

Artists take advantage of Maine's long woodworking traditions

From furniture to sculpture, a variety of artists find their creative outlet in working in wood

by Jorge Arango July 30, 2026

LIN LISBERGER

Lisberger started carving wood in her undergraduate years. “What kept me at it,” she remembers, “is that wood was so forgiving. If a piece broke off, you could glue it back or change it. If a stone breaks, on the other hand, you have to start over.” It was also, she felt, “a spectacular gift from Mother Nature that is plentiful,” with varied grains, colors and characters (i.e.: “Fruitwoods holds an edge because it is denser, and when I want something faster, I use softer woods”).

Wood was also ideal for her sculptural interests and intentions. “My work tells stories,” Lisberger explains. “I wanted something consistent within those stories, and that was material and method.” Implicit to those stories is the evidence of the hand. “I like the marks that my tools make.” Too much refinement would lose this essential aspect of her work and make it less alive.



Lin Lisberger, “Bagel Breakfast Sandwich.” (Photo by Luc Demers)

The stories she tells are culinary (whimsical food sculptures like bagels and hotdogs), natural (knot sculptures), quotidian (a shopping cart made from castoffs of other work, clown shoes, balloons), poetic (metaphorical bridges and ladders, or a pile of wood bones sitting on what looks like the shadow of a raptor that is based on Mary Oliver's rumination on death, "White Owl Flies Into and Out of the Field").



Lin Lisberger, "Shopping Cart." (Photo by Luc Demers)

"I've always talked about my work as abstracted narrative," she says. And yes, the stories are implicit in everything she makes. But it is the fealty to the material and the evidence of the making that make them evocative and stirring.

For more, go to linlisberger.com