

Daniel Marshall: Most Interesting Man Alive

By George Manzella



Photo Credit: Daniel Marshall, Inc.

It all started as a boyhood fantasy, an unrelated vision that transformed the son of an avocado farmer into the cigar

industry's most iconic figure. The Daniel Marshall brand is a love story of passion, perseverance and gratitude born of a teenage romance, an encouraging grandfather and a spontaneous trip across the globe. What was meant to be a gracious hand-crafted token of gratitude has since become the ultimate symbol of success and celebration.

Daniel Marshall credits Joseph D. Bain ("Papa Joe"), the grandfather of a former girlfriend, with having the vision and fortitude to believe in a 'surfer boy' from California. In 1982 Marshall was living in John Wayne's dressing room trailer absorbed in his childhood dream, which was to build his own sailboat to sail around the world. Papa Joe offered to loan the young artisan, \$50,000, to complete his project. As a way to give thanks, Marshall built a unique three-cigar hinged case out of teak for Papa Joe, who in turn encouraged Marshall to present it to Dunhill.



Photo Credit: Daniel Marshall, Inc. – Daniel Marshall at 19 years old with his original creation for Papa Joe

"He was fascinated by me building a boat and having a dream," said Marshall. "He believed in me. He showed me a way that everything is possible."

At the ripe age of 19,

Marshall flew from his home in California to

Dunhill's office in New York City with his cigar box in tow. After failed attempts to make an appointment with Dunhill over the telephone, the tenacious youngster went to the office unannounced and requested a meeting. Dunhill was originally unimpressed with what they later referred to as the "cigar carcass." But, after a fruitful exchange of ideas, Marshall had earned himself a \$250,000 purchase order from Dunhill. However, that was short lived. The deal was rescinded three months into the project because of corporate red tape. Marshall, who doesn't take 'no' for an answer, talked his way into another sales presentation but this time with the bigwigs in London, who also rejected his proposal --until Marshall convinced them to give him another shot.

"They said my humidor didn't meet Dunhill quality,"

Marshall recalled. "I asked them to give me a list of what I needed to change and if I can bring it back tomorrow with the changes, will they see me?"



Photo Credit: Daniel Marshall, Inc.

Dunhill agreed and they made Daniel Marshall the official architect of Dunhill humidors. That was 32 years ago and Marshall has been making humidors ever since.

"Every day I am driven to create a new humidor, a humidor that collectors will say 'wow...that is impressive,'" Marshall explained. "I wake up, have my coffee and light up my petite corona and I get to live my dream, 32 years and counting...excited by every day and every opportunity."

Daniel Marshall humidors have become the most sought-after and most renowned humidors in the

world. They have graced the homes of countless Hollywood celebrities, US presidents, government



Photo Credit: Andreas Tischler, Vienna, Austria – Marshall with Arnold Schwarzenegger during Opening of DM Lounge in Austria

dignitaries, fashion designers and many, many more. Daniel Marshall is also the cigar and humididor supplier of England's Royal Family. He has also created and private labeled for prestigious luxury gift houses like Tiffany & Co., S.T. Dupont, Cartier, Fred Joaillier, Harrod's, and Garrard's of London. Why is Daniel Marshall so well received?

"It is because of quality and the commitment to achieve the best that is humanly possible regardless of cost," Marshall boasted. "Quality is intangible. We can feel the human commitment, the passion, the blood, sweat and tears. We feel it, may not see it, but we feel it and that is what I believe people feel when they see a DM humididor or cigar."

Building a humididor is a painstaking process in which Daniel Marshall takes great pride. It takes nearly four months to create one DM humididor. The majestic sanctity behind each DM humididor evokes an eruption of emotions that cannot be explained in words. The artistry, the passion and the materials used are second to none. Each member on the Daniel Marshall team is an exceptional artist with up to 25 years of experience under the company's employ.

"To make a humididor can be described in one word, obsession, an obsession for quality, for the best, for perfection, and choosing the best exotic veneer. We do not rest until the humididor is perfect in every regard, explained Marshall."

Daniel Marshall creates and designs all of the company's humididors and he personally makes the first artist proof of each addition to the DM collection. He starts by selecting the rarest, most

exotic and brilliantly patterned woods and ends with a 175-point quality control inspection.

Marshall has created thousands of extraordinary humididors throughout his 32-year career but there are a few that are most decadent. He has created a very unusual sterling silver humididor that required 100 ounces of silver. He has fabricated humididors made out of solid gold, exotic woods and even alligator skin.

"My most expensive modern humididor sold for \$150,000. The exterior was wrapped in alligator skin with a polished Burl Walnut interior," explained Marshall.

In 2011 Marshall was commissioned by Universal Studios to create 1000 limited edition, numbered humididors to commemorate the 30th anniversary of *Scarface*. The stunning humididor was packaged with 10 specially made DM2 cigars and a copy of the movie, *Scarface*, on Blu-ray disc. It was showcased as the "Ultimate Fan Gift."



Photo Credit: Daniel Marshall, Inc.

Daniel Marshall humididors are historic. A collection is on display at the Smithsonian Museum. Plus, the DM

Treasure Chest received a #1 rating by Cigar Aficionado magazine. His most recent masterpiece was released at the 2014 International Premium Cigar and Pipe Retailers Trade Show (IPCPR) for Colibri, which Marshall describes as, "so revolutionary, so unusual, so unique."

Marshall and his team are always working on new assignments. His current projects include a solar powered humididor, a western-themed humididor, and a Bugatti humididor. Plus, he is working collaboratively with Arnold Schwarzenegger on a Terminator 5 humididor.



Photo Credit: Fotostudio Balsereit, Koln

Daniel Marshall also makes one of the finest cigars in the world – the DM Red Label. It is a peppery Nicaraguan Puro that is medium in strength but full of bold flavors. It is a ‘Cubanesque’ cigar that is rich with chocolate and espresso. The cigar is blended by Marshall’s

dear friend Manuel Quesada of Matasa and manufactured at the

Placencia Cigars, S.A. factory in

Nicaragua.

“I wanted to make a world-class cigar that can stand up against the best of the best,” Marshall recalled. “I wanted the cigar to have character, be rich yet smooth, and most importantly, be age worthy.”

Marshall believes very strongly in aging cigars. The tobacco he uses is fermented four times and the wrappers on the DM Red Label cigars are of five-year-old Cuban-seed tobacco. But, what is most intriguing about Marshall’s cigars is the aging process of the finished product. He is one of the only cigar makers who ages his cigars in a humidor for a full 12 months prior to release.

“Cigars change dimension and characteristics when aged in humidors, explained Marshall. “They will mellow and become something totally different with humidor aging.”

Daniel Marshall will be releasing a new blend and a Special Edition version of the Red Label in 2015. The new blend, DM White Label, is Honduran. It will be Marshall’s first new release in eight years. The



Photo Credit: Kitzbuhel Country Club – The DM Lounge in Austria

Special Edition release is called the DM Whisky Stave Humidor-aged Red Label Cigar.

“One has to taste this cigar to be able to experience as words cannot explain,” Marshall stated.

This cigar stems from a unique humidor that Marshall created for Balvenie. There were only 20 of these humidors made. Fifty-year-old staves line the interior while the exterior of the humidor is the exterior of the whisky barrel.

“The aroma that this process creates is sublime,” said Marshall. “When you open the humidor you immediately are transported to the duty free aging rooms at the Balvenie Distillery in Scotland where some barrels of whisky have been aging for over 100 years.”

Daniel Marshall has created the “ultimate celebration cigar” – the Golden



Photo Credit: Randy Cordero Studios, California

Cigar. It is the Red Label blend wrapped in 24kt gold. It comes in one size, Torpedo, and retails for \$250. This cigar has taken on a life of its own. There have been songs written about it and it has been featured in rap videos. Countless Hollywood celebrities and world leaders have indulged with a DM Golden Torpedo.

From humidors to golden cigars, Daniel Marshall does it all with class and distinction, making him the most interesting man alive. His humidors have stood the test of time and his cigars are first-rate. He has traveled the world, partied with some of the most

powerful and most interesting people on earth and his reputation speaks for itself. Daniel Marshall is the cigar industry’s most iconic figure