

Remaining with the cubic theme, **Tricolour I** and **Tricolour II** 2010, smaller works made in foam rubber combined with MDF and cellulose paint and lime brick respectively, show how Colin Booth is continually introducing other materials into his assemblages. In both sculptures the red, white and blue elements are fitted carefully to a support, one on its own plinth, the other on lime bricks. Placed in exact alignment these pieces also mark the way he has created the cubic form instead of accepting cubic elements as he finds them. The considerable strength of lime bricks hints at irony, bearing in mind the lightness of foam rubber.



Tricolour I 2010

Three of the most recent items in the exhibition, all of 2010, **End Grain**, **Home** and **Rivulet** mark developments not only in Booth's growing range of materials, but also in the way he uses the repeated form. **End Grain** is composed of three blocks already made from conjoined pieces of wood before being cut in the factory. The cross-section shows not only the annual rings of the wood, but also a cross-section of the joint that holds two pieces of factory-shaped wood together. Repetition of similar elements here is different from most of his other work, largely because of the random structure behind the face of the piece.

Home is one of the most direct pieces in the exhibition. Made simply from a stack of varnished MDF topped with a copingstone, it immediately reads as a house. Booth's use of the word home for the title adds further meaning to the sculpture and an emotional feel.



End Grain 2010

Some of the wood off-cuts from the furniture factory are fairly rough and are close, but not identical, in size. **Rivulet** is made from such elements, being sorted and assembled by Booth, but otherwise used in the condition they were found. In grading the pieces and placing them in descending order of height in a curving formation, Booth has created a sculpture that is much more organic than his architectural assemblages. From such a simple and direct vocabulary one can but marvel at the diversity of form he conjures simply from off-cuts of wood: the accretion of others' activity.

Ann Elliott 2010

Colin Booth was born in Gateshead. He studied painting at the University of Northumbria (1973–76), followed by an M Litt in Fine Art at Edinburgh University (1977–79) and a part time MA in Fine Art at the University of Brighton (1999–2001). As a young artist he travelled to the United States visiting the studios of Agnes Martin and Brice Marden, both minimalist abstract painters. Their influences may still be seen in his work as both painter and sculptor.

Throughout the late 1970s and 1980s he worked on curatorial projects and as a critic and journalist covering film and the visual arts before moving to Hastings in 1993 where he resumed painting. However, he still maintains his work as a curator, realising exhibitions at the Electro Studios, which he founded in Hastings in 1997–98, and the critically acclaimed exhibition *Colour White* at the De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill on Sea in 2002, which featured artists Naum Gabo, Ben Nicholson, Anish Kapoor and Callum Innes among others.

Booth has exhibited regularly in London and the South East of England since 1995, with shows in Melbu, Norway (2002), Helsinki (2003) and Amsterdam (2009). He lives and works in St Leonards on Sea, East Sussex.

For more information visit www.colinboothart.co.uk

EVENT Thursday 28 October at 1.15pm

Curator Ann Elliott in conversation with the artist
Please call 020 7418 2257 to reserve a place

All of the works are for sale

Contact Canary Wharf Public Art Office 020 7418 2257

Photographs by Peter Greenhalf

INSTITUTE OF PLAY

A NEW SCULPTURAL INSTALLATION BY COLIN BOOTH will be showing at the **V&A Museum of Childhood**, Bethnal Green, 5 November 2010 – 13 March 2011

List of Works (dimensions in cms, H x W x D)

Archetypes 2010 Foam rubber, MDF, tulipwood, cellulose paint 2 elements, each 210 x 70 x 70	Tricolour I 2010 Foam rubber, MDF, cellulose paint 100 x 32 x 30	Precinct 2010 Tulipwood, reclaimed pine, plywood, cellulose paint 80 x 92 x 40
Rivulet 2010 Ash wood 30 x 30 x 330	Tricolour II 2010 Foam rubber, lime brick 41 x 45 x 43	Iroko Low-rise 2010 Reclaimed Iroko wood 85 x 48 x 47
Modules 2010 Tulipwood, cellulose paint Dimensions variable	Red Low-rise 2010 Reclaimed ash wood 78 x 35 x 36	Towers I 2010 Reclaimed ash wood 98 x 25 x 25
Colony 2010 Reclaimed beech wood Dimensions variable	Green Low-rise 2010 Reclaimed ash wood 80 x 35 x 36	Towers II 2010 Reclaimed ash wood 88 x 29 x 29
Home 2010 MDF, copingstone 25 x 60 x 28	Dark Green Low-rise 2010 Reclaimed ash wood 80 x 35 x 36	Gift 2010 Tulip wood, MDF, cellulose paint Edition of 4 5 x 20 x 18
	End Grain 2010 Reclaimed pine wood 112 x 14 x 16	

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Sculpture in the Workplace

arts & events
CANARY WHARF

Measure + Intuition New Sculptures by Colin Booth



Lobby, One Canada Square,
Canary Wharf, London E14 5AB
Curated by Ann Elliott for Canary Wharf Group

11 October to 27 November 2010

Monday to Friday 5.30am–midnight
Saturday & Sunday 7am–11.30pm
Information on 020 7418 2257

Measure+Intuition New Sculptures by Colin Booth

With a modesty that is unusual in today's upfront and noisy world, Colin Booth proposes magnificent schemes quietly: schemes in which he invents monuments or architecture made from basic and reclaimed or recycled materials. His vision and means of communication seem to be poles apart, yet the sculptures have a curious and commanding presence.

In his student days as a painter – he has only brought sculpture into his practice in the past two years – Booth was profoundly influenced by the American minimalist and abstract artist Agnes Martin who has had a lasting impact on his work. He learnt from her sensitivity to light, to white, to geometry and to texture. On a recent visit to his studio in St Leonards on the East Sussex coast, where the windows face the sea, I watched as he took from a cupboard a curling piece of black canvas on which he had scrawled texts at random in white paint:

Measured & intuitive
Intimacy & monumentality
Geometric pattern & repetition
Surface texture, reflection and light
White aesthetic of modernism
Mark & signature

These words resonate with both his sculptures and his paintings. The paintings are large chequered works in white with contrasting matt and glossy paints, sometimes combining colours. When he began to paint over the edges of his stretched canvases, continuing the geometry of the composition, he felt that the paintings had become three-dimensional objects. From that moment, having already picked up some off-cuts of wood some time before without knowing what he might do with them, he began painting them white with grids of colours before arranging them in carefully considered groups on walls and flat surfaces. These mini sculptures marked the beginnings of his current work.

In the large white spaces of his studio where the light from both sky and sea permeates the rooms, Colin Booth has created the perfect place in which to *grow* his sculptures. On his journey to the studio he passes a furniture-makers' factory where off-cuts of various woods are regularly discarded, some having coloured surfaces. He began to collect these and eventually formed a relationship with the factory whereby he was able to receive these bits and pieces time and again. Gradually the supply increased, and now he has amassed so much that he is able to make work in a range of scales. Some of the wood is fairly rough and needs to be modified in the studio; others pieces he uses just as they are, finding associations, and exploiting their repetitive form. The process is purposely unsophisticated, like building with

bricks, of which he is deeply aware as he plays with his two young boys. Booth recalls his own youth: 'My early childhood memories of my father (who was a joiner) bringing home lots of small pieces of oak parquet flooring which I used to play with for hours on end making models of buildings and lay-outs for my toys. I've come full circle!'

Although Colin Booth's paintings and sculptures are based in a clearly defined system of geometry, often employing the square and cube, he also allows himself to work intuitively. He accepts materials as they are, and liking its tactile feel, prefers wood to metal while enjoying the combination of the natural and the man-made.

Archetypes 2010, a sculpture of six elements, is distributed around the Lobby of One Canada Square. The parts define the 'envelope' of the exhibition. Blue, red and grey cubes of foam rubber stand on tabletops, precisely positioned and divided by pristine white boards. Here



Archetypes 2010

they begin their existence as new and crisply defined works, but over time the colours will fade and change – a factor that Booth embraces as an element of chance.

It seems surprising to me that 'chance' was not written into his criteria for his work on the black canvas sheet, for this element is central to the way in which he collects most of his materials. In the studio Booth keeps the off-cuts and bits of building materials he has acquired, and on a large low plinth of 6 x 2.4 metres, built centrally in one of his rooms, he then begins to lay out combinations of things – blocks of wood, some cubic, others curved or oddly formed – which suggest how a sculpture might be created. The plinth also gives him a bird's eye view of his work. In **Colony 2010**, for example, he has taken wooden blocks that have one coloured face and another face cut at an angle. Placed together and in rows, he reflects on the beach huts ranged along the strand, visible from his studio windows. He looks down on them slightly, as we do when viewing **Colony**.

A number of pieces in the exhibition are assembled on top of immaculately crafted plinths, which are in fact part of the work. The striking contrast between reclaimed materials and the assemblages brings a tension and indeed an authority to the sculptures that may not otherwise be seen. This is an intelligent conceit.

One of the most exotic and vibrant woods in the exhibition is tulipwood, the colour and grain of which is rich and dense, appearing more so by the white cellulose paint that covers the sides of each cuboid element. In **Modules 2010** Booth has made a series of columns increasing incrementally in height, creating a work more



Modules 2010

complex than the sum of its parts. The composition is tight, carefully calculated and arranged. A slightly later piece, also made in tulipwood, has an entirely different feel: the cluster of tulipwood pieces that make **Precinct 2010** sit in dense formation on top of a section cut from an old pallet, creating a rough and ready contrast with the purity of the upper part of the sculpture. Booth's use of tulipwood here forms a direct link with **Institute of Play 2010**, his largest installation to date at 10 metres in length, a piece commissioned by the V&A Museum of Childhood that may be viewed there between November 2010 and March 2011.

Other items in the exhibition exemplify some of the variety in which Colin Booth uses the cube or square cross-sections of wood as the primary repeated element in his work. **Red, Green and Dark Green Low-rise**, and **Towers I** and **Towers II**, all made in 2010, are fashioned from wood, each piece with one surface painted as he found it. They are arranged to precisely fit a square-section plinth 70 cm high. Looking down one sees a small painting, or low-level minimalist relief, while



Green Low-rise 2010

looking across the form its three-dimensionality becomes clear. The sculpture **Iroko Low-rise 2010** is also of the same family of work. **Towers I** and **Towers II**, made of taller elements, evoke images of clusters of apartment buildings in Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Guangzhou, a mega region of China housing some 120 million people.