

# TREecycle 2016

The image of a massive, heavy, gnarly log being craned off a truck and suspended mid-air before being lowered onto a log carriage is at odds with the ease with which it is fed into the equally massive band saw. Timber miller Richard Parsons orchestrates the procedure in a way that only the truly skilled professional can.

*Treecycle 2016* is being planned for August as part of celebrations for the 200th Birthday of the Royal Botanic Garden, Sydney. The exhibition will celebrate the bicentenary in a unique way, with the focus on turning wood from trees that have graced the Gardens for many years into works of art by skilled makers.

Our Gardens are dynamic places; at any given time, young trees are planted, mature specimens grow old and die, and others require pruning... and so the cycle continues. The wood of 17 species – both exotic and native – has been harvested. To this end, David Bidwell, Senior Arborist at the Sydney Garden, has played a pivotal role in the coordination of the timber from the three Gardens. His knowledge and skills have been indispensable.

Wood is a medium that has universal appeal. Spurred on by the success of the 2010 *Kauri Project*<sup>\*</sup>, Hugh Springford, the chairman for *Treecycle 2016*, invited Leon Sadubin together with Ginny Sadubin to curate this new exhibition. They are confident it will be a showstopper.

Preparations for the exhibition have been underway for the past two years, as the conversion of logs into air-dried

timber is complex, time-consuming and physically demanding work. David Bidwell, assisted by staff from the Gardens including arborist Peter Butler, worked with Richard Parsons on the milling days.

*Treecycle 2016* will showcase the work of 45 craftspeople and artists, whose creations will reflect an amazing diversity of working with wood. Some names will be familiar, while others are those of emerging makers. The enthusiasm of the participants is palpable, and all are looking forward to meeting at Richard's mill near North Richmond for timber distribution. At the time of writing, the participants are poring over images of numbered logs, sawn boards and cutting lists. Their creativity and mastery of making will be a personal response to the workability, density, grain, nuances of colour and figure that is inherent in each piece of timber they select.

Once the timber is back in their own workshops, they will be considering which techniques – roughing out, resawing, steam bending, laminating and many more – to use to produce the chairs, boxes, clocks, tables, musical instruments, toys, lights, model boats and sculptures, plus a host of other surprises.

We are confident that the next phase leading to *Treecycle 2016* – that of the making – will be a mix of consideration, excitement, exhaustion, discovery and gratification, leading to unique works with the usual good measure of sawdust and shavings thrown in.

Leon & Ginny Sadubin, Curators

*"Wood from trees that have graced the Gardens will be turned into works of art by skilled makers."*



Hugh Springford with Outaniqua yellowwood



African olive being lifted onto the saw



Richard with stacked and air-seasoning wide boards

<sup>\*</sup>Five years ago, the *Kauri Project* demonstrated that although flying foxes caused the premature death of a number of trees in the Royal Botanic Garden, Sydney, the timber of the Moore's Kauri could be transformed into an array of beautiful works. The proceeds from this exhibition went towards the rehabilitation and upgrading of the Palm Grove.