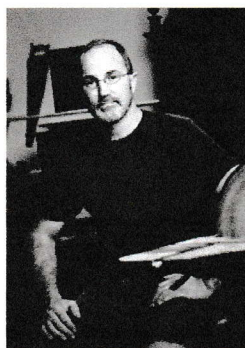




2017 Cartouche Award

JOHN BORLEY
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

JEFFREY S. ROBERTS NAMED 2017 CARTOUCHE RECIPIENT



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Jeff Roberts says he had “no prior interest” in furniture making until, just out of high school, he toured the North Bennet Street School in Boston. “I was kind of blown away by it,” he says.

He was attracted by “the classic looks, the proportions,” especially Newport furniture. “The Newport makers, I really think, found that fine line of detail, carvings, and proportions...some of the most beautiful furniture ever made.”

Carving was a big part of that attraction. “It was fun right off the bat. I enjoyed getting into those details. The feeling of chiseling a ball-and-claw or a fan or a three-dimensional, textured element on a piece of furniture.” He also loves to carve “insects, flowers, leaves, and trees. Things that aren’t on traditional furniture.”

Roberts says North Bennet gave him a solid foundation. Many years of working in small shops in Massachusetts taught him how to take a piece from design to finish, while learning “how to make money at it.”

Roberts also credits meditation with helping to take him “from being a good furniture maker to being recognized as a master.” He says, “It kind of slows your mind down and enables you to actually look at what your mind is doing, instead of just having that ‘monkey mind’ as they sometimes call it, where it’s just bouncing around with thoughts. It allows you to take whatever you’re doing to another level.”

In 2007, Roberts moved to New Hampshire and started his own business. He works out of a 32 x 60 foot garage. His specialty is ornamentally carved and shaped pieces. “Ball-and-claw feet, shell carvings, shaped pieces like Bom-

bé chests. They’re fun, so sculptural, so three-dimensional. I love doing chairs, because they are like a sculpture.”

Roberts has built hundreds of hand-crafted pieces over a career that’s now approaching 40 years. He’s an award-winning member of the League of New Hampshire Craftsmen and a juried member of the New Hampshire Furniture Masters Association.

Now he adds Cartouche recipient to his résumé. Roberts says “It feels great. I’ve put a lot into my career. It’s nice to have some peers recognize that.”

For a more in-depth look at Roberts’ career, see the 2017 issue of *American Period Furniture*. —JB

