IARC 407/507
Furniture Design and Functionalism - Seminar
Winter 2012 - Tuesdays and Thursdays 8:30-10:00
Room TBA
Instructor: Nils-Ole Zib - nils-ole@zib.nu

"To make this chair five times as expensive, three times as heavy, half as comfortable and less beautiful an architect can win a name".
Poul Henningsen

In Scandinavia designers have, more than most other places in the world, created a widely popular accepted design view, a design view where functionalism is seldom mentioned, but always present. Is this a strive to achieve a societal ideal? A remains from the prevailing Lutheran religion? Is this conception humanistic and democratic? Or maybe just a style with a moral pathos?

Poul Henningsen with Thonet nr.9

Through readings and discussions we will focus on the role of the designer in a multidisciplinary group also consisting of ex. engineers, craftsmen and consumers and as a player in the creation of society in general.

**Design case:** Based on lectures and readings, we will discus and analyse furniture typology. Each student, or group of students (up to three) will work on a case study, witch will be presented for the class on a running basis. In the case study you conceptualise and design an interpretation of one of the furniture types with special reference to functionalism.

**Historical context case:** We will read monographs on Scandinavian furniture designers, analyse their philosophy, working methods, concept development and final expression of their designs. Each student, or group of students will make a case study on an existing piece of furniture. This study will contextualise the given pieces of furniture in the framework of society and technological development.

**Objectives:** After finishing this course the students will have an understanding of how:
- design concepts impact on daily life and use.
- to integrate anthropometrics, ergonomics, sustainability, choice of material, production demands and structure on a design.
- to maintain the integrity of a concept while developing a design.
- history and societal ideals influence furniture design conception.
- to research end-user needs and expectations.
- to communicate design concepts to non professionals.

**Hand in and final presentation**
Findings for both design case and the research paper will be presented to the class on a running basis.
Final presentation will include sketches, 1:1 drawing, and a visual presentation of work method and flow.