

Assesment

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gories: - Woodworking tags: - art school - assessment - dovetails - future plans
- manifesto - woodwork technique - Woodworking — This morning was my final
assessment for the Diploma. I was getting pretty nervous beforehand, didn't
sleep much last night (for a host of other reasons, not just the assessment) and
had had little to eat. As I moved my work downstairs ready to bump it in I
thought how poor it looked next to the fabulous work of Michael and John who
were being assessed just before me. The usual pre-performance insecurities I
suppose...

But the assessment went fine; better than fine: I enjoyed it, or rather found it
helpful and even inspiring! I *do* believe in the direction that I'm going in, and
the body of work that I presented this morning shows this direction — it is not
of course where I'm aiming at but if it were why would I be here?! I think I was
able to express something of my philosophy of woodworking and explain how
the pieces (table, stool, chair and press) fit into it. Rodney was a great help,
talking about my progress etc; so was John Reid, especially with reminding and
encouraging me about the wider university context of my work (mentioning, for
example, the Talloires Declaration). In talking about my work I was not very
clear, nor at all concise; there was much that I would like to have added — but
all in all assessment has left me keener than ever to get in and do what makes
my heart sing! I thinking of drafting some sort of brief outline of those aspects
of woodworking that are important to me, that I might refer to when I get stuck
in the quagmire of doubt(!) Something about the workshop, my dress, drawing
of what I'm to make, the recycled and made materials, the hand tools, finishing,
etc. A checklist, manifesto, or somesuch thing.

Do I now want to get back into the workshop and keep working though? Not
a bit of it! Time for cake and tea with friends in town I think. Part of my
reluctance is the mistake I made with the dovetails yesterday: I was trying a
technique that I have read about often in textbooks whereby one marks the *pins*
by placing the *tails* over them and marking with the *saw* (and not a marking
knife as I have usually done). I did not think very thoroughly about how this
would work because I have heard a number of people talk about it as well as
seeing it in books. But work is what it did not do: it leaves a gap the size of
the saw kerf on every pin! I've probably just missed something very simple, but
rather than trying to perfect that technique now I think I'll go back to what I
know and can do — marking off the cut tails with a sharp pencil.

On the technical side of things today: on my main page I would like to put an
RSS feed from this blog, a calandar or other visual summary of my work and
the same for my reading; I guess this summer will see me on the computer a
bit! It's exciting though, this playing at the point of intersection of old ways of
working wood and new ways of coding sites!