

# Case Study



## The Cherner Chair Company's Multiflex



After receiving numerous requests from fellow architects to see their father's designs reissued, Benjamin and Thomas Cherner formed The Cherner Chair Company in 1999. Utilizing their father's original drawings and specifications, The Cherner Chair Company has brought back into production many of Norman Cherner's most popular designs. His most recognized design, the molded plywood 'Cherner Chair', is found in furniture collections worldwide and appeared in Norman Rockwell's 1961 painting "The Artist at Work" on the cover of the Saturday Evening Post.

Approximately four years ago The Cherner Chair Company approached Industrial Woodworking Corporation (IWC) to manufacture their line of Multiflex Storage pieces after first meeting at the International Contemporary Furniture Fair in New York City.

"Our initial experience with IWC was very positive but our design proved too complex to produce," said Benjamin Cherner. Mr. Cherner went back to the drawing board, came up with a new design and in the fall of 2011 approached IWC again in the hopes that IWC would consider producing the storage pieces. "We found that IWC was the only fabricator that understood our design intent and quality expectations. IWC had the expertise and experience to get the design fabricated and finished to the highest industry standards."

Even though the design was simplified, there were still challenges for IWC. Primarily, the standard approach for machining the mitre assembly did not accommodate desired appearances and assembly control.

"Without getting too technical, the geometric control of the machining of the mitre assembly was attained by taking the exact opposite approach to standard practices" stated Dave Stumpf, Director of Business Development at IWC. "IWC manufactures other products that paralleled the Cherner challenge for desired quality and visual outcome, and processes from these products were employed for the mitre assembly."



In addition, custom jigs and fixtures were designed to assist the assembler in eliminating variables that make this form of assembly difficult.

Finish quality for the Multiflex storage cabinets was of critical importance. IWC's Quality Manager placed strict material requirements on suppliers for consistency. Specific machining and finishing processes were implemented for this project to control material and color variances. Stain and finish sample approvals were completed early in the cabinet development process. In order to meet Cherner's high standards, finishing was completed in steps, throughout the manufacturing process, with final finishing after the carcass was assembled.

***"IWC has the staff to resolve almost any design issue from structure to finish. Although we came back to IWC with a design that was 90% ready to go, it was the resolution of other 10% that made it possible."***

**– Benjamin Cherner**

The Cherner Multiflex is available for purchase online at [www.chernerstore.com](http://www.chernerstore.com).

Norman Cherner studied and taught at the Columbia University Fine Arts Department and was an instructor at the Museum of Modern Art in New York and authored many books. Benjamin Cherner is co-founder of the Cherner Chair Company and heads the multi-disciplinary design studio Chernerdesign. His most recent work, a duplex penthouse in New York's East Village, was featured in Dwell magazine.

Since 1995, Industrial Woodworking Corporation has been a tier 1 OEM supplier to the West Michigan office furniture industry and the healthcare case goods industry, consistently maintaining a strong commitment to the environment. Vertically integrated, IWC manufactures products using wood panels, laminates, veneers, solid wood and thermo-film. IWC also offers water borne and HAPS compliant wood finishing. Our production team can integrate wood based components, glass, steel, hardware, aluminum extrusions, injection molded and thermoformed plastics to produce purchase complete, market ready products.

