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**Contact:**

Sasha Ali | Exhibitions Manager  
sasha@cafam.org | 323.937.4230 x25

## **SCRATCHING THE SURFACE: CONTEMPORARY WOOD SCULPTURE**

**January 27 – May 5, 2013**

*The Craft and Folk Art Museum presents an exhibition of nine contemporary wood sculptors*



*Can't Turn You Loose*, William Hunter, European olive burl, 2008. Courtesy of the artist



*Let the Sunshine In #9*, Pascal Oudet, oak and fishing line, 2012. Courtesy of the artist

LOS ANGELES — The Craft and Folk Art Museum presents *Scratching the Surface: Contemporary Wood Sculpture*, an exhibition featuring the works of nine contemporary artists whose unique sculptural forms capitalize on the naturally occurring textures and irregularities of wood. This international selection of artists includes Christian Burchard (OR), Todd Hoyer (AZ), William Hunter (CA), Art Liestman (Canada), Pascal Oudet (France), George Peterson (NC), Michael Peterson (WA), Merryll Saylan (CA), and Jack Slentz (NM). The exhibition is curated by Ray Leier and Kate Killinger Werley in association with del Mano Gallery and will be on view from January 27 through May 5, 2013.

Using both machine-cut and natural surfaces, each of these artists shares a proclivity for working with the grain of wood by reworking its surface via sawing, bleaching, sandblasting, and exposing surfaces to rain, sunlight, and dry heat. Their carving methods range from using the lathe to produce refined shapes, to using chainsaws for unpredictable abstract forms. Relying on a balance of approximation and accident, some of the artists are able to envision how the final artwork will look; while others let the material itself reveal the finished piece.

French woodturner Pascal Oudet uses sandblasting to dislodge the soft wood between the growth rings of the tree. The resulting sculptures are intricate with lace-like surfaces. Oudet describes, "I try to work with these characteristics, playing with the grain through various surface treatments (textures, sandblasting, scorching, colors). Most of the time, I have a precise idea of the piece I want to create, and then look for the wood that will render the effect I'm after."

Michael Peterson draws inspiration from the natural surroundings of the Pacific Northwest, where he lives and works. Working primarily with a chainsaw, he hollows and carves through damp pieces of wood, which contort into warped form and textures upon drying. "When starting a piece, it's not always best to know where it's headed," says Peterson. "Rather than thinking my way through a piece, it's more like feeling my way through it."

Jack Slentz and George Peterson look equally to the natural environment, as well as to designs in the urban landscape when developing concepts. Peterson often carves and paints into recycled wood from skateboards to incorporate an urban motif into his work. Slentz expresses, "The ideas for my artwork come from every day objects, things that we notice and take for granted. Some of the everyday forms I use, as points of departure, are manhole covers, storm grates, and seedpods."



Acrobat #3, Christian Burchard, Madrone burl, 2010. Courtesy of the artist

An opening reception for *Scratching the Surface* will take place on Saturday, January 26 from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. The reception is open to museum members and the public.

**PUBLIC PROGRAMS:**

CAFAM will offer exhibition-related workshops and events in conjunction with the exhibition. Other events will include CraftLab family workshops, held on the second Sunday of each month from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

Sunday, February 17 | 3:00 p.m.  
Artist Talk with Merryll Saylan

Sunday, April 21 | 3:00 p.m.  
Artist Talk with William Hunte

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Situated on historic Museum Row since 1973, the Craft & Folk Art Museum (CAFAM) is an invaluable contributor to Los Angeles culture, exhibiting current artists with intriguing perspectives and distinctive practices. Exploring the leading edge of craft, art, and design, CAFAM gives audience to diverse makers and artists whose work is often not represented in larger art institutions. The museum is a place to see art and make art — all under one roof. CAFAM coordinates a robust roster of hands-on workshops led by professional artists and makers. The intimate, atypical museum space and independent spirit at CAFAM combine to create an atmosphere of excitement and innovation, where people in Los Angeles deepen their relationships to art, creativity and one another. For more information, visit [www.cafam.org](http://www.cafam.org)

Location: 5814 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90036

Admission: FREE every Sunday

Regularly: \$7 for adults; \$5 for students, teachers, seniors, and veterans; free for CAFAM members

Hours: Tuesday-Friday, 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Saturday & Sunday, 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.; closed Mondays. Every first Thursday of the month, extended hours 6:30 - 9:30 p.m.