

STEP-BY-STEP TO CARVING A GREEN MAN IN SUNKEN RELIEF

WOOD CARVING

Calamity control

Dealing with common mistakes on carvings and how to avoid them



Learn how to carve a Gothic quatrefoil in stone



How to carve and colour an Abyssinian roller



Easy-to-follow guide: Carve a bowl and keys



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2017 shows and events



As we approach spring I am mindful of the shows that start to take place as the colder months are coming to an end. These can be large or small and take place in various locations.

But without doubt, people love attending them and see what other people are doing, making and what is for sale. Most shows and events – even if not labelled as ‘craft fairs’ as such – have craft sections within them. Typically, there are people working away to show what a given craft involves and what can be done. I know that clubs put a lot of effort in to putting on good displays of work; they usually have people carving and are open to people asking questions. The clubs and organisations do this very well, but there is one thing that many do well and that is have a sign or pop

up saying ‘if you are interested about what you see, come and talk to us’ or ‘if interested in joining our club come and talk to us’.

There should also be a bullet point of the reasons why joining is fun. Make people see that it is fun, friendly and not only does one learn to do something creative that doesn't cost the earth, it is a great social thing too.

I don't think it is implicit that people will talk to people demonstrating and I also think we assume at times that people will do the things we want them to. I am hesitant about talking to people at some shows, so I know others may be hesitant too. But if there is a sign giving people permission, or signposting that is ok talk to us if they would like information, then it takes away the hesitancy aspect.

We need to capitalise on the wonderful work that many clubs do at shows and events. Let's face it, we want new members and encourage

people to be aware and possibly get involved, try something out or join. I liken it to buying something. If you want something but have to go through or over many hurdles to do so, we quickly lose interest and look for something else. I want to be able to pay for something quickly and easily without fuss. Joining, learning about something or finding information should be like that too. It needs to be simple, easy and quick with as few potential barriers as possible.

Do shout about what you do, make people aware, try to enthuse and engage with people and make them getting to know about you and your club as easy as possible.

Have fun and let me know what you have been making.

Mark

To get in touch, please email me:
markb@thegmcgroup.com

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News & events...

We talk to the BDWCA and bring you the latest news and events from the woodcarving community

BDWCA: 2016 Regional Group Competition

The subject for the 2016 Regional Group Competition at the BDWCA Annual Show in September, which was selected by the previous year's winners, the Northern Ireland Group, was the Common British Starling.

Not a bird that immediately leaps to mind when thinking about what to carve, or one to admire in the garden, but on examination a definite challenge when it came to the painting! In the event 42 starlings graced the table, entered by seven of the Regional Groups.

The Northern Ireland Group – with 11 carvings – once again took the award, with Bentley Wildlife Carvers (South East Group) in 2nd, and Trent Valley Group in 3rd place. Mark Langford, competing as a member of the Cheshire Group, took the award for the Best Individual Starling.

Northern Ireland Group is a busy group with two meetings each week. While most of their members originally join them to carve walking sticks, most of them soon get involved in carving birds when they see what other people are doing, and that is reflected in the number of starlings that were entered.

So once again they had the responsibility of choosing the subject for the 2017 competition, and after much discussion chose the largest member of the Finch family – the Hawfinch. A lovely bird, nicely coloured, with a massive conical beak – designed to crack open such hard seeds as cherry stones to get at the edible kernel inside – and a challenge in carving the cleaver-like modification of some of the wing tips. It will be interesting to see how many arrive on the Group table in September 2017, and which group will win.

For further information on the BDWCA, as well as membership details, visit www.bdwca.org.uk. Membership includes three issues of our 28-page, full-colour magazine, *Wingspan*. Contact Membership Secretary: Mrs Janet Nash, 26 Shendish Edge, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, Tel: 01442 247610. Alternatively, please email: pam.wilson@bdwca.org.uk



Northern Ireland Group's Starlings with some of the carving team



Best Individual Starling by Mark Langford

Events



There's plenty to see and do at the Midlands Woodworking and Power Tool Show



Lee Stoffer demonstrates his green woodworking skills

PHOTOGRAPHS BY GIANANTHONY BAILEY

• Nature Craft

Join the English Heritage for family fun, with hands-on craft activities and the chance to build your very own den from among the vast woodland park.

When: 20–24 February, 2017

Where: Beeston Castle and Woodland Park, Chapel Lane, Beeston CW6 9TX

Web: www.english-heritage.org.uk

• BWA exhibition and demonstrations: Hertfordshire region

The British Woodcarvers Association is there for everyone, from the absolute novice hobby carver to top professionals, from non-carvers who are just interested in the art and craft of carving to companies supplying equipment to our members, so pop along to the Hertfordshire region to learn more.

When: 18–19 March, 2017

Where: Oaklands College Smallford, Hatfield Rd, Oaklands, St Albans AL4 0JA

Web: www.britishwoodcarversassociation.co.uk

• The Midlands Woodworking and Power Tool Show

The Midlands Woodworking and Power Tool Show promises to be a weekend filled with great demonstrations for you. These include demos on: turning, carving, furniture making, chair making, scrow saw, marquetry, CNC machinery, pyrography, boat building, band saw, sharpening and clubs, colleges and associations will be attending.

When: 24–25 March, 2017

Where: Newark Showground, Nottingham

Web: www.nelson.co.uk

• Yandles Woodworking Show

Get free expert advice on a huge range of top brands, exclusive show deals, save 15% off all self-selected timber and free masterclasses. Thousands of visitors come from across the country, to enjoy the informal and friendly atmosphere that is created within the surroundings of this historic timber yard. There will be demonstrations ongoing throughout the day.

When: 7–8 April, 2017

Where: Yandle & Son Ltd, Hurst Works, Hurst, Martock, Somerset TA12 6JU

Web: www.yandles.co.uk

• International Woodcarving Symposium Brienzt

Over five days, woodcarvers from all around the world will carve a piece of art. During those five days you will see woodcarving live and there will be concerts, food and drinks. The entrance is free of charge. The traditional Woodcarving Symposium Brienzt has been held for several years now. Since 2012 the KUNA association (organisers of Art Night Brienzt) have been responsible for arranging the symposium in conjunction with Brienzt Tourism. Woodcarving has a long tradition in Brienzt – and over the five days, woodcarving by artists from Switzerland and elsewhere in Europe will be presented in Brienzt.

When: 3–8 July, 2017

Where: Verein KUNA, Kunstnacht Brienzt, Rosenweg 7, 3855 Brienzt

Web: www.symposium-brienzt.ch

• International Symposium of Wood carving

The International Symposium of Woodcarving 'Lights and Shadows of wood' was started in 2002 and ever since, year after year, this event has increase continuously, in terms of involved artists and of the attention paid by the local inhabitants and tourists who, during the week, follow with great interest the creation of a work of art, along the streets of the villages. During July, about 25 artists of National and International level – even coming from outside Europe – who have been selected among the high number of applicants, realize a sculpture in wood, starting from a pine tree trunk, 180cm high. The working positions of the various artists are scattered around along the streets and the squares of Brienzt, Castello Tesino and Pieve Tesino, in order to allow the public to admire the creation process which starts the work of art, the finishing touch and to admire the relation between the artist and the piece of wood.

When: July, 2017

Web: www.visitvalsugana.it/en

• The 13th English Open Chainsaw Carving Competition

When: 26–28th August 2017

Where: Cheshire Showground, Flittogate Lane, Tabley, Knutsford WA16 0HJ

Web: www.livingheritagecountryshows.com

• Carve Carrbridge Scottish Open Chainsaw Carving Competition

When: 2 September, 2017

Where: Scotland

Web: www.carvecarrbridge.com

If you have something you want your fellow carvers to know, send in your news stories, snippets and diary dates to Briony Darnley at Woodcarving, 86 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 1XN or to briony.darnley@thegmcgroup.com

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Calamity control

Dave Western talk about making mistakes on your carvings and how to avoid them

Just once in my carving life, I would love to go from start to finish on a project without making some kind of mistake. Although many years of bitter experiences have helped me reduce the number of errors I now make, I would be a liar if I said that I ever manage to complete any carving without some sort of mess-up. I hope I can help my fellow carvers avoid some of the pitfalls I have careened into and can remedy any you do make.

An ounce of prevention

Although I risk sounding terribly patronising, there are very few real accidents or errors in woodcarving. You may occasionally encounter a piece of wood with hidden defects or you may have a tool misbehave due to faulty material, but for the most part, most carving blunders are completely of our own doing. Sadly, the following list is neither sexy nor

exhaustive, but I hope reading through it will help you get a better grasp on the first phase of mistake correction... not making them in the first place!

Going too fast

Of all the mistakes generated in the woodcarving realm, I would hazard that carvers who simply work too fast cause the vast majority of their woes. In our rush to see progress, it is easy to mishandle the work piece and rush the cutting or lose concentration and cut too much or cut in the wrong area. I know because I'm as guilty as the next person of getting swept away by the excitement of ploughing through the wood, but it is always important to stay under control.

Carving beyond ability

This is a tough one as it isn't necessarily a

bad thing to take on a challenge and learn some lessons the hard way. The trick is to know where that 'one step too far' is and try your absolute best not to cross it. Carving too far beyond your capability will lead to frustration and that can lead to errors in both judgement and technique.

Pushing too hard

This error is often inextricably bound in with going too fast and not keeping tools sharp enough for the job at hand. You are always safer to take two or three shallow cuts than to try and push about a bit chunk in one pass. Combine pushing too hard with a dull tool edge and you have the perfect recipe for a carving disaster.

Dull tools

A dull tool is a very dangerous tool, both for



the work piece and for the operator. Tools that are not in peak condition are more likely to leave ragged, unattractive cuts in their wake. They are also far more likely to be pushed too hard, which increases the risk of breaking through the cut and damaging the carving and injuring the carver.

Wrong tool

Often it is tempting to use the wrong tool to make a cut. Even though knives are versatile tools, they have their limitations as well as gouges and chisels. By using tools for purposes they were not designed for, you risk damage to the piece, the tool and even yourself.

Bad light

If you can't see clearly then you run greater risk of cutting errors. Lighting that is too dark or too bright should be adjusted by the use of blinds or auxiliary lighting and if you require glasses for optimum vision. Don't be too lazy or vain; put them on!

Working against the grain

If you are anything like me, you won't be able to count the times you've split off an edge, torn up a section or got a tool jammed because you have cut against the grain. Wood is a capricious medium and its

A KNIFE SLIP

With the sermon out of the way, let's concentrate on what to do when the air is blue and your carving has been stricken. If the mistake is relatively minor, such as a small section chipped or a cut that has veered slightly over a line, then it may be possible to simply rework the design a bit to accommodate it. Carving is a pretty fluid endeavour, so making modifications and adjustments on the fly should be thought of as part of the process. More often than not, a refining cut repair will be unnoticeable.



An errant knife pass has knocked off a small section of the wolf's ear. The damage is relatively minor and can be easily repaired



By simply re-carving the ear to a slightly greater depth, the damage has been removed. To accommodate the now deeper ear, a bit more of the shoulder was also removed

grain is seldom completely uniform. Take the time to learn each piece's quirks and then

try to work with them rather than against them.

Split spoon bowl

Sometimes, the mistake can be a bit more serious and glue repairs become necessary. If the piece is broken off cleanly then it can be glued back in place by a number of methods. Here a split bowl is repaired two different ways.



1. A clean break can generally be glued back in place, leaving little evidence of the damage.



2. Here, carpenter's yellow glue (which I prefer to the white glue) is applied to the break before it is clamped back together. Epoxy or quick setting glue can also be used, but if it is possible to get good clamping pressure, I find the carpenter's glue gives the strongest and least noticeable repair.



3. If you can clamp the piece without causing further damage, it is generally the best way to achieve a tight, unnoticeable repair. Small fast action clamps are excellent as are the clothes-peg type plastic clamps. Be careful not to damage the wood with excessive clamping pressure.



4. Sometimes it is difficult to use clamps to bind a break. Try a doubled up strip of masking tape to make a versatile and contour fitting clamp. It is possible to exert great clamping force with double layer masking tape, so avoid pulling too hard.



5. If mechanical clamping is not possible, consider using a cyanoacrylate type rapid set glue. These glues allow the repair of awkwardly shaped breaks using only hand pressure. Note that some of these glues bond instantly so you have to be confident of your placement when you rejoin the broken sections.



6. Gentle hand pressure will allow you to reunite a break if you are using quick setting glues. I generally hold mine slightly longer than manufacturer suggestions to give a bit more setting time.

Small chip outs



1. A small chip out has the potential to cause a lot of grief if I have to reshape the entire area around this Celtic knot. Fortunately, it has not broken away completely, which would necessitate a panicky search for the wayward piece, so it is a simple repair.



2. Using a thin stick, some carpenter's yellow glue is worked into the break (being careful not to dislodge the chip). Avoid piling too much glue in the break, but make certain there is enough to cover the entire break.



3. With another thin stick, gently press down on the chip to seat it back in place. Don't exert too much force and be aware of any lateral movement.



4. Once the chip has been set back in its proper location, a bit of masking tape holds it in place until the glue has dried. Note that this same operation could be done using quick set glue if you are in a hurry.



5. Although this chip has dried slightly off a perfect setting, it is close enough that it can easily be reworked for a nearly invisible finish in the final product.



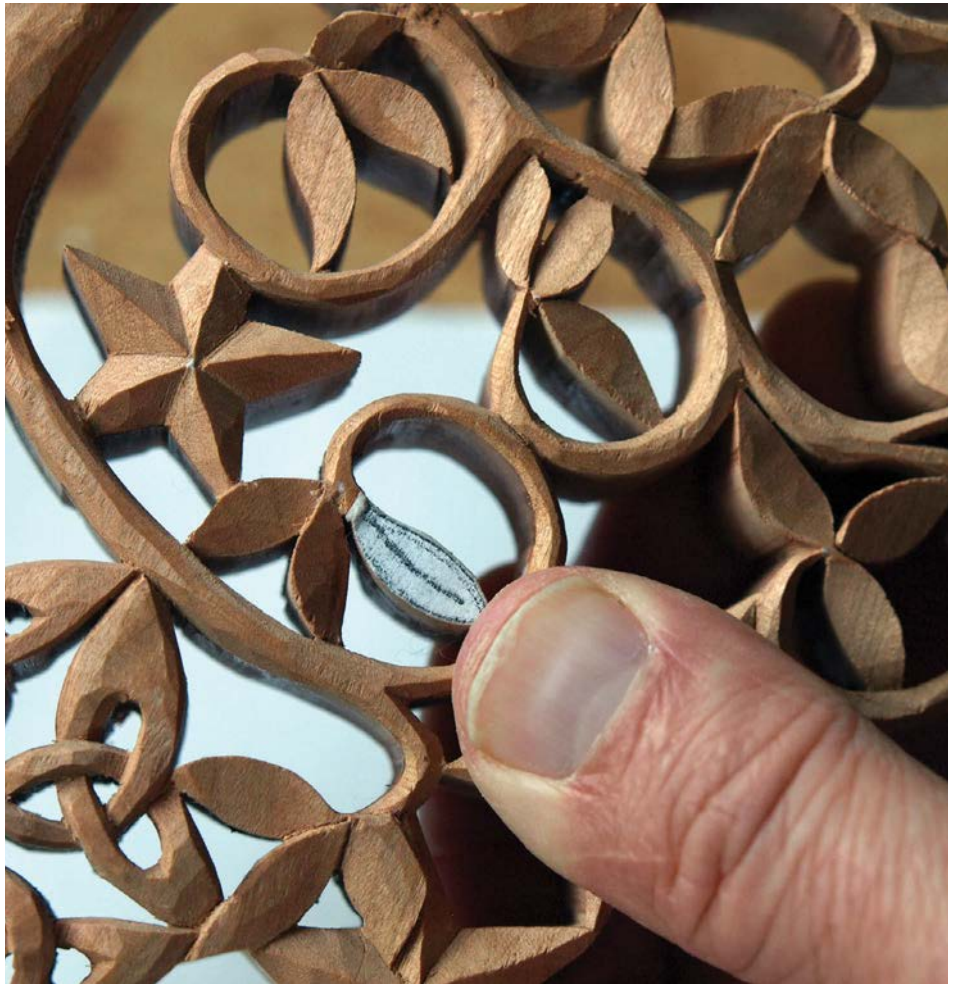
Awkward breaks



1. A break always brings a lump to the throat and fills the air with various hues of blue. If it's in a really tricky location like this one, it can be a nightmare. Fortunately, quick setting epoxies and cyanoacrylate glues allow even the most horrific fractures to be reset.



2. For an awkward break like this one where clamping is pretty much impossible, I always resort to cyanoacrylate for a speedy and strong repair. Sometimes, if the wood is particularly porous, it may take two coats of glue, but generally one layer applied as per manufacturer instructions is all it takes.



3. With the glue applied, the broken section must be swiftly and confidently rejoined. Be careful not to contact the glued section with skin or you will be bonded to your carving at more than a spiritual level. Press the sections together firmly but not excessively and hold for a bit longer than recommended by the instructions. I generally leave it cure for a few hours before working the area, although you can resume carving almost immediately if you are in a rush.

Dealing with small cracks and blemishes



1. Occasionally, you might encounter small checks, cracks, soft sections, pinholes, insect marks etc., on the piece of wood you are carving. There are a myriad number of wax or wood based sealers, fillers and finishes that can be used to cover over these unsightly blemishes, or you can make your own with fine sawdust and glue preparation.



2. I keep several little vials of super fine sawdust from a variety of tree species on hand in case I need to make my own filler. Usually I collect it from my random orbit sander so I know it will be as powdery as I can get it.



3. When I mix up a batch for filling, I keep it about 50–50 sawdust and yellow glue. I like it to be fairly thick, but not solid... somewhere around the consistency of cold treacle.



4. Use a thin stick to spread the fill mixture generously. Work it into the affected areas but leave a build up on the surface because the mixture will shrink as it dries.



5. When dried, use a cabinet scraper or chisel to scrape the excess material away. I'll often fine sand the last little bit, but I stay away from sanding too much as the mixture just clogs the paper and scraping looks better anyway.

Dire straights

I always keep as many of the offcut pieces from my current carvings as I can. Hang on to them until the carving is complete as they can be an excellent source of material for patches if you need to affect a major repair. When a piece is broken and lost or the colour match is critical, a patch cut from the same board you are presently carving can be the perfect way to rescue an otherwise doomed project. No one ever wants to have to glue in whole sections, but if you have to do it then the job is always more pleasant when you have a piece that is of similar colour, grain pattern, weight, etc.

A carving mistake need not cause a coronary and it doesn't have to signal the end of the line for your carving. Most are preventable, but when they do happen just stay calm and get out the glue and masking tape. ▮



Dave ensures he always keeps as many offcuts from his projects as possible

From the community

Here are just a few letters the Editor has received from you, the readers

A shepherd and his sheepdog

Dear Mark,
My husband (John Whiteley) subscribes to *Woodcarving* magazine. His main hobby is sheepdog trialling and, more recently, relief carving. Here are his carvings of a shepherd and his dog penning some sheep. This was last year's Christmas present for me. I thought you might be interested.

Alex Whiteley

John's carving,
inspired by his hobby



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF ALEX WHITELEY

New to carving



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF JOHN YOUNG

Just some of John's leaf carvings

Hi Mark,

The heading of your recent Editorial article immediately grabbed my attention. I began carving after I had my second hip replacement and was unable to continue my hobby for a while, which was then woodturning.

I managed to sneak into my shed, cut a piece of Wych elm and started to carve a Wych elm leaf; it wasn't very good... in fact it was rubbish. This gave me the idea to carry on with this project, carving leaves out of the actual wood that the leaf represents. This combines my love of wood, trees and leaves and as I now find it difficult to stand at my main lathe any length of time, I find this a great new hobby. To date, I have carved over 140 leaves each out of the wood of the tree. I had been thinking if anyone else has worked on a similar number of woods, so when I read your article it gave me a chance to ask the question in your magazine.

I belong to the Furness Woodturning and Woodcrafts Association and we meet on Monday evenings. Many of my friends at 'the club' are a great help in supplying me with new challenges by giving me more woods.

Can I take the opportunity to ask if anyone knows where I can obtain a small piece of Ginkgo biloba? I've wanted to carve this leaf for a while given its history.

John Young

If you have something you want your fellow carvers to know, send in your letters and stories to Briony Darnley at *Woodcarving*, 86 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 1XN or to briony.darnley@thegmcgroup.com

Canadian wildlife



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF WERNER GROESCHEL

Werner is inspired by the world around him

Dear Mark,
I enjoyed reading your editorial 'Time to have some fun' in the Jan/Feb 2017 *Woodcarving* magazine. I would think most carvers create work that has some meaning to them. For myself I usually carve pieces with a topic that is dear to my heart or that I am really interested in. When I work on such a piece I not only have the joy of carving but I also have the satisfaction of having created a piece that has some meaning and importance to me, once it is finished.

For example I greatly value the Canadian wilderness and the animals that live in it, and I strongly believe in protecting our environment. Therefore these are two themes that are inspiring to me and over

the years have been the focal point of my carving work. I have carved bears, salmon, otter, beaver, moose, mountain goat, big horn sheep, musk oxen and wolf, and on the environmental side I have created 'protect the environment' relief carvings of various designs. The environmental carving I am working on at the moment is a fairly large relief in oak titled 'Our small and fragile planet must be protected'. I have been a long-time reader and subscriber to *Woodcarving* and always look forward to receiving the next issue. Great magazine.

*Best wishes and happy carving,
Werner Groeschel*

FROM THE FORUM

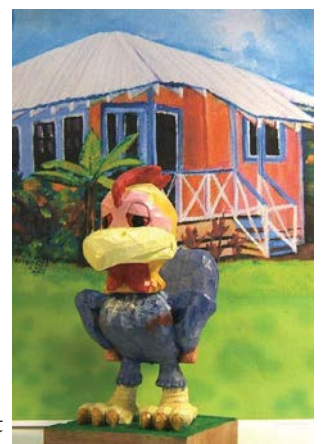
Here we share with you the pieces that readers have posted on our *Woodcarving* forum.

Having recently found an old wallet of his grandad's, monkeybiter was inspired to carve a realistic copy as a gift to his son. Carved from one piece of lime, the piece is finished using boot polish. "I regretted it as soon as I painted it on," monkeybiter said of using boot polish, "but it's growing on me." Fellow forum member bodrighy commented: "I can't think why you would do this, but I have to say it is really amazing. From the photographs I wouldn't know it was a carving. The only thing missing from the original is the 'Real Leather' logo."

Claude also replied to the post, saying: "Excellent work! I think the shoe polish contributes a lot to the 'old and used' look that a brown leather wallet would have." and Walshp said: "Brilliant – fantastic skill and artistry."

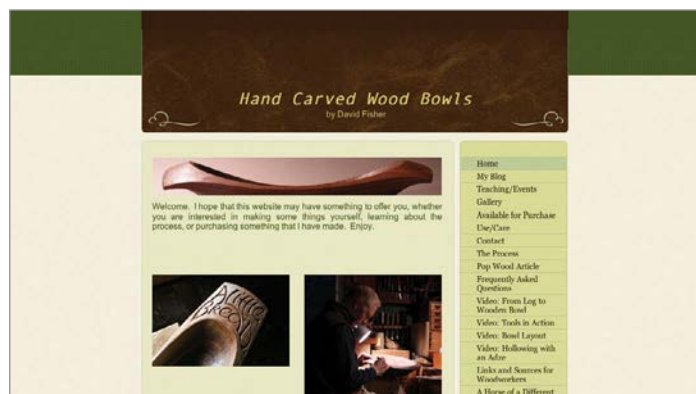


"This is a little rooster surveying 'his' yard in Kauai, Hawaii," Claude explains of his work. The piece stands roughly 140mm tall and is carved from basswood and painted with acrylic paints. Nick Simpson commented: "Claude, your output is as prolific as it is entertaining. I love 'em all." Robin Laycock also replied to Claude's post, saying: "Another good piece of work Claude. The rooster looks powerful with large feet and a big beak. He is ready to strut his stuff. Well done."

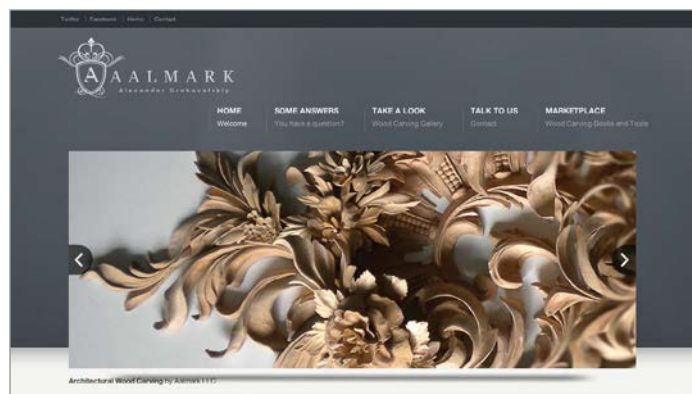


If you are interested in the possibility of your piece appearing here, or would simply like feedback and advice on your work, visit www.woodworkersinstitute.com and click on the forum button.

Websites of the month



David Fischer: David creates exquisitely beautiful bowls of various designs featuring various carved detail to add further wonders to the piece. His website is a mine of information of what he does and how, and also his blog is a great read.
www.davidffisher.com



Alexander Grabovetskiy: His work is a true delight to see. I am sure that when you look at this website and see the work created by this wonderful carver you will be amazed at what he is creating.
www.aalmarkllc.com



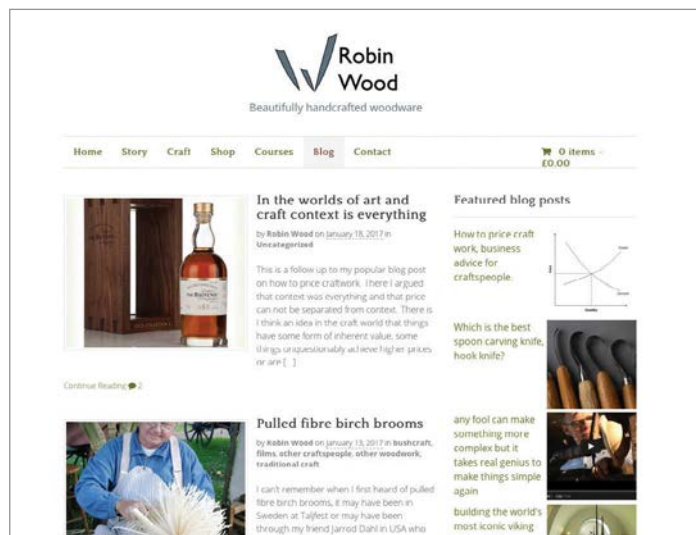
Patrick Damiaens: Patrick is another master of his craft. The website reveals the breadth of his superb work and is definitely worth poring over.
www.patrickdamiaens.be



Fred Zavadil: Fred may already be known to some of you, but his website is definitely worth a visit. From caricature to stylised to realistic, his work will amuse, delight and amaze.
www.fredzavadilwoodcarving.com

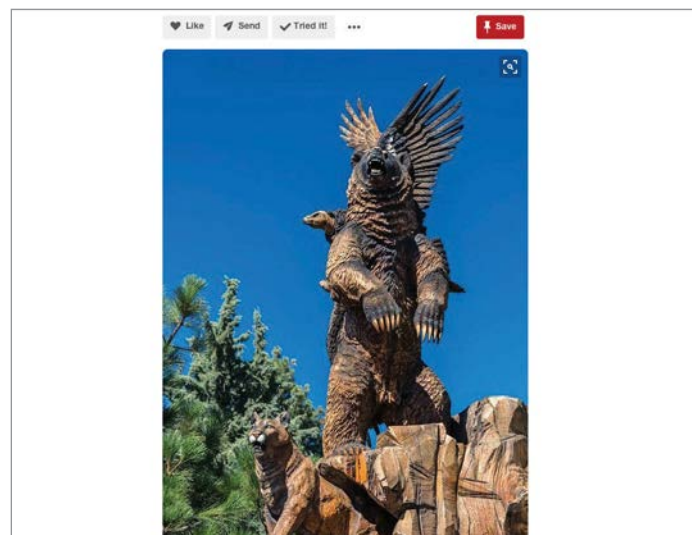
Blog

Robin Wood: His website is a treasure trove of information as well as great to look through seeing what he is up to. His blog covers technical aspects of carving and pole lathe turning, as well as woodworking in general, but it is also more personal than that. Robin gives an insight into what he cares for and is passionate about. Well worth reading.
www.robin-wood.co.uk/wood-craft-blog



Pinterest

Bear and eagle: This page shows a chainsaw carving of a bear and eagle by David Roy that took five years to create. It is a true masterpiece, well worth seeing. There are also some great related pins that show just a small sample of the variety of wonderful work being done with by chainsaw carvers.
uk.pinterest.com/pin/458874649518138483



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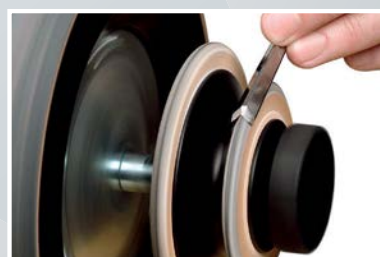
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Bowl and keys

Duane Cartwright carves a functional, everyday bowl and keys



This time round I thought I would carve a project with items we all own and use; this way everyone has easy access to the items for reference, which will help in the carving.

Before you begin this project, I suggest trying to use the tools you own and only carve as deep as your tools will allow to carve cleanly. With the depth of the bowl you will be carving, gaining access can be difficult so spoon/bent tools will be required. If you don't own any spoon gouges then carving a shallower bowl will allow you to gain access with straight shaft tools.

There are lots of options to carving this bowl with its keys and sweets. I've carved the bowl and its contents from a single block of wood, but if you have access to a lathe you could turn the outside of the bowl. But at the same time the bowl doesn't have to be round, it could be any shape. Carving a hollow area into any nice piece of wood will

create a bowl. You could even carve the items in the bowl separately using different species of wood, and then glue or place them into a bowl. You can use the pattern provided or you can design your own, adding as many items as you want. Just consider the more items you add the more challenging the carving process, though adding too much can make the bowl/carving look chaotic. Keeping your design simple can sometimes have more effect than over complicating it, I suggest adding a single sweet or key into the bottom of a nice wooden bowl.

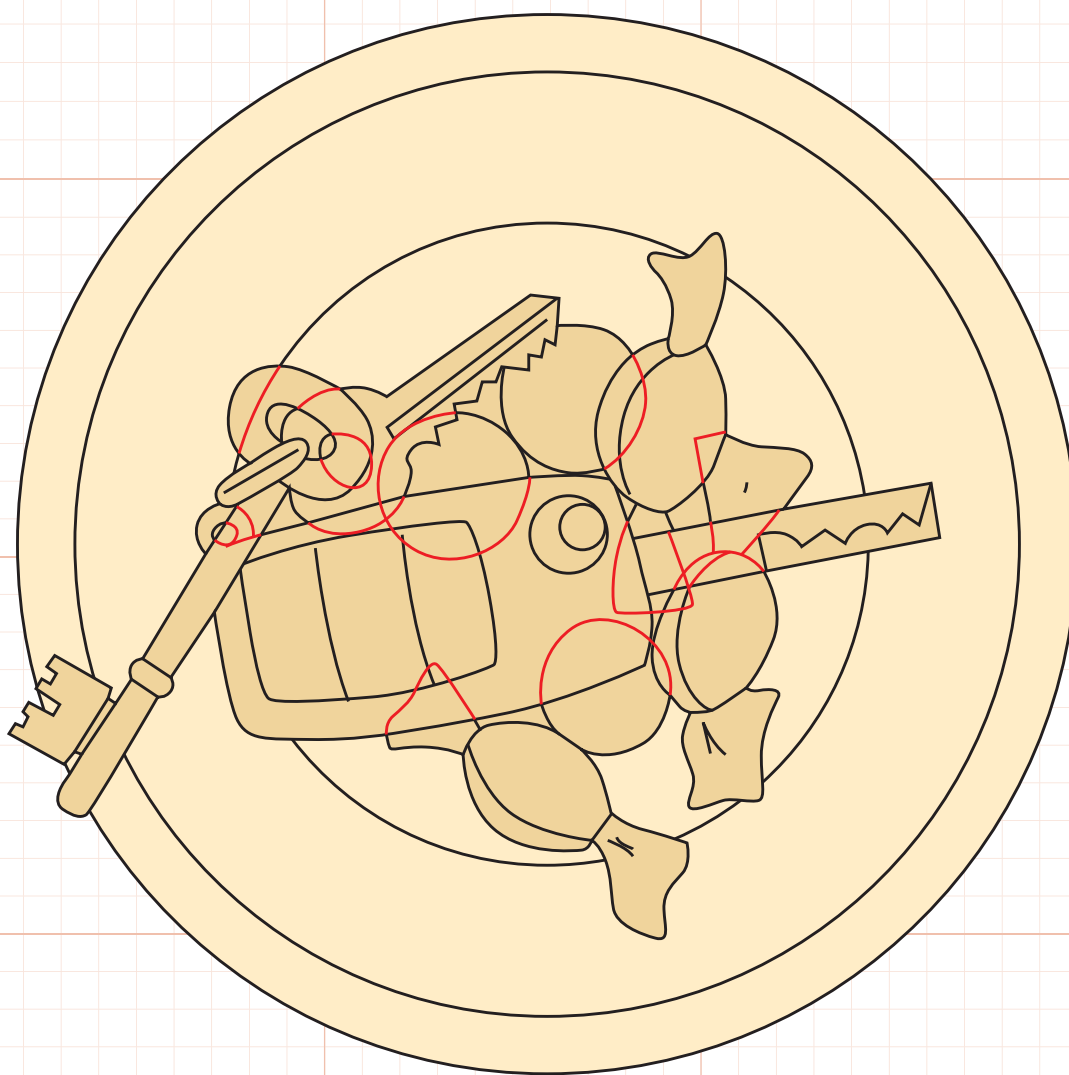
Method

To make your own pattern, start with a bowl of a similar size and depth to what you want to carve then add the items you wish to add such as some keys, sweets, coins, etc. Keep arranging the contents until you're happy with the layout and think about possible grain direction and weak points. If you carve items you don't use, you can keep the bowl

and its contents as reference. Next, take some photos at every angle, especially the bird's eye view as you will need it to make the pattern.

Now print the best bird's eye view photo, tape/clip a piece of paper over the print, then use a light box or a window to trace over the features and you now have your pattern. Whether you use the pattern provided or design your own, print the pattern at the required size for your chosen piece of timber and either glue, or trace, the design onto the blank.

Use a bandsaw to cut out the outside of the bowl, then use glue and paper and attach a scrap piece of wood to the underside of the bowl so you've got something to clamp to, which will secure the bowl for carving. I carved the bowl with a flat bottom, but if you don't own any spoon or grounding tools then sloping the sides into the bottom can make life easier.



Things you will need

Tools

- Bandsaw
- 2mm, 10mm V-tool
- No.2, 20mm
- No.3, 8mm
- No.7, 6mm
- No.9, 14mm
- No.11, 3mm

- No.1, 2mm & 6mm spoon gouge
- No.3, 5mm spoon gouge
- No.11, 3mm
- No.9, 5mm long bent gouge
- No.3, 6mm fishtail
- Hooked skew/knife

Material requirements

- Basswood (*Tilia americana*), 200 x 200 x 50mm

1 Measure 10 and 18mm down from the top, this will be the new top of the bowl and measure an 8mm lip/rim of the bowl. Then measure 8mm from the bottom, which will be a rough guide to the depth of the bowl.

2 Use a V-tool or a deep gouge to carve around the bowl's contents, especially around the key that protrudes from the bowl.





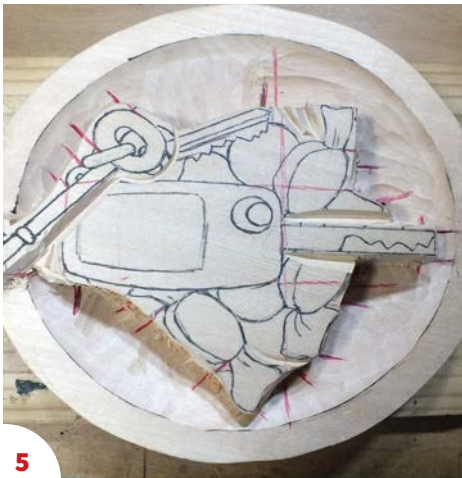
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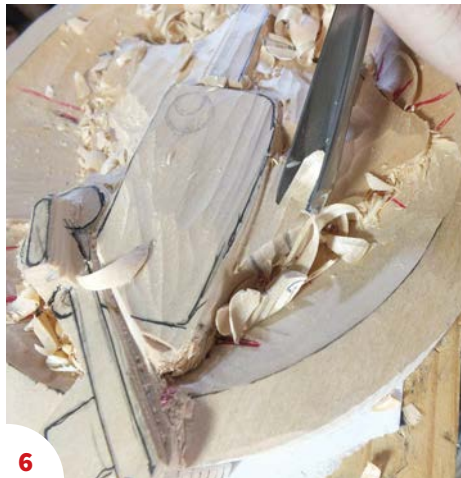
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3 Carve the top of the bowl down by 10mm to its new top/level (the line you marked out earlier). Depending on how confident you are, you either can take down the bowl's contents to the new top, leaving the protruding key, or follow the process lowering the top around the contents.

4 Using your finger as a guide, draw around the inside of the bowl's rim at about 12mm, then from inside the line start to slope the sides into the bowl's contents.



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5 Using a red pen, draw some guiding marks from the important features on to the sloping side of the bowl, then carve down the contents so they're below the top of the bowl while sloping the protruding key.

6 Using the red marks and the pattern, redraw the contents back in place and then carve around the car key, lowering the sweets, etc.

7 As you cut in around the bowl's contents, use a medium to shallow sweep gouge to slope the sides of the bowl down further. Only carve as deep as your gouges will allow and where the content meets the bowl try to cut the waste away cleanly, without leaving stab marks from the creation of stop-cuts.



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8 Slope the protruding key downwards and cut in around the split-ring, then using a shallow gouge carve the car key down giving it a slope so the end of the key fob goes under the protruding key and the tip of the key rests on the side of the bowl.

9 If you want to carve a flat bottom, use a compass or a finger as a guide around the bowl's edge and draw in the edge of the bottom, then with a bent gouge carve around it. If not, then stick with a curved sloping.

10 Use a depth gauge to keep check of the bowl's depth in each area and carve the bottom flat with a spoon chisel/ gouge. Carve the bowls wall/side so it's even all around the circumference of the bowl; you want a nice clean join where the wall meets the bottom of the bowl.



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11 Redraw the contents details and draw a centreline along the shaft of the protruding key. This will help when rounding over the shaft, especially as the wood grain goes across at an angle. When the top is carved, start to undercut the key. Use a hooked skew or similar with slicing cuts and don't force it, perseverance is the key.

12 Use the top of a spoon bent chisel and a hooked skew to undercut the car key, again using slicing cuts. With the keys undercut you can gain access to finish shaping the sweets and the sides of the bowl.

13 Carve in the rest of the car key details; on the side where the key bit goes use the corner of a chisel. With a slice create the stop cuts, then change the angle to remove a slither.

14 Carve the coins and sweets by finishing the car key. Undercut around its edge because the car key sits on the coins. Be careful not to leave stab marks.

15 Carving the twist on the end of the sweets can be challenging as the twists are random and delicate, which can make them fragile in places. Try to simplify them with flat planes at different angles and a couple of V-cuts near the sweets. Once you're happy with how they look, undercut the sweets from above, which will add to the effect.

16 The last thing to carve is the split ring. After carving the split ring round, round over the outside edges then with a V-tool carve a groove in the middle of the circumference. Use a small medium sweep gouge and carefully carve out the centre of the split ring, from both sides a little at a time.

17 With the bowl's contents carved, use a V-tool and carve a groove about 10mm down from the top of the bowl, creating the cowl's rim. Using a shallow sweep gouge carve from the rim down sloping the bowl side, in towards its base.

18 Use a scraper/spatula to break the glue and paper holding the carving to scrap wood. Turn the bowl over and finish carving the underside of the bowl. Use your finger and thumb to feel the thickness of the walls as you go.

Conclusion

If you place the bowl onto two pieces of scrap flat wood and draw around the bowl's edge, cut out along the drawn lines on the scrap wood; you will now have two curved pieces of wood, which when screwed down will hold the bowl securely while carving the underside. Beware to keep the protruding key clear, otherwise you could dent the carving or even break it.

Sand starting at 120 grit through to 400 grit. Sanding is a personal choice and you could leave the carving with a tooled finish. Once you've finished the carving apply a coat of sanding sealer, cut back the raised grain and apply your chosen finish. Then see how many people try to pick up the items in the bowl. ▶



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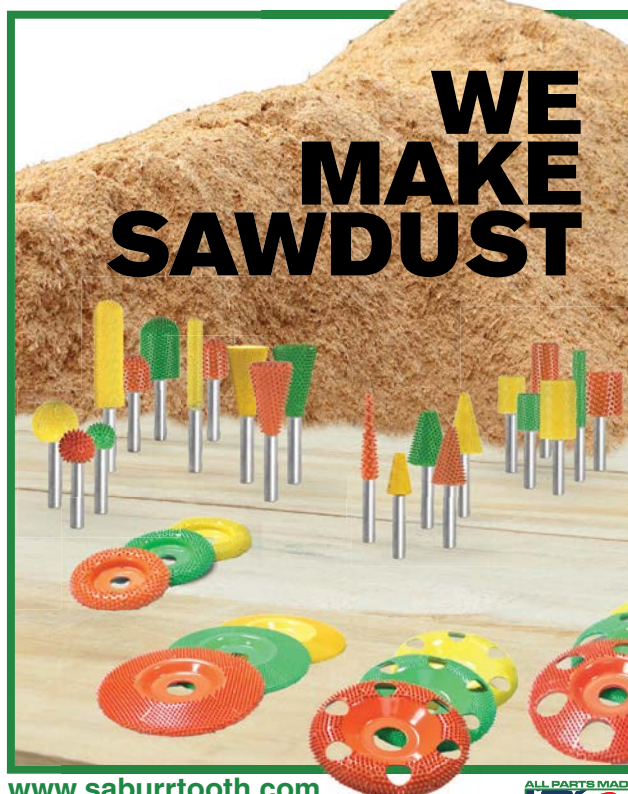


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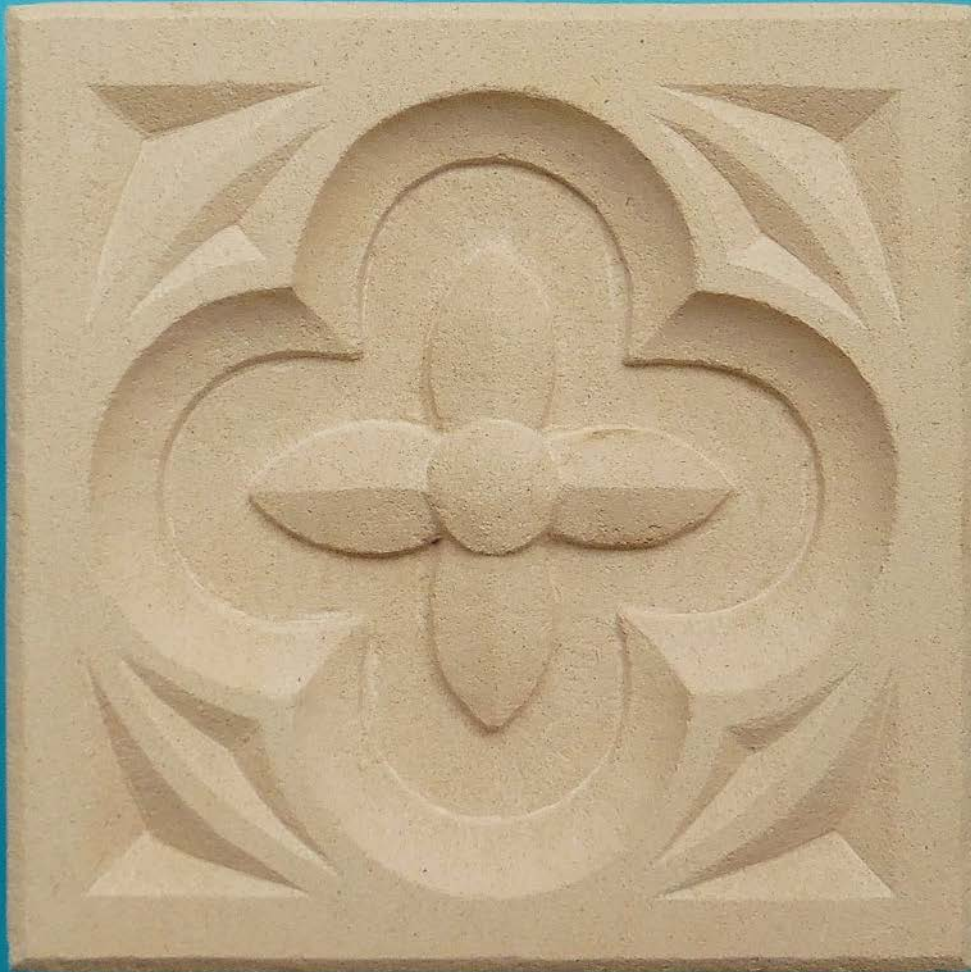
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Gothic quatrefoil

Steve Bisco carves a traditional Gothic quatrefoil in limestone



The quatrefoil is one of the mainstays of Medieval Gothic carvings, both in wood and stone. It is found everywhere in our churches and cathedrals throughout the medieval period and in the great Victorian Gothic revival. Its name, like so many stonemasonry terms, comes from our shared medieval heritage with Norman French masons – quatre meaning four and foil (*feuille* in modern French) meaning leaf. It is a stylised representation in stone of a four-leafed clover typically found in window tracery, in string courses, on fonts and 'pierced through' screens and walls. Versions with more or less leaves are also common – principally referred to as trefoils with three leaves or cinquefoils with five leaves.

A quatrefoil is a geometrical shape consisting of four small circles, inside a large

circle, inside a square (see drawing on the next page). The small circles are 'erased' where they merge on the diagonals and are formed into pointed 'cusps'. The triangular gaps between the small circles, the big circle and the corners of the square are called 'eyes' and are 'incised' with sloping sides. Flat and narrow 'tracery' bands, 6mm wide, are formed on the outer edge of the small and large circles and a 'cove', 13mm wide and deep, is formed inside each small circle. The surface of the inner part of the quatrefoil is carved flat, about 15mm below the top surface. To decorate the centre I have added a stylised four-pointed flower in Gothic style.

The tools and methods I have used in this project are much the same as a medieval mason would have used, not just for the sake of tradition, but because they are still used by

modern masons. This is part of the timeless charm of stonemasonry – following a path well trodden by many generations of our ancestors.

CARVING STONE SAFELY

- Wear eye protection when you're carving stone – flying stone chips are sharp!
- Stone is very heavy. A 300mm metric cube of stone will weigh around 70kg, so wear toe protector shoes/boots.
- Stonemasonry creates a lot of dust, so work outdoors if possible.
- Wear a dust mask no matter where you are working and take particular care if you're working with sandstone as silica dust can accumulate in the lungs.

Things you will need

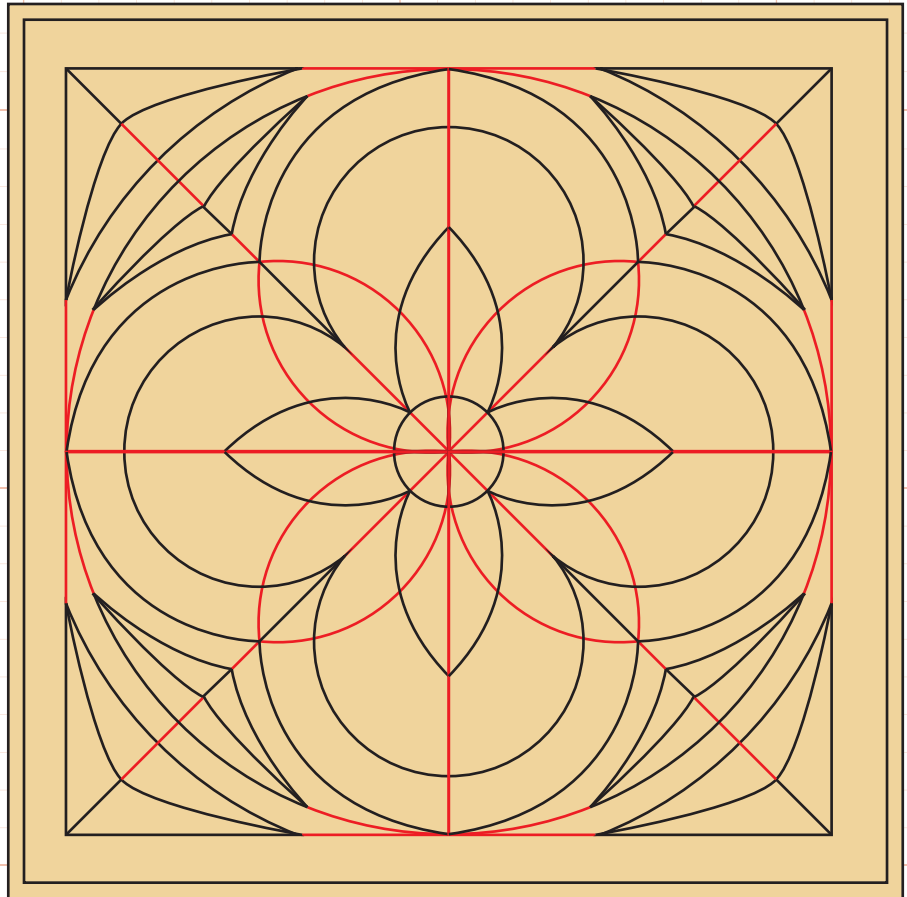
- Stone – limestone, 200 x 200 x 50mm
- 6mm, 13mm, 18mm chisel
- 18mm gouge
- Mason's dummy mallet

Extra tools (to prepare the block)

- Claw chisel
- Bolster
- Club hammer
- Stone rasp
- Stone/concrete saw

USING THE PATTERN

You can enlarge the pattern to any size that suits you depending on the size of stone you can obtain economically (see 'buying your stone' on page 25). Just remember if you make it too small then it will be fiddly to carve. If the surface of the stone is dry and free of dust, you can usually trace the pattern onto it with carbon paper. If that doesn't work then a quatrefoil can easily be drawn directly on the stone with a pencil and compass and some fairly simple geometry, as shown by the red lines in the drawing.



'TOOLING UP' FOR STONE CARVING

A stonecarver's toolkit is very simple compared to a woodcarver's. This is because the limestone and sandstone 'freestones' used for stonecarving have no grain and you can approach a cut from a wider range of angles. It just requires a few chisels and gouges to chisel away the stone from a particular place just a few millimetres at a time to create the shape you want.

Three flat chisels and three gouges in the sizes of 6mm, 13mm and 18mm will do most of what you ever need to do, and you'll want a Mason's dummy mallet to hit them with. For this project, an 18mm gouge will carve the cove in the quatrefoil and the three flat chisels will do the rest. A few other tools are useful for preparing and shaping a stone: a point tool, claw chisel, bolster, stone rasp,

stone/concrete saw and a club hammer are all used in the heavier masonry work.

You can get bolsters and concrete saws from a good building tools supplier, but for stonecarving tools you need to go to a specialist in artists and sculptors' supplies. Look at the adverts in this magazine and search the internet for 'stonecarving tools'.



Stone carving tools: Mason's dummy mallet with three chisels and three gouges in sizes 6mm, 13mm and 18mm



Roughing out and preparation tools: stone/concrete saw, stone rasp, club hammer, point tool, claw chisel and bolster



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Preparations

1 Ideally, get a block of limestone 200mm square or larger, and at least 50mm thick. Getting stone cut to size can be expensive, but it could be cheaper to get a suitable offcut and square it up yourself. Using a stone/concrete saw will cut through medium-soft limestone, like the Portland stone I used.

2 Refine the side of the square and remove the chipped and damaged edges you often find on offcuts by chiselling them down a few millimetres, with a claw chisel and bolster. Work the surface flat and smooth with a stone rasp. Work outdoors, if possible, as stone creates a lot of dust.

3 Make a full-size copy of the drawing to fit your stone. If the surface is clean and dry, trace the pattern onto the stone using carbon paper. If that doesn't work, draw the pattern directly on to the block as described in 'using the pattern'. Scribe over the lines with the point of a chisel or they may disappear while you are working.

Carving the foils

4 Chisel out the stone between the quatrefoil and the central flower. Go round the inside of the pattern and gently tap along one of the points of the cutting edge on a 6mm chisel. Hold the chisel at an angle of 45° and aim to produce grains and dust – not chunks.

5 Cut gradually deeper and switch to a 13mm chisel. Gradually make the edge vertical, up to the pattern line. As you work down always cut inwards at a point, like the cusps and flower tips, as outward cuts may break off at the tip.

6 Cut to a depth of 15mm. Level off the 'floor' with a 13mm chisel.

7 To check the depth is even all over, insert a screw through a flat piece of wood to make a depth gauge with the tip protruding 15mm. Move it around over the 'floor' and it will scratch the parts that are less than 15mm.

8 Draw a line 13mm down from the face where the cove of the quatrefoil will come down to. Chisel between the upper and lower pattern lines with an 18mm chisel.

BUYING YOUR STONE

The best place to look for good quality carving stone is at the yard of an architectural stonemason. Look on the internet for your nearest supplier. Getting stone cut to size can be expensive, so it is generally best to make your project fit the stone available. See what offcuts the stonemason can offer you at discount prices and choose the nearest fit. You can trim it to a perfect square using a stone saw, a bolster or a stone rasp. You can also get rough rocks very cheaply from garden centres and work these to shape, but they tend to be a bit smaller (see *Woodcarving* issue 139).

9 Form the concave surface of the 'cove' in the tracery with an 18mm gouge. Create sharp edges at the cusps, always carving inwards, and bring the sides of the cove up to the tracing lines on the surface and depth line you have drawn. Make sure the curve is smooth because any kinks will be noticeable.

Carving the eyes

10 The 'eyes' are incised into the tracery spandrels between the big circle, the square and foils. Start by cutting a 'V' midway between the pattern lines.

11 Gradually cut the 'V' deeper and wider, maintaining a slope of about 30°, while following the curves and straight lines. Cut neat mitres into the angles and follow the patterns closely.

Carving the flower

12 The flower is a simple low relief four-petal pattern. Cut round the centre circle and reduce the level of the petals, down to about 6mm below the top surface. Draw a baseline around the sides about 2mm above the 'floor'. Remember to cut inwards from the tips.

13 Use an 18mm chisel to slope each petal from its centreline down to the baseline. Round over the central circle into a dome and cut it neatly into the petals. Tidy up the edges of the petals and finish the flower neatly.

Finishing touches

14 Smooth off all the chiselled surfaces of the foils, eyes and flower by pushing the chisels and gouge along the surface like a plane to level out the tool marks. Finally, draw lines around the block 3mm in and down from the outer edge and carve a 45° chamfer to create a neat finish to the whole job.

15 Wash off all the dust with a hose and tidy up any uneven carving. Your quatrefoil is ready to give a touch of Gothic dignity to your home or garden.

TOP TIPS:

- 1.** There is no 'give' in stone, so the edges of a block will crumble if they are laying on chips of stone on a hard surface. Use a 'softener', such as a cork mat, on the bench so the chips will press into the mat instead of the stone.
- 2.** If you accidentally break off a piece of stone that is vital to the pattern, you can usually glue it back in place with PVA adhesive. Make sure the joint is dry and free of dust and it should stick firmly. You can fill gaps by mixing a paste of stone dust and PVA adhesive.
- 3.** Be careful with some adhesives as they can stain the stone. ▶



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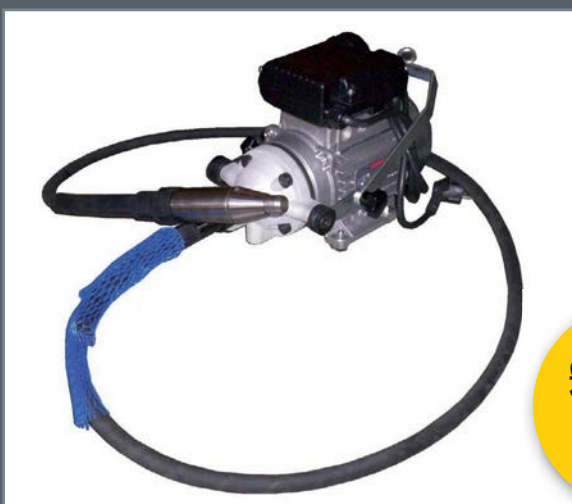
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THE DIARY

of a student woodcarver

William Barsley discusses the art of drawing specifically for carving



RECOMMENDED READING

Drawing, Second edition by

Philip Rawson 1987

Art Forms in the Plant World: 120 Full

Page Photographs (Dover Pictorial

Archive) Karl Blossfeldt 1986

Learning to draw comes easily for some but, for others such as myself, we find it an elusive skill that we would love to master, yet somehow just can't quite grasp. It was therefore with a mixture of excitement and hesitation that I began drawing lessons this year at college. In this article I hope to give you a taster of a few of the methods and techniques that I've been learning, and reveal just how important drawing can be to your woodcarving practices. I've even included one of my worst drawings, in the hope of showing you some progression throughout the year!

Drawing is an essential part of the woodcarving diploma at the City and Guilds of London Art School and has been for many years, weighted as approximately 15% of the first year course. Lessons are unique in that they focus specifically on drawing for the purpose of improving and aiding our woodcarving. Our drawing teacher, Diane Magee, is a hugely passionate and successful teacher who has the ability to turn a student with very little drawing ability into one who can draw to a high standard.

Why draw at all?

Two contrasting phrases I often hear when talking about drawing in relation to woodcarving are: 'But I don't need to draw, I can carve just fine' and 'If you can't draw you can't carve!' Prior to starting the course, I was most definitely in the former camp. I had been carving for years as a hobby, but felt much more comfortable carving than I did drawing. For some carvers this suits them just fine: they are able to see the form underlying the wood and carve it to precision with just a few guiding lines.

However, for many, drawing is inextricably linked with their carving and helps them to better understand designs and forms before beginning to carve, giving them the freedom to express their thoughts on paper. I've often heard experienced carvers say that when one carves, they are in essence drawing with their chisel as you would a pencil. Drawing can also be a big part of the commissioning process, as showing potential clients good designs can sometimes mean the difference between getting a commission or not.

Course structure

For me personally, learning to draw was a daunting prospect when starting the course. It was a relief, therefore, that our tuition started by cutting right back to the basics, with the assumption that we had very little previous drawing experience. As with many of our lessons, we were grouped with the stone carvers, as the skill of drawing is beneficial to all types of carving, and so there were 13 of us in total.

In the first year, we have three eight-day blocks of drawing spread across the three terms. In the first term, we looked at an introduction to linear drawings and constructive methods. In our second, we were introduced to tone, light, shade and shadow and, finally, in our third term, we consolidated the first two terms with eight consecutive days of research drawing at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Alongside these lessons we had anatomy classes in the evenings to look at the superficial muscles of the body. This process helped inform our weekly life-drawing classes, which have been an essential part of my learning journey. In the studio at college, we often draw standing at an easel, although at the Victoria and Albert we sit down and move between different spots.

Drawing at the Victoria and Albert Museum

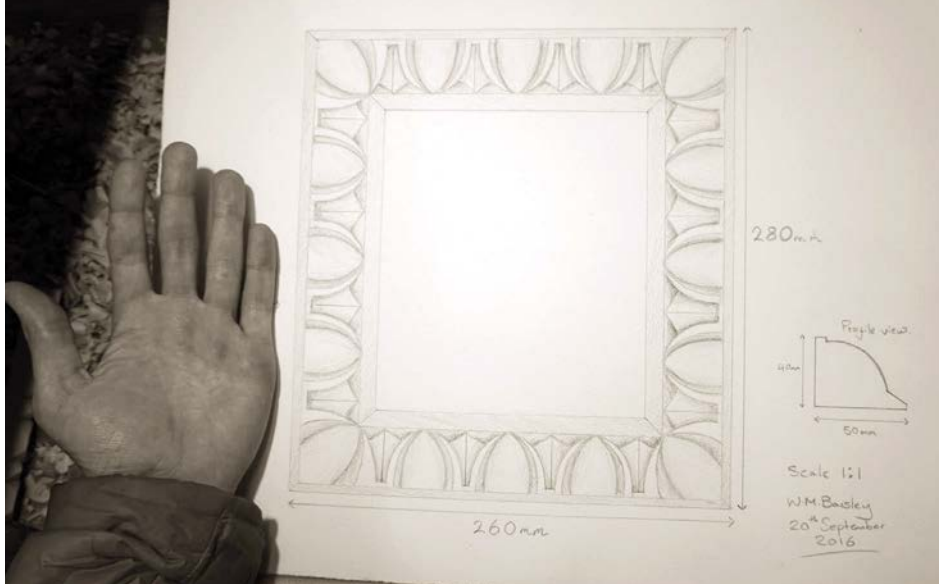
The Victoria and Albert Museum, founded in 1852, was the perfect place for our eight days of research drawing, as it houses an incredible array of decorative artwork and sculptures – heaven for any budding ornamental woodcarver!

We were given the freedom to choose an object to draw, which is a task in itself given the Victoria and Albert houses over four million objects (although not all on display). I finally decided upon the Norfolk House Music room, designed in the Rococo style, with beautiful gilded acanthus ornaments surrounding the walls, mirrors and ceilings. Originally part of Norfolk House in London, home of the Dukes of Norfolk from 1722, it would have been solely used for music and lit by candlelight.

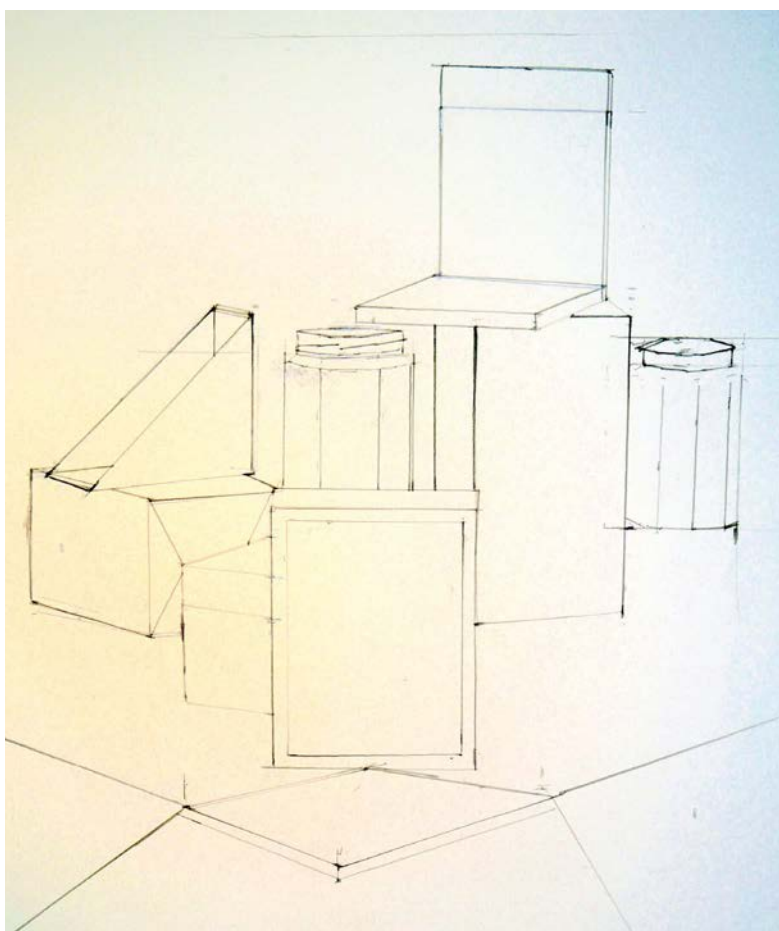
I drew the lower section of a mirror using various approaches of drawing such as a quick first-thought, a sketch, and a detailed diagrammatic and study, which all built up to a more sustained drawing of the piece. This process was a great way to end my first exploration into drawing, a very challenging skill to learn and one that I've yet to master. However, its importance to my carving has proven invaluable.

DID YOU KNOW?

Traditionally, a highly skilled ornamental woodcarver would have also been an accomplished draughtsman, understanding the principles of design. One example is Matthias Lock, the famous 18th-century carver and joiner, who studied under Thomas Chippendale.



ABOVE: Example of a tonal drawing for a walnut wood egg and dart frame commission



Our first exercise in linear drawing

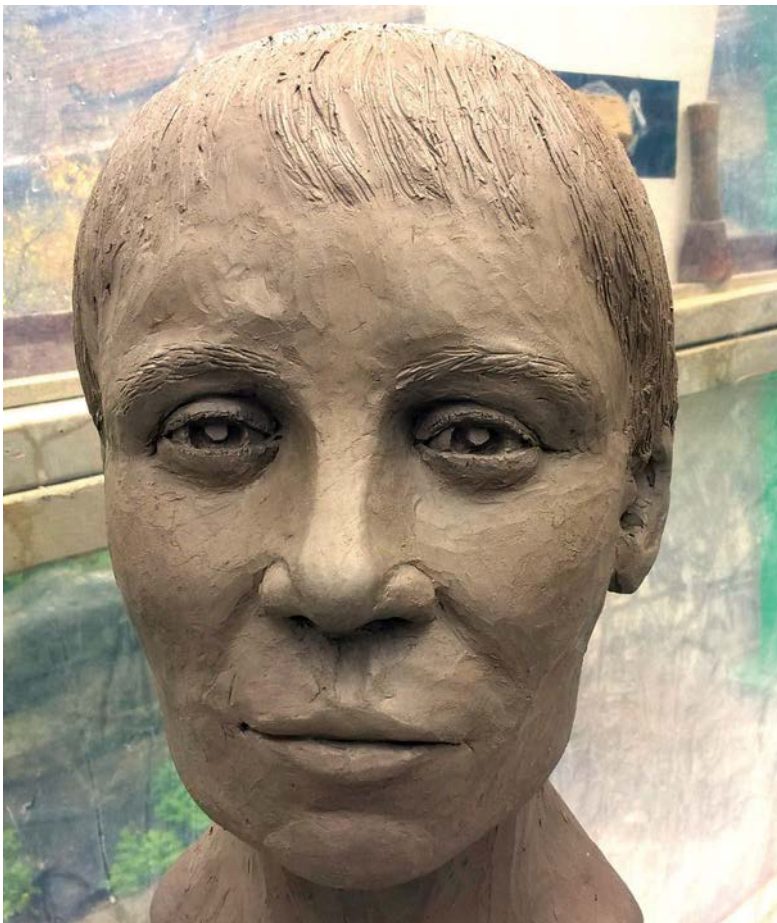


Modelling a heraldic shield in clay

RIGHT: My very first life drawing, as you can see the proportions are completely wrong



BELOW: Head modelling in clay



A drawing by Wilfe Gorlin (my fellow student), of a seated youth in terracotta at the V&A



A drawing by Wilfe Gorlin (my fellow student), a quick sketch from life modelling

TOP TIPS FOR DRAWING

1. Look, look and look again!

This sounds obvious, but when first learning to draw it's amazing how little we look at the object we are carving, reverting often to memory or preconceived ideas. More often than not this leads to inaccuracy.

2. Seeing the form

For a carver, it's important we take into account the structure and form of the piece we hope to carve, not just the outline or edge of the piece but the planes and shapes that make up the internal structure.

3. What 'type' of drawing?

Before starting to draw, decide what type of drawing you're aiming for, whether it is an intricate study showing every detail of the piece, or a rough first thought. This helps to keep a clear goal in mind. ▶

Next time...

In the next article, we will look at another important skill and technique for the woodcarver: that of sculpting and modelling with clay.

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All about LIME

Gary Marshall takes a look at the lime tree, whose history lies back in ancient times

The author standing by the largest known remnant stand of Tilio-Acerion forests dating from c.4,500BC



Open grown common lime at Kew Gardens showing good form

Think of a lime (*Tilia vulgaris*) tree and you may picture just one type. However, there are around 30 distinct species in the genus *Tilia* worldwide. They generally have telltale zigzag twigs and heart-shaped leaves. Limes range from the American basswood (*Tilia americana*) to the rare and lovely *Tilia tuan* from China, as well as many hybrids and cultivars. This article concerns three closely related types; the common lime – a hybrid (*Tilia x vulgaris*) and our British native trees – the small-leaved lime (*Tilia cordata*) and the large-leaved lime (*Tilia platyphyllos*). The common lime is a familiar tree in the British Isles; it's a hybrid between the small-leaved and large-leaved limes and is best seen in an open parkland setting. It's valued for its stately, tall form, for its bright, lime green leaves emerging in spring and for browsing livestock. Visionary landscapers like Capability Brown planted limes and other trees in naturalistic clumps; others laid out imposing avenues that still exist today. The fine dome-shaped tracery is a good identifying feature, before the leaves fully emerge. The tallest common lime stands at 46.5m in Reelig Glen, Inverness and in Bifrons Park, Kent there is a common lime with a trunk nearly 10m in girth. Limes are often pollarded in town and village streets – to reduce sticky, dripping honeydew from aphids.

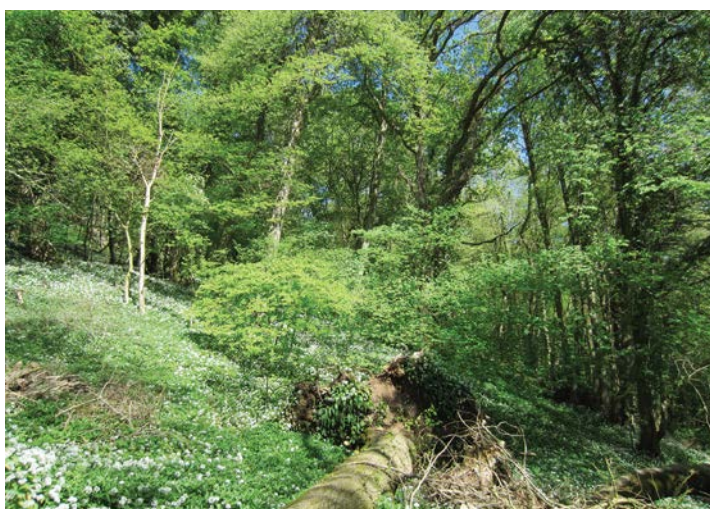


PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF SHUTTERSTOCK

Leaf and flower of a lime (*Tilia vulgaris*) tree

PHOTOGRAPHS BY GARY MARSHALL, UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED

Parkland with classic lime tracery and domed forms



'Wildwood' small leaved limes near Cheddar, in Somerset



Regrowth from coppiced large-leaved limes

Common lime variability

Look out for pruned trees with a mass of epicormic growth from the base, growth from cut branches and bulbous swellings on the trunk. Naturally, 'messy' forms are wonderful wildlife niches for insects, birds and small mammals, including bats. Also look for fluted trunks with large buttresses and 'well-behaved' trees with straight clean trunks and little or no epicormic growth. Common limes have genetic traits from both parents but with varying degrees of dominance, hybridisation may exaggerate such traits and these factors account for differing forms. The most common lime trees planted from the 17th century onwards were from just a few distinct Dutch clones – cuttings or sprouted stems. Hybrids occur naturally in Europe. This is unlikely in Britain, because of scattered lime populations and fertility issues, so virtually all common limes in the British Isles were planted by man. Carving blanks of lime are most likely to come from Scotland or abroad. Woodcarvers rate lime wood as it is light, stable and can be cut in any direction. Much of Grinling Gibbons' famous work is in lime wood. It's used by musical instrument makers and for hop poles. The flowers are prized by apiarists and are also gathered for herbal teas.

Our native limes

Small leaved and large-leaved limes

only occur in ancient woodland – i.e. woodland that has been in existence since at least 1600 in England and Wales. Some 6000 years ago, small-leaved limes were the dominant woodland canopy species, on a line roughly from the Humber to the Severn and in east Wales. They are not native to Scotland or Ireland. Limes had declined sharply by Roman times and slowly since. Theories behind this are various, including: reducing seed fertility/viability, which is still a problem and may be due to climate changes; increased browsing; harvesting lime bast – long fibres under the bark – for rope making and man selecting in favour of trees such as oak (*Quercus robur*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and hazel (*Corylus avellana*).

Where native small-leaved limes still reign

Imagine a steep track up a limestone scarp, going deeper into a large wood in the Mendips. Masses of ramsons – wild garlic – and bluebells carpet the ground. Overhead are extraordinarily diverse trees. Some with smooth straight trunks look a bit like ash, others have weird outgrowths and pendulous branches – or are they roots? Some are coppiced, recently or long ago, some pollarded with large crowns. Many have regrown, straight and tall; others gnarled and twisted, ent-like. A few are massive and have tumbled down, with

rotting trunks but still have vigorous roots. They're all small-leaved limes growing in one of the largest woods in the country where they still dominate the canopy. Is this similar to the old 'wildwood'?

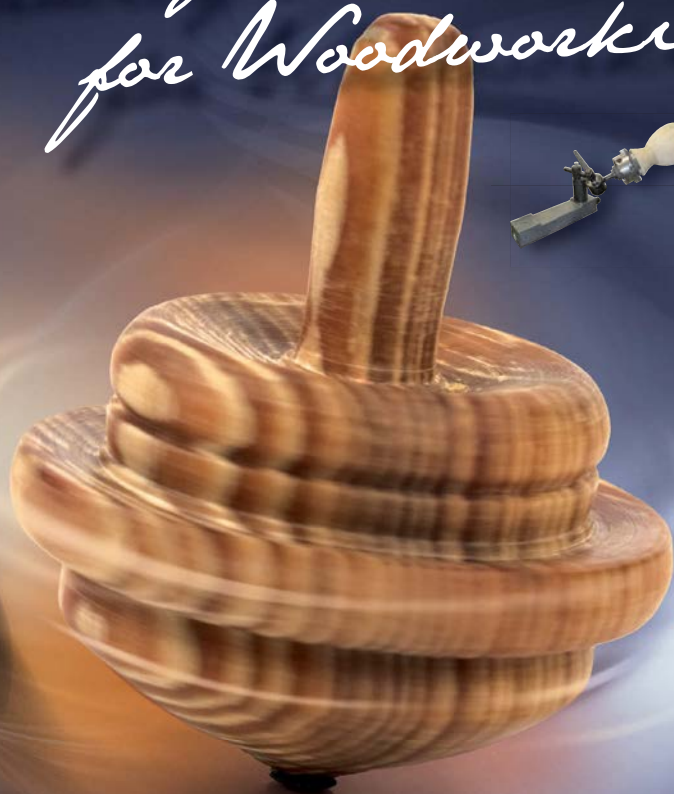
Native large-leaved limes in a rare setting

Until the 1990s, stands of native large-leaved limes were believed to grow only in a few locations in the Pennines, the Cotswolds and the Wye Valley. However, more than a dozen sites have since been found near the base of the South Downs. My first visit to the largest of these sites is shown in the opening photo. The next visit was a shock – large-scale felling had taken place – but this was supervised by English Nature, to rejuvenate the wood. After 10 years, I returned again to see excellent regrowth from old roots, while the fast rotting stumps are providing nutrients to aid vigour.

Longevity

Limes are remarkable trees. Unless completely grubbed out they can be 'almost indestructible'. A site of lime coppice stools in Gloucestershire is around 2000 years old – some believe it may even go back 6000 years. Nevertheless, ancient woodlands, where small-leaved limes dominate are localised and those where large-leaved limes grow are rarer still. Such woods are a direct link to the past. ▶

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GEORGE CARR

in profile

We meet Reverend Dr. George Kiernan Carr II, BA, MS, DMin, CCCI... who is adding another string to his bow, in the form of chip carving



George Carr was born and raised in New Orleans – “In Louisiana, they raise kids and chickens!” He was one of the early pioneers of the United States broadband cable television industry, having started in 1974 and retiring in 1996. From 1990–96, he, Joan (his wife) and family lived in Luton, Bedfordshire in England. He helped establish the broadband cable tv/telephone/internet business during that tenure. While in England, he also completed his studies and formation and was ordained a Catholic deacon for the Diocese of Northampton. His children are now grown up and George is retired “as best a cleric of the church can be!” He now enjoys being at home with Joan and spends his time talking on his amateur (ham) radio (a 53 year hobby of his) and chip carving. His wife Joan is a quilter and they reside in Lake Charles Louisiana, USA.

Getting into carving

George’s first got at a carving was a very simple relief of a turtle, which he carved in May 1976. “I cut a plank of

pine (*Pinus* spp.) and – knowing no better – used a few screwdrivers I had at home as gouges. At the time, I had no knowledge of woodcarving,” George explains, “little did I realize at that time I was laying the groundwork for a passion later in life!” It was after a lapse of almost 30 years that George tried his hand at carving again, but this time it was an in-the-round caricature of Rufus, a mountain man, carved under the instruction and supervision of Mac Profitt during a class at his workshop in Nawger Nob, The Great Smoky Mountains (www.woodcarvers.com). Although, George claims the carving is more Mac’s than his own. “It is common practice that when you participate in a short duration class, the instructor wants you to walk away with a complete carving project. In subsequent classes with other instructors, I quickly learned to muster up the courage to say, ‘Please, let me do it. I want it to be my work-mistakes and all’.” It was from that class in 2005 that captured George’s interest in carving and gave him his first taste of what can be done

→ in the medium of wood with proper wood and tools.

In recent years George has had to adapt his way of carving from how he was first taught, due to major surgeries in his neck. He is restricted to how far he can bring his head down. So, instead of being able to place a carving to be chipped on his lap (as he first was instructed), George now has to use an easel on his work table to support the timber, thus allowing him to see what he is carving. It took George several months to adapt to this new position to carve, but he got there in the end.

Inspiration

George tells us that he will make sure to take into account the likes and interests of the person he is gifting with a carving for inspiration, when working on a project. "For instance, Joan enjoys raising laying hens for their eggs. Often, she also quilts patterns that incorporate optical illusions. I take great pleasure in watching her delight when she sees the completed carving," George tells us.

It is also from George's vocation as a deacon in the Roman Catholic Church that he takes inspiration. He carves items which offer spiritual inspiration and reflection to himself, and hopes that other carvers who view or are recipients of these carvings feel the same.

Following on from his past project, George would next like to spend more time working on mixing intarsia and chip carving.

This wall hanging cutting board was chipped in December, 2016 as a Christmas gift for Joan, George's wife



George carved this project using just one knife, a sense of stain glass in the pattern

Work ethos

Carving is never far from George's mind, as he is constantly looking at scenery, paintings, patterns (not necessarily woodcarving patterns) and drawings with an eye for converting these to chip carvings. "For instance," George tells us, "when in the restroom of a friend of my wife's, I noted the pattern on the restroom wall and thought 'What a nice border that would make' for a plate." The same observation occurred again when he noticed the designs in the brickwork on the exterior of a building, and yet again, when he saw a seashore and lighthouse scene depicted in stained glass. George tells us that a dear friend of his, and chip carving instructor, Carolyn Holbrook (www.carolynsartworks.com) is continually amazed at how he can take a pattern of her's and personalise it to his own interpretation.

Favourite pieces

When it comes to George's favourite pieces of his own work, he immediately looks to his 40cm diameter Lazy Susan for the dining table, that he carved during a weeklong workshop under the watchful eye of Wayne Barton, world renowned chip carving instructor and founder

of the Alpine School of Woodcarving (www.chipcarving.com). "This was my most ambitious project at the time and I have much respect for Wayne as a carver and instructor," George tells us, and by this time in his carving experience he did 100% of the pattern placement, wood preparation, carving, cleanup, staining and sealing of the carving and wood.

George's next favourite piece is a chip carving, based on a New Orleans water meter cover. This piece was a gift for his sister who, with her family, are longterm residents of The Crescent City. "Folks in New Orleans collect water meter cover memorabilia", George explains, "and shortly after I carved the piece and presented it to her in January 2017, the actual meter cover from the pathway

in front of their home was stolen!" George recalls.

George is also very proud of a chip carving he did based on a quilted wall hanging that his wife, Joan created of a rooster. This carving is particularly significant to George as on several occasions the couple had discussed the idea of working on a joint project together like this one, and George surprised her with the carving for Christmas in 2016.

"Yet another would be a reading lamp I carved out of butternut (*Juglans cinerea*). This was an interesting project to carve due to the characteristics and grain of the wood," George normally chooses basswood (*Tilia* or *lime*) as the timber of choice though he has also carved in Chinese tallow (*Triadica sebifera*) too.

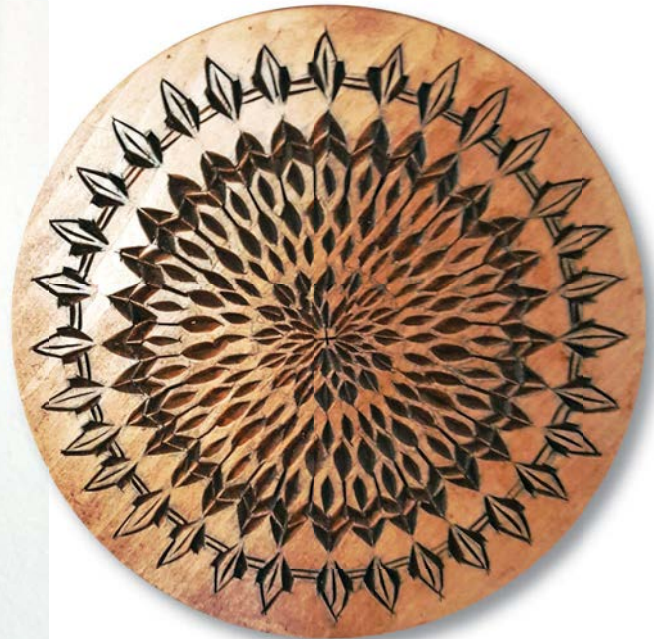
"In south Louisiana, we call the Chinese Tallows chicken trees, because the farm chickens roost in them at night. Interesting, too, is that these trees grow fast (hence a soft wood), grow very wild, are extremely prolific and are the bane of farmers – and I am told that in the northern United States, people pay good money for them in the nurseries! I kid you not! Quite a contrast!" – George



The scissors holder is affixed to the wall in Joan's quilting room



These two plate (above and below) are 152.4mm in diameter



They were done to sharpen George's chipping and staining skills

Using other materials

It's not just timber that George carves with, having experimented when carving for a long-term fisherman friend and pastor. George used High Density Urethane (HDU) to carve a fish; HDU is a dense foam that cuts and behaves similarly to wood when it is carved. "My limited experience with HDU is that it is easier to carve – since you have consistent 'grain' – and your favourite sharp chip carving knife does in fact glide easily through the material."

George found this was a good way to learn and practice to hold the knife at the proper (55–65°) angle and to move about the board. "It is also very easy to cut the larger boards to the desired size with a scroll or other light saw... and the quality is very consistent," George continues, "You must experiment with the staining as it absorbs stains differently than wood. There is also the lack of the wood grain look that characterises wood from trees. But, again, I think it is worth your time to experiment with HDU as a medium for your chip carving." (www.ezcarving.com).

Improving

George's Lazy Susan won first place in the Houston Area Woodcarvers Show and he has also recently completed the requirements for the title of Certified Chip Carver Instructor. This was a year-long course offered by noted chip carver and instructor Marty Leenhouts (www.mychipcarving.com). George took the course not because he wanted to become a teacher, but as a resource for improving his own chip carving skills.

A note

"I am deeply honored to have been asked to contribute to an article from a Journal that I respect so much. I look forward to each issue as it contains information from a different perspective than USA publications.

"I would like to point out that I recognize I am not an accomplished chip carver; however, I am a very

George's Lazy Susan was a week long project and he is currently finishing a second one

enthusiastic chipper! I would hope that readers will be inspired to continue to chip carve – or to try chip carving – once they see that while I strive for perfection, I – and the recipients of my carvings – do enjoy that journey and the fruits of my meager efforts." – George ▀



The inconsistent cuts surrounding the center clearly prove this is no machine-made, mass produced carving



This basket weave clock face gives the impression of not only depth, but entices the observer to first follow the pattern and then check-out the time

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For this project the background wood – the wood outside the pattern – is left at the original level of the wood surface. Only the actual design area is carved, creating the appearance that it is sunk into the wood in the final carving.

Enlarge pattern 125%.

Note: This pattern contains rough estimates of the depth measurements for each level based on the thickness of the board I used to carve this project. Remember that relief carvings should generally be worked in the top half of your wood blank. Adjust these measurements as necessary according to the thickness of the blank you're using.

Things you will need

Tools:

- 9in x 12in x $\frac{3}{4}$ in basswood plaque (229 x 305 x 19mm)
- Bench knife
- Chip carving knife
- Large and small round gouges
- Straight chisel
- Wide sweep round gouge
- V-gouge
- Bull-nose chisel
- Sharpening tools and strop
- 220-grit sandpaper
- Soft, clean cloth
- Sanding sealer
- Graphite tracing paper
- Painter's tape
- Pencil
- Ruler
- Polyurethane spray sealer
- Pecan oil stain
- Fine-point permanent marker
- Thick terrycloth towel or nonslip mat



1 Transfer the pattern and cut the outlines. Prepare your board by lightly sanding it with 220-grit sandpaper. Remove the sanding dust with a dry, clean cloth. Make a copy of the pattern, center it, and tape it to the board. Trace the pattern using graphite paper. Using a pencil and ruler, measure and mark a border line $\frac{1}{2}$ in (13mm) from the edges on all four sides of the blank. Measure and mark a second border line $\frac{3}{4}$ in (19mm) from the edges on all four sides. With the V-gouge, make stop cuts along the outer pattern lines of the face and along both border lines. With a straight chisel, bevel the sides of the border line cuts.





2 Cut and shape the background leaves. Use a bench knife to create stop cuts along the pattern lines of the face side of the lowest leaf clusters (around the mouth and mustache). With a large and/or small round gouge, rough cut the background leaves, tapering them from their highest point at the outer edge of the pattern to their lowest point where they intersect with the face and upper leaf clusters.

3 Smooth the background leaves and cut and shape the mouth leaves. Use a wide sweep gouge or large round gouge to remove the ridges left from the rough out work on the background leaves. With the bench knife, work stop cuts along the leaves extending from the mouth. Cut these leaves to depth with a straight chisel and round over the edges. With a V-gouge, create a center vein in each leaf by making a V-cut. Round over the lips with a straight chisel.

4 Cut the outline for the eyelids. Using a V-gouge, stop cut around the upper and lower eyelids.

5 Shape the eyeballs. Use a straight chisel or wide sweep round gouge to round over the eyeballs.

6 Shape the eyebrows. Shape the upper eyebrow area of the face with a straight chisel or a wide sweep gouge.

7 Shape the face. Create a stop cut with the V-gouge from the corner of each eye to the side of the face. Round over the edges of the face with a straight chisel. Round over and shape the area above and below the eyelids with a straight chisel.

8 Carve the pupils. Upend a large round gouge at the top of each eye to cut the outline of a three-quarter circle. Remove the circle chips with a bench knife. This creates indented circles to represent the pupils of the eyes.

9 Shape the cheeks. Stop cut along the sides of the nose with a V-gouge. Shape the sides of the face next to the nose (the cheeks) with a straight chisel or a wide sweep gouge.



10 Carve the nostrils. Upend a small round gouge and cut the outline of a three-quarter circle for each nostril. Remove the wood from the outline cut with a bench knife.

11 Shape the nose. Shape the nose using a straight chisel, tapering it to its lowest point at the bridge.

12 Add in the facial details. With a V-gouge, cut wrinkle lines at the corner of the eyes, under the eyes, and from the corner of the nostrils into the lower cheek area. Also complete the final shaping of the mustache leaves, eyebrow leaves, and the leaves at the top of the nose.

13 Mark the background detail. Using a pencil, mark the detail leaf lines in the lower section of facial leaves.

14 Cut the background detail. Create stop cuts along the pencil lines using a V-gouge. With a straight chisel, bevel one side of each leaf to tuck it under the leaf above it.

15 Smooth and sand the carving. Smooth the carving by shaving the carved areas with a wide sweep gouge, bull-nose chisel, or straight chisel. Lightly sand the carving using 220-grit sandpaper, and remove the dust with a dry, clean cloth. Spray two coats of sanding sealer over the entire carving, following the manufacturer's instructions. Sand after each coat. Sign and date the back of the carving with a fine-point permanent marker.

“With a V-gouge, cut wrinkle lines at the corner of the eyes, under the eyes, and from the corner of the nostrils into the lower cheek area.”

16 Finish the carving. Following the manufacturer's instructions, apply one coat of pecan oil stain to the carving. Work small areas about 3in (76mm) square at a time, and then wipe the carving with a dry, clean cloth. Allow the stain to dry completely. Seal the work with two light coats of polyurethane spray sealer. ▶



10



11



12



13



14



15



16

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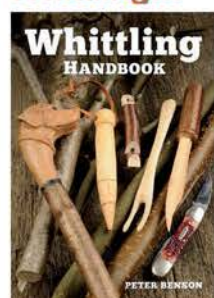
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Do I need more tools?

Peter Benson debates whether you need more tools, and if so, which ones?

This is a question most new carvers will ask at some time or other – in fact, so will most carvers come to that. Although most projects can usually be completed with around six to 10 different tools, the more projects you attempt, then the more tools you will need in your toolbox. Or does it? If

it does just what tools exactly are needed?

I hope the next few articles will help carvers understand what the basic tools in the toolbox are capable of producing and, therefore, what additional tools might be required without doubling up on tools that actually do the same things.

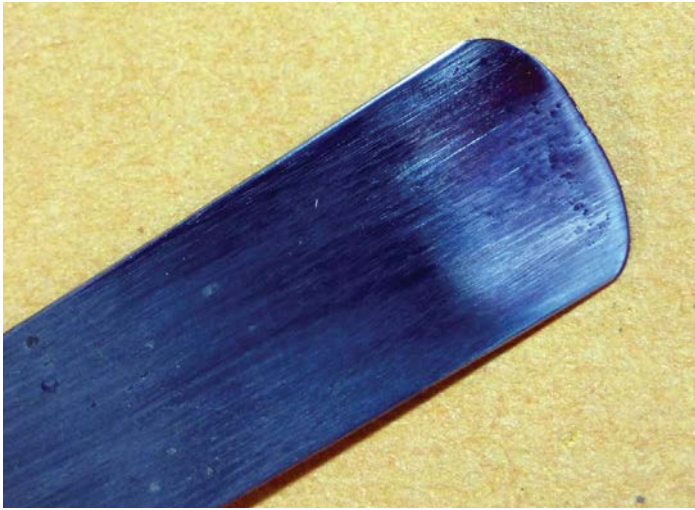
I hope to show what each tool in my suggested starter set is capable of doing in order to get the maximum use out of it. We tend to think that each tool has a specific function and we often don't attempt to experiment using it in different ways, or even sharpening it in a different way.



A No. 3 gouge with the corners nicely squared. A minute amount of rounding is better than the corner coming to a point



A badly sharpened gouge with the corners rounded, which limits the use of the tool



The same tool with a gentle bull nosing – ideal for letter carving or hair. Note the curve running along the whole cutting edge



Using a No.3 gouge for removing waste on a relief carving. Note that the tool is not cutting at each end of the cutting edge, thus leaving no damage to the surface

Common tools

First of all, let us deal with probably the most common tool – a No.3 sweep. This is the shallowest of the most used tools and may even be called a No.2 sweep by at least one manufacturer. The No.3 sweep will usually be used for basic shaping, both inside and outside of any curves. I would also recommend that this should be used for producing a flat background. I have seen many carvers trying to get a flat surface using a No.1 flat chisel. Obviously the corners of this are going to bury themselves into the wood with every cut, unless some severe modifications are made to the tool. A No.3 sweep has the corners lifted enough to skim over the surface and

the very slight ripple effect it causes can easily be dealt with later. As long as there is no rounding of the ends of the cutting edge this tool is very useful for undercutting, and removing waste from corners.

Many of the tools I have seen have ended up with rounded corners as a result of bad sharpening and honing. This does limit the use of the tool considerably, although deliberate and careful 'bull nosing', giving the cutting edge a slight curve along its length can give it another range of uses altogether. Many experienced carvers will have both types of No.3 gouges in their toolboxes. What 'bull nosing' will do is make it possible and very

easy to slide the tool sideways along the cutting edge producing a very smooth and even curve, making it useful for letter carving and architectural relief work and hair.

Finally, most novice carvers will only use a gouge with the bevel underneath as this is the most common way and will always tend to lift the tool out of the cut. Most basic tools can also be used with the bevel uppermost to give a neat curve where needed. This does need a little practice as the tool will tend to dive down into the wood, but once mastered you will find the tool has more or less doubled its functions. ▮



Trying to use a No.1 flat chisel to remove waste. Note the damage at each end of the cutting edge



Practising the use of the bull nosed No.3 gouge on a piece of waste with a slicing motion side to side

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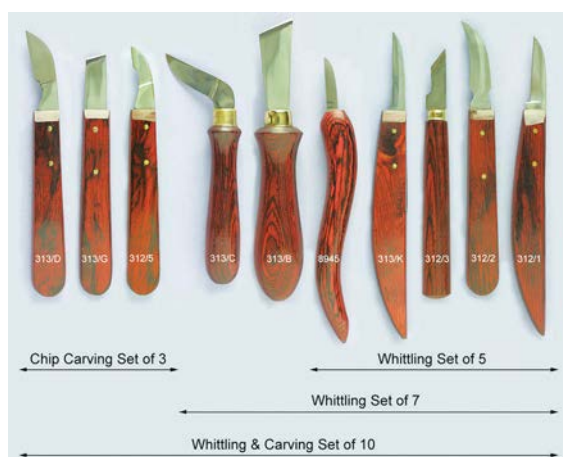
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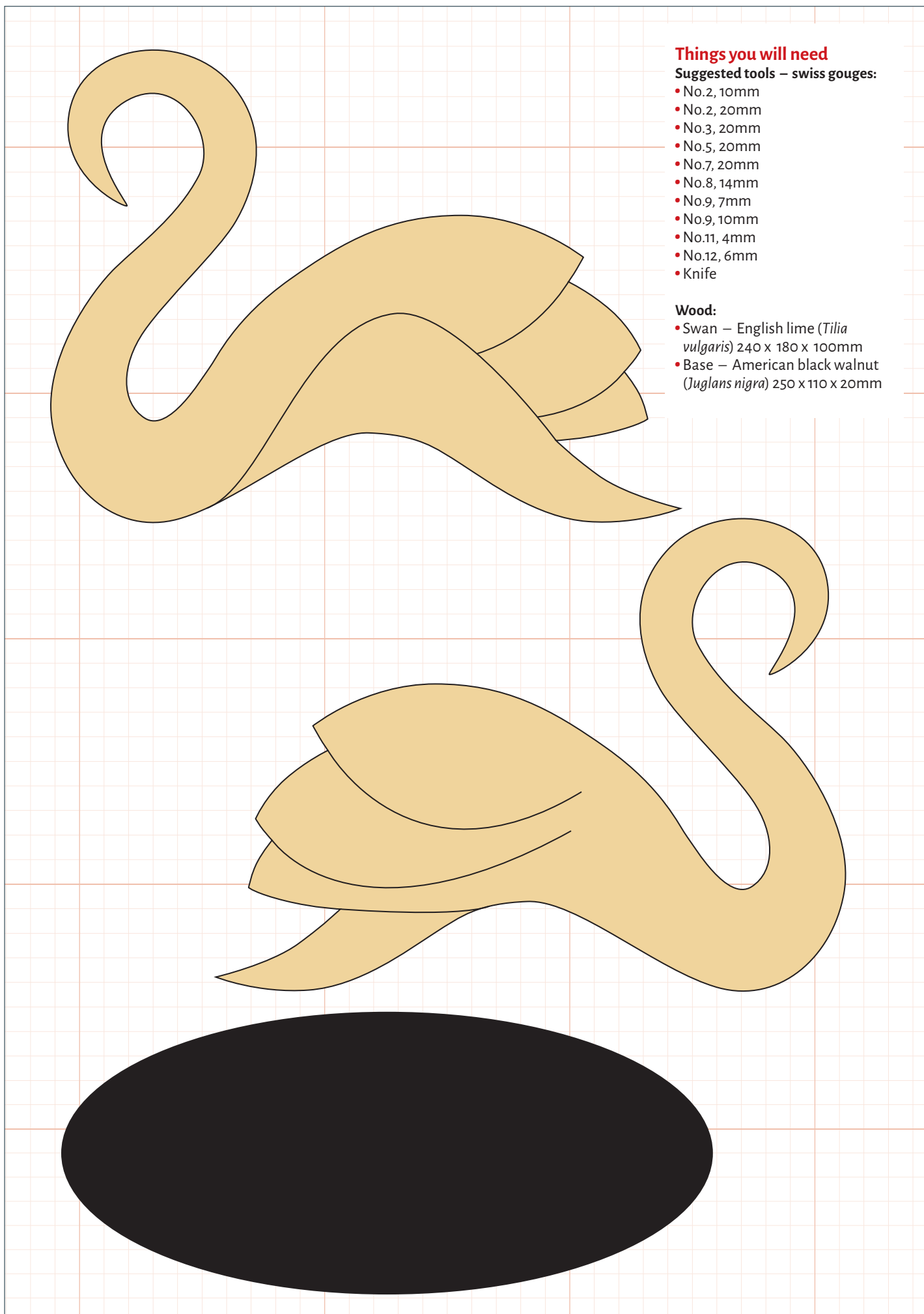
Carving a swan – part 2

Continuing on from last issue, Andrew Thomas finishes carving the swan



In the last issue of *Woodcarving* (154) I described the techniques on how to carve the first details of the swan, including the head, neck, body and sides of the wings.

We continue now with part two of the project: how to carve the undercut across the body, shape the tail and the wing tips. Before you start working on the project, please read through the complete step-by-step guide and study the stages and finished images to see how the carving develops.



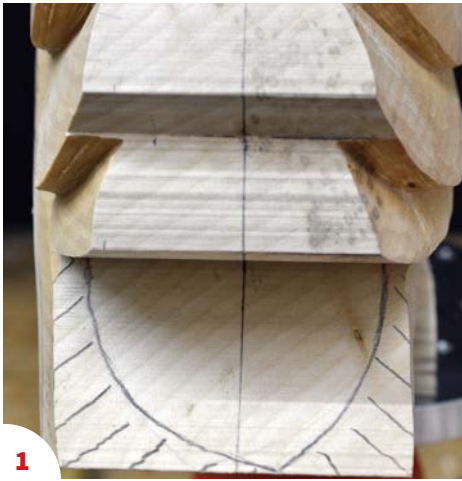
Things you will need

Suggested tools – swiss gouges:

- No.2, 10mm
- No.2, 20mm
- No.3, 20mm
- No.5, 20mm
- No.7, 20mm
- No.8, 14mm
- No.9, 7mm
- No.9, 10mm
- No.11, 4mm
- No.12, 6mm
- Knife

Wood:

- Swan – English lime (*Tilia vulgaris*) 240 x 180 x 100mm
- Base – American black walnut (*Juglans nigra*) 250 x 110 x 20mm



1



2



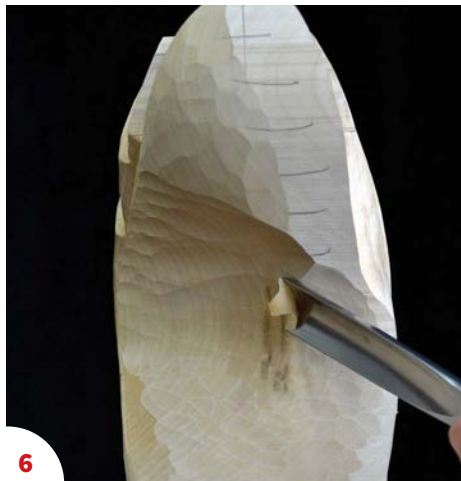
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8

Procedure

- 1** Begin with the tail. Form the tail asymmetrically with the tip justified to either right or left of the centreline. Draw your preferred design line onto your wood.
- 2** Use the No. 2, 20mm to pare the waste wood back to the edge of the tail's design line. Leave this area square for now as it will be shaped across its surface later.
- 3** Now turn your attention to the tapered undercut, which originates from the flat area at the base of the swan's neck at the front and gradually becomes more acute in its angle as it travels up to the highest position in the middle of the body. From this position the angle becomes less again as it flows down over the tail. You will need to use several gouges to produce this detail. Starting with a No. 7, 20mm work from the highest position in the middle of the body, down to the lower edge on the side.
- 4** Continue to pare the wood away, gradually working underneath the body of the swan towards the opposite side.
- 5** As the undercut develops you will need to start working outwards towards the neck and tail, while blending the depths evenly into these areas. As the angle of the undercut reduces as it flows to these areas, you will need to swap the No. 7, 20mm for a No. 5, 20mm, No. 3, 20mm and eventually a No. 2, 20mm.
- 6** When you have worked past the centreline of the swan, you may find it easier to switch direction and carve from the opposite side, in towards the centre to meet the cuts you have already made.
- 7** The finished angle of the tail is naturally determined by following the original V-tool cut on the side of the body as it flows downwards from the deeper undercut in the centre of the body.
- 8** When you have worked across the complete area underneath the body from front to rear, study the surface closely to ensure the gouge work is even and has no sign of bumps or hollows. If you do find any areas that need further work, then make sure that you correct them before you sand the piece, as any irregularities on the surface will show themselves beautifully when the piece is eventually finished and polished.

TOP TIP: An effective technique to visually detect any undulations or other irregularities on the surface of your work is to take the project outdoors or somewhere with natural sunlight, and slowly move it around to examine the surface as the shadows strike across it. The shadows will fall in to any undulations and show up any uneven areas or deep gouge marks that may need addressing, making them far more obvious to the naked eye.

9 Now the angle of the underside of the tail has been established, shape the upper side in relation to the tail. The left side edge of the tail is already formed at the correct height position. From here, the surface tapers down to the lowest edge on the right hand side.



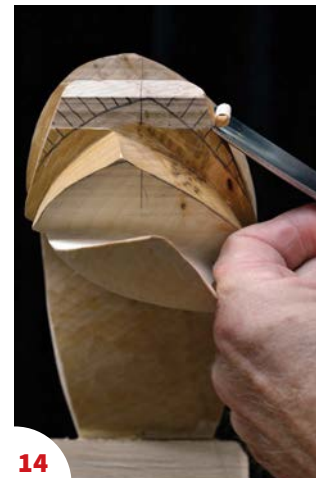
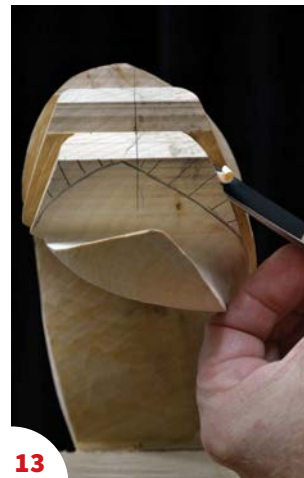
10 The following technique requires a degree of determination as it becomes more awkward to gain an effective gouge cut as you work deeper in to the inner edge underneath the wing. This is essential, so you must persevere to shape the flat square inner edge to produce the correct angle. Start by using a No.9, 7mm to carve along the line of the tail on the side view and across the inner edge, towards the left side.

11 Use the No.2, 20mm gouge to remove the mass along the square right edge, and shape the surface angle over the top of the tail in relation to the underside. Repeat steps 10 and 11 until the No.9, 7mm gouge no longer fits into the tight inner edge then swap to the No.11, 4mm gouge and continue working in this area.



12 When you reach approximately two thirds of the way across the tail from the right side to the left, you can then swap the No.11, 4mm gouge for 100 grit abrasive. Fold or roll up the abrasive to form a 2–3mm round edge and work this back and forth into the inner edge to continue creating the necessary angle. When you are sure that you have achieved a good result, sand over the entire tail to evenly smooth the surface.

13 Moving upwards now to the layers of feathers above the tail. Draw the feathers in position asymmetrically from the centre line and stagger up through the three different layers to produce a more realistic representation and to add interest around the carving. Use the V-tool to part the layers of feathering around the rear edge and use the No.2, 20mm gouge to carve the mass away, down to the design line.



14 Draw the second line of the wing feathers on the opposite side of the lower layer that has just been carved. Repeat the technique from step 13 to create the form of this detail.

15 Move on to the upper most position of the swan's back to where the wings will be separated. If you have followed the previous steps closely, the upper area of the wings should be delicately curving around the body and upwards to meet each other uniformly at the top. The separation line should be made as a flowing contour, asymmetrically across the body, from one side to the other, terminating at the tip.



16 Sketch carefully along this line with the V-tool while tapering the cut out in a natural angle as you reach the position near the swan's neck.



17



18



19



20

17 Blend the adjacent areas on both sides of the V-tool into the crease line, then work across all of the surrounding areas to create a naturally delicate flowing body contour. Repeat step 16 and this current step until you reach a good depth of separation between the wings producing an effective visual result.

18 The wings tip can be separated and will be formed slightly different from each other. Draw the shape you would like the wing to represent in its correct position. Use a knife to cut a deep slice in between the wing tips.

19 Use the No.2 gouge to shape the tip of the wing into the knife cut. Repeat step 18 and this current step until you reach your design line.



21



22

20 We move down again to the two lower wing tips. The pencil hatchings show the two small areas of the tips that need to be removed, which are approximately 6mm in depth down from the tip.

21 Use the V-tool to cut horizontally underneath the line of the wing above and vertically along the tips, down to the depth of the design line. Use the No.2 to pare the wood away across the surface of the wings to the tips and down to the design line. Use a knife to create the sharp inner edge of each vertical tip.

22 The next job to do is to break the vertical level of the wing tips. The hatched areas show the small sections that need to be removed to produce the staggered visual arrangement of the wings. Make these approximately 6mm up from the tip, but you can make them higher if you wish to.



23



24

23 Use a knife to carve a deep slice along the vertical edge and use the No.2 gouge to pare the wood back into this deep cut. Repeat this technique until you have reached the correct depth.

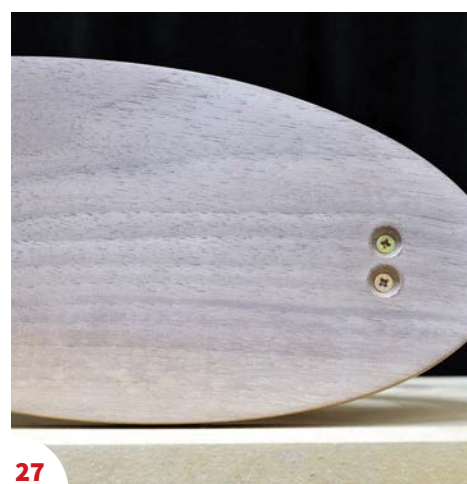
24 Before sanding, tidy up any uneven lines or areas left from the previous work along their flat edges. These can also be slightly undercut if you wish to. When you are sure that all of the edges and surfaces are even, then you can move onto the sanding procedure.



25 Start with 100 grit and work over the complete surface of the sculpture, following the line of the grain wherever possible, to remove every tool mark and smooth the surfaces of each section. When you are sure the surface is perfectly smooth clean the saw dust off all of the surfaces, and then brush or pour hot water over the complete sculpture and leave it to dry, thus raising the grain and allowing the following grits to be worked through more easily and effectively. Next, work through grits 150, 240 and 400, removing all of the scratches from each previous grit, repeating the hot water process in between.

26 Cut off the swan's faceplate base and tidy up the lower edge and sand it through the grits mentioned in step 25.

27 I have provided a template for the simple elliptical base that the example is mounted on, which you can use if you like or design your own. To fix the swan to the base without any visible sign of the securing screws, it should first be placed centrally on the base. View the precise location where the underside makes contact with the base from both the front and side views. Mark these two positions on the base, remove the swan and join the lines together to produce the accurate fixing point. Mark two drilling positions, side-by-side along the fixing point, approximately 15mm apart and drill two 4mm countersunk holes. Place the swan back in position and secure the base to the swan.



28 Use, if you wish, one good application of boiled linseed oil, which will beautifully enrich the natural colour of the grain. Leave this for a week or so to dry before applying several coats of dark wax polish, which will seal the grain and give it a wonderful sheen. ▶



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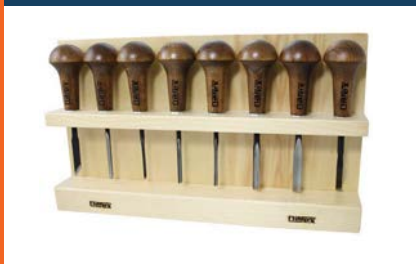
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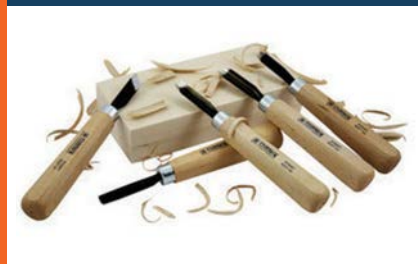
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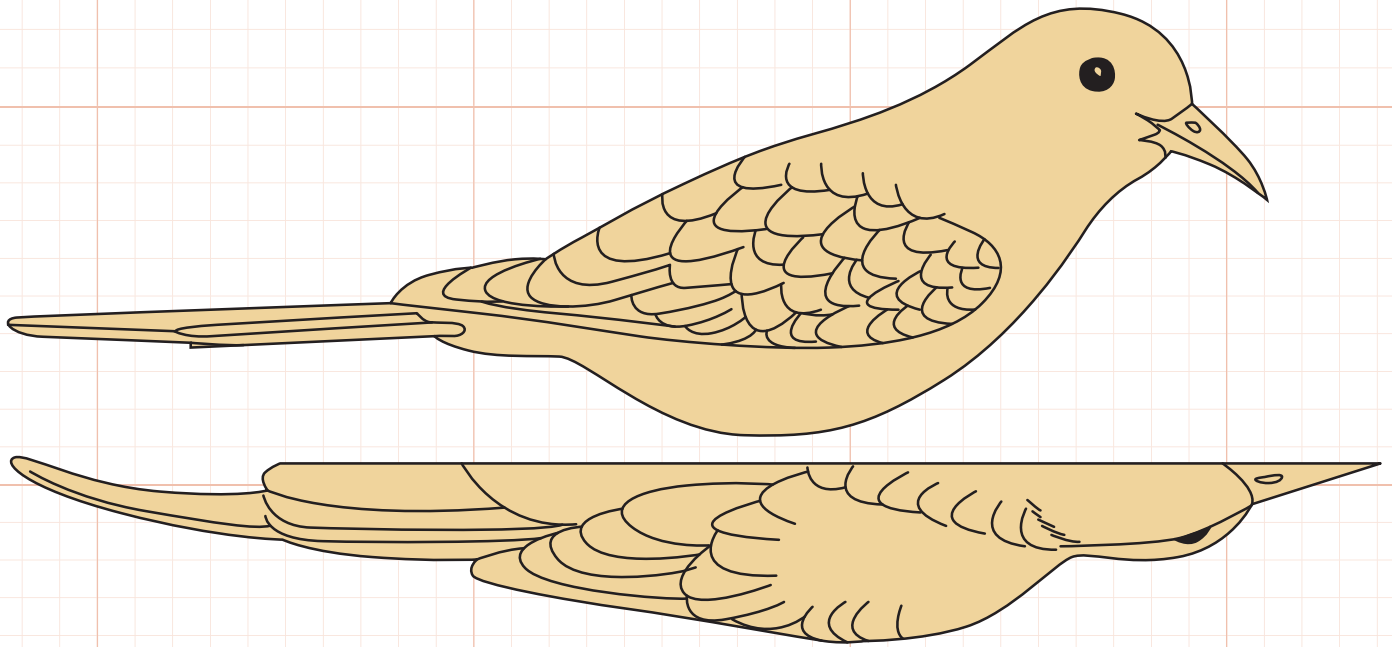
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Abyssinian roller

Mike Wood carves a beautiful blue Abyssinian roller

The Abyssinian roller (*Coracias abyssinicus*) is a beautiful bird that is found in the tropical areas of Africa and are seen wider afield as far as temporary migration is concerned. The Abyssinian roller mainly feeds on insects, small rodents and invertebrates and some call them 'sit and wait, or ambush hunters'. Their flight patterns give rise to the name 'roller'.





Things you will need

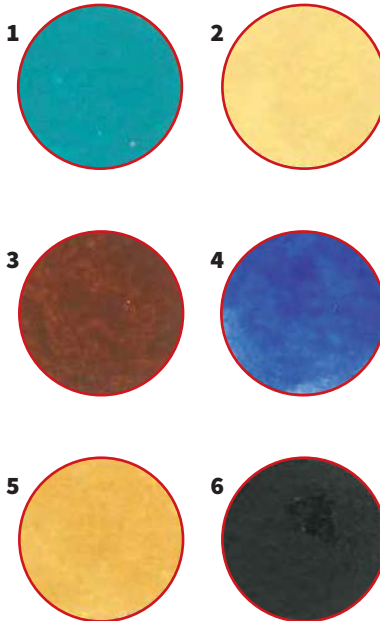
Tools:

- Rotary carving unit
- Handpiece to hold various cutters and sanding units
- Drum sander and abrasives to fit hand unit
- Coarse and medium grit tapered rotary cutter
- Medium grit ball rotary cutter
- Fine grit small ball rotary cutter
- Fine grit pointed ruby rotary cutter
- Fine grade flame/tapered cutter
- Medium sized fine grade ball-ended cutter
- Airbrush/brushes as appropriate
- Coloured artists paints
- PPE – facemask/goggles, dust mask and extraction
- Pyrography unit and shading and incising/scalpel-type tips
- Selections of acrylic colours shown in the palette
- Airbrush and/or brushes to apply the colours
- Sand/grit or other textured material for the stand
- PVA or similar adhesive

Materials:

- Jelutong (*Dyera costulata*)
– 300 x 100 x 100mm
- Driftwood/branches to form a stand
- Material for the base
- Two 100mm long thin strips of holly (*Ilex aquifolium*)

Colour swatches



1 Turquoise with a small amount of white to block in the blue on the head breast flanks, leave under tail coverts white

2 The back is painted cream, add yellow ochre to white gesso for this

3 Burnt sienna is airbrushed on all the back

4 Ultramarine blue is painted on the rump and front edge of the wings
 • Mixing a light blue edge these feathers and finish with thin washes of base colour
 • The shafts are painted in adding a small amount of back to the burnt sienna (I also used this to paint in some splits)

5 Yellow ochre was used to paint the feet, thin washes of burnt umber with satin varnish added to finish

6 Black for the bill and eye stripe

1 First cut out the bird shape on a bandsaw, coping saw or similar, following the template. Once cut, mark the main large features on the bird and then rough cut the shape of the body and head to represent the main profile lines and sections as best you can. Note that I cut a separate head section and join it to the main body. You can of course use a slightly wider piece of wood and create the bird in one piece. Once the bird is finished, one will not be able to tell the difference, either way.

2 Rough down the bird following your previous markings using coarse rotary burs. Once the main features are in place, further refine the head and body shape using a rotary carving unit fitted with a tapered burr – or using handtools – to achieve a rough shape. Make sure all of the main body forms and shapes on the top, sides and underneath are correct and in place before moving on to the next stage.

3 Sand the bird all over using a drum sander. Remember, any dust is potentially harmful to health so use PPE and suitable extraction to minimise inhalation. The other problem with power sanding is that one can very quickly remove too much wood so be careful.

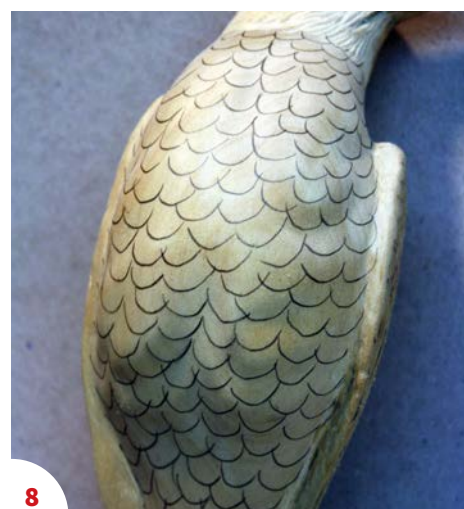
4 Now mark the positions of all the feather patterns. I cannot stress enough to check reference material. Not all feathers are the same size and it is but one of those details that clearly make a given bird identifiable. Using a high-speed grinder and a small ruby point cutter carve in all feathers, main head and throat details and use a round ball cutter to create the eye socket. Once done, use the ruby point cutter to create the fine detail on the head and feathers to better detail and define the shapes and detail required.

5 Now use a sander or hand sand the top very gently to remove any harsh raised grain or fuzzy bits. Make note of where the area where the sanding bobbin rests this area needs to be slightly depressed to delineate the top rear section of the main body of the bird and the wings.

6 Using a small round diamond burr put in splits on the feathers and 'soften' all edges of to create the effect required, paying particular attention to that depressed area mentioned previously.

7 Now to the underside. Having already created the main forms of the underside – make any adjustments now to get the look right. You want the main body to have that soft pillow-like effect a bird's feathers usually have and have the interesting areas of where the wings and tail feathers meet the main body and refined a little head shape. One done, set your eyes in place in the eye sockets. you can buy eyes or make your own from various materials. You can set in the eyes using Plastic Wood and other such two-part materials. shape to create a fully defined eye area.

8 The next stage is to mark the feather detail in the underside of the bird.





9



10



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12



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16

9 Use a white – medium to fine grade ceramic stone to create the fine detail on feathers and once done, lightly sand that area.

10 The next stage – once all the detail is done as far as can be done on the main section of the bird – is to shape and affix the long tail feathers that create this distinctive look on this bird.

11 These feathers are abutted to the underside of birds body and glued to the underside of the tail feathers. Once dry, sand and clean these extended feathers and make sure the shape is right. Then, using a pyrography unit fitted with a combination of a standard wire tip and scalpel-type tips – you need to use a wire tip for rough outlining and the scalpel-edge blade to incise and score precise detail into these feathers – start burning in and refining the look of them. The pyrographed lines will create the required feather pattern on these tail feathers and surrounding area and also disguise the join.

12 I make my own feet, but you can buy them ready made. But you need to have some, so decide where to drill the holes in the underside of the body to give a bird that looks natural when perched on a branch or other perch. You can adjust the shape/bend of the leg to give exactly the look and stance you require. Do not fix the feet in place to the body yet – this is done once all the pyrography is done – but when it is time to do so, use Plastic Wood or similar and blend in the body and leg hole area as required. The feet are fixed to the perch of some sort by drilling two holes – once for each foot – to allow the pin under the feet to bed into it and be fixed with abrasives.

13 You need to choose a perch or resting place on which your bird will sit. I chose to use branch wood where all of the bark was removed, washed it and then when dry scorched it. The timber was then gently brush and a light coat of matte fixative spray – a cellulose lacquer will work well – was applied to minimise carbon transfer if touched. Since the branch section was not self supporting, a base will need to be made. You can use ply or solid wood for the one seen here. It is carved and then coated with sand, grit and other bits I need to make it look nice. There are numerous materials that can be used. The branch can be affixed to the base by a screw or two driven into the branch from the underside of the base.

14 Now, remove the bird from the feet and use a scalpel-edge blade fitted in a pyrography unit to define the detail on the feathers.

15 Work all the way round the bird...

16... and continue at your pace until all of the bird is pyrographed with the correct detail. Note that the feet have been given a coat of mid grey primer as a base coat. The bird is then fixed to the feet.

17 First paint the bird with a thinned coat or two of gesso then, block in the main colours following the colour swatch for the correct colours and the locations.

18 Now paint the feet with yellow ochre, the bill is painted black and black airbrushed/or brushed round the eye. Then, using a fine rigger paintbrush, paint in some white feather edges.

19 On the underneath breast feathers use a small template to shield areas you do not wish to colour and also define a given shape, airbrush edge the feathers with burnt sienna. In this picture you can see the template/shield I use.

20 The back requires thin washes of burnt sienna, and the shafts to be painted in. The rump is edged with light blue and the tail feathers are painted with thin washes of turquoise.

21 Here is a view from the side showing the side profile very clearly and the boundary lines of the coloured feathers which accentuate the shape of the bird clearly.

“... block in the main colours following the colour swatch for the correct colours and the locations.”

22 The tail needs special attention as the colours gradually merge from the main tail feathers into those two long tail feathers. So the blue moves into black, tinged with black sienna.

23 The last job is to give the feet a few thin washes of burnt umber.

24 Here is the finished bird in all its colourful glory. ▶



17



18



19



20



21



22



23



24

Jennie Starbuck



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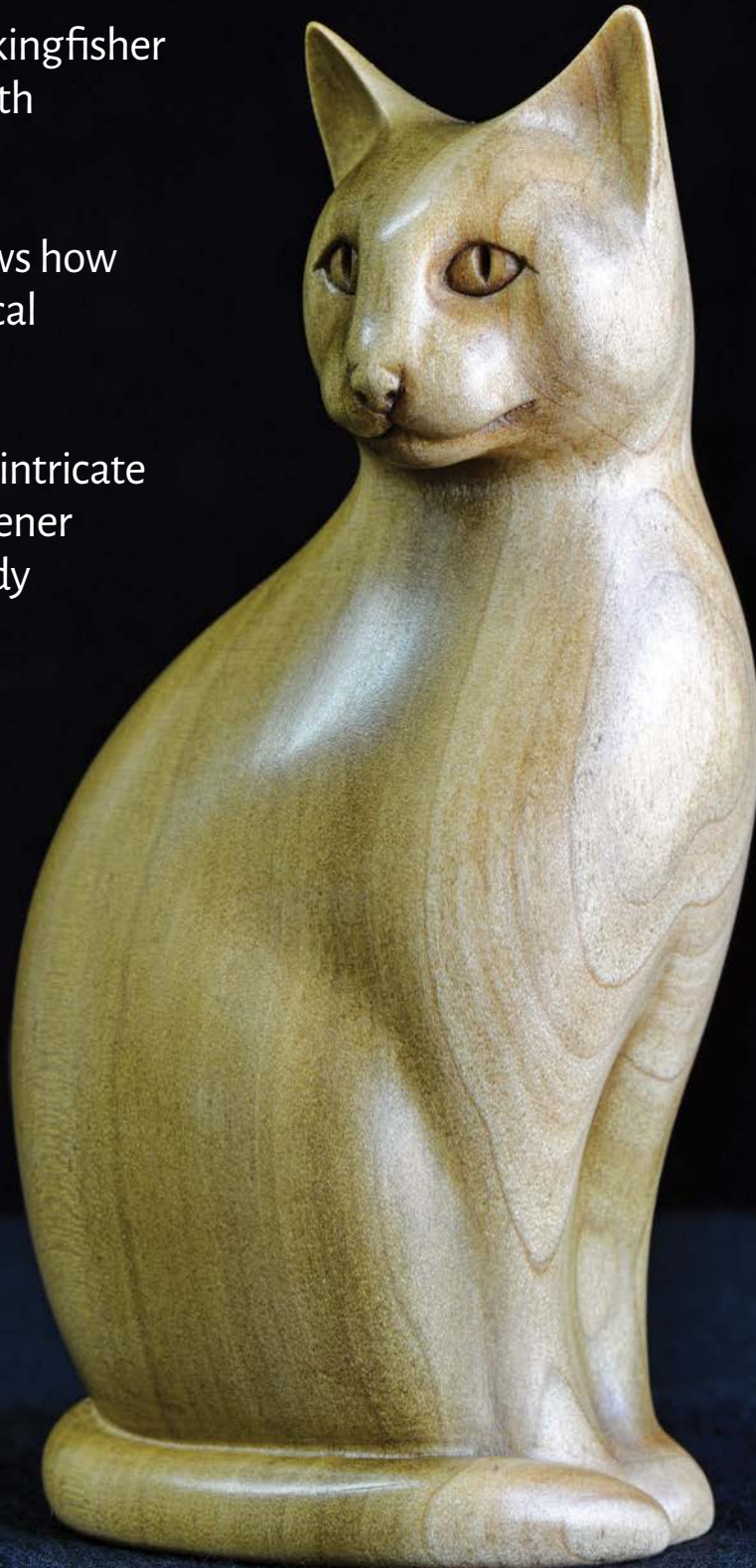
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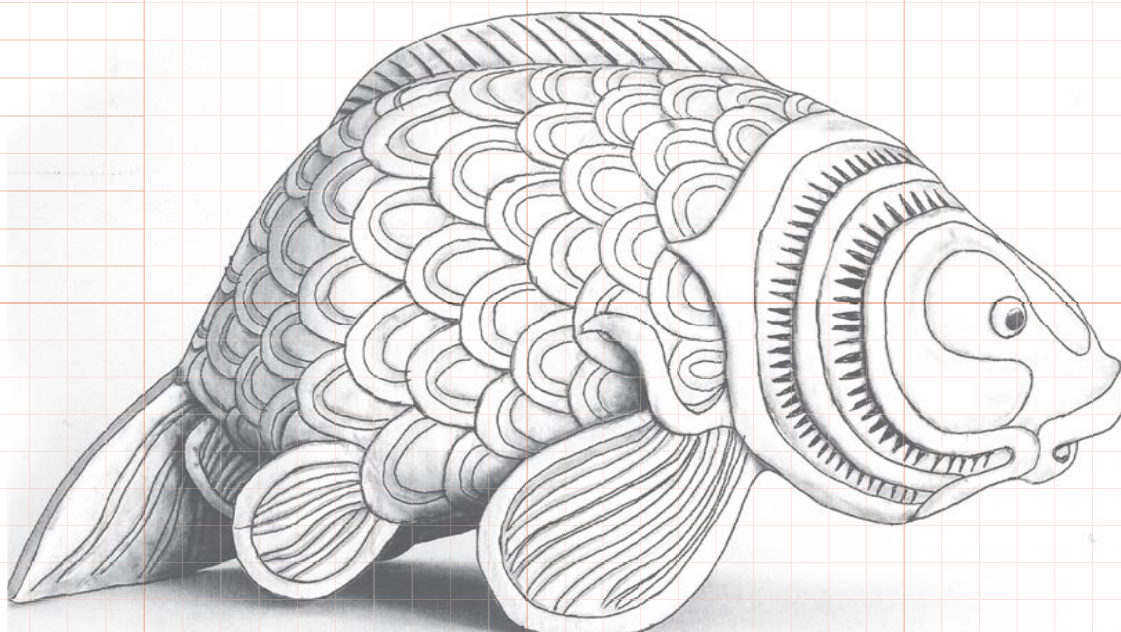


Carp

Bob Jubb carves a stylised carp

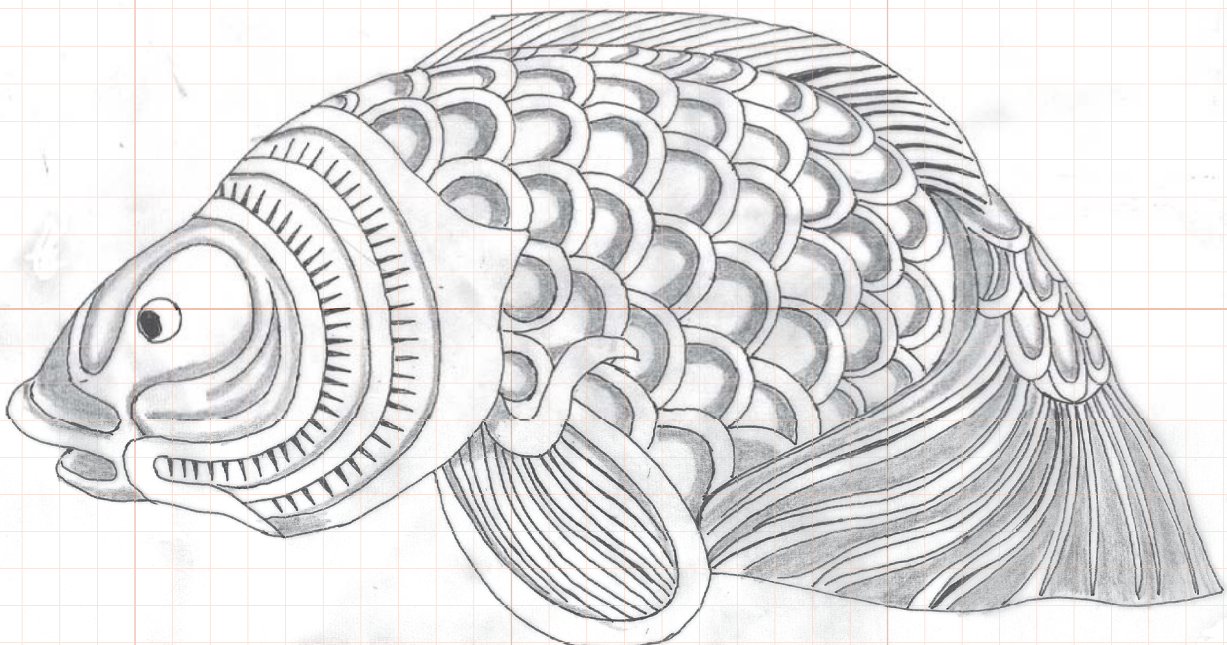
I spent a lot of time in my youth fishing for carp and sometimes I would fish all night – when they are supposed to feed more enthusiastically. One could be dozing quietly in a chair on a bank, and suddenly all hell would be let loose if a decent fish took the bait and made a run for it. After a decent battle, they were admired and then returned to the water. I used to draw them and later, when I became more interested in carving and also in Japanese netsuke, started to carve them.

The picture here is of my most recent larger carp, based on a Japanese ivory netsuke, which is only a couple of inches long, that I saw some years ago, with gills and scales accentuated in a pleasing way. I carved it in lime (*Tilia vulgaris*) and inlaid the eyes with imitation ivory and buffalo horn. I put three coats of finishing oil on and rubbed down between each layer. Finally, I used an 'Antique' wax which was slightly darker, to bring out the features on the gills, scales, fins and tail. ■

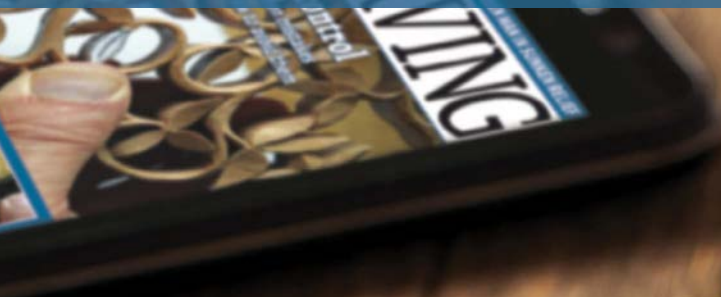


DID YOU KNOW?

- From the family Cyprinidae, carp are various species of oily freshwater fish
- They are a very large group of fish native to Europe and Asia
- Sub-species include silver carp, common carp, grass carp, crucian carp, catla carp, mrigal carp, black carp, mud carp
- Koi are a domesticated subspecies of common carp (*Cyprinus carpio*) that have been selectively bred for colour
- In Japanese culture, koi are treated with affection, and seen as good luck. They are popular in other parts of the world as outdoor pond fish.



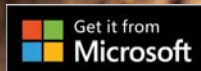
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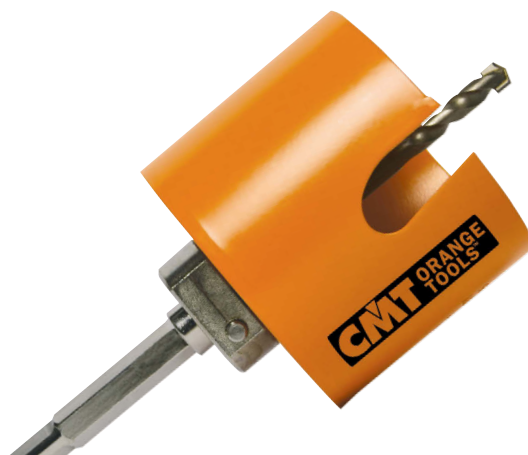




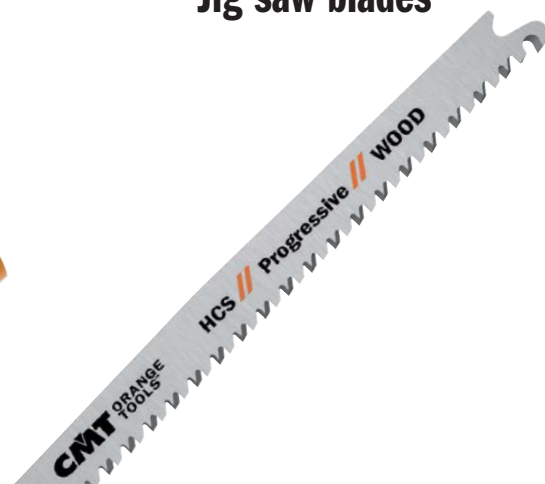
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PETER CHILD ARTISTS PYROGRAPHY UNIT ON TEST

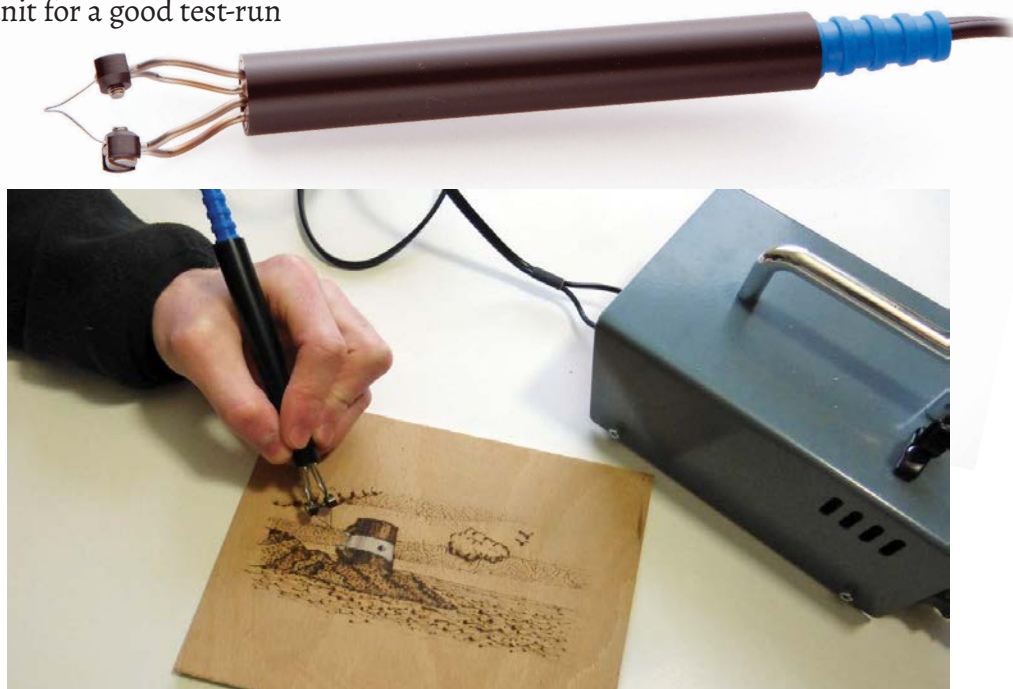
Peter Benson takes the pyrography unit for a good test-run

I have gone through the gamut of pyrography machines from the early days of basic soldering iron-type burners, through the screw-in various shaped solid tip pens to the more sophisticated designs available today.

My use has been primarily as an addition to my woodcarving work, where very fine detail has been required for feathering or fur that I haven't been able to achieve with the carving tool I have at the time. The burners I have used have been mostly from America with fixed, scalpel-type blades so I was pleased to get the opportunity to try this model with the fine wire tips. I am aware that this design for test has been around for a long time. It is well built and is popular with pyrography artists but I will look at it from the carver's viewpoint as well.

In use

Initially I gave it to my artist stepson, to see how someone who has never used such a thing before managed to get on with it. He tried it on thin plywood, prepared pieces of lime and thin leather, mostly with the thin point wire tips and the small spoon tip. Initially, the controls were good, the pen was comfortable to use and he found it easy to produce clean, fine lines with little or no over burning around the lines. He found the shading was a little more difficult as the spoon was not really big enough to give a very smooth finish and any attempt with the fine tip did result in over burning in the shaded area. However, I am sure that this could be overcome with more practice. With extended use he did find that his fingers tended to slide down the hand piece towards the hot wire holder and would have preferred some kind of flared end or flange at the end that would prevent any risk of burnt fingers. He also found that the wire holder method took a bit of getting used to – feeling that a third hand would help – and occasionally the wire tip fixing in the end of the pen was a bit



unreliable finding that despite tightening it it hadn't been gripped satisfactorily. I must admit that I checked this several times too and feel that something similar to the wire fixing in a three-pin plug with a hole for the wire and a fixing screw would be a vast improvement.

When I managed to snatch it away from my stepson I tried using it to do some texturing on a small carving and immediately noted two things. I could only hold the pen in one position and, as soon as I tried to twist it round to do shading I felt it was fighting to twist back again. As the handle is very smooth, this did make working difficult. Similar American machines have this facility and the one I normally use does not pose this problem.

However, I did find that the wire tips do the same job as several of the pens or tips in the fixed tip machines, without the bother or expense of having several different tips or pens and constantly changing them. This has a big cost saving over other units.

There was very little difficulty in getting smooth lines of varying depth and width with the wire tips and adjustable heat control is very sensitive and easy to control. I was able to produce fur and feather detail to my satisfaction. I only had the basic fine tips and wire; I didn't have the opportunity to make the different tips possible from thicker wire. You can buy ready made tips and spools of various thickness wire to make other tips from numerous locations,

making this already versatile tool even more adaptable to different requirements.

I mostly require the tip to produce texture without visibly burning the wood, as I don't paint afterwards, possible by turning the heat right down. As this requires a bit more pressure I don't know if it would reduce the life of the tip, but there was no problem and anyway, tips with the thicker wire would no doubt cure potential problems but, of course, you end up with a thicker line. I did try the machine on leather without much success, but that may be down to my technique rather than the tool.

Results

All in all, this is a very good machine and it will do all that most people would want from it. My only real reservation is the design of the pen itself. I, personally would get frustrated with fixing the tips and would definitely like a modification on the pen holder. I might even add some kind of coupling to make the pen detachable. Their idea of showing a diagram of how to put two pens on was a good idea too.

From my test I have no doubt, however, that there are many very satisfied customers out there that have used their units for years with no problems and I think that this unit is well priced and well worth a look at.



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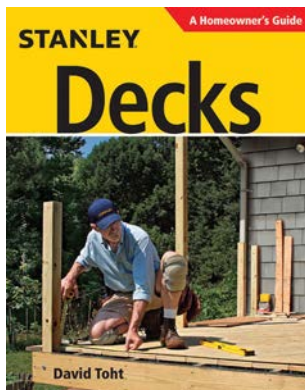
There are two profiles available. One is called a shaping dish and the profile of the cutting surface is domed – and the other disc is called a shaping disc and has sloping almost-flat face with a radius edge profile.

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Marble Throne

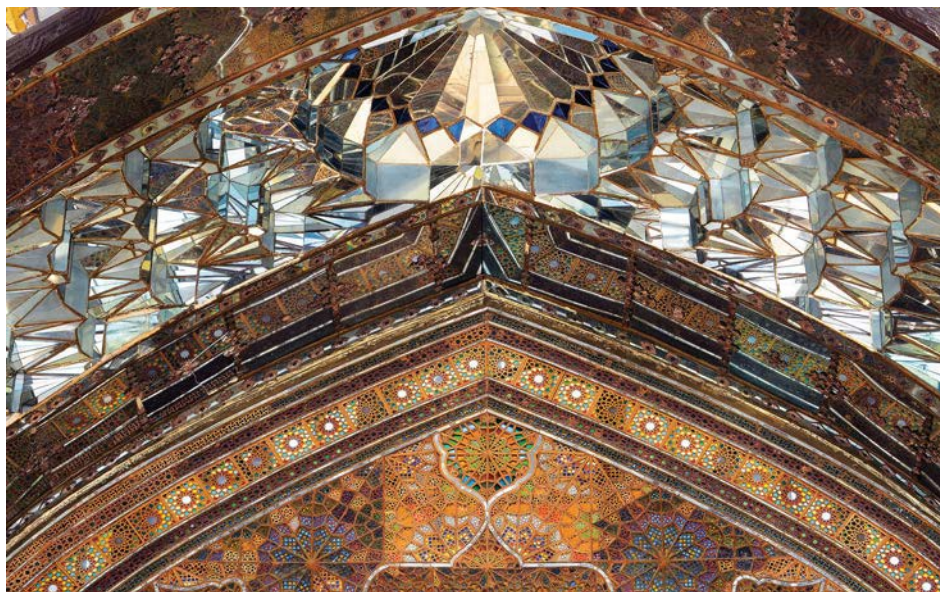
We take a look and marvel at the beauty of this throne

This beautiful, intricate and carved terrace, known at the Marble Throne, was built in 1806 by the order of Fath Ali Shah of the Qajar dynasty (r. 1797–1834) and sits within Golestan Palace, the former royal Qajar complex in Iran's capital city, Tehran. Golestan Palace belongs to a group of royal buildings that were once enclosed within the mud-thatched walls of Tehran's arg (citadel). It consists of gardens, royal buildings, and collections of Iranian crafts and European presents from the 18th and 19th centuries.

The spectacular throne combines a myriad of techniques including, painting, marble-carving, tile-work, stucco, mirrors, enamel, woodcarving and lattice windows; the throne embodies the finest of Iranian architecture. In 1806, Fath Ali Shah ordered stone carvers from Isfahan to make a throne from the famous marble of Yazd. Made up of 65 pieces of marble, the throne was designed by Mirza Baba Naqash Bashi (head painter) of the Qajar court. Mohammad Ebrahim, the Royal Mason, oversaw the construction and several celebrated masters of the time worked on the execution of this masterpiece.

The architecture and ornaments of this veranda were further modified during the reigns of Fath Ali Shah and Nassereddin Shah. Coronations of the Qajar kings and

formal court ceremonies were held on this terrace. The last coronation to be held at the Marble Throne was the coronation of Reza Shah of the Pahlavi dynasty, in 1925.



Many coronations have been held at this beautiful throne

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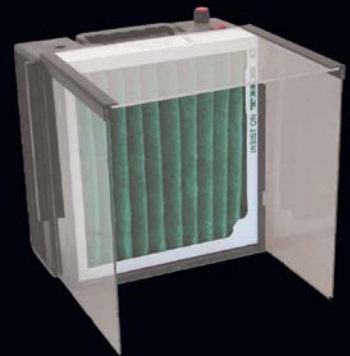


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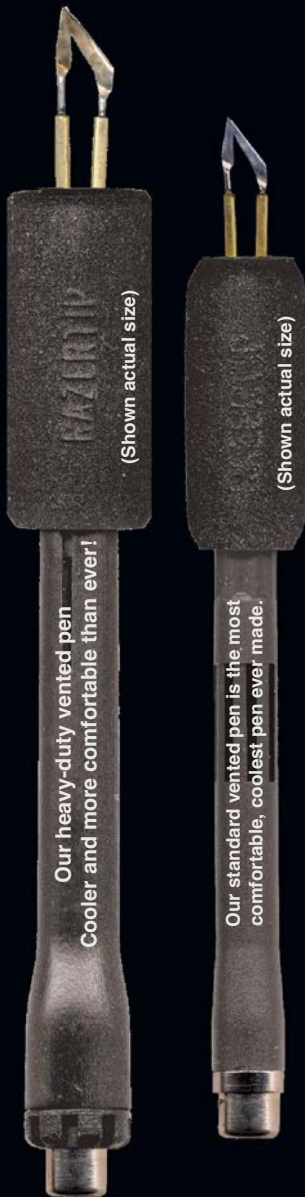
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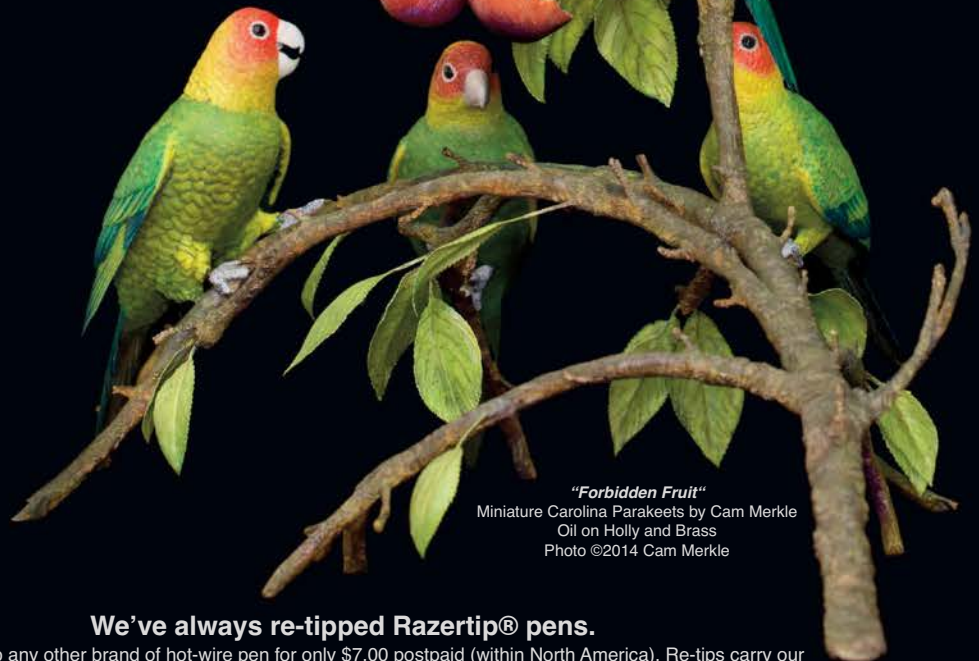
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