AHEAD OF THE *Curve*

BY GRETA LORGE

Most design classes at Stanford involve a number of projects over the course of the term, but the students in John Edmark's Art Studio 262 have a singular goal: to take a seat, and reimagine it.

The course, first offered in spring 2011 and again in 2012, affords advanced students the opportunity to iterate their design and hone their fabrication skills by focusing on the creation of a single highly refined object.

Why chairs? "Designing chairs has been a rite of passage for designers and architects for the past century," Edmark says. Their apparent simplicity belies the complex interplay between form and function. A successful chair, says Edmark, must be comfortable, aesthetically pleasing, structurally sound to support body weight, and suited to its intended environment and use.

These examples showcase the creativity, resourcefulness and mastery of materials and techniques displayed by the students.

TULIPS Drawing inspiration from the '60s mod style, Jacobi Grillo, '09, MS '11, combined two iconic forms to create a wholly original piece with a hidden design feature. Viewed directly from the front, the fiberglass-over-steel-and-foam TulipS matches the profile of Eero Saarinen's Tulip Chair, while from the side it matches the profile of Verner Panton's S Chair.

SLOSH Inspired by the flow of liquid into a glass, Cameron Jue, MS '12, sought to recreate the dynamic shape in plywood and EVA foam. The surprisingly comfortable seat features crests that support the knees and lower back, while a trough plunging below the sitting surface creates visual interest.

LIGHT AS CONCRETE A fascination with concrete and glass led Matt Crowley, '12, to explore their untapped potential. Using structural limitations and forms as guiding constraints, he arrived at a design that elevates and showcases these normally prosaic materials.

ILLUSION The piece by Prat Ganapathy, MS '12, is an ode to video gamers who spend hours parked in front of a screen. Laser-cam-cut segments of quarter-inch Russian birch edged in blue acrylic paint evoke the moiré effect, an interference pattern appearing as waves or ripples in closely spaced lines or detailed patterns, such as computer graphics.

TWIST Wanting to create an unconventional shape, master's student Bianca Morales, '10, channeled M.C. Escher—known for his enigmatic distortion of reality. The resulting design, in moleskin spandex fabric stretched over a welded steel frame, permanently captures a fleeting state of imbalance and motion.

JONATHAN EDELMAN
JOHN EDMARK (TOP AND BOTTOM)
JONATHAN EDELMAN (MIDDLE TWO)