

Chair - tubular

Furniture Collection

Accession Nr.: 74.118.1 

Artist/Maker: Breuer, Marcell (1902 - 1981) / designer

Manufacturer: Thonet furniture factory

Date of production: 1930

Place of production: Hungary

Materials: canvas; chromium-plated tubular steel

Techniques: bent

Dimensions: height: 86 cm
width: 45 cm
depth: 52 cm

These three pieces of seating furniture entered the furniture collection of the Museum of Applied Arts from the estate of Virgil Bierbauer (Borbíró) (1893–1956). In 1930, Hungary's advocate of modern architectural endeavours designed for himself a highly practical and genuinely functional set of furniture for a study, publishing it in the architecture periodical *Tér és forma* that he himself edited. To accompany the storage furniture and the writing table with their plain lines, Virgil Bierbauer chose tubular chairs for seating, designed by Marcell Breuer (1902–1981), who studied and qualified at the Bauhaus. The chair, which as a serially-produced item was given the model number B5, was one of Breuer's earliest pieces of tubular furniture. Its construction was extremely simple and light, consisting essentially of two bent elements: a U-shaped element comprising the back legs and the back support fitted into another element bent into right angles that constituted the front legs, held the canvas seat surface and was given more rigidity by two parallel struts. Its prototype was probably made in 1926. The general public was able to see it for the first time in 1927, in the interior of house no. 17, designed by Walter Gropius (1883–1969), at the Weissenhofsiedlung, the model housing estate in Stuttgart regardable as one of the first spectacular presentations of modern architecture. One year later, production of it was started by Breuer's firm, which Breuer founded together with Kalman Lengyel, who was likewise of Hungarian descent. It was at this time that a version with arms, model B 11, was developed. In 1929, the Thonet firm acquired the license to manufacture Breuer's tubular furniture. The pieces at the Museum of Applied Arts were almost certainly made by Thonet.

Literature

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