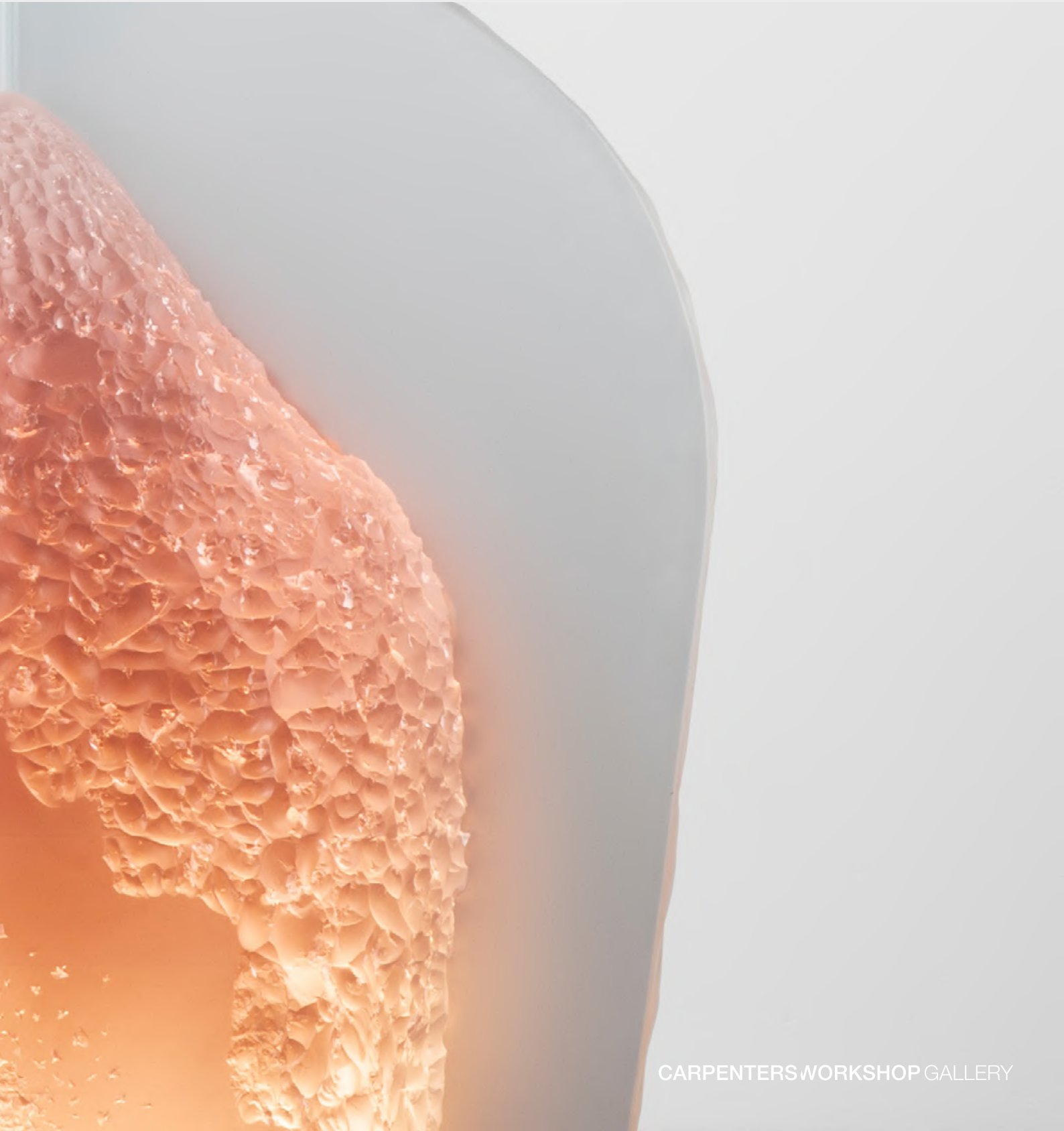


# WONMIN PARK

## UNFOLDING: RESTORATION OF EXISTENCE

NEW YORK | MAY 9 – JULY 28



CARPENTERS WORKSHOP GALLERY

South Korean artist Wonmin Park presents his solo show, *Unding: Restoration of Existence*, at Carpenters Workshop Gallery New York.

The title of the exhibition is taken from the concept of *Unding*, meaning 'unthing' or 'non-thing', coined by German-Korean philosopher Byung-Chul Han. Han defines *Unding* as objective absences, insubstantial non-objects that are displacing real world objects through the increasing ubiquity of a digital reality.

In this exhibition, Wonmin's artworks both exemplify and respond to Han's theories through material negatives and opposites, displayed through his twin series *Plain Cuts\_Stone* and *Steel* and *Plain Cuts\_ Remediated*. Wonmin's *Stone* and *Steel* pieces, composed of volcanic rock and industrial steel, are positioned as 'objects', balanced against the colored resin and glass 'non-objects' of his *Remediated* artworks.

Wonmin's collections combine opposites that mutually define the other, seen in the juxtaposition of *Stone* and *Steel*, using one material to outline and emphasize the qualities of the other. He develops this concept in this exhibition, pitting object against non-object, only able to explore their distinct natures when one is contextualised against the other. Across the two collections, the absence and presence of certain material qualities and conceptual characteristics are compared throughout.

In Wonmin's *Restoration of Existence*, he grounds his artworks in the reality of nature. *Stone*, *steel*, *glass* and *resin* represent the four elements via a form of synecdoche; each volcanic rock is taken as the core of the Earth itself; each aperture of colored resin represents an inland sea. The poetic characteristics of each artwork, such as the incomprehensible age of each stone, or the unique interplay of colour and light deep within each resin block, are shown as immutable, unable to be converted into the information-based reality of Byung-Chul Han's *Unding*.





## WONMIN PARK

### PLAIN CUTS REMEDIATED | FLOOR LIGHT 2022

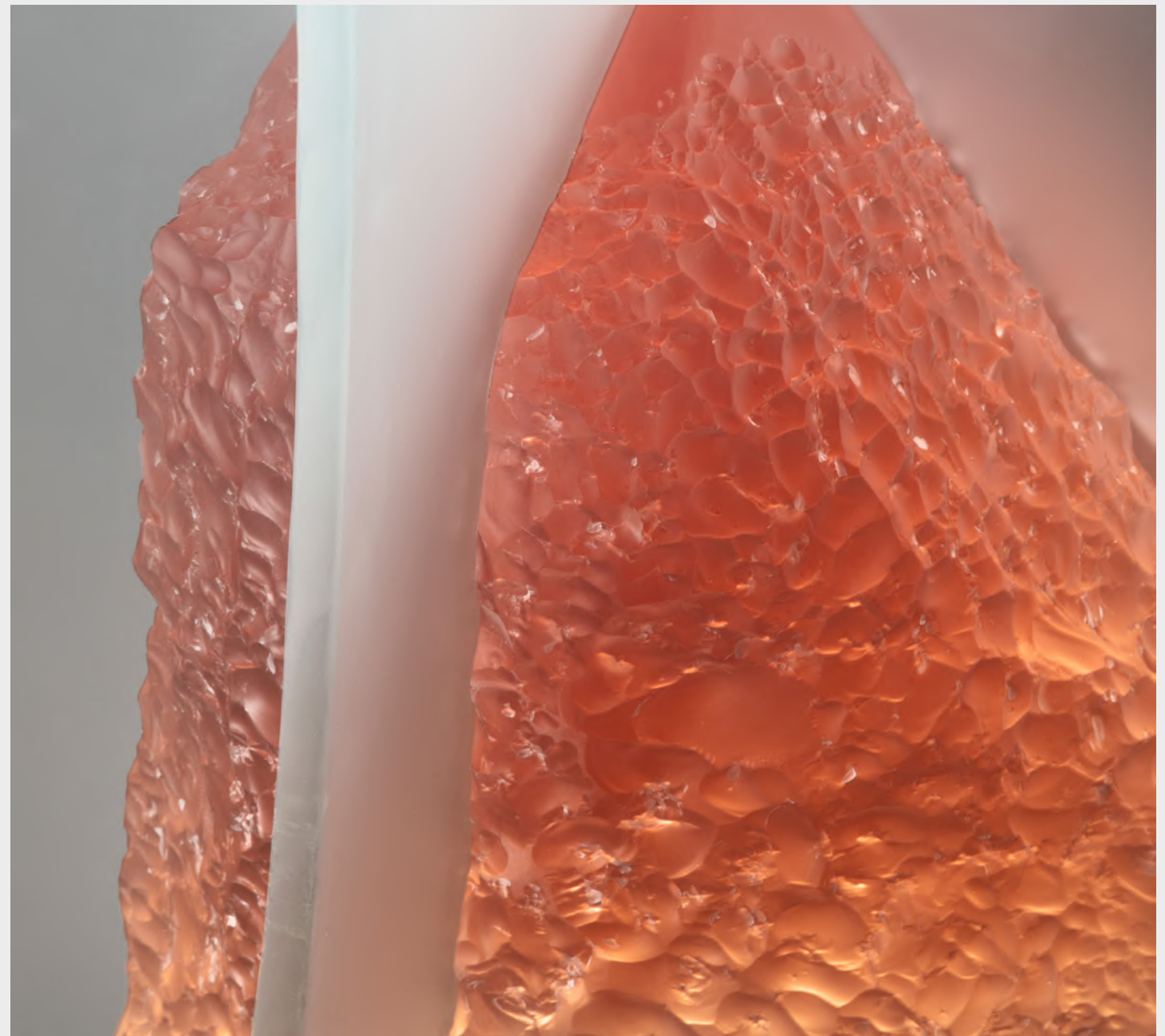
Colored resin, Glass  
118 x 79 x 77 cm  
46 1/2 x 31 1/8 x 30 1/4 in  
Edition Proto of 8 plus 4 AP

Plain Cuts\_Remediated\_Light\_SS22301 is the first floor lamp that Wonmin has created, with its vertical form inspired by mountainous volcanic formations. The colored resin base operates as a negative of the volcanic rock see throughout the rest of the Plain Cuts\_Stone and Steel series, intended to fill with a natural light that counterbalances the weight of the originals.

Wonmin develops Plain Cuts\_Remediated past the binary proposition that nature is always contrasted against mankind. These sculptures take inspiration from the Earth, responding in equal part to the artist's creative vision and the alchemical creation of the universe itself.









## WONMIN PARK

PLAIN CUTS REMEDIATED | LOW TABLE  
2022

Colored Resin, Glass  
39 x 175 x 94 cm  
15 3/8 x 68 7/8 x 37 1/8 in  
Edition 1 of 8 plus 4 AP (#1/8)

Wonmin Park's Plain Cuts\_Remediated series sees his original Stone and Steel sculptures duplicated, but with their stone bases rendered instead in colored resin, and their sheets of steel transformed into planes of glass.

The evolution is paradoxical; each sculpture has undergone an irreversible, molecular change, and yet its form and nature have remained identical.

Wonmin hand finishes each base with the same textural carving techniques he used on the volcanic stones of stone and steel, rather than achieving the same effect through a generic mould. Through this process the artist imparts his affinity with nature onto the man-made material.









## WONMIN PARK

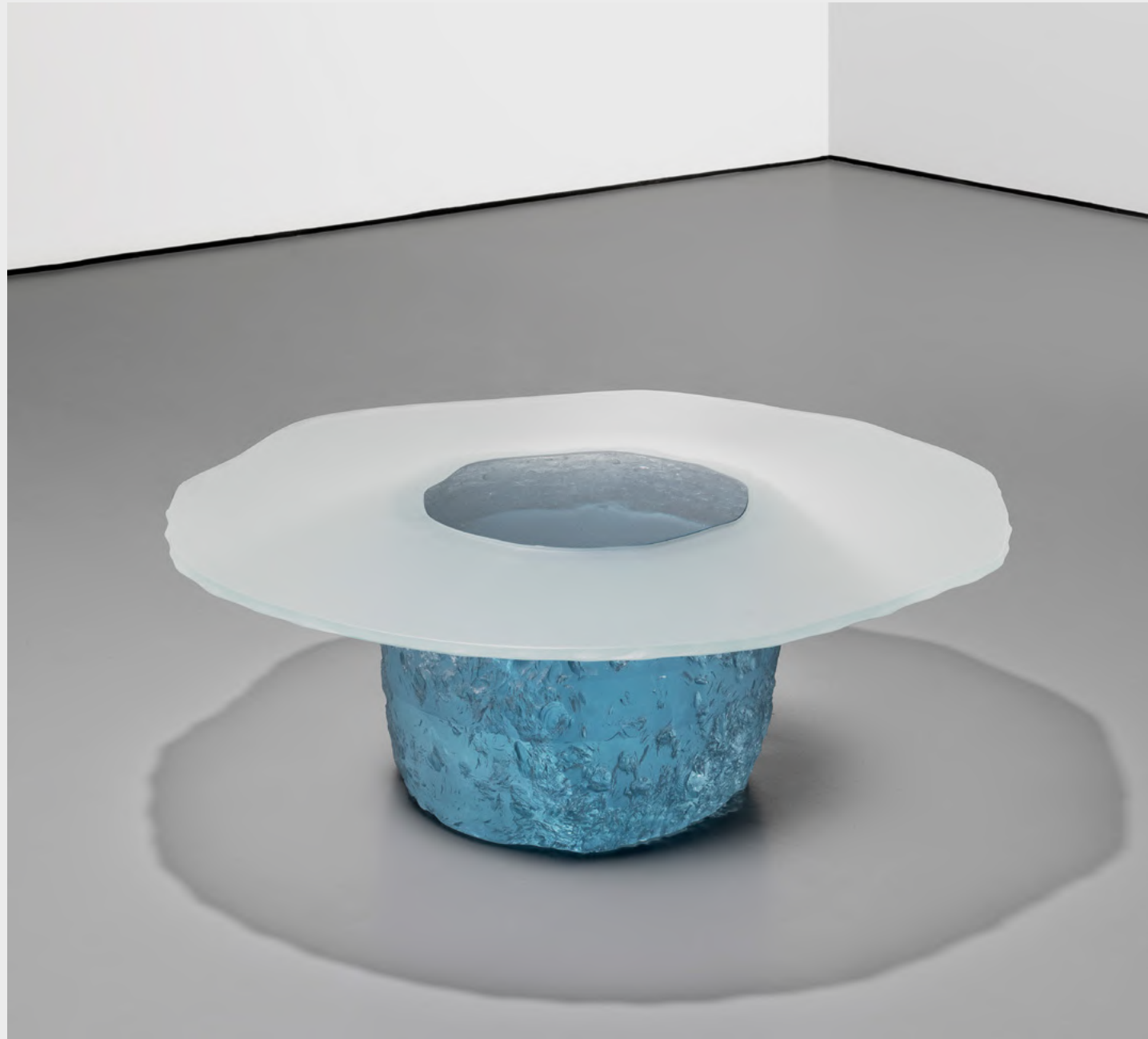
### PLAIN CUTS REMEDIATED | LOW TABLE 2022

Colored Resin, Glass  
45 x 134 x 120 cm  
17 3/4 x 52 3/4 x 47 1/4 in  
Edition Proto of 8 plus 4 AP (TP 1/1)

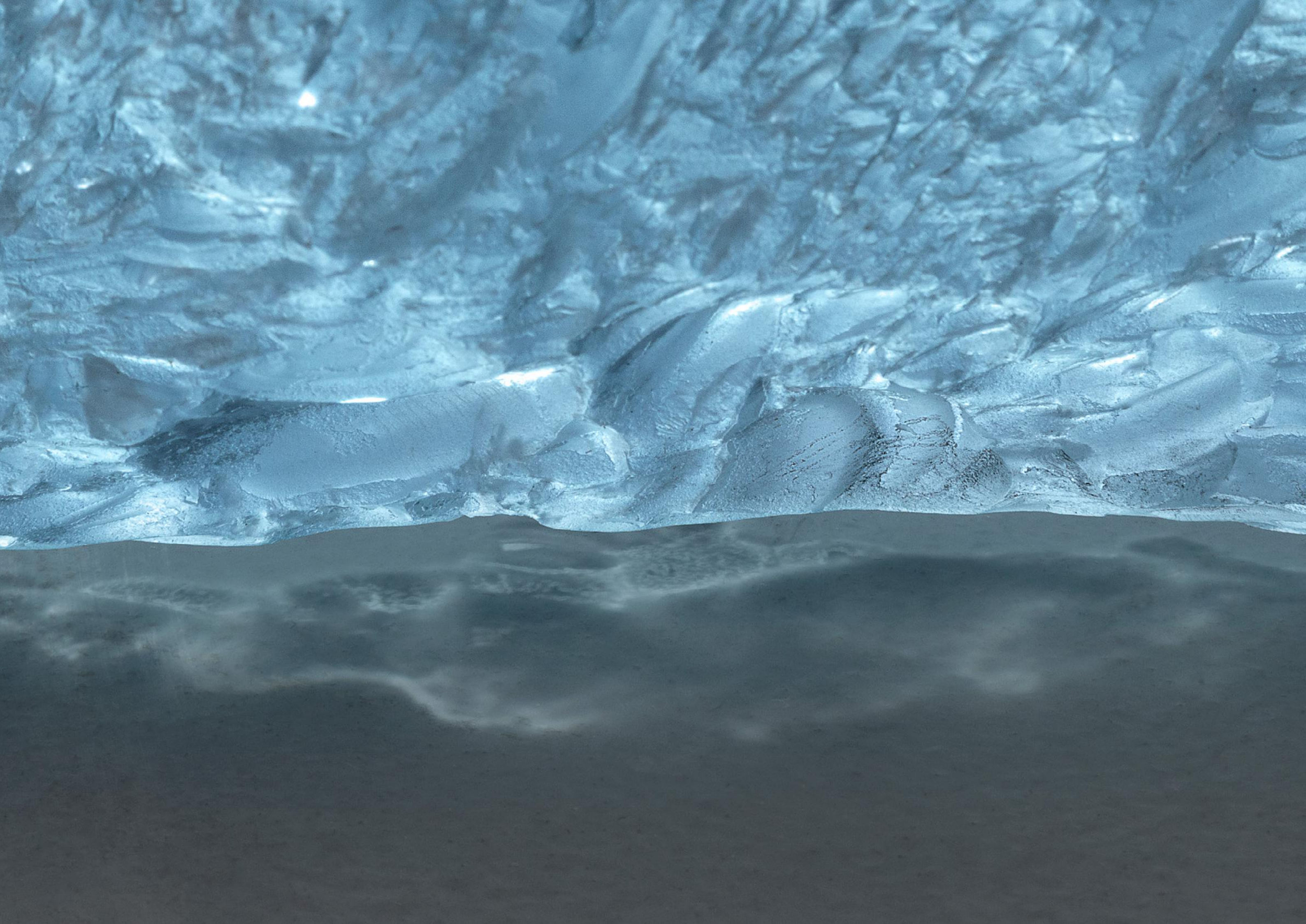
Each resin base of the Plain Cuts\_Remediated sculptures represents water, a parallel version of the original stone each was modelled on.

The clear pool of resin in the center of the glass aperture resembles a still lake, as seen from miles above the Earth. Just like with still water, the viewer perceives a surface reflection off the polished resin as well a view through its surface and into its depths. The idea is to be able to see inside the stone, offering a view of its inner nature.

The chromaticism of each resin base is augmented by its surrounding colorless glass. Each pane underwent a long process to arrive at its white frosted finish.









## WONMIN PARK

### PLAIN CUTS REMEDIATED | CHAIR 2022

Colored Resin, Glass  
45 x 134 x 120 cm  
17 3/4 x 52 3/4 x 47 1/4 in  
Edition Proto of 8 plus 4 AP

Wonmin Park's collections, from Haze, through Plain Cuts, to Stone and Steel, are not distinct from each other but follow a sequential development. His latest, Plain Cuts\_Remediated, draws upon aspects from all of them.

Plain Cuts\_Remediated continues Wonmin's technical achievements working with resin from his Haze series to explore the inverted nature of his Stone and Steel compositions.

This sculptural chair's absorption and distortion of light produces a surreal, dream-like quality, but it is here interrupted and grounded by the vertical glass sheet.





## WONMIN PARK

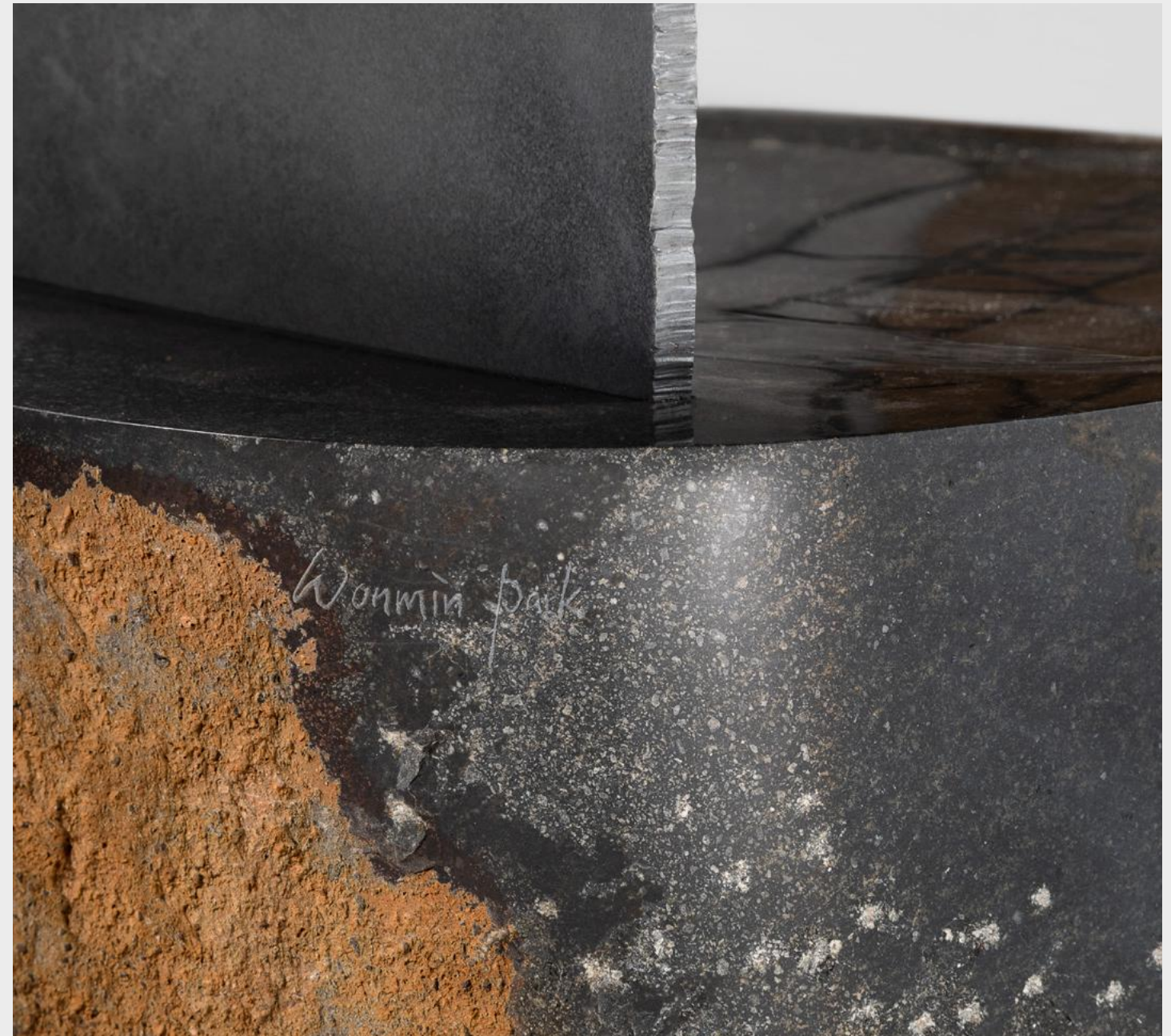
PLAIN CUTS STONE AND STEEL #8 | CHAIR  
2021

Stone, Dyed Steel  
105 x 50 x 60  
41 17/50 x 19 69/100 x 23 31/50  
Unique (#4)

At the heart of his Stone and Steel collection, is Wonmin's need to explore the full nature of his materials through their various changes of state as he works and processes them.

The stone base of these chairs is presented in three various states: its natural exterior, its cut and polished interior, and the elements that Wonmin has worked into its exterior crust, with carving techniques that add texture while retaining the stone's natural finish.

The natural beauty of each rock is augmented in the face of the human processes wrought against it by the artist.





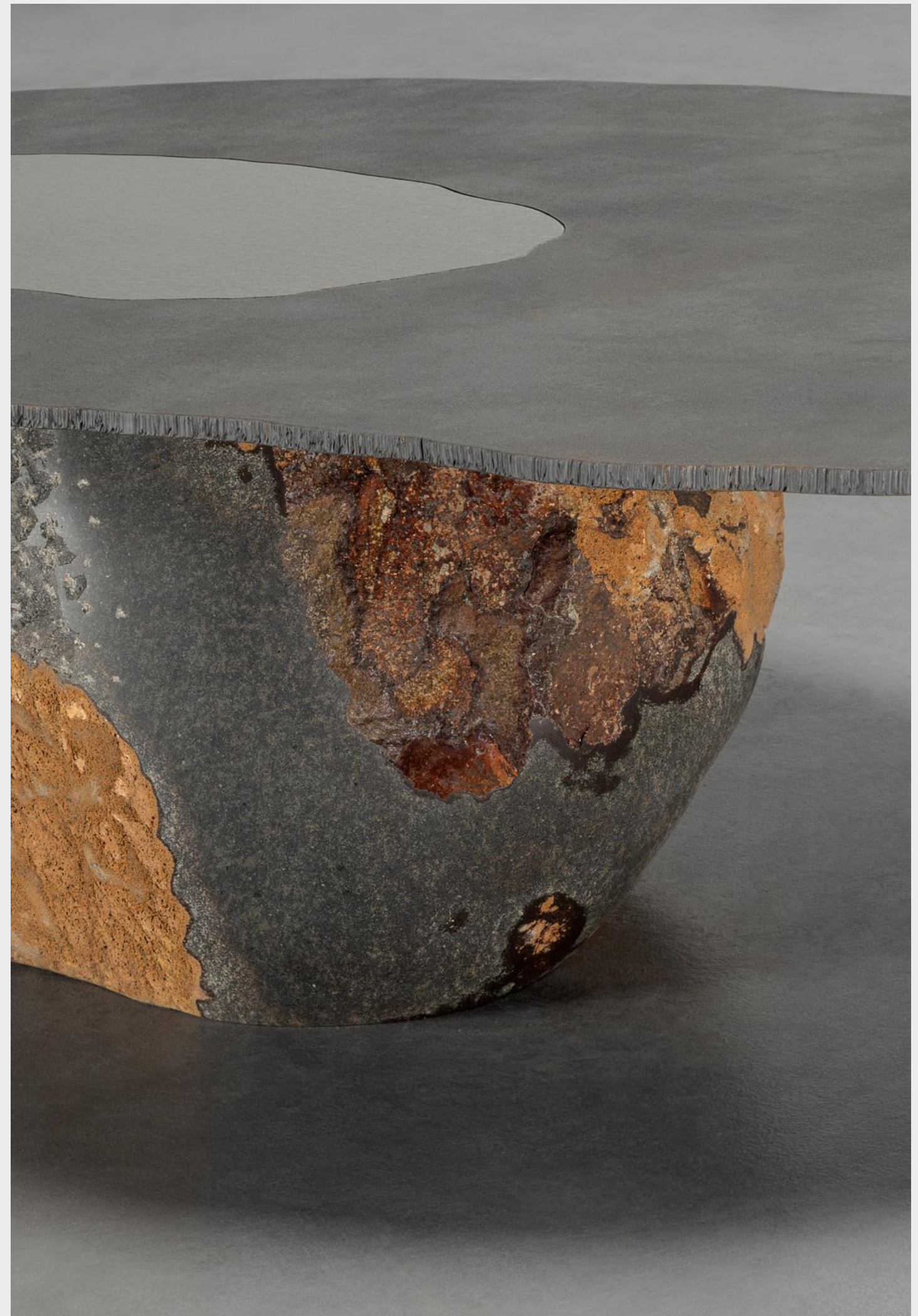
## WONMIN PARK

PLAIN CUTS STONE AND STEEL #1 | LOW TABLE  
2021

Stone, Dyed Steel  
37 x 176 x 103  
14 28/50 x 69 14/50 x 40 11/20  
Unique (#9)

Wonmin Park's Stone and Steel series reconciles the contrasting natures of primordial volcanic rock and modern industrial steel.

The steel plate of this low table is fitted around the cut stone with machine precision, epitomizing the control of human manufacturing processes. Wonmin is intrigued however that each unique stone is the product of a geological accident millennia ago, created deep in the crust of the Earth. He brings this internal history the artwork, as evidence of forms and processes greater than himself and his art.





## WONMIN PARK

### PLAIN CUTS STONE AND STEEL #5 | LOW TABLE 2021

Stone, Dyed Steel  
45 x 134 x 120  
17 1/2 x 53 x 47 1/2  
Unique (#1)

Wonmin's choice to work with stone and steel intentionally pairs a natural and a manufactured material, contrasting imperfection against uniformity.

The high iron content of the volcanic stone is responsible for both its dark metallic interior, as well as its rust-like exterior. Its crust is formed as the result of air and moisture penetrating deep fissures in the Earth and oxidizing the iron, forming a natural patina, which is juxtaposed against the cut and polished face of the stone with its marmoreal finish.

Paired with the steel sheet, the metallic elements provide a smooth counterpart for the rough, textured surface of the stone.





## WONMIN PARK

PLAIN CUTS STONE AND STEEL #9 | BENCH  
2021

Stone, Dyed Steel  
103.5 x 130 x 66 cm  
40 3/4 x 51 1/8 x 26 in  
Unique (#2)

Wonmin does not like to work within too many rules, nor overthink his practice. Fulfilling the potential of his materials is his main focus, keeping the design as effective yet minimal as possible, always toying at departing from functionality.









## WONMIN PARK

### PLAIN CUTS STONE AND STEEL #4 | LOW TABLE 2021

Stone, Dyed Steel  
40 x 250 x 190 cm  
15 3/4 x 98 3/8 x 74 3/4 in  
Unique (#2)

The shape of each artwork from Plain Cuts\_Stone and Steel is dictated by the shape of the stone, with Wonmin adapting the steel sheet to match.

The cut of the stone is vital to the success of each piece. Linearity is something that nature cannot produce - only humans have developed the ability to work in straight lines. The action of cutting the stone is materialized as the steel plate, exaggerated and expanded into space as a permanent plane of intersection.





## WONMIN PARK

PLAIN CUTS STONE AND STEEL #7 | CONSOLE  
2021

Stone, Dyed Steel  
84.5 x 144.5 x 45.5  
33 1/2 x 57 x 18  
Unique (#4)

Wonmin treats every volcanic stone used in Stone and Steel as a substitute for the Earth itself. The textured surface of each stone equates to the Earth's crust, with minute cracks equivalent to vast crevasses, smooth planes becoming wind-blown deserts.

In this way Wonmin collapses the scale of the Earth in on itself, and distorts magnitude through perspective. Viewed up close, rough patches on the stone resemble mountain ranges, and with each hammer of his chisel, Wonmin creates further microscopic geological formations. The artist draws an atomic link between the stones and the Earth despite their vastly difference sizes, using each rock to magnify details on the other.





## WONMIN PARK

PLAIN CUTS STONE AND STEEL #6 | DESK  
2021

Stone, Dyed Steel  
78 x 260 x 90 cm  
30 3/4 x 102 3/8 x 35 3/8 in  
Unique (#1)

In this monumental desk, Wonmin builds upon philosophies of relative value, singling out and defining material qualities only in relation to their direct opposite. Linearity is mutually defined against volume, smooth planes against rough surfaces, nature against man, stone against steel.

Amidst their embrace of purity and subtlety, Wonmin intends his artworks to speak for themselves, engaging with their surroundings with a material clarity.





## ABOUT WONMIN PARK

"In my designs, I want objects to speak for themselves. To be beautiful, attractive and engage with their surroundings. My work embraces simplicity, purity, and subtlety. People who experience my design have the space to explore their own sensations and emotions," says Wonmin Park.

He was born in 1982 in Seoul, South Korea, and is a graduate of the Design Academy Eindhoven. After working with a series of prestigious design companies in the Netherlands, he established Studio Wonmin Park, based in Eindhoven, in 2011. He has also established a production facility in Rotterdam and a creative studio in Paris.

To maximize the visual appeal of his pieces, Park uses resin and metal. The use of these chosen materials produces a surreal, dream-like quality reminiscent of seeing something without fixed contours, bound together by light and air. Park's furniture acts like sculpture that demands to be looked at and visually appreciated.

His designs are considered as both practical commodity and fine art. Wonmin has exhibited his work at the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea and Musée des Arts Décoratif, Paris.





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