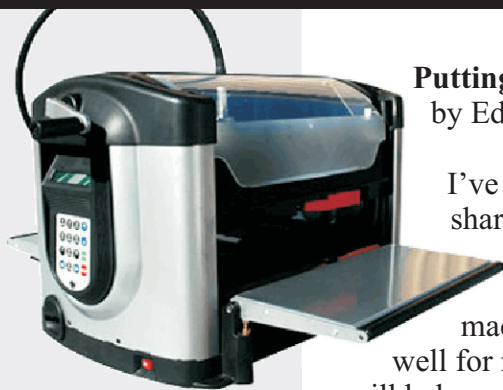


Ed Z. Baker's
Quick & Easy

PHOTO PREP INSTRUCTIONS

for use with your



Putting a Good Picture Onto Wood by Ed Baker

I've had a number of requests for sharing my method of preparing photographs for carving on wood using the CarveWright machine. This method has worked well for me and hope this short article will help you achieve nice results when carving your own photos. I'll also include "the secret" for applying a finish on your carved photos that enhances and brings out the hidden detail of your photo carve.

Making A Quick Pattern from A Photo

As always, when working with pictures, you should start with a Good Quality, High resolution digital photograph. It should not have a "Busy", or "Cluttered" background.

If you are using a document scanner to get your photograph, the ORIGINAL should meet the above mentioned qualifications. You will not be satisfied with anything less.

This carve will be very shallow, so it is important that the Head is LEVEL (aligned with the tracking belts) on your machine. If it isn't, your machine may not carve one side, or part of the picture.

In Designer, "Import your image" (Don't bother converting it to gray-scale). Crop it as you wish. Faces work best. Invert the picture so that it appears Natural, and not concave faced. Save it as a Pattern. (fig. 1 and fig. 2)

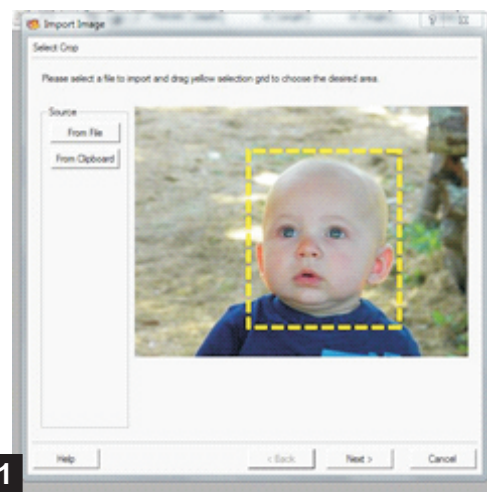


fig. 1

The Default depth = .250 is OK at this point. (fig. 2)

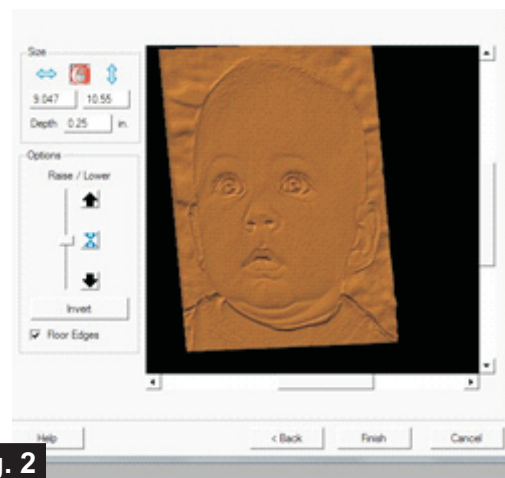
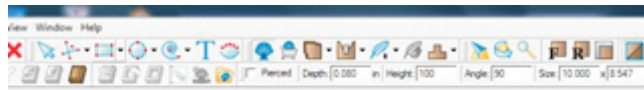


fig. 2

(cont.)

Layout the Project

Set up your desired board size in designer, and place the pattern you just created on it. Size and place it as desired. Change the “Depth” to .080 and leave the “Height” at 100. (fig. 3)



(This will be a very shallow carve)

fig. 3

With the pattern still selected, be sure to set it for Bit Optimization: **Best**. (fig. 4)

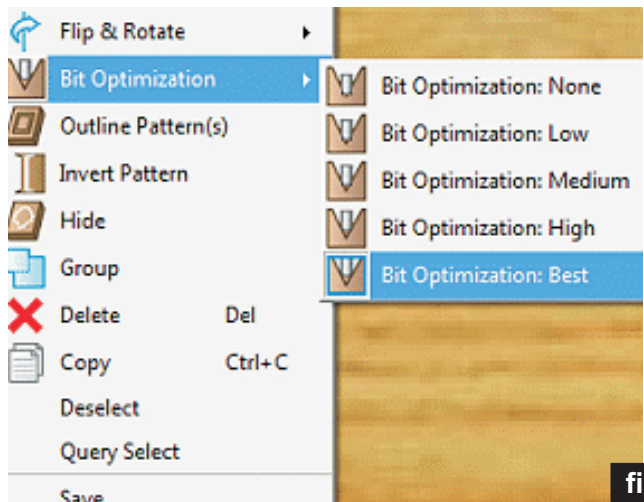


fig. 4

Save the project, then, upload to your memory card and select BEST carving quality. (fig. 5)
(Optimal isn't necessary with a carve this shallow)

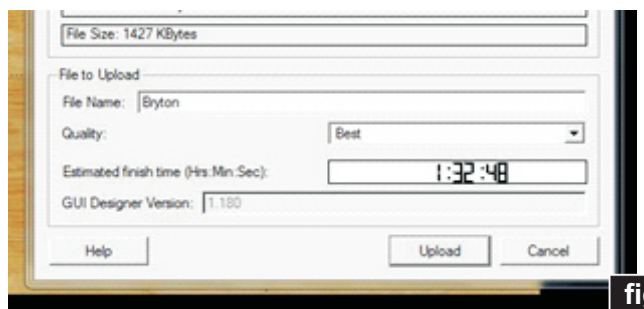


fig. 5

Run the Project

Choose a Fine Grained, Light Colored wood for your picture carving, such as Maple, or a similar wood. I have had very good results using Cabinet Grade Plywood, but I have never had good results with Pine.

I have purchased some 1/2-inch Birch plywood from Home Depot to use. It has thicker layers and if you set the carve to .085 it will carve JUST barely through the top layer of the plywood, and the image will be fantastic in the second layer. When using plywood, cut it so when it is placed in the machine, the carving bit will be cutting WITH THE GRAIN on the top layer. This makes it so the carving bit will be cutting *across* the grain on the second layer and make a beautiful picture when stained and sanded.

When your carve is completed, lightly clean it up, only around the edges, and only if it needs it.

Apply the Finish

Stain the carve with a Dark GEL Stain, using a small brush, then wipe all excess stain off with a rag. Leave it dark in the recesses of the carve, such as the eyes, nose, ears, etc. Allow the stain to dry for an hour or so.

With 220 grit sandpaper, using the palm (or heel) of your hand, start gently sanding the higher parts of the carve. Sand “With the Grain” until the higher parts start to appear lighter. As you sand, you will see the contrast begin to appear in your carve. Don’t sand with your fingers, and don’t over-do it. With practice, you will be very pleased with the resulting picture. In this example, I used a Walnut GEL stain on a piece of Sycamore.
(fig. 6)



fig. 6

In Conclusion...

There are more examples of the photos I have carved using this technique. You can view them on my website at:

<http://customcarved.web.officelive.com/default.aspx>

Click the menu item located in the left-side Red column entitled "Photo in WOOD".

I hope you'll have fun creating your own beautiful photo carvings!

- Ed Z. Baker

Did You Know...?

You can perform Rotary Carving using your CarveWright machine!



For more information, visit:

<http://store.carverwright.com/home.php?cat=304>

