



Andrew Dickinson, artist, craftsman and musical instrument maker, provides several of our products, including Stabilized Wood Bobbins. Here he describes what 'Stabilised Wood' is.

Stabilized wood is a timber that has been put through a process that makes it more stable and, therefore, more applicable to different pieces of work.

The wood, in this case maple burr wood, is immersed in a very low viscosity acrylic resin (water like) and then subjected to a vacuum. As the vacuum draws the air out of the wood the resin is pulled into it. The process is continued until the operator is confident that all the softer material in the burr has been saturated (some of the material is too hard and dense to take any resin). When this requirement has been satisfied then the saturated burr is gently 'cooked' to cure the resin. The result is a much more consistent and stable material.

This process can only be carried out on small pieces as there is a limit to how deep the resin will penetrate.

The colour is added to the resin before the vacuuming stage.

One of the most interesting characteristics of this material is the graphic manner in which the structure of the wood is described. The colour weaves in and out of the harder, natural coloured material and where there was a void the resin creates a hard-edged flash of colour. Sitting below this is the silky movement of a grain that dances in a multitude of directions.

There are only a small number of people who successfully produce nice looking blanks. I get mine from a craftsman in Russia who produces the nicest material that I have found.