



Nest tables

Almost otherworldly, Jesse Ede's furniture designs, made from recycled aluminium, are an invitation to consider alternative methods of production. Tables, benches, lights and mirrors connect to the Cape Town designer's overarching planetary theme, their textured surfaces resembling that of the cratered moon in their irregularity. "I'm not trying to make something pretty," says the artist, though sales of his work reflect an aesthetic attraction. "I'm trying to make unique things," he smiles, explaining his unusual process of sand-casting molten aluminium around Malmesbury slate. Working with the team at Cape Town Art Foundry, Ede places a mammoth cut stone, selected from a quarry, upside down in a sand tray moulded to the particular shape his design requires. The melted aluminium is poured around the stone so that, once set and turned around, the rock's apex makes a statement on top of the furniture piece, while its larger base forms the sturdy foundation.

"I can't control what it will look like," Ede says of the way in which each pouring results in different air bubbles or indentations in the sand.



Lunar table



Orbit light

MOONWALKER

Capetonian Jesse Ede combines metals and stones to create pieces with planetary presence

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Ede grew up in the workshop of his late artist father, where he was exposed to painting, carpentry and leatherwork from a young age, making things for himself with the array of tools at hand. But it was the four years of his early 20's, based in Antigua, working on classic sail boats, that honed his skills as a details-oriented thinker. "All you do is work with your hands," Ede reminisces.

Upon returning to Cape Town, he and a friend opened a design studio doing interior installations and custom furniture. But Ede says he always felt a pull towards making something for an exhibition. When Southern Guild Gallery put out an open call in 2016 to young designers to produce a limited-edition piece of furniture, Ede jumped to the challenge, veering from the carpentry he'd specialised in. "I wanted to work with a material that I didn't have to finish," he explains. "I rather wanted to celebrate the rawness and roughness of uncontrollable outcomes."

The result was his first Lunar Table, using his experimental process of aluminium smelting and open-cast pouring and cooling. The piece was a hit and travelled with the gallery to Design Miami that year. The following year his Lunar Bench formed part of a prestigious auction at Christie's London, where it sold for more than anticipated.

"It was affirmation that I should pursue this," says Ede, "I want to make things that people haven't seen before," he says. "Pieces that are timeless. They could have been made 100 years ago, or in the future."

jesse-edo.com



Jesse Ede searching for materials.