

CARVER PROFILE



"Fred's 'Niflehjem' studio" in Wilmar, Minnesota.

Fred Cogelow

By Chris Whillock

A studio visit! I had met Fred Cogelow a handful of times, and each time I stood star-struck, not really being able to speak intelligently. He is, after all, an amazing carver who has probably won enough international awards to fill my den. I'd mumble out a few words like "What type of wood is that?" or "How long have you been carving?" ... you know, something really well thought out.

Each time I would also ask him if it would be possible to visit his studio sometime in the near future, he would answer with one of his famous "Fred-isms" leaving me scratching my head. We would then exchange a bit more small talk and I would move along kicking myself that I didn't set the date.

This past Fall, Marv Kaisersatt, Ivan Whillock, and I were finally able to make the road trip from Faribault to Willmar, Minnesota, to visit the one and only Fred Cogelow. Fred was a gracious host who, while he and his wife Doris entertained Marv and Ivan with fresh pumpkin pie and politics, let me wander through his studio and home, snapping photos of anything that I desired. He was just completing a commissioned piece--and it is spectacular. I'm sure Carving Magazine readers will enjoy the tour of Fred's studio as much as I did.

Note from Fred: "Chris is too easily impressed, fortunately, there are medications to correct such conditions."



Fred was working on this carving when we stopped by for our visit. It is carved from Butternut and will be on permanent display at the Mineota, MN Public Library.

"Beets Weedin" was commissioned by Friends of the Mineota Library, to honor Darren Gislason, a voracious reader, teacher, and founder of a program to enhance literacy in Minneota.



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The amazing detail of Fred's carving.



Woops ... you weren't supposed to see this photo. Here Ivan Whillock and Marv Kaisersatt help Fred sand out those nasty gouge-marks.

Note from Fred: "This is my first sanded piece in 25 years or so. The fine sanding dust fills the pores and enhances the finish, but i dislike the process and am too impatient to do it evenly, and having those two assifing didn't much help."

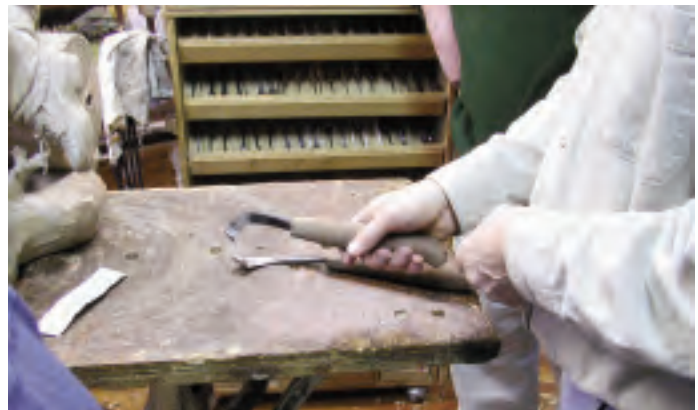


Mark Twain
in Basswood





One of Fred's tool cabinets, work area, study materials and speciality tools.



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The walls and rafters of Fred's studio are filled with a collection of carvings and nick nacks, some being stored as potential models for future works of art. You can find inspiration in every nook and cranny of his home as well.



"The Price of Distraction"
(in a seminar of Harley Refsal)



Just before we left Fred even took some time to share some caricature tips with budding young artist Marv Kaisersatt.

Note from Fred: "I was trying to convince my fellow bohemian that we should organize a traveling exhibition for a multi-state tour in 2013 or 14 (it takes at least three years to organize a quality tour). it could be called "The Minnesota Bad Czechs Road Tour," or "Czech-erd Pasts, Designer Firewood given a Minnesota Light!" Readers are welcome to suggest possible high traffic venues with quality settings."