

high on löw

glen oliver löw





Photo: Mobil by Kartell

“Design
isn’t just
about style.
It’s about
integrity of
materials,
functional
integrity and
intent.”

— Glen Oliver Löw

● Already known as one of the great names in European design, Glen Oliver Löw was the longtime design partner of Antonio Citterio of Milan. Considerate, collaborative and insatiably curious,

German-born Oliver is as approachable as his creations. Superbly functional yet visually beautiful, they’re the results of his “search for truth in materials.”

the essence

● As German design magazine *md* says in its profile of Oliver, he's known for working "from inside to outside, allowing content to work on form. Simply developing an outer shell is not his specialty."

As Oliver says, "I try to understand the essence of

the product ... and allow myself to be guided by this truth when designing." He designs to celebrate, not conceal, function.

The results are clean, simple, modern forms—easy to understand and delightful to use.

"In the beginning, I am not interested in shapes, but in the essence of the product."

— Glen Oliver Löw



Photo: Criterio, Low 98 by Ittala

search for truth

● Early in his career, his “search for truth” led Oliver from Germany to Milan, where he became Antonio Citterio’s design partner for more than a decade, creating acclaimed and accessible works for clients such as Ansgo, Flos, Kartell, Maxdata and Vitra.

In 2000, Oliver returned to his native Germany, where he operates his own studio and teaches at the University of Fine Arts in Hamburg. His products have been awarded numerous design prizes and are part of the permanent exhibition of the MOMA, New York.



Photos from top to bottom: Battista by Kartell, Lastra Lighting System by Flos, Camera/Light Projector by Ansgo

a truthful chair

“Think is the result of open dialogue between engineers, environmentalists and the designer.”

— Oliver on Think

● Oliver's collaboration with Steelcase began with recognition of the common design language, and the accessible approach to design that both appreciated.

Steelcase asked Oliver to partner in developing an easy-to-use work chair that set new standards for environmental responsibility. *md* states, “he basically

“Working with Oliver is like a dream,” says Steelcase Director of Design for North America, James Ludwig.

“His openness meant that even when things got hard—as they do when your goals are so big—we stuck together.”

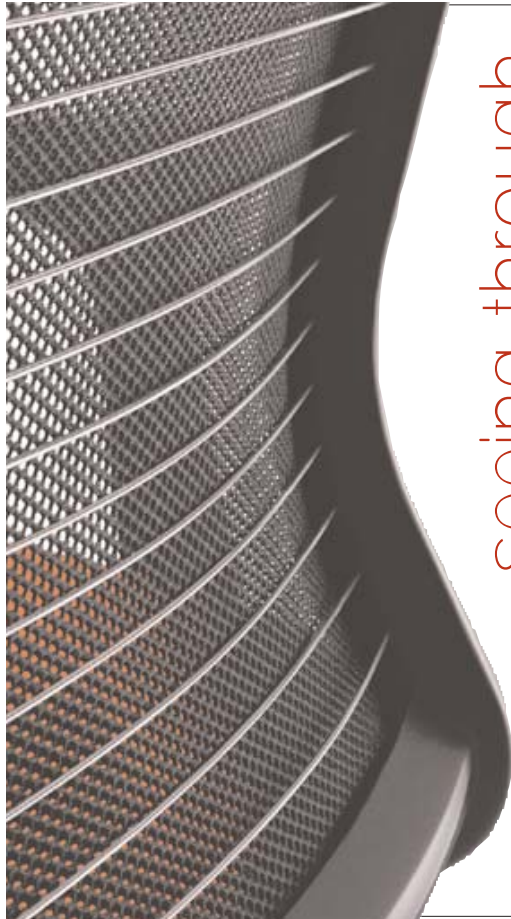
Team members agree, the Think chair is the brainchild of all three disciplines, with the clean aesthetic the



gives preference to companies who live up to their product responsibility by themselves, taking the crucial development and production steps.”

designer hoped for, the technological “intuitiveness” the engineer desired and the complete sustainability the environmentalists sought.

Photo left to right: Niki Bey, *Environmental Consultant, IPU*; Jay Bolus, *Environmental Consultant, McDonough Braungart Design Chemistry (MBDC)*; Kurt Heidmann, PhD, *Chief Engineer, Steelcase Inc.*



seeing through

- In the most obvious sense, Think is a transparent chair. But Oliver views its transparency in much more than its see-through back and open lines.

“Transparency means that you show each component of the chair, that you can read its structure and understand how it works,” he says.

“Nothing is hidden in this chair.”

Transparency also applies to the environmental impact of the materials, manufacturing, transport and life span of Think. You can see the results of its full Life Cycle Assessment at www.steelcase.com.



**“It’s about a
reduction of
physical and
visual
weight.”**

— Oliver on Think

● “We created a very light chair that is mobile and easy to move. The chair is easy to integrate, even into small spaces,” says Oliver of the chair’s lightweight design. At only 32 pounds, Think is a fraction of the weight of comparable chairs, so it consumes less material and less energy to manufacture.

The Think chair is made of up to 41% recycled materials and is up to 99% recyclable. Oliver and the engineering team worked closely together to make sure that, when the time comes, recycling the chair is easy. Think is designed to come apart with common hand tools (hammer, screw driver, etc.) in about five minutes.

32
pounds

41%
recycled

99%
recyclable

● Think's simple design includes a curved frame and a "comfort surface" created by the back and seat flexors. The materials' natural flexibility creates smooth, responsive movement from each user's weight and energy.

Adjustments are still possible, but not necessary.

Steelcase Chief Engineer, Kurt Heidmann, describes sitting in Think "like floating on a cushion of air." Oliver agrees. "I wanted the chair to be human and natural. I wanted it to arrive at the heart of people."

“Why shouldn't sitting in an office be as simple as sitting on the beach?”

— Oliver on Think

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