

THE MARQUETARIAN

Summer 2025 No.291

ISSN 0025-3944



“Little Morton Hall 2”

by Brian Freeman of the Sutton Coldfield Group

1st in Class 6A



Journal of
The Marquetry Society



The Marquetry Society

Founded 1952

Executive Committee

Patrons: John Bly F.R.S.A. Tony Jacklin C.B.E.

President: Enrico Maestranzi, 19 Ravendale Ave, North Finchley, London, N12 9HP Tel: 07402137843 Email: enrico.maestranzi@gmail.com

Chairman: Peter White, 10 The Russets, Meopham, Kent, DA13 0HH Tel: 01474 814217 Email: peterwhite16834@gmail.com (or: peter@marquetry.org)

Vice Chairman: Les Dimes, 17 Chapel Crofts, Northchurch, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire, HP4 3XG. Tel: 01442 862643 Email: les.dimes45@gmail.com

Hon. Gen. Treasurer: Janet Edwards, Lavender Cottage, 181 High Street, Kelvedon, Essex, CO5 9JD Tel: 01376 573412 / 07708 334204 Email: janwards40@gmail.com

Hon. Gen. Secretary: Jackie Thomas, 13 Towers Wood, South Darenth, Dartford, Kent, DA4 9BQ. Email: hon_sec@marquetry.org

Minutes Secretary: Janet Edwards, Lavender Cottage, 181 High Street, Kelvedon, Essex, CO5 9JD Tel: 01376 573412 / 07708 334204 Email: janwards40@gmail.com

Hon. Editor & Webmaster: Alan Mansfield, 142 Charlton Crescent, Barking, Essex, IG11 0NQ. Tel: 020 8507 0104 Email: alan.mansy@gmail.com (or: alan@marquetry.org)

Hon. Membership Secretary: Andrew Jaszczak, 17 Redwing Close, Stevenage, Hertfordshire, SG2 9FE Tel: 01438 352859 Email: andrew@marquetry.org

Independent Members' Secretary: This position is at present vacant. All applications from Independent Members only welcome. Please contact Editor.

Web Secretary: David Walker, 105 Brackenbrae Avenue, Bishopbriggs, Glasgow, G64 2DU Tel: 07722437518 Email: dave@marquetry.org

Social Media Officer: Karen Russo, 69 Chestnut Avenue South, London, E17 9EJ Email: info@marquetry.org

Society USA Representative: Position vacant at present.

Publicity Committee: Peter White & Alan Mansfield (Contact details as above)

Ex-officio Executive Committee:

John Biggs, Hazeldene, Ruskin Rd, Stanford-Le-Hope, Essex, SS17 0LF Tel: 01375 678695

A. M. Townsend, 3 Green Walk, Marden Ash, Ongar, Essex CM5 9HR. Tel: 01277 363058

Dave Bulmer, 5 Devonshire Gdns, Linford, Stanford-le-Hope, Essex, SS17 0QW. Tel: 01375 675411

Martin Bray, 43 Melthorne Drive, South Ruislip, Middlesex, HA4 0TS. Tel: 0208 845 7180

David Kelmanson, 6 Neptune Drive, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, CV37 7NH

Email: david@marquetry.org

Web Site Address: <https://www.marquetry.org>

Cover Background: Fumed Oak

Front Cover Picture: "Little Morton Hall 2" Miniature

Back Cover Picture: "Kingfishers" Miniature





Visit the Groups



Bexley

Deborah Morris, 137 Wellington Avenue,
Sidcup, Kent, DA15 9HB.

Tel: 020 8301 1600

Email: deb.morris08@ntlworld.com

Bristol

Brian Adams. Tel: 0759 0099 564

Email: laser202020@gmail.com

Broadlands

George Webb, 37 Sands Lane, Lowestoft,
NR32 3ER. Tel: 01502 515703

Chelmsford

Karen Cooper, 32 Ashurst Drive,
Chelmsford, Essex CM1 6TN

Tel: 01245 465509

Email: karencooper@live.com

www.marquetry.org/chelmsford_group.htm

East Dorset

Peter Mollan, 10a Gordon Road,
Highcliffe, Dorset, BH23 5HN .

Tel: 01425 280664.

Email: edmg_stanpit@tiscali.co.uk

Harpenden

Peter Goucher, 14 The Close, Harpenden.
Hertfordshire, AL5 3NB.

Tel: 01582 713978

Email: p.goucher@ntlworld.com

Harrow

Joan Grant, 7 Oxford Gardens, London,
W10 5UE.

Tel:

https://www.marquetry.org/harrow_group.htm

Humberside

This group has now converted to
Independents' status.

Leeds

Geoff Margetson, 3 Bransdale Close,
Baildon, Shipley BD17 5DQ

Email: secretary.leedsmarquetry@gmail.com

<https://leedsmarquetry.org/index.html>

Meopham

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

Tel: 01474 814217

Somerset - previously known as Merriott

Michael Burnham, Rendlesteps,
29 Broadway, Merriott, Somerset,

TA16 5QG Tel: 01460351785

Redbridge

Alan Mansfield, 142 Charlton Crescent,
Barking, Essex. IG11 0NQ.

Tel: 020 8507 0104

Email: alan@marquetry.org

<https://www.redbridgemarketrygroup.org>

Scotland

David Walker, - Tel: 01415347128

E-mail at: dave@marquetry.org

Sheffield

Graeme Johnson, 152 Hazlebarrow Crescent,
Jordanthorpe, Sheffield, S8 8AR

Tel. 0114 237 5348 - theegraeme@mac.com

Sproughton

For any enquiries regarding the
Sproughton Group please contact by e-mail
at: info@marquetry.org

St. Albans

Corinne Barnaby, 9 Arundel Close, Hemel
Hempstead, HP2 4QR. Tel: 07561 111278

Email: cojoba@ntlworld.com

www.marquetry.org/st_albans_group.htm

Staffordshire

Quentin Smith, 15 Newport Rd, Eccleshall,
Staffordshire,

ST21 6BE

Tel: 01785 850614

Email: qjsmarquetry@gmail.com

<http://www.staffordshiremarquetry.org.uk>

Sutton Coldfield

Mike Roberts, 30 Crockford Drive,
Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield, B75 5HH.

Tel: 0121 308 0239

www.marquetry.org/sutton_coldfield_group.htm

Thurrock

John Biggs, Hazeldene, Ruskin Road,
Stanford-Le-Hope, Essex, SS17 0LF

Tel: 01375 678695

Editorial and Publishing Office

142 Charlton Crescent, Barking, Essex, IG11 0NQ. E-mail: alan@marquetry.org

Main Contents Issue 291

Editorial & Website Summer Password	4
From the President's Perspective	5
Chairman's Chatter	6
Web Secretary's Letter	8
AGM 2025 Reminder	9
Web Officer's Report & New Group update	10
Free Verse report	11
Cutter Interview	14
Mounting a Picture	23
Going by the Grain	25
Social Media Officer's Report & Vic's Tips	27
Palm Sanders	28
2024 National Exhibition Gallery (& Judges' notes on cover exhibits p 37) ..	30
Readers' Letters	38
The Cabinet Scraper	42
Is it a Sell Out?	45
Veneer Grid	46
Flattening Veneers	47

Deadline Dates

Final date for receipt of material for issue
292 is 12th July 2025 but please let me
have as much material as possible by
mid June 2025

Final date for receipt of material for issue
293 is 12th October 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.

Other Useful Addresses

American Marquetry Society (AMS)

AMS Pres. Darrell Toups, Tel: 214-797-5158

Email: president@americanmarquetrysociety.org

Flemish Guild of Marqueteurs

Driesstraat 18, Tielt 8700, Belgium

Marquetry Society of Canada

Cathy Lago, Email: cmlago@rogers.com

Marquetry Society of Victoria.,

Closed down due to the effects of covid and diminishing membership, the result of covid.

Email: secretary@marquetryvic.org.au

Rencontre Internationale de la Marqueterie (R.I.M.)

Xavier Dyevre, 15 rue du Peintre Lebrun, 78000

Versailles, France. 01 39 51 53 66

De Verenigde Marqueteurs vzw

Tel. : 011 222 010 (Chairman)

Club Rooms: zaal het park, oostlaan 10, 3600 Genk.

E-mail: deverenigdemarqueteurs@gmail.com

facebook: De Verenigde Marqueteurs vzw

Website: <https://deverenigdemarqueteurs.word-press.com/>

Atrema

Espace Henri-Barbusse, 60 bis 10e Avenue, 93290

Trembley en France Tel/Fax : 331 43 84 53 54

Email: pathooge@hotmail.com

The Marquetry Guild Inc (NSW)

Kay Underwood Tel: (02) 9570 8680

Email: kuwood@bigpond.net.au

Page 3 Cartoon



Cartoon theme & artwork from an old idea by Alan Mansfield.

The 2025 International Marquetry Exhibition
Our Chelmsford group will be hosting the 2025 Exhibition
at Budworth Hall, Ongar, Essex, CM5 9JG on
6th June (for judging and setting up day),
and 7th and 8th June 2025 for exhibition visiting
AGM at 2.00pm Sunday 22nd June 2025 on Zoom



Here we are with our 2025 International Marquetry Exhibition just a few days away, that's assuming that your copy of this summer edition of The Marquetarian arrives in your letter box at the start of June of course, and I am just wondering who our next Rosebowl winner will be.

As I am one of the judges this year, obviously I will know because between myself and the other two judges, we will have decided whom to award the Rosebowl.

Will it be you? I do hope so, but unfortunately it can only be awarded to one marquetarian each year. This is a bit of a shame because there are always so many superb pieces of work on display that I would wish to be able to award many more Rosebowls to so many more exhibits and their builders.

If you look in our listing of Executive Committee members you will see that we now have a new Hon General Secretary, this is Jackie Thomas. Jackie has done this job on a professional basis, so is well in tune with what is required of a General Secretary. Hopefully the post in the Marquetry Society is not as demanding as the post would be in a professional situation - at least, we hope not!



**IMPORTANT
ANNOUNCEMENT
FOR
INDEPENDENTS**

We are looking for an Independent member to become our Indies Sec. Could this be you who would be keen to look after the interests of your fellow Indies?

Exec meetings (you would become an Exec member) are now conducted via Zoom, so no travelling is required anymore, just a PC, iPad or smartphone.

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

And now, a standard editorial plea, have you a technique or a marquetry story that you would like to share with us?

We would love to hear from you. Your input helps to make this magazine that much more interesting. Just write in or email me with your story and, hopefully, an illustration or photograph or two and we will form it into an article and publish it in The Marquetarian.

Also, if you can draw, why not contribute a cartoon or two? It would make a great alternative to my awful artwork!

Alan.

Summer period Password

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

s p a l t e d m a p l e

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 June 2025**.

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.



I am pleased to report that our new group, the Bristol Group, has held their first few meetings. Brian Adams had four new members for the Bristol Group turn up and thoroughly enjoy the experience of group life.

Being in a group is very beneficial to marqueterians. We can bounce ideas off each other and learn lots from simple discussion - it truly does help.

Of course, once the new group has settled down and established itself, the group can then enter 'inter-group' competitions with other groups in reasonably accessible close locations. We south-eastern marquetry groups don't have too many problems there, being as we are reasonably close to each other, but we do suffer from heavy traffic congestion, so it's 'horses for courses' I suppose.

Changing the subject, I hope that you all finished your varnishing and hanging arrangements for your National Exhibition entries in good time for sending them in for this year's exhibition. I am really looking forward to seeing what you have produced. I find it very exciting to see how inventive you all can be. New ways of producing marquetry works are always wonderful to see.

This especially relates to our independent membership who, without the influence of a group, can invent techniques that are applicable to their own way of working. Over the years we have seen such methods and techniques as sliverisation, fragmentation and even the window method arise and grow into established ways of



working that we all now take for granted. But these were all, shall we say, invented by our own membership over the seventy odd years that the Marquetry Society has been going.

Now if someone could come up with a very simple method of finishing, we would all be 'laughing'!

Enrico.

ENEERS & PACKS

**MIXED EXOTIC
ENEERS & BURRS**

**12 inches x 4 inches
or 30 cms x 10 cms approx.**

(not your standard veneers)

£18.99 inc. postage.

**Other sizes upon request,
please phone for details**

contact:

email coffeemate9@hotmail.com

ebay id . jan8753

mobile 07899 843227

**Cheques and payments to
JOHN COFFEY**

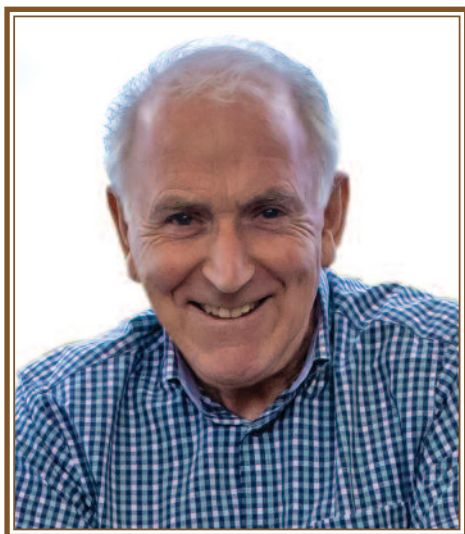
Chairman's Chatter

So, why do we do marquetry? No, don't answer that, but let me ponder what it's meant to me for so many years now. Like many of you I'm sure, when things are not going right, I sometimes wonder if the relaxation and sense of achievement the craft promised is rather outweighed by the frustrations and raised blood pressure that is often induced. But nothing pleases me more than when things finally work out well.

Perhaps even better than the self satisfaction that comes from getting the job done has been when the marquetry piece was made as a gift or maybe a commission and the recipient has been equally delighted by the outcome. Over the years I've been grateful for the number of times I've been able to put a smile on so many faces at the moment I've handed over a piece of my handiwork.

The pieces I've made for other people have often posed particular challenges, more so the commissions than maybe the boxes I've made for my wife and other family members. I've always tried to accommodate commissioner's wishes, even when the project has been a bit 'left field' shall I say. For example, how do you set about making a display stand for a retired Metropolitan policeman's truncheon, cap badge and service medal? I managed somehow and the gentleman was delighted.

I'll maybe return to the subject of unusual commissions later, but for now I'll mention two golfing related ones and one other. The first was for a simple stylised early golfer picture with additional text which I was asked to make for a golf society competition sponsored by a consultant surgeon who had just performed

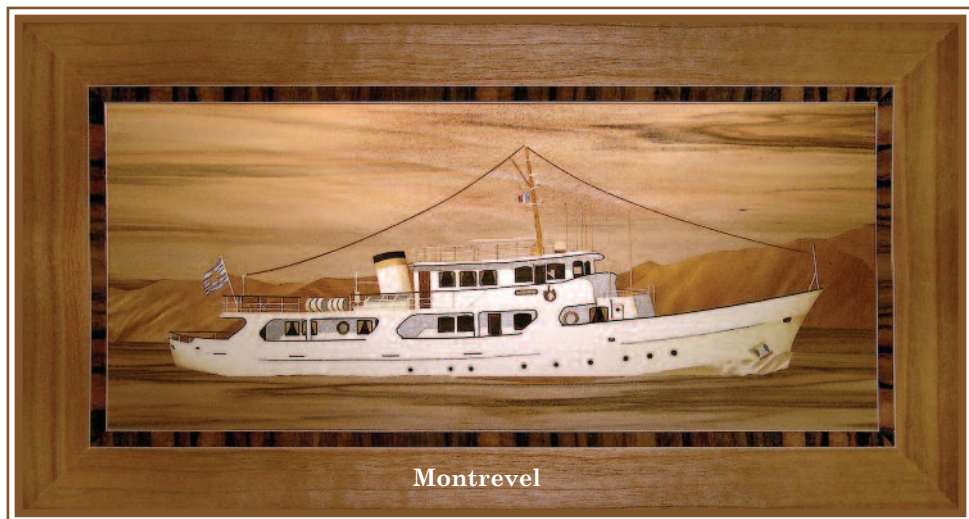


surgery on me. I was quite taken aback when he actually shed a tear when I presented the finished piece to him. The other golfing piece was for a large box, commissioned by the outgoing club captain of the Verulam Golf Club on their centenary (home of the Ryder Cup) which he told me would be a 'time capsule' to be kept locked in the club's trophy cabinet and not opened for 100 years I seem to remember him telling me. He would be placing inside the lockable box golfing related paraphernalia and other secret items. I hope the lock still works when the time comes, but of course there'll be no comeback on me by then!

I can't remember how it came about but I was asked to make a fairly large box depicting a French super yacht built in 1958 called Montrevel on the lid. The commissioner had just spent several months cruising as a guest of the multi-millionaire who owned it and wanted something special to remember his voyage by.

I'm pleased I've always kept photographic records as I'm sure I would have forgotten some of the things I've made otherwise.

Peter



Met Police Memorabilia



Left: Blackheath Golf Society

Right: Verulam Golf Club Time Capsule



creating Marquetry for our own benefit, so outside of the artists own circle of friends his work would be unrecognised.

Having judged at the National once and at local competitions I can sometimes recognise the style of one or two artists, but that's about it. We therefore have to tell our enquirers that we are unable to give any information. Because of the high quality that Alan Mansfield is able to maintain on the website, the enquirers think that we are a professional outfit and are sometimes disappointed to find out that we are just hobbyists.

Every enquirer always gets an invitation to join the Society and Alan tells me that between us we have managed to get some new members, mostly abroad, especially now we can offer membership payment through Stripe. Over the last few years we have had a number of enquiries from folk in Iran. Initially they asked if we could display their pictures for sale. We had to disappoint them as it is against our policy to do this.

However, we offer them website space in a gallery 'World of Marquetry' where their works can be displayed. Have a look at this gallery. The work is breathtaking. They not only use wood veneer but stone, mother of pearl and other materials. Alan has mentioned this recently as he tries to encourage folk to expand their technique in Marquetry.

Apparently Marquetry can be studied at University in Iran. One of our enquirers has a PhD in Marquetry! It is certainly appears a worthwhile course if our photographs are anything to go by. Pity it's so far away! Well, it will soon be time to see your splendid exhibits at our exhibition.

I look forward to seeing them and meeting some of you at Ongar in June. Bye for now.

David.

Greetings again. I hope that you had an enjoyable Easter holiday. This year apart from the Easter break we spent the whole time shut in. The weather was so poor we didn't feel like leaving the house. What an opportunity to get stuck into my latest Marquetry picture.

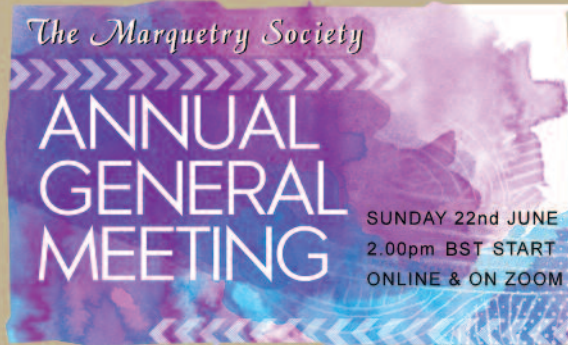
I managed to spend a lot of time doing it. It's a pity that it's not Easter every week. I'd get a lot more done.

Again I've received a lot of e-mail requests for information about pictures that folk have inherited. These requests generally seek information about the artist or location of scenes. If they are Buchschmid and Gretaux we are mostly able to help as we have a list, albeit incomplete, of their works.

However, if the work is not B&G we cannot identify these pictures so we will display them in our 'Can we Help' Gallery asking if any viewers can assist.

Unfortunately, since we have been doing this we have not identified any pieces and no one has contacted us to assist. Unless we can recognise the style of the artist it is hopeless. There is no register that we can consult as there is with artists using paint. A lot of the pictures are probably the work of someone like most of us,

IMPORTANT INFORMATION



As is becoming the industry norm these days, many AGM's are being held on the virtual online platform of Zoom. This is efficient and convenient.

We, the Marquetry Society, have also adopted this Zoom option, especially as it saves us money, and it allows overseas membership the opportunity to join the AGM without having to go to the difficulties of arranging travel and accomodation. Anyway, don't forget, that's 2pm in the UK (BST) and 1pm GMT for anyone joining us from afar, but other than that, just login to join the meeting.

All of our membership are invited and are eligible to join in the AGM.



Last Year's AGM held on Zoom



Our earlier AGMs held in person

There's no need to pose a question if you prefer not to, you can just sit back and enjoy the proceedings as an onlooker if that is your preference - it is entirely up to you.

However, if you do have a question that you would like to put before the committee, why not write to one of us (contact details are to be found on the inner front cover) and we will place that on the agenda as an item to be dealt with.

To join in the AGM you will need a computer or smart phone to join the meeting, plus the Zoom meeting's ID.

You can get the meeting ID from either myself, your editor, or David Walker your Web Sec. Just get in contact with either of us and we will give you that ID.

New Group - Bristol

Progress Report



As explained by our President Enrico, the new Bristol Group, under the direction of Brian Adams, has had some very successful meetings. New groups often take a while to bed in, but Bristol's new group looks

like they are 'going places' as the saying goes, and could be well on the road to achieving awards at our National Exhibitions. The photo above shows the group's meeting venue of St. Andrew's Church, Gloucester Rd North, Filton.



Do many of you visit our 'Members' Only' section of our website? if you do you will, or may have, noticed that we have over the last 5 years worth of PDF copies of The Marquetarian for you to read online or download and save to your computer if you wish.

With the April website update I added the last of the 2024 International Marquetry Exhibition exhibits to the website, so, if you entered something into the exhibition, you should now find that it is available to be seen by all of our worldwide website visitors for a full 12

month period until the 2025 exhibits start to replace those 2024 exhibits. But regardless, your work will be available for a full 12 month period.

In conjunction with our Facebook presence we have been promoting our 2025 International Marquetry Exhibition on our website since our April update a couple of months ago. Hopefully this will have helped to attract a vast quantity of visitors to the exhibition. With any luck, the beauty of our work will have inspired copious amounts to take up our art and craft and join our ranks - fingers crossed!

Free Verse: Explorations in contemporary marquetry

by Susan Bart



It has been a real honour to have been able to participate in the “Free Verse: Explorations in Contemporary Marquetry” exhibition at the Messler Gallery in Rockport, Maine, USA.

This has been an international exhibition curated by the artist Jim Macdonald who, with the help of the Gallery Director Victoria Allport, invited 22 artists with their 22 corresponding works.

The brilliant cast of participating artists is composed of well-known names such as Paul Schürch, David Marks and Silas Kopf.

Not only have I had the honour of participating in a joint exhibition with them, but I have also had the privilege of meeting them in person, as 11 members of this group attended the opening of the exhibition. The quality and variety of the works on display are a testament to the importance of the event. It was about time that we got together to get to know each other, exchange opinions, and promote the work of marquetry from the professional and artistic point of view.

The atmosphere created during that weekend meeting of marquetarians was wonderful. We are all rowing in the same direction and we need support and collaboration.

As David said: “an organized whole is greater than the sum of its individual parts.”

It would not be fair to publish just a few images as each of the 21 works deserved a single article in this magazine.

The entire show can be seen at <https://woodschool.org/wood-school-gallery/free-verse-2/>

If anyone wants more information you can contact each of us directly. The contact details, email and websites, are listed over the next few pages. We will be pleased to hear from you.

The artists represented there

- Ryan Andrusky, from Canada, presented an extraordinary little cabinet full of marquetry and transparency technique titled “The Bee Cabinet.” @ryanandrusky



Centre for Furniture Craftsmanship - home of the Messler Gallery

- Susan Bart, from Spain, presented a really challenging marquetry sculpture with different materials and techniques titled "Dystopian Poppy."

www.SusanBart.com

- Scott Grove, from New York, presented a very interesting box mixing root plates.

www.scottgrove.com

- Adrian Ferrazzutti, from Canada, presented a trompe l'oeil box of the iconic "Bankers Box."

www.ferrazzuttifurniture.com

- Isaac Sintim, from Ghana, with a moving portrait. @woodimpressiongh

- Anne Lecorguillé, from France, presented a large painting using straw sheets.

www.atelierpaille-marqueterie.fr

- Toby Winteringham, from England, presented two wall clocks.

www.tobywinteringham.co.uk

- Shannon Bowser, from New York, presented a small cabinet with a lichen motif. www.bkslab.com

- Paula Garbarino, from Massachusetts, submitted a wall cabinet with embossed marquetry. www.paulagarbarino.com

- Contributors Cindy Goldman and Spider Johnson, from Texas, presented a very colorful Alice in Wonderland cabinet

www.spiderjohnson.com

www.cavudesign.com

- Silas Kopf, from Massachusetts, submitted a bright and colorful cabinet. From here on out we all call him the Godfather of Marquetry. www.silaskopf.com

- Sasha Kopf, from Massachusetts, a worthy heir to the art and knowledge of her father Silas, presented a closet full of surprises. www.sashakopf.com

- Patrice Lejeune, from California, presented a closet very much out of the usual style and a technical challenge with new materials. www.patricelejeune.com

- Patrice Lejeune, from California, presented a closet very much out of the usual style and a technical challenge with new materials. www.patricelejeune.com

- James Macdonald, of Maine, presented an electric guitar completely covered in marquetry. www.jmacwooddesigns.com

- David J. Marks, of California, presented a technically spectacular circular frame. www.djmarks.com

- Jack Mauch, of North Carolina, presented a spectacularly shaped and elegant frame. www.jackmauch.com

- Brian Reid, of Maine, presented a cabinet that is very consistent in form and pattern. www.brianreidfurniture.com

- Paul Schürch, of Hawaii, submitted a stunning swivel table. www.schurchwoodwork.com

- William Tunberg, of California, presented a contemporary embossed wall structure filled with marquetry. www.williamtunberg.com

- Chelsea Van Voorhis, of Louisiana, presented a very complete work of a patterned bookshelf with indoor and outdoor marquetry and feminist concept. www.chelseavanvoorhis.com



- The late Greg Zall, of California, submitted a portrait of a marquetry cockatoo. @gregzall

You can see and hear all of us in this YouTube video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jMC4ghIKGv8>

Our goal is to promote and elevate the current status of the art of marquetry. It would be wonderful to have the support of different galleries to be able to offer our art.

The makers were given no constraints as to the size or style of the work to submit, which was a big risk, but the result was magnificent. There was a great variety, with the exception that Paul, David and Silas all submitted fish - so we have the recipe: if you want to be one of the greats... you have to make fish!

I cannot express enough with words for having been part of this beautiful experience. All my love to marquetarians. I firmly believe that many of the readers here have more than enough quality to have been able to participate in this exhibition, but not enough luck.

Let's try to have more exhibitions of this style in the future and more people can participate.

Until then, good work with the fish!

Editor's Note: Jim Macdonald's Cutter Interview is on the following page.

MESSLER GALLERY

CENTER for FURNITURE CRAFTSMANSHIP







Free Verse:
Explorations in Contemporary Marquetry
 January 24 - April 2, 2025

The Cutter Interview

Our Cutter Interviewee today is someone you are not yet familiar with, but he is someone almost unique in the luthier (guitar builder) world who applies his own hand cut marquetry to many of the guitars he produces in the USA. He is no other than Jim Macdonald.

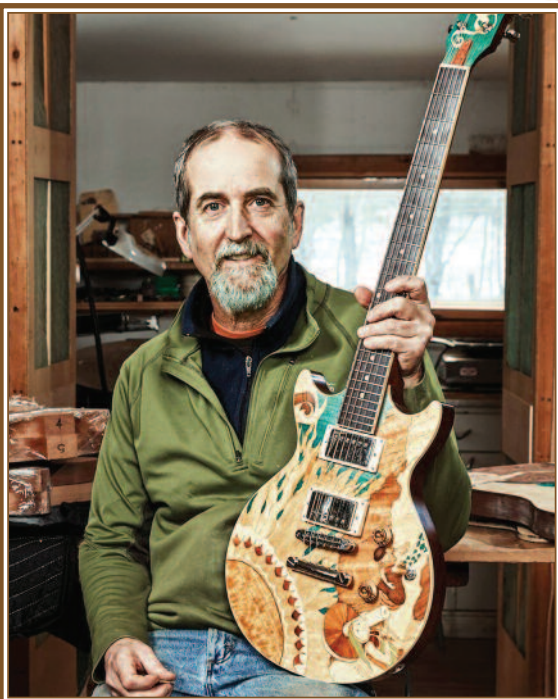
Now, seeing that your editor is a bit of a “guitar fruitcake” it is no exaggeration to say that he thoroughly enjoyed reading through this article, let’s hope that you do too. So, it’s over to Cutter.

Cutter: *Hi Jim, you make wonderful guitars which are decorated with beautiful examples of marquetry, so may I ask firstly what attracted you to the art and craft of marquetry?*

JIM: When I was in High School, I discovered books on Art Deco and Art Nouveau. The furniture pieces I saw that featured marquetry really appealed to me. The addition of embellishment to these works seemed to elevate them to a new level.

Cutter: *Musical instruments decorated with marquetry are not very common at all, except for old keyboard instruments, so what inspired you to add marquetry to your guitars?*

JIM: I’ve been playing and loving guitars since about 8 years old. When I was a teen, I saw the Steve Miller Band on TV and he was playing a guitar that had a psychedelic painting by surfboard artist Bob Cantrell adorning the body that wowed me. Also, in the magazine “Guitar Player” there was a picture of John McLaughlin’s double-neck guitar made by Rex Bogue that featured really ornate mother of pearl inlay work on the necks



Jim Macdonald with one of his marquetry decorated guitars

that I loved. And then there was Eric Clapton’s trippy guitar painted by the Dutch Art Collective called “the Fool” that he was using during his time with Cream. Art on guitars seemed like a natural fit. These three guitars influenced me and I thought, well, I could create these sorts of guitars myself.

Cutter: *Has anyone else’s work, such as Silas Kopf’s for example, inspired your own work?*

JIM: I would say absolutely, as I learned the double bevel style of marquetry from him at a workshop in the early 1990’s. At further workshops at the Center for Furniture Craftsmanship in Maine, I got to be his assistant and then co-teacher.



A wonderful example of Jim's more conventional marquetry. This piece is titled: Leopard Skin Pillbox Hat. 2023

When I first started woodworking in the early 1980's, I went to see Kopf's work at the Hensch Gallery in New York City. I had seen some pictures of his work before, but to experience them in person was really exciting.

One of his tables stands out in my memory, a piece called Primal Woodworking that shows a self-portrait with Kopf chewing the end of a live tree branch like a beaver. I loved it!

The message I got from seeing his work is that marquetry can be anything you want it to be, an avenue to personal expression through the use of wood veneers rather than paints.

Cutter: *Some marquetarians show a preference for particular styles or designs, so do you find such things influence your own marquetry work?*

JIM: My early work was mostly in the style of Art Deco or Art Nouveau. Another influence was Charles Rennie Mackintosh.

I especially liked the French style of Art Deco where the furniture designs were straight-forward and very elegant and the marquetry embellishment could be quite bold and wild. I like that some of this work is a bit whimsical as well.

One of my favorite craftsmen from this period is Jean Dunand. He was not a marquetarian, but he was very skilled in the art of surface embellishment through Asian lacquer techniques often using eggshell as a material.

Cutter: *When you start a new work, is it based on a customer's specific requirements and guidelines, or are you given a*



Eat a Peach guitar (left) in the Allman Brothers Museum at the Big House with the Capricorn Mural guitar, now in the Capricorn Studios Museum, both in Macon, Georgia

free rein to design on a theme put forward by the customer – or do you produce the designs simply because you find them pleasing?

JIM: I really enjoy doing commissions with themes that are important to the client. Earlier this year I did a marquetry portrait of a dog named Sally. The owners sent me some pictures that I



Jim's wet dog marquetry picture



Jim's squirrel guitar

used to create a scene of Sally having just climbed out of the water all wet sorta' saying "I love you, now throw the stick again please."

Another one of my guitars has a squirrel theme. My client loves squirrels and feeds them daily at his home in North Carolina. The squirrels in this area are often white. I created a playful scene of squirrel antics with a background of the hills from his town.

I also made a marquetry art guitar for a client in Dubai who asked that I

create a picture of his wife using pictures he provided.

I decided to go with a trompe l'oeil composition. He was an old rock and roller, so along with her picture, which looks like it was thumbtacked to a wall, I made some old concert posters of Janis Joplin and Cream look like they were taped to the wall, as well as a violin bow hanging from a screw, all in marquetry. I had a lot of fun with this one.

(Editor's Note: the finished Telecaster style guitar is seen opposite at the top of the next column)

Cutter: *When doing your marquetry 'lay-ons' do you knife cut, or use a laser cutter, or a form of fret or coping saw to produce your marquetry work?*

JIM: I primarily cut my veneers using the double bevel technique on an Excalibur 28" scroll saw. I'll use a straight edge and knife for very straight cuts. Also, I am a woodworker, and I've found ways to use my woodworking machines in my marquetry work.

Cutter: *Have you any favourite or preferred veneers that you like to work with?*

JIM: I have a really great collection of veneers that will last me the rest of my life and then some.

One of my first steps in creating a marquetry composition, after developing a pattern, is to select the veneers that I will use.

I obtained a large quantity of old veneers when I was first starting out. Many, many different species, none of them labelled! I like using these most. I also received some wonderful old dyed veneer from Silas that I love. The colours are much more subtle than most of the dyed veneers that are sold today. Of these, my favorite has been several pieces of a pale blue veneer that makes a very realistic sky.



Telecaster style guitar with Dubai customer's wife's portrait on it

Cutter: *Your marquetry displays much perfectly controlled pyrography, so do you use a pyrography workstation to get such delicate end results?*

JIM: Yes, I use a Razertip model #SK wood burning system. The tip I use almost exclusively is one with a knife point that creates very thin lines. By adjusting the temperature, hand pressure, and feed rate, I can really control the look. I mostly create a series of fine parallel lines as one would find in an old etching. I can also choose to emphasize cut lines to get a more illustrative look, or add fine



Razertip Woodburning Model #SK

details such as very small writing.

Cutter: *Moving on with the pyrography question, what are your thoughts on adding pyrography elements to marquetry work? The 'old school' rather frowns on such additions, but do you consider that pyrography adds an enhancing element to marquetry work?*

JIM: After learning and becoming fluent in the double bevel style, I became more interested in finding my voice as an artist, through the medium of marquetry.

I'm not a traditionalist in my approach. I've always loved to draw and see my particular method of pyrography as a way of drawing on the wood. The look of my finished work is distinctive and succeeds at being an accurate representation of my personal artistic expression.

Cutter: *Out of all the marquetry decorated guitars you have produced; do you have a favorite one that really pleased and satisfied you?*

JIM: Well, I've been a big fan of the original Allman Brothers and when I was a teen, I spent many hours sitting with my guitar next to the record player listening to the Allman Brothers Live at Fillmore East album, doing my best to learn the guitar parts note for note.



Michael Pierce and Jim Macdonald with the Capricorn Mural Guitar in front of the mural at Capricorn Studios (The Birthplace of Southern Rock) made by Michael

When I started making my own guitars in 2012, I wanted to give thanks to my musical influences.

I created a marquetry art guitar to honour the Allman Brothers and chose to make a composition that featured parts of the inside cover illustration of their Eat a Peach album.

When I started promoting the guitar on Facebook, I was contacted by a gentleman from Georgia whose brother was the Allman Brothers' original tour manager. He wrote to let me know how much he loved and appreciated my tribute guitar. One thing led to another and in 2018, my guitar became part of the permanent collection of the Allman Brothers Big House Museum in Macon Georgia. I presented the instrument to the Museum during a special weekend celebration of the Band and was able to make music with some of the best musicians with whom I have ever played. This unexpectedly has become one of the high points in both my marquetry and guitar playing career.

Cutter: *Would you class the marquetry addition you add to your guitars as simply decoration or an art form?*

JIM: I see my artwork on guitars being somewhat like the old days when you would buy an album and take it home and spend time listening to the music and also looking at the artwork on the cover and you would enjoy both. I've created marquetry versions of some favourite guitar albums and put them on my guitars. On the second marquetry design I did for Gibson's Custom Shop, I created a scene that showed both the cover of Jimi Hendrix's *Are You Experienced* album and John Mayall and the Bluesbreakers with Eric Clapton. Both were groundbreaking and influenced my own playing greatly.

Cutter: *What type of glue would you use to adhere the marquetry 'lay-on' to the guitar body, and do you use a vacuum bag press to hold the lay-on to the body while the glue cures?*

JIM: I use West System epoxy for adhering my marquetry to the solid Honduras mahogany guitar bodies. I use a vacuum bag with a special jig that fits the guitar body before the neck is glued on. When I make marquetry art for the wall, I will generally use Titebond yellow glue.



Jim's guitar (on right) next to Duane Allman's Gibson Les Paul in the Allman Brother's Museum

Cutter: *What advice would you give to someone who is keen to follow your example and venture into decorating musical instruments with marquetry?*



Jim presents the Eat a Peach guitar to the Allman Brothers Band Museum at the Big House during their 2018 Member's Jam

JIM: I have to say that there are easier ways to make a living. I augment my guitar making with other woodworking projects and it all seems to work out. I am a guitar loving optimist, so my advice would be to give guitarmaking a try for at least a few years and see if you are finding it enjoyable and are also finding a market.

Cutter: *Many marqueterians regularly use coloured veneers in their work, so do you prefer to work with natural-coloured veneers or are you okay with using dyed veneers in your work?*

JIM: I use dyed veneers when it seems like they will add to the strength of the composition. Silas was nice enough to send me some boxes of old dyed veneers with very nice colours that are more natural looking than the bright colours that are available today. I prefer using natural woods as much as I can though.

Cutter: *When it comes to finishing your work, do you grain fill, flatten and varnish and finish yourself, or would you prefer to send the work out to a specialist in that field?*



Another of Jim's hobbies

JIM: Ah, that's a trick question! Finishing a guitar is challenging, it is quite a different skill than woodworking. It has taken me a while, but I have finally settled on a water-based guitar finish



Perfect book matching of veneers

that gives the look and feel of cellulose lacquer. After I have applied enough coats, I will sand from 600 grit up to 4000 grit and then take the guitar to a buffing wheel using a medium cut compound. This gives the guitar a nice look and feel that is lustrous, but not a high gloss. I want my guitars to look as if they are old and very well cared for. The lower gloss allows the marquetry to show up quite well, where a high gloss would show the reflections of the lights in the room.



Another beautiful marquetry guitar



Marquetarians from Hawaii to Spain gather for a social time after the opening of the show Jim curated titled: Free Verse: Explorations in Contemporary Marquetry held at the 'Center for Furniture Craftman' Messler Gallery in Rockport Maine this January

Cutter: *Have you ever used or incorporated Mother of Pearl as an additional element in your marquetry work?*

JIM: Yes, I have, I think, just once, to create a magical glittering guitar pick on a design that I called Lady Jane. There are many talented inlay artists working with shell that I respect. I just like wood veneer better.

Cutter: *The marquetry you produce is very artistic, so do you produce artwork in other forms, such as paintings etc?*

JIM: In addition to guitars, I will use marquetry work to create wall art and to embellish furniture. My wife and I sometimes collaborate in the world of print-making, which we both enjoy.

Cutter: *Do you find marquetry to be a relaxing hobby, or is it simply day to day work for you?*

JIM: I find marquetry neither relaxing nor tedious work, I think it is exciting to see the composition emerge as more and more pieces are taped together after-cutting. The double bevel style is very

active. You set up for a cut, make the cut, undo your pack, find the pieces you are keeping, tape them together, then set up for the next cut. Time flies!

Cutter: *Do you have any other crafts, hobbies or interests, which share your available time?*

JIM: Yes, I enjoy messing about with sailboats – we live on a lake here where we can sail – it's really a wonderful way to be on the water. Earlier in my wood-working career, I spent about five years as a boatbuilder. I like to find older boats that need some attention and have the tools and skills to get them back on the water.

Cutter: *Thanks Jim for a very interesting interview, especially for our editor!*

Editor's Note: The next two pages feature photos borrowed from Jim's own web pages where even more of his splendid guitar build work can be seen.



Jim's latest piece



Hand carved neck & head joint



Jim's Mandala Project



Jim's boats in the water. The one on the mooring is Jim's favorite, named "Cobweb," a 1948 Rhodes 18 center-board sloop that Jim fixed up some 20 years ago





Guitar titled 1966



Jim strikes a chord



Don't try to steal this design



An original marquetry design by Jim



Jim's Marquetry Class

Mounting a picture, affixing stringers, borders and cutting mitres

Part 1

by David Walker

Nothing spoils the visual aspect of a picture more than unequal or crooked borders or mitres that are not cut accurately. As with other features of Marquetry there is no absolute correct method of carrying out these tasks. Each marquetarian will have found the best method that works for them. The method that I describe in the following article is the one that I have found acceptable for me.

Glossary:

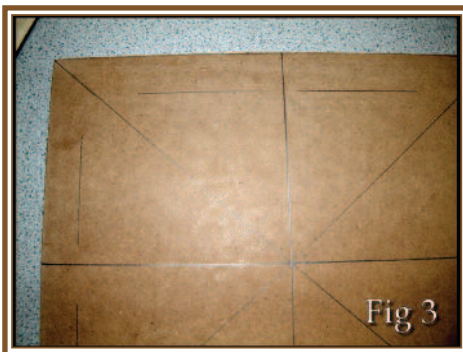
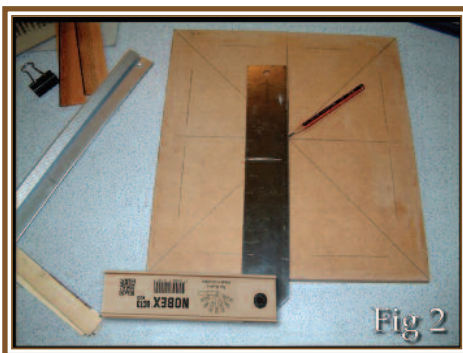
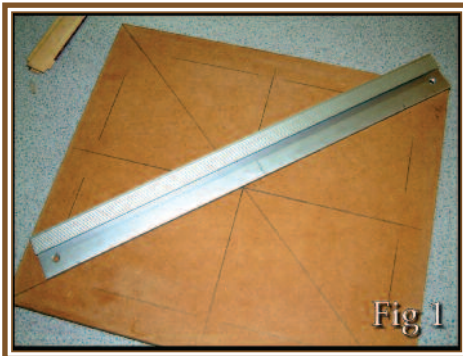
Borders: A veneer edge that surrounds the picture

Stringer: A thin strip of a contrasting veneers that separates the border from the picture. Can be a plain colour or a made up veneer.

Mitre: The method of joining the borders at the corners

Before we even start to attempt to mount the picture we have to ensure that both the picture and the baseboard are absolutely square. I use MDF board to glue the picture down. It is reasonably light and easy to cut and plane. Use an accurate set square and if necessary a metal straight-edge to mark up the board. The picture is squared up with a set square and knife.

The picture must obviously be mounted in the centre of the board. My method of finding the centre of the board and picture are the same. With a straight-edge, draw a pencil line from corner to corner on the base board. (Fig 1) Using the set square draw vertical and horizontal lines through the centre point, i.e. where the



diagonal lines cross, on the baseboard (Fig 2 & 3).

Before marking the picture fix veneer tape diagonally from the corners to prevent pencil lead marking the picture as this can be difficult to sand out, especially on light coloured veneers. (Fig 4 & 5)

With a straightedge draw lines from corner to corner but only mark with a pencil on the veneer tape. Where the diagonal lines cross will be the centre mark.

Draw horizontal and vertical lines, as before, on the face side of the picture, but again use veneer tape to draw on. (Fig 6 & 7)

The picture is now ready to glue down.



Position the picture on the board so that the centre lines on the picture marry up with the centre lines of the baseboard. (Fig 6 & 7) and draw around the picture with a pencil.

Remove the picture and the outline can be used to see where to spread the glue.



I use white PVA glue to lay the picture, but when using this type of adhesive a veneer press must be used to complete the pressing.

Spread a layer of glue on the board and then place the picture on the glued part and slide the picture about to exclude any air pockets again marrying up the lines at the centre and edges. (Fig 8).

*To be continued in a further edition of
The Marquetarian.*

Going by the Grain

BY ZSOLT NAGY

There has been a fascinating and ongoing conversation about artistic expression and original design in the pages of *The Marquetarian*. Reading about the decades-long debate on the necessity of originality in marquetry, I would like to take the discussion a step further—not just questioning whether artistic expression is needed in marquetry, but asking: How do we express our artistic vision precisely?

To place myself in this debate, I strongly believe that strictly copying someone else's work does not meet the fundamental criterion of art. I would define these as originality of intent, vision, aesthetics, and cultural or social connotation. Simply using another medium does not, in itself, bring new intention, perspective, or expression to the table. For a piece to be truly original, it must add something that was not present in the original artwork—introducing a new, distinct level of understanding.

Expanding the discussion on what qualifies as original artistic work, we may consider our own drawings, paintings, photographs, or even descriptions for AI-generated images as personal creative expressions (acknowledging that the latter remains highly controversial). However, the question arises: Why do we even bother translating these images—whether photographs, drawings, or paintings—into marquetry? There must be something inherent in the material itself that compels us to believe it would look authentic when crafted from wood. If not, then the process is not much different from copying someone else's work; the only distinction is that we have merely changed the authorship of what we are replicating.

From this perspective, I would argue that

using paintings, drawings, or prints, should serve only as an auxiliary step in the process of creating marquetry as an art form. Their sole purpose should be to assist the artist in envisioning, planning, and refining the final marquetry piece—much like notes for a novelist or experiments for a scientist. While they are valuable building blocks, they should never be mistaken for the final artwork itself.

This brings me to what I mean by going by the grain and how it relates to creating artistic marquetry. I am certain that many readers of *The Marquetarian* will be familiar with this approach, as most of us have used it at some point. This method prioritises the natural characteristics of wood—grain direction, colour, and contrast. It begins with only a vague idea of the final composition; nothing is drawn in advance. The picture gradually takes shape by following the grain direction of the veneers, minimising alterations, and continuously adjusting the final image according to the natural forms, patterns, and colours within the wood. Composition, perspective, structure, and contrast are all monitored throughout the process, ensuring harmony and balance as new veneer panels are added to the base. The artist plans only a few steps ahead, occasionally sketching contour lines with a pencil for guidance. However, nothing is rigidly predetermined—the veneer knife is guided by the grain, not by pre-drawn lines.

Technically, this approach can be described as a reversed window method. Instead of cutting a window in the base veneer first, we begin by cutting a panel from a veneer sheet, selecting it based on its natural grain pattern. We then position it in the composition, fix it atop the base veneer with tape, and trace around

it with a knife to create a precise opening for the piece to be inlaid.

I do not intend to suggest that this is the only valid approach to creating marquetry art, nor that it should always be followed in its purest form. In practice, it is often combined with other techniques, such as the traditional window method. However, I see this approach as a safe-

guard for producing true marquetry art. Artistic expression, after all, lies in our ability to see something within the grain pattern that others might overlook.

This seemingly small act of imagination has a profound impact on the originality of the final composition.

Zsolt Nagy



Table Top Jewellery Cabinet by Zsolt Nagy which achieved a VHC Class 7B in 2023



I am pleased to report that at the time of writing we are on the cusp of announcing our one thousandth member of our Facebook community.

I am enjoying seeing the inventive marquetry work appearing on our Facebook page, some of it is amazingly clever in content and artistic ability. It is also good to see some video content appearing, which can be very helpful in demonstrating techniques used by other practitioners of our arts and craft.

Our Facebook group is intended for people to share content and examples of their work, which is always pleasing to see. We do not have many, if any actually, rules to

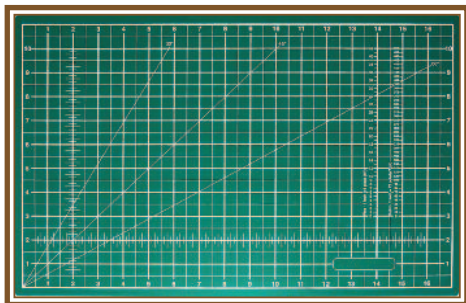
follow for our Facebook membership, and as long as any posted content is not intended for commercial purposes, that's absolutely fine.

I shall be stepping down as your Social Media Officer soon, mainly because my personal commitments really do limit my time for this post. If you are good with Facebook etc, why not consider taking over? Just let our editor know - thanks.

If you, dear reader, have something you would like to show the rest of us and indeed, the world, featuring your work or marquetry technique, why not post it on our Facebook page? Happy cutting friends.

Karen.

VIC'S MARQUETRY TIPS



Of course you all easily recognise the picture above, it is a self healing cutting mat, such as you are probably using already. Indeed, so am I, it's standard fare for most marquetryans.

But if you are in the unfortunate position of not having a cutting mat available, or have mislaid it, what can you turn to as an alternative? Well, luckily there are other items around which we can make

use of in a marquetry emergency. The first being a domestic vegetable chopping board. Although I would advise against using your better half's board which is used for preparing food, that would not go down well and you could well end up in the proverbial dog house for such a misdeed! So be advised there.

You could also try cardboard: such as a thick piece of cardboard, which can provide a sturdy surface for cutting. Wooden board: A scrap piece of plywood or a wooden cutting board can work well for cutting. Obviously watch your cutting tip as that can get broken or dulled due to the harder nature of wood as opposed to a dedicated self healing cutting mat.

A rubber bath mat is a good alternative because it can be sanitised easily and used over and over again. Or, a silicone baking mat could also be used instead.

PALM SANDERS

Even if you are preparing a rough wood surface or stripping an existing finish, an orbital sander achieves smooth, polished results. Unlike belt sanders which only move in one direction, these handheld power sanders use a circular sanding pad that both rotates and incorporates a slightly oval orbit. The combination of these motions reduces the chances of unintentional swirls on your unfinished or varnished marquetry surface.

Orbital sanders are built with a hook and loop pad which uses removable sanding discs, so as long as you have a wide enough range of sanding discs on hand, the tool is versatile enough for heavy-duty material removal, as well as fine finishing tasks, like finishing your marquetry picture masterpiece.

This sander, which a pal of mine lent me, was such a delight to use that I didn't want to return it after enjoying using it - so I bought one for myself and it has had quite a lot of use since. I don't regret buying it at all. Compared to my old sander, the Makita Palm sander glides effortlessly and quietly over the work, is easily controllable with one hand (which is an advantage in that the picture can be held still with the other without the need for clamping devices) and it quickly levels the surface. With care, the edges of a picture can also be done but one needs to guard against rounding corners. It is economical on abrasive paper as a sheet cut into four pieces e.g. it is a $\frac{1}{4}$ sheet sander and I have successfully used it with a range of different papers from 100 grit down to 1200, aluminium oxide/garnet wet and dry.

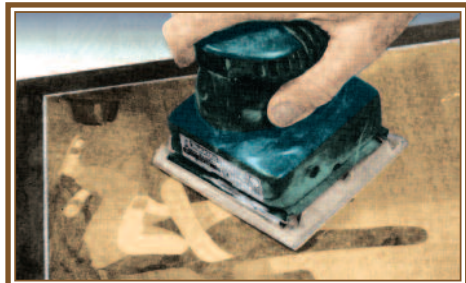
Just one small niggle about this (and some other "plug in" electrical tools). Why do they put such stiff cables on them?



The Makita palm sander - this is the 18 volt battery operated version

More flexible cables are available and would add to the comfort and convenience of using the tool.

But, as you see in the photo above, these tools are available in battery driven format. I find them very convenient as they have no trailing cables and are as powerful as the mains driven examples.



Ernie Ives with an earlier Makita mains driven palm sander

As you may have guessed, I got mine from Amazon where they have plenty of models from many manufacturers with prices ranging from around £30 to over £100. But for a good make such as the Makita featured here, it is available for around the £80 to £90 mark at today's prices. A jolly good piece of kit is this.

Still can't find that perfect veneer?

Then why not visit Wood Veneers ebay shop at
www.ebay.co.uk/str/woodveneers
where you can find everything you could possibly
need from veneer boxes, sample packs,
individual samples, veneer tape and so much more.

If you can't find what you need from our 1500
plus listings just contact Wood Veneers and
we will aim to cover your bespoke requirements

Phone : 01277 890616

Email : info@woodveneers.co.uk

Buy 2 sample packs receive a BONUS pack completely free

We are running a new promotion that applies to our samples, sample packs, micro bundles and marquetry bargain boxes.

If you're a member of the marquetry society (which you are if reading this!), simply add the following message to your next order:

"I'm a member of the marquetry society, help me be creative!"

Your order will be automatically topped up, it costs you absolutely nothing, just add the magic words and you'll get extra stuff for FREE!



L A P E L B A D G E S

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**



L A P E L B A D G E S

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.

The 2024 International Pictures

Thanks go to Peter White for taking the photographs



Left: 123 - VHC Class 1 - 19 x 25 cms

“Lighthouse” by Ben Comery of the Sutton Coldfield Group

AT: *This has a wild and desolate look, well chosen sky, well cut with a good finish. Really good borders and mitres. Lighthouse a bit flat looking, could have done with some sand shading along the edges, but that will come in time. Very well done*

MR: *I particularly like the veneer chosen for the sky. The lighthouse and seagull are boldly represented. It may have got a higher award with different foreground veneers*

DB: *The lighthouse stood out against the stormy sky, with seagulls in the foreground. Good tight cutting.*

Ed: *This is an excellent piece of work for class 1.*

Right: 736 - Class 7B - 18 x 11 cms. “Trinket Box #3” by Ted Salvidge of the St Albans Group

AT: *Nice box, burr veneer lid with coloured veneer on four sides. Not much marquetry, just triangles and circles. Good effort though, well done.*

MR: *This piece would have benefited from more marquetry.*

DB: *Nice little box, but I am not sure about the use of burr veneer and the coloured veneer together. Well cut and finished.*

Ed: *A well made box with interesting colouring.*



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 508 - HC Class 5 - 44 x 27 cms

“Cathy from Wuthering Heights” by Les Dimes of the Harrow Group

AT: Nicely set in American gum, an almost frightened look makes this another one to look good on a wall. Lots of good work on hair, but some small faults on cutting on face. Nicely finished.

MR: You can almost feel the wind blowing through the girl's hair, and sense clouds scudding by in the background.



DB: There has been a lot of very good portraiture in this year's competition and this is no exception. With the wind blowing through her hair it works well with rugged background.

Ed: Quality work in portraiture from Les.

Left: 119 - Class 1 - 15 x 19cms

“Balancing Elephants” by Barbara Hale of the St. Albans Group

AT: Nice idea, well done using all different types of veneers. The fiddleback sycamore suits the background. Well done.

MR: A pleasing cleanly cut novelty image.

DB: Bottoms up! Clever little picture, cutting good and an accurate border.

Ed: I do rather like this amusing cartoon style of an unusual subject. A clever idea which would have suited the old Beatles cartoon film of the ‘Yellow Submarine’. Oops, showing my age there!



Right: 809 - 3rd Class 8 - 16 x 25cms

“Ixias (after Rennie Mackintosh)” by Philip Green of the Staffordshire Group

AT: Cutting in general very good. Not sure about lily leaves. Background complements subject. Good work well done.

MR: A simple design portrayed with sensitive use of a pink veneer and some good fine line work.

DB: A simple design, with a lot of very good fine line work.

Ed: Goodness me, that's a heck of a lot of fine line work there Philip. Very cleanly done with some wonderful ‘splodges’ of paint effect cut in.

That fine line work must have been a real stinker to cut in, there is a lot more of it than you first realise. No glue stains to be seen, which is very applaudable. Well cut and finished.



Right: 536 (also 523!) - 2nd Class 5 - 33 x 47 cms

“Just One Run Needed” by Jean Robinson of the Sutton Coldfield Group

AT: *Lazy Sunday afternoon, sun shining, people relaxing watching cricket (done this many times). Superb cutting, the work on the trees alone is tremendous, shadows just right. Cutting on the clothes and players great. Nice borders and flat finish. Keep this up. Well done.*

MR: *An accurately cut tranquil scene of summer in England with good veneer selection. The right hand foreground elements are well represented. A sense of depth has been achieved without having to mute the background colours.*

DB: *As a cricket fan myself that could be me under the hat, there is a lot of very fine detail, and that looks like a cricket sky just about to rain.*



Left: 113 - 3rd Class 1 - 25cms circular

“St Albans Abbey from Verulamium” by Patti Edwards of the St. Albans Group



AT: *Good attempt at round picture, top half really nice with some good fragmentation, but let down a bit by some plain looking trees in middle. Well cut for a beginner. Finish a bit bumpy, needs sanding flat and re-finishing to be perfect. Well done*

MR: *One of the more effective pictures using predominately dyed veneers A pleasant artistic image. Perhaps the cloud shapes in the sky would have been better left out.*

DB: *I liked the affect of the fragmentation leaves at the top of the picture, and the trees in the background, the board is excellently cut.*

Right: 620 - HC Class 6A - Miniature

“London Icons” by Brian Freeman of the Sutton Coldfield Group

AT: *Good, mostly coloured veneers. Not one of Brian's best.*

MR: *Some tiny lettering, on the telephone box. Although the 3 icons are the same colour, they have been made to stand out from each other.*

DB: *To me these are icons can remember catching a number 5 route master to get to work, posting letters into post box, and walking around the corner to make a phone call the good old days.*



Right: 112 - Class 1 - 26 x 20cms

“Motor Bike Ride” by Jerry Leach of the Staffordshire Group

AT: Background hills and road veneers set off the bike, which is cut really well. Coloured veneers, but suits the subject. Really well done

MR: The hills and road are well represented. The shading gives depth to the motor bike fairing.

DB: Looks like they were enjoying the ride. Nicely cut and good use of the veneers in the background.



Left: 602 - Class 6A - Miniature

“Pecking Order” by Brian Freeman of the Sutton Coldfield Group

AT: Very nicely cut chickens. Good choice of veneers. Another of Brian’s classics.

MR: Some fine detail in the hens.

DB: A nicely cut and well finished miniature picture.

Ed: Perfect detail work in this very small picture by Brian. But then I am always praising Brian for producing such miniature work that I can only aspire to.



Below: 203 - 1st Class 2 - 51 x 32 cms

“Day and Night (Inspired by M.C.Escher)” by David Kelmanson of the Sutton Coldfield Group

AT: What difference from the Winning Card kit picture. Looking down from above, the different veneers used for the fields are superb. The small towns either side of the bottom would have done credit to miniatures. Flat and lovely finish. Well done David.

MR: The fields are made up of many different but subtly contrasting veneers which achieve a smooth transition from light to dark. The light and dark border strips work well.

DB: A clever concept with the light birds in the dark background and the dark birds in the light background, and with the light and dark border.

Ed: David is getting rather good at this marquetry thing. Rosebowl can’t be too far off methinks!



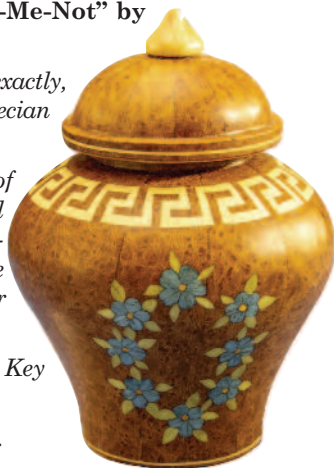
Right: 763 - 3rd Class 7C - No size given - “Forget-Me-Not” by Martin Bray of the St Albans Group

AT: *Excellent, how does Martin work out the designs to fit exactly, then stick on round shapes? Really delicate flowers and a Grecian key pattern on the lovely turned pot. Very well done.*

MR: *The tightness of the veneer joints over the surface of this urn shaped container is extraordinary. With all exhibits in this class being of a high standard it is difficult to decide which piece should only get 3rd prize. The understated, but very attractive, floral design is another attraction of this piece.*

DB: *This little shaped vase is perfect with a Greek Key design around the top and forget-me-nots on the body.*

Ed: *Martin sure has taken the miniature applied crown.*



Left: 764 - HC Class 7C - No size given

“Table One” by Martin Bray of the St Albans Group

AT: *More from Martin. Nice little table, and not so elaborate as in the past, but would look good in a doll’s house. Well done.*

MR: *All of the intersecting lines on the base, pedestal, and top of this small table line up perfectly.*

DB: *Table one, by the standards of the other pieces in this class, is quite plain but the fine line work is spot on.*

Ed: *Well, what else is there to say with this amazing example of miniature applied work? Martin does it again, same as Brian Freeman and Les Dimes. They all have the knack of knocking out countless examples of superb marquetry.*



Right: 802 - Class 8 - 23 x 31 cms

“Cormorant Fisherman” by Les Dimes of the Harrow Group

AT: *Atmospheric, showing how to use well chosen veneers to tell the story. Reflections in the water terrific. Well done.*

MR: *Portrays a simple but rather tranquil image of this ancient practice.*

DB: *I like how the three veneers have been used, the reflection in the water works very well.*

Ed: *Here Les does it again. I can only be envious at such ability to produce copious amounts of quality work.*



Right: 101 - 2nd Class 1 - 29 x 20 cms

“Thorpe in the Hollow” by David Waldron of the Staffordshire Group

AT: *Good choice of veneers used really well. Nicely cut and well finished, good perspective. Nice borders and mitres. One for the future.*

MR: *A tranquil village scene. Good choice of veneers for the walls. The slivers/fragmentation used for the hay looks realistic.*

DB: *Some nice detail in this picture, Good use of veneers, and well cut and finished.*



Left: 102 - HC Class 1 - 31 x 25 cms

“Venice” by David Waldron of the Staffordshire Group

AT: *Another nice well cut and clean picture. Good perspective and choice of veneers. Good mitres, but grain of the walnut needs to be straightened otherwise the picture looks wonky!*

MR: *A simple but pleasant Venice scene with subtle contrast between the various elements of the picture. The veneer chosen for the canal gives a sense of movement.*

DB: *A good perspective in this picture, I liked the veneers used for the bridge.*

The reflections of the bridge and gondola in the water work well.

Ed: *A nicely atmospheric view of a Venetian canal. Jolly good work.*

Right: 506 - Class 5 - 52 x 44 cms “The Flirtation (aft. Eugene DeBlass 1843-1932)” by Les Dimes of the Harrow Group

AT: *Lovely period feel about this piece, when young women looked beautiful and didn't play rough games like Football, etc. Good choice of veneers and well cut. Just a nice warm picture. Well done.*

MR: *The figures are well represented particularly the man, maybe the picture would have been enhanced further with more subdued wall tones.*

DB: *The second young lady looks to be shy at the man's advances. Nicely cut faces and I like the brickwork in the background.*

Ed: *I do like these pictures from Les.*



Right: 503 - HC Class 5 - 25 x 38 cms

“Poor Girl (aft. Michael Anger)” by Les Dimes of the Harrow Group

AT: *Determined look and the lovely headscarf and hair make this the sort of picture to hang on the wall. Some minor cutting faults, but overall well finished.*

MR: *Dyed and natural veneers have been melded together in a subtle way. The different veneers chosen for the hood also blend together nicely. Light and shadow in the face portray strong and moody facial features.*

DB: *There are nice features with the face and hair and some very good detail in the clothing.*

Ed: *And here we have another example of Les's talents with portrait work in the medium of marquetry.*



Left: 204 - 2nd Class 2 - 35 x 27 cms

“Seagulls over Brighton's West Pier” by David Kelmanson of the Sutton Coldfield Group

AT: *Same member as did Day and Night, but once again what a difference when leaving kits and given a free hand. The pier and gulls, great, aided by a nice sky veneer. The piece of man-made veneer just about works. The cutting, the clean flat finish all superb. One to watch!*

MR: *Well chosen background veneer and overall a good composition. Bold contrast between the birds and background gives a sense that the larger gull is about to fly out of the picture.*

DB: *I particularly liked the detail in the seagulls wings. Good detailed cutting in the remains of the pier.*

Ed: *David's on his way to the Rosebowl before too long!*

Right: 110 - Class 1 - 27 x 37 cms “I Won't Hurt You, I Promise” by George Toll an Independent Member

AT: *Had trouble making subject at first. Good cartoon, good veneer choice, and good cutting, but like George's other entries, the borders and board were poor and broken. But good attempt.*

MR: *A very amusing and well cut image, let down a little by the ragged edge to the border and dirty appearance of the picture surface*

DB: *A nice cartoon cat, however there is room for improvements with the cutting and the mitres.*

Ed: *Superb!*





Left: 804 - HC Class 8 - 26 x 39cms - “Daniel Craig as James Bond” by Les Dimes of the Harrow Group

AT: *Unmistakable likeness, but let down a bit by some poor cutting, but a nice finish.*

MR: *A very recognisable portrait of the well-known actor. The walnut veneer works well over the shoulder of the jacket.*

DB: *A good portrait of Daniel Craig as James Bond ready for action.*

Ed: *I may be daft, but I do like all of those James Bond films, even the George Lazenby one. The Daniel Craig ones especially, as they had ‘menace’ to them. This portrait really displays that quality.*

Right: 811 - 2nd Class 8 - 23 x 45 cms



“Robin” by Ivor Bagley of the St. Albans Group

AT: *Another portrait in the same mould as the Mahatma Ghandi. Nicely set in maple, lovely use of burr, nicely cut, and good finish.*

MR: *The facial features have been rendered lifelike with just enough detail to produce a striking image.*

DB: *Clever use of the veneers to create an excellent portrait of Robin Williams.*

Ed: *A top level portrait in just three veneers. This shows that you do not need to add every outline, your mind and eye will fill those details in, as you can see in Ivor’s portrait of Robin.*

Judges’ Notes on the Cover Pictures

Front Cover - 618 1st Class 6A - “Little Morton Hall 2” by Brian Freeman of the Sutton Coldfield Group

AT: *Another of Brian’s. I liked this one. Good fragmented trees. All of Brian’s work is fabulous. Just the subject matter changes. I reckon Brian must keep his collection of veneers in a match box !*

MR: *Expressive moody sky veneer. Some very fine detail in this piece particularly in the house and small figures. Excellent use of fragmentation and sliverisation in the foreground plants and trees.*

DB: *A lot of very fine detail in the buildings, with beautiful fragmentation in the trees and bushes, the reflection of the bushes in the water is excellent.*

Ed: *A good picture done in miniature.*

Back Cover - 622 - 3rd Class 6A - miniature “Kingfishers” by Elizabeth Head of the Staffordshire Group

AT: *Different. Birds made up of fragmentation and slivers.*

MR *Skilful use of fragmentation has given shape and texture to the birds whilst retaining the natural turquoise colour which a plain piece of dyed veneer would not have achieved. The use of sliverisation for the reeds/rushes gives them a natural look.*

DB: *The fragmentation on the two birds is ok, the top bird breast is more like slivers, and the leaves are mixture of both, but it seems to work.*

Ed: *I do like the way the sliverisation and fragmentation all work together to give a very pleasing view of two Kingfishers.*

Readers Letters

THOSE ABOUT TO DYE.

Hands are held up in horror. Some Marquetarians actually use dyed wood and why not?

Of course, the aim of an artist in wood veneers is to achieve a finished work by using the natural colours and characteristics of his veneer. For the most part this sets no problem for the competent marquetarian. However, should an artist in wood limit the range of subjects to which he can apply his art because the subject requires a bright colour? There must be occasions when an adventurous artist in wood must use a dyed veneer to achieve an unusual effect.

We must not condemn the use of such dyed veneers out of hand. I for one will not limit my range of subjects and will not regard myself as unethical when I use, after considerable thought, a dyed veneer.

What of sand shading? Are we not changing the natural colour of veneer by scorching? Yet marquetarians employing such techniques are rarely criticised and often highly praised.

Our friends, who are recognised as Artists in paint, also use bits of paper, tin, old iron, feathers and a wealth of materials that are not paint applied by a brush. They are still 'artists' but they do not limit their range.

Marquetarians, at least, confine themselves to wood veneers natural or otherwise. The skill in choosing, cutting, laying and finishing is necessary with any veneer be it natural or dyed.

Brian Heard

Hello Brian,

This is a long standing argument by the purists in our marquetry movement. Purists do not like to see our art and craft adulterated by easy to cut dyed veneers, they prefer to see the natural tones of the

wood and its grain in its purest form without the unnatural influence of petro chemical garish colouring.

Personally I find converting the designs (my own or otherwise) for my marquetry projects to sepia on my computers by using a graphics program, it gives me a good idea of what the finished marquetry piece will hopefully look like.

It works for me, but others may, and probably do, prefer other ways of working. I am primarily an artist, not a woodworker, and so I am used to making up and inventing designs and artwork. And so, marquetry as a medium throws up interesting challenges of how to produce an artwork in the medium of natural wood veneers as opposed to my regular oil and water colour paints and other like media. It is indeed a fascinating challenge, but very enjoyable nonetheless. However, if you like to use dyed veneers in your marquetry, then go for it. Hopefully it will enhance your picture, but don't let it dominate. Let it just add something that could not be obtained any other way.

Hope those personal thoughts help, but don't use them as guidance for choosing wether or not to use dyed veneers in your own marquetry work - it's your preference to choose here.

Alan.

ABOUT PORTRAITS IN MARQUETRY

Hi Mr Editor,

I have recently joined The Marquetry Society and I note that you have kindly offered to give advice on portraiture. I used to do marquetry some years back, but I turned to art to draw better pictures.

I have drawn many faces but I am rather puzzled about constructing them in veneer. Can a full face be done or is a three-quarter profile more effective, or side face easier? Also, can success be achieved with separate pieces of veneer or should one use one piece

of veneer with suitable shading?

Harry Bennett

Hello Harry,

If tackled carefully and systematically the full face, three-quarter or side face can all be done equally well, and success can certainly be achieved with separate veneers.

Portraiture in marquetry covers a very wide field indeed as no two faces are exactly alike. Consider for example faces that are aged, childish, delicate, tough, weatherbeaten, negroid, and so on. From this we can readily see that the actual veneers to be used will, of necessity, vary in each and every face.

The first step is to take a very long and very serious look at the portrait under consideration, noting most carefully each and every change in colour intensity. Then separate each change, however small, with a very fine line, systematically working over the whole picture until it is completely marked up, ensuring that no line ends in mid-air, so to speak, as each line represents a cut and each cut must surround a separate piece of veneer in the final picture. Here we have our line drawing.

Now carefully re-examine the original subject, pick out the brightest highlight and select a veneer as near as possible to this in colour, texture and appearance. Repeat this with the deepest shadow in the face itself. Having settled on these two extreme veneers, the next thing to do is to decide just how many intermediate shades are necessary to obtain the desired result. This number can of course vary from subject to subject, but once the selections have been made, they are the only veneers to be used for all the fleshy parts of the face itself.

By repeating this procedure for the hair, the eyes, and to a lesser extent, the clothing, a lifelike portrait should be readily obtainable provided sufficient care has also been taken throughout to ensure that the grain directions have also been used to best effect.

Alan.

MONOTONY IN MARQUETRY

Dear Sir,

Would you agree with me that we marquetarians are getting too hidebound and are producing pictures of a somewhat monotonous sameness? One of your readers appears to be of the same mind according to their letter in a recent issue of *The Marquetarian*. I rather liked their idea of dispensing with borders and abutting veneers over the edge of the mounting board to give the effect of solid inlay work.

Not every picture would benefit by this technique, but the general idea is one that would help to get away from the stereotyped marquetry "Masterpiece".

I may be alone in this, but I feel that to produce a picture which is a faithful photographic reproduction of the original is not the marquetry ideal.

Every art must grow and change, or it dies; the camera and the artist's brush have carried accurate portrayal to its limits. Surely, we should now help the growth of pictorial marquetry by exploring other avenues open to our craft. As an example, I give the following: -

In the year 2000 I visited a marquetry exhibition held by the Society in Bromley, Kent. It was a National Exhibition and was my first introduction to marquetry.

With one or two exceptions I have forgotten the actual details of the work displayed but one has stayed in my mind all these years. It was a panel of marquetry and low relief combined, and it fascinated me by its almost three-dimensional effect. The picture showed an estuary or river at low tide bounded by grassy banks. A few rowing boats and other small vessels lay imbedded in the sand or mud below the banks.

The important point was that only the boats in the middle and far distance were in true marquetry; the boats in the immediate foreground were in low relief — standing out from the picture by about a quarter of an inch. Those in the middle foreground were only slightly raised from

the body of the picture, and as I have said, the boats in the background were inlaid in the normal manner.

The total effect was striking, and the technique could be used to advantage in other types of pictures.

I should be glad to have the opinions of other members on this style of work; I believe that this method of using low relief is originally Chinese.

Well, Mr. Editor, should we branch out into other forms?

Ernie Hawkins.

Hello Ernie,

Many thanks for your observations and ideas about creating a sort of decoupage effect in the medium of marquetry. Sadly the traditionalists do tend to frown on anything that is not seen as marquetry in the form laid down in our constitution definition.

I am all for new ideas in the medium of marquetry. Some of our members have indeed experimented with unusual techniques in the past, but usually they get dismissed when it comes to judging at our National Exhibitions, and so, we are rather stuck with the traditional standards of many decades ago. Which is a shame because there are a great many good ideas out there.

Although we somewhat reluctantly accept laser cut marquetry these days, it still seems to lack approval when it comes to judging at our exhibitions, but why? Laser cutting still requires expertise when cutting, but obviously of a different sort.

If you check out the article by Susan Bart on page 22 of this edition of The Marquetarian you will see that an exhibition of new ideas in marquetry has taken place earlier this year in America. I have seen the photos of the exhibits, and I have to say that they are inspiring. So, is it time for us to take our blinkers off and see what fine work others are doing around the world and expand our own horizons?

Alan.

CONCERNING THOSE 'BIRDS ON A TWIG'

Hello Alan

See below those two 'hidden' mourning doves sitting on a snowy twig which you could not spot.

Best Regards

John Sedgwick



Hello John,

Many thanks for clearing that question up for me, and probably for quite a few others as well I imagine. I have to say that once it is pointed out, it becomes obvious.

It certainly is a clever idea though. Well done John.

Alan

BAKING SODA & HAREWOOD.

Dear Editor,

I have tried a suggestion made by a member of my group who heard from a Scottish member that it was useful to add baking soda (otherwise known as bicarbonate of soda) to the ferrous sulphate solution to obtain a darker shade of harewood. The result was very dramatic. I placed some sycamore to obtain harewood, I then added the baking soda to the solution and placed some more sycamore in this solution, the result was a harewood several shades darker.

It sounded to me like a useful method, so I made a ferrous sulphate solution by adding two tablespoons ferrous sulphate to 2 litres tap water. On dividing this solution into two trays I added one teaspoon baking soda to one tray. It frothed a little when stirred in. I tried two different lots of sycamore and one of ash. Result: all the pieces of sycamore were identical but the ash piece that had been in the added soda solution was marginally darker. Certainly, none of the pieces was dramatically darker.

Why, why, why, I asked myself. The only possible answer I could come up with was that the southern England water is already 'hard' and thus has a fairly high pH. Perhaps the Scottish water is softer (more acid rain?) and adding the baking soda brings the pH up nearer to ours. Its only a guess but perhaps one (or more) of the readers in soft water areas might try the experiment and let us know the results.

Normally I add left over tea to the harewood bath and that does seem to have a darkening effect. Some members I know add tea bags, but I had trouble with dark patches on the harewood where the veneer had rested on the bags. Obviously, the object in both cases is to add tannin to the solution. Grape tannin for home brewing also works but is much stronger and less controllable.

John Witney

Hello John,

Well, I knew about the tea bags added to the sulphate solution to make the darkening effect stronger, Alf Murtell late of the Redbridge Group told me about that one, but adding bicarbonate of soda to the sulphate solution is a new one to me.

I shall have to experiment and see what results I can come up with. If it works for me I will let the readers know the outcome. Grape tannin also sounds interesting, but presumably that would be from red wine I assume, or am I wrong there?

Alan.

A SENIOR CITIZEN DEFINED

Hello Alan,

Here is an amusing description of a pensioner (senior Citizen) I found lurking in an old copy of *The Marquetarian* bundled away in my loft. I thought it so accurate that I had to share it with you and the rest of our readers/members.

"A senior citizen is one who was here before the pill, television, frozen food, credit cards, ball-point pens, jet engines and supersonic flights, and the moon was for doing our courting under, not for walking on.

For us time-sharing meant togetherness, and chips one ate with fish bought in pennyworths. Hardware was hard-wearing and there was no such thing as software.

We were before panty-hose and drip-dry clothes, and dish washers were husbands, not an electric appliance. We had hot water bottles, not electric blankets.

We got married first and then lived together - how quaint. Girls wore liberty bodices and Peter Pan collars and thought cleavages were something to do with butchers.

Our time was before Batman, vitamin pills, disposable nappies, pizzas, instant coffee, Chinese takeaways or super-markets, and soap was for washing with.

In our day cigarette smoking was fashionable, grass for mowing, and pot used for stew and dumplings. To be gay was to be the life and soul of a party, while aids meant beauty creams, trusses and wigs.

Today's Senior Citizens are a hardy bunch when you think how the world around us has changed.

We are survivors."

Ben Gretton

Hello Ben,

Goodness me, that is sure an apt description of us ancients. Interestingly the other day when I filled my car up with petrol, the price came to £40.03, so I said to the cashier, I've got the odd "thrupence" - "that makes you sound old" she replied!

Alan.

The Cabinet Scraper

The cabinet scraper is to sandpaper what the fretsaw is to the knife.

Both scraper and fretsaw have a 'learning curve', a period of investment of a lot of time and some cash during which it is easy to conclude that they are techniques for ruining good work whose only virtue is the speed which they do so! Both devices, once mastered, allow results to be achieved easily that would be difficult or impossible with the superficially simpler methods. Part of craftsmanship is, after all, the learning of ways to make skill unnecessary.

A scraper is simply a flat piece of good quality steel. Sizes vary, but a typical one is 6" x 3" x 1/32" thick. I was pleasantly surprised to discover one in a local hardware shop. Amazon also advertise them. A cutting edge is formed by producing a microscopic burr or lip along the long edge of the scraper. When this is drawn firmly over a wooden surface it planes down the high-spots and leaves a smooth and even finish - once you have learned how.

A quite useful home-made scraper can be constructed by gluing a piece of hacksaw blade into a slot cut along the end of a piece of wood - teeth inwards. However, for ease of sharpening and use the conventional flat, all metal design is usually better.

Learning how to prepare the scraper is the first step. Even if you buy one ready sharpened, it will not stay that way for long. Scraping is a very efficient method, but you must be prepared to spend a significant minority of your scraping time in sharpening the blade. The first essential step is to round the corners, using first a file and then a stone. One is supposed to scrape with the blade slightly flexed so that the corners do not touch down, but such skills come slowly, and your pictures

can grow some nasty scratches if you do not take this precaution. Take care that the corners are rounded in all directions with no sharp points or edges.

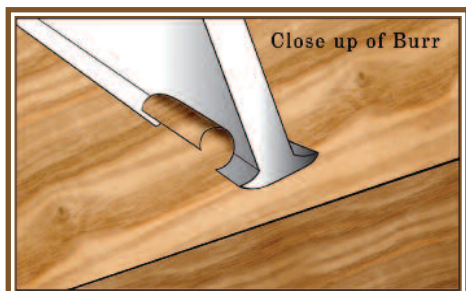
What you see here on the right is your editor's "lazy" version of the classic cabinet scraper. It is fitted with removeable and replaceable scraper blades that have been preformed and sharpened by the manufacturers. There is none of that forming a burr and honing that I am going to show you later in this article, required with this scraper tool.

These are now looked upon as 'vintage' tools and only seem to be available as used items. The question then arises as to the availability of replacement scraper blades for these tools. Luckily I still have a couple of unused spares, but I think that I had better take care of them and try to master my 'standard' cabinet scraper tools, you know, it's those ones that look like a rectangular piece of metal such as the one used in our photo below. These are the ones you bend into a curved



Showing a cabinet scraper in use

shape in order to use them in the manner they are designed for. But it's the sharpening that I find tricky, so let's get on with the theme of this article.



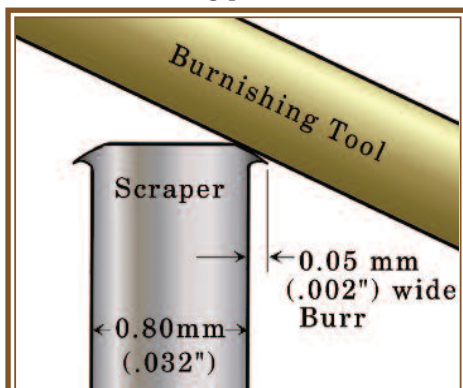
The principle of the cabinet scraper is to 'scrape off' waste veneer in a clean manner

Before the sharpening stage the working edges should, if necessary, be ground smooth and square on a flat hand-stone. Hold the scraper vertical and remember to keep it at a small angle to the direction of movement to avoid wearing grooves in the stone. Next, if the blade has already been used once, the old burr must be removed by rubbing the scraper flat on the stone. Use your fingers to distribute pressure evenly along the edge as you do this.

For the sharpening stage, the blade must be held firmly in a vice or clamped somehow to an immovable object. Since you will want to sharpen both edges along both long sides at a session, be sure that the vice will not crush the first pair of edges while you are making the second! The actual sharpening is done by running a hard, sharp object along the edge with firm pressure to push a lip of metal over into a burr shape. Special sharpeners can be bought, e.g. from Axminster Tools, etc.

I use a tungsten-carbide lathe tool. All that is required is a sharp square edge in a very hard material. A suitable tool could probably be ground from an old file or (with a suitable green-grit wheel) from a tungsten-carbide masonry drill or tile cutter, but remember that the tool must be sharpened so that you can apply considerable pressure.

The sharpening movement itself is as if you were spreading butter along the edge of the scraper. It helps to apply a little oil to the edge first. The sharp end of the sharpener should be trailed along the scraper's edge, with the front of the sharpener raised slightly. The end of the sharpener towards you should be tilted down slightly to concentrate pressure on the front edge of the scraper. It is a two-handed job to apply enough downwards force, and you should plan in advance what will happen when you slip off the end of the scraper - without care this job can bring business to the makers of sticking plaster.



The basic view of a demonstration of how the cutting burr is formed



Using a burnisher to form the cutting burr (or cutting lip)

It has been known to use a large screwdriver as a burnishing tool. The shaft of the screwdriver apparently does a good job.



Forming the cutting burr

Once an edge has been formed, try it out on a rough piece of wood. If it does not scrape efficiently, or if the cutting edge is not perfectly even, grind it off and try again. Rarely will a second attempt without grinding off produce good results. Be particularly ruthless if you have faltered and produced a protrusion at some point along the edge as this can score your work. On the other hand, do not be disheartened if you slip and cut a groove in the flat face of the scraper. Grind it down, but the slight dip that will then forever be in that edge seems to do no harm. Before using the newly sharpened scraper, it is as well to wash both it and your hands to remove any oil.

In use, the scraper is held in both hands, fingers on top, thumbs underneath, sloping towards you at an angle of about 30 degrees up from the work. The best angle varies from edge to edge so you must experiment. Pressure should never be more than the weight of your arms, less if there is any risk of plucking. It is often useful to move the thumbs to the ends of the scraper so that the ends can be bent slightly away from the work and only the central part cuts. Scrape with the grain whenever possible, but it is normally possible to scrape cross-grain quite safely provided that the scraper is held askew so that the cutting edge is at an angle to the direction of movement and to the grain. Used this way the blade never pulls at a wood fibre along all its length at once and is therefore much less likely

to dislodge it. The same goes for scraping across straight joins in the picture, stringers etc., although, it is true to say, scraping is always a little dodgy over badly fitting joins.

I always work with a small vacuum cleaner to hand and suck up the shaving dust at regular intervals. Besides keeping things clean, it allows you to see when an edge has stopped cutting efficiently and to select the best working angle.



The cabinet scraper used the correct way



Another form of cabinet scraper

The scraper can be used for cleaning sticky tape off a picture, although in this application there is always the hazard that a small piece of gunge will stick in the cutting edge and squash (rather than cut) a groove into the picture. Such damage will usually largely heal itself if moistened and left for a while. As a last resort you can try a clothes steam iron and brown paper to fix that problem.

Is it a Sell Out?

by Martin Schocke

To quote the master wordsmith William Shakespeare from one of his well respected speeches:

"To sell or not to sell, that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind of the
marquetarian to suffer,
The cuts and bruises, and yet gain no fortune,
Or to take up knife and fretsaw against a
sea of troubled peers,
And by opposing, sell his work and end
enjoyment thereof?"

Isn't that how Hamlet put it? Check your annotated Shakespeare again. The real question was "To be or not to be?", and for us the pivot turns on "BE" what?

The controversy flames on, whether to sell the marquetry over which you've invested so many tedious hours, impaled fingers, and dust engorged lungs, or to fling it all off in one fatal acceptance of a few pounds' compensation.

For us to look objectively at this subject we must start with individuals, for as many craftsmen there are, so are the differing views of selling. In general, there are two basic camps; those who sell and those who don't. But perhaps the issue starts with asking, "Why are you a marquetarian? What pleasure do you gain from your art? Is it the satisfaction of a job well done, or something else?"

Our enjoyment and sense of fulfilment may be found at various points along the adventuresome path we traverse with each new creation. Merely finding a new and more challenging design can bring its rewards and whet the appetite of novice and master alike.

There is something thoroughly stimulating in the sheer contemplation of new and uncharted territory.

The excitement may well be the motivating force which continually goads the marquetarian forth to completion, invigorating him onward to greater heights. Certainly, there is also pleasure in enacting the craft itself, laying up your newly found design and beginning the meticulous assemblage of veneer. Those who are able to transcend from craftsmanship to artistry will find great joy in creating new ideas in such a unique medium. For marquetry is indeed an exacting craft. And most all would agree there is a certain satisfaction gained in completing the race you have run. For as "Faith without works is dead", so work with nothing to show for it is just many needless lacerations and self-inflicted futility.

Once your masterpiece is finished you are faced with a decision: to keep your prize or relinquish it to another either by gift or sale. Marquetry sold, as with any art, brings to some the sense of accomplishment that comes with the acceptance and approval of others. It fills a need which all have to greater or lesser degrees and often serves as an incentive to move on, sometimes in the face of discouragement.

Obviously, another award of a piece sold is the monetary gain which may enhance one's possibilities to continue work in marquetry or be a support as a livelihood. Sellers will often state arguments in favour of their recipients who enjoy marquetry as well as any and desire to adorn their living rooms with handcrafted art.

And lastly there is the marquetarian who sells or bestows by gift his works because he has a message to relay to those outside of him. This may take the form of religious art destined for a church altar where many will view and be stirred to worship.

Non-selling craftsmen enjoy seeing marquetry at home, gracing their work area or spouse’s sewing room. With such an investment in time and effort, it’s relaxing to see the fruits of your labour, and once sold, it may never be seen again.

These are the craftsmen for whom the love of their work alone is rewarding and nothing can repay the efforts. Money speaks to them only of a cheap debauchery of unmeasurable care and labour. Their thoughts rarely turn to sale of work and may only be necessitated by dire financial need.

Is there a right and a wrong to this issue? Perhaps we should hearken back to our original question, “To be or not to be?”, and address ourselves to an argument heard from the non-seller’s point of view,

he contends that so often work done solely for profit is hurried along, punched out in a mass production factory method and rushed out the door with the aromatic scent of wet varnish still fuming from its surface.

Are we talking of being good craftsmen or low-grade merchandisers? Money is good to have now and again else however would you keep yourself in saw blades and Carpathian Elm Burr? But when it becomes the sole motivating force behind our work at the expense of craftsmanship and care, we have sold ourselves down the river into a slavery of monetary bondage.

Here is “The Great Sell-Out.” Whether we sell or whether we don’t, let us all endeavour to maintain a highly skilled level of craftsmanship in our work.

Veneer Examples - the A to Z of wood veneers

An occasional series featuring alphabetical listing of common (& rare) veneers

Apple	Ash, Olive	Avodire, Curly	Bubinga	Butternut	Camphor Burr
Cedar of Lebanon	Cherry Burr	Cherry Plain	Chestnut Burr	Cypress	Ebony, Gaboon
Ebony, Macassar	Elm	Eucalyptus	Fig, Java	Gaboon	Gum, Spalted
Hawthorn	Hickory	Iroko	Jacoranda	Juniper	Kingwood



Flattening Veneers



Now this is a question which often rises to the top when marquettarians get together. There have been many remedies and recipes raising their heads above the parapets over the years. And so, raiding our archives for the views of our forebears in the name and art of marquetry, here is an answer to that question from around 50 years ago given by Stan Furness who was head of a large industrial veneer department telling us how they used to flatten burrs and curls before commercial use of said veneers.

He suggested that we amateur (in comparison) individuals could do the same for ourselves - so let's check it out:

"We do thousands of sq. feet of veneer each week and much of the figured veneer is very dry and buckled. The best way that we have found to flatten it is to open up alternative leaves and lightly spray glue size on to them (i.e. on one side of each veneer) and place them in a heated press and allow it and the veneer to cool overnight. Matched veneers are kept together and placed in packs of four in the press. Cauls are placed between the layers until the press is full and then about 60 lbs per sq. in. pressure is applied. Once the veneer has cooled and dried it will keep flat.

How can this industrial technique be scaled down to a domestic level? Almost every household has an oven for cooking and the size of the veneer that marquettarians use would fit into it. Cut a set of plywood/chipboard panels to fit the oven shelves. They should all be the same overall size and the outer ones quite thick say $\frac{5}{8}$ " - $\frac{3}{4}$ " but the intermediate ones can be thinner. Sufficient panels should be cut to press all the veneer. After a day's baking, put the panels in the hot oven (hot as possible) with $\frac{1}{4}$ " sq. sticks between each one to allow the air to circulate

between the boards. With care the gas/electric can be left on for a while to heat the boards up. Meanwhile make up the glue size by dissolving about a teaspoonful of pearl glue in about a pint of hot water and put the mixture in an ordinary garden sprayer. Very lightly spray one surface of each veneer and leave them for about half an hour to absorb the moisture. Only very lightly dampen the veneer - remember the more moisture you put into the veneer the more you have to dry out and the longer it will take.

When all the boards are really hot place the veneer between them, cramp up tight and leave to cool and dry. The veneers should only stick to each other at most very slightly and should easily part if the pack is flexed. Once dry the veneer is ready for use and should not buckle again. Don't forget to clean out the garden sprayer as the glue goes off and smells badly."

Stan demonstrated that the method was quite practical by flattening oak and walnut burrs in his own oven. The walnut burr he left behind is still flat after about a month in the workshop."

Well, it is true to say that this was the professional way to do veneer flattening some fifty odd years ago. But, then, they were using chipboard and pearl glue, (*no wonder there was a bad smell when the glue 'went off', especially considering that glue was made from old animal parts, such as horses hooves and such like!*) but these days with fibre-board and PVA glues and similar, the job is more favourable when in domestic situations.

If you, dear reader, would like more up to date information on how flattening veneers can be done these days, do write in and let me know. Then it will be done.

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.

At Your Service DVDs

Earlier International Exhibitions: £10
 Alan Townsend Presents: £10
 Beginners Guide to Window Marquetry: £10
 Marquetry Tips & Techniques: £10
 Geometric Marquetry the Easy Way: £10
 Artistic Considerations & Veneer Choice:
 (includes booklets Know Your Woods) £15
 Added Dimensions in Marquetry: £15
 Bricks, Walls, Tiles & Pebbles: £10
 3 Veneers, & Making the Great Wave: £10
 Marquetarian DVDs - 40 editions per disc
 1/40 - 41/81 - 82/122 - 123/163 - 164/204
 - 205/245 - 246/287 - all at £20 each

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

USA members, please order via Peter White with Checks payable to The Marquetry Society.

Artistic Consideration DVD & Added Dimensions in Marquetry DVD - \$30 each
 All other tutorial and National Exhibition discs at \$20 each

Marquetarian Discs (40 editions per disc) as described above at - \$40 each



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/>

Suffolk Wood Veneers. 5 Sea Lake Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 3LQ. Tel: 7881 922 146 (Lyn Tupper). Email: info@suffolkwoodveneers.co.uk. Web: suffolkwoodveneers.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/>

Eaton's Seashells. We stock an extensive range of best quality, flat mother of pearl for inlay work and marquetry. Web: www.eatonsseashells.co.uk Tel: (0)1279 410284

Rothko & Frost Pieces of shell, stone, resin and other materials suitable for cutting and carving into inlays, for guitars, furniture and marquetry. Wide range of materials, sizes and thicknesses available. Tel: 01594 546 119 Email: info@rothkoandfrost.com Website: <https://www.rothkoandfrost.com/materials-c25/inlay-blank-t436>

W. Hobby Ltd. Sundries for box and clock making, fretsaws etc. 2 Knights Hill Square, London, SE27 0HH. Catalogue £3.25. Website <http://hobby.uk.com/>

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. No payments to the Marquetry Society please. Your dealings will be with the suppliers.



“Kingfishers”

by Elizabeth Head
of the Staffordshire Group
3rd Class 6A