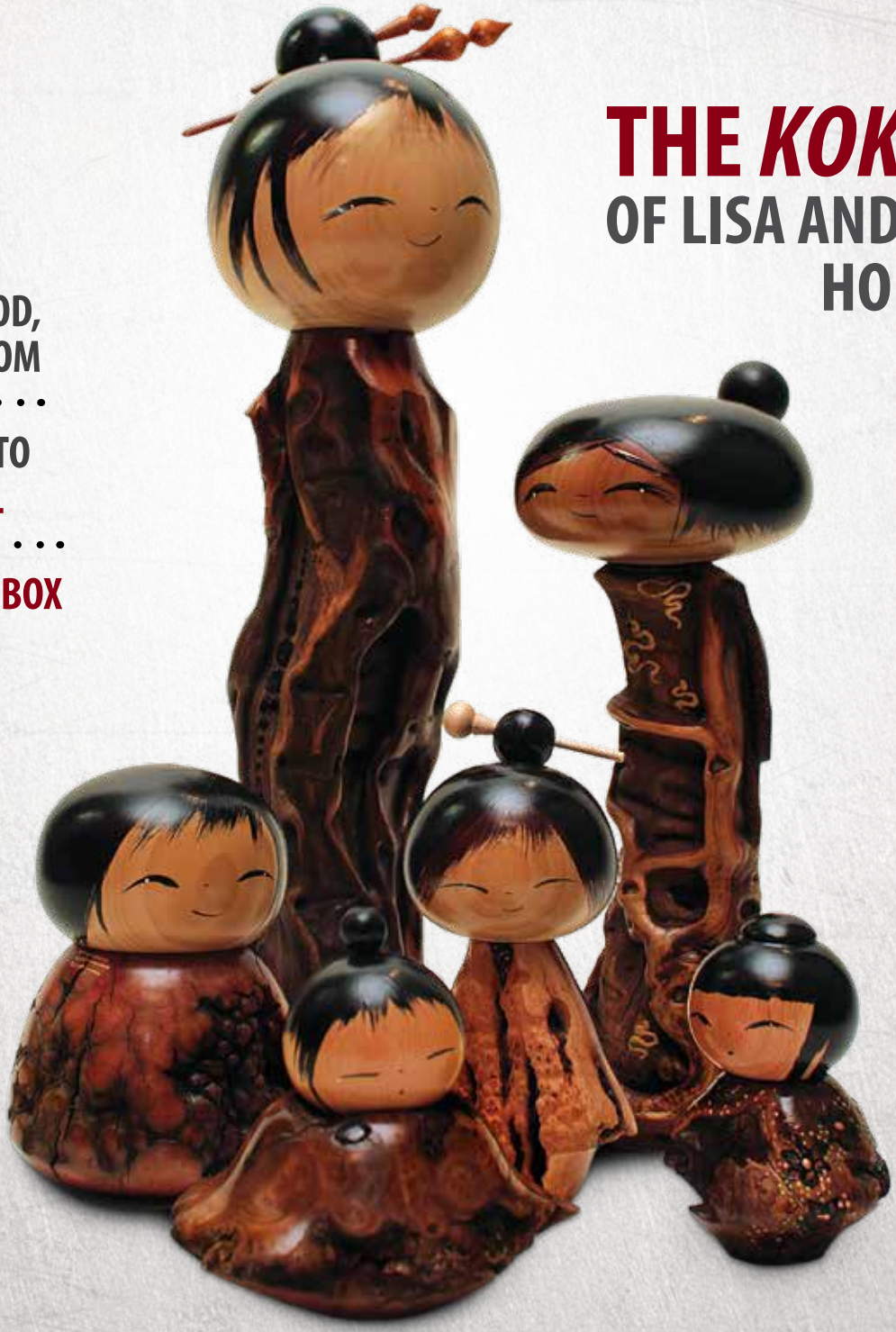
A DIFFERENT TAKE ON BOTTLE STOPPERS • A GALLERY-QUALITY FINISH • TURNING METAL ACCENTS

AMERICAN WOODTURNER

Journal of the American Association of Woodturners

February 2018 vol 33, no 1 • woodturner.org

THE *KOKESHI* OF LISA AND JACOB HODSDON



GENDER BEND: WOMEN IN WOOD, MEN AT THE LOOM

A PRO'S GUIDE TO A SIMPLE BOWL

THE EMERGING BOX

Diana Friend California

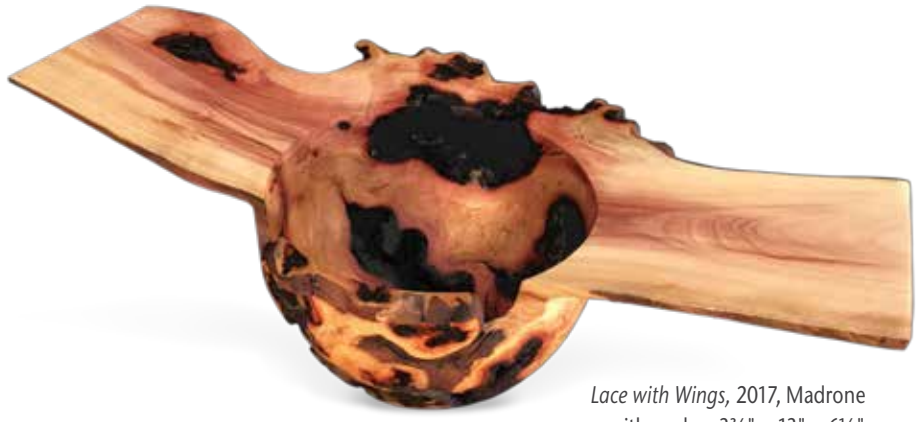
Complex bark, intense grain, cracks, voids, and color initially draw me to a piece of wood. Then it's the joy of exploration and discovery while turning that seems to lead me to difficult chunks of wood over and over again.

Deciding what to make—a natural-edge form, a basic geometrical shape, or a classic design—happens early in the creative process, but it's the challenges that arise from "defects" that lead directly to the final look. Those defects can become a hazard during turning, as the wood could fly apart at speed or when cut, so I consciously employ measures to mitigate those hazards. Adding multiple hardwood ties, or splines, can hold unsound wood intact; turning at slower lathe speeds (with less centrifugal force) lowers the likelihood of breakage; and using very light finishing cuts keeps bark intact and prevents my gouge from catching on the natural holes I seem to love.

Working on wood with delightful imperfections requires time and patience and can be frustrating and tedious. I feel, though, that such determination is akin to the countless hours I once put in as a professional French horn player. Years of daily warm-ups, practicing, and performing were sometimes required to pull off one beautiful phrase. Now, at the lathe, my time produces results that are wonderfully tangible and, in the end, equally gratifying. ■

For more, visit dianafriendbowls.com.

Blank Slate, 2014, Birch, 7" × 5" (18cm × 13cm)
Photo: Alan Gibbs



Lace with Wings, 2017, Madrone with canker, 3¾" × 13" × 6½" (10cm × 33cm × 17cm)

Sapsucker Cedar, 2017, Aromatic cedar with woodpecker-decorated bark, 4½" × 9" (11cm × 23cm)

Madrone Burl Set, 2015, Madrone burl, largest is 8" × 13½" (20cm × 34cm)

Crevasse, 2016, Bigleaf maple, maple and cherry splines, 1½" × 5½" (38mm × 14cm)

Photo: Alan Gibbs

Market Cherry Duo, 2015, Cherry burl, each is 4" × 11¼" × 7½" (10cm × 29cm × 19cm)

These pieces originated as one branch with a burl growing around it. The branch and burl were sliced in half, then turned.

Pacific Native Yew Trio, 2014, Yew, walnut splines, largest is 5" × 4" (13cm × 10cm)

Photo: Alan Gibbs

Cracked and Wrinkled, 2013, Walnut burl, cherry splines, 4½" × 12" (11cm × 30cm)

Safe slot-cutting

Two methods of cutting slots for splines. At left, a sled-style bandsaw jig securely holds a turned vessel. At right, a lathe-bed-mounted biscuit joiner is held in position by a carving vise. Another method is to cut the slots by hand with a Japanese razor-saw. In all cases, slices of hardwood or veneer are glued into the kerfs. The resulting ties, or splines, can "pin" wood in place and bridge a void enough to hold a piece together during turning. You might think splines are purely decorative; I appreciate the security they provide during and after turning.

AAW | AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS

Dedicated to providing education, information, and organization to those interested in woodturning

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Back Cover – Rick Orr

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EDITORIAL

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For tips on article submission and photography requirements, visit tiny.cc/AWsubmissions*.

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A NOTE ABOUT SAFETY

An accident at the lathe can happen with blinding suddenness; respiratory and other problems can build over years.

Take appropriate precautions when you turn. Safety guidelines are published online at tiny.cc/turnsafe*. Following them will help you continue to enjoy woodturning.

*Web address is case sensitive.

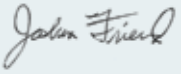
Editor's Note

I am not big on New Year's resolutions, but there is one change this year I *am* excited about. No, I have not resolved to do more turning, though I am always striving for that. It's a change in the AAW's publishing program that will benefit beginning woodturners; we have rededicated the *Woodturning FUNdamentals* digital publication and recruited former *Fine Woodworking* editor John Kelsey to take the helm.

We'll share more details about this development soon (watch your email for more information). In the meantime, if you are an author with beginner projects or techniques you'd like to share, contact John Kelsey at editorkelsey@woodturner.org. If you are a beginner looking for basic information or you know people new to our craft, your AAW membership is invaluable. Visit woodturner.org and check out our online Woodturning FUNdamentals resource—a self-guided learning curriculum. The rededicated *FUNdamentals* publication will feed that online database with ever more project and technique articles and videos.

I am also excited about the lineup in this issue of *American Woodturner.* Renowned professional turner Glenn Lucas of Ireland, who has fine-tuned his bowl-turning process over time, shares the benefit of his experience in "A Pro's Guide to a Simple Bowl" (page 16). Pat Miller shares his knowledge of turning metal accents on the wood lathe in an article and accompanying video (page 28). And Dr. Jennifer E. McDowell shares her knowledge of *kokeshi* culture in an insightful profile of modern *kokeshi* makers Lisa and Jacob Hodsdon (page 46).

Happy reading, and best wishes for a wonderful 2018.



—Joshua Friend

From the President

The accidental philanthropist

Giving, volunteering, non-profit; to me, these are words that fit together like mom and apple pie. I believe those words also epitomize the AAW and, more importantly, our members, who give through charitable programs like Beads of Courage and programs that benefit the physically challenged, youth, those in hospice, and others. Without volunteerism, not only would AAW not exist, nor would those activities I mentioned.

If you've been turning for a few years, your friends and relatives display your work with pride, but possibly don't need many more pieces. You may have sold pieces to neighbors for gifts, but even that market seems to be slowing down. Your home is starting to look like a shrine to your habit. Thing is, you're getting better and better, and you're not ready to slow down. You want a new audience who will recognize your amazing talents.

TA-DAH! Suddenly you're demonstrating at the local fair; the audience is amazed. You're making pieces for Beads of Courage; the recipients are overwhelmed. You're making canes or pens for the Wounded Warrior Project; those guys are showing off your work. Are you doing this because you're Mother Teresa? Not on a bet. You're the "Rock Star" of woodturning, the "Diva of Dogwood," the "Maestro of Mahogany." Your community has a new respect for you—because of your turning talents, yes, but more because you are a giving person. And all you wanted to do was have fun in your shop.

In turning, sometimes the result is more important than the technique. The same is true in reaching out to help others. Even if your purpose is not wholly altruistic, if your results benefit others, accept the thanks and keep turning. Remember, you got into turning to have fun, and if it gives you a minute or two of fame, bask in the spot light. You're special, you deserve it.

The AAW is an organization we all should be proud of. We may not save puppies or provide natural disaster relief, but we do give young people the opportunity to express themselves with their hands; we do give emerging crafts people and artists direction in pursuing their goals; we do give retirees a reason to remain active and achieve with pride. Finally, our donations help other non-profits earn money to meet their objectives. The turnings donated by our members may only make the recipient feel the care of someone they've never met. What could be more important?

Board changes

It's a new year with a new board. Maybe not so new; congratulations to Kathleen Duncan and Jeff Brockett, who were elected to their second term. And congratulations to Rick Baker on being elected to his first term. Rick has been an active committee volunteer and comes with credentials ensuring he will serve you well. Louis Vadeboncoeur is leaving the board, but his legacy, especially his molding of VISION 2020, will benefit the AAW for years to come.

Happily, we anticipate no staff changes. You can continue to expect professional services from Jane, Linda, Kim, Josh, Tib, Hannah, and Phil. They make a tough job seem easy. We are all lucky to have them.

Looking forward,

Greg Schramek
President, AAW Board of Directors

JOIN US IN PORTLAND, OREGON, FOR AAW'S 32ND INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

OREGON CONVENTION CENTER • JUNE 14–17, 2018

The AAW International Symposium is an excellent opportunity to watch world-class demonstrators share their techniques, to find out about the latest innovations in tools and materials, and to be inspired by the instant gallery and other woodturning exhibits. Join us to experience in person the creative passion of woodturning while enjoying the company of others who share your interests.

PORTLAND 2018
AAW AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS

SYMPOSIUM HOST HOTEL

Doubletree by Hilton
1000 NE Multnomah St.
Portland, OR 97232

ALTERNATE HOTEL

Courtyard (by Marriott) Portland Downtown Convention Center
435 NE Wasco Street
Portland, OR 97232

Learn more at tiny.cc/AAW2018.

DEMONSTRATORS

Eli Avisera, Israel

- Decorated Plate
- Woodturning Puzzle & Square Bowl
- Avisera Blocks and Inlays

Shalom, 2015, Maple, 16" × 6" (41cm × 15cm)

Photo: Valerie Bogle photography

Mark Baker, England

- Lidded Boxes
- Lidded Bowls
- Hollow Forms/Restricted-Opening Forms Made Easy

Cocobolo Vessel, 2013, Cocobolo, 8⅞" × 4¾" (23m × 12cm)

Donna Zils Banfield, New Hampshire

- Applying Color with Airbrushes
- Pyro-Engraving Patterns and Texture

It Satisfied My Soul No. 13, 2017, Cherry, 23k gold leaf, lacquer, 2½" × 7½" (6cm × 19cm)

Christian Burchard, Oregon

Special Interest Night Presentation

- A Life Made with These Hands, Predictable Unpredictability, and the Nature of Wood

3 Disks, 2011, Madrone root burl, 14" × 26" × 12" (36cm × 66cm × 30cm)

Photo: Rob Jaffe

Marilyn Campbell, Canada

- Split Vessels
- Creativity with Epoxy

The White Queen, 2015, Holly, epoxy, paint, magnet, 9" × 5" × 2½" (23cm × 13cm × 6cm)

Jeff Chelf, North Carolina

- Coloring Your Work, from Subtle to Sultry

Musician's Stool, 2015, Poplar, ambrosia maple, milk paint, 20" × 12" (51cm × 30cm)

Kip Christensen, Utah

- Spindle Techniques

Assorted spinning tops

Mark Dreyer, Illinois

- Introduction to Penturning and Taking the Wooden Pen up a Notch

Silver Glass Fiber, 2015, Glass Fiber, 1" × 6" (25mm × 15cm)

Photo: Julane Johnson

Cindy Drozda, Colorado

- Fabulous Finials
- Finial Star Lidded Bowl
- Gilded Sea Urchin Ornament

Cleopatra, Dyed boxelder burl, African blackwood, Akoya pearl in 14k gold, 12" × 8½" (30cm × 22cm)

DEMONSTRATORS, CONTINUED

Karen Freitas, California

- Three-Part Candle Stick

Twist with Flame, 2016, Tulip, buckeye burl, 12" (30cm) tall

Keith Gotschall, Colorado

- Three-Bowl Demo
- Off-Center Platter
- Scottish Quaich

Holly Bowl, 2010, Holly, blackwood, 2¾" × 4½" (7cm × 11cm)

Photo: Tim Brown

Steven Hatcher, Washington

- Inlaying Vessels and Platters with Imagery
- Decorative Inlaid Platter Rims
- Translucent Platter Inlay

Arctic Sun, 2014, Maple, rosewood, ebony with mineral crystal inlay, colorfast dyes, lacquer, 18" × 14" × 3" (46cm × 36cm × 8cm)

Kristin LeVier, Idaho

- Adding Sculptural Elements to Your Turnings
- Bending Wood Without Steam: Introduction to Compressed Hardwood
- Introduction to Micromotor Powercarving

Henceforth, 2015, Maple, compressed beech, silver leaf, acrylic paint, 3¾" × 17" × 3½" (10cm × 43cm × 9cm)

Photo: Jonathan Billing, Archer Photography

Eric Lofstrom, Washington

- Developing Your Skew Skills, "Making The Cuts!"
- Turning a Square-Rim Bowl, "Resonance" Series
- Turning an Endgrain Bowl, "Namaste" Series

Photo: Fred Abeles

Tops/Spinning Series, 2017, Maple, each is approx. 2" × 2¾" (5cm × 7cm)

Tom Lohman, Minnesota

- Segmented Woodturning

Imaginary Tubes, 2017, 6,145 pieces: Bloodwood, holly, yellowheart, cherry, wenge, chakte viga, 5⅛" × 14¼" (13cm × 36cm)

Jon Magill, Oregon

- Ornamental Turning

Twist of Fate, 2005, English boxwood, African blackwood, 3½" × 2½" (9cm × 6cm)

Guilio Marcolongo, Australia

- Emerging Box
- Spoon Box
- Off-Center Box

Off-Center Lidded Box, 2016, 3" × 3" (8cm × 8cm)

Wayne Miller, Massachusetts

- Acrylic Segmenting

Tootsie Pops, 2015, Acrylic, oak, 9" × 7" (23cm × 18cm)

Kai Muenzer, Canada

- Turned Drawer Cabinet
- Box with Tilted Lid

Jewelry Cabinets, 2017, Maple, 4" × 10" (10cm × 26cm)

Mike Peace, Georgia

- Adding Pizzazz with Texturing Tools
- Add Pizzazz with Hand-Chased Threads

Assorted textured works

Ed Pretty, Canada

- Beyond ABC
- Spindle Replication

Coffee Table Legs, 2016, Bigleaf maple, each is 16" × 5" (41cm × 13cm)

DEMONSTRATORS, CONTINUED

Graeme Priddle, North Carolina
- Ammonite Bowl
- Surface, Surface!


Frangipani Vessel, 2017, Pear, acrylic paint, 7" × 3¾" (18cm × 10cm)

Rick Rich, Washington
- Four-Legged Stool


Child's Stool, 2017, Maple, black locust, 12" × 10" (30cm × 25cm)

Jay Shepard, Washington
- Finishing, Buffing, and More


Enceladus II, 2015, Maple, acrylic paint, lacquer, calcite mineral, 3½" × 12" (9cm × 30cm)

Al Stirt, Vermont
- Open Bowl Turning/Balancing the Grain
- Sgraffito Platter
- Turned and Carved Square Platter
- Turned, Textured, and Painted Bowl


Circles, 1998, Maple, gesso, 2" × 15" (5cm × 38cm)

Dan Tilden, Oregon
- Turning a Hollow Vessel and Maximizing Your Expensive Wood


Madrone Burl Flower Pot, 2016, Madrone, 12" × 12" (30cm × 30cm)

Hans Weissflog, Germany
- Drunken Box
- Box with Pierced-Through Lid
- Standing Oval Box


Sunshine, 2015, Cocobolo, sphere is 10" (25cm) diameter

Ray Wright, Utah
- Using the Force to Turn a Wooden Light Saber


Light Saber, 2017, Walnut, maple, 42" × 1¾" (107cm × 4cm)

Lauren Zenreich, New Jersey
- Embellishing Your Projects with Archival Inks


Alan and Lauren Zenreich Collaboration, *3 Spheres on 3-D-Printed Stands,* 2017, Various woods, archival inks, acrylic paint, 3-D-printed wood filament, spheres are 3" (8cm) diameter

Call for Demonstrators AAW Symposium 2019

The AAW's 33rd Annual International Symposium will be held in Raleigh, North Carolina, July 11–14, 2019. To apply to be a demonstrator, visit tiny.cc/CallsforEntry (case sensitive) between May 1 and August 1, 2018. For more information, call the AAW office in Saint Paul, 877-595-9094 or 651-484-9094, or email inquiries@woodturner.org. ■

Andy Cole demonstrating bowl coring at the 2016 AAW International Symposium, Atlanta, Georgia.

Sponsor a Demonstration Room in Portland

We are offering the opportunity to express your support of AAW by sponsoring a demonstration room during the Portland Symposium. Whether as an individual member, an AAW vendor, or as a local chapter, this is a way to visibly display your support of the AAW and our programs. We especially want to thank all the individuals and organizations that have sponsored rooms in previous years.

Opportunities to participate in this fundraising program still remain. For more information, please contact Phil McDonald, Executive Director, at 877-595-9094 or phil@woodturner.org. ■

AAW Board of Directors

Call for Nominees

The AAW offers much to its members and we are looking for a few good people who can contribute something in return. Do you have the time, energy, and ideas to be a part of the AAW operations, as well as a willingness to help make it a better organization? Be a part of moving the AAW forward—run for a position on the AAW Board of Directors.

The AAW elects a volunteer nine-member board to represent the membership and move the organization forward. If you have been a member in good standing for the past three years, you are eligible. The nominating committee will select the six best candidates. From these six, members will elect three candidates to serve a three-year term, beginning in January 2019.

For information on the duties of board members, call any current board member or visit the AAW website at tiny.cc/Board for details.

If you are interested in serving on the board, please email the following to the executive director (phil@woodturner.org), no later than May 1, 2018:

1. A statement of intent, including qualifications and reasons for applying
2. Letters of recommendation from two individuals who can attest to your organizational and leadership abilities
3. A high-resolution photograph of yourself

The nominating committee will review application materials and conduct phone interviews. Candidates will be presented in the August issue of *American Woodturner*, and voting will occur during the month of August. Election results will be announced in late 2018.

dia•log

AAW's 2018 Member Exhibition, Call for Entries

Online entry: December 15, 2017, to February 15, 2018.

The 2018 AAW member exhibition theme will be *Dia•Log*, chosen because it reflects the city of Portland's strong community spirit and the state's long logging history, but perhaps even more important, it speaks to the way in which our woodturning community provides common ground. The theme allows for wide artistic interpretation, from philosophical to down-to-earth.

More information can be found on page 8 of the October 2017 issue of *American Woodturner* and at tiny.cc/Calls (case sensitive). Questions? Email AAW curator Tib Shaw at tib@woodturner.org.

WIT Women in Turning

WIT Grant Opportunities

WIT (Women in Turning) is dedicated to encouraging and assisting women in their pursuit of turning, to sharing ideas and processes to further members' skills and creativity, and to increasing participation of women in the field of woodturning. For that purpose, WIT has established several types of grant opportunities that support WIT objectives. Grant applications will be evaluated and funds distributed quarterly. To check the grant types currently available and to access the online application, visit tiny.cc/WITGrants.

2018 POP Fellowship Grants Call for Applications

Deadline: May 1, 2018

The Professional Outreach Program (POP) is accepting applications for its 2018 Fellowship Grants. The purpose of the POP Fellowship Grant is to encourage creative growth through research or to provide inspiration for new directions in turned wood art. For example, applicants might be interested in pushing their work in a new direction, working in collaboration with other artists, or exploring new materials or using existing materials in a new way. POP Fellowship Grants are funded by proceeds from the annual POP auction at the AAW's Annual Symposium.

Applicants must be AAW members in good standing. The Fellowship Grants are open to turners of all levels and abilities. For more information and to apply online, visit tiny.cc/POPGrant. Applications will be accepted online through May 1, 2018.

Calling all AAW Chapter Newsletter Editors and Webmasters

Each year, the AAW holds the Best Chapter Newsletter and Best Chapter Website contests. **Closing date for applications is April 1.** Winners will be announced at the AAW International Symposium, with a follow-up announcement in *American Woodturner.*

How to apply

Applications for both contests must be submitted online. Links to rules and guidelines, as well as to all past winners' newsletters and websites, can be viewed at tiny.cc/ChapterNewsWeb (case sensitive). This is a members-only page.

For the newsletter contest, the judges will be looking for:

- Visually appealing layout
- Current content
- Content that pertains to woodturning
- Content that demonstrates partnership and collaboration with AAW to share, support, and deliver a shared educational mission to those interested in turning wood
- Useful woodturning and news-related information
- Sound writing skills

For the website contest, the judges will be looking for:

- Layout/graphic design: visually appealing, easy to access
- Ease of navigation: easy to traverse pages, intuitive menu, links work
- Use of technology: appropriate use of scripting, styles, databases, and search engines
- Up-to-date/current content: new information up front, archived material available
- Website content: contains useful woodturning technical and news-related information
- Uniqueness/personality: good blend of design with appropriate appeal to woodturning audience
- Cross browser compatibility: site works with different browsers
- Content that pertains to woodturning
- Content that demonstrates partnership and collaboration with AAW to share, support, and deliver a shared educational mission to those interested in turning wood
- Useful woodturning news-related information

Hall of Fame

Past first-place winners of the chapter newsletter and website contests have been inducted into AAW's Hall of Fame, prominently honored on our website. Visit tiny.cc/chapterwinners to view all past winners. In order to recognize the excellent work of the full range of AAW chapters, first-place winners in either category must wait three years before entering the competition again.

Above all, newsletters and websites should be fun to read and provide useful information for the chapter they serve.

Prize Drawing for AAW Members

One of the many benefits of membership in the AAW is our monthly prize and year-end grand prize drawings. Thank you to the vendors who donated this year's prizes, which include tuition scholarships, $100 certificates, sanding supplies, DVDs, chucks, grinding jigs, symposium registrations, and lathes. Contact Linda Ferber if you would like to contribute a prize, linda@woodturner.org.

When you patronize our vendors, please thank them for their support of the AAW. To see a listing of each month's prizes and winners, as well as hyperlinks to the vendors' websites, visit tiny.cc/AAWDrawings.

At the end of 2018, we will draw another name from our membership roster to give away a Powermatic 3520B lathe. That winner will name a local chapter to win either a JET 1642 or five JET mini-lathes. The Powermatic and JET lathes are donated by Powermatic/JET. Included is free shipping in the continental USA; international winners will be responsible for shipping costs from the U.S.

2018 Donors

(Others may be added during the year.)

Vendors

- Backgate Industries (backgateindustries.com) Salt/Pepper Mill Kits
- David Ellsworth (ellsworthstudios.com) Set of four DVDs
- Mike Mahoney (bowlmakerinc.com) 16 oz. utility oil
- Thompson Lathe Tools (thompsonlathetools.com) $100 gift certificate
- Hunter Tool Systems (huntertoolsystems.com) $100 gift certificate
- Trent Bosch (trentbosch.com) Trent Bosch DVD
- Nick Cook Woodturner (nickcookwoodturner.com) Nick Cook DVD
- Powermatic/JET (jpwindustries.com/brands) Lathes

AAW Chapters/Symposia (each donating an event registration)

- Tennessee Association of Woodturners
- Turn on Chicago
- Turning Southern Style
- Ohio Valley Woodturners Guild
- Oregon Woodturning Symposium
- North Dakota Symposium
- Southwest Association of Turners (SWAT)
- Totally Turning Symposium

CAW Honors Robyn and John Horn with Founders' Award

THE CENTER FOR ART IN WOOD

The Center for Art in Wood (CAW) bestows its Founders' Award to designees who have played an invaluable role in the development and growth of CAW. In 2017, Robyn and John Horn of Little Rock, Arkansas, were given the award to acknowledge their three decades of supporting the Center's programs.

The award honors Robyn and John's philanthropy, as well as Robyn as a talented and evolving artist. Since her entrée into the woodturning world, Robyn Horn's work has stood out. I met her in 1987, when I curated an exhibition on woodturning. A year later, she was juried into the Center's 1988 International Turned Objects Show (ITOS) with one of her thick-walled *Geodes*, which bucked the trend of thin-walled vessels. The Horns initiated their support of the Center that year, when they joined others to help CAW publish the exhibition book, *Lathe-Turned Objects*.

The Center gratefully acknowledges Robyn and John Horn for including CAW in their support of artists, education, and craft.

—Albert LeCoff, Co-Founder and Executive Director

Robyn and John Horn

Photo: Steve Miller

Robyn Horn, *Leaning,* 2016, Cocobolo, 27¾" × 10" × 4" (70cm × 25cm × 10cm)

Photo courtesy of the artist.

Robyn Horn, *Sheoake Geode,* 1987, Sheoake, 7" × 8¼" × 6¾" (18cm × 21cm × 17cm)

The Center for Art in Wood Museum Collection

Photo: John Carlano

Symposium Attendees Donate Boxes to BOC

In 2017, attendees at the second-annual Oregon Woodturning Symposium donated forty lidded boxes to Beads of Courage (BOC). Beads of Courage, based in Tucson, Arizona, offers "arts-in-medicine supportive care programs for children coping with serious illness, their families and the health care providers who care for them."

Per the BOC website (beadsofcourage.org): "The Program is a resilience-based intervention designed to support and strengthen children and families coping with serious illness. Through the program children tell their story using colorful beads as meaningful symbols of courage that commemorate milestones they have achieved along their unique treatment path."

Of course, the children need somewhere to keep their memory beads, and that's where woodturners can help. The turned boxes donated at our symposium were given to the Mary Bridge Children's MultiCare Health System in Tacoma, Washington, and Kalispell Regional Healthcare in Kalispell, Montana.

—Mark Choitz, Willamette Valley Woodturners

From left: Woodturners Darcy Tataryn, Hal Schalles, Dick Worthey, and Dennis Van Loo proudly display turned boxes donated to Beads of Courage.

Members of Chapel Hill Woodturners Attend Irish Seminar

In 2017, fifteen members of the Chapel Hill Woodturners (of North Carolina) attended the National Seminar of the Irish Woodturners Guild. Assembling at the Glenroyal Hotel in the university town of Maynooth, just west of Dublin, the group saw demonstrations by a roster of international woodturners.

Members of the North Carolina club made valuable connections and were encouraged to return in 2018, when the Guild's seminar will take place in Limerick. Willie Creighton, Chairman of the Guild, indicated that plans are already being made for a contingent of Irish woodturners to visit their new friends in Chapel Hill and attend the 2019 AAW International Symposium in Raleigh.

—Carmine Prioli, Chapel Hill Woodturners

Wearing green in honor of their Irish hosts, members of the Chapel Hill Woodturners pause for a photo while attending the 2017 symposium of the Irish Woodturners Guild, Maynooth, Republic of Ireland.

Photo courtesy of Chapel Hill Woodturners.

CRW Hosts Home-Schooled Students

In early 2017, the Coulee Region Woodturners (CRW) of La Crosse, Wisconsin, held its second woodturning class for home-schooled children (and some of their parents). With roughly equal numbers of girls and boys, the kids ranged in age from about 9 through 17.

Home-schooling parents Mary and Joseph Lehn organized the event. The Lehns had met several CRW members in 2015 at an outdoor show and woodturning demonstration at Norskedalen Heritage Site in Coon Valley, Wisconsin. They were captivated by the art and process of woodturning, joined CRW as a family, and then took a woodturning class taught by CRW member Duane Hill.

Nine club members attended the teaching event, and we had eight lathes running. The members who participated were Jim Frank, Virginia Green, Phil Miller, Bob Raasch, John Griffiths, Jack Fitzpatrick, Kristine Clough, Duane Hill, and Nicole Sandeen.

The morning began with a short introduction to the lathe and, especially, safety practices. We emphasized the use of face and eye protection while turning, and everyone signed in for insurance purposes in case of an accident. Projects ranged from mushrooms to fine pens. Mostly we taught spindle turning, but one girl made a small bowl. Club members provided the tools, projects, wood, and acrylic pen blanks. We used mini-lathes owned by Duane Hill and Coulee Region Woodturners, all with electronic speed control.

The event was held at the facility of A Line Machine and Tool, a corporate member of CRW. Both the home-school families and our club are grateful to A Line for hosting the event.

With around ninety members, the Coulee Region Woodturners meets the third Saturday of each month at the Onalaska Community Center, Onalaska, Wisconsin. Guests are welcome and new members are encouraged. For more, visit crwoodturner.com.

—John Griffiths, Coulee Region Woodturners

Members of the Coulee Region Woodturners teach a hands-on class for area home-schooled students.

CRW member John Griffiths (left) guides a student in the use of a gouge.

Mentor Jack Fitzpatrick shares his woodturning knowledge. The teaching event emphasized safety and spindle-turning skills.

A sample of the different "fire plugs" turned by NWWT for Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue. The different number of burned rings identifies the type and size.

These sprinkler system plugs were made on a bandsaw from standard ¾" (19mm) flat stock.

Special Request Becomes Teaching Opportunity for NWWT

Members of the Northwest Woodturners (NWWT) of Portland, Oregon, received an unusual woodturning request. A local fire department, Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue (TVFR), asked the turners to make "plugs" that the firefighters carry with them when they go to a fire.

During a fire, firefighters often come across open pipes that cannot be closed off by normal means, so they drive tapered wooden plugs into the openings to restrict the flow of water. Due to the random, various-sized openings they encounter, the firefighters carry plugs of a variety of sizes and shapes. Firefighters stuff them into small openings by hand or hammer them into larger openings.

A special order

TVFR needed four different sizes of plugs, and the samples they gave us to copy were so old and dry, the wood was crumbling. We were asked to make twenty of each size. Given a plug's simple taper, I thought it would be a great opportunity for beginners to learn how to round square stock and form a taper with a spindle gouge. Then, if they wanted to practice using a skew, they could make the final finishing cut and reduce sanding.

We had eight students for this special turning session; several had never used a lathe before, and others had turned but still considered themselves beginners. Fortunately, we had four experienced turners helping and all went well.

Club members donated various blanks of maple, oak, cottonwood, and other unknown species. After sanding the plugs, we enhanced the design by burning rings in each type to easily identify them. Finishing them with walnut oil, shellac, and wax made them look and feel great.

I delivered the plugs to the supply department at TVFR, and the staff there commented, "These are too nice to use—they look more like a desk ornament." Nonetheless, we delivered usable plugs for the firefighters to have on hand.

As a nonprofit organization, NWWT's mission includes community service. This was our first project of this kind. It was a great learning opportunity for our beginning turners and brought two new people into the club. Our members continue to seek community-service projects. ■

—Roger Crooks, Northwest Woodturners

(Left) NWWT used the special request for plugs as an opportunity to teach beginners basic spindle turning.

(Right) Supply Manager Shannon Wrench and Supply Specialist Jess Fuellas, of Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue, happily received the eighty plugs made by NWWT members.

Calendar of Events

April issue deadline: February 15

Send information to editor@woodturner.org. For a more complete listing, see the AAW's Woodturning Calendar online at tiny.cc/AAWCalendar.

Canada

March 17, 18, 2018, The 13th Annual Matisho Memorial Woodturning for Cancer Research Benefit, Menno Industries, Waldheim, Saskatchewan. Share woodturning skills while raising money to support the Canadian Cancer Society. We encourage other turning clubs to host an event that supports your local or national cancer agency. For more, visit hubcityturners.ca or contact Glen Friesen at glenfriesen@sasktel.net.

Colorado

September 14–16, 2018, Rocky Mountain Woodturning Symposium, The Ranch Larimer County Fairgrounds, Loveland. Symposium to include forty-two demonstrations, large tradeshow, Beyond the Bark gallery display, and a live auction. For more, visit rmwoodturningsymposium.com.

Florida

February 9–11, 2018, Florida Woodturning Symposium, Lake Yale Baptist Conference Center, Leesburg. Three-day event held on the shores of Lake Yale, featuring national and regional demonstrators, onsite accommodations with meals included, silent auction, raffles, vendors, and workshops. Demonstrators to include Miriam Carpenter, Tim Yoder, Michael Hosaluk, Mark Sfirri, Don Watson, Keith Larrett, Jack Roberts, and Lee Sky. Workshops led by Dixie Biggs, Rudolph Lopez, Barry Reiter, Don Geiger, James McClure, and George Guadiane. For more, visit Floridawoodturningsymposium.com.

Georgia

September 21–23, 2018, Turning Southern Style Symposium, Dalton Convention Center, Dalton. Three-day event includes demonstrations, banquet, instant gallery, tradeshow, and spouse activities. Attendees are invited to bring a youth guest at no cost. Featured demonstrators to include Nick Agar, Graeme Priddle, Melissa Engler, and Mark Palma, with local demonstrators Peggy Schmid, Frank Bowers, and Mike Peace. For more, visit gawoodturners.org, email symposium@gawoodturner.org, or follow Turning Southern Style Symposium on Facebook.

Hawaii

March 10, 11, 2018, Honolulu Woodturners Symposium, MRC Roofing, 1041 Puuwai Street, Honolulu. Featured demonstrators to include Ashley Harwood, Graeme Priddle, and Melissa Engler, with additional rotations by Hawaiian turners. For more, email symposium@honoluluwoodturners.org or call Rob Hale at (808) 722-5056.

March 1–23, 2018, Big Island Woodturners 20th Annual Woodturners Show, Wailoa Center, Hilo. An exhibition of local work; reception and silent auction March 2; demonstrations and activities on March 3rd, 10th, and 17th. For more, contact Dennis at dfhakes@icloud.com or visit bigislandwoodturners.org.

Illinois

August 3–5, 2018, Turn-On! Chicago 2018 Symposium, Conference Center at the University of Saint Mary of the Lake, Mundelein. A three-day woodturning symposium sponsored by the Chicago Woodturners, includes fifty demonstrator rotations plus hands-on pen turning, a tradeshow, all meals, banquet, and auction. Registration to open on the website by January 1, 2018. Demonstrators to include Rudolph Lopez, Betty Scarpino, Kip Christensen, Harvey Meyer, Jennifer Shirley, and others to be announced. For more, visit turnonchicago.com.

Massachusetts

October 21, 2017–March 11, 2018, *Gender Bend: Women in Wood, Men at the Loom*, Fuller Craft Museum, Brockton. A multimedia exhibition featuring male weavers alongside female woodturners—two populations that have been traditionally underrepresented in their fields. Co-curated by Jon Eric Riis and Tib Shaw. For more, visit fullercraft.org.

Minnesota

Ongoing, The AAW Gallery of Wood Art in Saint Paul features four to six woodturning exhibitions per year, including works from AAW's annual themed member and POP exhibitions. On continuous display is the "Touch This!" family-friendly education room. For more, visit galleryofwoodart.org or email Tib Shaw at tib@woodturner.org.

Missouri

October 11–14, 2018, The 6th Biennial Symposium of the Segmented Woodturners, Marriott St. Louis West, St. Louis. Three days of demonstrations, a banquet, instant gallery, raffle, and camaraderie with the some of the finest segmenters currently turning. Confirmed demonstrators include Malcolm Tibbetts, Robin Costelle, Tom Lohman, Bob Behnke, Lloyd Johnson, Al Miotke, and Michael Hosaluk. For more, contact Russ Braun at Russ@deforestinc.com or visit segmentedwoodturners.org.

New Hampshire

May 12, 2018, 9th Triennial New England Woodturning Symposium, Pinkerton Academy, Derry. Hosted by the Granite State Woodturners and the Guild of New Hampshire Woodworkers. Demonstrations by nationally known and regional woodturners. Symposium to feature a gallery display of work by demonstrators and attendees; a competition, displaying turnings by teenage students (first prize is a Rikon mini-lathe); and a vendor tradeshow. Hosts are also sponsoring an outreach program in five New Hampshire schools, with an extra demonstration day May 11 just for students. For more, visit gnhw.org.

New York

March 24, 25, 2018, 15th Annual Totally Turning Symposium, hosted by the Adirondack Woodturners Association, Saratoga Springs City Center, Saratoga Springs. Demonstrators to include Nick Agar, Mark Baker, Nick Cook, John Jordan, Barbara Dill, Ralph Mosher, John Franklin, Paul Petrie, Donna Zils Banfield, and Dave Gilbert. For more, visit totallyturning.com.

Pennsylvania

September 28–30, 2018, Third Annual Mid Atlantic Woodturning Symposium, Lancaster Marriott, Lancaster. Event includes a tradeshow and instant gallery. Demonstrators to include John Jordan, Malcolm Tibbetts, Art Liestman, Beth Ireland, Mark St. Leger, and Michael Kehs. For more, visit mawts.com.

Tennessee

January 25, 26, 2019, Tennessee Association of Woodturners' 31st Annual Woodturning Symposium, Marriott Hotel and Convention Center, Franklin. Featured demonstrators to include Al Stirt, Ashley Harwood, Jacques Vesery, and Todd Hoyer. Celebrating its 31st TAW Woodturning Symposium, this event is one of the longest-running and most successful regional symposia in the U.S. The 2019 Symposium will feature a tradeshow, instant gallery, people's choice awards, and Saturday night banquet with auction. Registration opens September 1, 2018. For more, visit tnwoodturners.org or email symposium@tnwoodturners.org. Vendors, contact Grant Hitt at vendorinfo@tnwoodturners.org.

Utah

May 10–12, 2018, Utah Woodturning Symposium, Utah Valley University Events Center, Orem. More than ninety rotations, penturners' rendezvous, gallery of woodturned art, banquet, live and silent auctions, expanded spouse program, and Dale Nish's favorite, "the great eggcup race." Sign up at utahwoodturning.com or call 801-809-8198.

Virginia

November 3, 4, 2018, Virginia Woodturning Symposium, 279 Expo Rd., Fishersville. Biennial event featuring forty-one rotations for turners of all levels. Featured demonstrators to be Cindy Drozda, Rudolph Lopez, Donna Zils Banfield, Nick Cook, Barry Gross, Frank Penta, Graeme Priddle, Joe Fleming, Mark St. Ledger, and Lyle Jamieson. For more, visit virginiawoodturners.com.

Washington

March 17, 2018, Northwest Washington Woodturners' 9th annual All Day Demo, A Day with Stuart Batty, Anacortes First Baptist Church, Anacortes. Stuart will demonstrate the many techniques he has developed and refined over more than thirty-six years as a professional woodturner and instructor. For complete info, visit nwwwt.org/BattyDemo.pdf, email info@nwwwt.org, or call Phil Kezele at 206-372-5123.

May 21–July 1, 2018, *New Horizons*, Allied Arts Gallery, Richland. Then, August 1–September 30, 2018, exhibition will move to the AAW Gallery of Wood Art, The Landmark Center, Saint Paul, Minnesota. An exhibition wherein artists were asked to produce work outside of the signature style they are known for. Participating artists include Dixie Biggs, Trent Bosch, Christian Burchard, Marilyn Campbell, Cindy Drozda, David Ellsworth, Melissa Engler, J. Paul Fennell, Douglas Fisher, Michael Foster, Dewey Garrett, Stephen Hatcher, Michael Hosaluk, John Jordan, Ed Kelle, Ron Layport, Kristin LeVier, Art Liestman, Steve Loar, Bill Luce, David Marks, John Mydock, Bill Ooms, Binh Pho (posthumously), Graeme Priddle, Merryll Saylan, Betty Scarpino, Mark Sfirri, Steve Sinner, Curt Theobald, Gerrit Van Ness, Jacques Vesery, Molly Winton, Andi Wolfe, and Malcolm Zander. For more, visit newhorizonswoodart.org.

Tips

Large blank positioner

Small air pump bags, or "wedges," are sometimes advertised for leveling cabinets and windows or as a locksmith tool, but I have found another use for them. Mounting large, heavy bowl blanks on the lathe can be a struggle, as it can be difficult to achieve the desired alignment with the lathe's spindle. A small air pump wedge makes centering a large piece of wood a lot easier. These pumps can be found online for less than $20.

—Jim Seyfried, Michigan

Share your turning ideas!

If we publish your tip, we'll pay you $35. Email your tips along with relevant photos or illustrations to editor@woodturner.org.

—Joshua Friend, Editor

Swiveling headstock modifications

A useful feature on some lathes is a rotating, or swiveling, headstock. A built-in detent lever is used to realign the headstock after it has been moved, but the detent lever on my lathe has come loose and no longer serves its purpose accurately. To fix this problem, I aligned the headstock and tailstock, then drilled an alignment hole for a pin that lets me get the headstock back to dead center every time (*Photo 1*).

I drilled a ¼" (6mm) hole about ½" (13mm) deep, centered on the seam where the headstock swivels. A ¼"-diameter pin slides into the hole when the headstock is in proper alignment. I affixed a cable to the pin so it won't get lost. Note that this pin is for attaining proper alignment; it is not meant to replace the headstock's tightening system.

I also modified the headstock lockpin for easier operation. I welded a ½" socket to the end of the lockpin, so I can use a ratcheting socket driver to turn it easily (*Photo 2*).

—Richard Moist, Missouri


1


2

Pen bushing organizer

I am new to woodturning and have started making pens. Of course, the various pen kits require different-sized bushings. To keep the pen bushings well organized, I store them in an inexpensive, multi-compartment box, which I found at a bargain store. I labeled the clear box lid above each compartment, so I can easily identify which bushings to use with the style of pen I'm going to turn.

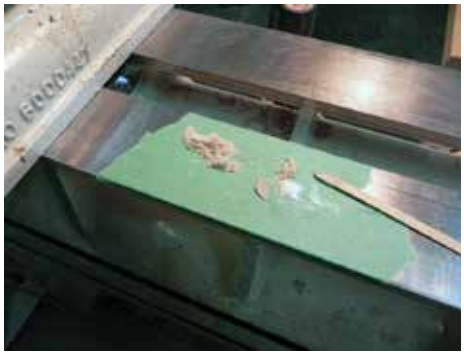
—Rosie Smiley, Texas

Chuck jaw storage

A challenge with having multiple sets of scroll chuck jaws is how to store them in a neat, organized way. I turned custom holders for each set of jaws from scrap wood, forming a recess sized for each set. The Oneway Stronghold chuck jaws have a pin on the fourth jaw; to accommodate this pin, I drilled a shallow hole in the holder and then labeled the jaws as shown.

—Dave Buchholz, New York

Disposable mixing surface



When mixing small batches of epoxy or shopmade wood filler (glue and wood dust), rather than hunting around my shop for a piece of scrap wood or other mixing surface, I now use a piece of wide masking tape instead. The tape serves as a disposable, impenetrable surface I can use right where I need it, like on the headstock or bed of my lathe.
—Ed Pretty, Canada

Magnetic lathe curtains

Cleaning the shop is never fun, but there is no reason not to make it easier. I hung several panels of magnetic screen mesh (one brand is called Magic Mesh®) from the ceiling to enclose my lathe area (*Photo 1*). The chips now hit the screen and drop straight down, so I no longer have to clean them from work surfaces or around tools and my grinder.

The magnets in the screen mesh allow me to open the screen easily, and they close automatically. The screen also allows for good air flow.

I placed the screen panels so that the magnetic openings allow access to frequently used areas, such as my tool rack and grinder (*Photo 2*). I closed the gap on the sides of adjoining panels by attaching binder clips. Be sure to mount the screens far enough away from your lathe and grinder so the material won't get caught up in moving parts.
—Don Doyle, Michigan


1


2

Accurate diameter measurement

I often need to measure the diameter of a workpiece after it is mounted and rough-turned on the lathe. I have tried using a caliper, then transferring the reading to a ruler, but that process feels cumbersome and sometimes my workpiece is larger than my caliper. I could lay a ruler on the nose of the tailstock's live center, but the live center's diameter would keep the ruler's edge off center—not by much, but enough to make me want a more accurate measurement.

I came up with a handy solution: a customized center-finder rule with a small, half-round cutout at the rule's "0" marking. The cutout fits over the nose of my live center, allowing the rule's edge to align with the true center of the workpiece and giving me an accurate measurement of its diameter. As my rule is made from aluminum, I roughed out the cutout at the bandsaw, then refined it with a small sanding drum in a rotary tool. You could just as easily use a hacksaw and file.

This rule modification works great for accurately measuring a tenon's diameter. It is also useful when laying out markings for a freehand-turned sphere, as you would transfer the rough cylinder's diameter to its length and add a center point. ■
—Pat Miller, Washington

A Pro's Guide to a **Simple Bowl**

Glenn Lucas

My Bowl Gouges

Here are the bowl gouges I use to turn a simple bowl, in order of use from top to bottom.

1. ⅝" Irish-grind bowl gouge, 55-degree bevel. Roughing and shaping cuts.
2. ½" Irish-grind bowl gouge, 45-degree bevel. Finishing cuts.
3. ⅜" bowl gouge, 45-degree bevel. Delicate cuts on rim and interior.
4. ⅝" bottom bowl gouge, 60-degree bevel. Inside bowl bottom.

Note that all of these tools have a secondary bevel, which reduces the likelihood that the tool's heel will rub and leave ridges on concave cuts.

When traveling around the world, I am often invited to critique the turned work of others, and I have always been especially keen to help new woodturners improve design and basic skills. One of the things I notice is that the newbie turner tends to over-complicate pieces by adding extra details, such as beads and other forms of decoration, which can prove difficult to cut cleanly, leaving a rough surface, even after sanding.

Shape can also add to the challenge, especially on the interior, so choosing a closed form such a calabash bowl is setting the bar very high. An open-form bowl with a simple but classic design can look great and prove a lot easier to turn and sand. When technique improves, then a little extra detail can enhance a bowl, particularly one with an uninteresting grain pattern.

I learned the hard way when it comes to shape, finish, and design. My mother has plenty of my early bowls on display to remind me of where I started. It is worth picking up a few books on pottery, a great source of shape inspiration that has helped me over the years.

Having turned bowls for just less than thirty years, I have come to the conclusion that simple is best. My ongoing bowl sales over these years have proved that this approach works well.

Getting started

When I make a bowl in production, I normally turn it in two stages. The first is to roughly shape an unseasoned piece of wood close to the shape of the finished form. I allow extra material for the bowl to distort as it dries in a kiln or by air and then re-turn the dry bowl at a later date. This can be a little disheartening for the beginner, who just wants to get turning straight away, rather than

waiting for wood to dry. The advantage of working this way is that it is easy to shape wet wood and also is so much cheaper than kiln-dried material, especially in larger sizes.

For this project, the bowl blank is 3" (8cm) thick and 9" (23cm) in diameter, cut round on the bandsaw. This size blank is easy to source dry so you can start and finish the project in one day. I selected a piece of Irish cherry and inspected it for defects, avoiding wood with cracks, loose knots, and ingrown bark, as these can lead to voids in the finished piece—not ideal if the bowl is to be used for food.

I always wear a full faceshield, and most of the time I wear a respirator to protect my lungs, even when not sanding. It is also very important that you sharpen your tools before you start the project and just before you make the finishing cuts. The tools I use for this simple bowl are shown in the *My Bowl Gouges sidebar.*

Mount the bowl blank

The first step is to mount the bowl blank on the lathe using either a screw chuck or a faceplate. A large faceplate offers a lot of security and less vibration because there is broader support behind the cuts being made (*Photo 1*). I use sheet metal screws that are about 1¼" (30mm) long. I then make the decision as to which side of the blank will receive the faceplate. If the wood has nice figuring, I try to make sure it is not turned away. If it has minor defects or bark inclusions, I try to position the blank such that I can remove them while shaping the outside. For the project in this article, I decided to mount the faceplate closest to where the bark had been, leading to pleasing oval growth rings appearing at the bottom of the bowl when the interior is finished. This mounting is an example of "faceplate," or sidegrain, orientation, with the woodgrain running perpendicular to the lathe bed.

Attach faceplate

Mount a faceplate to the turning blank using screws. The surface that receives the faceplate will become the top of the bowl, so the screw holes will be turned away later.

Beginner tip: mark the red zone

A red line down the tool's flute serves as a reminder of the risk of a catch if you see the line facing upward.

True the blank

True the bowl blank, first the outside edge, then the face.

I set the speed of the lathe to about 800 rpm and increase it to a maximum of 1200 rpm as the bowl gets lighter for the finishing cuts.

Begin shaping the outside

The first tool I use is a ⅝" (16mm) bowl gouge sharpened with my own version of an Irish grind. It has a 55-degree bevel angle, which is easy to achieve on any of the popular sharpening jigs. Use a red marker to draw a line down the flute (*Photo 2*). This will help remind the new turner that red means danger—if you see the red line as you make a ▸

cut, then there is a chance of a bad tool catch.

It is helpful if all surfaces of the bowl blank are trued up prior to shaping, to allow for measurements to be applied. Truing up the rim, or outer edge, first, I rotate the tool in the direction of the cut (*Photo 3*), checking that the red line is not visible from above. I then push the tool away from me, riding the bevel on the heel.

Move the toolrest to the bottom of the blank to true up that surface. I pull the gouge towards me (*Photo 4*), pressing firmly onto the toolrest and not against the wood, as this can lead to vibration from contact with the uneven surface. Standing with my right foot forward, I lean backwards as the tool travels along the toolrest. The toolrest height is also important; adjust it so the tool cuts on center.

From the bottom outside edge, measure 2" (5cm) in on both adjacent surfaces and draw a line (*Photos 5, 6*). Adjust the toolrest so it lines up with the two pencil lines, and then remove the wood in this area. Drop the tool handle to about 45 degrees, allowing for a shear cutting action, which is easier on the wood, your body, and the lathe (*Photo 7*). There is a good reason why the

Mark and rough outside shape

Draw pencil lines 2" in from the edge on both surfaces, then turn away the wood between those lines.

Lay out a tenon

Mark the depth of the tenon, then transfer the chuck jaw diameter to the bowl using dividers.

Form the tenon

Remove the material next to the tenon area.

A pointed scraper ground to an angle matching your dovetail jaws (in the author's case, 77 degrees) easily forms correct angle on the tenon. Chuck jaws without a dovetail profile call for a non-dovetailed tenon.

French guillotine had a cutting edge of approximately 45 degrees—less resistance in use, allowing for a more efficient cut.

Form a tenon

Measuring in ¼" (6mm) for the depth of tenon (*Photo 8*), I then choose a chuck and jaws that will allow the base size to be about one-third of the overall rim diameter. Measure the chuck jaws when they are almost closed (*Photo 9*), in a position close to a perfect circle. This allows for a really secure grip and full contact all around on the tenon, rather than opening up a smaller set of jaws, which would only contact the wood on eight points. When taking the measurement of the jaws with the dividers, allow an extra ⅛" (3mm).

Transfer the chuck jaw size to the bowl, making a light mark with the left point of the dividers (*Photo 10*). Ensure the right point does not touch the wood, which is moving upwards and could send the dividers flying, causing injury. The right-hand side is lifted off the toolrest, so the measurement is made through the centerline. A little trial and error is necessary until the line scribed is the same dimension as the dividers.

The gouge is then pushed in several passes toward the headstock to remove material around the tenon, always cutting into sidegrain (*Photo 11*). The tool I use to precisely form the tenon is a diamond-point scraper, shaped to 77 degrees to match the dovetail jaws of my chuck (*Photos 12, 13*). Remember that the shape and angle of the jaws on the different chuck brands will vary from profiled jaws with serrations to smooth dovetails jaws. The angles of the various dovetails can range from 75 degrees to 80 degrees. To achieve security and accuracy in my production business, my preference has always been to use dovetail jaws, which have proved to be very secure if the tenon is shaped correctly.

Finish shaping the outside

With the tenon formed, measure and mark the width of the base, approximately one-third the diameter of the rim. Then refine the outside shape of the bowl, leaving the base area intact (*Photo 14*). I create an ogee at the bottom and a convex shape towards the rim. Once I am happy with the shape, I make a push cut from the base to the rim using a ½" (13mm) bowl gouge sharpened to a 45-degree angle (*Photo 15*). This cut can prove challenging for many woodturners. Alternatively, you could use light shearing, or "shear-scraping," cuts to give you a smooth finish. The shearing cut is made with the left wing of the tool, keeping the handle down towards the floor in the 45-degree position (*Photo 16*). Raising the toolrest will make this cut easier, especially on smaller lathes, where the tool handle may come in contact with the locking levers.

It is not always easy to see if you have created a pleasing shape when the bowl is mounted sideways on the lathe, so either screw off the faceplate to check if you are satisfied with the profile in the upright position, or just rest your hand on the stationary bowl to feel how the shape flows.

Wet-sanding with oil

The outside of the bowl is now ready to be sanded, but first I will apply a coat of oil with the lathe off. I am opting to wet-sand using oil, which is very efficient and produces no dust. It is important, if using this sanding process, to work with oil that does not cure quickly, such as a walnut oil or a mineral-oil-based, food-safe finish. The abrasive will last a long time, provided it is dipped occasionally in the oil. I use a flexible, cloth-backed abrasive ▸

Shape and refine outside

Final shaping with a ⅝" bowl gouge.

A refining bevel-rubbing push cut with a ½" bowl gouge. As an alternative, a shear-scraping cut also refines the wood surface.

Hollowing steps: V-groove, rotate, pull, repeat

Mark circles on the face of the blank about ¼" apart using a pencil. With the gouge flute rolled away from you, push to form a small V-groove. This helps prevent the tool from skating to the left.

Rotate the flute up towards you, but not so far that you see the red line.

Pull the tool handle towards you to guide the cutting edge deeper into the wood.

Repeat the hollowing cuts, working from center to rim. The steps that are formed will make it easier to start subsequent cuts as you hollow the bowl.

with grits 120, 180, 240, and 320. When sanding, I hold the abrasive firmly with my right hand and use my left hand for additional support. Slow the lathe speed, and let the lathe do the work.

Hollow the bowl

Remove the faceplate from the bowl blank and remount the blank in the chuck using the tenon turned earlier. I use my thumb to apply pressure to firmly seat the dovetail tenon into the jaws. I then use both hands to tighten the chuck.

True up the face of the bowl, then mark with a pencil about ½" in from the edge to indicate the rim thickness. Add more lines to the face, about ¼" apart; these circles will help guide a new turner through the sequence of cuts.

The hollowing process can be a little daunting at first, for fear of a tool catch that could lead to the bowl coming of the lathe. I avoid using the tailstock for support during this process, as it hinders the movement of the tool. A carefully formed dovetail tenon will hold the bowl securely.

Three steps for hollowing

I begin hollowing with the ⅝" bowl gouge. There are three simple steps to remember here: 1) make a V-groove, 2) rotate the tool counterclockwise, and 3) pull the handle towards your body, standing right foot forward.

1. *Make a V-groove* by facing the flute, or red line, away from you, keeping the handle horizontal, and pushing into the wood (*Photo 17*). This means you are cutting into sidegrain when making heavy cuts and pushing the piece back into the chuck, which does not put much stress on the tenon, leading to less vibration.

2. *Rotate the tool towards you,* opening up the flute, but stop just before the red is visible from above (*Photo 18*).

3. *Pull the handle towards your body,* while pushing the tool firmly onto the toolrest with your left hand (*Photo 19*).

Repeat this process, working in steps, from the center out towards the rim. This process will leave a series of grooves about 1½" (38mm) deep at center to about 1¼" deep at the rim, stepped up like stadium seating (*Photo 20*). Position the toolrest so it angles into the bowl and then repeat the process, which now becomes easier, as the steps are

Refine rim and interior

The author uses a ⅜" bowl gouge to refine the rim and take light, cleaning passes inside the bowl.

Bottom gouge

A gouge with a 60-degree bevel angle is better suited to reach the bottom cleanly. The fulcrum point on the toolrest remains close to the rim. Don't push the blade along the toolrest with the left hand, but rather push the handle from behind.

Refine with a scraper

If the inside surface requires further refinement, a heavy half-round scraper can be used. Visualize the wood coming to the scraper, rather than pushing the scraper into the wood.

already in place to start the next series of cuts.

As the hollowing progresses, it is important to keep a frequent check on the wall thickness using calipers, aiming for about ¾" (19mm) all around, which leaves enough material to make several light finishing cuts.

The final cuts

Using a ⅜" (10mm) bowl gouge, I refine the rim, which I "roll" inward before softening the outside edge (*Photo 21*). I then angle the toolrest into the bowl and take several light cuts undercutting the ½" rim, reducing the wall thickness below it to about ⅜", as shown in *Photo 22*.

These cuts are very fine, resulting in no tearout when done correctly. However, this small-diameter tool is prone to vibration if the toolrest is not kept close and will not reach the bottom of the bowl successfully. This is where my 60-degree bottom bowl gouge comes into play. The steeper bevel angle will remain in contact with the wood as you cut toward the center, without the tool's shaft rubbing against the rim (*Photo 23*). The handle of this tool is kept in a horizontal position as my left hand pushes the tool down on the toolrest. Make several light passes, and each time bring the handle close to your side for stability as the cut nears the bottom.

With experience, all of this can be done successfully without using a scraper, but making light passes with a scraper will also result in a satisfactory finish. Let the wood come to the scraper, rather than forcing the tool into the wood (*Photo 24*). Frequent visits to your sharpening system will give the best results.

Repeat the wet-sanding process on the interior and then burnish with a small cotton cloth.

Remove the tenon

All that remains is to remove the tenon and shape the base. I usually use a vacuum chuck in production, but this can be expensive for a new woodturner. Most chuck manufacturers produce a bowl-reversing plate that will hold the bowl while you shape the base. The speed of the lathe needs to be reduced to about 500 rpm (*Photo 25*). It is a good idea to read the manufacturer's instructions before using these jaws.

The final step is to sign the piece, and it is ready for its new home. ■

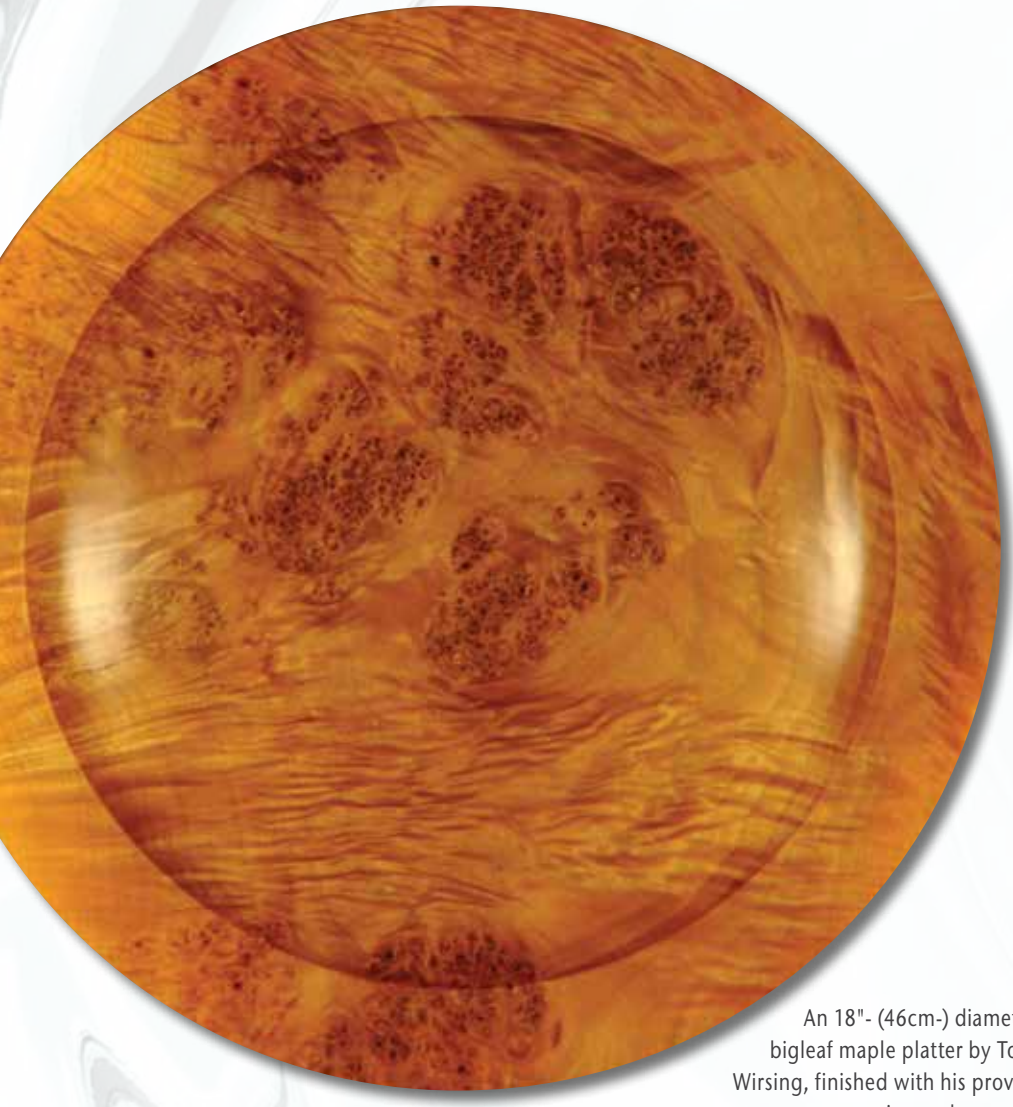
Glenn Lucas has been a full-time production turner since 1995. With a series of successful educational DVDs and a signature tool range, he teaches technique from his woodturning school in Ireland and around the world at symposia and events. For more, visit glennlucas.com.

Remove tenon, finish base

One way to reverse-mount a bowl to turn away the tenon and finalize the base is to use large plate jaws, available from most chuck manufacturers.

A Gallery-Quality FINISH

Tom Wirsing



An 18"- (46cm-) diameter bigleaf maple platter by Tom Wirsing, finished with his proven recipe and process.

I have become known for my platters turned from highly figured bigleaf maple, with a satin-smooth, hand-rubbed, gallery-quality finish. I like a finish that is very clear, so it reveals the beauty of the wood. I prefer the finish to be quite smooth, but not too shiny, so it reflects light in a soft sheen. People often ask how I finish my work; here's how I do it.

Surface preparation

A gallery-quality finish is unforgiving. The slightest imperfection will stick out like a sore thumb. So the workpiece must be absolutely smooth and free of any tearout or flaws before a finish is applied. Attention to detail, particularly when sanding, is essential. I typically hand-sand my work to 400-grit abrasive with the lathe running slowly. I then remove the workpiece from the lathe and rub it down with a very slightly dampened 500-grit Abralon pad (a foam-backed abrasive made by Mirka). I rub the pad radially (perpendicular to the scratch pattern left by the prior abrasive), completely removing even the finest scratches. I inspect the workpiece carefully at this point to ensure the wood surface is absolutely smooth.

Recipe and process

I then finish the workpiece using the following steps:

1 Mix equal parts of pure tung oil, polyurethane varnish, and odorless mineral spirits in a clean, airtight container. Any high-quality, oil-based (not water-based) interior polyurethane varnish is acceptable. Use clear varnish—avoid the semi-gloss variety, as it contains flatting agents, typically ground stone, which cloud and compromise the finish. Do not use exterior (spar) varnishes, as they do not dry as hard as high-quality interior polyurethane varnishes.

Safety Note!

Take care to dispose of finish-soaked rags and paper towels in a safe manner. Rags soaked with oil-based finishes such as varnish pose a fire-hazard risk due to the possibility of spontaneous combustion. Heat results as the finish oxidizes, and that heat has to be allowed to dissipate safely. Oily rags should be spread out in a well-ventilated area and allowed to dry before being disposed of, or placed in an airtight, fireproof container. Never store oily rags in a pile.

Odorless mineral spirits is less "smelly" than regular mineral spirits, and while both are toxic and should be used with nitrile gloves in a well-ventilated area, odorless mineral spirits is more pleasant to use.

2 Flood the workpiece with the mixed finish and continue to recoat it until the wood ceases to soak in more finish. This may take twenty to thirty minutes. Keep the entire workpiece continuously "wet" with finish. Once the workpiece ceases to absorb more finish, wipe it completely dry with rags or paper towels. Continue to wipe the surface periodically, until no more finish leaches to the surface. If any finish leaches to the surface and is allowed to dry, it can be very difficult to rub off the shiny spots later. Set the piece aside to dry for several days.

3 Recoat the workpiece with the finishing mix, applying it with a 500-grit Abralon pad. Scrub the finish on with the pad, rubbing vigorously across the scratch pattern created when the workpiece was originally sanded (that is, scrubbing radially). Immediately wipe the workpiece completely dry. Wipe it again in a few minutes if any finish leaches to the surface. Set it aside to dry overnight.

Mix equal parts of pure tung oil, polyurethane varnish, and odorless mineral spirits.

4 Recoat the workpiece as many times as necessary to get the desired surface texture, applying each additional coat in the same manner using an Abralon pad. At this point, it is better to apply too many coats rather than too few. Don't worry about the finish getting too shiny, as you can control the sheen in the final step.

5 The reflectivity, or sheen, of the final finish can be controlled by the fineness of the Abralon pad. If a more reflective, glossier, finish is desired, use a finer pad (1000 grit or higher) for the final coats. If you find the finish is too shiny, once the finish is completely dry and hard (a few days after the last coat is applied), rub the workpiece down with a water-dampened Abralon pad to produce the desired degree of reflectiveness. A water-dampened 500-grit pad will substantially reduce the reflectivity of the final finish. I find that a final rubdown with a water-dampened 1000-grit pad produces a beautiful soft sheen.

Once completely cured, the tung oil and urethane finish is food-safe. The finished item can be recoated periodically over its service life. ■

Tom Wirsing is a woodturner and furniture builder. He has demonstrated and taught at many symposia and AAW chapters across the U.S., Canada, and Australia. Tom is a past director and president of the AAW and lives with his wife Melinda on a ranch in the foothills of the Colorado Rocky Mountains. For more, visit thomaswirsing.com.


Apply each coat of finish with an Abralon pad, scrubbing vigorously in a radial pattern.


The reflectivity, or sheen, of this finish can be controlled by rubbing out the finish with the appropriate-grit abrasive pad.

A Word About Storage

I like Abralon pads because their abrasive stays bonded to the pad, even if it is left in the finish indefinitely. All air must be squeezed from the pad before leaving it in the finish. If any air is left in the pad, the finish will harden around the pad in the container, destroying the pad and shortening the shelf life of the finish. This finishing recipe, if stored in a well-sealed container, has a long shelf life.

A Different Take
ON BOTTLE STOPPERS

Pete Blair

In today's kitchens, many types of bottles can use a stopper. From olive oil to vinegar, wine bottles are only one possibility. I have made bottle stoppers utilizing everything from high-quality American-made parts to off-shore plastic, "stainless" steel that wasn't stainless at all, and natural cork. I wanted my stoppers to be relatively inexpensive to make, while still unique. In addition, typical wine bottle stoppers often make bottles so tall, they no longer fit on my refrigerator shelves, so I designed mine to have a low profile.

As a frugal woodturner, I looked for a less-expensive way to make the age-old stopper and wondered why natural and synthetic corks were so prevalent. I believe the answer is that they are a throwaway item and can be purchased very reasonably in bulk. A quick online search for T-top corks reveals a variety of sources. Many sizes are available; I bought 100 of the standard wine-bottle size with plastic T-tops (*Photo 1*). These cost about fifty cents each, with the price dropping as the quantity increases.

T-top corks can vary in length and diameter of both the cork and the plastic top, so all dimensions shown in *Figure 1* are approximate. Adjust your stopper dimensions to the particular units you buy.

Prepare stopper blank

Begin by cutting a project blank approximately 2" (5cm) square, or a little longer than that, depending on what shape you plan to turn. Grain can run lengthwise or across the blank, but remember that endgrain can be trickier to finish.

Based on the diameter of your plastic T-top, bore a hole in the blank (mine was 1 3/16", or 30mm, in diameter). This hole will be used first to mount the blank on a jam chuck, then to accept the T-top in the finished piece. The depth of this hole should be just a little deeper than the length of the T-top and cork to ensure the finished stopper sits evenly on its base, not on the protruding end of the cork, when placed on a flat surface. If the wood is square or easily gripped in a chuck, drill the hole on the lathe (*Photo 2*). If not, use a drill press, holding odd-shaped pieces with a clamp (*Photo 3*). After boring the hole, finish-sand the end around the drilled hole, sanding by hand if drilled on a drill press.

Turn a jam chuck

For holding the stopper blank on the lathe, turn a jam chuck, held in your chuck. Turn a spigot sized to fit snugly into the hole you drilled in the blank, as shown in *Figure 2* and *Photo 4*. The jam chuck should have a positive tenon and shoulder for the scroll chuck to grip and register against, and a positive shoulder for the stopper blank to register against.

Put a cork in it

1

T-top corks are readily available online. Common sizes fit wine bottles and specialty beer bottles, with a wide variety available.

You will also bore two concentric holes in it—a ¾" (19mm) hole deep enough to hold the cork and a ½" (13mm) hole all the way through, to help if the cork gets stuck.

Shape the stopper

Mount the drilled stopper blank on the jam chuck and bring up the tailstock for support as you shape it. I use a washer or plastic spacer on my live center when I need to use the whole length of the blank and wish to avoid damaging the wood with the live center (*Photos 5, 6*). But if I have enough wood to waste, I prefer to use the live center as usual.

Wood tends to change shape, and sometimes the fit on the jam chuck is not precise. I have noticed if I drill with the same bit into both endgrain and sidegrain, the fit is usually a little different. If the fit on the jam chuck is a bit loose, simply wrap a little masking tape around the spigot to take up the slack.

Turn the blank to your desired shape, leaving a small amount of material at the tailstock end. I sand to 600 or 800 grit at this point. Masking tape secures the partially finished blank on the jam chuck, allowing me to remove the tailstock and carefully complete the shape with fine, gentle cuts followed by final sanding (*Photo 7*).

If you want to apply a finish on the lathe, this is the time to do it. I use an oil/urethane blend, but cyanoacrylate (CA) glue works well, too.

Any number of turned shapes and designs can be employed. See *Wine Barrel Stopper sidebar* for my take on a themed version.

Now the holes in the jam chuck come into play. With the stopper blank removed, press a T-top cork into the larger hole. Spin it on the lathe slowly and rough up the plastic top with an abrasive. I cut a few grooves around the edges, as well (*Photo 8*). This helps form a better bond when gluing the T-top into the stopper blank. The jam chuck also allows me to later remount the completed stopper to finish or make minor adjustments. ▶

The T-top stopper concept

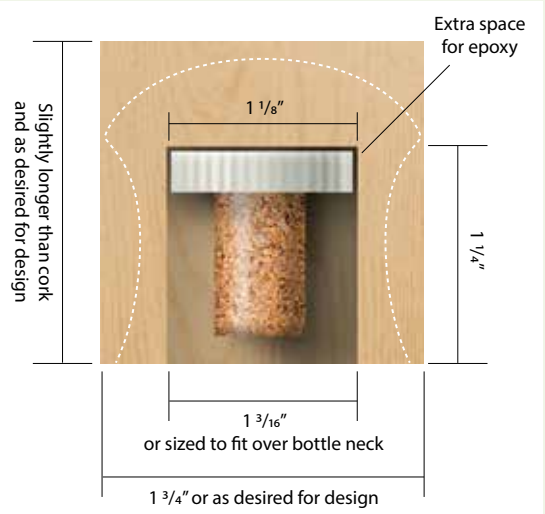


Figure 1. The purchased T-top is glued into a recess in the bottle stopper body. Actual measurements should be based on your T-top corks.

Illustration: Robin Springett

Drill stopper blank

Stopper blanks can be of any wood, oriented for endgrain or facegrain. Holding the blank in a scroll chuck, bore the main hole using a Forstner bit. This hole should be slightly deeper than the T-top with cork.

Irregularly shaped blanks can be drilled on the drill press. A piece of masking tape marked with a felt pen acts as a depth indicator on the drill bit.

Custom jam chuck holds stopper blank

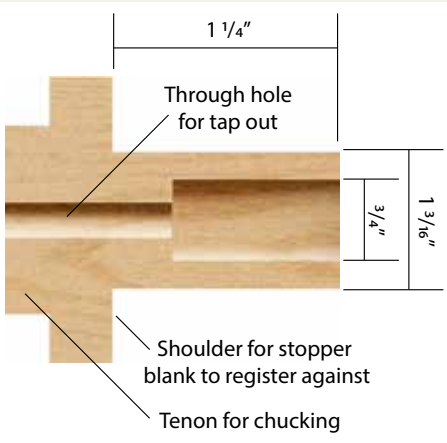


Figure 2, photo 4. Turn a custom jam chuck. The larger-diameter hole accepts the cork when gently roughing up the T-top plastic for gluing, and the smaller through-hole allows for a tap-out bar to aid in cork and/or stopper blank removal if necessary.

Illustration: Robin Springett

Turn an insertion jig

I find it useful to turn a dedicated insertion jig for holding and centering the T-top in the stopper blank during glue-up (*Figure 3*). To ensure proper alignment, the spigot on this jig must fit smoothly and without force into the hole in the stopper, so turn this diameter carefully. I then cut four shallow slots around the perimeter of the spigot to allow air to escape as the T-top is pressed into the stopper body. These notches are shown on the *front view, Figure 3*. I use an old hacksaw blade to create these slots, but a chisel would work fine as well.

Part the insertion jig from the waste-block. Use a parting tool until there is a small amount of wood remaining, then finish with a handsaw with the lathe off (*Photo 9*).

Glue in T-top cork

Mix up a small amount of epoxy (or use another glue that works on plastic and wood). You need only a little. Carefully use a mixing stick to apply the epoxy to *only* the bottom of the

Wine Barrel Stopper

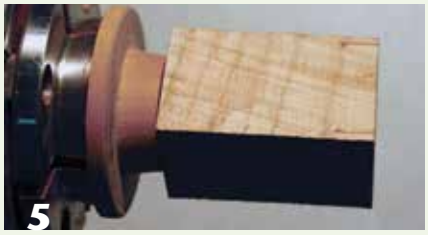
(1) Form a gently curved barrel shape, leaving three raised, wrap-around "bands." Adjust the toolrest height so its edge is parallel to the central axis, and use the toolrest edge as a guide to mark the staves, first in pencil, then in marker. Use an indexing wheel to space the staves evenly, or determine and measure the spacing manually *(Photo a)*.

(2) With the tailstock removed and the blank taped securely on the jam chuck, form a recess in the end of the barrel for the "top" detail *(Photo b)*.

(3) Burn in the lines dividing the staves *(Photo c)*.

(4) Color the bands with a permanent marker or burner. Then sand and finish. Barrels are typically pretty rustic, so don't spend a lot of time sanding *(Photo d)*.

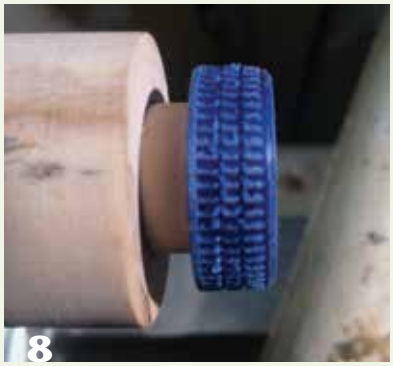
Mount and turn stopper blank



The stopper blank is mounted on the jam chuck spigot. Bring up the tailstock to support the blank during turning. Turn the blank to your desired shape, then sand it, leaving a slight nub where the tailstock supports the piece.

Remove the tailstock to finish turning the very top of the stopper. If your blank lacks a good, snug fit on the jam chuck, masking tape helps to secure it. Take gentle final cuts, then sand the end. If the stopper is stuck on the jam chuck, insert a tap-out bar in the through-hole to nudge it free.

Rough up plastic T-top before gluing



Use the larger hole in the jam chuck to hold the cork while you score the sides and top of the plastic T-top. These grooves will provide additional strength for the glue bond.

stopper hole. Try to avoid getting glue on the inside walls of the hole, but a little squeeze-out around the plastic T-top and its grooves is desirable.

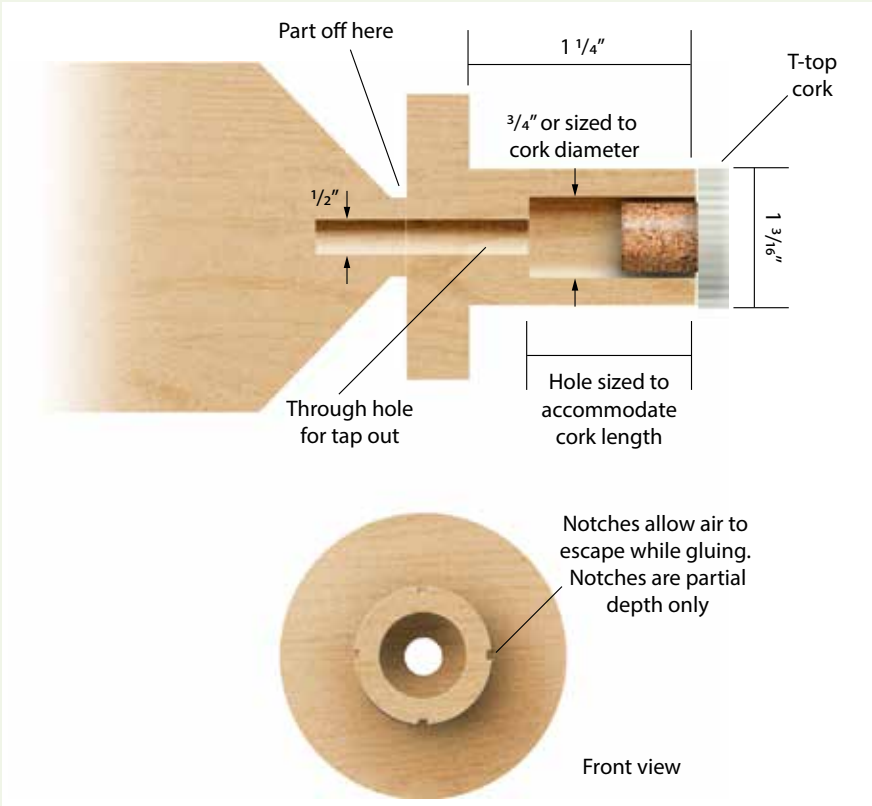
I then use the insertion jig to hold the T-top cork, center it in the stopper blank, and ensure it makes secure contact with the glue. Insert the T-top only part way into the insert plug to ensure it will reach all the way to the epoxy at the bottom of the hole. Then, using the insertion jig as a holder and positioner, push the T-top fully into the stopper (*Photos 10-12*). Once the epoxy sets, remove the insert jig from the stopper. Any difficulty in removing it can be resolved using the through-hole and a tap-out bar to nudge it free.

Final thoughts

These bottle stoppers are durable, functional, and inexpensive to make. They don't add much height, so bottles can be stored vertically in the refrigerator. The corks have a snug fit, so bottles can be laid on their sides without leaking. Many sizes of T-top corks are available, and best of all, there are endless design opportunities, both in turned shapes and embellishments. ■

Pete Blair was first introduced to woodturning in high school shop class in the 1960s. Having completed a professional career, he has now returned to the lathe and spends many of his waking hours turning or thinking about what he wants to turn next. Presently, Pete is exploring ways to allow his artistic side to emerge, such as adding detail, color, and texture to his work.

Turn a dedicated insertion jig



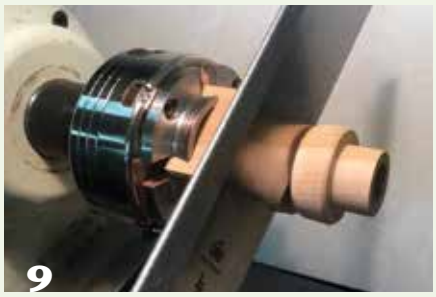


Figure 3, photo 9. The insert plug looks very much like the jam chuck, but has a completely different purpose: to center the T-top in the stopper during gluing. A smaller through-hole helps in removing the insert plug from the stopper body once the T-top has been glued into place. Note the turned jig is parted or cut off the wasteblock prior to use.

Illustration: Robin Springett

Put it all together

Use the insertion jig as a holder for the T-top cork during glue-up. Insert the cork into the jig, allowing the plastic to extend a bit, apply glue to the bottom of the hole in the stopper, then insert the T-top in the stopper blank. Remove the insertion jig only after the glue has set.

Turning METAL ACCENTS

Pat Miller

The aluminum finial and ball feet on this box were turned on a wood lathe using the same type of high-speed steel tools used on wood.

I started turning wood in 2010. Shortly thereafter, my wife Karen started decorating some of my turnings, bringing her fine-arts degree to life and prompting me to look beyond the log. Our work has evolved to include pyrography, carving, color, and the tasteful addition of non-wood materials. As a life-long metalworking hobbyist, I found myself looking at the contents of my bin of small aluminum pieces and wondering how they might look in a turned wood project.

Special safety considerations

The same eye protection we use for turning wood should be considered a minimum for working with metal. Same for lung protection when the sanding begins. It's important to note that metal shavings are much stronger and sharper than wood shavings. A single sharp strand of metal can slice a finger and just a few can pull your hand into harm's way. If a "bird's nest" of shavings forms around your turning (*Photo 1*), stop the lathe and carefully remove the mass and drop it into a waste can. Sweep your area before you walk away, as the metal strands are clingy and will soon make their way out of your shop and into your living space. Wood chips are annoying, but metal shavings pose more immediate dangers.

Working with aluminum

As far as metals go, aluminum is "woodworker-friendly." There are a number of aluminum alloys that have good machinability, strength, and corrosion resistance—all characteristics that are important to the more typical applications of aluminum in industry. The most common alloy is called 6061 and is more than likely what you'll find at the hardware store. It is easily cut on a bandsaw with a standard woodcutting blade (*Photo 2*); it can be sanded, filed, and drilled into easily, and it turns well on a wood lathe with regular high-speed steel (HSS) tools. Aluminum is strong and stiff and can be polished to a chrome-like shine. All of these characteristics make aluminum a great material for turning beautiful, contrasting finials, feet, knobs, or other accents that can adorn a turned wood project.

Removing aluminum from a rotating bar is slower than removing wood. Hand-held tools obviously cannot provide the cutting power of a captured cutter and a power feed, like on a metal lathe, but material can be removed surprisingly quickly as you gain some experience and confidence.

Choose a piece of round aluminum stock that is as close to the

largest diameter you plan to turn, without being undersized. While we can quickly turn the edges off a square block of the hardest wood and reduce its diameter just as fast, this is not so with aluminum. Start with a piece that is close in diameter, and use a slow feed rate while turning it.

Metal on a wood lathe

I use a standard four-jaw chuck with jaws that provide a good grip on small-diameter workpieces. (For an alternative chucking method, see *Collet Chucks sidebar.*) As with turning wood, keep the tailstock in place whenever possible during the cutting process. Compared with turning a finial from a hardwood, turning metal requires more tool pressure, so the tailstock provides valuable support. Use a center finder and mark the center point on the end of the metal stock, then use a punch to make a dimple where the tip of the live center can ride. As an alternative, use a center drill in a drill chuck mounted in the tailstock to form a resting point for the live center (*Photos 3, 4*).

Start with snug tailstock pressure as you "rough-turn" the metal stock (*Photo 5*). The tailstock pressure can be backed off a bit as the finial becomes smaller in diameter and your cuts less aggressive. Too much tailstock pressure on a small diameter turning can bend the finial and pop the live center out of the dimple. This isn't always a death knell for the project, as it is possible to gently tap the end of the finial carefully and adjust it back into alignment, but this is time-consuming and best to avoid. As the cuts become less aggressive and more in line with the ways of the lathe, you can simply remove the tailstock. A bit of practice will help you determine when you can do this.

My favorite tool for cutting aluminum is a ⅜" (10mm) detail gouge sharpened to nearly a point, as shown in *Photo 6*. This same tool is also one of my favorites for turning wood, so I simply tried it first and liked the result. Cutting metal is nearly always done with a small contact point, whereas cutting wood can be done with much more cutting surface in contact. This fact is even more important when using hand-held tools (as opposed to captured tools on a metal lathe). A firm, secure hold on the tool is essential to clean cutting, and maintaining small cutting contact makes this easier (less "grabby"). I have also made cutters from 3⁄16" (5mm) square tool steel in rounded and pointed profiles ▸

Hazardous "bird's nest"

1 Metal shavings are sharp and can easily slice into skin. Don't let a nest of shavings build up, and promptly sweep up around the lathe.

Working aluminum

2 Aluminum alloys like the commonly available 6061 can be worked with most woodworking tools and machines. Note the round bar stock being held safely in a jig for cutting on a bandsaw.

Center drill at tailstock end

3 Make a small indent, or dimple, at the tailstock end to accept the point of the live center. A center drill or punch works well.

4

Subtle changes in tool position and feed rate will allow you to go from making chips to cutting long spring-like spirals, much like those produced on a metal lathe.

that can be mounted in the straight shaft of a hollowing tool (*Photo 7*).

Carbide tools can also be used to cut aluminum, but in my experience they do not offer any performance advantage over HSS. Steel cutters can easily be reshaped to any profile you require, whereas carbide requires a rather expensive additional cutter for each profile.

I present the tool level, or horizontal, and on-center to start. Keep the tool perpendicular to the surface being cut and apply firm pressure. By habit, I cut from the tailstock to the headstock, though this practice isn't as critical as when cutting wood. There is no grain, per se, in aluminum to affect the cut, so it is possible to cut in either direction. When cutting finials in wood, it is important to work from the tailstock to the headstock, keeping as much wood as possible near the chuck for support. The workpiece, such as a finial, is cut and sanded in sections; the general practice is to work back toward the base, or bottom, and avoid touching the finished sections at all costs. Being considerably stronger than wood, aluminum is more forgiving in this regard, and I occasionally find myself going back to clean up a detail at the tailstock end. Keeping the tailstock in place as long as possible and remembering to reduce tool pressure also helps if you need to do this.

This might be a good time to note that the waste material between the end of the work and the live center point should be kept as small in diameter and length as possible. The added mass of extra waste material can cause a fine-diameter finial, for example, to bend and provides no additional support.

As with turning wood, there is no substitute for practice in turning metal. Subtle changes in tool position and feed rate will allow you to go from making chips to cutting long spring-like spirals, much like those produced on a metal lathe. I tend to push the tool tip into the metal to a depth of about 1/32" (.8mm), then push along the length of the piece. Don't be afraid to apply quite a bit more pressure than turning wood requires. You can steer the tip of the tool to produce the same lovely curves available when turning wood. This is a big advantage that hand-held tools have over the captured tools of a metal lathe, which can only make straight cuts and to some degree constant-radius curves.

Polishing and parting

Once you have turned the final shape to your satisfaction, you can begin to sand and polish your turned metal part. I use emery cloth for sanding and start with 180 grit and progress through 320 grit. Then I move on to wet/dry sandpaper, progressing through 2000 grit or higher, and finish with an automotive aluminum polish.

Begin turning

5

Use snug tailstock support at first, then back off that pressure as you reduce the diameter.

Cutting tools

6

7

My favorite tools for turning soft metals on the wood lathe are a small spindle gouge and a shopmade high-speed steel cutter mounted in a straight hollowing-tool shaft.

Collet Chucks

Since my start in turning metal on a wood lathe, I have discovered collet chucks, which seem better suited for turning brass and also work fine with aluminum. I am sure there are more technical terms than "grabby," but that is how brass acts when being turned with hand-held tools. The firmer, more secure grip that collet chucks afford on round stock makes turning brass much easier.

As I don't turn brass in diameters larger than 1" (25mm), I am now using and recommend collet chucks for turning brass. Sizes ER11 through ER40 collet chucks are available with #2 Morse taper shanks. Many modern wood lathes have this taper in the headstock shaft.

Secured with a drawbar, the appropriate collet chuck will hold material firmly and in nearly perfect concentricity.

The more secure grip of a collet chuck is useful when turning brass.

Polish to a chrome-like shine

Aluminum can be sanded much like wood and takes a nice shine when buffed with an automotive polish.

Parting off

Final removal of the workpiece should be done with a hacksaw with the lathe off.

This provides a mirror-like shine (*Photos 8, 9*).

If you are turning a finial, you would turn away the small waste at the tailstock end only after the piece has been polished. As we are leaving the tailstock engaged, some care must be exercised. At this point, most of the tailstock pressure has been relieved, so only a bit of contact remains. It is important to cut as close to parallel to the finial as possible, as there will be little if any support for the tool pressure perpendicular to the rotation. As the end is almost finished, I remove the tailstock and use a finger on the back of the piece for support, much like turning a delicate wood finial. Go slowly and the tiny waste piece will soon part off, leaving a nice sharp point on the finial. Any marks or even form imperfections can be dealt with using 180-grit emery cloth.

The least exciting part of the project involves reducing the diameter of the piece to make the stem, or tenon, that will fit into the wooden lid. Often the diameter needs to be reduced from about ¾" to ⅛" (19mm to 3mm), a fifteen-second task with a parting tool in wood, but much slower in metal, where a parting tool just doesn't work. I have found that leaving a bit of room where the tip of the detail gouge can be swung in a small arc helps to reduce the diameter quickly. The tenon can be dressed with the gouge to make nice, straight sides. Finally, cut the finial away from the waste with a hacksaw with the lathe off (*Photo 10*).

Final thoughts

In this article, I have shown only a small glimpse of what the woodturner can do with turned metal. I have turned knobs, bases, connections for use in multi-piece projects, and sockets for tool handles. There are other metals that also can be turned, such as brass and copper. They are a bit trickier than aluminum when cutting with hand tools, but with care and practice they can also make beautiful turned parts. ■

Pat Miller and his wife and artistic partner Karen are life-long makers and began their turning journey in 2010. AAW and Mid-Columbia Woodturner members since 2011, they have retired from their day jobs to be full-time artists, grandparents, and cat-staffers. Their work can be seen at several galleries and on their website, patandkarenmiller.com. They can be contacted at arborsongarts@yahoo.com. Coffee is always on at their studio in Yakima, Washington.

You read the article—now see the video!

This article has an accompanying online video in which Pat Miller further illustrates turning metal on a wood lathe. See the video by visiting tiny.cc/turnmetal or scanning the QR code with your mobile device.

A Turning Theme Re-Inspired by Nature

Gerry Roche

A spray of ice shavings flies as the author turns a form of disparate wood segments "cast" in an ice block.

Following a deep involvement with woodturning in the 1980s and 1990s, I began to feel that woodturning was losing its magic for me, and I became immersed in other interests, including building a log cabin and pursuing a doctoral degree in philosophy. Woodturning had become a far and distant memory, but a few years ago, prompted by an unusual set of circumstances, my interest was rekindled. Here is the story of my reignited interest in woodturning and creativity.

Driving concepts

The woodturning I did in the 1990s was not dissimilar from what many of my peers both here in Ireland and abroad were doing: making wet-turned natural-edge bowls and hollow forms, and using exotic timbers, burls, and even birch plywood. I was conscious of a certain dissatisfaction—indeed boredom—with conventional shapes and materials and was unsure where to find inspiration, until a chance reading of two authors. First, I was taken by the message of Professor David Pye of London's Royal College of Art: the essence of good craft lay in the "workmanship of risk"—that the work was not predetermined but was always open to the risk of failure by virtue of a simple slip of the hand or a moment's inattention; plus, creative possibilities might emerge, the existence of which couldn't have been envisioned when beginning the work. Somewhat like sailing a boat, the joy, or "sweet spot," is to be found not by sailing in the safest manner possible, but in stopping just short of the edge, which, if crossed, would presage disaster. The lesson I drew from Pye was not only of the need to experiment, but to experiment *radically*.

The second source of inspiration came from an English art lecturer and potter, who noted that the wonderful grain patterns and colors of

Inspiration

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2

Bushes on the "Green Road" (an old drover's path on the coast of Ireland) and trees on the road from Gort to Galway inspired an exploration in forms of disparate yet similar parts.

some timbers (or glaze patterns on some pottery) masked what were very pedestrian shapes. She had suggested that, as a test of good work, one should imagine the piece as being painted white and then judge whether the resulting shape was of interest. She suggested that poor craftsmanship can be masked by surface phenomena and one should seek to strip away surface decorations to reveal the bare, unadorned essence.

These ideas fired me with a new enthusiasm and sparked a renewed sense of creativity.

Inspired by nature

My imagination was further reignited during a walk on an old mountain path by the sea, close to where I live in the Burren, on the west coast of Ireland. Because the area is so exposed to the strong ocean gales, the trees are often shaped by the prevailing wind to such an extent that a tree growing behind a rock will echo the shape of the rock; and one tree growing in the shelter of another will conform to the larger tree's shape (*Photos 1, 2*).

These phenomena suggested to me the possibility of taking seemingly disparate objects (e.g., pieces of wood) and seeking to create a unity by imposing aspects of a single shared shape. Just prior to my retreat from woodturning, I made a piece titled *...and then there were two* (*Photo 3*). I realized that separating the constituent parts and then replacing them with spacers enabled an abstract shape to be "carried across" the gaps. When making that piece, I had not had that insight, but now I took it as my lodestone in seeking a new direction for my work.

But where to go from here? I liked the theme of using different-shaped constituent pieces of wood with rearrangement after turning but wanted to evolve the method of work-holding. I tried using 1" (25mm) dowels inserted into a solid timber formwork, as in *Requiem for a Bowl I* (*Photos 4, 5*). But I found using a solid wood formwork to be extremely restrictive, though it did offer ample support of the trailing edge of each component piece so it would not tear out by the action of the gouge.

A solution: ice

Many years ago, I had thought of using ice as a mechanism of mounting work on the lathe (by first immersing in water, the work to be ▸

An early attempt

...and then there were two comprises 121 pieces of 1"-square blocks of wood. The pieces, painted black, were placed within a tight-sided "box," which was fixed to a faceplate, mounted on the lathe, and turned in the shape of a shallow bowl. With the pieces removed from the lathe and the retaining box, alternate blocks were relocated and reassembled with spacers between them.

Second attempt: solid formwork

Requiem for a Bowl I comprises dowels that were inserted into holes drilled in a solid formwork at various angles, then turned, removed from the form, and reassembled. The disparate elements share the turned shape yet retain their individual angles.

Cast in ice

In *Requiem for a Bowl II*, the author took a cube, a sphere, and two conical shapes and, after securing them to a wooden base, put them in a water-filled container and froze the assemblage. He then turned a simple bowl shape in the resulting block of ice. When the ice had melted, the simple dish shape connected the four objects.

Further exploration in ice


9


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Each piece of timber, painted black, was screwed to the wooden base and reinforced with heavy plastic netting (not shown) prior to being encased in ice. If one attempted to turn the assemblage without the ice, the unsupported trailing edge of each piece of timber would fracture badly. In short, the ice added support to avoid tearout and provided a uniform turning surface.

turned in close flat contact with a metal faceplate, and then freezing all). Another idea from those fallow years was to embed separate pieces of wood in ice and then, having mounted the ice block on the lathe, to turn it. I had had the crazy idea of waiting for a hot summer's day and then, bedecked in my swimming togs, turn the block under the cooling balm of a shower of ice. That idea never came to be, but I realized the use of ice was the solution I was looking for.

One problem was safety: how to ensure the ice did not fracture during turning and become a dangerous projectile. The cross pieces in *Photo 6* show a primitive attempt to add some security: they are raised about 1" off the faceplate, so the ice under these crosspieces would function as a type of anchor. *Requiem for a Bowl II* was a step forward (*Photos 7, 8*), but the next piece was to be larger and safety would be a more pressing concern.

The solution presented itself one morning as I walked along the shore, where I found a piece of heavy plastic fishing net. Before immersing the work in water and freezing it, I draped the net over all the faceplate-mounted pieces and then secured it to the faceplate. I also bolted the timber faceplate to a metal one. When all was immersed in water and frozen, the netting played a role in the block of ice similar to that of rebar in a block of reinforced concrete. The net, being made of plastic, presented no problems when turning, as it was cut cleanly by the gouge (*Photos 9-11*).

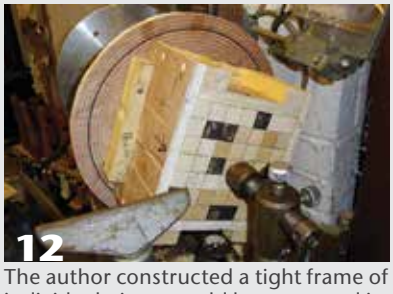
Exploration

My exploration of this theme then took me back to the technique used in my piece of twenty-five years ago, *...and then there were two*. This newer work comprises forty-nine pieces of 1"-square lengths of wood, each 6" (15cm) tall. I held the pieces in place while turning by the lateral pressure of a rigid framework (*Photo 12*). The turned shape is a 6"-diameter concave form (*Photo 13*), whose disparate pieces can be removed after turning and rearranged in various ways (*Photos 14–15*).

I have gotten a lot of mileage from a single observation of a natural phenomenon. I'm glad to be back at the lathe, excited once again by the journey of evolving thought and the possibilities it affords. ■

Gerry Roche completed a research degree in pure mathematics before taking up the study of law and qualifying as a barrister. He later became enchanted with the traditions of log-house building, woodcarving, and turning.

An interactive form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15

The author constructed a tight frame of plywood to hold forty-nine identically sized blocks of wood. Once turned to a concave form, the individual pieces could be presented in a variety of creative scenarios.

A Classy Espresso Tamper

Joe Larese

I recently bought an espresso maker, and after using a spoon to pack down the coffee grinds, I realized I needed a tamper. Most commercially sold espresso tampers are made of metal, and some cost more than $100. I was surprised to find that the woodturning supply companies don't offer a kit, so I decided to turn my own tamper, using a dense, close-grained wood for the tamping part and a contrasting wood species for the knob.

Turn the tamper section

1 Espresso makers have a metal filter basket that fits into a handled device called a portafilter, and the diameter of the filter basket can vary. Measure the inside diameter of your filter basket (*Photo 1*). Mine measured 2" (5cm).

2 Chuck and turn a blank 3½" (9cm) long to a diameter that will fit the filter basket closely (*Photo 2*). Be sure to keep the sides parallel or slightly tapered. Hard maple, apple, or birch would be a good choice for the wood.

3 Turn the end flat or slightly convex and sand to a fine grit. As this is the part that will be in direct contact with the coffee grounds, I finished the wood with just a little mineral oil, but you could also leave it unfinished.

Measure and turn

Measure the inside diameter of your espresso maker's filter basket, then turn the tamper to that size. Use a close-grain hardwood for this part of the project.

4 Turn a tenon and a slightly larger shoulder on what will become the top of the tamper part (*Photo 3*). The tenon, which I turned to ½" (13mm) diameter and about ¾" (19mm) long, will be glued into a hole in the knob section later. Sand and finish. I used wax for this part.

Turn the knob

5 Chuck and turn a blank of contrasting wood for the knob. Drill a hole sized to accept the tenon on the tamper portion. Glue the tamper to the knob, then blend the two sections for a smooth transition (*Photos 4, 5*).

Turn a tenon

The author uses a parting tool to turn a tenon and shoulder on the tamper.

Glue parts, turn transition

Rough-shape a contrasting species for the knob, then drill a hole to accept the tenon on the tamper. Glue the sections together, turn a smooth transition, and finish shaping the knob.

6 Continue shaping the knob, then sand, part, and finish as desired. I decided to finish the knob section with a spray lacquer for increased durability, masking the tamper portion to avoid getting overspray on it.

I can't guarantee your cappuccinos or lattes will taste better, but I'm pretty sure any home barista would be thrilled to receive a handcrafted tamper as a gift. ■

Joe Larese is a member of the Kaatskill Woodturners and the Nutmeg Woodturners League and is a turning instructor at the Brookfield Craft Center and SUNY/Purchase. He is a photojournalist by profession. His website is joelarese.com.

The EMERGING BOX

Guilio Marcolongo

I get a lot of inspiration from the work of other turners. I like to learn new approaches from articles and particularly demonstrations, then adapt the lessons learned to express my own vision. The idea for my emerging box series came from an emerging bowl turned by New Zealander Terry Scott. I thought, *I can put a lid on that*. It took some time to perfect the concept, and now that I have been making emerging boxes for ten years, I think I have it right.

Make the template

While the emerging box appears to be a complex turning, maybe even difficult to imagine coming from a lathe, the success of the entire project lies in starting with a carefully constructed template. I like to use a piece of 3⅛" × 3⅛" × 3/16" (8cm × 8cm × 4mm) MDF (medium-density fiberboard). A thinner piece will work, but a piece 3/16" thick will not flex when testing its fit against the box blank. I find the center of the template blank by connecting each corner with pencil lines and then using a punch to mark the center.

A 2⅜" (6cm) circle needs to be removed from the center of the template, so I mount a wasteblock that is at least 1½" (38mm) in diameter in a four-jaw chuck. I true the face of the block and then turn the diameter of the front down to 1 3/16" (30mm) with a peeling cut from a skew chisel or wide parting tool.

I use the tailstock to center the template on the wasteblock and join the two surfaces using cyanoacrylate (CA) glue. The quickest path to success is to place some CA on the face of the wasteblock and spritz the back of the template with activator. I place the punch hole in the template on the point of the live center, then advance the tailstock to clamp the template to the wasteblock. A bead of glue around the intersection of the template and wasteblock ensures a secure connection.

I use a Vernier caliper set to 2⅜" to mark the circle on the face of the template. With the lathe running, I touch the left point of the caliper to the face of the template where I wish to mark the left side of the circle (*Photo 1*). If the right point touches the spinning blank, a nasty catch can occur, possibly sending the caliper flying, sharp points and all. I adjust the mark until

INVITED SYMPOSIUM DEMONSTRATOR

Guilio Marcolongo will be a demonstrator at AAW's 2018 International Symposium in Portland, Oregon, where he will share his insights on turning boxes. For more, visit woodturner.org.

both points of the caliper point to the diameter of a 2⅜" circle. Defining the caliper line with a fine pencil improves its visibility (*Photo 2*).

I use a narrow parting tool and part halfway through the template, cutting just to the inside of the line. I am trying to achieve an exact 2⅜" hole, so I check again with the caliper to see if I need to adjust the cut. After parting off, I cut the template on the diagonal at the bandsaw, leaving the corner-to-corner line intact on one side of the cut (*Photo 3*). Cutting through the center of the line will under-size the template.

The cut will leave one side of the template smaller than the other (*Photo 4*). I gently sand the feet of the larger template half until I have a half-circle that is 1³⁄₁₆" deep. This is the most important element of the project, as the template does not lie.

Create the template


1


2

A carefully crafted template defines the fit and form of the box. A Vernier caliper assures a precisely defined circle in the template, and the circle is removed by carefully cutting just inside the reference line with a narrow parting tool.


3

Cut the template on the diagonal on the bandsaw, leaving the reference line intact.


4

Reduce the larger template section to finished size by sanding the feet.

Mill and label blanks

I start with two blanks to make the box. Each blank is milled to 3⁹⁄₁₆" (9cm) square × 4¾" (12cm) long; straight grain is preferable to highly figured material. One of these pieces will be a wasteblock, and I suggest a light-colored timber such as pine, which will make pencil reference marks easy to see (*Photo 5*).

On the blank for the box, I pick the best end and mark the top and front faces. There are several opportunities for misaligning components, and clear labels help keep the parts in order and assure a good grain match when the project is complete.

I cut the box blank and the wasteblock in half along the long axis (*Photo 6*). Scribe a 2¾" (7cm) circle on the piece labeled "top" and cut out the cylinder on the bandsaw (*Photo 7*).

Tolerances are so close on this project that I have found hot-melt glue to be the best approach for attaching the wasteblock to the box blank. Other adhesives I have tried, including CA or using a paper barrier and white glue, result in a loss of wood or damage to the blank.

Prior to gluing the components together, take the time to sand some of the faces. Sand the face of the wasteblock that will be joined to the box blank. On the box blank, I sand ▸

Prepare the blanks


5

Two blanks are necessary for each project. The darker timber will become the box and lid, the lighter is a wasteblock.

6

Both blanks are cut in half on the long axis and the top is cut from one half of the box blank. Note the labeling of each box component.

7


8

After sanding, the box blank is glued to the wasteblock along the outer seam.

Turn the box

9

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Mount the blank between centers and turn a spigot on the tailstock end, then remount the blank in a four-jaw chuck. Add a reference line on the light wasteblock to identify the cylinder length.


11


12

Turn a cylinder, verifying diameter and height with the template.

Shape the half-sphere


13


14

Turn the cylinder into a half-sphere and refine the shape with a skew presented as a scraper.

Aim for perfection and separate the blank


15


16

After using the template to arrive at the precise dimension, the pieces are easily separated with denatured alcohol.

all four of the sidegrain faces through 400-grit abrasive; the endgrain will be entirely turned away. When the faces are sanded, I clamp the blocks together and apply a bead of hot-melt glue on all four faces at the joint where the blocks meet (*Photo 8*). As a tip, light-colored hot-melt glue is preferable to the yellow variety, as later in the process it will release more easily with denatured alcohol (methylated spirits).

Turn the box

Locate the center on the front and rear of the joined blanks and with a fine point, mark the exact center. Mount the blank between centers with the side labeled "front" at the headstock end. I turn a spigot on the tailstock end to fit into my four-jaw chuck (*Photo 9*), truing the end as I go. Following the philosophy that the smaller the cut, the smaller any arising problems will be, I use a small bowl gouge throughout the turning process. When the spigot is complete, I remount the blank in a four-jaw chuck.

The first goal is to turn a half-sphere that will protrude 1 3/16" from the blank and have a 2 3/8" diameter. After truing the new face of the blank, I use my caliper to establish a 2 3/8" circle, using the same method applied to the template. I also draw a line on the lighter wood 1 3/16" below the face (*Photo 10*). When the blank is spinning, both the front circle and the line on the top surface will be visible.

With my gouge, I cut from the face of the blank towards the headstock. I stop my cuts at the previously drawn lines to create a cylinder. A parting tool eases a cut to the back and trues the area at the base of the half-sphere. I then use the 2 3/8" template to establish the exact diameter of the base of the cylinder (*Photo 11*).

With the template held parallel to the bed and just touching the edge

Prepare a jam chuck for the box


17


18

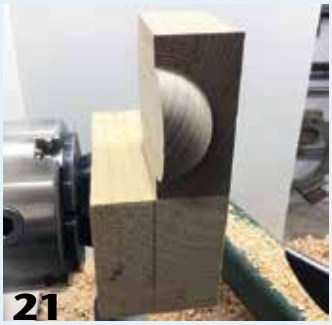

19

(17) Make a jam chuck to hold the box form by turning a spigot on a wasteblock.

(18-19) The hole to hold the box must be precise, so rely on the Vernier caliper to mark the dimension before hollowing.

Cut jam chuck to receive box blank


20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22


23

Use the box blank to mark the jam chuck for cutting, first placing the box blank perpendicular to the chuck, then parallel to the chuck's long axis.

The box blank should fit snugly into the turned and cut rebate in the chuck.

of the blank, I check for any light showing at the top of the curve (*Photo 12*). On this piece, a tiny sliver of light is showing, but I can live with that. Too much light and I would take another cut at the base to get the depth correct. The cylinder needs to be exactly 1 3/16" in length.

Now the cylinder needs to be turned to a half-sphere, and I remove most of the waste with a bowl gouge or another tool that allows me to cut close to the back of the form (*Photo 13*). I then make the finishing cuts with a freshly sharpened 1 3/16" skew chisel held flat on the toolrest and presented as a negative rake scraper (*Photo 14*). This allows me to put the fear of a catch out of my mind and concentrate on the profile.

Stop the lathe often to check the profile of the sphere with the template. The template touches the form wherever more material needs to be removed, and pencil marks will help remind you where to concentrate your efforts when the blank is spinning (*Photo 15*). Focus on these areas and avoid scraping adjacent surfaces.

Getting a clean surface around the base of the half-sphere can be challenging. This area should be inspected closely, as it may require additional sanding. If I find tool marks (usually lines) that are too deep for sanding, I can often disguise the problem by using a three-point tool to add three or four small lines. Once I am satisfied with the sphere, it is time to remove the hot-melt glue.

The beauty of using hot-melt glue is that I end up with a clean, sanded base after separating the two pieces of wood. With a brush, I lap some denatured alcohol over the glue and give it a few minutes to soak into the wood. In short order, the glue simply peels off (*Photo 16*).

The bowl will be 2 3/8" diameter and 1 3/16" deep. My technique for holding the blank is to use a modified jam chuck. This is a sure way of centering the bowl to achieve an even wall thickness. This is critical around the rim; otherwise, the lid will sit a little to one side, which does not look good.

To make the jam chuck, I use a piece of pine that is 3 9/16" (9cm) square × 5 15/16" (15cm) long. Connect the corners with lines to locate the center of each face, then mount the blank between centers in facegrain orientation and turn a spigot (*Photo 17*). Remount the blank in a four-jaw chuck and true the front. ▸

Hollow the box

(24) Start hollowing the box by cutting a groove ¼" in from the edge. This will help prevent run-back (the tool skating left) when completing the hollowing with a bowl gouge.

(25-26) With the hollowing completed, sand the face and separate the blank from the chuck. In considering the balance of the form, I decide to remove about ½" from the side.

Using the Vernier caliper set at 2⅜", transfer the measurement to the face of the blank (*Photo 18*). I like to give myself an entry point for hollowing, which helps prevent a catch. To do this, I use the long point of the skew with the tool presented flat to cut a small groove about 3/16" (4mm) in from the line. The object is to hollow a 2⅜" × 1¾"- (45mm-) deep cylinder (*Photo 19*), using the skew presented as a scraper (helpful on the walls and bottom) and a bowl gouge for quick removal of waste material.

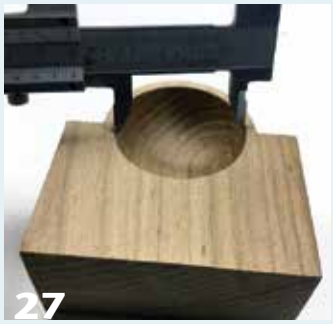
Some of the jam chuck must be cut away to receive the box blank turned in the first step. To mark the cut, I insert the box blank into the hollowed cylinder and draw a pencil line where the two forms meet (*Photo 20*). I then use the box blank to mark the outside of the carrier (*Photo 21*), and clearly shade or otherwise label the region to be removed (*Photo 22*). If everything is proceeding as it should, the section to be removed will be 1¾" thick, exactly the same thickness as the box blank.

With the waste section removed on the bandsaw, the half-sphere should now fit tightly into the carrier with the top of the curve mating against the top of the opening in the carrier (*Photo 23*). With the two components aligned, I use a bead of hot-melt glue to attach the two elements, applying the glue only to the seams on the outside of the form, not the top.

Chucked on the lathe, the circle that is to be hollowed to create the box should appear at dead center with the lathe turning. Again, with the long point of the skew, I cut an entry point ¼" (6mm) in from the edge of the half-sphere (*Photo 24*). I essentially cut a groove about ¾" (20mm) deep into the piece into which I can present my small bowl gouge with minimal risk of a catch and run-back, ruining the face of the form.

Recall that the bowl in this form is 1 3/16" deep, including the wall. I am aiming for a wall thickness of about 3/16", so I set my caliper for 1" (25mm) and mark the face of the opening. It is possible to drill a depth hole, but it is also easy to drill the hole too deep. I hollow the bowl with my bowl gouge, slightly undercutting the rim, and frequently checking the depth. I do not cut a step into the mouth of the bowl because if for some reason the box does not work, I will still end up with a small "emerging bowl."

Fit the lid



(27-28) The inner diameter of the box is transferred to the lid blank with the caliper.

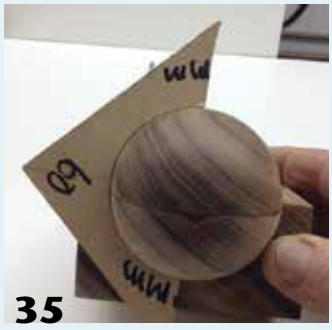
(29-30) A gentle peeling cut produces a spigot to fit the box. With the box on the lid, mark the outer circumference of the box on the bottom of the lid.

Complete lid interior

(31) The height of the lid is marked on the blank.

(32-33) The interior of the lid is hollowed in the same fasion as the box interior, starting with a skew held flat to create a groove for the bowl gouge to enter without skating off.

Turn the outside of the lid



(34-35) With the lid reverse chucked, the outside can be turned and sanded to completion. Frequent inspection with the template assures a uniform sphere.

(36) Drill a hole in the lid to receive the finial's spigot, being careful not to drill through the top.

I sand the form at this stage, typically to 400 grit. I use a rotary sander on the revolving face, which spares my fingers from the oncoming edges of the blank (*Photo 25*). The hot-melt glue can now be softened with denatured alcohol and the box separated from the carrier.

I consider the piece to be visually unbalanced at this point and solve the problem by cutting material off the end of the block, in this case, about ½", or 15mm (*Photo 26*). I sand the freshly cut end, resulting in all surfaces finish-sanded.

Turn the lid

The blank for the lid was cut in an earlier step and one end labeled "top." The top end now goes into the four-jaw chuck. I true the face, careful not to remove too much material. With the caliper, measure the inside of the box (*Photo 27*) and transfer that measurement onto the face (*Photo 28*). I use a skew presented flat for a peeling cut to reduce the diameter of the blank, producing a 3⁄16" spigot (*Photo 29*).

I check the fit of the spigot with the box, taking gentle peeling cuts until the spigot fits the base (*Photo 30*). With the base on the lid, I use a sharp pencil to transfer the diameter of the base onto the face of the lid and turn the lid blank down to just leave this line. I check the fit again, and if the diameter of the lid is just slightly larger than the base, I leave the difference to be removed later by sanding.

Before hollowing, I need to determine the height of the lid. To maintain the sphere shape, the lid needs to be 1 3⁄16" as measured from the back of the spigot, so I mark the blank accordingly (*Photo 31*).

I need to match the base's 3⁄16" wall thickness, so I again set my caliper to 1" and transfer the setting to the face of the blank. Using the skew chisel presented as a scraper, I make a groove as an entry point for my bowl gouge (*Photo 32*). I hollow the form, checking the depth frequently until I reach 1". A round nose scraper cleans up the inside walls nicely (*Photo 33*).

I make a jam chuck out of a piece of scrap wood to hold the lid. To ensure a snug fit, I transfer the diameter of the lid opening to the face of the jam chuck with the caliper. A slightly loose-fitting chuck can be rescued by dampening the spigot, causing the wood fibers to expand.

I remove the bulk of the waste from the outside of the lid with a detail gouge and refine the form with my skew chisel presented as a scraper. Use the template often to check the lid profile, focusing on those areas where the template touches the form (*Photo 34*). As the lid approaches its completion, I remove it from the jam chuck to ▸

Turn a finial

The blank for the finial is drilled for attachment to a fixed screw chuck in an off-center Vermec chuck.

The blank is reduced and final diameter of the finial achieved with a centered turning, then the chuck is adjusted off-center and the finial completed.

verify its fit on the base (*Photo 35*). The template should fit neatly over the top and bottom. If the lid is still a fraction high, remount it and take a little off the top of the curve. With no daylight peeking under the template, the lid is completed, as shown in *Photo 35*.

Make a finial

With the lid back on the jam chuck, drill a hole both 3⁄16" deep and wide with the aid of a drill chuck in the tailstock (*Photo 36*). This hole will receive the spigot connecting the finial to the lid.

As if the form was insufficiently dynamic at this point, I decided to add a finial turned off-center with the assistance of my Vermec off-center chuck. Finials are a good way to personalize a project, so consider ideas for your own design. A box without a finial is an option, but at the other extreme, I feel that long, thin finials do not fit the compact, round form of these boxes.

For the finial, I start with a 1"-square × 2⅜"-long blank of the same species of wood as the box. The standard jaws will grip such a blank in the center, at least with sufficient strength for drilling. I use a drill chuck with a ¼" bit to drill a 1"-deep hole (*Photo 37*).

With the off-center chuck on the lathe, I thread the blank onto the chuck's screw and turn a 9⁄16" (15mm) cylinder (*Photo 38*). I round the end and finish sand. Now I adjust the chuck off-center by 3⁄16", which doubles to become a ⅜" (8mm) off-set with the lathe in rotation. Subtracting this dimension from the total 9⁄16" diameter of the blank means I will be left with 3⁄16" of solid material rotating around the central axis.

I turn the finial with my small bowl gouge with a long grind. I work down from the top of the blank, cutting toward the headstock. I aim for a finial that will be about ¼" diameter at its base. The key to off-center turning is to make sure the bevel of the tool is aligned with the direction of the cut, and in this case, to gently cut toward the axis of rotation and push back toward the headstock. Some initial splintering is likely as the tool moves from air to wood and out again, but if the wood is sound, the cap will be safe, and after two or three cuts, I can turn the tool and cut back toward the tailstock. Once satisfied with the shape, I use my caliper and a parting tool to turn a 3⁄16" spigot at the base of the finial (*Photo 39*).

I sand the top and check the finial for fit one final time before affixing it with a dab of adhesive. Another box emerges! ■

Guilio Marcolongo lives in the Australian seaside town of Wonthaggi. A proud student of Vic Wood, Guilio has been turning for twenty-two years and is able to try his hand at most forms of woodturning.

Explorations
IN PRECIOUS METAL CLAY
A POP Fellowship Grant in Action

Firing precious metal clay, or PMC, in a kiln burns away the binders and leaves a solid metal object—in this case, a textured copper lid for a turned box. Jennifer Shirley was awarded a POP Fellowship Grant to explore the use of PMC in woodturning.

In 2016, I was awarded a Fellowship Grant from AAW's Professional Outreach Program (POP) to explore and learn all I could about precious metal clay (PMC). I had wanted to work with this material for a long time but never had the means to do so; the POP Fellowship Grant gave me the opportunity.

The POP Grant allowed me to purchase a tabletop kiln and a few of the necessary tools and accessories to get started. I also took a class at the Indianapolis Art Center, taught by a qualified instructor who was eager to help me get started on my journey in PMC, including ways to incorporate the material into my turned boxes.

What is PMC?

PMC is a relatively new material, most commonly used in jewelry making. It comes in "clay" form but, when fired in a kiln, becomes solid metal. The binder burns away in the firing, leaving you with a pure, solid metal object. PMC comes in 24k and 22k gold, sterling silver, copper, brass, stainless steel, and bronze, and more metals are becoming available all the time. Before firing, PMC in clay form can be molded, textured, rolled, pinched, pressed, cut, trimmed, sanded, drilled, etc., just like any other kind of clay.

PMC is sold by the gram, and as you can imagine, the type of metal determines the price. Gold costs approximately $185 for three grams. Copper, the cheapest, is about $22 for 100 grams. My first pieces were made of copper, and I am just starting to explore silver PMC. My POP Grant also allowed me to purchase an electric, digitally programmable kiln.

Continued learning and sharing

My experimentation with PMC has just begun. In addition to the class I took at the Indianapolis Art Center, I have also taken online courses. Craftsy.com happened to have an entire course on PMC, and the online format allowed me to "rewind" and review the course materials as many times as I needed to. It's a great resource. Learning the basics of using PMC is the easy part; advancing my skills and expanding the creative boundaries are what make incorporating this new material into my turned work truly exciting.

In keeping with the AAW's value of openly sharing information, teaching others about PMC is going to be one of the best parts of my journey. In 2018, I will teach a week-long class at Marc Adams School of Woodworking titled, "Precious Containers: Combining Precious Metal Clay with Turned Objects." The class will involve making small containers and with copper PMC lids. I will teach the basics of using and manipulating PMC, adding textures and working with shaping tools. We will fire the PMC in class with my kiln. Small boxes will be turned to incorporate the PMC lids, and we'll turn a finial to top it all off.

My thanks to the AAW and the POP committee for the opportunities this grant has afforded me.

POP Fellowship Grants are awarded biennially on even-numbered years. Applicants must be AAW members in good standing. The Fellowship Grants are open to turners of all levels and abilities. For more information and to apply online, visit tiny.cc/POPGrant. Applications will be accepted online through May 1, 2018. ■

—Jennifer Shirley

PMC is available in various metals, including copper, silver, gold, brass, stainless steel, and bronze.

Before it is fired in a kiln, PMC can be worked like any clay. Here, it is being rolled onto a textured pad.

The textured PMC is cut to the desired shape.

Air-dried PMC can be worked prior to firing in the kiln. Here, the author refines the edges of a box top using a file.

Gender BEND · women in wood men at the loom

Gallery view at the Fuller Craft Museum, Brockton, Massachusetts. Masterful woodwork by women and loomwork by men are juxtaposed in this unique exhibition.

Photo: Michael McMillan

Janel Jacobson, *Looking Back While Moving Forward,* Boxwood, 2¾" × 2¼" × 2" (7cm × 6cm × 5cm)

Merryll Saylan, *Bessomimbuche,* 2004, Various woods, glass bottles, spices, plastic tubing, 47" × 12" (119cm × 30cm)

fullerCRAFT museum™
Let the art touch you

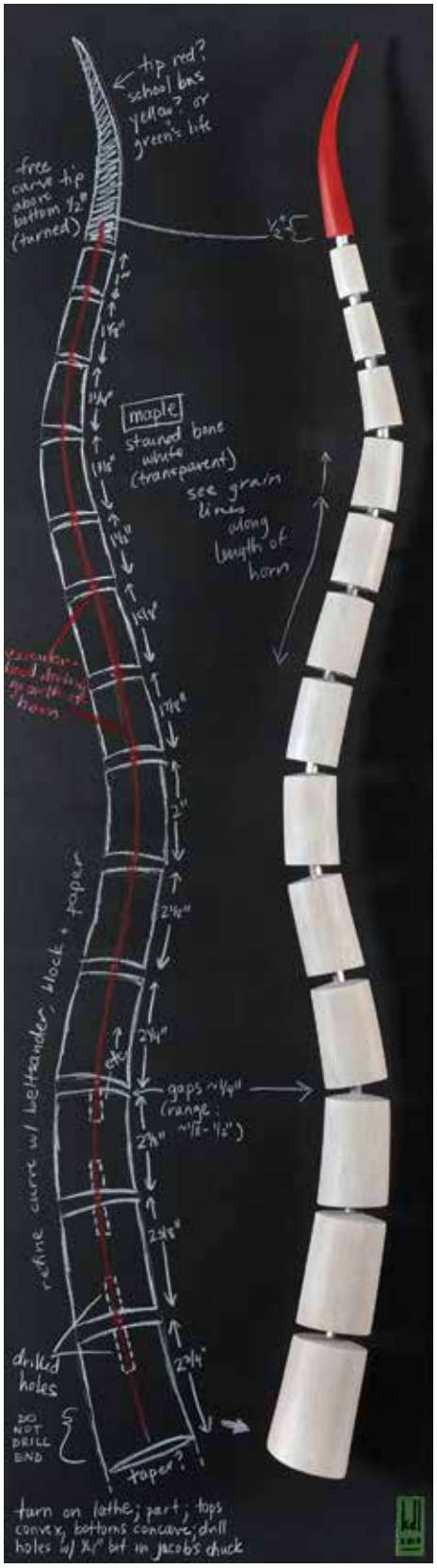
Gender Bend: Women in Wood, Men at the Loom is a multimedia exhibition featuring male weavers alongside female woodturners—two populations that have been traditionally underrepresented in their fields. Selected by AAW curator Tib Shaw and acclaimed tapestry artist Jon Eric Riis, the work reveals the wide scope of approaches in each field. With their shared organic origins, wood and fiber are natural partners, and their affinity shines in the exhibition, which features pieces by thirteen wood artists and fourteen tapestry artists.

The turned pieces in *Gender Bend* reflect a range of contemporary work being done by women. Although several pieces contain references to what might be thought of as "women's topics," such as sewing, friendship, communication, care-giving and widowhood, the artists expand beyond that to explorations of structure and material, an open embrace of the sensuality of wood, and the intimacy of working in partnership with this once-living material.

As it is for women turners, male tapestry artists are sometimes viewed as novelties by their peers and the public, but the excellent work in this exhibition, in wood and in textiles, is testament to a love of materials and craft that is unbounded by gender. ■

—Tib Shaw, AAW Arts Administrator/Curator

Gender Bend *is on display at the Fuller Craft Museum in Brockton, Massachusetts, through March 11, 2018. For more, visit fullercraft.org.*



Kristin LeVier, *Horn IV,* 2015, Maple, aluminum, acrylic paint, pencil, 34" × 9½" × 3½" (86cm × 24cm × 9cm)

Cindy Drozda, *Lidded Vessel,* 2005, Salmon gum burl, African blackwood, garnet, 24K gold, 13" × 13" (33cm × 33cm)

Photo: Tib Shaw/AAW
AAW Permanent Collection

Helga Winter, *Balance,* 2006, Bleached madrone burl, 7" × 12" × 10" (18cm × 30cm × 25cm)

Jay Heryet, *Bitter and Twisted,* 2010, pot: European sycamore, acrylic paint; lemon: boxwood, acrylic paint, 8" × 8" × 8" (20cm × 20cm × 20cm)

Photo: Tib Shaw/AAW

Hayley Smith, *Handful,* 2011, Maple, 2½" × 9½" (6cm × 24cm)

Wence Martinez, *Buffalo Robe Red,* 2015, Churro wool, indigo and aniline dyes, 58" × 31½" (147cm × 80cm)

EMBRACING TRADITION

THE KOKESHI OF LISA AND JACOB HODSDON

Jennifer E. McDowell

Holding Tradition, 2016, a grouping of three *kokeshi* made from manzanita, poplar, beech, and Russian olive, is Lisa and Jacob Hodsdon's tribute to the traditional form of Japanese *kokeshi*. All of their dolls are lathe-turned, then typically adorned with acrylic paint and coated with shellac.

A creative partnership

The Japanese lathe-turned wooden dolls known as *kokeshi* have a culturally significant history reflected in Lisa and Jacob Hodsdon's artistic conceptions. The Hodsdon's *kokeshi* are the product of their strong collaborative relationship and the ease with which they approach each other and their craft. The couple's creative *kokeshi* are a natural extension of Lisa's Japanese-themed paintings and Jacob's precise woodturning, developing into dolls that highlight distinctive features of the wood and complementary painted designs.

With very few references to access when they were developing their dolls, Lisa relied on the memory of her Japanese mother's *kokeshi* to help guide Jacob and herself toward a more personal *kokeshi* style. When Lisa tells the story of how Jacob and she started to make *kokeshi*, she talks in the warm tone of someone who has found her place in the world: "There was a blending point with us, in which our art cohesively came together." Their dolls now reflect this collaborative signature.

In her search to find a connection with her Japanese heritage, Lisa used art to form what she describes as a bridge with the culture she thought she had lost within herself. "Starting off, it was more like painting Japanese motifs and then it landed on *kokeshi,* and it felt like the exactly right thing to do."

The evolution from their past artistic pursuits to making *kokeshi* was such an easy, organic process that the couple found it difficult to relate precisely when they started, but thought it was around ten years ago. What is more evident is the couple's philosophy of working together and

always maintaining an open dialogue when creating a doll. While they both contribute their skills—Jacob preparing materials and doing the lathe work and Lisa painting and attaching accessories and finishing features—there is an emphasis on continued communication throughout the entire process, even deciding together which way the head should tilt or how an imperfection in the wood might be interpreted and enhanced with color.

In the early days of working out *kokeshi* forms, Jacob perceived that the only way for them to honor *kokeshi* was to make simpler dolls with less complex woods. After customers started to show appreciation for dolls that featured burls, knots, and other natural quirks, the process of making them became more in line with Jacob's own turning esthetic, while continuing to match Lisa's vision and honor her strong personal connection with *kokeshi*. Jacob was especially inspired by a Frank Sudol quote: "The message for my students is, you will never be remembered for what you copied, but you will be remembered for what you created. ... Once you reach inside, you will have original work." Throughout their process, the Hodsdons wanted to find their own *kokeshi* style and still make something that was a true *kokeshi*, not just a lathe-turned doll. They are not looking to draw directly from previous *kokeshi* designs but remain conscious of the rich cultural history of producing *kokeshi* in Japan, and their aim is to share their own artistic stories and skills through the *kokeshi* they create.

Producing such a unique art form has its challenges, though, as Jacob explains it was a learning process for him in getting to know this doll. Even though he had a pair of *kokeshi* in his room growing up, he did not know what they were. The couple has continued to educate themselves and the public about the *kokeshi's* cultural significance. Lisa relates, "When people actually recognize and connect with the spirit, personality, or character of a doll, then we feel like we succeeded."

Kokeshi Background

Kokeshi are distinct from other Japanese doll forms because they are always made from wood and are turned on a lathe. What are now classified as the eleven strains *(kei)* of traditional *kokeshi (dentō kokeshi)* originated from and continue to be produced in Japan's six northern prefectures (Akita, Aomori, Iwate, Yamagata, Miyagi, and Fukushima), collectively known as Tōhoku. *Kokeshi* are a relatively young doll in Japan, first appearing at the end of the Edo Period, around 1804–1811. Modern *kokeshi* (*kindai kokeshi*), which include both *shingata kokeshi* (*kokeshi* that do not adhere to certain production and design elements and one design is produced multiple times) and *sōsaku kokeshi* (*kokeshi* that are one-of-a-kind individual art pieces), were not produced until after World War II. These types of *kokeshi* often combine lathe work, carving, pyrography, and painting and dyeing of the wood, while *dentō kokeshi* are painted using primarily black, red, and green ink, and feature flower and design motifs indicative of the strain and the family producing them.

Just like *sōsaku kokeshi* artisans in Japan, Lisa and Jacob combine *dentō kokeshi* production techniques with artistic forms and decoration. Lisa describes her part of the process as giving order to the wilder aspects of Jacob's turned pieces, and accentuating the uniqueness of the wood. Like Jacob, she strives not to nullify nature or take away from the beauty of the piece. The main goal of *dentō kokeshi* artisans is to make *kokeshi* that exhibit a balance between the wood and decoration, so that the overall effect does not compete with the inherent beauty of the product.

Originally, *kokeshi* were produced in Japan by woodturners who made everyday-use items like bowls on the lathe. The scrap materials were then turned into *kokeshi* for children or sold as souvenirs at hot springs. Jacob and Lisa continue in their observance of *kokeshi*-making practices by creating dolls primarily from scrap material. They began making *kokeshi* by collecting wood on hikes, from burn piles, and from donations. These humble practices endure today and in many ways influence their current emphasis on the natural characteristics of the wood that they favor. Jacob's wood choices veer toward the unusual; he prefers the invasive species buckthorn because it has papery bark qualities similar to birch, or pieces that one might dismiss because "they are not suitable for making anything else." They both see this as part of the adventure of creating their *kokeshi*. It is a ▸

Shaped by the Wind, 2015, Manzanita, poplar, largest is 16" × 4" (41cm × 10cm)

This manzanita wood was naturally sandblasted by desert winds, then turned and painted.

Erected in Yajirō, Japan, in 1959, the *Kokeshi* Shrine, or *Kokeshi Jinjya,* pays homage to Prince Koretaka Shinō (844 to 897), credited with bringing lathe skills and technology to the Tōhoku region and certifying woodturning as a profession. Note the three kokeshi under the roofline, representing the three main Yajirō *kokeshi*-producing families.

Every January 2, during the *hatsubiki* festival at the *Kokeshi* Shrine, the making of the first *kokeshi* of the year is celebrated.

process of the joy of their collective efforts, from the exploration of what will be revealed on the lathe and later as Lisa adds her decorative embellishments and designs.

Woodturning and *kokeshi* in Japan

Traditional *kokeshi* artisans in Japan are professionally called *kōjin*, which can translate to mean more generally an artisan, but in Japan it usually identifies those who make *dentō kokeshi*. Some *kokeshi* artisans also refer to themselves as *kijishi*, or woodturners, as they also make other lathe-turned items. *Kōjin* begin their discussion of *kokeshi* with the history of the lathe and the eventual creation of *kokeshi*, using the same skills needed to make other lathe-turned products.

The lathe was introduced to Japan via China around the 5th and 6th centuries and perfected during the Heian period (794–1185). Artisans celebrating the technical achievement of lathe work and the specialness of their craft trace the transmission of lathe technology to Prince Koretaka Shinō (844 to 897), who is credited with transmitting lathe skills and technology to the Tōhoku region and certifying woodturning as a profession. *Kokeshi* artisans claim ancestorship with Prince Koretaka, who is honored in shrines throughout *kokeshi*-producing regions.

The area of Yajirō, in Miyagi Prefecture, has one of the more visual displays dedicated to the appreciation of *kokeshi*, honoring Prince Koretaka and the lathe. In 1959, *kokeshi* artisans in the area erected the Onomiya Koretaka Shinō Shrine as a place to worship Prince Koretaka as the god of woodturning. The unofficial but popular name for this shrine is the *Kokeshi* Shrine (*Kokeshi Jinjya*). Along its roofline, three *kokeshi* representing the three main Yajirō *kokeshi*-producing families—Satō, Nīyama, and Ogura—can be seen. Starting in 1967, on every January 2, the first *kokeshi* of the year is created by an honored Yajirō *kōjin*. This event is called the first pull (*hatsubiki*), as pre-dating the electric-powered lathe, a prevalent form of lathe in this region was the two-person (*ni nin hiki rokuro)* lathe, sometimes called the *tsunagi rokuro*, which requires one person to work the wood and the other to pull a cord back and forth to move the lathe's turning mechanism.

> **“A certain wildness must be tamed, but if the wood does not maintain some of that wildness, then you have gone too far.**
> **— Jacob Hodsdon**

A woodturner's form

Jacob started out hand-carving bowls and spoons, and soon developed an interest in figure-carving with a variety of materials, including wood and antler. A friend told him that if he wanted to make any sort of income carving bowls, he had to get a lathe. “Spending twenty-five hours hand-carving a burled bowl was no way to make a living.” From this seminal moment, Jacob became fascinated

with woodturning. He had admired his grandparents' collection of turned bowls, and now the lathe afforded him the opportunity to make his own.

Jacob appreciates the lathe for all the possibilities it presents and credits the skills he developed working with salvaged materials, and the commitment to turning difficult pieces like whisper-thin bowls, with inspiring himself when turning *kokeshi*. When making *kokeshi*, he relishes the challenge of placing a burled or knotted piece between centers because it requires concentration to explore the shapes dictated by the lathe. "With burls, you have to push yourself to look at the wood. It really pushes you to look into the piece and decide what is the best part that I can bring out of the piece. A person with a trained eye can tell what a burl will turn into, but even a trained eye gets surprised from time to time. I am specifically choosing these woods, and it would be pointless to my original vision to destroy that. They remind me of something that is closest to nature."

His overall approach to these pieces is that "a certain wildness must be tamed, but if the wood does not maintain some of that wildness, then you have gone too far." Jacob never rejects a particular piece, even if it appears to be too wild or inspiration did not present itself. Instead, it will wait for a few years, or until a time comes when it can be worked. Jacob has never shied away from imperfect woods in his work, a fact confirmed by Lisa who says he has always tried to find interesting materials, like barn wood, to make his wooden spoons so that he could leave some of the wood's natural effects on finished pieces.

Along with what they call their natural pieces, Lisa and Jacob also design a second form of *kokeshi* featuring a cylindrical shape, layered hair, and layered kimonos. These *kokeshi* are indicative of *kindai kokeshi*, as they combine the detailed carving and dyeing techniques found in one-of-a-kind dolls, and hair ▸

Layers of Tradition, 2015, Various woods, aniline dye, each about 13" × 4" (33cm × 10cm)

Here, the body and face are turned with a flat on top of the head, onto which a turned hairpiece is glued.

Swept Away, 2017, Manzanita, beech, 6" × 6" × 4" (15cm × 15cm × 10cm)

The sense of movement in this kokeshi was achieved by multiaxis turning.

Peaceful Contemplation, 2015, Chamise, beech, 6½" × 2½" × 3" (17cm × 6cm × 8cm)

inspired by *shingata kokeshi*, where the body and face with a flat top are turned first, and then a hairpiece is glued onto the flat base of the head. These dolls are often affectionately referred to by collectors as helmet-head *kokeshi*. It was precisely this detail that Jacob amended, instead producing dolls with long flowing hair running down the length of the wood to give the piece movement and character. These types of *kokeshi* allow the Hodsdons to continue exploring their craft artistically with carved details, dyes, and decorations that natural pieces cannot accommodate.

The process for making these dolls differs, as well. For natural pieces, the wood will dictate the shape of the *kokeshi*, but when making a more cylindrical doll, layered hair *kokeshi*, or layered kimono *kokeshi*, Jacob starts with straight-grained wood and then plans the shape of the doll before he places it on the lathe. Regardless of what doll they are making, the process is about taking a piece of wood and revealing its spirit in the finished piece. The couple agree that this is where the personality of each *kokeshi* originates.

In the shop

Jacob's work area and lathes currently share space with drying wood in a 1,200-square-foot basement, but his first workshop was in a horse stall whose climate was dictated by the weather. Jacob's current lathe has the capacity to turn both bowls and *kokeshi*. He starts each doll by turning it between centers, which he explains is a necessary practice, as most burled or knotted pieces will not fit directly in a chuck. Jacob also uses a mini-lathe for turning hair sticks and other accessories.

A simple hollow form will become the head of a *kokeshi* doll.

The tools on which he mostly depends are a spindle gouge, parting tool, and skew. He will also use a bowl gouge and shopmade hollowing tools for doll heads (hollow forms) over 5" (13cm) in diameter, or for larger doll bodies. The heads need to be made on a chuck because of the impression a live center would leave on the top of the head. Jacob's first *kokeshi* have these small indentations, as do older *dentō kokeshi* in Japan.

The old-style Japanese chucks resemble a claw that was hammered into the base or head of the doll. This practice became less favorable as *kokeshi* transitioned from children's toy to adult collectible. Long before a piece makes its way onto the lathe, Jacob must envision the *kokeshi* he wants to make to give the material proper time to dry. This is particularly true for larger hollow forms that become heads. A piece of wood may dry for up to three years before it is ready to be used. After the lathe work, Jacob may use his palm-carving set containing chisels, gouges, and knives to add further design.

When Jacob is finished working with a piece, Lisa begins the process of enhancing the personality of the *kokeshi*. From her perspective, she does find satisfaction in painting smoother-grained woods, like California manzanita and hardwoods like maple, when painting larger motifs such as scenery. She is quick to admit, though, that she is just as excited to navigate the voids and cracks of certain woods.

Her primary medium is acrylic paint because of the ease with which it can be applied to the surface of wood and the vast array of color choices. If she wants to dye a section of straight-grained wood, she uses aniline dye. Like many *kokeshi* artisans, Lisa prefers the finest

(Left) Jacob Hodsdon turning burl between centers in his basement shop.

(Right) Lisa Hodsdon at work painting eyes on the face of a kokeshi doll.

Golden Trees, 2015, Russian olive, poplar, maple, 5½" × 4" (14cm × 10cm)

Kokeshi heads and bodies in progress. A variety of motifs and expressions is conveyed via *kokeshi*.

tip synthetic brushes she can find and will even shave off a few bristles so she can achieve a more precise line. After learning that Japanese artisans would make brushes from squirrel fur and mice whiskers, the donors a product of a cat's affections, Lisa said she would not mind trying out these natural bristles herself.

She also likes to incorporate inks and pyrography into the pieces, just as *kindai kokeshi* artisans do in Japan. The most noticeable and final feature Lisa feels is intrinsic to her *kokeshi* is the small white dot in each eye, which provides depth to the pieces and draws viewers into their faces. "They don't look complete to me without that white dot—it is their spark."

Lisa currently emphasizes warm earth tones on her pieces, feeling that other colors are too flashy and would detract from the natural woods. On their larger dolls, Lisa will often just add a line or two of color to give definition and a certain order to the *kokeshi* body. Her favorite motifs are painted trees and flowers, relating that trees are especially satisfying to paint because of the infinite variety of shapes that can be achieved. Laughing, she says, "I like trees so much because they are natural." This is not a redundant statement, as the feathering of leaves that flows across the *kokeshi's* body and the trunk that hugs the curves of a particular knot blend so well that they float between being a natural scene on the *kokeshi* and becoming a natural part of the *kokeshi's* surface.

Honoring heritage

Lisa is drawn to *kokeshi* that evoke Hachinohe (Aomori Prefecture), where her relatives live. Several of the *kindai kokeshi* found in this area feature scenery and often retain the raw bark surface as part of their design. Lisa is beginning to explore using designs like koi, pagodas, and kimonos, themes she featured in her earlier paintings, and to pay homage to these scenic *kokeshi*. Jacob feels that these dolls, like Lisa's original artwork, have a certain serene quality to them. Ultimately, they reflect Lisa's comfort and ease with her identity and her connection with Japan.

This artistic duo continues to push themselves artistically and to create new designs. Forms that Jacob first presented to Lisa, like those with bark still attached, were initially rejected, but, like the wood that appears too wild at first, these forms resurface as Lisa's tastes have changed. They continue to work within their collaborative rhythm. There is occasional disagreement about what patterns are seen in the wood, but these *kokeshi* turn out to be interesting *because* of these differing visions, which make them unique. Lisa concludes, "It is almost as if we are still scratching the surface of the *kokeshi* realm because we want to keep pushing the boundaries. Complementing each other's work elevates what we want to do."

The qualities in Lisa and Jacob Hodsdon's kokeshi *were realized early on by the Asia Society (New York, New York), The Center for Art in Wood (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), and 15 Steps (Ithaca, New York), all venues that have continued to feature their work. Lisa and Jacob promote their* kokeshi *at the American Craft Council Shows and share their vision with examples of their work at The Huntington in San Marino, California, and selective online art purveyors. For more, visit hodsdonkokeshi.com.* ■

Photos by Jennifer E. McDowell.

Dr. Jennifer E. McDowell has been conducting research on kokeshi *culture in Japan and abroad for seventeen years. She is presently working on a volume that complements her dissertation, "*Kokeshi*: Continued and Created Traditions (Motivations for a Japanese Folk Art Doll)," and teaches anthropology in Syracuse, New York. Contact her at j.e.mcdowell@sunyocc.edu.*

THE AMAZING DOLL SERIES

KOKESHI-INSPIRED COLLABORATIONS

Cynthia Carden Gibson

Created at the collaborative event Frogwood, Keiko and her teahouse comprise the work of nine artists from various disciplines.

In 2010, I attended the Turning Southern Style Symposium in Georgia and watched Australian woodturner Ernie Newman turn a traditional *kokeshi*. *Kokeshi* are Japanese dolls made of wood and are characterized by their lack of arms and legs. Ernie explained that Japanese woodworking artisans who crafted functional items such as cups, bowls, and plates often used their cut offs to turn toys or rattles (*kokeshi*) in the shape of a doll. Ernie's doll was turned in two pieces and when the head was turned, it made a little squeak.

Ernie turned two dolls during that seminar, a *kokeshi* and a multiaxis doll that was turned and repositioned many times on the lathe to create a female shape. Ernie's form brought to mind Mark Sfirri's beautiful sculptural work. Andi Wolfe, who was also presenting, was given both dolls to embellish for the auction. She suggested to Ernie that I decorate one. I was given the multiaxis doll, though must admit I secretly longed for the *kokeshi*.

After returning home, I did a bit of research on the world of *kokeshi*. I read that *kokeshi* were originally produced as a child's toy but no one knows who made the first dolls. The little girl inside me was drawn to these precious dolls.

Inspiration and opportunity

A few years after this experience, a video was circulating on Facebook of a Japanese artisan turning and painting traditional *kokeshi*. His embellishments were carefully painted with a bamboo brush in a lovely minimalistic way. After more research, I learned there are two types of *kokeshi* dolls, traditional and creative. I was inspired by the beautiful *sōsaku*, or creative *kokeshi*, particularly the work of Sekiguchi Sansaku. I knew at that time creating a doll was in my future, yet with my full schedule, these thoughts remained dormant.

In June 2016, I attended Echo Lake, an artistic collaborative event in the Philadelphia area. This event encourages camaraderie among multimedia artists with no pressure to create their usual body of work. An auction is held at the conclusion and all work is sold to benefit the next year's event. During that week, I attended a luncheon at The Center for Art in Wood, where I saw several precious *kokeshi* created by Jacob and Lisa Hodsdon (see page 46). A woodturner friend, Matt Overton, saw my excitement for *kokeshi* and

The author at work on *Keiko*. To give the dolls a unique personality, Cynthia embellishes the head first, then designs the clothing and gives the doll a name.

Cynthia's dolls typically range from 2½" to 9" (6cm to 23cm) tall. She prefers to work in holly, Pacific madrone, rhododendron, dogwood, and pear. Pictured here are the first *kokeshi*-inspired dolls in the author's Amazing Doll series, turned by Cindy Drozda and titled, *Shin Yuu*, or Best Friend.

offered to turn a doll form for me to embellish during Echo. This was the perfect time to create my first doll.

Of the many projects I worked on during the event, the *kokeshi* pieces were my favorites. The buyer of the doll spoke to me after the auction and explained it was to be given as a gift to comfort someone special who was ill. This little doll had a voice.

A teahouse for Keiko

I had no plans to make another doll, but the charm and spirit of *kokeshi* lingered. In August of that year, I traveled to Oregon and participated in another collaborative gathering at the home of woodturner Dale Larson. In conversation with Dale, I mentioned my project at Echo Lake and shared images and my excitement. The next day, he invited me into his workshop and we searched his cut-offs for the perfect wood choices. With his excellent tutelage, I turned my own doll form just before the other artists arrived. After embellishing the doll, I named her Keiko, which means to celebrate and respect.

The collaborative event, called Frogwood, was well underway now, with awesome talent all around me. I asked fiber artist Kristy Kun if she would like to collaborate on a *kokeshi* project. Kristy loved the idea and shared that she had saved redwood pieces for a special project and felt this was the time to use them. She made plans to create a teahouse for Keiko. Woodturner and AAW Board member Kathleen Duncan cut out the windows of the teahouse, fiber artist Julie Johnson crafted handmade paper for the windows, and weaver Janis Johnson created a woven mat for the floor. Woodturner Eric Lofstrom turned an amazing miniature tea set, and multimedia artist Ron Gerton cast a sterling silver snowflake for the teahouse wall. Finally, Kathleen and I created a tray for the tea set and woodturner Jim Piper helped with final assembly. Nine of us felt a sweet connection with this project, inspired by the personality of one amazing doll.

More collaboration

I shared my desire to continue creating dolls with three friends in woodturning. Before I knew it, boxes had arrived at my doorstep with blank forms from Dale Larson and Cindy Drozda. Binh Pho and I had chatted about collaborating on a bespoke line of *kokeshi*-inspired dolls and quickly got to work. The dolls that followed charmed us all.

Dolls keep us in touch with our child within, keep us young at heart, and seem to speak to all ages and genders. Often, as makers, we are given subtle clues on creative direction and if we listen, that direction becomes crystal clear. This journey has truly been a labor of love among friends and a joy in my life.

If you would like to learn more about *kokeshi*, I recommend these books: *Kokeshi, from Tohoku with Love*, by Manami Okazaki and *Kokeshi: Wooden Treasures of Japan*, by Michael Evans and Robert Wolf. Soulportals.com, a repository of information on *kokeshi* curated by a collector, is another valuable resource. ■

Cynthia Carden Gibson is a pyrographic designer who works in collaboration with woodturners and sculptors. A love of fashion and Asian art heavily influences her pyrographic embellishments. Cynthia lives and works in Spartanburg, South Carolina. For more, visit cynthiagibsonpyrography.com and theamazingdoll.com.

Binh Pho, who passed away in August 2017, had collaborated with Cynthia Carden Gibson on several *kokeshi* dolls. This one is called *Imperial Jasmine*.

Collaborations with Dale Larson, named *Moonlight Stroll* and *Moonlight Sweetness*.

Three *kokeshi*, by Binh Pho and Cynthia Carden Gibson.

The author embellishing *Suzie*, a collaboration with Botho von Hampeln.

Members' Gallery

Gabor Lacko, England

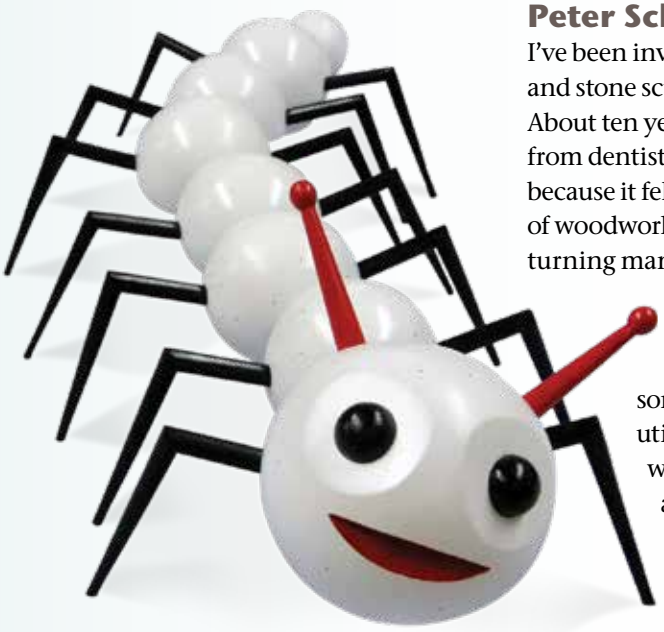
I have been turning since 1958, when lathes were simple machines and all turning was done between centers or on jam chucks and faceplates. Four-jaw chucks were used only on metal-turning lathes. In these sixty years, I went through probably every aspect of turning: bowl and spindle, segmented, assembled, inserted, spiral, hollow form, box, eccentric, multi-center, German ring-turning, and spherical turning. Probably due to my engineering background, I always found complex geometric forms interesting to turn. Pieces in my *Emerging Spheres* series were a result of this interest.

Gabor Lacko, *Emerging Spheres Trio,* 2016, Maple, spheres are 3" (8cm) diameter

Peter Schwenkmeyer, Ohio

I've been involved with woodworking and stone sculpture for thirty-five years. About ten years ago, as I was retiring from dentistry, I took up woodturning because it felt like a natural marriage of woodworking and sculpture. After turning many bowls (both one-piece and segmented) and other items, I felt the need to branch out into something new but still utilize my lathe, which, along with all the add-ons and accessories, represented a sizable investment. So I decided to stay with woodturning but emphasize the sculptural aspect. I began visualizing objects that could be made from an assembled collection of turned and, in some cases, cut parts.

My typical approach was to start with a general idea and work things out as I progressed with the turning and cutting. I wasn't able to get a good sense of the proportions from drawings, so I worked out the designs in solid form. I would create the largest part first to establish the scale and then add proportionally appropriate smaller parts. After the work of turning, cutting, and gluing was done, applying paint was the fun part.



Centipede, 2014, Poplar, cherry, 10" × 32" × 14" (25cm × 81cm × 36cm)

(Left) Fifi, 2013, Poplar, cherry, 17" × 16" × 5" (43cm × 41cm × 13cm)

(Right) Let's Fall in Love, 2013, Poplar, cherry, larger figure is 11" × 6½" × 4" (28cm × 17cm × 10cm)

Doug Schneiter, Colorado

I was introduced to woodturning nearly fifty years ago in high school. Eventually, I began teaching woodworking and in the early 1990s was offered a position at a school in Loveland, Colorado. This move came at a fortuitous time, as it coincided with the 1994 AAW Symposium in Fort Collins, which led to the formation of the Rocky Mountain Woodturners chapter. I was soon involved with an amazing group of turners, who were at first mentors but ultimately became longtime friends.

I am currently focusing on basket illusion pieces, which is certainly a reflection of my long friendship and respect for the late David Nittmann and his work. I always strive to infuse this method with my own direction, using multiple colors in geometric patterns on platters, bowls, and hollow forms. The goal is always the same: to make my next piece my best piece.

For more, visit dougschneiterwoodturner.com.

How Do You Like It?, 2016, Hard maple, 2" × 16" (5cm × 41cm)

Small Basket Illusion Bowl, 2017, Hard maple, 2" × 6" (5cm × 15cm)

Return Trip, 2002–2017, Soft maple, 7½" × 12 ½" (19cm × 32cm)

I originally turned this hollow form in 2002; in 2017, I remounted and re-turned it, adding the basket illusion effect.

Michael Maffitt, Mississippi

My fascination with woodturning began when shop classes were still common in junior high schools. That's when I turned my first set of legs for a small table, which somehow won a ribbon at the local fair. My turnings back then were mundane; I had very little instruction or inspiration, and the pieces reflected that. Fast-forward to 2005, when I found the Mid South Woodturners Guild, an AAW chapter in Memphis, Tennessee. I have found that in all AAW chapters, the members have a wonderful willingness to share. If you attend even one local or national symposium, you can learn and transfer knowledge to your own work. We have great resources today available to anyone who wants to learn.

The multisided pieces shown here offer angled views and interesting lines, but they are made using simple cuts on the lathe. The use of a plywood backer board for work-holding allows me to turn one surface, then flip the workpiece multiple times to turn the opposite and adjacent sides. My inspiration for this series came from a YouTube channel hosted by Robbie Power, aka Robbie the Woodturner, who credits Nova Scotia woodturner Derek Andrews with the idea. ▶

Multisided weedpot, 2017, Maple, each piece is 6⅛" × 1¾" × 1¾" (16cm × 4cm × 4cm)

Multisided weedpot, 2017, Maple, each piece is 8½" × 2½" × 2½" (22cm × 6cm × 6cm)

Al Miotke, Illinois

I started working with wood at a very young age, when my father, who owned a custom cabinet business, handed me a broom and said, "Sweep!" Following this initiation, he taught me to appreciate the beauty and flexibility of wood, along with the fundamentals of woodworking. My interest in the craft continued into adulthood; I explored furniture design as a part-time passion, while paying the bills as an engineering manager. Then, after more than thirty years of making furniture, I looked for something different and discovered woodturning. That was more than twelve years ago, and I have never looked back.

My fascination with segmented design resulted from a perfect storm of factors: precision woodworking skills, engineering expertise, and a newfound passion for woodturning. In recent years, an interest in natural forms and textures has transformed my design approach; I've combined classical segmented construction with carving, pyrography, and painting, with the goal of contrasting formal geometric patterns with the look of organic elements.

A Toot for Horton, 2012, Various wood species, 12" × 8" (30cm × 20cm)

Archimedes Gift, 2016, Bubinga, maple, bloodwood, 6" × 5½" (15cm × 14cm)

Keep the Ball Rolling, 2015, Holly, bloodwood, poplar (base), 8" × 12" (20cm × 30cm)

The Beauty Within, 2014, Maple, wenge, 10" × 8" (25cm × 20cm)

Steve Rasko, Canada

I made *Canadian Triple Crown* in celebration of Canada's 150th year (2017). The maple leaf in the center, made of silver-plated copper, is embedded in clear epoxy and was hand cut by my good friend and silversmith artist Laurie Casat. I stained the maple black, then textured it and highlighted the marks with gilding cream.

The title, *Canadian Triple Crown*, derives from three elements: the use of Canadian maple, the display of the Canadian maple leaf symbol, and the craftsmanship of a proud Canadian.

For more, visit floatingstonedesign.com.

Canadian Triple Crown, 2017, Eastern silver maple, silver-plated copper, gilding cream, 1½" × 8¼" (38mm × 21cm)

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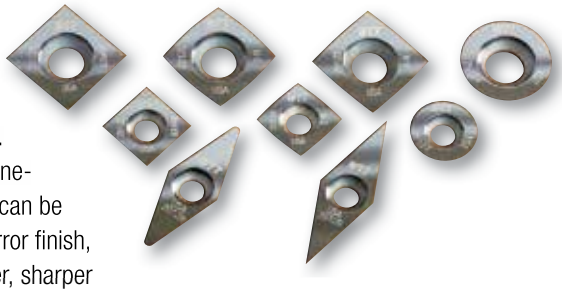

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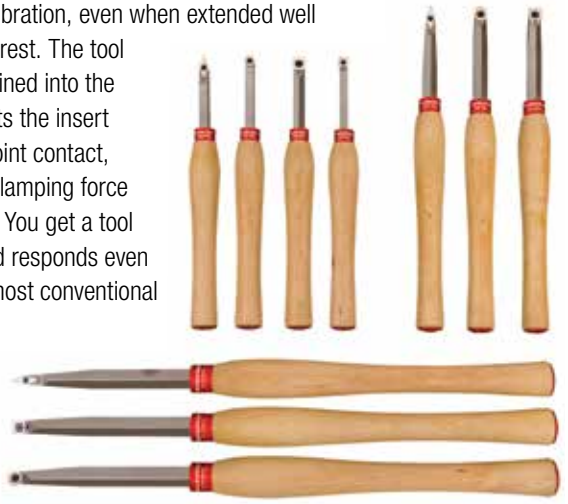

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RICK ORR
COLORADO

My main interest in woodturning is making boxes, and I think of my fly rod tubes as nothing more than very long boxes, each comprising shorter hollowed sections. From a 1"- (25mm-) thick bamboo board, I cut 3"- (8cm-) wide pieces, 15" (38cm) long. These strips are stacked and glued into square blanks, then mounted between centers for turning. The hollowing process involves Forstner bits and bit extensions; a steady rest is imperative. I use mortise-and-tenon joinery to connect the 14" (36cm) tube sections, and the joints are hidden by well-placed burn lines and color.

For more, visit fishtailflyrodtubes.com.

Laser work is contracted out to a local specialist.

Shown with a 6' (1.8m), #1-weight, two-piece fly rod made by the author's nephew, Lee Orr (304rodcompany.com).

Bill Suter, a former clerk of the U.S. Supreme Court, received a specially commissioned fly rod tube and fly rod made by the author and his nephew, Lee Orr, as a retirement gift, 2013.

Fly Rod Tube #60, 2013, Bamboo, 38" (97cm) long × 2" (5cm) outside diameter