



Why We Make Things and Why It Matters: The Education of a Craftsman

Peter Korn

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In this moving account, Peter Korn explores the nature and rewards of creative practice. We follow his search for meaning as an Ivy-educated child of the middle class who finds employment as a novice carpenter on Nantucket, transitions to self-employment as a designer and maker of fine furniture, takes a turn at teaching and administration at Colorado's Anderson Ranch Arts Center, and then founds a school in Maine: the Center for Furniture Craftsmanship, an internationally respected nonprofit institution.

Furniture making practiced as a craft in the 21st century is a decidedly marginal occupation. Yet the view from the periphery can be illuminating. For Korn the challenging work of bringing something new and meaningful into the world through one's own volition - whether in the arts, the kitchen, or the marketplace - is what generates the meaning and fulfillment that so many of us seek.

This is not a how-to book in any sense. Korn wants to get at the *why* of craft in particular and the satisfactions of creative work in general to understand their essential nature. How does the making of objects shape our identities? How do the products of creative work inform society? In short, what does the process of making things reveal to us about ourselves? Korn draws on four decades of hands-on experience to answer these questions eloquently, and often poignantly, in this personal, introspective, and revealing book.

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