

# Lilly Reich

1885 - 1947



The wall that has hidden her talent has begun to crack. Hopefully it will come tumbling down and she will gain the place in design history that she deserves.  
-Albert Pfeiffer, VP of Design Management at Knoll

# Biography



- Born June 16, 1885 in Berlin
- Initially designed textiles & women's clothing—an early hint at her future furniture design with contrasting textures & innovative use of fabrics
- At 23 she moved to Vienna in 1908 to work for modernist designer Josef Hoffman
- 1912 joined Deutsche Werkbund a government sponsored organization which promoted German products & designs
- 1914 opened her own studio at 29 & had a solid reputation in furniture design
- She was so revered that in 1920 was named the first women director of the Deutsche Werkbund. As director she was responsible for a US exhibit at the Museum of Art, Newark, NJ which displayed thousands of pieces of German design

# Lilly & Mies



MR Armchair (refined into the Brno chair)



- Met Ludwig Mies Van der Rohe at the Werkbund (he was the Vice President from 1926-1932)
- 1926 became his personal & professional partner for 13 years until he emigrated to the US in 1938
- In 1927 the Werkbund presented the influential exhibition "Die Wohnung" (The Dwelling), which included the Weissenhof Siedlung (Weissenhof Housing Estate), an experimental group of model apartment buildings built in a suburb of Stuttgart
- In 1930 Mies became director of the Bauhaus School & Reich joined the faculty as the 1<sup>st</sup> women to teach interior design (which included furniture design)

# Lily & Mies cont.

- Best known furniture from this period are the Barcelona & Brno Chair. Albert Pfeiffer states that she left the overall concepts to Mies with Reich “compulsively attending to refinements & details.”
- “Mies rarely solicited anybody's' comments but was always eager to hear her opinions.”
- “Mies did not fully develop any contemporary furniture successfully before or after his collaboration with Reich” –Pfeiffer

Barcelona  
Chair



Brno Chair

MR Side  
Chair

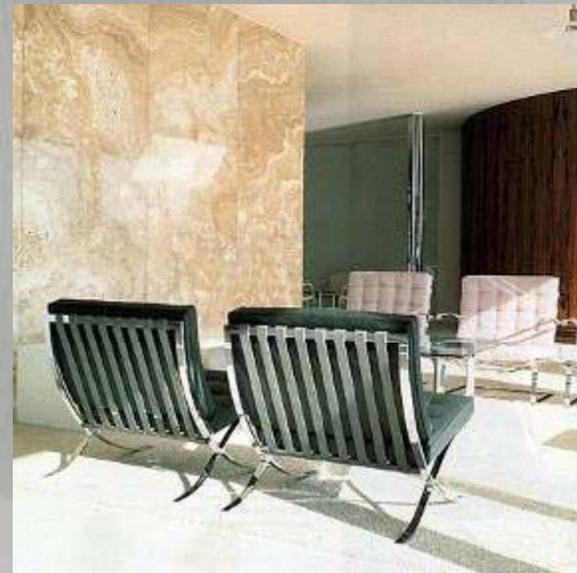


- Reich worked on the interiors for both the celebrated 1929 Barcelona Pavilion & the Tugendhat House in Brno

Barcelona Pavilion



Tugendhat House



# Reich's Interiors



# WWII & After

- Reich continued to manage Mies business & personal affairs in Germany until his death
- Saved over 2,000 of Mies drawings & 900 of her own by hiding them in a barn outside Berlin. They're now part of MOMA's Mies archives
- Reich's studio was bombed in 1943 & she was drafted into a forced-labor civil engineering organization until the end of WWII
- In 1945 began to revive the Deutsche Werkbund but she died at age 62 in 1947 before its completion in 1950



1931 Garden Table  
(LR 500) Tubular  
steel & beech  
veneer over  
plywood; MOMA

The erasure of Lilly Reich from the history of Mies then, was necessary to promote him to genius and his work to the realm of Art.

- Gill Matthewson

# Standing in the Shadows?

She is a shadowy figure, existing almost exclusively in the margins and footnotes of books, between the lines, and in the lapses and discrepancies of accounts of Mies' life and work.

It is, however, a strong shadow.

I believe that someone of importance cast it.



Gill Matthewson's "Standing in the Shadows"; NZ Architect & lecturer Master's thesis was titled *sex lies and the barcelona pavilion*

# Links

## Biography:

- o <http://www.core77.com/awid/reich.html>
- o Standing in the Shadows:  
<http://www.architecture.auckland.ac.nz/common/library/1995/11/i4/THEHTML/papers/mathwson/front.htm>
- o [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lilly\\_Reich](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lilly_Reich)
- o [http://www.modernfurnitureclassics.com/index.php/main\\_page/designers/designer\\_id/530](http://www.modernfurnitureclassics.com/index.php/main_page/designers/designer_id/530)

## Images:

- o <http://www.tugendhat-villa.cz/html.en/>
- o <http://www.alivar.com/contract/tugendhat.htm>
- o <http://www.danda.be/reviews/116/>
- o [http://www.bauhaus.de/bauhaus1919/biographien/biographie\\_reich.htm](http://www.bauhaus.de/bauhaus1919/biographien/biographie_reich.htm)
- o <http://www.tempiespazi.toscana.it/spazi/madri/htm/05.html>

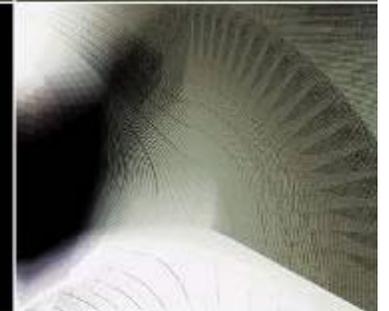


Perriand posing for the publicity shots for the chaise longue with a daringly short skirt & a necklace of ball bearings

# Charlotte Perriand

1903 - 1999

"A sincere and constant search for a modern living art"



# Early Years

- Born in Paris but grew up both in Paris & the rural mountain regions of Savoie (SE France) on her grandparents farm
- Had early exposure to designs tailored to the human form—her father was a tailor & her mother was a haute couture seamstress
- In 1920 at 17 enrolled in Ecole de l'Union Centrale des Arts Decoratifs to study furniture design for 5 years under Henri Rapen
- In 1926 she gutted the apartment she shared with her 1<sup>st</sup> husband & transformed it into metal & glass bar—a “machine age interior”
- Read Le Corbusier's books & in 1927 at 24 strode into his studio & asked for a job. His response: “We don't embroider cushions here.”
- Undaunted she continued to create furniture from her apartment & had a 1 woman exhibit at the Salon d'Automne



# Le Corbusier Years

- Her collection of aluminum & chromed steel tubular furniture caught the attention of Pierre Jeanneret who then dragged his cousin Le Corbusier to the exhibit—not long after she was offered the position of head of his 'furniture equipment' division
- In collaboration with Jeanneret, she designed 3 iconic chairs. One for conversation (the Slingback Chair), one for relaxation (the LC2 Grand Comfort) and one for sleeping (B306 Chaise Lounge)



# Furniture Designed at Le Corbusier's Studio





Displays at the  
Pompidou Center

- During the early 1930s, traveled to Modernist conferences in Moscow & Athens & developed fittings for Le Corbusier's architectural projects including Pavilion Suisse student accommodations, Salvation Army headquarters in Paris & Le Corbusier's own apartment
- In 1931 founded UAM Union des Artistes Modernes with Jeanneret



'Barrel' Refuge 1938



Charlotte Perriand  
*Refuge Bivouac*  
1936-1937

*Arcs 1600,  
Résidence La  
Cascade, 1969*



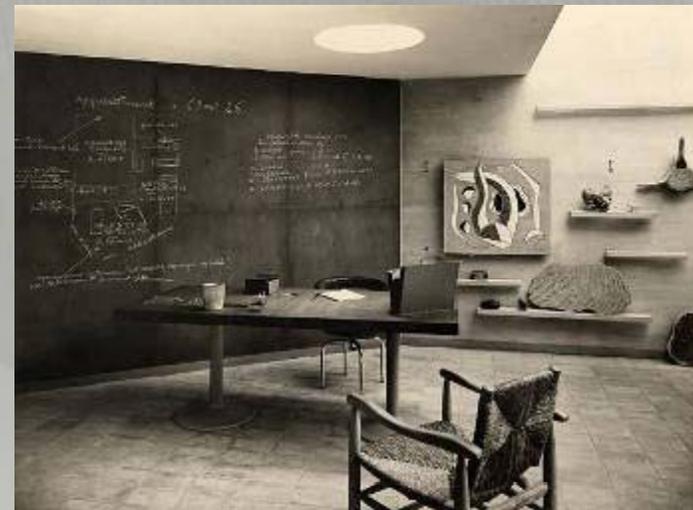
Savoie  
Cascade  
South

- Began to work in bamboo, rustic wood & metal—shocking at the time
- 1937 left Le Corbusier's studio to collaborate on projects with her friend the artist Fernand Leger in the Savoie region

Exposition de l'habitation, Salon des arts ménagers, 1936

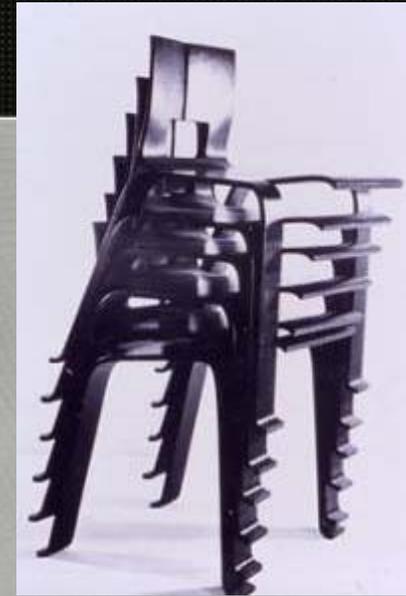


*La Maison du Jeune Homme*,  
Exposition internationale de  
Bruxelles, 1935



# WWII & After

- When WWII broke out she returned to Paris & formed a joint partnership with Jean Prouve & Jeanneret designing prefabricated aluminum buildings
- 1940 accepted a position as advisor to the industrial design Ministry of Trade in Japan.
- 1942 was forced to leave Japan & was trapped by war blockades so settled in French Indochina (Vietnam) where she married & had a daughter
- There she studied weaving, woodwork, rattan & other local design traditions
- Returned to France after the War & worked with Leger on a Hopital Saint-Lo (1949); Le Corbusier on his Marseilles apartment buildings (1950); & the French exhibition in Milan (1951)



# 1950s Furniture Designs



Chambre de la  
Maison du  
Brésil, Cité  
Internationale  
Universitaire de  
Paris, 1952



# 1950s-70s Furniture Design

Small Chair  
(1950s)



1955



1972 (Made in Italy  
by Cassina)



1962 Bench



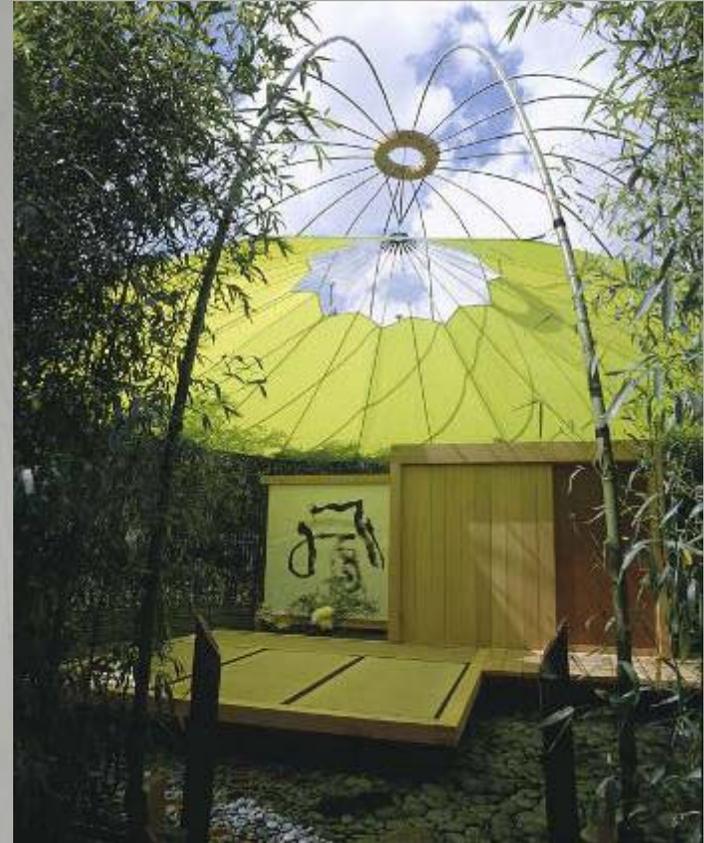


Leather &  
Chrome  
Bar Stools  
(1970s)



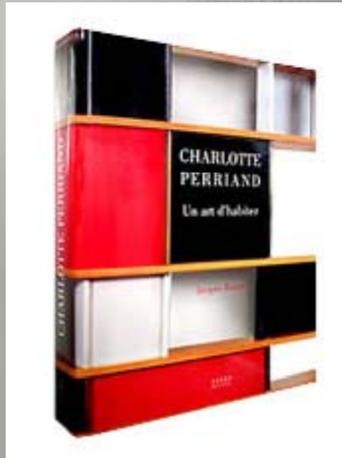
# Later Works

- 1957 designed the conference rooms for the League of Nations Building for the UN Geneva
- 1960 worked with Bauhaus architect Erno Goldfinger in 1960 on the French Tourist Office, London and Air France office, London
- 1993 Tea Pavilion for UNESCO as part of Japanese Cultural Festival in Paris

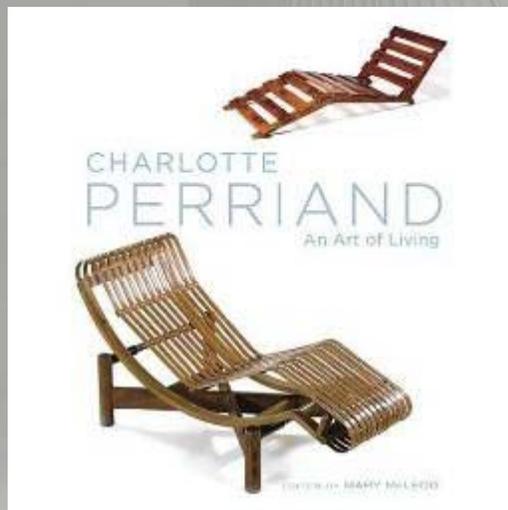


1993 Tea Pavilion

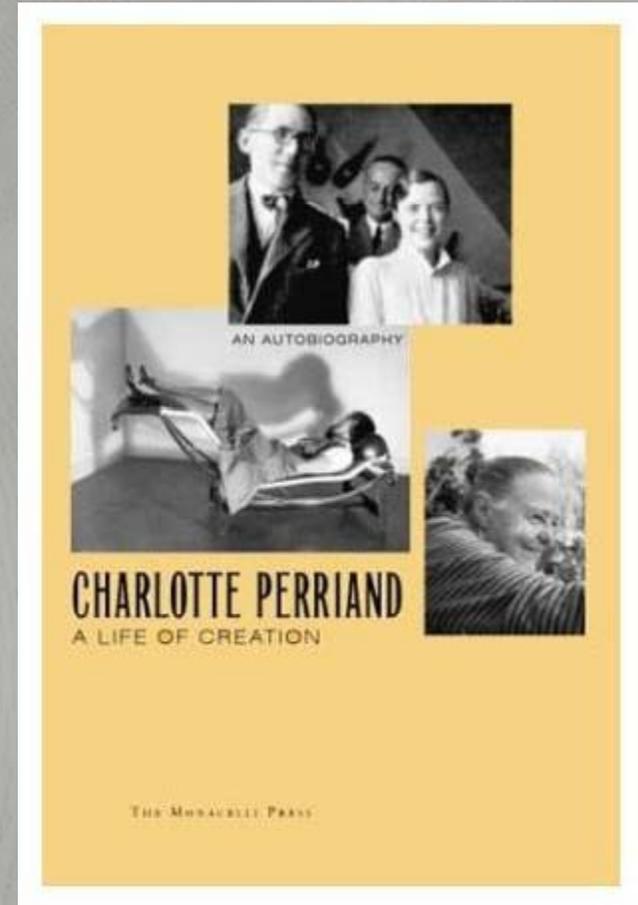
# More Information:



*Charlotte Perriand*  
By Elisabeth Vedrenne



*Charlotte Perriand: Art of Living*  
By Mary McLeod



*Charlotte Perriand: A Life of Creation (Autobiography)*

# Links

## Biography:

- o <http://www.centrepompidou.fr/education/ressources/ENS-perriand/ENS-perriand.htm>
- o <http://www.dezignare.com/newsletter/Perriand.html>
- o <http://www.r20thcentury.com/>
- o [http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m0268/is\\_10\\_37/ai\\_55015165](http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0268/is_10_37/ai_55015165) (online interview in 1999)
- o <http://www.dwr.com/>
- o <http://www.designmuseum.org/design/charlotte-perriand>

## Images:

- o <http://www.tempiespazi.toscana.it>
- o <http://www.stilleben-online.de>
- o <http://www.insecula.com>
- o <http://www.designmuseum.org>
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- o [http://roselli.org/tour/12\\_2000/121.html](http://roselli.org/tour/12_2000/121.html)



“It is her ceaseless optimism that made her a success”