

# GREEN ART

Trees,  
Leaves,  
and Roots

E. Ashley Rooney with Margery Goldberg



**Other Schiffer Books by the Author:**

*Green Homes: Dwellings for the 21st Century*,

978-0-7643-3033-9, \$39.99

*100 Artists of New England*, 978-0-7643-3665-2, \$45.00

*100 Artists of the Mid-Atlantic*, 978-0-7643-3734-5, \$45.00

*100 Artists of the Midwest*, 978-0-7643-4105-2, \$45.00

*100 Artists of the Northwest*, 978-0-7643-4312-4, \$50.00

*100 Southern Artists*, 978-0-7643-4241-7, \$45.00

*Contemporary Boston Architects*, 978-0-7643-4221-9, \$50.00

*Bespoke, Furniture from 103 Artisans*, 978-0-7643-4226-4, \$50.00

Copyright © 2013 by E. Ashley Rooney

Library of Congress Control Number: 2013955867

All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced or used in any form or by any means—graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying or information storage and retrieval systems—without written permission from the publisher.

The scanning, uploading, and distribution of this book or any part thereof via the Internet or via any other means without the permission of the publisher is illegal and punishable by law. Please purchase only authorized editions and do not participate in or encourage the electronic piracy of copyrighted materials.

"Schiffer," "Schiffer Publishing, Ltd. & Design," and the "Design of pen and inkwell" are registered trademarks of Schiffer Publishing, Ltd.

Designed by John P. Cheek

Cover design by Justin Watkinson

Type set in Aller

ISBN: 978-0-7643-4548-7

Printed in the United States of America

Published by Schiffer Publishing, Ltd.

4880 Lower Valley Road

Atglen, PA 19310

Phone: (610) 593-1777; Fax: (610) 593-2002

E-mail: [Info@schifferbooks.com](mailto:Info@schifferbooks.com)

For our complete selection of fine books on this and related subjects, please visit our website at [www.schifferbooks.com](http://www.schifferbooks.com). You may also write for a free catalog.

This book may be purchased from the publisher. Please try your bookstore first.

We are always looking for people to write books on new and related subjects. If you have an idea for a book, please contact us at [proposals@schifferbooks.com](mailto:proposals@schifferbooks.com).

Schiffer Publishing's titles are available at special discounts for bulk purchases for sales promotions or premiums. Special editions, including personalized covers, corporate imprints, and excerpts can be created in large quantities for special needs. For more information, contact the publisher.

**Front Cover:** Many glimpses of the artists' work can be seen on the front cover. Identifiable ones are from Kim Abeles, Natalie Blake, Nicole Dextras, Howard & Mary McCoy, Mimo Gordon Riley, and Strijdom van der Merwe.

**Back Cover:** Hilla Shamia's *Wood Casting*. Courtesy of Giliad Mashiah.

# Contents

<b>Foreword: Trees, Leaves, and Roots by Margery Goldberg</b>	4
<b>Introduction</b>	6
1. New England	8
2. The Mid-Atlantic	24
3. The South	66
4. The Mid-West	94
5. The West	114
6. Pacific West	128
7. Other Countries	178
8. Where to Find the Artists	224
9. Resources	231
10. Publications & Awards	237
<b>Index</b>	246
<b>Acknowledgments</b>	247



## FOREWORD

# Trees, Leaves, and Roots

by Margery Goldberg

How do you begin to narrow down a foreword for a book about trees and artists who make art about trees? Hundreds of books are out there about trees and art. Artists think three dimensionally; writing is more linear and is a very different way of seeing things in your mind's eye.

## Trees in Our Lives

Trees are our partners on this planet. Without trees, we would not be here. They are gorgeous, productive, and long-lasting. Humans revere the majesty of trees and respect their value and incomparable contribution to our planet.

Trees can live without people, but people cannot live without trees. Trees are so smart they do not need brains. Trees cooperate better than any species on this planet. They use a tremendous variety of elements and species to propagate, even though they are capable of self-propagation; they avoid it by going to extreme lengths. There are 750 different kinds of fig trees and 750 different beetles that help each tree propagate. Each beetle knows its tree. Some trees have been around since before Christ was born; others are larger than football fields. Some trees are communities in and of themselves, with over 4,000 different species living in them, providing entire ecosystems for thousands of different varieties of life. We hear the sounds of their ecosystems teeming with life, we smell their fruits, and many species eat their nuts, fruits, and even their bark.

Trees can have a tremendous impact on the economy, internationally, nationally, and locally. However, trees do not have it easy; they have to fight everyday for light, water, nutrients, as well as fight against disease, bugs, natural disasters, and humans.

Nothing is more beautiful after they are dead or more useful than a tree. Trees provide heat, shelter, furniture, utensils, art, and even the boxes we are buried in. Treat trees well, and they can supply many of our needs. Treat them badly, and they can cause extraordinary damage, destroying our homes, cars, and even our lives.

The "Tree of Life" is a universal concept, a symbol for life in many religions. Trees are our ancestors and guardians. How we treat our trees is a metaphor for how we revere and cherish all life on this planet.

## Art about Trees, Leaves, and Roots

Since humans started creating art on the walls of caves thousands of years ago, nature was their prime subject. The artists in this book create art about connectedness and interdependence — individuals to trees, human to human, man to nature, individuals to community, and nature to life. Trees inspire uniqueness and relevancy.

Some artists paint them, others sculpt with them, and some even use them for fuel as a catalyst to create new art forms. There are as many different ways to artistically interpret a tree, root, or leaf as there are people. Many artists paint, using a wide variety of techniques and applications: oil, acrylic, watercolor, encaustic, mixed media, collage, photography. Some make woodcuts; fabric artists use a wide variety of materials; sculptors use wood or transform other materials into looking like wood or trees. Ceramicists and glass artists work miracles with their medium, turning glass into wood and trees. The list goes on and on.

I began sculpting, at a very young age, growing up in Rochester, New York, which is a hotbed for woodworking. I was surrounded by some of the finest woodworkers in the country. While in college, I began working with wood and that's when I found my medium. Whether I carve a single piece or laminate from joined and planed boards and then carve with a chain saw, disc sanders, die grinders, and a multitude of hand tools, I let the wood grain dictate the flow — guiding my hands that hold the tools. Like the ancient carvers, I believe we all enable the spirit of the wood to be released.

I've owned a gallery for thirty-five years, and I am constantly amazed and impressed by the creative mind, as well as an artist's ability to bring their ideas into a concrete form. This book is a tribute to the splendor of nature and the artists' inspiration.

Ann Morris creates people out of bronze leaves, resulting in a hybrid of people trees. Carol Newmyer sculpts in wax and then casts in bronze to make the human form look like trees. Peter Kephart uses a bonfire to create a completely random effect. After the burning, he uses a burning log to draw tree forms and embellishes with

pastels to put on the finishing touches. His art exemplifies how there are still ideas out there that the human mind is capable of developing into a stimulating work of art — not just about the uniqueness of the technique but a statement about our environment.

Most of these artists are making a statement about our planet, even if they didn't mean to. So much of art is unconscious; in fact, I have always contended that the mind often confuses the message the soul wants to express. In this technologically advancing world which finds many of us overwhelmed with social media and technology, working with wood and with ideas about wood grounds us and brings us back to the nature of being human.

Miriam Di Fiore masterfully created a glass egg with a forest growing inside, sitting on a piece of driftwood. Another artist whose glass technique I find mind boggling is Demetra Theofanous, who creates a nest and eggs out of glass. Susan Klebanoff extends our view of nature into three-dimensional weaving with mixed media. British artist Amanda Richardson creates appliquéd fabric tapestries, hand-dyeing and appliquing each piece to create a work

that appears to be a painting. Bradley Stevens is a masterful painter who understands light in nature. Linda Colnett captivates the viewer with her mixed media collage with trees in the foreground and comics in the background. Joan Danziger uses paper mache as does Stephen Hansen, but who would guess these are the same medium? Then there is a group that creates environments like Andrew Grant and South African artist Strijdom van der Merwe who first creates his environment and then photographs it.

Certainly, the creative mind is an exceptional gift, which is exemplified over and over again by the artists in this book, where nature and the creative mind merge.

*Margery E. Goldberg has been a major activist in the Washington arts community for more than three decades as an entrepreneur and the owner of Zenith Gallery, curator, activist, arts commissioner, guest lecturer, and wood and furniture sculptor. In 2010, she was honored for her contribution to the cultural life in the nation's capital at the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Mayor's Arts Award ceremony, where she was presented with the Excellence in Service to the Arts award.*

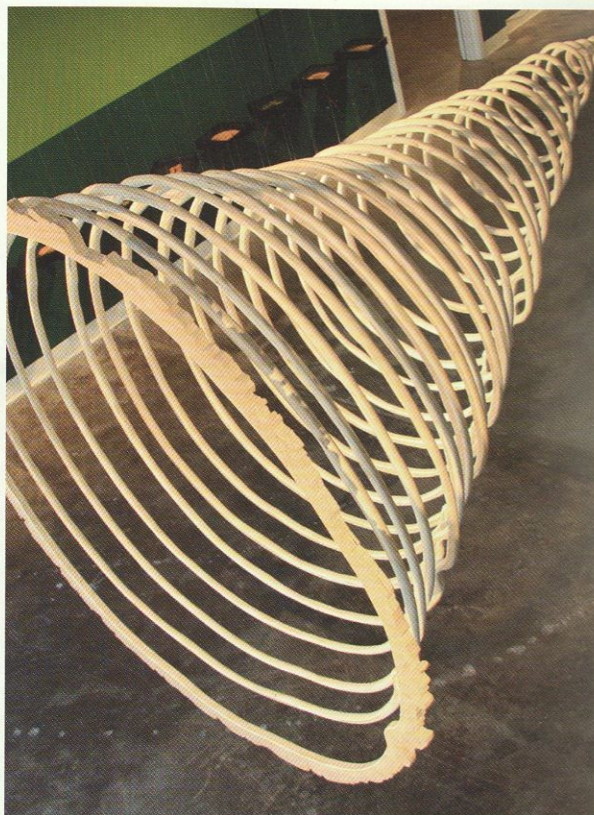
## Terry Berlier

Oakland, California

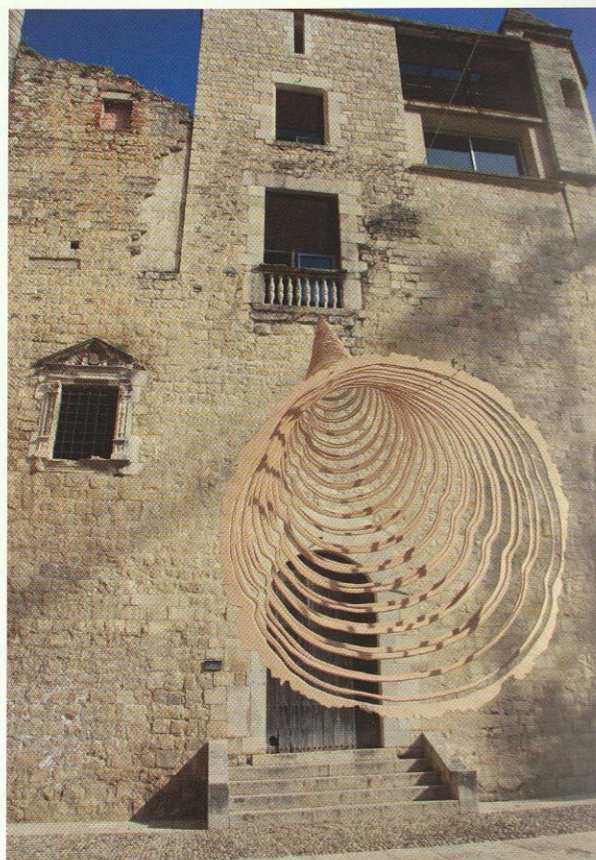
The memory of time and history preserved in the natural environment surrounding us is a major theme in my visual art practice. The traces and clues discovered in this investigation reveal quasi-cyclical patterns of the past and remind us to question how we might use that evidence to ethically move forward. My work seeks to dissect and map the fabrication of time and to expose and manipulate our understanding of cultural and environmental histories.



I use tree rings from a cross-section of a tree as a departure point; this extension of time physically and visually reflects the perspective of "long time" and long-term thinking, both into the future and into the past. In *Long Time II*, the sixty-one rings refer to Professor Nalini Nadkarni's research comparing the number of trees in the world to the size of the world population. She concluded that each person would have sixty-one trees. In *Perfect Lovers*, the cross-sections of two trees face each other and make reference to nature's clock by visualizing time in space. These "tree clocks" also reference Felix Gonzalez-Torres' piece *Untitled (Perfect Lovers)*, which is comprised of two synchronized clocks that inevitably become out of synch. *Reclaimed Time* represents a cross-section of a tree made from various reclaimed woods and creates a fractured sense of time; it acts as a reminder of the environmental impact of deforestation.



*Long Time I*. Twenty-five plywood rings, monofilament. 4' x 4' x 6'. 2009.



*Long Time II*. Sixty-one plywood rings, aircraft cable. 5' x 30' x 18'. 2009.



*Perfect Lovers.* One hundred plywood rings, monofilament.  
30' x 4' x 4'. 2011.



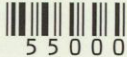
*Perfect Lovers (for Ceil and Sally).*  
Wood, glass, sawdust.  
46" x 27" x 13-1/2". 2012.



*Reclaimed Time.* Salvaged  
wood. 2' x 2' x 2". 2012.



US \$50.00



9 780764 345487

5 5 0 0 0

ISBN: 978-0-7643-4548-7