

For Immediate Release
September 2018

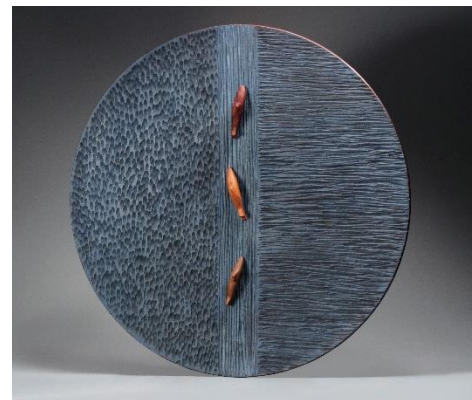
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Merryll Saylan: This is Your Life
November 2, 2018 – January 19, 2019
Curated by Glenn Adamson

Philadelphia PA: The Center for Art in Wood is pleased to present *Merryll Saylan: This is Your Life*, an exhibition celebrating the timeline of the artist’s career, curated by renowned curator, writer, and historian Glenn Adamson.

Merryll Saylan began turning wood in the 1970s. At that time, she was one of few women practicing woodturning as an art form. Saylan’s background in modern and contemporary design influenced her approach to wood, and unlike her contemporaries who gravitated toward exotic woods and distinctive grain patterns, she used wood as a blank canvas for creating compositions in color and texture. Her painterly approach lent a lyrical and poetic personal statement to her work, immediately setting her apart from her peers.



Guest Curator Glenn Adamson writes that Saylan’s work draws “sometimes humorously, sometimes poignantly— from the world of everyday things...her objects dwell right in that interesting space between unremarkable normalcy and aesthetic transcendence, which we all inhabit all the time.”



Merryll Saylan has been a practicing studio artist since the late 1970s. Her work is held in many important public and private collections, among them the Museum of Arts and Design, New York; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; the Smithsonian Institution's Renwick Gallery, Washington, DC; and Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT. Her life and work are documented in the Smithsonian Archives of American Art. Saylan is deeply involved in the art, craft, and woodworking communities as a maker, teacher, and writer, and she has served on the boards of American Association of Woodturners, Collectors of Wood Art, and The Center for Art in Wood.

Glenn Adamson is a curator, writer and art historian who works at the intersection of craft and contemporary art. Currently Senior Scholar at the Yale Center for British Art, he has previously been Director of the Museum of Arts and Design; Head of Research at the Victoria and Albert Museum; and Curator at the Chipstone Foundation in Milwaukee. Adamson's publications include *Art in the Making* (2016, co-authored with Julia Bryan-Wilson); *The Invention of Craft* (2013); *Postmodernism: Style and Subversion* (2011); *The Craft Reader* (2010); and *Thinking Through Craft* (2007), and the recently released *Fewer Better Things: The Hidden Wisdom of Objects* (August 2018).

EVENTS

CraftNOW Symposium | Nov 2 | 11 AM – 7 PM | University of the Arts Gershman Hall, 401 S. Broad St. Free and open to the public. Lecture by Merryll Saylan and Glenn Adamson at 1 PM

First Fridays | Nov 2, Dec 9, Jan 4 | 5 – 8 PM. Opening reception on Nov 2 | 6 – 8 PM

Gallery talk with Merryll Saylan and Artistic Director Jennifer-Navva Milliken | Nov 3 | 2 – 4 PM

Workshop with Alan Adler, An Introduction to Color on Wood | Sat, Dec 1 | 2 – 4:30 PM at the Center

Workshop with Merryll Saylan, Woodturning and Surface Treatment | Jan 17 & 18 | 10 AM – 4 PM each day | Dovetail Wood Arts at MaKen North, 3525 I Street, Philadelphia

Closing event and gallery talk with viewing of finished pieces from the workshop.
| Sat, Jan 19 | 2 – 4 PM at the Center

To RSVP for the workshops and for more information please contact Katie Sorenson, at 215-923-8000 or katie@centerforartinwood.org. Interested in bringing a school group? Please contact Lori Reece at lori@centerforartinwood.org



The exhibition program at the Center is generously supported by the Cambium Giving Society of The Center for Art in Wood, Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, Philadelphia Cultural Fund, and Windgate Charitable Foundation. Corporate support is provided by Boomerang, Inc., Penn State Industries, Signarama Center City, and Sun-lite Corporation.

CAPTIONS: Top, Center, Left

Merryll Saylan *Turning Sixty*, 1997 ITE. Photo by John Carlano

Swimming Upstream, 2012. Collection of Fleur Bresler. Photo by Kim Harrington.

Tea Set, 1997 ITE. Photo by John Carlano



Merryll Saylan: This is your Life is a featured exhibition in the celebration CraftNOW, which activates the city of Philadelphia in the days and weeks surrounding the Philadelphia Museum of Art Contemporary Craft Show.

Visit <https://craftnowphila.org> for details and registration.