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photo © Jack Ramsdale

TORD BOONTJE

THE LACEMAKER

24 JUNE TO 31 JULY 2010

Tord Boontje is well-known for his original design vision and with this eclectic and exciting collection of new work he overturns conventional expectations of what lace might be. 'With lace', he points out, 'all the value is invested in the labour and so it seemed a good idea to start working with cheap materials ... But also, by changing the material you can change the references'.

Works in the exhibition include a dramatic black sofa that emerges from a large three-dimensional web-like structure of bound and knotted Aramide and Dynema fibres. The sofa is one example of what he has been able to create by employing traditional craft skills, while substituting unorthodox materials. Others are a curtain composed in a random pattern of tangled flora and a selection of exuberant lighting designs, all constructed from natural raffia. Some of the more delicate works are items of jewellery, such as necklaces and a hairpiece, and a selection of test samples made in a variety of natural materials, including grass. The exhibition will include a short video about the process of making a raffia lace dress, offering further insights into his approach, which he describes as 'Spontaneous - not organized and symmetrical'.

Inspiration for this body of work came from an invitation by the Design Center at the University of Philadelphia to respond to their historic Quaker Lace Company collection and to make work for an exhibition entitled 'Lace in Translation' held at the Center earlier this year. Boontje spent three days immersed in the Center's archives and the resulting new works contain quotes from the original lace articles that attracted his attention.

Tessa Peters

Tord Boontje (b. 1968, The Netherlands) studied Industrial Design at the Design Academy, Eindhoven and at the Royal College of Art, London. He established his design practice, Studio Tord Boontje, in 1995 and has been Professor and Head of Design Products at the Royal College of Art since September, 2009. His design clients and projects are international, with both the commissioned work and mass-produced products of Tord Boontje and Studio Tord Boontje attracting numerous prestigious awards. He has had solo exhibitions in Tokyo, New York, Milan, Prague and London and his work is featured in museum collections worldwide such as MoMA, New York; Philadelphia Museum of Art; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Groninger Museum, Groningen; the Crafts Council Collection and the Victoria & Albert Museum, London.

For more information, images, or to arrange an interview with the artists please contact Tatjana Marsden or Alida Sayer
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