

A Slice of Genius



The sunburst of slender ash slats on Seth Rolland's demilune table may be dazzling for its elegance, but it's equally impressive as a technical feat: The entire array is one piece of wood. Starting with a 12/4 board 10 in. wide and 30 in. long, Rolland makes alternating stopped cuts from either end and then unfolds the plank like a paper fan. Working alone in the shop he built in Port Townsend, Wash., Rolland likes to design things he doesn't

know how to build and then figure them out. In 2000, he made a tabletop composed of more than 100 tiny pieces of wood, which required 15 glue-ups to complete. The tedium of the process led him to think: "If I didn't cut the pieces apart, I wouldn't have to glue them back together." Since then, Rolland has used his slicing and bending technique to make a wide range of pieces that reveal the vast potential in a single plank of wood.

—Jonathan Binzen

Photos: Frank Ross (bottom); Matt Kenney (top three)

How They Did It Turn to p. 98 to see how Rolland cuts the array of slats from one piece of wood.

Pro Portfolio Go to FineWoodworking.com/extras to see more of Rolland's pieces made with the slicing and bending technique.

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