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# Charles Hollis Jones

Clearing a Path with Innovative New Designs

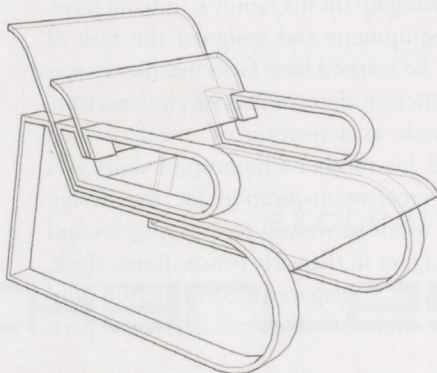
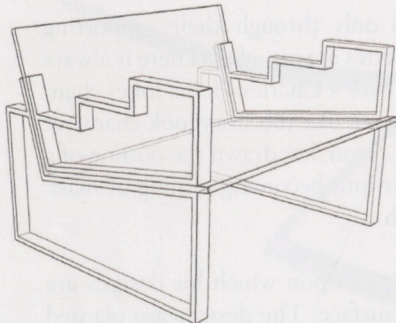
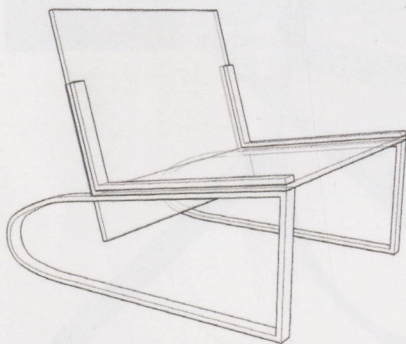
BY JO LAURIA | ILLUSTRATIONS BY DOMINIC FILOSA

**BEING ON THE EDGE IS WHERE ACCLAIMED** designer Charles Hollis Jones finds his greatest inspirations. It is at knife's edge—at the edge of possibility—where he cuts through clutter and finds the clarity that guides his design innovations. Recently, he introduced a new line of acrylic furniture appropriately named “Clearer Clear.” Thus far, Jones has released four new seating pieces including the “Clearer Clear Waterfall,” “Ziggurat,” and “Crescent” chairs, along with the “Checker” rocker.

After more than forty years in the design business, he continues to do what he does best: bending, stretching, slicing, and shaping acrylic into illusionistic “seating sculptures” that are beautiful and functional furniture. He achieves this by exploiting the optical properties of crystal clear acrylic and by outlining the fluid contours of his transparent constructions in gleaming polished-nickel metal frames. Seen from behind, as chairs are most often viewed, the chair backs and seats seem to disappear “into thin air” creating the illusion of invisibility. The placement of the “clearer-clear” acrylic fools the eye into thinking that the chairs are weightless and transparent, subverting the reality of their solidity

and tactility. In fact, it is only through their supporting frames that the chair silhouettes are revealed. There is always that sense of enchantment with a Charles Hollis Jones chair: one imagines that the designer, like the storybook character in *Harold and the Purple Crayon*, has drawn the outline of a chair in space and coaxed it into becoming a thing of mass, weight, and volume through pure trickery.

The underlying principles upon which his designs are based run deep below the surface. The designs are planted firmly in his youth growing up on his family's Indiana farm. Surrounded by farm equipment and assigned the task of tending the dairy cows, he learned how farm machinery was engineered and how function determined its construction. His father's adjunct trade as a restorer of wood covered bridges in Indiana, and his mother's homespun skills as a quilt maker, provided creative inspiration for the design lines that later evolved when he moved to Los Angeles and began his career as a designer in the early 1960s. Jones' sleek, visual forms that feature transparent construction and achieve a bold, graphic effect of silhouette derive, in part,



from watching his father work on restoring bridges. "I saw so many bridges exposed to the bones of their frames," he recalls. He credits this experience as giving him a firm understanding of the structural engineering of the armature, and engendering an appreciation for the stark beauty and strength of the revealed skeletal form.

He also believes that the other part that contributed to his early sensory education and helped shape his design vocabulary originates from studying the intricate patterns his mother created for the designs of her hand stitched quilts. He would later translate this visual information onto drafting paper, conceptualizing and inscribing the geometric outlines that would come to define his work. This is most readily apparent in the new chair designs: The crescent-arch shape of the "Crescent" chair is a translation of the quilt design "Cathedral Window;" the "Ziggurat" chair profile is inspired by the "Log Cabin" quilt pattern; and the "Clearer Clear Waterfall" chair and the "Checker" rocker are interpretations of the popular quilt pattern, the "Double Wedding Ring." Charles' early boyhood experiences fueled his intellectual curiosity for all things designed and set him on a clear path to create a singular stylistic language—a clarity of vision that continues to shine brightly in the design galaxy. ☐

"Simple classic lines, great design and quality of workmanship distinguishes Charles Hollis Jones furniture and accessories...I have potential customers literally stop their cars in the middle of the street on La Cienega Boulevard to look at my showroom windows when I have a new display of Jones pieces."

—Kim Veloso  
Proprietor LA Moderne

CH PROMOTION