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Tour De Force

John Houshmand Table

John Houshmand has been a photographer, a musician, and a partner in a high-end residential construction firm. What he learned each time was "how everything goes together." He now heads an atelier making one-of-a-kind sculptural furniture out of planks, slabs, and even trunks of reclaimed American hardwood like black walnut and elm. "The use of materials is as ruthlessly honest, yet sensual, as I can pull off," he says. The designs, which often juxtapose massive chunks of wood with thick glass panes, are all his; the execution is handled by a team of craftspeople on his 950-acre farm in New York's Catskill Mountains, also home to the company sawmill and the 1,700 slabs he keeps on hand for inspiration. When not shuttling between the workshop and his Manhattan showroom, Houshmand travels to meet clients (in places as far-flung as Kuwait) who want something specific. "Creativity lives on the edge of chaos," he says, referring to his penchant for seeing designs in his dreams. "Or on the edge of sleep."
--MARK GRISCHKE

Spalted maple--and-glass low table, \$11,400, 212-965-1238, www.johnhoushmand.com

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