

PLAN YOUR PROJECTS WITH ANDREW THOMAS

wood CARVING

Projects this month:

Gibbons-esque festoon
White-beaked dolphins
Carve the rim of a bowl
Maple leaves in relief
A pair of blue tits

Paradise of Fools

Ian Norbury's final exhibition

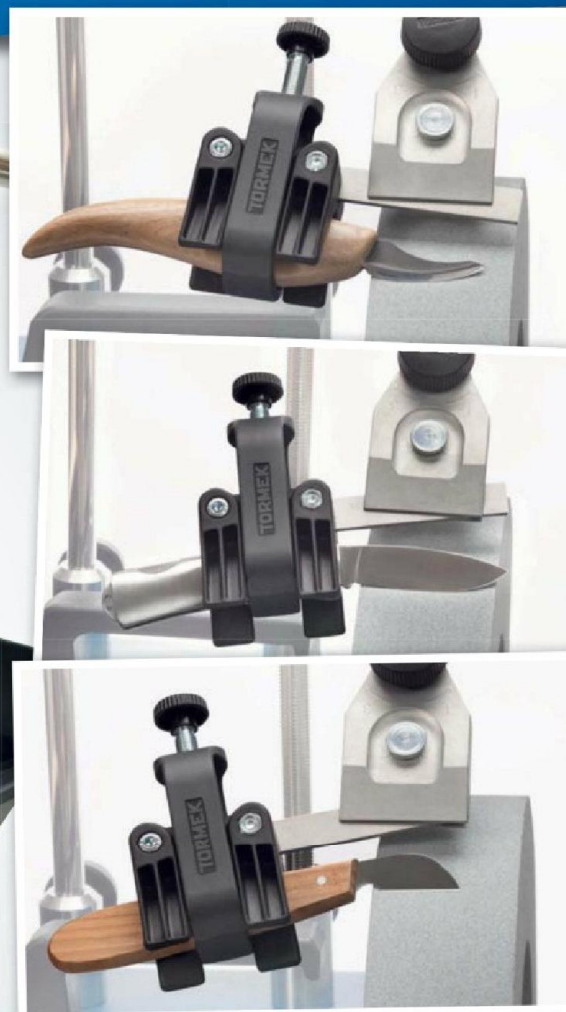
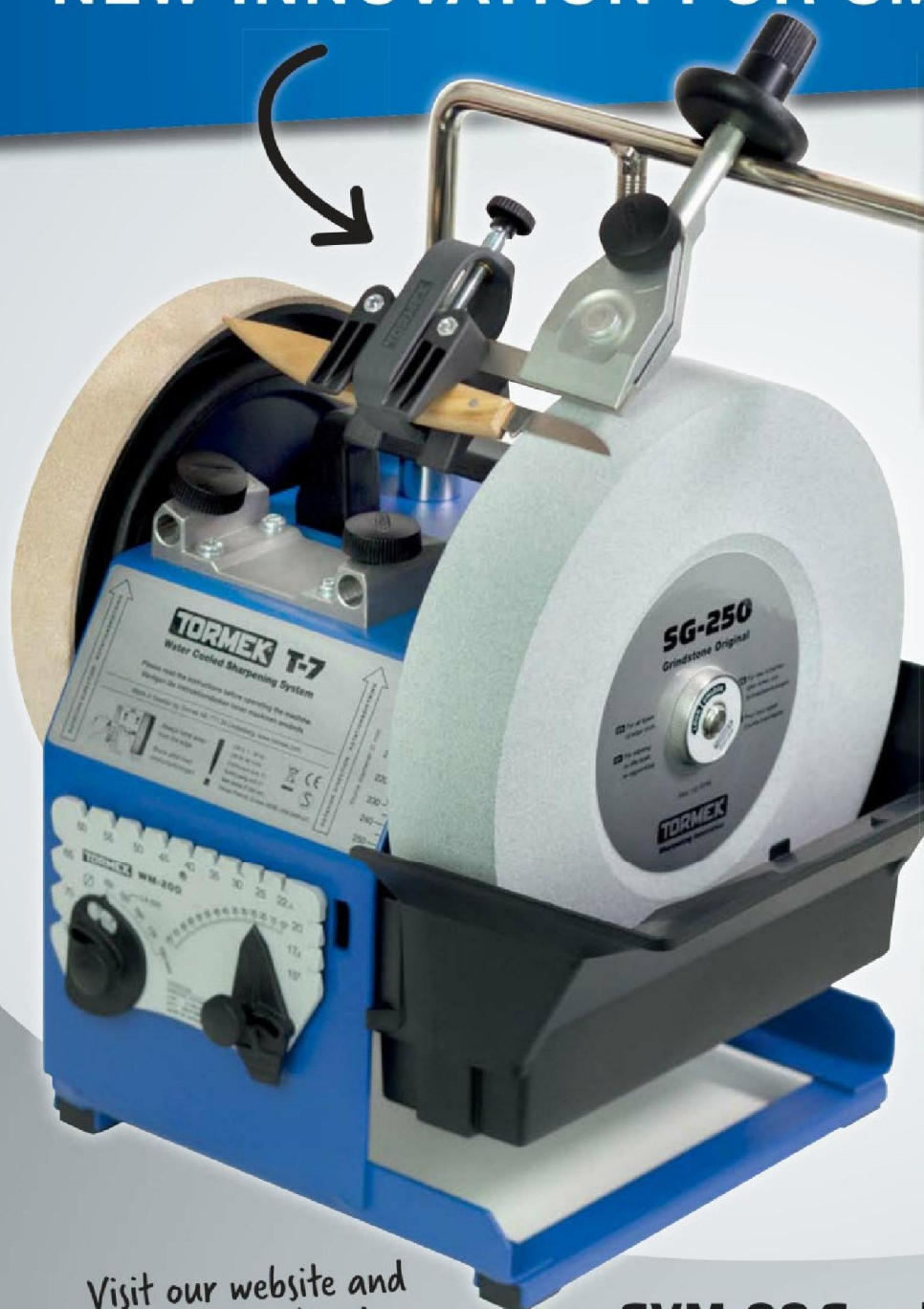
Michael Painter looks
at lettering with a
bull-nose chisel



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Woodcarving is an inherently dangerous pursuit. Readers should not attempt the procedures described herein without seeking training and information on the safe use of tools and machines, and all readers should observe current safety legislation.

Carving on turning...

It is an interesting position being in the hot seat of editorship, so to speak. There is always a balancing act to perform the wishes and aspirations of the readers and other factors like time, money and the willingness of people to play a part in the creation of the magazine. I have to say the response to my recent leader mentioning club profiles has done wonders in galvanising a response. Thank you to everyone who has contacted us at the magazine. We will work with everyone in due course and feature the profiles in a sequential manner, so don't worry if it takes a little while. It is nice to hear people's thoughts and that it is felt that there is a better and more comprehensive mix of articles now for people to lock into and work through.

On a different matter, I have received lots of requests to feature articles about carving on turned work. This is a tricky one for me. I must admit to viewing turning as a powered form of carving anyway, but if I was to feature something, what something would you like to see? Some will know that I edit *Woodturning* magazine as well as this one and it is true to say that there has been a massive increase in the type of turned work being created lately where

'enhancement' is used. This enhancement can be in many forms including, but not limited to, the use of carving, colour and suchlike. Some of it now is more sculptural work and is being likened to sculpture rather than turning. But it boils down to what type of carving on turning people would like to be included in the magazine every once in a while? Are we looking at the sculptural elements of hand carving, or all forms of carving including hand and power and so on? Are you asking for only the enhancement to be included and not the making of the item itself? To this end, I am trying something in this issue by running a modified but enhanced article on something we had in *Woodturning* magazine to see if you like this, and then we can work from there. Carved turned work opens up a range of avenues for you to explore in both hand and power carving and allows you to explore more in the round, relief work and other surface effects. As always, I would like feedback when you have looked at it.



Mark Baker

Mark Baker
Editor of Woodcarving



'Catalaya 11' by Rick Bywater, seen here at the recent AAW Symposium 2013 in Florida

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It can be ordered at any newsagent, or call Tony Loveridge, our Circulation Manager, on 01273 477 374 or email him at tonyl@thegmcgroup.com. Alternatively, save 30% on the cover price by subscribing. See page 36 for details.

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Andrew Thomas shows us how he planned this stylised figurative piece. See page 26 for more

Main cover image photographed by Andrew Thomas

The Woodworkers Institute web forum

Why not join in the discussions on all matters woodworking on the Woodworkers Institute web forum? Covering all four GMC woodworking titles, including *Woodcarving*, you can view the work from fellow craftsmen, exchange useful hints and tips, or join in on the hot topic of the day on the live forums. To register, simply log on to www.woodworkersinstitute.com, click the register button, and follow the instructions.



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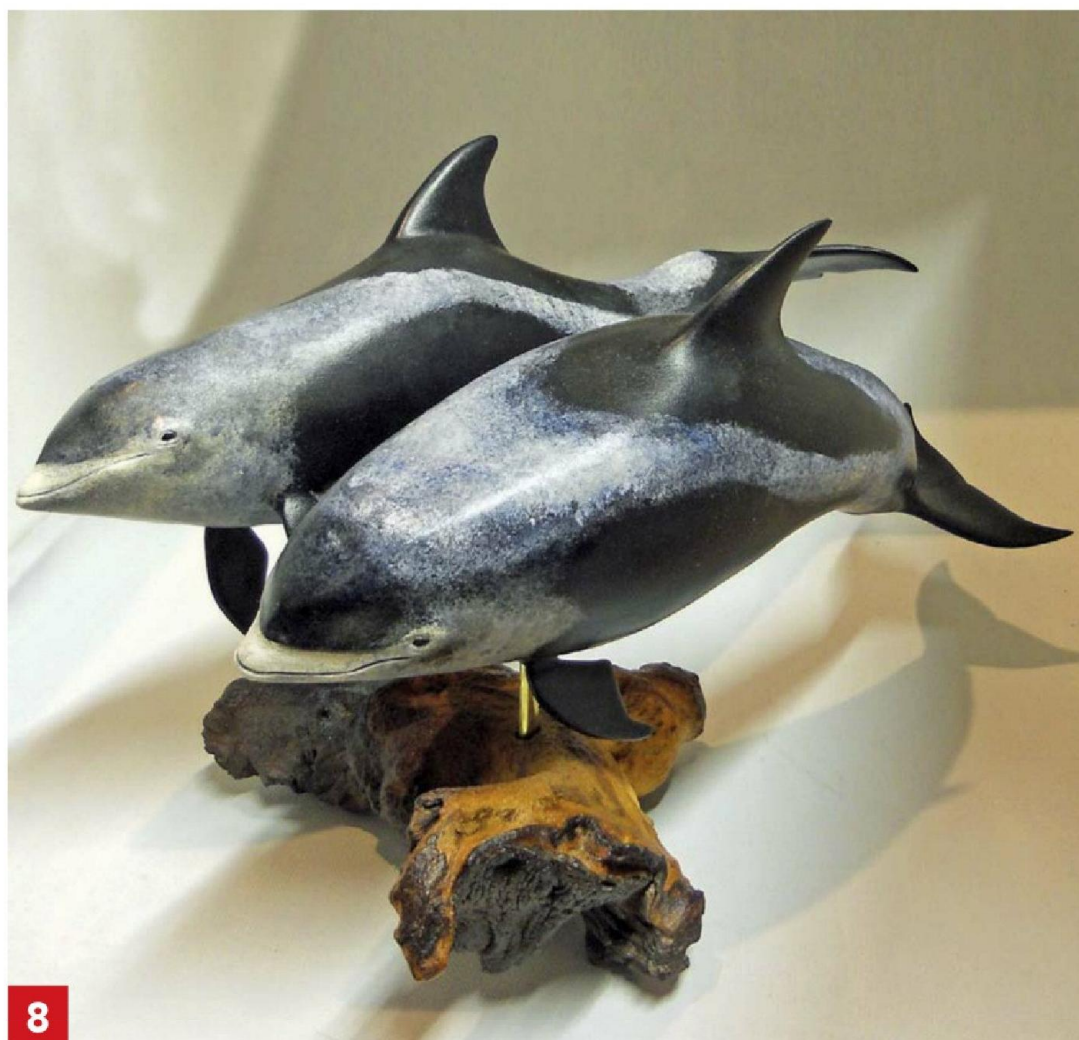
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Woodcarving Round & About

We talk to the BWA, the BDWCA and take your letters from the forum and important dates for your diary to bring you the latest news from the woodcarving community. If you have something you want your fellow carvers to know, send in your news stories, snippets and diary dates to Simon Frost at Woodcarving, 86 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 1XN or to simonf@thegmcgroup.com

BWA: Guiding carvers on their journeys

I wonder if we really know how many hours a carving takes us to do? We are often asked this question at shows. The majority of us carve for relaxation and would never be able to put a number of hours on our finished piece. The satisfaction comes with the journey we take – how many diversions we have to make to modify the design when lumps fall off, breaking to stop and think about the best direction to take next and, on reaching our final destination, feeling as proud as peacocks!

Many of us would've got lost on our journey without the support of friends at the BWA, meeting at clubs, workshops and show demonstrations in beautiful venues throughout the year, nationwide.

Our Gloucester region hosted the hugely successful BWA Summer Seminar. Members came from as far afield as Durham, Essex, Kent, Lancashire, Chester and Hertfordshire and went away asking when the next one would be! The atmosphere was buzzing with laughter and banter, as well as serious teaching. There were classes in netsuke, lettering, furniture decoration, chip carving, carving the human head and carving a green man.

Congratulations to Keith Hardisty of the Durham and North Yorkshire region for winning 'The Eddie Morgan Award for Valued Contribution', for being club treasurer since 2000. Eddie had been a member of the BWA for many years. He loved carving and his wish was for a memorial prize that could be won by anyone. The bird in the centre of the shield was



Keith Hardisty collects his award from David Shires

carved by Eddie as a fun entry in a 'fridge magnets and light-pulls' competition.

You can see us at the European Woodworking Show, competing in the Essex region's carving competition sponsored by Classic Hand Tools, to be held at the historic Cressing Temple Barns. Our carvings will compete for a splendid trophy and a great prize of vouchers worth £750 for the winner and £250 for second place.

And finally... inspired by a competition in issue 131 of *Woodcarving*, a surprised Derek Drain – Essex region – won himself a Kreg Joint Master!



Pat Brooks of BWA Herts with otters carved in sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*)

PHOTOGRAPH BY PAULA NOBLE

Contact the BWA

Tel: 07749 769 111

Web: www.britishwoodcarversassociation.com

Or write to: The National Secretary, 32 Beaufort Avenue, Kenton, Harrow, Middlesex HA3 8PF

BDWCA: Bird carvers compete

Where does the time go? It only seems like a few weeks ago I was writing "As this issue falls through your letterbox, BDWCA members will be in the last throws of preparing for the BDWCA Annual Show, which is held in Bakewell, Derbyshire" and here I am writing it again! The show is always held on the second weekend in September, which this year falls on 14 and 15.

This is always an exciting time, wondering what carvings will be on show this year, and who will win the coveted title of 'British Champion'. Carvers compete at Youth, Novice, Intermediate and Advanced levels, and there are four open classes – Working Decoys, Fish, Carved Bird's Head, and Carved Bird's Head on a Stick. The Stick class is open to non-members.

Last year saw an impressive display in the Novice category, resulting in some of the carvers moving up to Intermediate this year. Good luck to all our members who are competing, whatever the level!

If you are – or if you can be – in Bakewell during the show weekend, do please drop in and see all the different birds that will be on display. Remember to bring some money with you, as there will be a lot of other delights on offer to tempt carvers to part with their cash!

Contact the BDWCA

Tel: 0161 483 7116

Web: www.bdwca.org.uk

Or write to: Mr Keith Royle,
10 Mostyn Road, Hazel Grove,
Stockport, Cheshire SK7 5HL

Conversion chart

2mm	(⁵ / ₆₄ in)
3mm	(¹ / ₁₆ in)
4mm	(⁵ / ₃₂ in)
6mm	(¹ / ₄ in)
7mm	(⁷ / ₃₂ in)
8mm	(⁵ / ₁₆ in)
9mm	(¹¹ / ₃₂ in)
10mm	(³ / ₈ in)
11mm	(⁷ / ₁₆ in)
12mm	(¹ / ₂ in)
13mm	(¹ / ₂ in)
14mm	(⁷ / ₁₆ in)
15mm	(⁹ / ₁₆ in)
16mm	(⁵ / ₈ in)
17mm	(¹¹ / ₁₆ in)
18mm	(²³ / ₃₂ in)
19mm	(³ / ₄ in)
20mm	(³ / ₄ in)
21mm	(¹³ / ₁₆ in)
22mm	(⁷ / ₈ in)
23mm	(²⁹ / ₃₂ in)
24mm	(¹⁵ / ₁₆ in)
25mm	(1in)
30mm	(1 ¹ / ₈ in)
32mm	(1 ¹ / ₄ in)
35mm	(1 ³ / ₈ in)
38mm	(1 ¹ / ₂ in)
40mm	(1 ⁵ / ₈ in)
45mm	(1 ³ / ₄ in)
50mm	(2in)
55mm	(2 ¹ / ₈ -2 ¹ / ₄ in)
60mm	(2 ³ / ₈ in)
63mm	(2 ¹ / ₂ in)
65mm	(2 ⁵ / ₈ in)
70mm	(2 ³ / ₄ in)
75mm	(3in)
80mm	(3 ¹ / ₈ in)
85mm	(3 ¹ / ₄ in)
90mm	(3 ¹ / ₂ in)
93mm	(3 ³ / ₈ in)
95mm	(3 ³ / ₄ in)
100mm	(4in)
105mm	(4 ¹ / ₈ in)
110mm	(4-4 ³ / ₈ in)
115mm	(4 ¹ / ₂ in)
120mm	(4 ³ / ₄ in)
125mm	(5in)
130mm	(5 ¹ / ₈ in)
135mm	(5 ¹ / ₄ in)
140mm	(5 ¹ / ₂ in)
145mm	(5 ³ / ₄ in)
150mm	(6in)
155mm	(6 ¹ / ₈ in)
160mm	(6 ¹ / ₄ in)
165mm	(6 ¹ / ₂ in)
170mm	(6 ³ / ₄ in)
178mm	(6 ⁷ / ₈ in)
180mm	(7in)
185mm	(7 ¹ / ₄ in)
190mm	(7 ¹ / ₂ in)
195mm	(7 ³ / ₄ in)
200mm	(8in)
305mm	(12in)
405mm	(16in)
510mm	(20in)
610mm	(24in)
710mm	(28in)
815mm	(32in)
915mm	(36in)
1015mm	(40in)
1120mm	(44in)
1220mm	(48in)
1320mm	(52in)
1420mm	(56in)
1525mm	(60in)



Grey Heron, one-third size, by Derek Black. Gold in Novice Sea Birds and Shorebirds category

PHOTOGRAPH BY RAY LOUGHLIN FOR BDWCA

DIARY

Dates for the woodcarver's diary

Woodcarving Round & About



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF THE EUROPEAN WOODWORKING SHOW

workshop machinery and power tools to a superb selection of hand tools, workbenches, books, short course providers, timber, finishes, furniture and craft.

Yandles Autumn Show

6–7 September, 2013

Yandle & Son Ltd,

Hurst Works,

Hurst, Martock,

Somerset

TA12 6JU

Tel: 01935 822 207

Web: www.yandles.co.uk

BDWCA National Bird Carving Championships

14–15 September, 2013

The Bakewell Festival of Bird Art,

The Agricultural Business Centre,

Agricultural Way,

Bakewell, Derbyshire

DE45 1AH

Web: www.bdwca.org.uk

European Woodworking Show

21–22 September, 2013

Cressing Temple Barns,

Nr Braintree, Essex

CM77 8PB

Tel: 01473 785 946

Web: www.europeanwoodworkingshow.eu

The fifth European Woodworking Show is being held at Cressing Temple Barns in Essex this September. Larger and even more diverse than in previous years, the show is targeted towards woodworking enthusiasts and showcases a wide variety of woodworking skills, techniques, crafts and woodworking tools.

Workshop machinery, woodcarving, hand tools, woodturning and traditional crafts complete a mix of over 80 top-class exhibitors, plus food stalls, a storyteller and St Peter's Brewery. A wide variety of tools will be on sale, from small

The European Woodworking Show is held in the stunning Cressing Temple Barns

This show is always a highlight on the woodworking events calendar. Thousands of visitors attend, from all corners of the UK, to enjoy the informal and friendly atmosphere that is created within the surroundings of this historic timberyard. The usual working site is transformed with marquees which host a vast array of leading craftspeople. Live woodworking demonstrations will keep you entertained with new techniques to learn, useful advice on tools and handy tips. The sawmill itself is converted for use by international manufacturers, traders and publishers displaying the latest new product lines as well as the usual show sale and discounted timber.

LETTERS

'Competitive Spirit' at Rowan

You may remember some months ago we featured a carving project by Andrew Thomas called 'Competitive Spirit'; an abstract portrayal of three athletes on the podium of an event similar to the rather big one we had in London last year. Well, here is student Ian's fantastically crafted version of the piece. Ian was able to carve this faithful copy through attending Rowan, a wonderful arts charity based in Cambridge that offers people with learning disabilities the chance to express themselves, gain skills and improve confidence through art and craft. "It's really rewarding to see that readers are inspired to have a go at my carvings, especially in the case of this charity arts project," Andrew

said. If you've had a go at a project in Woodcarving and you'd like to share it, please do! Send Simon Frost an email on simonf@thegmcgroup.com.

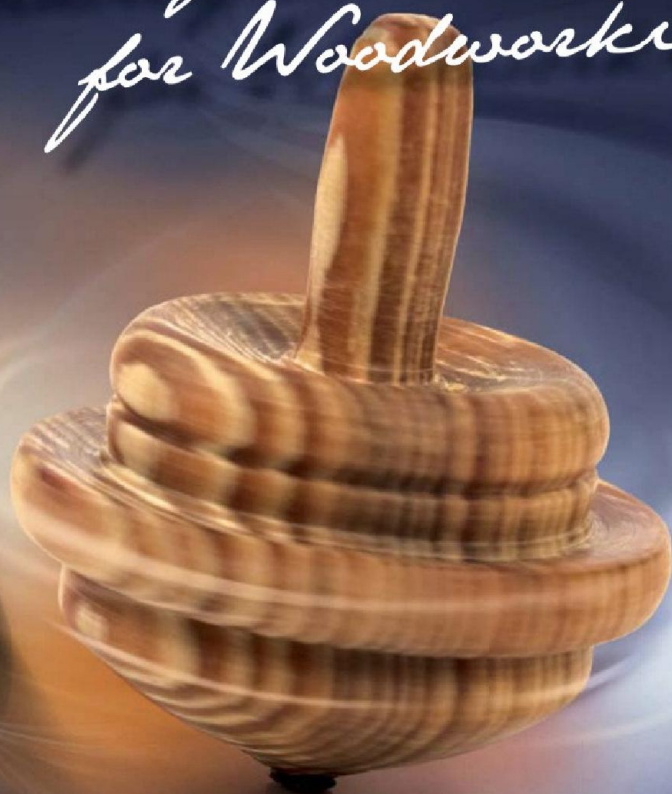


Web: www.rowanhumberstone.co.uk



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Carve two white-beaked dolphins

Steve Heath carves and paints this pair of aquatic beauties

For thousands of years, artists have represented the mystery, energy and playfulness of dolphins in stylised sculptures, striving to capture the essence of this fish-like creature, which has an oddly human smile and intellect. In contrast to this stylised or interpretive approach, I set out to create a pair of realistic white-beaked dolphins, with naturalistic proportions, movement, character and finish, while capturing something of the animal's spirit. Despite my realistic approach, this project lends itself to adaptation, so feel free to get creative and go for a natural finish

or stylise the original design as you see fit.

My inspiration came from watching a short film of a pod of white-beaked dolphins made by a friend off the coast of England. I cannot overstate the importance of good research when carving realistic animals – especially film, still photography and, if possible, observation of the animal in the wild – drawing from a wide range of sources that depict your subject from as many different angles as possible. The internet is an invaluable source of reference material, as are second-hand bookshops.

Things you will need...

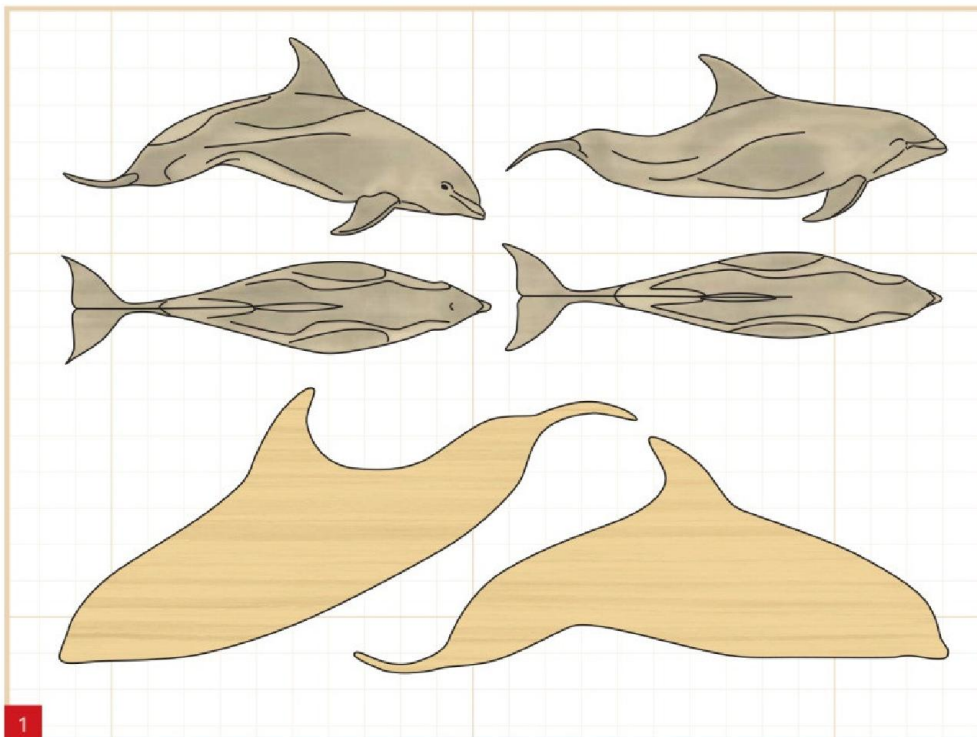
- Bandsaw or coping saw
- Hacksaw
- No.9, 10mm deep gouge
- No.5, 18mm medium gouge
- No.7, 14mm deep gouge
- No.5, 3mm & 5mm palm medium gouge
- No.9, 6mm palm deep gouge
- No.12, 8mm 'V' tool
- No.12, 5mm palm 'V' tool
- Carving knife
- Power carver
- 6.36mm sanding drum
- Ball-nose fine carbide burr 3.18mm
- Ball-shaped carbide fluted burr 3.18mm with 3.18mm head dia.
- Dividers and pencil
- 100, 150, 240, 320 & 400 grit cloth abrasive
- White gesso, natural sponges and size one watercolour brush
- Artist's acrylic paint: burnt sienna, French ultramarine and titanium white
- Hollow brass rods – available from model shops and websites
- Long screws

Wood

- European lime (*Tilia vulgaris*)
- Mopani root (*Colophospermum mopane*) – available from fishkeeping stores

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

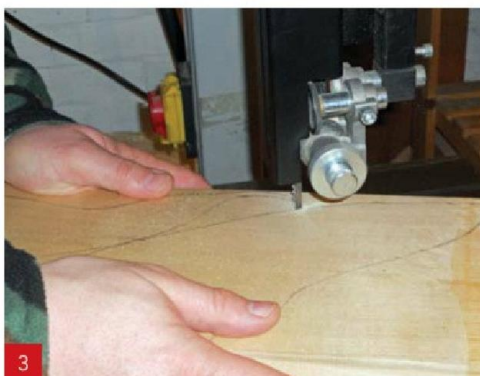
Steve Heath works as a clinical nurse specialist in an acute NHS hospital. Steve has been carving in wood and stone for around six years, specialising in wildlife. He has drawn and painted since childhood. See his website at: www.steveheath.artweb.com



1



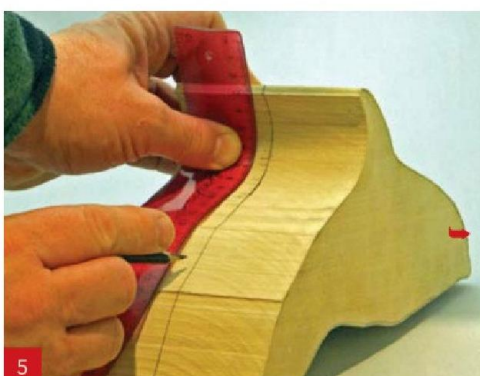
2



3



4



5



6

1 Draw a realistic plan and side views of two dolphins, which form the templates for the blank. To add interest and realism to the finished piece, it is advisable to draw the dolphins in a variety of different swimming positions. I confess to finding the research and drawing stage a bit dull compared to carving, but this preparation is a great way of gaining insight into the animals' shapes, proportions, character and behaviour, mostly freeing the carving process of those long and puzzling stalls, where the shape of a fin or beak just doesn't make sense and cannot be pictured within the wood. Research spent at this stage will pay off

2 For this project you will need to use a single block of European lime, carefully drawing a side-view outline of the two dolphins from my templates, ensuring the grain runs nose to tail. The pectoral fins have not been included at this point, but you will need to add them later to ensure the cut is with the grain, for extra strength

3 To cut out the blanks use a bandsaw or coping saw

4 To create the blank, I prefer to use only a side-view initially, rather than cutting the side view, taping the block back together and then cutting out the plan view – an approach recommended by some animal carvers. I'm probably being over-cautious here, but I feel tackling the blank from the side initially gives me more control over the final shaping

5 Following this initial side-view cut, draw a line from nose to tail on the lower and upper surfaces of the blank

6 The next step is to draw an outline from the plan

➔ **7** Using a bandsaw, you can now cut the plan view

8 The initial shaping phase is completed by cutting blocks away from either side of the dorsal fins with a coping saw. Try to keep a few millimetres' safety margin when cutting out on the bandsaw

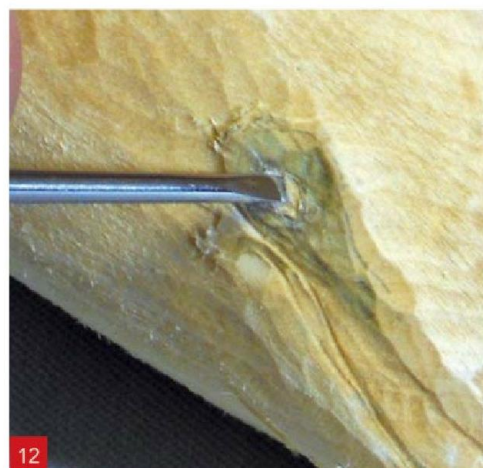
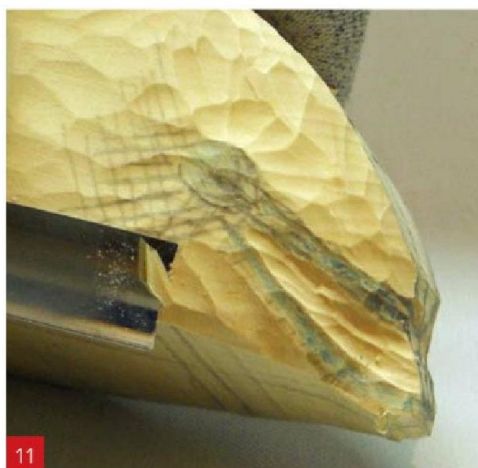
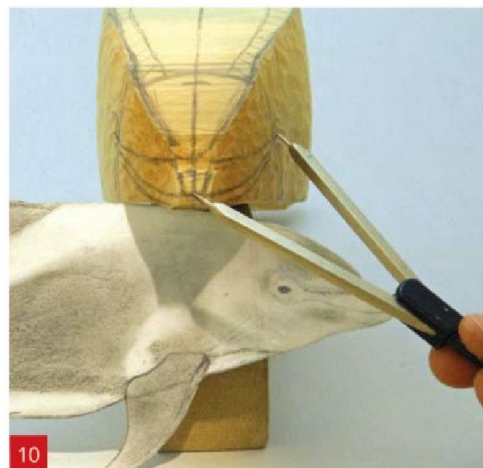
9 Shape the blanks further using a range of deep and medium gouges, followed by a carving knife to even out the gouge marks. I tend to use the same set of tools for most projects, but the whole carving could be completed using power carvers or knives, for example. Make frequent comparisons with your various references from many angles, making sure the salient features such as eyes, beak, flukes – tail – and dorsal fin are proportional to each other

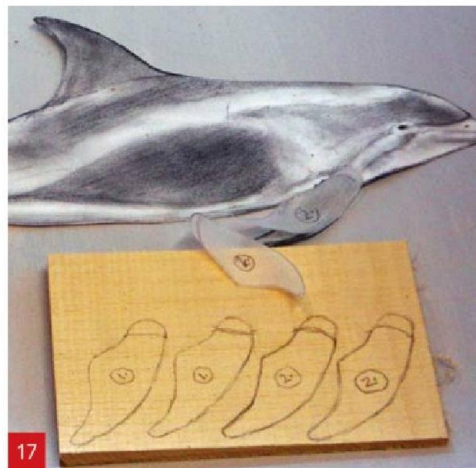
10 Using dividers to ensure balance and symmetry, I carefully pencilled on the eyes, mouth, head and beak. The face and head were then detailed using a range of gouges

11 Note the fairly deep groove formed by the intersection of the forehead – or 'melon' – carved using a No.9, 6mm deep palm gouge; and the line of the mouth – or 'smile' – carved using a No.12, 5mm palm 'V' tool. Another prominent feature is the shape around the eye sockets, which causes them to stand out from the side of the head. All these features give the dolphin its 'dolphin-ness'; its unique and instantly recognisable form

12 Shape the eyes using a No.5, 3mm palm gouge. By holding the gouge upside down you can make two deep vertical cuts to create an eye shape. Use the gouge 'right way up' and 'upside down' to carefully carve the dome or convex surface of the eye. I have in the past adopted a technique favoured by realistic bird carvers, using glass eyes from a taxidermy supply company. The eyelids and tissues around the eyes can be formed from plastic wood and further shaped with small gouges and fine abrasives. This latter technique requires painting to disguise the contrast between plastic and natural wood

13-13a Next, round and contour the upper and lower surfaces of the dolphins using a No.5, 18mm gouge and carving knife





14 Use a sanding drum to remove the tool marks, leaving a smooth, streamlined body shape

15 Carve the deep muscle definition of the tail using a No.9, 10mm gouge. The bulge of the powerful fluke or tail muscle tapers at the upper surface to form a ridge – due to the backbone – and narrows to form a thin keel on the lower surface of the tail

16-16a Contour these upper and lower ridges using a ball-nose fine carbide burr mounted on a power carver, followed by hand sanding with 100 grit cloth abrasive. Use the same techniques to taper the trailing edge of the dorsal fin and flukes so they almost feel sharp if a finger is run along them

17 Using tracing paper – baking parchment also works well – trace the pectoral fins from your original template. By cutting along the traced outline you create pectoral fin templates. Transfer the outline of the fins to a flat, thin offcut from the original lime block. It is important to ensure the grain runs along the length of the fin, for maximum strength. I found it helpful to label the fins 'Left one', 'Right one', 'Left two' and 'Right two', to correspond with dolphins one and two, helping me to match the right set of fins to the right dolphin. It is very important to draw the tenon shape on the end of the fin, at the point where it connects to the dolphin's body. The tenon should extend about 3-5mm beyond the fin; I prefer to slightly round the corners of the tenon for an easier fit

18 Use a bandsaw to cut the fins out and then use a No.5, 5mm palm gouge to shape the fins, ensuring the trailing edge of the fin is tapered – again, a power carver can be used. The leading, or front, edge of the fin is thicker than the trailing edge, and slightly rounded. I taper and narrow the tenon a little, which helps create a snug joint with the mortise

19 Carefully draw an outline for the two mortises on the underside of the dolphins, using dividers. A pencilled centreline helps to maintain reasonable symmetry. Exact symmetry is not strictly necessary, however. The length and width of the mortise should be slightly smaller than the base of the tapered tenon, allowing the fin to be pushed snugly into place

PROJECT

White-beaked dolphins

- ➔ **20** Use a No.5, 3mm palm gouge to define the mortise and a 3.18mm ball-shaped carbide fluted burr to deepen the hole

21 A little trial and error is involved. Small gaps can be filled with plastic wood if the dolphins are to be painted, but a bit more accuracy with the tenon and mortise joint is required if you are going for a natural finish. Shape the dolphins with cloth abrasive, starting with 100 and working through the various grits. Pour boiling water over the carvings after each grade; this will raise the grain. It is important to ensure the carving is dry before moving to the next grade of abrasive. Use the abrasive to soften the curved leading edges of the fins and flukes, the tip of the upper and lower jaw, and the surfaces of the eyes

22 Using a 50:50 water and white gesso mix, the dolphins were sealed and a surface created for acrylic paint. I prefer to use natural sponge to 'pat' the gesso on, to avoid leaving brush marks. It is important to leave the gesso to dry naturally between coats, rather than speeding the process up using a hairdryer, which can leave imperfections in the finish

23 Paint the dolphins using a mix of burnt sienna and blue ultramarine artist's quality acrylics. This combination of colours, with varying touches of titanium acrylic white in the mix, creates an almost infinite range of greys, from Payne's grey at the darkest – minus the titanium white – to a pale blue- or brown-grey. The greys were thinned and 'patted' on using sponges. It is important not to under- or over-dilute the paint, in order to avoid thick, opaque 'splodges' that obliterate preceding layers or watery washes that are virtually colourless and will not adhere to the gesso. Each wash of paint can be quickly dried using a hairdryer on a cool setting. I recommend experimenting using an offcut prepared with gesso as above, before moving to your carving. Use a small watercolour brush to paint the eyes and 'smile'

24 Leave the acrylic to dry thoroughly, which takes at least 24 hours at room temperature, before finishing with beeswax and polishing to a wet look. The next step is to mount the dolphins on a piece of polished mopani root, using hollow brass tubing



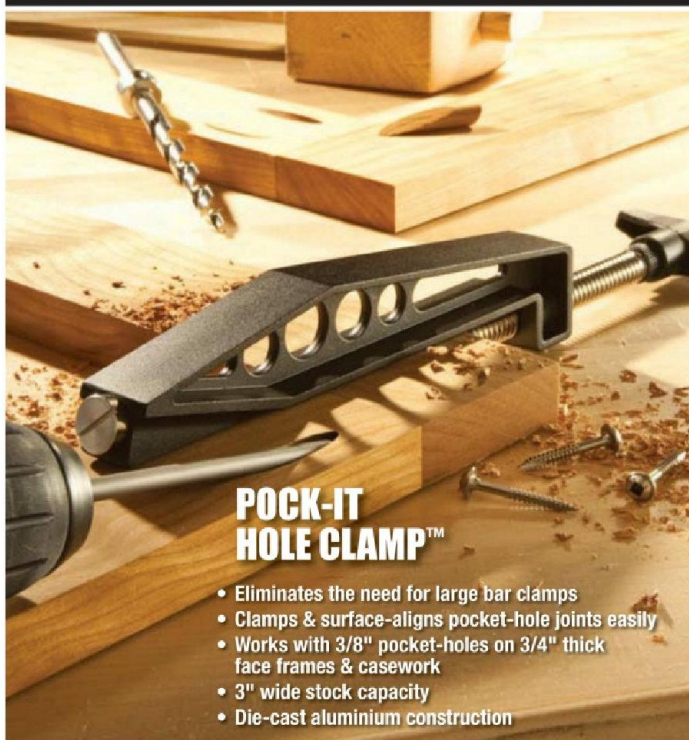
and long screws. Saw irregular nodules from the underside of the root to ensure the piece will sit without wobbling on a flat surface. Saw the tubing to a length around 50mm shorter than the long screws, using a hacksaw. You are then ready to drill holes through the mopani root and into the underside of each dolphin. Insert brass tubing as a spacer between each dolphin and the mopani root and then tighten the screws, ensuring the dolphins are positioned in their final poses. The carving is now finished and ready for display ▶

White-beaked dolphins

(*Lagenorhynchus albirostris*)

When people think of dolphins they tend to picture the ubiquitous bottlenose, sadly to be found captive in aquariums across the world. White-beaked dolphins are much less familiar but are, in fact, broadly distributed across the North Atlantic and into the North Sea, including the coast of the UK. They can be seen in groups of five to 50 and surprisingly little is known about their reproduction. They have a wide-ranging diet of fish, squid, octopus and crustaceans. The population is stable but some white-beaked dolphins fall prey to hunting and are killed in gill nets and trawls

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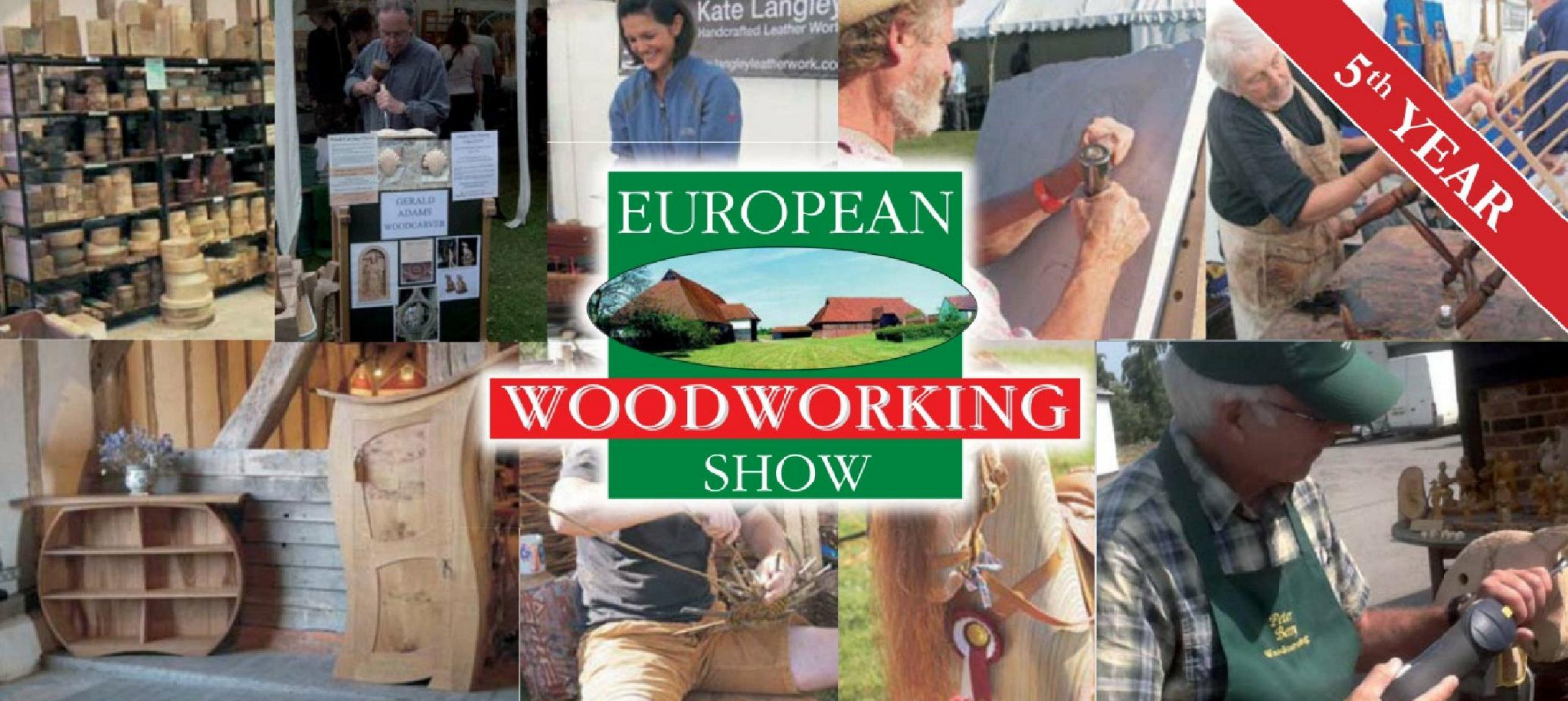
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Gibbons-inspired festoon

Feeling up for a challenge? Steve Bisco has just the thing with this beautiful Gibbons-esque festoon

It seems there are many carvers ready to take on the challenge of what might be called a 'virtuoso piece' – something that will showcase the skills they have built up over years. The 'holy grail' for an experienced hobby carver is to emulate the delicate naturalistic limewood (*Tilia vulgaris*) foliage carvings of the great master Grinling Gibbons (1648–1721).

Unlike my previous Gibbons-style pieces – the foliage carving in *Woodcarving* 113 and the armourial panel in 120 – this piece is not copied from a Gibbons original. It is a design I have put together myself using many elements frequently used by Gibbons in his overmantel festoons: apples, pears, peaches, grapes, currants, onions and peapods. I have also added tomatoes, courgettes, runner beans and strawberries which, originating in the New World, may not have been familiar to Gibbons in 17th-century England.

I have tried to maintain the seemingly random and chaotic arrangement that is the key to Gibbons' naturalistic style. I built it up in three layers –

as Gibbons commonly did – and broke it down into eight separate pieces. You have to think in three dimensions to consider how each piece will join together, and how the 'undergrowth' can provide support while appearing light and airy. Although this carving includes several large and solid fruits, we can maintain the typical lightness of a limewood foliage carving with a sub-structure of leaves and stems of the featured plants, the large decorative flowers of the courgette and the delicate smaller flowers.

Using the pattern

It is crucial to scale the drawing correctly. Enlarge the drawing so that the grid squares measure 25 x 25mm. If you use a scanner or digital camera to copy it into a computer you can print it out in separate pages. You must print each part at the same scale; crop the picture into areas of 8 x 11 squares and print each onto a full page of A4/US standard sheet. ➔



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Steve Bisco has been carving as a hobby for over 25 years, specialising in decorative carving and period styles. He is inspired by a love of historic buildings and aims to capture the spirit of a period in pieces for display in the 'home gallery'.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEVE BISCO

Things you will need...

Wood

Lime (*Tilia vulgaris*)

Parts G & H need a piece 75mm thick x 376mm x 130mm

All other parts need to be 50mm thick. There are many options for width and length, but the simplest would be W 150mm x L 1.8m

Tools

No.3, 20mm & 10mm

fishtail gouge,

No.4, 6mm fishtail gouge,

No.3, 10mm gouge,

No.5, 7mm, 5mm

& 3mm gouge,

No.6, 25mm gouge,

No.8, 8mm gouge,

No.9, 3mm gouge,

No.5, 13mm curved gouge,

No.9, 16mm curved gouge,

No.8, 8mm curved gouge,

No.3, 5mm bent gouge,

10mm short bent gouge,

12mm & 6mm back-bent gouge,

5mm bent chisel,

Straight V-tool,

Curved V-tool,

16mm hooked skew chisel,

10mm skew chisel,

10mm skewed spoon

gouge,

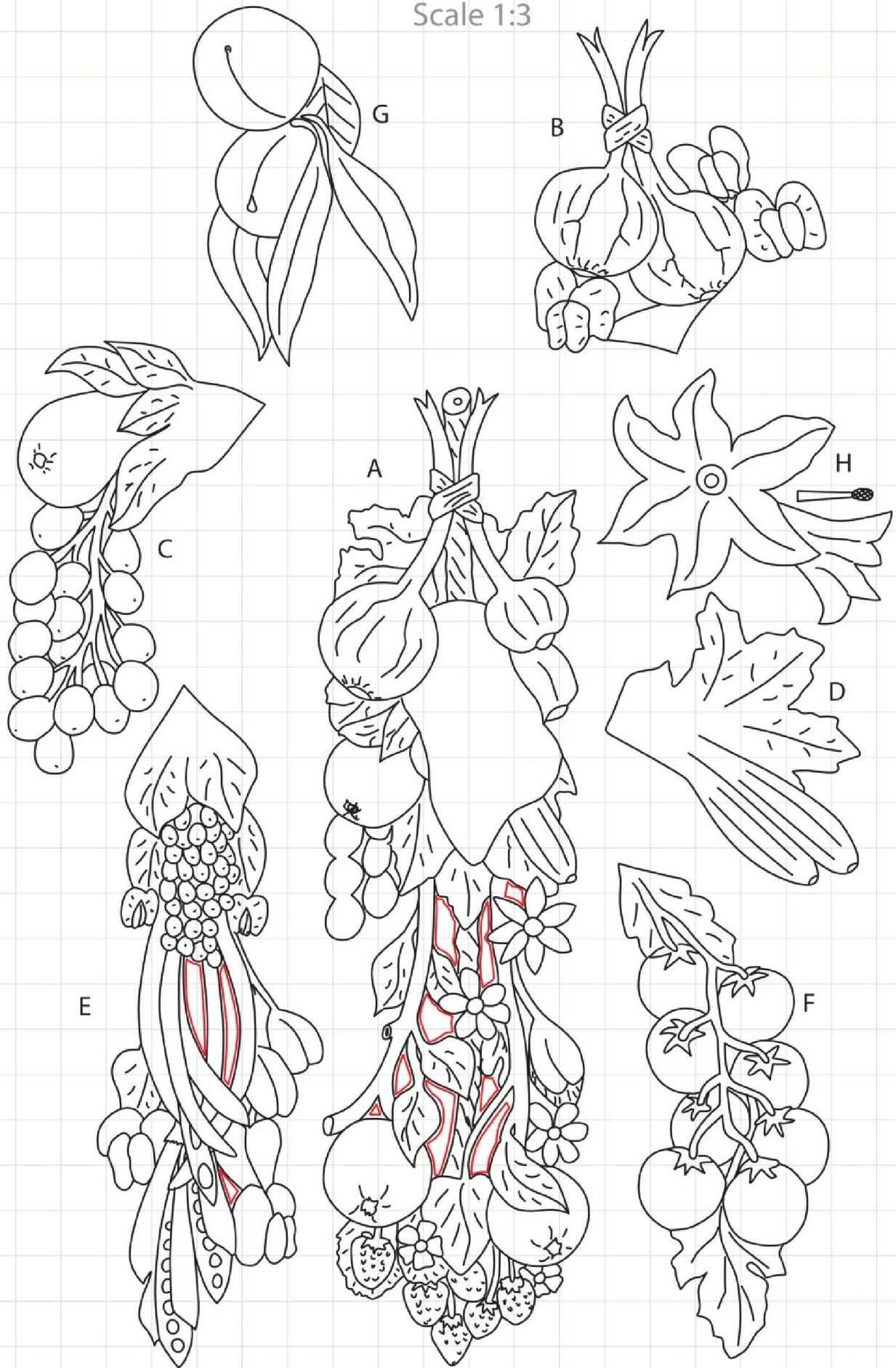
Chisel, 3mm & 2mm

No.11 veiner, 2mm

Padsaw

Fine rifflers

Scale 1:3





1 Make a full-size copy of the drawing. Trace the eight parts onto your blocks of wood in whatever arrangement gives you the best fit and the least waste, but be sure to align the thinnest parts along the grain. Use 75mm thick wood for parts G & H, and 50mm for all the rest. Use a jigsaw to cut out the few internal voids and a bandsaw, if you have one, to cut round the outer edges

The base layer

Part A – the rear 'spine' section

2 Part A – 50mm thickness – is the rear 'spine' section that all the other parts fix onto. Fix it to a backing board by screwing from the back. Start by roughing out the strawberries at the bottom and work upwards through the apples to the plums and their respective leaves and stems. Each element hangs from above and overhangs the thing beneath it, so try to show the pull of gravity

3 Continue roughing out the onions, garlic, pear and other elements at the top end. These will be mostly hidden by the forward layers, so focus on how they will look from the side and how the next layer will fit. There is a flat area in the middle which the forward layers will be attached to

4 Work back down again putting in the surface detail. Look at real examples of the various fruits and vegetables and try to show their distinguishing features in the carving. The 'blossom end' of each piece of fruit – opposite the stem end – and the root of the onion determine how they appear to hang, so place them carefully

5 Slim down the stems and open out the gaps between them. Give each leaf a lively curl and carve a spiral twist into the vine that runs down the middle. Carve thin stems for the strawberries and plums – they are supported by the leaves and fruits around them. Use a 2mm veiner to make tiny U-shaped indentations in the strawberries to represent seeds

6 With the top surfaces done, turn the carving over on a soft surface and pare away the surplus wood from the back. Open out all the gaps – even tiny ones – to create light and space, and undercut the leaves to a sharp edge. Think about your hanging fixings now as you cannot turn it over when assembled

➔ **7a-c** Use fine rifflers and abrasives to smooth the rounded surfaces of the larger fruits but leave a lively natural texture straight from the tools on the leaves and strawberries. Photos 7a-7c show the base section completed. This process of roughing out, carving the detail, undercutting and smoothing is repeated for each of the eight parts of the carving

The middle layer

Part B – onions and pea flowers

8 Part B – 50mm thickness – sits at the top of the carving. You need to rough out the shape of the onions with their stems curving down to meet those on the base layer then up again. Rough out the shape of the pea flowers, and a little 'fixing pad' at the bottom of the piece

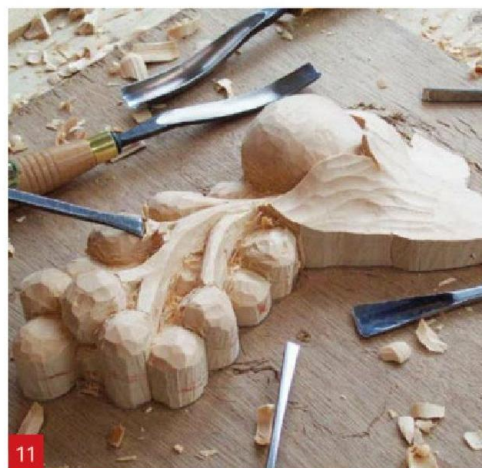
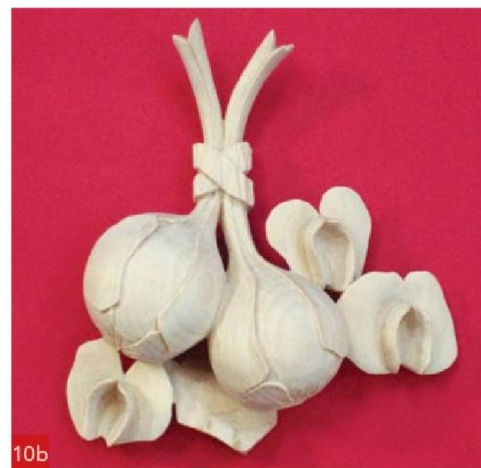
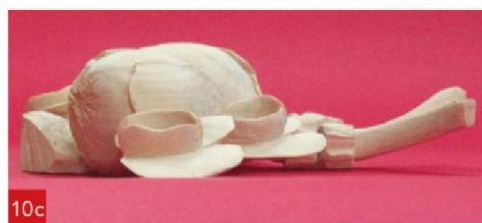
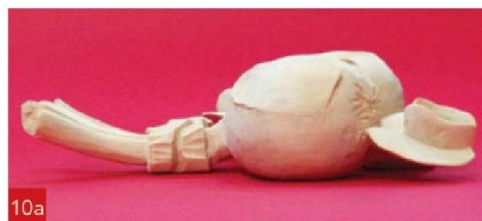
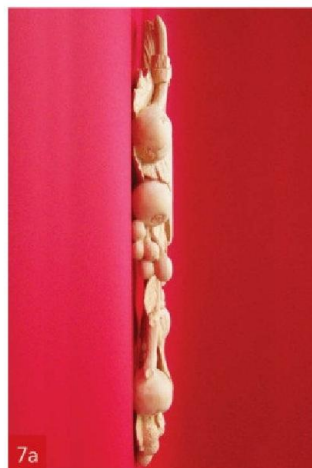
9 The next step is to carve the onions with some natural-looking splits and curls in their skin. Position the roots towards the front. The pea flowers are very delicate. Scoop out the gap in the middle petals first, then work round their sides and shape the outer petals into a smooth dish shape. By touching the middle petals together at the top you can provide some support

10a-c Now turn the piece over and pare away surplus wood at the back as you did before. Try the piece against the base layer and shape the joining surfaces to fit comfortably and naturally. Photos 10a-10c show the piece fully finished

Part C – pear and grapes

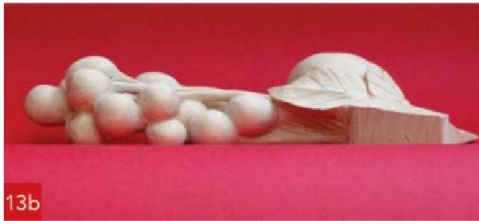
11 Part C – 50mm thickness – hangs down the left side of the carving. Shape the pear, its leaves and the fixing pad at the side. You should shape the bunch of grapes so they flow naturally out from under the pear, with one grape touching a base section grape for support. The top leaf needs to tuck under the pea flower on part B

12 The grapes must be very open so the stems are free and there are gaps throughout the bunch. Support is provided by grapes touching each other while they appear to be hanging loosely on thin stems. Use small bent tools to get into the middle of the bunch – this is one of the trickiest bits of the carving so be sure to take your time here

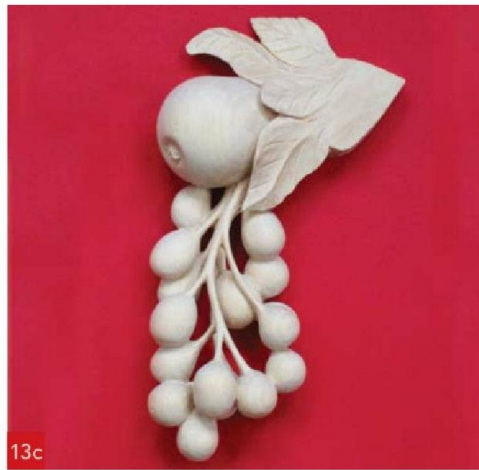




13a



13b



13c

13a-c Undercut as before and use rifflers and fine abrasives as necessary to clean up all the gaps and give the pear and each grape a smooth rounded surface. Photos 13a-13c show the finished piece

Part D – courgettes

14 Part D – 50mm thickness – the courgettes, is the smallest and simplest section of the carving. Rough it out so the top part of the leaf curls over the pea flower on part B. One courgette is at the top level of the board and the other at the bottom. Put plenty of curl into the leaf



14



15

15 Carve the smooth shape of the courgettes. A courgette leaf is rough, convoluted and spiky, with prominent veins, so carve deeply and boldly using the full thickness of the board. Much of the carving is across the grain, so a hooked skew chisel works best for carving the veins

“Carve the smooth shape of the courgettes”

16a-c Undercut the leaf carefully so it is very thin all over and has a sharp edge. Test the fit onto the base section and adjoining parts. Photos 16a-16c show the finished piece



16a



16c



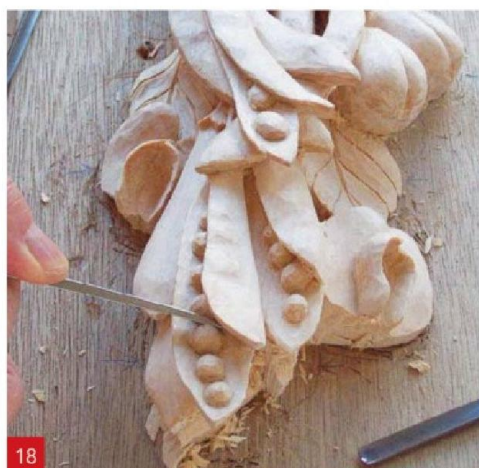
16b

Part E – peas, beans, currants and plums

17 Part E – 50mm thickness – hangs down the centre of the carving and consists of smaller elements that contrast with the heavier fruits of the other sections. Use the full thickness of the board to layer each element so it curls out from under the one above. Rough out the shapes of the currant bunch, beans, peas, plums, and the bean and pea flowers



17



18

18 Define each currant with a thin stem at its top and a blossom remnant at its bottom, and create space so the bunch is not just a solid mass. Use a large gouge to cut across the bean and pea pods to create undulations suggesting the shape of the seeds inside. On the open pods, give the upper part a pronounced upward curl and carefully shape the individual peas and beans. The plums and the pea flowers are like those in parts A and B, and the bean flowers are smaller versions of the pea flowers

➔ **19a-c** Undercut as before so the pea and bean pods are a natural thickness. Open out all the gaps – even the smallest ones – so the base layer will be partly visible through this layer. Photos 19a-19c show the finished piece

20 Now the middle layer is carved, assemble the parts temporarily onto the base layer using screws through the fixing pads. Keep the base layer screwed to the backing board at this stage. The base layer is partly hidden from the front view, but most of it is visible from certain angles. You can now see how the forward layer needs to fit onto the middle layer – not a simple process!

The forward layer Part F – tomatoes

21 The tomato bunch will be fixed at a slight right-facing angle, so take this into account in roughing out. The tomatoes are set at different levels, so use the full 50mm thickness of the board, with one of the fruits touching the courgette of part D. The bunch will be opened through with thin stems standing clear of the fruits, and a thin boldly curling leaf at the bottom end, so build this into the roughing out

22 Support is provided by the fruits touching each other so the stems can be carved thinly with a five-pointed blossom husk at the stem end. Excavate deeply between the fruits and stems with small bent tools

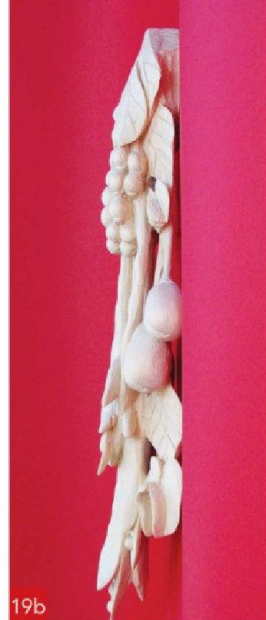
23a-c Undercut as before, opening out all the gaps. Shape the 'fixing' leaf to provide a fixing to the middle layer with at least one tomato touching the courgette for support. Photos 23a-23c show the finished piece

Lime/linden wood

Lime is the best wood for fine foliage carving, such as this project. Its American cousin basswood (Tilia americana) is the next best thing if you don't have access to lime. Lime can be difficult to source from timber merchants but is generally stocked by specialist craft wood suppliers. See the adverts in this magazine and search online to find them. In countries where lime is not native, you may need to order from abroad



19a



19b



19c



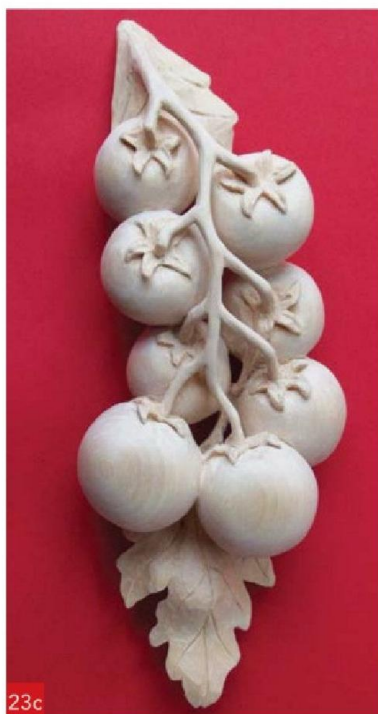
20



21



22



23a



23b



23c

Part G – peaches

24 The peaches need wood 75mm thick. There is a rudimentary leaf for a fixing pad on the right side, and the whole bunch must be roughed out to fit onto the main carving. One leaf flows from under the bottom peach and touches one of the other two leaves, which flow over it from the middle of the bunch. Give them lots of curl

25 Make the peaches smooth and round, with the crease and blossom end characteristic of the fruit. Carve the leaves very thin; a bit more thickness at the stem end reduces the risk of breakage

26 There is a lot of undercutting needed under the leaves. Shape the underside of the bunch to fit the carving. 120 grit abrasive will give the peaches a soft silky look. The leaves are best finished without the use of abrasives

"Carve the surface detail on the flowers"

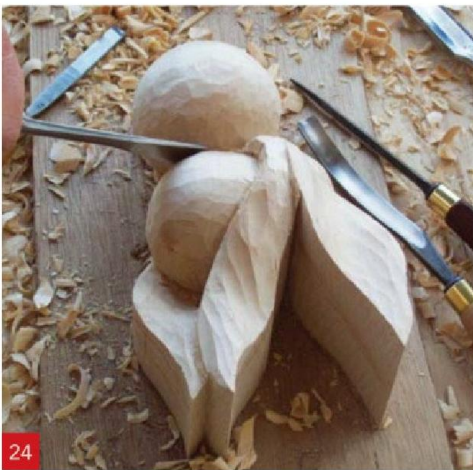
Part H – courgette flowers

27 The courgette flower, carved from 75mm board, needs very thin walls. Glue the wood to the backing board with some card in between, as screws would get in the way, but first take note how the flower will fit onto the carving, curling over the peaches, onions, tomatoes and courgettes. Open out the centres of the two flowers – one fully open, the other half open – and create the convoluted bell shape

28 Carve the surface detail on the flowers. Create very thin delicate petals with a natural convoluted texture. When you are sure the upper surfaces are finished, undercut the lower surfaces and prise the piece off the card. Pare away all the surplus wood on the underside until you have a very thin delicate flower

29 Carve a small stamen for each flower from spare wood. Create the pollen head by cutting fine contra-rotating spirals close together. Glue the stamens into the centre of each flower

30a-c Photos 30a-30c show the finished piece. Give it only the lightest touch with fine abrasive to retain the textured surfaces



PROJECT

Kitchen-garden festoon

➔ Assembly

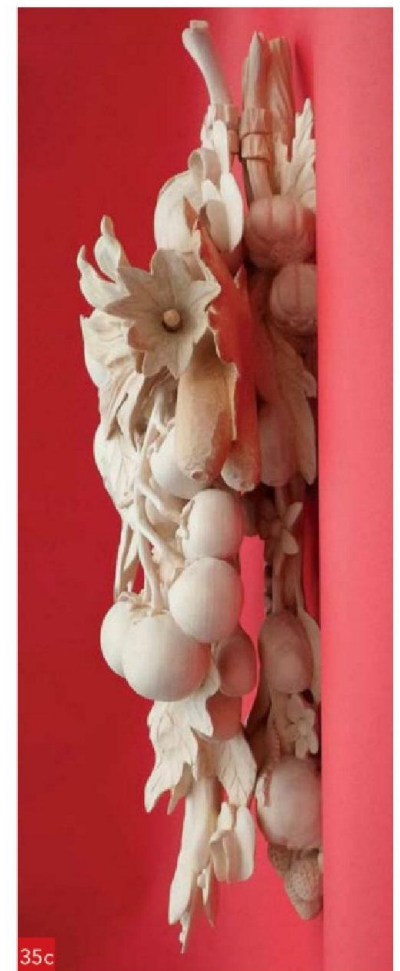
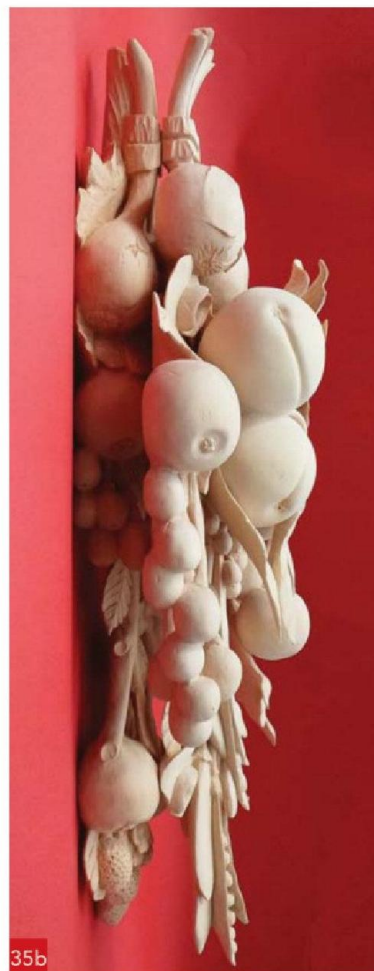
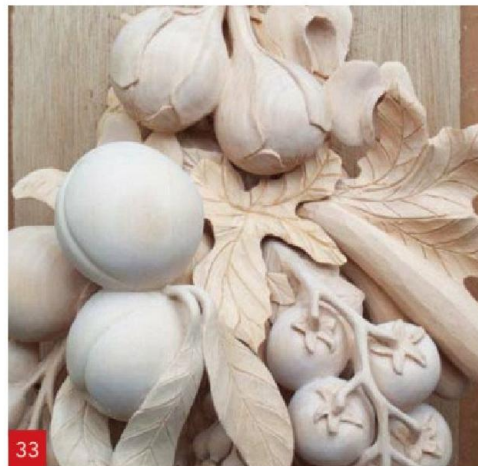
31 We can now assemble the carving by gluing the middle layer to the base layer with a good PVA glue. Bed in the joining surfaces, and use screws to hold everything in place while the glue sets. Fill any gaps between the pieces with spare wood – foliage carving is not an exact science! When set, remove the screws, drill out the holes, and glue in 6mm dowels to give the fixings long-term security

32 Follow the same procedure with the tomatoes and peaches. These also will need bedding in

33 Cover the joints and dowels – some of which may otherwise be visible – with a rudimentary leaf or two carved from your offcuts

34 Finally, fit and glue in the courgette flower which is so light it does not need dowelling. Just put glue on its base and under the petals where they touch the peaches and courgette leaf

35a-c The carving is now finished. These photos show the carving from the front and sides. Use these for guidance when carving and assembling ▶



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TRITON WOODWORKER OF THE YEAR

PLUS YOUNG WOODWORKER OF THE YEAR COMPETITIONS

GMC Publications, in conjunction with Triton Precision Power Tools, are proud to announce the Triton Woodworker and Triton Young Woodworker of the Year competitions 2013

GMC Publications, in conjunction with Triton Precision Power Tools, are again looking to unearth a wealth of woodworking talent up and down the country. We know you appreciate quality because you buy this magazine and we also suspect that you make some spectacular pieces but are too shy to show them off. But that was then. Now, with a prize pot of over £5,000, we are hoping to tempt you to show us what you are making. So enter and you will be in with a chance of winning a handsome number of Triton tools and cash too. There are effectively two competitions: Triton Woodworker of the Year and Triton Young Woodworker of the Year.

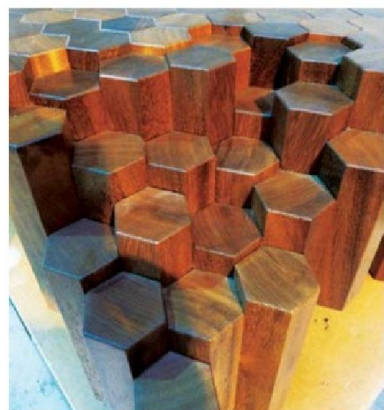
The Triton Woodworker of the Year category is open to absolutely everyone, no matter what discipline you work in, so long as the piece or structure you submit is made predominantly of timber. Triton Young Woodworker of the Year is open to any woodworker aged 21 years or younger. All you need to do to enter is submit sufficient

photographic evidence of your work – see photographic requirements & guidelines on the Woodworkers Institute website – by 31 October, 2013 and then just sit back and bite your nails. A shortlist for each competition will be drawn up from all the entries, and our team of expert judges may well call you/make a visit to see the piece or request extra information from you as required. Finally, first-, second- and third-place winners will be decided and announced by the middle of February 2014, and the prizes awarded at a special ceremony – the date of which is yet to be set. So what are you waiting for? It's time to get woodworking!

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Luke Miller's winning piece for the Triton Woodworker of the Year 2011 – a table made from ironwood that was influenced by the Giant's Causeway in Northern Ireland



The winners of the last Triton Woodworker of the Year Competition with their awards

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(RRP ex VAT) + £500 cash

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(RRP ex VAT) + £250 cash

Triton Young Woodworker of the Year

1st prize – £500 tools
(RRP ex VAT) + £500 cash

2nd prize – £300 tools
(RRP ex VAT) + £300 cash

3rd prize – £200 tools
(RRP ex VAT) + £200 cash

How to enter

To enter, all you have to do is send us the package of items as mentioned in the **Photographic, entry requirements & guidelines online**, along with the name of the category entered, your name, address, daytime phone number and email address. Closing date is 31 October, 2013 but we would, of course, like to see entries as soon as possible in order to feature them online in the run-up to the final. Label the relevant package and send it to the following address:

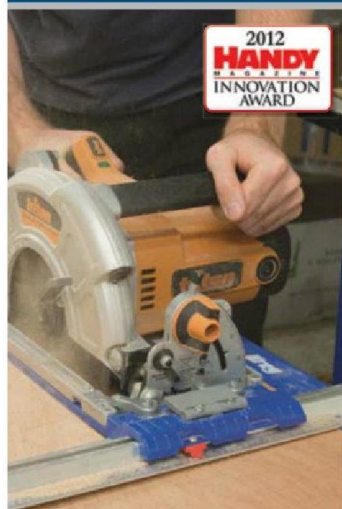
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PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREW THOMAS

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Andrew Thomas is a professional sculptor living in Wareham, Dorset, with over 20 years' experience of the subject. Working principally with wood, bronze and mixed media, his work can be seen in many private collections, both in the UK and Europe. Andrew is a qualified tutor in further education and delivers weekly lessons for private students at both beginner and intermediate levels.



Project planning

Andrew Thomas shows you how to use traditional and modern technologies to get your projects off to the best start

Design and project planning are the fundamental creative and technical skills that most artists employ each time they embark on a new project. It allows them to develop ideas and transform their concept or vision into a tangible three dimensional form. Every artist will undoubtedly develop their own individual techniques or approach to project planning in their choice of medium, and will naturally cultivate their creative thinking in order to solve various problematic occurrences that the medium, by its very own nature or limitations, may generate.

There are obviously many different media in which to create

three-dimensional sculpture but with reference to the technical methods of execution of these materials, the processes that are required mainly fall into two categories: construction and deconstruction.

Construction

One method of construction is to initially make a basic armature – a skeletal framework built with wire as a support onto which a clay, wax, or plaster figure or form is constructed, which can then be modelled with a variety of tools to create the desired shape. It can be useful for the woodcarver to make a small maquette of the design concept to problem solve various areas of detail that are complex and difficult to visualise and sketch.

Deconstruction

Deconstruction is used when working with media such as wood and stone, which require very careful planning to ensure that waste material is accurately removed, as it cannot be reapplied to an aesthetically pleasing finish if mistakes are made.



A small maquette built on a wire armature is a great way to visualise and solve problems



Waste must be removed very carefully, as mistakes cannot often be resolved to an aesthetically pleasing level

Figurative sculpture

The human form is an incredibly complex structure of connected moving parts. These have to be carefully studied and experimented with over time to develop a deep understanding of exactly how to produce a lifelike composition. The example that I am using is a sculpture of a flautist from my female figurative series called 'Rehana'.

When working with figurative forms, it is essential to have a good understanding of your objective, of what you want the finished piece to convey and resonate. Generally speaking, one of the most important factors is vitality. In this example, the essence was to capture the energy and dynamic life of the flautist as she passionately and creatively became at one with her instrument, her body movements flowing in harmony with the music.

Live model

To effectively produce a figurative sculpture you need to work closely with a live model and to use the tools of observation, photography and film to build a body of

reference material from which to work. This material is essential to study the subject closely in the specific context of the pose. The carver needs to identify and clearly understand exactly how each part of the figure and its anatomy should be formed to convincingly produce a sculpture that does indeed breathe life, creating the desired result and impact on the viewer.

This lady is a highly accomplished musician and her brief was simply to play various passages of music that she felt passionate about and that would take her to a level where her creativity and emotion within the music would run in harmony through her. Two cameras were used; one positioned in front and the other to her side. As she played through her repertoire and became at one with her instrument, images were taken at moments of musical crescendo that captured the essence of her creative performance.

Modern tools & technologies

There are a number of very useful three-dimensional computer



graphic tools that are available today; an excellent one called DAZ 3D – www.daz3d.com – is actually free to download, which is astonishing as it is a brilliant and powerful tool.

The 3D computer graphics tool that I use when working in a figurative style is called 'Poser', made by Smith Micro. I use this to build complete human forms in any size, pose and gender,

The flautist captured in a pose where her creative passion is reflected visually



For the live model study, the brief was simple – the model played passages that she felt passionate about



Two cameras were used – one positioned to the front, and one to the side



Using the 'Poser' software, I am able to rotate the figure 360° in any direction



I apply the clothes after using the naked body to create the exact pose



Using the software, snapshots can be taken from any angle

➤ which can then be rotated 360° in any direction to study specific areas of the form that are being worked upon.

Every minute detail of the figure can be tweaked to alter its angle and appearance, including skeletal and muscular systems, skin colour and texture, eye colour and a multitude of other effects including animation.

Hair and clothes can also be added to the 3D graphics within

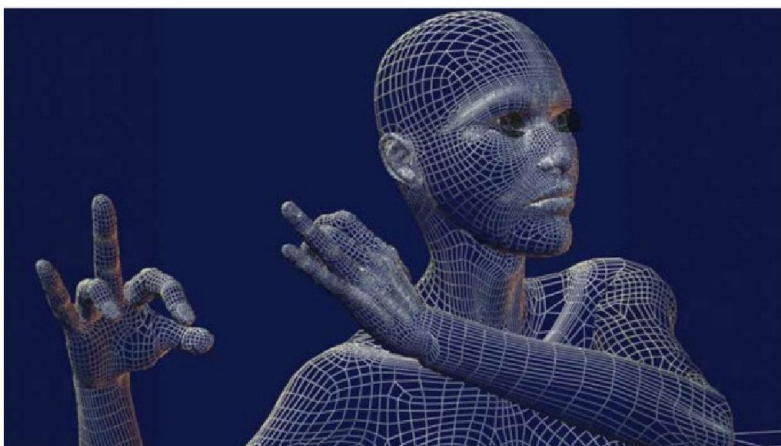
the software interface if required, but I tend to work with the naked figure to create the exact position of the pose that I wish to represent. I then apply the clothes and hair by hand to the printouts of the scale designs.

Pictures can be taken within the software from absolutely any angle of the figure, and then be printed out to use as reference material. The light direction and intensity can also be altered to

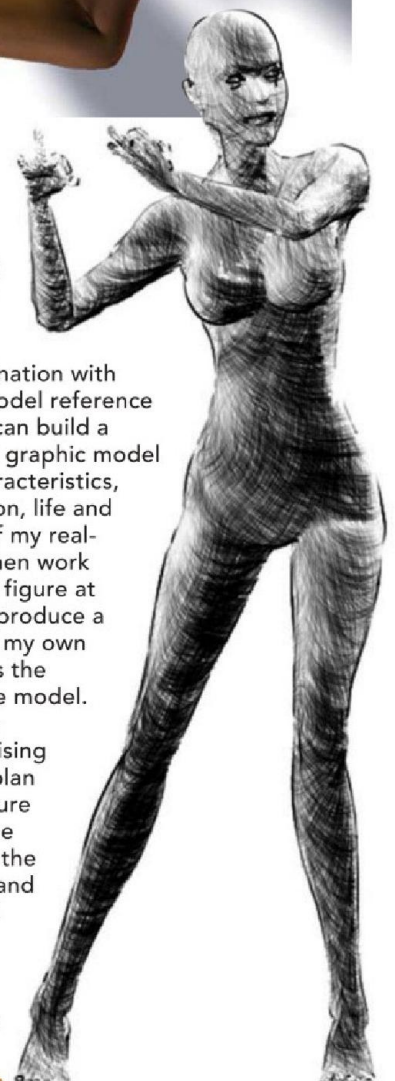
produce the exact required effect at any position.

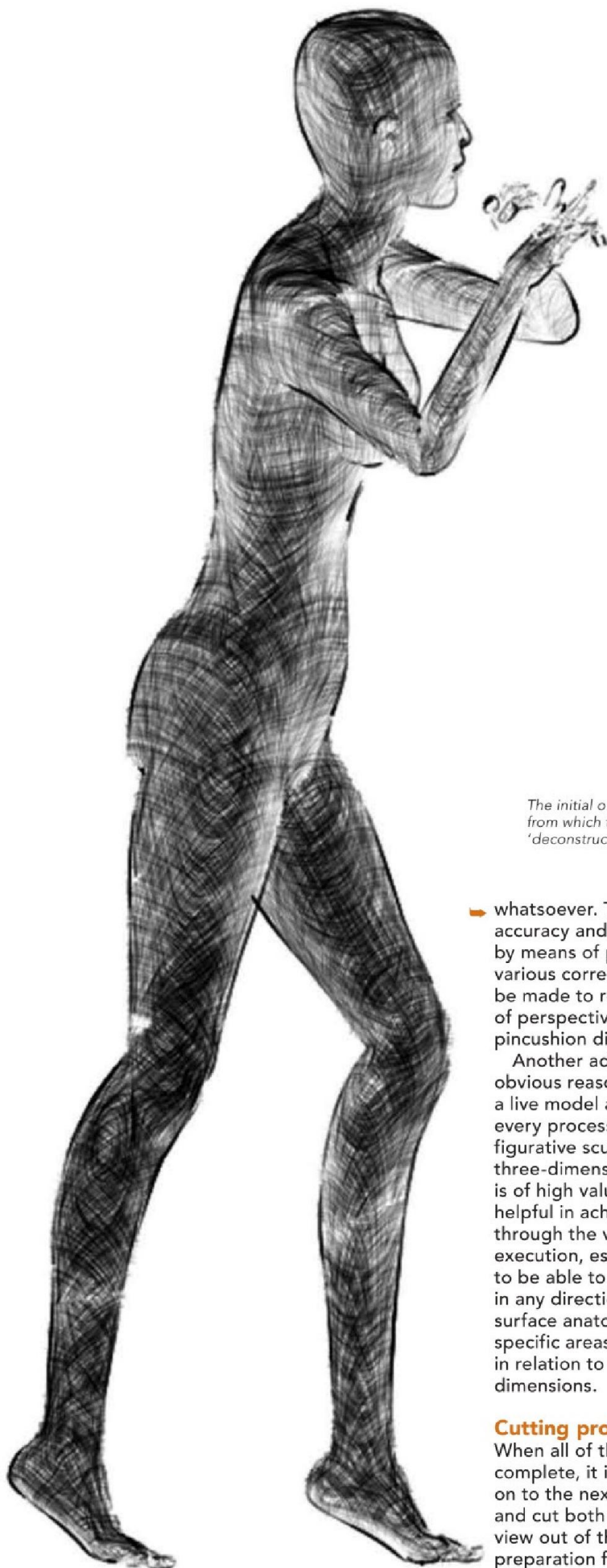
I use this software in combination with my body of live model reference material so that I can build a three-dimensional graphic model with all of the characteristics, movement, emotion, life and dynamic energy of my real-life model. I can then work with the rendered figure at my own speed to produce a figurative piece in my own style that captures the dynamic of the live model.

One of the main advantages of utilising such software to plan a figurative sculpture is that you have the ability to produce the essential artwork and reference material that you need in absolute perfect scale from any angle and without any camera lens distortions ➤



A multitude of minute details can be tweaked





The initial outer line from which the carving is 'deconstructed'

whatsoever. This is vital for accuracy and virtually impossible by means of photography without various corrections having to be made to rectify the effects of perspective, barrel and pincushion distortion, etc.

Another advantage is that, for obvious reasons, one can't have a live model at hand throughout every process of creating a figurative sculpture. To have a three-dimensional graphic of one is of high value and extremely helpful in achieving accuracy through the various stages of execution, especially the ability to be able to rotate the figure in any direction to observe the surface anatomy and see how specific areas of the form behave in relation to one another in three dimensions.

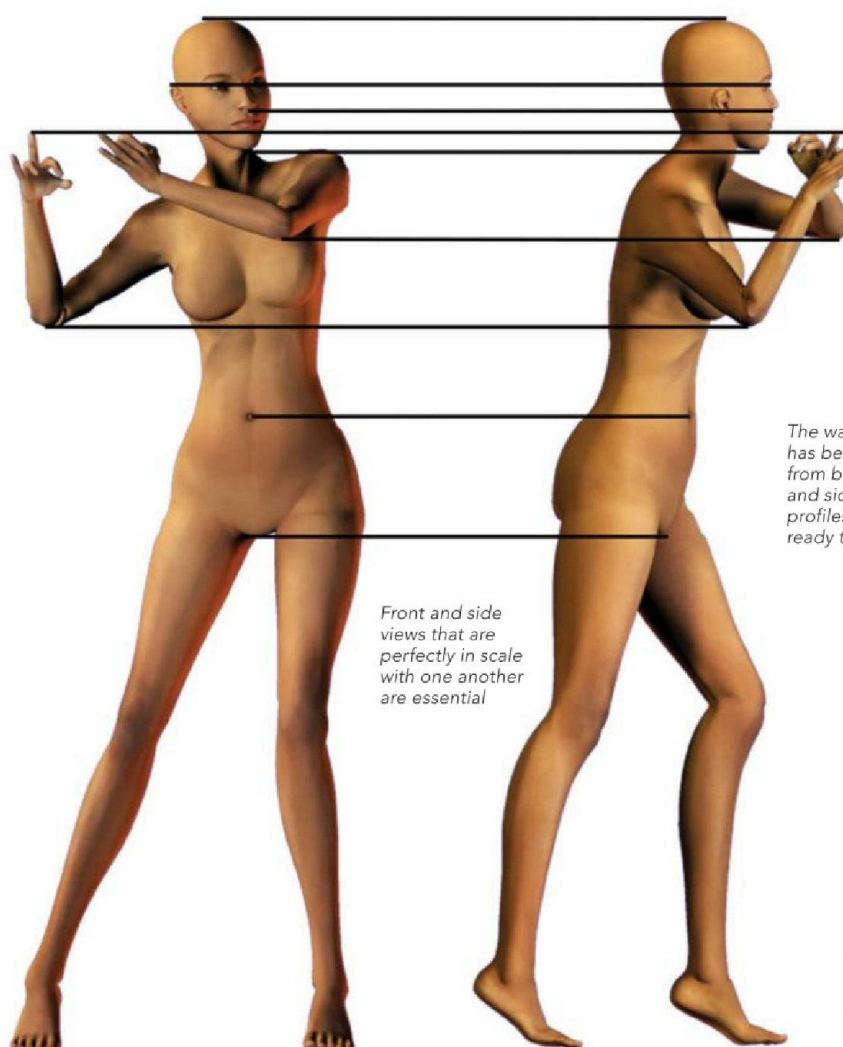
Cutting profiles

When all of these stages are complete, it is finally time to move on to the next stage of the project and cut both the front and side-view out of the block of wood in preparation for carving.

The cutting of the subject's profiles is the procedure of removing all of the waste from the edge of the design that you are working on. Creating this precise outer line enables you to start the carving procedures – deconstruction – accurately.

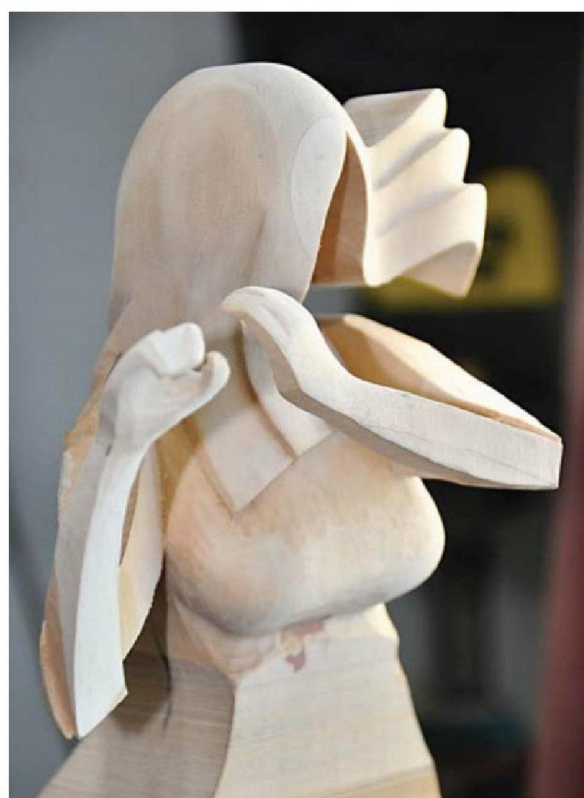
This requires front and side-view drawings of the design which are exactly in scale with one another. These can be printed out onto card and used as templates from which to draw them accurately onto the medium so both profiles line up precisely when the block is cut.

When the waste wood has been cut away from both front and side profiles it is ready to be carved. Even a quick glance at this bandsawn shape will immediately show you the complexities of the form that have to be methodically worked through with precise accuracy. This underpins the need to have a good body of prepared artwork and live model reference material – all in perfect scale – to be used as reference from the very first stage to the final execution. ▀



Front and side views that are perfectly in scale with one another are essential

The waste wood has been cut away from both front and side view profiles and is now ready to be carved



The very complex upper part of the body has now been carved, with just a little shaping left to be done to the left arm



The figure in her final stages of carving with just some fine-tuning to be done to her boots



The finished piece in bleached lime wood



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Michael Painter Diary of a professional carver



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mike Painter specialised in traditional wood and stone carving for over 28 years – starting as an apprentice and becoming a Master Carver. Since 2003 he's been balancing commissioned work with private teaching. To see more of Mike's work, visit: www.mikepainter.co.uk



Cutting out a typical inscription

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MIKE PAINTER

Taking the bull by the nose

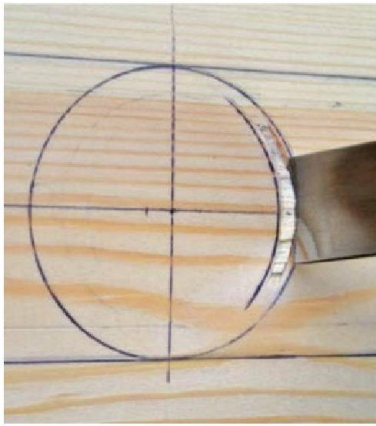
Mike Painter looks at lettering with the bull-nose chisel

There are many differing approaches to carving and we all have our own personal techniques; the enjoyment of carving is what matters. Craftsmen in all media throughout time have evolved and formulated the most efficient procedures and methods to generate items of quality in quantity and to a high standard.

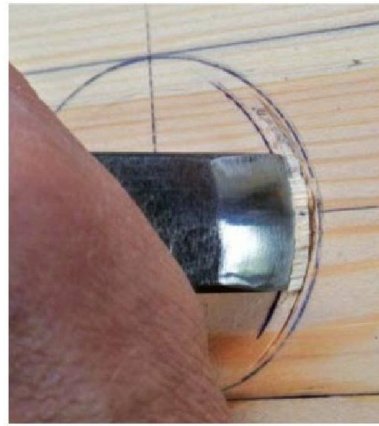
Their knowledge was passed on to further generations with the finest craftsmen gaining work and therefore earning more money.

The company that I was originally apprenticed to and employed by for 28 years was Robert Bridgeman in Lichfield, Staffordshire. It was established in 1877 and employed 40 woodcarvers at its peak. There were two similar companies

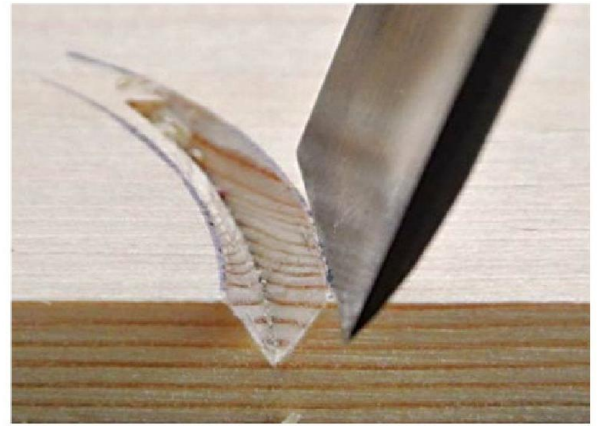
founded in Cheltenham during the same period; RL Bolton in 1866 and HH Martyn in 1888. The workforce of each of these would locate the most prestigious, lucrative contracts at other companies and seek employment with them. Their knowledge, procedures and techniques were therefore transferred and integrated into these companies ➡



Cutting the outside edge of the crescent shape that is to become part of a letter 'O' with a 3705-20mm bull-nose gouge, for a 50mm high letter in unforgiving soft pine



Cutting the inner curve with the inside of the same tool



This cross-section shows the tool is cutting with the grain as much as possible

➔ and many others, creating a core of commercial ecclesiastical carvers structuring the approach of traditional carving.

Negotiating the grain

The technique that you must always adopt when applying yourself to any woodcarving is to work with the grain as much as possible. It's possible to work across the grain but basically it is out of the question to cut into the end grain. Why do tutors offer instruction on using a parting chisel for letter cutting? As stated in the previous article, cutting a letter 'O' will always tear one side of the cut. Applying a flat chisel for cutting a curved letter also replicates this problem when used against the grain. This is known to be the action of a stone carver, where it is described as 'chasing the cut', since the grain, or what are termed 'beds', in most stones may be virtually ignored. Generally this is why stonecarving

is easier than woodcarving, since the grain does not have to be negotiated; this demonstrates the difficulty in moving from the stone to the wood industry. Difficulties also arise when forming the shallow and deep cuts at the bottom of the 'V' in lettering, with both of these tools. For example, it's virtually impossible to cut letters 25mm high efficiently in fibrous timbers such as oak (*Quercus robur*) or soft pine (*Pinus spp.*) with a parting tool.

Shaping the cutting edge

During my training, one of the many valuable forays into carving techniques was the importance of shaping your chisel's cutting edge to the bull nose. The essence of cutting a curved letter is to cut incised crescent shapes. With a square-edged chisel you can cut the outside of a curved letter but not the inside, unless you 'chase the cut' as mentioned above. With a bull-nose it takes just two cuts;

far more practical and efficient. This shape of the cutting edge assists in the carving of hair, eyelids, letters, volutes and where the incisions need to echo the curved background surface of mouldings. The list continues!

To achieve this shape, the cutting edge of the chisel should duplicate the curved section of the tool. It is practical to only incorporate it on 'slower' curved tools – flatter chisels – not fluters. Do not lose the corners of the cutting edge by rounding them, as this would imitate the shape of a fingernail. Initially, only regrind one of your tools and have a go – just enjoy. Many times I find with 'part-time' carvers, the chisel they find most useful in their tool collection is bull-nosed, yet they don't know why.

Versatility

It would be useful to have chisels that are versatile in many situations. Having a tool that aids you in only one function would



Only the outer curve may be cut with a square-ended cutting edge tool, as the corners of the cutting edge inhibit the inner cut



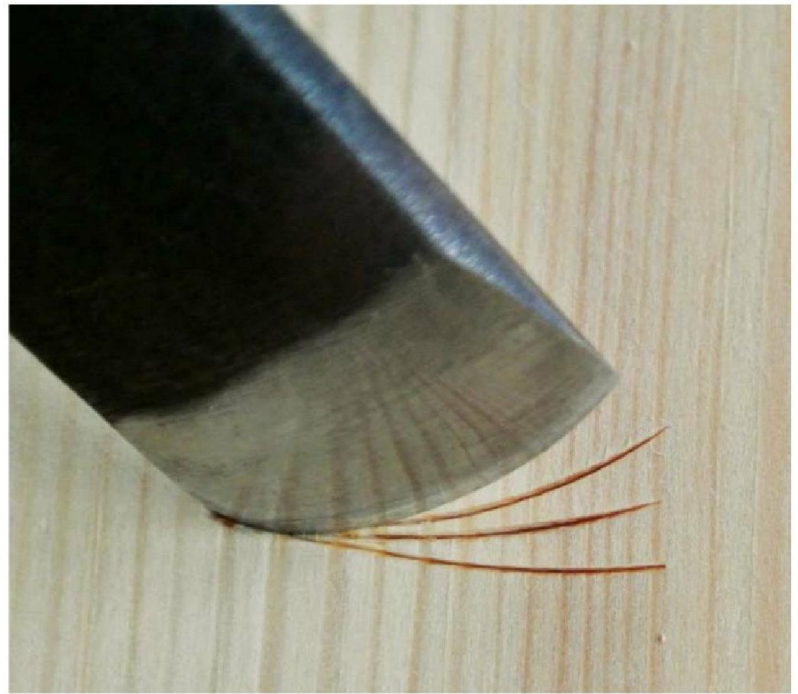
The inner curve cannot be cut with a square-ended cutting edge unless you 'chase the cut'



The bull-nose shape echoes the curved section of the tool without losing the corners



To straighten the curve, twist the handle while rolling the cutting edge to direct the cut through the line



Examples of different curves achieved by twisting the handle while rolling the cutting edge with the same chisel

be impractical, so we do not have chisels specifically for lettering. Some books instruct you to have chisels for a specific height of letter and another set for all subsequent heights; this would be costly and restrictive. Ideally it would be beneficial to have tools that cut letters of a certain height, with scope to cut letters within a margin of say 5mm taller or shorter. The bull-nosed tool allows this to happen; its shape allows you to roll the cutting edge of the chisel through the timber as you arc the handle in an upright position. You can tighten or straighten the cut by slightly

twisting the handle while passing the handle over the cutting edge. This is a necessity when cutting an 'O', as for optical reasons the 'O' has to slightly pass through the top and bottom lines and so isn't a true circle! If purchasing older tools you may already find they incorporate this cutting edge, but modern day carvers believe them to be worn, squaring the cutting edge and immediately reducing their versatility.

There is a short introduction to cutting letters in an excellent DVD entitled *Carving the Human Head* by yours truly! Throughout the DVD – which can be purchased directly

from me – the advantages of bull-nose chisels are explained.

Surely the tried and tested procedures for the professional should also be appropriate for the part-time carver, not for the need to become commercial but just to complete your work with ease and efficiency. The methods of many instruction books are time-consuming if used commercially; our costs would escalate and the commissions diminish.

Step ladders were required to reach this soap box! Now with my athletic physique I will jump onto the next box, which means more on lettering in the next article. ▶



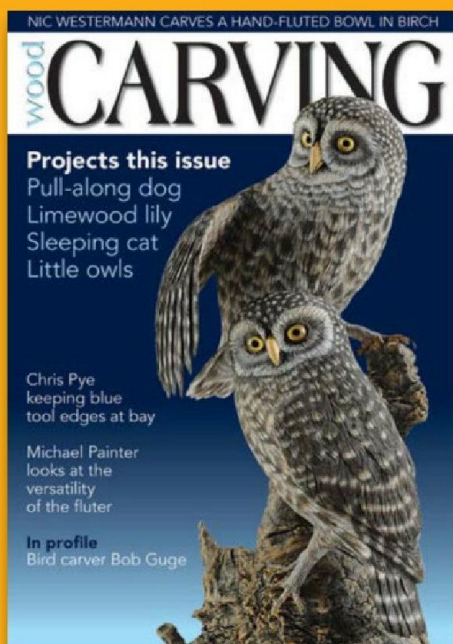
Cutting a smaller curve – 40mm high – inside the larger circle with the same chisel



Illustrating parts of two different circles cut in an unsuitable soft pine with the same tool

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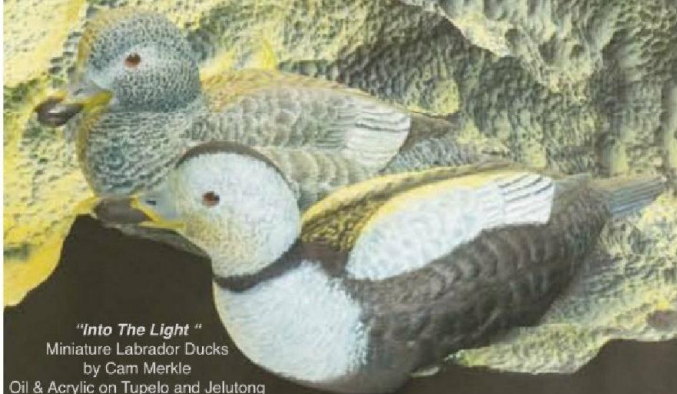


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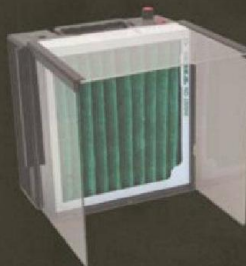
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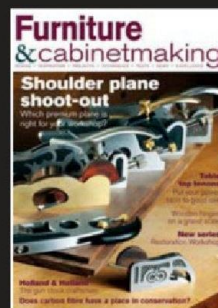
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glass, veneer, gold
and oil paints*

When speaking of influences, one name that is echoed by carvers throughout years of this magazine is, of course, Ian Norbury. World-renowned for his incredible figurative work, his idiosyncratic style is instantly recognisable. His figures inhabit a gloriously eccentric, dreamlike world of jesters and fools, legends and icons laced with classical, mythical and historical allusions, satire and symbolism. Sometimes comic, often surreal and always strangely beguiling, the realism of his sculptures' anatomy, clothing and faces is truly dumbfounding: "I swear it looks as though he has shrunk real humans down to size," said Donna Menke. But so much more than technical virtuosity, Ian Norbury has the rare ability to capture the nuances of human nature in wood – his carvings are real, living characters that we can identify with. ➔

'The Bureaucrat', walnut (*Juglans regia*), lime (*Tilia vulgaris*), pear (*Pyrus communis*), patinated copper, various veneers and marble, 520mm high

A history of folly

His latest collection, *Paradise of Fools*, depicts figures who embody the notion of folly in various guises; be it Pandora, who released all the evils of the world in the Greek myth; or 'The Bureaucrat', a scornful jobsworth in jester's dress, set on a mission to thwart the dreams of the common man. "I was drawn to folly by reading *In Praise of Folly* by Erasmus and *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*, where foolish aspects of humanity are depicted with vicious accuracy," he says. *Paradise of Fools* follows the history of folly "from the days of creation, through ancient mythology and folklore to the perverse foolishness of the 21st century's 'enlightened' mankind."

Professional fools

Followers of Ian Norbury's work will be familiar with his long-held interest in professional fools:

"A fascination with the activities of medieval jesters and clowns which could appall our 'liberated society,'" as he describes it. *Paradise of Fools*, as you might expect, includes several characters in Norbury's signature

'Another Cabinet Reshuffle'





Clockwise from above: 'The Hollow Man', lime (*Tilia vulgaris*), 760mm high – rear and front view; and 'Destiny', 530mm high, Lime (*Tilia vulgaris*), walnut (*Juglans regia*), marble and various timbers

jester's attire. 'Another Cabinet Reshuffle' depicts a jester clumsily shuffling a pack of cards: "The Prime Minister reshuffles his pack of ministerial cards, but they are all clowns." The origins of 'The Lord of Misrule' lie in the Roman midwinter festivals of Kalends and Saturnalia when, for a short while, masters and slaves would change places and a mock king ruled over a topsy-turvy world.

Harlequin's diamonds

A recurrent feature of his work, Norbury's harlequin costumes are decorated with a complex, coloured diamond pattern incorporating the natural creases and folds of clothing. This is achieved through a meticulous process in which each diamond is inlaid separately. He first creates a template using lead sheet around 3mm thick or, for a deep corner, almost paper-thin. The lead is cut into the shape of the diamond and stuck onto the intended area using a tiny amount of

cianoacrylate (CA) glue. He then cuts into the wood around the template's edge before removing it. A recess is cut into the wood using burrs and small gouges, and the wooden inlay is cut using the lead template. The bottom edge of the inlay is chamfered until it will enter the socket, and pushed in with carbon paper in between to mark it. He then cuts away the marks, repeating until the inlay fits, and finally carves in the folds. A harlequin costume might have 250-300 diamonds, so it's no swift task.

Further developing this technique, 'The Hollow Man' from this collection depicts Harlequin, a star of the past who, beneath the costume, is non-existent. With his mask removed, he is faceless; as his costume falls apart, he is hollow. Ian Norbury is not afraid to experiment, and even though one can see straight through The Hollow Man's composite body, the illusion is not shattered, as there are no cheap tricks to be revealed.



The female form

As well as male jesters, the female figure is a speciality of Norbury's work – see last issue's extract from his book *Sculpting the Female Face & Figure in Wood* – and *Paradise of Fools* includes five exceptionally crafted female nudes, each with their own story of folly drawn from Roman and Greek mythology, the Bible and classical antiquity.

Merged materials

Norbury mixes timbers to great effect, a technique that is oddly taboo among some traditionalists. "There seems to be almost animosity towards the idea," he says. "It's the same with painting carvings – it's about as traditional as you can get but the traditionalists hate it." 'Europhobia' – Norbury's take on the 'John Bull' character, satirising the bigoted 'Little England' mentality – makes use of lime (*Tilia vulgaris*), boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens*), yew (*Taxus baccata*) and dyed maple (*Acer campestre*), as well as veneer, pearl, amber and acrylics.



Above: 'Venus', 300mm dia., lime (*Tilia vulgaris*), marble, copper, ebony and silver

Left: 'Europhobia', 1,400mm high, lime (*Tilia vulgaris*), walnut (*Juglans regia*), boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens*), yew (*Taxus baccata*), dyed maple (*Acer campestre*), veneer, acrylics, pearl and amber



There is seemingly no limit to his material choice; as well as a great many wood species, *Paradise of Fools* makes use of gold, silver, copper, marble, crystal glass, tiger's eye... Norbury goes into each piece with an open mind and mixing media is key to his innovative style. Of the 19 sculptures, only one is composed purely of wood; the wall-mounted head and chin-stroking hand of 'Puck' – Shakespeare's 'shrewd and knavish sprite' from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which is carved entirely from lime.

Most pieces take about three weeks, though some can take up to three months. His working method for such a collection is methodical: "I decide on a theme for the exhibition. I work on one piece at a time. I make an initial drawing and then produce the various views anatomically. I do not use models. The figure is bandsawn from two sides, carved, sanded, polished and mounted. Then I move on to the next piece." Despite his carving prowess, it is not the process of carving that excites him: "The best aspect of carving is the conception – the burst of enthusiasm for the idea. The rest of the work is mostly very tedious, and it's usually unsatisfactory at the end." Though many would beg to differ.

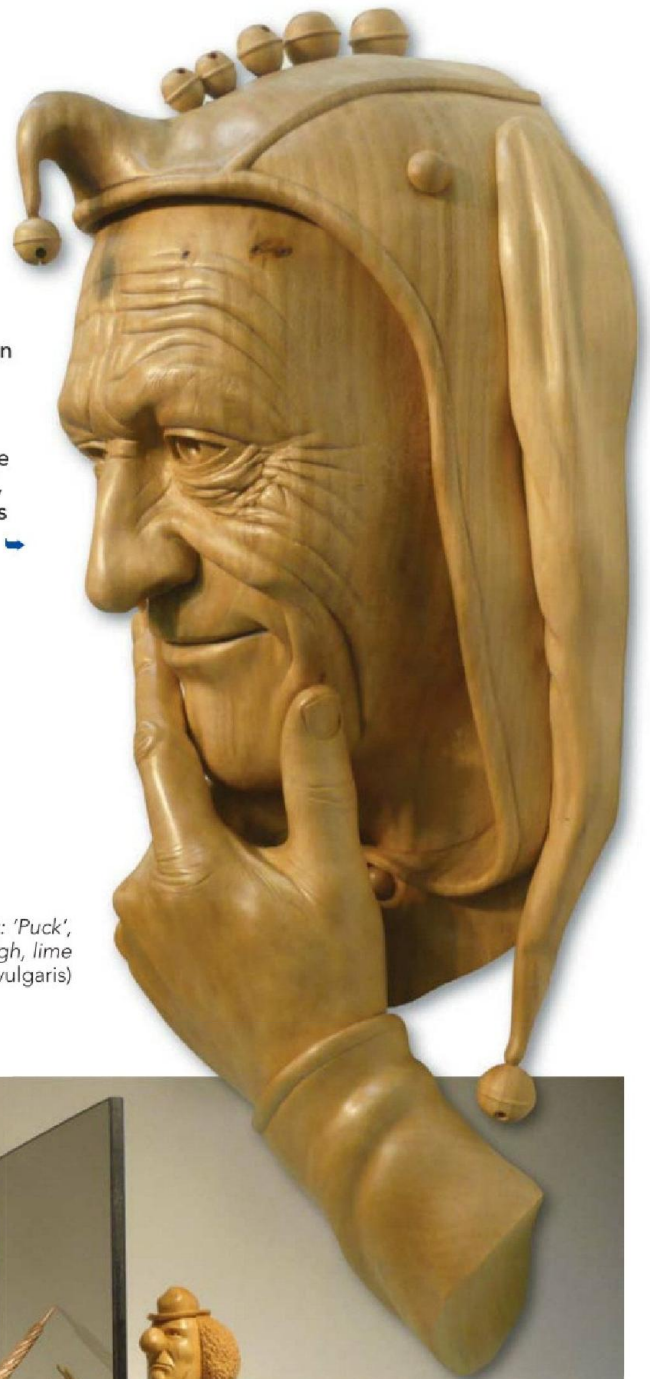
Influence

"I don't know much about other carvers," says Norbury, "I admire old German boxwood carvings and I suppose Grinling Gibbons shows you that sticking lots of bits of wood together can produce a good carving." An accomplished painter, Norbury's influences seem to stem more from other art forms, and it isn't much of a surprise when he cites Salvador Dalí as an initial inspiration. Elaborating on Dalí's "combination of technical perfection and an enigmatic theme" in particular, the influence seems to have stuck with him throughout his career.

He also names the Mexican surrealist Remedios Varo, and surreal characteristics remain prevalent in Ian Norbury's work. For example, in the piece 'Reflections', a clown and a wealthy businessman stand upon a marble checkerboard floor, facing each other on either side of a piece of glass. The glass can be seen as both a mirror, in which the boxwood clown and the walnut businessman face their own reflections with dissatisfaction; and a window to each figure's wish. The clown, a poor figure of ridicule, longs to be wealthy and respectable; the dull, straight-laced businessman years to be amusing and irresponsible. ➡



Above:
'Punchinello',
460mm dia.,
lime (*Tilia vulgaris*) and
acrylics



Right: 'Puck',
400mm high, lime
(*Tilia vulgaris*)



Right:
'Reflections',
boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens*),
walnut (*Juglans regia*), glass and
marble



'Carpe Diem', 700mm high, walnut (*Juglans regia*), lime (*Tilia vulgaris*), silver and gold

The final show

Paradise of Fools was Ian Norbury's first exhibition in several years and will, most likely, be his last. "I will still be carving; my clients would be very unhappy if I stopped," he assures us, but after years as one of the world's most in-demand carving tutors, he is now likely to also retire from teaching. That said, Ian Norbury has written books on the subject and also has many video tutorials available for purchase online that he will continue to add to, so there's still much to learn from one of the acclaimed carvers of our time.

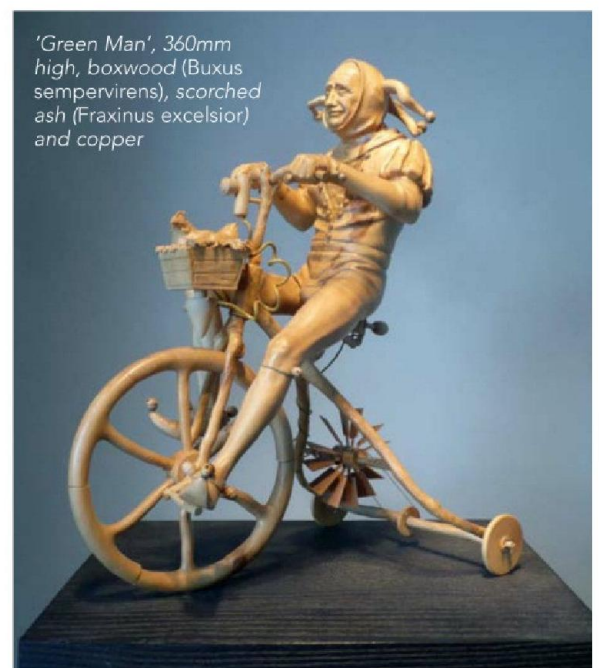
Ian Norbury's work raises the question of woodcarving's definition on the much-debated boundary between art and craft. His work is the result of masterful craftsmanship and technical innovation combined with well-considered characters, references and narratives that invite contemplation: "Obviously carving is craft," he says, "but whether it is also an art is difficult to say. Grinling Gibbons was considered one of the finest artists of his day. But now you do not need craftsmanship to become an artist. Is sticking a dead cow in a tank of formaldehyde art? It isn't craft. If it is art, I do not want to be an artist. I make things that people like – that is it." ▀

Contact

www.iannorbury.com



'Pandora', 390mm high, lime (*Tilia vulgaris*)



'Green Man', 360mm high, boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens*), scorched ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and copper

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Carving a maple leaf in relief

Zoë Gertner shows that you don't need to be able to draw to create this charming relief piece of a maple leaf, which is suitable for the beginner carver



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ZOË GERTNER

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Zoë Gertner specialises in teaching woodcarving and sculpture, and is a fully qualified teacher and Adult Education tutor who studied anatomy and physiology as part of her university degree. Zoë is experienced in teaching and practising all aspects of woodcarving and wood sculpture and has been working professionally since 1980. See her website here: www.Zoëgertner.co.uk

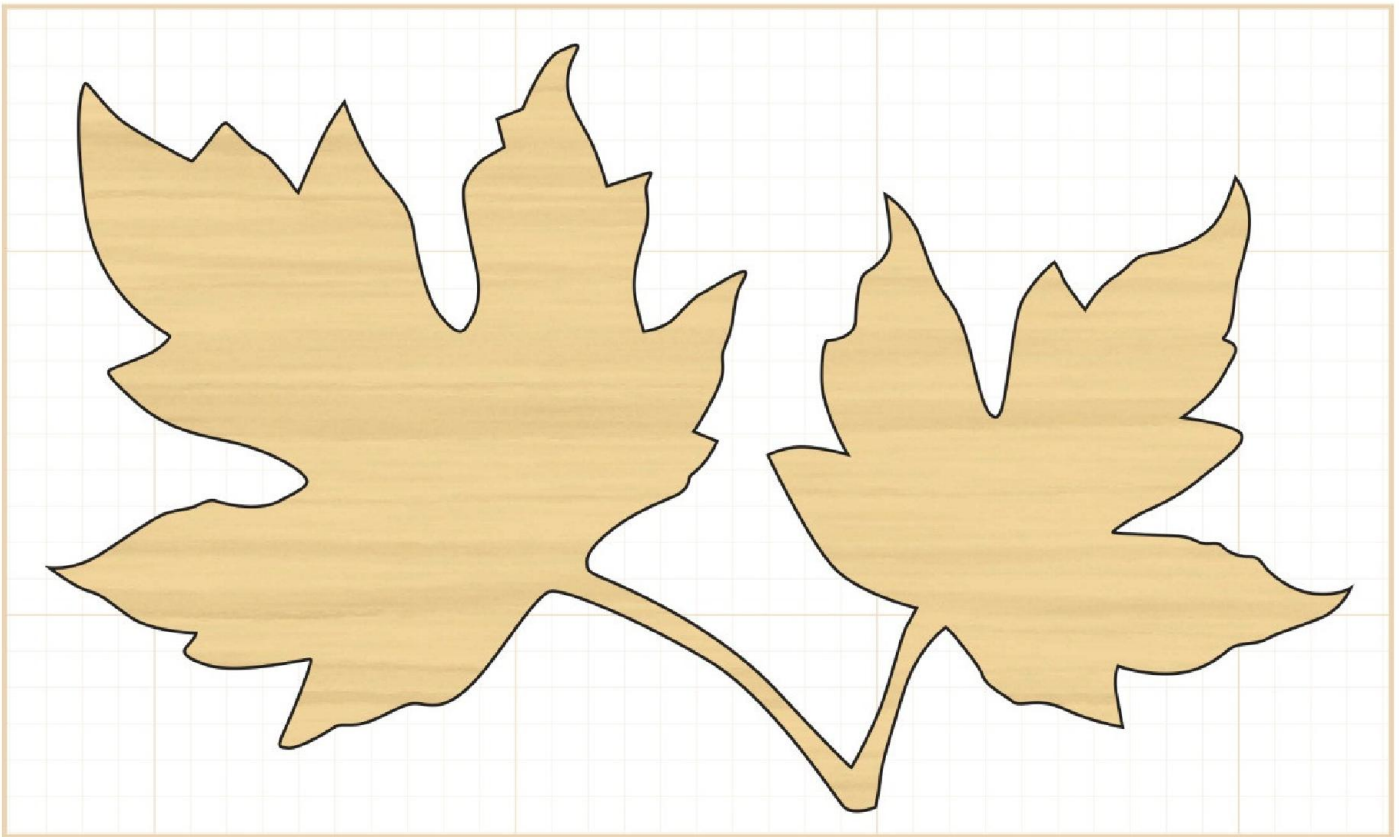


Things you will need...

- 6mm, 60° 'V' tool
- 3mm, 60° 'V' tool
- No.3 (Swiss No.2), 12mm gouge
- No.3 (Swiss No.2), 10mm gouge
- No.3 (Swiss No.2), 6mm gouge
- No.3 (Swiss No.2), 3mm gouge
- Skew/corner/No.2 (Swiss No.1S), 6mm chisel
- Cabinet scraper
- Wax polish and duster
- **Wood:** A piece of lime (*Tilia vulgaris*), measuring 180 x 75 x 12mm thick, with the grain running lengthwise. You will also need a selection of leaves or foliage to copy

Who thinks you have to be able to draw to be a woodcarver? Not so, as this project for beginners will show. Obviously, any drawing skills you have will help, but even if you are not in the least bit artistic, you can simply choose a picture or sample of foliage that appeals to you and transfer it to your wood to make a start. Not only that, but it always adds interest to decorate functional objects such as turned bowls, box lids or furniture such as chair splats or backs – either to personalise your work or give that little more to the recipient. The list is virtually endless!

The techniques shown in this delicate relief carving project are also used for carving details such as bows, folds, eyes, noses and paws on a carving in the round. So, forget about not being able to draw, and let's get started.



Choosing the wood & preparing it

1 Take a piece of lime with the grain running lengthwise. As an alternative you could use the fruitwoods such as walnut (*Juglans regia*), cherry (*Prunus spp.*) or apple (*Malus sylvestris*). A lighter-coloured wood will show the detail more clearly than a darker one. Clean the surface of your wood so you can draw on it. For the design, you could use any leaf you like. Gather a selection of leaves and arrange them pleasingly on your timber, fastening them on to the smooth surface using small pieces of masking tape



2 Using the leaves as templates, draw around the edges using a soft lead pencil and sketch in the main veins with arrows indicating the direction of cuts needed around the leaf

3 There are many ways of holding a relief carving so it cannot slip or move, but the most convenient is to rest the timber on a non-slip router mat so you can pick it up and turn it round when you want to change the cutting direction. Outline the edge of the leaves with the 'V' or parting tool. You will have more control using a 'V' tool with a mallet

4 When you cut around the outline with the 'V' tool you must cut in the correct direction. This ensures that if you slip with the tool it will run into the background and away from the line you are following, so you won't cut into your leaf by mistake. If you do not have a 60° 'V' tool you can cut the channel using opposing cuts with No.3 gouges. Once you have outlined the leaves, use a No.3 gouge to deepen and widen the 'V' cuts. The enlarged channel then protects the design, much as a moat around a castle, while you remove the background

5 Ensure that the edge around the design is smooth and cut cleanly with the grain

6 Make the first set of cuts around the outline down the side of the 'V' channel, turning the gouge as appropriate to match the curves of the leaf and stem. You can then make the opposing or second cuts towards the first ones, always using the tool with its bevel downwards, cutting towards the leaf from the background at an angle

"When removing the background of a relief, always begin by cutting into a channel"

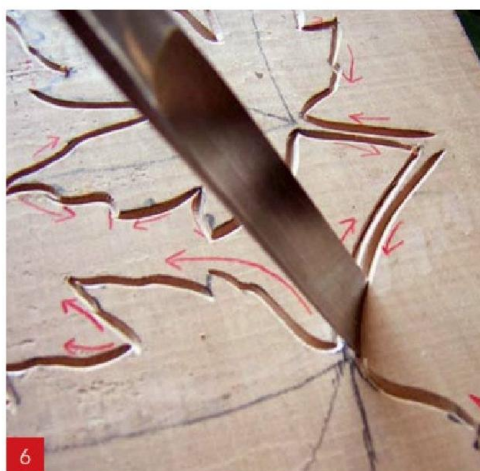
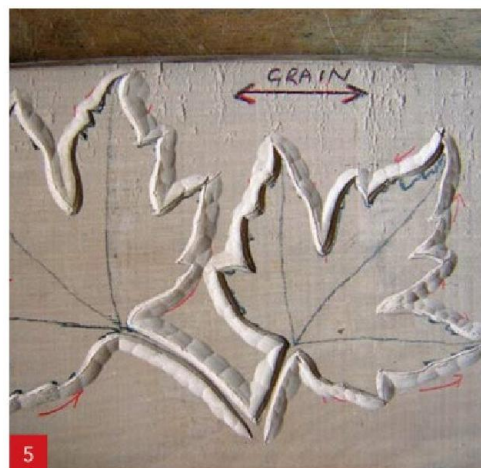
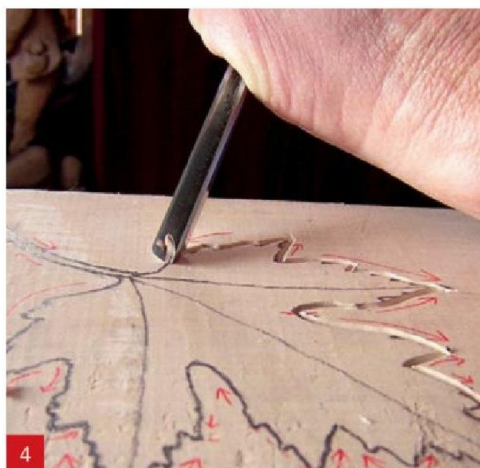
7 Along a curve, swing the cutting edge of the gouge towards the line as you cut so that you use the full width, not just the corner, of the gouge

8 When removing the background of a relief, always begin by cutting into a channel so that the wood cannot tear, run or split into the leaf itself. Then, overlap from here with successive cuts to reduce the surface

9 Start close to the outer edge of the channel, and using a No.3, 4, or 5 gouge of an appropriate width, with its bevel down, make a series of short, steep cuts across the edge into the channel

10 Begin a second row of cuts a little behind the first but not so deep. Still cutting towards the channel, overlap the first row

11 Continue with this overlapping sequence of cuts, working outwards from the leaves until you are clear of them





12



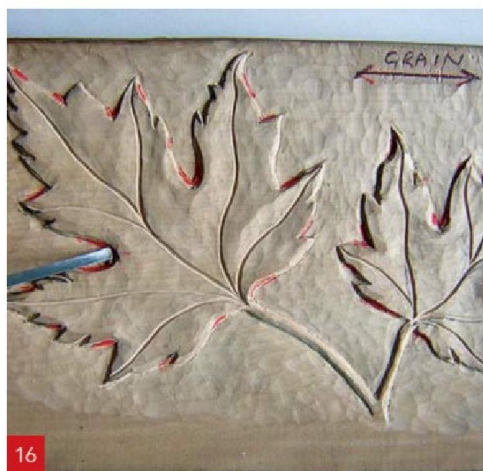
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14



15



16



17



18



19

12 Where there are two channels opposite each other, such as between the leaves, mark the midway line and cut from both sides to the midline to create the required shape. Remove the slight rise at the midway line and finish removing the background ensuring no deep cuts remain and the leaf edge meets the background as cleanly as possible. Refine the larger of the small leaf serrations and the background

13 Mark the lowest areas of your leaf and hollow the deepest area in the middle of the leaf by means of shallow opposing cuts

14 Pare with shallow cuts all over the surface so that no original flatness remains and the surface rises and falls in smooth undulations, with hollows merging smoothly into the rises, and no deep incisions. Incise the veins using a 3mm 60° 'V' tool and narrow at the tips by dropping your tool hand at the end of the cut. Cut in the tiny serrations with a 3mm, No.3 gouge and tidy adjacent surfaces with the point of a skew chisel or a scalpel

15 Your carving should now look something like this

16 Now, undercut the main leaves. Shade the area to be undercut using soft pencil – shown in red – and gently cut in from the background towards the edge of the leaf and stalk

17 Holding the gouge slightly tilted, carefully pare downwards towards the background. Finally, the point of the skew chisel is used to taper the sides of the 'cave' so its shape corresponds with the line of the upper surface of the leaf. Remove pencil marks and clean up the remaining surfaces. Do not use abrasives as this can remove crisp details

18 If you wish to make a contrast between the smooth surface of the leaf and the background, this can be stippled using a punch. Special punches can be bought and are used lightly with a hammer

19 Finally, apply a coat of wax polish using an old toothbrush, which may reveal further blemishes needing removal. Re-wax and buff your carving with a lint-free duster, and your relief carving is now complete

20 minutes with... Stan Kimm

We catch up with Stan Kimm, BWA's Hertfordshire Region leader



PHOTOGRAPHS BY STAN KIMM

When did you first get a taste for woodcarving?

I carved my first dagger with a penknife at the age of four and proudly took it to school to show my teacher. Needless to say she confiscated it, much to the fury of my Dad who gave her an earbending on the value of 'encouragement'. My Dad bought me the penknife, and I remember his words: "Before I give it to you I'll have to sharpen it because blunt knives are dangerous." He was my inspiration in those days. Today, I am inspired by Grinling Gibbons, Ian Norbury, Jonathan Fearnhead and Judith Nicoll.

What motivates you?

I have always liked making things and wood is a particularly nice medium to work with. I can easily spend 4-6 hours a day absorbed in carving. There isn't much that can't be made from wood – most shapes are possible.

What would you say is unique about your carving style that's instantly recognisable?

People say they know my style for its intricate detail with surfaces that are so smooth. I spend a fair amount of time on finishing using needle files and abrasives, checking work through magnifying glasses. Look out for my signature on my work – JK – I'm also known as Jim!

Where would we have seen your carvings exhibited?

I've displayed my work at quite a few places such as Alexandra Palace; Westonbirt Arboretum's 'Festival of the Tree'; Wembley Exhibition Centre; Sandown Park; Cressing Temple Barns Woodworking Exhibition in Essex



'Tripitaka'



'Chinese Dragon'

and at the Hatfield House 'Living Crafts Show'. In competition I've been fortunate to win 11 gold medals at some of these events.

What have been your greatest challenges?

Well, as you know, "Impossibilities are quite difficult, but miracles are even worse!" Definitely the 'Chinese Dragon' has been the most difficult project I've tackled. The refinement was very tricky. Another challenge was 'Tripitaka' (Tang Seng), completed in June 2012, carved in lime (*Tilia vulgaris*) in 250 hours, inspired by Chinese mythology of the 'Tales of Monkey'. Tripitaka was a monk whose disciples protected him from the enemies he encountered along his journey to retrieve the sacred scrolls. The reins and harness, which are integral, were extremely delicate.

This series also includes my carving of the main character, the mischievous 'Monkey King' who broke into the Palace to steal the golden peach, which made him immortal. He was jailed for 1,000 years, but released by Buddha to escort and protect Tripitaka. 'Sandman the Priest' and 'Pigman' complete the four main characters in the tale. Each posed challenges!

What advice and technical tips can you share with us?

Being an engineer, I always begin my carvings with drawings, referring to many books and other sources to get the details accurate. Spoon designs come from 'doodlings' and reflect the life of the person for whom the spoon is intended. Scale is so important. For example, when preparing drawings, I always draw a figure with one arm outstretched and the other bent at the elbow.

I cannot stress highly enough the need to use very sharp chisels. After the roughing out, I pare down with scalpels. I finish most carvings with Abranet abrasive mesh through grades up to 600 grit. Finally, pieces are coated with satin varnish. The first coat brings the grain up, so the wood must be smoothed off with abrasive and recoated with varnish a couple more times. I finish off with a final flash coat of varnish.

You've been busy with commissions – can you tell us about them?

Commissions come from word of mouth – I never advertise.

My first carving commission was for people I met in the Lake District who saw me carving a spoon. They asked for a tiger, which I carved in zebrano (*Microberlinia brazzavillensis*). Then came a springer spaniel for a breeder in Chester. My carvings can be found in Australia, and interestingly, there is one now owned by the only policeman in the Pitcairn Islands! More recently, I've completed a triple panel to display the names of church wardens of St Mary's Church, Kenton, London. It has a 100mm frame all covered with foliage. Stanton Church in Suffolk has hymn and psalm number boards framed with oak leaves and acorns.

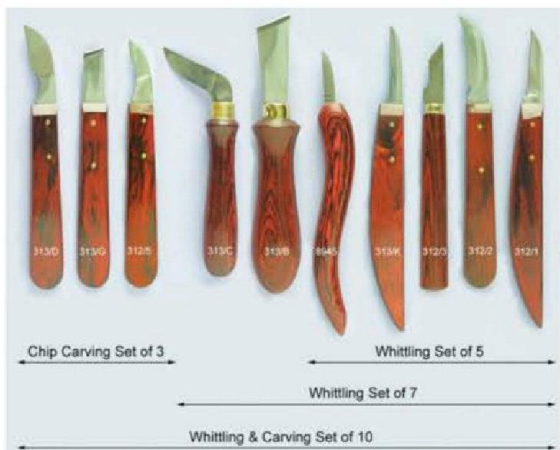
One gentleman took delight in one of my gold-medal winning pair of carvings at an exhibition at Alexandra Palace, which were not for sale. After three years of him pestering me to sell it, we came to a compromise in that I would carve him another pair. Frustratingly, having spent hours doing this, he refused to buy it because it was the 'original' one he wanted! My daughter-in-law was over the moon with the saga because they became a gift for her. Every cloud has a silver lining!

What are your dreams for the future?

To have the names of our national woodcarvers, amateur and professional, recognised internationally. They have talent, focus, patience, so much creativity and are a dab hand at research too – role models to be in awe of!

These are all joined together, yet each tail through the mouth is wider at the end than the mouth hole. There are no glued joints. Can you work out how Stan carved this?...





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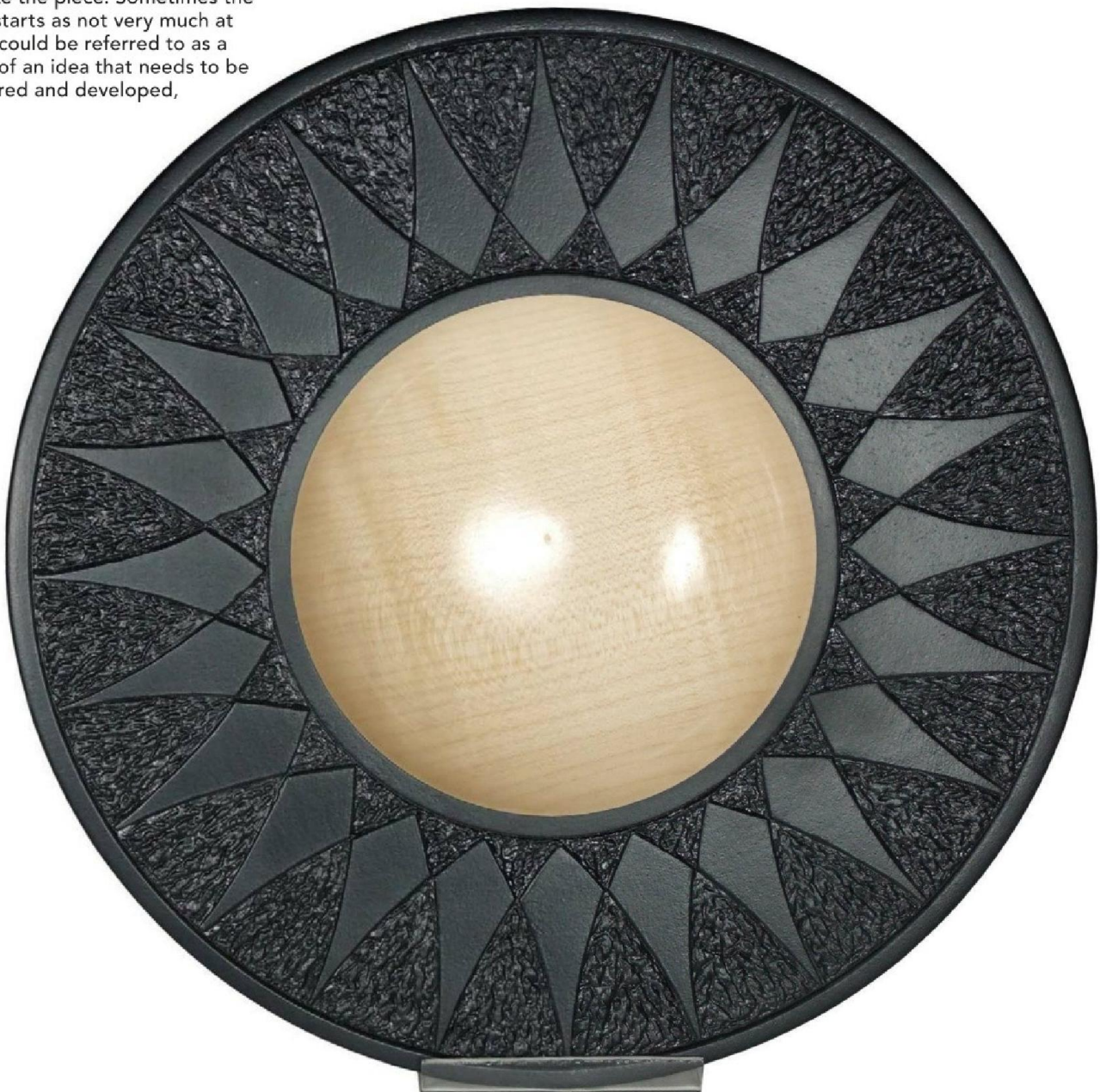
Carving a turned bowl rim

Nick Arnall looks at where turning and carving meet as he decorates the rim of this sycamore bowl

This piece is part of a group that, today, I refer to as 'The Geometric Series.' I think one of the hardest elements to overcome was that of confidence when doing the initial carving and sometimes knowing where next to take the piece. Sometimes the idea starts as not very much at all: it could be referred to as a seed of an idea that needs to be nurtured and developed,

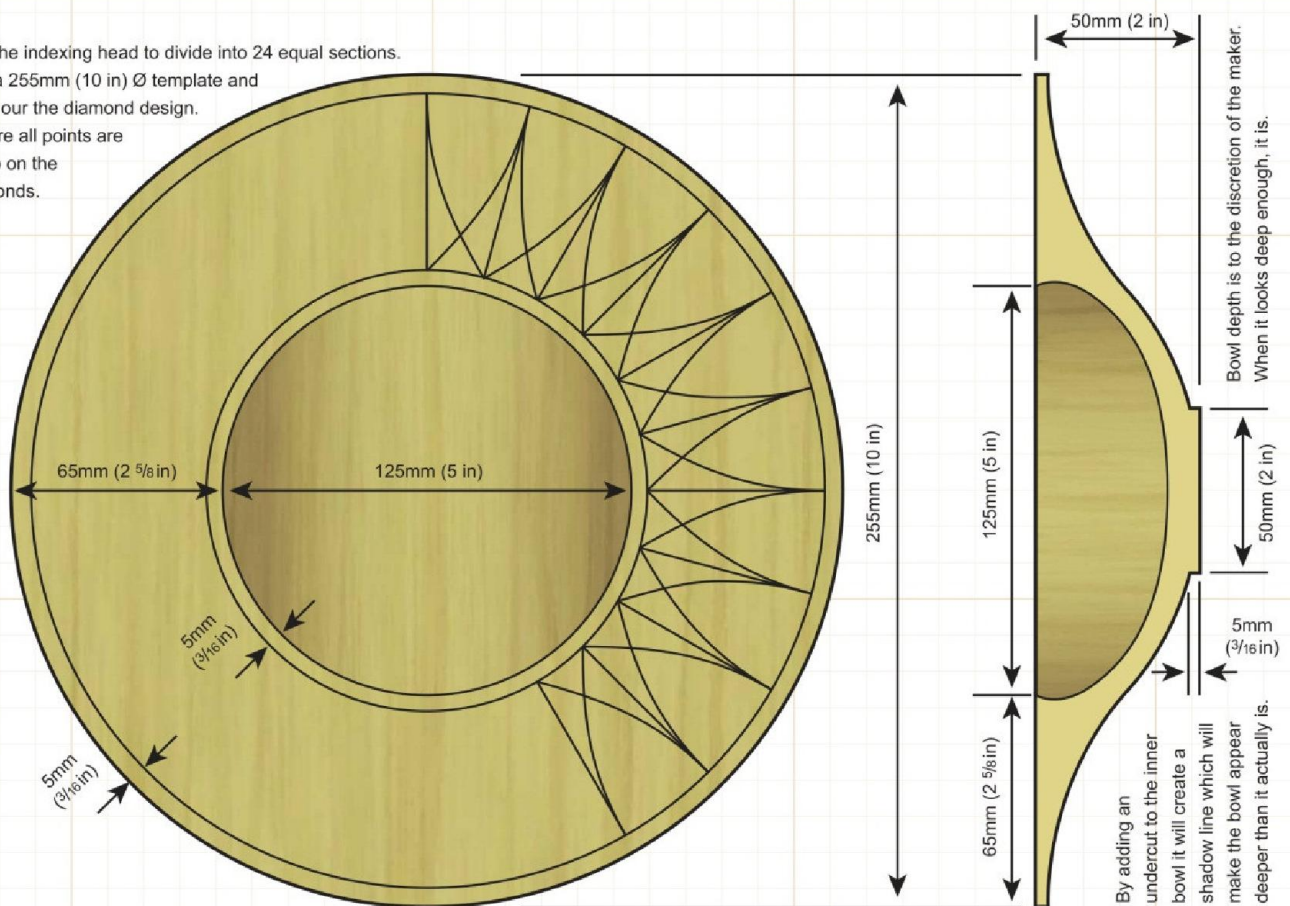
and maybe you even need to wait for a eureka moment to happen before you feel inspired to create it. With this group, I also gained some inspiration from the work of Al Stirt and Hayley Smith,

both of whom are well-known woodturners. For this project, you will need an Axminster multi-tool or equivalent, a reciprocating power carver, as well as a range of acrylic-based finishes.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY JANE ARNULL

Use the indexing head to divide into 24 equal sections.
Use a 255mm (10 in) Ø template and mark our the diamond design.
Ensure all points are sharp on the diamonds.



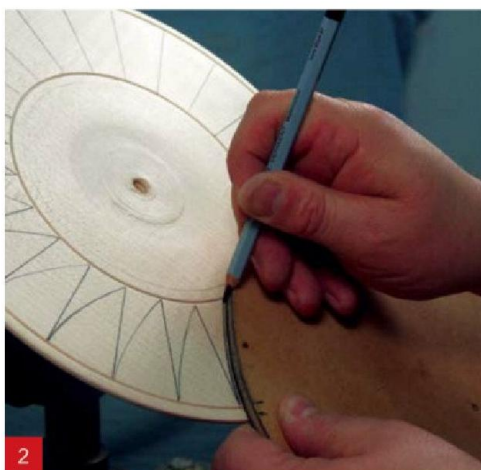
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Nick Arnall is a UK professional woodturner, author and demonstrator who produces decorative turned wood art and also turns spindles for furniture makers, cabinetmakers, joiners and builders. He has demonstrated at symposiums all over the world and also offers tuition to those who are looking to improve their woodturning and explore decorative techniques.



1 To begin this project, you need to start by using the indexing head of the lathe to divide the rim into 24. Check that the lathe's toolrest is set on centre; this will help to ensure the lines are perfectly radial. At this point, transfer the chuck and the piece to the carving clamp. Once the piece is suitably mounted, set the clamp at a comfortable angle and height and you can then begin the next process





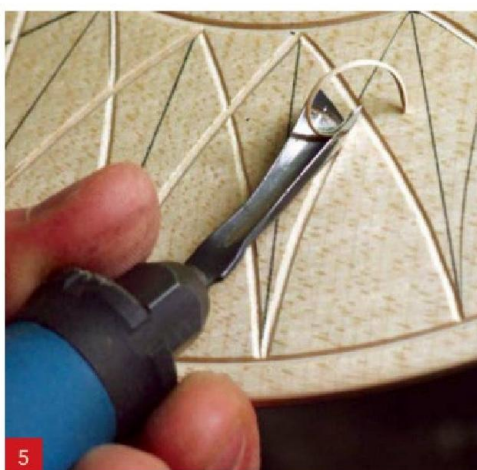
2 Set the template between the radial lines and then continue to draw them in



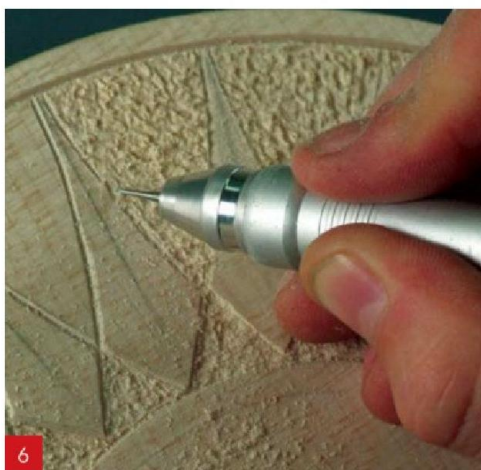
3 Now set the template to the left and the diamonds will appear. You can shade in the areas to be textured and this will help avoid any potential mistakes



4 When carving I use a power gouge – there are several on the market – mine is a Ryobi tool, which I have had for many years, it is fitted with a Flexcut 'V' gouge. The key to good detail is to always keep it sharp. Carve the first line to the right starting on the outside and working in to the centre. Try to get one smooth flowing movement without any changes in the direction of cut



"... begin to create a figure-of-eight random texture to relieve the remaining panels"



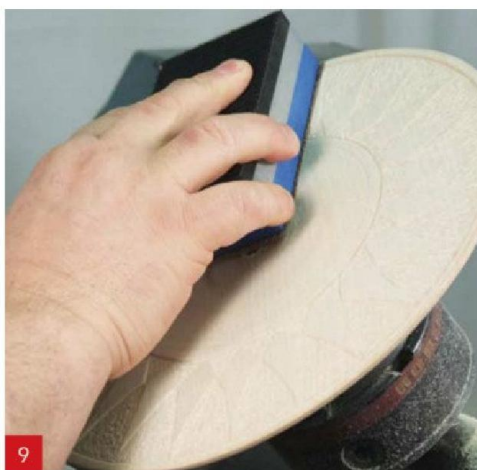
5 Now carve the second line to the right – I find this a little more difficult. Here you can see the previous geometric design simply carved, with no added decoration



6 Using a flex-shaft rotary tool fitted with a rotary hand-piece and a very small good quality round burr set at the slowest speed, place your hand comfortably in the centre of the piece and begin to create a figure-of-eight random texture to relieve the remaining panels. Take great care not to damage the carved edges



7 With all the texturing finished it will require some cleanup – this is sensitively completed using a radial sanding brush fitted to a standard rotary drill. Pulse the motor, as it will keep the bristles softer than if run at speed



8 Here is the finished uncoloured piece. At this stage take some time, look for any mistakes, and if needed, refine them to produce clean edges and detail

9 Using a hard-faced sanding block and fine abrasive, gently sand the face with the grain. Keep the block absolutely flat or the edges will become rounded, which you do not want

PROJECT

Carving a turned bowl rim

➔ **10** Using a soft long-haired bristle brush, apply multiple coats of liquid acrylic black. When the black is dry remove it from the carving clamp and return it to the lathe spindle

11 Seal with acrylic satin lacquer and apply multiple coats to the rim at this stage. Rotate the piece by hand, and as you do so this will allow good and even coverage

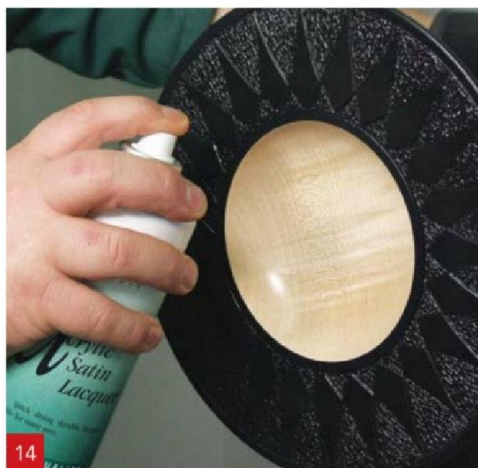
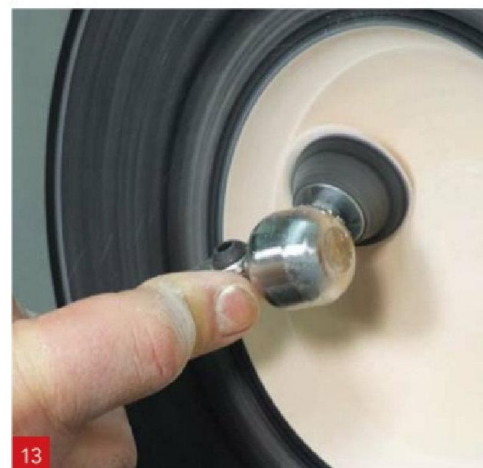
12 Ensure that your tool control is spot on. There is no room for error when making the entry cuts at the edge of the inner bowl. Remove the centre of the bowl working out to the line made earlier to define the edge of the bowl, using the long-grind 10mm bowl gouge. With a freshly sharpened French-curve bowl scraper refine the inside of the bowl – gently does it here. Use only the lightest of touches and it will do the job for you

13 Sand the bowl but be very careful at the intersection between the rim and the inner bowl. This needs to be kept crisp and does not want softening as it will lose its definition. Shear-sand the bowl and this will remove/disguise any radial sanding marks there may be

14 With the sanding complete seal, de-nib and lacquer the bowl with multiple light coats, then extend the spraying to cover the rim to produce one even surface. Allow the bowl to dry for about an hour before moving continuing

15 Apply burnishing cream to the bowl whilst it is stationary. Do not get any cream over the top edge, as it is not very easy to remove

16 Here is the finished diamond rim bowl complete with its black rim ▶



Top Tips

1. When creating carved areas do not settle for sub-standard details. They need to be crisp, clear and cleanly delineated. Take your time, do your best and, if necessary, back-track if you make a mistake
2. Check all detail both visually and by touch before applying colour to the piece. If needed, refine further before the next stage
3. The use of light is critical to success with any work. Do not over-rely on one source only, be it natural or artificial light. Ideally, a combination of both should be used and the work should be presented at different angles to the light source to create shadows when working – this will allow you to see how the decoration and the overall shape is developing

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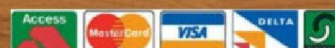
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Reader's showcase

Gary Bryan

Meet this carver and musician from Canada whose semi-abstract forms are inspired by nature

There are a lot of Shropshire carpenters in my family tree. Perhaps that is why I have had a lifelong love of wood. I love its colour, texture and smell – the sheer beauty of this material. I have an equal love for music and have spent my life working as a high school music teacher and violist. My viola is a wonderfully handcrafted wooden instrument and the deep, lush sound that it makes is also an expression of beauty. For me, the thoughts and emotions expressed in music are mirrored in the beauty of a wood sculpture. Whether I'm using a chisel or a viola bow, there is

a resonance in both that moves me to the core of my being.

I learned to carve through trial and error. I read and reread everything I could find on carving and still continue that practice to this day. My wife, who is a successful professional artist, serves as an in-house mentor, advising, critiquing and always encouraging. One thing I have realised: one is never finished with learning when making art. Each new piece both humbles me and excites me, pushing me to discover new techniques, new ideas. It is a lifelong process and so, in a sense, I am still learning to carve.



'Canyon Concert', African padauk (Pterocarpus soyauxii), 735mm high x 685mm wide x 355mm deep

Inspiration

John Rood, a 20th-century American wood- and stone-carver, opened my eyes early on to the possibility of what can be achieved with wood. Over the years I have added many to that list of favourites, but Henry Moore, Constantin Brâncusi, Eric Gill and Barbara Hepworth rise to the top. I love their beautiful, simplified forms, the monumentality of their work and above all, the evocative quality of their design.

How I work

Virtually the entire basement of our home has been turned into a large inspiring carving studio. One wall holds racks of chisels and shelves filled with artwork, objects found in nature, antique tools and an inspiration board filled with photos and quotes from great sculptors that inspire me. Another wall houses my ever-growing collection of books on carving and sculpture as well as my collection of wood for future carving. The central floor area is dominated by two workbenches – one I made for large sculptures, out of large timbers and a white oak (*Quercus alba*) top, the second a restored bench I use for relief carving.

An antique lathe and bandsaw occupy another section of the space. The former wine cellar has been transformed into an area for design, finishing and storage. I must confess – a little wine still remains!

The largest portion of my carving is done with a wide selection of chisels which I have enjoyed collecting over a period

of 40 years. Lately I find myself reaching for my many fishtail gouges as they seem to slide through the harder woods with a lot less resistance. I designed a 1kg brass mallet that fits my hand and allows me to carve for hours without tiring. Above all, though, the one 'tool' that I could not live without is my wonderful stereo system! It is always on. Fuelled by my collection of over 1,200 classical CDs, the music feeds my carving muse, intensifies the ideas I seek to express in wood and sustains me as I work.

Carvings

As a young carver, I enjoyed carving animals and low reliefs mostly in walnut (*Juglans regia*). Since my retirement, I have been developing a style that is semi-abstract, stylising the human figure and forms in nature. I seek to bring out the essence of each subject as strongly as I can, using the colour, grain and the nature of the various woods to bring each idea to life. Each new project seems filled with hope and possibility.

My current carving obsession is a large 762mm tall mahogany (*Khaya ivorensis*) sculpture of an embrace between a man and a woman. This has been a steep learning curve in human anatomy for me! My wife and I have served as our own live models for this one. The challenge is to simplify the figures so that the embrace remains the central theme and the two figures meld to become one. ▀

Contact bryange@bell.net



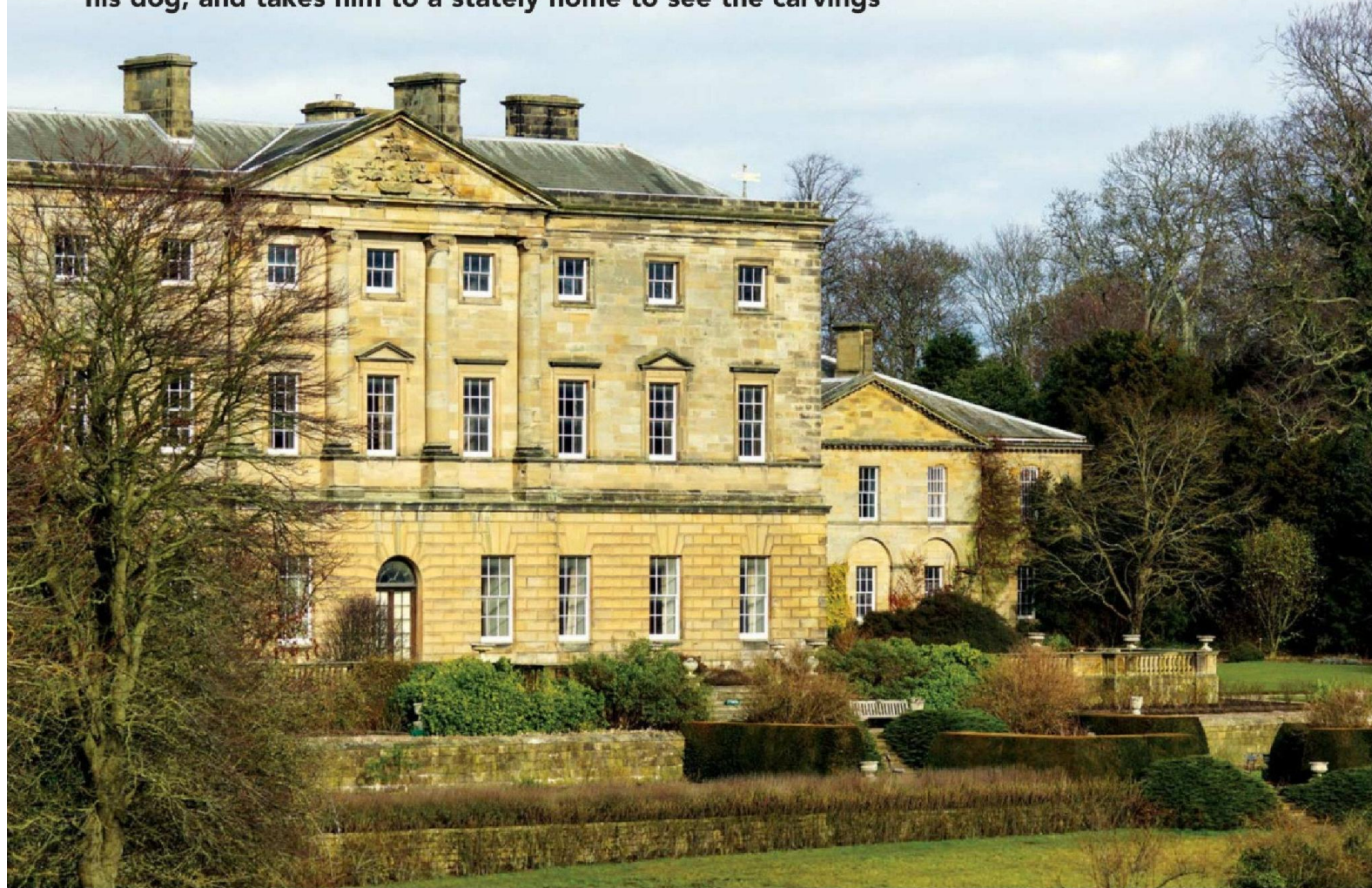
'Unfurled', butternut (*Juglans cinerea*), 785mm high



Gary's wonderful collection of carving tools, built up over the last 40 years

From the workshop

Ben Hawthorne gives his grandson some guidance in drawing his dog, and takes him to a stately home to see the carvings



I haven't done a lot in the workshop recently, as everything has suddenly decided to start growing in the garden and both Mary and I have been working full-time to keep up. Even when the weather has been unpleasant there has been plenty to do in the greenhouse.

We haven't seen much of Will as he has become interested in athletics and has been here and there competing for his school. He did come over during the half term with his new 'friend', a puppy of indeterminate origin that he had had for only a few weeks. I think his interest in carving is still there but is having a bit of a rest, as he has developed a real passion

for drawing. He has spent quite a bit of time since getting the puppy trying to draw it in various poses. He is actually very good – far better than I thought he would be. Drawing any animal on the move can be a nightmare – I found photographing them difficult enough. I think he will go back to carving, and any experience he has with drawing can do nothing but good. Considering that most of the carvers at the club say they can't draw at all, he should have a good grounding for the future.

It is well known that you cannot produce anything like an accurate drawing – or carving – of an animal if you don't have a reasonable knowledge of its

anatomy. I think we have all seen some very 'imaginative' anatomy on carvings at some time.

Watching the dog

I didn't think that a boy of nine years old was ready for detailed anatomy lessons, so we just looked at his puppy while we could and made basic comparison with his puppy and ourselves.

Will wanted to know which bits went where, so we spent quite a bit of time crawling around on all fours to compare the positions of various joints on ourselves with those of his puppy. It was quite hilarious, as the puppy thought it was a great game and wanted to get involved very personally

A trip to a stately home was a great bit of inspiration for Will



ILLUSTRATION BY ROBIN SPRINGETT

with all that we did. I am not suggesting that you should start crawling around the floor, but even just looking at your pets and how they move is a great help – Will and I certainly had a lot of fun. You could combine this with a series of photographs so that you end up with a library of different action pictures that could make some very attractive carvings or drawings. You could end up with some very lifelike reference material in poses that you will never find in any magazine or book. These can be even better if you give your dog his favourite toy to play with and just watch.

One style at a time

Mary and I took Will to a stately home not too far away. The gardens were well worth visiting and we had heard that there were some beautiful carvings inside.

Will and I couldn't believe the incredible detail in the oak carvings made hundreds of years ago, and I remembered something that Michael Painter once told me. He said that we can do nothing in sculpture now that the Romans

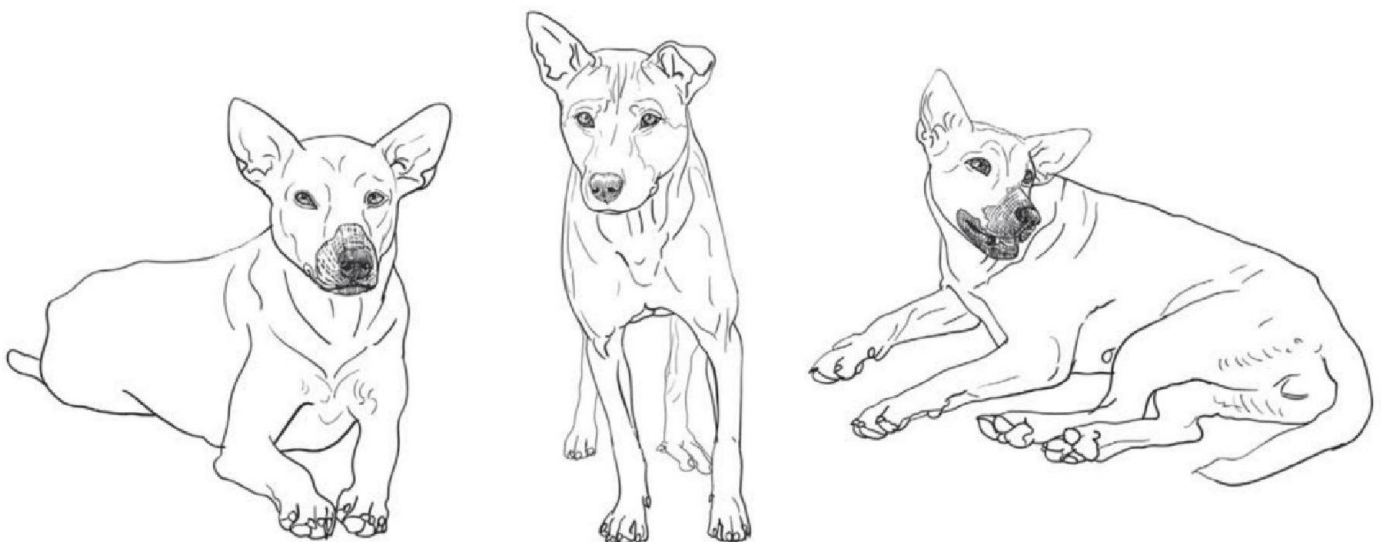
couldn't do centuries ago, and that the tools they used were not that different from those we use today. Will couldn't get over all the different styles of carving that there were and it crossed my mind that most of the carvers probably specialised in only one type of work, learning all the skills necessary to produce that alone. Learners like me try to carve human figures, animals, relief panels, lettering, birds and so on. I am not going to live long enough to master all the skills necessary for those, especially as it probably took the carvers who did that work a lifetime to perfect theirs.

Will said, with all the wisdom of a nine-year-old, that he would stick to relief until he gets it right.

If we are going to produce work of an acceptable standard we need to concentrate on one style of carving at a time and not keep chopping and changing.

I suppose this is a bit like problem solving. Trying to solve several problems at once will mean that you solve none. Tackle them one at a time, and you have a chance of success! ▶

Making a series of drawings provides useful reference material





Carve and paint a pair of blue tits

A colourful mix of blue, yellow, white and green makes the blue tit one of our most attractive and recognisable garden visitors. Here, Mike Wood shows you how to carve and paint a pair

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mike Wood has been carving all his life and professionally since 1986.

Carving mostly birds, he is self-taught and takes great inspiration from the American bird carvers. To see more of Mike's work, visit: www.mikewoodbird.co.uk

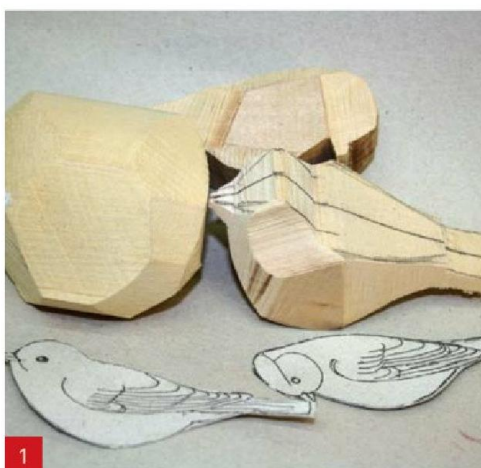
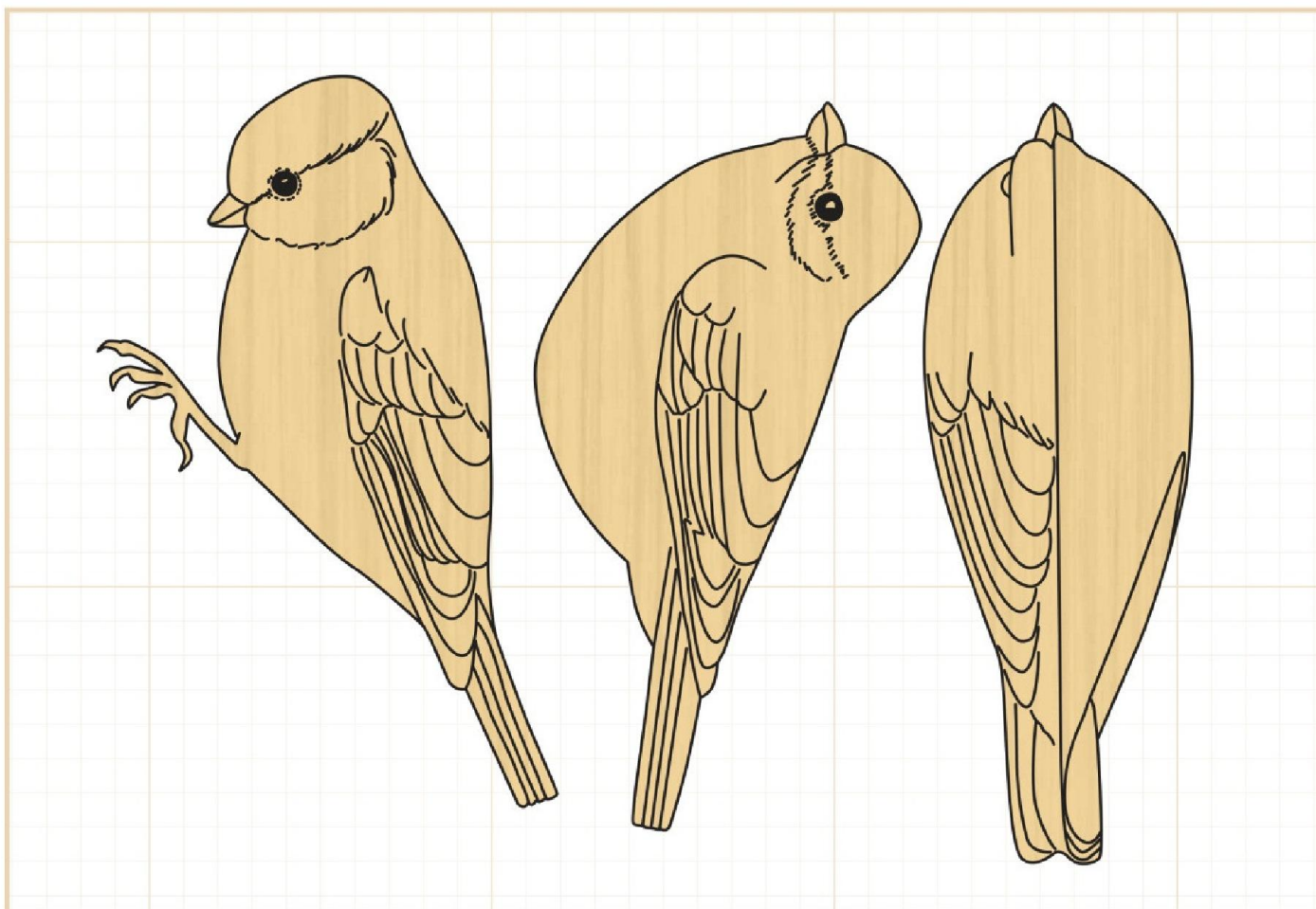


The blue tit (*Cyanistes caeruleus* or *Parus caeruleus*) is a small bird in the tit family Paridae. Its blue and yellow plumage make it easily recognisable. It is a wonderful subject to carve and is a delight to see one finished.

Blue tits are widespread and resident throughout temperate and subarctic Europe and western Asia. They usually nest in tree holes, although they readily nest in nesting boxes, too. Although preferring insects and spiders for food, they also eat seeds and other vegetable-based foods and will flock together in the colder months in their search for food from gardens and feeder points. Blue tits are very acrobatic in their antics and they can often be seen clinging upside-down to feeders and branches when foraging for food. They are a real delight to see and watch.

Things you will need...

- Rotary carving unit and handpiece
- Cone taper
- Sanding drum
- Different grades of cloth-backed abrasive
- Soft pencil
- Small diamond burr
- High-speed rotary handpiece
- Small ruby burr
- Artificial eyes
- Plastic wood
- Pyrography machine
- Airbrush
- Pieces of copper welding rod
- 4mm brass rod and thin brass sheet
- Paint: grey, black, yellow & green
- White gesso
- Rigger
- Personal protective equipment: safety glasses or faceshield, dust extraction and dust mask
- Wood: Lime (*Tilia vulgaris*); dimensions: 110 x 50 x 50mm; Jelutong (*Dyera costulata*): large enough for the apple

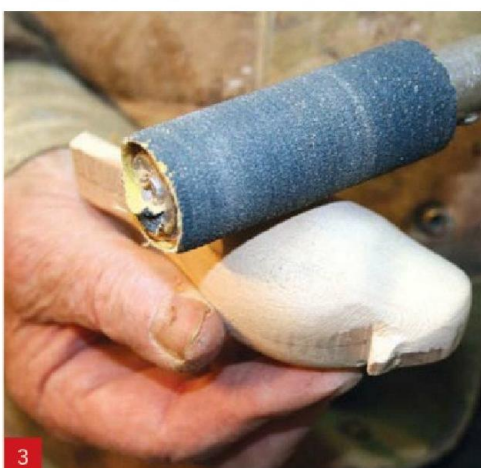


Carving the birds

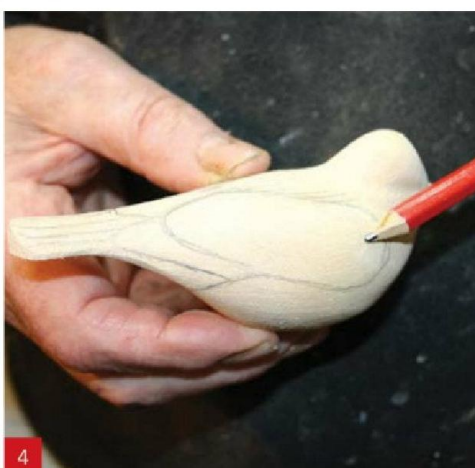
1 For this project you will need lime (*Tilia vulgaris*) blanks to make the birds. Each bird should measure 110 x 50 x 50mm so the wood should be slightly larger than this. The apple is made out of a scrap of jelutong (*Dyera costulata*). Measure your favourite apple and choose a piece of timber to suit. As a guide, something around 75-100mm square should be fine



2 The next stage is to shape the birds using a cone taper in a rotary handpiece. The burr used can be quite coarse, so pick something suitable that you may have. A cone-shaped one is probably the best shape for fast shaping; just look at what you have and see what you prefer



3 Using a rotary tool and sanding drum, sand the bird all over using different grits of cloth-backed abrasive. It is wise to have a rubber block nearby to run the abrasive on in the event that it becomes clogged



4 You are now ready to draw the outline of the wing on each of the birds, using a soft pencil

➔ **5** Once you have completed drawing the entire wing detail on each bird as well as beak and eye detail, you are ready to start the carving. Be as accurate as you can with the marking. When cutting you can, of course, change where you cut, but it is easier if you can mark out the right position in the first place

6 Using a high-speed handpiece and a small diamond point burr, you can now carve in all of the wing detail. If you don't have a diamond burr, other cutters can be used. A small flame cutter would work well here; this could be carbide or other material. That said, the diamond ones leave a finer finish. Remember, such use of rotary tools creates dust and potentially flying debris. Wear appropriate PPE: dust mask and eye/face protection. It is wise to have some form of dust extraction as dust is hazardous to health

7 Use the same diamond point burr to carve in all the wing detail on each of the birds

8 Keep using the same burr to carve in the head and bill detail

9 Using a high-speed handpiece and a small ruby ball, you are now ready to put in the eye holes. You can then use plastic wood to fit in the eyes on both birds

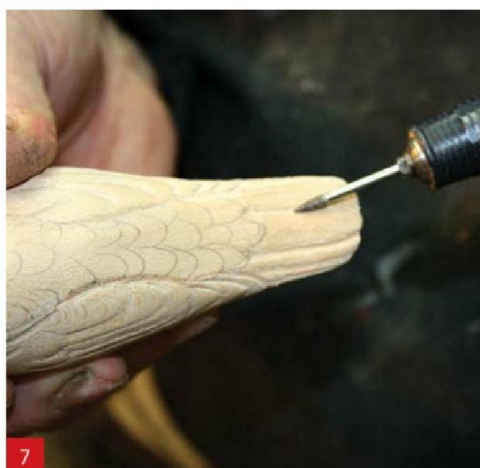
10 With the eyes fitted, clean up the area around the eyes using a small diamond ball

11 Using a high-speed handpiece and a small white stone, go all over the undersides of the bird

12 Starting from the outer edge of each feather, burn all the underside of the bird, highlighting all the feather details

Top tip

Burrs become clogged and need cleaning to keep them in tip-top condition. Obtain appropriate cleaning blocks for the cutters you have – tell the retailer what type of cutter you are using so you end up with the right product. Keep the cutters clean and they will last longer and cut cleaner without burning





13



14

13 Continue to burn the rest of the detail in until you have completed the entire bird. A chisel-edged or scalpel tip is ideal for this purpose. The fine lines incise and delineate areas well, which is perfect for this purpose. Note how some areas are darker than others. I use a constant heat but sometimes, to create more depth or width, I will go over an area multiple times to get the desired effect. It should now look something like this

14 The feet are cast and the legs are made from copper-coated welding rods



15



16

Making the apple

15 Now to create the apple. Again, use a cone taper in a rotary handpiece to shape the apple. If you need to, you can use a smaller burr to form the finer detail. Once the main shaping is done, finish off by sanding through the various grit grades

16 Use a 4mm brass rod and thin brass sheet to make a stalk and leaf to attach to the apple. Again, you can make your own: this will require you to solder the two bits together, but it is worthwhile. I am not aware of where you can buy such things



17



18

Painting the apple

17 To begin, paint the apple with an undercoat of yellow. Next, using an airbrush, spray matte varnish mixed with water all over the apple. Then, while the apple is still wet, brush red streaks onto its surface

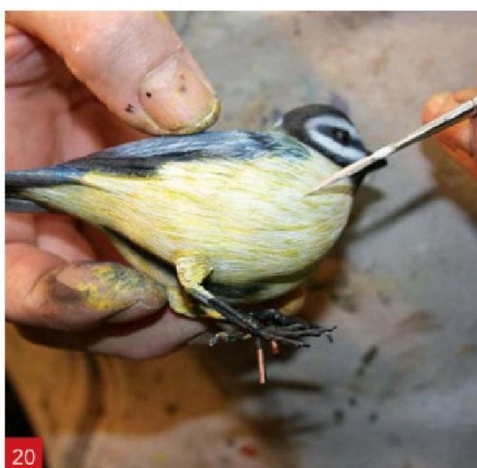
Painting the birds

18 Now back to the birds. Start by painting each one with an undercoat of grey

19 You can now start to map out where the colours will go. It is essential for you to have reference materials to hand to use as a guide in terms of how a blue tit is typically coloured



19



20

20 Using a fine rigger and white gesso, randomly put in fine feather detail on each of the birds, still using your reference material to ensure you get this as close to nature as possible

Distribution

There are currently around 20-44 million pairs of blue tits in Europe

PROJECT

Blue tits

➤ **21** You can now paint in the white face details on each of the birds

22 Using an airbrush, paint the dark parts of the wing and tail. Don't worry if you do not have an airbrush. The whole process can also be done using brushes

23 Use a rigger and white gesso to paint in the black detail

24 After giving the breast a thin yellow wash, go over this again, putting in the finer details as you go along

25 You are now ready to paint the head in further detail

26 You need to make a thin glaze of greyish-green and apply this to the back of each bird. You may find you need to repeat this several times in order to achieve the desired effect

27 You need to do the same to the breast of the blue tit, but this time painting it yellow. The next step is to paint the feet and the bill black

28 Here are the finished blue tits and apple

Description

The blue tit is usually 120mm long with a wingspan of 180mm for all genders, and is known to weigh about 11g. A typical blue tit has an azure-blue crown and a dark blue line passing through the eye and encircling the white cheeks to the chin, giving the bird a very distinctive appearance. The iris is typically a deep dark brown. The forehead and a bar on the wing are white. The nape, wings and tail are blue and the back is yellowish green. The underpart is mostly sulphur-yellow with a dark line down the abdomen. The yellowness is affected by the carotene pigments in yellowy-green caterpillars that the birds eat. The bill is a rich, deep black and the legs are typically a blue-tinted shade of grey





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The coping saw

Chris Pye shows you how to cope with this humble saw...



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chris Pye is a member of the Master Carvers Association; a woodcarving instructor both in Hereford and the USA; the author of some seven woodcarving books and numerous magazine articles and co-founder with his wife, Carrie Camann, of the online instructional website: www.woodcarvingworkshops.tv. His work can be viewed at www.chrispye-woodcarving.com



PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRIS PYE

The coping saw has a very narrow hard steel blade that readily cuts curves

To me the cheap and versatile coping saw is an unsung hero of the carving bench. I bought this one 35 years ago, since when it has hung ever-ready with my other tools. Many are the times I have identified and quickly removed a lump of wood from a carving with this little saw rather than reach for gouges; or profiled the edge of a relief; or pierced through a section between leaves.

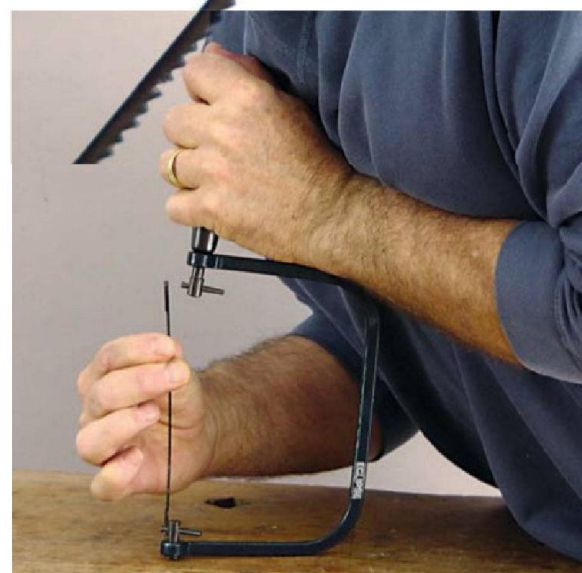
The coping saw has a very narrow hard steel blade that readily cuts curves; thus sometimes substituting for a bandsaw or power scrollsaw. By releasing the blade and threading it through a hole, you can cut internal profiles as well. You can use one hand on the handle and one on the frame at the far end; or one hand on the handle, with the other supporting the work; or both hands on the handle.

On better coping saws, the thin blade is held at either end in a notch in the bottom of a long 'pin', or something similar. The handle screws up tight to create

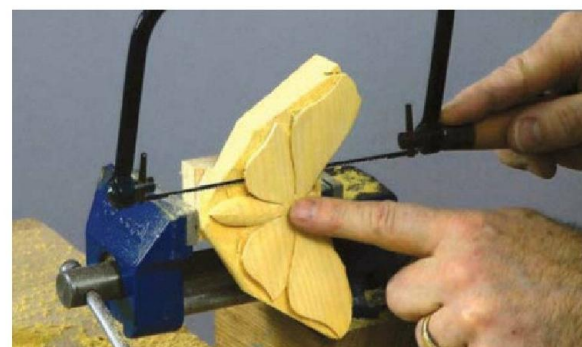
On better coping saws, the thin blade is held at either end in a notch in the bottom of a long 'pin', or something similar



By loosening the handle and pushing on the pins at both ends, you can swivel the blade



The best way to change the blade is to loosen the handle to relieve the blade tension, but don't remove it



Here I'm releasing a moth from its background wood with a coping saw, following the wing contour and cutting about 3mm thickness

tension in the springy frame and thus a taut blade; unscrewing the handle releases the frame tension for rotating or changing the blade. Depending on the work, it can help to reverse the blade so the teeth cut on the pull or draw stroke, rather than on the push.

By loosening the handle and pushing on the pins at both ends, you can swivel the blade. That is the genius of this little saw: by rotating the blade as you cut round a curve, you can usually keep the frame from being obstructed by the work. In this manner you can cut circular holes. Although you are limited by the depth of the frame, you can still find a very useful reach into many carvings.

Eye between the pins to keep the blade straight. It is crucial that the blade is straight at all times and not twisted. A twisted blade will tend to wander, so one side of the cut runs differently from the other, and will more readily kink or break. Keep the handle screwed tightly wherever you have set the

pins. If the handle does tend to move as you work, add a rubber washer or similar between the handle and the frame.

The best way to change the blade is to loosen the handle to relieve the blade tension. Don't remove the handle – place the far end vertically on your benchtop and lean your weight on the handle to flex the frame. You can slip the blade out from the pin notches easily. Blades for coping saws come in packets, usually of 10. I find a coarse 10tpi blade most useful but finer blades – 12, 15 and 18tpi – are also available.

In the picture to the right, I'm releasing a moth from its background wood with a coping saw, cutting about 3mm thickness. Besides saving me a lot of carving time the saw puts no pressure on the fragile wings, which would be inevitable if I were to carve away the back of the insect with gouges.

You can see a video of Chris demonstrating the coping saw on www.woodcarvingworkshops.tv. ▶

Top tips

1. Always work with a blade in full tension, which means the handle is locked tight
2. Keep spare blades. They will break and when they do is not the time to be shopping
3. Check frequently that the end pins are aligned and thus the blade is straight
4. Saw lightly – excess pressure is a common cause of a blade snapping. It is best to let the saw do the work
5. Keep checking the run of the cut at each end – it's easy to wander off your line

Introducing... Sydney Woodcarving Group

We go down under to find out about
this four-branched club based in Sydney



Members of the Shellharbour group



SWG President Frank O'Connor carving in relief

History

In 1993, four woodcarvers – Maricha Oxley, Robert Howard, Enn Muller, and Fred Blake – got together to demonstrate what they do at the annual Timber & Working With Wood Show in Sydney. They took the names of people interested in joining a group to promote woodcarving. This was how the Sydney Woodcarving Group (SWG) was formed. Maricha and Enn are still very active in the group, though very busy with commission work and taking part in various exhibitions. Enn has, over a number of years, taught his skills to many people in the workshop he shares with the Shellharbour group, and is also the official Woodcarver for the Australian Navy. Maricha is a well-known carver teaching woodcarving and sculpture in Sydney.

The SWG now has in excess of 85 members and meets regularly in four locations: Chester Hill, Epping, Lilli Pilli and Shellharbour. From each group, members are selected to form a committee which holds a meeting on alternate months at each clubhouse. It's key to have interaction between the groups, and members travel to each location throughout the year.

Group activities

In Australia, woodcarving has few practitioners, compared with woodturners, furniture makers, musical instrument makers and restorers. Carving is not well known, so when an exhibition is held people are amazed at the talent on show. We like to be out there talking to the general public, demonstrating, selling carvings and encouraging future members, especially younger people. A hands-on approach, where members supervise the public in carving a small item, attracts new members. Every year, we participate in the Timber & Working With Wood Show –

this is the premier woodworking show for the year, where we have established a presence for the last 20 years. Woodturners, furniture makers, boat builders, high school students and demonstrators are all part of the event. It is an opportunity for woodcarvers to buy timber and tools, or stock up on accessories. An internal competition is held for SWG members, which offers them an opportunity to improve their own standards.

SWG was invited to demonstrate at the Sydney Royal Easter Show, the major agricultural show in Australia. It was a great success for us and we received many enquiries from it. This show attracts approximately one million people over 14 days, so our members had an opportunity to promote their talents to a very wide audience. Each group also holds exhibitions and demonstrations throughout the year in their own areas, and this has been a great tool to attract new members. We've also supported various charities over the years. Through the raffle of donated works we've raised funds for the

Sydney Cochlear Implant Centre, the Sydney Children's Hospital, as well as other local hospitals.

Workshops

Every year, each group holds a workshop where guests are invited to demonstrate their particular expertise. We have had workshops on making violins, finishing, French polishing, sharpening, fan carving, power carving and pyrography. Interaction amongst groups is essential for any organisation – SWG is only as good as its members want it to be! The interaction between members at the workshops is interesting; you never stop learning.

This year, as part of our 20th anniversary, each group was given the task to make a box and carve five of its sides. This resulted in four boxes being ready for the Sydney 2013 Timber & Working With Wood Show where



Members at the Berry Celtic Festival

we displayed and raffled off the boxes. Making these boxes was a great way for new members to participate and work with a more experienced woodcarver.

The right tools

Today each venue has a bandsaw, sharpening equipment and, most importantly, comprehensive toolkits that new members are welcome to use until they decide on their own requirements. A range of projects, suitable for complete novices, are available with timber, instruction booklets and expert supervision provided. Private lessons can also be arranged with any of the professionals within the membership ranks. ▶

Some work on show at the Sydney Royal Easter Show



A member of the Epping group with his excellent golfing scene

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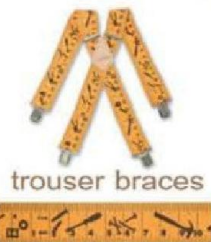
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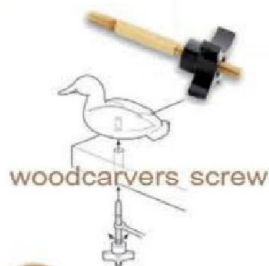
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Auriou holdfast

What is a holdfast? Basically, it's an iron bar in the shape of a number seven. The long leg is dropped into the bench dog hole and tightened onto the workpiece by a hammer blow. Another knock on the back of the holdfast head will release it. Simple and quick; holdfasts were in use in Roman times. Auriou have made a traditional holdfast based on these principles. Richard Maguire, a fine workbench maker from Lincolnshire, has assisted Auriou in the design.

It is made for 19mm round bench holes and has a forged head, a chamfered arm with a slightly convex pad and a slightly undersized 19mm steel post. The holdfast can also be used on 19mm holes in the workbench

legs. The long arm allows good access to work from all sides. The 330mm hold-down post easily allows you to clamp deep pieces up to 127mm thick.

The grip on the workpiece is extremely firm allowing you to plane, saw or chisel your workpiece. As long as you have your mallet or hammer to hand this is a very quick and efficient workbench accessory. If your worktop is very thin then you may have to roughen up the steel post to add further grip to the post. For workbenches of 50mm-plus this should not be required as the posts are shot blasted to give additional grip.

Contact: Classic Hand Tools
Web: www.classichandtools.com



£69.60

Liogier Bastard rasp

Noel Liogier has recently completed the development of the most aggressive hand-stitched rasp available. It has been evolving under test for some time and is now available. Hand-stitched with an ultra-coarse grain tooth pattern, the 350mm-length rasp is a No.3 grain. The Bastard rasp is intended for very fast stock removal. So called after the tradition of calling very coarse files 'bastards'. This rasp is the equivalent in wood removal, combining the abilities of a rasp and a coarse plane. It is extremely capable of handling wild grains,

burrs etc., but also for general fast removal where a plane may struggle. The Bastard rasp is available now and comes complete with a versatile handle assembly, with replacement blades also available.

Contact: Liogier
Web: www.hand-stitched-rasp-riffler.com



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Kulis Karvit putty

Kulis Karvit is a product made especially for the woodcarver. It is a two-part epoxy that has the consistency of putty, but when cured can be sanded, burned, carved and etched. It can be feathered out to a thin layer and still not break. Kulis Karvit has superior bonding characteristics. Simply mix equal parts of the epoxy and hardener and knead until totally blended. It's easy to smooth with water. It doesn't stick to fingers, but adheres to metal and wood very well. The user has plenty of time to work with it – up to 40 minutes – before it starts setting, before allowing to dry overnight. The 6oz. kit contains 3oz. each of parts A and B in re-sealable pots.

Contact: Woodworks Craft Supplies
Web: www.woodworkscraftsupplies.co.uk

Arbortech Mini-TURBO

It was just over one year ago in May 2012 that Arbortech launched the TURBOPlane. A year on and Arbortech is delighted to announce the arrival of a smaller version, the Mini-TURBO.

The Mini-TURBO is a revolution in wood sculpting. It can be used either directly on the Arbortech Mini Grinder or fitted to an angle grinder using the supplied extension shaft. The tool is smooth and controlled, while the limited side exposure enables optimal safety for the user.

The Mini-TURBO is ideal for free-hand shaping and is also suitable for use with guides and templates for accuracy. Shapes that were previously impossible to cut are now made possible and easier. This product is designed for fast efficient stock removal and deep internal profiles leaving a smooth finish, which requires minimal sanding. It is sold as part of a kit and comes with replaceable/re-sharpenable

carbide teeth, a brass M10-M14 adaptor and an assortment of sanding discs that can be fitted to the supplied extension shaft. The Mini-TURBO is perfect for medium sized carving projects from start to finish.

Contact: BriMarc
Web: www.brimarc.com

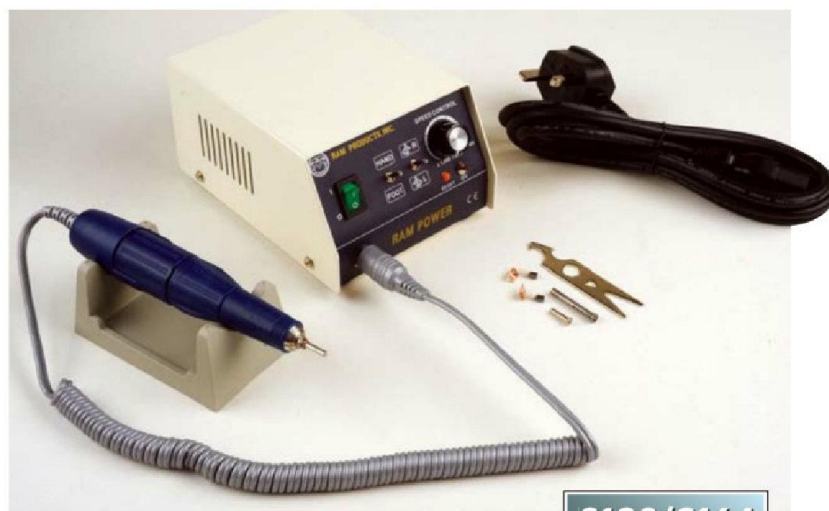


Trend double-sided credit card size diamond stone

This precision double-sided credit card size diamond stone from Trend is perfect for carvers and turners. It combines two grades of fine grit – 1,000 and 600 grit. This stone will help you to achieve the keenest edge, is supplied in its own storage wallet and is guaranteed for five years. Ideal for fluted, shaped and small carving and turning tools.

Contact: Trend
Web: www.trend-uk.com

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Ram Micromotor

This is the perfect tool for detail work using $\frac{3}{32}$ or $\frac{1}{8}$ in bits. The Ram 4,500rpm Micromotor comes complete with a handpiece and is reversible, allowing the user to use certain types of bits in either direction. The quick-change collet mechanism, allows the user to just twist to change bits. The motor has excellent torque at both low and high speeds. With virtually

no vibration and true running collets, you will be able to do fine detail like the professionals. The 45,000rpm handpiece comes standard with a $\frac{1}{8}$ and $\frac{3}{32}$ collet reducer. Prices shown are with/without foot pedal included. Shipping to countries outside of the USA will be subject to shipping costs and taxes.

Contact: Treeline USA
Web: www.treelineusa.com

Wivamac Honing system

Mark Baker tries out Wivamac's comprehensive honing machine

Specifications

Manufacturer: Wivamac

Model: WV1254M

Where to buy:

UK: www.toolpost.co.uk

Rest of World: www.wivamac.com/dealers

Price: £252 (RRP inc VAT)

Sharp tools are paramount to use, being able to cut wood effectively. There are so many items on the market claiming this or that, it is hard to wade through the waffle and know what is what. Many accept that you need to have a system – either belt or wheel – with abrasives on them to shape the bevel on a tool. Many opt to have one coarse grit and one fine grit to do this. Once the edge of the blade is shaped, then the cutting edge needs to be refined or honed to a perfectly sharp edge. The two processes should not be confused. Honing can be done by hand using a strop or similar item, whereby you manipulate the carving tool across a static block faced with some micro-abrasive material. That said, people are increasingly opting to go for a powered form of honing. This typically involves the use of a powered unit onto which you attach various discs in turn. Belts or wheels of materials rotate, or run away from the user/cutting edge so there is no risk of catches during the honing process. The discs and suchlike are available shaped to allow you to refine the cutting edge on a variety of gouge profiles – hence the various shapes of wheel available.

The Wivamac honing machine is, to all intents and purposes, a motor with an on/off switch on the top. Off to the left-hand side of the motor there is a spindle extension onto which are fitted four different

125mm diameter wheels. There is a 20mm soft, white flat-faced disc; a chocolate-brown flat-faced hard disc, also 20mm; a thin, 12mm-wide disc, called 'sharp', with an angled profile; and a 12mm convex radius-edged disc on the end. The kit also includes a block of polishing compound. It is worth noting that there is a European plug inlet on the switch. A fitting is supplied to fit this, but you will need to wire this up to a cable and an appropriate plug for your country to link it to an electric supply.

In use

The machine is quiet, the wheels run at 1,500rpm and the shaft runs true. If there is a slight wobble in the discs – which there wasn't – you can use abrasives to true them up. The wheels need loading up with the micro-abrasive polishing compound before use and this is a case of running the green compound onto the wheel. Once applied, you can start using the wheels. The compound will melt, turn black-grey and sink into the wheel's surface somewhat. It will need to be reapplied periodically to keep everything working well.

There is no toolrest included, so you can either make one, buy one or, as I chose to do, use the machine freehand. Remember, the wheels must always run away from the cutting edge.

The hard chocolate-coloured wheel has little give in the surface when a tool is placed on it. It is

ideal for standard chisels and similar tools with flat surfaces to hone. The softer white wheel is ideal for gouges and similarly radiused bevel tools. The 'sharp' wheel is ideal for cleaning up the inside of 'V' tools and thin fluted gouges. The radiused wheel is used for cleaning up the inside bevels of the gouges.

There is no guarding on the wheels to prevent splash or throw-off of the honing compound, so once you decide where to fit it I would advocate creating a false back wall to protect your walls and tools from spray-off.

Verdict

An excellent machine that is well made and simple to use. The wheels are superb and, should you prefer, you can also buy a softer cotton wheel or similar and fit that – however, there would be a lot more debris throw-off during use. The edges produced were clean and sharp; it took little time at all to create a new edge. ▶

The 'sharp' wheel is ideal for cleaning up the inside of 'V' tools and thin fluted gouges



NEXT ISSUE

wood CARVING

Chris Pye's pizza paddle

Tibetan carver Sampa Lhundup
in profile

Mike Wood shows how
to carve and colour
an oystercatcher

Carve a
green man
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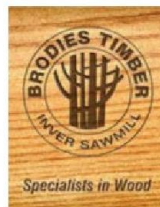
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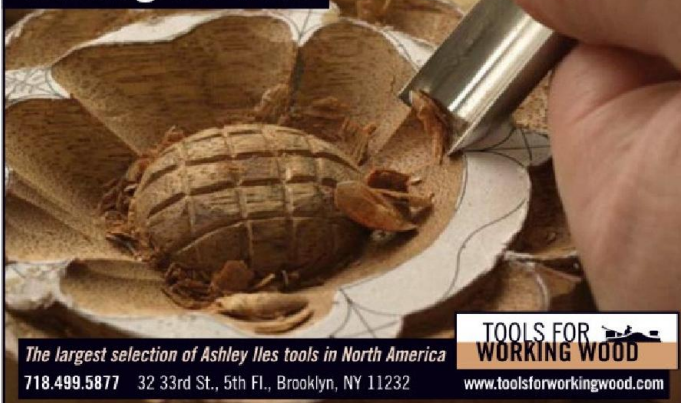
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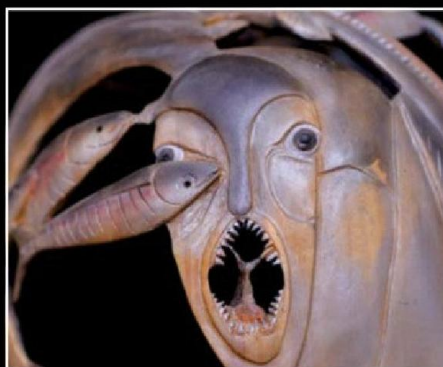
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Feeding Frenzy

John S Barany talks us through this striking piece inspired by his childhood fishing trips on Puget Sound



A rampaging horde of king salmon boil up out of the sea grass off Waadah Island at Neah Bay. They chase terror-stricken herring that ball up in a tight protective wad. Overshooting, they encounter a school of mackerel which streak to the surface of the waves and fly out thinking they're free at last, only to fall back into the waiting maw below... salmon have lunch. The story comes out of my childhood memories of fishing salmon on Puget Sound. All art starts with an idea, not a piece of wood or a technique. Design and drawing follow, then the craftsmanship, painting, and detailing resulting in the final physical accomplishment. The manual labour and the design process are subservient to that initial idea. Turning techniques, painting, carving are but slaves. Allegory is paramount in my favourite works. The idea foretells the story and if you can transmit it all in 20 visual seconds, you've accomplished the main goal. If additionally it is attractive, warm, loving, exciting, or in other ways evocative of an emotion desired, you may have a winner. This work is 229 x 1,320mm. I decided to use a lathe-turned totem shape that

would lend itself to the spiraling cascade of figures that I hoped would show a turbulent, swirling motion. I used plenty of 'windows' – pierced hollows to support the sense of depth and scale one would see in the clear empty spaces of ocean. The 'totem' rotates freely on a central shaft in the grassy base. The scene is carved in 360° so that one may rotate it for a completely different, fresh view. I used paper birch (*Betula papyrifera*), fully lathe-turned and hollowed in tenoned sections, then re-glued, then carved. For strength, wall thickness was maintained at 6mm. Drawings were done on graph paper and then freehanded onto the birch body. Outlines were pyrographed and undercut for bas-relief. The Foredom and Micro-pro handpieces were used with carbide and diamond burrs supplemented with hand tooling. Sanding was done mostly with a 25mm disc on a 10mm 90° variable speed cheepo drill. After final sanding to 220, fish and waves were painted with airbrush and brushed acrylics. A sealer of shellac and then several coats of sprayed lacquer left a satin coat with just a little lustre buffed lightly.

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Palm Handle

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Better Control... Better Carving

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PLAN YOUR PROJECTS WITH ANDREW THOMAS

wood CARVING

Projects this month:

Gibbons-esque festoon
White-beaked dolphins
Carve the rim of a bowl
Maple leaves in relief
A pair of blue tits

Paradise of Fools

Ian Norbury's final exhibition

Michael Painter looks
at lettering with a
bull-nose chisel



PLUS: READERS' SHOWCASE, CLUB PROFILE & KIT & TOOLS