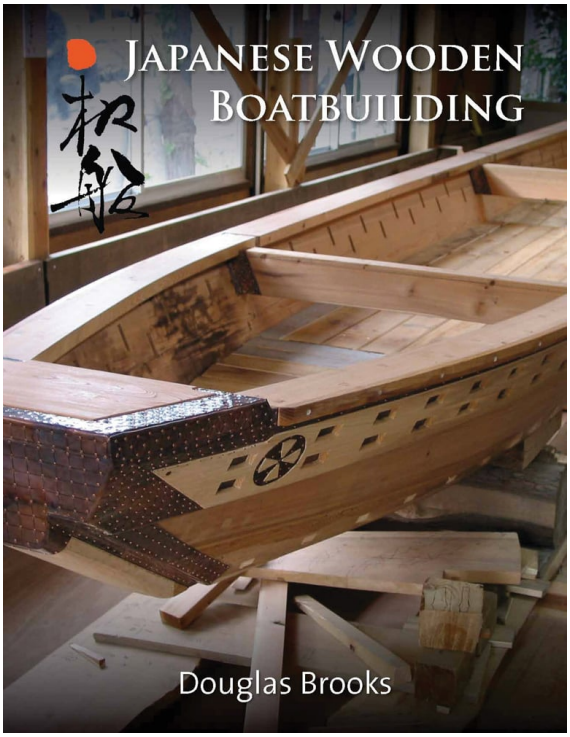
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Japanese Wooden Boatbuilding

Douglas Brooks

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- Introduces significant aspects of traditional Japanese boatbuilding design, workshop and tools, wood and materials
- Introduces joinery and fastenings, propulsion, ceremonies, and the apprenticeship system
- The only available English-language documentation of these traditional boats and the few craftspeople left able to build them

With Japan's unprecedented modernization in the last century, the demand for traditional boats (wasen) faded, leaving the last generation of boatbuilders with no one to teach. This is the story of the author's apprenticeships with five Japanese masters to build their unique and endangered traditional watercraft. Brooks was the sole apprentice for each craftsman, and worked under a time-honored system in which apprentices first swept floors and sharpened tools, learning chiefly by observation with only limited direct instruction. The resulting book is part ethnography, part instruction, and part the personal story of a wooden boatbuilder fueled by a passion to preserve a craft tradition on the brink of extinction. It fills a large and long-standing gap in the literature on Japanese crafts, and will be of interest to boatbuilders, woodworkers, and all those impressed with the marvels of Japanese design and workmanship.

Douglas Brooks is a boatbuilder, writer, and researcher specializing in the construction of traditional wooden boats for museums and private clients, and is a recent recipient of the Rare Craft Fellowship Award from the American Craft Council.

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