

CREATING GEODES IN WOOD • LIFE'S NOT TOO SHORT TO TURN CRAPPY WOOD • NOISE IN THE WORKSHOP

AMERICAN WOODTURNER

Journal of the American Association of Woodturners

October 2018 vol 33, no 5 • woodturner.org

AN ELEGANT MORTAR AND PESTLE

**INDECO: A
PRODUCTION
TURN OF MIND**

.....
**TURNED SPIRAL
ILLUSIONS**

.....
**MERRYLL SAYLAN:
THIS IS YOUR LIFE**



Andy DiPietro

New Jersey

Working with three-dimensional shapes has always been a passion of mine. During the day, I work as a mechanical engineer, creating CAD drawings of steel-foundry equipment. At night and on the weekends, I work as a wood artist. I have always strived to combine my artistic and engineering sides.

Evolution of a form

Turning hollow vessels with added texture and color had been my early focus for about eight years. In 2012, I began bandsawing and sculpting larger rectangular shapes such as *Dragon's Wing*. These forms were influenced by marble sculptures, which are

part of my Italian heritage. But I wanted to add more dynamic motion to my work; forms such as *Grain Waves* were inspired by the beauty of flowing water. Then, last year, I cut a red cedar log and noticed how much the endgrain resembled a flower. The wavy flower idea was born. ■



Fiore di Cedro (Cedar Flower), 2018, Eastern red cedar, 15" x 15" x 7" (38cm x 38cm x 18cm)



(Top) *Dragon's Wing*, 2017, Dyed oak, 24" x 14" x 4" (61cm x 36cm x 10cm)

(Bottom) *Grain Waves*, 2017, Pin oak, 30" x 17" x 4" (76cm x 43cm x 10cm)



Spalted Wave, 2018,
Spalted maple, 15" x 15" x 6"
(38cm x 38cm x 15cm)



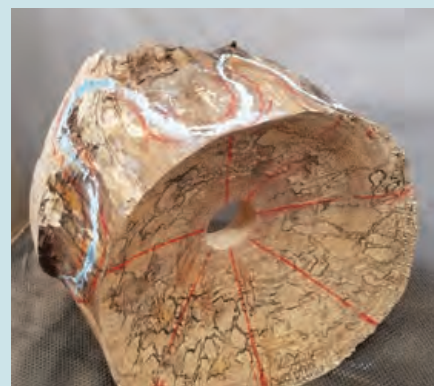
Waves of Ambrosia,
2018, Ambrosia silver
maple, 17" x 17" x 7"
(43cm x 43cm x 18cm)



Turn, Carve, Sand



These wavy flower forms are first turned endgrain on the pith center. About ten percent of the mass is removed to create a concave surface with a wide cross section.



Wavy lines drawn on the circumference guide wood removal. The author uses angle grinders, rotary carving tools, files, and a battery of sanding tools. The surfaces are lightly sandblasted and the edges are painted dark to create sharp contrast lines. An oil finish deepens the naturally darker endgrain fibers and enhances the figure.

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

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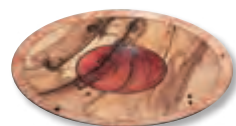
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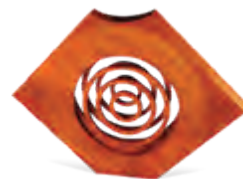
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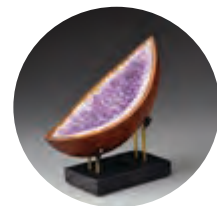
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A NOTE ABOUT SAFETY

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

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

*Web address is case sensitive.

Editor's Note



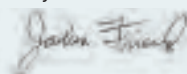
I welcome feedback on the journal and ideas for future content. *American Woodturner* is the journal of the AAW, and you, its members, *are* the AAW. This is your journal, so please reach out with comments and suggestions. I can't promise we will publish every article proposal, but I will consider every one thoughtfully and communicate with you about it, either way.

Some readers call for more functional items involving traditional turning methods. Kurt Hertzog's mortar and pestle article (page 18) fits the bill. D Wood offers a profile of a

husband-and-wife woodturning company (page 42) based on wares that are simple and functional.

Some readers ask for just the opposite—resources on turning wood for distinctly non-functional, purely aesthetic aims. Marty Kaminsky offers insights on turning “crappy wood”—material with natural defects that present unique challenges, and this article is followed by further commentary from expert turners (pages 23 and 26, respectively).

What would you like to see in these pages? I look forward to hearing from you.



—Joshua Friend

From the President



Who makes the decisions?

I, other Board members, and staff are contacted regularly with requests to influence decisions relating to Board elec-

tions, demonstrator selections, articles in *American Woodturner*, and any number of other decisions that might be made to the benefit of the organization and, possibly, of the individual making the contact. This is especially true after the Symposium, when the Board election and the selection of demonstrators and panelists take place.

Now, for all of us who view ourselves as leaders of AAW, I believe some clarification is appropriate. I view AAW and its leadership as a team effort.

The Board of Directors is elected by the membership and, in addition to being accountable to them, should ensure members' needs and desires are met. A director should deal with all Board issues, not just those they might be personally interested in.

The staff reports to the executive director, who reports to the Board. This group handles all the day-to-day needs of the membership. Budget development and control, administration, contract management, marketing, and membership recruiting are included in staff responsibility. Although the overseeing of *American Woodturner* and *Woodturning FUNDamentals* might be considered a staff function, that position reports

directly to the Board. Naturally, the managing editor works closely with the staff, especially on the needs of advertisers.

The committee structure is critical to the efficient management of our organization. The president appoints committee chairs, and those chairs recruit members who have displayed skills in the responsibilities of that committee. They make recommendations to the Board and staff, who then act with the assurance that their views are based on much expertise.

Finally, the membership provides opinions to the leadership, ensuring the needs of all members—whether they have turned for thirty years or three months, whether they are vendors or manufacturers, professionals or collectors.

AAW is in many ways like a symphony orchestra. Directors and staff handle the business responsibility—things like payroll, funding, contracts, and the hiring of key individuals, like a conductor. The conductor appoints the heads of the strings, brass, woodwinds, and all sections. The musicians are acquired and, as a group, beautiful music is the result. However, unless an audience can be attracted that is willing to buy tickets and finance the symphony, all is for naught.

Contract personnel

As I talk about how AAW is managed, maybe it's time to recognize some of our contract personnel who provide professional services to our organization. Our auditing firm, Olsen, Thielen and Co., in addition to completing our annual audit,

also independently administers our yearly election of Board members. This professional organization ensures your organization is managed in a fiscally responsible manner.

Conference Direct manages our Symposia and plans future Symposia, ensuring we are provided services, facilities, and management that produce a great experience for all attendees. Those who experienced the Portland Symposium this year can attest to the results of their efforts.

Our sales group, Pierre Productions & Promotions, deals with all advertising in *American Woodturner* and *FUNDamentals*. They also handle vendor booth sales at our Symposia. In both activities, they exceed our expectations, selling all booths at the Symposia and maxing out advertising in our publications. They know their business.

There are others who provide services on an as-needed basis; without their abilities and services, I'm sure we would have issues. Our organization is extremely well run. We make a complicated structure seem easy. We are primarily an organization of volunteers who selflessly give because of our love of woodturning. Even our staff and contractors continually exceed their job descriptions and volunteer. We are family. We know our business. We do it well.

Looking forward,



Greg Schramek
President, AAW Board of Directors

COME TO LEARN. LEAVE INSPIRED!

Experience AAW's 33rd Annual International Woodturning Symposium



Photo: Andi Wolfe

FOR ALL SKILL LEVELS - Demonstrations, lectures, and panel discussions, including:

- Beginner learning track
- Tool-handling techniques
- Hollow forms
- Segmented turning
- Lidded boxes
- Bowls
- Platters
- Embellishment techniques
- Penturning
- Ornamental turning
- Spindle turning

INTERNATIONALLY KNOWN DEMONSTRATORS and expert woodturning talent:

- Sharon Doughtie
- Benoît Averly
- Max Brosi
- Troy Grimwood
- Ashley Harwood
- John Jordan
- John Lucas
- Alan Miotke
- Pascal Oudet
- Dick Sing
- Colwin Way
- Kimberly Winkle
- Tom Wirsing
- Many more to be announced



July 11-14, 2019
Raleigh, NC

Symposium Facility
Raleigh Convention Center
500 S. Salisbury St.
Raleigh, NC 27601

Host Hotel
Raleigh Marriott City Center
500 Fayetteville St.
Raleigh, NC 27601

Registration opens
November 2018

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NEW AAW TOOL: Demonstrator DIRECT

Find a Demonstrator



After selecting the “Find a Demonstrator” module and filtering the results, members can click on the map’s red pins to display demonstrator information, including name, address, phone number, email address, demonstration topics, biography, fee range, and more.

Find a Chapter Program Director



After selecting the “Find a Chapter Program Director” module and filtering the results, members can click on the map’s blue pins to display chapter information, including program director name, phone number, email address, president name, phone number, email address, meeting details, and more.

Develop a Demonstration



The new tool’s “Develop a Demonstration” online learning portal helps less-experienced demonstrators enhance their presentation skills.

AAW is pleased to introduce Demonstrator Direct, an easy-to-use, online tool facilitating the all-important connections between demonstrators and AAW chapters. The tool helps all parties involved schedule demos faster, easier, and more conveniently than ever before! Plus, the “Develop a Demonstration” learning portal offers a curated selection of resources that will help less-experienced demonstrators build presentations and strengthen their delivery skills. Visit woodturner.org to get started.

For chapters

Demonstrator Direct’s “Find a Demonstrator” can help you tap into the broad range of available talent and identify the perfect presenter for your club’s programs. Just click on the red pins/bubbles on the map and, presto, your program director has access to key information:

- Filter the map results by demonstrator name, demonstration type (local, regional, international, remote), and topic areas (bowls/platters, hollow forms/boxes, multiaxis, segmented, embellishment, specialty).
- Access demonstrators’ names, phone numbers, demonstration types, fee ranges, biographies, and email addresses.

Note: AAW’s Demonstrator Direct maps and calendar are only as accurate as the data provided by your chapter. We encourage chapters to regularly submit scheduled events to the AAW Woodturning Calendar at tiny.cc/aawcalendar and provide chapter and chapter officer updates at tiny.cc/chapterupdate.

For professional demonstrators

Demonstrator Direct is the only marketing service designed exclusively for AAW demonstrators to reach the woodturning community. The “Find a Chapter Program Director” map can help you make connections with chapters and plan your schedule, as well as maximize your time and travel expenses. Click on the blue pins/bubbles on the map, and voilà, you have precisely the information

needed to schedule demonstrations and get ready to hit the road:

- Filter map results by state/province, chapter, program director name, and chapter president name.
- Access key pieces of chapter information: program directors’ phone numbers, email addresses, meeting locations, and website URLs.

Note: If you’re a professional demonstrator and don’t see your name on the map, we encourage you to sign up. Visit tiny.cc/ddemosignup.

For up-and-coming demonstrators

If you’re a less-experienced or prospective demonstrator who would like to build your presentation skills, you’ll enjoy Demonstrator Direct’s “Develop a Demonstration” learning portal. Tap into robust resources on content planning, organization, handouts, delivery, audio/visual elements, tips on handling questions, and evaluation—all designed to enhance your skills and help you hit it out of the park in no time.

For individual woodturners

If you’re a woodturner interested in learning a new technique, Demonstrator Direct can help you identify just the right teacher for individual instruction. Use the “Find a Demonstrator” map to easily filter results by topic area. Access demonstrators’ names, phone numbers, fee ranges, biographies, and email addresses. Just by clicking the red pins/bubbles on the map, you’ll have the information needed to arrange classes with pro woodturners. ■

Demonstrator Direct is an AAW-members-only service found at woodturner.org. Only demonstrators and chapter program directors whose AAW memberships are current will be listed on the maps. All demonstrator information is self-reported. Before booking a demonstration, chapters should connect with a demonstrator to determine whether his/her services will be a good fit. AAW recommends a written agreement of expectation between the chapter and demonstrator. Sample contracts and materials can be found at tiny.cc/ddemocontract.

DID YOU KNOW?

1

2,800 online projects, articles, videos, and tips are in AAW's Explore! search tool. Get the best project instructions, technique guidelines, and information in just a few simple clicks. Easily searchable by topic and includes all interest areas.

2

12,000 images of member work are in AAW's Forum gallery online. Get inspiration, ideas, and feedback simply. Connect with woodturning enthusiasts using this member-moderated virtual community.

3

360 online videos are quickly searchable by topic in AAW's Video Source. Avoid the frustration of searching YouTube. Get relevant woodturning videos in just a few clicks. All videos are prescreened by the AAW for quality content and safety.

4

145 issues of *American Woodturner* are online with a searchable index. Access every issue of *American Woodturner* journal published in AAW's online library archive or on AAW's mobile app.

5

35 issues of *Woodturning FUNdamentals* publication and the Woodturning FUNdamentals online learning portal offer one-stop basics. Helps newer turners build and expand their woodturning knowledge and skills safely with a curated selection of information, projects, tips, and videos.

6

365 affiliated chapters are all easily searchable on the AAW's Connects map. Find a chapter near you fast. Search the map for symposia, demonstrations, exhibitions, events, organizations, and schools quickly and easily.

7

AAW membership offers the single largest collection of high-quality educational woodturning resources available anywhere. Membership is the fastest way to learn and enhance your woodturning expertise.

All of these resources and more are available to AAW members online at woodturner.org. Visit us to explore and customize your experience. We invite you to learn and grow with AAW. Your AAW membership is a commitment to your own personal development and expresses your dedication to preserving woodturning for future generations. Please remember to renew annually.

Prize Drawing for AAW Members

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

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

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

2018 Donors

(Others may be added during the year.)

Vendors

- Backgate Industries (backgateindustries.com) Salt/Pepper Mill Kits
- David Ellsworth (ellsworthstudios.com) Set of four DVDs
- Mike Mahoney (bowlmakerinc.com) 16 oz. utility oil
- Thompson Lathe Tools (thompsonlathetools.com) \$100 gift certificate
- Hunter Tool Systems (huntertoolsystems.com) \$100 gift certificate
- Trent Bosch (trentbosch.com) Trent Bosch DVD
- Nick Cook Woodturner (nickcookwoodturner.com) Nick Cook DVD
- Big Monk Lumber (bigmonklumber.com) \$25 gift certificate
- Glenn Lucas (glennlucaswoodturning.com) Series of 5 DVDs "Mastering Woodturning"
- The Walnut Log Studio and Supply (thewalnutlog.com) Jeff Hornung DVD
- Powermatic/JET (jpwindustries.com/brands) Lathes

AAW Chapters/Symposia

(each donating an event registration)

- Tennessee Association of Woodturners
- Totally Turning Woodturning Symposium

2018 AAW Symposium Youth Lathe Winners

The 2018 AAW Symposium held in Portland, Oregon, this past June was the fourteenth symposium for the AAW Youth Turning program. This year, twenty-six participants ages 10 to 18 took advantage of nine classes taught by experienced instructors Kailee Bosch, Paul Carter, Nick Cook, Kip Christensen, and Bonnie Klein. Since the program started at the 2005 Symposium in Overland Park, Kansas, there have been 653 youth participants. In addition to the instructors, dozens of volunteers participated to make sure the learning experience was enjoyable and safe for all. Setup and local logistical support was provided through the able supervision of Pete Gibson, Cascade Woodturners Association, Portland, Oregon.

Lucky lathe winners

The program also awards fifteen sets of the lathes and equipment used in the classes each year to participants through a drawing. Since the program has been in effect, 329 lathes—with tools, chucks, and safety gear—have been awarded to youth participants. In addition to youth participant winners, ten complete sets were awarded to Educational Opportunity Grant (EOG) recipients. These lathes will be used by groups who submitted grant applications to serve organized youth turning programs in schools and AAW chapters.



Bonnie Klein teaching youth at the 2018 AAW Symposium, Portland, Oregon.

Photo: Andi Wolfe

Winners of this year's lathe packages are as follows:

Aiden Baltzell	Sydney Julier
Noah Biehler	(received the lathe not taken by Noah Biehler)
(took related equipment only)	
Benjamin Blevens-Silbernagel	Aengus and Petra Kennedy
Marina Broach	Keonni Reeves
Ryan Debo	Deirdre Replinger
Max Gehring	Nick and Troy Rich
Kacy Hawkins	Dawson Roos
Mitchell Hodgkin	Jared Van Hoof
	Maddie Welin

Generous supporters

This highly successful program would not be possible without the generosity of the vendors who provide equipment and supplies for the classes. The following vendors have supported the program from the beginning:

- JET/Powermatic (mini-lathes and stands)
- Crown Hand Tools (tool sets)
- Teknatool International (chucks and safety drives)
- Woodcraft Supply (faceshields)

In addition, the following vendors have supported the program for multiple years:

- Easy Wood Tools (tool sets and a custom smock for each participant)
- Craft Supplies USA (project supplies)
- Robust Tools (toolrests, drive centers)
- KC Tools (project supplies)
- Vince's WoodNWonders (abrasives)

Finally, individual volunteers put in many hours of their personal time before, during, and after the Symposium in various capacities to make this program work. They include Jeff Brockett, Kip Christensen, Larry and Judy Miller, and Molly Winton. ■

—Larry Miller, Youth Program Chair/Coordinator

CALL FOR STUDENT SUBMISSIONS

2019 Turning to the Future Competition

The AAW is pleased to announce the fourth Turning to the Future competition, an opportunity for woodturning students and schools to show off their best work. The exhibition will be held in conjunction with FreshWood, one of North America's largest student furniture-making and woodworking competitions.

The competition is intended to encourage and support students in reaching for and attaining the highest levels of skill in the use of the lathe. The contest is open to students in North America, and there is no entry fee.

Prizes include \$500 first-place and \$100 second-place awards in each division and



category, and two lathes for the Best in Show piece in each division.

There are two divisions, High School and Post-Secondary, with three categories each: Functional, Small Turnings, and Open. Five finalists in each division category will be chosen to have their work displayed at the 2019 AWFS® Fair in Las Vegas, Nevada, July 16–20, 2019. Work will be evaluated on craftsmanship, aesthetic appeal, creativity and/or utility, and process documentation. Application period opens March 1, 2019. Deadline for submissions is May 1, 2019.

If you know a student woodturner, encourage him or her to apply! Submission details can be found at tiny.cc/Calls.



Justin Fiaschetti, 2017 High School first-prize winner, at the AWFS Fair, Las Vegas.

Traces: 2019 POP Exhibition Call for Entries

Entry Period: December 1, 2018, to February 4, 2019



The Professional Outreach Program (POP) is seeking entries to its 2019 themed exhibition and auction. The 2019 POP show will feature original, small-scale works in the theme *Traces*.

Works accepted into this exhibition will be on view at the AAW Gallery of Wood Art in Saint Paul, Minnesota, March 10 to June 23, 2019, before traveling to the AAW International Woodturning Symposium in Raleigh, North Carolina, July 11–14. The auction will be held on July 13. Funds raised support POP programs, including the Instant Gallery awards, fellowships, Artist Showcase, panel discussions, and other professional development initiatives.

The full call for entries can be found in the August 2018 *American Woodturner*, page 7. Application will be online at tinyurl.com/2019POP. For more information, check the woodturner.org Calls for Entry page (tiny.cc/Calls), or contact Tib Shaw at tib@woodturner.org.

Continuum: AAW's 2019 Themed Member Exhibition Call for Entries

Entry period: January 1 to March 4, 2019

The AAW is pleased to announce an open juried call for its 2019 member exhibition, with the theme *Continuum*.

Works accepted into this exhibition will be on view at AAW's Annual International Woodturning Symposium at the Raleigh Convention Center, Raleigh, North Carolina, July 11–14, 2019. The exhibition will then travel to the AAW Gallery of Wood Art, Saint Paul, Minnesota, where it will be on display until the end of the year.

The full call for entries can be found in the August 2018 *American Woodturner*, page 6. Application will be online at tinyurl.com/AAW2019. For more information, check the woodturner.org Calls for Entry page (tiny.cc/Calls), or contact Tib Shaw at tib@woodturner.org.

AAW Board of Directors Election Results

Congratulations to Joe Dickey, Ken Ledeen, and Andy Cole for being elected to the AAW Board of Directors. Each person will serve a three-year term, beginning January 2019. Serving as a volunteer on the Board requires a significant commitment of time, and we appreciate the willingness of all six candidates to put their names forward for the election. Thank you. —Greg Schramek, AAW Board President

What Would You Do with an AAW Grant?

New grants committee

AAW is restructuring its association-wide grant programs. Historically, grants have been awarded by different committees within the AAW. Grants could be applied for through EOG (Educational Opportunity Grants); POP (Professional Outreach Program) Fellowship; and WIT (Women In Turning). To provide a more strategic application of funds, all grants will now be awarded by a singular Grants Committee. Grant applications related to POP and WIT will be vetted by their appropriate committees prior to the Grants Committee final review, selection, and granting of awards. Awards will be made on an annual basis, and to be eligible, applications must be received by December 31 of each calendar year.

Grant awards

For upcoming 2019 grant opportunities, find detailed descriptions and applications on the AAW website (tiny.cc/aawgrants). Monetary award limits (when applicable) will be noted



[Our AAW] grant included a lathe and supporting tools and equipment to start an after-school woodturning club. The equipment has [enabled us] to offer students the opportunity to learn a craft they can carry into their adult life.

—Helen Brown, Health Science High School



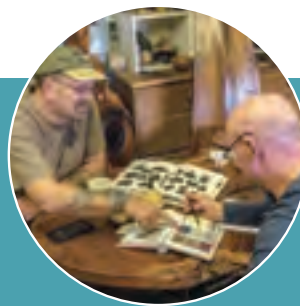
One of the joys of woodturning is seeing the inevitable smiles when young people turn their first object. The Chicago Woodturners was able to provide that experience for hundreds of kids in 2015, due in part to a grant from the AAW, used to purchase mini-lathes and other tools.

—Al Miotke



Having been awarded the excellent sum of \$1,000, it was a delight to send an email to [instructor] Nick Agar. The course revolved around my request to work with textures. Direction from Nick has opened so many possibilities to me to move forward with my work. I hope others will benefit even half as much from the AAW grant as I have with Nick Agar.

—Pat Carroll



I was awarded an AAW grant to explore and learn all I could about precious metal clay. I had wanted to work with this material for a long time but never had the means to do so. The grant allowed me to purchase a tabletop kiln and a few of the necessary tools and accessories to get started. I also took a class taught by a qualified instructor.

—Jennifer Shirley



within the grant description. Grants are available to individuals, chapters, schools, and non-profit organizations. Examples of available grants include, but are not limited to, outreach programs and/or events to encourage youth and under-represented populations (women, minority, disabled, etc.) to learn and pursue woodturning, support of existing or developing unique woodturning programs, educational workshops or class participation, professional development opportunities, chapter projects, etc. In addition to monetary awards, up to ten (10) mini-lathe packages will be available for award. A package will include a JET mini-lathe, Nova chuck, set of Crown tools, set of Easy Wood tools, and a faceshield. These lathe packages are a portion of what has been donated by sponsors to the Youth Turning Program at AAW Symposia.

Tips to consider when applying

- If you don't apply, you don't have the opportunity to receive a grant.
- Be thorough. The committee will not consider applications that are incomplete or vague.
- Complete the application online at tiny.cc/aawgrants. Only

online applications will be accepted.

- Submit well before the deadline. Late applications will **not** be considered.
- Provide sufficient information, so the committee members can clearly understand what you are requesting and how you intend to use the funds or lathes. Be concise; make your points directly and clearly. Samples of successful past proposals can be found online on the application form site.
- Include details of how you will use the funds or lathes. Specific needs should be itemized. Funds will not be granted for miscellaneous, incidental, or unspecified expenses.
- Explain your educational goal or experience you wish to obtain. Keep in mind these grants are intended for educational purposes. Explain how others will benefit as well.



If you have questions, please contact Molly Winton, Grants Committee Chair, at molly@woodturner.org or the AAW office.

In Memoriam: Phil Brown, 1937–2018

Phil Brown died quietly at home on July 14. He had been receiving hospice care for terminal cancer. Phil remained engaged with woodturning until his final hours—working with family and colleagues to curate his work, complete unfinished projects, and share in the planning of an upcoming gallery show that he had conceived earlier in the year.

Born in Denver and educated at Colorado State University and the University of Maryland, Phil worked as an agricultural economist for the U.S. Department of Agriculture. He had a lifelong interest in wood and began woodturning in 1975. Phil truly was

present at the beginning of the modern era of woodturning in North America.

Phil was a pioneering member of the AAW, and it would be difficult to overstate the impact he had on the woodturning and fine craft community of the Washington, D.C., area. He was involved in the formation of the Capital Area Woodturners, was a longstanding member of the Chesapeake Woodturners, and founded the Montgomery County Woodturners. Over the last several years, Phil devoted most of his time to the Montgomery County club in varying capacities, including club officer, program coordinator, show organizer,

and technical demonstrator. In 2017, he was awarded a Lifetime Impact Award for Excellence in the Arts and Humanities by Montgomery County for his contributions to the cultural life of the area.

Phil Brown taught by example. His appreciation of wood, form, surface, and finishes was exemplary and a source of inspiration for all makers who aspire to technical excellence. He is survived by his wife Barbara, three daughters, extended family, and a host of woodturners locally, nationally, and internationally whom he has deeply affected. ■

—Rich Foa, President, Chesapeake Woodturners



An example of Phil's signature "vortex" bowls.
Photo courtesy of Montgomery County Woodturners



Phil Brown in his Bethesda, Maryland, workshop, 2016.
Photo: Betty Scarpino

FOR FURTHER READING

Phil Brown's career and work were wonderfully profiled by David Fry in an April 2016 *AW* article, "Phil Brown on Untraversed Slopes" (vol 31, no 2). Readers who are interested in Phil's background, techniques, and aesthetics are encouraged to revisit this insightful portrait.



OVW Donates Wigstands to Cancer Society

In 2017, Canada celebrated a significant birthday—the 150th anniversary of the country's Confederation. Throughout the year there were many celebratory activities. The Ottawa Valley Woodturners decided to join in by undertaking to make 150 wigstands for the Canadian Cancer Society. Many members participated, some making multiple stands, and they met and exceeded the target.

In the spring of 2018, club representative Sam Lewinshtein presented the stands to the Canadian Cancer Society. At the May 2018 monthly meeting, the

club had a visit from Amy Desjardins, Director of the Ottawa regional branch of the Society, who described how stunned and grateful Society staff had been when presented with all the stands. She then introduced her colleague Julie Booker, whose task is to assist cancer survivors in the use and care of their wigs. Julie also expressed the Society's appreciation for the wigstands, explained how useful they were, and went on to say how she appreciated them personally because her own hair had not yet grown back either. Jaws dropped as the audience realized that her long blond hair was a wig and that

she was a cancer survivor. Both women received a long round of applause. ■

—Malcolm Zander



Sam Lewinshtein presents more than 150 wigstands to Amy Desjardins and Julie Booker of the Canadian Cancer Society.

Woodturners Fulfill Student Request

In early May, I was contacted by the mother of a 12-year-old middle schooler with a request of helping her son turn a baseball bat. Brad Crawford, an avid baseball player and student in a gifted language arts class, wanted to participate in the making of a bat and share the experience with his classmates. Involving youth in woodturning has always been an important part of the Chicago



Brad Crawford receives a lesson in turning a baseball bat from Scott Barrett and former Chicago Cub Richard Nye, both members of the Chicago Woodturners.

Woodturners' mission. We have participated in Boy Scouts events, high school penturning fairs, and multi-discipline art programs. This was yet another opportunity to not only fulfill a request, but possibly build a foundation upon which a future in woodturning could be built.

Since Brad is a pitcher on his local baseball team and a fan of the Chicago Cubs, I enlisted the help of my fellow club member Richard Nye, who played for the Cubs from 1966 to 1970. As an added bonus, Richard has become very adept at turning wooden baseballs and using pyrography to reproduce the stitching. You can only imagine the excitement this generated when I presented Brad with the news that we had arranged for his bat- (and ball-) turning experience.

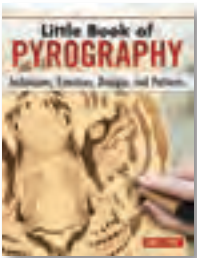
We met at my shop after one of Brad's baseball games. Following a brief introduction of safety equipment and tool use, Brad began some

rough-turning. In the early stages, we stopped frequently to reinforce proper technique. He was a quick learner and soon shaped the billet into a bat. Richard, with his fine tool control, took over to blend the barrel into the handle and butt. Within about ninety minutes, Brad was handling sandpaper and putting on a quality finish.

Then we all watched as Richard turned a near-perfect sphere and burned in the ball's stitching. When the two projects were completed, Richard began sharing baseball stories with his young protégé. The day brought great joy to a young man. I have little doubt that at some future date Brad Crawford will once again find himself covered in shavings and looking back on this day in May as his inspiration for a love of woodturning. ■

—Dr. Scott Barrett, Chicago Woodturners

Book Review: *Little Book of Pyrography: Techniques, Exercises, Designs, and Patterns*, by Lora S. Irish, Fox Chapel Publishing, 2018, 160 pages, hardcover



Artist and author Lora S. Irish has written twenty-eight woodcarving, pyrography, and craft-pattern books and now offers the *Little Book of Pyrography* focusing on techniques, designs, and patterns. This book is perfect for someone who has never tried pyrography and would like to give it a go, or for someone who has briefly used a pyrography unit and would like further instruction.

Little Book of Pyrography offers guidance to the novice looking to acquire equipment and supplies and learn how to use them. It also covers what materials can be used as a canvas and includes projects with step-by-step instructions.

Little Book of Pyrography offers guidance to the novice looking to acquire equipment and supplies and learn how to use them. It also covers what materials can be used as a canvas and includes projects with step-by-step instructions.

Irish does an excellent job describing the two basic burner styles—variable-heat and fixed-temperature—and explains the features of each type. She gives visual comparisons of what each unit is capable of creating and how each one is handled. The book also features helpful photos of available burning tips and what marks each makes.

Preparing the surface of the medium you will be using is important, and each type is described for safety and getting good results. Irish's description of each medium, be it wood, artist's paper, gourds, cotton, or canvas, is valuable information to know before touching hot tip to surface. Different types of wood react differently to burning, and Irish devotes several pages to these details.

Practicing on a sample of your project wood and keeping a record of heat levels are also discussed. Irish shows how to create a practice board that "gives you a working surface on which to experiment with the wide variety of strokes you will use." She also emphasizes tonal, or gray-scale, values, as shading using burns of various darkness levels will greatly enhance the quality of your work. The book's sample projects help you explore the techniques Irish presents.

The size of this little book is good for taking along when gathering up supplies, and it takes only a small amount of space on your worktable. The price is right as a gift for a beginner. With Irish's guidance, you will be well on your way to burning wood with success. ■

—Karen Miller

Calendar of Events

December issue deadline: October 15

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

New Zealand

October 4–7, 2018, Woodturning New Zealand International Symposium, Wesley College, Paerata, Auckland. Demonstrators to include Eli Avisera, Dixie Biggs, Sally Burnett, Philippe Cristophini, Stephen Hughes, Neil Joynt, Richard Raffan, Chris Ramsey, Ken Rays, Keith Tompkins, Neil Turner, and Derek Weidman. For more, visit sawg.org.nz.

Florida

February 8–10, 2019, The 2019 Florida Woodturning Symposium, Lake Yale Baptist Conference Center, Leesburg. Event offers onsite accommodations with meals included, silent auction, raffles, vendors, and workshops. National demonstrators to include Derek Weidman, Peggy Schmid, Jason Clark, Graeme Priddle, and Melissa Engler. Regional demonstrators to include Al Hockenbery, Don Geiger, Rudolph Lopez, and Franck Johannesen. Workshops led by Dixie Biggs, Steve Cook, Barry Reiter, Walt Wager, and Steve Marlow. For more, visit floridawoodturningsymposium.com or facebook.com/myfws.

Indiana

October 17–20, 2019, Ohio Valley Woodturners Guild's "Turning 2019," Higher Ground Conference Center, West Harrison. OVWG's biennial symposium features eleven rotations, each with five demonstrations. Pro turners will offer four unique topics over seven rotations. Pro demonstrators to include Stuart Batty, Trent Bosch, Mark Sfirri, Al Stirt, and Kimberly Winkle. Onsite housing and dining, vendors, instant gallery, and silent and live auctions. For more, contact KC Kendall at kckend@gmail.com.

Massachusetts

March 31–November 18, 2018, *Tricks of the Trade: Illusions in Craft-Based Media*, Fuller Craft Museum, Brockton. An exhibition featuring *trompe l'oeil* ("fools the eye" in French) work in multiple media; wood artists include Michelle Holzapfel, Lincoln Seitzman, Tom Eckert, and Miriam Carpenter. For more, visit fullercraft.org.

Minnesota

Ongoing, The AAW Gallery of Wood Art in Saint Paul features four to six woodturning exhibitions per year, including works from AAW's annual themed member and POP exhibitions. Remaining in 2018: *Dia•Log*, October 7 to December 28. On continuous display at the Gallery of Wood Art is the "Touch This!" family-friendly education room. For

more, visit galleryofwoodart.org or email Tib Shaw at tib@woodturner.org.

Missouri

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

Pennsylvania

August 3–October 20, 2018, *allTURNatives: Form + Spirit*, The Center for Art in Wood, Philadelphia. The Center's Windgate ITE International Residency culminates in a major multidisciplinary exhibition reflecting each resident's experience and includes work produced prior to the residency. Three-dimensional work will be accompanied by photographs, video, and other documentation. For more, visit centerforartinwood.org.

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. For more, visit tnwoodturners.org or email symposium@tnwoodturners.org. Vendors, contact Grant Hitt at vendorinfo@tnwoodturners.org.

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. ■



Bill Loitz, California

Multiaxis Goblet, 2018, Hard maple, poplar base, 48" (122cm) tall

Stem and goblet turned from one piece of wood on seven axes.

Photo: Gary Loitz

Tips

Banjo dust-hose mount



Figure 1.

There are two critical factors in dust collection. One is the volume of air passing through the space in which the dust is being generated. The other is the proximity of the collection device to the source of dust. I came up with a simple vacuum-holding device for the lathe room at the Eureka Springs School of the Arts (Arkansas). Taking the place of the toolrest during sanding, this dust-hose mount is held in the lathe's banjo and can be set close to the source (*Photo 1*). The benefit of this banjo mount is improved flexible positioning, whether you are using a portable shop vacuum or a larger dust collector.

To make the dust-hose mount, turn a hardwood dowel to fit in your lathe's banjo. Leave the top section square so you can glue two flat pieces to it, as shown in *Figure 1*. I used a circle cutter to cut the hole for the vacuum hose, then attached those pieces to the post with glue and staples. The vacuum hose fits in the hole with a friction fit, so size the hole according to the hose you are using. The dust hood can be turned in the holder to any angle you want, and the mount in the banjo can be raised, lowered, or rotated for maximum effect.

—Doug Stowe, Arkansas

Battery-powered toothbrush sander



Lots of times you can't get sandpaper into the intersection of raised surface features or grooves. And even if you can, it's hard to sand sharp angles evenly by hand. But you can reach those hard-to-sand areas and get great results with an inexpensive "orbital"

detail sander made from an electric toothbrush. My friend Bill Perri first introduced me to this idea. You don't need to invest in a rechargeable electric toothbrush—just buy a cheap one with replaceable batteries.

Here's what you'll need to make your sander: an inexpensive battery-powered toothbrush with a disk-shaped head, some double-sided foam tape, sandpaper, and a "hollow punch." Pluck out the toothbrush bristles with a pair of pliers, leaving a flat surface. Using a hollow punch that matches the size of the toothbrush head, cut a disk of double-sided tape. Stick the foam tape to the toothbrush head. Then punch out some sanding disks the same size, stick one to the toothbrush head, and sand away.

To change the sandpaper, just pry off the sandpaper disc from the foam tape and put on a new one. When the foam tape wears out, just punch out a new disk and stick it on the toothbrush head.

—Rich Sabreen, Connecticut

Alternate blade-tensioning method

I read Paul Coppinger's August 2018 AW article, "Double-Offset Bread Knife" with interest, and even managed to create one of my own. However, instead of building a bending jig like Paul's (shown on page 31 of the article), I came up with a simpler but quite effective technique to provide tension when installing the blade. I used a quick-grip-style clamp to apply pressure on the spindle when setting the second screw. It worked quite well.

—Doug Fuson, Wisconsin



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

Wolverine jig rule

I use a Wolverine jig to sharpen my turning tools. Like many of you, I previously used a marking system on the square-shafted arm to help me position the jig correctly for each tool. I knew, for example, that the shaft mark #1 correlated to skew #1, and so forth, through my collection of twenty tools. Unfortunately, many of the markings were too close to each other and got confusing, and worst of all they were

just not accurate enough for reliable repeatability.

To solve this issue, I painted one side of the shaft white, set a metric scale in the crotch of the jig, and marked off units at 1mm increments. For each tool, I determined the appropriate arm position and put the corresponding length measurement on a piece of tape on the tool handle (452mm, for example).

This saves a lot of set-up time when

I want to sharpen my tools. I just set the arm position at the length indicated on the tool, put the tool in the jig, and sharpen with confidence.

It is true that this idea will not work over the long haul, as the tool shafts are slowly getting shorter with each visit to the grinder. But the

system gets my setup a lot closer than it would otherwise be, and I bet I can get more than thirty grinds before having to change the number on the tool.

—Chuck Bajnai, Virginia

Steel jumbo jaw buttons

I recently had a project where I needed really big chuck jaws (jumbo jaws) but with a firmer grip than the supplied rubber buttons would provide. So I made simple steel buttons from large set screws, whose coarse threads offered the added benefit of serrations that provided more bite.

I picked up eight ½"-13 × ½" stainless steel set screws at the hardware store. (Stainless steel can be drilled with ease, whereas most alloy set screws are too hard.) Next, I removed the top jaws from my chuck and clamped each set screw in the base jaws of the chuck to drill a 15/64" (6mm) hole through the center (*Photo 1*). Then I used the jumbo jaws' original button mounting screws to mount the set screws as buttons with the hex end down.

While the eight points of contact wouldn't be optimal for heavy cuts, these steel buttons hold securely without any flex (*Photo 2*). ■

—Brian Simmons, Iowa



Efficient segment stop

I cut lots of segment parts on my table saw using a sled. To cut accurate-length segments, the common practice is to measure from the stop to the blade, but this takes time because you have to move the stop, set the fence, and then move the stop out of the way before making your cuts. Another issue is that when cutting short segments, a typical stop could interfere with the ramp that directs pieces away from the blade.

My fix was to cut a strip of wood the thickness of my blade and tape it to the stop (*Photo 1*). Once my fence (and stop) is set at the right distance, I move the strip of wood and tape it out of the way (*Photo 2*). This ultimately positions the stop in exactly the right place, and I don't have to move the stop up and down the fence for each setting.

—Peter Huckstep, New York



NOISE IN THE WORKSHOP

An Unseen Safety Hazard Jeff Chelf

Workshop safety has come a long way in my lifetime, especially in the field of woodturning. Woodturners are increasingly familiar with the hazards of wood dust and the exceptional products on the market for dust filtration and shop-wide collection. It is now commonplace to see full respirator/faceshields and even table saws that stop themselves. For me, personal safety is a top priority. I'm constantly thinking about the less-obvious risks associated with woodturning and related workshop hazards. As a young person afflicted with significant genetic hearing loss, I have noticed that despite a positive trend in shop safety, many turners ignore the issue of hearing protection.

With this skepticism, I decided to test my assumption that woodturning creates a dangerous level of noise. I've summarized my process and findings below.

Process

My first step in determining whether woodturning poses a risk to hearing was to find the acceptable exposure to various sound levels and then find a reliable way to measure the output of my own lathe. As a baseline of acceptable levels, I referred to a chart from noisehelp.com, a website with a wealth of information for those wishing to better protect their hearing. NoiseHelp cites a National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) infographic that advises caution at exposure levels beginning at 85dB (decibels) with eight hours of exposure, with exposure time diminishing as the decibel level increases (*Figure 1*).

To find a decibel meter, I had to look no further than a smartphone app. After looking through reviews of various decibel meter apps, I decided to go with Decibel X, which provides

an instant reading of sound levels and the ability to record data.

In my workshop, I mounted my smartphone on a tripod at approximately the same distance from the lathe as I would stand when turning, and at head height (*Photo 1*). I then measured the noise levels while turning various projects in an assortment of woods and holding methods. In spindle orientation, I tested maple, cherry, oak, and poplar. I tested a maple platter blank held on a wood worm screw.

In addition, I measured the sound levels while using a texturing tool on maple (*Photo 2*). My readings were primarily measured during roughing, which makes up the loudest period during woodturning. All tests were performed with either a bowl gouge or spindle-roughing gouge, sharpened just prior to use.

Findings

Cutting wood at the lathe often fell within acceptable noise levels, with exceptions for the use of texturing tools and with hard, dense woods such as oak. There was a considerable variation between species, with oak being the loudest at a consistent 100 to 105dB (*Figure 2*). Other species hovered around 90dB, with only brief spikes around 100dB. Texturing (tested on both poplar and maple) was equally loud, staying closer to and almost topping 100dB (*Figure 3*). As expected, roughing did prove to be the loudest, with a steady decline in noise as the blank came closer to round. The lathe by itself produced 65 to 70db, a completely safe level of exposure.

Conclusions

Before taking any measurements, I suspected turning could pose a risk to hearing, and the numbers I found confirmed this is true. The noise levels were particularly loud with harder species like oak and with processes like texturing, both of which peaked around 105dB, a level that is only safe for about five minutes of exposure per twenty-four hours. With other species, the noise level often fell into a range that could potentially be hazardous, though only with exposure times of one to two hours.

Given these findings, I will continue to wear hearing protection at the lathe

Noise levels in comparison

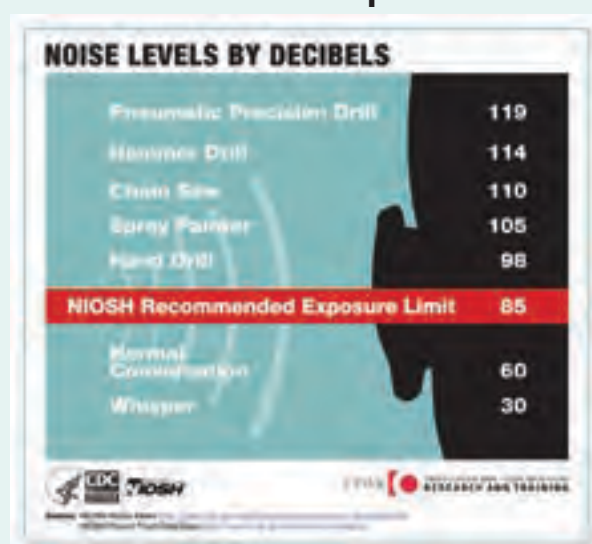


Figure 1. Infographic: National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Division of Applied Research and Technology, via CDC.gov.

Measuring noise levels at the lathe



1 The author's smartphone mounted at ear height near the lathe. There are several apps designed to give instant readings of noise levels.

How noisy is a roughing gouge on oak?

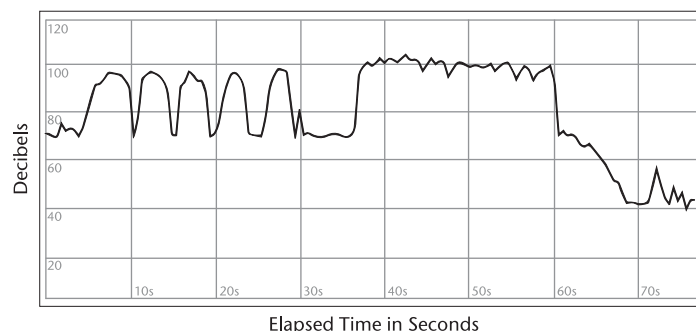


Figure 2. An output from the author's smartphone app, Decibel X, shows that roughing oak produces noise above acceptable levels. Where the sound level drops coincides with the turning coming into round.

Texturing tool on maple

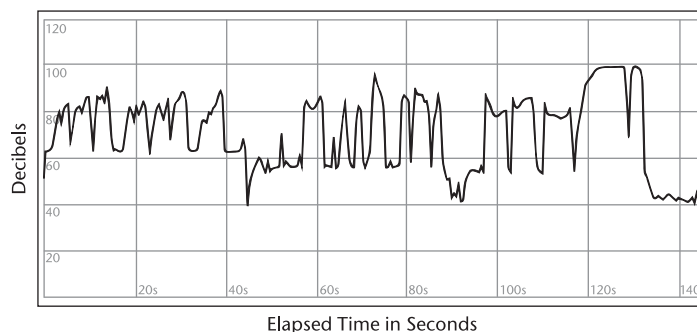


Photo 2 and Figure 3. Using a texturing tool on maple produces noise levels that could be harmful over a sustained period.

and recommend that others who turn for long sessions find hearing protection that works for their situation. I encourage everyone to download a decibel meter for their smartphone and run their own tests, and to continue the conversation around making our workshops safer spaces.

Options for protection

One obstacle in the way of proper hearing protection at the lathe is our wise use of faceshields, which can prevent the use of cumbersome over-ear muff-style hearing protection. There are a number of ways around this challenge, particularly because we are dealing with noise that is only slightly above the safety threshold.

My preference is to wear a full-face respirator/faceshield, which allows me

to still wear muff-style hearing protection (*Photo 3*). This option has the added benefit of protecting my face, lungs, and hearing concurrently. At times, it is cumbersome or, with a lack of air conditioning during North Carolina summers, just too hot. In those instances, I wear a more typical faceshield and use simple earplugs. Another popular option is to use earbuds or muffs with noise-canceling capabilities. Whichever method you choose will help to protect your hearing for years to come. ■

Jeff Chelf is a full time boat builder and woodturner with an academic background in archaeology. He currently lives and works in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 159 miles from the ocean. For more, visit jeffchelf.com.

A good solution



3 Don't compromise on protecting your hearing, face, or lungs.



An Elegant MORTAR AND PESTLE

Kurt Hertzog

Many turnings, while beautiful and enjoyable to make, are relegated to the mantle or display case and become more decoration than a serviceable item. Others are meant for functional, ongoing use in our daily lives, such as pens, salad bowls, jewelry, lidded boxes, and canes. This mortar and pestle project is not only fun to make, but it can be of service for many years.

History

The mortar and pestle that we know today existed at least as far back as 1000 BC, and some scientists claim ancient versions date back to 35,000 BC. Since the mortar and pestle excels

at crushing and blending herbs, nuts, seeds, spices, and medicinal concoctions, it is conceivable our ancient ancestors employed them as we do today. The process may have developed in prehistoric times, when perhaps food items were simply crushed between two rocks. The lack of containment would have prompted the development of a bowl function to minimize loss. Native Americans ground nuts and acorns using mortars carved into bedrock.

Motorized grinders have lessened the use of the traditional mortar and pestle but have not replaced its overall versatility. Regardless of evolution, today's mortar and pestle is a welcome

addition to any creative kitchen and can be useful for other applications around the home, office, or studio.

Materials

Modern mortar and pestle sets are made from various materials, including ceramic, granite, and wood. They are not usually made of metal, although through history bronze, iron, and brass were sometimes used. When used in the kitchen, pharmacy, art studio, or any other place needing pulverizing, mashing, grinding, or crushing, design and material selection varies. Most commercially available units are ceramic or stone, lending themselves to dry and extended wet

use. They are also virtually indestructible. Glass and porcelain are sometimes used but are most often found in pharmaceutical applications.

Some but not all woods also make for wonderful mortar and pestle sets for dry and, when properly maintained, wet use. Woods that will provide the best serviceability are dense species that will reject moisture more than porous woods. Hardwoods turn well, hold detail, and are tough enough for use. But even among hardwoods, closed-grain species such as maple and cherry would work better than open-pore woods like oak or ash, since the latter varieties are more likely to retain small bits of whatever is being crushed.

Dense fruitwoods offer many of the right properties, and I opted for olivewood. It is great to turn, pleasant to smell, and sufficiently dense, hard, and smooth. In use, olivewood performs very well. I hammered peppercorns, mashed garlic, crushed dried red peppers, and generally put the wood to the test. I hand-wash my olivewood mortar and pestle with dish soap and hot water. When dry, it shows no marks, dents, or other signs of use.

I do not apply a finish to my mortar and pestle sets, so turning and sanding is all that is required.

Design

When you are designing your mortar and pestle, think through your end use, which will impact the size and shape. For example, grinding up pigments for paints may call for a smaller size than making large batches of pesto or spiced mayonnaise, and grinding spices is different still. There is no “one size fits all” for this utility item, though I do recommend erring on the side of making it bigger rather than

smaller. It is easier to use a too-large vessel than one that is too small. Also, having multiple sizes on hand is much like having kitchen knives in various styles and sizes. Each excels at different tasks and is worth owning. Having a goal for the size and shape of your mortar and pestle also helps with planning processes such as material selection, workholding, and tool needs, as well as deciding on the logical sequence of operations.

For the project shown in this article, I planned for the mortar, or bowl part, to be 6" (15cm) in diameter at its widest point and a bit more than 2" (5cm) deep. I wanted the walls to curve back in so that the rim diameter is slightly smaller than the widest part of the vessel. This size and shape would work well for the portions of

guacamole and pesto my wife and I make, yet it would also handle spice and seasoning blends of garlic, peppers, mint leaves, and oils. The design of the pestle will have a ball end and a muddler end, rather than the typical single-ball design. Use either end in the mortar, and use the muddler end for preparing drinks. (*See Dual-Purpose Pestle sidebar.*) The muddler consideration meant this pestle had to be a bit longer than usual, since it would have to reach the bottom of a tall drinking glass. Even if it weren't used for muddling, this design lends itself for use in the mortar since the flat contour works well with harder round items being ground or crushed.

Adapt the project design to your own needs. ►

Raw materials



(1) The author's stash of olivewood, which arrived covered with sealing wax to prevent cracking due to humidity changes.

(2) Mortar blank rounded at the bandsaw.



Dual-Purpose Pestle

If you aren't familiar with a muddler, it is a bartender's tool specifically used to mash (called muddling) spices, herbs, and fruits at the bottom of a glass to release their flavors. Mojitos, Mint Juleps, and Old Fashioneds are just a few of the drinks where a muddler is useful. A typical muddler is made of wood and is about 7½" (19cm) long for sufficient reach. It has a flattened bottom with slightly rolled edges to work well in the bottom and side curves of drink glasses.

Rough-shaping



3 Rough-shaping the mortar's outside profile, cutting toward the headstock and across the facegrain. The blank is mounted between centers.



4 Beginning to form a tenon at the tailstock end of the blank.

Fine-tuning

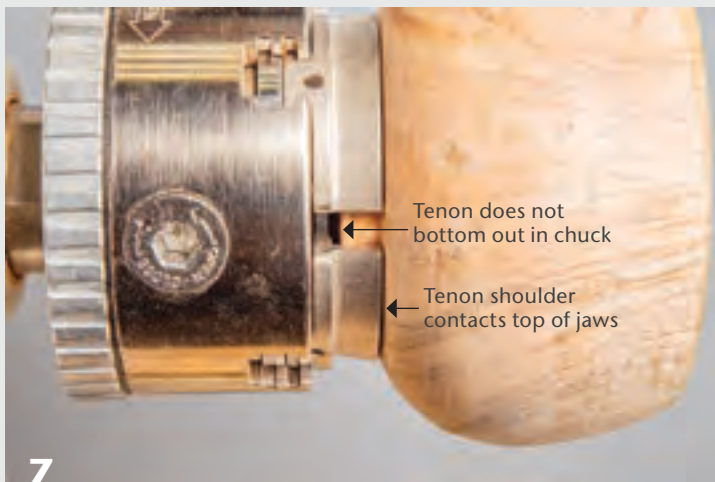


5 The author's tenon-sizing gauge, made from scrap wood, used to quickly form a tenon you know will fit in your chuck.



6 Fine-tuning the outside profile with a scraper.

Proper mounting in chuck



← Tenon does not bottom out in chuck

← Tenon shoulder contacts top of jaws

Mortar blank now mounted in the chuck, with top of jaws registered against the tenon shoulder and clearance at the bottom of the jaws.

The turning

I ordered several pieces of Olivewood in sizes that would accommodate my anticipated design (*Photo 1*). Since my mortar was to be around 6" in diameter and deeper than 2", I ordered bowl blanks 6" square and 3" (8cm) thick. For the pestle stock, I purchased blanks 2" square and 12" (30cm) long. Cutting the pestle stock to 7" (18cm) long allowed for a 6"-long pestle and some workholding scrap. Since a mortar is essentially a bowl, knocking the corners off a square blank at a minimum or ideally rounding the blank on the bandsaw is helpful (*Photo 2*).

Mortar

With the mortar blank mounted between centers, rough-shape the outside profile and begin to form a tenon at the tailstock end (*Photos 3, 4*). I find it easier to cut the tenon at the tailstock end of the blank, as there is more room to work and the bowl-shaping cuts will mostly be made in the direction of the headstock, which is preferable.

The tenon will be used for mounting the mortar in a scroll chuck for hollowing. I use a shopmade gauge to size the tenon for my chuck (*Photo 5*).

As shown in *Photo 6*, I use a scraper to refine the upper part of the outside profile. At this point, don't agonize over the transition from bowl side to foot, as that will be addressed after hollowing.

Mount the mortar blank in a chuck for hollowing. Be certain your tenon is as long as it can be without bottoming out inside the chuck jaws. *Photo 7* shows an appropriate gap between the bottom of the tenon and the bottom of the jaws.

Begin hollowing as you would any bowl (*Photo 8*). Work in stages by hollowing to a shallow depth and then thinning the walls in that section to final dimension. Given

the intended function of this piece, I leave the walls at least 1/4" (6mm) thick and slightly thicker at the rim and bottom. When one section is completed, hollow to the next short depth and cut the wall thickness to size. Hollowing in stages capitalizes on the strength the remaining material in the bowl provides, reducing vibration.

Don't forget to periodically check your depth, lest you make the bottom too thin (*Photo 9*). I use an easily made bowl depth gauge—see *Shopmade Depth Gauge sidebar*.

When you have achieved your desired bottom thickness, sand the inside, as you won't be coming back to that part of the turning. Sand slowly, letting the abrasive do the work. Progressing through the grits yields great results on olivewood. With no finish planned, I sand to 400 grit.

There are many ways to reverse-mount a bowl, or mortar, to turn the tenon into a foot. Here's a way to use a scroll chuck, since for this project it is already in use. With stout sidewalls and an undercut interior, you can easily use the jaws in expansion mode to mount your hollowed mortar. I put painter's tape over the jaws to prevent marring the wood (*Photo 10*). Orient the mortar over the tape-covered jaws and lightly expand the jaws. Bring the tailstock up to help with centering the workpiece, placing the live center point in the indentation previously made when the piece was first mounted between centers. While applying gentle pressure from the tailstock, expand the jaws into the bowl rim for a good grip (*Photo 11*).

Reverse-mounting a bowl this way allows you to refine the contour of the mortar's bottom and reshape the tenon into a stable foot (*Photos 12, 13*). With the tailstock in place, cut ►

Hollow the mortar



Hollow the mortar as you would a typical bowl.



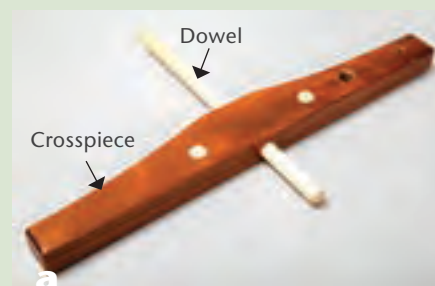
Deepen to desired bottom thickness, checking often with a depth gauge.

Shopmade Depth Gauge

When hollowing bowls, lidded boxes, or other excavated forms, use a simple depth gauge to measure your progress and determine how much deeper you'll need to go. My depth gauge is made from just two scraps of wood (*Photo a*). The main part, the crosspiece, is a stick of wood whose length measures at least twice the diameter of the bowl rim. The other part is a dowel slightly longer than the height of your bowl.

Drill a hole through the crosspiece at the center of its length, sized for a snug fit of the inserted dowel. Having a snug fit allows for use without the dowel slipping or the need for a setscrew. Sand one end of the dowel round so it won't damage the inside of your bowl.

Using the gauge is simple. With the crosspiece spanning the bowl rim and the dowel extending down *outside* the bowl, set the rounded dowel end at a position equal to your desired inside bottom depth (*Photo b*). This can be determined either by eye or ruler. You can set the depth for a raw blank or for a turning already in the chuck and in progress. Periodically check your depth by placing the dowel *inside* the bowl, without moving its position in the crosspiece. As you measure prior



to completion, the gap between the bowl rim and the crosspiece will show you the amount yet to be removed. Keep hollowing until, when tested, the dowel touches the inside bottom and the crosspiece rests on the bowl rim (*Photo c*).

Reverse-mount mortar



Painter's tape protects the wood as you gently expand the jaws inside the mortar rim for a good grip. Use the tailstock live center to aid in centering.



Turn the foot



12



13

Complete the bottom contour and clean up the tenon to create the mortar foot.

Turn the pestle



14



15



16

After roughing the pestle blank to round, shape its ends as desired. The author's design called for a rounded ball at one end and a flat muddler at the other. Shape the center of the pestle as desired.

the flat surface of the tenon slightly concave. Sand the entire outside of the mortar, except for the nub that remains under the live center. Remove the tailstock and take light cuts to remove the nub, then finish-sand that area. The mortar is now completed.

Pestle

Mount the pestle stock between centers and round it to the ball-end diameter (Photo 14). Shape each end according to your design; this pestle has one ball-shaped end and one flat, muddler end. The grip between them can be shaped, contoured, and decorated as desired. Sand the entire pestle. Pare down both ends to prepare for removal, as shown in Photos 15 and 16. With the pestle removed from the lathe, you can cut the remaining wood from both ends using a small tenoning or razor saw. Hand-sand both ends.

Final thoughts

For this project, I opted not to apply a finish at all. Any kind of film finish would run the risk of being damaged, fractured, or worn through in general use. The wood I chose is dense enough and looks

good enough that, with proper use and cleaning, its pores do not need to be sealed with a finishing product. Nut oils such as walnut oil can pose the risk of an allergic reaction in someone with a nut allergy. All of these considerations led me to leave the wood unfinished (Photo 17).

This is a fun, skill-building project that reinforces fundamental woodturning practices. For craft fair turners, you might consider adding the mortar and pestle to your sales offerings. It would certainly be a wonderful gift for anyone who enjoys cooking, including yourself. ■

Kurt Hertzog is a past president of the AAW, past chairman of the Rochester Woodworkers Society, and a council member of the Pen Makers Guild. He has written about woodturning and woodworking extensively for various publications. For more, visit kurthertzog.com.

Completed mortar and pestle

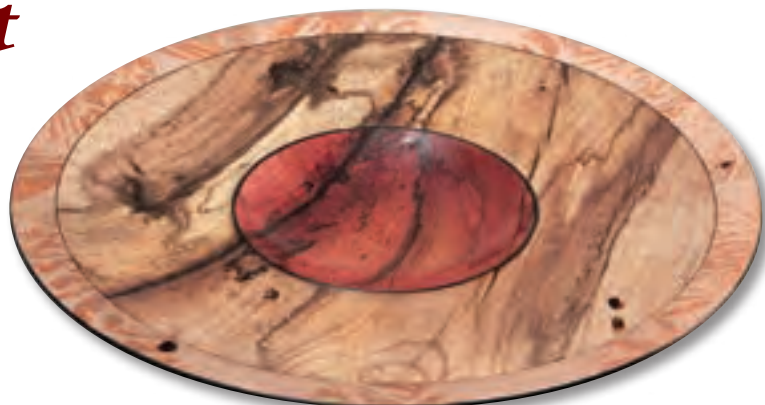


17

This food utility item in olivewood stands up to repeated use and hand-washing, having received no applied finish at all.

Life's Not Too Short TO TURN CRAPPY WOOD

Marty Kaminsky



The blank for this bowl had it all—rot, bark inclusions, cracks, worm holes, and spalting. It was in serious contention for the firewood pile.

During a club demonstration, a member in the front row yelled out that it looked like there was a lot of tearout in my unfinished project. Not missing a beat and not willing to accept blame, I said by way of explanation, “Crappy wood.” And he said sarcastically, “Yeah, blame the wood.” And we all laughed. Okay, maybe sharper

tools and better technique would have helped, but the point is although turning “crappy” wood is more difficult than turning good wood, the results often make the effort worthwhile.

Renowned turner John Jordan famously said, “Life’s too short to turn crappy wood.” I take “crappy wood” to encompass all manner of natural features, mostly resulting from wood’s inevitable degradation: cracks, voids, bark inclusions, punky (rotted) wood, spalting, worm and insect holes, and the like. John’s statement is well known among woodturners and has even been printed on T-shirts. John remains adamant in his view. I asked him if he ever turns crappy wood, and he insisted it is not worth the effort. He said he rarely sees anything that is “worth the countless hours that people spend trying to make a silk purse from a sow’s ear. I guess you could say I’m pretty much opposed to it, except in rare occasions.”

John raises a perfectly valid point—there certainly are aesthetic and safety risks in turning degraded wood. If you are a production turner making hundreds of salad bowls every year for your livelihood, then life certainly is too short to turn unsound wood. If you carve your turned forms, as John does, sound wood is the right choice. In these cases, it wouldn’t make sense to go to the

effort of trying to salvage compromised wood. And even if you were willing to do what it takes to do so, completing a turned form from such wood is far from certain. Stuff goes wrong—frequently.

Nevertheless, it has to be said that a piece made from “crappy wood” can be sublime. There are many beautiful things going on: fascinating patterns, multiple colors, wild swirls of grain, intricate spalting lines, and even worm holes can lend enormous beauty to a piece. It can indeed be worth the effort, though the safety risks should not be understated.

Safety issues

When wood has any of the problems previously listed, the turner is at risk.

Respiratory

Cutting or sanding rotted and/or spalted wood can send nasty spores along with the regular sawdust (which is bad enough) into the air for you to breathe. You must protect your lungs against this nastier-than-usual dust. At a minimum, wear a dust mask, but better yet is a full respirator with proper filtration. And set up a vacuum system with a collector close to your work to capture as much dust as possible as it is produced.

Bodily harm

Rotting, bark inclusions, cracks, and worm holes interfere with the strength ►

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Safety Resources

Take it upon yourself to stay safe when turning wood, but especially when turning compromised, unsound wood. AAW’s online resources offer valuable information; log on at woodturner.org. Two useful examples:

- Lynne Yamaguchi’s June 2014 *AAW* article, “Safety Matters, From the Eye of a Survivor” (vol 29, no 3, page 27), in which the author makes the case for wearing a riot helmet during turning.
- John English’s April 2010 *AAW* article, “Wood Dust and the Woodturner” (vol 25, no 2, page 20).





Rotted oak burl with padauk accents, stabilized with Minwax Wood Hardener.



Rotted oak burl, stabilized with Minwax Wood Hardener prior to turning.

don't stand in front of your turning as you reach for the start button. Position yourself out of the path. If you have folks watching you, make sure they are also to the side of the potential flight path.

Be careful of mounting wood with rot, bark inclusions, or worm holes, since in its weakened state it will not be as strong or hard as solid wood. Thus, any tenon you make will likely compress more in a scroll chuck, resulting in a less-secure hold. Stop frequently to check the security of the work holding.

And certainly, as always, wear face protection. You might consider going beyond the common woodturning faceshield and opt for heavy-duty headgear that can take more impact.

Nature's toll on wood

Rot

If there is too much rot, or soft punky areas of the wood, you might consider adding the piece to the firewood pile. It is a judgement call when considering just how much rot a piece can contain and still be salvageable. I have found that I can usually deal with a modest amount of punky wood. I use a wood hardener made by Minwax that I've found to work pretty well, although it's a bit pricey. You just saturate the punky areas with the hardener and allow it to dry, and the wood becomes considerably more workable. There are other wood-hardening products that I have not tried.

I'd be hesitant to use cyanoacrylate (CA) glue as a hardener for rot. It would be expensive, as rotted areas can sop up a lot of liquid. I'm also not sure how well CA-impregnated

wood would accept finishes, particularly dyes.

Small blanks can be stabilized with a resin like the commercially available Cactus Juice Stabilizing Resin, which is introduced to the blank before turning by way of vacuum. This process is very effective but is beyond the scope of this article. An Internet search for "stabilizing wood" and "Cactus Juice Stabilizing Resin" will yield informative results. Also, log on at woodturner.org to access Don McIvor's February 2014 AW article, "Stabilizing Wood: An Alchemist's Guide" (vol 29, no 1, page 22).

Spalting

Spalting is an early indicator of the decomposition of wood, often resulting in distinct zone lines, interesting coloration, and other features. Spalted wood may be quite solid, depending on how far along the wood has degraded, but look closely for punky areas that should be stabilized.

of the wood, creating considerable risk of a turning flying apart as it spins. You must protect your head and body from the risk of flying wood, should your turning decide to self-destruct or release from your chuck or other holding device.

Later in this article, I'll talk about how you can stabilize and strengthen degraded wood. The stabilization process both enhances the appearance of the wood and makes it less likely to come apart while spinning on the lathe. But even with your best efforts at stabilization, you should use particularly good judgement while turning. Always be wary of the turning blank as it is spinning. Use lower speeds than you would for sound wood. Stop the lathe often and check the wood to see if your stabilization efforts are holding. Are any cracks getting bigger? Any new ones showing up? Stabilization is not a one-shot effort. You'll very likely have to revisit it a few times during the process of turning. Do your best to stay out of the potential path of an "exploding" turning—the line of fire. For instance, when starting your lathe,

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- To understand more about avoiding cracks in wood, see David Ellsworth's August 2015 AW article, "Avoiding Cracks in Bowls and Hollow Forms" (vol 30, no 4, page 17).

- Dennis Belcher's August 2015 AW article, "When Good Wood Cracks" (vol 30, no 4, page 20) explores various ways to deal with cracks in turned work.



Cracks and bark inclusions

Cracks and bark inclusions may indicate seriously weak areas in a blank. Look over the blank carefully to decide if you think it's worth taking the risk. Small cracks and bark inclusions can be strengthened and filled. I often strengthen them with CA glue. Before applying any CA, saturate the region around the repair area with whatever clear coat you plan to use. This keeps the CA from spreading where you don't want it.

After squirting thin CA into a crack, I then fill it and follow that with another application of CA to saturate the filler. Use your favorite powder or fine granules as filler. I would never try to match the wood color; the results will *always* be a very apparent and unsuccessful attempt at matching the wood. Instead, use a contrasting material. I often use coffee grounds (sometimes mixed with a bit of coarse sawdust for a natural appearance). You can get metallic powders (brass and aluminum, for example) and other powder colors at art supply stores and through online sources.

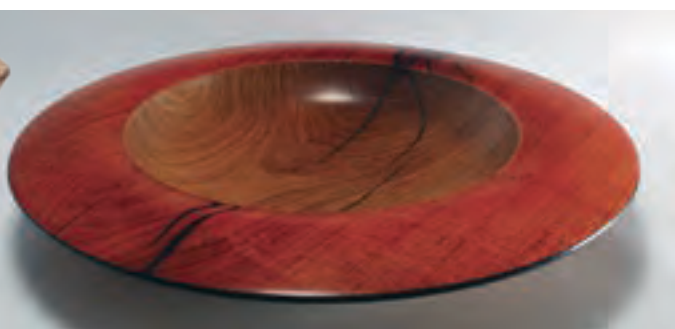
Some turners also glue in wooden splines, stitches, or veneer strips to hold wood with cracks and voids together during turning.

Worm holes

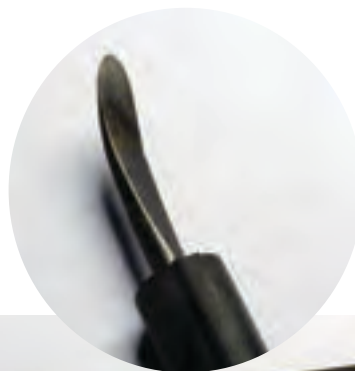
I like worm holes. They give a piece character. But the worms generally don't do as good a job as I would like. They leave the holes packed with a material less dense than the surrounding wood. I've made some small scraping tools to scrape this stuff out. Personally, I don't like the look of filled worm holes. If you are going to scrape out the worm holes, it must be done before any stabilization media, finish, or glue comes in contact with it.



Bark inclusion (and rot) in mesquite hollow form, stabilized with CA glue.



Cracks in a mesquite bowl stabilized with CA glue and filled with coffee grounds.



Shopmade worm hole scraper made of 1/8" piano wire with spoon shape ground on the ends (one end pointier than the other), and a rubber tube for a grip.



Wormy ash with padauk rim, with worm holes scraped out.



Amphora with worm holes and rot in mesquite, lacewood, purpleheart, and African blackwood.

Final thoughts

When working with wood with any of these naturally occurring characteristics, very sharp tools are required to minimize tearout. Sharpen often. You'll spend way more time making something out of "crappy" wood, but the results can be so rewarding. ■

Marty Kaminsky, a member of the Gulf Coast Woodturning Association and the AAW, has maintained a lifelong interest in photography, woodworking, and other art forms. An engineer by trade, Marty took up woodturning in 2000 and has taught and exhibited the craft widely. Marty can be reached at martykaminsky@gmail.com.

Embracing NATURAL DEFECTS

On the following pages, woodturners who choose to work with naturally degraded wood—including spalting, rotted areas, cracks, bark inclusions, worm holes, and similar characteristics—offer their perspective, with comments ranging from the philosophical to the practical.

Todd Hoyer, Arizona

For decades, my focus has been exploring wood characteristics and incorporating them as a focal point on turned wood objects. Working with wood is a collaboration between artist and material, balancing form with nature. Each piece of wood has a unique feature, whether grain, burl, inclusions, spalting, etc. Understanding and incorporating these “flaws” onto turned forms can increase the interest and depth of the object, accentuating texture, surface, and negative space. These “highlights” are the basis for my lecture, “Wood Characteristics,” which I teach in demos and at symposia.

Currently, my interest has been in showing the aging process of wood. As I like to say, the older and more greyed I’ve become, the more weathered my work is. I will turn a form and place it outdoors for a minimum of two years. The exposure to sun and rain, heat and cold, creates a unique cracked and weathered patina that cannot be duplicated any other way. I often then incorporate rusted steel to continue the aging theme.



Three Gold Rings (Ringed Series), 1991, Cottonwood (turned, burnt, and gilded, about 10" (25cm) tall



Untitled, 1993, Sycamore (turned and weathered), about 12" (30cm) tall

Veneer splines



The author turns a rough shape, then cuts slots with a fine saw and inserts veneer and glue into them. The slots have to be deeper than the piece's wall thickness. With the veneer glued in, she hollows the bowl/vessel. The crack, with the fine veneer bridging across it, appears to be sewn together.

Esther Bar, Israel

Compromised wood, imperfections, defects—these are all terms with negative connotations to describe a piece of matter that we cannot fully control. I try to approach the material from a different angle: it is the raw material, not some premeditated shape, which inspires me to create. I try therefore to maintain the beautiful, at times chaotic, aesthetics of the wood's natural state. That said, I am quite pedantic with my curves and finishes. Maybe because when the raw material represents such beauty, we have to try our best to have our own aesthetic input be worthy of it. My work, therefore, often holds that contrast between roughness and fine lines, between chaos and order.



Cracked Casuarina Bowl, 2018, Casuarina, beech veneer, 3¼" × 8¼" (8cm × 21cm)



Mike Jackofsky, California

Much of my work has involved making hollow vessels from “defective” wood. In the beginning, this material represented a challenge: Could I actually succeed in hollowing it, without having it blow up all over my shop? The bark inclusions and voids ended up in the piece because I thought I had to leave it “natural.” Yet, it is equally important never to let the wood completely dictate what you make.

I usually want to keep bark inclusions in the piece, but I won’t force the issue by using an excessive amount of glue. If it requires too much glue, I’d rather have a void. My biggest concern about voids is where they are located on the form: voids that are around the area of the largest diameter will appear as flat spots, which I work very hard to eliminate from my work. I prefer to have voids near the top of the vessel.

If you have one or two cracks in a piece, they become the primary focus and the first thing you see. If you have a lot of cracks, that makes the material interesting, but the focus is still on the overall shape, which is by far the most important thing to me as a maker.



Untitled Madrone Vessel, 2016, Madrone, 8" x 12"
(20cm x 30cm)



Michael Hosaluk and Richard Hooper, Untitled, 1996, Unidentified hardwood, 5" x 5" (13cm x 13cm)
Collection of and photo by Betty J. Scarpino

Betty Scarpino, Indiana

I purchased this piece at auction during the 1996 Emma Lake collaborative in Saskatchewan, Canada. Looking back from this vantage point in time, Michael and Richard’s collaborative vessel seems one of many quiet precursors to embellishing turned objects. From the late 1980s onward, Michael helped lead the woodturning field into its current phase of embellishing, unabashedly cutting, carving, and painting any object within eyesight.

Not dissuaded by three “flaws” in the wood, Richard highlighted them, calling attention to their geometric possibilities, which is reflective of Richard’s own experimenting with combining and cutting apart turned architecturally referenced solid forms. “Flaws” in wood offer vast potential for embellishing.

Dan Tilden, Oregon

I like to incorporate the natural features from a tree in my work, such as using a live-edge opening, emphasizing the wood’s natural movement from drying, or including a void. What some woodworkers consider a flaw in the wood, I feel adds character and lets a piece speak for itself as an object. Some of the best grain patterns and highly figured wood appear right near these natural features, so when you include them, you often end up with the material’s most beautiful parts.

When I design a piece around the tree’s natural features, the material is telling me where to take it; I have a conversation with the piece while creating it. ►



Untitled Natural Edge Vessel, 2015, Manzanita burl, 11" x 7" (28cm x 18cm)



Untitled Natural Edge Vessel, 2016, Maple burl, 14" x 9" (36cm x 23cm)

Photos: Rob Jaffe



Untitled, 1981, Walnut sapwood burl,
4" x 5" (10cm x 13cm)



Untitled, 1996, Black ash (burned and
burnished), 13" x 13" (33cm x 33cm)

American Art Collection of the Smithsonian Institution

David Ellsworth, North Carolina

I can think of no better phrase to describes one's intent when working with distressed materials than the old cliché: "One man's trash is another man's treasure." Whether it's a tasty piece of natural-edged burl, a punky piece of spalted somethingorother, or just an ordinary old chunk of grampa's buried-in-the-barn-for-100-years scrap from his first outhouse, someone will see something interesting to make with it.

In effect, working with these types of materials is the ultimate challenge to the creative process in its primary form. They force us to think out of the proverbial box, to learn to "see" our work and ourselves in a new dimension. And at their very best, distressed materials affirm David Pye's statement of exploring the making process through the element of *risk* rather than of *certainty*.

Michael Alguire, New Mexico

My mother-in-law found a piece of oak burl at a campground near our home. She asked if I could make her something from it. The wood was bone dry and full of inclusions and voids, and I didn't think I could get a piece from it. But after roughing and shaping the outside, I was able to hollow the piece using my method of "scrap-latching"—attaching custom-shaped scraps over the voids using hot-melt glue. This method has worked well for me as a means of reducing the risk of a workpiece flying apart.



Holey Oak, 2017, Oak burl, 6" x 8½" (15cm x 22cm)

Scrap-latching



The author's method of holding together wood with voids during hollowing. He "reads" the outside profile with a contour gauge and transfers the curve to scraps of wood, which are then cut on a bandsaw and hot-melt-glued over the voids.

He advises, "It is better to use scraps cut from sidegrain, as endgrain would be too weak. Be sure to use a sufficient amount of glue, as the scraps could fly off if not adhered well. To remove the scraps, I have spent lots of time using a hot scalpel but recently learned that denatured alcohol will help in removing hot-melt glue, which should work better on fragile pieces."

Vince Wilson, Colorado

Sometimes the wood I choose for the top section of a goblet is burl with decayed sections or voids. When turned thin without support, the material would likely shatter or explode from the forces applied during hollowing. To increase the possibility of a successful turning, I use plastic packaging stretch wrap to support the wood. This technique allows me to safely turn walls as thin as $\frac{1}{16}$ " (1.6mm) in wood I might not otherwise select for such delicate work. The stretch wrap would also keep any debris contained if the piece were to break apart.

The sliding headstock feature of my lathe allows me to hollow the interior from the tailstock end of the lathe and thereby keep me out of the line of fire in the unlikely event a broken piece of wood does get past the containment of the stretch wrap. As an added precaution, I attach a magnetic remote switch at the tailstock end of the lathe, enabling me to turn the lathe on and off without ever needing to cross the line of fire.

To see more of Vince's work, visit his website at glacialstudio.com.



Goblet with bowl and foot turned from oak burl and stem from cocobolo. Bowl section is about $4\frac{1}{4}$ " (11cm) in diameter, with walls $\frac{3}{32}$ " (2.4mm) thick. Overall height is $13\frac{1}{2}$ " (34cm).

Stretch wrap



Once a tenon is formed at one end, the piece is mounted in a four-jaw chuck. As much of the exterior as possible is then turned and finish-sanded. Next, the exterior is sealed in a couple layers of stretch wrap. Blue painter's tape is added to prevent the wrap from coming loose during hollowing.

Terry Martin, Australia

In a crowded turning world where original designs are increasingly harder to create, newer turners often turn to idiosyncratic wood in an attempt to make their mark. Also, many newer turners don't actually know what good, reliable woods are available in their area, so they

often use woods that are not very suitable. These often include damaged or rotten wood. It rarely works, but sometimes it does.

For my first ten years or so as a turner I was determined to try everything. I learned a lot, but mostly I learned not to waste my time with bad wood. But twenty-eight years ago, I produced an unnamed natural-edged bowl that I still think looks OK. It was cut from a log that had lain in wet ground for some time and the underside, which became the top of the bowl, was riddled with wood grub tunnels. The dark band was the spalting at the meeting point between the mud in which it was buried and the air. It required very sharp tools and a steady hand. Turning the outside was easy, but for the inside I taped the rim with gaffer tape and cut very carefully. I used a black marker pen to stain inside each grub hole to contrast it with the rest of the wood. Whether it was really natural edged is debatable, but I give the grubs credit for that. It was my job to see the bowl within the mess they left.

Untitled
Natural-
Edged Bowl,
1990, Evodia,
13" (33cm)
diameter



James N. Duxbury

Turned SPIRAL ILLUSIONS



As a teacher and demonstrator, I realize there are at least two types of woodturners. One creates beautiful, artistic, one-of-a-kind works, while the other creates precisely measured pieces, allowing for repetition of elements, identical turnings, and matching sets. This project was inspired by simple

trivets, precisely cut on a table saw (*Photo 1*). This type of trivet, a functional piece that incorporates negative space, is nobody's idea of art. But after making them on the table saw, I realized how this idea could be created at the lathe, using multiple centers to turn layered, intersecting, circular patterns.

Relatively basic designs can be produced by making the same cuts on both sides, offset from front to back. But designs are not limited to sets of concentric circles. A more complicated set of designs can be achieved with twelve or more centers. By offsetting the centers to make the spaces between the centers tangential to each other, a crescent moon-shaped ring can be formed.

I draw most of these designs first to get an idea of what the final piece should look like. Drawing also adds to the precision and accuracy, which are necessary for the piece to be symmetrical and properly proportioned. Each ring should be the same width, the same depth, and have the same spacing. The actual turning involved will not seem very difficult since it is all cut on a flat surface, but this is an intermediate-level project because of the planning and precision it requires. Small variations will be glaringly obvious.

Inspiration: a basic table sawn trivet



1

A table sawn trivet provides a conceptual model for cutting patterns to a precise depth to create new effects.

Design considerations

This three-center turning creates a spatial third dimension, revealing depth as the lighting and viewing angles change. The piece illustrated in this article is a basic example showing how to execute the design, layout, and cuts, but with a little alteration and imagination, much more complicated and fascinating possibilities can be explored. Similar effects are commonly associated with German master turner Hans Weissflog, who was chronicled by Terry Martin in the December 2013 issue (vol 28, no 6) of *American Woodturner*.

Prep workpiece



2 On a square of hardwood, mark out the center and two mounting holes in either direction along the diagonal.



3 Drill a hole in the center, and the two mounting holes. Countersink the mounting holes on both faces.



4 Mark one corner with an X on the side. This will help keep you oriented later.

Mount and lay out workpiece



5 With the tailstock aiding with alignment, screw the workpiece to the circular mounting plate.



6 Draw in the largest circle the workpiece will accommodate.



7 On the outer edge of the workpiece, mark the center depth and lines defining the height of the rings. The shaded areas between the faces and the lines serve as a reminder of what will be wasted.

Mounting and layout

Start with a piece of hardwood 6" (15cm) square and $\frac{7}{8}$ " (22mm) thick. Shown is a piece of cherry, but any close-grained hardwood will do. Draw lines from corner to corner to find the center. Notice the hole centers are made with a good sharp set of dividers. A compass and prick punch would also work, but I prefer dividers because they can do the same job faster and more accurately. Set the dividers to 3½" (9cm). Mark the center of the piece and two mounting holes along one of the diagonals (*Photo 2*). Using a drill press to establish perfectly vertical holes, drill a $\frac{1}{16}$ " (1.6mm) reference hole in

the center and the two $\frac{5}{32}$ " (4mm) mounting holes on the diagonal line (*Photo 3*). Countersink the two mounting holes on both sides. Mark a reference X on the edge of one corner near the $\frac{5}{32}$ " hole (*Photo 4*). Now the piece is ready to be mounted on the lathe.

Mounting requires a solid flat surface that will accept wood screws. I recommend a $\frac{3}{4}$ "- (19mm-) thick plywood disk, 12" (30cm) or larger in diameter, mounted on a faceplate. Do not use "propeller-type" configurations (i.e., a long rectangular board), as this type of mounting can cause vibration and is very dangerous.

Position the workpiece on center with the aid of the tailstock against the mounting disk, and attach it through the mounting holes with two 1½" (38mm) #10 flathead wood screws (*Photo 5*). Then draw the largest circle that will fit on the workpiece (*Photo 6*). Next, mark the center of the outer edge and draw two lines, one $\frac{3}{16}$ " above center and one $\frac{3}{16}$ " below it (*Photo 7*). These lines indicate the thickness of the rings to be turned. Use a pencil to shade in the area from the surface to the top of the rings, as this material has to be removed first.

Now comes the first round of turning. Using a small spindle gouge, dish down ►

Turn down to top surface of rings

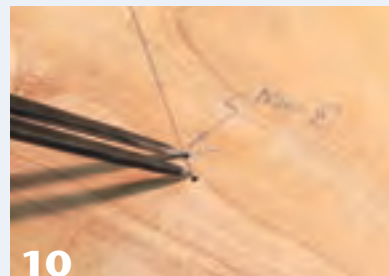


8 With a spindle gouge, dish the face of the workpiece to the depth of the first edge line, which will be the top surface of the rings.



9 A simple shopmade depth gauge is set from the edge line. Make sure your gauge spans the face of the workpiece, and always measure from the face, so you get consistent measurements.

Define new center

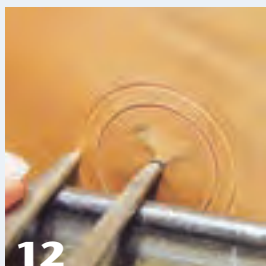


10 Establish a new, offset center for all the rings on the front side by measuring $\frac{1}{4}$ " along the diagonal toward your X corner. Remount the workpiece on the new center, again using the tailstock to align it.

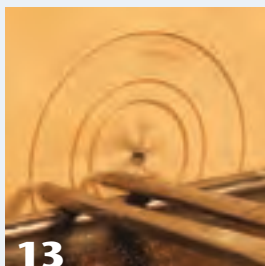
Lay out rings



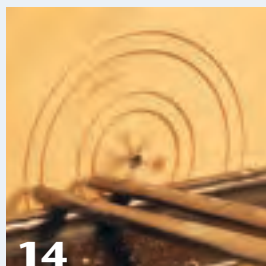
11 With the lathe spinning slowly, use dividers set at $\frac{7}{16}$ " to scribe the inner line of the first ring.



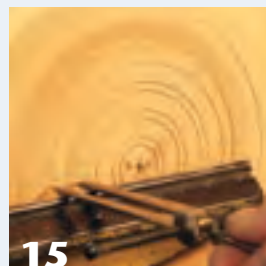
12 Dividers set to $\frac{1}{4}$ " mark the outer line of the first ring.



13 Using the inner line of the first ring as the set point, dividers set to $\frac{1}{2}$ " mark the inner line of the second ring.



14 Use the $\frac{1}{2}$ " dividers again to mark the outer line of the second ring, keying to the outer line of the first ring.



15 Continue the process with the $\frac{1}{2}$ " dividers until all three rings are defined, as well as a final outer line.

the surface to the depth of the top of the rings (Photo 8). I use a simple shopmade depth gauge with a brass pin set to match the depth of the top ring line, making sure the bearing surface of the depth gauge spans the full width of the face of the workpiece (Photo 9). Sand this turned surface to 320-grit abrasive. Remove the piece from the lathe.

Lay out rings

As noted, I like to use dividers and have many sets of them. These layout steps can be accomplished by changing the settings on a single compass or with one set of dividers, but for accuracy I set and tag four sets of dividers with key measurements. The settings in this case are $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6mm), $\frac{1}{2}$ " (13mm), $\frac{7}{16}$ " (11mm), and $\frac{9}{16}$ " (14mm). Make sure your divider tips

are crisp and sharp, as they will be used to scratch in guidelines for the rings.

Draw a line from the drilled center hole to the corner with the X on it. Then take the dividers set at $\frac{1}{4}$ " and step off a $\frac{1}{4}$ " distance from the drilled hole along this line (Photo 10). This will be the new center for all of the rings turned on this side. Using the tailstock to align the piece on the new center point, remount the piece on the lathe and again secure it with the mounting screws. Now, with the lathe turning at slow speed, place the $\frac{7}{16}$ " dividers on the toolrest with one of the points in the new center hole and lightly scratch in the first, inner line for the first ring (Photo 11). With the lathe still turning slowly, use the $\frac{9}{16}$ " set of dividers to mark the second line,

thereby defining both sides of the first ring (Photo 12). The remaining rings are all scribed with the $\frac{1}{2}$ " dividers. With the lathe turning and using the toolrest as an anchor, put one point of the dividers into the first ring line and lightly mark the inside of the second ring (Photo 13). Then put one point of the $\frac{1}{2}$ " dividers into the outer line of the first ring and mark the outside of the second ring (Photo 14). Repeat the process until three rings have been defined. Finally, from the inside of the last ring, mark a single, outer line (Photo 15).

Turn rings

Now comes the fun part—cutting the rings. Be gentle and use sharp tools. I use a very sharp $\frac{1}{16}$ " parting tool. When removing wood between rings, always

start in the center of the wood to be removed and work your way left and right, one small cut at a time, to minimize the risk of chipping off the tops of the $\frac{1}{8}$ "- (3mm-) wide rings. For the last cuts at the edges of the rings themselves, only take half-width cuts, approximately $\frac{1}{32}$ " (0.8mm) at a time.

Start the first cut between the center and the first ring line (*Photo 16*). The depth of cut must be down to the center of the thickness of the piece; I use my depth gauge, now set for the center depth, to confirm. Note that for consistent measurement, the reference surface while gauging the depth of cut is always the outer face of the workpiece. Sneak up to the proper depth—don't be in a hurry. Once that cut has been made and the proper depth established, remove the wood from there back to the center and then clean the remainder out to the first ring mark (*Photo 17*).

Make the next cut in the center of the wood to be removed between the first and second ring, again confirming depth as you go. Then widen this cut as required and continue outward. When all the rings have been formed, including the area outside the third ring to the final line, gently sand all surfaces to 320-grit abrasive (*Photo 18*). The front is completed.

Flip and repeat

Remove the workpiece from the lathe. Turn it over and remount the piece on the original center. Repeat the initial steps and instructions used on the front side: mark the widest possible circle, dish down to the depth of the top of the rings (you've already marked the depth on the edge), sand, and remove the piece from the lathe.

To locate the offset turning center on the back, draw a line from the corner with the X on it to the center

and continue this line about $\frac{1}{2}$ " past the center. Then take the $\frac{1}{4}$ " dividers and locate a new center $\frac{1}{4}$ " away from the X corner (*Photo 19*). *Important: If you offset the back in the same direction as you did the front, you will end up with a handful of small rings.* Remount the piece on this new center and follow the ring-marking steps shown in *Photos 11-15* to define three rings for this side.

Begin cutting the rings as you did on the front side, but remember, only the small, fragile rings on the

other side are holding this together now. Use a very sharp tool and very light pressure. Start cuts in the center between rings, and now when the proper depth is obtained, you will start to pierce through and expose the back of the other rings. Don't cut any deeper than you need to—all you want is daylight and a clean opening (*Photo 20*). Again, widen the cuts, similar to the ones done on the other side but with much less pressure (*Photo 21*). When all the cutting has been completed, any small slivers ►

Cut and sand front rings



16 Start your first cut between the center and the inner line of the first ring. Establish the depth, then slowly and carefully widen the cut.



17 Clear the wood back to the center, then to the inner line of the first ring. Slow and gentle nibbling does it; don't be in a hurry. Repeat the process for the second and third rings, including the space outside the third ring.



18 Sand the rings now, while they have the most support.

Flip workpiece and repeat



19 After flipping the piece and dishing it down as in *Photo 8*, remove the piece from the lathe and establish a new offset ring center. This time, set the center $\frac{1}{4}$ " away from the X corner on the diagonal.



21 With the ring lines defined, as in steps 11-15, cut the grooves that define the rings just deep enough to pierce through. Widen the cuts using as gentle a touch as possible.

can be removed with a razor knife and the piece gently sanded as before (*Photo 22*).

Finishing touches

Remove the piece from the lathe and trim off the mounting hole corners, and cut a pleasing crescent into the top. The 45-degree angle on a small combination square and a coffee can work well for marking these cuts (*Photo 23*).

Do all final sanding and finishing as desired.

Now you have the basics to do more complicated pieces, as shown in *Photo 24*. Usually, I have to draw these pieces to get the exact centers aligned on the front side. The opposite side can have offset rings also or just a continuous set of evenly spaced rings. Painting and shading can also be done to complement the design.

The finished turning can be incorporated in various ways to yield beautiful as well as functional items. I recently completed the lamp shown in *Photo 25* using an offset ring turning as the focal point. Next, I might create larger versions, possibly for a wall hanging or a much thinner set of pieces to incorporate into a hanging mobile. With a little imagination, you too can create unique pieces using these techniques to add a decorative touch. ■

Clean up rings



22

Use a craft knife to clean up any stray fibers, then sand.

Shape corners



23

Final steps include corner treatments, using a square and an old coffee can to mark the cuts.

Jim Duxbury, a woodturner and inventor, prides himself on creating wooden items that function with precision and stimulate creativity, while retaining the qualities and beauty of the wood grain. For more, visit duxterity.com/ec.



24

More complicated patterns are achievable by mixing and matching the various steps detailed here. Careful planning helps to achieve desired results.



25

This approach can be incorporated into an unlimited number of other projects.

Merryll Saylan: This Is Your Life



Photo: Mike Powell

In November, The Center for Art in Wood will open the exhibition *Merryll Saylan: This is Your Life*, for which I am acting as guest curator. Long recognized for her unusual painterly approach, Saylan was president of the AAW in 1994-1995. She came of age at a time when technique and spectacular timbers were the two primary emphases in the field, but decided to go another way: “scraping” her work—a more incremental and less risk-taking approach than that of many of her peers—and infusing relatively bland woods with beautiful dyes. Rather than showpieces of raw skill, her objects come across as lyrical and poetic personal statements.

In retrospect, Saylan’s embrace of a slow and meditative aesthetic seems visionary. Her works have an ongoing resonance that seems more contemporary with every passing year.

The retrospective at the Center for Art in Wood will take the measure of Saylan’s career with works borrowed from both private and public collections. These range from her early large

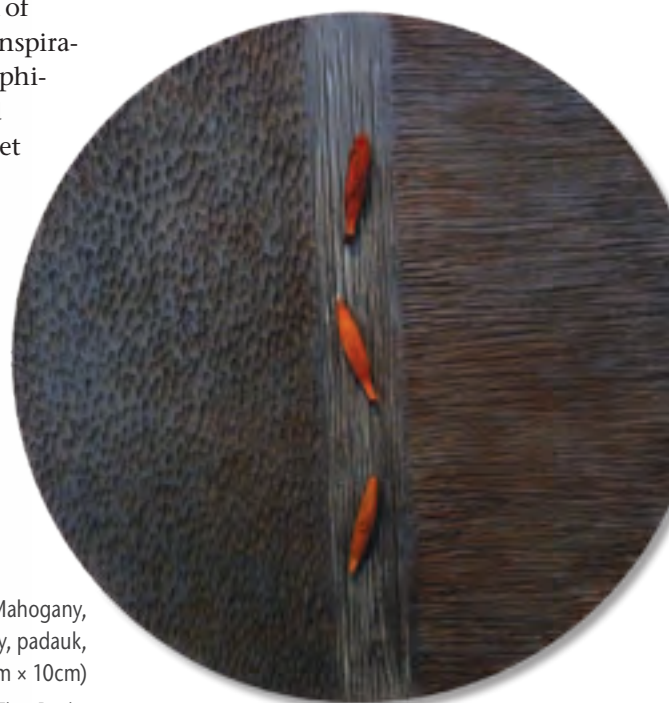
sculptures (which address themes of domesticity) through her mature works: subtly modulated platters; towers of small bowls; and still-life inspired objects. Also included will be her major work *Turning Sixty*, from the Center for Art in Wood collection, a project that marked a biographical milestone in the artist’s life.

The exhibition design—realized by Dan Saal and Erika Brask of ThoughtFull Design—will take inspiration from this notion of a biographical unfurling. It will be arranged chronologically, with all works set out on a single platform, each marking its own moment in a life. This surface will be compound-curved, like a hilly landscape or ocean surface, with works sitting atop rises or nestling into hollows.

The title, *This is Your Life*, has a double meaning. It both refers to the show itself

as a monographic survey, and also to Saylan’s artistic emphasis on everyday experience. Thus, the phrase could be read either as something said to Saylan by the curator, or as something said by Saylan to the visitor. ■

—Glenn Adamson, Curator



Swimming Upstream, 2012, Mahogany, milk paint; Fish: walnut, cherry, padauk, 28" x 28" x 4" (71cm x 71cm x 10cm)

Collection of Fleur Bresler



Rice Bowls and Container, 1976, Laminated birds-eye maple; Container is 8¾" x 8" (22cm x 20cm); Bowls are 4" x 4" (10cm x 10cm); Paddle is 8" (20cm) long

Arizona State University Art Museum, Gift of Joanne Rapp



Tea Set, 1997, Boxelder, 6" x 6" (15cm x 15cm)

Photo: Tony Boase

The Center for Art in Wood Museum Collection, Gift of the Artist

Merryll Saylan: This Is Your Life will be on view at Philadelphia’s The Center for Art in Wood November 2, 2018, to January 20, 2019. For more, visit centerforartinwood.org.

CREATING GEODES

IN WOOD

Scott Grove

It was an honor to be asked to contribute to AAW's 2018 Symposium exhibit and auction, *Out of the Woods: Traditional Form Revisited*. My challenge was to come up with something new and different while pursuing my life-long artistic theme of "discovering inner beauty."

When I experience a piece of art for the first time, I enjoy the *What the heck? How did the artist do that?* reaction that a surprising piece can inspire. The questions that rush into my head inevitably arrive at *Can I make that?* I strive to have my work evoke these feelings in others.

A geode is one of Mother Nature's exceptional examples of discovering inner beauty. From the exterior, geodes are rough, unremarkable,

sometimes downright ugly, and easily over-looked. Cut open, they can dazzle with the reflected light of thousands of crystal facets, sometimes in semi-precious gemstones such as amethyst and chalcedony. With geodes on the brain, I set off to emulate this natural gem by combining various materials into my turning to generate that sensation of curious puzzlement.

Geodes form over eons in natural voids in bedrock as minerals dissolved in ground water precipitate out of solution and harden. The exterior shape of a geode is dictated by the void in which it forms. I did not want my geode vessel to look too much like a uniformly-round turning; I wanted it to look more like an oblong hollow form split open to reveal its marvelous interior. I could have easily created a more realistic, rougher exterior, but I also wanted to add a touch of perplexity by including a hint of turned wood.



Gould, 2018, Redwood burl, crystal calcite, mother-of-pearl, brass, 6" x 6" x 3" (15cm x 15cm x 8cm)

Photos: Tib Shaw/AAW

Turn a basic bowl



1 Mount the blank and hollow out the bowl form.



2 Shape as much of the outside of the vessel as your tool allows you to reach.



3 True the rim and check that it is perfectly flat, as it will later become a gluing surface.

Start with a bowl

To establish the basic form to modify into the geode shell, I start by turning a 6" × 1½" (15cm × 38mm) shallow bowl. For this example, I use a well-seasoned redwood burl that has reached eight percent moisture content.

I mount the blank with a 5" (13cm) faceplate ring onto a four-jaw chuck with the top of the bowl oriented to the tailstock. I hollow out the inside of the form first with a bowl gouge, primarily using a shearing draw cut (*Photo 1*).

This is a simple form, but it is important to create a uniform inside curve, so I periodically measure the depth of the bowl until I reach my desired 1½". The inside does not need to be sanded because it will be covered with crystals, but every cut is an opportunity to practice good technique and achieve the best surface I can off the tool.

With the form still mounted on the faceplate ring, I shape the few inches of the outside of the bowl that I can reach (*Photo 2*). I keep a spherical shape in mind, visualizing a completely round bottom (a bowl without a foot). I sand the outside through 400 grit. My last cut ensures the rim is flat and has a nice crisp edge. The rim surface will become my gluing surface after the bowl is cut in half and reassembled, so I test it with a straightedge to be sure it is perfect (*Photo 3*).

A rounded bottom and flat rim



4 Re-chuck using either large plate jaws or a vacuum chuck and complete the outside of the form to a rounded, footless bottom.



5 After waiting overnight, re-true the rim on a flat surface using 120-grit abrasive.

To complete the exterior, I reverse the bowl and secure it on Cole jaws (*Photo 4*). This chucking arrangement provides unhindered access to the outside bottom to complete the smooth radius. I guesstimate how much to take off the bottom, guided by preliminary measurements of the internal depth and knowing the wall thickness is not a critical concern.

Most timbers have a tendency to move, or change shape, after milling, so I set the form aside until the next day to give internal stresses a chance to resolve themselves. The next day, to ensure the rim is still dead flat, I hand-sand it with 120-grit abrasive paper glued to a flat surface (*Photo 5*).

Cut bowl in half

I trace the bowl's circumference onto a scrap of medium-density fiberboard (MDF) and bisect the circle to mark the center cut line. I then bisect the cut line with a perpendicular line drawn through the center of the circle (*Photo 6*). All of this fancy footwork is done with a compass, and for those for whom geometry is a distant memory, there are many videos online that demonstrate how to bisect a circle.

I attach the bowl face down with double-stick tape and align the grain direction with the center cut line. I then use the perpendicular line and my dividers to draw two additional opposing curved lines for subsequent cuts. These curved lines are offset 1" (25mm) from either side of the ►

Lay out cut lines



6

Use scrap sheet material as a carrier for cutting the bowl at the bandsaw. A compass and a recollection of high school geometry will help you identify the centerline and perpendicular axis.



7

Using the axis perpendicular to the centerline, draw an arc 1" longer than the radius on either side of the center cut line.

centerline, or 1" longer than the radius of the circle (*Photo 7*).

With the bowl attached to the MDF, I use a bandsaw to cut the bowl in half down the centerline (*Photo 8*); this is not a critical cut. I then cut the two opposing matching curves, preserving the lines and leaving a little extra material to be removed during the final shaping (*Photo 9*).

I smooth out the cut using a spindle sander to sand to the line (*Photo 10*). Keeping the bowl attached to the MDF allows for safe, square, and secure cutting and sanding.

Glue halves together

I apply a small amount of mineral spirits to release the double-stick tape and lightly pry the bowl halves from

Cut and sand



8

Cut the bowl in half, then use the arcs drawn in *Photo 7* to guide the subsequent two cuts. Cut just outside the lines and leave a little extra material for final shaping.



9



10

Smooth the cuts up to the cut lines. A spindle sander makes the task simple, though hand-sanding with an abrasive on a flexible backing would work, too.

Glue halves back together



11

Apply a coat of dewaxed shellac to protect the exterior from glue staining.



12

Glue the two halves back together, joining them at the bowl's rim. Use painter's tape to provide clamping pressure while the glue dries.



13

the MDF with a putty knife. Then I seal only the outside of the bowl halves with dewaxed shellac to help protect the surface from excess glue (*Photo 11*).

After dry-fitting and a minor spindle sander touch-up to perfectly align the ends, I carefully apply wood glue to the rim edges and fit the two halves together by hand, wiping off any squeeze-out. Painter's tape is great for clamping the two halves together while carefully aligning the outside edge and tips (*Photos 12, 13*).

Refine geode shell

After the adhesive has cured, I sand and touch up the mated edges. I fill any gaps in the seam with an acetone-based, quick-drying wood filler.

Any inconsistency in wall thickness from the initial turning will be evident, as the bowl's rim is now exposed in cross-section at the points and the former bowl bottom is on full display at the sides and will probably not be parallel. To correct any aesthetic issues and to make the rim appear much thinner, I scribe the edge with a marking gauge set at $\frac{1}{8}$ " (3mm) (*Photo 14*). Because redwood burl is soft and chips easily, I strengthen the outer-most edge with thin cyanoacrylate (CA) glue. Carefully applied, the glue seeps up to and down the scored seam, consolidating and firming up the wood outside of the scored line. Using a Dremel with a carving burr, I taper the inside wood to the scored line, leaving a $\frac{1}{8}$ "-wide outer edge (*Photo 15*). I hand-sand the entire exterior and rim through 400 grit.

I like more contrast between the purple amethyst and the outer shell, so as shown in *Photo 16*, I apply a 50/50 mixture of Transtint amber and alcohol to the outside for a rich orange color. The warm orange and cool purple form a striking contrast that maximizes aesthetic impact.

Seal the exterior

Apply several coats of lacquer to seal and protect the stained surface. I lightly sand between coats, using 320-grit abrasive

and being careful not to sand through the finish and into the dyed wood. I repeat the process, alternating between lacquer and sanding, until I have built up four or five coats. Redwood is soft and absorbs finish quickly, so I pay special attention to the endgrain, making sure the pores are filled with finish.

After the lacquer has cured (a quick process), I mask the outside surface and rim with painter's tape, cutting the excess off cleanly at the inside edge (*Photo 17*). I scuff-sand the inside to remove any lacquer overspray and coat the tape with paste wax, being careful not to get any wax on the interior.

Line interior with crystals

Using a good clear epoxy, I make a thick, trowel-able paste by adding

crushed mother-of-pearl flakes, finely crushed crystal calcite, and coarse calcite (all from easyinlay.com). See *Crushing Minerals sidebar for helpful tips*. I like Chroma-Craft's 2000G Epoxy Gel mixed according to the manufacturer's specifications because it out-performs other brands I have tried on vertical surfaces. This mixture should be thixotropic (thickened) and not runny. The mixture will produce a white base coat similar in appearance to that of a real geode.

To keep the epoxy mixture from spilling out, I use balls of clay to hold the form in position. I then apply the mixture to one side of the inside surface. I sprinkle a light additional layer of coarse calcite on the wet surface and press it lightly into the epoxy mixture ►

Shape the rim



14 Mark the desired thickness of the rim and remove excess material. A rotary carving tool works well.



15

Finish and mask exterior



16 Consider dyeing the outside of the geode to either contrast with the crystals or perhaps evoke the appearance of stone. Then seal the exterior with lacquer (not shown).



17 Mask the rim and surrounding area with painter's tape, then coat the tape with paste wax.

with a wooden applicator (*Photos 18–20*). After the epoxy cures, I tap the excess calcite out for reuse and repeat the epoxy/calcite/mother-of-pearl application on the other side of the form.

After the epoxy has set, I dump out the excess calcite, mix another small batch of epoxy, and brush a light coat over the cured epoxy/calcite/mother-of-pearl layer

on one side. On this wet coat, I sprinkle another layer of calcite (*Photo 21*). After this application cures, I dump the excess calcite and lightly stroke the inside surface with my finger to remove any pieces that are not securely attached. I repeat this second application on the opposing side.

At this point, the interior should be completely coated with calcite and

mother-of-pearl. I carefully inspect the interior and look for voids or inconsistencies in the surface. I add single stones or a pinch of calcite dust as appropriate to fill voids and adhere the new addition with thin CA glue.

Add color

To color the calcite, I use shellac and Transtint, a concentrated, colorfast dye. I use a syringe to dispense the dye because I can measure using the fine-scale metric calibrations on the syringe. For the small quantities needed for this project, I simply count the drops (*Photo 22*). The syringe creates smaller and more controlled drops than the bottle's dispenser.

I start with ten drops of dye to 20 ml (0.7 fluid ounces) of shellac and test the color by dabbing it onto my mixing table. If the color is a bit strong, I double the shellac, bringing it up to 40 ml (1.4 fluid ounces). A lighter color applied in multiple coats is preferably to a too-dark surface that is impossible to lighten.

With an airbrush set with 20 pounds of pressure, I spray on light coats, being careful not to allow the material to bead up (*Photo 23*). I let each coat dry for about five minutes, then spray on another coat.

When examining a real amethyst geode, I notice the outer-most tips of the crystals are darkest and the bottoms transition to white, so I try to apply color only on the tips and avoid too much color on the bottom of the

Crushing Minerals



Crushing minerals into fine powder can be a challenge, even with a hammer or mortar and pestle. Material flies everywhere with those methods. Here is a better way: use a pipe and pestle.

Take a 12" (30cm) length of standard-threaded black pipe from a plumbing or big box hardware store. Any diameter of pipe can be used, but the size of the minerals that I want to crush dictates the pipe selection. For this geode, I started with coarse calcite and 1¼" (32mm-) diameter pipe with an end cap to create finer material for filling small gaps (*Photo a*). This 12" pipe section functions as the mortar, and I cut about 3" (8cm) off its length to provide clearance for my knuckles when pounding with the pestle.

The pestle is made with a 12" × ⅜" (10mm) black pipe with an end cap on one end and T-connector on the other to act as a handle. The outside of the ⅜" end cap has to be ground down to fit smoothly inside the 1¼" pipe. I used my bench grinder, but a handheld angle grinder will do. Simply drop a small sample of the minerals into the pipe mortar and with a few blows with the pestle, you can quickly achieve a fine grind (*Photos b, c*).

Be sure to remove the threaded end cap and clean out any remaining dust if you are switching mineral types or color.



Line geode shell with crystals



Apply the calcite/mother-of-pearl/epoxy mix to one side of the interior of the geode, then sprinkle on more crushed calcite/mother-of-pearl and pack the mixture into place. After curing, repeat the process on the second side.



calcite. Airbrushing makes this fairly easy as the peaks of the minerals naturally catch the majority of the color.

Refine the rim

Once the dye is thoroughly dry, I carefully sand the excess calcite off the rim with the spindle sander (*Photo 24*). When combining minerals and wood, it is easiest to work with softer materials like calcite and mother-of-pearl. These materials have a Mohs hardness of 2.5 to 3.0, while wood (not typically measured on the Mohs scale) ranges from 2 to 6. I sand the crystals flush with the wood, sanding through the tape on the edge and paying special attention to keeping the curve smooth and graceful.

I hand-sand the edge with a round sanding block, progressing to 400-grit abrasive, carefully removing all the spindle sander marks (*Photo 25*). I remove the tape from the outside and clean any remaining tape residue with mineral spirits. Finally, I lightly round the sharp outside edge with a hard backing block and 320-grit abrasive, then use an air nozzle on the compressor to blow dust off the calcite.

I carefully apply more amber dye to the edge using a small paint brush (*Photo 26*). The epoxy and CA glue help prevent dye bleed-through into the calcite, but care is still warranted. If any dye bleeds onto the epoxied

calcite, I use alcohol to clean the contaminated surface.

Complete the finish

A quick application of spray lacquer on the edge and calcite unites the interior and exterior finishes. As before, sand the wood edge of the geode lightly between lacquer applications. ■

Scott Grove is a full-time professional woodworker and sculptor who specializes in veneering, casting, and alternative inlays. He lectures and teaches selectively across the U.S. and in the U.K. His studio is nestled in the hills of the Finger Lakes region of Western New York. His websites are ScottGrove.com for his own work and an educational site that links to his YouTube channel, ImagineGrove.com. Scott extends special thanks to David Gould, "a skilled, well-experienced, generous and exacting mentor and burl collector."

Add more crystals



21

Apply a second, lighter coat of epoxy using a paint brush, then sprinkle on more calcite/mother-of-pearl crystals. Let the application cure before repeating on the opposing side.

Apply color



22

Apply dye to the crystals to achieve the desired color. An airbrush provides a controlled means of developing color intensity.



23

Refine rim



24

Use a spindle sander, then a rounded sanding block to refine the rim and abrade the crystals flush with the wood.



25

Complete the finish



26

Touch up the newly exposed rim wood to match the exterior of the geode, then apply a few coats of lacquer to the interior and rim (not shown).

INDECO:

A Production Turn of Mind

D Wood



Richard Sennett, author of *The Craftsman*, offered his opinions in a February 2008 article in *The Guardian*: “Three abilities are the foundation of craftsmanship: to localise, to question and to open up. The first involves making a matter concrete; the second, reflecting on its qualities; the third, expanding its sense.”

These abilities are challenges, particularly for the production craftsman. Faced, every day, with a lump of clay or a cone of wool or a leather hide, how does he or she transform this specimen of matter into something that demonstrates a consistent high standard of workmanship and, on an ongoing basis, is appealing to a range of customers? To answer this question, we go to the edge of the earth to visit one of Tasmania’s most esteemed woodturners, Patrick Senior.

Patrick and his wife, Mieke Senior-Loncin, are the joint operators of Indeco, a company that produces and sells a range of more than forty wood products, mostly for kitchen and dining use. Utensils, boards, and stands are made from local timbers, including Huon pine and blackwood. Except for a couple of salt, pepper, and spice mills, the items are unadorned: their attraction is embedded in utter simplicity and reliance on wood grain, if any, for enhancement. The stirrers, tongs, and spoons are made for use, taking on the patina of life: tomato sauce, burnt toast, or saffron rice. Yet, the designs are award-winning and warrant display equally in a gallery and gourmet kitchen shop. Patrick certainly fits Sennett’s criteria for a craftsman and has successfully maintained the foundational criteria—according to Sennett—in his Tamar River studio for twenty-five years.

Soup & Sauce Ladle

The object that launched Patrick’s reputation and confirmed the potential of his future in woodturning was *Soup & Sauce Ladle*. It consists of a shallow off-center-turned bowl with a flat edge, a slim turned handle, and leather strip that facilitates hanging. Huon pine, a pale timber with imperceptible grain that is unique to Tasmania, was Patrick’s choice for the first rendition in 1993. Contrasting the Huon is an ebony pin that locks bowl to handle, an inspired choice that draws attention to the back of the ladle. The angle of connection is pleasing to the eye and was recognized by Glenn Murcutt, the renowned Australian architect, who selected the piece for the Tasmanian Wood Design Collection (TWDC) in 1993.

Patrick’s description of how the ladle came about aligns with Sennett’s requirement to “open up.” Patrick was trying to make a spoon using offcuts: “As I looked at these two pieces [bowl and handle], I could see that if I put the handle at a different angle, I’d have a ladle. It evolved from wishing to make a spoon into making a ladle by steepening the angle.” It is still his favorite design of the many he has created.

Although well proportioned and astutely assembled, *Soup & Sauce Ladle* is not for display. According to Mieke: “From the beginning, Patrick really wanted people to use his things. A few times we had people say, ‘That’s too beautiful; it’s hanging on the wall.’” Remarks like this were overheard during the fifteen years Indeco displayed its



Soup & Sauce Ladles in Southern sassafras and sycamore maple with ebony pins.

wares at the Tasmanian Craft Fair in Deloraine, a town in the central north of the state.

The annual fair, whose inaugural outing in 1981 saw thirty-four exhibitors under one roof, has expanded so that its 2017 edition had over 250 exhibitors in eight venues throughout Deloraine; more than 15,000 visitors attend the four-day event. For Patrick and Mieke, the town was within driving distance: they were able to load \$10,000 to \$12,000 worth of stock plus a lathe into their ‘ute,’ the Australian term for a utility vehicle or pickup truck. Patrick, with a shy and introverted nature, was comfortable demonstrating, while Mieke took on sales and marketing. In their early days, the Deloraine Fair and wholesale orders from shops and galleries throughout the state provided their income. It was too expensive to take a vehicle on a ferry to the mainland and stay in hotels. Now Indeco is represented in a number of mainland outlets, whereas local shops, particularly Design Tasmania, have been supportive of their range and welcomed innovative products as they came along.

Spurtle

A spurtle is a utensil, originating in Scotland, for stirring porridge. It was the first item in the Indeco portfolio and continues to be popular for self ►



Photo: Chris Cterar

Spurtles, a popular and timeless turned kitchen item, commonly made by Indeco in blackwood, celery top pine, and myrtle, about 12" (30cm) long.



and as a gift. Its transformation from timber blank to tool can be seen on Indeco's Facebook page (facebook.com/IndecoTasmania). The video epitomizes the rudimentary repetition required to "make matter concrete"—a necessity that Patrick has managed through variety. He says he keeps production to batches of a day or day and a half: "I might do sixty spurples and move on to something else." This strategy relieves boredom. "Not that I'm particularly bored. I wouldn't like to do two days of spurples. I get physically tired and make mistakes."

The video shows that Patrick doesn't have a jig to ensure that every spurtle is the same. He sets the diameters of each end using a set spanner and turns by eye. It is evident, too, that his hands tell him as much as his eyes. So how has this plain, functional entity managed to survive for twenty-five years while some mass-produced goods only last a season? Part of its longevity is a further instance of "expanding its sense." *Spurtle* does not stand alone, it is part of an ethos.

Each Indeco product is given a name, tagged label, and stamped logo. Some names are practical—*Spurtle*, *Salad Servers*, *Corkscrew*—whereas *Toast to Opera* toast rack pays homage to the iconic Sydney Opera House; *Brontosaurus* recipe book stand is reminiscent of the profile of a dinosaur; and *Downunder* coasters are a *double-entendre* about Australia's and the coasters' place. These stories, as well as wood species and care instructions, are printed on labels attached with red cord. For instance, the tale of an elm tree, brought down in a storm at nearby Freshwater Point, gives a product provenance: when the raw material was planted, where it grew, how it came down. This, as well as knowledge of the artisan, makes labels integral to the marketing and brand of Indeco. They differentiate the commercially



Boab and *Rocket Mills* for grinding salt, pepper, and spices in Huon pine and sycamore maple.



Photo: Peter Whyte Photography



Meg's Mill (for grinding nutmeg) in blackwood and Huon pine.



Shaving Brush & Bowl in Huon pine.

produced utensil from the handmade and represent the care invested in these homeware products.

Mieke and Patrick feel they have to educate retailers as well as customers. Mieke says: “I remember initially when I sold the spurtles, retailers took them to the back and put oil on them, making my labels greasy.” Some retailers even regarded this “improvement” as making the piece their own. If a purchaser wishes to oil a wood product once it’s taken home, that’s fine, but, in the early days, shopkeepers had to be reminded to sell the product as its maker intended. Similarly, retailers wanted to remove the labels. Quoting Mieke again, “You wouldn’t take an artist’s name off a painting.” It is not unreasonable to suggest that Mieke’s experience reflects a view that crafted objects are held in low esteem—and can be interfered with—compared to art objects.

Education extended to craftspeople as well. When Indeco first went to Deloraine, makers displayed their goods on green baize cloth so that every display was the same. Mieke painted her booth panels white and covered tables with white cloths, replicating the white surroundings of a gallery. This attention to detail was noticed and customers expressed appreciation for the items being well displayed, labeled, and beautifully wrapped.

Rocket Mill

There are a number of salt/pepper/spice mills in the Indeco collection, as well as a coffee grinder. When Patrick started making mills, he wanted a grinding mechanism that was comparable to the quality of his turning. Because there are no Australian companies that make such mechanisms, he imported from Zassenhaus in Germany. These were the “Rolls Royce” of grinders, with a setting in the base for fineness of grind. Sadly, that company’s insolvency forced a search for other sources. Now a stainless steel central shaft and ceramic grinder are used.

The decision to add color to the *Rocket* came about due to an overview of the collection. The entirely timber-toned portfolio needed a boost—a marketing strategy—and the shape of this mill lent itself to primary colors. The *Rocket* was selected for the TWDC in 2006. A shellac-based polish is used for other mills, as it is readily applied on the lathe. All other objects are treated with a Scandinavian regard: no finish needed.

Another of Indeco’s mills, *Meg’s Mill*, arose from Patrick’s perceived need for a nutmeg mill. The quality of imported mechanisms was poor, so he designed his own. He drilled a hole in the side of the cylindrical turning to accommodate a nutmeg seed. He says, “This saves

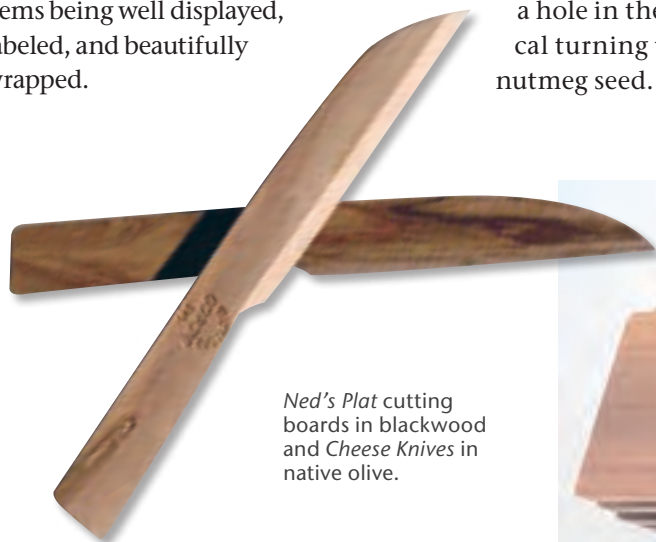
a piece of engineering that you don’t really need.”

When asked how many iterations of a mill are required before it is released, Patrick states that he usually gets it in the first or second version. He points out that development might take three or four weeks, but he can’t afford more time out of a production schedule that responds to constant demands from retailers. Patrick does elevation drawings and perfects them before going to the lathe. If he’s happy with the elevation, it transfers readily to a block of Huon pine or sycamore. The use of Huon pine and sycamore, both pale timbers, are felt to suggest hygiene and cleanliness, qualities desirable for objects used for food and personal grooming.

Bathroom accessories include *Make Me Blush*, a turned brush and container for face or blush powder, and *Shaving Brush & Bowl*. Both are made of Huon pine, whose oil, methyl eugenol, lends a piney odor and provides waterproofing. The tactility of the soft synthetic brushes and their housing summons up a time when grooming was unhurried and speaks to customers whose contemporary lifestyle choices eschew speed and convenience.

Ned’s Plat

There are boards and platters of increasing sizes in the Indeco range. Most are made of blackwood, which ▶



Ned’s Plat cutting boards in blackwood and *Cheese Knives* in native olive.



“ There is no greater accolade for a craftsman than an object that is a pleasure and a treasure.

offers a contrast to food items placed on the surface. Patrick believes that the object's function and design dictate timber choice, and he tries to deter requests for highly figured woods, like black

heart sassafras. His objects, like their maker, do not loudly declare their presence.

Abundant use is made of offcuts: *Cheese Knife*, *Pâté Spatula*, and *Tweezers*. These smaller,

less expensive items, expand Indeco's price range and offer the opportunity of combinations: a board and knife, for instance. Visitors to Tasmania can take home a locally designed, sourced, and made souvenir that is longer lasting than a Tasmanian devil tee shirt or wallaby key fob made in China. Conscious of this portion of their market, Mieke created the name *Ned's Plat* in homage to Australia's famous outlaw, Ned Kelly. Adjacent to a drawing of Ned, the label reads: "To butter the toast on, slice the onion, crush the garlic, place the cheese, or whack the blowfly with!" A product that embodies outback humor as well as practicality is particularly fitting as a memento from a settler nation like Australia.

Indeco is a proudly Tasmanian entity: the name derives from Innovative Design Company. Patrick grew up on a farm at Mole Creek, an agricultural area in the Mersey Valley, central Tasmania. His father was an adept amateur carpenter and, as a young man, Patrick grew familiar with mending gates, fences, and buildings. He met Mieke, who is Belgian, in his twenties and traveled to her home country where they lived for eighteen months. On their return, Patrick decided that if he was going to excel at woodturning—he had purchased a lathe in Tasmania while working in an office—he would have to acquire design training.

He enrolled at the Tasmanian State Institute of Technology, where he spent two years in an Associate Design in Wood program. However, it was during five years with a small furniture manufacturer that he really learned design as well as machinery use and maintenance,



(Above)
Tweezers in
Huon pine.

Photo: Peter
Whyte Photography

(Right) *Nest of
Bowls* in Huon
pine, largest
is 4 $\frac{3}{8}$ " (11cm)
diameter

Photo: Peter Whyte
Photography



a professional attitude, the value of jigs, and timely scheduling and procedures. Patrick continued his lathe practice in the evenings, making knobs and turned elements for the furniture.

This “apprenticeship” gave him confidence to strike out on his own in 1992 to develop his design ideas.

When questioned about whether his “elegant simplicity”—a phrase that Patrick applies to his work—derives from his stay in Europe and proximity to Scandinavia, he says, “No. It comes from growing up under the mountain at Mole Creek.” His aesthetic is innate: clean, proportioned, unadorned.

Nest of Bowls

Patrick’s designs and their execution have won a healthy number of awards. While he was a regular at the Tasmanian Craft Fair in Deloraine, he won the Premier’s Award of Excellence on three occasions. Six of his objects have been selected for the Tasmanian Wood Design Collection and were on display in 2016 when the entire Collection celebrated its 25th anniversary. In 2015, Design Tasmania honored Indeco with an exhibition, *In the Making*, featuring seventy-five items. And the annual Tasmanian Design Awards conferred Indeco with prizes in 2011 and 2012; its designs have been finalists since the Awards’ inception in 2007. *Nest of Bowls* was the 2012 winner.

The Design Award, with its criterion of a wholesale price of less than \$50, is one incentive for thinking and creativity. Patrick says: “I love to come up with one or two new ideas every year in any case. That’s quite stimulating.” The reality of being a production turner then provokes a laugh: “I need that stimulus; otherwise, my mind

Broad Knives in blackwood and Huon pine, useful in any functional kitchen.

would go, I think.” Yet, as Richard Sennett pointed out, craftsmanship embraces and thrives on minute-by-minute provocation. The craftsman does more than make—he or she reflects on what has been made and expands it further. In doing so, the evolution of the practice and the business continues. As Patrick says, a new design, whether award-winning or not, has a pragmatic purpose: “That also helps keep Indeco’s name at the forefront, hopefully.”

The Indeco Huon pine *Nest of Bowls* is a triptych that invites handling, use, and admiration. Each bowl nestles inside the one beneath. The exterior curves are perfectly calibrated so that the bowls neatly form a stack and readily separate again. The tapered rim is a design feature that takes the bowls out of the ordinary. They are housed in a tubular corrugated container, like the cladding on the farm buildings at Mole Creek. *Nest of Bowls* is a treat to hold, stroke, look at, and smell. There is no greater accolade for a craftsman than an object that is a pleasure and a treasure. ■

For more, visit indec.net.au.

D Wood designed and made furniture to earn a Diploma in Crafts and Design at Sheridan College in Canada and an MFA at the Rhode Island School of Design. Her PhD in Design Studies (University of Otago, 2012) was entitled, “Futuring Craft: Studio Furniture in New Zealand 1979–2008.” This is D’s sixth article for American Woodturner.



esCaper Spoons in Huon pine/goldey wood and native olive, longest is 7½" (19cm).



MEMBERS' GALLERY

Richard Calhoun, Oregon

I approach my work with a completely open mind, usually not knowing what the final shape of a piece will be until the blank is round. Then I let the shape and beauty of the blank determine what the final result will be.

A few years ago, I started experimenting with madrone burl. Madrone is a very unstable wood and is known for changing shape significantly when drying. I try to take advantage of this characteristic and create pieces that are rippled and distorted into unique shapes as they dry. I particularly enjoy creating hollow forms.



Madrone Burl Natural-Edge Distorted Bowl, 2016, Madrone burl, 5½" × 13" (14cm × 33cm)

Madrone Burl Distorted Vessel, 2014, Madrone burl, 6" × 3½" (15cm × 9cm)

Steven Forrest, California

I'm still on the upward slope of the learning curve technically, and exploring a variety of forms and aesthetics as my technique improves. Attending the AAW Symposium in San Jose (2012) changed my life, opening my mind and my eyes to endless possibilities, and I am delving as deeply as I can into woodturning. I appreciate the full range of work that people are doing, from the old guard to the avant-garde.

Untitled, 2018, Walnut burl, 12½" × 6¼" (32cm × 16cm)

"Walnut burl tends not to crack, but it does pucker and dimple. I thought the wood was completely dry, but it still elaborated on my work after I thought I was finished. Since the wood was so spectacular, I went for the simplest, slightest curve I could achieve. I wasn't able to complete the piece until I acquired a hollowing set and bowl steady, and even then, I decided I'd rather be safe than sorry and didn't push for the thinnest possible wall."



Untitled, 2018, Maple burl, 6" × 7" (15cm × 18cm)

"I've always liked pieces with thick walls, so this was an attempt to maintain the sort of craggy, mountainous, 'Game of Thrones' look of the outer burl, while also exposing the fantastic inner grain. That's also why I went for a less rounded, more severe line to the wall."



Matthew Deighton, Utah

I have always loved the combination of a natural-edge bowl with carved feet. The shapes and the flow of the piece just seem to always go well together. It was a little nerve-racking carving the feet on the bottom with the fragile bark face down. With a bowl this big, I was unsure how to hold onto it while carving, but it's the small challenges that make what we do so much fun. I found that the top curve of my shop vac matched the inside of the bowl perfectly.

The author's creative workholding method for carving and sanding the bowl's feet.



Untitled, 2018, Elm, 5" x 15" x 12" (13cm x 38cm x 30cm)



Jerry Bahr, Washington

My woodturning hobby began shortly after retirement, some ten years ago. With my first class on basic woodturning, I was hooked. Everything I have learned about turning has come from demonstrations at local AAW-associated woodturning clubs, AAW Symposia, and individual club members who willingly share their knowledge.

I truly enjoy turning figured wood. Several years ago, I was lucky enough to trade my Harley Davidson motorcycle for a very large inventory of figured wood from a mill that was going out of business. It was a good trade. My wife is happier, and I am safer. ►



Untitled Bowls, 2013-2014, Bigleaf maple burl, dye, largest is 6¾" x 16½" (17cm x 42cm)

These two bowls are from the same bigleaf maple burl. Bark inclusions are filled with turquoise powder in the larger bowl and brass powder in the smaller bowl. The red bands are dyed using ox blood leather dye, and the bowls are finished with walnut oil.

MEMBERS' GALLERY

Gabor Lacko and Patricia Spero, England

Soon after I started turning, sixty years ago, I got acquainted with the work of Hans Bolling, a Danish architect whose turned figures were popular in the early sixties. Intriguing to me was that Bolling's figures were assembled from several individually turned pieces. The sphere was always my favorite shape, and soon I was making objects assembled from turned spheres. The spheres were shortly expanded to ovoids, which culminated in my candlestick design consisting of two half and two whole egg shapes (*Photo 1*). My collaboration with Patricia Spero lead to decorated, stippled, and pierced versions.

During a visit to St. Armands Key in Sarasota, Florida, we noticed a lovely reproduction of Antonio Canova's *The Three Graces* (*Photo 2*). It was then that I thought the candlestick design could be transformed into our own versions of *The Three Graces*. Our representations are typically 6½" (17cm) tall. Having experimented with the proportions and orientation of the heads, a series was born.



The Three Graces in cocobolo on a pink ivory stand, 2012.



1

Early turned and assembled candlesticks inspired by the work of Hans Bolling.



2

Inspiration: *The Three Graces* statue, St. Armands Key, Sarasota, Florida.



With stippling and carved/burned leaf decoration in maple, 2013.



In English laburnum, 2013.



Turned from pinecones, 2013.

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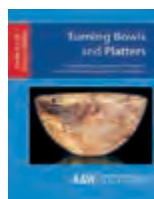
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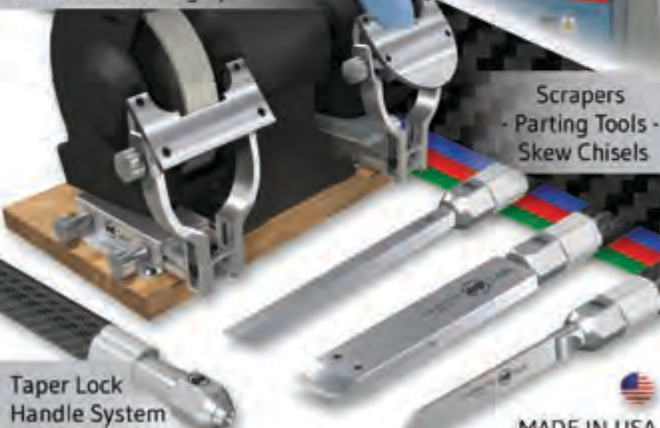
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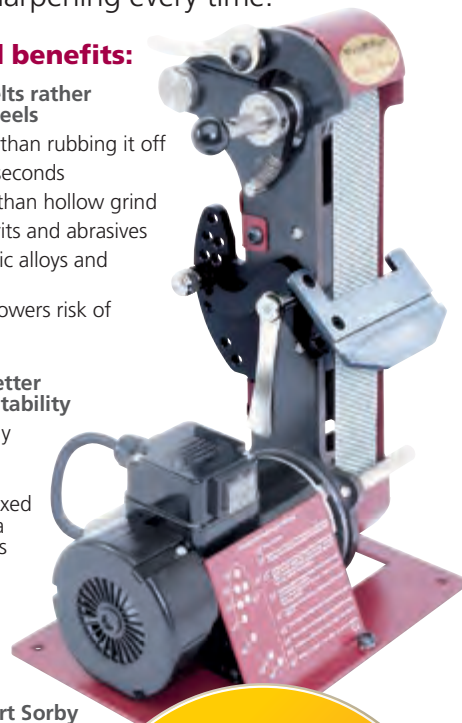
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Woodpeckers®

ULTRA·SHEAR

WOODTURNING TOOLS



The Evolution of Carbide Insert Woodturning

Love Turning But Hate Sharpening?

If you love woodturning, 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.

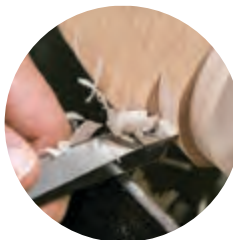
But *Ultra-Shear* goes even further, delivering a spectacular surface finish with a technique called **shear scraping**. Roll the tool right or left on your tool rest and you will feel it land solidly on a secondary bearing surface. This sets your cutting edge at 45° to the stock. Coming into the work 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.



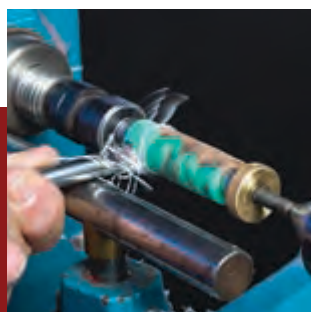
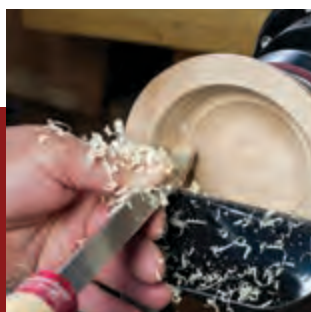
For ultra-fine finishing cuts, roll the tool right or left until it lands on the 45° bearing surface. Now, take a light pass with the tool still level. You'll be amazed at the clean cut and smooth finish.



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 **Woodpeck.com/Ultra-Shear**



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TALE OF A COLLABORATION

Mark Sfirri, Roger Alexander, John Koch, Michael Cooper, Michael Hosaluk, and others, *Fabiane*, 2017, Poplar, paint, Dimensions without tail: 14" × 28" × 9" (36cm × 71cm × 23cm)

Photos: Mark Sfirri

Students were challenged to make the legs for the multi-axis-turned body made by Sfirri. The legs are all different, which only seems fitting. Michael Cooper was teaching a wood-bending class at the time, so he and a student created the compound-curved tail. Hosaluk had the idea to have the mouth open, which adds to the piece's humor.

This animal/bench was a group project made during "The Mark and Mikey Show" at Marc Adams School of Woodworking, summer 2017. Mark Sfirri and Michael Hosaluk have used this title for several collaborative exhibitions (first one in 1993) and for several workshops at different craft schools. Both were early pioneers in collaboration, Sfirri in 1985 with painter Robert Dodge and then in 1992 with Hosaluk. The collaborative spirit has continued to this day—Hosaluk pushed the concept wider with the Emma Lake collaborative conferences in Canada and Sfirri with Echo Lake in Pennsylvania.

More on Marc Adams School of Woodworking at marcadams.com.

