

According to Steve Pancoast, master carver and owner of Piece of the Wind, every project has a story because each project is designed exclusively for the person or business that commissioned the piece and it's a part of their story. The first piece Pancoast created was a cradle to receive his own daughter. It became an heirloom and has since received each of his grandchildren. Through that experience, Pancoast has been creating heirlooms for others ever since.

CARVING HISTORY

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Carving since 1978, self-taught master woodcarver Steve Pancoast works from his studio in Amity, Oregon. The majority of his work is custom furniture, cabinetry, mantles and architectural embellishments such as corbels and door pulls.

PORTRAIT: TELL US HOW YOU GOT STARTED.

Pancoast: Although my aspirations were to utilize my degree in science to teach, I discovered through building the cradle for my daughter that I was far more mentally, physically, spiritually and even artistically fulfilled by the challenge of wood carving and wood working. The rewards of creating something for somebody that would be valued for generations became my life dedication.

PORTRAIT: WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST INFLUENCE?

Pancoast: Life, creation and people. These are the stories I want to tell. My attitude is I am nothing of consequence. I hope to do one thing of consequence, but never know what that one thing is. That way I won't stop trying.

PORTRAIT: WHAT IS YOUR GO-TO MATERIAL?

Pancoast: Wood. Unlike nearly all other media, it is alive and dynamic, as is life. If I have a favorite wood, it is cherry because that is the wood I used for my daughter's cradle.

PORTRAIT: MY WORK IS:

Pancoast: Purpose. My client is the designer, and I am their hands. My job is to listen to what they need and want, then deliver beyond their expectations.

PORTRAIT: MOST FUN PROJECT?

Pancoast: The LongHorn Saloon. A client asked me to build a saloon backdrop for a Western bronze desk sculpture. Together we created a highly detailed two-story action bar scene with each of the nine figures a realistic caricature of somebody involved in the project, including my client as the bartender, and daughter as the barmaid.

PORTRAIT: MOST MEMORABLE PROJECT?

Pancoast: I had the opportunity to work on multiple unique projects in a French Country-styled home, including highly carved built-ins and furniture. It was quite an expansive project lasting nearly three years. It was also during this period that I lost several people I loved. I was struck by the contrast of helping a family build a life while enduring the end of members of my own.

PORTRAIT: I LOVE WHAT I DO BECAUSE:

Pancoast: It has kept me challenged and interested for nearly four decades. Within that time, I've been able to utilize my skills and abilities to help others realize a part of their dream. Hence, Piece of the Wind.

PORTRAIT: WORDS OF WISDOM

Pancoast: Perfect enough. To accept the fact that 'perfect' is impossible, but perfect enough can set you free, and enable you to come closer to perfect than if you try.

