

## ANDY COLE



*“I realized a long time ago that if you spend the rest of your life trying to make the better mouse trap, you’ll get behind on the mice. I like to pull from designs that are common and have been a part of everyday living for years, then put a twist on them you wouldn’t normally see.”*

Andy Cole doesn’t take the easy way.

You won’t find screws or nails in a piece of wooden furniture he handcrafts. The Howard County artisan values the character that craftsmanship adds, so he relies on pegged mortise and tenon, wedged-through mortises, half-laps, dovetails and other joinery techniques.

It complicates the construction process but results in a piece of art that is worth the time spent. “I was born and raised in a small farming community where tradition is very rich,” he said. “That idea of tradition carries over into my work. I use seasoning, curing, joinery, and finishing techniques that have been around for centuries. Most of my work is traditional in construction and overall use, however, sometimes it’s designed with a modern interpretation.”

Andy looks to different genres, age groups and materials to create something original.

Born into a family of craftsmen, he made a hobby of woodworking long ago but studied another kind of design — landscape architecture — at Purdue University. When he wasn’t able to find a job in his field, he turned to woodworking more and more, and that led to furniture making.

“Being exposed to art and design throughout college allowed me to ‘open the box’ so to speak,” said Andy, who is known for the way he combines diverse materials in his work. He has added polished concrete to a wooden piece, for instance, salting the cement mix with pieces of recycled brown glass that brought out the deep browns of the black walnut base.

“Furniture is truly an art form in my opinion,” he said. “I’m not interested in creating production-type pieces that are cheaply manufactured. My goal is to create one-of-a-kind heirloom pieces that stand the test of time. When I create a piece for you, I want you to have your grandchildren’s grandchildren in mind.”

