

***Telling Tales***  
***WEM's 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Juried Woodworking Exhibition***  
**June 1, 2023 – August 27, 2023**

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## *Telling Tales: WEM's 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Juried Woodworking Exhibition*

*Exhibition features twenty-five artists whose work is a testament to the power of a well told story.*

**Malvern, PA** – The Wharton Esherick Museum (WEM) is pleased to announce the opening of *Telling Tales: WEM's 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Juried Woodworking Exhibition*, on view beginning June 1, 2023.

Stories allow us to make sense of the world, find new perspectives, and explore how we *want* things to be, even if that is very far away from how they are. We understand ourselves through the stories of others, and *everyone* has an impactful story to tell. *Telling Tales* acknowledges the importance of storytelling in Esherick's life and career through the exhibition of twenty-five artists whose work is a testament to the power of a well told story. Across a wide array of artistic approaches, *Telling Tales* showcases how skillfully and effectively wood can be used to tell stories drawn from the expanse of human experience and feeling.

First place winner Lucia Garzón's *Dad's Cart* not only tells an intimate and personal story of the artist's relationship with her father, but also explores the complex narratives and messages around labor, identity, and tradition that shaped her upbringing in a multicultural immigrant household. The ways in which the stories we tell shape our relationships is at the center of second place winner Suzi Fox's work. Dale Carnegie's book *How to Win Friends and Influence People* lends its title to Fox's sculptural reimagining of the clamp, a device designed to bind or constrict things together, while *Gentle Persuaders* uses hammers as a metaphor for the ways in which we communicate our ideas. Third place winner John R.G. Roth tells stories of changing climates, human activity in the landscape, and the ways we care for the earth through the creation of exquisite miniature worlds. Anna Hitchcock's *These Hands Are Getting Heavy*, the exhibit's honorable mention winner, explores what we expect from survivors of trauma and sexual violence as they tell their stories.



Lucia Garzón, First Place Winner  
*Dad's Cart*, 2019  
Wooden janitor's cart, caution sign, broom, video  
42" x 30" x 42"

These are just four of the narratives shared by the artworks featured in this exhibition, each of which use wood to tell stories that range from personal to societal, humorous to political, specific to universal. The writer and cultural anthropologist Mary Catherine Bateson has said that “the human species thinks in metaphors and learns through stories.” Each time someone enters the Studio, both words and wood allow us to learn new things about Wharton Esherick. As you spend time with the works featured in *Telling Tales*, the stories these artists share offer the same kind of learning, engagement, and revelation.



Anna Hitchcock, Honorable Mention  
*These Hands Are Getting Heavy*, 2022  
Basswood, 16" x 5" x 12"

**Exhibiting Artists:** Lucia Garzón, Suzi Fox, John R.G. Roth, Anna Hitchcock, Andy Buck, Peyton Dolin, Kagen Dunn, Carolyn Grew-Sheridan, Nathaniel Hall, Morgan Hill, Rob Hiza, Bob Holcombe, Danny Kamerath, Kathleen Kilanowski, Liz Koerner, Fernando Martinez, Rob Millard-Mendez, Matthew Olson, Colin Pezzano, Kara Beth Rasure, Peter Sandback, Peter Scheidt, Mark Tan, Janine Wang and Brian Skalaski, and Charles Wright.

**2023 Guest Jurors: BA Harrington and Adam John Manley**

BA Harrington is a wood artist, Professor of Woodworking, and Director of the Wood Center at Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP). Manley is a wood artist, Assistant Professor of Furniture Design and Woodworking at San Diego State University, and the co-founder of the contemporary craft zine/journal, CRAFT DESERT.

*Telling Tales* is a virtual exhibition viewable at [whartonesherickmuseum.org/programs](http://whartonesherickmuseum.org/programs) beginning June 1, 2023. The artworks selected for First, Second, and Third place, and Honorable Mention will also be on display onsite in the WEM Visitor Center, which is open during the Museum’s tour hours. Please note, all visitors must have advance tour reservations to enter the Studio. Details about visiting can be found at [whartonesherickmuseum.org](http://whartonesherickmuseum.org).

Many of the works showcased in *Telling Tales* will be available for purchase through the WEM store along with new jewelry and home-goods made by artists featured in the exhibition and a catalog featuring the work of all twenty-five artists.

**Related Programs:**

6/11/2023	2:00 – 4:00 pm	<i>Telling Tales</i> Member Opening Reception
6/20/2023	12:00pm	Virtual Program - Spotlight Talk: Lucia Garzón
7/18/2023	12:00pm	Virtual Program - Spotlight Talk: Suzi Fox
8/22/2023	12:00pm	Virtual Program - Spotlight Talk: John R.G. Roth

For program details visit <https://whartonesherickmuseum.org/events/list/>

**About the Wharton Esherick Museum:** The Wharton Esherick Museum, located just outside of Valley Forge Park in Malvern, PA is the handcrafted home and studio of Wharton Esherick (1887-1970), an internationally significant artist and leader of the Studio Furniture Movement. Esherick worked primarily in wood and extended his unique forms to furniture, furnishings, interiors, buildings, and more. His motto, "If it isn't fun, it isn't worth doing," is evident in the joyful expression of his work. A National Historic Landmark for Architecture, his hilltop studio/residence has been preserved much as it was when the artist lived and worked there.

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