KOHEI UKAI



Vestige 16-04
Manufactured by Kohei Ukai
Japan, 2026
Zelkova wood, Urushi lacquer

Measurements
143 × 7 × 13h cm
56,3 × 2,8 × 5,1h in

Edition
Unique Piece

About
Kohei Ukai explores the relationship between natural materials and traditional Japanese craftsmanship through the combination of wood and Urushi lacquer. In Vestige 16-04, Zelkova wood and lacquer form an elongated horizontal composition that emphasises proportion, texture, and sculptural presence. The contrast between the timber's natural grain and the refined lacquered surfaces reflects Ukai's investigation into material transformation, memory, and the traces preserved within natural forms.

Biography
Kohei Ukai (b. 1993, Aichi, Japan) is a contemporary Japanese artist specialising in wood and traditional Urushi lacquer. He graduated from Kanazawa College of Art in 2016 and completed his MFA in 2018, followed by a three-year residency at the Kanazawa Utatsuyama Craft Studio. His practice combines carving, layering, and polishing techniques to explore the relationship between the organic qualities of wood and the transformative properties of lacquer. Working primarily with Zelkova and camphor, he creates sculptural forms that merge traditional Japanese craftsmanship with contemporary artistic expression. In 2020, he was selected as a finalist for the LOEWE FOUNDATION Craft Prize and has exhibited internationally, including at the Ishikawa Wajima Lacquer Museum and Pierre Marie Giraud in Brussels.