

MOM'S JOY ROOM

Where Obsolescence Ends and Wonder Begins

2964 Fairmont Road • Morgantown, West Virginia 26501 • (304) 282-3671

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHENTICITY & APPRAISAL

The Owl Family Tree

Hand-Carved Buffalo Horn Sculpture • Four Owls on Wood Base • approx. 12" • Vintage

ESTIMATED WORTH

\$85 – \$160

Reflects the rare multi-owl composition, fine hand-etched detail, and impressive 12" scale.



Four owls in a single horn — the family perched along a carved branch



Standing a full 12" tall on her wood base

History & Background

Carving in water buffalo horn is a craft with deep roots across South and Southeast Asia, where the horn is a by-product of working herds and has been shaped into combs, cups, ornaments, and figures for generations. Horn is a remarkable sculptor's material: it is naturally layered, dark and glossy on the outside and warm cream-to-honey within, so a skilled carver can reveal the lighter inner layers by cutting away the dark outer shell. The result is a natural two-tone image with no paint required.

This sculpture makes full use of that effect. A single curved horn has been transformed into a tree of owls: four horned owls are carved in relief along its length, each rendered in the warm tan inner layer of the horn and framed by the polished black outer surface. Fine hand-etched lines pick out every feather, branch, and leaf spray, and the owls' eyes are set with yellow accents that give them a watchful, lifelike gaze. The horn's own natural tip has been left as the bare end of a branch, so that the whole composition seems to grow out of the material itself. A turned wood base keeps the piece stable and finished.

Horn carvings of this type were widely made and exported from the 1960s through the 1990s and were popular gift-shop and souvenir pieces across the United States. Single-owl figurines are the common form; a multi-owl composition carved to this level of detail and scale is a good deal less often seen. This example is presented as a vintage hand-carved piece in that Southeast Asian horn-carving tradition. It joins the Mom's Joy Room collection in October 2026 alongside her other horn carvings.

Notable Information

- ◆ Material: genuine water buffalo horn, hand-carved in relief, mounted on a turned wood base
- ◆ Subject: four horned owls perched in a branching tree composition
- ◆ Height: approximately 12" including base
- ◆ Technique: dark outer shell cut back to reveal the light inner layer; fine hand-etched feather, branch, and leaf detail; yellow eye accents
- ◆ Attribution: stylistic, Southeast Asian horn-carving tradition; no maker's mark observed
- ◆ Condition: clean, glossy, and intact with sharp carved detail and a sound base
- ◆ Joined the collection: October 2026

Collector's Notes

The common horn owl is a single bird of 3 to 5 inches. A 12-inch, four-owl composition with continuous branch and foliage detail is a far more ambitious piece, and it is what lifts this example above the usual gift-shop figurine. Owl collectors, a devoted and broad group, and buyers of natural-material decor are the natural audience. Horn carvings should be kept out of direct sun and away from heat and dampness, and are best cleaned with a soft dry cloth.

*"Wise enough to share a branch — four owls, one horn, and a hundred little
feathers."*

Mom's Joy Room
2964 Fairmont Road
Morgantown, WV 26501

Sandy Wade

PROPRIETOR

October 8, 2026