



## "Bald Eagle"

### Introduction

Welcome to marquetrie kit "Bald Eagle" from QJS Marquetry. This design is larger and slightly more complex, but can still be completed by a beginner with care. (Please note that the colours may differ slightly from those shown in the pictures.)

### What Do I Need?

In addition to the kit you will need a sharp craft knife, a surface to work on (a craft cutting mat is ideal but a kitchen board or some strong cardboard will do), a metal ruler or straight-edge, masking tape (or clear tape) and some PVA wood glue.

Unless you have specifically requested to have un-shaded veneers, the white veneers in your pack will have had their edges shaded by being dipped into hot sand. This enables you to include more detail in your picture, with better definition between the white feathers.

### Getting Started

Ideally, before starting these designs you should have followed our "Introduction to Marquetry by the Window Method" and made the "leaf" practice piece satisfactorily.

(Instructions available at <http://qjsmarquetry.co.uk/downloads/instructions-window-method.pdf>)

### Preparing your Background

You will first need your background. This may be supplied in two pieces, in which case you will need to make a join. Carefully trim a sliver from the two edges you want to join so that they fit tightly together. Holding them flat on the table, tape the face-side of the join using two or three pieces of tape. If you stretch the tape slightly it will help to pull the joint tight. Then tape the whole length of the join. Turn the work over and rub PVA glue into the join (if you flex the joint slightly you can be sure the glue gets onto the joint surfaces). Scrape off excess glue, tape the back and allow to dry. Once dry, remove the tape from the front, but leave the tape on the back for added strength.

Tape the drawing in place, ensuring the design is central. Trace through each element and cut in the pieces in turn. We recommend starting with the black feathers and their grey highlights.

### Black Feathers and Highlights

Start with the bottom row of feathers and cut each feather long enough to reach its upper "tip" but simplify the shape (as shown). The easiest way to cut a highlight is to add that first, before its black feather, and make it a little fatter than needed (see photo). Once the oversize highlight is glued in, and protected with tape on the back, it is easy to trim it back to a thinner strip and then insert the feather.



Once the first (lowest) row of feathers is in place cut the second row, cutting away parts of the first row as necessary.

## White Feathers

Once the black feathers are in place the white ones can be added, also working from the lowest row upwards. Angle the grain of the veneer along the length of each feather and use the shaded sections to give differentiation between the feathers. You may have two different pieces of white veneer – if so, mix them up as the slightly different colours will add to the effect. As you work up into the head area just ignore the eye (except for choosing suitably shaded pieces of veneer).



*HINT: use the light transfer paper when marking onto the black feathers – the light line can be easier to see than dark carbon marks*

## Beak

The beak is in two parts and the veneer provided is usually yew. Though a botanical softwood, yew is quite hard to cut, but usually has interesting figuring which enhances the beak. Try to select two slightly different coloured pieces for the top and bottom beak, and look for a suitable curve in the grain for the top beak. If you are lucky you might be able to use a natural knot for the nostril, otherwise cut in a small piece of black.

## Eye

The eye is one of the key elements of the design, so take your time to get it right. It is easier to assemble parts of the eye separately before inserting the whole assembly into your picture. In the first picture you can see a large circle of black inserted into a piece of the brown yew – this will be the outer circle around the eye – and the small pupil dot cut into a piece of shaded white.



In the second picture the bulk of the large black circle has been cut away, leaving a dark ring, and then the "iris & pupil" has been cut in. A small insert of white has been added as a highlight. The picture also shows the aperture cut into the white feathers ready for the eye assembly to be inserted.



## Preparing the Mounting Board

Assuming you wish to mount your picture onto the MDF board provided and not stick it to some other object you will need to prepare the board.

First, stick the backing veneer to one side of the board. This will be the back (so the veneer provided may not be very decorative) but will help balance the board and prevent warping. You will need two firm pieces of wood at least as big as the baseboard, strong clamps, some soft packing material (such as newspaper) and a sheet of plastic (to protect from glue). Place the packing material on one of the boards, topped with plastic. Place the veneer on the plastic. Apply adhesive evenly to the MDF baseboard (not the veneer/picture or it will curl) and press it onto the veneer, add the second large board and clamp firmly. When you come to glue your picture onto the board the procedure is the same, but you need to ensure you have removed all tape from the back of the picture and that you place it **face down** onto the plastic sheet. Once glued – perhaps an hour in a warm room - remove from the clamps and carefully trim and sand the edges.

Conventionally marquetry pictures are not framed, so the edges of the board need to be veneered as they will be visible when the picture is hung. (If you are going to put your picture into a frame you don't need to veneer the edges). Cut strips of veneer slightly wider than the thickness of the board and glue them in place, holding them with tightly stretched tape while the glue dries. You can do two opposite edges at the same time, then trim those down and do the other two sides. Once your board is veneered on the back and sides you can glue down your picture. Tape the front for protection and carefully remove all tape from the back before gluing.

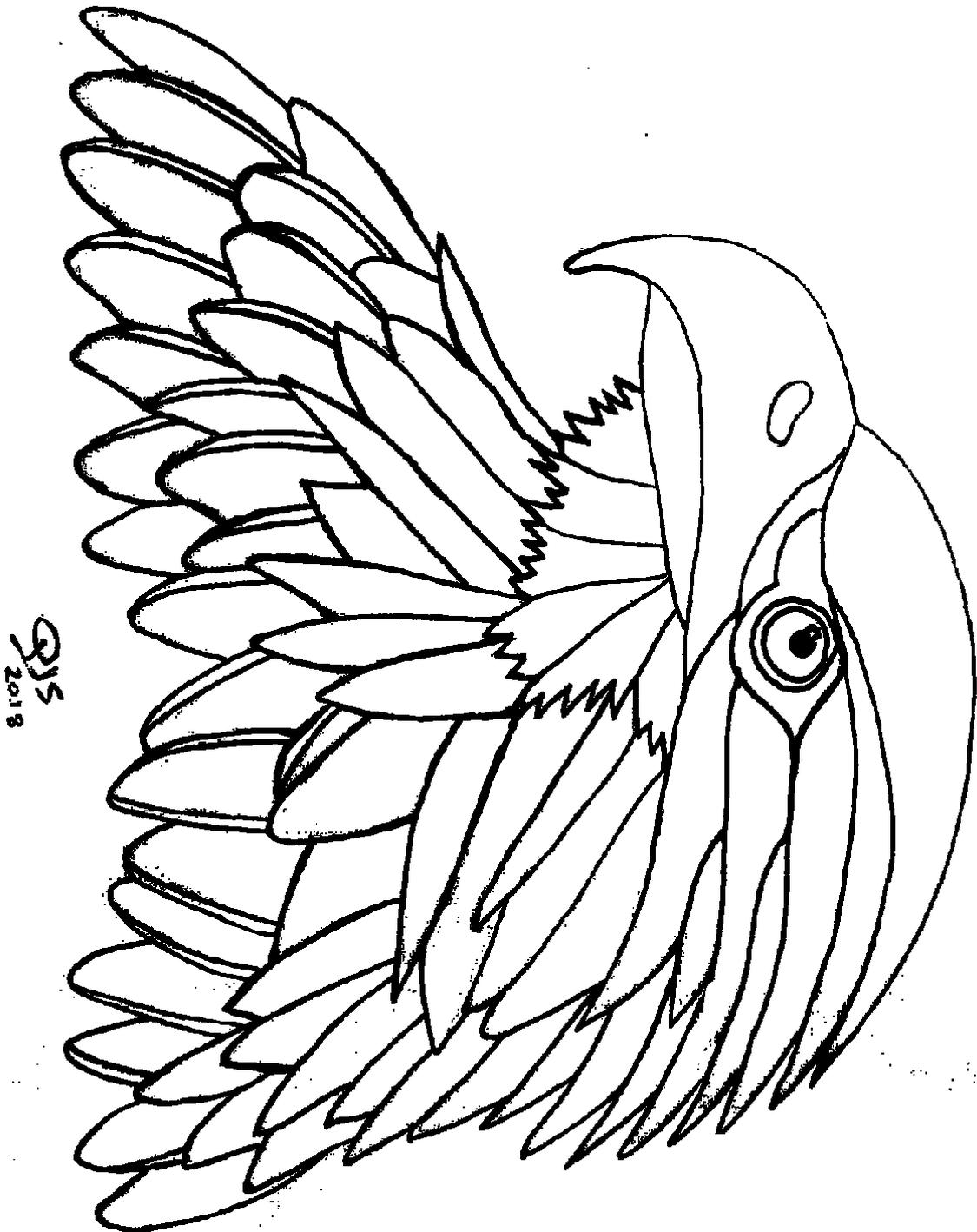
Once your glue is dried and you have trimmed up your picture give it a careful sanding using a moderate grit abrasive paper (180-240). Take care to remove dust (the brush on your vacuum cleaner is ideal) as the light and dark dusts can get into the dark and light veneers and make your picture look dull. Finally a coat or two of lacquer or varnish (follow the manufacturer's instructions) will bring up the colours and make your eagle look splendid.

More detailed instructions for mounting, sanding and polishing your picture can be found on our website at: <http://qjsmarquetry.co.uk/downloads/instructions-finishing.pdf>

For more help and information about marquetry please contact:

- **QJS Marquetry**  
01785 850614  
[www.qjsmarquetry.co.uk](http://www.qjsmarquetry.co.uk)

- **The Marquetry Society**  
[www.marquetry.org](http://www.marquetry.org)



**Packing list:** veneers, baseboard, instructions, abrasive paper, carbon and transfer paper, Marquetry Society leaflet, practice exercise