

EVENT REPORT 05.14.08 5:37 PM

Sitting Pretty

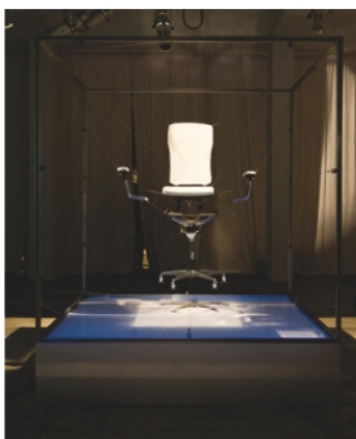
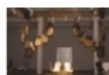
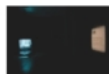
Office furniture manufacturer Allsteel staged an artsy installation to introduce its sleek new Acuity chair.

Allsteel, an office furniture manufacturing and engineering company, wants to make sure its audience knows its newest creation, the Acuity, is no ordinary desk chair. While the typical industry product launch takes place at trade shows like the NeoCon World's Trade Fair in Chicago, the Iowa-based corporation held a cocktail reception in a gallery-like setting at [Skylight](#) last night with the goal of communicating the breakthrough style and design of the latest addition to its line.

"Our target audience [for the Acuity] is the design community, Fortune 500 companies, media, and design businesses," said Brandon Sieben, Allsteel's vice president of marketing, explaining the location of the chair's debut. "As New York goes, so goes the rest of the country."

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PHOTO GALLERY



Allsteel enlisted Italian design firm Continuum to create the Acuity.
Photo: Digital Diva

Hoping to cast the product in a high-design light, Allsteel hired [EventQuest](#) to produce an installation that communicated both the technical precision and aesthetic beauty of the chair. "The question was, 'How do you make the launch of an office chair sexy?'" said EventQuest executive creative director Mark Veeder. "We needed to do something to make an impression on [guests] and shed an artistic light on the product."

The installation, displayed in a minimalist setting of white walls and raw concrete floors, included three pieces inspired by the Acuity, all of which incorporated the chair itself. "Exploded Chair" featured the chair's individual parts suspended in mid-air. "An Inspired Design" placed the product under a multitiered, lampshade-like structure made up of images representing what inspired the chair as well as what it can inspire in users. And "Ice" found the Acuity encased in a spotlight block of ice, with microphones amplifying the sound of the piece melting into a tray on the floor.

A crowd of 300 dealers, architects, designers, and journalists sipped cocktails and sculptures. Early on in the evening, Allsteel president Eugene Sung introduced the product with some quick remarks and a video documenting its creation, which did, in fact, pique curiosity about the chair. Thankfully, a curtain wall then parted, revealing more than 40 Acuties, which guests were encouraged to experience. "The whole thing is to get them to try the chair," Veeder said. —*Mimi O'Connor*