

The Center for Art in Wood: A Holiday Destination in Old City

By Bonnie Eisenfeld

The first time I visited the Center for Art in Wood I was awestruck by the beauty, uniqueness, and creativity of the objects on display, all crafted from wood, and I wondered why I had not known about this place before. Albert LeCoff, the enthusiastic co-founder of the Center for Art in Wood, who has promoted art shaped from wood for nearly 40 years, gave our group an hour-long tour, and his love of the craft was exhilarating and contagious. Le Coff expresses his love of art: “My work is constantly inspired by the new creations of working artists. My life’s work is exhibiting and documenting the work of artists.”

In 1986, after years of promoting the craft in his home, LeCoff, along with his brother Alan, founded the non-profit Wood Turning Center—now the Center for Art in Wood. The Center has been widely recognized by artists, collectors and scholars as a valuable resource for the education, preservation and promotion of art made from wood. The museum collection displays over 1,000 objects from around the world, including functional objects and contemporary sculpture. The Center has four or five special exhibitions in its Gerry Lenfest Gallery each year, as well as traveling exhibitions. In addition, the Center’s



Exhibit at Center for Art in Wood, Gerry Lenfest Gallery.

Len Scherock Museum Store features wood objects ranging from handcrafted collectors’ items to more affordable useful or fun pieces. The Fleur and Charles Bresler Research Library and Earl Powell Artist Research Files contain over 26,000 images, artists’ files and books on the subject of art in wood.

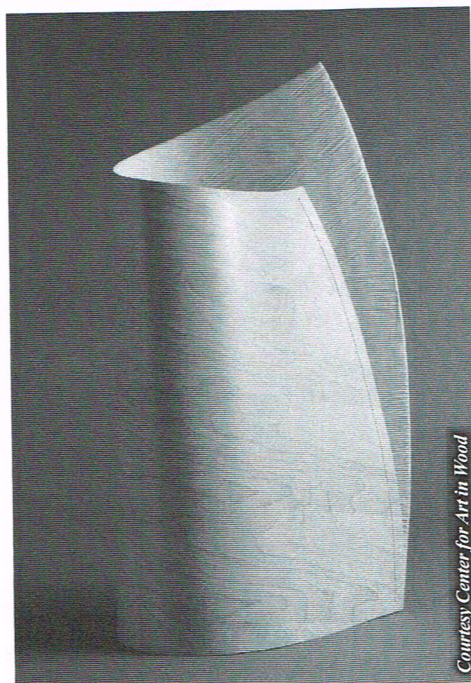
Each year through the annual Windgate ITE International Residency program, the Center awards seven prestigious fellowships to five artists who work either solely in wood or who work with wood in combination with other materials, one photojournalist, and one scholar/educator; fellows are selected from an international pool of applicants. For eight weeks, from June through the first week of August each year, the resident fellows live and work collegially

at the University of the Arts, exploring, researching, and collaborating on new pieces that are later exhibited at the Center for Art in Wood.

LeCoff has produced more than 20 symposia, 50 exhibitions and 15 publications on the subject of art in wood. In 2003 he became an American Craft Council Honorary Fellow and received the Collectors of Wood Art Lifetime Achievement Award. In 2008, the American Association of Woodturners gave him a Lifetime Achievement Award.

The Center for Art in Wood is located at 141 N. 3rd Street (near Cherry Street). Admission is free, and a voluntary donation of \$5 is requested. The gallery and museum store are open Tuesday to Saturday, 10a.m. to 5p.m. Memberships are available at a variety of levels. Members receive a discount at the store and many benefits, including the e-newsletter, *Turning Points*.

Events are held at the Center for Art in Wood during First Fridays. Join the email list to be notified of special events including artists’ lectures, gallery talks and presentations. For more information, please go to: <http://www.centerforartinwood.org/>



Malcolm Gaynor’s Bend II.



Daniel Hoffman’s Ram.