

# BENCHMARK

21 September 2011

## EXTRAORDINARY EXHIBIT FROM BENCHMARK AT LONDON DESIGN FESTIVAL 2011



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Following the 'Made by Benchmark' workshop at The Tramshed during the 2010 London Design Festival, Benchmark resolved to develop a concept for this year's festival that would demonstrate not only their craftsmanship and design but also their innovative thinking and ability to deal with difficult and complex design problems. They've come up with an extraordinary exhibit.

'Tree' is a gigantic 11.4m (37'5") table made from a single plank of oak 'balanced' on a mirror polished stainless steel pyramid. Benchmark's design, working in collaboration with Mark Lovell from MLDE, is derived from the structure of a living tree, with the roots (the pyramid) anchoring it to the ground and the branches, under compression, supporting the load of the huge canopy. The result is a table that appears impossibly balanced but, in reality, can support the weight of four adults standing on one end.

The plank comes from a huge oak tree that was planted around 1870 in the Landes, South West France. It is the longest planked oak log that any of Benchmark's sources in the timber trade has ever known and took Benchmark over six months to locate. The plank comes from the very centre of the tree with the 'bull's-eye' of the annual rings running through the centre of the plank.

'Tree' is on display at designjunction in Victoria House Basement, 37-63 Southampton Row, London, WC1B 4DA from Thursday 22 September - Sunday 26 September. designjunction brings together a stellar line-up of leading UK and international lighting and furniture brands and is set to excite, inspire and challenge anyone with a passion for design

'Tree' will be available for sale after the exhibition. Interested parties should contact Benchmark directly.

Ends

## **Note to Editors**

Images can be viewed at: <http://www.angusthomas.com/benchmark/index.html>

Images can be downloaded at: [http://www.angusthomas.com/benchmark\\_images.zip](http://www.angusthomas.com/benchmark_images.zip)

For further information, please contact::

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## **Benchmark**

Benchmark handles a wide range of commercial commissions for architects and interior designers as well as having its own furniture range. It employs a 50 strong team of designers and craftsmen with their own in-house upholstery, veneering, spray shops, metal fabrication and specialist metalworking in zinc, pewter, copper and bronze. The company holds the Queen's Award for Enterprise in Sustainable Development, the first furniture maker to receive this prestigious award.

This is not the first time that Benchmark has made a giant table. They made the vast refectory tables for Hogwarts Castle for the Harry Potter Films and last year, The Queen's College commissioned a table for their new dining room to seat 32 Fellows of the college. For more conventional spaces, Benchmark sell a number of tables by leading designers such as Terence Conran, Russell Pinch and Stuart Padwick, all of which come in standard 8 and 10 seat options or can be made in bespoke sizes.

[www.benchmarkfurniture.com](http://www.benchmarkfurniture.com)

## **Mark Lovell Design Engineers**

Mark Lovell Design Engineers is an award winning structural design engineering practice specialising in innovative, creative and sustainable solutions across a broad range of engineering and design disciplines including bridge design, bespoke residential, structural engineering, product development, façade engineering, sustainable design, renovation & conservation, community and commercial.

[www.mlde.co.uk](http://www.mlde.co.uk)

## **designjunction**

designjunction launched in April 2011 during the Milan Furniture Fair at Zegna Headquarters, Zona Tortona, attracting more than 20,000 visitors through the door. The event has transferred to the UK for the London Design Festival with a stellar line up of contemporary furniture and lighting brands.

[www.thedesignjunction.co.uk](http://www.thedesignjunction.co.uk)