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***Have a Seat: Mexican Chair Design Today* to open at Denver Art Museum in February 2024**

*Contemporary Mexican designers create chairs that connect with the history,
the material traditions and cultures of Mexico*

DENVER – October 10, 2023 – The Denver Art Museum (DAM) presents *Have a Seat: Mexican Chair Design Today*, an interactive exhibition featuring three historical artworks, 17 contemporary seats designed by 22 Mexican artists and a site-specific art installation. Curated by Jorge Rivas Pérez, Frederick and Jan Mayer Curator of Latin American Art, *Have a Seat* will be on view Feb. 18, 2024, through Nov. 3, 2024, in the Bonfils-Stanton Gallery on level 1 of the museum's Martin Building.



Through their pioneering designs, the artists in *Have a Seat* embark on a journey through history and traditions, exploring into the enduring legacy of the cross-cultural world that emerged in Mexico following the Spanish conquest which incorporated elements of Indigenous, Asian, African and European cultures and continues to influence the development of the arts today, inspiring new types of objects and furniture for the 21st century. *Have a Seat* showcases furniture by contemporary Mexican designers represented in the museum's permanent collection, including Andrés Lhima, Cecilia León de la Barra, Daniel Valero, Bárbara Sánchez-Kane, Jorge Diego Etienne and many more.

"The designs presented in this exhibition showcase Mexico's rich cultural heritage and modernity and its place as a global leader of design in the 21st century," said Christoph



Heinrich, Frederick and Jan Mayer Director of the DAM. "We invite visitors to immerse themselves in the history and innovative spirit that defines Mexican chair design and learn about the artists, their creations and their inspirations."

Visitors to *Have a Seat* will learn about the connection between contemporary Mexican design and ancient and colonial artistic practices in an interactive exhibition where traditional crafts are central to Mexican

daily life through the design and context of seating. Hands-on interactions throughout the exhibition will encourage visitors to sit on and move selected chairs and seats, offering the tools to identify the ancient, colonial and mid-century modern influences.

"Since the earliest days of human history, civilizations have used chairs to demonstrate social importance, such as the seats reserved for rulers and high-ranking religious figures in pre-Hispanic Mexico," said Rivas. "Designers and creatives in Mexico and across Latin America continue to draw inspiration from these historical traditions and styles, using centuries-old techniques and cutting-edge materials and processes to craft designs that bridge the past and the present."



Have a Seat will be organized into four sections: "Stools," featuring backless seating inspired in ancient, colonial, and mid-century modern examples; "Easy Chairs," highlighting the *butaque* and other hybrid types of seating resulting from the cross-cultural society that emerged after the European colonization; and "Spanish Chairs," emphasizing the lasting influence of European-style seats in Mexico today. The fourth section, "Immersive Gallery," will house Mexican artist Daniel Valero's site-specific art installation designed by his studio, Mestiz, in which objects and furniture made with traditional materials will be used, inspired by the natural surroundings and cultural fusion of Mexico's artisanal techniques.

“Mexico’s rich history of art and design spans thousands of years, rooted in Indigenous cultures that mastered processes like weaving, pottery and carving,” Rivas said. “Ancient civilizations such as the Aztecs, and the Europeans that came after them, used diverse natural materials and craft techniques with remarkable results. By exploring the realm where traditions and cultures converge with innovation, the designers in *Have a Seat* are reviving ancestral practices, while shaping a new landscape of Mexican contemporary art and design.”

Have a Seat: Mexican Chair Design Today is organized by the Denver Art Museum. Support is provided by the donors to the Annual Fund Leadership Campaign and the residents who support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD). Promotional support is provided by *5280 Magazine* and CBS Colorado.

Planning Your Visit

The most up-to-date information on planning a visit to the Denver Art Museum can be found online under the [Plan Your Visit](#) tab. Use this page to find details on ticket pricing, public transit options and access information. General admission for museum members is free every day. Youth aged 18 and under receive free general admission everyday thanks to the museum’s Free for Kids program. Free for Kids also underwrites free admission for school and youth group visits.

About the Denver Art Museum

The Denver Art Museum is an educational, nonprofit resource that sparks creative thinking and expression through transformative experiences with art. Its mission is to enrich lives by sparking creative thinking and expression. Its holdings reflect the city and region—and provide invaluable ways for the community to learn about cultures from around the world. Metro residents support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD), a unique funding source serving hundreds of metro Denver arts, culture and scientific organizations.

For museum information, visit www.denverartmuseum.org or call 720-865-5000.

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Image Credits:

Image 1: Mauricio Lara Eguiluz, *Chac Seat*, 2005. Polyurethane foam; 20 x 31-2/5 x 17-3/4 in. Denver Art Museum: Funds from Alianza de las Artes Americanas and Design Council of the Denver Art Museum, 2017.39. ©Mauricio Lara Eguiluz

Image 2: Cecilia León de la Barra, *Bangladeshi Stool*, 2003. Painted iron structure with polyvinyl fabric; 11-7/8× 11-1/2 in. dia. Denver Art Museum: Funds from Design Council of the Denver Art Museum, 2023.255. ©Cecilia León de la Barra

Image 3: Esteban Caicedo, *Palapa Chair*, 2022, this example made in 2023. Huayruro wood, chuspata fiber, and bleached palm; 51-1/8× 39-3/8× 23-1/4in. Funds from Design Council of the Denver Art Museum. © and courtesy Esteban Caicedo Cortés. Photo © Alejandro Ramírez Orozco

Image 4: Bárbara Sánchez-Kane, *Body Fillers and Plastified Diet*, 2022. MDF, pine wood, and leather; 18-7/8 × 12 in. dia. Denver Art Museum: Funds from the Ralph L. and Florence R. Burgess Trust. ©Bárbara Sánchez-Kane