

Lath Art for the Pro - Turning your Hobby into Cash

Over the next few months we will be adding content. PLEASE BE PATIENT. We won't be taking questions on this topic until this page is finished. A lot of what you read may seem disorganized, but we are putting up what we can when we can in response to general reader interest, and will organize it better later.....Thank you for your patience

Lath Art at Art Gallery

The other day we dropped into an Art Gallery in cottage country Ontario and along with watercolours and oils and sculpture, there were LathArt paintings by a local artist named Marty Humphreys, asking price \$350.00. That reminded me, my first test of the appeal of my LathArt was a local but high end arts and crafts consignment shop in Toronto Canada. I let them hang 2 paintings and both were sold within a month. In 1990, they sold them for approx \$300.00, my end was \$165.00.

How to Sell Patterns at Wood Shows

If you have a wood show (where they show off woodworking tools) in your area, you can start a nifty business selling LathArt Patterns.

You need 5 original designs that you have turned into patterns, a sign (made out of Lath, saying LathArt Patterns or something like that), finished samples of each of your patterns, a scroll saw and a book to register a mailing or e-mail list. It is also a good idea to offer lath blanks which are pre-cut lath wood glued onto paper (ours used to be 24" by 24 sticks of lath), and we charged our costs plus \$10.00 for these. Patterns should be priced competitively, see current prices and quality of intarsia patterns for pricing guidelines.

But don't just stand there in your booth. Get electricity and a scroll saw. Spend the few days making a piece of LathArt right there in front of the crowd. Invite guests to your booth to touch and feel the process. And if you have kids, let them participate in cutting and painting.

Most activity as far as sales occurred when the kids were in the booth, and it was obvious to customers that this was a family activity, not just a dad woodworking project.

And take names and e-mail addresses to keep in touch with people no matter if they buy or not. You may decide to run a class locally, and an interested mailing list could get that off the ground.

Remember to ask for the best pricing on your booth space. Some shows will offer discounts to small non-corporate show participants.

A World is Four (Paintings)

When we went to Crafts and Hobby Association Trade Show in Chicago in summer of 1997 with Woodscape Art Kits, we had **only 4 designs** ready for manufacture - Sugar Shack, Willow Pond, Beach House and Winter Farm. Today they have many designs.

A word of caution.

Once a design has been featured as a **pre-cut kit**, it becomes effectively **worthless** as a finished painting, pattern or a saw-it-yourself kit.

So give very careful consideration and thought before you use-up any of your designs in this way.

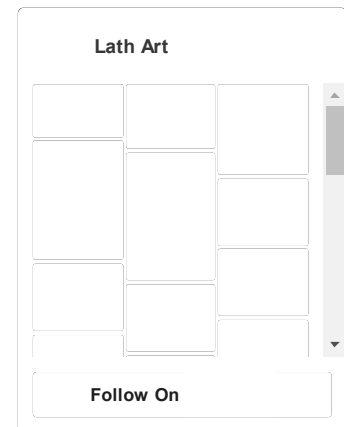
A World is Five

Using only **5 unique designs (yes only 5)**, that we made up in a saw-it-yourself kits which included:

48 sticks of lath wood each 1 1/2" by 24" by 1/4"
8 sticks of rougher frame wood, (size as per painting)
2 piece of brown paper to glue the 24 lath sticks to each
1 white thick paper pattern to use as a cut up pattern

Our Other LathArt Sites

- [LathArt How to and Patterns](#)
- [LathArt Discussion Help and Examples](#)
- [LathArt Paintings](#)
- [Mailing List and Contact Form](#)



1 thin brown paper pattern to use to layout your cut pieces on
instructions
pre-mixed oil colors in Palmer Paint Pots
nails

and packaged in a brown standard size cardboard box that we decorated with rubber stamps we designed ourselves.

We went to Sears Canada in Ontario and did demos at Christmas in front of the Craftsman tool section.

Our sales pitch to Sears was that it would create interest and traffic at Christmas, and possibly help them sell tools. That was in 1992.

At \$44.99 a kit. We had line-ups when we did demos, and had outstanding orders for our next delivery from those who had seen the demo and had came back to buy. And it did help sell a few scroll saws.

I'll bet (no, I don't have sales figures to back this up) that our original style of kit outsold the Woodscape pre-cut Kit they sell today. It had a lot of appeal as a full-family project, with 3 generations often involved in finishing a kit.

Our problem was not in the popularity of the Kit, but in the HUGE amounts of upfront cash that would have been required to roll out to all their stores.

In addition to manufacturing costs, back in 1992 before the Internet made reaching small town US and Canada easy, Sears wanted vendors to pay for space in their catalogue. (not petty cash either, I think we were discussing approx \$40,000, but I can't remember exactly, so dont pass any judgement based on this). This was not unique to Sears and was standard practice, with vendors paying for shelf space in grocery stores and ad-space in door-to-door flyers.

However Sears would have been the PERFECT place for LathArt kits. Their customers were very interested, and they reached a large and loyal audience with their catalogue.

The painting we started with were Willow Pond, Beach House, Sugar Shack (which are on the paintings page), Seagulls (not published) and Fishermans Wharf (not the same one as on the paintings page.) When we have a chance, we will digitize the last 2.

You don't need a lot of designs to make a business out of LathArt. For us, quality worked better than quantity.

Degroot at Ponderosa Steak House

Many of you have seen Degroot LathArt when it was hanging at Ponderosa steak house.

A manager at a location in upstate NY told us that some customers were asking to buy them right off the walls.

So if you have access to restaurant walls, they makes a good gallery.

A restaurant will normally not ask for a percent of your sale price. The usually only require that you replace anything that sells with another, and keep their wall decorated.

Talk about a Win Win. And a good way to test the appeal of your paintings.

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