

Meet Wells Mason of Ironwood Industries

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Today we'd like to introduce you to Wells Mason.

Wells, can you briefly walk us through your story – how you started and how you got to where you are today.

I literally grew up working in wood shops and metal shops. The smell of cut wood, the whirr of belt-driven motors, the rough texture of files and rasps, the danger and beauty of a sharp, polished chisel, these things were all part of my childhood. I think that exposure to hand tools and power tools and workshops gave me the confidence to explore it further as I got older. Many of my favorite tools today once belonged to my father and my grandfather, and I confess I sometimes daydream about their own projects with those same tools back in the day! In college, I studied English Literature, and I think that instilled in me a critical way of thinking and writing. These days, I like to say that I write my stories in wood and metal.

Has it been a smooth road?

It's not always easy to take the road less traveled. When I decided to become a designer and sculptor, I had to stay on my own path and not lose sight of it. There are plenty of reasons to get off your path and take the easy road. I think it takes resolve – which means a lot of stubbornness and maybe even a little bit of madness!

Please tell us about the business.

My studio is called Ironwood Industries. It's a design house. It's also a wood and metal studio. We specialize in studio furniture, contemporary sculpture, and architectural elements for residential, commercial, and public spaces. Over a 25-year career, I've done projects in Texas and around the country. I've shipped my work internationally to Canada and even Korea. I've worked with some of the most talented architects and interior designers in the world. My work has been published in numerous regional, national, and international publications and I've exhibited my work in countless galleries and museums. As an artist, I found my voice, and I'm most proud of that. Whenever I'm speaking to young artists and designers, I always encourage them to find their voice. I also encourage them to reach for the stars and if they fail, I encourage them to fail epically!

Let's touch on your thoughts about our city – what do you like the most and least?

I see many people giving back, but I think we can all do better. I believe in giving back. I believe we can all make a difference in large and small ways. Throughout my career, I've explored different ways of giving back and making a difference in my community. For instance, in order to encourage a sense of community in Coupland, I invited the Texas Tech College of Architecture to help us design a community center, and it was a meaningful, memorable experience for everyone. Then there was that time I helped the Salvation Army design a portion of their new facility and I also donated artwork to the project. Because I love to teach, I've given countless people the opportunity to work with me in my studio. Currently, I'm serving as the President of a small wastewater utility that serves several hundred households, and it's a thankless task, but I do it anyway, because I care. And, in response to the recent pandemic, I created a global community project that I'm calling The Next 100 Years Project. It's a big project filled with heart to serve the world. Through my actions, I hope to make a positive dent in the universe.

