

Cherry, Ash and Welded Steel Chair

Black cherry, American ash, welded steel

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The artist's words:

I have been building furniture and useful items for over 20 years from wood. I recently learned to weld and have begun to incorporate that welded steel into my work.

This chair, with its warm woods of red colored black cherry on the seat and yellow ash on the back that contrast with the slender black steel framework stands 41" high x 16" wide x 19" deep. From the front, the proportions of the back and seat are like a torso with wide shoulders and hips with a very tiny waistline. The chair has a chunky seat that is a 2" thick slab of cherry. The seat has the shape of an equilateral triangle with a gently rounded apex that points toward the back of the chair. The top, bottom and sides of the seat have crisp squared edges while the front edge of the seat has a smooth rounded curve from its top to its crisp bottom edge. The back of the chair is composed of six skinny, tall planks that rise up like splayed fingers from the seat. The tops of these slats form a gentle arc, similar to the tips of the fingers on a hand. At its highest point, in the center of the arc, the back rises nearly 30 inches from the seat and accounts for a little more than half of the height of the chair.

Triangles reverberate throughout its design. The six tall slats, similar to those in a picket fence, fan out as they rise up from below a triangular seat where they converge like a triangle with its apex pointing downwards. On the front edge of the seat, even the grain forms a subtle triangular shape. The three legs upon which the chair rests form a triangular footprint. The legs all splay outwards from the seat like the legs of a tripod. The two front legs are turned so that a square edge faces front, alluding to yet more triangles even though the 1" steel bars which make up the legs are square. About a foot from the floor, at a height a bit more than half of the distance to the bottom of the seat, the front legs are joined by a square cross bar. The bar is thinner than the legs, with a height and depth of about 1/2" that of the legs. Two more of these narrow steel bars extend back from the crossbar in front.

These two bars are attached flush to the center of the back of the cross bar with a one inch gap between them.

The two bars extend back on either side of and are attached to the rear leg. They continue on back six inches beyond the single leg at the back of the chair.

The cross bar and two perpendicular bars create a capital T laid flat with its thin horizontal top at the front of the chair and the thicker vertical stem, outlined with the two bars, extending toward the back. The rear leg is held in place between the two narrow shafts of what would be the vertical stem of the T.

From the front, it appears as though the slatted back is attached to the seat of the chair. It is not until we view it from the side that we see that the back is not only a several inches away from the rear edge of the seat but also that it tilts back away from the base of the chair. The slatted fan back of the chair is supported on a leg of its own that meets the rear leg of the chair at the floor. This square rod that supports the back construction is of the same dimensions as the chair's three legs. While the rear leg leans slightly forward, this fourth bar tilts away at an angle of 20 degrees. This fourth "leg" is secured to the rest of the chair by the same two narrow square rods that hold the rear leg of the seat construction – the stem of the T that extends back from the front crossbar. These narrow rods extend and inch beyond the fourth "leg". This part of the base resembles an upside down capital A.

A few inches above the cross bar of the upside down A is where the bottom of the planks of the backrest of the chair converge. They are held in place at the back of the chair by two black metal straps – bands of metal 3" high x ¼" thick. They span the width of the back within fractions of an inch of the width of the fanned planks. They are intersected by the square rod that is attached to the rear leg and the black metal against the yellow toned wood resembles a top-heavy capital I with a long top bar and shorter bottom one. Each plank is held in place with two brass screws: one in the top band and the second in the bottom.