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AMERICAN WOODTURNER

Journal of the American Association of Woodturners
December 2022 vol 37, no 6 • woodturner.org

THE ART OF WOOD 2022
AN ONLINE EXHIBITION OF NEW ZEALAND WOOD ART

BARBARA DILL
VARIATIONS ON A THEME

VIRTUES OF A SKEW-CUT V-GROOVE

TURNING CAPTURED RINGS

Nikos Siragas Greece

My passion for woodturning began at age 24, after watching a friend work at a lathe and then, soon after, buying a lathe of my own. This was the start of a long career as a professional turner. Early on, I produced utility pieces for carpenters, then restoration parts for old properties in the Venetian town of Rethymno, and later, artistic work for my gallery. I also teach and demonstrate woodturning internationally.

Inside the author's gallery in the tourist town of Rethymno, Crete.

In 1986, I converted my old family home in Rethymno into a woodturning gallery and workshop. Rethymno is a popular tourist location on the northern coast of Crete, and my gallery is positioned very close to the main beach road. Twenty-five years ago, I set up my 100-year-old Czechoslovakian lathe on the road outside the gallery and offered live demonstrations. These days, the gallery is open during the seven-month tourist season, and I travel for woodturning shows and demonstrations in the winter.

In 1995, I visited England and learned a lot from exhibitions and woodturners there. With new tools in hand—and following advice from my mentor, Stuart Mortimer—I started combining turning and carving to create pieces that express elements of the sea, which I have lived next to all my life. In 2003, I built my current home on a hill overlooking Rethymno, where I have a more spacious workshop and a large woodstore.

More recently, I have been serving as honorary president to support the new Greek Woodturning Association, set up to encourage the growing numbers of hobby woodturners here. In this way, I hope that woodturning will develop and continue in Greece for future generations. ■

For more, visit siragas.gr.

Fishbone Goblet, 2022, Carob, 19" × 4" (48cm × 10cm)

Winged Bowls, 2018-2022, Back two: Sycamore, each approx. 4" × 8" (10cm × 20cm); Front: Elm, 2¾" × 7" (7cm × 18cm)

Curvaceous, 2018,
Plane, 5¼" × 11"
(13cm × 28cm)

Slanted Hollow Form, 2021, Mimosa,
8" × 7½" (20cm × 19cm)

Twisted Goblet,
2020, Olive,
15½" × 3½"
(39cm × 9cm)

Stepped Goblet, 2021,
Olive, 14" × 3"
(36cm × 8cm)

Lily, 2020, Olive, 12" × 3½" (30cm × 9cm)

Flower, 2021, Olive,
8½" × 5½"
(22cm × 14cm)

Eel, 2016, Japonica, 7" × 4"
(18cm × 10cm)

AAW | AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS

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

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COVER

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Back cover – Brian Rosencrantz, Bruce Williams, William Helfferich, William Jones

woodturner.org

EDITORIAL

American Woodturner	Joshua Friend editor@woodturner.org
Editorial Advisors	Betty Scarpino Terry Martin John Kelsey Jean LeGwin
Journal Production	**Albarella Design** Linnea Overbeck *Art Director* *Production Management*
Woodturning FUNdamentals	Don McIvor editormcivor@woodturner.org.

EDITORIAL SUBMISSIONS

Send article ideas to: editor@woodturner.org

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

MEMBER SERVICES

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DIVERSITY STATEMENT

The AAW strives to cultivate an organization built on mentorship, encouragement, tolerance, and mutual respect, thereby engendering a welcoming environment for all. To read AAW's full Diversity Statement, visit tiny.cc/AAWDiversity*

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

Why are you an AAW member? The benefits of membership are many, and some of them are highlighted on the AAW website; visit tiny.cc/whyjoin. There is also a tearsheet outlining member benefits at tiny.cc/tearsheet. But another, more conceptual reason I suspect many of us have joined the AAW is that we are embracing the idea of being a lifelong learner.

Being engaged and open to trying new things is part of what makes us happy humans. In woodturning, the possibilities are seemingly endless, so it is the perfect avocation for exploring new ideas and techniques. With a little willingness to go outside of your comfort zone, a world of energizing ideas awaits in our craft. I'd like to think that your AAW member benefits amount to a smorgasbord of new things to try and people to learn from. What have you learned lately, and what will you attempt next?

—Joshua Friend

From the President

Ponderings

I have been thinking lately about transitions and evolution in woodturning. I have been a woodturner, a part-time amateur, for forty years, but that does not qualify me as a historian or chronicler of our art and craft. Most readers of the Journal probably share my perspective. When I started with an old Shopsmith in my basement, the only resources available to me on the topic of woodturning were Dale Nish's book and some VHS tapes that were available by mail for "rental" at half the retail cost if they were returned within thirty days. All of my tools were carbon steel, poorly profiled, and their edge-holding ability was impaired by heat damage caused by inexpert sharpening. Four-jaw scroll chucks were just being introduced, but I could not afford one. Variable lathe speed was usually attained by changing belts or creating a slip drive, as demonstrated by Del Stubbs.

My first symposium was a revelation. I had no idea what was possible with the tools I already had, and the speed with which professional turners produced works of art was inspiring (the egg cup races in Utah were a lot of fun and well attended, even though the products might not be called "art"). The instant gallery inspired an ever-growing list of ideas and things to try, and as my spouse began to attend events with me, the "You should do this, Honey" notes came back home.

The last few decades have, in my view, accelerated the advancement of the field, with better-built, powerful, variable-speed lathes designed for woodturners, better tool steels, and new inventions for work and tool holding. Over time, larger and better lathes, newer tools, and an assortment of gadgets and jigs filled my shop.

Although excellent examples of traditional "round and brown" work continued to be produced, surface embellishment, coloring, carving, piercing, disassembly/reassembly, segmented work, and other journeys away from the traditional craft items keep inspiring both new and "experienced" turners.

For me, the most rapid improvement in my technique always happened after an in-person event—either a symposium or personal instruction by a professional. In addition, the interaction with other turners reacting to a well-run presentation refined my perspective. The ability to visit vendors and touch their wares before depleting my pocketbook helped to justify my always growing collection of tools, gadgets, and timber for my studio.

And then came the pandemic. One result was a rapid improvement in the variety and quality of online demonstrations and teaching presented by the AAW and others. The impact on our affiliate chapters varied, but many are just now starting to return to whatever "normal" is going to be. It will be important to restore much of the in-person experience we have enjoyed, while leveraging new techniques to attract beginning turners from a more diverse population.

All in all, it has never been a better time to be a woodturner—whether you are a confident amateur, a seasoned professional, or someone totally new to the craft. It's good to embrace all that woodturning now has to offer and imagine what will come next.

Housekeeping

Also on the topic of transitions, we are welcoming Ron Day to the AAW Board, and Sally Burnett and KC Kendall will be continuing with new three-year terms starting in January 2023. John Beechwood will be completing his term at the end of this year, and we appreciate his contributions to the AAW mission.

Lastly, it is that time of year when we remind those who support the AAW that contributions, gifts, and bequests help to keep the organization running. AAW has made a huge difference in so many lives, as it has in mine. Please consider making a gift to AAW to help sustain this community. Learn more at tiny.cc/DonateAAW.

Keep turning,

Mike Summerer
President, AAW Board of Directors

AAW'S 37TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

Louisville, Kentucky • June 1-4, 2023

WHETHER YOU'RE A NEW TURNER OR A PROFESSIONAL...

Challenge yourself to learn something new at the AAW's 2023 International Woodturning Symposium in Louisville. Here you'll find what you've come to expect from an AAW Symposium:

- **World-class demonstrations** of bowls, platters, boxes, AND so much more.
- **Vendor tradeshow**, where you can test drive the latest and greatest.
- **Curated exhibitions** of wood art.
- **An expansive instant gallery** of attendee work that will thrill and inspire.
- **New discoveries**—demos that focus on the ogee curve and the skew, sessions that demonstrate turning spalted wood and turning metal, demos of the Ukibori technique or power carving, and sessions that inspire you to turn animal shapes and make treasures from your wood leftovers.

Over 3½ days, you'll choose from more than 80 compelling demonstrations and presentations from some of the best woodturners in the world. Next year in Louisville, accept the challenge to improve your techniques, learn new skills, and stretch your creativity.

FEATURED DEMONSTRATORS

More demonstrators and panelists to be announced in early 2023!

International

- Pat Carroll, Ireland
- Ulf Jansson, Sweden
- Mauricio Kolenc, Uruguay
- Joss Naigeon, France

United States

- Lynne Hull
- Seri Robinson
- Curt Theobald
- Jacques Vesery
- Derek Weidman

Photo: Andi Wolfe

START MAKING PLANS

Symposium Venue

Kentucky Exposition Center
937 Phillips Lane
Louisville, KY 40209

- Home of the Kentucky State Fair and an on-campus amusement park!
- Tradeshow and demonstration rooms are on the same level.
- RV camping available onsite. See woodturner.org for details.

Host Hotel

Crowne Plaza: Louisville Airport Expo Center
830 Phillips Lane
Louisville, KY 40209

- Rooms are $149/night with AAW discounted rate.
- Free parking onsite.
- Go to woodturner.org for the reservation link.

SYMPOSIUM REGISTRATION

Visit woodturner.org to register. See you in Louisville!

Call for Entries *Form | Content*: 2023 POP Exhibition and Auction

Submission Period: December 1, 2022, to January 15, 2023

The theme for the 2023 Professional Outreach Program (POP) exhibition and auction is *Form|Content*. Since 2007, the annual POP show, featuring small-scale works by an international roster of talented emerging and established artists, has been a highlight of the year. As a theme, *Form|Content* offers many possibilities—from statements on pure craft (the form is the full meaning or purpose) to thinking about how we use wood, shape, texture, color, surface design, etc., to convey meaning. As a play on words, content can also refer to the state of being content, or to the contents of a container, since turners are often vessel makers and vessels hold content(s). The theme makes space for all forms of turning.

Eligibility/submission details

- Full application/submission details can be found in the October 2022 issue of *American Woodturner* (vol 37, no 5, page 6).
- Apply online at tiny.cc/Calls between December 1, 2022, and January 15, 2023, 11:59 p.m. CST. All artists will be notified by January 31, 2023.

For more, check the woodturner.org Calls for Entry page, tiny.cc/Calls, or contact Tib Shaw at gallery@woodturner.org. To see past exhibition catalogs, visit galleryofwoodart.org.

Call for Entries *Out of the Woods*: 2023 AAW Member Exhibition

Submission Period: January 1 to March 15, 2023

The theme for the 2023 AAW member show is *Out of the Woods*, embracing the versatile and beautiful medium we work in and referring to the many challenges and changes of the past few years. As always, artists are encouraged to interpret the theme for themselves. Our goal is to host a Symposium exhibition that showcases and celebrates the full scope of excellent work being created by our members, from perfect traditional forms to innovative sculptures, and we hope you will apply.

All work exhibited will be selected through a blind jurying process. There are two cash prizes for this exhibition: the $300 Masters' Choice, selected by the jurors or their representatives, and the $200 People's Choice, selected by attendees at the AAW Symposium in Louisville, Kentucky, June 1-4, 2023.

Application details

- Full application/submission details can be found in the October 2022 issue of *American Woodturner* (vol 37, no 5, page 7).
- Apply online at tiny.cc/Calls between January 1 and March 15, 2023, 11:59 p.m. CST. All artists will be notified by March 31, 2023.

For more, check the woodturner.org Calls for Entry page, tiny.cc/Calls, or contact Tib Shaw at gallery@woodturner.org. To see past exhibition catalogs, visit galleryofwoodart.org.

Apply for an AAW Grant

AAW Grants are available to individuals, chapters, schools, and non-profit organizations. Examples 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 mini-lathe packages are available for award each year.

Regular AAW Grants are awarded on an annual basis. To be eligible, applications must be received by December 31 for grants given in the following year. However, Women in Turning (WIT) grants and others for under-represented populations, events, and exhibitions are awarded quarterly.

Find detailed grant descriptions and application information at tiny.cc/aawgrants. If you have questions, please contact the AAW office by calling 877-595-9094 or emailing memberservices@woodturner.org.

Call for Videographers and Streaming Technicians AAW Symposium 2023

Application period: December 15, 2022, to February 15, 2023

The AAW seeks volunteer videographers and streaming technicians for its next International Woodturning Symposium in Louisville, Kentucky, June 1-4, 2023.

We are looking for videographers with experience with video camera equipment, who possess some technical competence and can make decisions regarding how best to capture what is being turned (camera position, shooting angle, etc.).

Streaming technicians should have experience helping AAW chapters with streaming content, such as demos and hybrid meetings. We need volunteers who can switch between cameras and manage streaming hardware.

Photos: Joshua Friend

Those accepted as videographers and/or technicians will be expected to help set up or tear down and cover six rotations at the Louisville Symposium in order to receive a complimentary registration.

Applications will be accepted December 15, 2022, through February 15, 2023. Those selected will be notified in March 2023. For more information or to apply, visit tiny.cc/CallVideo.

Call for Student Work 2023 Turning to the Future Competition

AAW | AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS
Turning to the Future

Submission period: March 1 to May 1, 2023

The AAW is pleased to announce the sixth 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 encourages students to reach for and attain high levels of skill in the use of the lathe. It is open to all students in North America, and there is no entry fee.

Any high school student is eligible. Post-secondary students must be enrolled either full- or part-time in a degree- or certificate-awarding woodworking, art, or design program. (Students in apprenticeships or in specialty programs will be considered on a case-by-case basis.)

Prizes include $500 first-place and $100 second-place awards in each division (High School and Post-secondary). Finalists receive a one-year subscription to American Woodturner and a certificate for a complimentary AAW Symposium registration.

There are two divisions, High School and Post-Secondary. Up to fifteen finalists in each division will be chosen to have their work displayed at the 2023 AWFS® Fair in Las Vegas, Nevada, July 25-28, 2023. Work will be evaluated on craftsmanship, aesthetic appeal, creativity and/or utility, and process documentation. Submission period opens March 1, 2023. Deadline for submissions is May 1, 2023.

Submission details can be found at tiny.cc/Calls.

Prize Drawing for AAW Members

One of your many membership benefits with AAW is the monthly prize drawings. Prizes this year include gift certificates, tools, kits, books, DVDs, event registrations, and online education. Member winners are randomly selected at the beginning of each month and notified of their prize.

Thank you to the many businesses that continue supporting AAW members with these engaging prizes. If your business would like to contribute a prize, contact memberservices@woodturner.org.

When you patronize these woodturning businesses, please thank them for their support of AAW members.

- Carter and Son Toolworks (carterandsontoolworks.com)
- David Ellsworth (ellsworthstudios.com)
- Glenn Lucas (glennlucaswoodturning.com)
- Hunter Tool Systems (huntertoolsystems.com)
- Mike Mahoney (bowlmakerinc.com)
- Nick Cook Woodturner (nickcookwoodturner.com)
- Niles Bottle Stoppers (nilesbottlestoppers.com)
- Preservation Solutions (preservation-solutions.com)
- Rockler Woodworking and Hardware (rockler.com)
- Tennessee Association of Woodturners (TAW) (tnwoodturners.org)
- Thompson Lathe Tools (thompsonlathetools.com)
- Trent Bosch (trentbosch.com)

Businesses will be updated throughout the year.

AAW Board of Directors Call for Nominees

Application due date: April 1, 2023

The AAW offers much to its members, and we are looking for a few good people with the passion to contribute something in return. Does the opportunity to innovate interest you? Do you have the leadership experience and energy to be a part of AAW's future, as well as a willingness to help make it a better organization? Be a part of moving the AAW forward—run for a position on the AAW Board of Directors.

How it works

The AAW has a volunteer nine-member Board to represent the membership and move the organization forward. If you have been a member in good standing for the past three years, you are eligible to apply. The Board is most effective with a diversity of skills represented. Members with nonprofit Board experience, especially in the areas of finance, strategic planning, nonprofit governance, and legal matters, are encouraged to apply. After a review of application materials and conducting phone interviews, the Nominating Committee will select six highly qualified candidates from the applicants. From these six, AAW members will elect two candidates, and the Board will appoint the third candidate, to serve a three-year term beginning the following January. ■

—Linda Britt, Chair, Nominating Committee

"Walking into my first Board meeting was a whole new world. One of the first things I noticed was a professional and responsive staff—a far cry from chapter and other nonprofit boards. Discussion focused on issues and action items that really define the AAW. Things like increasing diversity in the membership and governance, support for regional functions, symposia locations, etc. In my six-year tenure on the Board, it was a lot of work, we got a lot done, and I wouldn't trade it for anything."

— Joe Dickey, Past AAW Treasurer and 2-term Board Member

Find Out More!

Interested, but still have questions? We would love to talk with you! For information on nomination application requirements and the duties of Board members, email Executive Director Phil McDonald (phil@woodturner.org) or call Phil at 651-484-9094. You can also find the application requirements, as well as contact info for all current Board members, at tiny.cc/Board. **All applications are due no later than April 1, 2023.**

A statement by each of the six candidates, along with photos, will be published in the August 2023 issue of *American Woodturner*. Voting will occur during the month of August. Election results will be announced by mid-September.

FROM THE EDITOR'S INBOX

Send emails to editor@woodturner.org

I have taught woodturning for over thirty-five years, working with people from all walks of life and backgrounds. I always find teaching extremely rewarding, but my most rewarding experience happened this past summer.

Tristan (13) and Trenton (11) became my students after they had finished school for the summer. Their grandfather brought them to my workshop every Saturday morning, 8:00 to 11:00 a.m., for six weeks. At around 9:00 each day, my wife Mary would bring them a cooked breakfast, and we would have a fifteen-minute break and a chat.

Trenton has slight autism but devours books way past his age group, and he has an interesting stance on world events, in which he takes a great interest. After chatting with his grandfather, Mary and I learned that Tristan was being bullied at school, had been in several fights, and was failing all of his classes.

After arranging a time for a separate social visit, Trenton and Tristan arrived one afternoon with big smiles and a bouquet of flowers for Mary. During this visit, we learned that the lads had moved to a different part of town and therefore were now attending a new school. We asked Tristan how he was finding his new school, and his reply brought a huge lump to my throat and a tear to my eye. He said that he was now on the school council, was a grade A honor student, and that he was awarded Student of the Month recently.

Mary asked him what made him change his attitude at school, and he replied, "Jimmy has given me confidence from woodturning and talking with me about life. I feel like I can achieve whatever I want." In a few weeks, when they break for Christmas, I will take them both gold prospecting. Who knows what they can go on to achieve in the future? To be an influential part, or catalyst, in their lives beyond woodturning is a huge reward for me as a teacher.

—Jimmy Clewes, Nevada

If you look at the five largest industries that consume wood, they would be home construction, mouldings, cabinetry, furniture, and instrument making. Yet none of these industries typically go to the tree to get what they need. Other people harvest the trees, mill the wood, and dry it to accommodate each industry's needs. This is the disconnect that makes woodturning so unique.

Woodturning is one of the very last woodworking trades that still has a tradition of harvesting the wood we need directly from the source, the tree. It is our fundamental connection to nature and the source of our products that set us apart. I hope we never lose this tradition.

—Scott Belway, British Columbia, Canada

Segmented Woodturners Confers Lifetime Achievement Award to Curt Theobald

What's in an Award?

I was asked to create a special award to commemorate Curt Theobald's Lifetime Achievement Award in segmenting. I was honored and wanted to take the opportunity to dig a little deeper into Curt's journey and create a memorable award that honors him with real meaning.

Coincidentally, a neighbor dropped off a West Texas cedar fencepost that had been in the ground for over twenty years and challenged me to see what I could do with it. During the tenure of that fencepost, Bobby Lane, my benefactor, was the head of the Agriculture Department at Sam Houston University. I had witnessed hundreds of agriculture students at his farm getting hands-on training in everything from steers to tomatoes. That fencepost saw a lifetime of service to future young farmers and ranchers-to-be.

I knew this was the perfect wood for Curt's award, as Curt is no stranger to fenceposts. This year, Curt and his family are celebrating the 100th year of his family farm, which helps to provide America's food. It seemed appropriate that, along with their family's celebration, we in the segmenting community should also celebrate the many years Curt has shared his knowledge with us. Plus, the similarities between Curt and my neighbor were not lost on me. Both are teachers, and I saw a striking congruence in their values and desire to be of service.

For this award to have more depth in its making, I asked Andy Chen, who has been segmenting for about as long as Curt, to collaborate. "Jerry wanted me to make the base for the trophy, and I was honored," says Andy. "Curt's work is not restricted to wood: he incorporates other materials such as glass and minerals, alabaster in particular. In designing the base, I wanted to make sure that aspect did not get lost. So I chose curly maple for the body in segments separated by mesquite veneer. One of the segments is substituted with a piece of alabaster. There is a small piece of holly on the top of the base where Curt's name is engraved. The bottom of the base, where the award information is engraved, comprises pie-shaped mesquite segments. Congratulations to Curt for this well-deserved honor."
—Jerry Bennett

Made with meaning
A sturdy cedar fencepost that served a faithful career on a farm seemed an apt material to use in Curt Theobald's Lifetime Achievement Award from the Segmented Woodturners.

Al Miotke (left) congratulates Curt Theobald on his Lifetime Achievement Award, presented by the Segmented Woodturners chapter of the AAW.

Since the first segmenting symposium in 2008, the Segmented Woodturners (an AAW chapter) has awarded Lifetime Achievement Awards to individuals whose artwork, teachings, and career have had a significant influence on advancing the craft and artform of segmenting. This year's honoree is Curt Theobald.

Curt began segmenting in high-school shop class, and this started a lifelong passion for working with wood. His interest in segmenting accelerated in the 1990s, when there was very little information available for those wanting to learn. So Curt painstakingly taught himself and made a personal commitment to share his knowledge with others.

His approach to segmenting has always included a focus on design, form, precision, and attention to detail. Curt's contributions to the field continue to this day: he has been an instructor at craft schools, including Anderson Ranch, Arrowmont, and Marc Adams, to name just a few; he has demonstrated at countless symposia and turning events, both in the U.S. and abroad; and his creative work has been published widely. Curt was also one of the organizers of the first segmenting symposium, an event that sparked the genesis of the Segmented Woodturners

Curt Theobald, *Sisters (Circle of Life Series)*, 2017, Cherry, holly, walnut, each: 11" × 4¼" (28cm × 11cm)
Gene Colley Collection

AAW chapter, of which Curt was one of the original board members.

Previous winners of this award include Lincoln Seitzman (2008), Ray Allen (2010), Bud Latven (2012), Malcolm Tibbetts (2014), Jerry Bennett (2016), and Bill Smith (2018), all instrumental in making segmenting what it is today. ■

—Al Miotke, President, Segmented Woodturners

JOURNAL ARCHIVE CONNECTION

EXPLORE!

To learn more about this year's honoree, log on at woodturner.org and use the Explore! search tool to find these articles:

- "Curt Theobald: Heir to a Legacy in Segmented Turning?" by Ken Keoughan, *AW* Winter 2001 (vol 16, no 4, page 42)
- "Curt Theobald: Elements of a Balanced Life," by Terry Martin, *AW* February 2016 (vol 31, no 1, page 48)

Mark Sfirri's Baseball Bats Head to Cooperstown

Multiaxis woodturning artist Mark Sfirri.

The National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum in Cooperstown, New York, has acquired a set of unusual baseball bats titled, *Rejects from the Bat Factory*, created by Mark Sfirri of Bucks County, Pennsylvania. The President of the Hall of Fame, Josh Rawitch, said, "We are excited to add this very unique piece of artwork to our permanent collection for fans to enjoy. Our Museum continues to display and collect one-of-a-kind artifacts and objects that help tell the history of our great game and Mark's work certainly falls into that category."

The set is part of a series that Mark began in 1993. Over the past fifty years, he has created a diverse range of wood furniture and sculpture, but his variations on the theme of altered baseball bats are among his signature works. The Hall joins other prominent institutions with sets of Sfirri's baseball bat series, among them the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Institution (Washington D.C.), Museum of Arts & Design (NYC), The Minneapolis Institute of Art (Minneapolis, Minnesota), The James A. Michener Art Museum (Doylestown, Pennsylvania), Yale University Art Gallery (New Haven, Connecticut), as well as numerous private collections.

"Cooperstown is the biggest stage for the sport," Mark noted. "My father would be proud." Mark's work joins other baseball-related works made by artists Norman Rockwell, Armand LaMontagne, Elaine De Kooning, Alexander Calder, and Andy Warhol, among others.

Mark described the inception of this series: "Our son Sam, who was six at the time, ran into my woodshop. He had just seen a baseball bat with a hollowed end on television and he wanted me to make him one." He continued, "I realized that the foundation of baseball bat design is function: a handle that is the perfect diameter for gripping, a knob to keep the bat from flying out of one's hands, and a larger diameter head for a greater chance of making contact with the ball. For me, though, it seemed an opportunity to use the form as a blank canvas, a chance to isolate multiaxis turning details that I was experimenting with, to impose them on this recognizable object. My first thought was to try to make it appear that the baseball dented the bat and deformed it in a way that is, of course, impossible with wood. In another design, I thought, what would it look like if a baseball was actually passing through a bat?" ■

Photo: Mark Sfirri

Mark Sfirri, *Rejects from the Bat Factory*, 2018, Ash, 32¾" × 23¾" × 5½" (83cm × 60cm × 14cm)

Mark Sfirri's *Rejects from the Bat Factory* is currently on view at the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum.

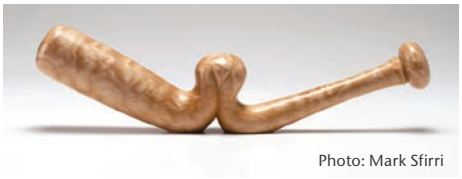


Photo: Mark Sfirri

Mark Sfirri, *Inch Worm Bat*, 2006, Quilted maple, 6" × 21½" × 3" (15cm × 55cm × 8cm)

For more on the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum, visit baseballhall.org. To see more of Mark Sfirri's work, visit marksfirri.com.

TIPS

Tips

Wolverine depth-setup enhancement

When sharpening gouges with the Wolverine system, Bill Baca describes a method he uses to quickly and accurately set the distance his gouges should protrude from the Wolverine Vari-Grind Jig. (See AAW's *Tips & Tricks for the Woodturner*, Volume 1, page 31.)

Bill drills holes in a piece of wood to match the depth of the overhang he wants to replicate when sharpening. In his case, the holes were 1¾" and 2" (4cm and 5cm), respectively. He states, "To set the tool in the jig correctly, all I have to do is put the tool tip all the way into the correct hole, push the jig up against the face of the platform and tighten the jig onto the tool."

While this works well, I have found that over time, the sharp tip of the gouge can dig into the bottom of the wooden hole. Over time, this deepens the hole and increases the length of the overhang. To overcome this problem and to enhance Bill's tip, I epoxied a coin in the bottom of the hole. Depending on the diameter of the hole, you could use either a Canadian looney ($1 coin) or a penny. The coin stops the gouge from digging into the wood and deepening the hole but is softer than the gouges and will not damage the tip of the tool.

If using this method, ensure that you allow for the extra thickness of the coin and epoxy when drilling the depth hole in the wood.
—Dex Hallwood, British Columbia, Canada

Jig centers wasteblock on bowl blank

Here is a simple way to center a wasteblock on a bowl blank. With a wasteblock mounted in a scroll chuck, turn its face flat and drill a centered 5⁄32" (4mm) hole all the way through. Next, punch a shallow dimple in the center of the flattened base side of the bowl blank. Now, with the wasteblock in hand, insert a ⅛"- (3mm-) diameter, pointed-end, hard steel wire through the hole so that the point of the wire projects out from the flattened face.

To adhere the wasteblock to the bowl blank, I apply thick cyanoacrylate (CA) glue in a ring around the face of the wasteblock, staying well away from the center hole and wire. Then I apply CA accelerator to the bowl blank (or vice-versa). Press the point of the wire into the bowl blank dimple and bring the wasteblock and bowl blank firmly into contact, making sure the wire point remains in the dimple. Quickly give the wasteblock a slight twist to spread the glue, then hold the assembly for a few seconds while the CA hardens. (Note that this assembly process is more easily accomplished with the bowl blank resting on a benchtop.) The blank and wasteblock are now ready for mounting on the lathe.

After the bowl has been turned, part it from the wasteblock; reface the wasteblock before removing it from the chuck for future use on another bowl blank. Occasionally, the hole through the wasteblock drifts off center so, after refacing the wasteblock, use a pen to mark a circle around the perimeter of the exposed hole while the lathe is running to reveal its concentricity, or lack thereof. Also mark the jaw numbers in their respective places on the wasteblock for future remounting in the scroll chuck. The wasteblock can be reused several times until it becomes too short.

I have heard it said that CA glue is not a sufficiently strong adhesive for this use, but I have mounted bowl blanks in this manner for many years without incident. Other glues could be used in place of CA for a more robust joint.
—Warnie Lore, West Virginia

Draw accurate chainsaw guidelines

When chainsawing bowl blanks, I always struggled when drawing a top-of-log guideline that intersects the pith on both ends of the log, particularly on logs that are not round and whose ends are not square to the axis of the log. I found that a plumb bob provides a simple and fast solution. Simply align the plumb bob through the pith and then chalk a line on the endgrain (*Photo 1*). Repeat on the opposite face without moving the log. Now simply connect the two lines along the top of the log (*Photo 2*). You now have guidelines for sawing the log directly through the pith.
—Ron Giordano, Texas


1


2

Add light to turned projects

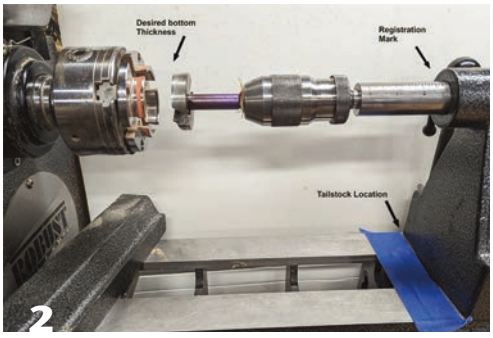
I enjoy turning small open-stack laminated bowls and adding an LED candle inside, so that the light spreads through the sides. It is a nice gift that can be lit during evening meals, used as a religious celebration of light, or as a relaxing, mindful meditative object.

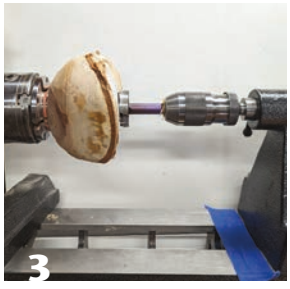
My wife, who is now in a nursing home with dementia, had a collection of paperweights. The blue globe (*at right in both photos*) was her favorite. To make a lighted stand for the paperweight, I turned a bowl over to make the base the top, added a thicker bottom when laying up the new form, and turned a sphere-shaped rest for the blue orb. To increase the light, I put a small LED puck inside, which pushed a lot more light into the room. I continued playing with the form and decided to open up the center of the sphere-shaped rest for the paperweight. This allowed the light to push out of the sides of the base and up through the glass. My wife loved having one of her favorite paperweights on display.

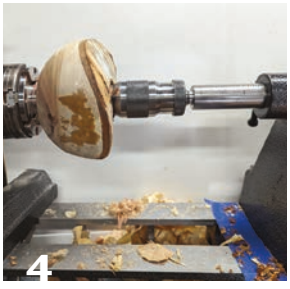
I hope you find this idea helpful. LED lights can add flair to an otherwise routine project.

—Rolland K. Stratton, New York

Tailstock depth gauge for drilling







Sometimes an idea comes from having to repeat a common task many times. In this case, I was rough-turning more than seventy natural-edge bowls from green birch (*Photo 1*). My first step was to drill to an appropriate depth with a large Forstner bit, to ease the hollowing. At first, I used a common depth jig, but this was cumbersome, as it required me to drill, remove the tailstock and drill bit, mount the depth jig, check the depths, remove the jig, and drill further if needed. This became very frustrating after ten bowls or so.

I came up with a much more efficient process that does not require anything other than my lathe, a drill chuck, some tape, and a Forstner bit. Essentially, I established three fixed points of reference: the face of the chuck jaws, the tailstock location, and a quill registration mark (*Photo 2*).

Mount your chuck (or faceplate) on the lathe spindle. Extend the tailstock quill to a designated registration mark: here, I've used the 3" (8cm) position. A marker also works to indicate the quill extension. Mount a Forstner bit (or Morse taper drill bit) in a drill chuck, and move the tailstock toward the headstock until the distance between the chuck face and Forstner bit is at your desired bottom thickness. Put a piece of tape on the bed ways in front of the tailstock.

Retract the tailstock quill and move the tailstock back, so you can mount the undrilled bowl blank in the chuck (*Photo 3*). Move the tailstock up to the tape line, lock it down, and start drilling by advancing the quill. When the designated quill position is reached, you know your desired depth has been achieved (*Photo 4*). Don't try to drill the hole in one pass, as the chips can cause the bit to bind. Retract the quill as needed to clear the chips.

I also use this depth gauging method in deep hollowing situations by using a quill extension (*Photo 5*). ▸

—Jim Meizelis, Illinois

Flattened pencil improves marking accuracy

After turning a set of billiard balls, I needed to locate the exact top and bottom of each ball to position the numbers. To do this, I made a positioning jig that allowed me to draw accurate lines around the center of the ball on three axes (*Photo 1*). I figured that the most accurate way to draw the lines was to use a pencil whose lead fit tight against the jig. So I sanded a long flat on the end of the pencil, which allowed the lead to be more accurately positioned (*Photos 2, 3*).

—Tim Heil, Minnesota

Food-safe indicator beads

I read with interest John Stiehler's article in the April 2022 *American Woodturner* on using silica desiccant to dry bowls (vol 37, no 2, page 32). For safety reasons, John uses non-indicator beads and then weighs the beads to determine when they need to be regenerated in the oven or microwave. I wanted a technique, however, that is food safe but still uses indicating beads for convenience.

My solution is to use food-safe indicator packets (*Photo 1*). I just toss a few in with the non-indicator beads. These food-safe indicator packets contain several beads that change from orange to green when they need to be regenerated. The colored beads can be seen when the packet is held up to a light (*Photo 2*). The indicator packets themselves can be regenerated in an oven or microwave, depending on the type of packet. This technique has worked well for me.

I bought my food-safe indicating packets at dryndry.com.

—Ron Giordano, Texas

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

Gloves for grinding

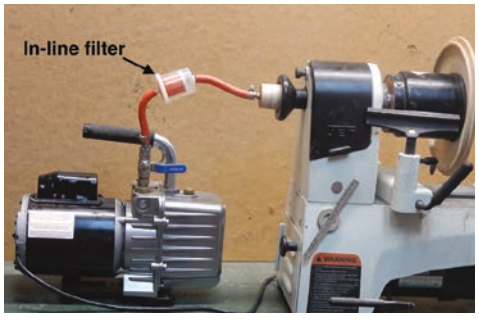
When I use my grinder, I wear tight-fitting leather gloves for protection. A simple safety tip for all.

—Tim Heil, Minnesota

In-line filter saves pump oil

I use a vacuum pump for the vacuum chuck system on my lathe. Although I like the powerful vacuum provided by the pump, I soon noticed it had pulled sawdust into the pump and contaminated the oil. This is not good for the fine tolerances of the pump! After changing the oil a couple of times, I decided to install a filter in the vacuum line to the pump. I found an inexpensive automotive in-line fuel filter works fine. They come with ¼" (6mm) fittings, same as the ¼" vacuum system tubing. ■

—Bill Wells, Washington



Calendar of Events

Send event info to editor@woodturner.org. February issue deadline: December 15.

Florida

January 6, 7, 2023, The South West Florida Wood Art Expo, Charlotte Harbor Event Center, Punta Gorda. An annual event that showcases the work of wood carvers and woodturners. One of the premier wood art shows in the country since 1986, it is a dynamic show with hundreds of entries for competition, vendors, demonstrations, raffle, artist displays, silent auction, and sales. For the latest info, entry forms, and more, visit swflwoodartexpo.org.

February 3–5, 2023, Florida Woodturning Symposium, RP Funding Center, Lakeland. Demonstrators to include David Ellsworth, Mark Gardner, Carol Hall, Avelino Samuel, Kent Harriss, Keith Larrett, Jack Roberts, and Kent Weakley. Event to include an instant gallery, raffle, auctions, shopping spree, and great vendors market. For more, visit floridawoodturningsymposium.com.

VIRTUAL EVENTS

AAW Presents

View AAW-sponsored programming of interactive demonstrations and presentations from the comfort of your own home. Visit tiny.cc/AAWPresents for more details and to register for upcoming sessions. Join AAW for this virtual programming.

REMAINING 2022 DATES:

- December 17: Rebecca DeGroot

AAW'S REMOTE DEMONSTRATION EVENT CALENDAR

Learn about upcoming non-AAW-sponsored interactive remote demonstrations (IRDs) at tiny.cc/IRDCalendar. Demonstrators can also submit entries to this online calendar at this link.

Indiana

October 13–15, 2023, Turning 2023, Ohio Valley Woodturners Guild's 12th biennial Woodturning Symposium, Higher Ground Conference & Retreat Center, West Harrison. Featured demonstrators to include John Jordan, Nick Cook, Ashley Harwood, Roberto Ferrer, and Helen Bailey. The pastoral setting has an onsite lodge, dormitories, and dining hall. Event to feature five stations and eleven rotations, instant gallery, wide range of vendors, and Saturday evening live auction. Registration opens February 15, 2023, at ovwg.org.

Maine

September 16, 2022–January 7, 2023, *Successful Seating: Outstanding Production Chairs in Wood*, Messler Gallery of the Center for Furniture Craftsmanship, Rockport. Curated by CFC Founder Peter Korn, the exhibition presents sixteen chairs by fourteen designers from seven countries, all of which are currently in production. For more, visit woodschool.org.

Minnesota

Multiple 2022 exhibitions, AAW's Gallery of Wood Art, Landmark Center, Saint Paul:

- September 4–December 28, 2022: *Bridging the Gap: The Craft and Art of Woodturning* (AAW's 2022 member exhibition)
- January 8–February 5, 2023: *Living with Craft: North House Artist Development Program Exhibition*
- February 26–May 19, 2023: *Form | Content* (2023 POP exhibition)
- July 1–December 31, 2023: *Out of the Woods* (AAW's 2023 member exhibition)
- Ongoing: *Touch This!; Around the Hus—Turning in Scandinavian Domestic Life*; vintage and historic lathes and turned items

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

New York

March 25, 26, 2023, Totally Turning Symposium, hosted by the Adirondack Woodturners Association, Saratoga Springs City Center, Saratoga Springs. Demonstrators to be announced. For the latest info, visit totallyturning.com.

Tennessee

January 27, 28, 2023, Tennessee Association of Woodturners 34th Annual Woodturning Symposium, Marriott Hotel and Convention Center, Franklin. Featured demonstrators to include Rebecca DeGroot, Stuart Batty, Nick Cook, John Beaver, and Tom Wirsing; additional demonstrators to be named later. One of the longest-running and most successful regional symposia in the U.S., the 2023 symposium will feature a tradeshow, instant gallery, people's choice award, and Saturday night banquet with auction. For more, visit tnwoodturners.org or email David Sapp at symposium@tnwoodturners.org. Vendors, contact Grant Hitt at tawvendorinfo@gmail.com.

Washington

March 11, 2023, Northwest Washington Woodturners' 11th annual all-day demo, A Day with Nick Agar, Anacortes First Baptist Church, Anacortes. Nick will spend the day demonstrating the many techniques of turning, texturing, and coloring that he is internationally known for, including his Viking Sunset Bowl. For more, visit nwwwt.org. Questions, email info@nwwwt.org or call Phil Kezele at 206-372-5123.

Bob Stocksdale (1913-2003),
Untitled Bowl, Undated, Rosewood, 7½" (19cm) diameter

Terry Patten and her husband Gary were at a Shriner's yard sale in Florida when she spotted this graceful bowl. Turning it over, she saw Bob Stocksdale's signature. Terry notes, "Being a woodturner's wife, I knew who [Bob] was, and of course the bowl was beautiful. I asked the price—it was $5.00. Of course I bought it!" Terry donated this extraordinarily lucky find to the AAW's Permanent Collection in memory of her husband earlier this year.

Photo: Tib Shaw/AAW
AAW Permanent Collection, Gift of Terry Patten

MAKE AN **OCTANGULAR BOX**

John Sutter and Roger Crooks

Background

In the April 2021 issue of *AW* (vol 36, no 2, page 14), we let you know about a chapter initiative brought about by John Sutter (lotecjon@aol.com) and Roger Crooks (nwwt.rogercrooks@comcast.net), who challenged members of the Northwest Woodturners (NWWT) to make thirty "exceptional" boxes for Beads of Courage (BoC). John adapted one of his favorite designs into a BoC box, the body of which requires an eight-sided glue-up and a satisfying bit of lathe work. Club members were provided detailed instructions and a step-by-step video for guidance. The project was such a success, we wanted to bring you the details, so you can make these beautiful boxes yourself—whether for BoC or for your own use.

See the sidebar for a link to the video, and following are step-by-step instructions adapted from the directions John and Roger provided to NWWT chapter members.

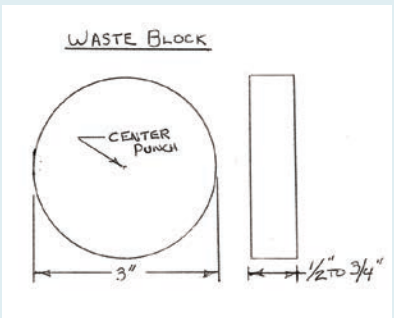
Beads of Courage is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for children and teens coping with serious illness. If you do wish to make boxes for donation to BoC, be sure to visit beadsofcourage.org/bead-bowls to learn more *before* embarking on the project. Be aware of the important guidelines pertaining to construction and donation.

Related Video!

To view the video on the making of an octangular box, visit tiny.cc/SutterBox (case sensitive) or scan the QR code.

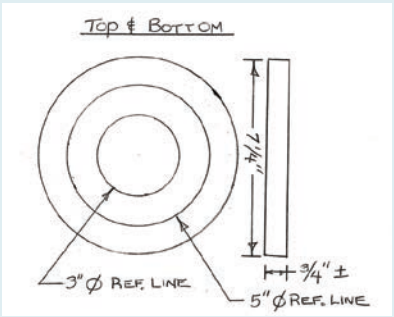
Bill of Materials

Select contrasting woods for the sides and top/bottom. NWWT used walnut and maple for their BoC initiative.



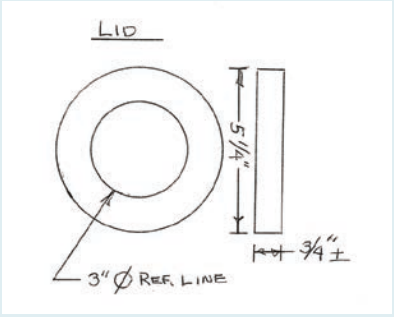
Wasteblocks (2 ea.)

Cut 2 wasteblocks for tenons, to be glued to the box bottom and lid. Each wasteblock is 3" (8cm) in diameter and ¾" (19mm) thick.



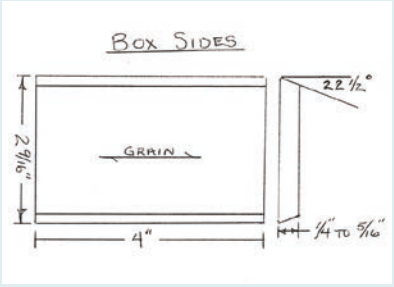
Top and bottom (2 [1 of ea.])

- Cut a top and bottom, each 7¼" (18cm) diameter and ¾" thick.
- Punch a center mark on both the top and bottom.
- Draw a 3" reference circle, used to locate the wasteblock **on the bottom only**. The other wasteblock will go on the lid, not the top. Glue a wasteblock on the bottom.
- Draw a 5" (13cm) reference circle on both the top and bottom, used to set the boundary of the arc on the top and bottom.



Lid (1 ea.)

- Cut a lid 5¼" (13cm) diameter and ¾" thick.
- Punch a center mark.
- Draw a 3" reference circle to locate the wasteblock. Glue on the wasteblock.



Box Sides (8 ea.)

- Cut 8 box sides ¼" to 5/16" (6mm to 8mm) thick, 4" (10cm) long, and 2 9/16" (6.5cm) wide (final dimensions).
- Initially rip stock to 2¾" (7cm) wide before mitering the long sides at 22.5° to final width.
- Finish-sand inside surfaces.

Step-by-Step Overview

STEP 1 *Cut box sides*

Cut the box sides to width, with 22.5° miters. A good table saw setup will ensure consistency and seamless glue joints. Here, a simple raised "L" jig prevents the point of the mitered side from sliding under the fence during the final cut.

MORE ON CUTTING STAVES

EXPLORE!

For more ideas on stave construction for turning blanks, log on at woodturner.org and use the Explore! search tool to find these and other articles:

- "Basic Stave Construction for the Lathe," by Bill Wells, *AW* October 2020 (vol 35, no 5, page 14)
- "A Table Saw Sled for Precision-Cut Staves," by Dan Swaim, *AW* June 2022 (vol 37, no 3, page 24)

STEP 2 *Assemble box sides*

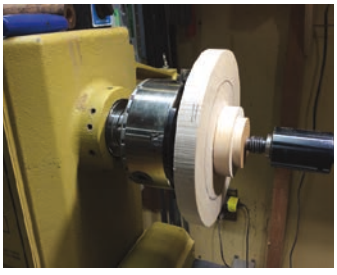
Lay the eight sides with the miter openings face down on a table. Line up the bottoms against a straight edge. Apply two strips of tape across the assembly. Trim tape on one end and leave 5" extra on the other end for pulling the assembly tight.

Flip the assembly over to expose the open miters, and apply a small bead of wood glue on one side of each miter joint. Carefully roll up the pieces to form the eight-sided box, and using the excess tape, pull the assembly tight so there are no gaps in the joints. Wipe off excess glue; you will not be turning the inside, so clean it as well as possible.

STEP 3 *True top and bottom edges*

Verify that the top and bottom of the box are totally flat by placing it on a flat surface. Use a disk sander or a sheet of sandpaper glued to a flat surface to flatten the edges.

STEP 4 *Prep box bottom*

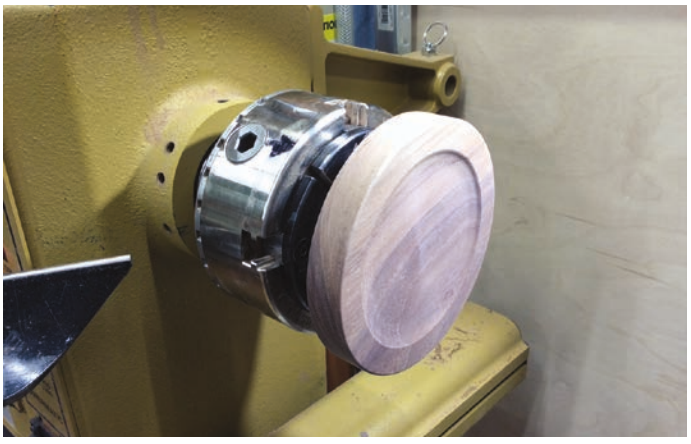


Mount the box bottom on the lathe and form a chucking tenon from the wasteblock you had glued on. Remount the bottom in a chuck, then trim the outside diameter to about 7" (18cm). Dish out the area within the 5" circle you had drawn. Smooth and flatten the gluing surface ring between outside edge and the scooped area, and confirm flatness with straightedge. ▸

STEP 5 Glue box to bottom

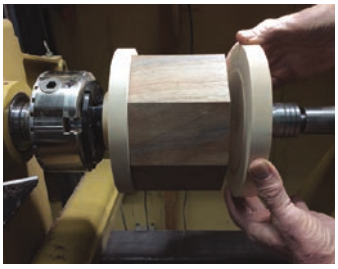
Glue the box to the bottom. Make sure box is centered and apply gluing pressure with a weight on top.

STEP 6 Turn lid



Make a chucking tenon from the wasteblock you had glued on the lid, then remount the tenon in a chuck. Turn the outside diameter of the lid to 5". Contour the inside surface of lid as desired (shown here, a simple shallow scoop).

STEP 7 Glue top to box



Mount the box top on the lathe using a recess to accept the chuck jaws in expansion mode. Trim the outside diameter to about 7", then true and flatten the outer 2" as a gluing surface. Glue the top to the box, now mounted on the lathe, using the tailstock for gluing pressure. A centered divot in the top aids in alignment.

STEP 8 Trim overhang and sand

At the bandsaw, with the box assembly sitting on its top, trim off the top and bottom overhang. Then sand the top and bottom flush with the sides.

STEP 9 Turn edge radius on bottom and top

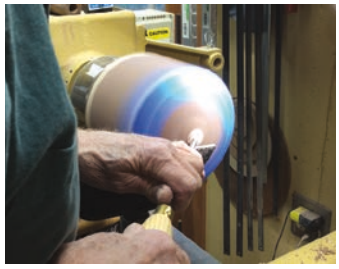
Mount the box by expanding the chuck jaws into the recess in the top, then turn the bottom edge radius reaching from the 5"-diameter reference circle to about ¼" below the box sides. Remount the box, now holding the tenon at the bottom in the chuck, and form the same edge radius on the top.

STEP 10 *Pierce hole in top, form lid rebate*



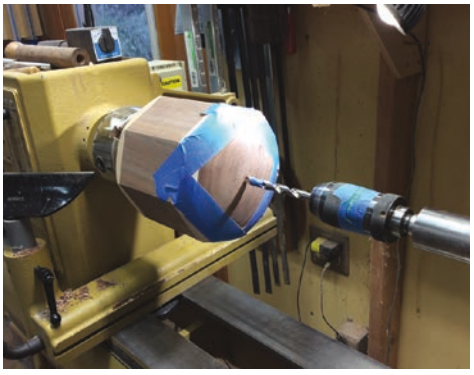
With the box still mounted in the chuck, cut through the top to make a 4½"- (11cm-) diameter hole. Note: If using a parting tool, make piercing slot twice the width of the tool's cutting edge to aid with chip removal and to prevent binding with the center disk when it is cut free. Form a lip in the top sized to receive the lid with a fairly loose fit.

STEP 11 *Turn lid*

Secure the lid in the top using tailstock pressure. Shape the lid with gentle cuts, and reduce the wasteblock as much as you can with the tailstock in place. To turn away the last of the wasteblock, retract the tailstock and hold the lid in place using painter's tape. Sand the top.

STEP 12 *Drill for knob*



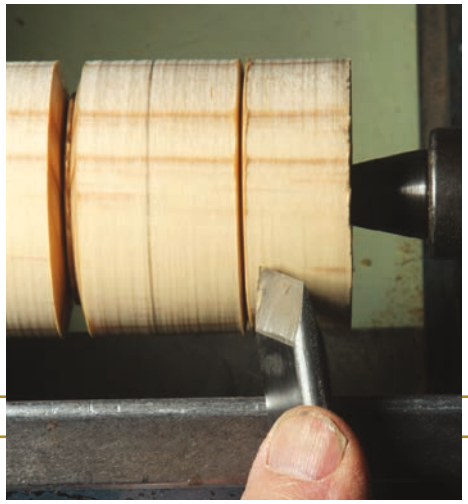
Using a drill chuck mounted in the tailstock, drill a hole sized to receive the tenon in a knob (in this case, ⅜", or 10mm, diameter by ⅜" deep).

STEP 13 *Complete the bottom*

With the lid removed, mount the box using a vacuum chuck, Longworth chuck, or jumbo jaws in expansion mode. Jam-chucking using the tailstock is also an option. Turn away the tenon and slightly undercut the bottom to ensure it will sit flat on a table. Sand the bottom.

STEP 14 *Make and attach a knob*


Turn a knob of your own design with a tenon that will fit into the hole in the top of the lid. ■



VIRTUES OF A SKEW-CUT V-GROOVE

Mike Darlow

I started turning in 1977 and took a three-year woodturning trade course at Sydney Technical College. Two aspects of the techniques I learned there seem to be rarely taught elsewhere and are neglected in books by other authors or in magazines or other media. The first aspect is optimizing the sequence of tool use when turning axially grained workpieces (i.e., with the grain running parallel to the lathe's bed ways); the second is the importance of cutting V-grooves in that sequence. In this article, I'll discuss both and in doing so come to some conclusions on the geometry of skew chisels.

Turning sequence

Turning is more efficient if the number of tools used is minimized. Simple designs of axially grained workpieces without pommels, which for convenience I'll call spindles, can generally be turned with three tools, each used once, in the following order: spindle-roughing gouge, skew chisel, and detail gouge. However, as a spindle's design becomes more complicated, the number of tools needed may increase, and some may need to be used more than once. Nevertheless, in deciding the tool-use sequence, one should aim to minimize the number of tool uses and therefore delay using detail gouges to cut coves and apophyges.

Bead-defining side cuts

Spindle design features typically include beads, coves, fillets, pommels, and long curves. After cutting the ends of any pommels and roughing and perhaps planing the workpiece, usually to a cylinder, the next operation would typically be to cut the beads, first because their maximum diameters are often the same as the diameter of the workpiece after it has been roughed, and second because if you cut the coves earlier than necessary, the stiffness of the spindle is reduced, turning becomes more difficult, and one or more steadies may be needed.

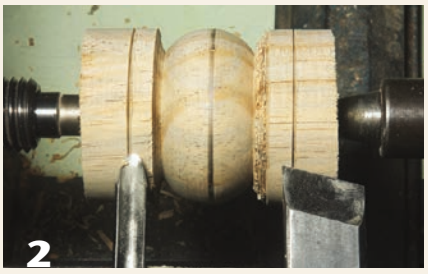
You can roll a bead with a detail gouge, the short or long point of a skew, a beading and parting tool, a bedan, or even a pointed scraper. *Photos 1 and 2* show my attempts to roll a bead into a cylindrical surface with the first two tools. What is clear is that the more rolling cuts in a series, the more the end of the last cut moves "in" towards the center of the bead. Therefore, cutting a bead into a cylindrical surface solely by making a series of rolling cuts will result in a narrower-than-designed bead of uncertain width.

The solution is to provide space alongside the bead for the tool to roll into and to allow the shavings to escape freely. Efficiency can be further enhanced if that space is also used to define both the designed lateral extent of the bead and its height. The means almost always recommended in the U.K. and the U.S. is to cut a rectangular

V-groove options

1

The inner pair of fine V-cuts mark the intended bead width. The outer fine V-cuts are ⅜" (10mm) away.



2

The left-hand half bead was cut with a detail gouge; the right-hand half bead was cut with a skew's short point. Note that with the short point, the bottom of the bead has moved farther inward.

Compare: skew vs. parting tool

Shown *at left* is a symmetrical V-groove made with a skew's long point; *at right*, a rectangular trench cut with a parting tool.

The right side of the V-groove; the skew has left a surface free from tearout.

The bottom and left side of the parting-tool trench; both are badly torn.

trench with a parting tool or a beading-and-parting tool. In contrast, I was taught to cut a V-groove with a skew's long point (*Photo 3*).

The skew used to cut the V-groove in *Photo 3* has a sharpening angle of 25°, and a long-point angle of 70° (*Figure 1*). The included angle of the V-groove in *Photo 3* is 23.5°. See *Optimal Skew Angles for V-Grooves* sidebar.

Photo 4 shows that the sides of the skew-cut V-groove are free of tearout, while *Photo 5* shows that both the bottom and the sides of the parting-tool-cut trench are badly torn. The endgrain tearout in the side of this radiata pine trench is about 3⁄32" (2mm) deep but would be less with crisp-cutting harder woods.

Clearly, the skew-cut V-groove is superior to the parting-tool trench in this bead-defining application because of several reasons:

- It can be used between adjacent beads, as its included angle is small
- It can be safely cut at longer overhangs over the toolrest than a parting-tool trench
- It doesn't require a tool change
- There is no tearout that would necessitate trimming cuts, which would result in inaccurate sizing

Skew terminology

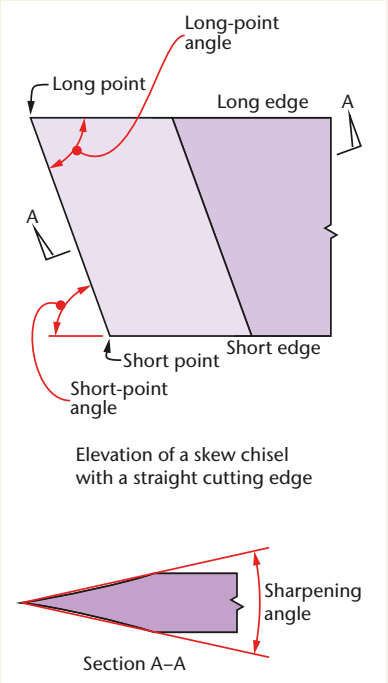


Figure 1. Terms associated with the nose geometry of a skew chisel. The long-point angle need not equal the short-point angle.

V-grooves – a closer look

In the remainder of this article, I will look in detail at cutting V-grooves alongside beads, and the design and use of the skew in cutting them. Two types of V-grooves are used alongside beads: symmetrical and canted (*Photo 6*).

Symmetrical V-grooves

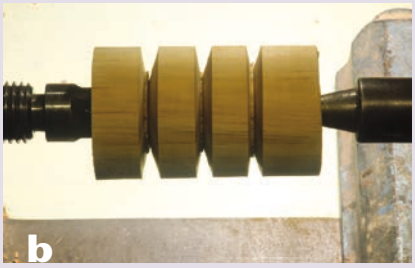
The symmetrical V-groove is the most used because it is the best to use between beads and can be used ▸

Optimal Skew Angles for V-Grooves

The skew I use has a 25° sharpening angle, which enables a tight V-groove. Also, the resulting cutting edge lasts longer than one with a coarser sharpening angle because more steel must be abraded away from the 25° cutting edge than one with a larger sharpening angle to bring the edge to the same bluntness. The edge with the smaller sharpening angle also cuts with less effort.

Why does a skew have a long point? Its only purposes are to cut V-grooves and pommel ends, part off, flatten ends, and rough-cut pins. Of these five uses, the first should be by far the most common. The skew I use to cut V-grooves has a 70° long-point angle; *photo a* shows this skew (at the top) as well as other options. Which of them is optimal? *Photo b* shows three V-grooves, each cut with seven similar-strength cuts with a skew's long point. The 70° long-point angle is the most efficient, and it is also more visible both when V-cutting and parting off. Therefore, it is the one I advocate.

(a) *Five chisels that can be used to cut V-grooves and roll beads.* Top to bottom: *a skew with a 70° long-point angle, a curved skew with a 90° long-point angle, a skew with a rounded long point and a long-point angle of 110°, a beading-and-parting tool, and a bedan. The latter two lack the skew's versatility and are essentially redundant.*



(b) *V-grooves cut with three different skews with varying long-point angles, from* left to right, *respectively: 70°, 90°, and 110°. This trial shows that the smaller the long-point angle, the deeper the V-cuts can penetrate.*

for isolated beads (except those that spring vertically or almost vertically). When a symmetrical V-groove is used between beads, it is important to minimize the V-groove's included angle so that the facing half beads can spring steeply if so designed. The sequence of V-cuts and rolling cuts is shown in *Figure 2*. The procedure is shown in *Photos 7-11*. Note that when making symmetrical V-cuts into a cylindrical surface, the blade should always be angled at 90° to the lathe axis: it isn't "skewed" at all, as that would increase the V-groove's included angle.

Some turners advise pushing the skew's long point forward to make a V-cut. However, you'll be able to cut much deeper if you start with the long point high on the wood and pull the handle crisply but rhythmically up as you push in. Each pull-up-and-push V-cut is completed once the long edge of the tool points at the lathe axis.

Canted V-grooves

Photo 12 shows three different bead profiles. Most books focus on how to turn the shallow bead on the left. The more shapely central and right-hand beads spring vertically. For them, the canted V-groove is the preferred variant. Canted V-cuts are also appropriate for high beads, irrespective of their forms, as the bottom of a deep, symmetrical V-groove can wander laterally.

Symmetrical vs. canted V-grooves

At left is a symmetrical V-groove, and *at right*, a canted V-groove. Both were cut with a skew's long point and are useful for defining a bead's shape and dimensions.

Symmetrical V-groove cut sequence

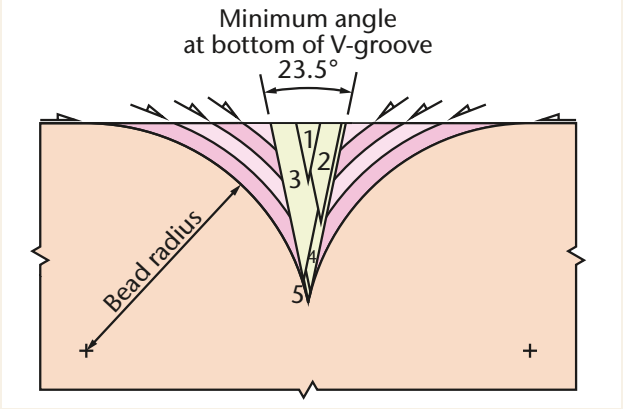
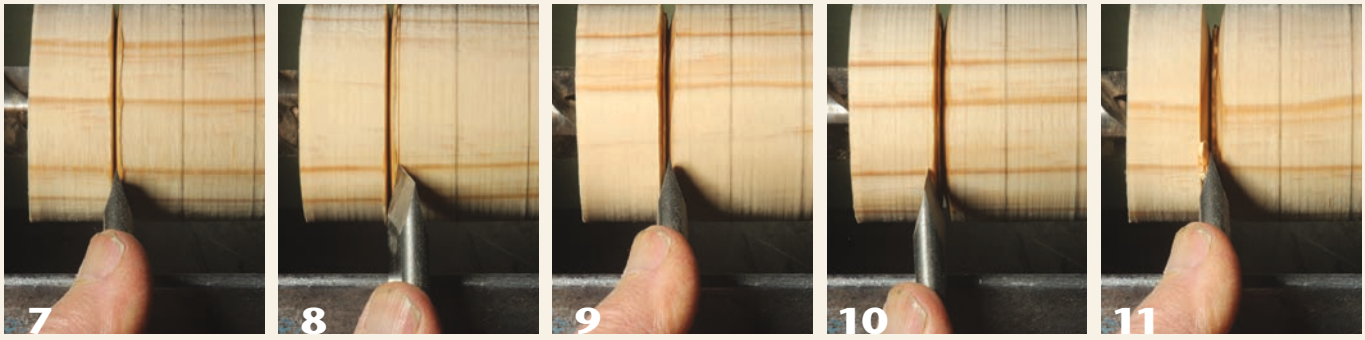


Figure 2. The cut sequence for a symmetrical V-groove. If using a symmetrical V-groove alongside an isolated bead, it's better to make the last cut of the series on the bead side of the V-groove. The arrows represent the tilts of the skew's short point at the start of each rolling cut.

Symmetrical V-groove, step by step



(7) The first V-cut of a symmetrical sequence. The cut is a swing-push motion made with the long point and powered by the right hand. The blade is 90° to the lathe axis, the skew's sides are vertical, and the long point will start the cut high on the workpiece. No wood is removed, but feathering is raised at each edge.

(8) Ready to start the second V-cut, on the bead side of the V-groove. The tool shaft is still held 90° to the lathe axis but is axially rotated about 12.5° clockwise. The cut is started just to the right of the feathering raised by the first V-cut.

(9) Completion of the second V-cut's swing-push. You should not attempt to steer the long point or hook or lever the shaving away because the long point will do everything automatically.

(10) About to start the third V-cut from the opposite side of the V-groove. The tool shaft is again 90° to the lathe axis but is now axially rotated about 12.5° counterclockwise.

(11) Completion of the third V-cut's swing-push. Additional V-cuts are then performed until the V-groove's depth is a touch less than the designed height of the bead.

The sequence of cuts for a canted V-groove is shown in *Figure 3* and consists of two different types of V-cuts: a deepening cut and a clearing cut (*Photos 13-17*).

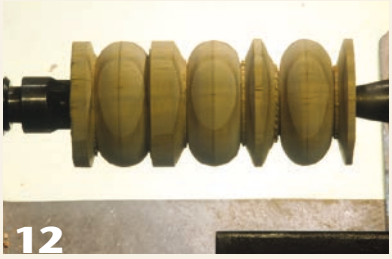
Takeaways

Next time you are turning beads on a spindle, remember these tips:

- A preliminary space-creating and bead-size defining cut is helpful, and for this task, a skew-cut V-groove is better than a rectangular parting-tool trench.
- A skew's long-point angle of around 70° is better than 90°, and 90° is better than more than 90°. A long-point angle of less than 70° is more aggressive, but the long point is then more fragile.
- A small sharpening angle on the skew (I recommend 25°) enables tighter V-grooves and faster V-groove cutting. It will also make cutting with the rest of the skew's cutting edge easier, permit a longer tool overhang, and leave a better off-the-tool surface. ■

Mike Darlow lives in the Southern Highlands of New South Wales, Australia. On woodturning, he has written seven books and more than 150 magazine articles, and has produced three DVDs. His website is mikedarlow.com.

Bead design



Three beads cut with a skew's short point. Symmetrical V-cuts were used before rolling the left-hand bead. Canted V-cuts were used before cutting the central and right-hand beads.

Canted V-groove cut sequence

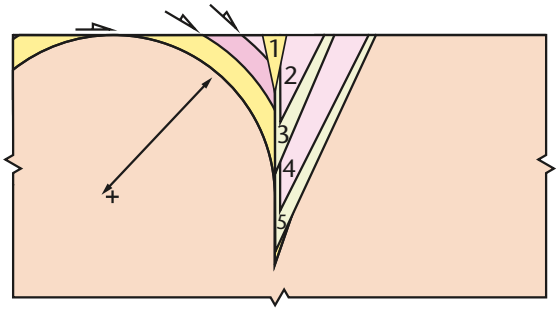
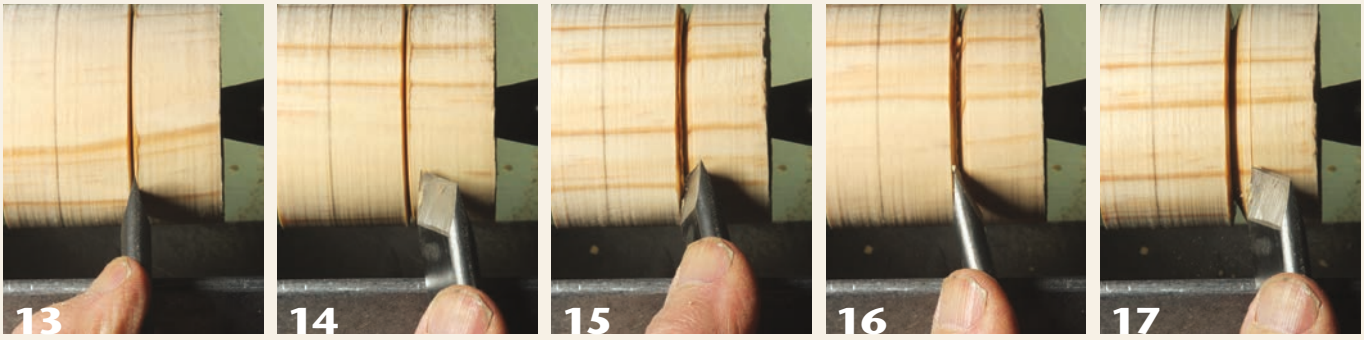


Figure 3. The cut sequence for a canted V-groove. The symmetrical V-cut 1 is optional, and instead one could start with a deepening cut followed by a clearing cut. V-cuts 2 and 4 are clearing cuts, V-cuts 3 and 5 are deepening cuts. If the half bead springs with a tall vertical face, you should offset the vertical face of the V-groove by about 1/16" (1mm) to allow for the final rolling cut to cut the whole surface of the half bead.

Canted V-groove, step by step



(13) The first V-cut in a canted sequence. This cut is performed just like the first V-cut for a symmetrical series—with a swing-push motion made with the skew's long point. No wood is removed.

(14) About to start the first clearing cut. The cut starts a little outside the feathering raised by the first V-cut. The tool shaft is fanned slightly to the right, and the skew's blade has been axially rotated about 15° clockwise.

(15) Completing the first clearing cut.

(16) Starting the first deepening cut. The skew's left-hand bevel lies in the plane of the vertical annular face of the V-groove. The cut starts with the skew's long point on the narrow fillet left by the preceding clearing cut, and the swing-push motion deepens the vertical, annular face of the V-groove.

(17) About to start the second clearing cut. Alternating deepening and clearing cuts is continued until a touch less than the designed bead depth is reached. As noted for *Figure 3*, if you want to roll the whole finished surface of a high half bead in one cut, offset the canted V-cut by 1mm.

Turning Captured Rings

John Lucas

Soon after I started turning, I came across a photo in an old textbook of a captured, or captive, ring on a spindle. The ring was unattached to the spindle and could be slid up and down its length but not removed, as it was "captured" by the larger diameters at each end. I couldn't wait to try it, though I had no idea what tools to use. I scraped the bead with a skew and, believe it or not, used an old butcher knife to release the ring. (Don't try that at home!) It was not pretty; the inside of the ring was awkwardly shaped, but it was complete and captured.

Since then, I have turned a lot of captured rings. They are fun, not too difficult to make, and can be used creatively on spindle projects.

Practice on scrap

Although turning captured rings is a pretty straightforward process, I recommend practicing on scrap wood before you attempt it on a project you hope to keep. Your first rings might be misshapen and require a lot of sanding.

To practice, mount a length of scrap between centers, turn it round, and form a bead on one end. Then undercut the bead from both sides until it is released from the spindle. Several tools could be used for these processes, such as a skew (*Photo 1*), spindle gouge, beading tool, and/or a specialized captured-ring tool. The latter two make it easier to get good results. Once the ring is cut free, pull it off the spindle to examine it. Keep practicing until you are satisfied with the shape of your rings (*Photo 2*).

Begin with beads

To illustrate this article, I turned a Celtic wedding goblet with two captured rings. To hollow the goblet, you'll have to mount a spindle in a chuck, so you'll have full access to one end. Turn the cup of the goblet first, leaving the stem thick to reduce vibration while hollowing (*Photo 3*).

Now it's time to turn the captured rings. The first step is to determine their size relative to the goblet cup and foot. The inside diameter of the rings should be smaller than the diameter of those elements, so the rings will remain captured on the stem.

After determining what the size of the rings will be, I reduced the goblet stem to a diameter equal to the rings' outside diameter. Then I used a beading tool to shape the outside of the ring (*Photo 4*). This tool makes it easy to form a truly round bead. If you want more than one ring, leave ample space between the beads, as this will provide clearance for the captured-ring tool, which I use in the next step to release the rings. After you have turned the outside of the rings (beads), use a parting tool to reduce the diameter of the stem between them (*Photo 5*).

Release the rings

A captive-ring tool—either commercially available or shopmade—is useful for releasing the rings from the stem. First, push the tool in so the gullet, or curve, surrounds the bead (*Photo 6*). The curve on the captive-ring tool should have the same radius as the curve on the beading tool. See *Shopmade Beading and Captured-Ring Tools* sidebar at the end of this article.

Next, move the tool handle in an arc from left to right to undercut the right side of the ring (*Photo 7*). As you proceed with the cut, keep the curve of the gullet against the bead, so it will act as a depth gauge. Then flip the captive-ring tool over and undercut the left side of the bead, but don't cut all the way through just yet. To determine how close I am to releasing the rings, I put a bright light on the opposite side of the cut and check it frequently. The light acts as a useful gauge that indicates how much wood is left, as it appears

Practice makes better!

A variety of tools can be used to first form a bead, then undercut the bead to form a ring and release it from the spindle. Here, the author uses the long point of a skew chisel, presented flat on the toolrest.

As you gain experience, you'll see which tools work better and how much skill they require to achieve nicely rounded rings.

Hollow the goblet cup

With a spindle mounted in a chuck, hollow the goblet cup before making the captured rings.

brighter as the wood becomes thinner (more translucent).

Sometimes at this stage, if you didn't quite follow the shape of the bead, the ring's sides may be parallel and flat, rather than curved. There are two tricks I use to improve the shape of the ring. The first is to use the inside corner of the cutting portion of the captive-ring tool to remove small amounts of wood and further shape the sides of the bead. This can be tricky, so take gentle, light passes. The second trick works well only if your tool has sharp, clean edges on the inside curve. Tilt the outside of the tool up and make light shear-scraping cuts with the inside of the curved portion of the tool.

When you are satisfied with the shape of the rings, you are ready for the important part—sanding. Sand as much of the rings as you can before releasing them. If you were not able to round the beads over sufficiently with the tool, use coarse sandpaper to continue the shaping and to clean up the outside of the rings. Proceed with sanding through the grits.

After sanding the rings, use a captured-ring tool to finish releasing the rings (*Photo 8*). ▸

Form beads

The author uses a purpose-made beading tool to form a bead.

If you want multiple captive rings, leave ample room between the beads. Use a parting tool to remove wood for tool clearance.

Undercut and release rings

The author uses a captured-ring tool, sized to match the beading tool, to undercut and release the ring from the spindle. Since the tool has a bevel on both the top and bottom surfaces, cut into one side then flip the tool over to undercut the other side.

Sand the rings

With the rings released from the stem, you can sand the inside of the rings. This is done by affixing sandpaper to the spindle and rubbing the rings on the spinning abrasive.

First, turn the stem down to a cylinder a little wider in diameter than its final width. I use medium cyanoacrylate (CA) glue to fasten the sandpaper to the stem, making a sort of flap sander. Apply a strip of glue to the back of the sandpaper. Then spray the stem with accelerator and stick the paper down (*Photo 9*).

With the lathe running slowly, sand the inside of a ring by rotating it around the sandpaper, twisting it as needed to refine its shape and to clean up the area last cut (*Photo 10*). Sand each ring, then pull the sandpaper off and attach the next grit. Sand through the grits before turning the stem to its final shape.

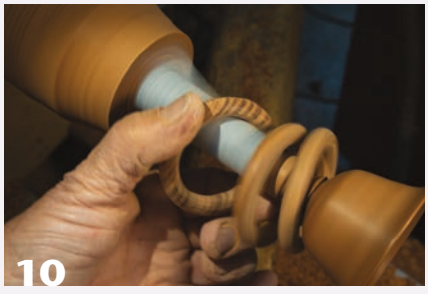
Final steps

Sometimes as you turn the stem, the loose rings will naturally go to one end or the other and stay out of your way. Sometimes they won't. If the rings bother you, use masking tape to temporarily hold them out of the way (*Photo 11*). Finish turning the stem and base, sand them, apply a finish, and part the goblet from the lathe. I prefer to use a wipe-on polyurethane, as the rings won't stick to the stem as the finish dries. Then I buff the finish to a high sheen. Note that you might have to run the buffs at a slower speed so the wheel can reach the inside of the rings. ■

John Lucas, a retired photographer, has been working in wood for more than thirty-five years and also dabbles in metalworking. He enjoys modifying machines, making tools, and sharing his knowledge through written articles and videos. He has taught classes at John C. Campbell Folk School, Arrowmont, and The Appalachian Center for Crafts.

Ornament, 2012, Goncalo alves, tagua nut, 6½" (17cm) tall

Sand inside the rings



Sandpaper is adhered to the still-thick spindle, making a temporary flap sander. With the lathe running slowly, move the rings over the abrasive for final shaping and polishing.

Love Doesn't Know Boundaries, 2004, Maple, walnut, 11" × 5" × 2" (28cm × 13cm × 5cm)

Turn the stem and base

With the rings completed, turn the goblet stem and base to your liking. If the rings get in your way, simply tape them to the goblet cup.

Executive Baby Rattle, 2018, Maple, Osage orange, 3" × 8½" × 3" (8cm × 22cm × 8cm)

Shopmade Beading and Captured-Ring Tools

Early on, I found it a challenge to cut the left and right sides of a ring to the same depth, which resulted in rings that weren't quite round. I had made several tools that "did the job" but required extra sanding.

Eventually, I decided to make tools based on the commercially available versions, and they work much better. Here is how you can make your own beading and captured-ring tools.

Step 1 – Drill

Drill a hole the size of the bead/ring you want near the end of a length of flat tool-metal stock. I used high-carbon steel I had purchased from a metal warehouse. Make two of them, one for the beading tool and one for the captured-ring tool.

Step 2 – Cut

Cut the ends of the stock across the holes. Cut one at 90 degrees for the beading tool (top in the photo) and one at 50 degrees for the captured-ring tool.

Step 3 – Refine

Grind a bevel on both the top and bottom surfaces, creating a negative-rake scraper effect. I honed the top surface of both tools. For the beading tool, angle the sides inward until you have two sharp points. For the captured-ring tool, refine the "hook" to a point. I enlarged the captured-ring tool hole just a hair so it would fit around the bead without rubbing. I also polished the inside of the hole with various stones.

Interlocking Rings

The piece shown in the opening image of this article is a wedding goblet, signifying the joining of two people. You may have noticed that the two captive rings are interlocked. How did I do this? The process involves breaking one ring apart and gluing it back together captured on the stem and another ring. With careful breakage and realignment, the glue joint will be nearly invisible. Note: The article photos show three captured rings, as I turned an extra as a spare, in case my first attempt at interlocking went awry.

Break a ring

Put one ring in a small vice and break it along the long grain, which should leave a clean break line.

Glue it together again

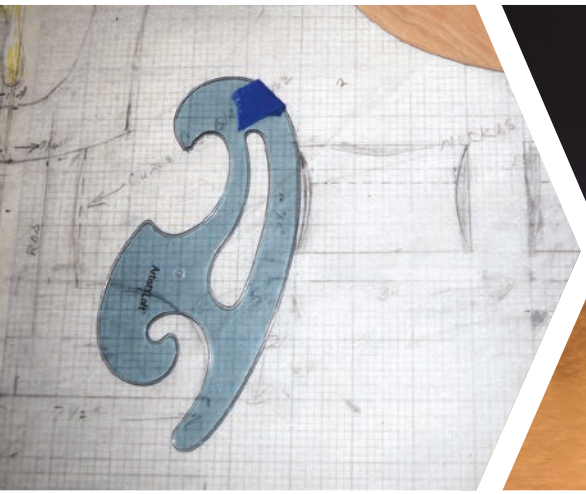
To glue the ring together again, I used yellow woodworking glue. Don't use CA glue, as it won't allow working time for fine adjustments. With yellow glue, you can push the parts together, wipe off excess glue, then squeeze the sides of the joint to get them to align perfectly. Hold them in place for a minute or so, then clamp with rubber bands until the glue dries. After the glue dries, hand-sand the joint lightly and apply more finish.

MORE ON CAPTURED RINGS

EXPLORE! **Find more articles and videos on captured rings in the AAW online archives. Use the Explore! search tool at woodturner.org.**

- **"A Ringed Rattle: Quick, Consistent Results from Dedicated Tools," by Fred Holder, *AW* December 1994 (vol 9, no 4, page 26)**
- **"Woodturning a Captive Ring Goblet," a video by Mike Peace**
- **"Captive Rings on a Goblet Box," by Rick Rich, *AW* October 2017 (vol 32, no 5, page 26)**

THE TOOLS AND PROCESSES *of Creative Work*



Dennis Belcher

Woodturners love their tools and understand that making something is more enjoyable with the right tool. We spend hours learning which is the correct piece of steel for a specific cut. We also learn quickly that the correct sequence of operations is an important part of any project. But there is a notable lack of information about the tools and processes for woodturners who want to evolve from traditional forms to the world of expressive art and sculpture. This article explores some of the practical methods you can use to incorporate creative ideas into your projects.

To illustrate these tools and processes, I'll take you through the steps in how I created a recent sculptural piece, *Summer*.

Capture your ideas

Ideas are fleeting and fade rapidly, so I like to capture them as they occur. Committing them to paper allows them to be retrieved later, when you have time to fully develop them. I use notebooks to record not only ideas, but also the sequence of operations for a new project (*Photo 1*). And updating the notes after the project is completed provides quick reminders of what I learned along the way.

I enhance the usefulness of my notebooks by making an index inside the front cover. I number each page and write the subject in the index, which makes it easy to return to a particular project or idea quickly.

According to Betty Scarpino, "Limitations (constrictions) can be helpful in coming up with unique solutions when designing a project." When exploring ideas, limitations impose boundaries that, in turn, require solutions that go beyond those that we often use. Limits can also help to reduce infinite possibilities into manageable choices. I record project limitations, as well as goals, early in the process.

Summer was the second installment of my *Seasons* series, based on seasonal imagery. My wife and I live on the coast of North Carolina, where summer is marked by the beach and the ocean. It followed that elements of the seashore should be reflected in the design. I decided to express ocean colors and patterns by dyeing curly maple. One helpful limitation was the width of my curly maple plank, about 10" (25cm).

Research for this project was an afternoon walking the beach. It was a time of opening all the senses. My camera recorded many observations: the waves, the sand, the patterns formed in the sand by the waves, and the objects washed onto the beach. I collected shells and rocks to use as possible models.

I was also inspired to include negative space, movement, and light in the project to attract and hold a viewer's attention.

Record ideas in notebooks

Capture inspirations and ideas on paper when they occur. Indexing the pages is a big help in returning to an idea later.

A table of sketches

Kraft paper

Jacques Vesery introduced me to table-sized sketching. Cover a table with paper, set out mental reminders of your research and notebooks, and begin. Brown kraft paper frequently used as packing material is superb for this step (*Photo 2*). The cost is low, the paper is thick enough to withstand a few erasures, and it can cover an entire table.

I first wrote out key phrases that described what was in my mind; then I created large, quick sketches that scaled up what I had drawn in my notebook. As the sketch evolved, I worked through technical details, focusing on how to resolve issues. One such technical problem was how to run an electrical wire to a light bulb at the top of the negative space.

It is important to sketch multiple shapes and forms on the tabletop paper to explore options. This helped me consider what the project's base would look like, as well as the scale of the piece and its various elements.

Vellum paper

Another type of paper that is good for making full-sized drawings is vellum (*Photo 3*). It will withstand multiple erasures and comes in a range of sizes. Vellum is also semitransparent, so you can place a second piece of vellum over your original drawing and trace the form's shape. The second copy can be altered as you work through alternatives without losing the original drawing.

Drawing aids

The right tools help with the drawing process (*Photo 4*). One of my favorites is a transparent, flexible ruler designed for quilters. It easily conforms to the curve of a bowl, and you can see where it is positioned on the wood because of its transparency. The initial 10" layout of the body of *Summer* was drawn with a large compass. This compass can draw a circle as large as 27" (69cm) and is invaluable in working with full-size drawings.

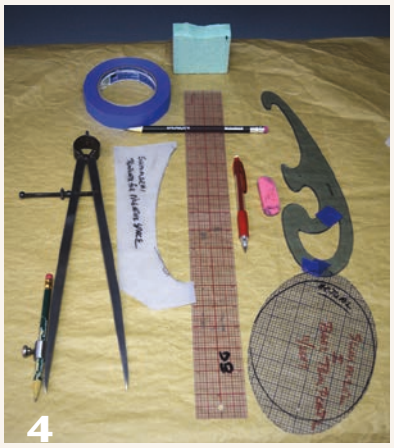
Tabletop drawings


2


3

Table-sized sketches help in evaluating choices. Then full-sized drawings can be made on vellum paper. The wide margins provide room for drawing all views of the project on one piece of paper, and are used for notes as construction and assembly problems are discovered.

Tools of creative work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Some of the tools of creative work: a large compass, masking tape, translucent poster board, XPS foam board, quilter's ruler, soft lead pencil, mechanical pencil, eraser, French curve, and gridded transparent plastic pages.

Drawing curves


5


6

(5) A pleasing arc is easily drawn with the natural sweep of your hand, with your elbow serving as a fixed point.

(6) A catenary is the curve formed by a loose hanging chain. An example can be found in St. Louis's Gateway Arch.

Flat work teaches us to draw and think in straight lines. The curved world of the lathe requires an entirely different library of tools, ways of working, and tips. One example in my *Summer* project was a line I drew with the sweep of my hand for the cutouts on the sides of the body. Your hand, wrist, and forearm, coupled with your brain, are marvelous tools for creating flowing curves (*Photo 5*). After I established an arc for one side of the form, I placed a piece of transparent plastic poster board over the drawing and traced the shape to the poster board. I then cut the poster board along the line to create a template for the second side. This process ensured that the curves would match.

The shape of the negative space in the center of my sculpture was based on a catenary curve, which is the shape formed by a loose chain held at each end. By varying the distance between the ends, different curves are created. You can capture your desired curve by looping a chain over the edge of a blackboard and following the resulting curve (*Photo 6*). From the blackboard, you can transfer the curve to transparent poster board and make a template from that.

Next, I focused on the neck and base of the sculpture. The full-scale drawings were invaluable in working out where ▸

the shaft for the shell, the motor, and the wiring needed to be placed (*Photo 7*). I established the curves for the front, back, and both sides using a French curve (*shown in the upper right in Photo 4*).

Finally, I turned my attention to the scale of the center shell that would rotate in the negative space (*Photo 8*).

It is a good practice to allow drawings to sit for a day or two and then return to focus on overall proportions, the different elements, and the harmony of the whole. When I made no new erasures for two days, I decided the components and scale decisions were settled.

Consider color

Next in my process was to think about the colors of each element in my sculpture. The world of color is complex. One way to make it more manageable is to have a box of 100 different colors of acrylic paints. The wide range of shades means that you can pull out a limited variety of colors and pick the shade that suits the element best. Start by selecting ten to twelve colors. Choosing from among a more limited color palette is easier than choosing one shade from 100—helpful limitations! Also, choosing between shades of a color is much easier than attempting to mix the colors from scratch.

I tested possible color selections by applying them directly onto my full-sized drawing (*Photo 9*).

Modeling

During a seminar, I heard Marilyn Campbell say that she could not draw. This was a stunning statement. It was hard for me to reconcile her statement with the marvelous, complex shapes in her work. It wasn't until I started exploring the world of sculpture that I understood: she was able to visualize in three dimensions, and the limitations of two-dimensional drawing made it impossible to express what her mind was creating.

Kristin LeVier teaches modeling as a way to break through the limitations of paper and pencil and flat work. Her modeling material of choice is foam insulation board, technically called rigid extruded polystyrene (XPS). Segments of this material can be joined easily with polyurethane glue to create larger pieces of any thickness and size.

XPS insulation board is easily worked with woodworking tools (*Photo 10*). It can be cut to size with a bandsaw. Wood files and sandpaper can be used to smooth the blocks and refine shapes. XPS board shapes more easily and faster than wood, and it is less costly.

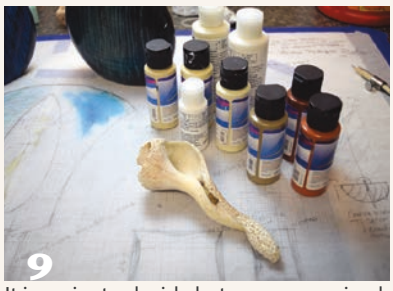
Photo 11 shows my drawing now transformed into a three-dimension model

Drawn to size

7 A full-sized drawing helps the author resolve questions about the shape of the sculpture's base and the placement of the motor and wires.

8 Focusing on the scale of the sculpture's center shell. From left: An actual shell from the beach, a foam mock-up, and two trial-carved shells in wood.

Testing colors



9 It is easier to decide between pre-mixed colors than to mix your own shades. The author samples colors directly on his drawings.

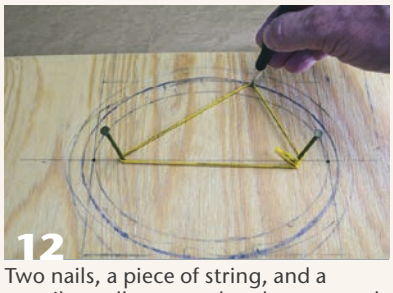
Modeling with XPS foam board

10

11

(10-11) XPS foam board is easily shaped with woodworking tools to create mock-ups of project elements.

Oval-drawing jig



12 Two nails, a piece of string, and a pencil are all you need to draw an oval.

in XPS. Modeling allowed me to see the sculpture's form as it would be viewed when completed. I was able to consider the curves, balance, harmony, and lift of the whole piece, and the process highlighted the shortcomings of the base.

The ease of modeling with XPS encourages you to create and consider multiple shapes. I tried several bases and decided to go with an oval shape. To create the oval outline for the base, I used a jig made of nails and string. I drove two nails into a scrap of plywood at a distance slightly less than the desired length of the oval. A loop of string placed over the nails serves as the boundary for a pencil, which can be moved around the inside of the loop to draw an oval (*Photo 12*). The size of the oval can be changed by varying the length of the string. I traced the oval onto the translucent poster board and used it as a template to cut the actual wood blank for the base.

Transfer pattern to wood

Two methods for transferring the pattern to the actual wood are transfer paper and the creation of a template. Transfer paper is similar to carbon paper, but it uses graphite rather than carbon as the transfer agent, which makes it a lot less messy. Transfer paper comes in large sheets, which facilitates large patterns.

To transfer your design to the wood, position the vellum drawing over the wood blank with the transfer paper between the drawing and the wood (*Photo 13*). Tracing the outline transfers the pattern to the wood.

For my project, I used the template method, rather than transfer paper. I placed a piece of translucent plastic poster board on top of the vellum, taped it in place, and traced the lines with a soft lead pencil. Then I cut out the template and used it to trace the pattern onto the wood blank (*Photo 14*). Since the plastic poster board is translucent, you can shift the pattern to maximize the beauty of the wood.

Carving the base and neck

Having the actual shell and ocean rock right at the carving station was invaluable when working on the base and neck (*Photos 15, 16*). Working from a picture is better than working from memory, but having the three-dimensional inspiration sample right next to the carving is even better.

Is it completed?

Once my sculpture was completed, you might think the creative process was over. It was not. The final step was to gather opinions from others with trained eyes. It is actually better if the opinions and critique come from artists who are accomplished in other fields. A painter would give a far better evaluation of your color choices than another woodturner. It is important that there be several people in your critique group. They might not agree in their observations and suggestions, but a variety of opinions helps break through a maker's natural bias of how well the piece has turned out.

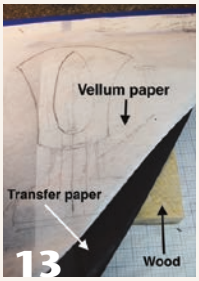
Mentors are also a part of the process of creative work. I have been fortunate to have Karen Gelbard, a nationally recognized fiber artist and also my sister, as my mentor. Mentors are an important part of being creative and can be invaluable when you reach a fork in the road.

Conclusion

For many years, I failed when I attempted to move a mental vision to a real object. It wasn't until I understood that there is a process to being creative and there are specific tools to make it easier, that I began to succeed in transforming mental images to tangible items. Certainly not all of my mental images end up being successes, but my path became far easier when I began to understand the processes and tools of creative work. ■

Dennis Belcher retired from a 30-plus-year career in the investment world to his lifelong passion of working with wood. A member of the Wilmington Area Woodturners Association (North Carolina), Dennis demonstrates for clubs and participates in juried art shows. Contact Dennis at Dennis.M.Belcher@gmail.com or visit his website, DennisBelcher.com.

Transfer drawings to wood



(13) One method of transferring a drawing to wood is to use transfer paper between the vellum drawing and the wood.

(14) Another method is to trace the form onto translucent poster board and cut out the shape to use as a drawing template.

Inspiration close at hand

(15-16) Having actual samples of inspiration such as ocean rock nearby makes carving and texturing easier.

FURTHER EXPLORATIONS IN DECORATING TURNED WORK

David Lutrick

In the February 2020 issue of *AW* (vol 35, no 1), John Lucas described his technique for adding interesting features to turned items using router bits. The same issue showed the routing jig used by Paul Petrie, Jr. Both rely upon linear motion of the bit along or across the surface of a workpiece. I have developed a parallel technique that relies on the bit cutting an arc through the wood. While either technique can achieve similar results on curved surfaces (*Photo 1*), the rotation technique can also enable the creation of symmetrical patterns, such as rosettes, similar to those achieved using ornamental-turning rose engines. These results were achieved after I experimented for several years, just as John Lucas described in his article.

Pie-crust rim

My experience of using a trim router for adding features to turned work started with a search for a way to reduce the time and effort required to produce the classical pie-crust rim on bowls and platters. After several attempts, I was able to use a cove bit in the trim router to cut starter grooves in a rim, uniformly spaced using the indexing wheel on the lathe. Key to the technique was a stable platform for the router. I put a small plywood table on a metal channel and connected that channel through a pivoting nut to the post that fits into the lathe banjo (*Photo 2*).

The angle of the table was adjusted by varying the height of the post and clamping the back end of the channel to a second banjo at a greater height. The depth of the groove on the rim was set by adjusting the router-base height. The low-profile insert mounted in the plywood table kept the router base aligned. A second low profile table insert was necessary, as the back of the router case was smaller than the base and the router axis had to be parallel with the table. With experience, the best angle and depth of the groove was determined. As anyone who has made a pie crust rim can attest, finishing and shaping the wood to an attractive final result was still an effort, but the starter grooves assured me of a uniform look. My most ambitious project was nested 20"- and 14"- (51cm- and 36cm-) diameter walnut bowls, the larger one with ninety-six grooves (*Photo 3*).

Gimbal jig for biscuit cutter

The second technique that contributed to developments did not involve the use of a router, but gave me ideas on how to support and guide the bit. Diana Friend introduced those of us in the Seattle AAW chapter to her technique for using "ties" to stabilize cracks and voids in bowls and other vessels. Some of the ties are hardwood copies of the compressed wood biscuits used for flat-wood joinery. Diana demonstrated cutting the slots for these ties with a biscuit joiner mounted on a gimbal jig supported by the lathe banjo.

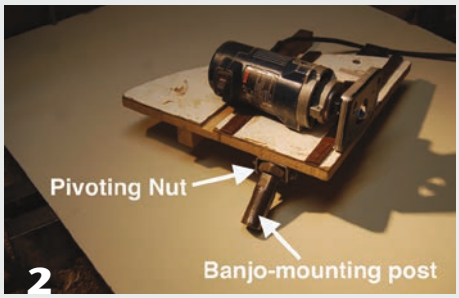
After seeing Diana's jig, I constructed a similar custom mounting of the Panavise® standard base. I made a base mount for the lathe by fitting an aluminum plate to the base and fixing a 1" (25mm) threaded rod to that plate with nuts (*Photo 4*). The rod is the correct diameter for the lathe banjo toolrest post. I then removed the jaws

Routed rim

1

A bowl decorated with router rotation.

Pie-crust rims



2

The author's jig for cutting pie-crust rims. The post mounts in the lathe banjo and allows for rotation via a pivoting nut.

3

Nested bowls with pie-crust rims. The larger one has ninety-six grooves, and the smaller one, forty-eight.

from a Panavise® self-centering extra-wide head and mounted that head on the bottom of the biscuit joiner (*Photo 5*). Fortunately, the joiner had screw holes in the base that lined up with the adjustable head brackets. *Photo 6* shows the jig in position to cut slots through a crack in a bowl wall, and *Photo 7* shows the cut slots.

Diana's technique using such a jig allows one to cut slots at almost any angle and position on a bowl's outer surface. The ties not only save many otherwise unusable bowls, they also add decorative interest, particularly when a set of multi-colored ties is used down the length of a crack, cut at various angles to the crack.

While cutting slots for the ties on numerous bowls and recalling the pie-crust rim technique, I was struck with the idea that a cutting tool mounted securely on a support at the proper distance from and orientation to the surface would give me a useful bowl-wall decorating tool.

Rotating-platform router

The first efforts to do this involved a fixed horizontal platform for the trim router, mounted in the banjo, plus a carriage for the router. As John Lucas described in his article, I also went through several iterations of the platform design, eventually creating my current one (*Photo 8*).

The table is a re-purposed piece of salvage aluminum, drilled and tapped for a commercially available toolrest post with ¾" × 13 tpi threads on one end. The ability to maintain a stable post while rotating the platform is critical. Fortunately, my lathe's toolrest post is held securely without play by the locking mechanism, while still allowing the post to rotate. Some post locking mechanisms do not maintain verticality until fully tightened. Others have a "flat" on the post that a tightening bolt contacts. Neither of these locking mechanisms allow rotation. In those cases, the controlled rotating cut is not possible unless the table were to have a bearing set into it. My current router carriage is also third or maybe fourth generation, as one can see from the numerous unused holes in the carriage plate (*Photo 9*).

When I first tried to use the carriage freehand on the platform, it was obvious the router bit could not be controlled well enough for precision decorating. I then tried to use a pipe-like depth gauge mounted on the router housing, with the bit inside the modified PVC pipe fitting (*Photo 10*). Paul Petrie, Jr., uses a rounded nosepiece to follow the bowl contour, and John Lucas uses a fixed fence for the same purpose. My depth gauge helped control the depth of cut, but still did not give enough precision to be acceptable, and the shape and depth of the groove were fixed, limiting design flexibility.

I now clamp the carriage plate to the platform (*Photo 11*). The movement of ▸

Gimbal jig


4
A gimbal jig mounted on an aluminum plate.

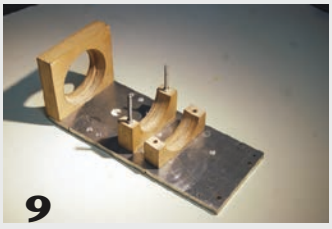

5
Panavise® head mounted on a biscuit joiner.


6

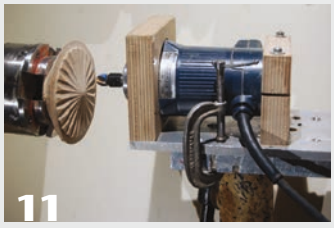
7
The biscuit joiner mounted on the gimbal, mounted in the lathe banjo, ready to cut slots across a crack in a bowl wall. Note: cutter blade extended for illustration purposes only.

Rotating-platform router


8
A support platform with banjo-mount post.


9
A trim router carriage.


10
Router mounted in carriage with PVC depth gauge collar.


11
Platform mounted in banjo with router carriage clamped to it. The router is aligned with rotation axis and ready to cut a rosette.

the bit is through an arc when the platform is rotated. I can move the carriage plate back and forth on the platform, changing the diameter of the arc that the router bit cuts. With the precise spacing provided by the index wheel's 48 stops, I can make designs with symmetry based on all the factors of 48: 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 12, 16, 24, and 48. Both cove and V-cutting bits work, each giving a unique visual effect.

Making rosettes

When the bit tip is placed exactly on the turning centerline and the platform post is aligned properly, rosettes can be precisely shaped on disks of wood. The blank disks are mounted in the chuck, with either a tenon or recess, depending on the planned use of the rosette. The surface is then shaped, scraped, and sanded, so it is uniform prior to routing. A table height spacer is used to set the bit at the exact centerline; thus, one does not have to rely on the post lock to set the height. Aligning the table-post pivot point requires one to first choose a position with the bit close to, but not touching the surface. Then one locks the banjo on the bed and rotates the platform through the arc, observing where the bit is likely to enter and leave the wood while cutting. The pivot point is then adjusted enough toward the disk surface for the bit to bite into the wood when the groove is cut. Minor adjustments can be made after the initial cut to change the leaf outline relative to the center point or to make the groove deeper.

Once a satisfactory cut is made, the piece is rotated using the chosen number of stops, moving the platform and router bit though the arc at each stop. As the table remains on the same level during any adjustments and the indexing, all the cuts will be in the plane passing through the lathe axis. As long as the piece is not moved in the chuck, the position of the cuts will be accurate and repeatable. For example, one could double the number of leaves in a design if the first complete blank rotation does not give satisfactory results. You can even change the bit size or bit shape for a second level of cuts. As one makes more and more of the rosettes, choosing the right post location and carriage position on the table becomes easier. Making practice pieces is always a good idea before starting on the final project.

Convex and concave surfaces can be routed, each giving a different visual effect. For a convex surface, a sharper peak will result in a single-point tip when finished (*Photo 12*). Concave surfaces need a "well" in the center for the bit to enter and exit the cuts. When the cuts are completed, that "well" will not be very noticeable (*Photo 13*).

The vertical profile of the blank cross section prior to routing will define the shape of the leaves. If the profile is smooth, without inflection points, the leaf outline will be a smooth curve. Inflection points on the profile will result in "corners" on the leaf outline. If the router bit leaves the surface at the end of cut before reaching the center of the design, a circular pattern will result. Using a small pointed tool, that circle can be emphasized before removing the blank from the chuck (*Photo 14*).

An attractive design depends upon the number of rosette leaves and their size relative to the size of the piece. A ½" (13mm) cove bit was used for the 24-leaf rosettes in *Photos 12 and 13*, which are 4" (10cm) and 4½" (11cm) in diameter, respectively. The 3½"- (9cm-) diameter design on the bottom of the bowl in *Photo 14* was cut with a ⅜" (9.5mm) cove bit, using a short arc diameter that created the forty-eight ¾"- (19mm-) long grooves.

After making several stand-alone rosettes, I determined that I could make the same pattern within a bowl or on a tray surface. I leave the area to be routed proud of the surrounding

Routed rosettes


12


13

A convex and concave rosette (*Photos 12 and 13*, respectively), both routed at the lathe.

Integrated design

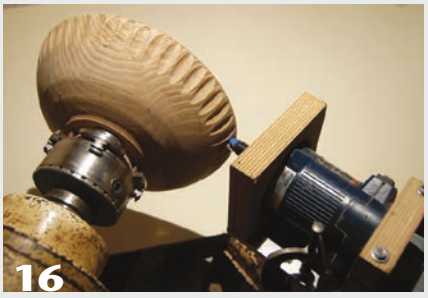

14

A routed pattern with an accentuating central groove.


15

Turned tray with integral convex rosette.

Bowl rim ideas


16
With the router mounted perpendicular to the turning axis, many possibilities exist for rim treatments.


17
Two passes using different router bits.


18
Two passes from opposite directions.

surface and complete the remainder of the piece. I shape that area as described above, usually for a convex feature, as shown in *Photo 15*. The width of the carriage plate should be as narrow as practical for the router, and the bit as far forward as possible; otherwise, when making an integral rosette in the bottom of a bowl, the cutting arc could be limited if the corners of the carriage plate hit the inner wall.

Surface decorations

Decorations on the outer surface of a turned piece are easily made by aligning the carriage perpendicular to the axis of the lathe. By cutting in a horizontal arc, grooves will be created that will be vertical when the piece is set on its base (*Photo 16*). Depending on the surface curvature in relation to the arc's diameter, a good deal of design flexibility can be achieved, such as patterns routed near bowl rims by indexing around the bowl twice with different arc center points (*Photos 17, 18*). In these illustrations using forty-eight index stops, the bowls had to be rotated in the chuck jaws by one-half index stop before the second pass was made.

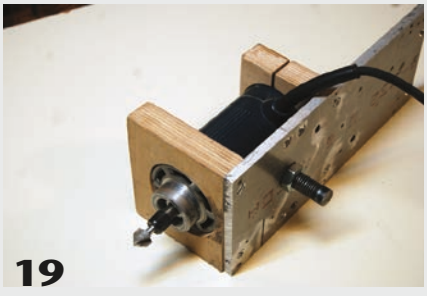
One can cut an arc and return to the starting position before moving to the next index stop, or one can cut one way, index to the next stop, and then make a cut to return to the starting position. Each method cuts the fibers differently with respect to bit rotation, somewhat affecting the finished look of the groove. Note that if the cutting arc is stopped before the bit leaves the surface, a closed shape is created, as shown in *Photo 18*. Unfortunately, stopping the cut (interrupting the platform rotation) sometimes results in burning the wood fibers. I have hidden this problem by painting the cut with a dark color, then re-turning the surface to remove paint traces around the edges of the grooves.

Putting different pieces together

Coming full circle on these techniques has led me to use the rotation technique with the trim router carriage mounted on the gimbal jig (*Photo 19*). Rotation is around the ⅝" (16mm) post threaded into the carriage plate and held by the gimbal ball. Pie-crust rim grooves can be cut with this setup (*Photo 20*). This arrangement can also be used to rout designs in the top surfaces of hollow forms and tray rims when a groove at an oblique angle is desired. ■

David Lutrick is a member of the AAW and a life member of the Seattle Chapter. He has been turning for forty-five years and is a turning instructor at Pratt Fine Arts Center (Seattle). For more, visit davidlutrick.com.

Router on gimbal jig


19


20

A router carriage with gimbal post allows for router rotation and an "arc" cutting pattern.

ORGANIZING, DIGITIZING, AND ARCHIVING YOUR WORK

Sam Sfirri and Mark Sfirri

You're a wood artist, and over the years you have amassed a large collection of photos of your work and pertinent information about the pieces you've made. Organizing this material and keeping it safe is important to your legacy as a maker. Imagine that one day you will be out of the picture—who will know where to find your work and the information about it? And even if you're not thinking of the life of your work after you're gone, better organization of your records can make your life easier now. Having quick, easy access to images of your work, as well as details about each piece, makes sharing information painless and can even inform new work.

This article is divided into two parts. Part I offers the perspective of an archivist, and Part II, that of a wood artist.

Part I: Understanding Archives

Sam Sfirri

What is an archive?

The term *archive* has become quite popular in recent years. You've probably seen the word on the Internet, sometimes used as a verb to describe an action, such as archiving your emails. This usage suggests that it means *to back up or to file away*. Sometimes it's used as a noun to signify, for example, past publications on a journal website, suggesting that it means *a collection of documents*. Sometimes it even refers to a place, like the National Archives, meaning *a place where documents are stored*. But what does the word *archive* actually mean?

The answer is, all of the above! As confusing as it may be, the word *archive* is used to refer to an action, a collection of records, and a place where collections of records are stored. What all these definitions have in common is a vague reference to the idea of safely storing records for posterity. But how exactly do you know with certainty that your records are *safely* archived once and for all?

The answer is, you don't. Not to be pessimistic, but in the archival field, we use the phrase *long-term preservation* to recognize that nothing is permanent; and something is only preserved long-term if proper measures are taken regularly, over time. Giving your records the best chance of survival means taking care of those records like the living, breathing objects they are. And no, I'm not just talking things like paper, sketchbooks, and photographic prints, but also computer files, as well as the information about the materials in the collection.

The goal of this article is to provide helpful tips for the long-term preservation of your archive. First, it is essential that you link the contents of your archive to the description of those contents. Without this explanatory element, it will become impossible for anyone (even you, if enough time passes) to know what the materials are, the context of their creation, and why they are important.

Key terms

I'll use the term *archive* to describe the entirety of the materials you want to preserve. A *record* is simply any archival item—anything that provides evidence of an event. For example, a letter provides evidence that correspondents have communicated with one another on a particular date.

The term *analog physical format* is just a fancy phrase referring to things like paper documents, photographic prints, and artwork. A *born-digital format*, which is always a computer file, refers to information that was created in a computer environment, such as an image file generated from a digital camera. However, *born-digital* is not to be confused with the concept of digitizing or scanning, which also deals with computer files. For example, if you take a photographic print and scan it using a photocopier or other scanning device, you may create an image file that you can view on your computer, but it is not born-digital because the photograph originated in an analog physical format. You would instead call this *digitized*, meaning the information contained on the original photographic print has been converted to a digital copy.

A good example of a collection that has both analog physical formats and born-digital objects will be outlined in Part II of this article. My father, Mark Sfirri, describes the results of his method of project creation as having three components: creating artwork, taking digital photographs of the artwork, and writing project notes. The collection comprises projects, and each project includes the artwork itself (analog physical format), digital photographs (born-digital objects), and project notes (metadata). *Metadata* is simply the description of

the archival record, which contains keywords to help identify the record and its context, making it accessible to anyone looking for it. Importantly, although my father may sell his artwork, the value of his projects is not limited to the piece of art itself. In fact, digital photographs and project notes can be just as important, if not more so. They afford him the ability to refer to past projects when embarking on new ones, to have accurate information about his work when he prepares for an exhibition, and to have a better sense of the value of his work in the marketplace over time.

Whatever form your archive takes, in terms of size, quantity, and diversity of formats, and however old or new the items are, the goal is to maintain control of the archive as a whole, where everything is documented and stored safely.

The 3-2-1 rule

Despite the reassuring feeling you might get from your digital photos and other files being stored *in the cloud* or *backed up on a hard drive*, the truth is that those files are completely dependent on the health of the storage device where they are backed up. And yes, *the cloud* is just another storage device somewhere in the world, accessible to your personal computer by way of the Internet.

Trevor Owens, in *The Theory and Craft of Digital Preservation* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2018), says that "technologies will not save you from needing to get your metaphorical digital boxes off the floor before the flood comes." Understand that entrusting your valuable digital records to a single platform of any kind is risky business. What happens if an online storage company goes out of business and its website gets shut down? Even if your material is still intact somewhere, how will you access it? Similarly, it is not recommended to back up your computer files to just one external hard drive. If that device becomes corrupt, the data on it is more than likely corrupt, as well, with no recourse.

Assume nobody cares about your archive more than you do. Even if this isn't true, or won't be true in the future, you can't rely on others to have the same level of enthusiasm for the long-term preservation of your archive.

For digital records, the recommended solution is to have at least three total copies of your collection of digital records. American photographer Peter Krogh came up with the handy "3-2-1 rule" while writing a book about digital asset management, stating that you should:

3: Create one primary backup and two copies of your data
2: Save your backups to two different types of media
1: Keep at least one backup file offsite

This rule reduces the impact of a single point of failure, such as a drive error or stolen device. The "two different types of media" could be one external hard drive and one cloud storage.

UNDERSTAND THAT ENTRUSTING YOUR VALUABLE DIGITAL RECORDS TO A SINGLE PLATFORM OF ANY KIND IS RISKY BUSINESS.

Environmental conditions

As a woodturner, you probably know that light, temperature, and humidity can cause dramatic effects on wood. Those conditions affect computer hardware, as well. Environmental considerations must be taken when considering where to store your external hard drives and your primary home computer.

Whatever materials you have in your archive, it is best to store them in a cool, dry, pest-free environment, with as little temperature and humidity fluctuation as possible. Use common sense when selecting a location for your archive; for example, keep your computer out of direct sunlight, and don't store materials anywhere near water or where a water source could affect the materials, such as under a pipe, or directly next to or on top of a heat source. It is best to have your archival material on a shelf or at least not sitting directly on the floor, especially if the floor is at or below ground level.

Papers should be housed in acid-free folders and boxes; photographic prints should be kept in mylar sleeves; VHS or other cassette tapes should be kept in appropriate archival boxes and stored vertically, to address the requirements of just a few common media. There is an enormous number of media types, so you will inevitably have to research the best storage solution for your archival records. A good place to start is Gaylord Archival (gaylord.com) or Hollinger Metal Edge (hollingermetaledge.com). ▸

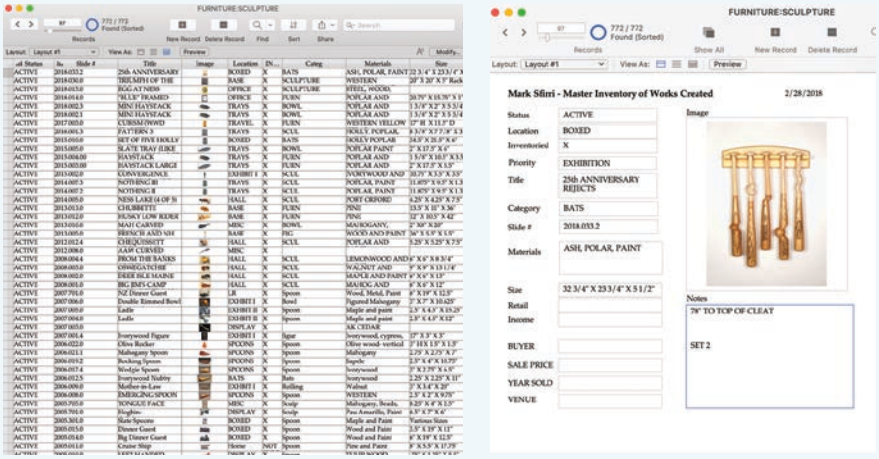
Back up computer files

Redundancy is a good thing when backing up your files. Don't rely on just one storage device. *Note: External hard drives should not be stored as shown here, as one can demagnetize another if they are stacked; they should be stored separately.*

Keep original media

Even if you have digitized photographic slides and other analog media, it's a good idea to hang on to the originals. You can always re-digitize if necessary.

Digital records



The author uses FileMaker Pro software to enter, organize, and store metadata for each project. Labels and field sizes can be adjusted to suit the needs at hand.

Part II: Chronicling Your Artwork

Mark Sfirri

Project notes

When I make a project in my studio, I keep track of and note the time I put into it, the materials I bought to make it, the size of it, and any special techniques used. I include details about the finish, especially if it is one I had never tried before. If I am painting the piece, I make note of the colors I used. I also assign the piece a number. If it is the first piece I made in 2022, for example, the number would be 2022.001, the second, 2022.002. If I make three objects of the same design, each of the three gets assigned its own number. I record all of this information in a document and keep it in a folder labeled Project Notes.

This notetaking process is by now completely ingrained in me. I have chronicled every piece I've made since the early 1970s. Why? Project notes have been useful to me for reference. If I am commissioned to design and make a table, I can quickly refer to all the tables I've made and, for instance, get an idea of how long the new table might take to make. If there is a new piece I want to finish with the same technique I used a decade ago, I can look up how I achieved that effect. I have used these notes often.

If you enter a piece in an exhibition or submit it for publication, the dimensions must be included. If you don't have the piece in your possession or if it is wrapped and stored and you don't want to unwrap it just to measure it again, you might have to estimate the dimensions. If you've kept notes, you can be exact, which is always preferable.

Photography

After completing a piece, I photograph it at high resolution so I'll have a visual record. I took photography classes years ago and enjoy the process of lighting, bracketing the images, figuring out a suitable f-stop and shutter speed, and composing shots. The AAW archives contain numerous articles about photographing turned work. I would only add that if you don't have a manual 35mm camera or don't understand some of its functions, it would be worth taking a course in photography or hiring or bartering with someone who is skilled and knowledgeable, so you end up with high-resolution, high-quality images of your work. A superior image of a mediocre piece is more valuable than a mediocre image of a superior piece.

As a last step, I send my images to someone I know who is skilled in Photoshop. This person corrects for any perspective distortion, trues up the image to make it vertical, and replaces whatever was behind the piece with a white background. Very occasionally, I will use a black background if I think it enhances the piece.

My folder for digital images is broken down by category—furniture, 2D work, baseball bats, painted sculpture, non-painted sculpture, figures, etc. Each object within that folder typically has two images, an overall shot and a detail shot. There are two versions of each image, one high resolution (4 to 10MB) and one low resolution (300 to 500KB). The latter is used for email, PowerPoint presentations, and websites. The high resolution is for publications, posters, and other printed material.

Keep in mind you can always reduce the size of a high-resolution image for use on websites, email, and social media, but you can't increase the size of a low-resolution image without compromising its clarity. This means that if a publication wants to use one of your images

and you have it only in low resolution, they will either not use it or reduce the printed dimensions in order to include it. This would be a missed opportunity.

Note that if you have slides, it is not safe to assume that digitizing them makes it okay to toss the originals. It is possible an original slide could outlive the digitized version of it. If the digitized version is lost and the original was discarded after digitization, you would be left with nothing. If, however, you retained the original slide, it could be re-digitized. In this scenario, it is good to understand how the digitized copy was lost and reevaluate your digital-records strategy.

Record-keeping software

Historically, I have used an Excel spreadsheet to keep information about my work, with the first entry being "Active" (meaning available) or "Inactive" (meaning the piece was sold, donated, traded, or destroyed). The next entry is the item number, followed by the title of the piece, dimensions, and category. Subsequent headings include the price, the purchaser, and the sales venue. Excel allows me to sort by Active or Inactive first and then by number in decreasing order, allowing me to see the most recent piece first, down to the oldest piece I have in my possession. The Inactive list follows the same chronology.

One issue that bothered me for a long time was not having a corresponding image tied to the spreadsheet. A colleague introduced me to FileMaker Pro and now I am a huge fan. I use it for my own artwork, my research, and my personal collection of other people's work. I needed a little help getting set up but have found it intuitive and easy to use. Excel spreadsheets can be imported directly into FileMaker Pro. Each entry has its own page in "Form View," which allows for the storage of much more legible detail than in a spreadsheet. For example, I can now list any exhibitions that the work appeared in and, if sold, who bought it and for how much. The entries can also be viewed in "Table View," which looks similar to an Excel spreadsheet but with a thumbnail photograph. When you need to edit the record if, for example, you sell a piece, you can change the entry from Active to Inactive and the application automatically saves it to the correct category in chronological order. One disadvantage of this software is that it is a bit pricey.

Because digital records are fragile, take the necessary steps to protect your files. For FileMaker Pro, I keep two sets of printed copies (one in my studio and one in my house). I update them yearly. I also save the file as a PDF every six months or so. To protect my FileMaker Pro files and digital images, I back up my computer monthly. I have also kept all of my external hard drives (and their corresponding cables), each labeled with their inclusive dates.

Lastly

A good record of my work is important to me while I'm alive, and it will leave a legacy of what I've done with my career after I'm gone. I suspect that my interest in organizing and chronicling my work might be unusual, but I recommend doing it. Artists need to be responsible for creating their own records. You are your own best advocate. Another person or organization isn't necessarily going to have the resources, time, or interest.

There are, of course, organizations that keep records. It's worth researching local organizations that you think ought to have information about your work. In my case, the James A. Michener Art Museum in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, set up a section on their website dedicated to artists in Bucks County, where I live, called Bucks County Artists Database (bucksco.michenerartmuseum.org/artists). In Philadelphia, the Senior Artists Initiative helps artists 55 and older learn how to organize and preserve their legacies, approach legal issues regarding their work with their estate, figure out what will become of their unsold work, and set up an oral history, which is preserved on the organization's website (seniorartists.org). I also served on the steering committee of the Furniture Society, which led to an oral history that has been archived by the American Craft Council. ■

What's inside?

When physical pieces are put into storage, the author affixes images of them, along with their object numbers, to the outside of the box or wrapping. This practice creates an efficient reminder of what's inside.

Sam Sfirri is an archivist at the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, at the University of Pennsylvania. He specializes in born-digital and audiovisual preservation. Sam is also a pianist and composer who has performed and has had his music performed across the U.S., Europe, and Japan. For more, visit madacyjazz.bandcamp.com.

Mark Sfirri is a woodturner, sculptor, furniture maker, researcher, and writer living in New Hope, Pennsylvania. His specialty is multiaxis turning, which he started exploring nearly fifty years ago. For more, visit marksfirri.com.

The Art of Wood 2022
An Online Exhibition of New Zealand Wood Art

In its second-annual exhibition/competition, the National Association of Woodworkers (NAW) showcased quality examples of New Zealand woodcraft. The NAW is a nonprofit incorporated society run by volunteers, whose sole purpose is to promote, foster, and encourage woodworking and the art of wood. This year's exhibition/competition was extremely successful, with 237 pieces submitted by woodcrafters throughout New Zealand, all vying for a piece of the $8,500 prize pot.

This year, organizers expanded the exhibition to nine categories: Bowls, Boxes, Domestic Ware, Hollow Forms/Vases, Natural, Ornamental, Plates/Platters, Furniture, and Wall Art. Like last year, Carbatec NZ was our main sponsor, supporting three categories. Other sponsors included Timberly Woodturning, The New Zealand Centre for Fine Woodworking, Valley Print, Record Power, South Auckland Woodturners Guild, North Shore Woodturners Guild, Joiners Magazine, and the National Association of Woodworkers.

Exhibition judges

Submitted artwork was judged online by internationally renowned woodworkers/turners: Phil Irons (U.K.), Emiliano Achaval and Kelly Dunn (Hawai'i); Matthew Deighton, Graeme Priddle, and Melissa Engler (mainland United States); and Rolly Munro, Troy Grimwood, and Lou Fuller (New Zealand).

Artist Robbie Graham won first place in a total of five categories, as well as the Supreme Award with a stunning ornamental piece called *Mamaku*. Following are the winning pieces from each category.

View online

All of the works in this exhibition are on view (and for sale) at exhibition.naw.org.nz. You can also visit NAW's Facebook page, facebook.com/NationalAssociationofWoodworkersNZ, and follow them on Instagram, @artofwoodnz. ■

—Trefor Roberts, President, National Association of Woodworkers, New Zealand

BOWLS

1st Place

Robbie Graham, *Enigma Too*, 2022, Jarrah burl, pyrography, Haarlem oil, 1½" × 9" × 2" (38mm × 23cm × 5cm)

2nd Place

Ray Scott, *Purpleheart Bowl*, 2021, Purpleheart, hard maple, 4" × 10" (10cm × 25cm)

3rd Place

Terry Scott, *Chasing Your Tail*, 2022, Brown mallee burl, gilders paste, Danish oil, lacquer, 4¼" × 14" × 12½" (11cm × 36cm × 32cm)

BOXES

1st Place

Robbie Graham, *Voyager 5*, 2022, Black maire, rimu, pyrography, Haarlem oil, 11½" × 10½" × 3" (29cm × 27cm × 8cm)

2nd Place

John McKenzie, *Basket Tea*, 2021, Sycamore, bamboo, deer antler, pyrography, lacquer, 3½" × 6¼" (9cm × 16cm)

3rd Place

Dick Veitch, *Pop-Up Lid*, 2021, Yunnan poplar, Danish oil, 3½" × 3" (9cm × 8cm)

DOMESTIC WARE

1st Place

Ray Scott, *Chess Set*, 2022, Wenge, black walnut, hard maple, 15" × 15" (38cm × 38cm)

2nd Place

Colin McKenzie, *One Up and One Down*, 2022, Red beech burl, 2½" × 14½" × 7¼" (6cm × 37cm × 18cm)

3rd Place

Dick Veitch, *Hoop Lamp*, Radiata pine, lacquer, 14¼" × 18" (36cm × 46cm)

HOLLOW FORMS/VASES

1st Place

Robbie Graham, *Kohuhu 7*, 2022, Black maire, pyrography, metallic paint, varnish, 4" × 9" × 5½" (10cm × 23cm × 14cm)

2nd Place

Richard Jackson, *A Stand of Tubes*, 2022, Casuarina, acrylic paint, tallest: 9" × 1½" (23cm × 38mm)

3rd Place

Graeme McIntyre, *Pear Vase*, 2022, Pear, pyrography, airbrushed metallic paint, lacquer, 7½" × 5¼" (19cm × 13cm)

NATURAL

1st Place

Holm Miehlbradt, *Rolly Bowl*, 2022, Oregon maple burl, dye, wipe-on poly, 3½" × 5" (9cm × 13cm)

2nd Place

Terry Scott, *Leaves on a Rope 6*, 2022, Red mallee burl, Danish oil, 4" × 16" × 13" (10cm × 41cm × 33cm)

3rd Place

Terry Scott, *Twins with Leaves*, 2022, Brown mallee burl, gilders paste, lacquer, 2" × 9½" × 7½" (5cm × 24cm × 19cm)

ORNAMENTAL

1st Place (and Supreme Exhibit Award)

Robbie Graham,
Mamaku, 2022, Pohutukawa, stainless steel, pyrography, Haarlem oil, 21" × 6" × 5" (53cm × 15cm × 13cm)

2nd Place

David Gillard,
The Beginning, 2022, Aspen poplar, metallic paint, 3¾" × 8¾" (10cm × 22cm)

3rd Place

Robbie Graham, *Nexus 7*, 2022, Black maire, pyrography, iridescent acrylic paint, lacquer, 7" × 8½" (18cm × 22cm)

PLATES/PLATTERS

1st Place

Robbie Graham, *Pacific Rim 2*, 2022, Jarrah burl, pyrography, Haarlem oil, 14½" (37cm) diameter

3rd Place

Terry Scott, *Totara with Kaikaka and Copper*, 2021, Totara, copper powder, Danish oil, lacquer, 13½" (34cm) diameter

2nd Place

Chris Hooton, *Kohekohe Plate*, 2021, Kohekohe burl, lacquer, 8½" (22cm) diameter

FURNITURE

1st Place

David Laird, *Captain's Chair*, 2022, Black walnut, white oak, wych elm, white ash, oil, 21¼" × 31½" × 31½" (54cm × 80cm × 80cm)

2nd Place

David Laird, *Spade Handle Tables*, 2022, Walnut, elm, oil, front table: 21½" × 24½" × 16" (55cm × 62cm × 41cm)

3rd Place

Julie Gannaway, *Stacked*, Chestnut, elm, oak, India ink, oil, 14¼" × 16½" (36cm × 42cm)

WALL ART

1st Place

Ray Scott, *Lone Albatross Cruising the Ever-Restless Southern Ocean*, 2021, Swamp kauri, varnish, 35½" × 63" (90cm × 160cm)

2nd Place

O'Dell Toi, *Tui in Flight*, 2022, Radiata pine, lumiere paint, gilders paste, 22" × 12" (56cm × 30cm)

3rd Place

Garry Jones, *Kea in Flight*, 2022, Totara, medium-density fiberboard (MDF), acrylic paint, 17" × 17" (43cm × 43cm)

AN UNEXPECTED FRIENDSHIP

Terry Martin

"That's what I love most of all. It's that feeling of holding a bowl and thinking of all the things you can put in there."
–Sister Sarah Rose

These days, a typical gathering of woodturners will mostly be older men who are often very similar in age and appearance. However, while the love of woodturning is a great leveler, behind the sameness there are often remarkable stories. At a demonstration in Boston, I once asked an older man in the front row to come to the lathe and verify what I was doing. I was impressed by his gentle courtesy and when he sat down again, I asked him what his profession had been. "Brain surgeon," he replied. Experiences like this have taught me not to make assumptions about the old guys I meet. Within groups united by their love of woodturning, I have encountered engineers, train drivers, accountants, nurses, farmers, and even a rocket scientist.

While I am talking mostly about older men—and at 75, I'm one of them after all—I particularly like meeting women turners because they challenge the stereotypes and I enjoy hearing their stories. However, I recently met a woman turner whose profession I didn't even have to ask about. At an exhibition held by the Woodturners Society of Queensland, I was buying something and looked up to see my purchase was being wrapped by a nun in full habit. I had barely registered that when she spoke to me in an American accent. I saw her member's badge with the name *Sister Sarah Rose* pinned to her habit and, before I could stop myself, I said, "Hello, are you a woodturner?" She smiled widely and said, "Yes I am!" That moment was the beginning of a most unusual woodturning friendship.

Background

We exchanged a few words, but she was busy, so I asked if we could meet again because I thought her story might be interesting. She blushed bright pink with embarrassment and said that "might be okay." A few days later, I was invited to visit her convent in Brisbane, and the week after that I found myself having ▸

lunch with five nuns at the convent of the Sisters of the Morning Star. Their order is relatively new and the convent where we were eating a delicious meal was established in 2019, the first in Australia. I learned that among the more usual daily routines of prayer and charitable work, the sisters choose to do manual work that "respects both people and nature." A sister can choose from different kinds of work, including sewing, candle making, leatherwork, calligraphy, pottery, and of course woodwork. One of the nuns, Sister Samuel, is a woodcarver and I saw her work in the convent chapel.

After lunch, Sister Sarah and I sat together, and she told me her story. She was born in 1977 in Morton, Illinois, "right in the heartland of the good ol' USA and surrounded by an abundance of corn fields." She grew up in a large Catholic family but says she was "not very religious." As is so often the case, she learned "hammering and nailing" from her father. "After work, he used to relax by puttering around in the garage. All of my brothers and sisters know how to fix things, and one of my brothers became a carpenter."

Sister Sarah excelled at school and went on to study liberal arts and sciences at college. She told me, "I'm pretty comfortable with everything from philosophy to calculus." At college, Sister Sarah made many friends who were more religious than she was, and she began to feel more drawn to the idea of a religious life. After college, she did what many graduates do and took a rite-of-passage backpacking tour of Europe. Because of her growing interest in religion, there was a religious element to Sister Sarah's trip, and she visited sites of significance in England, France, Spain, Italy, and more. When Sister Sarah returned home, she decided to enter a convent in Laredo, Texas. "It was tough on my family," she said. "They were supportive, but very sad."

After learning the ropes in Texas, Sister Sarah went to France where she began the process of stripping away the things from her former life. I was surprised to hear her say, "To be honest, it was easy for me. I was put in charge of maintenance at the large convent and the buildings needed furnishing because there were a hundred of us. We needed beds, shelves, and so on, so I started building them. I loved the feel and smell of the wood. It's usually easy to work with, and then you put a little varnish on it and it's beautiful." We can all recognize these sentiments, and she explained how this fit with her religious life: "My community was built around young, like-minded people who were disillusioned with many things. They believed that without developing all the aspects of what it is to be a human, it is not possible to reach your full potential. We have to work because that contributes to who we are and how we see others, so the community was developing the idea of incorporating craft work into their religious lives." This was tailor-made for someone from a can-do family. In 2008, Sister Sarah was sent to work in India. "While I was there," she said, "I saw how the poor people worked so well with basic tools, so I started to make crosses and other simple wood projects. It passed the time peacefully and I could be alone and concentrate on that."

Enter woodturning

The turners among us will recognize that Sister Sarah was ripe for a takeover by woodturning. Next, she told me about her first exposure to it: "I was living in a French convent lost in the mountains, where I was in charge of house maintenance, accounting, and cooking. While I was there, I saw my first lathe. There was a sister who was learning woodturning and I wanted to try, but I just had to watch. It was amazing to me that something so simple could be so beautiful, and how easily it could be achieved. She told me about Gilbert Bouffard, who has a woodturning school, so in 2015, I did a week-long course in spindle turning with him. I remember him saying, 'Turn! Raise! Don't jab it!'"

Sister Sarah told me that after she returned to the U.S. in 2016, she was still fascinated with turning. "I looked at turning in magazines and then really dove in! In 2016, my community paid for me to go to the John C. Campbell Folk School in North Carolina, where I made my first bowls. "That's what I love most of all. It's that feeling of holding a bowl and thinking of all the things you can put in there." I was amazed at how much Sister Sarah was moved around. It seems that in a growing and widespread community, she was a traveling troubleshooter.

From 2016 to 2019, Sister Sarah was not able to do any turning, but in September 2019, she was sent to Brisbane, where the new convent was being established. "Even before I arrived," she explains, "I discovered the website of the Woodturners Society of Queensland (wsqld.org.au). One of the other sisters and I decided to visit them, and we arrived in the middle of their general meeting. After the meeting, three of them sat down and told us about the club, so I signed up that day. They are a wonderful group of men and women. Now I have my own lathe and I am working hard to get better."

Mutual interests

All of this story was unfolding while we sat in a quiet room surrounded by the smell of furniture wax and fresh flowers. I could hear the other nuns going about their tasks, and while we sipped tea, I was thinking about how I would write this charming story of the much-traveled Sister Sarah. Then she said something I didn't expect: "I would love to find a mentor and work more—when God wants!" She smiled at me, all sweet innocence. "Is that a hint?" I asked. "It might be," she smiled. I don't teach turning and so I have never thought of myself as a good turning teacher, but I paused for a long moment and then said, "Well, let's wait and see."

The next week I was invited to travel to the mountains by my friend Bob,

Sister Samuel the carver on the left and Sister Sarah Rose the turner on the right.


Roughing the outside of a bowl: "Keep the handle down, Sister!"

She smiled broadly the whole time, and sometimes laughed out loud with the joy of what she was doing.

who has spent his life developing a forest that he sustainably harvests for selected clients. I thought that Sisters Sarah and Samuel might enjoy a trip like that, and they agreed. On a beautiful fall morning, we found ourselves winding up mountain roads into the sub-tropical rain forests. At a tiny country town, we turned off the main road, and I suddenly hit the brakes. When they asked why I had stopped, I pointed to the road sign at the corner. The two sisters laughed and got out for a photo beside the sign: "Sister Tree Creek Road!"

The rest of the day was a lot of fun, and Bob's generosity meant we left with a full load of wood. In the warm afterglow of their friendship, a few days later I decided to invite Sister Sarah to visit me in my workshop. When she arrived at my home, she was wearing her "work habit," which to me looked the same as her regular habit. She was very excited, so I decided to see what she could do by giving her some bowls to rough out. The wood was slightly wet, so very forgiving, and soon she was making the shavings fly. She smiled broadly the whole time, and sometimes laughed out loud with the joy of what she was doing. It was very infectious, and I felt myself smiling along with her.

Now Sister Sarah is a regular visitor to my home, and all my neighbors wave to the nun who unloads her tools from the convent's van. She brings her latest work for me to critique and then we divide the day between her helping me, and then her turning under my guidance. My workshop has never been so well-swept. I asked Sister Sarah to describe what turning feels like for her. "All the sensations are there," she said. "The smell, the color of the wood, the feel of the wood, and the tools that are touching the wood. Just being attentive to it brings joy."

My impression is that Sister Sarah is earnestly committed to becoming as good a turner as she can. She sometimes tries to go beyond what she has mastered and gets flustered when it doesn't go the way she wants—and haven't we all experienced that? But she is such a pleasure to be with that I think we will be doing this for some time to come.

As I thought through my observations on Sister Sarah, I decided it only fair to ask her how I rated as a reluctant teacher. She said, "When I work with you, I see someone who loves what they do and who has worked tirelessly over the years to reach the level where, as you say, you can do it without thinking, even though there is a lot of thought behind it. You are not shy about saying, 'I don't know; I need to reflect on that.' Someone who says that is learning just as much as the student is learning." She is right, I have learned a lot from my time with Sister Sarah, not least to revel once more in the simple joy of making shavings.

What an unlikely friendship—a feisty old atheist and a sweet-natured nun. Sister Sarah put it very well when she said something that will ring true for most of us: "I am amazed that even though we have such different views about many things, we can still meet at the lathe." Amen to that. ■

Terry Martin is a woodturner and writer working in Ipswich, Australia. Visit his website, terrymartinwoodartist.com, or contact him at tmartin111@bigpond.com.

"I am amazed that even though we have such different views about many things, we can still meet at the lathe.

Photo: John McDonnell

Barbara Dill

Variations *on a* Theme

D Wood

In December 2011, an article appeared in this journal entitled, "Multiaxis Spindle Turning: Further Exploration." It contained text, diagrams, and photographs in which Barbara Dill explained her explorations of multiaxis turning to help others get their heads around the principles of a seemingly daunting method of turning.

The article began: "Born into poverty in 1900, Louis Armstrong learned to play the cornet while in reform school. A few years later he was given his first cornet and mentored by King Oliver and others to play jazz by ear." Conjuring the image of Armstrong and his jazz genre, Barbara intended two things: one, to point out that the ability to create doesn't come naturally to everyone: instruction is necessary and productive most of the time; and two, to suggest that once you've mastered the basics, the improvisation, like in jazz, will come readily and result in satisfying renditions.

Ironically, while the music metaphor is familiar territory for Barbara, she doesn't like jazz. So, in telling *her* story, it seems important to use a compositional style for which she has affinity. Her preference is improvisational classical music, in particular *The Carnival of the Animals*, by the French composer Camille Saint-Saëns. Written in 1886, *The Carnival* was originally scored for eleven instruments, including piano, strings, flute, and clarinet, but Barbara played it as a young trumpeter. The adaptation of an orchestral suite to brass instruments is improvisation in itself, further enhanced by the interpretation of a performer. Perhaps this unconsciously prepared the youthful Barbara for her lathe experiments.

Regardless, for the past thirty-two years, Barbara Dill's "instrument" has been her lathe. And since she still enjoys picking up the trumpet on occasion, both instruments will feature here.

"Royal March of the Lion"

The Carnival of the Animals is a humorous suite of fourteen movements, each dedicated to the composer's musical characterization of an animal. Although Saint-Saëns is best known for this masterpiece, he refused its publication during his lifetime, lest it sully his reputation as a serious composer. It was printed in 1922, a year after he died.

The opening movement portrays the lion, commanding attention with deep strong notes. The lion, for Barbara, was her father. J. Madison Dill was born in Tennessee and attended college to study music as a trumpet player. Following graduation, he became a band director in Nashville and then, like many of his peers, joined the Navy as a result of the bombing of Pearl Harbor. He served on a minesweeper in the South Pacific and, rather than stay in the military when WWII ended, took advantage of the GI Bill and received qualification as an optometrist. Alongside his occupation, Madison continued with his passion for music. Barbara recalls: "He was the band director of the Post Five Legion Band in Nashville, where he went every Saturday night. He always brought us home Krispy Kreme donuts that we ate on Sunday before we went to church." She also remembers that, instead of bedtime stories, he put his daughters to sleep with music, including *The Carnival of the Animals*.

Barbara and her sister Charlotte played brass instruments from a young age. In addition, the family belonged to a fundamentalist congregation, Church of Christ, where acapella singing prevailed. Barbara's father was the song leader, and his daughters were brought up in the tradition of four-part harmony during religious services. Those vocalizations were probably heard at home during the week, too.

Early work

Barbara in 1992, prepping blanks outside her first workshop, a garage built in 1912.

Barbara's first craft-show setup. Early work, prior to her explorations in multiaxis turning, largely comprised bowls and hollow forms.

Editor's Note: Chainsawing photo shows historical context. Please use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) when operating a chainsaw.

Explorations

At far left is Barbara's first attempt at a multiaxis spindle, 1994. The others are examples of early attempts to understand this type of turning. "I made hundreds of those in the 90s, randomly changing the axes, but stopped out of the frustration of not knowing what to do next."

Spindles turned around 2006. "I turned lots of ideas and wanted to see what they had in common."

Both Dill girls got music scholarships at the end of high school, and Charlotte furthered her knowledge by studying music at college. Unfortunately (or fortunately), she conveyed a dislike for the experience to her sister. As a result, Barbara enrolled in mathematics and subsequently acquired a bachelor of science degree in nursing in 1968. She says that nursing was a likely trajectory: "I was the kid who had the Band-Aid® box and would always run when somebody needed one." Initially, she nursed in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, then joined the Air National Guard as a flight nurse. Stationed in Germany, she was on a medevac team and, later, a Department of Defense school nurse. From Germany, Barbara was sent to Ethiopia and, at the conclusion of her military service, traveled in India and Kashmir before returning to the U.S.

Barbara resumed public nursing again in Boston and received a ▸

(*Left*) Variations on a theme. In 2009, Barbara experimented using three twisted axes on squarish pieces of wood rather than long spindles.

(*Right*) Around 2012, Barbara observed a turner making goblets on many axes, using the tenon to throw the axis off center. This piece was the beginning of playing with a new method for not just goblets, but also bowl forms.

master of psychiatric nursing degree from Boston University in 1980. She was inspired by transactional analysis, developed by Eric Berne, which uses social relationships and interactions as a basis for analyzing human behavior. Barbara's master's thesis offered a systematic explanation of theories of communication, an attempt to simplify the weighty medical tomes that were part of her studies. She went on to coordinate psychiatric aspects in the emergency departments at Boston City Hospital and the Hospital of the Medical College of Virginia/Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU).

"The Elephant"

"The Elephant" is the fifth section of *The Carnival* and was obviously based on misinformation about this creature. Whereas Saint-Saëns portrays the elephant as a plodding, heavy beast, an elephant makes almost no noise as it ambles through its territory. For Barbara, the elephant was the growing grey mass of what she calls "compassion fatigue" that was the result of observing illness, injury, and death in the emergency room setting. Psychiatric patients could not be adequately dealt with in that environment, and the concurrent decline of the healthcare system provoked burnout. She thought it best, for her patients' sake as well as her own, to leave nursing after twenty-one years.

Prior to acting on that decision, a significant event occurred during her time at VCU. Barbara saw an issue of *Smithsonian Magazine* that contained an image of a carved bowl in the shape of a fish. She experienced a longing for the bowl but knew the only way she could have it was to make one herself. Barbara recounts the coincidence that influenced her future career: "The next day in the mail there was a flyer from Henrico Adult Education [one of the counties around Richmond, Virginia] and there was a carving class. Sid Morton was the teacher and I dragged myself out of the ER. He taught us how to sharpen the tools and for two weeks we couldn't even touch the wood—we sharpened tools. When we got to touch the wood, I was able to create the bowl that I thought was so lovely."

Play develops insights

Barbara arrived at the form in the image *at left* by changing the axes randomly. This play led to an understanding of the dynamics at work, and from that knowledge, she made *Harmony* (*at right*) in 2012.

That carving class in 1988 was assisted by her mother's chisel and mallet. While living in Hawaii during Madison's time in the Navy (1947-1949), Barbara's mother was inspired by local totem poles to make her own. The walnut pole subsequently disappeared, but the tools are still in the Dill toolbox. The hobby of woodcarving prompted Barbara to attend craft fairs to see what else was going on. Her first encounters with turned bowls and a lathe prompted the thought, "I'll betcha I could do that, too!"

"Kangaroos"

Barbara couldn't find anyone teaching woodturning in the Richmond area at that time. The Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts (Gatlinburg, Tennessee) offered a course in the summer of 1990 and Barbara signed up. "I didn't know what a headstock or tailstock was. I didn't know anything. It was a design class. I was the only woman. But I loved it, and everyone was so helpful to me." The teacher was Michael Hosaluk. Michael recalls: "I remember Barbara taking my class at Arrowmont. She showed an enormous love and interest for woodturning and brought so much fun and energy to the class."

This period in Barbara's life was one where she hopped back and forth—like Saint-Saëns's kangaroos—to Arrowmont, filling her pouch with woodturning knowledge from Ray Key (1991) and David Ellsworth (1992). To have early instruction from these masters provided a phenomenal grounding, which she practiced on a General International lathe sited on a hand-poured cement slab in her 1912 garage. Barbara made bowls and hollow forms and took a broader interest in the woodturning community. She attended the World Turning Conference in Wilmington, Delaware, in 1993 where she encountered people from around the world. She describes a highlight: "The Europeans did a lot of multiaxis turning, and I saw Mark Sfirri's and Michael Hosaluk's work. I thought, 'How do they do that?' I came home and created my very first spindle. The axes were separated because I thought they had to be separated by a lot of space in order to make such amazing objects. I learned a lot from that first spindle."

Barbara's fascination with multiaxis turning provoked the fabrication of countless spindles with randomly altered axes and varying depths of cut. But she wanted to *understand* multiaxis turning and since she didn't (yet), she dropped that part of her woodturning repertoire. Barbara continued turning, exhibiting her work in craft shows and teaching basic bowl turning at the Woodcraft store and the Visual Arts Center in Richmond. She enjoyed sharing her skills, and the remuneration helped support her addiction to woodturning tools and supplies.

Charlotte died suddenly and unexpectedly in 2003, and grief curtailed Barbara's woodturning for some time. Doug Finkel was teaching at VCU and invited Barbara to just hang out, join the classes, and give demonstrations to get her mojo back. Mark Sfirri was a guest instructor, and while Barbara took copious notes and made numerous drawings during his three-day multiaxis turning workshop, she still did not fully understand what was going on. When she returned to her workshop, she found that she was merely copying Mark's examples.

The upshot was her commitment to the same process she had used with her master's thesis on theories of communication: isolation, analysis, and simplification of the various types of multiaxis turning. "I just started turning a lot of random spindles to see if any of them looked similar and what they had

Alternating beads and coves on both twisted and parallel axes, 2013.

in common. Within a few months, I began to see commonalities regarding axis placement: whether the axes were parallel or not and the outcome, and the circular or arc type, depending on the depth of cut. I [organized the results] in quadrants, and it started to make a lot of sense." Barbara nervously put together a demo, including a board of samples, for her local woodturning club. It was seen by Tom Crabb, who said, "Wow, Barbara, you've just figured it out! I want you to demo at the Virginia Symposium. And you need to write about it." Finding the vocabulary and articulating the process resulted in two articles for *American Woodturner*: "Multi Axis Spindle Turning Part 1" (Fall 2007) and "Multi Axis Spindle Turning Part 2" (Winter 2007).

"The Swan"

"The Swan" is the penultimate movement of the suite. It is the most revered part of *The Carnival* and despite Saint-Saëns's prohibition ▸

A step further

(*Left*) *Wave*, 2017, Ash, 7½" × 4½" (19cm × 11cm)

Wave was made by turning two coves twisted at 90 degrees.

(*Right*) After spending time with Max Brosi in 2018, Barbara decided to carve out the insides of *Wave*, resulting in *Exoskeletons*.

Multiaxis bowl forms

Shadows, 2017, Holly, each: 2" × 5" (5cm × 13cm)

A multiaxis goblet in holly (in progress).

against publication, he allowed "The Swan" to be printed during his lifetime. The movement's beauty, grace, and serenity reflect Barbara's sense of satisfaction at having resolved for herself the mystery of multiaxis turning. The knowledge she gained also brought her real joy: "Now that I understood it, I would wake up in the morning and wonder, what would happen if I did this on three axes? Every day I would experiment with new ideas. What would happen if I changed the size of the wood? What would happen if I did this or that? My whole life became an experiment."

Barbara feels she should probably have been an engineer. As a child, her curiosity about how things worked initiated the dismantling of the toaster, radio, and a watch in the Dill home. The same applied to her psychiatric nursing: she was curious about how the human psyche worked. Her nature calls for the systematic understanding of an issue or process, which, when solved, is coupled with a willingness to share that understanding with others.

Now, in her studio surrounded by forest in rural Virginia, Barbara continues to experiment. She has applied color to her turnings only to a small degree because she prefers naturally light-toned woods. "My main focus has been on the form and the way light hits the wood as the axes change. I noticed over the years that whiter woods, like holly and maple, show shadows a lot better than cherry and walnut. So I started focusing mostly on holly. We're lucky down here to have huge holly trees. People bring

me holly to work with." Barbara turns green wood because its ease of cut aids tool control and results in a superior quality surface, as compared to kiln-dried wood. She aims for clean cuts and does as little sanding as possible.

Barbara's remuneration from woodturning comes from teaching and publications. In addition to the previously mentioned articles, *American Woodturner* also published her work in the February 2010, October 2013, and June 2021 issues. Her book, *Multi Axis Spindle Turning: A Systematic Exploration* (Schiffer Publishing) came out in 2018. She identifies as an experimental turner and is fortunate to have a partner whose financial and emotional support preclude the need to exhibit and sell work. It's not that Barbara's work is too mechanical or scientific to warrant purchase or collection. It's more about being comfortable with, and simply valuing, who you are and what you do.

Finale

As the trumpets, tuba, trombone, and French horn conclude *The Carnival of the Animals* in crisp, bright, spirited harmony, two turners and teachers offer closing thoughts. Michael Hosaluk: "We open doors for people and share our knowledge and as teachers are rewarded when someone you shared time with excels and further shares with others." And Barbara Dill: "I think my experience in psychiatric nursing and all the nursing jobs I've had made me who I am today and made me understand the world the way I see it. I'm also thankful that I have a peaceful place to work and don't have to deal with illness and death and tragedy every day. I feel so grateful that at the end of the day, I can say, 'Look what I made with my hands.' It makes me smile and it makes others smile. I never dreamt this would be my life."

Encore

Barbara noted *The Carnival* as an example of her preference for classical improvisation over jazz. But regardless of the genre, improvisation and its companion—variations on a theme—are central to Barbara's approach to the lathe. She noted that when teaching multi-axis turning, she sees "one simple spindle that [could be changed] by applying different variables and ideas to make it a more complex turning. This type of turning is improvisational as well! It's the fun of experimenting and exploring." ■

For more, visit barbaradill.com.

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. In 2012, she earned a PhD in Design Studies from University of Otago. D is the editor of Craft is Political *(Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2021).*

Spheres Interrupted (Series), 2018, Holly, 2½" × 5" × 2½" (6cm × 13cm × 6cm). Alternating spheres turned on two axes "twisted" 90 degrees.

Turned spheres placed upon multiaxis pedestals (2021), which have a slightly concave top, allowing the sphere to spin and roll around—a fun toy!

Members' Gallery

Jimmy Clewes, Nevada

I designed the lidded boxes shown here using techniques I learned years ago while earning my B.A. degree (with honors) from University of Manchester (U.K.), studying 3D design, wood, metal, ceramics, and glass.

Mokume-gane is the Japanese technique of making metal look like wood bark. Layers of metal are fused together and then formed through a roller mill. Although it is a time-consuming technique, many different patterns can be produced, depending on how the *mokume* blank is worked during the process.

The use of mixed media appeals to me, and the introduction of the polished opals, which are virtually transparent and reflect clearly defined incandescent to intense bright fiery colors, adds a visual aspect that changes depending on the light.

For more, visit jimmyclewes.com.

Mokume-gane

A *Mokume-gane* blank ready for the roller mill. Layers of metals are soldered together, drilled partway through to expose deeper layers, and then flattened in the mill.

Untitled, 2022, Ash (scorched), maple, wood dye, pewter, nickel, silver, and copper *mokume* band, 5½" × 3" (14cm × 8cm)

Untitled, 2022, Maple, cast and heat-colored pewter, wood dye, 4½" × 2½" (11cm × 6cm)

Untitled, 2022, Maple, wood dye, sterling silver and copper *mokume* band, cast pewter, polished opal, 5½" × 2½" (14cm × 6cm)

Untitled, 2022, Maple, wood dye, sterling silver and copper *mokume* band, cast sterling silver, polished opal, 3½" × 3" (9cm × 8cm)

James Wilson, Arizona

I inherited this captured-ring chalice, which was made in 1927 by my grandfather, Thomas Albert Wilson. Grandfather was the managing director of Western Manufacturing Company, located in Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada. The company imported lumber from various locations in order to manufacture millwork for hospitals and schools. My grandfather was a master carpenter, and one of the perks of his job was that he could pick pieces of wood that he could use in his woodworking hobby. He had his own workshop with a lathe, was a perfectionist, and enjoyed making items such as this chalice.

Thomas Albert Wilson, *Chalice*, 1927, Unknown wood, 4¼" × 2⅛" (11cm × 5cm)

Woodturner Steve Noe describes the Chalice *further: The stem is a mere 1⅞" (5cm) long and 7/16" (11mm) in diameter and is encircled by no less than fifteen captured rings in five sets of three. Turnings with captured rings are not uncommon, but each of these sets comprises three concentric rings having respective outer diameters of 1", 1½", and 2" (25mm, 38mm, and 5cm), all contained on this very short stem.*

Pedestal Bowl, 2021, Pecan, walnut, ebony, 26" × 21" × 14" (66cm × 53cm × 36cm)

Walnut Vases, 2020, Walnut, each approx. 20" × 6" (51cm × 15cm)

Dave Means, Missouri

I have always sought to express myself artistically in many different ways over the years. Now my woodturning hobby is the outlet for my artistic expression, and I try mainly to reveal, through good form, the beauty I find in wood. Bowls and boxes were my beginning efforts, but now I really enjoy making vases and hollow forms, or just putting a large log on my lathe and seeing what comes of it. Always wanting to do something new or try a new technique, I can't seem to leave a simple turning without adding some carving—mostly just spirals, but more recently other carving techniques, too.

Saint Basil's was inspired by the onion domes of Saint Basil's Cathedral in Moscow's Red Square. I wanted to use a variety of woods and try different spiral carvings. It began with a series of boxes, each in a different wood and a different style dome and base. When these were completed, I felt they needed a base and a central dome. I made no effort to make a close model of St. Basil's Cathedral but produced this very symmetrical version. The "windows" are photographs from Gothic cathedrals I have visited.

Saint Basil's, 2022, Various woods, 25" × 14" × 14" (64cm × 36cm × 36cm)

Nancy Bowman, Ohio

After several years of doing flat work, I received a wonderful gift for my birthday—a wood lathe, and that changed my creative direction. I began by turning bowls and pens. As a collector of bone china teapots, I studied the beautiful forms of teapots and vases and wondered if they could be made from wood. This sparked my interest, which developed into a passion for creating them on the lathe. Then, after several years of making teapots and vases, I rediscovered my love of kaleidoscopes, which started me on another wonderfully creative journey. My passion for creating kaleidoscopes grew exponentially, as I explored shapes, designs, and the multitude of mechanical systems that could be used.

Creating artistic pieces on the lathe has been extremely fulfilling. It is very rewarding for me to watch someone pick up one of my kaleidoscopes and witness their joy and amazement at the magic of what they see inside. Watching others marvel in disbelief as they discover that my teapots are made of wood is a part of what keeps me turning and exploring the possibilities of woodturning.

Collaboration with **Chris Ramsey,** *Kaleidoscope II*, 2022, Brown mallee burl, three-mirror system with dichroic glass and lampwork glass beads, repurposed lamp parts, 19" × 14" (48cm × 36cm)

Kaleidoscope II won the People's Choice Award at the 2022 Turn On Chicago symposium.

Teapot, 2015, Pear, Swarovski crystals, Teapot: 16" × 11" × 4" (41cm × 28cm × 10cm); each cup: 5" × 3½"× 2¾" (13cm × 9cm × 7cm)

Simplicity II, 2022, Pear, paint, 6" × 4" (15cm × 10cm)

Ron Giordano, Texas

Being retired and a member of the Dallas Area Woodturners, I normally turn bowls and vases to have fun and keep my mind active. I had never turned an urn until my daughter-in-law requested them for her two horses, Violet and Bailey. I sized the urns to hold a representative amount of remains and designed them to capture the character of each horse.

The black urn is for Violet, who was a black-and-white American paint horse mare. I designed a feminine shape for the urn and dyed it black to capture the black portion of her coat. The center band of aspen and African mahogany echoes her bridle and reins. The spherical metallic accents reflect the bling of the rider's equestrian shirt. The chestnut-colored urn is for Bailey, who was a palomino stallion. I used a masculine, high-shouldered shape for the urn and curly birch for the main body. The center ring and top are made from African mahogany and walnut.

The tops of both urns unscrew from the main body. I used a CAD program for the initial design and then printed scaled drawings for turning. My daughter-in-law appreciates the urns as a way to honor and remember both horses. ■

For more info, visit rongiordano.com, or follow Ron on Instagram, @ron_giordano_woodworking.

Equine Urn for Violet, 2022, Dyed maple, African mahogany, aspen, steel spheres, chromed aluminum, 5¾" × 4¾" (15cm × 12cm)

Equine Urn for Bailey, 2022, Curly birch, African mahogany, walnut, aluminum rod, chromed aluminum, 5¾" × 4¾" (15cm × 12cm)

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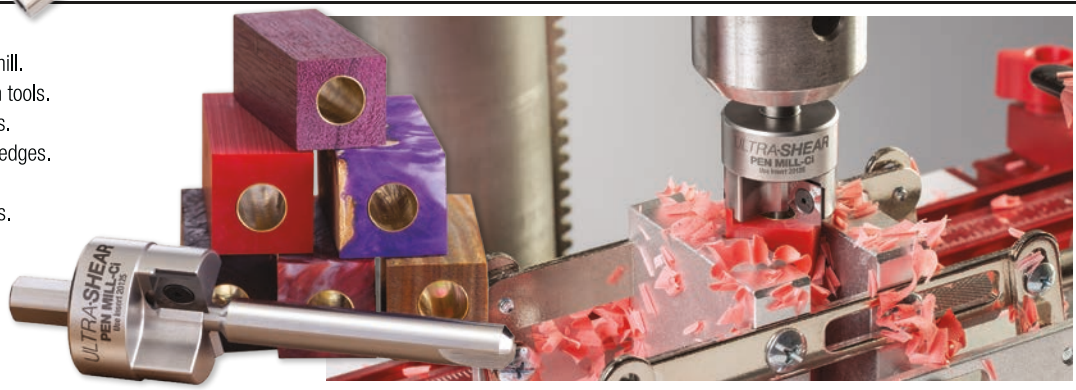

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Al G's Legacy (Curio Cabinet), 2022, Mahogany, figured maple, olive, African blackwood, 22" × 12" × 12" (56cm × 30cm × 30cm)

Al G's Legacy

Al G's Legacy is the product of a collaboration between four members of the Palm Beach County Woodturners (Florida). The idea came about when Bruce Williams and Brian Rosencrantz were demonstrating at the South Florida Fair. Brian had turned a Stephen Hogbin-style "split bowl," and the two decided to see what could be done with that idea. Bill Jones and Bill Helfferich were invited to collaborate, and over the next four months, the elements were turned and assembled. Bruce named the piece *Al G's Legacy* in honor of the founder of the Palm Beach County Woodturners, Al Gruntwagin. Al once told us that the most important thing to him was for the chapter to continue to grow and flourish after he passed. We have dedicated ourselves to that purpose and to preserving the art and craft of woodturning. *Al G's Legacy* is a symbol of that quest and a salute to the man who started it.