



Gallery Libby Sellers  
presents



## Tidal Ossuary

Julia Lohmann and Gero Grundmann

### Reference

os-, oss-, ost-, oste- os [singular] or ossa [plural] *Latin for bone*

### Ossuary

1. A receptacle for the bones of the dead; a bone-vault, charnel-house; a bone-urn.
2. A bone-cave, or deposit formed largely of bones, belonging to late geological times.
3. Of or for the deposit of the bones of the dead.

### Committee Report, 1836:

The Thames...receives the excrementitious matter from nearly a million and a half human beings; the washings of their foul linen; the filth and refuse of many hundred manufactories; the offal and decomposing vegetable substances from the markets; the foul and gory liquid from the slaughter-houses, and the purulent abominations from hospitals and dissecting rooms, too disgusting in detail. Thus that most noble river, which has been given to us by Providence for our health, recreation, and beneficial use, is converted into the Common Sewer of London, and the sickening mixture it contains is daily pumped up with water as a common beverage for the inhabitants of the most civilised capital in Europe.

Cited in Albert Boime, *Art in an Age of Civil Struggle*, 1848–1871



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## **Tidal Ossuary**

**Julia Lohmann and Gero Grundmann**

Julia Lohmann's interest in design was inspired by childhood walks with her father, during which they collected abandoned objects to create small figurines of strange, imaginative creatures. This dual interest in both the natural world and overlooked items led her to investigate the contradictions inherent in our relationship to animals as sources of food and materials. 'Tidal Ossuary' – an elegant collection of beastly origins – sees Lohmann returning to these childhood meanderings, as the bones used to make the small and covetable vessels were chance finds, discovered while walking along London's river Thames with her partner Gero Grundmann.

Grundmann and Lohmann's investigations into the origins of the bones and their displacement on the banks of the Thames, suggest that they are 19th century waste that was thrown into London's Victorian sewer system and turned out into the river. Given the Thames pathway's proximity to London's Smithfield meat market and the underground waterways that link the market to the river, the designers believe the bones to be by-products of the Victorian meat industry.

Their fascination with the waste lies in the resonant histories inherent in the bones and the many evocative narratives that they trigger. Once deemed as rubbish, these remnants of meals long past have survived beyond their supposed use-by-date and will now be returned to objects of use and worth. Typically for Grundmann and Lohmann this questioning of value systems – in which the overlooked and discarded are given new purpose and meaning – is paramount.

All works are courtesy Gallery Libby Sellers.

The series is an open edition of mixed materials including polished bone, silver, resin and stainless steel.

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## Gallery Libby Sellers

### **About the Designers**

London-based, German-born designer Julia Lohmann is inspired by unconventional approaches to established design disciplines. Since graduating from the Royal College of Art, London in 2004 Lohmann's unique, conceptual creations have jostled on the thresholds of design, science and art. Her work has been included in international exhibitions including 'Telling Tales', Victoria & Albert Museum, London, 2009; 'Design Contre Design', Grand Palais, Paris, 2007; 'Design Mart', Design Museum, London, 2004 and form part of major private and public collections worldwide including MoMA, New York. Lohmann is a recipient of the 2009 Jerwood Prize, and has been recognized by Design Miami (Designer of the Future Award, 2008) and the Design Museum, London (Esmée Fairbairn Foundation Award, 2004). In 2009 she created the annual window installation for the Wellcome Trust in London.

Gero Grundmann is a London-based designer born in Göttingen, Germany, in 1974. He is motivated by socially-inclusive, sustainable and narrative approaches to design. In addition to running the graphic design office Studio Bec, Grundmann develops and exhibits products and installations with his wife and partner, designer Julia Lohmann. Grundmann has co-authored an MA-level design curriculum and has worked as a mentor to design students and professionals in Europe and Asia. Grundmann holds an MA in Communication Art and Design from the Royal College of Art, London, and a Diploma in Translation from the Chartered Institute of Linguists, London.

### **About Gallery Libby Sellers**

After six years as curator of London's Design Museum, Libby Sellers set upon a new way of showcasing designers, founding her eponymous gallery in 2007. Commissioning new works from some of the industry's most promising and progressive designers—including Julia Lohmann, Max Lamb, Peter Marigold, Dick van Hoff and Moritz Waldemeyer—Sellers sets up guerrilla galleries in different locations internationally to offer an exciting and dramatic alternative to the more conventional museum or gallery experience. Since the first exhibition in 2007—described as the highlight of the London Design Festival—the gallery has since gone on to present a number of critically acclaimed selling exhibitions, establishing itself an influential player in the international design world.

For further information and images  
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