

15 innovative, beautiful and
experimental ways of joining

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joins

books

THE
ARAM
GALLERY

FOR EXPERIMENTAL OR NEW DESIGN

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The Aram Gallery
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Joints + Bones is an exhibition that investigates the structure and connections of design, as opposed to surfaces or skins. An international mix of emerging and established designers have found innovative, beautiful and experimental ways of joining.

Some exhibits make the mechanics of their joinery explicit, asking us to look at how construction can lead to overall form or rationale. Tension, pivots and bespoke 3D-printed parts are some common means with playful possibilities.

Other projects investigate new methods of combining materials, often with an unusual agent employed to do the joining: a stretch of fabric, a hose clip, or a shrunken plastic bottle. Exhibits vary from decorative screws and cable ties, to modular structures that can repeat to fill whole rooms.

Alongside these works, is a set of complementary exhibits that relate to the nature and materiality of bones. These include crockery in bone china, translucent hangings that remind of X-rays, and skeletal structures grown by fusing powder around hot wires.

Encouraging a deeper appreciation of furniture and structure, Joints + Bones looks at how a method of joining can go beyond an essential role and give a piece of design its logic, originality and character.

Riya Patel, curator

RIVE ROSHAN Loom Bound (2016)

Fabric is used as a hinge and a joining element for the oak components in this partition system. Loom Bound is a modular design, and the partition can be extended, adapted or configured to suit a particular space. The design can be used to divide space, improve acoustics, create storage or areas of privacy. Kvadrat Steelcut Trio fabric was chosen for its strength, interesting weave patterns and use of colour.

TOMAS KRAL Clown Nose (2010)

In the human body, elastic ligaments connect bones and keep joints stable. A coloured elastic thread connects this ceramic storage vessel with its spherical cork lid. To access what's inside, the user has to stretch the cord and remove the cork, but the two parts remain connected. The design was inspired by round red clown noses that stay on the face with elastic.

Complementary exhibits

RAW MATERIAL Offcut tables (2016)

These tables are made from the offcuts of waste generated by the stone industry in Rajasthan, India. Often discarded for imperfections that make them unsuitable for flooring, these offcuts can have interesting qualities that are ripe for re-interpretation as furniture. The tables slot together several offcuts like a puzzle, relying only on the weight of the material to stabilise the joinery. With no external fastening, the materiality can be kept pure.

SOFT BAROQUE Pearls (2010 & 2016)

Screws are a super normal and universal method for creating structures however it is embarrassing for a designer to leave them exposed. Possibly from nostalgia for traditional timber joinery, or the desire for visual "cleanliness" – screws are often filled, plugged, hidden or covered. Pearl screw caps are an overcompensation for this delusion, a marriage between the most economical construction system and the cultural value of natural pearls.

1882 LTD Crockery by Max Lamb (2012)

Bone china is a type of porcelain made using bone ash (ground cattle bones) that has its roots in 19th century Stoke-on-Trent. Bone china is known for its particular translucent qualities. This contemporary collection of fine bone china tableware by Max Lamb for 1882 Ltd has been slip-cast from plaster models carved by hand. The interior is glazed for functionality and the raw exterior reflects the modest surface texture of the plaster original.

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ADAM GUY BLENCOWE Dado (2016)

The stability of these furniture pieces relies on the profile of the shelves meeting ends that have been cut exactly to fit them. This system takes standard wooden mouldings and profiles that are found in DIY stores the world over. The idea is to create a downloadable collection of vertical components (such as shelving ends or bench legs) so that the maker can slot in the standard horizontal elements, and create furniture that functions how they choose. *Designed for Opendesk as part of a project with Ineke Hans.*

HUNTING & NARUD Keel Collection (2009)

This furniture collection and coffee table is characterised by a slot-leg system; a response to traditional Norwegian furniture and inspired by the drop-down keels in small sailboats. Sand cast, iron legs slot into a wooden table top, locked in place by a wedge. This hands-on way of assembly can be done with simple tools and few fixings. It means the furniture can be taken apart, adapted, stored, shipped and repaired very easily.

MICHAEL MARRIOTT Ply stool (2009)

This edition of 100 birch plywood stools was designed for Paul Smith. Zip ties are used to join the five parts together, a simple, quick and surprisingly strong means of assembly, that doesn't require tools or expertise. The plywood is just 6mm thick and the stool can be transported flat pack. The stools are screen printed with five designs in eight colours, they fix together with 11 different coloured zip ties.

MARINA STANIMIROVIC Jewellery and various experiments (2015–6)

This collection of jewellery and experiments is based on finding new, simple, quiet and alternative ways to think about common hinges and joints. Flat Necklace and Silent Gesture are necklaces made in Corian and brass with a type of rubber bathroom seal to make a flexible hinge. Private Ice is characterised by a single hinge. Unwilling Connection is a ring made by binding a sand rose to aluminium with heat shrink tubing.

MICAELLA PEDROS Joining Bottles (2016)

Transformed by heat shrinking, the bodies of used plastic bottles can be used to join things together and create functional structures. The method can be used to make a strong joint between odd lengths of timber, branches and other offcuts. The lamp is given its stable structure by joining a stone to a piece of wood with the method. Carving the wood gives the plastic something to grip and helps strengthen the joint.

RITA PARNICZKY X-Ray Vault series (2014-16)

Photograms are images made using light-sensitive materials but not a camera. Based on photograms that mimic the organic details seen in hospital X-rays, this series of semi-translucent materials come to life in the light, through a combination of nylon monofilament and iridescent threads. The X-Ray Vault Series was further influenced by the form of fan vaulting in cathedral architecture.

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SMITH
1885 ONWARDS

STUDIO MINALE-MAEDA Keystones (2014)

Keystones is a set of 3D-printed connectors that can be used to construct various pieces of furniture (the coat stand is shown here). The connectors are designed to work with standard sections and planes of wood that the user can find relatively cheaply. The keystones have been designed with angles that strengthen the form of the overall piece and give it stability: they work without screws or glue.

Wrong Colour Furniture System (2013)

Wrong Colour Furniture System explores the small-scale production of flexible, modular furniture. The structure is anodised aluminium which grips a skin of plywood panels that the structure allowed to show through. Different colours aid the ease of assembly: magenta for vertical bars, cyan for horizontal, and yellow for complete frames.

JAMES SHAW Rodular seating collection (2016)

One type of simple joint is repeated across the Rodular family of seating, with each round section of timber joined to the other by fitting snugly into a round hole. The consistency of the construction method allows each piece to be produced for a low cost. The stools have a rotational symmetry that allows them to stack closely.

Modular Mechanics Chair (2016)

The system behind this chair takes the idea of modularity to the extreme, where the connections almost become ornament. It could just as easily be applied from a small container to an entire kitchen. The system was developed during a residency in Ruskin's home village in the Lake District, and responds to the spirit of his "Mechanics Institute" through which he spread craft skills and developed the first flat-pack furniture.

BONSOIR PARIS Installation for COS (2013)

This installation for fashion brand COS at Salone del Mobile 2013 was designed to be built rapidly, adaptable to any kind of space, and draws on the structural codes of the atomic form. A central 3D-printed "atom" connects up to 14 elements and can be used to create an infinite structure that can change shape and scale, as well as wrap itself around the existing features in a building. It is anchored with weights, and infill panels are used to adapt the display.

MAX FROMMELD Hose clip shelf (2011)

This extendable shelving system is made of three main components: wooden pole, steel bracket, and shelf board. The metal frames sit in a groove in the vertical poles and a simple metal hose clip connects the two elements. Hose clips are metal bands that contain a simple gear, and can be tightened by turning the screw by hand. Quilted material is used to make compartments within the open framework.

STUDIO ILIO Hot Wire Extensions (2016)

Hot Wire Extensions is an investigation into the "model of nature" and the understanding that growth is based on complex principles, influences, and chemical and physical processes. The structures here are "grown" by allowing a composite powder of sand and nylon to fuse around a heated nichrome wire. The sand act as a filler material as well as a heat conductor. The nylon powder melts and bonds during the curing process turning the mixture in to a solid body.

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