



AHEC Europe
Unit 20.1,
20-22 Vestry St
London, N1 7RE

americanhardwood.org

PRESS RELEASE
MAY 2015

SEBASTIAN COX USES CURLY MAPLE TO DESIGN AND MAKE TYPOGRAPHIC BENCH FOR MONOTYPE WORDPLAY AT CLERKENWELL DESIGN WEEK

In a project presented by Clerkenwell Design Week, designer and maker Sebastian Cox has used American curly maple to craft a beautiful wooden bench that spells ENJOY as part of an outdoor exhibition curated by typography company Monotype, called WordPlay. It's an exhibition that invites us to celebrate the way type design permeates and enhances our world. Cox's bench is a further collaboration with the American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC).

At various locations around Clerkenwell visitors will find type playfully reflected, lighting up passageways, splayed on walls, crafted into furniture.

"American curly maple is an absolutely stunning wood that has a velvety shimmer and smooth surface. It's a timber that doesn't sell very well in Europe at the moment and yet grows in abundance in the US, so the WordPlay project is a great platform to hopefully raise awareness of this beautiful and underused timber," says Cox. "The top is also an interesting material: thermally modified tulipwood. It's been baked at 180°C to make it stable and resistant to decay. It also gives it a dark coffee colour and aroma and contrasts well with the white of the curly maple."

Cox chose the type – Unica – because he and his team wanted something simple and sans serif. It would have been an enormous challenge to make a serif font in wood because they wanted to use furniture-making techniques to create this piece. "Unica also looked like it could be solid so we decided to make the piece into a bench, which suited the word 'ENJOY' because it has a sturdy E at the beginning and Y at the end," adds Cox.

One huge consideration when working with wood is movement. All wood wants to move across its width so when making a six-sided shape there are conflicting grain directions. "We've treated the letters as if they were a cabinet – with solid sides and tops, and then we've cut our own 5mm veneers for the front and back, to limit this grain conflict. It'll make the whole thing stable and very sturdy – just like a chest of drawers," says Cox.

As David Venables of AHEC comments, "Sebastian often talks about the feeling of joy he gets from making, even when it's a challenge and very hard work. 'Enjoy' is the perfect word for him and his idea to turn the word into a bench so it can have a life after Clerkenwell Design Week is inspired."

This is one of two collaborations that the American Hardwood Export Council is doing with Cox for Clerkenwell Design Week. The other is The Invisible Store of Happiness, designed and made by Cox and artist Laura Ellen Bacon, to challenge the versatility and properties of two beautiful and sustainable timbers: American maple and cherry. More information on this project can be found here <http://www.theinvisiblestoreofhappiness.info/>.

Material/project facts and details:

Soft Maple: Grown in Eastern USA. Weight 609kg/m³. Hardness 4225 N

Tulipwood: Grown in Eastern USE. Weight 449kg/m³. Hardness 2402 N

Bench weight: 85kg

Hours making: 147

Cups of tea consumed in making (by Seb, Jo and George): 186

Post-watershed swearwords used during making: 6

When: 19 -21 May

Where: Opposite Vitra in Clerkenwell Road

Twitter: #WordPlay

- ENDS -



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Notes to editors:

ABOUT MONOTYPE

From the early days of typesetting by hand, through to the evolution of web typography, Monotype has a long and constantly evolving typographic history. Whether it's meticulously formed type from the 1800s, or hand-hinted typefaces for new digital environments, we have always celebrated and supported the craftsmanship that underpins type design.

Our libraries feature iconic typefaces including the Helvetica®, Frutiger®, and Univers® families as well as contemporary releases from the Monotype Studio. Monotype has designed custom typefaces for brands including Vogue, Sony, Centrefold, and The Times.

ABOUT SEBASTIAN COX

Sebastian has been highly recognised for using the ancient technique of coppicing. By cutting and managing trees in this way provides an abundant source of timber, as well as creating a healthy and diverse woodland. He creates products that are simple in form, functional, unobtrusive, lightweight and durable. His work also shows a strong connection with the making process through visible joints, and honest construction. Manufacturing each piece by hand, his designs are mostly developed at the workbench rather than on a CAD program.

www.sebastiancox.co.uk

Twitter: @sebcoxfurniture

ABOUT AHEC

For over 20 years the American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC) has been at the forefront of wood promotion in Europe, successfully building a distinctive and creative brand for U.S. hardwoods. AHEC's support for creative design projects such as The Wish List for London Design Festival, FIVE at Clerkenwell Design Week 2014 demonstrates the performance potential of these sustainable materials and provides valuable inspiration.

www.americanhardwood.org

Twitter: @ahec_europe

ABOUT CLERKENWELL DESIGN WEEK

One of the best-loved events in the design industry calendar, Clerkenwell Design Week is a three-day annual festival gathering Clerkenwell's long-established design community together. Now in its sixth year, the event has increasingly become a must go-to showcase for the UK and international design community. Last year's show attracted over 32,000 architects and designers, and 250 brands from the UK and across the globe.

The name Clerkenwell comes from the Clerks' Well in Farringdon Lane, where London parish clerks performed the famous Medieval Mystery Plays throughout the Middle Ages. Since the Industrial Revolution, the area has housed craft workshops, printers, clockmakers and jewellers. Traditional crafts, such as printing and bookbinding still flourish, as do graphic designers. In the last two decades, Clerkenwell's unique variety buildings have been transformed into central studio and workshop spaces, attracting an unprecedented concentration of architectural, design and creative practices.

The global businesses that have made Clerkenwell their home have shaped the borough into the UK's most important generator of creativity and innovation. Serving an infinite variety of other industries easily accessible from across London, Clerkenwell has become home to a plethora of new media agencies, graphic and interactive design studios and more than 200 architectural practices - more per square mile than anywhere else on the planet. In addition, Clerkenwell houses over 60 design showrooms.

www.clerkenwelldesignweek.com

Twitter: @cdwfestival / #cdw2015

PHOTOGRAPHY

Can be downloaded from this drop box link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/x16kxxli4q1ojc/AAAabaTEkVkhOBECqUtlHv1ta?dl=0>

Credit: Petr Krejci



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