

WESTERN HARDWOOD ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONVENTION WORLD FORESTRY CENTER - PORTLAND, OR



KEYNOTE SPEAKER TOMMY MAC

Carpenter, construction worker, craftsman, educator, writer/producer, TV personality – Tommy MacDonald has worn all these hats with skill and attitude and boisterous success. From the rough and tumble Dorchester section of Boston, Tommy was always fixing or building something. From an early fascination with tools, to a voc-tech high school, a 4-year union carpentry apprenticeship program, to 15 years as a journeyman carpenter, Tommy never strayed too far from his tool box. Later, Tommy was accepted at the North Bennet Street School, an internationally renowned craft and trade school, where he honed and refined his native woodworking skills while learning the art of fine furniture making. His curious nature and innate attention to detail led him to carefully research the technical intricacies and fascinating provenances of the historical pieces that inspired his works. It also led to a chance meeting with Bob Vila who appreciated both Tommy's exceptional craftsmanship and his charismatic presence and featured Tommy and his work on national TV in his Colonial Home project.

The experience was an eye opener. While continuing to expand his fine furniture collection – experimenting with new designs and materials – he became increasingly aware of the opportunity to reach out and share his knowledge and expertise with a wider audience: online, in books, and ultimately on TV. A series of podcasts chronicling in depth the construction of a bombe' secretary brought Tommy's mentoring skills to the forefront while capturing his "one of the guys" persona to a "t".

Tommy's big break came in 2009 when he hit the airwaves nationally as host/writer/executive producer of WGBH's new television series, Rough Cut – Woodworking with Tommy Mac. The show was an instant success accruing multiple Emmy Nominations and several Telly Awards, including a Silver, along the way. Tommy can often be found developing and perfecting woodworking tools with Pony Tools, Inc. and educating children across North America as the Celebrity Spokesperson of the Hardwood Forest Foundation.

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