

designboom®

choi, byung hoon

dec 17, 2007

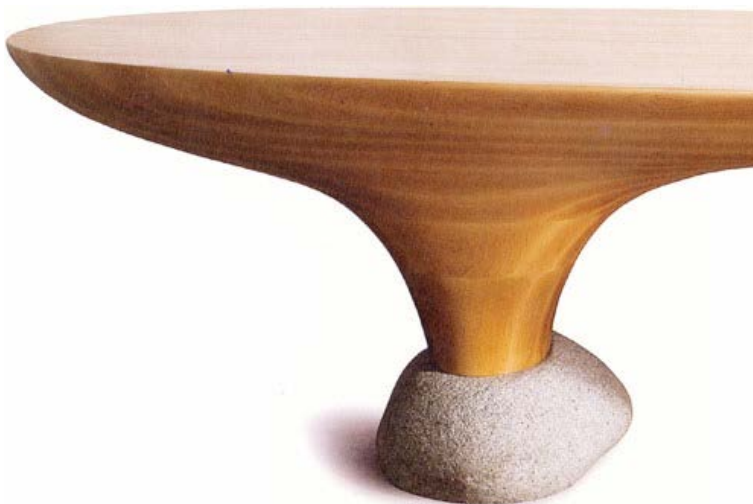
at the beginning of his career, byung hoon choi was very involved with modernizing the traditions of korean design. his early work and research explored the relationship between functional objects and art. because this practice was not common at the time, choi broke new ground with his research and practice. he experimented with form, texture and material to develop his own formal language that brought a modern approach to korean tradition.

like the traditional korean furniture makers, choi employs natural materials, a sober and rigorous style as well as a balance of functionality and aesthetics. along with the work of his colleagues', choi promoted a new direction in korean furniture that favoured an artistic approach to design, differentiating it from industrially manufactured goods. --- choi's furniture demonstrates the intent of an artist creating furniture, rather than a designer just adding artistic touches to pieces of furniture. his work appears fluid and improvised, acting on an emotional level while still fulfilling the functional requirements. choi tries to anticipate changes in taste, working free from the current trends. his aesthetic evolved slowly over-time, while remaining simple enough to maintain a timeless quality. by borrowing from the past, both locally and from cultures abroad, choi reinterprets exiting ideas, building on them and modernizing them in his own way.

by using a minimal palette of natural materials combined in primitive ways, choi's work accentuates the inherent beauty of nature. he allows room for the natural elements to speak for themselves. because choi uses such minimal manipulation, his pieces retain the feeling of being untouched and raw. when choi must intervene, his mark is hidden or masked to allow for an uninterrupted viewing. as a result, his work captures the essence of nature through the eyes of man.



afterimage 07-247, maple wood + natural stone, 2007



afterimage 07-247, maple wood + natural stone, detail, 2007

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he doesn't manipulate the material into a new form, he accentuates and focuses on the natural beauty. the elements look as though they were merely plucked from nature and arranged, demonstrating choi's belief that the craft is secondary to the beauty of nature.

choi's recent work explores a formal language he refers to as 'modern organic'. the work pairs smooth wood with the hard lines of raw granite in an array

of combinations and forms. the wood is light and soft, while the granite is hard and heavy. the contrast of the two textures is obvious but at the same time, they share many similarities. the final pieces are majestic, serene and spiritual while evoking meditative, tranquil and mysterious characteristics.

his original style and approach to designing furniture make him one of korea's most revered designers, at home and abroad.



afterimage 01-104, white marble + natural stone, 2004



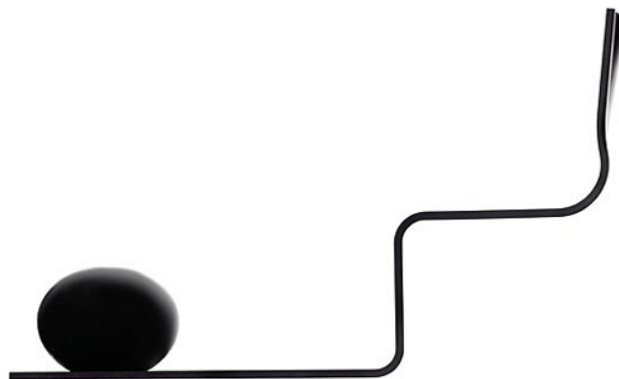
byung hoon choi in his studio



afterimage 06-233, ebony wood, 2006

choi, byung hoon

was born in gangwon-do, korea in 1952. in 1974 he graduated from the hong-ik university with a degree in applied fine arts. he later completed a masters of fine art form hong-ik in 1979. in 1977 he founded an association of young artists, 'the society for the creation of decorative and applied arts' which had a profound effect on defining the future of applied arts in korea. he travelled around the world during the 1970's soaking up inspiration from the mayan, incan, african and indian cultures. he has exhibited his work throughout korea and the world, while concurrently

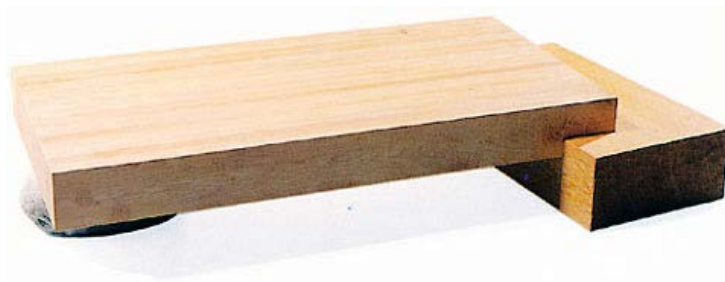


afterimage 07-243, walnut wood + black granite, 2007

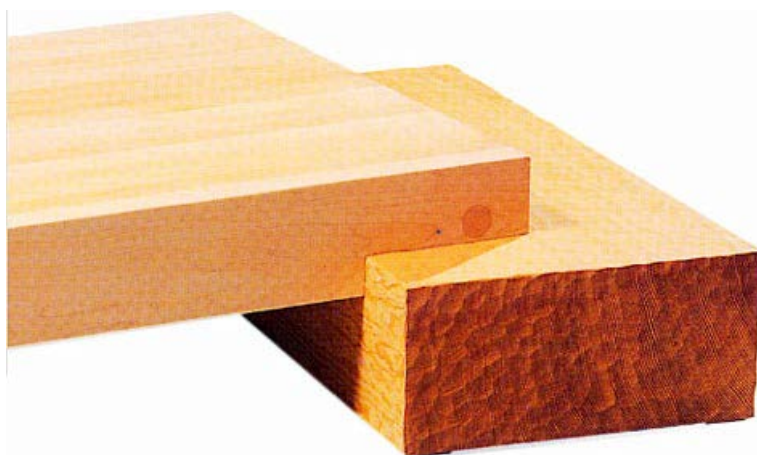
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working as a professor at a number of schools. choi has also developed extensive research in the field of furniture design and crafts, working as a research professor, throughout his career. he is currently a professor of woodworking and furniture design at hongik university, in seoul.



afterimage 0089, maple, pine, natural stone, 2000



afterimage 0089, maple, pine, natural stone, detail, 2000



afterimage 01-112, red sandalwood, maple, natural stone, detail, 2001



afterimage 05-223, white marble, natural stones, 2005

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afterimage 0092, maple wood + natural stones, 2000



afterimage 01-113, marble, pine wood, 2001



afterimage 06-231, ebony wood, 2006

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luca trazzi - designboom - visited byung hoon choi in december 2007. byung hoon choi gave a tour of his studio and workshop, showing off his prototypes, final products and his workspace.



afterimage 04-214, wood, natural stone, 2004
photo by bae, bien-u



byung hoon choi showing his models and the final pieces © picture designboom

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more models from projects



byung hoon choi's models are often made from the same materials as the final pieces



small model of a wood and granite stone bench

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07-242 bent-wood chairs, counterbalanced with stones



luca trazzi (designboom) with byung hoon choi testing out the chair's strength

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self-made conference table in byung hoon choi's studio



self-made conference table in byung hoon choi's studio

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lutca trazzi (designboom) and byung hoon choi in the studio's workshop



a new piece by byung hoon choi

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the view into the garden at byung hoon choi's studio



the view into the garden at byung hoon choi's studio



byung hoon choi and luca trazzi (designboom) outside of atelier choi

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