

the
TOOL
I can't do
WITHOUT



Peter Sefton explains why he likes to show his students the virtues of using a Swann Morton scalpel

Peter's Swann Morton scalpel

Peter Sefton picks the tool he can't do without which is a Swann Morton Scalpel

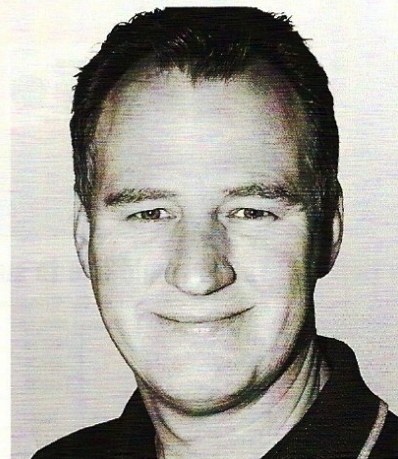
I trained as a furniture maker 27 years ago, at Brunel in Bristol and became a journeyman cabinetmaker, whilst making my own commissions, before I set up my own workshop in Worcestershire, making pieces for international designers and clients. I started lecturing in further education before running C&G and BTEC Furniture Design and Making courses and I now run the Peter Sefton Furniture School where I train aspiring furniture makers and hobbyists looking to enhance their skills.

I'm not sure when my Swann Morton scalpel became such a fundamental part of my tool kit, but I remember using it during my early years, making marking knives from old hacksaw and bandsaw blades bound with leather, or glued between shaped hardwood handles. I was very proud of them before I was tempted by a beautiful Japanese knife full of Eastern promise and tales of how it had been quenched with ox blood. However, I found the

blade too thick, plus it was a faff to re-sharpen and finally dropping it once, I broke its tip and my affection for it.

The scalpel was the answer to my marking out and veneer cutting needs. It was very sharp, fine and held an excellent edge, and if damaged or blunt it only took a minute to re-sharpen. I soon realised when running my own workshop, the importance of being productive, and time spent away from the bench was time when I was not earning.

Eureka! I had found the ideal tool. For me the scalpel is probably the smallest, cheapest and most versatile bit of kit I have and I'd be lost without it. I do still show my students how to grind and sharpen hacksaw blades to make scratch stock cutters and cutting gauge blades as the general quality of those supplied are seldom good enough, but I use the No. 3 scalpel with 10A blades for my general work, drawing rods, marking out joints and hand-cutting veneers.



ANTHONY BRIDGE

Peter Sefton. For more information on his courses, visit www.peterseftonfurnitureschool.com

I also use the No. 4 with the No. 26 blade for scribing my dovetails to the pins. The larger blade has the reach and gives a precise line to work to. When the tip loses its edge or snaps off, it just needs the back taking off on the Tormek and de-burring on a fine stone.

I also hear it's good for removing stubborn splinters (remember to use the sterile variety here) which was I originally bought it. F&C

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