

About Michael

Original, whimsical and imaginative are just some descriptions of the fine contemporary, reproduction furniture and custom designs produced by Churchill fellow, Michael Borton. STATEMENT

I am totally opposed to clear felling of forests and hate to see waste. "I like to use recycled and salvaged timber where ever possible".

I like to combine traditional and modern methods of construction and design in bringing to life and enhancing the raw characteristics and natural beauty of our native timbers.

All my pieces must be individual and of the highest quality, they must look good and feel even better, giving lasting pleasure to their owner for a lifetime.

Since returning from the Churchill fellowship in 1999, my work has reflected the lessons and experiences that were gained. With each piece I am testing the skills I have learnt from the many workshop visits and courses undertaken.
Michael Borton

Born 1961 Grafton NSW

Since finishing my apprenticeship as a joiner in Grafton I have not stopped learning about my trade. In 1986 I traveled Australia changing jobs as I needed and in the end as they interested me, learning new skills with the dream of one day working for myself - preferring to get as much experience as possible beforehand. I worked in Canberra, Bendigo, Albury, Perth & Brisbane before finally settling in Murwillumbah in 1990, working in a joinery making built-in furniture for Paul Hogan's mansion and joinery for the famous of Beach Hotel of John Cornell in Byron Bay.

In 1991 I started exhibiting, drawing on my experiences to create quality pieces. In 1993 I started working for myself doing kitchens, joinery, furniture and antique restoration working in all styles and materials on request. I have continued to learn, taking courses in woodcarving (Laurence Otto), Marquetry (Geoff Hannah), French Polishing (Paul Gregson) and will continue into the future. Today, I still do 1 or 2 kitchens a year, but now antique restoration is a big part of my business as I teach it for Adult Education and Camp Creative and assist Geoff hanna in Qld Joinery. I rarely do more than this as fine furniture is on the increase as my reputation for quality workmanship continues.

In 1999, I received a Churchill Fellowship Trust and I spent 3 months

- Studying antique and contempory design in the U.S.A, England, France and Austria
- Attending courses in wood carving with Ian Norbury, Ben Harmes and at the Giesler Moroder School.
- Furniture polishing at West Dean College with Bruce Luckhurst.
- In observation at the workshops of the V&A museum, the Royal Collection ,the Queen`s Restoration work shops ,the British Antique Restorers Associations Secretaries own workshop and those of Lord Linley .

These experiences have not only broadened my knowledge and honed my skills, expanded my world view, and strengthened my ideas and goals for the future.

Whilst still attending courses to hone my skills, I now also teach woodwork, woodcarving and antique restoration from my home once a week, cameos at Camp Creative, Arts West Q.L.D and I`m available for special interests groups and clubs as well as courses specifically designed to foster individual skills.

When creating a piece, I often refer to antique furniture designs and books, and use their aesthetics and proportions as a reference and inspiration for design and shape, using elements of different styles. This enables me to visualize the piece I am trying to create.

Starting with the seed of an idea scribbled on a piece of paper with approximate sizes and side notes on reference books/magazines timber and finishes. These are often filed away, so that at a later date I can recapture the threads of thought from that time, when I feel like making it or the right piece of timber comes along.

In recent years my carving has been purely realistic, sculptural objects, and the furniture reflects quality modern designs inspired by Art Nouveau with sweeping curves, and Art Deco with its flat, plain surfaces subtly enhanced with figured veneer and inlays.

I use decorative and figured timbers to create exceptional, specialized individual pieces for my clients.

I see a lot of pieces in magazines that are said to be new ideas drawn from peoples' imagination with a philosophy on the

pieces' creation, and in almost every case, because of my background in antiques I can see elements of numerous styles and designs.

The Mack 1 chair is a good example showcasing design and the timber selection process.

This chair`s design draws inspiration from the “Charles Renee Macintosh Arts and Crafts” period for its general shape, the “Sam Maloof” style for the saddle seat, Art Nouveau for the stretchers, the Shaker style for its simple form and a Chinese design for the back splat . This culminates in an interesting mix of unique, eclectic design and aesthetics. It is a piece that is sculpturally exclusive, yet with comfort and relaxation in mind. Choosing the complementary timber is as important as the design. Jarrah burl was specifically chosen for the seat, due to its fan pattern which accentuates and links perfectly to the matching head rest. The legs and rails were cut from exquisite spotted Jarrah and the back splat has a truly beautiful fiddle back pattern running through it. This attention to detail promises truly special pieces for my clients and the reason why they keep returning to add to their collections.