

On creating your own art.

(Written 28Dec2019)

In an interview about her life as a singer, Linda Ronstadt said, “You don’t have to delegate your sorrows to professionals.”

This quote struck home for me. At age 66, while the sands in my hourglass may not be running out – at least, I hope that’s the case – they are noticeably running on. So it grows more and more unlikely that I will become a famous author, perhaps even less so that the furniture I make will sit on gallery display alongside the works of Sam Maloof or Judith Ames or Brian Boggs. But I keep going.

Having been burdened early on with the need to produce things to share with others, whether manifested in my writing or in making things from wood, there has never been a time when that drive subsided. Oh, sure, I’ve had dry spells, side-tracked by more basic imperatives such as raising children or repairing our Old House. And more recently, my writing has been on hiatus while I recovered from a serious injury, followed by a disconcerting experience with side effects of medications.

Through it all, I’ve never doubted that I had something to say, even as it became clear that much of it might be received by an audience of one. It would have been easy to immerse myself in books written by others or limit my woodworking experience to viewing the work of others. But all that would have been one way – receiving without contributing – and I would never have found that satisfying. So, I keep writing and I build out a workshop that allows me to shape wood into items my loved ones will find useful even while newfound physical challenges require altering my approach to the task.

My voice sounds through writing and shaping wood. And I’m with Linda. I can’t delegate my voice to others. If that voice is heard only by a few, what of it? I can only control my own actions. And as long as thoughts come and hands grasp, I’ll express my sorrows and joys in my own way.

I hope you will, too.