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WORKPLACES THAT WORK

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The Invisible Architect
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Knud Lonberg-Holm p. 102



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A Chair of Many Bases

With a classic aesthetic and a variation to fit every use, Brad Ascalon's Nestle chair aims for timelessness.

One of the ways office furniture has changed in the past decade is through sheer diversity—from beanbags to executive chairs, people use a mind-boggling array of seating at work today. This is what Brad Ascalon considered when designing the Nestle chair for the contract-furniture company Stylex. “There was a gap in its line,” says Ascalon. “We wanted a chair that was going to work across many functionalities.”

Ascalon felt that the way to do this was through a chair that could adapt to a variety of bases, accents, or accessories. “Eventually we started hitting upon a series of bases that

we thought would work with everything from conference seating to casual dining in a corporate environment, to side chair, to lounge chair,” he says. “Really the entire array of possibilities for contract seating.”

Ascalon designed a variety of base options—a cantilevered sled frame, a traditional sled frame, wooden legs, a fixed four-blade base with a swivel return, and a five-blade base on casters with height adjustment—meant to be adaptable to the degree of formality and the change in function. Taking his cues from 1960s-era Knoll, Ascalon gave his chair a modern update with better comfort and ergonomics.

“I really want to put furniture into the world that will last over time,” he says. “We don’t really design for trends, so part of that strategy is to reference the tried-and-true era of the 1950s and 1960s. I think it has a better chance of becoming timeless.” Here, Ascalon speaks to the evolution and details of the Nestle chair. ■



“The broader use of bucket-style chairs demands better comfort. Stylex’s experience in ergonomics enabled us to cleverly add lumbar support while keeping the form streamlined.”

“The wide variety of base options enables the shell to work in informal dining, in the formal executive office, or any area in between.”

“Nestle’s shell and foam include a blend of soy-based material. The shell is designed to limit rework and scrap during the manufacturing process.”

“I see design from a reductivist perspective. We questioned what was necessary and, if it was simply decoration, we eliminated it.”

BRAD ASCALON (b. 1977) founded his New York studio in 2006, specializing in furniture, packaging, consumer products, and environment design, as well as sound composition and installation art projects. Ascalon’s collaborators have included Fasem, Ligne Roset, Design Within Reach, and Bernhardt Design.