

David Litaker

The objects I make are intended to appeal to the senses. In my case, the first thing that hooked me was the smell. Cedar trees, which grew abundantly around my childhood home, would fall in summer storms leaving open trunks perfumed with a rich, aromatic, addicting scent. This attraction continued to evolve as I worked with other woods with smells reminding me of roasted peanuts and cookies baking. My love for wood has deepened through the surprise of finding swirling, flaming patterns of grain hidden away by Nature and with the sensual feel of surfaces sanded smooth.

I began working with wood when I was a teenager - my father had a large shop with almost every possible tool. At first, I focused on making functional things – a lamp, a jewelry box, a bowl turned on a lathe. Creating things I could use was deeply satisfying and was something I found I missed during my later career. A timely offer from my father came upon my retirement – the contents of his shop. An added bonus came in the form of a second timely offer from a cousin with a barn full of seasoned black walnut lumber. Since then, I have reacquainted myself with the tools I once knew, to make one-of-a-kind, functional objects from mostly local wood. Adding contrast to the intense, rich colors that appear when an oil & beeswax finish is added using stone or metal inlay is intended to focus attention on the natural artistry of the grain. I use only food-safe finishes on all my work.