NESTED BALWOO BOWL SETS • WINDSOR CHAIR-MAKING FOR WOODTURNERS • CUSTOM TOOL HANDLES

AMERICAN WOODTURNER

Journal of the American Association of Woodturners

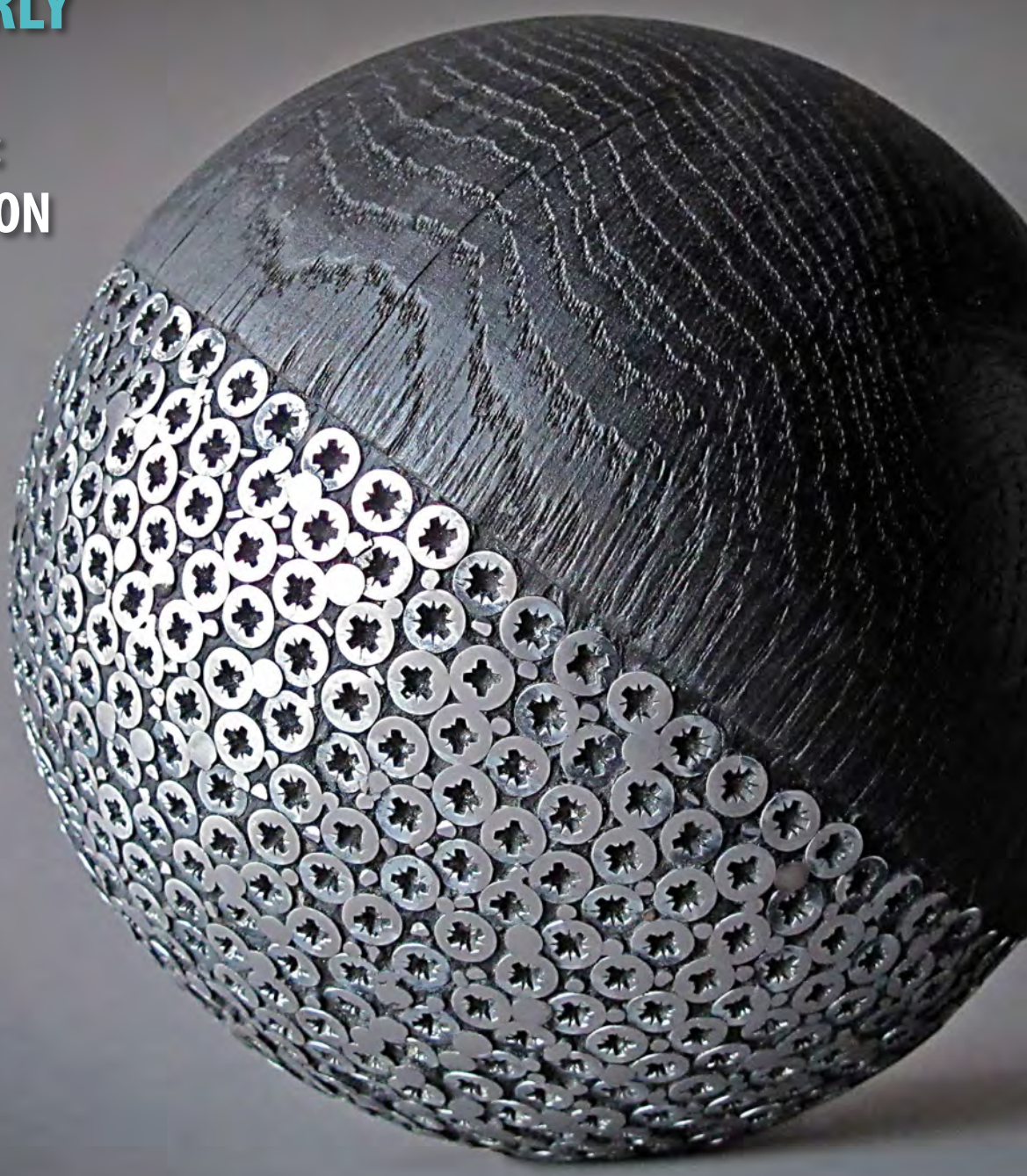
April 2015 vol 30, no 2 • woodturner.org

BENOÎT AVERLY
CREATIVITY IN CONSTRUCTION: A COLLABORATION OF MATERIALS

THE DIVINE DOLLS OF HIROKI ASAKA

WILLIAM H. MACY

REMEMBERING GILES GILSON



Michael Scarborough

New York

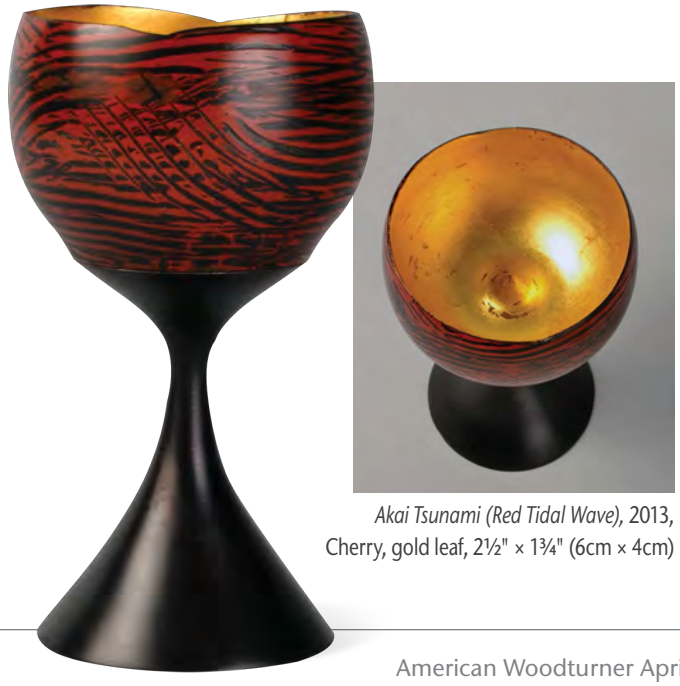
My great-grandfather was a mosaic artist from northern Italy, and my father built me my first workbench when I was five. But, undoubtedly, the strongest artistic influence on my life was my childhood spent in rural Japan surrounded by the natural beauty, the ancient architecture, and the people themselves.

My work is primarily inspired by traditional Japanese *Urushi* lacquerware. The pieces seen here were generally influenced by the iconic red and black surfaces created by the 16th c. monks at the *Negoro Dera* temple, but each has its own story. Whereas the ceremonial dipper reminds me of one I saw as a child in Yamaguchi prefecture, the golden hooves on the Boar bowl are an example of my own artistic madness. And, while the creation of *Tea at Dawn* was an unfettered flow from conception to execution, I struggled for hours to "perfect" the calligraphy in *Mu (Nothingness)*. Eventually, I gave up and, on a whim, spun the bowl with my hand, touched the brush against the surface, and *voilà!* ...or should I say, *banzai!*

Akai Tsunami was created in recognition of the Fukushima disaster. A raised cone in the bottom of the piece symbolizes the sub-oceanic volcanoes that surround Japan, while indentations in the lip represent its mountains and valleys. The gilded interior has been left with a feeling of *wabi-sabi*, intentional imperfection, to represent the scars left in Fukushima. As with all traditional lacquer pieces, the finish serves as structural support for the wall, which in this piece is similar in thickness to an eggshell, representing the fragility of our home planet.

Japan—and Asia in general—continue to provide me with an inexhaustible supply of inspirational forms and surfaces. Whether it is a trip to a museum, an antique store, or thumbing through family albums, I always come away with an urge to get into the studio and play.

For more, visit michaelscarboroughdesign.com.



Akai Tsunami (Red Tidal Wave), 2013,
Cherry, gold leaf, 2½" × 1¾" (6cm × 4cm)

Ceremonial Dipper, 2011, Maple, mahogany, 6" × 17" (15cm × 43cm)

Collection of Albert and Tina LeCoff

Wild Boar with Golden Hooves, 2013, Linden, sapele, gold leaf, 7½" × 11" (19cm × 28cm)

Akebono (Tea at Dawn), 2013, Maple, gold leaf, mica powder, 12" × 9½" (30cm × 24cm)

Mu (Nothingness), 2014, Maple, 4½" × 13" (11cm × 33cm)

Collection of Steve Keeble and Karen Depew

AAW | AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS

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

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AMERICAN WOODTURNER

Journal of the American Association of Woodturners

ASSOCIATION NEWS

WOODTURNERS CHATTER

GALLERY

COVER

Cover – Benoît Averly, *Screwball,* 2015, Oak, steel screws, nails, 5½" (14cm) diameter

(*Screwball* will be included in this year's POP exhibit, "Creativity in Construction: a Collaboration of Materials.")

Back Cover – Sally Burnett, *Neap Tide,* 2014, Sycamore, acrylic, 8" × 5½" (205mm × 140mm) Photo: Julie Dearden

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

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The AAW does not endorse any product featured or advertised in this journal.

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.

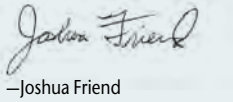
*Web address is case sensitive.

Editor's Note

Woodturners who seek to improve their work and distinguish themselves know that the most meaningful feedback comes from others immersed in the craft. No one understands quite as accurately as another woodturner what goes into a piece. The same can be said for any endeavor, including publishing. Long before I became editor of *American Woodturner*, I was keenly aware of the journal's top-notch quality and reputation. So I was not surprised to learn that AAW's flagship publication is now one of two finalists for a Nichee Award. This means that among niche publications (and there are many), *American Woodturner* stands above the crowd for content, professional design, and print quality. I am extremely proud that *AW* has been acknowledged by its peers in this way.

Giles Gilson, an iconic woodturning artist, died in January. I never had the opportunity to meet him, but after compiling a tribute to him for the journal (page 49), I wish I had. Our tribute comprises personal accounts of Giles by some who knew him, images of Giles and his work, as well as a short video by Kevin Wallace. Just the act of compiling and processing these materials has changed my perspective on life. I hope you find the tribute informative and inspiring, too.

I'm happy to continue offering video to supplement written articles. My thanks to AAW member Dave Mueller of Texas for his contribution of video editing. This issue includes a two-part treatment of the skew chisel—great for beginners just learning or for experienced turners wanting to revisit this most worthwhile spindle-turning tool. In the first part (page 28), Jim Scarsella provides a thorough understanding of the tool itself—its parts, sharpening options, and the dynamics of how it works. In the second part (page 32), Keith Tompkins describes how to make the most common skew cuts, and John Lucas offers his expertise in a video illustrating these cuts (see link on page 34). If you have been avoiding the skew because it is a challenging tool to learn, these articles and video will help to demystify its use.



—Joshua Friend

From the President

Thank you

On behalf of the AAW, I want to thank the donors in our 2014 fundraising program. Your generosity made this program a huge success. We certainly appreciate you and will strive to use your donations in the most effective ways for our membership. There are several options available (noted on our website) pertaining to how you can extend your support for the AAW. They range from an additional donation at renewal time to donation of securities and end-of-life donations. Contributions in any amount are welcome. Each of us adding just $5 when renewing our memberships would amount to another $75,000 AAW could use to support woodturning education efforts worldwide. Plus, boosting our donation income overall can improve our eligibility to receive available grants.

Chapters are the heart of our organization, as they reach nearly every one of our members in their monthly meetings. Their support of our membership renewal efforts has assisted in maintaining our existing membership base as well as adding new members. A special thank you to all of our chapters for their efforts and assistance.

Video content

The AAW is committed to increasing the value of your membership. Our ability to add video to our offerings is expanding. The December 2014, February 2015, and this issue of the journal offer articles with included video content. Compressed URLs and QR codes are listed at the end of certain articles for your convenience. Check out these accompanying videos for some great expanded content.

In the alternate months when the journal is not published, the AAW offers *Woodturning FUNdamentals*. This electronic publication has been using video content all along. The clips that are included supplement the content of that publication. With video rapidly becoming a preferred method of content consumption, we will continue to expand our video library to provide the best learning environment possible.

Symposium

The upcoming Pittsburgh symposium promises to be one of our largest events. With a large number of members living within driving distance, we expect a record attendance. Early indications are that we might have to close registrations at some point to be certain we can provide a quality event. If you are planning on attending, please don't delay. I recommend you get your registration completed promptly to be sure you'll have a spot in Pittsburgh.

Our Pittsburgh demonstrator team includes fifty of the finest woodturners from around the world. You'll be able to see demonstrations and panels ranging from woodturning fundamentals to artistic embellishments. The depth and breadth of topics should offer something of interest to all. Along with the educational aspects of the symposium, there will be many other things to do. You'll have the opportunity to renew old acquaintances, see and buy the latest in tools and equipment offerings, participate in the EOG and POP auctions, view one of the finest woodturning instant galleries, and more. That is just within the convention center. Pittsburgh has much to offer our attendees in the way of museums, galleries, fine dining, sports, entertainment, brewpubs, and shopping. The city has something to offer nearly any taste or interest. If you are bringing a significant other not interested in woodturning, they will be sure to find interesting and engaging pastimes while you enjoy the symposium.

Some last-minute reminders... The call for volunteers is an ongoing effort. If you have time to assist at the symposium, let us know of your interest and availability now by sending an email to NMWTwebman@aol.com. Don't forget there are many areas where your spouse or other family members can assist as volunteers. As in past years, we will be having the youth turning program in full swing. Not only will younger turners learn under the guidance of an experienced turner, they will also have a great chance at winning a complete mini-lathe package to take home with them. Of course, the odds of winning vary with the number of youth participants in the program, but we've had years when fully half of the participants won this extensive package.

Please do not forget our charitable programs at the symposium. ReTurn to the Community efforts, including the Empty Bowls, Beads of Courage, Lighthouse for the Blind, and Disabled Veterans programs, are ways to help us give back to the community. Even if you are not able to attend the event, you can participate in these programs. Visit tiny.cc/Charitable for more information.

I'll look forward to seeing you in Pittsburgh in June.

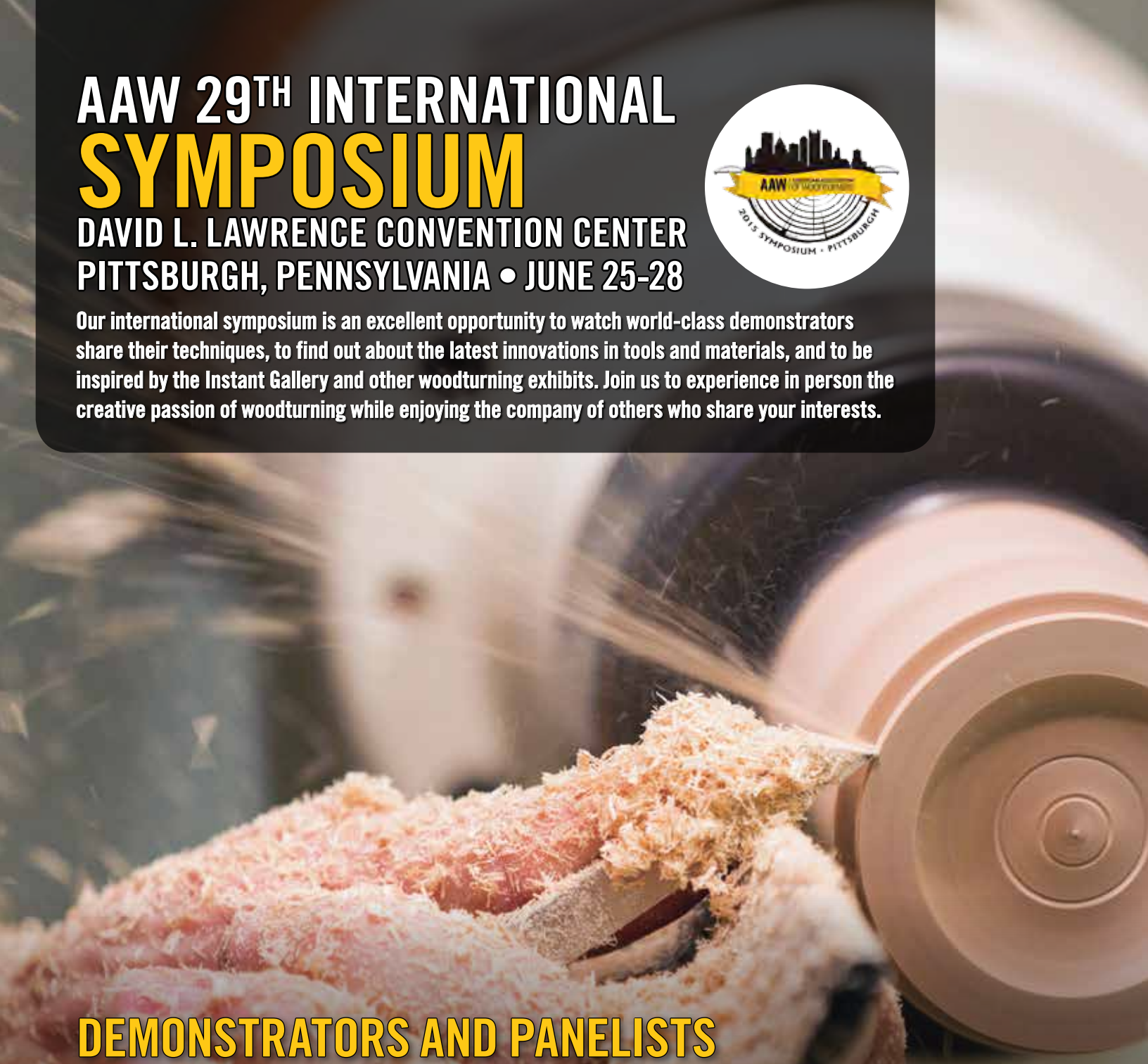
Best,

Kurt

AAW 29TH INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

DAVID L. LAWRENCE CONVENTION CENTER
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA • JUNE 25-28

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



DEMONSTRATORS AND PANELISTS

See the February journal for a listing of the featured demonstrators' rotation titles.

RICK ANGUS
MARK BAKER
STUART BATTY
JOHN BEAVER
JEFF BENNETT
JERRY BENNETT
JEFF BERNSTEIN
DIXIE BIGGS
MICHAEL BROLLY
JACK BROWN
CHRISTIAN BURCHARD
ZINA BURLOIU
KIP CHRISTENSEN
JASON CLARK
NICK COOK
BARBARA DILL
ANDY DIPIETRO
SHARON DOUGHTIE
CINDY DROZDA
DAVID ELLSWORTH
DICK GERARD
ASHLEY HARWOOD
STEPHEN HATCHER
BILL HAYES
DAVE HINKELMAN
LYLE JAMIESON
STEVEN KENNARD
JERRY KERMODE
CRAIG KIRKS
HUBERT LANDRI
JANICE LEVI
KRISTIN LEVIER
STEVE LOAR
ALAIN MAILLAND
JOHANNES MICHELSEN
PASCAL OUDET
BINH PHO
JOEY RICHARDSON
AVELINO SAMUEL
BETTY SCARPINO
TED SOKOLOWSKI
MARK ST. LEGER
ANDI SULLIVAN
JASON SWANSON
NEIL TURNER
JACQUES VESERY
HELGA WINTER
MOLLY WINTON
TIM YODER
MALCOLM ZANDER

Photo: Andi Wolfe

AAW AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS

Demonstrators

Rick Angus, Connecticut
- How Knife-Edge Tools Cut
- Endgrain Lidded Box

Untitled, 2014, Curly soft maple, cherry, 9" × 3½"

Jack Brown, Pennsylvania
- Scalloped Christmas Ornament with Five Points

Five-Point Ornament, 2014, Hard maple, 7" × 2"

Kip Christensen, Utah
- Principles and Techniques of Clean Cutting

Blackened Sepulcher, 2009, Russian olive burl, 5" × 5¾"

Jason Clark, Arizona
- Unconventional Hollow Form—Turning the Torus

Torus VIII, 2014, Redwood burl, 3½" × 9"

Barbara Dill, Virginia
- How to Understand Multiaxis Spindle Turning
- The Challenge and Magic of Multiaxis Spindle Turning (slide show)
- Using the Lathe as a Carving Tool

Close-up of Cluck, Clook, Click, 2014, Walnut, cherry, holly, 19" × 3½"

Cindy Drozda, Colorado
- Maximizing Burl Figure
- Fabulous Finials

Dance of Life, 2014, Coolibah burl, African blackwood, tallest: 12" × 5½"

Dick Gerard, Indiana
- Turning and Decorating Spheres

Boat Full of Balls, 2014, Maple, birch, walnut, bloodwood, padauk, bubinga, cottonwood, cocobolo, 6" × 24" × 3"

Ashley Harwood, South Carolina
- Turning for Jewelry
- Rim and Foot Design on a Bowl

Stephen Hatcher, Washington
- Creating Unique Bowl and Platter Accents
- Feet, Lid, and Finial Techniques
- The Half-Moon Form

Arctic Sun, 2014, Ziricote, ebony, big leaf maple, mineral crystal inlays, dye, 18" × 14" × 3"

Jerry Kermode, California
- Natural-edge Bowls with a Stitch
- Beginning Bowls and Plates

Natural-edge Calabash, 2014, Box elder burl, 4½" × 7¾" × 7½"

Hubert Landri, France
- Manufacturing a Ladle
- Making a Tea Pot

Janice Levi, Texas
- Pyrography Basics

Turtle Necklace, 2014, Holly, 2⅝" × 4"
Photo: Tom Levi

Ted Sokolowski, Pennsylvania
- Making a Peppermill or Saltmill

Oriental Peppermill, 2013, Macassar ebony, spalted curly maple, bronze casting, 7½" × 5½"

Jason Swanson, Wisconsin
- Constructing a Staved Segmented Turning Blank

Salt and Peppermill Set, 2014, Curly walnut, curly hard maple, Honduras mahogany, 10" tall

Neil Turner, Australia
- Open Form with Coral Texture
- Sea Urchin Box

Sea Urchin Box, 2013, Jacaranda, 2¾" × 2½"
Photo: Suellen Turner

Molly Winton, Washington
- Making and Use of Homemade Pyrography Brands
- Intro to Surface Enhancements

Caballos Ascendentes, 2014, Camphor burl, 6" × 3½"

Tim Yoder, Oklahoma
- Video for Clubs and Demonstrators
- Catches

Forest Floor, 2014, Maple, bubinga, lacewood, zebrawood, walnut, purpleheart, tallest: 8" × 1¾"

POP SHOWCASE ARTISTS

This year's Professional Outreach Program (POP) Artist Showcase will feature Kristin LeVier and Helga Winter. In addition to their individual rotations noted below, Kristin and Helga will participate in a POP panel discussion, "How We Got There," in which they will present their work and describe their own pathways toward recognition in the woodturning field. Helga is known for her elegant and fragile bleached or colored madrone pieces; Kristin for her flowing organic forms inspired by nature. Join these two outstanding artists and follow their artistic journeys, which have led to their selection by the POP committee for this prestigious honor.

Kristin LeVier, Idaho

▸ **Concept to Creation: The Process from Sketch to Finished Object**

Horn 4, 2015, Maple, aluminum, acrylic paint, pencil, 34" × 9½" × 3½"

Photo: Jonathan Billing, Archer Photography

Helga Winter

▸ **Surface Embellishments: Wax Resist and Encaustics**

The Sky Stealer, 2014, Madrone, unpigmented beeswax, fiber reactive dyes, encaustic gesso, seaweed, 5" × 12¼" × 11¾"

Photo: Carmen Anderson

AAW | AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS

Craft Room

The Companion Program for this year's AAW symposium, including the craft room, is being coordinated by the Society of Contemporary Craft (contemporarycraft.org). We are excited about this partnership and will be able to offer attendees an outstanding variety of activities, including tours, demonstrations, lectures, and hands-on classes. The lectures and hands-on topics include Wire Crochet Bracelets, Lotion/Soap Making, Enameling, Polymer Clay Demo, Paper from Weeds, Assemblage Jewelry, Mug Rugs: Found Fiber, and Textured Metal Jewelry. There will also be guided tours of the Society of Contemporary Craft.

Visit woodturner.org for links to tours and to register for companion program classes.

SYMPOSIUM HOTELS

Host Hotel

Westin Convention Center Hotel, Pittsburgh

NOTE: DUE TO HIGH DEMAND BY SYMPOSIUM ATTENDEES, THIS HOTEL HAS ALREADY SOLD OUT

Other Hotels

Omni William Penn Hotel

Visit woodturner.org for updated hotel and group rate information.

POWERMATIC LATHE RAFFLE!

Winning ticket will be drawn at AAW's Pittsburgh symposium, June 27, 2015.

Proceeds support activities of the AAW Chapter Turners Anonymous and the Society for Contemporary Craft.

TWO LIVE BENEFIT AUCTIONS

Join us Friday evening to experience the EOG live auction benefiting AAW educational programs. Refreshments will be provided and a cash bar will be available. Then, on Saturday afternoon, show your support for AAW's professional outreach initiatives at the POP exhibit live auction, "Creativity in Construction: a Collaboration of Materials."

Both auctions include remote online bidding, allowing bidders anywhere in the world to participate via live web audio feed. All live auction items will be published for advance viewing in mid-May. Visit auction2015.woodturner.org for more information.

AAW BENEFIT DINNER AND SILENT AUCTION

Join us on Saturday evening and show your support for the Educational Opportunity Grant (EOG) Program by purchasing a ticket for the benefit dinner and special awards ceremony. The conclusion of the dinner and awards ceremony will offer you a final chance to bid in the EOG silent auction, which is free and open to all.

Over the past ten years alone, AAW member support for the EOG live and silent benefit auctions has raised more than $450,000 for woodturning education. ▸

MOBILE APP

The Guidebook app for mobile devices will again be available for use at this year's symposium. With this free app, you'll have all the rotations, demonstrators, tradeshow exhibitors, floor plans, and messaging at your fingertips. **Guidebook is ready for download now.** Save time by installing the app before the symposium. Visit tiny.cc/symposium for more information.

DONATE TOOLS TO TURNERS WITHOUT BORDERS

To help Turners Without Borders continue implementing global initiatives—and to support other AAW programs like Woodturning Beyond Barriers and Turning to the Future—please bring your lightly used tools to the Pittsburgh symposium. Bowl, spindle, and roughing gouges are most needed, but all other tools are welcome. Donations will be accepted at the registration desk.

RETURN TO THE COMMUNITY

Each year, local chapter organizers select a project for fundraising during the symposium. This year, we have two. Bring a turned bowl or other object for the Empty Bowls fundraiser, which benefits Variety, the Children's Charity of Pittsburgh. You can also donate boxes to support Beads of Courage. For more information on both of these initiatives, visit tiny.cc/Charitable (case sensitive).

FREE SYMPOSIUM HANDOUT BOOK

Symposium registration includes this comprehensive symposium book, which features all the demonstrators, images of their work, and valuable how-to information on topics covered in demonstrations. Buy an extra copy for $25 to share with your woodturning friends back home!

PROFESSIONAL OUTREACH PROGRAM PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Panel discussions open to all symposium attendees.

Artist Showcase—How We Got There: Malcolm Zander, Helga Winter, Kristin LeVier

Chasing Professionalism: David Ellsworth, Jerry Kermode

How to Critique, Evolve, and Learn from the Experience: Jacques Vesery

Signature, Branding, and Marketing: Derek Weidman, Ashley Harwood, Binh Pho

Significant Moments in Contemporary Woodturning: Steve Loar

What Is Art Anyway? Jacques Vesery, Zina Burloiu, Sharon Doughtie

Women's Perspectives: Betty Scarpino, Dixie Biggs, Sharon Doughtie, Steve Loar

Woodturning with Disabilities: Andi Sullivan, Jeff Bennett, Bill Hayes, Dave Hinkelman

Diversity in Wood Art: Going Beyond Boundaries: John Beaver, Jeff Bernstein, Andy DiPietro, David Ellsworth

Iterations of Work (POP lecture): Sharon Doughtie

Iterations of Work (panel discussion): Sharon Doughtie, Betty Scarpino

Instant Gallery Critique
Jacques Vesery, Steve Loar

Intimate Critique
An opportunity to receive valuable feedback on your work through one-on-one discussion with an expert. Expect encouragement, tips, suggestions, and a positive experience.

WOODTURNING TRADESHOW

You won't see a larger woodturning tradeshow anywhere else! Ongoing demonstrations let you watch tools and machinery up close and in action, so plan plenty of time to experience it all. Following is a partial list of tradeshow vendors. Visit tiny.cc/symposium for updated information.

Advanced Lathe Tools
Affinity Tools
Arizona Silhouette
Bone Mountain Bristlecone
Carter and Son Toolworks
Carter Products
Chucks Plus
Cindy Drozda
Conestoga Works LLC
Craft Supplies
Curt Theobald
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Lyle Jamieson Woodturning
North Woods Figured Woods
Oneway Mfg.
Peachtree Woodworking Supply
Reed's Woodworking LLC
Robust Tools
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Saburrtooth Tools
Schiffer Publishing
SS Niles Bottle Stoppers
Stockroom Supply
Ted Sokolowski Woodturning
The Center for Art in Wood
Thompson Lathe Tools
Trend Routing Technology
Trent Bosch Studios
Turningwood.com
USDA, Pennsylvania Dept. of Agriculture
Vince's WoodNWonders
Wildwood Design
Woodcut Tools, Ltd
Wood Turners Wonders

YOUTH TURNING ROOM

Youth ages 10 to 18 are eligible to register for free hands-on instruction. Each registered youth must be accompanied by an adult who is registered for the symposium. Students will make a variety of projects.

Volunteer teachers include Joe Ruminski, Kip Christensen, Barry Gross, Steve Cook, and Larry Miller.

On Sunday, twenty-five young turners will win a complete turning package, including a lathe, tools, and faceshield. Our thanks to those who generously donated in support of this program.

- Powermatic/JET, 25 mini lathes with stands
- Crown Tools, 25 sets of tools
- Woodcraft, 25 faceshields
- Vince's WoodNWonders, abrasives
- Teknatool USA, Inc., 25 chucks and safety centers
- Easy Wood Tools, 25 sets of tools
- Craft Supplies USA, texturing tools, Christmas tree ornament supplies
- Penn State Industries, pen mandrels
- Arizona Silhouette, wood and project supplies
- Tennessee Association of Woodturners, pen and kaleidoscope kits
- Kip Christensen, ice cream scoop kits and supplies
- Barry Gross, project supplies

Photo: Andi Wolfe

*Donors listed as of March 1. See tiny.cc/symposium for updated information.

AAW AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS
Special Interests

AAW's international symposium encompasses many special interest groups that are all part of our woodturning community. At no other event will you be able to sample such a broad range of interests. Special Interest Night (SIN) will be held Thursday, with some activities taking place during the day. Following is a sampling of special interest topics and activities that will be represented at the symposium:

- The Collectors of Wood Art, Society for Contemporary Craft (SCC), and Carnegie Museum of Art have scheduled a full day of activities at SCC headquarters three blocks from the convention center. Activities will include a panel and presentation featuring Suzanne Perrault of the Rago Auction House and frequent appraiser on the popular PBS television series *Antiques Roadshow*. An afternoon session will include presentations by Christian Burchard, Jerry Bennett, and Pascal Oudet on the latest direction of their work.
- The exhibits "Merging," "Creativity in Construction: a Collaboration of Materials," "Then and Now," and Jacques Vesery POP Merit Award will open at 6:00 p.m. and will include a welcome reception with refreshments.
- Several national AAW chapters will hold their annual meetings during SIN activities. These include Segmented Woodturners, Principally Pens, Ornamental Turners, and Women in Turning.

WOODTURNING EXHIBITIONS!

Instant Gallery

Bring up to three of your woodturnings and participate in the largest display of turned-wood objects under one roof. To preregister your display pieces online prior to arrival, visit tiny.cc/instantgallery (case sensitive). While you are at the instant gallery, vote for your favorite Chapter Collaborative Challenge (C3) entry, use the intimate critique to have an informal discussion about your work, see EOG auction items, admire award winners, and participate in ReTurn to the Community.

Creativity in Construction: a Collaboration of Materials

For the ninth annual Professional Outreach Program (POP) exhibition, forty studio artists from ten countries created small-scale works with a focus on material, either combining wood with other media or creating the illusion of multiple materials through surface manipulation. All works will be auctioned to raise funds for POP initiatives.

Merging

AAW's annual member exhibition showcases the diversity of ideas, techniques, and approaches being developed by both our amateur and professional members. This year's theme reflects the merging rivers that shaped our host city of Pittsburgh, as well as the merging of ideas or materials to form a new, greater whole.

2015 POP Merit Award: Jacques Vesery

The exquisitely carved and painted trompe l'oeil work of Jacques Vesery is unmistakable, despite subject matter as disparate as baseballs and nautilus shells. The small scale and rich detail draw the viewer into a world inspired by nature, but entirely the artist's own invention. The POP Merit Award recognizes Jacques' contributions as a teacher, mentor, and leader in the woodturning field.

Steve Loar: Then and Now

Educator, author, and artist Steve Loar uses themes and narratives—often drawn from popular rock songs—to guide him in creating evocative, layered compositions. "Then and Now" includes early and very fresh works, all reflecting Steve's impeccable attention to detail and craftsmanship. His collaboration with cast-off components from noted artists in the field will bring an added dimension to the informed woodworker.

The public is welcome to tour all of these exhibits; registration is not necessary. Please encourage local friends to stop by, see what woodturners make, and perhaps buy a piece to take home.

Derek Weidman/Hannah Taylor, *Parts of the Whole,* 2015, Holly, ink, pigment, 8" × 8" × 8" (This piece will be included in AAW's "Merging" exhibit.)

Chapter Collaborative Challenge (C3) 2015

For AAW's 29th international symposium in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the chapters and membership committee will again sponsor a Chapter Collaborative Challenge (C3).

Each AAW chapter is invited to submit one collaborative work created by as many chapter members as possible, with a minimum of six participants. Complete rules for entry can be found at tiny.cc/C3.

The pieces will be prominently displayed during the symposium in an area near the Instant Gallery. During the symposium, attendees will be invited to select, by ballot, their choice for Best of Show and their favorite piece in each of three categories: Artistic, Mechanical/Technical, and Fantasy. Votes will be tallied prior to the banquet, during which the winners will be recognized. In addition to plaques awarded for the winner in each category, the AAW will provide one free symposium registration to each chapter that wins an award. An image of the Best of Show entry will appear on the back cover of the August issue of the journal.

JOURNAL ARCHIVE CONNECTION

If your AAW chapter is considering entering the C3, check out Byron Rosbrugh's 2010 article, "The Challenge of the Chapter Challenge," which offers useful guidance on the considerations and rewards of participating. See *AW* vol 25, no 5, page 10.


ASSOCIATION NEWS AND NOTES

The Challenge of the Chapter Challenge

Byron E. Rosbrugh

There are many challenges to overcome when a local chapter enters the AAW Chapter Collaborative Challenge (3C) competition. The challenges begin when consideration is given to participating in the event, and continue throughout the process. And if that is not enough, a final challenge is to find an appropriate display venue for the entry after it is returned from the symposium. Despite many challenges, this event is a wonderful experience for everyone who participates.

The 3C provides an opportunity for building team spirit within a club while at the same time creating a masterpiece of art that will live on well after its debut at the symposium. This combination is a means by which chapter members become directly involved with the many benefits of being a woodturner and of belonging to a national organization of peers. Members connect with other individuals who share a common interest—a desire to learn more about their passion: woodturning excellence. The 3C challenges members to work together with one goal while transforming a concept into reality. Each person plays an important part to achieve that success.

Wilmington Area Woodturners Association (WAWA), located in Wilmington, NC, became involved in the 2009 challenge when one member innocently asked the chapter president if the chapter had ever considered participating in the 3C. The WAWA is a young club with about sixty members who possess different backgrounds, skill levels, and talents.

The members are probably typical of most chapters' membership: primarily retired individuals who have spent years working in fast-paced vocations, complete with the appointments, deadlines, and duties that are part of a successful career. Many belong to the club to simply pick up new ideas and techniques, meet and socialize once a month with others of similar interests, or to just make a few chips fly. Becoming involved in a competition that requires timelines, difficult turning techniques, and lots of additional planning meetings is not why they became members. They have "been there and done that" and don't want to do it again! However, when the club president appointed the "innocent questioning member" as leader of the new group to investigate, organize, plan, and build an entry for the 2009 symposium, it was the beginning of a great experience for all.

The first step began in December 2008 when we formed a team to develop a concept that would fit the theme for the 2009 symposium in Albuquerque. There were many entry guidelines to consider: size, shape, complexity, symposium theme, static or dynamic, materials, appearance, finish, shipping details, display and setup—obviously a multitude of decisions had to be made. It was difficult for us, when looking at various ideas, to determine which would fit the club's talent and time available. We were already late in starting—almost half the available time had elapsed. And we had a lot of questions.

The concept team was made up of members with a variety of talents: an emergency management professional, a retired lawyer/engineer, an information technology consultant, a technician machinist, and a nuclear engineer. The team started with

10 American Woodturner October 2010

AAW Board of Directors

Call for Nominees

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

The AAW elects a volunteer nine-member board to represent the membership and move the organization forward. If you have been a member in good standing for the past three years, you are eligible. The nominating committee will select the six best candidates. From these six, members will elect three candidates to serve a three-year term, beginning in January 2016.

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, 2015:

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 in late May and early June. Candidates will be presented in the journal, ballots will be sent out in the fall, and election results will be announced in late 2015.

Call for Demonstrators AAW Symposium 2016

AAW's 30th international symposium will be held in Atlanta, Georgia, June 9–12, 2016. To apply to be a demonstrator, visit woodturner.org/Events/CallforEntry between July 1 and September 15. For additional information, call the AAW office in Saint Paul, 877-595-9094 or 651-484-9094 or email, inquiries@woodturner.org.

2014 Fundraising Campaign

We want to express our deep appreciation for the generosity of those who gave to the AAW during the 2014 fundraising campaigns. Your donations will be used to fund our general operations, youth education, Educational Opportunity Grants, and other programs. We also want to thank all of our members who contributed artwork to support the EOG and POP auctions at the Phoenix symposium. Please visit woodturner.org for a complete donor recognition listing.

AAW membership dues cover only a portion of the expenses for our member programs and services. In 2014, we introduced a new fundraising program, making it even more convenient to support the AAW at any level of ability.

Your contributions matter immensely to us. We thank you for your personal expressions of support for the AAW and our nonprofit mission.

—Dale Larson, Binh Pho, and David Wahl, Members of the 2014 Fundraising Committee

—Kurt Hertzog, President, AAW Board of Directors

—Phil McDonald, AAW Executive Director

$0 – $99

William Anderson
Jackie and Ken Baker
Janet Bequeaith
Ronald Bishop
Jan Bush
Central Connecticut Woodturners
Thomas Coghill
Douglas Diggles
Scott Duncan
Alan Falk
Barbara Fraivillig
E.C. Gaura
Buren Gilpin
The Gordons
Richard and Rita Hammer
Michael Harper
Kenneth Hollinrake
Tommy Holmes
Michael Horkan
Reuben Hufham
Lawrence Hurst
Wes Jones
James Kotas
Andrew Kuby III
Ted Laffey
Philip Lapp
Roger LaRose
Albert LeCoff
George Lee
Michael Lustig
Peter Madden
Steve Mills
Adrian Moses
Jim Murch
Jonathon Murphy
Cindy Navarro
Walt Nollan
Gary Novak
Philip and Sharon Packer
Bob Patros
Michael Peace
Gene Perryman
Dave Phillips
Ildefonso Pinheiro das Chagas
Marc Provost
Joel Rakower
Dennis Richardson
Skip Richardson
Barry Rockwell
Merryll Saylan
John Shrader
John Simms III
Arthur Williams
Steve Wolfe

$100 – $499

Anonymous (1)
Sherwin Anderson
Rick Baker
Bayou Woodturners
Roger Bennett
Jeffrey Bernstein and Judy Chernoff
Frederic Braun
Warren Carpenter
Matthew Cohn
Nick Cook
David Crady
Kathleen Duncan
Christie Enke
Linda Ferber
Otto Folkerts
Michael Forman
John (Jack) Freeman
Dennis Goring
Harry Hamilton
Bill and Kay Haskell
Beth and Karl Jacobson
Robert LeBlanc
Jean LeGwin
Mike Mahoney
Alain Mailland
Allen Miller and Andrea Sullivan
Arthur and Jane Mason
Kenneth McColly
Stephan Michaud
Larry Miller
Francisco Navarro
Leon Olson
Rick O'Ryan
Kip and Ann Powers
Harvey Rich
Bob Rotche
Kim Rymer
Betty Scarpino
John (Jack) Shelton, Jr.
Lyle Solem
Timothy Spaulding
The Families of TSBY
Stateline Woodturners
Gary Sundquist
Paul and Barbara Vondersaar
David Wahl
David and Ruth Waterbury

$500 – $999

Anonymous (1)
Frank and Elizabeth Amigo
Jeffrey Browne
Eileen Duffy
Richard Essenmacher
Robert and Gail Gaynes
Larry Genender
Richard Nye
Michael Pearlman
Donald Penny
Kermit and Janet Perlmutter
Alfred Selznick
Louis Vadeboncoeur
Donald Wadsworth
Stan and Elder Wellborn
Warren (Skip) Wilbur
Great Falls Woodturners
Mountaintop Woodturners

$1000 - $4900

Anonymous (1)
Gorst duPlessis
Johnnie (Milton) Johnson and Eileen Kennedy
John and Carol Ellis
David Ellsworth
Harvey Fein
Fred Goldstein
John Green
John Hill
Al and Sherry Hockenbery
Jerome and Deena Kaplan
Andrew Laird-Johnson And Kay Kitagawa
Bill Loitz
Michael Meredith
Ottawa Valley Woodturners
John Peckham
Binh Pho
Jim Piper
Ralph Burke
Bob and Sandi Speier
Botho von Hampeln
Lou Williams
Wilmington Area Woodturners Assoc.
Tom and Melinda Wirsing
Mark Wood
Kansas City Woodturning Guild
Malcolm Zander

$5000 and up

Anonymous (1)
Dale Larson

Calendar of Events

June issue deadline: April 15

Send information to editor@woodturner.org

Colorado

September 18–20, 2015, 19th annual Rocky Mountain Woodturning Symposium, The Ranch Larimer County Events Center, Loveland. The event offers forty-nine rotations; demonstrators include Glenn Lucas, David Ellsworth, Sam Angelo, Michael Roper, Doug Schneiter, Vince Wilson, and more. For the most recent demonstrator list and registration information, visit rmwoodturningsymposium.com.

Georgia

May 15–17, 2015, Southern States Woodturning Symposium, The Clarence Brown Conference Center, Cartersville. Featured demonstrators to include Sören Berger, Kimberly Winkle, Avelino Samuel, Chris Ramsey, Nick Cook, Steve Cook, and Steve Pritchard. For more, visit southernstatessymposium.org.

September 18–20, 2015, Turning Southern Style XXI, Georgia Association of Woodturners, Northwest Georgia Trade and Convention Center, Dalton. Demonstrators will include Nick Agar, Benoît Averly, Jimmy Clewes, Nick Cook, and John Lucas. The event will include vendors, an instant gallery, a banquet, an auction, and a spouse/guest lounge. For information and registration, visit gawoodturner.org.

Massachusetts

February 21–June 21, 2015, "Audacious: The Fine Art of Wood from the Montalto Bohlen Collection," exhibit at the Peabody Essex Museum (PEM), Salem. Showcasing one of the world's finest contemporary wood art collections with more than 100 pieces, the exhibit coincides with Bob and Lillian Montalto Bohlen's donation of forty-seven works to PEM. Opening day activities to include a special presentation and artist demonstrations by Binh Pho, Ron Gerton, and Stuart Mortimer. For more, visit pem.org.

Minnesota

Ongoing exhibit: "Touch This!" featuring fascinating facts about wood and woodturning, as well as pieces you can touch. For more information, visit galleryofwoodart.org.

October 28–November 1, 2015, Fresh Cut - Green Woodturning Symposium, North House Folk School, Grand Marais. The symposium will include multi-day coursework, demonstrations, speakers, mini-courses, and community gatherings. Featured demonstrators to include Robin Wood, Michael Hosaluk, and Michael Cullen. For more, visit northhouse.org.

Montana

September 26, 27, 2015, Great Falls Woodturners Symposium, Great Falls College, MSU, Great Falls. Featured demonstrator Rudolph Lopez will conduct demonstrations of his extensive knowledge and creativity in woodturning. For more, visit gfturners.org.

October 17, 18, 2015, Yellowstone Woodturners Symposium, Billings. Featured demonstrator/teacher will be Alan Carter, who will demonstrate turning long-stem goblets, suspended vessels, split-bowl vessels, and design so you can find your own creative voice. For more, visit yellowstoneturners.org or call Ron Velin at 406-679-0902.

New Hampshire

May 8, 9, 2015, 8th Annual New England Woodturning Symposium, Pinkerton Academy, Derry. Hosted by the Guild of New Hampshire Woodworkers and the Granite State Woodturners, the symposium will include woodturning demonstrations, a gallery of work by demonstrators and attendees, and a trade show. There will also be a Youth Turning Day, Friday, May 8. For more, visit gnhw.org.

North Carolina

November 6–8, 2015, North Carolina Biennial Symposium, Greensboro Coliseum, Greensboro. Featuring sixty-three demonstration periods in nine rotations. Featured demonstrators include Nick Agar, Jimmy Clewes, Don Derry, Ashley Harwood, Mike Jackofsky, Al Stirt, and eight regional demonstrators. Large tradeshow, instant gallery, and banquet with live auction. For more, visit northcarolinawoodturning.com.

North Dakota

April 17–19, 2015, Hands-on Annual Spring Symposium, Career Center at Bismarck State College. Three demonstrators will offer the hands-on learning experience. For more, visit dakotawoodturners.com.

Ohio

October 9–11, Ohio Valley Woodturners Guild's Turning 2015 Symposium, Higher Ground Conference Center, Cincinnati. Featured demonstrators to include Mike Jackofsky, Chris Ramsey, Neil Scobie, Mark St. Leger, Malcolm Tibbetts, and Derek Weidman. Event will feature a vendor area, auction, instant gallery, onsite lodging and meals, and a spouse craft room. For more, visit ovwg.org.

Pennsylvania

September 24, 25, 2016, Mid Atlantic Woodturning Symposium hosted by the Mid Atlantic Woodturners Association, The Lancaster Marriott at Penn Square, Lancaster. Eight nationally renowned demonstrators, thirty-two demonstrations, instant gallery, award banquet, and raffle. For more, visit mawts.com.

Texas

August 21–23, 2015, Southwest Association of Turners (SWAT) 24th Symposium, Waco Convention Center, Waco. One of the largest woodturning symposiums in the U.S. Lead demonstrators: Joe Herrmann, Ed Kelle, Kurt Hertzog, Malcolm Tibbetts, Derek Weidman, and Dick Gerard. The symposium will also feature six regional demonstrators and more than forty vendors. On Sunday after lunch, there will be a raffle for valuable door prizes. For more, visit swaturners.org or contact Ken Mays, 105pltkm@gmail.com.

Utah

May 14–16, 2015, Utah Woodturning Symposium, Utah Valley University, Orem. Demonstrators to include Sam Angelo, Sally Ault, Mark Baker, Michael Blankenship, Jason Breach, Jay Brown, Rex Burningham, Kip Christensen, Cindy Drozda, Ashley Harwood, Kurt Hertzog, Mike Jackofsky, Art Liestman, Eric Lofstrom, Art Majerus, Guilio Marcolongo, Cindy Navarro, Stan Record, Jim Rodgers, Jason Schneider, Alan Trout, and Neil Turner. UWS will also host Women in Turning, a virtual chapter of the AAW. For more, visit utahwoodturning.com.

Virginia

April 25, 2015, Richmond Woodturners' competition and exhibition, Woodcraft Store, Richmond. The event, which is open to the public, features several categories and skill levels, including youth. The Richmond Woodturners will provide demonstrations throughout the day. Woodcraft also hosts woodcarvers, scroll sawyers, and penturners. For more, visit richmondwoodturners.org.

Washington

July 25, 2015, Woodturners of Olympia's "Creativity in Woodturning Symposium," Komachin Middle School, Lacey. The event will feature Richard Raffan, whose demonstrations will include Back to Basics, Bowls, Lidded Bowls, and Suction Fit Boxes. Additional workshops with Richard will be held July 26–29, and August 1, 2. For more, visit woodturnersofolympia.org.

Seattle Woodturners Active with Outreach

The Seattle Woodturners, an AAW chapter, actively seeks not only to improve its members' woodturning skills and enjoyment of the craft, but also to reach out to the community in positive ways. At its monthly meetings, the club regularly discusses where its efforts might be needed in the community.

Boxes donated as part of the Beads of Courage program, which offers emotional support for children with serious illnesses and their families.

Empty Bowls

Each year for the past several years, the club has participated in the Empty Bowls drive. This program reaches out to those who are homeless and/or unable to adequately feed themselves or those in their family. All money gained by the sale of the bowls is used to feed those in need. For more, visit emptybowls.net.

Art Fairs

Another outreach activity of the Seattle Woodturners is its annual spring participation in the Bellevue Art Museum's (BAM's) KIDSfair, an event designed to involve kids in art activities. Members of the Seattle Woodturners participate by turning tops as a "tool" to expose kids and their parents to woodturning. As the tops are turned, they are given to the kids, who then decorate them at special "turning" stations that rotate the tops to color the chatter-worked areas. The club also makes tops for kids during BAM's annual ARTSfair in July, a three-day event where 400–500 tops are given to enthusiastic youngsters.

Annually in August, the club demonstrates at another art fair, Kirkland Summerfest, to help inform the public about woodturning.

Beads of Courage

In 2014, the club began creating Beads of Courage boxes (a nationally recognized project) for children dealing with serious and life-threatening illnesses. The supportive program helps kids cope with the ordeal of difficult and frightening medical treatments. The children use the boxes to hold beads, which signify strength and courage, given to them at different stages of their treatment. For more, visit beadsofcourage.org.

Obviously, the initial intent of our outreach activities was to publicize woodturning and to invite the public to join our chapter, but our members invariably come to feel great personal satisfaction from their work as well. ■

—Les Dawson

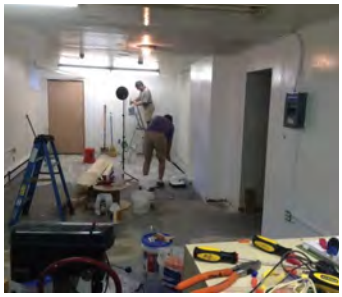
In the Empty Bowls program, donated bowls are sold to raise money to help feed the hungry.

Detroit Area Woodturners Moves to Pontiac Creative Arts Center

Due to continued community outreach events held by the Detroit Area Woodturners (DAW), the chapter's membership has increased by twenty-five percent. It became essential for us to find a large enough space to hold our meetings. We found a new home that suits our club perfectly in the Pontiac Creative Arts Center.
The Arts Center offers a larger meeting area, with space for a turning facility with seven lathes, as well as ancillary equipment like a bandsaw and sharpening station. The new space required significant reconstruction, and we would like to thank the DAW members for the time, equipment, and money donated to make this move possible. Our thanks also to the Arts Center for accommodating us. Now chapter members are donating their time to teach classes to the local community. ■

—Glenn McCullough

The DAW crew knee-deep in demolition, knocking down walls and moving electrical and plumbing, to make smaller units into a larger, more functional space.



Reconstruction involved updating and adding light fixtures, drywall, and paint, as well as filling, leveling, and sealing the floor.

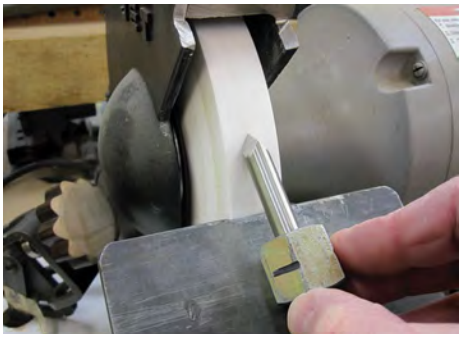
The Detroit Area Woodturners' new larger facility at the Pontiac Creative Arts Center.

Tips

Grinding jig for three-point tool

I found it challenging to make and then re-sharpen a three-point tool with uniform bevels every time. So I came up with a jig for the task. All you need is a brass flare × FIP (female iron pipe) adapter, as shown. The inside diameter of the flare end should be the same size as your tool steel so you can slide the adapter over your tool. Drill, tap, and insert a set screw into the fitting so you can secure the adapter to the tool. Grind a small flat on the tool steel for the set screw to seat on for easy alignment of the adapter on the tool steel.

In use, the flat sides of the adapter serve as a repeatable reference when placed on the grinder toolrest, so the tool's bevel will automatically align the same way every time. The jig also works great for making and sharpening a round skew.
—Larry Sefton, Tennessee



Share your turning ideas!

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

—Joshua Friend, Editor

Faster air drying

I have had good luck air drying 4"- to 10"- (10cm- to 25cm-) diameter logs for woodturning. The rule of thumb for air drying wet logs is one year for every inch of radius. If time is of no consequence, this may be all right, but if you are as impatient as I am, two to five years is a long time to wait.

In May, I harvested a large oak that produced several stacks of desirable wood. To experiment, I loaded a firewood rack with the oak logs and placed a dehumidifier in the center. The ends of the logs were painted with an emulsion wax sealer, and the whole assembly was wrapped and sealed in plastic sheeting.

A hygrometer and thermometer were placed inside so temperature and humidity could be monitored. I followed the progress periodically with a wood moisture meter. The humidity inside the package remained about 20% lower and the temperature 20 degrees higher than the ambient air. By the end of October, the equilibrium moisture content (EMC) of the logs measured from 8% to 13%. The average humidity where I live is 12.7% in October, so the wood had dried effectively. Throughout the stack of logs, there was no splitting or checking from the drying process.

To test the EMC of the wood throughout the log, I turned one to the shape of a lamp base. The EMC measured 13% at a 2"- (5cm-) diameter neck section. What would have required three years to season naturally was ready to turn in five months.
—Dick Webber, Oklahoma

Mark your pen bushings

I typically turn about a dozen cigar pens per year—mostly as presents and thank you gifts. Since I don't make them regularly, I don't remember each time the order in which the bushings should be installed on the pen mandrel. Instead of reading the instructions each time I make a pen, I came up with an easy fix: mark the bushings permanently to indicate their order.

To simplify the identification and installation of the bushings, I placed each one in a vise and cut either one, two, three, or four marks on the bushings with a hacksaw. The number of marks corresponds to that bushing's placement on the mandrel. Now it is fast and simple for me to mount bushings and pen blanks. ■
—Bill Rosener, Oklahoma

Turners Without Borders Continues Outreach in China

I knew very little about China when Terry Martin asked if I would go there to teach woodturning at a school for kids with disabilities. Terry and others from AAW's Turners Without Borders had been to the Wenzhou Special School briefly, but I was asked to spend a couple of weeks setting up a turning program there. I eagerly accepted the challenge.

Wenzhou Special School is a precious egg in a nest of steep green hills. The 1,000 students have a variety of disabilities, but I spent most of my time with children with hearing impairment. The children were funny, helpful, and easy to help. The first bit of sign language I had to learn was, "Thank you." At the school, I was made to feel very welcome and received wonderful gifts: a superb carved Buddha, exquisite paintings and turned dolls, beautiful books, and thousands of smiles—a bounty beyond reckoning. As a valued guest, I was routinely given three or four times as much food as I could eat.

I took dozens of turnings to China: puzzles, physics illusions, dolls, trick tops, and other toys. Eyes widened and hands reached! Members of my local club, The Blue Mountains Woodturners near Sydney, Australia, had made 150 finger tops and left them unfinished so the children could decorate them with felt tip pens and make them their own. The joy on their faces showed how much fun they had.

Teaching the teacher

I spent more than half my time with one teacher, Mr. Zhu, a gifted and diligent young man who soon learned to grind tools freehand, use Vernier callipers and story sticks to produce matching spindles, and turn with two skews at once—one in each hand! In a very short time, Mr. Zhu became an able turner and a good teacher. Safety was a major focus, so the children did small-scale spindle turning and made tops. Many were hesitant, even nervous, but quite a few became enthusiastic converts.

Communication is not easy for a westerner in China. Add hearing impairment and it gets harder, but a surprising level of communication is possible with drawings, photos, gestures, and phones that translate. Occasionally, Chinese words come out quaintly in English: "Your idea is red hope." On the first day, I tried to make the sign for "Thank you," but it came out as "marriage." With good will and patience, a lot is understood.

The adroit Mr. Zhu learned a great deal and I am confident he will pass it on. He appears motivated to work hard at woodturning and he treats the children well. All this augurs well for the future and for the program started by the AAW and the International Wood Culture Society. Mr. Zhu knows little of faceplate work and this is an obvious topic for follow-up. Other future topics could include using jigs to sharpen tools, making two-part pens, going beyond copying to creativity, embellishing wood surfaces, designing, turning with multiple centers, and so on.

Two creative girls at the Wenzhou Special School decorate a spinning top.

AAW's Turners Without Borders program extends the reach of woodturning globally. Our mission is supported by generous donations of lathe equipment and turning tools. Thank you to those who have donated time, money, and equipment. Many others have helped make this project a success, but I owe the most thanks to the children. They are curious, kind, and a delight to teach. I am very grateful I got the chance to participate in this wonderful program. ■

Photos: International Wood Culture Society

—Ernie Newman

TWB's Ernie Newman teaches Mr. Zhu (left) and a Wenzhou student the proper use of the skew chisel.

Ernie Newman and Su Jinling are surrounded by appreciative students.

Nested Balwoo Bowl Sets

Duk-Su David Koh
and Sang-Gil Jung

Nested-bowl sets are commonly turned from a single large block of wood using coring techniques. This method minimizes wood waste, so it is often used for valuable woods such as burl. When stacked together as a set, the resulting bowls are visually entertaining because their shapes are similar, but at different sizes. Significant gaps exist, however, between the bowls as a result of the thickness of the coring cutter and further removal of material during final turning. By comparison, Balwoo dining-bowl sets, used by Buddhist monks in Asia, have minimal gaps between each component bowl. These sets are highly compact and easily carried by monks who travel frequently for religious training. In this article, we introduce the turning of Balwoo bowl sets.

Procedure of Balwoo turning

The technique to make a Balwoo set is similar to the turning of typical wood bowls. There is no coring process. The process includes two steps: (1) partial turning utilizing wet bowl blanks and (2) final turning after drying. Individually turning a tightly stackable set of bowls is challenging because the turner needs to match not only the diameter and depth, but also the curves of neighboring bowls. To achieve perfectly nested bowls, one needs to prepare all sizes of partially turned bowls with dimensional overlap between neighboring bowls. After drying, the bowls are finish-turned to be the components of a set.

Hook tool and lathe designed for Balwoo turning.

A partially turned bowl, ready for drying.

Bowl	OD	ID	WT	H	D	BT
1	153	141	6	70	62	8
2	170	157	6.5	79	70	9
3	187	174	6.5	89	79	10
4	205	191	7	100	89	11
5	223	209	7	112	100	12

Table 1. Final turned dimensions (in mm) for a Balwoo set of five bowls. *(Editor's Note: Conversions from metric to imperial measurements are not included in this Table, as millimeters are more practical than very small fractions for conveying the required increments.)*

OD: outside diameter, ID: inside diameter, WT: wall thickness, H: height of bowls (= depth + bottom thickness), D: depth, and BT: bottom thickness. The gap between bowls is 2mm. For the partial turning, OD and ID can be 10% larger and smaller, respectively, than the indicated values for final turning. For height, add 10% of the value shown.

Partial turning and drying

For Balwoo sets, we use wood species that minimally deform during drying and are relatively lightweight and rugged for long-lasting use. Preferred local woods in Korea are silver poplar and ginkgo, but North American hardwoods such as maple are also appropriate. Primarily, Balwoo bowls are turned in crossgrain orientation (with the grain running perpendicular to the ways of the lathe) on a lathe that is designed specifically for turning with hook tools for efficient cutting (*Photo 1*).

Mounted onto the lathe, a round bowl blank, prepared with a bandsaw, is turned on the outside, and then the inside wood is turned away. The next bowl is prepared in the same manner, but with its inner and outer diameters and its height slightly larger than those of the first bowl (*Table 1*). At this rough-turning stage, the inner diameter of the next bowl needs to be smaller than the outer diameter of the smaller bowl. This overlap is essential to allow for the distortion of wood during the drying process. If you use wood that shrinks extensively, size the bowls to have more overlap.

Wall thickness is rough-turned to about ten to fifteen percent of the outer diameter of the bowls (*Photo 2*). Typically, multiple bowls of a size are prepared, expecting the loss of some of them from cracking. For drying, to avoid losing moisture too quickly, which can result in cracks, wet lathe shavings are contained in the freshly turned bowls. After about a week, the bowls are inverted, stacked up, and further dried in a cool drying room for about one year. Alternatively, coating of bowls with wax emulsion immediately after turning reduces the occurrence of cracks.

Final turning

When the moisture content reaches less than about ten percent, the bowls are remounted onto the lathe and final-turned. For Balwoo turning, it is essential to control diameters and wall thickness precisely. We start with the smallest bowl of the set. Unlike conventional bowl turning, it is more suitable to shape the inside of the bowl first.

Matching the spaces between bowls is important, so we define the outer diameter first. The preset ▸

(3) Mark the predetermined outer diameter of the first, innermost bowl.

(4) After removing wood from the outside of the bowl to the pencil mark, turn away the wood on the inside.

(5) Measure the depth of the bowl.

(6) The inside of the first bowl complete.

(7) The bowl is remounted using a jam chuck and is ready for finish turning on the outside.

(8) The height of the bowl is marked and the wood below the line is trimmed away.

(9) The outside of the first bowl is finished and the bowl is now complete. Note the flat bottom, essential for stability during dining.

(10) The inner dimension of the second bowl is marked using the first bowl as a reference.

(11) The depth and inner curve of the second bowl are checked regularly using the first bowl as a reference.

(12) Two bowls are completed with minimal gap between them.

outer diameter is marked using ruler and pencil while the bowl is being rotated (*Photo 3*). When marking, align the ruler at the bowl's centerline; otherwise, the circle will have a diameter larger than the predetermined size. The wood outside the outer line is removed using a bowl gouge or hook tool (*Photo 4*). Next, the inside of the bowl is turned. The depth of the bowl is often measured using two rulers (*Photo 5*). When the shape is satisfactory, the inside of the bowl is finalized by sanding using different grits of abrasives (*Photo 6*).

The bowl is flipped and fixed onto the lathe using a jam chuck (*Photo 7*). The height of the bowl is indicated at the base using a try square (*Photo 8*). The wood below the line is trimmed away and then the outer curve is shaped smoothly. Sanding of the outside completes the innermost, first bowl (*Photo 9*).

Now we start with the second bowl. The rim of the bowl is trimmed flat and the outer diameter of the first bowl is traced onto the second bowl while the second bowl is rotating (*Photo 10*). Then the inside of the bowl is turned away.

The depth and inner curve are checked regularly using the first bowl (*Photo 11*). When the first bowl sits perfectly inside the second bowl, this step is finished. It is convenient to use a ruler or straightedge to compare the heights of the two bowls. Turning and sanding the outside of the second bowl are done in the same way as for the first bowl. The second bowl is now completed (*Photo 12*).

The walls of the bowls are thin and heat is generated during the sanding step, possibly causing distortion. It is advisable to stack the bowls with some shavings between them for more efficient cooling.

The same steps are repeated until the largest bowl in the set is completed.

A Balwoo set with five bowls.

A Balwoo set with twenty-five bowls, finished with Japanese lacquer. Crafted by S.G. Jung.

Design principles and additional notes

Balwoo sets consisting of four or five bowls are used most frequently (*Photo 13*). For a set with more bowls, start with smaller bowls so the largest one will have the size you desire (*Photo 14*). It is helpful to use drawing software to determine dimensions of each bowl at the planning stage.

The most challenging step is to control the side curve of the bowls. Unlike the measurable and well-defined top diameters and wall thickness, the curves need to be determined by the turner. In the production line, it is feasible to match the curves of neighboring bowls because of repetition. For occasional hobby projects, we suggest using a set of contour profiles made of cardboard or sheet plastic. The profiles can be designed with software such as Photoshop or CorelDRAW®.

If you turn a Balwoo set, you will immediately recognize a gradual shape change of each bowl. Usually the inner bowls have a flat profile while the outer (larger) bowls are taller (*see Photo 14*). *Figure 1* illustrates why this occurs and gives some idea how to minimize the gradual change in profile. For example, the largest bowl in example A is hemispherical and it has a profile ratio (height divided by radius) of 1. If all bowls have the same wall thickness, the profile ratio remains unchanged up to the smallest bowl, in other words, no change of shape.

If the largest bowl has a profile lower than a hemisphere (profile ratio < 1), as shown in example B, the profile ratio of the inner bowls becomes smaller, making the innermost bowl quite flat. As shown in C and D, the same is true even though the wall thickness is reduced at a rate proportional to the radii of the bowls. This is why most Balwoo sets have a hemispherical shape. Note that the bottom of Balwoo bowls is not round but flat for stability (*see Photo 9*). In addition, the bowl's bottom is slightly thicker than its side, helping cause the difference of shape.

A cover fitted to the largest bowl accompanies many Balwoo sets. The ▸

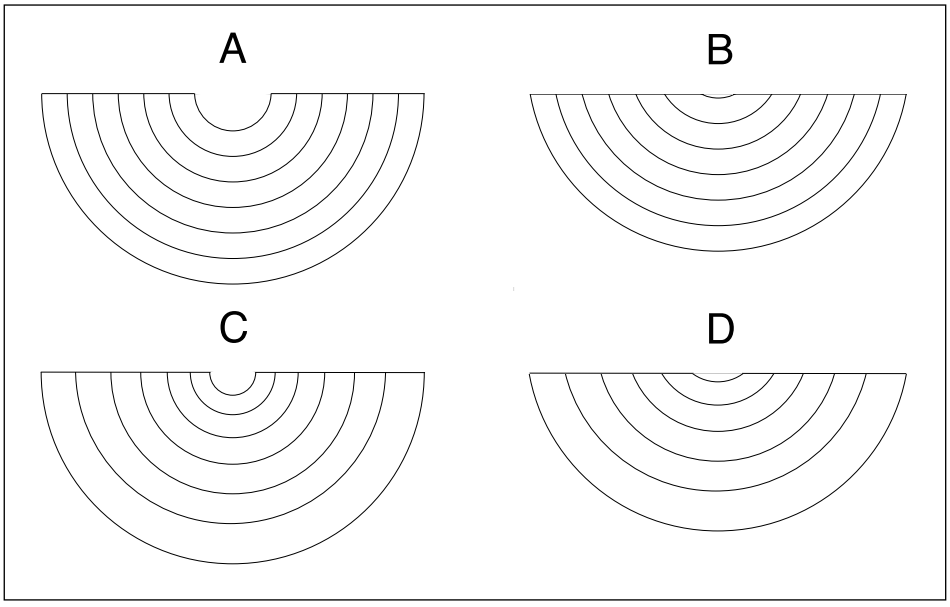


Figure 1. Profiles of Balwoo bowl sets.

cover typically is plain, not decorated or carved. The Balwoo bowl sets used for daily dining, including for soup, are finished with multiple layers of Japanese lacquer, which has excellent resistance to heat and water. Any finishing material can be used, however, especially when the bowls are used as a decorative object or will not have contact with water.

Stackable Balwoo bowl sets can be produced with basic bowl-turning techniques. To minimize the gap between bowls, it is important to determine carefully the dimension of each bowl before starting the turning procedure. Based on the analysis discussed in this article and the significant experience of Balwoo turners, hemispheric design seems to be optimal for maintaining the overall shape of the bowls. Dimensions of a Balwoo set listed in *Table 1* can be a starting point for further refinement.

In principle, a Balwoo set may have as many components as you want, with some limit imposed by deformation of bowls in the smallest sizes. Balwoo sets of multiple bowls can resemble the yearly growth rings in tree trunks. Sets with an excessive number of bowls find their value in their decorative aspect and often are purchased by collectors. Balwoo turning can be a step-up project for bowl turners who seek to advance their skills. ■

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Sang-Gil Jung has been a professional woodturner for twenty years and specializes in Balwoo bowls. As a hobby, he makes carved coffee tables with natural edges.

Origin and use of Balwoo

After Buddha achieved nirvana—the enlightenment—each of four heavenly kings presented one bowl as a gift. Buddha stacked the bowls and used them for his dining. This is the old story of the origin of the nested Balwoo bowls. Balwoo sets can be made of different materials but are commonly turned from wood because of easy fabrication in Korea.

The Balwoo set is presented together with a napkin and a pair of chopsticks.

In Buddhism, dining with Balwoo sets is regarded as a part of religious training. This group-dining ceremony proceeds with well-defined steps, including rehearsing verses of specific Buddhist literature. The major theme is to appreciate the effort of the many people who have harvested the crops and prepared the food. With sufficient energy and nutrients from the dining, each person now is able to pursue the ultimate understanding and also help other people.

One Balwoo set is used for a serving of rice, soup, and clear water. At the end of the dining ceremony, rice tea is distributed to collect any remaining food in the bowls and to drink. Finally, the clear water contained in a bowl is used to clean the bowls. So the Balwoo dining ceremony emphasizes (1) equality by sharing the same kind of food, (2) hygienic dining habits, (3) food saving with minimal waste, and (4) community building by eating together.

Sidebar photos courtesy of the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism.

Food is distributed.

A monk says the verses before eating.

Eating.

After dining, rice tea is poured into the bowl to collect any remaining food, and then it is drunk.

JOURNAL ARCHIVE CONNECTION

Balwoo bowls represent one approach to turning beautiful nested sets. Another more common method is to use a bowl coring system. For a good explanation of this process, as well as analysis of the popular coring systems available on the market, see John I. Giem's article from *AW* vol 28, no 1 (page 36). AAW members can access the journal archives at woodturner.org. Under the "American Woodturner" tab, click on "AW Journal Archives."

THE DIVINE DOLLS OF HIROKI ASAKA

Catherine Gorrie

Witch with Monkey/Cat, by Hiroki Asaka, about 10" tall. Hiroki's art is informed by Japanese robots, toys, and cartoons.

Imagine, if you can, a new and enthusiastic recreational woodturner attending her first woodturning convention. The place is the Gold Coast of Australia and I am seeing renowned international artists demonstrating one after another for a whole weekend, mingling with like-minded enthusiasts, trading tips, and maybe telling a few tales. There is a large table set up with all sorts of turnings displayed by hobbyists, aiming both to show off their best work and to learn from professional critique. The instant gallery grows and grows as the demonstrators add pieces made during their classes.

This table fascinates me and I study it every time I walk past. Toward the end of the first day, a few turned dolls appear, the likes of which I have never seen before. They are assembled from various wood species and feature many movable parts, plus a few accessories that are magnetic and removable. One doll represents Cat Lady with her group of cats and an ironic mouse on her head, and the other is a young girl apparently prepared to defend herself with an axe.

The only clue to the creator of these divine turnings is a small business card with an email address. The pieces soon disappear, and I learned later that someone had almost immediately purchased them, even though the table was not meant for selling work. Luckily, I had photographed each piece that interested me, and I had snapshots of these remarkable dolls. Once I got home, I sent an email to the creator, Hiroki Asaka, who lives in Japan. I praised his work and asked if he had any pieces for sale. He wrote back to say he would make a doll for me. Time passed and eventually I received an email saying he had completed my doll. Hiroki provided photos of Witch with a little sidekick that he identified as "cat or monkey." Witch and Monkey/Cat were absolutely delightful. Needless to say, I bought them. ▸

Cat Lady and Girl with Axe, both by Hiroki Asaka, briefly appeared at a woodturning seminar in Australia and were quickly sold.

Witch and Monkey/Cat are segmented pieces made from eight different woods. The arms, legs, and heads all move, being held together internally with elastic cord anchored by small eye screws. A magnet holds Witch's hat in place so it can come off. Her hair is in a long, flexible braid made from many small pieces. Her outfit is quite magnificent—a skirt under a cloak with scalloped edges and inlaid design.

Getting started

Hiroki, 33, lives in Sakai, which is part of Osaka, Japan. As a child, he was fascinated by plastic robots, comics, and all sorts of animations. He started out working at a woodworking company where he learned traditional Japanese woodturning, which is quite different from the Western style. The lathes don't have tailstocks and the long tools resemble old-style turning hooks. The woodturner cuts from underneath the turning, bracing the long tool against his body and leaning on a freestanding wooden toolrest that is not attached to the lathe.

Hiroki started his own woodturning business about four years ago. It was so difficult to obtain traditional Japanese lathes and tools that he took a few lessons in Western-style turning and decided to work that way. At first, he found the Western methods strange and difficult, but he was determined to teach himself.

Hiroki's first step toward success in doll-making was learning how to make a functioning joint. Once he mastered that, he was able to make dolls with many moving parts. He also had to figure out how to attach the parts so the doll could move and hold its poses. After a lot of trial and error, he settled on a method using elasticized cord, wire, and eye screws.

Making the witch

I asked Hiroki how he made the witch. First, he draws a full-sized image. You can see something of today's Japanese animations in his drawings, as well as in the finished result.

He selects a variety of wood species with different, natural colors—no stains or dyes. Then he assembles the octagonal blank that will become the witch's dress, inserting splines of a contrasting wood to achieve decorative lines down the front opening. He also bores holes in the sides of the dress blank to accept glued plugs of contrasting woods. He then turns the dress into the desired shape.

To create the scalloped pattern, Hiroki bores holes in the desired locations down the front of the dress, then cuts away the waste using a small, high-speed carving tool. ▸

Doll maker Hiroki Asaka, 33, lives near Osaka, Japan.

Traditional Japanese tools were hard to find, so Hiroki uses Western-style turning tools with a mid-sized lathe and scroll chuck.

Hiroki makes movable joints using elastic cord and wire, anchored inside the doll with knots and eye screws.

Hiroki makes a full-sized, fully detailed drawing. He also makes construction sketches to work out the geometry of the blanks.

The witch's dress will be turned from an octagonal block assembled around splines of contrasting wood. Hiroki also has bored two large holes for contrasting plugs.

Hiroki turns the hollow bell shape that will become the witch's cloak.

A series of bored holes creates the scalloped front of the witch's cloak. Hiroki removes the waste with power carving tools.

To make the doll's head, Hiroki assembles and turns a blank of contrasting woods.

The witch's hat consists of three turnings joined together.

The doll's arms, legs, and other parts consist of many precisely turned pieces, all meticulously assembled.

Hiroki uses a small router in a jig block to engrave the face of the witch's staff.

Hiroki's tiny workshop contains a full complement of woodworking tools and machines.

Next comes the head. It starts as a rectangular prism of wood, sawn at an angle and glued to a contrasting species. He turns the rough shape of the head, then inserts the eyes and the magnet that will hold the hat on. He makes the hat itself in three parts that are glued together on completion. The boots also are made of three parts: the toe, the back of the boot, and a heel. The arms, legs, and hair parts are all made as per the drawing. Finally, Hiroki turns and assembles the staff, using the lathe's indexing wheel and a small router to cut the pattern on its face.

Hiroki uses the full range of woodworking tools and machines to complete these tasks, including a belt sander, bandsaw, table saw, planer, drill press, router, clamps, and glue, to name a few. He uses a pyrography pen to burn the doll's mouth, and he finishes the wood with three coats of oil.

You might be surprised to learn that Hiroki's workshop is about 9 feet wide by 18 feet long. It is highly organized, and Hiroki makes excellent use of every bit of space. You might also be surprised to learn that Hiroki and I managed to put this article together by email, even though I know no Japanese, and he knows no English. ▶

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Making doll bears

Hiroki Asaka's bears have movable arms and legs joined with elastic cord; the head has a neck socket that rotates and tilts on a ball turned onto the pear-shaped body. The bear's eyes and nose are turned plugs glued into holes, while the mouth is drawn by pyrography. The bears are finished with three coats of oil.

Before turning the body and head from a square billet, Hiroki bores holes for arm and leg joints.

The stub at the top of the pear-shaped body will later be turned to a ball that fits into a socket in the head.

He saws flats where the legs will join, then mounts the body blank between centers.

Arms, legs, and ears are bored, beveled, and turned in the same way as the body and head, then finished with three coats of oil.

After roughing the blank to a straight cylinder, he marks the division between body and head.

Elastic cord anchored by eye screws passes through the head socket into the bear's body.

The basic design of the bears can be adapted to make squirrels and many other animals.

HIROKI'S
EXPRESSIVE FIGURES

Historically, dolls have been a valued part of Japanese culture—as a friend to children, a lucky charm, or a mirror reflecting one's feelings. Hiroki's figures often use the same basic design and structure, with variations of wardrobe and accoutrements to define individual characters. ■

Dynamic in their poses, Hiroki's dolls aptly portray human sensibilities or fairytale motifs.

A kimono-wearing doll commissioned as a present for a shakuhachi (bamboo flute) player.

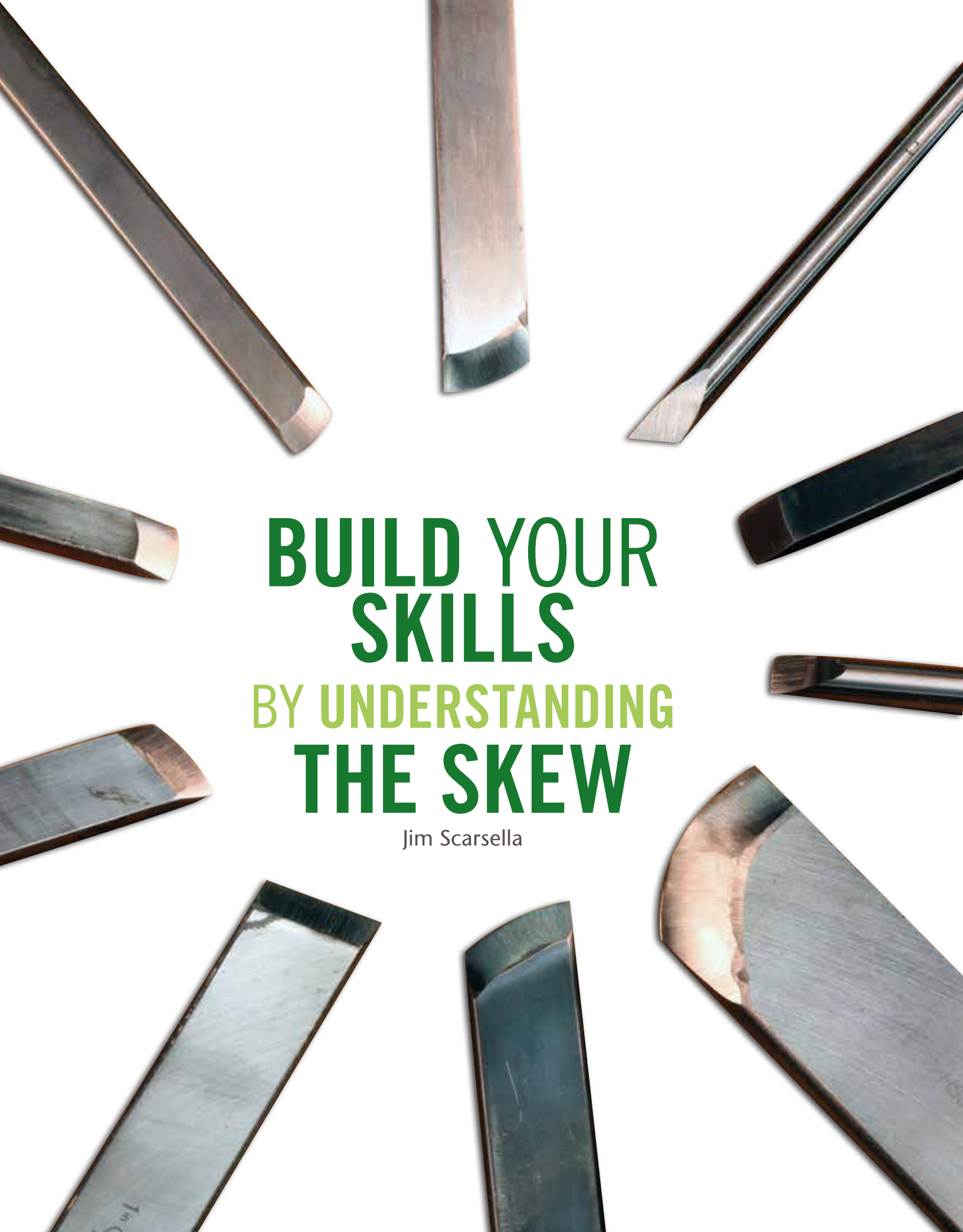
The striped eel catfish and dragonfly elements reflect motifs found in an autobiography whose author received this commissioned piece as a present.

A baby gift Hiroki made for a friend. In Japan, it is customary to give a doll wearing a traditional armored helmet to celebrate the birth of a boy.

A commission for a married couple. He plays the cello, and she the shamisen (a three-stringed Japanese lute).

Well suited to woodturning, dolls like Little Red Riding Hood and Witch are Hiroki's favorite motif.

A dress-up doll, made for a friend.



BUILD YOUR SKILLS BY UNDERSTANDING THE SKEW

Jim Scarsella

Certain cuts achieved with a skew chisel are superior to those of any other tool. However, the skew seems to strike fear in the hearts of many woodturners. In truth, it is that very reputation that got me interested in the skew when I was new to turning. I had to find out for myself exactly why this tool is despised by so many. It did not take long for my untrained hands to discover the answer. So began my quest to better understand and develop skill with the skew. Hopefully, what follows will convince you to give the skew a chance and to shorten your learning curve if you do.

It is true, if you exclusively make facegrain-oriented bowls, you may not find much use for the skew. But you do not need to be a production spindle turner to find countless applications for this tool. Any time you are working on projects with the grain running parallel to the ways of the lathe, the skew shines—and not just on spindles for furniture or architecture. Endgrain hollow forms, toys, pepper mills, ornaments, and boxes present numerous applications for the skew chisel. So let's take a closer look and see if there is a place for the skew in your shop.

Anatomy of the skew

There are a several skew shapes, bevel grinds, and sizes, but they are all just variations of a simple flat-edged chisel. Those who are fans of the skew have varying preferences, and this can be confusing for novices just learning about the tool. But the reality is that, provided the tool is sharp and free of nicks along the shaft, most will perform well, regardless of their differences. *Photo 1* illustrates the names of individual parts common to all skew chisels.

Three cross sections

Skew chisels are available in three different cross sections: rectangular, round, and oval (*Figure 1*).

Probably the most common shape is the rectangular skew. However, some are made from unaltered bar stock and are sold with sharp, square edges, rendering them nearly useless out of the box. The sharp edges will catch on any imperfection in the toolrest and make it difficult to slide and roll the tool smoothly. At the very least, the sharp edges need to be rounded over and softened. Ideally, a rectangular skew has the edge that runs to the short point fully radiused, and the edges that run to the long point chamfered and softened, removing any nicks and bumps. This allows for fluid movement of the tool when planing and rolling the short point and provides a stable surface when holding it vertically for penetrating cuts with the long point. Most tool manufacturers now sell skews already machined with this profile. Look for this shape when shopping for a new tool, and know that with older, used tools, you may need to tune them for optimal results.

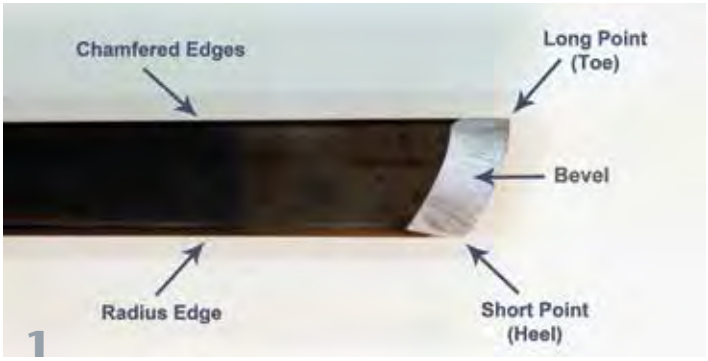
Round skews, ground from small diameter steel blanks, are great for forming details on finials, chess pieces, and other fine spindle work. As round skews get larger, the width of the tool limits their usefulness because they cannot easily reach between close elements. Many turners also find them difficult to sharpen due to their tendency to roll when presented on a grinder. For these reasons, I limit my use of round skews to fine details.

Oval-shaped skews allow smooth travel over the toolrest and are great for planing cuts and rolling beads. They are less stable on the toolrest than a rectangular profile during facing or V-groove cuts. Also, because of the curved body, some find it more difficult to sharpen with consistency. However, there are many woodturners who prefer this shape, and in skilled hands it makes a great all-purpose skew.

Skew sizes and angles

Skews come in a wide variety of sizes. The very small and very large do offer some advantages in particular circumstances, but I find that I reach for my ½" (13mm) and 1" (25mm) skews most often. If I were to recommend one tool to the new turner, it would be a ¾" (19mm) or 1" rectangular skew for the versatility that size and shape offers.

Most skews come ground with a cutting edge that forms a straight line from long point to short point, typically with about a 70° angle measured from the long axis. This is a very usable profile and a good place to start when learning. However, many experienced turners favor a curved profile, with a straighter section for only about a third of the tool ▸



Common names of skew parts.

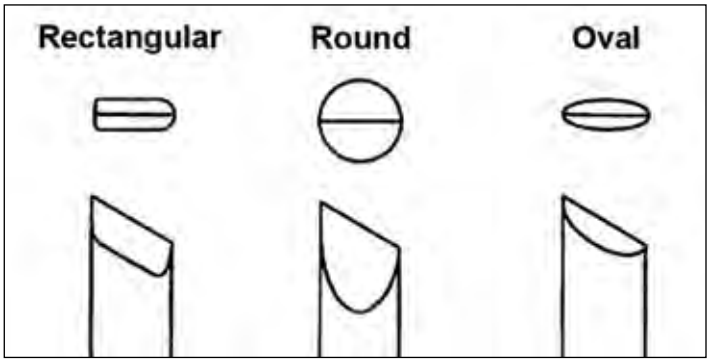


Figure 1. Skew cross sections.

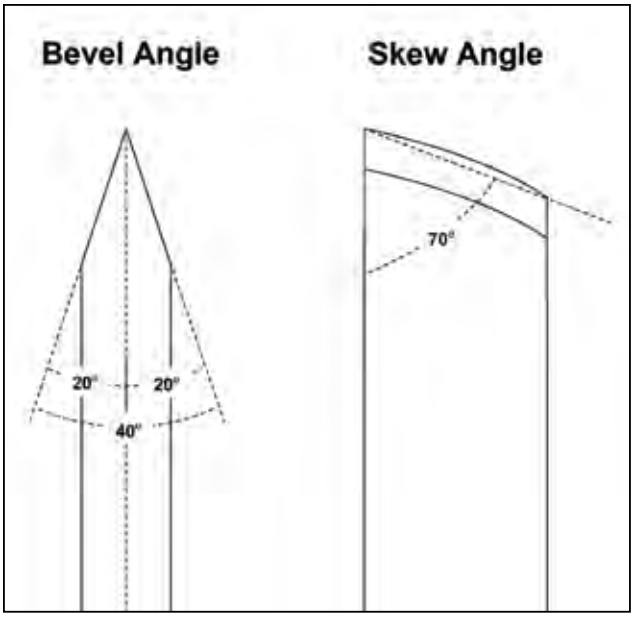


Figure 2. The difference between the bevel angle and skew angle.

near the long point, arcing into a gentle curve to the short point *(Photo 2)*. The overall slope is maintained at about 70°, but the curved profile offers an advantage when making rounded or arcing cuts.

The typical 70° skew angle can be altered to good effect for individual uses. Steeper angles are great for cutting shallow, sweeping coves and working in tight areas, and some may find flatter angles better for rolling beads.

Note that the skew angle and bevel angle are two different parts of the tool, as illustrated in *Figure 2*. Bevel angle considerations are discussed later in this article.

Geometry of a skewed cut

The skew chisel can make exceptionally clean cuts because, as the name implies, its cutting edge is skewed, or angled relative to the directional rotation of the wood. This orientation creates two benefits. First, cutting occurs by slicing along the wood grain rather than directly into it, reducing the tendency of wood fibers to pull out. Second, when any cutting edge is skewed in relation to the rotation of the wood, the actual cutting angle is reduced, effectively making the cutting edge "sharper" and generating a cleaner cutting action (*Photos 3, 4*).

This effect occurs with many other turning tools, too. Think of how we manipulate a bowl gouge, tilting the flute to the side or rotating it vertically when shear cutting. Even a spindle roughing gouge, when presented with the bevel pointed in the direction of the cut, has a skewed cutting angle. These are all examples of skewed cuts, and they produce a finer surface because they slice along the wood fibers and effectively introduce a sharper edge to the wood. With this in mind, when using a skew chisel on a difficult piece of wood, experiment by altering the presentation angle of the edge simply by swinging the handle one way or the other. This can dramatically affect the quality of the cut.

Bevel angle

A 40° included bevel angle (20° on each side) is considered typical for skew chisels, but the exact angle is not critical. In practical use, an included bevel angle anywhere from 25° to 55° is common.

Skew angles can be straight (bottom image) or gently curved.

Skewing the angle of the tool effectively produces a "sharper" edge, which generates a shearing or paring action and ultimately a cleaner cut surface.

Skew with a hollow-ground bevel.

Skew with a convex-ground bevel.

Skew with a flat-ground bevel.

Depending on the application and material, moving toward a more acute or obtuse angle may offer advantages. A blunter angle can provide added durability to the edge when working with very hard wood. More acute angles work well on soft woods, and the thinner cutting edge also allows clearance when working in tight transition areas. As illustrated in *Photos 3 and 4*, the actual cutting angle is not just dictated by the grind angle, but rather a combination of the grind angle and the angle of attack relative to the directional rotation of the wood. It is not possible to position the tool and have a cutting angle greater than the grind angle, as that would cause loss of bevel support and become a scraping cut. But, depending on how much you skew the position of the tool, the cutting angle can be greatly reduced from the grind angle.

I find a 40° included bevel angle a good all-round compromise between durable and sharp. A handy, nontechnical method of finding that angle is to grind the bevel length to about one-and-a-half times the thickness of tool. It so happens this bevel length will equal about 20° (actually 18.4°) on a tool of any thickness. The result is a tool with an included angle of about 40°.

Sharpening

There are three common ways to sharpen a skew chisel: hollow grind, convex grind, and flat grind. Opinions vary on which is the best. Ultimately, tool skill is the most important factor and someone proficient with these tools will work effortlessly with any grind.

Hollow grind

Grinding a bevel on a round stone produces a concave profile or a "hollow" in the bevel, as indicated in *Photo 5*. The smaller diameter the wheel, the deeper the hollow grind. In my experience, a concave bevel on a skew has the tendency to make the tool catchy and harder to control, especially when you are learning. The back edge of the bevel becomes a pivot point, which prevents the bevel's surface from supporting the cutting edge directly behind the cut. With this pivoting action, the cutting edge is not naturally pointed in the direction of the cut, but rather deeper into the wood. As a result, a hollow-ground tool tends to self-feed and is a little more grabby in use. This tendency can be overcome with practice, but I find this grind less user-friendly, especially for beginning turners.

You can improve a hollow-ground skew's performance by honing the edge on a flat surface after grinding. This produces two flats in a single plane at the front and back edge of the bevel. These flat surfaces lead the tool in the direction of the cut and reduce the tendency of the tool to dive farther into the wood. If you hollow-grind your skew, try honing with a diamond stone between trips to the grinder. You may find it makes the tool more stable and easier to control.

Convex grind

You can produce a slightly convex bevel by gently rolling the bevel up on the grinding wheel while sharpening. After sharpening the edge, gently advance the chisel up the wheel. This removes the trailing edge of the bevel and produces a slight convex or bullet shape (*Photo 6*). I find this grind easy to master freehand on the grinder with only a toolrest set to the appropriate angle, and it is very good for most of the common skew cuts. Keep in mind, the key here is a very slight convex shape. It is easy to overdo it and render the tool nearly useless. Monitor the shape closely as you grind the tool, as you only need to remove the concave hollow and nothing more.

Flat grind

After much time using all manner of grinds, I favor a dead-flat bevel on a skew chisel (*Photo 7*). Since it is easy to control and maintain bevel contact during the cut, a flat-ground skew is the easiest for beginners to use. As noted, the flat surfaces lead the tool in the direction of the cut and reduce the tendency of the tool to cut aggressively. I sharpen all my skews with a flat bevel. The problem is, it is hard to consistently produce a flat bevel freehand on a grinder. Practically speaking, this requires a belt sander sharpening method with a platen, which produces a flat, even edge.

To be sure, you can have a long and happy woodturning career, making beautiful work, without ever mastering the skew. In fact, there probably isn't anything you can do with a skew that you can't do with some form of gouge or scraper. However, I believe there are many things the skew simply does better. For one, it leaves a cleaner surface off the tool, which means less sanding. I think if you give it a fair chance, you will be glad you added this tool to your workshop. ■

Photos by Roger Meeker

Jim Scarsella is an avid turner and carver and an active member of the Detroit Area Woodturners. Although a passionate furniture maker for almost thirty years, Jim started turning in 2008 and hasn't made a piece of furniture since. To see more of his work, visit jimscarsella.com.

(Editor's Note: A detailed description of how to make the most common skew cuts can be found in Keith Tompkins' article on page 32. Also, please see page 34 for a link to an instructional video by John Lucas that further illustrates the techniques.)

Skew Chisel PRIMER

LEARN THE BASIC CUTS

Keith Tompkins

The planing cut, made with the skew chisel's bevel rubbing, leaves a surface requiring minimal sanding.

The skew chisel, one of the most versatile spindle-turning tools, has a bad reputation. It is sometimes the butt of woodturning jokes: "I brought along my skew chisel," says a demonstrator, "for opening this can of paste wax." Many otherwise expert turners refuse to use the skew. Yet others, having mastered its use, swear by it.

The skew is ideally suited for efficient, high-production spindle turning and continues to be a favorite among production turners. With this one tool, a variety of spindle-turning functions are possible: peeling, planing, V-grooves, beads, fillets, facing off endgrain, and even coves. But the skew's versatility comes at a price: In order for the tool to cut both to the right and to the left, a bevel must be ground on both sides of the cutting edge. This design is the primary reason the skew has a tendency to catch.

The difficulties of mastering the skew have not gone unnoticed among manufacturers. Several companies market alternatives to the traditional design, with the main selling point being that their tool can help you overcome the skew chisel's propensity to catch. But if you take the time to master this tool, you will be able to make cuts other tools cannot—and leave a finer surface on the wood.

Learning to use a skew chisel is well worth your time and energy. Here is how to make the most common skew cuts.

Peeling cut

Let's start with the peeling cut, which does not usually leave a clean surface but is perhaps the best way to remove a great deal of wood quickly. Use it to rough a cylinder to size and for forming tenons.

To start the cut, place the tool high up on the turning with its cutting edge parallel to the axis of the turning (*Photo 1*). Since this cut is rather aggressive, you can lessen how heavy a cut you take by using only a small part of the cutting edge at one time. As the wood rotates, allow the bevel of the skew to rub without the cutting edge engaged. Pull the tool back toward you until the edge begins to cut, then raise the handle and feed the edge in and upward to complete the cut. As you raise the handle, imagine moving the cutting edge in a slight arcing motion as it cuts the wood—up slightly and then toward the axis of the workpiece.

Slide the tool over to begin another cut.

Planing cut

The planing cut is one of the most frequently used skew cuts because it can leave a highly polished surface off the tool. This cut involves riding the bevel of the tool. To begin the cut, lay the tool flat on the wood and gradually rotate it until the bevel is contacting the wood and the edge begins to cut. If you are cutting from right to left, rotate the tool counterclockwise; from left to right, clockwise. When you have engaged the cutting edge, simply slide the skew along the toolrest, taking a light cut.

Turners have their own preferences as to exactly how to hold the skew chisel during the planing cut. Note in the *lead photo* that my left index finger is riding against the straightedge of the toolrest, while light pressure from my thumb maintains bevel contact with the wood. I find this grip gives me better control of the depth of cut and allows me to feed the tool smoothly along the toolrest. There is no need to muscle the cut with brute force; a light touch is all that is required. Also notice that the cutting edge is skewed, or positioned at an angle in relation to the rotation of the wood. This allows the tool to cleanly peel away, or pare the wood, rather than scrape directly into the surface.

V-groove

The V-groove may be the simplest cut to make with a skew chisel, but no other

tool can do the job as well, leaving clean, sharp sides of the V-grooves all the way to the bottom. The traditional method involves positioning the toolrest fairly high in relation to the turning. The long point of the skew is used to define the centerline of the V-groove, arched downward until it contacts the workpiece, and then the handle is raised to deepen the groove. To widen the groove, the same cutting action is made alternately from the right and left until the V-groove is to the desired width and depth. The bevel is rolled slightly away from the cut for minimal bevel contact. This is called "floating the bevel" and helps with tool control when cutting into the narrow bottom of a V shape.

An alternate cut I use successfully involves lowering the toolrest until the point of the skew is aimed directly at the centerline of the turning. Rubbing only the portion of the bevel near the long point, I complete the cut by pushing the tool straight in. Admittedly, this method will cause consternation with some proponents of the skew, but it works. Since the tool is situated lower in the cut, there is no need to arc the tool down into the wood. As the tool is fed straight in, the revolving wood meets the edge and is peeled away. With this cut, I control the amount of wood being removed by regulating the amount of side pressure I apply to the bevel as it cuts. The result is a clean cut, and catches are rare (*Photo 2*).

For a peeling cut, present the skew chisel with the cutting edge parallel to the axis of the turning. This cut will remove a lot of wood quickly.

Here, the skew is being used to turn the left side of a V-groove shape. The tool is presented with the long point down and rotated very slightly clockwise so the bevel can "float" behind the cut.

Beads can be formed with a skew using either the short point (heel) or a small portion of the cutting edge with bevel support (pictured here). Notice with this method the cutting action is near the horizontal centerline of the turning, so the cut stays on the same plane from start to finish. When the heel is used for cutting, the action begins near the top of the cylinder and finishes near the centerline.

The sides of beads can be cut similarly to a V-groove—with the long point down and gently riding the bevel for support.

Beads

A major advantage of using a skew chisel to turn beads is that it can reach into the narrow area between the beads, leaving a clean, crisp line at the bottom—no sanding needed. Here are three ways the skew can be used for rolling beads.

Cutting with the short point

The traditional method of turning beads involves holding the skew high up on the turning, presented on its side as you would for a planing cut, then using just the short point (heel) to roll the bead. This cut requires a few different but simultaneous movements of the tool: its shaft must be rotated to keep the cutting edge in contact with the wood; the handle must be swung (right to left for cutting the left side of a bead); and the handle must be raised as you cut the side of the bead deeper. During this cut, if any part of the cutting edge other than the short point comes into contact with the wood, a spiral catch can occur.

Ride the bevel

Another technique is to cut with a portion of the actual cutting edge, as opposed to using just the point at the heel. The bevel "rides" the wood as you cut the bead (*Photo 3*). The key is to gently ride the bevel all the way to the base of the bead. The tool's bevel supports a portion of the cutting edge, which helps to avoid a catch.

Long point down

Yet another method is to cut the bead using the toe (long point) of the skew, similar to making a V-groove. Rather than using just the point, however, ride the bevel at an area just above the long point when cutting with the long point down (*Photo 4*). It helps to use your body movement to swing the tool smoothly to form the curve of the bead. Control the depth of the cut by modulating the pressure applied. This cut works equally well cutting either to the right or left, ▸

Position the bevel of the skew chisel parallel to the wood to begin cutting a fillet.

Finish cutting the fillet by advancing the tool as you would for a planing cut.

To achieve a clean cut on endgrain, use just the toe of the skew chisel. To avoid a catch, lean the left-side bevel slightly away from the endgrain (exaggerated here to illustrate the concept).

and gives an unobstructed view of the cutting action. The result is a clean cut with little tendency for a catch.

Fillets

A fillet is a flat, horizontal area of a turning useful for visually separating various spindle elements. For example, a fillet can be used as a transition between a cove and a bead. Fillets must be cut clean and crisp, without the need for sanding, and the skew chisel accomplishes this task better than any other tool. Many turners cut fillets with a parting tool because of its ease of operation, but the parting tool leaves a surface of torn fibers, which requires sanding. Sanding is useful in some cases but can dull, or round over the clean, crisp details of a well-turned spindle. A parting tool can be used to rough-size a fillet, but it should be followed up with the fine finishing cut of a skew.

Cutting a fillet involves making the initial cut without the benefit of bevel support. To begin, position the skew chisel with one of the bevels (depending on the direction of the cut) parallel to the turning, as you would perform a planing cut. Raise the handle gently until the short point contacts the wood. Just the slightest pressure will cause the tip to form a slight groove in the turning (*Photo 5*). Once the groove is formed, rotate the toe of the skew away from the wood slightly to create clearance and avoid having the entire bevel making contact with the surface of the wood. Then, advance the tool as in a normal planing cut (*Photo 6*). With experience, you can eliminate the step of shifting the toe away from the cut. This cut is also useful for sizing tenons.

Cutting endgrain

The skew chisel works well for cutting across endgrain, whether on steps, shoulders, or the absolute end of a spindle-oriented blank. This can be useful for truing the face of an endgrain blank prior to hollowing for a box or goblet.

The endgrain cut is performed with the toe, or long point. Present the tool with the long point down so the toe is just touching the surface to be cut (*Photo 7*). The key to avoiding a catch is to keep the bevel nearest the wood tipped slightly away from the endgrain. If the long cutting edge touches the endgrain, a dig-in will happen. To finish the cut, simply raise the handle and advance the tool across the endgrain. This cut leaves an exceptionally smooth finish on endgrain surfaces.

After years of using the skew chisel, I have learned the secret to its misbehavior. Simply put, the cutting edge of a skew chisel will catch when the correct portion of the bevel is not supporting the cut. Even a slight twist of the tool handle can allow the wrong portion of the bevel (or the wrong bevel) to contact the wood; a spiral catch is the result. Keep the cutting edge supported by the bevel when beginning a cut whenever possible.

Although there are new tools constantly being brought to market, the skew's versatility and quality of cut will ensure its continued presence in nearly every turner's tool assortment. You, too, can learn to use the skew chisel with patience and practice. ■

Keith Tompkins is an accomplished lifelong woodworker and turner. For contact information and examples of his work, visit keithptompkins.com.

You read the article—now see the video!

This article has an accompanying online video in which John Lucas demonstrates how to make the skew cuts described here. To view the video, visit tiny.cc/skewcuts (case sensitive) or scan the QR code with your mobile device.

WINDSOR CHAIR-MAKING

FOR WOODTURNERS

Five Instructors

David M. Fry

Fan back Windsor side chair by Pete Galbert; mixed woods, milk paint, and oil. The simple turnings blend well with modern furnishings.

Photo: Dana Duke

Brian Cunfer (right) watches a student put the finishing touches on a carefully installed undercarriage. With no 90-degree angles in sight, boring seat sockets accurately without a drilling jig requires reference gauges in two planes.

Photo: Courtesy of Brian Cunfer

At first glance, the familiar Windsor chair beckons to turners as a natural, if ambitious, project in furniture building—an elegant array of flaring spindles elevating a sculpted seat and curving back rail. The underlying reality, however, is more complicated. Among hand-built antiques, for example, those slender back spindles likely took shape under a drawknife, not a turner's chisel. And the legs, stretchers, and arm posts were typically turned in small shops and woodland huts at a remove from the businesses that assembled them. The late-twentieth-century revival of artisanal Windsor construction did bring turning, bending, carving, and assembly together under one roof, but teaching of the craft in short courses has often separated lathe work from "chair-making" once more. Some authorities, including modern Windsor pioneer and educator Michael Dunbar, believe that turning duplicate legs, stretchers, and arm posts is too time-consuming and challenging for most Windsor chair students. His institute, which runs a school and publishes a monthly online newsletter, supplies course participants with pre-turned parts.

Fortunately for woodturners, a number of top-tier makers still incorporate hands-on turning within their instruction. They manage this by holding small classes, scheduling ample time (six to fourteen days), and steering novices toward simple chair leg and frame designs. The benefits are obvious. Foremost is the opportunity for participants to claim ownership of the chair from the floor up.

What to expect in class

The one-off Windsor chair derives its superiority over store-bought models largely from the strength and longevity of parts rived straight from the log, with little grain runout and high resistance to breakage under load. (Factory chairs rely on sawn stock more vulnerable to fracture.) Consequently, courses usually introduce students to greenwood tools such as maul and splitting wedge, drawknife, and shave horse (although some makers prefer the bench vise for whittling). Other unfamiliar tools may include the adze, scorp, and travisher for sculpting the seat, and steam box, clamping strap, and bending form for shaping the back rail. Often the instructor demonstrates the use of the tools and builds a chair alongside students.

Chair class is not the ideal setting for hand-duplicating turnings for the first time. Novices can practice beforehand on simple leg designs, such as the bamboo or double-bobbin form. With these, roughing gouge and parting tool may be sufficient to produce acceptable profile fidelity and surface quality, perhaps with light sanding. Those attracted to fancier baluster shapes need some command of the detail gouge and skew/bedan.

Students should come mentally prepared to grapple with a few mistakes. It is easy to drill the wrong angle for a seat socket or miscalculate the length of a stretcher. Participants favoring a natural finish should keep in mind the miraculous power of milk paint to camouflage botched and plugged mortises. In the end, students may learn that good craftsmanship does not always have to mean perfection.

Following is information on five Windsor chair-makers who offer hands-on instruction. ▶

GUDRUN LEITZ // HEREFORDSHIRE, ENGLAND

Course details:

Three intensive nine-day classes for up to eight students each during June, July, and August 2015; beginners through advanced; tuition at £620 ($970) plus £10-60 ($15-$90) for materials; various styles of Windsors; international students can arrange special chair shipment with air carriers. Visit greenwoodwork.co.uk.

Gudrun Leitz on her sprawling woodland campus with shave horses, pole lathes, drive frames, and canvas-filtered sunlight.

About 100 miles west of London, Gudrun Leitz runs a green-woodworking school practicing the 250-year traditions of nearby High Wycombe and the Chiltern Hills—hallowed ground for Windsor chair enthusiasts. It was here that village woodturners, or "bodgers," once produced thousands of chair parts in forest encampments and shipped them off to assembly shops for product completion. At Gudrun's school, students tackle the entire process and take home a chair made completely off grid.

Trained and initially employed in fine furniture making, Gudrun eventually grew alienated from the sounds and space, and even the work, of modern shops and decided to pursue her interests in outdoor woodcraft. Eventually, she and some partners purchased a deciduous woodland close to Ledbury, where she has run summer courses for the last twenty years. In addition to newcomers, these sessions attract loyal veterans who, along with staff assistants, help the struggling. The canopied, open-air site features a generous assortment of pole lathes, shaving horses, work benches, tool sets, cleaving brakes, and bending equipment. Support facilities include camping pitches, open A-frames, and a well-run kitchen with clay oven, although students may opt for catering and B&Bs not far away.

Gudrun's program is the only one among those featured here requiring Windsor chair students to use a pole lathe, which improbably exploits wood itself, in the form of a resilient cut sapling, to power woodturning. A treadle tethered to the work piece and flexed pole initiates a reciprocating stroke that propels spindle rotation and recovery. With the interrupted cut, fluency takes a little practice. It is safe to say Gudrun long ago mastered the technique by pole-lathing 500 oak balusters for the Shakespeare Globe Theater.

Before starting, course participants have an opportunity to select a chair style among samples on hand. Some may elect to make a simple dining chair, while the more accomplished and determined can look to finish an arm chair. English Windsor styles can sometimes make the American variety look genteel by featuring more robust spindles and rails, as well as a squarer posture (with less leg rake and splay). Occasionally a wide back splat decorates these heavier frames. The general lines and heft of such chairs may seem rustic to American eyes, but a suite of them produced by a group of Gudrun's students won acclaim at the fashionable Milan Furniture Fair. Solidity and truth to materials have their appeal. Although both American and English chairs were commonly painted green in the eighteenth century, English Windsors today tend to have a natural or stained finish.

Photos: Courtesy of Gudrun Leitz

(Above) Gudrun's classes typically incorporate a variety of styles based on student preferences and abilities.

(Left) Pole-lathing takes the woodturner's dance to a new level. Lacking bearings and a hollow, threaded headstock spindle, this ancient contraption nevertheless enabled a bodger to produce up to 144 chair parts a day. Gudrun's chair-making instruction includes the use of the pole lathe.

DAVID SAWYER // WOODBURY, VERMONT

In the pantheon of American Windsor chair-makers, few have exercised as much influence in recent decades as Dave Sawyer, whose students have occasionally risen to the top of the field and become well-known teachers in their own right. An MIT-trained engineer who left a corporate career behind, Dave has since built more than a thousand chairs. His work appears in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and the pages of leading woodworking magazines, and his teaching has left its mark at Colonial Williamsburg and a number of college and independent craft programs.

Having recently turned over production to his family, Dave continues to lead the Windsor Graduate Course at his home shop, where students can work one-on-one with him or, as needed, his son George. The instruction runs seven days or more, depending on the student's skills and chair style preference. Dave will build a similar chair in tandem with the student.

The course usually begins with riving an oak log, followed by shaving spindles and bending the back bow from the splits. Leg and stretcher turning comes next, with inexperienced turners producing bamboo-like spindles, and the more accomplished sometimes opting for baluster-style legs and posts. Abrasion-resistant maple serves as an ideal undercarriage wood. Eastern white pine is the northern wood of choice for easy seat boring and carving, which normally takes place after turning the undercarriage. Careful assembly, sometimes with the coaxing of a mallet, represents the moment of truth after tricky mortise drilling, bow execution, and spindle dimensioning. At the end, coats of milk paint unify the different woods to create a sculptural silhouette. Because of the flexible pace, most students manage to complete their chairs or at least a dry fitting of the finished parts.

Dave's technical skills are complemented by his deliberate mindset and deep knowledge of wood and engineering. Former student Stephen Long reports that his teacher never seemed to be in a hurry and insisted on sharpening tools whenever needed. Not one to hover over course participants, Dave believes mistakes can always be fixed. In addition, he "reads wood grain as easily as I read a newspaper, and he sees subtleties and nuances in chair design and construction that only someone with an eye for beauty could see."

Photos: Courtesy of David Sawyer ▸

Course details:

Seven-plus days for one (occasionally two) students; beginners through advanced; tuition begins at $1,200 for balloon back chair (more for arm chairs); various styles of Windsors. Visit sawyermade.com.

Dave Sawyer eyeballs a chair leg angle. A balloon back side chair nearby awaits finishing.

Hand-sculpted knuckle of an arm chair. Coarse woods like oak present something of a carving challenge.

Baluster-style turnings ready for socket drilling.

PETER GALBERT // STERLING, MASSACHUSETTS

Like many American Windsor builders, Pete Galbert lives in the Northeast, where colonial furniture remains popular. His impact as an educator, however, extends far beyond. Teaching now takes up half his time through one-on-one and three-student sessions at his shop, and in larger classes across the country. He has served as a guest instructor at Penland, Arrowmont, the Center for Furniture Craftsmanship, and a half-dozen other well-known craft schools, as well as at individual builders' shops.

Like his mentor Curtis Buchanan, Pete has posted some fifty chair-making videos on YouTube, including many on lathe technique. The clips on Windsor Chair Leg Turning succinctly capture how to observe and break the rules of spindle turning. The educational videos are complemented by his Chair Notes Blog and the new *Chairmaker's Notebook* (Lost Art Press), with more than 450 of his hand-drawn illustrations and complete instructions on building bow back and fan back chairs with simple tools.

Besides chair-making, teaching, and publishing, Pete designs and markets specialty tools, including the Galbert Caliper, Travisher (a small spokeshave), and Drawsharp edge restorer. These innovative devices see regular use by other professional builders.

Such a range of accomplishments is noteworthy for someone who entered the field only fifteen years ago. Trained in painting, sculpture, and photography, Pete had developed exhibits for the Smithsonian before setting up his own shop in a small New England town. The traditional Windsor has since anchored his production, but his background in art and fine craft has also stimulated design variations. Some are occasionally reminiscent of Sam Maloof's chairs in the use of swept arm rests and crests, flattened back spindles, and hardwood seats. As Pete has refined his forms, he has also analyzed the building process—not just for his own efficiency, but for transmission of the craft to others.

Although Pete teaches turning by demonstrating on the lathe and overseeing hands-on student practice, he does not expect them to produce finished spindles for their projects. This policy sets him apart from the other instructors profiled here. He does, however, allow participants to turn parts to specification before they come. He also offers private turning instruction to help get students up to speed for his classes.

Pete Galbert demonstrates drawknife technique. Although it obviously cannot replicate the lathe's automatic symmetry, it does not deflect rubbery back spindles and can cut quickly with, rather than across, the grain.

Photo: Glen Rundell

While sculpting the seat, a student uses a scorp to smooth the rough tracks of an adz.

Photo: Pete Galbert

Student savoring his sack back with comb.

Photo: Pete Galbert

Course details:

Six days for six students at the shop of Caleb James in Greenville, South Carolina; beginners through advanced; tuition of $1,300 each for balloon back or fan back chair; April 20–25. Six days for three students at Pete's Sterling shop; beginners through advanced; tuition of $1,500 each for balloon back or fan back chair; flexible start date. Six days of tailored instruction at the Sterling shop for one experienced student; tuition of $1,950 for advanced chair designs; flexible start date; individual turning instruction at $375 per day.

WILLIAM MORRISON // EAST MONTPELIER, VERMONT

Having produced more than 5,000 legs, stretchers, and arm posts for new chairs and innumerable restorations, William Morrison has yet to grow jaded as a woodturner. Use of a duplicator has never tempted him, given the satisfaction of shaping crisp, well-proportioned spindles freehand. Adopting the same approach, his students can usually turn a decent set of bamboo style legs and stretchers for the first time within a few hours.

In the early 1990s, William apprenticed with a master Windsor chair-maker after years of restoring, designing, and building furniture on his own. Soon thereafter, he secured an architect's commission to build sixty-five side chairs for a five-star inn. Working alone, he completed the task within a year. That job led to other commissions to produce chairs for the architect's residential clients. Eventually, he developed relationships with galleries, interior designers, and hundreds of homeowners from San Diego to New England. Along the way, apprentices came on board and students began enrolling in intensive courses to make their own chairs. In addition, William demonstrated the craft annually in historical settings like Canterbury Shaker Village and served as a full-time staff member at Old Sturbridge Village. In recent years, he has branched out into boat building and home renovation but has continued making Windsors and leading classes.

William works and teaches primarily out of his Vermont shop on an organic farm. (He also occasionally sees students at his Cape May, New Jersey, property.) To avoid toxic chemicals, he uses traditional milk paints and a petroleum-free oil developed by his wife, an herbalist. Course participants can exploit his knowledge of finishing gained from years of restoration and production work.

William's extensive experience working among clients with disabilities has prompted him to begin shifting his production and teaching business to nonprofit status. His ultimate goal is to establish an educational center for traditional crafts like chair-building that serves not only the fortunate, but also wounded veterans, the economically challenged, and those with developmental disabilities. Part of the plan is to provide total shop access that complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Photos: Courtesy of William Morrison ▸

Course details:

One or two students, 7–10 days, depending on type of chair and skill level; spring through fall; tuition at $1,500 per person ($2,200 for two) in beginning class on balloon back side chair, $1,600-$1,700 ($2,400-$2,600 for two) in advanced class for sack back or comb back chair with carving and advanced turning instruction; sliding scale for economically challenged individuals, with scholarships available for those with developmental disabilities. All materials and tools provided. Visit morrisonwindsors.com.

(Top left) Functional furniture as sculpture.

(Top right) Balloon back Windsor by William Morrison; milk paint and oil. This chair charms through its incisive turnings, deeply contoured seat, and sinuous, channeled bow. Polished grain in the seat advertises its source.

(Bottom right) William Morrison (left) coaches a student turning on a vintage Delta lathe.

BRIAN CUNFER // KIRKWOOD, PENNSYLVANIA

Although Brian Cunfer lives only about an hour from Philadelphia, the historical center of American Windsor chair-making, he learned the craft in the Great Smoky Mountains at the John C. Campbell Folk School twenty years ago and, later, in the shop of master builder Curtis Buchanan. Now Brian is an instructor himself at the Campbell School, as well as a teacher at his own production studio in Lancaster County, where he is assisted by an apprentice.

In recent years, a number of honors have come Brian's way. He was selected as one of America's Best Traditional Craftsmen by *Early American Life* in both 2008 and 2014. In 2009, the Spartanburg (South Carolina) Historical Museum engaged him to make two reproduction Windsor chairs. Closer to home, the Lancaster County Planning Commission designated him as a Heritage Craftsman, and the Pennsylvania Guild of Craftsmen invited him to lead workshops at its Lancaster headquarters.

Brian takes great satisfaction in the details of traditional chair-making. Using time-tested methods, he splits out and steam-bends chair backs from wet white oak logs and turns legs and arm posts from green sugar maple. Drawknife and spokeshave shape the slender back spindles. An antique tool enthusiast, he flips a switch only for the bandsaw and lathe.

Classes are structured according to the skill levels of participants. For example, the workshop schedule provides enough time for beginners to turn bamboo or double-bobbin style components. If advanced students prefer a different profile, Brian supplies a pattern and material to be turned before the workshop. Course projects follow a defined sequence: loop back for first-time students, continuous arm for second-timers, and the double-bow sack back for the next step up. Once veterans have completed a set of four Windsors, they may be invited to make a trestle or tavern table for the cost of materials only (no tuition).

Brian's shop now has the capacity to accommodate four students at a time. He feels that participants who work in teams of two retain more information during the week. If someone would rather learn one-on-one, such sessions can be arranged for an upcharge. ■

Photos: Courtesy of Brian Cunfer

Course details:

Five-day workshops for up to four students; May 4–8, Loop Back/Continuous Arm Workshops; July 13–17, Sack Back Workshop; August 17–21, Loop Back/Continuous Arm Workshops; September 21–25, Loop Back/Continuous Arm Workshops; November 9–13, Sack Back Workshop; tuition at $1,200 for all classes, with individual instruction by arrangement for an additional fee. Visit pachairmaker.com.

Brian Cunfer and a student examine end-kerfed back spindles that will be wedged and trimmed flush. The continuous arm chair's strong but flexible frame has often been compared to a suspension bridge.

Sack back rocker with carved knuckles and ears by Brian Cunfer; milk paint and varnish. A marvel of design and execution, this chair demands that bows and crest all line up amicably.

David M. Fry turns wood and writes near Washington, D.C.

Bird cage Windsor by Brian Cunfer; milk paint and varnish. The dark seat channel plays off the faux joints of the bamboo.

- CUSTOM - TOOL HANDLES

Carl Ford

I have found most commercially available tool handles uncomfortable to use for a variety of reasons. So I found a way to make adjustable handles that are just the right diameter for my grip, the right level of softness, and the right weight and length for my tastes. You can make customized tool handles at a fraction of the cost out of PVC pipe, craft foam, heat-shrinkable cloth, and a few other easily attainable supplies (*Photo 1*).

Solving design challenges

When I first thought of making my own handles, I had to solve a couple of design challenges. First, I wanted a soft-grip material, but I knew I could not simply slip something like a rubber hose over a long piece of pipe and end up with a snug fit. I hit upon the idea that I could heat shrink a soft material onto the pipe for a perfect fit. But the cost of 2"- (51mm-) diameter heat-shrink tubing was too high. Then I found a heat-shrinkable, polyester woven fabric (*see Sources sidebar*). It creates the perfect outer handle surface—not too slick and not uncomfortably rough.

The next challenge was how to mount a ⅝"- (16mm-) diameter tool shaft in a 1¼" (32mm) PVC pipe. Commercially available adapters and inserts for making your own handles are designed to fit into a ¾" (19mm) hole, much smaller than my base material. I thought ▸

about making an adapter out of wood but decided a short piece of wood would be too prone to splitting when stressed. The breakthrough came when I realized I could insert the hardwood adapter farther into the PVC pipe, making the pipe act as a ferrule that prevents the wood from splitting. I could hold the tool in the long wooden insert using set screws reinforced by steel threaded inserts (*Photo 2*).

Considerations

PVC pipe of 1¼" diameter is just the right size for my hands, but you can customize the feel by using a different diameter and length of PVC. Schedule 40 1¼" PVC pipe is actually 1.66" (42mm) outside diameter and 1.36" (35mm) inside diameter. You may be thinking PVC is too flexible to make a good handle, and that is true if the PVC pipe is less than 1" (26mm) diameter. A 1¼" pipe is quite rigid.

You can also use schedule 40 aluminum or steel pipe, but they are more expensive and I do not like heavy handles. I try to adjust my turning technique to eliminate vibration problems rather than adding weight to my tool handles. But if you want to add weight, you can fill an old sock with lead shot or aquarium stone and insert it into the PVC handle.

Sources

Three of the items needed for these tool handles may be hard to find, so I have provided my preferred materials, along with a reliable source and model numbers. I get all of the following items from McMaster-Carr (mcmaster.com):

- Heat-Shrinkable Woven Fabric Tubing: McMaster-Carr item #2587K16
- Steel Threaded Insert for Set Screws: McMaster-Carr item #90248A027
- Cup Point Set Screw, McMaster-Carr item #92311A578

I insert a scrap of metal rod in the wooden insert at the tail end of the PVC handle to counterbalance the weight of the cutting tool. Adjust the length of this rod to attain just the right balance.

Making the handle

Prepare the PVC

1. Start by cutting your PVC pipe to length. A hacksaw works well for this. I generally like handles that are 16" (41cm), 22" (56cm), or 30" (76cm) long.
2. Cutting PVC often creates a burr on the inside that you need to remove before you attempt to turn a snug-fitting wooden insert. Remove the burr with a deburring tool or sandpaper wrapped around a dowel. I also cut and debur a 6" (15cm) length of the same diameter PVC pipe, which comes in handy later, while turning the wooden insert: it is easier to test fit the tenon size with a shorter length of PVC, as you can just slide the tailstock out of the way and test the fit.

Turn wooden handle inserts

1. For a 1¼" PVC handle, start with a 2¼" (57mm) × 2¼" (57mm) × 5" (13cm) blank of hardwood. After turning it round and making a tenon, mount the blank in a scroll chuck. True up the end and create a small dimple in the center to help start a drill bit. I like to drill a ½"- (13mm-) deep starter hole with a ½" drill point countersink (often used in metalworking). These countersinks are short and stout and therefore drill a starter hole dead on center (*Photo 3*).
2. If you are going to mount a ⅝"-shank cutting tool in your handle, drill

(1) The author's ingredients for a customizable, durable, and inexpensive tool handle.

(2) Cutaway showing the tool handle's components and design. A cutting tool is held in the hardwood insert and held firmly by set screws.

a ⅝" hole all the way through the insert blank (*Photo 4*). The hole size should match the diameter of the shaft of your cutting tool. I like to use drill bits with a Morse taper shank that fit directly into the tailstock of my lathe. They are ideal for drilling deep holes on center because they are long, stout, and fully supported by the matching Morse taper in the tailstock. Each handle has two wooden inserts, one on each end. I often make handles with different sized holes on each end to accommodate different cutting tools—½" and ⅝" holes on short handles; ⅝" and ¾" holes on longer handles.

3. With a pencil, lay out the tenon and shoulder (*Photo 5*). Mark the total length of the insert at 4" (10cm) with a ⅜"- (10mm-) wide shoulder on the headstock side. The tenon has to be on the tailstock side so you can test fit it into PVC pipe. With a narrow parting tool, make a ¼"- (6mm-) deep slot a little below the shoulder to remind yourself not to go any farther than this while rough turning the tenon.
4. Turn a tenon that will fit snugly into your PVC pipe. Vernier calipers are useful here, as they have both inside and outside jaws that move in sync. When you set the inside jaws to the inside diameter of the pipe, the outside jaws will automatically be set to the tenon size you need (*Photo 6*). Use your calipers and a parting tool to cut a tenon on the first ¼" ▸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of your blank (*Photo 7*). Test fit this section to your PVC pipe before roughing out the rest of the tenon with a spindle roughing gouge.

5. Turn the tenon incrementally to its final diameter, and test fit the PVC as you go. Use a pencil to keep track of how far the PVC pipe fits on the tenon (*Photo 8*). Switch to a parting tool to turn the area under the shoulder to final diameter and a detail gouge to cleanly cut the endgrain under the shoulder (*Photos 9, 10*).
6. With a pencil, lay out the finished diameter of the shoulder (*Photo 11*). I like to use the no math method. Slip your PVC pipe up to the shoulder and use a scrap of ⅛"- (3mm-) thick craft foam held on top of the pipe to mark the shoulder diameter. Using the foam as a spacer accounts for the thickness of the foam layer, which will be added later. The width of the pencil line will account for the thickness of the fabric that will go over the foam. Turn the shoulder to final diameter with a detail gouge, being sure to leave the pencil line (*Photo 12*).
7. Using a point tool or parting tool, cut shallow grooves every ½" on the tenon to improve the holding power of the epoxy (*Photo 13*). Do not sand the tenon, as a rough finish will further improve adhesion.
8. Part off the insert and remount in a chuck or between centers to clean up the parted-off end with a detail gouge. Then sand the shoulder and exposed end, rounding over any sharp corners with abrasives (*Photos 14, 15*). I like to apply a coat of shellac and then mask off the shoulder area and exposed end to protect them from glue during the next step.
9. Repeat this process to turn a second insert for the other end of the tool handle.
10. Glue the handle inserts into PVC pipe with a generous amount of epoxy (*Photo 16*).


17


18

Drill and tap holes for the threaded set screw inserts

In use, your cutting tool is secured in the wooden insert of the handle with set screws. This allows you to easily remove and replace interchangeable cutters. I like to install set screws in holes that have been lined with threaded steel inserts, which add a layer of reinforcement to the hardwood and will stand up to lots of abuse. I use inserts that have ½"-13 threads on the outside and 5/16"-18 threads on the inside. These inserts accept any length 5/16"-18 stainless steel set screws (*See Sources sidebar*).

1. Start by drilling a ⅜"-deep starter hole using a ½" drill point countersink. The small point on the countersink really helps get the hole started where you want it, which can be tricky on a curved surface (*Photo 17*). Clamp the handle in a wooden hand screw or clamp it to a block of wood so it does not roll around while drilling. To drill straight holes, use a drill press if you have one. Otherwise, use a hand drill with a square held nearby for vertical reference.
2. Drill a 27/64" (11mm) hole through one wall of the PVC and wooden insert.
3. Tap threads in the hole with a 1½"-13 SAE taper or plug tap, available at most hardware stores (*Photo 18*).

Cut and install the foam and fabric

A layer of ⅛" craft foam (available at most craft stores) between the PVC and the outer fabric creates a handle that feels good and does not require a death grip. I glue the foam to the PVC pipe with spray adhesive. The heat shrinkable fabric is made in a tube shape and shrinks in diameter but not in length when you heat it with a heat gun. I recommend rehearsing the foam and fabric installation with scraps before you attempt it on a real handle. Spray adhesive is unforgiving, and the heat shrink fabric is not cheap, so a little practice will be very helpful. I normally use black foam to match the color of the outer fabric and help hide any installation problems, but I have used yellow foam here to better illustrate the process.

1. Cut the craft foam to the same length as the PVC pipe and wide enough to wrap all the way around the pipe with a little overlap (about 5¾", or 15cm wide for 1¼" PVC). The foam I purchase only comes in 12" or 18" lengths, so I have to use multiple pieces on longer handles.
2. Cut the heat-shrinkable fabric to length with scissors. Make it at least 1" longer than the total length of the handle because it is hard to control how the fabric distorts when it shrinks.
3. Draw a straight reference line from end to end on the handle. Then test fit the foam. Cut ¾" wide masking tape 1" longer than the handle and keep it handy. In a separate work area, put down some newspaper to catch any overspray and spray a coat of adhesive onto the back of the foam. Attach half the width of the masking tape to the long edge of the foam and the other half to the

handle with the edge of the foam on your reference line (*Photo 19*).

4. Avoid sticking the foam to the handle until after you have the masking tape all lined up. Wrap the foam all the way around the handle with no air pockets or wrinkles. The foam should overlap, but the masking tape will keep it from sticking to itself.
5. With a sharp knife, cut through the overlapped layers of foam at a 45-degree angle to create a tight seam (*Photo 20*). Peel the foam back a little and remove all of the masking tape. Then close up the newly cut seam.
6. Cut holes in the foam to allow the set screw inserts and set screws to be inserted later. If you are not using black foam, paint around the holes and ends of the foam on the handle with black acrylic paint to hide any fabric installation problems.
7. Fold back both ends of the fabric about 2", then slip it onto the handle. Center the handle in the fabric (*Photo 21*), but make sure the fabric does not cover the set screw insert holes.
8. Glue down only the ends of the fabric with spray adhesive to keep it from shifting around on the handle. To do this, mask off the fabric with paper and apply the spray adhesive to just the foam ends of the handle. Remove the masking paper and unfold the fabric onto the glue. The fabric should extend ½" beyond each end of the handle.
9. Shrink the fabric onto the handle with a heat gun as soon as possible after bringing the ends of the fabric into contact with the spray adhesive. You want to shrink the fabric before the spray adhesive dries. You have to heat the fabric to 212° F (100° C) to shrink it. So you will need at least a 1200-watt heat gun (available at hardware stores, often used for stripping paint). Start in the middle of the handle on the fabric's seam. Work from the center out to the ends and from side to side until the fabric is tight enough so it does not move. Be careful not to overheat the seam, as it will split if you apply too much heat when the fabric is almost tight.
10. Use a knife to trim the fabric to length and cut out the set screw insert holes. I use a long skew tip in my wood burner as a hot knife (*Photo 22*), which cuts the fabric easily. The cut ends of the fabric do not unravel easily after shrinking, but I like to ensure they stay put by applying a thin coat of epoxy to a ¼"-wide area at the cut ends and around the screw holes.

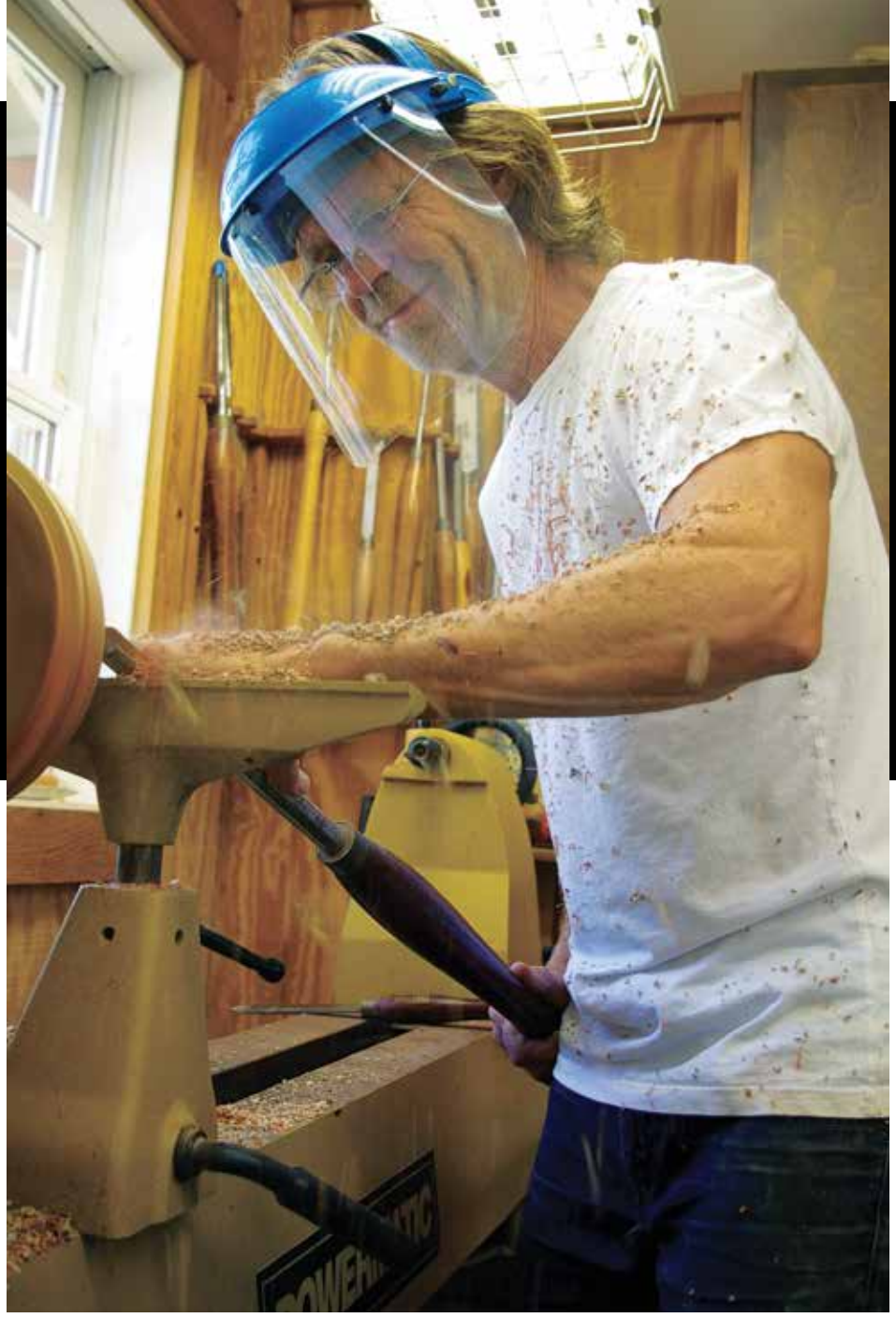
Install the set screws

1. Put a little epoxy on the outside threads of the steel insert and screw the insert into the handle (*Photo 23*). The epoxy permanently locks the thread inserts in place. After the epoxy is cured, you can clean up any excess epoxy that may have leaked onto the inside threads using a 5/16"-18 tap.
2. Install the set screws with a thread-locking fluid (*Photo 24*). Let the thread lock dry overnight, then break the set screws free using a hex wrench. This process makes the set screws fit snugly so they will not rattle loose.

Now all that is left to do is mount your favorite turning tool into your new custom handle and make some wood shavings. ■

Carl Ford, an accomplished woodturner, loves teaching people how to turn and is looking forward to starting a second career teaching woodturning at Purchase College in New York in spring 2015. His website is carlford.us.

WILLIAM H. MACY: WORKING IN THE MOMENT



David Heim

William H. Macy has acted in more than fifty plays, eighteen television programs, and eighty-four films. For the past five TV seasons, he has played the dissolute Frank Gallagher on the Showtime series "Shameless." He has written more than a dozen TV and film scripts. In 2014, he directed his first feature film, "Rudderless," as well as an episode of "Shameless." Macy cofounded a theater company and taught acting. He plays the ukulele and writes songs. He has been nominated for four dozen awards and won nineteen, including two Emmys. And he is an avid woodturner.

Macy took up woodturning in 1996, when he filmed the movie "Fargo." One day, when he was not needed on set, he stopped at a woodworking-supply store and caught a turning demonstration. "I was smitten. I started taking lessons from the turner in his basement," he recalls. He bought a mini-lathe, storing it in a corner of the "Fargo" set. "On my days off and whenever I had some spare time, I turned."

Now he uses a full-sized lathe, centered under one of his shop windows so plenty of natural light strikes the bowl he is turning. He vastly prefers to make bowls and seldom does spindle work.

Macy's creativity extends well beyond acting, directing, writing, and woodturning. At home in Los Angeles, he often spends his days in do-it-yourself mode. He seeks out fix-it projects for the twelve-year-old Craftsman-style house he shares with his wife, actress Felicity Huffman, and their two daughters. He tends the lushly planted slopes around his house. He and his family volunteer for Habitat for Humanity to help build affordable housing. And whenever he can catch a spare moment, he climbs the steps to his woodshop so he can spend some time at the workbench or his lathe.

"I love to get lost up there," he says. "It's glorious."

Macy harbors few illusions about his woodworking talents, saying, "I love carpentry, but I'm also the worst carpenter I have ever met." That doesn't stop him, though. He recently built an arched, Japanese-style footbridge to span a gully in his yard, as well as three Japanese-style benches in ash. Former

President Jimmy Carter, no slouch in the woodshop himself, signed one of the benches at a fundraising event.

I recently spent some time with Macy, talking about creativity on the set and in the shop. From across the room, he looks absolutely average (if you can get past the days-old beard and shoulder-length hair he wears for his Frank Gallagher character). He wore a plain white tee shirt, ordinary jeans, and running shoes when we met. Up close, however, he has a presence that is way beyond average. He holds your attention with his bright blue eyes, nearly always grins when he speaks, and locks those eyes onto you when he listens.

Foundational skills

I began by asking how he handles different creative endeavors. Acting, for example, usually is a group activity that involves adding emotion, gestures, and expressions to enliven the words in a script. On the other hand, woodturning is a mostly solitary activity that involves subtracting material. What does he have to do to prepare himself for each type of activity?

Macy thinks for several seconds, then answers: "It has become apparent to me that so much of what I do comes from repetition of basic skills, not 'art.' The particular skills involved with acting take up so much energy. For me, the biggest amount of time is spent learning the lines, which I read off the page many times. The process takes hours. The carpentry equivalent is building a piece of furniture that has multiple identical pieces." Those basic skills and tasks, he admits, "are a monumental pain in the ass." Still, his clear implication is that you have to endure that repetition before you can get creative or artistic, no matter what you are trying to accomplish.

Merely learning to recite lines obviously is not enough, he says. "Acting skills take up a lot of your conscious mind. And you have to act with another person in the moment. A good actor will take what he brought to the party"—the words he has memorized—"and mix it with what he sees on the spot." One of Macy's challenges as a woodturner is that he does not turn regularly enough to make the basic skills intuitive. He says, "I turn in little spurts because I have little spurts of free time. So when I learn something and then acting work comes along and I don't get back to the shop for a while, I feel like an idiot. I can no longer do what I thought I could do and have to get reacquainted."

Finding your muse

Twice in his acting career, Macy says, he has felt the presence of a "muse" ▸

Although Macy downplays his woodworking skills, he recently built three of these Japanese-style benches. A certain former President signed one.

Photos courtesy of Jacquelyn Phillips

With help from friends, Macy laminated pieces of fir to make this graceful, arched footbridge. He now owns a very large number of clamps.

Photo courtesy of Jacquelyn Phillips

when onstage. When this happens, all the skills and all the basics go into overdrive, sending the performance to a higher level. "It's an out-of-body experience—like you've had too much coffee, only it's not unpleasant. It's like I'm stepping back and watching myself act." When acting, he says, "you have to figure out a way to let your subconscious out without being filtered by your brain—because the subconscious never lies."

But Macy has yet to experience a similar inspired state in woodworking. "When you build something, you draw the plans and make all the pieces. When everything fits and fits well, that's a great feeling," he says. "Unfortunately, it doesn't get me to that higher level where the muse resides."

Still, woodturning remains a favorite pastime for Macy. He likes the instant gratification he gets from turning a bowl in a few hours, the feel of the tool against the wood, and even the aroma of different woods as he cuts them. And, muse or no muse, he loves the craft of turning.

A dynamic approach

"When I turn and I haven't committed to a particular shape," Macy says, "I'll spend time looking at the grain and measuring it against the size of the blank. I try to get the grain pattern centered on the piece." Once a blank is mounted on the lathe, Macy does not obsess over details that are out of his control, such as splits and knots. It is obvious he enjoys the challenge of using the material before him. "If I see a check, I'll just glue the crap out of it," he explains.

After our conversation, we went up to his shop, where he worked on a couple of bowls he had begun roughing some time earlier. His style has evolved over the years, after experimenting with green wood and turning very thin-walled pieces. Now, nearly all his bowls have a foot recessed for a scroll chuck, curving smoothly up to a large rolled rim. He leaves the base of his bowls thick to give them some heft.

Much of the wood he turns comes from Vermont, where he has a second home. He has blanks in beech, sugar maple, and hophornbeam but will turn just about anything that once sprouted leaves or needles. His store of wood includes oak, eucalyptus, and carob, among others.

Macy worked on the foot of a bowl in pecan for a few minutes, then realized that part of the foot had chipped away. This fazed him only momentarily, and he quickly changed direction, as he does when acting in the moment: he decided to turn a new recess for the chuck and carve the chipped portion to form little feet for the bowl.

A piece of flame box elder went on the lathe next. As he began shaping the foot, large areas of powdery wood and two large voids emerged. Again, he adapted to the situation, modifying the bowl's shape to try to find good wood. It paid off. He managed to turn away the punky patches and most of the voids. "I can fix the rest with glue," he mused from under his typical grin. ■

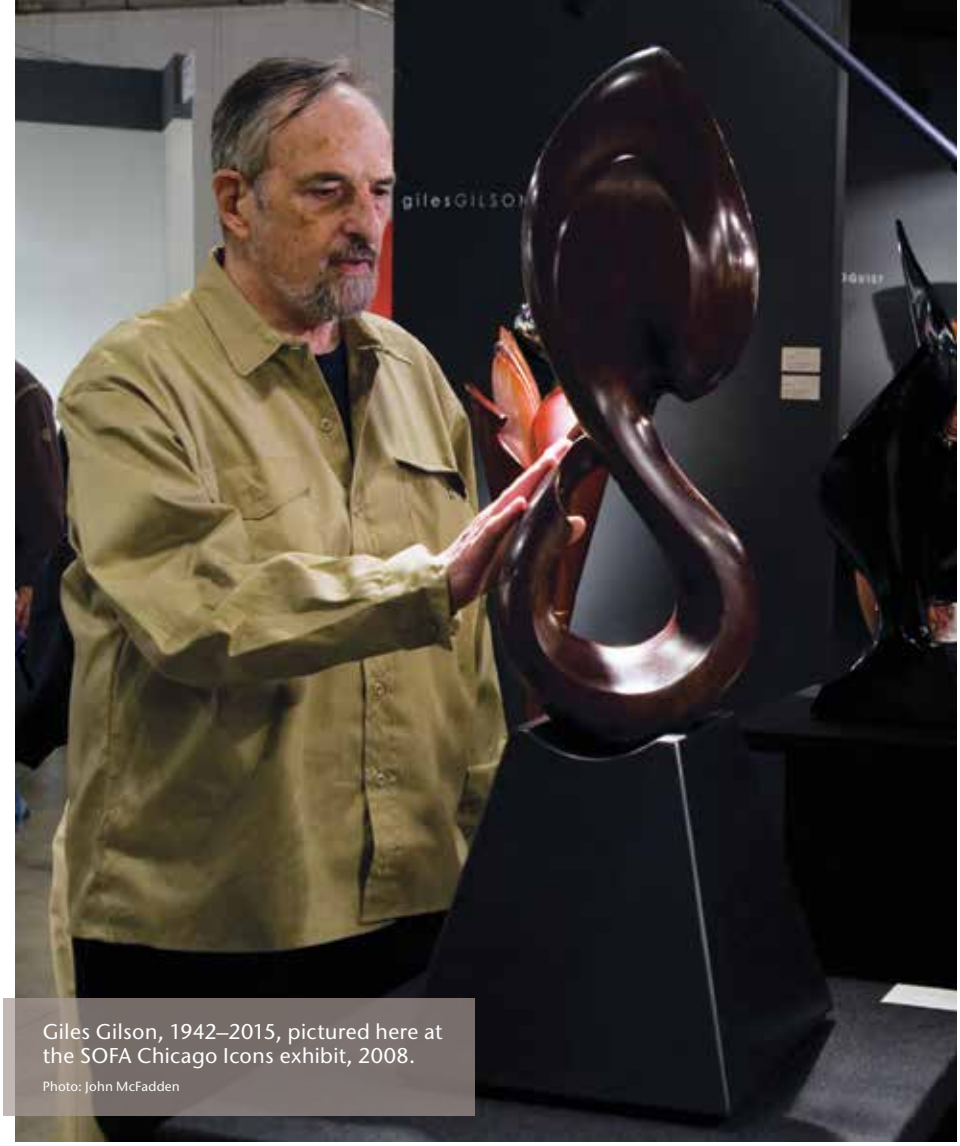
Macy's bowl-turning style has evolved to a simple foot and rolled rim, joined by a graceful curve.

William H. Macy, a character on and off the set.

After examining the bowl, Macy decided to work around the chipped foot and carve what remained into small feet.

All photos by David Heim, unless otherwise noted.

David Heim has profiled several woodturners for AW, including Beth Ireland. A member of the Nutmeg Woodturners League in Connecticut, David can be reached at davidheim1@comcast.net.



Giles Gilson, 1942–2015, pictured here at the SOFA Chicago Icons exhibit, 2008.
Photo: John McFadden

REMEMBERING *Giles Gilson*

Giles Gilson, an iconic, influential figure in contemporary woodturning, died January 20, 2015, at his home in Schenectady, New York. An AAW member since 1986, Giles was awarded a POP Fellowship Award in 2006 and earned the distinction of Honorary Lifetime Member in 2009.

I did not have the pleasure of knowing Giles but have learned he was a renegade, a truly creative spirit unafraid to blast through boundaries. Among woodturners, he became known for his impeccable technical execution, innovative use of graphics and automotive paint/lacquer, incorporation of metal, and an undeniable urge for playfulness and absurdity.

Following are memories and impressions of Giles, written by some who knew him. Hopefully, these varied accounts convey a sense of what Giles was like. For more, refer back to Terry Martin's 2009 profile article of Giles, published in *AW* vol 24, no 2, page 18. Additionally, Kevin Wallace has kindly provided a a short video about Giles, which can be found at tiny.cc/GilesGilson or by scanning the QR code.

—Joshua Friend, Editor ▸

In the Words of Giles Gilson (culled from video footage)

"Imagination is the ability to dream—to fantasize—to visualize and create sequences of events in the realm of thought. There's the human process... the sequence of emotional and intellectual events a person experiences as a result of a set of circumstances. I have found that my process—the sequence of emotional events that I go through in creating a piece—has many levels. Some of the triggers for these events can be traced to very early childhood. Many of them can be traced to more recent experiences. Because I've had so many experiences in the past that can best be described as bizarre, I have long felt that it is important to include a sense of the ridiculous. Yet, when I'm doing a piece, I must be careful not to clutter a work with this. I use the absurd elements when they bring something to the final work.

All of the choices I make in the design of a work will be influenced by the circumstances around me, current perception and emotion, and the culmination of past experience. I have asked philosophical questions as long as I can remember and I often find that this quest influences the work in subtle—and sometimes not so subtle—ways."

David Ellsworth

It always hurts when you lose a very close friend, especially when he was a brother in the arts. And when that friend was also a true icon in your field, it stings.

Giles was a revolutionary, a daring bandit of creative ideas that were so ahead of their time, woodturners often rejected his work as being too modern, too avant-garde, too off the wall… too innovative. He was the first to use paint on his turned wood pieces, specifically transparent automotive lacquer, which changed color as you walked around a piece; the first to incorporate materials like Plexiglass, fiberglass cloth, and metals; and the first to use humor in his artwork, like a turned jar that was actually a jewelry box. You raised the lid and a tiny box popped up from inside with a tiny door, which, when opened, engaged a hinged shelf that would drop the jewels into the jar below.

Giles Gilson, *Incident at the Crossroads,* 1997, Various woods, metal, Corian®, acrylic paint, 18¾" × 5" (48cm × 13cm)

Permanent Collection: Minneapolis Institute of Arts

Provenance: The Lipton Collection

Giles was a consummate 24/7 artist who lived alone in his studio in Schenectady, New York. The range of his creativity went beyond wood into metals, plastics, computers, and film. He rarely slept. His artistry was supported by his drive for superior craftsmanship in everything he did. Often considered a lovable wild man, a product of the '60s, his passions were old cars, old airplanes, and RCAs (radio controlled aircraft). He had an RCA helicopter that he once flew inside his studio… once! He also built a prototype racecar *inside* his studio for Honda Corporation (for which he never got paid). He had a succession of old Jeep Cherokees in various stages of drivability—all lined up in his driveway until a tree came down in a storm and crushed them all. But his crown prize was a '32 Ford "Deuce Coupe" that he rebuilt piece-by-piece, part-by-part. He had only a few months to enjoy it before his death.

Stories? Sure. How about the message on his answering machine: "Hello, this is Giles… Leave your name and credit card number and I'll get back to you real soon." Or, when asked where he got his ideas: "Hell, they're chasing me down the street." Or, when demonstrating turning a walnut vase during a workshop and someone asked how he was going to finish it, he covered the entire surface with Elmer's glue, picked up a handful of turned shavings off the floor, tapped them down carefully over the sticky surface, and calmly declared, "It's finished." And, of course, one of the many times I visited and slept on a lumpy antique mattress with no box springs on the floor of his guestroom, I was awakened by the itch of a deer tick buried in my butt. And, yes, he dug it out with a pair of pliers that he quickly ground down to look something like tweezers. Anesthetic? Of course… 90 proof!

The woodturning field has been greatly enriched by Giles' energy, vision, perseverance, passion, humor, and the guts to go "where no man has gone before." As Kevin Wallace said, Giles was a true American original. So the next time we think about using color in our work, or have what we think might be a crazy idea, or if we're at all hesitant to go in a new direction, think about Giles. His influence is everywhere and permanently embedded in our field.

Mark Lindquist

Giles was a long, long-time friend. He was first a friend to my father Mel. They met in the early 1970s when Mel was doing a craft fair at the Schenectady Museum in Schenectady, New York. They became fast friends, and soon Giles was visiting Mel in Mel's basement shop. Mostly they drank a lot of coffee, smoked a lot of cigarettes, and laughed and told jokes over and over again.

If there's one thing I will always remember about Giles, it was his laugh. How he could laugh. When Giles and I met, he was routinely getting up at 4:00 a.m. to do his paper route, which gave him money to pursue his dream—"to make things in wood." He was already an accomplished hot rodder, and he could play the sax seriously, and fly "round engine planes" as he called them. He had a particular style or manner of doing things his way. In a sense, he was an "Elvis" in the making. Both Mel and I saw it, and because of Giles' warmth and odd sense of humor, he just became family. You might say we adopted him.

This was a guy who fit the description of "starving artist." He rarely had any money because he spent it all on wood, machines, paints, materials—anything and everything he needed to reach his goals. He didn't have a clue how to get his work into a show. In the beginning, I helped him the best I could, and eventually he began to fly more on his own.

Left to right: Giles Gilson, Mark Lindquist, David Ellsworth

Saint Paul, Minnesota, 2011

Photo: Terry Martin

> **Giles was a wild and crazy guy on the outside—a true thinker and profound individual on the inside.**
> —Mark Lindquist

We had a lot in common. His grandfather had been a big part of General Electric, where Mel had been a quality control engineer. We both had played in many of the same clubs and bars in our own bands in the Tri-City area, and we had a goal of changing the world of craft, in our own ways, moving it toward and into art.

There were so many conversations, so many things we did in the realm of the theoretical, that I don't even know where to begin, because a conversation with Giles really never had a beginning or an end. It was a continuum—just the way Giles' influence will be felt.

I used to tease him about his use of paint and his "Harley-Davidson motorcycle gas tank finishes" and he'd grin and smile and say, "Yeah boy, and don't they look nice!" We'd laugh and laugh.

Visiting his first studio on Troy Road. was "a trip," as we used to say in those days. Harry, Giles' dad, had parts and pieces of torn down engines all over the shop, and the jazz and blues always playing while Giles patiently moved the greasy parts to the side and somehow kept working.

He drove our van for us out to the first ACC Craft Fair East Coast-West Coast Exchange in 1977. The event was in San Francisco at Fort Mason, and this was where Giles met David Ellsworth, Hap Sakwa, Ray Leier, and others for the first time. Giles was supposed to drive straight through, but he took a several-hundred-mile detour to see the Grand Canyon. That was Giles. All he would do was grin that big grin, head down, piercing eyes, and laugh and laugh. It was fun—and fun in a big way—for Giles and anyone around him.

The legacy Giles leaves is significant and only somewhat realized. There is significant documentation of his work in books, catalogs, and essays, but it will never tell the story of what he really accomplished, which was to meld ideas, experiences, materials, methods, and technological innovation into exquisite, outrageous, unique works of art that only he could have made.

His influence has spread far and wide. Giles was the epitome of creativity, never at a loss for ideas or plans for new and interesting work. He remains a pillar of the studio woodturning movement, and his influence will continue to be felt in the world of woodturning and wood sculpture.

Just two days before hearing of his passing, I had visited his website (which I had made for him some time ago) to see if he had added anything new. I had meant to be in touch with him, but he disappeared as quietly as he originally appeared in my life. I know I'll always have the memories of the many projects we did together, the many, many good times, and the memory of the hardships he endured. The laughs, the music, the blues, the skat, the jazz, and dirty sax. A wild and crazy guy on the outside—a true thinker and profound individual on the inside.

Say "Hey" to Mel when you see him, Giles. God speed, brother. ▸

Terry Martin

Some people leave more ripples in the pond than others. Giles Gilson was a rare person—larger than life, brilliant, irreverent, and outrageous, but always fun to be with. He retained a childlike ability to see the world differently than most of us, and so he made art that was never predictable, never boring. Even when he was very ill, Giles liked to make people laugh and enjoyed shocking everyone, but his roguish play could not hide the fact that he was a technical and creative genius. His mastery of processes, materials, and ideas was second to none. When Giles was finished making his latest artwork, he would lay back and riff on his saxophone, lost in contemplation. Who knows what was going on in his head? He might have been designing a new aircraft, adjusting the suspension on a vintage car, making a precious jewelry box, or dreaming of loves lost. There never was and never will be anyone like Giles. We need him now just as much as we ever did—to challenge, to provoke, and to delight. He will be sadly missed.

Giles Gilson, *Reversal Graphic,* 1986, Wood, lacquer, 38" × 13" (97cm × 33cm)
Photo: Courtesy of Lindquist Studios: Mark Lindquist, John McFadden

Giles Gilson was many things, including an acrobatic pilot and jazz musician.

Giles Gilson, *Whisper the Wind*, Wood, metal, paint, 7½" × 10" (19cm x 25cm)

Photo: Courtesy of Lindquist Studios: Mark Lindquist, John McFadden

Giles Gilson, *Uptown*, Basswood, aluminum, acrylic lacquer, 6" × 7¼" (15cm × 18cm)

Photo: Terence Roberts

Collection of Lisa and Bernard David

> **Initially scolded by collectors and dropped by galleries, Giles Gilson is today considered a major influence on a new generation of woodturners who embrace painting, sculpture, concept, and emotional content.**
>
> **—Kevin Wallace**

Mark Sfirri

My first demonstration on the road, as it were, was in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, in 1992. I had the pleasure of being a demonstrator with Del Stubbs, Richard Raffan, Michael Hosaluk, and Giles Gilson. While at the conference, we all stayed together in a house for four or five days—and there is nothing like close quarters for getting to know people. Richard and I assumed the roles of meal organizers and chefs, as we quickly saw without stepping forward we wouldn't be eating. Much has been shared about the fact that Giles had other interests outside of woodworking. One night, he would share story after story about being a pilot. Another night, there were many stories about being a jazz musician. He was a really good storyteller who could make you feel like you were right there in the story with him. He is and will be missed.

Michael Hosaluk

I have many memories of Giles, but what stands out the most is when his brain was whirring. His enthusiasm for his art was contagious. He made you want to take your own work to the highest level you were capable of and beyond. He always had time for you and what you were doing and would add to your ideas in a way that made you feel good. I am lucky to have experienced time with this special man and will cherish my memories of a dear friend.

I remember when Giles was at our conference in Saskatoon demonstrating the spraying of lacquer finishes. He had a small fan behind him to blow the fumes away, a cigarette in his mouth while spraying highly flammable liquids. A true trained professional.

Happy trails, Giles...

Kevin Wallace

The work of Giles Gilson wasn't remotely like the work of any other artist and, truth be told, we still aren't quite sure what to make of him. He didn't believe in rules—if there has been one aspect of Gilson's work that has stood out over the years, it has been his penchant for breaking rules and challenging the status quo—yet he embraced excellence when it came to his own standards.

He became involved in industrial design and engineering at an early age, and they remained central to the creation of artwork that was inspired by music, theater, graphic arts, automotive design, aeronautics, women, and what he referred to as "mysterious things."

Having gained prominence as a woodturner, Gilson rejected the limitations of conformity and began painting over the wood, shocking many in the field. He further frustrated his critics by creating work that was neither made of wood or lathe-turned for exhibitions of turned wood objects. Gilson made clear that the work of an artist is not concerned with how it's made or what it's made of, but whether it captures what it is to incarnate as a human on this planet at this point in history. Initially scolded by collectors and dropped by galleries, he is today considered a major influence on a new generation of woodturners who embrace painting, sculpture, concept, and emotional content.

Giles Gilson was a hot rod in a world of beige sedans. It will take a while for us to understand his work and there is a very good chance we won't ever really get our heads around who he was and what he brought to this world. Somewhere he's having a good laugh about that.

Jane and Arthur Mason

The passing of Giles Gilson is very sad news. We treasure his memory, work, friendship, sense of humor, originality, and most of all his devil-may-care way of life. If there was fun to be had, Giles was there. Before we met him, he had already been through careers as an acrobatic pilot and a jazz musician. If you wanted to feel good about yourself or the world, Giles was there. He was one of those people who, now that he's gone, we say, "Damn, why didn't we call him up last week or go see him?"

We first became aware of Giles when we saw our first show in 1986, "The Art of the Turned Wood Bowl," which featured the collection of Edward Jacobson. In that wide ranging assemblage of twenty-one fine artists, he was the only one working in color. And what color! It was baked on like the surface of a car, which was hardly surprising since he worked on cars and planes and appliances in Schenectady for GE. He went on from there to constantly surprise us. He wasn't bound solely to wood but would mount rifle sites, radar antenna, and other out-of-space gadgets to give his work a modern feel while reminding you what a superb wood artist and technician he was.

In the Jacobson catalogue, he joshed enthusiasm for the lathe by asking satirically, "How much turning must be used before a piece can be considered turned, and if a piece is turned, then what type of turned object may be considered 'art'? Contemporary turners [circa 1985] are pushing these limitations farther than ever. Essentially, turning is a wonderful technique that can be *part* of a larger creative whole in a work of art."

How farsighted in 1985! But we're getting too serious for Giles. He was fun even though he had personal problems of all kinds. He was first and foremost a friend and advisor. One time, he even pretended to listen to us when we told him the wood for a piece was too beautiful to be all covered with paint. He proceeded to leave a section of the piece in its original state to show its beauty.

When he was at an AAW meeting, or at David Ellsworth's house, or some other occasion, you knew the night would be late and the beer would flow and the laughs would go on forever. Now we know—not quite forever. We shall not see anyone like him again.

Bernard David

I first met Giles through Mark Sfirri in 2002. Mark was my guide for the "Wood Turning in North America Since 1930" show at the Renwick. I saw a piece that really struck me. It was Giles Gilson's *Sunset* (1987). I fell in love. I couldn't believe the pearlescent paint and metal work. I not only admired the piece but also wanted an exact copy. I also felt compelled to learn how to do what Giles had so artfully done. Mark made the introduction to Giles, and that was the beginning of a lasting friendship.

Giles created a likeness of *Sunset* for me and entitled it *Sunrise*. It rests peacefully in the main entry hall of our home. All who see it admire its technical execution and exceptional beauty.

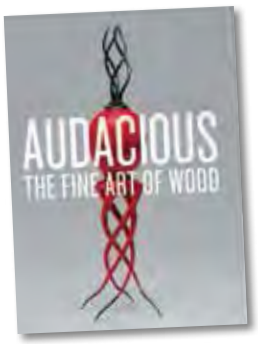
More importantly, after I had met Giles over the phone, I made the journey to the "Gilson Studio" in Schenectady and spent about a week learning how to turn metal objects and "paint like Giles" using his pearl essence technique—a method that gives Giles' work almost a glass-like feeling. I was excited by my newfound skills but more honored to have begun a friendship with an exceptional human being.

A telling story about Giles began when Albert LeCoff decided to gather a number of skilled woodturners and give them the challenge to create some object(s) out of two small pieces of wood. When the time came to exhibit their work, Giles showed up with two vials containing the ashes of the wood. When asked why he had done what he did, Giles responded that he was moved to do so. Everyone was in disbelief. Giles didn't care because he saw the beauty in what he had done and hoped it would resonate with others.

Giles had tremendous technical chops and that gave him the ability to create whimsical objects. I was privileged to create one piece of work with him collaboratively, which I titled *Whimsy* after his passing. The piece incorporates metalwork and pearlescent paint. In keeping with Giles' tendency toward playfulness, he suggested we include a toggle switch on its side.

Giles Gilson was my friend and my teacher. He is and will be greatly missed by those who knew him. Yet, like all great artists, his work will endure in the eyes of many. I miss you *"vertical mon."* ■

Giles Gilson and Bernard David,
Whimsy, Basswood, walnut, stainless steel, 6" × 6¼" (15cm × 16cm)
Photo: Terence Roberts
Collection of Lisa and Bernard David



BOOK REVIEW:
AUDACIOUS—THE FINE ART OF WOOD
Peabody Essex Museum, 2015, 200 pages

What if a pair of enthusiastic collectors stopped by your studio or exhibition booth and offered to put you on their payroll as an artist for at least a year? They might even buy you new gear to equip your imagination. In return, you would devote most of your energy to creating art rather than working side jobs for financial stability, and would give them first dibs on new pieces at a discount. Sound like an irresistible proposition? Or an unsettling infringement on your long-cultivated relationships with galleries and retail clients?

In real life, eighteen makers accepted similar offers from Bob Bohlen and Lillian Montalto Bohlen. Despite their controversial approach, the couple succeeded in spurring the development and raising the profile of numerous emerging artists, now established in the field. Through these arrangements and other transactions, they have acquired more than a thousand woodturnings and sculptures over the last seventeen years.

Initially retaining four curators to advise them, the Bohlens have since pursued an unconventional collecting strategy that downplays comprehensiveness and tradition in favor of works generating "positive energy" and viewer astonishment. Like other patronage in the field, however, their approach seeks to galvanize greater appreciation for innovative woodturning within the art world and marketplace. Accordingly, the Bohlens have already contributed more than 800 pieces to museums in the U.S. and Canada. The most recent beneficiary is the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts, which accessioned forty-seven works from them this year. In tandem with the occasion, the museum is currently exhibiting about a third of the three hundred objects now in the Bohlen collection under the appropriate banner *Audacious*. The show does not feature as much art as the catalog but does include at least one piece from almost all ninety-seven published artists. It is worth noting

(Left) **Frank Sudol,** *Giant Ribbons #2 and #1,* 2002, Birch, acrylic paint, fabric paint, 46" × 14" (117cm × 36cm) and 44" × 14" (112cm × 36cm)

Prompted by Bob Bohlen's interest in taller, thinner vessels, these ascending tangles of riotous color surely achieved some kind of high-water mark within woodturning at the time of their creation.


Photo: Terry Martin

(Right) **Ron Gerton,** *Revolution/Evolution,* 2012, Curly koa, bronze ore, 34" × 25" × 13" (86cm × 64cm × 33cm)

Heavily influenced by Art Nouveau and bonsai, this desegmented and reassembled turning embodies life's spiraling ambitions.


Photo: Walter Silver/PEM

that among those represented, remarkably few are women.

Scale and color

Size, one of the most imposing features of the artwork, may not immediately register for the catalog reader, but will surely strike the museum viewer head on. Dozens of works extend 18" (46cm) or more in one dimension, and many reach far beyond. Two air-brushed vases by Frank Sudol soar toward 4' (122cm), while fragile, wood-proud vessels from Brad Sells and Derek Bencomo undulate voluminously above their delicate bases. With all semblance of the bowl left behind, Ron Gerton and Jerry Bennett execute lengthy aerobatic figures in their spiral compositions.

Of course, size differs from mass. This distinction underlies much of the Montalto-Bohlen collection. Works with large silhouettes here tend to be thin sectioned or at least well ventilated. Piercings or natural openings not only reduce weight but also bring light inside and sometimes cast shadows beyond. In this context, the "wow" factor swells as the size/mass ratio increases.

Competing with scale for attention, color also stands out in many works, whether as polychromatic wood laminations or supercharged pigment overlays. With his ongoing exploration of Islamic architectural motifs, Michael Mode occupies the limelight within the field of segmented turnings. Among woodturning painters, three predominate: Giles Gilson (the late airbrush pioneer) and Frank Sudol and Binh Pho, who adapted Giles' coloring technique to their slit and latticed vessels. Binh, featured prominently in the catalog and now heir to both colleagues, arguably stands at the center of this collection. Others like Donald Derry and Mark Bressler also command a place on the pedestal for their provocative exploitation of patterned color. ▸

(Below) **Mark Bressler,** *Superman Mini,* 2009, Comic books, 4½" × 5½" (11cm × 14cm)
Photo: Terry Martin

Glue and gouge reformat the comic book without losing much of the action.

(Above) **Donald Derry,** *Of the Rainforest,* 2006, Chinese elm, pigments, 19" × 18" × 21" (48cm × 46cm × 53cm)
Photo: Terry Martin

Perhaps a beheaded jungle god or topographic map of a distended Earth, this highly polished vessel also speaks of the maker's preoccupation with optical perfection.

(Left) **Curt Theobald with Binh Pho,** *Inner World,* 2014, Butternut, African padauk, birch plywood, acrylic paints, cast glass, 43" × 18" × 17" (109cm × 46cm × 43cm)
Photo: Walter Silver/PEM

Two-thirds the height of the average viewer, a brick-laid egg practically invites passage into the enchanted interior, if indeed it exists (it does).

Hugh McKay, *Ruach,* 1998, Clockwise from right: Madrone burl, cast bronze, glass, nickel, colored glass inserts, each piece measures 12" × 18" (30cm × 46cm)

Photo: Walter Silver/PEM

Making an impression

The catalog's photography captures objects in crisp detail and readable depth, thanks to the expertise of woodturning artist-documentarian Terry Martin and museum staff/consultants. Colors pop, and shadows occasionally amplify the revealing geometry of pierced forms. What light-box images cannot do is convey relative scale without a distracting size reference in the frame. Catalogs sometimes address the challenge by including ensemble shots taken in collectors' homes. A photograph of four Hugh McKay vessels in the Bohlens' library serves this purpose well in *Audacious*. A few more grounded images in the book's early pages would have served readers and artists better than enlarging a duplicate color plate and devoting space to images portraying what the collection does not resemble.

Sorting the collection

The catalog artwork is presented in six sections introduced briefly by as many artists. Some, like Betty Scarpino, Binh Pho, and Michael Mode, elaborate on personal events, places, or artistic traditions that inspired particular forms or motifs. Surface enhancements receive the attention of David Ellsworth, who describes how experimentation with scorching led to results he could not have completely foreseen. The section on pierced wood begins with Alain Mailland's meditation on making space as well as objects, learned from his study of bonsai. And in his introduction to natural edges—redefined to include bark inclusions and other native defects—Ron Gerton demonstrates how a deft description of others' work can shed light on one's own.

Touch, illusion, and virtuosity

Rather than retracing the history of woodturning, which is not well represented in the collection, the catalog's introductory essays grapple with the difficulties of classifying the field within today's art world. Exhibition curator Dean Lahikainen generally makes the case for the growing acceptance of expressive wood as fine art. Brâncuși, Noguchi, Nevelson, and Puryear are cited as established groundbreakers. He also points to internationally renowned glass artist Dale Chihuly and ceramist Betty Woodman as credible role models in other craft-based media. Perhaps the strongest evidence presented comes from *New York Times* art critic Grace Glueck, who reviewed a Montalto Bohlen Collection show in 2006. She noted that the "range of techniques is dazzling, as is the variety of woods" and that the collection's "splendid examples" of artwork in wood belong to a legitimate aesthetic realm.

In the current catalog, another writer from the *Times* offers a somewhat different assessment. Feeling a measure of uneasiness, Verlyn Klinkenborg finds the works "stunning but often, it seems, slightly out of register, as if we had trouble bringing them into focus." He notes, "The narrative or symbolic meaning of many of these objects is inscribed into their surface or form (or materials) with a deliberateness we simply don't expect to see in 'pure' works of art. ... Many of them contain a kind of tricksterism that can't be felt simply by looking at them. They must be handled to be believed." The essayist is particularly transfixed by the "weightlessness" of the objects and the ingenuity of the exhibitors, including their ability to cover their tracks: "[Nearly] every work on display here makes us wonder how it was made..." He cautions that such virtuosity can distract from the larger meaning of the work. Ultimately, however, both artistic woodturning and mainstream fine art, in his estimation, have the power to transform the observer's perceptions of the world.

The importance of the wood's physicality—its warmth, texture, and surprising weight—emerges as a central theme

in the introductory essays. For contrast, these pages present several images of classical, Modern, and folk art whose tactile qualities would rarely enter the observer's consciousness. The upshot is that it makes little sense to reflexively elevate such purely visual art above work that asks to be handled. Museum director Dan L. Monroe and chief curator Lynda Rosco Hartigan reinforce this point by underscoring the primacy of tangible interactions in child development and their enriching role in developing all the senses, including aesthetic.

Woodturners can easily affirm such sentiments, expressed so persuasively by the different essayists. But a sobering irony surfaces here: Few places are less likely than a museum to promote tactile art appreciation. With their Plexiglas shields, deep pedestals, and hovering security, works typically remain off limits to the inquisitive hand. In that respect, the extended commentary appears somewhat misplaced. Given the book's focus on wood's tactile appeal, museums like Peabody Essex might do well to permit visitor handling of selected objects (as the Smithsonian did with a valuable Maloof rocking chair) or find a way to convey an attribute like weight (using a lightly loaded balance scale) or texture (with samples).

Finding a rightful place

With all the attention given to the airiness, illusion, and technical complexity at the collection's core, it is easy for the catalog reader to lose sight of a separate woodturning aesthetic exclusive of these qualities. Absent in *Audacious*, the totems and chain-sawn vessels of Mark Lindquist, the stylized torsos of Stoney Lamar, and the minimalist sculpture of Robyn Horn do not imitate other media, display delicate intricacy, or hesitate to convey mass. Ultimately, any generalizations about incorporating "wood art" into the fine arts need to take into account the diversity of expressive turning.

Overall, the catalog's narrators offer a refreshingly candid account of the personal and entrepreneurial forces shaping a world-class collection—and the curator's dilemma in classifying it. They also vividly articulate both the essence and nuances of wood that make it compelling and, in the artist's hands, unpredictable. If only such scrutiny and eloquence had been trained on a few individual works. A foursome of Hugh McKay's vessels does receive extended description, but only in terms of its creation and the qualities of the different media. What about the shared form itself, a writhing orb of swellings and tendrils enclosing gemlike glass and a tiny hidden mouth? Can these pieces be understood apart from their title, *Ruach*, the Hebrew name for God's breath? Much could be said here and alongside a number of other remarkable pieces in *Audacious*, including Marilyn Campbell's *Rare Elements* and Peter Hromek's *Paradise*. Missed opportunities to address aesthetic content also extend to section headings, save for one—A Sense of Place.

The catalog's preoccupation with materials and technical prowess reveals why woodturning, however expressive, remains a citizen of the decorative arts. Given the excesses and crassness within much contemporary fine art, is that such a bad thing? *Audacious* provides plenty of evidence it is not. For those of us enraptured by the impossible reach of the artful hand, this exhibition and catalog deserve our attention. ■

Hardcover $40, with limited edition slipcase $80, Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts. The Audacious *exhibition runs until June 21; for more, visit pem.org.*

—David M. Fry

(Below) **Marilyn Campbell,** *Igneous Series #3,* Rare Elements, 1999, 9½" × 11⅞" × 2" (24cm × 30cm × 5cm)
Photo: Terry Martin

Like Peter Hromek, Marilyn makes good on an evocative title, offering an elevated pearlescent body with glowing edges—in this instance on full display.

(Above) **Peter Hromek,** *Paradise,* 2008, Bleached maple, 13¼" × 11½" × 11½" (34cm × 29cm × 29cm)
Photo: Terry Martin

The contours of the chaste ivory exterior give way to the sensual thresholds of the interior. Disciplined use of color focuses the viewer's mind and increases the work's visual power.

Members' Gallery

Dewayne Colwell, Oklahoma

My American Indian headdress was inspired by conversations with my niece's husband, who comes from an Apache Indian family and does a lot of tribal dancing. I used techniques learned from a Jimmy Clewes workshop on design and from a Malcolm Tibbetts class on ribbon construction.

The headdress comprises about fifty wooden feathers made from zebrawood and walnut. The feathers were turned from stave construction, then cut apart and rejoined to form the curves. The breastplate comprises thirty-four segments of turned yellowheart piping and a segmented thunderbird made of holly, purpleheart, redheart, and yellowheart. I used leather straps on each side to hold the piping and turquoise decorations. Some silver beading and conchos were used to further adorn the breastplate.

Untitled, 2014, Zebrawood, walnut, yellowheart, holly, purpleheart, redheart, leather, turquoise, silver beads, conchos, 30" × 16" × 16" (76cm × 41cm × 41cm)

Jim Sexton, Texas

I am a carpenter by trade and home builder by profession, and at age 50 I began searching for a new creative outlet. Considering my carpentry skills and design background, woodturning seemed a natural fit. I attended a meeting of the Dallas Area Woodturners. During show and tell, John Tisdale held up a huge hollow form made from mistletoe mesquite burl. For me, there was a beam of light shining down from heaven on this guy holding this incredible piece. John graciously gave me a list of tools required for turning large vessels and began mentoring me.

A short eighteen months after purchasing a lathe, I entered my first turning in the 2014 SWAT (Southwest Association of Turners) Instant Gallery and won the People's Choice Award.

Untitled, 2013, Silver leaf maple, 12" × 18½" (30cm × 47cm) Winning entry 2014 SWAT People's Choice Award

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SALLY BURNETT
ENGLAND

The forms I make are inspired by the landscape around me. The textures reflect the rugged beauty of rocks exposed to extremes of wind and rain in the Peak District and coastal areas of the U.K. close to where I live. Following the curves and textures in my work provides a visual and tactile exploration of the landscapes I try to portray. Shadows that dance across the fields I can see from my studio can be glimpsed through the pierced surfaces in some of my work.

I work almost exclusively with native English timbers, which I turn green. This provides more choices as to which part of a log I can use for turning. Many of my designs follow existing grain patterns in the wood, an approach enhanced by using timber with bands of contrasting growth rings. Knots and cracks complete the work as they become interpretations of changes in the landscape.

I constantly explore new mediums and techniques to enhance what I am trying to achieve and add visual impact—but always with the design remaining inherently my own.

For more, visit sallyburnett.co.uk.

Neap Tide, 2014,
Sycamore, acrylic, 8" × 5½"
(205mm × 140mm)
Photo: Julie Dearden