

MAX
JUNGBLUT
—
CONTEMPORARY ART

SEARCHING CLUB

2017-CONTINUOUS

WITH HIS NEW LONG-TERM RESEARCH PROJECT SEARCHING CLUB, ARTIST AND DESIGNER MAX JUNGBLUT EMBARKS ON A NEW EXPLORATORY JOURNEY INTO THE TENSIONS BETWEEN ARTISTIC AUTONOMY AND ECONOMIC, CAPITALIST PRODUCTION PROCESSES. THIS NEW SERIES, TO WHICH NEW PIECES WILL BE ADDED CONTINUOUSLY, PLAYFULLY TAKES THE FORM OF A SEARCH FOR A PERFECT PROTOTYPE OF A NEW CHAIR, WITHOUT HAVING THE ACTUAL GOAL OF REALIZING AN ALL-ENCOMPASSING AND FINISHED FINAL DESIGN. INSTEAD, THE SEARCH ITSELF BECOMES THE ARTISTIC PROJECT AND THE PROCESS OF TRYING TO REACH A FINAL GOAL BECOMES THE SOURCE OF UNIQUE ARTISTIC OUTPUT.

Starting with a well-thought-out, sophisticated design, which evidently shows traces of earlier pieces from the various collections of Jungblut, the design features are meticulously marked and copied for a new piece. However, the artist introduces subtle changes in each successive chair in an ongoing quest to arrive at the perfect prototype, without actually having this as a final goal. The resulting alterations of the original design are at times quirky and playful, moving feet, back or seat in unexpected directions, and at other times more abstract and conceptual, questioning the practical function or aesthetic appeal of a chair. Through this artistic approach, the Jungblut references both craftsmen methods and artisan crafts, while simultaneously referring to notions of the assembly line, Fordism and mass production.

Although the series as a whole reveals the evolution of the original design in a quasi-industrial methodology, the form of the chairs can always be traced back to nature, as is the case with all of the works by Jungblut. In the successive designs of new alterations for the chair, the artist can play with color and material, the options spanning from pure wooden constructions to designs that incorporate felt or leather. Mostly, however, the artist chooses

to finish the newly formed chairs using polyester, ensuring an enduring and stable chair, which ensures a comfortable and luxury seating experience.

The quest of searching for the perfect chair design, without ever arriving there, opens up a space for thinking about production processes and the artistic effort that always underlies such endeavors. Whether or not this method will finally result in a design that can be taken into production, the pieces that constitute this series at this moment are all unique, hand-crafted and each bare a specific artistic signature.

Guus van Engelshoven, Curator

HEIGHT	71 CM
WIDTH	82 CM
DEPTH	73 CM
YEAR	1.2017



SEARCHING CLUB

HEIGHT	71 CM
WIDTH	82 CM
DEPTH	73 CM
YEAR	1.2017





FIRST PIECE OF A NEW SERIES

THE SEEDLING

HEIGHT 170 CM
WIDTH 100 CM
DEPTH 100 CM
YEAR 1.2017

THE WORK THE SEEDLING PRESENTS ANOTHER STEP IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MAX JUNGLUT INTO AN AUTONOMOUS PRACTICE WITH FIGURATIVE FORMS. THIS TIME REPRESENTED BY A SEED, NATURE IS NOT ONLY USED AS A SUBJECT, BUT ALSO PLAYS A LEADING ROLE IN THE DESIGN AND WORK PROCESS, IN WHICH THE ARTIST AIMS TO REWORK INDUSTRIALIZED WOOD IN ORDER TO GIVE IT A MORE NATURAL LOOK. THIS PROCESS REQUIRES A DEDICATED FOCUS, EXTENSIVE HOURS IN THE ATELIER AND A LOT OF CARE AND PASSION. IT IS WITHIN THIS WORK EFFORT WHERE THE INTRICATE MATRIX OF LINES AND SHAPES EVOLVES AND MAKES UP THE FINAL PIECE.







LA RENAISSANCE

ALLUDING TO A LEAVE, A RAINDROP, A SEED, A WILLOW OR A MOTHER WITH CHILD, THE PIECE TITLED LA RENAISSANCE BY MAX JUNGBLUT REPRESENTS BOTH A CULMINATION OF THE WORKING PROCESS AND PHILOSOPHY OF THE ARTIST, AS WELL AS A RADICAL DEPARTURE AND NEW BEGINNING.

For the past ten years, the artistic process in which artist and designer Jungblut reworks and refines industrialized wood in order to bring it closer to a more natural state has resulted in a number of high-end design works and objects. Although earlier projects such as Spatial Object (2009) and Reconciliation (2016) already play with the notion of the autonomous object-as-art, this project seems to signal in a definitive break with any reference to functionality, instead fully appealing to our faculties of memory and imagination.

The creation of La Renaissance follows an intuitive method forming its lines and organic shape, using the signature tile-lath structure that has become so characteristic of the pieces by Jungblut. The resulting piece looks monumental, but vulnerable. Both feminine and playful. The finishing of the wood structure reveals some parts being sanded, while others remain untouched. With this, Jungblut seems to again walk the fine balance between the natural and the industrial, between the innate and the man-made.

Guus van Engelshoven, Curator





LA RENAISSANCE

HEIGHT	380 CM
WIDTH	90 CM
DEPTH	230 CM
YEAR	2016/17







THIS IS
NOT A
CHAIR





THIS IS NOT A CHAIR

HEIGHT 67 CM
WIDTH 81 CM
LENGTH 77 CM
YEAR 1.2017





EXPLORING THE THIN LINE BETWEEN CONTEMPORARY ART AND DESIGN

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE FORM DOESN'T CARE ABOUT THE FUNCTION ANYMORE?

THERE IS NO CONTEXT THAT CAN DEFINE A CLEAR BORDER BETWEEN ART AND DESIGN. THERE ARE CERTAINLY MANY AREAS OF INTERSECTION. METHODOLOGY AND TECHNIQUES DON'T ESTABLISH THE LIMITS OF ONE OR THE OTHER. MORE THAN THE PIECE ITSELF OR WHERE IT IS PLACED, WHAT REALLY DRAWS THE LINE BETWEEN ART AND DESIGN FOR ME IS THE INTENTION BEHIND THE CREATIVE ACT.







HEIGHT 55 CM
WIDTH 68 CM
LENGHT 68 CM
YEAR 2016

CLUB MIGNON



CLUB MADAME

HEIGHT	64 CM
WIDTH	77 CM
LENGHT	70 CM
YEAR	1.2016



HEIGHT 65 CM
WIDTH 79 CM
LENGTH 75 CM
YEAR 2.2016

CLUB MADAME DEUX

THE CLUB MADAME
WAS EXHIBITED BY
GANA ART AT TEFAF
2016. BENEATH THE
BEATIFULL PAINTING
'ABSTRAKTES BILD' 1991
BY GERHARD RICHTER.



CLUB MONSIEUR

HEIGHT 71 CM
WIDTH 90 CM
LENGHT 85 CM
YEAR 1.2015







LA BASE DE CLUB FAUTEUIL FAMILY EST UNE CONCEPTION SOPHISTIQUÉE ET ERGONOMIQUE

With its aeration, inclusive sizing, support for the natural ways the human body moves when seated, and environmentally sensitive design, Max Jungblut challenged practically every convention about wooden chairs. Every material, every curve on the Club fauteuille advances the art and science of seating.



CLUB MONSIEUR

HEIGHT	71 CM
WIDTH	90 CM
LENGHT	85 CM
YEAR	1.2015

IN A SECOND READING,
THE WORK ALSO SEEMS TO
RECONCILE THE DICHOTOMY
BETWEEN THE ART OBJECT
AND THE FURNITURE PIECE,
WHICH CAN BE SEEN AS THE
RED THREAD THROUGHOUT
JUNGBLUT'S OEUVRE.







HEIGHT 74 CM
WIDTH 88 CM
LENGTH 85 CM
YEAR 1.2016

CLUB MONSIEUR DEUX

LA PEAU EST FORMÉE AVEC DES VIEUX LATTES DE TOITURES



Once belonging to nature, the basic components of the works were used in the industrial construction of roofs, after which they would be discarded and thrown out. In their metamorphosis into design objects, the gap between nature and industry is narrowed through the artisanship of the working-process and the organic expression of the resulting pieces.

A circular inset showing a close-up of hands working on a wooden surface. The hands are positioned to hold a piece of wood in place. A purple triangle is drawn on the wood in the upper left corner. The text is overlaid in the center of the circle.

LA RECHERCHE
DU MODÈLE DE
MONTAGE PARFAIT

A circular inset showing a man with a focused expression working on a large wooden structure. He is using a tool to shape the wood. The structure has a complex, woven pattern of wood. The text is overlaid in the center of the circle.

L'AMOUR POUR LE
BOIS SE MANIFESTE
DANS LA PHASE
DÉFINISSANT

COUCH

MORE THAN TEN YEARS INTO THE PRODUCTIVE PROFESSION OF THE DESIGNER, ONE CAN NOW BEGIN TO TRACE THE TRENDS AND CHANGES THAT HAVE MARKED THE DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN HIS ARTISTIC PRACTICE. WHERE IN HIS EARLY DESIGNS, THE ARTIST STILL MAKES CLEAR DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN FURNITURE PIECES AND AUTONOMOUS OBJECTS, HE INCREASINGLY STARTS TO PLAYFULLY NEGATE THE PRIMARILY PRACTICAL-ORIENTED FUNCTIONS OF THE FURNITURE PIECE, AS WELL AS THE PURELY AESTHETIC FORMS OF THE ARTISTIC OBJECT. INSTEAD, MAX JUNGBLUT CREATES PIECES THAT COMBINE THE TWO, ALL THE WHILE STAYING FAITHFUL TO THE ARTISAN ROOTS OF THE BUILDING PROCESS AND THE NATURAL, SLEEK LOOK OF THE FINAL RESULT.

This development culminates in the latest piece by the designer, Untitled (Couch) 2013-14. Though still referring to a form of seating, a practicality connected to the interior, the sheer monumental size of the piece – which measures 300 x 170 x 80 centimeter – constitutes a further disentanglement of the borders between functional object and artistic piece. The piece incorporates an astonishing 550 days of artistic labor, to which the precious attention for detail testifies. The masculinity of size is juxtaposed with the femininity of its round and organic form, resulting in a work of art that catches the eye in any interior it is placed in.





RECONCILIATION

The latest work by designer Max Jungblut, titled Reconciliation, presents a new development in the long line of woodworks Jungblut has produced between 2011 and 2015, which can be typified as an exploration of the boundaries between the practical functions of furniture, and the pure aesthetic forms of the autonomous art object. With this newest piece, the designer clearly embarks on a new phase in his research, departing with any references to functionality and instead focusing on the object-as-art.

Although the resulting piece is still reminiscent of earlier works such as Untitled One (2014), a table featuring a rounded base, Jungblut has radically inverted its outwards appearance into a sculptural, organic form that shows two embracing figures, while the characteristic use of wood and the curbed movements within the piece still clearly show the signature of the designer and firmly place it within his long-term series.

By going beyond the functionality of a furniture piece, the work Reconciliation invites new narratives and multiple readings, and as such, seems to position itself within an acute actuality, alluding to current (foreign) wars, heightened global tensions, and the desire for a better world. In a second reading, the work also seems to reconcile the dichotomy between the art object and the furniture piece.



HEIGHT 114 CM
WIDTH 214 CM
LENGHT 102 CM
YEAR 2015/16



UNTITLED I

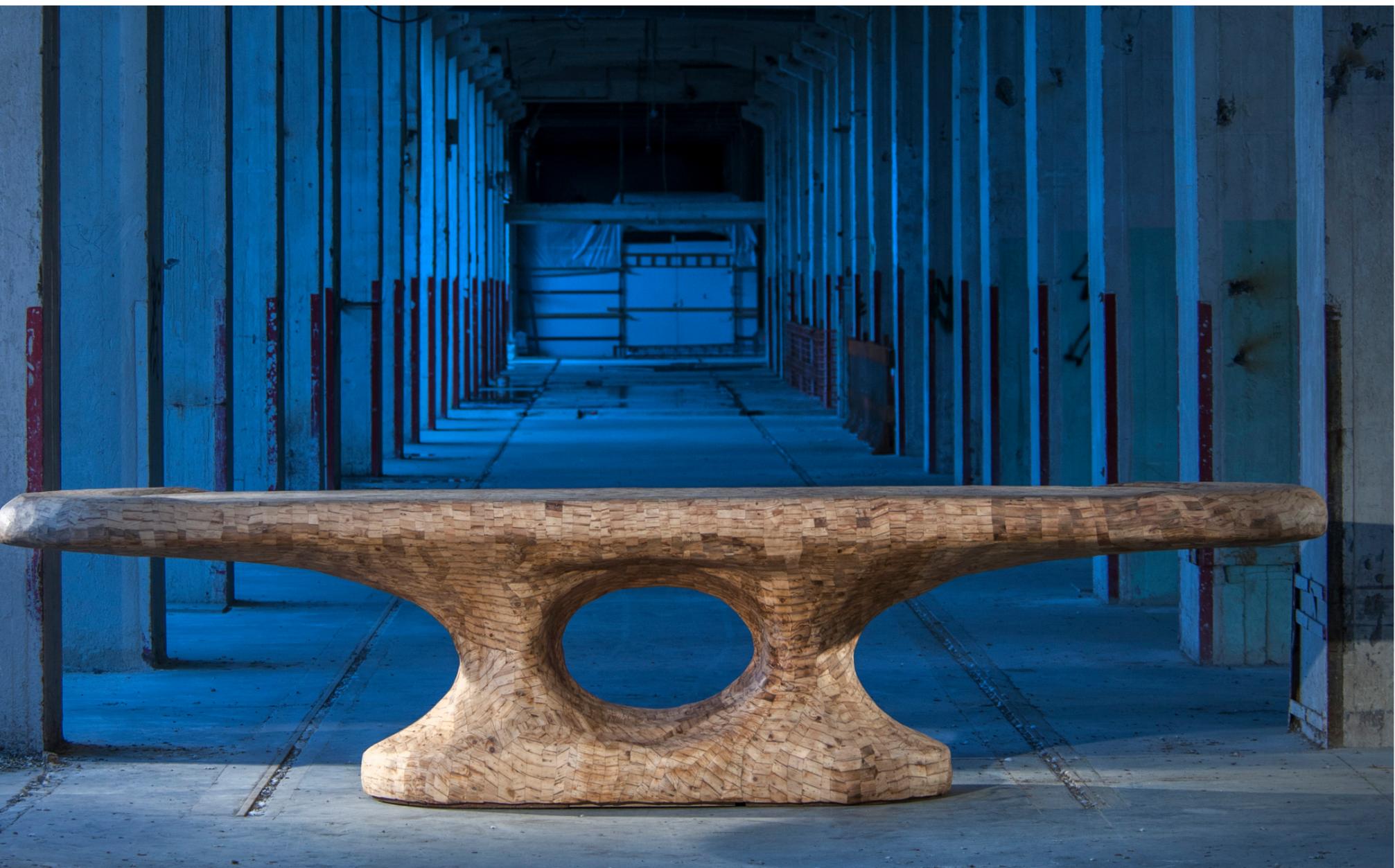
UNTITLED I (2010-2011) IS ANOTHER WORK IN THE NEW COLLECTION BY MAX JUNGBLUT, THROUGH WHICH HE INVESTIGATES THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ARTISANSHIP, NATURE AND INTERIOR DESIGN. THE WORK FOLLOWS THE PRINCIPLES OF THE OTHER PIECES IN THE COLLECTION, USING OLD TILE LATHS IN INNOVATIVE WAYS TO ADDRESS, ASSESS AND INVERT THEIR MEANING AND FUNCTION. IN MORE THAN ONE WAY, THIS NEW WORKS CAN BE CONSIDERED A REFLECTION OF THE DESIGNER'S TWO-YEAR QUEST FOR A NEW AESTHETICS IN WHICH NATURE BECOMES BOTH THE RESOURCE AND THE END PRODUCT OF HIGH-END DESIGN PIECES.

It becomes apparent that the process of finding such a new aesthetics was incorporated within the work, which itself is constructed around the narrative of a journey. In the contrast between its massive scale and the timidity of its fine lines, the work unfolds a story of exploration and process, where ideas are able to grow freely and organically. The lines within this table diverge, meet, connect, separate and follow their own path again.

In a doubled reflection of the designer's working method, this puts the functionality of the material in their new existence into question again. Once belonging to nature, the basic components of the works that comprise Jungblut's latest collection were used in the industrial construction of roofs, after which they would be discarded and thrown out. In their metamorphosis into design objects, the gap between nature and industry is narrowed through the artisanship of the working-process and the organic expression of the resulting pieces. With the introduction of the grid of lines and connection, however, it opens the question whether the final work should be approached in utilitarian terms or experiential ones. Far more than simply an object with a clear-cut 'purpose', the work is able to activate memory and interpretation, through which can take on multiple forms and tell many stories, despite of its seemingly robust character.

Next to blurring the boundaries between functionality and artistic experience, the work addresses the specific interest expressed through the collection to bridge the gap between the private domain of the interior and the public domain of nature, questioning whether the pieces bring the outdoors indoors or vice versa. It expresses the desire to bring the laborious process of interior design in connection to more natural processes and introduces a point where these might meet.

HEIGHT	104 CM
WIDTH	95 CM
LENGTH	454 CM
YEAR	2010/11







SPATIAL OBJECT

The ideas on which the work of Max Jungblut is based are explicitly expressed in this spatial object. On the one hand, it refers to the origin and first bearer of the wood, but since it is visualized as an abstraction it presents the construction which it has become to us.

The object plays with the balance between hiding and revealing by placing the tile laths on the outside of the object in a play of lines that became gradually visible in the production process, both for the designer and the audience. By presenting the object in the public space, the spectator is invited to reflect on the production processes that natural materials often undergo. Furthermore, the work offers a reflection on the fact that these materials are often hidden from sight through their use in constructions which make them invisible to us. This way, the object questions the demarcation between 'natural' and 'artificial' beauty. The artificiality of the object also reflects the artificiality of the space in which it is placed. It almost becomes a totem or an altar, but in a way in which it is not clear what we praise nowadays; nature, the constructions we make from nature, or both.

HEIGHT	152 CM
WIDTH	39 CM
LENGTH	39 CM
YEAR	2009





THE ENTRANCE

THE AMBIANCE OF CRAFTSMANSHIP THAT RADIATES FROM THE WORKS IS HARDLY UNDERSTATED; APPROXIMATELY 850 HOURS OF WORK WERE NEEDED IN ORDER TO BUILT THE ENTRANCE, OF WHICH 300 WERE SPEND SOLELY ON FINISHING OFF THE TABLE WITH CANDLE WAX, ENSURING A SMOOTH AESTHETIC QUALITY.

Within the process of creation, only natural materials were used. The decision to only apply re-used tile laths is two-fold, on the one hand it refers to a desire for durability and sustainability, on the other hand it could also be considered a desire for quality: old tile laths are made of redwood and bare a quality that is hardly matched by newly bought tile laths. The age of the structures from which the wood was taken ranges between 100 and 200 years. Through the process of preservation undertaken while finishing off the object, the sustainability of this wood is extended by another hundreds of years, while at the same time giving it its distinctive contemporary character.

HEIGHT 94 CM
WIDTH 93 CM
LENGHT 184 CM
YEAR 2009



THE MODERN ERA IS TYPIFIED BY RADICAL SHIFTS IN TECHNOLOGY, INDUSTRY AND CULTURE. INCREASINGLY, WE ASK OURSELVES WHERE FORM AND FUNCTION MEET AND HOW THE TWO RELATE TO ONE ANOTHER. IN A SIMILAR VAIN, THE BORDERS BETWEEN CULTURE AND NATURE HAVE LATELY BEEN CONTINUOUSLY REDEFINED AND REASSESSED, TESTIFYING TO A TENSION BETWEEN MASS-PRODUCTION AND CRAFTSMANSHIP, AND RAISING QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CONTEMPORARY MEANING OF ARTISTRY, LABOUR, AUTO-EDUCATION AND DIY-MENTALITIES.

The genesis of the development of designer and artist Max Jungblut (1966, Maastricht) can best be traced back to his residency at one of the most notorious artist squads of Maastricht, named the VendEx – an old dilapidated warehouse on the outskirts of the city, where he created his first studio setting. The VendEx, a grey building in the middle of a former industrial site, might seem detached from his contemporary practice, but laid the foundation of his artistic approach ever since. Working in the centre of the rubble of a capitalist and industrial society, Jungblut developed a fascination to turn the raw and harsh aesthetics of the building into a new, more natural, habitable and inviting environment, by using its old materials to transform the interior design of the

former warehouse. In so doing, he welcomed a new and widely varied community of inhabitants and visitors alike, changing the ‘big-business’-look of the building into a heart-warming context for a new generation of upcoming creative and artistic talents.

It is here where Jungblut first started to mediate on the importance of the interior; as a place of exchange, of meeting with kindred spirits, of working together. In line with these thoughts, he transformed the interior of the VendEx into a place where people would meet and interact in new and innovative ways. An interior characterised by open spaces, an open planning, and functional ways of being together.

INTO THE VOID

The works by Jungblut present a new development in the long line of woodworks the artist has produced, which can be typified as an exploration of the boundaries between the practical functions of furniture, and the pure aesthetic forms of the autonomous art object. Within his newest pieces, the artist clearly embarks on a new phase in his research, departing with any references to functionality and instead focusing on the object-as-art.

Although the resulting pieces are still reminiscent of earlier works, Jungblut has radically inverted their outwards appearance into sculptural, organic forms that show his investigation into new, spatial designs, while the characteristic use of wood and the curbed movements within the pieces still clearly show the

signature of the artist and firmly place them within his long-term series.

By going beyond the functionality of a furniture piece, this new development invites new narratives and multiple readings, and as such, seems to position Jungblut’s artistic practice within an acute actuality, alluding to current (foreign) affairs, heightened global tensions, and the desire for a better world. In a second reading, the work also seems to reconcile the dichotomy between the art object and the furniture piece, which can be seen as the red thread throughout Jungblut’s oeuvre.

Guus van Engelshoven, Curator

STARK SINUOUS LINES

Wood, the aroma of it is ubiquitous. You smell it, see it and can feel it; you can even taste it in the air, for every surface is covered with shavings. Upon entering the atelier, there is no mistaking; Max Jungblut is an artisan. Yet, his craftsmanship extends far beyond the creation of mere commodities. Indeed, it appears that Jungblut is driven by the idea of wresting processed wood free of its commodity status and bring it back together to reach a more natural state. Especially his current work lets us discover the smooth, sometimes chaotic and yet always organic forms, predominant in nature. Jungblut creates a space for his materials to become artifacts not of human made perfection. Strikingly the imperfections and the unevenness of the artifacts display a form of natural perfection.

All pieces by Atelier Jungblut breathe the same love for nature. It is the stark contrast between industrialized wood and the natural forms which should be understood as the red line we can follow throughout Jungblut's work. Technologized forms, modern and minimalistic in their appearance are brought back in nature's sinuous lines. While every artifact presents itself in a light wooden brown, the spectator experiences a revelation when closer examining the actual flow and diversity of color each artifact has to offer. Here again, the artist lets nature to speak for itself as the colors and shades which evolve are not intentionally structured nor ordered but are a result of the arbitrary setting of the material in use.

Many of the artifacts we can observe may still be understood in an actual use context. At the same time, the dichotomy between sculpture and means of everyday usage and that of conceptual and pragmatic is not far from the observer's sensation. Jungblut continuously discovers new forms in these sculptures and by remarkably straightforward configurations allows the observer to follow his thought process. A table which might have served as mere means for human consumption is now brought back into the smooth gentle shape of nature, turned upside down and thus becomes a sculpture alienated from its former context.

The reconciliation, an eternal communication between two minds brought to the fore by the artists' interpretation, allows us to understand the multistability of an object at hand. The former table, which has been freed of its inherent program of action, now becomes an object of sensation. The artist Max Jungblut fascinates by displaying the interplay and inherent relation between technology, nature and art and challenges us to look beyond the use context and realize new states of perfection.

Alexander Feldhaus M.A, M. Phil

For more work & information

ATELIERJUNGBLUT.NL

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SUITABLE FOR OUTSIDE USE. THE
JARDIN & PARK PHOTOSERIES ARE
ARTIST IMPRESSIONS. THE IDEA
OF TAKING THE WOOD BACK TO
NATURE.**

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