The sculptor and cabinetmaker Paolo Frattari used the TRAVISHER and TRAVISCRAPER for a reinterpretation of a Windsor seat. His work has been published in the Italian magazine *Legnolab*

TRAVISHER and TRAVISCRAPER

THE WINDSOR WORKSHOP

Who has tried at least once to build a chair of the Windsor type or simply tried to accomplish a large concave shape, you will be inevitably faced with a problem: how to make uniform and smooth the part?
There are some tools that it seems can solve the problem, but they only succeed in part: our eye succeeds perfectly in grasp every little lack.
The good news is that there are new tools that promise to solve the problem at the root: the Travisher and the Traviscraper.
They are produced in England by The Windsor Workshop of James Mursell and, for now, sold only by them.
The products are sold in beautiful packaging, two solid cylinders cardboard complete with nameplate showing the manufacturer's name, the
model and various contacts. Within each, in addition to the paper to absorb shocks, there is a practical pencil with the site address printed.
The first thing we noticed when observing the two tools was their beauty: the black body, the reinforcement in yellow brass and the silver blade engraved with the manufacturer's initials, combined with these unusual shapes, they definitely make them beautiful objects to look at before even using them.

THE TRAVISHER

(Photo 1-2)
On the left the Travisher Deluxe version, on the right the Traviscraper, photographed together with their cylindrical packages. The Travisher is also produced in cheaper version all in wood. In the Traviscraper package there is also a paper template that reproduces the curvature of the blade.

The Travisher is a 19.8cm long, 6.2cm wide and a 5.8 cm high. It is shaped like a banana and features a sole with double curvature, wider at the front and slight laterally. The blade is arranged with the cutting edge along the front profile, it is 7.5 cm long, 2.15 cm wide and 3 mm thick.
The tool body consists of a technical polymer called Delrin, which some attempts of scratches, made with various woods and irons, have confirmed be a particularly hard material.

Instead the sole of the instrument consists of a thick block of brass fixed to the body with two bolts; in addition to making the object more beautiful, it reduces friction on the wood improving his smoothness.
The blade has a convex shape that follows exactly that of the sole. Its geometry follows in miniature that of chest knives with the same type of curvature; the two tangs placed at the end of the iron are used here for fixing in the body instead of the handles. The fixing is done by two screws, placed on the sides of the brass insert, threaded into the threads obtained in Delrin and pushed against the tangs to lock the iron.

(Photo 3 p11)
The Travisher seen from the front from below. The sole with the wide front curve, the more moderate lateral one and the blade that follows the trend of the first. The plane's Delrin body includes a thick brass overlay that forms the sole of the tool.

(Photo 4-5-6 p11)
The two front screws, on the side of the sole, allow you to unlock the blade, to adjust its exit, and therefore the depth of the processing; or allow you to remove the blade to be able to sharpen it.

(Photo 7 p12)
The Delrin body of the Travisher was deprived of the blade and the brass sole.

To adjust the blade it is therefore necessary to loosen the screws with the Allen key supplied, to set by touch or eye its protrusion and then return to block it.
The tool arrives perfectly sharp and with a paraffin on the blade which protects it from rust. Like axes, these blades are sharpened on the internal side, the concave one; in this case we need medium-sized stones, or sandpaper wrapped around a rod, to work better along the form.
The blade rests on the edge of a rise and with the stone you start the work sharpening actions. To eliminate burr on the outside, it is preferable to move the iron on a stone, in this way it's easier to flatten the little blade and not risk rounding off the wire, as it could happen continuing to work as previously stated for the bevel.
At the end of the steps on the various stones, the spinning can be completed at the grinding wheel, using a disc cloth impregnated with abrasive paste: first passing the iron on one side then on the other.

(Photo 8-9-10 p12)
The Travisher blade is sharpened on the inside, placing it on a rise to facilitate movement with the various stones. To eliminate the burr it is preferable to do the opposite: move the iron on the abrasive surface. The sharpening can then be perfected on the grinding wheel using a cloth disc impregnated with abrasive paste.

We tried the Travisher on a spruce lath, very difficult wood to plan. The tool shows up manageable and light weight, contrary to what happens with steel planes, makes it smooth and at the same time stable in proceeding. The anterior brass sole is useful in guiding the blade and makes the movement more fluid.

(Photo 11 p12)

After slightly loosening the set screws, the blade comes out and the its parallelism can be adjusted up with a few clicks and a light hammered on the head of one or both tangs.

The hands placed at the sides allow for a freer view, while their closer position makes it more stable the tool and allows, using the fingertips as a reference, to adjust the depth of the machining.
The planed surface is still free of tears, a sign of the good quality of the steel. And despite the reduced sole size, the surface is well uniform and smooth.
Of course we also tested the Travisher in the work for which it was designed, the excavation of the seats, and proved irreplaceable. The excellent quality of finish unexpectedly showed a fast removal of the material, the wide frontal curvature also allows you to easily reach all parts of the excavation.

(Photo 12 p13)
During use, the Travisher is easy to handle, stable and smooth; with the unusual position of the hands it also offers a freer view. The curved blade produces a similarly curved surface, well highlighted by the square above, which is perfectly smooth and free of tears.

(Photo 13 p13)
In the excavation of the seats, the Travisher shows its best. In addition to the quality of the finish, the wide front curve allows you to reach all the parts. In fact, the instrument is not very sensitive to changes in direction and works equally well even when facing the fiber sideways.

The multiple qualities of the travisher led us to test it in different areas than the usual ones. Using it in sculpture proved to be even more valid; the ability to sculpt has been added to the smoothing of the surface.
The wide visibility makes it an excellent alternative to gouges, especially when the material to remove is minimal but affects a large area. Excellent on large and concave parts but also on small and convex ones.

THE TRAVISCAPER

The Traviscraper is a scraper inserted in a structure similar to a vastringa (similar only in the external structure not in the use). The body that supports the blade is made from the same materials as the Travisher. It has the same doubly curved sole, the blade copies with its shape the front curvature, and two bolts placed on the body that serve to fix the brass sole. The handles instead, they reverse the curvature by moving slightly downwards.
Unlike the Travisher, moreover, the Traviscraper mount the blade perpendicular to the sole, with a small rounded aluminum wedge that keeps it fixed to the body. It measures 21 cm in length, 3.2 in width and, with the blade inserted, 4.8 cm in height.
Like the previous instrument, it comes perfectly sharp but is equipped with a template that reproduces the curve of the blade, a reference to respect when sharpening it.

(Photo 14 p14)

The Traviscraper is a scraper inserted in a structure that supports it. The blade is mounted vertically and is fixed to the body by means of an aluminum wedge.

(Photo 15 p14)
To sharpen the blade, proceed as in common scrapers: files, stones and then burnisher. The supplied template shows the curve that must be maintained on the cutting part.

In the test of use, a tool was also shown to be very good. Handy, light and with a wide handle that makes it very similar to a vastringa. In a short time it eliminates even the smallest bumps left by Travisher, making the surface a special smooth and flawless mind. It can be used both in push and in pull. Like the previous one, it fits easily to the various curves that the seat presents. Compared to common scrapers, control is better especially in the slight depressions where the presence of the sole helps to guide the movement and restore the plan. The presence of the handles then allows, when needed, to exercise more pressure and take more aggressive action.
Although the shape of the sole is not ideal, the wide handle and blade stability allow it to be used where it is possible on convex surfaces. With a little practice we can obtain results that are difficult to imagine.
The two tools have proved to be irreplaceable in the manufacturing of Windsor chairs, but in our opinion they are utensils which can be profitably employed in many other applications, certainly partly still to be discovered.
Beautiful, elegant, versatile, ancient but made with modern conceptions.
Owning them is a joy and a wish for the future.

(Photo 16 p 14)
The Traviscraper eliminates even the smallest bumps left by the Travisher. It is light and easy to handle with a sole that adapts well to different ones curves that the seat presents.

(Photo 17 p 14)
The wide grip and the stability in the use of the Traviscraper allow you to use the instrument also in the finishing of convex surfaces.