

George's Hobby - Waterfowl by Hand

Dateline: Sunday, May 9, 2010

George Textor has an amazing hobby. He carves birds by hand. He carves water fowl to be exact. He does this at a work bench in his basement next to the family laundry room. In the next room he paints of the birds he sculpts.



George describes an exquisitely carved and painted owl that he created by hand

His sculpting and painting are meticulous and painstaking.

When I first saw these birds I could hardly believe my own eyes. I thought they were real



George's Great Lakes tern on the left

birds momentarily caught at rest. They looked like they could just flutter their delicate wings

and fly off into the air. But they were actually almost perfect replicas carved from a simple block of wood by George.

How Does He do It?

He begins with a block of wood, typically soft red cedar. He showed us one and the mere aroma of the wood was delightful not to mention what he than does with the wood. He cuts the wood to the rough shape of the bird he is working on with his trusty band saw. What self respecting guy would work on wood without a power tool, right? He then sculpts the piece by whittling it down with wood carving



One of George's hand sculpted, long billed birds



George points out more of his remarkable collection of hand carved water fowl

tools. He uses another power tool. He drills a hole in the beak of the bird to set the bill in to. He then does more sculpting and when he has the bird fairly

well shaped he uses his trusty Dremel tool for fine work on the wood.

How Does He Get It to Look So Real?

The next step in the process is to paint the bird's feathers, head and bill. George has set up a separate work area to do his painting. He doesn't want the wood dust from his sculpting to get on his wet paint. He selects an authentic color photograph of the bird he is creating from his extensive collection of avian photographs and works from that image to get the colors just right on the bird.

It depends on the particular bird that George is working on whether the painting takes longer or the carving takes long. In any event the end product is as life-like a bird as I have ever seen..

Links to Video Clips of George Explaining His "Hobby"

Here are some links to short video clips of George explaining his sculpture to us when we visited him



It was amazing to listen to George talk about his artistic hobby of creating sculpted water fowl. His collection of birds he has created himself is quite extensive. Each one is so realistic that they seem to come alive when you look at them and that for all intents and purposes they appear as if they could take to the air at any moment. It is worth a visit to George's home to see his wonderful carved water fowl if you have any interest in art, art history, painting, sculpting or birds.



recently..

There is a lot of detailed work involved in his water fowl sculpting. George spends a fair amount of time thinking about how to improve his sculpting and it shows in his work.

George has studied earlier American water fowl sculptors of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century to learn how to develop and improve his work. .

**Steve Waszak, MD
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