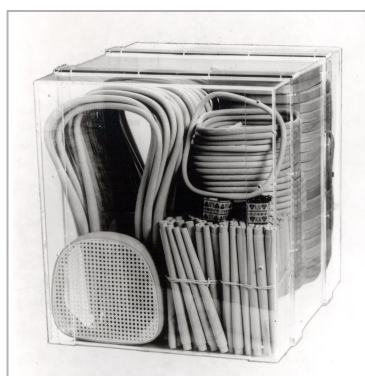


Press Release  
Frankenberg/Shanghai, March 2016

## **THONET at the “Festival of Design – Design Republic, Design Commune” in Shanghai**

**Exhibition about the importance of chair 214, curated by Neri&Hu architects**

From 6-19 March 2016, the interdisciplinary “Festival of Design – Design Republic, Design Commune” initiated by Neri&Hu architects will premiere simultaneously with the “Design Shanghai” trade fair. The agenda focuses on talks and workshops along with installations and exhibitions, including the exhibition series “Chasing Modernism”. It deals with the world-famous Vienna Coffee House Chair, chair 214 (formerly No. 14) from the German manufacturer THONET and its importance in the history of modern design. The highlight of the exhibition, which also includes other THONET furniture, is a one cubic metre shipping crate. The crates, each one able to hold 36 of the chairs completely disassembled, were used in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to ship the chair 214 around the world. On 9 March 2016 Thorsten Muck, Managing Director, THONET GmbH, will speak about the chair, which was one of the first European export products ever to reach the Orient, in his lecture “THONET – The Birth of Modernism”. At the same time, he will offer interesting insights into the traditional furniture manufacturer’s almost 200 years of corporate history. A chat with Lyndon Neri, founder of Neri&Hu architects will follow the lecture.



The exhibition “Chasing Modernism” demonstrates the enormous success of chair 214 alongside the historical shipping crate invented by Michael Thonet, which was an epoch-making invention in light of the conditions at the time: by 1930 Thonet had sold more than 50 million copies of the Vienna Coffee House Chair, which is considered the most-produced chair in the world. In addition to other THONET bentwood classics, the tubular steel icons S 64 by Marcel Breuer and S 43 by Mart Stam from the Bauhaus era are included in the exhibition. They, too, are milestones of modern design for which the company is responsible. The contemporary barstool 404 H by designer Stefan Diez and chair 130 by Naoto Fukasawa both build a bridge between THONET’s history and the present. The two designers will also give lectures during the festival: Naoto Fukasawa on 6 March, and Stefan Diez on 12 March 2016.

The venue for the event is the “Design Republic Commune” in the Jing’an district’s “Design Republic” right in the centre of Shanghai. The building is a former Victorian style police station, which was perfectly converted by the two internationally acclaimed architects Lyndon Neri and Rossana Hu. As an interdisciplinary platform for design, “Design Republic Commune” houses a “Design Store”, the “Design Library” and the “Design Commune”, which offers spaces for exhibitions. This special location is about the relationship between people and everyday objects, the discovery of beauty in

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everyday things. The two-week festival aims to gather together the design community in an exciting and unexpected way and to emphasise the open, interdisciplinary and innovative character of design.

## **Exhibition “Chasing Modernism” during the “Festival of Design – Design Republic, Design Commune”**

6–19 March 2016

## **Lecture by Managing Director Thorsten Muck about “THONET – The Birth of Modernism”**

9 March 2016, 3:30 p.m. until 4:30 p.m.

### **Design Republic**

511 Jiangning Lu  
Jing'an District  
Shanghai

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We would appreciate receiving an author's copy in the event of publication.

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### ***Thonet – future-oriented furniture design with a long tradition***

*The unique success story of Thonet began with the work of master carpenter Michael Thonet. Since establishing his first workshop in Boppard on the Rhine river in 1819, the name Thonet has stood for high-quality, innovative and elegant furniture. The breakthrough came with the iconic chair No. 14, the so-called Vienna Coffee House Chair: the pioneering technique of bending solid beech wood enabled the mass production of chairs for the first time. The second milestone in design history was the tubular steel furniture by the famous Bauhaus architects Mart Stam, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Marcel Breuer in the 1930s. At the time, Thonet was the world's largest producer of these tubular steel furniture designs, which are considered timeless today.*

*For the company today, the continuous process of innovation stands in the foreground alongside a focus on tradition and fine craftsmanship. Thonet collaborates with renowned national and international designers. In addition, some of the furniture is designed by the in-house Thonet Design Team. All of the furniture is produced in the company-owned manufacturing facility and, following the motto “Individuality is our standard”, custom-tailored solutions are part of everyday life in Frankenberg. Thorsten Muck is the Managing Director of Thonet GmbH at the corporate head offices*

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*and production site Frankenberg/Eder (Germany). The descendants of Michael Thonet, the fifth and sixth generations, are actively involved with the company's business as partners and sales managers.*