

Internal Logic

Made of bamboo, designed for flat-pack delivery, dry (no glue) self-assembly structures with space saving storage solutions are some of the worthy features in Jair Strasznow's furniture collection Grassworks. This checklist is good, but the most exciting aspect of this collection is the integrity, in both the structural and the aesthetic sense, of the design.

Strasznow has a distinctive way of working – he launches into an intense immersive process driven by specific fascinations and usually with loyalty to a single material. The exhibits are the fruits of this method applied to Bamboo sheet laminates, and the manipulation of traditional interlocking woodworking techniques. It is a focused, hands-on, trial and error, design process. A good example of this fascination and perhaps most visible in Grassworks, is the reworking of the dovetail joint. The dovetail is a straightforward principle of slotting pieces of wood that have opposing sloped angles to wedge themselves against one another. It is much used in western joinery and Japanese woodwork. Strasznow uses the dovetail joint not only as a detail but more interestingly as a core structural principle, showing a mastery of design rather than craft.

The dovetail, like the other geometric locking principles applied in Grassworks, serves Strasznow as practical inspiration. Through various iterations and applications he generates objects that share a sense of utility. Combining the satisfaction of construction toys and the charm of interlocking treasure boxes, these furniture prototypes present an original and sparse elemental language, simple but not obvious. Added to the playful control evident in the details, and the shapes derived from the logic of the construction itself, reveals designs that are both experimental and new. Unlike many of the similarly shaped and like-minded computer generated designs we have been subjected to in recent years, Grassworks, like Jair Strasznow, are products of their own internal logic.

The exhibition includes recently developed production ready prototypes, exhibited internationally for the first time. Israeli born Strasznow studied industrial design at the Holon Institute of Technology. Following his postgraduate studies at the Applied Arts Department Sandberg Instituut he settled in the Netherlands where he works from his Amsterdam based studio. This is his first solo exhibition in the UK.

The Aram Gallery is an independently curated space that encourages and promotes understanding of contemporary design, by presenting experimental and new work with a special interest in the work of designers and artists in their early careers.

Director: Zeev Aram
Curator: Daniel Charny
Assistant Curator: Ellie Parke
www.thearamgallery.org

The pieces on show are prototypes, hand made by Strasznow at his Amsterdam studio.

www.strasznow.com

Graphic Design: Ayelet Yanai

The Grassworks collection was realised with the kind support of: Bambusa

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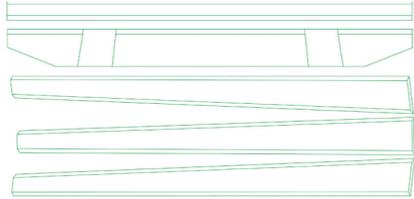
Furniture prototypes in sheet bamboo by Jair Strasznow

Private view: 23 September, 6-8:30 pm
Exhibition open: 17 September - 31 October, 2009
rsvp to: gallery@thearamgallery.org

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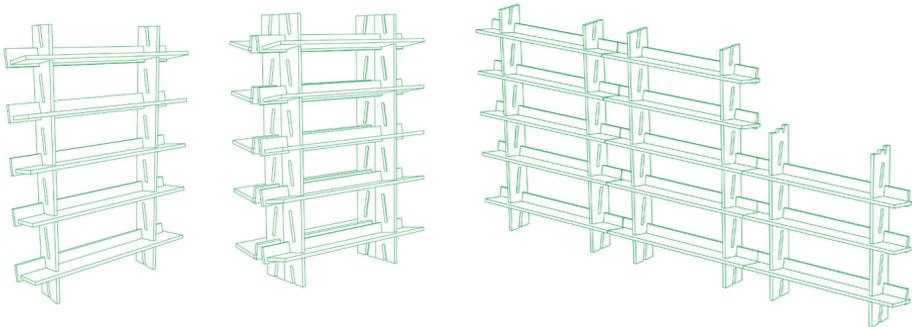
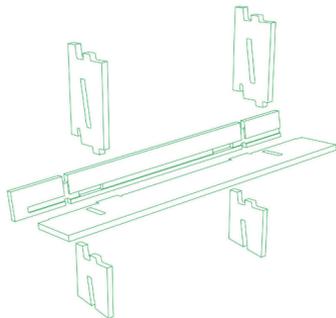
Dovetail Trestle

A three-legged trestle (right, middle, left) that combines a dovetail slotting detail of the legs into a horizontal beam, with a top strip that locks the structure and acts as a flat support for the table top. There is only one possible way to assemble the trestle. The three-legged structure enables compact stacking.



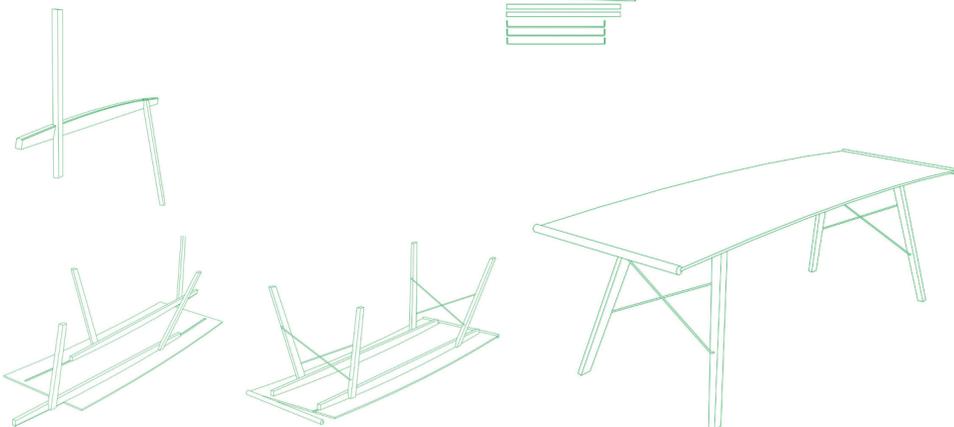
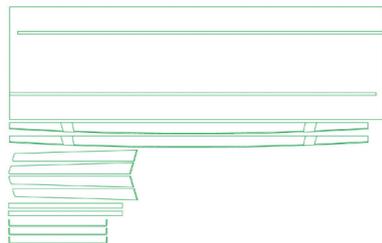
Bookshelf System

This modular shelving system is constructed with five types of repeated identical parts. It can be assembled and extended sideways as well as upwards. It consists of a base, spacer, shelf, shelf backing, top part and book stopper. One unit comprising of five shelves can be produced out of a single standard sheet.



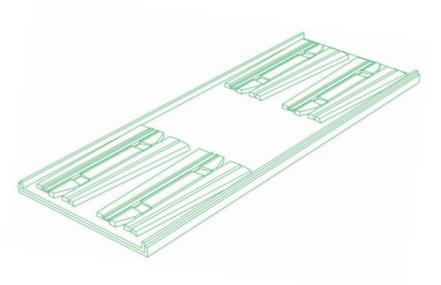
Dovetail Table

The four legs are slotted with a dovetail detail into the two horizontal beams. The beams slide in opposite directions into their position underneath the table surface and are locked with metal wire crosses.



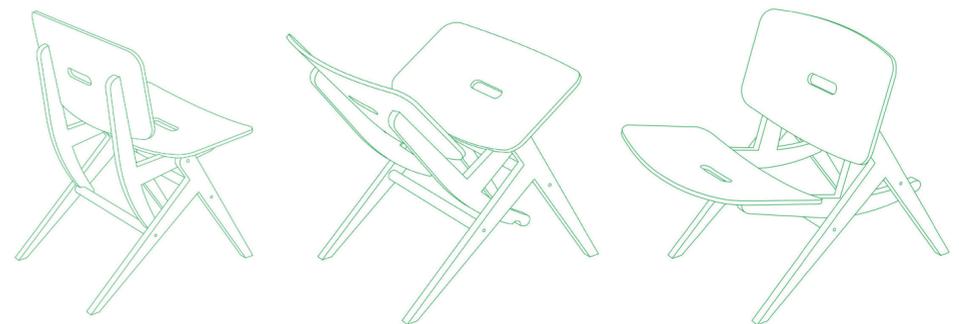
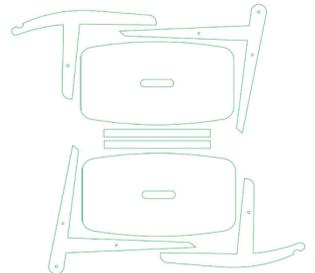
Trestle Table

This trestle table has a double-layered top. Each surface has a U shaped profile surface that rests on top of the trestles. The table can be used individually or opened to become two that can be arranged in a square or end to end for maximum seating capacity.



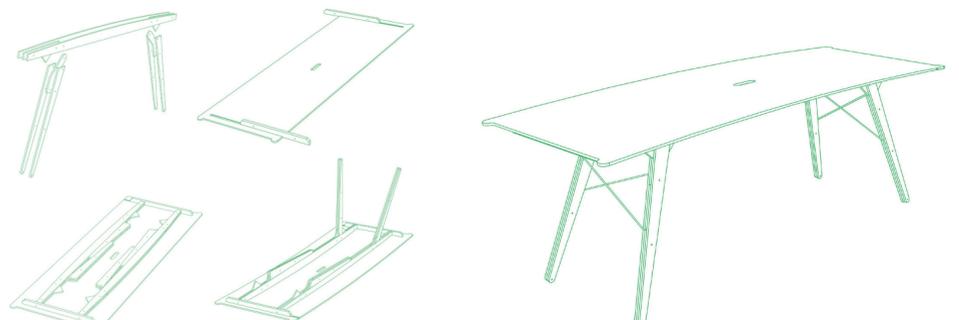
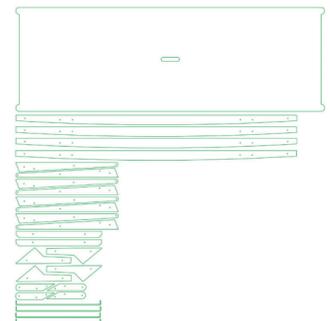
ChairEasyChair

This chair converts easily between a dining chair and an easy chair. Constructed from two identical shaped laminated pieces which form both the back and seat, through alternating their function depending on the chairs position. With one simple action of turning the dowel under the seat the upright dining position is transformed into a lower deeper seat suited for a relaxed pose.



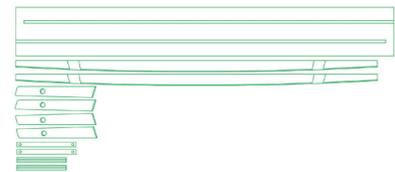
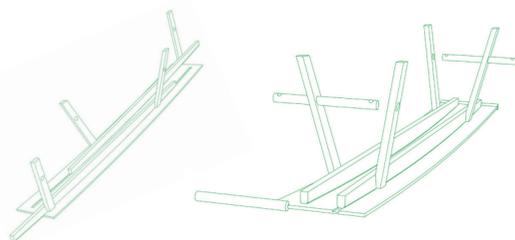
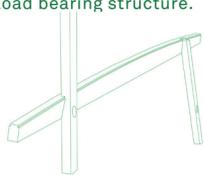
Folding Table

The folding version of the dovetail table is designed to be an easily stored temporary table. Leaning securely flat against a wall when not in use it is easily accessible. Its parts are CNC-routed out of 10mm sheet; the legs and beams bolted into a three-layered sandwich laminate. Although flat when stored, the surface is slightly curved when assembled.



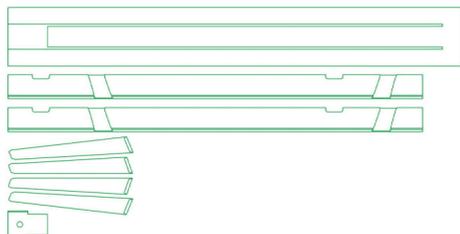
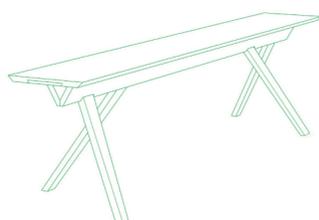
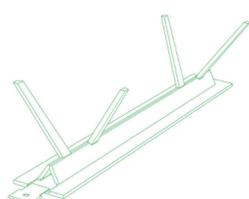
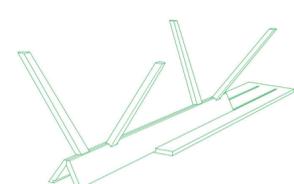
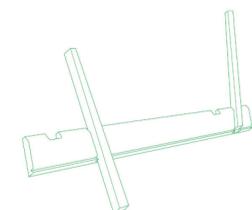
Dovetail Bench

The four legs of the bench are slotted through a dovetail detail into two horizontal beams. The beams slide in opposite directions in tracks on the underside of the seat surface and are then locked by two dowels that in turn are themselves locked into position by two smaller dowels. It becomes a secure load bearing structure.



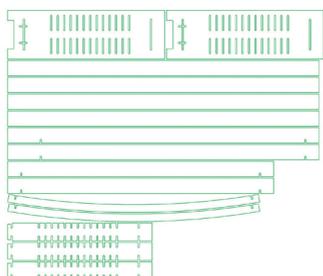
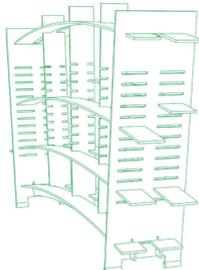
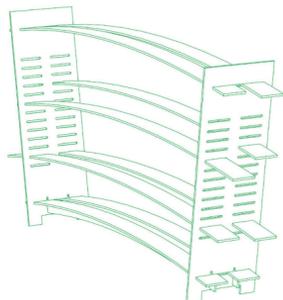
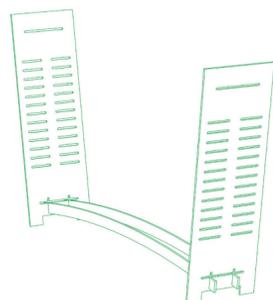
X-Bench

A single dovetailed strip locks the X-Bench into position holding the four legs that are also dovetailed into the underside of the seat surface, passing through two horizontal beams.



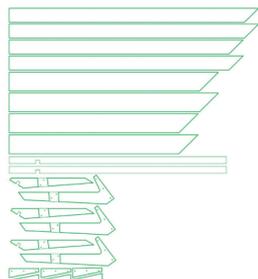
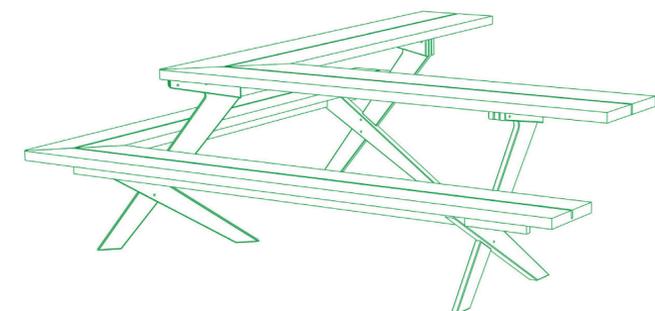
Bookshelf

The fully flat packed lightweight kit is a highly adjustable bookshelf, designed as a freestanding space divider. The structure is stabilized by the tension created from the base. The interlocking vertical spacers support the side plates and the shelf. The tension in the structure enables the use of thin lightweight sheet material.



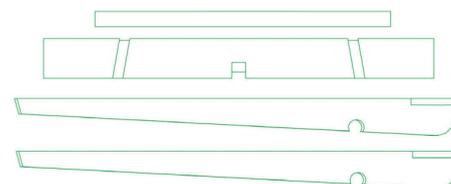
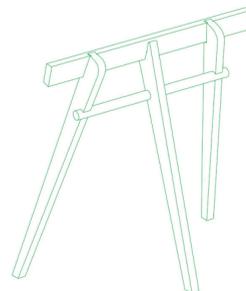
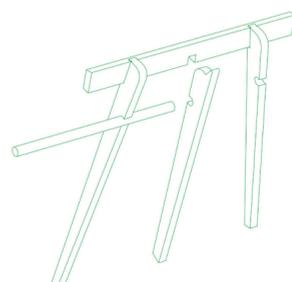
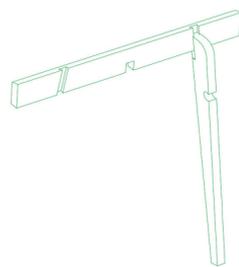
eLpicnic

A variation on the iconic social picnic table, it is as if it was sliced and opened on one side. In contrast to the original, the eLpicnic is designed to minimise contact between users and capitalise on personal space. Made from pressed bamboo the table is suitable for outdoor conditions.



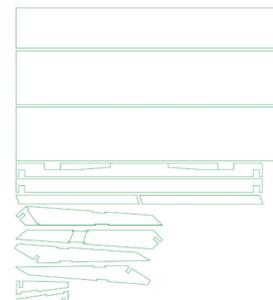
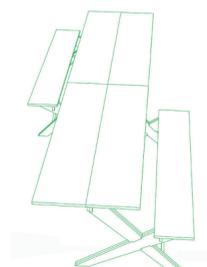
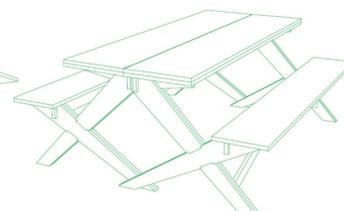
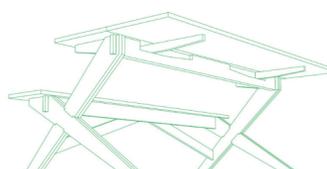
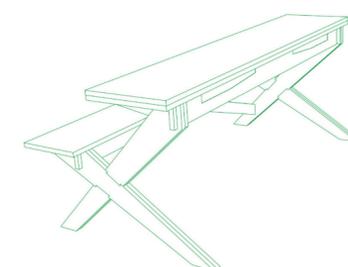
Folding Trestle

The folding three-legged trestle is designed in a scissor like structure that is locked into place by a dowel inserted into and between the blades like legs.



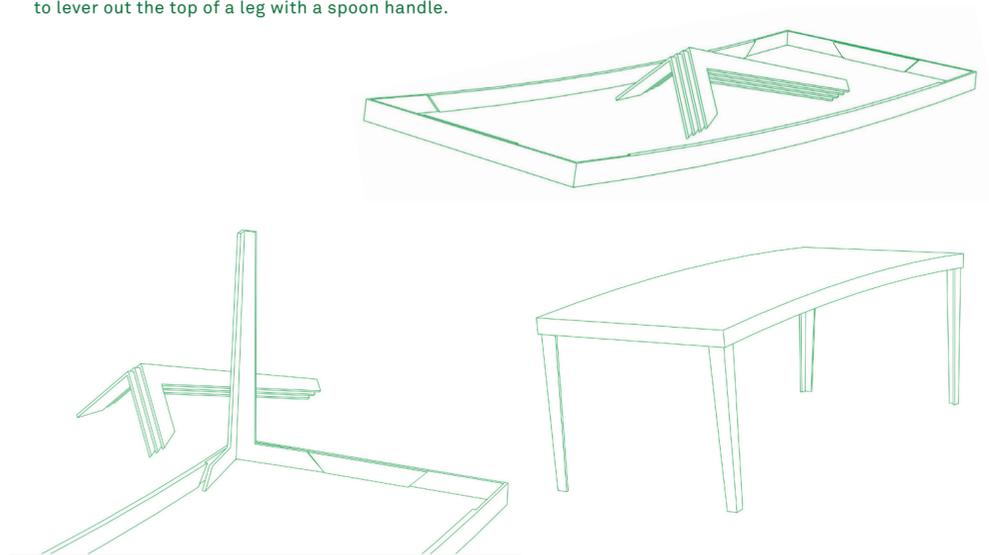
(half a) Picnic

This is a domesticated version of the iconic picnic table. Reduced to a one sided bench the double flapped surface can still be opened to a full surface. When opened the bench serves as a counter weight for the extended surface. The stepped design of the legs position means that two of the domesticated units can be combined to form a two-sided bench configuration.



Twisted Table

The wing shaped tops of the legs click lock into the corners on the underside of the table and lock securely into a subtle over cut detail; the assembly does not require any tools. All that is required for disassembly is to lever out the top of a leg with a spoon handle.



Seesaw

Designed to provide a correction of balance between an adult and child or to enable playful experimentation of size and weight. The adjustable seesaw is centered on a removable slotted pivot that can be swiftly changed from a balanced to one of the off-centre positions. Made from pressed bamboo it is suitable for outdoor conditions.

