

The Museum of Modern Art

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PROJECTS: MAGDALENA JETELOVÁ
March 14 - April 28, 1987

The Museum of Modern Art continues its PROJECTS series with the first American exhibition of the sculpture of Magdalena Jetelová, opening on March 14, 1987. Organized by Diane Farynyk, curatorial assistant in the Department of Painting and Sculpture, the exhibition features two recent works by this Czechoslovakia-born artist.

Jetelová's massive, rough-hewn wooden sculptures of houses, chairs, and stairways often give the impression of being incomplete, damaged, or abandoned. Houses lean dramatically and seem to be in danger of collapsing, and huge wood steps turn in on themselves as they reach precariously toward the ceiling. In these works, Jetelová transforms utilitarian structures into sources of amusement or anxiety.

The exhibition features two works that exemplify the recent developments in Jetelová's series of chairs and stairways. Boban (1986) consists of huge, barely smoothed logs that form the arms and legs of a chair, but it lacks seat and back; its oddly angled appendages create a sense of awkward movement. Crossing (1986), an ascending trail of raw oak with sporadic steps, seems to totter on feeble legs--thin wooden strips that seem barely able to bear the work's weight--and ends abruptly in midair. "Both works generate uneasiness about their stability," writes Diane Farynyk in her essay for the brochure accompanying the exhibition, "and symbolically instill a vague angst over man's survival."

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