

Wooden WONDERS

Three modern craftsmen are using the oldest of materials to craft superlative new versions of classic vehicles



A SMOOTH RIDE ▶ Sueshiro Sano, Japan

For most men, a wedding ring represents a bond and a vow, but rarely a moment of creative inspiration. For Sueshiro Sano, a ninth-generation mahogany shipbuilder, his sparse prospects of even buying a ring first represented the gradual decline of his family's trade in Japan. As his own coffers shrank, Sano's soon-to-be wife suggested he make a ring from wood. In doing so, Sano combined age-old techniques with a new epoxy process to create a substance on par with carbon fibre in terms of strength, yet even lighter and with a stunning mahogany finish. But demand for handcrafted wood vessels continued to decrease, so Sano's gaze soon turned away from the family business to another predominantly metal-only enterprise: bike making. Now, his whimsically named Tokyo-based company, Sanomagic, constructs three exquisite bikes a year, each improbably made of polished mahogany (aside from the gears and brakes). It's a remarkable journey that's brought him full circle – both as a craftsman and as a husband. *From \$30,000. sanomagic.world.coocan.jp*

WILL CADE ▶