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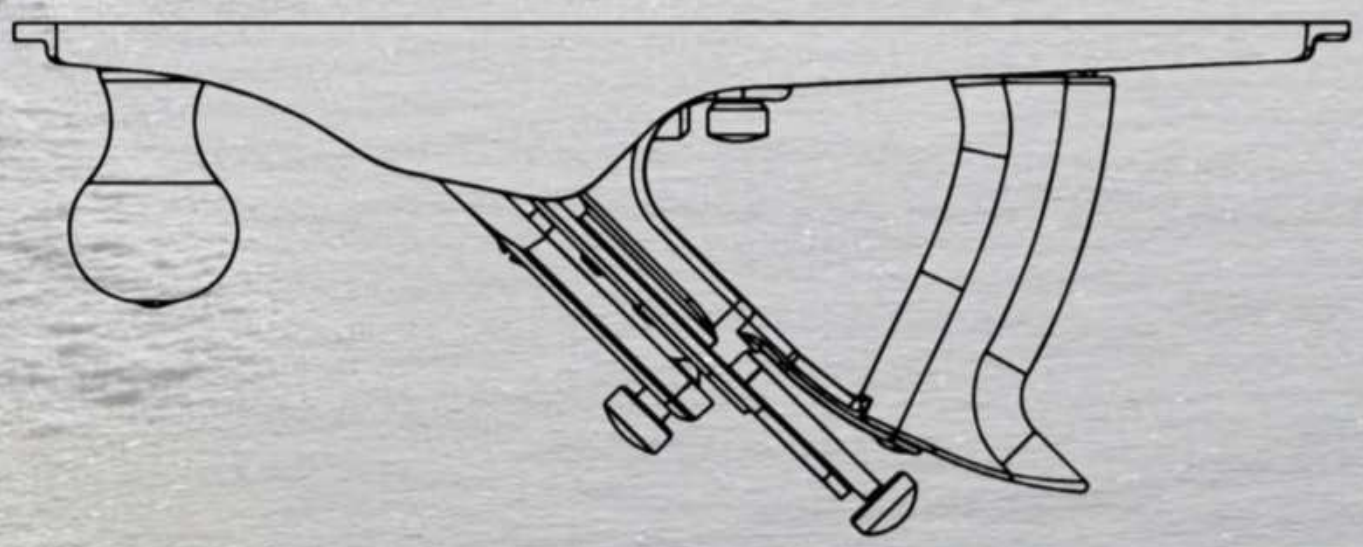

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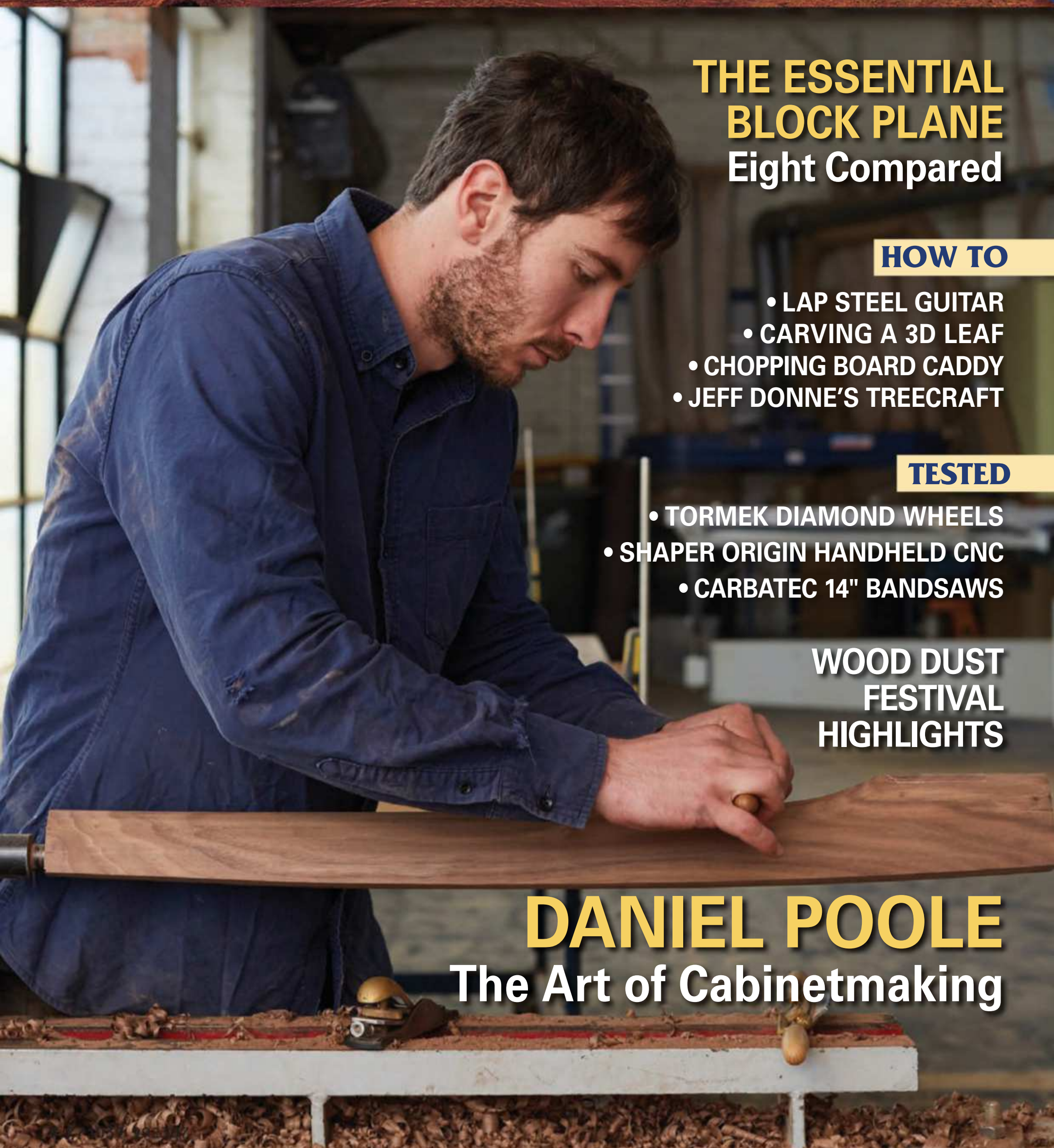

THE ESSENTIAL BLOCK PLANE
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- JEFF DONNE'S TREECRAFT

TESTED
- TORMEK DIAMOND WHEELS
- SHAPER ORIGIN HANDHELD CNC
- CARBATEC 14" BANDSAWS

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Hock plane and spokeshave kits

Ron Hock's long-time friendship with the late legendary woodworker and teacher, James Krenov, resulted in the famous Krenov style wooden hand planes becoming available to woodworkers in kit-form. The kits are precision made from Jatoba a.k.a. Brazilian Cherry (Hymenaea courariI) a dense, stable hardwood, well suited to hand plane building.

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Australian Wood Review 100

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ISSUE 100 – SEPTEMBER 2018

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Editor's Letter

100 issues. 25+ years. Medal time. But seriously, it's hard to believe and 100 is a milestone for not just me, but for many others who have been involved in the production of this magazine, not to mention the likely thousands whose work has appeared in its pages.

I could bang on about changes that go back to film, scans and floppy disks…but nowadays most people don't know, remember or even care about that. I could reminisce, with your indulgence, about a small boxy looking Mac obtained for the purpose – about having to phone a friend to ask how to open a program to create layouts, add text and boxes that would contain images. How antediluvian that sounds now.

I started this magazine with Raf Nathan. It was a big idea (we never figured out who thought of it first) deemed foolish by many, possibly because we didn't know what we were doing or getting ourselves into.

People told us we had the mix all wrong, that it wouldn't work. It did seem to work though, although the mix did change depending on what we liked and what was possible.

The mission, my mission, has stayed the same and I have often refocused on it when small business pressures and everyday life hassles impinged.

In my first editor's letter I wrote: 'We are about furniture, fine woodwork and design, and as much about wood as the people who work with it. We hope to give Australian woodworkers and the whole industry the voice, presentation and recognition it deserves.' I'm still going with that.

Melbourne and Memphis

A group of designer makers in Melbourne recently exhibited at Craft Victoria. Damien Wright talks about the work shown at *This is not Memphis*, and in particular about the ideas that lay behind it, see p.66. I tend to think it's no coincidence that this magazine aspires to support the same values.

Family ties

If you happen by the way to notice there's another 'Nathan' author here, you're right and there is a family connection. Our home workshop gets a fair bit of family use. At the end of last year my son worked on a project of his own. A couple of months later he showed me the photos he had taken along the way, and that's how Ari Nathan's story about making a lap steel guitar happened, by accident. Sometimes the apple doesn't fall far from the tree.

L!VE on Wood Review TV

AWR L!VE: Tools for Design happened in Sydney on August 4 and the feedback has been great. We'll be publishing some video highlights on Wood Review TV (YouTube) so you can get an idea of what it was like.

See our exhibition

All the entries for Studio Furniture 2018 can now be seen on our website, but I hope you can find a way to see the exhibition of new work by shortlisted makers that will run at Bungendore Wood Works Gallery from October 20, 2018 to January 31, 2019. Personally I can't wait to see what I know will truly be a landmark exhibition of fine woodwork!

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Australian Wood Review

www.woodreview.com.au

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COVER:
Daniel Poole in his North Coburg workshop in Victoria

COVER PHOTOGRAPHY:
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Main: Handheld CNC technology, Bryan Cush operates the US-made Shaper Origin router.

1. The Shaper kit includes 1/8", 1/4" spiral up-cut bits and a V-profile engraver.
2. A cut file is placed on the workpiece using the live-view touchscreen.

Shaper Origin

Reviewed by Bryan Cush

Like many other woodworkers I had been avidly following the development of the Shaper Origin for the past few years; curious to see whether it lived up to the hype.

The first caveat is that the Shaper is currently not available for sale in Australia but I have been running the US version through a step-down voltage transformer with no issues to report after six weeks usage. The second thing to clear up is that it won't be replacing traditional CNC any time soon, but perhaps that could be its best attribute – it's simply not trying to be a standard CNC.

On top of the 'R&D' price I paid US$290 for shipping and $220 for a transformer. Shaper Origin is currently only available on a pre-order basis.

Shaper's developers describe it as an augmented-reality CNC router. It utilises a forward-facing, high-resolution camera to scan a matrix of their unique 'domino' tape stuck down to the workpiece and builds up an augmented XY workspace of an unlimited size.

The Z-axis (up and down) is controlled by a motorised mechanism housed in the spindle mount which can plunge to a maximum of 35mm. The domino tape is a consumable (and not a cheap one at US$18 per roll) however there are plenty of simple tricks to reduce tape usage through templates and jigs, which are shared through an active online Shaper community.

Once the camera stitches together a composite image there are two options for defining cuts. They can be created in Adobe Illustrator and by matching line types from the provided template file cut, styles such as interior, exterior, on-the-line or pocketing are automatically applied.

These instructions can be overridden at any time on the Shaper without having to revisit a computer; a great time-saving feature. The second option enables the user to create simple shapes and profiles directly on the device with no computer required. This is a key advantage over the often complicated process of preparing CAD files and calculating complex cut paths for a standard CNC.

A cut file is placed on the workpiece using the live-view touchscreen, or if an exact position is required, the router bit can 'touch off' along the outer edges of the piece to locate the precise XY position as per the cut file.

The next step is to select the type of router bit being used (included with the Shaper kit are 1/8", 1/4" spiral up-cut bits

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and a V-profile engraver), the required depth of plunge, and whether an offset to the cut line is required. The offset is a key feature of the tool, allowing roughing passes to remove the majority of the stock, followed by a zero offset, cleanup pass – great for accurately fitting tenons, inlays or dowels where the offset can gradually be stepped down until the perfect fit is found.

The operation and interface are highly intuitive and feel more akin to a simple video-game than a power tool, with on-screen prompts such as direction indicators to give you the best finish on interior versus exterior cuts.

Build quality is what you would expect from a product that was developed in partnership with Festool and ergonomics have been well considered, with the raise and lower buttons being conveniently located on the handles. Dust collection is better than most routers I have used with the clear dust shroud doing an excellent job at removing chips and dust.

The relatively small Festool spindle (a 720W trim router) is obviously a trade-off for weight-saving and balance. In my opinion, the decision to opt for high accuracy over high power was definitely the correct one as the Shaper was clearly designed to be used in shallow, offset passes at a slow feed rate to allow the spindle mount enough time to adjust to human error as you try to follow the onscreen cut guidelines. The bit can also completely retract if you stray beyond its maximum auto-correct range. Cut quality is much better than I had expected from a 'freehand' tool and, so long as shallow passes are used, it is possible to produce extremely accurate lines that require minimal sanding clean-up to remove burrs and burning.

An analogy for Shaper vs CNC machines would be to think of what a track saw is to a tablesaw. It won't supersede it, but instead offers complementary functionality in a more portable format. The ability to take the tool to the workpiece is a game changer for working on large, heavy pieces of furniture.

If you are imagining the Shaper Origin becoming the daily workhorse of your workshop, powering through 40mm thick solid timber you are likely to be disappointed. However if like me, you see the benefits in combining digital with traditional woodworking practices and using the Shaper as a highly accurate tool for templating (used in conjunction with a more powerful router and pattern bit), engraving and inlaying work then it is a no-brainer purchase for any professional or hobbyist.

Photos: Bryan Cush

Bryan Cush is a Melbourne based furniture designer and maker. Learn more at www.sawdustbureau.com

3. Shaper utilises a forward-facing, high-resolution camera to scan a matrix of their unique 'domino' tape stuck down to the workpiece.

4. Close-up of parts cut 'freehand' with Shaper Origin technology.

5. Test cut mortise and tenons obtained with the Shaper.

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Carbatec 14" Bandsaws

Reviewed by Damion Fauser

Carbatec have recently released their new range of bandsaws and I visited their in-store workshop to test their 14" machines. There are two, identical except for motor power. The first has a perfectly acceptable 1.5kw (2hp) motor, which runs off a standard 10 amp general power outlet. The other has a 2.2kw (3hp) motor but for this one you'll need a 15 amp circuit. It's good to see domestic and professional users with differing power requirements and access being catered for.

Safety has been at the forefront of development, with automatic electronic brakes, micro-switched doors and magnetic NVR master switches positioned in convenient locations.

Cutting capacities are generous. The table size of 550 x 410mm is ample without being cumbersome, and the maximum resaw of 360mm is superb for this size class. With the motor power available coupled with a quality blade, resaws at this height will be achievable for all.

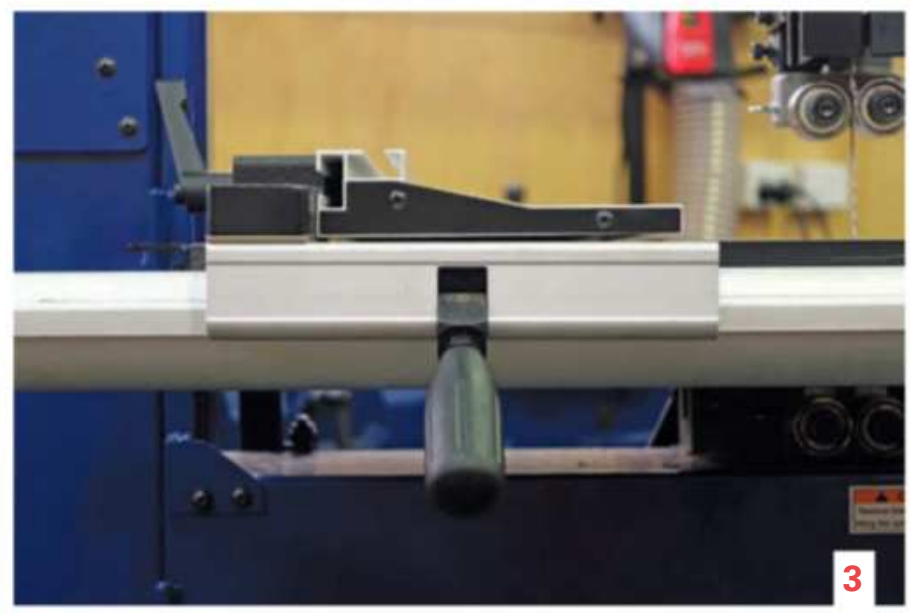
There are tool-free adjustments on the double-roller bearing guides top and bottom, and quick-release blade tension via a

Main: Carbatec 14" bandsaws cater for different power requirements and access.

1. Showing the lower wheel housing.
2. The upper wheel housing.
3. The aluminium fence can be set high or low.


1


2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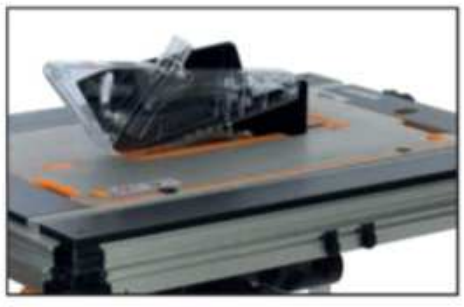

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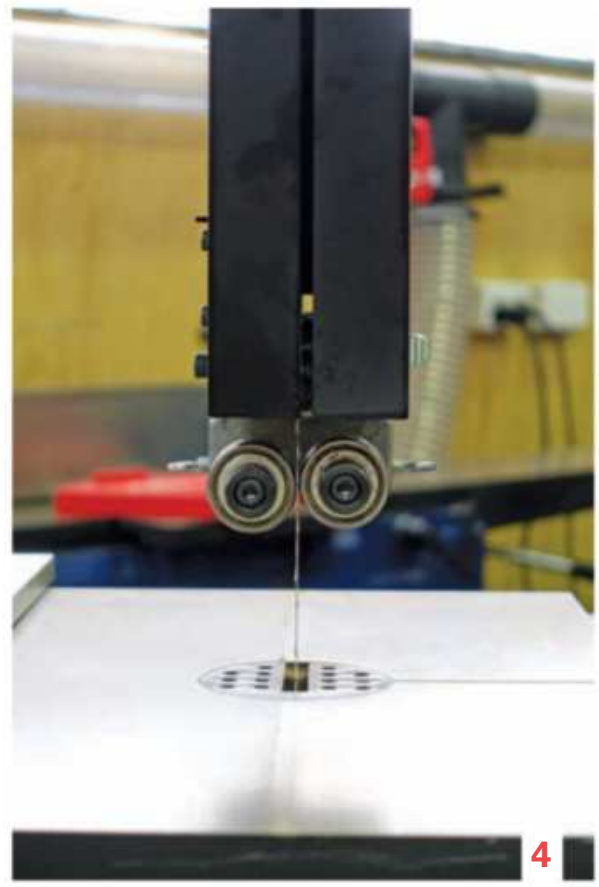
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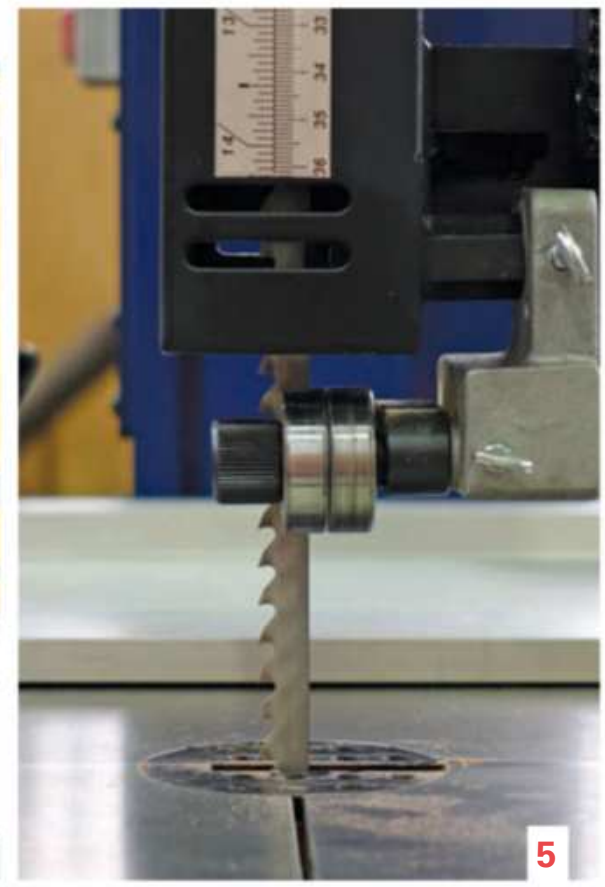
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7

lever, making blade changes quick and intuitive. Grooved roller thrust bearings allow the blade to run cooler. Blade width is acceptable and ranges from 3.2mm (1/8") to 19mm (3/4") so users can make a wide variety of cuts with quality blades. Overall blade length is 3080mm, for which you'll be able to choose off-the-shelf blades or order custom blades cut and welded to suit.

Dust collection is via two 100mm ports, one just below the lower guide set and another at the base of the rear cabinet. When I ran some test cuts in the machine the collection was first class with very little residual waste in the bottom of the cabinet. The cast iron wheels are factory balanced and provide for smooth and vibration free operation.

The blade guard/post adjustment was easy and smooth with a lockable rack and pinion mechanism, which did not appear to require resetting of the guides at high and low ranges. The table tilts through an acceptable 10 to 45°. The fence is an aluminium extrusion that can be set either high or low, offering maximum flexibility and safety. It also has a small range of adjustment for drift, if this is how you choose to account for this phenomenon.

At my request, I was provided with a very high quality carbide blade and used it to make a number of test cuts to evaluate the performance of the machine. I made rip cuts, and resaw cuts smaller than 200mm in some Tasmanian blackwood and Australian red cedar. The machine/blade combination performed admirably and I was suitably impressed with the results from a machine in this size class, and I was using the lower-powered option.

Well priced for the features offered, these machines are definitely worth considering.

Review machines supplied by Carbatec, www.carbatec.com.au

Damion Fauser is a Brisbane based designer maker who also teaches woodworking. Email: damion@damionfauser.com

4. The machine has double-roller bearing guides top and bottom.

5. Metric and imperial scales for height adjustment.

6. Quick-release blade tension is operated by a lever.

7. Dust collection is via two 100mm ports at the rear.

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Wheels: Coarse $585, Fine and Extra Fine each $545

Left: Tormek's diamond wheels don't require truing and offer flat and hollow grinding.

Below: Macro shots are labeled with the stones used to produce the grinds shown.

Tormek Diamond Wheels

Review and photos: Troy McDonald

In June Tormek announced a new range of diamond wheels designed to fit the larger Tormek grinders such as the T8, T7 and earlier models which accept a 250mm wheel. Many would have considered a CBN (carbon boron nitride) wheel a more likely offering, however in true Tormek tradition, they have chosen to do their own independent research and move to a technology that they believe will eclipse the competition.

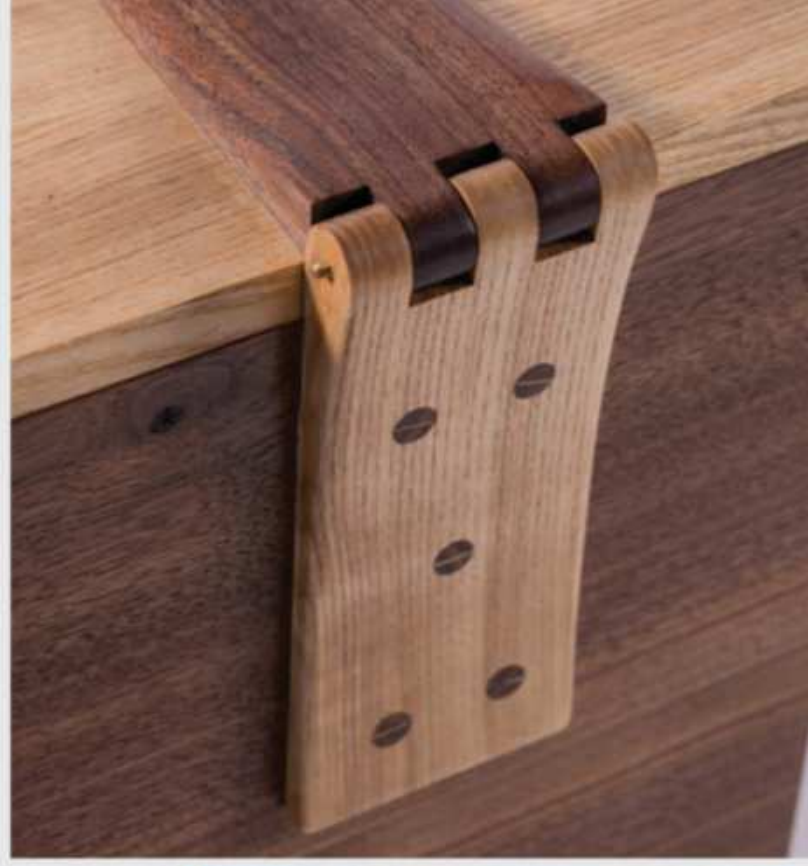
There is no doubting the superiority of diamond abrasives, being almost twice the hardness of CBN, however, the one weakness remains exposure to high temperature. Even low speed spark grinders generate far too much heat for diamond abrasives. Hence, the decision to go diamond sees Tormek capitalising on the unique nature of their product, the near zero heat generated through low speed water cooled grinding.

The three diamond wheels are 360 grit Coarse (DC-250), 600 grit Fine (DF-250) and 1200 grit Extra fine (DE-250). All are constructed from a machined steel frame coated with a single layer of diamond grit anchored with nickel. Even though the steel frame is coated with nickel there is a requirement to use a provided corrosion inhibitor in the water when sharpening to avoid rust occurring on the grinding wheel.

I decided to test both the coarseness and speed of grind for each wheel in comparison to both the standard SG-250 Tormek wheel and also a 180 grit CBN wheel mounted to a slow speed dry grinder. This was not intended to be a scientific test but I wanted to get a feel for how quickly each wheel could remove metal and how fine the resulting grind was.

The diamond wheel does not absorb water like the standard wheel so everything is up and running very quickly. My test tool was a large 38mm HSS skew chisel that requires a significant amount of steel removal when reshaping. I started with the coarse wheel and despite its grading at 360 grit found the DC-250 much coarser than expected. The grind is very coarse making this the wheel of choice for rapid steel removal.

Working through the three diamond wheels progressively I recorded the results as shown in the photos. For



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Above: Comparing grinds for the standard SG-250 and CBN wheels.

Above right: Producing a flat bevel with the MB-100 in vertical sharpening mode with the SE-77 jig.

comparison, the standard SG-250 Tormek wheel produces a grind somewhere between the fine (DF-250) and extra fine (DE-250) diamond wheels. I found both the coarse and fine diamond wheels offered a quicker grind than the standard Tormek wheel but neither were as fast as the dry grinder with 180 grit CBN. This could in part have been due to my reluctance to apply significant grinding pressure after being warned that only relatively light pressure should be applied to the diamond wheel, especially early in their life until the grit is 'bedded in'.

The DE-250 wheel produced an edge that could shave hairs and cut endgrain softwood without stropping, however I wouldn't leave the latter out. For touching up bench tools, the DE-250 would be my wheel of choice. For turning tools the DF-250 would offer a better compromise between edge quality and speed of grind. I would reserve the DC-250 only for those applications that required ongoing shaping of tools or bulk metal removal. It's hard to see the DC-250 being necessary in most woodworking shops.

The diamond wheels also offer the ability to grind on the side of the wheel in addition to the periphery. To allow this Tormek has also released a new adapter base (MB-100) that enables a range of existing jigs to be used on the side of the wheel. The MB-100 allows for flawless flat grinding as opposed to the hollow grind that results from conventional sharpening on the perimeter of the wheel. Carving chisels and knives are two types of tools what will potentially benefit from this ability to flat grind.

It's important to note that Tormek still sees the standard SG-250 wheel as the best 'all round' wheel for most applications and as such will offer the diamond wheels as accessories for customers that have a need for the benefits that diamond offers.

The distinct advantage these wheels have over the standard SG-250 is their ability to stay full diameter for life and not need to be re-trued. This combined with the exceptional durability of diamond grit and an ability to flat grind on the side of the wheel will be attractive to many.

I see the diamond wheels as an excellent accessory from a manufacturer with a proven track record of innovation in the development of market leading products.

Check out also Troy McDonald's video review on YouTube, see Wood Review TV.

Tormek diamond wheels and base supplied for review by Promac Tools www.promac.com.au

Troy McDonald is an engineer and woodworker based in Brisbane. Email him at: helenoftroy1@optusnet.com.au

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Shear Cuts

When starting out, the outlay required for tools and sharpening gear can seem off-putting. For would-be and also experienced turners, enter Woodpeckers Ultra-Shear, a one-tool solution that even reduces the need for sharpening. With nano-grain carbide inserts that rotate to a new edge, and are then replaced when all are used, this is one sharp tool. Five cutters are available. From Professional Woodworkers Supplies.
www.woodworksupplies.com.au

Product news

A round-up of tools and products to take notice of.

Turners' Gear

Woodturners can add to their kit and boost their capabilities with several accessories now on offer from Hare & Forbes Machinery House. Faceplates in two diameter sizes (90mm and 150mm) with M40 and 2mm thread allow you to add different threaded inserts to fit multiple lathes. The PM-2 pen mandrel set holds small pen parts for creative shaping. CTR-4 curved tool rests enable easier turning of bowl interiors. A set of four includes an S-type rest, round and flat body 90° rests and a 45° rest. The rests have a round hardened steel top for smooth gliding tool action.
www.machineryhouse.com.au

Dust Free Hand Sanding

Mirka's new Roundy hand block kit is comfy to hold and makes it easier and less tiring to sand hard-to-reach places. The abrasive wraps around the sides of the block and dust extraction happens evenly via 34 holes in the pad. It's compact and light, and suits wood and other applications. The kit comes with the block, hose and Abranet discs.
www.bestabrasives.com.au

Galbert Caliper

Peter Galbert is a US woodworking legend, known for his Windsor chairs, carved spoons, writings and more. He has also developed several tools through his own working needs. The Galbert Caliper streamlines spindle turning. Billed as a 'turner's tape measure' the tool directly reads diameters, allowing the operator to simply stop when the desired diameter is reached. With this stainless steel bodied tool there is no need to set multiple tools for use in different locations. Now available locally from Lie-Nielsen Australia.
www.lie-nielsen.com.au

Evan Dunstone's Cataract Rocker in Branch 95 Briar Oak and Northern Silky Oak.

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Quiet Achiever

Format 4 Exact 63 is the thicknessing solution that offers accuracy and ease of use. Solid might be its middle name with its massive 630mm wide and thick cast iron table. With a SilentPower cutterblock the four-sided disposable knives are claimed to last 20 times longer than straight cutters. Digi-Drive height control is literally at the tip of your finger – press plus or minus to make the thicknesser table move to the required position. Infeed rollers lift gently with large depths of cut. Feed speed can vary from 5 to 20m/min and there are several options to customise machines for user requirements.
www.felder-group.com

Clamps All Angles

Mitre, rebate, splices, wide and acute angles – this clamping system is designed to handle and hold the lot. Available from Professional Woodworkers Supplies, US made Blokz also function as hold-downs with bolts and knobs that are sold separately. Blokz are made from solid aluminium with neoprene clamping pads that are grooved for better grip.
www.woodworksupplies.com.au

White Bronze Cast

Henry Eckert Toolworks's new chisel plane is cast in white bronze and accepts Henry Eckert or Lie-Nielsen plane blades. The fit is precisely machined and further secured with rare earth magnets. This is a tool you can call on for trimming plugs, dowels, dovetails and using in places that are hard to get at. Solid and hefty means it will get the job done. Small ($119) and large ($169–189) chisel plane versions take low angle block or jack plane blades.
www.thetoolworks.com.au

Print and Digital

Featuring Melbourne furniture maker Alexsandra Pontonio on the cover, Timbecon's new catalogue offers 220 pages of glorious tools for your perusal and purchasing pleasure. The range has recently expanded to include Armor, Bow, CMT, Easy Wood, iVac Micro Jig, SawStop, Whittle and Next Wave Automation. And the stable of Sherwood and Torquata machinery and equipment has also explanded. Download the new catalogue or get the print version for a postage fee of $5.
www.timbecon.com.au

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www.carbatec.com.au

Cast Engravers and Masons Square

Beautifully made by Veritas in Canada this square is a re-issue of the original made by Preston Tools of the UK many, many years ago. This square has a cast brass body with a brass locking knob. The ruler can be set to any depth so it functions as T-square, depth gauge and try square. Available for $77, the square is supplied by Interwood Shop with an improved ruler that has better markings.
www.interwoodshop.com.au

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Vesper Tools premium joinery marking knives feature rare and expensive woods. The knives have O1 or HSS tool steel arrowhead blades which are beveled like chisels with a flat back reference surface. The knives are entirely handmade by Chris Vesper in a range of select woods as available.
www.vespertools.com.au

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www.thetoolworks.com.au

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The Essential and Versatile Block Plane

Anton Gerner compares and rates eight block planes currently on the market.

Since my last review of block planes in *AWR#11* way back in 1996, a number of new brands have become available. As we now find ourselves in the middle of the great hand tool renaissance, it seems the perfect time to revisit this essential and versatile hand tool.

Why get a block plane?

A block plane is a small handplane which has the blade bedded at a lower angle than most planes, with the bevel facing up. They are basic tools and most consist of only four components – the body, cap, blade and blade adjuster.

Most people tend to think the main functions of a block plane are for slicing through endgrain (due to its low angle), and also for planing smaller parts due to their size. However they are useful for far more than that.

As a block plane can be used one-handed, I find it's one of the most used planes in my workshop. For finishing and chamfering edges, to flushing joints and fitting components, the block plane offers great precision as your hands are very close to the work.

Block planes are my favourite handplane because they are fast to sharpen and quick to set up. Not having a chipbreaker simplifies things and allows for a much lower blade angle, as the blade is bevel up. An upward facing bevel acts as a chipbreaker and the shavings curl up against it.

As a block plane can be used with one hand many woodworkers find it's their go-to plane for onsite work, where panels and trim strips need to be fitted and scribed to walls. A sharp block plane can handle both solid timber and manufactured board with ease.

The tools tested

For this review I tested eight block planes that are currently on the market across a range of standard and low angle models. The standard angle planes were typically 20° and the low angle 12°. The choice of which angle to choose depends on the type of work you do, but generally the standard angle will cover most tasks well, while the low angle planes are better suited to planing endgrain.

Apart from the HNT Gordon and Lie-Nielsen planes, all the planes tested had edges and corners that were too sharp. The Stanley, in particular, had knife sharp edges that could actually cut. With a new tool I recommend filing and sanding all the corners and edges prior to first use, to make the tool comfortable to use and hold.

Disappointingly, most of the planes reviewed had a concave sole and all were out of square. The exceptions were the Lie Nielsen 102 that was flat (but has curved sides), and HNT Gordon which was flat and square.

What I found surprising was that the planes were all high quality, and the machining and surface on each was generally very good (apart from not being flat and square). The exception being the overall finish on the Stanley and the knurling on the Luban and WoodRiver adjustment knobs which weren't as finely finished.

Several of the planes tested have adjustable throats, however I've never found this to be a necessity and question the value of them. A sharp blade is more important in my view.

Aside from the HNT Gordon plane, where the blade is held in with a wedge, the other planes reviewed had either a Norris type adjuster (depth of cut and lateral adjustment in one) or a standard thread adjuster (where the adjuster pushes on a slot in the blade).

For this review I didn't test the quality and blade life of each blade, as time didn't allow. I was however able to sharpen each blade to a keen edge, capable of producing fine shavings. All the planes had well machined blades of around 3mm in thickness, which were generally quite flat on the back.

I sharpened each blade and tested each plane on both hard and soft woods, long grain and endgrain. Each tool in this review was able to produce good shavings, with no obvious major difference in performance between them.

After using and reviewing these block planes over a period of weeks, I actually found it really difficult to pick many differences between them. The only real differences were their adjusting mechanisms, aesthetics and comfort. I also felt each plane would still require some minor work to really bring out the best in it. I believe that your choice will come down to budget and ultimately which you personally find comfortable to hold. For the purposes of this review therefore, I have decided to issue three awards.

Best Value for Money goes to the Luban low angle block plane, as it's a very well made tool that can be tuned to perform as well as the more expensive block planes in this review. I also liked its narrow width, which makes it easy to hold in one hand.

Best Overall in my opinion is the Lie Nielsen 60-1/2. The quality of machining, finish and attention to detail set this plane apart from the others. I believe the extra cost is worth it over the life of the tool.

Reviewer's Choice Here I chose the Lie Nielsen 102 because it's such a versatile tool that can be used one-handed with ease. This plane performs all the tasks a block plane is designed to do and more. If I could only have one plane in my workshop, this would be it.

Lie Nielsen No. 60-1/2 Low Angle Block Plane

From the moment you open the box, it is clear this tool is in a different league. The quality of machining, finish and attention to detail stand out. Although the sole of the plane I tested wasn't perfectly flat, I was prepared to overlook this, as it could easily be flattened by hand and in this respect was slightly better than the others in this review.

Depth of cut is regulated by the blade adjusting knob that registers in a single slot in the blade. The adjustment on this plane is a smooth and positive operation, with minimal backlash.

Made from cast iron, with a bronze lever cap, the plane came quite sharp out of the box and only required minimal honing. The adjustable mouth sits perfectly flush with the sole of the plane and is easy to adjust.

This is a well balanced tool that fits the hand well and is light enough to use with one hand if required. The tool performed well on endgrain and all other tasks thrown at it.

www.lie-nielsen.com.au

LIE NIELSEN NO. 60-1/2 LOW ANGLE BLOCK PLANE

BEST OVERALL

Bed angle	12°
Blade width	35mm
Plane length	158mm
Plane width	44mm
Blade	A2 steel hardened to RC 60–62

Lie-Nielsen No.102 Low Angle Block Plane

Based on the original Stanley No.102, this was the smallest plane tested. I've owned one of these for 25 years and can honestly say it's the most used plane in the workshop. I use it for making MDF templates, planing down edges on veneer work and planing endgrain. I can use it with greater control than a spokeshave when shaping larger curves and by skewing the plane you can actually get into some quite tight curves.

This block plane fits perfectly in the palm of my hand and because it is so well suited to such a wide range of tasks, I believe it is the most useful and best block plane on the market today.

Made from bronze with stainless steel fittings, this lightweight and small block plane is perfect for one-handed use. It handles endgrain with ease and without chatter. The simple adjusting screw offers good blade control with zero backlash.

The Lie-Nielsen came flat and well finished out of the box. Only the blade required sharpening.

www.lie-nielsen.com.au

LIE-NIELSEN NO.102 LOW ANGLE BLOCK PLANE

REVIEWER'S CHOICE

Bed angle	12°
Blade width	32mm
Plane length	132mm
Plane width	40mm
Blade	A2 steel hardened to RC 60–62

Stanley 60-1/2

By resurrecting a trademark last used in the 1930s that honoured Stanley president William Hart, the Stanley block plane proudly displays the initials SW framed inside a heart shaped border. The well-known sweetheart logo dates back to a period when Stanley offered a level of hand tool manufacturing and craftsmanship that was unmatched.

This Stanley block plane was made from ductile cast iron, which was poorly finished and had knife sharp edges. I found this plane lacked attention to detail, however it could easily be fine-tuned if you have the time to spend on it.

The Norris style blade depth and lateral adjuster is not finely made. It has a lot of backlash and a full turn is required before the blade begins to move.

This plane is obviously made to a budget and even though it has an heirloom look and feel there are better options available.

www.timberbits.com

STANLEY 60-1/2	
Bed angle	12°
Blade width	41mm
Plane length	165mm
Plane width	54mm
Blade	A2 steel

HNT Gordon

Made from gidgee, this was the only plane made from wood that I tested. It has a higher blade angle (55°) than the others and is therefore ideal for hard and difficult timbers. The blade can also be reversed and used as a scraper at 85°.

Without an adjusting mechanism the blade is held in place with a wooden wedge. Adjustment is controlled by tapping the blade or rear of the plane with a small hammer. While this does take some time to understand and practise, it's simple and easy once mastered. Very detailed and easy to follow instructions are included with the plane.

The HNT Gordon block plane was the only plane tested that came out of the box flat, square and with a ready to use sharp blade. This was a refreshing find!

The gidgee body is nicely finished and the user has a few options for holding positions.

During use I found the plane seemed to clog with shavings more than others, however I may just need more practice in adjusting it. I feel this is really a two-handed plane best suited to intermediate size work, rather than really small projects.

www.hntgordon.com.au

HNT GORDON	
Bed angle	55°
Blade width	38mm
Plane length	180mm
Plane width	54mm
Blade	Tool Steel hardened to RC 62–64

Veritas Block Plane

Made in Canada from cast iron, the Veritas standard angle block plane stands apart from many others, due to several unique design features. Firstly, there are two adjustable blade guide screws that prevent the blade shifting left to right. This is a handy feature when fitting the blade to the plane. The second point of difference is the high quality Norris style adjuster, which not only adjusts depth of cut, but lateral adjustment as well. I really liked this adjuster and I found this plane had the finest and most precise adjusting mechanism of all the planes tested. The cost of this plane is worth it for these features.

The Veritas block plane also features a low-profile lever cap which fits the hand well and has three finger grips in the sides for different finger positions and improved control.

www.carbatec.com.au

VERITAS BLOCK PLANE	
Bed angle	20°
Blade width	41mm
Plane length	165mm
Plane width	52mm
Blade	PM-V11

Clifton Low Angle

Made in Sheffield, UK this the most expensive plane tested. I like its solid and traditional look and the high quality bronze body has nicely softened edges and a good weight to it.

Clifton say they aim to fit your hand comfortably with its wooden handle, but for me it failed in this respect. The only plane that wasn't new out of the box, the finish on the wood was rough and not nice to touch, although it could easily be sanded smooth and oiled.

The cutting depth and blade angle are controlled by a well-made Norris type blade adjuster which had no backlash. I found the adjuster to be very smooth and able to move the blade in small increments.

Function wise, this plane worked as well as any other in this review and I therefore question whether the extra cost is justified.

www.flinn-garlick-saws.co.uk
www.beyondtools.com.au

CLIFTON LOW ANGLE	
Bed angle	12°
Blade width	41mm
Plane length	165mm
Plane width	50mm
Blade	Cryogenically treated O1 steel

Luban Low Angle

The Luban low angle block plane was the least expensive plane tested for this review. I found the quality of the machining to be of a similar standard to the higher cost planes, with the exception of the knurling on the adjusting knob, which didn't have a fine finish.

With a cast iron sole and bronze lever cap, the Luban brand is manufactured by the Qiangsheng Tool Co in China. With some very minor tuning up (ie removing sharp corners) this plane will perform as well as those more than twice its cost. I really liked the narrow width (44mm) of this plane, which made it easier to use and hold in one hand.

I believe this low cost, well made block plane offers excellent value for money, especially compared to the cost of the other planes tested. Luban hand tools also come with a five year guarantee.

www.timbecon.com.au

LUBAN LOW ANGLE	
Bed angle	12°
Blade width	35mm
Plane length	163mm
Plane width	44mm
Blade	T10 steel hardened to RC 59–63

WoodRiver Block Plane

The WoodRiver was the only tool tested that incorporates a knuckle-joint lever cap. In this design the nickel-plated lever cap is spring-loaded and the blade is held in rock solid when the cap closes with a snap. This makes blade changes quick and easy, although I think it would take a while to get used to.

The WoodRiver plane has an old fashioned appearance, which is attractive. Although the polished lever cap fills the palm of your hand comfortably, I personally found this plane a little clunky to use. Because of its width and weight, I found it was necessary to use two hands.

Made in China, the stress relieved ductile iron castings have a well finished appearance. The adjustable mouth is very smooth to operate and the plane produces very fine shavings.

I found this plane had a lot of backlash in the adjusting mechanism. It took three-quarters of a turn before the adjuster engaged and moved the blade.

www.woodworksupplies.com.au

WOODRIVER BLOCK PLANE	
Bed angle	12°
Blade width	41mm
Plane length	176mm
Plane width	51mm
Blade	High carbon tool steel hardened to RC60–64

Anton Gerner is a furniture designer/maker in Melbourne. See www.antongerner.com.au

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whittle WAXES

All From One Tree

From twigs to trunk, Jeff Donne demonstrates his no-waste system of treecraft.

Most of us have a scattering of life changing moments throughout our years. For me, this was one of them.

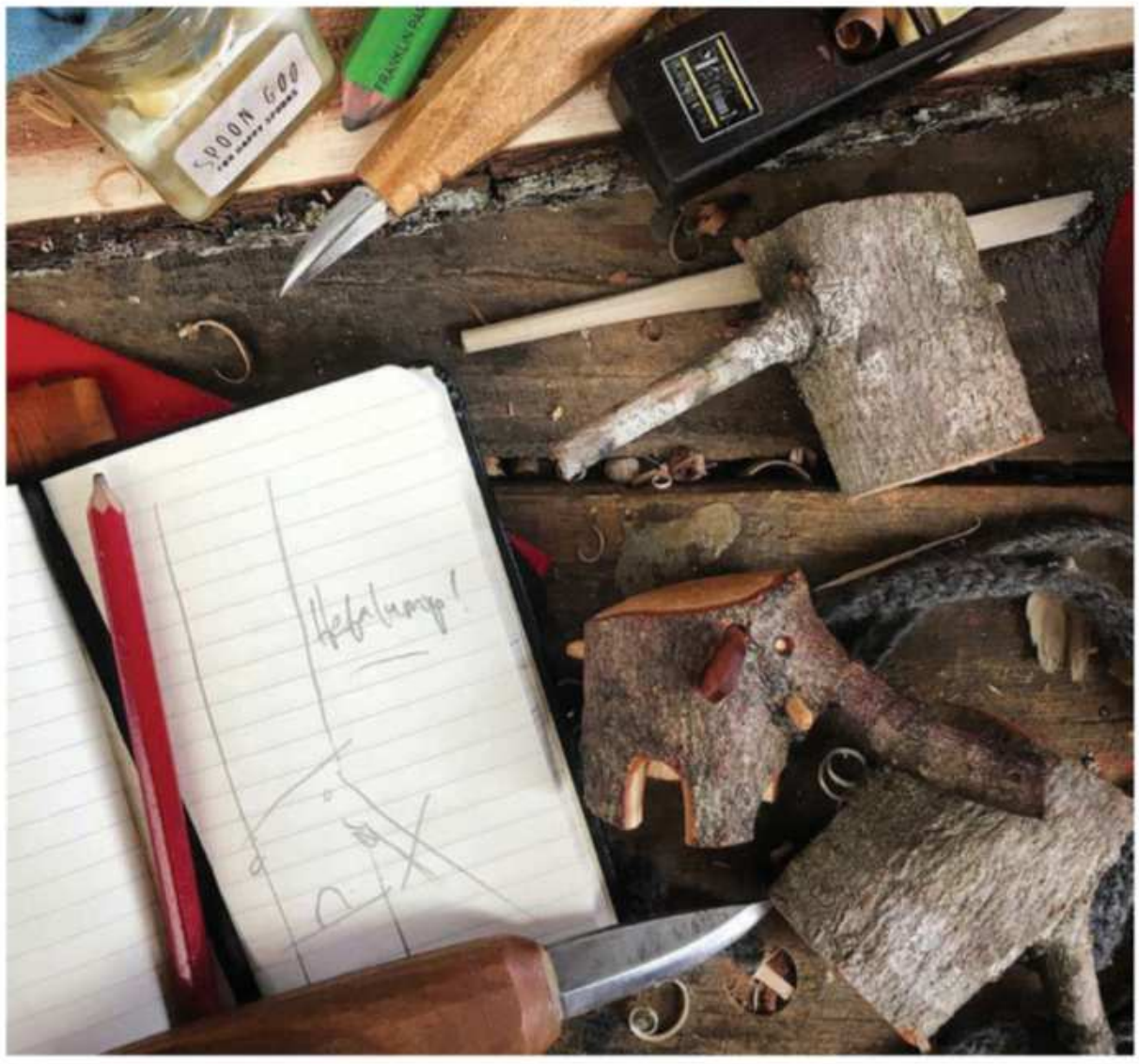
We were standing in a logging camp in the sprawling Budongo Forest Reserve in north-west Uganda. On the ground, amid cobbled together bush dwellings, lay the remains of a giant mahogany tree, at least four metres in diameter. Its belly was missing.

The loggers had taken the gold; a straight-grained section measuring no longer than a length of pine baton from your local hardware store. The rest was left, apparently unusable.

At this time, some 18 years ago, I had just started a journey into green woodworking (with a slight deviation into chimpanzee tracking*), and I realise now that seeing the wasted mahogany tree led me away from the traditional concept of working wood, and head first into treecraft: using the whole thing, no waste.

Foodies have nose-to-tail degustation, woodies have it too, only our 'cuisine' is enjoyed with axes and knives.

Now of course to sample the fineries of treecraft, you don't need to fell a towering giant, or even a sapling, you just need to have an understanding of grain, some basic tools in your



Main: Jeff Donne in his workshop. Photo: Liam Edward Brennan

Opposite page: Branches can be used to make rustic furniture with a mortise and tenon construction.

This page: Forked sections can be whittled into a variety of figurines and animals.

kit, and an eye to seeing everything from rocking chairs to crochet hooks hidden within the tree.

Twigs and branches

Let's start at the top of the tree. If that pruning is fresh and green, you need to think about the possibility of it cracking as it dries. Small branches thinner than, say, three fingers diameter, will often not crack as they dry, eliminating the need to split and remove the pith with an axe.

This opens a whole world of things you can make because you have the option of working with wood in the round. A collection of branches, for example, can become elegant rustic furniture made using mortise and tenon joinery.

The trick here is to work everything when green, and then let the rungs dry before assembly. Leave the tenons oversized, and when dry, whittle them down to size for a snug fit into the mortises. The thicker posts will still be green and they will shrink around the tenons, leaving a tight join requiring no glue.

Forked sections

The point where a branch meets the trunk, although often cast aside because of its uneven grain, is for many green woodworkers and spooncarvers, where opportunities

most arise. Ladles are the most obvious choice here, because the flow of grain from branch to trunk make for a strong and beautiful utensil.

But I like to turn these knotty little sections into a variety of toy animals. Here is where you can really enjoy the rhythm of whittling. To me, whittling is carving without a purpose, and as much as I adore making spoons and other kitchenalia, I find the freedom of wandering with a knife, with no particular utility in mind, to be a most enjoyable thing. All you need to do is saw just below the conjunction of twig and branch, and then saw again about 100mm above the fork. Now turn it upside down and you'll be greeted by the beginnings of a bear, a wombat, echidna or elephant. Try it, it's heaps of fun.

The trunk

More than anything else, the trunk, when riven along its length, will provide your projects with strength. Always stronger than sawn timber, a riven section of the main stem will yield a huge variety of potential projects, from chairs to bowls and beyond.

When making a ladderback chair for example, the conventional method to achieve the splayed legs and backrest is to start with something straight and steambend the legs into the shape you desire. I find it a much more satisfying process to allow the tree to have a say in how things will pan out. Start with a gently bent log, split it into equal sections using a froe and you will have the beginnings of a chair designed by you and a tree.

Splitting accurately with a froe is one of the most rewarding green woodworking skills, because not only will it provide you with beautifully strong blanks, it is also a skill to be learned and one that gives you a terrific sense of achievement when that log pops open just as you planned it!

When using a froe to cleave long sections, the secret is to steer the split by using your weight; push down on both the froe and the thickest section of the log, and try your best to keep an equal amount of wood on either side of the froe blade.

Opposite: Using a froe to split lengthwise sections of a branch.

Opposite and below: The stages in making an endgrain cup: split, mark, drill, hollow and refine.

Good Woods for Treecraft

Natives

- Native cherry (*Exocarpos cupressiformis*): soft, even, great to carve.

- Black casuarina (*Casuarina littorallis*): firm but still nice to carve. Dries hard.

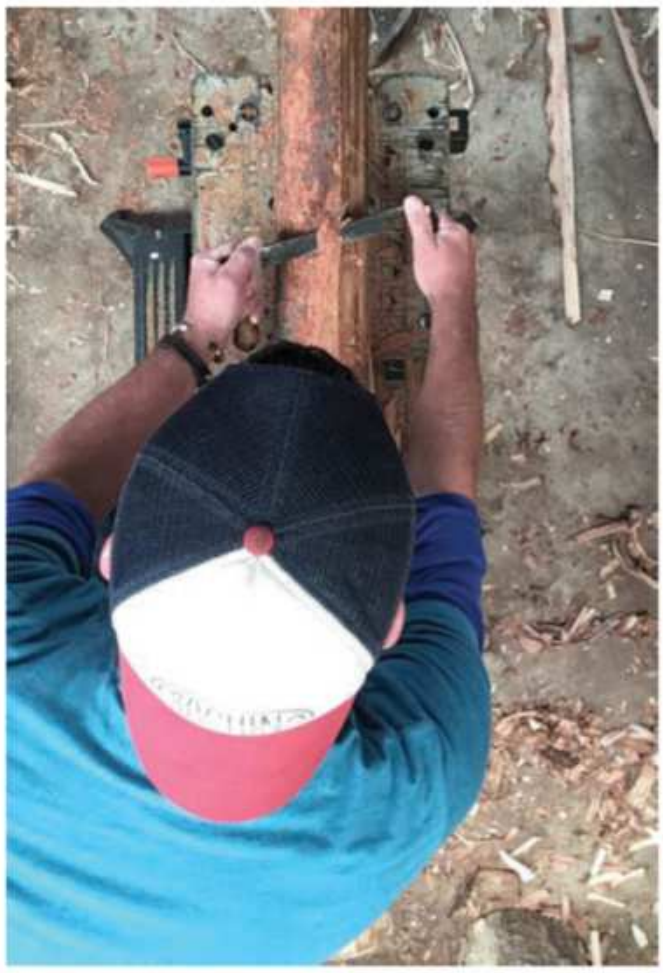
- Blackwood (*Acacia melanoxylon)* and hickory wattle (*Acacia falciformis*): two stunning acacias. Nice to carve when green.

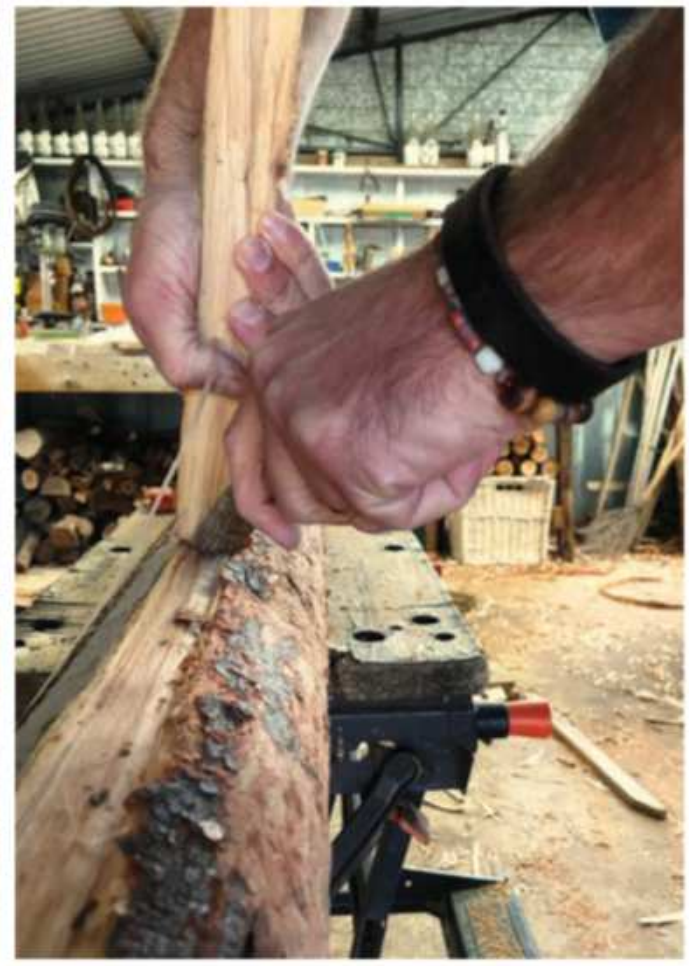
- Stringybark: messy grain but the wood itself carves really well when green. Weavable bark. Of this group of eucalypts I've worked with yellow stringybark (*Eucalyptus muellerana)* and white stringybark (*Eucalyptus globoidea).*

- Silvertop ash (*Eucalyptus sieberi*): Splits beautifully off the axe. Firm but nice to carve. Weavable bark.

Exotics

- Birch, sycamore, sweet chestnut, apple, pear, cherry.





This spread: 'Bark is a fantastic resource that can be used to weave seats. Here you can see me stripping bark from a trunk that has then been used to weave a seat on the stool shown.'

Another thing I like to make from a trunk section is an endgrain cup. Depending on what you make them from, these cups can look spectacular and they really add something special to enjoying a drop of your favourite tipple or morning cuppa. Start with a log wide enough to accommodate four cups (about 250mm diameter) and then split into four wedge shaped sections.

Drill a hole down the endgrain, nearly to the bottom, and watch out that the drill bit spur doesn't come all the way through. Draw your cup's circumference onto the endgrain and create a cylinder shape using an axe and knife. Next, using a spoon carving hook knife, hollow out the inside by turning it around and around until you reach a wall thickness you are happy with.

Seal the outside and inside with oil (I use coconut oil, or sometimes linseed/flax oil, and I've heard that beer, conveniently, was once used to seal the inside of wooden cups). Also, endgrain cups tend to work better with diffuse porous timbers like birch or native cherry (see p.39 for some other treecraft wood recommendations).

The bark

Some native trees, like stringybarks and silver top ash, have a fantastically strong and flexible inner bark that can be used for weaving baskets or the seat of a stool you made from other parts of the tree.

To weave a seat, you need to peel the bark from the trunk as soon as it is cut; if you let it dry, the bark will stick to the sapwood. Springtime is best for doing this with many European and American trees, but I have had success peeling eucalypts year round.

Start with a nice long section of trunk, with as few knots as possible. Next, you need to score two deep lines in the bark, about 25mm apart, and running the length of the trunk. Raise the bark at one end and using a tapered and blunted stick (imagine a wooden cold chisel, made from the same tree of course), push its end under the bark while carefully raising the bark with your other hand. This will give you a strip of inner and outer bark ready for splitting and re-splitting into fibrous weavable strips.

To re-split into thinner strips, pinch the outer bark between the thumb and index finger of one

hand, and the same with the inner bark on your other hand. Carefully prize the two layers apart by twisting both wrists and bending the bark in each hand, always bending more on the thicker side.

Tie one end of a 2–3mm thick strip to a stool rung and form a warp by wrapping continuously around the opposite rungs, and then weave the weft through the warp. When a strip runs out, tie on the next strip, ensuring that all knots are on the underside of the seat. When finished, tie off the last strip, sit on your stool and carve a spoon from another part of the same tree!

One tree, so many uses. Of course this only offers a hint of what you can make from a tree, but working out the bevy of useful items you can make from one single branch is part of the attraction to treecraft. So the next time there is a tree fallen across your driveway, or a neighbour has tossed a load of prunings over the fence, before chucking them in the fire or bin, have a think 'what can I make today?'.

** While in Uganda, Jeff spent time running a chimpanzee population census.*

Photos: Jeff Donne, Michael Griffin

Next issue Jeff will write about using native species for green woodworking.

Jeff Donne is a professional spooncarver and treecraft teacher from the far south coast of NSW. His roaming Spoon School travels to many parts of Australia, from the big smoke to Tassie, Alice Springs and beyond. For information see: www.spoonsmith.com.au Instagram: @thespoonsmith

The skills you need

Axe work. Capable of two key tasks: splitting and carving. To carve with an axe, hold it close to the head, keep your elbow in close to your body and cut with a slicing motion using your forearm and a flick of the wrist.

Knife work. There are too many knife grips to list, but regardless of the technique, practise long cuts that give the knife a smooth surface to glide over. Always cut from a high point to a low point, and never towards your hands.

AUSTRALIAN Wood REVIEW

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IMAGE: LAURA MCCUSKER'S WORKSHOP. PHOTO: NATALIE MENDHAM

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YAFFA 09308

The Art of Cabinetmaking

'The craftsman ethic is what secures my employment', says Melbourne designer maker Daniel Poole. Story by Linda Nathan.

'My job is to make joins, basically…but not too basic.' Daniel Poole, 28 doesn't overstate things, however his work speaks volumes.

Viewing the joinery of Daniel's *Wandel* dining table is a voyage of discovery. It begins at the corner. From above there are angles, shadow lines and a flow of walnut grain you could swim in. Underneath, the joinery of the frame is sculpted. Curves, lines and transitions are resolved and refined – in other words, crafted.

'What are you trying to say with your work', I asked. 'I'm not someone who needs to tell the whole story, not that I don't have one,' said Daniel. 'If someone doesn't appreciate this is a good piece, I don't mind. It's acknowledged by the people who can see.'

Daniel studied industrial design for a year and then took up an apprenticeship. He describes himself as a cabinetmaker, a reflection of the value he places on the craft. And yet he is an artist and a designer – but those, he feels, are labels for others to apply. Likewise evaluations and compliments are for others to make. 'If you're doing good work it will be recognised,' Daniel says.

Why did he switch to an apprenticeship? 'Just due to my personality', said Daniel. 'In industrial design you do all your drawing, and the skills you're learning are to communicate what you want to make…and then you get a manufacturer in China to make it. And I've always been hands-on. My family had an engineering business so I grew up with access to that and also learnt about resourcefulness (I grew up in a rural area) – knowing you could make something with very few tools.'

Daniel Poole at the lathe. These legs will now be shaped with handplanes and spokeshaves. *Photo: Elise Wilken*

1. *Wandel* table in walnut, also showing the underframe. *Photos: Elise Wilken*
2. Leg and frame joinery of the *Wandel* table. *Photos: Linda Nathan*
3. *Melanie* sideboard in white oak with handturned and recessed handles. *Photo: Elise Wilken*
4. *Wandel* bed and bedsides in spotted gum. *Photo: Daniel Poole.*

When Daniel says, 'often the art of cabinetmaking is overlooked', his words underpin the respect he has for others who have honed their skills without shouting about their virtuosity. 'All the best cabinetmakers in Melbourne that I know are very reserved and quiet people who work hard at being skilled. If you're trying to make a living out of this, you know when others are working hard. However, almost the more work you put into something, the less you're going to make.'

When I visited, Daniel had just moved into larger premises in North Coburg. Up-scaling is a decision and commitment that grows out of necessity. 'You go in (to

business) naively because it's what stimulates you, and then it's as much a curse, because by the time you get in this far you're tied down and you've got to make it work. But I've got the capabilities, the space and the machines to do the work. I'm on my own path trying to do what I want to do.'

It can be easy to blow your mind as well as your budget when you're setting up: knowing who you are, what you want to do, how to make money. 'Essentially it's been four years of learning what not to do, in my time and working for myself', said Daniel. 'It's been a constant process of trying to refine, be smarter, be better. It's been refining to the point of making fewer pieces and repeating those, especially if you're going to employ (people) so those employees can get an understanding and develop their skills.'

A week is not much time for clutter to accumulate but looking around the new workspace there were few visible trappings of the artist craftsman or even a cabinetmaker. No tool wall or crafted benchspace. One drawer in a chest was opened to reveal some hand tools, and a few in use lay on a bench. Once again, the whole story doesn't always need to be told.

There may be unspoken words but Daniel is obviously a thinker. 'I like to stir things up a bit – the design community – because they have most of the influence – but often with an inferior product, so there's probably that rivalry. Although, to be honest I do like to mix in-between.' Those who design and craft can sometimes claim authority over those who design but don't make.

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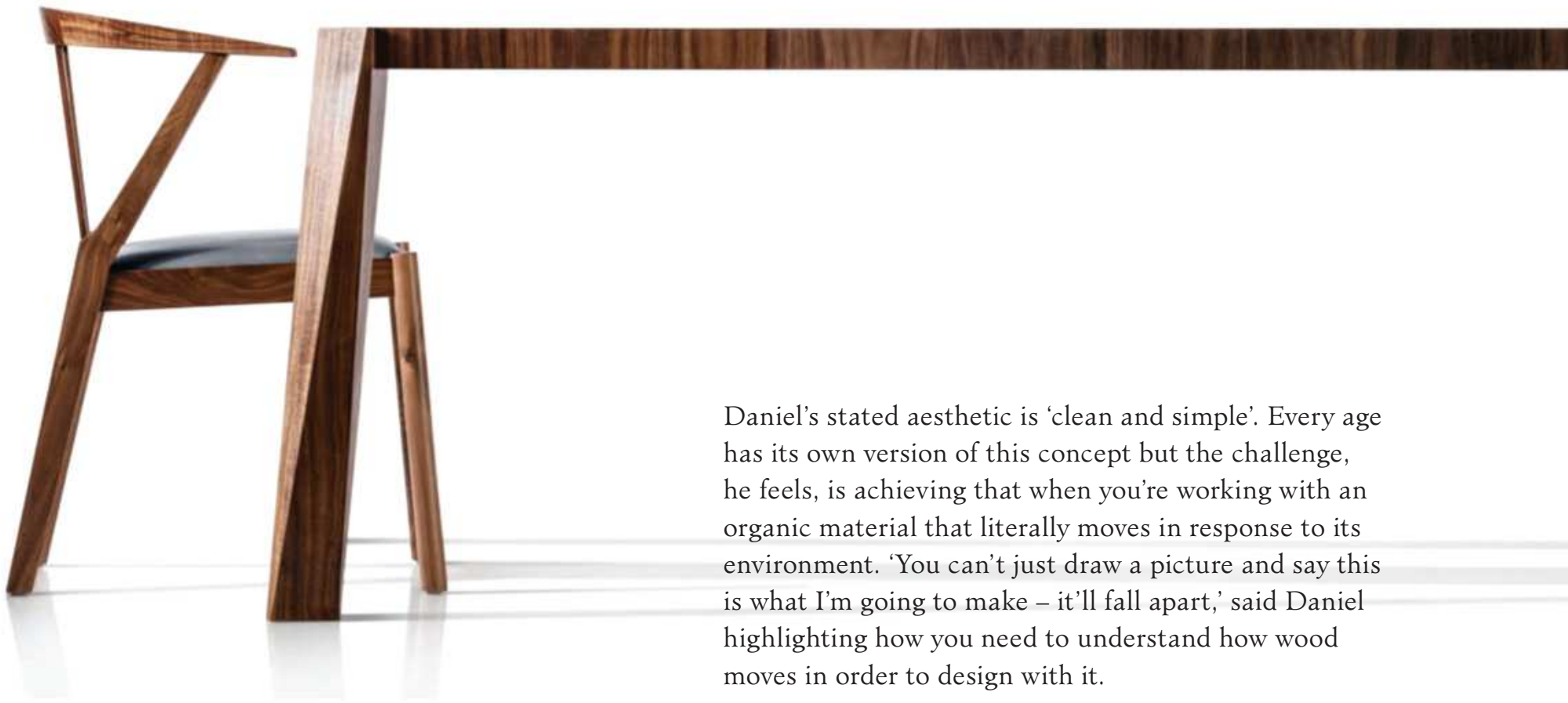
5. As an 'exploration of imperfect beauty' the *Joanne* sideboard highlights the grain and colour variations of blackwood. *Photo: Elise Wilken*

6. Sculpted frame supports and open through tenon construction on the *Joanne* table. *Photo: Elise Wilken*



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Daniel's stated aesthetic is 'clean and simple'. Every age has its own version of this concept but the challenge, he feels, is achieving that when you're working with an organic material that literally moves in response to its environment. 'You can't just draw a picture and say this is what I'm going to make – it'll fall apart,' said Daniel highlighting how you need to understand how wood moves in order to design with it.

Knowing how to refine designs and structures is a matter of experience. 'At first you tend to over-engineer and be overly cautious, but I'm balancing practicality with design and rigidity. Basically I'm trying to build a better and better product'.

Machine-wise Daniel has a good setup but 'anything that's curved has to be finished by hand'. In effect that's what sets his work apart. 'The craftsman ethic is what secures my employment, not everyone can cut dovetails and afford to pay the rent. I've developed the capabilities to do that. But my vision hasn't changed since I left industrial design. The space I want to create – the table I want to make, suits that environment. I want to be able to provide products that are accessible but that have the quality and integrity that being a cabinetmaker gives.'

With overheads and part-time staff there's pressure but still some freedom. 'I need to produce three pieces a month to pay the bills but I'm pretty stubborn with only doing what I want to do,' said Daniel. The latter is more about refining designs that can go on to be produced with a profit, as well being selective about 'one-offs that you'll never get your time back on'. Down the track he'll make some stock items and create a display space.

Daniel Poole works hard to refine his designs for both aesthetic and economic reasons. But he's happy to let his work and other people speak for its appeal and integrity.

Contact Daniel Poole via his website at www.danielpoole.com.au or Instagram page @danielpoolestudio

7. Dining chair and torsion table in shopsawn veneers. The grain on the top runs across the width. *Photo: Barton Taylor*

8. A run of chairs in American walnut.

9. American white oak extension table and Williamstown chairs. *Photo: Barton Taylor*

10. *Williamstown* table in solid white oak, 3200mm long x 1200m wide. *Photo: Barton Taylor*

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YAFFA 09121

Making a Lap Steel Guitar

For a beginner luthier, this was an achieveable build that made the most of low cost materials. Story by Ari Nathan.

Most guitarists would agree there's no limit to the number of guitars you can own. This is regulated by the size of your wallet, and mine had already been emptied in the lead-up to the holidays last summer. That was where the generosity of my father and his over-populated wood collection came in.

Why a lap steel?

As the name suggests a lap steel guitar is designed to be played in your lap with a metal slide. It has a metallic blues sound that I'm growing an appetite for. A slide guitar has a high action and the strings don't actually contact the frets which act as a guide only. Although I strived to position the frets as accurately as possible I knew they weren't critical to the sound, and to my mind this made a lap steel a good choice for a beginner maker as this seemed to be more forgiving design (normal guitar neck construction is known to require extreme accuracy).

Choosing the wood

I read up a little on tonewoods and generally it seemed the lighter weight woods had a richer resonance. With this in mind, and in view of what was available, I went through the family stash, tapping various boards of wood before settling on some southern silky oak (*Grevillea robusta*).

Brazilian rosewood is the premium wood for fingerboards, however I lucked out with this and settled on a dark piece of jarrah. The lap steel has a single-piece body that's 800mm long and 180mm at the widest part with a 40mm thickness.

Electricals and other parts

The bridge, tail piece and tuning pegs used here were standard electric guitar type parts and leftover from another project.


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The electronics were bought secondhand online for about $30. I got the Humbucker pickup from a guy down the road who builds these in his garage. The control panel plate and the nut were made from some 2mm square aluminium tubing I found at Bunnings.

Starting point

The distance between the bridge and the nut determines the ratio of the fret spacings. To calculate these I used one of the many free-to-use online fret spacing calculators (for example www.stewmac.com/FretCalculator). Once I had these measurements I went on to make the body. The process is summarised in the steps that follow the photos.

The process

1. The wood for the body was planed and thicknessed before marking out the shape. Using a ruler and a pencil I sketched directly onto the wood using the calculations from the online calculator as my starting point. I played with the shape of the body and head, tracing curves from objects at hand. When I was happy with the outline the blank was bandsawn to shape.

2. The thickness of the head was first reduced to 15mm on the bandsaw.

3. Chisels and then a trim router were used to shape and finish cut a 90° rebate for the nut. I was careful to be very accurate as this would form the reference point for measuring the placement of the frets and bridge.

4. This detail of the finished head shows the right angle nut that was cut from the square aluminium tubing. Shallow slots were filed and then sanded as smooth as possible for the strings to sit in.

5. Holes were drilled into the body for the bridge and the tailpiece. Accurate placement of these was critical and as mentioned before, referenced off the nut. Note: the position of the bridge must be taken from the centre of the intonation slides so as to allow movement in either direction when setting the guitar up. The recess for the pickup was first drilled with a forstner bit before chiselling out the waste.


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6. The back cavity for the electronics was done the same way.

7. A hole was drilled from the pickup cavity through to the rear electronics cavity for the pickup cable.

8. The final step in shaping the body was rounding the edges of the body and head. I used a radius bit in the trim router for this. The rounded edge of the body was reduced to blend into the square edge of the neck.

9. Verniers and a knife were used to mark fret locations on the jarrah fretboard. I used the measurements from the online calculator and targeted for accuracy to two decimal places as best as I could to minimise compounding error.

10. The David Barron magnetic saw guide guaranteed 90° saw cuts. Hot melt glue held a scrap of wood to the blade as a depth stop.

11. The fret material was cut from a piece of Huon pine veneer. I knifed off strips of veneer and inserted them into the slots before running superglue along their length. This thin and runny glue soaked into the veneer causing it to swell for a perfect fit in the fret slots. The fret veneer was left proud of the surface for later trimming.

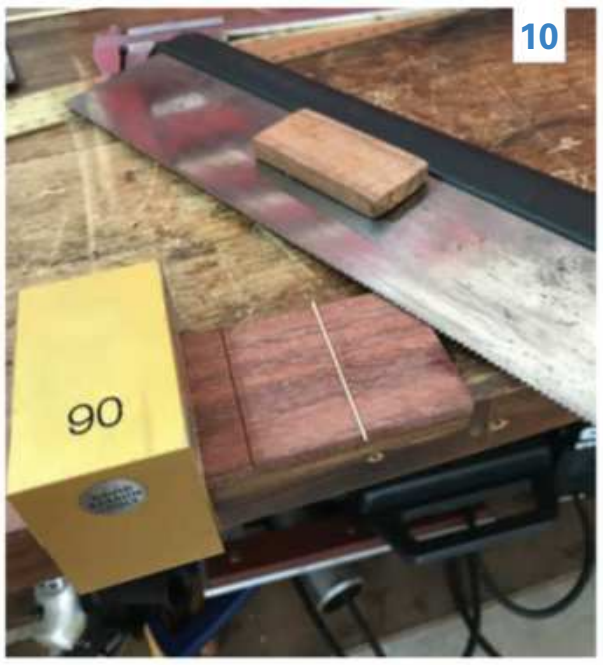
12. The excess fret material was trimmed with a sharp Japanese marking knife, a very satisfying job.

13. Holes for the fret dot markers were first punched with an awl then drilled. Sections of an old paint brush handle were glued in with PVA and sawed flush later. The glued-on inlay banding you can see running down the sides of the neck was another workshop leftover find that added a nice touch.

14. After sanding with a sanding block progressively to 1000 grit the fretboard was completed.

15. In this photo the fretboard has been glued on with Titebond III. The neck was masked off while the finish was applied. I wanted a classic starburst finish so I applied black stain with a rag along the edges and used metho to blend and create the fade over the top. Four coats of Whittles hardwax were applied, sanding in between each.

16. I used another piece of scrap aluminium for the control plate. This was cut to length with an



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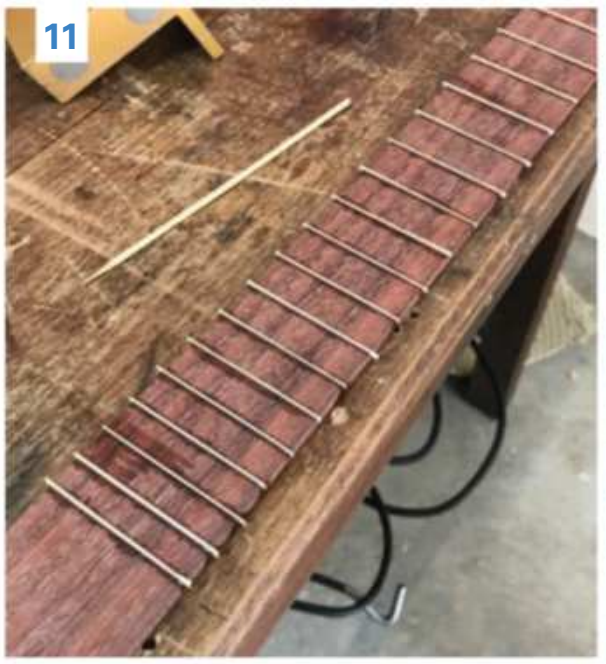
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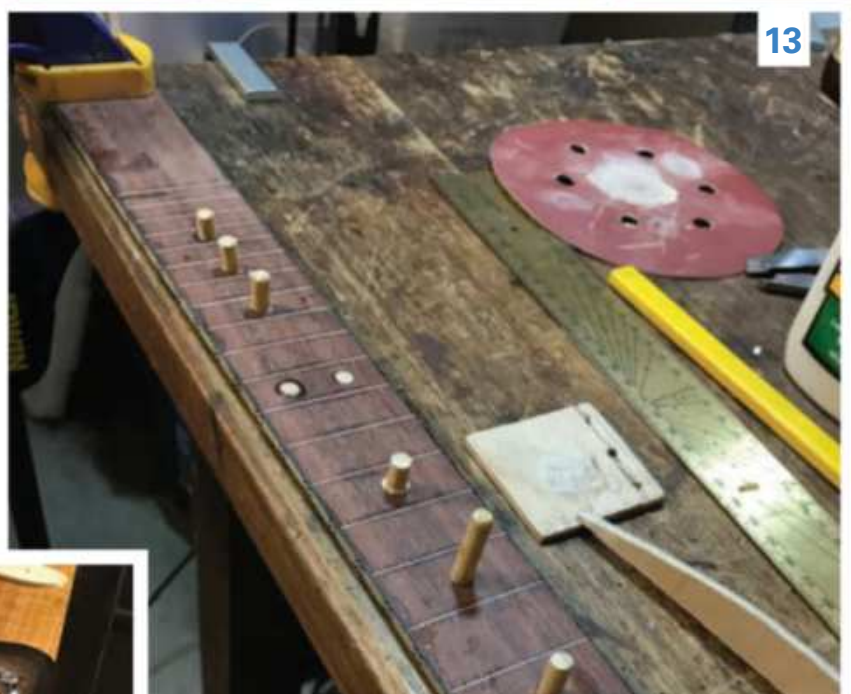
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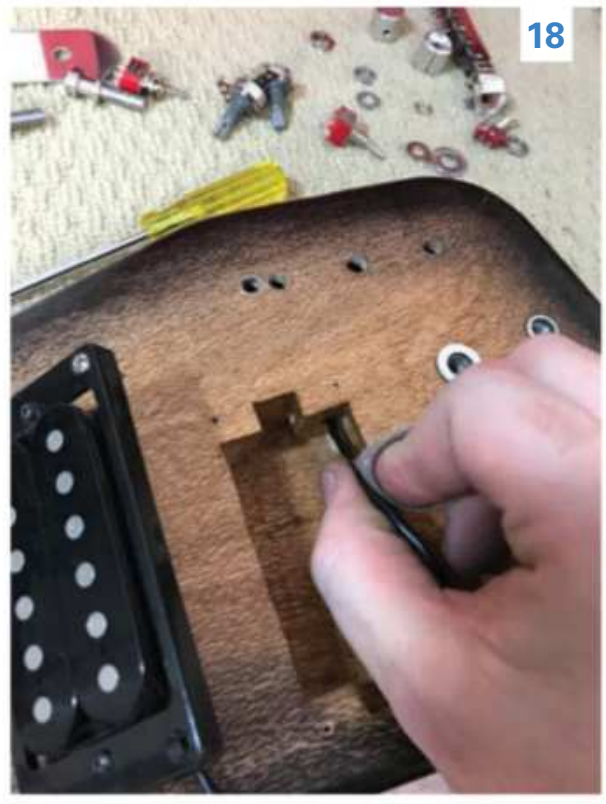

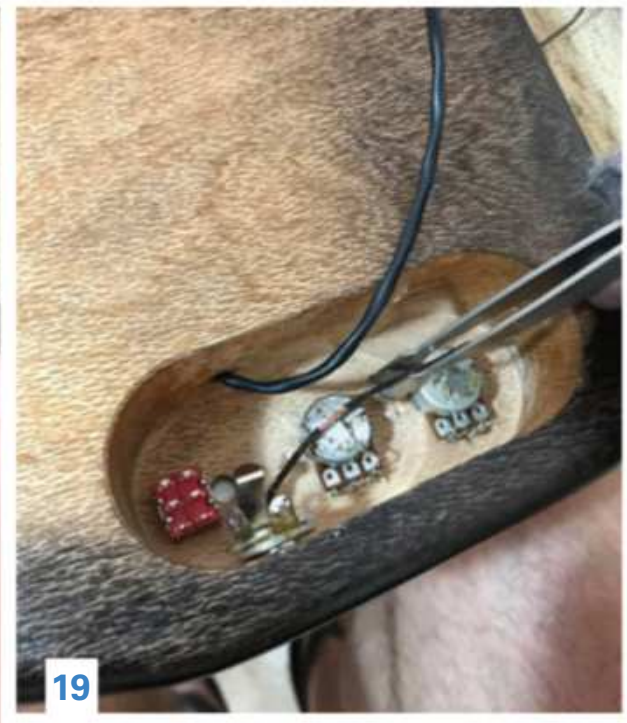

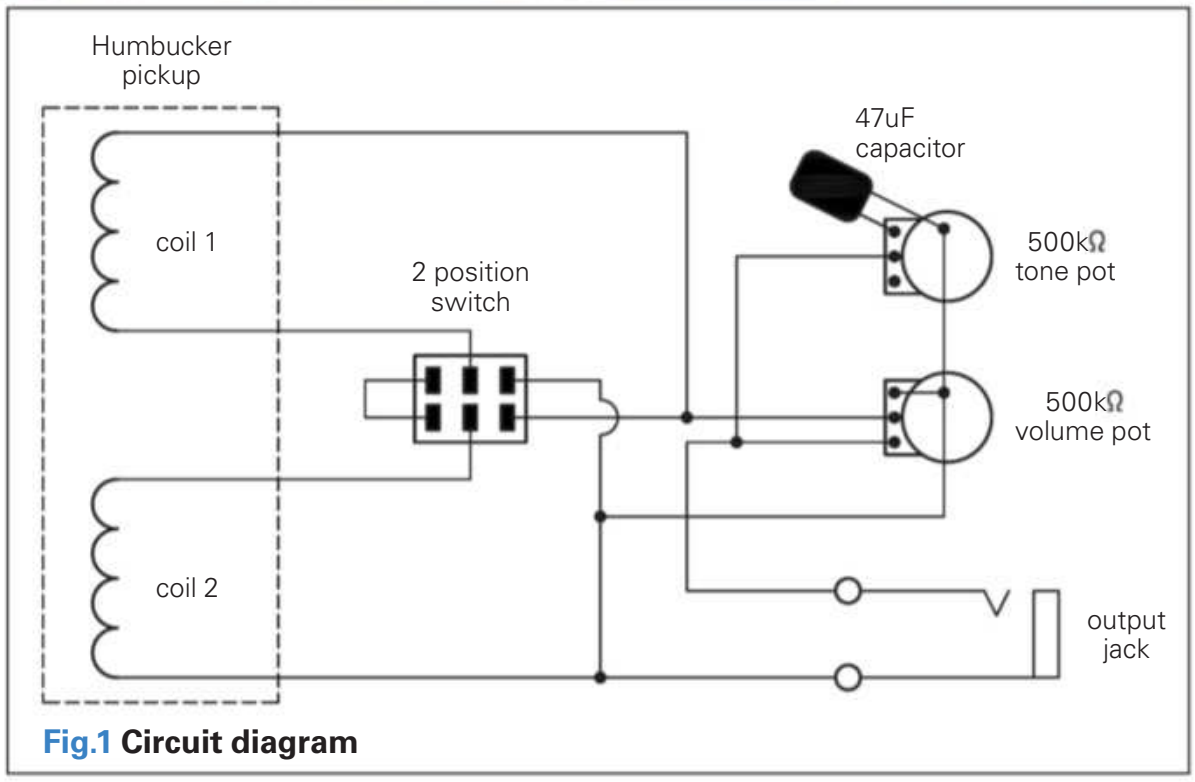

Fig.1 Circuit diagram

angle grinder, shaped with a bench grinder, sanded down with wet and dry paper and then buffed up with metal polish.

17. Now it was time for the installation of components and electronics. Holes for the tuning pegs were marked out and drilled before screwing them in.

18. A standard volume and tone pot was used, as well as a coil splitting switch to run the humbucker in series or in parallel for different sounds.

19. The final test was to string it and set it up. The nut groove depths were tuned and the intonation on the bridge tuners adjusted.

After a few minutes fiddling with the amp settings I was pleasantly surprised with the sound. The wood gives a good resonance and the aluminium nut seems to give a clean metallic tone that suits the style of music this guitar is intended for.

Hear the lap steel guitar on YouTube, search for Wood Review TV.

Main photo: Linda Nathan

Process photos: Ari Nathan

Ari Nathan is an electrical engineer, a guitarist and makes things from wood and metal. Email: ari_n2@hotmail.com

A Japanese Turner

1

Terry Martin and Yuriko Nagata observe the tools and techniques of Takehito Nakajima as he completes a bowl.

Last issue our story about Japan gave an overview of the world of Japanese woodturners. This story describes how one turner completes the turning of a bowl. Such bowls are probably the most commonly made turned objects in Japan. They may be used for rice, soup, or other dishes, and are usually lacquered, most commonly with a tinted lacquer that hides the wood beneath.

The region surrounding Yamanaka on the west coast of Japan is different from the rest of Japan because it is common for clear lacquer to be used so the wood beneath shows through.

Takehito Nakajima comes from a significant Yamanaka woodturning family. His father is Torao Nakajima, a recognised master highly respected for his kindness and commitment to helping others. As described in *AWR#99*, Nakajima senior is a key player in the education of young turners. So it is not surprising that Takehito completed his own traditional apprenticeship with his father. He became an independent *kijishi*, or woodturner, at the age of 22, and in the 27 years since then he has himself become a craftsman of considerable standing in the community.

Lacquerware is one of the most highly prized products of Japanese culture and has reached a level of perfection unmatched in the world. A requirement for high quality lacquerware is that the wood must not warp after the lacquer is applied. This means that the wood drying processes are very sophisticated. All bowls are turned at least twice, and often they are turned three times before the wood is stable enough.

The gradual release of moisture and tension in the wood is controlled by careful stacking so air circulates around the

1. Pre-turned bowl blanks stacked for drying.

2. The pedals are used to select clockwise or anti-clockwise rotation.

3, 4. The pedals activate sliders that push the belts onto different pulleys.

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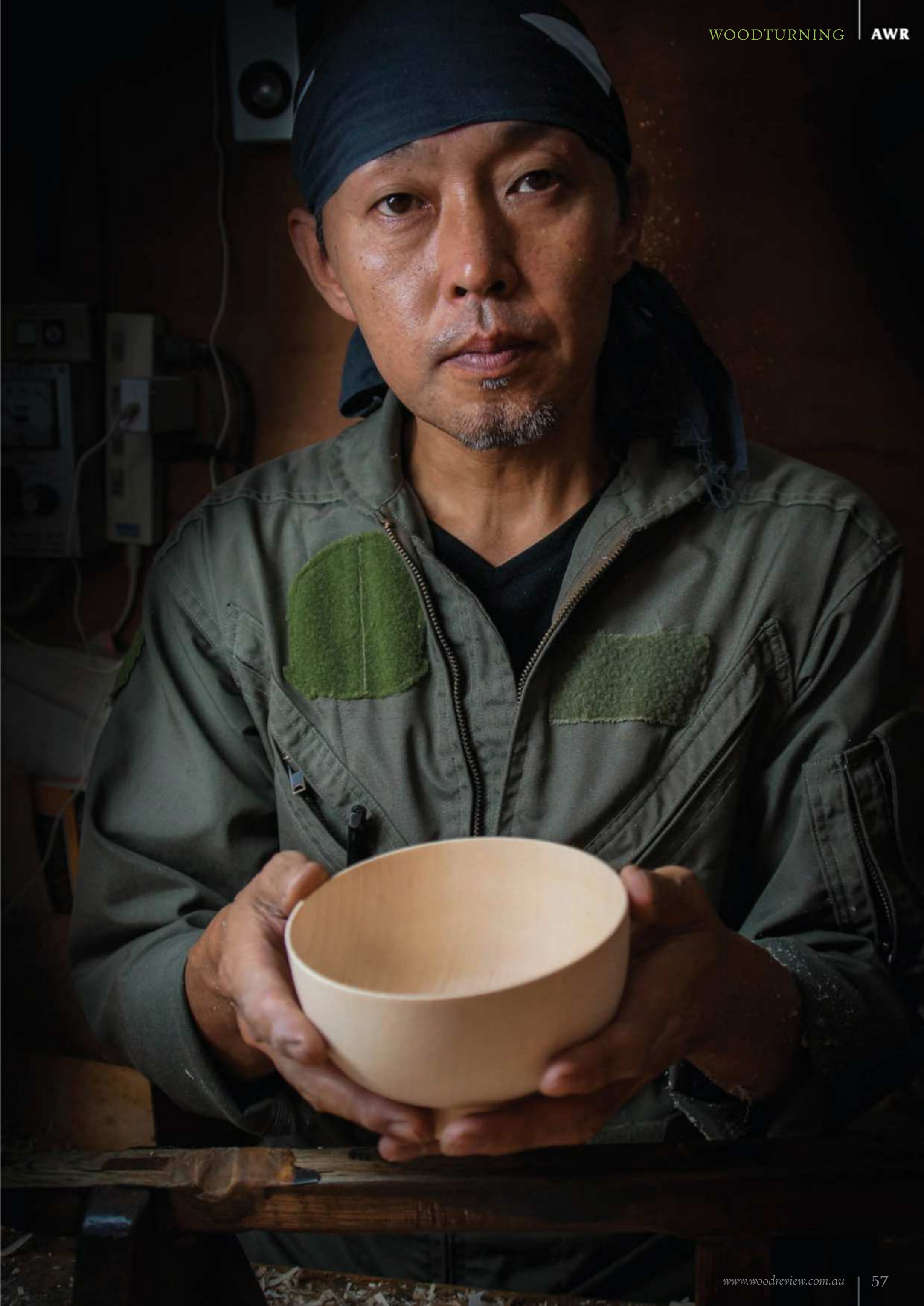

5. When you make your own tools, the possibilities are endless.

6. Mounting the blank in the jam-fit chuck

7. Turning the rim to size.

8. Recutting the chuck to accept the rim of the bowl.


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bowls in rooms where humidity is controlled (**photo 1**). In some places the partly finished blanks are stored in a room below where the turners work and they drop their shavings down a chute to be put in a slow-burning heater to slightly accelerate the drying process.

In Yamanaka turners sit at 90° to the axis of rotation with the headstock on their left. The headstock is enormous with heavy bearings and a very thick shaft that ends in a hefty cup chuck. All work is either mounted directly into the cup chuck, or into a jam-fit chuck that is hammered into it. The lathe is driven by belts and often the motor is in a separate space so it is very quiet. The direction of spin is reversible and this is done by left and right foot pedals that move the drive belt onto counter-rotating pulleys on the main shaft (**photos 2, 3, 4**). When neither pedal is depressed the shaft does not turn.

Like many Japanese turners, Nakajima-san sits in what is almost a cubicle, open on one side only. He sits against the 'bed' of the lathe, which is a flat table, and his legs are below the bed, positioned to operate the pedals. Nakajima-san forges his own tools, as do all Japanese turners, and he has an impressive array hanging on the wall ready for use (**photo 5**). These are mainly divided into hook tools and scrapers.

In the confined space it was impossible to take photographs from over Nakajima-san's right shoulder, which would have given the best view of the tool as it cuts.

We watched the final turning sequence where he finishes a bowl that has already been turned once to dry. In normal practice each of the individual steps shown here would be repeated hundreds of times without changing the jam-fit chuck, but here he shows the process with just one bowl.

In **photo 6** he selects a suitable chuck and hammers it into the cup chuck using the long cylindrical-headed hammer seen at the top of the photo. He hits it once hard and then rotates the piece slowly by gently touching a pedal so that it is not fully engaged.

As it rotates he rapidly aligns the blank with a series of small taps till it runs true. Then he quickly checks that the blank fits tightly in the chuck and adjusts with a quick cut of the tool if it is does not. The whole process takes less than a minute. The tools he will use are fanned out in front of him, each with a distinctive handle so he can identify them among the shavings. Between the tools and the hammer are four whetstones which he constantly uses to sharpen the tools with a quick flick of his wrist.


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9. Shaping the outside.

10. Final cutting of the foot.

11. Scraping the exterior.

12. Selecting a chuck for reversing the blank again.

13. Turning the inside.

14. Scraping the interior.


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In **photo 7** he trues the rim of the bowl, taking it down to the final external diameter and truing the internal diameter for rechucking. Like most Japanese turners, Nakajima-san does not measure, but he can make thousands of bowls, all with precisely the same dimensions.

In **photo 8** he has removed the blank and turns the jam-fit chuck down so it will accept the bowl blank in a reversed position. The blank is re-set on the chuck with a quick tap-tap, and in **photo 9** he starts final shaping of the exterior of the bowl with a hook tool. His left arm strongly holds the tool rest on the table and his hand fixes the shaft of the tool in its fulcrum position. The tool handle is under his armpit, which counteracts the strong leverage of the tool due to the long overhang. He cuts with swinging sideways motions of his upper body – all with amazing speed and precision. You can see the small indentation in the tool rest worn by the tip of his index finger, the result of years and years of daily work.

In **photo 10** the outside is completed by defining the sharp division between the bowl and its foot. How clearly his two index fingers define the axes of his movement! The whole outside is turned in less than a minute.

The final outside touch is made in **photo 11** with a hand-held scraper made from a piece of bandsaw blade taped to a piece of bamboo for support. It is always sharpened with a quick flick on the whetstone before use. The shavings seems to melt off the wood and it is done in seconds – no sanding required.

Nakajima-san selects another jam-fit chuck for turning the inside of the bowl in **photo 12**. Tap-tap, it is set up and the interior is turned in **photo 13**. He has moved the tool rest across to the front of the bowl and it is finished inside with a few quick swings of the hook tool. In **photo 14** the curved end of the scraper is used to finish the interior with a jet of perfect shavings.

Finally, Nakajima-san holds up the bowl and his expression says, 'I made this'. It all happened so fast it was hard to photograph, but when he is in proper production mode doing each step hundreds of times without changing chucks, it would be even faster. So we asked, 'How many of these can you make in a day?' He quietly answered, 'Two hundred.'

Photos: Terry Martin

Yuriko Nagata is a researcher with the University of Queensland.
Terry Martin is a Brisbane-based wood artist, author and curator.
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Carving a Eucalyptus Leaf

Robert Howard shows how to carve a complex and fragile natural form.

Above: Eucalyptus leaf, 240 x 70 x 2mm thick carved by the author from red cedar and shown with the model.

This particular eucalyptus leaf is larger than those native to this area. It has a dried out form that creates a lot of movement in its edges, and an interesting play of shadows down its length. I have chosen to carve it exactly as I found it, but some exaggeration could make it even more interesting.

I carved it from my favourite native wood, Australian cedar (*Toona ciliata*). It is not the best wood for the job as the figure can clash with the carved form, but I have it, and I like it.

Drawing 3D forms

Design drawings, using the standard plan view along with side and end elevations are straightforward for the regular rectilinear forms found in most furniture. Compound curved forms are much more difficult. Luckily, there is a substitute for them that is very simple.

First, I chose the view of the leaf that is the simplest to accurately draw. In this case it was the plan, or overhead view.

Practically, this means projecting the edge shape of the leaf vertically downwards onto the plane of a sheet of paper, or a thin sheet of wood.

To do this accurately, I made a simple jig. Firstly I taped the ends of the leaf to a sheet of thin plywood so it would not move if I gave it a nudge with the jig (**photo 1**), and carefully marked around it (**photo 2**). I cut out the resulting shape with my scroll saw (**photo 3**).


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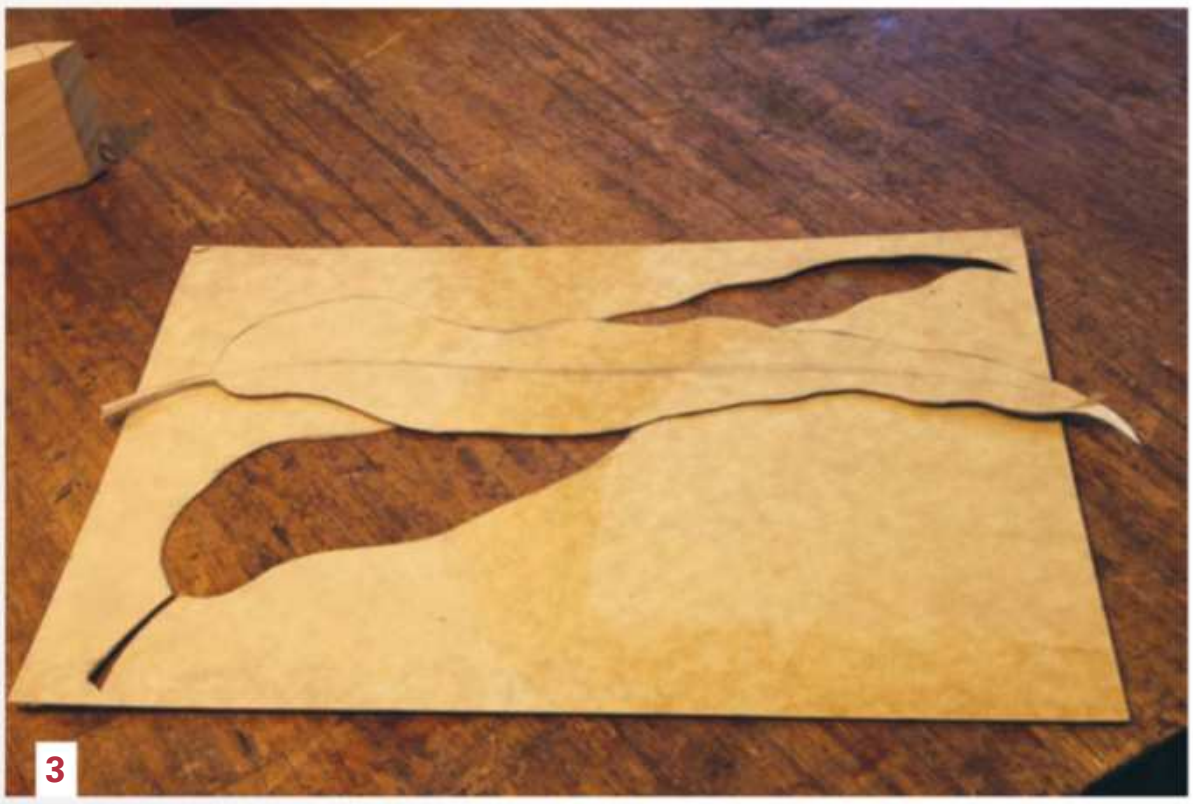
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1. The leaf the carving was modelled on was first taped down to a thin piece of MDF.
2. A simple jig held a pencil vertically below the edge of the leaf so its profile could be drawn for the plan view.
3. The plan view template of the leaf was cut out from MDF on the scrollsaw. This template was also used to cut the blank that would be carved.

4. The plan view template of the leaf was marked out onto the stock used to create jigs for holding the workpiece.
5. Marking the profile of one side edge of the leaf onto one half of the jig.
6. The wood to be carved sits inside the two lower halves of the jig which were screwed onto a base board. These lower surfaces are used to form the shape of the leaf edges.
7. The top surface has been roughly carved to the level of leaf edges.
8. The position of the centre vein has been carved in as well as the top surface of leaf.
9. Use a V-tool to outline the centre vein and then bring in the sides and work the leaf surface to match.


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Next, I needed to find a way to get my side and end elevations. I also knew I was going to need a jig to hold the leaf while I carved it. Serendipitously, there was an extremely simple way to do all this.

On a piece of scrap cedar, I traced the outline of the leaf, using my template, and bandsawed out the resulting shape in two halves (**photo 4**).

Then, in turn, I placed the leaf next to each half, in the position it had been in to make the original template, and traced the line of the edge onto the vertical wall made by the bandsaw cut (**photo 5**). Then I turned each half on its back and bandsawed out these two new shapes (**photo 6**).

This simple procedure gave me all the views I needed, in combined form, in the wood of my jig. Each point on the lines of intersection of these two cuts combined the plan, side elevation and end elevation of the leaf at that point.

My jig was now in four parts: a right-hand side cut in two, and a left-hand side cut in two. I selected the bottom right- and left-hand parts, and screwed them down around a leaf outline drawn onto a base board of plywood or MDF. I set the top pair aside for the moment, to use later in a similar way, but with an important difference that I will explain.

For the carving, I marked out another leaf, using my template, from a piece of quality cedar of higher density and better colour.

Carving the top surface

The two long sides of my leaf are completely different compound shapes, joined together by the centre vein. Close inspection of the actual leaf shows the vein roughly in the centre of the leaf down its length, and crucially, at no point is the vein

higher than either edge adjacent to it at that point. This meant that I could safely carve wood away horizontally inwards from each edge of my jig, towards the centre vein. At this stage, I was just roughing out the basic form (**photo 7**).

In order to more precisely carve the surface, I needed the centre vein. As eucalyptus leaves dry, this centre vein tends to hold its original form, with only gradual curves side to side and up and down.

Its top-down plan shape was easy to draw from the actual leaf. To add to that its side elevation shape, I carved along the drawn line, copying the gentle up and down undulations of the actual leaf (**photo 8**). I then carved inwards from the edge of the leaf to the vein, from each point around the leaf, paying particular attention to the way the actual leaf curved along the way. All this carving was quite safe, as the leaf was fully supported underneath at all points by the uncarved wood on the bottom.

I took care to gradually refine the width and height of the centre vein now, as it would be much more difficult to do at a later stage (**photo 9**).

Replicating the veins

Finally, I wanted to see if I could replicate something I have long admired in the gum leaf carvings of John Kendrick Blogg (1851–1936). Somehow he was able to carve very realistic venation in his leaves. The carving was so subtle I still wonder how he did it. Did he use scrapers? Or did he use the old carver's trick of scoring the lines into the wood with a smooth, blunt instrument, sanding the evidence away, and finally wetting the wood so the compressed, scored lines swelled to raise them above the surrounding wood surface?


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10. The perfect tool was found! Lines to imitate the veins were scored with half of a pair of spatula shaped tweezers.

11. Showing the central vein and venation of the model leaf with the final surface achieved.

12. The bottom two halves of the jig were screwed to the base board a tad closer so the inverted leaf carving could be supported on top. The leaf outline was marked and a small rebate carved in.

13. The more difficult bottom side of leaf has now been carved.

14. Showing the underside of the finished leaf carving.

I decided to try the latter method on this carving (**photo 10**), but I made one mistake. I should have done it before I carved the bottom surface. This would have allowed me to put some decent pressure on the scoring tool, which would have resulted in a more prominent raised line after wetting. Because I waited until the end, I only had partial success (**photo 11**), but it was enough to encourage me to try again on another carving sometime in the future.

Carving the underside

With the excess wood on the top surface carved away, I could not simply turn the carving over, and use a jig made with the other pair of pieces I set aside when I made the first jig. Most of the wood would have been unsupported, so that would not have worked.

For the top half, the jig enclosed the leaf carving, but for the bottom, I decided to move the two parts closer together, so the wood I was about to carve was held, not inside the jig as before, but instead, on top of it. In theory, the shapes should have been a perfect match. They weren't, of course, but they were close.

With the carving upside down on top of this new jig, I traced its shape onto the top surface. To hold the wood, I cut a shallow rebate about 3mm deep around the top surface of the jig, to the line marking out the shape of the leaf (**photo 12**).

Done accurately, this rebate stopped the wood from moving as I carved it. It also allowed me to compensate for discrepancies in the form, and so ensure that the leaf was supported at all points on its edge.

With regular reference to my leaf model, I now carved off the major part of the excess wood on this

bottom side of the leaf. This was the more difficult half to carve. Here, the leaf surface was above the edge at every point, so I needed to constantly refer to the actual leaf surface as I carved, as well as frequently check the thickness of my carving (**photo 13**).

As with the top half, I soon marked in the vein on this underside. I took great care to match it as closely as possible, as I carved it, with the shape carved on the upper side, both in its plan shape (as seen from above), and in its elevation (as seen from the side). Any error here could easily lead to carving a hole in the wood. Getting it right, however, was crucial to success with the carving.

Finally, I worked over and over the surfaces, slowly and carefully taking off tiny shavings, while all the time checking and rechecking the thickness. I was able to work both surfaces at this stage, because I had not yet sanded and scored the upper surface. Mistakes can have advantages.

The underside of the leaf has the tool marks on the surface, as I prefer this effect to a sanded finish (**photo 14**).

The finished thickness is between 1mm and 3mm, with most of it between 1mm and 2mm. A couple of coats of shellac, followed by some wax, and it was finished.

Process photos: Robert Howard

Photos of finished piece: Rebecca Nathan


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Robert Howard is a woodworker and sculptor who lives in Brisbane. He teaches regular woodwork classes from his studio. Email: howardrobert@me.com

Tilting at Windmills

'This is Not Memphis' was an exhibition that showcased the beauty and value of furniture made by the people who also design it. Words by Damien Wright.

Tasmanian furniture designer maker Laura McCusker with her *Short Black* table. *Photo: Peter Whyte*

1. Adam Markowitz, *Assegai* pendant and *Fred* table. *Photo: Ben Clement*

2. Laura McCusker, *Stand + Deliver* coatstand. *Photo: Peter Whyte*

'None of these makers can separate design from making, or craft from production'[1]. So opens Dr Olivia Hamilton's wonderful catalogue essay for the exhibition *This is Not Memphis* held at Craft Victoria in April to May this year.

Curated by Chloe Powell, Craft Victoria showed the work of six craftspeople: designer makers head down and hands busy at the top of their games, elegantly poised at the 'nexus of craft and design'[2].

Finding a stage for 'skill, discipline, time, process, ingenuity, virtuosity and beauty'[3] amongst the relentless machine noise of the 'design industry', Adam Markowitz, Bern Chandley, Bryan Cush, Daniel Poole, Laura McCusker and I focused our gifts in an oppositional frame to 'The Memphis School'. This is why.

Perhaps naively, we are staggered by the return of the 80s Memphis style, with its signature garish palette, its plastics, its incoherent geometry and faux irony. Eighties-themed parties and nostalgia-driven radio stations are one thing. But do we really need a contemporary wave of postmodern furniture design that speaks volumes about the indulgence and narcissism of our consumptive society? Are we going to do that again? Yes, I guess.

So we six designer makers picked on the poor old 'Memphis School.' Those radical Italian architects and their vain attempt to shake off the yolk of modernism have become an orthodoxy themselves. The freedom from material, structural and aesthetic 'rules' they sought has turned full circle to become dogma. The design industry, fashion, globalisation, rationalisation, built-in obsolescence and 'international style' is the new Grand Narrative.

The fundamental problem is this: it is not radical or brilliantly ironic to make something very badly. It is, in fact, incredibly conformist, predictable and lazy.

As Richard Sennett argues in *The Craftsman*, '…at different moments in Western history practical activity has been demeaned, divorced from supposedly higher pursuits. Technical skill has been removed from imagination, tangible reality doubted by religion, pride in one's work treated as a luxury…the craftsman's aspirations and trials hold up a mirror to these larger issues past and present'[4]. Virtuosity should once again be the new black, not shonky crap sprayed technicolour.

If you long to break a rule in this word of fast fashion furniture, if you wish to be a non-conformist, I suggest


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you design and make something. Work with your mind and your hands. And make it really well. Make it out of materials that matter and make it to last. Perhaps your object has a statement to make; perhaps it does not. But the act of 'doing' is, in this post-manual age, a radical and creative departure from convention.

The act of 'doing' is an expression of our humanity; our unique capacity to connect abstract thought and physical action. As Laura McCusker describes her practice, 'You get to fire on all aspects of what it means to be a human. Where the head is connected to your hands'[5]. Craft is Laura's sweet spot.

We are led to believe that with a punch of a key anyone can squeeze furniture out of a toothpaste tube. But I can assure you that very few people can or will make a chair like Bern Chandley.

And of course these six people are not new to this logic. We have all done our time. We are addicts one and all. And we can fill a room with beautiful and powerful objects. We can start and sustain a conversation. In *This is Not Memphis*, we did. We were engaged and engaging, gratifyingly admired and appreciated for doing so.

'Furniture that respects the past, stands firmly in the present and looks passionately to the future', is how Chloe Powell described our collective output in the *Not Memphis* catalogue[6]. The language of this scene, of this time and place, is craft. Craft is present in all of this. It is both a state of mind and a physical action. The 'impulse of craftsmanship'[7], as Sennett puts it.

That's the politics, so what's the work? Let me briefly flatter each of the makers in *This is Not Memphis*.

Have you ever laid eyes on – or even better touched or sat on – a Bern Chandley chair? Well I have and it is a thing to behold. Chandley interprets the Windsor chair within a contemporary Australian vernacular. It is like Marilyn Monroe singing Happy Birthday. You have heard that song a million times but not like this.

At Red Bluff, Western Australia, I once watched an osprey eagle rise from the cliff simply by extending its wings. It turned itself into the wind and rose with breathless grace soaring over the surfers and returned to its nest without beating its wings. It was one of the most beautiful things I have ever witnessed. Laura McCusker's *Short Black* evokes that magnificent creature's efficiency, power and confidence. Laura's command of the elements is sublime.

Adam Markowitz's *Assegai Pendant* light hung like Damocles' Sword over his *Fred* table and *Flea* chairs. Inspired by the far

Viking north, Markowitz pulls back mid-century modernism from the comedy of manners it has become. He pares back the pear, revealing an architecture of beauty, efficiency, refinement and purpose. Every detail matters. Every note just so.

If like me you admire the underneath of a bridge or perhaps even the high rise car park for its beauty and structural logic – for the grace of an utter intolerance to anything but purpose – then you will love Bryan Cush's *Pinch Bench*. Brutal, focused, democratic and satisfying. Whisky straight.

And Daniel Poole streaming Sam Malouf with his *Wandel* table, gives us perhaps the most beautiful sawhorse ever. A stunning exercise in virtuosity. Why? Well, because he can.

Lastly, I will not be so stupid as to frame my own work. Rather this is how historian Dr Billy Griffiths described my redgum *Food Bowl*. 'Like all his work, this object is an argument he has made with his hands. The rough, red, cracking grain of the wood runs length-ways across the piece, like gullies and rivulets spreading across a parched, burnt land. Damien encourages this comparison with his title, which is a pointed commentary on the mistreatment of the waterways on which the tree grew'[8]. The politics is the work.

More information about Craft Victoria is at www.craft.org.au

1. Olivia Hamilton, catalogue essay, This is not Memphis, 2018

2. Olivia Hamilton, catalogue essay, This is not Memphis, 2018

3. Damien Wright, catalogue essay, This is not Memphis, 2018

4. Richard Sennett, The Crafstman, Yale University Press, 2009

5. Laura McCusker. Video for Australian Design Centre, Obsessed, 2018. Filmmaker Angus Lee Forbes, https://vimeo.com/254595106

6. Chloe Powell, catalogue essay, This is not Memphis, 2018

7. Richard Sennett, The Crafstman, Yale University Press, 2009

8. Dr Billy Griffiths National Museum Australia, Every day futures, 2018, https://everydayfutures.com.au/project/ancient-red-gum

3. Bern Chandley, *Lowbow Diner. Photo: Christopher Sanders*

4. Bryan Cush, *Pinch Bench. Photo: Bryan Cush*

5. *Daniel Poole, Wandel Table. Photo: Jonathan Revill*

6. Bryan Cush, *Triqueta* coffee table. *Photo: Bryan Cush*

7. Damien Wright, *Reading Chair and Ned Table. Photo: Jeremy Dillon*

Damien Wright is a Melbourne based furniture designer maker. He appeared on the cover of AWR#97 and was profiled in that issue as well. Learn more at www.wrightstudios.com.au


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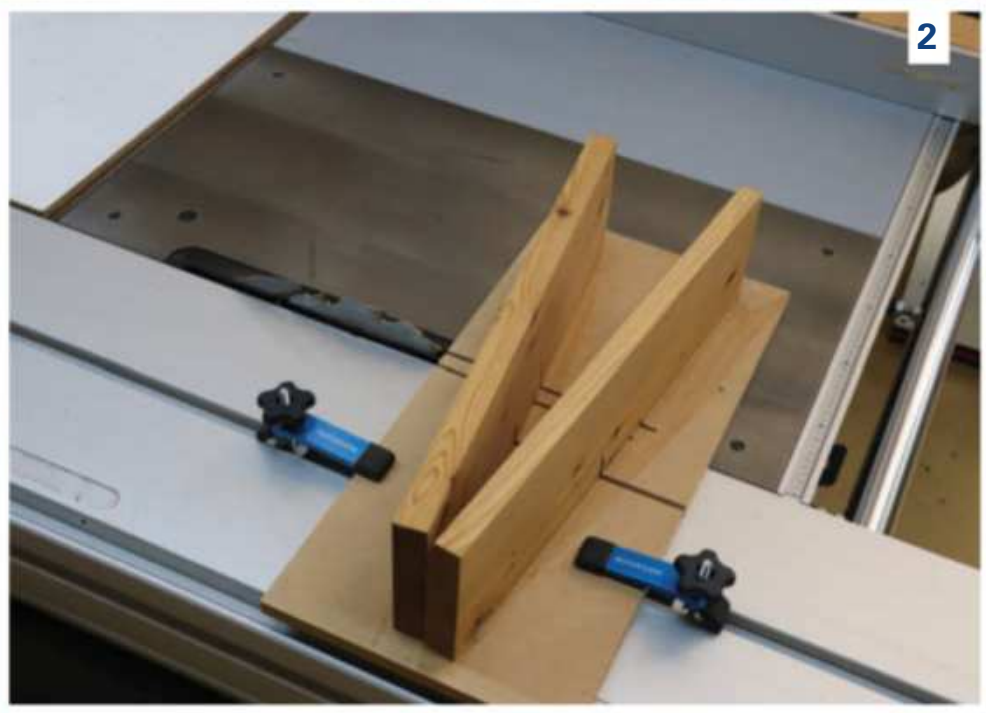
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Dovetails on a Tablesaw

Peter Young shows how to machine cut the joinery for an attractive bench seat.

My personal preference is to cut dovetails by hand, whether it is for drawers, boxes or bench seats. I like the look of the handcut joint and also the freedom it gives me in layout and design. But there are times when I use the tablesaw to do the job, as is the case with this bench seat which has quite thick components. The method is also useful where you need to do a number of dovetail drawer boxes of similar size for example.

Angles and sizes

To cut the tails, the sawblade needs to be angled, while for the tails the work needs to be angled. Commonly used dovetail angles are 7° (1:8), 9.5° (1:6) or 14° (1:4). My approach is to use lower angles for wider stock and bigger angles for narrow stock. So for a 22mm drawer front I routinely use 1:8 ratio but for a 6mm tray inside a box I would use 1:4. For this project I am going to use 7° or about a 1:8 ratio.

Jigs and fences

Two jigs are required, one for cutting tails and the other for cutting the pins. The details of the jigs vary a little depending on the type of tablesaw you are using. For the tails jig on a standard tablesaw you need to make a crosscut sled (see Andy Groeneweld's article in *AWR#98*). For a saw with a sliding table, as shown in the article, the jig is L-shaped and is clamped to the crosscut fence (**photo 1**).

For the pins jig, the work needs to be presented to the blade at the same angle as the dovetails, in this case 7°. Two angled fences are required, one to cut each side of the pins (**photo 2**).

Cutting the tails

I lay out the tails on the leg components using a black marker for clarity and working from the centre line outwards. If I'm making several dovetailed boxes or drawers I only need to mark up one drawer side and then I use a stop block to make the same cut on each of the other sides.

A rip blade is used to make the cuts but as it is at a 7° angle the base line is not square and some cleaning up will be required, so I adjust the height of the blade so that it cuts 1–2mm below the base line (**photos 3, 4**).

Main: Cutting dovetails on the tablesaw is a useful technique for large scale sections or production work.

Above: Made from red cedar and silver ash, the author's bench seat is 1030 x 370 x 450mm high and features machine cut dovetails and curved ends.

1. L-shaped jig for cutting tails on the sliding tablesaw.
2. The jig for cutting the pins has two fences angled at 7°.


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3. Cutting tails with the L-shaped jig and a standard rip blade, set the cut to just below the base line.

4. Close-up view of machining the tails.

5, 6. Cutting tails with a modified rip blade with the tips of the teeth re-ground at 7°, allows a clean cut right on the baseline.

7. After cutting both sides with a modified blade there is only a small amount of hand work required to remove the waste.

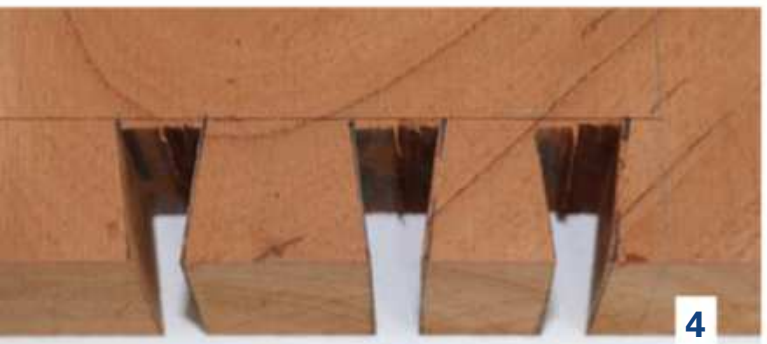
8. To transfer the tail layout to the end of the pin board, clamp a baton on the baseline of the inside face of the tail board.

9. The baton registers on the back of the pin board allowing easy transfer of the layout.

10. Pin board layout with waste clearly marked in red.

11. Make a test cut to make sure the cut goes all the way to the baseline.

12. Cutting the pins.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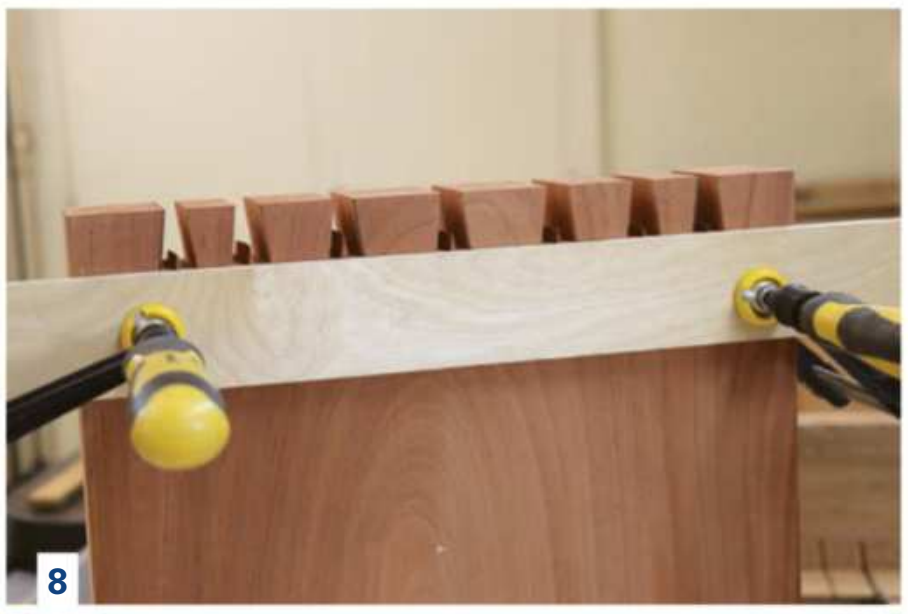
If you are using the tablesaw method often it is worthwhile using a dedicated rip blade with the top of the teeth re-ground to 7°. This produces a nice clean cut and you can set the depth of cut right on the base line (**photos 5, 6**). With a 7° angle and 10mm pins there is only a small triangle of material left to clean up by hand (**photo 7**).

Cutting the tails in the legs of the bench is fairly straightforward. Using a digital protractor set the blade to 7°, and then cut to the layout line. Starting at the half pins, make a cut on the waste side of the line. Now flip the piece and make the same cut on the other end of the same board. Repeat with the other leg. Now go back to the first leg and make the next cut, then repeat the procedure until all the joints are cut.

Cutting the pins

Now you need to transfer the tail layout to the pin board. On large components like the bench, I like to clamp a baton on the baseline on the inside of the tail board (**photo 8**). With the tail board supported so that it is at the same height as the pin board held vertically in the vice, it is now a straightforward matter of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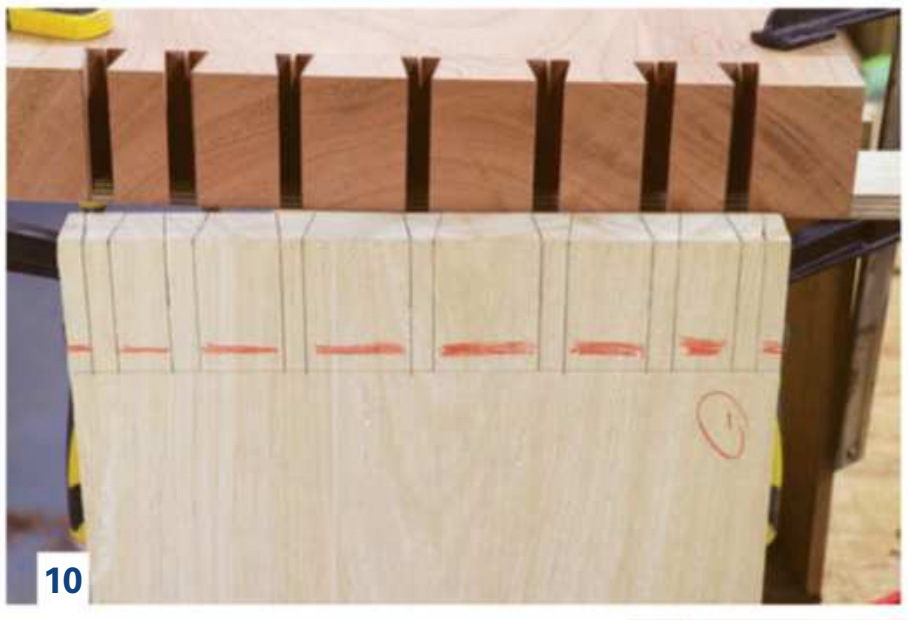
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transferring the layout to the end of the pin board (**photos 9, 10**).

Theoretically, all the components should be the same, so it should only be necessary to mark out one tail board and use it to set up for all the other cuts. In practice it is safer to individually transfer the tail layout to each pin board.

Make a test cut on an offcut to make sure that the blade is at the correct height (**photo 11**). One side of the tails jig is used to cut one side of the tails, then turn the jig around to cut the other side of the pins (**photos 12, 13**). Use a rip blade with the teeth square at the top and the position the blade vertically.

As with handcut dovetails, some paring may be required to fit the pins accurately to the tails (**photo 14**) but with practice and knowing how close to cut to the layout lines the amount of paring can be minimised.


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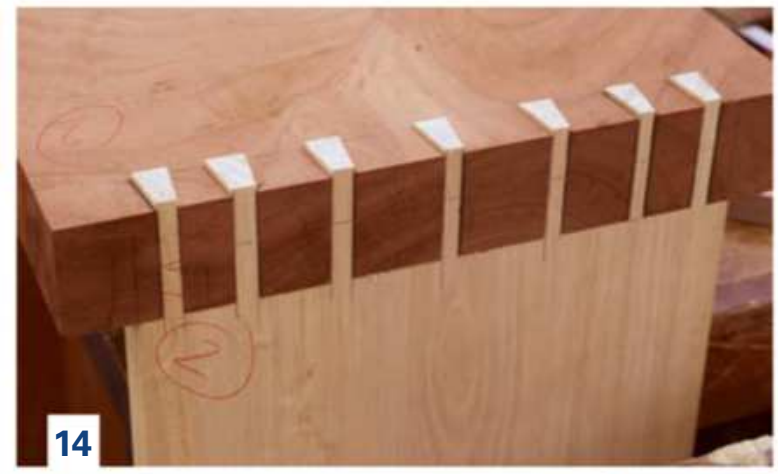
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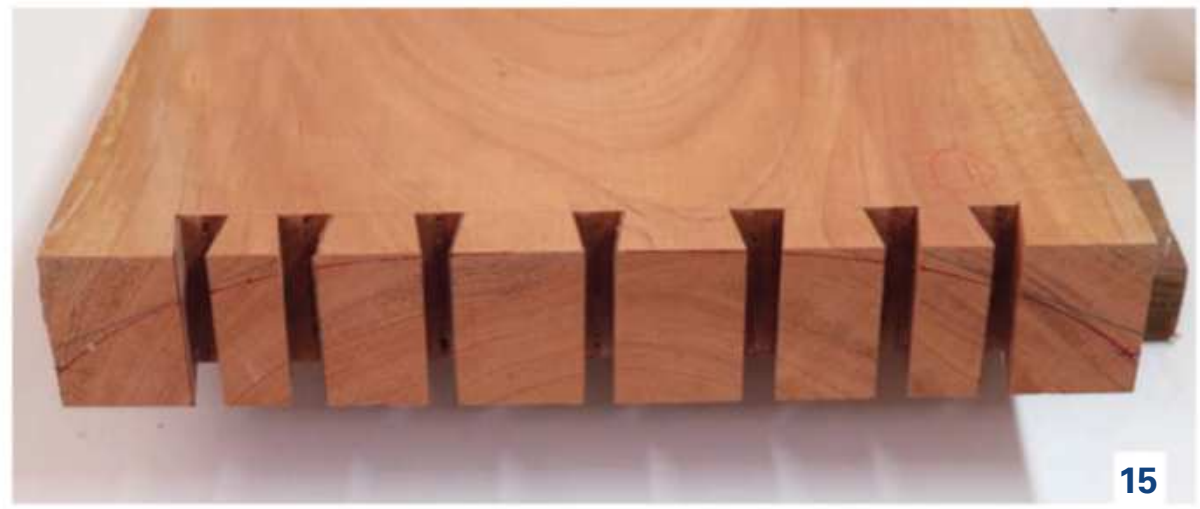
13. Completed pin cuts.

14. Fitting the joint.

15. Lay out the desired curve on the end of the legs.

16. Remove as much of the waste as possible using a jig to hold the work on the sliding table.

17. Complete the curve using planes and cabinet scraper.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Cutting the curves

Now that the dovetails have been cut for the bench seat, the legs can be shaped to a curve (**photo 15**). I was unable to do this with my bandsaw, so I removed the bulk of the waste by clamping the leg to a right angle fence attached to the sliding table of the tablesaw and the blade angled to a tangent of the curve (**photo 16**). The remainder of the curve was produced using handplanes and cabinet scrapers (**photo 17**).

Summing up

For this bench project, the main advantage of cutting the dovetails on the tablesaw was the ability to handle the quite large components with ease. Similar advantages would apply to large carcase components.

For smaller components such as drawers, the main advantages are the relative speed of cutting out the tails and pins, especially if all the drawers are the same size and there is no need to lay out the cutting lines for each individual drawer.

It is also possible to cut quite small pins and this is helped by having a narrow kerf blade reground to the appropriate angle, in this case 7°. Another advantage is the ability to vary the space between pins. A disadvantage over say router jig methods is that individual fitting of the joints may be required.

So, while I do not use the tablesaw method frequently, it is a good technique for certain circumstances, and this bench seat is a good example.

Photos: Peter Young


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Peter Young is a studio furniture designer and maker who lives in Brisbane. Peter teaches at Sturt School for Wood and sometimes at other woodworking schools. Email Peter at pydesign@tpg.com.au

A Festival is Coming

Wood Dust Australia is a five-day multi-layered event for woodworkers that will launch on October 17, 2018.

Opposite page from left: Michael Fortune, Thomas Lie Nielsen, Terry Gordon and Matt Kenney.

Clockwise this page: Queanbeyan's Q Theatre, Andy Buck and Vic Tesolin.

It's no secret that in recent years attendances at capital city wood shows have flagged. Formats can get stale if not renewed and revamped. Enter Wood Dust Australia, a multi-layered event for woodworkers that bills itself as an international festival.

A two-day Timber & Tool Marketplace will take place just over half an hour's drive from Canberra at Bungendore Showgrounds, while in the lead-up, workshops and evening seminars will take place in Queanbeyan.

In addition, Bungendore Wood Works Gallery and Australian Wood Review have once again teamed up to produce Studio Furniture 2018, an exhibition of new work by leading Australian, New Zealand and international woodworkers that will open during the festival. Time to pack your bag and book your ticket!

The list of international guests goes to the top of the tree with hand tool royalty like Thomas Lie-Nielsen, Vic Tesolin and Wally Wilson from Veritas. Also flying in are Canadian designer maker and teacher Michael Fortune, US wood artist Andy Buck and Matt Kenney, author and one of Fine Woodworking magazine's editors.

Wood Dust is the brainstorm of well known Australian woodworker Evan Dunstone and woodworker/marketer John Madden. This dynamic partnership has decided to take the woodworking world by storm and create 'the kind of woodworking event that we would like to attend'.

To this end, Wood Dust Australia will kick off with a series of Masterclasses. These will take place at the Dunstone Design workshop in Queanbeyan, a fully equipped professional woodworking setup. Those who are lucky enough to have already booked will now have the opportunity to learn skills in design and prototyping, steam bending, kumiko making, hand tool skills and woodcarving, and the list goes on. If you're reading this now however, you can also enquire about the Short Masterclass program that is also offering places.

You're not too late however to attend a series of 'Yarns at the Q'. These take place at Queanbeyan's Q Theatre auditorium and will be evenings of talks and Q&A sessions that will feature the aforementioned international guests along with local wood celebrities such as fine toolmakers Terry Gordon and Chis Vesper, along with wood artisans Carol Russell, Ross Annels, Kerryn Carter, Bern Chandley and Chelsea Lemon.

Some of the program highlights are outlined over the page but you can get all the details from the website at www.wooddustaustralia.com

Clockwise from above, some of the woodworkers and toolmakers who will participate in Yarns at the Q and give workshops, along with some of their work: Wood Dust co-founder Evan Dunstone (second from right) with the team and Dunstone Design, handplanes by Brian Shugarue, platter by Chelsea Lemon, Wood Dust co-founder John Madden, wings carving by Kerryn Carter, turned vessel by Hiroshi Yamaguchi, marquetry art by Chelsea Lemon, spoons by Carol Russell, Chris Vesper fine toolmaker, kumiko work by Matt Kenney, stools by Andy Buck, carving by Robert Howard, table by Michael Fortune.

Head to the Marketplace

There are two big days of activity at Wood Dust's **Timber & Tool Marketplace**. This takes place at Bungendore Showgrounds over the weekend of October 20–21, 2018.

For starters, a full complement of local and international vendors will display fine tools and timbers. One special must-see is Melbourne toolmaker Brian Shugarue, who will publicly display his handplanes for the first time. Demonstrations include carving workshops by Carol Russell, chopstick making and a program of talks.

Meet the Makers Pavillion
Here you can chat with identities such as Michael Fortune, Matt Kenney and Vic Tesolin, and also talk shop with toolmakers Thomas Lie-Nielsen and Terry Gordon.

Luthier's Lane and Performance Stage
You now have the chance to meet face to face with instrument makers of all types and also enjoy live musical performances by local artists playing instruments made by luthiers exhibiting at Wood Dust.

Axe Throwing
Well, why not? Just for fun, Wood Dust attendees will have the chance to try their arm at the onsite axe throwing arena. If you're feeling confident you can enter Wood Dust's Axe Throwing Tournament and take on the likes of Thomas Lie Nielsen. Axe throwing is courtesy of Maniax Axe Throwing and naturally is a regulated activity! Tournament entries open September 10 via the website.

Air Woodworker
If axe throwing is not your thing perhaps Air Woodworker is? In the vein of air guitar, get up on stage and show off your woodworking moves to a 60 second soundtrack! There are prizes of course. That's one to start practising – enter online and download the audio file. Entries open September 24.

Wood Dust TV
To keep everyone connected, Wood Dust TV will be live streaming interviews with international guests, live updates on festival activities, woodworking demos and general chats.

Food and Drink
A festival that celebrates handmade will also be supported with good food and craft beer. Expect country hospitality.

There's more to come of course, but it will pay to plan ahead. The full Wood Dust program will be available online form October 1, and of course at the gate on arrival at the event.

For all information and registrations see www.wooddustaustralia.com

The Chopping Board Bako

Here's a way to display all those beautiful boards you made from the offcuts you saved. Story by Kerryn Carter.

It's that time of year...my pile of wood shorts is threatening to take over my small part of the world. It's a veritable graveyard of the odd one out in pine, blackwood, jarrah, mahogany and rosewood. So now it's time to grow up and use my tablesaw to make my problem into chopping boards.

The ubiquitous chopping board... all glued together and thicknessed beautifully can be handed to friends and family with a smile, like it was an inspired choice of wood and tools and talent. But we all know that chopping boards are a win all-round, they really are a genius solution to make our wood piles smaller while making our friends and family happy.

The slightly annoying thing about chopping boards though is the lack of the means to display them. That's the trick isn't it? You go to a reasonable amount of trouble to

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make them, so they can live out their lives between the coffee machine and the kitchen wall. Or worse still, at the back of a cupboard only to see the light of day when someone needs a carrot chopped.

So I have brought my chopping boards out from the back of the coffee machine and made them interlock into a box that can sit elegantly on its own in a kitchen. When called into service the boards will complement your French cheese selection or even your diced carrots and give them some graphic appeal.

Inspired by the *himitsu bako* or the Japanese puzzle boxes, the *Himitsu Chopping Board Bako* is six chopping or serving boards in one. The boards come in four different sizes which gives me a few presentation possibilities. Once the top board is removed the rest of the boards simply slide out leaving the base board which just needs to be flipped over to be put into service.

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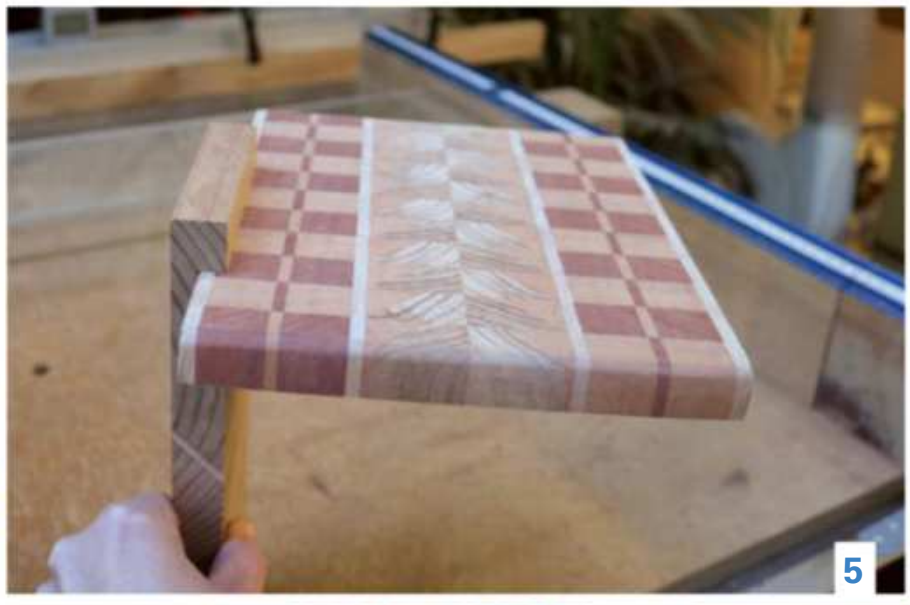
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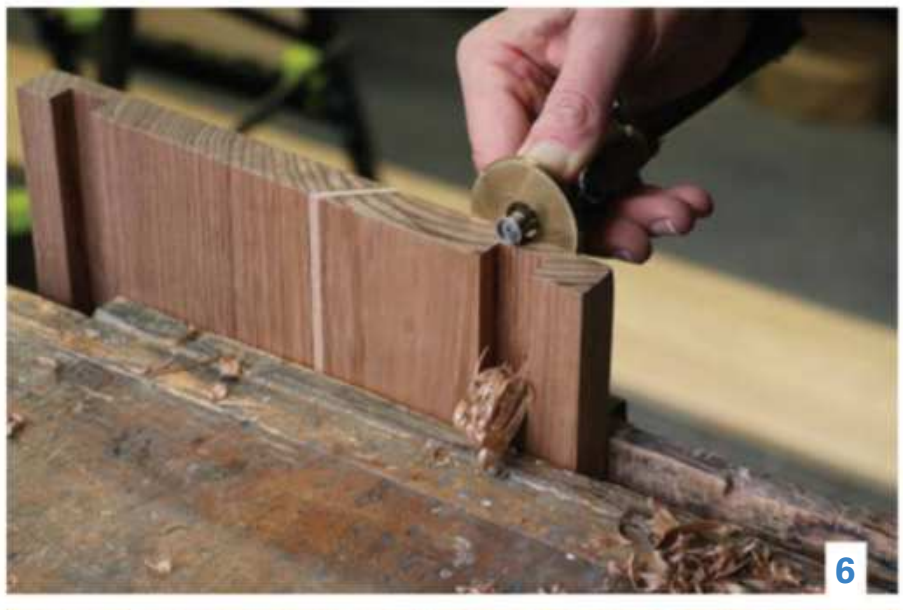
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Most of the box is made from Tasmanian blackwood which is also the tree motif in the centre of the top 'hero' board. There are also strips of kauri pine, mahogany and jarrah.

This article is not about how I made my endgrain boards but suffice to say I learnt a lot about the pitfalls of making them, not the least of which was a particularly harsh lesson in how much thicknessers like unsupported endgrain (not much apparently).

If I ever make another endgrain chopping board I will be including some sacrificial pieces glued to each end to support all the endgrain and docking the sacrificial pieces off at the very end (butcher block style). Enough of that, back to the interlocking box design.

This entire project was made on my tablesaw with either my ripping setup or my crosscut sled in place. There are certainly times when a router would be faster but I feel it's a false economy given how easy it is to make micro adjustments to dado widths on my sled. Individually fitting each board snugly to each groove/dado is king here, so the sled was perfect for my purposes.

I am pretty sure the recipient (my mum) will be well pleased with the elegance and functionality of the board puzzle box. All that remains now is to crack open the cheese and the bubbles and quietly toast to my happily depleted shorts wood pile.

Photos: Kerryn Carter

Kerryn Carter teaches woodwork classes for kids and women in Sydney. Email: kerryn@toolschool.com.au

1. Start with some fully dressed boards of your choosing. I decided to make some elaborate boards but you don't have to. This box can be made without gluing up anything. All my boards were thicknessed to 19mm.

2. The top and bottom chopping boards are identical as are the two slim side boards.

3. Mark up the side board grooves to take the top and bottom boards.

4. I used my crosscut sled to waste out the grooves to a depth of 10mm. You can use the router for this too.

5. Make sure the grooves aren't oversize, the fit needs to be snug.

6. I cleaned up most of the grooves/ dados that were going to be visible from the sides to get rid of the saw marks.

7. Test the assembly of the top and bottom boards with the two side boards.

8. The bottom board now needs its dados cut. Here you'll see the dados are pulled inside from the ends of each side of the side boards by the depth of the grooves you've been cutting (in my case 10mm). The width of the dado is 19mm. Those two dimensions alone determine the location of each dado cut.

9. The front and back boards are then cut from the same long board to make sure they are the same width. The dados are then cut in those boards.

10. The six pieces are now ready for shaping.

11. Using a block plane to break the edges.

12. Test fit before sanding

13. It all went together in the final assembly.

14. Showing the end view.

15. Lastly, food safe mineral oil was applied to each surface.


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Reflections on how the pendulum has swung, and swung again. Words by Linda Nathan, Editor.

100 Issues

One hundred issues over 25 years of production is cause for reflection and that means making judgements and comparisons. But how to summarise? Thinking back brought me to reflect on how the local scene has changed, and changed again. Here's a potted history.

In the beginning…

Along with hippies and the counterculture the 60s and 70s brought us the First Great Craft Revival, a rejection of the mass produced. There was macramé, handspun and hand woven, there were slabs of earthenware, slabs of wood and the zen of making. We used wood like there was no tomorrow…and yes it was fun. Beards were in, but haircuts were long.

Self learning and beyond

Without formal avenues of learning the woodworking fraternity continued on a course of furious self-education that for many started with the books of James Krenov and Fine Woodworking magazine, and some schooling in woodcraft as opposed to wood trades became available.

In 1984, George Ingham, once a student at John Makepeace's Parnham School in the UK, came to Australia and founded a course at the ANU that is different now but still exists. Other schools have come and gone, The Melbourne School of Woodcraft (Vic), Australian School of Fine Wood (WA), Australian School of Fine Furniture (Tas) to name a few. Design and fine woodwork courses were established at TAFE colleges but in recent decades these have been popping off one by one and morphing into other tertiary disciplines. On the upside there are many more makers now offering ongoing tuition.

Identity crises

Artist, artisan, designer, maker, craftsperson – for decades one has had to decide. There were camps divided by politics and notions of style. The trades were there too, and unlike studio crafts, grew to be a generally better paid career choice.

Calling oneself an artist could seem pretentious. The same held for being an artisan, although nowadays this term recalls a skills-based heritage. In the 80s designers ruled. Every second business seemed to have 'by design' added onto their name. Towards the 90s craft became a dirty word

– we'd had enough of those lumpy knits and clunky furniture creations – being 'crafty' was a put-down.

But in this century 'craft' has become cool again. We are enjoying the renaissance of the handmade and now everything is being 'crafted'. Today's designer makers can show how one skill informs the other.

In the 90s designers and makers longed to be more like the other. Highlighting this division were government initiatives such as Arts + Industry (c.1995) with its design competition *Australis incognita* that aimed to unite designers with manufacturers.

Makers still need to be better at design, and many designers are now turning to makers to add the sustainability and credibility that 'well made' can give to their work.

Our cultural cringe

Of course being Australians and insecure we needed to get our work seen overseas. Bigger markets, rich people, 'benefactors' even – these were the reasons, and wasn't that where true recognition lay?

In *AWR#3*, 25 years ago, I quoted Helmut Lueckenhausen who referred to Euro-chic and local 'perpetrators' of a culture that mainly approved only of work from Europe. As of 2018, for the first half of the year, social wood and design media was awash with Milan and Aussies showing their stuff and having their vino too. It looked like fun – I would have loved to be there. But do we still really need that approval? Looks like we do, yes.

Economies of manufacture

Back to the 90s and enter the world of flat pack. This was and is a style of component-based 'nested' manufactured goods that we were sold on much like that recession we also had to have. If that was the method, manmade boards were the medium, with the message being they had environmental credentials. Perhaps.

With transport costs skyrocketing and cognisance of carbon miles growing, volumetric economies were on offer. Flat pack seemed clever too. Cut-outs, connectors, nuts and bolts and some smooth slide and push-to-open cabinet hardware was the stuff of IKEA and commercial cabinet and furniture makers. But did it really look good, and will it survive?

Styles we loved, scorned and loved again

Speaking of the verge, forward to the noughties and teens of the 21st century and we have witnessed a huge revival of 'mid-century modern'. Tessa and Parker found themselves right back in again and I'm happy that founder Tony Parker was around to enjoy that. A shame many others who designed in the 1950s and 60s can't witness how their furniture, cast off by many in the 70s and 80s came to be our flavour of the month.

In the 80s, along with shoulder pads, we had Memphis style, straight out Milan of course and for a while it really was fun. Colour and geometric shapes including pyramids and columns with an authenticity that apparently went back to Ancient Egypt. Damien Wright has more to say on that this issue.

Mid-century, Scandinavian especially Danish, Japanese and Shaker not to mention vestiges of Maloof and Krenov are amongst styles that influence today's makers, and I admit to also liking them, but what and where is our own style?

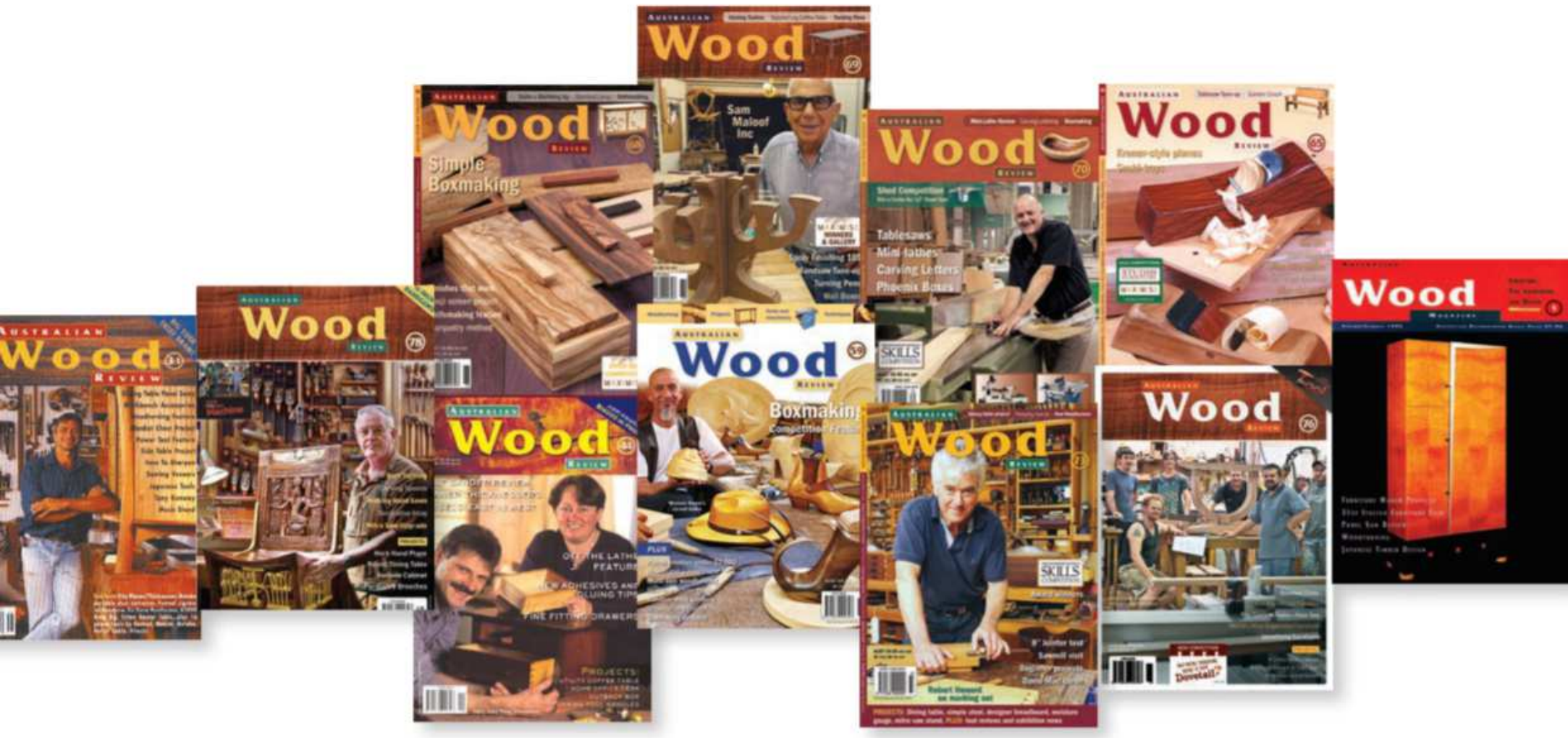
I love American walnut and get why it's popular, but I love our native trees and woods more. Shouldn't they be the basis of our Australian style? Developing designs and technologies of construction based on endemic woods and the politics of place must be one way to help that along.

The Second Craft Revival

The rise of the 21st century 'maker movement' has been widely acknowledged and the viability of studio crafts is enabled through the use of social media and online sales platforms. With access to the world and the ability to tell one's story day by day, individual makers/designers/craftspeople have been able to market their wares cost effectively. And beards are back in, but haircuts are short.

Wood shows

Thirty years of wood shows have not escaped unnoticed by me or my partner Raf Nathan, mainly because we launched the Working



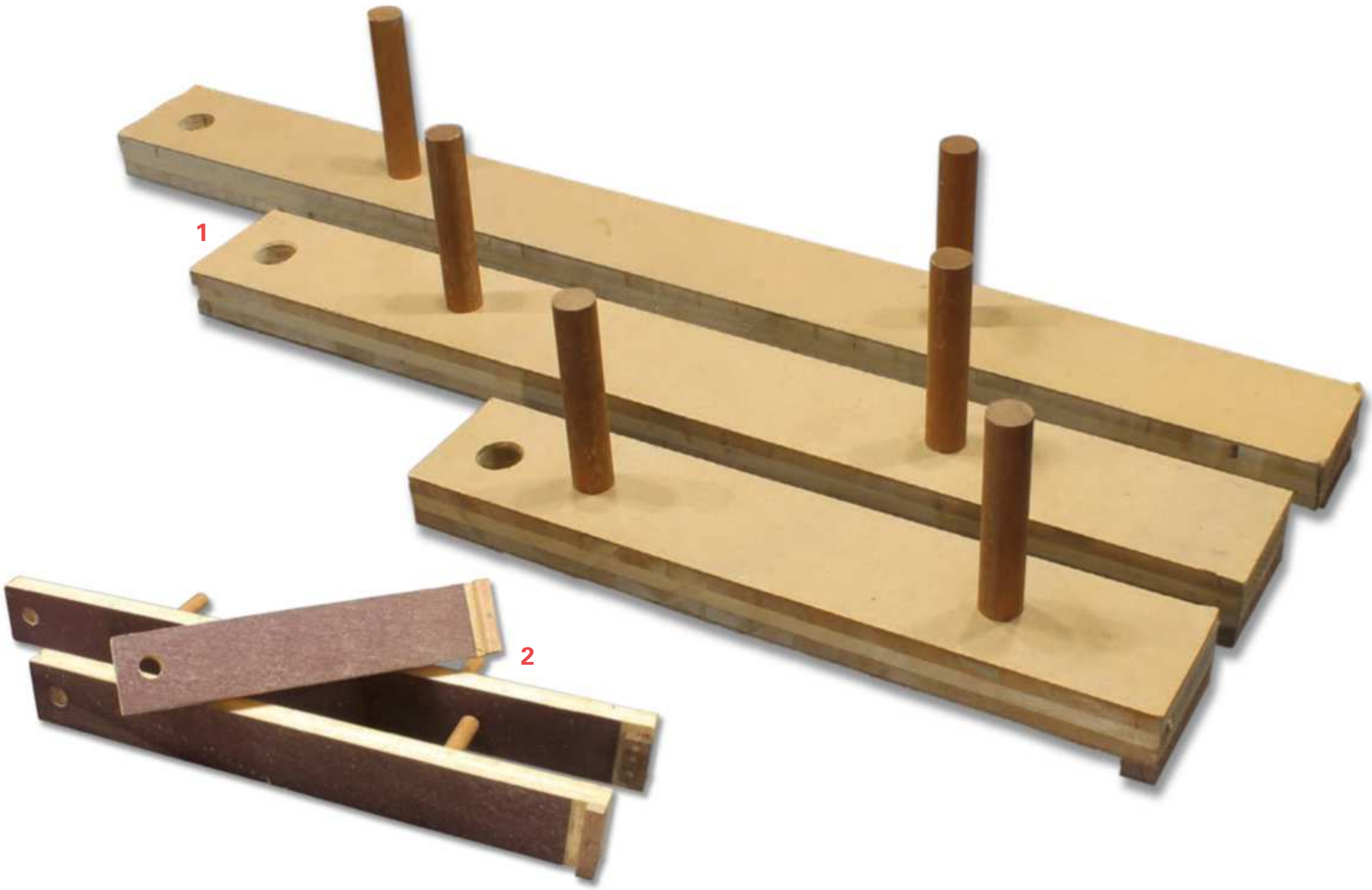
With Wood Show in 1988, and then renamed it to The Timber & Working With Wood Show the year after. Those first shows, held in the Royal Exhibition Building in Melbourne attracted over 22,000 attendees, although it took a lot to achieve that 'instant success'. With representation from government, timber and panel producers, large scale machinery manufacturers and suppliers, along with a National Woodwork Exhibition of some 218 pieces – these shows were very different then.

In the last two decades we've seen the show model successfully taken up by clubs, suppliers and schools hosting their own events with demonstrations and a commercial trade element. It's good to see how new events are appearing, some more targeted and others offering a more multi-layered festival atmosphere.

Enough said

So what's my point? It's ironic how attitudes and preferences that have swung back and forth. Fashions, styles and the politics of sustainability all hark back to respecting the material itself. Wood. Perhaps it takes a lot longer than 26 years to see what will endure.

In the face of all this change that only ever seems to escalate, how good is it to retreat into one's shed, workshop, studio or in my case even to whittle at the kitchen table? Find a piece of a beautiful natural substance like wood that will remind you of forests and your connection with and respect for the earth. Fashion it into something, and experience something tangible and real. I do this, and when I think of that, feel happy that some sense of that has always been the aim of what this magazine is about for the many, many people who have been part of it and supported it.



Push and Pull Sticks For Jointers

Darren Oates shows a safer way to joint long boards.

A lot of timber I use these days is roughsawn and usually two to three metres in length. I have a very large jointer with 2.6m long tables that are 500mm wide. Even with a machine this size it can be hard to safely manoeuvre long pieces of timber across the surface.

I thought there had to be a better way and the three push/pull sticks shown in **photo 1** were the answer. They were made back in 2008 and I've been using them ever since.

Made for varying lengths of timber, they range in size from 550mm to 1000mm in length and all are 100mm wide. They are made from blockboard, because this is was what I had on hand at the time. If I were to remake these now I would use two pieces of 18mm marine ply glued together to make a push/pull stick that was 36mm thick.

They need to be quite thick as all the pushing motion will be through the two dowels that will be bored into this surface. If using this construction method use an epoxy for gluing the two pieces together so that you are not introducing any water into the plywood as you would with a PVA. This is to ensure stability and to keep the stick flat and straight.

Photo 2 shows how 60 grit sandpaper is glued to their underside to them to give a non-slip surface. This eliminates any sideways movement as you are passing the wood over the cutters. Once again, try to use a non-waterbased glue for this setup.

The tab you can also see in the photo locks onto the end of the board you are jointing. The tabs are glued to the underside of the stick and then strengthened with wooden dowels. This is also a safety precaution for the day when the tabs hit the cutters. Using wooden dowels means no damage will be done to the machine cutters as would be the case if you held the tab in place with metal screws.

Please note that the jointer was isolated from the mains power when the following photos were taken. The fence and guard were also removed for photographic purposes but are used when machining.

Photo 3 At the start of the cut I am pushing down on the front of the timber and also pulling it across the machine surface via the forward handle on the push/pull stick. This gives a very positive feel to this operation as there is no slippage at all incurred even on a heavy piece of timber.

Photo 4 The piece of timber is now one third the way across the cutters. I have switched from pulling to pushing, still using the forward handle. I am still pushing down on the front of the timber which is essential for achieving a flat surface.

Photo 5 This is the end of the jointing procedure. In a smooth motion, I have moved my left hand onto the forward handle and my right hand onto the back handle to finish passing the piece of timber over the machines cutters. I am also pushing down on the front handle and pushing forward on the back handle.

For ten years these push/pull sticks have always been my go-to tools for jointing all sizes of boards, but especially large and long pieces. They are also great for keeping your hands well away from spinning cutters and a much safer way to carry out this essential procedure.

Photos: Darren Oates

Darren Oates is a studio furniture maker based in the Hawkesbury, NSW. Email darrenoates@gmail.com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Wood Diary

For more events and news sign up to AWR fortnightly newsletters at:
www.woodreview.com.au

Diary listings are free. **Email to:** linda@woodreview.com.au

Note: Listings are correct at time of publication but may be subject to change. It is advisable to check details with the organiser before visiting.

7–9 SEPTEMBER
Melbourne Timber & Working With Wood Show
Seaworks, Williamstown, Vic
www.timbershows.com.au

8 SEPTEMBER
25th Anniversary Open Day
South Burnett Woodcrafters Inc
Doug Hutcheson: owlbrudder@gmail.com

10–13 SEPTEMBER
China (Shanghai) International Furniture Machinery & Woodworking Fair
NECC, Shanghai, PR China
www.woodworkfair.com

21 SEPTEMBER
FIAA Industry Awards Crystal Palace
Luna Park, Sydney
www.fiaa.com.au

28–29 SEPTEMBER
Cooroora Wood Craft Show
Cooroy Memorial Hall, 23 Maple St, Cooroy, Qld
www.cooroorawoodworkersclub.com

13–30 SEPTEMBER
Fringe Furniture Festival 2018
Abbotsford Convent, Melbourne
www.melbournefringe.com.au

29–30 SEPTEMBER
Spoonies in the Tweed
With master craftsman Robert Howard
Uki, Tweed Valley, NSW
www.tweedspooncarving.com.au

30 SEPTEMBER
Dangerous Designs
Online competition
Closing date for 2018 entry
www.dangerousdesigns.com.au

6–7 OCTOBER
Lost Trades Fair
Rare and artisan trade demonstrations and displays
Cobb & Co Museum, Toowoomba, Qld
www.rundellandrundell.com.au

12–14 OCTOBER
Illawarra Festival of Wood
Bulli Showgrounds, NSW
www.illawarrafestivalofwood.com

17–21 OCTOBER
Wood Dust Australia
The Australian and Internernational Timber & Woodworking Festival
Queanbeyan and Bungendore, NSW
www.wooddustaustralia.com

20 OCTOBER 2018–JANUARY 31, 2019
AWR Studio Furniture 2018
Juried exhibition produced with and shown at Bungendore Wood Works Gallery, NSW
Presented by Felder Group Australia
www.woodreview.com.au/studio-furniture

3–4 NOVEMBER
Spoon Jam
Spooncarving workshops
Pambula, NSW
www.spoonsmith.com.au

9–11 NOVEMBER
Canberra Timber & Working With Wood Show
Canberra Racecouse, ACT
www.timbershows.com.au

10–11 NOVEMBER
Annual exhibition, demos, kid's program
Eltham & District Woodworkers
Eltham Community Centre, Main Rd, Eltham, Vic
Geoff (03) 9432 9047 Charles 0413 481 699

5–25 NOVEMBER
DESIGN Canberra
Over 100 events linking makers and designers including exhibitions, talks, tours, open studios
www.designcanberrafestival.com.au

SF18 studio furniture

Australian Wood Review | wood works gallery Bungendore | Felder Group

Visit a landmark exhibition by today's leading designer makers in wood!

Studio Furniture 2018 is is an Australian Wood Review exhibition produced in partnership with Bungendore Wood Works Gallery, NSW.

Seventy shortlisted entrants will present original works in wood, specially created for an exhibition dedicated to and inspired by the memory of Matthew Harding, one of Australia's leading visual artists.

The exhibition opens on October 20, 2018 during the Wood Dust Australia festival. Cash awards totalling $17,000 will be presented, in addition to a Hammer N4400 bandsaw valued $3,166

EXHIBITION DATES

October 20, 2018 – January 31, 2019

To see all entries

VISIT **www.woodreview.com.au/studio-furniture**

presented by Felder Group Australia

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YAFFA 08596

Woodworkers Without Borders

Thanks to the global network of woodworkers, Adam Markowitz was able to show his work at New York's International Contemporary Furniture Fair.

It's 2pm on the day before the show opens, and the rain has started to come in sideways instead of just its usual downward inclination. I'm dripping wet standing in what is likely an increasingly rare industrial backwater of Brooklyn, New York.

Kelly Harris is making her way down the rambling corridors of the ancient five-storey 1918 factory that holds her workshop. I've got three hours to get my *Fred* table to the Convention Centre in Manhattan. A second delivery guy has just canceled on us.

'Congratulations! You've been selected for the 2018 ICFF Studio.' Six weeks prior, the header grabbed me by the collar from my inbox. Each year the ICFF Studio invites designers from around the world to submit for the chance to exhibit at ICFF – the International Contemporary Furniture Fair, held each year in Manhattan. ICFF Studio is sponsored Bernhardt Design, a major US contemporary furniture company that still produce out of their own factories in North Carolina.

A small catch – if you win, you still have to get yourself and your work to the fair. Not so easy when your workshop is in North Melbourne, Australia. My table *Fred* was my first production piece, the original prototype I built in my first workshop in 2013. I've lugged it in and out of more convention centres then I'd like to think, but lugging it to New York was different. International airfreight quotes were eye-watering. I thought to myself, 'it'd be cheaper to build the thing over there!'. Then thought – actually, that's not such a bad idea...

In Kelly's workshop, we're furiously trying to wipe back the Osmo finish. This storm that has descended on delivery day has brought a blast of humid air that means that this final coat of oil on *Fred* is not going off any time soon. We're about to leg it across Manhattan in a rented van. Kelly's the sort of person you want at the helm of a madcap sprint across one of the busiest cities in the world – she was the drummer in a Punk band that toured Australia ten years ago.

Kelly and I met in Maine in 2014 whilst studying at the Center for

Furniture Craftsmanship. The school was born out of the Studio Furniture movement, and founded by Peter Korn. We had the fortune to study primarily under Tim Rousseau, but also with such luminaries as Adrian Ferazzutti, Tom Keally and a number of other well respected woodworkers.

For me, Maine was the end of a few years of furniture study that had taken me to Hobart as well as Copenhagen. For Kelly it was a beginning that led to two years at the North Bennett Street School in Boston, where she became a protege of Peter Galbert. I'd seen some of the work she'd done at NBSS making Windsor chairs and I knew she was up to the task of making *Fred*.

Kelly doesn't do anything by halves – but I don't know if she knew quite what she was getting in to when she agreed to build a *Fred* table, for the first time, in four weeks flat, having never seen the table before in person, mostly via Instagram correspondence. But there we were, me white knuckled and her trading abuse with her fellow New Yorkers as we made our way avenue by avenue across the teeming metropolis, with an American *Fred* swaddled in blankets in the back.

While Kelly had successfully delivered a finely crafted American *Fred* table in four weeks, my challenge was just starting – I had to find it a home in four days at ICFF. Furniture fairs are strange places. They're a long way from dovetailing chisels in raking light overlooking Walden's pond.

Anyone who has had to stand wavering on their feet under the glare of artificial lights and muster up the passion to talk with conviction to the 300th person that day will attest to that. ICFF was that on a monster scale. There was undoubtedly some good work there, though it was on the

Main: Adam Markowitz in New York on the Bernhardt Design sponsored ICFF Studio stand.

Above: Kelly Harris in her Brooklyn, New York workshop.

Left: Adam Markowitz working on the Fred table.

Above: Walnut cabinet by Kelly Harris, USA.

Below: US woodworker Marc Stimpson with two of his round slab tables.

whole highly commercially oriented. Krenov wouldn't have been able to make heads or tails of ICFF. I always make my way over to the Conde House stand and see the Japanese work. Their *Splinter Chair*, by Nendo, is always a showstopper.

Standing there, you forgive people for walking right past your work with a glazed eye look. Yours is the hundredth table they've seen today. But there were those that did stop. Usually the through tenon or the thinness of the top on *Fred* would grab them. I was also showing my *Walnut+LED Assegai Pendant* (Qantas had agreed to take that one as checked luggage in a two metre long jerry-rigged PVC pipe with strap handles – which caused some nervous looks on the New York subway).

The days slipped by. No sale. Plenty of interesting conversations. With a few hours to go, I was panicking a little. I had a table in New York and a plane leaving in two days time with no plan. A big guy toting a beer came out of the crowd and gave me a bear of a handshake. 'Hi, I'm Marc. I follow you on Instagram. I like your work.'

Marc Stimpson runs his own woodworking practice, Hope's Woodshop, about an hour out of Boston. He showed me some of his work – Nakashima inspired live edge tables with bow ties, some Shaker inspired stools. Good stuff. 'I use one of your Aussie machines', he tells me, a Lucas Mill for his slab work, which he sources all locally and mills himself.

He explained that he handplanes everything flat himself too. I raised an eyebrow in momentary doubt at the idea of flattening a 12-foot slab by hand, but remembered my hand getting swallowed up in his when we shook hands and decided to take him at his word. I confided my predicament in him. I had a table in desperate need of a home.

'Why don't you put your table on my show floor? I think there's a big market for this sort of table on the East Coast. I'll have no trouble selling it.'

Whew.

See more of Adam Markowitz's work at www.markowitzdesign.com. Learn more about Kelly Harris at www.kellyhappis.com and find Marc Stimpson at www.hopeswoodshop.com

Adam Markowitz is a designer maker in Melbourne and was on the cover AWR#98. Contact him via www.markowitzdesign.com or Instagram @markowitzdesign

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WOOD DUST

The Australian International Timber and Woodworking Festival

Come and immerse yourself in all things woodworking

Wood Dust is an authentically new woodworking festival that promises you a rich program including: talks and master-classes by leading Australian and international craftspeople, an exhibition of fine woodwork at the Bungendore Woodworks Gallery, a tool market place featuring visiting tool makers from around the globe and of course some country hospitality.

Bungendore & Queanbeyan NSW
17th - 21st October 2018

Register your interest online, save the dates and tell your friends.
For further information and exhibitor enquires contact us at hello@wooddustaustralia.com

Our Sponsors FineWoodworking STURT STURT STURT

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