



Sam Maloof: 36 Views of a Master Woodworker

By Fred Setterberg

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Finalist for the Glenn Goldman Award for Art, Architecture, and Photography, Southern California Independent Booksellers Association

The first craftsman to receive a MacArthur Foundation genius grant, a man whom his friend and fellow furniture maker Jimmy Carter called the best woodworker that ever lived, Sam Maloof was one of the great masters of midcentury modernism. His pieces sensuous, inviting design and immaculate workmanship elide any distance in critical perception between craft and art, and his furniture is found in private domains throughout the world and in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and the Smithsonian. Warm and gregarious, Maloof was loved by those who knew him. His Southern California compound became the hub of a rich network of artists and artisans; and today, six years after his death, thousands of visitors pass through his home and workshop to catch a glimpse of a life so rich in beauty.

This engaging book, which will be released on the centennial of Maloof's birth, skillfully weaves together the words of family, friends, and associates to present thirty-six perspectives on a great artist. Far from the solitary genius we often imagine a creative person to be, the person who emerges from these stories is both the proud product of the community from which he originated and an anchor of the Pomona Valley arts scene he helped create. Surprising and illuminative, *Sam Maloof* places not only art, but also the role of the artist, at the heart of our culture. The book includes over one hundred color and black-and-white photographs.

Published in collaboration with The Sam and Alfreda Maloof Foundation for Arts & Crafts

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Editorial Review

Review

“This richly illustrated book...offers a multifaceted portrait of the man and his work, as viewed through the eyes of people who knew him.” --Scott Russell Sanders, *The Washington Post*

“I've always taken Maloof's audacity of form as permission to 'misbehave handsomely.' This collection confirms my suspicions.” -- Nick Offerman, actor, author, owner of Offerman Woodshop

“This warm and personal account of Sam Maloof, one of America's most beloved craft makers, brings the man and his work alive. By examining Maloof from multiple vantage points, Fred Setterberg unveils the complexity of his apparently straightforward life story. The book will be rewarding not just for those who knew Maloof and his work, but for anyone who places value in a life devoted to skill and artistry.” --Glenn Adamson, Nanette L. Laitman Director, Museum of Arts and Design

“As snapshots of a life devoted to craft, this book should be a touchstone for any would-be craftsman. Here is the secret of what it's all about: not fly-by-night sensation, but hard work, dedication, and genuine love of material and community, refined over decades. It is a rare treat to read such intimate portraits of one of the great craftsmen of our time.” --Nora Atkinson, Lloyd Herman Curator of Craft, Renwick Gallery, Smithsonian American Art Museum

“This engaging portrait of the preeminent woodworker of the twentieth-century studio craft movement, presented through multiple voices and vantage points, poignantly animates a vanishing moment in the cultural history of California (and the nation at large).” --Peter Korn, author, *Why We Make Things and Why It Matters: The Education of a Craftsman*

“This 264-page hardback book will be appreciated by fans of Maloof and the American modernism movement. It will also be of interest to those who shape beautiful, functional objects with their hands and those who support such labor-intensive, personalized works.” --Janet Eastman, *The Oregonian*

“The perfect introduction to the life and work of an authentic American artist who continues to inspire and influence new generations of artists, woodworkers, and furniture makers.... Enthusiastically recommended.” --*Midwest Book Review*

“A tribute to an amazing man [whose] work will never be forgotten, with people coming together to reveal the 'best of the best' in the world of woodworking. And a man who had such great passion for his art that he was kind enough to share it with one and all....this memoir is one to be savored.” --Amy Lignor, *Feathered Quill Book Reviews*

“Absolutely fascinating.” --*KellyVision*

“Wonderful pictures and unique documents are featured in this classy and elegant book. Important testimonials from Mr. Maloof's friends, colleagues, and family are included. Mr. Setterberg brings all of the above with style and poetry in tribute to artist who has himself brought poetry into wood. This is a must-have book for anyone who loves beauty and wants to touch it.” --*The Culture News*

“A fascinating biography of a special man: an artist, certainly, a sculptor, yes, and—above all—a master woodworker.” --J. Norman Reid, *Highland Woodworking*

From the Inside Flap

The first craftsman to receive a MacArthur Foundation "genius" grant, a man whom his friend and fellow furniture maker Jimmy Carter called "the best woodworker that ever lived," Sam Maloof was one of the great masters of midcentury modernism. His pieces' sensuous, inviting design and immaculate workmanship elide any distance in critical perception between craft and art, and his furniture is found in private domains throughout the world and in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and the Smithsonian. Warm and gregarious, Maloof was loved by those who knew him. His Southern California compound became the hub of a rich network of artists and artisans; and today, six years after his death, thousands of visitors pass through his home and workshop to catch a glimpse of a life so rich in beauty. This engaging book, which will be released on the centennial of Maloof's birth, skillfully weaves together the words of family, friends, and associates to present thirty-six perspectives on a great artist. Far from the solitary genius we often imagine a creative person to be, the person who emerges from these stories is both the proud product of the community from which he originated and an anchor of the Pomona Valley arts scene he helped create. Surprising and illuminative, Sam Maloof places not only art, but also the role of the artist, at the heart of our culture.

About the Author

Fred Setterberg is the author of *Lunch Bucket Paradise* (Heyday, 2011) and the coauthor of six other books, including the award-winning *The Roads Taken: Travels Through America's Literary Landscapes*. He has been a staff writer for the *East Bay Express* and editor of *Travelers Tales America*, and has written for *The New York Times*, *The Nation*, and scores of other national and regional magazines. He lives in Oakland, California.

Users Review

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Eleonora Plunkett:

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