

FINANCIAL TIMES

# how to spend it



NOVEMBER 11, 2011

**THE LAST SWAN**  
THE SUBLIME TASTE  
OF MARELLA AGNELLI

# how to find it

OCTOBER 4 2014



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*Zoé Ouvrier's wish is to take plywood and restore to it something of its sublime origin – gouging and carving it to release the tree*



From left, Vincent Dubourg's cast aluminium and white lacquer aluminium chair, about €4,000, from Capetown Workshop Gallery; 200-gauge plywood screen, from €200, from Gallery Funn

one tree, with the beautiful markings of the wood displayed to powerful effect. The dimensions of that single plant is still present, even though the wood has been primarily engraved. The piece almost catches the eye to its own natural apothecia, evoking not

only its intricate reaching upwards in life, but also the closeness of shade that would arise from a fire created from it, since dead. Wadli's most famous artwork is entitled *Enguerra* – a combination of the Latin words *engua* (venery) and *liquor* (sweat). As with all these designers, by experimenting with his material, he produces work that digs deeper, and imaginatively, into its mysterious angles. ■

#### THREE SPIRITS

**Andrea Bonati**, [www.andreabonati.it](http://www.andreabonati.it) and **Capetown Workshop Gallery**, **Capetown Workshop Gallery**, 1 Oldmarket St, London WC2O 3JQ, UK, [www.capetownworkshopgallery.com](http://www.capetownworkshopgallery.com) and track.

**Charles Trevelyan**, [www.charles-trevelyan.com](http://www.charles-trevelyan.com) and see **Capetown Workshop Gallery**, **David Gill Gallery**, 74 King St, London WC2E 9JF, UK, 020 225 4600, [www.davidgillgallery.com](http://www.davidgillgallery.com), **Gallery Funn**, by appointment, at Reader Square, London M1 5DT, UK, 2265, [www.galleryfunn.com](http://www.galleryfunn.com) and branch [www.galleryfunn.com](http://www.galleryfunn.com).

**Ginger & Jagger**, 01533 555 765, [www.gingerandjagger.com](http://www.gingerandjagger.com), **Joseph Wadli**, [www.josephwadli.com](http://www.josephwadli.com) and see **Capetown Workshop Gallery**, **Wadli's Magnus Coleman**, 12216, 2000, [www.wadli.com](http://www.wadli.com) and [www.magnuscoleman.com](http://www.magnuscoleman.com).

**Richard Woods**, [www.richardwoods.com](http://www.richardwoods.com) and see **Capetown Workshop Gallery**, **Richard Woods**, Alton Barn, Church Hill, Little Wilton, Oxford OX4 7JQ, UK, 01865 277 960, [www.richardwoods.com](http://www.richardwoods.com) and see **Capetown Workshop Gallery**, **Valentin Lindemann**, [www.valentinlindemann.com](http://www.valentinlindemann.com) and see **Capetown Workshop Gallery**, **Vincent Dubourg**, [www.vincentdubourg.com](http://www.vincentdubourg.com) and see **Capetown Workshop Gallery**, **Zoé Ouvrier**, [www.zoeouvrier.com](http://www.zoeouvrier.com) and see **Gallery Funn** and [www.zoeouvrier.com](http://www.zoeouvrier.com).

transition between an irregular, organic tower shape and a smooth outer skin. Although the source is primitive, he says, "the treatment is very sophisticated".

Emerging Australian designers Charles Trevelyan, at Capetown Workshop Gallery, is similarly interested in the "interplay between structure and surface". His latest work includes a series of framed tables, tree-inspired pieces, including the almost abstract, patterned-laminate table, *Sigara* (from €40,000), and the *Infanteira* lamp (from €30,000, pictured on opening page). Portuguese-design company Ginger & Jagger has cast benches in different metals for its Earth to Earth collection, which includes the *Magnolia* sideboard (from €36,720), *Pig Tree* console (from €4,800) and *Roost* ash dining table (from €13,130, pictured on opening page).

Meanwhile, the Capetown Workshop Gallery also shows the output of French designer Vincent Dubourg, including his branch-inspired chairs, *Buisson* Aluminium (about €75,000, pictured above) and *Double* (from €15,000, OFW's relationship with branches – cast in steel, aluminium or bronze – he once said it is like "each trying to tame the other: a young branch, soft and pliant, one demanding. And this led us to find a harmonious whole". On a more humorous note, the marvellous artist-designer Richard Woods, who has transformed art dealer Michael Hue Williams's country pad for an exhibition entitled *Country Life*, has created a series of large ceramic "tree-trunk vases in cheerful colours (green or orange)".

And finally, there are two projects where the tree as life, rather than its literal depiction, is predominant.

The first is French designer-maker Zoé Ouvrier, represented by Gallery Funn in London, who has produced a series of remarkable folded screens (from €20,000, example pictured above right) made from patterned plywood, onto which she has then painstakingly engraved the most vital and beautiful trees. As she puts it, her wish is to take plywood, the most banal of industrially produced materials, and "restore to it something of its sublime origin, the tree". The screen is effectively a wood engraving on a vast scale – but rather than being used to create art prints, it is the artwork itself – and every screen is different. In another reversal, it is the grooves into the plywood, the carving out of the wood that release the tree. Ouvrier reports the strong emotion she felt at the idea of providing a space of privacy, as if within a forest, for someone to unwind.

It is quite evocative, too, that one feels when confronted with the latest creation by internationally renowned Irish designer, Joseph Wadli. Commissioned for an exhibition curated by Sarah Griffin at the New Art Centre, Salisbury, Wadli's *Magnus Coleman* (€224,000, pictured on opening page), with its flying shell, is a virtuous demonstration of the sculptural potential of his technique. A country boy from Cork, who taught himself to make furniture through experimentation, Wadli closely guards his method of splitting ash wood, working with its flexibility to create dramatic, sophisticated pieces that retain nature's original energy. This extraordinary desk that stands on one foot, with its left side spiralling upwards into the ceiling, is created from