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THIRD PLACE

BRADLEY MEYER

CRAFTING MY LEGACY: A WOODWORKER'S JOURNEY

JET TOOLS USED: OSCILLATING SPINDLE SANDER

FAMILY ROOTS AND EARLY INFLUENCES

My story in woodworking began long before I ever picked up my own tools. I was raised in an environment filled with sawdust, old boards, and a quiet tradition of craftsmanship passed down through generations. Both sides of my family were steeped in woodworking—grandparents who built, repaired, and created, and a father who not only showed me the value of working with my hands but also left behind tools that I still use in my shop today. My mother would often bring home antiques needing refinishing or rescuing, and watching my family revive old pieces shaped me more deeply than I realized at the time.

Inspiration from the Mountains and Community

Today, my inspiration comes from where I live: the high mountains of Southern California, especially the community of Big Bear Lake. The tall pines, rugged landscape, and rustic mountain cabins fuel my creativity. My friends and family have been my greatest supporters, encouraging me to push further, dream bigger, and transform ideas into real, functional art.

DEVELOPING A UNIQUE WOODWORKING STYLE

My woodworking has evolved into a style that blends mountain-inspired design with reclaimed materials—barn wood, live-edge slabs, mountain mahogany branches, black walnut, and metalwork. Whether I'm building custom cabinets, display pieces, or rustic furniture, I strive to bring a sense of place and authenticity into every creation.

CURRENT PROJECT: THE PONDEROSA PINE DINING TABLE

My current project is one of my largest yet—a 14-foot dining table crafted from a single slab of Ponderosa Pine. This massive and beautiful piece of timber embodies the character of the mountains in every knot and grain line. Shaping, flattening, and finishing a slab of that size has challenged my skills, patience, and creativity, but it's exactly the kind of project I love to tackle.

ESSENTIAL TOOLS IN MY WORKSHOP

One of the JET tools that has become indispensable in my shop is the JET Oscillating Spindle Sander. I constantly rely on it when shaping curves, refining joinery, or perfecting the fine details that give a handcrafted piece its unique character. Its reliability and smooth performance enable me to achieve the high level of fit and finish I aim for in all my projects. As my work continues to grow, I hope to add more JET tools to my shop.

WOODWORKING AS A LASTING CONNECTION

Woodworking is more than a hobby for me—it is a connection to my roots, my community, and the mountains I call home. It is my way of creating pieces that tell a story, just like those I grew up with. I am grateful for the opportunity to share my journey and to demonstrate what is possible when craftsmanship, creativity, and passion come together.