



BEN
JACKEL



GREAT BASCINET, 2013
stoneware and beeswax
23 x 13 x 17 in. (58.4 x 33 x 43.2 cm)

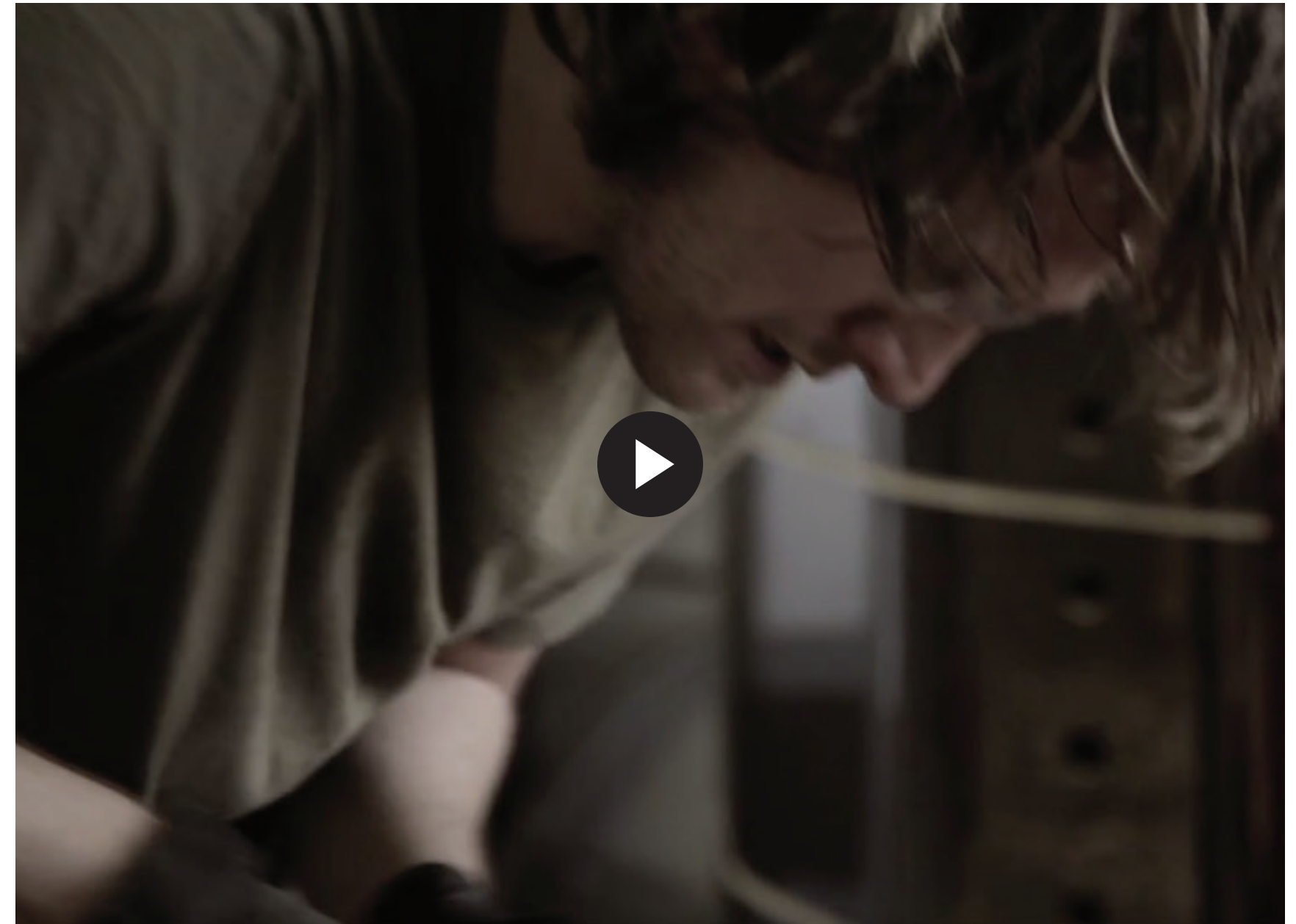
B E N
J A C K E L

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“[Ben Jackel] is chipping away at a block of Douglas fir to form an enormous replica of the head of a pole-mounted weapon called a halberd... There’s a romance to the scene that would seem to hail from a different era: the young, striking lone wolf of a sculptor, wrestling his material into submission to produce work that reflects mankind’s tireless propensity for war.”

HOLLY MYERS, LOS ANGELES TIMES, 2012



BEN JACKEL: IN THE STUDIO (2011)

DOWN TO THE BONE, 2008–2009
redwood and graphite
120 x 90 x 16 in. (304.8 x 228.6 x 40.6 cm)

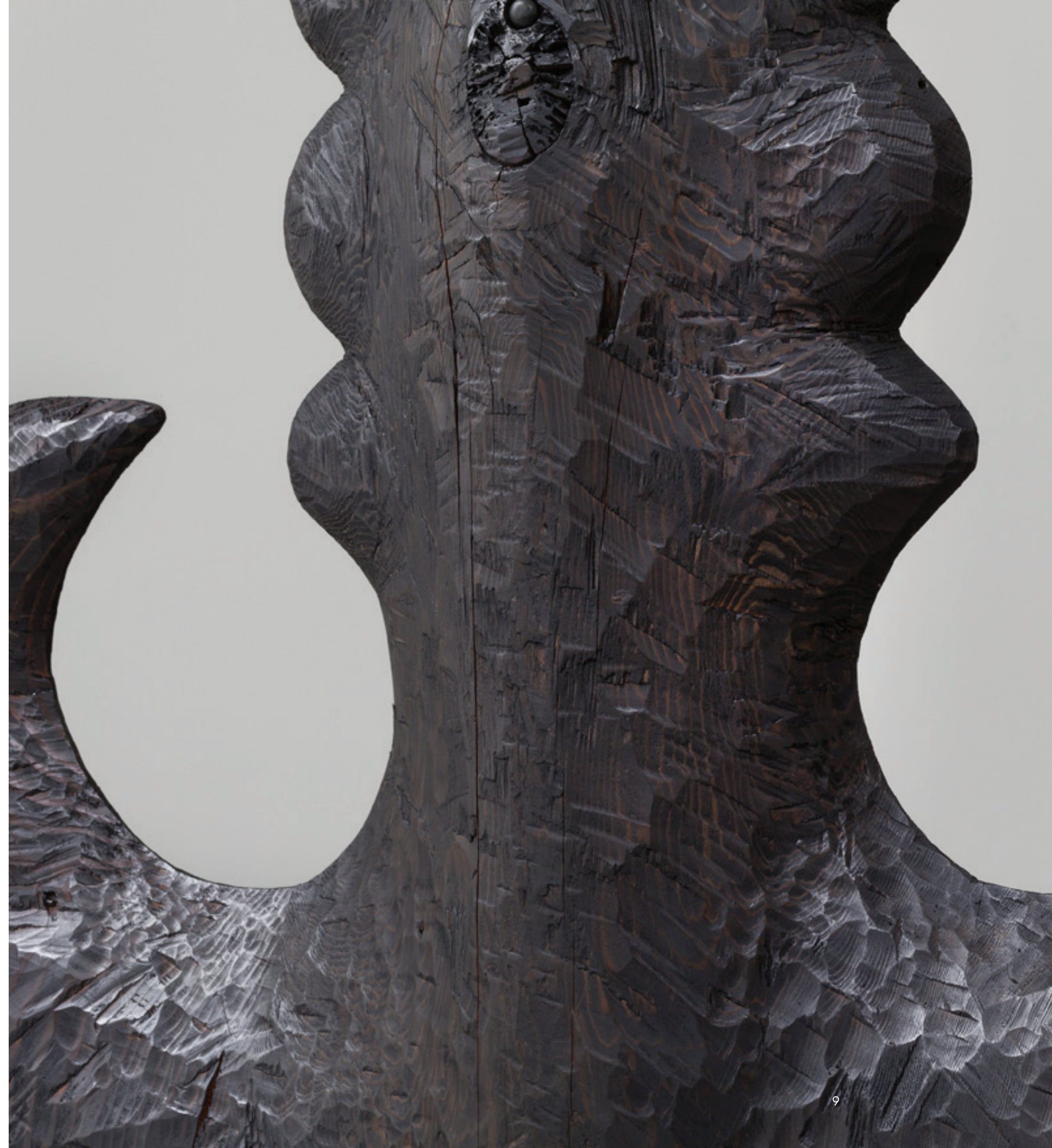




FIRE AXE, 2008–2009
stoneware and ebony
16½ x 46½ x 3½ in. (41.9 x 118.1 x 8.9 cm)



PAY ATTENTION, 2012
pine wood and graphite
162 x 64 x 11 in. (411.5 x 162.6 x 27.9 cm)



FIRE EXTINGUISHER (JAPANESE), 2007
stoneware and walnut
26 x 10 x 8 in. (66 x 25.4 x 20.3 cm)



FIRE HOSE (JAPANESE), 2011–2013
stoneware, ebony and beeswax
40 1/4 x 33 3/4 x 6 1/8 in. (101.9 x 85.7 x 15.6 cm)





NAVY HOSE, 2012
stoneware and beeswax
32 1/2 x 22 1/2 x 3 1/2 in. (82.6 x 57.2 x 8.9 cm)





WALL PIPE, 2012
stoneware, beeswax and hardware
139 x 126 x 8 1/2 in. (353.1 x 320 x 21.6 cm)



RUBY ST., 2011
stoneware and beeswax
28 x 18 x 14 in. (71.1 x 45.7 x 35.6 cm)





BEN JACKEL:
AMERICAN IMPERIUM
L.A. LOUVER, 2015

SWISS HYDRANT, 2014
stoneware and beeswax
28 x 9 x 9 in. (71.1 x 22.9 x 22.9 cm)



“A good builder and a good artist have a lot in common; they both construct items that exhibit an economy of means. These similarities explain the appearance of Jackel’s work... While his pieces replicate existing structures, the translation from metal to clay changes the nature and meaning of those objects... To Jackel, craft and imagery is a single element...”

KATHLEEN WHITNEY, CERAMICS MONTHLY, FEBRUARY 2014



BEN JACKEL: FIRE HYDRANTS (2014)



GARRISON, 2012
stoneware
18 x 40 x 21 in. (45.7 x 101.6 x 53.3 cm)

Come What May

Ben Jackel, 2012

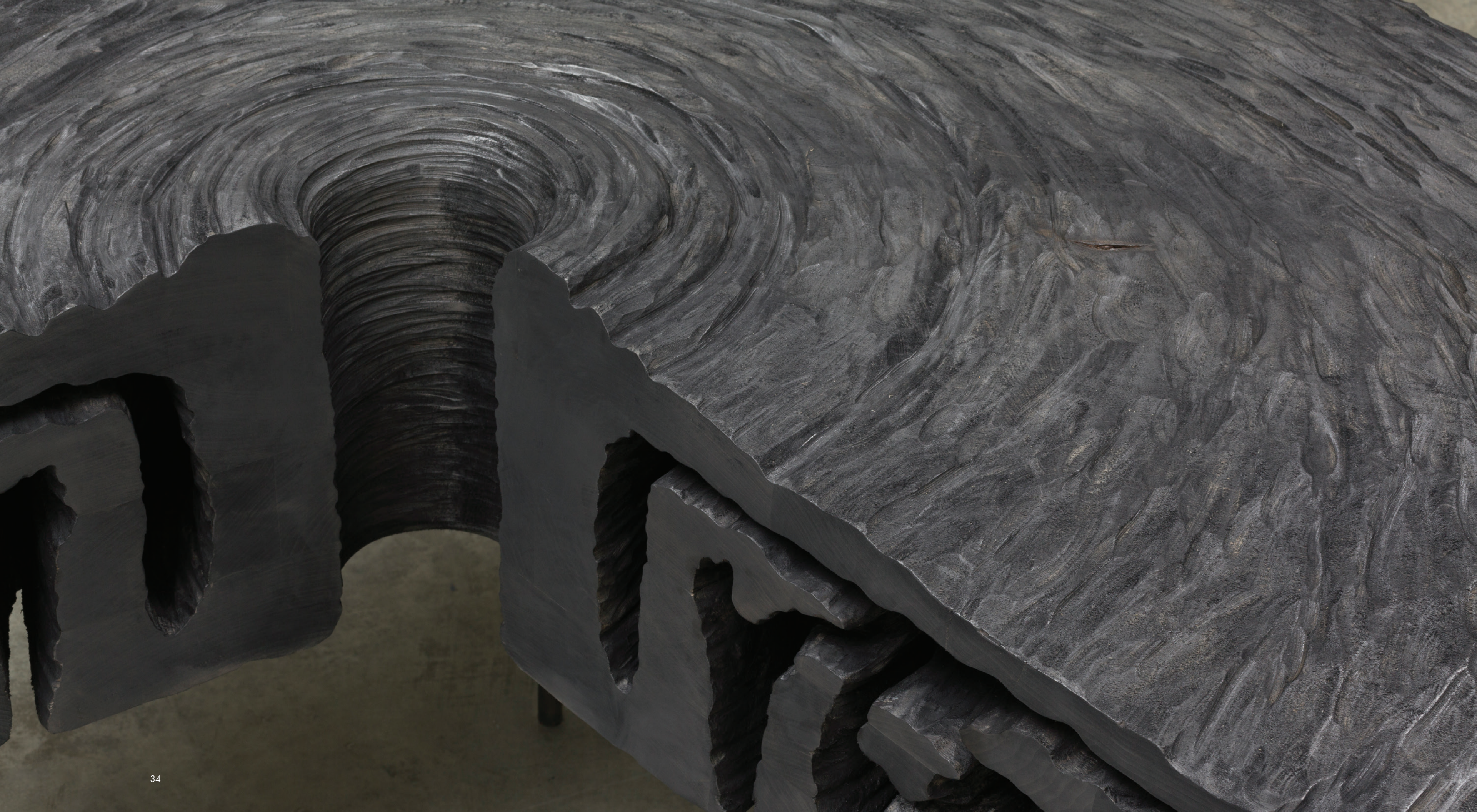
I came across an image of Hurricane Katrina in a magazine. The image was a computer-generated diagram of a hurricane with a large slice of it cut away. This let you see inside the storm. The dynamic form that was revealed was so intricate and beautiful. Radiating circles of clouds, an impossible object. So much of what I was making art about sprung from the destructive power of a hurricane. The image of the hurricane diagram now felt like a challenge. It would tie all the other objects together in a swirling vortex.

I chose to carve the hurricane sculpture from a solid stack of basswood. At over five feet across, the sculpture will spread out and tempt the viewer to peer into the swirling cloudbanks. This work will be burnished with graphite powder to reflect the dark forces that such a storm holds.

The title *Come What May* is quoted from the 1972 Ingmar Bergman film *Cries and Whispers*. "Come what may, this is happiness. I cannot wish for anything better. Now, for a few minutes, I can experience perfection. And I feel profoundly grateful to my life, which gives me so much."

COME WHAT MAY, 2012
basswood and graphite
13 x 65 x 65 in. (33 x 165.1 x 165.1 cm)





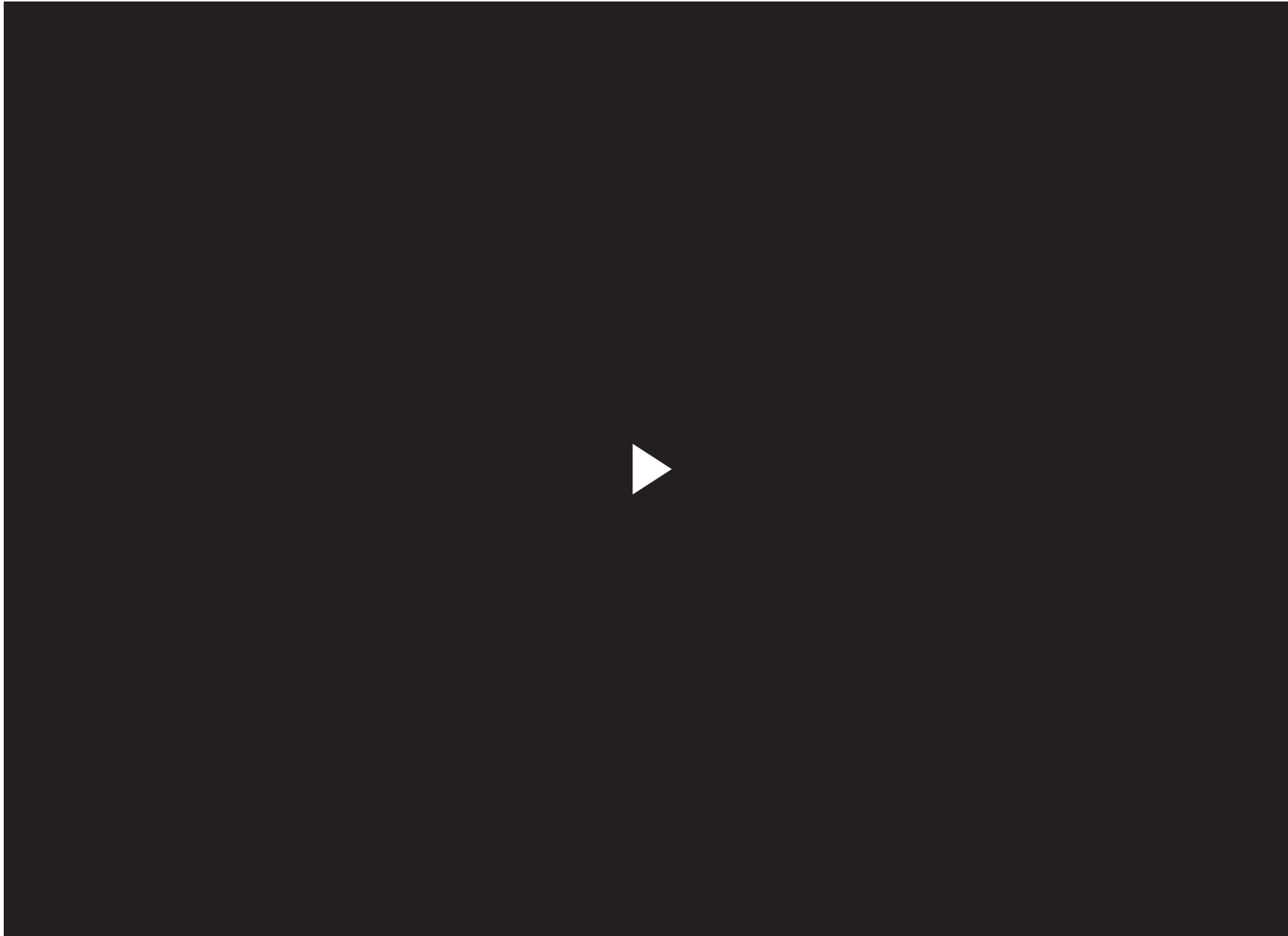


BEN JACKEL:
ZERO PERCENT CONTAINED
L.A. LOUVER, 2012

RESOLUTION AUTHORITY, 2009–2013
mahogany and graphite
13 x 69 1/2 x 39 in. (33 x 176.5 x 99.1 cm)







BEN JACKEL: CREATION OF A DRONE (2012)

Phantom Works

Ben Jackel, 2013

In 2009, I began a series of sculptures based on the proliferation of new Unmanned Ariel Vehicles or UAVs. In addition to their global/political implications, these vehicles are strikingly beautiful. To emphasize their graceful form, line and volume, I have painstakingly hand carved these planes out of solid mahogany. The surface is refined until it is absolutely defect-free, then polished with graphite powder. This finish both adds a mysterious quality to the wood and implies the dark mission given to these drones.

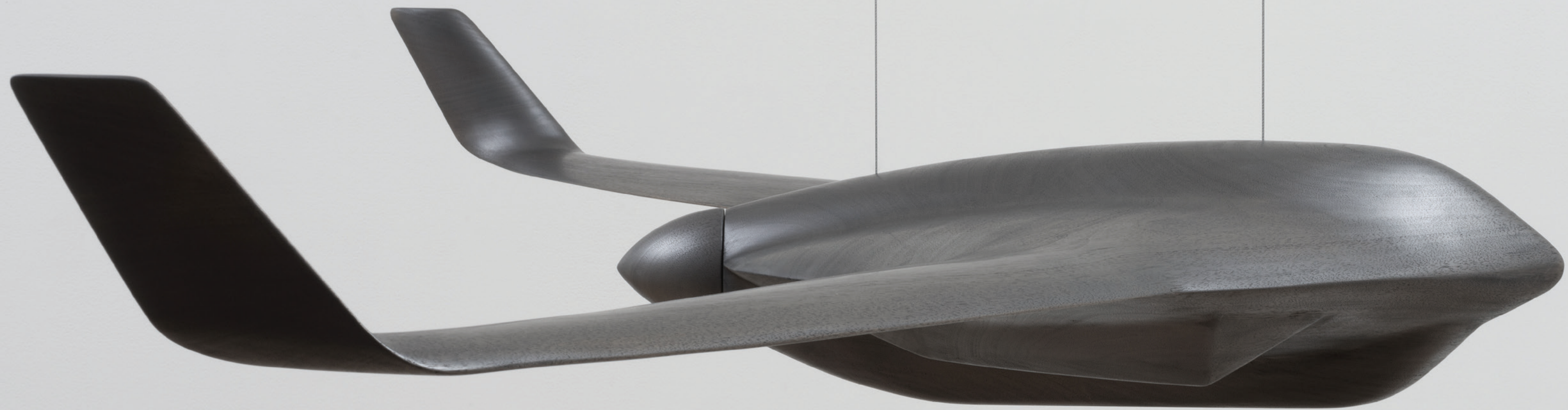
My most recent drone is titled *Phantom Works*. This model, the X-45, was constructed as a next-generation concept demonstrator. The radical, unconventional design allowed for advanced stealth capabilities and a better understanding of the cutting-edge control surfaces. It was these unique qualities that drew me to its design, the odd, straight-edge profile contrasting with the smooth, flowing lines of its horizontal surfaces.



PHANTOM RAY, 2011
mahogany, ebony and graphite
5 x 37 x 46 1/2 in. (12.7 x 94 x 118.1 cm)

FURY, 2014
mahogany, graphite and ebony
7 x 61 x 32½ in. (17.8 x 154.9 x 82.6 cm)







SUBSTANCE, 2015
mahogany and graphite
25 x 25 x 7 in. (63.5 x 63.5 x 17.8 cm)



VICTORY, 2009
stoneware, ebony, beeswax and leather
36 x 10 x 8 in. (91.4 x 25.4 x 20.3 cm)



VICTORY, 2009 (DETAIL)



Water Resolution

Ben Jackel, 2007

During World War 2, the Japanese super battleship Yamato was built for the specific purpose of destroying America's navy in a decisive battle. In April of 1945, one of the most brutal and bloody battles in history was raging on the island of Okinawa. In a last, futile effort to repel the American navy, the largest navy in history, and to save Japan from invasion, it was decided that the battleship Yamato would make a suicide attack on the American fleet. The name Yamato is an ancient name for Japan, so to sacrifice this most sacred ship in the spirit of the kamikaze illustrated the hopeless and desperate nature of the Japanese war effort.

En route to the battle with an escort of a few cruisers and destroyers, the

Yamato was spotted by American aviators, and soon over 300 American planes would sortie against this giant. After a few short hours and a few dozen bomb and torpedo hits, the sinking ship's forward magazine exploded, tearing the ship in two and sending her to the bottom on the ocean.

The image of this super battleship, the centerpiece of a nation's military power, sinking into the ocean, was compelling to me. At the same time when I looked closer at this ship as an object, its beauty was immediately evident. The design of the Yamato is the most wonderful mixture of curves, circles and fantastically complex forms and volumes.



WATER RESOLUTION, 2007
stoneware, acrylic and beeswax
77 x 12 x 13 in. (195.6 x 30.5 x 33 cm)



MILES TO GO UNTIL WE SLEEP, 2008-2009
ebony and stoneware
dimensions variable



MILES TO GO UNTIL WE SLEEP, 2008-2009 (DETAIL)



BEN JACKEL:
COMPLIANCE SOLUTIONS
L.A. LOUVER, 2009



SYNTAGMA, 2008-2009 (DETAIL)
porcelain, mahogany and bismuth alloy
overall: 16 x 72 x 55 1/2 in. (40.6H x 182.9 x 141 cm)



“The exhibition’s centerpiece Syntagma gathers 256 six-inch-high Greek warriors, girded in a grid formation. Made from chocolate brown porcelain and assembled through the mixing and matching of individually cast parts—a selection of of different helmets, shields, and breastplates—the Lilliputian soldiers suggest both action figures and confections and are at once reminiscent of China’s Terracotta Army from the 3rd century BC and Allan McCollum’s displays of similar-but-different objects in massive quantities.”

CHRISTOPHER MILES, ARTFORUM, SEPTEMBER 2009





DIGNITY AND PURPOSE, 2005
stoneware and Douglas fir
84 x 90 x 48 in. (213.4 x 228.6 x 121.9 cm)

DEAF AS A CANNON, 2008–2009

stoneware

19 x 30 x 17 in. (48.3 x 76.2 x 43.2 cm)

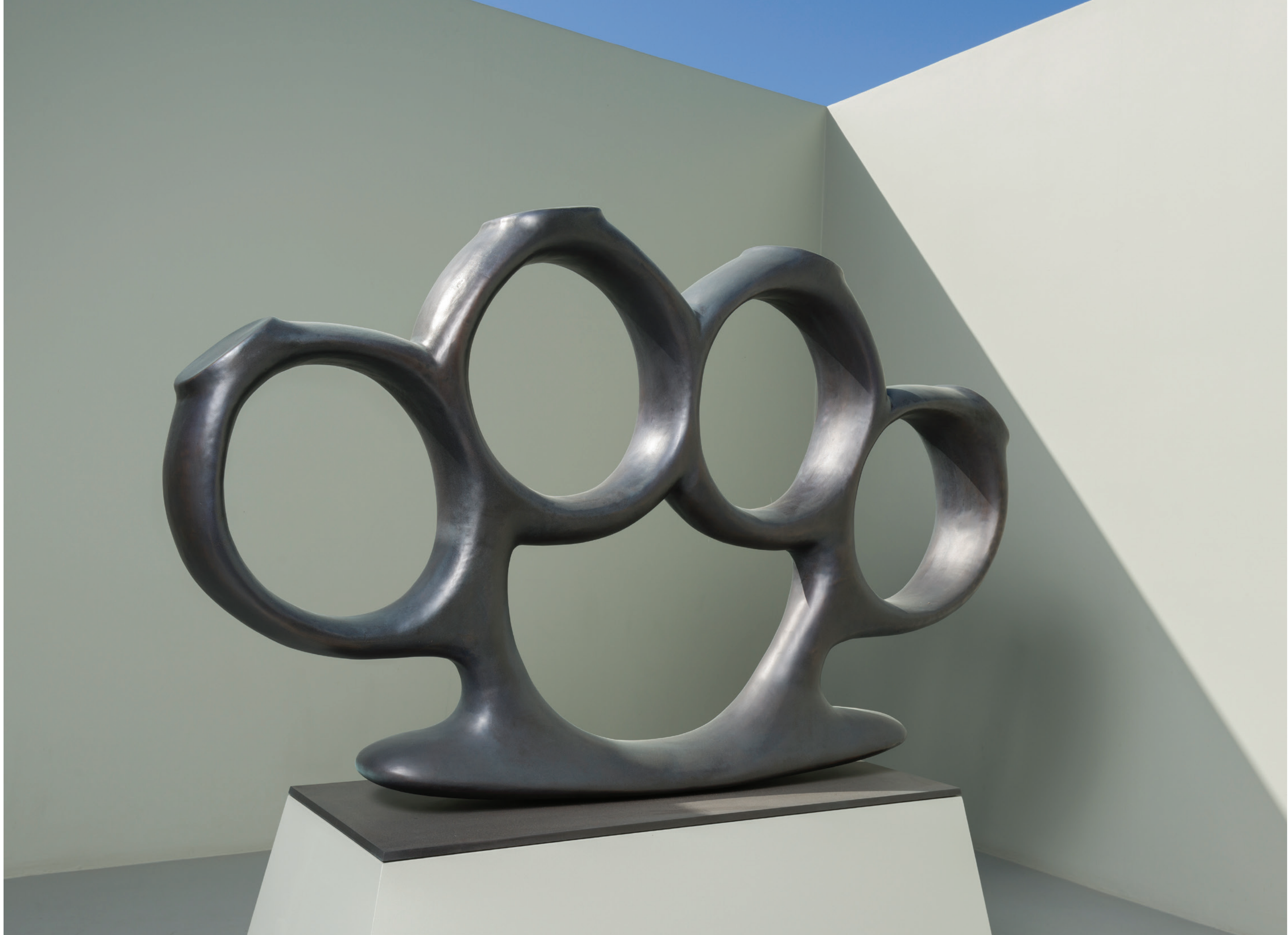




SPIKED MAXIMILIAN, 2014
stoneware and beeswax
19 x 14 x 23 in. (48.3 x 35.6 x 58.4 cm)



BEN JACKEL:
AMERICAN IMPERIUM
L.A. LOUVER, 2015



Grandpa's Knuckle Dusters

Ben Jackel, 2014

Several years ago, I became aware that the father of my Uncle Dave, John A. Gomolka, had been involved in the amphibious assault on the Island of Attu in May of 1943. I discovered this fact when Uncle Dave handed down to me a collection of artifacts that his dad had carried with him or recovered from that battlefield. One of these objects was an old set of brass knuckles.

I chose to create a monumental-sized sculpture of these knuckles for many reasons. The first time I noticed them in a formal sense was while watching a film and spinning them around my fingers. This object had been designed to interface with my hand; the connection I felt to it had been planned by its maker back in the '30s or '40s. This tool — this weapon — when worn, augmented the abilities of its user by adding strength and power. I looked more closely at the form of these particular knuckles and found beauty, elegance and a fantastic balance of positive and negative space. It was like a miniaturized Henry Moore sculpture.

After realizing the aesthetic grace that this object contained, I immediately set out to explore and produce my own enlarged version. The use of scale is important in all of my work, but this one was a no-brainer for me. If this little piece of metal made a man so dangerous and powerful that it must be banned, then I wanted to make a bigger, more powerful version. Soon, I had completed a 4-foot sculpture out of my favorite material: black stoneware. With this piece completed, I thought that my inquiry into this object had ended.

However, the form of these knuckles still lingered in my mind. I wanted to see them bigger. I wanted their scale to further exaggerate their power while at the same time obscuring their source, their true identity. I had also been patiently waiting for the perfect project that would whisper into my ear and ask to be made out of bronze. These knuckles did that, and I embarked upon the quest to create a truly monumental version of Grandpa's Knuckle Dusters.



GRANDPA'S KNUCKLE DUSTERS (BRONZE), 2014

bronze

42 x 70 x 8 in. (106.7 x 177.8 x 20.3 cm)
Pedestal: 29 x 57 x 27 in. (73.7 x 144.8 x 68.6 cm)

LIST OF WORKS

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stoneware and beeswax
23 x 13 x 17 in. (58.4 x 33 x 43.2 cm)
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BEN JACKEL

BIOGRAPHY

1977 Born Aurora, Colorado

EDUCATION

2008 Black Belt, (Shodan) Jinenkan, Tokyo, Japan

2005 Master of Fine Arts, University of California, Los Angeles

2000 Bachelor of Fine Arts, University of Colorado at Boulder, CO

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2014 *Ben Jackel: Grandpa's Knuckle Dusters (Bronze)*, L.A. Louver, Venice, CA
Ben Jackel: Artist in Residence 2014, Fullerton College, Fullerton, CA

2012 *Zero Percent Contained*, L.A. Louver, Venice, CA

2009 *Compliance Solutions*, L.A. Louver, Venice, CA

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2014 *Takeover*, Gildar Gallery, Denver, CO

MAS [LTD]>> Las Vegas, Atra Curatorial and Vast Projects, Las Vegas, NV

Artnauts: Art and Poetics, Ramallah, Palestine

PREP SCHOOL: Prepper and Survivalist Ideologies and utopianism/dystopian visions,

Torrance Art Museum, Torrance, CA

Artnauts: Answering Gauguin: Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going?,

Academy of Fine Arts Sarajevo, Gallery of the Academy, Sarajevo, Bosnia; traveled to

National University of the Arts, Bucharest, Hungary

Artnauts: Identity, University of the Andes, Bogota, Colombia

2013 *One Night Only*, curated by Max Presneill, Torrance Art Museum, Torrance, CA

Artnauts, Dar al-Kalima College, Bethlehem, Palestine

Group Show, L.A. Louver, Venice, CA

MAS Attack Ltd Ed. LA x SF, Studio 17, San Francisco, CA

HCC Central Art: USPS-LA, curated by Julia Haft-Candell, Central Art Gallery,

Houston, TX

Place, Puerto Inirida, Taraira: Mitú, Santa Rolsalia, Columbia

DIPTYCH AMERICA, China Central Academy of Fine Arts, Beijing, China

Toward a Better Society: Artnauts Comments from the United States, Eötvös Lorand University,

Budapest, Hungary

Homeland: An Apt Exhibition of Home, Land and Homeland, Dar Al-Kalima University College of Arts & Culture, Bethlehem, Palestine

2011 *Loose Canon*, L.A. Louver, Venice, CA

2009 *Tools*, Williamson Gallery at Art Center College of Design, Pasadena, CA (catalog)

2007 *Rogue Wave '07*, L.A. Louver, Venice, CA

2006 *High Desert Test Sites*, Moonlight Mesa, Desert Weapons Exploration, Joshua Tree, CA

2005 *Supersonic*, Los Angeles Design Center, Los Angeles, CA

2003 *American Made*, Latch Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

Bruin Battle, curated by Skylar Haskard, UCLA Fowler Museum, Los Angeles, CA

2002 *Built on Two Tables*, Revolutions Art Space, Denver, CO

Synapse, Galleria Corriente Alterna, Lima, Peru

2001 *Art by or about Chicano Culture*, Glenwood Springs Center for the Arts, Glenwood Springs, CO

North American Bonsai Pot Competition, National Bonsai and Penjing Museum of the U.S. National Arboretum, Washington, D.C.

Below 2002, Contemporary Crafts Gallery, Portland, OR

2000 *Grasp*, University Gallery BFA Show, Boulder, CO

Y2Klay, Denver International Airport, Denver, CO

1999 *University of Colorado Exhibition*, Core New Arts Space, Denver, CO

AWARDS

2004 Lilian Levinson Scholarship, University of California, Los Angeles

2003 Elizabeth Mandell Scholarship, University of California, Los Angeles
Hoyt Scholarship, University of California, Los Angeles

RESIDENCIES

2014 Artist in Residence, Fullerton College, Fullerton, CA

BIBLIOGRAPHY

SELECTED ARTICLES

- 2014 Whitney, Kathleen. "Ben Jackel: Use Only In Case of Emergency." *Ceramics Monthly*, 2014: 50–54. Print.
- 2012 Ollman, Leah. "The Happy Medium." *Art in America*, December 2012: 156–161. Print.
Lipschutz, Yael. "Ben Jackel." *Flash Art*, October 2012: 111. Print.
"Ben Jackel: Zero Percent Contained." *L.A. Artweek*, June 12, 2012. Web.
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Myers, Holly. "In the studio: creating with broad ax strokes." *Los Angeles Times*, 6 May 2012: E6. Print.
Nys Dambrot, Shana. "Day of the Jackel." *LA Weekly*, May 2012: 142–143. Print. 2000
- 2010 "Ben Jackel: disasters in clay." *Kauffman-Mercantile*, October 6, 2010. Web.
McElhinney, James Lancel. "The Fine Arts of War: The Original Avant-Garde." *Fine Art Connoisseur*, June 2010: 48–52. Print.
"ARCO, the controversial art." *Estrella Digital*, February 22, 2010. Web.
"LA in ARCO." *ABCDARCO*, February 21, 2010. Web.
"El director del Reina Sofia pide un nuevo modelo para Arco." *El Pais*, 21 February 2010: 49. Print.
- 2009 Knight, Christopher. "L.A.'s growing pains, status." *Los Angeles Times*, 20 December 2009. Print.
"Ben Jackel: Compliance Solutions." *Ceramics Monthly*, September 2009: 20. Print.
Miles, Christopher. "Ben Jackel." *Artforum*, September 2009: 301. Print.
Myers, Holly, et al. "Critics Choice." *Los Angeles Times*, 14 June 2009: E14. Print.
Rebecca, Niederlander. "Ben Jackel." *Artscene*, June 2009. Web.
Myers, Holly. "War, fire themes in sculpture." *Los Angeles Times*, 22 May 2009: D16. Print.
- 2008 Melrod, George. "Young at art: Ben Jackel." *Art Ltd, West Coast Art + Design*, May 2008: 54. Print.
"Alumni." *UCLA Arts*, Winter 2008: 14. Print.
- 2007 "Rogue Wave 07: 2007 12 Artists From Los Angeles." *Art Review*, 2007. Print.
"Venice Calendar of Events." *Venice*, July 2007. Web.
Ollman, Leah. "The Good Type of 'Rogue'." *Los Angeles Times*, 6 July 2007: E22. Print.
"Critics' Choice." *Los Angeles Times*, 29 July 2007: F13. Print.

SELECTED WRITINGS

- 2014 "Grandpa's Knuckle Dusters"
- 2013 "Phantom Works"
- 2012 "Come What May"
- 2011 "Benediction"
- 2010 "Artist statement—May 5, 2010"
- 2007 "A Battleship, Firehose and a Pair of Elephants"
"More thoughts on Yamamoto"

NOTES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS

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CREDITS

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Front cover: detail of *Great Bascinet*, 2013
Back cover: detail of *Phantom Ray*, 2011

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A close-up photograph of a dark-stained wood joint, likely a dovetail. The wood grain is clearly visible, showing a fine, linear texture. A vertical line, possibly a seam or a decorative element, runs down the center of the image. At the bottom center, there is a dovetail notch cut into the wood. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture and the depth of the joint.

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