



Pretzel Chair, George Nelson, 1952

Anniversary Edition 2008

George Nelson (1908–1986) numbers among the most important and influential figures in American design during the second half of the twentieth century. Demonstrating a remarkable range of talents, Nelson was active in many areas – as a product designer and graphic artist, as an architect and exhibition designer, and as a successful manager and design promoter. He also produced an extensive body of publications dealing with topics of design theory and criticism that influenced the international discourse on design and architecture for several decades.

In the 1950s, George Nelson and his New York office developed an individual and expressive range of seating pieces, several of which have long since achieved classic status. In 1952, even before the famous Coconut Chair or the Marshmallow Sofa, Nelson designed a chair made out of bent wood that was initially referred to, simply, as the “Laminated Chair”. The bold yet elegant curve of the single wooden piece forming the back and armrests soon inspired the nickname “Pretzel Chair”. Bent laminated wood is used not only for the backrest and its twin supports, but also for the four legs that cross underneath the seat. The downward taper of the legs contributes to the chair’s slender appearance. Due to insufficient manufacturing techniques, the Pretzel Chair was removed from the market after only a few years, which makes it highly valued among collectors today.

"Light weight, transparency and an elegant silhouette" were essential qualities that a chair should have, according to George Nelson. They are united in the Pretzel Chair. On the occasion of George Nelson's 100th birthday, Vitra is re-introducing the Pretzel Chair – which numbers among the most famous designs by Nelson – in a limited Anniversary Edition of 1000 pieces.