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*Ross Rudel, Untitled #248, 1997.
Stained wood, 16" diameter x 4".*

Ross Rudel at Jack Shainman

Untitled #248 is a wooden structure the color of a night sky. Like a large bowl with its emptiness pointing out towards the viewer, it cups its own darkness. Sculptor Ross Rudel, after honing and polishing the piece, has made a tiny hole in its interior to allow the light to sift through. The effect is not unlike the viewing of a distant stellar body. The light settles in the hollow of the structure, giving it the appearance of a streaking comet.

We discover Rudel's sculptures on the walls of the gallery like pebbles and sea shells on a beach. There is nothing hurried about the crafting of these objects. There is also nothing random or accidental in their execution. The artist subjects the wooden foundations to a precise, purposeful erosion.

Each sculpture unfolds or closes into itself in singularity. They inform the viewer like seeds and buds containing individual secrets. *Untitled #264* is bean shaped. Stretched across the surface of its wooden base is red pigskin. The vegetable is wrapped in animal. Its secret vitality might emanate from a grain of sand.