

Huntington School of Fine Woodwork

September 2006 Monthly Report
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In September, two new groups of students began in the woodshop, and although they have only been in the shop a month, great progress has already been made. This month, our new students have all completed a shop orientation and shop safety overview. Over the course of the shop orientation and safety overview, students were provided with guidance on machinery, including instruction on correct machine usage as well as explanation of incorrect operation to allow adequate understanding of how each machine works and how it should be operated safely. With each machine, once the shop instructor provided explanation and demonstration, each student was

supervised during hands-on experience. During this process, all entry-level students completed a shop mallet and breadboard as exercises to develop these skills.

Once students began to acquire an understanding of the machinery and tools in the woodshop, we began to go over basic joinery. The first step in woodworking is to understand how to use the tools available correctly and understand what they are intended to do. The second step is to understand the characteristics of wood, how it can be joined, and what techniques are most or least effective. The joinery techniques discussed ranged from the simple butt joint to dovetail joints. As understanding of basic joinery techniques began to develop, we discussed aspects of both strength and aesthetic, leading to the practice of combining joinery types, resulting in joints that are strong enough and aesthetically pleasing enough not to require hardware.



Midway through the month, students began to use the skills they were developing to create a shop stool. In order to allow the students to fully understand the process, they actually designed the stools, with assistance from the woodshop instructor. This exercise was intended to lend focus to the process of project planning and teach the students the value of planning a project thoroughly, which provides obvious direction throughout the project and minimizes confusion because some students learned the easy way and some, and some the hard way.



Advanced-level students have been involved in the study of joinery also. After discussion of joinery techniques and characteristics that strengthen joints both structurally and aesthetically, students in the advanced class decided to reconstruct a customer order, using newfound joinery techniques.

Future plans include the continued study of joinery techniques, more advanced machinery techniques and quality control, mainly precision in measuring and cutting. The main goal is to focus more on learning and less on filling orders. We still hope to take custom orders from customers but intend to limit custom orders to those that relate to lesson content.