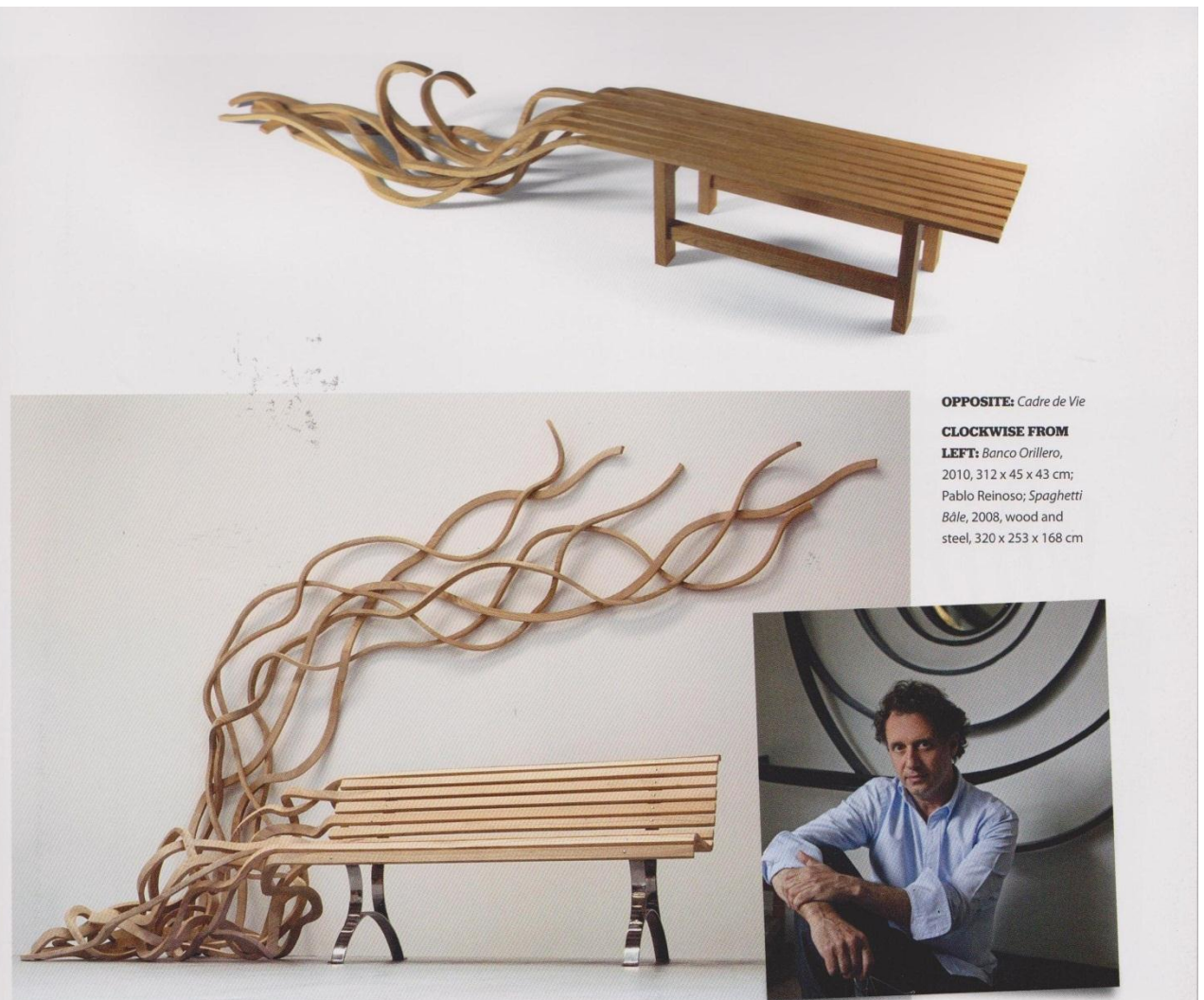


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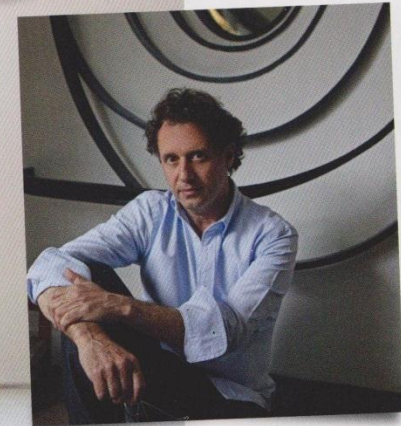
A ROOT Awakening

FRENCH-ARGENTINE ARTIST AND DESIGNER PABLO REINOSO'S POETIC AND PLAYFUL SCULPTURES UNVEIL TO US A WORLD WHERE NATURE RUNS RAMPANT AND THE IMAGINATION RUNS FREE

BY Y-JEAN MUN-DELSALLE IMAGES COURTESY OF ART PLURAL GALLERY



OPPOSITE: *Cadre de Vie*
CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: *Banco Orillero*, 2010, 312 x 45 x 43 cm; Pablo Reinoso; *Spaghetti Bôle*, 2008, wood and steel, 320 x 253 x 168 cm



Imagine snaking tree roots invading and taking over everyday items, pushing their way through obstacles to emerge triumphant. Nature appears to overcome inanimate objects and bring them to life, resuscitating them. By distorting the familiar and manipulating our reality, the art of Pablo Reinoso succeeds in plunging us into a whimsical, fantastical alternate universe where things aren't quite as they seem. By incorporating functional objects such as picture frames, chairs, benches, spades, ladders and garments in his artwork, though in mutated form, he has forced art and design to confront one another.

Artist or designer? Reinoso's artistic oeuvre developed in parallel with his commercial practice. Starting to create innovative, playful furniture designs in the 1990s, he has since become renowned for his dramatic, stirring reinterpretations of ubiquitous and common objects. In 2000, he created a bench for the city of Fukuroi, Japan, on the outskirts of the soccer stadium that was the venue for the 2002 World Cup. His design work has the unusual ability of serving daily human necessity as well as awakening emotion. Sometimes one doesn't know where the design stops and the art begins, as he integrates "function" into his artwork.

PROFILE

Born in Buenos Aires in 1955, Pablo Reinoso studied architecture at the University of Buenos Aires and has lived and worked in Paris since 1979, establishing a successful career as an artist, communication consultant and product designer working on furniture, lighting, jewellery and the packaging of luxury consumer goods, including for Poltrona Frau, Kenzo and Veve Clicquot. In 1997, he joined LVMH and became artistic director of Parfums Givenchy in 2000, then Parfums Loewe in 2002, designing perfume bottles and cosmetic lines. He founded his own design and communication company in 2004. His works have been exhibited at the Venice Biennale and in museums and galleries worldwide including Centre Pompidou, Paris; Museo Reina Sofia; Madrid, Ruth Benzacar Gallery, Buenos Aires; Museum of Art and Design; New York; and Carpenters Workshop Gallery, London.

“Design came later to balance out this discipline that was missing in my life. I owe to architecture many of my reflexes as a designer”



LEFT TO RIGHT: *Pala Rampante*, 2009, Fresno wood and metal, 237 x 57 x 12 cm; *Pala del Amor*, 2010, 199 x 30 x 25 cm; *Escalera Timida*

He notes, “For the two activities to work in harmony, I had to struggle, understand them and, above all, understand what each discipline resonated in my inner being. Artists construct an artwork that must satisfy themselves first, then the consumer – in the best-case scenario! But this isn’t a necessary condition. We artists don’t have user specifications; we build it, often, while discovering it. My differentiating factor is having placed the notion of design at the heart of my artistic oeuvre, but I’ve placed it like Yves Klein used blue pigment in his work, or like Mondrian placed geometry in his.”

Reinoso’s multicultural background – a childhood in Argentina then a move to France when he was 24 – was a result of the Argentinean dictatorship, which

brought him to Europe earlier than expected. Self-taught, he had begun sculpting at the age of 13. He says, “I’ve always managed on my own. I learn a lot by observing others; I have a strong intuition of the métiers. But I had a teacher (fellow Argentine sculptor Jorge Michel) who gave me the push I needed to take off just at the right moment. I’d wanted to be an architect as well, but the dictatorship forced me to stop. Once I arrived in France, I had to earn a living. Design came later to balance out this discipline that was missing in my life. I owe to architecture many of my reflexes as a designer.” Through his sculpture, he aims to expand horizons and go beyond prescribed boundaries, yet surpassing his own limits is his biggest challenge.



LEFT: *Huge Sudeley Bench*, 2010, 188 x 955 x 238 cm

BELOW: *Aluminio Bench*

Early on, Reinoso worked principally with wood, slate, marble, brass and steel, concentrating on articulation and metonymy, space and time. In 1995, he added the “material” of air, which allowed him to free his works of the obligations of matter. He explains, “Air represented a moment of rupture with heavy and classical materials. It allowed me to tackle subjects that were important to me to go into deeper, such as the being, dependence, fragility and persistence.” He created monumental sculptures, some of which led to the establishment of landmark installations. He reveals, “Each time I begin a new creation, I ask myself if this future work can belong in my book, if it has a place in my ‘catalogue raisonné.’” His artwork is “the result of research and work accomplished. One is an artist or one isn’t. The rest is hard work.”

His life-sized gravity-defying and surrealist *Spaghetti Bâle* takes the universal, humble park bench and transforms conventional straight wooden slats back into swirling, intertwining tendrils of climbing ivy or living branches spiralling upwards. This conceptual work is also the incarnation of skilled craftsmanship, where each slat is hand-carved to create twisting curves, a perfect example of man giving nature a helping hand. The exuberantly breathtaking *Huge Sudeley Bench* takes the idea further, evoking powerful human emotion. The first time that Reinoso has worked on



such a mammoth scale, he oversaw a team of foundry technicians who used hydraulic machinery to shape lengths of steel girder into free-flowing forms, resulting in a cross between sculpture and architecture.

Although recognised in Europe, he is relatively unknown to the Asian public, and is now venturing into this market, which represents brand-new territory for him. Currently exhibiting his first-ever solo show in Southeast Asia at Art Plural Gallery until 3 March 2012, *Pablo Reinoso: A Solo Exhibition* features the prototype of a new monumental piece and 15 sculptures that cover his last two years of work. The exhibition is a collaboration with Swiss art dealer Frédéric de Senarclens, the gallery’s CEO, who has always admired and followed Reinoso’s artistic career. Since design art is part of the gallery’s focus, both felt it was the right place and time to introduce the artist’s work to Asia. 