

THE 2020 VIRTUAL WIT EXCHANGE • EMBEDDING OBJECTS IN A PORTHOLE BOWL • TURN A WOODEN TEA STRAINER

AMERICAN WOODTURNER

Journal of the American Association of Woodturners

April 2021 vol 36, no 2 • woodturner.org

MAKE A STEAM PUNK PEN

OF WATER AND WOOD:
THE INSPIRED WORK OF MIKE LEE

.....

HARVEST TABLE COMMISSION
WITH SPLIT-TURNED LEGS

.....

THE ART OF REPURPOSING



TomGall

New Jersey

In 1981, I needed six small spindles for a kitchen project. I borrowed a cheap lathe and some tools and for two days I scraped and sanded my way to completion. That began my “frustration/interest” in woodturning. The following year, I purchased a no-name lathe at an estate sale, and I learned only through trial and error for more years than I care to admit... not recommended!

After a few years, I began entering local juried art-and-craft shows on a limited basis. I started turning fulltime in 1988 and continued through 2006, when I was forced

to retire due to a serious auto accident. Since the accident, I turn only a limited number of pieces each year, usually for club challenges, club exchanges, or to make gifts. About fifteen years ago, I started using a little bit of texture and color, and now I rarely make a piece without embellishment.

I joined the AAW in 1986 and was considered a founding member. I’m also a founding member and was the first president of the New Jersey Woodturners (1990), as well as a long-time member of the Bucks Woodturners (1988). ■

Carved Spoon, 2018, Yellow cedar, acrylic ink, metallic and iridescent paints, gilders paste, 2¾" × 12½" × 2¼" (7cm × 32cm × 6cm)



(Above) Textured Vessel, 2019, Ash, modeling paste, acrylic paint, 5" × 5⅞" (13cm × 13cm)

(Left) Wall Hanging, 2019, Maple, acrylic paint, gold pen, 12" × 12" × 1¾" (30cm × 30cm × 4cm)



Textured Disc, 2014, Maple, acrylic paint, gilders paste,
7" × 4½" × 3" (18cm × 11cm × 8cm)



Fireworks, 2015, Spalted maple, gilders paste,
5¼" × 5⅞" (13cm × 13cm)

Banded Vessel, 2019, Ash,
acrylic and metallic paints,
4¾" × 5¼" (12cm × 13cm)



Ornament Grouping,
2019, Maple, holly,
acrylic, metallic and
iridescent paints,
each: 7" × 2½"
(18cm × 6cm)

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

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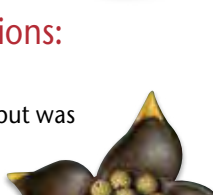
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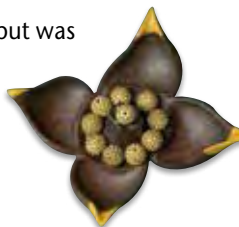
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Photo: Donna Dreyer

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engendering a welcoming environment for
all. To read AAW's full Diversity Statement,
visit tiny.cc/AWADiversity*

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

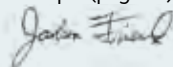


Learning a new skill is not easy. It takes determination and commitment, not to mention time and resources. Sometimes, there might be an intimidation factor preventing us from getting started, especially with woodturning—*Will I injure myself at the lathe? What if my work doesn't measure up?*

But what if there were a collaborative event that was all about learning new skills and taking creative risks, an event that was truly positive, nurturing, and encouraging? The AAW's Women in Turning Committee has created exactly that in its annual WIT eXchange. Read about the 2020 eXchange on page 42. Not surprisingly, the

supportive atmosphere goes well beyond how to handle a skew—it sounds more like a village working for the greater good. We could all learn a thing or two from this extraordinary group.

Most of us have turned a pen. In fact, that is where many of us got our start in woodturning. With a basic kit, a mandrel, and a little wood, you can make a useful object in a short amount of time. But I wonder how many woodturners choose to evolve their pen-making skills beyond the basics. Mark Dreyer shows us how to do this, using a steam punk pen as an example (page 18). With resin casting, the creative options seem endless.



—Joshua Friend

From the President



Safety and the old woodturner

I grew up riding my bike everywhere. It was my transportation in a one-car

family where parents were not cab drivers. They hadn't invented helmets for bicycles and safety didn't matter. Every boy had a pocketknife, regularly cut himself, and safety was not an issue. Many of us broke our arms, and the cast was a badge of honor. Most kids got measles, mumps, and chicken pox without considering not being around our friends, let alone social distancing. Safety rarely came up in discussion. I did play hockey and wore a cup, but a helmet? Forget it!

Fast forward too many decades and now I'm a woodturner in the 21st century, and safety is as important as the work we create. Faceshields, respiratory protection, lathe speed, tool quality, even high-voltage issues are of critical concern. And now the issues related to the COVID virus, including vaccination, face masks, and group gatherings, make being a leader in the AAW almost overwhelming. The skills I bring to AAW include business knowledge, leadership, and a love of woodturning. Clearly, safety was not a part of my early upbringing, and I have spent a lifetime avoiding any issues

relating to medicine. Fortunately, other Board members bring qualifications and knowledge I may lack.

Rick Baker is a Board member who chairs the Safety Committee. His committee ensures any presentations provided by the AAW, be they live or virtual, fully comply with our safety policies. They work with vendors to ensure a focus on safety equipment and the sale of quality tools that minimize the risk of harming the turner. Beyond the safety policies associated with Symposia, video demonstrations, and advertisements in our publications, Rick emphasizes our safety function is focused on education, not policing. Few of us like to be told what to do, but most of us will consider good advice.

Until recently, communicable diseases were not considered a woodturning safety issue, but obviously that's no longer the case. Another Board member, Mike Summerer, is a retired medical physician and hospital administrator. He provides your Board with sage advice on the impact of live group gatherings like a symposium and the possible impact on our members. He appropriately emphasizes that the health of our members is of primary importance. Social involvement is needed, but a delay until the virus is under control will benefit us all over the long term. In the interim,

Mike's focus will remain on providing quality remote demonstrations and virtual symposia.

Like you, I don't like to be told what to do. And like you, I'm tired of dealing with this coronavirus issue. However, like you, I try to make decisions based on all available information. My early years may not have had enough focus on safety, but unnecessary risk-taking is just not the thing to do in the 21st century.

Run for the Board

We are again looking for individuals interested in serving on the AAW Board. Obviously, a love of woodturning is critical, but business experience, leadership skills, decision-making, and involvement in chapter leadership are essential for the long-term well-being of the AAW. For more details, see page 9 for our Call for Nominees.

After a number of years on the Board and being involved in many decisions, I can assure you it is not possible to make all the people happy all the time! But I can also say that being a Board member is highly rewarding. Please consider throwing your name in the hat for 2022.

Looking forward,



Greg Schramek
President, AAW Board of Directors



Saving the best seat for you!

WHAT IS AAW PRESENTS?

Throughout 2021, AAW will bring your favorite woodturners to you—virtually. Watch them in action and ask questions in real time, just as you would if you were in the same room.

Whether it's a popular presenter or well-known master woodturner, AAW brings you the experts—their insights, years of learning, and experience testing the boundaries of tools and techniques.

And, as an AAW member, you will receive discounted access to this affordable and engaging online programming.

COMING UP! Cindy Drozda, April 24, 2021

Featured Project:

Wildfire Challis: Colored Natural-Edge Burl Stemmed Bowl



Photo: Andi Wolfe



Cindy Drozda has worked with wood professionally since 1977. She is known for her precise techniques, fine details, and analysis of form and the elements of successful design. Her elegant lidded vessels with delicate finials bring a contemporary flair to classic forms. Cindy shares her woodturning knowledge and passion as an international demonstrator, teacher, writer, and producer of instructional DVDs. Visit cindydrozda.com to learn more about Cindy.

HOW DO I REGISTER?

Visit the AAW Presents webpage, tiny.cc/AAWPresents, or scan the QR code to find more details and register for upcoming demonstrations.



On tap for future presentations:
Eric Lofstrom and Keith Gotschall!

VALUABLE INSIGHTS FROM THE PROS

What viewers said they learned from Betty Scarpino's presentation...

"[That I should] select one or a small number of materials, paints, sandpaper, whatever, and stick with it rather than trying too many things."

"That one needs to practice, practice, and practice to gain the skills needed to do quality work."

"Keep going. Keep trying. Find your own voice."



Screenshot from Betty Scarpino's online presentation, 2021.

Your Generosity Matters

We want to express our deep appreciation for the generosity of supporters and AAW chapters who gave to AAW during 2020. Your donations fund general operations, youth education, Women in Turning, Educational Opportunity Grants, and so many other programs.

Also, a gracious thank you to members who contributed artwork to support the AAW Live Benefit Auction and POP Auction during the year.

And finally, we are grateful to all of our volunteers, whose collective

contributions of thousands of hours are essential to the fulfillment of AAW's educational mission.

AAW membership dues cover only a portion of the expenses for member programs and services, and your contributions matter immensely. Thank you for your personal expressions of support for the AAW and our nonprofit mission.

—Greg Schramek, President, AAW Board of Directors

—Phil McDonald, AAW Executive Director

AAW Live Benefit Auction Contributing Artists

Michael Alguire	Cindy Drozda	Michael Hosaluk	Eric Lofstrom	Bob Rotche	Holland Van Gores
Benoît Averly	David Ellsworth	Georgianne Jackofsky	Rudolph Lopez	Jon Sauer	Camille Wall
Simon Begg	J. Paul Fennell	Mike Jackofsky	Mike Mahoney	Betty Scarpino	Hans Weissflog
Christian Burchard	Dewey Garrett	John Jordan	Harvey Meyer	Mark Sfirri	Tom Wirsing
Bruce Campbell	Vivien Grandouiller	Michael Kehs	JoHannes Michelsen	Jay Shepard	
Jim Christiansen	Lisa and Jacob Hodsdon	Dale Larson	Alan Miotke	John Underhill	

AAW Professional Outreach Program (POP) Auction Contributing Artists

Katie Adams	Melissa Engler	Tom Hale	Pat and Karen Miller	Mark Sfirri	Hans Weissflog
Teresa Audet	Roberto Ferrer	Katie Hudnall	John Mydock	Ward Stevens	Jakob Weissflog
Roger Bennett	Nicholas Flaherty	Beth Ireland	Laurent Niclot	Ben Strear	Christine Wenzhöfer
Dixie Biggs	Amy Forsyth	Michael Kehs	Michael Peterson	Neil Turner	Cindy Pei-Si Young
Kailee Bosch	Diana Friend	Patrick Kingshill	Graeme Priddle	Amy Umbel	Daniel Zobel
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Luc Deroo	Keith Gotschall	Elisabeth Mezieres	Jason Schneider	Derek Weidman	

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Howard Atamian	Dick Enstad	Tom Henry	Alan Leland	Mike Muhm	Rhonda Summar
Joyce Botsch	John Fisher	Debra Kay	Brian Lensink	Bill Papesch	Tim Swihart
Ken Brinker	Diana Friend	Higley-Feldman	Bill Loitz	Frank Pedroni	Pat Thobe
Linda Britt	Fred Goldstein	Ross Hirst	Michael Lombard	Steve Pritchard	Meryl Valnes
Larry & Beth Butrick	David Groth	Dave Hulett	David Louie	Paul Pyrcik	Albert Vandam
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—Ruth & David Waterbury

In honor of Derrick Te Paske's retirement
—Communication Arts Department
at Framingham State University

In memory of Greg Haugen
—Bob Patros

In memory of Bob Ivey
—Larry & Beth Butrick

Important Changes to AAW's 2021 Symposium

Over the last year, AAW leadership has closely monitored the status of COVID-19 in preparation for our 35th Annual International Symposium, July 15-18, in Omaha, Nebraska. Above all else, our concern continues to be the health and safety of our members, demonstrators, tradeshow vendors, partners, and other event attendees.

In February, the AAW Board of Directors unanimously made the essential decision to cancel the in-person components of the 2021 AAW Symposium in Omaha and transition to a fully virtual event in 2021.

While many expected the COVID-19 pandemic to recede by July 2021, too many uncertain variables remained, including vaccine distribution and evolving virus variants. The Board concluded that even when following CDC and local COVID-19 transmission precautions, we could not guarantee safety for all involved, given the large number of people assembling from around the country and the world.

While this is incredibly disappointing for all of us, we are transitioning to an improved AAW Virtual Symposium for 2021 (see info below).

AAW's 2021 Virtual Symposium, July 17-18, 2021

Enjoy AAW's in-person Symposium? Enjoy last year's Virtual Symposium? This year, we're bringing you the best of both, and more. You'll have front-row seats, right from the safety and comfort of your own home.



Glenn Lucas's online demo at AAW's 2020 Virtual Symposium.

For this year's event:

- Enhanced virtual event software platform
- Multiple concurrent live demonstration tracks (with access after the conference to all recordings)
- Virtual tradeshow
- Virtual Instant Gallery
- Live and silent auctions
- Special-interest topics
- Drawings
- ...and more!



The only thing missing will be the handshakes and hugs from old and new woodturning friends. You will need to wait one more year for that.

Visit woodturner.org for the latest event details.



SAVE THE DATE!

We'll see YOU in '22!

Mark your calendars for AAW's next in-person event!

This large, action-packed experience marks the celebrated comeback of AAW's Symposium after a two-year virus-related hiatus. There will be plenty of demonstrations and panel discussions, a jam-packed tradeshow with exhibitor booths, inspiring exhibitions and Instant Gallery, auctions of turned art, charitable initiatives, networking opportunities, and more.

**AAW's 36th Annual International Symposium
June 23-26, 2022, Chattanooga, Tennessee**



The in-person experience! Instant Gallery and vendor tradeshow, 2019 AAW Symposium, Raleigh, North Carolina.

Photos: Andi Wolfe



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. ■

AAW Youth Committee Seeking Assistance

The AAW Youth Committee is seeking assistance in identifying individuals who teach woodturning in public or private middle and high schools, or groups who have woodturning programs for youth ages 10-25. Our objective is to reach out to these teachers and groups to provide information about the AAW resources available for both teachers and students. Please share this request with any individual or group you believe would be interested. Woodturning teachers' and group names, along with contact information, should be sent to youth@woodturner.org. ■

—Linda Britt, AAW Youth Committee

AAW Board of Directors Call for Nominees

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

The AAW elects a volunteer nine-member board to represent the membership and move the organization forward. If you have been a member in good standing for the past three years, you are eligible. The nominating committee will select the six best candidates. From these six, members will elect three candidates to serve a three-year term, beginning in January 2022.

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

If you are interested in serving on the board, please email the following to the executive director (phil@woodturner.org), no later than May 1, 2021:

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

The nominating committee will review application materials and conduct phone interviews. Candidates will be presented in the August issue of *American Woodturner*, and voting will occur during the month of August. Election results will be announced in late 2021.



Christian Briseppierre demonstrating at the AAW Symposium in Raleigh, North Carolina, 2019.

Photo: Andi Wolfe

Call for Demonstrators: AAW Symposium 2022

The AAW's 36th Annual International Symposium will be held in Chattanooga, Tennessee, June 23-26, 2022. To apply to be a demonstrator, visit tiny.cc/Calls between May 1 and August 1, 2021. For more information, call the AAW office in Saint Paul, 877-595-9094 or 651-484-9094, or email memberservices@woodturner.org. ■

Prize Drawing for AAW Members

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

Thank you to the many businesses that continue supporting our members with these engaging prizes. When you patronize our vendors, please thank them for their support of AAW members. If your business would like to contribute a prize, contact memberservices@woodturner.org.

2021 Donors

(Others may be added during the year.)

Vendors

- Powermatic/JET (jpwindustries.com/brands) Lathes
- David Ellsworth (ellsworthstudios.com) Set of four DVDs
- Mike Mahoney (bowlmakerinc.com) 16 oz. utility oil
- Thompson Lathe Tools (thompsonlathetools.com) Gift certificate
- Hunter Tool Systems (huntertoolsystems.com) Gift certificate
- Trent Bosch (trentbosch.com) Trent Bosch DVDs
- Nick Cook Woodturner (nickcookwoodturner.com) Nick Cook DVD
- Glenn Lucas (glennlucaswoodturning.com) Series of 5 DVDs, "Mastering Woodturning"
- Niles Bottle Stoppers (nilesbottlestoppers.com) Gift certificate
- Rockler Woodworking and Hardware (rockler.com) Gift certificate
- Preservation Solutions (preservation-solutions.com) Gift certificates
- Carter and Son Toolworks (carterandsontoolworks.com) Gift certificates
- AAW (woodturner.org) *Getting Started in Woodturning* (books)

Call for Online Presentations: "AAW Presents"

Are you demonstrating online? If you have experience creating high-quality, effective, and interesting demonstrations, have access to the technical capability for a live interactive presentation, and would like to reach a large and enthusiastic audience, we want to hear from you. Consider applying to be part of the AAW's new online series, AAW Presents. For full details and application, visit tiny.cc/Calls. Questions? Contact Tib Shaw, tib@woodturner.org.

AAW Bylaws Change

The AAW Board of Directors has implemented a change to the AAW Bylaws. This change, resolved effective November 19, 2020, effected the removal of Section 5.16 (d) of the Bylaws, which states: "All members of the Association may attend Regular or Special Board Meetings."

To learn more about this change, visit the Board and Leadership page of the AAW website, woodturner.org.

Kristin LeVier Receives Bob Stocksdales Award



Photo: Jonathan Billing

Philadelphia's The Center for Art in Wood (CAW) has named wood artist Kristin LeVier the recipient of the 2020 Bob Stocksdales International Excellence in Wood Award. The award—now in its fifth year—is presented annually to an emerging or mid-career artist whose work, like that of Bob Stocksdales (1913–2003), unites quality of craftsmanship and respect for materials.

Kristin LeVier, of Moscow, Idaho, creates wood sculpture representing an intersection of art and science. With two decades

as a research molecular biologist, LeVier views her surroundings through the eyes of a scientist. Her work stimulates curiosity in the worlds of botany and microbiology and encourages us to look more closely at the diverse world around us.

Bob Stocksdales was an internationally renowned pioneer of contemporary woodturning. Known for his striking lathe-turned bowls in exotic woods, he is credited with sparking the revitalization of woodturning and its growing significance as an art form. Prior recipients of the Stocksdales Award include Jakob Weissflog (2016), Dean Pulver (2017), Ben Strear (2018), and Humaira Abid (2019).

For more, visit centerforartinwood.org.



Diadromae, 2018, Poplar, wire mesh, acrylic paint, silver leaf, 12" x 8½" x 3" (30cm x 22cm x 8cm)

Photo: Jonathan Billing

Calendar of Events

Send event info to editor@woodturner.org. June issue deadline: April 15.

See AAW's online Remote Demonstration Event Calendar at tiny.cc/IRDCalendar.

Canada

July 9–11, 2021, Saskatchewan Woodturners Symposium, Regina Trades and Skills Centre, Regina. Sponsored by the South Saskatchewan Woodturning Guild, this event features an instant gallery, wine and cheese gathering, banquet, lunches, auction, and demonstrations. Demonstrators to include Jean-François Escoulen, Nick Agar, Jason Breach, Michael Hosaluk, and others. *Note: This symposium is scheduled conditionally and is dependent on the regulations of Saskatchewan Health for meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic.* For the latest information, visit southsaskwoodturners.ca.

Alaska

April 10, 11, 2021, Alaska Woodturners Symposium, via Zoom. Due to COVID-19 conditions, this year's symposium will be presented online via Zoom, and attendees must register in advance. Symposium to feature an Instant Gallery of member work. Demonstrators to include Trent Bosch, Eric Lofstrom, Rudolph Lopez, and Mike Mahoney. For more, visit akwoodturners.org/Symposium.

California

January 9–April 24, 2021, *Making Waves: Craft on Water Ecology*, Craft in America Center, Los Angeles. An exhibition focused on works by artists who deal with various ecological and human-generated threats to our oceans and water systems in a variety of media. Artists include Po Shun Leong, Joan Takayama-Ogawa, Jennifer McCurdy, Christopher Edwards, and others. For more, visit craftinamerica.org.

Colorado

CANCELLATION NOTICE: The Rocky Mountain Woodturning Symposium, which was scheduled for September 17–19, 2021, at The Ranch Larimer County Fairgrounds, Loveland, has been cancelled. The event will be rescheduled in September 2022 (dates to be determined). For more, visit rmwoodturningsymposium.com.

Illinois

CANCELLATION NOTICE: The 7th Segmenting Symposium, which was scheduled for September 23–26, 2021, at the Crowne Plaze Hotel,

Northbrook, has been cancelled. The event will be rescheduled in 2022 (dates to be determined). For the latest, visit segmentedwoodturners.org.

Minnesota

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

- March 14–June 13, 2021: *Elements* (POP show also featuring works from the American Tapestry Alliance)
- June 20–August 29, 2021: *Art from the Lathe—Selections from the Permanent Collection*
- September 5–December 19, 2021: *Finding the Center* (AAW member show)

- Ongoing displays: *Touch This!* family-friendly education room; gallery gift shop; and vintage and reproduction lathes.

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

Online/Virtual

April 24, 25, 2021, The Midwest Penturners Gathering (Penmakers International Annual Symposium), this year an online virtual event. Multiple demo "rooms" running simultaneously,

vendor space, and social gatherings. Featured Demonstrators to include Mark Dreyer, John Underhill, Dick Sing, Ed Brown, and Fred Wissen. Attendees will have access to all the prerecorded videos for thirty days after the event. Entry is \$35; visit midwestpenturnersgathering.com for more info and a link to register, or email mpginfo@yahoo.com with questions.

Pennsylvania

September 24–26, 2021, Mid Atlantic Woodturning Symposium, Lancaster Marriott Hotel and Convention Center, Lancaster. For more, visit mawts.com.

Tennessee

January 28, 29, 2022, Tennessee Association of Woodturners Annual Woodturning Symposium, Marriott Hotel & Convention Center, Franklin. For more, visit tnwoodturners.org.

Texas

August 27–29, 2021, SWAT (Southwest Association of Turners) annual symposium, Waco Convention Center, Waco. Event details are pending. For more, visit swaturners.org.

AAW PRESENTS/ VIRTUAL EDUCATION



View interactive demonstrations from the comfort of your own home. Visit the AAW Presents events page,

tiny.cc/AAWPresents, for more details and to register for upcoming events.

April 2021:

Cindy Drozda: *Wildfire Challis: Colored Natural-Edge Burl Stemmed Bowl*

May 2021:

Eric Lofstrom: *Namaste Bowls*

June 2021:

Keith Gotschall: *Manhole Cover Box*



Photo: Tib Shaw/AAW

Stephen Hogbin, Kitchen Stool (Fragmented Turning), Wood, 27" × 13½" (69cm × 34cm)

AAW Permanent Collection; donated by the artist, 2009.



For many years, the Chicago Woodturners have been supporting the Beads of Courage (BoC) program with turned boxes. Last year, a few spouses started sewing BoC bags, which were delivered along with the boxes. For the last six months, even my 89-year-old mother has volunteered to sew bags that will surely put a smile on the faces of many kids at Lurie Children's Hospital in Chicago. She has single-handedly made and donated more than sixty bags to this excellent cause, with more on the way. I suggest that clubs consider adding bags to their BoC donations. They are relatively fast and inexpensive to make, and it's a great way to get those who sew involved, benefiting more kids in the program. You can find instructions on the Beads of Courage website, beadsofcourage.org/bead-bags.

—Al Miotke, Chicago Woodturners



The Coulee Region Woodturners (Onalaska, Wisconsin) recently became aware of the charitable efforts of a young woodturner, Tommy Rhomberg of Mount Vernon, Iowa. Tommy has been turning and selling baseball bats and donating \$20 from each bat sold to the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation's derecho relief efforts. The donated funds help support community recovery following the extreme weather event that swept across Iowa in August 2020. In recognition of Tommy's good work as a woodturner and a civic-minded young man, Coulee Region Woodturners donated \$100 to help his community. We realize that we are all neighbors, separated by some miles. Learn more about Tommy's journey at thegreatderecho.com.

—Bob Raasch, Coulee Region Woodturners

I have been using tree service green waste to make woodturning stock for my business, 2 Tree Boyz Wood, for more than six years. In late 2019, the director of the Georgia Arborist Association (GAA), of which I am also a member, asked if I could help him procure some turned pieces for their organization to give out as awards. Since the GAA promotes the reutilization of tree service green waste, the director felt that spending their award budget on art made from reclaimed green waste would fit their mission better than what they had done in the past.

Since that initial conversation, I have procured turned items that have been given out as awards at the 2019 and 2020 GAA Winter Awards Banquets and at the 2020 Tree Climbing Championship. The items, including hollow forms, bowls, and platters, have been very well received. AAW members Mark Sillay, Andy Bennett, Tony Raffalovich, Wes Jones, and Bob Franklin, along with others, have made awards, which were presented with a small slate plaque.

—Elisabeth Smith Ross, Georgia Association of Woodturners



Boxelder hollow form, by Mark Sillay.



White oak bowl, by Wes Jones.

In January 2021, Jean Gribbon, Executive Director of Beads of Courage, and Ken Tower, a Desert Woodcrafters member who made twenty-eight BoC boxes (shaped like trucks), presented the boxes to the Tucson SWAT team. Members of the SWAT team then delivered the trucks to Banner Children's Hospital in Tucson, Arizona.

—Paul Swane, Desert Woodcrafters



We all know that 2020 was a very difficult year. Nonetheless, the Central Texas Woodturners Association (CTWA) was able to rise to the challenge and make 110 Beads of Courage (BoC) boxes for the Dell Children's Hospital in Austin, Texas. It is our hope that 2021 will be a different year and of course that children would not get sick and need a BoC box at all.

—Johnny Tolly, Central Texas Woodturners Association



Book Review: *Useful Woodturning Projects*, by Mike Darlow, Fox Chapel Publishing, 2021, 208 pages, paperback

Prolific author Mike Darlow's new book, *Useful Woodturning Projects*, presents a mixed bag. As always, when he gets down to specific instruction and illustration, Darlow does an exemplary job. His knowledge and skills are unquestionable, and there are many valuable aspects of tooling and technique that may be unfamiliar to readers that Darlow renders clearly. Particularly strong are his sequences of operations and his chucking strategies for sophisticated projects.

However, much of the book is disappointing, with the project choices themselves being problematic. More than a quarter of the book is devoted to various chess sets, a subject Darlow has considered more fully in an earlier book. Many of the other projects are simply antiquated. A point-presser-and-clapper, a monaural stethoscope, and a

reel stand may have value as antiquarian objects, or as challenges for various skills, but they are hardly objects of daily use. Darlow acknowledges "some might consider [the book's range of projects] too esoteric." While this may serve some readers well, the emphasis on objects that were *formerly* useful limits the appeal of the book.

In addition, the book would have benefited from greater focus and a tighter editorial hand. This plays out in two key areas. One is a tendency to wander into historical notes and minutiae that, however interesting in their own right, ultimately detract from the topic at hand. In a book whose emphasis is on utility, extended histories of chocolate, the pepper trade, and cotton thread seem out of place. A full chapter is devoted to type-faces, without any specific connection to woodturning. The other is Darlow's

argumentative and at times pedantic tone.

Despite some lip service to the contrary, the book's introduction reads like a screed against trends in modern woodturning. An obvious example: "An unfortunate recent trend is to promote woodturning as fun." He creates a sort of boogeyman out of the modern emphasis on turning bowls and vessels, and the perceived tension between art and craft. Darlow ultimately sets up a binary, zero-sum context in which one is either working doggedly to improve according to Darlow's standards or wasting one's time.

Readers can decide for themselves whether the valuable aspects of the book compensate for its weaknesses. ■

—Steve Forrest



Cumberland Woodturners Supports Local Charities

Woodturners have a history of giving back to their communities. The Cumberland Woodturners (CW), an AAW chapter that meets in Crossville, Tennessee, is no different, but an exception. In 2008, club members came up with the idea of making and selling Christmas ornaments, whose proceeds would be donated to local charities, such as Kids on the Rise. That idea became an annual project involving the entire membership. Each year since then, our sales totals have grown, and local residents have become repeat customers who contact us to inquire about ornament sales locations and times. The annual ornament sales project has provided a long-term connection to our community, and has helped develop partnerships with local businesses.

In 2020, CW lost the sales location provided by a local bank due to

the pandemic. Fortunately, we were contacted by a local furniture refurbishing business that could provide the much-needed sales space. That partnership not only helped our club sell over 500 ornaments, generating \$6,635.00 for the cause, but provided additional exposure for this furniture refurbishing business.

Since 2008, the club has donated more than \$21,000 to local charities through ornament sales, but CW's involvement doesn't stop with ornaments. We continually support Beads of Courage, regularly donating boxes and wig stands. I am

proud of the contributions of our membership, with their continuing efforts toward supporting our community. ■

—Thomas Neckvatal, President
Cumberland Woodturners



Proud members of the Cumberland Woodturners. Front row (from left): Les Black, Herman Ledford, Tom Neckvatal; back row: Steve Sullentrup, Dennis Johnson.



A local business, Dogwood Exchange, generously provided space for the Cumberland Woodturners to display and sell their turned ornaments to raise money for charity.

Chicago Area Clubs Join Forces for Empty Bowls

For more than sixteen years, the Chicago Woodturners (CWT) and the Windy City Woodturners (WCWT) have jointly participated in the annual Empty Bowls for Food event hosted by the ceramics club at Oakton Community College. Our turned bowls, as well as other items from the lathe, have been a welcome addition to their event each year. But because the college was closed in 2020 due to COVID-19, the Empty Bowls event was cancelled.

However, this cancellation did not deter our woodturning clubs from forging ahead with a COVID-safe event (following CDC guidelines). Our club members had been turning bowls all year in anticipation of the college event, some turning more than ever (a welcome side effect of the pandemic). There was a short discussion during a virtual club meeting to confirm that we all wanted to find a way for this event to happen. After all, with the upheaval of

so many lives, the food pantries needed assistance—and funds—more than ever.

One club member had a supportive contact at an outdoor venue, Batavia Boardwalk Shops, who allowed us to use the space at no cost. This gem of a location offers outdoor retail shops typically used for weekly pop-up markets, and our Empty Bowls event qualified as a pop-up event. In just three weeks, with some great networking, newspaper coverage, and a mention on local TV, we were able to get the word out.

The event was a huge success—we raised more than \$3,700 in just six hours. All money raised was distributed to the Northern Illinois Food Bank, which supports

food pantries across Northern Illinois; Batavia Food Pantry, serving the local community; and the Fox Valley Food for Health organization, which delivers healthy meals to people fighting major health issues. We are thankful for the support of our club members and the local community pulling together to help our neighbors in need. ■

—Marie Anderson, Windy City Woodturners



Donating proceeds to the Northern Illinois Food Bank. From left: John Dillon (member of CWT and WCWT), Christine Fisher of the Northern Illinois Food Bank, and Marie Anderson (member of CWT and WCWT).



Batavia Boardwalk Shops donated a pop-up space for club members to sell items to benefit Empty Bowls. From left: Marie Anderson, Zac Cesario of Fox Valley Food for Health, and John Dillon.

NWWT Supplies Kits for BoC Project

Last fall, John Sutter, a member of Portland, Oregon's Northwest Woodturners (NWWT) came up with the great idea to make thirty "exceptional" boxes for Beads of Courage (BoC). John adapted one of his favorite box designs into a BoC box, the body of which requires an eight-sided glue-up. To ensure consistency across all the boxes, the club

decided it would provide all the milled wood for members to use. To achieve this, NWWT partnered with the Guild of Oregon Woodworkers to produce thirty box kits, ready to assemble and turn.

Club members were provided with detailed instructions and a step-by-step video for guidance. NWWT members picked up the kits and turned them into beautiful BoC boxes.

John and his wife Luanne hand-delivered the thirty boxes to Mary Bridge Children's Hospital in Tacoma, Washington. They were met by Lou Ann League and Susan Hayes, who were delighted with the boxes being donated. They confirmed that the children really enjoy and treasure these boxes, which hold beads representing milestones along

Related Video!

To view a video on the making of these BoC boxes, visit tiny.cc/SutterBox or scan the QR code.



a patient's medical journey. The beads help children tell their own story of courage and bravery.

This is another example of a joint community service project by NWWT members. Many members donate their work for good causes, but for large projects, we make it a club effort!

Beads of Courage is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for children and teens coping with serious illness. For more, visit beadsofcourage.org. ■

—Roger Crooks and John Sutter, Northwest Woodturners



NWWT BoC boxes are hand-delivered to Mary Bridge Children's Hospital, Tacoma, Washington.



Club members committed to making thirty BoC boxes and were given kits to assemble and turn.

Tips

Low-friction tape improves toolrest

I had been conditioning my toolrest with light sandpaper and waxing the finger-slide area for easy tool movement. Recently, I added a strip of $\frac{3}{4}$ "- (19mm-) wide ultra-high-molecular-weight (UHMW) tape where my fingers slide under the tool. What a difference! The tape allows me to glide the tool along the toolrest very smoothly.

I bought my UHMW tape from McMaster-Carr (mcmaster.com), but it is widely available from other online sellers.

—Harvey Fein, New York



Smartphone magnifies small print

When the stamped print on the end of a drill bit showing its size is too small for me to read, I take a picture of it with my smartphone.

Then I enlarge the picture on the screen so I can read the numbers. This also works when the printed directions on a can of finish are too small to read.

—Tim Heil, Minnesota



Triangular jig for sharpening point tools

A few years ago, I made an economical point tool from a high-speed-steel drill bit. I ground the tool freehand and while the tool was useable, I wasn't able to grind three smooth, equal facets by hand. I had the same problem when trying to re-sharpen the tool on the grinder.

To solve the problem, I made a jig that allows me to sharpen the tool quickly and ensure each side is equal. The size of the jig will vary, depending on the diameter of the tool shaft. In my case, I used a $\frac{1}{2}$ " (13mm) drill bit to make the tool, so I made the sharpening jig using $\frac{3}{4}$ "- (19mm-) thick hardwood. I cut an

equilateral triangle with 3" (8cm) sides and drilled a hole in its center for a snug fit of the drill bit (*Photo 1*).

To sharpen a point tool, insert the tool shaft in the jig and set one side of the triangle on the grinding platform. Adjust the platform to the appropriate angle, then grind the first of the three facets (*Photo 2*). Rotate the jig to grind the second facet and again for the third.

I should have been smarter and made the sharpening jig first. Then I would have had a perfectly ground point tool from the start.

—Dex Hallwood, British Columbia, Canada



Price tags identify pen blanks

I have found that I sometimes lose track of the species or source of the wood I am using to make pens. To keep this information organized and accessible, I use paper price tags purchased at an office supply store. Put the important information you want on the tag, and when possible, attach the tag to the pen blank so it will follow the wood all the way to final production, when you can replace it with a permanent tag.

—Greg Cartwright, West Virginia



Pen drilling stops

I am primarily a pen turner. When I make multiple pens at once, simplifying movements helps to streamline repeated processes. One such process is drilling holes in pen blanks for the brass tubes. I do this



at the lathe, using the tailstock to advance and retract the drill bit—repeatedly. To simplify this action, I used a red marker to identify my start and stop positions on the ruler stamped on the quill. Thus, I can tell my current drilling depth at a glance. This is easier and quicker than trying to read the numbers on the ruler. ►

—Jim Putnam, Wisconsin

TIPS

Skew sharpening jig

I have never been able to grind a consistent angle or bevel on my skew free-hand. To rectify this problem, I made two angle jigs—one for sharpening each side of the skew (*Photos 1, 2*).

A piece of scrap hardwood serves as a base that fits under the grinder platform and allows the jig to slide horizontally. The bases are about 6" (15cm) long, although the exact measurements are not crucial. I cut two pieces of ¼"- (6mm-) thick plywood to measure 3½" (9cm) at the base and 3½" tall. Because I wanted a 70-degree angle on the skew, I cut a 20-degree angle on each piece of plywood. I then glued the plywood to the hardwood bases, ensuring the bottom of the hardwood block and the bottom of the plywood were aligned (*Photo 3*). The jig allows me to get consistent and reproducible angles every time I sharpen my skew.

Note: Because I was working with smaller pieces of scrap material, I was forced to make two jigs because it was unsafe to cut two 20-degree angles on such a short piece of plywood. If I had a longer piece of plywood, I could have cut both angles on one piece and used one jig to sharpen both sides of the skew.

—Dex Hallwood, British Columbia, Canada

**Centering vise improves pen blank drilling**

The wooden screw clamps I initially used when drilling pen blanks were cumbersome and sometimes inaccurate. The solution for me was a pen blank centering vise, which I purchased from Penn State Industries. When I turn the crank handle on the side, the jaws come together symmetrically, so the blank is automatically centered under the bit. Plus, the vise holds the wood in a vertical position, so the hole is drilled through the center of the blank.

To set up the vise so it is centered under the bit, simply lower the drill bit, turn the vise crank so the jaws tighten around the bit, and clamp the vise to the drill press table. Loosen the jaws, mount your pen blank, and drill away.

—Greg Cartwright, West Virginia



The author uses a crevice attachment on his shop vacuum to remove the chips during drilling.

Inexpensive buffing system

It is easy to spend a lot of money on a hobby or small business when you don't really have to. Sometimes it takes an alternative look at how to do something to achieve the same result for less money. That is the case with buffing turned projects. Buffing motors and accessory sets are available from woodturning product suppliers and other specialty stores, but you don't need to incur that expense (\$80 to \$150 at a minimum).

Your wood lathe is a buffing monster, needing

only a few inexpensive additions: a ⅝" (16mm) right-tapered spindle (\$10), a buffing wheel with a ¼" to ½" (6mm to 13mm) arbor hole (\$12), and buffing compound bars (\$3.50 to \$10, depending on size and type).

Mount the tapered spindle in a chuck, thread the buffing wheel onto the

spindle, and you are ready for buffing. For around \$40, you can buff your wood projects with the best of them.

—Jim Putnam, Wisconsin

**JOURNAL ARCHIVE CONNECTION EXPLORE!**

To learn more about buffing, see Don McIvor's excellent article, "Buff for the Perfect Finish" in the August 2017 issue of *American Woodturner* (vol 32, no 4, page 24). Log on at woodturner.org and use the Explore! search tool.

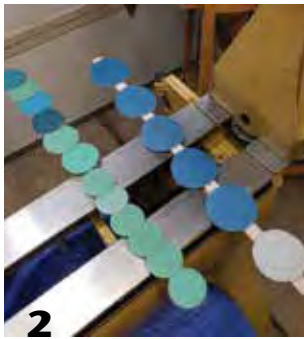


Sanding disk holder

For power-sanding at the lathe, I used to place all of the different grit sanding disks on the lathe bed or on top of the headstock, so I could easily switch from one grit to the next. But after each grit, I use compressed air to blow the dust off, and more often than not, I would inadvertently blow my sanding disks onto the floor. I came up with an inexpensive solution that keeps the disks in place, organized and in sequence, and easy to store when not in use.

In a long strip of scrap wood, I drilled four holes on one side to glue in $\frac{1}{2}$ " (13mm) rare-earth magnets. On the other side, I attached hook-and-loop material (*Photo 1*). The magnets keep the strip in place on the lathe bed during use, and the hook-and-loop material holds the disks in place so they don't blow off anymore (*Photo 2*). When not in use, the disks store out of the way on the end of my lathe (*Photo 3*).

—Pat Scott, Colorado



Plastic yard signs = bowl blank templates

Now that the elections of 2020 are behind us, I hope you were able to pick up some of the corrugated plastic yard signs that flooded our streets and neighborhoods. You can use them for something useful in your shop, and you will be protecting the environment, too, by repurposing the material.

One of the uses is to make templates for rough-cutting bowl blanks on the bandsaw. Yard signs are typically 18" × 24" (46cm × 61cm), and out of one you can make at least five templates (*Photo 1*). Draw circles to your desired sizes with a compass, and then cut them on the bandsaw, easy and fast. Through the compass center on the template put a small nail into the blank, and you have a template to follow when rounding the blank (*Photo 2*).

—Pavle Ancevski, New Jersey



Friction stop improves on spindle lock



Most lathe spindle locks can be engaged only at specific points, and many of these stops have "play" in them when locked. I came up with a friction stop that engages the spindle at any point and with no play. Further, the amount of friction can be adjusted so the workpiece can be hand-rotated and stopped at a specific area, which I find useful for hand-sanding, texturing, and light carving.

To make my friction stop, I cut bottom and top curves in a block of wood to conform to the curvatures of my lathe motor and handwheel, respectively. When placed on the lathe motor, the *inside* top cut should fit just under the handwheel. This cut should be made at a slightly upward angle toward the *outside* edge, so the tighter the friction stop is tapped under the wheel, the more friction is applied. Both the bottom and top curves should be padded to protect the motor and handwheel. A "tacky" material, such as shelf lining, helps apply friction.

A couple words of caution: One, a friction device should never be used as a braking system to slow or stop the lathe; use it only with the lathe off. Two, only "hand-tapping" should be necessary to engage the stop. Heavy pounding could damage the lathe's bearings.

—Mark Heatwole, Virginia

MAKE A STEAM PUNK PEN



Photo: Michael Slaughter

Mark Dreyer

Photos by Julane Johnson, unless otherwise noted.

It was at the Midwest Penturners Gathering in 2013 that I watched John Underhill do a demonstration on clear-casting pen blanks. That was the minute I went from being a pen turner to a pen maker. That was also the minute that changed even how I

take vacations: now I walk through every store and look for items I can cast into pen blanks. I came upon the idea for the steam punk pen described here—with a crushed Mickey Mouse penny taking center stage—when I saw a penny press that makes elongated souvenir coins.

This article outlines the making of one example of a steam punk pen. But with these simple techniques, tools, and a willingness to practice (and the courage to stand in line at a penny press in front of children), you can discover the vast world of clear-casting. You can incorporate watch faces (see front cover of this issue), carbon fiber, papers, stamps, and a host of other items.

For the example shown here, I used a Majestic pen kit. The tubes for the Majestic are some of the largest available for pen making, allowing the pressed penny to be the star of the pen, yet not overpower the tube. Good proportion of the embedded object in relation to the tube is very important.

Add background material

The first step is to cover the kit's brass tubes with a background, or base, material. Here, I used commonly available aluminum duct tape (*Photo 1*), to which I added the effect of "rivets" using a ponce wheel. You can use almost any thin material as a background, such as a carbon fiber sleeve (glued and secured) or a label or decal. The choices are limitless.

Aluminum tape is dense enough so you do not need to paint the tubes beforehand. If you are going to use carbon fiber as your background, you would first paint the tubes black. Many other background coverings call for painting the tubes, generally black or white. If the base material requires painting the tube, let the paint dry at least twenty-four hours before applying glue to the tube.

As you can see in *Photo 2*, you don't have to worry about matching the exact length of the tubes when cutting the aluminum tape. I have found that if I have excess at the top and bottom, I can simply fold it into the tube before casting. This does a couple of things. It helps to seal the ends when I am putting the tube into the

NEW TO PEN TURNING?

EXPLORE!

If you are new to pen turning, get a good start by searching the AAW's online archives. Log on at woodturner.org and use the Explore! tool to find lots of related articles and videos.

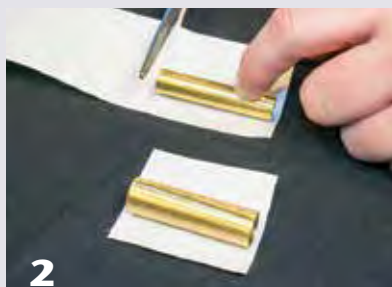
- "Penturning Primer," by Kurt Hertzog, *AAW* April 2016 (vol 31, no 2, page 16)
- "Ten Steps to Better Pens," by Kurt Hertzog, *AAW* Summer 2008 (vol 23, no 2, page 46)
- "Pens," by Scott Greaves, *AAW* Winter 2003 (vol 18, no 4, page 36)



Create background layer



1



2



3

The author chose aluminum duct tape for the base, or background layer. Cut it slightly oversized, and texture it with a ponce wheel to create the effect of rivets.

mold for casting, and it helps to secure the tape to the tube. You do not want the tape pulling away from the tube during the casting process, as this would generate a significant amount of heat.

As for overlap side to side, I left about $\frac{1}{8}$ " (3mm) of extra material. After I cut the tape but before applying it to the tube, I added the appearance of rivets. This is a simple process. Turn the tape over, back side up, and using a straight-edge and ponce wheel, slowly roll the wheel over the tape (*Photo 3*). Never go backwards or try to do it a second time, as the rivets will not match up.

When you flip the tape over, you will see the ponce-wheel indentations that look like rivets, which we will amplify with color in a future step. Put in as many rivets as you like. I also roll out some copper tape at this point and put some rivets in it, too.

Remove the backing from the aluminum tape and carefully roll it over

the tube (*Photos 4, 5*). You do not need to place the tube at the edge of the tape. I find it easier to put the tube on the tape about $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6mm) from the edge and then gently roll one end over and then the other. Aluminum duct tape is very sticky. The good thing is, if you create any small creases in the tape, it can be considered a design element that just adds character to the pen blank.

Now cut the copper tape to various lengths and randomly stick them onto the tube (*Photos 6, 7*).

Ebonize the tube

I apply ebonizing cream to give the blank that dirty industrial look, which adds to the steam punk effect. Use a paper towel to rub some cream onto the blank in a random way (*Photo 8*). I typically let it sit for only a few minutes and then use ►

Adhere base material



4



5

Peel the backing off the duct tape and adhere the base layer to the brass pen tubes.

Add accents



6



7

Copper tape, textured with the ponce wheel, cut into small pieces, and applied randomly, contrasts nicely with the aluminum base.

Apply ebonizing cream



8

The author uses ebonizing cream, applied inconsistently, to achieve a gritty steam punk look.

a clean piece of towel to rub it off. Non-uniformity is the key here. Leave on as much as you want, or take it off. During the casting process, the blank will lighten up and the color will be reflected more. Put the blank aside as you prepare other elements for the blank.

Penny prep

Crushed pennies can be acquired all over the place—at theme parks, tourist attractions, baseball stadiums, and truck stops at state lines. Penny press machines are everywhere.

There are many ways to prep an elongated pressed penny for use in a pen blank, but I have adopted the simplest method. To figure out the bend you need to put in the penny, use a punch set and find which punch actually fits into the pen tube

(*Photo 9*). I find a little over-bending is better than under-bending the penny. Use the punch that just fits into the pen tube as a form to wrap the penny around.

When I started making steam punk pens, I used wood to make a bending form. Drill a hole in a piece of dense wood the same diameter as the tube and cut the wood to expose half of the hole (*Photo 10*). For this example, embedding the penny in the top half of a Majestic pen kit, I used a $\frac{3}{4}$ " (15mm) drill bit. Carefully lay the penny across one side of the block and, using a drill press and the punch, apply pressure to bend the penny (*Photo 11*). Once the penny is wrapped all the way around the punch, you might find that the edges remain proud. Rotate the penny half

way and use both halves of the wood form to sandwich the edges. Press again and you will have a perfectly rounded penny.

Recently, I began using a jeweler's dapping set instead of wood to shape the crushed pennies. The process is basically the same. Determine the correct punch and slot and apply pressure to bend the penny. Pressure can be applied with a drill press, arbor press, or just by hand, depending on the thickness of the metal being bent. As an option, you could add small metal gears to your steam punk blank to add character. Bend the gears using the same method (*Photos 12-14*).

Use a single drop of cyanoacrylate (CA) glue to attach the penny to the blank. CA glue and casting

Bend accents with wood block and punch



9



10



11

The right sized punch, one that just fits inside the pen tube, along with a drilled and cut wood block, serve as a bending form. Apply pressure to wrap the thin metal element around the punch. Here, the author bends a Mickey Mouse souvenir penny that will become the centerpiece of this pen.

Bend accents using jeweler's dapping block



12



13



14

An alternative to the wood block is a jeweler's dapping set. Small metal gears add to the steam punk vibe.

resins do not play well together, so a single drop will do. If you use too much or see the glue on the outside of the penny, let the blank sit for a few days to allow the CA to gas off. Gears can be applied to the blank in the same way.

Cast the blank

There are numerous casting resins on the market, though most people use Silmar 41 or Alumilite. I use both, depending on the project at hand. Alumilite is perfect as a bonding agent, so it is a good choice if you are casting embedded objects like shark vertebra or alligator jawbone or simply casting color. Alumilite has low odor and is very quick setting, so demolding is quick. Silmar 41, on the other hand, does have a distinct smell, but I also find it provides a clearer finish. Both products work for this application, so use the product you like best. Both are chemicals, so please read and understand the instructions that come with the respective products. Most importantly, use gloves and safety glasses when working with these casting resins. With these easy precautions, I have used both products for years with no issues.

I use a horizontal casting mold that I purchased for the pen kit I am using. These molds are very reliable and do not waste resin. To use a horizontal mold, you will need to determine how much resin is needed to complete the cast. A simple way to figure this out is to use water or rice in a mock-up casting—simply fill the mold with either and then pour it into a measuring cup. Then read the amount.

One important note: When you are using small amounts of resin, the mixture's accuracy is critical. With Alumilite, it is imperative that parts A and B are measured to the exact same weight. With a small pour, a few grams over or under can cause

MORE ON CASTING

EXPLORE!

To learn more about casting your own turning blanks, log on at woodturner.org and use the Explore! search tool to find these articles and more:

- "Pen Blank Casting," by Marla (Mills) Christensen, *AW* August 2017 (vol 32, no 4, page 28)
- "Making a Form for Casting," by Scott Schlosser, *Woodturning FUNDamentals* July 2015 (vol 4, no 4, page 11)
- "Natural Revelations: Esther Bar at the Lathe," by Shai Noy, October 2019 (vol 34, no 5, page 38)

a failure. When you get to a bigger pour, a few grams might not be as important, as there is a greater margin of error. Always use a scale to measure the resin parts in the best mode your scale can do, preferably grams (*Photo 15*). Pen casting molds generally take 1 to 2 oz. of resin with some left over. To minimize error, it is best to make a few sets of blanks and plan for a slightly larger pour.

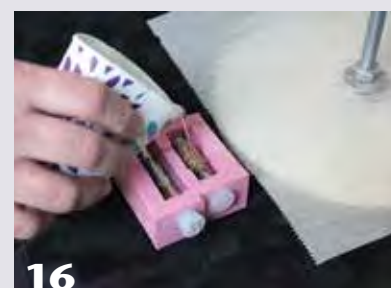
Clear-casting typically requires pressure, so after I prepare the resin for pouring and fill the molds, I place the molds in a pressure pot (*Photos 16, 17*). I have found that 40 to 50 psi is more than enough pressure to drive out the air bubbles. When using Silmar 41, I leave the molds under pressure for at least twenty-four hours; for Alumilite, 90 to 210 minutes does the trick. I let my cast pen blanks cure for about a week before turning them, though this is personal preference. ►

Weigh, pour, and pressurize



15

When casting the pen blanks in resin, weigh the two parts carefully to ensure the proper mixture.



16



17

Pour the resin into the mold, then use a pressure pot to drive out the air bubbles.

Keep a Sharp Edge!

I see many people struggle when turning acrylics. The number one issue is dull tools. If you use high-speed-steel tools, sharpen them before each pen blank. As you build your skills, you will know when you need to sharpen and when you can cut another blank. If in doubt, sharpen. If you use carbide tools, realize that just because you don't need to sharpen carbide does not mean you don't need to get a fresh edge. The more reputable carbide tools hold an edge for twenty to forty hours of turning before needing to be rotated. And if you are new to carbide, try the "negative-rake" cutters, which make it much easier to master turning acrylics.

Turn, sand, and assemble

Mount your cast pen blank on the lathe as you would any other pen blank. Turn it down to slightly more than $\frac{1}{16}$ " (1.5mm) proud of the bushing. Note that having the penny embedded in the blank means you should leave a small bulge in the center and taper to the ends.

Next work the corners. Many pen blanks are ruined when sizing the blank to the kit. This detail, seen in the transitions from blank to kit, makes the difference between a professionally turned pen and the amateur variety. Once I have it to $\frac{1}{16}$ " proud of the bushing, I use a very sharp spindle gouge to refine the transition. Find the edge of the bushing and roll the cut back into the blank. I let the tool find the edge in a closed position, then roll it to

open (flute facing up). This guarantees a perfect fit.

You can now turn down the rest of the blank or even rough-sand it to final shape (*Photos 18, 19*). With proper turning, the sanding should be minimal. But if you are at all concerned about cutting through the resin and exposing an embedded item, opt for sanding. No one will know how the blank was completed, and erring on the side of caution is between you and the blank.

I sand through the grits with sandpaper and then use Micro-Mesh®. I start at 220 grit paper, then go to 320. For 400 grit, I use wet/dry paper wet. Do yourself a favor—when the sandpaper looks used, throw it away. You will be amazed how much better your finishing will

become if you do this. When used correctly, sandpaper is a cutting tool. If that tool is used dull, it will simply burnish your pen surface, rather than abrade it. Plus, dull paper may introduce unwanted lines due to fracturing.

When using Micro-Mesh®, I rotate my application with each grit. I use the first grit with the lathe on. Then for the next grit, I shut the lathe off and sand along the length of the pen blank. And I continue alternating methods with each new grit—lathe on, then off. Remember, the purpose of sanding at this stage is to remove the scratches from the previous grit, not to shape the work. If the sanding of a pen blank takes more than five minutes, you need to refine your tool technique.

After the sanding is completed, I apply a quick coat of Novus® scratch remover and then buff the blank. Buffing your pens will give them that glass-like finish.

Finally, assemble the pen parts, following the kit's instructions. Confirm that the tubes are clear of any debris such as glue or tape. And keep in mind, too much pressure is your enemy—the components should fit together with only a moderate amount of pressure. ■

Turn it!



Use sharp tools when turning acrylics. Shape the pen barrels, sand, finish, and assemble.

Photos: Donna Dreyer

Mark Dreyer lives in Aurora, Illinois. He is an electrical engineer by trade and has been a pen turner and maker for more than twenty-five years. Mark has demonstrated twice at AAW National Symposia—2016 in Atlanta and 2018 in Portland—and at regional events such as Turn On! Chicago, the Midwest Pen Turners Gathering, and at numerous local clubs. He is an active member of the Chicago Woodturners and the Windy City Woodturners. Mark's work can be found at markdreyerturning.com.



An Accurate BOWL-DEPTH GAUGE

Michael Pinto

Most bowl turners will admit to cutting through the bottom of a bowl at least once. However, equally frustrating is accurately determining the base thickness. The “T-style” depth gauges that register against the bowl rim offer some degree of accuracy, but if the gauge is not held parallel to the lathe bed or if your eye isn’t aligned at the correct angle, its accuracy can be compromised. To take the guesswork out and provide an accurate visual of the thickness of the bowl base, I use this simple gauge.

Depth gauge parts

The gauge comprises two parts, both of which rest on the lathe bed: (A) a fixed reference point from which to measure and (B) a movable point that registers your current bowl depth (*Figure 1*).

Part A can be fixed at various locations, such as the desired foot of the bowl, the desired inside base, etc. Whatever point you choose, be sure to allow for additional space for final finishing, removal of the tenon, a foot (if so planned), and/or a slight concave profile of the base. Position X is the fixed point you wish to measure from. Use a square to align X with the desired reference point on the bowl (*Photo 1*).

Part B’s point of contact inside the bowl corresponds vertically to position Y at the lathe bed. The gap between the X and Y indicates your current base thickness and gives you a quick read on how much more material you may need to remove.

Components and key points

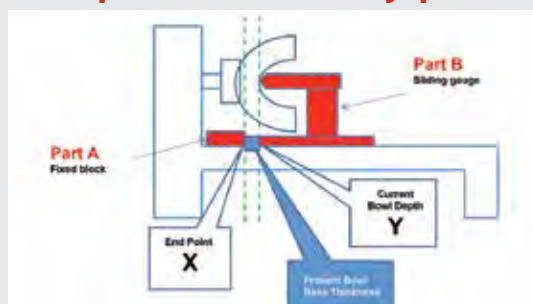


Figure 1: The gauge comprises two main components, shown in red. Part A is fixed, and Part B slides along the bed ways.

Jig setup



Use a square to align the front edge of Part A (point X) with the part of a bowl you want to measure from.



Jig construction

(2) The upright of Part B is noted (and later cut) so that the “sharpened” point will be exactly at spindle height.

(3) Both Part A and Part B have bottom runners that register within the lathe’s bedways.



In use

(4) The visible gap between Parts A and B represents the thickness of the bowl’s base.

(5) For a quick view, use only Part B and use a square to carry the depth up to the bowl’s exterior.

Construction notes

To make Part B, mount a square blank on your lathe and turn it to a point like a pencil. To ensure this point is at the same height as the lathe spindle, place Part B’s base on the lathe bed and mark where the vertical support should be cut (*Photo 2*). It should reach up to the bottom surface of the horizontal point piece. Ensure that the sharpened point is aligned to the front edge of the base.

To firmly secure Part A to the lathe bed, you could countersink a magnet in the base. If your lathe bed is not magnetic, use masking tape as an additional marker or a knob that clamps onto the bed ways. *Photo 3* shows the underside of Parts A and B.

In use

A precise visual of your current bowl thickness can be determined by using the setup as shown in *Photo 4*. But if you want a quick glance of how far you have hollowed, you can use only Part B and a square to carry the depth up to the bowl’s side (*Photo 5*). Deeper bowls, boxes, and hollow forms can be measured by using a longer pointed dowel mounted on Part B.

Michael Pinto lives in Toronto, Canada, and is a member of the Woodturners Guild of Ontario. He can be reached via his Instagram handle, @mwoodturner.

Turn a Wooden Tea Strainer

Beth Ireland

Project ideas come from many places, but I often find *need* is a powerful creative force. I started drinking tea made from loose leaves two years ago but became frustrated with the teapot I was using—a ceramic pot with a mesh filter. In order for the water to reach the loose leaves in the filter, I had to make a lot of tea. Plus, the mesh filter was difficult and messy to clean. While teaching last winter at The Center for Furniture Craftsmanship in Maine, I invited Mark Gardner to be a guest instructor. Mark had the students create their own plates, bowls, and spoons. These functional items inspired me to customize a strainer for tea that would fulfill my needs.

The first version I made had a spoon shape, but it did not balance well on the cup and required one-handed use. I reasoned that two handles would allow the strainer to rest on the cup. I went through four designs before I found the one that was right for me, illustrated in the steps shown here. I always encourage students to play with the form of an object to achieve their own purpose, whether it's a scoop, strainer, cup, or whatever.

Materials and design

Students at the school were processing bowl blanks from two large maple trees, and I was able to use wood from their offcuts. When choosing wood, stick with varieties that have no tannin. I have used maple, birch, cherry, and avocado.



Cherry does have some tannin, but it works well nonetheless and does not impart any flavor to your tea.

When designing your strainer, think of what you need it to do and how it will be used. I have a special teacup at school and another at home. They are two different sizes, so I needed to make different-sized strainers. Measure your cup's inside diameter, subtract at least a $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6mm) and that will be the outside diameter of the bowl part of your strainer. You might also check your chuck sizes to know the distances that the jaws open and close, what Forstner bits you own, and the size stock you have available. These elements will affect the product you make.

The depth of the strainer bowl is another consideration. If the tea leaves are really strong, I make the

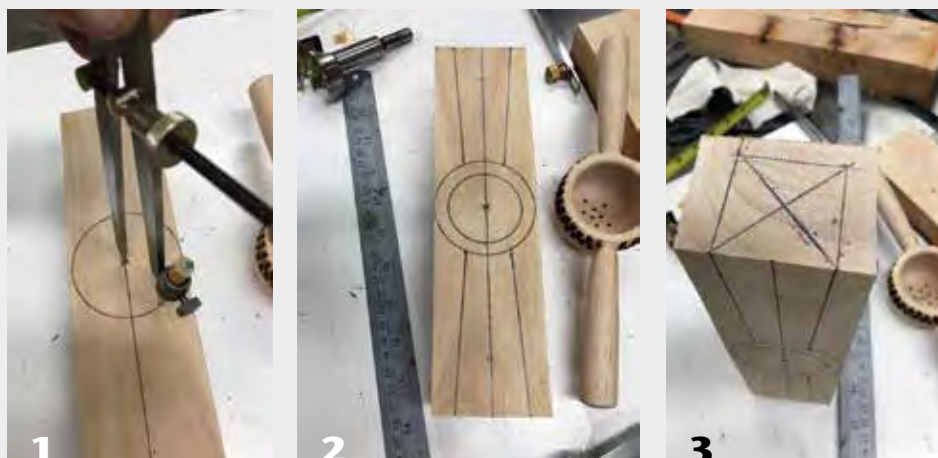
bowl of the strainer shallow so it will not reach the water in the cup after I pour. But if the tea is herbal and needs to steep, I make the bowl deeper so it will be submerged in the water.

I like the look of long handles, but they really have to overhang just long enough to rest on the cup's rim.

Blank prep

For this article, I made a strainer to fit a cup with an interior diameter of $2\frac{1}{2}$ " (6cm). My starting blank was roughly $2\frac{1}{2}$ " wide, 9" (23cm) long, and 2" (5cm) thick. Ensure the top of the blank is flat. You can achieve this by hand-planing, sanding, or running it across a jointer. (*Safety Note: It is not safe to run a piece shorter than 12" (30cm) across a jointer, so process a larger piece and then cut it down to size.*) The

Blank layout



1 Lay out your tea strainer design on the blank using pencil, ruler, and compass. Note the intended turning centers on the ends.

sides of the blank do not have to be flat, as you will be cutting them away. After flattening the top, I took a cut at the bandsaw with the flat top surface against the fence. This gave me a bottom surface somewhat parallel to the top.

Next, I drew my strainer concept on the top surface of the blank using a ruler and compass. Draw a centerline along the blank's length, then find the center of that line. Using a compass, draw circles representing the outside and inside diameters of the strainer bowl. I typically keep the handles large in the layout stage, so I can decide later what shape I want. Here, I drew angled handles, but they could also be straight. Carry the handle lines to the end of the block. I made a square at the endgrain, for ease of turning a cylinder (Photos 1-3).

Choose a drill bit to remove most of the bowl's interior. A drilled hole serves two purposes: it sets the depth of the bowl and adds efficiency when I am in

production. I used a 1¾" (4cm) bit, but if you don't have a bit that large, it's fine to use a smaller bit, as you can simply turn away the interior. Set the depth on your drill press, ensuring at least ¾" (9.5mm) thickness at the bottom of the bowl. This will leave room for a chucking tenon and, later, a curved bottom. Drill the blank (Photo 4).

Now you're ready to cut the blank out at the bandsaw. First, I cut into

the lines where the bowl and handles meet. Straight in and out, this is a relief cut. I cut the bowl shape next (Photos 5, 6).

When the shape drawn on top of the blank is cut out, prepare to cut the side profile. I carried the line where the bowl and handles meet across the unmarked bottom to remind me not to cut into the curve of the bowl's exterior. I also drew cut lines from the bowl to the handle ►

Drill bowl interior



4 A Forstner bit will give you a flat bottom with a little dimple in the center. A large bit can grab and spin the piece out of your hands, so clamp the blank to the drill press table.



5

Rough-cut blank sides



6

At the bandsaw, rough-cut the shape of your tea strainer.

Rough-cut blank bottom



7

(7) Pencil lines across the bottom serve as a reminder not to cut into the bowl while cutting a slab from the bottom of the handle.

(8-9) Because the piece is now an odd shape, be sure the work sits firmly on the bandsaw table. Maintaining two points of contact will prevent the work from rocking during the cut.



8



9

ends so I could cut away the remaining material there (*Photo 7*).

I tipped the piece in one direction to make the first bottom relief cut, then tipped it to the opposite side and made a second relief cut—always cutting on the stable side with two points touching the bandsaw table. Next, cut the length along the bottom, again maintaining workpiece stability on the bandsaw table (*Photos 8, 9*). Do not worry if the workpiece doesn't look perfect—you are just rough-cutting the blank in preparation for turning on the lathe.

After the blank is rough-cut on the bandsaw, draw different handle shapes on the wood until you see something you like. Then trim the workpiece to match your idea (*Photos 10, 11*). It doesn't matter if the handles are not square—the lathe will make short work of rounding them. The important thing is to locate your centers before mounting the work on the lathe. In this case, I positioned the centers closer to the top so the bowl would hang deeper into the teacup in use. If I had left the centers where they were initially, the handles would have been closer to the middle of the bowl.

Mark and cut handles



10



11

Sketch your desired handle shape onto the wood, then trim away the excess at the bandsaw.

Turning tools

For the turning of the tea strainer, use the tools you are most comfortable with. Following are the tools I typically use for this project (*Photo 12*).

Design Options

To me, the most important part of any project is the design, but designing is a process that takes time. When I have lots of extra wood and an idea in my head, I just start turning—it's like sketching in 3D. When wood is precious, I refine my idea on paper before touching a tool. If I let the wood "speak to me," I might start with a log and end up with a toothpick. Starting with a plan helps you think through all the steps.



Spindle gouge. I have been a production turner for thirty-five years and am very comfortable with my spindle gouge. I grind it to an extreme fingernail profile, which means it has an elongated bevel and a thin, sharp cutting edge. This profile gives me the finish cut of a skew, but the rounded corners make it easier to sneak into tight details

Tools for the job



12 The author's chosen tools for making tea strainers: a spindle gouge with a fingernail profile, a scraper custom made from a hex wrench, a parting tool with an angled edge, and a spindle-roughing gouge.

Turn one handle



13 With the work mounted between centers, begin with the angled parting tool to establish a cylinder next to the bowl.



14 The author uses a spindle gouge, cutting toward the bowl to shape the handle.



15 A roughing gouge, advanced toward the tailstock, is used to finish shaping the handle end.

Set handle lengths



16 Use a spindle gouge to make a partial cut denoting the length of the handle.



17 Remount the work, flipping it end for end. Use a spring caliper to gauge and then transfer the completed end's diameter to the second handle end.



18

without catching. I also use a spindle-roughing gouge at the ends of the tea strainer handles.

Angled parting tool. I use a parting tool ground with an angled cutting edge, which leaves a sharp leading point on one side. This profile makes it easy to scrape on the side and reach into tight corners.

Hex wrench scraper. I also use a long-armed hex wrench ground as a scraper to match whatever profile I want. For this tea strainer, I have ground it to a round-nosed shape. I also pull a burr on it and use it as a shear-scraper.

Turn the handles

Mount the partially shaped workpiece between centers. I used the angled parting tool with the longer side next to the bowl. With the lathe spinning at 1200 to 1800 rpm, I skimmed a smooth edge on bowl's side while moving the tool forward until it reached the cylinder that lives within the square of the strainer handle (*Photo 13*).

Now turn the rest of the handle to your desired shape. I used my spindle gouge, with the bevel facing the wood to make a skewing cut, moving from handle end toward the bowl (*Photo 14*). With the roughing gouge, cut in the other

direction and remove the stock closest to the end (*Photo 15*). It is difficult to use the roughing gouge for the entire handle because of the limited visibility caused by the spinning bowl section. Be careful not to get your hand or tool too close to the bowl.

With one handle shaped, mark your desired handle length. I always leave at least an extra $\frac{1}{4}$ " at each end so the center points from the drives will not remain in the finished piece. Make a partial cut with the spindle gouge to denote the length of the handle and to begin defining the shape of the end (*Photo 16*). Then take the piece off the lathe and flip it end ►

Tip!

When you buy a new spring caliper, its ends will be sharp. File the ends until they are smooth and round, finishing with 320-grit abrasive. The caliper's points will touch the wood as it spins, so it is important they will rub and not engage in the wood.

Transfer diameters to second handle



Transfer other diameters from the completed handle to the unfinished handle—next to the bowl and at the handle center. Turn the handle down to the established diameters to match the first handle.

Jam chuck



The author remounts the work using a scroll chuck as a jam chuck. The pin jaws are expanded inside the bowl only enough to center the work, not to hold it in place. Tailstock pressure holds the work against the base of the chuck jaws.

Form tenon, cut side



Form a tenon on the bottom of the bowl, then pare away at the side up to the handles.

for end so your body will be in the same stance when you turn the other handle. It is always easier to repeat a shape if you come at it from the same body position.

Replicating the handle shape from one side to the other is not as difficult as you might think. Mark three places on the completed handle (now at the headstock side)—its two ends and the largest diameter at the center. Then transfer the locations from those marks to the roughed cylinder on the tailstock side using a ruler.

Use a spring caliper to capture the diameter of the completed handle's end (*Photo 17*). Hold the caliper to the wood with just enough pressure that its points slide across the dimension with a little friction. Now transfer this diameter to the unfinished handle end (tailstock side). Hold the caliper in your non-dominant hand and the parting tool in your dominant hand, and push the tool forward to make a groove in the wood. Position the pre-set caliper in this groove and let its smooth ends gently rest while the piece is spinning. Do not force the caliper down, but let its points pass over the piece when you reach the correct diameter (*Photo 18*). Do this dimension transfer from the other two marked locations (*Photos 19, 20*). When you connect the three parting tool depths, your duplicated handle shape will appear (*Photo 21*).

Turn the bowl

The first step in turning the bowl section is to reverse-mount it so you'll be able to form a chucking tenon on the bottom. This will allow you to then turn the piece around and excavate the interior. I am not a proponent of expanding jaws inside a workpiece. In my years

of turning, the worst accidents I have seen are from this practice. I only use the jaws as a jam chuck. The bowl opening goes over the jaws, and I expand the jaws just enough to ensure the piece is centered. I then use the tailstock to push the bowl against the chuck body (*Photos 22, 23*).

Once the piece is mounted, turn a tenon to fit your chuck jaws. I used my angled parting tool. Beware that now the handles are spinning. Position yourself so you are pushing the piece onto the chuck as you turn. This will keep your hands away from the spinning handles (*Photo 24*).

Next, I took a skimming cut on the side of the bowl, down to the handles. This is where the angled parting tool shines; its sharp leading edge cuts cleanly as you scrape the side of the bowl (*Photo 25*).

Remove the bowl, flip it around, and hold it in the chuck, tightening the jaws as much as possible. I cut the outside edge of the bowl with the parting tool, exactly as I had done from the bottom, working my way right up to the handles.

I used my custom hex tool scraper to shape the rim and the bowl's interior (*Photos 26, 27*). Then, with a burr on the tool, I presented the

Shape rim and interior



With the work now held by the tenon, the author uses a custom-made scraper to form the tea strainer rim and to shape the interior of the bowl.

edge at an angle to shear-scrape the interior and exterior down to the handles. This gives a smooth surface that needs almost no sanding. If you do sand the rim, interior, and sides, always be mindful of the spinning handles. When I make these from wet wood I hand-sand when they are dry.

The next step is to reverse-mount the piece so you can remove the tenon and shape the bottom. My chuck jaws have sharp edges for grabbing pieces, so I positioned a rubber band around the jaws to protect the finished surface inside the bowl (*Photo 28*). Once again, I do not want to exert any pressure from inside the bowl, but gently turn the chuck key just enough to center the work

and then use the tailstock to push it against the chuck. Don't worry about the point of the cone (or live) center indenting the wood, as later that can be the location of a strainer hole.

I used the hex wrench tool to shape and then shear-scrape the bottom (*Photo 29*). At the very bottom, I used a spindle gouge to finish my shape right up to the cone center (*Photo 30*). Strive for a bottom thickness of about $\frac{3}{16}$ " (5mm). Using the jaws as a jam chuck allows you to take it off any time you want to check the thickness. Sand, being careful of the spinning handles.

Final steps

Remove the piece from the lathe and remount it between centers to sand ►

Remount, finish bottom



The work is remounted once again to remove the tenon and shape the bottom. A thick rubber band protects the now-completed bowl interior during jam chucking.

the handles. Then, with the piece off the lathe, cut the handle ends to final length.

The rim, or band, of wood between the handles is still rough from the bandsaw. I used a Shinto rasp to smooth and even out this rim. I like the Shinto rasp for this operation because it is smooth on the sides and allows you to work easily around the handles without nicking them (*Photo 31*).

Now drill the holes in the bottom of the bowl. On a piece of paper, I drew a circle slightly smaller than the interior dimension and bisected it with a ruler and compass. Decide on the location and number of holes you want, and poke holes in the paper at those points. I put a small piece of two-sided tape on the back and pressed the paper into the bottom of the bowl (*Photo 32*). Set the piece on a sacrificial scrap of wood so it does not tear out in the back as you drill. I used a 1/8" (3mm) drill bit.

The tea strainer will sit on the edges of a cup, so use a carving tool or flat

Custom-Made Scraper

I routinely make custom scrapers from long-arm hex wrenches. I buy them by the dozen, as they are cheap, hard, and hold an edge pretty well. I make tools to suit my needs quite a bit, as they can cut hours off my time spent on a project. You could also use an extra-long Phillips-head screwdriver to create a scraper. I have ground it to a round-nose profile. It should be flat on top, where the cutting edge is located. The bevel angle can vary, depending on the cut. If I find the tool is not cutting well, I will make the bevel longer. You must grind all edges sharp that will touch the wood.



chisel to make little flats to rest on the rim of the cup (*Photo 33*). This will prevent the strainer from tipping as you pour hot water.

The rim band is the perfect place to put your mark. Burning, carving, inlay, painting, and drawing are all great ways to decorate your piece. Most importantly, when your tea strainer is completed, sit down and have a nice cup of tea! ■

Beth Ireland, a professional architectural woodturner and sculptor with more than thirty years of experience, lives and works in St. Petersburg, Florida. She teaches the two-month Turning Intensive at The Center for Furniture Craftsmanship in Maine, as well as workshop classes at major craft centers around the country. For more, visit bethireland.net.

Smooth rim band



31

The author uses a rasp to smooth the rim band between the handles. This band presents a prime opportunity for embellishment.

Drill strainer holes



32

Drill holes in the bottom of your tea strainer.

Carve flats on handles



33

Flats carved on the underside of the handles near the bowl prevent the strainer from tipping as you pour hot water.



HARVEST TABLE COMMISSION WITH SPLIT-TURNED LEGS

Stephen Hogbin

To me, woodturning is almost always in relation to something else. Unlike my earlier work, where turning was an end in itself, this time it's how to fit a turning into a table structure that will endure a lot of stress. The project shown in this article borrows a split-turned leg detail from other side tables and incorporates it into a harvest dining table. It required a structural solution that was

immensely strong, yet the turned components remain expressive, albeit hidden from sight. With this design, the table could have a glass top and look interesting.

It is also interesting to me how modern glues facilitate solutions that would never have been possible in the past with animal glues. These glues enable a very direct, simple solution. Visually, the various elements are expressed clearly, and as

a structure, it is easy to understand what's going on.

Project considerations

The clients who commissioned this harvest table enjoy family gatherings and recognize the importance of having meals together. After a lengthy discussion, we agreed to a table that would be 8' (2.4m) long and 44" (112cm) wide. If I could have made it without legs, the client ►

From sketch to wood



A sketch conveys the basic table structure and how the split-turned leg would be incorporated.

would have been very happy. It's risky to put legs too far under a table, as the table is more prone to tipping and oscillating when people knock against it.

Another important consideration was that I would use wood from a tree they had cut down three years earlier, converted to lumber, and which was now dried enough. The

wood initially measured 12 to 15 percent moisture content, but I felt with the right table design, it would work. After the wood sat in my dry studio workshop for at least a month in the winter, the moisture content had dropped to 8 to 9 percent.

The boards were milled to 2½" (6cm) thickness. I found that they

would be too heavy for the tabletop, so I took them back to the mill and had them cut in half, resulting in 1"- (25mm-) thick boards. After the boards were milled to finished dimensions, I left them to rest for a few days. I always have more than one project going on, so I can shift back and forth and remain productive.

The tree had had a lot of tension in its growth. Most of the boards had curved dramatically during drying, and I was concerned that as I cut into them, more tension would be released. Some of the boards stayed straight to the new cuts, and others continued to move just a little.

Working with clients

How clients approach the design process varies. Some, happy with only a quick sketch, will say, "Show me when it's completed." Other clients want all the details and rationale for every part throughout the process. If their vision is too strong, it can become a problem. From the beginning, I make it clear that in the end, it is *my* design. I have learned to be thorough and ask a lot of questions to get a feel

A turning blank of four legs



The legs had to be laminated to make 3"- (8cm-) square blanks. Then the four legs were strapped together and held with a stainless steel band clamp at each end, along with a small amount of glue as insurance in case the turning chisel catches.



for the clients' concerns, interests, and ambitions for the piece. It can go very wrong if there isn't a clear communication, and even then when it seems clear, it can go seriously wrong. Fortunately, that rarely happens. Actually, what I enjoy about commission work is the pull and push of the exchange.

Having had conversations about the clients' needs and aspirations, I will also ask what they have seen of my work that inspired them to commission me to do the job. It is an indication of what they like in my work. I am reluctant to look at magazine pictures, as I don't want to copy others' designs, although they might inform directions.

A rough sketch can easily create illusions, even though it gets to the heart of the project. So the sketch evolves to a measured drawing, which will get to the bones and structure. If the client has difficulty understanding a drawing, then a scale model is made. A miniature of what they will get really is the best way to convince the client. Things will still change, but the model brings the client much closer to understanding what will happen. It helps me as well, and sometimes I make the model even if the client does not need or want it.

Once final decisions are made, both the client and I make a commitment. We agree to the price, and a deposit is paid to cover materials. Then there is no turning back. ■

*Stephen Hogbin, of Intersections Wood Gallery & Studio (intersectionsstudio.com), runs a school and completes commissions in Owen Sound, Canada. He is the author of five books, including *Woodturning: The Purpose of the Object*.*



At the lathe

The author turns the assemblage to the desired profile.

Turned and split



From a similar project, the four legs are split apart with a chisel.

Assembly



Dining tables get seriously racked when people push against them. Using modern PVA wood glue, large screws, and a milled shoulder at the top of each leg, the table structure becomes almost indestructible.

A lasting finish



The author applies polyurethane to the leg structure prior to mounting the tabletop.

EMBEDDING OBJECTS *in a* PORTHOLE BOWL

Cody Walker



My love affair with turning began when I made a simple wooden pen. That experience snowballed into more complex pen making and casting my own blanks. I particularly enjoyed casting embedded objects, such as printed labels, copper sleeves, pressed pennies, shark teeth, abalone strips, sea horses, stamps—anything that would fit on a pen tube. Soon my projects included bowls and hollow vessels, and I started thinking about how to embed objects into the walls of these larger turned pieces.

I was stumped until I woke up one morning thinking about an octagonal bowl blank. I reasoned that an octagon with flat sides would allow me to drill accurately spaced “portholes” into the outer edges of the blank. I could then embed objects in the holes with casting resin. Portholes can be through holes (windows) or inlays that can be seen only on the outer wall of your project.

Casting resins

Casting can be done with various types of resins, each with advantages and disadvantages. I have worked with three primary types: epoxy, urethane-based resins, and polyresins.

Epoxy resins, such as the brand Liquid Diamonds, offer good adherence to the wood, with less likelihood of shrinking and pulling away. Epoxies typically have longer cure times, about twenty-four hours. As such, an eight-porthole bowl could require numerous days of casting, since each porthole has to be cast individually and could require as many as three separate pours.

Urethane resins, such as the brand Alumilite, also offer good adherence and limited shrinkage, with the added benefit of shorter cure times. Two potential downsides: urethane resins have to be cast under pressure and are very sensitive to moisture. Having to use a pressure vessel might limit the size of your project, and moisture can cause a cloudy or opaque cast. Both epoxy and urethane resins require accurate mixing ratios and can be difficult to mix in smaller amounts.

Polyresins, such as the brand Silmar 41, produce very clear casts, are typically less expensive, and offer a relatively short cure time. The downsides

of polyresins are that they are brittle and “chippy” to turn, and that they shrink more, which can cause separation from the wood. I tend to favor polyresins, despite their disadvantages, since they are relatively easy to mix in small amounts and shrinkage issues can be addressed by casting each porthole in multiple layers.

Materials

Wood selection is also important when planning a porthole bowl since you need to limit wood movement around the acrylic casting. For this reason, green, or wet, woods are not suitable for this project. Larger fully dried one-piece blanks can be used if available, and segmented construction—making use of kiln-dried lumber—is another good option (*Photo 1*). With a segmented blank, portholes can be drilled

ANOTHER APPROACH EXPLORE!

For another method of adding portholes to a bowl wall, see Wes Jones's December 2020 *AW* article, “Stained Glass Porthole Bowl” (vol 35, no 6, page 34).



into wood that will be incorporated in a feature ring.

There are also several considerations when deciding what to cast. The size and shape of the items you want to embed will help determine the diameter and depth of your drilled portholes. The final wall thickness of your vessel will also be determined by your embedded objects since they should be placed in the center of the vessel wall. The density of the object must also be considered since lower-density objects like dried seahorses or starfish will float to the top of your cast as it cures. Finally, some objects may react with your resins and change colors, dissolve, or cloud your cast. The objects also need to be thoroughly dried before casting. You may want to do some experimental castings if you are working with a new object.

Blank prep and layout

Once you have decided what to cast and selected your wood, it's time to lay out your blank for cutting and drilling. Casting requires flat, level surfaces since in liquid form, resins are self-leveling. Using a round blank poses problems for casting objects around the perimeter. A rounded surface may be difficult to drill and complicates your casting. Conceivably, you could use a jig or holding device to bore holes in a round blank and either create temporary dams for your castings or turn away any excess material above your flat cast. But you can simplify the process by using blanks with parallel flat surfaces. I generally use an octagonal blank since it simplifies layout, indexing, and drilling. However, you could use any blank with an even number of parallel sides.

To make an octagonal blank, start with a square block and find its center by drawing diagonal lines corner to corner. From the center point, use a compass to draw a circle representing the final outside diameter of the bowl

Portholes in segmented construction



1 Adding a feature ring with portholes in segmented construction works well. Here, coins “float” in cast resin.

Octagonal turning blank



2 The flat parallel sides of an octagon make for even hole spacing and easy drilling.

Gauge the fit of an object



3 The author gauges the size of different objects to embed—a marble and a coin. This helps to confirm the projected wall thickness of the vessel and the depth the hole should be drilled.



or vessel. Then use a 45-degree square to add four more lines, dividing the outer circle into eight equally spaced sections. The four new cut lines are established by extending a 45-degree angle from an existing flat to a dividing line at the outer edge of the drawn circle. After you cut these flats, mark the center of each one on the outside edge to indicate your drilling locations (*Photo 2*).

Use the object you intend to cast to approximate the inner wall of your form (*Photos 3, 4*). Then use a compass to draw a line representing the inner wall. If you are making a segmented blank, keep the sides as concentric as possible and carefully measure from the middle (lengthwise) of each

segment to approximate the inner and outer walls. I generally err on the side of a thicker wall, especially when casting larger irregular objects. I can testify that cutting into a flint arrowhead creates sparks, leaves an indelible impression on your gouge, creates a “design opportunity,” and generally messes up your day. Allowing for a greater margin of error helps to reduce the potential for mishaps.

Using the object as an aid also helps to determine the depth of your drilled holes. When making a window-type of porthole, drill deeper than where you expect your inner wall to be—that is, all the way through your intended wall thickness. When making an inlay, the depth should ►

Drill the portholes



With a flat registered on the drill press table, the Forstner bit (top) is aligned perpendicular to the bowl wall. Drill to the desired depth for either a window (through the wall) or an inlay (stopped within the wall).



A porthole bowl blank, drilled and ready for casting.

Inlaid (non-through) porthole



A porthole that doesn't go all the way through the vessel wall serves as a recess that will frame an embedded object. Here, the author has colored a base layer of resin behind an arrowhead.

Cast object in resin



The author pours a carefully portioned mixture of resin to cast an object in a bowl wall. The flats of the octagon allow for a horizontal surface and a neater pour.

stop short of where you expect the inner wall to be. After determining the depth, bore the holes (*Photos 5, 6*).

Casting objects

After drilling the holes, it's time to cast the objects in resin. When casting an embedded object, I cast each hole in two or three steps, first establishing a base layer. If you are inlaying an object, you can color this base layer using pigments or powders to create a background, as shown in

Photo 7. The base should be cast to a depth that positions your object where you want it in the wall of your bowl or vessel. I typically use a craft stick marked at the desired depth to gauge how much resin to pour into the hole (*Photo 8*).

After the base pour sets, place the object you wish to embed in the hole, then pour a second cast. For lower-density objects that may float, the second cast should be a very thin layer that cements your object in

place. Heavier objects can be completely cast at this stage. However, I generally do all portholes in three or more layers when using polyresins to help minimize separation between the resin and the wood.

Turn the piece

After the resin has cured, you are ready to start turning or to glue up your blank if you are doing a segmented piece. Use the same turning techniques you would use on any other work. If you have drilled all the way through your intended wall thickness to create a window, hollowing the interior will reveal the inner side of your cast. Obviously for inlays (non-through holes), you will need to stop short of your cast material when hollowing.

It's important to use sharp tools to minimize chipping the resin. I generally use a bowl gouge with an Irish grind to turn and hollow. Hollowing can also be done with carbide tools but may require additional sanding. Turning at higher speeds (when safely possible) helps to ensure your tool cuts evenly through the transition from wood to resin.

Sanding should be done at slower speeds. I sand my porthole bowls to 3000-grit abrasive. It's important to sand to a fine grit, as stopping at coarser grits will reduce the clarity of your acrylic portholes. Apply a clear-drying finish, such as polyurethane, and buff. Buffing helps to give your portholes a glass-like finish.

Embedding objects in portholes and inlays is a fun and creative way to accent your work. The possibilities for creating interesting and unique pieces seem endless. ■

Cody Walker, a recently retired engineer, has been turning for about nine years. He is currently treasurer of the Richmond Woodturners, an AAW chapter in Virginia.

Make a “Tumbling” Bowl

Peter M. Smith



Tumbling Bowl,
Maple, cherry, walnut, 3" x 11" (8cm x 28cm)

“Tumbling” bowls and platters are so-called because they present an M.C. Escher-like illusion of tumbling cubes, and this appearance changes as the piece is rotated. All it takes to achieve this surprising effect is precision sawing and attention to the wood grain direction.

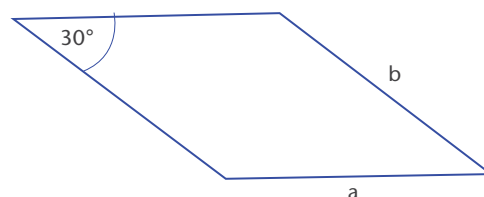
Make diamond segments

A tumbling-bowl blank is built up from diamond-shaped segments. It is critical that the sides of each segment are exactly equal, and the acute angle is 30 degrees. From the top view, you can see that three segments will form a hexagonal “cell” (*Figure 1* and *Photos 1, 2*).

For the table saw setup, move the fence to the “open” side of the tilted blade to avoid trapping the offcut between the blade and the fence, which could cause a kickback (*Photo 3*). A new thin-kerf blade will provide clean cuts.

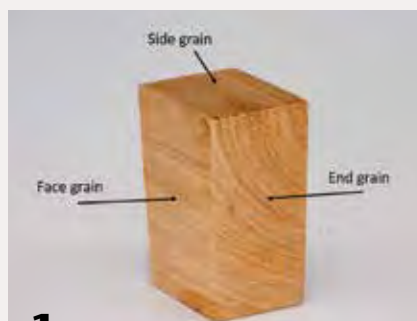
Use three lengths of contrasting woods, such as walnut, cherry, and maple. The stock must be of uniform thickness—in the example shown here, I planed the wood to 1" (25mm) thick from readily available 5/4 lumber. The stock’s width, which determines the height of the bowl (minus a small amount of turning waste), should be the same for each species of wood. Anywhere from 2½" to 4" (6cm to 10cm) wide is appropriate, depending on whether you are making a platter or bowl.

Use three of the first segments you cut to test the hexagonal fit. An imperfect fit now will be magnified during assembly, so be prepared to sacrifice some segments to get it right. Adjust the blade angle and/or fence as needed. When you are satisfied with your table saw setup, the segments can be cut quickly, so have a box handy to collect them (*Photo 4*). Be careful when ▶



Diamond segments form hexagonal cell

Figure 1. Tumbling-bowl segment shape. Sides a and b must be equal length.



1

A diamond-shaped segment in cherry, 4" tall. Note the grain orientation.



2

Top view of a “cell” of three segments. The optical illusion is already at play—it looks like a cube, but it’s actually a 4"-tall hexagon.

Cut segments



3



4

(3) The shim on the table saw fence prevents binding of the acute segment after the cut. The magnetic gauge is critical for ensuring the correct angle. Even so, trial and error are needed to achieve the “perfect” fit.

(4) Upon proper setup, cutting the segments goes quickly. The long scrap stick allows for safe pushing of the segments into a collection box.

sawing, even if there is little chance of kickback because of the obtuse angle of the saw blade and the spacer shim on the fence. Use a waste stick to push the segments through and into the collection box.

Assemble cells

As noted, a basic “cell” comprises three diamond segments, one of each wood color. There are two important factors to note when assembling the cells—the position of the different woods and the grain orientation (*Photo 5*). The positioning is easy since the woods are different colors. Just be consistent with their positioning for all cells. Here, I

have chosen to put walnut to the left, cherry to the right, and maple on top. More critically, the sidegrain at the top must be oriented the same way in each cell. This forms the main visual element, which is the illusion of a cube.

It’s easy to make a mistake here and spoil the visual effect. I recommend setting one established cell aside as a reference for the subsequent cells. Each cell will have three facegrain sides, three endgrain sides, and two sidegrain faces (top and bottom).

When you have the segments oriented correctly, glue three segments of the different woods into a cell. Rubber bands at the top and bottom will hold

the cells together while the glue sets (*Photo 6*). Wipe off any glue squeeze-out with a damp towel. After the glue is dry, clean up the sides of the cells very lightly on a belt sander.

Assemble turning blank

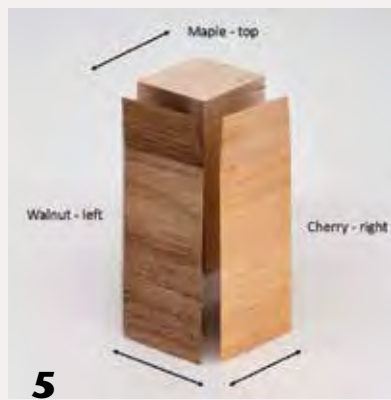
Once the cells have been prepared, they can be built into a turning blank in different ways. A basic approach is to take seven cells and glue them together to form a core, making sure the wood positions are aligned (walnut on the left, etc.). I recommend using quick-grip clamps with shims to ensure a good fit (*Photo 7*). After the core is set, twelve more cells can be added to extend the diameter (again, paying attention to wood species and grain orientation). Using 1"-thick stock, this method will increase your core from about 7" (18cm) to about 10" (25cm), as shown in *Photo 8*.

The core and the outer layer could also be glued together at the same time, giving some wiggle room for the fit (literally). Here, the need for precision cutting becomes obvious. Use lots of glue since glue-starved joints risk failure during turning. A strap and quick-grip clamps with shims hold the cells together tightly while the glue sets.

If you are using tall segments, say 4", another approach is to cut four of the cells in half and use seven of these shorter 2" (5cm) cells for the core, creating a “well” in the center. Otherwise, more than 3" (8cm) of waste per core cell will be turned away, which is difficult, unnecessary, and uneconomical. Even after turning past faceplate screw holes on the short cells and accounting for the tenon, there would still be enough thickness for the bowl base. The disadvantage of this approach is that when gluing the taller cells around the core, it is more difficult to keep the joints tight.

Another option is to add an outer edge to your glue-up so you are not left with a jagged perimeter. You can use eighteen individual segments (not

Wood species orientation



5 Three segments are ready to be glued up into a cell. Be consistent with positioning of wood species in all cells.

Glue segments into cells



6 Segments are glued up into seven 4"-tall cells, with gluing pressure provided by rubber bands. After the glue dries, the cells are sanded lightly.

Glue cells into a core, then expand



7 From a separate example, 2"-tall cells are glued into a seven-cell core.



8 The author surrounds a core with additional cells, widening the diameter of the blank.

glued into cells) to fill in the outside angles and complete a hexagonal blank (Photo 9). In this example, this added 1" to the outside diameter. The same wood can be used for all of these edge segments, or you can alternate species to contrast with adjacent cells. If desired, trim the hexagonal points on the bandsaw to create a circular blank before turning. The example shown resulted in a blank of about 11" (28cm) diameter.

Turn the bowl

Shaping and finishing the bowl are the easy steps. Standard lathe mounting techniques apply. For example, you can initially mount the blank on a faceplate or screw chuck, true it up, shape the outside, and form a chucking tenon. Then remount the work in a chuck to hollow the bowl (Photos 10-12). Sand and finish as you normally would. Any slight gaps between cells can be filled with sawdust and glue.

Sweeping curves will distort the cube illusion somewhat, so aim to have steeper sides and the bottom of the bowl relatively flat, as shown in this article's lead image.

Take note that with this glue-up, you'll be turning dry hardwood, which is slower and more difficult than turning green wood (no long

ribbons flying from the lathe). And the sharp edges of the segments can fracture if they have not been glued securely enough.

Looking beyond bowl forms, shorter cells (about 1" tall) can also be glued together to form an attractive sidegrain cutting board of tumbling cubes. ■

Peter M. Smith, a woodturner for many years, turns bowls of all shapes and sizes from native hardwoods found in New Jersey. His work is in many collections (and kitchens) nationwide. In search of the "perfect" bowl, Peter aims to simplify form, using classic shapes that have evolved over time in different cultures.

Complete the hexagon

A glued-up blank, ready for bandsawing to a circle for turning. The author has added eighteen individual walnut segments to fill in the angles at the outside edges.



Tumbling Platter/Bowl, Maple, cherry, walnut, 2" x 11" (5cm x 28cm)

Turn the bowl



(10) A 4"-tall blank with a "well" in the center, mounted on a screw chuck and trued up.

(11-12) The author forms a chucking tenon on the bottom of the bowl, then remounts the work in the chuck for hollowing and final turning.

The Art of Repurposing

Inspiration from a Chapter Challenge



A few years ago, the Mid-Columbia Woodturners (Kennewick, Washington) started an annual challenge, with the results being presented at our annual holiday party in December. One of our club challenges was to use found objects in a turning project. Since then, some members have

continued to pursue this approach in their work, using objects for something other than their originally intended purpose. The world is filled with items—from trash to treasure—that can be used to enhance turnings and add interest and value. In fact, the simple act of looking for these items can help

open a maker's mind and energize creativity. Following are some examples of these works. I hope this concept will inspire others to do new work with found objects.

—Jerry Johnson, Mid-Columbia Woodturners

The Midnight Oil

Pat and Karen Miller take frequent hikes in the area near their studio, where they have come upon many interesting items along the trails and hills. One such item was an old glass bottle found in a ravine. They decided to make it part of a special turning project. The pierced and pyro-textured tube and a turned, carved, and pyro-textured base are made from citrus wood. The spout and handle are from compressed ash with a bit of texturing to tie them to the base. Everything was given a bath in red dye darkened with black dye, then finished with a satin topcoat and matte acrylic to kill the sheen. The bottle is partially filled with found, tumbled stones, including amethyst, peridot, sunstone, and garnet. The lid is easily removed so new owners can add their own treasures.

Pat and Karen Miller, *The Midnight Oil*, 2020, Citrus wood, compressed ash, found glass bottle and pebbles, dye, 7½" × 6½" × 2" (19cm × 17cm × 5cm)



Light up the Sky

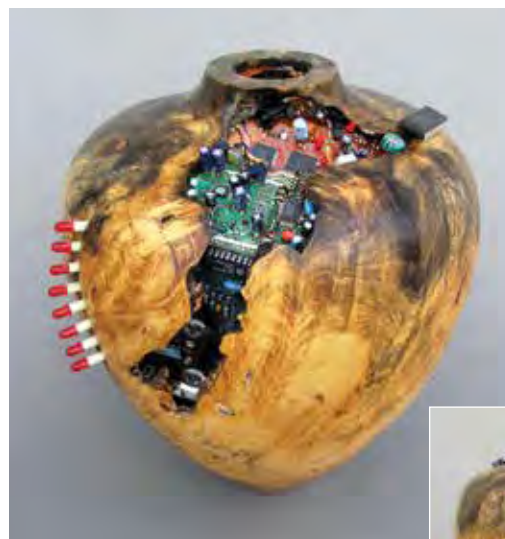
Jerry Decker's *Light up the Sky* started while on a visit to an architectural salvage store. There, he discovered a bin of large marquee light bulbs. His first thought was to use them as the envelope of a turned hot-air balloon. But on the ride home, the idea turned into a steampunk dirigible based on some small Christmas ornaments Jerry had turned the prior year. By the time he arrived home, his sketchbook was full of preliminary ideas. The final result was a solar/steam driven dirigible.



Jerry Decker, *Light up the Sky*, 2019, Upcycled marquee light bulb, Swarovski crystal beads, decorative wire, hollow copper tubing, maple, padauk, 8½" x 10" x 4½" (22cm x 25cm x 11cm)

Homeland Insecurity

Ron Gerton's studio was once located in an old shopping center, a few doors down from a computer repair business that threw out some amazing "trash." Ron started collecting discarded electronics parts and eventually decided to use them in his artwork. He turned a hollow vessel from a piece of spalted buckeye burl with natural voids. Then he fit some of the used electronic parts into the voids. The result was *Homeland Insecurity*.



Ron Gerton, *Homeland Insecurity*, 2016, Buckeye burl, found electronic parts, 14" x 9" x 10" (36cm x 23cm x 25cm)



Parody

Jerry Johnson purchased a small cage at a second-hand store. After a period of considering potential projects, he came across a song titled, "A Bird in a Gilded Cage," composed by Arthur J. Lamb and Harry Von Tilzer, published in 1900. The song laments the fate of a woman, "the fairest of all the sights," who because she married for wealth and not for love, becomes metaphorically "only a bird in a gilded cage." Jerry decided to satirize the song and made *Parody*, which presents a gilded ball in a cage.



Jerry Johnson, *Parody*, 2019, Found metal cage, walnut, metallic wax; cage: 12" x 7" (30cm x 18cm), turned box: 5¼" (13cm) diameter



Breaking Boundaries and Removing Limitations



The 2020 Virtual WIT eXchange

Two thousand twenty started off looking like a great year. The planning for the third Women in Turning (WIT) eXchange was at the top of the list for the WIT committee. We'd tentatively scheduled with Arrowmont for the third week of September 2020. But we all know what happened next—the pandemic forced us to change our plans. The committee needed to shift its focus quickly from planning an in-person event to finding alternatives to keep the WIT community connected.

Going virtual

As the year went by and it became evident the pandemic wasn't going to end anytime soon, we adapted to our safe-at-home circumstances. We found options that would allow for a different type of WIT eXchange that might be just the ticket to bring this community some much needed focus. We were going Virtual! The September WIT newsletter included an article with an invitation. WIT committee member Andi Wolfe stated, "The past two years have shown us how important the eXchange has become

to a community of women turners in stimulating creativity, fostering collaboration, and facilitating self-confidence."

The next challenge was to spread the word. Linda Ferber and Marie Anderson started promoting the Virtual WIT eXchange through social media. We broke the mold, reaching audiences like never before. Previous limitations such as geography, artistic genre, finances, and skill level were no longer obstacles to participation. By the beginning of November 2020, we had more than 100 inquires.

FOR FURTHER READING

EXPLORE!

Log on at woodturner.org and use the Explore! tool to find these *American Woodturner* articles about the 2018 WIT eXchange and WIT's approach to creativity.

- "Uproarious Reciprocation: The 2018 Women in Turning eXchange," by Lynne Yamaguchi and Kathleen Duncan, February 2019 (vol 34, no 1, page 42).
- "Abundant Imagination: A Case Study in Fostering Creativity" by Lynne Yamaguchi, August 2019 (vol 34, no 4, page 37).



Team Northern Lights (Janese Evans, Linda Ferber, Rosanne Gold, Ellen Starr), *Fluid Containment*, 2020, River birch, boxelder, cherry, wool felting, birch plywood, gilding, paint, 13" x 9¾" x 9¾" (33cm x 25cm x 25cm)

Women of different backgrounds were willing to take a risk, jump into the unknown, and step outside of their comfort zone.

The process

So, how would we do this? We decided the Virtual eXchange would be similar to the prior in-person eXchanges in structure only. Linda and Marie would facilitate the process, which included setting up teams of three or four women to work collaboratively on a project inspired by randomly selected word pairs, a noun and a modifier. At the in-person eXchange, all the teams were supplied the same materials and a limited time to create their projects. The emphasis was on the process, not on completing a project, which allowed freedom to experiment and explore.

The challenges of working on a virtual team definitely added to this

intense collaboration. The first change would be the timeframe. Instead of six to eight working hours per project, we had to consider the constraints of social distancing, geographic location, shipping, time zones, and more. The individual teams managed their own timing, working with (or around) shipping schedules. We were all working together, embracing flexibility for a successful outcome.

We committed to twice-weekly Zoom meetings to accommodate the wide range of time zones involved. Many of the teams came together after our first week of orientation meetings in early November. (In fact, we welcomed new teams as late as the first week of December.) These Zoom meetings proved essential for community building and communication throughout the collaboration. ►



Team Symposium Chums (Linda Ferber, Dawn Herndon-Charles, Cindy Sing), *Reckless Position*, 2020, Ash, oak, walnut, copper, glass, paint, 15" x 6" x 6" (38cm x 15cm x 15cm)



Team Accents from Across the Pond (Mary Ashton, Margaret Garrard, Jay Heryet, Helen Bailey), *Voluptuous Gifts*, 2020, Sycamore, gold leaf, acrylic paint, corrugated cardboard, 12" x 12" x 12" (30cm x 30cm x 30cm)

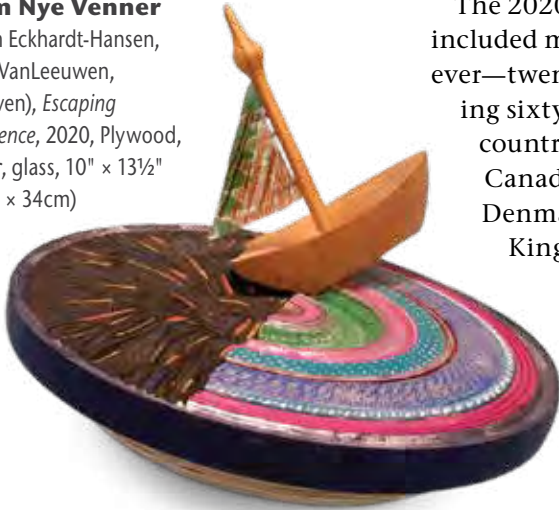


Team Brainy Handfuls

(Cindy Sing, Sandy McLain Hochmuth, Marie Anderson), *Diverse Evolution*, 2020, Manzanita, spalted maple, organic fibrous banana/silk, refined perle cotton, organic cotton boll, precious metal clays, fused glass, resin, copper wire, peacock feathers, 36" x 12" x 3" (91cm x 30cm x 8cm)

Team Nye Venner

(Bitten Eckhardt-Hansen, Laura VanLeeuwen, Iris Laven), *Escaping Turbulence*, 2020, Plywood, poplar, glass, 10" × 13½" (25cm × 34cm)



The 2020 Virtual WIT eXchange included more participants than ever—twenty-one teams comprising sixty-two women from seven countries: the United States, Canada, the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, the United Kingdom, and France.

Fortunately, the AAW had recently launched an online tool to help facilitate various woodturning communities (called AAW

Exchange). We formed a WIT group, where facilitators and teams could post updates, including video tutorials, process photos, and comments. This virtual learning platform was an important tool for supporting community growth.

Beyond woodturning skills

At the in-person eXchanges, projects were completed daily and presented after dinner to the entire group. Participants were then re-assigned to new teams, and new words were



Team We Got Lathed

(Cheryl Lewis, Jackie Cheyne, Noele DeSafey), *Fragile Diversity*, 2020, Black oak, cedar, red oak, encaustic wax, yard debris, shou sugi ban charring, epoxy, paint, 20" × 7½" (51cm × 19cm)



Team East West Explosives (Christine Smith, Susan McCoy, Anne Ogg), *Escaping Turbulence*, 2020, Maple, boxelder, walnut, 20" × 12" × 12" (51cm × 30cm × 30cm)

In Their Own Words

"Such a supportive force!"

"I must tell you COVID really has done bad things with my mental health. My workshop has been closed, so this project really lifted me up."

"Thank you for making this virtual eXchange a really positive event in these gloomy days of COVID."

"We made new connections, stretched our creativity, and had fun!"

chosen for the next day. Enter the virtual element. How would the projects, skills, and creative journey be shared? Andi Wolfe taught us how to create a five-minute “speed talk” presentation in PowerPoint. She did this by creating and presenting the lesson via her own “speed talk,” which was presented live at the weekly Zoom meetings, recorded, and archived on the WIT community page. This enabled women to review it at any time and/or share it with members in their own Zoom team meetings. Creating these presentations proved to be daunting, to say the least—limiting each presentation to five minutes forced teams to focus as they reflected on their journey. We had to introduce our team members, then discuss the creative thought process, challenges we faced, and our learning adventures. We then had to review the process(es) used to create the project and ultimately unveil the completed work (all in five minutes). These women really stepped up, further expanding their skill set beyond woodturning.

This positive creative journey encompassed women of all skill levels

and invited the use of a variety of media. We worked beyond “round and brown,” exploring metal, glass, fiber, poured acrylics, paper, and even digital photo manipulation. We hope this expansion to other media will have a lasting influence on woodturning. We don’t (and shouldn’t) always stay in the woodturning “lane.” Opening our minds to different choices of media created unlimited opportunities to break boundaries and explore new avenues.

Huge benefits

The 2020 Virtual WIT eXchange was by all accounts a huge benefit to those who participated. We have received very positive comments, including stories of feeling uplifted, supported, and inspired. The women who shared in this journey said they appreciate having a reason to get to the lathe and create. More than anything else, we have all gained new friendships and new skills. To be honest, in this one instance, we can say we were thankful that COVID caused the shift to a Virtual eXchange, as it allowed us to include

For More About WIT

For more, visit tiny.cc/WIT, where you can learn all about AAW’s Women in Turning program, view video recordings of past WIT Presents artist talks, read WIT newsletters, and see the full array of collaborations from the virtual 2020 WIT eXchange.



many more women from all over the world.

The ripple effect of the 2020 WIT eXchange is widespread. As the teams shared their progress with their local woodturning communities, they were inspired to create programs based on the format of this experience. It will be exciting to see the results of these ripples. Now, get to your lathes and create something!

The WIT committee is deeply grateful to Ruth Niles (nilesbottlestoppers.com) for sponsoring the 2020 Virtual WIT eXchange.

—Linda Ferber and Marie Anderson



Team Ring Masters (Rebecca DeGroot, Linda Ferber, Janice Levi), *Joyful Passage*, 2020, Cherry, maple, paint, 6½" × 13" × 8" (17cm × 33cm × 20cm)



Team Lakes to Ocean (Heather Marusiak, Phyllis Moffitt, Dima Tawakkol), *Iconic Generosity*, 2020, Cypress, walnut, onyx, 13½" × 8" (34cm × 20cm)

OF WATER AND WOOD:

The Inspired Work of Mike Lee

Sharon Doughtie



With the demise of brick-and-mortar galleries and the proliferation of social media, many artists actively post their work on Facebook, Instagram, and/or woodturning forums. As this phenomenon increases, so does the perceived need to devote time and energy to create and maintain a virtual public profile. Could this diversion be detrimental to making the work itself? Is a social media presence required to be a well-known artist? Enter Mike Lee, who, despite eschewing social media, remains a well-known and admired woodturning artist.

Mike rose in the woodturning field in the 1990s, before social media existed. His guiding principle: “If the work is good, it will speak for itself. Don’t make something so someone will like the work. Make it so *you* like it.” This approach has served Mike well throughout his career.

His expressive turned and carved forms are loved by many, and despite a modest public profile, his classes at Arrowmont fill up and he continues to be invited to demonstrate at symposia.

Mike was raised in Kailua on the island of O’ahu, Hawai’i—an idyllic setting with beach-water sports front and center. Mike has swum, free dived, surfed, stand-up paddled, spearfished, and now practices wing-foiling. He used to describe himself as a surfer who happens to turn wood. Nowadays, he is more likely to say he is a wing-foiler who carves.

Early work

Mike describes himself as being “one-pointed” in his pursuits: “If I’m interested in something, I’ll go 110 percent, pedal to the metal.” When Mike was stand-up paddling, his goal was to catch a double-overhead wave.

In Hawai’i, that means catching a wave with a 13’ to 14’ (4m to 4.3m) face. As soon as he accomplished that, he was ready to move on to another challenge.

This one-pointed focus and willingness to embrace challenges have helped Mike become the premier wood artist he is today. He began turning in 1987, when, in a funk from a bad situation, he was seeking a new focus. “What’s that machine that spins the wood?” he asked during a visit to a local tool seller. He emerged with a lathe, some tools, and a book and taught himself what he jokingly calls “the fine art of bludgeoning wood.” “I got beat up,” he recalls.

In those early days, Mike made Hawaiian bowls, pens, and other basic objects. He watched numerous videos, read *Fine Woodworking* magazine, and joined the AAW. After giving himself time to achieve some competency, Mike started selling his work at craft fairs and was juried into the Pacific Handcrafters Guild, the most prestigious craft fair in Hawai’i at that time, and contemplated turning as a way of making a living.

Before getting formal instruction, Mike learned the fundamentals of turning from a Richard Raffan video and book, and from a Del Stubbs video. When Raffan demonstrated in Hawai’i, Mike attended. He notes, “Richard was a huge influence on

Carving Wood and Waves



Photo: Sharon Doughtie

Mike Lee, wing-foiling at Kailua Beach, October 2020. Wing-foiling is a new watersport that uses a surfboard with a hydrofoil attached to the bottom, instead of the usual fins. People, including Mike, have added sails to the mix, which increases their speed and can allow them to become airborne. Riders hold a sail in their hands and pivot it to catch even the smallest ripples of wind. Mike says, “With surfing, everyone is trying to get on one wave. In wing-foiling, the wind is shared by everyone. The foiling community is really awesome.”

me. I bought a Harrison lathe because Richard turned on one!”

Mike has a great love for and loyalty to Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts. In those early years, he took note of pictures of contemporary woodturnings paired with ads for classes at Arrowmont. Since he was considering turning as a career and saw that many of the professionals he admired taught at Arrowmont, he decided to get some proper instruction. He signed up for Arrowmont’s work/study program in 1990 and 1991, working around the campus, then was a workshop assistant in 1992 and 1993. From there, he was invited back to teach.

Influences

Although his influences are vast, among the turners he credits are John Jordan, Stoney Lamar, Michael Hosaluk, Del Stubbs, Michael Peterson, Ray Key, and David Ellsworth. Jordan and Lamar both instructed Mike and introduced him to collectors, for which Mike is deeply grateful. In addition to having his work in numerous private collections around the world and in Arrowmont’s permanent collection, Mike also has pieces in several museums, including the Renwick Gallery at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the Honolulu Museum of Arts, Detroit Institute of Arts, and Arkansas Arts Center.

Mike once lamented to Stoney Lamar about slogging through his twelve-hour workdays. Stoney responded, “I only work five hours a day.” Surprised, Mike asked what Stoney did the rest of the time. The reply: “Think.” That pivotal moment caused Mike to change how he approached and thought about his work.

Mike was fortunate to attend Del Stubbs’ last class at Arrowmont, where he also learned to turn thin bowls and make boxes. His 1996 box made from flame-wood with a curly koa insert references the Hawaiian bowl shape with the added element of a foot, which raises the form. The concentric stippling at the top is the perfect frame for the focal point of the

raised bead that encircles the koa insert. Repeating the fine stippling on the foot brings the elements together. Even though the box was made twenty-five years ago, the lid still closes with a resounding snap.

Mike also took a box-making class from Ray Key at Arrowmont. “I learned a great deal about design and getting a good fit on my lids. [Ray] was a lot of fun to hang out with, too.”

Growing career

Mike has created several series of pieces, and he works on them concurrently. Mike says that all the pieces in his series feature lobes, creases, and folds. His waveforms and other ocean-inspired shapes speak to his love of the ocean.

Mike has regularly taught at Arrowmont and given demonstrations and hands-on sessions at symposia and woodturning clubs throughout the U.S. and around the world. His laidback teaching style, self-deprecating humor, kind nature, and genuine interest in others, along with his stellar skills, have made him a popular figure in the turning world. But Mike has never stopped to honk his own horn—he is way more interested in pursuing his next passion.

Art galleries offered to show Mike’s work, and the now-closed del Mano Gallery was his most successful outlet. He also showed in Martha Connell’s Great American Gallery in Atlanta, Georgia, which represented some of the most innovative contemporary craft artists when it was open (1985 to 2003).

After several years as a full-time maker, Mike was invited to join a local hui (co-op) gallery and showed work there for twelve years. The venue gave him a steady storefront presence in



Untitled Box, 1996, Flamewood, koa,
5" × 3¾" (13cm × 10cm)

Private Collection

Photo: Pat Kramer



Hawaiian Bowl, 2010, Koa, ebony,
11" × 10" (28cm × 25cm)

Silver Collection

Hawai’i, where collectors and passersby could view and purchase his work.

For many years, Mike and a friend who made jewelry boxes organized a yearly sale during the two weekends after Thanksgiving. He would work on his pieces for several months. They had a huge mailing list, and those sales sustained him throughout the year.

During the 2008 recession, with three children in school and soon to be in college, Mike got a regular job for the first time in eighteen years. “I did what I had to do,” he said. He briefly worked for a ukulele company, cutting instrument parts. Soon, a local millwork company approached Mike about joining their team, and he is still working there today. ►

Ammonite inspiration



An ammonite fossil, whose shape inspired a series of Mike Lee's turned and carved works.

Photo: Tylwyth Eldar - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=85146692



Ammonite, 1999, Koa, 4" × 7" (10cm × 18cm)

John and Robyn Horn Collection



(Above left) *Fossil Shell*, 2008, Gabon ebony, 3" × 6" × 5" (8cm × 15cm × 13cm)

Private Collection

(Above right) *Trilobite*, 2003, Pheasant wood, 4½" × 6½" × 6" (11cm × 17cm × 15cm)

Private Collection

(Right) *Crescent Ammonite*, 2002, Macassar ebony, 10¾" × 14" × 5¼" (27cm × 36cm × 13cm)

Private Collection

Photos: Hugo de Vries



He manages the rough mill, planing and ripping wood to size as well as working on the molder, making handrails, moldings, and baseboards.

Mike's children are mostly through school now, and when they graduate, he will retire and go back to full-time art making. When asked if he misses daily studio work, Mike said making things every day fills that void. He works in his studio when he feels the urge, but on free days, he is more likely to be wing-foiling, working on getting airborne.

Process and inspiration

Mike draws much of his inspiration from the ocean. Waiting in the surf line for a set to come in allows time to ponder and observe. He says there is a marvelous feeling of being away: "Getting out there and being in the ocean clears your head. Diving, seeing all the different marine life, gives me ideas—all the ripples on the waves, the perfect surf rolling in, a beautiful thing to see. Being in the water makes me feel inspired when I go into the studio. The ocean is like everything to me. I don't know what I'd do in my life without it." Mike continues, "I'm always gathering ideas when I'm in the water, just looking around, seeing things that inspire me to carve."

When Mike begins work on an object, he does not make an initial sketch. Working intuitively, he has an idea of where he is heading, draws on the wood as he carves, and keeps a close eye on the details he plans to include, such as strategically placed sapwood. If the piece will feature deep carving, he leaves it very thick off the lathe, though not all of his pieces are turned—some are pure carvings.

Fossils

Fossils fascinate Mike, and while at Arrowmont one year, he visited a rock shop, where he purchased an ammonite fossil. Ammonites, now extinct, were close relatives of squids and octopi, but they lived in a nautilus-shaped shell. This

There is never a lump, a break in a line, or anything to distract the observer from believing in the fantasy creature.

shape inspired Mike to make his first turned-and-carved piece, *Ammonite* (1999). It was a laborious endeavor, as it is frustratingly difficult to relief-carve on a concave form. But Mike persisted, and making *Ammonite* would start his creative journey with lobes, creases, and folds. The curves at the rim that sweep into the bottom of the bowl reference both the ocean and ammonites, resolving in a breaking wave at the bottom of this shallow bowl. Mike later shifted to hollow vessels for other ammonite-inspired pieces.

Another fossil that inspired Mike is the trilobite, which lived in shallow waters. His *Trilobite* form (2003) looks like an alien prehistoric critter, perhaps a precursor to crabs. The ribs could be a line of waves washing in. Like *Ammonite*, *Trilobite* is relief-carved but is lushly plump and sensuous because the carving is on a convex shape.

Mike's art pieces invite handling and close inspection. There is never a lump, a break in a line, or anything to distract the observer from believing in the fantasy creature.

Fossil Shell (2008) features concentric ribs wrapping a carved hollow form that sits in a stand on its side. Here, the ammonite form, with its scaled ribs, has been unwrapped. The brushed fins could have been for locomotion. It also evokes an image of an ocean creature or perhaps its egg case.

Crescent Ammonite is a carved hollow form that sits on its side. The concentric rings surrounding the center hole again reference the surf line. There is the ubiquitous waveform around the hole, with a crescent moon or maybe a sea creature embedded next to it. Mike carefully placed the sapwood at the base, and the light stippling complements the strong grain.

Tidal series

Spending a lot of time at the beach, Mike has had the good fortune to study

tides, waves, coral, and rocks. His *Tidal* series is informed by those observations. *Tidal Surge* delightfully evokes the image of waves lapping on a sandy beach. The stippled sapwood helps ground the idea of sand, while grain lines underscore wave movement.

Tidal Pod conjures images of sand peppered with small pools at low tide, layers of coral with secret caves, or perhaps a sand-and-ocean-sculpted rock sitting on the shore. It invites closer inspection.

Movement

Mike enjoys making pieces that move. *Rock-a-Bye Pod* was his first rocking pod.



Rock-a-Bye Pod, 1994, Eucalyptus burl, 3" x 5¾" x 3" (8cm x 15cm x 8cm)

Pat Kramer and Sharon Doughtie Collection

Tidal Surge, 2000, Milo, 4½" x 8½" (11cm x 22cm)

Alan and Donna Lee Collection

Photo: Hugo de Vries



Tidal Pod, 1999, Milo, 5½" x 10½" (14cm x 27cm)

Private Collection

Photo: Hugo de Vries

He wanted it to look "like something you'd find on the forest floor." Indeed, it does look like an unusual seed or perhaps a creature from the sea, until the viewer discovers the rockers on the bottom. A sculpture in the round, it has visual offerings from every angle. Mike turned it from a eucalyptus burl and left it thick for the carving that followed. After completing the gracefully thin form, Mike sandblasted it using glass beads. His ubiquitous waveform surrounds the rim.

Rock-a-Bye Tako, another rocking object, is an alluring fantasy of an octopus wrapping its tentacles around a rock and perhaps gently rocking along ►

Rock-a-Bye Tako, 1999, Macassar ebony, 5½" x 8¼" x 3¼" (14cm x 21cm x 8cm)

Honolulu Museum of Art Collection

Photo: Hugo de Vries



Photo: Pat Kramer

Brood, 2005, African blackwood, cocobolo, tagua nuts, 3½" × 6" × 8" (9cm × 15cm × 20cm)

Photo: Hugo de Vries



or getting some sleep. Mike leaves it to the observer to imagine the possibilities. The stippling again serves to spotlight the eight high-relief-carved legs.

Since ocean critters are in the forefront of Mike's view, he was destined to create some crabs. The fabulous *Brood* is a kinetic sculpture in which an African blackwood crab sits on a nest of cocobolo and protects her tagua nut eggs. The eggs act as rollers, allowing the crab to rotate. With Mike's usual attention to detail, he left four sapwood tips on the nest petals. The repeated scales on eggs and crab pull the piece together. Mike enjoys designing multiple elements in a piece that give viewers a chance to interact and play.

Pod forms

Pods appear to be the forms that Mike has revisited the most. Some stand upright while others lay on their sides. The upright forms came first and resemble lush, plump gourds that are ripe and ready to burst with life. They have a carved cylinder running diagonally up both sides of the pod form. Yet again, there are ocean references in *Ohana*—the waveform around the top and fish scales on the cords.

Lobes, folds, and creases are very evident in *Tripod*, a grouping of pods that lay on their sides. It was a challenge for Mike to figure out how to resolve the end points. Fortunately, he was able to draw on his high school days when he practiced kung fu. Mike nestled his

finger and thumb pads together, as in the "crane" stance, pointed his hand towards his face, and looked at his fingertips. In that pose was the resolution for the pod ends—five lobes with creases and curves. Again, these pods evoke the feeling of ocean eggs or critters.

Family

The most important series to Mike is arguably his *Family* series. "I remember sitting in a lot of different slide shows by different artists, and they'd show self-portraits in their work. I thought, 'I don't have a self-portrait. I have a family. They are a family portrait.'"

"I tried to include my children [in my turning practice], let them choose the type of wood. They'd come by when I was working, and it was a good way to include them in the process. When the children were little, we'd go out every weekend. We'd go surfing, hiking, playing tennis. We were really close. It was natural to put them in my work." The Lees are still a close family. The three children spend as much time as they are able with Mike and his wife Debbie. It has been a boon during the pandemic.

Object of Our Affection is an homage to the birth of their first child, Zac. It is two hollow forms made from one contiguous

Photo: Hugo de Vries



Photo: Hugo de Vries



(Above) *Tripod*, 2000, Lignum vitae, cocobolo, Gabon ebony, largest: 4" × 5" × 3" (10cm × 13cm × 8cm)

Private Collection

(Left) *Ohana (Family)*, 2004, Lignum vitae, milo, Gabon ebony, koa, yellowheart, largest: 5" × 4" (13cm × 10cm)

Private Collection

Object of Our Affection, 2006, Gabon ebony, gold leaf, 3" x 11" x 5" (8cm x 28cm x 13cm)

Private Collection

piece of Gabon ebony with a precious gold-leafed egg cradled between them. The tentacles radiating from both forms create the perfect nest to protect and support the egg. This was an exceedingly difficult piece to make. The hardness of the wood, coupled with one hollow form flying off center though space like a propeller while the other was being turned, made for some nail-biting moments.

Family Jewels, a carved shell that holds four smaller hollow or carved forms, speaks to providing a place for the tribe to rest and be safe. The shell could represent Mike at times or his wife at other times. The enchanting small forms speak to the individuality of the family members and how they can all be who they are without reservations. All are cherished and accepted. The shell form was painted with milk paint, then glass-beaded in the sandblaster.

On the Beach features five pods arranged on a piece of quilted maple, suggesting an image of Mike and his family on the beach looking out to the ocean and enjoying their time together. Each pod is made from a different wood, but they all have the shape of their clan and the hearts of gold created from living a life together full of love, kindness, and support.

Mike has a loyal cadre of collectors and frequently receives orders that he works on in the evenings. He has no plans to open any social media accounts but is still awash with ideas. It will be a pleasure to see what surfaces when he returns to being a full-time artist. ■

For more, visit leewoodart.com.

Sharon Doughtie is a full-time turner living in Kailua, Hawai'i, who occasionally writes articles for American Woodturner. Follow her on Instagram, @sharondoughtie.

Photo: Hugo de Vries



Family Jewels, 2008, Yellowheart, Gabon ebony, cocobolo, lignum vitae, tulipwood, milk paint, 3½" x 7" x 6" (9cm x 18cm x 15cm)

Private Collection

Photos: Hugo de Vries



On the Beach, 2008, Quilted maple, padauk, lignum vitae, purpleheart, yellowheart, Gabon ebony, various colors of gold leaf, 4½" x 21¾" x 7½" (11cm x 55cm x 19cm)

Photo: Hugo de Vries

MEMBERS' GALLERY

Ryan Butler, Arkansas

Wind struck a hollowed boxelder, and with it ... Inspiration! I was seeing double: a jagged hollowed interior and a bark-covered exterior. Could I turn a hollow vessel with both a natural top edge and a solid natural bottom? I went to work and, in November 2018, roughed out my first *Double Natural* pieces. The concept and aesthetic is simple: double natural ends—double natural beauty.

I use spalted and figured wood and like to think I am opening a window to the soul of the tree. Some of my *Double Natural* turnings remind me of people who work with their hands—rough and weathered on the outside, yet of beautiful character within.



Double Natural Oak Burl, 2020, Oak burl, 8" x 8" x 6" (20cm x 20cm x 15cm)



Chinkapin Oak Pod, 2020, Chinkapin oak, 6" x 8" x 5" (15cm x 20cm x 13cm)



Lovebirds (Sylvan People Series), 2020, Chinkapin oak, each: 5" x 3½" (13cm x 9cm)

Retaining bark, top and bottom



The author uses a faceplate to mount a branch section perpendicular to the lathe bed. Since the bark does not sit flat on the faceplate, wood wedges add stability. Screw holes through the bark are plugged later with bark from the same branch.

Dmitriy Popkov, Saint Petersburg, Russia

I am a radio engineer by profession, but for five years I have been studying wood-working—and woodturning in particular—as a hobby. I started with a small bench-top lathe located in my garage, around which a whole work-shop gradually formed, including a full-sized lathe.

I am interested in all kinds of woodturning—all directions, forms, and methods of decoration—but I get special pleasure from simple harmonious forms. I learned about the art of woodturning from the entire world community, and thanks to it, I have made many friends on all continents.

In addition to woodturning, I do a little 3D printing and modeling and try to find synergies between these topics. At the website, thingiverse.com, a couple dozen 3D models of turning jigs I developed have been published under a free license. I hope that in this way, I can contribute to the world's knowledge of woodturning.



Untitled, 2020, Apricot, each:
8" x 3" (20cm x 8cm)



Untitled, 2020, Maple, rowan, oak, each: 3¼" x 3½" (8cm x 8cm)

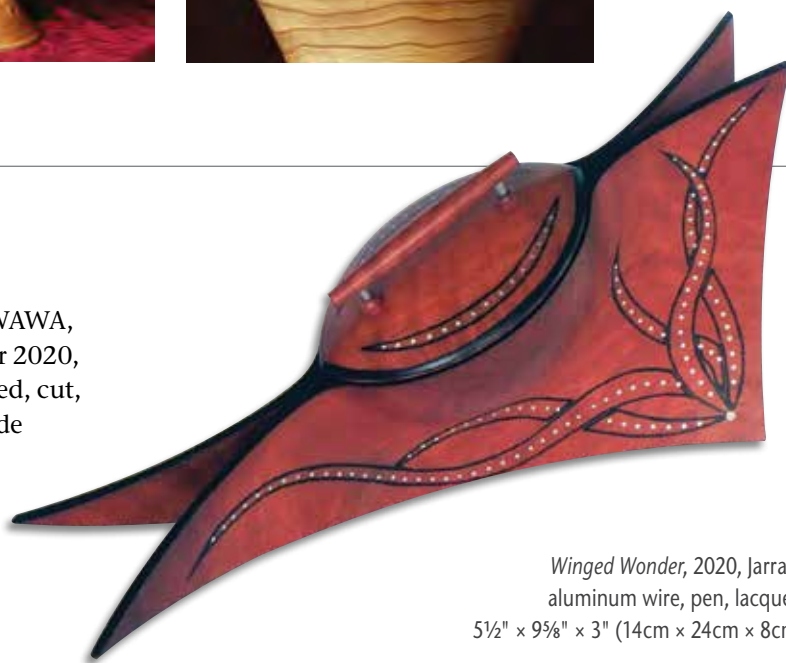


Untitled, 2020,
Elm, 12" x 3½"
(30cm x 9cm)

Denis Tapley, Perth, Western Australia

The Woodturners Association of Western Australia (WAWA, woodturnerswa.org.au) held a competition in October 2020, and the challenge was to produce an item that is turned, cut, and then reassembled. Inspired by Jason Breach, I made *Winged Wonder*.

After adding the black lines with a marking pen, I drilled holes and inserted aluminum wire, secured with epoxy. When the glue dried, I trimmed and sanded the excess wire flush using a small padded sanding disk. ►



Winged Wonder, 2020, Jarrah,
aluminum wire, pen, lacquer,
5½" x 9⅝" x 3" (14cm x 24cm x 8cm)

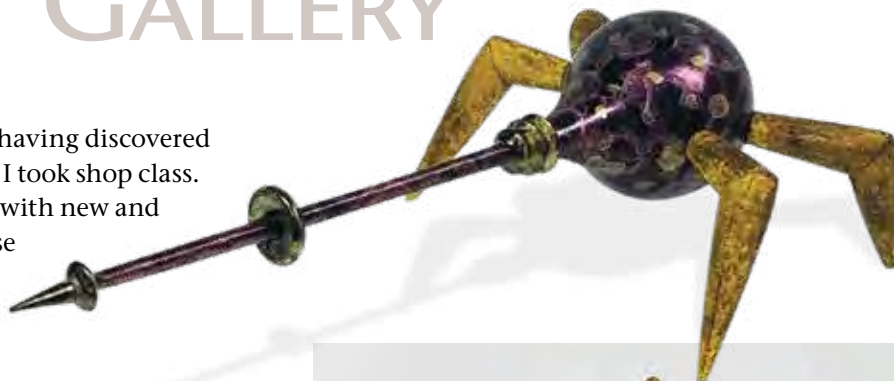
MEMBERS' GALLERY

Bobby McCarley, Louisiana

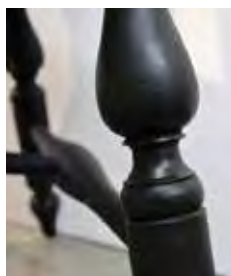
I am a long-time woodworker and turner, having discovered my love of working with wood back when I took shop class. Now I spend much of my time coming up with new and sometimes whimsical ideas. In one of those whimsical moments, I came upon the fictional creatures shown here. The story unfolds...

When the latest pandemic hit and affected the entire world to the point of all people having to isolate themselves in their homes, nature started making a comeback of long unseen plant and animal life. One such animal was a mystical creature long thought to be extinct, not having been seen for hundreds of years. It apparently has the ability to change its coloring to blend in with surrounding foliage. The creature feeds mostly on small insects and lives under decaying plant matter.

After studying ancient research, I may have discovered the identity of the mystery critter—the elusive Needle Iridescosaurus, seen only in the Peruvian jungles of the Amazon. While this is yet to be confirmed, any additional findings from other researchers would be welcome.



Needle Iridescosaurus (Mother and Babies), 2020, Maple, iridescent paint, largest: 1½" × 7" × 4" (38mm × 18cm × 10cm)



Jeff Wyatt, Alabama

I was exposed to woodworking at an early age. In my home, Saturday mornings were spent watching the *New Yankee Workshop* and *This Old House*. Afterwards, my father would take me out to his workshop and teach me woodworking and life lessons. I enjoyed it all and now miss those days. My father was a master wood carver and furniture maker. One of the projects we always talked about making together was a Windsor chair, but he passed before that could happen.

During a monthly meeting of the Carolina Mountain Woodturners, I found myself staring at a beautiful fanback arm chair made by Curtis Buchanan. This ignited in me a love for spindle turning and green chair making, and I hope to share this passion with the woodturning community.

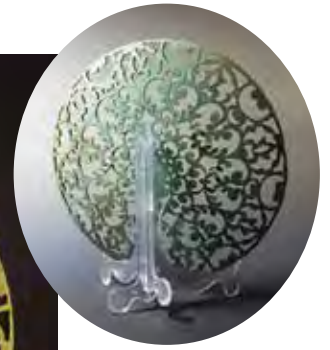
Windsor Writing Arm Chair, 2021, Eastern white pine (seat), white oak (spindles, arm rails, crest), sugar maple (legs, center stretcher), mahogany (writing surface, drawers), 48" × 24" × 20" (122cm × 61cm × 51cm)

Luigi D'Amato, Sant'Antonio, Switzerland

I think art should elicit an emotional response, and I try to do this through turning and embellishing wood. The themes and designs I see around me form the basis of my expressive work. Inspiring designs can be found everywhere in our daily lives. For example, seeing an ancient ruined wall or a particular pattern in a church might generate feelings or memories of past events.

I carefully select the wood for my work, sometimes using the wood's color, grain, and appearance to convey meaning. On some works, I use acrylic and metallic paint. I also pierce the wood to help convey a thought, emotion, or memory. My hope is that an observer will experience emotions similar to what I felt during my creative journey of making.

For more, visit passionturning.com.



Pierced Metallic Plate, 2020, Cherry, metallic paint, 10" (25cm) diameter



Spiritual Box, 2020, Mahogany, 4" x 2 3/4" (10cm x 7cm)



Tea Service, 2019, Cherry, metallic paint, 4 3/4" x 8" x 4 3/4" (12cm x 20cm x 12cm)

Steve Miner, Florida

I began working with two-part casting resin, dyes, and other materials a couple years ago after seeing several cast pieces featured on YouTube. Although I turn a variety of pieces in wood, I enjoy working with urethane resin and combining it with different materials such as aluminum, brass, and burl wood to create unusual forms and effects. The possibilities are limitless, and it enhances the artistic side of my work.

Nebula was one of those pieces that "spoke" to me. Some say it looks celestial, while others say it's more of an undersea vision. Either way, I hope to stir the imagination of the viewer. ■



Nebula, 2019, Maple burl, iridescent paint, urethane resin, dye, cherry, aluminum rod, 6" x 5" x 3" (15cm x 13cm x 8cm)



Blue Twin, 2020, Urethane resin, dye, aluminum shavings, silver metallic powder, maple burl, poplar, taller piece: 6" x 3" (15cm x 8cm)

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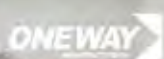


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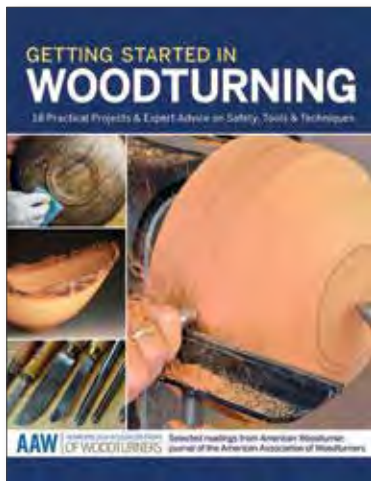
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*Vendor had been scheduled to exhibit at the Omaha Symposium tradeshow. (List current as of March 5, 2021.)

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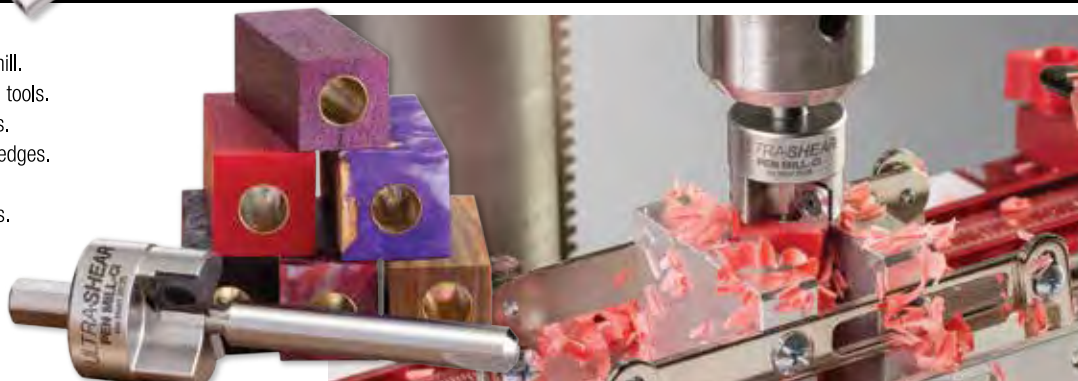
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GLORIA HERBERTS

BRITISH COLUMBIA,
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I began woodturning in 2000, after seeing a demonstration at a local home show, fascinated that a bowl could be created before my very eyes. For a number of years, I turned simple bowls, platters, and hollow vessels and then had the wonderful opportunity to attend a demo and class by Binh Pho. I was transformed—since then, I incorporate piercing, pyrography, and surface enhancements in all of my pieces. Although each one takes considerable time, I find this work to be a relaxing, almost meditative hobby.

My turnings are influenced by everything I see around me, and I work almost exclusively with bigleaf maple, as it grows abundantly here in BC. I love hats, and the one shown here is part of a series I am calling *Hats Off!*



You Can Leave Your Hat On, 2018, Bigleaf maple
(hat and hatband), compressed wood (trailing ribbon),
acrylic paint, 3½" × 9" (9cm × 23cm)

Dry-fitting the trailing
ribbons to the hatband.
The bow, trailing ribbons,
and hatband were
airbrushed blue, while
the hat body was finished
with polyurethane.

