

American Association of Woodturners

Message from Binh Pho

Educational Opportunity Grant Auction

Dear Members,

Years ago when I was fairly new to the field of woodturning, I was at an AAW symposium and witnessed an amazing event at the Educational Opportunity Grant (EOG) auction. People were bidding on what had been written on a napkin! David Ellsworth had simply written, *I owe you a piece about six inches in diameter*, then signed it, *D.E.* I recall the high bid was around \$4,000. All I could think was, "Wow! Four grand for some writing on a napkin."

The following year, I was tempted to put one of my creations in the auction, but I was concerned that no one would bid on my donation because I wasn't a well-known artist. Nevertheless, I donated one of my works and it brought in \$250. I was tickled pink.

Each year the auction grows as more pieces are donated and the AAW often generates more money than the previous year. This is the beauty and the strength of the AAW and its members: It doesn't matter who we are or where we are with our skills, we all have a willingness to chip in and help the organization grow and prosper. That spirit has and will continue to build a strong foundation for the AAW.

The EOG auction is one of the highlights of the symposium; all the donated pieces are auctioned either silently or live. This year the live auction promises to be the most successful one ever because many major collectors will join us to celebrate our 25th anniversary as the Collectors of Wood Art forum is being held in conjunction with the AAW symposium. This is a great opportunity to get exposure for your work. Donations of quality work and enthusiastic bidding allow us to achieve a successful auction.

Many top turners and past demonstrators from all over the world will attend this event, joined by new demonstrators, many local to the Saint Paul area. To name a few who have already donated to the

auction: David Ellsworth, Trent Bosch, Jacques Vesery, Tim Heil, John Jordan, John Wessel, Ray Key, Joey Richardson, Bill Pottorf, J Paul Fennell, and Michael Hosaluk.

Consider donating something to this year's EOG auction-it doesn't matter if you are a beginner or a professional-or bidding on a great piece of art. Tables in the Instant Gallery will be set up to accept your work and bidding sheets will be available.

Best wishes and see you in Saint Paul!
Binh Pho, EOG Auction Committee