

## Paula J Dimit

Paula has always loved wood, all kinds of wood-old, new, smooth, twisted, rough. Even the way wood breaks and weathers fascinates her more than other materials. She has worked with oil and watercolor; studied pencil, both monochrome and



prism. But she always comes back to working with wood. She is a self-taught carver, inspired by the wood itself. Her carvings

have spirits, and she talks to them. They have never answered-out loud anyway. The carvings sit in her studio in various states of completeness. When they are finished, she has to keep them for a few days before she is able to part with them. They are her creations-her children.

There something about New Mexico that made her, once again want to start wood carving. She was raised on an Iowa farm, taught school for twenty years and raised her family. When Paula came to New Mexico, she picked up her knives to work with a piece of cottonwood.



That piece became a cat, her best friend Oliver. The speckles in the left-over cottonwood led her to an owl, partially carved but still emerging from the wood. When she carved St. Francis to protect her own animals, she knew then that she was hooked.

Paula worked with Cedar, Redwood, Basswood, Pine and Mahogany. Then she was introduced to Jelutong, a wood which carves and stains well. She then decided to add color to her pieces with linseed oil and oil paints, not to cover the wood but to enhance its character. She keeps the integrity of the wood in her carvings. What she has come to is a style somewhere north of rustic, south of folksy and west of realism.

