KOHEI UKAI



Vestige 17-05
Manufactured by Kohei Ukai
Japan, 2017
Zelkova wood, Urushi lacquer

Measurements
20 × 20 × 95h cm
7,9 × 7,9 × 37,4h 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 17-05, Zelkova wood and lacquer form an elongated vertical composition that highlights the contrast between the timber's natural grain and the refined lacquered surfaces. The slender proportions and interplay of textures reflect 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.