



TITLE: **Chainsaw Series Bowl #10**

ARTIST: **Mark Lindquist**

DATE: **1989**

SIZE: **8 ½ in. H X 11 ½ in. W (top)**

MEDIUM: **Maple burl wood**

ACCESSION #: **96.3.7**

Additional works in the collection by the artist? Yes ☒ No ☐



ARTIST'S STATEMENT

"...I turn my bowls for appearance and artistic expression more than for utilitarian function. This may be a controversial approach among woodworkers, although it is in accord with artists and sculptors who accept a work for itself and not for its utility. As I see it, the bowl's function is to command the space of a room, to light its environment. Its function is to display the beauty of nature and to reflect the harmony of man. The bowl is already full. It contains itself and the space between its walls" (Lindquist, 1978).

CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

In the early 1980s Lindquist chose to take his work in a new direction. Rather than continuing to create highly polished surfaces, he experimented with new techniques that explored and highlighted the contact between the cutting tool and the wood. Recalling his earliest woodworking experiences, he sought to replicate accidental slips that caused tears while working with a lathe.

Chainsaw Series Bowl #10 represents the evolution and unification of these early explorations with his earlier sculptural vessels. In the interior of this vessel Lindquist intentionally retained the clearly visible markings of his chainsaw.

ARTIST'S BIOGRAPHY

Mark Lindquist was first introduced to working in wood by his father—nationally renowned woodturner, Melvin Lindquist—when Mark was ten years old. As a result, he became very skilled at using a lathe and chainsaw. When Lindquist later attended New England College to earn his BFA his artistic foci were in the formal disciplines of sculpture, drawing and painting. During that era he also became interested in working in clay and became an apprentice to a Zen inspired ceramicist; this furthered his interest in the study of form and Japanese Zen philosophies. In the 1970s, Mark Lindquist returned to working in wood. He and his father broke with tradition when they created and sold nonfunctional woodturned bowls at crafts fairs. These early vessels showed a clear departure from the traditional smooth surface of woodturned vessels. Uniquely, their vessels paid tribute to the internal nature of wood rather than to just surface beauty. Their vessels contained arrested decay, cracks, and bark inclusions to maintain the wood's connection to the tree from which it came. Equally trendsetting was their decision to give their craft objects artistic titles. Although the public initially rejected their aesthetic, by the 1980s, vessels that celebrated the natural beauty of wood became the norm.

Lindquist's pioneering approaches to woodworking are many. As early as 1979 Lindquist used a chainsaw to deliberately tear into the grain of the wood in order to produce textures and patterns similar to the accidental marks made on a lathe. His interest in expressing his sculptural ideas on a monumental scale encouraged his modification of industrial lathes so that he could turn massive forms. In the early 1980s he stacked these forms to create his *Totemic Series* and later his *Ichiboku Series*. His *Captive Series* (begun in 1982) shows Lindquist's response to Michelangelo's sculptures of the same name; here Lindquist broke all ties with the utilitarian and used the vessel as metaphor. His creative aesthetic and gifted talents as an artist and craftsman have achieved him national acclaim. Beginning with the Metropolitan Museum of Arts' acquisition of two of his works in 1978, Mark Lindquist's artwork has been collected by major museums and public collections worldwide. Most recently, in 2010, Lindquist was honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award by the American Association of Woodturners.

MEDIA DESCRIPTION

- **Burl:** a dome-shaped growth commonly found on a tree trunk or branch. Burls are often caused by some form of stress to the tree.
- **Lathe:** a woodworking machine that securely holds the wood and rotates it so that the wood can be carved and shaped.
- **Woodturning:** the forming of wood articles, like bowls and sculpture on a lathe.

REFERENCES

Maloy, G. (ed.). (2010). *Mark Lindquist*. Quincy, FL: Gadsden Arts Center.

Lindquist, M. (1986). *Sculpting Wood: Contemporary Tools & Techniques*. Worcester, MA: Davis Publications, Inc.

* <http://www.lindquiststudios.com/MarkLindquist.htm>

Lindquist, M. (1978). "Turning Spalted Wood," *Fine Woodworking*, Summer 1978.

RELATED TERMINOLOGY

Artisan: a person with superior skill in a craft or applied art.

Artist: a person with superior skill in one of the fine arts.

Craft: any type of art done with practical application.

Fine Art: a visual art considered to have been created for aesthetic purposes and judged for its beauty and meaningfulness.

Completed October 2010 by K. Alison Schaeffler-Murphy



Mark Lindquist, *The Boat: Stratigraph Series*, 1990, Carved and Polychromed wood panel, 15 3/4" x 17 3/4"
Accession # 96.3.6

USING EVERYDAY OBJECTS TO CREATE EXTRAORDINARY ART ACTIVITY LESSON PLAN: K—5

Session Activity: Between 1988 and 1990 Mark Lindquist earned his MFA from FSU. During his studies Lindquist focused on sculptural relief panels. To create his *Stratigraph* series Lindquist applied layers of paint to joined plywood panels. He then used a hydraulic chainsaw to carve intricate patterns into ordinary plywood to simulate *tsu-jan* (Chinese brush strokes). To stimulate Lindquist's appreciation for the beautiful quality of simple lines, students will use **sgraffito** painting techniques to create their own extraordinary work of art out of ordinary materials.

Objectives: Students will understand the way artists respond to nature, as well as other cultures, to create unique works of art. Students will also understand the emotional effect of different types of lines and patterns.

Materials: Acrylic paint in a variety of colors, pre-cut corrugated cardboard sheets, paintbrushes, sgraffito scraping tools such as paintbrush handles or popsicle sticks. Additional visual aids should include images of Chinese calligraphic brushstrokes, examples of a variety of lines, and illustrations of scientific stratigraphic studies.

Activity Procedures: Begin the lesson by looking at the artist's image. Discuss similarities and differences between Lindquist's piece and the Chinese calligraphic images. Next, while looking at illustrations of different lines, talk about the way different lines evoke varied emotional responses. Finally, compare stratigraphic illustrations to Lindquist's relief sculpture and discuss the reasons he might have chosen to call this his *Stratigraph Series*. Once students have decided upon the moods they want their images to evoke they can begin creating their artworks. Using a variety of colors students will paint over the cardboard canvases. Students may choose to layer their colors or to cover different sections with different colors, allowing paint layers to dry before applying other layers. Once the paint has dried students will use lines chosen for emotional impact and scratch through the paint layers to create their artworks. As a last step, for impact and contrast, students will carefully paint sunken relief areas with black paint.

Vocabulary

sunken relief sculpture—a sculpture in which the carving is below the surface.

sgraffito—a technique in which a top layer of color is scratched to reveal a color beneath. In Italian the word *sgraffire* means "to scratch."

stratigraphy—a branch of geology that studies rock layers or stratification of earth.

tsu-jan—a Chinese philosophical term that means effortless spontaneity; unconditioned and totally itself.

Sunshine State Standards: K—5

VA.A.1.2—Student understands and applies media techniques and processes.

VA.C.1.2—Student understands the visual arts in relation to history and culture.

Sunshine State Standards: 6—12

VA.A.1.4—Student understands and applies media, techniques, and processes.

VA.D.1.4—Student assesses, evaluates, and responds to the characteristics of works of art.

INSPIRATIONS/WHEN CRAFT BECOMES ART ART HISTORY LESSON PLAN: 6—12

Session Activity & Objectives: Mark Lindquist's work indicates his response to artwork done by other artists. He acknowledges inspirations from Japanese Zen artists, Michelangelo, Jean Arp and Brancusi (to name a few). He is quoted as saying "As students we learn by doing what our teachers do. But to pursue the work seriously, we must all eventually face the apparent surrounding darkness, follow our own direction, find our own way, or else settle for the stigma of mediocrity" (Lindquist, 1986, p. 218). *Students, will develop a deeper understanding of Mark Lindquist's unique sculptural voice by reflecting upon the way he was inspired by other artists while still maintaining his originality. During group discussions students will also make distinctions between artwork created in a craft medium as craft or as a fine art. After break-out sessions class discussion should ensue.*

Preparation:

The art instructor can choose to provide images or have students search for images to compare and contrast. Possible choices include: Michelangelo (*Captives*), Constantine Brancusi (i.e. *Bird in Flight*, *Socrates*, *Princess 'X'...*), Jean Arp (i.e. *Knight Torso*, *Classic Sculpture...*), Japanese art (i.e. pottery and rock sculptures in Japanese gardens), as well as a variety of images of Mark Lindquist's sculptural works.

Discussion:

- Inspirations:** While looking at Mark Lindquist's artwork and that of his inspirational sculptors—Michelangelo, Brancusi, Arp, and Japanese Zen artists—discuss their similarities and differences. Each group of students should choose an artwork with which to compare Lindquist's work listing five similarities and five differences. Ask the students to comment on the way Lindquist transformed his artwork to make his own unique artistic statement.
- Craft Becomes Art:** Mark Lindquist's artwork has been collected by major museums and public collections worldwide. Lindquist is recognized as being influential in changing the craft of woodturning into a serious art form. He blurred the boundaries between craft and fine art. *Students should begin this portion by talking about what they see as the difference between crafts, fine crafts, and fine art. Students should determine what distinguishing factors define an artist's work as craft or fine art. Inquiry should include questions about the way Lindquist's work differs from that of traditional woodturners. Students should refer to specific works of art by Mark Lindquist when presenting their findings to the class.*

Activity:

- Following group presentations the instructor should open a dialogue about artistic integrity focusing on the differences between copying other artists and being inspired by them. Each student can choose a sculptural or craft artist whose work he/she finds particularly inspirational and design a unique work of art for future fabrication.



Mark Lindquist, *Hompashiki II, Ichiboku Series*, 1995, Cherry/Polychrome, Steel, 58"H x 28" D (base)