




Unique furniture with style

New Hampshire Furniture Masters

2012



About Us

Established in 1995, the New Hampshire Furniture Masters Association was formed with two simple goals in mind: to build public awareness of the state's master furniture makers and to cultivate an audience for their works closer to home.

Today, more than two dozen artisans in four states are realizing those goals, creating works in an array of styles and showcasing their juried pieces in a series of exhibitions, privately hosted house parties and the annual auction.

How We Work

The Furniture Masters typically approach a project in one of two ways: as a speculative piece with no buyer identified or as a commissioned piece developed in collaboration with a buyer. When working on a commissioned piece, maker and buyer work closely to determine the materials, style, functionality and budget for the work to make sure that it allows the maker to express his vision, while at the same time meeting the buyer's specific needs.

2012 Collection - See It Today, Own It Tomorrow!

Year round, members of the New Hampshire Furniture Masters toil in their studios, designing and building fine furniture. Some pieces are commissioned by clients, while others are speculative pieces created by the masters to demonstrate their creativity and exceptional skill in the art of fine furniture making. For 16 years, the Furniture Masters have showcased these creations in an annual catalogue that details the works that will go up for bid at the annual auction. With the 2011 catalogue, we instituted a new policy that underscores the “evergreen” nature of the masters’ pursuits. We have continued with this approach for the 2012 season.

The pieces depicted in these pages are a representative sample of the outstanding works created by the masters over the course of the past year. Unlike in years past, this publication does not necessarily reflect every item you will see in the September 22 auction. Some pieces have been made with the auction in mind, while others were created to be displayed during the course of the exhibition season. Every piece is for sale throughout the season and may sell at any point. Pieces may appear on the auction block on September 22, but they may just as easily be ensconced in a savvy buyer’s home by that time.

With this in mind, please enjoy this year’s stunning selection of works and remember, if you see something you like today, you could own it tomorrow!

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All photos are by Bill Truslow,
except where noted.



“Redbird,” a delightful cherry and curly sycamore table by Brian Reid, is one in a series of tables in which Reid plays with relationships between edge detail, leg design and the parquetry patterns of the top. The piece was inspired by a client seeking a wine cabinet. “I created half a dozen design samples before finding the right parquetry pattern with the right color palette,” Reid recalls. “Following the commission, I used the 20-inch square samples as design inspirations to create a series of tables, all inspired by Queen Anne furniture. The whole idea was to take a pattern and let it suggest variations in three-dimensional form, rather than vice versa.”



Stunning carpets to complement exquisite furniture

Shown above: Ginger Table by Brian Sargent and Hadji Rose Garden Rug are available now for purchase.

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www.persianrugsnh.com



A Message from the Chairman

“We thank Steve Duprey for allowing us to showcase our works in this beautiful, light-filled space.”

It's All about Momentum

This year has been a year of opportunities and accomplishments for the Furniture Masters.

Steve Duprey's generosity showcases NHFMA

Through the generous donation of gallery space by Concord businessman and passionate arts advocate Steve Duprey, the Furniture Masters now have a permanent display space. Our works are proudly displayed in the “Smile” Building at 49 South Main Street, within the Concord Chamber of Commerce's new welcome center and across from the League of New Hampshire Craftsmen's gallery. This location places us in a better position to connect with the business and arts community of Concord, as well as foster new relationships with people from across New Hampshire and beyond. The gallery provides us with a year-round venue for exhibits and events to promote the craft of studio furniture making in New England. We thank Steve for allowing us to showcase our works in this beautiful, light-filled space.

Building a community of support

Through our graphic designer Jacqueline Stahle of Think Design, we have launched the Furniture Masters' new website, which has already proved its value, as evidenced by the number of new people contacting the Furniture Masters through the site.

The gallery and new website would not be possible were it not for organizations like the Concord Chamber of Commerce, with its foresight as to what the creative economy will bring to Concord, N.H.

It is also through our sponsors' support that the Furniture Masters organization continues to grow. Their donations enable us to connect with the community through a host of exhibitions and special events, thereby creating a community of people that supports the arts in New Hampshire and the craft and tradition of making fine furniture in New England.

Brian L. Sargent
Chairman, New Hampshire Furniture Masters

NHFMA Gallery
49 South Main Street
Concord, NH

Photo by Brian Sargent



2012 Exhibitions and Auction

April 30–May 26

New Hampshire Art Association

Robert Lincoln Levy Gallery

136 State Street, Portsmouth, NH

Reception: Friday, May 4, 5:00–8:00 PM

August 12

Castle in the Clouds

455 Old Mountain Road, Moultonborough, NH

Reception: Sunday, August 12, 5:00–7:30 PM

August 22–September 19

New Hampshire Historical Society Exhibition

New Hampshire Historical Society's library

30 Park Street, Concord, NH 603-228-6688

Reception: Thursday, August 23, 5:30–8:00 PM

This perennially popular exhibition showcases the Furniture Masters' newest creations in the sophisticated surroundings of the Historical Society's elegant library.

September 22

Annual Live Auction and Silent Auction

Currier Museum of Art

150 Ash Street, Manchester, NH 603-669-6144

Reception and Silent Auction: 6:00–7:15 PM

Live Auction: 7:30 PM

The distinguished Currier Museum of Art is the setting for the Furniture Masters' ever popular live auction, a favored gathering for fine furniture aficionados throughout the region. This annual affair offers attendees a wonderful opportunity to obtain the finest studio furniture being made today!

September 28–30

The Gallery at Frenchman's Bay

1112 Main Street, Somesville, ME 207-244-1165

Reception: Saturday, September 29, 6:00–8:00 PM

This year marks the second annual showing of the Furniture Masters' works at The Gallery at Frenchman's Bay. Gallery owner Tyra Hanson presents the masters' creations in a beautiful gallery setting.



Photos by Steve Booth





"This beautiful ensemble of Arts and Crafts-style furniture began with a simple library table," recalls Furniture Master Thom Walsh. "Once I created that piece, everything else just fell into place." Everything else was actually a game table and two chairs, as well as four additional tables, all built of quarter-sawn white oak and designed to complement the original table. This lovely room graces a home near Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

Photo by David J. Swift

The New Hampshire Furniture Masters are full-time, professional furniture makers who demonstrate the highest degree of excellence as designers and craftspeople. This next section showcases the masters and their current pieces in the 2012 collection.

“With an alabaster complexion and ruby red highlights,
'Elizabeth' echoes the Golden Era and is a
quintessential reminder of my British heritage.”



'Elizabeth' Grandfather Clock

*hard rock maple, Andaman red padauk
14-1/2" deep x 25-1/2" wide x 92" high*

A tribute to Queen Elizabeth II's Diamond Jubilee this year, "Elizabeth" was inspired by Queen Elizabeth I. The maple seeks to emulate her well-known alabaster complexion and the use of Andaman red padauk mimics her striking ruby red lips, making "Elizabeth" as stunning in appearance as this formidable queen.

The diamond pattern commemorates the Diamond Jubilee and boasts 390 maple diamond squares, each centered with a ruby red padauk and polished brass dome-headed pin. The face features an intricate floral design inlaid with Canadian maple, Andaman red padauk, madrona, satinwood, boxwood, Purpleheart, holly and ebony veneers. A graceful swan neck pediment with center finial crowns the long-case hood, concealing the Franz Hermle eight-day, triple-chime movement.

The world-famous London clock tower that houses Big Ben is to be renamed Elizabeth Tower. This will be a historic moment in time; 60 minutes will celebrate Her Majesty's 60-year reign, giving the "Elizabeth" clock special commemorative distinction.

Gary Armstrong



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“Having the patience to allow each piece the time it needs to develop and be made is probably my best skill.”

Ted Blachly

Silver Chest II

curly sugar maple, cherry, mahogany
18" deep x 36" wide x 35" high

This is a second edition of a piece I made in 2002. I enjoy an opportunity to revisit the design and process of pieces I've made. Often I will make subtle changes to tweak a design and give it its own personality. I made some proportional changes here, making the case a bit lighter and with slightly longer legs. The composition of the wood can never be the same, but it is one of the joys (and challenges) of working with solid wood. This piece sits sweetly in a dining room, waiting for those few rays of afternoon sun. Figured maple loves that.

Private collection



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“A classic dry bar of the thirties,
redesigned and re-engineered.”

‘Speakeasy’

cherry, walnut, maple, slate
16" deep x 32" wide x 44" high

It took some figuring out and waking up in the middle of the night to get this piece working as smoothly as I wanted—and with 31 ball bearings as well! The elements that make this piece a bar can be removed for a different use.

To see this piece in motion, go to YouTube.com and enter
“The Speakeasy Aurelio Bognesi.”

Aurelio Bognesi



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'Ball Chair'

*white pine, varnish
24" diameter*

This piece was hand-carved from a single piece of pine and dried for two and a half years, and I exploited the natural checking of the wood by rounding into the cracks. This process complements the heavily textured surface with the smooth comfortable seat.



"My work reflects
a collaboration with
nature. I cooperate
with the chaos
of the forms I find in
the forests surrounding
my studio."

'Apparition'

*maple, birch, beech, varnish
24" deep x 27" wide x 98" high*

The Shaker-inspired natural form of the hardwood saplings is what defines the shape of this piece. As an artist, I select and discern how the shapes communicate "chair."

Jon Brooks



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"I have long been attracted to the challenge of doing refined work in coarse wood. While the journey can be difficult, the contrast is worth it."

John Cameron



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Crane Chairs

white oak

armchair: 23" deep x 22-1/2" wide x 40-1/2" high

side chair: 23" deep x 19-3/4" wide x 40-1/2" high

The initial idea for these chairs came to me while sketching in a gallery. Re-imagining a chair I had made 10 years ago, I drew it again with a Ming dynasty influence and arrived here...my version of a classical Chinese design.

Many of the details were not established in the drawing; instead, I found them as I worked the wood, allowing my eyes and hands to tell me when the shape was right. Tuning a curve, adding a facet, constantly looking and questioning as I worked, a sculpted fluidity emerged and the chairs came to life.



“The two chairs and coffee table that you made for us really enhance the beauty of our home. The process of working with you was great, and the end product is really fabulous and better than we could have imagined.”

– Alice and Barry

‘Flowers and Birds on a Mission’

cherry tinted with dichromate

22" deep x 27" wide x 31" high, 15" seat height

This reading chair merges design ideas from a recent commission with artistry from a dining room set made a couple years ago. The chair is Mission style but made with shapely curves instead of square lines. The theme for the decorative carvings is nature, bringing outdoors in, as has been my style for a while. The reverse coloration creates accents to the flower and bird carvings.



Jeffrey Cooper



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“While I use many hand tools to size, shape and smooth, my most important tools will always be hand and eye.”

Garrett Hack



‘Port and Starboard’

Douglas fir, cherry, rosewood, aspen, bone

painting by Carolyn Enz Hack

12" deep x 19" wide x 35-1/2" high

The beautifully faceted hulls of wooden boats fascinate me. So do wavy seashells and the bold patterns in the linear grain of golden Douglas fir. These elegant cabinets are a new iteration of the design ideas that I have been playing with for the last few years — three legs, complex curved forms and jewel-like details. This is how a maker for almost 40 years has fun with his craft.



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"I am pleased to be able to present this sofa table for the 2012 season, considering the demanding work of my 'Lambovich IV' commission, The White Mountain Breakfront."



Sofa Table

Cuban mahogany, mahogany and ebony inlays
14" deep x 52" wide x 32" high

The clean lines of this table are suitable for either a traditional or contemporary setting. The positioning of the legs at a 45 degree angle provides an interesting interplay of light and shadow. The result is a simple, yet elegant, design that could be useful in many situations where depth of space is limited.

David Lamb



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Sofa/Hall Table

figured maple, cherry
16" deep x 60" wide x 30" high

A third scale model of this table sat on a shelf in my shop for five years. My client and I decided to go with a new approach. I kept looking at it and decided to dust this thing off and make it, twice.

"On occasion, time is all that is needed to bring a vision into focus."

Wayne Marcoux



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Sideboard

figured maple, cherry
16" deep x 60" wide x 30" high

This sideboard has an orange slice pattern and suicide doors. Together, these two pieces make a nice set.

“A feast for the senses, this chair took 22 years to make.”

Easy Chair in Ebony

wenge, Macassar ebony, Amboyna burl, gaboon ebony lines, hard maple, poplar, upholstery by Joseph Portinari
29" deep x 35-1/2" wide x 46" high

The Easy Chair in Ebony is my darker, more exotic version of the mahogany Easy Chair No. 1 introduced three years ago. Inspired by Art Deco flash, I aimed to create a stylish and contemporary alternative to the easy chairs of the 18th century. Textured wenge arms and legs give a warm, weathered appearance of age, while golden Amboyna burl, combined with luxuriant multi-colored Macassar ebony, is right at home with the Deco vibe.



Tom McLaughlin



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Richard Oedel



Lakewood Console Table

*mahogany, fiddleback makore, crotch birch from
Lake Mooselookmeguntic in Maine
17" deep x 58" wide x 33" high*



My console or sofa table continues the tradition of the elliptical demi-lune tables of the Federal era. When I am fortunate enough to find an interesting piece of crotch birch, I like to use it in a design that takes advantage of the strong wood grain and the “light” that glows from within. The shimmering patterns of the fiddleback makore complement the birch, which was harvested by hand on the shores of Lake Mooselookmeguntic near Rangely, Maine, and then cut to a slice only 1/30th of an inch thickness in my studio.

“Ok, go be a furniture maker, but first swear
to me you will never make ugly furniture.”

– comment from Robert Whitley, nationally acclaimed furniture maker,
to Richard Oedel, then a student at the North Bennet Street School

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“The depth of grain that a beautiful piece of mahogany can have always amazes me.”

Philadelphia Lowboy

mahogany

21-1/2" deep x 33-1/2" wide x 31-1/2" high

This is a reproduction of a lowboy or dressing table originally built in the late 1700s. The pierced apron has lightly carved foliage that seems to flow from the carving on the knees. The intricately carved central drawer front, with its bold foliage and deeply carved shell, is carved from a solid piece, not applied. Topped off with a beautifully grained piece of solid mahogany, this piece stands strongly on its ball-and-claw feet.



Jeffrey Roberts



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“Textures have
always intrigued me:
the time seemed
right to start
exploring possibility.”



Brian Sargent



Ginger Table
*Honduran rosewood, Swiss pear, lacewood, walnut, hemp
20-1/8" deep x 22-3/4" wide x 26" high*

In this piece I am exploring texture as well as form.
The ginger jar influence in the shape of this piece grounds
the table. The strips of Honduran rosewood give it the
subtle texture of a basket. The artful nature of this table
would be eye-catching in any room.



“Class and pizzazz
in a small package.”



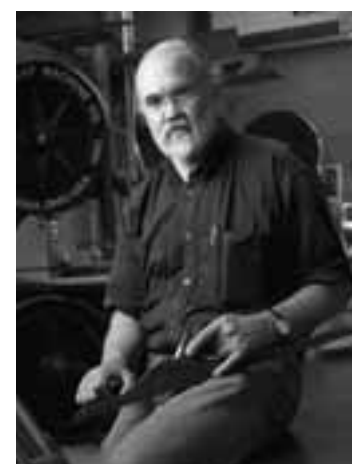
Boston-Style Chippendale Breakfast Table

mahogany

28-1/2" deep x 28-1/2" wide x 28" high (folds to 14-1/4" wide closed)

This little knockout is perfect for apartment living in 1760 or 2012. Although small, it is not a table that will be overlooked. It features matched boards for the top and single leaf, as well as cabriole legs with hand-carved claw-and-ball feet to give it that special elegance. Folded up, it could be placed next to a chair, but opened out it is perfect for a meal or a game of cribbage with your partner.

William Thomas



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Each year, guest artists held in high esteem as designers and makers of fine furniture are invited to participate in the Furniture Masters' exhibition season and auction. This year we also feature emerging artists, whose special talents and commitment position them as the next generation of fine furniture makers.

This playful table and chairs set by Jeffrey Cooper was commissioned for a house overlooking New Hampshire's Great Bay. "The clients see herons from the window and she feeds bluebirds, so it's a 'his and hers' set," Cooper explains. "His chair features heron designs on the back and both sides with one bluebird, hers has a bluebird theme with one heron in the design, and the table includes both birds. The pierced carvings and the use of color strike an informal tone, in keeping with the casual feel of the home."



'Valentine'

cherry, bird's-eye Swiss pear, mahogany
 16" deep x 44" wide x 31" high

Rather than making a traditional demi-lune, I created a half clover shape that gives definition to each apron and puts a modern twist on a traditional form. The idea evolved from a series of designs I have drawn over the last year. My goal was to create a piece that is modern in form, while maintaining a traditional feel that will fit in with any décor. To create the harlequin pattern, I combined the bird's-eye figure as the foreground and clear straight grain for the background.

"The inspiration for 'Valentine' came from my desire to make a piece that combined curved components with the contrasting hard lines of the harlequin pattern. The overall form and the colors of the combined woods reminded me of Valentine's Day."

Gabe Sutton
 Guest Artist



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“Design is everything!
Without good design,
the greatest craftsmanship
is wasted. Not all great
museum pieces are
the best craftsmanship.
It was design that
made them a treasure.”

– Wall Kunker
(submitted by Freddy Roman)



L–R: Freddy Roman, Bradley Wolcott, Greg Brown. Photo by Brian Sargent.

Emerging Artists

The Furniture Masters are proud to welcome this year’s class of emerging artists, all of whom have dedicated themselves to furthering the tradition of fine furniture making. The masters have watched these promising young artisans develop and have selected them as emerging artists because they have demonstrated the potential to become professional masters of their craft. Over the next two years, the jury will work with these artists to help them achieve full Furniture Master status. During their tenure as emerging artists, these individuals will have their work juried, just as the current masters’ works are juried for all exhibition and auction offerings.

Emerging Artists

Greg Brown

The Parlor Collection

mahogany, ash, upholstery

chair: 19" deep x 22" wide x 37" high

beverage stand: 11-1/2" diameter x 30" high

Samuel McIntire, one of the most influential American carvers of the 18th century, had a keen eye for proportion and flawless execution that lured me to recreate the legacy he left behind. The richly hand-carved mahogany arm chair and beverage stand incorporate a variety of Roman and Grecian elements portraying success and good fortune. The set provides a pleasing setting to entertain guests, while subtly captivating the viewer with its lavish carvings.

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Freddy Roman

'Simplicity'

cherry, ebony, holly, maple, poplar
 16" deep x 21" wide x 28" high

These two tables were inspired by two styles of furniture, the Shaker and Federal styles. The Shakers designed their furniture with clean lines, great uniformity and attention to detail. Federal furniture was made to appear delicate and highlighted by the use of stringing, inlay, banding and contrasting materials. These tables are my efforts at finding a balance between simplicity and elegance.

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Emerging Artists

Bradley Wolcott

Sideboard

cherry, holly, ebony
 17-3/4" deep x 41" wide x 38" high

This sideboard pairs bold details with subtle curves in a simple, yet elegant, form that would be at home in any setting. Thin ebony lines sharpen the contrast between holly and cherry, while the gentle bow of the front softens the geometric regularity of the doors and drawers.

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education

Education plays a vital role in both preserving and furthering the tradition of fine furniture making. The Furniture Masters continue to support the Prison Outreach Program and are pleased to further their involvement with the New Hampshire Institute of Furniture Making's Studio-Based Learning Program.

Jeffrey Roberts built this mahogany card table as a reproduction of a historic piece originally built in Philadelphia in 1771. "I built this table as a commission for a client that appreciates ornate 18th-century furniture," Roberts notes. "This might be the most intricately carved piece I've ever done. The construction of it was pretty simple, but I logged hundreds of hours at the bench shaping and carving. It was a lot of work, but also a lot of fun."

Photo by Jeffrey Roberts



“When two artists
merge in collaboration,
the outcome is
usually spectacular;
this desk gives merit
to that statement.”

Prison Outreach Program

Allen Eason and Eric Grant

18th-Century New England Secretary Desk

lightly figured cherry, poplar, brass

20" deep x 42" wide x 86" high

This New England secretary has dynamic proportions that create a well-balanced and pleasing desk. Some of the features include an amphitheatre interior, a delicately arched bonnet and flamed finials. Allen and Eric collaborated on every aspect of designing and crafting this secretary, which includes particular attention to selecting very wide and rare lightly figured cherry boards.



The Furniture Masters could not exist without the generous support of many individuals and organizations. It is because of their continued sponsorship and patronage that we are able to carry forward the rich tradition of furniture making to the next generation; we are forever grateful.

"I really like the design of this piece—a traditional, 18th-century Hepplewhite style," Sam Chase notes. "I like the curve of the front—it's simple, yet graceful." Chase created this beautiful mahogany chest of drawers with satinwood banding for a Furniture Masters auction some years ago.

Photo by John W. Hession, courtesy of *New Hampshire Home*

Acknowledgments

The generosity of people can be given in so many ways...

This year, as in so many years past, the Furniture Masters have experienced our supporters' strong willingness to give their time and expertise to the group, whether through the knowledge that Mary McLaughlin will always respond to our questions about the organization or that Lori Ferguson will go the extra mile for the group when deadlines are immediate. This willingness to support the Furniture Masters seems to arise from a shared commitment to excellence; the Masters are dedicated to creating the best-designed, highest quality furniture possible, while our sponsors, advisors and supporters are devoted to letting others know what we do best.

It is with great appreciation that we acknowledge Sy Mahfuz, Tony Hartigan, Arthur Clark, Bob Larsen, Geralyn Smariga and Roger Myers for their passion for this organization.

We are pleased to be back at the New Hampshire Historical Society again for our annual Auction Preview exhibition. It is through the generosity of the New Hampshire Historical Society and the help of Joan Desmarais and Wes Balla that we feel at home here.

You can also see this shared passion in the work of Jacqueline Stahle of Think Design, who designed our beautiful new website (which debuted earlier this year) and who again produced a stunning catalogue of our work. We also thank our photographer Bill Truslow for studio and portrait photography, Joan Bennett of The Write Connection for copyediting and J.S. McCarthy for printing.

Administrative assistant Sheri Keniston's enthusiasm for the Furniture Masters is likewise evident in her willingness to take on new challenges this year.

Finally, it is through the financial generosity of our sponsors and the commitment of the masters that the Furniture Masters will continue to be a part of the New England economy.

"I consider this award-winning design my signature piece," Furniture Master Thom Walsh admits. This stunning 86-inch long daybed features graceful "sleigh ends" that are formed in a vacuum press. Constructed of mahogany crotch veneer with a solid mahogany base, the piece is upholstered in a traditional method using horsehair and coil springs and features a hand silk-screened velvet fabric by Peter Fasano, a textile artist from western Massachusetts.

Photo by Thom Walsh



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Walnut Dining Chair by David Leach
Photo by Brian Gulick

A close-up photograph of a person's hands working on a piece of wood. The person is using a hand plane to smooth the surface of the wood, which is held in a workbench. The wood is light-colored and has some grain visible. The person's hands are wearing a watch on the left wrist. The background is a solid blue color.

Our Educational Mission

Education of the next generation of makers is among the Furniture Masters' most important goals. They blend inspiration, experimentation and tradition in an effort to cultivate and serve a growing community of students, apprentices and professionals. The masters' educational offerings include the apprenticeship-style Studio-Based Learning Program and the Prison Outreach Program, which inserts Furniture Masters into N.H. state prisons in Concord and Berlin to instruct inmates on furniture-making techniques. A companion program is being developed for the Maine prison system.

NHFMA is a group of professional furniture artisans committed to preserving the centuries-long tradition of fine furniture making. The association promotes the growth of fine furniture making, as well as the sale of fine furniture made by its members, by hosting exhibitions; engaging in collaborative marketing and educational activities; and partnering with museums, art organizations and galleries. The organization strives to uphold the highest standards of quality craftsmanship through a peer-reviewed jury system.

NHFMA Auction: September 22, 2012

P O Box 5733
Manchester, NH 03108
603-898-0242
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“‘Heaven and Earth’ was inspired by the clear night sky in the rural area where I live,” says Tim Coleman. An ethereal piece comprised of English brown oak and English sycamore on a roasted ash stand, it was created by Coleman in 2010 for the biennial Society of Arts and Crafts Artist Awards exhibit in Boston, Massachusetts. The star shapes are made using a novel technique in which Coleman cut the stars out of the surface layer of thick brown oak veneer, creating depth and shadow lines that would not have been possible with an inlay process.

Photo by Dean Powell

