What's in the Stuffing?

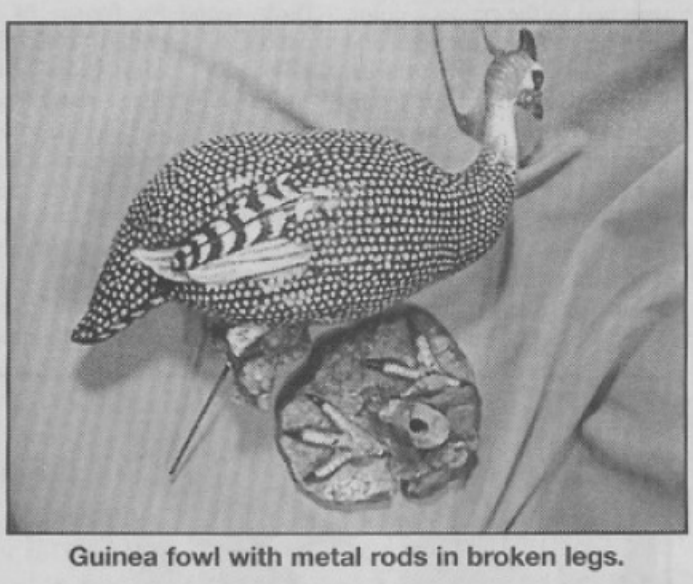
By DiAnna Tindell

No....I'm not talking Thanksgiving Stuffing, unless maybe the turkey is a display for a Thanksgiving Parade and requires some restoration prior to the big event! Many large objects with ornate sections include metal rods inside the body for added support. If the metal rods are bent or damaged, corrections to realign the design may cause even further damage. A household adhesive for normal glue jobs will not work on most damaged objects with bulky, heavy or crumbly (soft-bodied) parts. If the object also includes metal rods within the body, the task to bond all the broken parts back together can be challenging. Normally, a stronger industrial adhesive will be needed.

There are many two-part adhesives and epoxies that can be considered, depending on the "body type" of the damaged areas. For instance, a glass object would need to be bonded with a product specific for glass. It might even need a glass liquid etcher treatment prior to application of the bonding adhesive. It is best if glass is bonded with a clear, non-yellowing adhesive product. For medium-weight broken sections, it would be best to use a medium-bodied, two-part industrial adhesive epoxy glue with "non-sag" capabilities for the first step in bonding. If it is very porous, lightweight and chalky, the use of a "non-sag" industrial adhesive epoxy will add strength and support.

To further aid with support and reinforcement, the bonded joins would need some additional filler products used as a "Stuffing Mixture" for the inside of the object. These come in various consistencies and color, and each has its own unique purpose. These are also useful to bond broken areas together without first requiring any glue type adhesive.

The easiest way to consider which two-part thermal filler to use as a "stuffing mixture" is by comparing the properties of a test "cured" ball-type sample to the "body type" you are working on. Select the sample that comes closest to the same texture, weight, color and strength of the parts you are trying to bond, reinforce or add support to.



Guinea fowl with metal rods in broken legs.

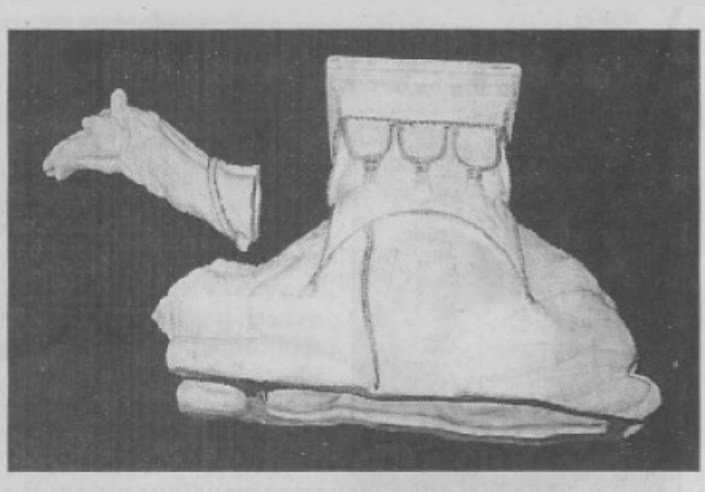
Some examples of the various types of two-part thermal fillers are: Repair It Quick — recommended for thick, heavy objects such as marble, stoneware and heavy frames. Quickwood Light Fill—for medium-weight objects: pottery, terra cotta, soft-paste porcelain and some frame types. Quick Copper—for

Continued on next page

What's in the Stuffing...*continued*

medium-weight objects and matched to the object's color, such as copper, bronze and some darker shiny surfaces. Quick Aluminum—for medium-to-heavy objects and matched for color, such as silver, pewter and some metal-type frames. Quickwood Pine—good for "gold" or yellow backgrounds as the base color for many frames and other objects such as some pottery, etc. Quickwood Dark—good for frames of a darker background, such as mahogany. Quick Crete—for "outdoor" garden objects or most any other concrete type structures. There are more, but these are a good base to get started on many restoration projects with various body types.

In some instances, bonding and/or epoxy thermal



Large, hollow camel before restoration.

fills are not enough to hold some objects together due to the overall gravity in design, weight and stress points. In some cases, it may be necessary to include additional support with alternative products.

There are old examples of restoration where objects were "stapled" together with various types of wire. They drilled holes into the broken parts, wrapped wire through to connect at the joins, and then filled the holes. With today's excellent products, it isn't necessary to have wire staples. There are many clear materials that can be applied in key areas to coat joins and add a blanket of outer wall strength. Depending on the surface, these products can be clear high gloss, semi-gloss, satin and matte.

If all else fails, the project may need to take on an additional design of material that offers more support, such as a new layer or vining-type structure with strong base material. This will change the original view of the piece, but can sometimes offer a better solution with pleasant surprises for a totally new look.

If the item requires the inside to be restored, a restorer will normally work on the item in halves to obtain an invisible restore appearance on the inside before completing the item as a whole. This allows the inside areas accessible to be worked on in more detail.

If a view of the inside of the object isn't necessary, relevant, or available when complete, the restore can be processed differently. For instance, there is an excellent foam product that can be injected as a "stuffing mixture" into the inner walls of large structures as a fantastic support. This foam is an industrial product not available within the normal commercial market. It is great for added inner strength on objects that have been re-bonded from many broken sections and need some sort of unified fused wholeness. This foam offers a much better alternative to older traditional methods of metal rods and heavy plaster fills. This foam can also be used for many faux finishes when formed into molds or painted. It has long term durability with no shrinkage or changes.

It is best to contact a professional restoration spe-

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What's in the Stuffing...*continued*

After - "foam stuffing" strengthened the piece without adding extra weight.

cialist for the highest quality products, techniques for better alignment and fit, bonding and filling to insure compatibility of any future processing.

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