

Wizardry in Wood 2016

Outstanding historical exhibits from the Economic Botany Collection, Kew

Over two hundred outstanding exhibits from the Economic Botany Collection at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew will be exhibited at Wizardry in Wood 2016.

This is the first time the Economic Botany Collection, Kew collection will have been exhibited to the public in the City of London. The exhibition features historical items from dozens of countries and provides a dramatic contrast to the finest contemporary woodturning across the rest of the Wizardry in Wood exhibition.

Kew's Economic Botany Collection illustrates the extent of human use of plants around the world. The huge variety of objects includes artefacts made from plants, as well as raw plant materials, such as wood samples. The collections build an important bridge between biological and cultural diversity, and are a valuable resource for the study of plant uses past, present and future.

Sir William Hooker, the first official Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, opened the Museum of Economic Botany in 1847. While the majority of the objects were acquired during the 19th and early 20th centuries, the Collection continues to grow today and now holds over 100,000 specimens, including 35,000 timber specimens and 2,000 wooden objects.



L to R: Comb made of African blackwood (*Dalbergia melanoxylon*), collected by Sir John Kirk, Zanzibar, 1881; Noah's ark figures made of spruce (*Picea abies*) in Saxony, given to Kew in 1862; Squirrel nutcracker made of yew (*Taxus baccata*), Switzerland, 1859; lute made from Kew trees after the Great storm of 1987, by Stephen Barber.

Four themes highlight Kew's work in promoting the use and conservation of timbers, from the founding of the Economic Botany Collection in 1847 to the current day.

- **“Making”** shows the close link between the properties of different timbers and how they are used. A range of manufacturing techniques will demonstrate the ingenuity of woodworkers ranging from ancient Egypt to Victorian Britain.
- **“Woods at Kew”** explores how and why Kew built up its collections through commercial and colonial networks, and today continues to build up its collections through international collaborations with botanists around the world.
- **“Science at Kew”** shows how Kew scientists play a vital role in promoting the sustainable use of timbers. Wood anatomists work out new ways of identifying timbers at risk of illegal trade, while field botanists plot disappearing forests and work with local people and institutions to preserve them.
- **“Woods in the World”** draws on the uniquely diverse collections at Kew to illustrate the many ways in which woods have been and are used, especially by indigenous peoples, in the Americas, Europe, Africa, Asia and Australasia.

Inspired by Victorian botanists, Kew and the Building Crafts College have also undertaken the challenge of recreating a **“Timber Trophy”**, typical of the spectacular displays of the era of the Crystal Palace and other great exhibitions. Over 20 of Kew's largest cut timbers will be displayed on a special stand made by the College. These range from ebony to bog oak, and show an extraordinary range of colours and grains.

The remarkable diversity and history of Kew's collections make this an exhibition that will appeal to all, whether interested in wood, sustainability, or history, or indeed all three.

Press enquiries and images:

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Notes to Editors

Wizardry in Wood: 12 – 15 October 2016 at Carpenters' Hall, City of London

Wizardry in Wood, the exclusive quadrennial exhibition of the finest contemporary woodturning, returns with its fourth showcase this October.

Presented by the Worshipful Company of Turners, the 2016 exhibition will be its largest and most diverse to date with an unparalleled showcase featuring 70 of the most skilled leading UK and international contemporary turners as exhibitors and also in the Daniel Collection.

At the core of the exhibition, visitors will be able to see work from 25 of today's leading woodturners who bring traditional craft skills, steeped in history, to a setting of newness and innovation.

Live demonstrations will allow visitors to engage with the unique craft skills and processes while daily guided talks will offer an insight to the materials, methods and designs on show. Visitors will also have the opportunity to see the entries and winners of the Turners' Company 2016 Competitions, and with many of the works on sale, visitors will have the opportunity to purchase a diverse range of high quality original works.

Exhibition website: www.wizardryinwood.com

Opening times : Wednesday 12 Oct, Thursday 13 Oct and Friday 14 Oct: 10am – 6pm; last entry 5pm. Saturday 15 Oct: 10am – 4pm; last entry 3pm.

Venue: Carpenters' Hall Throgmorton Avenue, London, EC2N 2JJ

Tickets from Eventbrite : www.wizardry-in-wood.eventbrite.co.uk

Single: £10 Double: £16.

(These prices include a 10% donation to the Turners' Company Charity)

Follow the latest WIW news via social media:

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Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

The **Economic Botany Collection at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew** was founded in 1847 by Sir William Hooker. It is one of the largest and most important collections in the world.

The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew is a world famous scientific organisation, internationally respected for its outstanding collections as well as its scientific expertise in plant diversity, conservation and sustainable development in the UK and around the world.

Kew Gardens is a major international and a top London visitor attraction. Kew's 132 hectares of landscaped gardens, and Kew's country estate, Wakehurst, attract over 1.5 million visits every year.

Kew was made a UNESCO World Heritage Site in July 2003 and celebrated its 250th anniversary in 2009. Wakehurst is home to Kew's Millennium Seed Bank, the largest wild plant seed bank in the world.

Kew receives approximately just under half of its funding from Government through the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). Further funding needed to support Kew's vital work comes from donors, membership and commercial activity including ticket sales.

Website: www.kew.org

Worshipful Company of Turners

Wizardry in Wood is managed by the Worshipful Company of Turners for the Charitable Trust of the Worshipful Company of Turners.

The Turners' Company is one of the oldest livery companies in the City of London, receiving its Royal Charter in 1604. It maintains a close relationship with the art and craft of woodturning, supporting a wide range of educational, training, charitable and professional activities.

The Company is also closely involved in the life and activities of the City of London. The Company's **Turning Competitions** are biennial and its **Wizardry in Wood** exhibitions are held every four years.

Website: www.turnersco.com