



Superposition—for some time, Bjørn Jørund Blikstad’s PhD-research in art and design, has progressed by superposing *two* different processes: wood-carving and magazine-making. He has conceived this superposition as a theoretical work on *furniture*. His research homes in on the trivial object.

Intra-action—in his sculptural and editorial work, there is evidence of a lateral drift in how he lives and depicts the aspects of his *reflective* process that can be understood as ‘body-work’. This drift in the subject-object *ratio* revolves around the tool: the materiality of *enskilment* as a reflective nexus.

Entanglement—by moving ornament from being considered an *add-on*, to become a *vehicle* of research, the ‘ornamental logic’ is incorporated into his query into furniture as an epitome of the ‘trivial object’, and thereby opens the door to its place in [culture](#), from where design conceives the art-work.



How can we understand the works of [Tilman Riemenschneider](#) when we know that some 500 years later a furniture designer would craft himself in wood-carving to query Tilman's work: not to confine himself to that work, but using it as a *contemporary* prism unto past and present material forms?

Standing—as I do—one step off furniture designer Bjørn Jørund Blikstad's work with wood-carving, makes me ask precisely that question. Because it is what doing research through art & design could mean. The mention of both art and design, in this case, is more than formulaic: it is *substantial*.

Blikstad's investment into wood-carving is artistic in the sense that it is *indigenous to the craft on non-mimetic terms*. Both in his query on whether it is possible—as a maker—to break out of the cage of one's *own species*, and asking why Riemenschneider carved a furry sculpture of [Mary Magdalen](#)?

A similar query brings him to the painter [Giuseppe Arcimboldo](#) (born half a century after Riemenschneider) who chose to build his character portraits from *vegetable* assemblages. Evidently, querying a *painter's* work on vegetable metaphor, and a *wood-sculptor's* fur-carvings cannot be the same.

Since Arcimboldo worked with painting, Blikstad's reference to him—given his choice of working with wood and chisel—is both *hetero-material* and *hetero-technical*. It marks the difference of working *on* and working *with*, which is one that runs throughout Blikstad's work, with different emphases.

In a *magazine*-series that he has been developing *alongside* his artistic research he never depicts himself as being on the job: his photographs do not show him as a maker, but in *other* repertoires of bodily contact, ranging from moving around his pieces, to moving them around. They are mobiles.

It is in the magazines we find him querying the prismatic affordances of his pieces to resonate with an array of *object-findings*, that typically go further back than art-history, unto archaeological finds. The reference to archaeology point two ways: **1)** to *modernism*; **2)** to material findings as *events*.

At the difference from e.g. [Gottfried Semper](#) he does *not* query the history of crafts and materials as *styles*, but rather as 'speculative events'. It is the existence of the findings as events—in their own time/the time of their discovery—that guides Blikstad's interest in artefacts as a furniture-designer.

The acts of making and finding are *superposed* in Bjørn Blikstad's work. From where I stand—one step off—the different strands of his work are *adjacent* rather than parallel (like *triangles* can be adjacent). They constitute ways of *re-routing* his query, in *routes* are left to triangulate (on a target).

At his mid-term evaluation of his PhD fellowship, this aspect of Blikstad's work is left relatively *open*. For a long stretch—when he was working on the Dawkins/Kardashian stela—his magazine-work was a clarification of his woodwork. Presently, it appears that this relationship has been reversed.