



# Eric Lofstrom Washington

## **2018 SYMPOSIUM DEMONSTRATOR**

**Eric Lofstrom will** be a demonstrator at AAW's 2018 International Symposium in Portland, Oregon, where he will share his woodturning



expertise. For more, visit woodturner.org.

Working with wood has been a source of peaceful intrigue since my childhood. When creating at the lathe, I try to practice "presence," or mindfulness, so I can stay safe and make the most of my time creatively. I strive to balance the seemingly opposite goals of absolute physical control and creative surrender. On my best days, I can zoom in on the finest material details, while also acknowledging how various elements might play to a piece's artistic message. Approaching studio time in this way may not be the most productive in terms of volume, but it allows me to explore and fully understand things in a more satisfying way.

As an artist, I aim to create clean-lined forms with minimal distraction. I use grain, color, and texture to invite an intimate conversation with my work. I enjoy working within self-prescribed constraints, focusing my exploration to develop philosophical concepts into series. Currently, my work represents curiosities relating to water, energy, and the human spirit.

For more, visit ericlofstrom.com.



Namaste series, 2014–2017, Maple, acrylic paint, largest is 2" × 4" (5cm × 10cm)

In his Namaste pieces, Eric Lofstrom seeks to represent the essence of an honoring interaction between souls.



With a steady hand, Eric forms an unbroken spiral from bottom to rim, often coloring the interiors of his Namaste bowls with multiple layers of paint, gold leaf, or both.



Namaste series, 2017, Maple, acrylic paint, 2" × 3" (5cm × 8cm)

Resilience series, 2017, Maple burl, dye, largest is  $6" \times 3"$  (15cm  $\times$  8cm)

The influence of water is most obvious in Eric's Resilience pieces (multiaxis droplets), portraying the frozen movement of a falling droplet blown in the wind.







Spinning series, 2017, Maple, ink, each is  $2" \times 2\frac{3}{4}"$  (5cm  $\times$  7cm) Turned with a skew chisel, tops in Eric's Spinning series exemplify the dizzying exuberance of playing with possibilities.



Resonance series, 2017, Maple, acrylic paint,  $8" \times 5\frac{1}{2}" \times 1\frac{1}{2}"$  (20cm × 14cm × 38mm)

Celebrating the metaphor of ripples caused by a pebble dropped into a pond, Eric's Resonance series acknowledges the life- and soul-altering impacts of human interaction. The "ripples" are cut cleanly and do not require sanding, which would round over the sharp ridges.

# AAW OF WOODTURNERS

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

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Journal of the American Association of Woodturners

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#### woodturner.org

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

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#### Index to previous articles:

Download a free complete American Woodturner index (PDF format) at tiny.cc/AWindex\*.

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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



Members of the AAW community never cease to impress me with both their depth of knowledge and willingness to share it. The spirit of sharing seems to be an underlying characteristic of woodturners. I hear about it all the time in casual conversation and see it through the lens of journal editor.

Chapter members like Michael Grady, of the Western Massachusetts Woodturners, embody

that woodturner's generosity. Mike went above and beyond to find the right method of teaching Jeff Granger, who was determined to learn

woodturning despite having suffered a stroke. Jeff is another kind of inspiration altogether—equally moving in a different way (page 15).

I often hear how woodturners keep no trade secrets, but openly share what they know without fear of competition. This comes in the form of techniques and methods, as well as analysis of artistic concepts. Malcolm Zander shares both in a two-part treatment of piercing and the creative use of negative space (pages 22 and 28, respectively).

Here's to learning from one another and then adding our own spin.

John Friend

—Ioshua Friend

## From the President



#### **Evolution**

I just read Amazon is going to start its own distribution branch. I'm sure the U.S. postal service thought online purchases were going to

be their savior. Now, not only will they lose Amazon's business, I'll bet in short order Amazon will be in competition with them.

What does this have to do with the AAW? Ten or twenty years ago, if you wanted to be a turner, you might join a local club, find a mentor, and have turning friends advise you on what lathe to buy, where to get wood, and what to turn. After a couple of purchases, you'd start getting catalogs from vendors and soon have more tools than you need or regularly use. You probably purchased or borrowed some instructional books on turning. You're happily using the same equipment your friends are and making similar turnings.

Let's fast-forward to today. Now if you want to be a turner, you'll probably still join a local club, find a mentor, and have friends give you advice. However, now you'll go online, look at all equipment available, read reviews, visit discussion forums, and buy the latest and greatest tools available. Your friends will envy you. You still might get catalogs from vendors, but you'll purchase mostly online. Instead of books, you'll look to online videos for instructions or

ideas. If time and money allow, you'll attend some turning classes.

Let's fast-forward five or ten years into the future. You are of a different generation. You want to be a turner and, as your educational and career experiences have been computer-focused, you look to the Internet for purchases, learning experiences, and turning ideas. You also post images of your pieces, hoping to get recognition for your developing skills. Although much of your interaction with other turners will be through social media, most turners will still join a local club. Chapters might place emphasis on mentoring and teaching newer members. Education and involvement will play a big role in making new turners into long-term advocates of turning. Craft schools and professional turners will continue to play a major role in developing the best of turning skills. By the way, those catalogs, like the ones Sears used to print, are no more.

What is common to all three of these scenarios? The American Association of Woodturners, an evolving organization recognizing the changing needs of its membership and responding to those needs. To meet the current and future needs, we are focusing on more online resources and improved quality of all communications. Joshua Friend, our editor-in-chief, does an outstanding job both with *American Woodturner* and online content. Additionally, he has recruited John Kelsey to head up *Woodturning FUNdamentals*, our popular web-based program focusing

on educating up-and-coming turners. Both the *American Woodturner* and all of our electronic educational materials will remain the "Gold Standard" for the woodturning community.

AAW will continue its support of local chapters. We realize our long-term successes are dependent on the wellbeing of our chapters. Our Annual International Symposium, with its three-decade history, and the regional symposia will continue to ensure all turners have the opportunity to see the best artists in the world, purchase the latest in tools and supplies, and provide galleries displaying the finest of turnings.

The AAW recognizes its environment is changing and will continue to be proactive, not reactive, in its evolution. We have a proud history. It's important we are just as proud of our future.

#### Thank you

Finally, as a result of continuing growth of membership, efficiently run symposia, and well-managed expense control, the AAW ended 2017 in an excellent financial position. We can thank Jeff Brockett and his Symposium Committee, Joe Dickey and the Finance Committee, and Phil McDonald and our talented staff.

Looking forward,

Greg Schramek

President, AAW Board of Directors

# AAW'S 32ND ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

OREGON CONVENTION CENTER PORTLAND, OREGON • JUNE 14-17, 2018



Our 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.





#### SYMPOSIUM HOTEL

#### **Host Hotel**

**Doubletree by Hilton** 1000 NE Multnomah St. Portland, OR 97232 503-281-6111, info@portlanddoubletree.com Reservations: 800-996-0510

#### Alternate Hotel

Courtyard (by Marriott) Portland **Downtown Convention Center** 

435 NE Wasco Street Portland, OR 97232 503-234-3200

Visit tiny.cc/SymposiumHotels for updated hotel and group rate information.

#### **DONATE TOOLS TO THE AAW TOOL BANK**

AAW's Tool Bank is a success story. In each of the last seven years, AAW members have brought new and lightly used tools to the Annual Symposium for donation. This program supports AAW outreach in Tool Bank Grant awards to benefit chapters and organizations teaching woodturning.

Your donation of new or lightly used tools will be much appreciated. Our greatest need is for bowl, spindle, and roughing gouges. Chucks and other equipment are also welcome. Tool donations will be accepted at the Symposium registration desk.

#### **FREE SYMPOSIUM** HANDOUT BOOK

Symposium registration includes a comprehensive Symposium book, which features all the demonstrators, images of their work, and valuable how-to in-

formation on topics covered in demonstrations. Buy an extra copy for \$25 to share with your woodturning friends back home!



#### PROFESSIONAL OUTREACH PROGRAM PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Panel discussions open to all symposium attendees.



- Artists Showcase—Evolution of an Artist: Sally Burnett, Vivien Grandouiller, David Ellsworth (moderator)
- Creativity: John Mydock, Melissa Engler, Mark Sfirri (moderator)
- Packing Fragile Work for Shipping: Tib Shaw, Kristen LeVier, J. Paul Fennell (moderator)
- **Photography:** Tib Shaw, John Beaver (moderator)
- Craft Shows: Mark Waninger, Christian Burchard, Sally Ault, David Ellsworth (moderator)
- Collectors of Wood Art (CWA): Namita Gupta Wiggers, Patricia E. Kane, David Wahl, Suzy Wahl, John Beaver (moderator)
- **Collaboration:** Mark Sfirri, Graeme Priddle, Eric Lofstrom, Joe Seltzer (moderator)
- Marketing: Nick Cook, Ashley Harwood, Sally Ault, Mike Mahoney (moderator)
- The Ego and the Soul—Why Makers Make: Stephen Hatcher, Derek Weidman, David Ellsworth (moderator)
- Turning with Physical Limitations: Brent English, Alan Zenreich, Andrea Sullivan (moderator)
- Instant Gallery Critique: An opportunity to receive valuable feedback on your work through one-on-one discussion with an expert. Expect encouragement, tips, suggestions, and a positive experience. Graeme Priddle, Andrew Johnson-Laird, William (Bill) Moore

Visit woodturner.org for updated information.

#### AAW EDUCATIONAL BENEFIT LIVE AUCTION

Join us Friday, June 15, 2018, for good company and the AAW Educational Benefit Live Auction (formerly known as the Educational Opportunity Grant Live Auction, or EOG Auction). As before, proceeds will support AAW educational initiatives. The AAW remains committed to providing EOG grants, and that program continues in its present form.

The AAW Educational Benefit Live Auction will again allow you to participate via live, remote, online bidding. Auction items will be published online for advance viewing, typically thirty

days prior to the auction. To sign up to be notified via email when online previewing becomes available, visit tiny.cc/NotifyMe.

Note that this year the auction will have an earlier start time to accommodate remote bidder participation in different time zones. Look to the AAW website (woodturner.org) and your Symposium confirmation for details.

Also, don't miss the bidding at the Professional Outreach Program (POP) live auction the afternoon of Saturday, lune 16.

#### **MOBILE APP**



The Guidebook app for mobile devices will again be available for use at this year's Symposium. With this free app, you'll have all the rotations, demonstrators, tradeshow exhibitors, floor plans, and messaging at your fingertips. Save time by installing the app before the Symposium. Visit woodturner.org.

# YOUTH TURNING ROOM



Youth ages 10 to 18 are eligible to register for free hands-on woodturning instruction. Each registered youth must be accompanied by an adult who is registered for the Symposium. Students will make a variety of projects. Our youth turning instructors this year will include Kailee Bosch, Paul Carter, Kip Christensen, Nick Cook, and Bonnie Klein. On Sunday, fifteen young turners will win a complete turning package, including a lathe, tools, and faceshield.

#### **Donations to the Youth Turning Room:**

- JPW Industries: JET mini-lathes and stands
- Nova Teknatool: Nova chucks and revolving tail centers
- Crown Tools: Crown turning tools
- Robust Tools: Toolrests
- Craft Supplies USA: Project supplies
- Vince's WoodNWonders: Project supplies
- Woodcraft: Faceshields
- Easy Wood Tools: Tool sets, custom turning smocks
- AAW: Portland Symposium T-shirts



Learning to turn a bowl with expert instruction at the AAW International Symposium, Kansas City, 2017.

Photo: Andi Wolfe

Donor list current as of time of publication. Visit tiny.cc/AAW2018OR for updated information.

Our heartfelt thanks to those who generously donated in support of the AAW Youth Program. These vendors have also agreed to furnish a complete turning package for the visually impaired program.

# SPECIAL INTEREST NIGHT





Christian Burchard
Photo: Christopher Briscoe

The action begins on the evening of Thursday, June 14, with Special Interest Night sessions for focused disciplines, including Ornamental Turners, Principally Pens, and Segmented Woodturners. Specialty group meetings such as Women in Turning will take place, along with forums on other relevant woodturning subjects. Don't miss a special Thursday night presentation, when Christian Burchard, globe-trotting woodturner, sculptor, furniture-maker, housebuilder, goat-tender, cheesemaker, and much more, will reflect on his journey in woodturning in a presentation, "A Life Made with These

Hands: Predictable Unpredictability and the Nature of Wood." Burchard will discuss the importance of using our hands and being creative in these uncertain times, as well as the pleasure of working with unpredictable materials and not knowing exactly where you're going.

# POP SHOWCASE ARTISTS



This year's Professional Outreach Program (POP) Artist Showcase will feature Sally Burnett and Vivien Grandouiller. In addition to their individual rotations noted below, Sally and Vivien will participate in a POP panel discussion, "Evolution of an Artist."

#### Sally Burnett, England

- PowerPoint presentation on turning "green" endgrain vessels with a wide top and small base. Covering timber selection, turning thickness to reduce movement when drying, the hollowing process, and Sally's methods to create a balanced form with an elegant curve.
- ▶ Design and Decorative Techniques
  Sally will cover the original inspiration for her Corvus Nero Collection and the decorative processes she uses in her work. She will show how easy it is to combine simple processes and techniques, such as bleaching, pyrography, carving, and gilding, to create unique, dynamic surfaces.





Corvus Nero Woven Black, 2017, Sycamore, wood bleach, pyrography, marbled silver leaf dyed bronze, acrylic paint, 9" × 81/4" (23cm × 21cm)

#### Vivien Grandouiller, France

#### Spheres

Turning of a sphere. Hollowing off-center with lathe and Foredom® rotary tool, painting with airbrush, and masking techniques for sandblasting.

#### Ogives and Menhirs

(ogive: a point or arch in Gothic architecture; menhir: an upright-standing stone)
Turning in different grain direction, painting with airbrush, sculpting with Foredom®, and masking techniques for sandblasting.





Ogives and Menhirs Colors, 2016, Ash, acrylic paint, steel (bases), tallest is 12" (30cm)



# WOODTURNING EXHIBITIONS



#### **Instant Gallery**

The AAW Symposium Instant Gallery is the largest display of turned-wood objects under one roof. It is a great opportunity for any and all registered attendees to sell or just show off their work. There are no requirements: just bring up to three of your turnings to participate in this incredible display.

#### **Special Exhibitions**

#### Dia•Log

The annual AAW member exhibition theme for 2018 is Dia•Log, chosen to reflect the city of Portland's strong community spirit and the state's long logging history, but perhaps even more essentially, it speaks to the way our community, through a shared love of woodturning, finds common ground in uncommon times.

Two artist awards will be given during the Symposium: a Masters' Choice Award of \$300 and a People's Choice Award of \$200.



**Dewey Garrett**, *Halfblock*, 2017, Birch plywood, 5%" × 53/4" × 51/2" (15cm × 15cm × 14cm)

#### **Out of the Woods – Traditional Form Revisited**

Now in its twelfth year, the Professional Outreach Program (POP) exhibition series presents small-scale works by an international roster of emerging and established artists. This year, the exhibit will feature works by forty-three artists from ten countries and eighteen states. The work is small scale (maximum size of  $6" \times 6" \times 6"$ , or  $15\text{cm} \times 15\text{cm} \times 15\text{cm}$ ), but the artists brought big thinking, creativity, and skill to presenting familiar forms in new and innovative ways.

The work from this show will be auctioned live at the Symposium. Can't make it? Bid online! To sign

up to be notified via email when online previewing becomes available, visit tiny.cc/NotifyMe. Proceeds support POP initiatives and programs, including panels, Instant Gallery awards, grants, and the Artist Showcase.

#### 2018 POP Merit Award - Binh Pho

This year, POP honors the late Binh Pho, 1955-2017.

The POP Merit Award is given to an artist whose body of work and career have contributed significantly to the growth of woodturning as an art form, and that is certainly true for Binh Pho. Binh moved the field of woodturning forward with work that was beautiful and immediately appealing to all, but rich with biographical meaning. As a teacher and mentor, as an AAW Board member, and as the energy behind many initiatives, his mark on woodturning is indelible. Previous recipients of this award include David Ellsworth, Ron Fleming, Clay Foster, Giles Gilson, Stephen Hogbin, Mark Lindquist, Richard Raffan, Merryll Saylan, and Jacques Vesery.

Visit the Special Exhibitions Area at the Portland Symposium to see all these shows, as well as the AAW live/online auction items and work by POP Artist Showcase presenters Sally Burnett and Vivien Grandouiller.

The Special Exhibitions opening, including light appetizers and a cash bar, will be held Thursday, June 14, at 5:30 p.m.

# COMPANION PROGRAM



We are excited about the 2018 AAW Companion Program for spouses and adult guests of Symposium attendees. Gather together to socialize or work on DIY projects. Bring a current project to work on, or be inspired by the sample project materials on hand.

This program also offers a meeting spot for walking tours, grabbing Portland's MAX Light Rail train service, or visiting local sights. Visit tiny.cc/Companion for updates.

# CHARITABLE EVENTS



Each year, local chapter organizers select a project for fundraising during the Symposium. This year, we have two, to which attendees are invited to contribute. See woodturner.org for details and guidelines.

#### **Empty Bowls**

AAW members create and donate woodturned bowls (and other turned items), which are sold in the Instant Gallery for only \$25 each. All of the 2018 proceeds will benefit Meals on Wheels People, of Portland.

#### **Beads of Courage**

AAW members create and donate woodturned boxes to the nonprofit Beads of Courage. Through this program, children receive unique beads that represent procedures or treatments during a serious illness. For example, they might receive a red bead for each blood transfusion, a yellow bead for each night in the hospital, a star bead for surgery, or a white bead for chemotherapy. Their collection of beads becomes a tangible record of their journey. Each turned and donated box will be used to hold a child's precious beads.

#### WIT GROUP PROJECT FOR BENEFIT AUCTION





**WIT Collaboration,** *Topsy-Turvy,* 2018, various woods and sizes

For the fourth year in a row, Women in Turning (WIT) will donate a group project to the AAW Educational Benefit Live Auction (formerly called the Educational Opportunity Grant, or EOG, Auction), held during this year's AAW Symposium in Portland, Oregon. The theme for this year's WIT donation is spin tops, and the collection is titled, *Topsy-Turvy*. Tania Radda will design and make the display, which will contain more than forty spin tops, all made by women woodturners.

The Benefit Auction in Portland will be connected live via the Internet—if you want to bid on *Topsy-Turvy* but will not be able to attend the Symposium, you can bid online. Visit tiny.cc/NotifyMe to sign up for email notification of when auction items become available for online viewing. Funds raised from the sale will help support woodturning education. Thank you to all the contributors who donated this year's spin tops.

—Tania Radda

# WOODTURNING TRADESHOW



Explore the newest woodturning equipment, accessories, and supplies all under one roof. We'll have a huge amount of exhibit space to showcase the finest manufacturers and vendors of wood, tools, lathes, sanding and finishing supplies, instructional materials, and more. Take advantage of show specials on merchandise. Browse the wide range of handcrafted gifts and artwork—from wooden pens to jewelry, bowls, sculptures, and more. Following is a partial list of tradeshow vendors. Visit woodturner.org for updated information.

Airbrushing Wood Alumilite Corp. **Arrowmont School of Arts** and Crafts **Blackline Tool Company Boxmaster Tools** Carter and Son Toolworks Carter Products Chefware Kits Cindy Drozda **Woodturning Tools CPH International Craft Supplies USA Curt Theobald Studios** Designs by Gjovaag **DNB Tool** D-Way Tools, Inc. Easy Inlay **Easy Wood Tools** Earth's Watch Wooden Watches Frugal Vacuum Chuck Gilmer Wood Company

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# SPECIAL LATHE RAFFLE







We are proud to announce JET/Powermatic will be the exclusive lathe provider for the AAW International Symposium in Portland.

JPW Industries will provide twenty-six lathes for the youth turning area, the 3520C and mini-lathe for the special raffle, and loaners for all demonstration rooms. The demo room loaners will be for sale at discounted prices; watch for details on how you can purchase one.

Our thanks to JPW Industries for their generous involvement in the woodturning community.



This custom-painted, Portland-themed Powermatic lathe will be raffled off during the AAW International Symposium, in Portland, Oregon, June 16, 2018. Join us for your chance to win! Proceeds to support Oregon-area AAW chapters.

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## 2017 Fundraising Campaign

On behalf of all those whom AAW serves, we want to express our deep appreciation for the generosity by those individuals and AAW chapters who gave to the AAW during the 2017 fundraising campaigns. Your donations will be used to fund general operations, youth education, Women in Turning, Educational Opportunity Grants, and other programs. We also want to thank all of our members who contributed artwork to support the EOG and POP auctions at the Kansas City Symposium. Please visit woodturner.org for a complete donor recognition listing. AAW membership dues cover only a portion of the expenses for our member programs and services, and your contributions matter immensely to us. We thank you for your personal expressions of support for the AAW and our nonprofit mission.

-Greg Schramek, President, AAW Board of Directors

-Phil McDonald, AAW Executive Director

#### \$0 - \$99

James Ackerman Jim Aliano John Anderson **Robert Andrews** Bill Baca Debbi Baker Barrie Baptie **Dennis Barkelew** Frnie Rean Ted Beebe **Denis Bourke** Ken Brinker Helen Brown Harold Horchover Mark Choitz

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Derek Roff

Bill Straff lim Titze Priscilla Wahlen Robert Waldron John Wasden Des Wirges Vic Wood Ken Woodkey Joseph Zinski

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DeDe McNeil Allen Miller and Andrea Sullivan Larry Miller Minnesota Association of Woodturners Doug North Northwood Turners Rick O'Ryan

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Paul Vondersaar David and Suzy Wahl Marjin Wall David and Ruth Waterbury West Michigan Woodturners in honor of Jerry Kroehn Steve Wheeler Woodturners of Olympia

#### \$500 - \$999

Jerry Bennett **Becky Bragg** Art Candland Matthew Cohn **Des Moines** Woodturners Richard DiPerna Robert and Gail Gaynes Eileen Duffy Kathleen Duncan Kevin Felderhoff Linda Ferber Otto Folkerts

Margaret Lospinuso Rick Rich The Perlmutter Foundation **Utah Woodturning** Symposium

#### \$1000 - \$4900

**Dakota Woodturners** Joe Dickey John and Carol Ellis David and Wendy Ellsworth John Green

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Ohio Valley Woodturners Guild Oregon Woodturning Symposium

Southwest Association of Turners (SWAT) Tennessee Association of Woodturners (TAW) **Thompson Lathe Tools Totally Turning** Symposium

Trent Bosch Turn on Chicago **Turning Southern** Style



#### **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 ninemember 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 threeyear 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.

# **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.

# **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.



# **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. ■

# Calendar of Events June issue deadline: April 15

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

#### Canada

July 20–22, 2018, 2018 Sask Woodturners Symposium, Persephone Theatre, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Registration includes two lunches and one supper (early bird discount ends March 31, 2018). Featured demonstrators to include Graeme Priddle, Melissa Engler, Michael Hosaluk, Molly Winton, and Steven Kennard. For more, visit hubcityturners.ca.

#### 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 live and silent auctions. Demonstrators to include Mike Mahoney, Dale Larson, Jason Breach, Sally Ault, Merryll Saylan, Trent Bosch, Brian Gisi, Doug Schneiter, and Michael Roper. For more, visit rmwoodturningsymposium.com.

#### Georgia

February 17–April 28, 2018, Art from the Wood Lathe, Hudgens Center for Art and Learning, Duluth. An exhibition of woodturned art by Georgia turner Wes Jones. For more, visit thehudgens.org.

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. Discounted price of \$155 until August 21; plus Saturday-only rates available. New this year: Special Interest Night. For more, visit gawoodturner.org, email symposium@gawoodturner.org, or follow Turning Southern Style Symposium on Facebook.

#### 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. Demonstrators to include Rudolph Lopez, Betty Scarpino, Kip Christensen, Harvey Meyer, Jennifer Shirley, and others to be announced. For more, visit turnonchicago.com.

#### 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 6<sup>th</sup> Biennial Symposium of the Segmented Woodturners, Marriott St. Louis West, St. Louis. Three days of demonstrations, a banquet, instant gallery, raffle, and camaraderie with 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.

#### Montana

September 29–30, 2018, Yellowstone Woodturners Symposium, Roaring 20s Club House, Billings. Featured demonstrator/instructor will be Stan Record (instructor for Craft Supplies USA), specializing in embellishing platters, bowls, and boxes using grinder, colored paste, texturing tools, rotary tool, relief carving, and color applications. For more, visit yellowstoneturners.org/wp or call Tim Morgan at 406-690-8730 or Dr. Van at 406-545-0777.

#### **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 Jersey**

January 14–April 22, 2018, *David Ellsworth: A Passion for Wood*, Hunterdon Art Museum, Clinton. An art exhibition showcasing the work of master woodturner David Ellsworth. For more, visit hunterdonartmuseum.org.

#### 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.

#### Texas

April 27–29, 2018, SWAT Region Women in Turning (WIT) Retreat, Cypress. Hands-on retreat for women of all turning skills. Admission includes two lunches and an evening meal. Demonstrators: Sally Ault, Rebecca DeGroot, Jeanne Douphrate, Janice Levi, and Charley Phillips. Preregistration required; contact Janice Levi at jlevi@rightturnonly.net.

August 24–26, 2018, Southwest Association of Turners (SWAT) Symposium, Waco Convention Center, Waco. Lead demonstrators to include Stuart Batty, Keith Gotschall, George Hatfield, Dan Tilden, Craig Timmerman, and Alan & Lauren Zenreich. Also vendors, instant gallery, hands-on area, banquet, and drawings. Lunches are provided. For more, visit swaturners.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

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 for which they are known. For a list of participating artists, see page 42 in this issue of American Woodturner. For more, visit newhorizonswoodart.org.



# Yacolt Safety Whistle Demo

The town of Yacolt, Washington, is small and has no traffic lights. The rare traffic jam is usually due to the spectacular Independence Day parade, the large well-planned fireworks display, or the more recent National Night Out festival in the town park. The abundant turnout to that last event was perhaps due in part to members of the Southwest Washington Woodturners conducting a demonstration in the shade of the pavilion.

Our club board had sanctioned the planning of a demo in Yacolt six months prior. Initially, it was to be a collaboration with the tourist train based in town. But when club secretary Terry Tanner attended a town meeting, our demo plans were placed at the top of the agenda. The mayor and town council loved the idea of a woodturning demonstration and asked if we would be willing to do one during the town's National Night Out event in August 2017. Of course, we agreed.

Deciding what to turn was the easy part—whistles, of course, based on an article in the *American Woodturner* archives.

#### **Spreading the word**

Our club board wanted the woodturning demonstration to accomplish three things:

- Generate interest in woodturning and share the benefits of the AAW and club membership
- Carry out the club and AAW mission of "providing education,



Members of the Southwest Washington Woodturners generated public interest in the craft by turning and handing out wooden whistles.

## Mid-Columbia Woodturners Turns 20

The Mid-Columbia Woodturners (Washington) chapter of the AAW turned 20 years old in 2017. The founding members, Jerry Johnson, Ron Gerton, John Nichols, and Chuck Madsen obtained their charter from AAW in 1997. The club has since grown to more than seventy-five members, with more than two-thirds of them regularly attending the monthly meetings.

The club challenge for the year 2017 was to turn something that incorporated "20" into the turning. There was no restriction on *how* the concept could be used. Several members took the challenge and created unique and interesting turnings, including a bowl holding twenty spheres, bowls with twenty insets, the club initials (MCW) made with twenty segments, and more.

-Flo Sayre



MCW members showing off their 20-themed creations in celebration of this special anniversary. From left: Kelly Craig, Henry Doolittle, Dan Holmes, Bill Tanner, Guy Bomarito, Pat Miller, Jerry Johnson, and Jerry Decker.

information, and organization to those interested in woodturning"

• Turn and give away what we would call "safety whistles" to residents and visitors of the event

The event was organized so that when participating club members were not demonstrating at the lathe, they were responsible for giving away whistles and encouraging club and AAW membership. At the club meeting prior to the event, turning the whistles was demonstrated. All club members had been sent an electronic copy of the article and asked to make several so a large supply

asked to make several so a large supply

would be available on the day of the event. Club members supplied more than 130 whistles to be given away.

On the day of the big event, two mini-lathes were set up and whistles were being turned continuously by club members taking their turns at the lathes. More than 150 whistles were given away, and many watching expressed interest in club and AAW membership. While cleaning up the wood chips, club president Dan Baker had every right to be as pleased as he looked—it had been a successful and fun occasion for everyone.

-Rick Rich



# Jeff Granger: Turning Against the Odds

In January 2017, Jeff Granger and his wife Judy attended the Woodworking Show in West Springfield, Massachusetts. Jeff was experienced in woodworking, but this time he saw something new: The Western Massachusetts Woodturners, an AAW chapter, was demonstrating lathe work. He wasn't familiar with woodturning but knew immediately he wanted to learn.

Many people become woodturners in this way, but Jeff's story is different. Fifteen years ago, he had a stroke that left him paralyzed on the right side of his body and affected his speech. Although he has the use of his left hand and arm, it is his non-dominant side. Learning to turn with only one hand would be a challenge for most people, but Jeff refused to let his limitations stop him.

#### A plan and lessons learned

The Grangers came to a meeting of our club and wanted to learn about our mentoring program. As vice president of the club and the one in charge of programs and mentoring, I spoke with Jeff and Judy.

My first thought was that it would be difficult to teach Jeff how to turn safely. I had no experience teaching someone who is physically challenged. Eventually, I called the AAW, whose staff pointed me in the right direction. They told me about Dan Stromstad of the South Puget Sound Woodturners, who mentored a friend who had had a stroke. I called Dan immediately. He told me what he did, what worked, and what didn't. After trying a number of woodturning tools, Dan said he finally settled on Easy Wood Tools because they could be used with one hand. At the end of our talk, he left me with this one thought: Focus on what he can do, not on what he can't.

I realized there was only one way for me to understand what was possible for Jeff: I went to my shop and tried turning with only my left hand. If I couldn't do it, why would I expect him to? After some practice, I discovered I could make basic cuts. My plan was to stay one step ahead and find the best way to cut safely, optimize tool control, and maintain balance. Whenever Jeff came to my shop for

mentoring, I would turn with only my left hand. After watching me turn in this way, Jeff was able to make the same cuts. We wasted no time trying to adapt the typical two-handed technique to Jeff's situation.

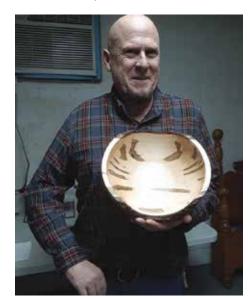
Other than the non-standard method of turning, our overall approach was conventional: focus on the fundamentals, place special emphasis on consistency, and ensure the current teaching session builds upon the last. It was helpful to define success, ask what it would take to achieve it, and then be open to the possibility that the answer might be quite simple.

Jeff has been turning for seven months and has made remarkable progress. He brings his work to the club meetings for show and tell and participates in our outreach projects like Beads of Courage. This story would not be complete without acknowledging Judy Granger's support of Jeff. Her fierce advocacy and unwillingness to accept "no" for an answer are inspirational.

-Michael Grady



b Jeff Jeff Granger began woodturning after bout suffering a stroke, without the use of his right llenge arm. Michael Grady helped him learn a onehanded technique.



Jeff proudly showing his work.

Michael Grady (left) offering guidance to Jeff Granger. Mike got helpful information about mentoring someone with a physical challenge after contacting the AAW.

# Tips

#### **Simple tool protector**

I was on call to do a demo at our club and wanted to bring a few of my good turning tools. Naturally, I was concerned about the cutting edges on my newly sharpened tools getting damaged. Before I put the tools into my bag, I thought of a very simple way to protect them: cover the sharp edges with a rubberized glove. I discovered I could put the sharp end of each tool into one of the fingers of the glove and then bind the handles together with a rubber band.

-John Bacino, Pennsylvania



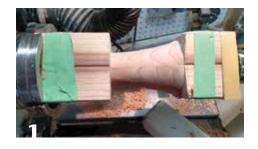
## Share your turning ideas!

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

#### **Inside-out calculations**

One challenge I encountered when I began turning inside-out projects is that I was never sure just how deep I could cut initially (*Photo 1*) and still have enough wall thickness after flipping the components to turn the outside profile. As a result, I would sometimes err on the side of cutting too shallow and end up with flat areas.



Using some basic algebra and geometry, I came up with an equation to help determine the maximum depth of initial cutting. Put simply, the smallest possible diameter must be greater than 0.414 times the width of the overall inside-out blank. This diameter can be set easily with calipers.

As an example, the overall width of an inside-out blank comprising  $1\frac{1}{2}$ "-(38mm-) square lengths is 3" (8cm). The diameter of initial cutting can be no smaller than 3" × 0.414, or 1.242". A safe caliper setting in this case might be  $1\frac{1}{2}$ ".

—Jim Meizelis, Illinois

#### **JOURNAL ARCHIVE CONNECTION**

AAW's online resources have plenty to offer on inside-out turning. Search "inside-out" using the Explore! tool to find prior articles on the subject. Visit woodturner.org to get started.



#### A third hand

Sanding bowls off the lathe is a tricky business made easier if you have three hands. I discovered a gadget called the Staybowlizer®, whose intended purpose is to anchor bowls on kitchen work surfaces when mixing ingredients. I found it is also great for holding turned bowls in all kinds of positions for sanding or other off-lathe work (*Photo 1*). When supplemented with a stand (such as the weighted coffee can shown in *Photo 2*), the Staybowlizer offers support for sanding the outside of bowls.

This product has a very "grippy" surface with good holding power, but after a while, sanding dust tends to cause it to lose its grip; a quick wash solves that problem. The Staybowlizer can be found online (see staybowlizer.com).

—Ed Pretty, Canada





# JUST WING IT!

ne of the simple pleasures in my life is to sit out on my deck, where I can see several bird feeders in my back yard and enjoy watching the little winged wonders munch at the seeds and suet I put out for them. Woodturners often take cues from nature in the forms they produce on the lathe, quite often from plant life. Today, let's take a suggestion from nature's air force and create a little winged marvel. We won't try to make it true to life like some experienced carvers do, seeing to every detail of every feather, but more of a stylized version

The bird is made of wood; wire is used for its legs. Two blanks will be needed. One will be sized for the body and head (*Figure 1*), and the other will be used for the wings (*Figure 2*). The wings will be cut away from the turning and glued onto the body.

that we can have some fun with.

#### Body

Start with the body. Prepare a blank that is 1¼" (32mm) square and about 7" (18cm) long. As shown in *Figure 1*, the body and head are turned from the same blank. Mount the block between centers and turn a tenon that will be held in a four-jaw chuck (*Photo 1*). To the right of the tenon is the head section, which should be left square for now. The remainder of the block is for the body.

Turn the body and while it is still supported on the lathe, drill holes for the neck and feet as shown in *Figure 1*. Drill a ¼" (6mm) hole for the dowel that will hold the head on, and two \%4" (2mm) holes in the bottom for attaching the wire legs. The position >



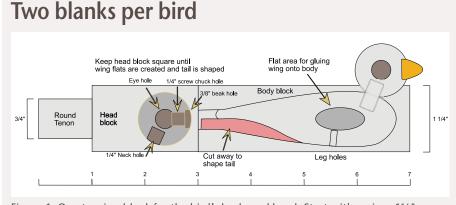


Figure 1. One turning blank for the bird's body and head. Start with a piece  $1\frac{1}{4}$ " square by 7" long.

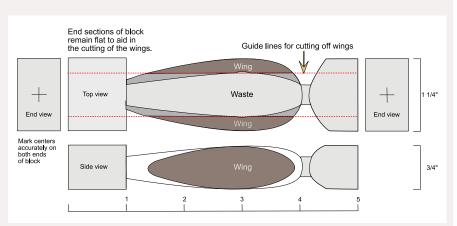


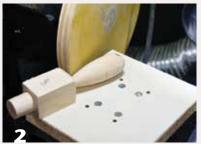
Figure 2. One turning blank for the wings. Start with a piece measuring  $1\frac{1}{4}$ "  $\times$   $\frac{3}{4}$ "  $\times$  5". The non-square blank means flats will remain after turning, which allow for safe cutting on the bandsaw.

# Mark and turn body

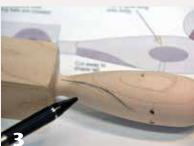


Mark the head/body blank, delineating each section. Begin by turning only the body; leave the head section square. Drill holes for the neck and feet, as shown in *Figure 1*.

# Shape the body



After turning the body shape, sand flats on the sides of the bird's body. The square section that will later become the head registers the workpiece firmly on the disk sander table. The sanded flats provide a gluing surface for the wings.





Mark and cut away the underside of the bird's body. Note the still-square head section is held securely in a wooden handscrew clamp for safe bandsawing.

of these holes can vary, depending on how you intend to pose the bird. If you pose the bird in a more upright position, then drill the neck hole more forward. If it's going to be more level and facing forward, then drill the neck hole back a bit. The leg holes are positioned near the center of the bird.

Draw some reference marks indicating where the wings will be glued on. Remove the blank from the chuck and create flats between these marks, one on each side of the body. If you have a disk sander, lay the block on the sander table, as shown in *Photo 2*, and gently touch the side of the body to the disk to create a small flat, just large enough to glue on the wings. If you don't have a disk sander, you can turn your lathe into one, as in *Photo* 2, with a small table that fits into the banjo and sandpaper adhered to a disk mounted on a faceplate or chuck. You could also create the flats by hand, using a hand-held sanding block.

Draw a curved line beneath the tail as shown in *Figure 1* and *Photo 3*. Take the blank to the bandsaw and remove the stock under the line (*Photo 4*). The square head block will enable you to move the blank safely through the bandsaw. Never try to cut round, unsupported wood on the bandsaw, as that would pose a significant safety hazard.

The tail and underside of the body need to be shaped and sanded. You can choose to do most of the shaping while the body is held on the lathe or remove the piece and carefully hold it in hand to shape it. Using a rotary tool with a small sanding drum (Photo 5) is an easy way of doing this, but if you have some carving burs, you may be able to speed up the roughing job. If you use carving burs and hold this tiny body in your hands, be sure you wear a carving glove in case the bur runs off the wood and heads for your fingers. This sanding operation can get a little dusty, so be sure you are

wearing a dust mask and directing the dust away from yourself.

#### Wings

The process shown here will create two symmetrical wings, each with a flat and domed side. The flat side will be glued onto the flats that were created on the body.

Prepare a blank for the wings measuring  $1\frac{1}{4}$ " ×  $\frac{3}{4}$ " × 5" (32mm × 19mm × 13cm). Be accurate in determining the center mounting points for this piece so that the wings will come out evenly. Accurately mark and divot the centers on the ends of the wing block (Photo 6). Mount the block between centers, mating up the divots with the drive and tailstock center points. As the block turns, you'll be hitting and missing, just as if you had started to round down a turning square (*Photo 7*). The piece is pretty small, so working with a speed in the 2000s makes for less vibration. However, don't turn at a lathe speed you're not comfortable with.

Turn the block so that the back of the wing taper is longer than the front and so the ends of the wings are cut deeper than the straight reference lines that will be used to cut the wings off.

Sand the domed wing surfaces and then prepare them for cutting away on a bandsaw. For safety sake, I wrapped the block with blue painter's tape (*Photo 8*) so that when the wing pieces

## Carve and sand



A rotary tool with a small drum sander makes quick work of final shaping and sanding the bird's body.

are cut away, they will be kept in place and won't accidentally come into contact with the blade.

Set your block against the bandsaw fence (*Photo 9*), so you can cut a nice straight line through the wings at the saw marks. Saw off the first wing. Turn the blank over so the opposite side is against the fence. Adjust the fence position so that you will saw off the second wing at the same thickness as the first one.

When the sawing is finished, you should have two symmetrical wings (*Photo 10*) with the taper on the back of the wing being longer than the front taper. Sand the back and edges of the wings so that they are smooth.

#### The head

The head is made from the remaining section of the body block (*Photo 11*).

It is a small 1" (25mm) sphere, turned in two mountings. The first uses the tenon created for turning the body and is for shaping and drilling the front of the head. The second mounting will be a reverse mounting of the head on a screw chuck so that the

back of the head can be finished and sanded smoothly.

Turn about three-quarters of the head sphere, leaving enough stock at the back to provide sufficient strength for drilling. Use bradpoint drills for all the holes, so your bit ▶

# Turn the wings

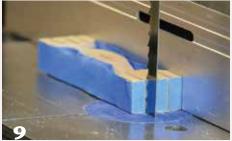


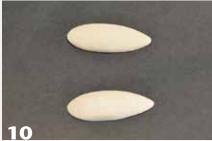


Mark and center punch the ends of the wing blank. This non-square blank will leave flats after turning, so the wings can be cut away safely at the bandsaw.

## Cut wings at bandsaw







Blue painter's tape helps to contain the small wings after they are sawn from the blank. Final-shape and sand the wings after they are cut free.

## Turn and drill head







Remount the unturned head blank. Turn most of a sphere, but leave some supporting wood for drilling. First drill a larger hole for the beak, then a smaller hole within the first for reverse-mounting on a screw chuck to finish turning the back of the head.

# Colored pencil segments for eyes







With the head still partially turned, mark eye location and drill holes to accept short segments of a colored pencil. Glue and tap in the pencil pieces, using the toolrest underneath for added support.

won't wander on the curved surface and so the edges of the holes will be smooth.

For determining the roundness, I use a homemade measuring gauge (*Photo 12*). To make the gauge, cut two fully rounded holes of the same diameter close to each other, then simply saw away one of the holes at its center. Now you can place the half-hole up against the turning to see how close to round you have turned it.

Using a drill bit in a tailstock chuck, drill a ¾"- (10mm-) diameter hole ¼" (6mm) deep (*Photo 13*). Because the head will be reversemounted after parting it off, drill a ¼"-diameter hole ½" (13mm) deep within the center of the beak hole. This is so you can remount the head later on a ¼" screw chuck to finish the back of the head (not shown here but fully explained in the accompanying video—see link at the end of this article).

Draw a line around the head so you can mark the position of the eyes (*Photo 14*). If your lathe has an indexer, use it to position the height of the eyes symmetrically on each side of the head. Or just use a flexible tape measure to mark their positions equally.

Create the eyes using small ¼"-long cutoffs from a round colored pencil of your choice (*Photo 15*). This results in a dash of color for the "pupil" of the bird's eye. Measure the diameter of the pencil, chuck a matching drill bit in your drill, and drill holes for the eyes.

Now support the head from the underside with your toolrest, put a dab of cyanoacrylate (CA) glue in one of the eye holes. Hold the eye piece with thin pliers and gently tap it into the hole (*Photo 16*). The eyes should be inserted just a bit proud of the head surface. A little spray of CA activator will help secure it. Do the same for the other eye. Be sure the glue has set so it won't splash at you when you turn on the lathe. Use gentle cuts to shape the eyes flush with the head.

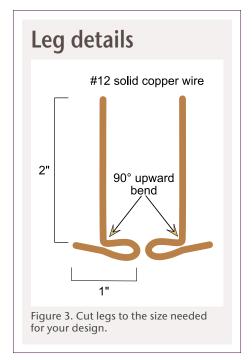
The last drill hole is for the dowel that will connect the head to the body. Drill a ¼" hole in the bottom of the head positioned as shown in *Figure 1*. Part off the head and reverse it onto a ¼" screw chuck. Now finish and sand the sphere.

### Legs and feet

Make the legs (*Figure 3, Photo 17*) using #12 solid electrical wire. Using wire allows the flexibility of keeping the foot small while still being

able to bend the legs so a group of birds could be displayed in varying positions.

Copper wire is soft and dents easily if you grip it with bare steel pliers. To prevent that, attach a short strip of electrical tape to each of the plier's gripping jaws. Cut the wire into 3" to 4" (8cm to 10cm) strips, then carefully strip off all the insulation, trying not to scratch the wire itself. Rough up the wire with sandpaper before



you start to bend it so the paint will adhere better.

Create the front of the foot by bending a loop around the shaft of a screwdriver (*Photo 18*) and continue the bending until you achieve the shape of the foot as shown. The back of the foot (hallux) should be on the opposite sides of each leg so you have the appearance of left and right feet. When the foot is finished, then bend the leg up perpendicular to the foot.

Paint the legs with a spray paint that will adhere well to metal. Apply several coats and rotate the legs between coats so all surfaces are sprayed equally. Allow sufficient time for the paint to cure before handling them.

#### Beak

The beak can be made from a dowel or small piece of scrap. It should be  $\frac{3}{8}$ " in diameter to match the hole you drilled in the head earlier. You could leave the beak pointed (*Photo 19*) or use a small saw to cut the mouth open for those birds that you want to sing.

#### **Assembly**

Attach the wings to the body using hot-melt glue or your favorite glue. Attach the beak to the head and then attach the head to the body. Try swiveling the head to get different expressions.

Experiment with inserting the legs, snipping and bending them so that the bird stands up properly and gives the look you want to achieve. There is no exact measurement of where to put the legs so the bird balances. The variables of the weight of wood and the final shape you produce will all come into play in balancing the bird.

#### **Coloring and finishing**

Depending on your own design preferences, you may choose to just use

nature's colors of different woods for color. Or you could paint them with acrylics or an airbrush. Bare wood can be nicely finished with an application of your favorite oil.

I hope you have fun making one and hopefully a nest full of these. Pose them on your favorite shelf and enjoy playing with them. Remember not to feed them too much!

Richard Dlugo began turning in the 1970s to fulfill a need for wooden toy parts. In the last ten years, he has become very active as an artistic turner. You can view his other toys at richarddlugo.com/toys. He is most grateful for the sharing of ideas, inspirations, and techniques between woodturners at all levels. This article is meant to give back some of that sharing. You can reach Richard at richard@richarddlugo.com.

## Cut and bend wire legs





The copper core of 12-gauge electrical wire, stripped of its sheathing, works great for the bird's legs. Shape the legs by wrapping the wire around a screwdriver, using electrical tape on your pliers to protect the easily dented copper.

### Turn a beak



The bird's beak can be turned to a rounded or pointed end, or for a singing bird with the appearance of an open beak, saw a small wedge into the end of the blank. Glue the beak into the bird's head.

# You read the article—now see the video!

This article has an accompanying online video in which Richard Dlugo further illustrates the making of these



whimsical bird forms. See all of Richard's hints and tips on the subject by visiting tiny.cc/DlugoBirds or scanning the QR code with your mobile device.



# PIERCINS AND OUTS OF G

Malcolm Zander



Photo Courtesy of Gordon Pembridge

#### History

Sometime between 1991 and 1992, Saskatchewan dental therapist and instructor Terence da Silva received a visit from nearby Paddockwood resident Frank Sudol, who brought a collection of dental parts he wanted assembled into a system to pierce holes in wood. Terence did so, and when Sudol tried it out, it worked so well that, as da Silva recalls, "He jumped up and down like a small boy."

#### Frank Sudol's influence

In June 1993, Sudol showed a pierced chalice form at the AAW's Annual Symposium, and it caused a stir. A similar piece by Sudol, *Goblet*, is now in the AAW Permanent Collection.

Sudol's career took off, and he began to sell the modified dental handpiece kits and to teach. In 1998, he gave a course at Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts. Binh Pho had seen Dale Nish's wormy vessels, found them very interesting, and was looking for a tool to make something similar; he thought that piercing might be a way. Pho

took Sudol's course, during which he made a bowl where the piercing formed images. Sudol saw it and said, "You SOB—you made something I had never imagined." Pho had used piercing for more than just decoration.

Following this development, Pho, Sudol, Steve Sinner, and several others held a week-long session of discovery at Pho's home. Further week-long sessions were held at six-month intervals, exploring piercing and air-brushing, complemented by a series of commercial courses taken on air-brushing. In 1999, Binh Pho's *Chicago Cityscape* put him on the map.

Others quickly picked up on the use of high-speed air-powered carvers. Arthur Jones's ephemeral, filigree *Soul of the Game* (1997), an ironic redefinition of the game's macho, offensive weapon, predates Pho's *Cityscape*. Jones used a Buffalo air-driven, 250,000-rpm, straight dental handpiece.

#### Different ways of "piercing"

The term *piercing* is usually associated with fine, small holes created with an air-powered tool, but the semantic line between *piercing* and *carving* is fuzzy. We shall see that the size of the holes

and how they are made matter far less than the appeal and impact of the finished piece.

The use of air-powered, high-speed tools has become the standard for fine piercing, but it is not the only way. Most people would call the ▶



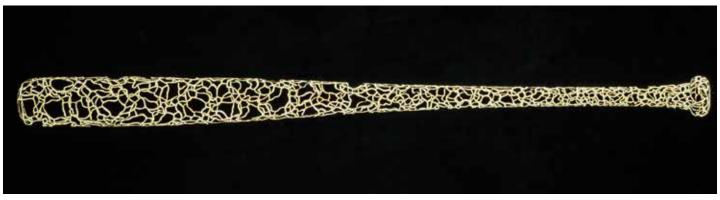
**Frank Sudol,** *Goblet,* 1994, Birch, paint, 6½" × 3½" (17cm × 9cm)

An early example of the use of a dental drill for piercing.

Photo: Tib Shaw/AAW



**Binh Pho,** Chicago IV, 1999, Maple, acrylic paint, dye, 12" (30cm) diameter Photo: Binh Pho, Courtesy of Ruth and David Waterbury



**Arthur Jones,** *Soul of the Game,* 1997, Maple, 35" × 21/2" (89cm × 6cm)

four works below by Frank Cummings, Arthur Jones, Richard Kennedy, and Ed Kelle "pierced." Yet they were not made with highspeed air tools, and the holes are not always small.

For his early 1988 platter, Cummings used a jeweler's fretsaw and rasps. Jones's early 1995 Sylvan Autumn was done with a Bosch jigsaw and finished with a knife and microgrinder. The 1980s-era Citrus-Citrine by Cummings and The Seed by Hughes in the accompanying article on negative space (page 30) were also made by fretwork. High-speed air tools were not available at the time, but the pieces certainly appear as if they could have been made this way. More recently, Ed Kelle and Richard Kennedy have both used slower micromotor tools. The conclusion from these examples is that defining piercing by tool or by hole size is arbitrary.

#### **Equipment/methods**

High-speed, air-powered handpieces Dentist Lew Jensen initially created a hobbyist market for ultra-high-speed tools (250,000 to 400,00 rpm) driven by compressed air, of which the dental drill is an example. The advantage, compared to slower tools, is that at this speed the cutter (known as a bur) does not follow the wood grain—it slices effortlessly wherever directed.

Pho initially used both a dental drill and another oil-requiring hand-piece. Shortly afterwards, he switched to the oil-free NSK Presto, turning at 320,000 rpm at 35 psi, which has become the tool of choice for many wood artists. Ceramic bearings floating on an air cushion eliminate the need for oil lubrication.

The Presto and other such power carvers found on the Internet typically draw only 1 to 2 cubic feet/minute (CFM) at 35 to 40 psi, so the air

compressor need not be large. Turbines are expensive, but with care they last a long time. Bearings can be damaged by water or particles in the incoming air supply, so a good 5-micron ceramic filter and water trap in the line are essential, as is a pressure regulator to avoid turbine damage from excess air pressure. Damage also occurs if too much lateral pressure is put on the handpiece from trying to cut wood that is thicker than the tool will handle, or from engaging the shaft of the bur against the wood instead of using the cutter flutes (a common cause of bur breakage for beginners).

Regulators, traps, and fittings can be found in the compressed-air section of any hardware store. A good setup illustration is shown in Glynn Cox's useful article listed in the *Resources* sidebar at the end of this article.

Burs used in air-powered handpieces such as the Presto or dental drill are











(Clockwise from top left)
Frank Cummings
III, Platter, 1988, Macassar
ebony, mother of pearl,
18K gold, onyx inlays,
3" × 16" (8cm × 41cm)

Arthur Jones, Sylvan Autumn, 1995, Camphor, 5" × 18" (13cm × 46cm) Photo: Randall Smith

**Ed Kelle**, *The Weight* of *Expectations*, 2009, Scorched cherry (bases), bleached maple (sphere), steel rod, sphere is 2" (5cm) diameter

**Richard Kennedy,** Black-Anatir series, 2012, Lime wood, 3" × 8½" (8cm × 22cm)



Air-powered tools: dental drill (top) and NSK tool.

Photo: Malcolm Zander

made of carbide, have a  $\frac{1}{6}$ "-diameter  $\times$   $\frac{3}{4}$ "-long (1.6mm  $\times$  19mm) shank, and are identified by the prefix FG (Friction Grip). Most commonly used are the FG 699L and the FG169L. The 699L has radial chip breaker grooves and removes stock faster than the 169L, which lacks these grooves but leaves a cleaner cut. Also used are the FG700L and FG170L, which have a slightly larger-diameter cutter.

Cutting at this high speed burns the wood, the more so the thicker the wood. A fan to blow the smoke away or an exhaust hookup to your dust collector to remove the smoke is a good idea. Resinous woods produce more burning. The residual carbon on the cut wood edge can be partially removed by taking a rapid, lighter, second pass along the wood, in a left-to-right direction. Buffing with 400-grit 3M radial bristle discs<sup>™</sup> is also useful. Further cleanup can be done by sanding or by the use of needle files (techniques illustrated in my short video listed in the Resources sidebar). If the wood is to be painted, then the burning is hidden, but if it is to be left natural, then good cleanup is essential.

#### Dental drill vs. pen-type handpieces

The primary difference here is that pen-type handpieces have more torque; hence they can comfortably pierce wood thicknesses up to about ½" (3mm), with variability according to the hardness of the wood. A dental drill handpiece copes with a maximum of half this thickness. Pushing the tool

beyond these limits is liable to damage the turbine. Replacement turbines for the dental drill are significantly cheaper than those for the NSK.

In addition, the dental drill turbine has steel bearings that require oil. This I apply about every half hour of run time, and it takes only a couple of minutes to do. The drill is then run at speed briefly before being applied to the wood in order to blow out any excess oil, which might stain the wood.

I prefer the dental drill for fine work on small pieces. The 90-degree angle of the bur to the handpiece often makes it easier to pierce perpendicular to the plane of the curved wood. The Presto is held like a pen; the dental drill I prefer to cradle, as seen in my video listed below. In both cases, you need a stable base from which to manipulate the tool. For the Presto, you can rest your wrist or fingers on the body of the wood and with hand and arm now steady, operate the tool with the fine motor muscles of your fingers and thumb (as shown on page 22). Alternatively, you can pivot off a single third or fourth finger as a base, as seen clearly in Andi Wolfe's video (see Resources sidebar) of her carving Acer Embrace. A strong light and headmounted magnifier are essential.

#### Micromotor detail carvers

Micromotor detail carvers are also high-speed tools but operate at a maximum of 30,000 to 50,000 rpm, a tenth the speed of the air tools. Their cost ranges from \$200 to \$2,000, and unlike air tools, which are run at top speed only, micromotor tools offer variable speed from zero rpm up to the maximum. An Internet search for "micromotor detail carver" will turn up many different models. A good online video showing some of the features is listed below (though this is not an endorsement of the product shown). All are driven by a small electric motor in the handpiece, which in

turn is linked to the control box by a fine electrical cord, giving complete freedom of movement.

Micromotors have significantly more torque than compressed-air tools. However, even at the high end of their speed range, the cutter bur will usually track the wood grain. For piercing, they are preferable to the older and slower flex-shaft tools, which have yet more torque but are awkward and slow to pierce with. Another advantage of micromotors over higher-speed air tools is that there is less scorching of the wood. Micromotor tools are more appropriate for heavier work than airpowered handpieces. A good example is the work of J. Paul Fennell, whose pieces are sculpted in thicker areas with a micromotor and in thinner areas with the NSK Presto. ▶



Micromotor handpiece with blue 400-grit abrasive 3M Bristledisc™ in the collet. Tool length is 61/2" (17cm)

Photo: Malcolm Zander



**J. Paul Fennell,** *De la Mer,* 2012, Carob, 8½" × 8" (22cm × 20cm)

25

**Pascal Oudet,** Diabolo 41, 2017, Oak, 17¼" × 8½" × 7½" (44cm × 22cm × 20cm)

Lace textures achieved by sandblasting.

Robert Jones and Stephen Hughes, Potpourri bowl (Jones) with laser-cut insert (Hughes), 2017, Native pear, silky oak veneer plywood, 2" × 6" (5cm × 15cm)

Laser-pierced inserts can be made in a range of patterns, but thus far only on flat work.

Photo: Robert Jones





Burs for micromotor carvers are larger and heavier than the FG burs; the shaft is  $\frac{3}{32}$ " or  $\frac{1}{8}$ " (2mm or 3mm). They come in a range of shapes and coatings.

#### Laser carving

A laser can also be used to make fine piercings. Stephen Hughes has created inexpensive laser-cut inserts, which have been used in fellow-Australian Robert Jones's potpourri bowls, as seen above.

A major drawback to the laser method is that the wood must be flat. If someone can create a system to laser-cut vessels in three dimensions, that would be a remarkable breakthrough.

#### Sandblasting

Pascal Oudet uses sandblasting to generate a fine-pierced texture in his work. Oudet and Bill Luce have developed this technique through many

CONNECTION
For more on design
considerations, see Binh
Pho's Summer 2000 AW
article, "My Philosophy
in Piercing Design" (vol
15, no 2, page 13).

**JOURNAL ARCHIVE** 

hours of experimentation, and the effect is unique.

#### **Design considerations**

In his Summer 2000 AW article, Binh Pho describes his piercing philosophy, involving two types of piercing: negative dominant and positive dominant. This article, with accompanying diagram, is invaluable reading for all those learning to pierce. Positive dominant piercing leaves much wood and little air. Richard Kennedy's Anatir is an example. Negative dominant piercing has much air and little wood. Binh Pho's Balance (shown on page 35 of this issue) is an example. The way in which light interacts with these two pieces is very different.

#### Wall thickness

Given the importance of transmitted light for the visual effect of pierced pieces, care must be given to hole size relative to wall thickness. If the holes are very small and if the walls are

thick, then the holes will close off when viewed from the side, and the desired effect of transmitted light is lost. In this case, the walls must be made thin. Steve Sinner's *Goblets* are an extreme example—the walls are 0.5mm (1/50") thick and

the hole diameter is about 0.7mm. For a thicker piece of say 1/8", one can get good light transmission only if the holes are significantly larger. An example is my *Leaves in a Golden Wind* (wall thickness ~2mm); another is Fennell's *De la Mer*.

Most turners prefer to make thinwall vessels from green wood and monitor the wall thickness using a light source behind the wall. Wet wood transmits light well. The disadvantage of this method is that as the piece dries out during turning, it will warp, even more so after completion. Sanding can be done only when the piece is dry. If instead the piece is preturned, allowed to dry and move, then re-turned to the final thickness, these issues do not arise. However, the use of light to track wall thickness is now harder because dry wood transmits light poorly. One solution is a fiber optic system giving an intense light next to the piece but with the undesirable lamp heat at a distance. With this system, I find that even dense exotic woods such as pink ivory will transmit light when dry, at wall thicknesses approaching ½5" (1mm). (African blackwood will not transmit light at any thickness). Good calipers are essential. A sparkplug feeler gauge with leaves of different thicknesses is useful

for monitoring; apply the calipers across the wall of the piece and then check it against a leaf of the desired wall thickness. I aim for 0.8mm on my small pieces.

#### Color

Piercing may be complemented with airbrushed color, used most notably by Binh Pho, Frank Sudol, and Gordon Pembridge. Pho used it for storytelling; Sudol and Pembridge used it to depict and honor wildlife. Pembridge's and Pho's work may be seen on their respective websites: gordonpembridge.com and binhpho.com.

#### **Summary**

Piercing is a way of creating negative space, which depends on light for its effect. It is a decorative design element and can give a feeling of fragility and lace-like delicacy, as in the filigree background of Pembridge and Sudol's work. The patterns produced by piercing are textures, both visual and tactile, and can be dramatic. Richard Kennedy notes that the light creates its own artwork through the shadows cast. Sinner and Kennedy both find that piercing gives a wow factor to a piece.

Piercing can also be used to convey different meanings. J. Paul Fennell uses it to mimic the patterns of sunlight on an ocean floor. For Binh Pho, it was all about negative space as a metaphor for past or dream events in his storytelling.

There are different ways to pierce wood, and there are different styles. Try it, and find a style of your own. Listed at right are several resources to get you started. Have fun.

Photos courtesy of the artists, unless otherwise noted.

Malcolm Zander is a New Zealand-born wood artist living in Ottawa, Canada. His website is malcolmzander.com.



**Frank Sudol**, *Wolf*, c. 2000, Birch, about 30" (76cm) tall

Photo Courtesy of Barbara Sudol and Kevan Leycraft

Wildlife, pierced and airbrushed.



**Gordon Pembridge,** The Red Elephants of Tsavo, 2014, Macrocarpa, acrylic paint, 5¾" × 6¾" (15cm × 17cm)



**Malcolm Zander,** *Leaves in a Golden Wind,* 2008, Walnut, 23K gold leaf, 9½" × 15½" × 11½" (24cm × 39cm × 29cm)

Different hole sizes for different wall thicknesses.



**Steve Sinner**, *Goblets*, 2005, Sugar maple, heights are 2½" to 4" (6cm to 10cm), diameters are 1" to 2" (25mm to 5cm)

## Resources

- Article with setup illustration, by Glynn Cox: tiny.cc/GlynnCox
- Andi Wolfe carving video: Acer Embrace: tiny.cc/AndiWolfeCarving
- Malcolm Zander piercing video: Dressed for Dinner: tiny.cc/ZanderPiercing
- Video explaining micromotor features to look for: tiny.cc/Micromotor
- Source of micromotor and FG burs: bursforcarving.com
- Source of optional supplementary filter for compressed-air system: tiny.cc/MotorGuard

# A Look at Negative Space



To me, negative space represents something mysterious and awakens one's curiosity.

—Binh Pho

egative space is the open space within or around an object or image. It can bring lightness and delicacy to a sculpture or vessel, and it can also imply movement.

Negative space can be used for telling stories. It is a means of adding interest and often generates drama by the use of light.

There are multiple ways of creating negative space—it can be carved,

sandblasted, drilled, constructed, inserted, cut, or it can simply pre-exist in nature. Multiple meanings can be given to it, and the way in which the space is designed and how it interacts with the associated mass is as important as the design of the mass itself.

A master in the use of negative space is English sculptor Henry Moore. *Oval* with Two Points is a massive object in a field of emptiness. The effect is dramatic. The space within integrates the sculpture with the surroundings and gives it depth. The interplay and contrast between something and nothing—solidity and emptiness—brings a sense of mystery.

# Exploiting wood orientation

In 1979, David Ellsworth introduced a secondary negative space into a

turned wood vessel by orienting a decayed log so the rotten core fell away on either side of the vessel. In 1986, Todd Hoyer used a similar technique for a bowl in his Gourd *Series*. The negative space in these two turnings was created by nature and brought out by skill in the orientation of the wood when turned. Incorporating negative space into a form can add information and interest; the eye is drawn into and through it. Look at the Ellsworth and Hoyer images and ask yourself if they would be as interesting if they were simply solid forms.

A variation on this technique starts with a burl—a wooden growth with an irregular shape. During solid-form turning, curved surfaces appear with crevices and hollows that have yet to be cut into. As more wood is removed, these areas disappear and eventually one is left with a smooth, round object. But if we stop before this point and then hollow the form to a thin wall, the crevices and hollows become voids in the wall. The trick is to stop at the right point, and to orient the wood so the voids are balanced. An example is Michael Peterson's Two Canyon Mesa. The void in the wall here fuses with the space inside the vessel and allows us to peer deep into the interior.

These methods of creating negative space by exploiting wood orientation during turning became popular in the 1980s, to the point where Giles Gilson spoofed the practice in his *Point of View* vase. The negative space in this piece is, of course, not a naturally occurring void, but was artificially constructed.

As with Henry Moore's *Oval* with *Two Points*, negative spaces can also be created by deliberately inserting holes or voids into an object. In 1984 and 1985, Frank ▶



**David Ellsworth**, Vessel, 1979, Desert ironwood, 63/4" × 6" (17cm × 15cm)



**Todd Hoyer,** Untitled from *Gourd* series, 1986, Mexican blue oak. 71/4" × 91/2" × 81/4" (18cm × 24cm × 21cm)

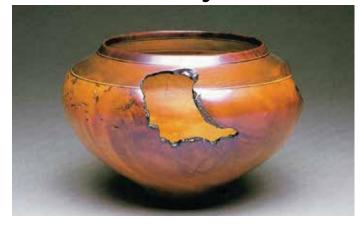
#### Voids created from a burl



**Michael Peterson,** *Two Canyon Mesa,* 1989, bleached and sandblasted boxelder burl, 5" × 141/4" (13cm × 36cm)

Photo: Robyn Horn

### An un-natural natural edge



**Giles Gilson,**Big Window/Little Bowl,
Walnut, maple,
3½" × 5" (9cm × 13cm)
Photo: Courtesy of Lipton
Collection

Cummings III and Stephen Hughes designed negative space into their vessels after turning. This was a new approach. They used a jeweler's fretsaw to make the openings, which were then refined with rasps and carving techniques.

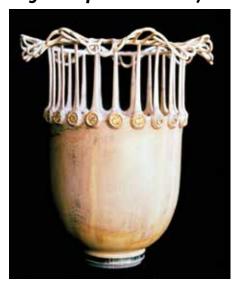
#### **Achieving movement**

With the subsequent advent of flexshaft, micromotor, and air-powered cutting and carving tools, many woodturners have found it easy to cut negative spaces into their work after turning. Their goals are varied. Many are interested in movement associated with passive negative space. In Dewey Garrett's *Exploration* (whose turning was technically challenging—described by the artist as having periodic "rapid disassemblies"), the skeletal form is fascinating. For Garrett, the most interesting aspect was the moiré patterns it cast as one walked around it, with the

interplay of space and material. The moiré patterns generated by the spaces in Hans Weissflog's lathe-turned pieces are also particularly evident as one moves past them.

Frank Cummings III is interested in movement too. His childhood memories of a rotating carousel in a Los Angeles park became the inspiration for his *Carousel* series, which evolved from the earlier *Citrus-Citrine*. In *Splendid Lady*, the waves in the lace-like crown

#### Negative space created by fretwork





(Left) Frank Cummings
III, Citrus-Citrine, 1988,
Orange wood, citrine,
18K gold, 8½" × 6½"
(22cm × 17cm)

(Right) **Stephen Hughes**, The Seed,
1985, Huon pine,
14½" × 11"
(37cm × 28cm)

#### Moiré Patterns



**Dewey Garrett,** Exploration, 1992, Maple, padauk, 4" × 14" (10cm × 36cm)



**Hans Weissflog,** Saturn Star Bowl, 2014, 2½" × 7" (6cm × 18cm)

evoke musical rhythms and undulate as one moves around the piece.

Arthur Jones explores the effect of movement in his *Black Hole* sculptures, which are interactive with the viewer: as one passes in front, the background light flickers on and off, giving a strobe effect; as one passes to the side, the thin lath attached to the equator becomes solid.

The open spaces in Virginia Dotson's cleverly constructed piece cast interesting light patterns, and the diagonal lines lend movement.



**Frank E. Cummings III,** Splendid Lady, 1997, Bleached maple, Kingwood, pearls, garnets, 18k gold, 73%" × 51/4" (19cm × 13cm) Photo: John Kiffe, © Long Beach Museum of Art

### Voids in a segmented vessel



**Virginia Dotson,** *Shadow Play #10,* 1996, Maple, Pau marfim plywood, dye, 10" × 10" (25cm × 25cm)

### Flickering strobe



**Arthur Jones,** *Night Star VII,* 2003, Mahogany, 32" × 18" × 61/2" (81cm × 46cm × 17cm)

The Center for Art in Wood Museum Collection, Donated by Neil and Susan Kaye

There is a strong sense of movement, too, in the *Helix* series by William Hunter, driven by the spiral forms for which he is known. The moving interplay of light and shadow between the forms and the spaces around and within them are integral to the dynamic effect.

#### **Thematic expression**

Negative space can send an emotional message. In another deconstructed piece, Betty J. Scarpino has sent two very different messages simply in the way the two forms are arranged and the space between them is altered. The left image conveys a feeling of intimacy; the right image a sense of aloofness or independence.

A dramatic use of negative space is illustrated with *Only Time Will Tell* by Frank Cummings III. Three years in the making, all light and air with the delicately carved gears and interior works visible, it is very different in its impact and use of space from a classic, enclosed, tall-case grandfather clock.



Negative space can be symbolic. The flame-shaped voids in Neil Turner's *Fire Bowl* were inspired by the Australian bush fires; they elevate a simple solid-wall, naturaledge bowl into a signature work. In the space contained by Arthur Jones's early *Madonna and Child*, we envision a shoulder, a womb, and a fetal form all in one.



**Frank Cummings III,** Only Time Will Tell, 2013, Curly and spalted bubinga, walnut, rosewood, cherry, African blackwood, oak root, precious jewels, mirror, porcupine quills, 88½" × 25½" × 15½" (225cm × 64cm × 39cm) Photo: John Kiffe

## **Conveying emotion**

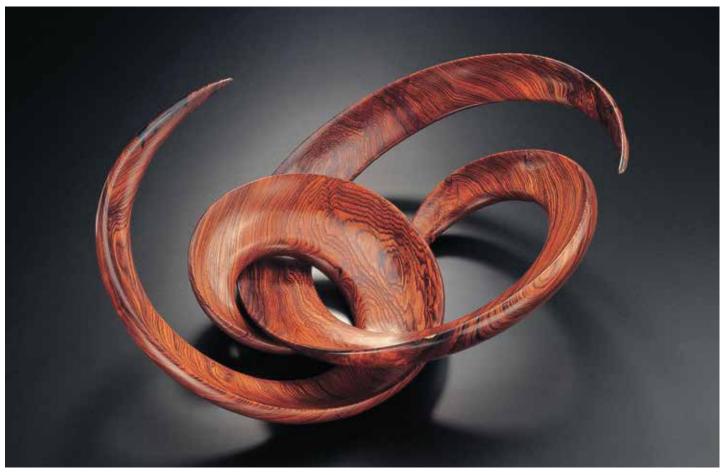
**Betty J. Scarpino,** *Double Entendre,* 2007, Maple, 3½" thick × 15" diameter (9cm × 38cm)

Photos: Shawn Spence



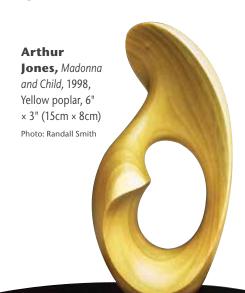


# Space and spirals spinning



**William Hunter,** *Converging Helix*, 1999, Cocobolo, 10" × 18" × 23" (25cm × 46cm × 58cm)

# Space as symbolic form





**Neil Turner**, Fire Bowl, 2003, Rock sheoak, 7" × 111½" (18cm × 29cm)

Photo: Victor France

### Space embraced



**Andi Wolfe,** Acer Embrace, 2010, Sugar maple, 10" (25cm) tall

**Arthur Jones,** *The Offering,* 2000, Mahogany, celluloid ball, 22K gold leaf, 14" × 8" (36cm × 20cm)



The two turned sculptures at left derive impact from their embrace of empty space. Andi Wolfe's Acer Embrace envelops a large void, yet the space occupies a volume. Visualize this piece if the leaves were simply carved onto a solid bowl form. It would lose the light, open feeling. The Offering comes from Arthur Jones's Fossil/Skeletal series. It is nearly all space and is elementally simple, yet the symbolism is unmistakable.

In a similar way, the space that surrounds and penetrates Alain Mailland's *L'Élégance de Pélagie* imbues it with a wonderful sense of lightness and grace.

Negative space is a feature of open segmented work, where it is a form of decoration and also adds lightness. William Smith's *Wings* is a lovely example.

Bill Luce has a unique method of creating negative space, by sand-blasting. In his skeletal *Bones of the Tree* series, he reveals the history of a tree in the patterns cast, with the spaces created by removal of the softer growth rings contrasting with the harder rings left behind.

#### **Mystery**

A simple salad bowl encloses space. Many of us are drawn to hollow forms, which also enclose space. Viewed from the side, a hollow form is indistinguishable from a solid form. Yet as we lean over it, our eyes and hands are drawn to explore the interior, and when we lift it, we experience a pleasant surprise from the unexpected lightness. It is an optical illusion. Binh Pho associates negative space with mystery, so perhaps it is a sense of the unknown that we enjoy here.

Pho is a storyteller. In his two books, *River of Destiny* and *Shadow* of the Turning, co-authored by Kevin Wallace, every piece has a story, and

# Revealing the inner structure

**Bill Luce,** from Bones of the Tree series, Douglas fir







William Smith, Wings, 2006, Ebony, holly, pear, chakte viga, padauk, 2¾" × 4½" (7cm × 11cm)

Alain Mailland, L'Élégance de Pélagie, 2005, Pistachio, 11" × 8" (28cm × 20cm)

Pho uses negative space in every one of these stories. He associates negative space with events that occur in dreams or have actually occurred. He calls it "the presence of absence." An example in *River of Destiny* is the legend of Ying Toi and Leung Shan Pak, two lovers who were separated by death. Pho represents them by two butterflies surrounded by an open pierced lattice, so

that they exist in the negative space of the spirit realm.

Binh Pho trained as an architect, and form and space are the vocabulary of architecture. His sculpture *Balance* combines form and space beautifully. Beneath the image of *Balance* on his website, Pho quotes philosopher I Ching. As a summary of negative space, it is a good last word:

We join the spokes together in a wheel, but it is the center hole that makes the wagon move.

We shape clay into a pot, but it is the emptiness inside that holds whatever we want.

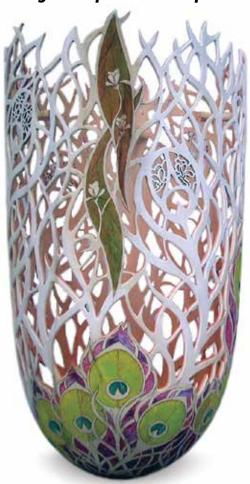
We hammer wood for a home, but it is the inner space that makes it livable.

We work with being, but non-being is what we use.

Photos courtesy of the artists, unless otherwise noted.

Malcolm Zander is a New Zealand-born wood artist living in Ottawa, Canada. His website is malcolmzander.com.

#### **Negative space as metaphor**



**Binh Pho,** *Balance,* Boxelder, 14" × 9" (36cm × 23cm)

EXPERIMENTING WITH COLORED TEPOXY

Jay Hockenberry

oday is the day. You go out to your woodpile to find that piece of burl you have been saving for several years, only to find it is past its prime. The ideal burl you pictured in your mind is ruined—now filled with voids, bark inclusions, rot, and cracks. When you look at it, you see firewood, but when Don Metz looks at it, he sees a beautiful bowl or vessel enhanced by streaks and swirls of color.

Don is a member of the Nutmeg Woodturners League in Connecticut and has been turning for fourteen years. "In my years as a professional wooden boat builder, I used a lot of epoxies, but it wasn't until I started woodturning that I saw their real potential. It started when I had a piece of cherry burl with lots of problems; I decided to try filling the problem areas with epoxy colored with acrylic paint."

I recently had the opportunity to follow Don as he converted a piece of cherry burl that had been in his woodpile for several years into a beautiful hollow form.

#### Preparing the wood

The process starts, of course, with a chainsaw, but the fact that Don doesn't have to eliminate all voids and cracks allows him a wider range of options. The chainsawed block is further shaped on the bandsaw (with the use of a sled for safety). Final shaping prior to mounting on the lathe is to rough out a circular block on the bandsaw using the largest template possible (*Photos 1, 2*).

Positioning on the lathe is critical to get the largest piece possible, but the fact that voids and cracks will be filled with epoxy means the outside surface can be less than perfect. Turning compromised wood poses extra safety hazards; Don wears full protective gear while turning, including a helmet and heavy-duty faceshield (*Photo 3*).

#### Colored epoxy fills voids and cracks in this cherry burl hollow form by Don Metz.

#### Forming a dam

After roughing the shape on the lathe, Don identifies the areas to be filled and marks where he will construct a dam to prevent the colored epoxy from running out (*Photo 4*). When applied, the epoxy is quite thin and runny, and although it seems to find the tiniest hole in the dam, it sometimes refuses to travel from void to void through natural cracks. Don enhances the flow path with a small cutter in a rotary tool, being careful to follow the width of the natural cracks and avoid forming unnaturally straight lines (*Photo 5*).

The best materials for the dam seem to be painter's tape and silver air conditioning

#### Rough-shape on bandsaw





The rough burl is shaped on the bandsaw prior to turning. Note the use of a bandsaw sled for safe cutting.

#### **Initial turning**



Don wears a helmet and heavy-duty faceshield during initial turning. Turning compromised wood poses extra safety hazards.

### Identify and prep pour site





the area of the first epoxy pour. A rotary tool is used to widen some cracks to facilitate a more thorough flow of epoxy.

Don marks

#### Form a dam



Painter's tape and HVAC foil tape work well for forming a dam to contain the poured epoxy.

#### Mix colors, pour





Don mixes acrylic paints, as well as dyes, in the epoxy to create interesting effects. Doing multiple smaller pours works well.

tape, although Don has used duct tape as well. In some situations, Don even uses modeling clay to construct dams to limit the travel of the wet epoxy. But no matter how carefully the dam is constructed, leaks will occur, so be sure to put your workpiece on a protected surface that can contain spillage. A cardboard box is a good containment option since you can use the sides of the box to position the piece with the pour site facing up (Photo 6). An additional step to further limit spillage through the dam is to coat the entire taped surface with white glue and after this dries, recoat the taped surface with shellac.

Most projects will require multiple applications of epoxy in different locations on the piece.

#### Adding colored epoxy

After the dam is constructed, it is finally time to add the epoxy. Through experience, Don has learned to limit the amount of epoxy poured at any time to 2 to 3 ounces, though it is possible to pour 5 to 6 ounces at a time with a slow-curing epoxy. Don currently uses EasyCast® (Clear Casting Epoxy), which takes up to seventy-two hours to harden. Although it seems counterintuitive, very small batches take longer to cure than larger amounts. Larger quantities of slowcuring epoxy generate more heat, which speeds the curing process. Faster-curing epoxies (such as West System® epoxy) would overheat if more than an ounce is poured in a confined space. Limiting the pours to 3 ounces is the most practical,

since most pieces need to be repositioned prior to subsequent pours.

There are many products that can add color to epoxy, but Don primarily uses Golden brand acrylic paints and Douglas and Sturgess dyes (*Photo 7*). In addition, he sometimes uses copper, brass, aluminum powder, and glitter dust to add sparkle.

For large fills such as the one pictured, Don will mix 2 to 3 ounces of epoxy, but only add color to a half-ounce at a time. Pouring the colors independently creates interesting swirls and effects (*Photo 8*). This is the part where Don's experience with art comes into play. He has been an amateur painter for over seventeen years, so blending colors seems to come naturally. By adding small amounts of color at a time, he can control the final result.

Don has learned through experience that as he adds a new color to a pool of wet epoxy, the new color will tend to sink to the bottom and force some of the previous colors to rise. He can enhance this process by inserting a wire coat hanger into the hardening pool and draw a column of the bottom color up through the pool. Delaying this action for two to three minutes allows the layered colors to jell enough to allow the final result to be definite stripes of color with a stalagmite of the bottom color included. Knowledge and use of the color wheel helps prevent accidently creating a drab blob of color.

Glitter dust can be added directly to your chosen color, or you can first mix it in the Pearl color of Ceramcoat® paint, which helps the dust disperse more evenly through the mix. Glitter, which

#### **Apply finish**



After turning and sanding, Don applies multiple coats of wipe-on polyurethane.

is made of larger granules than glitter dust, is usually added on top of the wet epoxy and pushed through with a wire coat hanger. If the copper, brass, or aluminum dust, which gives a somewhat metallic finish, is desired in the final surface of the piece after turning, it should be added to every application of color.

All of these techniques must be practiced in order to ensure the desired results. Don often is surprised as he turns a piece to see the colors appear and then, with additional turning, disappear. Much care and a light touch must be used to get the best results. Don feels that the only way to really learn this process is to purchase a quart of epoxy and some acrylic paints and give it a try.

#### **Turning and finishing**

After the epoxy cures, Don removes most of the tape by hand and returns the piece to the lathe for further refinement. Carbide cutting tools are quite effective for removing excess epoxy and glued tape. Several iterations of damming, filling, and scraping will be necessary to finish the outside of the vessel. Hollowing is completed in the same way as a typical hollow turning.

Don applies multiple thin coats of wipe-on polyurethane (*Photo 9*).

With a lifelong interest in trees and woodworking, Jay Hockenberry took a class in bowl turning at the Brookfield Craft Center, taught by Andy Barnum. He quickly developed a love for turning and joined the

Nutmeg Woodfurners League. Jay and his wife Rae Ann live in the western hills of Connecticut.

# New Horizons: A "CHALLENGING" EXHIBITION

Jerry Johnson, Jim Christiansen, Ron Gerton, and Jim Swift Photos courtesy of the artists, unless otherwise noted.

lmost three years ago, four members of Washington's Mid-Columbia Woodturners— Jerry Johnson, Jim Christiansen, Ron Gerton, and Jim Swift—met to explore the possibility of creating a special wood art exhibition in the Northwest. We wanted to include many of the best wood artists in North America and ensure the exhibition would represent a significant contribution to the art community, especially at the local venue. But we wanted to do something different. Many of the best wood artists have a recognizable, signature form, or style, and have had great success with it. We wanted to encourage them to do something new and different. Hence,

#### **VENUES AND DATES**

New Horizons will be on view May 22–July 1, 2018, at the Allied Arts Gallery in Richland, Washington. The show will then be moved to the AAW Gallery of Wood Art in Saint Paul, Minnesota, where it will be on view August 1–September 30, 2018.

the show title, *New Horizons*. Our guidelines not only *allowed* artists to explore new territory, but *required* it.

The initial decision to do the exhibition was based on a desire to showcase the Northwest as a good place to enjoy wood art. Tri-Cities Washington is at the epicenter of rapid economic and cultural development. There seems to be an increased commitment to the artistic and cultural infrastructure. Additionally,

we had the opportunity to plan the exhibition to coincide with the 2018 AAW Annual International Symposium, which will be held in nearby Portland, Oregon, in June.

#### In the artists' words

Many of the participating artists reported that creating new work was a challenge. Following is a sampling of the artworks, along with artist commentary.

"We are used to looking at the 'pretty' figures in curly wood (as on the backs of violins), quilted wood, or burl. Burning such wood and brushing away the charred material transforms the figure into texture, bringing the structure of the wood alive in three dimensions. This new work focuses on texture; my previous 'iconic' work was more about the form."



**Art Liestman (Canada)**, From the V, 2017, Quilted bigleaf maple, acrylic, 11½" × 20½" × 2½" (29cm × 52cm × 6cm) Photo: Kenji Nagai



Steve Loar noted, "Developing new work 'that departs from the artist's style' is a distinctly greater level of demand. It was daunting, bracing, and exciting—and difficult. Christian Burchard's virtuoso turning skills of both the outside and inside surfaces of what cured as a reject vessel afforded me the opportunity to consider what famed sculptor Barbara Hepworth referred to as 'the absence vs. the presence,' rather than working with a volume that light fell upon and defined."

Steve Loar (Michigan) in collaboration with Christian Burchard (Oregon), Airflow, 2017, Madrone, antler, cord,  $9" \times 12" \times 7"$  (23cm  $\times$  30cm  $\times$  18cm)

Traditionally, the ornamental lathe has been used to apply symmetrical patterns to turned forms. Bill Ooms' new work is based on using the ornamental lathe to apply non-symmetrical patterns to turned forms. Ooms stated, "Five-Sided Black Box is inspired by a red urushi lacquer box by Kuroda Tatsuaki. In this case, the box must be viewed from all sides to fully appreciate the design."

**Bill Ooms (Arizona),** Five-Sided Black Box, 2017, African blackwood, 2½" × 3" (6cm × 8cm)



As woodturning and carving are primarily subtractive processes, Dewey Garrett used 3D printing, an additive process, as inspiration for the *New Horizons* challenge. He noted, "Experimenting with new work has never been difficult for me, as I make

things for the experience of making and not as an occupation." For this endeavor, Garrett applied 3D printing techniques to make a white plastic model of a pierced dodecahedron with an interior sphere [left photo]. The final work was made from layers of 1/8"

(3mm) plywood cut on his homebuilt ornamental turning machine and assembled on a central shaft so they can represent a dodecahedron form or rotated to make chaotic shapes that are seemingly random in appearance [right photo]. ▶





**Dewey Garrett** (**Arizona**), Ordered Chaos, 2017, Plywood, paint, 6" × 6" × 6" (15cm × 15cm × 15cm)

Known for his elaborate pyrography designs on turned vessels, John Mydock said, "My inspiration for *Mili—Tree of Life* was a sudden 'aha moment' when looking at Ron Fleming's carved vessels showcased at the 2017 AAW Symposium in Kansas City. I love Milo trees, with their yellow flowers, green heart-shaped leaves, and brown pumpkin-shaped seedpod clusters. This vessel represents a leap of faith and my jump towards new horizons of creativity."

**John Mydock (Hawai'i),** *Mili—Tree of Life*, 2017, Milo, pyrography, 12" × 13" (30cm × 33cm) Photo: Ilsa Harmon





**Ron Layport (Pennsylvania),** The Road Not Taken, 2017, Bigleaf maple burl, metal fragments,  $3\frac{1}{4}$ " × 17" (8cm × 43cm) Photo: Mark May

"I view the wooden bowl as a universal power object. This particular bowl marks nearly two decades of my woodturning experience—significant events, recorded by the insertion of fragments from those times. For example, I used barbed wire from an abandoned farm in West Virginia, where I spent childhood summers. Even a metal shard removed from the tire of my truck and a gift from my wife of antique nails."

Michael Foster's work typically has a sense of order inspired by math and the sciences. He noted, "New Horizons provided me with the opportunity to do some work that is free of these boundaries. Choosing a subject matter was pretty much a given for me: Birding has become my new passion. Many would argue that relief carving is more difficult than 3D carving, as you need to consider how to give the illusion of depth. I really enjoyed the stretching of my abilities that this piece presented."



**Michael Foster (Vermont),** Summer Marsh, 2017, Sugar maple, acrylic paint, 7½" × 7½" (19cm × 19cm)

Ed Kelle looks back at his works from long ago in the fields of painting and stone sculpture. He stated, "Venturing into new works has always been a part of my artistic life. There have always been points where I have gotten all I need out of a series and I have the desire to move on to something else. This piece is a much more organic form than I have usually done in woodturning. There is freedom in it, even though it was turned on the lathe. The flowing lines have a wandering sense that invites exploration. The surface texture reflects my love of rocks."



**Ed Kelle (New York),** Drink With Me, 2017, Poplar, acrylic paint, 2" × 7" × 5" (5cm × 18cm × 13cm)

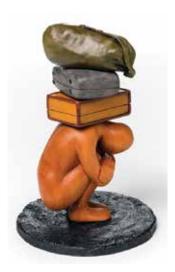


Mark Sfirri (Pennsylvania), Cubism, 2017, Western yellow cedar, 12" × 11½" (30cm × 29cm)

For the past several years, Mark Sfirri has been experimenting with repeated sphere shapes, incorporating the concept into furniture and sculpture. This new piece combines spheres and cubes in the design. He stated, "It doesn't take a whole lot for me to venture into new directions. I often take bits and pieces from past experiments and mix them with new concepts. What's exciting to me about this new work are the intersection lines where the forms come together."

"Mortality is real and getting closer. I have been reflecting on all that has gone on in my life: the good, the bad, and the ugly. There are stories to tell, and I can best do that through my artwork. Creating has always been my passion and soothing balm. Creating new work relating to past, present, and future should help exorcise things that haunt and reinforce experiences that have brought joy and meaning into my life."





"Mineralogy has long held an interest for me, as well as mountaineering, which has presented many opportunities to find fascinating mineral samples, including geodes. Geode formations seem very promising as artistic inspiration, given my twenty-year history of using mineral crystals as accents and imagery in woodturning.

\*Geoplasmamorphosis\* is the first of many pieces I expect to grow out of this inspiration." ▶

**Stephen Hatcher (Washington),** *Geoplasmamorphosis*, 2018, Maple burl, Brazilian rosewood, optical calcite and fluorite crystals, resin, dyes, lacquer,  $7'' \times 734'' \times 21\%''$  (18cm × 20cm × 6cm)



Malcolm Zander moved into new work inspired by Lino Tagliapietra and Norm Sartorius. He reported, "From this process, I have learned much and have found some new skills which I will be using in the future to explore this and similar ideas further. A whole new direction for me. It has been very rewarding."

**Malcolm Zander (Canada),** Voyage of Discovery, 2017, Bleached basswood (body), Alaskan cedar (cubes), acrylic paint, 41/4" × 371/4" × 23/4" (11cm × 95cm × 7cm)

"I think the things you love and the things that make you angry are rich, rich fodder for creative thinking. For *New Horizons*, I chose a thing I love as my inspiration. It is a hard thing for many artists to step away from work that has given them acclaim or sales. I think the *New Horizons* challenge provided a necessary and invaluable push that many of us need. My mind churned over this challenge for nearly two years. I thought and sketched and had many false leads until "Implements for the Protection of the Innocents" became unmistakably *the* idea."

**Kristen LeVier (Idaho),** 2017.1208.1 (Arm Cuff), 2017, Carved and bent cherry, acrylic paint, leather, brass, aluminum mesh,  $7" \times 10" \times 4"$  (18cm  $\times 25$ cm  $\times 10$ cm)

Photo: Jonathan Billing, Archer Photography



# New Horizons Participating Artists

Dixie Biggs, Trent Bosch, Christian Burchard, Marilyn Campbell, David Ellsworth, 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, Melissa Engler, Merryll Saylan, Betty J. Scarpino, Mark Sfirri, Steve Sinner, Curt Theobald, Gerrit Van Ness, Jacques Vesery, Molly Winton, Andi Wolfe, Malcolm Zander.

#### **Final thoughts**

There have been some challenges in creating this exhibition. One of our original planners, Jim Swift, passed away and the committee decided to dedicate the exhibition to him. Bill Luce was severely injured in a traffic accident and was not able to make an item for the show; the committee decided to show his iconic work in the show catalog. Noted artist Binh Pho passed away before he could complete his work for the show. In memory of Binh, the show will feature one of his pieces that was cast into bronze by Ron Gerton.

An article, "The Making of New Horizons," can be found at the exhibition's website, newhorizonswoodart.org.

# Wedge Mandre Charlie Wortman

e woodturners make a variety of jigs as challenges arise. Recently, I was faced with turning dozens of antique-style pepper mills, whose blanks have a through-hole. The usual method of turning this project requires multiple mountings in a chuck a time-consuming process. After mulling it over, I thought of a mounting jig that would give me full access to the blank, so I could complete the turning with only one mounting. I call this jig a wedge mandrel due to its design and sliding action. The wedge mandrel can be mounted on the lathe using a Morse taper, collet chuck, or a scroll chuck with pin jaws.

#### Turn and cut mandrel

Begin by drilling a hole through the pepper mill blank. A %"- to 1"- (22mmto 25mm-) diameter hole works well. for this mandrel.

Select a piece of straight-grained hardwood about three times the length of the pepper mill blank. Mount this stock between centers and turn the drive end to a Morse taper to match that of your lathe's spindle. (Turn this section straight if you are using a collet chuck, or form a tenon for pin jaws.) I made a handy Morse taper gauge, using a drive center as a guide. Turn and test as you go (*Photos 1, 2*).

Saw away just enough material from the tailstock end to eliminate the tail center indentation. After mounting the mandrel into the lathe spindle or chuck, establish a new point for the live center. Turn the mandrel to final diameter, checking for a close fit in the drilled peppermill blank (*Photo 3*).

The last step is to cut the wedge mandrel diagonally. The length of the diagonal cut should be just shorter than the length of the pepper mill blank. Make an angle jig to hold the mandrel securely for safe cutting on the bandsaw (Photo 4).

Lightly sanding the sliding surfaces and applying a coat of wax reduces friction while tightening. Make registration lines to help you center the blank on the mandrel. Also, linear marks show the orientation of the wedge halves within the blank (Photo 5). Now, the wedge mandrel is ready for use.

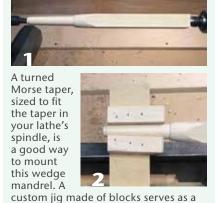
#### In use

Slide the pepper mill blank over the left half of the mandrel, then slide the mating portion of the mandrel into the hole and bring up the tailstock. Advancing the handwheel will cause the wedge parts to slide together and apply pressure inside the blank (Photo 6). Use just enough pressure to prevent the blank from spinning on the mandrel while turning.

This mounting method gives me full access to the turning blank. I can cut it to length, face off the ends, and turn my desired shape on its sides. The mandrel might get slightly nicked and cut from contact with turning tools, but will turn many blanks before having to be replaced.

Charlie Wortman is a member of the AAW and several local woodturning clubs. He can be reached at exquisiteturnings@icloud.com.

#### **Turn Morse taper**





Cut the mandrel in two on a diagonal. The angled wedge parts will later compress within the project blank to hold it in place. Note the holding jig used for safe cutting of a round object on the bandsaw.

#### Turn mandrel diameter

handy sizing gauge.



Turn the mandrel to a good fit within your project's through-hole.

#### Mount turning blank



Registration marks on the wedge mandrel help in positioning the turning blank. Advancing the tailstock handwheel applies pressure inside the blank and holds it securely for turning.



# MEMBERS' GALLERY

**Brian Horais, Tennessee** 

I enjoy integrating seemingly disparate methods and approaches to expand the breadth of creative opportunities. In addition to the use of dovetail joinery, normally associated with rectangular objects, I enjoy making "twisted" shapes that derive from off-axis turning.

Brian will be presenting a class on off-center turning at the Appalachian Center for Craft in Smithville, Tennessee, in May 2018. For more, visit horais.com.





## JOURNAL ARCHIVE CONNECTION

For more on Brian Horais' designs, see his December 2017 AW article, "Twisted Segmented Turning: a Challenging Alternative to Round Shapes" (vol 32, no 6, page 40).



(Left) Untitled (Dovetail Stave Vase), 2016, Maple, cherry, purpleheart, 8" × 6" (20cm × 15cm)

(Middle) Untitled (Dovetail Stave Vase), 2016, Maple, cherry, purpleheart, 8"  $\times$  4" (20cm  $\times$  10cm) For unusual stave designs, I form dovetail joints using a router-based template system (available from mlcswoodworking.com), cut the flat panels into tapered staves on the table saw, and glue them into a turning blank.

(Right) Untitled (Twisted Dovetail), 2017, Mahogany, maple, African rosewood, 9" × 7" (23cm × 18cm)

#### Gerard Bufalini, Michigan

Applying a copper patina to turned ash, I made a replica of a water carrier of the type my grandmother carried in Pacentro, Italy, circa 1910 to 1919. Names for this type of copper vessel varied by region; in Pacentro, it was called a *concone*. The original vessel measured about 20" (51cm) in diameter at the base and 24" (61cm) tall.

In those days, the town had no running water or toilet facilities. Whenever water was needed, my grandmother would have to go to the town well, fill the *concone* with water, and carry it back home balanced on her head. Smaller versions were used as spittoons.

5

Untitled, 2017, Ash, copper patina, 61/2" × 6" (17cm × 15cm), excluding handles

#### Mike Sorge, Virginia

I enjoy rescuing, revealing, and preserving the inherent natural beauty of fallen trees through creative wood-turning, with an emphasis on large non-round forms. These include geometric sculptural art with utilitarian function, natural-edge winged vase sculptures, burl forms, and round forms that play with light and shadow.

For more, visit mikesorge.com.







(Clockwise from top left) Kissing Fish Lidded Vase, 2016, African wenge, zebrawood, 7½" × 9" (19cm × 23cm)

Pagoda Cairn (Triple Diamond over Kissing Fish), 2017, Sugar maple, African bubinga, wenge, 21½" × 23½" (55cm × 60cm)

Seven separately turned and hollowed boxes fitted upon each other.

Stacked Cairn, 2016, Black walnut, sugar maple, 11" × 14" (28cm × 36cm)

#### Roy Grant, Georgia

A beautiful white oak with a burl near its bottom stood in the yard for three generations. A bolt of lightning signaled the impending death of the tree, and soon it had to be taken down. The family asked me to make something from the burl as a remembrance of the tree.

I made a cut down the middle of the 30" (76cm) burl with the idea of turning a platter. After completing the back and front rim, I was forced by medical reasons to put the project on hold for a long time. Of course, the wood moved as it dried, and when I was finally ready to turn again, it wobbled heavily and rocked the lathe. Turning it true was not going to be possible.

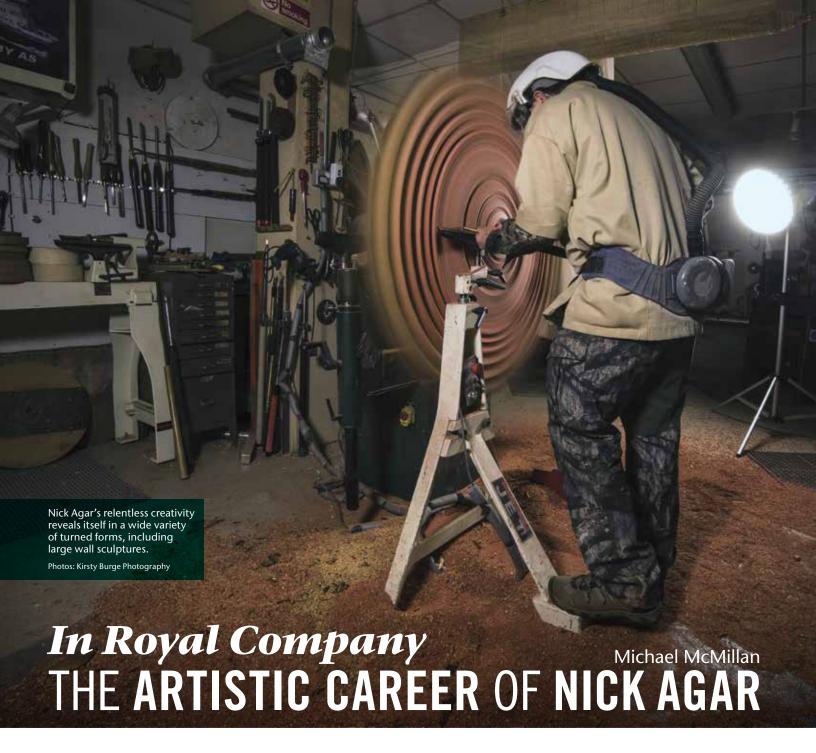
Seeking options for the unturned burl in the platter's middle, I called my carver friend Don Highfield. He took it home and produced the leaves and acorns. I sanded the piece to 1000-grit abrasive and finished it with lacquer.

The family is overjoyed to have a piece of their tree to pass on to future generations.

Turning by **Roy Grant**, carving by **Don Highfield**, *Memory*, 2016, Oak burl, 2½" × 28" (6cm × 71cm)

Photo: Christopher Mark Sorrow







ith a tireless work ethic and seemingly boundless creativity, Nick Agar has emerged as a prominent, awardwinning artist who has helped shape contemporary woodturning. For more than twenty-five years, he has served as instructor and mentor to professionals and novices alike, freely sharing the broad array of talents he has amassed. Agar crafts hollow vessels, wall sculptures, figurative compositions, and

other innovative works with equal mastery, and is adept at combining a multitude of materials with various, sometimes unexpected embellishment techniques, such as weaving.

His work is influenced by the beauty of the environment surrounding his riverside home, studio, and instructional space in the Devon region of Southwestern England.

Agar's love of nature intertwines with his fondness for the evolution

of the decorative arts and the history of ancient cultures, most notably of the Viking Age. Taken in their entirety, Agar's works represent a trifecta of artistic traits: a mind with reverence for the past, a heart keenly aware of the marvels and beauty of the present, and a set of hands working to push the frontiers of the wood artist far into the future.

#### **Early career**

As is often true for those who make a living at the lathe, Nick Agar arrived at the scene through an unconventional path of ever-changing professional and personal circumstances. His comprehensive understanding of wood properties and the handling of the material derived from his experiences as a forester in the 1980s. Agar's time was spent working on the first and second thinnings of softwood trees in hilly-ground areas in Devon. This work doubled as an opportunity to familiarize himself with the properties of wood-the object that would become Agar's medium-of-choice in his later artistic endeavors. He vividly recalls instances of clearing and cutting elm and other woods, marveling at the beauty of the grain structures as logs were sawn into slabs. This interest led Agar and a co-worker friend to take evening woodturning classes with Rod Jenkins, who taught them the foundational principles of the lathe.

Just as mechanization brought the end to many jobs on the loom, pottery wheel, and lathe, Agar's work in forestry also became a victim of modern industrialization. New machinery was introduced and "took away our jobs," says Agar. "It could do in six minutes what six men could do in an hour." Agar's exit from the forestry industry also put a hold on his woodturning, and he moved into a period dabbling as a jack-of-all-trades across multiple lines of work.

He was employed in the building industry, spent time as an outdoor pursuits instructor, and worked with mentally handicapped children, among other positions.

It was an apprenticeship in 1989 in the village of Dartington with a man named Dougie Hart (who also spent time with brothers Simon and Richard Raffan in their early development as turners) that gave Agar the opportunity to get back to the lathe. Agar worked on a range of woodturning projects—crafting plates, bowls, cutting boards, spindles, and other objects of utility. Then, in 1991, just two-and-a-half years after Agar started the apprenticeship, Hart passed away unexpectedly. This loss, paired with a tree-felling accident that broke Agar's back and ended any possibility of a return to forestry, forced a period of self-assessment. The prospect of advancing his career with the skills and experiences he had accumulated was suddenly tainted with uncertainty.

In those early days, instructional resources in woodturning were not nearly as plentiful as they are today. While Agar was familiar with turners such as Ray Key and Bert Marsh, as well as the work of David Ellsworth and Ed Moulthrop in America, he mostly developed techniques, skills, muscle memory, and nuances by trial and error. Dale Nish's 1975 book *Creative Woodturning* and John Jordan's early instructional video content were some of the only outside materials employed during Agar's formative independent years.

Agar would build hollowing tools from bits of scrap metal and turn spherical vessels without hooked scrapers or a sphere jig—toiling through projects as an autodidact. As he says of his work during this period, adept woodturning required "brute force, sweat, and blood till the end of the job."



*Ponder,* 2001, Yew, steel, 5' × 16" × 20" (1.5m × 41cm × 51cm)

This creative office chair, made and used by Nick Agar, features early wall sculpture-style turning.

#### **Gaining exposure**

From 1991 to 1993, Agar demonstrated his skills at agricultural shows around the United Kingdom. Towing a trailer (known as a "horse box" in the U.K.) to each location, he would lay his homemade, Lister-engine-powered lathe across the truck bed and turn for a crowd and sell his work. Agar notes how formative these experiences were in preparing him for working with people in the woodturning community; he developed skills that have become invaluable >

Nick's approach to creating might be wildly inventive and somewhat gung-ho, but he knows when to stop, when too much embellishment is too much. That's why his *Viking Sunset Bowls* are now Agar signature pieces, much copied, but rarely equaled.

-Richard Raffan

in his current work demonstrating around the world.

During this time, Agar also worked with the Devon Rural Skills Trust in the Cockington region of Torquay (part of an area commonly known as the English Riviera). This was the first instance in which machine-powered woodturning was given the backing of the Trust, as the focus on traditional hand-skills and crafts had previously allowed for only

pole-lathe turning with limited use of modern machinery. Subsequently, in 1993, Agar began a two-year woodturning stint near Plymouth at Buckland Abbey, a National Trust Property that was the former home of Elizabethan explorer and mariner Sir Francis Drake.

#### **Returning to his roots**

After the passing of Dougie Hart, the Dartington studio had been kept operational by Dougie's daughter. However, when the unit became vacant in 1995, Agar negotiated for the space with the building owner, explaining that he was the last apprentice who worked in the studio and was therefore personally attached to the space. Agar subsequently revamped the studio, transforming it into half work area and half gallery, which he called The Woodturning Studio. As a gallerist, he would go on to represent Jason Breach, Stuart Batty, Les Thorne, Gary Rance, Phil Irons, as well as other English artists. The Woodturning Studio was among only a few galleries focusing exclusively on woodturning.

This second stint in Dartington brought great success for Agar, both personally and artistically. Located

Life from Lava, 2012, English sycamore, 18" × 18" × 2½" (46cm × 46cm × 6cm) Photo: Jonathon Cuff

The Daniel Collection



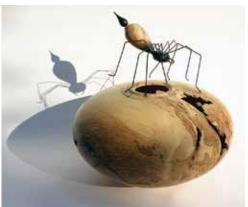


(Left) Maquette, 2004, English sycamore, each square is 6" × 6" × 1½" (15cm × 15cm × 38mm)

Photo: Jonathon Cuff
The Daniel Collection

(Right) The Guardian, 2005, Spalted beech, steel, paint, vessel is 9" × 16" (23cm × 41cm)





near a popular tourist site—the home to Dartington Glass and proximate to the original studio of famed English potter Bernard Leach—Agar's studio-gallery attracted as many as 600,000 visitors per year. As he states, the site had become "the mini Harrods of the Southwestern U.K."

While Agar treasured his time representing other artists, the success of the studio-gallery produced an additional benefit—the time and resources to do what he wanted as a maker. He soon began work collaborating with prominent English basket maker Ian Strugnull, who would weave willow into the rims of Agar's bowls and use the same material for bowl handles. These works were featured in a profile of Agar's studio-gallery on the BBC program *The Arts and Crafts Show*.

Nick Agar went on to earn a host of public opportunities and recognition, including commissions for Asprey's and the Royal Family. The latter work, inspired by mazer bowls, has been on display at The British Museum. Agar admits that the re-creation of these mazers—handle-less, shallow bowls or wide cups often adorned with silver—were likely the starting point

for what later became his *Viking Sunset Bowls*, for which he is commonly known today.

#### **Personal challenges**

The telling of the story of Nick Agar goes beyond celebrating his career; life outside the studio plays as great a part. In 2002, Agar's role as a father became devastatingly traumatic, as his five-year-old son was diagnosed with cancer in both kidneys. This shattered Agar's world emotionally and changed him as a person. The pain of witnessing his son undergoing chemotherapy imposed itself on Nick's creative work and approach to craftsmanship. He would often block the light from his gallery windows in an effort to "cave himself in," he notes. Anxiety and distress affected his work on a commission at the time for an English dance academy—a seven-foot sculpture enveloped with hand-carved Egyptian hieroglyphics. Fortunately, his son recovered from the cancer, but the experience changed Agar's perspective and prompted him to reconsider his priorities.

#### **Artistic works**

In the mid-2000s, Agar left the Dartington studio and transitioned to his current Totnes location in Devon.

Since then, Agar has progressed in his artistic endeavors at the lathe. His



Ceramic Effect Vessel, 2011, Poplar, milk paint, 20" × 14" (51cm × 36cm)

Rigsby Collection

sculptures—both freestanding and wall hanging—have become known for their ability to showcase the natural grain of both common and exotic woods, as well as highlight the possibilities of applied color. Ever since the first wall sculpture created by Agar back in his Buckland Abbey days, these forms have continued to diversify in content, amplified by technical experimentation. Today, viewers are witness to a range of color >



Shell Form, 2012, Hackberry, milk paint,  $5" \times 131/2" \times 5"$  (13cm × 34cm × 13cm) Photo: Jonathon Cuff

Viking Arm Ring, 2014, English sycamore, spirit stain, silver leaf, gilt wax, paint, 21½" × 5" (6cm × 13cm)

Photo: Tib Shaw/AAW AAW Permanent Collection

The Daniel Collection



(such as in his *Reincarnation* series), fossil forms, historical iconography, stylistic references (Aboriginal dot paintings), and mechanical motifs—whether expressed through ammonite imagery, a Saxon shield, the complex interplay of cogs, or other creative elements.

Agar points specifically to the Jarrah burl wall sculpture *Unlocking* 

My Potential as a stepping-stone in his development as an artist. Years ago, a client had purchased the home of a locksmith, resulting in the acquisition of a variety of keys for asylums, prison cell doors, gun safes, and other locking mechanisms. Agar was asked to incorporate these newfound keys into a commission for the home. He ended up featuring them on the endgrain of a piece of Jarrah burl, on whose surface he decided to create a composition that would appear to "unlock" something inside the sculpture. This work was met with rave reviews, and Agar decided to title the piece as a self-referential appraisal of his new artistic direction and capabilities.

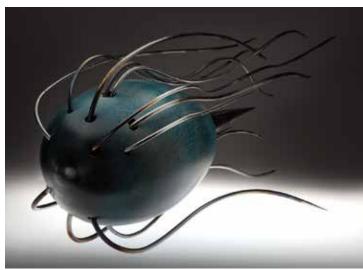
In many of Agar's non-bowl sculptures, the wood—whether grass tree root, burr oak, mallee, or other species—often becomes a frame for the action taking place in the center of the work. This central composition may be a medley of carving, dyeing, trompe l'oeil illustration, scorching, bronzing, or other handwork in service of storytelling and historical reference. Excellent examples of this

marriage of traits are Agar's Fossil Series, as well as Break on Through.

Other works associated with Agar are his *Sunset Viking Bowls*. These celebrated bowls achieve a wonderful balance of smooth and rough textures, while employing color and detail in just the right amount of technical restraint. As Richard Raffan notes, "Nick's approach to creating might be wildly inventive and somewhat gungho, but he knows when to stop, when too much embellishment is too much. That's why his *Viking Sunset Bowls* are now Agar signature pieces, much copied, but rarely equaled."

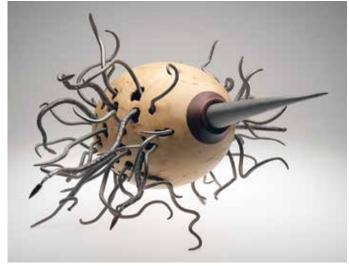
But restraint does not mean Agar won't "swing for the fences" in technical virtuosity. Just look to his *Hermit Series*—pieces such as *Squidoo* and *Hermit 3*—which are some of the most challenging works of craftsmanship in his artistic catalog, amalgamations of turned hollow forms, piercing, and chromed steel tentacles. In contrast to his heavier, sculptural wall work, these pieces have a lightness, fluidity, and movement to them, akin to some of Kristin LeVier's recent work.

Another tour de force example of craftsmanship is the *trompe l'oeil* 



Squidoo, 2008, Horse chestnut, acrylic paint, steel, 12"  $\times$  34"  $\times$  12" (30cm  $\times$  86cm  $\times$  30cm)

Photo: Jonathon Cuff The Daniel Collection



Hermit 3, 2008, English sycamore, cocobolo, steel, bullet points, lacquer, 23" × 27" × 23" (58cm × 69cm × 58cm)

Photo: Jonathon Cuff
The Daniel Collection





(Left) Unlocking My Potential, 2009, Jarrah burl, metal keys, paint, 27" × 27" × 3" (69cm × 69cm × 8cm)

(Right) Break on Through, 2007, Jarrah burl, copper, acrylic paint, 225/8" × 225/8" × 6" (57cm × 57cm × 15cm) Rigsby Collection

masterpiece *The Key to the City*. Made for an event hosted by the Worshipful Company of Turners, this piece references the Square Mile, the nickname for the business center in the city of London. Despite all elements being crafted from wood (even the key), five of the gears actually turn.

#### **Instructor**, road warrior

Nick's life as an artist is multidimensional and international in range. He is on the road continually, providing valuable lessons to audiences in technique, form, and design. This leaves less time for his own work, a common challenge for today's professional woodturner. As a result of his commitment to teach and demonstrate, the appreciation for his wisdom and technical skill is universal. As Ray Key states, "Nick is respected by his peers around the world for what he brings to the woodturning movement. There are few who can rival his knowledge and enthusiasm, which ensures that those who come in contact with him leave having had an enjoyable and enriching experience."

Agar is never a magician unwilling to reveal his secrets. On the contrary, he is eager to enable





Viking Bowl, 2014, Rippled English sycamore, wood dye, gilt, lacquer, 6" × 13" (15cm × 33cm) Worshipful Company of Turners Permanent Collection

others' exploration of art and his methods. Agar co-authored with David Springett the 2012 book, Woodturning Evolution, which provides hands-on instruction for a variety of techniques and projects. In addition, he markets the products used to embellish his Viking Sunset Bowls through Georgia-based Chroma Craft, and has created a line of equipment through Florida's King Arthur Tools. Pair this "open book" delivery of his materials and knowledge with years of dedication on the road, and you get one of the most

sought-after and admired minds in contemporary woodturning.

As stated by Colorado woodturners Kay and Dennis Liggett, "Our woodturning world expects a lot from our teachers. We expect them to travel all over the world for demonstrations, classes, and symposiums that last only a few days at a time. Some of them have adapted well to this life. Nick Agar rides into town like a circuit-riding preacher in the Wild West and gives us new ideas that shake our craft."

In 2018, this "road show" includes many stops, including symposia and ▶

other events in Alaska, New York, Georgia, Australia, Austria, Germany, France, Ireland, Norway, as well as other places.

Given the breadth and depth of Agar's commitment to woodturning, it is no surprise that his body of work has earned many accolades and awards. He recently became a member of the Worshipful Company of Turners and was given the honor of Freeman of the City of London. In addition, he is a patron of the Max Carey Trust, which is the sole woodturning trust in England. His work is held in private collections around the world, including numerous works in The Daniel Collection, one of the largest holdings of contemporary woodturning in the U.K. Jonathon Cuff, collector and co-curator of The Daniel Collection, notes, "Nick's work immediately stands out. Whether it's because it's one of his wall hangings, or the degree of embellishment, or even that it is just so unlike anything else you see around you, it forces

44

Nick understands the delicate interplay of possibilities and gets the balance right.

-Jonathon Cuff



Trilobite Pot, 2012, English sycamore, wood dye, gilt, lacquer, 5" × 7½" (13cm × 19cm)

Dale Nish Collection

you to look again. In many cases, it challenges pre-conceptions about what turning is, or what you and/or the turning establishment thought it was or should be. Nick understands the delicate interplay of possibilities and gets the balance right."

#### **Final thoughts**

The mission and popularity of contemporary woodturning, as well as its breadth of content, form,

technique, and exhibition opportunities, continue to grow. This broadening coincides with the everwidening influence that Nick Agar has had on the international woodturning community. He's been an artist, a gallery owner, the person who cuts down the trees, and the one who purchases the lumber. He has been both a student of the field and a mentor of students. And the work is still enjoyable for Nick, as it always brings him back to his love of nature. In his own words, "When I was a forester, I had the sense of touch and feeling-woodland and nature. And I still think I can get all that from doing the art that I do."

Agar is passionate about finding peace with what he is doing. "You're going to be rich in life, but not in money," he says of his vocation. However, the international woodturning community is unquestionably richer for his many contributions to the field, his endless enthusiasm, and his passion for teaching and sharing.

For more on Nick Agar, visit turningintoart.com.

Power Flower, 2010, Horse chestnut burl, acrylic paint, gilt,  $24" \times 24" \times 4"$  (61cm × 61cm × 10cm) Gunther Collection

Michael McMillan, Associate Curator at Fuller Craft Museum in Brockton, Massachusetts, can be reached at mmcmillan@fullercraft.org.

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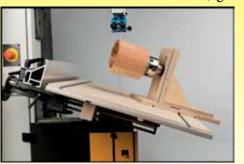


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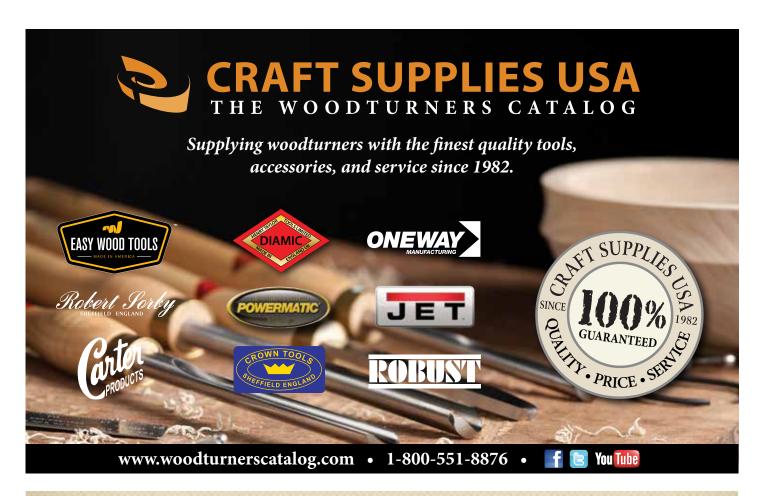


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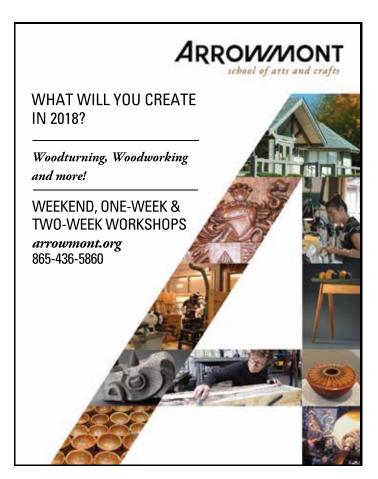
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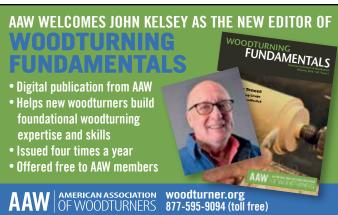
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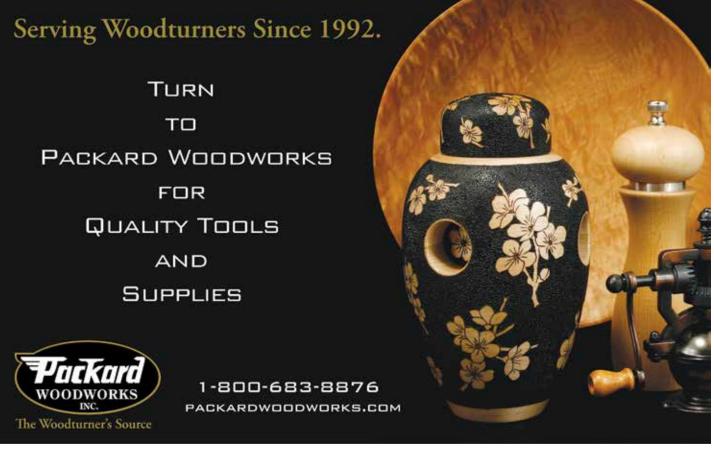
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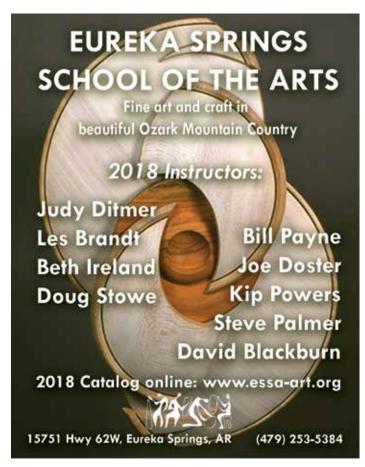
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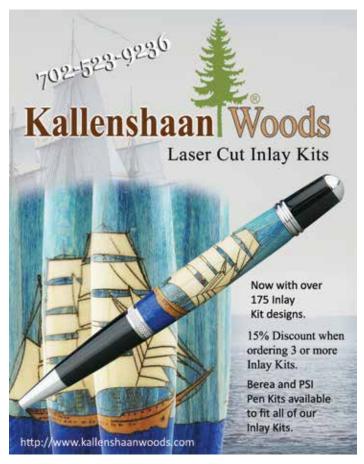
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Sharpens with belts rather than abrasive wheels

- Cuts steel rather than rubbing it of
- Change belts in seconds
- Flat bevel rather than hollow grind
- Wide range of grits and abrasives
- Sharpens all exotic alloys and carbide\*
- Belt sharpening lowers risk of overheating

Patented angle setter guarantees repeatability

- Sharpen at exactly the same angle every time
- · Nine factory indexed settings próvide a guide for all types of tool
- Can be locked between indexes for custom settings

**Exceptional Robert Sorby** construction

- Built from solid steel
- Pivots for operator comfort
- Inexpensive to run
- Small workbench footprint
- Backed by Robert Sorby Warranty

Wide range of accessories to suit all sharpening needs

system and recommend it. It was quick and simple to set up and very easy to tools were sharper than when sharpened on a wheel. Joseph M. Herrmann, Editor, Woodturning Design











www.robert-sorby.co.uk

Patent Number: 2438962

\*Carbide tools require use of diamond belt

\*\* Robert Sorby warranty is for 5 years if machine is not used commercially. Guarantees all non electrical parts except wear plate which needs replacing occasionally and with heavy use. Motor warranty is 2 years





# 4-Piece Woodturning Tool System with Carbide Insert Cutters

#### **ENJOY THE SUPERIOR CUTTING ACTION OF CARBIDE!**

Designed for spindle and faceplate work where scraping and shear cutting action needs the precision that these new tools deliver.

- Tungsten Carbide Insert Cutters keep sharp longer than carbon or HSS tools.
- Simply rotate a dull cutter for new edge! Takes just seconds.
- Circle, Square and Diamond Cutters provide variety of shapes for turning needs.
- Tool-less Chuck in the handle makes changing between shafts/cutters fast easy.
- Machined Shafts with cutters include flat bottom with 2 side flats for consistent tool positioning in scraping or shear cutting mode.



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# The Evolution of Carbide Insert Woodturning



#### Love Turning but Hate Sharpening?

If you love turning but don't have the time or equipment it takes to effectively sharpen your tools, you have to check out Woodpeckers new *Ultra-Shear* line. Just like other carbide insert tools, *Ultra-Shear* tools have a short learning curve, simply keep the tool flat and level on the centerline of the workpiece and cut the shape you want.

But *Ultra-Shear* goes even further, delivering a spectacular surface finish with a technique called *shear scraping*. Roll the tool right or left on your tool rest and you will feel it land solidly on a secondary bearing surface. This sets your cutting edge at 45° to the stock. Coming into the work at this angle, the wood fibers slice cleanly, virtually eliminating sanding. The exclusive shape of the *Ultra-Shear* shaft allows you to switch from aggressive stock removal to super-fine finishing in the blink of an eye.

#### The Sharpest, Longest Lasting Inserts

On the "business end", Woodpeckers development team worked hand in hand with the best carbide manufacturer in the country to give you the

best inserts on the market. It starts with a nano-grain carbide material.

This extremely fine-grained carbide can be polished to a mirror finish, yielding a cleaner, sharper

edge. Yet it is tough enough to hold that edge longer than virtually every other insert on the market.

#### **Solid Support for the Insert Means Chatter-Free Cuts**

The alloy steel shaft undergoes a two-step hardening process giving you a tool that floats smoothly across your tool rest and resists vibration, even when extended well

over the tool rest. The tool pocket machined into the shaft supports the insert with three-point contact, not just the clamping force of the screw. You get a tool that feels and responds even better than most conventional tools.







Keep the tool flat on the tool rest and level to the ground for fast stock removal and basic shaping cuts.



For ultra-fine finishing cuts, roll the tool right or left until it lands on the 45° bearing surface. Now, take a light pass with the tool still level. You'll be amazed at the clean cut and smooth finish.



Detail tool has two styles of tips, full sharp (supplied as standard) for creating precise vee lines and radius point for making small beads and coves (optional).

Whether you're a beginner or an experienced turner, turn large bowls, pens or tiny miniatures, you'll find *Ultra-Shear* tools will eliminate the drudgery of sharpening and dramatically increase your confidence and success at the lathe. For more details and to see the tools in action, visit our website: www.woodpeck.com/ultra-shear

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