

DAVID MCPHERSON

BIOGRAPHY

McPherson, a retired teacher of Mathematics, resides in London.

While in his teens, he began leathercrafting making a carved wallet at classes held at the YMCA, London.

He joined the Canadian Society for Creative Leathercraft (CSCL) in 1980 and became adept at traditional leathercrafting skills. He received his Fellow standing (CSCL's highest skill level) in 2005. He now holds the position of Chairman of the Council of Fellows: the organization's judging body. He has held several executive positions and currently he and his wife Dorothy serve as CSCL representatives to the Ontario Crafts Council.

Throughout his lengthy arts career he has generously shared his leathercrafting skills with others. One year he taught leather crafting at Haliburton School of the Arts. He has conducted numerous workshops and demonstrated at diverse community events such as guest leathercraftsman in The Tack Shop at Fanshawe Pioneer Village, London; at the CNE, Toronto; Thanksgiving Festival, Balls' Falls Conservation Area, Niagara.

His work has gained recognition including two Ontario Crafts Council Design Awards and several highly-prized leather awards. He has received two Ontario Volunteer Service Awards for his work in the arts.

He competes and has had work appear in several Ontario Crafts Council shows. He retails his work and has participated in the Toronto Gift Show marketing his work internationally. Currently, his work is available at ARTISTIX, London, ON.

His trademark is hinge-lid boxes constructed entirely of leather. Beginning with a thick, rigid sole leather base, he constructs the box around the base. His work features geometric shapes influenced by his mathematical background. Boxes are round, rectangular, oval, half-circle, apple (polar limaçon), or irregular following the outline of an inset stone. His boxes often feature decorative gemstones or exotic wood inset in the lid. Each is finished with three coats of a water-resistant finish.

DAVID MCPHERSON

ARTIST STATEMENT

This substantial piece, **THE FAMILY WOODSTOVE**, began with the gift of a metal-plate logo that once was part of an antique woodstove. Its manufacturer was ELMIRA STOVEWORKS, Elmira, Ontario.

Because of the metal plate's filigree I decided it would serve as a shiny lid ornamentation if I could create a free-form box that was sturdy enough to support it. I further decided that the box should, in some way, refer back to the wood stove from whence it came.

So, I decided to make the box from heavy cowhide leather. And I made it rotund and black. I used red leather under the filigree to give it a realistic air with the red representing fire.

I used traditional leathercrafting techniques and airbrushing to achieve a rich, deep black of the heavy leather. The red leather is prefinished.

This roly-poly piece that features a bit of Canadian history is, indeed, sturdy and very roomy for holding lots of odds and ends. It's hard working - just like the old stove!

Title: **THE FAMILY WOODSTOVE**

Dimensions: 28x21x18 cm

(Oval box with metal plate ornament on lid. Colour: black and red)

CONDENSED ARTIST STATEMENT

David McPherson is an international crafter with a Mathematics background who enjoys creating award-winning leather boxes. He has elevated the lowly *box* to an art form that often serves him as a medium for self-expression. His on-going interest in geometric shapes is evident in his finely detailed work, and he estimates he's made over 400 boxes since he began retailing them 20 years ago.

HIGHLY CONDENSED ARTIST STATEMENT

David McPherson is an award-winning leather box maker.

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

The problem is to find a function $f(x)$ which satisfies the conditions $f(0) = 1$ and $f'(x) = f(x)$. The function $f(x) = e^x$ is the only solution.

Consider the differential equation $y' = y$. The general solution is $y = Ce^x$. The initial condition $y(0) = 1$ determines the constant $C = 1$.

The function $f(x) = e^x$ is the only function which satisfies the conditions $f(0) = 1$ and $f'(x) = f(x)$.

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THE SOLUTION

The solution is $f(x) = e^x$.

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CONCLUSION

The function $f(x) = e^x$ is the only function which satisfies the conditions $f(0) = 1$ and $f'(x) = f(x)$. The function $f(x) = e^x$ is the only function which satisfies the conditions $f(0) = 1$ and $f'(x) = f(x)$.

REFERENCES

The references are given in the following list.

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ARTIST STATEMENT

I set out to create this **WHO I AM** box to reflect some aspects of my life journey: a memory box of sorts.

Mathematics as a career choice resulted in my continuing fascination with geometric shapes. Here I chose a triangular shape for this box. I used traditional leathercrafting techniques in constructing the box and airbrushed it to achieve the transparent light brown colour.

For the sides and lid of the box I chose medium weight cowhide. I wrapped and glued the sides around a base cut from heavier leather. This is called *free-formed*, and it is a system I use in making all of my corporate boxes.

Each hinge is meticulously marked and precision cut since even the width of a knife blade can throw off the precision needed to allow the hinge to work well.

While growing up in rural Ontario I enjoyed the seasonal beauty of sumacs on our family's ancestral homestead. So, the wood insert in the box lid is sumac: a tribute to this Ontario bush. I hand-turned the sumac on a miniature lathe in my woodshop and discovered that sumac is beautiful inside with its design striations resembling the lines of a sandstone. Its inclusion reflects my enjoyment of woodworking.

Title: **WHO I AM**

Dimensions: 13x10x7.5 cm

(Triangular box with hinged lid, inset sumac wooden disc. Colour: Light brown)

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THE

CHAPTER

1. The first part of the book is devoted to a general survey of the subject.

2. The second part is devoted to a detailed study of the various aspects of the subject.

3. The third part is devoted to a study of the various methods of research.

4. The fourth part is devoted to a study of the various results of research.

5. The fifth part is devoted to a study of the various applications of the subject.

THE

These are the main parts of the book.

The book is written in a simple and clear style.

THE

6. The sixth part is devoted to a study of the various conclusions of research.

THE

This is the last part of the book.

DAVID MCPHERSON

ARTIST STATEMENT

BEEHIVE BOX

Beehives were kept on our rural Ontario homestead. Therefore, the design speaks of my childhood.

Ever driven by my adult interest in Mathematics, I chose a special geometric shape for the surface design tool used to stamp this box: the hexagon. I carefully designed the hexagon stamp and then had a machinist specially make the metal stamp. After that it was hours of meticulous stamping for me.

I used traditional leathercrafting techniques and airbrushing to provide the rich, deep Antique Rouge colour. This box required very heavy leather to enhance the depth and beauty of the shadows created by my deep stamping with the hexagon tool. The custom stamp design appears on both the inside and outside of the hinged lid.

Each hinge is meticulously measured and marked since even the width of a knife blade can throw off the precision needed to allow the hinge to work well.

In order that the lid not appear too detailed for the box, I added two leather bands to the body of the box to balance the design.

This box refers back to halcyon days when bees buzzed in our sunny orchard.

Title: **BEEHIVE BOX**

Dimensions: 15x11.5x9 cm

(Hexagon-stamped box with strap hinged lid. Colour: Antique Rouge.)

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1871-1872

1873-1874

1875-1876

1877-1878

1879-1880

1881-1882

1883-1884

1885-1886

1887-1888

1889-1890

1891-1892

1893-1894

1895-1896

1897-1898

1899-1900

1901-1902

DAVID MCPHERSON

ARTIST STATEMENT

BLUE BOY box began with a beautiful blue agate gemstone that I decided to feature in a leather box. The gemstone needed a setting that would compliment it, so I decided on a delicate shade of blue. However, to achieve the desired colour I had to begin with a deep, navy blue dye that I applied to medium weight cowhide leather.

The next step was to apply a white acrylic rub over the navy dye to lighten it, thus creating the subtle blue shade I wanted. The acrylic rub served another purpose: it brought out the pores, grain and markings in the tanned leather, creating a natural surface design. The different weights of leather tend to show the dye and rub differently so I deliberately chose leather that has grain and markings.

The box's hinged lid was meticulously measured and marked since even the width of a knife blade can throw off the precision needed to allow the hinge to work well. The lid lifts to reveal the surprise that is inset on the inside of the lid: the agate. The blue of the lid enhances the stone's character thus focusing attention on the agate as intended.

To me, the interlocking geometric design is artistic and comparable to a painting and, because of its colour, I titled it **BLUE BOY** after Gainsborough's famous oil painting.

Title: **BLUE BOY**

Dimensions: 12x11.5x9 cm

(Rectangular box, rounded corners, strap hinged lid. Blue agate inset inside lid. Colour: blue)

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ARTIST STATEMENT

DIMINISHING was a symmetry challenge. My goal was to create a set of three boxes that were identical except in diminishing size. I chose the half-circle shape. Each box was to be the same shape and colour but each a little smaller in size.

In constructing the boxes I used traditional leathercrafting techniques including airbrushing to achieve the transparent tan colour. For the sides and lid of each box I chose medium weight cowhide that I wrapped and glued around a base cut from heavier leather. This is called *free-formed*, and it is a system I use in making all of my corporate boxes. The smaller boxes required lighter weight leather.

They feature a hinged lid in a size appropriate to the size of the box. Each hinge is meticulously measured and marked since even the width of a knife blade can throw off the precision needed to ensure that it hinges well.

This set elicited a whimsical response as the playful repetition in size reminded me of the nursery rhyme bowls in *The Three Bears*: Papa bear, Mama Bear, and Baby Bear. The symmetry challenge worked out quite pleasingly.

Title: **DIMINISHING**

Dimensions: 12x8x6, 10.5x7x5.5, 7.5x5.5x5 cm

(Set of three leather half-circle boxes with hinged lids. Colour: British Tan)

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David McPherson, an international crafter with a Mathematics background, creates award-winning leather boxes as an artistic, self-expression medium. His on-going interest in geometric shapes is evident in his finely detailed boxes, and he estimates he's made over 400 boxes since he began retailing them 20 years ago.

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