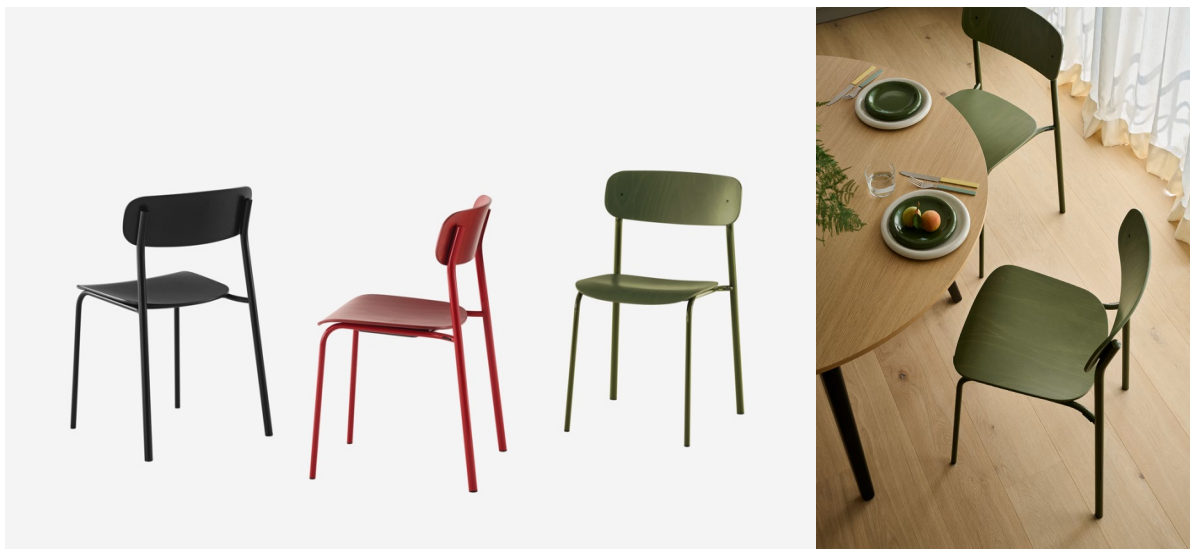


Press release  
Frankenberg, October 2024

## Versatile stackable seating on four legs: the new S 243 tubular steel chair Design: Frank Rettenbacher, 2024

Tubular steel has been part of Thonet's DNA since the 1930s. The company's portfolio includes some iconic modern furniture designs that make use of this material, such as the cantilever chairs S 43 and S 33 by Mart Stam and the S 32 by Marcel Breuer. Thonet's latest addition to the tubular steel family is the S 243, designed by Frank Rettenbacher; his concept and design take their cues from those iconic predecessors. It combines a tubular steel frame with moulded plywood in the seat and backrest, paring back the materials to maximise form and function. The S 243, which Thonet will be presenting in numerous versions and colours at Orgatec 2024, is a lightweight, four-leg, stacking chair that responds to the requirements of today's homes and offices. A chair that fits naturally into the world of today and tomorrow.



Thonet's new S 243 tubular steel chair is a versatile piece with clean lines. "The objective in developing this product was to create a pure, modest shape that would accurately reflect the timelessness of the Thonet brand," explains Austrian designer Frank Rettenbacher, who lives and works in Amsterdam. "The challenge was to combine these characteristics in a chair that was still stackable." The result is a model that pays subtle homage to Thonet's tubular steel history while remaining contemporary and highly recognisable. In terms of its shape and range of uses, the S 243 displays the high degree of agility and fusion expected of furniture in today's living and working spaces. The chair is a unique piece that exudes stability and stands alone creatively. Its design makes reference to Thonet's tubular steel tradition without appearing cloyingly nostalgic. "Modularity was another important aspect of the product development, and all the components of the S 243 have been designed to be easily replaced or changed. This increases the longevity of the chair and highlights the company's ambition to be actively sustainable," states designer Frank Rettenbacher.

The S 243 has a clear, logical design: the two supporting back legs have a diameter of 25 mm, whereas the diameter of the front legs is a slimmer 18 mm. The front legs form one continuous visible line from the front side to where they meet and connect with the back legs, giving the chair its airy, lightweight appearance. The dimensions of the moulded plywood seat and backrest are balanced with those of the tubular steel frame, though the frame plays a more defining role in the chair's design. Technical connecting elements have been reduced to a minimum: at first glance, only the rivets that

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connect the backrest to the back legs are visible. The chair is available in a variety of colourful versions: as the S 243 with moulded plywood seat and backrest, as the S 243 SPV (fully upholstered seat, moulded plywood backrest) and as the S 243 PV (fully upholstered seat, backrest with tacked-on flat upholstery on the front). There are two options for the tubular steel frame: chrome-plated or powder-coated in colours ranging from muted to vibrant. The S 243 measures 48 x 79 x 52 cm, has a seat height of 47 cm (48 cm with upholstery) and weighs approximately 5.5 kg. This stacking chair can also be optionally equipped with a fixed folding row connector.

Suited for a wide variety of settings, such as restaurants, the S 243 is also perfect for creating row-seating arrangements. Its technical and aesthetic characteristics are an ideal fit for the contract sector, but its unique, understated design also makes it a superb addition to private homes. “Even as a young boy, I sat on Thonet chairs at our family dining table, without actually knowing that they were Thonet chairs. They have a natural presence as pieces of furniture, seamlessly blending into any type of space,” says designer Frank Rettenbacher. “And that is precisely what we hoped to achieve with this new chair: it should be timeless and subtle, yet iconic and at home in any situation.”

## About Thonet

Thonet has been making furniture for the residential and contract sectors since 1819. With a passion for bentwood and tubular steel, the German company produces iconic designs – from its famous coffee house chair and Bauhaus classics by Mart Stam, Marcel Breuer and Mies van der Rohe, to contemporary pieces by leading modern designers. Combining the latest production technology with traditional craftsmanship has made Thonet one of the world’s favourite furniture makers. Its production facility in Frankenberg continues to create innovative products that are designed to last. Thonet furniture is synonymous with quality, functionality and a timeless design language. Sustainability is engrained in the Thonet story. From the earliest days, Michael Thonet’s first bentwood designs were not just aesthetically remarkable. They expressed a deep understanding of efficient use of resources. Thonet furniture has a very long life cycle and is built to be handed down from one generation to the next. It can also be revitalised in Frankenberg upon request.

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