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A Strange Rocking Chair . . .
The Need to Express, the Urge to Create

The article below was printed in *Folklore & Mythology* (1982b), a newsletter published by Patrick K. Ford when he was Director of the UCLA Center for the Study of Comparative Folklore and Mythology. Appearing three times a year, issues carried major articles as well as notes and news items. Although I had not written about Kentucky chairmakers for several years, I agreed to prepare this article because it gave me an opportunity to comment on why I had asked certain questions in research, looked for answers in various realms, and emphasized the individual craftsman in much of my work.

Moreover, I was considering rewriting my earlier book, *The Hand Made Object and Its Maker* (1975) had been out of print for some time. Despite the book's wide readership, the press did not reissue it in soft cover—a decision I agreed with. The handwritten script that the publisher had chosen was difficult to read. I had written the book at a time when folkloristic research on material culture was just getting under way. Some of the issues and concepts I dealt with had not been treated by other folklorists yet; they needed to be refined. In addition, I wanted to restore the original title of the book—”Craftsmen of the Cumberlands”—which the publisher had changed because of its regional focus.

The upshot was that in the summer of 1981 I began revising the volume. After a few weeks, however, I abandoned the project because of other responsibilities and commitments. The introduction to this article, intended to be a preface to a revised version of the craftsmen book, is what survives of those efforts. The rest of the essay explains why I had highlighted Chester Cornett's "strange rocking chair" and considers such matters as the materials, tools and techniques of construction, tradition, consumer influence, and the individual artist and his experiences and self-concept in answer to questions about the origins of this chair and other utilitarian art objects.

What I do not mention in this article is that several unpublished papers figured significantly in my writing of *The Hand Made Object and Its Maker*. Much of the first chapter called "A Strange Rocking Chair" incorporates a paper I gave at the

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I also do not mention in “A Strange Rocking Chair . . . The Need to Express, the Urge to Create” or elsewhere some of the early influences on my work. Thomas C. Munro’s The Arts and Their Interrelations (1967) and Toward Science in Aesthetics (1956) gave me an excellent grounding in the history and philosophy of art; his work helped me understand some of what I was reacting to in art history and trying to overcome in my own studies of the aesthetic impulse in everyday life. D. W. Gotshalk’s book Art and the Social Order (1962) directed my attention to how the artist manipulates and exploits raw materials. David Pye’s The Nature of Design (1964), which concerns “fitness for use,” gave me a valuable concept as well as appreciation of how the useful or practical aspects of craft and the decorative element are combined and interrelated in an object.

C. G. Jung’s Psychological Types, or the Psychology of Individuation (1964), to which I was introduced by Carlos C. Drake (a fellow graduate student in folklore at Indiana University), provided me with an understanding of the psychology of each craftsman I studied. I have often quoted the statement by Franz Boas in Primitive Art (1955:9) that “all human activities may assume forms that give them esthetic values.” For a long time I was infatuated with Ruth Bunzel’s The Pueblo Potter (1972) yet also disturbed by it. Eventually I realized that her otherwise promising and oft-cited chapter, “The Personal Element in Design,” which had helped direct some of my queries in fieldwork, had the goal of dispelling the idea of individuality in folk art. In her preoccupation with trying to establish (like her mentor Boas) general cultural laws, she virtually championed cultural determinism by refusing to accept Indian potters and white traders' statements that they could identify the works of particular artists or distinguish individual styles.

One of the most influential works had nothing to do with material culture. Robert A. Georges’s “Toward an Understanding of Storytelling Events” (1969) directs attention away from narrative texts to the process of narrating, treating storytelling events as communicative processes and social experiences. His landmark essay was a direct challenge to longstanding assumptions within the historic-geographic method regarding tales as diffusible entities, in literary analyses of folktales, and in much of anthropological research that sought to explicate story “texts” in terms of a broad cultural perspective without regard for the specific circumstances of narrating. Much of what Georges wrote about narrating seemed true of constructing and using objects. Both the telling of stories and the making of things by hand are done within networks of interaction in which participants assume or ascribe certain social identities and act in accord with mutual expectations. The object that
is produced, like the "text" of a story that is transcribed from a tape recording, is but one output of the interaction. One needs to know the particulars of the circumstances of interaction to understand what was generated. In other words, contrary to what Robert Plant Armstrong (1971) wrote, the "significance" of a work of art is not "incarnated within its own existence" (see my 1973b review).

In the mid- to late-1970s following publication of *The Hand Made Object and Its Maker*, some anthropologically- and sociologically-oriented researchers questioned whether a focus on individuals was "generalizeable." Preoccupied with broad constructs of "culture" and "society," and inclined to make general statements regarding whole groups of people, they were understandably uneasy about studying situational contexts and specific individuals. This approach may be changing, as suggested by Benita J. Howell (1984), who compares my book with Bill Holm's *Smoky-Top: The Art and Times of Willie Seaweed* (1983).

Also in the mid-1970s, some museum personnel complained that their historical research was limited to surviving specimens and archive documents; they could not follow the methods I had set forth in my study of contemporary chairmakers in southeastern Kentucky. Although they were scarcely in a position to interview craftsmen and their customers, these students of past traditions nevertheless had a set of guidelines directing attention not to the object alone but to social, economic, psychological, aesthetic, and ritualistic aspects of craft production and the uses of material culture. All they needed to do was look in the historical record with certain questions in mind. A recent example of this is Robert F. Trent's "Legacy of a Provincial Elite: New London County Joined Chairs 1720–1790" (1986).

The essay that follows is an attempt to explain why I wrote what I did in *The Hand Made Object and Its Maker*, and why I raised certain questions and sought answers in particular areas of concern. As such, it should help clarify what some of the methods of folk art study are and why these methods may be useful. (In the first version of this article, as well as in the book, I have identified Chester Cornett as Charley Garrells. To avoid confusion here, the craftsman's real name is used.)

Research into human behavior must begin as well as end with human beings and should focus on the individual, for an object cannot be fully understood or appreciated without knowledge of the person who made it.

Much of my research in the late 60s concerned craftsmen living in or near the Cumberland Mountains in southeastern Kentucky. Known simply as "chairmakers," many of them made baskets, musical instruments, and other furniture such as tables and cabinets as well as chairs. Who are or were these individuals? What were their experiences, their beliefs and values, their aspirations, and their conceptions of themselves? How do these matters relate to the making of such ordinary and unpretentious objects as chairs?
How were designs conceived, and why those features rather than other ones? What were the reactions to the chairs by family, friends, and customers? How have the attitudes and expectations of others affected the craftsmen and the things they made?

Answering these questions leads to the posing of others. Why do people strive to perfect form in some aspects of their daily lives, even in the making of utilitarian objects? What is the aesthetic experience, and how is it expressed? What is folk art, are art and craft really different phenomena, and what constitutes creative behavior? How do we study folk art—what assumptions and concepts may we make and use, what questions can we ask, and what solutions should we seek?

These are some of the issues I addressed in my Ph.D. dissertation at Indiana University (1970), several articles and a book entitled The Hand Made Object and Its Maker (1975). The book is an extended study of particular individuals engaged in craft work, and it focuses on one chairmaker, Chester Cornett. The few biographies of “folk artists” before it dealt with painters, while the bulk of studies of folk craft did not consider individuals at all; instead they utilized a cultural or historical framework, postulating types and the diffusion of subtypes of objects or describing changes through time resulting from culture contact. The book also analyzes and assesses such concepts as art, folk, creativity, and aesthetics; and it sets forth a method to account in specific ways for the features of objects that people make.

The thesis of The Hand Made Object and Its Maker is that the things made by the chairmakers discussed owe their traits and features to tools, materials, and techniques used in construction; to designs learned from other craftsmen; to preferences and expectations of customers as stated by them or inferred by the craftsmen; and especially to each maker’s beliefs, values, and aspirations. Moreover, it illustrates that many of the forms human beings find pleasing or satisfying are useful in some way. Whether called art or craft or simply chairs or pots, most objects of everyday life are means to help us achieve some practical goal as well as ends in themselves to be admired for their form. Technological and creative processes are entwined, and evaluations of products admit considerations of both fitness for use and appearance. To stress one dimension and to exclude consideration of the other would be to distort the nature of chairmaking and similar activities and to do a disservice to the objects and their makers.

To illustrate some of these points now, as I did earlier in the book on Kentucky chairmakers, I would refer to one of Chester’s more unusual chairs, the “two-in-one bookcase rocker, masterpiece of furniture.” Discovering how this “strange chair” (as Chester called it) came into existence inspired much of my research on chairmaking, so it seemed fitting to use the solving of
Chester's seventh two-in-one rocker, second bookcase rocker, and first and only "bookcase masterpiece" (December 1965) is made of red oak with white oak rockers and black walnut trim and pegs. There is storage space below the seat and lower shelves. "There ain't nothin' in the world like hit. That's why I call it my 'masterpiece.'"
this mystery as an organizational principle of the book. Why was the chair built? What did Chester think of it? In what way is this chair expressive of who Chester was or of what he wanted, of his relationships with others, and of the need to create?

"I have Bin this month Workin day and nite on a Big Rocker," Chester wrote to my wife and me in late December, 1965, only a few months after we met him and photographed him at work. Big chairs, although not typical in southeastern Kentucky, were scarcely remarkable for this craftsman, for he had been known for several years as the maker of rocking chairs at least five feet in height with seven or more slats, thick posts, and plenty of room in the seats. "This one is Made so different that hit don't look like iney chire that I Ever made," he insisted. "They are sometim strange about this Rocking chire . . . I don't Reley no what hapin . . . I just startied work on hit . . . Seems to Be sometin Kidin me . . . so Strang."

We were mildly curious but not really perplexed about this piece of furniture, because we knew that while Chester had made some unconventional chairs they were—well—chairs; and a chair is a chair, so to speak. More puzzling was Chester's own bewilderment about the process of manufacture, for our impression had been that he fully conceived of the object before he began construction; the requirements of useful design usually preclude spontaneity in making the object.

The chair disturbed Chester, though, because he wrote to my wife's sister about the piece shortly after he had sent a letter to us. "This one is a strang [chair]," he repeated to her. "I Reley dinton in tin to Make hit this tipe." There was no description of the chair, only the same reference to an unsettling feeling in Chester because "This Rocker is Reley strang . . . Neve sen inney thing like hit in my hole life . . . hit Reley Looks like my Master Pece of furniture."

We heard nothing further about this chair during the ensuing months, nor, strangely, did the craftsman mention the rocking chair that we had ordered in November of 1965. Our chair was to have seven slats, a set of woven hickory bark splints, and pegs that contrasted in color with the wood of the chair. It was supposed to be similar to one we had purchased from him for a museum, and had greatly admired.

We did not see Chester again until the end of August, 1966. We wandered into his workshop to find our piece of furniture crowding a corner of the room. It was not what we had requested but the "masterpiece" that Chester had mentioned in his letters. This "strange" chair, which Chester presented to us as ours, is made of solid oak with black walnut decorative trim at the top. The heads of its walnut pegs are carved in a pattern of ridges and grooves. It has eight legs and four rockers. Five panels forming the back and sides create a strong feeling of enclosure. Shelves on each side of the chair are
Chester recalled: "My uncle Oaklie taught me to do the barkin' but I had a long time alearnin' it." Chester used "notch lockin'" to hold the strips of hickory bark together, but most chairmakers tied the ends of the bark together instead.
supposed to hold books. Beneath the lowest shelves are storage units, and the
seat lifts up to reveal storage space below it. The shelves and the storage
space partly account for Chester's calling the chair a "bookcase rocker," and
because it has twice as many legs and rockers as usual it is a "two-in-one
rocker." Although standing only 50 inches high, the chair seems massive and
imposing because of its 35-inch width and 29-inch depth in combination with
its weight of about 75 pounds and the large pieces of solid wood used in
construction ("posts" or legs are about two inches in diameter and shelves
and seat are two inches thick).

"Now what's it s'posed to be?" asked a visitor to Chester's workshop
shortly after we arrived. Chester informed him that it is a rocking chair that
holds books—hence, a bookcase rocker. "That's nice, real nice," said the man,
without much conviction.

All of us were uneasy, Chester because this was not the chair we had
ordered, my wife and I because it was not what we wanted or could really
afford or perhaps even fully appreciate, and the visitor, who was as surprised
as we were at the nature of the chair. After asking about some minor detail of
construction, and hardly listening to the answer, the man hurried out of the
room.

Most people who have seen the chair said nothing at first sight, perhaps
because of shock, and little afterward owing to mixed emotions. To some it is
a throne, to others a puzzlement, and to several an aberration. But two
craftsmen who worked in a chair shop in the area declared the chair a work of
art because of the elaborate construction and the extensive ornamentation.

"I think it's pretty," said one of the chairmakers. "If I had that chair I'd set
it up in my living room and set things in it. Put ivy vines on it, you know, to
make it look kinda like a cliff."

"I think the people that bought that chair bought it for the looks," replied
the other chairmaker after a moment's reflection. "Now if I had that chair I
wouldn't let nobody set in it. I'd fasten that to the wall and put whatnots in it." He also noted that the four rockers seemed to "fit the design of it" and looked
"all right on the chair," although he had complained earlier that the extra
rockers and legs on some of Chester's other two-in-one chairs are "kinda
dangerous" and that "a man could hurt hiself on them things."

What was Chester's attitude toward his "masterpiece"? "When I first saw
it, I liked it pretty good," he said, but after having lived with it for eight
months and having endured the puzzled stares and inane questions of neigh­
bor's and customers, he was less sanguine.

"I'm kinda like other people," he said; "hit don't look right someway." He
suggested adding a leg rest in front, as he had done to a couple of other chairs,
and black leather upholstery to the seat, back, and sides. Even so, "It don't
look like it b'longs here yet; I b'lieve it come here too early or too late, one."
The idea for this chair came to him in a dream; the final product is not quite the same as the original vision. The basic procedure was the same as that used to make a seven-slat rocker out of a six-slat rocker.
“If you don’t like it,” I asked Chester, “why do you call it your ‘masterpiece’?” “Cause, uh, it is,” he said. “I never made nothin’ like it in my life. There ain’t nothing in the world like hit. That’s why I call it my ‘masterpiece.’”

Actually, Chester’s remark is a bit misleading, for there were in fact many design antecedents for the chair in his 40-year career as a chairmaker, although I did not know that at the time. But the earlier works themselves are not an adequate explanation of the masterpiece’s unusual qualities.

How this chair was made, why it is of this form with these particular features, and what this has to do with understanding human behavior are questions that required a couple hundred pages to answer and illustrate. Rather than try to give the answers now, I would mention areas in which I sought solutions to these problems.

An immediate consideration was the materials, tools, and techniques that Chester used in making chairs. A distinctive trait of his work since the mid-50s had been stretchers or “rounds” and legs or “posts” that were eight-sided. He achieved this effect by shaping them with a drawing knife, a time-consuming and laborious process. Reasons he gave for doing it this way are that his handmade foot-powered turning lathe had broken and he could not get it repaired, it was too difficult for one person to use this kind of lathe anyway, and he had become accustomed to shaping the pieces with a knife. Sometimes he referred to both the effect and the process as “old-fashioned,” a remark that baffled me. The chairs made by his grandfather and uncle, with whom he worked as a youth and from whom he learned much about chair making, consisted of pieces turned on a lathe. Only later did I learn that before putting the posts and rounds on the lathe they roughly shaped them eight-sided with an axe. Chester had refined as an element of design what to others was merely a part of the construction process; and he seemed to relish the old-timeyness of it.

I considered “tradition” as well. That is, what were the techniques and tools as well as designs used by Chester’s predecessors whose direct influence I could establish, and by other craftsmen in the area who were his contemporaries? One notable trait of most of the chairs is that they are made without glue or nails or even pegs. By warming the rounds on top of the stove for several days, but leaving the posts green, craftsmen take advantage of the natural propensity of the unseasoned wood to shrink around the seasoned pieces. Sometimes pegs or “pins” are inserted unobtrusively in the back of the post at the top to secure the top slat. Although a master of the art of working with “wet” wood, Chester made more and more chairs in the 1960s with an increasing number of pegs prominently displayed on the front. This, too, he referred to as “old fashioned,” but it was unique.

On learning that customers seemed to prefer this decorative touch and that Chester emphasized the pegs ostensibly because it helped sell the chairs,
I turned my attention to the matter of customer influence on the craftsman and the designs he made. Many of the chairs owed features to Chester's attempt to please customers directly or to attract them indirectly. A settin' chair with cross-hatching on the front posts, several dining and rocking chairs made of expensive woods such as walnut and cherry, and a couple of chairs with pegs the heads of which were carved in a series of ridges and grooves resulted from a combination of personal desire and the attempt to gain attention. I began to suspect, too, making me feel ill at ease, that the more than 90 pegs in the bookcase rocker—several of whose heads were carved in the ridges-and-grooves pattern—were there because of me (and that perhaps the book shelves—which will not hold books, although Chester might not have realized this because he does not have any—were inspired by my identity as “scholar”).

I gathered from innuendo and a few comments by his wife that Chester had wanted to make something special for us, as he had done a couple of times before for people who had befriended him and praised his work. Several times during our visits in August and November of 1965 I had remarked on another rocking chair he had made a few years before that had nearly a hundred pegs, some of which had specially carved heads. The feature was certainly noteworthy, lending a regal quality to the chair. Little did I anticipate the effects my remarks would have.

That Chester used some of the techniques learned from others in the area, that the overall design of the masterpiece has precedent in his own career, that my comments inspired him to add special details—these facts are only part of the story of how this chair came to be. They do not account for the chair's alleged "old-fashioned" qualities or for his calling some of his chairs "old timers" and dwelling on their old-timey traits. Nor do they explain why the chair is so massive, so solid, so seemingly protective. "Hit's just like somebody huggin' you," said Chester in regard to the deeply curved back of other two-in-one rocking chairs that he made in the early 60s.

As I tracked down and scrutinized several score of his chairs made from the 1920s to the mid-60s, I became aware of certain trends in Chester's work. Consistent from the beginning was superior skill and a propensity to experiment with materials, techniques of construction, and design. In the mid-50s Chester made side chairs with six, seven, and eight legs. This was followed by several years during which he made simple and ordinary chairs. In the early 60s he began constructing rocking chairs with eight legs and four rockers. A period of making ordinary chairs followed, but in the mid-60s the qualities of old-fashionedness and enclosure prevailed. Why?

Other behavior puzzled me. Chester had long hair and a beard, he wore overalls, and he was barefooted. In these ways he was unique among the men I saw, but in keeping with the appearance of those in Al Capp's "Li'l Abner" comic strip, which Chester recalled having seen in the mid-50s; the
Figure 2.4. The “Mayor’s Chair”
Chester’s third two-in-one rocker and first “bookcase rocker” was made of black walnut with hickory bark splints. This chair has a leg rest that extends in front; the lids of the basket arms lift up.
haphazardly constructed furniture in the strip inspired Chester in the spring of 1965 to build a chair with similar visual qualities, the slats and rounds extending through the posts. Shortly after we first met him in August of 1965 Chester sang a song of his own composition called “Old Kentucky Mountain Home.” The tune reminiscent of “Man of Constant Sorrow” (a song that two years later Chester was to tell me is his favorite, especially as he remembered its being sung decades before when he lived on Pine Mountain), this song tells of a man a “long, a long ways from my old Kentucky mountain home” who is fighting a war, praying that he will survive to return to his old Kentucky mountain home, the “place where I was born and raised.” Knowing he had been drafted in World War II and stationed on the Aleutian Islands, I assumed Chester had composed the song 20 years before as an expression of his feelings at that time. I did not realize until much later that he had created the song in the spring of 1965, only a few months before he sang it to me. There was a marked tension between his wife and him. The family struggled with poverty, the health of the male children seemed to deteriorate rapidly when they reached their teens, and Chester often complained of various ailments as well as frequently objected to living near the highway and insisted on returning to Pine Mountain where he was born and raised. Whether I wanted to or not, I had to consider Chester’s relationships with others, those experiences that were common topics of conversation, his expression of needs, and his statements of aspirations. For it was becoming increasingly obvious that Chester’s chairs were not constructed in a vacuum and that many forms of behavior were both expressive and interrelated.

Inexorably I was drawn into the complex web of Chester’s life, fascinated yet repulsed and unable to extricate myself: his treatment in the VA hospital for emotional problems, his rejection by a young woman when he returned to the Cumberlands after the war, his marriage to his present wife whose husband had deserted her and her daughter and for whom Chester felt pity but not love, his failure at several jobs urged upon him by his wife who was embarrassed by his chairmaking, his years of hardship and deprivation because Chester could command little money for his chairs, his frustration over his plight and his inability to understand the illness to which his sons succumbed, his extreme introversion and his irascibility when his work was interrupted by curious passersby and familial responsibilities and the complaints of his wife that he was trying to live in a world of his own making, his gradual identification with the past and dreams of residing where he had grown up and of living as he had decades earlier when free of the problems that beset him now, and his wife’s having left him in the mid-50s and the early 60s because she found intolerable his way of life of eking out a bare existence in some isolated hollow.
I was forced to examine immediate circumstances in which the strange rocking chair was constructed: Chester’s growing obsession with old-timeyness as evidenced by his comments and appearance and chair designs, his expression in song of doing battle with unknown enemies and fear of failure, his desire to isolate himself both from the curious who spotted him from the highway nearby and the eager patrons writing him daily because of recent publicity in national newspapers, his feelings of obligation to those few who befriended him and desire to reciprocate by making things especially for them, his urge to create something testifying to his capabilities and mastery and as symbolic of the ability to solve some of the problems heaped upon him, and his need to isolate as well as insulate himself in this time of turmoil and assault.

I had to explore ways in which the making of things relates to psychological states as well as to cognitive and interactional processes: how, for example, grief may precipitate certain acts of creation both as an expression of and a solution to the losses that one suffers, how the grieving process compels us to behave in particular ways, and how intensely felt emotions may guide and direct and give shape and substance to many of the things we make and do.

Whatever the attitudes of others toward the strange rocking chair, and whether I wanted the chair or could afford it or ever would appreciate it, I had to accept it when Chester offered it to us as ours. And I had to keep it. For I came to realize that in Chester’s life and work it was indeed a “masterpiece.” Viewed as an utilitarian object—a chair to rock in with ease and comfort—the two-in-one bookcase rocker, masterpiece of furniture seems to have come too early or too late. Certainly it is not of this world of practical objects serving their useful purposes well, and therefore, “Hit don’t look right someway.” But this is a “strange rocking chair,” one whose meaning and existence cannot be explained in ordinary terms, or at least within the frameworks common to folkloristic scholarship when I commenced my research.

In June of 1981 the chairmaker Chester Cornett died in the VA hospital in Cincinnati, Ohio. He had been ill for two years and had made no chairs during this time. Fortunately, however, the last chair he built was documented in detail. Filmed by Herbie Smith and his wife Elizabeth Barret, a 90-minute study of the work of Chester Cornett called “Hand Carved” is available through Appalshop Films, Box 743, Whitesburg, Kentucky 41858.

It has been 17 years since I began research on craftsmen of the Cumberlands. In the early 70s I published a series of articles on folk art, using chairmaking as the data. By the mid-70s I was preoccupied with trying to articulate concepts and perspectives. The late 70s saw me investigating ways
in which people in urban areas personalize space and otherwise try to make their everyday existence both pleasurable and meaningful. My concern in recent years has been the work place: how to use folklore as a diagnostic tool to ascertain what is wrong as well as what is fitting and satisfying, what elements of our expressive behavior might serve as models for improving our working environment, and why studies of occupational and organizational folklore are a vital part of understanding human behavior and of attending to various ills that our society faces.

During this time many of the students in the Folklore and Mythology Program have done research on art and aesthetics, contributing in ways and to an extent that I could not have imagined when I began my own work. Among the current Ph.D. candidates, for example, Patricia Wells is probing deeply into basket making, maple sugaring, and other activities in a rural area of Massachusetts in order to understand both creativity and community. Examining in depth motivations of several individuals, the process of conceptualization and the nature of aesthetic responses, Verni Greenfield (individual Ph.D. in folk art and museum studies) is the first to really understand a fundamental compulsion in many of us—the desire to recycle objects by creating an entirely new and different form from discarded items. Roberta Krell, who has taken gerontology as an allied field, is about to set forth new conceptions of both aging and creativity by researching the expressive behavior of the elderly.

These and many other studies past and present recognize that human beings have a need to express themselves. Moreover, they explore the urge to create as a condition fundamental to being human. Increasingly apparent from such research is that building a strange rocking chair is but an example, albeit an extreme one, of behavior common to us all: mastering skills, expressing ourselves, and creating forms whose existence is to be understood in terms of identity and experience, needs and aspirations, self and others. Like his bookcase masterpiece, Chester Cornett was unique. But in essence, and in the ways that count the most, he was just like the rest of us. Although no longer among us, he has left behind physical testaments to his achievements, enriching our lives and reminding us of what makes us all human and thus members of a common species: the need to express, the urge to create.