

**THE LOST
CLOTH OBJECT
STEPHEN BURKS
MAN MADE**

ALPI

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All of us at Stephen Burks Man Made are delighted to present the Design Miami project The Lost Cloth Object with ALPI, an installation inspired by the Kuba textiles of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Kuba is a traditional cloth woven from raffia palm leaves and decorated with abstract geometric patterns, the production of which began in the 17th century. Using the veneers from the ALPI Legacy collection, we interpreted Kuba patterns in a way that transforms them into a new material, ALPI wood. The Legacy collection is made up of “lost” types of wood such as ebony, Honduran mahogany, teak and rosewood, which are not readily available or in some cases no longer allowed to be harvested commercially. For the Design Miami project, we connected an ancient but dynamic art form to the ALPI veneers, uniting craft, design, industry, age-old ideas and contemporary expression. The Lost Cloth Object exemplifies our approach to design as a translation of ancestral ways, pluralistic and culturally open.

Stephen Burks Man Made

My passion for design has guided me on a continuous path of research, born out of a desire for experimentation. To give three-dimensionality to ALPI surfaces, I invite designers to create unique pieces unfettered by the restraints of industrial production. The results are free interpretations of ALPI wood that openly channel the artistic approach of their creators.

The encounter with Stephen and the way he was inspired by the traditional craft of Kuba cloth led to an epiphany. I saw an intimate connection to our Legacy collection – both are expressions of cultural heritage at risk of disappearing. When Stephen proposed The Lost Cloth Object, it felt like a moment of magical creativity. The decision to present our collaboration at Design Miami gave even more spirit to this project, forming another tangible link to my exploration of wood, design and art.

The Lost Cloth Object represents a consideration of design as a cultural practice. Its visual language interprets the material and reinvents it to tell a new story.

Vittorio Alpi









ALPI is a leading producer of decorative surfaces made of reconstituted wood. The company was the first to industrialise this process. ALPI lignum veneer is made of real wood by taking apart and putting back together a tree-trunk. This generates a material that is authentic wood, designable and reproducible, specially conceived for the worlds of design, architecture and industrial production.

For over 40 years now, ALPI has maintained a continuous dialogue with protagonists of the design world, an approach rooted in the desire to create pieces of furniture without the limits of commercialisation. The resulting objects, made in very small series, explore and highlight the expressive potential of ALPI wood.

The Lost Cloth Object in collaboration with Stephen Burks Man Made is the 2025 chapter of a series of events begun in 2017 with Martino Gamper and the exhibition “Re-Connection”, which was followed by Alessandro Mendini’s mysterious “Tre Primitivi” (2018), the elegant alchemy of “La Tavola degli Elementi” by Piero Lissoni (2019), the bare-bone iconicity of “If I Were a Carpenter” by Ron Arad (2022), the atmospheric “Prevalentemente soleggiato con rovesci sparsi” by Konstantin Grcic (2023) and the soft subtlety of “Layered Nature” by nendo (2025). In 2024, in celebration of the 40th anniversary of design activity at ALPI, the company presented the exhibition “Along the Edge – ALPI 1984-2024” during the Edit Cult design fair in Naples. During 3daysofdesign 2025 in Copenhagen, ALPI staged the installation “Echoes of Form” designed by GamFratesi.

The Lost Cloth Object is a cultural design initiative with roots in traditional craft. It transfers the ancient art of Kuba cloth to contemporary times by inventing a new material and new objects with historical content. ALPI continues its voyage through art and invention by combining nature and artifice, creative freedom and technical expertise.

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in collaboration with
Stephen Burks Man Made

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