

After Retirement, Lucinda Daly Reinvents Herself & Becomes a Professional Woodworker

From Sharp & to the Point

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Lucinda Daly with *Asymmetrical Movement*, an entry table Lucinda designed and built of madrone.

woodworking program. She is doing what challenges her and what she loves to do—woodworking. While most 66-year-olds are winding down their professional lives, Lucinda Daly's plan is to ramp back up, and to produce on a professional level in a highly competitive business.

No matter who you are, Lucinda's is an inspirational story, and one that's perfect to begin a new year with.

Please, read on! - *Linda at Hock Tools*

What struck me most upon first meeting Lucinda Daly while visiting the Krenov School was that she is closer to my age than her fellow classmates currently enrolled in our local fine woodworking program. I'm 67, Lucinda is 66.

Plenty of male students have been in their sixties when occupying a bench at the Krenov School but not so many women. And yet, here is Lucinda Daly, now in her second year of a demanding



Black Beauty, ebonized elm bentwood chair. 18" d x 18" w x 36" h. Tied for Best of Furniture award with *Beauty 360* (below) at Sonoma County Museum of Art's 2018 Artistry in Wood exhibit.



Entry Bench. Unfinished white oak with tapered bent laminations and coopered redwood seat constructed of redwood reclaimed from the ceiling of Moffat Field Air Force Base. 21”d x 42”w x 18”h.

1Q: What was your last career, how long did you do it, and when did you retire?

A: I taught Art at Edward R. Murrow High School in Brooklyn, New York for 10 years and then I moved to California and taught Photography at Berkeley High School in Berkeley, California for 18 years. I retired three years ago.

2Q: When and what made you decide woodworking would be a good career for you?

A: When I moved to California I bought a Craftsmen house in Berkeley. Coming from a small apartment in New York City I had only a few pieces of furniture. When looking into purchasing pieces, I found secondhand stuff that was sometimes well made but the styles were eclectic and didn't fit with my interest in the Arts and Crafts Movement. Quality antiques were unaffordable. Another idea was to go modern and buy from IKEA. Woodworkers sometimes call it "curb furniture." When it falls apart after a couple of years people put it out on the street, hoping someone will haul it away! I then discovered Berkeley Mills. They make limited-edition Arts and Craft furniture. My heart was set on this style and quality of work. But again, I couldn't afford it. That's when I decided to make it myself.

3Q: How did you come up with, or envision making custom furniture as a career rather than a hobby or avocation?

A: After filling my house with furniture, I wanted to continue working, so I began making things for other people.

4Q: Other than The Krenov School, what other means of woodworking education have you pursued.

A: For many years I studied woodworking at Laney Community College in Oakland. I learned technical skills and machine safety. I also took classes there with Jay van Arsdale and Marie Kline who introduced me to hand tools.



Above left: Hall Table. African mahogany , ebony, and maple., with aluminum posts.
11”d x 32”w x 34”h.



Above right: Asymmetrical Movement. Maple entry table . 12”dx 34”w x 34”h.

5Q: How is this different from a passion experiment?

A: Woodworking has become a lifelong passion. I intend to continue designing and building pieces as long as I can.

6Q: Who was your first influence in woodworking?

A: The first furniture makers I was inspired by were Green and Green, Macintosh, and other Arts and Crafts designers. But the person who has influenced me most is my dad. He did construction work for his career but always had a shop in the basement and built furniture, models of cars and trucks, and cuckoo clocks. He is now 91, and reluctantly but graciously has given up his shop.



Beauty 360. Circular cabinet adorned with lacewood veneer, mahogany edge bands, cedar, and kwila pulls, mounted on a mahogany stand. 21”d x 21”w x 48”h. The case is suspended with brass posts that have been antiqued and anchored with bolts and threaded inserts.

Awarded Best of Furniture at the Sonoma County Museum of Art's 2018 Artistry in Wood exhibit..

7Q: Who is your biggest influence today?

A: My greatest influences right now are Greg Smith, Ejler Hjorth, Jim Budlong, and Laura Mays the illustrious crew at the Krenov School! That said, I am also looking at the work of Silas Kopf. His marquetry is exquisite! My recent project is a Demilune entry table. The top displays a veneered fan of alternating hard-wood and sapwood fan blades in quilted maple. The piece was inspired by the Art Deco designer, Jacques- Emile Ruhlmann. I have also been influenced and encouraged by the contemporary furniture designer Michael Fortune from Toronto, Canada.



Above left: Demilune Sunrise , quilted maple, bubinga, and handmade brass pull. 13"dx 35"w x 33" h
Above right: Demilune Sunrise detail of brass pull.

8Q: How do you go about designing a piece?

A: I begin by looking at the work of others in museums, in books, and online. I make many quick doodles and develop some of them into more detailed drawings. I then create a quarter-inch scale model, full-scale drawings, and a full-scale mock up.

9Q: Have you built any custom furniture where the parameters come from someone

else?

A: I have a client whom I met in a wood-working class. She likes to have her hand in the process of designing the work. It's a fun collaboration and I have built many pieces for her lovely home.

10Q: What is your favorite tool to use, and why.

A: I enjoy working with curves and the spokeshave rules!

11Q: What's this year at school going to do for you?

A: A second year at the James Krenov School is allowing me to revisit the techniques that I have learned over the past year and hone my skills.

12Q: What's next, after The Krenov School, that is? And, how do you see yourself going about this business of custom furniture making?

A: Upon completion of my second year at the Krenov School, I will return to Berkeley. I intend to construct a new shop and aspire to work at the level I have achieved in Fort Bragg. I will continue working with current clients and connect with interior designers, gallery owners, and architects to secure work on specific projects for home and industrial design.



Drawing of work now in progress.

Thank you, Lucinda Daly!



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