



Twentieth Century Design Icons  
no. 5

## “Hat Trick Chair” by Frank O. Gehry (born 1929)

**FRANK O. GEHRY** was born Ephraim Owen Goldberg on 28 February 1929 in Toronto, Canada. He is widely regarded as the greatest living American architect, and the most famous since Frank Lloyd Wright. He has won the Pulitzer Prize for architecture, has been inducted into the California Hall of Fame (by California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and First Lady Maria Shriver), and has been awarded the prestigious Woodrow Wilson Award for public service by the Woodrow Wilson Center of the Smithsonian Institution in New York City. He was the subject of the 2005 documentary film, *Sketches of Frank Gehry*, by veteran director Sydney Pollack. He is perhaps the leading example of a contemporary “Starchitect”.

Gehry’s buildings, including his private residence, have become tourist attractions. Many museums, companies, and cities seek Gehry’s services as a badge of distinction, beyond the product he delivers. His best known works include the titanium-covered Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain; the Walt Disney Concert Hall in downtown Los Angeles; Experience Music Project in Seattle; Weisman Art Museum in Minneapolis; Dancing House in Prague, Czech Republic; and his private residence in Santa Monica, California, which jump-started his career.



The “Hat Trick chair”, along with the “Wiggle Side chair”, is the best known of Gehry’s furniture designs. Constructed of hard white maple veneers in 2-inch wide strips, with all wood grains run in the same direction for resilience, it is laminated to a 5-ply or 7-ply thickness with high-bonding urea glue. The contoured seat is constructed of cross-ply maple for rigidity.

The “Hat Trick Chair” has won numerous awards, including:

- ASID Award, 1992;
- ROSCO Award, 1992;
- ID Magazine Gold Award, 1992;
- ICFE Award for Excellence, 1992;
- IBD Award (Silver), 1992;
- Premium Imperiale Award (Prince Takamatsu World Culture Award), 1992; and
- Time Magazine, Best Design of 1992 Award.