



WOOD FORUM

Newsletter of the Sonoma County Woodworkers Association

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October 2014

Meeting With the Makers at the *Artistry In Wood* Exhibition

by Walt Doll

The October general meeting will be held in the *Artistry in Wood* exhibit hall at the Sonoma County Museum on Tuesday, October 7th starting at 7pm. This meeting offers the best opportunity for members to see the Show and hear about the entries. Award certificates will be presented and Show exhibitors will talk about their entries. The meeting will be an open forum where you may ask questions about the individual entries. It promises to be just as engaging and informative as the walk through with the judges at the Museum in September. Members with work in this year's show are encouraged to attend and talk about their entries. Scott Clark will serve as the moderator.

Best of Show



Chest for a New Idea by Michael Cullen

Photo by Tyler Chartier



Artistry in Wood Awards

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Artistry in Wood 2014

September meeting held at Sonoma County Museum

by Bill Taft

SCWA Chairman Bob Moyer opened the September Meeting with the Judges at the *Artistry in Wood* Show in the Museum's large first floor exhibit space, where the work will be exhibited this year. He thanked the Museum for their continued support of the *Artistry in Wood* shows, and introduced Cynthia Leung, who welcomed the audience on behalf of the Museum. Cynthia announced that the museum is having several events that coincide with *Artistry in Wood*, including a Shoji Demonstration with Jay van Arsdale; Chairs as Sculpture: Sculpture as Chairs, a presentation by Michael Cooper; and Studio Tours at Michael Cooper's studio and at Bruce Johnson's studio.

Art Hofmann announced that Mount Storm Lumber and Millwork was hosting an Open House event on Friday, September 12 where we will have a video display and members to talk about the benefits of SCWA membership. Art also reminded us that our next meeting will be our Meeting with the Makers, also held in the *Artistry in Wood* exhibit on October 7th.

Bob Moyer turned the meeting over to our Show Chair, Scott Clark, who began by thanking the Museum and the museum staff members for their help in putting the exhibit together. He made a point of thanking Curator of History, Eric Stanley for his help. "I'll tell you what, he does a lot for us. Thank you, Eric." Scott announced that we have three sponsors this year: Don Ketman of the Woodshop Mercantile, WNT Designs (Don Pettit), and the Wine Country

Woodturners. Thank you sponsors! Next he thanked all the volunteers that helped get the exhibit ready for the Show. The Show opens with a museum members preview Friday evening, and will be open to the public on Saturday, September 13th.

Scott then introduced the judges, who had worked throughout the afternoon examining the pieces and making award selections. Jim Rogers is the Director of the Diablo Woodturning Center in Pleasant Hill. His specialty is segmented woodturning and hollow vessels. He has published many articles on woodturning and other subjects, both in the USA and internationally. David Welter is a woodworker with a long association with the College of the Redwoods. After attending

the College in 1983 and '84, he returned in 1986 as a "Fine Woodworking Specialist," which is the position he still holds today. He has helped successive generations of woodworkers attain high levels of skill. Paul Reiber is a woodcarver from the Mendocino coast, who specializes in sculpture and relief carving. He is a graduate of the College of the Redwoods Woodworking program and has taught carving at

summer programs at Anderson Ranch and the College of the Redwoods. His work is collected internationally. With introductions complete, the

judges moved to the front of the exhibit hall and began their comments.

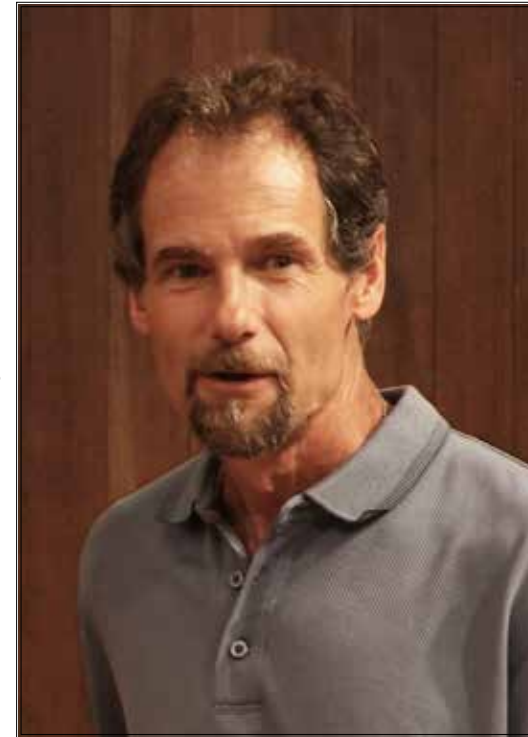
Stopping in front of *A Fly on the Wall* by Donovan Miller, Paul Reiber said, "If we were giving out awards for names, we would give this piece the Best Title Award." They opened their remarks with some commentary on the judging task they experienced that afternoon. It was extraordinarily difficult because the quality of the work is so high. "Our comments and views on any specific piece are based upon our backgrounds, which may not coincide with the background of the maker. Judging is a subjective kind of a thing. We did reach unanimous decisions on all of the awards." Returning to *A Fly on the Wall*, they agreed that they liked this piece. Not only was the title clever, but the piece was clever and very well

done. They gave it an Award of Excellence.

Moving on to a display of turnings, Jim Rogers picked up Victor Larson's *Silver Maple Bowl*. He liked the shape of the bowl and the quality of the workmanship. However, he felt that the base could have been

a little larger to give it more stability. Jim liked the shape of Les Cizek's *M.E.T.S.* turning. It has nice fair curves, "a beautiful shape." He complimented Les on the glue joint and asked if the inside was carved before or after gluing. "I didn't have the courage to carve it through that little hole,"

replied Les. The judges awarded *M.E.T.S.* an Award of Excellence, Jim saying "We really love this piece."



Show Chairman Scott Clark



A Fly on the Wall by Donovan Miller



M.E.T.S. by Les Cizek



As part of the process of judging chairs, the judges sat on them. This is their “comfort test,” as chairs should be comfortable for a wide range of body sizes and shapes. All three judges found Anthony Leighton’s *Walnut Dining Chair* comfortable. They “really liked it a lot,” describing it as “very handsome,” “well executed,” and “clean and handsome.” They bestowed upon it an Award of Excellence.

Walnut Dining Chair
by Anthony Leighton

“Extremely striking,” “excellent execution,” “stunned by it” and “look at me – I’m gorgeous” were the judges’ comments when discussing Michael Cullen’s carved *Fossilized Feather* wall art. It was very obvious that the judges like this piece and they gave it an Award of Excellence.



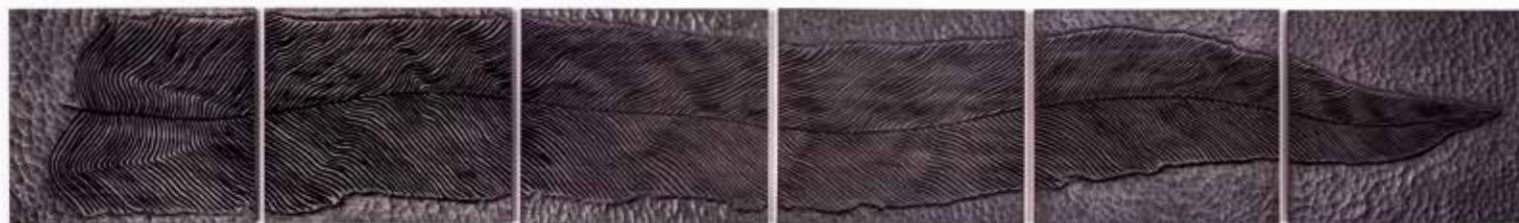
Early Internal Combustion Engine
by Donovan Miller

Donovan Miller received his second Award of Excellence for his entry, *Early Internal Combustion Engine*, a model of an early reciprocating engine. Jim Rogers commented that it reminded him of the scale models required by the U.S. Patent Office in a bygone era, and the mechanical construction was so well done that it looked as though it would run.



Snake Charmer's Tool Kit by Scott Clark

The award of **Best Miscellaneous Piece** was given to Scott Clark for his entry, *Snake Charmer's Tool Kit*. At first the judges were a little uncertain about this entry, partly because of the pink color of the musical instrument. After further inspection, they noticed that the cobra was the handle for the lid of the snake basket, the basket had a basket weave texture burned into it, and the flute was made so that it could be played.



Fossilized Feather by Michael Cullen



Tribute to Ray Churchill by Robert Nelson

As the judges approached Robert Nelson’s *Tribute to Ray Churchill*, they began a discussion about high gloss “glass” finishes. The discussion centered around the difficulty of getting it right and therefore the general practice of discouraging the use of it on fine woodwork. In reviewing Robert’s glass-finished platter they asked, “Who is Ray Churchill?” They were told that Ray was instrumental in getting turnings exhibited. He was the first to enter them, and he liked his work to have a high gloss finish. Once Ray broke the barrier to having turned pieces in the Show, they became a large part of the *Artistry in Wood*. With the reason for the high gloss finish known, the judges gave it an Award of Excellence.

As David Welter approached Casey Moffitt's *Madrone Sideboard*, he removed the top drawer and described the features that he liked about the drawer construction. One was that the top edge of the drawer back was lower than the sides, assuring that it would not get snagged on anything. Replacing the drawer, he demonstrated that the slight taper in the width of the drawer (wider at the rear) and the snug fit with the matching taper in the case made the drawer slightly more difficult to pull out as it reached the fully extended position, preventing it from being inadvertently pulled from the cabinet. He commented that the shape of the pulls reflects the overall shape of the piece, but that they had a "production like" feel to them. Casey's *Madrone Sideboard* was given the **Best Furniture Piece** award.



Madrone Sideboard by Casey Moffitt

Jim Rodgers picked up Hugh Buttrum's *Ginkgo Box* and removed the cover to show how the key that was incorporated into it kept the carved pattern of the cover aligned with the pattern on the base. They liked the appearance of it, the turned shape and the deep carving. The *Ginkgo Box* was given an Award of Excellence. There followed quite a lively discussion about Hugh Buttrum's *Short Stack* entry, a stack of five small bowls. The judges liked the shape of the bowls, but wondered why one bowl was distinctly different. Four of the bowls had the same shape, a simple shape with a level foot and charming painted finish. The fifth bowl has a very different shape and finish. Hugh explained that each of the bowls is unique, and that it was his intention to have the variation in the stack. Jim Rodgers said they thought that may have been the case, and that they gave *Short Stack* an Award of Excellence.



Short Stack by Hugh Buttrum



Black Box by Lee Baker

Lee Baker's first award of the evening was the **Best Woodturning** award for his *Black Box* entry, which is actually a set of four small turned black boxes. The judges admired the quality of the workmanship in making these boxes. Jim Rodgers described them as having "fine turned shapes with elegantly carved surfaces, all very carefully done."



Ginkgo Box by Hugh Buttrum

David Welter described Joshua Smith's *Display Case with Seven Facets* as "delicate, doll-house like." The quality of the design and workmanship is excellent. He pointed out the use of double-pin joinery. They liked the use of different size doors on the front, a small door on one side and a double-panel door on the other side that enclosed both the center and that side of the case. This allows the user to have the focus items displayed in the center of the case without having the door stiles interfere with the view. The judges gave Joshua's *Display Case with Seven Facets* an Award of Excellence.



Display Case with Seven Facets by Joshua Smith

Small Rocker, Lee Baker's second award winning entry, received an Award of Excellence from the judges. They liked the overall shape as well as the shapes of the elements, the taper of the legs and the curved transitions at the joints. The joinery was very well done and they liked the subtleness of the inlaid leaves in the back.

Small Rocker by Lee Baker



Paul Reiber, commenting on William Taft's entry *Leaves*, described it as delightful, playful – an original approach in art. From a distance it looks like marquetry, but it is very three dimensional. He noted that the carved leaves were made of many pieces and that the work and forethought to piece it together is just awesome. This piece was given the **Best Art Piece** award.



Leaves by William Taft

Michael Cullen's *Chest for a New Idea* (see photo on page 1) received the **Best of Show** award. The judges greatly admired this piece, mentioning the delicacy of the base and how it fit with the carved chest. The workmanship, the carving, the finish, everything is extraordinary. The title, *Chest for a New Idea*, sparked their interest in the story behind it, and Michael provided it.

The wood, walnut, was salvaged from trees growing on George Washington's Mount Vernon estate and his whiskey distillery. It was furnished by an organization called Historical Woods of America (<http://historicalwoods.com/>), to be used to create something to commemorate the history of the wood. The title reflects George Washington's new idea about freedom and the respect for individual's rights. The carvings depict his idea of uniting the 13 colonies into a single nation.

After Michael finished the historical background surrounding his piece, the judges concluded their comments by thanking the audience, offering to talk with any of makers about their pieces, and turned the meeting over to Scott Clark. Scott wrapped up the meeting by thanking the judges, and a warm congratulatory applause filled the room.



Chest for a New Idea (interior) by Michael Cullen

Photo by Jose Cuervo



Chest for a New Idea (interior) by Michael Cullen

Photo by Jose Cuervo

Photos of award winning pieces mentioned in this article are by Tyler Chartier unless otherwise noted.

November Elections are Just Around the Corner

The Association Needs Your Help

In preparation for the upcoming election of SCWA officers, a nominating committee is being formed that will consist of three current Board members and two non-Board members. This is where you come in - step up and help the organization move forward into 2015. If you would like to serve on the nominating committee, please contact Bob Moyer before or at the October 7th meeting. The nominating committee will be seeking nominees to fill the Chairman and Treasurer positions.



Tyler Chartier at work

Photo by Jose Cuervo



Bench Doggs at work at Opening Reception

Photo by Jose Cuervo

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Wood Forum is the monthly newsletter of the Sonoma County Woodworkers Association. Please feel free to submit articles and photographs for inclusion in the publication. You can send your submissions to the Wood Forum Editor at SCWAEditor@gmail.com. Advertisements are also accepted with a per-entry cost of \$5 per column inch.

Membership Application

I would like to join the SCWA to meet other people interested in the craft, the art and the business of fine woodworking. Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$35 for the annual dues. I understand that this fee entitles me to attend monthly meetings and to receive the Wood Forum newsletter by email or via the SCWA's website.

[] I am enclosing an additional \$15 to receive the Forum by regular mail.

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