

DESIGN THE NEW GENERATION

# Young guns with designs on greatness

The heirs of Marc Newson are selling their work to a world that is finally recognising Australian talent, writes **Helen Hawkes.**

Marc Newson may be the Australian poster boy for iconic, international design. But there is a new generation of designers jostling for the title.

Among them is contemporary Melbourne-based designer Shareen Joel, 38, who has already created future design classics in fields spanning apparel and homewares through to domestic hardware and motoring.

Part interior designer/part industrial designer/part brand director, Joel is one of a new breed of Australian creatives, many of whom straddle a number of disciplines in the same way Newson has done so successfully over the past decade.

Her designs are "fashion-driven, in a classic timeless way", she says. "I think it is important that design transcends time."

Joel has run her own design consultancy since 1998 and works for high-profile corporate, residential and retail clients. Major projects have included interior architecture for Macquarie Bank, Seafolly Australia and Bloom Cosmetics and product design for Oluce Italy (task and ceiling lights), Country Road (furniture) and Ford Motor Company (interior and exterior car design, including the carbon fibre Indigo).

Simplicity, balance, elegance and proportion are characteristics that best describe her work, with many projects, such as the Helmet Task Lamp, the Fat Clock and the Entry Light Frame Armchair demonstrating an innovative approach to so-called common objects, ensuring each becomes

an integral part of its intended environment as well as having the potential to become a classic.

The same could be said of the creations of Sydney-based designer Adam Goodrum, 36, who has designed an impressive body of work across multiple disciplines, including architecture and interior design, but with an emphasis on furniture and objects.

His work speaks a diverse language, says Goodrum, who adds that he tries "to resolve design challenges in beautiful objects that have a little bit of whimsy".

There's something slightly playful about much of his work, but it's also incredibly well considered and functional. His stylish modular Armoire screen can be as large or small as you desire and his sculptural Eve ottoman is decadent but divinely comfortable. Currently in production with leading European manufacturer Cappellini is Stitch, a folding chair made from aluminium that closes to a tiny 15 millimetres.

Rivalling Newson in both the talent and the glamour stakes is Argentinian-born, Brisbane-based Alexander Lotersztain, 31.

In 2007 Lotersztain was named one of the top 10 most influential faces in design by *Scene Design Quarterly* and in the top 10 of 100 Young Brightest Australian Achievers Bayer/Bulletin Award.

Like Joel and Goodrum, his body of innovative design work includes furniture, objects and interiors, most of them exhibited and produced internationally.

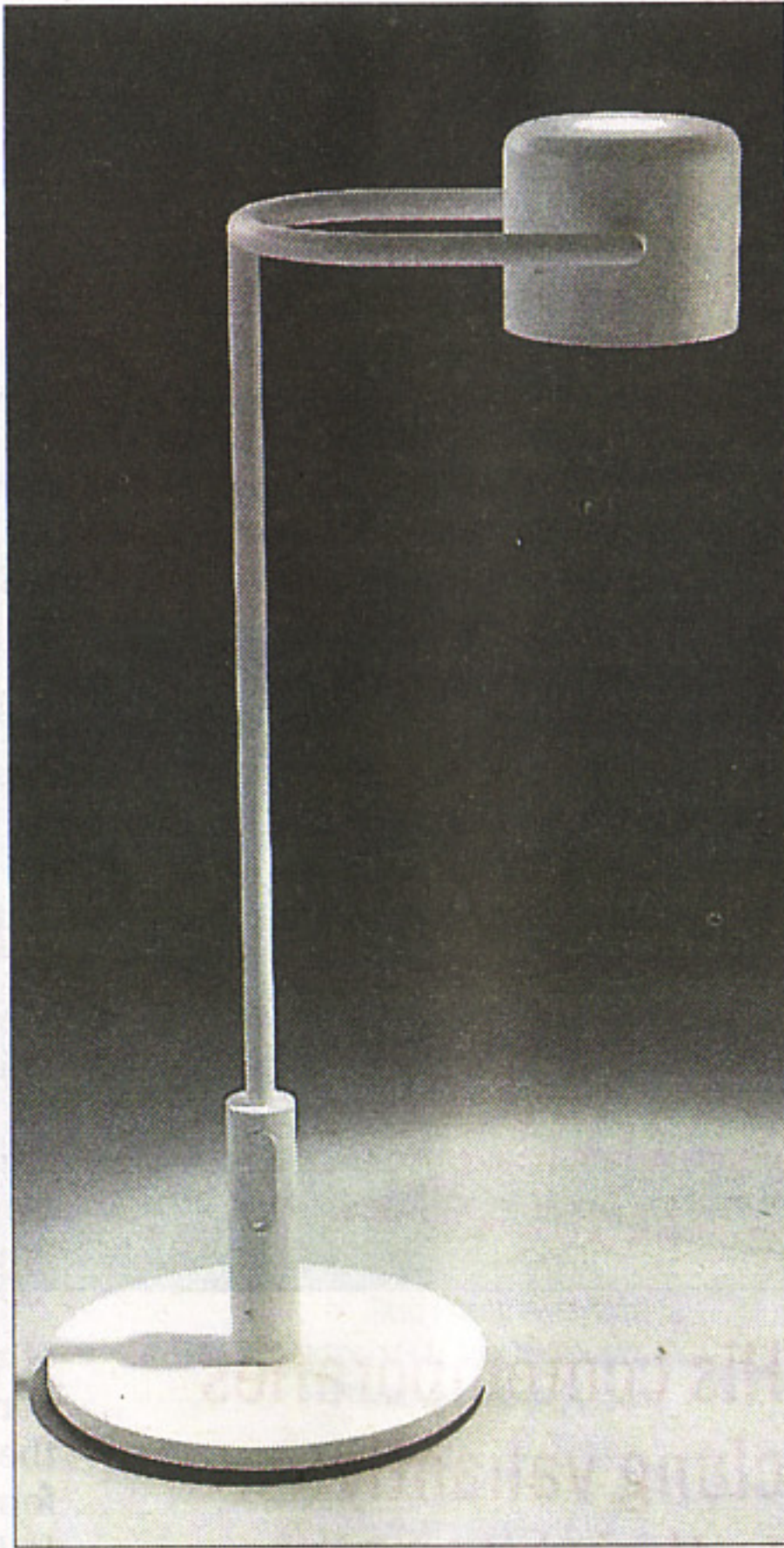
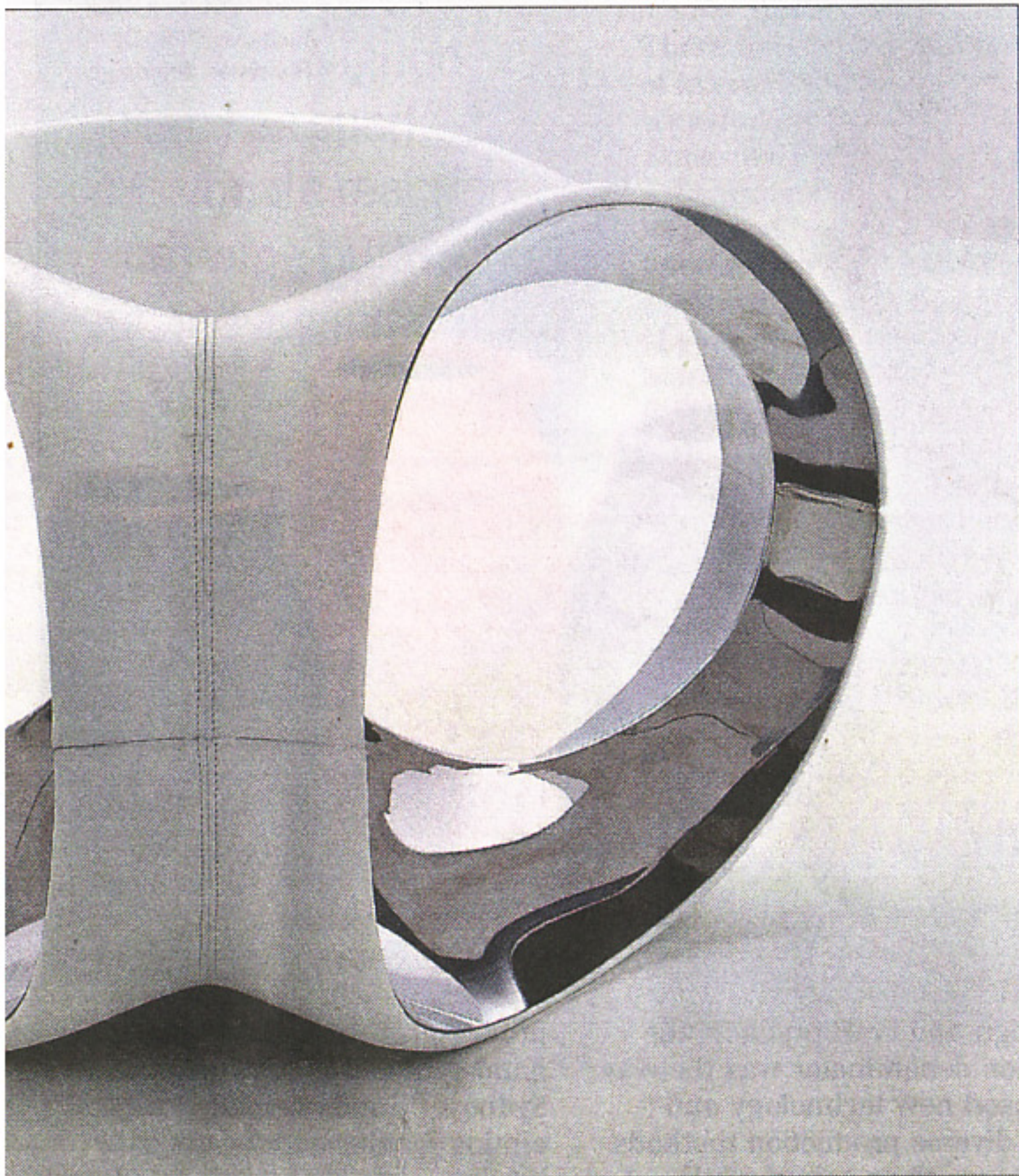
Originally a graduate of Buenos Aires Industrial Design at Ort School, Lotersztain moved to Australia when he was 19 but has worked in Japan, notably at IDEE Headquarters in Tokyo

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Left: Stitch chair made from aluminium, folds down to 15mm, designed by Andrew Goodrum; and right: fitout designed by Shareen Joel. Photo courtesy Andrew Goodrum





(which produced some of Newson's designs), and still travels widely, citing this as his main inspiration.

"When I design a piece I consider not only how we live these days but how the product will appeal to a global market," he says. "How would a person in Japan or Italy see it, for example? Design is very related to culture and heritage."

Most recently Lotersztain oversaw every aspect of interior, image and branding, from bedroom design to layout and glassware for the bar, for the upmarket Limes Hotel, part of designhotels.com, which opened its doors in Brisbane in June.

He has also signed a distribution agreement with StyleCraft Australia-Singapore to distribute his furniture range including an indoor/outdoor chair series, Lerod, made of zinc-plated steel rod; and Stump, a plastic stool originally geared towards the cafe market.

Of course Lotersztain would not be at the front of the avant garde design pack unless he had green credentials and, in this case, he is heading a team which works directly with village communities in rural Africa to develop



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commercially viable design products that can be made by local artisans.

Back in Sydney, design team Janos Korban, 47, a metal specialist, and Stefanie Flaubert, 42, an architect, have developed a reputation for sophisticated, organic sculptural objects as well as furniture and lighting.

They work mainly in metal with their pieces in demand for architectural projects including the Lumiere building in Sydney, where an enormous noodle sculpture is suspended, and the Ian Shrager hotel in Miami, where they supplied screens and poolside furniture.

Of their design process Flaubert explains: "We look to the growth patterns in nature to develop ideas. Design falls out of experimentation and play and we extract themes for investigation from the mathematics and geometry of the natural world."

Says Joel: "In Europe, 90 per cent of companies use designers for their brands and products. In Australia, that figure is 8 per cent."

"But Australian design is now becoming recognised internationally and Australian manufacturers could be tapping into that pool of contemporary talent."

Clockwise from above left: Andrew Goodrum's Eve ottoman; Helmet task lamp by Shareen Joel; and views of Limes Hotel, Brisbane, interior design by Alexander Lotersztain. Photos courtesy Andrew Goodrum, Design Hotels and Shareen Joel Design

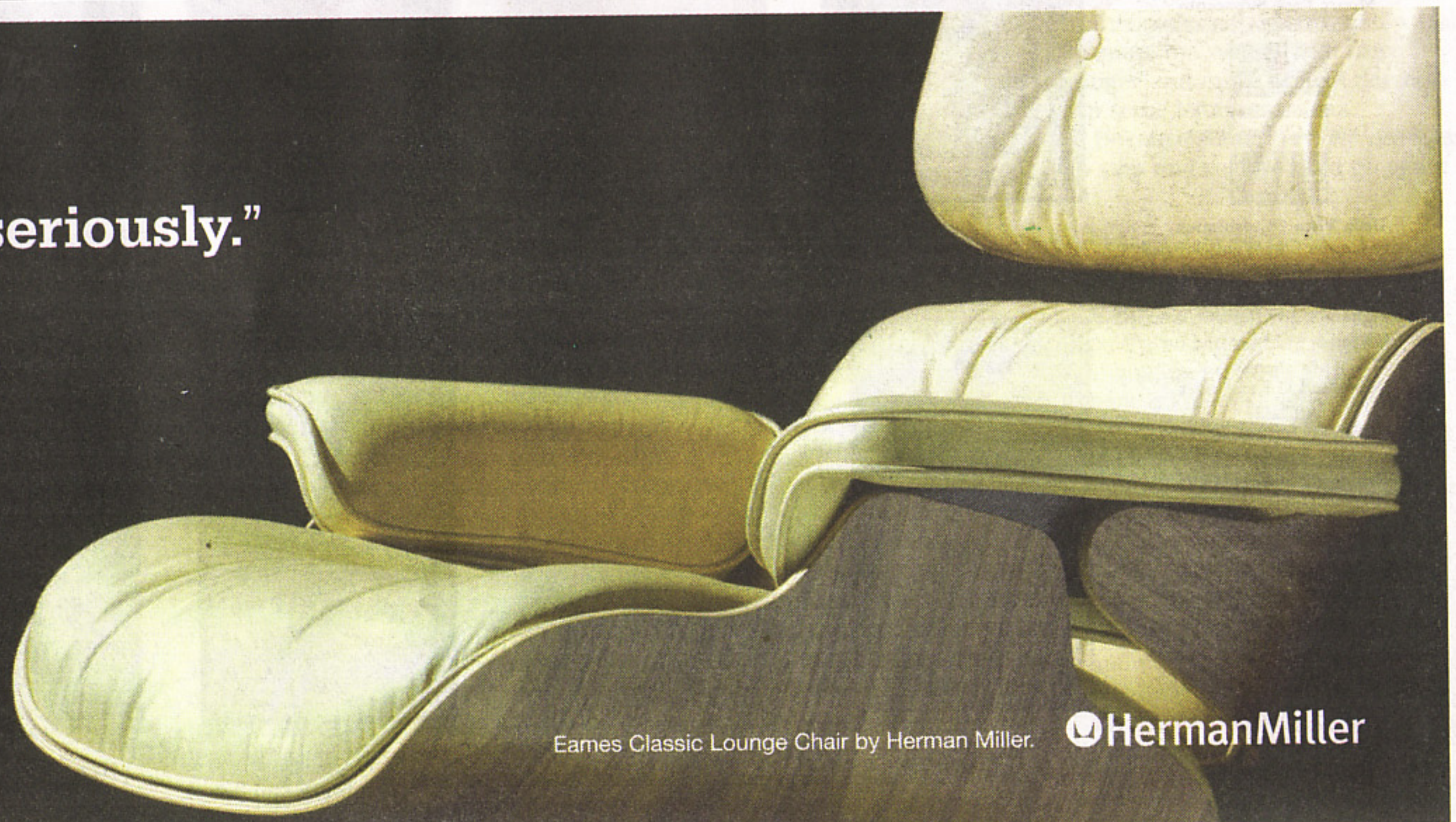
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