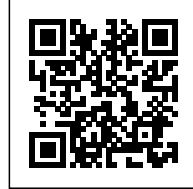


LIVING WOOD

Posted on March 14, 2016 by Urban UrbanNext



Categories: [expanding design practices](#), [No Density](#), [Project](#), [Technology and fabrication](#), [Williamson Chong](#)

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Williamson Chong, the architecture and design office of Betsy Williamson, Shane Williamson, and Donald Chong, creates work that situates digital fabrication and wood construction in a broader cultural context, linking together theories of design and technology with ecological aspects of building and construction.



This exhibition was initiated after a 24 month study of advanced wood construction that took the architects to Scandinavia to study the cultural impact of the material within a similar biome, Austria and Switzerland to meet with leaders in wood fabrication and engineering, and Japan where wood

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has been used in construction for centuries.

Living Wood combines advanced digital technologies with one of the world's simplest materials. By pairing the two, the architects have re-framed the perception of the material in the Canadian context, from rustic to the sublime.



Living Wood Installation at Corkin Gallery.

The work in this exhibition explores wood's material history by extracting artifacts from a digital exploration of the effect of mass movements in the landscape on the growth and form of trees. Trees affected by mass movements record the evidence of geomorphic disturbance in the growth-

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ring series. Earthquakes, landslides, floods and snow avalanches are just a few of the large scale processes that can register in tree rings. As the ground shifts and moves, trees will initially grow perpendicular to the slope then, over time, re-align their growth skywards. These principles form the variables used in the creation of this work. The simulation of this mass movement, in the form of a distorted digital surface, is shown as both a projection and a registration.

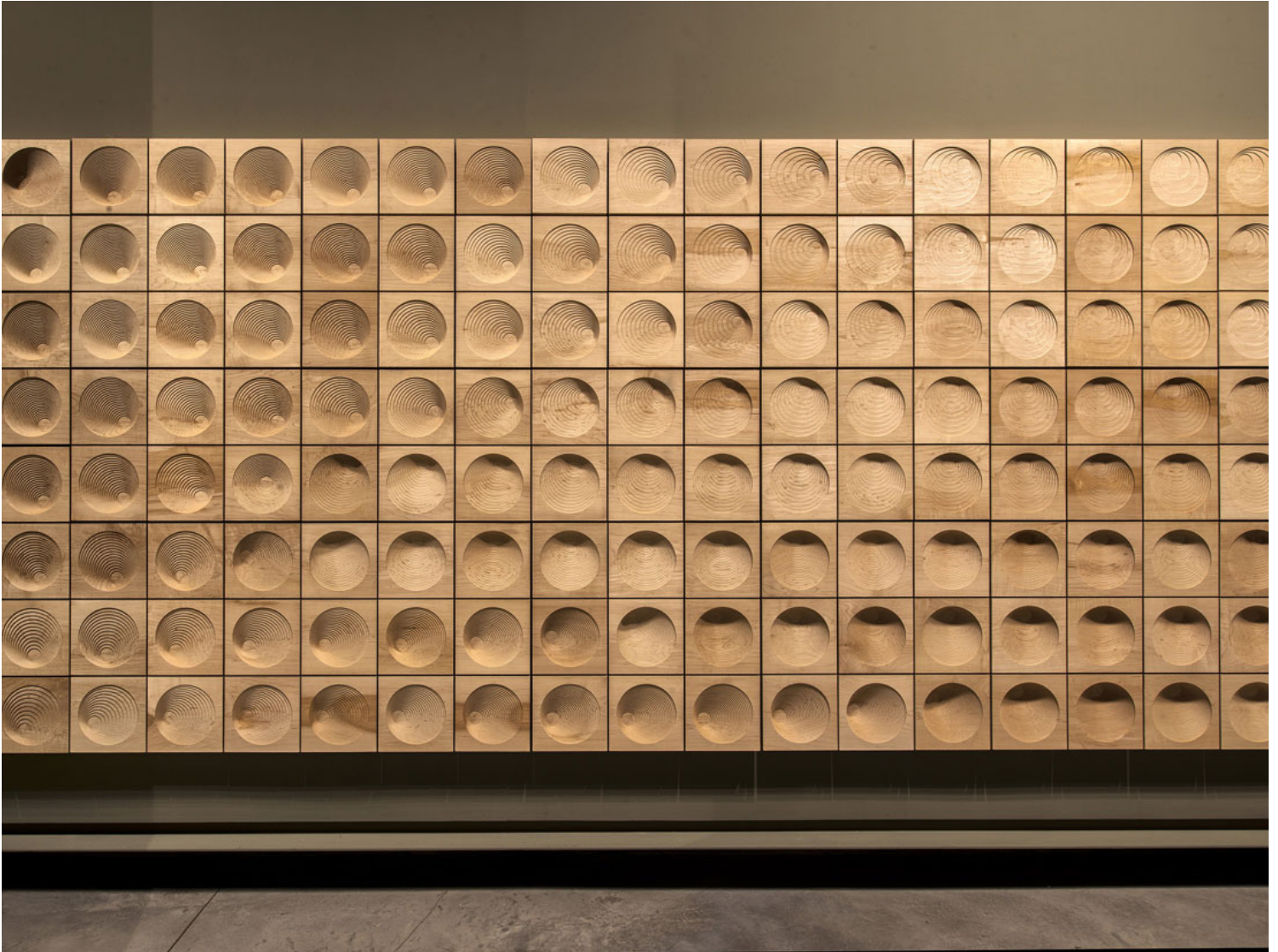


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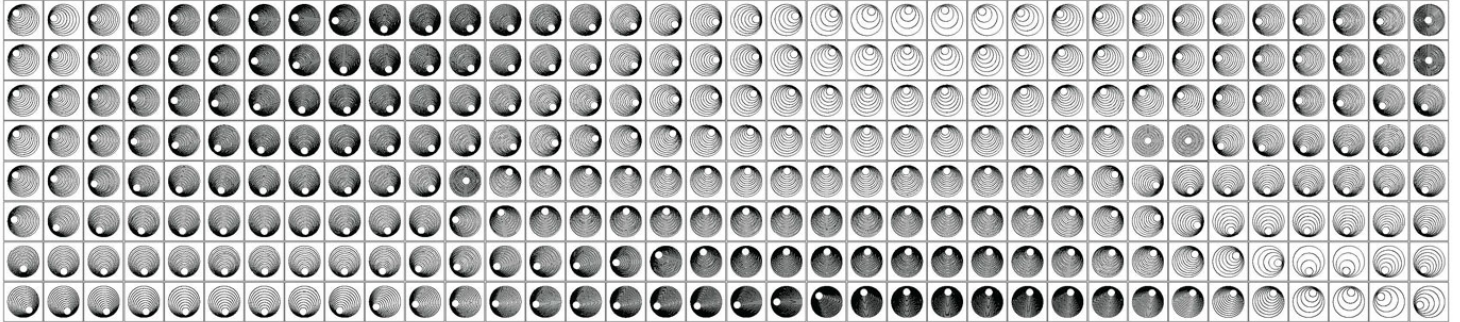


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Tracings

Tracings is a 200 square-foot grid made up of 288 individual squares of Ontario White Maple. Using the modern tools of digital fabrication, each piece is carved to a depth that registers the angle of a curved surface projected onto its face. From a distance, one reads the undulating plane registered on the wood's surface. Up close, the subtle differences between each piece become apparent. The result mimics the forest in that each piece of wood is unique, yet builds to a greater whole.

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Origins

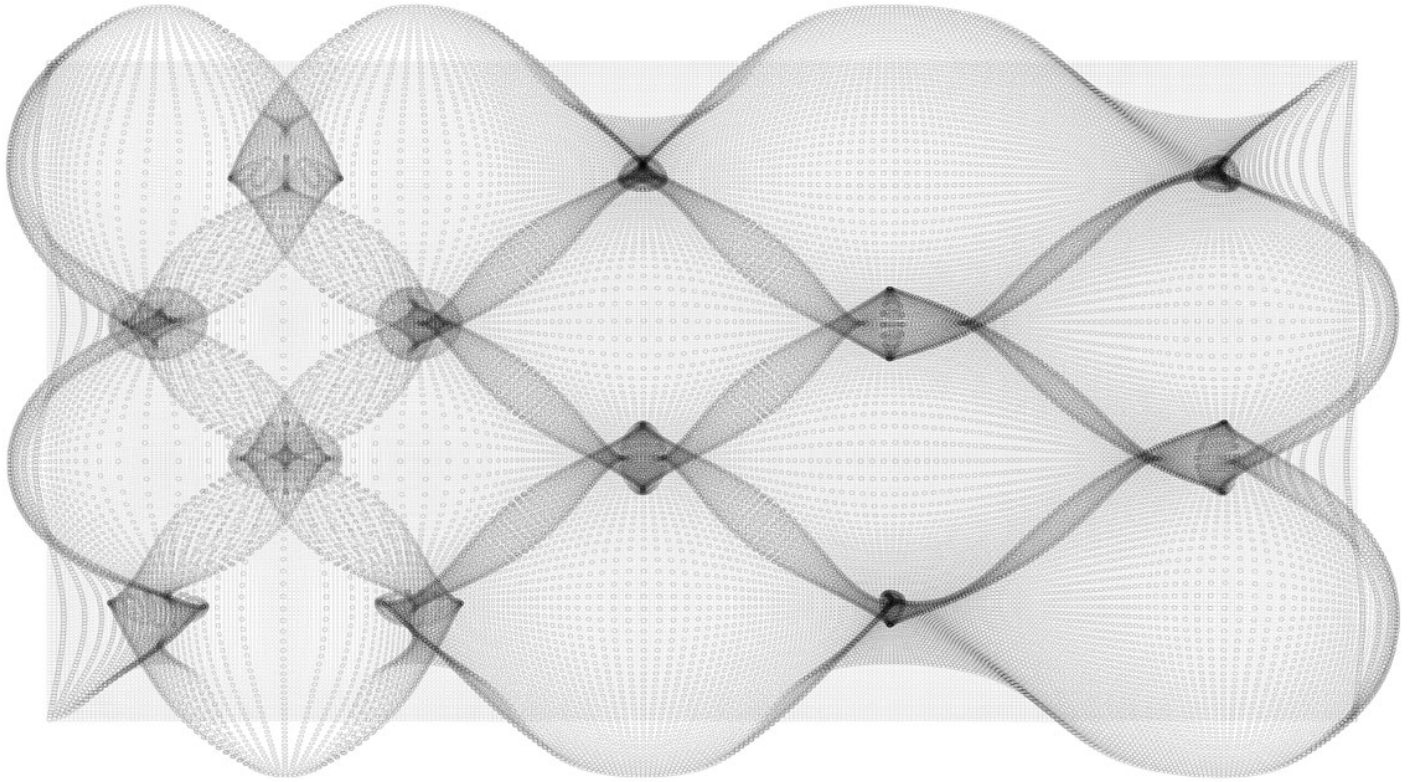
Origins is a series of 31"x 56.5" inkjet prints of a digitally manipulated surface. In these curated moments we see the overlaps and densities similar to that of the projected surface registered in the *Tracings* piece opposite. In these drawings, composed of between three and four million circles each, one circle represents the ground origin of the 'tree' and another, the 'treetop'. Therefore, where the drawings are the densest, the curvature is exposed. The landscape inspired images explore the direct relationship between living things as well as the didactic relationship between digital tools

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and the hand of the artist.

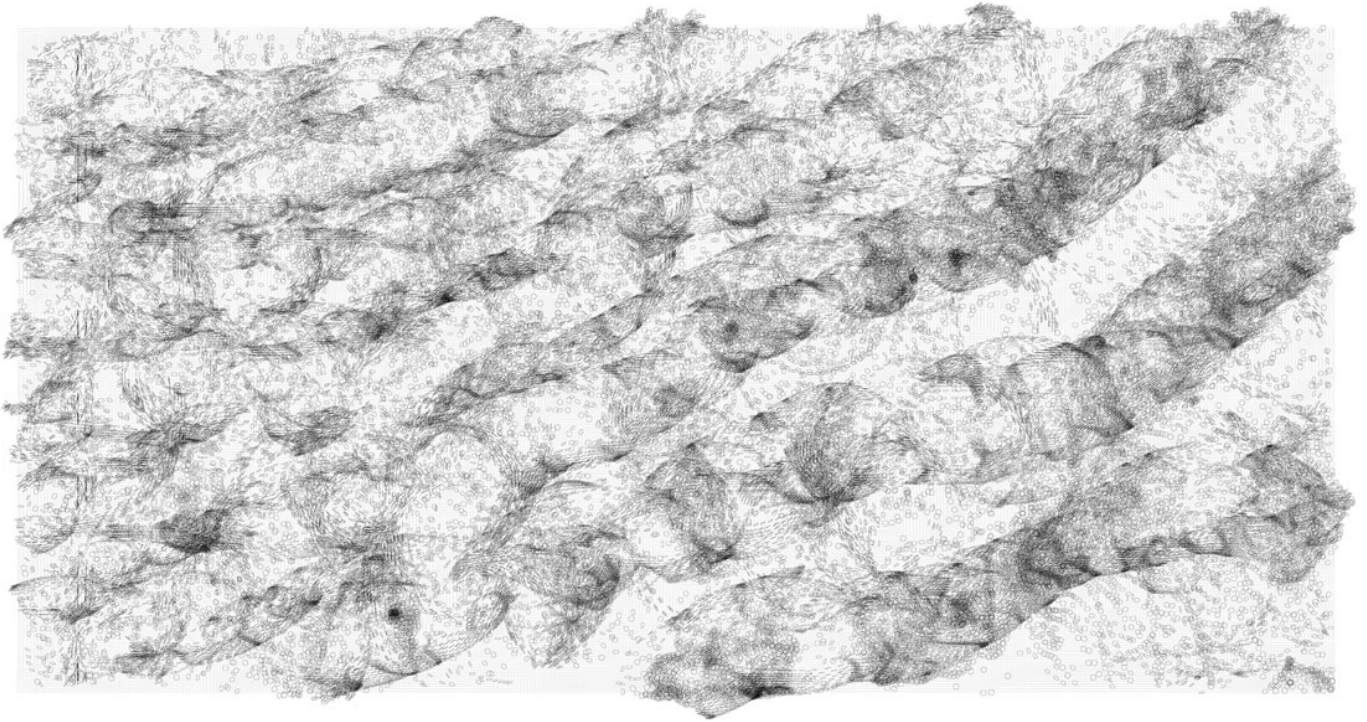


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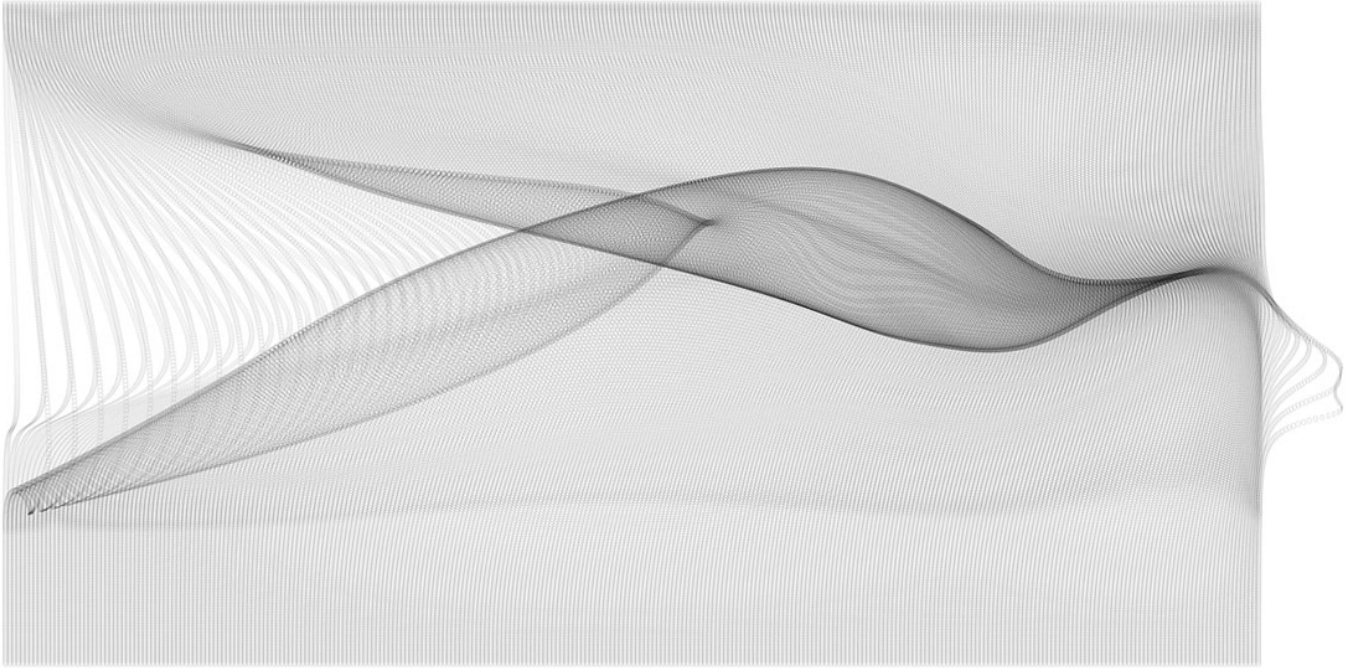
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Graded

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Shear

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Gently

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