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Jennifer Hicks (top, cover)



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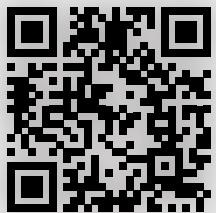
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Precision Drive Systems partners with LevelupSpindles

By Tod Riggio

Precision Drive Systems (PDS), a single-source provider of spindle solutions in Bessemer, N.C., announces a new partnership with LevelupSpindles.

Based in Bad Salzuflen, the German company boasts a broad and robust portfolio encompassing drive systems, including spindle repairs, spindle resale, and innovative application-specific new designs, according to a company statement.

"This cooperation elevates PDS's service and application capabilities to a new level. Customers in Germany and across Europe can look forward to a comprehensive top-quality spindle service for most manufacturers, new spindles, innovative spindle designs, and much more.

"In the case of repair, LevelupSpindles' experts meticulously examine customers' spindles and restore them to peak performance. LevelupSpindles has a network of specialized service technicians who are experts with widely used CNC machine brands (for wood and soft materials) such as Homag, Weeke, and Reichenbacher, as well as (for metalworking) DMG Mori and Mazak. Upon request, they can also handle the removal and installation of spindles and motors directly at the customer's machine. Maintenance contracts for machines are also offered, depending on availability," the company said.

Robert Turk, President of PDS, noted that LevelupSpindles has a "deep familiarity and experience with PDS, our products and services, as well as their excellent contacts with European customers, (making) them the ideal partner to consistently pursue our mission — to deliver fast, reliable, and precise solutions.

"This partnership enables PDS to significantly strengthen our ser-

vice offering throughout Germany and Europe while ensuring that our customers continue to receive the outstanding support and engineering expertise they have come to expect from us."

Global Shop Solutions, a provider of ERP software for manufacturers worldwide, is celebrating the 35th anniversary of President & CEO Dusty Alexander.

"Over the last 35 years, Alexander led the expansion of the software into several geographies including Canada, Latin America and Asia Pacific," the company said in a statement.

"To support this rapid international growth, he opened offices in Mexico, Singapore, Indonesia, Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. Further, he expanded the global headquarters in The Woodlands, Texas, by building an onsite R&D Excellence Center and a Customer Training Center. Today, Global Shop Solutions proudly serves customers in over 25 industries in 30 countries, employs more than 320 employees and has offices in seven countries."

"As President & CEO, Dusty has consistently championed ideas that put our customers first," added George Thuo, the company's Director of Cloud Technology. "His leadership led to the launch of our Cloud ERP product, unlocking new opportunities for growth, scalability and long-term success for the businesses we serve. His ability to anticipate market shifts, combined with his relentless focus on listening to customer needs, exemplifies the kind of forward-thinking leadership that drives meaningful change. This has not only shaped our company's direction but also empowered our customers to thrive. This type of vision is what sets great leaders apart." **W**

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New leadership joins the Paradise City Arts Festival

By Jennifer Hicks

The Paradise City Arts Festival, a New England-based contemporary art and design show featuring handmade items that include furniture and other woodworking items, has announced a leadership transition. Its founders, Geoff and Linda Post, have retired after three decades of commitment, and will be turning over responsibilities to Mariah Swanson and Elana Chernick-Kritz.

"We are incredibly honored and excited to continue the extraordinary work of Geoff and Linda," Chernick-Kritz said in a statement. "Their vision created something truly special, and we are dedicated to maintaining the core philosophy of 'by artists, for artists.' We are deeply committed to upholding the values that have made this fair thrive for three decades."

The Paradise City Arts Festival's curated shows, held in the spring and fall in Marlborough and Northampton, Mass., attract thousands of attendees interested in seeing the work of over 200 artists and makers from across the country.

Swanson adds that changes are in store for the group's flagship fall show, held over Columbus Day weekend, such as more music and food offerings. Next year's spring show will feature emerging artists.

"We're fostering the next wave of talent and the next generation of collectors, while always focused on produc-

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(From left) Geoff and Linda Post, founders of the Paradise City Art Festival, and the new leaders, Mariah Swanson and Elana Chernick-Kritz.

ing events with a vibrant, creative atmosphere that's welcoming to everyone," Swanson says.

The shows began in 1995 and Linda Post says she looks forward to seeing how they continue to evolve in the years ahead.

"As Paradise City Arts enters its fourth decade, it is still a living entity, always growing and open to changes and new ideas. Our events have won accolades and awards over the years for their innovative approach to the whole concept of an art and craft show. But it's time for us to step back, to make way for a new generation. We love the creative ideas that Mariah and Elana bring into the mix. They have embraced the quality and imagination that define Paradise City Arts, while introducing artists, performers, and activities that also appeal to millennials, families, and younger collectors. We can't wait to see where they take us," Post said in a statement.

Learn more at paradisearts.com. **W**

Stiles hosts Manufacturing Solutions Seminar

By Jennifer Hicks

Over 100 attendees from the woodworking industry participated in Stiles Machinery's Manufacturing Solutions Seminar, held June 11-12 at the company's showroom in High Point, N.C.

The event, open to woodworking manufacturers, business owners and industry professionals from across North America, features machinery demonstrations, presentations and interactive breakout sessions.

"Held at Stiles' state-of-the-art showroom, the seminar allowed attendees to explore the latest trends, technologies and strategies shaping the woodworking industry," the company explained in a statement.

"Emphasizing innovation and automated technologies, the event featured demonstrations of compact cabinetry manufacturing, nested machining, and automated finishing, along with discussions about industry challenges, op-



Attendees learned about industry trends and new machinery at the Stiles' event.

timization software, and more."

As part of Stiles' 60th anniversary celebration this year, the company held a giveaway on both days where winners received complimentary enrollment in one of Stiles University's in-person courses.

Stile University has trained over 40,000 students since 1990, offering accredited education courses in manufacturing, software, automation and more.

"It is a pleasure to work with so many different manufacturing customers, coming together to explore the future of our industry and solutions to the challenges it faces. This year marks the 60th anniversary of Stiles Machinery, and we are proud of the partnerships we have made and our ability to provide events like this year after year," said Barry Kellar, President and CEO of Stiles Machinery.

The next Manufacturing Solutions Seminar is scheduled for November. Learn more at stilesmachinery.com. **W**

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Texas Woodworking Festival expands

By Jennifer Hicks

The Texas Woodworking Festival, slated for the weekend of Sept. 13-14 at the Palmer Events Center in Austin, Texas, has grown significantly since its inception in 2018. Founder Austin Waldo says the initial event only had about 10 exhibitors and a couple hundred attendees, but in recent years it has had between 60 to 80 exhibitors and last year had over 2,000 attendees.



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Open to the public, the annual event offers a trade show atmosphere with vendors, educational seminars and more.

"We're hoping that it continues to grow this year," says Waldo. "Every year we've held the event, the reach has also spread and grown. It was very much an Austin-only event for a while, then it was Texas-only, then it grew to a regional event, and now we see individuals coming in from all over the place from different states, flying in, especially with new aspects we're adding this year. We're only seeing it continue to grow into an international event at some point."

Waldo, a lifelong hobbyist woodworker who founded the Austin School of Furniture in 2018, started the Austin Spring Social the previous year to bring Austin-based woodworking groups together into one large event.

"I moved to Austin in 2013, and at the time, there were several woodworking clubs that were kind of old school and not appetizing to me in my 20s, so I took classes at community college and started my own woodworking club. From there, that club grew really big and we did the Austin Spring Social as a way to have one woodworking club meeting for all the woodworking groups in the area. It didn't really bring the clubs together, but it brought people together, and I realized we should try it again the following year."

The festival features vendors, educational seminars, demonstrations, and other activities for professionals and amateurs.

"We're not looking to be an industrial show," says Waldo. "We're looking to include woodworking broadly from the hobbyist to the professional level, and to offer as much as we can in one place. There are a lot of professional

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Shaper Tools exhibiting at the 2024 festival.

networking opportunities in working with companies and buying machines on the smaller scale at the show, but it's also the content creation and influencers are also part of the show, the education, the classes we're providing, the hands-on activities at the show and of course the fun, which is a big component of what I like to make sure is happening. There's always live music, beer, tacos, woodworking, and after parties. Austin is a very young, fun city and we try to show that through the event."

The Austin School of Woodworking used to produce the show, but Waldo has since turned the school into a 501c3 nonprofit, making the festival its own business entity.



"The show is growing and we're always looking for more exhibitors and companies to work with, but we're also wanting everybody who can come to the event to check it out," adds Waldo. "We want to keep growing the event and provide what people want to see and do and make sure they're having a good time while they're doing that."

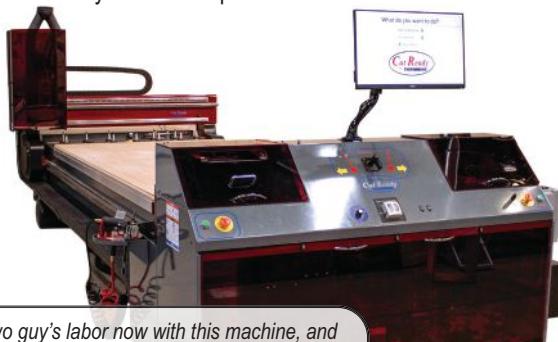
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Hickory gets the call for countertops

By Jennifer Hicks

Countertops are currently the number one project used with FAS and rustic hickory in recent months, according to suppliers interviewed by Woodshop News.

Different grades and color variations all add to the allure of the species, they say.

Steve Van Osdol, of Hickory & Oak Custom Sawmilling in Decatur, Mich., says he gets a lot of calls for hickory and that it's been a pretty steady seller in recent years.

"What I sell a lot of hickory for is countertops, island tops, so typically the thicker stock in 8/4. The 4/4 doesn't move as well, but people still use it to make cabinets or small woodworking projects," says Van Osdol, who adds many of the hickory trees in his area are smaller and produce more of the calico look his customers are seeking.

"I'd say the rustic look it gives is probably it's number one attribute, because a lot of people want a lot of stuff going on with color changes, even small knots, defects, things like that. Sort of like what you see with pine, but pine is pretty soft. So, with the hickory, it's very hard and has a lot of color change between sapwood and heartwood."

Dave Norman of Parkerville Wood Products in Manchester, Conn., says hickory has been extremely popular in the past six months.

"Mostly what we're doing is for countertops, and we've literally got four going in the shop right now. One is for a guy's showroom in more of a calico white/brown mix. Sometimes people want different things. The problem with history is it can be a real in-and-out wood. Some people fall in love with the heartwood, and that's all they want. Some people choose it because it's cheaper than white

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oak, and if they hit it with the right stain, they can make it look like white oak."

Norman adds that while hickory has its positive attributes, it's a very tricky wood.

"We say hickory is an angry wood. It can be really hard, and you have to go through a lot of wood usually to find what you're looking for. If I have a project needing 100 board feet, I've got to bid 200 board

feet because there's going to be a lot of picking and choosing to get the right wood. Most hickory right now is a combination of several species. Pecan hickory is different from shagbark hickory, for example. Ours is a combination; you never know what you're going to get. Some could be all heartwood, some could be all sap, and some could be a nice mixture of white and brown."

Norman also points out that hickory stains very well compared to other hardwoods. It's limited in size offerings, and not much thicker than 8/4, and usually not over 8" to 9" wide, and rarely over 12' long. He says it also tends to warp more than any other wood and is very challenging to work with because of its hardness.

Chad Muterspaw of CR Muterspaw Lumber in Xenia, Ohio, says hickory has remained very steady over the years, and is popular for a variety of projects including countertops, cabinets and flooring.

"Hickory's always been a good seller. I really haven't seen any change for us. What we do with hickory, and what I've noticed a little bit, is more color sorting. So, we've got some customers that like the calico brown and white mix, and then we have seen a lot more inquiries about heavy brown," says Muterspaw. **W**

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Maksiwa's edge banders range from a handheld model to a production unit with corner rounding.

Exploring the possibilities

The options and choices involved with an edge bander purchase

By John English

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Five-part doors and foil certainly have their place, but banded edges offer a lot of options that can help a shop stay abreast of popular trends and do so on a budget.

With the flexible nature of both consumer tastes and machine technology, it can be difficult to select a new edge bander. There are so many choices that it's a good idea to narrow them down at the beginning of the search, and the most obvious parameter is material. The questions to ask here are whether most of the shop's planned edge banding will be on solid wood, ply, MDF, or some other core. And what of the banding itself — will it be pre-glued (hot air) or wet (glue pot) adhesive? Is laser edge banding, where the seams disappear, also an option for the budget?

Volume is the next variable. Is this something that you see a single employee handling on a basically manual machine, or does it look like there's a higher volume happening? Machines come in partially and fully automated options, so that's an area for discussion with a salesperson. Unlike many other woodshop machines, edge banders don't have a lot of size constraints when it comes to panels. But the machine itself will take some floorspace, and some machines are configured so they need room for conveyors or carts.

Shipping costs have become more of a concern over the past four years, as has the price of installation. There's an anomaly worth noting here if a woodshop is searching online for a machine: sometimes it's actually less expensive to ship from a distance than it is locally, so that's worth asking about. The reverse is also true: an online price may be

significantly lower than a nearby supplier's, but the transportation costs, insurance and possible state taxes can change the equation. And a local supplier may offer better ways to handle the set-up and training issues. Rather than sending employees to a distant venue with the associated travel and accommodation costs (and downtime), a local seller can usually dispatch employees to the woodshop to train staff.

Name brands are important in large machinery purchases. Reputable manufacturers will provide ongoing and comprehensive support and will be able to ship repair



Among 17 models from Felder are (clockwise, top right) the portable ForKa 200 eco plus, the new G363R with pre-milling, and the new Tempora F1000 Classic.



The F2 from Altendorf.

parts quickly. Plus, it's a lot easier to do online research on companies with history and see what kinds of reviews they are getting.

Large woodworking shows such as IWF (iwfatlanta.com) and the AWFS Fair (awfsfair.org) are the best places to see all the leading brands of edge banders in one place, along with knowledgeable salespeople who can help direct a search to the most appropriate machine. And these shows come with the added benefit of showcasing all the latest in robotics, machine tending, and all other aspects of professional woodworking. There are often show specials for financing or leasing, and there may even be a trade-in option: all things to chat about with the people in the booths.

OPTIONS TO CONSIDER

Edge banders now offer several labor-saving options. A pre-milling unit cleans up the edges by removing a tiny amount of material with rotating cutterheads, producing a surface that's smooth, flat, square, and ready for tape. The process delivers an optimum surface for glue adhesion and removes any imperfections that might telegraph through the banding.

An anti-adhesive unit is an add-on that can prevent glue from sticking to the surface. It applies an anti-stick (release) agent such as Teflon or silicone to the visible face of the tape after it is placed against the edge but before pressure is applied. It stops glue squeeze-out from sticking to the panel surfaces, and the tape's visible face.

Some machines work with a specific adhesive while others can be adapted to handle almost any type. Ethylene-vinyl acetate (EVA) is the most common glue for liquid systems. It's called a thermoplastic adhesive because it can be softened with heat and hardened by cooling. EVA can contain resins, wax, and plasticizers, and their content level depends on which physical properties the tape manufacturer wishes to enhance or impart. This type of adhesive provides a slightly flexible bond, which is an asset with wood movement, and EVA also has some resistance to moisture. It's considered nontoxic but burning the waste can release irritants, depending on those additives.

The other popular option, polyurethane reactive adhesive (PUR), develops a stronger bond and is rapid setting. It provides instant tack and then reacts with ambient humidity to cure over the next day or two. PUR will bond almost anything including metals and glass, but it's more expensive than EVA and it contains potentially harmful isocyanates, so proper venting is important. It also has a shorter shelf life and can expand a bit during the cure period. That can create a visible bond line, so it's a good idea to experi-

ment before committing to it.

There are low and high temperature glues available that can change the open and cure times, and these may be especially useful in contour coverage or when working with varying thicknesses or types of material.

Hot air edge banders are used with pre-glued banding and these machines are fast and efficient, so they're a viable option for smaller shops and shorter runs. One potential limitation is the availability of banding in the right species or color that has factory-applied adhesive, but that isn't as much of a problem as it used to be. Plus, changing the edge banding on hot air machines is just a matter of switching rolls, which is faster and cleaner than liquid systems.

Laser edge banders replace the EVA with an extruded polymer that is layered onto the back of the tape. The laser beam activates this and creates a seam-free, very strong bond. But these machines are expensive (as is the banding for them), so a shop needs to have enough production planned to cover the cost. Laser edge banders can make sense over time because they save maintenance time and labor expenses, and they also minimize material waste.

Any machine being considered needs to be able to handle the thickness and width of the banding that the shop will use. And excess tape will need to be trimmed, so all but the most basic manual machines offer some type



Laguna Tools offers models for every shop size, from the Bandit 32 with 2mm capacity to the 3mm Bandits 4 and 5.



The nVision Series of contour or curved edge banders from SNX Technologies.

of trimming unit. This can include edges (top and bottom), end trimming so the corner joints are clean, corner rounding on higher end machines, and a variety of scraping and buffering options (beyond the anti-adhesive units mentioned earlier) that can keep the visible face of the banding clean and ready to coat if needed.

The machine's feed speed is important, too. Some manual configurations with less speed control may require two operators to load and unload, while automated systems can generally be timed to match the abilities of a single operator.

EDGE BAND INFO

There are basically three types of banding: solid wood veneer, plastic such as polyvinyl chloride (PVC), and melamine. There are also some metals, but most of the metallic finishes in the wood industry are actually plastic.

There are numerous reputable suppliers of edge band-

ing and it's worth visiting all of the websites listed below before selecting a supplier. Not everyone stocks everything, and most offer specialized areas that can solve specific problems.

Richelieu offers more than 4,000 combinations of colors and widths in ABS and PVC bands, plus a huge selection of Greenguard-certified real wood bandings that are eligible for LEED programs. The company's engineered Evolution HD products offer a balanced, coordinated appearance as they're made from real wood fibers or veneers. The entire range of Richelieu edge banding can be searched online according to parameters such as category (acrylic, melamine, polyester, etc.), collection name, and more than 1,100 wood based products.

Adwood offers edge banding in an extensive variety of materials including 18 species of wood veneer, 15 species of thick wood and synthetics including PVC, and melamine in a variety of sizes and colors. The thick wood edge band-

Fuse Series edge banders from NewCNC.com include the Fuse 8, which can be ordered with either single or rough-and-fine trimming options.



Cantek offerings range from the portable MX555AU to the MX370P with pre-milling and corner rounding.

Pro Edge Technologies offers the PET II, PET III and the new PET IV edge bander (shown) with pneumatic quick-change technology.



ing can be factory cut to specifications and also comes in sizes that are designed for pre-glued applications. Adwood's generic PVC edge banding comes in four basic colors, and its synthetic edge bandings work well with both direct heat applications and automatic edge banders.

REHAU says that its "edge band is delivered with an imperceptible color difference of less than 1 Delta E, whether the material is PVC, PP, PMMA or ABS. Their color stability and material resilience ensure they will age as gracefully as your cabinets and millwork." REHAU's LaserEdge offers zero joints, zero seams and zero glue, and the company's FlexEdge will trim easily and handle small radii without extra pressure on contour applications. For woodshops worried about the environmental impact of some bandings, REHAU offers PP which is a very neutral synthetic material manufactured completely out of petroleum. It's fully recyclable and burns as clean as a candle. PP offers enhanced chemical and heat resistance, and higher UV resistance to fading than other non-PVC compounds.

DC Distributing offers PVC edge banding in solids, wood-grains, patterns, paintables and gloss. The catalog includes widths up to 1-5/8" that are Greenguard certified, and colors that can match virtually all laminates from major manufacturers. In addition to an impressive range of standard thick and thin bands, DC also offers specialty items such as bamboo, zebrawood, and eucalyptus edge banding.

EdgeCo carries a huge project range, including custom color production runs of PVC, ABS and stained wood veneer banding, plus slitting to width from 5" to 8" master rolls. EdgeCo will also apply hot melt glue for forced hot air applications or peel-and-stick adhesives for its EeeZeeEdge solution.

Some of the larger suppliers require minimums or only offer specific products in large batches. **Klingspor's Woodworking Shop** and **Rockler** both offer decent selections of banding in the most common wood species, and they do so in lengths and widths that can often best suit a small shop's needs. **W**

RESOURCES

Edge Banders

Adwood (adwood.com) • Altendorf Group America (altendorfgroup.com) • Atlantic Machinery (atlanticmach.com) • Biesse America (biesse.com) • Burns Power Tools (burnstools.com) • Cantek America (cantekamerica.com) • Casadei-Busellato America (casadeibusellato.com) • Castaly-Lobo Machine (lobomachine.com) • Felder Group (felder-group.com) • Hermance Machine Co. (wurthbaermachinery.com) • Holz-Her U.S. (holzherusa.com) • iBiD Machinery (ibidmachinery.com) • JKL Machinery (jklmachinery.us) • John G. Weber Co. (johngweber.com) • Laguna Tools (lagunatools.com) • Maksiwa (maksiwa.com) • NewCNC.com (newcnc.com) • Panel/Wood Machinery (panelwood.com) • Pro Edge Technology (proedgetechnology.com) • RT Machine (rtmachine.com) • Safety Speed Mfg. (safetyspeed.com) • SCM Group (scmgroup.com) • SNX Technologies (snxtechnologies.com) • Stiles Machinery (stilesmachinery.com)

Banding

Adwood (adwood.com) • CabinetParts.com (cabinetparts.com) • DC Distributing (dc-dist.com) • EdgeCo (edgecoinc.com) • Formwood (formwood.com) • Frank Paxton Lumber (paxtonwood.com) • Hardwood Specialty Products (hardwoods-inc.com) • Klingspor's Woodworking Shop (woodworkingshop.com) • Lenderink Technologies (lenderink.com) • Oakwood Veneer (oakwoodveneer.com) • Outwater Plastics (outwater.com) • REHAU (rehau.com) • Richelieu (richelieu.com) • Rockler (rockler.com)

Mention multipurpose machines to older woodworkers and they'll grumble something about Jacks-of-all-trades that can do lots of jobs, but none of them well. Fortunately, technology has moved along and left those opinions far back in its wake. These machines now carry the emblems of some of the finest tool manufacturers on the planet. They are efficient and precise, and favored as much by cabinetmakers as they are by furniture artists.

Felder Group (felder-group.com) is one of the leaders in this field. Despite employing more than 800 people, the Austrian company is still family run (now by a third generation), and it has a deep commitment to environmental awareness and sustainability. Felder offers 11 different multipurpose machine models under its Hammer and Felder labels. The Hammer C3 41 is a great example: it can thickness plane, joint, saw, shape and drill (the last two are optional upgrades). Drop-in-place extensions expand the jointer bed to a comforting 63", which is unusual in space-saving machines, and the C3 41 also has excellent dust collection. It planes parts up to 8.85" thick and has the standard Hammer self-adjusting three-knife cutterhead with disposable two-edge blades. A Silent-Power spiral carbide insert cutterhead is an option, so named because it is much quieter than the traditional head and delivers about twenty times longer blade edge life. A horizontal boring head can be mounted on the planer for dowel drilling, and shaping takes place at four speeds in forward or reverse. The C3 41 accepts both router bits and shaper cutters, and offers some quick-change options. The sliding table saw has a riving knife and scoring, and it can cut to a full 4" height at 90 degrees, while blades up to 12" in diameter can be lowered below the table.

For larger shops, Felder offers machines such as the CF 741 S, which comes with a high degree of automation and sophisticated controls. The functions on this larger machine are more separate and accessible, and it's designed for higher volume production without surrendering any precision. Felder also makes an entry-level multipurpose machine, the CF 531, that is ideally suited to one- or two-man shops.

There are half a dozen **Minimax** combination machines in the **SCM Group** catalog (scmgroup.com). The company has been building them since 1952 and says that all of the classic woodworking processes can be performed on a

Multitaskers

Combination machines are practical and efficient for shops of all sizes

By John English



The C400 from iTech Machinery.



Space-savers from Grizzly include three jointer/planers and a cast-iron router table that replaces a table saw wing.

single machine that includes a planer, spindle molder, and saw. Among the advantages of multipurpose machines, SCM lists the ability to make changes easily, increase precision, reduce set-up times, and lower the costs of parts. The machines have options for mortising and tenoning, too. They range from the entry-level C 26G with a 10" saw blade and a sliding table with a 4' stroke to the elegant CU 410ES which has the capacity for a 400mm (15.75") diameter blade, a scoring blade, a four-speed spindle for shaping, a four-knife planer/jointer, and an 86"-long cast-iron jointer bed. SCM Group also makes two saw/shapers that combine a sliding table saw with a spindle motor, and nine different jointer/planers.

In fact, several leading manufacturers make combination planer/jointers, and most have a helical insert cutterhead option. **Grizzly Industrial** (grizzly.com) has the G0634X floor model, which offers 12-1/2" wide machining, and a bench-top 12" machine, the G0959. There's a jobsite 8" combo too, called the G0958. Grizzly also offers a way to combine a router table with one of its table saws via the H7507 extension table. This is an 18" x 27" cast-iron wing that's machined for universal router mounting and easy installation.

There are four planer/jointers and two multi-function machine families in the **Casadei Busellato** catalog (casadeibusellato.com). The universal combined machine models C30C, C41C and C41ES come with three independent motors that run a thickness planer, an 11.8"- or 16"-wide jointer with bed options up to 86" long; a table saw with scoring, and a three- or four-speed shaper. This supplier also makes the high-production TS 35 ES combined saw/spindle molder that can handle a 350mm (13.7") diameter saw blade and shaper heads over 9" high.

Combination models from **Robland** (robland.com) range from compact, space-saving options to larger machines that deliver saw quality on par with the company's full-scale panel saws. They include the Xi NX, and HX Series. The top-of-the-line Xi1410 has a production-grade panel saw with optional scoring, a tilting shaper spindle for more complex cuts, planing and jointing functions, and an optional mortiser.

VERSATILE VARIATIONS

RT Machine's **Friulmac Select** (friulmacselect.com) offers a range of machines that can mold and then trim ends for



Casadei-Busellato makes several planer/jointers and a couple multi-purpose machines, including the C30C (top) and the TS 35 ES.

wood flooring and cabinet stiles and rails. The company's Dualfeed is a precision double-end trim and molder feeder where parts are loaded into a hopper, precision end-trimmed, and then automatically fed into the molder in a single operation.

Laguna Tools (lagunatools.com) has an interesting take on space-saving machines. The company makes a pair of SuperMax combination brush and drum sanders, one of which has a 13" capacity. The other is open-ended so it can handle panels up to 19" on one pass, or 38" on two. A woodworker can drum sand and profile sand on the same machine because of its interchangeable drum and brush heads (wire or nylon).

Larick, a branch of Pillar Machine (pillarmachine.com), offers several combination machines that sand, profile and texture in a single pass. They're engineered so that from one to six heads can be mounted simultaneously for a variety of functions such as distressing, polishing, de-nibbling, and sealer sanding on wood, metal and plastic. The sanding heads can be wire, abrasive nylon, or sanding brushes. Pillar also makes a line of mortise/tenon/miter machines for joinery.



JET offer planer/jointers and planer/molders.



Rikon offers a pair of combination planer/jointers in 12" and 16" options with helical carbide insert cutterheads and DROs.

Rikon (rikontools.com) makes a pair of planer/jointers with helical heads in 12" and 16" options. The smaller machine comes with a 3-hp motor and 34 carbide inserts and can plane parts up to 12" wide by 8" thick while jointing to 12". The larger model has a 12" wide jointer with a 65-1/2" bed, 16" wide by 8" thick planing capacity, and 44 inserts. Both machines are equipped with digital readouts.

Wurth's **Hermance Machine Co.** (wurthbaermachinery.com) division carries both new and used combination machines, and the used stock changes frequently so it's worth revisiting.

JET (jettools.com) has 8", 10" and 12" planer/jointer combinations and the larger one can be ordered with a 42-insert helical cutterhead. The company also makes a 13" planer/molder.

The **PantoRouter** (pantorouter.com) is a small benchtop machine that can mill hundreds of differently sized mortise-and-tenon joints plus dovetails, box joints and more. It can replace a router table, portable dovetailing jigs, and even a small CNC in shops that primarily build furniture with solid wood joints. It is capable of machining at angles, and even compound angles.

And **Safety Speed Mfg.** (safetyspeed.com) makes combination panel saw/router machines with an interchangeable carriage that lets a woodworker cut and rout on the same machine by simply switching tools.

LESS FAMILIAR NAMES

RS Wood (cmcwood.com) is an Italian manufacturer that makes sev-



The flagship unit from Robland, the Xi410, combines a high-production saw with scoring, jointing and planing, and a tilting shaper spindle.

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WOODSHOPNEWS



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The C400-1, one of five combination machines from Chansen.

eral multipurpose machines with a saw, molder, jointer, thickness planer, and mortising functions. They are driven by three independent motors.

DM Italia (dmitaliasrl.com) is another Italian maker, and it ships product worldwide. Among the options is the Combination America 1600 which has a sliding saw with scoring,

cast iron tables, a 3-speed shaper, and a 12" planer/jointer. Three-phase power is available as an option.

The Chinese manufacturer **Chansen** (chansenmachinery.com) makes three combination machines with three functions (planer, jointer, and mortising), and two with five tools (add a shaper and table saw).

Another Chinese factory, **iTech Machinery** (itech.info) offers several combo machines with four or five functions. Its full line of equipment also includes CNC routers and lasers.

Multipurpose machines are defined by the fact that they combine several functions in a small footprint. The definition is changing as CNCs offer woodshops the ability to rout, cut and shape using multiple axes or aggregate heads. And robotic arms can also perform multiple functions from sanding to spray coating. But CNCs and robots are more adept at processing higher volumes, while traditional multipurpose machines still appeal to craftsmen because of their efficiency and adaptability. They're more of a tool than a machine, less automated and more personal. We've essentially abandoned hand tools in the woodshop, and traditional machines are being replaced by AI and robots, so who knows how long we'll have multipurpose machines. But for now, they're still viable and enjoyable — and surprisingly functional. **W**

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Ecogate adds new dust collector interface and controller

By Jennifer Hicks

Ecogate, a manufacturer of control systems for dust collection systems, recently launched two new products to enhance dust monitoring capabilities for woodshops, the Dust Collector Interface and Dust Collector Controller, which can be added to most existing Ecogate systems.

"Ecogate's Dust Collector Controller turns a regular dust collector into a smart component of your dust collection system. It not only lets your collector communicate with you, but it gives you full control of it too. And the best part - it integrates with greenBOX so you know it can be automated and remotely accessed," says David Vera, Ecogate's marketing manager.

Both units provide monitoring capabilities for fan total static pressure, filter differential pressure, system air volume and ve-



The Interface has a sensor suite to measure system functions.

locity, ambient temperature, relative humidity and barometric pressure, ambient air quality and particulate matter levels, and motor vibration, current, voltage and power.

The Dust Collector Interface provides monitoring only. In addition to monitoring the various input and data, the custom-built Dust Collector Controller controls every dust collector motor with Variable Frequency Drive (VFD) ramps.

Vera says the Dust Collector Controller can replace a Programmable Logic Controller (PLC), found on previous systems, that may suffer from limited data capabilities, infrequent software updates, or lack of remote access for monitoring purposes. This created a dilemma where maintenance issues were not discovered early enough, causing systems to stop and dust to spread. The new product closes that gap, according to Vera.

"This purpose-built control interface replaces legacy PLC panels with a fully programmable, sensor-rich module that communicates natively with any Ecogate greenBOX control unit over industry standard Modbus RTU and can control any dust-collector brand," adds Vera.

Learn more at ecogate.com. **W**

Courtesy of Ecogate

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Sames presents the Nanobell 8 Series

By Jennifer Hicks

Sames North America, a manufacturer of professional finishing equipment, has introduced the Nanobell 8 Series, a line of rotary bell atomizers designed to bring automotive-grade coating performance to other industries, including woodworking.

The technology offers a higher quality finish and significant material cost savings, the company says.

"What it does, because we're using centrifugal force on a bell cup to atomize stains or paints, is we get a much better uniform particle size, and it also helps in that we're spraying with a round pattern instead of a flat pattern, so it gives us much better transfer efficiency where we can direct more of them material to the part being sprayed," says Matt Tellitocci, product manager at Sames.

"With a gun, we have a paint stream coming out of the end of the nozzle, and it gets impinged with atomizing air. What that does is it breaks up the paint, and there's a fan there you use to actually determine the size of the pattern. With a bell, we're using rotary atomization (and) a bell cup



that spins upwards of 60,000 rpm. The paint, as it comes off the edge of the bell cup, is sheared off and gives us a very consistent particle size."

The technology is available in the Nanobell 801, 803, and 805 models, giving end-users reliable performance across fixed, automatic and robotic installations.

Key features of the Nanobell 8 Series include independent air adjustment, consistent rotation speeds via the new T8 Air Motor, flow capacities up to 800 cc/min for fast, repeatable results across various applications, and a new T8 turbine that ensures consistent rotation and precise atomization. Quick disconnect components, durable internal parts, and a contamination-reducing centrifugal effect all reduce downtime and extend equipment life, according to the company.

Learn more at sames.com. **W**

Courtesy of Sames

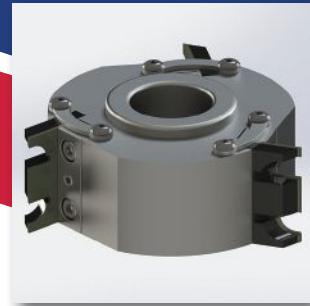
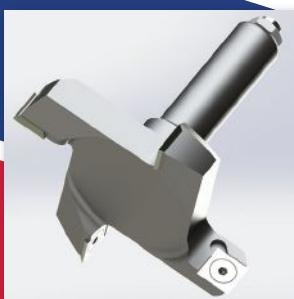
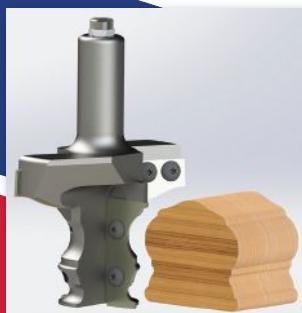
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WOODSHOPNEWS



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New PauaFlex flexible wraps from Easy Inlay

By Jennifer Hicks

Easy Inlay, a manufacturer of exotic, easy-to-inlay products for woodworkers, woodturners and crafters, introduces PauaFlex wrap material. The new ultra-flexible shell laminate adds a beautiful aesthetic to projects, the company said.

"I've never seen anything like this before. It's so easy to roll the shell veneer onto any tight radius inlay and the colors are breathtaking," said Scott Grove, founder of Easy Inlay.

"Unlike the obvious and vertical stripe-y aesthetic seen in today's paua abalone shell pens, after finishing, the micro-scores and seams fade into the background, creating a gleaming natural shell inlay for a pen, pencil, bottle stopper, fishing pole, or pool cue."

To apply, the user peels off the PSA backing, wraps it around a pen tube or a tight radius void, and adds resin. This thin, uncoated material can be cut to size with scissors, a laser, or a utility knife.



PauaFlex features a PSA backing for an easy application.

The PSA adhesive aids in temporary positioning before resin is added. For a permanent bond, users should apply thin CA glue which will wick into and under the paua shell through the micro scored seams. When finished, the natural shell is extremely colorful and exhibits opalescent blues, brilliant greens, and luminous fiery flashes, according to Grove.

Paua is a unique species of abalone found only in New Zealand's coastal waters.

The one sheet size offered is 65mm x 230 mm (2-9/16" x 9-1/16"), and seven 9.5mm (3/8") x 65 mm long tubes can be created from one sheet. One sheet sells for \$29.95. Easy Inlay features an automated tube diameter calculation on its website to help with determining the size sheet needed based on the pen type.

Learn more at easyinlay.com. **W**



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Hardware Resources adds U-shaped rollouts & drawer boxes

By Jennifer Hicks



Courtesy of Hardware Resources

Hardware Resources, a manufacturer of products for the kitchen, bath and closet industries, has expanded its line of dovetail drawer boxes to include U-shaped rollouts and drawer boxes.

They are designed to maximize under-sink storage space in bathroom vanities.

"Available in four configurations for 30" or 36" wide vanity-depth sink base cabinets, the U-shaped cut-out measures 12" wide by 10" deep, providing ample space for most plumbing con-



figurations," the company explains.

"The standard drawers are designed to provide a three-drawer configuration that is ideal for creating a furniture-style vanity look in custom bath cabinetry projects. The rollout drawers can be mounted to the cabinet floor or fixed to a shelf inside the sink base cabinet."

Each U-shaped rollout and drawer box is made with 4" tall, UV-finished white birch. They ship with pre-installed HR MAX undermount slide and clips, and wooden runners, the company said.

Learn more at hardwareresources.com. **W**

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- Karl Brogger, Sogn Cabinets

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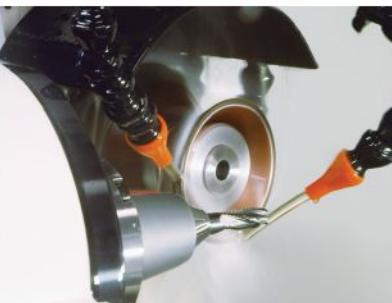
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FINISHING



Sanding for the best appearance

By Diane Shattuck

Sanding affects the appearance of the finish on many substrates. When finishing wood, sanding scratches become visible after the stain is applied or in painted finishes when the topcoat is applied over the sanded primer. When sanded correctly, the final surface should be smooth, without scratches or blemishes, with an even sheen, and without orange peel or a ripple appearance.

The quality of appearance that is acceptable is subjective. It is the balance of all the variables of sanding that will have an effect on appearance. Paying attention to selection of grits, minerals, backing pads and technique will ensure success in the final appearance and performance of a finish.

For a stellar appearance on stained wood, it is crucial to sand in the direction of the grain. If you have crossing patterns on door styles and rails, for example, sand up to the seam, then change directions following the grain. Otherwise, cross scratches at the joinery will show when the stain is applied. When using a random orbital sander, swirls will show if too much pressure is applied. Tipping the sander can create a deep scratch, which can also be caused by using the wrong abrasive or backup pad.

When working with a stain, it is important to remember that the pigment color will lodge into the sanding scratches and grain pattern when the stain is wiped off. The lodged pigment will appear dark, magnifying the defects and scratches. These can be repaired by dipping the abrasive used for final sanding in the stain, which will act as a gentle slipping agent, then lightly sand out the defects. The key here is to make sure that the abrasive stays wet and avoid pressing hard on the surface. Let the abrasive do the work. Once the scratch is 80 percent removed, re-stain. This process works when the stain is still wet or not completely dry. If the stain has fully dried, you will need to re-sand the entire area.

Generally, when sanding bare wood for staining, a 120- or 150-grit aluminum oxide sandpaper and a me-

dium or medium/soft backup pad are the best choices.

For a nice appearance on painted surfaces, there is a system or combination of applications needed because you have two coatings, a primer and a topcoat. One thing to keep in mind is that even though the surface is painted, flaws will still show. Be sure to level and fill all blemishes. The size of the scratch is important: it needs to be large enough to create a profile for the primer to penetrate, but not so big that it can't be filled by the primer. Use 150-grit aluminum oxide sandpaper on bare wood, then sand the primer with 220 to 320-grit silicon carbide. Leveling orange peel or slight ripples in the primer will ensure a flawless, smooth and consistent sheen. If the primer is only sanded to where it just feels smooth, you can still have appearance issues. If orange peel is not removed completely, it will telegraph through the topcoat. Good lighting certainly helps in the inspection process.

Sheen will affect how we see scratches in the finish. The higher the sheen, the more the scratches will show. Fine scratches in the final coat will reduce the sheen but leave behind very fine lines, while uneven sanding will produce an inconsistent sheen. A good rule of thumb is to remove all scratches before switching to a finer grit.

The color we achieve can be manipulated by the type of mineral and grit we choose. The deeper the scratch, the darker the color due to more penetration of pigment. The smoother you sand, the lighter the color. But be careful to leave enough tooth for the coating to adhere.

An abrasive's performance depends on the proper grit sequence and application method. And always let the tool and abrasive do the hard work.

Next month we'll cover the tools used in sanding and how to build a consistent system. Until then, respect the process because shift happens. **W**

Diane Shattuck is a finisher, consultant, guest speaker, writer and teacher. She can be contacted at dianeshattuck@msn.com. Questions, suggestions and comments are always welcome.

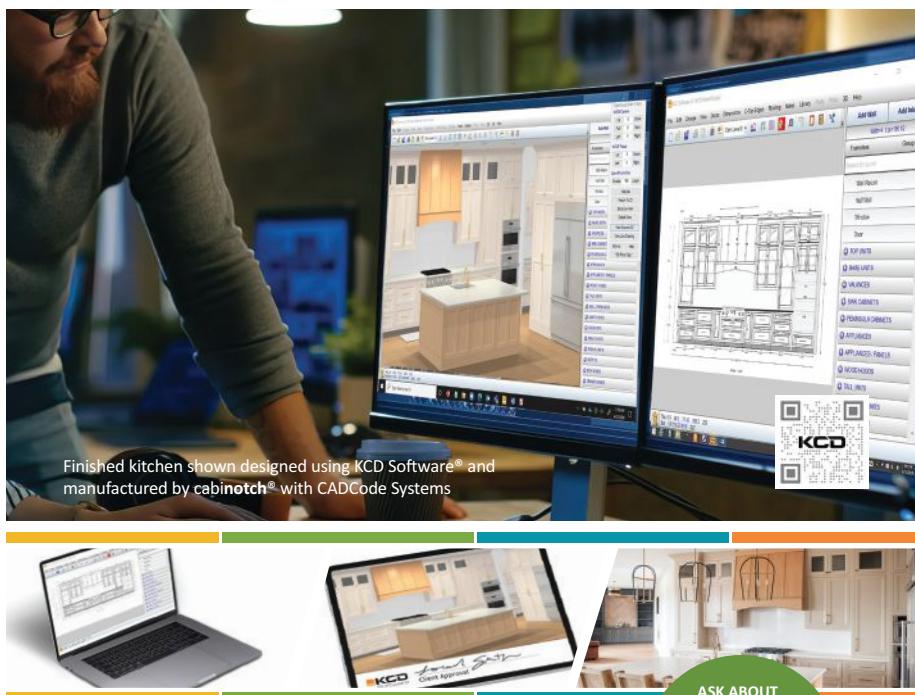
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Jon Peirce



DELIGHTING CLIENTS

Rhode Island furniture maker Jon Peirce strives to exceed their expectations

By Jennifer Hicks

Jon Peirce, principal of Industrious Revolution in North Smithfield, R.I., is eager to explore fine furniture commissions and build lasting relationships with clients. His goal is to awe prospective clients and draw them back for more.

"Making clients delighted is an important aspect of having a business. That includes keeping them informed. Anytime a client places an order, I'll send them in-process pictures on how it's coming along. I always meet my commitments in terms of my promise on when something is going to be done," says Peirce.

"One of the things I get frustrated with, as a consumer myself, is when people don't return my calls or not come when they're supposed to or not meet expectations or commitments. I try to err on the other side and be over communicative."

Sales are primarily throughout New England and often originate from the Fine Furnishings Show in Providence, R.I.

A PASSION FOR CREATIVITY

Peirce grew up in Durham, N.H., home of the University of New Hampshire (UNH), where his father was a professor of agriculture. His dad dabbled with woodworking projects for the family home, which inspired the young Peirce.

"My dad was a weekend warrior kind of woodworker. He

had a basement shop that was very rudimentary and said I could use the shop if I cleaned up after. That introduced me to shop classes in middle school, and I made simple projects — a chair, a cabinet," says Peirce.

Peirce was encouraged to go to college and majored in economics at UNH. He pursued a minor in fine arts, and classes in architecture and woodworking helped unleash his creative side.

"I had a professor who was a fairly accomplished woodworker with some pieces that are still in some galleries. He taught me how to make dovetails, how to use a jointer and planer and all the equipment that we didn't have in the middle school shop, so I think that's really when I got super interested in woodworking."

Peirce went on to graduate school, earning an MBA from Babson College in Wellesley, Mass. He married Alison, who he met at UNH, and the two lived in Arlington to focus on their careers. At that time, Peirce worked in production scheduling for an electronics manufacturer in Boston, while she worked in accounting.

His woodworking fell into a period of dormancy as he had no shop space in the couple's first apartment and then their first home in North Providence, R.I. By 1997, the couple had three children and moved to their current home with a 600-sq.-ft. basement. With the beginnings of a shop,



Peirce in his basement shop.

Peirce took classes with Allan Breed, a carver and period furniture maker in Rollinsford, N.H.

"That was the only formal training I had, other than a college class," says Peirce.

TAKING THE PLUNGE

Peirce stayed with his business career through 2015 while making furniture on the weekends. Then he got the opportunity to take his woodworking to a professional level.

"I had progressed from production scheduling to manufacturing management. I worked at a company that made boat engines and ran the shop there, (then) worked for a company (EMC Corp.) in Hopkinton, Mass. that made computer storage from 1993 to 2015.

"Then in 2015, the company I was with had grown tremendously and Dell wanted to purchase us, so they did. What normally happens in acquisitions, they give incentives to people working there to no longer want to work there because they want their own people, so I was lucky to just be able to retire and get a year of benefits. I chose to retire and open a business, which is this one-man shop.

"I felt like I knew enough to try to do it as a living in 2015 and it just worked out. Financially, I was able to do it," says Peirce.

He had a very well-equipped small shop but needed a market.

CREATING A PRESENCE

Peirce had his business name well before it existed. In 2005, he purchased the domain, *industriousrevolution.com*.

"I thought it was an interesting name because Slatersville, the next village over in North Smithfield, was the first planned mill village in America, sort of the birthplace of the industrial revolution, so it was a play on that. The industrious revolution is a term economists describe as prior to the industrial revolution where people made things by hand in guilds and in their homes. It was pretty apropos for what I'm trying to do.

"I specifically started wanting to sell furniture. I have a good friend who's an antiques dealer. He has a great eye for forms, pieces people are interested in. He commissioned me to make a dozen or so pieces for him, which allowed me to be able to make a portfolio."

The portfolio helped him get selected as an exhibitor at Fine Furnishings in 2017. He has returned every year since.

"The show has really been the vehicle that has gotten me the most and best clients. It's the only show I do, so it's the only time people can put their hands on my work and see it in person. I've got enough work from that show that I don't need to do anything else. So, between that show and my Internet presence, I don't do any real marketing. I let them come to me. Repeat business is the most important thing for me. There are very few clients I've had where I've only done one thing for them."

Peirce has garnered a very specific clientele who appreciates the quality and uniqueness of his work. Most are on the East Coast, and he will deliver pieces for free to anyone throughout New England. He has also made sales to California, Florida, and Hawaii.

"I have one client, a wonderful man and his wife, retired



Mid-century curly cherry bar cabinet; curly maple West Hill stands, and inlaid flamed birch dining/gaming table from Peirce's portfolio.

doctors in their 70s. They had a big house in Princeton, N.J., and they decided to sell it in their retirement and bought studio condos in Vail (Col.), West Palm Beach (Fla.), Manhattan, and Brewster (Mass.), and none of their furniture fit in them. He found me on the Internet searching for bachelor's chests because I had made one. Since then, I've made them well over a dozen pieces."

His furniture styles range from traditional to mid-century modern. It all depends on what clients want. He's a stickler for the finest hardwoods, particularly of the figured sort.

"Figured woods are really my passion, and also something you can't get at any furniture store really. I have a lot of clients who like the figured woods. That visual appeal is important."

He purchases materials from Irion Lumber in Wellsboro, Pa., Highland Hardwoods in Brentwood, N.H., and Bar-

WHAT'S IN THE SHOP

Powermatic Model 66 table saw, Model 60 8" jointer & Model 30 disc/belt sander • Woodmaster 25" planer • Bridgewood 18" band saw • Multico PM-20 mortiser • State B-1 oscillating spindle sander • Supermax 19-38 thickness sander • Rockwell/Delta 10" radial arm saw • Bosch 12" dual bevel miter saw • Porter-Cable 3-hp router • Incra router table lift • Laguna PFLUX3 3-hp dust collector with HEPA filter • RBI Hawk scroll saw • Tormek grinder/sharpener • Festool sanders and vacuum • Delta drill press • Bessey parallel clamps • Collection of used and antique hand tools, saws, chisels, gouges, & planes

rette's Hardwood in Thompson, Conn.

On average, he will make 20 to 30 pieces a year.

PARTING ADVICE

Peirce enjoys sharing his journey and the advice he's learned along the way, as that's how he got to where he is today.

"Mistakes can be a very productive way to learn in woodworking," he adds. "The only kind of mistakes you don't want to make are safety mistakes. Even non-safety related mistakes, there are those that will cause you to have to throw something out, and that's frustrating. But in almost all other cases, there are ways to fix mistakes and save your project."

"Another thing I've learned is that you absolutely want to buy the best wood you can possibly buy. Wood is a small component of the overall cost, so to get that visual impact, buy the best material you can and don't skimp." **W**

Buying a small-shop CNC

Special features and optional add-ons to consider, and a roundup of what's available from the leading manufacturers

By John English

Anyone who owns a basic CNC knows they can get more out of it than trimming panels and plowing grooves. These machines have a lot of potential, and it can be released by adding factory options or aftermarket upgrades and accessories.

The most obvious of these is tooling. Buying the best bits and cutters is critical, and production shops generally invest in solid carbide or polycrystalline diamond tools. For smaller shops and light production runs or one-off work, high quality carbide-tipped tools from reputable manufacturers work a lot better than discount carbide and high-speed steel options. If budget bits are not well balanced,



The Hammer HNC3 benchtop (top) and Format4 C-Express 920 Classic from Felder Group (not to scale).

or the shafts are even minutely erratic, the results during machining can be quite disappointing. Good tools hold an edge longer and make a finer cut with less heat build-up, and that also reduces wear and stress on the spindle.

Beyond tooling, small shop CNCs can usually be ordered with specific features and most are eminently upgradeable with both factory and aftermarket add-ons.

OPTIONAL UPGRADES

One of the least expensive and most rewarding add-ons for almost any model CNC is LED lighting. A woodworker can attach strips of bright white LEDs to the underside of the gantry, or there are several kits available that slip a ring light around the spindle so the point of contact for the bit is well illuminated. Good lighting always improves the quality of work, whether with hand tools or machines, and CNCs are no exception.

Almost any CNC can also be outfitted with a dust shoe. There are numerous models on the market, and these wrap around the bit to contain and collect fine dust at its point of origin. A clean work area makes it a lot easier to monitor progress along a toolpath, but it also avoids having the bit cut through the same material twice — first to remove it, and then as accumulated waste. A shoe also reduces contamination in the shop's air, which somehow seems to always find the finishing booth. There are some kits available that will use a small stream of forced air to remove debris, but those are just moving the problem rather than removing it. They can be useful in delicate carving applications where very little waste is being created, but they're not ideal for grooves and dadoes. And there are also simple attachments that fit around the bit and blow dust away as they spin. These work well when the machine has a full dust collection system in place that will evacuate debris as it is removed.

Basic CNC spindles often come with a single collet, so a set of different diameter collets for various shaft dimensions can be very useful. It opens the door to using metric or SAE shafts and specialty router bits.

Machines that come with a simple MDF spoil board may well meet the needs of a small shop, but upgrading to an MDF or aluminum T-slot board adds a whole new range of clamping options. Rather than fixturing with screws, T-clamps can be moved minutely for adjustment, or added and removed quickly to change parts. If the shop elects to retain the MDF spoil board, a pneumatic gun that shoots



The new BenchPilot from Shaper Tools is a small gantry-like system that transforms the portable CNC into a stationary tool.



Laguna's KX24 offers small shops a gateway machine that includes touchscreen controls and automatic depth setting.

plastic nails (rather than steel ones) is a handy option. Plastic nails won't hurt bits or blades if there is unintentional contact.

Pneumatic clamps are a relatively inexpensive upgrade if the shop has adequate reserves of compressed air. There's a learning curve here: it's important to design toolpaths that avoid the clamps and their handles and hoses.

Adding a vacuum pump for clamping allows the addition of solutions such as pods that elevate the work and allow full access to the sides of parts. There are also several vacuum table retrofit kits available that use foam tape and blocking to secure parts on the table but be aware that some of these are machine/model specific rather than universal.

A few CNC manufacturers and aftermarket suppliers offer a fourth axis kit that is independent of the spindle and gantry. It simply attaches to the lathe bed. This adds rotary action that allows the spindle to act much as handheld chisels do on a lathe: it lets the CNC make round parts. The fourth axis can spin quickly to present parts to a cutter mounted in the spindle or rotate very slowly in minute increments and then lock in place to present different faces of a workpiece to the bit. For example, a fourth axis could be used to decorate each facet of a hexagonal spindle or newel post.

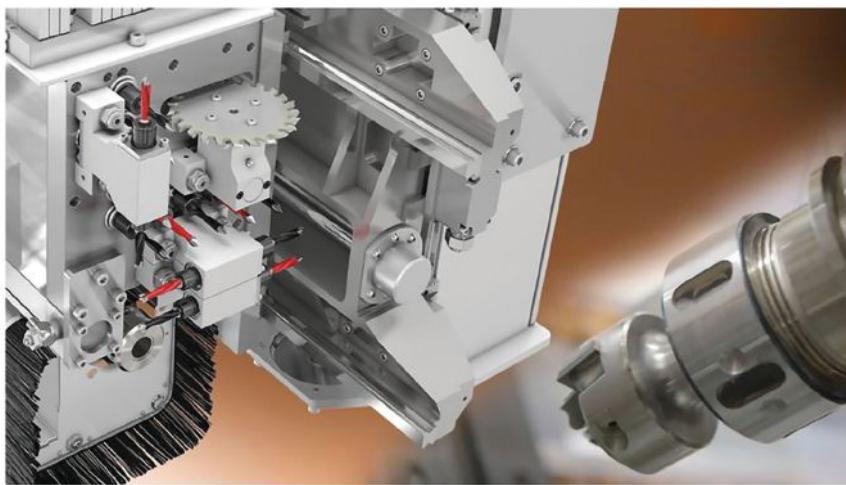
One of the most impactful options to add to a CNC is an aggregate head. Not all small machines can handle the added weight and extension of the cutterhead, so it's important to check with the CNC manufacturer if in doubt. A standard CNC points a tool straight down from the spindle, and an aggregate head allows the tool to swivel up to 90° so it can work on the sides and even undersides of parts. Beyond extending the usefulness of standard bits, aggregates also let the woodworker use a whole range of other tools, from sawblades and sanders to wire brushes and mortising bits.

HANDLING PARTS

A relatively inexpensive upgrade for small shops is to add conveyor rollers before and after the bed of the CNC to help with loading and unloading sheet stock and machined parts. The advantage of extending these areas in a one- or two-man shop is that heavy sheets become more manageable, and milled parts can accumulate without needing to be removed immediately. While cobot-assisted arms for loading (infeed) can be quite expensive because of the size and weight of full sheets of MDF or plywood, robots might be a viable option for unloading (outfeed) and stacking machined parts. They're less expensive than hiring new employees and are surprisingly easy to program.

Some manufacturers set up their machines for automated conveying. For example, all new machines from **NewCNC** (newcnc.com) are pre-configured with automatic load and unload devices, automatic panel alignment, table sweep and optional label printing. A single operator can keep the machine in continuous production, and the result is significant labor reduction and an increase of about 40 percent in output. A woodshop can purchase automatic loading and unloading when buying the machine or add it at any time as it's a plug and play connection.

For small shops making a range of different parts, or performing several operations on each, an automatic tool changer can be a solid investment. An ATC dramatically reduces downtime because the operator doesn't need to shut



Evolution 7405 from Holz-Her USA, a self-contained, multiple-head CNC that can handle large parts and machine edges.



The 24R from Tormach has a 24" x 55" work area and it can be ordered with a vacuum pump and automatic tool changer.

down the machine and mechanically remove and replace each tool. The machine simply releases one tool and picks up another. Many tool changers will also zero out the Z coordinate: that is, the machine will automatically measure the distance between the new tool and the spoil board and adjust the height accordingly.

For small CNCs with a single tool, an aftermarket touch plate (tool length sensor) can help speed up this process and set the Z position accurately, so it coincides correctly with the CAM settings.

Depending on the motors that move the spindle and gantry, an upgrade for the CNC controls or even moving to a handheld control may be an option. This can increase the speed and efficiency of the CNC and make it easier for a one-man shop to operate it.

Safety and/or dust containment enclosures are smart additions for many CNCs.

Small CNCs often come with air-cooled spindles or even just a bracket for attaching the motor from a portable router. Upgrading to a liquid-cooled spindle lets the machine



work all day without overheating.

There are some aftermarket labeling options available that let the operator track the identity and orientation of milled parts. Panels coming out of a CNC often look alike, and this can be confusing to an assembler. So sticky labels, direct printed, or laserered barcodes can help.

For signmaking and other specialized processes, the spindle can be replaced on many CNCs with a laser, wood-burner, engraver, or drag knife. Some machines will also accommodate a plotting pen for writing or drawing on a flat surface, and all of these capabilities are worth considering when one is assessing various CNC models before settling on one.

There are also some aftermarket touch probes available that will plot and digitize the shape of a 3-D part so that design software can create toolpaths to replicate objects such as architectural details or sculpture.

The takeaway here is that a basic CNC router can reduce a shop's workload, but a wide variety of factory features and add-ons can elevate its performance and expand the ways in which it can be used.

WHAT'S AVAILABLE?

Employee-owned **Tormach** (tormach.com) is located in Madison, Wisc., and the company makes the 24R CNC. This machine has a 24-3/4" x 55-3/4" x 6-3/4" work zone and it comes with a 2-hp, water-cooled, variable-speed spindle that runs on household current. Among its features are a vacuum table and a Pathpilot controller.

CAMaster (camaster.com) makes several CNC models that are well-suited to small shops, among which is the Stinger 1. The company notes that this is "the most robust desktop CNC on the market", but the word desktop may do it a disservice. Made in the U.S., the machine has a 24" x 48" bed, so it will handle most kitchen and bath tasks. It also has digital stepper motors on all axes and an HSD spindle as an optional add-on. The Stinger 1 is equipped with a Centroid PLC controller and comes with Vectric's VCarve Pro design software.

The Innovator 4' x 4' from **AXYZ** (axyz.com) is a rugged, production-level CNC that is ideal for small woodshops on



The Innovator 4' x 4' from AXYZ is loaded with special features and optional add-ons.



The CAMaster Desktop Stinger 1, available with a 2' x 4', 4' x 4' and 4' x 8' table, plus an ATC option.

a growth path. The work envelope is 48" x 49" x 6", and the machine has integrated servo motors and a helical rack-and-pinion drive. Add-on options include an automatic tool changer or a high-speed knife cutter. The Innovator 4' x 4', and the larger 5' x 8' both come with a highly intuitive Smart Console and an A2MC controller, and all of AXYZ's machines integrate with the most popular CAM software.

The entry-level Centaurus CNC from **Limtech Industries** (limtechindustries.com) comes with numerous features including automatic tabletop pins for locating sheet stock, a vacuum table with a 10 -hp pump (15-hp is an option), and an eight-position tool changer with automatic Z calculation. There's also an optional add-on for 32mm line boring.

The M Series is the smallest moving gantry CNC router in the **C.R. Onsrud** (cronsrud.com) line-up, with several models to choose among. The 97M has a 49" x 97" table and delivers nine inches of Z-axis vertical stroke and a 10-position ATC. The larger 145M has a 61" x 145" table, and both machines can be found on the **RT Machine** website (rtmachine.com).

The ARK360 from **Axiom Precision** (axiomprecision.com) is a fourth axis rotary kit that works on all of the company's Pro and Elite model CNCs, and looks like it would be adaptable to many other machines. It transforms a small CNC into a rotary machine capable of handling cylindrical objects from intricate engravings on round surfaces to custom 3D carvings on cylinders.

Vision Engraving (visionengravers.com) offers four

small-shop CNCs that include the company's new V-Touch pendant and proprietary Vision software. This manufacturer also makes a rotary attachment that lets a woodworker engrave cylindrical items up to 10" in diameter.

Holz-Her U.S. (holzerusa.com) has developed a family of vertical CNCs that save space and contain their machining inside a windowed enclosure. There are four specialized models for joinery and drilling, plus the Evolution 7405. This machine can deliver precise edge routing on all four workpiece edges and can hold parts up to 47" wide and as long as needs be with vacuum clamping. Those parts can be up to 2-3/4" thick, and the 7405's clamping means making anything from drawers to entry doors is quick and efficient.

Laguna Tools (lagunatools.com) is well known for its larger production CNCs, and for smaller shops the company recently introduced the KX:24 which was designed with luxury features but at an affordable price point. It comes with a 15.1" touchscreen, a 24" x 48" work area, an ultra-quiet spindle, and an automatic tool touch-off that ensures precise bit setting.

The Origin from **Shaper Tools** (shapertools.com) is a manual machine that has an automated motor that can move around within its housing. The idea is that the operator places the tool close to the cut line, the machine establishes where it is by referencing some tape that has been applied to the workpiece, and the Origin then makes small adjustments in X, Y and Z as the operator moves it along. It's a portable CNC, but the company has also invented a few



The entry-level CNC from Limtech, the Centaurus, has an eight-position ATC and a 10-hp pump for the vacuum table.

ways to turn it into a benchtop tool. The newest is BenchPilot, which turns the router into a hands-free milling machine.

Felder Group (felder-group.com) makes a benchtop unit, the Hammer HNC3 825, that offers interpolation (simultaneous movement along all three axes) and comes in four models. The company also manufactures the Format4 C-Express 920 Classic, an enclosed unit that performs drilling and milling jobs. It has a 17-spindle chuck system, and a slotting saw for machining panels or creating joinery.

SMALLER BEDS

Digital Wood Carver (digitalwoodcarver.com) makes four machines that are specifically designed for small shops. The company also manufactures two production grade machines, one of which has a 48" x 48" bed.

The Smartbench from **Yeti Tool** (yetitool.com) is a portable, large format, easy-to-use jobsite CNC that assembles in a few minutes, makes use of AI for milling, and can process full sheets of plywood.

Colorado-based **Diversified Machine Systems** (dmscncouters.com) makes several high-volume machines and its Freedom line includes a 4' x 4' model with an impressive 12" of travel in the Z axis.

The entry-level CNC from **Hendrick Mfg.** (hendrick-manufacturing.com) is the 4' x 8' model in the HDL-L series. Features include automatic material positioning with adjustable pop-up pins, a plenum-style vacuum table, multiple independently operated manual vacuum zones, and a manual pulse generator, which lets the operator manually move the axis for fine adjustments.

The line of affordable Shark desktop models from **Next-Wave CNC** (nextwavecnc.com) runs the gamut from \$799 to \$5,999, with ten different packages available on the website.

The innovative family of small-shop machines from **One-Finity** (onefinitycnc.com) is "ideal for both beginners cutting simple materials, advanced users seeking upgraded features and functionality, and businesses running parts 24/7," the company said. It has introduced a new automatic tool changer with four tool pockets.

The smallest CNCs from C. R. Onsrud, the M series, include the 97M (background, shown with two spindles) and 145M.



Phantom CNC Systems (phantomcncsystems.com) makes four families of CNC, all of which are available in 4' x 4' and larger models. The Cosmic is equipped with an air-cooled spindle, ER32 collets, and a dust hood for efficient dust collection. It also comes with a pneumatic roller system that holds materials firmly during cuts.

The Shapeoko 5 Pro is the newest and largest CNC from **Carbide 3D** (carbide3d.com) and it comes in 2' x 2', 4' x 2' and 4' x 4' options. It uses a ball-screw and linear rail motion system, which is the same motion system used on industrial CNC machines.

SCM Group North America (scmgroup.com) offers a vast array of CNC options, among which is the Startech CN K compact 3-axis model. It offers a fourth axis, a 46" x 30" worktable, and more than 6" of Z-axis clearance.

The **ShopBot** catalog (shopbottools.com) includes several desktop and floor model CNCs that are ideal for small shops. For example, the MAX ATC 12 has a 24" x 36" work area and can be outfitted with an MDF or an aluminum T-slot deck, or even a vacuum table. It can accommodate a rotary indexer (fourth axis), and it comes with a seven-tool automatic changer and a 1-hp spindle.

The smallest model in the Atlas Series from **Techno CNC** (technocnc.com) is a 4' x 4' that comes with a 4-hp spindle, stepper motors, a multi-zone vacuum Y-slot table, and open architecture that works with all industry standard CAD/CAM software. The company also makes an enclosed desktop machine, the HD II, that has a 20" x 30" processing area.

Thermwood (thermwood.com) makes several large industrial machines, but the company's Cut Center may be of special interest to smaller shops just entering the field. AI powered, this machine requires no CNC experience to operate and provides automatic nesting, labeling and even assembly guidance. The Cut Center simplifies design too, by reducing it to simply inputting specs.

With all of these options and so much more searchable online, it's relatively easy to get the most out of a small-shop CNC. **W**

Show of H. C. Westermann sculpture opens in Chicago

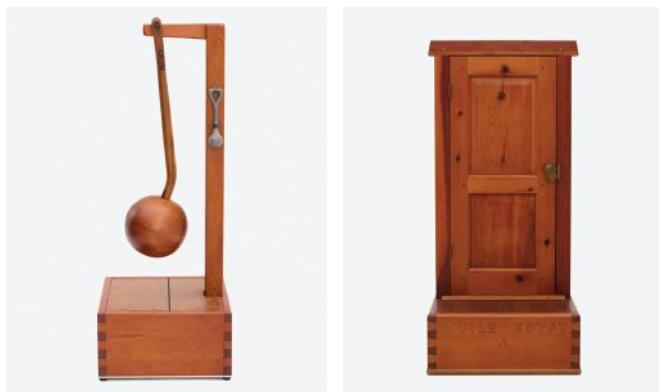
By Jennifer Hicks

The Art Institute of Chicago opened "H. C. Westermann: Anchor Clanker" on May 17. The exhibition is the largest gathering of sculptures by American artist Horace Clifford Westermann (1922-1981) in Chicago in more than 20 years and will run through May 17, 2026.

"Westermann combined his mastery of materials, especially wood, philosophizing, wit, and wordplay to communicate a worldview that resonated with many Americans in the post-war era," said curator Giampaolo Bianconi.

"I hope visitors also appreciate that his depth of experience, rambunctious sense of humor, and dedication to craft truly influenced a generation of artists from Chicago to Los Angeles and beyond."

"Westermann's work has been grouped among the most consequential artists of the 20th century," the Art Insti-



(From left) H. C. Westermann: Homage to American Art (1966), dedicated to Elie Nadelman), Douglas fir, ash, cast lead, and antique shovel handle; Little Egypt (1969), Douglas fir, pine, oak and bronze.



H. C. Westermann: Death Ship, Out of San Pedro, Adrift (1980), ebony, brass, copper, and solder.



H. C. Westermann. Rotting Jet Wing, 1966. Pine, plate glass, felt, and copper.

tute said in a statement. "His ability to traverse so many historical contexts is a testament to his independence as an artist. In New York, he participated in various exhibitions dedicated to New Realism, Assemblage, and Surrealism. While fellow artist Donald Judd identified him as a key maker of 'Specific Objects' in 1963, Westermann's openness to mass culture has often grouped him with contemporaneous Pop Art, and in 1972 he was included alongside major international Con-

ceptual artists in the exhibition Documenta V."

The exhibition is accompanied by a catalog with essays by Bianconi and associate research curator Thea Liberty Nichols. Learn more at artic.edu.

RENEWAL OPENS

The Wharton Esherick Museum (WEM) in Malvern, Pa., has opened Renewal, a virtual exhibition celebrating the museum's juried woodworking competition, that runs through Sept. 7, 2025.

The exhibition features 25 contemporary makers that explore the capacity for material, personal and collective renewal through art in wood.

The annual exhibition began in 1994 as an opportunity to highlight connections between Wharton Esherick's (1887-1970) creative legacy and the work of contemporary makers of all kinds, including professional woodworkers, artists, designers, hobbyists and craftspeople. These exhibitions showcase artworks that reflect a form or theme inspired by Esherick's creative work or personal narrative, according to a statement from the museum.

"This year, WEM invited applicants to think broadly about the idea of renewal, which Esherick took seriously across his career. After training as a painter, he renewed his artistic identity time and again, finding enough inspiration to make everything from illustrated books to stage sets and costumes to iconic furniture. He believed in renewed approaches to form, refusing to make objects that conformed to expectation but which instead straddled the line between function and sculpture."

View the exhibit at whartonesherickmuseum.org. **W**



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presents Nova Pro Scala, a restyled successor to the Nova Pro double-wall drawer system. "The modern design of the Nova Pro Scala features crisp lines, right angles, and small radii, all perfectly aligned to create a harmonized and refined impression that resonates with architectural aesthetics. Available in Silver, Stone, and Ice finishes, the satin metallic surfaces integrate seamlessly into high-end, contemporary environments. Designer panels can be fabricated and added to the sides, allowing architects to expand their creative vision and customize the look to suit any project, the company said. Learn more at grassusa.com.

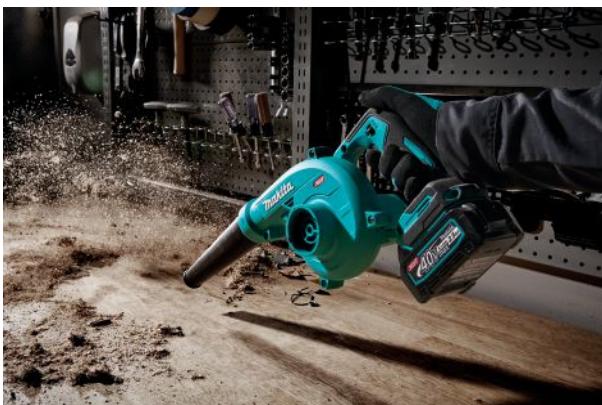


IRON BULL MFG.,

a manufacturer of scrap and waste hoppers, maintains a selection of standard sized hoppers for faster delivery. With capacities from 1/2 to 3 cubic yards, available in standard and heavy-duty designs, these hoppers are ideal for scrap wood, metal, and more. Self-dumping and drop bottom design are available, according to the company. Learn more at ibullmfg.com.

MAKITA U.S.A.

introduces the new Compact Blower, a cordless tool that's part of the manufacturer's 40-volt XGT battery platform. The company says the tool delivers a blowing force of up to 127 cfm and 221 mph. "It's compact enough to keep in the truck or trailer, but powerful enough to clear a site fast," said Stevan Garcia, Makita's senior product manager for outdoor power equipment. Learn more at makita-tools.com.



STILES

announces the launch of the Homag Drillteq D-110, a stand-alone horizontal drilling and dowel-inserting CNC machine. Features include three individually selectable horizontal drill spindles; machine-controlled side and center fences for enhanced flexibility; motorized control of X, Y, and Z axes four to eight individually adjusting clamping cylinder; up to two doweling systems for automated insertion of various dowel diameters; barcode reading with a cordless scanner, and the IntelliGuide LED operator guidance system. Learn more at stilesmachinery.com.



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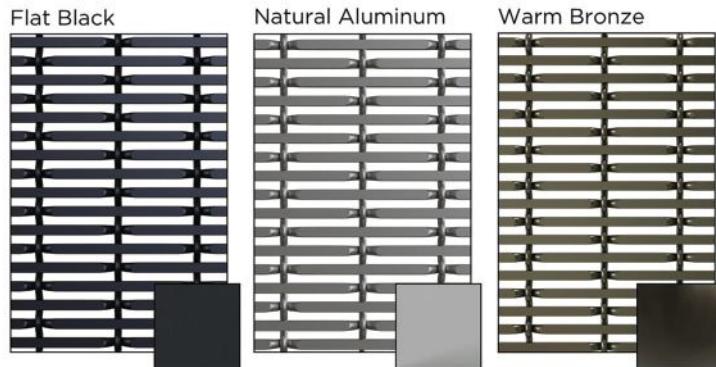
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introduces a removable front access option to its best-selling Box Style Wood Range Hood. This upgrade is designed to simplify both installation and ongoing maintenance. "Whether accessing internal components, routing ductwork, or performing service, this intelligently designed feature allows for efficient, tool-friendly entry, reducing time on-site and minimizing disruption during installation or future maintenance," the company said. Learn more at castlewood.com.



THE FINISHING TOUCH

The boxes are built and the doors are assembled. Now it's time to add a finishing touch that sets this job apart from the crowd. That can be imaginative lighting or quiet, soft-touch hardware, or maybe storage organizers, or a premier coating to protect the surfaces.

Richelieu's innovative lighting solutions feature WAVE Technology that delivers smooth, dot-free lighting that's ideal for recessed or surface installations. And the company's Door Acoustics System offers effective sound reduction for pocket and wall-mount sliding doors while also blocking odors, drafts, and light.

Rev-A-Shelf's unique "whole home" approach includes specialized areas such as cabinet childproofing and LED lighting. The company's Trecco Lighting® division will design and manufacture custom lighting solutions and then guide a woodworker through specifying the ideal product and wiring schematic for any residential or commercial project. From sleek cabinet accessories to stylish stove hoods, floating shelves, pull-outs and pull-downs, cabinetmakers turn to Rev-A-Shelf for finishing touches.

And when it comes to coatings, the Selva™ Pro range from Chemcraft® offers the highest standard in polyurethane and acrylic. The range includes three systems that provide a complete spectrum of sheens and offer limitless color possibilities. Selva Pro systems provide substantial protection, longevity, beauty and design freedom, so they're ideal for multiple uses from commercial applications to residential projects, kitchens and bathrooms. With simple, consistent mix ratios across all systems, the Selva Pro range has become a favorite among professionals.

Read on to see how these innovative and reputable suppliers bring something special to design, and help shops add more custom to their cabinetry.



Chemcraft.com



44-45

rev-a-shelf.com



Richelieu.com

47

46

Layers of confidence in every coat

The Selva™ Pro range from Chemcraft® wood coatings offers the highest standard in polyurethane and acrylic coatings systems for the professional and industrial woodworking community. The Selva Pro 2K polyurethane and 2k acrylic systems by Chemcraft represent a harmonious blend of artistry and manufacturing precision.

Inspired by the rich heritage and craftsmanship of trusted Italian-inspired formulations, Selva Pro systems are backed by decades of industry expertise to give layers of confidence in every coat.

The range comprises three systems offering versatile solutions for craftsmen and manufacturers alike. They have been designed with passion and crafted to provide a complete spectrum of sheens – from high gloss to dead flat – and offer limitless color possibilities for the most creative imaginations. Selva Pro systems provide substantial protection, longevity, beauty and design freedom so they are ideal for multiple uses, from commercial applications to residential projects, from kitchens to bathrooms, yacht interiors to musical instruments, hockey sticks to pool cues.

Selva Pro coatings are known for their exceptional, well-rounded performance. The systems are supported by a carefully selected range of complementary products that together form a complete solution, easily integrated into existing workflows. With simple, consistent mix ratios across all systems, application is streamlined and complexity is reduced. The Selva Pro range has become a favorite among professionals: training is straightforward, application is consistent, and inventory management is simplified.

All elements of the system are produced in North American modern manufacturing facilities using high-quality raw materials and following stringent US standards for quality assurance.

Selva Pro Chiaro is a high-build, high-solids system that offers robust protection for wood against wear and moisture. Ideal for areas like kitchens and bathrooms, it is durable yet soft to touch. The formaldehyde-free formula has minimal odor and comes in a wide variety of sheens. Chiaro uses the same hardener as Bianco, with a consistent 2:1 mix ratio for minimal complexity.

Selva Pro Bianco is a high-build, high-solids pigmented system that offers robust protection for wood against wear and moisture. Also ideal for areas like kitchens and bathrooms, Selva Pro Bianco is similarly durable yet soft to touch. The formaldehyde-free formula has minimal odor and comes in a wide variety of sheens. It offers unlimited color opportunities and excellent tinting* stability (when using a neutral base), especially with lower sheen finishes. Bianco uses the same hardener as Chiaro, with a consistent 2:1 mix ratio for minimal complexity.

*Tinting requires natural base.

The smooth formulation of Selva Pro Acrilico acrylic system enhances wood grain, particularly on expressive and / or high-quality wood-types. The Acrilico system includes a pigmented topcoat; a neutral topcoat with excellent tinting* stability especially with lower sheen finishes; and a clear 'Naturale' topcoat which has a modern dead flat finish inspired by the latest trends and highly sought after by customers. Only one hardener is needed, with a consistent 10:1



mix ratio for minimal complexity.

*Tinting requires neutral base. Naturale cannot be tinted.

Chemcraft is a brand of AkzoNobel, a global leader in paints and coatings that is active in over 150 countries and an expert in the manufacture of sustainable coatings. Being part of the AkzoNobel family means Chemcraft wood coatings benefits from extensive research and development capabilities, technologies, and support networks, which were crucial in the development and launch of the Selva Pro range. AkzoNobel's expert R&D team has a global track-record with polyurethane and acrylic-based wood coatings systems, which have earned global trust from the professional and industrial woodworking community over several decades. Following comprehensive testing the range offers proven, well-rounded performance so woodworkers can be confident that Selva Pro coatings are the right choice.

Selva Pro coatings are available through the Chemcraft network of knowledgeable and experienced local distributors who, with the support of the Chemcraft team, pride themselves on the quality of the technical advice they can provide end-users.

For more information, visit www.chemcraft.com or contact your local Chemcraft distributor.



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Finishing Touches from Richelieu - Diffusing Light and Sound

Richelieu Hardware has developed multiple solutions that use movement and light to add a spectacular finishing touch to casework.

The Junior Acoustics System is a low-profile hardware and retractable seal system for wooden doors that weigh up to 100 kg (220 lbs.). It offers effective sound reduction while also blocking odors, drafts, and light. Ideal for today's popular pocket and wall-mount



sliding doors, the smooth Quiet Edge helps a woodshop create quiet environments for office spaces and residential kitchens.

To help reduce kitchen noise, Richelieu offers the Series 828 full extension Synchronized Concealed Undermount Slide, which is equipped with soft-close technology for whisper-quiet performance. The synchronized mechanism delivers smooth, balanced motion, preventing drawers from shifting or misaligning, regardless of the angle of pull. And for added peace of mind, Richelieu offers a front Locking Device that secures the drawer in place to prevent unintended movement as well as the SVS Interlock insert that ensures that only one drawer opens at a time, which minimizes the risk of tip-overs for adventurous children.

Lighting is another way to add spectacular finishing touches, and Richelieu's innovative lighting solutions feature WAVE Technology to create seamless transitions between lighting tones. It also allows the user to have full control of the room's illumination. For example, FlexyLED AT6 is a flexible linear LED module with silicone-en-

capsulated technology that delivers smooth, dot-free lighting in a compact six-square-millimeter profile. It is ideal for recessed or surface installations, and offers uniform diffusion without the need for lenses or extrusions. And Richelieu's FlexyLED SEH4 is a silicone-coated LED strip that is designed to fit straight, curved, or circular grooves.

Richelieu also offers the Brillanté Collection for custom doors and components that feature a high-gloss lacquer finish. Designed for casework professionals, the collection makes it easy for woodshops to offer high-end, glossy products in a wide range of colors and stylish patterns.



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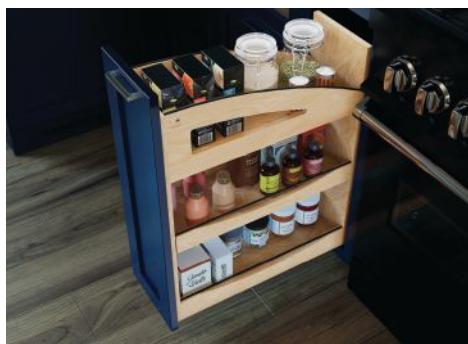
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Tresco®, Rev-A-Shelf's lighting division, has been offering lighting solutions for residential and commercial cabinetry since 1989. Combining superior performance with



ease of installation. Tresco helps woodshops design and deliver quality lighting systems with speed and confidence.

In 2024, Rev-A-Shelf welcomed Omega National Products into the family, expanding its offering to include beautifully crafted wood range hoods with multiple ventilation options and a full range of floating shelves. Trusted by designers and cabinetmakers alike, Omega's line complements custom woodwork with timeless, hand-finished designs that are both practical and elegant.

Together, these three brands represent one clear vision: to provide cabinet professionals with complete, high-quality solutions—from accessories and lighting to decorative



components. With dedicated teams, global distribution, and deep roots in craftsmanship, Rev-A-Shelf is proud to deliver the finishing touches that define extraordinary spaces.



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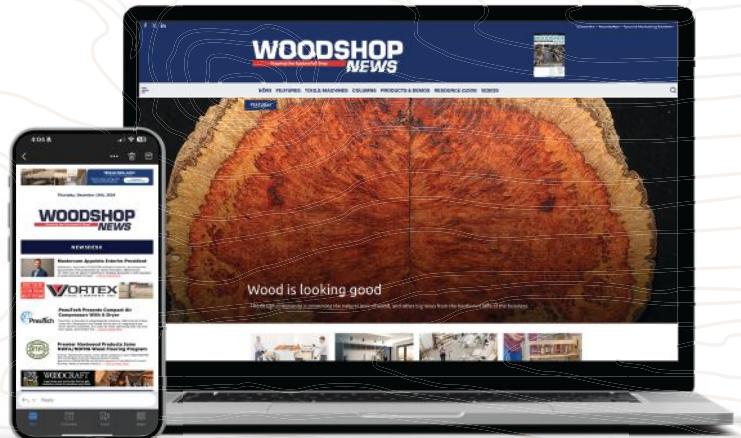
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Include name, dates, location, description of event and a contact address or telephone number. Calendar items, which should be typed or printed clearly, must be received at least 60 days before the event.

Please note that fees, as listed, might not include materials or shop fees. Check with a specific class for further details.
— Compiled by Jennifer Hicks

ARIZONA

Nov. 9-11 — Specialty Tools & Fasteners Distributors Association (STAFDA) annual convention and trade show. Location: Phoenix Convention Center. stafda.org

CALIFORNIA

Monthly — San Fernando Valley Woodworkers meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Balboa Sports Center in Encino. sfvw.org

Monthly — Society of Wood Manufacturing, a chapter of AWFS consisting of educators, manufacturers, hardware and industrial suppliers, and machinery dealers, meets during the second week of each month. For location and dates, visit awfs.org.

Monthly — San Joaquin Fine Woodworkers Association meetings are open to all experience levels at members' shops. For locations and dates, visit sjfwa.com.

FLORIDA

Ongoing — The Dunedin Fine Art Center is offering six-week woodturning classes at its Cottage Campus taught by AAW professional member Tony Marsh for beginners and intermediate-level participants. Full-day classes are held on Thursdays. Call 727-298-3322 or e-mail education@dfac.org.

Monthly — Woodcrafters Club of Tampa meets every third Thursday evening at 3809 W. Broad St. in Tampa. tampa-woodcrafters.org

MAINE

Ongoing — The Center for Furniture Craftsmanship offers year-round classes in woodworking to the highest degree of craftsmanship. One- and two-week workshops from June through October; 12-week Furniture Intensives; a nine-month Comprehensive; eight-week Turning Intensives, and Fellowships. woodschool.org

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MARYLAND

Monthly — The Howard County Woodworkers Guild meets the first Saturdays of the month at the Bain Senior Center at 5470 Ruth Keeton Way in Columbia from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. For more information, contact Manny Flecker at aaron0641@hotmail.com.

MASSACHUSETTS

Oct. 11-13 — Paradise City Arts Festival Fall Show, featuring handmade work from over 200 juried artisans and makers. Location: Three County Fairgrounds in Northampton. paradisecityarts.com

Nov. 21-23 — Paradise City Arts Festival Fall Show, featuring handmade work from over 200 juried artisans and makers. Location: Royal Plaza Trade Center in Marlborough. paradisecityarts.com

MICHIGAN

Oct. 1-3 — Cabinet Makers Association's National Conference featuring keynote presentations, educational sessions, plant tours and more. Location: Westin Book Cadillac Detroit. Register and learn more at cabinetmakers.org.

MINNESOTA

Monthly — The Minnesota Woodworkers Guild meets on the second Tuesday of each month at various locations. mnwwg.org

Monthly — The Minnesota Woodturners Association meets on the first Saturday of each month (except July) in Plymouth. They also offer a wide range of classes for beginners and advanced turners. mnwoodturners.com

Oct. 11 — Sixth annual Woodworkers Expo, hosted by the Minnesota Woodworkers Guild, featuring over 70 exhibitors showcasing custom work and products, demos, and more. Location: Minnesota State Fairgrounds Progress Center in St. Paul. mnwwg.org

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Nov. 9 — Third annual New England Woodworking Competition hosted by the Guild of New Hampshire Woodworkers, featuring Tom McLaughlin as Master of Ceremonies, and keynote speakers Jeffrey Cooper, a professional carver, and Mike Pekovich, Editor of Fine Woodworking Magazine. Location: Granite State Room, MUB Center, University of New Hampshire in Durham. gnhw.org

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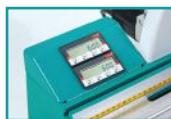
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NEW JERSEY

Monthly — The North Jersey Woodworkers Association meets the third Monday of every month. njwewoodworkers.org
Monthly — The Professional Woodworkers Guild of Upper New Jersey meets the third Wednesday of every month. njwoodguild.com

NEW YORK

Monthly — The Woodworkers of Central New York holds meetings on the first Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Belgium Cold Springs Fire Department in Baldwinsville. woodcny.org

Monthly — Northeast Woodworkers Association holds meetings on the second Thursday of the month at various locations in the Albany area. For more information, visit woodworker.org.

Monthly — The Long Island Woodworkers meet on the first Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Frank Brush Barn of the Smithtown Historical Society in Smithtown. liwoodworkers.org

Sept. 21-27 — Frame and Panel Project with Andrew Glantz. Covers joinery and construction methods to create your own piece. Fee: \$985, plus \$200 for materials. Loca-

tion: Wendell Castle Workshop in Scottsville. View the full class schedule at workshop.wendellcastle.org.

NORTH CAROLINA

Monthly — Triangle Woodworkers Association meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. at Klingspor's Woodworking Shop. Location: MacGregor Village in Cary. Learn more about the guild at trianglewoodworkers.com.

Monthly — Charlotte Woodworkers Association meets the third Tuesday of each month, except December, at 6:15 p.m. Location: 8801 Park Road in Charlotte. Learn more at charlottewoodworkers.org.

Oct. 25-29 — Fall High Point Furniture Market. The furniture industry trade show features showroom tours, vendors, speakers, educational seminars, and networking events. highpointmarket.org

OHIO

Ongoing — Cincinnati Woodworking Club meets the second Saturday in the months of Jan., March, May, Sept. and Nov. from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the E.B. Mueller in Reading. cincinnatewoodworkingclub.org

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PENNSYLVANIA

Monthly — Lehigh Valley Woodworkers Guild meets at 6:30 p.m. every third Tuesday of the month at the Woodcraft in Allentown. Various craftspeople provide presentations on their woodworking techniques. lvwwg.com

RHODE ISLAND

Nov. 7-9 — 30th annual Fine Furnishings show featuring fine handcrafted furniture and other artwork for the home. Location: WaterFire Arts Center in Providence. finefurnishingsshows.com

Dec. 6-7 — Holiday Arts Market, presented by the Fine Furnishings Shows. Location: WaterFire Arts Center in Providence. finefurnishingsshows.com

SOUTH DAKOTA

Monthly — The South Dakota Woodworkers Guild meets the last Thursday of every month, except August, at various members' shops. The club has hand tool and woodturning groups. Learn more at sdwoodworker.org.

TEXAS

Sept. 13-14 — Texas Woodworking Festival, an annual event featuring demonstrations, classes and lectures. Location: Palmer Events Center in Austin. texaswoodworkingfestival.com

Oct. 1-3 — National Hardwood Lumber Association Annual Convention. Location: Marriott Rivercenter in San Antonio. nhla.com

VIRGINIA

Oct. 10-13 — Society of American Period Furniture Makers' annual conference, featuring the Cartouche Award banquet. Location: Williamsburg. sapfm.org

WYOMING

Sept. 4-7 — Western Design Conference Exhibit + Sale, featuring luxury residential interior design and furnishings and other one-of-a-kind items with a western theme. Location: Snow King Sports and Event Center in Jackson. westerndesignconference.com **W**

TEXAS

Sept. 13-14 — Texas Woodworking Festival, an annual event featuring demonstrations, classes and lectures. Location: Palmer Events Center in Austin. texaswoodworkingfestival.com

Oct. 1-3 — National Hardwood Lumber Association Annual Convention. Location: Marriott Rivercenter in San Antonio. nhla.com

VIRGINIA

Oct. 10-13 — Society of American Period Furniture Makers' annual conference, featuring the Cartouche Award banquet. Location: Williamsburg. sapfm.org

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Sept. 4-7 — Western Design Conference Exhibit + Sale, featuring luxury residential interior design and furnishings and other one-of-a-kind items with a western theme. Location: Snow King Sports and Event Center in Jackson. westerndesignconference.com **W**

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Topflight accommodations

Eric Kalwarczyk has found his woodworking niche, designing and building sculptural artisan birdhouses that are enjoyed by his customers as much as their feathered friends. He started making birdhouses as part of his side work in 2019 and officially formed Eric's Aviaries about three years ago. He says he enjoys seeing people's reactions in the marketplace as much as he likes his time in the shop.

"They're something a little unusual. People don't really associate a birdhouse with a fine art piece. It's more of something people just throw in their backyard and wait for the birds to come. But the way I'm doing these, some people think it's like a sculpture. They're putting them in their yard or their garden where they would maybe put a metal sculpture or something, but it's a nice justification because it almost becomes an interactive piece of their property when the birds move in," says Kalwarczyk of Dudley Mass.

Kalwarczyk says his evolution into building birdhouses started organically as he's always been a hobbyist woodworker. He was a professional chef for most of his former career.

"What happens with that industry, it gets a little tedious and old doing nights and weekends, and I had two young daughters and my wife's a teacher, so the hours just started to take a toll on family life.

"I met a guy with a cabinet shop in Sturbridge, Mass., and started working for him building kitchens and built-ins and things for seven years. I was doing woodworking on the side, and I thought I'd make a go at my own business.

"My uncle got me into birdhouses. I made one for him and he had a neighbor that liked it, and she called me and had ideas for one. If you told me 10 years ago I'd be designing and building birdhouses and selling them as art pieces, I'd say that's not even a thing. It just sort of happened, and I realized people like these."

His market has grown from people seeing them in his front yard asking to purchase them, to large art fairs in New England.

"At some point I thought of going to craft-based shows but learned to get the price that you need to get for them you need to go to art shows in the affluent areas where people have the land and there's an artsy vibe. A lot of it's in the demographics where people want them."

He has exhibited at the Westport Fine Arts Festival in Westport, Conn.; Paradise City Arts Festival in Northampton, Mass.; Vermont Flower Show in Essex Junction, Vt.; Stockbridge Summer Arts & Crafts Show in Stockbridge, Mass., and Mystic Outdoor Art Festival in Mystic, Conn.

Kalwarczyk says his background in cabinetmaking helps with joinery and other techniques he can apply to his designs. He only works with his own designs.

"I started doing more symmetrical things, but then I got into the more whimsical stuff, the crooked, wacky, weird stuff. There's a segment of people that really like that. I've had a customer who bought five pieces and they're going

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Eric Kalwarczyk and some of his birdhouse designs.

to make sort of a Dr. Seuss garden."

He generally uses locally sourced woods, including white pine heartwood, red and white cedar, tamarack, sassafras, and locust, and uses a penetrating oil finish, such as Penofin, to give the pieces some longevity. All are designed to sit on a 4x4 post.

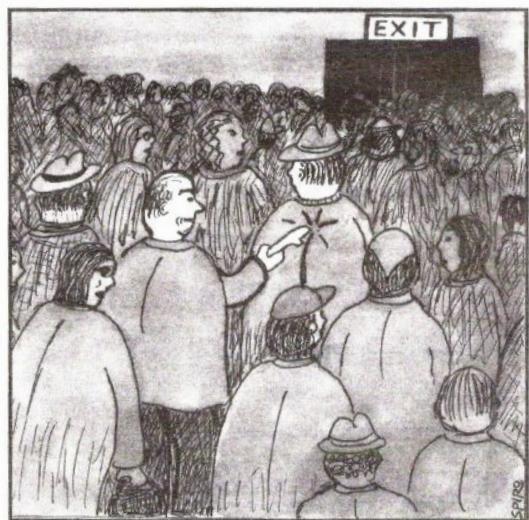
"Some people ask about what will happen to them and I tell them they're not going to last forever. They're going to weather over time and people have to be okay with that."

The larger birdhouses generally sell for \$500 to \$3,000. Learn more at ericsaviaries.com. **W**

—Jennifer Hicks

60 Grit

Rough humor by Steve Spiro



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