



FROM THESE WOODS

Rooted here, reaching beyond

All galleries
June 8–September 1, 2017

**MOSS
ARTS
CENTER**

FROM THESE WOODS

John Albright, Alex Bannan, Charlie Brouwer, Melissa Engler, Greg Galbreath, Travis Graves, Andrew Hayes, Michael Kovick, Steven McBride, Phoenix Hardwoods, Jonathan Rugh, Daniel Sanchez, Norm Sartorius, Mac Traynham, Shanti Yard, Jennifer Zurick, and Virginia Tech's School of Architecture + Design, Center for Design Research

From Southwest Virginia and throughout the Appalachian regions of North Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, and West Virginia, the region's diverse woodlands represent a significant ecological and artistic hotbed, inspiring a diverse array of art forms. Home to the largest stretch of public land in Eastern North America and an above average density of biodiversity, our Appalachian forests present unique opportunities and critical responsibilities.

Featuring highly skilled, handmade works from local and regional artists, *From These Woods* explores the dynamic relationship between humans, the natural world, and the creative impulse. The exhibition focuses on wood, showcasing a number of artistic styles and practices, including woodturning, carving, basketry, furniture, and instrument making by artists living in Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, North Carolina, and Tennessee.

Wood has always provided us with sustenance—its trees provide shelter; its boughs, the warmth of fire; its planks, the structures of homes, vessels, and so much more from furniture to bowls for our nourishment. Wood is a treasure, and in the hands of the artists in this exhibition, wood, with its rich diversity of patterning, texture, and inviting tactility, has been transformed into an appealing range of artistic objects.

Exploring the importance of place, space, and sustainability, many of these artists feature work that has been sustainably sourced from local materials, emphasizing the importance of maintaining environmental integrity and supporting the local economy while simultaneously transforming our valuable natural resources into works of art.

Many thanks to the artists for sharing their work and to Fleur S. Bresler and Tracy Neyhart for lending to the exhibition. All works in the exhibition are courtesy of the artists except where noted.

Jeff Attridge and Devon Johnson
Curatorial Graduate Assistants
Curators of the Exhibition

▼ Steven McBride; *Big Ivy with Mountain Ash*, 2016 (detail); archival print mounted on Gatorboard with French cleat mount; 24 x 50 inches



John Albright

From his Blacksburg studio, John Albright transforms locally sourced hardwoods into furniture that emphasizes natural forms. Albright's benches and stools blur the line between style and functionality.

Bench #1, 2016

Maple and white oak

18 x 16 x 72 inches

Bench #2, 2016

Walnut, black oak, and white oak

18 x 12 x 69 inches

Collection of Tracy Neyhart

Stool, 2016

Maple and white oak

18 x 16 x 18 inches

Alex Bannan

Inspired by the natural world, Alex Bannan's work reflects its environment. Featuring walnut, ash, white oak, and mahogany, Bannan's pieces evoke the winding currents of the New River and the wild beauty of Southwest Virginia. Raised in Roanoke, Bannan currently lives and works in Richmond.

Untitled, 2017

Walnut, ash, and maple

36 x 12 x 12 inches

Push Home Pull Home, Mountain, 2016

Bent luan and white oak

30 x 12 x 18 inches

Push Home Pull Home, River, 2016

Bent walnut, mahogany, and pine

18 x 12 x 4 inches

Sushi Table, 2014

Poplar

18 x 24 x 12 inches



▲ Alex Bannan; *Untitled*, 2017; walnut, ash, and maple; 36 x 12 x 12 inches

Charlie Brouwer

Rooted in self-reflection, spirituality, and the intricacies of the human condition, Charlie Brouwer's constructed wood sculptures invite wonder and introspection. Using local wood, most of which he harvests in and around his workshop in Floyd County, Brouwer creates pieces that illustrate the dichotomous nature of life, simultaneously fragile and resilient. Brouwer lives and works in Willis, Virginia.

House Upheld #2, 2017

Maple

76 x 21 x 23 inches (measurements approximate)

Ode to Joy #1, 2006

Maple, dogwood, and pine

77 x 11 x 12 inches

After the Last Supper, 2016

Pine and poplar

61 x 26 x 22 inches

Ode to Joy #2, 2006

Pine, oak, and dogwood

58 x 12 x 10 inches

House Upheld #1, 2014

Maple

52 x 21 x 23 inches

▼ Charlie Brouwer; *After the Last Supper*, 2016 (detail); pine and poplar; 61 x 26 x 22 inches



Melissa Engler

Melissa Engler's wild, chaotic forms hint at humanity's fickle relationship with the nature. As Engler explains, her works are "an exploration into the ways we utilize the natural world with an emphasis on the line between use and abuse." Engler lives and works in Asheville, North Carolina.

Bounty

Carved, painted, and torched poplar and waxed linen
29 x 27 x 3 ½ inches

Natural Causes, 2017

Maple and basewood
20 x 17 x 8 inches

Tail Eater III, 2017

Cherry
30 x 48 x 4 inches

▼ Melissa Engler; *Tail Eater III, 2017* (detail); cherry; 30 x 48 x 4 inches



Greg Galbreath

Greg Galbreath, the founder and owner of Buckeye Banjos, has been honing his craft for over 20 years. A native of Maryland with a master's degree in freshwater ecology, Galbreath claims that the time he spent in nature as a child and later as a student proved to be formative moments in his development as an artist. In addition to making custom banjos, Galbreath plays in the old-time string band Farm Use Only with his wife, Cindy. Galbreath lives and works in Eggleston, Virginia.

Banjo #173, 2017

Wood, brass, skin, and shell



▲ Greg Galbreath
Banjo #173, 2017
Wood, brass, skin, and shell

Travis Graves

Travis Graves, an associate professor of art at East Tennessee State University, creates sculptures that deal with society's relationship to nature, particularly our dependence on the environment. Graves employs lead counterweights, magnets, and metal in order to hold his pieces in place—a delicate relationship between objects constantly poised on the brink of collapse, not unlike our own connection to the natural world.

In Balance #4, 2007

Wood and lead

48 x 160 x 40 inches

In Suspense #6, 2007

Metal, magnets, and wood

30 x 24 x 16 inches



▲ Travis Graves; *In Suspense #6*, 2007; metal, magnets, and wood; 30 x 24 x 16 inches

Andrew Hayes

Stories shape our world. They help us define ourselves, reminisce about the past, and look to the future. For Andrew Hayes, altered books are a means of telling new stories. He explains, "I take my sensory appreciation for the book as a material and employ the use of metal to create a new form and hopefully a new story." Hayes' creations explode with possibility, ripe with the potential of a thousand imagined futures. Hayes lives and works in Penland, North Carolina.

Strand, 2017

Steel and book paper

7 x 16 x 8 inches

Lug, 2017

Steel, book paper, and paint

12 x 10 x 5 inches

Layers, 2016

Steel and book paper

17 x 7 x 3 ½ inches

▼ Andrew Hayes; *Layers*, 2016; steel and book paper; 17 x 7 x 3 ½ inches



Michael Kovick

One of the premier instrument makers in Southwest Virginia, Michael Kovick is also an accomplished musician who can play harmonica, fiddle, and mandolin, among others. In addition to his artisanal work, he currently serves as a session musician at Windfall Studios near Floyd, Virginia.

Mandolin, 2017

Wood

27 x 10 ½ x 4 inches

Steven McBride

The Big Ivy section of Pisgah National Forest, located in western North Carolina, faces constant threats from commercial logging interests. As an artist and forest advocate, Steven McBride is helping to preserve Big Ivy through his photography, documenting the forest's importance and impact on the human spirit. McBride lives and works in Weaverville, North Carolina.

Dragon's Back, 2016
Archival print
22 x 17 inches

Monolith, 2016
Archival print
24 ½ x 19 ½ inches

Hawthorn 1, 2016
Archival print
mounted on Gatorboard
with French cleat mount
30 x 56 inches

Hawthorn 2, 2016
Archival print
mounted on Gatorboard
with French cleat mount
30 x 56 inches

Big Ivy with Mountain Ash, 2016
Archival print
mounted on Gatorboard
with French cleat mount
24 x 50 inches

Dragon's Profile, 2016
Archival print
17 x 22 inches

Connection, 2016
Archival print
19 ½ x 24 ½ inches

FSR 74, 2016
Archival print
22 x 17 inches

Behind the Curtain, 2016
Archival print
22 x 17 inches

Vine, 2016
Archival print
19 ½ x 24 ½ inches

Dreaming in Big Ivy, 2016
Archival print
22 x 17 inches

▼ Steven McBride; *Vine*, 2016 (detail); archival print; 19 ½ x 24 ½ inches



Phoenix Hardwoods

Floyd's Phoenix Hardwoods brings an entrepreneurial spirit to their artistry. Their locally sourced slab furniture has an instinctively natural feel, showcasing smooth, polished burls edged with raw, untamed boundaries. Owners Bill and Corinne Graefe have brought one-of-a-kind furniture to the New River Valley.

Maple Burl Table with Angled Walnut Legs #1, 2016

Maple and walnut
48 x 25 x 18 inches

Maple Burl Table with Angled Walnut Legs #2, 2016

Maple and walnut
30 x 24 x 18 inches

Three Maple Burl Vases, 2016

Maple
Dimensions variable, 7-12 inches high

Maple Burl and Walnut Slab Stool #1, 2017

Maple and walnut
18 x 17 x 25 inches

Maple Burl and Walnut Slab Stool #2, 2017

Maple and walnut
18 x 17 x 25 inches



▲ Phoenix Hardwoods; *Three Maple Burl Vases, 2016*; maple; dimensions variable; 7-12 inches high

Jonathan Rugh

Utilizing advanced material systems and design technology, Jonathan Rugh's work inhabits the intersection of technology and craftsmanship. Exhibited here, Rugh's paddles utilize high-tech, performance-driven structural optimization through wood composite laminate, illustrating the productive potential of technology and wood. Rugh serves as a wood shop craftsman in the Virginia Tech School of Architecture + Design.

▼ Jonathan Rugh, *Untitled Paddle (detail)*



Daniel Sanchez

As a logger in the Appalachian forests, Sanchez's experience of wood is constant and everyday. He harvests trees but also transforms its burls into captivating objects, unveiling the innate beauty and unusual possibility of their forms. According to Sanchez, "carving for me is a reflection of us as human beings. It is a process of transformation that lets others see the goodness and beauty hiding inside of us." Sanchez lives in Willis, Virginia.

Catharsis, 2016
Wormy maple
12 x 24 x 20 inches

Mountains and the Valley, 2016
Ash
15 x 19 x 14 inches

Termite's Old House, 2016
Maple
3 ½ x 17 x 9 inches

Nature's Gift, 2016
Applewood
6 ½ x 11 x 8 ½ inches

Norm Sartorius

Norm Sartorius' fine wooden spoons take many forms. Sartorius is known for the unique variety of materials he works with to create his spoons, which are abstract and brimming with metaphor. Australian purpleheart, African blackwood, and Honduras rosewood are just a few among the many media Sartorius has utilized. He describes his work as sculptures, explaining, "my spoons are sculptures; my sculptures are spoons—not spoons to stir the soup but spoons to stir the soul." Sartorius lives and works in Parkersburg, West Virginia.



▲ Norm Sartorius; *Single Parent*, 2011; African blackwood burl; 3 x 7 ¼ x 3 inches

Beneath the Surface, 2011
Algerita burl (Arizona)
12 x 6 x 4 inches

Single Parent, 2011
African blackwood burl
3 x 7 ¼ x 3 inches
Collection of Fleur S. Bresler

Australia Purpleheart Spoon, 2010
Australian purpleheart
6 x 1 ¼ inches

Apex, 2010
Australian snakewood
4 7/8 x 14 ¼ x 3 1/8 inches
Collection of Fleur S. Bresler

Algerita Burl Spoon, 2009
Algerita burl
5 x 4 x 21 inches

Pac Man, 2008
Honduras rosewood burl
5 ¼ x 3 ½ x 1 inches
Collection of Fleur S. Bresler

Collaboration with Nature, 2007
Texas desert root wood
3 x 12 ¾ x 2 5/8 inches
Collection of Fleur S. Bresler

The Turnip, 2005
African blackwood
1 ¼ x 8 ¼ x 2 ½ inches
Collection of Fleur S. Bresler

Spoon from a Forgotten Ceremony, 2001
Bloodwood
2 x 4 ½ x 21 inches

Mac Traynham

Mac Traynham is a giant in the world of Appalachian music, a towering figure who has been plying his trade as a musician, teacher, and artisan for over 30 years. Recognized as a master banjo maker by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities in 2009, Traynham's open-backed, custom-made banjos combine expert craftsmanship with impeccable aesthetics, each piece resulting in a sonic whirlwind of beauty. Traynham lives and works in Willis, Virginia.

Fretless Banjo, 2017

Wood

28 x 11 x 3 inches

Shanti Yard

Based in Floyd, Virginia, Shanti Yard seeks to preserve the unique natural qualities of the wood he shapes into vessels. As he explains, "the most exciting aspect of my work lies in the unfoldment, a sort of flowering, of a raw piece of wood." Yard's wood-turned pieces are at once expressive and contemplative, celebratory and introspective.

Maple Burl Bowl with Carved Feet, 2017

Maple

10 x 21 inches

Maple Burl Vase, 2017

Maple

23 x 11 inches

Rhododendron Root Burl Sculpture, 2017

Rhododendron root burl

14 x 14 x 26 inches

▼ Shanti Yard; *Mountain Laurel Burl Sculpture, 2016 (detail)*; 26 x 30 inches



Jennifer Zurick

Drawing upon a variety of sources from contemporary Japanese basketry to traditional Native American techniques, Jennifer Zurick's black willow bark baskets are simple, yet elegant. Using bark from willow trees near her home in Berea, Kentucky, Zurick strives to imbue her work with life, creating an intermingling of nature and the human spirit that makes for a transcendent artistic experience.

Untitled #650

Willow Bark

10 x 9 x 9 inches

Untitled #653

Willow Bark

10 ½ x 6 ¾ x 5 ¼ inches

Untitled #722

Willow Bark

8 ½ x 6 x 6 inches

Untitled #764

Willow Bark

5 ¾ x 3 ¾ x 3 ½ inches

Untitled #772

Willow Bark

5 ¾ x 4 x 4 inches



▲ Jennifer Zurick, *Untitled #722*; willow bark; 8 ½ x 6 x 6 inches

Virginia Tech School of Architecture + Design, Center for Design Research

Under the direction of Nathan King, assistant professor of architecture; Mark Leach, wood shop supervisor; and Jonathan Rugh, wood shop craftsman, students in the Center for Design Research worked with Rwandan students and craftspeople in order to create a number of furniture prototypes, some of which are on display in this exhibition. These furniture pieces continue to be used and produced at the African Design Centre, a new fellowship program based in Kigali, Rwanda.



▲ Daniel Sanchez, *Nature's Gift*, 2016 (detail)

Also on view

Diana Cooper: *HighWire*, 2016
Grand Lobby

Gallery Hours

Monday–Friday, 10 AM–5:30 PM
Saturday, 10 AM–4 PM
Admission free

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