

THE MARQUETARIAN

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“Marxism”

by Ivor Bagley of the St. Albans Group
VHC in Class 6A



Journal of
The Marquetry Society



The Marquetry Society



Founded 1952
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Cover Background: Fumed Oak

Front Cover Picture: "Marxism" Miniature

Back Cover Picture: "Flute Player" 31 x 35 cms





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Deadline Dates

Final date for receipt of material for issue
290 is 12th January 2025 but please let me
have as much material as possible by
mid December 2024

Final date for receipt of material for issue
291 is 12th April 2025

Marquetarian Back Numbers

Are available in PDF form via e-mail at a nominal cost per issue. All editions from number 1 are available. Enquire via Editor.

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Page 3 Cartoon



“Okay then Ladies, the deal is I get a kiss under the mistletoe first, and then you choose for yourself a piece from my rare woods veneer collection!”

Cartoon theme by Vaughan Thomas & 1880's style artwork by Alan Mansfield.

The 2025 International Marquetry Exhibition
Our Chelmsford group will be hosting the 2025 Exhibition
at Budworth Hall, Ongar, Essex on
6th June (for judging and setting up day),
and 7th and 8th June 2025 for exhibition visiting
More information with our Spring 2025 Marquetarian

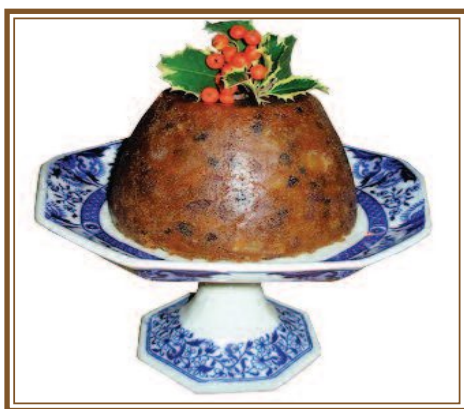


I am afraid that we are a little bit 'wordy' in places in this winter edition of The Marquetarian. But, as you read on, you will see that it is not only very important information, but also some rather interesting and helpful marquetry guidance and practical advice.

Obviously, we can always do with more material from you dear reader, especially your ideas on any useful tools you have discovered. An example being the 'fine line cutting knife' from our President Enrico. I made one of these for my own use, what an asset it is. I can now cut all sorts of fine lines and their 'insert' windows with total accuracy. If only I had known of this before. Read it on page 10 - really good.

Can you draw a cartoon? It would be wonderful to see new approaches to our page 3 cartoons. I am sure that you don't want to be constantly lumbered with my humble efforts every 3 months. So, to prevent that happening, get your pencil sharpened and let your artistic abilities flow into an inventive cartoon for us. I would really enjoy seeing them.

On the opposite page our President talks about this magazine going to A4 in size. Unfortunately the disadvantages outweighed any advantages costwise.



Your editor's Christmas Pud - luvverly!

Apologies for mentioning this, but it's once again time to renew your membership subs. It can be done easily online or by using the renewal form included with this magazine.

For our outside of the UK membership, you may, if you prefer, renew your subs direct to our bank using the following:

Account Name - **Marquetry Society**

Sort Code - **30-94-55**

Account No. **00844307**

IBAN - **GB41 LOYD 3094 5500 8443 07**

BIC - **LOYDGB21046**

Alan.

Winter period Password

The password for the Winter period Members Only section of our website is

oliveashcurl

As always the password is all lower case and a single word, so just type it in as seen above on or after the **1st December 2024**.

To visit this section of our website go to the Independents' Page button on our home page, then scroll down on the Independents' Page to the bottom of that page to the "Enter Protected Area" button. Click the button and enter the password in the dialogue box which will appear on screen. You will then have full access to our large online designs library.



It's a big thank you to Alan Townsend and Janet Edwards of the Chelmsford group for arranging the venue and hosting of our 2025 International Marquetry Exhibition. The venue is that lovely old building named the Budworth Hall, located in the delightful village of Ongar in Essex.



Budworth Hall, Ongar

The basic details of dates and location are printed on page 3 of this journal. We will have much more information for you with the spring edition of *The Marqueterian*.

So, get cutting and polishing and let's see who can acquire the prestigious Rosebowl for 2025 - you never know, it could be you!

Now, I am sure that our editor will have already mentioned this, but we, the Exec Committee, looked at the possibility of changing the format of our quarterly magazine *The Marqueterian* (which you are presently reading, and presumably, holding in your hand) from its present A5 size up to A4 in size, which is just over 11 inches or 28 cms in height or length.



We are aware that some of you keep your copies of *The Marqueterian* in those binders that we have been selling for about fifty years. Those are for A5 size.

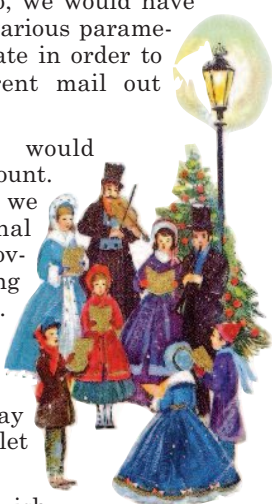
There were advantages in changing to A4: primarily that was the increase in size of the graphics, such as photographs from the National Exhibition. However, this would have had an adverse effect on postal costs.

The larger size of the envelope and the weight of the A4 package compared to our current A5 magazine mail outs, would certainly have affected our mailing costs, and so, we would have had to balance various parameters to compensate in order to retain our current mail out costs.

Inevitably this would affect our page count.

At the moment we have 48 internal pages plus the covers, thus making 52 pages in all. We would need to cut that in half. Would you have been okay with that? Do let our editor know.

And now let me wish you all a wonderful Xmas & New Year.



Liability Insurances and The Marquetry Society

The subject of The Marquetry Society's (the "**Society**") insurance cover was comprehensively addressed by Peter White in his "Chairman's Chatter" article in the Spring 2024 edition #286 of the Marquetarian.

At this year's AGM a question was raised as to who exactly is insured under the Society's £5,000,000 public liability insurance ("**PLI**") policy, which resulted in the Executive Committee contacting the Society's insurance broker, Howe Maxted Group, to request them to seek clarification from the insurers as to what exactly constitutes a Society "member" for the purposes of such insurance.

The brokers put forward our question to the insurers and subsequently informed us that:

"The insurers have advised as follows:

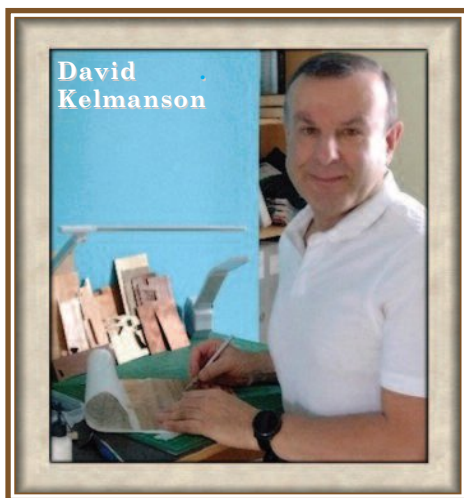
For a person to be considered as a member they would need to be acting under the direct control and management of the client.

Anyone who participates in any other capacity is not covered by the policy. Anyone acting independently is not covered."

The above reference to "**member**" means the liability insurance policy's definition thereof, i.e. **a member of the Society** and the "**client**" means the **Society**.

The geographic limits of the PLI policy restrict "members" to UK members (i.e. those based in England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man). The PLI cover applies to any UK event, exhibition, class, group meeting, demonstration or any other public forum howsoever described (each a "**UK Event**"). No other countries or risks are covered.

The insurer's advice hence confirms that, with regard to the Society's PLI cover:



- the approved activities of all UK Society members are insured at a UK Event;
- the approved activities of UK non-Society members (each a "**UKNSM**") are insured provided they are acting under the direct control and management of the Society. What this means is that, for a UKNSM to be insured at a UK Event, any activity undertaken by such UKNSM must take place with the express authority from, and full supervision of, a UK Society member;
- any Society-related UK Event must always be directly controlled and managed by a UK Society member for the PLI to cover anyone suffering a loss or injury caused by a UK Society member or UKNSM at a UK Event; and
- this does not extend to non-UK Society members and hence if either a non-UK Society member or non-UKNSM elect to participate in a non-UK Event, they will be acting entirely at their own risk, will not benefit from the Society's public liability insurance cover and may incur personal liability.

It therefore follows that, in order to mitigate the risk of the Society's PLI cover

being invalidated at a UK Event, a UK Society member should:

- always “directly control and manage” the activities of UKNSMs at a UK Event;
- **not** allow UKNSMs to act independently or in isolation at a UK Event; and
- notify UKNSMs that, if they elect to act independently or in isolation, and/or without the express authority from, or full supervision of, a UK Society member and cause a loss or injury at a UK Event, they will not be insured under the Society’s PLI cover and may incur personal liability.

The above suggests that it is in the best interests of UKNSMs to become Society members in order that they may benefit directly from the Society’s PLI cover and hence UK Society members may therefore wish to point this out at any Society group meetings attended by UKNSMs.

Please can all Society members note the above, especially where they participate at a UK Event in which a practical demonstration may be offered by a UKNSM, as in such circumstances a UKNSM should at all times be acting under the direct control and management of a UK Society member (or members) for the PLI cover to apply.

The above reflects the current status under the Society’s existing PLI policy. The Society is currently exploring a number of cost reduction initiatives and, as part of that exercise, it is possible that it may switch its insurances to a more cost-effective provider in future. If that happens, we will issue an updated article in a later copy of the Marquetarian summarising the scope of any revised PLI cover taken out by the Society.

David Kelmanson
Executive Committee Member (*ex-officio*)

Veneer Examples - these are 65 years old veneers





One of the enjoyable things about being the recipient of enquiries to the Society is that I've no idea where the next one will come from.

During the last three months, I have had enquiries from Australia, Canada, Germany, Iran, Italy and of course mainly from America. Surprisingly I only receive a few from the United Kingdom. The site still attracts a lot of interest from many parts of the world, interestingly, not so much from the UK. The enquiries are quite diverse, from adhesives, polishes and veneer to pricing works potentially for sale. Recently I received an enquiry from a non-member living in Teesside. He wanted to know where he could get veneer as his source was no longer in business. I gave him the following suppliers. Turners Retreat (Ex Craft Supplies) John Coffey Veneers or Freed Veneers (Wood Veneer Hub) all shown in the rear of the magazine.

There are, though, other sources found in the Marquetarian and Website and some in the near continent who have excellent stock, again shown on the recommended suppliers page at the rear of the magazine. I had a long chat with John Coffey and he states that you will not find veneer any cheaper. He also gives a discount to Society members.

He sells on eBay with photographs of his



wares, veneers and bandings. His phone number is 01592 201 556. I bought some nice Pear Wood and Koto from him. Give him a ring and see if he can help you.

Some of the enquirers have asked if we have any vacancies! Because of the very proficient construction of the site by Alan, we are thought to be a professional organisation.

They must feel rather sad to hear the truth! All answers given are mainly gathered from my own experience, but if there is something that I am unsure about, there is plenty of help to be had from Alan and others.

Most enquiries fall into the same mould asking if I can identify the artist of a picture that came into the possession of the enquirer many years ago and asking how much the picture is worth. We have a long-established rule that we cannot give a value as we are not experts, so we refer them to eBay to see what prices similar pictures are demanding. One of our Tuesday Zoom members exhibited at an exhibition in San Diego and sold his picture for \$2,000!

I also refer them to auctioneers/valuers, but I don't think there is any formula even from these people that will help. We have been able to 'specialise' in giving information regarding pictures made by Buchsmidt & Gretaux in Germany in the 50's and 60's and this only because we were able to speak and keep in contact with the last surviving partner of that company Otto Chlup. Without the label on the back and initials cut in, it has become that much more difficult to identify these pictures.

Well, that's sufficient for now. And thanks for your good wishes to the great many who attended the National. I am sure that you thought it worthwhile. Special thanks to Enrico and his colleagues for setting it up.

Enjoy the winter season and have a very good time at Christmas.

David Walker



Sunday, the first of September, saw our 2024 International Marquetry Exhibition winner's gallery and slide show launched on our website to replace the 2023 gallery which had run its 12 month course.

I hope that you have been enjoying the 2024 slide show. Most web visitors elect to view the slide show first, and then move on to the static gallery to enjoy each exhibit in more detail.

Once again we must thank our erstwhile photographer Peter White for the superb quality of his photos taken with his mirror-less Canon camera. Peter uses a light tent which diffuses the external lighting and thus gives us pictures devoid of the dreaded light bounce back and odd reflections. And, with the use of Adobe Photoshop, the photos that Peter presents me with are all of the very best quality. More than likely easily as good as anything you will see on the magazine shelves of your newsagents.

Unfortunately for the website we have to reduce the 'dots per inch' from 300 dpi to the web standard of 72 dpi. We also need to use an amount of compression in order to reduce the file size of each picture in order to allow for those with a slow internet connection. Although, with broadband becoming so prevalent, this is not so much of a problem anymore.

Normally every single entry gets its full 12 month period displayed on our website. Hopefully I managed to get every one of the 2023 entries displayed there (fingers crossed!). Some of the later exhibits will still be available on our web

site until the last day of August 2025 in the 'All Other Entries Gallery' pages.

Currently that goes on to room 6 for the 2023 Marquetry Exhibition entries. The pages 7 to 10 still display exhibits from the 2021 Marquetry Exhibition, and the final page number 11 has the 2019 Marquetry Exhibition has 14 from that exhibition still available. Page number 1 of the 'All Other Entries Gallery' now displays the first 10 of the randomly chosen 'non-awarders' from the 2024 International Marquetry Exhibition. More will follow with each monthly web-site update. That is until we have used up all of the 2024 entries of course. Hopefully no-one will have been left out with any luck.

Now, change of subject, as many of you know, we hold an online marquetry evening each week on a Tuesday, and very successful it has turned out to be. We have only had one minor complaint in all the time we have been running this. It was to say that we don't run enough real time tutorials for very basic beginners. Well, if you are a beginner and join our Tuesday meeting, just pipe up and tell us what you want, and we will be more than happy to help you, and probably even do a real time demo of whatever technique, there and then. If it is a special technique, one of us will make a video of the technique and run it at the next meeting for you.

If you want to take part on a Tuesday, just email me or David Walker (email addresses printed on the inner front cover) and we will send you the link.

Anyway, let me wish you all a Merry Christmas and a superb New Year.

Alan.

MARQUETRY TOOLS

Fine Line Cutting Knife

From time to time we all need to cut fine lines and/or stringers. But how often do we get a totally linear fine line or stringer at the end of our endeavours with a standard blade and ruler? Almost never I would venture.

So, what's the answer to this puzzle? Well, you can fork out almost \$100 and have one shipped over from the 'States (seems to be the only place I can find them, none stocked over here in the UK) or, you can build my version for less than a couple of quid. Let me explain.

You see in the illustration on the right an example of the Japanese double inlay knife. A superb tool for the job, it has all of the adjustments you would ever require for the fine line and stringer jobs, but \$100 is somewhat expensive for a tool you would only use rather rarely.

Below you see my variations of this tool with the three of them preset at three



An article by Enrico Maestranzi



Japanese double inlay knife

different cutting widths to allow for the most common sizes of fine lines and stringers you would most likely require.

For this job I have used number 11 size scalpel blades, but for extra stiffness and insurance against breakages and for added strength, you could substitute 10A blades for this job which are somewhat more hardy than the number 11s.

You start by gluing two scalpel blades together (I use epoxy glues for this task) as seen in the photo below:



Apply a liberal amount of glue to one face of each blade. You could add spacers here if you require a wider cut, but do ensure that the structure is well glued up to almost the cutting tip itself. Otherwise the blades will splay apart as you cut, and you will lose your accuracy. Then tape the blades together while the glue sets and place them under some weights and leave for 24 hours for the glue to cure.



The next step is to fix those prepared blades into a handle of some sort. As you can see in my photo on the opposite page, I have made use of standard handle with a fairly wide chuck for the closely set blades (the ones preset for cutting fine lines) and for the wider set blades I have used some home made handles constructed from some scrap timber that I had lying around the workshop.

For those home made handles I cut two similar lengths of the timber as seen in the photo at the top of the next column and then place and glue the prepared blades in place as you see in the photo.

If the blades were a little wider with a spacer inserted between the blades, you could chisel out a slight amount of space in the home made handle to accomodate the blade package. But do not carve out too much as you will want the blades to be



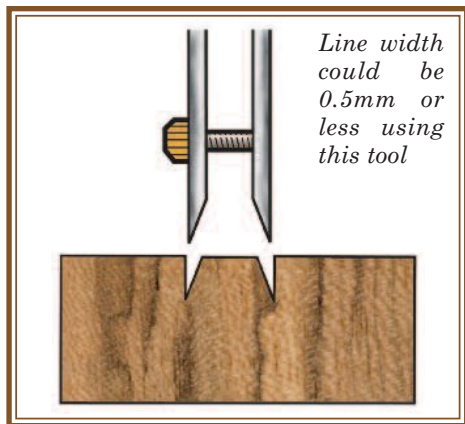
A well used double inlay knife

tightly held in the handle. You certainly don't want them wobbling about, otherwise you will not get a good clean cut.

Once you have got the blade package located correctly, you will then glue the other half of the handle in place and tape it all together while the glue cures and sets.



I have used these home made fine line and stringer tools for many years now and they have more than proved their worth. The added advantage is that they are cheap, versatile and easy to make.



The picture above shows you how that Japanese double inlay knife operates. It cuts two totally parallel lines in your chosen veneer. The full name of this tool is the Japanese Shirabiki Double Inlay Marking Knife. Unfortunately I cannot find any stockist of this tool over here in the UK at all. I'm afraid that you will have to import it from any of the several USA stockists if you really want one, but watch out for the cost, they are expensive.

One thing that I should have mentioned earlier is that before you glue the two blades together, make sure to clean the gluing surfaces with meths or pure alcohol, and then roughen up those gluing surfaces with fine grade wet and dry Silicon Carbide grit papers. This ensures a good surface for the glue (epoxy resin preferably) to adhere to successfully.

Another point is that the window you cut with this tool, and the insert you also cut with this tool, will fit each other perfectly. No trimming up required.

I had been asked about using the very thin E11 blades in this tool.

Well, my answer is that E11 blades are rather rare, and not that often used. Plus they are easily broken, so, use number 11s and 10s for this tool. I find they last much longer.

Also this tool is perfect for cutting arcs and circles in fine line situations. To cut such things accurately by hand is almost impossible, but with this tool, simplicity itself. You will wonder how you managed without it, it really is that useful.



Would you like to make a difference on the planet through marquetry art?!!

It has been proven that art displayed in hospitals, helps patients heal through the extraordinary power of visual art, by transforming the space into uplifting healing environments.

Using that extraordinary power of visual art, a group of USA marquetry artists has established a collaborative project, called “One Love”, that will involve experienced marquetarians from around the world, creating a “quilted mural” in marquetry, that will be donated to a ‘non-profit’ such as a Children’s Hospital, Veterans’ Hospital, Cancer Hospital in the Texas area, at no cost to the hospital.

Based on the hospital in collaboration with the recipient and Splashes of Hope (<https://www.splashesofhope.org/>), the theme will be determined about January 2025, and selected marquetry artists will create a piece of art of the same size (approximately 8” x 10”) and with the same uplifting theme. All marquetrys will be signed by the artist with their name and city/country. The finished artworks will be glued up but not finished, and then sent to artist Cindy Goldman in Austin Texas, to be assembled into an 8’ x 4’ “quilt”, glued up and sprayed with

finish (which has been approved by the recipient), and delivered.

If you have interest in being a part of this unique, and we believe to be the first “international” marquetry artwork of its kind, please notify Alan Mansfield at alan@marquetry.org



An example of a large acrylic painted picture and its attraction to young children as seen on the ‘splashes of hope’ website.

I won the Rosebowl in 1978

by Peter Metcalfe

Editor's Note: This is part 2 of Peter's story of his 1978 Rosebowl win.

But, not only did Peter achieve the Rosebowl in 1978, he also got himself a Highly Commended award with his other entry 'Angler's Paradise' as you see here on the right at the top of the next column.

The visual quality of those early slides is very questionable, but with the help of Photoshop, these can be improved significantly, as you can see here, nearly 50 years later.

This was the address the marquetry society had for me. A young guy on a bicycle handed it to my wife, his mother had sent him to the other end of town to deliver it. The letter was asking if I would loan *Sea Dreams* for the millennium exhibition. How lucky was I to receive it? I was only too happy to send it off and it was a treat to see all those winning pictures in one exhibition.

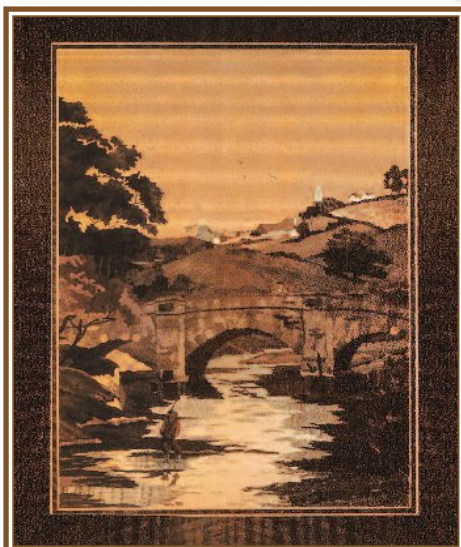
I don't think that marquetry gets the recognition it deserves. On one hand an artist can paint a red dot on a canvas and it's a masterpiece. Demanding millions. On the other hand, someone spends endless hours selecting, cutting and inlaying hundreds of pieces of exotic veneers to produce a thing of beauty, and, outside the marquetry circle, hardly gets a mention. Something sadly wrong.

Just want to wish you and everyone in marquetry society all the best.

Hope you continue to produce these lovely pieces of work for many, many more years. Sure, you will.

Peter Metcalfe.

As a matter of interest I (being your editor) have gone back over the judges' comments



Angler's Paradise - 1978 HC Winner

for the year 1978, and what they said of Peter's work, which I think you will find rather interesting, so here it is:

"I have left until last my favourite exhibit in the Advanced Class - Peter Metcalfe's "Angler's Paradise" — a lovely picture of a fisherman in a peaceful country river, and one which would grace anyone's drawing room. However, the judges apparently did not consider this picture to be worth any award, (*actually it did achieve a Highly Commended award. Ed*) though they gave the Rose Bowl to Mr. Metcalfe's other entry "Sea Dreams". Certainly "Sea Dreams" was delightful — a little boy on the seashore — but I found it hard to understand how of two such superb pictures one can win the premier award and the other get no recognition at all!"

I hope you have enjoyed reading a Rosebowl winner's story from the 1970's.

Independents' Corner

An occasional article for Independent Members by David Kelmanson

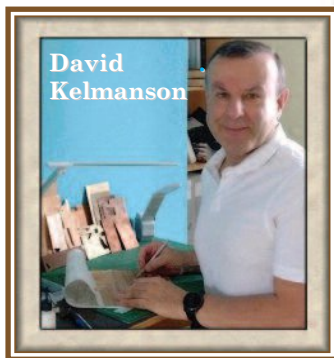
David Kelmanson, an ex-officio Executive Committee member of the Marquetry Society, is currently an active member of the Sutton Coldfield Group. Upon joining the Society, however, David was initially an Independent member and hence offered to contribute a guest article to this latest edition of the Marquetarian in which he reaches out to all Independents.

I joined the Society as an Independent in February 2023, having finally decided to “take the plunge” after practising marquetry at home as an enthusiastic amateur for almost 30 years. I started out by making Art Veneers kits received as Xmas and birthday gifts, moving on to my own designs in recent years. I occasionally scanned the Society’s website over a period of several years before plucking up the courage to apply for membership, having marvelled at the artistic brilliance of some of the exhibits on display. I knew in my heart that if I was to make any progress in terms of developing my own marquetry skills I needed to learn from experts and not just rely on a series of archaic marquetry text books I had collected over the years, most of which covered only the basic elements of our craft.

Having joined the Society as an Independent, it quickly became clear to

me that the best way in which to improve my skills would be to engage with other, more experienced

members – preferably (but not always) in person - so as to discuss and observe at first hand several new skills and techniques to which I had never previously been exposed; sand shading, fragmentation, ultra-thin lines to name but a few. I was encouraged by the highly experienced Mike Roberts at the Sutton Coldfield Group to enter the 2023 international marquetry exhibition at Middleton Hall, organised by Mike and fellow members of his Group. I was reluctant to participate at first given my relative inexperience compared to that of many seasoned exhibitors but Mike was extremely welcoming, even towards a brand new Independent such as myself! Even though none of my entries received an award I savoured the experience of exhibiting as an Independent and, more importantly, being



able to enjoy (and learn from) a range of exhibits submitted by some incredibly talented marquetarians.

The 2023 exhibition presented me with the opportunity to meet several members of the Sutton Coldfield Group who openly welcomed me to their ranks. For the last 15 months I have been a very active member of their Group, which meets monthly, at which I now provide advice, guidance and practical support to newcomers to the craft to help them develop their skill sets. The round trip from my home in Stratford-upon-Avon to Sutton Coldfield and back is some 80 miles, but attending the Group, from my personal perspective, offers many advantages versus the alternative of pursuing my hobby in isolation. By being part of a Group, there is absolutely no doubt that I have learned new skills that I simply would have been unable to develop had I remained an Independent.

Notwithstanding my own positive experience of joining a Group, the Society fully recognises and appreciates that there are a number of perfectly valid reasons why many Independents cannot participate in a Group, not least because there isn't a Group based within easy travelling distance to and from their homes. Equally, however, there may be some Independents among our ranks who would prefer to join a Group, but who may not know how to go about doing so, or what options are available to them. Or there may perhaps be other Independents living nearby, unknown to you, but with whom you could potentially team up to establish your own, new Group?

Because the Society does not receive feedback from Independents via local Groups, it is conscious that direct communication with Independents is somewhat limited.

We'd therefore like to hear from as many of you as possible with your suggestions as to what you'd like to see the Society offer to independents so that the Society can better understand the areas on which it needs to focus.

If you are happy to provide such feedback, the best way to do that will be to email me at david@marquetry.org and provide your name, membership number and comments. Similarly, if you are interested in meeting up with, or simply talking to,

other local marquetarians, the best method of establishing what options might be available to you is to email me with your comments and we will be happy to consider your enquiry.

I would like to stress that Independents are a vitally important element of the Society and comprise the largest individual Group by membership numbers. In recent months the introduction by the Society of its new "e-Mag" membership option has generated a number of new members, quite a few of whom are overseas-based Independents. This is a welcome trend given that, during the last few years, Independents' numbers have waned (not just because of Covid) and the Society is keen to arrest that decline.

Being an Independent doesn't mean that you need to be alone; you can:

- email the Society with your comments or enquiries;
- participate in online discussions with other marquetarians (there is a weekly Zoom meeting open to allcomers hosted by our IT supremos, dave@marquetry.org or alan@marquetry.org who will be happy to provide you with log-in details);
- submit your efforts to the annual marquetry exhibition;
- visit (and support) Society stands at regional and national craft fairs;
- display your works on the Society's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/Groups/marquetrysociety>; and
- purchase experts' tutorials via the Society's website at https://marquetry.org/marquetry_courses.html;

Finally, may I take this opportunity to remind everyone to renew their Society membership for 2025 (please see renewal instructions earlier in the magazine, thanks!)

Whether you are a UK or overseas Independent or Group member your support is vital to us and we look forward to your continued and active participation in the Society, thank you.

David Kelmanson

Executive Committee Member (ex-officio)

DYED VENEERS & PENETRATION

The most frustrating part of using dye to colour wood is getting it to penetrate the surface of the wood so you don't "cut through" the colour accidentally as you work or sand the finish and expose undyed wood.

This is not a modern problem. In the 18th century, in fact, the penetration problem was discussed in many woodworking journals and some professional woodworkers even employed a scientist of the day to help them solve the problem. Here is an example:

Before dealing with the dyeing of wood, I consulted with a scientist in this field, to try, if possible, to make them deeper and more beautiful than those that cabinetmakers normally use. Typical of scientists, he wanted to do his own experiments. However, these did not fulfill me expectations. Nevertheless, they did confirm that it was possible to make improved dyes, even if this would be very difficult.

After the exposé of experiences that the employed scientist had made, it is to be believed that it is hardly possible to use chemicals for a good tint; or at least we have not yet found the secret to make them fully penetrate the wood by means of some other given preparations of the wood or of the tinctures. Or even, by making all these tinctures cold, and leaving the woods there until they are fully penetrated, supposing this was possible.

In the 21st century many of us have the same problem. Your editorial team have

been asked many times how to dye veneer or thicker woods through their entire thickness. In fact, one of the first articles we ever wrote was about how some enterprising chaps had solved the problem by injecting dye into the tree as it grew.

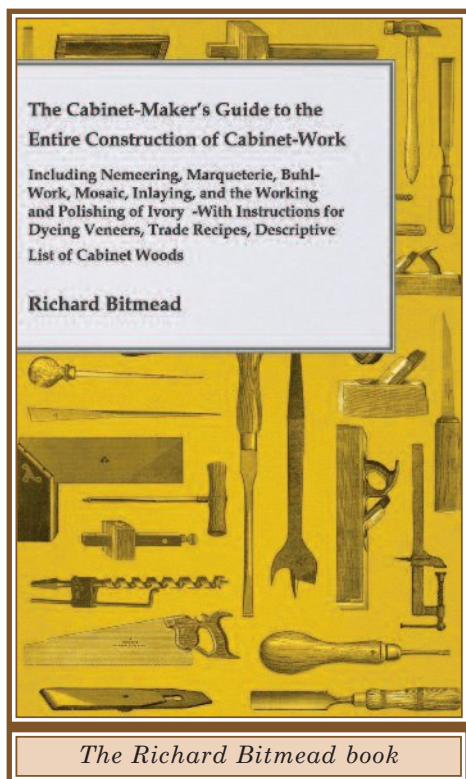
I know that some of the professional English wood working specialists have solved the problem and can dye anything any colour, through and through. If you've ever been a student (distant or otherwise) of theirs, then you'll have seen the veneers they deal with there – some pretty amazing stuff.

I don't know how they do it. There are reports online (YouTube etc) of seeing their students working at it, but I've not found those particular videos yet, but I'll keep looking.

I was lucky enough to check out an old book that I finally got my hands on (still available via Amazon) titled: "Cabinet-Maker's Guide to the Entire Construction of Cabinetwork" (The Technical Press Ltd., London, 1937) by Richard Bitmead.

Richard Bitmead was a professional London cabinetmaker with 25 years experience when he wrote this book. He covered the topic with this short but intriguing entry:

"In the process of dyeing woods throughout their mass, the Parisian veneer merchants have led the monopoly of Europe for a number of years. Veneers or boards dyed through their entire mass of exactly the same colour throughout could not be produced except in Paris. There are a



number of English woods which will take the dye and look as brilliant as any woods from France.

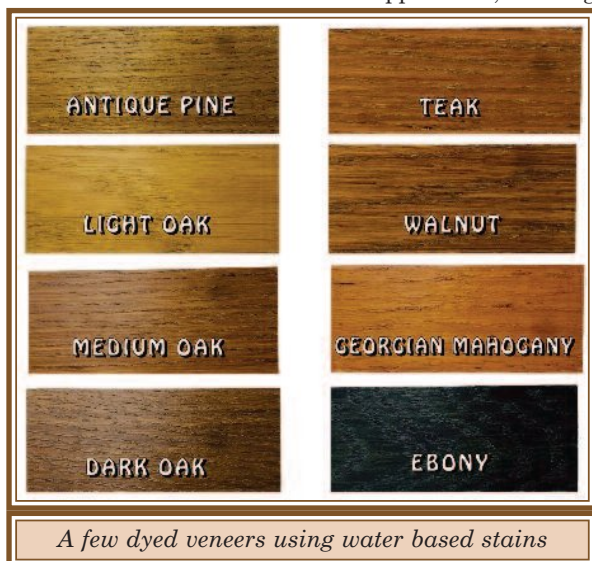
In selecting wood for dyeing, for every colour except black, white wood should be used, such as sycamore, beech, lime, etc. If a coloured wood be used, it neutralizes the tint, and the colour will be bad. For black, use pear, cherry, beech, or soft mahogany; any of these woods will take the colours well. The first process the wood should undergo is to boil it in a solution of caustic soda (lye) and water, in the proportions of half a pound of caustic soda to five pints of water; the wood should be boiled in the solution for half an hour, and then allowed to remain in to soak for twenty-four hours. It should then be

taken out and wiped well with clean deal shavings, to remove the alkali, when it will be found to have become as soft as leather and equally plastic. Then place it between boards, and put weights on the top to flatten, and let remain until dry. This treatment with caustic soda effects a clearing of the pores of the wood from all the gummy or resinous matter, and the open pores, when dry, will absorb the dye-stuffs like a sponge."

A simple and effective way to colour veneers on a small scale is to steep them for a long period in a spirit-based wood dye. Overnight may be sufficient in some species such as sycamore or maple, but others, like oak, may take a little longer.

One process often used, uses an advanced pressure system that can dye a batch of veneers in about 20 minutes. Obviously a great advantage from a production view-point if you have a lot of veneer to dye. It gives you complete control over the process and the ability to dye veneers on a consistent and repeatable basis. You can also dye a range of tones and shades for colours which greatly expands the design potential when considering the material.

Spirit-based dyes give the veneers a chromatic and translucent appearance, allowing



the full beauty of the natural grain patterns to shine through, making each piece of veneer unique and distinctive. When lacquered, they become vibrant, lustrous and intense, adding to the dramatic nature of your work.

Some of our membership have queried whether it is frowned upon or not by the Marquetry Society, to use coloured or dyed veneers. To answer that, let's look at what our constitution says on the subject. Here is the definition we use: "Marquetry is the art of making pictures and enriching other articles of wood with decorative designs and patterns by the skilful use of the grain, figure and colour of wood veneers, the separate parts of the picture or design being cut to shape, assembled and glued to a prepared base board or background. Although the materials most used for this work are veneers of wood, other materials maybe used."

Nothing in there about artificial colouring, so let us check the judges' guidelines to see what is recommended there – here is what the guidelines say: "The Society's definition of marquetry should be borne in mind when considering the use and effectiveness of non-natural veneers in a marquetry exhibit. This refers to the use of dyed veneers; man-made veneers, bleached or scorched veneers and the like. It should be considered whether or not such veneers have been used tastefully, with discretion and in keeping with the piece."

Usually, it is the soft cutting veneers that are subjected to the dyeing process, the harder veneers are not so successful at taking on the colours with as much intensity. So, for those who prefer to have an easier job when it comes to the cutting, dyed and coloured veneers would suit you best. Although, some would say, that you do lose the natural beauty of the wood, which I suppose is obvious.

Do note that you can make use of natural colourings for veneers with things like beetroot and turmeric for example.

But the problem here is that they are not truly colour fast and will often fade when in the presence of the bleaching effect of the ultraviolet in sunlight. However, a few years ago we did publish a comprehensive article on the use of natural dyes in these very pages.

An example of what we discussed is that Brazilwood, logwood and fustic are well known traditional natural dyes that produce bright colours with veneers such as sycamore; the brazilwood yields rich reds, logwood purples and fustic strong yellows. These three dyes are made from the heartwood of tropical forest trees. They are great dyes for beginners, as they are both easy to use and economical. With proper care, all three dyes have a good light-fastness. Eventually they mellow to paler but are still bright colours.

By late 1500's large quantities of brazilwood, logwood and fustic were imported into Europe from Latin America. These three new dyes cost much less than those previously available therefore allowing more people to make colourful veneers. These three dyes are normally sold as wood chips but are also available as natural dye extracts. I prefer to use brazilwood and logwood as wood chips, as I seem to get a better colour this way. However, I find the fustic extract better than the wood chips.

To obtain strong colours, put 50 grams of wood chips in a saucepan, cover with boiling water and then leave them overnight. The following day, boil the chips in the water for about an hour. A pinch of iron mordant changes the final colour; brazilwood becomes darker and purpler; logwood goes greyer and fustic greener. A strong dye bath of logwood and fustic together with a pinch of iron will produce a black with great depth of colour, whilst brazilwood and fustic produce a fantastic orange.

If any readers missed that article (in *Marquetarian* 244 page 10), or if you would like to have it updated and reprinted, just let the editor know and we will happily do that for you.

Are solvent better than water dyes?

ALDER	AMERICAN WALNUT	ANTHRACITE	ANTIQUE CHERRY
BEECH	BRAZILIAN WALNUT	CAPPUCCINO	CHESTNUT
DARK OAK	DEEP FOREST	ENGLISH WALNUT	EUROPEAN LARCH
LIGHT OAK	MENTHOL	MUSHROOM	ORANGE
ROYAL MAHOGANY	TANGERINE	TEAK	VERMILLION

A table of coloured veneers using spirit or solvent based dyes

Solvent-based wood dyes and stains are very quick drying, usually just 5 to 10 minutes. Unlike water-based dyes and stains that may raise the grain of the wood slightly, solvent-based stains do not, meaning a smoother surface and finish can be achieved. Solvent-based dyes and stains are also more compatible with high moisture conditions.

Water based dyes and stains are often, and usually, based on more natural colourants. No petro chemical stuff here. The solvent dyes and stains seem to have a stronger colouring ability.

What is the difference between a wood stain and a wood dye? In the context of pure wood stains and dyes, wood dyes are simply more concentrated than stains allowing them to be thinned if required or intermixed with compatible products to colour and tint them.

The table seen above will give you a good idea of some of the varied colours obtainable with the solvent based stains and dyes. There are even more shades available for those who want brighter colours.

In the meantime, do have fun experimenting and colouring your veneers.

Has the Society Progressed in the Past 72 Years?

or a long standing plea for original and artistic subject matter.

Editor's Note: Surprisingly the topic of original design and subject matter in the medium of marquetry has been ongoing since the Marquetry Society started in 1952, and it carries on into the present day. Suzanne Marquess researched and wrote about this over three decades ago, and so, as the theme still applies today, we have updated the original article and present it here for you. See if you agree with the theme of this, perhaps controversial, article.

'Is the modern trend of pictorial marquetry progressing in the right direction?' P. A. Drake, October 1955.

I will let readers answer these questions for themselves by submitting thoughts and ideas for consideration, and by quoting from the pages of previous Marquetarians up to the winter 1978/79 edition. Obviously later editions contain very similar material, but for now, those earlier ones will suffice for our needs here.

So, decide for yourselves and, by all means, send your comments both for and against to the Editor, Chairman or President.

'The Marquetarians Creed' by Brooks appeared in issue 29, January 1960 and seems a good place to begin this article: "I do not choose to be a copyist; it is my right to be original if I can. I do not wish to be a kept worker, humbled and dulled by having others tell me what to do. I want to dream and build, to fail and to succeed. I prefer the figment of my imagination to a drawn-for-me picture. The thrill of fulfilment to the stale calm of a commercial picture. I will not trade my dignity for a printed handout. It is my heritage to think and act for myself, to enjoy the benefits of my own creations, and to face the world boldly and say, this I have done."

In issue 25, January 1959, an article

appeared written by Brand. "Consequently, we have behind the Society six years of experience, skill and knowhow - all on the craft of Marquetry, that is everything that goes into the making of a Marquetry picture, except the picture; all that is needed to produce a work of art except the art. It would appear that we are in such a hurry to produce sensational effects in an unusual medium that we have ignored or side-tracked the very soul of art-originality."

Seems a definition of what constitutes original is needed here and again, I'll quote from a few of our early masters. No. 25, Jan. 1959, Brand continues with the following.

"An original, which should be the aim of any Marquetarian, is not, as some members may think, made up from three or four different items taken from drawings and paintings and placed together as a whole. Let us then try to define the word "original" in terms that can be applied to Marquetry pictures. A picture, or design, the subject matter of which is conceived or imagined by the originator and arrived at after considerable thought and observation, built up and added to until the whole is a complete and balanced work. (The finished picture often bears no resemblance to the original idea, but this does not alter the concept.) Our thoughts and ideas may be supplemented using models, rough sketches, even photographs and pictures, but they are only used to stimulate the original idea and improve on it. Not replace it, as we then revert to copying which must be avoided. In a nutshell your conscience will tell you whether it is "all your own work"."

Issue 69, winter 1969-70 by Walker, "An original picture is one you have drawn or photographed yourself. So, of course, a portrait can be an original if taken from

your own photograph or drawing.” No. 101, Winter 1977/78, by Good, “Chambers 20th Century Dictionary defines the word “Original” as “in the Author’s own words” or “from the Artist’s own pencil”, “not copied” so if you can accept this description can you also accept that an original Marquetry picture is one that is from the Marquetarian’s own pencil, brush or camera and finally knife or donkey and is not a copy of someone else’s work, or is this too easy?” No. 115 Winter 1978/79 by Ives, “that the design must be *‘to the members own ideas and not copied from a book or any other illustrations’*.”

During my research which started with issue 1, originality crops up again and again and although my research for this article stopped long ago with issue 105, Winter 1978/79 these comments did not end there - just consult your latest mags, including, and not to be left out, those of the 21st century!!! Even from the early years of the Marquetry Society members have been creating their own designs. Have we lost the stimulus to do so? Shouldn’t we try to do so **NOW**? Seems it’s **NOW** or **NEVER**!

In issue 2, April 1953, Kidd said, “What hobby can be more satisfying than to have completed an original wood picture, entirely from your own design. Harmony in natural colour - a work of art.” No. 3. August 1953, Cox, “The practice of marquetry is absorbing but until you are prepared to do the job in its entirety, then you will not derive the complete satisfaction which is so unique in this delightful craft. The aim to create a “picture-in-wood cannot be achieved if the craftsman is tied to using a few woods and must follow the lines of someone else’s designs. You are aiming to create a thing of beauty with your own hands and might I emphasise, **WITH YOUR OWN MIND.**” No. 10, April 1955 by Drake, “The rather complicated(!) design drawn from my artistic imagination involved more than fifteen separate pieces and due to my limited selection of woods, I was compelled to

use the same veneer twice.” No. 12, October 1955, Harold’s Helpful Hints. “Don’t forget that your own designs are always the best. You can more easily follow your own ideas, than copy someone else’s.” No. 15, July 1956, Burton, “I tried other kit sets, and then decided that perhaps it would be better to be original and design my own efforts.”

In issue No. 39, Summer 1962 by Campkin, “there has been considerable correspondence at various times about designs for marquetry and the merits or otherwise of original drawing. I wonder whether I might add my plea for a little more originality all round - in particular with regard to the choice of subjects for marquetry pictures.” No. 52, Autumn 1965, Lincoln, “The sad fact is that most of us obtain a line drawing from the pen of another artist; a commercial design; a calendar or print. We are not creating from the mind, but slavishly interpreting the line of another artist, or copying a photograph. Let’s have a fresh approach to the craft - adventurous new ideas and complete freedom of expression - and we will raise an exact science to an acknowledged art form”. Number 53, Winter 1965, Oppenheim, “... that we should begin to make marquetry an art rather than a technique. It would be the only way to gain recognition for our craft from art authorities. The commercial designs issued by firms will never get us anywhere in that direction. I would rather see a poor design developed by the Craftsman himself than a perfect one made for him by someone else. Plagiarism always has been considered poor taste in the history of art. It will never create something original.”

Why were so many discussing the merits of producing original work from almost the formation of the Society? And why was it felt important to strive for? The following quotes should sum it up.

In issue No. 24, October 1958, by Kinder, “I think the Society and its members are

in danger of getting in a rut! No Society can expand unless its members are all the time striving to express originality." No. 25, January 1959, Oppenheim, "If the craft is not to become boring in the long run, the craftsman must go beyond the scope of the usual commercial designs with numbers.

... The ideal is certainly that the work should be of one's own design." No. 32, Autumn 1960, Brand, "By trying to copy faithfully every detail of our selected illustrations we have imposed upon ourselves serious limitations which have killed any spark of originality and imagination." No. 42, Spring 1963, Lawrence, "One member gave it as his opinion that too frequent repetition of the same design such as the kits used by the Society, were harmful, especially at exhibitions as they created a wrong impression amongst viewers and hindered or discouraged originality amongst members... but that originality should be the ultimate aim." No. 76, Autumn 1971, Chandler, "Tradition is one thing, artistic creativity is another and unless both are encouraged, I do not think any progress will be made in the furtherance of the craft as an art form." No. 82, Spring 1973, Hawkins, "Would you agree with me that we marquetarians are getting too hide-bound and are producing pictures of a somewhat monotonous sameness?" No. 99, Summer 1977, Walker, "From the point of view of Exhibiting, it is very boring for a spectator to come upon "Down to the River" in every class, however well or badly done; or a dozen "Old Curiosity Shops" in one exhibition."

In issue No. 57, Winter 1966/67 under 'National Competition Rules, 1967' an award for 'Original pictures' appeared. This was not a class in itself, and read, "Pictures made from members' own drawings, paintings, etc., should be declared as such on the entry form. A separate award may be made for the picture judged by a qualified person to be the best artistically." This award is now given at our Nationals.

I feel that originality should be encouraged as members have felt from the beginning and seem to feel now. I believe that originality brings a breath of fresh air into our Nationals. What do you think?

Past members thought, "At our recent National Exhibition, I noticed several pictures and designs which were the members' own original work, and I wonder whether we might next year have a special class in the National competition for original pictures. The rules would have to be carefully worded, and we should, of course need to rely on the integrity of members not to cheat!" From No. 35, Summer 1961, by Kinder. No. 86, Spring 1974, Trickey, "Mrs. Walker in her letter asks "who wants to continue making pictures someone else has made? That is what harms The Society and suggests we are a band of copyists." Well, who is making us a band of copyists? The Marquetry Society itself, by excluding the Original Class." No. 96, Autumn 1976, Hone, "To encourage a more creative approach to marquetry, and if the Society agrees this is a good thing, could we have an "Originality" Class in the next National Exhibition?" No. 100, Autumn 1977, Garrud, "But what about the member who draws and designs his own piece? Should he not be given some merit for his effort?"

In this article I do not suggest that marquetry should stop being a pastime, hobby or craft for those who enjoy the practice on that level, no, not at all. However, I end this dip into the early editions of *The Marquetarian* with a last quote from issue 93, Winter 1975/76 by P. K. "It can be stated that the facts show that at the present time, a major part of the activity of the Marquetry Society is going on at the level of a craft society. In order to have the widest vistas for The Society it is desirable to guide the future development towards the independent artistic society striving to develop marquetry into an art of its own type."

Okay, I agree, we certainly do have the Artistic Merit award these days, but how

many original designs are entered into this category each year? Only a small percentage I would hazard a guess at. However, we do now have an accredited artist judging this category for us, so we have improved there.

Nonetheless, we are basically still copyists. But, I suppose, that not everyone can be assumed to be an artist who practises marquetry, most are probably hobbyists or woodworkers in some capacity or other. Of course, many members are quite happy to produce marquetry reproductions of available designs, and good luck to them if that is their ambition.

But, to get marquetry recognised as its own art form, we do need to produce some completely original work in the medium of wood veneers. The recognised art world needs to discover that we are here, and we are producing much, really beautiful, picture work and objects in a new (to them) and original form that they probably never realised existed – until now, that is.

So, go to it my fellow marquetarians and let's see if we can astonish and surprise the reluctant art world. We certainly do have the talent in our membership.

Best of luck.



Bleeding Veneers, Padauk, Rosewood, etc.

Our President Enrico Maestranzi recently gave a useful tip at one of our Tuesday evening Zoom meetings on the subject of preventing the colour of certain woods bleeding into surrounding areas. Basically, the idea was to apply the sealer with a pad and go over the 'safe' areas first and when the pad was almost dry, to do the veneers that were likely to bleed. It is 'the almost dry pad' that is the key to his success.

One of us made a chessboard out of off-cuts of rosewood and bird's eye maple and when he brushed the first sealer coat of lacquer on, the colour from every rosewood square ran into the maple. When dry again, it was relatively easy to scrape the board clean, but rather than try his usual technique of painting the individual rosewood squares with sealer he tried Enrico's method except, of course, there were no safe areas to start on with the pad. Nevertheless, by keeping the pad fairly dry he successfully sealed the board without any further colour bleeding problems

Perhaps a word about the pad might not go amiss here. For applying sealer and lacquer (not French polish) he uses about

a 5" square of tough material such as denim or material from his old trousers (!), folds a paper kitchen towel inside and screws the material tightly around it to make a pad that looks something like a French polisher's rubber.

A small quantity of lacquer is put in a tin lid and the pad dipped into it and rubbed quickly over a portion of the surface. Gradually the whole surface is covered in this way and as soon as it is dry another couple of coats are given. When these are dry, he brushes on the remaining coats, but by then much of the grain has been filled and the bleeding colour veneers are sealed. Thanks for the tip Enrico. It probably saved the air from being blue for a second time!

If you have a tip, do please send it in.

Thanks.



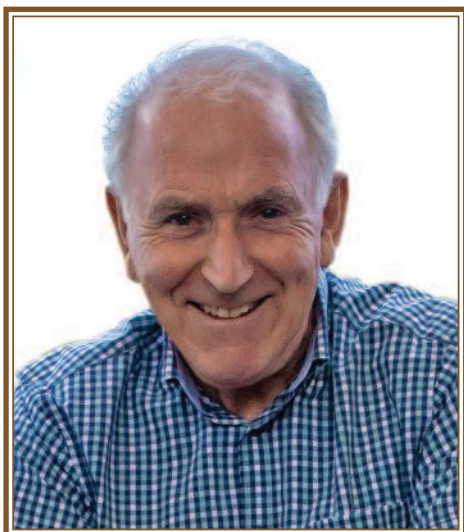
Compliments of the Season to you all. Best Wishes, Enrico.

Chairman's Chatter

I read with much interest part one of Peter Metcalfe's article in the last magazine, 'I Won The Rosebowl in 1978'. How fascinating it is to hear about the path an individual has taken through the craft that we all love so well. I thought I'd been going a long time, having joined the Society back in 1982, but Peter clearly started his journey somewhat earlier than that in 1971. He seemed to have been taken aback by his successes, but he clearly has great talent as witnessed by the reproduction of his Rosebowl winning entry shown with the article (issue 288 page 13). I look forward to reading part two of his article in this issue.

Reflecting on that, we rarely get to hear stories like this except maybe whilst in conversation with fellow marqueterians when meeting up at an exhibition or socially. One or two may have told their stories, but I'm sure Marqueterian readers would like to hear more. 'The Cutter' interviews have been great for probing into the minds and backgrounds of a number of marqueterians over the years and long may they continue, but, if you have your own story to tell, why not send it in to our editor for publication.

'Every picture tells a story' and that is very true of our marquetry. I'll often look at a picture or even an applied piece and think, what was it that inspired the creator to make that. So there are many stories to be told there as well. Was it because of a memorable holiday at a special destination, a loved one's favourite flower, a bird or animal that has a certain significance? So, again, think about this and share it with us through the pages of this magazine.



As an example of my own, you may know that, if I get an opportunity to do so, I will make a picture based on one of my own photographs. Photography is another love of mine so I get most rewards from taking control of the whole creative process and produce something which is wholly my own and not partly so by copying an existing design. I've achieved this on just ten of my past pieces so far, but most of my work has been reproductions of designs from other sources like most marqueterians.

A photograph I'd taken on a large lake at The Bluewater Shopping Centre, local to me, had done particularly well in photographic competitions and I decided it would make a good subject for a three veneer picture. I called it 'A Family Day Out' and it gave me great pleasure to make. Here you'll see the original photograph and my finished picture which was made from crown cut tulipwood/rosewood, sycamore and mineral stained horse chestnut.

Peter

Editor's Note: On page 47 of this winter edition of our journal, we do actually have an article all about photographing marquetry. It is an interesting read.

Peter's original photo of the Swans at the Blue Water Shopping Centre.

This is a lovely clear photo and demonstrates the wonderful clarity that can be achieved with modern digital cameras.



Peter's 3 veneer picture titled 'A Family Day Out' which won him first place in the 3 Veneer class at the 2023 International Exhibition held at Middleton Hall that year. Superb work.



Lacemaker's Cabinet by Peter White
3rd in Class 7 in 1984



An Improvised Press

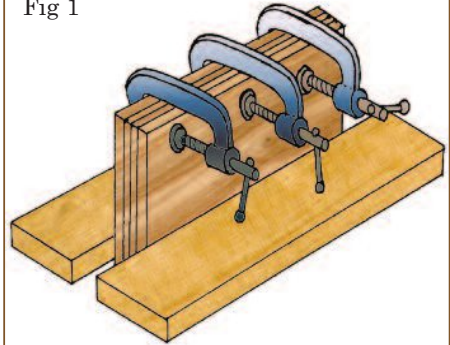
It was a rather chilly day and the press was in the shed at the bottom of the garden, and because of the inclement weather and my poor suffering back, I couldn't get out. And so, I decided to improvise.

I had my baseboard ready and I coated this on both sides with PVA glue. I applied the back and the marquetry assembly and put them between two thick pieces of spare MDF, together with the obligatory newspaper and/or plastic sheeting to act as padding and prevention of excess glue spillage. I then placed the whole assembly between the jaws of my Workmate and applied three cramps top and bottom as in Fig. 1. It worked better than my usual press so I use this method all the time now.

If you have a large bench vice, you can easily adapt this method for similar use.

Another sort of similar method, which was

Fig 1



written about in these pages some little while ago, was to use some solid wood bread-boards and deep throated G clamps. Only problem here is that you are limited in size of picture to press by the physical size of the bread-boards, but other than that limitation, this method also works very well.

You do need to be sure to apply the deep throated G clamp firstly in approx the centre of the press in order to squeeze the glue outwards, and then place a series of clamps around the assembly. Works well.



Yes, it's that time come around already! Doesn't seem 12 months since we last paid our yearly subs, but I'm afraid it is. But don't worry it's really easy to do, either complete the renewal form supplied with this winter Marquetarian and send it in along with your payment to



our membership secretary, or go online to our website at: https://www.marquetry.org/online_pay_p1.html

Select your location (or eMag if you are an eMag member) from the list, then click the blue 'Buy' button, fill in the details on the Stripe page, and then you will have renewed your membership.

VIC'S MARQUETRY TIPS

Today we look at where veneers are cut from a tree

Oysters:

Usually used complete. Woods often used are Lilac, Olive, Laburnum. They should always be sawn obliquely to avert splitting.

Curl (in the USA Crotch)

Formed where the trunk divides, or at a junction with a large branch. Usually cut half-round, sometimes flat cut. If very wide, leaves are cut along the line X - Y as seen in the diagram.

Section (1)

- F: Annual rings
- G: Bark
- H: Cambium layer
- J: Sapwood
- K: Pith
- E: Medullary rays
- L: Heartwood

Section (2)

A: Plain Sawn. Cut at right angle to rays, which show only as specks. Figure offcut caused by annual rings.

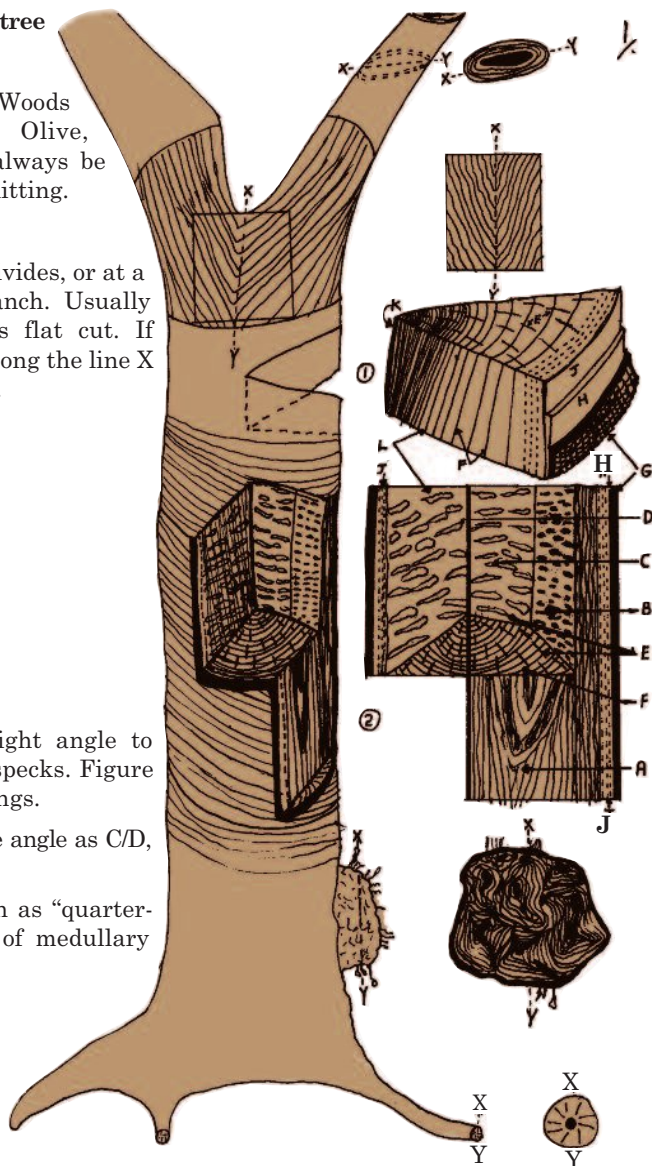
B: Not cut to quite the same angle as C/D, so figure is smaller.

C, +D. Cut radially (known as "quarter-cut"). Exposes full width of medullary rays in veneer.

- E: Medullary rays
- F: Annual rings
- H: Cambium layer
- J: Sapwood

Burr (in USA Burl)

Burr is a concretion of stunted shoots, knots, and mis-aligned wood fibres. A tree may have several burrs upon it, but usually has none of useful size. Generally, the most decorative and expensive veneers are from burrs and roots. Same use as oysters, notably from Oak.





Assuming that you regularly visit our Facebook page you may have noticed that some contributors who were almost making our Facebook pages their own 'shop window' have now virtually disappeared. This is down to our admin officers taking the situation in hand and limiting these particular contributors to admin control, meaning that for them to post anything they need admin approval firstly. And, most happily, that control is working well.

You may have noticed recently that many contributions to our Facebook pages are now consisting of glassware, which is one of those things that are rather difficult to do in the medium of marquetry.

Those contributions are, of course, superb, but the subject is not as new as they seem to think it is. Many years ago Horrie Pedder, who was a well known member of the Redbridge Group in his time, produced the picture of two glasses and a single rose, which you see displayed here in the next column.

Horrie mastered that see through effect

and technique superbly, as I am sure you will agree. Alan, our editor, has posted it on our Facebook home page to show how it was done almost half a century ago.



I am sure that it will please many to see it.

It is now that time of the year for me to wish you all a delightful Christmas and a most splendid New Year.

Karen.

LAPEL BADGES

To purchase one of these rather exquisitely cast and enamelled Marquetry Society lapel badges please send a cheque for £6.00 (this covers Postage & Packing as well) made payable to **The Marquetry Society**



LAPEL BADGES

Include your name and address and then mail to our Chairman :

**Peter White,
10 The Russets,
Meopham,
Kent, DA13 0HH.**

Note: Due to any unforeseen postal limitations, please allow for possible minor delays with delivery of your lapel badge.

Still can't find that perfect veneer?

Then why not visit Wood Veneers ebay shop at
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JOHN COFFEY**



Due to health problems Robin, our Independent Members' Secretary, has been obliged to resign his post.

Therefore we are looking for an Independent member to take over this important position. Could it be you who would be keen to look after the interests of your fellow Independents?

The job is not onerous. It's basically being a voice on behalf of all you Indies at our Executive Committee meetings & AGMs and writing the Indies Corner.

As those above meetings are now conducted via Zoom, no travelling is required, just a PC, iPad or smartphone.

If interested please contact the editor or a member of the Executive Committee.

The 2024 International Pictures

Thanks go to Peter White for taking the photographs



Left: 504 - Class 5 - 55 x 38 cms

“The Red Canoe (aft. Paul Hedley)” by Les Dimes of the Harrow Group

AT: Nice wistful picture. Lots of depth. Veneers on girl's clothing well chosen and nicely cut. All in all, a nice item.

MR: A nice piece of work. The girl's image portrays a pleasing sense of light shining through the window.

DB: I find this picture very relaxing with the young girl peering out of the open window.

Ed: This is a superb example of Les's artistry in the medium of marquetry. Although Les is a traditionalist in the art and craft of marquetry, much original thought and application certainly comes through.

Right: 732 HC - Class 7B - size not given. “Deer Jewellery Box” by David Kelmanson of the Sutton Coldfield Group

AT: A good attempt at a curved top box. With Monarch of the Glen deer type of marquetry. Nice finish, but words on front need more attention (too big), but well cut and nice work.

MR: A simple personalised design on this attractive small box.

DB: A nice little jewellery box with Jill on the front. I am sure Jill will be very pleased with it.

Ed: This is a splendid small jewellery box. Judging from the size of the latch on the front, this is very small. Nicely done with a good looking finish.



Judges' Comments

The initials used for the Judges are:

(AT) Alan Townsend

(MR) Mike Roberts

(DB) Dave Bulmer

(Ed) Our Editor's alternative views

(AM) Artistic Merit Judge

The judges' comments are taken from their own notes. Editorial notes are based on different selection parameters to those of the exhibition judges and are related to the exhibit's presentation in this journal. However, where elements of any 'non-awards' work stand out to the editorial eye, these will be mentioned in the text.

Right 519 - Class 5 - 87 x 32 cms

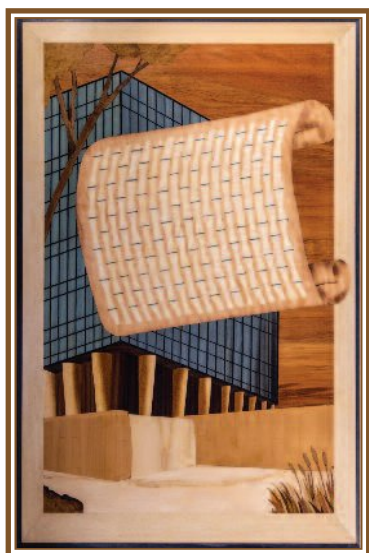
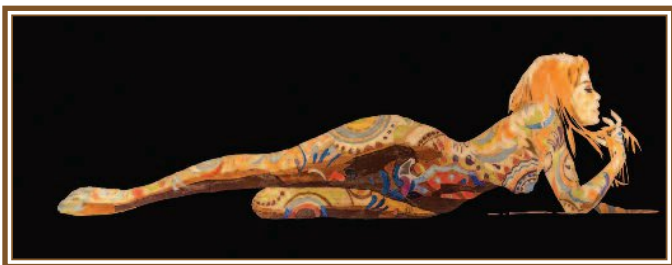
**“Painted Lady” by Neil Micklewright
Independent Member**

AT: Nice artistic piece to have on the wall. From a distance this looks really good. Up close some cutting lets it down. Colourful, well done.

MR: A strong powerful and colourful image.

DB: The model stands out against the dark background. It nicely picks out the painted body.

Ed: Beautifully made marquetry picture. Pleasing subject matter.



Left: 514 - Class 5 - 31 x 90? cms

“Embassy of USA, London” by Enrico Maestranzi of the St. Albans Group

AT: I don't recognise the building, but nicely clean cut with lots of detail. Good talking point when on wall, with some nice sand scorching. Good clean finish & good choice of veneer. Well done.

MR: Some fine cutting in this striking image.

DB: Unusual picture of the American Embassy. Nicely cut and finished.

Ed: One of Enrico's best. I believe this also won an award when entered into the American Marquetry Society recent competition. Some nice sand scorching seen on the scroll, check it out.

Right: 205 - Class 2 - 27 x 34 cms

“Marilyn” by Norman Rowe of the Thurrock Group

AT: Good movement in dress and nicely cut. Well chosen veneer with movement. Face not so good and I think the black background a bit stark. Well cut and finished.

MR: This lively image would have been improved by less harsh sand shading. Good contrast between an effective dark background and the figure.

DB: The classic Marilyn pose. Sadly not the best reproduction with the sand shading being a bit too heavy.

Ed: A famous Marilyn pose from the 'Seven Year Itch' film. A good reminder.



Right: 624 - Class 5 - miniature

“Marooned” by Elizabeth Head of the Staffordshire Group

AT: *I guess another of Brian’s students. Nice picture which will appeal to people. Well cut and finished. Keep up the good work.*

MR: *A charming image.*

DB: *This is a dramatic miniature, as the little boy and girl embrace. Will they be saved before the tide comes in?.*

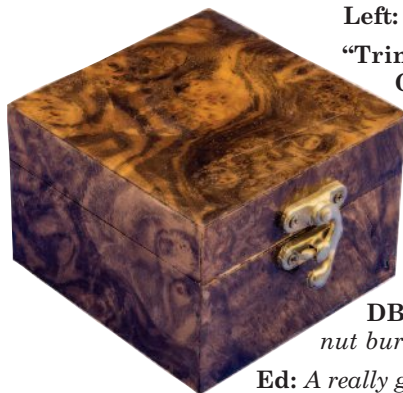
Ed: *A good and interesting miniature. Pleasing young figures and their dog. I hope the tide is going out for them.*

It’s an attractive composition which adds an emotional element to the work. Pulls at the heart strings as the saying goes.



Left: 735 - Class 7B - 13 x 8 cms

“Trinket Box #2” by Ted Salvidge of the St. Albans Group



AT: *Sorry, but from the photograph I cannot see any marquetry. What I see is a nicely made box with what looks like burr walnut. But well made with a good finish.*

MR: *There is not really any marquetry to judge on this box.*

DB: *A nice little box. Beautifully veneered with a walnut burr.*

Ed: *A really good little trinket box. Would have liked to have seen, say, a little lettering or two for some marquetry content. Clean finish.*

Right: 105 - Class 1 - 35 x 26 cms

“Help! a Cat!” by George Toll an Independent Member

AT: *Good effort. Lots of dyed veneers. Mitres good. Finish a bit bumpy.*

MR: *An amusing image. Some damage to the top border and some glue has been left on the surface.*

DB: *This is a good cartoon subject for a beginner’s piece. But, there is a little room for improvement with the cutting.*

Ed: *I enjoyed this picture of cat and mouse sort of changing places.*



Right: 303 - Class 3 - 21 x 28 cms

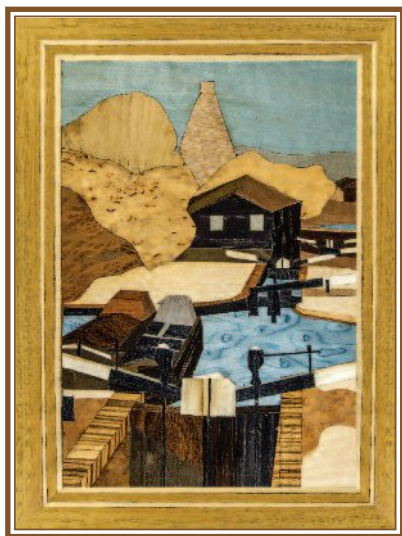
“Stourbridge Glassworks & Canal” by Allen Horrocks of the Sutton Coldfield Group

AT: *Well cut and finished. Harewood a bit bright - out of place in canal, and more work needed on trees, but good depth. Good borders. Well done.*

MR: *An interesting composition. A less bright veneer for the water might have worked better.*

DB: *A very nice canal picture using natural veneers. Spoilt for me by the bright blue water.*

Ed: *A good view of the glassworks and canal.*



Left: 122 - Class 1 - 20 x 28 cms

“Charlie Chaplin” by Tracy Gibbons of the Sutton Coldfield Group



AT: *Good choice of veneers. Face looks long, but nicely cut & finished. Borders very good. Well done..*

MR: *An unusual composition set against a pleasing background.*

DB: *A nice portrait for a beginner's piece, but the shading on the face could have been softer.*

Ed: *Ah yes, it's Charlie peeping round the corner there - Hi Charlie!*

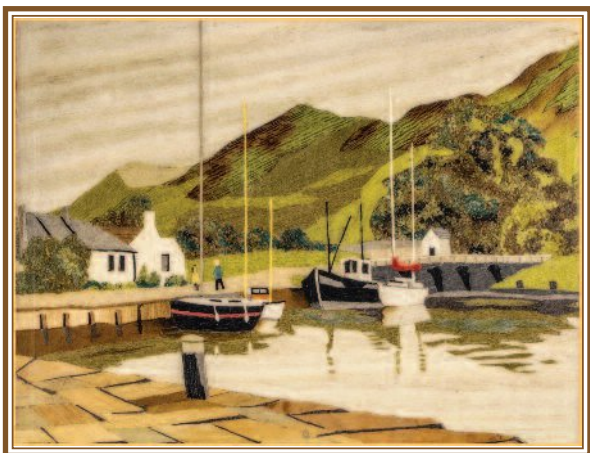
Right: 614 - 2nd Class 6A - miniature

“Boats at Rest” by Brian Freeman of the Sutton Coldfield Group

AT: *All of Brian's work is tops. The difference is contents and subject.*

MR: *The hills are realistically portrayed in this pleasing harbour scene. The shoreline weed, algae and reflection are nicely interpreted with what seems to be very fine veneer slivers.*

DB: *There is an awful lot of fragmentation in this miniature, but has been very well crafted in the background, and I like the reflection in the water.*



Ed: *Another of Brian's superb miniature pieces. How the heck does he manage to cram so much detail into these miniature pictures of his? Not that I'm jealous of such abilities of course! And if you believe that - hmmm!!*

Right: 738 - 1st Class 7B - 20 x 16 cms - “Lief’s Box” by Rosina Harris of the Chelmsford Group

AT: Roz’s second only piece of work. Good cutting. Coloured veneer (but who cares?). Well planned design and a nice box. Watch this space!!!

MR: Tasteful use of dyed veneers in the neatly executed box top design. Only by looking at it closely did I realise that it is a composite face and flower image.

DB: Nice clean box with a colourful cut design on the top. The dark border works well, but I think that the two dark corners should have had a light border.

Ed: What a really pleasing box. Superb.



Left: 608 - Class 6A - miniature - “Swans” by Brian Freeman of the Sutton Coldfield Group

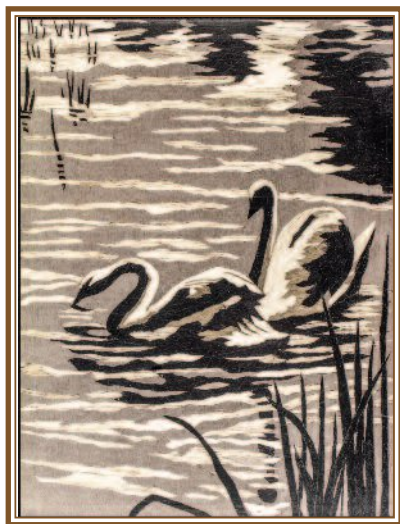
AT: All of Brian’s work is tops. The difference is contents and subject.

MR: A muted interpretation of what may possibly be Mute Swans.

DB: This is another one of Brian’s beautifully cut and detailed miniature pictures.

Ed: Hello, Brian’s doing it again! I’ve already turned green with envy - people think I’m going mouldy! As always, brilliant miniature work.

Brian certainly has the ‘knack’ when it comes to miniature work. I’ve said before that Brian doesn’t use magnifying equipment with his miniature work - I would need reading glasses coupled with a very large magnifying glass to try to compete!



Right: 529 - Class 5 - 30 x 21 cms - “I’m Feeling a bit Crabby Today” by Alan Mansfield of the Redbridge Group

AT: Nicely cut, but on the two occasions I really got to look hard, I could not figure out what veneer was used. Clever, unusual. Well cut and finished. I hope to find out sometime.

MR: A very artistic depiction of crab, it almost looks like a painting.

DB: A simple picture of a crab. The shell and claws are excellent.

Ed: Who is the clown who’s putting such fishy themed pictures as this into our exhibitions? Surely not our editor?



Right: 125 - Class 1 - 23 x 23 cms

“Eagle Mountain” by Lucy Bodin of the Sutton Coldfield Group

AT: *Swooping eagle always a good subject for a beginner. This one very good. Feathers and eagle very nice. Maybe a bit more figured veneer on rocks, but well done. Borders excellent.*

MR: *Careful veneer selection has produced a picture with satisfying contrasts between its elements.*

DB: *A good beginner's picture with the eagle landing in the mountains. All well cut and framed with a border.*

Ed: *A jolly good eagle, especially for the beginner's class. Lots of future potential here.*



Left: 107 - Class 1 - 34 x 26 cms

“A La Ronde Exmouth” by George Toll an Independent Member

AT: *Good effort. Lots of dyed veneers. Mitres good. Finish a bit bumpy.*

MR: *An attractive piece of work. The marquetry elements of the piece were well executed, but let down a little by ragged borders. The surface would have benefitted by sanding down more before polishing.*

DB: *Good use of veneers. The sky works well. The dark border could be cut a little better.*

Ed: *As with all of George's work, I am always pleased to see what he has produced.*

Right: 511 - Class 5 - 32 x 30 cms

“Edgar Allen Poe” by Les Dimes of the Harrow Group

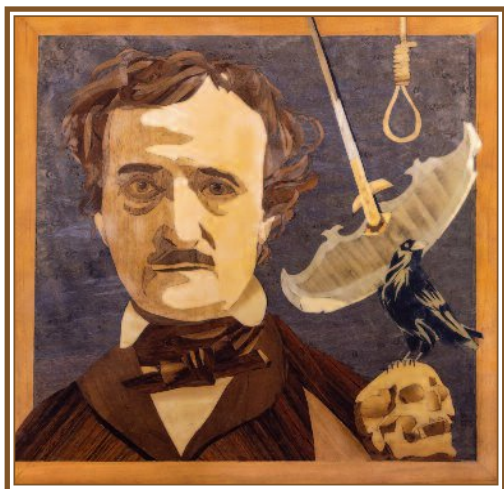
AT: *Fine portrait as usual from Les. Good choice of veneers. Well done..*

MR: *A dramatically portrayed macabre image of the famous author.*

DB: *This is another excellent portrait of Edgar Allen Poe by Les Dimes.*

Ed: *I rather liked this composition and portrait. Themes from Edgar Allen's literary work abound in Les's picture*

Makes one rush to dig out those old Vincent Price films and enjoy an evening or two wallowing in the macabre world of Mr. Poe.



Right: 501 - Class 5 - 50 x 62 cms

“The Lament For Icarus (aft. Herbert James Draper, 1863-1920)” by Les Dimes of the Harrow Group

AT: *Dark picture brightened up by the winged Icarus. The dark veneers well chosen. Some good sand scorching. Some a wee bit heavy. All told, a nice picture..*

MR: *A bold and dramatically portrayed image of a Greek myth.*

DB: *A good and interesting picture, as the well crafted fairies lamenting Icarus demonstrate.*

Ed: *A well crafted marquetry interpretation of the famous, rather large, classical painting. It certainly looks good in the medium of marquetry.*



Left: 526 - Class 5 - 23 x 18 cms

“Homeward Bound” by David Middleton of the Chelmsford Group

AT: *Really nicely chosen background sky. Delicately cut reeds. David used a drill for the round seed heads and chipped in small pieces. Nicely cut and a bit more planning could have made a winning 3 veneer.*

MR: *A very pleasing and artistic image. The sky veneer adds realism to the windswept scene.*



DB: *Nice veneer for the sky. Works very well for the birds and grasses.*

Ed: *A breezy day with a flock of birds making their way home for the evening roost. Very effective.*

Right: 534 - Class 5 - 45 x 35 cms “A Japanese Enchanted Garden” by Colin Roberts of the Chelmsford Group

AT: *Lots of delicate work. Fragmented trees. A well cut temple and storks. Very well done.*

MR: *Overall, I like the picture, although the foreground tree maybe a little lumpy.*

DB: *Some very good detail. Nicely cut and finished.*

Ed: *Colin always comes up with a well composed and constructed piece of work. That sky veneer is very interesting, it's going north - south rather than the usual west - east. But it certainly works. Very clever.*





Left: 626 - Class 6A - 15 x 5 cms - "Winter Birds (after Colin Blanchard)" by Philip Green of the Staffordshire Group

AT: *Probably one of Brian's students. Different shape well suited to the subject. All well*

cut and finished. Nice work.

MR: *An artistic style impression of feeding birds .*

DB: *A pleasing miniature with fragmentation foreground and detailed birds and apple.*

Ed: *Yep, it's a miniature - although at first glance, it looked sort of standard sized to me. Good to get so much detail in such a small space.*

Right: 761 - 2nd - Class 7C - no size given

"Which way up?" by Martin Bray of the St. Albans Group

AT: *What Martin achieves is beyond me. Everything is so perfect, cutting, laying and finishing. A real gem. Keep going Martin.*

MR: *It is difficult not to be amazed at the accuracy of the cutting over such tightly curved surfaces.*

DB: *Every detail on this globe lines up, it's beautiful.*

Ed: *Oh yes, that's very much up to Martin's very high standards. How Martin manages to plan it all out before turning and cutting is amazing. Well done.*



Judges' Notes on the Cover Pictures

Front Cover - 611 VHC - Class 6A - "Marxism" by Ivor Bagley of the St. Albans Group

MR: *A lively, and striking image of the Marx brothers. The figures stand out strongly against the bright bold background veneer.*

DB: *A nice little portrait of the Marx brothers. I like the way the hats and arm cut in to the border, gives a 3d effect.*

Ed: *Oh yes, I certainly did like this triple portrait in miniature. I instantly recognised each of the Marx Bros. Very admirable to get all three spot on in a miniature piece. Excellent work.*

When you consider how small these miniatures are, this is very clever work.

Back Cover - 527 - Class 5 - 31 x 35 cms "Flute Player (after Leyster)" by Philip Green of the Staffordshire Group

AT: *Good use of burr Walnut on clothes. Nice face & hand. Maybe over large piece in the light veneer foreground. Very nice violin. The border was a bit of a mix up, but good mitres. Well done.*

MR *A pleasing piece that might have benefited from a little more detail in the clothing.*

DB: *Using a cliché, a nicely composed picture.*

Ed: *I just really liked this flute player picture. It has a good freedom in its construction, very much in a kind of French plein air style. A jolly good picture which in any other year could have been an award winner.*

Readers Letters

Thanks for your help Marquetry Society

Good morning:

Sometimes, on the odd Sunday, I visit a flea market in my city in the south of Spain, which contains mostly rubbish literally recovered from street containers by humble people to put it up for sale and from other vendors who trade in all kinds of junk. I always question visiting these places because of the dirt, but the truth is that sometimes treasures appear camouflaged among so much rubbish.

This is the case of this beautiful marquetry painting by Buchschmid & Gretaux, which was camouflaged among twenty paintings with discoloured prints and deteriorated cardboard frames under a filthy layer of dust on the floor.

I quickly focused my attention on the painting and intuitively identified that it was fine marquetry, so I bought it for a ridiculous price. Later at home I cleaned it carefully and gave it a generous amount of linseed oil, to remove the dirt and nourish the wood. When I began my search for information using the data on the card on the back, I found your interesting website, which provided me with all the information I needed.

As a thank you, I am writing these lines to congratulate you first of all for your great work, and to be able to provide the photographs of my discovery.

The painting is apparently in perfect condition, except for a very small piece of the monument that seems to have come loose and the gap can be slightly seen.

Thank you for your attention.

Kind regards.

Vincent

Hi Vincent,

Many thanks for your kind words and thoughts regarding the information we freely give on our website. We are pleased



BUCHSCHMID & GRETAUX
STUTTGART-VAIHINGEN
WOOD INLAY WORK
MADE IN GERMANY

ROTHENBURG. St. George's Fountain (St. Georg'-Brunnen)

ROTHENBURG OB DER TAUBER (RIVER). Best preserved medieval city. Off the road from Würzburg to Augsburg, Bavaria. Saved from destruction by later High Commissioner for Germany Mr. John Mc. Cloy. Whole area survived in 30 years war 1618 to 1648.

St. GEORGE'S FOUNTAIN. Still in use. Fountains in many old cities, water supply prior to house plumbing. Background. „Apotheker“ means pharmacy. Right side part of „new“ city hall, by now 400 years old.

Text urheberrechtlich geschützt.

that our Buchschmid and Gretaux pages especially are providing important information on this subject, which is not available anywhere else in the world.

Above is the photo of your rescued piece of B&G wood inlay, together with the authentication label from the reverse of this beautiful work.

Although this is only one small section of our website (it is found under the 'Can We Help?' button on the home page) it proves to be very popular with Buchschmid and Gretaux searches on all of the favoured search engines such as Google and Microsoft Edge. Very helpful for our ratings.

Best wishes,

David Walker, Web Sec.

Dear Alan,

It was so delightful to read the comments on my 'Mountain Landscape' work in the Summer issue. I am happy to answer your question about what sort of piece it is. Also, I would like to take the opportunity to write a bit more about the design, as it came up several times during the exhibition.

The piece is a relatively small box (176 mm x 73 mm x 86 mm) for essential oils with containers for up to eight oil glasses (the mountain landscape with wildflowers was chosen to match the function). The box itself was made of solid wood blocks using hidden barrel hinges. The reason I chose this type of box is twofold. The box itself got a rustic effect with the visible endgrains on the side of the box, while the containers had the same decoration inside as the box got outside. The box was built up from four main blocks: the European oak as the main body and lid, the horizontal decorating line made from veneers with different thicknesses, the vertical line made from solid European walnut and oak veneers, and the bottom block made from veneers as well. These were cut to sizes and glued together to get the box itself.

The holes for the compartments were drilled into the box body with Forstner bits (using very low RPM to avoid wood burning). After that, the box got the bottom veneers. The lid is decorated with marquetry on both sides; the top depicts a mountain landscape with various wildflowers on it. The flowers were cut individually into the foreground. In that area, some more transition between the grass and hills in the middle ground would have been beneficial. Also, the pine trees would have been far more realistic with some shadows and contrasts.

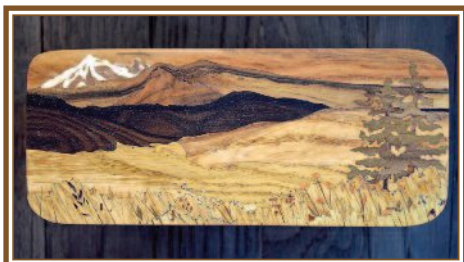
I believe the box really captures the interest of the spectators after the lid is open, revealing the small marquetry disks inside the box. Each of these small disks depicts a plant used for essential oils, and they are for helping to organize the oil glasses.

Please find below more pictures about the box.

I hope I could give an answer for your question, and I am happy to dive more into the details in case anyone is interested in how the box was made.

Sincerely,
Zsolt Nagy

Independent member



Hello Zsolt,

Many thanks for your very comprehensive answer to my question posed in the summer edition of our journal. It gives us a good insight about its build and current use.

Superb work, well done, Alan.

A very pleasing renewal letter to our Membership Secretary

Hello Andrew...

Thanks for your welcome!

I am sort-of returning to the fold - I was a member for a few years in the late 80's/early 90's, when I ran a craft unit at the Ridgeway Cottage Industry Centre in Derbyshire. Unfortunately the decision to open coincided with a recession, so although it was a "peppercorn" rent, it eventually became unsustainable.

In those days it was Ernie Ives who was the "hero", but I also met a wheelchair-bound chap who excelled at the fragmentation technique. Shame on me, I can't recall his name, but I remember admiring his work at the Ipswich Open one year. I did try and contact him many years later (and ago) and found that he'd sadly passed away. He truly was very talented, and I've often thought what wonders he'd produce had he been able...

Anyway, I've dug out the veneers from the attic, found the brass Swann-Morton blade holder, and ordered some veneer tape. Will whatever skill level I managed to achieve way back then return? Probably not, but I'll let you know!

Again, pleased to be part of the family,

Regards

Colin Sawford.

Hello Andrew & Colin,

Welcome back to the Marquetry Society Colin, it's wonderful to welcome back previous members of the society.

I can help with your recollection of the chap in the wheelchair. That was indeed the multiple Rosebowl award winner from those earlier years, the well respected Richard Shellard, a great personal friend of Ernie Ives.

One of Richard's oft seen pictures is at the top of the next column. This is titled "The Alchemist" and it achieved an HC at the 1982 National Exhibition.



The Alchemist by Richard Shellard

Not one of Richard's most highly rated pictures, but these days it is rarely seen, so I thought it was time to bring it back to prominence. I hope you all enjoy it.

I am sure that your skill level will return reasonably soon after you have reacquainted yourself with the tools of our art & craft. We are always here to help if you need any guidance, but I am sure that you will have no problems at all.

All the best,

Alan.

A few examples of the general email traffic we receive almost daily

Hello,

I recently acquired several German marquetry pictures and I've attached the largest one (unsigned) along with a photo of the signature on a smaller one. Any impressions (location, maybe?) or information you can give me would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you so much!

Ginger Marie

The reply from our Web Secretary David Walker:

Hi Ginger

Thanks for your request to identify your picture,

Unfortunately marquetry tends to be a

solitary hobby and therefore pictures and styles often change. The picture that you sent could come from anywhere. It looks like a kit picture which I've not seen before. As it has not got a signature on either the front or the back it is virtually impossible to identify the artist. It could possibly be of German or Dutch origin. I am sorry that I cannot be of more help. You could send us copies of the other three to see if they are by the same artist but I think that it would be impossible to identify the maker.

David Walker, Web Secretary of the Marquetry Society, Glasgow, Scotland (UK)

**Best wishes,
David Walker.**

And another example from that daily email traffic

Hello,

I hope you can help me with an old wood-en painting. Do you know anything about this painting?

With kind regards,

Hussein Ismail

Hi Hussein,

Thanks for sending us a photograph of your splendid wooden picture.

This is an example of wood inlay or marquetry work.

It is quite nicely done and the cutting appears to be very well presented with no visible glue lines present.

The veneer choice looks rather good to me and it seems to suit the coastal theme of the picture very well. Good detail work.



Ginger Maries' German picture

Unfortunately there's no index available of individual marquetry artists' works or styles of working.

If it is a commercial piece, then there may be a label of some sort glued to the reverse. If there is, could you take a photo of it and send it to us? This would help with identifying the maker and any other information.

Best wishes,

David Walker, Web Secretary of the Marquetry Society, Glasgow, Scotland (UK)



Hussein's Old Wooden Painting

And even more from our ample inbox

Marquetry Society,

I'm just getting in touch to thank the members of the Marquetry Society for putting together your collection of wood-working links! My name is Mrs. Echevarria and I'm the program director for the Hastings Recreation and Community Center here in Minnesota. Up until the week of Christmas we are hosting a special Makerspace workshop. We did this last winter and it was a huge hit within our community. Allowing kids to tinker teaches them what's working and what's not, and they have to try different tactics to solve problems. Kids learn to experiment, accept failures, make improvements, and develop the resiliency they need to try and try again. We're working on some simple wood working projects right now, involving both turning and carving techniques. You listed some wonderful websites to share with the group -- we really appreciate it!

Wishing you a very happy holidays!

Mrs. Lisa Echevarria

As you see, we are more than helpful with all visitors to our website. It is especially pleasing for us to see that our information is benefitting children especially all around the world.

We do not ask for contributions of any sort, we are just pleased to share our enthusiasm and joy of marquetry to all.

Alan.

Being Broad-minded - or inappropriate

Dear Alan

In the Marquetarian #288 (Autumn 2024) I was pleased to see a very suitable comment on P23 about the subject matter of the very impressive Gallaher Panels. They clearly represent a historical situation we view differently today, although here we were looking at the quality of the workmanship, rather than endorsing the content.

However, on P37, the Class 8 winner

received a rather different comment about the need to be 'broad-minded'. No. Both the title and the content of this image were inappropriate, and I suspect, to some would have been offensive. Additionally, the comments display a lack of judgement, perpetuating a sort of 'schoolboy smut' humour.

Without wanting to seem to have a personal vendetta, I thought the inventive box on P34 Class 7A, was spoiled by an unnecessary title, and the Editor's comment was complicit in perpetuating this inappropriate 'humour'.

The Marquetarian is a national publication and not an 'Old Boys' Club'. It should have standards that reflect its position and standing; and be aware of the current mores of society as a whole. The mentioned concern expressed by members should have raised a flag to those administering the competition to have thought a little more about these entries.

I consider myself broad-minded, but this is inappropriate.

Steve Amos

Hello Steve,

Thanks for your concerns and views about the exhibits in our National Exhibition gallery pages and the comments accompanying them. I am truly sorry that you find them offensive, they are not meant to be. Perhaps a little 'near the knuckle'. But considering the work of established artists such as Dame Tracy Emin - we are very far from such explicit work. If any reader feels as strongly about this subject, do please write in and let us know. Thanks.

Alan.



Starting Your Veneer Collection

by Maurice Dannser

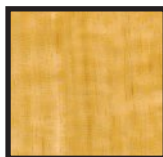
What veneers should I stock? is a question that we get asked usually by a beginner starting marquetry. They have done one or two kit sets and now want to branch out and do their own designs. It is a difficult question to answer as so much depends on the ideas and tastes of the marqueteur, the type of work he or she is going to do, and the amount of money available to spend. The difficulty is further aggravated because every piece of veneer in a log is different, and no two logs of the same species are alike. Furthermore, one end of a leaf may contain some highly prized figure while the other is quite plain and ordinary. Thus, if I recommend two marquetarians to buy a certain species of veneer for, say, a sky effect, one might be highly delighted while the other is most disappointed and disgruntled that I should suggest such a veneer.

From this you can see that it is desirable, if not always practical, to see what you are buying but, as most members must order by post, I will try to give a selection of the more commonly used ones that are generally available today. Textbooks list about 200 different veneers but you will have difficulty in getting more than about a quarter of them. Even if it is listed in a catalogue there is no guarantee that the firm will have it in stock or even know when it is likely to get some. So, this list will contain only those woods which I have been able to buy in the last year or so. I shall assume that the hypothetical beginner has a liking for scenic pictures with or without bird and animal subject matter.

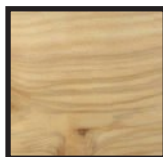
Veneers are usually required for one of five purposes: (i) waste veneer; (ii) backgrounds; (iii) detail work; (iv) borders and edges; (v) backing. Let us look at each section and see what is available.

Detail Work

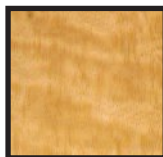
Here I had better just list the woods I have found very useful and give a few details about them. As always, their use will depend very much on the colour and markings on the piece.



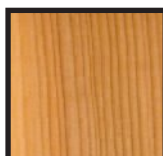
Afara — Rather a plain straw colour. Use for fields and lawns in small pieces.



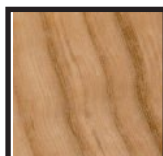
Olive Ash — Brown and white stripes with a wild, wavy figure. Use for skies, water (calm or rough), stones and rock-work. Very useful.



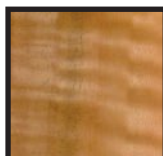
Ayan — Golden yellow colour but rather brittle. Use for thatch (very new looking) and brass work.



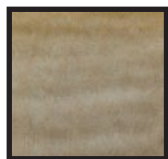
Cedar of Lebanon — Light brownish. Fairly straight grain marking. Good for new woodwork.



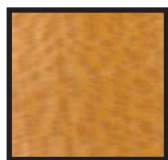
Elm — Striped brown. Use for ploughed fields, woodwork, roadways.



Eucalyptus — Pinkish brown. Often with a chunky figure which gives a good stone-wall effect.

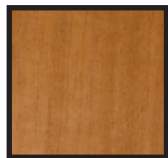


Harewood — Treated Sycamore, etc. to make a grey veneer. Best kept only for grey birds and animals.



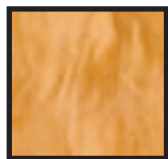
Lacewood/Planetree wood — Different cuts from the same tree. When a Planetree-log is cut radially it shows a prominent medullary ray

figure but when it is cut tangentially or peeled then the figure is a small fleck. Both types are very useful to have. Use for tiled roofs, fabric, feathers, fur.



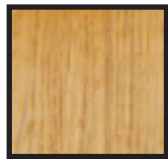
Mahogany(s) — A selection of the various types is useful for brickwork and other red colours. The curl figured pieces are very good for horses

and animals.



Maple — Slightly browner than Sycamore. Can be plain or figured (Sugar Maple). I mostly use if for large faces. If you have a chance to get

Quilted Maple, get it, as the “blistered” looking surface is excellent for faces and the petals of roses and other flowers.



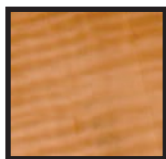
Oak — Plain English Oak seems to be more useful than the quarter cut stuff which is prized by the cabinet makers for its silver grain. If you can

get any which is slightly stained brown by a fungus, then that is very good for rough fields and roadways. Brown Oak which is all over brown is not too useful.

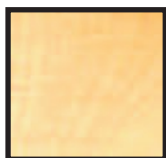


Australian Silky Oak — Oak-like in texture and figure but brick red in colour and, of course, is suitable for brickwork.

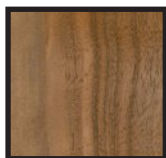
Tends to fade a little in time.



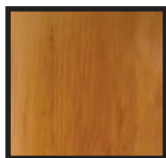
Pear — Rather a pale plain pink in colour. Can be used for animal parts and faces. Our example is a little weathered, hence a little darker



Sycamore — Again for white parts. But do bear in mind that there are many variations of this veneer - fiddleback for example.

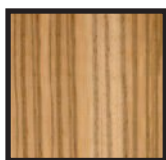


Walnuts — All the types given under the back-ground section are very suitable for many parts of most pictures.



Yew — Rather hard but is often highly figured. Colour varies from yellow (sapwood) to biscuit. Good for clothing and fabrics. The small black

knots in the sapwood make excellent eyes for small people, birds and animals.



Zebrano — A very stripey wood with many uses. Woodwork, fences, roofs, etc. The stripes can be used instead of shading to give a rounded

effect to an object.



Burrs — These are expensive, and many are not too easy to cut but they are indispensable for trees and foliage. Try Walnut, Myrtle, Maple,

Elm and any others that are obtainable. Supplies fluctuate.

Borders and Edges

Plain straight grained woods are best for these. Most popular are the Mahogany types particularly Sapele, but I usually

prefer something a little browner and darker: Black Walnut or, my real favourite, Wenge, which is a dark chocolate brown but is a devil for splitting. Cutting with a veneer saw helps but still the edge often has to be planed to get it straight. Most of the other Walnuts, if straight grained, are also very good for borders.

Backing

Almost any veneer, plain, wide and inexpensive is suitable. Mahogany is a good choice. I now regret having used beautifully figured woods in the days when they were readily available for backings which are not seen. I could put them to better use now.

Summary

Buy in large pieces — Aspen, Olive Ash, Avodire, Birch, Obeche, various Mahoganies, Sycamore, various Walnuts, Pine and Wenge.

Buy in smaller pieces — Afara, Ash, Ay an, Cedar of Lebanon, Maple, Elm, Eucalyptus, Harewood, Lacewood, Planetree-wood, Oak, Pear, Yew, Zebrano and any Burrs.

Don't buy — Mansonia (it fades to a mud grey colour); Padauk (its crimson colour changes to that of Mahogany and Padauk is a hard wood to work and also the colour sometimes runs when the sanding sealer is applied); Coral Rosewood (colour runs when finish is applied unless a spray gun is used); Macassar Ebony, Satinwood and Tulipwood (they are all very hard and best left until you can tackle them with a saw). The last four woods are also very expensive.

Well, that is my suggested stock list for you. Even though I have bought all the woods I have listed at various times in the past year I doubt if you sent the list off to any of our suppliers that they would have them all in stock, and if they did, it would set you back quite a few pounds, but you should be able to choose the ones you think that you will most likely need and gradually built up your stock.

Storing

I store the longer lengths (3 ft. or so) on top of a wardrobe with a piece of chipboard on the top to keep them flat. Shorter pieces are kept vertically in cardboard boxes in alphabetical order so I can find them quickly. Certain woods like Walnut have boxes of their own. Woods which are too wide for these boxes are stored in large lettuce style boxes in three categories: red/brown woods, light woods, and burrs. I also have another box in which I keep the woods I am using at the time.

Distressed Veneers

Veneers which are badly buckled, particularly burrs, I soak in hot water until they are soft and then put them between chipboard in a press for a few days, until they are dry. This usually cures the problem for a time anyway.

Waste Veneer

This needn't be veneer at all but a piece of cardboard such as shirts are packed with, but I prefer to use a nice light coloured, crisp cutting veneer. Sycamore is my favourite but is no longer the cheap wood that it was. Obeche is a softer substitute but is more fibrous and woollier and more likely to split. Beech can also be used but is somewhat harder.

Backgrounds

Here I will have to sub-divide the section into plain and figured. Plain backgrounds are useful for portraits including those of bird and animal figures. Pride of place must again go to Sycamore. Several varieties are listed in the catalogue; all are very useful. Plain for when you want the interest in the subject itself; fiddleback, which has a ripple figure running across the grain like that chosen for the backs of violins; lace figured which as the name suggests has a fine lace-like pattern on the surface and is usually very white; and weathered Sycamore which is very light brownish colour. Horse Chestnut is also plain white, often whiter than Sycamore,

but it has been in short supply this year and the few samples that I have seen have been rather yellowish. Maybe the supply position will improve again soon. Obeche and Avodire, both yellow cream colour may be more suitable if there is much Sycamore in the design.

For the darker, plainer background there are various Walnuts and Mahoganies. Sap Walnut is the lightest in the Walnut group followed by European (sometimes referred to as French) which can be plain or highly figured depending on the particular piece that you get. Black Walnut should be the darkest but sometimes is quite pale grey. Australian Walnut can be more or less all over greenish black or it can be figured with pink stripes. Either way it is useful. African or Nigerian Walnut isn't a true walnut but is related to the mahoganies. It is a Greenish golden colour often with a sapele-like stripe. Most of the mahogany type woods will make good

reddish coloured backgrounds particularly Honduras and Makore.

If a more golden colour is required try Kussia (Opepe) or perhaps Teak but this splits too easily for my liking so I would possibly use Afrosmosia instead.

Figured Backgrounds

Here I will include skies which, if they make up a sizable proportion of the picture area, should be figured. Again, some of the Sycamores can be used particularly if they contain some mineral staining, but Aspen is generally preferable. This can vary from white to yellow to pink in the same piece and frequently give a good sunset effect. Olive Ash, depending on the figure, can be used for both skies and water. Figured Ash, Pine and Birch often have quite effective markings for a sky. When ordering sky veneer through the post one really does have to take potluck with the figuring that is sent. Aspen is the most reliable in this respect.





Photographing Marquetry



We do get quite a good amount of photos of marquetry pieces sent into us on a regular basis. A common problem with many of them is the dreaded flash bounce back.

This is a problem deriving from the photographer trying to get a 'face on' view of a marquetry picture with an, often, mirror like finish. The photographer is usually aiming to keep the marquetry piece 'square on' in the photo, but there's no need for this because we can easily correct for such distortions at editorial level. The main thing is to avoid flash reflection.

In the finished photo the main interest is the marquetry picture, so make sure that there is no distracting background to spoil the effect. The best plan is to use some plain white paper or card and lay the picture flat, or to place it behind the picture if mounted on a wall. Light coloured wallpaper with only a slight pattern would do providing not too much of it showed round the picture. The next important point is adequate lighting - without which you won't get a decent photo anyway. My camera normally uses an electronic flash unit since most of the work has to be taken indoors where natural lighting is not available. The big problem with flash is that you cannot tell in advance whether you will get a reflection from the polished surface of the picture, and this was the main thing I had difficulty in overcoming. If you use a simple camera with a built-in flash unit (most are), you must never stand straight in front of a picture to take it or you will get a bad flash reflection; stand at an angle of around 45 degrees and this will avoid the reflection, though the picture will not be square in the finished photo. If a separate flash unit is used a better technique can be employed by holding the camera straight in front of the picture and the flash unit at an angle of 45 degrees so as to avoid the dreaded reflection.

This normally gives good results but care must be taken to ensure that the camera is pointing properly at approx 90 degrees or the lighting will not be correct.

There are two ways to ensure this; the first is to mount the camera on a good rigid tripod so that, once auto focused on the picture, the rest of your attention can be given to holding and aiming an external flash correctly (if used), knowing that the camera cannot move and is correctly positioned. If you haven't got a tripod, the second method is almost as good - provided you are using an external flash. Try to bounce the flash off of the ceiling rather than directly on the picture. Any lighting aberrations can then be corrected in the computer software. If you are fortunate enough to be able to get the picture into the open air on a bright day the best way is to lay it flat on the ground, or suitable flat surface, with white paper underneath to give a background. Then the camera can be held above - taking care not to stand in the way of the light - and the photo taken this way. It is possible to lay the picture flat when using flash as well if desired - the main thing is to get the picture correctly positioned and focused. The flash unit should be held at least two or three feet to one side of the camera so as to provide the correct angle to avoid reflection. The more highly polished the picture is, the more difficult it is to avoid a reflection - but it can be done.

If you have a good camera it will usually be self focusing, most are these days. If holding the camera close to the subject, make sure that the whole of the subject can be seen in the viewfinder or monitor screen and aim by "sighting" it.

One last word - if this has aroused your interest in photographing your pictures, please don't get so interested that you neglect your marquetry, just treat it as a secondary hobby to the real one, which is, of course, marquetry.

Subscription Fees For 2025

Location	New Members	Renewal Rate
U.K	£29.00	£29.00
Rest of Europe	£32.00	£32.00
Outside Europe	£32.00	£32.00

*Please pay via our online Stripe system if at all possible, otherwise send your subs to our UK Membership Secretary

OPTIONAL OFFERS:

Veneer Pack (UK only - Mixed Exotics) £18.99 (includes P & P) available from supplier John Coffey. (Contact details page 29)

N.B. We regret it is too costly to send these particular veneer parcels overseas.

All membership subscriptions are due on January 1st and run to December 31st. Please renew as soon as possible to do so.

Prompt payment is much appreciated

PLEASE NOTE:

Subscriptions can also be paid online at:
www.marquetry.org/online_pay_p1.html

Thank you.

Items For Sale by the Mem. Sec.

Marquetry for Beginners by Ernie Ives. Copies of the 4th Edition of this 56 page instruction booklet will now be supplied as a PDF file in an Email attachment or on CD. Printed stocks are now no longer available. (Please apply via the Editor)

Items For Sale by the Treasurer

Binders for the Marquetarian

Binder holds 12 issues of The Marquetarian £5.50 each plus £3.35 P&P for up to 7 binders. Please apply to the Hon Treasurer for binders.

Please make payments (cheques, etc) for the above 'For Sale' items to the 'Marquetry Society'. The Treasurer and Mem. Sec addresses on inner front cover.

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Please make cheques payable to Peter White and send to: Peter White, 10 The Russets, Meopham, Kent, DA13 0HH

Tel: 01474 814217

Email: peter@marquetry.org

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Artistic Consideration DVD & Added Dimensions in Marquetry DVD - \$30 each
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The following panel of experts have kindly placed their services at your disposal free of charge but do please be kind enough to send a stamped addressed envelope.

Veneer Identification

Any veneer identification inquiries, please contact by e-mail: info@marquetry.org for help and information

Sand Shading and General Enquiries

Quentin Smith, 15 Newport Rd.
 Eccleshall, Staffordshire, ST21 6BE
 Tel: 01785 850614

Email: qjsmarquetry@gmail.com



Recommended Suppliers



Turners Retreat (Formerly Craft Supplies). Turners Retreat, The Woodworkers Source, Faraday Close, Harworth, Nottinghamshire, DN11 8RU, Phone: 01302 744344, Email: eShop@turners-retreat.co.uk.

Axminster Power Tool Centre. Tools and machinery for general woodwork / marquetry. Unit 10, Weycroft Avenue, Millwey Rise Industrial Estate, Axminster, EX13 5PH Tel: 0800 371 8222. Email: email@axminster.co.uk. Website <http://www.axminster.co.uk/>.

Breakaway Tackle Ltd. Ernie Ives Craft Knives available. Unit 65, Claydon Business Park, Claydon, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP6 0NL. Tel: 01473 832822. www.breakaway-tackle.co.uk/

Bude Time Enterprises Ltd. Clock movements. The W. I. HALL, Broad Close Hill, Bude, Cornwall, EX23 8EQ. Tel: 01288 353832. <http://www.budetime.co.uk/>

Capital Crispin Veneer Co. Ltd. Decorative and constructional veneers. Unit 1, Industrial Estate, Festival Way, Basildon SS14 3WQ. Tel: 020 7474 3680. Email info@capitalcrispin.com Web: www.capitalcrispin.com

C & L Clocks. Quartz clock movements. C & L Mail Order, Bridgerule, Holsworthy, Devon, CX22 7ED. Tel: 01288 381690. S.A.E. for price list. <https://www.clockparts.co.uk/>

John Coffey Veneers. Veneer supplies. 22 Aytoun Avenue, Kirkcaldy, Fife, Scotland, KY2 6ZL. Tel: 07899 843227. Email: coffeemate9@hotmail.com.

Freed Veneers (Wood Veneer Hub). Veneer Specialists. Unit 4 Eden Court, Eden Way, Leighton Buzzard, Beds, LU7 4FY. Tel: 01525851166. Web: www.thewoodveneerhub.co.uk

Wood Veneers. Veneer supplies. Wood Veneers, units 1 & 2 The Courtyard, High Laver, Ongar, Essex, CM50DU. Web Address: <https://www.ebay.co.uk/str/woodveneers>

Freestone Model Accessories. Cutting mats and cardboard modelling accessories. 28 Newland Mill, Witney, Oxon, OX28 3HH. Tel: 01993 775979. Catalogue £1 & 1st Class SAE. Email: sales@freestonemodel.co.uk Website <http://www.freestonemodel.co.uk/>

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Shesto Ltd. Piercing saw blades, etc. Sunley House, Olds Approach, Watford, WD18 9TB, UK. Tel: +44 (0)20 8451 6188. Catalogue £3. Website <http://www.shesto.co.uk/>

Original Marquetry Ltd. Mother of Pearl, bandings, veneers, and all manner of marquetry accessories. Tel: 0117944264 Website: www.originalmarquetry.co.uk

Placages et Filets Gauthey. Wide range of veneers including a large stock of dyed wood. Safe shipping to the UK. Address: Quai Georges Bardin, 71700 TOURNUS, France. Tel: 0033 3 8520 2702 Website: <https://www.gauthey.fr>

Cove Workshop. Marquetry Kits. The Cove Workshop, Gobbins Brae, Islandmagee, Larne, Northern Ireland. Email: info@marquetrykit.co.uk Web: <https://www.marquetrykit.co.uk/>

Please inform the editor of any amendments, additions or deletions to this list. Please make all monies & costs payable to the individuals or firms concerned NOT to the Marquetry Society please. Your dealings will be with the suppliers.



“Flute Player (after Leyster)”
by Philip Green of the Staffordshire Group
Class 5

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL 2025

Renewal due on or before January 2025

To Hon. Membership Sec

Andrew Jaszczak,
17 Redwing Close,
Stevenage,
Hertfordshire,
SG2 9FE

Or for members in USA:

Please pay online at:

https://www.marquetry.org/online_pay_ovrsea.html
(or snail mail your renewal to Andrew at the address
seen on the left)

Note: It is easier to pay online if you prefer to do so

Please renew my subscription to the Marquetry Society

Please Note: Reminders will not be sent

UK Membership	£29.00	eMag membership	£22.00
European membership	£32.00	Note: eMag membership receives the Marquetarian magazine in PDF form electronically only.	
Outside Europe	£32.00		

Optional:

Associate / Junior member* £ 5.00

Donation £

Total £

I enclose PO/Cheque/Check payable to The Marquetry Society for £.....

Name (BLOCK LETTERS)

Address

.....

.....

Postcode

Telephone.....

E Mail.....

Membership No.

Group

*Associate member: Spouse/Partner/child or sponsored junior under 18 years.

Please send this form with your remittance to the Hon. Membership Sec.

Or you can now pay by Bank Transfer: Account Name – Marquetry Society

Account Number 00844307 Sort Code -30-94-55

Bank transfer outside UK - IBAN - please use **GB41 LOYD 3094 5500 8443 07**

Please Note: You can easily pay online by Stripe via our Website if you wish.

The membership details of the Marquetry Society are held on the Society's computer and are only used for Society business and not used for any other purpose.

Remember, reminders will no longer be sent, so please renew as early as possible.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP 2025/26

Subscription is due every January.

As a special offer, new membership joining in Dec 2024 will receive membership for 2025 free. If joining in 2025 see note below. This only applies to new members.

2025 joiners renewal date is January 2027 Note: Reminders will not be sent

To Hon. Membership Sec

Andrew Jaszczak,
17 Redwing Close,
Stevenage,
Hertfordshire,
SG2 9FE

Or for members in USA:

Please pay online at:

https://www.marquetry.org/online_pay_ovrsea.html

(or snail mail your application to Andrew Jaszczak)

Note: If joining as a new member in **2025** (rather than 2024) you will receive **2026** membership free and your membership renewal date will then be January **2027**

Please enrol me as a member of the Marquetry Society

UK Membership	£29.00	eMag membership	£22.00
European membership	£32.00	Note: eMag membership receives the Marquetarian magazine in PDF form electronically only.	
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Associate / Junior member* £ 5.00

Donation £

Total £

I enclose PO/Cheque/Check payable to The Marquetry Society for £

Name (BLOCK LETTERS)

Address

.....

.....

Postcode

E Mail.....

Telephone..... Group (if known)

How did you hear of the Society?

*Associate member: Spouse/Partner and Family under 18 years or sponsored junior under 18 years.

Please send this form with your remittance to the Hon. Membership Sec.

**Or you can now pay by Bank Transfer: Account Name – Marquetry Society
Account Number 00844307 Sort Code -30-94-55**

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Reminders will no longer be sent, so please renew in January as outlined above.