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THE ROLE OF FURNITURE IN HUMAN LIFE.

Annotation: *This article deals with the introduction of furniture into human life, the history of its development and modern furniture.*

Key words: *Furniture, plywood, cardboard, Charles Rennie Mackintosh, construction, Scandinavian, Alvar Aalto, Furniture Design.*

A house without furniture is like a barren canvas waiting for realising its own beauty. A home sans classy furniture affords no comfort to its owners. Besides, it looks dull and cheerless.

What is Furniture?

Furniture enjoys a long and illustrious presence in our dwellings. It changed its form and style according to the tastes of the time. The ornate baroque furniture that once graced the grand abodes of the era is now confined to the museums around the world.

Experiments were made not only with shapes and sizes, but also materials. Besides natural wood, cast aluminium, plywood, cardboard and moulded plastic were introduced for the first time. The design evolution continues as contemporary designers go on weaving pure magic with many different articles of furniture.

Why Do We Need Furniture?

Beyond any doubt, a room without furniture wears a desolate appearance. A bare living room, bedroom or any other corner of the home does not give us the comfort we seek in our surroundings. We need a cosy sofa to sit down, a comfy bed to stretch on

and cabinets to arrange numerous household objects. Furniture happens to be the beautifying element of any home and also the most necessary objects of decor.

Furniture design is particularly dependent on trends[1]. During a period of time, the design or general appearances of furniture design changes over the course of history which was influenced by architectural style[2,3].

At present, in order to have the above mentioned qualities dictated by changing customer demand it is necessary to develop new types of furniture with improved functionality[4, 5]. The desire in furniture style to create new designs or different appearances led to the development of new manufacturing methods and materials used.

Investigation into Chair Design

For my Investigation into chair designs I choose to investigate how simplistic and basic the chairs have become. From Charles Rennie Mackintosh, who was renowned for his style and applied decoration to Philippe Stark who has taken simplistic to another level. I have investigated how the designers have used applied decoration to enhance the look of their chair, to how functional the pieces are (or in some cases un-functional!).

HIGH BACKED CHAIR - CHARLES RENNIE MACKINTOSH - 1902

Mackintosh produced designs on a whole range of furnishings as well as his architectural designs. Many of these were purely functional but he also produced many 'artistic' pieces throughout his life. Because of the large amount of applied decoration on Macintosh's pieces that it could be argued that each piece is a finely detailed work of art itself. Probably the most famous of such pieces are his famous high backed chairs. The high backed chair I have chosen to study was made for the International Exhibition of modern Decorative Art, held in Turin in Italy in 1902

The chair appears to have a very low seat, being only a quarter of the height of the actual chair, this also may perhaps be due to the fact the seat is fairly broad at the front, widening out from a fairly narrow back. The back of the chair is as wide as the back of the seat but tapers towards the top. This main support is framed with two tall slim struts.

The construction of the low seat and tapering back makes the chair look almost abstract because of these bizarre proportions. In the photograph it looks as if the picture has been taken from a strange angle which has distorted the shape.

There is little in the way of applied decoration on the chair except for the back, which on a portion is padded and covered in a light blue-grey colour. On this is a painted stylised rose bush design that fills the width of the padded portion. Beneath this is what appears to be wilting petals falling from the bush. At the top of the chair carved into a piece of wood is an organic form of sorts with the typical Art Nouveau whiplash stretching the length of it.

Scandinavian Furniture in Modern Interior Design Furniture design is an art that was discovered a long time ago. Even before the Egyptian period when the x-chair was widely popular, there existed basic furniture pieces that may not have been concerned with art but were primarily made by carpenters and craftsmen with function in mind. Throughout history furniture design has developed into a prospering industry with the needs and demands of the people in all parts of the world for comfort and luxury growing more sophisticated in each decade that passed. At certain periods in history, and specific countries and regions in the globe, furniture design creations have sprouted and have been improved from their simple prototypes into more detailed.

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The legacy of designers like Alvar Aalto, Eero Saarinen and Verner Panton is still among us with their original furniture pieces finding their way in to the hall of fame and still widely used even in the present. Their timeless quality inspired new Scandinavian designers to create furniture pieces that will live up to the classic value of the futuristic-looking Panton chair and the modern silhouette of the Tulip chair. Even American designers have discovered and emulated the ingenuous concept and fabrication of these

infamous furniture designs. They have modified the process and materials using means that are more accessible to them. When Scandinavian furniture makers captured the American market, they also started producing with the foreigners' taste in mind up to the point that these innovative furniture styles were seen less in their own region and gained more buzz in the United States. People around the world admire how Scandinavian furniture understands the essence of function in its rawest structure and transforms it into exceptional yet form-fitting creations. The success of Scandinavian furniture design lies in providing the quality that people seek as well as its availability to the public. The major development in production of this type of furniture happened in the 1950s. There was a movement that led to the manufacture of items to be accessible not only to affluent people but also to the masses. This increased the appeal of Scandinavian furniture and gave way to their proliferation not only in European countries, but also all over.

Furniture design is an art from ancient times. Historically, furniture designer created pieces for the aristocracy and nobility. But, now a day they design for all the people stuffs like beds, sofas and other component for homes, apartments, offices and more. Before the 19th century, the design was good but not much functional[6,7,8]. The complex design was given importance and the materials were expensive. They determine the value of the furniture by the duration of time taken to make that stuff.

Furniture Design History

Furniture design has been a part of the human experience since the beginning of history. Evidence of furniture survives from as far back as the Neolithic Period in the form of paintings, wall Murals discovered at Pompeii, in sculpture and examples have also been excavated in Egyptian Pyramids and found in tombs in Ghiordes (modern day Turkey). These notes will track the main advancements, developments, styles and materials in furniture design highlighting the identifying features of each period, the materials used and show images of some of the most significant pieces of furniture ever designed.

Born from the Bauhaus and Art Deco streamline styles came the post WWII Modern style using materials developed during the war including laminated plywood,

plastics and fibreglass. In modern furniture the dark gilded, carved wood and richly patterned fabrics gave way to the glittering simplicity and geometry of polished metal. The forms of modern furniture sought newness, originality, technical innovation, and ultimately conveyed the present and the future, rather than what had gone before it as revival styles had done[9, 10, 11]. This interest in new and innovative materials and methods produced a certain blending of the disciplines of technology and art. The use of new materials, such as steel in its many forms; moulded plywood and plastics, were formative in the creation of these new designs. They were considered pioneering, even shocking at the time especially in contrast to what came before.

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