



SHELTER / HOME DESIGN

How This Unconventional Designer Is Blurring the Line Between Furniture and Sculpture

We shall call it "furni-culpture."

BY HELENA MADDEN ON MAY 17, 2019



ADVERTISEMENT





Courtesy of Valentin Loellmann

German designer Valentin Loellmann's refined, modern work sits proudly at the intersection of [furniture](#) and sculpture. "For me, my work plays with the idea of categories," says Loellmann, who has a solo exhibition opening this month at New York's [Twenty First Gallery](#). "It's not art, it's not design—it's something in between."

Loellmann's benches and buffets, and other pieces also play with the notion of contrast and paradox. A table is made up of lively resin and cold brass, a "couch" is comprised of wood and metal. It's a war of warm and cold materials, and yet a cohesive product results. His resin table, for instance, looks more fine jewelry than bespoke furniture; a narrative that makes the piece all the more compelling. "I try to create two different personalities in one piece," adds Loellmann. "So when I work with marble, for example, I want to give the heaviness of the stone a very light appearance."



Valentin Loellmann's walnut and solid brass sofa.

Courtesy of Valentin Loellmann

Indeed, the designer's work brings this concept to the common coffee table—or stand-alone staircase. The latter represents Loellmann's more conceptual, sculptural pieces, although a stainless steel staircase can still be brought into the home and used as a pseudo-shelf, should the owner put his or her mind to it. But it's more form than function, more sculpture than furniture, while still simultaneously existing within both spaces. "This was one of the last pieces I did for the new collection, and I did it with great excitement," Loellmann concludes. "It's a piece that is, in a way, easy to access because everybody knows what it is. But it also has a symbolic character to it."

And despite the (literal) heavy lifting that goes along with Loellmann's work—his resin table alone, while beautiful, weighs over 300 pounds—Loellmann says he's "very keen" on keeping everything in his own studio. Where else could such a delicate confluence of behold furni-culture occur?