ARTS REVIEW

from the Wilmette Arts Guild ...to inform, stimulate and inspire

Summer/Fall 2018

Rita O'Hara

Rita O'Hara

"At Midnight-Let the Owl select his favorite refrain"

Rita paints and then reads Emily Dickenson for titles that illuminate the meaning. www.ritaohara.com

"Will there really be a morning"

"Was dying as she thought or different"

"When I at last awaken"

"We knew not that we were to live"

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All Species Photography

Bio Blitz Concept by Kevin Fitzpatrick

Bio Blitz is a short, intense team effort using photography and many tools to discover as many different life forms as possible in one location.

photo Kevin Fitzpatrick

Kevin Fitzpatrick

I am putting all of my efforts these days on working on Bio Blitzes across the country as a conservation photographer. My purpose is to shoot biodiversity in a way that people can see the species, very close so they can see all of the beautiful detail and color that they possess. When this happens their perceptions changes and these species take on a new life in their minds. They are now seen as an asset and so a apart of there world! To date I have shot over 110 Bio Blitzes from Maine to California. "Bio Blitz is much more than just a concerted effort to identify the species that live in a chosen location: It is a celebration of nature and the many wonderful forms that exist in any given place. When people of all ages and professions gather together to take a closer look at their local wildlife, a tangible excitement builds in the air. Bio Blitzes are very powerful tools for environmental education, conservation, and community engagement. They represent experiential learning at its best. Images from Bio Blitzes highlight the species diversity found in an area, but they also show people having a positive experience with their local ecosystems. Conservation is confronted with the need to integrate art and science, merging different but valid ways of perceiving and experiencing the world. Indeed, merging these different ways through direct participation in activities such as Bio Blitzes challenge or blur the artificial boundaries marked by our training. But what biologist doesn't feel the stirring of the profound, and what artist doesn't sense the geometry in the mystery? At our core we are humans, and the head and the heart are inseparable. What any of us are really trying to do is tell that compelling story about conservation; that is, provide an interpretation of the intersection of human history, the emergence of an ecological conscience, and biological integrity. A Bio Blitz is an opportunity to experience that intersection directly. I have worked with the ATBI (All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory) in the Smokies since it started almost 20 years ago where we have found over 1000 new species to science during the last years. ATBI projects are now starting up all across the country. The wonderful thing about Bio Blitzes is that they are all inclusive. Any one gets to go and play a part. Kids, parents, and grandparents you name it! I have worked with scientists for years and know how most people think of them. The Bio Blitzes allows people to work hand and hand with scientists in the field where they are in your element! They see how engaging, passionate and usually much fun to be with. Also many of the younger scientists are very interested in seeing the general public get in involved in science. I have worked with National Geographic on their Bio Blitzes including Saguaro National Park, Rocky Mountain National Park, Jean Lafitte National Historical & Preserve, Golden Gate National Park, The Mall in Washington, DC. The public was totally engaged and over 1000 kids were at each one! I have worked in New England with number of organizations that were working on their own ATBI Project. These included the Boston Harbor Islands where I worked on a project developed by E.O. Wilson, Acadia National Park and the Adirondack All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory.

photo Kevin Fitzpatrick

I would like to take the time to talk to any of you at length about using this concept in your community.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

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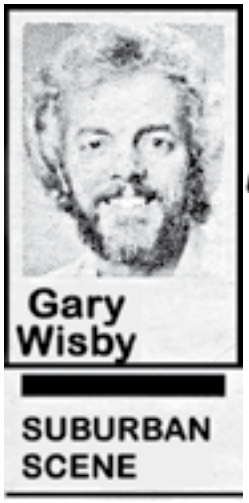
iLCP INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE OF CONSERVATION PHOTOGRAPHERS

Yurts in Wilmette

PAGE 22 OF THE CHICAGO SUN-TIMES, TUESDAY, AUGUST 2, 1983

Tassels and fetishes dangling from the curved ceiling of the yurt dazzled all who entered.

Photograph by Ken Lull.



Gary Wisby

SUBURBAN SCENE

A yurt is:

a. The portable home of a Kirghiz tribesman from the Tibetan highlands.

b. A showcase for North Shore women who like to weave.

c. A small container of yogurt.

Both "a." and "b." are correct.

Members of the North Shore Weavers Guild made the domed, round tent for display at a recent weavers' convention in a Cleveland suburb.

"It's a great vehicle to display a huge variety of weaving," said Sally Schoch of Wilmette, who helped think up the project.

"We're interested in all phases of weaving, from rugs to wall hangings to belts, clothing, pillows-anything with fiber."

Schoch saw photos of yurts during a session on weaving "environments" at a conference in Ames, Iowa, a year ago.

The tent, 6 feet in diameter and about 6 feet tall, is put together from homemade felt. The waterproof felt is made of fleece, which weavers who spin go through a lot of. But they use clean fleece in their work.

"Several of our members grow sheep, from Woodstock and around Barrington," Schoch said. "You shear off the top layer, which is fairly clean stuff. It gets rained on.

"What we got [for the yurt] was all the skirts from the bottom of the sheep, the leftover, dirty, filthy, awful stuff.

"It was a monumental job. We had to wash it in garbage cans, stirring it with huge broomsticks. There is nothing heavier than wet fleece." Each load required two nights of soaking in a soap solution, with a rinse in between.

Then the fleece was sent to a mill near Sheboygan, Wis., to be carded or combed. It came back light and fluffy, like quilt batting. Next it was pressed into felt.

"You lay it out, at least two layers one over the other, going in different direct ions," Schoch explained. "You wet it with boiling water, then soapy water, then cold water, to shock the fibers. You roll it, beat it unroll it the other vway and beat it again."

The beating mats the material and compresses it by about 10 percent.

The North Shore women beat it every which way: "We hit it with rubber mallets, we jumped up and down on it, we ran somebody's suburban van over it, we tried everything.

"We finally ended up in a Laundromat for a 'final washing. Everyone in the place thought we had lost our minds."

Perhaps half of the guild's 200 members worked on the project. One important contributor was Gunta Cepuritis, Kenilworth architect who designed the latticelike wooden frame.

The yurt is decorated inside and out with bags, bands, tassels, pillows, rugs and fetishes designed to ward off evil spirits. Because of the richness of accessories, every time the tent is erected it looks different.

Thus the domed domicile is ideal for the homemaker who constantly likes to move the furniture around. "It would be fun to live in one of them," Schoch said. "It changes each time you put it up."

Workshop participants learn how to teach weaving on an oversized backstrap loom.

Photograph by Irene Stoller

Yurts in Wilmette

A traditional yurt (from the Turkic languages) or ger (Mongolian) is a portable, round tent covered with skins or felt and used as a dwelling by nomads in the steppes of Central Asia. The structure comprises an angled assembly or latticework of pieces of wood or bamboo for walls, a door frame, ribs (poles, rafters), and a wheel (crown, compression ring) possibly steam-bent. The roof structure is often self-supporting, but large yurts may have interior posts supporting the crown. The top of the wall of self-supporting yurts is prevented from spreading by means of a tension band which opposes the force of the roof ribs. Modern yurts may be permanently built on a wooden platform; they may use modern materials such as steam-bent wooden framing or metal framing, canvas or tarpaulin, Plexiglas dome, wire rope, or radiant insulation.

Ed Oppenheimer discusses rug techiques with a student in his workshop.

Photograph by Vicky Cullen

Handwoven bands are tightned around the perimeter of the yurt's lattice framework by Ann Bliss.

Photograph by Irene Stoller

Hey Frey and John Guest stitch felted panels to the yurt's lattice structure.

Photograph by George Pope

"Yurt-wear" by Sally Schoch

These beautiful garments were designed from folk patterns in handmade felts using the "old ways" of making fabric that was both very warm and beautiful.

Yurts in Mongolia

photos by Laura Rodriguez

Anaïs Nin

"And the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom."

Wayne Brucar

Thank you so much W.A.G. artists for responding to our request for images to accompany this Anaïs Nín quote. Her words are so illustrative of the creative process that we all go through when we work, no matter which medium.

Part of the creative process seems to be the "filling up" until we can no longer contain the new idea. We have to spill it onto the paper, canvas, film, computer or whatever will receive our in-process thoughts.

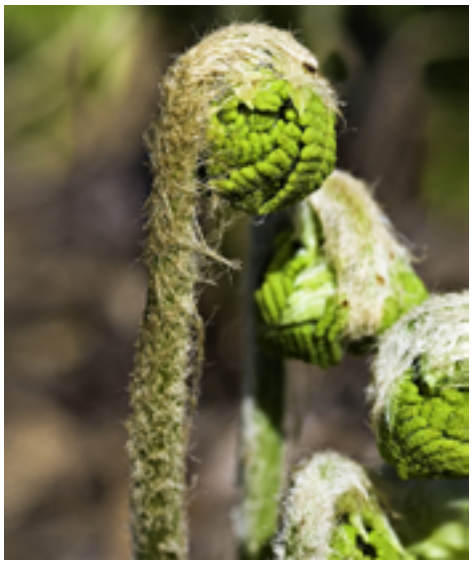
We have to see it apart from ourselves; chew it, mash it, change it or admire it as a separate entity. It needs to stand on its own. If we keep it inside ourselves it takes up too much cerebral space.
We start to mentally stub our toe, or choke on the next idea to improve it. Our work has to leave our heads.

Recommended Reading:

Flow -Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi
The Artists Way- Virginia Cameron
Annotated Alice in Wonderland
-Lewis Carroll -Martin Gardner
The War of Art- Steven Pressfield
"The Task of the Artist"
-Joseph Conrad's Essay
All are available online.

George William Olney

Patricia Abby Berg



Peter Nussbaum

Verna Todd

Patricia Abby Berg

Peter Nussbaum

Joseph Taylor Woodcut Prints

Joseph Taylor is an Evanston based artist/illustrator working in various media: woodcut prints, mosaics, oils and digital. He teaches Open Studio Painting at Wright College studied painting/printmaking at Indiana University, painting with Marion Kryczka at The School of the Art Institute Chicago, and woodcut prints with Julian Cox at the Evanston Art Center.

https://www.joetaylorart.com

The Great Wave off Kanagawa by Katsushika Hokusai-1832

Kinroysan Temple
Hiroshige-1856

Kabuki Actor
Sharaku-1794

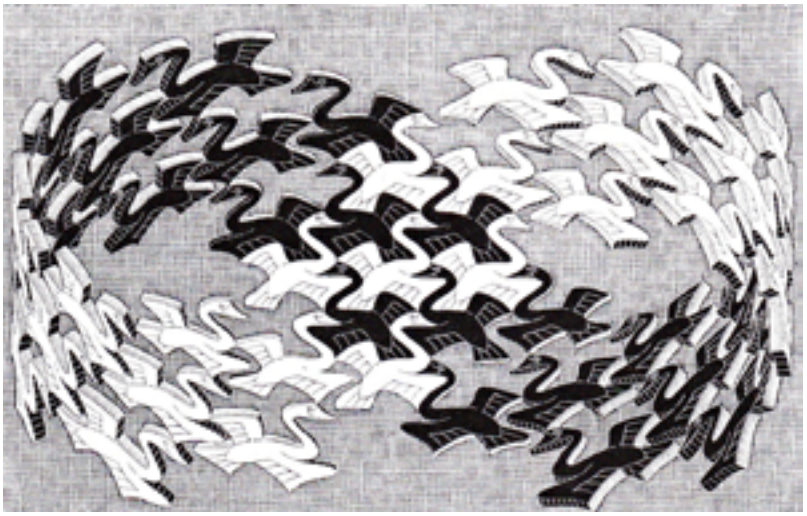
Double Shelf Stand
Harunobu-1766

Sudden Shower
Hiroshige 1857

Canary and Peony
Hokusai 1834

M.C. Escher Woodcuts

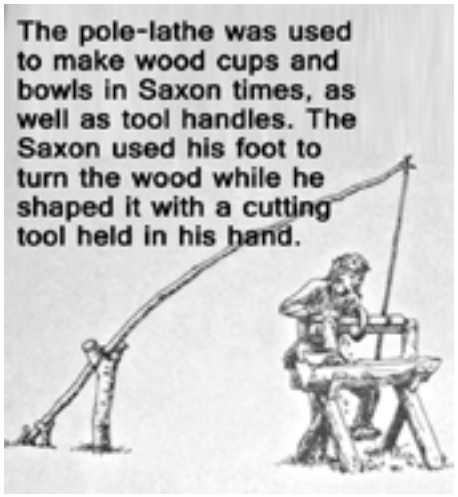
Tetrahedral Planetoid-1954

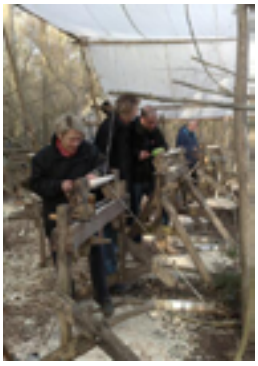


Swans-1956

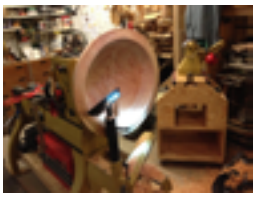
Wood Turning

Wood turning by Andy Kuby, President of the Chicago Woodturners Club





Wood turning has been around quite some time. The earliest references are in Egyptian illustrations of turning on a bow lathe, but the practice probably dates from much before that. Wood does not hold up well if it is not taken care of, and most turnings were utilitarian and well-used so they did not make it through the centuries. Many of the examples from Ireland and England exhibit multiple patches and repairs, indicating that they were treasured. Turned-wood articles continued to be mostly furniture parts, treenware and serving pieces until the 1940's. Early "professional" turners in Europe were known as bodgers. They used pole lathes to produce chair legs and spindles for "Windsor Chairs" and kitchenware. Bodgers traveled with only enough equipment required to construct a lathe as needed. The lathes and other equipment were set up as close to the wood source as possible, and the bodgers camped nearby until the jobs were complete. Treadle lathes, a contemporary example) made turning easier since the revolutions of the work were now continuous. In the middle of the 20th century, the craft of wood turning began to approach an art form and to be taken seriously. Those of us turning today have the benefit of learning directly from the mid-century masters. I have personally taken classes from some of the more important turners of the last century, as well as many of the world class turners who learned from them.



I first started turning in the late 1980's when a real estate development partner gave me a lathe, but it wasn't until many years later that I was able to devote the time required to develop a skill. There is always more to learn and many different ways to do everything. At this stage I finally consider myself experienced enough to be able to introduce others into the craft. The Chicago School of Woodworking is a huge resource.

I work in a studio in Riverwoods, Illinois, where I do primarily bowls, bowls roughed for later finish turning and bowl mounted on the lathe for finish turning. I use mostly native hardwoods which have been taken down for development or due to disease. The Emerald Ash Borer has provided me with more wood than I can use in many years. I sometimes travel with a chain saw, just in case, and always have moving blankets to protect the inside of my van. I am the President of the Chicago Woodturners Club (chicagowoodturners.com) which is an invaluable network for finding the wood, learning how to work with it and getting constructive feedback on what you did with the wood. Our club also provides educational opportunities in the community to schools, libraries, youth groups and others interested in the art and craft.

I have made bowls with natural edges, large salad bowls, and decorative bowls although I like the ones you can actually use the best. I also do goblets, kitchenware and tableware including platters which are in use every day in our kitchen.

Joining two pieces of wood together with threads is skill that allows me to create small acorns and urns along with a lot of useful items. Ornaments are made with hollow orbs so they are lightweight enough to hang on a branch without bending and Beads of Courage vessels are made to hold the beads which young cancer patients collect to commemorate their treatments. Often I just do a piece for the joy of creating it.

Turned tops by Carole Floate from the Ted Ressler Collection

Chip Carving with Wayne Barton

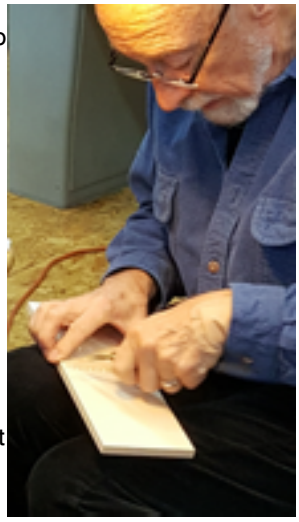
by Julie Ressler photos by Laura Rodriguez

At eighty this master carver, raised in Chicago, has stories on stories of a life dynamically spent in so many directions -psychologist, counselor to street gang members, circus performer, and during the Korean War the job he most treasured The Coast Guard! He was stationed in a lighthouse on Lake Erie off the coast of Toledo because of the treacherous shallows. He was thrilled to have the time to practice his carving skills in peace and quiet. He had to be ordered to take "liberty!"


Wayne Barton

He began as a five-year-old with his Norwegian grandfather and a 36" stick of poplar. Always shave downward on the wood, he learned, the strength of the wood lies in the grain. His grandfather told him to first remove the bark, then make it round, then make it square and then make it round again. With this simple exercise he began to feel the wood and has spent his life perfecting the feel. He prefers the title of Kerbschnitzer (notch carver) which has a more accurate feel to it than chip carver.

When he left the Coast Guard, he went to college and majored in psychology which he practiced in any number of jobs. He applied for a PHD and was rejected. He knew he was talented. He was devastated to learn that he was too old. That particular university was only interested in younger students who would do research and publish. He wanted to do therapy. He went into decline and lay at home reading history which has always been his solace.



The opportunity to study in The Wood Carving College in Brienz, Switzerland, the finest in the world! "Don't be putting it off!" he was advised. He thrived and became the first American woodcarver to ever have a forty-five-day, Special Exhibition at the Swiss National Museum in Zurich. They prepared a marvelous fete of roast ox on a spit and rösti smothered in Tilsiter cheese! Marvelous!

In 2005 he was named Premier Woodcarver in the US. Wayne is also a guest lecture in design at the Art Institute of Chicago.


MACHS NA (Imitate this!) Cathedral of St Peter and St. Paul, Bern, Switzerland, 1421

His best advice to artists: "You're never going to learn it all. Just begin and keep going." "Everything in your life has a purpose. It just takes time to see it."

Laura Rodriguez and Julie Ressler will be taking Wayne's Beginning Carving class
Oct 20 & 21, 2018

The Chicago School of Woodworking
5680 N Northwest Hwy
Chicago, IL 60646
(773) 275-1170

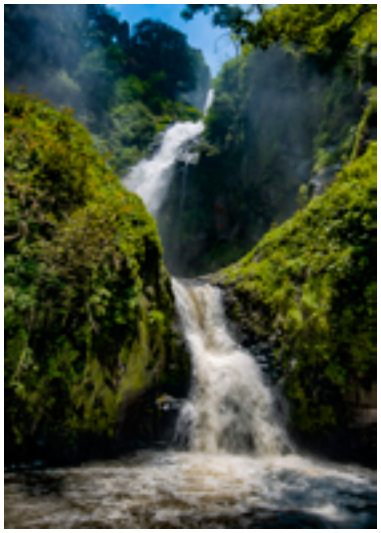
Zacatlán—Pueblo Mágico

By James L. Merriner

"His father-in-law said, 'If you make a clock I am going to eat it.' " Thus was launched the clock-making industry of Zacatlán, Mexico, as Mary Carmen Olvera Trejo tells the story.

Mary Carmen is an entrepreneur, artist, and all-around civic dynamo in Zacatlán, a town in the Sierra Norte mountains of Mexico. We are visiting during the annual Apple Festival, 2018 celebrating the region's major crop.

About 75,000 souls inhabit "Zacatlán de las Manzanas" (of the apples). Blue jeans and cellphones are everywhere, of course, but this corner of the West has not been Americanized. No McDonald's, no Starbucks. Everyone seems to greet everyone else with smiles and kisses. Cars on the narrow streets gladly stop for a procession on foot carrying a statue of the Virgin Mary; men passing on the sidewalks remove their hats.



And everywhere you look: Vivid colors, from pastel to gaudy. A turquoise pickup truck, an apricot VW Beetle, a two-toned orange house.

On the highway approach to Zacatlán from the Puebla airport, the hillsides are trimmed in blending shades of green from lime to olive to sage. Once in town, suddenly on the right the earth drops away into a massive gorge, 1,800 feet deep and punctuated by waterfalls. Mountains form the backdrop. Fog descends from the peaks and often settles into Zacatlán.

Just across the street from the promenade on the rim of the gorge is a view at least equally stunning—high murals the length of three football fields.

Mary Carmen Olvera Trejo led the murals project along with Trish Metzner, a mosaic teacher from Philadelphia. In 2014 a team of Mexican artists and volunteers began creating the artworks on the walls that flank a small hill, the site of the town's oldest cemetery.

The first 12 murals celebrate "Vida Eterna," Eternal Life. They show Biblical scenes, from the Creation through the Fall to the Resurrection, ending with the "Ángel del Apocalipsis" (with a plaque citing Apocalypse 22:16). Artistic depictions of these sacred scenes have filled museums in Europe and the U.S. for hundreds of years. Perhaps for that very reason, it is the originality of these murals that startles. Tiles and stained glass, along with pieces of salvaged and recycled materials, create a phantasmagoria of color. You have never seen the Fall, for example, rendered with such fluidity as Eve gracefully plucks an apple (in Zacatlán, an irony) from a tree while standing in a riot of flowers.

The next part of the murals honors Zacatlán itself. Apple trees, apples in baskets, even a rendering of the sixteenth-century San Pedro y San Pablo church placed inside a giant heart-shaped apple—all celebrate Mexico's largest apple and cider producer. Just a glance at any panel will telegraph the painstaking care and civic energy that wrought such munificence. Also, the effect obviously is informed by Mexican folk art.

Next is an explicit homage to that folk art—"Vivir en el Universo Nahuatl," Live in the Nahuatl Universe. Nahuatl is an umbrella term for many indigenous groups in the area, what we might loosely call Aztec. Indeed, these murals depict Aztec gods and rituals. Brilliant dragons, some in three dimensions,

Zacatlán—Pueblo Mágico

By James L. Merriner

Mary Carmen Olvera Trejo and her father
Ing. Roque Leonel Olvera Charolet

and multi-colored hummingbirds in flight, the souls of Nahuatl warriors who accompany the gods and kings. Some of the tiles are clear or mirrored, reflecting sunlight or car headlights in a flashing strobe effect.

The murals proceed down a curving underpass beneath the street, halting at an overlook on the gorge. There, a final mural on the right overflows into the ceiling.

The project was funded in large part by grants from the Wilmette Arts Guild. Already a cultural touchstone, the murals preserve images of pre-Columbian and traditional ways of life in the Sierra Norte de Pueblo region. At the same time, they exemplify the power of a community to create art while encouraging onlookers to explore their own creative potential. Still another purpose, of course, was to boost tourism in a woeful economy.

The latter purpose seems to be succeeding. Along the streets leading from the murals to the central plaza, shopkeepers stick hand-written notices on their walls: "Se Solicita Vendedora Activa," Energetic Salesperson Wanted. Empty stores have reopened; the storefronts are freshly painted, the colors seemingly chosen by throwing darts at a color wheel. The curbs are a fresh bright yellow as well.

Martha Olney, an economist from the city of San Luis Potosí, said after regarding the changes of recent years, even months: "This is a thesis! It is an excellent example of how a well-placed art project can become the center of an economic growth zone."

The stores offer clothes, hats, native handicrafts and other tourist wares, naturally, but also almost anything, even a selection of caskets. The vendors apparently have never heard of the hard sell. They come out to greet passersby, cheerily show their merchandise, but don't insist if you nod "no" and move on.

It is hard to imagine a place more removed from American tourist clichés about Mexico, what George Olney, an American expat photographer and Martha Olney's husband, defines as "sunny beaches, cheap tequila, and cheap drugs." In fact, Zacatlán is one of more than 100 towns officially designated as Pueblos Mágicos, places of natural beauty and cultural richness. As George Olney says, few Americans have even heard of them.

The cultural richness spills over in the central plaza during the apple festival, a two-week extravaganza held every August since 1941. Indigenous dancers perform in short-sleeved white blouses with lace and embroidered flowers which is a native dress known as a *huipil.* Others dance in floor-length, flowing dresses of many colors so vivid they almost cause eyestrain. In one dance a man wearing the costume of a wild boar enters to threaten the women. Fortunately, the male dancers subdue the beast and carry it off lashed to a pole.

Beyond the stage, vendors offer wares in booths or on blankets on the ground. As the locals say, "In Zacatlán you can have four

Itala Langmar-Apple Queen Yazmín Domínguez Juárez-Mary Carmen Olvera Trejo

Zacatlán—Pueblo Mágico

By James L. Merriner

seasons in one day." Harsh, high-altitude (elevation 7,000 feet) bright sun can give way to thundershowers in minutes. The vendors meet the frequent rain with aplomb. Never a hurried motion, never a wasted motion. The folks simply spread plastic tarps over their stuff and remove them when the rain passes, with no loss of good humor. Sharing the laid-back posture are dogs without leashes or collars. They roam about and lie on the ground at will. Nobody seems to mind.

In the center of the plaza is a sixteen-foot, double-faced clock made of flowers. Visitors tend to flock here for photos with the bell towers of the basilica in the background. All four hands of the two clocks are moved by a single mechanism. Such a marvel could only come from a famed Zacatlán workshop.

Which brings us back to Ms. Olvera Trejo and the promise to ingest a clock. Her great-grandfather figured out how to fix a clock on the wall of his parents' ranch house. His son, Mary Carmen's grandfather Alberto Olvera Hernandez, liked to tinker too. Olvera Hernandez left the ranch for Zacatlán. Having admired a British-made clock in a church tower, he vowed to make a clock himself. He had no training or even proper tools. "His father-in-law said, 'If you make a clock I am going to eat it.' "

Olvera Mechanical Clock ready to be moved to the Science wing of the Wilmette Jr. High School

Olvera Hernandez bought a textbook in French and fashioned his own tools. For instance, he converted a treadle sewing machine into a small bandsaw. By 1909 he created his first watch. "In 1918, he had a big clock. 'Please tell my father-in-law to come eat my clock.' " Olvera Hernandez was seventeen years old.


Olvera Clock Museum

Mary Carmen's father, Ing. Roque Leonel Olvera Charolet, joined the family business, the first clock factory in Latin America. Having completed his own first monumental clock in 1944, he sold the firm's clocks all over Mexico City. Meanwhile, four of his sisters moved to Zacatlán. One of Mary Carmen's uncles wanted to get in on the action.

This family saga calls for the talents of a novelist. One day Olvera Charolet went to work only to find out that the uncle had changed the locks. "My uncle loved money, my father loved work," Mary Carmen says without a trace of rancor. Needing his expertise, the uncle eventually called Olvera Charolet back to the firm, but then turned him out once again.

Today the clock factory is run by Mary Carmen's youngest brother, Jesus Clemente Olvera Trejo. Relojes Olvera III Generación has shipped large public clocks to countries in Central and South America and Europe. The workings are still mechanical, not electric.

In fact, such workings—handmade gears, bells, a pendulum can be viewed in an Olvera clock in the science wing of Wilmette Junior High School. The clock, nine feet tall, was presented by the Wilmette Arts Guild through the generosity of Dick W. Davis, an arts benefactor from California.

Back in Zacatlán, a museum in the Olvera factory shows off that improvised bandsaw and many other unlikely artifacts from the history of timekeeping. Near the entry hangs a large portrait of Olvera Charolet wearing a moustache, a soft smile, and a sombrero with a legend that captures the spirit of Zacatlán:

Encantado de haber nacido. Happy to have been born.

Zacatlán, O Zacatlán

A poem by Itala Langmar, inspired by her recent visit to Zacatlán

Zacatlan, magical town, your people
Are growers of apples, bakers of bread
Painters of extravagant walls
Your mountains embrace you in
Stately trapezoid drapes kissed by
A very ancient, comforting fog.

Zacatlan, magical town, your streets ascend
And descend in ribbons of pulverized
Stones surrounded by homes made up
In tantalizing hues: exuberant grays,
Spacious yellows, bloody wild reds,
Astonishing prosperous greens.

Zacatlan, magical town, your days unfold
In sunshine, rain, and fog over people
Patient, industrious, hard-working, who kiss
Welcoming you with smiles and papayas
Creative people, men in sombreros,
Women in shawls, children with flowers.
They carve, knit, and paint invisible
Fugitive dreams.

Zacatlán, O Zacatlán

...en español

Zacatlán, ciudad mágica, tu gente
Son cultivadores de manzanas, panaderos de pan
Pintores de paredes extravagantes
Tus montañas te abrazan en
Majestuosas cortinas trapezoidales besadas por
Una niebla muy antigua y reconfortante.

Zacatlán, pueblo mágico, tus calles ascienden
Y descender en cintas de pulverizado
Piedras rodeadas de casas compuestas
En tonos tentadores: grises exuberantes,
Espaciosos amarillos, sangrientos rojos salvajes,
Verdes asombrosos y prósperos.

Zacatlán, ciudad mágica, tus días se desarrollan
En el sol, la lluvia y la niebla sobre las personas
Paciente, trabajadora, trabajadora, que se besa
Recibiéndote con sonrisas y papayas
Gente creativa, hombres con sombreros,
Mujeres en chales, niños con flores.
Tallan, tejen y pintan invisibles
Sueños fugitivos

Images by Itala Langmar, inspired by her recent visit to Zacatlán

On the Importance of Titles in the Arts

Titles in the arts are worth considering carefully. Every piece of art is a statement. A good title can increase material value but also illuminate the artist's intended meaning. Shirley Engelstein's contemporary fiber art piece won "Best in Show" at the Chicago Cultural Center a few years ago, not only for its fine originality and careful execution, but the title was "Bridges to Sweden - A Tribute to Raoul Wallenburg", a man for whom all the world has respect and gratitude.

Bridges to Sweden
by Shirley Engelstein

One of the most successful novels of twentieth century was *Gone with the Wind.* The author, Margaret Mitchell, called it *Tomorrow is Another Day*. The editor knew better, came up with the title which is a classic.

Think about *Ulysses* —— how anyone would confuse Homer's Hero with Leopold Bloom is a mystery. Yet we must ask, "Why did Joyce choose this title?"

What about *The Charterhouse of Parma*? André Gide described it as the greatest of all French novels, while Henry James ranked it «among the dozen finest novels we possess». but the Charterhouse itself does not appear until the last page of a three-hundred-page book. Think about Somerset Maugham's *Of Human Bondage*, the autobiography of a medical student from 1900. What was the bondage about? Answer: the young man was always in love with someone who did not return his devotion. Not at all obvious as you read the book. Yet he was bound to suffer endlessly from unrequited love. So, titles can be important. Ideally, they provoke curiosity or clarify subtle meanings, like those mentioned here.

The other way to go is to make the title completely obvious like *David Copperfield* which tells the story of young David himself. Same with *Tristram Shandy* by Laurence Sterne (1713 – 1768) in seven enormous volumes, although that is a biography that doesn't have much to do with the eponymous hero. Rather it is about almost everything else in the world—- the progress of Tristram from conception on is merely a frame on which a long series of digressions hang. *Gulliver's Travels* says it all but the actual travels were a far cry from the ordinary sounding title.

In the first part of the twentieth century writers often chose titles from the Bible or Shakespeare. Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* The themes of T*he Sun Also Rises* appear in its two epigraphs. The first is an allusion to the "Lost Generation", a term coined by Gertrude Stein referring to the post-war generation. The other epigraph is a long quotation from *Ecclesiastes*: "What profit has a man of all his labour which he takes under the sun? One generation passes away, and another generation comes: but the earth abides forever. The sun also rises, and the sun goes down, and hastens to his place where he arose." Hemingway told his editor Max Perkins that the book was not so much about a generation being lost, but that "the earth abides forever." He thought the characters in *The Sun Also Rises* may have been battered but were not lost.

— A Collaborative Essay

by Everett Campbell and Julie Ressler

Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* takes the title of the novel from Macbeth's famous soliloquy in Act 5, Scene 5 of William Shakespeare's *Macbeth*:

> "Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow,
> Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
> To the last syllable of recorded time,
> And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
> The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
> Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
> That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
> And then is heard no more: it is a tale
> Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
> Signifying nothing."

Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls* is taken from the metaphysical poet John Donne's series of meditations and prayers on health, pain, and sickness (written while Donne was convalescing from a nearly fatal illness) published in 1624 as *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*, specifically *Meditation XVII*. Hemingway quotes part of the meditation using Donne's original spelling in the book's epigraph, which in turn refers to the practice of funeral tolling of church bells:

> No man is an Iland, intire of it selfe; every man is a peece of the Continent, a part of the maine; if a Clod bee washed away by the Sea, Europe is the lesse, as well as if a Promontorie were, as well as if a Mannor of thy friends or of thine owne were; any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in Mankinde; And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; It tolls for thee.

Pollock's Blue Poles

Titles like these seem to imply that "this is a serious work," somehow justifying a link to other important books,

The winner in the category "associative prestige" is certainly Damien Hirst who put a tiger shark in a tank of formaldehyde and entitled it "The Physical Impossibility of Death in the Mind of Someone Living" aka to the general public, "the shark in the tank." Many of the contemporary artists have selected titles to aggrandize their rather banal works or provide a context in which the work can be better understood.

The original title for Jackson Pollock's "Blue Poles" was "Number 11, 1952". In 1954 at the Sidney Janis Gallery, Pollack himself changed the name to "Blue Poles". The title seemingly grounding the work, distinguishing it from all the other drip paintings.

Ed Ruscha's "OOF" in 1962 inspired the gallery label" an "onomatopoeic" grunt of incommensurable monumentality. OOF is suspended between image, language, icon and absurdity."

OOF by Ed Ruscha

Sam Rodia and his "Watts Towers"

The art in the Lescaux caves needs no signature. The context provides all the validity needed for the beholder as does the Watts Towers in Los Angeles. These three towers of steel, cement, bottles and shells were built over a 33-year period.by Simon Rodia was originally called "Nuestro Pueblo." This was a case of the public choosing the name it found most appropriate.

This also happened with Rembrandt's "Night Watch" which had become so oxidized over the years that the subject matter was quite obscured. When it was finally cleaned there was no "Night" there!

The original titles "Militia Company of District II under the Command of Captain Frans Banninck Cocq," also known as "The Shooting Company of Frans Banning Cocq and Willem van Ruytenburch" seemed more appropriate but "Night Watch" stuck in the public's mind.

"La Giocanda" almost everyone knows is da Vinci's renowned an popularly known "Mona Lisa," so named by the famous artist and art critic Vasari.

Titles communicate. This can be from author to painter as well as the audience in general. One of the finest examples would be "Figure in Gold." Though not a physical likeness, Demuth created this portrait of his friend, the poet and physician William Carlos Williams, using imagery from Williams's poem "The Great Figure," which evokes the sights and sounds of a fire engine speeding down the street. The intersecting lines, repeated "5," round forms of the numbers, lights, street lamp, and blaring sirens of the red fire engine together infuse the painting with a vibrant, urban energy. Demuth derived the title from the poem, which reads:

Demuth's "Figure in Gold"

Among the rain
and lights
I saw the figure 5
in gold
on a red
firetruck
moving
tense
unheeded
to gong clangs
siren howls
and wheels rumbling
through the dark city

Andrew Wyeth's "Young America"

Compare Andrew Wyeth's "Young America" — a boy on a bicycle, happy, wholesome, 1950 - with Mauricio Catellan's "America" — a solid gold toilet at the Gugenheim, 2016. What a difference the title makes in these two examples of an artist using a visual image to represent America!
Both are completely realistic images. The toilet is conceptual art, not actually crafted by the artist's hands. The only thing to distinguish it from an ordinary toilet is the fact that it is made of gold.

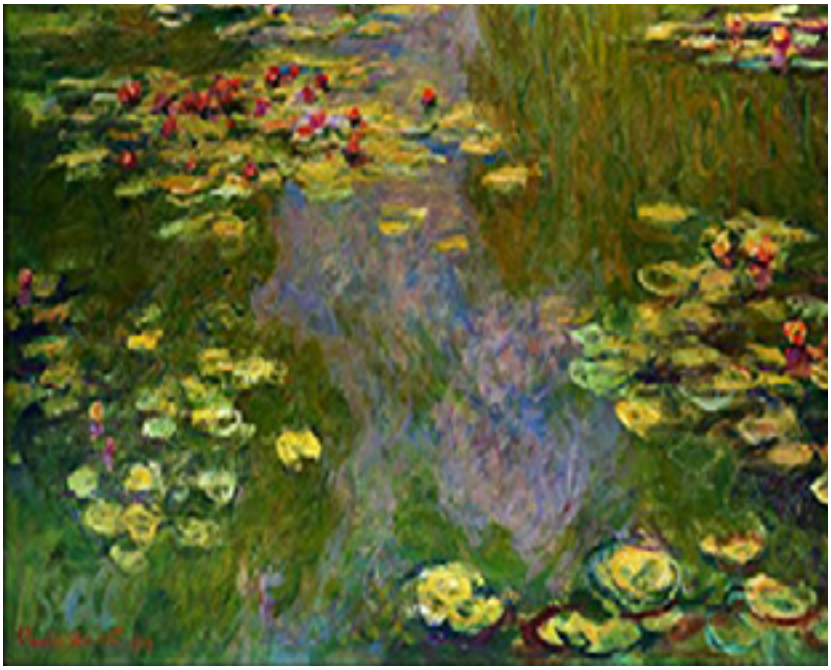
The "Young America" by Wyeth and the "America" by Catellan are both images that stand for the abstraction of what is America. If all you knew was the name you would have no idea what the image would look like, no visual clue is suggested. Instead it

Mauricio Catellan's "America" 2016

is the other way around, the image (painting or toilet) becomes a symbol for how the artist feels about America.

The importance of naming works of visual art started in the 19th century when paintings became commodities to be marketed instead of commissioned.

In the 20th century the title actually becomes the context. Without a name the viewer of many contemporary works would be at a complete loss.



Claude Monet's "Water Lilies," 1916, actually titled "The Gardens of Giverny"

Rembrandt's "Aristotle with a Bust of Homer"
We need the title to understand that this is no ordinary Renaissance man, but the great classical Greek thinker contemplating Homer.

The only record we have of artists providing titles came when the artist began painting works "on spec," as it were, which were *a priori* to having them sold. This is different from a patron, such as a king, pope, rich merchant, etc., hiring an artist to make a specific painting (portrait, bible scene, mythological characters, etc.). In such cases the patron would name a work whatever he wanted or perhaps some art historian would do so.

In the 18th century artists began showing works they did for themselves at annual salons. They named the works mainly for identification so that people could talk about them and write reviews. Titles were functional rather than contributing to the meaning of the work.

With the development of abstraction it was not at all obvious what the painting was about. Picasso's " Les Demoiselles d'Avignon " of 1906 would be hard to talk about without a title — like " what are we looking at?" Titles helped the viewer appreciate the work past the simple fact of identification.

Marcel Duchamp's "Fountain" 1917, signed R.Mutt

With the advent of conceptual art, titles really became an intergral part of the work. The urinal on its side by Duchamps is there to say "This is NOT an ordinary urinal lying on its side, it is now a fountain." That is an example of how the title provides the context in which to appreciate the work. The same is true of the shark in tank work by Hirst in which he is saying "this is not just a shark in a tank, it's metaphysics."

Picasso's "Les Demoiselles d'Avignon", 1906

Occasionally an artist may use a title not to identify the work, but to make the visual image stand for some abstract idea, such as Wyeth's "Young America". That, using a part to represent the whole, is what literary critics call metonomy.
To summarize, titles and how they apply to works of art is usually taken for granted. In reality, the development of how titles have evolved and are used today is interesting and worth consideration. "Untitled" whether 1,2 or 3 trivializes the aesthetic experience.

One of the most extraordinary examples in the history of art in which the title explains the work, where the visual and conceptual are integrated together is "Origin of the World" painted in 1866 by Gustave Courbet and hanging in the Musée D'Orsay. Look it up! Let us know what you think. (wilmetteartsguild@gmail.com)

THE SOUND IS THE RESULT OF EVERYTHING YOU ARE

by Julie Ressler for M.S.M. Souvenir Journal

There is a radiance that shines forth from Andrius J. Faruolo, violimaker. He is a man doing what he loves in the most perfect way that he can imagine. He is shy about his critical eye and very funny. He apologizes for his passion for correct spelling. His studio is a complex, fastidiously arranged collage of woods carefully stacked and drying, ironwood for Baroque bows, a basket filled with strips of different purflings (fig bark, corn husk paper, pear, apple and cherry bark, Madagascar ebony) mason jars of dyes (extracts of madder root and walnut shell for instance) and lacquers, calipers, templates and brushes. Tributes with affectionate inscriptions from grateful clients and newspaper articles about them decorate the walls. Andrius and his twin brother Alarik came East from Vancouver, Washington together. Alarik studied with Karen Tuttle at the Peabody Conservatory. Andrius attended classes with Itzhak Perlman. Although excellent musicians, Andrius was drawn into instrument making and restoration and Alarik is a superb bow maker." Itzhak kept asking me to make and fix things for the ten of us in his class. Can you imagine what it was like to land in New York right in the middle of these classes and the Meadowmount School? Amazing!"

Andrius Faruolo at work

Andrius Faruolo at Sotheby's

The two brothers had attended numerous art classes in drawing, painting, charcoal, pastel and carving. Their father as a young man had been apprenticed to Natuno, a mandolin maker in New York. He went on to a career in radio, but retained his love of fine instruments. Their mother is a playwright. "My parents met in Andrius Jilinsky's acting class."

Andrius Faruolo thinks he is able to make such fine instruments because he has the sound that he needs in his ear. He has the physical stamina and mental endurance to search for it in the instrument. "If that sound is there in your head, your hand and arm will find the right correction in the wood. It may take time but you'll find it. The sound is the result of everything that you are."

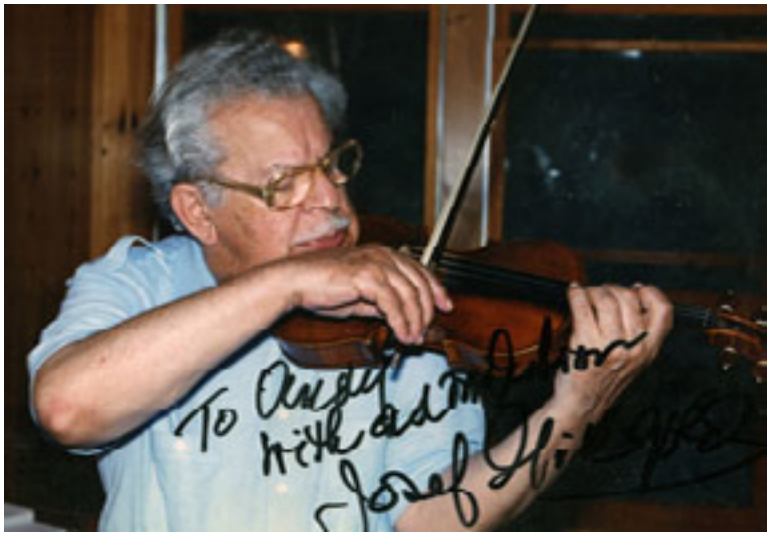
"This is a rough business - extremely physically demanding. Everything is done by hand. At Meadowmount I hate to have these talented players do too much because there is always the chance they will cut a finger. That will be that! A career shot!

My brother and I went walking through Germany and Italy knocking on trees to find good wood. We made several trips, We'd find someone with a chain saw, split the trees into wedges ourselves and ship them home. This took months but we have the most beautiful wood. I found that ironwood in Argentina when I was giving an instrument making seminar."

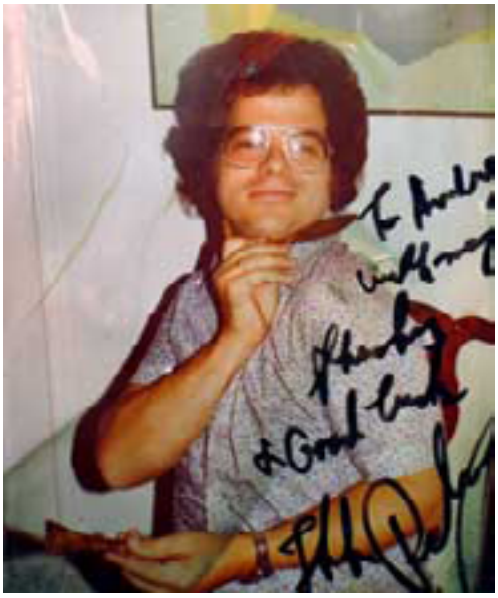
"The greatest time to be an instrument maker was 1750 in Cremona, Italy but right now is the second best time! We have so much knowledge available, so many of the right materials are at our fingertips. However, there is no electronic substitute that can match human sensitivity. Man, not his inventions, makes art.

"I love restoration. It's like having a textbook open in front of you. Great care has to be taken. The wood becomes very fragile. I am so amazed at the different characters and variety among the old instruments. I go all over the world for Sotheby's."

Andrius Faruolo's best advice to a young person interested in learning instrument making is to work in a shop or go to a school, take art lessons, lift weights. This is a very demanding art. You have to love it.



Josef Gingold



Itzhak Perlman

Chicago School of Violin Making

3636 Oakton St. • Skokie, IL • (847) 673-9545
http://www.csvm.org/

text and photos by Howard Frank

The Chicago School of Violin Making provides training in violin making to a diverse and international student body. Believing that string music greatly enriches our lives and communities, the school has three main goals: to produce graduates ready to enter the profession of making, repairing and restoring violin family instruments; to promote the highest levels of traditional craftsmanship to serve musicians and their instruments; and to build awareness of and appreciation for the art of violin making.

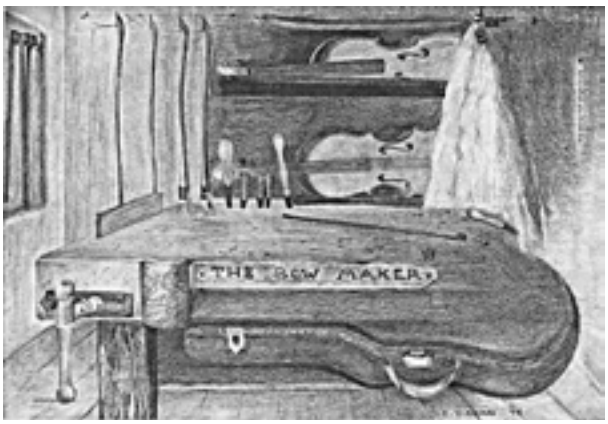
The school began in 1975, when the family of Kenneth Warren and Son recruited a talented employee to teach violin making. The Warrens recognized a need for trained professionals to work on instruments, and saw a violin making school as the best way to get there.

Tschu Ho Lee proved to be a fine choice to teach. He was and still is a Master violin maker, trained in Mittenwald, Germany. Mr. Lee began with 8 students, and soon had 16, housed at Kenneth Warren and Sons.

In 1983, Tschu Ho Lee took on the full responsibility for the school and moved, with about twenty students, to a building on the north side of Chicago. He remembers working 10 to 11 hours a day, teaching and continuing to make his own instruments. After many generations of graduates, the school moved again to its current location at 3636 Oakton Street in Skokie, IL.

A new chapter began when Mr. Lee retired. He left the school in capable hands, under the Directorship of his two teachers, Fredric Thompson and Rebecca Elliott. To ensure that the school would continue, they arranged to incorporate as a not for profit school. They formed a Board of Directors, with Board President Jim Zartman, who set up the school as a 501(c)3 entity. Mr.Lee continues to visit the school, checking students' work and showing them his newest instruments.

The Chicago School of Violin Making has been teaching students for 43 years. We now have more than 200 graduates in the field, working throughout the US, in Canada, France, Sweden, Korea, Singapore and South America on some of the finest instruments for both solo performers and musicians in top orchestras. Some have shops that provide instruments for young students. Some are fine makers. All together our grads have raised the level of workmanship on string instruments.



Joseph Krosnowsky Studio, Rye NY - drawing by Edna Dagan

Edna Dagan

Antonio de Torres Guitars

by David Collett
photos by Felix Salazar

Antonio de Torres, 1817-1892

David Collett-Guitar Salon International, Santa Monica, CA

The name of Antonio de Torres (1817-1892) is to guitarists what the name of Antonio Stradivari is to violinists. Taken as a whole, the corpus of instruments made by this legendary maker's hand are today regarded as the foundational basis of the modern guitar. The impact that these guitars have made on successive generations of luthiers is impossible to exaggerate – still to this day, most or nearly all of Torres' structural and tonal improvements are actively in use by all top contemporary builders. In Torres' own day, the leading players such as Julian Arcas and Francisco Tarrega were already performing on his masterpieces, and successive generations of players over the 20th century continued to play them. Although increasing values on Torres over the past several decades has resulted in their placement largely within sphere of collectors, they are still highly desirable to leading professional players and occasionally make their way into the recording studio or even concert stage. Pepe Romero, Stefano Grondona, Wulfin Lieske, George Sakellariou and Marc Teicholz, among others, have brought them to life in recorded and live sound and we all hope this trend continues in the future, especially as more Torres instruments come to the public's attention.

Torres' career as a guitar maker is typically broken into two phases, or "epochs". Conveniently, they are separated several years apart and take place in different cities. In the "First Epoch" we find Torres working in Sevilla – his first known guitar having been built in 1854, and his last in 1868. His second epoch began 7 years later back in his hometown of Almeria in 1875 where he built guitars continuously until his death in 1892. As has been noted by others, the disruptive "gap" between his two eras coincides precisely with a major civil war that would have injured Torres' prospects of having any reasonable livelihood as a "guitarrero" in a time of social unrest. Aficionados, experts and scholars of Torres' work have tried to attribute stylistic differences in Torres' work to the two epochs, but this is an ongoing debate as to precisely what these are. It does appear that the basic "Torres plan" was achieved very early in his career, suddenly, and remained his basic blueprint for the duration of his career. Differences that appear on a guitar-by-guitar basis seem to be based on matters having to do with: materials available to Torres, the budget of the client for whom the guitar was built, curious experimentation and artistic inspiration, the age or "size" of the client for who Torres appears to have had concern for the ergonomic details of his guitars. Perhaps it would be best to provide a couple of examples from each epoch to illustrate some of the variety of Torres' work, yet at the same time demonstrating the underlying unity and consistency of his purpose and direction in his intended aim of producing instruments of maximum musical sensitivity and beauty.

<u>First Epoch</u>

In 1862 he built a famously unique and unusual guitar – the back and sides being of paper mache (as opposed to the traditional woods normally used for guitars such as cypress, maple, rosewoods, etc). However his choice of unorthodox materials for use in a <u>structural</u> detail such as this seems to have made him curious to try some unusual materials for <u>decorative</u> purposes. Although Torres was known for using natural colors in the woods selected for his inlays, in this same year, he built another instrument using colored paper (bright blue and pink/red) for the inlay materials, instead of the traditional wood veneers found in his other guitars. This instrument is as unique in his output as the paper mache guitar.

1862-Antonio-de Torres-guitar

Torres was known for inserting a metal (usually brass) device called a "tornavoz" into the soundholes of some of his guitars. These appear more frequently in the First Epoch than in the second, as far as we know from his surviving guitars – some of the more famous examples being "La Leona" (FE04) of 1856, the richly decorated "Cumbre" (FE08)

of 1858, “FE13” of 1860 (previously owned by Miguel Llobet, 1878-1938 and Hermann Hauser, 1882-1952), and “FE17” of 1864 (famously owned by Francisco Tarrega and others), to name but just a few. More precisely, this curiosity called a “tornavoz” was a conical tube attached to the soundhole, which generally adds a sort of “sonic boom” to the lower frequencies in the bass registers, and gives the trebles a brilliant, sparkling clarity. Technically, this is achieved by the lowering of what guitar makers call the “body resonance” giving the overall sound a different character than guitars without a “tornavoz”. A great example of one Torres’ last known “First Epoch” guitars from 1868 features a tornavoz and can be seen here:

1868 Antonio de Torres SP/CSAR

Second Epoch

As much as Torres seems to have built guitars individually, one at a time - each of them being a unique creation with no deference to what preceded them, or what was to follow, there is, in the second-epoch, a cluster of several instruments made in 1887-1888 that share many common features and have become regarded as a very exciting “group” of “like” or similarly-related guitars. Some of the common features include a “chain” motif found in the rosette patterns, as well as similar proportions in body size and internal details to one another – almost as if they were being built for the same client, with small differences for varieties sake but in the by and large, unusually similar to one another given Torres’ tendency for great variety from one guitar to the next. Contemporary players in particular have been very attracted to this group of guitars as they are seen to be entirely “modern” in build, strength and sturdiness as any instrument being built today. These instruments invite a style of playing unto themselves that modern players find very comfortable and easy, with little need to “play gently” and with little concern for the instruments feeling “fragile” as some other Torres can (falsely it must be added) to many modern players. The most famous of these is “SE114”, which can be seen in a very famous photograph, being played by it’s original owner, the mighty Francisco Tarrega. Perhaps the most recorded instrument in this group is SE111 from 1887 – Italian guitarist Stefano Grondona has recorded many of his albums on this guitar. Two standouts that I have had the pleasure to broker include a favorite of Emilio Pujol, Domingo Prat and Miguel Llobet, which they named “La Italica” – this is SE 116 from 1888. Grammy-Award winning guitarist Andrew York became a believer in Torres instruments after recording several of his compositions on it. The guitar built just prior to “La Italica” and numbered SE115 was played for many decades by concert artist Matilde Cuervas, (1888-1956) and after her untimely passing, by her husband, the great personality Emilio Pujol, (1886-1980.) This instrument, now nicknamed “La Novia” by its current owner, also attracted the attention (again!) of Andrew York who delivered a powerful performance of his composition “Home” on this very guitar.

Francisco Tarrega, 1852-1909

Andrew York playing “Home” on an 1888 Torres guitar

In conclusion, it is simply astonishing to even look at the incredible variety of guitars being built in the centuries right up to and contemporary with the time of Antonio de Torres (this could be the basis for a completely different article!) But the key point is that it seems that every guitar maker in these times had no proverbial “shoulders to stand on”, and had to envision his instrument personally, and from scratch – “re-invent the wheel” - in terms of aesthetic and structural considerations. And as much as many of these guitars have their own individual charm and historically rich backgrounds, it is only with Antonio de Torres, starting in 1854, that we finally have the basic foundational blueprint for what we in the year 2018 still consider to be a “modern” guitar. All the variety of this bygone “wild west” of the past suddenly vanished when Torres entered the scene – in his instruments we find the perfect blend of proportions, dimensions, thicknesses of materials, arching/doming/bending of woods, aesthetic considerations – that simply became the standard to be copied. In these instruments players can truly find a vehicle for expressivity, ease of play and artistic freedom that was unprecedented in prior times.

(See next page for ways Torres Guitars are identified.)

Torres guitars today are identified in a number of ways:

There is a numbering system. In his second epoch, Torres himself started numbering his guitars. On these second-epoch labels, behind a printed "Secunda Epoca" or "Guitarra num" he would hand-write a number. Today we short-hand this to "S.E." or "SE". SE115 is therefore the 115th guitar built in the second epoch. In recent decades a similar system has been adopted to account for his first epoch guitars, using FE, followed by a number. Since we are doing this retroactively several new discoveries have popped up that need to be inserted between two already-taken numbers, so letters are used – for example, there is a guitar from 1867, numbered FE27. Since this numbering system has been in use, 3 others from the same year have appeared and are subsequently numbered FE27A, FE27B, and FE27C.

Some of the guitars have names. Torres himself only named one of his guitars – "La Leona" of 1856, also known as FE04. Others have been named over the past hundred or so years, such as FE19 "La Suprema", SE70 "La Invencible", SE72 "La Emperatriz", SE115 "La Novia" and SE116 "La Italica".

Some of the guitars are identified by their previous owners, aka their provenance. For example, if you see a reference to "1888 Torres, ex. Tarrega", this would be referring to SE114. Or "1864 Torres, ex. Tarrega" would be a reference to FE17.

All of the sounds of the guitars and artists and much more can be found on Youtube.com, a site of infinite resource and delight.

SAVE THE DATES

Scroll Saw and Fretwork

An interview with Michael Tipp

One continuous outline cut

Michael Tipp found the Scroll Saw and fretwork as a mature artist. He was in Lowe's and witnessed a demonstration. A few days later, he bought an inexpensive saw and went home to work. The next month he bought a more expensive one and then a year later bought "The Works." He says that when he is working he is in an altered state, an hour would pass in what seemed like a moment, which is familiar to all artists. He was in FLOW. This is a term coined by psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi at the University of Chicago when he was studying the creative process. The book "Flow" details the process. It is commonly called "in the zone," time out of time. It is super altered concentration focusing on a chosen task and probably needs no further explanation to almost all reading this. Michael found it relaxing and productive. He found that he enjoyed making puzzles, the astrological zodiac and fantastical creatures like hippogryphs, phoenixes and gryphons which became even more magical in cut wood.

Michael Tipp working onThe Cathedral

He used patterns from woodworking magazines and vendors. The most elaborate having 2800 pieces is Milan Cathedral, brilliantly designed by Pedro Rodriguez Lopez from Spain. To Michael's knowledge there are only a few others in the world. For other patterns go to www.finescrollsaw.com. Another is a super elaborate chess set and board designed by Ray Wilkens.

Michael says the figure of the wood is very significant. We would call it the grain in all its wavy coloring. Considering this is paramount when laying the pattern to be cut. Another tip is to allow the saw to draw the piece in, never push or it'll be ruined. For very elaborate designs he uses 3/16-inch birch plywood which can be bought down to 1/16 inch!

Michael Tipp's Peregrine Falcon

During the Victorian Era fret work used to be done by ladies with a handsaw, much as they would knit or crochet. Is that where the expression "Don't fret, dear," comes from? Fretwork was the darling of the Victorians and the Middle Easterners. It would give privacy and block the brilliant sunlight but allow the air to pass through.

Michael says when he finishes and steps back, he is always amazed and feels as though he had nothing to do with this lovely, complicated piece of art. He says, "Well, everything complex is made from a gathering of smaller simple pieces." He is too modest.

Duomo di Milano, Catholic Church in Milan Italy

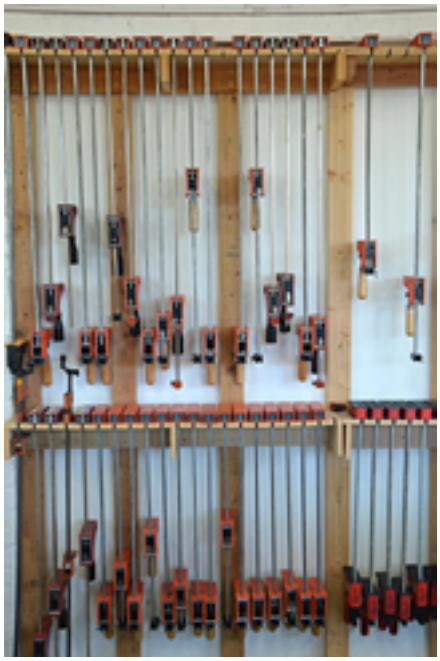
Chicago School of Woodworking

Julie Ressler
photos by Laura Rodriguez

Chicago School of Woodworking was established in 2007 to train students in the art of fine furniture making. Since then, its program has expanded to include the arts of turning, scroll saw, marquetry, Chip Carving, and speaker making and cabinet making.

Shaun Devine and Julie Ressler

Dr. Pat Garcia and her toolbox



The Tools

Rare Woods

Living wood - trees provide shade, cool the air and illustrate the movement of the wind. Burned it gives warmth and charcoal for drawing, ground up it gives paper, carved it records life and makes excellent cookie molds (springerle), provides man with boats and oars, flavoring barrels for wine and whiskies; in the past, Dutch with shoes. The best crochet hooks, looms and all manner of tools. Above all, it resonates and fills the air with tones of previously unimaginable beauty, raising man's spirit to the most breathtaking heights it can absorb and still live... Wood gives us instruments - music- without which we would crumple into mud-stuck lumps of earth.

Chicago School of Woodworking

5680 N Northwest Hwy
Chicago, IL 60646
(773) 275-1170

Instructors

Shaun Devine
Mark Hamester
Larry Anderson
Nick Artemakis
Wayne Barton
Rich Ordahl
Clint Stevens
Mke Tipp
Andy Kuby

Queenie

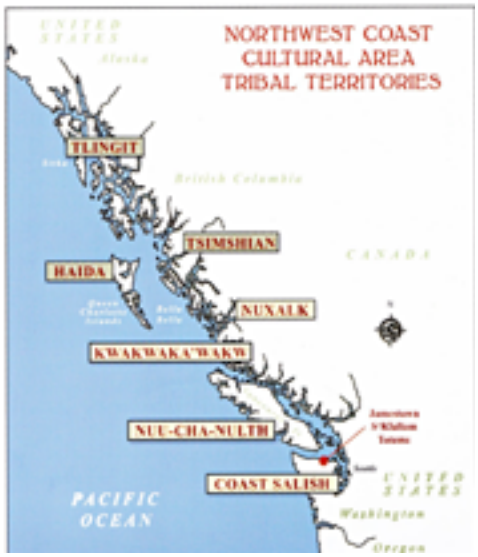
Queenie has been working at the Chicago School of Woodworking for ten years now. Shaun adopted her from PAWS when she was 9 months old. Her perceived duties include serving as a canine alarm clock for Shaun and defending the shop from every dog that walks past her door. Queenie also provides dog therapy for those times when you should have measured twice. She likes long walks and belly rubs.

Shaun Devine selecting her wood

The Shop

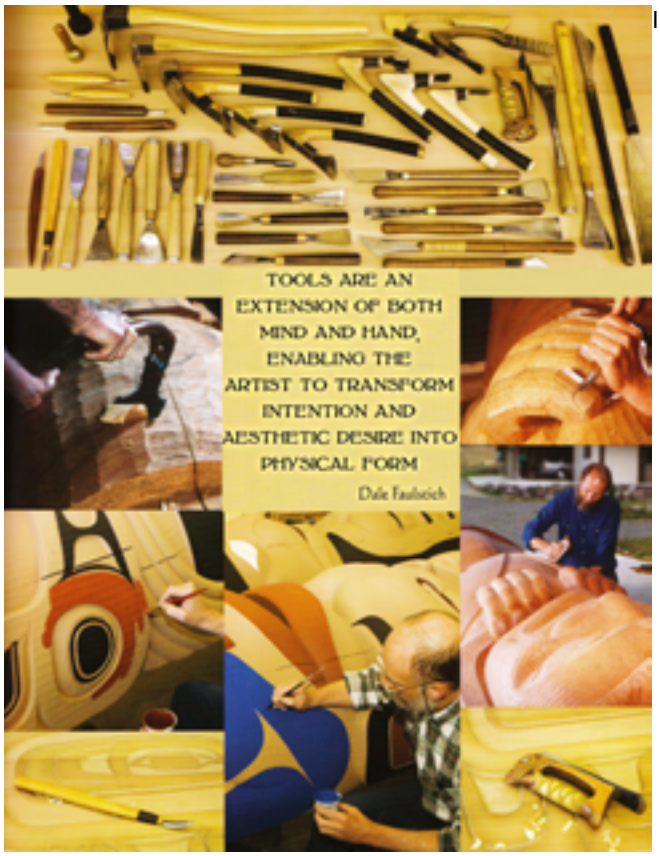
“Totem Poles of the Jamestown S’Kallam Tribe”

The Art of Dale Faulstich- A Discovery by Dick Davis



I was headed for Seattle, whizzing down Highway 101. I glanced to my right and behold- TOTEM POLES! I stopped but missed the entrance and drove in the exit.

I was virtually alone. The restaurant was closed but soon I found, Bud Turner, with a totem pole carving in progress, looking ever so much like an Egyptian mummy creation. He graciously showed me his workshop studio where he explained the use of different woods, red cedar, the old growth, the use of colors, black, red, green-blue, all earth tones. He adapted Indian designed tools into modern steel. One looked like a beaver’s tooth.



He explained that the different totems represented significant tribal stories and religious concepts in this unique native artwork. He strongly recommended buying *Totem Poles of the Jamestown S’Kallam Tribe* by Dale Faulstich, Joan Worley and David Woodcock. After looking through the colorful illustrations and reading a short, totem story or two. I bought three copies!

Better than I ever could, this book tells the stories of the strong people, the S’Kallam Tribe represented in their magnificent totems. One of my favorites is “Coyote and His Helpers” reprinted here.

(Book available at Amazon $14.95 or used $2.39)

COYOTE AND HIS HELPERS

Coyote prowled the shore of Sequim Bay one spring morning, as usual up to no good. He heard beautiful singing. Soon he came upon three lovely young women laughing and dancing on the beach. Instantly pricked by lust, Coyote watched them for a time, but when he approached they ran from him and jumped into the bay, embarrassed. Coyote gave up - for that day.

The next day Coyote was back, and there they were – three young maidens singing, dancing, and laughing. Coyote's desire grew stronger. Again he drew near them, and again they ran off to dive into the water. Coyote persisted, but after four frustrating days he grew angry. He turned for help to his two supernatural helpers, his constant companions - in short, his own scat.

"Little Brothers" he asked, "how can I get close to these women?"

After some discussion, his helpers gave their advice. "Coyote,' they said "you should sing the same song as the beautiful maidens, and dance the same dance. Begin singing and dancing a long way down the beach and move very slowly toward them as you dance. Perhaps this way the maidens will not feel so threatened by your approach."

It was just the kind of trick Coyote liked, but he was too proud to take advice well. "Of course!" he snapped. "That is exactly what I had already planned to do."

The next day Coyote tried his luck once more on the beach.

When he could hear the first notes of the maidens' song, he began to sing and dance. Very slowly he danced down the beach toward the women. Closer and closer.

By the time he was among them, he was infatuated, out of his head with love, and greedy for the pleasure to come.

But these maidens were no ordinary dancers. They were Seashell People, their home the bottom of Sequim Bay, and they changed into young women whenever they came out of the water to sing and dance.

They knew Coyote for a rogue and a trickster but pretended to be taken in by his ploy. One of them held his right arm as they all danced, another his left. The third danced behind him, rubbing his shoulders. This felt so good to Coyote that he didn't realize they were now dancing with their feet in the water. The maidens kept singing to him and laughing with him and dancing around him, all the while leading him deeper into the bay. We want to marry you and begin our honeymoon as soon as possible!" Smitten, Coyote didn't even know where he was until the water was up around his neck. He began to squirm and thrash around. Too late!

Coyote by Michael Francis

The Seashell Maidens pulled him with them down to the bottom of the bay. They held him there until he drowned.

Poor Coyote. For four days he floated face down in Sequim Bay. At last he washed up onto the same beach where he'd first seen the maidens. His friend Wolf, out for a morning stroll, found Coyote lying in the sand.

As wise as Coyote was foolish, Wolf said, "Well here's old Coyote. He must have tried fooling around with those Seashell People."

Wolf was a shaman, and he decided to help his friend. He searched the forest for medicinal plants, chewing on them as he walked back to Coyote on the beach. He spit the wad of plants he'd been chewing right onto Coyote's body and then recited some prayers. He stepped across the body of his friend four times. The last time he did so, Coyote woke up.

Coyote didn't know where he was or what had happened. Then he realized he was once more alive and growled, "Wolf, why are you bothering me while I'm asleep? I was having a nice little nap. Leave me alone!" He straightened up as well as he could, wrapped his dignity around him, and stumbled off down the beach.

Wolf watched Coyote walk away, and he laughed.

[Adapted by Dale Faulstich from vthe story told by Alice Williams, translated by Vi Hilbert in Haboo: Native American Stories from Puget Sound.]

Carole and Ed Schmidt Wooden Toymakers

Carole and Ed Schmidt had been designing and building these beautiful wooden toys for about thirty-five years. Ed designed and built and Carole finished them in their studio in Reynoldsburg, Ohio. Ed says that there are only five or six wooden toymakers left compared to the dozens when they began.

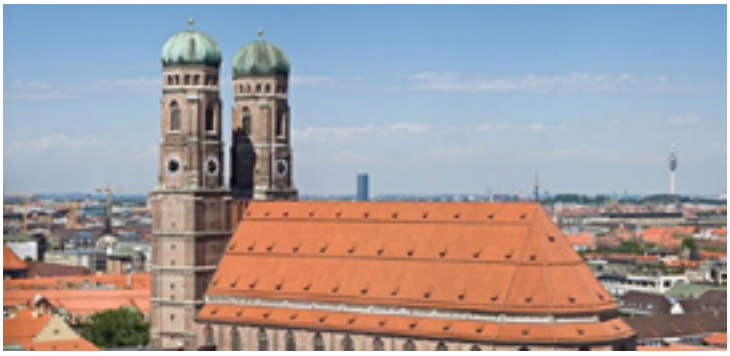
Ed used walnut, cherry, hard and soft maples and red elm. They were very careful that the exotic woods like bubinga, zebra, satinwood, and purple heart were not on the endangered list and they bought from reputable dealers. One of the most interesting is cardinal wood that is bright red with a pungent smell. Many of the shows that they exhibited in also had enforced regulations about what woods may and may not be used. Carole then applied DEFT nitrocellulose based lacquer that is child safe, dries quickly and protects the natural beauty of the woods. Each toy got two or three coats by hand depending on the absorbancy of the type of wood.

Ed and Carole kept the prices within reason $25 for an airplane up to $3500 for the Noahs Arc which has fifteen pair of carved animals! They took commissions from companies and a minimum of fifteen pieces. The road crusher was such a piece. Ed said he had a passion for machines since he was a boy working on a farm. Those big machines just seemed so wonderful to him. They seem so wonderful to us also and are the heartfelt delight of children of all ages.

Ed has retired, but has left a legacy of joy that will live in our hearts forever.

Ancient wood finds new life with Edmund Blöchinger

Posted by Reyes Gonzalez in Feature Articles,Luthier Spotlight,News



Munich Frauenkirche as it appears today.

Edmund Blöchinger's "Dome" guitar has a very intriguing back story, so we thought it would be a great piece of information to share with everyone. Among the fascinating details about this instrument, it is notably interesting that the soundboard comes from the spruce beams that resided for over 450 years in the roof of the Frauenkirche in Munich, Germany – probably the most iconic structure in that city that tourists today flock to with their selfie sticks and zoom lens cameras. From these antique spruce beams is where the story of this guitar begins.

Munich Frauenkirche "dome" with wooden beams exposed, circa 1945.

The roof of the Frauenkirche collapsed in 1945 after the allied bombings at the end of the Second World War, and large sections of the spruce beams were lying in the ruins. After two hard winters where much of this wood was used for survival by the inhabitants of this beleaguered city (mainly for fires to cook and stay warm), in 1947 a substantial amount of the remaining wood was salvaged by a violin maker named Franz Fuchs (1899-1975), who had seen the wood on a visit to Munich. Fuchs clearly had a keen eye to the special sonic qualities lying dormant in this precious wood. After Franz's death in 1975, his son, Gerald Fuchs (who is still alive today) inherited the remainder of the wood and has continued to fulfill the vision of his father – to find stringed instrument makers willing to use it and carry on the legacy and vitality of this amazing material. Indeed – 43 violins, 3 violas and 3 cellos have been built to date from this wood. This incredible story was the subject of a radio show that aired in 2013, and guitar maker Edmund Blöchinger, working one evening in his workshop, heard this story. He immediately contacted Gerald Fuchs and was fortunately able to acquire several of the best remaining beams for use in his master grade, concert classical guitar – the first to ever be done with this ancient wood.

Analysis of the annular rings dates the origin of the trees to about the year 1190. The trees were cut in the Bavarian alps around the year 1460 and floated down the river Isar to Munich where they were pulled out of the water and used in the construction of the roof of this church, which was completed in 1492. In other words, this wood is over 800 years old from the dating of its earliest rings, but was supporting the roof in this cathedral for 455 years, up to its destruction in 1945. During its centuries-long tenure in the roof of the church, it was absorbing the vibrations of the music that would have been performed in this sacred place – music from medieval times through the renaissance, baroque, classical, romantic and modern periods. Incredible to imagine the choirs, orchestras and chamber ensembles throughout the centuries whose sounds have been gently vibrating and therefore leaving their voices in this wood. Also, consider the vibrations coming from human speech – the countless sermons, weddings, baptisms, even funerals that would have taken place in this solemn structure – again, leaving their sound vibrations imprinted in this wood. And then the terrible destruction of 1945.

Edmund Blöchinger with Gerald Fuchs and two beams of the "dome wood"

Well, thanks to the courage and vision of Franz and Gerald Fuchs, the wood has now been given a new beginning to continue vibrating once again, not only in the violins, violas and cellos built over the last 70 years, but now also in this Edmund Blöchinger "Dome" guitar. This incredible wood, with so many stories dwelling in its grains, has been given a second chance at life.

Edmund Blöchinger "dome top" guitar

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Anaïs Nin

"And the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom."