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Cover: Walter Rumi, dean of the Italian Rodmakers *(photo by Alberto Poratelli)*

Image page 2: Comparison of the bamboo ferrules: Bjarne Fries vs Alberto Poratelli

Well – said the White Rabbit - this time the given deadline was met so we are not late.

Not at all – answered the Mad Hatter - we are late, very late. We were supposed to be out by February.

No! – replied the White Rabbit - Bamboo Journal was due every 3 months, now it is every 4 months so the deadline was met!

The Mad Hatter had no reply.

Yes.

Yes. We decided to issue a number every 4 months.

Frankly it was too demanding to publish every 3 months.

Hence we planned to be out in July –to cover the annual event of IBRA Gathering- then in November and March.

In this way we have a large enough time span ahead to work without rushing and pressure –we hope- so as to be able to provide our readers with the high quality and interesting articles they deserve –we hope.

Now here are the articles of this issue.

I like starting with the article by Tom Morgan.

It is not an absolute novelty because he already published his writing on his webpage (www.troutrods.com) and even earlier in Power Fibers no. 29. We reckoned republishing it could be useful, as not all Italian readers may have read it and perhaps not even some English speaking readers may have come across it.

This is an updated version tha che covers the theme of tolerances in bamboo rodmaking with great lucidity.

March 10 2010

The partecipants at the stage of the bamboo ferrules

Podere Violino - Sansepolcro.

Tom Morgan's character and personal history as well as his background of rod maker make his article a fundamental text that unfolds with great awareness the most technical aspects of rod making.

Alessandro Brunelli and Christian Diacon, from different points of views, illustrate the events that took place last September during the Second European Gathering in Sarnen (CH).

Rick Sorensen, one of the major USA –hence in the world- "on line classic tackle dealers", with his deep knowledge and experience in the subject, describes the world of rod-making in the tradition of California, its evolution and future developments. When visiting his website keep with you a bib as what you see is mouth-watering!

Alberto Calzolari, great salmon Full Dress flies maker and bamboo fan – I am pretty sure in short he too will fall into temptation and start rod making! - writes about doubts, excitement, uncertainties and the highlights of those who feel Fly Fishing as a fundamental aspects of their existences, for better or for worse.

Roberto Natali draws our attention to another European historical rod, Pezon et Michel 's "Le Marvel". This article, just like all the ones he writes, is accurate, competent, knowledgeable.

A high rank rod made by a producer with a great history behind. A period piece from the past.

Marco O. Giardina tell us about "The IRP Project" and describes the origins and birth of the rod designed by Roberto Pragliola and IBRA for the Italian Casting Style.

Moreno Borriero illustrates what, together with the annual Gathering, is the crucial moment of the IBRA activities: the Rod making course yearly held in Sansepolcro, along the river Tiber banks.

Alberto Poratelli concludes –possibly- his essay on the making of the "Italian Style" bamboo ferrules. Not to be missed.

After Valentino, Armani, Ferrari, the words "Italian Style" will make us think of Alberto as well!

Finally, a short articles by a "naïve" turner about how to deal with wood for turning it into reel seats insert.

Enjoy your reading.

MOG

In this issue the paintings

of Adriano Manocchia

About To Test His Skill

Some Bamboo Rodmaking Thoughts

Tom Morgan

I wrote this dissertation to a Hand Mill user who was asking me about whether or not he was being too critical in his rodmaking. He also asked about how to choose a rod design. I may have gotten carried away but decided to share many of my thoughts about rodmaking and some of the difficulties involved in selecting a design.

You say that you are building your rods to a .001" tolerance. As I see it there are two areas of tolerance and I will discuss both of them. One is the flat to flat tolerance and the other is the taper tolerance. I do agree, as you will see later in my discussion, that the flat to flat tolerance is easier to achieve than the taper tolerance. I also believe that flat to flat dimensions that are close demonstrate good workmanship. And it is worthwhile to achieve good results, but not absolutely perfect results, because of balance and spine.

In reality, isn't .001" an arbitrary figure? Why not build them to .000" or even .0000" since all good micrometers can be read to that dimension. There are several reasons, in my opinion, why even .001" isn't practical. To cut strips that end up with .001" accuracy, when glued into sections, you have to cut your strip to .0005". I don't even know a way to measure strips that accurately. If you are sanding them to a predetermined dimension I will discuss this in more detail later. When I used to make ferrules it wasn't easy on one of the best lathes available, a Hardinge tool room lathe, to consistently achieve that accuracy on metal much less bamboo unless I was using a dial indicator reading to .0001" accuracy. I have never seen a bamboo cutting machine, including the milling machine at Winston with high precision bearings that would consistently cut to that tolerance.

Another factor that greatly influences section accuracy is sanding. Using 320 grit sandpaper you remove approximately .001" of material with three very light strokes. Therefore, you must be extremely vigilant in order not to remove too much bamboo particularly on the ends of tips.

Where are you getting the dimensions for your rods? If you are getting them out of a book forget great accuracy. I have personally miked a substantial number of the old "Masters" rods and have experienced everything from an occasional miking that is nearly the same on each side to as much as .020" variance from flat to flat. It's very uncommon to have the rods at each station within less than .004 from flat to flat and often it's greater than that. So when you read a taper in a book did they take the high, the low, or the average? What if you have two sides that mike the same and one that is .008 different? How did they deal with that when publishing the taper? Also if you read different tapers published in different books the same rod model sometimes have different tapers listed from each other. Which one are you going to choose? Also, rodmakers would improve or change the tapers over time yet keep the model number the same.

I have discovered over the years there are so many variables to trying to replicate a published taper exactly that it's extremely difficult to do. To give you just one example we did a test on a butt recently in our shop. It was a typical solid butt that was glued using Urac then coated entirely, including the ends, with four coats of Man O War varnish.

We marked the place on the butt where the dimension was .250". During the winter when we did this test the humidity in the shop was about 25%.

We have a humidity cabinet where we hang sections prior to gluing in order to increase the moisture content to the level recommended by the glue company. At the time of the test the humidity in the cabinet was about 75%. We left the varnished section in the cabinet for10 days and carefully "miked" the section at the point it where it had previously measured .250". It now measured .262" or a growth of 4.8%. We then left the section out of the cabinet and a couple of weeks later measured it again. It was back to the .250" dimension at the measuring point.

The reason I mention this is that if you are using a published taper what might the humidity been when a certain rod was measured and the taper recorded? I have never seen this reported along with published tapers. This is just one of the variables but it illustrates the difficulty of reproducing someone else's taper. A taper can certainly be a worthwhile guide but how the rod feels, casts, and fishes to the builder are, in my opinion, the most important elements.

You often see that the rod was miked over varnish and they subtracted .006 for its thickness. Was the varnish really that thick? Or was it that thick everywhere? Another consideration with varnish is that different varnishes are harder or softer than others and will affect how a rod flexes. What type of varnish was it?

They used to use hide glue on virtually every rod because it was the best available. Are the characteristics of rods glued with hide glue different from modern glues? What about the variance in the physical properties of bamboo? Everyone that has dealt with bamboo knows that the deflection varies some between strips from different culms. How can that be taken into account? What about heat treating? I have never seen tapers given with light, medium, or heavy heat treating as one of the parameters. Anyone that has worked with different heat treating knows that the deflection and resilience changes with different amounts of tempering.

What diameter of bamboo pole was used? Particularly on butts the diameter of the pole and the resulting radius on the outside influences the volume of bamboo in a given section.

What about the guides that are used? I have extensive knowledge of designing rods in fiberglass, graphite, and bamboo and know that different guide weights will GREATLY influence the action of the rod as will different tip tops. I don't see that listed as a parameter. What about the wrap length, wrap coating, and varnish on the rod. The action can be greatly affected by the weight of these items. What about guide spacing? How many guides were on a rod? The size and weight of the tip top can greatly affect the action. Did the rod have a heavy wire loop or a light wire? Was the tip top tube heavy or light or was it long or short? If you don't believe that a tip top makes a huge difference in the action put just a tip top on a rod blank and flex it then remove it and flex it again and see the difference. It's remarkable.

What about the length and style of ferrule? The difference in weight can be substantial and affect the action of the rod.

Was the old Master's rod really that great? Might it have been better with a slightly different taper in the butt or tip? Who's to judge?

You say that you flatten the flats on your rods. Think about the quad sections in particular. You are removing a substantial amount of the best fibers that are located on the outside. You go from removing no fibers near the corners to substantial in the middle. Doesn't that matter? I think so. Isn't this a compromise to the bamboo just so you can try to keep the dimensions the same?

I have discussed many of the variables that should be accounted for when choosing a published rod taper. Perhaps you design your own tapers. At least that eliminates many of the variables that I have described above because you can keep the bamboo rod dimensions and the components the same. However, are you

confident that you are a good designer? Have you cast lots of bamboo rods? Can you make all kinds of loops during your casting to determine what the rod will do for different casting styles? If you don't like the action do you know where to change the dimensions of the rods to achieve the action that you do like. This is knowledge that, from my experience, is difficult to learn and I have found very few who have this ability.

One way that I have used is to try and get a consensus of rod action and to understand different angler's perception of what is the best action is to have several different casters and fishermen cast and fish different rods. This does give a good cross section as long as they are competent casters and fishermen.

I have also cast a great number of rods from rodmakers where I thought the tips and butts were poorly matched resulting in rods that felt odd or weren't smooth casting. Most bamboo designers never make enough tip and butt combinations with interchangeable ferrules to allow them to adequately test different actions to come up with what they like the best. To give you an example, in the series of bamboo rods that we are making now we have three models: 7' #3, 7' #4, and 7 1/2' #5. Among these three models we had over 40 combinations of tips and butts that were interchangeable to try and get the very sweetest casting and fishing combination. Even though the differences were subtle because I had a good idea of what I was looking for I still thought it necessary in order to end up with what I thought was three great designs. Was this an over kill? Perhaps, but the rods have been cast by some very knowledgeable bamboo anglers and they think that they are some of the sweetest casting and best fishing rods they have tried. I think a good record. This is not to say that I have all the answers but to point out that it's a difficult task to come up with really good designs.

As a general observation I believe that the tip determines the action more than the butt does but as previously mentioned having the proper balance between the two is critical for great designs.

I have always had the philosophy that I wouldn't criticize a designer who spent a great deal of time working on his designs because that is what he likes or he wouldn't be building the rod. However, most rods do fall within a fairly narrow range of design because anything outside of that range doesn't feel normal and isn't acceptable to most anglers.

I certainly haven't cast many of the bamboo rods that have been made but I've cast enough to give me a good feel for action. In my opinion, and that of another designer that I greatly respect, the rods of E.C. Powell were the best casting bamboo rods as a group of any that we have cast. As a matter of interest his rods were some of the worst for variation in measurement from flat to flat. In fact, the one that I mentioned above that was .020" off on one flat was his and was a great casting rod. I certainly don't advocate that lack of precision but it goes to show that he was a great designer and new actions despite the lack of accuracy of his machinery.

E.C. Powell used one of three different mathematical taper designs to make his rods. Following the B9 taper pattern certainly would be a good place to start to design trout rods. A great many bamboo advocates, particularly from the Midwest and East, have never even cast one. So there are lots of rods out there that many have never had the opportunity to experience.

Does this all mean that you shouldn't make bamboo rods because there is much that is unknown and a lot of things to consider? Of course not! There are lots of things that go into a quality rod that can be defined and many of today's rodmakers, and many from the past, have made great rods. They have also made a lot of poor casting rods and you shouldn't forget that. Just because it's a bamboo rod doesn't mean it's a great one. You can be careful in your bamboo selection to make sure you have good fiber quality, that the bamboo is free of structural damage, cosmetic blemishes can nearly eliminated, and the workmanship can be carefully done. Good glue work can be done without seams, they can be glued without torque, the sections can be

very uniform, and they can be very straight out of the binder. Those that aren't can be CAREFULLY straightened using heat as long as they don't begin very crooked.

You can choose quality guides, relatively clear cork, beautiful wood, and cosmetically beautiful fittings that are properly polished. Your varnish work can be of a very high quality and blemishes polished out if you desire. The end result can be a beautiful rod that is a wonderful fishing instrument. And one that would make an angler proud to own and fish.

But, in my opinion, you need to take a realistic view of what is practical. To begin with, look at lots of rods. I don't believe that you can know what makes a great fishing rod until you see a number of them. Cast lots of rods to help determine what constitutes a good action for the situations you are trying to cover.

From my experience you want to settle on a basic taper for a rod and then you want to replicate it for others that you produce in that model. The things that are most important are the general taper and the consistency between rods. I don't think that anyone can tell whether or not a rod is off a thousands or two here and there but they certainly will know if they are expecting one type of action and get one that's completely different.

I believe that the important dimensions are based on percentage. Try to keep the rod in the area of the last 12 -15" of the tip within +/-.001 or, preferably, less. If the tip diameter is .065" then .002" is 3.1%. Keeping the same thoughts of percentage the typical butt at .325" would be off .010 ". Naturally, a butt would typically be easy to keep within +/-.002-.003" which is a smaller percentage because of the size. I do think that it's important to have the area in the tip extremely close to your proven taper. If it doesn't come out perfectly you can always slide the sections slightly one way or the other to get it very close to your dimensions without changing the basic "feel" of the rod. That may cause other dimensions to be slightly off but it will tend to keep the overall action and the line sizing very close to what you want.

Now I do think that it is important to keep the flat to flat measurement close because that does help keep the rod in balance and without spine. In this area you should be able to keep the rod within the +/-.0015(.003 total) or, preferably, a little less with good equipment and technique but, here again, I would think of it in percentages.

Another thing to consider in rod design is the difference in line weights between sizes. Here is a chart measured in grains which are 1/7000 of a pound.

Grain	Weight	Difference
1	60	20
2	80	20
3	100	20
4	120	20
5	140	20
6	160	20
		% increase
1	60	-
2	80	33.33%
3	100	25.00%
4	120	20.00%
5	140	16.67%
6	160	14.29%

Isn't this surprising? This was a set of standards based on grain weights developed in the '60s to replace the old line designations of HCH, HEH, GBH, etc that manufacturers used. The reason they changed was that there weren't consistent standards between manufacturers as to line weight and variance tolerance so customers weren't sure of what they were getting when they purchased a line. However, with the new standards there is a substantial percentage difference between the lower weight lines and the heavier ones. I've never liked this dramatic difference, particularly in the lighter line sizes, but that's the way it is. Also, don't forget that line manufacturers have about a +/-

tolerance of 5 grain on lines so the weight varies from this chart and can affect what a rod feels like by as much as 1/4 line size in some cases.

In designing rods I have always gone by the cross sectional area rather than a linear chart of the dimension. I think that it's a lot better way to do it. If you graph out the cross sectional area you get a very good visual picture of how the rod looks. It's always some form of a half parabola shape.

What are the important things in rod design? First, they must be great fishing rods. The most important is that on a trout stream they must deliver the line well, protect tippets, play fish well with the tackle being used, and be comfortable for the angler to use. Second, the rod should be smooth to cast without any hinges or kicks, it should come alive in the hand, and it should have that sweetness that's hard to describe but that you instantly know when you make a cast. It should easily become what I would call a thought rod where it becomes almost an extension of your arm and you forget it.

Then it should be beautiful and the workmanship impeccable. The overall design should be pleasing to the eye and have unique features that define your sense of design.

The fittings should all be of the best quality. Things like the outside of the ferrules, winding check, and reel seat components should be perfectly polished showing no tooling marks. Your action between rod models with the same style should be similar so that customers know what to expect.

You certainly can make a progressive style model, or a parabolic style, or some variation of other basic actions to accommodate different philosophies to please your design philosophy or that of a customer's individual thoughts on good design.

The last thing, and probably the least considered but maybe the most important, is that the rods should reflect your philosophy of life and living. I believe strongly that your life and what you do should be in balance so that you are at ease with the rods that you make, there is harmony in your life, and when you are enjoying time on the stream with one of your creations you have a warm feeling about it and the environment. The rod should have a harmony that others will feel when they cast and fish it.

Building beautiful rods that other anglers enjoy has brought me tremendous satisfaction throughout my life and I hope that it does for you.

I hope that I have given you some insight into my thoughts and philosophy on rodmaking. Hopefully, this will also be a start of you developing your own.

Another Day On The Test

Second European Bamboo Rodmaking Gathering
Sarnen, Switzerland

Alessandro Brunelli

The second European Bamboo Rodmaking Gathering was held in the middle of Switzerland in the lovely village of Sarnen on the week-end of 25 through 27 September 2009. Our Swiss friends organized it perfectly in the rowing sport centre by lake Sarnen a few kilometres from Lucern.

Just over 100 people from all over Europe met again in a beautiful Autumn weather to exchange knowledge, experiences and cheer, thus confirming this event as the highlight of the bamboo rod making arena in Europe.

For the first time we had one guest from the UK, while a few new visitors approached us during the event . Christian Diacon and wife came from France. The majority of people were old friends from the first informal gathering with the Swiss, Italian and German rodmakers – also held at the same place in Sarnen - back in 2006 and the following gatherings in Waischenfeld, Germany (2007) and Sansepolcro, Italy, (2008).

We can certainly say that, well a century and a half

into the making of the modern fishing tackle era, the "Renaissance" of bamboo rod making is alive and striving. Our French friend Christian confirmed that in France too there is a recent renewed interest in this tradition once deeply rooted in his country.

The beauty of these gatherings, and in Sarnen it was respected again, is that all information is shared and that part-time rodmakers can meet in a friendly, intimate atmosphere with real trade artisans such as Rolf Baginski (Germany), Robert Stroh (Germany), Christian Strixner (Germany), Bjarne Vries (Danemark), Larry Tusoni (USA), Jerry Kustich (USA), Nick Hughes (South Africa, based in Switzerland). Andy Royer (USA), our bamboo broker, also attended the event with his daughter...leaving us all at first disconcerted because of his new beardless look and a pony tail: too much time spent with bamboo rodmakers, he explained.

People started arriving and registering in the middle of the afternoon on Friday. Philippe Sicher, one of the 6 organizers, officially welcomed us in the evening before dinner. From non smoking requirements to a shuttle bus service to the nearby hotel , all was gently organized, including a dedicated Swiss pocket-knife kindly given to all participants as a gift. An elegant and friendly team of helpers and the cooks Beno Gisler und Christian Schmid rounded off the excellent organization of the event. Typical Swiss food like rösti and bratwurst, delicious salads and local ravioli, delighted us through the event.

This second gathering was structured almost exclusively around workshops. However, these were not mere how-to stations, but real work places where a complete bamboo rod making sequencing was in place. As a result, a three pieces rod, " C.C. de France of Hardy" was created and given as price in the final raffle which concluded the week-end .

The workshops began on Saturday morning with the splitting of bamboo culms, and continued with the straightening of the nodes, binding and tempering the strips, and down till the very end stage of varnishing and signing which occurred on the following Sunday morning. The rod was made in a record time of just one and half days by an international group of 33 rodmakers. Understandably, 33 people working on the same rod and applying all possible different techniques and tools for each building phase as an educational exercise could not end up in the very essence of a precision cane rod (we, for instance, randomly measured over 10 hundreds of an cm of differences in the mid section of the rod), but the exercise could perfectly illustrate the simple yet manifold world of rodsmithing.

At the same time, opposite the splitting area, another large group of people surrounded Mr Ferdi Wenziger working at the lathe and making nickel-silver ferrules - by drilling and not turning the original silver-steel piece. A high precision work perhaps to be attempted by the most experienced craftsmen. As always, it might look easy but it's not a trouble-free task.

Self-taught Luciano Oltolini and Claudio testa, IBRA members, showed on the other hand the painstaking art of making agate stripping guides. The result of their individual work was stunning. The process involves drilling agate stones with a hollow diamond tool and then polishing them. The agate plates are purchased in mineral shops. Claudio and Luciano said that many rings get broken in the making, since natural stones are unpredictable and have anisotropic properties. Once the ring is ready, it's then soldered in an equally hand-made framework. The whole process can take two hours or more for just one agate stripping guide. The job is frustrating, says Luciano, "because perhaps you are a good half an hour into drilling, that the agate ring falls apart and you have to start all over again". Other times " I lost one or two finished agate rings which fell on the floor and so I realized I had to have a soft rubber mat on the bench to prevent occasional bouncing and losing!" Sounds familiar, doesn't it?

You learn at your expenses all the little details of your craft. Claudio was the first IBRA member to go along this path, alone, and out of his home workshop. “Buy the more expensive but best quality tools, you will never regret it” he advised us. A remarkable achievement, by both Luciano and Claudio whose work was very well received by many fellow rodmakers. By the way, Luciano Oltolini’s agate stripping guides can be seen and purchased through Alberto Poratelli’s website (www.aprods.it) ...just for those who asked to buy some

Another innovative workshop was carried out by Kurt Zumbrunn: how to make handmade grips of birch tree bark. The craft of using birch tree bark to make basketry and other objects has a long tradition but it was the first time that it was presented in our rodmaking circle in a step-by-step way. The first stage is to staple little squares of birch tree bark around a long bolt , then gluing them together and finally working them down on the lathe .

The grip has a smooth, very pleasant touch. The weight is slightly heavier than natural cork, but aesthetically, the distinct colouring of each ring and the unique natural pattern which result have a tremendous impact on the viewer. We, on the other side, immediately thought of other materials or uses which could be invented.

Gerd -Peter Wieditz delighted us with his simple yet very effective way of making steel snake guides out of metal wire. He just used two simple handmade tools: one to make the desired spiral shape and size – he uses small pins of different sizes as pivot around which the wire is properly twisted - and the other one is a flat metal bar with holes and a straight path for flattening and correcting the alignment of the snake guides' feet. The snake guides were then used for the rod in preparation.

Jaroslav Vecko wanted to become an engraver in his native Czechoslovakia when , like many of his countrymen, fled to Switzerland in the aftermath of the Prague Spring of 1968. Engraving is the art of manually drawing and chiselling in metal to make either prints or stand-alone masterpieces like those “carvings” or “drawings” you can see on knife handles, guns, rifles...and, yes, even ferrules and reel holders The task is daunting since no mistake is allowed. Many years of practice are necessary to master this magnificent fine craft. Today, the best schools are in Belgium and Italy .

Jaroslav demonstrated us how to engrave a ferrule by using a special turning vise and a hand graver.

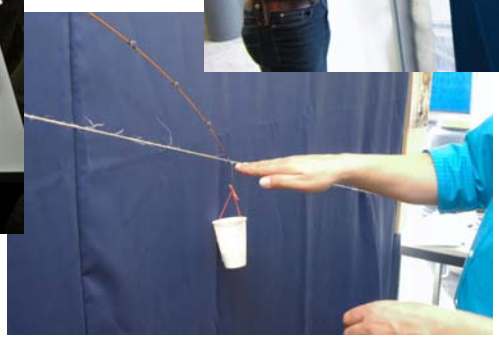
Perhaps the most useful and clever workshop was the "15 degree power measuring" by Mr Theodor Matschewski and Ludwig Reim, from Germany. These two gentlemen have spent the last 20 years in developing this very simple but stunning test which provides a measured account of how your fishing rod (any kind of fishing rod) performs. The characteristics and performance are simply derived by the basic physical law of Newton. I

n practical terms you set the rod at a "zero" level, horizontally, the tip touching the line marked as "zero", then you add a weight M_1 at the tip until a "static" level just below is reached and then again another weight M_2 till the tip of the rod is bent so to touch a 15 degree line with line "zero".

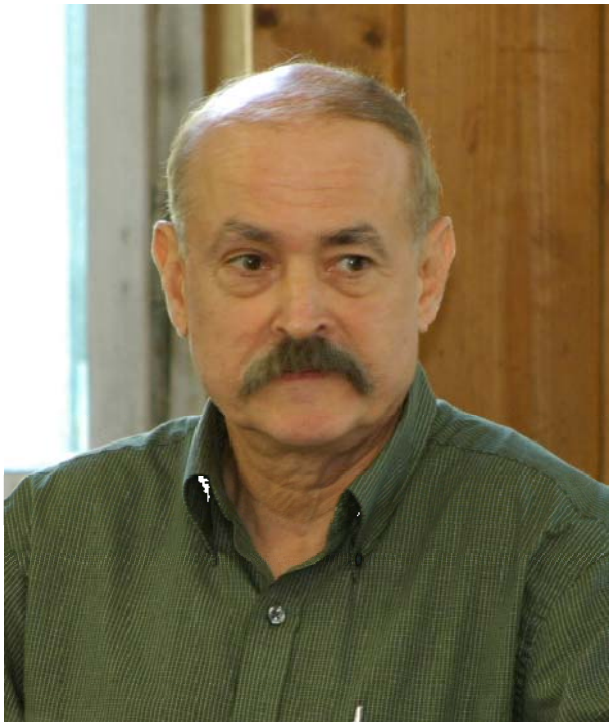
The two masses M_1 and M_2 give you the kind of rod action you have (e.g. medium-fast) and the equivalent line number. We tried with an Alberto Poratelli's IRP, 7.2', #3 rod and the result confirmed that it was a medium-fast, #3 rod as Alberto and IBRA stated

By means of this test, one can compare rods independently from line, length and material. Beginners and interested anglers could then use it before buying a new rod knowing what they are looking for. Mr Reim also developed a test to measure the speed of a rod but we do not enter into it in detail in this article.
The declared target is to have this system adopted as THE worldwide standard by rod manufacturers.

Besides, more and more people are recognizing its importance. "The test is as simple as effective, so what could be against it?", say the two entrepreneurs? More about their test at www.solitip.de and soon also in English (www.solitip.com).



Terenzio Zandri and Gianluca Nocentini have become a fixed presence of our gatherings. Again their beautiful flies made out of a special loom, the hook vertically placed, created a sensation. But Terenzio is also known for his famous silk line. To learn more about Terenzio, check his website www.terenziosilklines.com



Larry Tusoni gave a speech on Sunday morning explaining the new features of his popular software - and taper data base- “RodDna” which has now reached version 1.4. Larry was also busy in the workshops, on the planning form, on the Tormek machine giving a presentation on how to sharpen blades and was very active throughout the gathering.

Fly Reels were again presented by aficionados of this craft like Waldemar Nowak who makes “S-shaped” reels , Wolfhard Schulz, both from Germany and Markus Rohrbach (Switzerland,) . We met Wolfhard for the first time in Waischenfeld in 2007. With a direct mentoring of Joe Janciuras who lives in the USA, Wolfhard has been gradually trying to reproduce Edward vom Hofe reels, the only person in Europe! Markus Rohrbach of Swiss Tackle, a mechanical engineer, exhibited his beautiful fly reel and the new tippet dispenser.

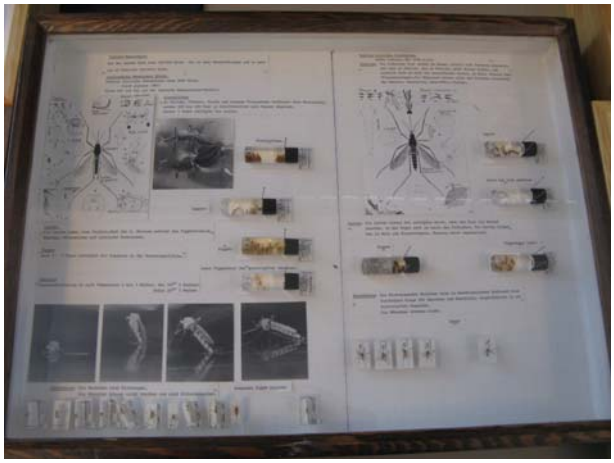
He said “It all started in 1999 when I first build the prototype of the dispenser for myself. After using it for a while friends were asking for it and I decide to produce a small series for them in 2000.

After that I started the reel project and sold the first reel at the end of 2003 to the USA and another 15 piece to Japan” His reels and tippet dispensers are available to try at next gathering and of course on his website (www.swisstackle.ch).

Our friendly and cheerful Daniel Hoda (http://hoda-bamboo-rods.ch) , always present since the beginning of our gatherings, showed a bamboo spinning rod along with his beautiful fly fishing rods.

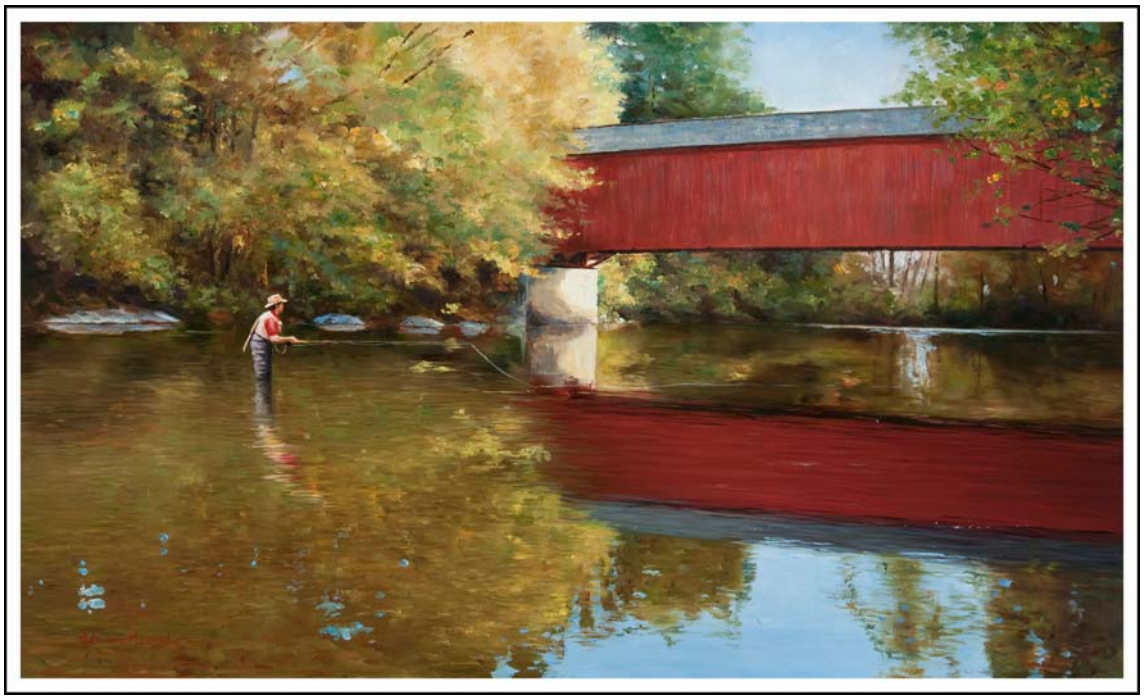
He and Tim Anderson also suggested the use of a USA –made glue to varnish the rod. Tim, who from scrimshaw artist in Waischenfeld back in 2007, has since become a convinced bamboo rodmaker, showed us the way of using this special glue, named “Gorilla Glue” to varnishing the rod.

The variety of the workshops and presentations did not finish here. The Swiss entomologist Heinz Suter, provided a magnificent display of aquatic insects. A masterful work which could be easily placed in a Natural Museum without doubt!



As we said, the gathering finished with a raffle. Many prices were on the table including the rod which had just being finished and provided with a document with all 33 names of the people involved in the making.

We left Sarnen after lunch together in a nice, autumn sunshine



A Perfect Fall Day

THE STORY OF AN AMATEUR FRENCH RODMAKER AT THE 2ND EUROPEAN RODMAKERS' GATHERING

Christian Diacon

One evening on TV they had a programme on bamboo rod-making. A programme like many others you might say; perhaps, but not for me! The Italian explanations were simple and with subtitles and I immediately got the urge to try to make « my very own» bamboo rod.

While searching the web for Garrison and Carmichael's book which was cited as a reference in the programme, a found a database by the Club Français du Refendu (French Split Cane Club), in which I found information about the tools and a book in French « La Canne à Mouche » by J.L. ESPINAY. I ordered the book and started my adventure with bamboo. I requisitioned my cellar, made my tools, bought some local bamboo and made my First Rod! Hum !! It was my first rod and I was proud that I had managed to make it from scratch.

I started participating in a French Forum of rodmaking "Le forum de GILLUM"; and on the forum I met Paul Agostini who received me at his house and showed me a few of the tricks of the trade. I learned a lot and my technique and tools improved considerably.

With Paul I went to the First European Rodmakers' Gathering in Italy which was organised by IBRA. I was worried about the language as I only speak French but we were met with great friendship and a little in French and a little in Italian, we managed to have real discussions, to exchange lots of ideas and we understood each other perfectly. We met with some big names in the rodmaking scenario like Hoagy Carmichael, we learned new techniques the new Streamlined bamboo ferrule by Alberto Poratelli and Gabriele Gori

My new rod was made bearing in mind all the new techniques I had learned and especially regarding the Streamlines ferrule. This rod was adopted by my wife the minute she tried it for the first time.

So without any qualms, I went to the Second European Rodmakers' Gathering in Sarnen (Switzerland) just for the pleasure of seeing old friends and meeting new ones. Philipp SICHER, one of the organisers and his team, had a brilliant idea which was to set up a big fully equipped rodmaking shop to demonstrate all the steps involved in rodmaking... We saw a bulky bamboo culm slowly transformed into a rod and we could all say, I did this or I made that. We made a three piece rod from the splitting to the wrapping.

Each phase was carried out by three different Rodmakers (professionals or amateurs) and each one compared his method to achieve the same results.

This gave rise to very constructive exchanges of views.

Some magnificent Rods, reels were exhibited as were Zandri Terenzio's flies whom I would like to thank for having taught me and my wife his tying method.

One stand by Theo Matschewshi explained his method of calculating the line weight of any rod by measuring the way it would flex to 15°. Later on Larry Tusoni explained his new RodDna programme.

A lot of rods were set up for us to try out and several casting lessons and demonstrations were held by the specialists. Discussions and advice were never missing and everyone sought out the specialists and professionals to hear their views.

Regarding the organisation and the organisers – there is little to add to the fact that everything flowed flawlessly. The German messages were translated in English and Italian and Alessandro helped us with the French.

So a big thanks to everyone who worked towards making our stay so pleasant. The restaurant was decorated very appropriately with bamboo motifs and the food was delicious.

To crown everything, a raffle was held and the first prize was unique: the « Rod » of inestimable value which was made by the participants and a certificate of authenticity signed by all the makers.

I wish to thank IBRA and its team with whom we got on very well and we will most certainly be at their gathering in May. It's a promise. .

These gatherings which are attended by people with a passion for bamboo rods are always rich in discoveries and exchanges and go beyond all language and social barriers. A single passion reunites people from the whole world (Germany, Switzerland, Italy, England, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, France...) in a fraternal atmosphere of mutual understanding and that is what counts.

I have already decided to attend the IBRA gathering in May and the Third European gathering which will take place in Germany.

I will be there...

A Trip Up North

The West Coast Rod Building School

California's Tradition, its Past, Present and Future

Rick D. Sorensen

Given the nature of fly fishing and its underlying lack of pragmatism, it's no wonder to me the Bamboo Fly rod will soon celebrate its 200th birthday. An evolved angler certainly understands our venerable pastime is much more about connecting with nature and tradition than actually catching trout.

This point is even more evident when viewed relative to rods made of modern materials. The fact is the heavier, and comparably performance-limited bamboo rod remains the tool of choice for the most talented and experienced anglers. This simply reveals that fly fishing is not centered in the paradigm of what's best ... but *what's right.*

Given these realities, I often reflect on where our sport is headed and, more specifically, how the bamboo fly rod will fare in the hands of a technically-absorbed younger generation. I've carefully considered these circumstances and feel confident the rich genera of antique tackle collecting and bamboo rod building is secure in the hands and hearts of the young anglers who have stepped forth to wade among us in our sacred waters.

I make my home in Southern California and operate West Slope Classic Fly Tackle, a vintage fly fishing tackle business. To shed light on my beliefs about our future, I'd like to share with you some historical information that's close to my heart, and a learned and beloved area of interest.

What has now come to be known as the West Coast Angling Tradition is made up of fly fisherman and rod makers who in the convention of my Golden State, innovated, discovered and developed what I believe to be the finest school of rod makers known today. This rod building tradition is built on knowledge elevated and refined by being diligently passed from one generation to another. It is also a story of great masters completing their legacy and their dreams by seeing their work and innovations live on in the hands of those they have painstakingly chosen to build on their efforts.

First in the Gold Rush then in other generations, California has always been a place where pioneers sought freedom and opportunity. The wide-open spaces and limitless possibilities drew people who were by nature creative and forward-thinking individuals. This same spirit was to be found in our early builders and most notably, in the fly rods of Powell and Winston.

Starting in the 1920's, this era of rod building came to define the fly rods of the Golden State. Powell and Winston almost simultaneously developed hollow cutting techniques that re-defined the performance of bamboo fly rods. These two rod making companies went head-to-head for many years in casting competitions, smashing records for distance and accuracy while driving their craft to new levels previously thought unachievable. It is these long and light hollow built rods, based largely on progressive tapers that continue to define the performance characteristics of the Western bamboo fly rod.

Winston got its start under the innovative leadership of Lew Stoner. It then produced rod builders Doug Merrick, Gary Howells, Tom Morgan and Glen Brackett, all of whom went on to refine the defining concepts captured during the Stoner era.

In the 1980's, a little known rod builder, a "mad genius" named Mik Montagne e, stepped forward with amazing innovations and created what is without question the most esoteric bamboo fly rods ever built. With knowledge of engineering, ballistics, physics and computer science, the avant-garde craftsman used his technical and analytical skills to completely re-invent the bamboo fly rod. Amazingly, Montagne casted very few classic bamboo rods and let empirical science be the deciding factor in how a fly rod best performed. He then translated this information into a complex computer program that led to what famed angler, Andre Puyans, called "Montagne's Theory of Linear Acceleration." Essentially, Montagne discovered that fly rods best performed when the tip remained in a straight line throughout the casting cycle (line of departure) and thus produced exceptionally fast bamboo rods that easily cast 2-inch loops and achieved feats of distance and accuracy once thought to be unobtainable given the natural limits of bamboo.

In terms of rod design, Montagne's brilliance was realized in the unconventional rectangular-shaped rod sections that, when compared to conventionally-designed rods of the same volume of power fibers, were five times as stiff under dynamic loading conditions. Additionally, Montagne refined the somewhat crude cell model of hollow cutting concepts developed Powell. Running the scallops to within 10 inches of the tip top and shaping them like an external rod taper and performing the cuts to predetermined measurements, the craftsman was able to build some of the lightest and fastest rods anglers could handle. All of Montagne's accomplishments notwithstanding, there were many anglers who were either not skilled enough to handle his rods, didn't embrace his radical departure from tradition or simply didn't feel his work translated into improving the act of fishing. In any case, Montagne remains as one of California's most influential rod designers whose techniques, designs and approach moved our craft forward. His rods command tremendous respect.

The archetype for the Western bamboo rod was realized in the shared El Cerrito shop of Mario Wojnicki and Per Brandin. For nearly 15 years the two masters worked side by side, albeit separately, and through their labors further branded the identity of the Western school of bamboo rod makers. Fundamentally, the artisans tested the limits of bamboo rods by asking questions such as, "How long?", "How light?", and "How to best build a bamboo fly rod?" The answers were realized in rods such as a positive-casting, 8'6" four weight weighing a mere 2.8 ounces. The boundaries in hollow cutting, wall thickness and other methods of maximizing power-to-weight ratio were pushed to the hilt and this made available rods which were heretofore considered beyond the scope of accepted methodologies, construction techniques and the inherent limits of bamboo. In addition to casting performance, Brandin and Wojnicki brought all the elements of the ultimate rod together in creating pieces with refined finish work rivaling the most sophisticated efforts of famous eastern builders.

Staying within the discipline and traditions of classic bamboo rods by executing understated yet cosmetically -distinctive finish work paired with outstanding fishing performance have placed Brandin and Wojnicki in the rarified position of being the most accomplished and innovative rod builders our craft has produced.

Jim Reams makes him home on the banks of the Fall River in Northern California just feet from the flows of the glorious spring creek and its wickedly-challenging rainbows. With several other Blue Ribbon trout streams within minutes of his home, Jim is an authoritative spring creek angler who has literally spent thousands of hours fishing and solving the problems of the technically difficult waters that surround him. As a rod maker, Reams has extensively tested and refined his designs and has translated his extensive experience into long, light and crisp hollow built rods that are supremely adept for fishing their intended applications. When it comes to finish work, Jim is regarded as one of the most methodical and gifted craftsmen among contemporary rod makers. His natural talent for painting water colors and an ability for ultra-fine work is reflected in his artistically-perfect rods. One of fly fishing's most affable and beloved personalities, Reams craft mirrors his desire for perfection in both performance and cosmetics.

Among the most exciting and promising of young builders to work in the West Coast model is Erik Peterson of Linnéa Rod Company, who many consider to be the future of bamboo rod building. Peterson was mentored by California's finest rod builders and anglers and his education has deeply influenced his craft. In his early 20's he went to work in the shop of fly fishing renaissance man, Andre Puyans, and then served as a guide and instructor at Puyans' trout schools, learning the fine points of spring creek angling and fly tying under Andre's watchful eye.

In 1995, Brandin took the young craftsman on as an apprentice for two years. During this time, Peterson built a strong friendship with Brandin's shop mate, Wojnicki, who further educated the young builder in the arts and sciences of rod building. From that point, Peterson refined his own methods and tapers, benefiting from the guidance of his close friend Jim Reams. Today, at 40, Peterson's work stands as a testimony to the greatness of his mentors who generously invested in his success.

True to the West Coast model, Linnéa rods are deeply hollow cut well into the tips and offer medium fast action tapers that cast with grace and authority. Erik builds rods both in quad and hex configuration which feature handmade components and finish work that is clean, elegant and understated. Peterson is a very fine caster, a formidable spring creek angler and has an uncanny penchant for taper design. He's one of the rare individuals who can translate "feel" and verbal description into reality as a wonderful bamboo fly rod.

As I indicated, weighing Peterson's talent and the guidance he's received from so many of California's great anglers and rod builders, he's in fine position to assume the trust of the tradition and future of the West Cost School of rod building. He's poised to make a tremendous contribution to the world of rod building.

While times change and our technologies develop, like natural law, human nature remains as an enduring constant. As anglers we seek the peace and beauty of a trout stream and many of us choose to interact with this spiritual endeavor using a handmade bamboo rod. Just as leaves fall in October and snow melts in the spring, I rest in the knowledge that our ancient tradition is cyclical. Great masters, who were all at one time apprentices, will carry our craft forward by investing their contributions in the trust of those who are capable and worthy of one day doing the same.

Chasing Summer Brookies

Reflections Of a Fly Tyer

Alberto Calzolari

" There are feelings which are difficult to explain, they belong to our most intimate sphere of senses. It's hard to describe a smell, a taste, if we don't associate it with something comparable. When, sometimes, it happens that I have this sort of dejà vu, on the river, rod in hand, I feel happy. Rather, I deeply hope they may arise again, I wait for them. They are like slashes of smells, lights, colors, of sounds that bring me back to a time that, although not so distant, is already part of my remembrances. They bring me back to where everything started. They are the flashes of memory.

For a short and intense moment I experience those sleeping feelings again, emotions that once lived in a child's heart and that were forced, much to their regret, to give way to the world of grown-ups."

It was early love, the one with fishing, but not immediately with fly fishing. Firstly I met bobbers, coarse fish and natural baits. Carp, tench, perch. That very first rod, a bamboo pole, still lives with me, although now one piece only, just to remind me that one day I would have gone back to that material, bamboo, but in a much nobler form.

I cannot easily explain what attracted me to fly fishing so much that it would force me to give up all other techniques, but certainly it was the same feeling that is still bewitching me for over 30 years. Many other passions stirring up in me, then burnt out in the course of years, but they never replaced my fly fishing addiction. It would better to say they simply lived side by side.

I guess all these passions have got something in common and I believe it has to do with aesthetics and its marriage with technique. One of my first loves was with plastic models, then followed by Bonsai cultivation, where technical and botanical knowledge must live together with taste and an eye for proportions. I was then fascinated by the aquarium world up to the point to prepare a thesis for my degree, and there is nothing strange with it, except that I was attending an Economics Faculty. Of the aquariums I especially loved the plants and the underwater gardens, more than the simple fish. Once again a pure matter of aesthetical composition. Perspective rules, proportions, spaces, combinations of colours and different foliage, botanical characteristics, everything was important for an artistic setting of the plants. Again technique and aesthetics.

For sure, very little of aesthetics was in my very first flies. It may sound like the usual cliché, and maybe clichés are born in such way, but I really experienced my first approach with fly tying using my mother's sewing threads and few feathers collected here and there. No books, no schools, no teacher was there to make my task easier. Nowadays, tying classes, videos and books are an enormous help for the newcomers but, somehow, reduce the emotions of discovery, of the slow journey which brings to the first good results. If I think that, looking at the first flies bought at the local shop, I thought the fibres of the hackle collar were tied on one by one. Then I began untying a few flies and clouds dissipated on my doubts. Only later I learnt that many famous tiers of the past considered the untying of the flies (of other tiers) the best exercise to get the right skill. The small cash available as a teenager poorly married with high prices of materials and tools. So, for a long time, Indian cock hackles and a lot of fantasy lived together on the tying desk. To tell the truth, on that table I should have studied as well and an always patient mother was there to remind me that one man cannot live only with feathers and fishing. Even if, later on, I realized that some lucky guy was succeeding in doing this.

Getting to the classic salmon flies, those to be exhibited, was really natural, but not easy at all.

Just as it happened to the apprentices of the Bonsai garden in Omiya, Japan, who used to spend the first few years only watering plants to get familiarity with them, so my journey to salmon fly tying went through thousands of fishing flies, of every kind, with every available material. And there was no better school. Only practice makes perfect, although perfection will never be achieved. Perfection belongs to God. This makes sense in every respect, whether we are planing a bamboo strip, tying wings on a fly or casting between two opposite currents.

Along with salmon flies came a completely new challenge, starting from zero, a new task to aim for. Supported by the chance to reach the highest level, in the art of fly tying, in terms of combination of technique and aesthetics.

Hands slowly move almost automatically, fingers

react in harmony while eyes and mind are conducting the orchestra. A mind that can free itself from other thoughts. It can be a perfect practice for concentration and relax, maybe a little Zen.

The art of tying salmon flies for exhibitions stands out from the schemes and techniques used for any other kind of fishing flies. Care for details becomes really important, knowledge, selection and handling of materials reaches the highest level while their assembling on the hooks can be almost maniacal.

Through these flies I was discovering another aspect that was probably just waiting to disclose: the tradition. The salmon flies were the key to open my being a traditionalist. In this respect Japan was the country that influenced me most. In Japan, tradition, technique and aesthetics live together in many aspects of daily life, not only in arts and crafts.

It so happens that Bonsai finds its highest expression in Japan (although it was born in China) while for aquariums and fly fishing this country is one of the most important after United Sates and gave birth to some refined aquarium landscapists and fly tiers. At the same time, before being attracted by bamboo fly rods I was enchanted by the botanical essence and its wide use in oriental countries. Japanese and Chinese first, live a sort of symbiosis with bamboo, they make tools for daily uses or art objects.

With time passing I started to be aware of this growing attraction for tradition. Surely it is biologically more probable that this may happen as a natural cycle of the years passing by, but I am not ready to associate it with the aging but more with getting experience and with the relative wisdom.

It is always difficult to explain the reasons of feelings, why we can be attracted by things of the past. Maybe, to me, this can have something to do with the awareness, or better to say with the belief , that “beauty” is in danger in our modern world. In every sense.

Ernest Schwiebert once wrote that after seventy years he finally understood why he was fishing: because of the “beauty”, the one that belongs to every aspect of fly fishing. I really love this statement. Once more this reinforces my firm beliefs that this style of fishing has more to do with aesthetics than with catching fishes. My way of conceiving fly fishing is steeped in beauty, whirling of lines in the air, flying of mayflies, feathers, flies, the rods, the flow of the waters, sounds and smells of the surroundings.

If it was only to catch fish I could have given up with my journey with salmon flies. The flies to which I dedicate hours and attentions born to be admired and framed and are unsuitable to be tied at the end of a leader, even just for the cost of feathers and materials used. Materials, a virus which may infect a sick man. They are lethal. Their search becomes a hobby inside the hobby and you may discover a world that you could not believe may exist.

If someone would ask me which was the highest reward in tying these salmon flies I would be certain of the answer. I was gifted with the chance to get in touch with so many people around the world. Not just to feed the ego but rather the heart and mind. And this is Beauty too.

To be invited to Italian and foreign shows fed the ego instincts, in the most human way, but meeting and making new friends gave inward happiness and contributed, more than anything else, to my growth and knowledge. My job, with its continuous pilgrimage around the world, was of great help. Quite a good knowledge of foreign languages and an inclination for socializing and talking – sometimes too much – did the rest.

The last few years saw a growing interest toward classic and salmon flies by fly tiers from around the world. In every continent, from Asia to Australia, from United States to South America and naturally in Europe, I had the pleasure to start friendships with some of them.

From every person I had the chance to meet, famous or not, I tried to catch some experience, suggestions, tricks, stories and even just emotions. I believe that at the base of every cognitive process we must have eyes and ears well open and especially it is worth to respect the experience of others. This journey never ends. Paul Jorgensen said once that “fly tying is a school where nobody ever graduates from”.

I was always very pleased to appreciate the naturalness and sincerity of the famous personalities that once belonged to my heroes. Those I was reading of on books and magazines. Going round with these people was teaching me, among the rest, to look back and don’t forget where we are coming from and the steps that brought us here.

Slowly I was attracted by a sphere of interests that completed my way of being. Tradition, history of fly fishing and the men who wrote it.

This was perfectly suited by classic flies, by love for vintage and antique tackle and for the books. Books, a beautiful way to graze a man’s mind and thoughts. Books can stimulate in me more senses at the same time, sight, touch and even sense of smell. The smell of printing and papers.

Salmo Amabilis
For IBRA

The smell of time. Antique books or books that once belonged to some famous person allow me also what I consider a subtle luxury, dreaming. Going through the pages of these books is like to begin on a trip in the past. At the end, like a piece of a puzzle, also bamboo rods found their natural way in this context. Like a dress that fits perfectly. And once again bamboo rods are blending technique and aesthetics with the warmth of tradition. Handling these rods can give a subtle pleasure, tactile and visual. If these rods are vintage or antique pieces then the taste of past times adds to the equation, thinking about the hands that once created them, hands of lonely craftsmen or wage-earning workers. And we ask ourselves to whom these rods belonged many years before. Most of the times we cannot find the answer and so we can only bring them along with us on the river to let them do what they were built for. Placing the rod sections on its bag, admiring the beauty of the silk wraps and smelling the aroma of the varnish has somehow a mystic taste.

My attraction for the rod making art is real, I must admit it, and it is only for a matter of time – lack of this – that I still have not started this adventure. Frequent contacts with IBRA regulars and with my good friend Marco Giardina are a huge stimulus to which I must resist. In the process of rod making there is somehow a similarity with salmon fly tying, the silks, their wrapping, the finishing and the care for details. For the time being I try to practice with some restoration techniques on vintage rods. I assume it is an excellent exercise to get eyes and hands used to treat the material and with the processes that later on could be applied to the crafting of a complete rod.

Wrapping, repairing ferrules, varnishing, polishing. Handling of vintage rods, not necessarily museum pieces, I think may help to create in our mind that predisposition for the elegance of proportions and for details. It's almost what happens to the apprentices of the Bonsai gardens mentioned above. Their only job for the first few years is the watering and cleaning of pots. An apparently pointless and despotic imposition that is instead forcing the apprentices to absorb aesthetical and technical concepts through the continuous observation.

It is exactly what happens with the classic salmon flies. Nothing can be more useful that studying and impressing in our mind the classic proportions of the antique flies, whenever is possible to get them. Books, once more, support and complete the growth process.

Bamboo rods, like classic salmon flies, require a distinctive mental approach and the learning and perfecting curve of techniques has to go through unavoidable steps. The exact opposite of the modern concept of pretending to get everything quickly. Concepts to which young generations risk to get used to. We are now in the era of the "instant expert", of the junk food, of the packaged mediocrity, of plastic and of the quick abbreviations of mobile texts.

I really believe that bamboo rods may help the approach to the "beauty" of our sport and to appreciate the intrinsic value of fly fishing in its entirety.

I believe there are things that don't necessarily need to be altered by the laws of development and by the imposed innovation. Especially when this innovation is driven by marketing and profit laws.

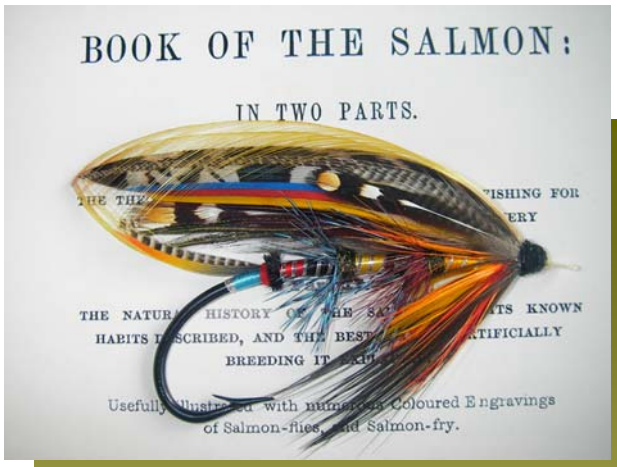
Fly fishing, considered in its entirety, is a world made by countless facets and all of them fascinating. I cannot identify any other human activity where sporting and physical acts, technique, scientific knowledge – although elementary – in entomology and ornithology, arts and crafts, can merge and live together.

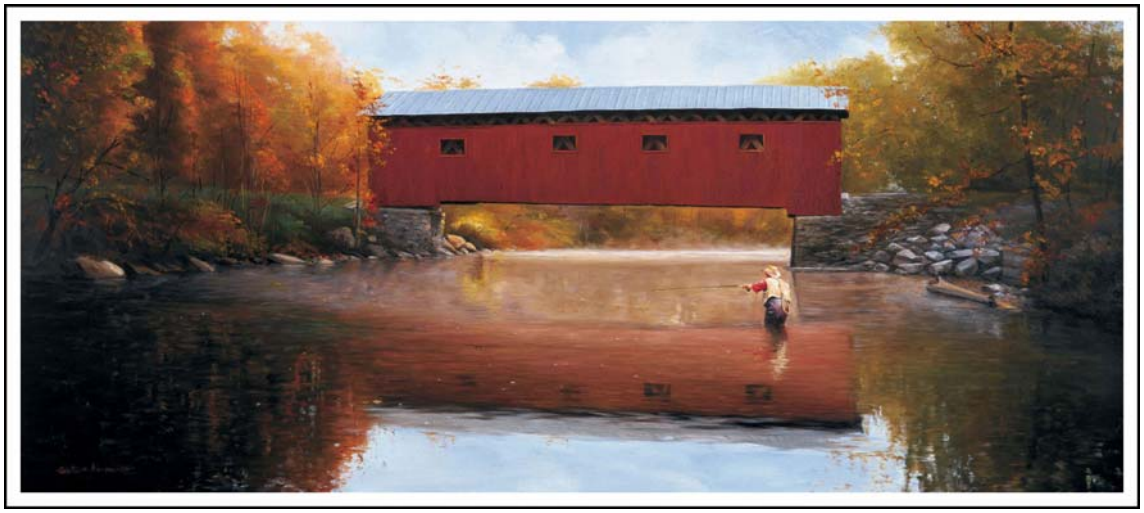
I believe, and I am not the first one to state this, no other sport exists to which thousands of studies and books have been dedicated.

And even if this is not the case, I still love to believe it. Some years back, during a dinner at the Catskill Fly Fishing Museum, someone asked Ernest Schwiebert what was so important about fly fishing that made it so wonderful for him. His reply was ..."everything".

My most intimate hope is that fly fishing could remain anchored to a certain traditionalism and that it could be, before anything else, philosophy, culture, style, aesthetics and ethic.

Otherwise it could risk to become just only another way to catch fish.





Late in The Angler's Season

The Pezon et Michel's Super Marvel

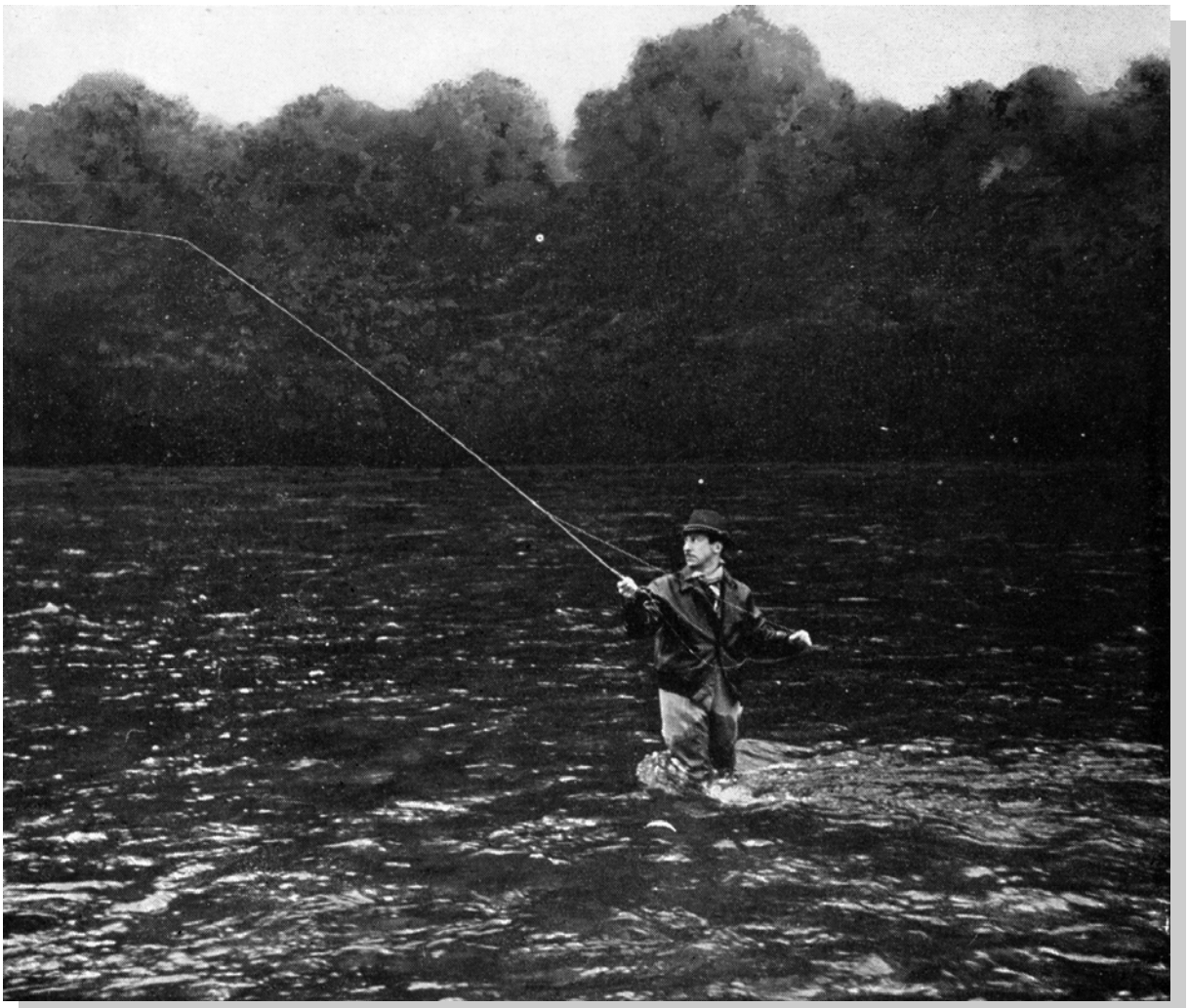
Di Roberto Natali

After the Marvel by Hardy I've decided to go back to Pezon & Michel to discuss its antagonist: the Super Marvel. While the Hardy Marvel is the expression of the old English style, in France "Le Marvel" soon becomes the "Super Marvel" and it epitomizes the modern style of casting and it was born through the collaboration of Charles Ritz and Hans Gebestroiter .

Charles Ritz, who often fished the mythical Traun in Gmunden, met the famous guide Hans Gebestroiter at the end of the 30's and often mentions him in his book "A Fly Fisher's Life".

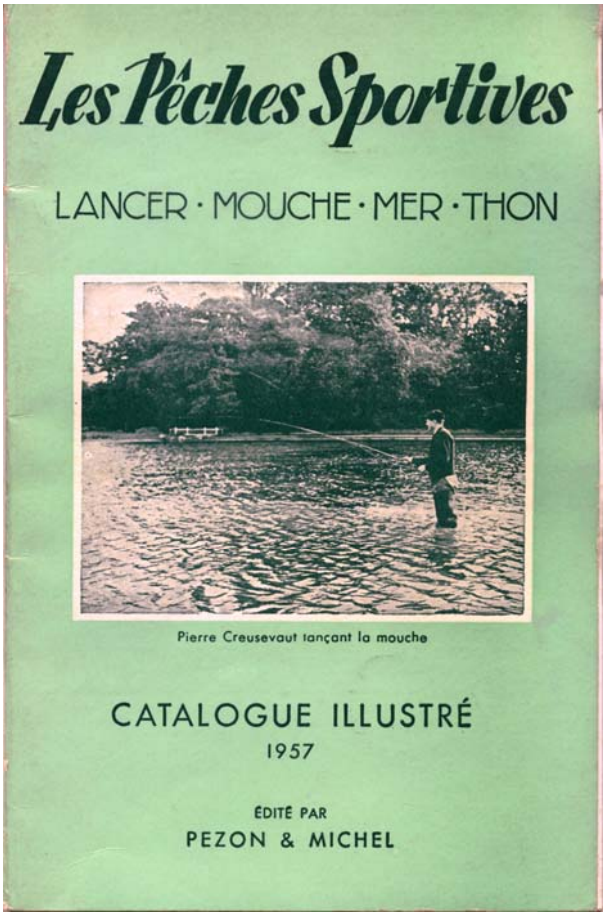
When Pezon & Michel under his supervision, came out with a series of Super Parabolic rods – PPP (*puissance pendulaire progressive*= progressive pendular power), each one was signed by a great fly fisher of the time, with indications by Hans Gebestroiter, they made two rods: the "Le Marvel" and the "Traun" which were destined to substitute the Baby-Zéphir and the Zéphir dedicate to Tony Burnand .

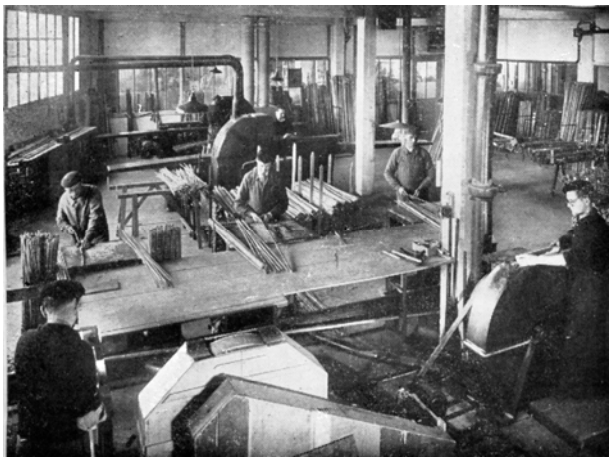
In 1959 the Super Parabolic PPP Nel 1959 came out – it was a 7' 5 weight rod which wasn't much acclaimed by the market because it was too "fast" and so two years later a revised model came out. It was the "Super Marvel" – a 7' 2" five weight rod.



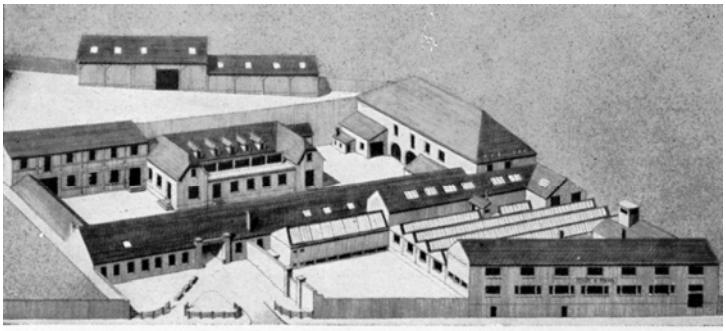
The Super Marvel was a great success and it remained in the catalogue from 1961 until the 2004-5 issue and it is surely one of the fastest rods made by Pezon & Michel.

In the P&M catalogues it is presented as a rod exclusively for dry fly fishing and that could cast a line up to 22 metres .





PEZON & MICHEL
LA MARQUE DE QUALITÉ


Vue générale de l'usine d'Amboise.

To confirm that it is always the same model, both the P&M Marvel rods had the reference number CS262 and if you have a P&M and you wish to date it, it may be interesting to know that the brand changed method of numbering various times, differentiating even between various series of rods, so with good approximation we can indicate that:

- Rods made before 1970 have a code made up of a series of numbers that indicate the day, the month and the year and the progressive number of the rod (code DDMMYYN). So for example a Super Marvel with the following number 15106510 tells us that the rod was made on October 15th 1965 and that it is number 10 of the series.

-The rods made after 1970 and until mid 80's and in general all the PPP models have a code made of year (first number), reference number, length, year (2nd number) i.e. Y, ref. N., Feet, Y. For example the code 7262725 (7/262/72/5) indicates a Super Marvel CS262) 7' 2" made in 1975.

-The rods made from the mid 80's on, had a code made up of the year, the month, the reference number (YYMM REF N.) but often only the year and the month, so for example a code number 8612262 indicates a Super Marvel made in the month of December 1986.

- The rods made in the last period from 1999 until 2003 during which time the ownership of P&M had passed on to Franciois Hue, only have a progressive number so my Super Marvel is simply N. 678.

- After 2003, the P&M brand name was sold by Hue to Sensas but he kept all the rodmaking tools and the bamboo rod production warehouse for himself. So from 2003 until 2005, Sensas kept the rods in their catalogue but they changed the codes. In the 2004 catalogue, the Super Marvel was made to a strange size of 7' 3" with reference number 99700 and the rods were made exclusively by Francois Hue. Production was then stopped. At the moment Francois Hue keeps only a restoration enterprise for bamboo rods.

Hue keeps only a restoration enterprise for bamboo rods.

Let's analyze the characteristics.

Super Marvel (1961-2003 code cs262)

Length 7'2" (218,5cm), Line weight # 5; two piece with staggered ferrule and double tip.

Ritz type cork grip with blued anodized aluminium reel seat.

Reinforced green wrappings tipped in red. .

Hook keeper with the serial number between the wrappings and a French Flag just above it. Stripping guide and tip top in hard chrome.

Blued snake guides

Blued ferrules

The more recent rods come with one tip, while the older production rods all came with double tips. .

Red rod bag and green aluminium rod tube. Later in green or grey PVC which was covered by a beige bag with the company logo.

Design report	Super Marvel		
maker	Charles Ritz Eduard Plantet Pezon et Michel Made between: 1961-2003 Dimensions including varnish		
Geometry	Hex		
Lenghth	7 foot 2 inches , 86 inches (218,5 cm.)		
Line weight	5		
Pieces	2 with double tip. The PPP series had a staggered ferrule: Tip 48 6/8 inches butt 38 3/8 inches		
ferrule	16/64 blued		
taper	Station	dimensions	
		inches	mm.
	0	0,0630	1,600
	5	0,0820	2,083
	10	0,0990	2,515
	15	0,1140	2,896
	20	0,1310	3,327
	25	0,1450	3,683
	30	0,1670	4,242
	35	0,1840	4,674
	40	0,1990	5,055
	45	0,2040	5,182
	50	0,2130	5,410
	55	0,2280	5,791
	60	0,2440	6,198
	65	0,2520	6,401
	70	0,2650	6,731
	75	0,2920	7,417
	80*	0,2930	7,442
	85*	0,2930	7,442
* stations 80 and 85 are under the grip			
Guide spacing 0, 4 1/2, 10 3/8, 17 4/8, 24 3/8, 31 1/2, 38 15/16, 46 2/8, 54 4/8 e 6 3/16 inches, stripping guide and tip in hard chrome, guides blued			
Wrapped in green silk with red tips			
The grip is 10 15/16 inches, Ritz style all in cork with anodised lock down aluminium reel seat			

Planning A Summer Trip

"The IRP Project"

A Bamboo Rod for the Italian Casting Style

Marco O. Giardina

To tell this story we have to go back to the second half of the '70s. Up to that time, in Italy the style of fly fishing was quite indebted to the English tradition, even more to the French one .

The rods of quality used by fly fishers were Hardy and Pezon et Michel. The casting technique in use was very classic and suited those rods at best, performing parabolic or English action.

Few fly fishers were using Brunner's rods and the casting technique devised by Hans Gebestroiter, the so-called Austrian technique that was known in USA as Belgian Casting Style.

These rods and techniques were considered "rough" at that time; hence they had very few fans.

At the end of the '60s the first rods made of graphite appeared on the Italian scene. These rods are light, easy to use, accomplishing better performances; they met a quick success and in short drove bamboo rods out of the market.

The costs decreased and many young people started practicing fly fishing. In any case these are long rods, with important lines (6/7) better suited to large size rivers. The casting technique descends from that of the previous years with some appropriate adjustments.

These rods have a defect: they are not suitable for the nature of the Italian rivers.

They are long rods and they need space. The Italian rivers, except a few located in the north-east planes like the Brenta, Adige, Tagliamento rivers - very similar in size to the US west coast rivers, are small rivers, they are often narrow streams flowing between banks strewn with thick trees and vegetation.

This is quite normal as the Italian terrain is by 60% mountain land.

It is at this time that Roberto Pragliola appears on the scene. He is a charismatic personality in the Italian fly fishing world. Writer, columnist, rod planner, magazine director, he gave a new meaning to the fly fishing and casting techniques. He invented the TLT (Total Casting Technique).

He is a personality that is liked by many, but may be unbearable to some others.

He makes himself well-regarded or hated: no way in between. It is to be said that without him the course of fly fishing would have taken a different path.

Roberto Pragliola was born in Florence, but during the II World War he moved to Fiumaldo with his family, a small centre in the Appennine Mountains in northern Toscana, a place rich in woods and streams, where no fly fishers were intruding from the plains and the cities. The woods were very thick and little room was available for casting, there were very clear waters and very wary trout.

That was the place where casting further improved and blended into art, a difficult art reserved to the most creative and gifted persons.

This was the training field were the young Pragliola was practicing, and where he very likely envisaged a new way of casting to meet the environmental constraints of our country.

In the early '80s, this new way of casting was becoming more refined and also started to be known by its name: TLT.

In 1984 Pragliola published his fundamental text "Mosche e trote per acque veloci" (Flies and trout for fast waters): the Italian fly fishing community was shocked by this book. It was going against the traditions and outlined a new method of fly casting and fishing technique.

This new view was hinged on the following fundamentals: short rods, capable of casting light lines -3 or maximum 4- at high speed with tight lines; a highly technical cast, capable of placing a fly at a distance of 45 feet, under the bushes along the banks, just where the trout rise. It was something unimaginable at the time.

It is at this time that the gap between Italian casting and the bamboo widens. The bamboo rods available in Italy at the time, did not and could not have the features which were suitable to TLT requirements, nor is it possible to build rods that meet those requirements as there is no a tradition of craftsmanship able to do that in Italy. Hence, the carbon rod's primacy.

The *Art of Fly Fishing Journal* nr. 14 publishes an interesting article focussing on Hardy and Charles Hardy, the last of the Hardy family involved in the family company. Page 54 shows the photo of Mr. Hardy dining with friends. Mr. Hardy is gesticulating, clearly simulating a cast, and the caption says < Here he demonstrates the Italian's casting stroke... quick, quick, quick..."

But the Norwegians" he said, "are slow, slow, slow..." with most other nations fitting somewhere between.>

The TLT casting is propagating beyond the Italian boundaries. For certain, those who are not familiar with the technique and try it, may find it quite unpleasant, almost dangerous, but, believe me, nothing is as spectacular as watching a good TLT caster in action. You are watching an athletic gesture, very akin to an athletic trial. Sometimes I come across excellent casters. In those circumstances I give up fishing and watch the "artist".

In 1987, Roberto Pragliola established the SIM –Scuola Italiana Mosca (Fly fishing Italian School) that over 20 years graduated hundreds of fly fishers highly specialized in his technique. Over time, SIM would generate a number of schools that would further propagate TLT techniques.

The 80s, though, are the years when in Italy the use of bamboo rods dies out. The importation of bamboo ceases. It is the totalitarian triumph of the graphite rod. Bamboo rods become collectibles or "objects" for museums.

In other countries, yet in counter tendency, books like "A Master's Guide To Building A Bamboo Fly Rod" by Everett Garrison are read and studied, small rod-making laboratories, home-built, often as a hobby, spring up. The Renaissance of the Bamboo would soon stem from these laboratories.

The situation is quite different in the US where bamboo rod making never ceased, but, instead, it can be said to have aged and flavoured as a wheel of good cheese.

The large mass production disappeared, whereas the high quality production boosted – T&T, Winston, just to cite a few - and a new type of craftsmanship appeared – the one man shop – that pushed the bamboo rods to the highest levels. It can be said that the rod making is at a top level at the end of the '80s, well beyond that of the "Golden Age Era" of the first half of the last century.

Today the bamboo is developing very rapidly all over the world. Rods of outstanding quality are being produced in every continent: Japan has excellent rod makers who conjugate artistic tradition and function. Southern America rod makers, though few, are highly appreciated everywhere. Australia and South Africa have their share as well. North America and Europe express great rod makers.

It is worth expanding on some features that are now prominent in this historical period of rod making. Rods of the past, Golden Age, were also those of high manufacturing – like Payne, Leonard, Garrison, etc... Function was prominent over form.

Today this approach is upset: the need to pay attention to the "form" - as formal/aesthetical feature - is now fundamental or essential at least

Form, in the sense of aesthetical research, now is the distinguishing factor between high quality rods and ordinary rods. It is to be considered that as to the aesthetics aspects in the rod making world, there are different contrasting points of view about "form".

And as to the formal aspect there are formal antinomies that have their justifications in the universe of Rodmaking.

The rods range from the richness of elements of those created by Jeff Hutton and Jeff Wagner for the Presentation series, just to quote a few - that recall the aesthetical virtuosity of Baroque, the sensual painting of Guido Reni, the blending of architectural forms of Gian Lorenzo Bernini;

to those essential rods of rod makers like Bjarne Fries and Per Brandin recalling the aesthetics of Alvar Aalto, Gropius and his Bauhaus, Marcel Breuer and his chair Wassily – one of the most beautiful and essential objects ever created by modernist design. Perhaps the same origin of Fries and Brandin from northern Europe makes them inclined to such essentiality of forms.

A great production from both sides of the Atlantic Ocean comes from those rod makers who aim to produce flawless rods, where the attention to details goes together with an original aesthetical approach that makes each single artist's production well distinct.

James Reams, M.D. Clark, Aroner and the museum-worth products of Tom Morgan Rodsmiths, to cite a few, well represent the US bamboo world.

In Europe, names like Rolf Baginski in Germany, Edward Barder and Tom Moran in UK, Gabriele Gori in Italy, Ger Vroomen in Holland show the great aesthetics and formal quality of the Old Continent.

Things become somehow more complicated if we observe the development of the tapers and the action of the rods. I think that this complexity is related to the different casting techniques of the different countries where rod making develops.

The fascination of the "classic" tapers - Payne, Dickerson, Garrison to mention but a few- is still intact after 30 years and over, in some cases 60.

I think I am right when I say that out of 100 tapers those rod makers choose for a rod, 95% include historical tapers, and that only 5% include new tapers or new elaboration of old tapers.

This is an understandable choice, considering that in more than a century of rod making many different situations, environmental and geographical, have been solved in terms of tapers.

"A taper for every season" exists, just to paraphrase the title of Zinnermann's movie.

There is no river, fish, weather condition, fly, fishing technique for which a taper has not been already devised. Some people state that, with these techniques and building materials, there is no longer room for innovation for the tapers.

Is this true?

I do not think so.

The human mind is so rich in creativity and resources that any limit can be challenged.

The challenge now was building a bamboo rod that could be used with the TLT - Tecnica di Lancio Totale.

On a day of July 2005 a group of friends decided to establish the IBRA -Italian Bamboo Rodmakers Association- with the twofold aim of making Bamboo Rodmaking known in Italy, and of becoming the reference association for the rod makers already active in Italy.

This initiative was unexpectedly successful. A permanent office was provided for IBRA in Sansepolcro, Tuscany, and within two years there were eighty members. Three national gatherings and two courses for new rodmakers were organized. IBRA is present in all the Italian fishing Shows.

In 2008 the first European gathering will take place in collaboration with the organizers of the Swiss and German gathering. To speak the truth this happens when demand and offer meet.

In Europe, in Italy and in German speaking countries in particular, fly fishing is seen not only as a way to get fish, but also as a lifestyle less tied to consumerism, less slavery towards the "Latest novelties", more inclined to reflection and attentiveness, free from the materialistic constraint that pushes humans to consumerism and to the dependence on material goods. The rod, that is an object necessary to commit an action, in this view is seen not as "disposable", but as "valuable and durable" for its very qualities and for the way it is built. It is also seen as the result of the work of craftsmen far from mass production.

It can be said that a new market that has developed within fly fishing, is more aware and less prone to consumerism. Bamboo rods certainly are the factor that mark the distance between "before" and "after".

Bamboo rods, though they come from the past, are revised in a modern view, and become the symbol of a new approach to fly fishing. Bamboo rods thus fill the gap between the Golden Age and the modern era.

The encounter between Roberto Pragliola and IBRA was a coincidence;

he was at the Fishing Show in Verona in February 2006. His humour, typical of people from Tuscany, could not restrain him from making pungent comments on the "wood rod takers", and then the unavoidably casting challenge followed.

He was understandably surprised by modern bamboo tapers.

He enthusiastically accepted the invitation to participate in the Gathering in June, where he was welcomed with great warmth and enthusiasm .

That is how the adventure began.

In order to be operative, the Italian rodmakers were asked to come to a meeting bringing their rods so as to test the tapers of the rods that offer the best performances for Pragliola's casts.

Later on, in Autumn, in a field for archery in Montecatini , north of Florence, about forty bamboo Rodmakers gathered.

Roberto Pragliola tried all the rods and went through several tests till he finally, almost at evening, selected three rods that better suited his casting style. Three rods 7' tip action, as fast as the wind. One of them has bamboo ferrules, well apt to Pragliola's style. We started from these tapers to define the tapers IBRA/ Pragliola.

Gabriele Gori is appointed for the study of the tapers and the coordination of the work, he is President of IBRA, and he is a structural engineer and a refined rod maker.

In March, after Gori's studies, eight prototypes for two tapers are ready; for each taper a variant was arranged: one with N/S ferrules, one with bamboo ferrules, and for each of these also a variety of butts shorter than the tip.

The rods are carefully tested, and a 7'2" line 3, two equal pieces rod was selected; the bamboo ferrules designed by Alberto Poratelli were chosen (he is the guru of bamboo ferrules in Italy), and some further adjustments were made to the taper as compared to the one chosen during the tests.

In June, during the 2007 gathering, 4 rods slightly differing in sizes are presented. In August the final round: the taper has been defined, and its "aesthetics" too. The rod is flamed, showing a "tortoise shell" look, the threads are transparent; the reel seat is a down locking with amboyna insert. Of the 4 rods one is donated to Roberto Pragliola, one to the Museum of Fly Fishing sited in Castel di Sangro, one is left to IBRA and the fourth is donated as a prize for the Raffle held at the World Tuscany Open – WTO in 2007, the International Fly Tying contest held every 2 years in Sansepolcro and Arezzo. In this WTO a true *parterre du roi* participates, the best of the Italian fly fishing, as well as a number of well known international people as A.K. Best, Al Caucci, Hans Van Klinken, John Randolph, Bill Harms

to cite but a few.

During this event, on September 22, the IRP rod is presented to the audience. And it can be said that it really hit the public.

On the one hand, the fact that Roberto Pragliola showed he had accepted the bamboo for his TLT technique, to some people seemed a “heretic” act from him.

On the other hand, all the people who managed to try the IRP rod appreciated its “modern” action that left no room to conservationism and nostalgia of the past. Many, in fact, wondered if they had missed something in the past years, while desperately seeking novelties, high modulus carbon fiber, extreme performances and technology at any cost.

In the US forums, an interesting debate is evolving on the prices of the bamboo rods. What is pointed out is that at present there is the tendency to buy goods considered durable, but that they have all the characteristics of “disposable” goods, and the costs are not necessarily lower: plasma TV’s, electronic music players, laptop computers, mobile phones, video game systems.

All these “durables” have a common trait: they will all be obsolete in 2 years time and will be replaced by new, more advanced devices.

Acquiring these goods does not make people feel guilty for having bought goods doomed to a very short life *per se*.

On the reverse side, acquiring a bamboo rod, even if it is bought by a fisherman who will use it for the whole fishing season and for many fishing seasons over the

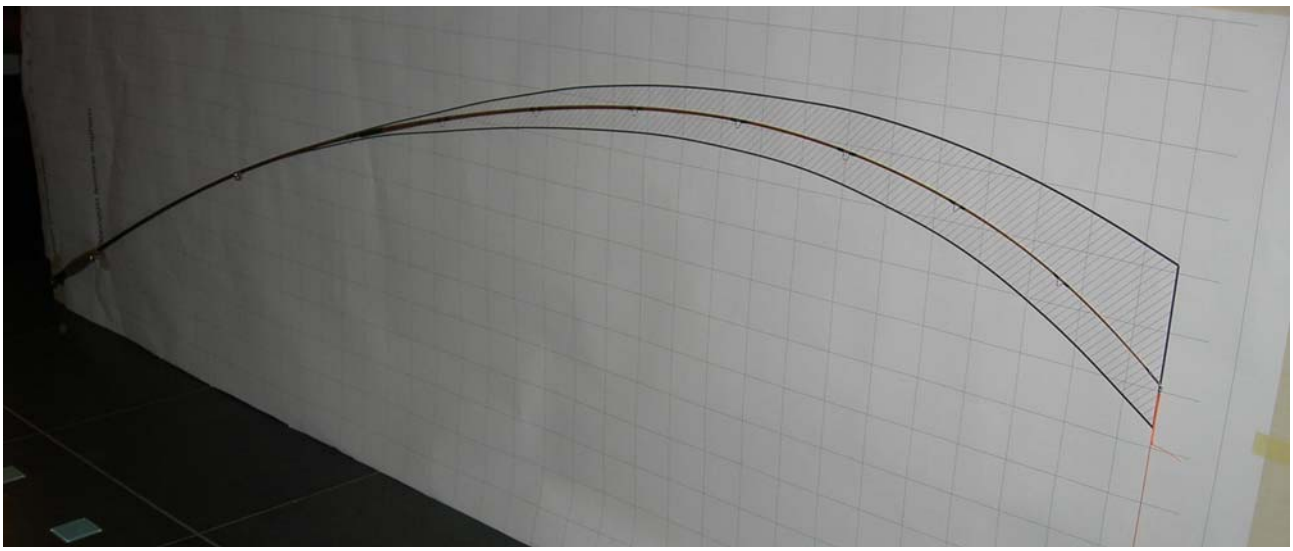
years, causes a sort of psychological embarrassment due to the cost of the rod, though, on average, it is not much higher than that of a plasma TV or a good personal computer. Nevertheless, bamboo rods have an operative life that is longer, reasonably as long as 100 years, if good maintenance is practiced.

What does this mean? Perhaps that the Power Carbon Fibers cycle is over?

Not at all. Large number production of rods can only be met by graphite rods. Bamboo rod building is a niche production, apt to satisfy the needs of a particularly demanding public, as to both aesthetics and customised casting action.

To realize the IRP, in fact, over a period of a year, 15 rods have been built with differences in structure and measures.

Trying to do the same with the aim to build a graphite rod would have meant to face very high costs, if not counterbalanced by the aim to commercially produce a great number of rods.



Bamboo is the only material that allows building rods with different casting performances and with a virtual endless number of variations. It is possible to modify each taper so as to allow any adjustment that suits the user.

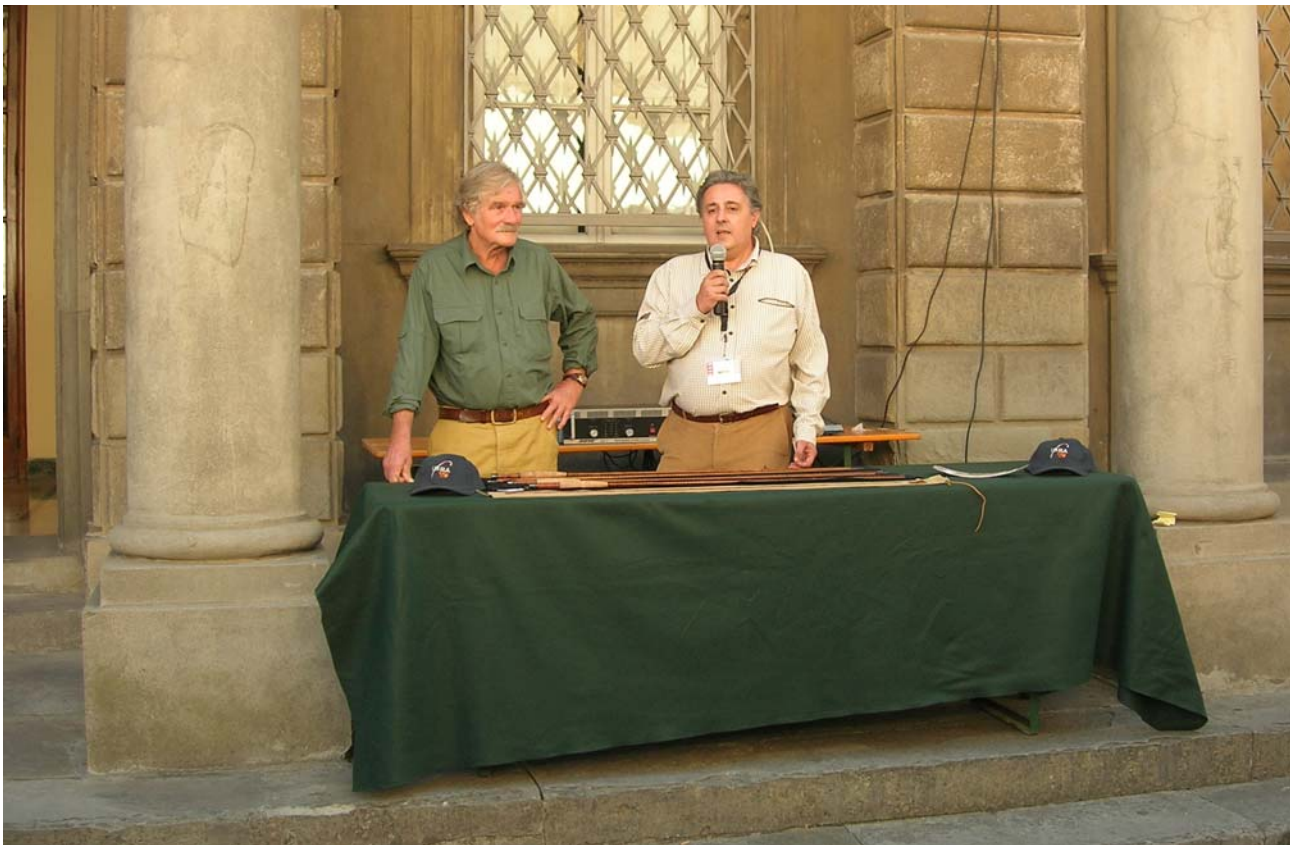
Moreover, building a bamboo rod, allows the rod maker to design the rod with his feelings, approach and expectations.

Allow me to quote a few lines from an essay written by one of the most renowned Rodmakers, Tom Morgan, and published in the October 2008 Power Fibers issue: "*The last thing, and probably the least considered but maybe the most important, is that the rods should reflect your philosophy of life and living. I believe strongly that your life and what you do should be in balance so you are at ease with the rods that you make, there is harmony in your life, and when you are enjoying time on the stream with one of your creations you have a warm feeling about it and the environment. The rod should have a harmony others will feel when they cast and fish it.*"

This rod, in particular, unveils the effort of a research aimed at new ways of conceiving the relationship between the fisherman, the action and the tool. A bridge across a conception apparently left behind by the technology and the re-conquest of old and well established knowledge revitalized through modern and up-to-date perspective.

The original taper with bamboo ferrules is published on the IBRA website and can be downloaded in PDF format: http://www.rodmakers.it/IRP/taper7232.pdf

The version with N/S ferrules can be found in Larry Tusoni's RodDna database ver. 1.201 as: Italian Guild IRP7232.



Quiet Time of the Morning

IBRA - CORSO DI BAMBOO RODMAKING 2009

Moreno Borriero

In 2009, IBRA organized the 4th annual rodmaking class. Who would have thought it? Six intense days of work which took place last November. I remember that the 1st class had been publicized on the Italian forums in 2005 but it didn't happen. We didn't get enough people. What a pity I thought! It seemed that the interest in bamboo was after all limited to those few IBRA pioneering founding members and a few bamboo lovers. I couldn't register because at the time I was still working for a "dictator" who made my life a misery and so I would have had neither the will nor the head to join in. Instead in 2006 I was able to join and this time we gathered enough participants and so the 1st memorable class was held at the IBRA clubhouse at Podere Violino Country Hotel in Sansepolcro. From that moment on, thanks also to the great work carried out by IBRA at the many fairs, gatherings and events, the interest for bamboo rods has grown progressively and exponentially and now we have a waiting list. Some of this year's participants had registered for Class N. 2 but that was full so they passed to Class N. 3 and even N. 4! I cannot but imagine with what excitement the participants wait for the class to begin – I can remember not sleeping for a couple of months before the Class!!.

The things that make this experience so unforgettable is the camaraderie among the participants and the tight bond that is formed with the instructors. The enthusiasm is tangible and the exhausted and sweaty participants just don't seem to want to go to bed after Class because of the eagerness to see and handle their creations that slowly but surely take shape after each and every construction phase. The few moments of relaxation are reduced to the famous snacks that are offered by students and instructors. Who can forget the tasty homemade Finocchiona and Soprassata, o the fantastic Parmigiano cheese with honey, the creamy Gorgonzola, the marinated anchovies, the cheeses from Piemont, the cakes, the biscuits and classy wines? And what to say about the delicious meals conjured up by the Violino chefs?

Every class has a story of its own and the experiences accumulated by the instructors has led to a very high level of workmanship. From the 2009 edition we have added a few important initiatives.

Perhaps the most important is the making of the so called Class rod.

On a separate workbench the instructors demonstrate the work phases and then continue them in parallel to the students.

In this way should doubt arise the students can approach the “class” bench and see the phase being done and the way it should be done.

At every class a classic rod will be made which will then be destined to the upcoming IBRA Bamboo Museum. Another little step forward was the drawing up of a little handbook with all the construction phases so that the students can have a small reference when they get back home and starting making rods on their own.

The reason for the handbook is that so many notions are discussed during the class that often one gets to the end of the course having forgotten a phase or a method.

It is great to arrive on the first day of the course to find the work benches ready with six flaming new planing forms still in bubble wrap! A part from the P.F. that can be purchased by the student at the end of the course, all the basic tools are supplied and these can also be purchased at the end of the course so that the students can go home and have enough tools to begin working at home – block planes, wetting stones, blade jigs, depth gauges.

The instructors that held the 4th class are expert rodmakers. Gabriele Gori, IBRA Chairman is a very talented rodmaker who a part from making excellent rods, also dedicates his time to scientific studies on rod actions. Together with Alberto Poratelli, he studied the bamboo ferrule and collaborated in the realisation of the Streamlined ferrule; Alberto Poratelli, is also one of the most expert rodmakers in Italy. Then there is Walter Rumi, who has been making modern action bamboo rods for more than 20 years now. Marco Giardina who is easily recognizable by his Japanese style work clothes and his tenugui head gear! Then there is Massimo Giuliani, who is mentioned in Italy as a benchmark for his exquisite wrappings and finishes. And what about Franco Ferrari, great calligraphy expert. Hi signatures are really to die for” He is a great bamboo rod connoisseur and does excellent restoration work on Hardy and Pezon & Michel rods. 6 participants and 6 instructors: an optimal ratio.

During every class we are visited by some “alumni” who come back to pick up some tips on techniques that may need refreshing or just to relive the great moments that are impressed in our minds. This year among others we had Andrea Ferranti - Class of 2008 who refreshed his techniques giving a hand with the Class Rod.

Now getting back to the Class of 2009; the students, Melani, Guidotti, Grondona, Francucci, Calzolai e Sanna (in workbench order) turned out to be very concentrated, meticulous and on average with good manual skills. As always and right from the beginning a serene atmosphere prevailed. The theory was followed with great interest and pertinent questions were asked and the 6 beautiful bamboo rod blanks which would be the envy of even the most expert rodmakers were finished long before schedule thanks also to the welcome help of two bevellers.

After having cleaned up the blanks, glued on the ferrules, reel seats and grips they moved on to what is perhaps the most delicate moment for a newbie rodmaker i.e. the wrapping of the guides. Strangely every year this seems to be the most difficult part. Not to worry though because the rods are always rewrapped with more than acceptable results when the students get home. At this point all that can be said is well done to the students and a warm thanks to the instructors that have led us into this wonderful world.

Sharing The Morning - Yellowstone

THE BAMBOO FERRULES

Di Alberto Poratelli

Chapter 2

Designing a bamboo ferrule

In this chapter, I will describe the calculation method and the design of a bamboo based on my theory. It isn't the only method but simply the method I use.

In the design process of the bamboo ferrule, it is very important to achieve a pleasant profile that will look good with the rod – it's really a concept of Design.

Designing is an expression of man's activities and this gives shape to the materials he uses.

Things may look simple in this field but the designing of something that one takes for granted, is a complex operation because we want to achieve an object that embraces both functionality and looks, it must be easy to achieve and without the need for complex tools.

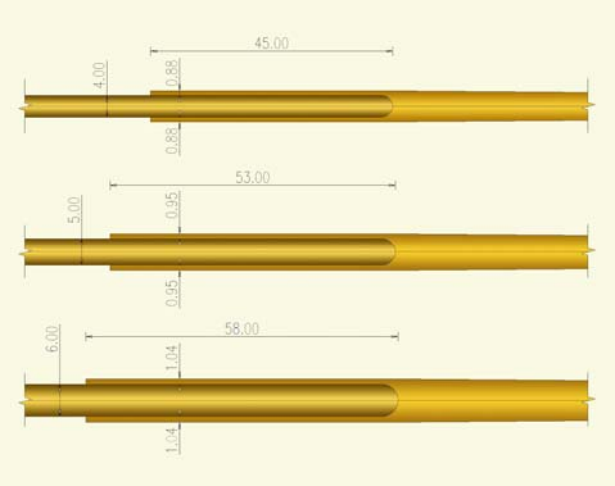
possibilità di costruzione senza attrezzature particolarmente complesse.

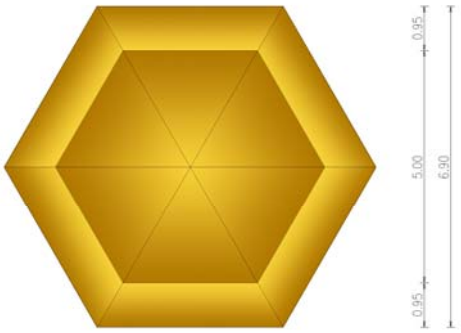
The ferrule is that part of the rod which is needed to connect two or more sections of a rod in a simple but secure way. A simple ferrule that does not guarantee a stable bond during fishing would be as useless as a ferrule with a stable bond but that isn't strong enough.

Substantially, the parts that make up a ferrule are two: a male part and a female part.

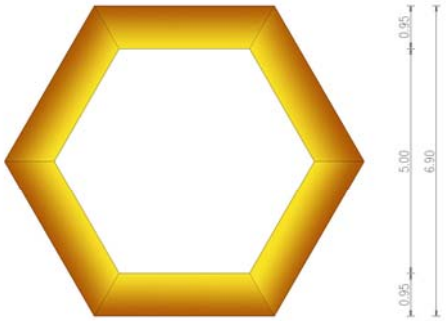
In general but not always, in metal ferrules, the male part is on the tip while the female part is on the butt. With bamboo ferrules the opposite happens, the male on the butt and the female on the tip.

This is not an absolute value – in fact it is possible to invert the male and the female parts but from a purely aesthetic point of view, I feel that my suggestion is the ideal solution.





SEZIONE TIPO DELLA GHIERA IN BAMBOO DA 5 mm



SEZIONE DELLA GHIERA FEMMINA DA 5 mm

When we are required to dimension a bamboo ferrule, there are three variables to take into account:

How long must the ferrule be?
How thick must the walls of the female part be?
How long must the swell be in the female?

These questions must take a few fundamental factors into account:

The dimensions must guarantee sufficient strength
The dimensions must guarantee sufficient stability
The dimensions must guarantee an impact that is as small as possible with respect to the action of the rod
The dimensions must guarantee that the finished rod looks good.

My experiences on the subject have brought me to draw a few conclusions and after a number of trials that can be summarized in the table below. These can be easily used to calculate the dimensions of bamboo ferrules.

My experiments helped me to determine the parameters that I used when elaborating the table and that can be used for the dimensioning of the ferrules and these parameters were elaborated for rods from 6' to 8' and for rods that measured between a minimum of 3.5 mm and 6.5 mm at the joint. These measurements comprise almost all bamboo rods.

How long must the ferrule be?

The length of the ferrule is given by the length of the cavity of the female element and it must guarantee sufficient fiction and distribution of forces to ensure enough strength and tightness of the ferrule.

Friction because it is the coefficient of adherence between the walls of the ferrule . This ensures that the connection is stable. It is of no use to make longer ferrules which must be limited to the minimum. For these reasons the ferrule must be between 41 mm and 59 mm.

What must the wall thickness of the female be?

The general characteristics and especially the compactness of the fibres in Pseudosasa amabilis make it possible to achieve thicknesses which are very closet o Nickel Silver. In fact I carried out experiments with some really thin thickness and I even made one ferrule with a wall thickness of 0,3 mm which from a strength point of view do not give problems

but because of their extreme thinness, they drastically lose in rigidity. This means that during casting they become oval and they lose adherence (friction) and this leads to the tip coming loose.

In order to guarantee sufficient rigidity, the wall thickness must not be less than o,85mm thick.

Considering the disposition of the power fibres in the culm which are concentrated externally, I've determined that by increasing the wall thickness we can achieve an increase in strength up to a limit of 1,10 mm; thicker than this you only have an increase in thickness but not in strength. So the maximum strength is achieved with a thickness of 1,10 mm and I feel anything above that to be useless – at least with the type of rods I have taken into consideration.

How long must the swell of the female be?

The answer to this question keeps one main factor in mind – simplicity. I have always been convinced that we should be able to make bamboo rods only with the simplest materials and tools, without having to resort to complicated ones. In this particular case I decided to design bamboo ferule that could be made by all rodmakers with their standard planing forms i.e. with screws every 5 inches (127 mm).

That's why my swells for all my rods are 127 mm (5 inches).

So bearing this basic data in mind:

Depth of the ferrule:
minimum 41 mm, max 59 mm

Wall thickness of the female:
minimum 0,85 mm, max 1,10 mm

Lenght of the swell: 127 mm

I drew up a table in which the various dimensions are in relation to each other in order to guarantee maximum strength, stability and aesthetics.

TABLE "A" – DIMENSIONING A BAMBOO FERRULE

Length of the rod	Metal ferrule	BAMBOO FERRULE							
		Section of the rod at the dividing point		Length of the cavity - mm.	Wall thickness - mm.	Length of the Swell - mm.	Relationship between the section and the wall thickness		Relationship between the length of the cavity and the wall thickness	
		inch.	mm.	10 x a / c						
		a	a	B	c	d				
6'0"	9/64"	0,1378	3,50	41,00	0,85	127,00	1/	4,12	1/	11,71
		0,1417	3,60	42,00	0,86	127,00	1/	4,19	1/	11,67
		0,1457	3,70	43,00	0,86	127,00	1/	4,30	1/	11,62
		0,1496	3,80	44,00	0,87	127,00	1/	4,37	1/	11,58
	10/64"	0,1535	3,90	45,00	0,87	127,00	1/	4,48	1/	11,54
		0,1575	4,00	45,00	0,88	127,00	1/	4,55	1/	11,25
6'6"		0,1614	4,10	46,00	0,88	127,00	1/	4,66	1/	11,22
		0,1654	4,20	47,00	0,89	127,00	1/	4,72	1/	11,19
	11/64"	0,1693	4,30	48,00	0,90	127,00	1/	4,78	1/	11,16
		0,1732	4,40	49,00	0,90	127,00	1/	4,89	1/	11,14
7'0"		0,1772	4,50	49,00	0,91	127,00	1/	4,95	1/	10,89
		0,1811	4,60	50,00	0,92	127,00	1/	5,00	1/	10,87
	12/64"	0,1850	4,70	51,00	0,93	127,00	1/	5,05	1/	10,85
		0,1890	4,80	51,00	0,93	127,00	1/	5,16	1/	10,63
		0,1929	4,90	53,00	0,94	127,00	1/	5,21	1/	10,82
		0,1969	5,00	53,00	0,95	127,00	1/	5,26	1/	10,60
7'3"	13/64"	0,2008	5,10	54,00	0,96	127,00	1/	5,31	1/	10,59
		0,2047	5,20	54,00	0,97	127,00	1/	5,36	1/	10,38
		0,2087	5,30	55,00	0,98	127,00	1/	5,41	1/	10,38
		0,2126	5,40	55,00	0,99	127,00	1/	5,45	1/	10,19
	14/64"	0,2165	5,50	56,00	0,99	127,00	1/	5,56	1/	10,18
		0,2205	5,60	57,00	1,00	127,00	1/	5,60	1/	10,18
7'6"		0,2244	5,70	57,00	1,01	127,00	1/	5,64	1/	10,00
		0,2283	5,80	57,00	1,02	127,00	1/	5,69	1/	9,83
	15/64"	0,2323	5,90	57,00	1,03	127,00	1/	5,73	1/	9,66
		0,2362	6,00	58,00	1,04	127,00	1/	5,77	1/	9,67
		0,2402	6,10	58,00	1,06	127,00	1/	5,75	1/	9,51
		0,2441	6,20	58,00	1,07	127,00	1/	5,79	1/	9,35
8'0"	16/64"	0,2480	6,30	58,00	1,08	127,00	1/	5,83	1/	9,21
		0,2520	6,40	59,00	1,09	127,00	1/	5,87	1/	9,22

AT this point with the table in front of you, who do you begin designing your ferrule?

The first thing to do is to determine the size of the rod at the point where the ferrule goes. For a two piece rod, this point will be the halfway point of the taper. So if it is 7' rod, it will be at 42' (84'/2); for a 7' 6" rod it will be at 45' (90'/2) and so on...

Once this point has been determined, from the table you can extrapolate the rest of the data you need.

For example, let's consider the taper of a well known rod - 7'0" DT#4 by Cattanach, and we will have:

taper :

	inches
0	0,068
5	0,070
10	0,082
15	0,102
20	0,123
25	0,137
30	0,152
35	0,166
40	0,184
45	0,206
50	0,214
55	0,220
60	0,244
65	0,258
70	0,272
75	0,300
80	0,300
84	0,300

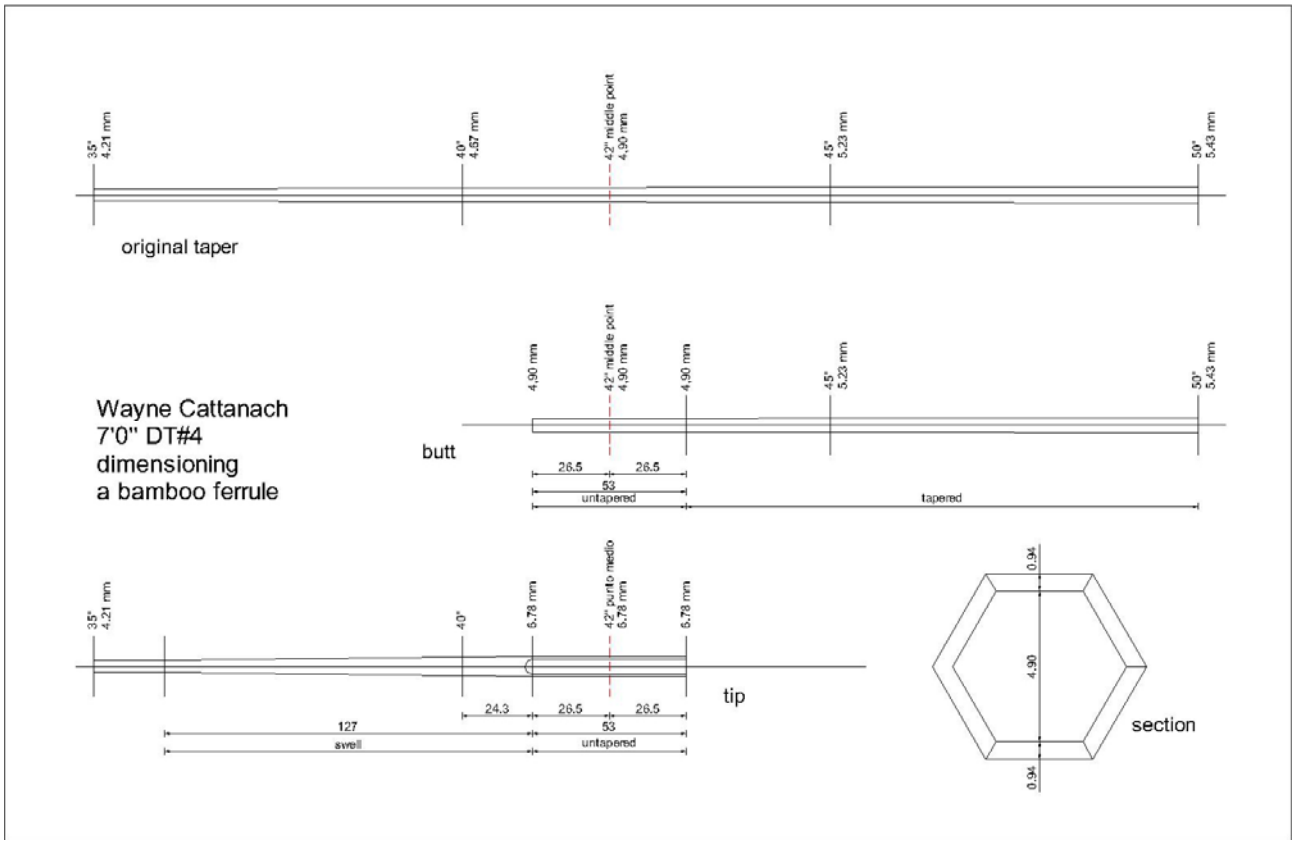
The dimensions at the median point (42') i.e. where the ferrule will be positioned can be determined with the following simple linear interpolation:

Dimensions at point 42" = 0,184+(0,206-0,184)/5x2 = 0,1928 inch
In millimetres = 0,1928 x 25,4 = 4,897 mm rounded off to 4,90 mm

From the table we obtain the data for the ferrule:

Depth of the ferrule (cavity)	mm.	53,00
Wall thickness	mm.	0,94
Lenght of the swell	mm.	127,00

With these figures we can now design our ferrule:



At this point we have designed our ferrule.

In the next chapter we will examine how to transform it in “Streamlined” – the theory and the practice.

Sunset at the Madison

A easy way to build a wood insert for a reel seat

Marco O. Giardina

I most certainly have a defect!

(I didn't say "only" one defect. In fact the defect in question amounts to about 0,6% of my total defects).

I am lazy.

I have an obsession.

(Here were have reached 2.38% of my total obsessions)

I love tropical woods.

Above all woods from the Dalbergia family.

Like Cocobolo, Rosewood, Blackwood ... but not onlly.

This obsession started with reel seats inserts.

I started collecting woods even before I had understood how to transform them into reel seats .

I didn't have a lathe so I started tormenting my friends to make me the cylinders for this use. Antonio Paglia – excellent rodmaker and refined lathe user – was my first victim.

Antonio knows how to make everything that is needed to dress a bamboo rod – ferule, reel seat hardware and of course reel seat inserts – with an Einhell 300.

It is made in China, in Shanghai by Sieg just like most lathes that are branded under various names around the world. It is small and the price is undoubtedly inviting.

Antonio Paglia uses his lathe very well and achieves excellent results. I cannot but wonder what he would do with a bigger and more famous lathe.

Briefly. Antonio patiently made me so many inserts that they could last me a lifetime.

But another problem arose:" ... what am I going to do with all the rest of my wood?"

A lathe was absolutely necessary.

Obviously an Einhell, so that Antonio can be my Mentor.

It doesn't look like it, but a little 7X12 lathe weighs around 50 Kg (around 110 Lbs). And it is well balanced. Getting it into my shop was a nightmare and quite dangerous. I was about to break my toes. So what! You might say. You don't need toes for rodmaking. True, but I'm quite attached to my toes!

The lathe was clean, ready for use and oiled. I began turning my first insert.

The chosen wood was a Bocote burl.

Guibourtia Demeusei, with golden brown streaks mixed with amber, a shower of ivory and black and a strong rose aftertaste!

The rectangle, 1 inch by 4 is ready – kindly cut to size by a friend who owns a woodworking shop – but ... how do I drill it? Patiently – all mentors are patient – Antonio explains how to drill it with a drill press and a jig that I would have to build myself.

But only then did I realize that my drill press was too short. The piece of burl and the bit extended way above the full extension of the press.

Shall I purchase another press?

Let's see how to solve the problem in a simple and easy way.

Ease is the food of the lazy!

Mark the centre on both sides of the wood – it could be a rectangle or any other geometrical figure and I cut the centre with something pointy.

Anything with a point will do.

Bring the rectangular burl to the lathe with a centre drill I centre the two faces.

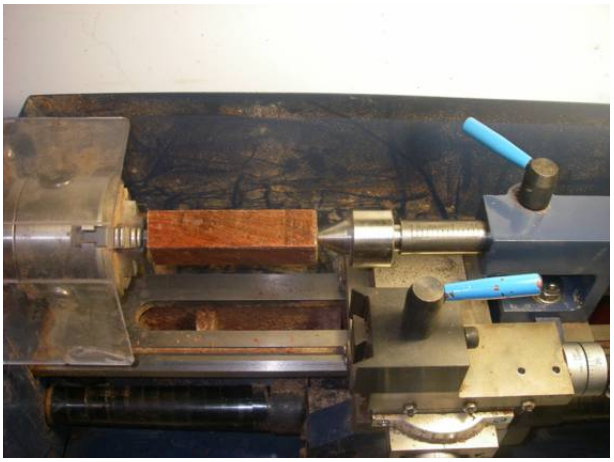
On one of the marked faces I drill a 6-7 mm deep hole with a 6 mm drill bit.

I made myself a little jig with a 6mmm threaded bar; I filled a nut down so that it would have two points and I glued it to the threaded bar with superglue leaving a 6 – 7 mm space.

The threaded bar is fixed to the lathe with the chuck. Place the wooden insert onto the threaded bar and hit the opposite end with a hammer so that the nut penetrates into the insert and this will prevent it from moving when the chuck rotates.

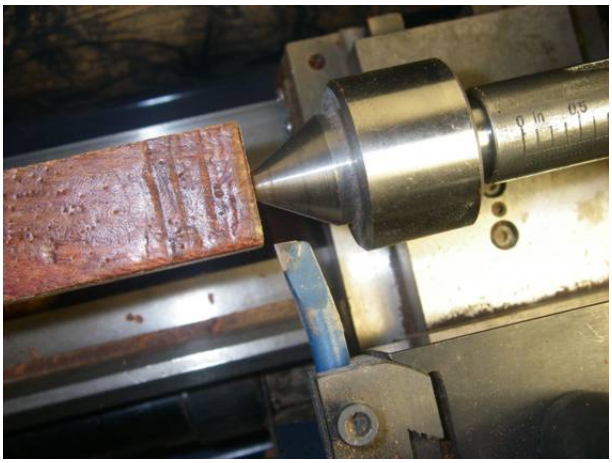
Place the other end which was drilled with the centre bit in the live centre.

At this point the insert is in axis and ready to be machined.

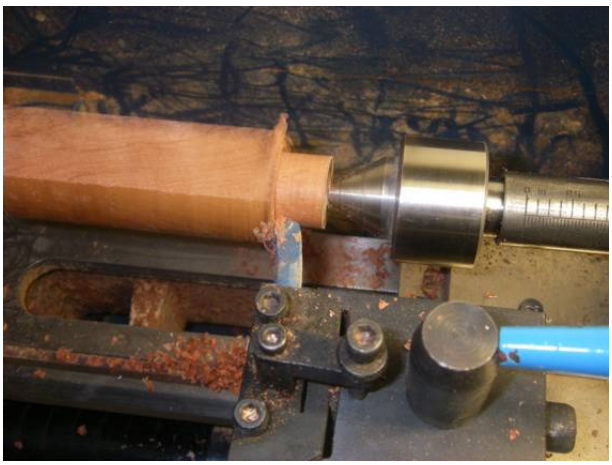


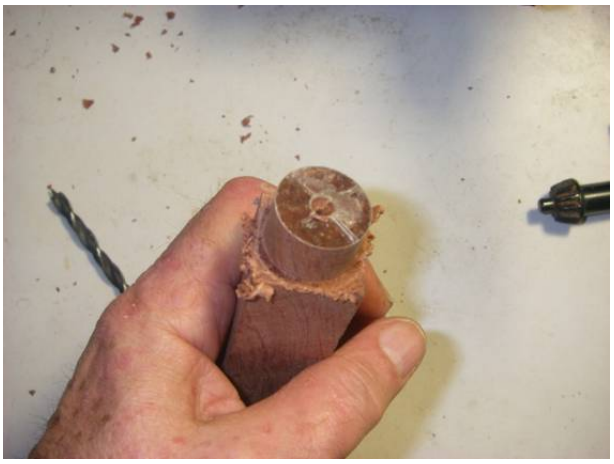
Use a tool like the one in the photo. I don't know what it's called: my knowledge of machine terminology is still primitive, but it has made things easier for me.

Start working just before the end of the insert and below the flat surfaces and advance slowly.



The four edges will be eliminated in one shot and you will have a ¾ inch cylinder.

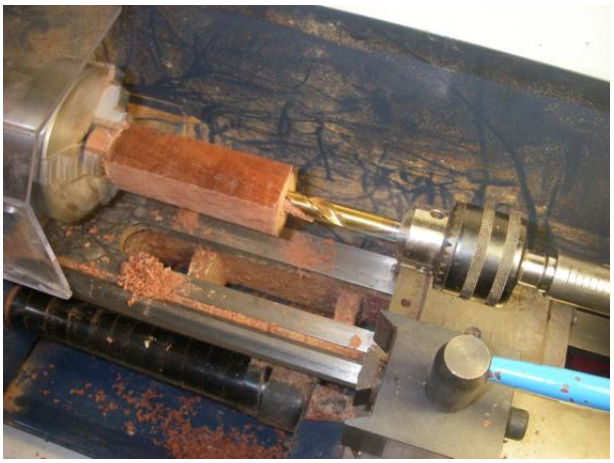




Invert the insert and tighten it into the 3 chuck jaws of the lathe.

Change the live centre with a drill chuck and a bit (I use a 10 mm bit but this will depend on the size of the hole that you need), and centre the bit in the 6 mm hole you had drilled before.

Start up the lathe and drill the insert by slowing advancing the bit in the tailstock. Slowly!!



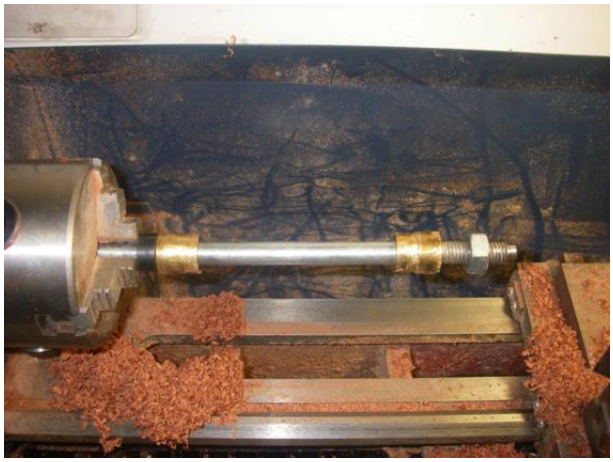
The bit does not rotate and chips tend to accumulate in the drills grooves and this causes the wood to overheat. Stop often to get rid of the chips.

The lathe speed must be the right one (duh!!)

In a short time you will have a perfect centre hole, straight and in axis with the insert.

During the next phase you will machine the insert down to size to complete the job.

Gabriele Gori gave me a splendid tool that he made – but he has a professional lathe – to complete these final phases precisely.



A threaded bar with spacers onto which the insert can be placed and a nut to tighten everything and that can be placed into the chuck jaws.

In order to get perfect in axis rotation, Gabriel added a bearing (ball bearing or roller bearing) that can be used to lock it into the drill chuck on the tailstock.

At this point the wooden insert cannot rotate happily and you can begin on the last leg of the work on the lathe.

I use the same cutting tool as before.

With four rapid passes I get a perfectly cylindrical insert which is ready for the final phases:

sanding, routing for the reel feet and final finishing.

I use Garrison style cups and rings – so I don't need the router. ....it's easier!

All this would not have been possible without the friendship, patience and help of Antonio Paglia and Gabriele Gori to whom I will be eternally grateful for having let my laziness survive yet another hard trial.

Tales From Long Ago

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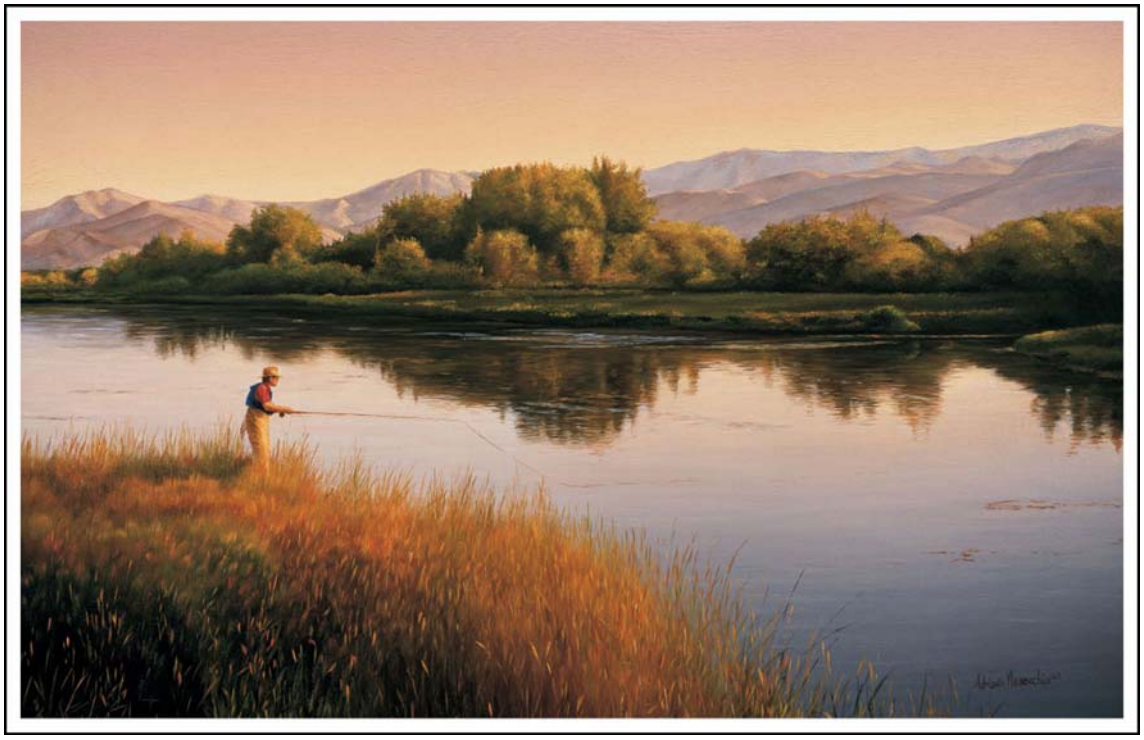

Visit to Silver Creek

Adriano Manocchia

"My paintings are my emotions; I paint what attracts me. And it is that incessant search for the visually stimulating that makes this voyage exciting. While painting places I've observed, I enhance my images through compositional means, bringing them closer to ideals upheld in a bygone age of painting. I leave the complexity of life behind in my work. I'm perhaps searching for a time now long gone in our world. If I can transpose these emotions in a painting, I've accomplished what I set out to do"

Born in New York, Adriano Manocchia received his Bachelors degree from Pace University in New York City. After graduating, he spent twelve years as a photojournalist traveling the world to cover news events. In 1984, Adriano turned his attention to fine art, adopting the painting techniques of the Old Masters and quickly received the attention of critics worldwide. A number of awards and special projects marked his recognition in the traditional art field as a foremost contemporary artist. Adriano's work is in major private collections as well as prestigious galleries.

Through the years the technique and subject matter of his paintings have evolved. His earlier detail renditions of wildlife and angling scenes have given way to a more painterly style. Water with its sounds, colors, movements, had always awakened a deep response in him. Now it is the study of that water, always different, challenging, elusive, that inspires his creations. One of the predominant responses to his paintings is that sense of peacefulness collectors feel while viewing them. The art collector appreciates the boldness of each brush stroke which, when joined by others, can capture the realism of the scene. Sunsets and sunrises have the more immediate impact for their dramatic effects, but peaceful scenes find their way in the hearts and minds of the viewers.

It is nostalgia, instead, which permeates Adriano's still life paintings. He is not just a painter, but a story-teller that uses a paint brush to inspire emotions. An old creel, a bamboo rod, a creased photo, are all elements of a story which each collector can interpret and shape in his or her own way. It is a trip down memory lane where highly detailed and vibrant objects become intrinsic elements of those recollections, only to fade away along the edges in the dark background, just like fuzzy details of an old memory.

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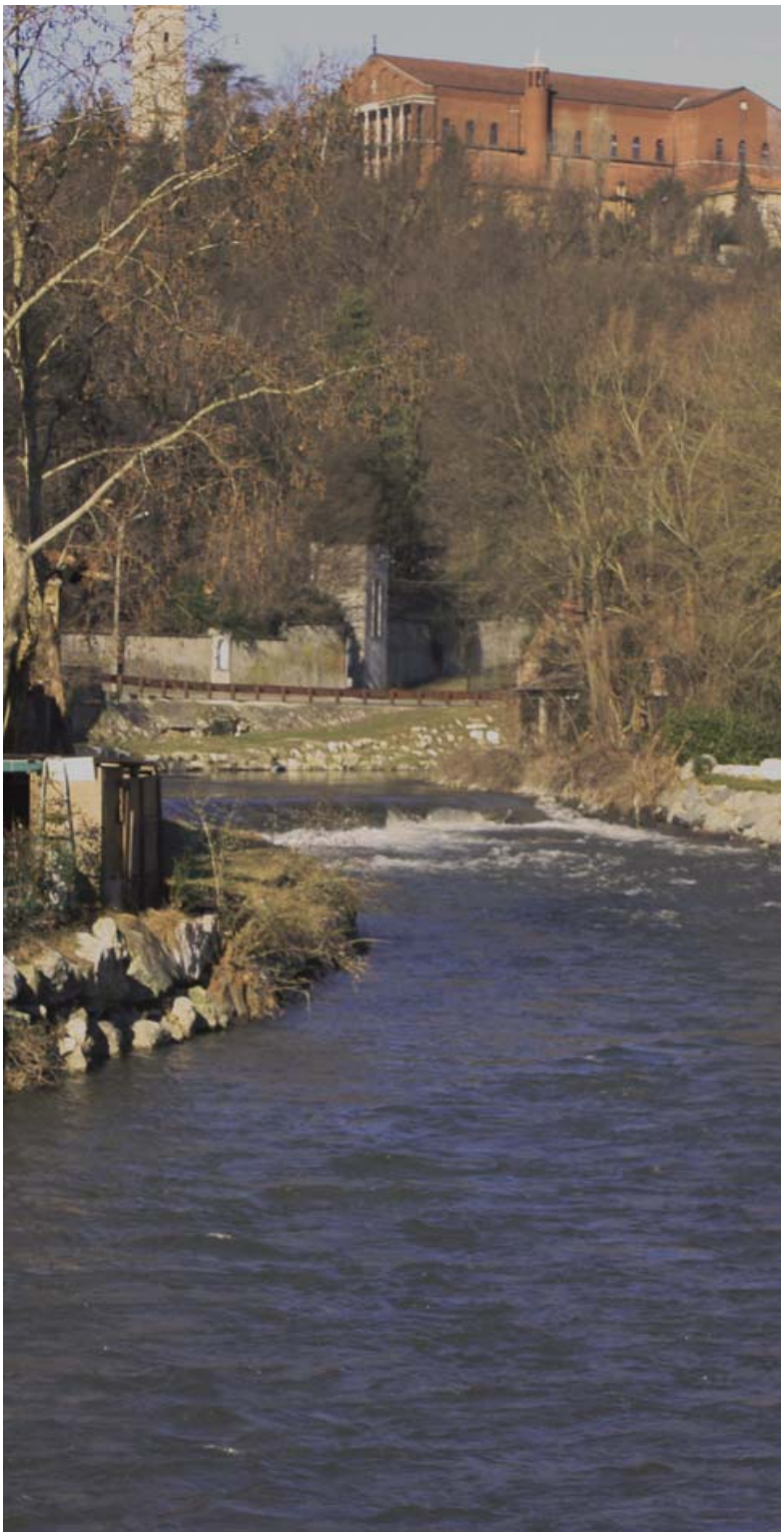

Tribute to the Lambro River

n. 4 Year 2010