

# Joint Wizardry

Kintaro Yazawa brings a mind-bending flourish to woodworking's most powerful joints. In his hands, dovetail pins morph into hawk's talons or sewing scissors. Finger-joints, sawn micro-thin, form diamond patterns. And the end of a through-tenon can take the shape of letters spelling out a phrase.

In his 20s, Yazawa left a sales career in Osaka and apprenticed to an organ builder in France. On returning to Japan in 1977, he set up shop as a furniture maker and began to teach himself traditional Japanese woodworking. Convinced that joinery was the heart of good furniture, he employed exposed joints on his pieces and called his business Yazawa Joinery Workshop.

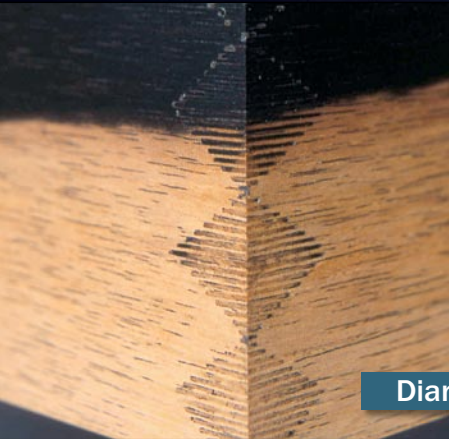
Soon after, an old man visited and said, "Your workshop has a very boastful name!" Showing Yazawa a double-twisted dovetail joint, or *nejiri arigata*, the man defied him to figure out how it was made. When Yazawa did figure it out, a seed was planted. Before long, he was inventing astonishing joints of his own.

See *How They Did It*, p. 110, for an inside look at Yazawa's joinery.

—Jonathan Binzen



Hawk's nail



Diamond



Sewing scissors



Through-tenon lettering

Pro Portfolio: Visit [FineWoodworking.com](http://FineWoodworking.com) for a narrated slide show of work by Kintaro Yazawa.

COPYRIGHT 2007 by The Taunton Press, Inc. Copying and distribution of this article is not permitted.

Photos: Kintaro Yazawa