**Accession No.** : N/A

**Designer**: Harry Bertoia

**Title (Date)**: *Ottoman Bird Stool* c. 1950/60

Overall dimensions as displayed: 380 x 615 x 440 mm (h, w, d).

**Overall weight:** 4 kg

# DESCRIPTION

**Summary** **description**

Ottoman Bird stool designed by Harry Bertoia in 1952, bought by Barbara Hepworth in the 1960s to be used in her greenhouse in St. Ives. The stool is currently displayed in the greenhouse of Hepworth’s house and is intended to be used by the public.

**Number** **of** **parts** **with** **dimensions** **and** **weight**

1 part: 380 x 615 x 440 mm (h, w, d).

**Materials**

Steel, polyamide (nylon), fabric, foam.

**Fabrication** **and** **assembling** (**including** **base**)

The footstool consists of two parts: a base and a seat, which are constructed with welded steel rods. The seat of the footstool and the chair attach onto their base by four brackets and four bolts. The steel rods are coated with a layer of polyamide, commercially known as a ‘nylon dip’. The seat pad of the footstool is covered in red, plain weave wool, or wool blend fabric, and is padded with an underlying layer of foam, polyester with kaolin, used in upholstery since the late 1960s. The use of kaolin suggests a dense foam was required, one that would retain a moulded shape. The foam was produced in a mould, and the fabric applied to it with an adhesive. The cover is applied onto a welded steel frame coated in polyamide. The seat pad wraps around the welded steel rods with a drawstring mechanism.

**Surface** **finish**

The cushion and base has a worn finish.

**Inscriptions**

None.

# CONDITION

**Structural** **condition**

Structurally the welded steel bases are sound. The screws connecting the steel base and seat have been sheered so these elements are loose. There are four screws and bolts missing from the footstool. The polyamide coating on the base is delaminating from the metal, resulting in losses which are mainly concentrated at bolt to bracket joints and on the metal rods that have contact with the floor. The foam within the seat pads has severely deteriorated, loosing flexibility and becoming dense and granular.

**Surface Condition**

The surface condition is poor. The footstool is covered in surface dirt. The top cover is extremely faded and worn with staining. It has a stiff feel, which could be the result of the deteriorating foam or the adhesive applied to adhere it to the foam. The steel base is exhibiting orange corrosion, with local corrosion staining on top of the polyamide coating.

# MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS

* Short term maintenance is carried out to hoover underneath the cushion to remove pests.
* Yearly maintenance is carried out to assess the rate of fade, monitoring for pests and damage.
* Long term maintenance will incorporate replacing the covers every 10-15 years depending on level of fade, wear and damage.

# HANDLING AND INSTALLATION

* One technician and one day is required for install.
* Handle the stool from the metal base and not by the cushion.

# DISPLAY REQUIREMENTS

The chair and footstool must be displayed in the greenhouse of the Barbara Hepworth Museum. Visitors are permitted to use the chair and stool.

PACKING AND STORAGE

**Gross** **Weight**: 4 Kg

**Recommendations:** Both chair and footstool should be soft-wrapped in bubble wrap and polythene sheeting to be transported to BHM.

**Environmental** **requirements:** The greenhouse is an uncontrolled environment, review conditions annually.

# HISTORY AND PREVIOUS TREATMENTS

Both chair and stool were purchased and used by Barbara Hepworth in her greenhouse in St. Ives, in the 1960s. As far as known, both have never been treated.

**TREATMENTS RECOMMENDATIONS**

* Remove original seat pad, remove degraded foam and aqueous clean in a shallow tray with demineralised water and a drop of Dehypon LS 45, rinsing with demineralised water. The original seat pad is then archived.
* Make a pattern of the original seat pad and reupholster with Hallingdal 65 #0674, an archival fabric of wool/viscous blend that matches the warp/weft and colours of original fabrics.
* Replace the foam with high density polyurethane-ether foam.
* Spot treat corrosion on metal locally by swelling the corrosion initially with white spirits on a cotton swab. If necessary, use fine (0000 grade) steel wool for the rest of the corrosion.
* Seal exposed metal with wax.
* Remove surface dirt from the polyamine coating with demineralised water and cotton swabs.
* Consolidate the delaminating polyamine coating with Paraloid B44N 10% methyl proxitol.
* Remove failed bolts from stool seat and reattach wire seat to base with replacement bolts.
* Attach seat pad to wire seat.

**Location** **of** **examination**: Sculpture Studio Tate Britain

**Examiner**: Alice Watkins

**Date**: 17.01.2019