



*"Sunlit Pine Branch" by Elmore DeMott*

# PINE

## ART EXHIBITION

SCHEDULED SEPTEMBER 3 – OCTOBER 31

*By Barbara Reed, Alabama State Council on the Arts*

**F**rom the longleaf pine forests that covered Alabama before settlement, to the millions of acres of loblolly pine plantations that are part of our contemporary timber industry, pines have played a crucial role in Alabama culture, development, and industry. Pines are symbolically and ceremonially important trees to many Native American people, but their meaning varies from tribe to tribe. Some view the pine tree as a symbol of longevity that denotes wisdom and harmony with nature. Today's long-term management of pine forests produces a renewable resource, erosion protection, watersheds, recreation, and habitats for wildlife.

A new exhibition, PINE, exploring pine trees and forests through an artistic lens will be on display in the Georgine Clarke Alabama Artist Gallery from September 3 until October 31. Operated by the Alabama State Council on the Arts, The Georgine Clarke Alabama Artists Gallery is free and open to the public Monday-Friday from 8 am-5 pm, and is located on the

first floor of the RSA Tower in downtown Montgomery at 201 Monroe Street.

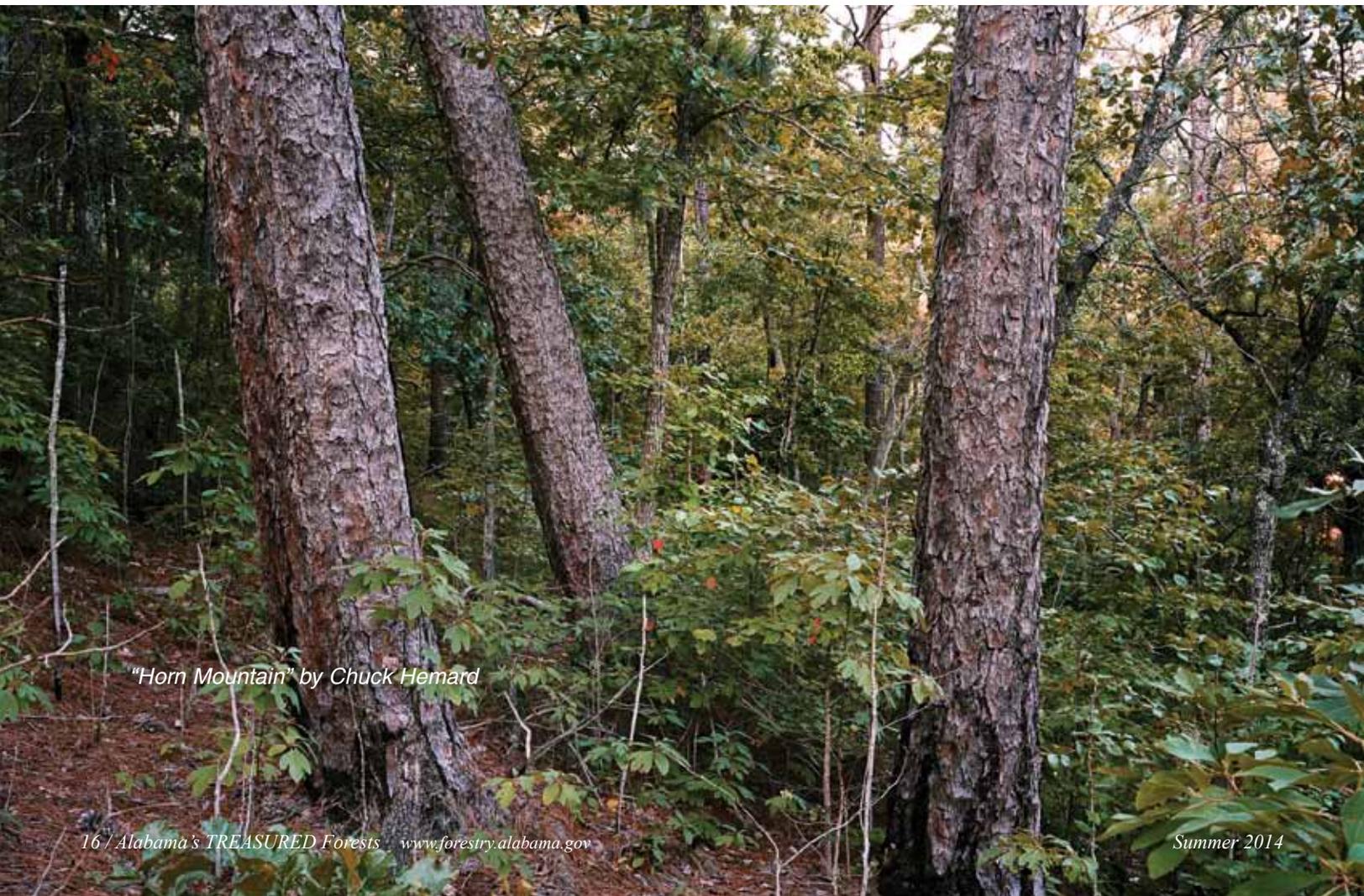
For this exhibition, four Alabama artists look at pine from a variety of perspectives: Photographer Elmore DeMott of Montgomery documents controlled forest burns in her series of photographs from the past two years. Photographer Chuck Hemard of Auburn explores old-growth pine forests in south Alabama and Georgia in his series of large-format photographs. Sculptor and furniture maker Ethan Sawyer from Dothan and sculptor Chuck Moore of Valley have transformed salvaged heart pine and given the wood a new life as artwork. Also included in the exhibit will be an assortment of pine needle baskets crafted in Alabama.

Elmore DeMott, a Montgomery artist featured in the PINE exhibit, shares her perspective, "As a photographer I find myself defining the world in terms of light, shadows, and patterns.

*(Story continued on page 18, photos on 16 and 17)*



*"Eglin Fog" by Chuck Hemard*



*"Horn Mountain" by Chuck Hemard*



*"Night Burn" by Elmore DeMott*

# PINE ART EXHIBITION

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*"Table" and "Tractor Bench" (with inlaid pine sections) by Ethan Sawyer*

Capturing beautiful colors, fascinating shapes, and unique textures with a camera is both a challenge and a delight, especially when uncommon perspectives create striking images and lasting impressions." DeMott continues, "When at work, it is as if the rest of the world disappears and my camera and I are alone with that which is before us. I aim to capture the essence of my subjects with a goal of sharing the stories my photographs can tell."

Photographer Chuck Hemard was born in New Orleans, Louisiana, and was raised in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. After earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from the University of Southern Mississippi in 1999, he relocated to Athens, Georgia, and received his Master of Fine Arts from the University of Georgia in 2004. He now teaches photography at Auburn University and is the recipient of an Alabama State Council on the Arts Photography Fellowship. Capturing the beauty and mystique of nature, Hemard presents the pine tree as beautiful, resourceful, and vibrant. In this exhibition, his photographs visually explore the remnant landscapes of old-growth longleaf pine-lands across the coastal plain of the Deep South. The images attempt to describe and reflect on what remains of one of America's most significant landscapes, a landscape with deep ties to the cultural, economic, and environmental histories of Alabama and the larger southern United States. Longleaf pine-lands once were a dominant element of a landscape mosaic that covered the coastal plain from Virginia to east Texas, some 90 million acres at the time of European settlement, and have all but been wiped away. When properly maintained with frequent, non-fatal fire, the longleaf ecosystem rivals the tropical rainforests in terms of biodiversity, yet today the decline of this ecosystem has been listed as the third most endangered in our country.

Furniture maker and sculptor Ethan Sawyer of Dothan comments, "I enjoy the complexities of nature and how it can simultaneously be both delicate and strong, as well as direct and reactionary. I think the same holds true for my work; I like to have organized plans for projects, but I also like to allow for a slight degree of flexibility once I get the material in my hands. This is especially true when I choose to work with wood, since all lumber pieces have their own personality. This level of flexibility allows me to think on my feet, and always provides a new morsel of education."

Self-taught sculptor Chuck Moore of Valley has created hand-tooled pieces in wood, stone, and metal for the past 40 years. Moore's art has evolved through a process of trial and error, success and failure. When designing a sculpture, Chuck lets the medium he is working with play a large role in his design. He feels that if he tries to force a design into a piece without using its natural flow and movement, it will lose some of its innate beauty. It is important to Moore to look beyond the surface of the medium and make his design from what he sees in it. Most of his work is created from material that he has found, been given, or from scraps of previous projects. In recent years, he has purchased soapstone and incorporated that material for diversity in his work.

Artists have found the pine tree beautiful and a significant subject matter in their work. Don't miss the opportunity to come and reflect on this important exhibition, PINE, September 3 – October 31. For more information, contact Elliot Knight, Visual Arts Program Manager/Gallery Director, Georgine Clarke Alabama Artist Gallery (334)242-4076, ext. 250 or [elliott.knight@arts.alabama.gov](mailto:elliott.knight@arts.alabama.gov)



*"Carved Bust" (left) and "Totem" (right) by Chuck Moore*