

# JAN de WERYHA-WYSOCZAŃSKI

Internet: [www.de-weryha-art.de](http://www.de-weryha-art.de) e-mail: [jan@de-weryha-art.de](mailto:jan@de-weryha-art.de)

***Prof. Dr. Helmut R. Leppien, Chief Curator at the „Hamburger Kunsthalle“ (Hamburg Art Museum): „Der Natur gleich Nah und Fern“ concerning the catalog „Jan de Weryha-Wysoczański - Holzobjekte 1999-2000“ (Jan de Weryha-Wysoczański - Wooden Objects 1999-2000)***

Jan de Weryha-Wysoczański is a sculptor. He is not a searcher and a finder as Richard Long, he hews wood using both the gouge and the axe, he takes tree-trunks apart by means of the power saw. He works. Everything that comes into existence during this work becomes material for works. There is no waste. This exhibition presents an ancient monument made of nine stacked, sculptured discs standing next to a pile of rough wood chips which have been stacked up with great care and thus result in one closed form.

The arrangement of the five peeled, sharpened tree stumps pointing at each other: Energy is bundled at a one point but, simultaneously, also spreads out towards five directions. We look at the cut surfaces, which are criss-crossed by cracks, and become aware of testimonials of a centuries-old nature life. While peeling the stumps a pattern of horizontal and vertical sawing traces came into existence. We tend to say that the fields have the shape of quadrants, but at the same time we perceive that nothing has been constructed. Each line is created during work, no field is a well-proportioned square.

The bark of a tree-trunk which is the result of carefully peeling by circular saw cuts the artist piles it to a hill - no: to a disc of a hill, equally near to nature as far from it. He saws trunks of old, already hollow trees into discs after he formerly placed two even cuts lengthwise, facing each other. This way the discs look as if both come together the nature and the human form. Then the artist stacks these discs onto each other and side by side, just like farmers used to stack firewood in former days. The same way? No way - completely different! In the stack the contours - the original contours of the trunk - draw closer, refer to each other: This is the work of an artist, and we start looking at the equivalence and differences of the contours, of the hollow forms and the different colorations of the different trunks.

The way Jan de Weryha-Wysoczański treats wood reminds of farmers' work. Just like farmers hill up firewood, soil or potatoes he adds chopped-down pieces of the trunk or bark to a pile. Although his name already shows that the artist and his family do not have their origins in farming his works take up traditions of archaic actions. The artist's resolute will of designing, however, is always present.

Piles have a circular ground-plan. The artist takes one step further and orders round wood or long bulky slats to a flat circle. Then the next step follows: The arrangement of wood discs and other bits and pieces to a ring. One time the pieces seem to have a certain form and all look the same, some other time they have waste character. All these rings have something magical, are monuments of the conjuring. It's not only the effect of the material giving that kind of character but also their shape. Just as the circle the square has such a basic form. Edge pieces of the wooden discs are arranged to a square, individually or impressively in three-rows. We look at the definite differences of the single parts, realize how the artist has arranged these orderly.

Thus, Jan de Weryha-Wysoczański is a sculptor who is seeking to discern the material wood in its specialty while working on it, perceives this specialty and treats it with respect, but simultaneously forms and designs the material the way sculptors have always been.