

DENK

PONTUS WILLFORS *SHOP*

EXHIBITION DATES:

FEBRUARY 24 - APRIL 7, 2018

RECEPTION: SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2018 6-8 PM



(Los Angeles, CA) - DENK gallery is pleased to present *SHOP*; its first solo exhibition of new works by gallery artist Pontus Willfors. The artist's detailed sculptural pieces are executed in hardwood and aluminum, often interchanging one material for the other in surprising ways and challenging the expectations we unwittingly impose upon ordinary materials and commonplace objects. By re-sensitizing the nature of our physical encounters with these recognizable forms in unfamiliar guises, the prosaic implements of the domestic and mundane are given new meaning through process and transformation.

In *SHOP*, Willfors recreates vehicles and objects related to the theme of transportation to re- envision their context and divest them of their implicit utility. By transforming a mass manufac- tured life-sized car into a hand-carved silhouette of Poplar, for instance, or an unassuming bi- cycle into a sculpture of White Oak, Willfors' conversions reimagine the generic vestiges of everyday use as unique sculptural effigies.

Though conceptually driven, Willfors' work is heavily process-oriented and informed by a de- liberate reliance on craft. Fascinated by the limitations of material and process, his willingness to experiment methodologically and his preference for difficult and resistant transformations, yield unexpected results. *SHOP* taps into the contingent trial and error inherent in any material, studio-based practice, but specifically reflects the artist's revisit of his childhood fascina-

DENK

tion with wood carving. Willfors' penchant for the painstaking fabrication of likeness is offered as a self-conscious gesture through which the known is subtly transformed into the neoteric.

The artist's preference for slow, meticulous, subtractive handmade processes is in direct opposition to the aesthetics of machine making he reinterprets in the show. Having to reproduce the surfaces of a manufactured car by hand and from scratch in wood, a material fundamentally resistant to the conversion, challenges the limitations of the artist's tools, warranting an inventive reinterpretation of the object's physical and formal constitution. It is within these interstitial spaces of production, physical problem resolution, and reconstitution that Willfors' ingenious craft thrives.

SHOP presents a unique collection of denatured objects, large, life-sized facsimiles expertly crafted by Willfors. Here, a car is evacuated of its utility and associations of aspirational consumerism and presented simply as a handmade sculpture bordering on the nostalgic. Just as the workshop is understood as a space of assembly and process, so too is the exhibition the product of an analogous material adaptation; the physical objects of the 'shop' are superimposed onto the cultural sphere and re-read in the context of their subtle reinventions.

image credit: Pontus Willfors, *The Falcon*, 2018. Poplar wood, 57h x 181w x 11d in.

ABOUT PONTUS WILLFORS

Pontus Willfors creates sculptural works that challenge the assumptions we impose upon everyday objects and materials. The artist often co-opts the utility and familiarity of domestic forms, transforming things like tables and chairs, all crafted by hand, into wild, ornate, lyrical compositions or evacuating these objects of their use by reductively distilling them into formal minimalist constructs. By connecting the controlled, functional nature of household products to their unruly, natural sources or by channeling the very simplicity of the culturally-charged meanings they've accrued beyond their empirical worth, Willfors encourages us to reconsider the sources of the 'known.'

ABOUT DENK GALLERY

Founded in January of 2017, DENK is a newly established gallery in Downtown Los Angeles' thriving arts district. Its founding mission is to present a diverse program of local and international contemporary artists working across a variety of mediums, including sculpture, installation, painting, photography, works on paper, and interdisciplinary media. The gallery's goal is to curate engaging exhibitions by artists who are creating relevant, substantive, experimental, or timely work. By providing an adaptable venue that will allow artists to develop their concepts and have them realized, DENK hopes to foster a generative curatorial space.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT GALLERY DIRECTOR CARL BERG AT
CARL@DENKGALLERY.COM**

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