



# SITTING PRETTY: THE CHAIR RE-ENVISIONED

Thursday, June 21–Sunday, August 12, 2018  
Ruth C. Horton Gallery, Miles C. Horton Jr. Gallery, and  
Sherwood Payne Quillen '71 Reception Gallery

MOSS  
ARTS  
CENTER

Roger Atkins, Alexander Bannan, David Bonhoff, Bruce Bradford, Stoel Burrowes, Graham Campbell, Sonya Clark, Jacob Cress, Felicia Dean, Douglas Finkel, Sophie Glenn, Timothy Hintz, Craig Nutt, Jonathan Rugh and Virginia Tech School of Architecture + Design's Center for Design Research, Ann Walsh, Kimberly Winkle

Sometimes humble, sometimes grand, but often taken for granted, chairs play an important role in our everyday lives. More than just a place to rest, chairs offer a glimpse into our collective ideas about status, comfort, beauty, utility, and place. From office chairs to thrones, the chair is often synonymous with one's place in society, one's role in the family, or one's station in life. *Sitting Pretty: The Chair Re-Envisioned* presents a selection of contemporary chairs by artists from Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee that expand upon traditional forms and cultural associations, re-imagining the possibilities of what a chair is and can be. Expertly crafted with a variety of materials, styles, and techniques, these unique and refreshingly inventive chairs push beyond expectation and even functionality into new realms of design and expression. Whether fanciful and dramatic, clean and curving, questioning, or just plain playful, these chairs invite viewers to see what is usually an ordinary object with a fresh perspective. So here's to the not-so-humble chair—who says sitting has to be boring?



## Roger Atkins

Sugar Grove, North Carolina  
[atkinswood.com](http://atkinswood.com)

Roger Atkins explores both the hard lines and soft shapes that can be created with wood. Interested in showcasing the versatility and innate beauty of this medium, Atkins creates chairs with contrasting woods and mathematically precise inlays using organic shapes reminiscent of those found in nature.

► Roger Atkins; *Deep Dish Rocker*, 2018; mahogany and walnut; 36 x 32 x 32 inches; image courtesy of the artist

**ON THE COVER:** Graham Campbell; *Bench for the Platform at Fashoda Junction*, 2015; railroad sleeper from Africa, poplar, walnut, and brass; 29 x 80 x 39 inches; image courtesy of the artist



## Alexander Bannan

Richmond, Virginia

Alexander Bannan is drawn to furniture because it is a recognizable and universally engaging medium, a unique mix of artistry and function. Inspired by the history and community of artists and craftsmen in the Shenandoah Valley, Bannan created a body of chairs for this exhibition depicting geographic features with historic or cultural significance, including strategic locations of import to the Civil War.

## David Bonhoff

Columbia, Virginia  
bohnhofffurniture.com

David Bonhoff's work showcases the curved, bent-wood forms that reflect his background in boatbuilding. He combines traditional furniture practices—such as joinery and veneering—along with sweeping lines to create elegant and unexpected pieces.

## Bruce Bradford

Winston-Salem, North Carolina  
bradfordcustomfurniture.com

Inspired by mid-century Danish furniture, Bruce Bradford incorporates sculptural elements into each piece that he creates, describing them as "functional works of art." Bradford reinvigorates traditional benches and rocking chair forms with these sculptural elements and decorative wood types.



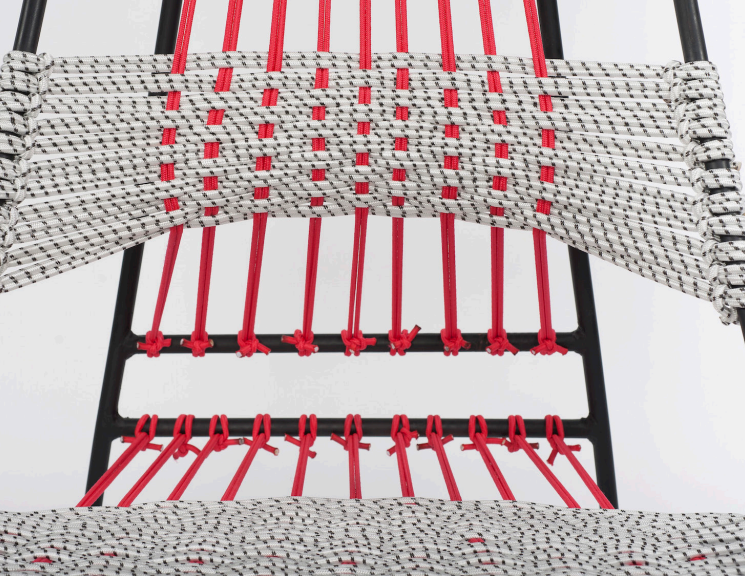
▲ Alexander Bannan; *Fort Defiance*, 2018 (detail); ash, Spanish cedar, canvas, and milk paint; 38 x 21 x 20 inches; image courtesy of the artist



▲ David Bohnhoff; image of work in progress; image courtesy of the artist



▲ Bruce Bradford; *Wenge Rocking Chair*, 2018; Wenge and Pau Amarello; 47 x 27 x 54 inches; image courtesy of the artist



▲ Stoel Burrowes; *M Cat's Cradle*, 2015 (detail); metal and bungee cord; 38 x 26 x 30 inches; image courtesy of the artist

## Stoel Burrowes

Mebane, North Carolina

In his 30 years of furniture making, Stoel Burrowes sees furniture design as a process and an exploration. Inspired by the classic Windsor seating tradition, Burrowes expands on elements from the past and diverse components of form and practice in his designs—with special attention paid to human comfort. In *Cat's Cradle* woven bungee cords comprise the seat and back, contrasting this relaxed form with the chair's metal angles.

## Graham Campbell

Smithville, Tennessee

Graham Campbell is a furniture designer and educator who incorporates studies in architecture, residential construction, and technical theatre in his fanciful and dramatic furniture creations. Campbell's benches for Fashoda Junction—a historic and strategic location in African colonial history—imagine constructions that would have been created after troops left the area. In these works Campbell imagines what the locals would have created to “sit on the platform of the station that would never be built next to the railway line that never appeared.”



▲ Sonya Clark; *Corrow Chair*, 2011 (detail); found chair and thread; 36 x 20 x 20 inches; image courtesy of the artist

## Sonya Clark

Richmond, Virginia

[sonyaclark.com](http://sonyaclark.com)

Sonya Clark values handmade objects, especially those that embody narratives and well-told stories. With an unconventional take on traditional craft techniques, such as incorporating unravelling braids and all that symbolizes in the chair on view here, Clark imbues her work with the weight of history and the impact of a searing past on issues of race and identity today.

## Jacob Cress

Fincastle, Virginia

[jakecress.com](http://jakecress.com)

Jacob Cress is a master craftsman who acutely understands the rules of furniture making—and then breaks them. Seemingly animated, full of humor, and even outlandish, Cress' refreshingly inventive chairs encourage viewers to see ordinary objects differently.



## Felicia Dean

Greensboro, North Carolina

Felicia Dean utilizes industrial materials, hand craft, and digital manufacturing methods to create her unusual chairs. Dean generates three-dimensional forms using two-dimensional manufacturing procedures such as fashion design sewing, upholstery processes, and patterning techniques.

## Douglas Finkel

Towson, Maryland

After working with wood for 25 years, Douglas Finkel has found beauty in different approaches to the medium. Finkel's love and understanding for wood manifests itself in his work; he particularly values attention to form and line, both of which are present in his pieces.

## Sophie Glenn

Smithville, Tennessee

sophieglenn.com

Sophie Glenn employs traditional forms and methods of making in her designs while incorporating non-traditional elements and materials to challenge viewers' conception of furniture. In doing so, Glenn both honors and expands upon the furniture making tradition, embracing innovation through exploring both form and function.

## Timothy Hintz

Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Truly a master of woodworking, Timothy Hintz applies his knowledge of wood's inherent qualities and the changes that occur naturally in the medium in shaping his especially inventive re-interpretations of the chair form.



▲ Douglas Finkel; *Milking Stools*, 2018 (detail); beech and walnut; 10 x 15 inches; image courtesy of the artist



▲ Sophie Glenn; *School Desk*, 2015 (detail); walnut and powder-coated steel; 35 x 24 x 30 inches; image courtesy of the artist

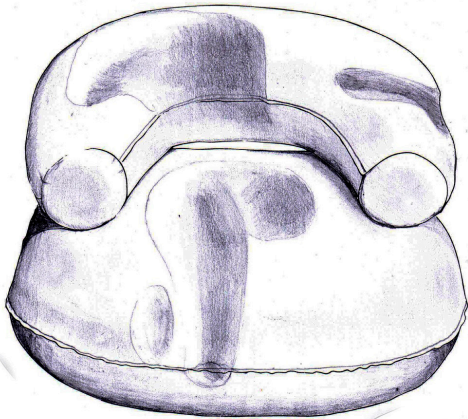


▲ Timothy Hintz; *Oak Conversation Chair*, 2014 (detail); oak and hickory bark; 48 x 40 x 32 inches; image courtesy of the artist

## Craig Nutt

Kingston Springs, Tennessee  
craignutt.com

Imagination, improvisational freedom, humor, and furniture-making techniques converge in Craig Nutt's artworks. He began vegetable-inspired works over three decades ago and has honored this theme since.



▲ Ann Walsh; artist's sketch of new work in progress; image courtesy of the artist

## Ann Walsh

Baltimore, Maryland

Ann Walsh values the processes involved in furniture-making as much as the effect that they have on the audience. Walsh's interests in psychology and contemplation of society inspire her surrealist furniture.

▼ Kimberly Winkle; artist's sketch of new work in progress; image courtesy of the artist

## Virginia Tech School of Architecture + Design's Center for Design Research

Blacksburg, Virginia

archdesign.vt.edu/programs/center\_for\_design\_research

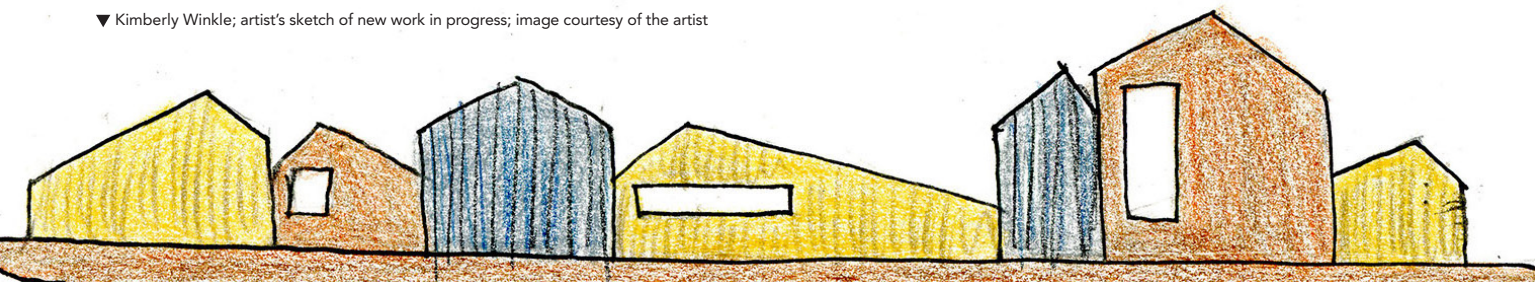
Under the direction of Nathan King, assistant professor of architecture; Mark Leach, wood shop supervisor; and Jonathan Rugh, wood shop craftsman, students in the Center for Design Research worked with Rwandan students and craftsmen to design and produce furniture for the newly opened African Design Center. Building on their work in Rwanda, the center is developing a palette of furniture to outfit a new library at Mzuzu University in Malawi. The chairs in the exhibition are prototypes that demonstrate new forms and ideas about construction techniques available in Malawi.

## Kimberly Winkle

Cookeville, Tennessee  
kimberlywinkle.com

Kimberly Winkle is influenced by traditional furniture design techniques and expressive materials such as hardwood, paint, and graphite. Winkle creates unexpected artworks that possess aspects of distinctiveness and whimsy.

This exhibition is curated by Virginia Tech graduate assistants Sarah Tucker and Emily Bianchi in conjunction with the Moss Arts Center curatorial staff.



## Works in the Exhibition

All works courtesy of the artists

Roger Atkins  
*Deep Dish Rocker*, 2018  
Mahogany and walnut  
36 x 32 x 32 inches

Alexander Bannan  
*Fort Defiance*, 2018  
Ash, Spanish cedar, canvas, and milk paint  
38 x 21 x 20 inches

Alexander Bannan  
*Kiptopeke*, 2018  
Maple, cherry, canvas, and milk paint  
38 x 21 x 20 inches

Alexander Bannan  
*Origins at the Appomattox*, 2018  
Ash, black walnut, canvas, milk paint, and brass screws  
38 x 21 x 20 inches

Alexander Bannan  
*Work in progress*, 2018

David Bohnhoff  
*Work in progress*, 2018

Bruce Bradford  
*Wenge Rocking Chair*, 2018  
Wenge and Pau Amarello  
47 x 27 x 54 inches

Bruce Bradford  
*Cherry and Maple Bench*, 2018  
Cherry and maple  
41 x 54 x 26 ½ inches

Stoel Burrowes  
*M Cat's Cradle*, 2015  
Metal and bungee cord  
38 x 26 x 30 inches

Stoel Burrowes  
*Cat's Cradle*, 2014  
Oak, poplar, ash, and bungee cord  
35 x 28 x 34 inches

Graham Campbell  
*Bench for the Platform at Fashoda Junction*, 2015  
Railroad tie from Africa, poplar, walnut, and brass  
29 x 80 x 39 inches

Graham Campbell  
*Work in process*, 2018

Sonya Clark  
*Cornrow Chair*, 2011  
Found chair and thread  
36 x 20 x 20 inches

Jacob Cress  
*Self Portrait*, 2002  
Walnut  
40 x 20 x 20 inches

Jacob Cress  
*Oops!*, 2002  
Figured mahogany  
40 x 20 x 20 inches

Felicia Dean  
*Knotty*, 2012  
Steel, galvanized wire, felt, foam, twine, and paint  
31 ¼ x 22 x 35 ½ inches

Felicia Dean  
*Beekeeper*, 2012  
Fiberglass, foam, fabric, twine, magnets, and steel  
16 ¼ x 28 x 25 ½ inches

Douglas Finkel  
*Fidget Spinner Milking Stool*, 2018  
Beech and walnut  
10 x 15 inches

Douglas Finkel  
*Button Milking Stool*, 2018  
Beech and walnut  
10 x 15 inches

Douglas Finkel  
*Heart Milking Stool*, 2018  
Beech and walnut  
10 x 15 inches

Sophie Glenn  
*Rebel Rebel*, 2017  
Rusted and painted steel and annealed wire  
19 x 19 x 42 inches

Sophie Glenn  
*School Desk*, 2015  
Walnut and powder-coated steel  
35 x 24 x 30 inches

Tim Hintz  
*Oak Conversation Chair*, 2014  
Oak and hickory bark  
48 x 40 x 32 inches

Craig Nutt  
*Burning*, 2002  
Oil paint and lacquer on wood  
46 x 57 x 31 inches

Craig Nutt  
*Butterbean Chair*, 2009  
Paint on bleached maple and leather  
38 x 18 x 23 inches

Craig Nutt  
*Celery Chair with Peppers, Carrots, and Snow Pea*, 2005  
Lacquer on carved wood and leather  
37 x 25 x 22 inches

Ann Walsh  
*Work in progress*, 2018

Kim Winkle  
*Work in progress*, 2018

Kim Winkle  
*Work in progress*, 2018

Jonathan Rugh, Virginia Tech School of Art + Design's Center for Design Research  
Replicas of chair prototypes, African Design Center Project





▲ Craig Nutt; *Burning*, 2002; oil paint and lacquer on wood; 46 x 57 x 31 inches; image courtesy of the artist

#### Gallery Hours

Monday–Friday, 10 AM–5:30 PM

Saturday, 10 AM–4 PM

Admission free

To schedule a tour or class visit, contact [megh79@vt.edu](mailto:megh79@vt.edu).



For more information about exhibitions and events:

[artscenter.vt.edu](http://artscenter.vt.edu)

