

Stoney Lamar 2019 POP Merit Award Recipient

Andrew Glasgow

The AAW's Professional Outreach Program (POP) has selected Stoney Lamar as the recipient of its 2019 Merit Award. Stoney is a product of North Carolina, having received a degree from Appalachian State University in Boone. There, he met Susan Casey, a furniture maker who would become his wife, inspiration, and, much later, a serious helpmate. I have known, shown, and sold his work at various times since 1989. I also proposed and executed an exhibition, *A Sense of Balance: The Sculpture of Stoney Lamar*, that traveled to four museums. It is clear Stoney has gone beyond the work of craftsman and woodturner and has been breaking new ground in sculpture for many years.

Beyond the lathe

His beginning was about the lathe and what it could provide artistically. He worked a bit with the idea of being a furniture maker but recognized quickly that his heart was elsewhere. It was with the lathe. He further explored the lathe with an internship with iconographic turners Mark and Melvin Lindquist in the mid 1980s. Initially, the vessel form captured Lamar, and he made an important series of suspended vase vessels that were both lyrical and technically demanding. However, it wasn't long before he began to view the lathe as a tool—not as an end but the means to get to a new end.

Stoney created a different body of work using the lathe as a carving tool, including pieces like *Torso for William Turnbull*. Carving became important and soon was an integral part of most of his work. His carving tools were frequently innovative, as in using a chain saw while the lathe was turning to give his work a signature

look. As the evolution of Lamar's career became more conceptually driven, the work began to change. This is evidenced in work like *Addicted to the Rhythm*. Part of this evolution was the use of multiple axes on the lathe to achieve work that was turned yet purely sculptural.

Sculptural evolution

When Stoney moved to Saluda, North Carolina, in the early 1980s, he worked with other craftspeople in marketing and showing his work. His fellow makers challenged his abilities, as they exhibited work in the same shows and on occasion in the same booth. It was during this time that Stoney introduced metal to his work. It was not merely a support element, but rather an artistic one, as can be seen in *All Dressed Up*. From then on, the use of metal became a regular practice for Stoney as an element of some kind—whether a visual stand or a vertical slash.

More recently, he has made either much larger pieces or sculpture comprising multiple objects. *Green Eyed Girl/Blue Boy*, *Shibori*, and *Ribs* serve as examples. These works and others made during this phase of his career approach a height of six feet and have allowed Lamar to explore the idea of a conversation between elements.



Suspended Vase Vessel, 1985, Maple, 10" x 10" (25cm x 25cm)

Photo courtesy of Leann Bellon



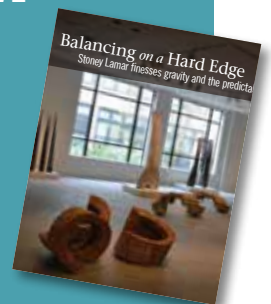
Suspended Vase Vessel, 1988, Zircote, 10" x 10" x 12" (25cm x 25cm x 30cm)

Photo courtesy of John and Robyn Horn

JOURNAL ARCHIVE CONNECTION

EXPLORE!

To learn more about Stoney Lamar, see David M. Fry's June 2014 *AW* article, "Balancing on a Hard Edge: Stoney Lamar Finesses Gravity and the Predictable at the Asheville Art Museum" (vol 29, no 3, page 44).





Torso for William Turnbull, 1997, Ash, 13" x 8" x 4" (33cm x 20cm x 10cm)



Addicted to Rhythm, 1996, Cocobolo, 10" x 8" x 5" (25cm x 20cm x 13cm)

Photo courtesy of Asheville Art Museum



All Dressed Up, 2003, Madrone, steel, 22" x 14" x 5" (56cm x 36cm x 13cm)

Collection and photo courtesy of Arkansas Art Center Foundation



Green Eyed Girl/Blue Boy (Moroccan Children), 2008, Madrone, largest: 53" x 17" x 12" (135cm x 43cm x 30cm)

Photo courtesy of Francoise J. Riecker

Involvement and influence

Stoney uses the lathe as a painter uses a paintbrush. He expanded the woodturning field with sculptural multi-axis work, the use of metal, and larger-scale pieces. Stoney has also shared tools, ideas, methods, and his time with so many. Teaching at Penland School of Crafts and Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts, he has influenced countless students with his expansive thinking and openness to the craft community. Stoney also has served on the boards of the American Craft Council, Southern Highland Craft Guild, and The Center for Craft. He is a leader, not just in the turned-wood field, but also in the wider fields of craft and sculpture. Stoney Lamar has changed the landscape of craft and has challenged woodturners in truly significant ways. ■

For more, visit stoneylamar.net.

Andrew Glasgow has served as executive director of the American Craft Council and director of The Furniture Society. He also has worked for the Southern Highland Craft Guild and the Birmingham Museum of Art. He currently resides in Asheville, North Carolina.



(Top) Shibori, 2012, White oak, steel, milk paint, 68" x 9" x 5" (173cm x 23cm x 13cm)

Photos courtesy of Stoney Lamar



(Bottom) Ribs, 2017, White oak, steel, 52" x 5" x 11" (132cm x 13cm x 28cm)

Photos courtesy of Stoney Lamar