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**PRESS RELEASE**

The Island Gallery  
400 Winslow Way E, #120  
Bainbridge Island, WA 98110  
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**EVENT:**



# Spring Forward

## Traditional and Contemporary Furniture Design

**April 5 – 28, 2019**

Participating Artists:

**Chris Demarest, L. Wendy Dunder, Makoto Imai, Bill Koss, Carl Yurdin**

Featuring her jewelry collection *Native Americans*:

**Begona Rentero**

**First Friday Artwalk, April 5th, 6-8 pm**



IMAGES SHOWN ABOVE:

From left to right: Carl Yurdin, Bill Koss, Makoto Imai, Chris Demarest  
(The Island Gallery April 2019 Artwork Collage)

## About the Show:

### **Spring Forward: Traditional and Contemporary Furniture Design**

As we move our clocks forward to greet a new spring, let's celebrate both traditional and contemporary furniture design from Northwest furniture craftsmen. Traditional Japanese joinery methods and materials, contemporary design elements, Northwest hand blown glass and native woods.

The show will also feature a new collection, *Native Americans*, from **Begona Rentero**, inspired by Native Americans and the American western landscape.

Participating Artists: **Chris Demarest** (Bainbridge Island, Washington), **L. Wendy Dunder** (Portland, Oregon), **Makoto Imai** (Seabeck, Washington), **Bill Koss** (Olympia, Washington), **Carl Yurdin** (Bainbridge Island, Washington).

## About the Artists:

**Chris Demarest (Bainbridge Island, Washington).** Born in New England in 1951, most of Chris's career has been in children's publishing with over 100 titles to his credit. *FIREFIGHTERS A to Z* was a New York Times Best Book (2000). Research has taken him as far as the Persian Gulf, as an official artist for the US Coast Guard, as well as flying into Hurricane Ivan with the Hurricane Hunters. From 2011-2017, he traveled the country painting in museums and libraries portraits of World War II era men and women while collecting their stories. The tour brought him to Bainbridge Island in 2017 where he documented the internment of local Japanese Americans, the main painting now hanging at the island's Historical Museum. In 2018, he settled on Bainbridge Island where he began exploring sculpture in wood and shoji paper, leftovers from a teahouse studio he built. The World War II exhibit is now permanently housed at the Palm Springs Air Museum, Palm Springs, California. A smaller exhibit is currently touring Alaska.

In Chris' words: *My influences for decades have come from Japan and Scandinavia, pulling elements from each culture: line, sparseness, simplicity and material. Though my background has been in both traditional portraiture and children's books, three-dimensional work has floated throughout my life. Moving to Bainbridge Island, building a teahouse, it was working with leftover shoji paper that led to my current work: sculpture and lighting. Borrowing from Scandinavia the word "hygge" to define cozy, comfort and my essential building material, shoji paper, I call my work: "Shygge".*

**Wendy Dunder (Portland, Oregon).** Wendy is a professional watercolor and acrylic painter, known for depicting landscapes, still life, animals, and people. Recently, however, her focus has shifted to creating



sculptural lamps of bent wood and laminated paper. As a certified teacher and Artist in Residence in schools in her area she is also deeply involved in creating curriculum-based murals. A hallmark of her work is the involvement of her students in the process, and together they have created permanent outdoor municipal murals of concrete, stone, tile, glass, and paint.

Created from multiple layers of tissue paper glued in place over frameworks of materials such as thin-cut and bent wood, reed, bamboo, and welding rod, these illuminated sculptures spring to life as glowing wall sconces, table lamps and hanging lamps. Delicate and graceful in appearance, they are amazingly strong and functional.

**Makoto Imai (Seabeck, Washington)**, Makoto grew up near the town of Gero in Japan. As a child, he made skis, sleds and toys for both himself and his friends. Knowing her son cared little for school, Makoto's mother appealed to the carpenters to accept him as an apprentice. At 15, he was accepted, attending high school classes at night. After five years, he completed his apprenticeship by laying out an entire house. Makoto sought work in Kyoto where he spent three years working on teahouse construction and temple repair. It was during this time he first came to the United States, spending two months on a teahouse in California, where he encountered enormous interest in traditional Japanese joinery. Returning home, Makoto spent another two years working solely on temples, but disappointed in the increased use of machine tools in Japan, he saw a brighter future in the United States to work and share his knowledge. Makoto has since established himself as a true master craftsman. He has been involved in extensive projects, from tea rooms and Japanese style homes to restorations and cabinetry. He currently devotes most of his time creating exceptional tansu and furniture pieces.

**Bill Koss (Olympia, Washington)**, Bill Koss, from Olympia, believes that wood can possess a character that waits for someone to release its latent personality. He looks for the opportunity to let the wood express itself. In doing this, he prefers curves over straight lines, natural colors over stains. This does not mean he believes that wood must always appear alone. Wood combines well with other brightly colored woods. And glass and metal can accessorize the natural attributes that nature provides. Even colored stones occasionally appear in his projects. In short, Bill has no hard and fast rules when it comes to creating new projects. The majority of his material is sourced from local mills. He also scavenges leftover material from neighbors. His goals are to continue growing his woodworking skills; avoiding artificial limitations as he creates and produces functional and attractive art. Before devoting his time to woodworking, Bill worked as an analyst for the state legislature and as part of executive management at four state natural agencies.

**Carl Yurdin (Bainbridge Island, Washington)**. The Island Gallery welcomes Carl Yurdin, a new artist from the industrial design world of the East Coast, who settled first on Orcas Island and now here on Bainbridge Island..

In Carl's own words:

*As an industrial designer for over fifty years, I have spent my whole career designing products that expand the visual possibilities. Over those years, I have remained committed to high design standards, balancing functionality, user requirements, regulatory needs and overall aesthetics – for both highly consumer focused products, as well as more industrial products, like medical and construction equipment. In my view, everything*



*deserves the opportunity to be well designed to enhance the overall user experience. That perspective informs how I work today, having moved to the Northwest and Bainbridge Island.*

*My process is about investing in the beauty of the wood and revealing what possibilities exist. I don't always know what will come out of a project when I start, but I respect the materials I am working with – letting them provide direction, along with the tools I use. Together, we figure it out. I strive to create pieces that convey the possibility of nature, but bring a practical usability to bear. Nothing is too fragile and everything has a purpose, be it highlighting an aspect of the natural wood or incorporating it into a function of use. That's where the keen balance of the industrial designer in me shines.*

### **Featuring the jewelry collection *Native Americans*:**



**Begona Rentero (Granada, Spain)**, a Spanish designer originally from Granada, grew up in a family that had a profound respect for nature and the environment. These early influences developed into a passion for organic forms, color and movement inspired by nature. Begoña later translated this passion into a jewelry collection featuring a series of unique pieces. The colors and organic shapes of winter flowers, flora and sea fauna have inspired her latest collection of hand-made, exquisitely crafted jewelry. The pieces are made of special paper, fibers of silk, cotton, et cetera, that she prepares with a method she has developed to toughen them up for daily use, without compromising their delicate, organic aesthetic. Using only natural dyes her pieces both reflect and respect the environment and, as she says, "are so light you have to touch them to know that you're wearing them."

### **GALLERY LINKS:**

Images, biographical or other artist information. Please contact the Gallery for any additional information.

Web Site Artists' Page (complete roster of Gallery artists): <http://www.theislandgallery.net/artists.php>

To Contact the Gallery: [ssn@theislandgallery.net](mailto:ssn@theislandgallery.net)



**CURRENT ONLINE EXHIBITION:**



[Click to view: \*Paintings: Online Exhibitions\*](#)

## About The Island Gallery

Established in 2002, **The Island Gallery** features internationally recognized artists whose work takes traditional art forms in exciting new directions: studio furniture and sculpture; museum quality textile art and wearables; wood fired ceramics from the finest potters in America; paintings and prints; and unique jewelry creations. Monthly exhibitions include live musical concerts, featuring such genres as jazz, rock, folk, chamber music and performance art. This, along with its reputation for excellence, makes The Island Gallery a destination spot on beautiful Bainbridge Island, a short ferry ride from Seattle, and steps from the new Bainbridge Island Museum of Art. In 2017 we celebrated 15 years of collaboration with unique and talented artists from near and far.

**Event Location/Contacts/Visit:**

**The Island Gallery, 400 Winslow Way E, #120, Bainbridge Island, Washington.**

Underground parking is available at The Winslow off Ericksen Avenue.

**Web site: [www.theislandgallery.net](http://www.theislandgallery.net)**

**Shop: [www.theislandgallery.net/shop](http://www.theislandgallery.net/shop)**

**Blog: [www.theislandgallery-artblog.blogspot.com](http://www.theislandgallery-artblog.blogspot.com)**



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*the Island Gallery*

**SPRING GALLERY HOURS**

**Tuesday-Saturday 11-6pm**

**Sunday Noon-5pm**

**Closed Mondays**