

A yellow wooden chair is positioned in front of a light-colored, weathered brick wall. The chair has a simple design with vertical legs, a horizontal seat, and a backrest. The wall behind it shows signs of age, including peeling paint and small holes.

the Small Chair Collection inventory

The Small Chair Collection has been donated by artist Carmen Gray to the Office for Small Decision Making in June of 2022.

The only condition given by artist Carmen Gray to the OfSDM is the following: “*Each small chair will be scattered amongst clients and Office members at the occasion of the office’s dissolution through an auction of favours.*”

This catalogue is an introduction to the Small Chair Collection and a way to discover Carmen Gray’s motivation to collect said collection.

So my thing with the little chairs actually started with a tower - Torrente tower, my mum and my pocket. Or I should really say, my mum in my pocket: I know, it must sound weird!

The thing is when I was a kid there was a time when I was extremely scared about being away from my mum. Sometimes I didn't want to go to school, or just anywhere without her. To convince me that everything was OK my mum used to tell me that she would come along with me all the time, that she would shrink down to a tiny size and fit in my pocket.

On the Torrente tower day (Torrente was the nearest town to the house-in-the-middle-of-nowhere where we used to live) my mum just happened to see me on a school daytrip with my class. She was doing the groceries in the market, just where the tower is. She saw all of us, climbing the steps, getting to the top, I guess, smiling to herself.

She saw me and didn't say anything, but the next time that I tried to hide behind her skirt to avoid going to school, she said once more: Darling, it's all right, nothing bad will happen to you, don't you remember that I can become smaller and get in your pocket? Like the day you climbed Torrente tower with your class (and then she started describing the trip, going into all sorts of details, so much so that I got terrified) in which you were going up and down the steps, and you were putting your hand in and out of your pocket twisting me all upside down! Screwing up the entrance ticket and the foil of the sweets you were slyly eating.

When she told me that it made such an impact on me that I trusted her completely, without even questioning anything. Then I really believed that whenever I was scared my mum was with me, tiny as a mouse, there in my pocket. I started acknowledging her, being highly aware of my chubby little hand every time I put it in my pocket, careful not to crush her.

I don't know how many years I spent putting my hand in my pocket as if it were shallow, as if I were holding it up. Always really carefully and in slow motion.

Since I was a kid I would also see my mum using my little chairs to sit in the living room, in the garden, to cut green beans before dinner, to read, to put on cream after swimming, to watch TV. I am not sure why but since then I have always thought of these two things together.

Over the last ten years I have lived in four different countries. I have had four phone numbers, a million different addresses, bank accounts, transport cards, health insurance cards. I have moved so many times that I could not give sentimental value to my belongings or gather more objects (that was a very restrictive limitation considering how I like collecting stuff). Furniture, books, plants: the only thing I used to allow myself were posters (that I could roll up in a tube), postcards, or anything else I could fold and fit in a suitcase.

When I moved in with Hugo in Amsterdam Noord and saw all the furniture he had, I thought, well OK, I could maybe have just a small chair in the living room.

That small chair and my bedside table were my only two pieces of furniture. Apart from the clothes and the plants and photos and frames. The only two pieces of furniture with which I left, with which I arrived at the next house when I moved.

Well that's how, more or less before the pandemic started and time stopped, I decided that when I saw a small chair that I liked I would take it to the studio and include it in my collection, and that would remind me of the tower in Torrent, of putting my hands in my pocket so very carefully, of my mum, and the fantasy she was able to pass on to me.

About the Small Chair Collection
by Carmen Gray, 2022

2019



#1 *Berta*
35×66,5cm
4kg
Antwerp furniture shop give away



#3 *Bedroom Drum*
41,5×43,5cm
1,1kg
Gift from Hugo



#2 *Dolphin Love*
23,5×41,5cm
1,5kg
Gift from Alex





2020



#4 Gummy Red
25×50cm
1,5kg
Gift from Maureen



#5 Olga's
32×62cm
3,3kg
Kringloop Noord



#6 Ethio Chair
27×57cm
1,3kg
Street find



#7 Balcony Flip
56×33cm
3,3kg
Street find



2021



#8 Vacas Campos
26,3×49,5cm
1,7kg
Gift from Mislav



#10 La hija bastarda
27×57cm
2,6kg
Exchange with Filip



#9 Burgundy diamond
32,5×60cm
3,5kg
Kringloop Noord



#11 Comodín
30×53cm
1,9kg
Not clear

2021



#12 Monday afternoon

32,5×71cm

5,1kg

Kringloop Noord



#14 Mapu

25×49,3cm

1,2kg

Not clear about the origin of this one.
Happened to be next to Carmen's door for
more than a year.



#13 Turquoise Thee

30,2×57cm

3,5kg

Street find







2022



#15 Pop Reverse
30×57cm
2kg
Rataplan Diemen



#17 Little Pant
27,3×56cm
2,2kg
Kringloop Noord



#16 Amarillo
27×54cm
2,7kg
Second hand shop

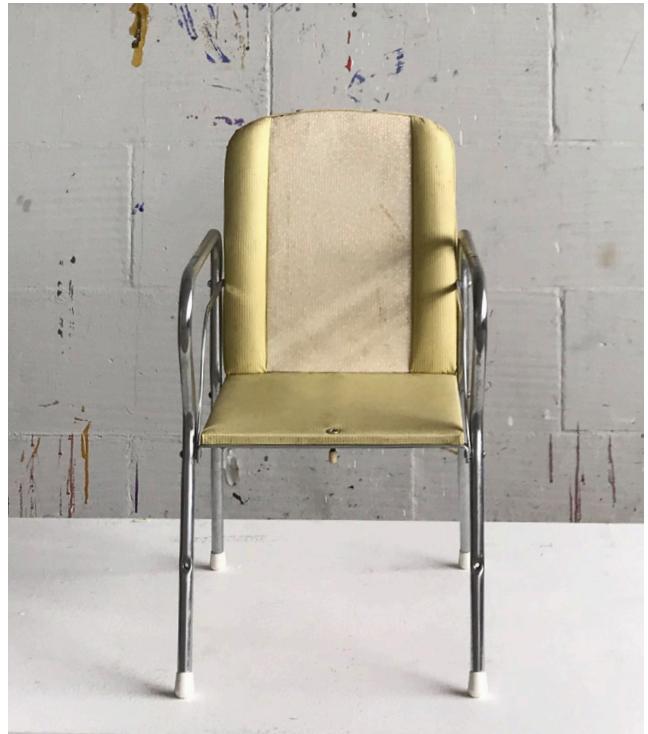


#18 Orphan's lament
3×53cm
0,9kg
Street find with Gers

2022



#19 *Pitufo*
39×66cm
1,9kg
Gift from Alex



#21 *Babette*
61×35cm
3,6 kg
Mariana's find



#20 *Núvol 2*
50×28,5cm
2,1kg
Gift from Alex



#22 *White Bird*
26,8×47,5cm
1,6kg
Gift from Lorenzo

2022



#23 *Esmeralda*
34×51 cm
1,6kg
Gift from Alex



#25 *Wild Puppy*
37×51 cm
2,5kg
Unknown



#24 *Foresti*
35,3×60,5 cm
3,8kg
Gift from Alex



#26 *Robin*
40×57cm
3,9 kg
Unknown

2022



#27 *Marko*
67×37,5cm
3,8kg
Alex's gift



#28 *Prolet*
42×67 cm
6kg
Unknown





**The Office for Small Decision Making
(OfSDM) presents**

**the Small Chair Collection inventory,
a collection by Carmen Gray**

**Exhibition with
Mariana Jurado Rico
in collaboration with
Carmen Gray,
Gersande Schellinx,
and Nicolás Vizcaíno Sanchez**

**Catalogue designed by Gersande Schellinx
Pictures by Carmen Gray**

**Plan B, Amsterdam
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