

# **This Room Was Furnished Entirely With Curbside Trash**

Armed with broken chairs and tables and 1,000 feet of rope, a designer is rethinking what it means to repair and reuse.

Walk in the lounge of a typical design school, and you'll be surrounded by pricey, carefully selected furniture. But when the Central Saint Martins College of Arts and Design in London needed to furnish an entry room, it turned to the street and curbside trash instead.

"I imagined a situation where we were hunters going around London trying to find what we need," says recent graduate Paulo Goldstein, who was commissioned to design the space by college head Jeremy Till. "We needed 10 different chairs, so we divided London into areas, made a map, and explored until we found them."



Five days later, armed with broken chairs and tables and 300 meters of rope, the team started tying everything together to make furniture that was entirely unique.

"The way I'm repairing is the most absurd way," Goldstein explains. "With most repairs, you have a piece with a certain aesthetic, it gets broken, and normally someone fixes it by trying to go back to the original state. The way I repair is the opposite: I give back the functionality, but there's a lot of time and effort used to produce a new piece."

Goldstein started experimenting with repairs a few years ago, after the financial crisis led to the loss of his job. "There was a strong feeling of not being in control of anything," he says. He went back to school, and his M.A. project, Repair Is Beautiful, "focused on the potential of making and the obsession of craftsmanship—trying to control the pieces of material that you have around you."



The new project continues to build on his earlier work— like the idea that in a society where products are cheaply made and throwing things away is normal, learning to repair can be seen as an act of political resistance.

"In a couple of months, your computer will seem obsolete and you'll buy a new one, or the next iPhone will come out," he says. "We keep consuming more and more. But once somebody starts making—using the potential humans have to be creative, to produce tools, to make something we really need or want—you're going against the whole system."

He hopes that more people will start heading to the street, collecting and rebuilding or redesigning products instead of shopping. "It's a way to fight the idea that we're supposed to throw things away or produce more and more stuff that won't last."



### ADELE PETERS

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