

# what is creativity?

Presentation by Jim Yonkers  
Woodworkers of Central New York  
Woodworking Special Interest Group  
July 12, 2023

The image features a quote centered on a black rectangular background. The background of the entire image is a scenic view of a calm lake with a forested hill in the distance under a grey sky. The quote is written in white, all-caps, sans-serif font.

CREATIVITY  
IS JUST  
CONNECTING  
THINGS.

**IF YOU ONLY  
FOCUS ON THE PROBLEM**



**YOU MIGHT  
MISS THE EASY SOLUTION**



where does it come from?

Creativity comes out  
of the necessity to  
solve problems.

*or*

how do I get some?





*or*

how do I acquire this trait?

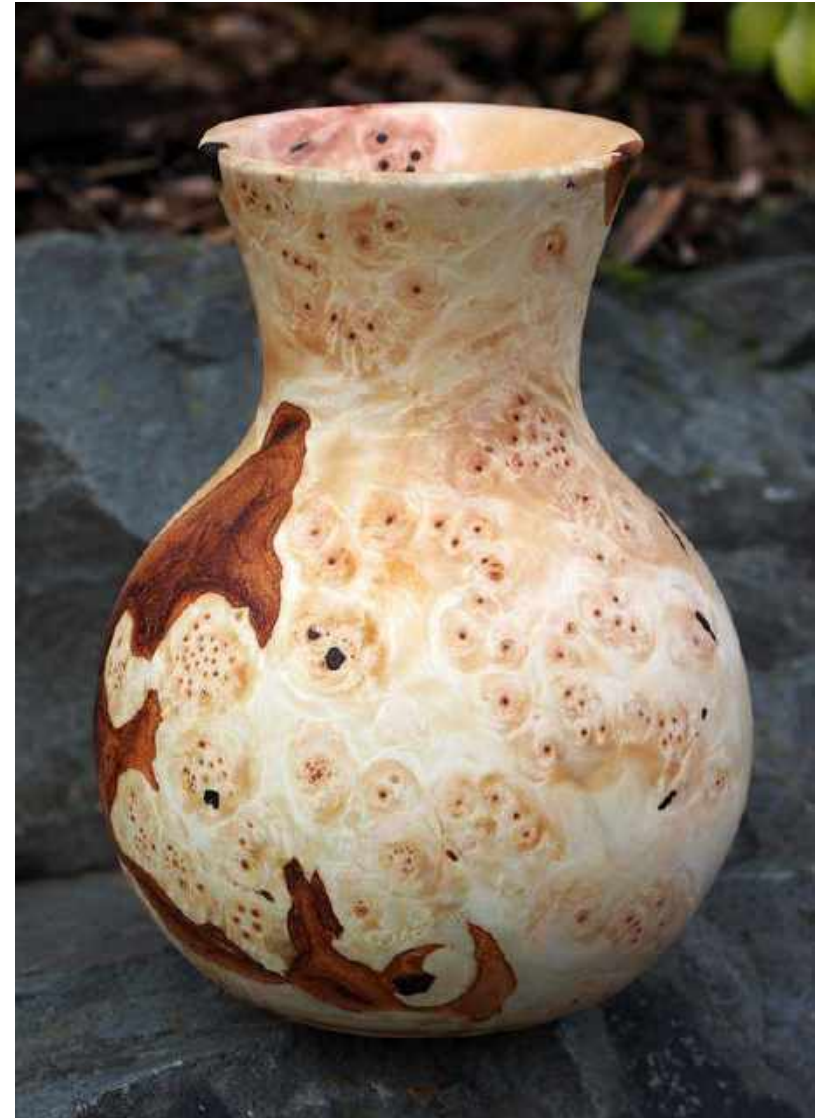


The best definition of Creativity is

***the sum total of your  
experience,***

***a need***

***and situational  
awareness,***





# what is inspiration?

- I think the idea that innovation and inspiration depends on individual geniuses is misguided. History shows that inventions invariably build on earlier findings that are recombined and improved upon. Most of the things we use every day are inventions that no single human being could ever design within their lifetime,”
- Rather than the product of individual inspiration, these inventions can be thought of as the product of our societies.
- ***Innovations rely on individuals learning from others—in that way, human society functions like a collective brain***

# Inspiration..... where does it come from?

encouragement, enthusiasm, genius, incentive, influence, insight,  
motivation, revelation, vision, afflatus, awakening, brainchild,  
flash, hunch, illumination, impulse, motive, notion, thought,  
whim, deep think, dream, my wife.

# AFFLUTAS

divine imparting of  
knowledge, power  
or inspiration





how do I get some?



# the best definition of Inspiration is.....

something that makes someone want to do something or that gives someone an idea about what to do or create :  
a force or influence that inspires someone , a person, place, experience, etc., that makes someone want to do or  
create something, a good idea.



1903



1879

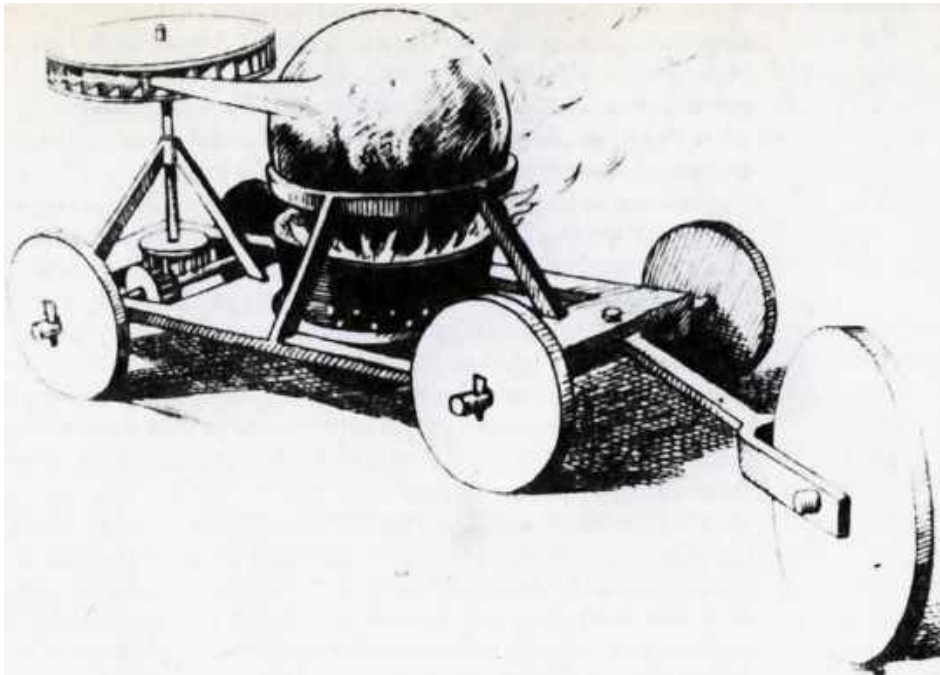
- 1885: Gottlieb Daimler patents what is generally considered to be the first true motorcycle.
- Daimler, the automotive pioneer usually associated with building the world's first successful internal combustion engine (and, subsequently, the first automobile), staked his claim of priority in the two-wheeler world a year before developing his famous auto.
- However, the idea of a motor-driven, two-wheeled vehicle did not originate with Daimler, nor was his the first such contraption to see the road. Sylvester Roper, who spent the U.S. Civil War working in a Union armory, built a primitive *motorcycle* as early as 1867. Roper's supporters -- and he has more than a few -- argue that he should be credited with building the world's first motorcycle.
- What gives credibility to Daimler's claim of developing the first *true* motorcycle is the fact that it was gasoline-driven. Roper's post-Civil War hog, with a tiny two-cylinder engine, was powered by steam.
- Daimler's motorcycle was essentially a wooden bicycle frame (with foot pedals removed) powered by a one-cylinder Otto-cycle engine. It may have also included a spray-type carburetor, then under development for use in the Daimler automobile that appeared in 1886.





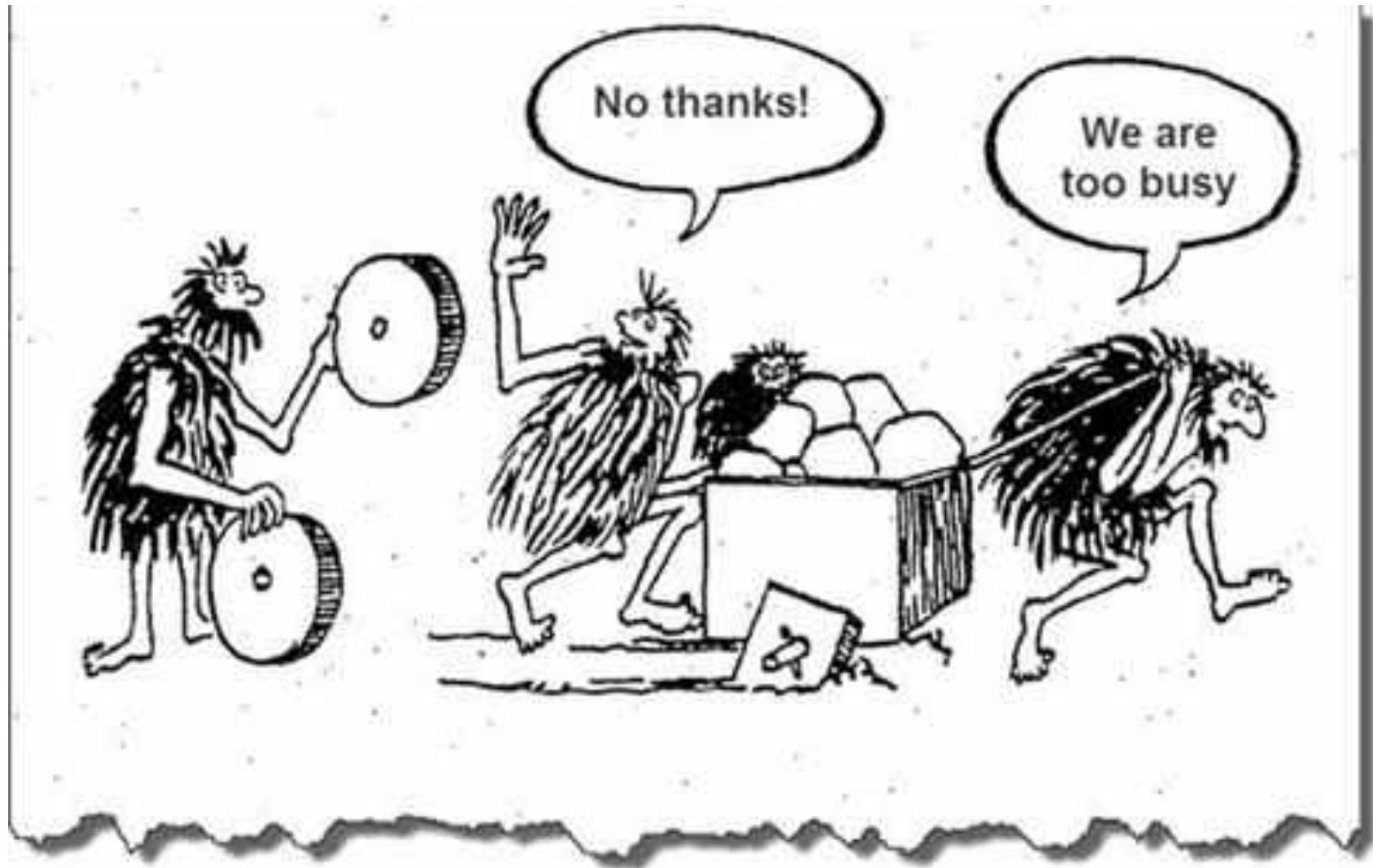


In 1807, François Isaac de Rivaz designed the first car powered by an internal combustion engine fueled by hydrogen. In 1886 the first petrol or gasoline powered automobile the Benz Patent-Motorwagen was invented by Karl Benz.



The very first car might well have been the invention of a Flemish missionary named Ferdinand Verbiest. Born in Flanders in 1623

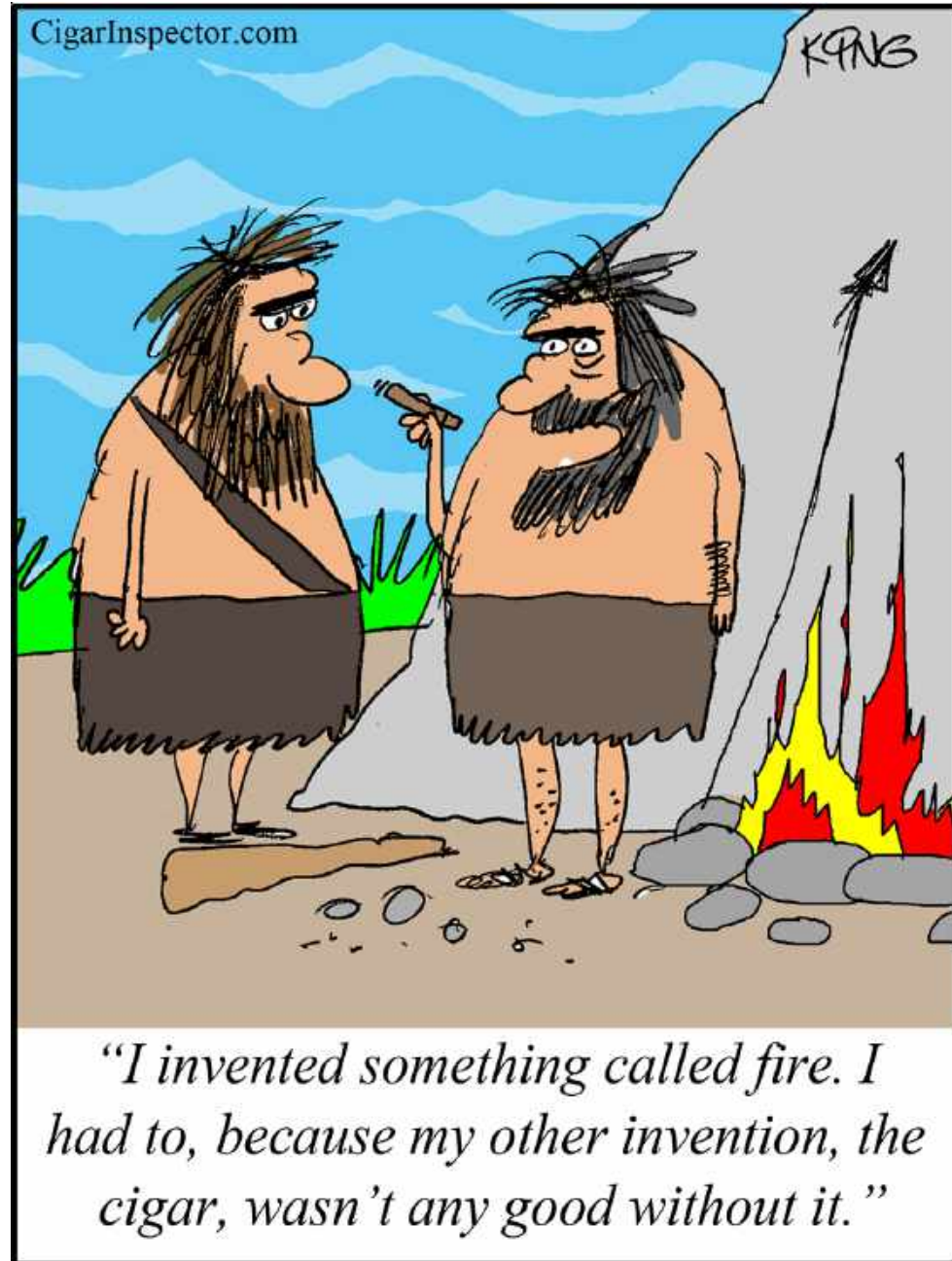
but nothing could have been done without....?





**situational awareness**

# Necessity





# What are the sources of inspiration & creativity?

- ✓ Monthly meetings
- ✓ Newsletters
- ✓ Journals
- ✓ Like-minded people.
- ✓ Professional associations
- ✓ Books, magazines, articles
- ✓ Trade shows, demonstrations
- ✓ TV shows
- ✓ Videos
- ✓ Websites like

Google & **Pinterest**



<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/83879611790>



<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/29702653790966>

[www.pinterest.com](http://www.pinterest.com),

*or*

[www.google.com/images](http://www.google.com/images)

*or*

[www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

Then in the search bar, type the subject you are interested in.....

“wood turning,” “spalted wood art” , “segmented turning”, “ woodturning tools” etc.

**Suggestion: “repairing cracks in my bowls”**









not everything has to be the same species of wood



check out [www.constantines.com](http://www.constantines.com) or [www.certainlywood.com](http://www.certainlywood.com) for specialty veneers  
many different vendors sell *exotic* hardwoods



not everything has to be symmetrical



Never say *It can't be done*

Maybe it just takes a little longer



<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/589197563721595222/>

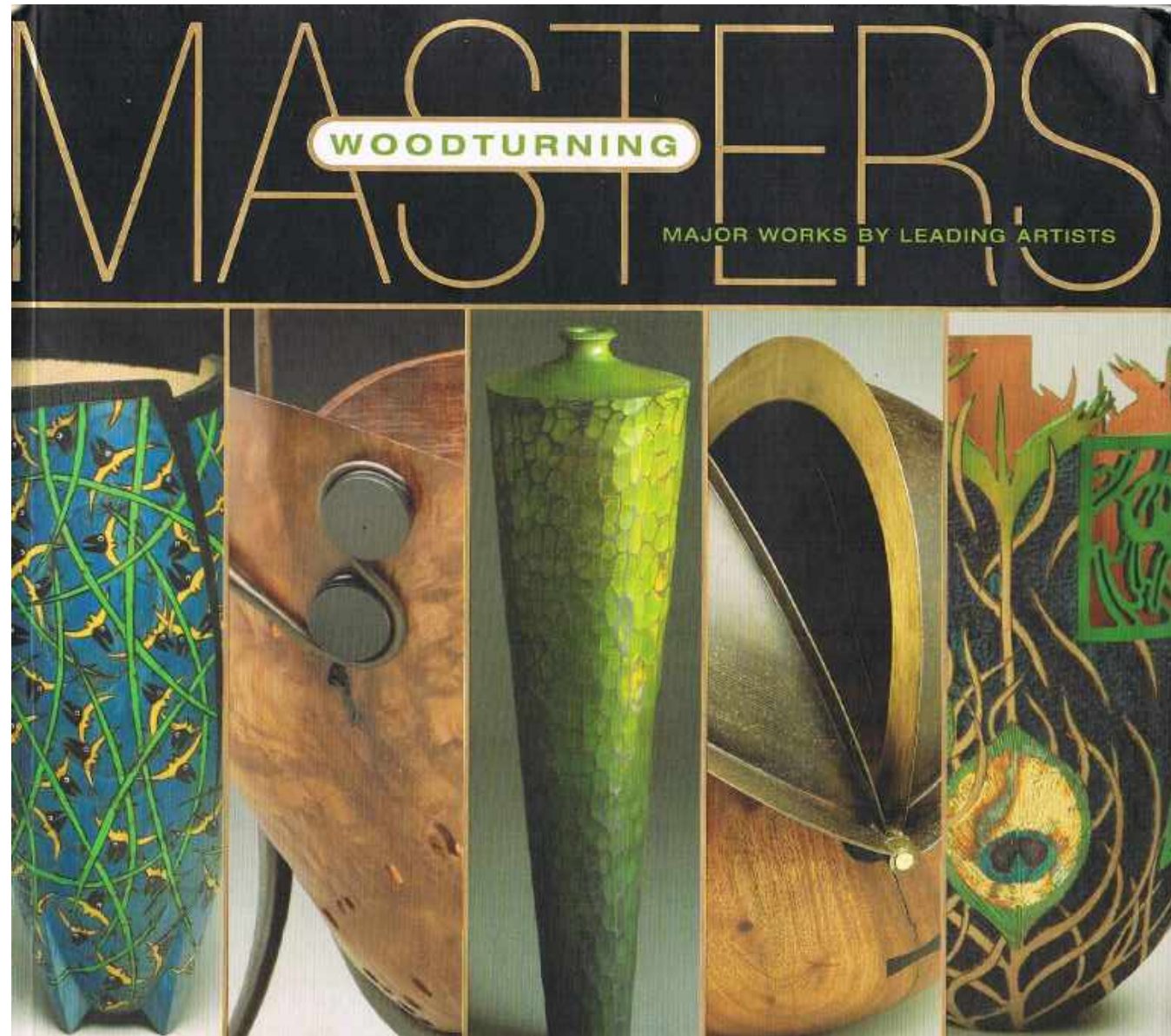






for me, 2 books  
stand out for ideas  
and inspiration

*Book 1 ...*



Published by Lark Books, Curated by Jim Christianson

Introduction . . . . .	6
------------------------	---

#### THE MASTERS

Donald Derry . . . . .	8
Ben Carpenter . . . . .	16
Michael Bauermeister . . . . .	24
Ron Gerton . . . . .	32
Mark Sfirri . . . . .	40
Michelle Holzapfel . . . . .	48
J. Paul Fennell . . . . .	56
Graeme Priddle . . . . .	64
Hans Weissflog . . . . .	72
Binh Pho . . . . .	80
Malcolm Tibbetts . . . . .	88
Alain Mailland . . . . .	96
Clay Foster . . . . .	104
Gerrit Van Ness . . . . .	112
Christian Burchard . . . . .	120
Hugh McKay . . . . .	128
Marilyn Campbell . . . . .	136
Stephen Hatcher . . . . .	144
John Jordan . . . . .	152
Michael Hosaluk . . . . .	160

## Contents

William Moore . . . . .	168
David Ellsworth . . . . .	176
Stephen Hogbin . . . . .	184
Ron Layport . . . . .	192
William Hunter . . . . .	200
Ron Fleming . . . . .	208
Bud Latven . . . . .	216
Jacques Vesery . . . . .	224
Betty Scarpino . . . . .	232
Jean-François Escoulen . . . . .	240
Steve Sinner . . . . .	248
Giles Gilson . . . . .	256
Bert Marsh . . . . .	264
Brenda Behrens . . . . .	272
David Sengel . . . . .	280
Alan Stirt . . . . .	288
Michael Brolly . . . . .	296
Bill Luce . . . . .	304
Cindy Drozda . . . . .	312
Michael Lee . . . . .	320

About the Curator . . . . .	328
Portrait Photographers . . . . .	329
Acknowledgments . . . . .	329
Index of Featured Artists . . . . .	330



Bihn Pho, box elder



*The Second ...*

Published by Lark  
Books, edited by  
Veronika Alice Gunter



# 400 WOOD BOXES

**The Fine Art of Containment & Concealment**

# Round Boxes



Donald Derry



Kip Christianson

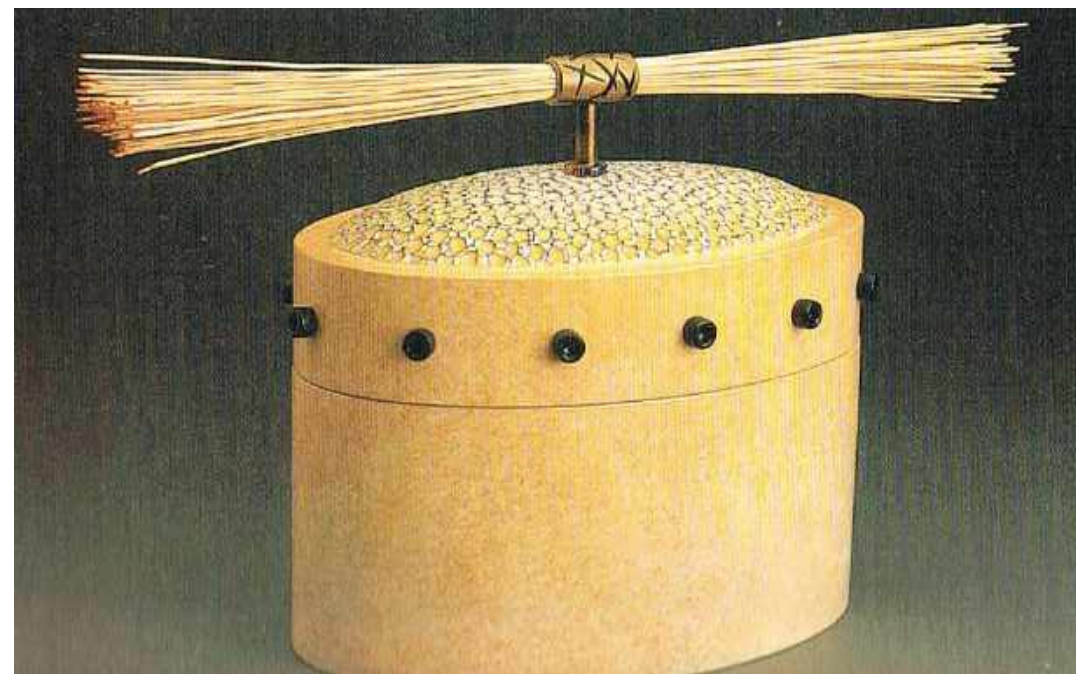




Jake Antonelli

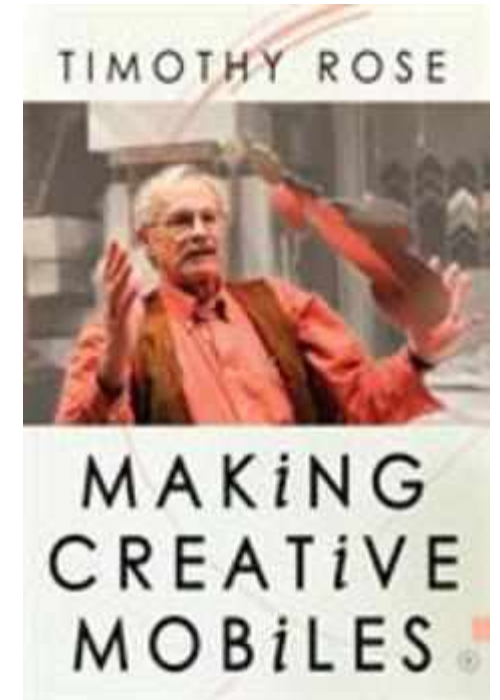
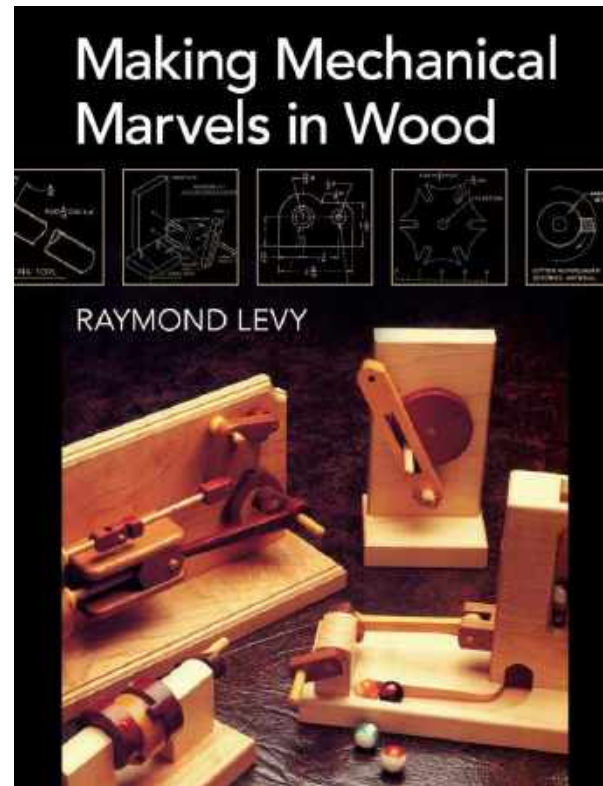
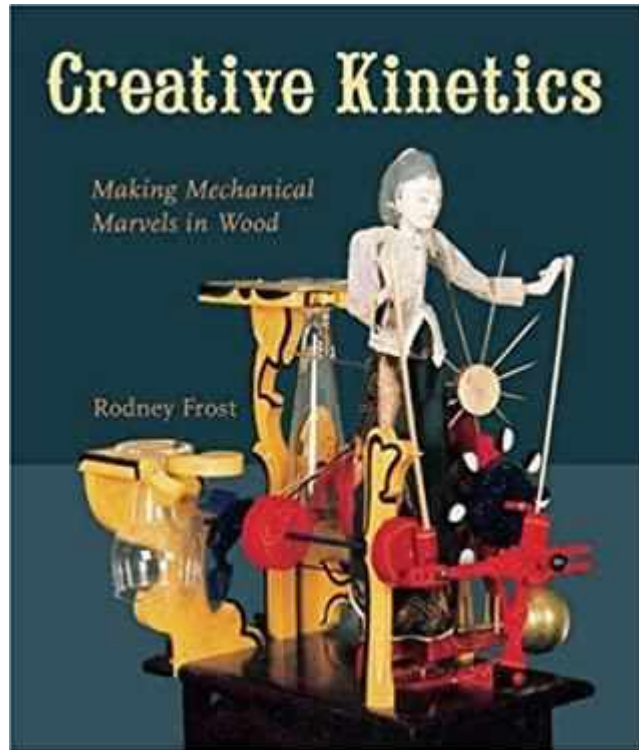


Terry Cadden





## Other Books to Consider ...





Displays



Woodburning, pyro



# Lets do something different



Fly Swatters



Color



Clocks  
[www.clockworks.com](http://www.clockworks.com)













✓ do you really need a round base?

# Common Creativity Myths

**“The inspiration just hasn’t hit yet” is one among a long line of myths about creativity.**

**Here are four more:**

**You are born with it.**

**You have to be right-brained.**

**It falls into your lap.**

**You’ve got to be a little mad.**

But these aren’t just myths. They are also excuses.

## here are more definitions of *Creativity*

“Starting with nothing and ending up with something. Interpreting something you saw or experienced and processing it so it comes out different than how it went in.” – Henry Rollins

To me, creativity is seeing and communicating ideas in ways that are unique, compelling, and unexpected.” – Lee Odden

“Copying smarter.” – Lisa Barone

“This might not work.” – Seth Godin



While there are many many definitions of Creativity, innovation, etc each may be representative of a unique endeavor, such as Visual Arts, Poetry, Literature, Abstract Thinking, Theoretical Physics, Mathematics, Politics, Policy and so on.

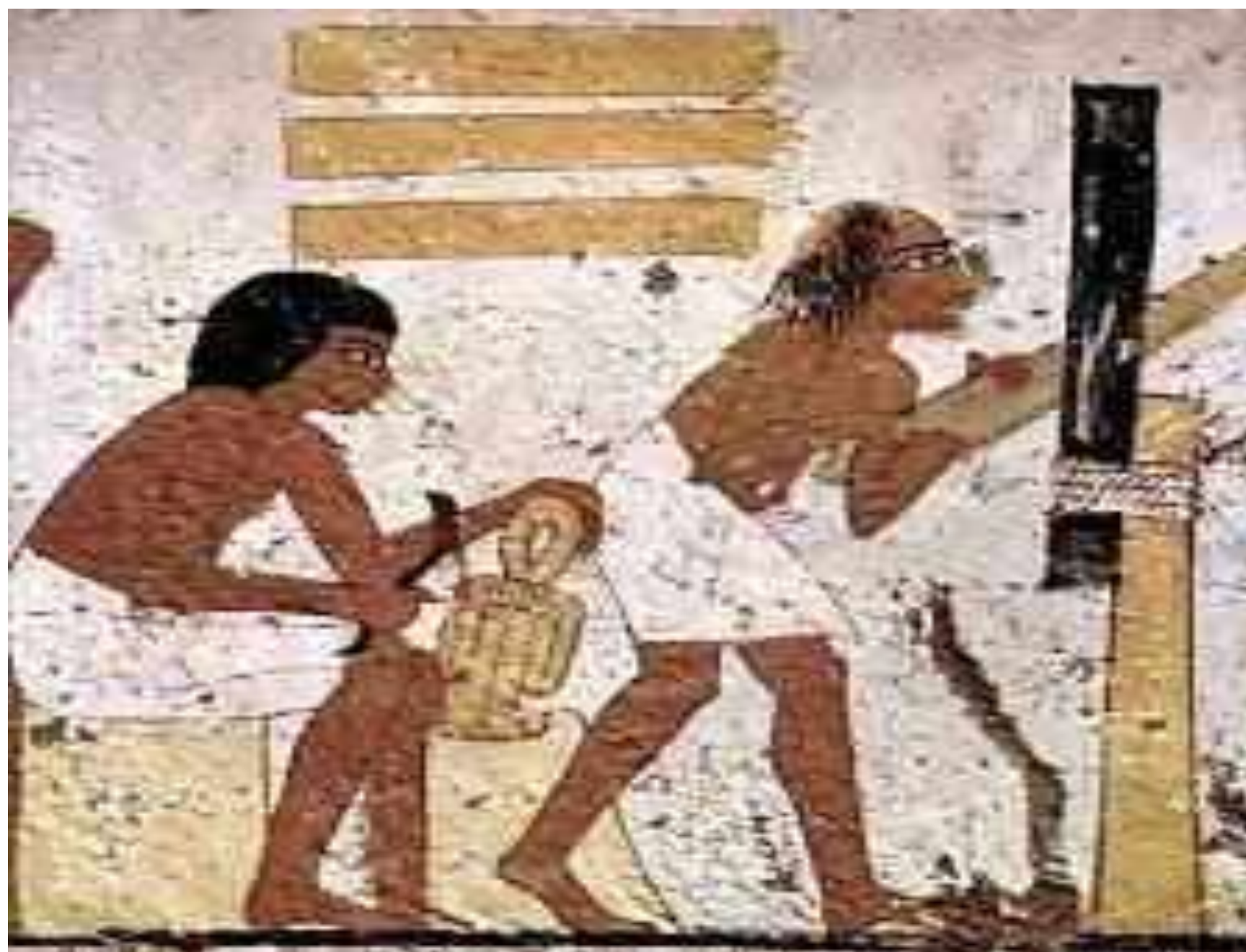
***The definition we are talking about is usually defined in terms of that activity, there may be no real universal definition***

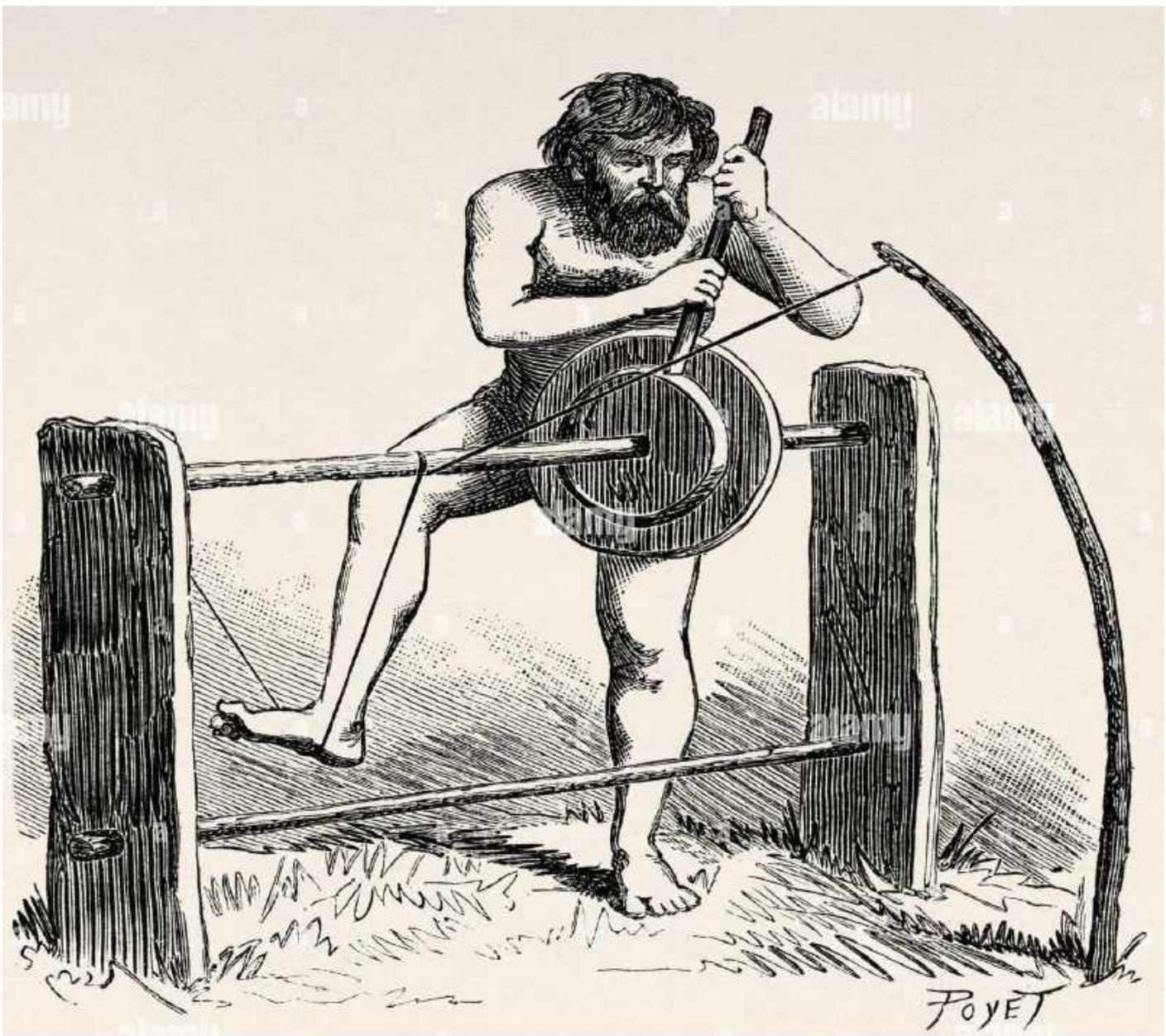
**“Well I don’t have the  
shop or tools for it”**





















**TOM HANEY**

*Queen of Diamonds*, 2005

32"H x 10"W x 5½"D (81.2 x 25.4 x 14 cm)

Basswood, pine

PHOTO BY DAVIES AND LAWERY



**TOM HANEY**

*A Hand to Hold*, 2001

26"H x 8½"W x 4½"D (66 x 22 x 11 cm)

Basswood, pine



Kip Christensen



John Lavine







Jonathan Pressler

Michael Mode



Peter Cook







Philip Weber







































# **6 Key Habits & Tasks of Exceptionally Creative People**

- 1. Give yourself permission to create junk**
- 2. Make new connections with old ideas**
- 3. Always look for things to connect, steal ideas**



**4. Force yourself create consistently**

**5. Constraints are not the enemy**

**6. Be Productive**

**Creative Thinking →  
Creative Doing**



## **Pallet Lumber and a Stick**







# 1/2 Moon Shelf

simple

# 1/2 Moon shelf

complex













**Wood Shark  
Tooth Fairy Box**



**even the simplest,  
can be made extraordinary**

Western handle on  
Japanese pull saw







Turning a Stone Column in Indiana circa 1920s



**“It’s impossible”, said pride.**

**“It’s risky”, said experience.**

**“It’s pointless”, said reason.**

**“Give it a try”, whispered the heart. “It’s impossible”, said pride.**

**“It’s risky”, said experience.**

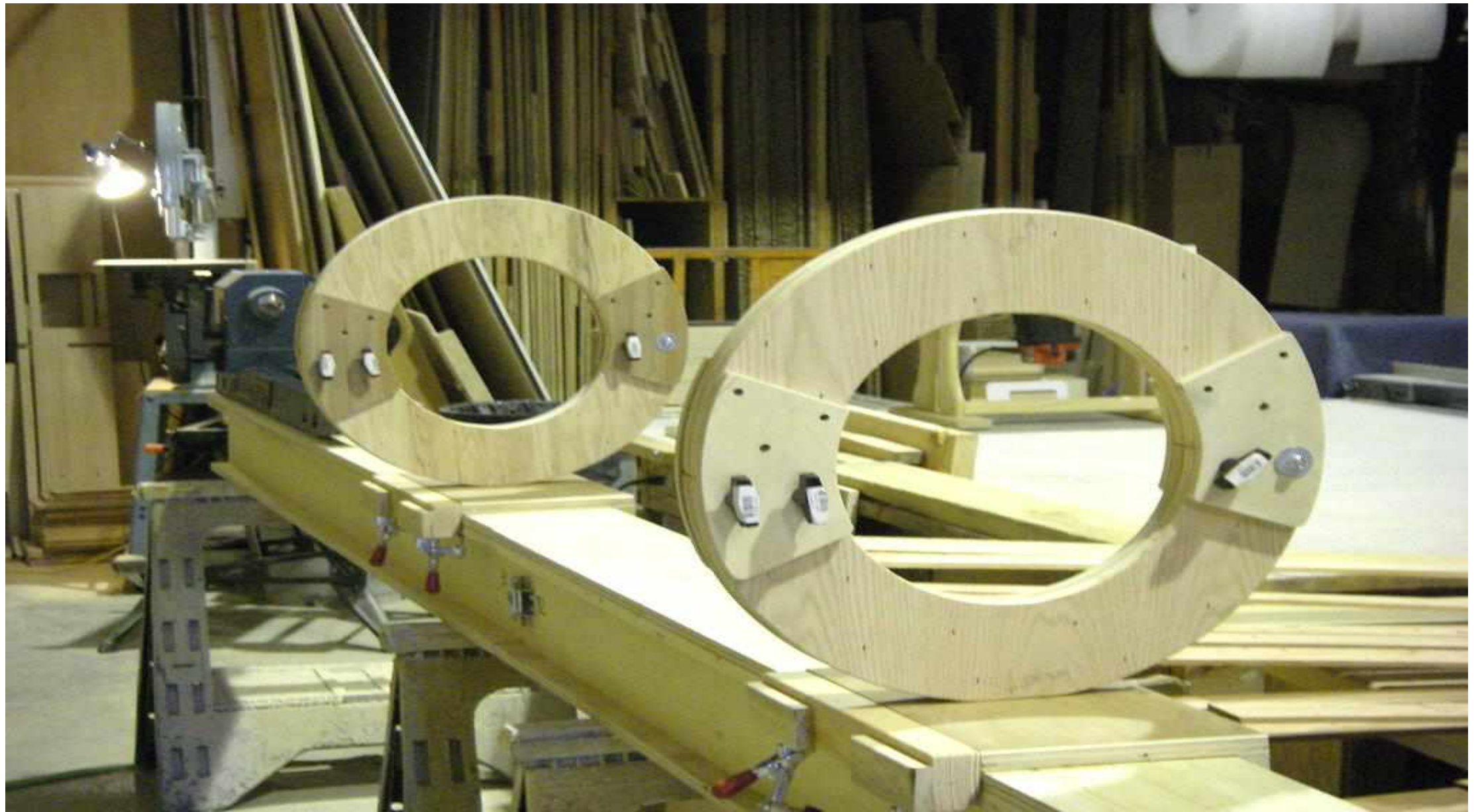
**“It’s pointless”, said reason.**

**“Give it a try”, whispered the heart.**

"Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great!"













962-011 No. 1 Wood Lathe™ "The Whole Enchilada"



961-880 No. 2 Wood Lathe™ plus 12" outboard bed



961-887 No. 3 Wood Lathe™ plus 18" outboard bed



961-882 No. 1 Wood Lathe™ "Basic Lathe"



962-004 No. 1 Wood Lathe™ plus 20" outboard bed assembly

























# Wood Toys







**Pre 1600's there were some 35000 words in use for the English Language, today there are some 171,100 words in use, considering that there was a time when no English was spoken even no words.**

**Then someone, some where , started with one grunt, then another, then more, until we had a Language.**

**In 1600 along comes Shakespeare and he adds some 1700 words to the English Language, so that we now have some 171,100 words.**

**The English language uses an alphabet with just 26 letters and with just those letters the Kings James Bible has amassed 3,116,480 of them in order to make 782,137 words. However the total vocabulary of this Bible is approx. 5000**

**Our language is a result of building blocks, using older languages, borrowing from many other languages, mixing them up but still only using a mere 26 letters**

**Not unlike today where I only use several tools to produce vastly different products, a hammer , a saw, chisel , wedges, screws, paints ... just like on the pyramid walls.**

**Creativity is the sum total of experience, and the shared experience of others melded into one.**





CREATIVITY IS  
CONTAGIOUS.  
PASS IT ON.

Albert Einstein

EPIC-QUOTES.COM

## Videos on Creativity That You Might Enjoy ...

- The 6 Habits of Exceptionally Creative People –  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JmQPNJhw5kQ>
- Everyone Can Be Creative –  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tTtjETjGDFY>
- The 5 Stages of the Creative Process –  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ybNoYjLmfPA>