



Ronald Emmanuel Kent

May 18, 1931 - December 15, 2018

Ron Kent passed away on Saturday, December 15, 2018.

The son of immigrants, Ron grew up in Los Angeles and attended Hollywood High School, where he met Myra Davis, whom he married in 1951 while serving in the Coast Guard. During his enlistment, Ron was transferred to the Territory of Hawaii, and he and Myra fell in love with the islands. After graduating from UCLA and establishing himself as a stock broker, Ron and Myra returned to Honolulu in 1965.

Early in the marriage, Ron discovered that buying furniture was more expensive than building it himself. He tinkered with light sculptures and other media, but when Myra gave him a “toy” wood lathe for a birthday present, she changed his world.

Turning wood on a tiny lathe suitable for 10-year-olds and using a sharpened screwdriver as a tool, Ron developed his gift for graceful shapes carving three-inch bottles. In a matter of months, the “toy lathe” was replaced by a larger one from Sears and proper tools which he replaced with larger, better equipment as he experimented with shapes, sizes and a variety of local woods.

Ron found his niche turning bowls and platters made of Norfolk Island Pine—the tall symmetrical trees first brought to Hawaii by sailors looking for trees suitable for replacing broken masts.

Already a fixture at local craft fairs, Ron’s use of Norfolk Pine propelled him into the international spotlight. His work was featured in the Smithsonian Institution, the Vatican collection, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Louvre.

Central to his life was Ron's love of family. Myra was his partner, and they were together from their teens through their eighties. Ron and Myra were almost always side by side. They had a Sunday tradition of sanding wood together and many of his art pieces were signed "Ron & Myra Kent."

Ron is survived by Myra; children Elizabeth (Kent) and Steven (Brooke); grandchildren PD, Alex, and Niko; and great grandchildren Frank and Diego.

Committed to Hawaii’s art community, Ron and Myra created an "Albizzia Challenge" to encourage the use of invasive species and award a prize to emerging wood workers at the annual wood show. A fund has been set up at the Hawai’i Community Foundation to sustain these prizes in the memory of Ron. To honor Ron’s love for Hawai’i, his passion for

art, and his desire to support future artists, gifts can be made to the Ron and Myra Kent Fund at Hawaii Community Foundation, 827 Fort Street Mall, Honolulu, HI 96813, attn to Eric Laa.

Private services were held.