

WILD GOOSE ISLAND CARVING STUDIO - Loren P. Pinski

By Emma Adair

Loren Pinski began his carving career while visiting an art gallery in Holland, MI where he saw a carved mallard hen. He was amazed at the beauty and intricacy of the work but looking at the price tag he realized that there was no way he could afford the carving. "I knew I did not have the money to purchase the carving but since I was a wood worker, I figured that I would have to learn how to carve one myself." Upon returning to Missoula, MT, he bought a how-to-book, grabbed some old carpenter chisels and a rasp, some scrape Doug Fir lumber, and carved a decoy. It immediately became clear that this would be the last time he would try to carve a duck using construction grade lumber.

Loren spent thirty years working in the forest products industry. His jobs allowed him to work in several western cities such as Missoula, Portland, Billings, Denver, Coeur d Alene, and Boise. As a result, he was able to take carving classes from several World Champion carvers: Ted Smith, Dave Alexander, Tom Matus, and Tom Newell. His work also provided him the opportunity to compete and win ribbons in countless regional carving competitions and he was sold his carvings through art galleries in Denver, Portland, East Glacier Park, Cour D Alene, Boise and Bigfork. He has participated in art shows in Missoula, Big Sky, Sun Valley, McCall, and Boise.



From the very beginning, Loren has been able to sell his carvings. "I still have that old decoy carved from stud grade lumber but my second carving sold to a co-worker for \$25." His carvings have been purchased by collectors through out the U.S and have ended up in the hands of collectors throughout the world.

Some of my carvings were sold directly to carvers in other countries and some were purchased by companies who sent my carvings to colleagues around the world. For example, a carved Avocet was purchased by a company and given to a Brazilian Provincial Governor. My carvings are in Canada, The United Kingdom, Japan, Brazil, Indonesia, and Chile." His work has been purchased for retirement gifts, service awards, and customer appreciation gifts. Loren's carvings have also been featured in several corporate magazines, industry trade journals and corporate newsletters.

“My greatest honor has been carving the The Mulrooney Award for the North American Wholesale Lumber Association. This is a 1/4 sized flying Bald Eagle and is considered the most prestigious award in the Forest Products Industry.” NAWLA is an international trade organization with over 600 members representing the leading manufacturers and wholesalers through out the United States, Canada, and the world (www.nawla.org). The Mulrooney is given to the individual who has provided exemplary service to the North American forest product industry and the community at large. Pinski stated, “I worked in the forest product industry and know many of the recipients of this award. To be chosen to carve a flying Bald Eagle every year is an incredible honor. Besides, it is a lot of fun to design the bird and actually do the carving. I look forward to winter when it is time to work with the folks at NAWLA.”



Much of Pinski’s inspiration comes from simply being outdoors. “To see birds in their natural setting is the ideal way to discover the personalities and characteristic that makes each bird unique. I have been dive bombed by red winged black birds, almost drove off the road watching a bald eagle catch a fish on the Clearwater, watched a raft of mergansers go after a school of fish, and was stared down by a barn owl.”

“I try to incorporate all these experiences into my carvings so that the beauty and excitement of the outdoors can be brought into someone’s home.” While most of his carvings have been of birds, Pinski have also carved fish, bears, caricatures, and even nativity sets. “Years ago I inherited a nativity set made by my mother - that has inspired me to design, carve, and even sell my own nativity sets. I suppose that carving nativity sets are kind of a hobby.”

Whether a Mountain Blue Bird from the meadows of Idaho, a carved eagle that resembles a real bird fishing on the Clearwater, a trophy style rainbow trout caught at Duck Lake, or an antique style decoy that brings back memories of an old family cabin; most commissions seem to be based on a fond memory. That’s what makes carving fun, not only are people appreciative of the quality of the work, it makes them remember the beauty of this world.

Loren’s studio is in Star, Idaho where he lives with his wife, and two Vizlas. To see more or Loren’s carvings visit his studio: www.lpparver.com or contact Western and Wildlife Art Magazine.