

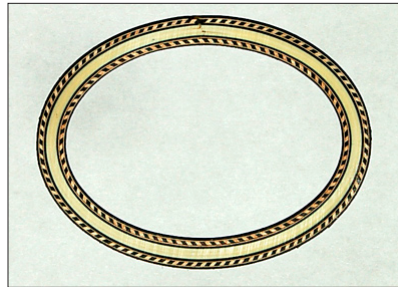
These instructions accompanied parts manufactured by Siminoff Banjo and Mandolin Parts which ceased operations in 2017 after 50 years of serving luthiers worldwide. Part numbers are no longer relevant. This document has been reproduced and made available to enhance your skills and support your luthier builds.

Technical Resource Installing soundhole rosettes

re: *Ultimate Bluegrass Mandolin Construction Manual - 4th Edition*
Reprint size: 8.5"x11" • Rev: 10/15/23

The Siminoff #420 soundhole rosette is a replica of the original rosettes used on F4 mandolins. It features two rings of maple/ebony rope binding and a center ring of grained celluloid.

The split in the top center of the ring is a result of how the rings are produced and is covered by the fretboard to become invisible when the instrument is finished.



F4 rosette, Siminoff Part #420

The rosette is inlaid into a channel cut into the soundboard and then sanded flush to the soundboard's surface.

Installation outline (see the step-by-step directions on the reverse side):

- 1) Cut or rout the soundhole first to ensure accurate positioning of the rosette.
- 2) Place the rosette on the soundboard. Ensure that it is concentric to the soundhole and the the split in the rosette is facing towards the peghead (where it will end up under the fretboard). Note that the split also enables the rosette to bend upwards on both sides of the soundboard, where the soundboard's surface comes up to meet the fretboard plane.
- 3) Place two small leather or wood cauls over the rosette and use small C-clamps to hold the rosette in place.
- 4) Using a #11 X-Acto® blade, carefully cut a groove into the soundboard around the inner and outer edge of the rosette (Fig. 2). Be careful not to cut into the rosette. (If you carefully hold the flat side of the blade against the rosette as you cut around it, the cutting edge will not cut into the rosette wood.) Keep the blade vertical.

NOTE: An alternate, but less accurate method, is to draw a thin pencil line around the rosette, remove the rosette, and then cut into the pencil line. However, the rosette provides an excellent guide for the knife blade and will result in a more accurate cut than trying to follow the pencil line without the rosette there as a guide.

5) When you are done cutting the edges of the rosette that are not obstructed by the clamps and cauls, place two other cauls and clamps at different locations, remove the original clamps, and complete cutting where the original clamps and cauls were.

6) Remove the clamps. Using either a small narrow wood chisel, or an X-Acto gouging blade, carefully gouge out the wood between your initial cut lines. Remove only as much wood as necessary to make a channel that is as deep as the thickness of the rosette.

7) When the rosette is fitted to the channel, use a Q-Tip® to apply a thin bead of Titebond® into the channel. Push the rosette in place and clean away any excess cement that squeezes out. Cover the rosette with wax paper, and using cauls that are wider than the rosette, apply C-clamps with moderate pressure. Do not try to clamp the rosette down in the fretboard plane - those ends will be sanded flush to the fretboard plane when the glue dries.

8) When the glue dries, remove the clamps and wax paper, and sand the rosette flush to the soundboard.

Finishing tips:

- 1) Using a small thin brush, carefully paint two clear coats of your chosen finishing medium (varnish or lacquer) onto the rosette to seal the pores and fibers of the rosette.
- 2) Place a 12" strip of tan-colored vinyl paint-masking tape onto a piece of glass. Using a single-edge razor and straight-edge, cut a 5/16" wide strip from the center of the tape (this ensures that both edges are straight and parallel). Peel the tape from the glass and apply it to the rosette to mask it off, guiding in into a curved and oval shape as you press it down. Press the tape down firmly to ensure that the surface of the rosette is fully sealed.
- 3) Now you can apply the stain without staining the rosette. Some scraping may be necessary.

The following two pages show 27 step-by-step photos on inlaying a rosette.

Follow these 27 steps to accurately inlay your F4 rosette:

The process for inlaying an F4 soundhole rosette is the same whether you are installing a new rosette or replacing a damaged one. The following photos show a rosette being replaced in an A-model mandolin.



1. With the soundhole cut, position the rosette on the soundboard and align it to the soundhole.



2. Use small wood or leather cauls to protect the rosette and clamp the rosette in place with small C-clamps.



3. Use a sharp #11 X-Acto blade and score a line into the soundboard on the inside and outside of the rosette.



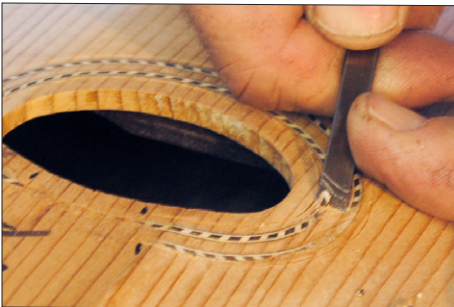
4. Place two more cauls and clamps on the rosette, then remove the first two clamps, and complete the cut.



5. Remove the rosette and deepen the cut you have made. The depth should equal the rosette's thickness.



6. Be careful that you do not chip out the soundboard wood when working near the soundhole's edge.



7. Using small chisels or gouges, begin to remove the soundboard wood between the cut lines.



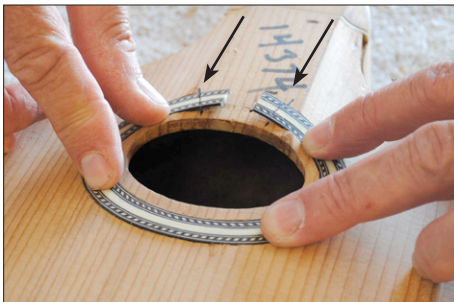
8. Work slowly and deliberately. Pay attention to working with and against the grain.



9. Wiggling the gouge back and forth may be helpful in working the tool through the wood.



10. Work the channel up to the fretboard plane, but do not attempt to cut the channel level to the fretboard plane.



11. Test fit the rosette into the channel. Draw two lines onto the rosette and soundboard (arrows) to ensure alignment.



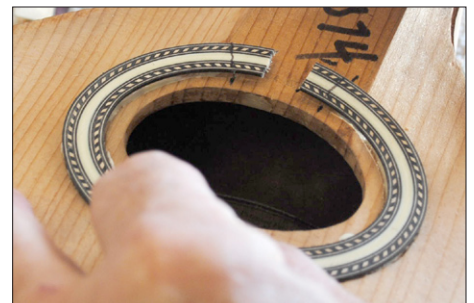
12. Using small clamps and cauls, test-clamp the rosette. Do not clamp the ends of the rosette down to the fretboard plane.



13. After you confirm the depth of the channel, apply a thin bead of Titebond Regular Glue into the channel.



14. Use a Q-Tip to spread the Titebond evenly into the channel.



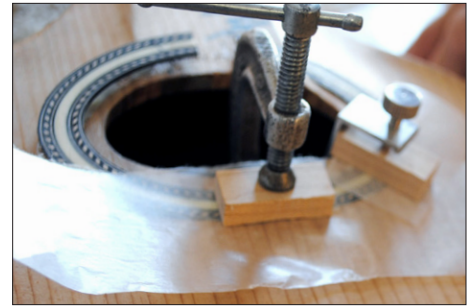
15. Place the rosette into the channel and rotate it to align to the marks you made in Fig 11.



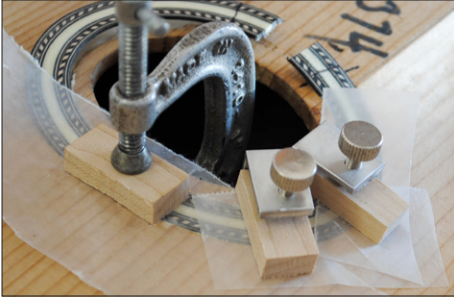
16. Use wax paper to prevent cauls from being glued. Use a big piece and cut through it or use several small pieces.



17. Place wood cauls on the wax paper and begin to position small C-clamps around the rosette.



18. For gluing rosettes, we've made small C-clamps from C-shaped aluminum channel stock



19. Continue to add clamps and cauls.



20. The split part of the rosette will bend upwards. It gets the last clamp (Fig. 22).



21. Snug all the clamps evenly and ensure that the rosette is properly seated in the channel.



22. Apply some glue under the free ends of the rosette and gently clamp the ends downward (but not all the way).



23. Allow to stand for 24 hours and then remove the clamps and wax paper.



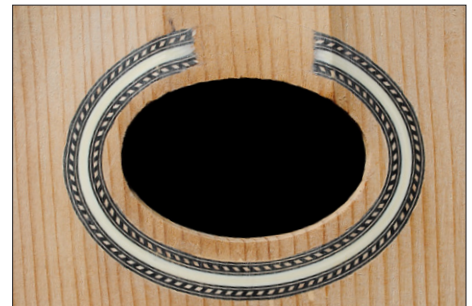
24. Use a flat sanding block to level the protruding ends of the rosette to the fretboard plane.



25. Ensure that the sanding block is square to the fretboard plane so that it does not alter the shape of the fretboard plane.



26. Sand the open ends of the rosette flush to the fretboard plane.



27. The free ends of the rosette that are sanded away will not be visible once the fretboard is in place.