

Centre for Fine Woodworking

January 2008 Newsletter

Exhibition

On December 11th we opened our first annual student exhibition which was very well attended. The organisation of this show was a massive undertaking and we owe great gratitude to Pat Spitz and her crew. (Like trying to corral cats was how Pat described the experience.) We've just taken the exhibition down but it would be fair to say that the response from the public and woodworkers who managed to see it has been fantastic, with many making the effort to personally congratulate the students and tutors from the Centre.

In all, thirty five pieces were on display representing work from all aspects of the full time and short courses. A large percentage of the works that were for sale sold, several students are negotiating major commissions and The Refinery Gallery where the exhibition was presented has reported a major increase in visitors during the period the show was on. What more could you ask for?

Peter Gibb's review for the Nelson Evening Mail is printed below. If you wish to check out all the major pieces in the show head to our brand new WEBSITE with a brand new address www.cfw.co.nz Enjoy! and remember that most of the work you will see is by people who entered the Centre with minimal previous experience.

Woodwork lavished with expertise

Exhibition of the work of students at the Centre for Fine Woodworking, Refinery Gallery. Reviewed by Peter Gibbs.

There's something satisfying about seeing an organic, live material such as wood being shaped into an object of function and beauty.

Ten students, taught by five tutors for up to nine months, have produced 35 pieces of furniture for this exhibition.

Students at the centre cover topics in blocks, so four weeks might be spent in learning dovetail joints, another four in the art of steambending and laminating, and so on.

There's evidence of the time spent on these specialist areas throughout the exhibition.

The dominating work is Nigel Whitton's 2.7m dining table. Despite its generous proportions, the table has a lightness, without appearing flimsy. The tapered and curved ash and beech legs seem to lift the slightly curved tabletop effortlessly from a well-grounded foundation.

The same design element, of broad-based legs tapering upward, is used again by Whitton in a combined table, storage box and Go game board, and also by Katalin Sallai in one of my favourite pieces, a bench entitled New Seductive Object.

Reflecting the block course in chairmaking, there are some well-designed examples:

The jarrah and ash dining chair by James Perry was made for a man of decent proportions, as is his armchair in matai. Both manage to achieve a balance and elegance.

More whimsical is the Wing chair by Whitton, which makes conscious use of the properties of the saligna timber. Used in the back of the chair, the timber has a feathery grain - the connection being extended into wing shapes.

A lacquered ash chair by Tracey Perry is upholstered in pink, a statement of femininity in what is mostly a blokes' world.

Thorkild Hansen, better known as a jeweller, is no mean practitioner with woodworking tools too. His coffee table and small cabinet reveal great precision and attention to detail.

The techniques of steam-bending are seen to great effect in similar stools made by both Tracey Perry and Lukas Hamilton to a design by tutor David Haig.

It's not possible to mention every piece in the show, but there are no weak links. Every item has been lavished with love, attention and expertise, and together they form a brilliant testament to the Centre for Fine Woodworking.

New Website

Yes, things move fast these days and we decided we needed to tidy our website image up to reflect the quality of the work coming out of the Centre. Larry Spitz has worked through the whole re-vamp with website wizard Rick Coleman to produce our new internet home. Check it out at www.cfw.co.nz

Summer in Nelson

There are still places available on our 2 week Beginning cabinet making and 6 week Dovetailing courses (2weeks beginning cabinet making and 4 weeks dovetailing. If you have some experience you can just do the 4 weeks) both starting January 21st. First in, best dressed as they say.

For more info check here:

<http://www.centre-for-fine-woodworking.co.nz/courses.html>

Waimate Woodskills Festival, March 1-2

CFW tutors John Shaw and Katalin Sallai (see below) will be giving a range of demonstrations at the woodskills festival over Saturday and Sunday. It looks like it's going to be a great fun weekend and we'd love to catch up with anyone who's planning to visit. It will be a good opportunity to pitch any questions you might have and generally chinwag.

Additions to our 2008 calendar

A public lecture, two very special week-long courses, a two week traditional clinker dinghy building workshop and early notice of some weekend courses coming up.

Marquetry in Contemporary Woodworking

Length: 5 days

Dates: Tuesday-Saturday 4-8 March

Fees: \$750 including GST Non-refundable deposit: \$300.

Prerequisite: none

Find out more here:

<http://www.centre-for-fine-woodworking.co.nz/courses12.html>

Katalin Sallai will be teaching a 5 day workshop on contemporary marquetry in early March. Katalin completed a formal apprenticeship in marquetry-making in Hungary before moving to Australia where she has pursued a career in teaching and woodworking for twenty years. She is actively working to integrate the traditional techniques of knife cut veneer use back into contemporary woodwork.

Furniture Restoration

Length: 5 days

Dates: Monday-Friday 10-14 March

Fees: \$750 including GST

Non-refundable deposit: \$300

Prerequisite: none

Find out more here:

<http://www.centre-for-fine-woodworking.co.nz/courses11.html>

William Cottrell will be teaching a course on furniture restoration the following week from Monday, March 10 to Friday, March 14. He will describe types of damage, and methods of repair and provide demonstrations of these techniques. Cottrell is the author of the magnificent book "Furniture of the New Zealand colonial era: an illustrated history, 1830-1900". He is responsible for the restoration of a great many pieces of furniture found in private homes, public buildings, museums, hotels and lodges. This is a superb opportunity to spend time with NZ's most prominent furniture historian and restorer.

Traditional Dinghy Building

Length: 12 days

Dates: June 9-20 (including the weekend of June 14-15)

Fees: \$1795, including GST

Non-refundable deposit: \$300.00

Material costs: None

Prerequisite: Beginning Cabinet Making or similar experience

Find out more here:

<http://www.centre-for-fine-woodworking.co.nz/courses5.html>

Nigel Whitton is a traditionally trained Shipwright / Boat builder. In mid-June he will be teaching a Traditional Dinghy Building workshop over 2 weeks. This course has been developed to enable participants to understand and apply all the steps involved in building a clinker/lapstrake dinghy. This will include critical procedures such as lofting, bending ribs, planking, fitting of planks at stem and transom, use of copper nails and roves and finishing. Students will work co-operatively in groups to build the dinghy. When completed the dinghy will be available for purchase from the Centre.

Public Lecture

Malcolm Zander a highly respected NZ-born Canadian-based woodturner will be giving a public lecture on Wednesday 16th January at Fairfield House, Nelson, from 7.00p.m. \$5 entry fee. He will be presenting images of and discussing the woodturning scene and form in general as it relates to woodworkers. You can check out his own work at www.malcolmazander.com Look forward to seeing you there.

Weekend courses

We have often been asked about weekend courses. Up 'til now our response has been "sometime in the future". We presently feel that we will be in a position to begin offering weekend courses starting in May. Likely topics will be:

- Making a wooden plane
- Tuning and sharpening the basic tool kit
- Getting the most from your router

We are also keen to hear suggestions, so if you are particularly interested in being kept informed as we firm up dates and costs or have any suggestions for courses get in touch at info@cfw.co.nz