

# Pati Stajcar

Pati Stajcar (Staycar) first began wood carving in the early 1980s as a means of relaxation therapy to offset the stress from her job as an airline reservation agent. But as her passion for the work increased so did her skill, and she became a full-time artist in 1985.

As she begins a piece, Stajcar may spend up to several hours just turning the wood over and over in her hands, visualizing what the finished piece will yield. "Anybody can put images into the wood, but the true creative process comes into play when you let the wood tell its own story. Unfortunately, most people still think of carving as a 'folk craft' rather than an expression of fine art."

One of her most recent works, "Transitions," shows just how far the creative process can go. Carved from a red-cedar burl, the piece is a stunning tapestry of design and technique, depicting a red hawk about to devour a small widgeon. The "transition" is beautifully carried out by moving from the natural, uncarved burl at the back to the smooth undulating curve of wood which portrays the birds' bodies and wings.

"I love working in wood, for the natural shades and shadows give each piece a warmth, and an individual look of its own. I look at the cracks and knots in the wood, not as flaws, but as a natural influence which challenges my imagination. With any art form, there is always an outside influence which comes into play during the final process of creation."

*Surrender by Pati Stajcar*  
*Red cedar burl, 50" x 37" x 16"*  
*Artwork courtesy of the artist, Golden, CO*

