

The complete anatomy of chairs design

1000 Chairs, by Charlotte & Peter Fiell, published by Taschen. ISBN 3822857802 £6.99
Currently out of print but a reprint is due this July in an abbreviated version and with a different cover. The edition referred to here is the out-of-print version.

THE German publishers Taschen produce a completely bonkers catalogue, which combines books on bondage, sadism and masochism with some excellent value-for-money titles on art, architecture and design. From design consul-

tants Charlotte and Peter Fiell, there are a number of titles including their soon-to-be-relaunched *1000 Chairs*, although it's a shame that this will not be available at the start of the V&A's exhibition on Modernism, *Designing A New World 1914-1939*, which will showcase some of the most radical chair designs ever created.

With its quirky English, French and German text, a hallmark of Taschen books, *1000 Chairs* offers the most comprehensive survey of chair design from 1808 to the present, with more than 1000 illustrations of chairs from Michael

Thonet to Frank Lloyd Wright and Gerrit Rietveld. Each chair gets a page displayed on its own and with biographical and historical information about the chairs and their designers. Talking about Thonet's bentwood chairs, Peter Fiell said: "It might not look much but there's an argument for saying that modern furniture began with this chair. Specifically made for mass production and evolved from the Bierdemeier style, the design is stripped down to its essential parts. The form is not modern but its simplification is." Top design reference book.