



a natural state

Artist: Peter Werner

Video 1: Spotlight (The Interview)

Werner: The people that I learned from are Carlson Tuttle, who taught me how to make the small-handled brooms, and also Ralph Gates, who taught me to make all the wooden handles. I learned at that folk art center, which is a very natural setting. And the very first time I made a broom, I said, “Wow. I really like this. I want to pursue it,” and bought some broom straw.

I like it for the art purpose. I’ve entered things in the fine arts fair at the State Fair and won a prize or two. But even though this is considered more of a craft, I, I kind of bounce back and forth between the fact that these brooms are, are useful domestically to sweep with and also that people like to hang them from their walls, just to display it because it is something beautiful.

I think the uniqueness of each of the wooden-handled brooms that I make makes a statement of where I’ve been in my life. We’ve been up in the San Juan Islands, in the state of Washington, in Half-Moon Bay in San Francisco, and up in the mountains in North Carolina, and all over the state—the beaches, Kiawah Island—down at Jekyll Island in Georgia. All those brooms and broom handles are a statement of my life, I think...of, of where I’ve been and the different places that I enjoy going and my commitment to, to be surrounded by nature.

Where you’re in a nice area—be it Portland or Eugene or the San Juan Islands— you have water, you have trees, you have incredibly nice nature. And it’s going to, to attract artists, I think, because it makes for a nice setting...a nice environment for art to occur.