

ALBERTO DUMAN

<http://www.albertoduman.me.uk/>

FOLKED UP (2006)



Several pieces of scrapped waste furniture destined to charity and low income citizens of Cardiff were donated by Track 2000, a EU-funded community-based Welsh organisation.

These were shipped in an empty cargo from the port of Barry/Cardiff to the port of Riga, Andrejsala, the location of the old power station soon-to-be contemporary Art Museum as well as the gallery in which the exhibition of the furniture was held.

A video documentation of the shipment of these goods was made and a web version can be downloaded from the website.

The company Willie Group, who sponsored the shipping of the furniture, organises frequent shipping of hardwood from Riga to Barry port, where it is turned into pallets.

On its arrival in Riga, the furniture was hand-carved by a graduate of the School of Applied Art in Riga who was sub-contracted to execute the carvings based on the instruction given by the artist's own design.

These were based on fragments of original Latvian folk patterns extracted from text books and placed on the surface of the furniture.

The results are mock-Latvian folk furniture, much like those seen often in theme restaurants in Riga attempting to reconstruct a vernacular Latvian interior furniture, but themselves being machine-routed mock-folk pieces.

The chain in question (Lido) has copyrighted its own design patterns in a typical corporate mentality that first pillages existing traditions and then attempts -often successfully- to encroach such actions by ring-fencing its own product within the boundaries of copyright law.

During the exhibition, the stacked piles of hardwood ready to be shipped to Wales were visible through the window of the space as well as in the video shot at Barry port, played on a TV screen inserted into one of the carved pieces of furniture.

Alberto Duman