



美國闊葉木外銷委員會－東南亞及大中華區  
American Hardwood Export Council - Southeast Asia & Greater China

香港金鐘道 89 號力寶中心 1 座 2005 室

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## **"Echoes of the Wood" Sustainable American Hardwood Contemporary Design Exhibition Opens in Shanghai**

"Echoes of the Woods" Sustainable American Hardwood Contemporary Design Exhibition unveils at Former Residence of Hotung Robert in Shanghai on September 7<sup>th</sup>. From the vast and distinctly seasonal American hardwood forests to vividly natural and creatively original artworks, ten young Chinese designers and artists use American hardwood as their primary material to interpret the resonance and echoes between nature and humanity, society, and all things. The exhibition will run until September 30<sup>th</sup> attracting industry professionals and design and home enthusiasts to closely appreciate and interact with the works, making it a must-visit hotspot of City Walk in Shanghai this autumn.

The exhibition is fully supported by American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC), curated by "Cooollect" and co-organized by "Spring of Design" and Shanghai Furniture Industry Association Design Professional Committee. The objective is to empower sustainable American hardwood with infinite creativity and design artistry to create a series of unique contemporary art and design works, allowing the public to experience more application possibilities of natural wood materials in design and art fields and further promote sustainable development.

"AHEC is truly honored to fully support and witness this spectacular design feast. We have long endeavored to help more people understand American hardwood and influence their views of this material - that as a sustainable and aesthetically valuable natural material, it possesses tremendous design extendibility and broad application prospects. Globally, we have presented numerous design projects, including 'Connected' at the Design Museum in London in 2020 and 'Discovered' in 2021, as well as 'SLOW' at the Madrid Design Festival 2023. This thematic exhibition held in Shanghai marks an innovative attempt by us to bring original designs featuring American hardwood to China," expressed by Mr. John Chan, Regional Director of AHEC Southeast Asia and Greater China.



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*Mr. John Chan, Regional Director of AHEC Southeast Asia and Greater China*

“Echoes of the Woods” --- The Collection of Ten Contemporary Art Designs

**[Breaking] Console Table / Coffee Table / Cabinet**

Creator: Yun Zhao / Curator, Independent Designer, Founder of “TIWUWORKS”

Material: American red oak



Zhao's work collection **[Breaking]** contains a console table, a coffee table and a cabinet, which aims to explore the processes and connections between different state changes of life. Through this piece, he hopes people can constantly pursue the meaning of life in the cycle. The work uses American red oak, which has a slightly shallower texture, fewer scars, and higher hardness, making it more suitable for surface treatments such as polishing and fiber drawing. In this work, the designer applies two surface crafts simultaneously to showcase the multifaceted qualities of red oak.



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**「The Elf」 Deck Chair / 「Magnolia」 Side Table**

Creator: Samson Wang / Furniture Designer, Wood Artisan

Material: American red oak, metal



Samson Wang's inspiration is from the shape of bamboo leaves. His light visual interpretation displays oriental beauty while daring colors and geometric shapes depict a perfect fusion of Memphis design and Eastern culture. The work uses American red oak as the primary material as he appreciates its texture, tactile quality and the sense of sophistication and refinement it conveys. In terms of craftsmanship, Samson integrates traditional and contemporary fine woodworking techniques to present the design, while incorporating metal materials for decorative accents that make the piece more contemporary.



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**[Infinity] Leisure Nook**

Creator: Chris Tang / Product Designer, Founder of "Artempo"

Material: American red oak, lacquer, metal



The works of Chris Tang draw inspiration from the traditional Chinese concept of "Heaven is round and Earth is square", which serves as one of the simplest yet profound expressions of natural order, with all developments of the world coherently condensed within it. He aims to construct an independent and static microcosmic realm of Heaven and Earth, where one can attain calm and enlightenment through tea drinking, meditation, cultivation and comprehension of Dao. In the sustainable flow of time, thought, spirit and substance come together in harmony, tending towards simplicity and stillness. The work uses American red oak, with its straight grains, reddish hue within its whiteness, making the permeability of natural texture immediately apparent just by looking at the surface. In terms of craftsmanship, Chris chooses to combine lacquering with the wood, whereby American red oak serves as the wooden substrate that echoes and complements traditional lacquering techniques in a mutually reinforcing way, producing visual effects of supreme natural harmony and beauty.





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### 「Migration」 Installation Art

Creator: Zizi Wang / Floral Artist

Material: American red oak, mirror, metal, mixed materials, etc.



China's traditional chronicle of flowers, the "Twelve Flower Months", inspired Zizi Wang's creative work for this exhibition. In her piece 「**Migration**」, she explores the relationships between materiality, time and space from a contemporary art perspective, presenting endless possibilities through distorted mirrors that magnify and distort the surrounding area, reflecting scenic views and faces from different dimensions and redefining the world around us.

The scale markers and back textures are testaments to the passage of time—the twelve flowers, twelve months, twelve solar terms interweaving temporal trajectories and life's cycles. Through time, she reexamines her past, present and future, exploring time, self and life.

In terms of materials, the artist selects American red oak for its clear grain and natural beauty. In the production process, red oak's hardy texture, excellent workability and strong plasticity better embody the design concept and detail work. Additionally, the piece leverages five-axis technology to intricately carve and cut the wood within 3D space, realizing various complex curved and structural designs while retaining the wood's original grain and tactility, presenting it in a more artistic, three-dimensional form imbued with deeper spirit and vitality.



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**[Blanc] Table / [Blanc] Floor Lamp**

Creator: Linda Lee / Interior Designer, Founder of Li Man Space Design and Linda Lee Design

Material: American maple, American cherry, metal



The inspiration of Linda Lee's collection is from the *Medicago orbicularis* — its vibrant organic morphology spoke to her inner self, spurring exploration into how to transmute those qualities into a homewares line seamlessly fusing form with function. She favors American maple as the primary expressive material from nature, combining with American cherry, copper and maple burl, it presents the visual energy through the collaboration of these crafts.



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**[Invisible Presence] Interactive Installation**

Creator: Yanxiong Lin / Furniture Designer

Material: American cherry



**[Invisible Presence]** is a sculptural furniture piece by Yanxiong Lin that derives inspiration from relationships of friendship and family. Through a poetic reconfiguration of disparate elements according to their associations with other forms, he creates a unified structure with multiple references. Through such forms, the artist aims to slow viewers' thought processes, even inducing a contemplative state of suspension.

Sculptural furniture is not merely independent objects but existential presences that form relationships with audiences and environments. Each work comprises a part of the space, intentionally facilitating interaction through deliberate layouts. This interaction transcends physical contact, encompassing an emotive and intellectual exchange. The piece selects American cherry for its outstanding carving and forming attributes plus finely uniform straight grains. Its delicate texture and warm hue can be easily sanded and polished to an extremely refined lustrous surface.





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「Treasure House」 Interactive Installation

Creator: Min Zhang / Artist

Material: American maple, American cherry, American red oak



Min Zhang's interactive installation 「**Treasure House**」 draws inspiration from observations of urban humanity's living states. Referencing Escher's endless staircase and Monument Valley's play structures, the lit spheres at top symbolize souls brimming with energy, reminding people that amid eternal checkpoint living, the sole genuine choice is awakening to discover one's inner radiance. The piece utilizes American maple, cherry and red oak. The grain of Maple is straight and clear with evident waves while also stiff; cherry feels moist and smooth with delicate grain; oak endures wear with straighter grain, heftier feel and natural beauty. Each wood was handcrafted through cutting and sanding to retain the wood's intrinsic textures and surfaces. An eco-friendly water-based lacquer was finally uniformly brushed onto the blocks. Manipulating them feels pleasurable, their tactility and hues emotive. The three woods exhibit distinct tonal and grain hierarchies enhancing expressivity.





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**「Universe - Known, Unknown」 Installation Art**

Creator: Yuesheng Fang / Product Designer

Material: American maple, metal, stone



「Universe - Known, Unknown」 installation art is created by Yuesheng Fang. He has collected many stone spheres over time, varying in size, most dating back to the Song Dynasty, with textures resembling the surfaces of planets. Inspired by this, he wishes to combine the stone spheres, also gifts from nature, with wood materials for secondary creations. Through structural linking with metals, American maple, stone spheres and metal wires, a new expressive style and conceptual presentation is formed. New and old are never opposing facets; exploring material qualities is an essential attribute for a creative individual.



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**[Hana] Wine Cabinet**

Creator: Zhongyu Zhang / Product Designer, Founder of [MMR]

Material: American maple



Zhongyu Zhang's work [Hana] wine cabinet draws inspiration from the "Hana" structure of Mongolian yurts. By exploring material possibilities of American maple and the spatial transformation between "nomadic" and "urban", it creates a space that satisfies "guilty pleasures".

American maple is selected for its durability to ensure structural stability and longevity over time. Maple also has good resilience and elasticity suitable for the structural demands of the piece. In the work, each wooden slat is joined by hinges to form a rhombus grid structure, retaining rope marks as structural traces. The overall work realizes a "diamond-like" appearance through manifested technical structure. Traditionally, the collapsible Hana allows for quick assembly and dismantling of yurts when migrating. MMR Studio's [Hana] wine cabinet focuses on the fluidity of such "temporary spaces" in its application to the bar's "fencing", re-envisioning the socially-embedded space of the bar.



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**[Watching Sunset] Interactive Installation**

Creator: Samoon Xia / Architect, Curator, Artist, Writer

Material: American hard maple, fabric, OPPLE SDL software defined lighting



*Wood Sponsor: Shanghai Furen Investment Group Co., Ltd. & Fortune (Shanghai) Resource Co., Ltd.*

**[Watching Sunset]** is created by Samoon Xia, which is an interactive installation where one enters a partially enclosed wooden space from an external environment through a narrow door. Within this confined area, the light is warm and one can see but not touch the distant sunset view.

The artist selects lighter-colored American hard maple with some visible grain, as hardwoods (also called "hard maple") resemble softwoods visually yet have a different tactility while offering higher strength for equivalent weight. Fabrication aims to retain the wood's natural grain and texturing as much as possible. American hard maple features typically cream-colored sapwood on the edges, used here for the facing layer, while heartwood colors range from light reddish-brown to deep reddish-brown seen in some structural cross-sections exposing the heartwood. Rarely-seen "flute", "fiddleback" and "birds-eye" figuring may also occur on American hard maple, darkening slightly with sun exposure over time.



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### **About the Material**

#### American Red Oak



Warm, grainy, tough and bendy, full of character.

Reaching a height of 21m, with a trunk diameter of 1m, red oak is the most abundant species in America's hardwood forests. Named for the colour of its leaves in the fall, this classic oak wood has a light brown sapwood, and a heartwood characterised by attractive warm reddish-pink tones. Red oak is strong, straight grained, coarse-textured and distinctive. Its porosity makes it a premium wood for bending and staining.

#### American Cherry



Rich, smooth, vibrant and flexible, a craftsman's delight.

A medium size tree, reaching a height of around 20m, cherry has a relatively short rotation, taking less time to mature than other hardwoods. The narrow sapwood is a light pinkish colour, while the heartwood varies from rich red to reddish brown, and darkens on exposure to light. American cherry had a long period of popularity in furniture making, it became less popular but is on the verge of a revival.





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### American Maple



Light, fine, hard and incandescent, a bright choice.

A close cousin of European maple and sycamore, American maple can reach heights of between 23-27m, with a trunk diameter of 75cm. For the purposes of this project, we are grouping the botanical subspecies, hard and soft maple, which share similar characteristics and are both relatively abundant. Hard maple is a cold climate species favouring the northern states, whereas soft maples grow more widely across the mixed hardwood forests of the eastern United States. Both hard and soft maple produce syrup.

### **About American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC)**

**American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC)**, headquartered in Washington DC, USA, is the leading international trade association for the US hardwood industry. AHEC represents the committed exporters among US hardwood companies and all major US hardwood production trade associations. Concentrating on providing architects, designers, traders, processors and end-users with technical information on the range of species, products and sources supply.

**The American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC) Southeast Asia and Greater China (SEA & GRCH)** office was opened in Hong Kong in 1992 to serve and oversee nine Asian markets.

For more details, please visit AHEC Southeast Asia & Greater China website: [www.ahec-china.org](http://www.ahec-china.org)

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