

Former president's club producer for Texas based retailer Louis Shanks launches bench made originals through the Mill Collective.

While watching the craft beer segment explode in growth, Chase recognized the appetite modern consumers have for authentic small batch products. Even though these brews are 40-80% higher in price than mass produced beers, the category has grown over 2,600% now totaling almost 15% of total beer sales. The market is proving that they no longer want a mass produced product. What they were instead in search of was an experiential purchase and personal connection to the maker.

Being a contract product designer, this is something that Chase has seen the furniture industry struggle with for a very long time. By the time new products get to the end consumer, there is no original story or inspiration from the designer that created the piece to begin with. Instead, the process a consumer currently experiences in retail is; does it fulfill my practical need, and if so, where can I buy it the cheapest. As an industry we have strayed from an art form and turned into a "Polaroid" industry all chasing "RH". The product that stops consumers in their tracks at a retail environment is getting harder and harder to find as the industry throws out as many new items as possible while it searches for identity. That's when Chase Ryan first found out about Mill Collective.

While Chase was in Hickory working on contract designs he met with John Conrad, fellow member of the International Society of Furniture Designers. John mentioned a new project called Mill Collective that he thought would be worth looking into. Chase was able to meet with the executive team at Mill Collective and has been in close contact ever since. This market Chase decided to fully control his own product narrative experience, by launching an originals collection with Mill Collective.

"I know my product won't be for everybody, however the individuals that appreciate my story and the inspiration behind my designs will get far more than just another image in a never ending catalog." - Chase Ryan

Chase will be present for the meet the makers event at Mill Collective Saturday, October 19th from 10am - 7pm to show modern buyers what an experiential purchase looks like. His current backlog for originals extends until summer of 2020.