



## PRESS RELEASE

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YOU CAN NEVER HAVE TOO MANY VEGETABLES.

### CRAIG NUTT: CERTIFIED ORGANIC OPENS AT THE MOBILE MUSEUM OF ART Friday, January 18, 2008

Artist-created furniture takes on many shapes but none have a more palatable presence than those crafted by Craig Nutt. “Much of my work is rooted in the garden,” states Nutt, “and the garden has provided me with a metaphorically rich and evocative vocabulary.”

Craig Nutt is an impeccable craftsman that pursues organic design in its most humble and edible forms. His *Radish Salad Bowl* (1993) is a playful, witty sculpture that at the same time acts as functional serving ware. It is a salad bowl on a stand with oversized cayenne peppers as legs, a radish that opens to make two salad bowls, and radish leaves that function as salad servers. The piece is made of cherry and maple and is similar in form to a brightly painted 1998 version that is in the collection of the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

He has also designed a chair where the front legs look like carrots; the back legs, celery stalks; and the rail across the back, a snow pea .

Born in Iowa, Nutt is a 1972 graduate of the University of Alabama. He began his career as a woodworker based in Northport, Alabama, where he lived for many years. He currently resides in Kingston Springs, Tennessee, near Nashville.

Nutt's meticulous craftsmanship is infused with a sense of freedom and spontaneity drawn from his early work in painting, assemblage and improvised music. He employs a wide variety of



Craig Nutt, *Radish Salad Bowl*,  
1993, Collection of Lewis Fitts

wood working techniques including turning, carving, traditional joinery and steam bending as well as oil painting and lacquering techniques.



Craig Nutt, *Celery Chair*, 1993,  
Collection of Mobile Museum of

In making art furniture he begins by roughing out the basic shapes on a band saw and lathe; he then further defines the forms (such as the cayenne pepper legs) with rasps and sharp-edged woodworking tools. The pieces are further refined with a drum-sander and fine sandpaper and then finished with artist's oil paint. The result is a sensual painted surface that mimics the glossiness of the respective vegetable's skin.

Not all vegetables are the same. "Vegetables, Nutt said, have associations of taste and memory." When he took an elegant okra-shaped table from Alabama to an exhibit in the north, it was not well received. "Some people had okra once - and hated it," the artist said.

Drawn from museum and private collections, this exhibition of over thirty pieces spans 30 years of Craig Nutt's creative, humorous and masterly approach to fine woodworking. The exhibit runs through March 23, 2008.

#### Mobile Museum of Art

Recently expanded in 2002, Mobile Museum of Art in beautiful Langan Park is the largest art museum along the Gulf Coast from New Orleans to Tampa.

The 95,000 square foot facility is the setting for its permanent collection of over 8,000 works of art spanning two centuries of culture, as well as world renown traveling exhibitions and regional art exhibits.