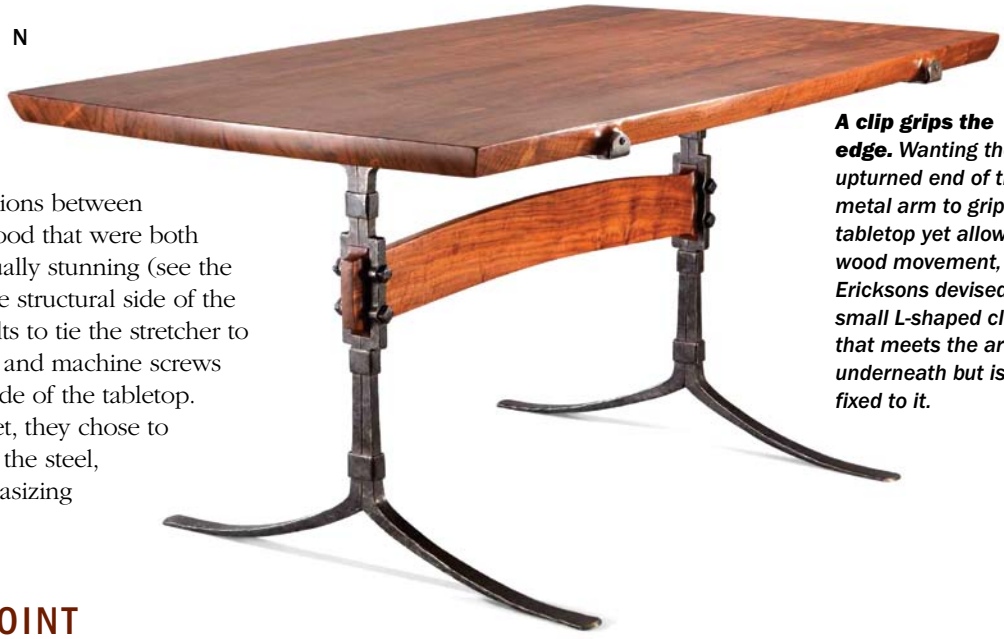
how they did it

When metal meets wood

BY JONATHAN BINZEN

The challenge for Robert and Tor Erickson was twofold—to make connections between wrought steel and solid wood that were both structurally sound and visually stunning (see the back cover). To address the structural side of the equation, they used heavy nuts and bolts to tie the stretcher to the legs, and relied on threaded inserts and machine screws to attach the upper arms to the underside of the tabletop. For beauty, where the two materials met, they chose to sculpt away the wood on both sides of the steel, articulating the connection while emphasizing the contrast in strength and hardness.

EDGE DETAIL



A clip grips the edge. *Wanting the upturned end of the metal arm to grip the tabletop yet allow wood movement, the Ericksons devised a small L-shaped clip that meets the arm underneath but isn't fixed to it.*

SCULPTED TRESTLE JOINT

Steel pattern. *To begin sculpting the joint, Tor Erickson mills a plank to fit the opening in the leg, then traces the outline of the metal.*

Addition by subtraction. *Tor Erickson routs away the waste along both faces of the stretcher, leaving only the areas that will meet metal. He trims to the line and creates a radiused corner using a bandfile belt sander.*

The versatile compression joint. *Using nuts and bolts is an extremely strong way to secure the joint, allows for tightening the joint over time, and makes the table simple to disassemble for storage or transport.*

Photos: Sugar Pine Studios (finished table); Jonathan Binzen (all others)