

ARCH 576 Fall 2021

Furniture Design Workshop-Discussion/Lab by Appointment

Instructors: Carl Lewis + Lowell Miller



Description: Tuesday, 3:00pm-6:00pm, Annex Wood Shop

Architects have long been involved in the craft of fine furniture making. Designers including Carlo Mollino, Jean Prouvé, Charlotte Perriand, and George Nakashima have explored the relationship between form and craft in the design of furniture. The move towards accessibility in architecture and design has largely focused on functionalist notions of performance. This seminar couples accessible design with an emphasis on craft in the production of a piece of furniture. Students will be tasked with the design and construction of a piece of furniture of their choosing. The design of the piece, the craft with which it is constructed, and its usability by its intended audience will be equally weighted. Working in this manner, students will be going against the grain of contemporary consumer culture; they will be tasked with the development and construction of objects that should endure beyond their own lifetimes.

Each furniture project will allow students to examine a series of issues:

- The assembly of multiple elements into a cohesive composition
- An understanding of material properties, strengths, and character
- Questions of function and ergonomics, how each selected projected functions for its intended user

In this fabrication workshop, students will gain proficiency in the use of hand and power tools used in making fine furniture. They will gain a deeper understanding of material properties and will explore the implications of material choice in the design process. Through a series of readings, discussions, and exercises, we will explore the many issues involved in the design and construction of fine furniture. The knowledge gained will feed into the design and fabrication process.

Expected Outcomes:

Each student will be individually responsible for the design and construction of a finished piece of furniture. Students will complete a series of exercises to develop skills leading up to this project.