



Patrick Martinez

Twenty things you should know about Patrick Martinez...

Zanoah Bia + Dorinda Bixler, November 30, 2009

Portrait_Express

Patrick Martinez is a visual artist who was born in France where he grew up. He studied at the Fine Art School of Besançon and Grenoble and at the Institute of High Studies in Visual Arts in Paris. In 1997, he received a grant to work

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in Tokyo, Japan, where he stayed for two years before finally settling in New York. In his projects, Patrick Martinez has been exploring different forms of expression, such as video, drawing, installation, sound art... Through a wide range of media, he establishes experimental structures to examine ideas about process, action, mobility, adaptation and resistance. His work investigates the relationship between the object and its context of presentation in order to challenge perception. He has exhibited in France, Germany, Spain, England, Brazil as well as in Japan and the US and his work is represented in New York by Parker's box gallery.

Patrick Martinez has recently founded the design firm Blank Bubble interested both in the creation of objects, graphic patterns and the construction of environments and architectural projects.



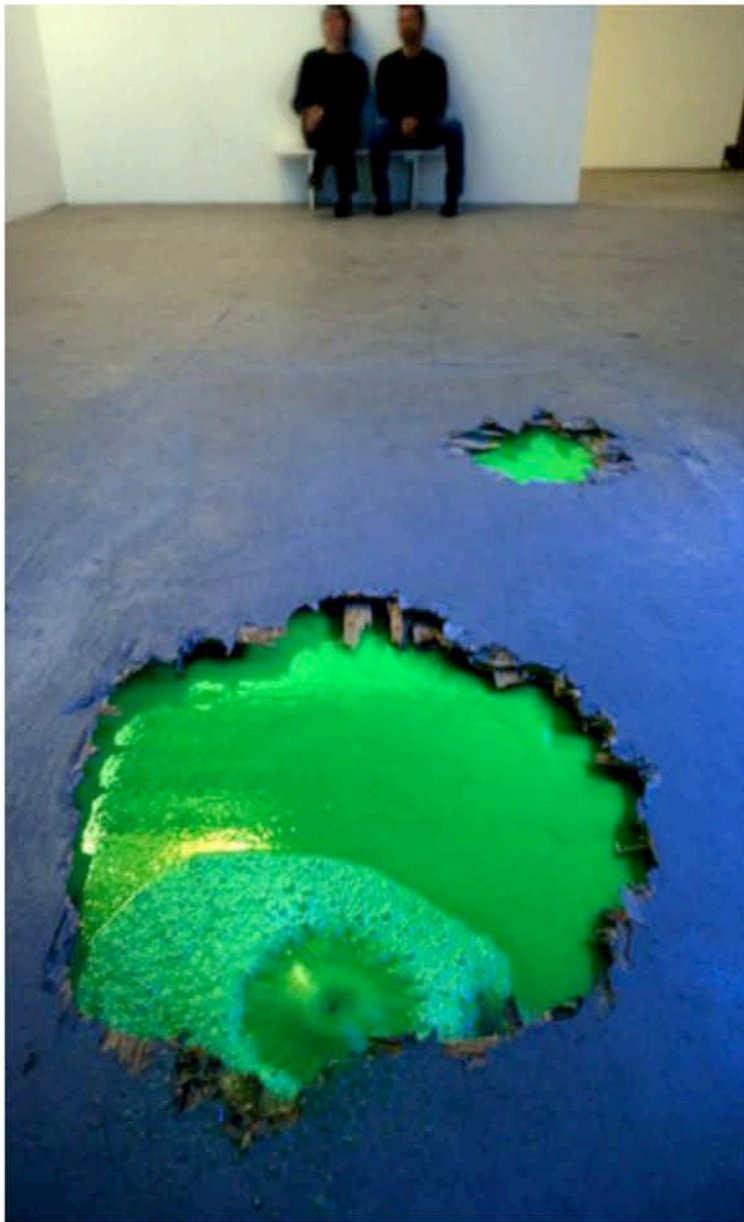
Patrick Martinez/white Soup Bowl, 1995

A journey in New York with Patrick Martinez...

EgoDesign Magazine: Who are you? How would you describe yourself?

Patrick Martinez: I was born in France and I lived abroad for a dozen years. After Japan, I moved to New York. I am an artist. My projects are developed in the form of drawings, videos and installations, including sounds. My interest in design has always been closely related to my artistic practice and stems originally from a question on the status and methods of distribution of works...

I have a particular interest in terms of mobility, shift of perspective, point of view and a taste for paradox, discrepancy, false symmetries, setting abyss. This is reflected at different levels of my practice



Patrick Martinez/Bubbling green_E.Frossard

E.D.: Tell us more about Blank Bubble, Tree House Projects and Click?

P.M.: Although this idea has been in my mind for many years, I recently created the office of *Design Blank Bubble* in order to preserve some form of independence in research and creation of objects or situations. These objects are intended to be distributed according to specific distribution channels, corresponding to the nature of each project. Blank Bubble is also intended to allow the production of facilities for exhibitions in places such as galleries, art centers or museums.



Click by Patrick Martinez

The first object I wanted to show during the launch of Blank Bubble was a "non-object", simply because it was Click, a downloadable, immaterial lamp. Click was a sort of statement of intent, a shifting irony that raises the question of production and whether or not to produce certain objects.

The Tree House project corresponds to a more general desire to design living spaces of smaller dimensions and adapted to specific needs: rest, work, eat, play, invent...

One essential element is the idea that the foundation upon which these buildings originate is no longer the land - the mineral element that is usually equated with the idea of stability - but the tree, a living organism which one is obliged to consider and that requires some form of responsibility. And then there is the thrill of rising above...



Patrick Martinez/Semolina storm - Tempête de semoule

In the future, I would like to develop projects that are relatively simple in their execution such as these open cabins, but also other more sophisticated, real housing units that are comfortable and have self-generating energy for their operation.

E.D.: Is there a philosophy behind Blank Bubble?

P.M.: Like the logo of the brand, *Blank Bubble* is a bubble of empty thought, as well as a potential reservoir of ideas of all kinds, exploring the most diverse areas. *Blank Bubble* is marked by a particular interest in dematerialization, meditative objects that offer sensory experiences, and the idea that, more than ever, we can and must do more with less.

E.D.: What do you consider your influences, what inspires you?

P.M.: It would be difficult here to make a list because they are multiple and constantly renew themselves. I love the works and creations of the mind, for example those that come from writers, filmmakers, artists, designers or architects. More than inspiration, I prefer to speak about my energy's work, I often draw from the bustle of major cities and music.



Patrick Martinez/ClickLamp, 2009

E.D.: How would you explain Design?

P.M.: I'm interested in design, like art, in so far as it resists any form of categorization and has the capacity to reinvent itself and be where we do not expect it. However, I sometimes see it as an intermediary that provides information on the multiplicity of our relationships with the world.

E.D.: Your favourite materials in design and why?

P.M.: Through experimentation, each device can generate the invention's use, so I never want to limit myself to one practice or the use of specific materials. In the context of industrial production, however, it is fundamental to be concerned about social impacts, health and environmental problems associated with their use. In these circumstances, the question is rather whether any material should not be used.



Patrick Martinez/Raft Lamp

E.D.: What does the word ecology mean for you?

P.M.: Relationships require undeniable interdependence between all living beings and their environment. At the human level, the obligation to take this into account is an individual point of view and generally, it means politics.

E.D.: And chic, what do you feel it is?

P.M.: A form of elegance, natural gracefulness, where the trace of effort never appears.

E.D.: Which designer, artist and architect do you admire most?

P.M.: Ettore Sottsass, for his freedom from formal invention and disregard of conventions. I will also mention, for other reasons, Mies van der Rohe, Sol Lewitt, Bruce Nauman, Richard Buckminster Fuller and many others...



Patrick Martinez/Tree House1 by Patrick Martinez & Thomas Gerhardt

E.D.: What are currently your favourite brands or objects, and why?

P.M.: I am interested in strong objects, those that have substance, where something intangible transcends their formal aspect -- for example books, records and lamps.

E.D.: Which city resembles you the most and why?

P.M.: I take my energy from cities that retain a human dimension, where it is possible to model the time and space like you want, where you can be isolated within the crowd and walk for hours; without that the level of urban density does falter. Tokyo is an example of this kind of city. New York, too.



Patrick Martinez/Tree House1 by Patrick Martinez & Thomas Gerhardt_New York

E.D.: Your dream project?

P.M.: I let the dream exist where it is best expressed, namely in its unreal and unworkable state, if I take your question literally. This is the interest of some of the most

notable works by architects that have ever been made. I am thinking of certain projects by Claude Nicolas Ledoux, as well as those familiar to us all from Archigram. So I imagine, like Yves Klein, an architecture of air - invisible and transparent - which would, by modulating the air pressure, protect us from bad weather like a roof or walls, or would perform the function of a chair or bed, for example. I am reminded of the force fields of old science fiction movies...

Otherwise, in the realm of the possible, to achieve a significant number of tree houses would please me greatly.

E.D.: What is your favourite example of the use of sustainable fabrics/products in design?

P.M.: Those that inspire us to reduce our product needs.



Patrick Martinez/Tree House1 by Patrick Martinez & Thomas Gerhardt)Blank Bubble

E.D.: What design project would you never design and why?

P.M.: All those who go in the direction of the bidding, like a banana holster for example.

E.D.: What do you hope your current work will bring to people, humanity?

P.M.: I just design things with as much precision and care as possible, but I am careful to predict how people will receive and interpret them. The experience they have is individual, personal, and this experience is not mine. Furthermore I am suspicious of universalism when it also implies a uniformity of behavior.



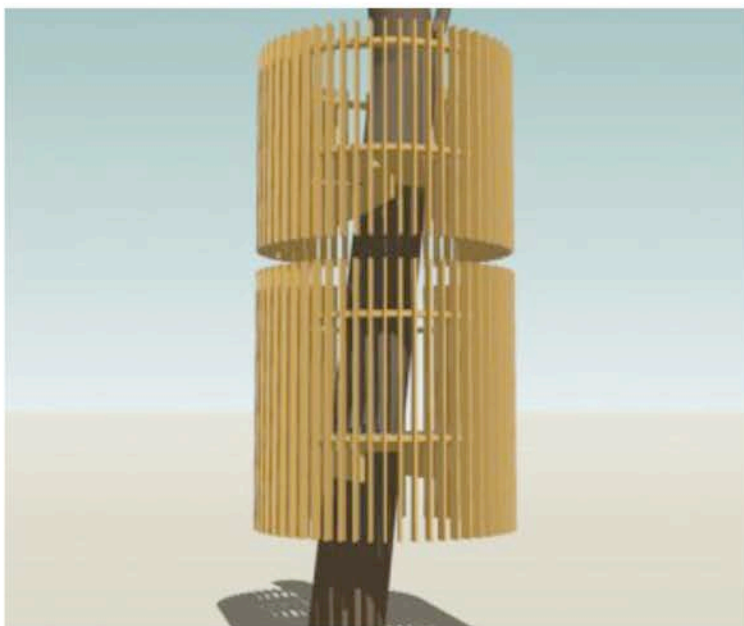
Patrick Martinez/Tree HouseOne by Patrick Martinez & Thomas Gerhardt

E.D.: What invention would best improve your life?

P.M.: In many respects, teleportation. But I also like the slow pace of time and journey.

E.D.: Can you describe an evolution in your work from your first projects to the present day?

P.M.: Formally, each piece is different, but I realize that my concerns and the ideas underpinning my practice are recurrent. It's like saying the same thing in every way possible. Perhaps, in the final analysis, there is only one idea in life, not always clearly identified, and that is where I spend my time trying to create. In the best case, eventually we will finally know what it meant.



Patrick Martinez/Tree House2 by Patrick Matinez and Thomas Gerhardt_Blank Bubble.

E.D.: What couldn't you live without?

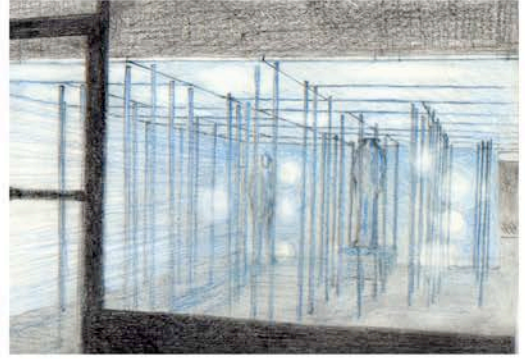
P.M.: Eat, drink and sleep.

E.D.: Finally, which 21st-century architects/designers/artists would you invite to a dream dinner?

P.M.: It would be a dinner with friends, mostly artists. There would be, in particular: Ingrid Luche, Jacques Julien, Hugues Reip, Michel Blazy, Gilles Clément, Cyril Martin and some friends I met recently that I have yet to get to know...

www.patrickmartinez.net

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Drawing of *High, Low and in Between* installation, 2010

HIGH, LOW AND IN BETWEEN **PATRICK MARTINEZ**

SEPTEMBER 17 – OCTOBER 17, 2010 GALLERY HOURS: THURSDAY TO SUNDAY 1 TO 7 PM

OPENING RECEPTION: FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 6-9 PM

Parker's Box is delighted to present *High, Low and in Between*, a new installation by **Patrick Martinez**.

The artist's previous exhibitions at the gallery have borne witness to Martinez' eclectic and prolific practice, providing spectators with memorable sensorial experiences, (large holes smashed in the gallery floor filled with bubbling green liquid...an interactive, optical-effects tunnel animated by rotating colored circles...) as well as striking individual works including smoke sculptures, monumental doodles, laser-cut drawings, and a multitude of experimental videos.

Among the latter, a number of recent works have involved the technique of using series of similar chosen images as the frames of a film. Parker's Box begins its 2010-2011 season with a special screening of *The Hole* a week before the opening of *High, Low and in Between*. *The Hole* (2008) was produced by filming a zoom into multiple images of holes, creating the impression that we are hurtling into a completely irregular tunnel that has been cut, blasted, drilled and bored into a whole variety of diverse materials. Once again, this work and the two new works presented in the exhibition, *High, Low and in Between*, use completely contrasting techniques but add their voices to a coherent reflection.

Through his tireless and prolific research and experimentation the artist explores a particularly rich, personal universe in which suggestions of matter and anti-matter share the center stage and become interchangeable. The experiential basis of Martinez' work often simultaneously utilizes objects and materials as the hyperrealist representation of themselves, the suggestion of natural phenomena and/or an abstract expression of particular atmospheres and sensations. In the work titled *High, Low and In Between*, for example, a number of sheets of Styrofoam are used to create a false ceiling and a platform allows visitors to pass their heads into the space created above the expanse of Styrofoam. While thoughts of an inverted Inuit fishing hole in the polar landscape come easily to mind, a curious and unexpected atmosphere is created by the semi-transparent whiteness of the familiar, cheap material that the artist has used to create this horizontal division of the space. In his most recent projects, Martinez increasingly avoids any temptation to hide or camouflage the mechanisms of his work. While careful use of lighting becomes an important vehicle of atmosphere here, the materials used ultimately represent themselves much more than the illusion of something else. The simplicity of the means allows other layers of metaphor to develop, and the origins of the title (given to both this piece and the exhibition) suggest that the artist welcomes this. "High, Low and In Between" is a country album by Townes Van Zandt (1972), whose use of the phrase would seem to refer to psychological levels, or degrees of depression.

The second work presented in the exhibition is titled *Blush*. To make this work, the artist has inserted into one of the gallery walls a very flat, circular material known as "Flatlite" that acts as a glowing light source. The idea is a simple one, but once again finds the spectator drawn into an experiential situation in the face of an unexpected, and unusual physical presence. Walls do not normally glow, and they certainly are unlikely to blush. Martinez often enjoys this kind of discreet transformation applied to something as banal as a wall. The strangeness of the resulting experience has a grain of the surreal, but corresponds also to a kind of neo-existentialism in the artist's concerns with the physical world and its impermanence.

As a logical extension of these preoccupations, Martinez has pursued an activity as a designer in parallel with his artworks. The line that divides these two parts of the artist's creativity is often particularly fuzzy, though his design work necessarily tends to graft itself onto functional objects. That said, it could easily be claimed that the wall described above is also a functional thing, and certainly the artwork Blush relates closely to a number of objects designed by Martinez. One of his most recent projects is a computer screensaver that essentially transforms the computer into a lamp whose various parameters of color and intensity can be modified by the user. The Martinez Click Lamp has been named Best of Category winner in the 2010 I.D Annual Design Review Competition, and is currently on view at the AIGA National Design Center in New York.

Patrick Martinez was born in Besançon, France in 1969 and studied in Grenoble and Paris before leaving to live in Tokyo and finally settling in New York. He has exhibited widely in Europe, Japan and the US including at The Showroom, London; Galerie Georges-Philippe & Nathalie Vallois, Paris; Galerie Anne Barrault, Paris; Futura, Prague; Metrònom, Barcelona; Intercommunication Center, Tokyo; D'Amelio Terras, New York; Exit Art, New York; Artists' Space, New York...

Parker's Box. Gallery Hours: Thurs-Sun, 1-7PM. Further information: +1 718 388 2882 or info@parkersbox.com

