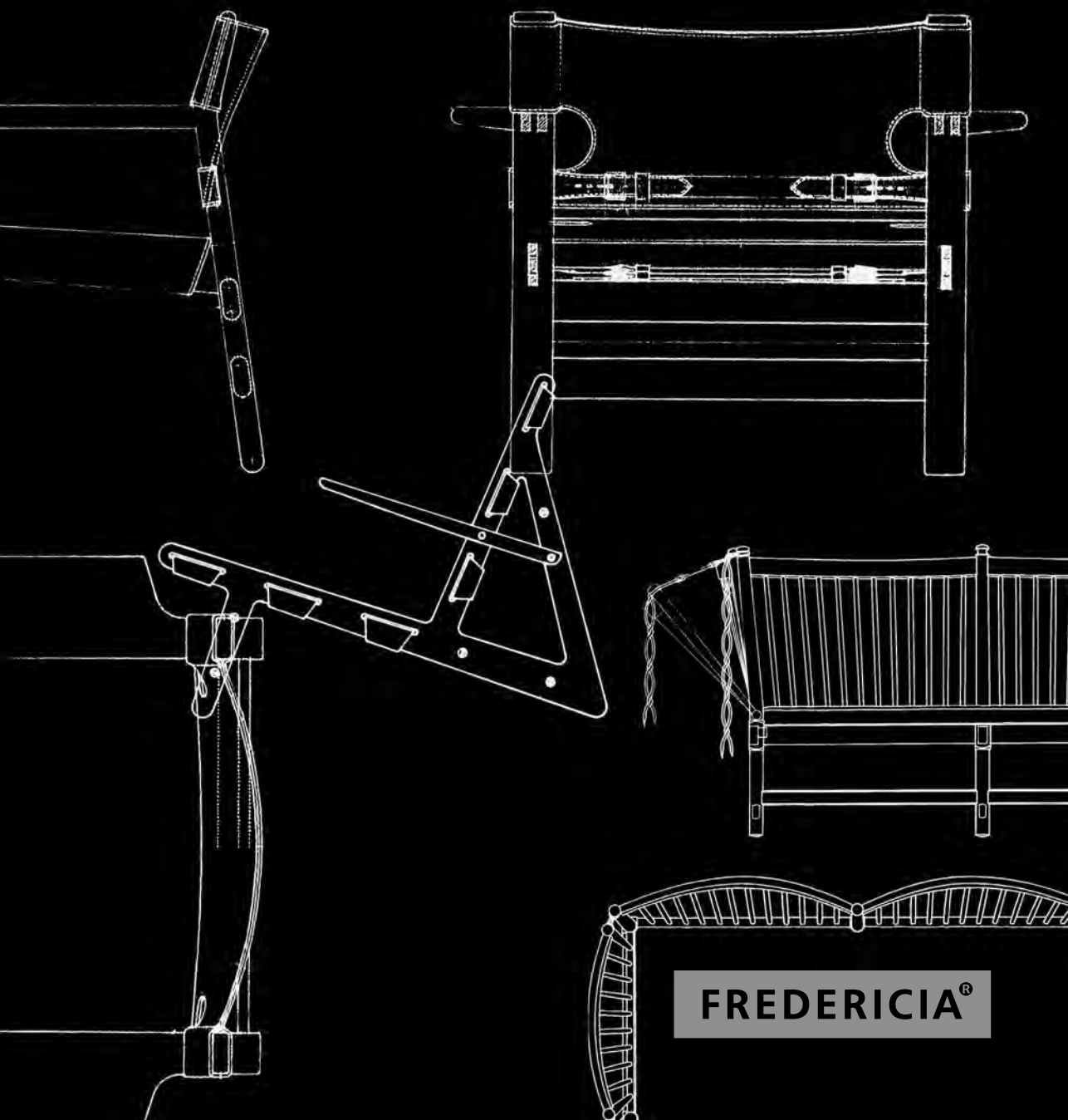
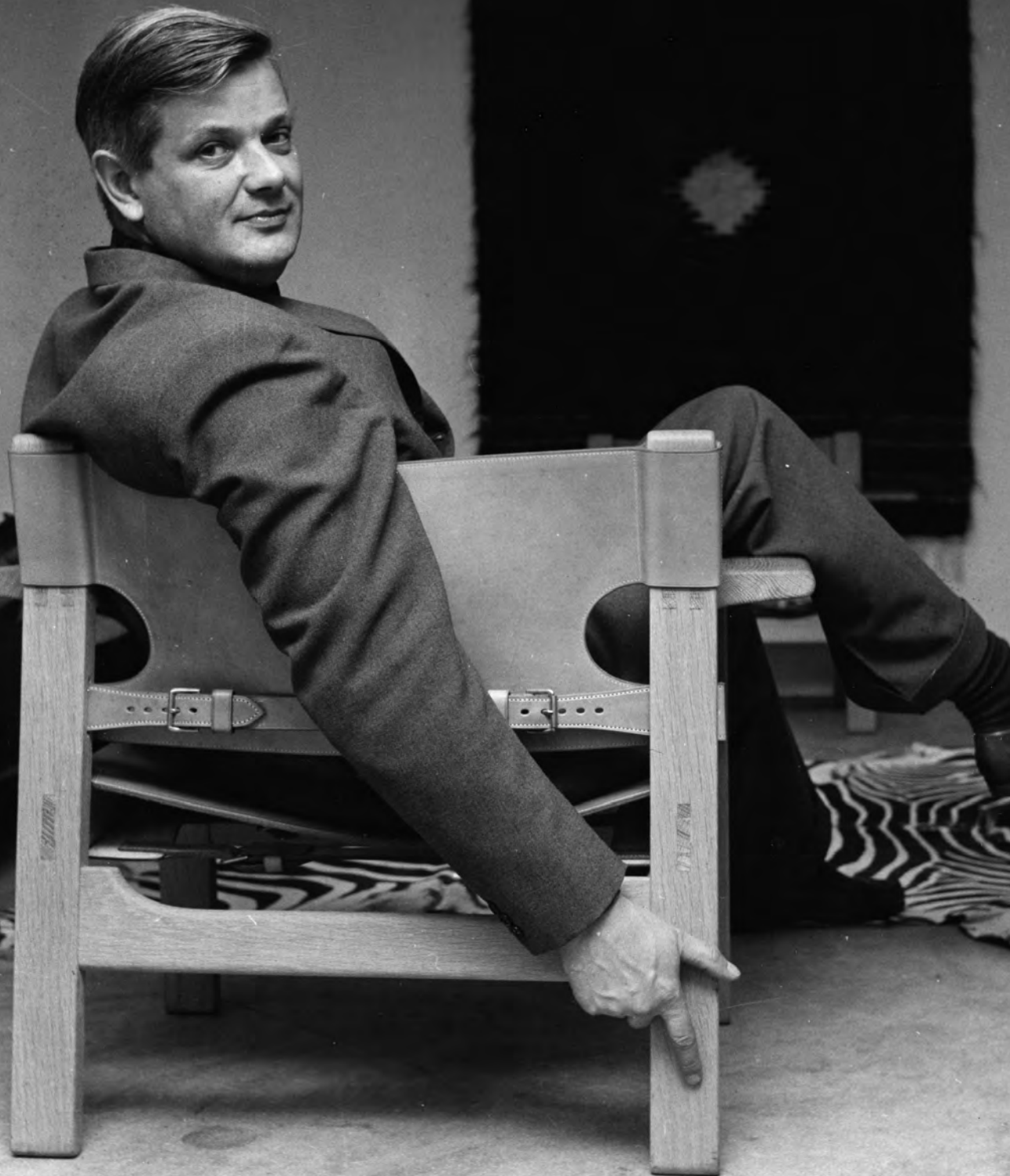


MOGENSEN 100 YEARS



FREDERICIA®

Børge Mogensen 1914–1972



MOGENSEN 100 YEARS

Børge Mogensen was born in Aalborg, Denmark in 1914 and embarked upon his career in the world of design as a cabinetmaker in 1934, before entering the Copenhagen School of Arts and Crafts in 1936. It was there that he studied under his mentor, Kaare Klint, who he would work extensively with in his early years, before progressing to the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, from which he graduated in 1942. It was evident from early on that Mogensen was an extremely productive and ambitious person, as he became head of design at FDB soon after graduation, as well as simultaneously spending several years as Kaare Klint's teaching assistant at his alma mater, the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, before establishing his own design studio in 1950.

'Functional' is the word which best describes Børge Mogensen's design. The majority of his furniture was designed with industrial production in mind and is characterized by strong and simple lines. His method of scientifically studying measurements for everyday objects such as clothing and household utensils in order to establish protocols for furniture always resulted in genius in the finished product. Scholars of Danish Modern often refer to Mogensen's methods in their studies and written works.

Over the course of his life, Mogensen created hundreds of designs, many of which came to him at all hours of the day and night, which prompted him to grab a pen and sketch on the backs of envelopes, cigarette packets, napkins, etc. Other than receiving the Eckersbergs Medaille 1950, Mogensen was really only recognised for awards later in life, winning the Furniture Prize in 1971 together with Andreas Graversen, and the C.F. Hansens Medaille and the distinction of Honorary Royal Designer for Industry in London 1972. He died in the same year, only 58 years old, although his spirit continues to be celebrated not just in the year of his 100th anniversary, but will be for many more generations to come.

BØRGE MOGENSEN
WAS OFTEN
CRITICISED FOR
STUBBORNLY
INSISTING ON
TRADITION INSTEAD
OF EXPLORING NEW
MATERIALS, METHODS
AND TRENDS



THANKFULLY BØRGE NEVER GAVE A DAMN

The Spanish Chair

Børge Mogensen's home







Børge Mogensen's summer residence

JASPER MORRISON ON BØRGE MOGENSEN



It's interesting that a designer of Børge Mogensen's talent should be such a well kept secret. As a design student I knew about Jacobsen, Wegner, Kjærholm, Panton and some others, but not Mogensen.

It was not until relatively recently that I found out that he designed so many of the classic Danish furniture pieces that I admired. Many of his designs had infiltrated my reservoir of references without my being aware of their author. If I ask myself how this could have happened the only answer I can find is that Mogensen designs are intentionally discrete, he didn't set out to design anything eye catching or iconic, although some of his designs are quite radical. I believe that's the clue to understanding and appreciating the quality of his design. It's not so much about the chair or the table as objects, though they are certainly beautiful, but about the effect they will have on their environment. You need only look at photos of Mogensen's own home to appreciate how skillful he was at tuning the architecture and interior design to amplify the effect of his designs.

Discrete objects are more successful in building good atmosphere than eye catching ones. It took me a long time and a lot of effort to understand that, and part of the understanding involved the making an exhibition called Super Normal, which I curated with Naoto Fukasawa in 2006. Looking at his work now I think Mogensen was instinctively Super Normal, he understood the beauty of very normal things and appreciated how they benefitted everyday life. He took a lot of care in refining and simplifying the lines of his designs to the point where the spirit of the object becomes more evident than the form. I believe that's what design is all about and also why his designs are so enduring.

J39

14

THE PEOPLE'S CHAIR

It is believed that it was a surplus of wooden pins and dowels in the factory stores that led Børge Mogensen to design J39 in 1947. Perhaps that was a fortunate coincidence, as today it is one of Denmark's most sold wooden chairs, and has been in uninterrupted production ever since it was launched.

J39 is the obvious choice for everything from canteens to conference halls, churches to private homes, and is popularly known as the People's Chair. This simple, yet unique chair was

inspired by Mogensen's mentor, Kaare Klint, as well as American Shaker furniture. The curved backrest and hand-woven seat make the J39 a comfortable dining chair in an aesthetically pleasing quality.

The subtle design language means that it can be added to an existing interior, or serve as a room's visual hub. J39 has a solid beech or oak frame; in untreated, soaped, lacquered, or black or white painted finishes, and seat corded with black or natural paper yarn.



'The People's Chair' is truly deserving of its name – it is one of the most sold wooden chairs in Denmark.

To this day, the J39 seat is corded
by hand. One chair requires 144
metres of paper cord.





Since the J39 was introduced, the seat height has been raised 2 centimetres, as people today are taller on average than they were in 1947.

THE LUXURY OF MODESTY



Christian Holmsted Olsen, head of collections and exhibitions at Design Museum Denmark speaks of Børge Mogensen as a 'bone dry' designer, a stubborn disciple of Kaare Klint's design ideals, especially in the treatment of wood so that the owner of the furniture could appreciate not just the design, but also the tree from which it came from.

"In keeping with this tradition, FREDERICIA has become one of the crown jewels of Danish design", says Olesen. "From the 1950s, when FREDERICIA started working with Børge Mogensen, Danish furniture design has become what us Danes are best known for internationally in the twentieth century. There is no published work on design that doesn't feature Denmark, along with Børge Mogensen and FREDERICIA's contribution to the establishment of modern Danish design".

"In contrast to FREDERICA's design principles, where they choose new designs based on gut feeling, Mogensen would never speak about the subjective human mentality, he referred exclusively to the objective physical proportions of a person when he worked on a design. It was this process that made Mogensen known as a very dry designer. He stood for the outspokenly frank, the even keeled, feet planted firmly on the ground, which is the same philosophies and traditions that the Shakers stood for in their furniture design, which Mogensen took inspiration from".

"It was this matter-of-fact outlook that made Børge Mogensen's furniture border on the anonymous, which is precisely what made it also very noble. Mogensen's work came wholly from studying the type of object he was creating – how could he refine an older object of the same type into a better version. It was this focus that created his unique relationship with furniture design".

"A quote from Mogensen's mentor, Kaare

says that a designer 'stands on the shoulders of others' in creating new designs, which is evident in Børge's J39 chair in which he found inspiration in Klint's own church chairs. Klint himself was influenced by the old church chairs from the Middle Ages. So when Jasper Morrison modeled the Trattoria chair after the J39, with a plastic seat and back that could be removed for shipping ease, he was also standing on the shoulders of his predecessors, both as an attempt at improvement and a tribute to Mogensen at the same time, as well as proving a love for a chair that is actually already more than 100 years old".

"Børge Mogensen did not have the recognition that he deserved in the heyday of Danish design, but he will get his renaissance. FREDERICA has a finger on the pulse of global trends, and the world's demand for quality materials, modest luxury, and attention to detail all but guarantees that Mogensen's time is fast approaching".



In the 1940s, the trend was to craft furniture from expensive imported Cuban mahogany, Burma teak, and Brazilian rosewood. Børge felt that this was ostentatious and unnecessary, and felt that the Danish designers should be using Nordic woods instead. Beech, which was in generous local supply was one of his favourites, as well as oak, which turned out to be instinctively genius, as no other woods patinates as beautifully as oak.

Thomas Graversen



Børge Mogensen was a very productive man during his short life, with hundreds of designs to his credit. Below are models which are today produced by FREDERICIA.

J49

1944

J39

1947

C18 table

52



1789 The Spokeback Sofa

1945

2229 The Hunting Chair

1950



No.1 Sofa
1955

The Søborg Chair
1952

3171 Bench
3236 Chair
1956

2226 The Spanish Chair

1958

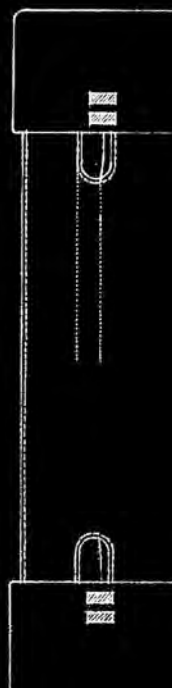
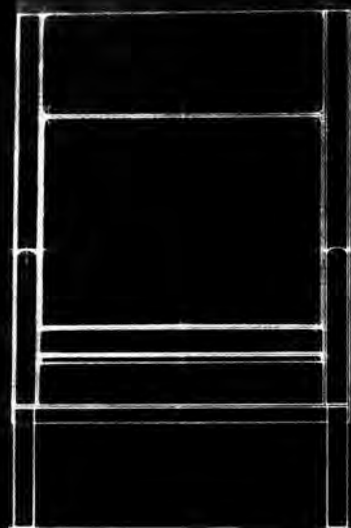
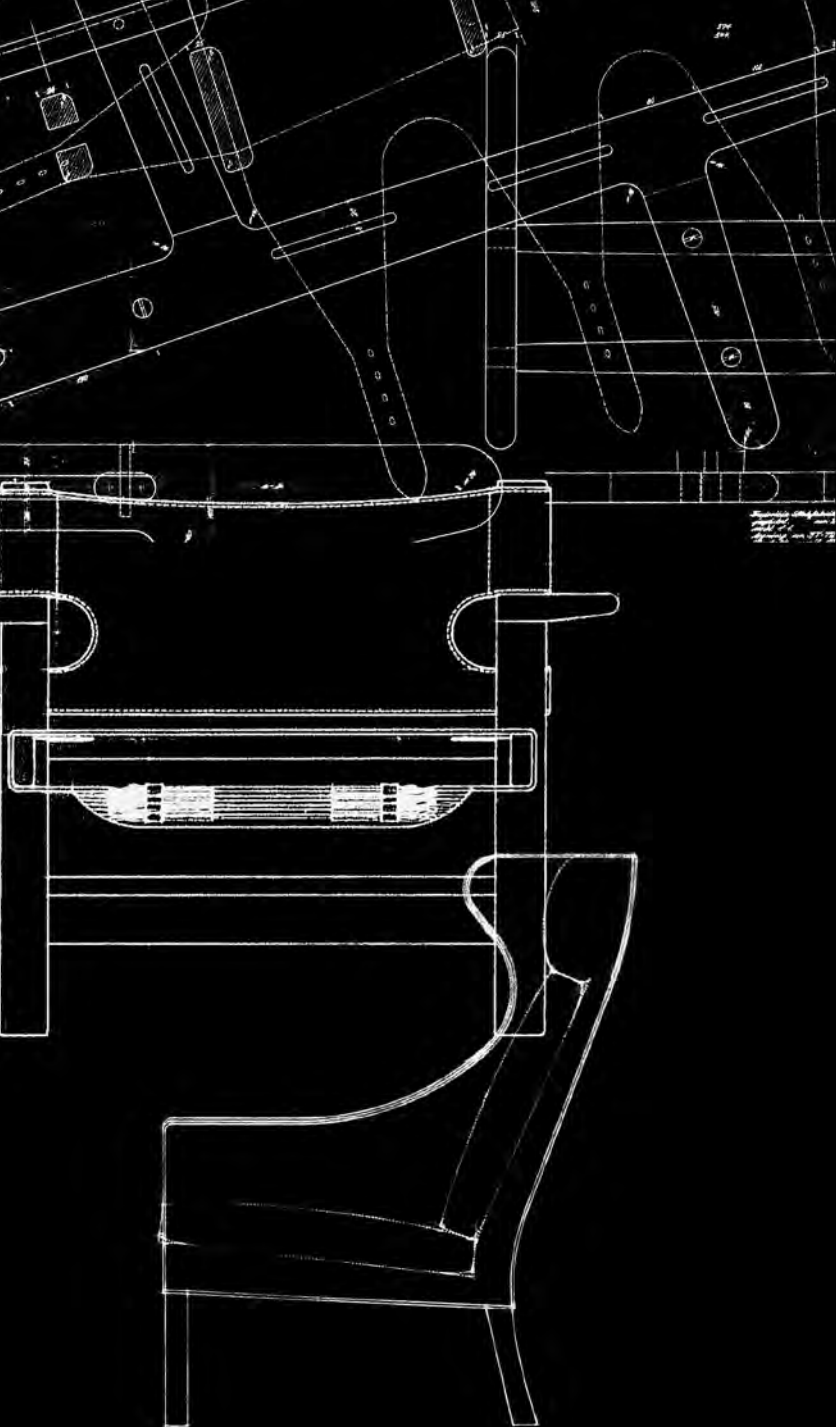


2213

1962



2002, 2204



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