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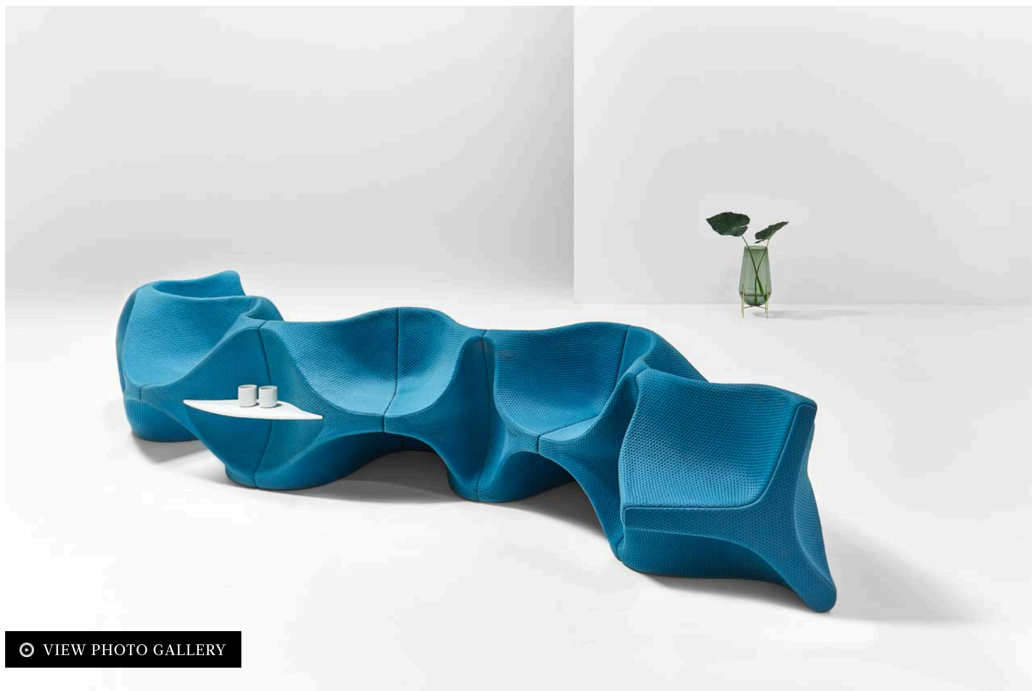
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ALL HOME FURNISHINGS

See How Karim Rashid’s Heartbeat Gave Nienkämper Quite the Challenge

10.08.19 || Posted by Caroline Williamson || Home Furnishings || Main



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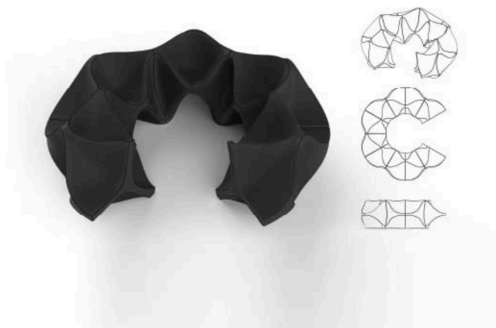
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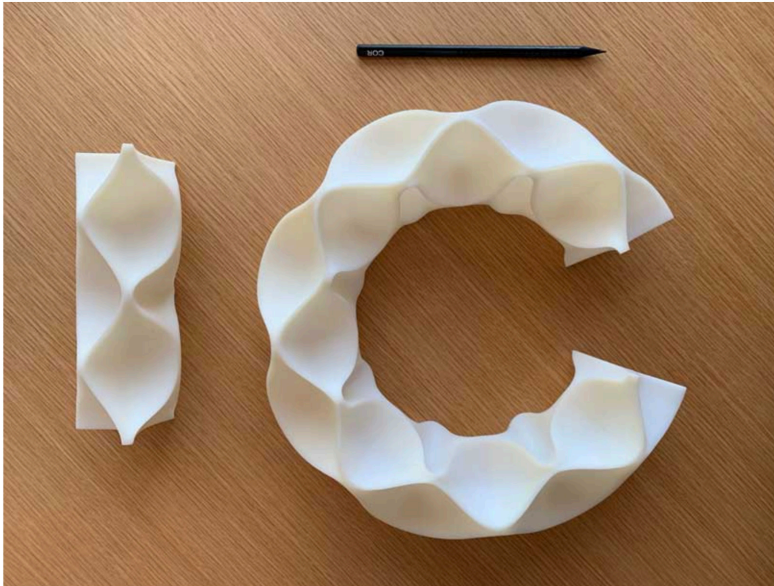
SUBMIT

Heartbeat, imagined by Karim Rashid and engineered by Nienkämper, debuted at NeoCon 2019 and proved to be an instant showstopper, winning the Workplace Bench category in the HiP Awards, as well as one of just six Best of NeoCon Editor’s Choice Awards. Heartbeat functions as a living, breathing system. Designed to facilitate conversation, Heartbeat suggests sharing a “heart to heart” with your fellow human beings. This incredibly complex piece was a year plus in the making and took multiple iterations to perfect. From working with an innovative molder in the industry who could tackle Heartbeat’s grooves and twists, to searching for a rare fabric that could offer a four-way stretch, Heartbeat proved to be a challenging feat. Here’s a look at the journey Nienkämper took to bring this product to market, in this month’s Deconstruction.



Rendering

Heartbeat was first presented to Nienkämper by world-renowned industrial designer Karim Rashid in February of 2018. Rashid's inspiration behind the design was to address the social alienation that contract design can often impose on public spaces. With this in mind, he created Heartbeat to alleviate stagnation and spark conversation with one's fellow human beings.



Small scale model

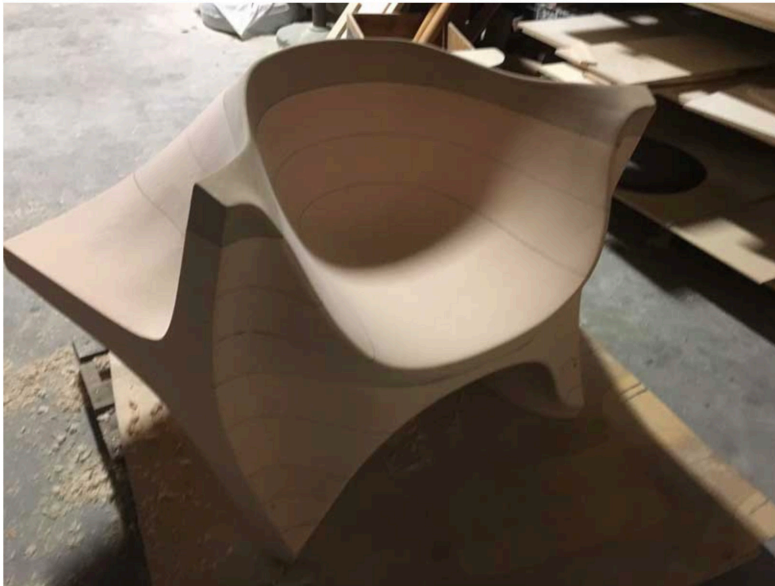
Initially, Nienkämper produced a few small scale models of Karim's lounge to play with the different configurations and get a sense for how it could facilitate conversation between those sitting in it.



Top half full-size model



Top half full-size model with (L to R) Ann-Marie Snook, Rebecca Nienkämper, and Klaus Nienkämper



Pattern

In May of 2018, production of the first Heartbeat pattern kicked off and required handwork to open up the seat areas as the modifications resulted in narrower seats. The CAD drawings were then modified on the other two sections to open up the seat areas.



First tool complete



First tool complete



Flexible foam

The first part of the Heartbeat lounge was produced in flexible foam in April of 2019.



Low-density rigid foam



Cut-in parts

Then, Nienkämper decided to cut parts in half to make it easier to upholster and handle. Nienkämper needed to source fabric that offered a four-way stretch given Heartbeat's unique shape in order to ensure the highest quality upholstery.



Beginning of upholstery

Upholstery was ready to begin in May of 2019 and assembly and attachment methods were decided. The sofa sections are dowelled together with wood and steel to ensure solid construction. Optional magnetic connections provide additional flexibility, reconfiguration, and ease of assembly.



The finished product is a reconfigurable and scalable system that is composed of three distinct seating elements—Straight, Concave, and Convex—which allow for Heartbeat to grow and change depending upon the needs of its environment. Repositioning these three elements allows for the creation of unique, morphing, undulating, physical landscapes.





Heartbeat is instantly recognized for its unique sculptural form and layout, which is flexible, reconfigurable, and one-of-a-kind. It provides seating on both sides and can be configured in straight lines, circles, or serpentine shapes.