



# WOOD FORUM

Newsletter of the Sonoma County Woodworkers Association

[www.sonomawoodworkers.com](http://www.sonomawoodworkers.com)

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## January Meeting: An evening with Don Naples



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## February Meeting - Art Hofmann

**Who:** Merryll Saylan

**Where:** Dave Marks' Studio  
2128 Marsh Road  
Santa Rosa

**When:** February 8th, 7:00PM

Our next meeting will feature the well-known turner, Merryll Saylan of Berkeley. Merryll will discuss the evolution of her career as a crafts artist over many decades via slides, examples of her work and a demonstration.

Merryll has served on the boards of both The Wood Turning Center in Philadelphia and The American Association of Woodturners. Merryll has been a leader in the use of color and texture on wood. Her writings on wood-art, techniques and the woodturning field have been published in numerous books and magazines. She broke the mold many a time, applying color, for instance, when the prevailing ethic of the time was one of purity, when only unpainted wood was considered the truest expression for an artist. She is now a respected teacher and lecturer, and has been artist-in-residence in programs in the US and abroad. Her work is in many of the collections of prominent museums and galleries in the U.S. and other countries, such as the Museum of Arts and Design in New York City, the Renwick Gallery in Washington, D.C., the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, and the Mint Museum of Craft & Design, Charlottesville, NC.

Take the second driveway that leads directly to David's Workshop/Studio

## Calendar

Here is the calendar for the next few months:

March 1st - Ron Hock, tool making, sharpening

April 5th - Ejler Hjorth-Westh, chairs, design and construction

May 14th - Bruce Johnson, sculptor extraordinaire

## January Meeting Report – Don Naples

Our presentation for January was done by member Don Naples, a retired engineer (GE and Ampex), who makes custom enclosures for high-end speaker systems based on speaker technology developed by audio legend Siegfried Linkwitz. Don's company, Wood Artistry, sells the speakers under the Orion name. You can buy flat-packs of pre-cut, unfinished or finished wooden parts for the enclosures or a complete Orion system, replete with speakers

and electronics, ready to play. Those of you interested in some of the technical aspects of the speaker design are encouraged to visit [www.linkwitzlab.com](http://www.linkwitzlab.com).

The meeting was held at one of Don's three shops in Healdsburg, one that he designates his 3-phase shop. He also has a single-phase shop at his home (6 blocks away) and his metal-working mill and lathe at a nearby machine shop. The 3-phase shop's primary equipment is a table saw, jointer and fork lift! The shop is also used to prepare Orion systems for shipment. Don ships systems all over the world, and has evolved specialized packaging for the purpose. The fork lift saves money by obviating the need for renting trucks with elevator lifts which are more expensive than those without.



*Speaker cabinets lined up for production*

The Linkwitz speaker design does not require an enclosure in the typical sense. Most speaker systems are contained in enclosures, which, together with the speakers, create a desired sound field. Common enclosure technologies have names like "infinite baffle", "tuned port", "bass reflex", "folded horn", and "passive radiator". In contrast, the Linkwitz design utilizes dipole (dual) speakers that radiate front and back along with custom sound processing electronics. The "enclosure" serves to position the speakers optimally for the listener's ear, rather than to shape the sound field as traditional enclosures are designed to do.

Because the sonic qualities of the enclosure are not important, a great deal of freedom is available to the enclosure designer/builder. Choice of materials is virtually unlimited, for example, enabling the designer/builder to customize the enclosure to an individual customer's desires.

Don began his presentation with a discussion of the process of music reproduction, beginning with recording considerations and ending up with the challenge of reproducing sound in the home. He pointed out that the object is always to come up with lifelike sound in a "sweet spot" large enough to satisfy the listener. He gave an overview of the relevant technologies and added some historic perspective. He emphasized the differences between active and passive crossovers, circuitry used to funnel different parts of the audio spectrum to individual speakers, and contended

that Linkwitz' active network design was what made it possible to get phenomenal sound out of modestly-priced speakers.

Don then went on to discuss the woodworking aspects of his business. He likes to use solid wood throughout, eschewing veneer because he believes that it is too labor intensive. He showed some examples of the type of woods he likes to use including a 8/4 chunk of western bigleaf maple with an incredible ripple pattern and a 4/4 slab of highly figured bubinga. Typically, he works with a finished thickness dimension of 3/4". He uses General Finishes oil/urethane finish which he sprays on. He admitted that conventional wisdom was stacked against spraying, but that he has found it to be the most efficient method of application.

The two bass speakers (woofers) in dipole configuration are mounted in a "W" frame, a simple box that positions one woofer above the other, one facing down and the other facing up. These woofers are wired so that they are out-of-phase, otherwise they would tend to cancel each other out. The W-frame prevents the system from producing too much vibration. The dipole midrange and high-frequency tweeter are mounted on a front panel. As noted above, they are not enclosed, but the panel serves to position them optimally relative to the listener's ears.



*The Orion speakers The design is a bit unusual, but it's functional for the excellent sound reproduction.*

Don sells complete Orion speaker systems including all the electronics for approximately \$7200. That includes dual enclosures with speakers, cables, sound processing electronics and a 12-channel amplifier. The system can also be purchased from Linkwitz Labs in kit form with various options depending on the level of adventurousness of the buyer. Don says that, if anyone in the SCWA wants to build his own system from a kit, to call him first for advice. He says that there are several changes that should be made to the original design that he has learned from experience and is happy to share with club members. The cost of a kit is approximately \$2200.



*The rear of the Orion speaker. There is no back. The sound comes out from both the front and back.*



*The Orion amplifier and crossover controller*

Despite the state of the economy, Don says that he has more business than he can handle and is working a 7-day week to fill his backlog!

Don concluded the meeting by playing selections from several CD's including classical, jazz and rock music. It is fair to say that the attendees were impressed, especially given that the room might be thought to be acoustically unfriendly (concrete floor, hard surfaces, etc.) Don made the point that good speakers should sound great in any listening environment, and he certainly proved his point!

Mike Burwen

## Artistry in Wood 2011

Wow, is it time again? Well, yes it is. Fresh from our success in 2010, our 2011 show is "just around the corner". The dates for the show are as follows:

**July 8** - Acceptance of pieces

**July 13** - Judging event

**July 15** - Opening

**August (TBD)** - Artist night at the museum

**September 25** - Closing

This year there are several changes to the show. I prepared the following FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions):

### **What are the changes to this year's show?**

Well for one, we are being moved to the upstairs gallery. The second is that we have the space for a much longer time than usual.

### **Why are we being moved to the upstairs gallery?**

The Sonoma County Museum is "tightening" up its exhibit costs this year. They have decided to have fewer exhibits for longer periods of time. As such, our exhibit fell right in the middle of one that they already had planned. They only had

the upstairs available for us during the summer.

### **Isn't that space smaller?**

Yes, it is smaller, and narrower as well.

### **What does that mean as to the number of exhibits?**

It remains to be seen. You are responsible for the exhibits, so we don't know what will be shown until the day that we accept them for the show. We ask if you have a large piece – a bed, bench or table – that you notify us early on so we can place it appropriately. We might have to restrict the total number of pieces in the show. We won't really know this until we understand how many pieces will be shown and their size.

### **I really don't understand why we are being moved off the main floor! Don't we have a good relationship with the museum?**

Our relationship with the museum is very good. The annual Artistry in Wood show draws a very large crowd every year. The museum is going through some tough times and these changes reflect this.

### **Tough times are something everyone is experiencing. Didn't we give the museum a rather large donation last year?**

Yes, we did. It was for \$1,000 and we made the same donation two years ago. According to Diane Evens, the Executive Director, it costs \$25,000 a month to open the museum. The museum admission fees are extremely low, when compared to the San Francisco museums and most of the money they raise is through donations and grants. While our donation helped, it didn't begin to cover their expenses.

### **What other changes do you expect this year?**

We are planning a more aggressive publicity campaign by reaching out to the local media channels. Also, there might be some new categories of awards this year. Additional changes, if any, will be announced as soon as they are agreed to.

### **Who is agreeing to these changes?**

Well, for one, the Board of Officers. Also, there is an advisory committee that will help our Show Director this year. If you want to be on the advisory committee, please contact Michael Wallace: 824-1013 or [mjmw Wallace@gmail.com](mailto:mjmw Wallace@gmail.com).

### **What do I do now?**

Get into your shops and start cutting wood! The show will be here sooner than you think!

## **Exhibits in the Area**

There are three exhibitions opening in our area that you may be interested in:

The Baulines Craft Guild presents *Forming a Life, Paths in Studio Craft*, through March 18th at the Marin Community

Foundation (415-464-2500), 5 Hamilton Landing, Novato. It is open Monday through Friday.

The Fort Bragg Town Hall hosts the *Mid-Winter Exhibition* of student work from the Fine Woodworking Program at the College of the Redwoods. This exhibition runs from January 29th through February 6th. The town hall is at 363 N. Main Street, Fort Bragg (707-964-7056).

The Petaluma Art Center presents *Family Tree: 65 years of Woodworking in Northern California*, January 21st through March 13th. For information, visit the website: [www.petalumaartcenter.org](http://www.petalumaartcenter.org).

**(Ed. Note:** I went to the artist reception on Saturday and can tell you that this was a wildly popular event. The place was crowded. Many of our members have a piece in the exhibit. Too many to list. Go to the website for more information.)

## **Lie-Nielsen Tool Event**

David Marks will be hosting a Lie-Nielsen Hand Tool Event at his Workshop/Studio on Friday March 25th and Saturday March 26th, 2011.

Lie-Nielsen will be holding a special 2-hour presentation for the SCWA on Thursday evening March 24th from 7:00 – 9:00 PM. This will give SCWA members a preview of what Lie-Nielsen will be demonstrating, including sharpening and hand tool use. This should be a very exciting event as demonstrators working for Lie-Nielsen will be on hand to answer your questions as they give you a sneak preview of the 2-day event.

**Event Date: March 24th, 2011 7:00 – 9:00PM**

Location: David Marks Woodshop/Studio

2128 Marsh Road

Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Take the second driveway that leads directly to David's workshop/studio

## **Wooden Boat Challenge**

I received a communiqué from Starr Swindt, the Team Coordinator for the 2011 Wooden Boat Challenge, stating that the Challenge is limited to 17 teams and that he expects all of the slots to be filled before the entry deadline. He is encouraging everyone to, "get your applications in ASAP to ensure a place in the competition".

As I write this, we do not have enough interested members to form one team (each team has 4 members). If you are interested in being on the team, call me at: 794 8025 or email me at [wgtaft@aol.com](mailto:wgtaft@aol.com).

At the January Board meeting we discussed the idea of

sponsoring a team of high school wood shop students in the Challenge. The idea here is to use the boat building challenge as a learning experience for the students. It would involve helping the student team design and build a practice boat prior to the event and then supporting them during the competition. To do this, we need one or two members to facilitate it (two members would be preferable). I will be willing to help, but other members need to be responsible for it. Anyone want to volunteer? If you do, call me or e-mail me.

Bill Taft

## **Judges Announced for Artistry in Wood 2011**

John Lavine, Brian Newell and Julian Shaw have been appointed the judges for the 2011 Artistry in Wood Show at the Sonoma County Museum.

John Lavine has been involved in furniture and woodworking for 30 years, as a maker, teacher, magazine editor and writer. In 1980, he started Kodama Woodworks, a one-person shop combining his study of Japanese woodworking with contemporary furniture. He has exhibited his work nationally and is a master member of the Baulines Craft Guild. From 1997-2008, John was the editor of *Woodwork* magazine. During that same period he also taught furniture-making part-time at Laney College in Oakland. He was a founding board member of the San Francisco Museum of Craft + Design, and continues to participate on its Advisory Board. He recently wrote a catalogue essay to accompany Michael Cooper's 2011 touring retrospective exhibition, organized by SFMCD.

Brian Newell began carving wood at age eight and is now a world class furniture artist who works in Fort Bragg. His furniture combines clean execution with seemingly contradictory qualities, such as weight and lightness, formal elegance and whimsy. Brian studied woodworking at the COR Fine Woodworking program in Fort Bragg in the late-eighties, after which he moved to Chicago, where he worked for three years as a patternmaker for the scale model industry. During this time, he established his own workshop and acquired a reputation as an furniture-making artist. In 1997, Brian along with his wife and daughter moved to Japan. After ten years of working at his craft and establishing a reputation, Brian returned to the Mendocino coast, where he set up a furniture studio and teaches classes, mainly in compound bending, a hallmark of his furniture. Brian's website is [www.briannewellfurniture.com](http://www.briannewellfurniture.com).

The English woodturner, Julian Shaw, has been a full-time woodworker for over fifteen years. He has studied with master woodworkers from both the US and England. He runs a full-service woodturning shop in Sebastopol and teaches woodworking at the Sebastopol Independent Charter School. He is the founder of Wine Country Woodturners.

At his shop, he produces architectural turning for local contractors. It is also here, until recently, Julian also made functional and decorative wooden bowls and vases which he sold through galleries and arts and fine crafts shows throughout the US.

Julian established a year-round, outdoor "green woodworking" program for the Sebastopol Independent Charter School's 5 through 8th grades. The course includes all aspects of sustainable woodwork practice, from planting and harvesting trees through the use of foot-powered lathes for making kitchen utensils, and other functional items. All tools have been used traditionally for centuries and are solely human-powered. Two additions to this year's program are the making of wooden bows and arrows in 6th grade, and the use of steam bending to make field hockey sticks in 8th grade. The school has also been recognized as an "Ocean Guardian" School for its work on planting native oak in the Laguna de Santa Rosa. For further information, please check out his website: [www.greenwoodwork.com](http://www.greenwoodwork.com)

## **From the Chairman**

I really enjoyed Don Naples' presentation at our January meeting on the engineering and construction of the speakers that he builds. I was pleasantly surprised at the sophistication of the audio industry. It is nice to see that a technically complex speaker cabinet can be made to be an attractive piece when made by a skilled woodworker. Thank you, Don!

I expect that you have all received your membership renewal letter. It is the only notice that we will send to you concerning membership dues. The policy on dues that has been in effect for a long time, is that dues are to be paid at the beginning of the year and cover membership privileges for the year. Please send in your dues payment while it is still fresh in your mind.

While you are writing that membership dues check, please take the time to review and update the contact information contained in the letter. We are encouraging all of our members to receive the Wood Forum by e-mail. E-mail is free and the cost of the printed newsletter has become the largest item of our budget. If you have internet access, please check the "Prefer newsletter by: Email" box on the membership renewal form.

Art Hofmann sent a copy of the monthly meeting program schedule to me today. It looks like he has a full schedule of programs for the year and there is activity started on programs for early next year. As soon as we get all of the presenters confirmed, the meeting schedule will be put on our web site in a calendar format. We will continue to publish the meeting notices in the Wood Forum.

Michael Wallace has confirmed that the dates for the 2011 Artistry in Wood Show are set. The show will run longer this year as the Museum's new policy is to have fewer, longer

duration shows. We are going to present the latest information on this year's show in every issue of the Wood Forum, starting with this issue. This is part of our plan to increase the publicity for our meetings and for the show.

In last month's note, I included a paragraph written to see if there was any interest in forming a team of SCWA members to participate in the Wooden Boat Challenge. So far only two members are interested, so we still have openings on the team. I'm confident that we could build a winning boat (there is a race) and it would be a lot of fun. Time is getting short on this, so I put another notice about it in the newsletter. If you are interested in being on the team or forming a team, or helping with a student team, give me a call. The event is Saturday, April 30th in Bodega Bay. For more information see [www.bbfishfest.org/boat](http://www.bbfishfest.org/boat).

Bill Taft

# WOOD FORUM

Newsletter of the Sonoma County Woodworkers Association

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**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**

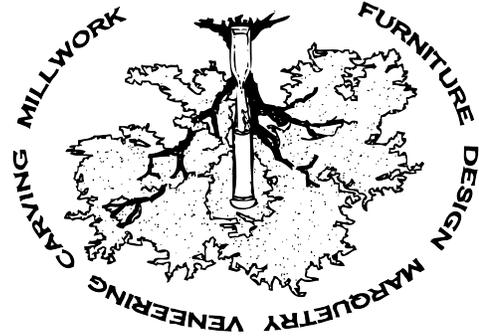
*Wood Forum* is the monthly newsletter of the Sonoma County Woodworkers Association. Please feel free to submit articles, notices, photographs, announcements, and comments for inclusion in the publication. Advertisements are accepted with a per-entry cost of \$5 per column inch. All submissions for the February issue must be received by February 15, 2011. You may submit your entries to the editor listed below.

### Credits:

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Santa Rosa, CA 95402  
February 2011

PO Box 4176  
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# 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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