



## bernhardt design european debut > global edition

PRODUCTS: «GLOBAL EDITION» COLLECTION  
 DESIGN: LEFT TO RIGHT > YVES BEHAR (BENCH), PEARSON LLOYD (STACKING CHAIR), ARIK LEVY (SOFA), SHIN AZUMI (OCCASIONAL TABLE), LIEVORE ALTIERR MOLINA (BARSTOOL), JEFFREY BERNETT (LOUNGE CHAIR), CULDESAC (WOODEN ARMCHAIR), ARIK LEVY (TABLE), PEARSON LLOYD (TABLE LAMP), LIEVORE ALTIERR MOLINA (CHAIR), CHRISTIAN BIECHER (CHAIR)  
 PRODUCT DETAILS: LEFT > «WHISPER» ARMCHAIR // DESIGN: CULDESAC // RIGHT > «ARO» BARSTOOL // DESIGN: LIEVORE ALTIERR MOLINA  
 MANUFACTURER: BERNHARDT DESIGN + DANERKA // INFO: WWW.BERNHARDTDESIGN.COM, WWW.DANERKA.COM



Bernhardt, a 120-year-old family-owned company, founded Bernhardt Design in 1980. Specialized in high quality contract furniture, until now Bernhardt has been focused on «English speaking» markets, as well as Hong Kong and Singapore. Yet, in the past few years the growing interest from Europe has finally convinced the company that there was room for them on this continent as well. When European designers work with an American company — as is largely the case with Bernhardt Design — their approach changes, explains Jerry Helling, the brand's creative director. «Our history of supplying furniture for commercial applications like restaurants, hotels, or offices has made us more focused on the product that is going to be viable 10 years from now. When these businesses buy furniture they plan to keep it for a very long time, and they need to be sure that these products will not go out of fashion. Having to always think about what the product is going to look in 10 years is slightly different than the possibly more fashion-conscious Italian approach.» The news that Helling brings to Europe is the Global Edition. «A couple of years ago I have been working on two furniture collections, one over 400, and the other over 200 pieces, all made by one designer. To me it was like, which one is the «real» sofa, and which five are the «fillers»? Nobody could do that much product and have it all be good. So I came up with this idea of a collection where the goal is to design one quintessential product in each category, like a sofa, an occasional table, a lamp, a kitchen chair, a dining room chair. There should be no reference to a specific style or time: it must look like it could have been designed in the '30s, or in the '20s, or today. It shouldn't represent any nationality or point of origin, and it shouldn't be a strictly residential, or an office, or a hospitality product. And if we were going to accomplish this, a designer had to be focused on one or two products only.» Having pointed out a handful of renowned designers, Helling addressed each of them with the proposal to design a piece for the Global Edition, without knowing the names of other participants. Each designer got a specific task; the only ones that were offered a choice were the Spanish studio Culdesac, the people to whom Helling went first and who asked to work with the most complicated category. «It was the wooden armchair, a product so easily referenced to Scandinavia, to America, or to a reproduction. They designed the entire chair without lifting their pen from the paper — it's all drawn together, and every angle affects every other angle...» Which were the criteria for choosing designers? «In each of these cases there was some product they had designed in the past that made me think that they would get the idea. A good example is Shin Azumi: I chose him because of the low barstool he had made for LaPalma. Lievore Altierr Molina have made their career on designing products for the contract market. I am not supposed to be showing my favorites, but if I had to choose one product that represented what we wanted to accomplish that would be the barstool they designed, because it is absolute simplicity.» In order to be able to deliver the product in a reasonable amount of time, Bernhardt Design has established a partnership with Danerka, a company with which they share the same design mentality. This Danish label will manufacture the furniture and ship it out across the continent.