

The Future Was Then

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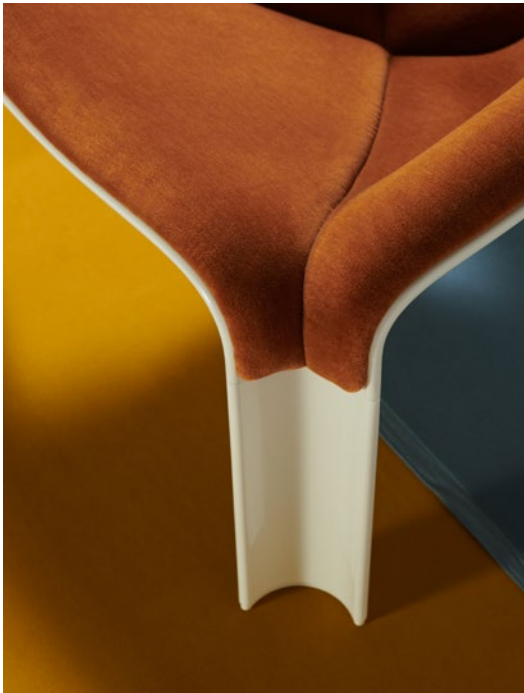
More than half a century after its debut, Pierre Paulin's F300 Lounge Chair has been reissued by GUBI, reimagined for today with sustainable materials and a Bauhaus-inspired campaign – and the sculptural design still feels strikingly fresh



BELOW The sculptural curves of the F300 and its iconic status led to its acquisition by MoMA for its permanent collection



RIGHT The frame of the chair is constructed of HIREK, a lightweight, engineered polymer that is UV resistant



When French designer Pierre Paulin's F300 Lounge Chair first appeared in the late 1960s, it was as if it had travelled back in time from another era. With its fluid curves, lack of flat surfaces and playful invitation to lounge in unconventional positions, it broke every rule of what a chair was supposed to be. At the time, it was embraced by design aficionados, acquired by MoMA for its permanent collection, and became a symbol of the 1970s. More than 50 years on, its design holds just as much appeal – and, this year, Danish design house GUBI has reissued the iconic chair alongside Paulin's T877 side table.

These launches are a natural follow-up to the successful relaunch of Paulin's pillowy Pacha collection of armchairs by GUBI in 2018, and are testament to GUBI's ambition to preserve Paulin's work while bringing it into a new century.

'Design opens new ways of living, and the F300 captures that perfectly,' says Marie Kristine Schmidt, CEO of GUBI. 'Born of late-1960s experimentation, it still resonates with today's search for comfort, creativity and self-expression. It felt like the natural next step [after relaunching Pacha] – a bold, sculptural counterpoint that deepens the conversation around Paulin's legacy while answering today's appetite for pieces that are both iconic and liberating.'

The F300 was radical even among Paulin's many groundbreaking works. Its monolithic form is

OPPOSITE The chairs are presented in a way that reflects Paulin's wish to design environments not objects



PHOTOGRAPHY: GUBI

BELOW The T877 side table, which was also designed by Paulin, has been reissued to accompany the F300

RIGHT The production process for the F300 chair involves hand-finishing to perfect both the frame and the upholstery



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defined by generous curves that encourage the body to sprawl, perch or lounge with ease, challenging the way more conventional seating typologies dictate one ‘correct’ way of sitting. ‘It’s about freedom and it’s exactly why the F300 resonates so strongly with contemporary audiences,’ says Schmidt. ‘That mix of radical form and real comfort is what makes it an enduring icon – it’s still futuristic today.’

When it came to bringing such an iconic piece of design back into production, faithfulness to the original was, of course, essential, but so too was updating the design responsibly. GUBI responded to this by investing in more sustainable materials, greater technical precision and a level of refinement and comfort calibrated to today’s expectations.

Paulin’s original edition, for example, was made using fibreglass and polyurethane – materials that were pioneering in the late 1960s, but are environmentally problematic today. Instead, GUBI chose to manufacture the chair in HiREK, a lightweight, engineered polymer with an interior made from up to 30% industrial plastic waste. The surface of the material is UV resistant, and so ideal for outdoor furnishings, further expanding the functional reach of the F300. ‘HiREK gives the same sculptural curves and glossy finish, but with less environmental impact and more durability,’ says Schmidt. ‘It proves innovation can serve both design and responsibility.’



Feature



Bringing the chair back was also not straightforward. Original documentation was scarce, meaning the team had to work like design detectives – studying vintage models, reverse-engineering the structure, and prototyping and testing moulds until they achieved the curvaceous form. ‘There were plenty of challenges,’ Schmidt recalls. ‘Achieving the flawless curves in HiREK required both engineering precision and hand-finishing. It was a technically demanding process, but worth it to capture both the sculptural integrity and the human warmth of the original.’

The reissue of the F300 is accompanied by the relaunch of the T877 side table, a companion Paulin designed in direct dialogue with the chair. The two pieces share a visual language of sculptural curves and lightness, and relaunching them together brings this dialogue into the 21st century.

In GUBI’s campaign for the relaunch – inspired by the work of pioneering Bauhaus artists Josef and Anni Albers – the chair and table are presented in a way that echoes Paulin’s desire to design environments rather than isolated objects. It shows people using the chair in a variety of ways, reflecting both Paulin’s original intentions and the more flexible approach we take to living with objects in today’s world.

Striking photographs position the chair against planes of saturated colour that evoke Josef’s *Homage to the Square* and Anni’s woven abstractions. ‘The Alberses were masters of abstraction, geometry and

Design

LEFT Final finishing is carried out to complete the manufacturing of the newly relaunched F300

BELOW The team had to act as design detectives to replicate the curvaceous shape of the original design



OPPOSITE GUBI’s campaign for the relaunch shows people interacting with the chair in a variety of ways

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BELOW The fluid curves of Paulin's original design provide a comfortable, tactile surface to lounge or sprawl

RIGHT Danish furniture company GUBI has made Paulin's F300 Lounge Chair available to a new generation



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colour – values that resonate deeply with Paulin's work,' explains Schmidt of the campaign direction. 'Their influence gave us a visual framework that highlights the chair's sculptural qualities while rooting it in a wider cultural conversation. It's about showing the F300 not just as a piece of furniture, but as part of an artistic and architectural legacy.'

The campaign is also a celebration of the colour palette that was developed for the relaunch, which carefully balances heritage and freshness. The F300 is reintroduced in Alabaster White and Pastel Green – shades that emphasise its sculptural silhouette and nod to its 1970s origins, while feeling at home in contemporary interiors. For the T877 table, the palette expands further, with Violet Ice, Honey Gold, and Molé. Upholstery options for the F300 bring in bold, tactile textiles – from earthy browns to saturated blues and vibrant yellows – that allow for personalisation.

By reintroducing the F300 and T877, GUBI has done more than revive two classic 20th-century designs. It has reanimated Paulin's vision of sculptural furniture that shapes environments. 'At GUBI, we're not nostalgic,' says Schmidt. 'We look for designs that can inspire today. The F300 is a perfect example: bold when it first appeared and bold now. It makes space for personality, invites playfulness and sparks conversation. I hope people feel that timeless design is something to live with, not just admire.'