

# BUILDING BESPOKE FURNITURE

*Behind the scenes with Kevin Travers*

Prior to creating custom furniture in his shop, Kevin Travers worked in new construction and residential design. A tanking economy and personal injuries forced him to leave the world of large-scale community projects to focus on smaller-scale jobs in his shop. The artisan reveals that his story has less to do with the consequence of circumstance and more to do with the perfect alignment of the stars and serendipity.

BY STACEY MARCUS  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARIANNE LEE

In Kevin Travers' workshop, whimsical toys he creates using found objects keep him company.







"All of my commissioned work is made to whatever the customer wants, and it is made properly and well," says Kevin Travers, above.

Travers says his first project involved creating pieces for himself: "I had a new house and needed furniture." His official orientation into the world of carpentry had been in a high school vocational school workshop, where he created a hutch and coffee table.

These days, you can generally find Travers in his shop, day and sometimes night, listening to a medley of music including classic rock, reggae, jazz and hip-hop, and working on multiple projects simultaneously. While juggling the hand-tooled creation of his pieces in real time, his imagination is figuring out design details. "I don't want to make something that will end up in the dump," says Travers. "I want to create meaningful pieces that family members will be talking about for generations."

Just like a storyteller cherry-picks his words or an artist carefully chooses the perfect palette, Travers tells stories through intricate details in his work. When he custom-designed a pair of storage trunks for young twin boys, he included secret compartments and satin nickel finishes, and also incorporated some of their grandfather's memorabilia from his career as an airline pilot, like tags, wings and emblems. Each chest also includes words of encouragement from grandfather to grandson etched into the wood inside. "The interior has a removable locking keepsake box, with the thought that when the boys leave the nest they might take the box with them and leave the trunk, if need be," says Travers.



PHOTO: KEVIN TRAVERS

Above left: A custom chest for a young girl has an original painting on the front.

Right: A custom trunk for a young boy includes secret compartments and satin nickel finishes, and also incorporates some of the grandfather's memorabilia from his career as an airline pilot.



PHOTO: KEVIN TRAVERS



PHOTO: KEVIN TRAVERS

Travers enjoys making unique pieces like this table for two that incorporates a vintage scotch label and a special quote affixed under the lid.



PHOTO: KEVIN TRAVERS

A nice custom touch, wings from a former airline pilot make this chest for his grandson very special.

He also designed antiqued, whitewashed chests for young twin girls and their baby sister. "The homeowner and interior designer specified the chests be dainty and timeless, incorporating antique brass finishes and decorative ball feet, plus contain an original painting on the front of each, with specific subject matter for each of the three daughters," says Travers. He reached out to his friend Jennifer, of Jennifer Nelson Artists Agency, who delivered a few artist portfolios for consideration. Once the client had selected the artist, he put the parties together. With the overall design concept complete he made the three front panels and delivered them to Nelson in New York. Meanwhile, Travers sourced the brass oval handles and hinges from Period Hardware, a shop on Charles Street in Boston's Beacon Hill. "I passed the storefront while spending an anniversary weekend with my wife in the city and just fell in love with the shop," says Travers. "I found everything there!"



PHOTO: KEVIN TRAVERS

Two of Travers' custom-built tables fit the casual ambience created by leather and wood furnishings in this room.

Speaking of his wife, Melanie, he handcrafted a wedding chest for her out of reclaimed heart pine and incorporated a heart-shaped piece of coral in the lid. "It clinched the deal that she was going to marry me," he notes. Travers also created a daybed for their daughter, Ruby. "We just had a conversation recently that since she will be entering middle school, she wants me to design a loft bed with slide-out drawers underneath," says the dedicated dad. When asked if he has built anything special for the family animals, dog Buddy and cat Japsner, he laughs and says, "I just fix a lot of screen doors."

The animals will just have to wait, while Travers continues to enrich the lives of his clients with unique pieces like a table for two that incorporates a vintage scotch label and a special quote affixed under the lid, and two mudroom benches with a rustic appeal, made from native white oak, split wood, butterfly inlays and wooden pegs. "All of my commissioned work is made to whatever the customer wants, and it is made properly and well. Colors, sizes, options, features and wood species are all customizable. I can work with architects, interior designers, special planners and homeowners to develop their vision," says Travers. "Or, I can handle the whole project solely, start to finish." **SHOME**

# Pure golf.

“TGC is an experience like no other”

We value competition, tradition and camaraderie.

The best traditions of golf – fair play, excellent conditions, caddie program, and community involvement – serve as the foundation of TGC's success.

The best traditions of hospitality – first-class member services & award-winning dining are the norm here.

TGC is a private, golf-only oasis from the pressures of daily life. Our active but casual members share a camaraderie unlike other private clubs on the Cape.



**THE GOLF CLUB**  
COMPETITION • TRADITION • CAMARADERIE

A REES JONES DESIGN



132 Falmouth Woods Road | East Falmouth, Mass. 02536  
TEL (508) 457-7200 | [www.tgcgolf.com](http://www.tgcgolf.com) | facebook: tgcgolf  
Individual, family and corporate memberships available, but limited.