

"SPRING BLOSSOMS" CHAIRS

American Black Walnut with Fused Stained Glass and Leather

The chairs before you capture the pure essence of flowering cherry blossoms in the Spring...

The basis for this piece of wood art began with an idea stirred every Spring when the first white and pink blossoms magically appear on Whidbey Island. Capturing the spirit and artistry of these trees in bloom in fused glass panels presented the initial challenge. Designing a contemporary chair that incorporated these glass panels as the chair backs brought to bear over 50 years of woodworking and design experience to accomplish the task. Nearly two years in the planning and fabrication process, these chairs represent what functional art should be.

The various components of the chair frame have been crafted from a single piece of figured American black walnut (*Juglans nigra*). American black walnut is highly prized due to the wide range of vivid colors, exotic figuring and chatoyance (opalescence reminiscent of looking into a cat's eye) exhibited within the timber. To compliment the sweeping curve incorporated in the seat frame, the natural-edge of the lower front seat rail was retained.

The colorful and artistic chair backs have been created by fuse-tacking numerous hand-cut pieces of colored art glass onto four layers of clear art glass. The shape of the glass back was created by slumping into a custom mold. The resultant back is both beautiful and structurally strong. Each back has been mounted within the chair via precise hand chisel-cut joints and pinned using solid copper nails.

The seats have been upholstered with deep, dark concord-grape leather over a firm yet compliant padded plywood plate. The wonderful feeling of sitting on the well-padded seat combined with the massaging potential of the glass pieces on one's back needs to be experienced - by simply taking a seat and moving into the chair's back. The end result is a chair that feels as great as it looks!

The chairs have been hand finished to with a satin lacquer to highlight the natural color and protect the beautiful character of the dark timbers while giving the chair a warm feeling to the touch. As with all of his wood art pieces the title of the piece, creation date and artist information has been permanently stamped on the underside of each chair. The chairs have been entered in the artist's permanent registry.

Dimensions: 19-1/2 inches wide
16-1/2 inches in seat depth
36-1/4 inches in height

Artist: Gary A. Leake, Coupeville, Washington

Price: \$1675 (matched pair)