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## John Gibson

John Gibson sees a gourd the way a painter views a blank canvas or a sculptor looks at a piece of stone. Gourds, he has learned, are instruments for boundless artistic creativity. Gibson is the maestro.

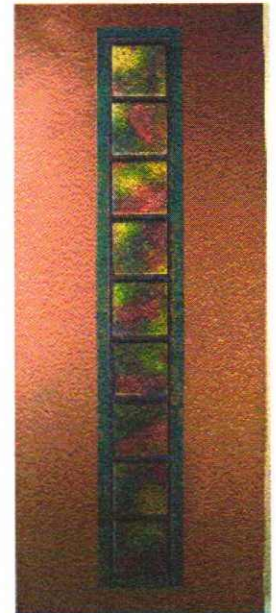
Using Southwestern, Native American, wildlife & contemporary designs, Gibson is turning gourds into magnificent pieces of art. In the process, he is turning the heads of many across the country who have discovered the intricate, natural beauty that emanates from his work. "I feel more like a person who sculpts rather than paints," said Gibson,

who produced his first piece in 1993 & has since seen his art displayed in a growing number of galleries nationwide. Gibson is indeed more than a painter. He is a craftsman, designer & engraver. It is these disciplines, coupled with the exactness of a mathematician, that Gibson uses to begin each project. With compass & ruler in hand, he painstakingly makes the measurements that ensure the geometric precision that is so vital to his art.

There's nothing simple about Gibson's work. From the initial choice of the correct shaped &

who worked as a cowboy in his early years on the ranches in West Texas & Kansas, Gibson has traveled extensively throughout the Southwest, gathering the mental images that he conveys in his art.

He grew up in Jackson, Mississippi & graduated from the University of Southern



Mississippi. He has worked as a salesman, retail manager & healthcare professional. But it was his love of the Native American culture & the West that ultimately brought him into the art world & to the natural canvas of the gourd. Each of Gibson's designs are a multi-step process. From washing, cutting, cleaning, sanding & leveling each gourd, to drawing the design & burning it into the gourds hard shell. Gibson then turns to dyes for color & to give the gourds



textured & a three-dimensional look not possible with paint. After a clear coating is applied, finishing designs are etched in with a high-speed drill. He may then add a final touch, such as a piece of bone, horse hair or turquoise. Like the gourd itself, everything Gibson incorporates into his art is natural. "For as long as I can remember, I've had a special connection to the Native American culture, to the outdoors & to the landscapes of the West," Gibson said. "It is those loves that I try to reflect in every piece I make."

sized gourd to the final decorative stone inlay, leather lace or abalone shell, each piece reflects the individualism of its creator. Influenced by his father,

John Gibson