Joinery for the ages

BY ANISSA KAPSALES

David Haig has been making his sinuous rocker (see the back cover) for 20 years. And just as he seamlessly blends the use of machines and hand tools, he also balances delicate, graceful lines with remarkable strength and durability. He sweeps one perfect curve into the next as he merges the design with joinery that has proven itself over decades.

GUSSETED
Rather than putting the back leg directly into the arm, Haig reinforces the joint by creating a gusset that sits in a mortise in the arm.

SCREWED AND PLUGGED
The back-leg-to-seat joint is reinforced with a #12 dome-head screw and then plugged. Haig does the final shaping with a Japanese whittling knife after the joint is cut and fit.

NOTCHED
Before the seat is shaped, a router with a ½-in. straight cutter and a simple jig are used to create the curved notches in the seat that accept the back legs.

MORTISED
The rocker-to-seat joint is like a cantilevered spring. An angled mortise houses the rocker part. Haig says he can put his full weight on just the seat and rockers when they are fitted and glued.

BISCUITED
The rocker and back legs meet in a point and are joined with a single biscuit. Haig uses a V-chisel to add a fine cross-hatching on the mating surfaces and epoxies it all in place.

LAMINATED
Where the rocker curls under the seat and sits in the housing, the curve is too tight to create from a single steam-bent piece. Instead, three pieces cut from the steam-bent rocker stock are laminated and epoxied to the rocker.

Online Extra

To see a video of David Haig bending the wood and cutting the joinery for this chair in his New Zealand shop, go to **FineWoodworking.com/extras.**

Drawings: John Tetreault; photo: Daniel Allen