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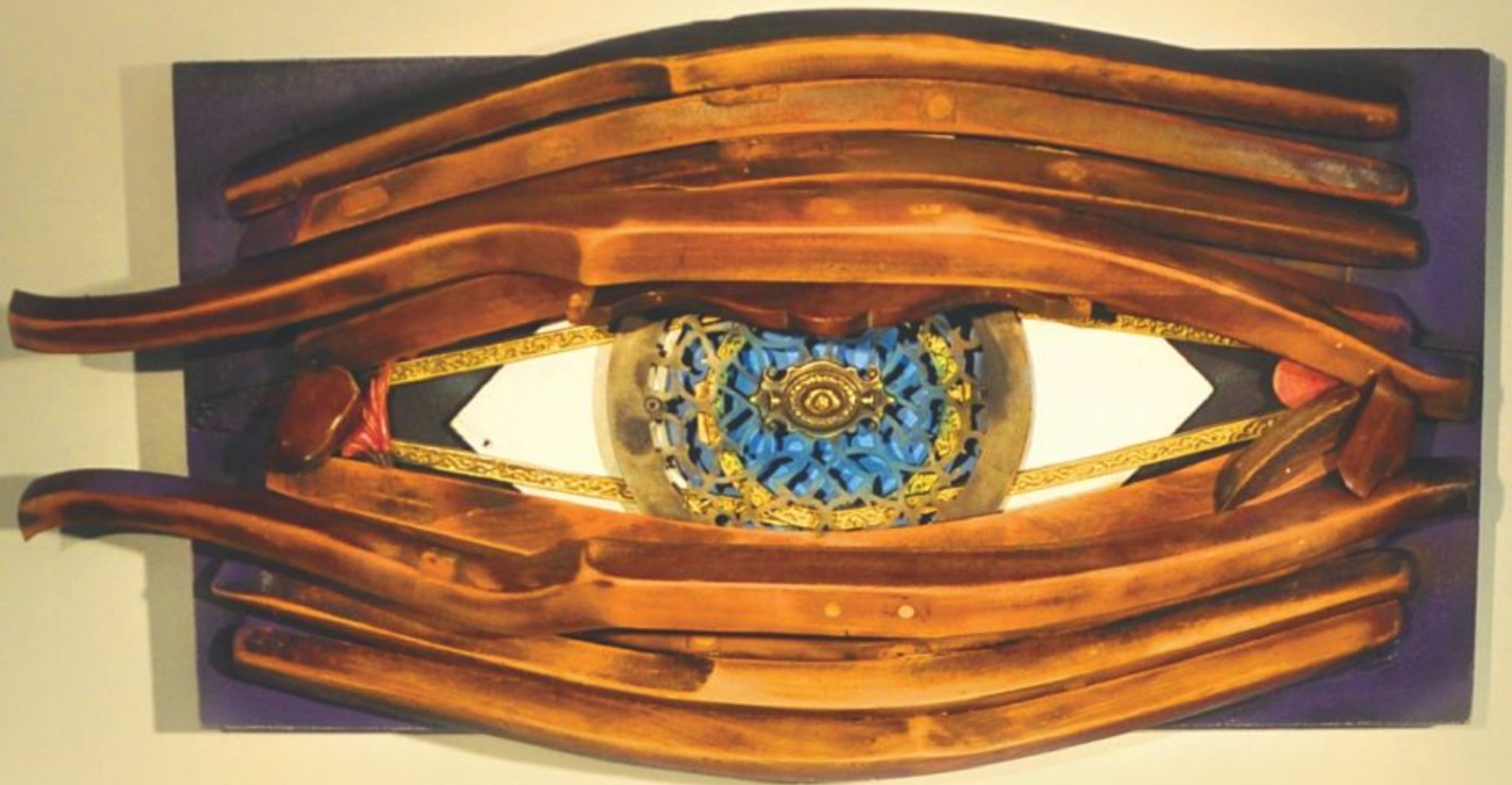


# COMMUNITY



*Variations in familiar themes in annual "Works in Wood" at New Hope Arts Center*

## Rooted in tradition



"Luminous 2015" by Adam Capone, is made from salvaged furniture.

**By GWEN SHRIFT**  
STAFF WRITER

Contributors offer entertaining variations on often-seen themes and techniques in a grand annual exhibit of fine and art woodwork in New Hope.

"Works in Wood" at the New Hope Arts Center is loaded with novelties, furniture, sculpture, wood paintings and mosaics; within a well-populated category of small works, artists fit boxes, plates, vessels, bowls and ornamental pieces of extraordinary accomplishment.

Chairs alone almost merit their own review. As in past years, woodworkers demonstrate that there's something about seating that brings out the quirky side of the artistic sensibility.

In terms of pure art, the field belongs to Adam Capone, David Washington, Michael Pascucci, Randy Liebowitz Dean, Michael Kehs and Brandon Spector.

Capone's "Atlas 2015," an enormous hanging piece depicting the head of a semi-mythical armored warrior, shows the master of reclaimed wood has taken to the air.

Capone has four works on view, elaborating not only on his mystical fascinations, but an ever-growing ability to discern expression in components of old furniture — and incidentally proving that he's had an

"Works in Wood" is on view through Dec. 13. Gallery hours are noon to 5 p.m. Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The arts center is at 2 Stockton Ave. in New Hope. Phone: 215-862-9606. Website: [newhopearts.org](http://newhopearts.org).

extraordinarily productive year. Kehs endows small, intricately worked objects with playful or serious subtexts, freighting a faux teapot with the latter. "Bitter Tea" is a tour de force of carving and decoration. The artist renders the body of the teapot as a beehive, its handle and spout of deer antler.

But it is a swarm of gleaming metal bees, lighting on the piece, trying to get in and trying to get out of the hive, that gives "Bitter Tea" its emotional resonance. The decline of bees threatens all plant and animal life on the planet. If the bees die, as so many already have, plants and animals will be hard-pressed to survive.

Spector shows wood mosaics, the illusionistic, quilt-like "Yin Yang" and the abstract "Cacaphony," made of salvaged pine lath. It's astonishing to see the nuances he produces from such a humble material.

See, **WOOD**, B2



"The Buckeye," is crafted of walnut and buckeye burl, by Chris Maher.

"Untitled 2" by Geoffrey Noden, is constructed of walnut, holly, red palm and cherry.



"Bitter Tea" by Michael Kehs, is constructed of holly, metal and deer antlers.



# Wood

Continued from Page B1

Washington and Pascucci render the human form in abstract style, the former positioning forms floating around each other in "A Love Supreme" and the latter analyzing exuberant life itself in "I Am, I Am."

Washington also is fortunate in discoveries of unusual pieces of wood. "A Love Supreme" is carved in one piece from a single maple burl, that is, a growth that is neither trunk nor branch. This one is spectacularly large.

Dean enters a piece that marries incised wood and painting; her "Uncover Color" is a textural, semi-abstract landscape that shows both techniques to advantage.

Birdie Miller's "wabi sabi" series of hanging wall cabinets bridges the gap between art and furniture.

The basic form is a utilitarian container for objects, sometimes with a door of polished wood, sometimes of deceptively rough old lumber. The artist crosses the boundary with the interiors of his shelves and cases, which explode with brilliant, almost fluorescent, oranges and blues.

Into a category of their own fall the works of Amy Puccio, who offers a collection of pieces in painted recycled wood to depict oversized handcuffs, a partly undone zipper, a corset and a chain door lock.

Furniture this year, for the most part, is cool and unostentatious, such as Chris Maher's "The Esherick," a monumental work composed of a huge slab of cherry atop simple, interlaced rustic legs; John Sterling's very Craftsmanesque walnut credenza; Andrew Michelson's serene buffet; and Prashun Patel's quiet cherry writing desk and walnut waterfall bench.

Other moods entirely are summoned by Walter Stephenson, who devised a poet's desk in a romantic welter of highly contrasting woods and an edge that follows the shape of the plank. His collector's cabinet is for someone who doesn't mind grasping a bare bone to open a drawer.

Even more audacious are two in a series of Charles Adams' outsized, chimerical "Guardian" chairs, with, variously, gaping beaks, insect heads, duck feet and ferocious ribs.

In this vein, Maher built a chair of walnut, buckeye burl and stainless steel, topped by a massive moose antler, which has a natural, off-center effect.



"Yin Yang" by Brandon Spector, is crafted from salvaged pine lath.

Small works are as energetic as the larger ones, especially Buren Gilpin's "Holly Flame," a deconstructed vessel that references fire in form and color.

Jack Schiller turns in a pleasing variation on the bowl form, shaping the rim in the form of a square cross. Other artists ornament their bowls with unusual and finely detailed inlay work, including Geoffrey Noden and Bryan Richardson, the latter continuing his fascination with thin slices of whole walnut shells set in epoxy.

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Phone: 215-862-9606. Website: newhopearts.org.  
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"Holly Flame" is by Buren Gilpin, in holly.

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