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HOUSTON | JULY/AUGUST 2021

PAPER CITY

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Dreams and remembrance, sculptural
furniture objects, a collaborative exhibition
between 3.Paradis and Joyce Lin.

COVER CREDITS:

The breakfast room at Pete and Bailey McCarthy's Bellville farmhouse designed by Miles Redd, with Curtis & Windham Architects. Photography Trevor Tondro/Otto. Page 58.

THE EXPLOSION OF JOYCE LIN

BY REBECCA SHERMAN

HOUSTON ARTIST JOYCE LIN IS A BREAKOUT STAR AT THE PRESTIGIOUS “OBJECTS: USA 2020” EXHIBITION AT R & COMPANY IN NEW YORK CITY. HERE, LIN TALKS ABOUT THE WORK THAT HAS SEEN HER HAILED AS A VISIONARY NEW TALENT.



For *Skinned Table*, Joyce Lin used a razor blade to dissect layers of veneer from an old table, which she mounted to its exposed underbelly on brass pegs, like a biological specimen. The table is surprisingly beautiful in its deconstructed form, but Lin is going for something much deeper. “In taking things apart, I’m investigating structures and materials — how things are made and where they come from — but it’s also like I’m searching for the truth,” Lin tells me from her Houston studio at East End Maker Hub.

Skinned Table is currently featured in the prestigious “Objects: USA

2020” exhibition at R & Company in New York City, which runs through September 6. Lin, 26, is the youngest artist in the show, and her work is getting a lot of attention in the national press — Bloomberg called her a breakout star among the show’s lineup of established contemporary artists such as Daniel Arsham, The Haas Brothers, and Monique Peán.

Evan Snyderman, who co-founded R & Company, has described Lin as an extraordinary young visionary. Having studied both furniture at Rhode Island School of Design and biology/geology at Brown University, Lin digs beneath the surface of design with forensic fervor. “Joyce Lin is as

much a scientist as she is a carpenter, continuously exploring the layers and surfaces that lie beneath our physical world,” Snyderman says. Lin’s future as a collectible artist is promising: When the gallery exhibited one of her \$3,000 *Exploded Chairs* in 2019, the entire edition of eight sold out. Her public work, *Home Grown*, is on view at the Richmond Ave Sculpture Trail through December 31. In a play on words and materials, she created an armchair, table, and lamp from fiberglass, epoxy, and soil that appear to have sprouted from the ground.

For our discussion with Joyce Lin, turn to page 78.

(continued from page 68)

THE EXPLOSION OF JOYCE LIN

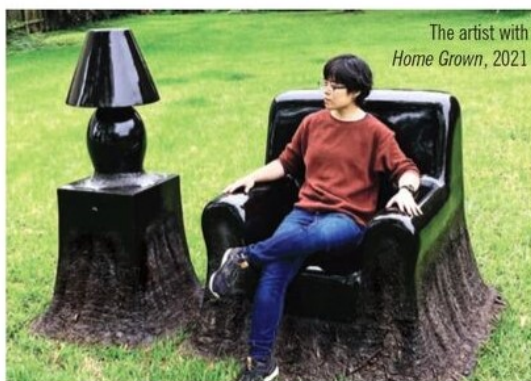
REBECCA SHERMAN CHATS WITH JOYCE LIN:

It's unusual to have a dual degree in furniture design and science.

JL: I've always had a fascination with the natural world and the question of where we come from, and where we are going. In college, geology intro classes were eye-opening — it's part of our deep history in the way that everything is interconnected.

Your designs are original and provocative

JL: This idea of painting over the surface and hiding the structure away, it's a journey of doing something that's wood based, seeing the natural grain of the material. It collided with my growing understanding of industrialized materials, where people are engineering all the properties to have control over their physical environment. For me,



there's almost a horror aspect of it.

There's also humor to your work.

JL: In my early work, I made toy kinetic chairs to challenge the assumption that furniture is static. In geology, what we assume is static is not. Even rocks are slowly moving. Everything is slowly moving from one state to another. Chairs are related to the human body — even how we talk about a chair: It has a back, arms, legs. It's my way of almost turning the work into a character.

Dirty work.

JL: I've been interested in dirt for a while — conceptually, as this idea of something beneath our feet, a realm that we consider nature, but it's also

something we might consider disgusting. When things die, we use dirt to cover them up. But things also grow out of it. The natural matrix of death and creation is beautiful. In my newest work, *Home Grown*, the bottom grows up from the dirt into this opaque

surface so you can't tell what's inside.

1-800 Get Pink

JL: It's a chair I made at the end of 2020. It was a reaction to social media at the time. I was doing a lot of rounded chair forms that are painted or gilded. But what is actually inside those things? So, there are exposed areas where you see what's really underneath.

Inspiration.

JL: Just going about everyday life, I'll see something like exposed pavement on the road and be inspired. I'm fascinated by construction. For a while, they spent a year repaving my entire road, and I was like 'Oh my god, there's a whole world under our feet.'



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