

EGEVÆRK (METTE BENTZEN AND LASSE KRISTENSEN)

b. 1978 and 1985, Denmark

Egeværk is a design studio based in Elsinore, Denmark, established by cabinetmakers Mette Bentzen and Lasse Kristensen. Trained at the rigorous Danish joinery PP Møbler, Bentzen and Kristensen develop hand-carved furniture inspired by the natural forms and muted tones of the Scandinavian landscape. Many of their designs appear frozen in moments of flux, drift, and erosion, embracing the fluidity and incremental transformation of the tides, the strata of slow-melting ice made visible in a disintegrating glacier, the gradual buildup of lime deposits that form stalagmites, or the undulating motion of marine life.

Whether producing a side table, stool, console, or other object, Egeværk's designs offer a thoughtful negotiation with their materials of choice. The grain of a white Danish ash or a darker wengé wood might call for a delicate metal inlay while the vertical atrium of a home might suggest water droplets dripping from the natural rivulets of a leaf's centerline. Their Fluid Easy Chair, based on observations of jellyfish, encases thousands of tiny air bubbles in hand-cast and carefully tinted resin. Enveloping the sitter in a translucent casement like a gossamer shell from outer space, the chair sparks thoughts of the enigmatic non-human species which exist alongside our own.

Egeværk's *måne* series of delicately carved moons summon visions of the palely-lit twilight of deep winter in the Nordic region. Embodying the waxing-waning edge of the moon's cycle through bare wood and black-stained panels of Danish ash illuminated by internal LEDs, each sculpture bears the name of one of dozens of planetary moons across the solar system. As with much of Egeværk's furniture, the sculptures' elegant finish brings out the nuanced grain of the wood, which shares something of the illusory contours and shadowy concavities visible on our own moon's surface.

As a duo, Bentzen and Kristensen have been awarded the Carpentry Prize, Danish Design Awards (Best in Arts & Crafts), the Peter, Ingrid and Ralph Hernoe Honorary Grant, and other marks of honor. They hold membership in the Danish Crafts & Design Association. Egeværk's work is in the collections of the Trapholt Museum, Imagine Museum, Lune Rouge Collection, and the collection of Thierry Barbier-Mueller. In addition, Kristensen was selected as the winner of the Danish and Nordic championships in cabinetmaking and has represented Denmark in the World Cup in Japan, for which he received the Mærsk Grant and the Poul & Gurli Madsen Grant.