



WOOD FORUM

Newsletter of the Sonoma County Woodworkers Association

www.sonomawoodworkers.com

Volume 30 Number 07

July 2010

June Meeting: A visit with Greg Zall and Karl Shumaker



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July Meeting Notice

Where: Berkeley Mills, Berkeley.
2830 7th Street / Berkeley, CA 94710

When: Saturday July 10th 9:00 am

Information/Directions:

Berkeley Mills was founded in 1988 by Gene Agress and Dave Kent. From their early concentration on adapting the form of Japanese tansu chests to modern Western living (in the form of entertainment centers, home offices, and more), Berkeley Mills quickly gained a reputation for stylish design and impeccable quality. Moving beyond the tansu aesthetic, they now produce living, dining, and bedroom suites, custom kitchens, and doors. While they recently opened a showroom in Santa Monica, all the construction is still done in the shop that lies tantalizingly just on the other side of the glass windows in their Berkeley headquarters. They have very graciously invited us to their side of the glass for a tour of the shop. This is a can't miss opportunity for anyone interested in the craft of fine furniture, or in work inspired by the Arts and Crafts Movement, Stickley, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Charles and Henry Greene.

Directions:

Take the Ashby Avenue exit off I-80.

Turn left at 7th Street (the first intersection)

Berkeley Mills is 3 blocks up, on the left.

Car Pool:

As usual for our trips, if you want to car pool to Berkeley with other members, please be at the Petaluma car park (Lakeville exit). We will leave the lot at about 7:45 AM.

BONUS !!! Merryll Saylan is inviting us to stop by for a visit after we tour Berkeley Mills. She lives near by and there are places to eat as well. Directions will be given to her studio once we get to Berkeley Mills.

As many of you know, Merryll is a respected artist and was most recently a judge at our Artistry in Wood show. This is a treat and a most generous invitation.

June Meeting Notes by Art Hofmann

The meeting began somewhat later than usual at Karl Shumaker's shop off of Sexton Road in western Sebastopol. It was a fine June evening and the limited parking situation at the bottom of fairly steep hill led to some informal gatherings in front of the shop. The shop itself is a fair sized building filled with the usual machines and lots of hand tools set in a grassy area bordered by lots of trees. Carl Johnson, our Vice Chairman, opened the meeting by asking if there were any guests, and indeed, there was one, James Naples, Don's son, who works in Windsor at a CNC shop, mainly with metal.

Bill Taft told us about our Artistry in Wood show which

is drawing ever closer: dates are as follows: September 3rd (the Friday before Labor Day) for entries; the meeting with the judges will be on Wednesday, September 8th, the show opens on Friday, September 10th and closes on October 17th. Prime time, really, for a show of this sort.

Carl Johnson then turned the meeting over to Greg Zall and Karl Shumaker. Greg had brought along his main machine, a rather newish scroll saw, an Excalibur from Canada, a machine he believes has essential features for marquetry work. The first is an arm that tilts to allow Greg to make bevel angle cuts. Another feature is that the arm raises so that threading the fine blades through tiny hole is done from above rather than from below. This makes things much easier, Greg says, and saves lots of blades, which break frequently even under the best of circumstances. Since the table is stationary it can be supplemented on either side, and at his shop, Greg has a surrounding auxiliary table that facilitates large work. The marquetry process does not in and of itself require such a saw, Greg told us. To demonstrate, he showed a handheld fret saw designed for marquetry and a small shop built jig with a bird's mouth cut-out. This was a basic set-up he has used in the past.

Marquetry in practice, is fairly technical, and decent equipment is necessary; the Excalibur (or a saw like it) for Greg, and in Karl's case, a computer steered rig with a laser-cutter.

Both Greg and Karl do excellent work, as any regular viewer of our Artistry in Wood shows know, since both have garnered a number of prizes. Both are fine artists, basing their images on nature and often in Karl's case, Asian inspired scenes and motifs. Greg's portraits of grasses and insects for instance, are exquisitely detailed. Many of you will recall the grasshopper whose eyes were made of cross cut bamboo that the captured the multi-lensed insect eyes so very well.



Coffee table constructed by Greg

Karl's panels tend to be larger and more dramatic, and architectural, though not necessarily so always, and are also quite detailed. Greg's work is achieved through the more traditional double bevel approach, where one piece

of wood, (usually the background wood) is sandwiched with a contrasting wood, and both are cut at the same time. The contrasting wood is then fitted like a piece in a jigsaw puzzle into the design from below with no detectable gaps or lines. Karl's process is technically more elaborate: designs are produced, then scanned into the computer, where they are presented as a series of dots, which are then traced with a mouse to produce lines. Veneers are then placed in specific areas of his computer-steered laser machine, which has an X-Y axis, where the laser cuts them into design elements, and then are then fitted together. From that point, the process for both Karl and Greg is similar: the resulting image is then pasted onto a ply, which is then backed up with another ply to equalize the gluing tension. The resulting sandwich then is placed into a vacuum bag where it is glued under pressure. Finally, the top surface with the image is sanded and finished. Afterwards it is either installed as part of a piece of furniture, or it becomes a stand-alone panel, like a painting.

Their work is not easy to contrast: In general, Karl's work is larger and more dramatic, while Greg's is smaller and more given to details. Karl's laser technique permits him to add lines, where the laser burns partially through a given component of the design; thus a drawing element of much of Karl's work. Sometimes the lines are quite exaggerated, where whole dark areas come into play. In looking around Karl's shop, Carl Johnson and I came across a large image of a bird which brought us up short: on first glance, we were both convinced that the image was in three dimensions. It wasn't, but the effect was so palpable that we were astonished.

Greg writes about his work: "I love drawing and with marquetry I can incorporate my love of drawing with cabinetmaking. It is fun that the artwork is made completely out of wood and it harmonizes with the wood of the cabinet. I am doing only one of a kind pieces so I use the double bevel method of marquetry. This slow accurate method allows me to have the most control and pleasing fit possible. I work on a scroll saw cutting the inlay piece and the recess for it at the same time. I am continually inspired and amazed by the unusual looks you can achieve using only wood."

Here are a few details from Greg and Karl's demos: Greg began by explaining that intricate work is possible with double bevel marquetry. Mainly he does one of a kind pieces. The small pieces fit into the larger background the way a countersunk screw does. Greg mostly uses 1/16th inch thick hand cut veneers in his marquetry pieces. For this veneer thickness, he uses a 2/0 blade mainly, set at an 8 degree tilt. On something intricate or with very thin veneers he uses a 3/0 or even a 5/0 blade with a tilt of 9 to 11 degrees. On larger projects his angle decreases go 5 or 6 degrees. The background wood is usually on top, with the insert piece taped to the backside, and after cutting, viola a perfect fit! The bottom piece, the plug part, has to be slightly bigger than the top piece for the fit to work. The plug is glued into the background board prior to making another cut.

As to the design stage, an image is drawn or selected which he then often takes to the computer where it is expanded to the proper scale, a print out is made and the image is transferred

onto the selected background wood using carbon paper.



Karl fitting some wood

When working on large background pieces, there is a preliminary step where other woods are inserted into a smaller sacrificial sheet of something like poplar with their grain oriented in the proper directions. After sawing, the smaller pieces are gathered and glued into the sacrificial background sheet. When the pattern is completed in the sacrificial sheet, the sheet is attached to the larger background, usually from the front side, and the assembly in the sacrificial sheet is cut into the background sheet. Once all of the pieces of the image have been glued into the background sheet, the resulting image is glued to a backing board, and the surface is sanded flat to reveal the original in wood.

Karl took up the ball and discussed his process, especially those aspects that differ from Greg's. He begins with an image, either one that he has created himself or has found. He often works from line drawings, and paintings, sumi paintings being a favorite. He stressed that one major difference from Greg's method, is the with the laser technique, he can make any number of copies. The image is then scanned into the computer, and in AutoCad, lines are expanded and exposed as a series of dots, which he then connects with a line by means of a computer mouse. The resulting programming is loaded into a computer that steers a laser that runs on an X-Y axis. Pieces of appropriate wood are inserted at the desired angle and the computer steers the laser around them, cutting them out. Different woods lase at different tempos, and it is up to the operator to instruct the computer accordingly. Karl demonstrated the process for us using three different woods cut at three different points by the laser. He emphasized that he spends many hours in preparation before cutting begins.

The meeting then returned to the larger shop room where there was an interplay between Greg and Karl focusing on wood selection and correcting mistakes and making repairs. Greg said that the double bevel method does not need extensive filling: Karl said he keeps various pots of wood

dust since the laser does not do a fine kerf.

As to woods, both of them like myrtle wood which comes in a variety of colors. Greg likes blue mahoe and mansonia for grays, also bog redwood or bog oak. Browns are of course easy to find, and so is red for which bloodwood, grenadillo, bubinga, and pernambuco work well, though they do 'warm up' over time, a phrase he uses with his customers. Osage orange turns brown quickly. Carob wood is Greg's new favorite for the red pomegranates in his work for synagogues. Nutmeg is another of Greg's favorite, since it takes the sand shading process really well, and does nicely for yellows. Green woods are hard to come by, since they go brown quickly. Lignum vitae stays fairly green.

How woods take to sand shading is a big issue for both Greg and Karl. This is the process in which sand is heated and a light piece is drawn through the sand to achieve shading, adding depth to images. Karl says that purpleheart doesn't toast at all, and neither does western red cedar. By the time they take on some color, a part of the wood has burnt off, and has shrunk. Greg uses sand from Petco for shading. This sand is somewhat finer than construction sand and seems to work well. Greg puts sand right on the burner of his electric hot plate, which gives him a lot of control. Karl uses construction sand in a skillet. He says the sand has to get up to a 'temper' before it works well.

Wood hardness and softness is not a big issue. Greg doesn't work much with figured wood, since the pattern of the figure doesn't have the expanse to emerge as an important element. Burl is out for the same reason. He does like spalted wood of late, if it works in his design, since it has lines of its own. Greg says that he has gotten subtle over time in terms of his colors and designs: he advises us to go bold; the result will last better over time.

Finally, Greg reviewed the virtues of the Excalibur saw for marquetry work. The Excalibur he says, is one of the better scroll saws on the market, and is inexpensive compared to a Hegner. A main feature that Greg likes, is that the arm tilts and not the table. When working large pieces, this makes a huge difference, since it is possible to build an auxiliary table around it. Another feature is that the arm lifts allowing blades be threaded from the top. Finally, you can slow the saw down to a crawl, which is great for doing super-detailed work. When using really fine blades, this is a great advantage.

With that, Greg donned his Optivisor to see more clearly, and cut a very fine piece of wood out of background and contrasting wood. It fit perfectly into the background. Very cool. We gave both of them a big hand for their efforts for the evening.

Thereafter, the meeting broke up into smaller, informal groups that went on until it was quite dark.

MEMBER BONUS!!!!

The Sonoma County Museum is offering a special discount **only** to Sonoma Woodworkers Association members, to celebrate the Museum's 25th Anniversary.

Normally an individual membership is \$35, for a limited time, until August 21, this is discounted to \$25.

This is a great discount. As you know, we have a strong relationship with the museum and by joining their membership, you are showing how important that relationship is to our group. Call 579-1500 x 13 for more information or email swiseman@sonomacountymuseum.org

Survey Results:

This month's survey asked members to fill the following:

My workbench is

(My workbench) belonged to a very nice neighbor's ex-husband who never came and got it after the divorce....So I was lucky enough to receive....a very nice gift. George Nostrant

Interesting question: my workbench is hand-made and has been evolving over thirty years; recently I added four drawers underneath to organize the previous clutter; the top is 2" maple and is pretty clear of "stuff" most of the time (I assume honesty is a requirement for participating in the survey!) Mike Baldus

My workbench is handmade of hard maple and has, like its owner, more than the usual number of vices. Larry Stroud

My work bench is a 12' X 5' table I built to make 10' trellis pieces for a debutante ball at the Burlingame Country Club in 1965. Bob Mahoney

My work bench is..... not as boring as this survey. Robert Gauthier

My workbench is Scandinavian red beech and usually a mess. Rick White

My bench is 2 layers of 3/4 ply with mdf on the top, bolted together and resting on plastic saw horses. I mean to make something better in the near future. Kai Heard

My bench is a hollow core door on two metal legs and is **ALWAYS** cluttered. Michael Wallace

Calendar

August 3 - Guild-based presentation coordinated by Larry Stroud, at Larry's shop

September - Artistry in Wood at the Sonoma Museum

October - Artistry in Wood - artist presentations at the Sonoma Museum

CLASSES IN MARQUETRY WITH GREG ZALL

WOOD FAIR 2010

College of the Redwoods presents the following classes in partnership with the Humboldt Woodworking Society Wood Fair (held July 10 and 11 -exhibitions, woodworking market place, demonstrations, classes www.humboldtwoodfair.org)

Class details and schedule *call (707) 269-4000 (707) 269-4000 to register*

026766 Marquetry I

Monday, Tuesday, & Wednesday - July 12,13, & 14

08:00am-05:00pm

Instructor: Greg Zall

Fee: \$375

Location: College of the Redwoods - AT108

Class limited to 16 participants

Introduction to Marquetry for Contemporary Furniture: Marquetry is a technique in which different colors of wood veneers are carefully cut to fit precisely together in a design. The idea that one can paint a picture using the natural colors of wood is ancient. In the mid-sixteenth century, Italian craftsmen started using marquetry as furniture decoration, beginning a long history that still thrives today. During the process of completing a project, students will learn the double-bevel method of marquetry. This highly accurate technique eliminates gaps around individual pieces of the marquetry picture. *Bring to first class: masking tape, yellow glue.* Fee includes three days of instruction, materials, and all other supplies, including quality tools that students will keep.

026767 Marquetry II Thursday, July 15

08:00am-05:00

Instructor: Greg Zall

Fee: \$150 Location: College of the Redwoods - AT108

Class limited to 16 participants

Marquetry Master Class: Advanced marquetry that goes from intricate (using some of the finest saw blades available) to working large scale (such as full size doors). Other subjects include - cutting veneers, flattening burls and other difficult woods, incorporating inlay into projects, working with brass, pewter and mother of pearl, gluing down projects, parquetry and template routing. We will have demonstrations and discussions. Each student will be able to try out techniques using scroll saws and hand tools. A time will be set aside for a lively discussion covering what is effective design in marquetry, using slides and samples of work. Students are encouraged to bring marquetry project ideas for design refinement and plan of attack. (Students who complete Marquetry I will have a reduced fee of \$120.)

CLASS AT MY SHOP IN PETALUMA

BEGINNING MARQUETRY WITH GREG ZALL

Saturday and Sunday August 7 and 8, 2010

9:00 TO 5:30

Fee: \$210.00

Location: 1890 Middle Two Rock Rd Petaluma, Ca

During the process of completing a project, students will learn the double-bevel method of marquetry. In addition I will be able in to show you the nuts and bolts of how I work on projects in my own shop Fee includes two days of Instruction, materials, and all other supplies, including quality tools that students will keep.

To register contact me directly at 707 7616106 or email at woodcookie@earthlink.net

SCWA Officers Meeting - Note by Bill Hartman

The SCWA Officers met on June 15th, 2010 at Carl Johnson's home at 7pm. The following are the business issues discussed.

Present were Chairman Mike Wallace, Vice Chairman Carl Johnson, Program Director Art Hofman, Show Chairman Bill Taft, Treasurer George Nostrant, Secretary Bill Hartman, Video Librarian Dennis Lashar.

The first issue discussed concerned the 2010 Artistry in Wood Show. The show opens Friday, Sept 10th and runs through Sunday Oct 17th. Wednesday Sept 8th, 7pm will be the Show Judging and Members Meeting. Request for Volunteers!!!! We are asking members to volunteer between Aug 30th and Sept 6th to prepare the Show exhibit space and to set up the show. Activities include demolition, moving walls and pedestals, painting, etc. Judges will be Jim Budlong, David Marks, and Loy Martin. Members will be asked to distribute flyers to increase visitor attendance at the show. Free Family Day is Sat August 3rd, and volunteers are needed on that day also.

Future Programs. The idea was proposed to have an separate meeting, maybe the 2nd week of Nov, to brainstorm ideas for future meetings. Ideas for future meetings included Japanese Woodworking demo, a meeting with Don Naples, Merryll Saylan at David Marks shop, do an annual Guild meeting, and a furniture makers presentation. And possibly adding short topics to regular meetings, including safety and specific tool usage. Bill Hartman volunteered to demonstrate proper use of the table saw and Dennis Lasher would talk about bandsaw procedures.

Budget. George Nostrant said there is \$7686.40 in our bank account. We took in \$4700 last year and paid out \$3300. Most of what was paid out was for newsletters and speaker fees. We discussed continuing paying speakers and possibly offering more to specialized or well known speakers and including costs for hotel for speakers from far away. Speakers fees are a prime item of the SCWA budget since active and interesting meetings are the goal of SCWA. The idea to provide T-shirts and ball caps with SCWA logo was also talked about. The value of these items would enhance visibility of the club in the community, be available for future events, and increasing pride of membership. Mike Wallace said he would look into costs for these items. Another idea mentioned was to provide scholarships for membership fees to members who are struggling financially. This has not come up very much, and it would not be a large financial issue.

Another budget item discussed was possibly offering some kind of grant to Sonoma County High School Woodworking Programs. As we all know, all budget items in the schools have been cut back and we all know the high cost of operating a wood shop. It was suggested that the SCWA have some responsibility in supporting students who are our future furniture makers, hobbyists, and construction workers. Bill Hartman gathered the names of high schools offering Woodworking/ Construction programs and the number of students in the 2010-2011 school year.

Rancho Cotate HS	145 students
Petaluma HS	60 students
Ellsie Allen HS	60 students
Santa Rosa HS	80 students
El Molino HS	80 students
Analy HS	80 students
Healdsburg HS	25 students
Montgomery HS	45 students
Sonoma Valley HS	60 students

It was proposed to mention the possibility of a Grant Program to the members of the SCWA in the next newsletter and get input from general members if this is something they would support. Bill Hartman mentioned that even a few hundred dollars can be vital in this budget environment and that students would be told about this community support. And this would be a great opportunity to make aware the SCWA to students who could be future members. Bill also mentioned that his students will have a great showing in the furniture sections of the Sonoma-Marin Fair in Petaluma and The Sonoma County Fair. Please visit these venues when you are at the Fair.

Elections: Bill Taft will come up with a nominating committee. The current officers are willing to continue in their current roles except Mike Wallace who wants to continue as Newsletter Editor and assist Bill Taft in this years Artistry in Woods Show and take over as Show Chairman in 2011. Carl Johnson asked for another member to take his job as Vice Chairman. So as of this date the only positions open are Chairman and Vice Chairman.

The Officers Meeting of the SCWA adjourned at 9:30 pm.

From the Chairman

Hello again,

Well the Solstice has passed and now we "slouch towards darkness". Poetic, huh? Well, the year is now officially half over. What have you been doing in your workshop? I really hope you've been working on something that will simply amaze, or at least cause a pause, at our Artistry in Wood event.

Bill Taft, Art Hofmann and myself had a meeting with Diane Evens, the Executive Director of the Sonoma Museum. We are trying as a group to come up with ideas to support both of our organizations. We have a number of ideas and will soon be notifying you of what they are, as soon as we reach agreement.

As noted elsewhere, the officers met and discussed a number of topics. Chief among them for me, was the rather large bank balance we carry as an association. Our membership dues and event processing fees, give us a relatively "hefty" balance at the end of every year. In the last year or so, we have brought in some outside speakers and because we know they have to come from afar, provide for a stipend of some sort. These presentations are one of the ways we benefit you for your participation in the Association. We are working to figure out others.

Elections, elections, elections. While we in California will be electing a governor, a senator, assorted other races, as well as deciding if we should legalize marijuana (NOW that one will be VERY interesting), our interest is always who will be an officer next year. As Chairman, I've held this position for two years and I think that is enough. I want to put my attention elsewhere for the association and will instead run for Show Chairman. I will continue, if elected, as Editor. Since both Carl Johnson and I (he's the Vice Chairman) will be stepping down, that means that there are two vacancies. Will you consider to run? We need people to help to continue to make SCWA the most dynamic woodworking club in the Bay Area.

Just to amplify my message of a couple of days ago, the announcement that Woodcarft would be closing is a bit premature. I've spoken with Tom, the manager, and he says that they are pursuing in finding another owner for the store. If that works, the store will continue. What a shame, of having lost two other woodworking suppliers (Western and Santa Rosa Tool) that we could lose this one as well. We'll have no where else to go for supplies. I know the Internet has changed things, but nothing can beat by just browsing the aisles of a great woodworking store. I do hope things will work out.

Well, as I don't seem to have as much sunlight as I did a month ago, I best go make use of it now. Off to the workshop!

See you at the next meeting!

Michael Wallace

Photo credits: Theo Mueter, Greg Zall

WOOD FORUM

Newsletter of the Sonoma County Woodworkers Association

Officers

Chairman	Michael Wallace	824-1013
Vice Chairman	Carl Johnson	473-9505
Program Director	Art Hofmann	542-9767
Secretary	Bill Hartman	696-0966
Treasurer	George Nostrant	538-3398
Show Chairman	Bill Taft	794-8025
Wood Forum Editor	Michael Wallace	824-1013
Guild Chairman	Larry Stroud	823-1775
Publicity Coordinator	Bill Taft	794-8025
Video Librarian	Dennis Lashar	538-9793
Seminar Coordinator	Larry Stroud	823-1775
Post Officer	George Nostrant	538-3398
Web Page		
Photographer		

Join Us! The Sonoma County Woodworkers Association is a 31-year old association of over one hundred professional and amateur woodworkers who meet monthly at members' shops to share experiences, ideas, techniques, and mutual enjoyment for creating with wood. Membership entitles you to attend monthly meetings, receive Wood Forum, our monthly newsletter, attend our annual show, and apply for seminars and demonstrations. Annual dues, payable at the beginning of each calendar year, are \$25. New members joining after September 30 may, for \$35, have their membership extend through December 31 of the following year. Please consider joining the SCWA and meeting people who, like yourself, are interested in the art and business of fine woodworking. Send dues to:

PO Box 4176, Santa Rosa, CA 95402 Santa Rosa, CA 95402

Wood Forum is the monthly newsletter of the Sonoma County Woodworkers Association. Please feel free to submit articles, notices, photographs, announcements, and comments for inclusion in the publication. Advertisements are accepted with a per-entry cost of \$5 per column inch. All submissions for the June issue must be received by July 20, 2010. You may submit your entries to the editor listed below.

Contact Michael Wallace
Snail-Mail PO BOX 1838, Sebastopol, Ca 95472
E-Mail mjmwallace@gmail.com
Home (707) 824-1013

Wood Forum 7



Santa Rosa, CA 95402
July 2010

PO Box 4176
Vol. 30 No. 07

Newsletter of the Sonoma County Woodworkers Association

WOOD FORUM

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Yes, I would like to join the SCWA and meet other people who are interested in the craft, the art, and the business of fine woodworking. Here is my application. I have enclosed a check for the annual dues of \$25 that covers my subscription to Wood Forum and entitles me to attend the monthly meetings.

Send check and completed application to: Sonoma County Woodworkers Association
PO Box 4176, Santa Rosa, CA 95402

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_____ Wood Forum 8 _____