

Christina Boy

Woodworker

Madison, Virginia

Where is your studio?

It is on my father- and mother-in-law's farm about 1/2 mile from our house - in the countryside of Madison, Virginia. I built it with the massive help of my father-in-law and husband not even a year ago.

Do you work alone in your studio and do you prefer that to sharing studio space with other artists?

I work alone. I like working alone, yet I also miss the exchange you have with the people around you when you share a space.

Do you keep regular hours of work time?

Usually - at least 5 days a week anywhere from around 8:30AM till 6PM

Do you listen to music or prefer silence when you are most creative?

It all depends what I am working on. I cherish the quiet - as that can be hard to find among power tools, but music can keep me going and lift the spirits when times can get frustrating. I also love listening to pod-casts and murder mysteries when I am working on things - like sanding - that I don't have to focus on too much.

How would a visitor describe your studio? (for example: chaotic, obsessively tidy, comfortable or intimidating, etc.)

I asked my friends and these are some of the responses I got back:
at the foothill of the mountains. open and welcoming, bright, airy, light. thoughtful layout, well-designed, organized, form and function meeting, definitely dusty, busy and loud, colorful, perfect place to get away and work with no distractions, interesting juxtaposition of the metal, wood, light, and glass.

Do you seek out conversations with other artists either formally (like a clay club, or XX Association, etc.) or informally (like looking for feedback from your artist friends or mates)?

One of true things I miss most about my time at Penland as a core student is that time of feedback and exchange with my fellow mates, teachers and friends. Since I have not been doing this very long, nor in this location, I have not found any fellow artists in the area yet. Currently, all I have around here for now are some neighbors that stop by once in a while - and they all think that what I am doing is "interesting."

Do you keep current with work in your field or prefer to work without the potential influences?

I do not keep up with it as much as I feel like I should, because when I do - I tend to find inspiration in others which fuels me.

What creative books or other sources do you find useful?

I look at a lot of different things.... design websites and blogs, friends blogs, books and magazines - yet one thing that has been the biggest inspiration is this chair poster from Vitra that I received from friends over 14 years ago. It has hundreds of chairs on it from the 1800's till the 1990's. Every time I look at it, I see something new. New shapes, new lines, new curves, new angles, etc., never-ending beauty.

What distracts you most from your work?

My home - it being so close in proximity to my studio is both wonderful and my biggest downfall.

How do you nurture yourself to remain creative?

I go for drives and walks. The countryside here is beautiful and relaxing. It inspires me in so many ways. The fields, harvest time, old shabby barns, weathered wood, etc....yet sometimes I need something different - a change in scenery. When I can get away, I like going to a museum or gallery - or wander aimlessly through a city.

Do you make "office" time and is that a struggle to balance the artist with the business-person?

It is a huge struggle. Being so new at what I do, I am still trying to figure out what I am doing. What I need to be doing as a business-person. It sure is confusing and therefore so easy to just toss aside "for later" in order to have more time for the studio.

How many years did it take for you to feel accomplished at your craft? And how many years have you been working in your materials or as an artist?

For my 6th birthday I received a block of wood, nails and a hammer from my parents. I loved that gift; it was very unusual and different. 10 years went by before I worked with wood again - I interned with a carpenter for a few months only to then choose a different path in sales and office/commercial design. It took me almost another 8 years to get back to working with wood and I have been doing it on and off since 2004.

In no way do I feel like I am accomplished at my craft. Not yet. Just as I am an imperfect being, so is my work. Yet every day I learn something new. Get a little bit more precise. Get a little closer in where I want to be. And knowing where I want to be going in my artwork and in life. I feel as though I am just a toddler, finding my feet and balance in this big wide world.

Can you define “studio practice” as it relates to your life or share a personal philosophy about what contributed to your choice to be an artist, and how you approach that choice as a lifestyle?

My studio practice is a very special and sacred time. During college and at Penland I did not know how good I had it. If I managed my time to get the most out of being in the studio, I had an abundance of it. My studio practice involves everything - from conception - be it ideas scribbles on an envelope or a to-scale drawing - all the way to the finished product. Not all of these things have to be done in the studio, but having an environment that is "mine" - that I built and feel this connected to - is oh so sweet - and I want to spend all your time in it.

After leaving Penland and not having a space readily available to be creative and making - it gets tough. Working full time and only sometimes having access to a shop is disheartening. I got time in once in a while - and then it was always very discombobulated; as soon as I found my grove and got rolling, I had to stop again and wait for the next opportunity. So I got less and less done, got frustrated and felt like giving up on the dream of doing what I love. During this whole time I was feeling as though something was missing from my life when I was not able to make and create objects. Building my shop was one of the biggest undertakings. With the help of my father-in-law and husband we build my beautiful shop this past summer. We survived the heat and the earthquakes that centered just 20 miles from here and the around 90 hours a week - between my job and the studio - insane - but so worth it!

Getting laid off earlier this year was a huge blow to my self esteem and self worth - yet I suddenly had all the time in the world to be in MY studio and work on projects I had been dreaming about doing since leaving Penland. I am still figuring out my day to day, and how to make a living doing it, but I am enjoying every minute of it and am thankful for this opportunity to daily practice and live my dream in my very own studio.

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Artist Statement for Studio Practice Exhibit

hazy mountains. wispy clouds. blue skies, or gray. lush fields, acid greens and many shades of brown. red dirt. rows of corn shooting up taller and taller - turning into gangling walls of a maze. weathered barns. metal roofs, sometimes rusty - sometimes agleam in the sun. paned glass windows. peeling paint. cows. fences. golden hay bales. tractors. trees. hay fields, growing taller, undulating in the wind.

these are just a few things i see every day. they influence me and give me peace. when i combine my influences of past and the clean lines, simplicity, and minimalism of the modern classics that i love so much with my now - these are the results of me being an artist in the environment that i work in.



View from studio door



CHRISTINA BOY

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EDUCATION:

Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), Richmond, VA. 2003-2007
Bachelors of Fine Arts, *Magna Cum Laude*, Craft and Material Studies: concentration glass and wood
Mensch & Büro Akademie, Germany, Nov 2001 Certified Workstation Specialist
Berufsschule der Fachschule des Möbelhandels, Cologne, Germany. Sept. 1997 – Jan. 2000
RAUMKULTUR HIERONIMI, Bonn, Germany, Sept. 1997 – Jan. 2000 Apprentice, Showroom and Sales

ASSISTANTSHIPS:

David K Chatt Designs, Penland, NC, Fall 2009 and Summer 2010
Sarah Martin Studios, Penland, NC, Fall 2009 and Summer 2010
Visual Art Center, Richmond, VA, May - June 2006 Assisting Japanese bamboo Artist *Shigeo Kawashima*

AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS:

2012 - 2nd Place - Handcrafted, 2011 - 3rd Place - Equus III, 2009 - Finalist - Raphael Founders Prize;
Merit Award - 52nd Annual Juried Arts Exhibition, 2008 - Furniture Society Educational Grant; Core Student
Fellowship – Penland School of Crafts, 2007 - State Fair of Virginia Scholarship; Naomi I. Becker Scholarship
- to attend Haystack; 2 Work Study Scholarships - to attend Penland; Winner 2007 NICHE Student Awards in
the category Furniture, 2006 - Mary B. Bishop/Francis S. Merritt Scholarship - to attend Haystack; Allen A.
Eastman Award, VCU - for Excellence in Wood

EXHIBITIONS:

2012 - *Your Personal Hang Ups* - The Center for Art in Wood - Philadelphia, PA (Fall 2012); *Studio Practice* -
Penland Gallery, Penland, NC; *Handcrafted* - Imperial Art Center, Rocky Mount, NC (2nd place)
2011 - *Equus III - The Modern Horse* - Morin Gallery, Orange, VA (3rd place)
2009 - *Via Penland* - Rebus Works Gallery, Raleigh, NC; *Women in Wood- An American Association of
Woodturners Invitational*, Sandra J. Blain Gallery, Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts, TN, and Grovewood
Gallery, Asheville, NC; *Core Show 2009*; Northlight, Penland, NC; *Transformations 7* – Society of
Contemporary Craft; Pittsburg, PA; *52nd Annual Juried Arts Exhibition*, Imperial Art Center, Rocky Mount, NC
(Merit Award) ; *Penland, Exhibit* - The Sparta Teapot Museum, Sparta, NC
2008 - *Core Show 2008* - Penland Gallery, Penland, NC; *VCU: School to Market* - ACC Show, Baltimore, MD
2007 - *The River – Art and Music at the Depot*, Culpeper, VA; *ConnexTions* - American Association of
Woodturners, St. Paul, MN; *Go Figure Group Show* - Hawthorne Gallery, VCU, Richmond, VA; *Beaux Échec,
Senior Retrospective*, VCU, Richmond, VA; *Senior Show* - VCU, FAB, Richmond, VA; *NICHE Awards Display* -
Philadelphia Buyers Market of American Craft, Philadelphia, PA; *Schluckauf* - Group Show - Hawthorne
Gallery, VCU, Richmond, VA
2006 - *ReTurn of the Spoon* - Hawthorne Gallery, VCU, Richmond, VA; *Group Show* - SAS Gallery, VCU
Student Commons, Richmond, VA; *Juried Student Fine Arts Exhibition* - Anderson Gallery, VCU, Richmond, VA
2004 - *James River Project* - Main Art Gallery, Richmond, VA

PUBLICATIONS:

- *Ironwork Today 3, Inside and Out*, by Jeffrey B. Snyder, Schiffer Publishing Ltd, December 2011
- *The Laurel of Asheville*: Asheville, NC, Feb 2010, page 10
- *Mountain Express*: Asheville, NC, Oct 1-7, 2008, Fierce Dedication to Craft, by Katey Schultz, page 50
- *Studio Furniture. Volume 5: Meaning of Craft*. Faculty Selects, page 109, The Furniture Society
- *Woodshop News*, page 49, May 2007
- *NICHE Magazine*, Volume 19/Number 2, page 79, spring 2007
- *The Vine*, Richmond, VA, December 2006