



Heather Jansch uses driftwood found on beaches after high tides and storms to make life-size sculptures. She specializes in horses.

## She Brings Driftwood To Life

By Janis Schole, Contributing Editor

A single piece of driftwood can be beautiful by itself. But for inspired artist Heather Jansch of South Devon, England, the ability to combine many such pieces of wood into dramatic, life-like sculptures has gained her world-wide attention. Her work can now be found from Japan to Australia to Italy.

The majority of Jansch's unique sculptures have been horses, but she has also created human forms, pigs, piglets, red deer, and more. She finds material to work with on beaches after high tides and storms. By beach combing with a pickup truck, her assistant brings back a regular supply of oak, elm and larch driftwood.

Finding pieces with just the right size or shape is what's so satisfying about her work. "It's like a 3-dimensional jigsaw puzzle," she relates. Occasionally, Jansch cuts sections of driftwood to fit where needed, and she always has several sculptures in progress at one time. While most of her work is life-size, Jansch has also made sculptures as small as 22 in. high.

"One needs to give a lot of thought to it and have an understanding of the stresses and strains created by different poses and some idea of the weights involved," she explains. "The structure must not only be self supporting, it must also be stable enough to cope with high winds without falling over. Further, it must be strong enough to withstand being lifted by a crane when being installed."

The larger sculptures require a steel frame, which she paints with a rust inhibitor and then coats with fiberglass to give a roughened surface. That makes it blend into the sculpture

more, and stops the wood from slipping on bare metal. She positions the wood with wire and then screws the pieces together, covering the screw heads with filler and stain.

Jansch captures the delicate features of horses' legs and hooves by using additional materials. The legs are a combination of wood, steel and fiberglass resin, while the hooves are made from "discarded copper water-heating cylinders".

"The larger sculptures are intended for outdoor display and are made from hard woods like oak and elm," she says. "They're treated with preservative and I recommend that they be sprayed each spring as one would a garden fence. I can't say exactly how long they'll last but they should certainly outlast me. All the screws are stainless steel."

Jansch also sells limited edition photographic prints of many of her driftwood sculptures, original drawings, limited edition prints of drawings, and additionally, has created "driftwood bronzes," which perfectly replicate the original driftwood texture, but are virtually indestructible.

"I could never have dared hope that I would find a medium of such apparently universal appeal; the popularity of my sculpture has exceeded my dreams by miles," she says.

There's a 3-year waiting list for full size new works and current pricing for those start at \$29,360 U.S. and go to \$88,084 U.S.

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Finding pieces with just the right size or shape is a challenge. "It's like a 3-dimensional jigsaw puzzle," says Jansch.

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Photos courtesy of Lee Valley Tools

At just 16, Marco Facciola built this entire bike from wood and glue.

## Teen's All-Wood Bike Really Works

Stories of his grandfather's wooden bike wheels in Holland gave Marco Facciola the idea to make a wooden bike. The 16-year old built the entire bike from wood and glue.

"I needed to complete a school project in a non-academic area," says Facciola, who lives in Quebec. "I've always enjoyed woodworking and design, so I decided to build a functional wooden bicycle. I wanted a project that would be a challenge."

And a challenge it was, especially intricate details like the "chain" and the coasting mechanism. In the case of the chain, he had to drill holes in the spacers that keep the two plates of each link apart. The dowel sticks he used had to have a hole drilled exactly in the center. And he needed more than 100 of them.

"If the hole was even slightly off-center, the dowel would explode," recalls Facciola. "I had drilled 10 of them, and then they started exploding. I readjusted everything, and they continued exploding, making me suspect the bit. As soon as I sharpened it, the links worked."

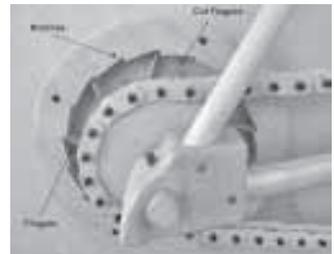
He researched the strengths of different woods and built jigs to test them, standing on them to measure their strength.

The big challenge was the ratcheting system for the drive gear. Facciola wanted to be able to "coast" the bike down the hill without the pedals moving. Once his father had explained the system of spring and pins (all steel) that modern bikes use, the high schooler was able to devise an alternative.

It consisted of a hub with fingers, thin pieces of wood sticking out from the center. When engaged, the fingers would catch and hold on notches of wood as Facciola pedaled, but when coasting, they would slip past the notches.



To build the chain, he drilled holes in the spacers that keep the two plates of each link apart. The dowel sticks he used have a hole drilled exactly in the center.



Ratcheting system for the drive gear consists of a hub with thin wood fingers sticking out from the center.

With a design in place, Facciola made his first attempt, cutting the fingers with the wood grain for maximum flexibility. When he had all 18 fingers glued in place, he discovered it was too strong. First he sanded off a layer of wood on each piece, and finally he cut every second finger down.

"I finished the rest of the bicycle without too many problems," he says. "I used it once to show that it could be ridden, and then I had to turn in the project."

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