

An Exceptionally Rare Shape

Paul Chapellier

Private view Friday 19 April, 6-9pm

Exhibition continues 20-21 April, 2-5pm

SET

27A Dalston Lane

London

E8 3DF

Live edge, or natural edge, is a style of furniture that retains or incorporates the raw edge of a piece of wood. The father of Live edge, George Nakashima, believed “each tree has its own destiny to be achieved”; Nakashima’s post-world-war-2-modernist-anti-industry-movement emphasised the unique nature of each piece of wood using only ‘solid wood’ for its “honest and real” qualities. Each piece is crafted to its own unique properties where slight variations are not ‘product flaws’ but features that highlight its individuality and speak to its quality. Used to assert social status, the handmade craft of each item is part of a hierarchical value system that reveres an ‘authentic’ original; Live edge furniture serves to function as Nature entering the domestic and corporate spaces of Culture.

Enter the contemporary era and Nakashima’s designs are reinterpreted, copied and reproduced multiple times, used by decorators, DIYers, B+Q, interior design reality tv shows and found in hotels, furniture stores and living rooms. Nakashima’s ‘honest and real’ wood, marketed originally for its authenticity, lives alongside its copies and reproductions, displacing Live edge as a unique object to include the artificial materials and glossy resins of its counterparts. Reproductions that through their accessibility and standardised commercial platforms, serve to disrupt aesthetic hierarchies; what was once reserved for the elite can now be accessed by all who have access to the internet.

Text by Beverley Gadsden

Paul Chapellier (FR, 1989) is a London-based artist working in photography, sculpture and installation. His work examines how objects survive in images and how images operate as objects.

List of works (clockwise):

A Humble Material Palette

Plaster, paint, metal shelves

122 x 70 cm

2019

An Understated Opulence

Plaster, paint, metal shelves

189,5 x 100 cm

2019

Natural Edge

Plaster, paint, metal shelves

71 x 50 cm

2019

Created by Nature Itself

UV prints on laser cutter foam board

180 x 40 cm

2019

Eccentric Planks

Plaster, paint

Various sizes

2019