

# Seascape

**7<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup>**

**June 2023**

**Palais Thott / French Embassy**

**Kongens Nytorv 4, 1050 Copenhagen**



# Seascape



© Esther Baron



For 3 Days of Design, RDAI is presenting “Seascape”, an installation composed of two original pieces recalling the plant and marine world.

In collaboration with the Copenhagen based cabinetmaker Atelier Aréthuse, RDAI has designed a table inspired by the seaside grape tree, “Coccoloba Uvifera”, accompanied by a rug evoking the ripples of the wind-swept sand. This rug is developed in collaboration with RDAI’s neighbours, the Parisian fabric editor, Maison Lelièvre.

The project is a true collaboration of the design and savoir faire of RDAI, Atelier Aréthuse and the Maison Lelièvre - **Where would we be without you ?**

# Seagrape



© Esther Baron

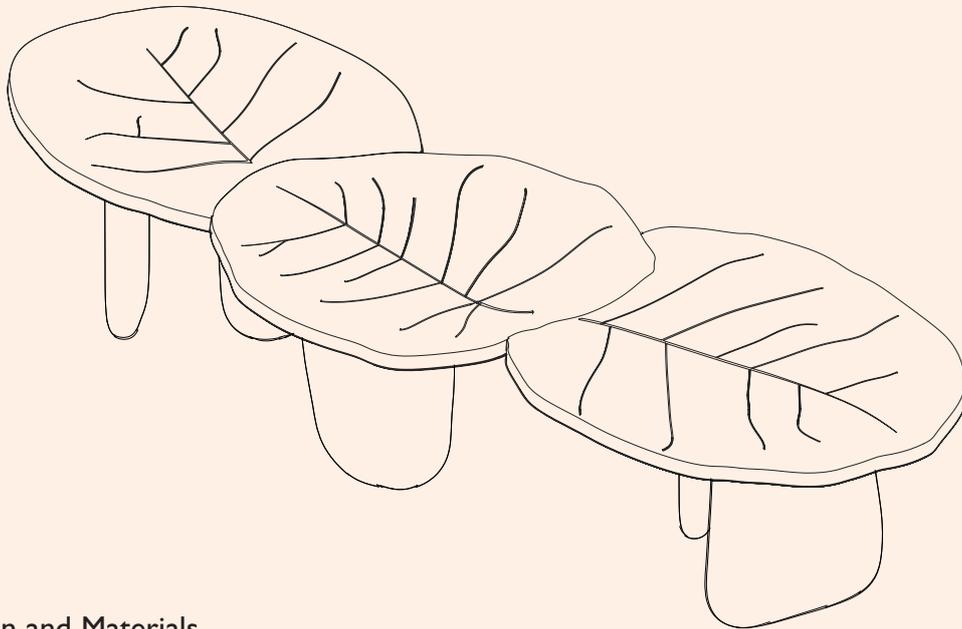


The Seagrape table is a large, sculptural, almost brutalist table in ash wood, freely inspired by the leaf shapes of the seagrape, a shrub found on beaches and shores in tropical climates.

The “Coccoloba Uvifera” is a shrub highly resistant to sea spray, whose broad, bright green, fan-shaped leaves change colour once they have fallen, taking on a multitude of warm, flamboyant hues such as copper, rust, reddish-brown, as they rest in the sunshine .....

The table is the result of a collaboration with Atelier Aréthuse, a French cabinetmaker based in Copenhagen. It was through close dialogue between RDAI and Atelier Aréthuse, from the first sketch to the last detail, that the project evolved and was nurtured to fruition. Atelier Aréthuse was able to translate the raw spontaneity of the design and bring sophistication to the treatment of textures and shades.

# Seagrape



## Fabrication and Materials

The Seagrape table is at once a piece which is fabricated from a design conceived by RDAI and also conceived to express the fabrication methods mastered by Alexandre Aréthuse.

RDAI looked for a design which would utilise the sculpting and colourisation methods of Alexandre. The freedom of form of the table typology allowed a furniture design, sculptural in its form and finish, with limited constraint imposed by a specific function. We played around with organic forms and designed a series of disks forming a tabletop with wide sculpted legs. Then suddenly, the subtle changing colours of the grape seed leaves and the sculpted surface of the tree trunk appeared in our imagination !

The Seagrape table is made from two Danish white ash trees (50 – 60 years old) taken from the forest of Corselitze located in the southern part of Denmark (96 km from Copenhagen). They have been naturally dried in Veksø (24 km from Copenhagen) for about 10 years.

The construction of this table uses human hands techniques, such as the gouge work for the veins and the edges of the table tops, but also all the surface preparation, using a long and rebarbative sanding/humidification process that will ensure the softness and durability of the table.

All the colourisation of the wood is the result of experimentations rediscovering 18th century French cabinet making techniques. The staining process involves the dyeing of the wood core, and not adding layers of colours on the top of the wood. The colours impregnate the wood and magnify the wood grain pattern. The process of finding the right colours for this table took the testing of over 40 different stain recipes. The water based right recipe stain is applied by hand with a natural sea sponge, dried and sanded until the desired colour effect is correct. The colour is then covered by a sealer by hand using a “pinceau d’ébéniste” (mixed strings of natural cotton) that isolating the colour from the protective finishes. A final protective coat is applied by hand using a French matt lacquer to provide a very natural look.

It is a long process, but a necessary process to merge “decoration” and “function” as a dining table is made to be used, and wine, water, coffee, and cleaning will be in contact with the table.

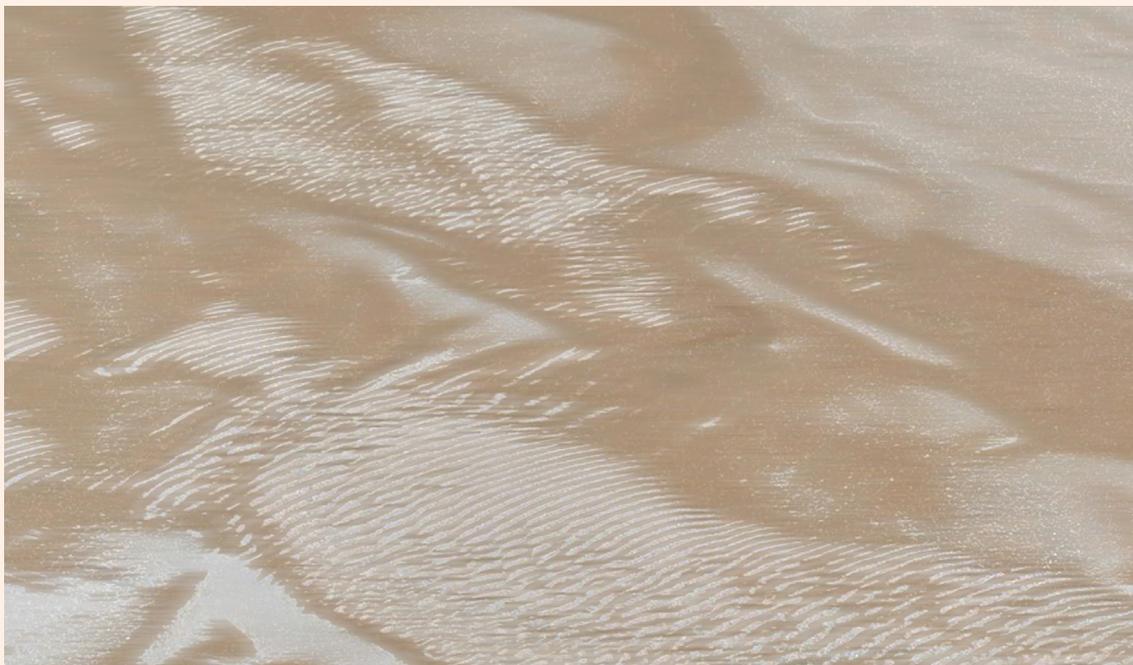
# Seaside



The Seaside rug was born of the desire to capture the essence of the Caribbean beach on which the leaf of the seaside grape tree rests, the inspiration for the table created by RDAI and Atelier Aréthuse. Evoking sand through rugs was a natural choice. Of course, transcribing such a delicate, ever-changing surface was a challenge, but with the vibrant exchange between RDAI and Lelièvre, we succeeded in creating a singular rug that met the requirements of both our companies. Seaside is a hand-tufted rug, a technique that combines aesthetics, comfort, and the volume we needed to achieve the desired effect, whose texture evokes the ripples left on the sand by the wind.

We attached great importance to working with texture, playing with a composition of natural materials that is both raw and sophisticated. After several composition trials, we opted for a blend of jute, bamboo, and New Zealand wool.

# Seaside



## **Fabrication and Materials**

Jute for its natural, dry, matte appearance, reminiscent of the dried leaves that fall from the tree.

Bamboo for its shine and softness, evoking the feel of sand underfoot.

New Zealand wool because it's a quality material, technically necessary to hold the other fibres together and to sculpt the rug in bas-relief.

Once the composition had been finalized, the next step was to decide how to transcribe the sand ripples. The option of “drawing” them on a flat surface using different colours or material changes was quickly discarded in favour of chiselling the material for a volumetric rendering.

A technical challenge for the craftsmen we work with, since the jute used in the carpet's composition is a difficult material to tuft and then sculpt.

Between the drawing by RDAI and the final realization, it was through the constructive exchange with Lelièvre that the design was refined. Lelièvre produced numerous prototypes to test the assembly of different fibres, interpreting the design as accurately as possible.

The result is a subtle, almost monochromatic carpet that, thanks to the combination of 3 fibers and the carving technique, seems to vibrate under the light.

## RDAI

### Denis Montel & Julia Capp



© Alex Proffit

RDAI is an architecture, interior architecture and design agency based in Paris, with a subsidiary in Hong Kong. Founded in 1972 by Rena Dumas, the agency is now led by Denis Montel and Julia Capp.

With nearly one hundred employees from 10 different nationalities, the agency — winner of the Equerre d'Argent prize in 2014 — is recognized worldwide. Experienced architects, interior architects, designers and technicians work together on around 70 international projects each year, always responding to the specifics of places and cultures.

RDAI works on all scales, from entire buildings to interior environments and individual objects — with innovative support from technical experts, research and development, datamining and material specialists — treating a diverse selection of programmes including retail, hotel, residential, workplace, cultural, events, and furniture design.

With its intuitive and conceptual approach, the objective of RDAI is to reach the very essence in every creation.

[rdai.fr](http://rdai.fr)

[@rdai\\_ensemble](https://www.instagram.com/rdai_ensemble)

Contact / François Trédez / [presse@rdai.fr](mailto:presse@rdai.fr)

## LELIEVRE

### Emmanuel Lelièvre



© Lelièvre

Entering Maison Lelièvre is to enter the temple of interior design, at the heart of French heritage, to experience the essence of the French “Art de Vivre” at your fingertips. Founded by Henri Lelièvre in Paris in 1914, the eponymous Maison built its reputation with its velvets signature. Over the years, due to Lelièvre’s passion for colours, materials, and its taste for beauty, Maison Lelièvre has become, for more than a century, one of the major actors in interior design. Lelièvre’s expertise, its craftsmanship, its heritage, and its unique “know-how” is a subtle balance between tradition and modernity.

Maison Lelièvre has developed its reputation internationally with the ambition to create significant interaction between Lelièvre and its clients, through its showrooms in Paris, London, Dubai, Düsseldorf and Milan.

[lelievreparis.com](http://lelievreparis.com)

[@lelievreparis](https://www.instagram.com/lelievreparis)

Contact / Marie de Cheffontaines / [mdecheffontaines@lelievreparis.com](mailto:mdecheffontaines@lelievreparis.com)

## ATELIER ARÉTHUSE

Alexandre Arethuse



© Lior Zilberstein

### ATELIER ARÉTHUSE, Fine-crafted contemporary furniture & objects

At Atelier Aréthuse we are passionate about the art of craftsmanship and we take pride in our commitment to excellence. Our attention to detail and devotion for quality is evident in every piece we create. We believe in the absolute quest for visible and sensory perfection and strive to achieve this through traditional, modern and ancient woodworking techniques, coupled with an experimental, innovative and sustainable approach.

### ALEXANDRE ARÉTHUSE, Fine-craft creator

My ambition to advance with the development of unique furniture pieces, combined with my eagerness to experiment drove me to take a new direction, wherein I use old techniques with modern methods and break traditional boundaries. My knowledge, gathered from many years of experience in related fields, and my inquisitive nature create an abundance of opportunities. I now refer to myself as a Finecraft Creator, as I integrate all my skills (industrial design, experimentation, furniture engineering, product development, traditional & modern craftsmanship and project management) into a single operation, with a relentless pursuit of visible and sensory perfection, and always with an innovative mindset.

[atelierarethuse.com](http://atelierarethuse.com)

[@atelierarethuse](https://www.instagram.com/atelierarethuse)

Contact / Alexandre Aréthuse/ [aa@atelierarethuse.com](mailto:aa@atelierarethuse.com)











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