

AHEC presents ‘Wood for the Trees’

Mitre & Mondays heads to the heart of the forest for 3daysofdesign



The Mitre & Mondays trio: Josef Shanley-Jackson, Freya Bolton and Finn Thomson, at Benchmark's workshop. Photography courtesy of Mitre & Mondays.

- AHEC, Mitre & Mondays and Benchmark collaborate on an immersive hardwood exhibition for Material Matters at 3daysofdesign 2026.
- Evoking a forest environment, ‘Wood for the Trees’ takes visitors on the journey of a hardwood from seed to product.
- The exhibition is inspired by AHEC’s feature documentary *Forested Future*, and makes the case for responsible forestry and sustainable material use.

On 10–12 June 2026, the American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC) returns to 3daysofdesign in Copenhagen, inviting the global design audience to explore the environmental, structural and aesthetic potential of American hardwoods with an immersive storytelling exhibition, created by Mitre & Mondays, a London-based studio with a focus on social and environmental impact, regenerative materials, and design for reuse and repair.



Taking place within Material Matters at the historic waterfront Gammel Dok building in Christianshavn, *Wood for the Trees* will take visitors on a spatial journey into the world of hardwood forestry.

The exhibition draws on the ideas and themes explored in AHEC's recent feature documentary [Forested Future](#), which examines our relationship with forests through the lens of the people and communities whose livelihoods depend on them. Supported by the peerless craft expertise of Benchmark, Mitre & Monday's vision for the exhibition translates the story on screen into a design-led spatial experience.

In previous years, AHEC has used its platform at 3daysofdesign to showcase its collaborations with established and emerging European designers, demonstrating the creative possibilities of underutilised hardwood species through product innovation and sculptural spectacle.

This year, AHEC is widening the focus, not only highlighting material beauty and versatility of hardwood, but providing an overview of its place in a broader environmental system that encompasses responsible forestry, carbon storage and long-term sustainability. *Wood for the Trees* makes the case that the use of a diversified range of timber helps incentivise landowners to maintain their forests for generations to come.

Take a walk in the woods with Mitre & Mondays

A century ago, the hardwood forests of the eastern United States were little more than 'stumps and ashes', but in the last 100 years, they have recovered, now spanning more than 40 million acres and growing at twice the rate they are harvested.

Visitors to Material Matters will be immersed in an abstract arboreal setting, examining every stage in the journey of hardwood timber from tree to finished product, through five key stages that unfold into the world of responsible forest management, and making the case for the long-term stewardship of nature. Constructed from timber donated by family-owned sawmills, exhibition materials will be presented on rotating trunks; seating and furniture evoke fallen logs; and graphics will be suspended from above, evoking the boughs of the forest canopy.

As well as designed objects and material applications, the exhibition will include educational storytelling and environmental data, expressed through audio-visual elements, graphic and narrative displays.

In the context of an increasingly uncertain environmental future, the exhibition will explore how growth, planning and resilience underpin the long-term health of North America's hardwood forests, and the impact that material selection and timber use have on sustaining them.



Wood for the Trees exhibition maquette. Image courtesy of Mitre & Mondays

The exhibition takes the visitor through five stages in the story of timber:

1. **Growth** looks at how trees, among the largest and longest-living organisms on earth – reproduce, regenerate and even clone themselves, allowing them to persist across generations, adapting to change over time.
2. **Planning** explores both the day-to-day realities and century-spanning timescales of forest management, examining the life cycles of trees and the systems and strategies employed to sustain them.

3. **Selection** unpacks the meticulous process of identifying trees for harvest and for preservation, and the factors that influence it – including age, health, longevity, and the tree’s contribution to the vitality of the wider forest ecosystem.
4. **Resilience** considers the ability of a forest to withstand change – adapting to shifts in climate, resisting pests and disease, and recovering from disturbance – the role foresters play in strengthening that ability, and the impact that our material choices can have in shaping it.
5. **Timber** looks at the point where the forest meets the human world, and reveals the history carried in the grain of every piece of wood.

Wood for the Trees is free to visit and takes place in the ground-floor exhibition space at Gammel Dok, Strandgade 27B, Copenhagen during 3daysofdesign, 10–12 July 2026, and will include a workshop enabling visitors to interact with the materials – date TBC.

For more information, please contact ahec@zetteler.co.uk

Notes for editors

AHEC

AHEC, the American Hardwood Export Council, is the leading international trade association for the American hardwood industry. For over 30 years, AHEC has built a distinctive global reputation through design-led collaborations, research-driven projects and high-profile exhibitions that demonstrate the performance and sustainability of American hardwoods. By placing design at the centre of its work, AHEC continues to engage the global design community in meaningful dialogue around materials, environmental responsibility and the future of making.

americanhardwood.org

@ahec_europe

Mitre & Mondays

Mitre & Mondays are a London-based studio designing and manufacturing objects and spaces that help connect people to the material world around them. Their motivating force is that design should present a future for everyone, proving you

can offer solutions to the social and environmental challenges of the day, whilst inspiring curiosity and excitement. Designing for disassembly, reuse and repair, Mitre & Mondays go beyond sustainability, focusing on the social and environmental impact of production, building on their knowledge of circular systems and regenerative materials.

mitreandmondays.co.uk

@mitreandmondays

Benchmark

A powerhouse of craft, Benchmark is one of the UK's leading furniture-makers. Founded by Terence Conran and Sean Sutcliffe in 1984, the company has a mission to create furniture that contributes to human health and wellbeing, using natural, sustainable and non-toxic materials. With workshops in Berkshire and Dorset, Benchmark works with many of the world's leading architects and designers on commercial and residential projects. From forest to finished piece, Benchmark is positioned as a leader in sustainable enterprise. Its approach marries forward-thinking design with exemplary levels of craftsmanship and creativity, producing furniture that exudes natural warmth and soul.

benchmarkfurniture.com

@madebybenchmark

Materials

With special thanks to **Bingaman & Son Lumber**, **MacDonald & Owen**, **Northland Forest Products** and **Rossi Lumber** for their timber donation.

American red oak

Quercus species, mainly *Quercus rubra*

American red oak is the dominant species in the U.S. hardwood forests - with distinctive grain and wood that is not always red in colour. The name comes from the leaf colour in the fall. Red oak may be sold on the basis of 'northern', 'southern' and 'Appalachian'.

[Learn more about American red oak](#)

Yellow birch

Betula alleghaniensis

Preferring cool regions with high rainfall, yellow birch is mostly harvested from forests in Maine, New Hampshire, New York, Pennsylvania and Vermont. Generally straight grained with a fine uniform texture, the wood of yellow birch has a distinct difference between the sap which is white and the heartwood which is light reddish brown. It is heavy, hard and strong, with good bending qualities.

[Learn more about yellow birch](#)

Hard maple

Acer saccharum, Acer nigrum

Grown for both lumber and syrup, American hard maple is distinct from other maple species around the world, and renowned for its delicate colour, hardwearing nature, straight grain and fine finish. With creamy white sapwood and heartwood that can vary from light to dark reddish brown, hard maple darkens with exposure to light over time. It is widely used for applications where durability is important, such as flooring, worktops and furniture.

[Learn more about hard maple](#)

Cherry

Prunus serotina

American cherry is a fast-maturing hardwood species, with an ability to regenerate rapidly after forest fires. Cherry wood has a fine uniform grain, and a smooth texture. Sapwood is creamy white; heartwood varies from rich red to reddish brown and darkens on exposure to light. Easy to machine, mould, sand and stain, cherry wood is ideal furniture and fine joinery, and is a popular choice for doors, interior panelling and musical instruments.

[Learn more about cherry](#)