

# THE *Krenov* FOUNDATION

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Laura Mays, President

*The mission of The Krenov Foundation is to preserve and continue the legacy of James Krenov. A legacy is a gift from the past that is used by us in the present, and in turn will be passed on to those in the future. Of course, James*

*Krenov was many things: a father and a son, a husband, woodworker, writer and teacher. His books and his teaching are his legacy to the wider world. His focus on the individual and her emotional relationship with material and tools and techniques continue to strike a chord with woodworkers around the world, and many of those he taught have gone on to become teachers themselves. Jim emphasized understanding the material – wood – negotiating with it, getting constant feedback and adapting, learning by paying attention and being fully engaged. This approach has been absorbed by his readers and students, and has permeated woodworking wherever his books are read and his students teach. In this and future issues of the newsletter we look at schools and shops that continue James Krenov's legacy, beginning with Inside Passage School of Fine Cabinetmaking founded by CRFW graduate (2000) Robert Van Norman.*

— Laura Mays, President

## ***THE KRENOV LEGACY:***

**ROBERT VAN NORMAN TELLS  
THE STORY OF BUILDING  
INSIDE PASSAGE SCHOOL OF  
FINE CABINETMAKING**



Inside Passage School of Fine Cabinetmaking is located in the quaint ocean side community of Roberts Creek on the Sunshine Coast of British Columbia, Canada.

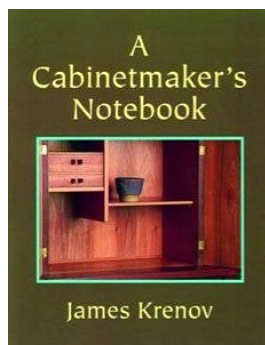
**T**he world lost one of the most influential woodworkers of our time in the fall of 2009, and I lost my friend. More than twenty years before, I read *A Cabinetmaker's Notebook* for the first time, in 1987. It was that book, and

subsequent conversations that took place with its author James Krenov that lead to the opening of Inside Passage School of Fine Cabinetmaking more than a decade ago.

It is difficult to convey in words the influence that Jim had on my life.

In short, our school would not exist had it not been for his generous support and guidance.

Our school and its program is founded on and dedicated to Jim's teachings: the work of the amateur, a dedica-



**A glimpse at the Benchroom at IPSFC.**

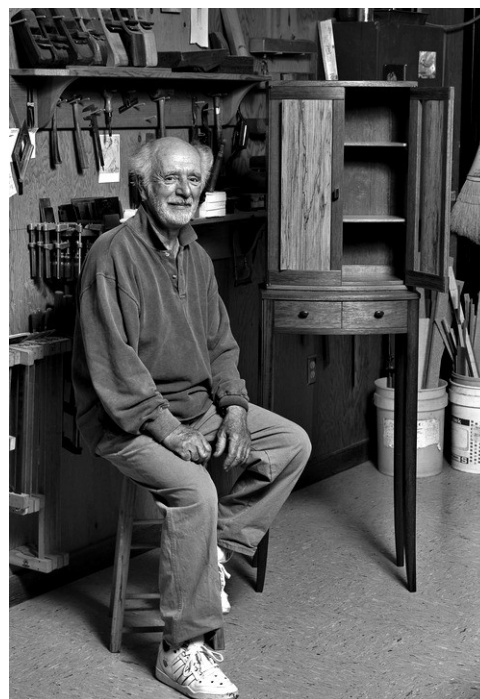
tion to the craft that is built on curiosity, feelings, and a reverence for the material. The work of the hand, the eye, and the heart -- where sensitivity and intimacy are encouraged, not suppressed.

Imagine my great fortune and gratitude to Jim, who, in the final years of his life, provided my students with weekly lectures, passing along his final thoughts on the craft, leaving us his rare signature on our school and our

work, much as he did on his cabinets.

During one of the lectures he provided for my students, he spoke of the importance of being happy in your work, and in your life. While it may seem odd to pay homage to Jim by quoting another woodworker, it was Jim that introduced me to John Brown, who wrote "I live in a beautiful place; I work at something I love. I make enough money to live and my demands on the world's resources are very meagre. What's so unusual about this idyllic circumstance is that there is plenty of room for more to join." These words aptly describe my life, too, and are all I could aspire for my students at IPSFC. Thanks Jim!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank, Michael Burns, Jim Budlong, and David Welter. This place would simply not exist, had it not been for their generous support. — RVN



**James Krenov in 1992. Photo: Kevin Shea.**

## ABOUT ROBERT VAN NORMAN



his hand tools, bench and original Swedish machines to Robert. The walls of his shop are lined with some of the wood that has been with Robert for nearly thirty years, as well as with wood left to him by Jim.

It must be said that Robert met someone else in 1987, someone who would perhaps have an even greater impact on his life. Yvonne Van Norman became Robert's partner in life and work, living near their wood-working school in a century old cottage on one of the original homesteads in the ocean side community of Roberts Creek in British Columbia, Canada.



**Above: Robert Van Norman made many planes before attending CR, many during his student years with James Krenov; and now, plane making is one of the first things he teaches to his own students at IPSFC.**

**A**s you now know, Robert Van Norman is the founder, resident craftsman and teacher at Inside Passage School of Fine Cabinetmaking. His website of the IPSFC is inspiring, with an

impressive line-up of workshops, as well as photographs of beautiful work by student after student — each bearing the heart of the Krenov tradition and spirit.



**Cabinet made by now resident craftsman Caroline Woon when a student at IPSFC.**

Robert has also taught at other schools, perhaps the most far-flung being The Tree of Knowledge school in Northern Israel, which was founded by one of Robert's students, and for which he

continues as an advisor.

After teaching full time for sixteen years, Robert decided to reduce his teaching schedule to spend more time on his own work, including a nearly completed book entitled *Heart Hand & Eye*. His small workshop at the back of his home, just down the road from the IPSFC, is home to yet another legacy—Jim bequeathed

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*Note: A Cabinetmaker's Notebook and other books by James Krenov can be obtained through [The Woodworkers Library at Linden Publishing](#).*

**EVENTS & CALENDAR**  
EXHIBITS & OTHER EVENTS SUPPORTED BY TKF



**Mendocino Coast  
Furniture Maker mem-  
ber Les Cizik's *Bordello*.**

I

**MENDOCINO COAST FURNITURE MAKERS**

The 18th Annual Show at Oddfellows Hall  
Saturday, July 9 — Sunday, July 31  
Reception July 9, 5-8PM  
Kasten & Ukiah Streets  
Mendocino, CA 9546

II

**NEW WORK BY FACULTY**

at the  
MESSLER GALLERY  
CENTER for FURNITURE CRAFTSMANSHIP  
June 10—September 14  
25 Mill Street  
Rockport, Maine 04856



**Box by Clark Kellogg,  
instructor at Center for  
Furniture Craftsmanship  
and alumnus of CR Fine  
Woodworking Program.**



Our mission is to continue the legacy of James Krenov, his values, approach to woodworking, and teaching. The Krenov Foundation supports the art and craft of fine woodworking through scholarships, exhibitions, and developing an online archive of Krenov's work. If you would like to help our awards and scholarship programs, or other activities, please contact TKF President at [thekrenovfoundation@mcn.org](mailto:thekrenovfoundation@mcn.org).