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**FINE ARTS**  
SOCIETY OF PEORIA

April 13, 2023 @ 10:00 AM  
Peoria Riverfront Museum  
222 SW Washington St., Peoria, IL

## AMERICAN STUDIO FURNITURE MAKERS: THE FIRST GENERATION lecture by Dr. Robert Aibel

Following World War II, many American designers rejected the factory system of mass-producing functional objects in favor of individual artisans who conceived of and executed their own original designs. Some embraced historic craft methods, while others experimented with new methods and materials. The Studio Arts Movement took shape in clay, metal, fiber, glass, and wood.

Studio art designs reflect the personal visions of their makers and take many directions. Wharton Esherick and George Nakashima on the East Coast and Sam Maloof and Arthur Espenet Carpenter on the West Coast were the major figures among the first generation of American hand-crafted furniture makers. In Ned Cooke's 1989 book and catalogue for a show at the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, *New American Furniture: Second Generation Studio Furnituremakers*, he referred to the four of them as the First Generation of Studio Furniture makers. This phrase



reified the existence of a movement that began before the Boston show and helped to create a framework within which to think about American Studio Furniture. This lecture by Dr. Robert Aibel, a leading expert on the Studio Craft Movement, will explore the careers and work of Esherick and Nakashima in particular.



Aibel is the founding owner of Moderne Gallery in Philadelphia. He lectures regularly on studio furniture design, and has authored several publications on the topic. Aibel holds BA, MA, and PhD degrees from the University of Pennsylvania. From 1977-1992, he was a professor of Aesthetic and Visual Communication at the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School and at Drexel University.



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