

Wmagazine

Editors' Blog

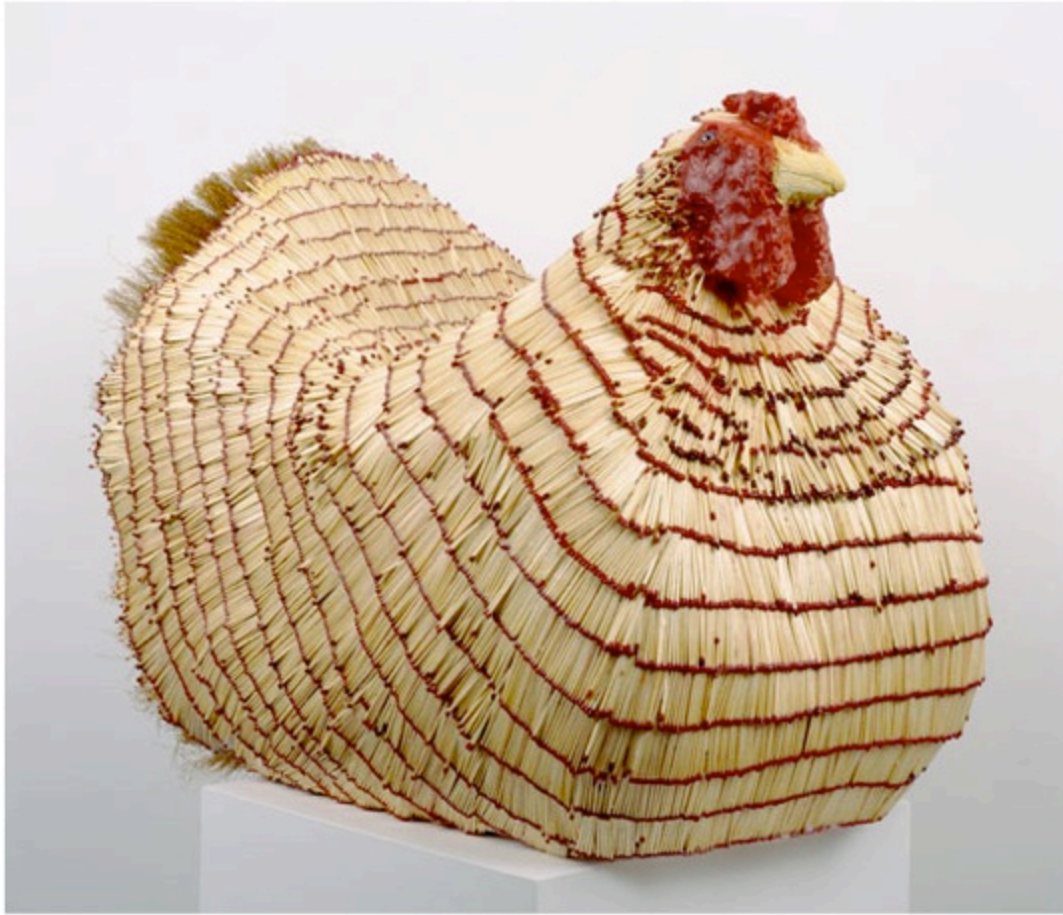
March 20, 2013

▶ DON'T MISS: MAD AGAINST THE GRAIN



Ai Weiwei's, Grapes, 2008

With so many new-fangled materials at designers' disposal today, good old-fashioned wood would seem to be just that—old fashioned. But that all depends on who is fashioning it. “Against the Grain: Wood in Contemporary Art, Craft, and Design,” on view through July 9th at The Museum of Art and Design in New York explores the myriad ways in which artists, designers, and craftspeople from around the globe are pushing the boundaries of the time worn material. The exhibition, which includes some 90 sculptures, installations and objects, includes what at first seems to be an unremarkable stack of firewood but is actually Mark Moskowitz's expertly-crafted chest of drawers as well as Wendell Castle's virtuoso Ghost Rider rocking chair. Not everything is functional. Good luck trying to sit on the Chinese artist Ai Weiwei's precarious pile of Qing Dynasty stools.



Willie Cole's Malcolm's Chicken I, 2002

What all of the pieces in the show have in common—from Alison Elizabeth Taylor's illusionistic marquetry installations which recreate architectural elements of abandoned houses to Willie Cole's chicken made of matches, brooms, and wax—is a cutting edge approach that is gleefully knotty by nature.

Images: Ai Weiwei: Courtesy of the artist; Friedman Benda, New York; Photo: Bill Orcutt; Courtesy of Alexander and Bonin, New York; Photo: Courtesy of Alexander and Bonin, New York.

By Virginia VanZanten