

(roadtest)



Boone



Solberg



Pens MADE BY *Hand*

FROM THE PENMAKERS GUILD: PART II



*I*n the last issue of *Stylus*, we introduced pens made by the artisans of the Penmakers Guild—a group of craftsmen and “penturners.” Founded in 2003, the Guild comprises 69 members, and criteria for membership include innovation and high-quality craftsmanship in the products produced. In this second and final article on the Guild, we examine another group of fountain pens made by some members.

The Flame pen was created by Bruce Boone. This particular pen is crafted in Blue Hawaii, and it is a

very interesting art piece. The pen has a curved, feather shape (to look like a flame) with very fine metal work to go with the fine finish on the acrylic barrel. The clip is integral, and it is an extension of a titanium fitting into which the gripping section screws. This artist is also an accomplished machinist, as demonstrated by the high quality of the pen’s fit and finish. The triangular gripping section feels good and writes well with its 14-karat, two-toned nib made by Bock of Germany. The nib, however, is small in relation to the pen. This

pen is a good writer and combines craftsmanship and art in its unusual look. It is priced at \$995 and is packaged in a very nice custom leather case, with an internal sleeve to keep the pen stable.

The Stealth was built by John Solberg. This clipless pen is crafted from black and rose Lucite, reminiscent of the ripple ebonite used by Parker in its 1900-era eyedropper-filled pens. It is long and straight with a tiny flare at the end of the barrel. The pen has a long, thin, gold-plated section and a small 14-karat nib. In our opinion, the

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Turchetta



transition from large barrel to very small threads at the section makes for an uncomfortable writing grip. We suggest a larger diameter gripping section to alleviate this problem. The pen has a very nice general fit and finish with simple and elegant lines. It is priced at \$385.

The Equinox was produced by Scott Meyer of Only One Creations. It is a medium-to-large plastic pen with a blue cracked ice acrylic body and white metal trim from commercial kit equipment. The pen has a large white metal section, and this craftsman has sourced a 14-karat gold nib with a two-tone sunburst design and an

imprint of his company. This pen retails for \$275, with a rollerball available for \$250.

Anthony Turchetta of Penchetta, sold by Pen Works of Cape Creek, Arizona, produced the limited edition Amber Ripple #26. The striking pen is made from Italian Lucite with a very nice multidimensional design. This is a large, heavy pen, and the cap is not made to post, but it is well balanced for writing and exhibits quality lathe work. It has a 14-karat nib with an ebonite feed from Bock; it also has a metal gripping section. The pen comes with a block of matching Lucite as a pen rest. →

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Jackman

Kleinhenz

In this final article in our Road Test series of Guild-made pens, we have covered wood, plastic and metal pens in a variety of styles and finishes. But in our opinion, too many of the craft pens are made from kits using stock sections, feeds and plated nibs (few of the pens have solid gold nibs from major modern nib manufacturers), and they fill using a cartridge or converter.

All of these pens are visually arresting, yet lead us to speculate, When will a craftsman create his own nibs? (Will some create their own "bottle fill only" internal filling mechanisms?) Also, many collectors know the work of Joe Cali, who has been making pens with custom-made sections and feeds to accommodate vintage nibs, either supplied by the artist himself or supplied by the customer commissioning a custom-made pen. Just a little dreaming, but it would be nice to try some of these beautiful pens created by Guild members with writing configurations built for writing performance, rather than primarily for looks.

Richard Kleinhenz turned a pen from a rare wood known as curly koa, which is native to Hawaii.

This is a medium-sized pen with a beautiful finish, and it is made with a matching wooden section and plastic threads for practical closure. The cap band is white metal with a gold-plated raised center band. It employs a kit clip, but it looks good and functions well. The pen has a 14-karat flexible nib and ebonite feed from Bock. The pen writes very nicely, and it is delivered in a nice wooden gift box. It sells for \$235—a good

price for a pen of this size and quality.

Bill Jackman also produced a beautiful pen from curly koa wood. It is a large pen with a large and smooth gold-plated section and a gold-plated steel nib that writes nicely and feels good in the hand. This pen shows great workmanship on the fit and finish: the grain lines up on the cap and the barrel when the cap is screwed in place. It has a very attractive and easy-to-use spring clip; the cap is not meant for posting. This pen is a real value at \$95. →

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Hertzog

The next two pens were produced by Kurt Hertzog, and they are both unusual art pieces. The first is a plain wooden pen that is very light, but has good balance despite its length. It has a kit gripping section and steel nib with very little flex. The pen is built as a desk pen with a nice matching desk base. The second pen by Hertzog is a curvy, painted pen and is quite interesting, but is less balanced for writing. It, too, was built with a kit section, feed and steel nib, which was likewise very rigid. It also comes with a wooden desk base.

Gerry Rhoades of Montana Pens produced a pen from Golden Desert Ironwood, and it demonstrates very nice lathe work. The barrel flares out at the end, and both the cap and barrel taper toward the center band when the pen is capped. All trim is yellow gold plate; the pen has a thin gold-plated section with a small 14-karat nib. The pen is well balanced and writes smoothly. It looks good, feels good, and it is made with a nice functional spring clip. This pen represents a very good value at \$150.

The two pens submitted



Gisi



by Gisi's Writing Instruments are produced by a father and son team, Mark Gisi and his son, Brian. They have only been making fountain pens for the past four years, but use unique materials. Each pen is one of a kind. The first pen, by Brian Gisi, is called The Copper Knight, and it is truly a work of art! It is a blend of materials (woods and metals) in a very clever design to impart the image and feel of medieval knight-hood. The pen is fitted with a Bexley 18-karat nib, feed, section and converter. It is a heavy pen and uses brass rivets with sharp-edged

heads that stick up all over the surface, so it is not quite comfortable for writing. However, it is visually stunning and shows very fine workmanship. It is definitely worth the \$1,200 price tag as an art piece. From Mark Gisi is a pen from the Frank Lloyd Wright stained glass series (FLW#6). It employs amber celluloid, with window panes of blue celluloid as accents, and the base wood is pomelle burbinga. Multi-colored bands and stripes are made from "color grain." This pen has stunning colors, and is a fine work of art. It employs an 18-karat Bexley nib. &

Rhoades

