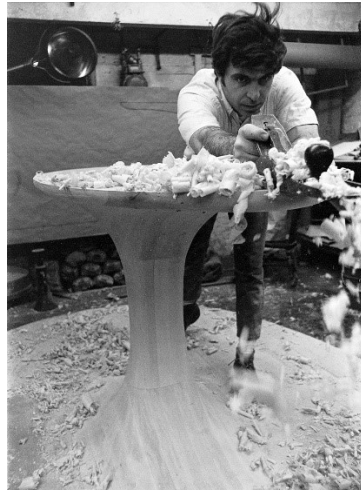


# The Branch

## Museum of Architecture and Design

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### Atavistic Memories: The Studio Furniture of Sam Forrest On View January 15–April 17, 2022 at The Branch Museum of Architecture and Design

RICHMOND, VA, January 20, 2022 -- *Atavistic Memories: The Studio Furniture of Sam Forrest* explores the American Studio Furniture Movement through the hands of furniture maker Sam Forrest (1936–2021). Beginning with Wharton Esherick (1887–1970) in the 1920s, woodworkers rejected the mass production of furniture, opting to focus on natural materials working in their own studios. Inheritors of Esherick’s experimental approach to form included Wendell Castle, who pioneered stack lamination techniques that allowed for more sculptural yet functional works. Having been taught by Alan Lazarus, a student of Castle, Forrest devoted more than fifty years to handcrafted woodworking, from household objects to church altars. This first solo museum show represents just a fraction of his prolific body of work. The exhibition brings together 38 remarkable pieces locally sourced from family, friends, collectors, and Sam’s last home, the Haiku (Hyco) House, in Mathews, Virginia. Also featured are portraits by William P. Kendrick, Erjun Zhao, and Catherine Venable.

*Atavistic Memories: The Studio Furniture of Sam Forrest* considers the intellectual statements of an artisan outside the constraints of the past and the advanced technology of the twentieth century. For Sam, his craft was a quality or state of being in which he permitted his subconscious – his ancient or ancestral ‘atavistic’ memory – to reveal itself through skillful woodwork. *Atavistic Memories: The Studio Furniture of Sam Forrest* encapsulates the spiritual

tenacity and structural process of a man engaged in the delight and dilemma of the resistance of wood.

### Credits

*Atavistic Memories: The Studio Furniture of Sam Forrest* is organized by The Branch Museum of Architecture and Design and is generously supported by Patsy K. Pettus. The exhibition would not have been possible without those who gave generously of their time, expertise, collections, and memories of Sam: Bo Forrest; Mark Lenz, Tabitha Ramseyer, Joe Ramseyer, *Hyco House, Mathews, VA*; Jennifer Schroeder, *Bay School Community Arts Center, Mathews, VA*; Scott Braun, *Assistant Professor, Area Head in Wood, Craft/Material Studies, VCUArts*; Arthur and Lloyd Backstrom; Sharon Leahman; Ryland and Monika Fleet; Rubin Peacock; Alan Lazarus; Catherine Venable; Zarina Fazaldin; Andrew Willner; and Maurice Beane.

### The Branch Museum of Architecture and Design

Founded in 2005 as the Virginia Center for Architecture, The Branch Museum of Architecture and Design evolved to include all design in 2017. Housed in a 1919 John Russell Pope building on the National Register of Historic Places, The Branch aims to elevate awareness of the transformative power of design through exhibitions, programs, and partnerships in Richmond and beyond.

### General Information

The Branch Museum of Architecture and Design is located at 2501 Monument Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23220. For general information, please call 804-655-6055 or visit the website at [branchmuseum.org](http://branchmuseum.org).

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