Inspired by crystals, Saerom Yoon injects colour into the resin and puts together pieces in contrasting hues to create tables

wooden bench, tray and, most recently, one of Michael Thonet's best-known designs, the bentwood No 14 chair.

The pieces create bubbles and imperfections in the resin, which Nacho sees as forms of embellishment. It is a fact-finding exercise that adds a sense of rediscovery to familiar items, reinventing them for the 21st century. And though clearly very conceptual, all the pieces are also very usable – halfway between art and functional sculpture. Each piece from the collection is a one-off that takes a minimum of 30 days to make.

London designer Andy Martin first started using resin when he experimented with making surfboards as a teenager. He now takes leave of contrasting coloured resin to make pieces of furniture for his California Sunshine series (from £5,400). Both transparent and semi-opaque versions of the material are used, with the semi-opaque appearing to glow when light falls upon it. He opts for very simple forms, and much of the charm lies in the colours he chooses – often bright bubble gum pink or butter yellow in contrasting concentric circles.

One of two exceptional South Korean designers experimenting with resin is Woonsin Park. For his dreamlike Haze furniture series he uses delicate pastel colours to create pieces that look as light they seem as if they are about to float away. Park says he uses resin for its "sense of lightness and purity, and because it gives a sensation of painting weightless air". Indeed, there appear to be no fixed boundaries to his exquisitely delicate chairs and tables (from €9,500), made at his studios in the Dutch city of Eindhoven and Carpenters Workshop Gallery's Rotary space on the outskirts of Paris.

Park's compatriot Saerom Yoon has designed a series of tables (example pictured above right, €2,800) also using pale pastel colours, but with a much sharper edge to them. Inspired by crystals, he injects colour into the resin and then puts together pieces in contrasting hues to create tables. The effect draws attention to their hard edges, some of them rough, others entirely smooth. Each one takes about two weeks to make.

Wood and stone are the inspiration for Italian design studio Alcaro4, which has been preserving pieces of both in resin to make enchanting stools. The Dolomyth stool (£1,700) features a hunk of rock from the Dolomites, its form and texture clinging to it and now embalmed in clear resin that preserves them on its surface. Oak pulse salvaged from the Venetian lagoon are encased in clear resin for the Abyss lamp (from £1,800), Chimera table (from £7,750, both pictured on previous page) and Anchor stool (£1,450), every grain and sign of ageing or change eminently visible and exquisitely preserved. Experimental, ethereal and ultimately very beautiful, they epitomise the inimitable allure of resin. ✦

DES DESIGN

Alcaro4, alcaro4.com and see Mint. **Aemaeon Gallery,** Trafalgarstrasse 21, 50676 Cologne (+49) (0) 221 8003, aemaeon-gallery.com; **Andy Martin,** by appt only, 51 Cathcart St, London NW5 3JG (020) 3393 3999, andymartinstudio.com; **Carpenters Workshop Gallery,** 4 Albemarle St, London W1 (020) 3002 3030, carpenterworkshopgallery.com; **Marcin Rusak,** by appt only, Unit 30, High Cross Centre, Fonthill Rd, London N15 (07909) 358 526, marcinrusak.com; **Martha Sturdy,** 17 W 7th Ave, Vancouver, BC V5Y 1H9 (+604) 872 5205, marthasturdy.com; **Mint,** 2 North Tce, Alexander St, Cottesloe 5451 (0429) 725 2226, mintshop.co.uk; **Nacho,** (+31) (0) 50 3903 [illegible] and see Aemaeon Gallery; **Saerom Yoon,** (+82) (0) 2 [illegible], saeromyoon.com; **Woonsin Park,** woonsinpark.com and see Carpenters Workshop Gallery.