



Twentieth Century Design Icons
no. 10

“DSH Chair”
by
Charles Eames
(1907-1978)
Ray Eames
(1912-1988)

THE “DSH” CHAIR was designed by Charles and Ray Eames in 1945 for Herman Miller;

New materials, especially those that held promise for doing more with less, fascinated Charles and Ray Eames throughout their careers. Their fascination led to inventive modern furniture, such as the “DSH” chair, the first mass-produced product to use new fibreglass-reinforced plastic technologies developed during the Second World War.



Recognizing the need, Charles Eames said, is the primary condition for design. Early in their careers together, Charles and Ray identified the need for affordable, yet high-quality furniture for the average consumer – furniture that could serve a variety of uses. For forty years the Eameses experimented with ways to meet this challenge, designing flexibility into their compact storage units and collapsible sofas for the home; seating for stadiums, airports, and schools; and chairs for virtually anywhere. Their chairs were designed for Herman Miller in four materials – molded plywood, fibreglass-reinforced plastic, bent and welded wire mesh, and cast aluminum. The conceptual backbone of this diverse work was the search for seat and back forms that comfortably support the human body, using three dimensionally shaped surfaces or flexible materials instead of cushioned upholstery. An ethos of functionalism informed all of their furniture designs. “What works is better than what looks good,” Ray said. “The looks good can change, but what works, works.”