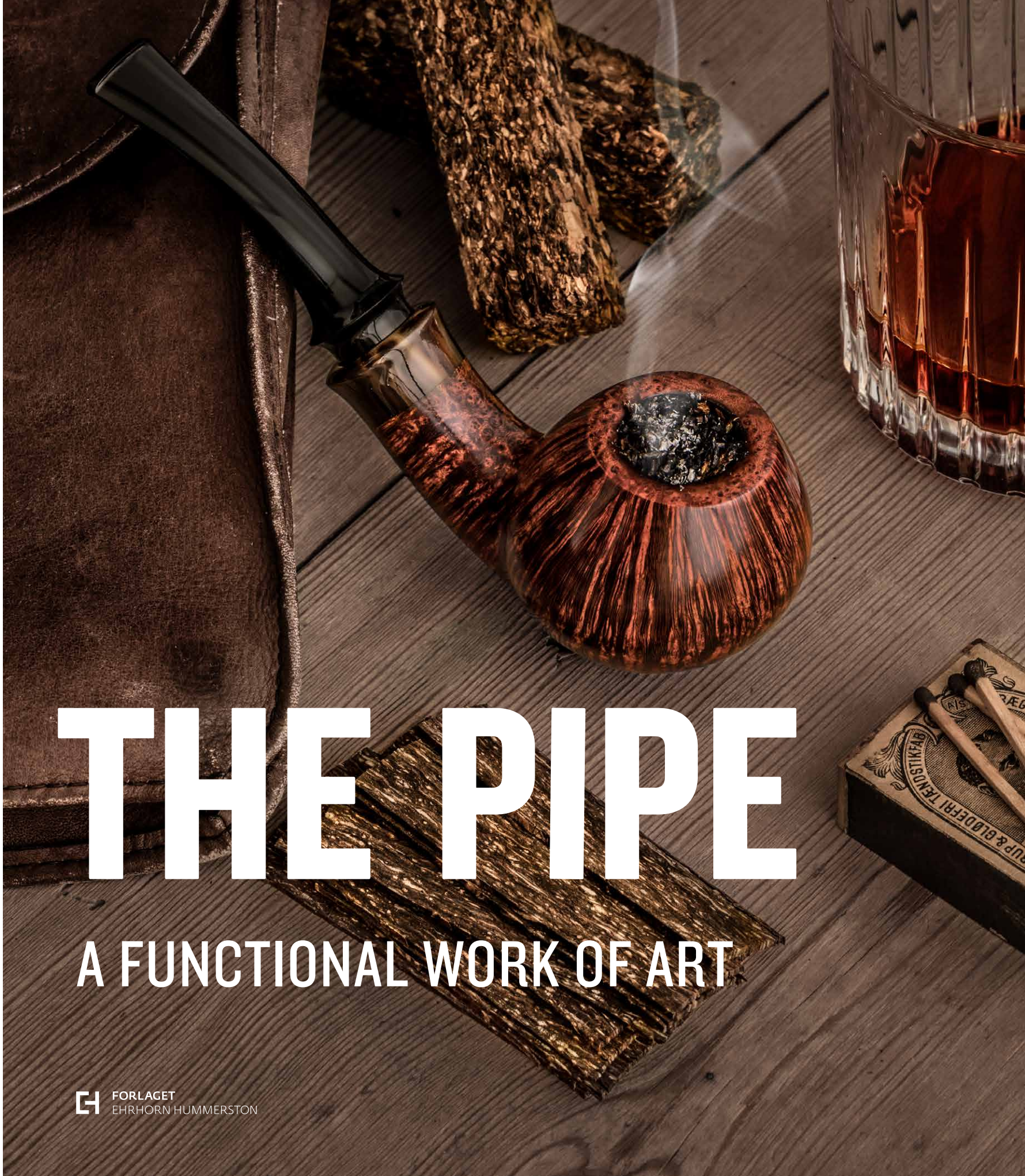


THE PIPE

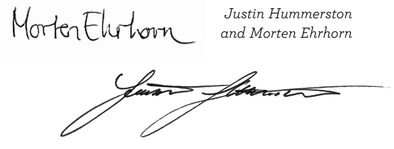
A FUNCTIONAL WORK OF ART

FORLAGET
EHRHORN HUMMERSTON

PREFACE

Everyone has an opinion on pipes. In that way, pipes are no different from cigarettes, but the opinions towards cigarettes are predictable: if you smoke them, there is a good chance you like them. If not, there is a good chance you hate them. With pipes it is different; pipes have an alluring appeal to others than the obvious fans. A lot of people enjoy the scent of the lazy smoke rising from a pipe, others feel that pipes are powerful tools adding character and an intellectual dimension to its owner and, of course, there are those who associate the pipe with their father, uncle or grandfather. Whatever your predisposition, the point is that the pipe is the only tobacco-related product that not all non-smokers instinctively hate. We can perfectly see why and it is our assumption that browsing this book will – if not make you love pipes – at least develop a respect for the stunning curves and lines that the portrayed pipe makers are able to find in the humble briar wood.

The impetus for this book was our own fascination with pipes and our fascination has grown tremendously during our research – not only for the pipes, but also for the people making them. There are a lot of existing biases in which pipe makers are predominantly men, usually grumpy and sitting in dark basements, chopping away pieces of wood in the same pace as they lose hope and joy of living. People with prejudices like that should spend a couple of hours with Anne Julie, Tom Eltang, Manduela or the other pipe makers we portray here. You will not find a group of people more interesting, open-hearted, more insightful and happier to be around than the pipe makers in this book. It is a loss to the world, that two of them passed away during the publication off this book, and that pipe makers in general usually work in isolated settings. Of course, some of them require quiet surroundings to be able to produce their stunning craft, and maybe it is the hours alone with the wood, sandpaper and their thoughts that shape not only the beautiful pipes, but also their interesting personalities.



Justin Hummerston
and Morten Ehrhorn

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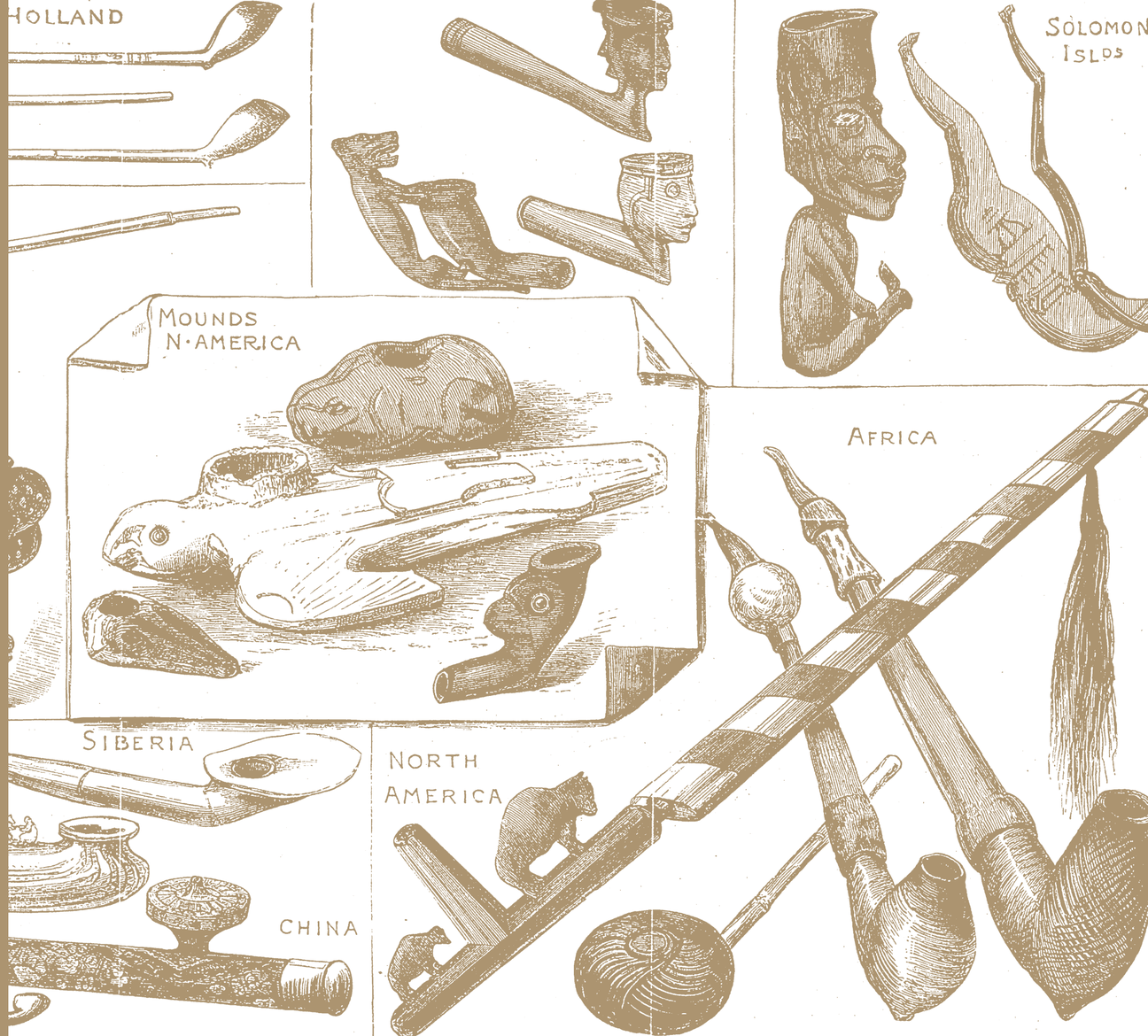
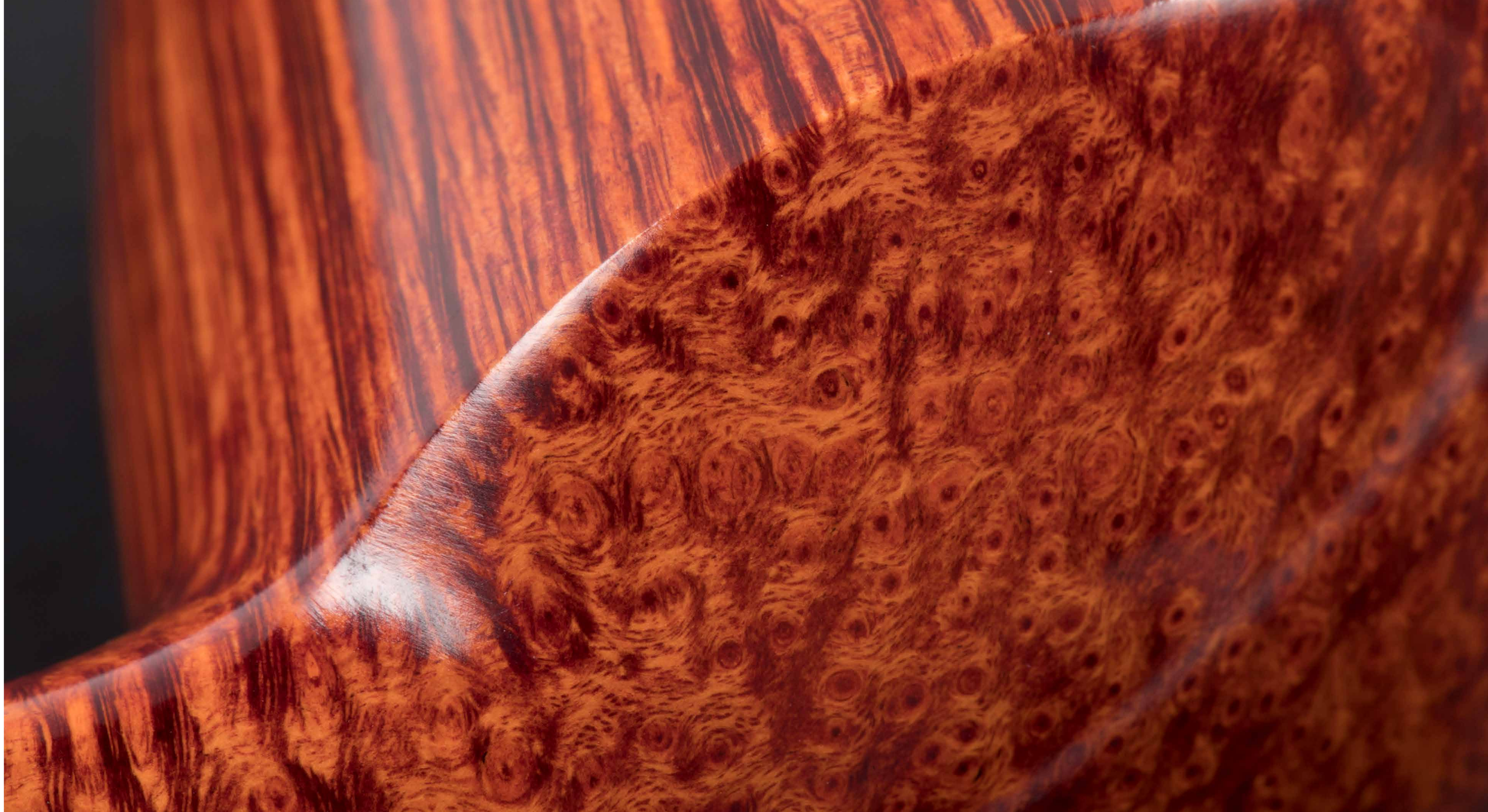


The craftsmanship of skilled pipe makers can bring forth the unbelievable potential of a humble burl of wood. Who could imagine that Tom Eltang was able to find and develop this magnificent spectacle growing under our feet?



PIPE ANATOMY

STUMMEL

STEM

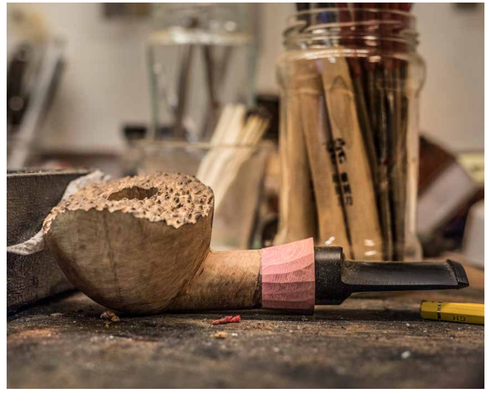
LARS IVARSSON

There are many legends in the world of handcrafted pipes, but only a few are born into greatness. Lars was the son of Sixten Ivarsson and hence royalty. Some heritages are destined for failure – simply because the shoes are too big to fill, but this is not the case with Lars. In fact, he not only managed to meet expectations, he surpassed them by becoming much more than the son of Sixten.

Of course, Lars could never make a bad pipe. Even if he tried, his father Sixten would reject it. Every pipe Lars made had to be perfect in every aspect, and Sixten was right there to tell him how, but Lars was curious to understand why. Therefore, he conducted his own experiments that usually confirmed what his father had told him, but Lars' questions added a dimension of a deeper almost philosophical understanding of pipes.

Tom is always bursting with new ideas. Not only in regards to individual pipes but also with ideas of sets so elaborate and beautiful that they will keep any pipe smoker awake at night. It is sets like these that can tempt a pipe smoker to excuse the collectors that only buy to own and never to smoke. But it is a temptation you should never give in to. Pipes can never be too beautiful to be smoked.

Anne Julie lives on a remote island in Denmark. From here, she not only produces her coveted pipes, she also has a gallery where guests from all over the world can see other examples of her inexhaustible creativity.



There is a poetic contradiction between the somewhat crowded workshop and the rigorous pipes Manduela produces there.

This is a great example of the compact and yet elegant pipes Tao produces. Even a landlubber would look like a proud sailor with this beauty clamped between his teeth.

Most of Teddy's pipes are not much darker than when the wood was dug up from the ground. The reason for this is the almost perfect briar that Teddy finds. He needs no darker colors to disguise flaws or imperfections on his pipes.

Erik's son, Knud Nørding, is also in the pipe business, and luckily Knud's son, Victor Nørding, has chosen that direction too. There are plenty of Nørding pipes in the future.

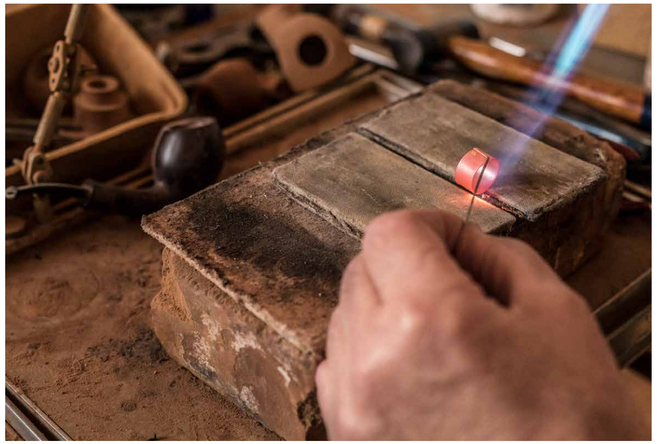
One of the pipes from Nørding's famous Hunting Pipes series. The idea was to make an annual pipe where shape and color of the pipe brought out the characteristics of a wild animal. This one is the Canadian Goose from 1997.

KURT BALLEBY

Kurt made his first pipe at 16 years old in 1966. It was only for fun. He had no idea that he later would become one of the finest pipe makers in the world. To begin with, he attended university, but he was not a very good student. He seemed to be interested in everything, but his studies. It was not until 1983 that he found his purpose when pipe maker Kai Nielsen offered him a job. Kurt began making mouthpieces for Kai's pipes and he was so fond of the craftsmanship that he stayed in after hours to make his own pipes. Kurt was with Kai until 1989 when Kai decided to join his father, Viggo Nielsen, in Faaborg, who was making pipes there.

Kurt was still making pipes, but he was not very established and sold his pipes at bars and pubs. That all changed when a German company in 1992 contacted him about selling his pipes through them. This became a breakthrough for Kurt, as people realized how truly amazing his pipes are. They are stamped "Balleby" and ornamented with a gold diamond. He grades his pipes by numbers. The sandblasted pipes, which are blasted by Hans "Former" Nielsen, are graded 1, 2 or 3 whereas the smooth pipes are graded 4, 5 or 0. The higher the number the better the quality apart from "0" which is higher than 5. In some rare cases, Kurt grades a pipe "00" but that exceptional quality does not occur often. When they occur, they are numbered. For example, a 00 pipe could be numbered 217 meaning is was pipe number 2 from 2017.

Kurt's pipes are inspired by history, foreign cultures and heroes of the pipe world – for example the work of Bo Nordh, a very skilled Swedish pipe maker, who passed away in 2006.



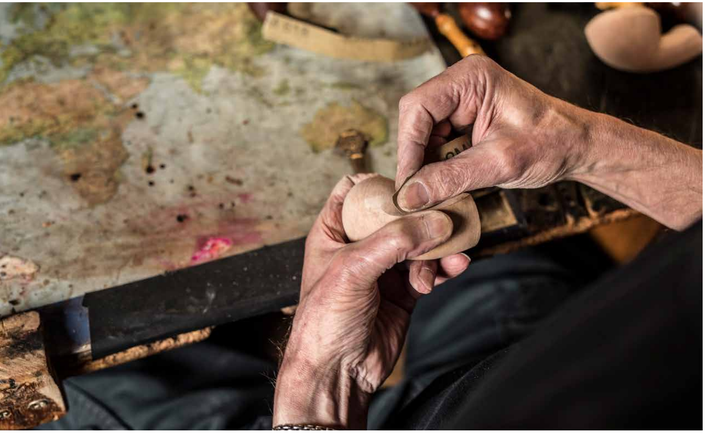
Per and Ulf were on the same page from the beginning. They wanted to make the best pipes possible, but Svend Bang was somewhat impressed with what Preben Holm had accomplished at his factory and in trying to venture in the mass production direction. Fortunately, he did not win that discussion with Ulf and Per, who have produced their wonderful pipes ever since. When Svend retired in 1984, Per and Ulf took over the business and kept the name.

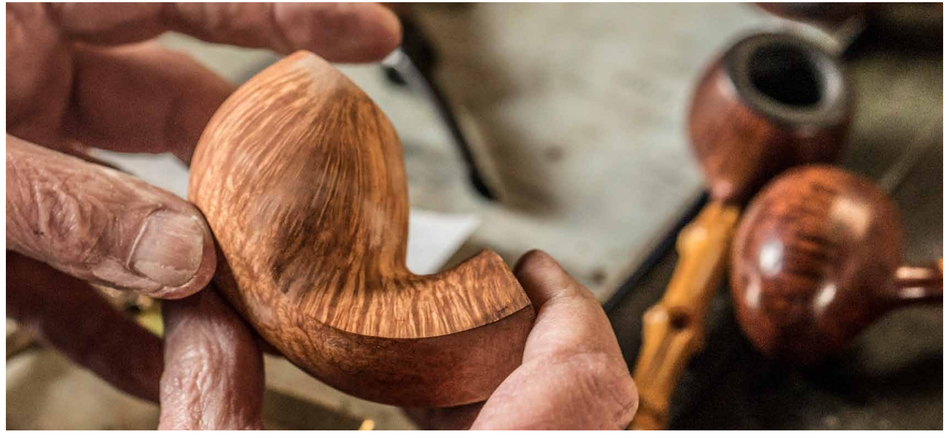
It is in itself interesting to meet two extremely skilled pipe makers at once, and to think that they work and complement each other daily will leave most pipe fans in awe. If not, they definitely will when they handle and smoke one of the pipes they made.

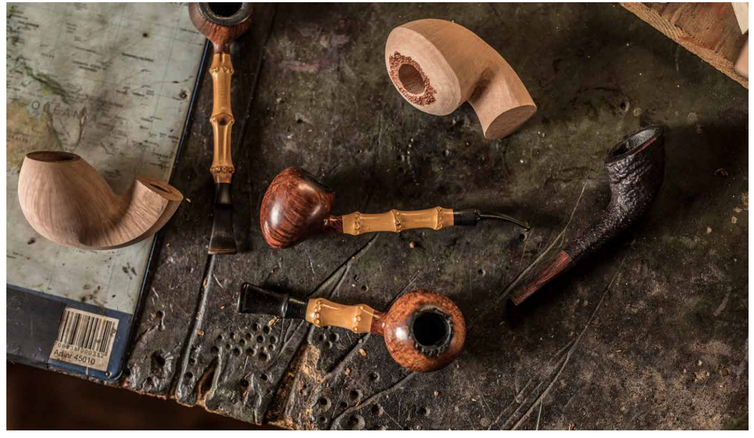
The pipes at S. Bang are made by two individual pipe masters with their own preferences and styles. Still, they share the same set of design and engineering guidelines and, of course, they share ideas and techniques – including their famous silver work and double staining process that will make the grain leap from the bowl.

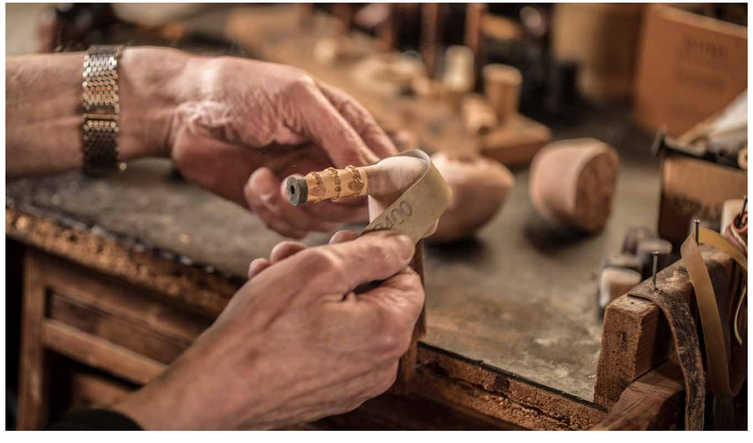
Poul Rasmussen trained Former in Suhr's workshop where Former among others worked with Sven Knudsen, the brother of Teddy Knudsen. If it had not been for this humble basement, the Danes would probably not have been so famous for their pipes.

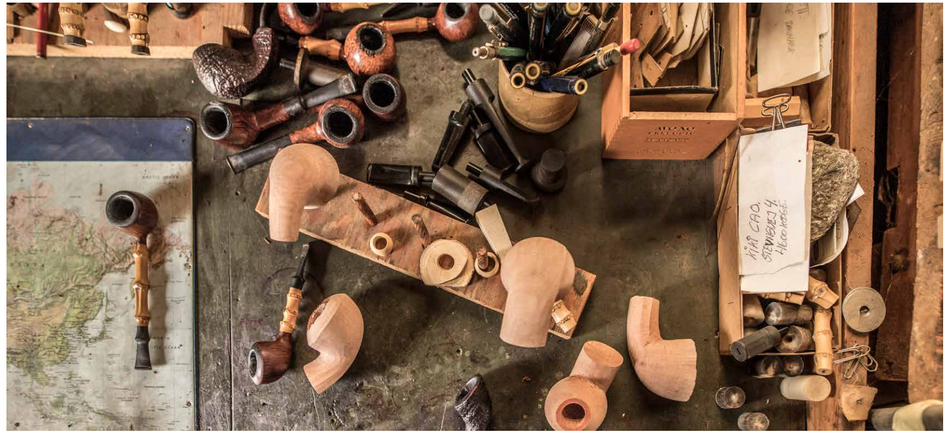
The quality is absolutely understandable. Former has been in the industry for nearly 60 years, but how Former continuously elaborates and invents new shapes and stunning designs is beyond understanding. His sources seem inexhaustible.

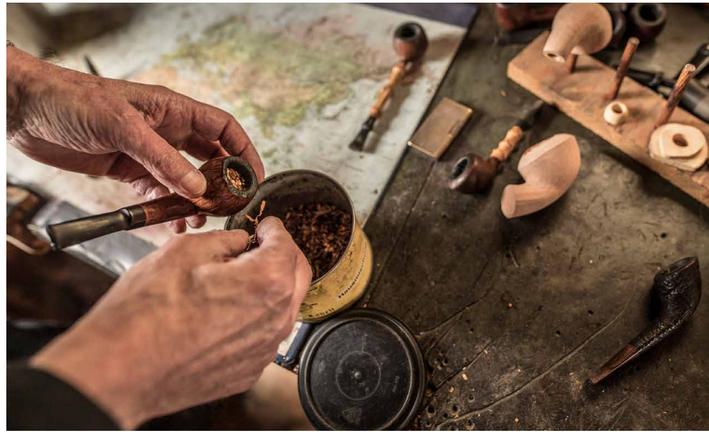


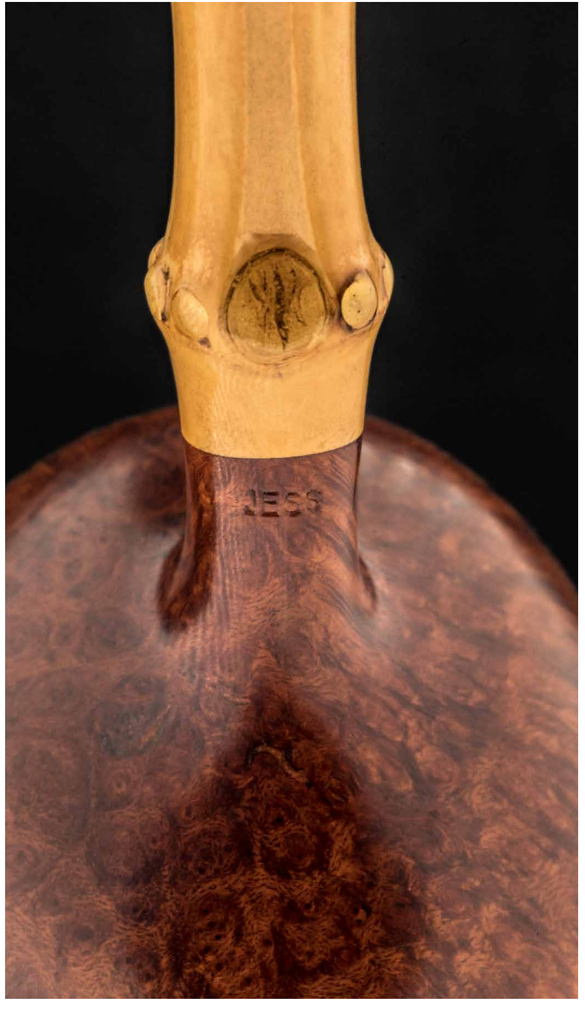


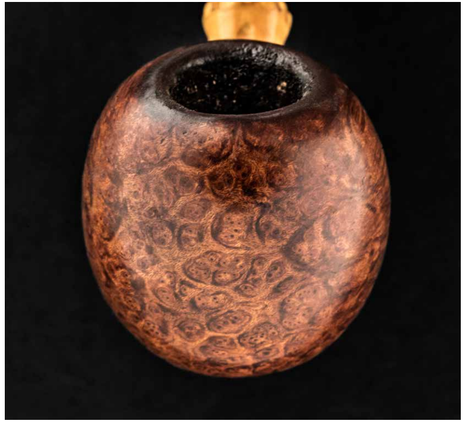


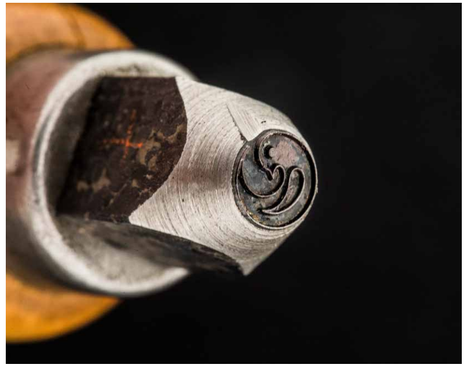




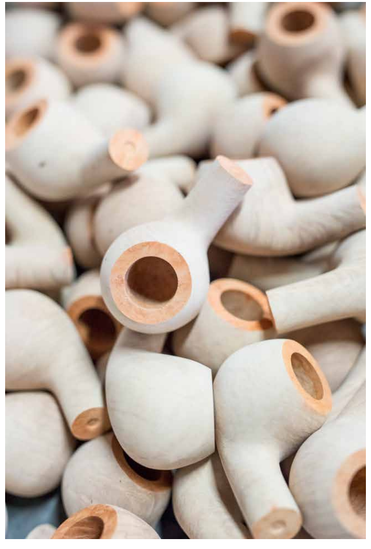




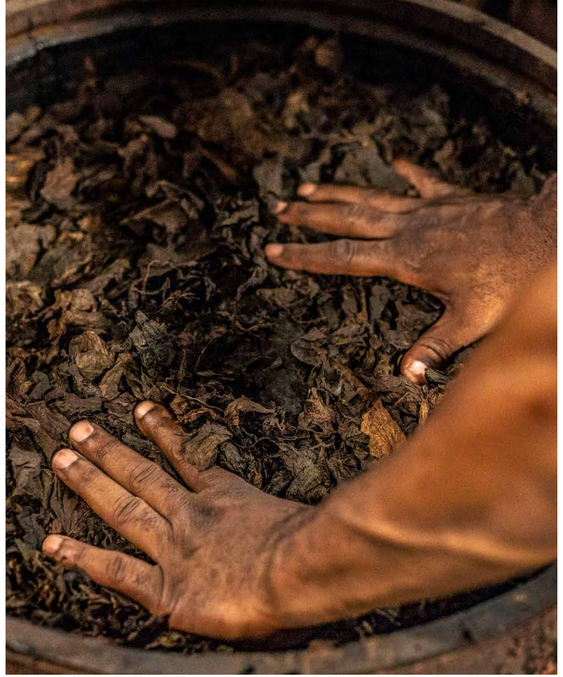




Any pipe that leaves the hands of Chonowitsch is an amazing pipe. If you a lucky enough to be able to purchase one of his pipes stamped with a bird, it almost makes sense if you hesitate to smoke it... almost.



At the factory they are producing a wide variety of models and in huge quantities. When you visit, it is easy to forget the staggering amounts of individual procedures it requires, even at a factory, to produce a pipe.



Ruth Williams and Walter Scott are "turning" the tobacco and replacing it in barrels before Maurice Lebray reapplies pressure with a jackscrew.