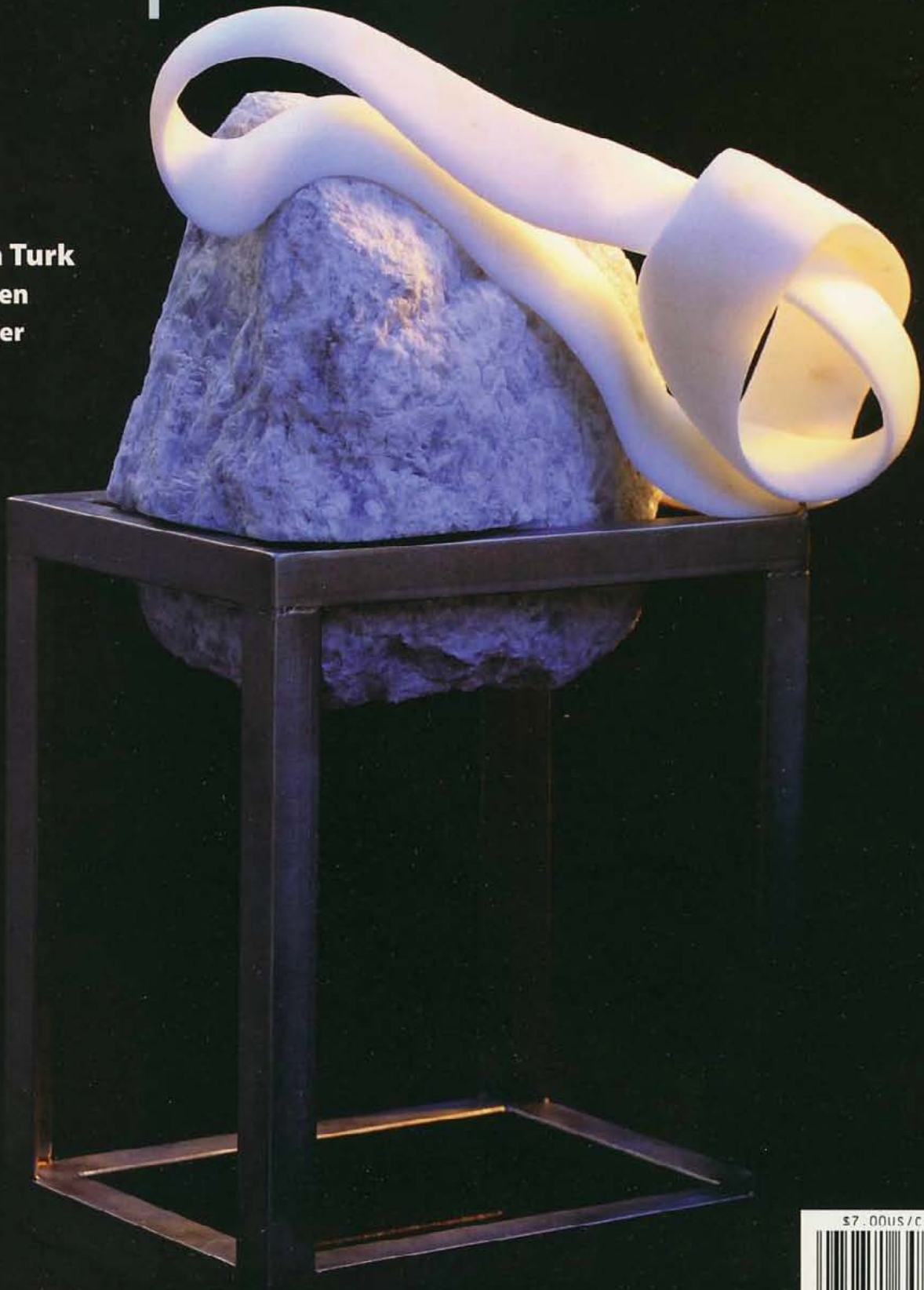


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Untitled #155, one of Wilder's most recent projects, was commissioned by Yorkshire Sculpture Park (YSP) and kicked down in November. In this intricate construction, approximately 10,000 equal lengths of wood were precariously balanced on top of one another, without fixing, joining, or additional materials. After the "kick down," Wilder collected the wood in boxes and will likely use it again in future projects. As he says, "By limiting the creative act to one simple material, in ample supply, with clearly defined parameters...a door opens into a wholly unexplored creative territory." Creating the illusion of structural stability, Wilder's sculptures offer interaction, inviting viewers to enter the alternate spaces that they create within gallery confines.

Born in Edinburgh and currently based in Japan, Wilder references Zen through the meticulous construction of his works, which often resemble traditional Japanese architectural and decorative motifs. (*Untitled #155*, for example, looked like a long, winding folding screen made out of wooden blinds [*sudare*].) After the earthquake in Japan last spring, many journalists interpreted his delicate constructions as symbols alluding to the fragility of the country's infrastructure. Although Wilder refutes these specific readings, he admits that "the precariousness of each [work] hints at the delicate balance of man versus nature."

The transitory character of Wilder's work, together with the climactic moment of the visually documented kick down, serves as a commentary on the inevitable and seemingly random cycle of creation and destruction in the world at large, empowering the artist as creator and destroyer in an increasingly market-driven art world.

BALL-NOGUES STUDIO

Table Cloth

Los Angeles

In the spring and summer of 2010, the University of California, Los Angeles's Schoenberg Hall courtyard hosted a unique outdoor installation and performance space. Designed by Ball-Nogues Studio, a self-described "integrated design and fabrication practice operating in the territory between architecture, art, and industrial design," *Table Cloth* was made up of hundreds of unique coffee-style tables and three-legged stools, linked together to create a kind of tapestry that hung from the main building of the Herb Alpert School of Music. Where the tables and chairs met the ground, they could be disconnected from each other to serve the needs of musical performances, activities, and gatherings. At the end of the summer, the university community was invited to dismantle the sculpture and reuse its furniture components.

An exercise in what Benjamin Ball and Gaston Nogues refer to as "cross manufacturing," *Table Cloth* was specifically designed to be dismantled and its parts put to different use. They define this approach as moving "beyond recycling and reuse," calling into question the very idea of current "green" design. Although, as Ball remarks, it is overly optimistic to hold *Table Cloth* as an exemplary model for the future of environmentally friendly design since "we probably will not see a world where the components that make up our buildings become useful consumer products in their own right...one never knows..."

Juries are convened each month to select works for Commissions. Information on recently completed commissions, along with high-resolution digital images (300 dpi at 4 x 5 in. minimum), should be sent to: Commissions, Sculpture, 1633 Connecticut Avenue NW, 4th Floor, Washington, DC 20009. E-mail <elena@sculpture.org>.



Ball-Nogues Studio, *Table Cloth*, 2010. Plywood, steel, felt, and hardware, 30 x 20 x 50 ft.

Perhaps someday the wall systems of buildings will be constructed of frying pans and barbecue grills."

Together with its transitory beauty and distinctive reusability, *Table Cloth* also served an acoustic function. According to Ball, musicians appreciated the sculpture for its ability to lower reverberation times in the somewhat enclosed outdoor performance space, thereby improving the acoustics of musical performances in the courtyard.

The congruity of *Table Cloth's* design impressed not only the UCLA community, but also the American Institute of Architects, which gave it a 2010 Design Award. The piece was also listed as a top project in Americans for the Arts' 2011 Public Art Year in Review, further demonstrating the success of this one-of-a-kind exercise in the site-specific ephemeral.

—Elena Goukassian