



museum of arts and design

**MUSEUM OF ARTS AND DESIGN PRESENTS JOHN PROCARIO'S
SCULPTURES SHAPED BY WOOD, LIGHT, AND MOTION**

John Procario: Freeforms—Sculptural Explorations in Wood and Light
October 27, 2026–April 4, 2027



Left to right: John Procario, *Vertical Freeform VII* (2025); John Procario, *Freeform Ceiling Sculpture I* (2024) and *Sculpted Sofa I & II* (2024); and John Procario and Alex Roskin, *Anthropose IV* (2026). Photos: Courtesy of Todd Merrill Studio and the designer.

NEW YORK, NY (October 14, 2026) – Wood bends, light dances, and sculpture becomes something to experience in motion in *John Procario: Freeforms—Sculptural Explorations in Wood and Light* on view at the Museum of Arts and Design (MAD) from Tuesday, October 27, 2026, through Sunday, April 4, 2027. The first solo museum presentation of Procario's work, the exhibition features suspended light sculptures, sconces, seating, and freestanding works in which ash wood is bent by hand into open, looping forms and illuminated from within.

Procario's sculptures begin with a material pushed close to its limits. Using a process of freeform bentwood lamination, he bends thin layers of ash wood into curves that are then bonded into permanent forms, often working from no more than a rough sketch. Flexible LED (light-emitting diode) strips are embedded within the wood, transforming the material into a source of light. The resulting works occupy a space between sculpture and design, asking viewers to consider how material, technology, and the human body can shape one another.

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Displayed alongside supporting materials contextualizing the designer's process, the more than 15 sculptural works in the exhibition are made to change and shift as they are viewed and experienced. There is no fixed front as visitors move around a sculpture—loops open and close, crossings separate and reconnect, and light moves in and out of view. What initially appears weightless and fluid, reveals the force required to craft it. Each curve carries the evidence of wood bent nearly to the point of breaking.

In *Freeforms*, light is not applied to sculpture from outside but rather becomes part of the structure itself. Suspended works and sconces appear as lines drawn in space, with illumination running along the inner face of the wood. With the designer's *Sculptural Seating* series, also on view, the same looping vocabulary takes physical form, translating gestures developed in light sculpture into sofas and ottomans. Freestanding works extend these forms into the gallery, including *Anthropose IV* (2026), created with designer Alex Roskin, in which a ribbon of bleached ash rises from a polished stainless-steel base in a series of illuminated loops.

Elissa Auther, MAD's Deputy Director of Curatorial Affairs and William and Mildred Lasdon Chief Curator, said: "MAD was founded on the conviction that how something is made is part of what it means. Procario's practice brings together one of the oldest traditions of woodworking with a relatively new lighting technology, pushing both through a deeply physical process of making. These are works that cannot be fully understood from a photograph or from a single point of view. They ask us to move around them, to notice how material responds to force, and to experience making as active and alive."

Procario's approach to wood evolved from an early familiarity with the material. He grew up in his father's carpentry workshop before his formal studies in sculpture, where he began to explore wood as a metaphor for the human body. As he developed his technique, Procario deliberately pushed the material to its limits, breaking wood to understand how far it could bend. An early adopter of LED lighting, Procario has experimented with integrating the technology into his wooden sculptures and designs since 2012, expanding the expressive possibilities of both material and light. The *Freeform* series emerged from this sustained investigation of force, flexibility, balance, and light.

EXHIBITION CREDITS

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ABOUT THE ARTIST

John Procario is an American designer whose practice spans sculpture, lighting, and furniture. He grew up in his father's carpentry workshop, where he developed an early appreciation for woodworking, before pursuing sculpture in graduate school. His training in sculpture led him to

approach wood not simply as a material, but as a means of exploring the human form and movement.

Procario began developing his *Freeform* series as an exploration of this relationship between material and the body, later extending its visual language into furniture, lighting, and sculptural works. His practice has also expanded into the *Crevasse* and *Basin* series, in which he draws on forms found in topography and the landscape. Across these bodies of work, Procario combines a restrained visual vocabulary with an interest in physical sensation and perception.

Procario's work has been commissioned for residential and commercial environments, including a monumental installation for the Kaufman Organization's Nelson Tower in New York City. In 2018, he was invited to create a work for a multi-artist exhibition at Philip Johnson's Glass House. His work has been featured in *The New York Times*, *Architectural Digest*, *Design Milk*, *Interior Design*, and *Luxe Magazine*.

ABOUT THE MUSEUM OF ARTS AND DESIGN

The Museum of Arts and Design (MAD) champions contemporary makers across creative fields and presents the work of artists, designers, and artisans who apply the highest level of ingenuity and skill. Since the Museum's founding in 1956 by philanthropist and visionary Aileen Osborn Webb, MAD has celebrated all facets of making and the creative processes by which materials are transformed, from traditional techniques to cutting-edge technologies. Today, the Museum's curatorial program builds upon a rich history of exhibitions that emphasize a cross-disciplinary approach to art and design and reveals the workmanship behind the objects and environments that shape our everyday lives. MAD provides an international platform for practitioners who are influencing the direction of cultural production and driving twenty-first century innovation and fosters a participatory setting for visitors to have direct encounters with skilled making and compelling works of art and design. For more information, visit madmuseum.org.

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