



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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***Studio Design: Contemporary Furniture***

**WHO:** Craft Alliance in the Kranzberg Arts Center  
**WHAT:** *Studio Design: Contemporary Furniture*  
**WHEN:** **February 10, 2012 – April 8, 2012**  
**FREE Opening Reception on Friday, February 10, 6-8pm**  
Gallery Hours: Wednesday – Saturday, 12noon – 6pm; Sunday, 12noon – 5pm  
Closed Monday and Tuesday  
**WHERE:** Craft Alliance in the Kranzberg Arts Center, 501 N. Grand, St. Louis, MO 63103  
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**ST. LOUIS (December 7, 2011) *Studio Design: Contemporary Furniture***, an exhibition featuring contemporary wood furniture designed by Brian Ferrell, Kimberly Winkle, and Matt Keim, opens at Craft Alliance's gallery in the Kranzberg Arts Center on **Friday, February 10, 2012 from 6 pm - 8 pm.** Each of the works featured is meticulously hand-crafted and studio designed. The works feature abstract forms, sleek designs, colorful surfaces and combined materials while still maintaining an intentional functionality. Each of these pieces is a one of a kind, handmade object. Studio design vs. manufactured.

"The exhibition illuminates unexpected facets of the familiar -- the extraordinary within the ordinary -- through artworks that compel the viewer to examine their surroundings with fresh eyes. T"

Brian Ferrell is an artist who creates sculpture in functional forms, designing one-of-a-kind furniture and custom tableware. Since 2000, his work has been regularly exhibited in group and solo exhibits on a national level, published in "500 Tables" by Lark Books, and purchased by private collectors in the US and Europe. Ferrell was honored with a solo exhibition at Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater during the summer of 2008 and has a number of upcoming shows in 2010.

Clean Lines, modern, Kandinsky,

Using asymmetrical geometry, basic shapes, and gradual shifts in composition, Brian Ferrell creates sculpturally functional

Lines and shapes intersect through careful transitions of form; creating an interplay of curves, contoured edges, and tapers in uncluttered compositions that are at once sculptural and inspired by their function.

“Steel cables glint and direct the eye between, around, and beneath the surfaces... These subtle juxtapositions begin a dialogue between visual and physical balance, precariousness and stability, lines and shapes, positive and negative space.”

The artist explains, “In my furniture, a mix of exotic woods like paduak and purpleheart are complemented with domestic woods, such as maple and walnut. In my tableware and hollowware, pewter and various woods continue this exploration between materials, utilizing lines and surfaces to draw one’s eye into a nuanced rhythm of intricate detail and open space. Steel cables glint and direct the eye between, around, and beneath the surfaces. Pewter is sanded to create a radiating pattern of silvery lines terminating at a polished edge. These subtle juxtapositions begin a dialogue between visual and physical balance, precariousness and stability, lines and shapes, positive and negative space.”

**Kimberly Winkle:** Employing traditional furniture making techniques and materials, I build forms and structures with results that are, often times, untraditional. I use hardwood, paint, and graphite to create my works. The forms are generally streamlined in order to better play the role of an empty canvas for color and line. I activate the wood by painting and drawing onto its surface. These inscriptions serve as pattern, embellishment, and residual evidence of my hand. spontaneity, nuance, chaos yet order, rhythm and gesture with these marks; all working in concert to imbue the object with individuality and charm.

a balance of proportion, form and surface enhancement as I transform the common furniture format into something that is very uncommon sophisticated yet approachable, has intention but is not overly serious, displays equilibrium between function and design and, in the end, brings pleasure and something new to the user.

**"I have intentionally simplified the forms of my furniture, so that it is the designs themselves that are the central focus."**

intentionally simplifies her furniture’s form to focus on the color and surface treatment of her designs.

"Tit for Tat Tables" because I had access from a local factory to some mahogany offcuts, though they were only nineteen inches long. I wanted the tables to be a couple, with a sort of dialogue happening between them. To that end, I chose to make them "opposites" of one another. It's sort of yin and yang balance between the two.

Where? I don't know, but it's mostly when I'm relaxed and not trying to "force it." I am often inspired by a color or line drawing or scribble I see. I guess I'm inspired by simplicity and economy.

Textile patterns—their color combinations and patterns of shapes, etc.

has always been interested in structural architecture, the way things fit together.

She translated her interest into a college degree in ceramics – with a focus on large, sculptural pieces. Clay, however, "has limitations structurally," she said, and when she took a woodworking class during her second semester as a ceramics graduate student at San Diego State University, "it was just a natural fit."

For the past year or so, she's been focusing on lathe-turned tables. She sells a line of them through the Artful Home and chose tables in part because she was looking for something that was "marketable in terms of both aesthetics and time. It's a fun object that's not too large to ship and doesn't take too long to make" --and thus drive the price up. Also, she had some 8/4 mahogany that was only 19" in length and was "trying to figure out what I can make with the mahogany."

The first pair of tables in this series were her Tit for Tat End Tables, which Kim describes as a "clever duo" with "yin and yang": areas that are painted on one table are not on the other, and vice versa. "I just think that they're kind of fun that way," she said.

When she paints her items, Kim said she prefers to primarily use milk paint. While color – along with form and line – is one of the three main areas of her focus, and she does describe her color choices as bold, she also notes that her choices are "not fast car red and not obnoxious."

"If I'm going to be painting something, I'll generally use poplar," Kim said of her wood choices. "It grows so abundantly so many places in our country. Also, poplar, in my opinion, is not too visually exciting. If I'm letting the natural wood show, I generally prefer warmer wood, like cherry or mahogany."

She's also interested in making marks on her pieces, "a combination of furniture making and drawing," as she put it. Her preferred marks are also a combination, of lines and dots. "Put together and combined, they make each other stronger," she said. "It's like a visual Morse code as repetitions occur. The spacing and form of things creates a sort of code, although there is no actual message."

As she creates her items, Kim notes that her experience with ceramics has definitely had an influence. Her knowledge of the history of vessels, for instance, has "informed my woodturning – the relationship with the opening of the bowl to the foot of the bowl."

And although she has not combined her ceramics work with her woodworking yet, Kim has combined additional material with her woodworking, such as hand-forged steel for castings to hold the wheels on a large mirror that slides along the wall. She traded a wooden box to the blacksmith who forged the casters.

Her latest work is a pair of turned coat hangers inspired by a visit to the restored Shaker village of South Union in Kentucky. The hangers were fashioned for the American Association of Woodturners' show "Be Our Guest: A Progressive Invitational," a show Kim was invited to join at the behest of turner Merryll Saylan. She likes them, Kim said, because they allow her to mentally revisit South Union – and also because they are "a surprise."

### ***Tit for Tat Tables***

*by Kimberly Winkle*

**Style:** Modern

**Type:** Table

**Materials:** Poplar, Mahogany, Milk Paint, Polyurethane, Graphite, Prismacolor Pencil

**Dimensions:** 16 in. deep by 16 in. wide by 22 in. tall.

These tables (16 in. dia. by 22 in. tall), called "Tit for Tat," are made of poplar, and mahogany offcuts from a guitar manufacturer. Winkle used spindle-turning and bowl-turning techniques to make the parts for the base. She added color and patterns with milk paint, graphite, and Prismacolor pencil. The tabletops were finished with Waterlox Original Sealer and Finish, and the pedestals were sprayed with polyurethane to prevent the pencil lines from smudging.

**Matt Keim:** I have been around woodworking all my life as my father taught woodworking for more than thirty years. I have always worked with wood in various forms to create functional and non-functional pieces. I sought out woodturning as a way to express myself and relieve stress. I find it magical to stand in front of a lathe and watch long thin ribbons of wood fly over my shoulder, exposing a form within. I try to expose the beauty of the piece I am working on by defining the shape to show the grain pattern in all its glory. I turn a variety of woods both domestic as well as exotic, often searching for salvaged wood. I love simple forms that do not take away from the natural beauty of the

wood itself. I believe that woodturning gives a piece of wood a second life that can be enjoyed for generations.

Juxtaposition Flat surfaces, ridged natural edges surfaces

Vessels

Different woods, highlight natural beauty, contrasting colors/textures

## **ABOUT CRAFT ALLIANCE**

Craft Alliance is the only art institution dedicated to contemporary craft in the St. Louis region. The non-profit organization, located in the Delmar Loop and in the Kranzberg Arts Center in Grand Center, provides inspiration and education in contemporary craft to a national community of artists, collectors, students and the art-viewing public. It does this through every creative stage, offering exhibitions, studio art classes, family programs, and community outreach programs. For more information, please call (314) 725-1177 or visit [www.craftalliance.org](http://www.craftalliance.org).

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