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Belly Table

design Andrew Riiska

recycled douglas fir

35" x 67" x 30

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Belly Table by Andrew Riiska

The Belly table is made from recycled Douglas Fir beams and after years of refining the design and techniques used to create it, is Riiska's favorite version of the table. Inspired by his work with cathedral ceilings in New York, the bottom forms a complicated curve from all four sides that meet in the middle to form an "X". The process begins as a model in 3d. A CNC machine, typically used to create mass-produced products out of sheet material, carves the bottom. The unconventional use of the CNC to produce the 'belly' exemplifies the creative detailing in Riiska's work. The textural corduroy affect is a beautiful and tactile by-product created by the machine. The top is hand planed using a Bailey #5 hand plane originally owned by Riiska's grandfather, while the legs are connected with the original hand chiseled joinery present in all of Riiska's Belly tables. The use of the hand plane and a scraper brings out the depth and shine in the grain of this beautiful wood. Finally, the table receives five coats, of hand rubbed, Tung oil finish. The Belly Table combines the best of modern technology with old world classical woodworking creating a piece that embodies the future of new American Design.

Andrew Riiska's work features expert joinery and original silhouettes that transcend style and period. Equally at home in a contemporary loft or a turn of the century Victorian his furniture stands on its merits: craftsmanship, utility and beauty. He uses only recycled materials to meet his aesthetic and functional needs. Riiska culls materials from deconstruction sites, seeking out old growth native Californian wood, and wood that's already served a previous purpose to meet his aesthetic and functional needs. Riiska's 15 years of recycling old growth lumber has lead to many signature methods of construction including the "wood stitch," an extremely strong half lap cross that is embedded into the wood to stabilize already formed cracks. Riiska enjoys making pieces that change and come alive as you move around them by incorporating subtle details that play with the viewer's perspective. Riiska grew up in a family design studio and workshop in a small town in Connecticut where he learned to make the highest quality furniture using only hand tools. Andrew has taught design and construction techniques at the Parson's School of Design in New York City. His work has shown at the Rare Gallery in Chelsea, The Replace interior design gallery in Manhattan, and is featured at The Space, a photography studio in the Chelsea Market. He currently designs and builds out of his downtown Los Angeles studio and teaches woodworking at The Southern California Institute of Architecture.

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