

---

# Pro Rege

---

---

Volume 24 | Number 2

Article 10

---

December 1995

## Working With Wood

John Van Rys  
*Dordt College*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/pro\\_rege](https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/pro_rege)



Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Van Rys, John (1995) "Working With Wood," *Pro Rege*: Vol. 24: No. 2, 10.  
Available at: [https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/pro\\_rege/vol24/iss2/10](https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/pro_rege/vol24/iss2/10)

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by the University Publications at Digital Collections @ Dordt. It has been accepted for inclusion in Pro Rege by an authorized administrator of Digital Collections @ Dordt. For more information, please contact [ingrid.mulder@dordt.edu](mailto:ingrid.mulder@dordt.edu).

# Working With Wood

John Van Rys

*for April*

For you, dear, I negotiated  
knots in aspen planks—  
nurturing a jelly cupboard  
into being from a J.C. Penney  
photograph and pencil plan.

In dreams I saw it whole—  
a Platonic form, satisfied.  
Jars wedded to mason lids, vows sealed  
with rubber rings, stood within  
its walls—rounded beets resting  
soundly; zucchini relish,  
yellow and green with the sun's bite;  
pickles floating in a briny sea,  
amid the flotsam of dill seed;  
translucent red, jellied currents;  
blueberry jam bruised to a purple  
pulp. I saw it—aspen wood  
stained maple, varnished over, a glass door  
cathedral holy—a gift  
given over to an ideal of  
domestic bliss.

I wrestled weekly those planks  
into an ordained form—aided  
by whining table saws and shapers, seeking  
truth from joiners, clamping doubts with bars  
while waiting for joints to seal,  
put asunder by neither man nor woman.

It's finished, this jelly cupboard,  
but jarless. You had other plans, filled it  
with decorative tins and dishes, a teapot  
cottage. It's home now.

I am beginning to understand  
wood and you, maybe. I, the would-be  
carpenter, sought to shape  
planks into grace. Receiving,  
you made grace a home.