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Kopp RISD Museum Bench

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My name is Andrew Kopp. I am a second year grad student in Furniture Design. In designing my bench, the objects that I was inspired by were the metal objects in the museum.

The surfaces of all these metal pieces really informed me. I didn't want to try to imitate or copy these pieces because they have acquired this patina over a large amount of time; over thousands of years. I only wanted to use these as influences or inspirations to devote my own process. I didn't want it to compete with the work in the space. I really wanted it to just compliment the work.

I think it's very valuable that this class taught me and the other students how to work with real world client. It's a good transition between the school world and building for a project. Building a project for school and building a project for a client is very different.

The museum allowing the students to express their own design qualities is a very good compliment, and I think it works really well, and the benches really show that they are truly the students' designs, but directed towards solving the need of the museum.

Hi, I'm Peter Walker. I'm an associate professor at RISD and the graduate program director in the department of Furniture Design, and I'm the faculty member who's responsible for coordinating and running this specific museum seating class. This was a fascinating opportunity for our department of Furniture Design students, which encompass not only graduate students, but also students from senior and junior year to engage in a class that brought the museum and the teaching institution of RISD together in a very unique combination.

I think quite often when patrons visit us into the museum—and students, as well – we're absorbing extraordinary amounts of information and cultural references, and influences. In this particular instance we were able to absorb them and then reinterpret them, and then actually place them back in the museum. So I think this is a really extraordinary opportunity where the museum patrons of the future, and visitors in the future, are actually going to be able to learn from the process of education that has happened here; as well as the history that's been preserved and represented.