



Museum for Art in Wood

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**MUSEUM FOR ART IN WOOD AND NEXTFAB ANNOUNCE
ARTIST HENRY MERKER AS THE 2025 WINTER RESIDENCY PROGRAM FELLOW**

*The annual residency, hosted in collaboration with NextFab, is awarded to a Philadelphia-based artist
creating contemporary art in wood*

PHOTOS: [HERE](#)

Philadelphia, PA | January 6, 2025 – [Museum for Art in Wood](#) (141 N 3rd St, Philadelphia, PA 19106) and [NextFab](#) have selected Philadelphia-based artist [Henry Merker](#) for their fifth annual [Winter Residency](#). Launched in 2021, the program is designed for artists based in the Greater Philadelphia region who work in the medium of wood and demonstrate technical proficiency with woodworking equipment. The residency will run from January 6 to March 6, 2025, culminating in a solo exhibition at NextFab (1800 N. American Street) on March 13, 2025.

The Winter Residency Program is a collaboration between the Museum and membership-based makerspace NextFab. Each year, the two organizations assemble a jury of makers and educators to award one fellowship to an artist in the region who works either solely in wood or other materials in combination with wood. The fellow receives a stipend for project materials and access to NextFab's workshop space. Reflecting the Museum and NextFab's support of environmental stewardship, reclaimed wood must comprise at least 50 percent of the fellow's work during the residency.

"NextFab and the Museum for Art in Wood continually find ways for our communities to experience and benefit from our unique resources," said **Melissa Guglielmo**, Director of Programming and Jewelry Supervisor at NextFab. "The Winter Residency is a wonderful example of what can happen when an artist practicing in the field of woodworking gets access to the equipment and diverse range of creatives that work from NextFab's studios. In return, the NextFab community gets to work alongside the resident artist and is exposed to the high-level concepts and techniques used in their craft. From researching historical techniques to working with new materials - this residency is an opportunity to grow and connect craft with the broader maker community."

The 2025 Winter Resident is **Henry Merker**, a Philadelphia-based artist known for designing experimental home goods in wood using traditional woodworking processes and computer-aided devices such as CNC routing machines. In his studio practice, he playfully leverages these tools to pursue rare shapes and forms that question conventionality and reveal the beauty of wood through its versatility.

Merker's career is dotted with periods of focus on specific design objects, such as lamps, candle sticks, and mirrors. His creative pursuits are centered around a self-described spontaneous methodology, which results in collections of objects whose thread of inspiration can be traced through each chronological iteration. From the recent collection of mirrors for Philadelphia's Commonwealth Gallery to the Spontaneous Lamp series (which has produced 23 designs since 2022), he has applied this practice

to create different houseware items with unique shapes and designs. Merker is currently represented by design collective DUDD HAUSE and has shown work at Philadelphia's Commonweal Gallery, Hot Bed Gallery, and Yowie.

As the 2025 Winter Resident, Merker will continue his creative practice and explore the adaptability of cork, a sustainably harvested wood product. He aims to create a zero-waste collection of design objects by leaning into the cork's unique properties, which make it ideal for carving and reconstitution. This aligns with the residency's sustainability goal and continues Merker's work exploring inventive shapes and designs in wood.

"The Winter Residency Program reflects the shared values of the Museum for Art in Wood and NextFab," said **Jennifer-Navva Milliken**, Executive Director and Chief Curator at the Museum for Art in Wood. "This one-of-a-kind collaborative program supports artists who are applying their hard-earned skills and artistic vision toward long-range thinking about sustainability, environmental care and stewardship, and ways that thinking creatively about the material of wood can guide us to a better future."

The Winter Residency exhibition is on display at NextFab from March 13 to May 22, 2025. Following the exhibition's opening, the Museum and NextFab will host an Artist Talk with Merker on March 14, where he will share insights into his creative process.

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About the Museum for Art in Wood:

The Museum for Art in Wood is the international leader for contemporary art and creativity in the material of wood. The Museum engages, educates, and inspires the public through the exhibition, collection, and interpretation of contemporary art in wood. Founded in 1986 and sited in Philadelphia, the Museum for Art in Wood serves a local and international community. It has built its reputation by providing opportunities for makers and visitors to experience craft directly, through participatory programming; seminal exhibitions and documentation; and the growth, conservation, exhibition, and care of its permanent collection. The Museum's practice of keeping these resources free and available to the public emphasizes its commitment to building a democratic and inclusive community. Visit museumforartinwood.org to learn more.

About NextFab

NextFab is a membership-based makerspace that provide access to tools, technology, education, events, and services for makers and creatives. They offer a variety of education and startup programs, as well as professional design, production, and placemaking services for whatever your fabrication needs. Visit www.nextfab.com to learn more.