

1931



S 43

THONET

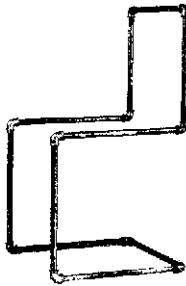
Design Mart Stam





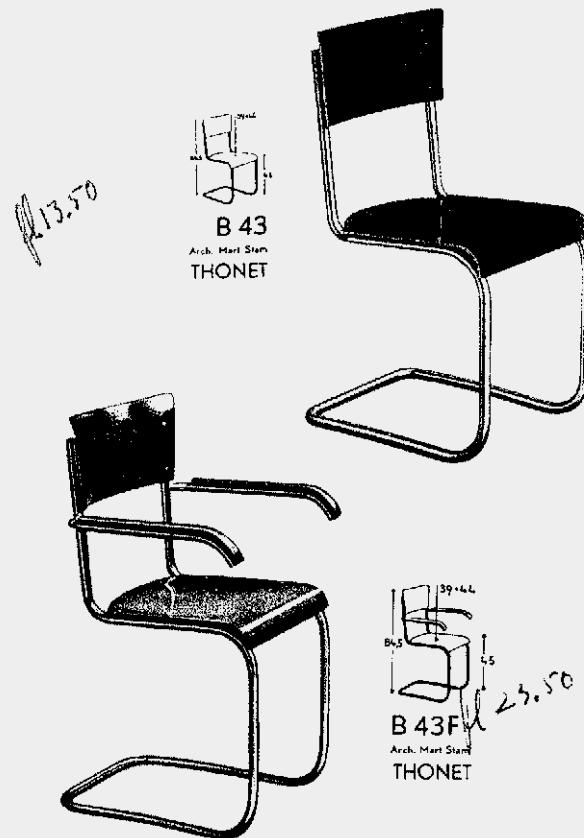
Mart Stam, born 1899 in Purmerend in the Netherlands, was among the leaders of Modern Architecture and a pioneer in contemporary furniture design. He attracted much attention in 1927 with his architectural contribution to the Weißenhof project in Stuttgart both as an architect and as a designer experimenting with tubular steel. In 1928 and 1929 he worked as an architect in Frankfurt, where he helped build the Hellerhof housing estate, among other projects. At the same time he served as a guest lecturer at the Bauhaus, teaching elementary construction theory and urban planning. From 1930 to 1934, Mart Stam was active in Russia and other countries; he subsequently worked as an architect in Amsterdam until 1948. In 1939 he assumed the top position at the Academy of Arts and Crafts in Amsterdam, and in 1950 he was named director of the Conservatory for Applied Art in Berlin-Weißensee. He returned to Amsterdam in 1953 but emigrated to Switzerland in 1977, where he died on February 23, 1986, in Goldach.

Like sitting on air: Mart Stam first introduced his pioneering »chair with no rear legs« at the opening of the Weißenhof project in Stuttgart in 1927. He had begun experimenting with gas pipes one year earlier,

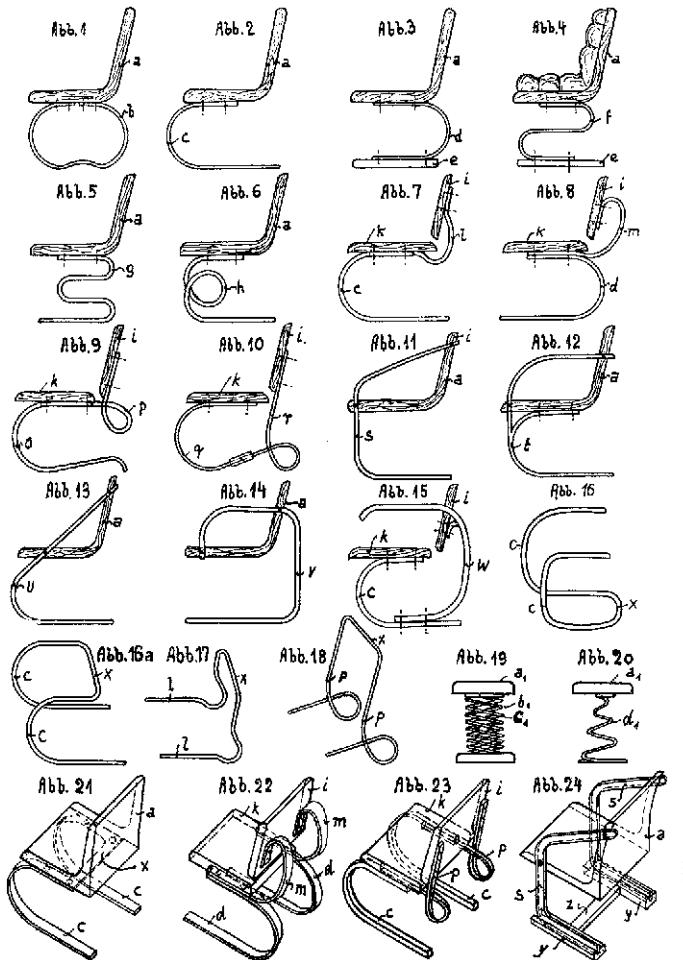


Gas pipe chair, 1926

and the introduction of his prototype revolutionised modern furniture design. At the time, Stam was not yet interested in the bobbing effect achieved with cold-bent steel tubing. Rather, it was the simple, unornamented design that captured his attention and that fit so perfectly the modern architecture of the day. The »S 43«, a variation of this design, was introduced in 1931. The design combined clarity of form and aesthetic economy of construction with the advantage of improved comfort: The comfortable »free-swinging« or bobbing effect, which made opulent cushioning totally unnecessary, was said to feel like »sitting on air«.



Thonet sales catalogue, 1933



Utility model drawing, 1929

A chair must have four legs. For many years, this was considered a fundamental truth of western civilization. But this belief changed radically with the development of the cantilevered tubular steel chair. In the 1920s, many designers tried their hand at this newly discovered principle, including the American Harry E. Nolan and Mies van der Rohe, who patented a cantilever model of his own in 1927. A long battle for patents and creative rights ensued. In 1932, Mart Stam was awarded the artistic copyright for the strictly cubic »chair with no rear legs«. Today, Thonet owns these rights.

S 43



S 43 F



Its discreet elegance of form makes the »S43« a design that epitomised the very spirit of modernity – and it also typifies the pursuit of contemporary industrial design culture that is evident throughout the history of Gebrüder Thonet GmbH of Frankenberg, Germany. The »S43« has played an important role in Thonet's collection of tubular steel furniture for more than 70 years now. It is still being produced in Frankenberg with the care and attention to quality that befit a classic 20th-century design.

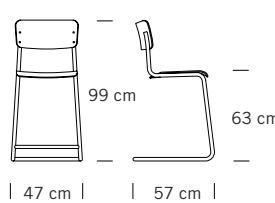




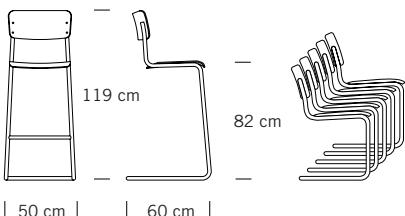
S 43 is available with or without armrests, as stackable chairs, as bar stools and as children's chairs. The frame is chrome-plated or powder-coated. Seat and backrest are available in natural beech or lacquered in black, anthracite, white, or red - also available in an upholstered version as S 43 PV.



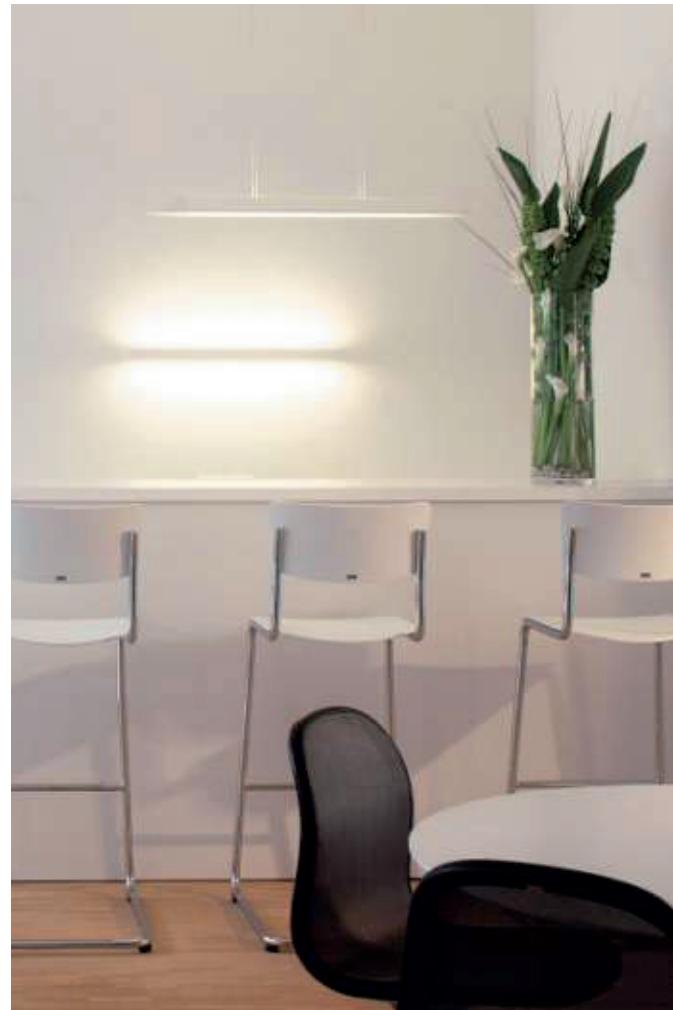
S 43 HT



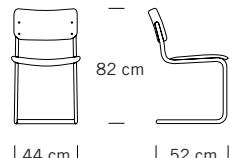
S 43 H



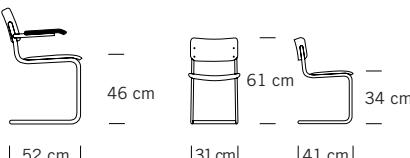
S 43 ST



S 43



S 43 F



S 43 K

A milestone in industrial furniture production. The technological innovation of cold-bent, resilient steel tubing – comparable to Michael Thonet's discovery in the 19th century that it is possible to curve wood – led the pioneer Mart Stam to produce a bold, trend-setting design, which in turn inspired Marcel Breuer and Mies van der Rohe to make further developments.

The ensuing perfection of the new construction principle – within the context of formal restraint demanded by the Bauhaus school and the modern architectural theory of the day – was another important component that had a major influence on the history of modern furniture design



Ludwig Mies van der Rohe 1927



Mart Stam 1926

1929/30 Thonet



Marcel Breuer 1929/30 Artistic copyright Mart Stam



Hans Luckhardt 1931

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