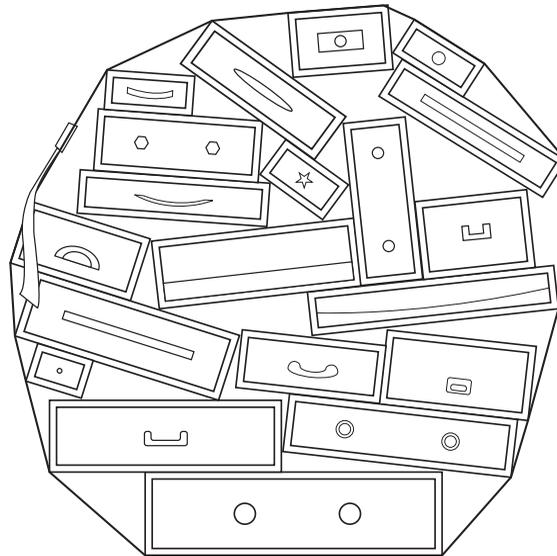


D.I.Y LADENKAST

BUILD YOUR OWN **TEJO REMY** "YOU CAN'T LAY DOWN YOUR MEMORIES" **CHEST OF DRAWERS.**



A DO IT YOUR SELF **TOOLBOOK** + DESIGN ANALYSIS

D.I.Y LADENKAST

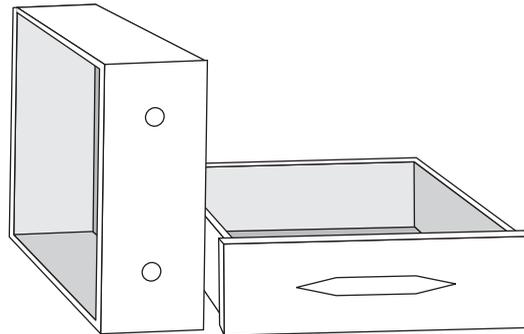
BUILD YOUR OWN **TEJO REMY** "YOU CAN'T LAY DOWN YOUR MEMORIES" **CHEST OF DRAWERS.**

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D.I.Y LADENKAST

PART 1

INTRODUCTION



&

COLLECTING DRAWERS





Welcome to D.I.Y Ladenkast

An Introduction by the author of this book

TEJO REMY'S "You Can't Lay Down Your Memories" Chest of Drawers (*Ladenkast* in Tejo's native Dutch) is a product that, through friendly perseverance and sheer beauty has recently been elevated to the status of a design classic. The idea of tying up 20 old recycled drawers with a rustic hessian strap had resonated around the world and the product is now located in museums and design collections everywhere. One of the things that makes it so attractive is its apparent simplicity. It looks like you really can Do It Yourself. But can you?

The answer is Yes. You can. And this book shows you how. It starts with collecting the drawers in PART 1, the part you have in your hands right now. It follows with carpentry instructions for making the frames in the next book PART 2. If you know a little

about woodworking and have some basic power tools laying around you can do this yourself, but don't hesitate to call up a local carpenter and have a professional do it - the instructions are in the form of a detachable fold out for exactly that reason. Next is the fun part, assembling the drawers in PART 3, for which you will need a couple of friends or family to help you.

Of course, building your own Tejo Remy inspired Chest of Drawers may not have the same *cache* as purchasing an original from Droog or Tejo's studio in Holland (though it certainly should be cheaper), but if this question of "authorship" bothers you, then feel free to make use of PART 4 - the Certificate of Authenticity. I've included 2 envelopes so you can send it to Tejo, along with a picture of your creation, for him to sign and

send back to you. Just make sure you address the smaller envelope.

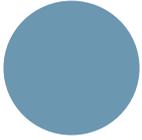
I first came up with the idea of this instruction manual, after I surprised Tejo Remy in his studio one day and interviewed him on camera. As many of his answers to my questions that day relate strongly to the contents of this book, I have included a transcript of that interview, along with a design analysis essay, in APPENDIX I and II.

And that about wraps up this introduction. But just so you don't miss out on any of the steps, or do them in the wrong order, if that's even possible, here is a rundown of the parts:

- PART 1** Collecting the Drawers
(this booklet, overleaf) Some notes about shopping for drawers
- PART 2** Frame Construction
A foldout carpentry guide
- PART 3** Drawer Assembly
An illustrated step by step guide
- PART 4** Certificate of Authenticity
plus send and return envelopes
- PART 5** Appendix I
An analytical essay
- PART 6** Appendix II
transcripts of Tejo Remy conversations







Collecting the Drawers

This is the easiest part. Possibly the most fun also. Prowl around your local second-hand stores each weekend, scavenge the streets near your home, pillage your garage or storage unit, beg your relatives and basically do what ever you have to in order to collect a number of beautiful old pre-loved drawers. When I interviewed Tejo in his workshop in Utrecht, I mentioned that I wanted to use some drawers from cabinets that my parent owned, which I will perhaps inherit. He answered, so, you have to wait until they die. Right....

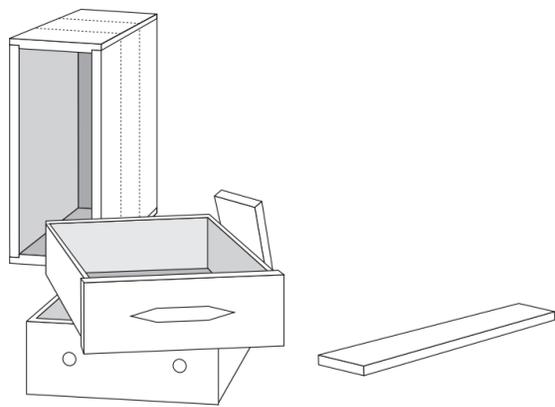
You will need 20 drawers. Actually, you could make your Chest of Drawers will more or less, but every photo I have seen of Tejo Remy's design have 20 drawers exactly.

When you are ready to start making frames for your drawers, take a look at **PART 2**

D.I.Y LADENKAST

PART 2

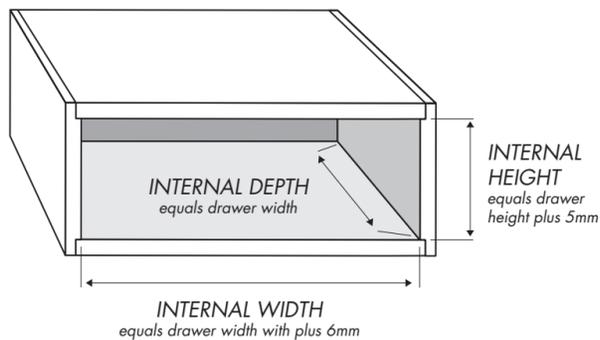
FRAME CONSTRUCTION



2

Add 5mm to the drawer HEIGHT and WIDTH measurements to find the INTERNAL measurements for the frame. This will allow the drawers move in and out freely. Drawer DEPTH become the frame INTERNAL DEPTH with no change.

More than 5mm can be added to the height and width dimensions if it is expected that the wood will expand or compress greatly from extreme seasonal temperature fluctuations.

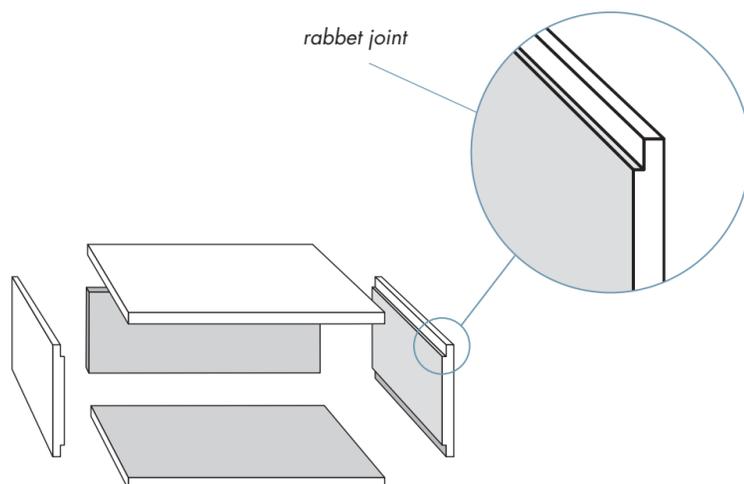


4

Use rabbet joints for construction. The back piece is inset about 8mm.

A strong and preferably environmentally friendly wood glue should be then used to join the sections together.

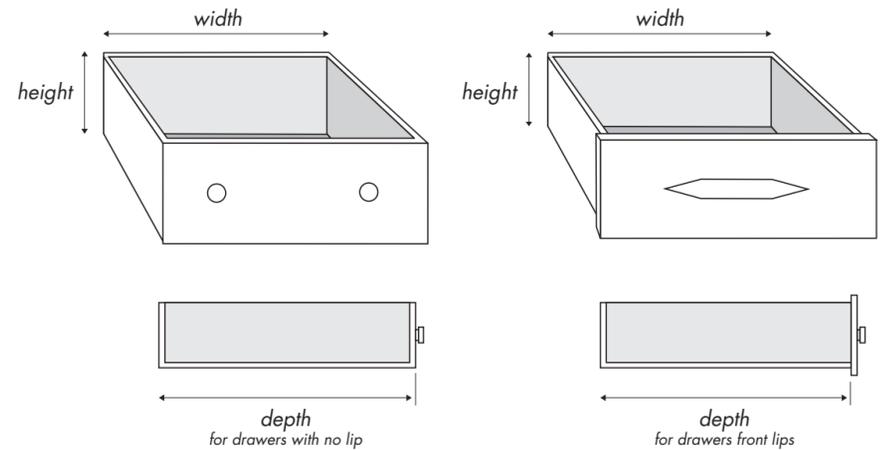
Wooden dowels inside the joints will improve strength and rigidity and are better than using visible screws or nails.



1

Drawers without front lips can be measured along their whole depth. Drawers with lips need their depth measure from the back of the drawer to the back of the lip. This lip will be outside of the frame.

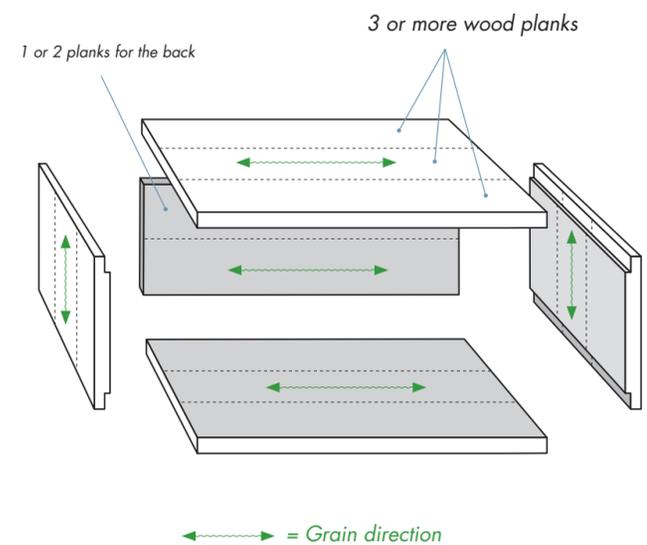
Its best to take these measurements at the same room temperature as when you measure the wooden frames. This is to prevent the drawers becoming too loose or too tight in the frames due to the natural expansion and contraction of wood at different temperatures.



3

The drawer is constructed from 3 pieces of wood from back to front, on all sides. Grain direction is marked with green arrows.

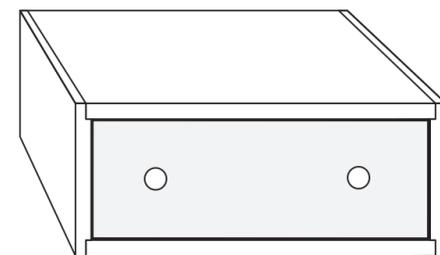
Running the grain direction as indicated is the best way to manage expansion and contraction of the wood. It is important that good quality wood is used for the frames. Sycamore Maple is the wood used in the original design and the same or local equivalent suitable for long-lasting cabinetry is best.



5

Insert the drawer to check the fit, and it is complete!

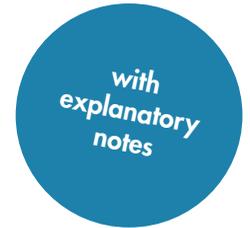
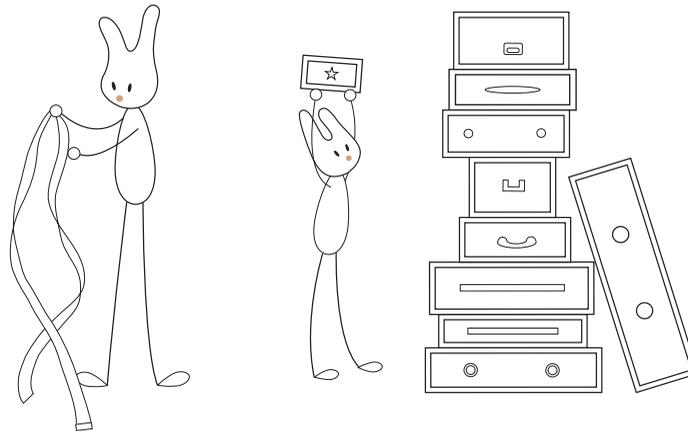
Repeat 19 times for the other drawers.



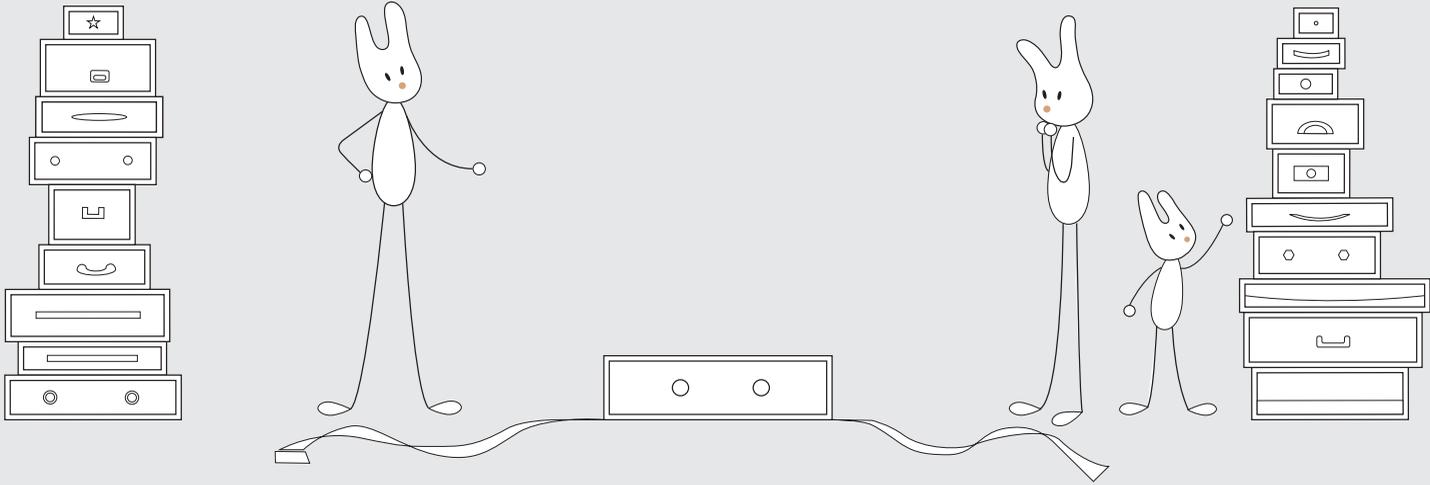
D.I.Y LADENKAST

PART 3

DRAWER ASSEMBLY



It makes sense to start with the heaviest drawer on the bottom.

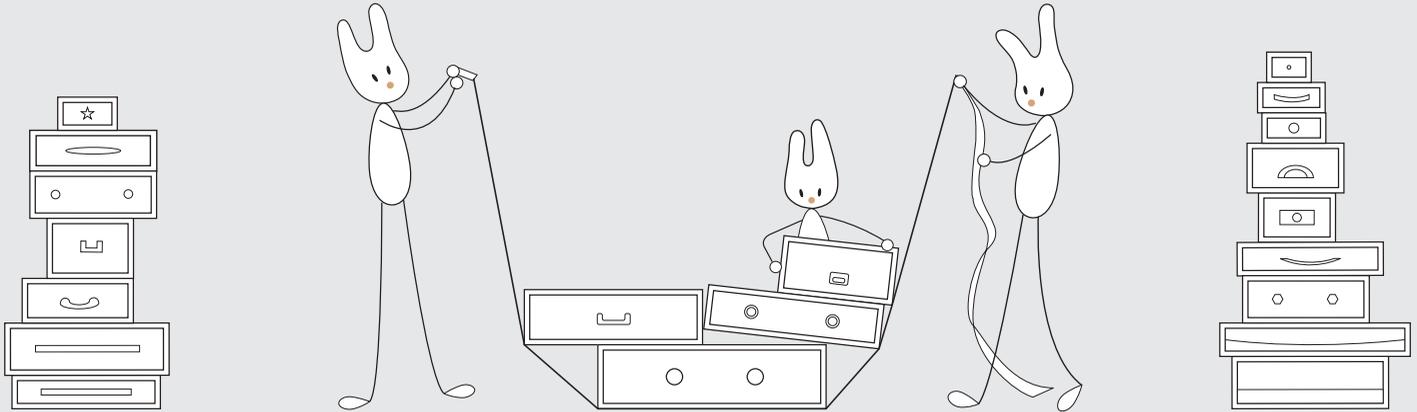


While most of the Tejo Remy *Chest of Drawers* I have seen have the biggest drawer at the bottom, this is not a hard and fast rule. Some of the chests, for example, the one held by MOMA in New York has a wide and slim drawer at the bottom, and the biggest drawer above. At least

one, the chest Tejo Remy made in Los Angeles with American drawers, has a very big drawer, possibly the biggest, right near the top. And I also think I saw a chest somewhere that started with 2 drawers at the bottom instead of one, but I can't find that image in my files now. Its

possible I dreamt it. So much has this project penetrated into my life that I even dream about finding drawers and constructing chests.

Add the drawers one at a time.
Use two people to hold up the belt and fix the drawers in the position you want.

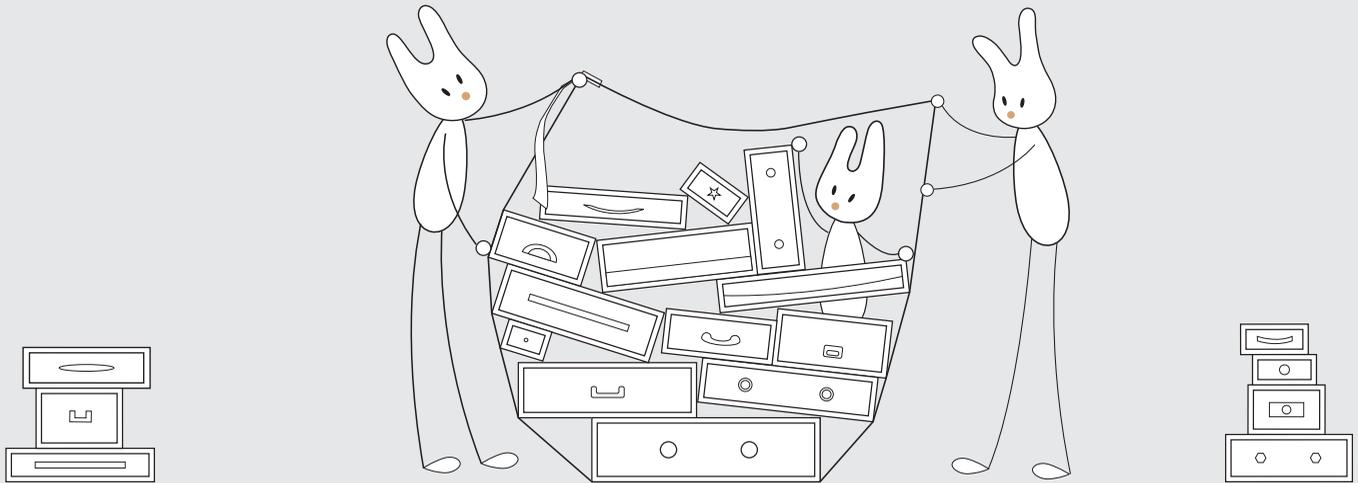


This process may take you several hours. When I interviewed Tejo Remy at his Utrecht studio, he told me that *now* he can assemble chest very quickly, in 20 minutes or so, but that it takes some people as long as 3 hours to re-assemble them after that have been dis-assembled for

shipping and delivery. I can infer from this that the assembly of the first chest of drawers took some time also, but it may be that re-assembling drawers accurately is much trickier than assembling them in the first place, as you have less freedom to be creative with the

arrangement. But, collecting your own drawers and making your own personal “Ladenkast” you have the same freedom as Tejo, so go for it!

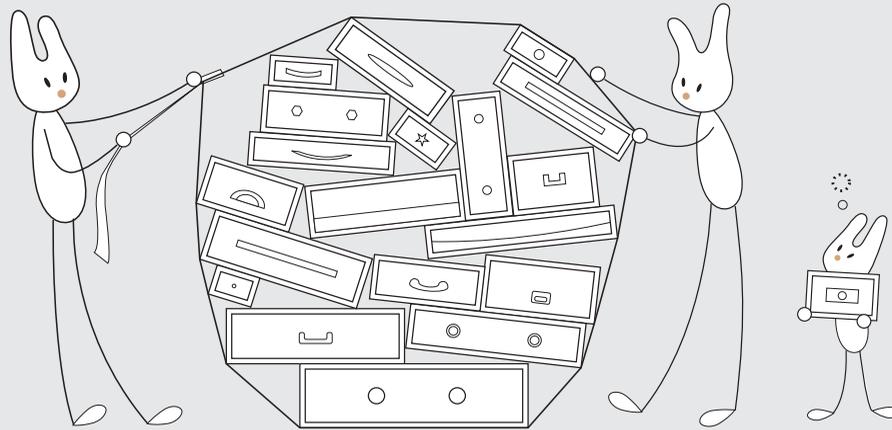
Connect the belt over the top as the drawers pile up.
Be sure to create lots of "space" between the drawers.



This creation of space, or voids, is done by placing the drawers at odd angles. Its crucial to achieving the right look; the "jumbled" aesthetic. It references the junkyard, the tip and the scrap-pile. The place we put junk we care so little about we don't bother to arrange or

organize it, we just chuck it together, throw it away. And so with the Tejo's design, we see this junkyard aesthetic transformed into something insanely beautiful by the use of framing and unconventional composition.

As you near completion, begin to tighten the belt.



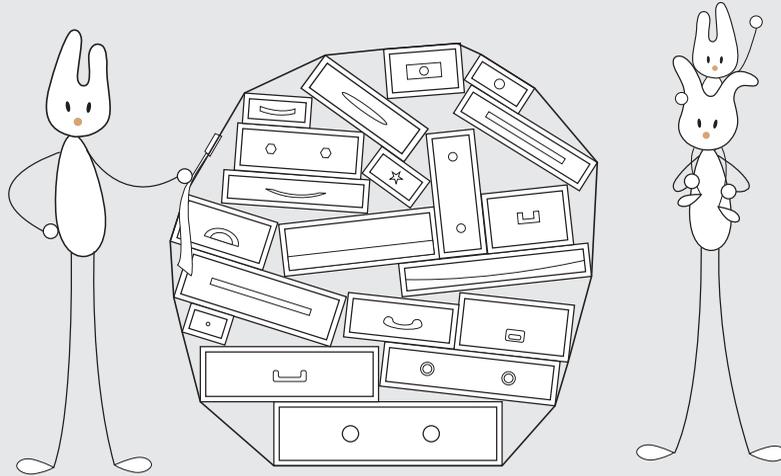
By now you have probably found out, through trial and error, that some compositions are not easily balanced. This is because as drawers are successively added, “balancing lines”, lines of power transference between the drawers, change, making some composition

unstable. By tightening the belt incrementally and removing your own support, you can test the stability before you finish the design.

I illustrated this section with a child putting the drawers together, but I really don't recommend

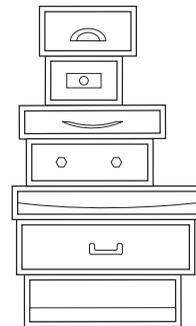
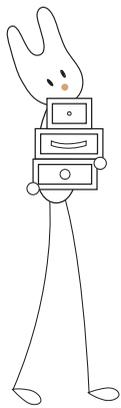
using your children for this job in case they get crushed by a falling drawer. They should instead be put to work doing something safer, like mixing cocktails in the kitchen for when you finish.

Goedgedaan!



That's Dutch for "congratulations". You have now completed your very own Tejo Remy "You Can't Lay Down Your Memories" Chest of Drawers. If you feel proud of your creation, detach the supplied "Certificate of Authenticity" and send it off with a the self-addressed and

stamped envelope to Tejo. If he approves of your drawer arrangement he will sign it and send it back to you, as proof that you now possess a genuine "designer-approved" original.



.....
.....
.....
.....

return address:

AFFIX STAMPS HERE

TEJO REMY
c/o TEJO REMY & RENE VEENHUIZEN STUDIO
URANIUMWEG 17
3542 AK UTRECHT
THE NETHERLANDS



D.I.Y LADENKAST

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHENTICITY

*I, Tejo Remy, designer of the "You Can't Lay Down Your Memories"
Chest of Drawers (1991), hereby recognise this Chest produced by*

.....,

your name here

as shown in the attached photograph, as

"true to style".

.....

TEJO REMY

Utrecht, The Netherlands

dated .. / .. /

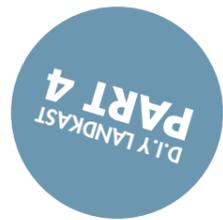


return address:
TEJO REMY & RENE VEENHUIZEN STUDIO
URANIUMWEG 17
3542 AK UTRECHT
THE NETHERLANDS

AFFIX DUTCH
STAMPS HERE

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

WRITE YOUR NAME
& ADDRESS ABOVE



D.I.Y LADENKAST

PART 5

APPENDIX I



AN ESSAY:
HOW CAN TEJO REMY'S DESIGN CLASSIC
BECOME MORE SUSTAINABLE?





How Can Tejo Remy's Design Classic Become More Sustainable?

TEJO REMY'S "You Can't Lay Down Your Memories" Chest of Drawers (*Ladenkast* in Tejo's native Dutch) was designed in 1991 and was soon recognizable as representing a new way of thinking about design and consumerism.

These characteristics were important in the product being picked up 2 years later by Droog as a kind of "flagship" product. Since then, recognition of the product has increased to the point where I believe it has achieved the status of a design classic. Perhaps the greatest indication it has achieved this status is in recent burning by fellow Dutch designer Maarten Bas (PICTURE AT LEFT), alongside other design classic, such as chairs by Eames, Macintosh and Sottsass, in New York in 2004.

The chest is constructed by creating wooden frames around old drawers purchased from recycling centers. These frames with their drawers inserted are then assembled together in an upright but jumbled fashion and tied with a hessian furniture removalist's belt. Each instance of the product is unique. At Tejo Remy's studio I saw a collection of dozens and dozens of polaroids of completed chests; in this context they strike one as evolving semi-autonomous creatures, always different but growing with the same rules and system.

The aesthetic achieved is somewhat D.I.Y - there is a feeling that it could be constructed anywhere and in any time. Real reproduction of the product is actually more complicated and requires an understanding of what is easily reproducible and what is not. For example, the production of the

wooden frames is consistent across all instances and therefore easily reproduced. The same for the hessian belt. However, the drawers and in particular their assembly is unique and more complicated, and in fact forms the authorship of the product. In an interview I conducted with Tejo Remy, he said that while the selection of drawers in a single piece is important, the selection of drawers from the recycling centre is not. As a result, the factory where the drawers are assembled has shelves filled with drawers that are individually chosen and used when needed in a piece. The collection of those drawers is done practically, once a month and in bulk. The consideration when creating the assembly is to produce irregular space between the drawers and as much of it as possible. This is the jumbled look important for its aesthetic. There are also structural factors

to consider when assembly the drawers; lines of gravitational pull exert themselves through the piece and some configurations are not structurally possible. And so assembly does not follow only by visual aesthetic but by a combination of visual aesthetic and structural sense. Tejo Remy now no longer does this process personally, but by colleague who, through years of collaboration, is able to produce the aesthetic quality required. This forms the authorship of the piece. Though, the fact that it can be communicated to another individual is telling.

After each Chest of Drawers is assembled in the factory, a photograph is taken and the product disassembled. It is then flat packed for transport. The photograph of it fully assembled is sent along and it is up to the eventual owner to re-

assemble the chest, to re-create the assemblage. This process can be slow. What may take Tejo Remy or his colleague 20 minutes to create, can take up to 3 hours to re-create. This is of course due to experience, but also perhaps because during the creation Tejo Remy and Co are able to be free with their choices, the re-creator does not, and perhaps very slight difference in angles produce greater gravitational effects that are hard to manage. 3 people are required to assemble/re-assemble each piece.

PROBLEMS WITH THE LADENKAST?:

- Expense of transport
- Use of non-local wood
- Non-local identity, non-local drawers
- Difficulty in re-creating a previously designed assembly

The chest very much functions as a symbol for sustainability: the use of old drawers creates both an emotional and intellectual response that re-values old things and questions the value of buying new things. The chest has been widely featured in design magazine, books, and conferences since it was produced so the chest functions more in the realm of images and text than it does in the realm of actuality.

Attempting to make a product that is better known through images and text than it is in reality more sustainable is difficult because as a symbol it already functions at the zenith of meaning. And in reality, the product is already quite sustainable, of course because it re-uses old materials, but also because the new materials used, simply frames made from maple and a furniture removalist's belt







made from hessian, are built robustly and used transparently. In addition its status as a design classic ensures its value does not diminish with age - it is a product unlikely to be discarded.

The drawers come from recycling centres around Holland, and as such are predominately examples of Northern European furniture. But Tejo Remy has also made a few chests outside of Europe and drawer selection is not a critical part of the aesthetic. And it's nice when each chest reflects its own locality. For example, a version he was invited to make in California (PICTURE AT LEFT) included examples of Eames furniture and other products such as a typical American style metal filing cabinet. Currently, a museum in Atlanta has invited him to construct a chest made from the drawers of famous Americans such as Jimmy

Carter. While the Museum's curators are selecting the drawers, he will be flown over to assemble the piece. Tejo Remy also feels that while most customers of the chest of drawers pick a pre-existing design from a collection of photographs held by Droog, he would welcome a more direct relationship with customer desiring a custom solution e.g. customers who provide their own drawers. This is because the original intention was to produce a connection between objects and the user's memories and personal experience, as is suggested in the full title "You Can't Lay Down Your Memories"; my own interpretation being, you can't disregard your own memories of an object by throwing it away, so why not produce your own Tejo Remy Ladenkast with your own selection of drawers; drawers that mean something to you and reflect your own locality?

Do to this, I propose a Ladenkast Instruction Manual. A manual that explains in intricate detail all the steps that are required to produce a Chest of Drawers in the same way Tejo Remy would. This manual should include everything relevant, from the mundane, such as the dimension for the frames and the product code for the belt, to the pivotal and hard to pin down; The Authorship of the piece. But would a recreation be real? One can argue that unless it has Tejo Remy's signature on it is not authentic. Perhaps one could fly out Tejo Remy to sign it in person, or maybe perhaps it is enough to have Tejo Remy's signature on the instruction manual? That can easily be stuffed in an envelope and mailed. Or perhaps just a certificate sent with a photograph of the user-created chest, along with a self-addressed stamped envelope.

The trick is in balancing the feeling of owning a Tejo Remy design original against the pleasure of producing and creating something yourself.



D.I.Y LADENKAST

PART 6

APPENDIX II



TRANSCRIPT OF AN INTERVIEW WITH TEJO REMY
TRANSCRIPT OF A PHONE CONVERSATION WITH TEJO REMY





An Interview with Tejo Remy

On Thursday the 15th of November 2007 I went to the studio of Tejo Remy to talk about his “You Can’t Lay Down Your Memories” Chest of Drawers (“Landenkast” in Dutch) first produced in 1991. The interview was mainly about the topics that interested me most, namely, construction methods, authorship and logistics.

The interview was filmed by William Hunter, and while interesting has inconsistent sound quality, so I think much more can be obtained from reading this transcript. I have placed explanatory words in brackets (like this) when the textual nuances are not immediately clear. There are also **** when the audio is not clear and I couldn’t remember what had been said.

TEJO = Tejo Remy

GUY = Guy Keulemans

WILL = William Hunter

OFF CAMERA Tejo tells me about the last stage of the manufacturing process, which is to take a picture of the completed chest of drawers.

TEJO: we shoot a photo and then.... .

GUY: Send it out?

TEJO: Yes.

TEJO: (referring to my pictures) So you have them all?

GUY: Ah, no, these are the ones I found on the internet.

TEJO: You found these ones on the internet?

GUY: And of course the droog book from 1996

TEJO: This one I didn't [make].(referring to the imitations)

GUY: I know! Have you see these ones before?

TEJO: (head nod)

GUY: (referring to Tejo's own designs): Do you recognize them?

TEJO: Yeah, this one is from Marian Unger and this one is ***Arnout's***.

GUY: (referring to the droog 1996 book) And I assume this is the first one?

TEJO: (referring to Maarten Bas's version) And this one is broken?

GUY: This is the one Maarten Bas burnt in New York. Its funny to me because he must have taken off the strap, and pulled the drawers out before burning it.

TEJO: Yes.

GUY: And then reassembled it. And I wonder, can you tell when he re-assembled it, did he re-assemble it the same way?

TEJO: I wouldn't know...

GUY: Is it that when you are assembling are you very focussed on a style or an aesthetic, or is it more random?

TEJO: No, no, the problem is always the "power lines" this one pushes here, this one goes here (referring to placing drawers on top of one another)

GUY: To get it so the gravity... so it balances?

TEJO: Yes, you have to get these lines, like this one pushing down, straight, and this one (running across) has to be straight. Its always tricky.

GUY: So here, (referring the pictures from the

1996 Droog book) when there are three people helping you, how long does this take? How long does the assembly take?

TEJO: There are people who are putting it together who take 3 hours.

GUY: Just the assembly? Including making the sleeves?

TEJO: No, no, no, just the assembly.

GUY: That's quite a long time.

TEJO: But when I do it, it takes 15 or 20 minutes. I have done over a hundred chests now.

GUY: Is that how many are in existence?

TEJO: Yes

GUY: That's how many have been produced?

TEJO: Yes

TEJO: (ref: to the Art by Function design) And you

found this one also?

G: Yeah, I think on the website where I found that picture there was a comment that said maybe you had seen it?

Y: Yeah, I was there (in that New York exhibition)

GUY: Its pretty outrageous in a way, I mean I don't know how you feel about it. Because.... I saw you in the conference "Reclaiming Design"

TEJO: You were there?

GUY: No I saw it on the internet...and they asked how you feel about that fact that this (chest of drawers) is a limited edition expensive item, but maybe the original idea was a more "do it yourself"

TEJO: Yeah.

GUY: And how do you feel about other people actually making these in their own homes... and



do you have anything to add? Is that ok?

TEJO: When its for personal use its ok.

GUY: Do you feel you still need to be credited as the author, as the designer in those cases?

TEJO: Yes, Yes.

GUY: Thats why I think this is outrageous (referring to the imitation peices)

TEJO: There is also this website in Berlin, that has this chest on their website, and one can order the chest. And they make it much cheaper. Maybe I should get it from them and just (send it on****)..

GUY: And then just sign it and sell it?

TEJO: Yeah.

GUY: (shuffling papers..) I had some specific questions.... Ah, how do you go about sourcing the drawers?

TEJO: Well, we have a lot now. We collect them in the Hague from a recycling company. A big centre with a lot of stuff coming in. Once a month we go by there and collect the drawers. But we also collect drawers from the street.

GUY: If you see a nice or interesting one?

TEJO: Yes, wherever we can.

GUY: And do you buy the drawers individually or do you buy the full cabinet, chest of drawers and use one drawer in one piece and use the other, say 2 drawers, in others..... sorry my question is not very clear (laughter). If you have three drawers of the same kind, from the same chest,..

TEJO: Yes,

GUY: You use them all?

TEJO: We use them all in different ones.

GUY: Is there a special technique for making the

sleeves? Is it just measuring and joining?

TEJO: Do you mean the boxes?

GUY: Yes...

WILL: The frames.

TEJO: The frames. Well what's good about it is that... well, when I'd made it, I made the wood as small as possible. The guy who makes it now, makes it as wide as possible.

GUY: And why is that?

TEJO: Because then it's nicer, you can see the wood better.

GUY: Right.

TEJO: It goes around....

GUY: Because some drawers have an overhang.

TEJO: Yes, each drawer is different, so you have to look at the drawer, and how to slide it, and

sometimes you have to make a sliding (mechanism) and things like that.

GUY: So when this guy, this guy who makes the frames, thickened the edge, did he discuss that with you?

TEJO: Thickened the edge?

GUY: You said he makes it as wide as possible?

TEJO: I mean that, it's glued together, (pointing out the sides of the frames), there are three.

(Tejo is referring to how many pieces of wood are required to produce a frame; when he first made it he used many thin pieces, but now the process has been simplified and made more elegant)

GUY: Oh I see.

TEJO: In the beginning we made it small so you can see, you can notice the.....

GUY: visual effect, from the striping....?



Kunst 03



Kunst 06



Kunst 09



Kunst 02



Kunst 01



Kunst 08



Kunst 05



Kunst 04

TEJO: (but) its also that this is better for the construction of the box.

GUY: Ok I understand.

TEJO: He's a cabinet maker, so...

GUY: So when you select the drawers, is it pretty random? Or are there drawers you decide not to use because of a certain way they look or function?

TEJO: Yeah, its really just what you think is nice or not.

GUY: Are you only (person) selecting the drawers now?

TEJO: No, others also select the drawers.

GUY: And thats because you have this relationship?

TEJO: Yes,

GUY: And they understand what you want?

TEJO: (head nod). (points to the photo of the factory shelves filled with drawers). And they have all these drawers there (indicates how many they have in storage, ready for use.)

GUY: So when people purchase these, and you transport them, how is that done? Are they transported whole, with the belt? Or are they disassembled?

TEJO: Yeah they are disassembled and packed in a crate.

GUY: And then are they re-assembled based on a photograph?

TEJO: Yes, and they (the customer) has to to do it themselves.

GUY: And thats why it takes them 3 hours sometimes....

TEJO: (head nod) (everyone laughs)

WILL: Is there any sort of instruction...?

TEJO: Yeah, there is a manual which shows them how to proceed with it.

GUY: Really? Is it possible I could have a look at that.

(OFF CAMERA Remy shows us the 3 page instruction manual for re-assembling the chest of drawers after delivery. It consists of 5 or 6 images showing 3 people putting the chest together drawer by drawer and slowly tightening the belt until it is finished, plus some explanatory text.

We talk about the original assembly process, and he describes how the important thing is to create a lot of "air" between the drawers, i.e voids that communicate the jumbled look. I then ask him about the how the drawers for the chest must

mostly be from Northern European furniture, and whether he has made any overseas.)

TEJO: The first one (made overseas) was made in L.A. , and this one was made with American drawers.

GUY: And you made that one?

TEJO: Yes, it was made (with drawers from) George Nelson, Eames, and things like that.

GUY: Does it have very different look?

TEJO: No, it doesn't matter. It's just the idea. But it was nice, I was invited over to L.A. , to go over to, what do you call it, the flea markets, and things like that... and bought the drawers.

GUY: Did it take some time to do that, or did you do it very quickly?

TEJO: In two days we did it.





GUY: Right.

TEJO: (referring to an image of the chest of drawers made in L. A) If you don't know, you don't see it.

GUY: (looking at the image) You can see those filing cabinets are quite common...

TEJO: In America (laughter)

GUY: You mentioned the one with the television in it? How did that come about?

TEJO: Yeah, that was for Marian Unger, she's a design critic. She wanted a chest, and she had a little TV that she wanted to put in it.

GUY: My thought when I saw that was, this piece ages very well, it's very sustainable in a sense that it can last 20, 50 or a hundred years later you can still use it, but that television is now obsolete.

TEJO: Yeah, that's true.

GUY: But I guess you could always deconstruct it, and re-assemble it with a new television in it...

WILL: With a flatscreen.

(Tejo then shows us series of photographs of successive chest of drawers, all photographed in the same manner before disassembly and transport).

GUY: It's a very different feeling seeing so many all together, it seems like some kind of animal or something, you know, like some kind of evolving creature. So when people order one, is it that they never really know what they're going to get?

TEJO: Yes.... but Droog first show pictures, and then people can make a choice as to which one they want.

GUY: Right...

TEJO: People want to have a choice. But I

wouldn't bother about it.

GUY: Is it common that people give a request to you, like "can you make something like this" or "can you use this particular type of drawer"?

TEJO: It would be nice if people did that. It happens... but not often. Sometimes. But I think it becomes better, it becomes more personal. Because it's all about the memories, about where you put your things and how you recollect where you put your things. And if you have personal drawers...

GUY: It makes sense.

TEJO: Yeah, it makes sense.

GUY: So my research topic is to take a design classic and make it more sustainable, but the thing is, I chose this because it's probably very difficult, because it's already very sustainable. I

mean, it uses old materials, it's simple and basic in its structure.... so there is no problem to fix. And I thought this would be a great challenge because I'm not sure exactly how it can be made more sustainable.

TEJO: Yes, and the question is, how sustainable is it? How eco-friendly is it? It uses a lot of wood. And the energy to make, to build it, is also quite....

GUY: But most of that would be human energy...

TEJO: And electrical.

GUY: Right, to cut the wood...

TEJO: To cut the wood and to shape it.

GUY: But there is no way to reduce that...

TEJO: Well, (on the other hand) you make one, and it lasts for a long time..

G; Right, so it's justified.



TEJO: Yeah.

GUY: But I thought one thing that maybe is an environmental cost is the transport, because its very heavy, so I am wondering if, in the same way that you work with your maker here, is it possible to have it made more locally, so for example, if someone from Australia wants one, you actually send instructions to a carpenter in Australia?

TEJO: (nodding head) I'm doing one now in Atlanta.

GUY: And thats how you are doing it?

TEJO: They are now collecting drawers... from famous people, like Jimmy Carter.... so I want a drawer with a peanut on it. (laughs) But that chest will be made there, so they don't have to send the drawers over and send it back again... it costs too much.

GUY: But how do you feel about the aesthetic choices that will be made without you? You say you have this relationship with your maker...

TEJO: Ah... when you make it yourself, you write these things down... the things they should be aware of.

GUY: So what kind of content is that? What kind of instructions?

TEJO: ... well actually, with the drawers, it doesn't matter. To me. You can collect any drawer, clean it, and its alright. Its more a personal choice, which colors that you use, that you put together.

GUY: And that doesn't matter to you.

TEJO: It doesn't matter to me.

GUY: And so what does matter?

TEJO: The boxes. Good wood for the boxes.

GUY: And thats fixed right? How its made is

fixed?

TEJO: Yeah.

GUY: Ok and so the next thing is the third stage, the assembly... and do you have strong feelings about how it should be assembled too?

TEJO: Yes, I have - that's another point. Well you can see photographs here, you can try it. Its a lot of trial and error. And thats good.

GUY: With the one thats being made in Atlanta, do you think, will you see a photograph of it, that they will send, and do you think that you will have a criticism? Maybe you need to adjust the....

TEJO: I am thinking I will put it together myself. I will go there.

GUY: Oh, ok...

TEJO: It will be nice to have a trip (laughs).

WILL: This one in Atlanta, is that for a private

commission, or is that for a Museum?

TEJO: A museum.

GUY: For the High Museum?

TEJO: You are from America?

GUY: No, Australia.

WILL: I am

TEJO: You're from America?

WILL: Yeah.

TEJO: So, do you want to make one in Australia?

GUY: Um....(laughter)

TEJO: A franchise?

GUY: Um, yeah, actually....

WILL: Not for 16,000 euros (laughs).

GUY: Well I do love the piece....and the thing is I would like to make one here, but I wouldn't

want to ship it back to Australia, so I wonder if I could...., you know, its a weird thing to discuss because of course its your design, and is a like a kind of "do-it-yourself" design, but one of the important things about the way you sell them now is that you sign them-

TEJO: Yeah-

GUY: There is a limited edition... you make 14 a year?

TEJO: No, 25. 20 or 25.

GUY: Ok.

TEJO: Yeah it depends on if you want to go with this crazy marketing where everything has to be signed, in a limited edition.... its also a lot bullshit of course.

GUY: Right.

TEJO: And thats why the people who buy it now,

they see it as a collector's item or as-

WILL: More of an art peice...

TEJO: They invest in it, and then in twenty years they will sell it again for the money. But if you want to make one for yourself, and that it....

GUY: Yeah well thats what I would like to do...

TEJO: Yeah, well I think thats something totally different and everybody gets my blessing for that.

GUY: Cool. Yeah I'm already starting to think about old furniture that my parents have, that you know, is very "nice" but its also, maybe, not my style, its a bit old or something, but if I inherit this furniture then I can do with it what I like...

TEJO: But then your parents have to die!
(laughter)

GUY: Thankyou Tejo, that was very informative.





A Phone Conversation with Tejo Remy (to the best of my recollection).

On Wednesday the 22nd of November 2007 I had a phone conversation with Tejo Remy. This was about one week after the interview.

I didn't record this conversation so can't vouch for its accuracy, it's just what I remember.

TEJO = Tejo Remy

GUY = Guy Keulemans

TRANSCRIPT:

ME: Hello Tejo.

TEJO: Hello

ME: Well, I had a discussion about our interview with two of my mentors at the Design Academy, and they think it could be a really interesting project.

TEJO: Ok. Good.

ME: But I have a couple of follow-up questions, I should have asked them earlier but I forgot.

TEJO: No problem, go ahead.

ME:. Thanks. Well, I remember you showed me

that little assembly instruction leaflet, with the photographs of 3 people assembling the Chest of Drawers. But I wanted to ask, do you change that for every Chest or is it the same one you use each time.

TEJO: No, its the same one.*

ME: Ok. And the other question I have is, what happens to the cabinets the original drawers come in? Do you keep them or re-use them for anything? Or are you able to purchase the drawers seperately?

TEJO: Yes, we purchase the drawers separately. The people at the recycling center know thats all we are interested in. I don't know what happens to the cabinets.

ME: I was thinking I could make something from those cabinets.

TEJO: Yeah, you could do that.

** My understanding of this while the Chest of Drawers are always different, the assembly guide uses photographs of the same one each time. If this is adequate for assembly, then its the principles of assembly that are important, not a step-by-step instruction for the unique arrangement be constructed - which is instead derived from the Polaroid photograph included with the disassembled drawers. Therefore, an illustration or comic book assembly sheet would be adequate and perhaps preferable.*



D.I.Y Ladenkast created by Guy Keulemans



guykeulemans.com