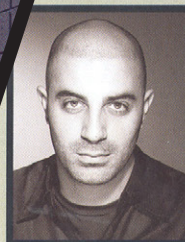


PICK CHAIR by STUDIO DROR for BBB EMMEBONACINA



Dror Benshetrit runs a multi-disciplinary design studio in New York. He specialises in product design, interior architecture, graphic design and creative consulting. He studied at the Design Academy in Eindhoven and the Center for Art Education at the Tel Aviv Museum of Arts

www.bbhemmebonacina.com
www.studiodror.com

The cantilever chair has an illustrious history. Mart Stam, Marcel Breuer and Mies van der Rohe were the pioneers of the concept back in the Twenties. Fast forward several decades and you find Verner Panton messing about with injection moulding to perfect his Pop take on the theme, the iconic Panton chair. That's a lot to live up to, without attempting to add your own, complex, twist to the genre.

With no back legs to speak of, the cantilever chair was difficult enough to pull off in the first place. It relies completely on the materials used to stabilise it (which is where tubular steel came in very handy), but Israeli-born designer Dror Benshetrit has further complicated matters by giving his chair a dual function.

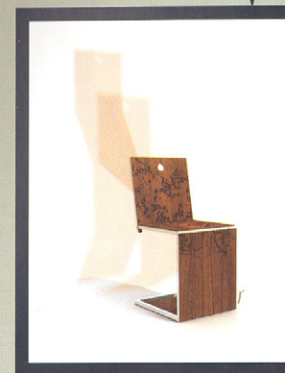
The Pick chair, manufactured by Italian firm BBB emmebonacina, is, he says, the very first foldable cantilever chair. And, certainly, we've never seen one that can be hung flat against a wall before, doubling up as an artwork.

'The biggest challenge was to make a cantilever shape, but with the lightest structure possible. It took us almost four years to finalise because of this,' says Benshetrit. A prototype was produced last year with clunky stainless-steel reinforced hinges, but it proved too heavy to lift on to the wall. He has now settled for an aluminium frame that is suitably light but tough enough

to withstand the constant change of use. The hinges were perfected after Benshetrit struck upon a mechanism that locks into place, giving the design stability both as chair and in its flat form, as a 2D artwork.

Working out of his studio in New York, Studio Dror, Benshetrit is dedicated to pushing the boundaries of form and function. Another of his designs, Folding Table, also for BBB emmebonacina, uses the same kind of complex mechanisms as Pick, but the latter has taken off already, largely thanks to its versatility. Not only can it be helpfully hung up out of the way when not in use (the idea for the chair came about when Benshetrit was living in a very small apartment where the wasn't even enough closet space to fit a fold-away chair) but it is also flexible in terms of finishes.

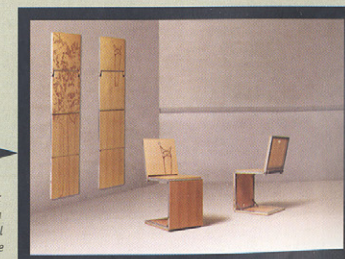
The current examples feature sleek panels in plywood, but there are endless possibilities as they simply clip on and off the frame. 'Many other materials can be used, including plastic,' says Benshetrit. 'We are working on different colour panels, and they can even have graphics on them.' The branding opportunities offered by Pick have already been recognised by an American footwear company which has ordered several chairs for its store in Manhattan, while Italian publisher Mondadori has ordered 100 chairs to assist in its centenary celebrations. 58



Images of trees that inspired the chair are laser-cut into 6mm-thick plywood panels



Dror Benshetrit works on an early version of the Pick chair in his New York studio in 2002



The final product can be hung as a panel on the wall or folded to make a chair