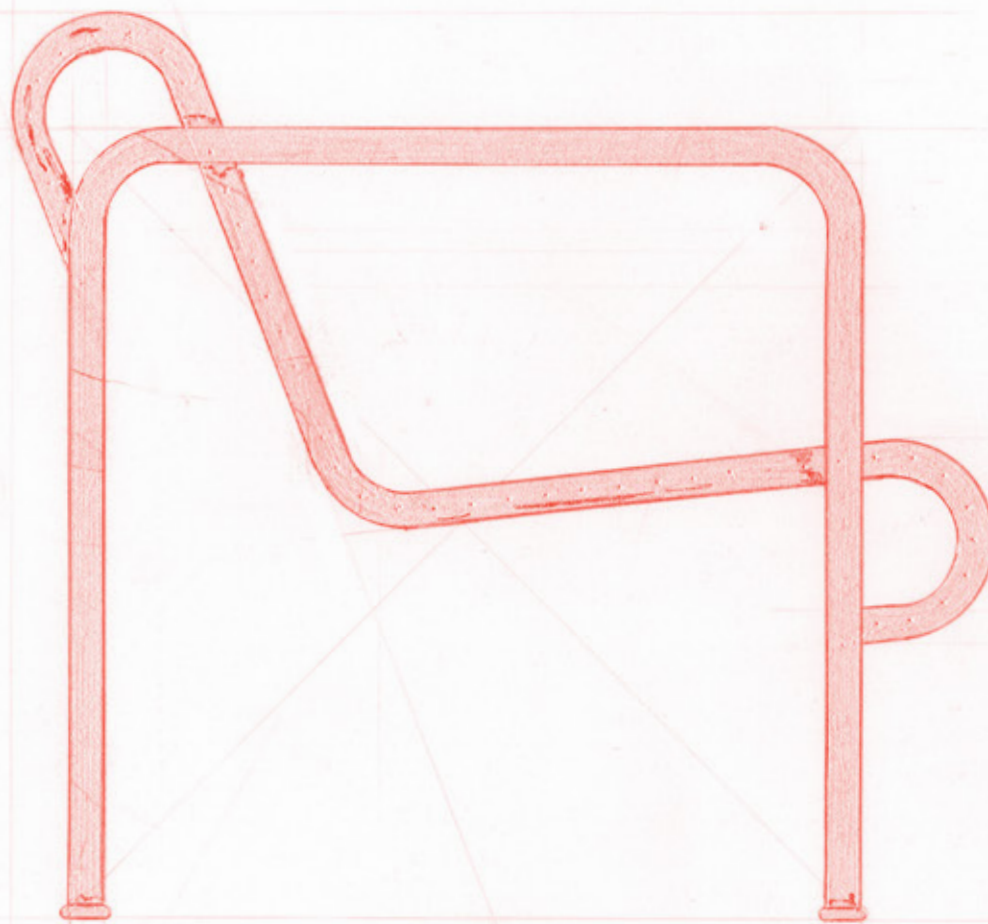


A. PAPER

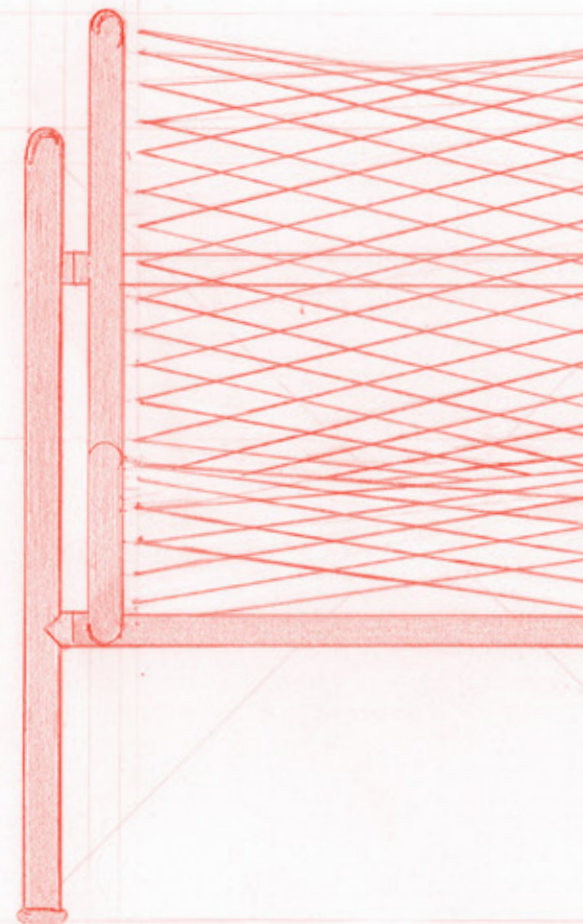
Our combined workshop and showroom in hall K2 is located in a former industrial building a 15-minute bike ride from the centre of Copenhagen.



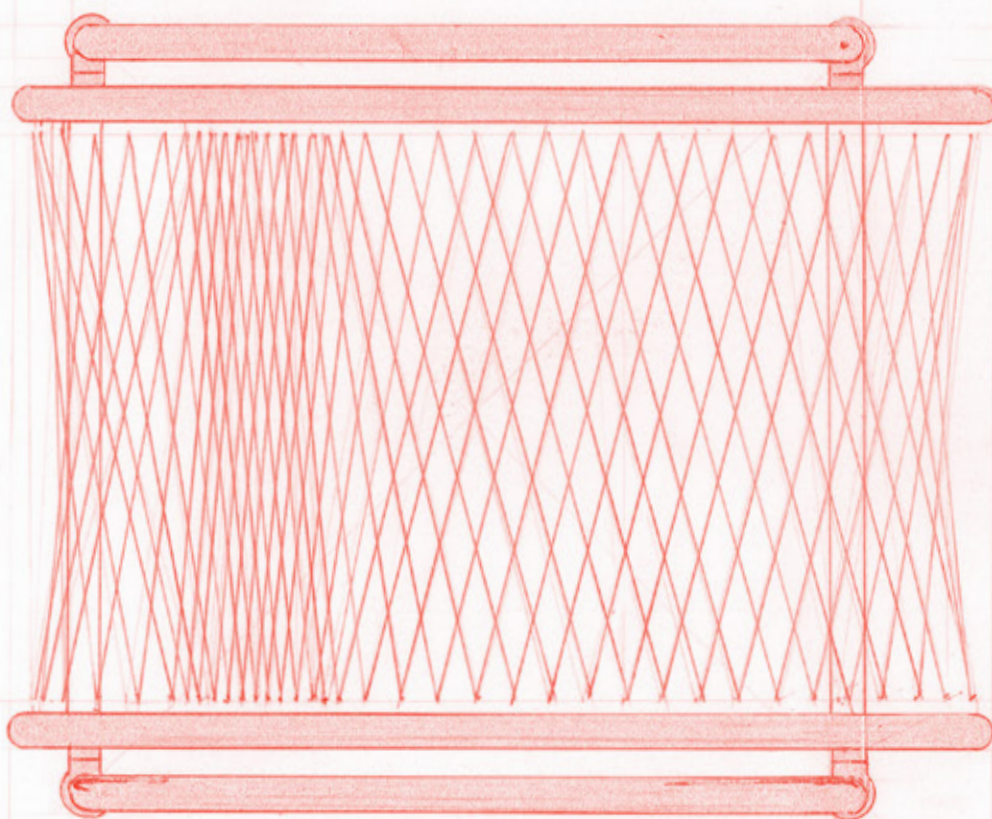


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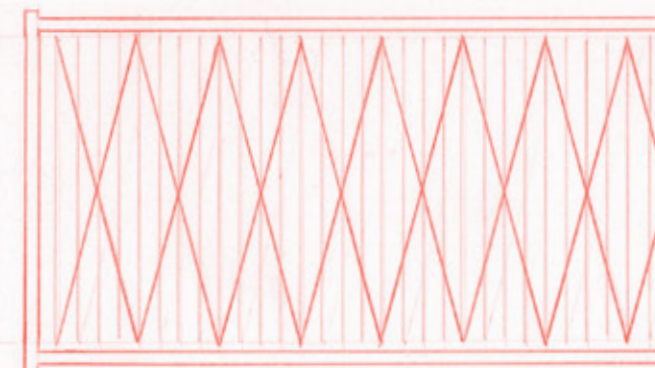
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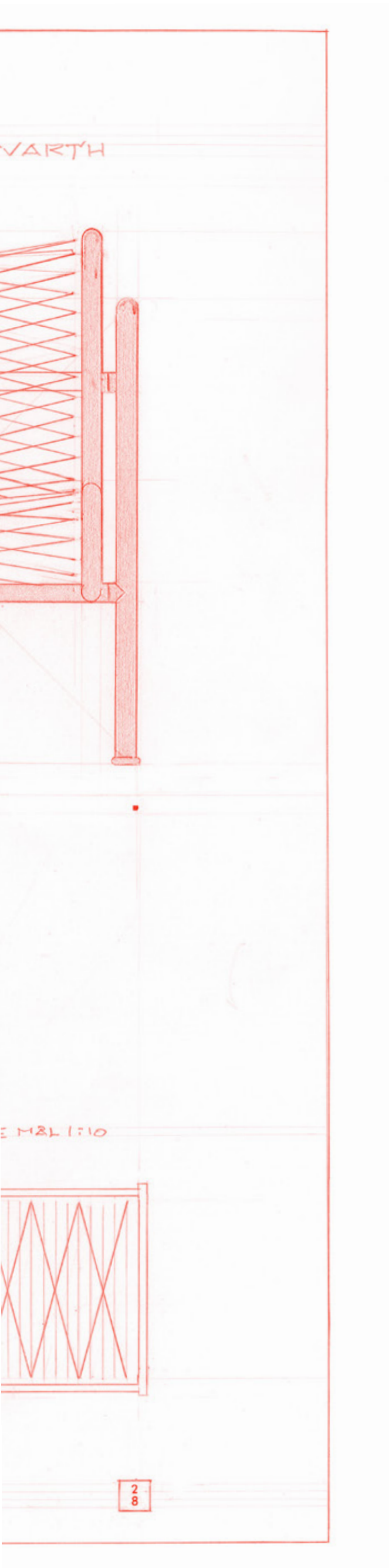


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PRINCIP FOR OVSPPENDING AF WIRE





There is something really nice about getting up close – to the furniture, the makers, the production process. We create furniture with a focus on quality, craftsmanship and respect for professional expertise. Our products are designed and developed in Denmark.

Furniture from A. Petersen is crafted with the intention to renew the Danish design tradition and carry it into the 21st century. Not in a grand or rapid way, for the sake of scale or tempo. But in a measured, serious way, for the sake of our current time as well as posterity, because furniture should last a lifetime, and hopefully even longer. A good piece of furniture only becomes more beautiful through time and use, as lived life leaves its mark on the materials.

Our furniture is based on love of the craft, developed in collaboration with the best designers and craftspeople we know and properly produced with respect for everyone whose hands and ideas were involved in shaping it.

We use appropriate technological approaches to produce efficiently for the future, without abandoning our roots and the traditions of craftsmanship which have brought us here. We owe that to everyone who laid the foundation for Danish Design as well as to all the coming generations.

We live in a world where resources must be taken seriously and treated with respect. As a responsible furniture company, we insist on curiosity, durability, quality and proper production conditions. The result is furniture with a transparent production story.

From the outset, we have emphasized the value of getting up close. We continue to make that a priority. It makes good sense to focus on what's at hand, even as we keep an eye on the future.

— The A. Petersen team

COLLECTION



Lamp (PC)

Poul Christensen (PC) - Lamp

A napkin, gently picked up by two fingers and placed above the table, where it has become a lampshade. A crumpled piece of paper with random creasing that gives rise to a play of light and shadows. Architect Poul Christiansens’s Lamp also has similarities with a tablecloth or a sheet of paper.

The random character of the creasing is intentional. Poul Christiansen has worked with light and shadow in lamp design for many years. In contrast to his other, meticulously pleated lampshades, his idea of crumpling a lampshade has now turned into a lamp design for A. Petersen. In a comment on the lamp, Poul explains, ‘All my life, I have had an interest in creasing

and folding. The crease lines in a sheet of paper hold a three-dimensional shape that is revealed when the paper is folded. There is a direct connection between the crease pattern and the spatial form. This lamp is based on the idea of randomly creasing or crumpling paper. The form has become unpredictable and highlights the beauty of unpredictability. No two lamps are alike, and the form, which is accentuated by the light, can be changed, if you like.’

The lampshade is made of Tyvek, a strong, lightweight material that is easy to clean. It begins as a sheet of white Tyvek measuring 70 x 70 cm with a hole in the middle where the cord, encased in a brass tube, is pushed through. Once the interior components of the lamp have been assembled, the shade is crumpled, and the lamp is vacuum-packed to preserve the creases. When you unpack the lamp, you may choose to add creasing, bend the edges or simply leave it as it is.

Lampshade made of Tyvek. Brass tube and white lamp cord.

DIMENSIONS:
LAMP: H: approx. 50 cm, W: 35-50 cm
CORD: approx. 400 cm long

Tube Chair (DS)





Dan Svarth (DS) - Tube Chair

The seat on Dan Svarth's Tube Chair almost seems to be floating in the air. Mounted on four small hand-milled cones in stainless steel, it is elevated slightly above the frame. The seat has rounded corners and a shape that is not quite a triangle, not quite a square but something in between. The upholstery comes in three variants: goat rawhide (parchment), black Elegance leather and natural Vegetal leather.

The smaller back rest continues into the frame and forms the front legs, while the larger, exterior chair back extends into the back legs. Despite its simple and straightforward appearance, the chair in fact consists of 17 individual components, which come together in a fluid form. The two solid steel stretchers between the front legs contribute to the chair's expression and strength.

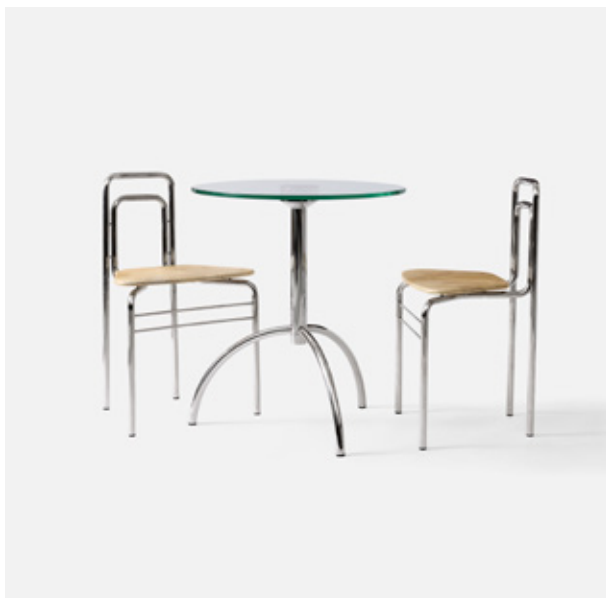
The first Tube Chairs were produced by blacksmith and furniture manufacturer Herluf Poulsen in the town of Tikøb in the 1980s. In 2022, together with architect Dan Svarth, the team at A. Petersen began to rethink the chair's design and production. What you see here is the result of that process.

The entire frame is made of hand-polished stainless steel by Stål&Form. The seat is produced and upholstered in the workshops at A. Petersen.

Handpolished stainless steel frame. Legs and back in a single flow, seat upholstered in parchment, Elegance or Vegetal leather.

DIMENSIONS: W: 47 cm, D: 38 cm, H: 74 cm
SEAT HEIGHT: 46 cm

Tube Table (DS)



Dan Svarth (DS) - Tube Table

Once you have a chair, the table often follows – or vice versa. That was also the case for Dan Svarth’s Tube Chairs and the Tube Table. The two designs were intended as a pair, with the small round café table accompanying the chairs. In a design presentation from 2021, Dan Svarth’s drawing showed the chair from the front and side and also included the table. Over the following years, as we developed the chair, it seemed obvious to include the table as well.

In the spring of 2024, the Tube Table had its debut as a café table in the April Coffee shop in Pilestræde in central Copenhagen, and today, it is part of our furniture collection. The clean lines and minimalist

aesthetic of the Tube Table are a perfect match for the Tube Chair. Together, the two create a harmonious ensemble characterized by style and sophistication. Whether placed in a trendy café, a chic office space or a modern home, this duo elevates the setting with its understated yet striking presence.

The solid rosette that joins the frame to the glass tabletop is turned in stainless steel. After many hours of meticulous hand polishing, it appears almost as an ornamental necklace.

The hand-polished stainless-steel frame is manufactured by Stål&Form in Odder, which also produces the rosette. The glass tabletop is made by J.N. Bech in Randers.

Hand-polished stainless steel frame and rosette. Glass tabletop.

DIMENSIONS: Tabletop Ø: 62 cm, H: 72 cm



Metal Stool (os)

Ole Schjøll (OS) - Metal Stool

Side table, coffee table, stool, pedestal ... Whether used as extra seating for a guest or as a stylish accent piece, Metal Stool, designed by architect Ole Schjøll, elegantly complements any interior decor scheme.

A simple, flat piece bent into shape, like a playful origami experiment that results in a folded drawing. The painted steel construction has a charming

industrial expression, while its clean lines and geometric form add a touch of contemporary elegance to any space. Despite its simple and delicate appearance, Metal Stool is both heavy and stable, weighing in at 13 kg, which makes it perfect for outdoor use.

Metal Stool consists of a rolled steel plate that is laser-cut and bent into a 3D shape by Stål&Form. After sanding and polishing, the stools are powder coated by Laduco.

Powder coated 5-mm steel. Available in RAL1021 (yellow), RAL 5017 (blue) and RAL 3002 (red).

DIMENSIONS: Seat Ø: 41 cm, legs Ø: 60 cm, H: 36 cm

Wooden Chair (DS)



Dan Svarth (DS) - Wooden Chair

One day, there it was. In the middle of Dan Svarth's living room. He did not say anything, probably because he wanted his guests to notice it without having it pointed out to them and to remark on its presence.

'From time to time, we visit Dan and have a cup of coffee or a glass of wine. Then we go into the basement, into Dan's workshop and studio, where all his furniture models are lined up side by side, and talk about furniture, about design, about Dan's many years of work in the field. That day, we paused in the living room, where a beautiful wooden chair had been set out. I had never seen it in Dan's house before, and my curiosity was sparked immediately,' says Anders Petersen from A. Petersen.

Dan opted for this subtle and understated way to present his wooden lounge chair one afternoon in Copenhagen. Anders liked what he saw. He thought it was a beautiful chair, and together, they set to work. The original prototype - made for and presented at the Cabinetmakers' Autumn Exhibition in 2001 - had to be scaled up in size by about 3% to achieve its proper form, according to Dan Svarth. After many adaptations, several trials and some long working days in the hands of cabinetmaker Gustav Sandegård in the workshop in A. Petersen's premises on Raffinaderivej, here it is, in Oregon pine. With sweeping lines in the seat and back, characteristic, almost triangular rear legs and armrests that are an exquisite study in form.

Solid and veneered Oregon pine. Oiled.

DIMENSIONS: W: 59 cm, D: 78 cm, H: 79 cm
SEAT HEIGHT: 39 cm







Metal Bench (os)

Ole Schjøll (OS) - Metal Bench

When Ole Schjøll showed A. Petersen his Wire Table back in 2016, he also presented his Metal Bench. It was originally conceived and designed for a competition to make public seating for Copenhagen’s main pedestrianized street, Strøget. The metal bench was near to Ole’s heart, and ever since, it has been on display at A. Petersen, sparking inquiries from clients: was it for sale, was it possible to buy one? However, A. Petersen only had the one bench, so it was not for sale. The clients were right, though: it has a simple yet sophisticated and elegant form. The double arches between the seat and legs are quite obviously a good choice: it works!

When April Coffee opened its third coffee shop, the setting was in a central Copenhagen location and the interior design was by A. Petersen. The metal bench occupied a prominent position as a bright yellow burst of energy just inside the door of the coffee shop . With this, the bench was revived and is now part of A. Petersen's collection.

As a special option, Metal Bench is also presented in a hand-polished stainless-steel version. This version shows off the blacksmith’s craftsmanship from its most insisting side: it takes three days to hand-polish the bench to a shine so deep you can see your face in it.

Metal Bench is produced by Stål&Form. The powder coated version is finished by Laduco.

Hand-polished stainless steel or powder coated steel.

DIMENSIONS: W: 170 cm, D: 46 cm, H: 46 cm

Wire Chair (DS)





Dan Svarth (DS) - Wire Chair

Carbon fibre and steel. The chair looks industrial, and the materials back this impression up. Almost the opposite of what we normally associate with craftsmanship. But make no mistake: the Wire Chair, designed by architect Dan Svarth, is an excellent demonstration of quality craftsmanship.

The frame is carefully welded together, and the woven carbon-fibre seat and back are made in one strong flow. When you take a seat, the chair will surprise you with its comfortable give and the way it follows the shape of your body.

Dan Svarth made the first prototype of this chair in 1972 while he was teaching at the Royal Danish Academy – School of Architecture and, at the same

time, working with the renowned Danish architect and designer Poul Kjærholm. Dan made the prototype himself, bending ordinary water pipes for the frame.

The only problem back then was that the wire was not stable enough for long-term use. Technology has come a long way, and today, we have the benefit of hardwearing carbon fibre. The diagonal weave makes the chair strong and stable.

The Wire Chair frame is welded by Stål&Form, and the carbon fibre weave is made in A. Petersen’s workshop on Raffinaderivej.

Hand-polished stainless steel frame. Seat and back in one flow, made with wire in carbon fibre.

DIMENSIONS: W: 64 cm, D: 79 cm, H: 69 cm, SEAT HEIGHT: 40 cm



Ole Schjøll (OS) - Stool

One day, architect Ole Schjøll showed up at A. Petersen with a stool and a stack of drawings of it under his arm. He wondered if the stool might be developed and perhaps put into production?

The idea for the Stool dates back to Ole Schjøll's time at the Royal Danish Academy – School of Architecture, where he designed and made a mock-up. Since then, the model has been part of the furniture collection at the Academy. Now, it has been further developed and put into production.

The Stool combines traditional wickerwork with modern technology. The skeleton of the woven seat is made up of 16 laser-cut parts, which are combined into a three-dimensional puzzle. The skeleton stabilizes the woven seat and results in a strong cushion-like seat that gives the Stool a long lifespan. The three-legged frame is produced at Hudevad on the island of Funen, and the Stool is assembled in the workshop on Raffinaderivej.

Thus, a design idea has evolved over time and become a beautiful, functional and highly durable stool, developed and produced with respect for a traditional craft in tandem with the new possibilities of technology.

Leg frame in moulded untreated ash, wickerwork seat, natural leather straps.

DIMENSIONS: W: 66 cm, D: 66 cm, H: 38 cm



Wire Table (os)

Ole Schjøll (OS) - Wire Table

When architect Ole Schjøll designed his Wire Table in 1984, he did not imagine that he would pull out the drawings and put the table into production 32 years later. Nevertheless, he succeeded, in a production consisting of no fewer than five different production stages on Danish soil.

From sketch to finished design, the table undergoes bending, welding, polishing, cutting and lacquering before it is finished and ready to be brought home to a cosy living room.

The stainless steel wire that makes up the table's frame is delivered and shaped by FK Trådindustri, a company in central Jutland. The ten wire components are subsequently welded together into a unified frame by welder Mikkel Kjærholm. The frame is then brought to OP Stål in Ringsted, where it undergoes electropolishing, which is both more environmentally friendly and more durable than chrome plating.

Meanwhile, the steel tabletop has been cut into the right size and shaped in Gladsaxe at the company Klip og Buk. Corners, edges and burrs are sanded, before the tabletop is sent on to Laduco Industrilak in Ishøj. Here, it is hung on a hook and sprayed with solvent-free powder, which adheres to the electrostatically charged surface. Afterwards, the tabletop is baked in the oven for 20 minutes at 180 degrees Celsius.

Electropolished stainless steel frame and powder-coated metal tabletop (black, red, white).

DIMENSIONS: W: 69 cm, D: 69 cm, H: 44 cm

Tool Boxes (LD)



Line Depping (LD) - Tool Boxes

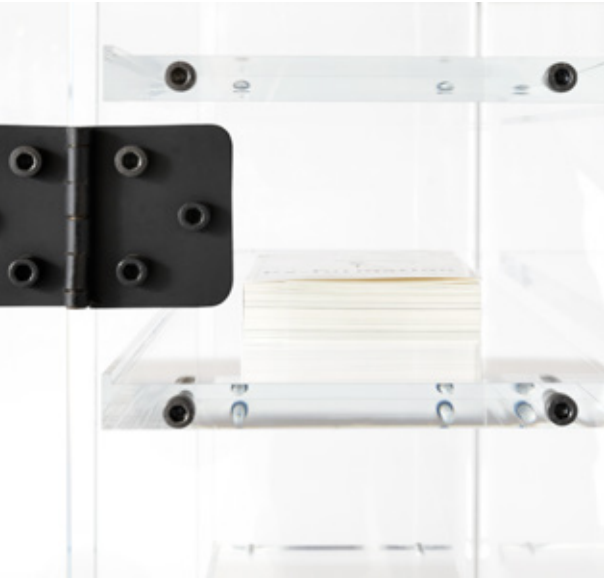
A toolbox can be just as beautiful as it is practical. Tool Boxes, designed by Line Depping, is a storage unit which, with subtle reference to the classic toolbox, offers a way to organize both collections and everyday items. And everyday use is exactly what Line Depping wants you to consider when choosing furniture for your home. Her designs encourage you to surround yourself with things you actually use and which speak to you in an aesthetic design language; things you enjoy seeing on a daily basis, year after year.

Tool Boxes consists of a metal frame with drawers that slide on hidden rails and can be pulled out from either side. The construction may look simple, but many hours of work in the cabinetmaking workshop go into making the six drawers, each consisting of seven parts.

The frame is welded by Stål&Form in Odder, Jutland. The ash version is colour graduated in the workshop on Raffinaderivej with natural yellow pigment developed in collaboration with Linolie og Pigment in Haderslev.

Frame in stainless steel. Drawers in Oregon pine with invisible varnish or colour graduated yellow ash.

DIMENSIONS: W: 70 cm, D: 43.5 cm, H: 62 cm



Knud Holscher (KH) - Roller Cabinet

In Knud Holscher's kitchen, there are three rather unusual kitchen cabinets. They do not resemble anything you would see in other kitchens, and they strike a remarkable figure. The upright boxes on wheels resembling old travel trunks are used for storing herbs and spices, pots, plates, bowls and glasses.

When Knud Holscher designed the cabinet, it was intended mainly as a room divider and storage space in offices. It was put into small-scale production and used as a wardrobe in the executive offices of a large Danish company. Knud Holscher and his wife, Henny, put them to use in their kitchen. The cabinets are seen here in Alucobond with a laminated aluminium shell.

Back in 2016, the form concept of the cabinets was taken up again: the Roller Cabinet can be fitted with a clothes rack and/or shelves and is thus suited for a wide range of purposes. It offers a flexible storage space, where kitchen utensils, coffee cups or shirts can be put away and brought out, as needed. In the newer acrylic version, the cabinet is intended to be used for books, as shop décor, for ceramics, as a drinks cabinet or whatever else one might want to display.



Roller Cabinet (KH)

'It's funny to think that the cabinets caused such a stir with the older generation in the companies where they were installed, just because their shape was a little different. We also used them in our own drawing studio,' says Knud Holscher, who continues: 'Even though they were intended for office use, Henny and I have been using the cabinets in the kitchen all these years, and we think they work really well for storing kitchen utensils and spices, so I think it's great that others can now enjoy them in their own home.'

The Roller Cabinet in Oregon pine is produced by A. Petersen in the cabinetmaking workshop on Raffinaderivej. The acrylic version starts at Plastsnedkeriet in Silkeborg, which specializes in this type of production, and is then assembled in the workshop on Raffinaderivej.

Cabinet in Oregon pine (oiled) or acrylic. Shelves and/or hanger bar.

DIMENSIONS: W: 70 cm, D: 70 cm, H: 156 cm





Dining Table (os)



Ole Schjøll (OS) - Dining Table

Years ago, architect Ole Schjøll designed a dining table that was only produced as a prototype. A table where circle and cube meet and are united in the form of a round tabletop on a square steel-wire base, unmistakably related to his Wire Table, which was the first piece of furniture put into production by A. Petersen. Later, the Dining Table joined the family.

The frame is made of stainless steel wire, produced and shaped by FK Trådindustri in central Jutland and subsequently welded together by Mikkel Kjærholm. The reversible tabletop and the two sides are a combination of black linoleum and white laminate. The untreated ash trim strikes a warm note in contrast to the cool steel wire.

With a diameter of 145 cm, the Dining Table has ample room for a family of three, four or five and is also ready to welcome guests, as eight people can easily fit around it. If you are in the mood for a change, just turn the tabletop around and switch the expression from black to white, or vice versa.

Frame in stainless steel. Reversible tabletop in black linoleum and white laminate. Trim in ash.

DIMENSIONS: Dia: 145 cm, H:72 cm



Bookkeeper (DS)



Dan Svarth (DS) - The Bookkeeper

The Bookkeeper is a small useful piece of furniture designed by architect Dan Svarth. As a supplement to a bookcase, it is ideal for storing the books you are currently reading or the week's newspapers or for organizing your vinyl collection. Or as a corner unit with room for knitting or magazines.

The original Bookkeeper was initially made from simple MDF boards that were cut, milled and glued together to form three surfaces with corners and edges, until the colourful little piece ended up looking quite complex. The many angles and the opening to the rear lend it a light and elegant quality. Two small, angled legs tilt the whole box, ensuring that everything always stays in place.

Painted wood and MDF in six different colours (RAL)
5012 – blue, 6017 – green, 2002 – red, 8022 – black,
1028 – yellow, 7042 – grey

DIMENSIONS: W: 34 cm, D: 34 cm, H: 38 cm



Table (DS)



Dan Svarth (DS) - Table

The brief for architect Dan Svarth was to create a table large enough to seat a big family. Long enough that a smaller family can use one end of the table for a shared meal and the other end for work. And narrow enough that people can sit close to each other, can reach everything and can easily get around the table in the living room.

The long table is an obvious table type, but also one that already exists in a wide variety of designs. To be meaningful, a new design therefore has to build on past solutions – with sophistication and the ambition of offering improvement.

The result is a tabletop that almost seems to float in the air. With a thinly milled elegant edge that curves inwards and gets thicker in the middle. With sturdy legs placed at a comfortable distance from the table’s edge, so that they do not get in the way of people’s legs and upset the seating plan, and which can be unscrewed to allow for flat-packing and easy transportation. Or for easy disassembly and storage if the table is only brought out for special occasions. Adding on to the long table, Dan Svarth has made a square version as well. For the smaller space, for the office, for four seatings around the dining table.

The table is produced in A. Petersen's workshop on Raffinaderivej.

Veneered tabletop in mahogany with removable turned solid legs of the same wood. Oiled.

DIMENSIONS: W: 235/120 CM, D: 90/120 CM, H: 72 CM

**‘Bench in three parts – two bearing and one borne. You might be allergic to coffee tables as such. And not want an ottoman. But need a place to put down books, magazines and newspapers. And to put up your feet. With a passion for minimalism. To enjoy the peace and logic of furniture construction.’
– (TS)**



Bench (TS)



Torben Skov (TS) - Bench

Furniture and graphic designer Torben Skov has designed this bench, which consists simply of two foldable clamps holding a plank in place. With no need for screws, this is a simple, easy and portable piece of furniture with multiple functions. As a seat or as a coffee table. As a window sill in houses with large glass facades. As a bench on the terrace, in the garden or in the hallway. As a shelf for displaying products in a store, as a welcoming seat in a large hall or as a place to rest in a museum or gallery.

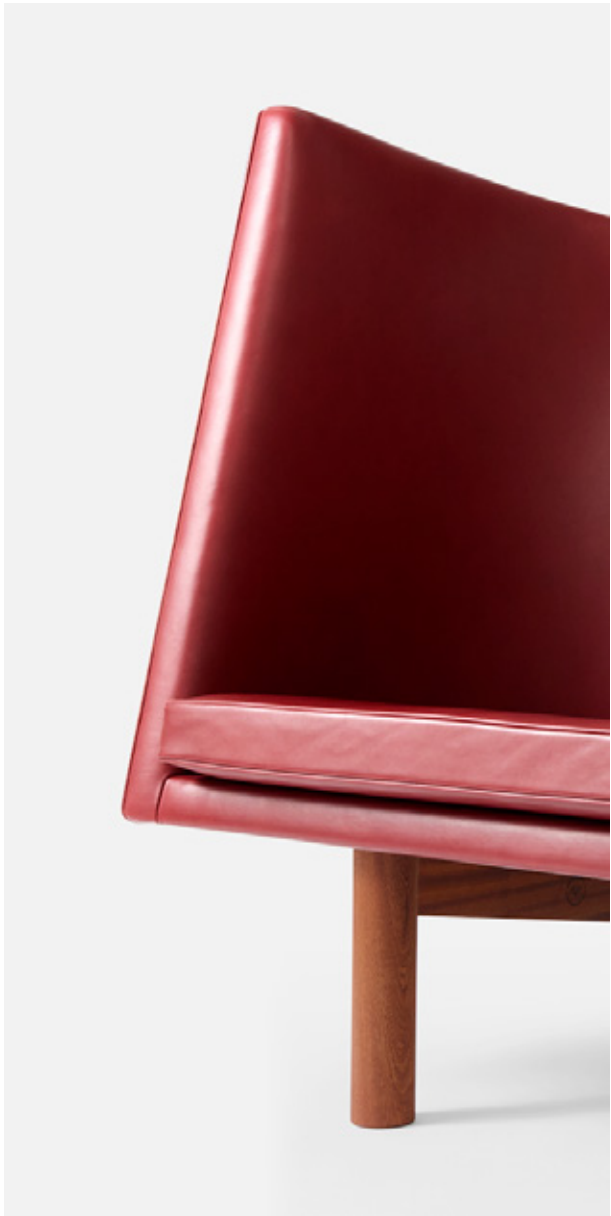
Torben Skov's long career as a graphic designer is clearly reflected in his furniture. In its structure, the Bench is almost like lines drawn in the air. The horizontal wooden plank, the slanted load-bearing steel legs – both parts strict geometric compositions, which simultaneously pay homage to the architectural principle of the distinction between the bearing and the borne. The two vertical structures bearing the horizontal plane. In this piece of furniture, the tension from the plank and the weight of the person sitting, or the weight of the things placed on the Bench, help to lock the structure in place.

Clamps made by welder Mikkel Kjærholm, plank made in the workshop on Raffinaderivej.

Clamps made of acid-proof stainless steel, untreated pine plank. Other lengths and types of wood available (at a surcharge).

DIMENSIONS: W: 160/180/200 cm, D: 45 cm (plank 24 cm), H: 40 cm (plank 4 cm).





Sofa (DS)

Dan Svarth (DS) - Sofa

The task was to create a new sofa design using high-quality materials that had references to classic modernism, while also being unique. The architect Dan Svarth presented the results of his considerations in early 2018 in the form of 1:5 and 1:10 scale models and watercolour images, and product development got underway.

Many hours were spent in the cabinetmaker's workshop to get the rounding of the base frame to fit the slanted angle of the legs and uprights and in the upholstery workshop to get the straps tightened. However, the big challenge was getting the leather neatly stretched out in one piece without a seam along the middle and without losing the nice arch in the back and the comfortable lumbar support.

It took some elbow grease, but the result speaks for itself: a whole leather hide for the rear of the back section and a whole leather hide for the inner side of the backrest lend the sofa an exclusive look, while the rounded shape invites you to get comfortable.

The Sofa's base frame is made of beech – a strong material that is easy to work with. The slim, slightly arched leg frames with the tall aft staves in the back ensure that the sofa looks just as beautiful from behind as it does from the front. The upholstery is traditionally made, using hairlock, cotton wadding, hemp webbing and exclusive vegetal leather, which only becomes more beautiful with age.

The Sofa is produced in A. Petersen's workshops on Raffinaderivej. And just recently a three-seater was added to the collection.

Mahogany frame, oiled. Upholstered with Elegance leather from Sørensen Leather (natural, black, red or brown). Stuffing in hairlock, hemp webbing, cotton wadding, tow, hessian, Holland cloth.

**DIMENSIONS: W: 150/202 CM, D: 72 CM, H: 95 CM
SEAT HEIGHT: 40 CM**

Sofa (Ds)





Modul (CLH)



Chris L. Halstrøm (CLH) - Modul

Designer Chris L. Halstrøm has created a flexible piece of furniture for A. Petersen with multiple uses. It is a daybed, a sofa, a spare bed, a chair and a lounge module all in one. The Modul consists of two elements, a chair and a sofa, which can be put together or used individually. The Modul comes in mahogany with a seat in leather, stuffed with hairlock. In all simplicity, the Modul consists of a wooden frame, an upholstered seat, and one, respectively two, bolsters. The bolster has a slit that lets it grip a transverse backbar – a design touch which contributes to the high degree of flexibility.

When the bolster is removed, the full depth of the seat can be utilized, and the Modul can be used as a guest bed or a classic daybed. ‘The depth of the piece has the pedagogical effect of encouraging movement and invites you to pull up your legs,’ says Chris L. Halstrøm.

The cylindrical back cushion not only adds character but also makes the Modul suited for use as a free-standing element in the room. When the piece is pulled out from the wall, it can be accessed from both sides, and the round shape of the back now offers a minimal seat for a brief rest. The removable bolster also contributes to the sofa’s flexibility. For example, it can be moved around and used to support your neck or your legs. The Modul is made in the A. Petersen workshops on Raffinaderivej.



Available with a mahogany frame and full leather upholstery.
Bolsters included: 2 for the sofa and 1 for the chair.

**SOFA DIMENSIONS: W: 145 cm, D: 70 cm, H: 66 cm
SEAT HEIGHT: 42 CM**

**STOL DIMENSIONS: W: 70 cm, D: 70 cm, H: 66 cm
SEAT HEIGHT: 42 CM**

**‘Modul became a very dialogue-based collaboration with enthusiasts who refused to compromise on either craftsmanship or materials. With the skilled craftsmen near at hand, we were able to work out optimal solutions.’
– (CLH)**





UP CLOSE

With the goal of bringing a more human perspective and greater balance to their life, designer Line Depping and her husband, sculptor and designer Jakob Jørgensen, sought a creative haven in the middle of the Baltic Sea. In close interaction with nature, they have created a space dedicated to art and design.

OUT OF TOWN

VISITING LINE DEPPING

Designer of Tool Boxes ^(LD)

By Sofie Brünner
Photo Enok Holsegård

Just under four years ago, Depping and Jørgensen decided to move out of the city, leaving behind the metropolis, their one-room flat and the urban noise, systems, structures and expectations in a search for complete freedom and a deeper sense of connectedness with themselves, their family and their work, which includes two independent practices as well as joint projects under the name Depping & Jørgensen. Their choice fell on a smallholding from 1820 on the island of Bornholm; a geographic location where getting to and from Copenhagen involves crossing a bridge and taking a ferry. The property, which has two hectares of land, is surrounded by farmland and has a view of the sea on the horizon. In addition to the main house, there is a studio, which serves as the

couple's shared workplace, and a converted garage that contains Jørgensen's larger sculptural projects. On the land, Jørgensen is currently planting the last of 500 new trees, with an ambition of establishing a small wood. Initially, the couple looked at properties all over Denmark. Eventually, they chose Bornholm based on a conscious decision to embrace the adventure. Moving into nature, becoming part of an island community and experiencing the implications of the fact that there is no way off the island once the last ferry has sailed.

After showing us around the property among newly planted trees, tall grass and the odd sculpture here and there, the couple invite us in. Over freshly brewed coffee and homemade cinnamon buns, they talk about a trip to Texas and New Mexico a few years ago. The experience had a much more profound impact on them both than they anticipated. The couple had always dreamed of seeing the Donald Judd Foundation and the Chinati Foundation, which together own Donald Judd's homes, studios and a large number of art installations in Marfa, Texas, by Judd and other artists. In connection with a solo exhibition by Jørgensen in New York in 2022, they decided to extend their stay in the US and visit both the Judd sites and Abiquiú, New Mexico, where Georgia O'Keeffe spent much of her life.

'You have to give Donald Judd credit for relocating to Marfa with open eyes. Fed up with New York, he moved to Texas with his children and spent the

rest of his life there, with a vast amount of space at his disposal. He was completely committed and built the place from scratch,’ says Jørgensen. Depping adds, ‘Previously, we had travelled extensively in Japan, which had a profound influence on especially my work over the years. Now, I am beginning to acknowledge that the US may have impacted me more than I realized. It gets to you in a different way. The way Judd and O’Keeffe interacted with nature was very inspiring.’ Standing at the cooker, brewing a second pot of coffee, Jørgensen says, ‘Not to draw a direct comparison, but when we moved here, we had a similar goal of engaging with the landscape and having room to do stuff; basically the same motivation as Donald Judd and Georgia O’Keeffe.’

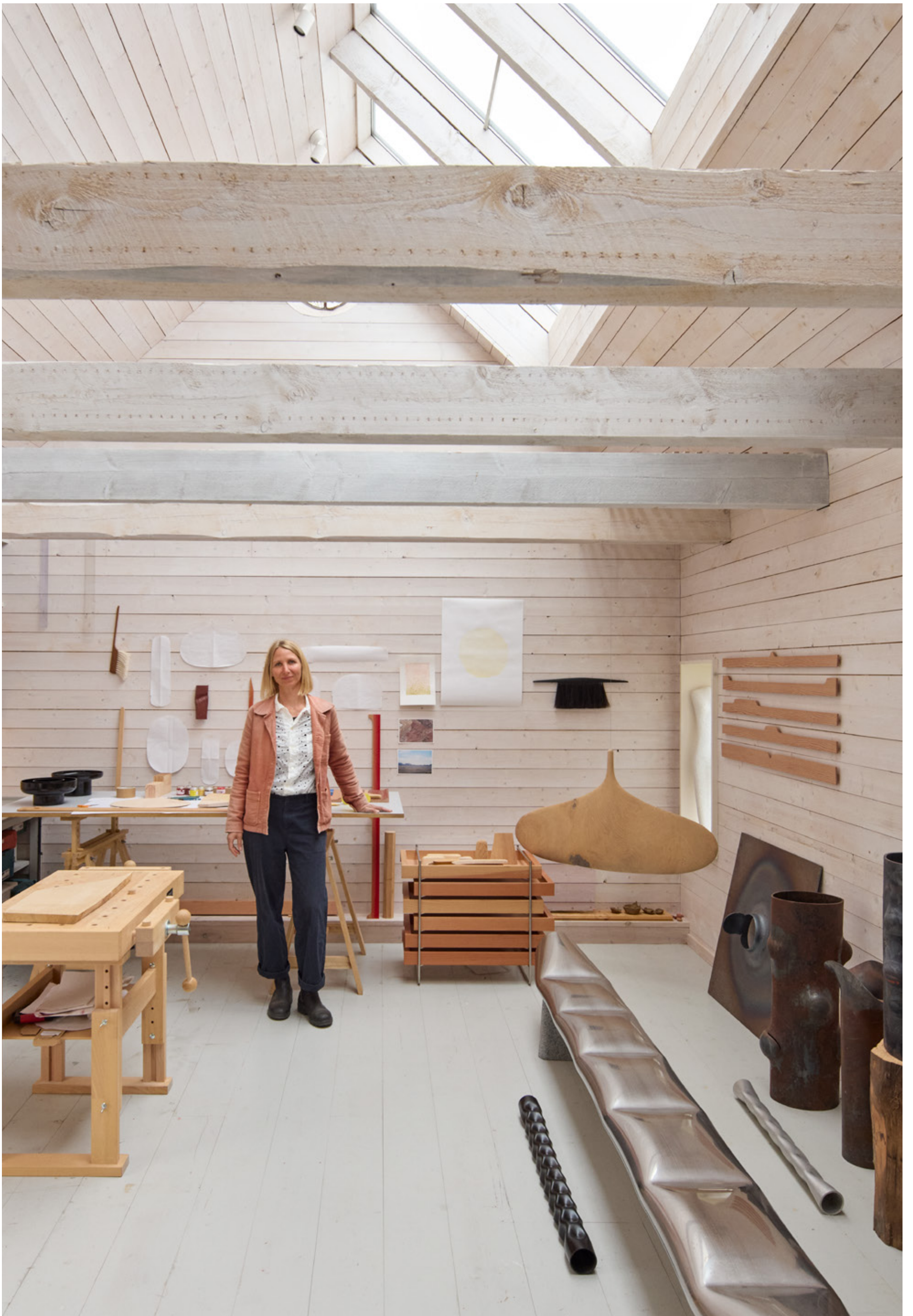
One of the reasons why the couple chose Bornholm was the rugged nature, which is very different from the rest of Denmark; the ever-roaring sea, the craggy rock formations and the windswept vegetation along most of the coast and the wavy fields and forests covering most of the island’s interior. ‘I love being in nature, and while I do draw inspiration from it, my goal is to create something that is completely clear-cut and simple, as a contrast and

counterpoint to nature’s lavish diversity or chaos. I bring nature into my work by incorporating the human condition into my designs,’ says Depping, whose designs include the drawer system Tool Boxes, which is produced by A. Petersen.

Depping divides her time between creating unique objects that are sold by Galerie Maria Wettergren in Paris as well as product designs manufactured by companies in Denmark and abroad. Both categories are characterized by her poetic and simple expression combined with keen attention to details. Depping appreciates the interaction and contrast between the two disciplines. ‘My dual practice of one-off objects and product design are not separate but merely two different ways of working. I like the interplay between free form, where my focus is on expression, form and

**‘I bring nature
into my work
by incorporating
the human
condition into
my designs.’
– Line Depping**

The studio, which is situated in immediate extension of the main house, is full of samples, prototypes and tools. Depping’s fascination with the couple’s visit to Texas and New Mexico is evident in sketches, colour samples and inspiration images on the table and wall. In the corner is one of her unique handmade wooden objects; to the right of it, the project Texas Rulers, inspired by the landscape in Texas hangs on the wall. On the floor, elements from Jørgensen’s objects made of processed steel tubes.





Depping's Tool Boxes in her distinctive yellow notes contain everything from sketches, drawings and objects to collections of found objects, carefully organized in removable tray drawers.

**‘Not everything has to have an explanation. When you encounter an object that you are unable to decode, you have to examine it, open your senses, see, notice and take your time. That is what I hope to achieve in my work.’
– Line Depping**



A tableau in the living room consisting of bowls from one of the couple's joint projects is placed side by side with artefacts from a recent trip to Asia. Both the stool and the organic marble sculpture on the floor were designed by Jørgensen.

material, and the commercial products, where I also need to consider the practicalities of manufacturing. The objects emerge intuitively: a vague idea of form, some rapid sketches and an intuitive process where I work hands-on with the wood. It is a very direct and simple process, where I do everything myself, from start to finish. Design, on the other hand, is created in interaction with others and involves a longer idea process. I like both approaches and the transitions between them, and to some extent, I am able to

transfer knowledge from one practice to the other. In both processes, I have a keen focus on proportions, and I take the sense of form I have developed to determine when a line is just right and supple in my objects and bring it into my designs.' Part of Depping's practice is a years-long collaboration with Jørgensen under the name Depping & Jørgensen, which has resulted in several exhibitions and in designs for commercial companies, including Hay and Takt. Their joint projects have a clear distribution of skills and tasks, as Jørgensen, according to Depping, has a wilder streak, while Depping's approach is sparser and more systematic.

'Jakob has the technical grasp and is more hands-on in the process, while I use small-scale models, sketching and the computer and have a stronger focus on details and tactile qualities. In combination, this enables a more complex approach.'

Depping describes her childhood home as 'very proper': a place where you have your things in order, your drawers are organized, and you are expected to behave as a decent person towards the world around you. When Depping met Jørgensen at the Danish Design School in 2002, he joked that she would have to learn to unleash her inner troll: let go, go wild, make some noise, make a mess, take up room. Over time, Depping has gradually come to acknowledge these qualities as part of being human.

'Care and logical thinking combined with a rebellious streak have made me the designer I am today. My childhood home was very proper. It was tidy, clean, the drawers were neatly organized, and you met your obligations and commitments. These are all good qualities, but the requirement to fit in can spark a subtle rebelliousness. I want to create objects that make room for people to just be human.'





The living room overlooks the surrounding fields, with the sea on the horizon. The natural setting was an important factor in the couple's choice to move to Bornholm.

Depping is currently seeking to incorporate more colours into her work. The intense yellow colour has long been a characteristic feature of her works, but after the trip to New Mexico, where she collected soil samples from the mineral sediments in the dusty landscape, she has begun to develop a new colour palette.

Bio – Line Depping and Jakob Jørgensen met in 2002 as students in the furniture programme at the Danish Design School (now the Royal Danish Academy - Architecture, Design, Conservation) in Copenhagen. Shortly after her graduation in 2007, Depping was employed in designer Cecilie Manz’s studio, where she worked from 2008 to 2012. Concurrently with this, in 2011, Depping came into contact with Galerie Maria Wettergren, which began to display and represent her one-off objects. In 2012, Depping and Jørgensen joined Hay, where they designed products both as in-house designers and under their own name, until 2018. In 2019, Depping held her first solo exhibition at Galerie Maria Wettergren, and ever since, she has worked either solo, creating one-off objects and product designs for companies in Denmark and abroad, or as a duo with Jørgensen under the name Depping & Jørgensen.



Depping and Jørgensen's home has a calm and contemplative feel. Most of the furniture is of their own design, the skylights in the high ceilings let in a diffuse natural light, and around the house, there are small collections of objects and tools brought home from their travels. In direct extension of the main house lies their shared studio, where sketches, prototypes and form experiments appear alongside Japanese hand saws and selected power tools. This is where Depping creates her unique objects, sawing and sanding her impressively large fan-like wooden objects. On the table, there are small samples of soil collected in New Mexico next to wooden elements painted in the colour shades of the soil.

'Georgia O'Keeffe's place in New Mexico had a very different atmosphere from the starker, more arid Texas. New Mexico had traditional adobe houses, rounded and mud-built. The atmosphere here was warmer and more approachable. While we were there, I collected soil samples in a variety of colour shades from the different layers in the nearby mountains. Later, among other uses, I matched them to colours that I used for an exhibition at Sølvgade 19 in 2023. I have previously worked with colours, for example in Tool Boxes, but I would like to focus even more on colours in the objects I am currently working on.'

In the studio, boxes and drawers hold a wide selection of tools, objects and artefacts. Depping tells us about a stay in New York years ago, when she spotted a tiny object in the gutter that had clearly been part of a larger, industrial product but whose function she was unable to determine. She put it in her pocket, and that marked the start of what she describes as her 'irrational collections', reflecting her conflicted relationship with the systematic and the chaotic.

'I really enjoy the intriguing quality of objects that don't serve a practical purpose but which echo or simulate a function. That is what the objects in this collection are about. They are industrial products that I found in the street, but since I can no longer determine their function, they have become pure form. I do not draw inspiration from them directly, just as I don't derive direct inspiration from nature, but the intriguing aspect of the forms informs my work.' Depping has pulled out a drawer with objects carefully arranged in a mix of sizes and materials, like finds in an archaeological collection.

'My rule is that I have to find them. I can't buy them. It's a little like finding things as you walk along the beach. If I discover their function, my interest in them tends to fade.' To Depping, the collections are a way to make room for the messy aspects of being human, combined with the careful and organized approach she takes with her from her upbringing.

'With Tool Boxes, I addressed the practice of storing things. I have a lot of things that I collect and which are a source of joy. To me, they represent



memories, forms, materialities; things that speak to my senses. They have no rational value, but they are valuable to me. It is a human trait to want to collect all sorts of – possibly useless but fascinating – objects. I would like to make room for this sense of wonder. Not everything has to have an explanation. When you encounter an object that you can't decode, you have to examine it, open your senses, see, notice and take your time. That is what I hope to achieve in my work.'

On the horizon, the house and the trees are casting long shadows in the setting spring sun. Time seems to pass more slowly on the island, and our senses are heightened by the smell of freshly ploughed fields, the buds on the newly planted trees, ready to burst, and the seagulls that have flown in directly from the sea. After a few minutes' silence, as we head back to the main house, Depping reflects,

'Our decision to move to Bornholm was also a decision to move towards something more human.'



With great humility and a twinkle in his eye, architect and designer Knud Holscher attributes his success to being in the right place at the right time. Combined, of course, with a touch of talent. He has worked with some of the giants of modernist architecture, including Arne Jacobsen and Kay Fisker, and was best friends with Poul Kjærholm, who teased him for not mastering the art of furniture design as well as Kjærholm. Nevertheless, Knud Holscher is one of Denmark’s most award-winning designers for a body of work that ranges from prestigious architecture to everyday objects such as prams and architectural hardware – not to mention the detached house in Holte north of Copenhagen that he designed for himself and his family. Join us on a visit with one of the great architects and designers of his generation, who says he would like to be remembered as a ‘democratically minded personality’.

KNUD HOLSCHER

THE LAST OF THE MODERNISTS

Designer of Roller Cabinet ^(KH)

and Chair ^(KHEP)

By Mille Collin Flaherty

Photo Enok Holsegård

Maybe it’s the season. The beeches have just unfolded their bright green wings, the sky is high and clear. There is a sense of freedom in the air, goodbye to coats and socks, and at the bottom of a street, where the residential neighbourhoods turns into woodland, and hours become changing times, lies the house where Knud Holscher lives with his wife of a lifetime, Henny. So maybe it is the season, or maybe it is the two of them who are causing the knots of winter to loosen up and bringing out a sense of humility. Knud Holscher is still tired after celebrating his 92nd birthday last week but is otherwise unaffected by all the fuss. We are here to document some of his works, including what is perhaps the most significant, at least on a personal level: the house in Holte that he designed and built in the early 1970s and where he has lived ever since.

He opens the door inside a glass cube floating over a bed of ivy spread out like a green carpet

underneath the entrance. His clothes are grey, and he stoops slightly, as he asks,

‘Who are you?’

For a few seconds I wonder if he might have forgotten about our appointment, but then he extends his hand and breaks into a boyish smile, accompanied by a slight quiver in the corner of his left eye which, as I shall discover, is his ‘tell’ when he is having me on. Kidding, as he says. It won’t be the last time I see it.

Coffee is served in cups designed by Grethe Meyer. Henny fetches them from the flexible modular kitchen cabinet system that holds everything from herbs and spices to bowls and Arne Jacobsen’s Cylinda-line coffee and tea service from 1967. The cabinets were originally designed as room dividers and storage in a large architecture firm, and it was only when they moved into the couple’s kitchen in Holte that it occurred to him to push two sides together, so they could be closed. Not that the cabinets are ever actually closed in their kitchen, except when Knud and Henny’s three children were curious toddlers.

The closed cabinets were not produced for anyone else, until Anders Petersen from A. Petersen saw them and created a cabinet in Oregon pine mounted on wheels. Recently, a version in transparent acrylic was added, and the cabinets, which can be customized, for example with a hanger bar, can be used for anything from a retail display cabinet to a wardrobe or a bar cabinet or, as here, a kitchen cupboard.

‘The one in wood is wildly beautiful. The one in plastic is a bit more ...’ says Knud Holscher, again

with that mirthful quiver in the corner of his eye. He deliberately leaves the sentence unfinished, and it's not because he has forgotten where he was going with it, as he does a few times during our conversation: sometimes he skips the intermediate steps, and the listener has to stay alert to follow his train of thought when it veers off on a tangent. Nevertheless, he remembers his main point and underscores it repeatedly: that he feels lucky to have ended up in a profession that was a perfect match for him and his temperament.

A sort of talent

Knud Holscher grew up in Rødby, where his plumber father cast tin soldiers and little warships for him in aluminium. His fleet had 'a neat finish', and Knud sailed his troops across his father's green card table. Knud's father took him along to the building sites where he worked. Among other places he remembers visiting a veterinarian who was having the first floor of his private home refurbished. The architect happened to be Tobias Faber, who later became Knud Holscher's teacher at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, School of Architecture, but what the young Knud mainly noticed at the vet's house was how the builders used plasterboards rather than the timber he was used to seeing. Even at this young age, he had an eye for detail, but since there was only a single architect in Rødby, it did not seem like the most obvious career ambition.

Nevertheless, Knud Holscher was accepted into the Academy in Copenhagen, where he was met with great kindness, as he puts it. 'Perhaps because I had some sort of talent, if you'll pardon me saying so.'

We talk about how you should never have to apologize for your talent, and indeed, it earned him a place in 'The Higher School', a special class for the most promising students. Here he met Arne Jacobsen and was recommended for a job. At Arne Jacobsen's office he was involved in the firm's current project: designing the interiors of the SAS Royal Hotel in Copenhagen.

'As I see it, Arne Jacobsen designed the Swan and the Egg, which were the difficult tasks, and I designed all the other elements that defined the spaces,' says Knud Holscher.

During the project, which included meetings with the master carpenters, for example, people travelled up and down in a construction site lift mounted on the outside of the SAS building. The lift always dropped a few centimetres before it caught hold, and every time, Knud Holscher held his breath and felt that he was in free fall.

'But then I looked at Arne Jacobsen and thought, "If he can hack it, so can I";' he recalls.

The major breakthrough

Knud Holscher became familiar with Arne Jacobsen's thinking, and over the years, he has sought to rationalize what he learned from him.

'He had a masterful grasp of colour and was able to modulate the chairs that served as sculptural elements in the stringent hotel rooms,' he says. That is all he has to say about Arne Jacobsen's approach at this point, before he moves on with a leap in time and space to St. Catherine's College in Oxford, England. Here, Knud Holscher was Arne Jacobsen's head of studio and responsible for the diverse, international project team. Arne Jacobsen knew German, while Knud Holscher spoke English, so the communication with the team went through Knud. After two and a half years in England, Knud and his family returned to Denmark, where he went to work for the architecture firm Krohn & Hartvig Rasmussen, later renamed KHR Architecture. Shortly after joining the firm he was asked to design its proposal for a major architecture competition for the prestigious Odense University project.

'If you win, you could make partner,' he was

told. Knud Holscher won, and the project was his major breakthrough. When asked to describe the project he searches briefly, and in vain, for paper and pen, since he finds it easier to describe things in lines rather than in words.

'It's a lot of squares. It competed with every major architect from all over Scandinavia.'

He does not recall exactly why his proposal won the competition, but as a result, he became a partner and established a separate design department:

Knud Holscher Design. KHR Architecture, too, had its share of large egos.

'I do hope I have managed to steer clear of those kinds of excesses myself. You should always appreciate your employees; they are so essential. You need to acknowledge other people's contributions rather than believing you can do everything on your own,' he says.

The right place at the right time

In fact, Knud Holscher has been able to do most things. Like few others, he has explored every corner of his

Bio – Knud Holscher (1930) trained as an architect at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, School of Architecture. He began his career as an architect in Arne Jacobsen's architecture firm, where he was involved in designing the interior of the SAS hotel in Copenhagen and St. Catherine's College in Oxford, England, among other projects. As a partner in KHR Architecture Knud Holscher designed a range of projects, including Odense University, now renamed the University of Southern Denmark, and Finger B at Copenhagen Airport. He is one of the most award-winning designers in Denmark and has created products – from prams to lamps and signage – for a wide range of clients including Georg Jensen, Ifö, Paustian, Holmegaard, Coloplast, d line and Copenhagen Metro. Knud Holscher also designed his own house in Holte north of Copenhagen, which was built in 1972. He is married to Henny and has three adult children: Tine, who is an artist, Nils, who is an architect, and Rasmus, who is head of the design section of Knud Holscher Design.

profession, perhaps not entirely alone, but a look at his body of work reveals an extremely diverse portfolio, including everything from toilets and door handles to prams and signage systems. This diversity was inspired, in part, by Arne Jacobsen's 'total design' approach; in part he also humbly attributes his wide range to luck.

'I am happy to acknowledge that I was able to work as an architect and a designer because I came into a Danish tradition for drawing things. My daughter is an artist, and that is a much more lonely pursuit. She is not getting all the opportunities I got. I feel that I got a lot for free simply by being in that world. By being in the right place at the right time.'

With big architectural stars on his shoulder, including Odense University and Finger B at Copenhagen Airport, Knud Holscher quickly made his name as one of the most distinguished architects of his time. However, it is his industrial designs that have won him the most accolades. While he was with Arne Jacobsen, he won a competition for sanitary appliances and had his designs put into production by the British firm Adamsez. The toilets received a British Design Award. Once he was back in Denmark,





"If you can make screws and fittings visually appealing, that is what characterizes design, whether it is a college or a cabinet, a toilet or an ostomy bag or a road system with poles and signs to let people know where to turn off if they want to go to Rødby" says Knud Holscher



**‘I am happy to acknowledge that I was able to work as an architect and a designer because I came into a Danish tradition for drawing things.’
– Knud Holscher**

he rang the manufacturer Ifö, initiating a collaboration that would last for more than forty years. The first toilet he designed for Adamsez is still in use at the ground level of the house, while the upstairs toilet has been replaced with the more modern Ifö design.

Prestige of the worst kind

That Knud Holscher is one of the leading modernist architects of his generation is clearly reflected in the house in Holte. It almost looks as if it had been designed yesterday – by one of the leading contemporary architects. The now fifty-year-old building set new standards, which have only recently gained popular acclaim. When it was built it was truly innovative. However, it was a challenge to design one’s own home, and according to Knud Holscher, it was ‘prestige of the worst kind’. Unrestrained by a client’s taste, he was able to demonstrate the full range of his talent. Here, he could truly shine and test all the ideas that were not *comme il faut* in contemporary architecture.

He points to the large concrete elements in the ceiling and explains that he discovered them when his colleague Max Brüel used them in a church.

‘I like the look and the simplicity of the principle. It was going to be a large house,’ he said, considering that the cast concrete slabs were generally used as standard elements in industry and thus had a certain scale.

Henny adds, ‘It was a chance to try things you wouldn’t do for others. The design is so unique you couldn’t impose it on anyone else, even if you thought you had a good idea.’

The idea was to create a spacious feel and, importantly, to avoid corridors lined with cabinets, with three rooms in a row. Knud Holscher snorts with contempt.

‘So bloody boring. The spatial distribution here is a little more exciting, around a glazed room where we played table tennis and played with model trains,’ he explains about the hub of the ‘children’s section’ with the three identical rooms: a built-in plank bed,

a bookcase and a desk. At the time, the rooms were ironically referred to as the ‘cells’.

Did the house stand out in its time?

Knud: ‘I hope so.’

Henny: ‘That’s safe to say. Many people who visited have said, “What an interesting house, but we could never live like that.” Many think it’s too advanced.’ Knud: ‘You can walk round stark naked in the bedroom, even if are three people sitting in the kitchen in a suit and tie. The possibility exists. We have held large parties here. The engineer said we couldn’t have forty people dancing in step on the mezzanine – he wasn’t sure the concrete deck would be strong enough.’

Cutting to the bone

The durability and timelessness of Knud Holscher’s design stem from his philosophy of cutting to the bone and finding the most minimalist form, coupled with assigning equal emphasis to aesthetics and function.

‘If you can make screws and fittings visually appealing, that is what characterizes design, whether it is a college or a cabinet, a toilet or an ostomy bag for Coloplast or a road system with poles and signs to let people know where to turn off if they want to go to Rødby,’ says Knud Holscher, adding

‘That is what it’s all about. I use a toilet a couple of times a day. It is a pleasure that it’s functional. And that it looks beautiful.’

He would like to be remembered for mastering both big and small design tasks.

‘My architectural hardware is its own little world,’ – he cups his hand as if he had the world in the palm of his hand – ‘and Odense University is from here to the moon. I have had a wildly privileged life, because I have enjoyed my work. There have been times when I came home late. Isn’t that right?’ he says and turns to Henny, who simply replies,

‘You could say that again.’

Have they turned to each other professionally? She never interfered in his work but did offer her opinion in the design of their shared home. It was none of her business what Odense University should look

like, as she puts it. ‘Henny has been a strong partner. I just gave a speech to the family; there are thirteen of us in total. We have no black sheep, everyone is in good health. I have an amazing wife who, when we were going to Oxford to oversee the St Catherine’s College project, came along without hesitation. She was pregnant and would be giving birth in England. She has been so incredibly strong. ‘If you have something good to say about someone, you have to remember to say it, he thinks. He has appreciated every single compliment he has received over the years. Erik Christian Sørensen, whom Knud Holscher met at the School of Architecture, wrote in one of his books, ‘To Knud Holscher, whom I admire’. ‘He was a strong personality and my teacher over the years. I designed the upper part of Østerport Hotel while I was working for him. I never figured I should get the credit for that. That’s impressive. Arne Jacobsen would never have done that. There are different ways of handling yourself in a world where everyone wants to be famous.’

In design and architecture, you need to keep your eye on the ball, not on the player, he thinks.

‘I would like to advertise myself as a democratically minded personality,’ he says and remembers one compliment that looms large in his mind: after winning the competition for Odense University, he was at the Academy one day, to teach. Here he passed Professor of Architecture Viggo Møller-Jensen, who literally bowed down before him.

‘He bowed so deeply that his head almost touched the ground. Then he continued on his way. A gesture like that helps everything grow.’

His gaze moves through the large glazed section into the atrium garden, where a well-trimmed cherry tree is in full bloom with luminous, pink blossoms. Then he says, ‘I think my life has been so wonderful.’

One name has kept popping up in design circles in recent years. He is said to be one of the greats but also someone who tends to avoid the limelight. Now, however, several of his furniture projects have been put into production by the Danish manufacturer A. Petersen. It is clear to see that there is great respect for the man who, as the only person, was allowed to work for and run the design studio of Poul Kjærholm, in addition to teaching at the Royal Danish Academy – School of Architecture for nearly a lifetime. We visited architect Dan Svarth in his home and studio in Copenhagen's Østerbro district.

AT HOME WITH DAN SVARTH

Designer of Sofa ^(DS), Rocking Chair ^(DS),
Bookkeeper ^(DS), Table ^(DS), Wire Chair ^(DS), Tube Chair ^(DS),
Tube Table ^(DS) and Wooden Chair ^(DS)

By Sofie Brünner
Photo Enok Holsegård

Dan Svarth looks surprised as he opens the door, and for a moment I worry that I got the date wrong. Nevertheless, I am waved into a long hallway as he mumbles something about being instructed that he simply MUST let me visit, even though he sounds fairly sceptical of the whole idea. On the walls hang large plaster casts of ancient Egyptian friezes and ornaments.

Dan continues into the living room, only to come to a stop in the middle of it, as the treasure chamber of a room begins to open before my eyes. Classic Herman Miller furniture stands side by side with Dan's own designs.

A wealth of historical artefacts and objects cover most of the surfaces, testimony to Dan's passionate interest in the golden age of Egyptian furniture design. The walls are covered with paintings, drawings and tapestries, the latter created by Dan's wife, textile designer Anet Brusgaard.

He seems somewhat uneasy about the visit but relaxes slightly when asked about his time at the Academy (the Royal Danish Academy – School of Architecture in Copenhagen), where he enrolled as a student in 1968 and, directly after finishing his education, continued as a teacher until 2006.

'The Academy was no kindergarten. It was up to you to decide if you wanted to engage or not. Whether you felt you had anything sufficiently important to bring forth to the professors. If you didn't, there was no reason to waste their time, and they would make sure to let you know. Then you could go home and rethink. That's also why many students didn't much like the Academy – at least not the Department of Furniture Design.'

The study of architecture during the 1970s was quite different from what it is now. Studying was mostly self-directed by the individual students, and it did not have the current regular structure of a three-year bachelor's degree followed by a two-year master's. Back then, you had to humbly request permission from your professor to be allowed to spread your wings, after which it was up to the professor whether you would be allowed to embark on your final assignment, or whether you might simply be notified that you were not yet ready but were to kindly continue your studies without the promise of a fixed end date. In the worst case, you might be told there was no reason for you to continue, Dan recalls.

This brought to mind some of the toe-curling stories in circulation at the Academy when I was a student there myself, including ones featuring the



Many years ago, Dan established a drawing office and workshop, separated by shelving units, underneath his living room. At the desk he designs new furniture or paints abstract paintings, as can be seen at the top of the floating shelf.



The long space, which includes both the living and dining room, is divided up by bookcases on wheels. The sofa and the coffee tables are designed by Dan. The lounge chair was created by Charles & Ray Eames for Herman Miller.

**‘If culture is not renewed, it has no meaning.’
– Dan Svarth**

architect Poul Kjærholm, one of the most prominent professors of his time and known for being particularly uncompromising – but that is about as far as I get before Dan interjects:

‘Well, you have to be! Compromises lead nowhere. In reality, he was great. He has been completely misunderstood.’

Dan says that last sentence more to himself, as he has already turned his back on me and is heading towards the stairs in the back of the living room, which lead downstairs to his drawing office and workshop. In this room, which is as large as the combined living and dining room upstairs, there are towering stacks of books, drawings and hundreds of scale model chairs.

A central desk is placed on top of a classic filing cabinet. Above hangs a floating shelf with even

more models. Behind a partition made of bookcases lies Dan’s workshop, where he creates meticulously detailed chair models, amongst other things.

‘After some years at the Academy, I asked Poul [Kjærholm] whether I might be allowed to graduate. He didn’t see the point. He advised me to get out and design some furniture. Just a few days later, he rang me to ask if I would like to teach at the Academy one day a week. Shortly afterwards, I also began to work at his drawing office,’ says Dan.

Perhaps it is the well-worn PK11 chair, designed by Kjærholm, pushed in under a small table along the wall that brings him back to the story.

‘I took over his studio after some time. He didn’t feel like drawing, which I can certainly understand. It’s easier to explain what you want, and where you want to go, and then get others to draw it. That allows you to maintain the wider perspective. You don’t get lost in the details. That’s what you see in the TV programme Danmarks Næste Klassiker (Denmark’s Next Classic), where the participants lose themselves in details. Poul didn’t care for that. Lucky thing, because otherwise everything would get derailed.’

I notice a twinkle in Dan’s eye as he looks up and catches my gaze. Now I am the one who is surprised that the architect is referencing the Danish

broadcasting corporation DR’s recent reality TV series, in which furniture designers compete to create a new furniture classic in just three weeks.

‘How about a cup of coffee?’ he suggests, jovially. As we head up the stairs and into the kitchen, Dan returns to the topic of his time with Kjærholm.

‘If you didn’t understand the tone, the importance, the character of the work, you couldn’t work for him. But I never had any problems understanding what Poul wanted to achieve.’

In an attempt to understand the size of the iconic architect’s design studio, I ask about the other employees. ‘Well, it was just me!’

Seated at the kitchen table with a cup of black coffee in front of me, my eye is drawn to the impressive plaster casts adorning the walls.

‘I believe you’re dependent on the things that happened in the past. It’s important to be mindful of history. I myself am very dependent on it, and almost always use something from the past as my starting point. Not just that of other colleagues. I mean real history. Chinese, Egyptian, Roman, Spanish and so forth. You see a piece of furniture, and then you try to improve it. To refine it,’ says Dan.

Alongside his nearly 40 years at the Academy and in Poul Kjærholm’s office, Dan also worked on designs of his own, as evidenced by the impressive collection of models in the basement. Only a few of his designs have been put into production, until Anders Petersen from A. Petersen laid eyes on this hidden treasure trove just over five years ago. Since then, he has put both new and older designs by Dan into production. While a sofa, a rocking chair and a number of tables are new designs, the Wire Chair, which will be launched in the near future, was originally designed in 1972.

‘I don’t get tired of a design, but I can tell that it’s old. It was a different time. Back then, all the architects had a fairly similar design expression. We drew inspiration from each other and tried to do better. We pushed each other in this direction or that. But it isn’t like that anymore. That relationship isn’t there anymore. Now, it points in all directions.’

Was it better back then?

‘I couldn’t say whether it was better, but it was better for the art of furniture making. That is basically non-existent today. When it becomes really commercialized, it takes on a completely different character. It’s like there is no relationship there anymore. Culture is based on refining things, but people don’t think about that in design anymore.’

Why do you think that is?

‘There are no guidelines anymore. People don’t know in which direction to go. And then the design begins to loosen. It’s common to talk about whether something is beautiful. But what is beautiful? That is a matter of judgement. Of course, you can develop your own criteria and make them sublime in many ways. But no one does that anymore, now that the materials and techniques can do whatever you want them to.’

When you design a new piece of furniture today, is it still for the sake of improving it?

‘I definitely aim to do as well as I can. And that’s why I can’t create anything in three weeks, as you see in Danmarks Næste Klassiker, for example. I take much longer. I hang it up and observe it for a long time. Then I take it down and do some more work on it, and then I hang it up again. It continues like that for a long time.’

Do we even need more chairs?

‘No ... but that’s what’s so great about culture. It changes. If culture is not renewed, it has no meaning.’ That last sentence fills the ensuing silence in the room, before Dan lets out a laugh.

‘Oddly, when we speak about chairs, we rarely speak of renewal. But look at stage plays, for example. Those are renewed continually, every time a classic is performed anew. That’s what I mean by striving to refine a piece of furniture.’

Over the past 35 years, Dan has been conducting a comprehensive research project dealing with the earliest known furniture designs from ancient Egypt, starting from around 3000 BCE. A time when art, architecture and crafts underwent explosive development.

‘Consider the Egyptians. They invented the reclining backrest. The lounge chair, an extraordinary invention! And perhaps you’re thinking, “settle down, you old fool”, but wasn’t that radical? And when they began to carve the back leg so it was narrower where it connects with the backrest, that was exclusively for the sake of appearance. Otherwise it would look clumsy. It is a purely aesthetic experience.’

Is it okay to design exclusively with aesthetics in mind?

‘Yes, of course! But you shouldn’t talk about it too much.’ We share a laugh, as we both know that if there is one thing that is prohibited at the Academy, this is it. Even though it seems the most natural thing in the world when one is born with an eye for visual expression.

Part of Dan’s research involved visits to historical museums the world over, where he carefully studied and recorded furniture from Egyptian tombs. Based on these studies, he created perfectly detailed 1:5 scale models of all the chairs known from ancient Egypt. The more than 100 models were all created in the workshop under Dan’s home.

‘It is pure style. The Egyptian priests who were involved in developing these chairs must have been great aesthetes. They knew exactly what they were doing. Old things can certainly feel relevant. Their sense of texture or form can be so unique,’ says Dan.

That his comprehensive work with the models, apart from being immortalized in the reference work First Movers, would also end up as an exhibition, in 2019, at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, which possesses the most comprehensive collection of these exact pieces of furniture, is baffling to Dan. It seems completely out of the question that he would have his work exhibited at one of the world’s most renowned historical museums, but Dan’s body of work is full of surprises and accolades. He has been able to give back to history what it has given him. Almost a form of symbiosis.

‘At the Academy, we always believed that culture should be renewed. It isn’t all on you – you don’t stand alone in the world. We stand together.’



The chairs and dining table were both designed by Dan. The latter was recently put into production by A. Petersen. The Hanging Lamp is a Gerrit Rietveld design, and the totem-like sculpture in white is one of Dan's early works. The works on the wall are by Lise Malinovsky.



Work in the cabinetmaking and upholstery workshops ranges from the development of prototypes and the production of new furniture to the renovation of old pieces. Just as there are new relevant furniture ideas to be developed, it is also meaningful to repair and reuse with respect for materials and resources.

When the cabinetmaker and the upholsterer are busy in the workshops, you are welcome to look in and observe the process.

It is important to get up close to understand the many steps all items of furniture to go through before they are finished and ready for use. All the templates for the many elements that make up the base frame of the Dan Svarth sofa hang on the wall.

A. Petersen
Raffinaderivej 20, K2
DK-2300 Copenhagen

contact@apetersen.dk
apetersen.dk

FB: facebook.com/apetersen.dk
IG: @apetersen_collection

The showroom and workshops
are open by appointment.

Photos by Enok Holsegård
and Kim Høltermand

We make reservations
for printing errors.