

London Design Journal

INSPIRATION FROM INTERIORS, ART, ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

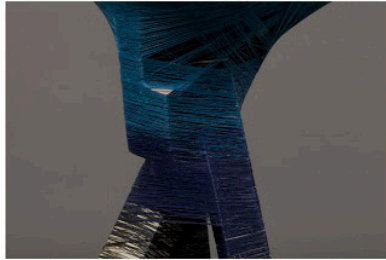
HOME ABOUT INTERIORS ART ARCHITECTURE DESIGN FURNITURE LIGHTING DESIGNER Q&A SPOTLIGHT INSTALLATIONS EXHIBITIONS FASHION MUSIC QUOTES
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~ Anton Alvarez & Swarovski// Digital Crystal at the Design Museum

October 02, 2012

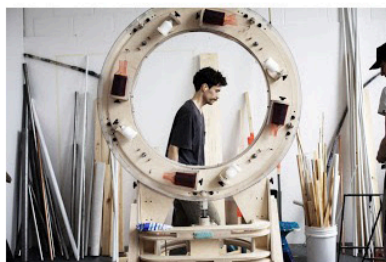
I have been thinking a lot about design process & the new techniques & technologies (3D printing etc) that are making possible new forms and new thoughts on design. One exciting new way of developing forms is [Anton Alvarez](#) thread wrapping machine. If you have been to the [Design Museum](#), the exhibition Digital Crystal incorporates the work of the designer, if you haven't been...it's a great reason to go. See the video of Anton talking about his work & the thread wrapping machine [in action here](#).



Exploring our emotional connection with short-lived products, Anton Alvarez's machine is designed so that its operator cannot know what they will make before they have completed the manufacturing process. When spinning at high speed, the foot-operated contraption joins objects and crystals together by binding them tightly in thread and Swarovski crystal yarn. The raw materials for each individual product are manipulated at the moment of creation, resulting in a series of improvised one-offs that capture the actions of the maker while reinterpreting the fundamental components of each end product.

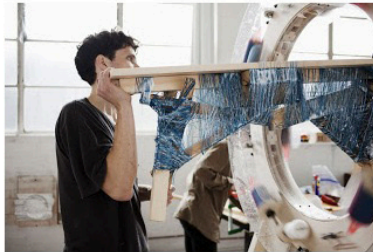


To master the new craft of thread wrapping requires at least 10,000m of yarn.



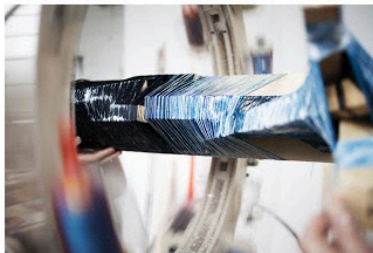
'The Thread Wrapping Machine is a tool to join different types of material with only a glue-coated thread to bond it. By using this construction method materials such as wood, steel, plastic or bricks can be joined to form objects and spaces.

'I wanted to create an externalised joint, that would enable me to combine a big range of different materials that normally would require very time consuming methods of jointing them together. At the same time a decorative pattern appears with the different colours of the thread.'



What inspired you to make the thread wrapping machine?

'In my first year at college I spent a period of 120 days of experimentation, which led up to this machine. I started from nothing; and during the 120 days I combined different material, ideas and methods, creating a log of experiments presented in my book 120 x 120. The pieces of furniture produced with the machine combine many of these experiments and the machine was something I had to build to be able to continue with the experimentation.'

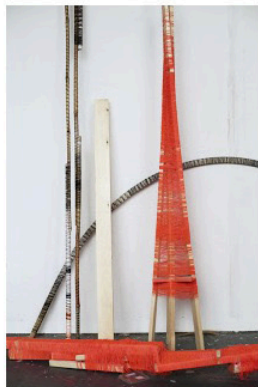


What is your thoughts on affordable design?

'For me to design a tool like this is partly to become independent, so that in my practise I can work freely and develop the full potential of this particular process. I want to be able to afford to create new ways of exploring making processes without any pressure from a manufacturer or industry. I have complete control over the development of the machine, I can freely experiment and develop it according to what I discover are my needs in this new craft, the Craft of Thread Wrapping.'



Anton Alvarez is a Swedish-Chilean designer based in east London. A recent graduate of the Royal College of Art's Design Products MA, Alvarez originally studied fine art and cabinetmaking before completing an Interior Architecture and Furniture Design course at Konstfack, the University College of Arts, Craft and Design in Stockholm. Alvarez's work focuses on the design of systems and the creation of tools and processes for producing physical products.



Digital Crystal showcases 15 of Swarovski's design and architecture commissions from the last 10 years. These installations have served as an experimental platform for leading figures in international design to conceptualise, develop and share their most radical works. The show features artworks by