

## **Formal Legacies: Further context**

### **Andrew Southall**

#### **The Shaker Settee and the Occasional Table**

The first photograph places the re-fabricated 1820s spindle back settee at Westonbirt Arboretum, in front of the romantic vista of a constructed landscape, with imported American Maples and Pines dating from 1839, a third element of concurrent history. Based on the response to the settee, a second iteration of the project developed further the idea of the object as an interface between the visual language and the cultural ethos it embodies: an occasional table made in the same way, by hand, to a Shaker design. This was used to provoke observation and discussion about its antecedents and histories through recollections, personal associations and individual stories.

#### **Methods and processes:**

The pieces were made following study of the typical shaker furniture from a range of sources in museums, archives and published works of which the key text is *The Book of Shaker Furniture*, published by J Kassay in 1980. Kassay studied original Shaker furniture in collections in the USA and had also visited The American Museum in Bath to make drawings of the Occasional Table. These construction drawings and commentary form a detailed analytical documentation of the typological distinctions of Shaker furniture. The joinery was carried out using hand tools similar to those used in the 1820s and electric power tools were employed in place of those which would have been driven by water power.