

THE WORLD OF INTERIORS

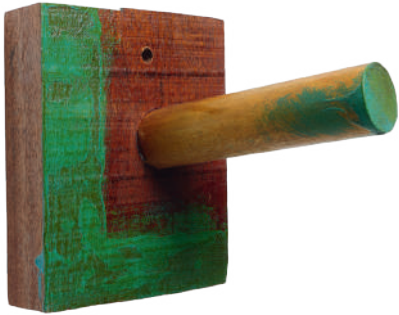
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Va-va-bloom!

From far-out feats in sugar
to a Venetian fantasy suite



Hang Fire



100 Hooks

16 December–3 February
Blunk Space, 11101 Highway 1, Point
Reyes Station, CA 94956, USA

Could there be a more gallant object than the humble wall hook? After all, its primary purpose is to support, to carry, to elevate. Even when in use it recedes into the shadows, allowing what it holds to project forward. Yet for all this cordiality, the hook is also a thing of poetic ambiguity. When not in use – stripped of context and content – it exists in a liminal state, caught between function and non-function, utility and surreal sculpture.

It is in this spirit of connection, transformation and provocation that Blunk Space presents *100 Hooks*. With contributions from 100 artists and designers across the globe – including Fabien Cappello, Martino Gamper, Yukiko Kuroda, Jasper Morrison and David Wiseman – it is the California-based gallery's most ambitious exhibition to date. Like all of its projects, however, at its heart is the substantial creative legacy bequeathed by the multidisciplinary artist JB Blunk (*WoI* Nov 2018), after whom it was named.

It is his daughter Mariah Nielson, director of both the estate and the gallery, who has curated this show. '*100 Hooks* is a continuation of my father's seminal 1981 exhibition *100 Plates/Plus*, held at David Cole Gallery in Inverness, California,' she explains. Fascinated by the idea of restricting himself to one type of object, one 'essential form', Blunk relentlessly explored materials and modes of expression through these plates, testing the fine lines between art, craft and design.

Influenced by his experiences in Japan with the master potter Kitaōji Rosanjin, Blunk's self-built workshop, his home and all its contents are testimony to the man's passionate belief in the beauty of everyday, handcrafted objects. His colossal public sculptures across California bear witness to his curiosity and energy. Collectively they serve as inspiration for all the invited contributors to *100 Hooks* who have either exhibited at Blunk Space, completed a residency at the estate, or been influenced by his approach and body of work. Each brings his or her own very nuanced response to the brief: to create one hook of any size or material.

The us-based ceramicist Woody de Othello, known for his anthropomorphic forms featuring a smattering of bodily parts, offers a sculpted ear, while Bethan Laura Wood, drawing from her own ornately detailed mirrors produced with the Murano glass foundry Barbini, presents a frilly phallic appendage. Francis Upritchard's cast-bronze hook hovers somewhere between a gnarly tree branch and a talisman or religious relic from an otherworld deity. Korean-born Minjae Kim describes his work as 'simple, quirky, imperfect, incohesive, impractical, irrational'.

With such diverse outcomes, the visual effect of all 100 hooks protruding from the gallery's walls or propped on a central table creates sensory overload. Seeing them together transforms these seemingly everyday items into playful, animate vessels, even carnal or spiritual things. Lofty ambitions for the humble wall hook, perhaps, but then again hooks are all about holding things aloft © *Libby Sellers is a design historian, curator and writer*

From top: Green River Projects, 'Hook', 2019/2023, wood, shellac, tint; Bethan Laura Wood, in collaboration with Barbini Specchi Veneziani, 'Frilly XXX' hook, 2021, glass; Max Lamb, 'Wall Tile Hook', 2023, limestone; Everett Noel, 'Days and Nights', 2023, brass, redwood cut-off from the JB Blunk Estate, deer antler