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SANTIAGO CALATRAVA'S MONUMENT TO RAIL TRAVEL

PATRICK BOUCHAIN
WES ANDERSON
KEN GARLAND

MAN AND MACHINE



THE CHINA GRANITE PROJECT

MAX LAMB

On display all too briefly at the new gallery 20 Hoxton Square Projects, Max Lamb's exhibition was a beautiful and simple exploration of the relationship between human labour and natural material. On display was a collection of granite furniture: pieces included an emerald-green granite chair with a concave-cut back and seat, and straight-cut black granite stools and tables.

The work was created by Lamb and Chinese stoneworkers during a two-week residency in April this year. Lamb had travelled to a quarry in Chengnanzhuang, 350km south of Beijing, as part of a programme to foster an artistic approach to Chinese culture and industry, supported by Alexander von Vegesack of the Vitra Design Museum.

The work expressed the beauty of the raw material in its natural state, but optimistically showed how the intervention of man and technology can improve and enhance that beauty. The sense of this was conveyed by a film of his residency. Due to the language barrier, Lamb drew multiple drawings and sketched on to the surface of the stone to explain where to make the cuts. A 2.5m-diameter diamond blade then cut the boulders, moving through the stone as if it were cheese, before the cut edges were polished.

'My project resulted in a mutual exchange of discovery, laughter and smiles, and a collection of pieces that are to be viewed as boulders but used as furniture,' says Lamb. www.maxlamb.org

Vicky Richardson



Above: The granite quarry in China, where Max Lamb took up a two-week residency



Above and left: Lamb's finished granite furniture, with its contrasting rough outer edges and polished cut surfaces

