



Furniture maker John Ebinger takes a break in his studio, where he crafts pieces with a diligent eye on the character of the wood he works with. *Opposite:* Ebinger's creativity extends to the musical realm, where he takes the stage with his double bass and The Phoenix Symphony at Symphony Hall.

PORTRAIT: DAN DELANEY. TOP RIGHT: JONATHAN EATON.

Furniture maker, sculptor, musician. Sometimes it's even hard for John Ebinger to put a label on himself. "I just hope to be considered a creative person," he smiles. "The big connection between my music, my art and my furniture is my creativity." Ebinger, who plays double bass with The Phoenix Symphony, creates one-of-a-kind benches and tables—pieces whose beauty lies in their simplicity. "The tree is nature's finest sculpture, and I could never presume to duplicate such perfection," he says. "But I can express myself in the wood." The process of putting together different woods, which is much like playing the notes in a musical score, is what fascinates Ebinger, who has dabbled in wood-working since childhood. He became serious about the craft some 15 years ago, when he got the idea to make a many-sided cube. "In the orchestra, I'm only one of 70, and I'm at the whim of the conductor, so it's confined creativity," he says. "But, with my woodworking, I'm free to go wild." *thedoctorswoodworks.com; 602.251.3444*

Ebinger's asymmetrical bench benefits from the striking contrast of claro walnut and white ash. *Musician's Bench, 19" x 19" x 18"*



WOODEN TOUCH

JOHN EBINGER



Top Shop:

The Woodworkers Source in Phoenix; I love to look at the different kinds of wood, even if I'm not taking anything home with me.

Prized Possession:

My circa-1850 German bass; it's my baby, and it's the one I play in the orchestra.

On My Nightstand:

A People's History of American Empire, by Howard Zinn, and *The Undiscovered Self*, by Carl Jung, as well as a stack of woodworking magazines and crossword puzzles.

Philosophy:

I like to live by this quote from Frank Lloyd Wright: "Study nature, love nature, stay close to nature. It will never fail you."

Design Icons:

Frank Lloyd Wright, Sam Maloof and George Nakashima.

Up Next:

My next big effort will be making a chair inspired by the Nakashima Concord. It will be my first serious venture into creating seating furniture.