

**The Driehaus Museum Announces New Exhibition,  
*The Art of Seating: 200 Years of American Design***

Chicago (October 2017) The **Richard H. Driehaus Museum** (40 E. Erie) is pleased to announce the upcoming exhibition *The Art of Seating: 200 Years of American Design*, **opening February 10, 2018**. The exhibition will feature 37 exceptional examples of American chairs created between 1810 and 2010 and will run through August 11, 2018

Designed for form and function, each of these works of art acts as a window into national history, culture and social trends. Chair designs from the late-nineteenth century Aesthetic Movement emphasize hand-craftsmanship and ornamentation, ironically prized by those who had amassed great wealth through industrialization. The emergence of computer technology is seen in the color and complexity of the twenty-first century's Postmodern chairs.

This exhibition focuses on a comprehensive private collection of iconic and historic chairs reaching back from the mid-1800s to today's studio movement. The exhibition provides an opportunity to see readily recognizable chairs alongside those rarely seen by the public. Although all 37 pieces serve a familiar function, many of them take an unfamiliar form.

Organized by the Museum of Contemporary Art Jacksonville, in collaboration with the Thomas H. and Diane DeMell Jacobsen PH.D. Foundation, *The Art of Seating* offers a stylistic journey in furniture design with showstoppers by John Henry Belter, George Hunzinger, the Herter Brothers, the Stickley Brothers, Frank Lloyd Wright, Charles and Ray Eames, Eero Saarinen, Isamu Noguchi, Frank Gehry and others waiting to be discovered. The exhibition also features contemporary and historic designs by some of the biggest manufacturers such as Knoll, Herman Miller and Steelcase.

Perhaps the most illustrious piece of history in this collection is that of the House of Representatives Chamber Arm Chair from 1857. Designed by Thomas U. Walter, architect of the Capitol Building from 1851 to 1865, the House of Representatives chairs were created to be used in the halls of Congress and were showcased in portraits of political leaders such as Abraham Lincoln and Andrew Johnson.

The chairs are presented surrounded by the lavish late 19th-century interiors of the Driehaus Museum—once the residence of the affluent Nickerson and Fisher families of Chicago. “We are very pleased to bring *The Art of Seating* to Chicago. This exhibition isn't just about chairs, but about how we relate to comfort, style, even power. Additionally, it will be intriguing to view objects crafted in the 21<sup>st</sup> century within the Gilded Age splendor of the Nickerson Mansion, as the Driehaus Museum typically explores the finest decorative arts of the late 19<sup>th</sup> to the early 20<sup>th</sup>

centuries,” says Rena Zurofsky, Interim Executive Director of the Driehaus Museum.

### **General Information**

*The Art of Seating* is organized by the Museum of Contemporary Art, Jacksonville, in collaboration with the Thomas H. and Diane DeMell Jacobsen Ph.D. Foundation and is toured by International Arts & Artists, Washington, D.C.

Entrance to *The Art of Seating: 200 Years of American Design* is included with the price of general admission to the Driehaus Museum. Guides will speak to highlights of the exhibition as part of the daily tours.

Group Tours of 10 or more, and access via Private Event bookings is also available.

Public programs exploring a variety of themes from the exhibition, including musical performances, exhibition talks, and more, will be presented for the duration of the exhibition. For information and tickets, please visit our [Programs page](#).

For additional information about *The Art of Seating*, please visit <http://www.driehausmuseum.org/the-art-of-seating/>.

For information including Museum hours, group tour information, directions, and parking, please visit [DriehausMuseum.org](http://DriehausMuseum.org) or call 312.482.8933. ext. 21.

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### **About the Richard H. Driehaus Museum**

Immerse yourself in the original Gilded Age splendor of the Driehaus Museum, just steps away from the Magnificent Mile. The interiors and surviving furnishings are complemented with period pieces selected from the Driehaus Collection, allowing visitors to experience the opulence and drama of this late 19th-century home. The Museum features special exhibitions and public programs, for more information, visit [DriehausMuseum.org](http://DriehausMuseum.org).

The Richard H. Driehaus Museum  
40 East Erie Street, Chicago, IL 60611  
312-482-8933  
[driehausmuseum.org](http://driehausmuseum.org)

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**The Museum of Contemporary Art, Jacksonville**, a private non-profit visual arts educational institution and cultural resource of the University of North Florida, serves the community and its visitors through exhibitions, collections, educational programs and publications designed to enhance an understanding and appreciation of modern and contemporary art with particular emphasis on works created from 1960 to the present.

The American Chair Collection started as a way to provide further context to the **Jacobsen Collection of American Art**—paintings, sculpture, silver and furniture which were acquired during the early 1990s. With the help of Andrew Van Styn, Director of Acquisitions, Conservation and Photography, the creation of the chair collection began with the purchase of an Egyptian Revival Side Chair and has since blossomed to the more than 40 works on display in this exhibition.

**International Arts & Artists** in Washington, DC, is a non-profit arts service organization dedicated to increasing cross-cultural understanding and exposure to the arts internationally, through exhibitions, programs and services to artists, arts institutions and the public. Visit [www.artsandartists.org](http://www.artsandartists.org)

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