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30 YEARS | 1986-2016 AAW AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS

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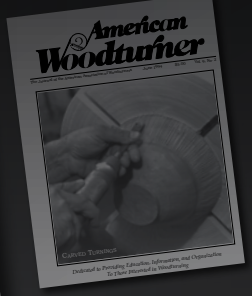
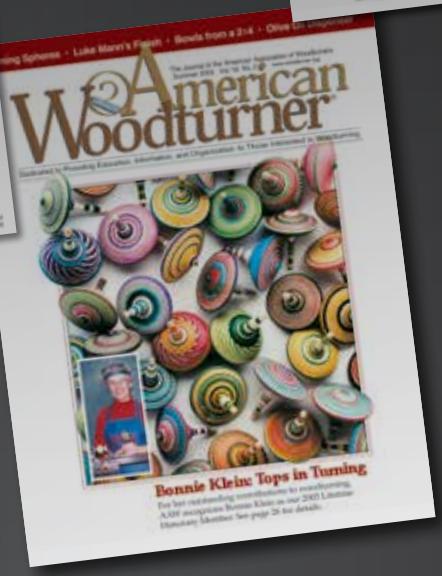
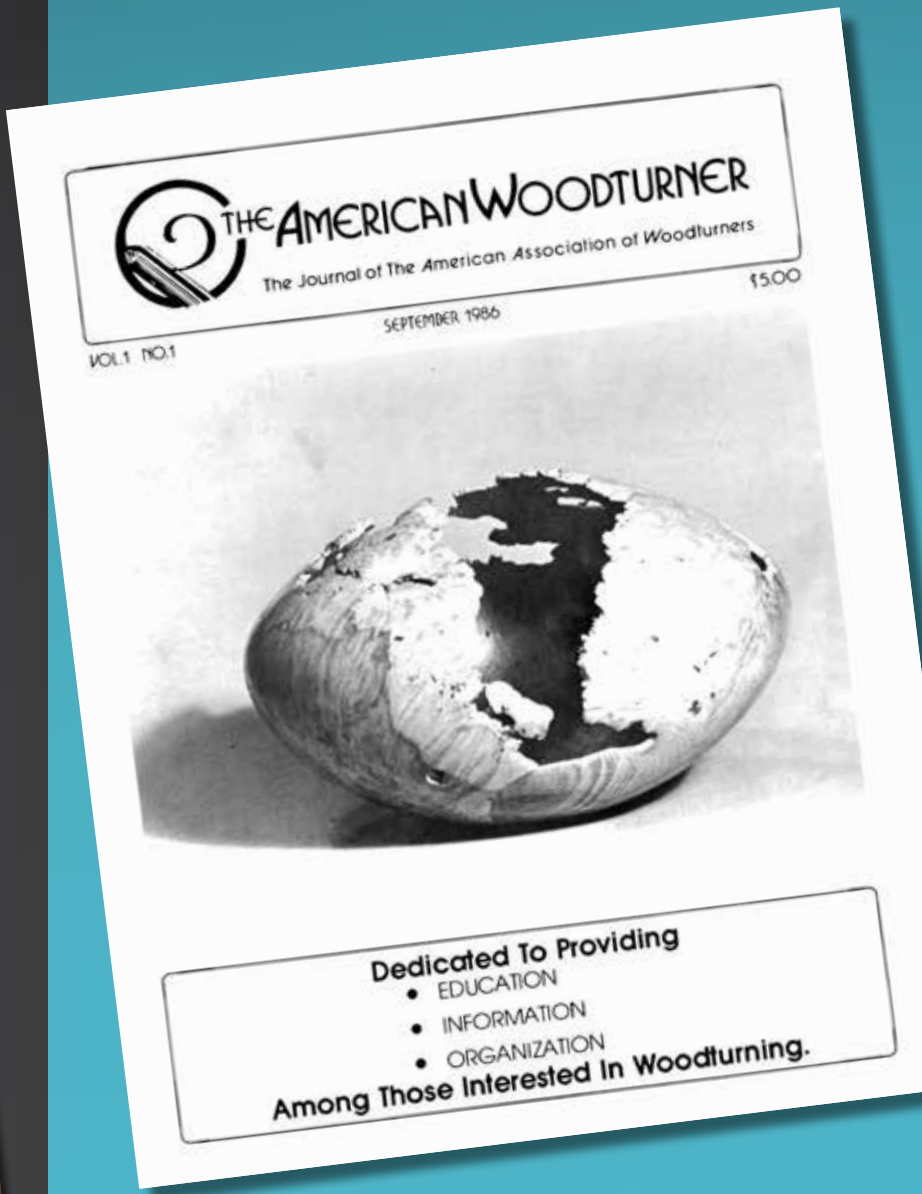
1986







For thirty years, the *American Woodturner* journal has recorded and reflected the extraordinary evolution of the American Association of Woodturners, whose mission to provide education, information, and organization to those interested in turning wood has persisted as the guiding principle. Here's to another thirty!

GREETINGS FROM PHIL MCDONALD, AAW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Oh, what a grand celebration it is! Over the past thirty years, woodturning has experienced a proliferation of ideas, innovations, tools, and techniques. And throughout this dynamic and exciting period, the AAW has been a preeminent force for engaging woodturners around the world.

Since 1986, the AAW has served more than 45,000 members. At present, our membership hovers at its highest point. And woodturners are a loyal lot. Half of our current members have been with us for eight years or longer, and AAW leadership often calls upon members for advice and counsel.

While we cannot say exactly what the next thirty years will bring, we are positioning the AAW for a successful future. In his President's Letter (page 4), Greg Schramek observes that the advance of the Internet age has brought new expectations we cannot ignore. Still, we enthusiastically prepare for what lies ahead with an awareness of what came before. The visionaries who gathered at Arrowmont in 1985 for the Vision and Concept Symposium saw a future rich in fellowship and cast an enduring mission built upon a culture of sharing ideas. These principles will endure, as nothing can supplant the experience of being together—whether in a friend's shop, a chapter meeting, or at a symposium. Our International Symposium will remain the grandest annual gathering of woodturners in the world; *American Woodturner* will continue as the leading source of information and inspiration; and the home office will still answer the phone when you need personal attention.

This June, more than 1,500 AAW members will come together in Atlanta, Georgia, for our 2016 International Symposium, the next milestone in a tradition dating to 1987, when 225 members gathered at the first AAW Symposium in Lexington, Kentucky. On behalf of the AAW board and staff, I offer sincere thanks to every member for your contributions, which have collectively enabled the AAW to touch the lives of so many over the past three decades. We are thrilled at the prospect of continuing to shape the experiences of all future members.

Phil McDonald

WOODTURNING'S **LONG JOURNEY**

ORIGINS

Although the earliest evidence of turning is a jet button dated to 2000 BCE, wood was probably turned even earlier. Wood rarely survives thousands of years, but there are indications of its being turned from North Africa to East Asia. Wood lathes were probably developed independently in more than one place.

1200 BCE – 1100 CE

Although the archeological record is slim before 300 BCE, some artifacts from Europe and Asia have survived from earlier periods. Written records and turned fragments suggest that woodturners made everyday kitchen and tableware, as well as prestigious ceremonial bowls.

1200s – 1700s

Europe

As European cities grew, guilds developed to create apprenticeships, dictate prices, and set quality standards. They also held trade secrets close and imposed tight production constraints. Master turners employing a handful of journeymen supplied a myriad of local needs, notably everyday bowls, goblets, and bottles, along with furniture parts and architectural elements. Many cities had whole streets filled with turning shops. Turning businesses still line the main streets of towns such as Seiffen, Germany, and Naruko, Japan.

Twelfth-century turned dinnerware, preserved in a silted-up well at the Hospital of St. Mary, Spital, London. At the time, most people ate off wood or bread trenchers.

Photo: The Gentle Author

North America

Settlers brought woodturning to North America and adapted their traditions to local conditions and needs. As living standards rose, wealthy landowners and merchants wanted impressive four-poster beds, newels, and columns. American turners, free from the traditional control of European guilds, built an industry serving cities such as Philadelphia, Providence, New York, and Boston.

C. 320 BCE

Oldest known image of a lathe: this relief carving in limestone showing a strap lathe is from the tomb of Petosiris, an Egyptian priest. Woodturning evolved slowly for thousands of years, with advances in tool metals from copper to bronze to iron, and then to carbon steel.

Photo: akg-images/François Guénet

EARLY 1800s

Steam power fueled rapid industrialization, bringing turners out of small workshops and into large factories with dozens of lathes driven by belts over long shafts extending across enormous spaces. Mass-produced pottery and enameled metal supplanted wooden tableware even as demand grew for turned chairs, porch posts, and stair parts.

Photo: Courtesy of Swinburne University of Technology, Australia

1915

TURNING 30

A sampling of AAW's specially themed exhibition pieces made in celebration of its 30th anniversary. The *Turning 30* exhibition will open at the AAW Symposium in Atlanta, Georgia, June 9, 2016, and will be on view at AAW's Gallery of Wood Art in Saint Paul, Minnesota, September 4–December 29, 2016. For more, visit galleryofwoodart.org.

Carol Hall, Michael Kehs, and Dan Greer, *27 Animals, 3 Artists,* 2015, Box elder, pyrography, acrylic glazes, 2" × 6" (5cm × 15cm)

This piece, shown here in three views, won a 2016 Niche Award.

Gene Colley, *Time in a Bottle,* 2016, Box elder, gold leaf, acrylic paint, 4½" × 6½" (11cm × 17cm)

Bob Rotche, *Turning XXX,* 2016, Cherry, pyrography, acrylic paint, 6" × 7" (15cm × 18cm)

Al Stirt, *Waves,* 2016, Black cherry, milk paint, 12" × 15" × 2¼" (30cm × 38cm × 6cm)

1800s – 1950s

Traditional small-shop turning in both Europe and the U.S. persisted well into the 20th century, overlapping the industrialization of turning. Turners continued making simple specialty products like chair parts, wagon-wheel hubs, dairy bowls, and spindles. Skilled turners also made wooden patterns for making the molds used in casting metal. Itinerant turners known as bodgers camped and worked in woodland huts, producing chair parts and other items.

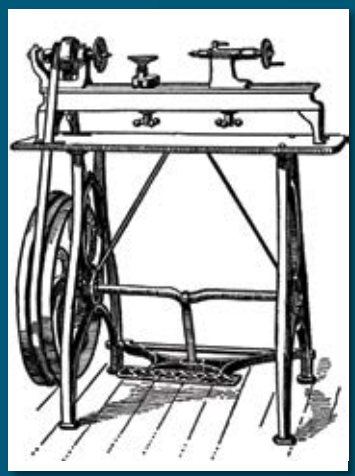
Photo: Leon Olson

An 1840s great-wheel lathe, in a blacksmith shop in Nauvoo, Illinois, once used to fulfill local needs.

LATE 1800s THROUGH WWII

The mass-manufacture and marketing of small, multipurpose machines influenced woodturning's expansion from profession to pastime, as did woodturning instruction in industrial-arts curricula. Turning instruction was provided to injured soldiers for both rehabilitation and retraining.

Photo: Courtesy of the U.S. National Library of Medicine

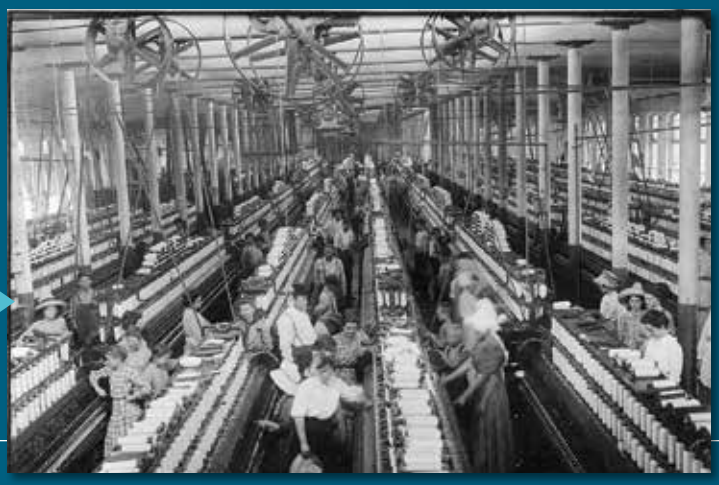


EARLY 1800s – MID 1900s

Woodturners were employed in astonishing numbers to support European and North American industries. For example, bobbins turned by the thousands were essential to the industrialization of textile manufacturing, and items such as turned spars and pulleys were much in demand for sailing ships.

Magnolia Cotton Mill, Mississippi, 1911.

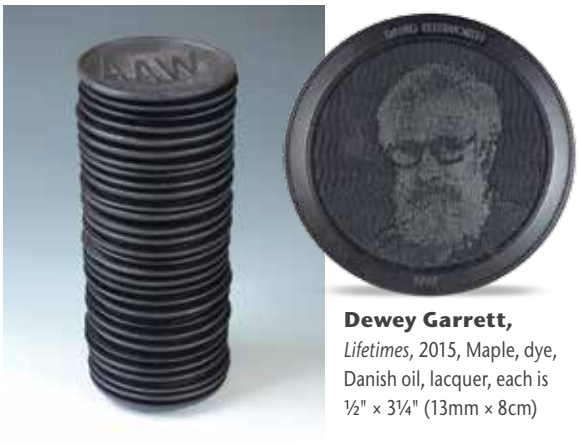
Photo: Lewis Hine - U.S. National Archives and Records Administration



1940s – 1980s

The number of factory-employed woodturners declined after WWII due to automation and the increasing popularity of plastics. Meanwhile, individual woodturners, often isolated and unaware of each other, began using the lathe for a more personal style of turning, producing unique, artistically expressive work or doing production work for discerning audiences.

Bob Holcombe, *Wooden Teeth Worn by David Ellsworth, First President of the American Association of Woodturners,* 2015, Basswood, ash, maple, milkpaint, acrylic paint, plastic engraved tag, 12½" × 5" (32cm × 13cm)



Dewey Garrett, *Lifetimes,* 2015, Maple, dye, Danish oil, lacquer, each is ½" × 3¼" (13mm × 8cm)

Mark Sfirri, *It's the Little Things Part 1,* 2016, Poplar, holly, paint, 5½" × 9¼" × 3¾" (14cm × 23cm × 10cm)

Dixie Biggs and Steve Loar, *Gold Leaf,* 2016, Bleached jacaranda, maple, cherry, 32" × 10" × 14" (81cm × 25cm × 36cm)
Photo: Randy Batista

1976 – 1981

Albert LeCoff, Alan LeCoff, and Palmer Sharpless organized the first woodturning symposia at the George School in Newtown, Pennsylvania, encouraging disparate turners to begin sharing ideas. Woodturning heroes, notably Mark Lindquist and David Ellsworth, helped trigger a creative revolution that elevated our ancient craft to the realm of art.

Photo: John Kelsey

Albert LeCoff, blue plaid shirt, introduces woodturning mentor Manny Erez at the second George School symposium, 1976. Old-school craft is handed off to a new era of turners.

1980s AND 1990s

Advances in lathes and accessories made turning easier, notably electronic variable-speed motors, the four-jaw scroll chuck, hollowing systems, and tools made of high-speed steel and other advanced alloys.

2016

The AAW, now the largest international woodturning association, with 15,000 members in fifty-two countries, turned thirty and hosted its 30th-Annual International Symposium in Atlanta, Georgia, with about 1,500 attendees.

ATLANTA 2016
AAW AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS SYMPOSIUM
30 YEARS 1986-2016

OCTOBER 1985

During the Woodturning Vision and Concept Symposium held at Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts, thirteen woodturners began planning the creation of the American Association of Woodturners, paving the way for turners to connect.

An enthusiastic woodturner finds a way to see a demo.
Photo: Nancy Gerard

1986

The AAW was formed with a mission of providing education and organization to anyone interested in woodturning. The original ledger shows the first members. David Ellsworth, member 0001, was elected the organization's first president.

Photo: AAW

AAW | AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS

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A NOTE ABOUT SAFETY

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

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

*Web address is case sensitive.

Editor's Note

As part of the AAW's 30th anniversary, we've put together a woodturning timeline (inside front cover spread) that offers a broad overview of the long journey of our beloved craft. Compiling this timeline was a challenge, and I want to extend my deepest thanks to Tib Shaw, AAW arts administrator and curator; Terry Martin, a woodturner, historian, curator, and frequent *AW* contributor; and John Kelsey, a woodturner and former editor of *Fine Woodworking*. It was their insights and resourcefulness that made the timeline possible.

Although the original inspiration for the timeline was to help celebrate this important milestone in AAW's history, it ultimately shows the broader story of woodturning and our relatively small part in it. The timeline reveals that our thirty years are but a short moment when you consider the long history of woodturning. But in those thirty years, the AAW has had a profound effect on the direction and use of this ancient craft.

Perhaps it was a perfect storm that led us to this point—the culmination of converging factors, evolving woodturning from industry into a pastime and art form. I am excited to see what twists and turns woodturning will take over the next thirty years.

—Joshua Friend

From the President

VISION 2020, a service evolution

AAW membership has always been a great value proposition, with benefits like the *American Woodturner* journal, the Annual International Symposium, and support for local chapters, vendors, professionals, and woodturning schools. However, as in most other parts of society, woodturners are increasingly using the Internet to broaden their knowledge, obtain specific information, connect through social media, and find learning resources. We still want those quality publications and experiences, but in this information age, we now expect even more value for our membership dues.

In anticipation of evolving member expectations, in 2014 AAW leadership began researching ways to continue meeting your needs. VISION 2020 is the result. Created from hours of focus groups, interviews, and analysis, VISION 2020 is AAW's plan to remain the leading resource in woodturning. Its programs are inclusive, with the intent to fulfill the needs of hobbyists, professionals, collectors, demonstrators, and vendors.

The AAW already has a wealth of information online, such as access to every issue of *American Woodturner*. We'll continue to develop our own new and exciting content, but VISION 2020 will expand our offerings by aggregating content from many other sources. Leveraging the Internet will be a critical part of this evolution.

Here are some of the added benefits you can expect to see between now and the year 2020:

- Access to an online searchable database of woodturning videos, linking you to the best of what is available on the Internet
- An integrated learning curriculum to better meet the needs of all turners and AAW chapters
- Individualized online learning resources, made more accessible through a user-friendly AAW website
- Improved local-chapter support, including guidelines and tools for better demonstrations and the use of video, handouts, and more
- An interactive online directory tool designed to help chapters find out about demonstrators
- Efforts to encourage more people to take up woodturning, especially those from under-represented groups

A history to grow on

During this 30th-anniversary year of the AAW, it is a time to reflect on our past and embrace the needs of future woodturners. Long-term members will continue receiving the benefits they most enjoy, even as we fulfill our obligation to evolve and remain relevant in a changing environment.

Woodturners have a long history of sharing. Thirty years ago, a group of mostly professional turners wanted to bring turning to a larger mass of people. They worked with manufacturers to develop new and better tools; they supported craft schools by teaching and demonstrating; they worked with galleries and museums; they made woodturning an art. I believe that without the professional turner, the AAW would not be what it is today.

It is with this rich history and spirit of sharing that we look to the future. We know we must embrace new technology to improve and expand our member services. The AAW has always been the "go-to" organization for all things woodturning, and we plan to build on that status with VISION 2020, a plan that will make our learning and information gathering a 21st-century experience.

Looking forward,

Greg Schramek

Moulthrops to Present at Atlanta Symposium

The Moulthrop family, comprising three generations of woodturners, holds a place of prominence in the history of modern North American woodturning. The late Ed Moulthrop (1916–2003), a successful architect turned full-time wood artist, had a major influence on elevating the status of wood from a utilitarian material to an art form. He was a pioneer in reconfiguring tools and converting metal lathes to wood use to assist him in becoming one the first to turn large bowls and hollow forms.

Ed's son Philip and grandson Matt, renowned woodturners in their own right, will present a lecture, "Material Selection and Creation of Turned Objects Using Personalized Tools and Methods," at this year's AAW International Symposium in Atlanta. Their appearance, sponsored by AAW's Professional Outreach Program, will be part of the Special Interest Night activities, Thursday, June 9, at 7:00 p.m.

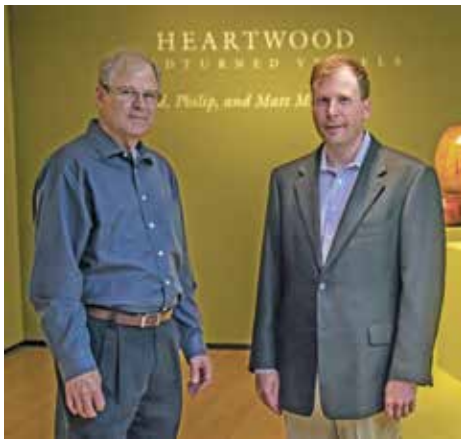
History

As a modernist architect, Ed Moulthrop adapted classic shapes of Roman and Greek vessels to highlight the beautiful grain patterns in southeastern American hardwoods. He experimented with chemical compounds to prevent green wood from cracking prior to turning. Rather than show his work on the craft-show circuit, Ed chose to market it through galleries next to high-end glass, ceramics, and centuries-old paintings. His work drew national attention, appearing on magazine covers and in museums a decade before the AAW was formed.

Today, the Moulthrops' large, clear-coated vessels remain an iconic brand in the high-end collectable market. The popularity of their work persists, with demand from five major national galleries and smaller regional venues.

Following in Ed's footsteps

Philip quit a law practice to join his father in the family woodturning business in 1979. Together they produced work received by the Pope, numerous heads of state, and business leaders across the world. Following his father's death, Philip worked alone until his son, Matt, gave up a business career to join him as a third-generation wood artist. In 2011, the family was featured on the PBS television series *Craft in America: Family.* The episode can be viewed at tiny.cc/Moulthrop.



Philip and Matt Moulthrop, 2014, during an exhibition of work by the Moulthrops at Auburn University.

Photo: Mike Etheridge, Auburn University Photographic Services

"We haven't changed our philosophy and won't. Showcasing the beauty of the wood always comes first," said Philip. "But we are a family business. You have to work hard in a changing market to pay the bills. The schedule doesn't give us much time to see a lot of our friends in turning, so I'm looking forward to this time at [the AAW Symposium]." ■

For more, visit moulthropstudios.com.

—Dave Long

Philip Moulthrop, *Loblolly Streaked Pine Sphere,* 2013, Loblolly pine, 11½" × 12½" (29cm × 32cm)

Photo: Moulthrop Studios

Matt Moulthrop, *Spanish Oak Globe,* 2012, Spanish oak, 8¾" × 12¾" (22cm × 32cm)

Photo: Moulthrop Studios

Philip Moulthrop, *Mixed Mosaic Bowl,* 2013, Various woods, 8½" × 13½" (22cm × 34cm)

Photo: Bentley Gallery

Reflections on AAW's 30th Anniversary

David Ellsworth

AAW's origins

My best recollection is that there were ten of us in the room, nine newly elected board members and an administrator. It was April 1986. The room was at the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C., and the event was the first sit-down meeting of the AAW's board of directors, following the "Vision and Concept" conference at Arrowmont the previous October.

All of us were woodturners, most of us educators, and this would be the day we plotted the course of the organization we have today. Beyond our own ideas, we hoped we really knew what woodturners needed and wanted. But what could we offer them? How could we connect with them and stay in touch? And, of course, how would we pay for it?

Another factor was that we really had no idea how many woodturners were out there. Several of us had been to conferences in other countries, and there had been a number of similar events in the United States over the previous decade. But we knew this wasn't the full picture. In order to get a handle on these questions, we were simply going to have to jump into the ring and see where it led us.

Mark Lindquist, *Bowl,* 1982, Sugar maple burl, 5" × 10½" (13cm × 27cm)

An inclusive philosophy

We established a working philosophy for the organization that would become the foundation for all future endeavors. This philosophy can best be described as an *inclusive, ask-don't-tell* approach. In effect, we would make every effort to give equal weight and attention to spindles, boxes, bowls, platters, vessels, artists, craftspeople, hobbyists, professionals, and all forms of diddlers and do-dadlers. *Ask-don't-tell* meant constantly seeking input from our members (asking) so we were sure to address their needs, rather than *telling* them what we thought those needs were. No easy task in that pre-Internet era.

Yes, the AAW has strayed a bit over the years. Every non-profit group seems to be guilty of that. But we have always rebounded stronger than before, which is all part of the checks and balances that *do* actually work when organizations remain on track and conscious of their core values. Of all the other craft media organizations—ceramics, glass, jewelry (metals), basketry, ironwork—most of which are quite a bit older than the AAW, none provides as many opportunities to advance member learning skills on all levels or to gain public exposure for artwork than the AAW. Think thirty years of scholarships and grants, regional and national conferences with active youth programs, juried and invitational exhibitions, thousands of demonstrations on turning

Bob Stocksdale, *Bowl,* 1979, Celon ebony, 3" × 5½" (8cm × 14cm)

William Moore, *Inverness,* 2000, Oak burl, spun bronze, 10" × 10" × 5" (25cm × 25cm × 13cm)

Photo: Harold Wood

techniques, lectures on professionalism through the Professional Outreach Program (POP). And, of course, the instant gallery at AAW's Annual Symposia is the largest non-juried woodturning exhibition in existence. Add to that *American Woodturner*—the most dynamic membership-supported woodturning publication available—nearly 375 local chapters covering the breadth of North America, plus an extraordinarily comprehensive website, and it's easy to appreciate the impact the AAW has had in supporting the field of woodturning.

A mission to grow on

Short of sounding like I'm preaching, recall AAW's original motto: *Dedicated to Providing Education, Information, and Organization for Those Interested in Woodturning.* We have done that and continue to do so. But one area in which the AAW has consistently come up short is its projected goals in membership. After thirty years, we should have 30,000 members and we are currently just over half that. This is the case for lots of reasons: many people simply are not "joiners"; around half of those attending local chapter meetings are not AAW members; and the economy is always a factor. The cost of membership is directly related to the perceived value of the services provided. If people don't perceive *education, information, and organization* as something of value to them personally, they obviously won't join.

Part of the value I speak of relates to the breadth and dimension the field of woodturning has evolved into. And if it weren't for this continuous growth, both administratively and in the artwork produced, organizations like the AAW could not survive. Thirty years ago, about the most outrageous thing to appear on the scene was Mark Lindquist's chainsaw surfaces on his bowls. Today, the pure forms of Prestini and Stocksdale remain as the foundation of good design, but we now have new interpretations of what that term means. Color and texture have become the norm, multimedia work is commonplace, and turned bowls are being used to cast glass and bronze forms. Collectively, people continue to explore, expand, and challenge both the material of wood and our understanding of the term *beauty*—and all to a very approving audience.

So it is with some confidence that we look down the road, although always with one foot on the gas, one on the brake, and a sharp eye on the rearview mirror. I offer this element of caution only because survival in the crafted arts, either as an individual or an organization, depends on maintaining a strong balance between one's creative euphoria, self-discipline, and barebones practicality. Collectively, these elements help us maintain perspective and a measure of flexibility as we each pursue our respective goals.

Ultimately, it is the energy that each of us brings into our lives—how we add to that energy through our own initiative and then push it through our work and pass it on to others—that becomes the future of any art form. That individual effort is also the future of the AAW. ■

Clay Foster, *Rattle Pot,* 1994, Pecan, raffia, deer antler, 6¼" × 6" (16cm × 15cm)

Binh Pho, *Between Blue,* 2015, Cast glass, 14" × 8½" (36cm × 22cm)

Craig Lofton, *Bowl,* 2015, Cast bronze, 6" × 8" (15cm × 20cm)

JOE RUMINSKI

AAW 2016 HONORARY LIFETIME MEMBER

Larry Miller

Joe Ruminski, AAW's 2016 Honorary Lifetime Member

Every year, the AAW awards the distinction of Honorary Lifetime Member to someone who has contributed significantly to the field of woodturning. This year, that award goes to Joe Ruminski of Fairview, North Carolina.

Joe started his woodturning journey at the young age of thirteen. His father had an auto-body shop in which he had a big green Powermatic lathe acquired from a school auction in 1963. Although Joe had no instruction in woodturning, his dad knew turners were using old files to make scrapers for turning wood, so that's what he used. One of his first real projects was making a spinning wheel, during which he says 80-grit abrasive was his best friend. He turned wood a lot until, as he says, "girls, work, and college took most of my time—and probably in that order."

From educator to turner

Joe graduated from Warren Wilson College with a bachelor's degree in education and became an elementary school teacher, primarily because, as he puts it, "I wanted most of the kids shorter than me." After going back to school at Western Carolina University for evening classes, he obtained advanced degrees in education and administration. He worked in the same school system as a principal for the next twenty years, and after thirty years in the system was able to retire.

While anticipating and preparing for retirement, Joe took a woodturning class at John C. Campbell Folk School with Bobby Clemons as the instructor and Nick Cook as his assistant. One class was all it took to hook him again into spinning wood for fun. He was particularly impressed with the improvement in tools since his days of using old files for scrapers. His next big step along the journey of becoming the expert turner he is today occurred in 2000, when he joined the Carolina Mountain Woodturners (CMW), where several members mentored him in safe and proper tool technique.

Joe developed his woodturning skills by attending more than seventy seminars and studying with craftsmen such as Ray Key, Mike Mahoney, Gary Sanders, Nick Cook, and Bobby Clemons. In addition to the formal training, he honed his skills by producing more than 800 natural-edge bowls, utilitarian bowls, vases, Christmas ornaments, and other art pieces. His work appears in several prestigious places, including the Biltmore Estate and numerous galleries in Western North Carolina.

From turner to teacher

In 2003, Joe had an opportunity to teach a weekend class at the Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts as a fill-in instructor, which he found to be the perfect match for his interests—turning and teaching. Later

Spinning, 2011, Maple, manzanita root, 6" × 4½" (15cm × 11cm)

that same year, he was accepted into The Southern Highland Craft Guild. His first big commercial turning job was to make more than 750 pieces for the Biltmore Estate Company. This single job taught him three important things: 1) how to make really clean cuts, 2) how to develop a production mode of turning, and 3) the knowledge that he didn't want to do that kind of work again.

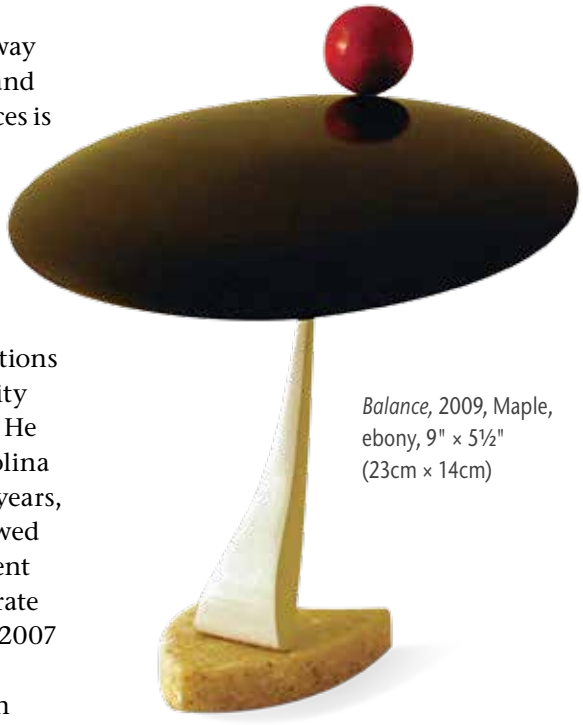
Joe is now a regular instructor at John C. Campbell and Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts. He has opened a classroom area in his own studio, with classes available for private and semiprivate instruction. His students quickly gain skill sets that would otherwise take years to acquire, and he always receives stellar reviews. As an instructor, Joe says the biggest reward comes from seeing people he has taught doing things beyond anything he has ever done. He has taught all around the United States.

Joe describes his current work in woodturning to be about the technical aspect of how to turn well and safely. In his sculptural pieces, his goal is to use line and form in a way that allows the viewer to use his or her imagination to create a description of the art, while his utilitarian pieces show the natural beauty of the wood in a way that makes them both practical and artful. The goal in all of Joe's pieces is to keep the lines simple so they accent the natural beauty of the wood.

An active contributor

Joe Ruminski has always been a doer, and woodturning organizations have benefited from his propensity to do whatever needs to be done. He was a board member for the Carolina Mountain Woodturners for two years, starting the year he joined, followed by stints as secretary, vice president for two years, and then two separate duties as president of the club in 2007 and 2015.

Joe became an AAW member in 2001. He started working with the AAW Youth Program in 2008 by teaching a couple of classes in Richmond, Virginia, after which he became a member of the Youth Program committee under the leadership of Bonnie Klein. After teaching youth classes for a couple of years, Bonnie stepped down from the chair position and Joe stepped in to fill that role until 2015. Other duties with the AAW have included: turning the special awards for the past seven years, working with the EOG auction for the past eight years, serving one year on the AAW board nominating committee, and helping get the Light House for the Blind and the Veteran turning sessions started at the annual AAW Symposia.



Balance, 2009, Maple, ebony, 9" × 5½" (23cm × 14cm)

Testimonials

Joe has made a lot of friends and supporters during his time in woodturning, and a recognition article wouldn't be complete without some input from ▸

Joe Ruminski in his element: teaching youth at an AAW Symposium.

Photo: Andi Wolfe

Joe with a blind woodturner at a Lighthouse for the Blind AAW Symposium session.

Photo: Andi Wolfe

Tear Drops, 2008, Dyed ash, each about 5" × 3" (13cm × 8cm)

Formal Ball, 2012, Maple, cherry, 14" × 4" (36cm × 10cm)

them. Greg Schramek, President of the AAW's board of directors, has known Joe for about ten years. Greg states that not only is Joe a true professional, taking pride in what he does to achieve the highest quality, but he is also one of the hardest workers Greg knows—yet is reluctant to take his share of recognition. Greg further reports that Joe wasn't born with a silver spoon and will find a cheaper way to make a tool, rather than buy one. Not only will he make a tool himself when possible, but, more importantly, he will also pass the knowledge on to others.

Another long-term woodturning friend, John Hill, emphasizes the "get 'er done" attitude Joe possesses by relating the CMW objective of creating a woodturning learning center back in 2005. The center consisted of eleven mini lathes with all the accessories, along with a utility trailer to travel and teach woodturning classes at schools, retirement homes, other woodworking clubs, the state fair, and other venues. John says Joe was instrumental in making this chapter effort a success.

I have worked on the AAW Symposium Youth Program with Joe for all the years he has been involved and can cite many instances where his support was instrumental in solving problems and making the program a success. Along with his get-it-done personality, Joe never lets his ego get in the way. He'll do whatever is needed—recruiting and organizing the youth instructors, teaching multiple sessions, or doing the grunt work to help the annual program run smoothly.

Although Joe's best friend, his dog Carson, can't talk, he has expressed his admiration for Joe by his actions. Joe's wife Carol told me Carson doesn't like for Joe to leave him behind. Before one of Joe's trips for a woodturning demonstration, he was packing what he needed and checking things off his list. As he put an item in the box, he noticed a glue bottle was missing. Thinking he checked it off without actually putting it in, he got another one. Then he noticed some wood pieces were also missing from the box and he couldn't remember where he'd put them. Carol discovered the problem—and brought the glue bottle and slightly chewed wood back into the house and asked Joe if these were what he was looking for. Carson, not wanting Joe to leave, was removing things from the box as fast as he could and taking them outside when Joe wasn't looking. They report that Carson still doesn't get to go on Joe's trips, but he appears to be more accepting of Joe's absences. Either that or Joe has gotten more vigilant.

In Joe's own words, "None of [my woodturning experiences] would have been possible if it had not been for a very supportive wife and family." Carol is a very talented quilter and a fantastic cookie maker. They are celebrating their 45th wedding anniversary this year, and Joe states, "It's hard for me to believe she has put up with me all this time," noting an instance when he and Carson tracked wood shavings all over the recently cleaned house Carol had prepared for evening guests.

Joe and Carol have two grown sons, of whom they are very proud. Their older, Chris, is a glass artist and their younger, Jeff, is a commercial graphic artist. Joe and Carol have three wonderful grandchildren, Jerica, Katie, and Eli.

Greg Schramek's words provide a fitting final statement: "If AAW had a pedestal, I believe Joe should be placed on it. After all, he's only five foot, four inches, but based on his contribution to woodturning and the AAW, he stands high above most of us." Congratulations to Joe Ruminski on this well-deserved recognition award. ■

Larry Miller is a member of the Woodturners of Olympia in Washington. He has been active in the AAW Symposium Youth Program since 2007 as an instructor and coordinator.

SWAT Turns 25

Everything begins with an idea

The largest regional woodturning symposium, now known as SWAT (the SouthWest Association of Turners), has a rich and evolving heritage. It began 25 years ago, when a small group of Texas turners had the idea to get together under large live oak trees near the Colorado River in Columbus, Texas, with the goal of providing a live, local forum for the education and skill development of anyone interested in woodturning.

The first symposium, on Columbus Day 1992, was called *A Texas Turn or Two*. The event was conceived and organized by turning enthusiasts, including Gary Roberts, Clay Foster, Mark Potter, Larry Roberts, and James Johnson. Mark Potter agreed to host the gathering at his cabinet shop. The demonstrators worked for free, and the founders figured if they could attract fifty attendees, they would break even.

Folks began to wind their way down the dirt road a couple miles toward the Colorado River. Soon there were motor homes, trailers, pop-ups, and tents scattered under the massive oak trees—a Woodstock for woodturners! The founding fathers (as we now call them) more than broke even, with about eighty attendees. The event returned to Columbus the next year, with Tennessee-based, award-winning John Jordan as the first invited demonstrator.

From 1994 through 2000, the symposia were held at an RV park near Canyon Lake. A ferocious rainstorm swamped the event in 2000, with cold rain blowing into the tents. The storm put a damper on that event, but enthusiasm persisted and the event was reorganized as SWAT and moved to Wichita Falls. Both the name and location change were undertaken to market the event to woodturners from neighboring states—not to mention we would be meeting in a climate-controlled location.

SWAT today

The annual symposium is now held at the convention center in Waco, Texas, with about 1,000 participants, representing twenty-seven clubs from Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arkansas, and Louisiana. In 2015, SWAT hosted attendees from twenty-nine states. SWAT is the second-largest gathering of its kind, after the AAW International Symposium.

This year's event, the 25th Anniversary of SWAT, will be held August 26–28. The symposium will feature nineteen demonstrators, including nationally renowned turners Dick Sing, Mike Mahoney, John Jordan, Stuart Batty, John Beaver, Mary Lacer, Cindy Drozda, Clay Foster, plus eleven regional demonstrators.

Many things make SWAT attractive to attendees. Along with world-class demonstrators, it has some of the lowest registration fees (which include lunches); an improved spouse program with numerous classes, workshops, and field trips; and a slew of vendors displaying the latest in tools, technology, and wood. An always-popular feature is our two-for-one raffle, which offers the chance to win in two drawings, one for woodturning tools and one for gallery-quality works donated by invited turners. In the tool drawing, more than $5,000 worth of tools is given away, plus grand prizes of midi-lathes and three full-sized lathes.

Join us this August—the Silver Anniversary of SWAT promises to be legendary!

For more, visit swaturners.org.

—Stormy Boudreaux and Dave Marshall

Clay Foster and Mark Potter at the first *A Texas Turn or Two* symposium, 1992, which would evolve into SWAT.

Photo: Tracy Marshall

Donate Used Tools

Many turners have donated tools to the Turners Without Borders (TWB) Tool Bank. These tools have been put to good use in several TWB initiatives. To help TWB 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 Atlanta Symposium. Bowl, spindle, and roughing gouges are most needed, but all other tools are welcome. Donations will be accepted at the registration desk. The tools will be put to good use in a new initiative in Honduras, which will be carried out in partnership with GreenWood, an organization that helps artisans develop sustainable businesses using forestry resources. Visit greenwoodglobal.org.

Symposium Volunteers Needed!

The success of every AAW Symposium is due to the many individuals who volunteer for a variety of tasks before, during, and after the event. If you are attending this year, please give a few hours to this vital effort. The greatest need is for demonstrator assistants, aid in the Youth Room, and help in the instant gallery.

To volunteer, contact John Ellis at NMWTwebman@aol.com. Volunteer early to have the best chance of being assigned your preferred demonstrator and time slot. All volunteers receive a complimentary Symposium T-shirt.

Woodturning Cohort Embraces Spirit of Exploration

The Mid Minnesota Association of Woodturners (MMAW), an AAW chapter, meets at the Paramount Visual Arts Center in St. Cloud, Minnesota. In exchange for meeting, classroom, and storage space, the MMAW provides instructors for community classes at the facility. When the Paramount sought input from MMAW members on what classes to offer, one suggestion was for a learning experience that mirrors successful instruction in other art mediums: a cohort.

A cohort is loosely defined as a study group where the members choose a common goal to pursue. The concept is to learn from each other, rather than from a single instructor teaching the group. One benefit of a cohort experience is that the group gets multiple perspectives on what works and what challenges are experienced. The cohort is a support system that encourages learning.

Woodturning cohort members (*from left*) Denny Myers, Gary Mrozek, and John Caye consult with Tib Shaw, curator of AAW's Gallery of Wood Art, Saint Paul, Minnesota. A touch tour of AAW exhibition pieces helped the cohort decide which piece to emulate. Cohort member not pictured: Guy Schafer.

Photo: Linda Ferber

Field trip

Our cohort class was designed for experienced woodturners, as we would be exploring concepts beyond basic skills. The proposal included a field trip on the first scheduled meeting day to the Minneapolis/Saint Paul area to visit the AAW's Gallery of Wood Art, the studio of woodturning professional Jim Sannerud, and the home of wood art collectors David and Ruth Waterbury. The goal of the field trip was to find inspiration from all the pieces we saw and, as a group, decide on one aspect of a mutually inspiring piece to emulate.

The group spent about two hours at the Gallery of Wood Art and enjoyed

Leon LeCoursiere, Untitled (carved polychrome bowl), 1997, Curly birch, paint, 3" × 6" (8cm × 15cm)

AAW Permanent Collection
Donated by Lois Laycraft in memory of Frank Sudol

Inspiration from the Permanent Collection

The cohort chose an AAW permanent collection piece as inspiration. Leon LeCoursiere's turned, carved, and painted bowl would serve as a model for the group's exploration of form and technique.

LeCoursiere's piece was one of many donated to the AAW in 2009 by Lois Laycraft, whose life partner Frank Sudol traded or obtained works from students and friends, among them some of the top names in woodturning.

"Whatever profession you're in, it is a continuous learning process. It would be a dark cloudy day when you think you know it all. You might as well put away tools because you're no good to yourself or to others. And don't give up when things go wrong. When a piece turns out to be not so good or a failure, it's not a total loss. You learn from it. You need failure to learn."
—*Leon LeCoursiere*

a touch tour led by Tib Shaw, the Gallery's curator. "I pulled several pieces from our collection that I thought would be good sparks," noted Tib, who also added that a touch tour can be arranged for any AAW members (with advance reservations).

The cohort decided on an AAW permanent collection piece by Leon LeCoursiere. This piece inspired each of us in different ways. Our carving and painting skill levels were mixed, making the inspiration piece a good choice to stretch our comfort levels.

Back in the shop

With the visual experience of our field trip, the cohort returned home to work on emulating the chosen feature based on how the experience moved us and making it our own. Over the next week, we experimented in our own shops and tried to take our varying degrees of woodturning skills to a more artistic level.

Each of us came to the first classroom gathering with a prototype, sketches, or narrative description of our work plan. The discussions became meaningful and informative, as we developed trust and were allowed the freedom to experiment.

OUR GOAL WAS NOT TO MAKE A PERFECT PIECE, BUT RATHER TO EXPERIMENT AND LEARN.

We were all bowl turners, but our embellishment skills varied greatly. We each had different tools and techniques. Rotary carving tools were used (both hand-held and flex-shaft) as well as reciprocating carvers and traditional carving tools. We tried each other's tools and learned from each other's methods. There were different, creative ways of detail sanding, too. Using a sanding sleeve from an oscillating drum sander worked well on concave surfaces. A less-expensive method was applying abrasive to a piece of electrical conduit with spray adhesive. Also brought to the table was a shopmade profile-sanding block for specific profiles. We shared our supply sources for the various tools, including what was available at local hardware and home-improvement stores.

We agreed that spraying a coat of lacquer on the bare wood would help prime the wood and prevent bleeding when paint was applied. We all gained a new respect for those with a steady hand with a paintbrush.

It wasn't a competitive atmosphere; in fact, we laughed at our own mistakes while delivering compliments to each other and dismissing each other's perceived shortcomings. Our goal was not to make a perfect piece, but rather to experiment and learn. These classroom sessions created a pleasant and welcoming self-teaching atmosphere. The experience of the woodturning cohort was well received, and future offerings have been scheduled through the Paramount Visual Arts Center. ■

—Gary Mrozek

(Clockwise from top right)
Denny Myers, Untitled, 2015, Box elder, 2½" × 5" (6cm × 13cm)

John Caye, *Moonglow,* 2015, Basswood, 3¼" × 7½" (8cm × 19cm)

Gary Mrozek, *Calhoun,* 2015, Cherry, 2½" × 8" (6cm × 20cm)

Guy Schafer, *The Swirl,* 2015, Cherry, 2½" × 5" (6cm × 13cm)

Greenville Woodworkers Guild Teaches Turning

Kids love woodworking and woodturning. The Greenville Woodworkers Guild (GWG), located in Mauldin, South Carolina, is now conducting woodturning instruction through its Youth Program. In this class, students 12 to 18 years old learn to turn a variety of projects, including bowls, pens, ornaments, and more. The GWG purchased and dedicated equipment specifically for this program, including midi-lathes and all the associated turning tools, chucks, and accessories.

The woodturning classes are held weekly, with most attendees being home-schoolers who are available during daytime hours. Special classes are sometimes scheduled for scout groups, high school students, and, in one case, a college class that took the course for academic credit.

GWG also provides general woodworking classes for youth, emphasizing hand-tool use. Students in this class have constructed benches for the Myers Center for Special Children, several benches for the local Veteran's Administration facility, and a variety of personal projects, such as a lathe bench, a chess table, and a hand-coopered bucket.

An appreciative 12-year-old girl turns her first bowl.

A proud student shows off his first bowl, turned in the GWG's Youth Program.

The GWG's Youth Program teaches manual-arts skills that were once more widely taught in middle schools and high schools. It provides the opportunity for the practical application of skills and knowledge associated with STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) programs. A formal syllabus has been developed so students can earn academic credits. ■

For more, visit greenvillewoodworkers.com.

—Wells Doty

OVWG Opens Learning Center

In September 2015, the Ohio Valley Woodturners Guild (OVWG) celebrated the grand opening of its long-awaited woodturning Learning Center in Cincinnati. Since its inception more than twenty-five years ago, the OVWG has met in various places, transporting its equipment in a trailer to set up for monthly meetings, attended by 100 members or more. Now the OVWG has signed a three-year lease for a 1,500-square-foot studio in the Kennedy Heights Cultural Center (KHCC), which also houses eight artist studios and a 3,000-square-foot multipurpose space.

The Ohio Valley Woodturners Guild's new Learning Center, located in the Kennedy Heights Cultural Center, Cincinnati, will allow the OVWG to better serve its members and the surrounding community.

The OVWG Learning Center is equipped with eight midi-lathes, four mini-lathes, three full-sized lathes, plus other equipment including a table saw, bandsaw, cut-off saw, disc sander, and buffer. Each midi-lathe is mounted on its own custom-built mobile workbench that includes a built-in dust collector and tool drawer.

We will hold our monthly meetings in the KHCC's large multipurpose space, simply moving our demo lathe and audio/visual equipment down a hallway to the meeting room. This dramatically simplifies preparing for and cleaning up after each meeting. The KHCC's multipurpose space will eventually have built-in audio/visual capabilities, which will make it even easier to conduct our meetings.

Fulfilling a mission

The OVWG's Learning Center will be used for classes for both OVWG members and for the general community. It will also allow us to comfortably host one-day hands-on sessions with professional demonstrators. Special-interest groups, such as our active pyrography enthusiasts, will also use the Learning Center for demonstrations and meetings.

We currently have 260 members. Some have been turning for twenty years or more, but many have four years or less experience in turning. It is difficult to meet everyone's needs and interests with one big monthly demonstration, so we will also offer more tailored and focused demonstrations at the Learning Center for small groups, in between our normal monthly meetings. This will help us better fulfill our mission to expand awareness of woodturning and help members and those in the community build their skills in this craft. ■

For more, visit ovwg.org.

—KD Kendall

Tips

Replacement respirator hose

When the hose on my Triton powered respirator needed to be replaced, I used a length of central vac hose (mine is Vacuflo brand). I used the connector from the original hose and a hose clamp to attach the replacement. If the fit is a little loose, wrap a few turns of electrical tape around the adapter end before inserting it into the hose. I have found the central vac hose to be more durable than the original.

—James Andersen, Wisconsin

Inexpensive lathe frame

Like many woodturning clubs, my chapter, Inland Northwest Woodturners, operated for years with inadequate protection for the viewing audience during demonstrations. Sitting in front of a poorly protected lathe to see and hear better has its risks. We wanted to build a suitable frame with a protective shield. The frame described by Deryl Duer in the June 2012 issue of *American Woodturner* (vol 27, no 3, page 18), with extruded aluminum, would be ideal but was well beyond our budget. We accomplished a simpler, less expensive build using readily available fence components.

The frame is made of black-coated anodized 1⅜" (35mm) chain-link fence top rail poles and matching "T" connectors. We used a ⅜"- (10mm-) thick polycarbonate pane 3' × 4' (1m × 1.2m) for a shield, which was attached to the frame with 1" (25mm) right-angle aluminum.

We chose to build a tall frame, based on our available 12'- (3.7m-) high ceiling, though 7' to 8' (2m to 2.4m) total height would be sufficient. The entire cage can be built and torn down as needed to move to other venues. The frame itself, when completely assembled, is light enough to move forward or back, and side to side, around any lathe but is stout enough to stay in place and provide a steady mount for camcorders without vibration. The total cost for the entire frame/shield build was just under $500.

—Carl J. Bodenstein, Spokane, Washington

Dust hood mount

I finally came up with a satisfactory dust hood mount for my Powermatic lathe. Having gone through many variations, I like this design because it stays where I want it and it's easy to adjust. Although I made it for my Powermatic, you may be able to apply the general idea to your lathe.

The unit is mounted to the lathe by way of a turned, snugly fitting spindle, or dowel, in the lathe-guard bracket. A bolt with a custom-turned knob holds the spindle in whatever position needed. The other end of the mounting spindle is glued into a hole in the corner of a 2"- (5cm-) thick block measuring 3" × 4" (8cm × 10cm). This block needs to be beefy enough to support the weight of a long dowel, dust hood, and hose. Another, longer, dowel, 1½" (38mm) in diameter by 14" (36cm) long, is glued into a hole in the opposite corner of the block. A wooden bracket fastened to my dust hood slides along this dowel and can be locked in place with a threaded rod with a knob.

The assembly can be positioned just about any place near the piece being turned by rotating the spindle in the lathe-guard bracket, by rotating the hood around the dowel, and moving the hood along the dowel. ■

—Jim Brinkman, Texas

Share your turning ideas!

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

—Joshua Friend, Editor

Calendar of Events

August issue deadline: June 15

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

Canada
July 22–24, 2016, Saskatchewan Woodturning Symposium, Regina Trades and Skills Centre, Regina. Hosted by South Saskatchewan Woodturning Guild, featured demonstrators to include David Ellsworth, J. Paul Fennell, Jacques Vesery, Cam Merkle, Bernie Bober, and others. Vendors, auction, and instant gallery. For more, visit southsaskwoodturners.ca.

New Zealand
September 29–October 2, 2016, Woodturning New Zealand International Symposium, Kings College, Otahuhu, Auckland. Demonstrators to include John Beaver, Troy Grimwood, Chris Hooton, Steven Kennard, Guilio Marcolongo, Hugh Mill, Chris Pytlik, Pat and Karen Miller, Brendon Stemp, Curt Theobald, John Van Der Kolk, John Wessels, and Andi Wolfe. For more, visit sawg.org.nz or email events@sawg.org.nz.

Colorado
September 16–18, 2016, Rocky Mountain Woodturning Symposium, The Ranch Larimer County Fairgrounds, Loveland. Forty-eight demonstrations. Presenters to include Nick Cook, Michael Andersen, Ron Ainge, Les Brandt, David Ellsworth, Jay Shepard, Larry Fox, Milo Scott, and Keith Gotschall. Large vendor tradeshow, art auction, hands-on rotations, and instant gallery. For more, visit rmwoodturningsymposium.com.

September 22–25, 2016, 14th Biennial Ornamental Turners International Symposium, DoubleTree by Hilton Denver-Stapleton North, Denver. Ornamental turning topics to include rose engine, fixed tool, and guilloché. Demonstrations on modern and antique OT machines. Demonstrators to include Jean-Claude Charpignon, Fred Armbruster, Bill Ooms, David Lindow, Phil Poirier, David Wood-Heath, Peter Gerstal, and Jon Magill. For more, contact Brad Davis, braddavis@netins.net or visit ornamentalturners.org.

Georgia
May 14–August 7, 2016, *Turned and Sculpted: Wood Art from the Collection of Arthur and Jane Mason*, Georgia Museum of Art, Athens. Exhibition to include work by Ed, Phillip, and Matt Moulthrop, David Ellsworth, Mark and Mel Lindquist, Bob Stocksdale, and others. The Collectors of Wood Art will host discussion forums in conjunction with the exhibition June 7–9 in Athens and Atlanta. For full details, visit georgiamuseum.org or collectorsofwoodart.org.

September 15–17, 2017, Turning Southern Style Symposium, hosted by the Georgia Association of Woodturners, Dalton Convention Center, Dalton. Event to include top-notch demonstrators, a large group of vendors, and a great facility. For more, visit gawoodturner.org.

Illinois
July 22–24, 2016, Turn-On! Chicago 2016 Symposium, The Conference Center at the University of Saint Mary of the Lake, Mundelein. Demonstrators to include Nick Agar, Rex Burningham, Robin Costelle, Steven Hatcher, Clay Foster, and others. Hands-on penturning, tradeshow, meals, banquet, auction. For more, visit turnonchicago.com.

Maine
September 17, 2016, Maine Wood Carvers Show, Buker Community Center, Augusta. Includes a carving competition, vendor booths, tool and wood sales, and raffles. For more, contact Justina Hatch at justina_marie_1960@yahoo.com.

Massachusetts
March 12–June 12, 2016, *Visions from the Lathe: Selections from the Massachusetts South Shore Woodturners (SSW)*, Fuller Craft Museum, Brockton. More than thirty-five works from SSW. Workshops, demos, and events in conjunction with the exhibition. For more, visit fullercraft.org.

October 27–30, 2016, 5th Segmenting Symposium, Boston Marriott Quincy, Quincy. Demonstrators to include John Beaver, Bob Benke, Jerry Bennett, Bruce Berger, Andy Chen, Robin Costelle, Jim Rodgers, Malcolm Tibbetts, and others. Instant gallery, banquet, raffle, turning exchange, vendor area, and activities for partners. For more, visit segmentedwoodturners.org.

Minnesota
Ongoing exhibit: *Touch This!* At the AAW's Gallery of Wood Art, Saint Paul. Featuring fascinating facts about wood and woodturning, as well as pieces you can touch. For more, visit galleryofwoodart.org.

Montana
October 8, 9, 2016, Yellowstone Woodturners Symposium, Roaring 20's Auto Club, Billings. Featured demonstrator/instructor will be Keith Gotschall, demonstrating off-center platters, hollow forms, lidded boxes, and winged boxes. For more, visit yellowstoneturners.org or call Ron Velin at 406-679-0902.

North Carolina
July 16, 2016–January 16, 2017, *Shaping the Vessel: Mascoll + Samuel,* The Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture, Charlotte. An exhibition of turned work by John Mascoll and Avelino Samuel. For more, visit ganttcenter.org.

Pennsylvania
September 24, 25, 2016, Mid Atlantic Woodturning Symposium, Lancaster Marriott/ Convention Center, Lancaster. Demonstrations by Mike Mahoney, Al Stirt, Binh Pho, Cindy Drozda, Eric Lofstrom, Mark Sfirri, Dennis Fuge, and Kurt Hertzog. Vendor tradeshow, banquet, auction, and instant gallery. Visit mawts.com. Vendors contact Lsherman120@gmail.com or call 717-478-1845.

Tennessee
January 27, 28, 2017, Tennessee Association of Woodturners' 29th Annual Woodturning Symposium, Marriott Hotel, Franklin. Demonstrators to include Nick Agar, Cynthia Carden Gibson, Stephen Hatcher, and Frank Penta. Tradeshow, instant gallery, banquet, and auction. For more, visit tnwoodturners.org. For vendor booth information, contact voldad18@comcast.net.

Texas
August 26–28, 2016, 25th Anniversary of the Southwest Association of Turners (SWAT) Symposium, Waco Convention Center, Waco. Demonstrators to include Cindy Drozda, Mike Mahoney, Clay Foster, Stuart Batty, Mary Lacer, John Beaver, John Jordan, and Dick Sing. Also regional demonstrators, vendors, art gallery, hands-on area, lunches, banquet, and raffles. For more, visit swaturners.org.

Virginia
November 5, 6, 2016, Virginia Woodturning Symposium, presented by the Virginia Woodturners (a group of ten Virginia clubs), EXPOland, Fishersville. Featuring international and regional demonstrators. For more, visit virginiawoodturners.com.

Washington
July 23–27, 2016, 9th Annual Symposium & Workshops, the Woodturners of Olympia, Olympia High School, Olympia. All-day symposium with door prizes, lunch, and drawings, followed by four days of workshops with Michael Hosaluk and Bob Espen. For more, visit woodturnersofolympia.org/symposium-2016.html. ■

Call for Demonstrators AAW Symposium 2017

The AAW's 31st-Annual International Symposium will be held in Kansas City, Missouri, June 22–25, 2017. To apply to be a demonstrator, visit tiny.cc/CallsforEntry (case sensitive) between May 1 and August 1, 2016. For more information, call the AAW office in Saint Paul, 877-595-9094 or 651-484-9094, or email inquiries@woodturner.org.

– TURN A –
SHAWL RING AND PIN

Bob Rosand

Some time ago, a friend asked me to make some shawl rings and pins so she could give them as Christmas presents. I didn't know what a shawl ring was, but after a quick Internet search, I was up and running. A shawl ring and pin help to fasten a shawl or scarf in position, and there are many variations. I've even seen women use them in their hair.

The rings and pins that I make have a finished outside diameter of about 2½" to 2¾" (6cm to 7cm). The finished inside diameter of the ring is about 1½" (38mm), and they are about 3/16" (5mm) thick. The finished pins are about 4" (10cm) long, 3/16" in diameter, tapering to about ⅛" (3mm) at the tip. I have access to a lot of color wood, so many of the shawl rings and pins I have made are of that material, but any wood is fair game—burl, oak, ambrosia maple, walnut, etc. My preference is to make the rings using the endgrain of the wood (with the grain running ▸

Mount the ring blank

A custom holding jig made from plywood scrap is hollowed to later allow access for turning away the center of the shawl ring. The blank is mounted using double-sided tape and centered with the live center as a reference point.

parallel to the lathe bed) rather than using sidegrain. This way, I don't have to deal with issues of tearout.

Getting started

I have a dedicated jig for holding the rings during turning. The jig is simply a plywood scrap turned to a maximum diameter of 2¼" (6cm) and a minimum diameter of 1¾" (4cm), as shown in *Photo 1*. It is hollowed out so I will later have access to scrape the inner portion of the ring to round it over. The shawl ring is held in place for turning with double-sided tape.

You'll need a few tools to turn the rings and pins: a small roughing gouge, a ½" (13mm) scraper ground at a severe angle to allow undercutting, a ⅜" (10mm) spindle gouge, a square-nose scraper, and a small skew. You will also need to decide what kind of finish you want to use. I tend to use a clear finish such as lacquer with a satin sheen, which is fast and easy, but an oil finish is also acceptable.

Turn the outside edges

With a support block and tailstock pressure, turn the shawl ring to its final diameter, then round over the outside edges.

Turn the ring

I start with a rough disc 3" (8cm) square and about 5/16" (8mm) thick. To illustrate this article, I used ambrosia maple, a favorite of mine. I have a great source for this wood and it turns and sands nicely. Color wood also works great as well as bits of scrap burl. You might also consider gluing up pie-shaped wedges to form the disc to be turned. If you do glue up ring stock, make sure the wood is sufficiently dry. I've had some embarrassing failures with some of my earlier shawl rings—also known as splitting. The bottom of what will be the shawl ring needs to be sanded to about 400 grit prior to being mounted on the jig for turning. I use an old belt sander with various grits to accomplish this task.

Apply two-sided tape on the end of the jig and trim off the excess using the long point of a small skew (*Photo 1*). Then remove the protective coating from the tape, and adhere the disc blank on the jig, centering it as well as you can using the live center as a reference (*Photo 2*). Note: I have found that two-sided carpet tape does not work well for woodturning applications; I prefer to use a quality double-sided tape, available from most woodturning suppliers. For added support during the initial rough-turning, I like to use a scrap block and tailstock pressure (*Photo 3*). The two-sided tape holds very well but can take only so much abuse. I use a roughing gouge to turn the ring to about 2½" diameter. Using a spindle gouge, begin shaping the shawl ring by rounding over its outside edges (*Photo 4*).

At some point, you will have to remove the pressure block to finish turning the inside area of the ring. When you do, make sure your tools are sharp and your cuts are light. A catch or excessive pressure will push the disc out of position. Using the

Turn the inside edges



Remove the support block and tailstock so you can turn the center of the shawl ring. Use gentle cuts with sharp tools to avoid shifting the ring's position. A custom-ground scraper undercuts the ring and refines its shape.

spindle gouge, cut out the interior of the disc and then use a scraper to bring the interior to its final dimension (*Photos 5, 6*). At this point, I use the angled scraper to refine the interior shape of the shawl ring (*Photo 7*). Once I'm satisfied with the shape and thickness of the shawl ring, I sand it to 600 grit and remove it from the jig. Pry the ring off carefully because it is thin and can break. Slow steady pressure works the best (*Photo 8*).

With any luck, the two-sided tape will remain adhered to the jig, which should allow you to reverse the ring temporarily for light sanding. The underside is already sanded to 400 grit, so a light sanding is all that should be needed. Any tape residue can be removed with a little lacquer thinner.

Turn the pin

The pin is pretty easy to turn and is mostly accomplished with a roughing gouge, spindle gouge, and skew (*Photo 9*). I hold the pin material in pin jaws in my chuck and use the live center for support, but you could also mount the workpiece between centers. Shape the pin with the roughing gouge and round over the ends with the spindle gouge and/or skew. Sand to 600 grit and remove from the lathe. Use a small sanding disc held in the lathe to sand the ends of the shawl pin (*Photo 10*). Four hundred and 600 grit work well for this.

All that remains is to apply the finish of your choice. I like to spray with lacquer, sand lightly, and buff. ■

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Remove the workpiece

Gently pry off the turned shawl ring. Flip it over and remount it for light sanding on the reverse side.

Turn the pin


Turn the shawl pin to your desired shape. Sand the ends using a sanding disc mounted on your lathe.

Multiaxis Tablet Stand

Larry Sefton

The best paperweights have always been conversation starters that also keep stacks of papers in place. The subject of this article, a touchscreen tablet stand, will definitely start conversations, function as multi-dimensional paperweight, *and* support a tablet, digital reader, or smart phone at a variety of angles for hands-free reading.

Chance and need contributed to the birth of these tablet prop stands. I had been experimenting with off-center turning and left one of my pieces on the kitchen table instead of taking it out to my shop. The next day, while reading the morning newspaper on my tablet—you guessed it—I leaned the tablet against my experimental turning. The real "A-ha moment" happened when my wife came into the room and said, "What a great idea! I want three of them in red: one for my quilt studio, one for my desk, and one for *my* side of the kitchen table."

The beauty of these weighted tablet stands is that each one will finish at a different shape and/or size with a wide variety of multiaxis angles. It comprises two parts that are joined with a dowel and glue: a multiaxis top section and a hollowed and weighted base. They can be painted any color of the rainbow, have a natural wood finish, or be even further embellished with an infinite number of designs.

Considerations

I use a safety drive, which is essentially a dead center with either serrated or smooth contact surfaces, as shown in *Photo 1*. If you have a catch, the workpiece will stop as the drive continues to spin. The more tailstock pressure you apply, the greater the catch required to stop the wood. I never use a chuck or pronged drive for this kind of project.

Because off-center, or multiaxis, turning requires the intermittent cutting of air and wood, higher lathe speeds (within safe parameters) are your friend. Faster lathe speed equates to less time with the tool passing through air, which, in turn, causes less tool bounce and smoother cuts.

The process

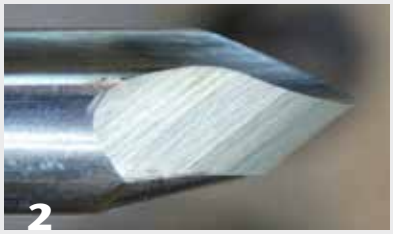
Note: For safety reasons I always use the safety cage guard on my lathe, a faceshield, and safety glasses. In these

Safety drive

1

A safety drive, with less bite into the wood than a spur drive, provides assurance in the case of a catch: the drive keeps spinning, while the wood is stopped by the cutting tool. Varying the tailstock pressure adjusts the amount of drive friction applied. Note the different axis points used for this off-center turning.

Better access



2

The author's spindle gouge with the heel ground away for better access into tight spaces.

process photos, the lathe is stopped and the guard lifted for easier viewing.

At first glance, you might think this tablet stand requires advanced woodturning skills. In reality, it is fairly straightforward and a lot of fun to make. All the turning is done between centers using a ½" (13mm) spindle gouge, with the gouge's heel removed in order to reach into the narrow areas (*Photo 2*).

Note that you will need two similarly sized blanks, one for the multiaxis top portion and one for the base (you will get two bases from one blank). I started with a round blank 4" (10cm) long and 3" (8cm) in diameter. Different blank sizes will allow for creativity and design opportunities.

To mount the blank for turning the first off-center "ledge," position the blank between centers with the safety drive center ⅜" (10mm) off center toward you and the revolving/live center ⅜" away from you.

Starting at the drive end of the blank to create the first V-cut, make a couple of slightly curved convex cuts (not straight) on one side, then a couple of cuts on the other side. Note that the position of the tool's flute at the end of the cut has been rotated 90 degrees from its open starting position (*Photos 3, 4*). I turned mine so the center is between 1" (25mm) and 1¼" (32mm) in diameter.

At this point, sand the turned surfaces lightly to remove any fuzz at the center of the cut. Cloth-backed abrasives typically work best for this type of sanding. In the process illustrated here, I did not sand, knowing that I would paint the piece.

Second and third axes

Adjust the axis of your workpiece for the second cut. In this example, the blank was shifted ⅜" off center in the opposite direction from its first position at both the drive and live center ends. This puts the turning on a new axis.

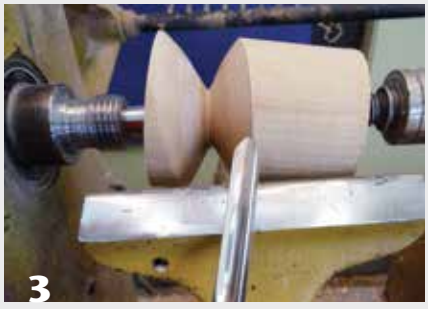
Cut your second V-cut and sand as desired (*Photo 5*).

Re-adjust your turning's axis position a third time to finish the tailstock end of your piece. In this example, I changed the axis point by another ⅜". Finish turning the tailstock end (*Photo 6*), making sure to leave enough wood to support ▸

JOURNAL ARCHIVE CONNECTION

For additional information on multiaxis turning, see Barbara Dill's *AW* article, "Multiaxis Spindle Turning: Further Exploration" (vol 26, no 6, page 32). AAW members can access all past journal articles online at woodturner.org.

Turn on first axis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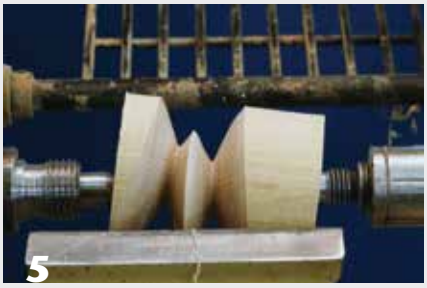
With the blank mounted off center, form the first of the V-cuts starting at the headstock end.

Turn on second and third axes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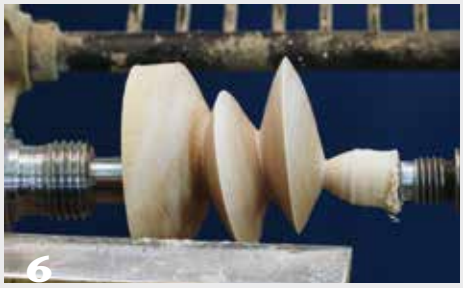
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7

Reposition the blank to a second set of axes and form another V-cut. Repeat this process a third time and complete the turning at both ends, leaving stubs that will be removed later.

Trim and sand ends

Remove the end stubs with the piece off the lathe. If you are using a bandsaw, be sure the workpiece is held securely. Cutting round objects on the bandsaw without proper support is dangerous, as the piece could roll into the blade and out of control. Sand the ends smooth.

the turning while finishing at the drive end.

I could have cut the blank shorter. However, you may want thicker levels, different angles, and/or a taller tablet stand. For those into math and geometry, the shorter the blank, the less offset needed. In other words, shorter blanks create the opportunity for more extreme angles. There is room here for lots of experimentation with different axis points.

You may or may not choose to reposition the drive center before finishing the headstock end of your turning. In this case, I moved the piece about ¼" off center before finishing the turning (*Photo 7*).

Now is the time to round any sharp edges. The outer angle edges are typically sharp enough to cut skin, so hand sand carefully to get the feel you want.

Trim and sand the ends

Remove the turning from the lathe and cut off the waste ends using your bandsaw or a handsaw. If using a bandsaw, make sure to use a fine-tooth blade and support/secure the turning, as shown in *Photo 8*. With a soft sanding pad mounted in a drill chuck on your lathe, remove any remaining stub, being careful to keep the original shape (*Photo 9*). I used 150-grit abrasive, as this tablet stand would be painted.

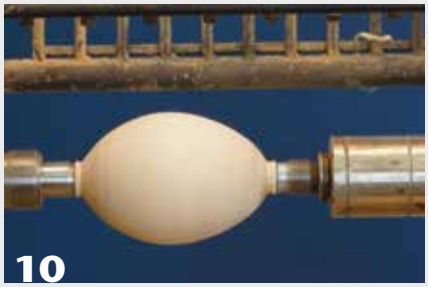
Turn the base

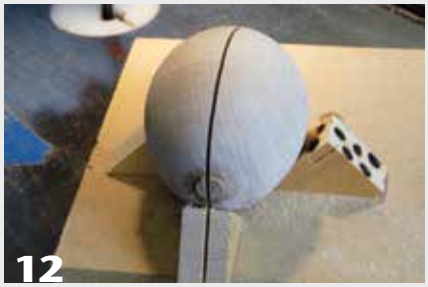
Now it is time to make the base (again, one blank yields two bases). I started with a base blank similar in size to the first part of the turning (about 4" long and 3" in diameter). Turn the blank into an oval (*Photo 10*), but there is no need to be overly precise with the shape. Sand and add details as desired.

Cut off the ends using a bandsaw, a holding sled, and a fine-tooth saw blade (*Photo 11*). The ends can also be removed using a small handsaw or power sanded off.

Slice the oval turning in half to create the necessary flat bottom surface for your base. In order to safely and accurately slice the oval in half, make a sacrificial scrap-wood sled using wood wedges hot-melt glued to a board. The hard-to-hold oval base should be supported by the wood wedges, while just barely touching the bottom board. Depending on how you plan to finish/embellish your tablet stand, orient the wood grain accordingly. Attach the oval base to the wood wedges using hot-melt glue; this holds the oval turning steady during the cutting process. Cut the oval turning and sacrificial sled in half. Remove the two halves from the sled (*Photo 12*).

Turn and cut the base





Turn the second blank into an oval. Trim the ends and cut the base in half, holding the workpiece securely during cutting, here with hot-melt glue in a custom jig. (This yields two bases.)

Join the two sections

The next step is to join the base to the multiaxis top section. Hold them together to get a feel for the angle and location of the holes that will need to be drilled for attaching them together. Experiment with different angles and positions.

Drill a ⅜" (10mm) hole 1" deep at your desired angle into the bottom end of the top section, making sure to drill into the center of your lowest V-cut. Chamfer the drilled hole so the top section will nest onto the base (*Photos 13, 14*).

Dry fit a ⅜" dowel 2" (5cm) long into the just-drilled hole. Using the top section with the dry-fit dowel in place, double-check the angle and determine the location of the hole to be drilled in the base. Drill a ⅜" hole ½" deep into the top of the oval base (*Photo 15*). This hole serves two purposes—as a place for the connecting dowel pin during final assembly and as a wall-thickness indicator when hollowing the bottom.

Glue the dowel pin into the multiaxis top section only and set aside. I used five-minute epoxy because I feel it fills voids more effectively.

Hollow the base

To add stability to the tablet stand, I hollowed out the base section and added weight. There are many ways to do this, but I used a mini-grinder with the workpiece held securely in a carving jig with hot-melt glue. When using a grinder, wear eye protection and cut-resistant gloves. As you hollow, stop when you see your pre-drilled hole. The wall thickness and interior finish are not overly critical because this carved-out surface will be filled and not seen (*Photos 16, 17*).

Remove the hollowed base from your carving jig. Cut off and/or scrape away excess hot-melt glue. Using a soft sanding pad mounted on ▶

Drill and chamfer top section


13


14

After experimenting with different positions of top on base, determine the location of holes for a connecting dowel pin. Drill a hole into the bottom of the multiaxis top section; then form a chamfer around the hole so the parts will nest together better.

Drill base


15

Drill a hole in the base to accept the connecting dowel pin. Be sure the piece is held securely for safe drilling. Note the author's holding buttons, which help prevent the piece from spinning.

Hollow the base


16


17

Hold the base securely for safe hollowing. Gluing it to a carving jig using hot-melt glue provides a good temporary solution. The author hollowed this base using a handheld mini-grinder.

Glue top to base


18

Glue the two sections together using a dowel to reinforce the joint.

your lathe, sand the outside surface of the base, bringing the ends to finished shape.

Final steps

Test fit the hollowed base and top section, making sure the assembly balances well and looks good. Mark the finished length of the dowel pin, unassembled, and trim it to length. Then, using epoxy, glue the multiaxis top into the base (*Photo 18*).

You are now ready to add the weight. Using epoxy glue that is just starting to set, add a dam around the inside surface of the connecting dowel pin to prevent possible leaking of resin during the weight-filling process. If you are using a particularly porous wood, planning a natural wood finish, or going for a thin wall thickness, you may need to first use a wood sealer on the outside of your turning to prevent resin bleed-through.

Create a way to hold the assembly upside down and level so the hollowed area can be filled. I poured uncooked rice into a plastic container and nestled the assembled unit headfirst into the rice. I also used a bubble level to guide me in adjusting the base so it was perfectly level.

There are many casting resins that can be used to fill the base. I used Smooth-Cast® 326 Resin by Smooth-On, Inc., which sells mold-making supplies (smooth-on.com). Mix the resin per the manufacturer's instructions and add a small amount into the base around the dowel pin. Add your weights almost to the rim (I used reclaimed shot, but you could also use nuts and bolts, fishing weights, or other small, heavy items). Fill in around the weights with additional resin so it reaches the upper edge of the base's rim (*Photos 19, 20*). When the resin has dried fully hard, sand the bottom smooth.

Up to this point, you have been exercising your left-brain analytical skills. Now it is time to shift gears and let your right brain's creativity shine by using the completed stand as a canvas for embellishment. Lean your tablet or digital reader against your new stand for easy, hands-free reading. ■

Add weight to base

19

20

With the entire stand held level in a container of uncooked rice, partially fill the hollowed base with resin. Then add weight (in this case, reclaimed shot) and pour more resin until the cavity is filled to the rim.

Larry Sefton has worked as an engineering manager in manufacturing and recently celebrated twenty-three years as a risk control consultant with Liberty Mutual Insurance Company. Larry is a member of the AAW and a member and former president of the Mid-South Woodturners Guild (Tennessee). He blogs at sandboxtime.blogspot.com and can be reached at larry@sefton.info

CUSTOMIZED CENTER PUNCH

Joe Larese

It is common practice to mark and indent the center points at each end of a workpiece prior to mounting it between centers. I often use an automatic, or spring-loaded, center punch to do this. You simply align the point of the punch on your center mark and push down on the tool to activate it. However, the tool's small-diameter barrel makes it difficult and uncomfortable to use. My solution was a custom-turned knob that nestles in my palm and makes it easy to apply the necessary pressure.

I purchased my center punch inexpensively from a national tool importer. It has a hardened point and a sectioned brass body. Here's how you can turn a comfortable wooden knob for this tool.

Drill and shape

Mount a blank 2½" (6cm) in diameter and 3½" (9cm) long in a four-jaw chuck and turn it round. Face off the front and drill a hole matching the diameter of the punch's barrel. The diameter of my punch is just less than ½" (13mm), so I used a 31/64" (12mm) twist drill bit for a tight fit. If you use a ½" bit and have a looser fit, opt for a gap-filling glue like epoxy or thick CA glue. The knurled brass of the barrel should allow for good glue adhesion. Drill the hole approximately 1" (25mm) deep (*Photo 1*).

Reduce the diameter around the hole to about ¾" (19mm), using a cone-shaped live center for support if you experience chatter. A ferrule could be added but is not necessary, as there is little lateral stress to the tool in this area. I found a cove shape is attractive and sufficient.

I use a spindle gouge to form a mushroom-top shape for the knob and a parting tool to clear material as my cuts progress (*Photo 2*). Continue to shape and sand the knob before parting it off.

Reverse-mount and finish

I discovered my center punch can be disassembled by unscrewing the end section. After removing this top portion, I was able to hold it in a large drill chuck mounted in the headstock (*Photo 3*). I was then able to press-fit the turned knob onto this makeshift mandrel for final sanding and finishing (*Photos 4, 5*). Alternatively, you could turn a spigot to the diameter of the drilled hole to remount the knob for final turning.

The combination of fine wood and brass elevates an ordinary punch into a classic tool. I plan to make several more to give as gifts. ■

Joe Larese is a member of the Kaatskill Woodturners and the Nutmeg Woodturners League and is a turning instructor at the Brookfield Craft Center. He is a photojournalist by profession. His website is joelarese.com.

Drill and shape

Mount a turning blank, drill a hole that matches the punch diameter, then shape the knob using a spindle gouge.

Center punch as mandrel

After disassembling the brass punch, chuck its top section in a drill chuck and reverse-mount the knob onto it for final turning and sanding.

A LATHE-TURNED DRUM SET

Jeff Salter

Humans have been crafting drums since prehistoric times. Early drums were rudimentary, consisting of a membrane, usually animal skin, stretched over some sort of hollow shell. Originally, drum shells were carved out of logs. In the eighteenth century, drum builders began steam-bending thin plies of wood into cylindrical shells. By the nineteenth century, drum manufacturers such as Leedy, Ludwig, Rogers, and Gretsch were making modern drums a part of the fabric of our society. Now, after a fascinating two-year project, I'm proud to count myself as a member of this illustrious fraternity of drum builders.

I've been drumming for about as long as I've been woodworking, and since the earliest days, my friends have asked, "Why not make your own drum set?" In January 2013, everything I needed was in place to realize that goal, to create a drum set of solid wood shells cored from a single cherry log.

Roughing the drum shells

One of my woodturning buddies, Bert Olton, obtained a 24"- (61cm-) diameter cherry log and had it delivered to the Huron Valley Woodturners club in Ann Arbor, Michigan, where several club members helped mount a large piece onto Russ Clinard's large-capacity lathe. We mounted the heavy green blank on a large faceplate and engaged the tailstock for support. The blank was so large, we needed to use a chain saw to remove portions before it would swing freely on the lathe.

An Internet search produced a table listing dimensional shrinkage values for various species of wood. We turned a cylinder 19" (48cm) in diameter in the hopes of yielding an 18" (46cm) bass drum after drying and final machining. With the blank roughed to size (*Photo 1*), we cut a series of concentric cylinders using the McNaughton coring tool fitted with a straight blade. We quickly found the dangers of plunging the tool into endgrain by hand, when a massive catch ripped the cylinder from the tailstock and faceplate.

We remounted the cylinder, and I rigged up a machinist's slide to hold the slicing tool (*Photo 2*). This improvement provided greater control of the feed rate and cutting action by securely holding the cutter exactly on center. The cutter produced a spray of wet sawdust as it cut into the log. We found we needed to clear the kerf with compressed air to keep the blade from binding as it progressed deeper into the blank.

Each coring cut was made halfway through from one side before turning the piece around to cut from the other

Rough-turn the log

1

A freshly cut cherry log is trued on the lathe.

Cut the drum shells

The author's shopmade machinist's sled, securely holding a long, straight cutting tool, provides the needed stability and control for slicing deep into the log's endgrain.

After cutting halfway in, the log is reversed so the cut can be completed from the other end. Shims at the headstock end provide stability during the cut.

The author with his drum shells in progress. Notice how the grain travels vertically rather than horizontally, as on commercially made laminate drums.

side. For added safety, prior to making the final plunge cut on the outermost shell, I inserted shims into the kerf on the headstock side to support the shell as it broke free (*Photo 3*). We continued in this manner until all the shells were cut (*Photo 4*).

Re-turning

I took the shells home, recorded their diameter, and left them to air dry in the corner of the basement. Two years later, I set upon the task of machining the shells to their final diameter and wall thickness. I began with the smaller shells. They dried slightly out of round, so I mounted them to the lathe with a loose-fitting jam chuck so as to not distort their shape. I secured the shell to a wooden jam chuck using shims, a few corner blocks, and some hot-melt glue (*Photo 5*). I trued up the interior using a tool with a ring-type cutter and chip breaker to limit the depth of cut.

I cut the outside diameter to fit a commercially made Mylar® drumhead (*Photo 6*). Commercial drumheads are made in full inch increments and fit over drum shells ⅛" (3mm) smaller than the head size. With the outside cut to final dimension, I returned to the inside and cut the final wall ▸

Remount and finish-turn

After air drying, the out-of-round drum shells are remounted using a jam chuck. The outside and inside are turned true and reduced to the final wall thickness, 5/16".

True the outside surface

The author's shopmade jig, a specialized router table, holds the largest drum shells, which are too big for his lathe. To true the outside surface, the drum is rotated on an axle so that it passes over a router bit protruding upward.

thickness to 5/16" (8mm) and added a 45-degree bearing edge with a slight back cut where the drum head would seat (*Photo 7*). I sanded both the inside and outside before removing the drum from the lathe.

Router jigs

The 16" (41cm) floor tom and 18" bass drum were too large to mount to my lathe. So I constructed a couple of router setups to do the final machining. The setup for machining the exterior consisted of a sled with an axle set at the appropriate center height for each shell. Two plywood disks, cut to the final shell diameter, ride on the axle and are used to both clamp the shell in place and act as a sizing template (*Photo 8*). The shell was cut to a true cylinder by rotating it above a ½" (13mm) router bit and shifting the sled laterally with each revolution. This process continued until the shell diameter matched the template (*Photo 9*).

The setup for machining the interior consisted of a couple of angle iron rails and a cradle made up of four roller-skate wheels. The angle iron was positioned to guide the router laterally while the exterior of the shell rolled on the roller-skate wheels (*Photo 10*). I was careful to position the rails parallel to the rotational center of the shell to ensure the router would cut a uniform wall thickness as it tracked from one end to the other. With each rotation, I shifted the router laterally and cut a surface concentric to the exterior surface. I repeated this process, taking light cuts until I reached a final wall thickness of 5/16". The routing process left the surfaces quite rough, requiring several hours of sanding before I was happy with the surface quality.

True the inside surface

A router and rail system is used to true the inside of the largest drum shells and bring the wall to final thickness. The drum shell rotates on roller-skate wheels.

Trim and sand

To cut the shells to length, I used the table saw with the roller-skate cradle affixed to the top (*Photo 11*). I started the saw with the blade fully retracted below the table, then raised it up and rotated the shell atop the roller-skate wheels, being sure to hold the shell against the saw's fence. I then added a 45-degree bearing edge to the shells at the router table.

After final sanding, the shells were ready for finishing with instrument-grade lacquer, expertly applied by my friend Brian Lenehan. The shells received several sealing coats of lacquer prior to hand sanding and then another five finish coats, followed by more hand sanding and buffing to produce a high luster.

Drum hardware

I fitted each shell with twelve or sixteen drum lugs, depending on its size. I chose to apply arch-style lugs, which I purchased from Drum Foundry (drumfoundry.com). Using a circular template, I marked the position of the lug mounting holes over blue painter's tape (*Photo 12*). After I carefully drilled all the holes, it was time to put it all together. Assembling all those lugs took a long time, but the excitement of finishing the project inspired me.

All the other bits of hardware—drumheads, rims, mounting hardware, and stands—were purchased online at a cost similar to that of a brand new, high-end, commercially made drum set. So building your own set doesn't make economic sense, but the joy of creating your own instrument is priceless.

Performance

My kit comprises an 18" × 18" bass drum, 16" × 16" floor tom, 13" and 10" mounted toms, and a 13" × 4" snare. Ludwig isolation mounts suspend the mounted toms and allow them to resonate freely. The bass, raised up off the floor several inches, produces a surprising low punchy sound, despite its small size. The snare sound is crisp and snappy with lots of bright overtones. The 5/16" cherry shells vibrate harmonically when the head is struck. And because all the drums were fabricated from the same log, they seem to have a sonic affinity for one another. The drums actually sound better as an ensemble than they do individually.

The solid shells provide warmth, resonance, and a full-bodied sound that conventional laminate shells can't. Laminate-shell drums comprise several thin sheets of wood glued together and molded into a shell. Any imperfections and irregularities in the wood plies, coupled with the adhesive used to bind the plies together, limit their resonance. Solid shells, not inhibited in this way, lend themselves to a more organic sound, warm tone, and sensitivity that sounds good at any volume.

Admittedly, I am biased, so I brought the set to a nationally renowned drum shop in Naperville, Illinois, Maxwell Drums, for an expert opinion. Graciously, Steve Maxwell, Jr., agreed to give them a critique. "These babies really roar!" was his first comment. Steve played a variety of drum grooves, from jazz to "four on the floor" rock-n-roll. At one point, during a Latin Samba groove, he reached down and played against the side of the floor tom, producing a warm wood block sound. "Check that out!" he said. Finally, he turned to me and said, "Yeah, man, it's a cool kit—they really are fantastic."

What started as a lofty goal spurred on by friends through the years has led to the creation of a one-of-a-kind, state-of-the-art drum set that will live on as a family heirloom. Undoubtedly, the drums contain the spirit of the majestic cherry tree from which they came, but they also sing the names of all those who participated in their birth. No one singular skill was required for this project, but rather the talents and support of a community, for which I am grateful. ■

Jeff Salter, an optical engineer in Ann Arbor, Michigan, began woodworking in his father's shop at an early age and became an AAW member in 2006. Jeff teaches woodturning at club meetings and is the author of an instructional woodturning DVD, Spiraling Into Control. *For more, visit JeffsTurnedWood.com.*

Trim to length

The drum shell is trimmed to length at the table saw. A holding/positioning jig with roller-skate wheels, along with the saw's fence, allow for a controlled cut. The shell is rotated through the saw blade.

Mark for hardware

The drum shells are carefully marked and drilled for lugs and other hardware.

CONCEPTS FOR A WOODTURNER'S GUITAR

Bernie Hrytzak

Turned Guitar, 2015, Cedar, maple, rosewood, ebony, purchased guitar hardware, 40" × 14" × 5" (102cm × 36cm × 13cm)

My interest in turning a round musical instrument began with the *Turned for Use II* exhibition, which opened during the AAW Symposium in Richmond in 2008. After making a mandolin for that exhibit, I decided to create a round-bodied guitar.

My process involved turning two shallow bowl shapes with relatively straight sides and gluing them together to form the guitar's hollow body. Then I turned a neck and glued extra wood at its end so I could form a peghead. The trick to turning a guitar neck is in the gluing up of the blank, as you are making a split turning, with two neck pieces separated by a spacer. I contoured the end of the turned neck to fit on top of the guitar body, then glued the fingerboard and peghead veneer to the neck.

I used a store-bought fingerboard blank and guitar hardware, such as frets, tuning machines, nut, strings, adjustable bridge/saddle, and tailpiece. A good source for these items is Stewart-MacDonald (stewmac.com), where you can also find helpful design criteria such as scale lengths and fret-spacing calculations. Guitar making is a complex pursuit, and my intent here is not to provide complete, detailed plans, but rather to convey the general idea.

Planning

My first step was to establish the size of the guitar by cutting out mock-ups of cardboard and holding them in my lap to determine fit. Then I built a rough full-scale prototype assembled only with hot-melt glue. This provided a good visual aid in planning the angle of neck to body.

Once I had a plan in mind, I made a cross-sectional sketch to scale, showing the profile of the soundboard (top) and backboard (bottom), along with the correct placement and angle of the neck (*Figure 1*). Working from this sketch, I made outside profile gauges from stiff cardboard that would later help me achieve the shape I wanted at the lathe.

The design

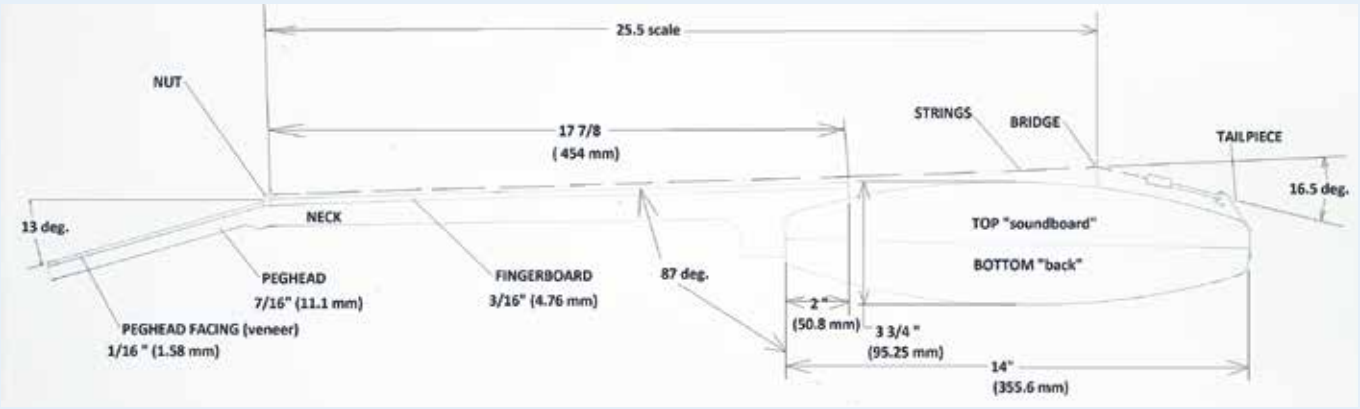


Figure 1. A cross sectional sketch is invaluable in visualizing the concept.

Soundboard, or top

The preferred wood for soundboards is Sitka spruce, for its favorable tonal quality, but cedar is an acceptable second choice, and that is what I used. I selected the wood by carefully checking the growth rings to make sure there were at least ten rings per inch and that there were no irregular rings. I planned on a final diameter of about 14" (36cm) and therefore jointed the edges on two pieces roughly 15" (38cm) inches long and 7½" (19cm) wide and glued them so the growth rings formed an "A," as shown in *Photo 1*. This is an important consideration for strength, as the soundboard has to resist the force of the string tension. I marked the glued-up top blank and cut it round on the bandsaw, then drilled a hole at the center on the inside surface for mounting it on a screw chuck for turning. I turned the top contour, using a profile gauge as a guide (*Photo 2*).

The thickness of the soundboard varies across its diameter to help it vibrate (and resonate sound) when the strings are plucked or strummed. This variation is achieved by turning the inside to different thicknesses, as indicated in *Figure 2*. In order to achieve these thicknesses precisely, I used a drill press to drill depth holes at 1" (25mm) increments from the center. The drill press table was useful for holding the soundboard so that the holes were drilled perpendicular to the tangent. Note that the thicknesses indicated in *Figure 2* are the minimum values required to avoid compromising strength.

With the soundboard reverse-mounted on a vacuum chuck, I hollowed the soundboard to a depth of about ½" (13mm) to make room for working on the interlocking joint. Since I left more wood at the center, vibration was reduced while I worked on the joint, which is at the outside edge.

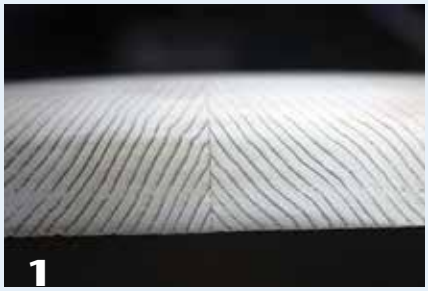
In order to secure the soundboard to the backboard, the joint details must be accurate in depth and diameter to provide proper engagement and sufficient glue-joint strength. The shape of this joint can be seen in *Figure 2*.

I then proceeded to turn the top thickness to the required profile by using the depth holes as a guide. I left the holes barely visible and removed them in the final sanding process (*Photo 3*).

Backboard, or bottom

I prefer a hardwood such as maple for its strength for the backboard, which I shaped on the lathe in a similar manner ▸

Glue and turn the body



The alignment of the growth rings is critical for the strength of the soundboard.

I used profile gauges made of cardboard to get the soundboard and backboard profiles correct during turning.

Varying wall thickness

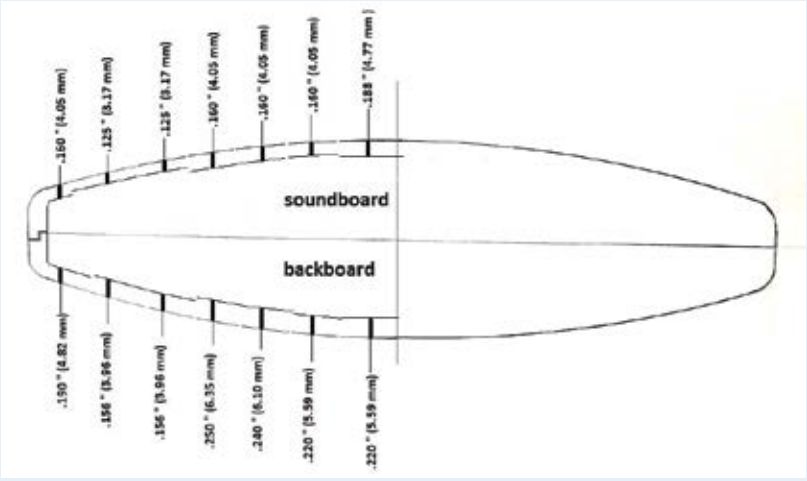


Figure 2. Intentional variations in the thickness of the soundboard and backboard improve the wood's ability to resonate sound.

Predrilled depth holes aid in achieving thickness variations.

Backboard

Reinforcing blocks are glued in position in the backboard to provide strength to the neck and tailpiece areas.

Soundboard

Cardboard f-hole templates provide a quick and accurate way of positioning the holes on the soundboard.

Inside the soundboard, with f-shaped sound holes, reinforcing blocks, and tuning bars that also act as bracing.

as the soundboard. While forming the interlocking joint that would mate with the soundboard, I tested the fit numerous times to ensure a good fit with no gaps. Once the correct profile was established and before removing the backboard from the lathe, I mated the soundboard with light tailstock support (using foam to prevent marking) and sanded the outside profile at the junction to ensure a flush joint.

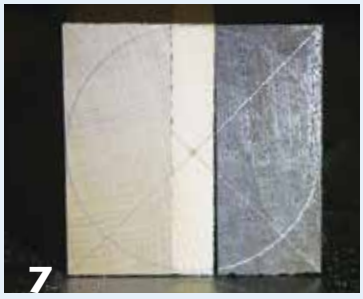
To achieve a strong assembly with the neck and tailpiece mounting points, I added reinforcing blocks inside the soundboard and backboard. These were made of maple and were contoured to fit the inside shapes of the corresponding parts. They were sized in thickness so that when the soundboard and backboard were glued together, the blocks would have a surface that would be glued as well, adding to the strength (*Photo 4*).

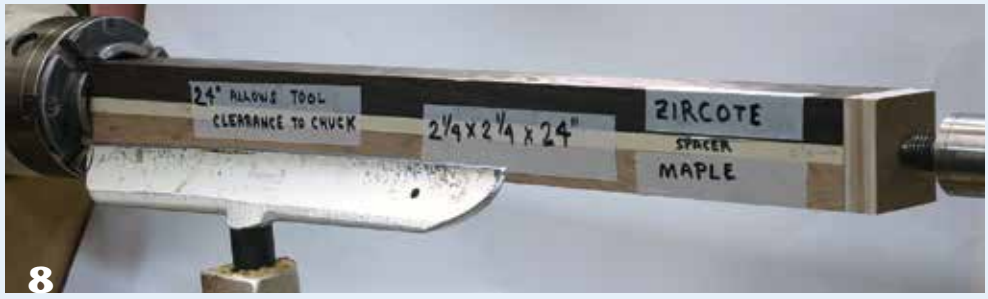
Sound holes and tuning

I decided to use f-shaped sound holes, and the design required them to be sufficiently away from the bridge so strength would not be compromised. The size of the holes must be sufficient to allow the sound to get out but not so large that the acoustic effect of the chamber is lost.

Once I determined the size of the sound holes, I created cardboard patterns and traced them on top of the soundboard. Then I drilled small holes to transfer the location to the inside of the soundboard. I reinforced the immediate area of the sound holes on the inside with wood glue and bandage gauze. Holes were then

Turn the neck





The neck blank is a split turning that comprises stock for two necks plus a spacer between them, resulting in necks shallower than a half circle. A plywood waste block at the tailstock end prevents the live center from splitting the assemblage, glued only near the ends.

drilled to the inside at the extreme ends of the f-holes using a Forstner bit. Using the position of these holes, I used the templates to transfer the entire pattern to the inside. The remaining parts of the f-holes were opened up using a scroll saw with a very fine blade (*Photos 5, 6*).

An acoustic instrument sounds better if the soundboard is "tuned." To do this, I borrowed a concept used in the making of mandolins and glued wooden tuning bars inside the soundboard. These bars, which also help to strengthen the top, were profiled to fit the inside contour and glued in a splayed shape, being narrower at the tailpiece, as shown in *Photo 6*.

The method for tuning is to tap the soundboard gently with a wooden hammer, listen to the note produced, and remove tuning-bar material until the correct note is attained. I had to remove quite a bit of material at first but eventually had to fine tune carefully, as small changes make big differences in notes when you get close to the target. Both sides of the soundboard were tuned, the left side (as viewed from the peghead) to B-flat (treble) and the right side, to A-flat (bass). Tuning the soundboard in this way creates more pronounced sound characteristics.

Body assembly

I sanded the inside edges of the f-holes after the tuning was complete, then dry-fitted the soundboard and backboard to confirm a good glue joint. The insides of the soundboard and backboard were then sealed with shellac, followed by several coats of wipe-on polyurethane. I then sealed the outside edges near the glue joint with shellac so any glue squeeze-out would not interfere with the subsequent finish. I applied glue to the mating surfaces, aligned them, and applied light pressure using clamps with foam padding to protect the wood surfaces.

Turning the neck

The next step was to construct and turn the neck. For this guitar, I decided on a scale of 25½" (64.8cm). This scale represents the distance from saddle to nut and predetermines the fret spacing and length of the fingerboard—in this case, 17⅞" (45cm). Adding length for the peghead and an extra 1¾" (4cm) for clearance near the chuck, I started with a neck blank that was 24" (61cm) long.

The width of the blank had to be large enough so I could turn the neck down to 1⅝" (41mm) at the nut end and 2⅛" (54mm) at the soundboard end. This meant starting with a blank 2¼" (6cm) square.

To prepare the neck blank, I glued two pieces of hardwood with a ⅜" (10mm) softwood spacer between them so that, when turned, the neck's profile is not quite half a circle (*Photo 7*). This process yields two guitar necks. Using a ⅜" spacer meant each of the two neck pieces would have to be 15⁄16" (24mm) thick. These pieces were glued at the ends only, with a plywood square added at the tailstock end to prevent the live center point from splitting the blanks apart (*Photo 8*). The waste areas could be cut off after turning to separate the parts.

I turned the necks to the required taper, noting the necessary widths at each end (*Photo 9*). I sanded the round portion while the workpiece was still on the lathe, and the flat surface off the lathe, after separating the assemblage.

Shaping the peghead

My plan called for the peghead to be angled 13 degrees from the neck, as shown in *Figure 1*. To ensure there would be sufficient material to achieve this shape, I had to glue extra wood, staggered, to the underside of the end of the turned neck. *Photo 10* shows this glue-up, along with side pieces positioned at the 13-degree back angle. These side strips acted as a cutting guide, as shown in *Photos 11 and 12*, but were also needed to make the peghead wide enough.

After verifying the peghead thickness required to accommodate the tuning machines I had bought and allowing for 1⁄16" (2mm) rosewood facing, I cut the peghead on the bandsaw to a thickness of 7⁄16" (11mm). I wanted a peghead with flowing lines, so I laid out the tuning-machine footprint on paper and designed a shape that would work within the constraints of tuning-knob accessibility (*Photo 13*). After cutting the peghead to shape and sanding the edges, I applied thin strips of ebony to the peghead's sides, using clamp blocks that matched the curves to ensure proper gluing pressure. When the glue had set, I sanded the edges flush with the top and bottom of the peghead.

I cut rosewood veneer to match the top shape of the peghead, allowing excess for sanding flush. I also cut an access hole so I'd be able to tension the truss rod (*see sidebar*). I created a decorative cover to hide the adjustment nut and then glued and clamped the peghead veneer in the correct position and, later, sanded the edges even with the peghead. ▸

Add peghead material

10 Gluing material to the sides and bottom of the peghead achieves the required length and width.

Holes for the tuning machines were located by transferring the layout from the peghead template I had made earlier. I first drilled small holes all the way through; then I used the final-sized Forstner bit to start the hole from one side and then run all the way through from the other side to minimize tearout (*Photo 14*).

Fingerboard

I bought a rosewood fingerboard blank and ran it through the thickness planer to ensure parallelism and smooth surfaces. I also purchased acoustic-guitar fret stock and determined the fret spacing using a calculator made for that purpose (such as the one found at stewmac.com). Cutting the fret slots with a fret saw blade will ensure proper insertion and retention. Note that you can also purchase fingerboards pre-slotted according to your chosen scale.

If you are cutting your own fret slots, measure each fret location from the nut rather than from each other, to

Cut peghead

The side strips, glued at 13° from the neck line, act as a cutting guide.

Peghead layout and veneer

A template for locating holes for the tuning machines helps in determining the final shape of the peghead, whose rosewood veneer matches the fingerboard.

Optional Truss Rod

I decided to use a truss rod in the neck, an option sometimes not used in guitars with nylon strings. The tension of steel strings is more apt to bend a neck, and a truss rod can help straighten it. The truss rod is a slightly curved threaded rod embedded in a groove in the neck. If the neck warps or bends, applying tension to the rod will straighten the neck. You can purchase a truss rod and form the neck groove to accommodate it. I made my own out of ¼" (6mm) mild steel, put a bend in it, and threaded the end.

I cut a groove along the neck on the table saw with a dado blade. The truss rod hooks into a hole at the guitar-body end of the neck (*Photo a*) and lies in the groove. The threaded portion protrudes into the peghead, where clearance has to be provided for a nut and socket to tighten the rod if needed. A wood filler strip matching the curvature of the rod glued into the groove of the neck provides a solid backing for the rod to push against when tightened (*Photo b*).

A neck-embedded truss rod, here ready to be set in its groove, allows for straightening of a bent neck. The rod lies in a dado in the neck under the fingerboard. Plastic wrap prevents the rod from becoming glued in place.

A wood filler strip, here ready to be glued in, covers the truss rod and provides backing support during tensioning. A threaded portion of rod protrudes into the peghead for adjustment. A socket wrench confirms access to the rod's tensioning nut.

avoid a compounding of errors. Once all fret locations are marked and depth requirements established, I cut the slots on the table saw using a sled. Then I trimmed the fingerboard to fit the taper of the neck, allowing for a trim piece in a contrasting wood at the outer edges.

Abalone dots are often used to denote positions on a fingerboard. I placed one dot on the fifth, seventh, tenth, and fifteenth intervals and two dots on the twelfth interval. I used a Forstner bit to drill holes to a depth that would ensure the dots would be flush to the surface when installed.

Using a fret-cutting tool, I cut the frets to the width of the fingerboard plus the width of the trim pieces. Since the decorative strips were not slotted like the fingerboard, I had to notch the ends of the frets before installing them. I used a drill press jig to push each fret home. A light tapping with wood and a hammer was necessary for a few stubborn frets. After the frets were in position, I sanded their ends smooth for comfortable playing. It is critical that all the frets be at the same height to compose tones properly, so I used a height gauge to find high points and filed them down where necessary. I then glued the decorative strips to the exposed edges of the fingerboard.

With the truss rod installed, I glued the fingerboard assembly to the neck, ensuring proper position, using padded clamps. Light sanding of joints was required to ensure smooth playing.

Join neck to body

15

A shaped support block provides a strong neck-to-body union. To improve joint strength, the grain of the block is oriented at an angle and dowels extend to the guitar body's internal reinforcing blocks.

I glued the nut in place at the same time to ensure it was properly positioned.

Neck-to-body assembly

To anchor the neck to the body of the guitar at the correct angle, I formed a support block whose top surface was angled 3 degrees relative to the guitar's horizontal plane (*Photo 15*). I shaped the block for a close fit to the neck and body and glued it to the neck. The outside profile was contoured after it was mated with the neck. The next step was to glue the assembly to the body; I used dowels to add strength to the union.

Finishing

Once the assembly was completed, I drilled the mounting holes for the tailpiece and fitted the hardware. I adjusted the tailpiece height to achieve a 16.5-degree angle of the strings from the saddle to the tailpiece (called break angle). Too much break angle will add stress to the bridge and soundboard. Since the turned soundboard has a convex shape, I contoured the mating pads of the bridge for proper seating. Upon confirming a good fit, I removed the tailpiece and bridge and applied a finish to the guitar—several coats of tung oil on the fingerboard and a seal coat plus about thirty coats of lacquer on the body. After the lacquer cured for several months, I buffed the finish to its final sheen.

I then installed the hardware (*Photos 16–18*). I used a floating bridge/saddle, whose placement was determined by the scale I chose. For my guitar, the 25½" scale meant the saddle had to be 25½" from the nut. Accuracy with saddle placement and fret spacing is critical to playability and proper intonation.

There are many important factors in guitar construction; this article is not meant to cover them all in depth, but rather to offer the possibility of a legitimate guitar with lathe-turned parts. The sound characteristics of my guitar are different from typical acoustic guitars—the bass portion is less pronounced—but it does create a pleasant sound and is easy to play. ■

A retired automotive engineer, Bernie Hrytzak, from Chatham, Ontario, has been actively turning since 2005, when he joined the Thames Valley Woodturning Guild in London, Ontario, and the AAW. His turned work has been displayed in juried shows, art galleries, and museums.

Guitar hardware

16

17

18

Guitar hardware is added after finishing. From left: tailpiece, floating bridge/saddle, peghead with tuning machines, and bone nut, which was marked for string location, cut, and filed.

IN SEARCH OF BIG TREES

Mike Mahoney

The author measuring the national champion Western white pine, High Sierras.

When I demonstrate at woodturning clubs and symposia, I start with a short discussion about my lifestyle and show pictures of my work and interests. I explain that if I were not in my shop, you would find me in the forest exploring, bird watching, tracking animal prints, and identifying plants and trees. This last endeavor led me to another hobby—"hunting" big trees. As a lifetime woodturner, I have always appreciated wood for its incredible variety and beautiful character. Fortunately, I never had to take trees down for use in my woodturning business since I get all my wood from urban landfills. So people are often surprised when I reveal that I don't hunt big trees to cut them down, but to record their size.

When I was growing up, my family had a very remote cabin in the High Sierras, where I frequently explored nature. My parents must have felt I was safe when I set off early in the morning to go fishing in remote lakes many miles from our cabin. When I go back there now, I am amazed I had such freedom as a child. But that freedom led me to become familiar at an early age with the variety of trees and plants growing in the forest. It did not hurt that my parents and siblings where all naturalists.

Stumbling onto a champion

On one excursion when I was young, I remember sliding down a very steep incline and stumbling onto two massive pine trees. They seemed out of place with their enormous girth. No other trees in the area looked like these. Many years later, I was hiking the area with my sister Darcie, who is a tree biologist, and we decided to revisit those trees. This was actually a whole day's hike, something I never prepared for as a kid. I never even kept water with me, just my fishing pole and trusty dog, Bear. When we made it to the spot, sure enough, there were the two massive trees, which turned out to be Western white pines. My sister had brought devices to scale, or measure the trees. We measured the girth four-and-a-half feet up from the ground; then we measured the average spread of the branches. We had an instrument called a clinometer that measured the height of the tree. She explained that all these measurements combined would give the tree a total number of points, which we would compare to

In the backcountry near Kirkwood, California, with a large juniper.
Photo: Jim Knight

The national champion California black walnut, Fairplay, California.

data collected by the American Forest Foundation (AFF).

Keeping track of plants and trees is simply part of good stewardship of our natural resources and helps with forest sustainability. AFF is dedicated to this mission, and I quickly became a member.

On the Foundation's website (forestfoundation.org), you can find a list of the largest trees in North America. The largest tree of a given species is known as a champion. The pair of Western white pines I had first stumbled upon as a child were not as big as the national champion on record, which turned out to be nearby.

Through AFF, I secured the coordinates of the national champion Western white pine and set out for a hike in an incredibly remote area of the El Dorado National Forest near Lake Tahoe, California. My wife Jenni and I spent the day scouring the area for this tree and wondered how someone had been there before since there were no trails. We found many large candidates but none that matched the national champion, except one tree that had long ago died and been removed by an avalanche.

Dejected, I returned home and did more research. I contacted the gentleman who nominated the tree in the 1970s. He affirmed its location, noting the tree was in bad health when he found it, so it could have died since then. I went back to the area to make another survey without any luck. I contacted AFF and explained that the national champion for Western white pine was no longer alive. They suggested I nominate a known tree that was alive, and that's how I became the keeper of the largest known Western white pine. I declared its location for others to measure to check my accuracy and to explore for even larger trees of that variety.

A unique pastime

This new hobby fit nicely with my other interests and I soon set out to find trees of other varieties. I explored the Intermountain West in Utah and Nevada looking for limber, bristlecone, and white bark pines. I also have looked for a variety of firs, spruce, junipers, and cottonwoods. In California, I have searched for lodgepole, foxtail pines, walnut, and many varieties of oaks. I nominated the largest cottonwood and limber pine.

As you might imagine, my journeys have brought me face to face with many other natural wonders. Once, a 400-lb black bear appeared behind me but was more intent on getting out of the rain than spending time with me. I have also encountered mountain lions. In one instance, an immense cat jumped onto the trail ahead to announce its presence. This encounter made me think twice about exploring the forests alone, but I still enjoy it, just as I did as a young boy. ■

Mike Mahoney is a production woodturner specializing in salad bowls, utility items, and burial urns. He lives in rural Northern California on a farm with his wife, Jenni. For more, visit bowlmakerinc.com.

A large redwood tree at Calaveras Big Trees State Park, California.

TURNING WOOD: It Does Grow on Trees

Jim Finley

All woodturners, whether they realize it or not, have direct connections to forests, woodlands, and trees. How often, though, do we think about our role as woodland stewards? A woodland steward recognizes the need for a forward-looking relationship with the land generally and forests in particular to ensure those who follow have the same options we enjoy today. *What are we doing to conserve and sustain forest or wood resources?*

Certification Programs

The following programs provide insights into global efforts to sustain forests and their values.

Forest Stewardship Council (fsc.org)
Promotes environmentally sound, socially beneficial, and economically prosperous management of the world's forests. Provides FSC certification using a set of principles and criteria.

Rainforest Alliance (rainforest-alliance.org)
Works to conserve biodiversity and ensure sustainable livelihoods by transforming land-use practices, business practices, and consumer behavior.

Sustainable Forestry Initiative (sfiprogram.org)
Promotes sustainable forest management by overseeing the internationally recognized SFI® certification. SFI on-product labels identify certified sourcing and chain-of-custody claims to help consumers make responsible purchasing decisions.

GreenWood (greenwoodglobal.org)
Trains artisans to make high-quality wood products, adding value to forest resources and creating incentives to protect biodiversity; fosters self-sufficiency by promoting sustainable forest management, the use of lesser-known species, inspired designs, skilled hand-tool production, and access to markets.

Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (pefc.org)
Promotes sustainable forest management through independent third-party certification.

The challenges to forest sustainability are large and growing and include social, ecological, and economic concerns.

Social impacts

Across the world, access to forests is changing, and concerns about how we use and exploit land are rising as populations grow, climate changes, and social unrest rises. In the developed world, access to food, fuel, and water is a given. In third-world and developing countries, access to these daily needs is sometimes difficult. Land for agriculture, water for drinking and irrigation, and forests for fuel and charcoal are points of community and regional conflict.
In some parts of Africa, Asia, and South America, land and forest ownership patterns are not well defined. People on the move use and take resources. There are real concerns about how to sustain ecological systems under conditions of social unrest.

International trade agreements, such as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), seek to protect threatened natural resources. When wood arrives at our lathes from distant lands, we should ask, *Has it been sustainably harvested? Was it protected under a convention that restricts its harvest and use?* We logically assume those who supply our wood are aware of restrictions and follow the rules, but we should consider, *What is the impact on extralocal forests and people?*

It is not uncommon to hear about forest clearing in faraway places, often framed as illegal logging, or forest clearing for agriculture, pasturing, or energy production (think palm oil). Illegally harvested timber, just like illegally harvested ivory, takes away local resources and creates social unrest and power struggles—haves and have nots. Without market controls to protect resources, it is difficult to maintain stable ecological systems that provide local wood for cooking, stabilize soils, and ensure clean water and viable plant and animal communities.

Some tree species, although not protected by CITES, are rare or require special care to ensure they regenerate successfully. In North America, forest ownership is clearly defined and somewhat respected; elsewhere, ownership patterns are much different and community or public ownership is easily and wantonly violated. To address ownership and sustainable harvesting concerns and to ensure local owners and dependent peoples and communities are considered in resource use and extraction decisions, there are evolving third-party certification programs designed to support the use of science-based forest management (*see sidebar*).

Ecological concerns often tie directly to social issues. Consider that forests are complex systems, yet those in the developed world might be perceived as less complex and better understood. Northern forests have long been studied by the scientific community, and while we may never fully understand their complexity, we understand them better than those of the south.

Globalization

Globalization has improved many aspects of our lives, but what has it done to forests? Additions to and removals from ecosystems are difficult to track and understand. The movement of exotic species, along with insects, diseases, and fungi, continues to change forests. Before long, North American forests will have lost their ash species because of the emerald ash borer, introduced from Asia. American chestnut and American elm have met similar fates. The Asian long-horned beetle threatens maple and birch, and thousand-canker disease threatens black walnut—and the list continues to grow.

Moving illegal or uninspected wood can lead to additional threats and losses.

So it is essential we learn and obey laws about transporting wood across state lines as well as international borders. An important resource on this topic is dontmovefirewood.org.

Globalization of our economy is a double-edged sword. Many peoples and economies benefit from the exchange of goods, but we are learning there are externalities. Parts shipped on wooden pallets from one continent to another have had stowaways. We have imported plants, vegetables, animals, and wood that have brought a host of new species to our shores. Federal and state agencies hire inspectors who work hard to keep these threats from affecting our landscape. In every state, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has offices of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). Visit aphis.usda.gov for more.

Catastrophic fires are consuming forests as some parts of the globe warm and become drier. Australia, a source of some spectacular woods, has seen several years of extraordinary fires. The American west, damaged by unprecedented pine beetle outbreaks and dry-tinder conditions, is seemingly always ablaze. As global consumers, we must consider our role in and commitment to maintaining healthy forests. APHIS can clarify existing or pending restrictions on moving wood and can help with CITES-related questions. Personally, I found this agency very helpful in answering questions when I was tasked with moving wood into and out of Pittsburgh for the 2015 AAW Symposium.

Economics

Economic influences also underpin our relationship to forests, as the supply-and-demand chain affects decisions relative to social and ecological values. Common species that are easy to grow and find yield lower prices. Demand for less-common species or those with unique characteristics brings higher prices. In the recent past, demand for redwood burl has led to the poaching of relatively rare woods from public and private lands in the western U.S. Some woods are not well distributed across their ranges and, in some places, are scarce or there is inadequate information about existing supplies.

A cursory review of a given species, such as African blackwood, results in contradictory information about its trade globally. Some think it should be listed by CITES, while others believe it is not a threatened species. We are all familiar with the movement of ivory. Until recently, in some places it was legal to harvest; in other places, it was protected. Thus far, it has not been possible to control its trade. A responsible consumer understands the need to exercise care in using and moving scarce resources and considers viable alternatives.

Attaining wood

Although some turners are forced to purchase stock due to their location or other specific needs, many acquire found wood at no cost. Finding the right species sometimes involves serendipity, but it is possible with connections to community arborists and their "bone piles," neighbors with yard removals, storm damage cleanup, and logging residue. Woodturners know many of these tricks, have built contacts, and prowl likely places for the next bowl or spindle in the rough.

Buying wood, I think, is akin to purchasing food or cars in the sense that we may not know much about it, where it came from, or its environmental cost. Perhaps the biggest challenge in purchasing wood responsibly is knowing just what you are buying. With Internet sales, often all you have is a photo, price, and shipping costs. I recently read an advertisement for an exotic wood from Africa, and the selling point was that the species is seldom available in the sizes offered, suggesting customers should respond quickly because they may not have access to such wood in the future. *Should we be concerned? What is the cost to a distant ecosystem or community? Do we really need to harvest these trees?* The questions are many.

Regardless of whether you find your wood or buy it, a steward will think about future supply. Woodturning is a wonderful hobby and business that uses a natural resource that ties us to the land. If we are to ensure its availability into the future, we should look for opportunities to demonstrate our care for trees and forests. ■

Jim Finley is the Pennsylvania Extension Forester, Ibberson Professor of Forest Resources, and the Director of the Center for Private Forests at Penn State. He conducts research and extension education programs on sustainable forest resource management, focusing on private forestland. Jim and his wife Linda own and manage 280 acres of woodlands in Pennsylvania. His turning experience dates back to the 1970s, when he turned for an antique restoration shop. Jim is a founding member of the Nittany Valley Woodturners in State College, Pennsylvania.

AAW's Safety Resources
AAW members have access to safety resources, including the free digital download of *Safety for Woodturners*, which covers safe chainsaw operation among other topics. Visit tiny.cc/WTSafety.

Harvesting Wood

Wood gathering is dangerous work. For the most part, what you find is big and heavy. To move it or to prepare it for turning, you need powerful tools such as a chainsaw. Have you had chainsaw safety training? Do you use safety equipment? Every time you use a chainsaw, you should have safety footwear, helmet and hearing protection, ballistic chaps, gloves, and skills. Recently, while I was cutting trees for a charity, someone remarked, "You have more invested in safety equipment than I have in my saw." Safety does not just happen—you have to plan for it with the right equipment and awareness.

The author harvesting wood for turning. Note the safety gear and log stand.

Turned and Sculpted:

Wood Art from the Collection of Arthur and Jane Mason

Betty J. Scarpino

The significance of Jane and Arthur Mason's gift of thirty-two woodturnings to the Georgia Museum of Art extends well beyond the artworks themselves. This collecting couple's support for the field of turned-wood art is wide-ranging, and already, it reverberates. Longtime champions of turned wood, Jane and Arthur gifted this historically noteworthy portion of their collection to a museum previously unfamiliar with the field. The Masons understand the importance of connections, and they know how to generate enduring enthusiasm.

With a few noteworthy exceptions, missing in the Masons' gift are representative objects that showcase stylistic shifts in the field of woodturning, as well as work that illustrates their more recent burgeoning interest in surface enhancement and manipulation of wood-turned forms. Understandable: The seeds for Arthur's initial interest in woodturning were planted because of his father's background in forestry. From this inherent love of trees and wood, Arthur (and Jane) were primed to leap full-scale into collecting wood art as a result of a visit, in 1986, to see *The Art of Turned Wood Bowls: The Edward Jacobson Collection* at the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington, D.C. Beautiful wood-grain throughout, *The Jacobson Collection* showcased these

Arthur and Jane Mason donated work by the following artists to the Georgia Museum of Art, Athens. The work will be on view in a special exhibition May 14–August 7, 2016, at the Dorothy Alexander Roush and Martha Thompson Dinos Galleries.
Dale Couch, Curator of Decorative Arts.

Garry Knox Bennett
Phil Brown
Marilyn Campbell
Rod Cronkite
Virginia Dotson
David Ellsworth
Dennis Elliott
Robyn Horn
Todd Hoyer
William Hunter
Mark Lindquist
Mel Lindquist
Bruce Mitchell
Ed Moulthrop
Matt Moulthrop
Philip Moulthrop
Dale Nish
Michael J. Peterson
Merryll Saylan
Al Stirt
Bob Stocksdale

(Above) **Robyn Horn,** *Diagonal Cubes,* 2005, Redwood, graphite, 18" × 17" × 6¾" (46cm × 43cm × 17cm)

Michael J. Peterson, *Western Pot Form,* 1991, Maple burl, 5" × 11" (13cm × 28cm)

Robyn Horn, *Geode #202,* 1988, Quilted maple, 10" × 10" × 10" (25cm × 25cm × 25cm)

artists' love of their medium and their skill at bowl turning. I understand how Arthur and Jane must have felt; I was mesmerized many years ago when I saw *The Jacobson Collection* on display at the Indiana State Museum. The memory still thrills.

A historical collection

The gift includes the work of many well-known artists, and for the most part, the pieces are older. Each one seems to represent its maker ideally, and, collectively, the grouping is illustrative of the emergence of woodturning as a distinct craft field. Michael Peterson's vessel, turned in 1991, can be regarded as an icon of early hollow-turned vessels. Now, Michael rarely, if ever, uses the lathe. Instead, his monumental, stacked sculptures are individually hollowed using a chainsaw—and they are rectangular. Robyn Horn has also departed from woodturning to focus on direct-carved, monumental sculpture. Her divergence is brilliantly illustrated with the two works in this exhibit, an early turning from 1988, *Geode #202*, and a more recent angular sculpture, *Diagonal Cubes*, 2005, where Horn continues to investigate her relationship with sculptural possibilities inherent in massive hunks of wood.

The Masons' support of woodturners' early explorations in surface embellishment is illustrated with Todd Hoyer's *World Bursting Apart*, 2001, and Merryll Saylan's platter *Disk*, 1998. Neither is opaquely painted; wood is a significant aspect. Yet, surface embellishment is the element that attracts and holds attention. The one highly decorative, non-wood-appearing sculpture is Marilyn Campbell's *Snow Home*, 2000. Woodgrain is not easily apparent in the holly and ebony Campbell used, and resin binds the turned elements. The inclusion of this piece is a suggestive nod to the future, as is signified by its creation date of 2000. ▸

Merryll Saylan, *Disk,* 1998, Stained poplar, 9" × 9" × 1⅜" (23cm × 23cm × 3cm)

Marilyn Campbell, *Snow Home,* 2000, Holly, ebony, resin, 8½" × 12" × 3" (22cm × 30cm × 8cm)

Todd Hoyer, *World Bursting Apart,* 2001, Wood, 18" × 12" (46cm × 30cm)

Merryll Saylan, *An Apple a Day,* c. 1996, Hard maple, birch, 1¾" × 24" × 4" (4cm × 61cm × 10cm)

Garry Knox Bennett, *Bowl #692,* 2002, Wood, paint, 6" × 12" × 7" (15cm × 30cm × 18cm)

Ed Moulthrop, *Donut,* 1988, Ash leaf maple, 3¼" × 7" (8cm × 18cm)

Philip Moulthrop, *Bowl,* 1996, Ash leaf maple, 3⅜" × 11⅞" (9cm × 30cm)

Saylan's conceptual sculpture, *An Apple a Day*, stands out as an example of the potential for using the repetitive aspect of woodturning for expressing ideas. Saylan turned 80 this year and is still actively involved in the field—perhaps an apple a day worked. The Georgia Museum of Art is fortunate to have two of her artworks bequeathed.

I find it ironic that the alphabetical listing of artists begins with Garry Knox Bennett, not generally known as a woodturner. Yet, here he turns up in a historical gift of turned objects. Bennett's playfully mocking, anti-woodturning viewpoint is reflected in the title, *Bowl #692*. Surely the number 692 is random. And, delightfully, he may have embellished the bowl, but not turned it himself. Nonetheless, there it is, its interior painted an innocent, clean-slate white.

The Georgia Museum of Art is a teaching facility and, because of its location in Athens, is fortunate to now have a tie with the Moulthrop family legacy of woodturning, centered in nearby Atlanta: Ed, Philip, and Matt. These three generations are well represented in the Masons' gift, providing a connection that will lure local interest and involvement.

The Masons have made it their sincere mission to get to know the artists whose work they collected. As is the case now, woodturners were easily accessible in the 1980s. Arthur simply called David Ellsworth, whose work he admired in *The Jacobson Collection*. From that initial contact and visit, the Masons met many other makers. Once they got to know an artist, they often collected her or his work in depth, such as with Virginia Dotson. Over the past thirty years, they have invited woodturners for meals, visited with artists at conferences, and every year hosted residents from the Center for Art in Wood's Windgate ITE International Residency.

The Georgia Museum of Art

The Masons' connection with the Georgia Museum of Art is indirect and originated from Jane's involvement with painting, sculpting, teaching art, and an early business enterprise teaching people how to use computers. Because of her combined background in art and computers, Jane was asked to join the board of visitors for

The Lamar Dodd School of Art at the University of Georgia to help plan its new art building. Now finished, the building is located next to the Georgia Museum of Art. It is Jane's vision that many art students will see and study their collection. She understands the role that connections can play in fostering future interest and support for wood-turned art.

Overseeing the reception and exhibition of the gift is Dale Couch, Curator of Decorative Arts, Henry D. Green Center for the Study of the Decorative Arts. Couch's knowledge and appreciation for American/Southern turned-wood furniture, 1640–1840, is a starting point for his increasing interest in and enthusiasm for contemporary turned objects. It is curator Couch's intention to use the Mason collection as a baseline from which the museum will eventually build a wide-ranging collection of woodturnings, historic to current.

Museums focus their in-depth collections on only a handful of media, and Dale Couch views the Masons' gift as it was intended: An opportunity to pick woodturning as a strength in modern studio craft. That intention is already successful: Couch expects the museum to eventually develop woodturning as a focus. A quick study, Couch has already learned much about contemporary woodturners and is captivated with their work. He will attend the AAW's 30th Anniversary International Symposium in Atlanta and will participate on two panel discussions.

As the Georgia Museum of Art builds its collection, it will be interesting to see the direction the museum takes concerning future inclusion, or not, of non-turned sculptures from makers such as Horn and Peterson. There is a compelling case to be made for acquiring this sub-group of wood artists' new work: Initial involvement in woodturning led a variety of makers to eventually give up roundness in favor of a broader vocabulary that includes angular and large. That Jane and Arthur included Horn's sculpture signals the possibilities this could provide.

On the other hand, and perhaps more compelling, contemporary woodturning-focused exploration is moving the field into expressiveness not previously imaginable. It is admittedly a difficult but potentially delightful curatorial decision. It is evident, though, that joining, following, and supporting contemporary woodturners on their journey of exploration and expression will be fulfilling and rewarding.

The historical significance of the gift provides valid foundation for building a comprehensive collection of woodturned art. The turning field has been chastised for its all-too-narrow focus on the use of a machine—the lathe. Distractors point out that ceramists would, for instance, never want to be categorized by a wheel or weavers by a loom. Just because a field has been defined by reference to a specific machine, though, does not mean it cannot be successful, interesting, and valid. Why not explore the depths of what can be created from lathe-turned objects? The concept of limitations is an established design tool.

Reverberations

Edward "Bud" Jacobson first saw a Moulthrop bowl in the Hand and Spirit Gallery in Scottsdale in 1977, and from there began his own collection of turned-wood bowls, eventually donating it to the Arizona State University Art Museum. (This is documented in the book, *Crafting a Continuum: Rethinking Contemporary Craft*, edited by Peter Held and Heather Sealy Lineberry.) Previous to the donation, the collection traveled to numerous venues to be seen by thousands of wood enthusiasts, including Jane and Arthur Mason. In turn, the Masons donated three Ed Moulthrop bowls to the Georgia Museum of Art. Gifts can reverberate, and the Masons' bequeath is already making waves. The works in this historical collection will be studied and also used as a basis for the museum to build a strong focus on woodturning as a studio craft. ■

All photos courtesy of Georgia Museum of Art.

Betty J. Scarpino lives, carves, turns, and writes in Indianapolis. Her artwork can be seen at bettyscarpino.com.

Matt Moulthrop, *Mimosa globe,* 2011, Mimosa, 4" × 8½" (10cm × 22cm)

Virginia Dotson, *Flared rim vessel,* 1987, Arizona walnut, 2½" × 9¾" (6cm × 25cm)

Helga Winter in her studio, 2015, holding a "tea paper" vessel.

Photo: Betty J. Scarpino

HELGA WINTER

The Vocabulary of Experience

Betty J. Scarpino

POP SHOWCASE ARTIST

Helga Winter will be featured as one of the Professional Outreach Program's showcase artists at AAW's 2016 International Symposium in Atlanta, Georgia. For more, visit woodturner.org.

Helga Winter's artwork is colorful and vibrant, and at the same time, soothing. Its appeal has a lot to do with Helga's focused connection with her methods and on her materials while she transforms wood into art objects. Fully present, she expels shavings, saturates wood with dyes, applies paint, transfers images, waxes surfaces, discovers connections, and inks messages. Her restyling of plain-wood madrone vessels to colorful, dancing objects is synergetic. All dressed up, they invite closer inspection, reflection, and admiration.

Tennessee

Helga talks about Pacific madrone *(Arbutus menziesii)* as being "ornery," but I suspect she may secretly identify with that label. Getting to know her through phone calls, emails, and finally meeting her in person, I see that Helga is gently determined. While living in Nashville, Tennessee, shortly after graduating from Vanderbilt Peabody College with a graduate degree, she walked past a storefront and was immediately drawn in to investigate further. It was fine-furniture maker Paul Pitt's workshop and sales gallery. Experiencing a strong lure to wood, she asked Paul if he would take her on as an apprentice. He initially said no. Helga returned a week later and asked again, assuring Paul that she would learn quickly and work hard. He eventually relented and so began Helga's lifelong association with wood.

In 1984, while in Tennessee, Helga studied woodturning with Rude Osolnik and David Ellsworth. Because of that association, she attended the first woodturning symposium in 1985 at Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts, where some of the symposium attendees conceived of and started the AAW.

While taking a woodturning class from Liam O'Neill at Arrowmont, Helga began to fully realize the potential for local connections, so she wrote a letter to all the woodturners she could find in the vicinity of Nashville to organize a meeting. Among others, John Jordan attended. Shortly after helping start the Tennessee Association of Woodturners, she

moved to the Pacific Northwest, where a new perspective in woodturning awaited her.

Madrone

Perhaps I find Helga's vessels soothing because of the graceful undulations the wood takes on as madrone shrinks and moves during its process of air-drying. Madrone trees regally shade parks, homes, and streets on the Olympic Peninsula where Helga made her new home. That wood became Helga's canvas after moving to Washington State in 1987. Unlike in Tennessee, where locally harvested woods were varied, colorful, and highly figured, madrone was the primary hardwood available, but its naturally creamy, light color turns a not-so-attractive brown over time. Opportunities loomed.

Helga realizes this wood may even have lured her to her new life in Port Townsend, patiently awaiting discovery. She is open to what life provides and knows how to benefit from nature's gifts, so it is no surprise that Helga was the first woodturner to recognize, appreciate, and expansively take advantage of madrone's properties. She paid attention and became aware that she was concurrently releasing *and* taming the wildness of wet madrone. She writes, "Green madrone, a wood that is unpredictable, is my favorite. We are collaborators, each helping the other liberate the hidden experiences that shaped us. The mystical and meditative adventure of partnering with madrone puts me in touch with the essential character of the piece and myself."

Chainsaw adept, Helga harvests her own lumber and learned that turning bowls start to finish was not only possible, but also desirable. She utilizes all parts of the tree—branches, trunk, and roots. Of madrone, Helga writes, "Being a turner of green wood allows me to look deep inside the tree and carry on a dialogue. The green wood is still full of movement, wanting to take back its own shape after I turn it into something that is only momentarily round. Then I step aside and let the wood seek its own perfection."

Far from dominating the process, Helga collaborates with madrone. She welcomes its movement, akin to her own life's rhythms. She works with what's offered: "Sometimes ▸

Untitled, 2007, Madrone crotch, fiber-reactive dye, 4½" × 8" × 7¼" (11cm × 20cm × 18cm)
Photo: Frank Ross

Untitled, 1991, Madrone root burl, rock, 10" × 8½" × 7" (25cm × 22cm × 18cm)

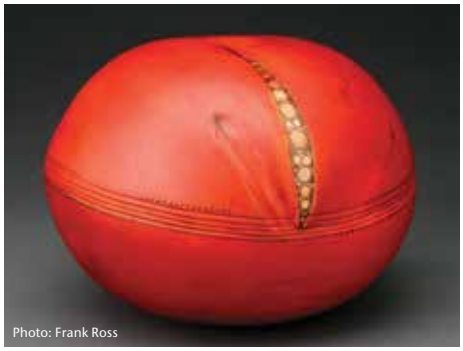


Photo: Frank Ross

(Top left) Suture, 2010, Madrone, dye, madrone branches, brass shavings, 6" × 10" × 9½" (15cm × 25cm × 24cm)

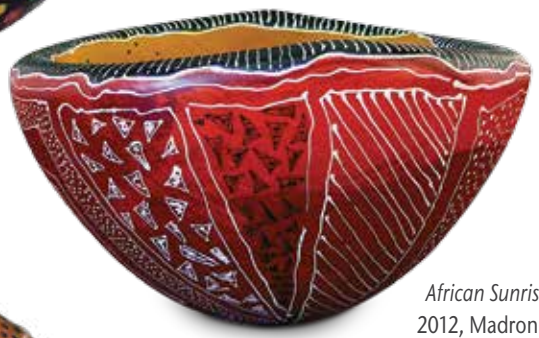
(Top right) Untitled, 1997, Madrone, aniline dyes, wax resist, 6¾" × 12¼" × 11½" (17cm × 31cm × 29cm)

(Bottom) Untitled, 1988, Madrone, aniline dyes, wax resist, 5¾" × 12¾" × 11½" (15cm × 32cm × 29cm)

Mikado, 2010, Madrone, fiber-reactive dyes, wax resist, 4¾" × 13¼" × 11¾" (12cm × 34cm × 30cm)
Photo: James Klose

Untitled, 1997, Madrone, aniline dye, wax resist, 7½" × 12½" × 12" (19cm × 32mm × 30cm)

Connecting the Dots, 2015, Madrone, fiber-reactive dyes, wax resist, 4¼" × 9¾" × 8½" (11cm × 25cm × 22cm)



African Sunrise, 2012, Madrone, India ink, dyes, acrylics, 3⅛" × 9" × 8¼" (8cm × 23cm × 21cm)

Madrone Spheroid on Seaweed Stand, 2012, Madrone, fiber-reactive dye, acrylics, seaweed, 4½" × 4¼" × 2¾" (11cm × 11cm × 7cm)
Photo: James Klose

Dancing Dishes, 2009, Madrone, paper transfers, acrylics, 2½" × 12¼" × 11¼" (6cm × 31cm × 29cm)
Photo: James Klose

cracks occur, sometimes fluid movements result. After the drying is complete, it is my turn to respond to the new shape, the cracks, the imperfections, so that they will reflect the reality of a less-than-perfect world instead of being viewed as flawed."

Helga's early vessels from madrone were gracefully lightweight, appearing to float and dance. Perhaps that implied motion was reason enough for anchoring them onto stone bases, a grounding of sorts. The wood's plain-brown presence, though, motivated Helga to begin using color, and she soon began turning vessels into dancers, adorning them with flamboyant costumes and nestling many of them in dried-seaweed bases.

Adornment and process

One of Helga's childhood memories is marveling at the vivid colors of tulips in her mother's garden, "...especially the black ones. A bee enters the differently colored interior, setting the whole plant into vibration. One of my surface-embellishment techniques is a batik-like process. I apply wax and dyes to my vessels, finishing with a layer of black dye or India ink. As I selectively rub away the wax, patterns and color reveal themselves and the vessels vibrate with life." I had not made the connection with tulips, but do so now, especially in Helga's earliest dyed-and-waxed vessels.

The colors and patterns Helga employs invite people to look closely and investigate. Her intention is "...to confuse, so that you come closer and verify your first perception or alter it: Is it glass? Is it a gourd? What is it made of? Is it wood?"

Helga combines a variety of techniques with years of exploration. A copious note-taker, she also documents her processes. While the techniques she employs are not secret, they are highly individualized applications of information widely available throughout the craft world. Her strong desire for discovery and abundant curiosity drive her to experiment; playfulness helps her imagine technique combinations others have not yet tried. She encourages others to simply "try it and discover what happens!"

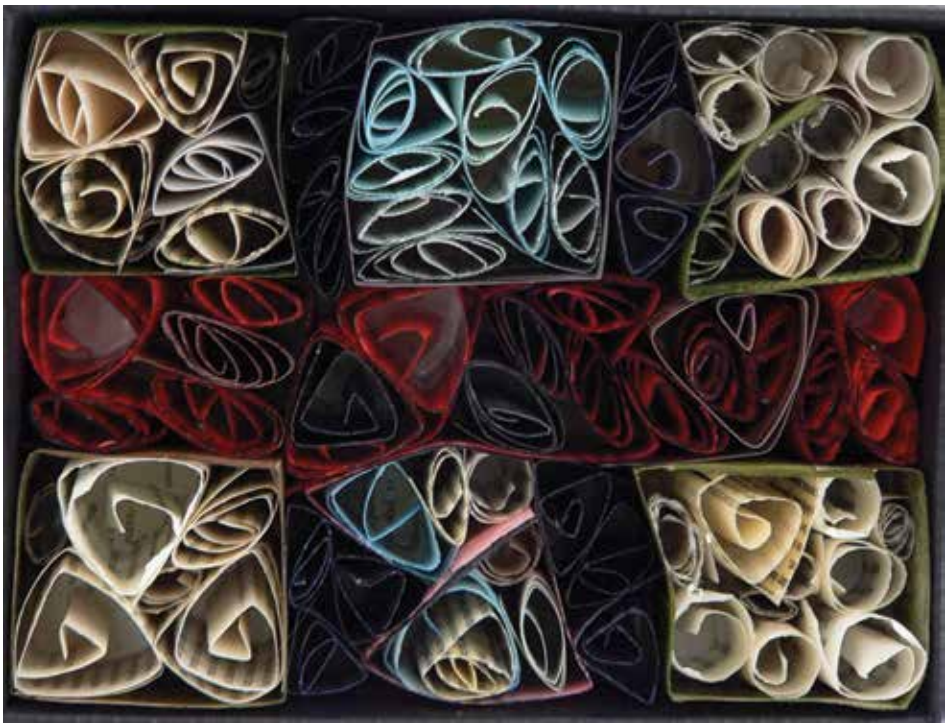
With this sense of playfulness, Helga has explored encaustic wax, wax resist, inking, dyeing, acrylics, and paper transfers. She learned about them fully until they became part of her personal vocabulary. We can take from Helga this worthy example and discover our own style of embellished vessels.

We all have personal memories, dreams, and imaginations. Helga's life experiences flow through her and become evident in her work. Thoughts are revealed, joys shared. Helga explains, "I like the secret places, the mysteries, the stories behind, the inside of things, the dark side, the light side, the underside, the surface. Multiple layers on my work reflect multiple layers within human beings. I like the work to appear as if it grew into being, intriguing the eye and the mind, appearing sensual to the touch and radiating emotion." You will have your own way of infusing your life's experiences into what you make with your hands.

As she explores her subjects in depth, a new element will appear ▸

A Passion for Change, Repurposed books, pigmented and unpigmented beeswax, thread, eucalyptus pods, wire, 24½" × 20" × 3" (62cm × 51cm × 8cm)

> "The ease with which I handled the saw awakened a longing within me for the familiarity of turning. It is a feeling that is hard to describe and that surprises me again and again because it does not diminish in its intensity.
>
> — Helga Winter



Thinking of Sushi, 2015, Repurposed books, pigmented and unpigmented beeswax, 6½" × 8" × 3" (17cm × 20cm × 8cm)

here or there. It may blend or might stand out, startling even Helga. As she works with and incorporates new elements, they become a familiar aspect of her vocabulary. She owns them.

Deconstruction

Storage is often a problem for artists. We collect objects and materials to use in our artwork, perhaps to add a decorative hinge to a box or to save bits of wood or jars of paint for later. While I was visiting, Helga revealed an unusual storage opportunity, a seldom-used refrigerator full of books. I couldn't help but wonder if they all had jackets. They may need them—there seemed to be a library's worth, which might take a lifetime to deconstruct. Helga periodically tears out pages for the construction of sculptural paintings—I want to read between the lines.

These stored materials fuel her interest in deconstruction and satisfy her need to use byproducts. Growing up in Germany after the war, she internalized the need to explore the use of things that might otherwise be thrown away: Half of a dried avocado skin makes the perfect-sized bowl for pins. Used teabags, washed, dried, and layered with wax as they are draped around the outside of a turned bowl, become light, airy vessels. Metaphors danced around in my head as we sat in Helga's studio, drinking hot tea, waxed-teabag vessels lined up on a shelf, eavesdropping on our conversation.

Helga's notes on deconstruction beg to be deconstructed, or perhaps reconstructed: "Provides

Common Threads, 2016, Tea paper, fiber-reactive dye, unpigmented wax, roots, thread (hand stitched), 4½" × 8" × 5¼" (11cm × 20cm × 13cm)

time for reflection. Quiet time. Gathering information from inside. Deconstructed trees, turned into vessels, shavings made into paper."

Fanning Out, 2016, Tea paper, seaweed, thread (hand stitched), unpigmented beeswax, 7¾" × 16" × 4½" (20cm × 41cm × 11cm)

Sabbatical and return

As odd as it might sound, using a chainsaw brought Helga back to woodturning in 2003. Upon returning from Germany after a seven-year sabbatical while caring for her mother through her final stage of life, Helga found herself chain-sawing limbs for firewood. She describes the feelings that activity engendered: "The ease with which I handled the saw awakened a longing within me for the familiarity of turning. It is a feeling that is hard to describe and that surprises me again and again because it does not diminish in its intensity. I sometimes refer to it as 'a lining up of all my molecules in perfect order' and I felt that when turning my first little birdseye maple bowl in Rude Osolnik's and David Ellsworth's workshops in Berea, Kentucky, thirty years ago."

Life and work

Inseparable, Helga's work and life course together. Both are seasonal. She likes to turn in the fall and let the vessels dry during winter. In the spring and summer, she embellishes. Helga is "reminded of the seasonal changes a garden goes through, reveling in the flexibility and endurance that is mirrored there. A garden also brings my mother into my thoughts, and I marvel at the skills she had as a gardener and in general."

Helga lives near the ocean and works with the trees that grow nearby. She makes shapes that are reminiscent of seashells and utilizes seaweed for stands. As she and I walked along the shoreline our last morning together, Helga scavenged several likely prospects for vessel stands. Neighbors and friends know of her work and they often deliver salvaged local woods to her driveway and share memories of their trees. In turn, she "...turns a vessel to present to them made of part of their tree. That connectedness to my surroundings feeds me and allows contentedness to enter."

Like her turned-and-dried madrone vessels, she transforms stresses into gentle movement as she gardens, walks the hilly streets of Port Townsend, sketches in journals, and sips hot tea. ■

More of Helga's artwork can be viewed on her website, helgawinter.com.

Betty J. Scarpino lives in Indianapolis, where she turns, carves, and embellishes wood. Her website is bettyscarpino.com.

Movement Within Stillness, 2015, Madrone, dye, pigmented wax, 5¼" × 8" × 7" (13cm × 20cm × 18cm)

Post-Millennial **Standout:**

HERISHEGESAN SRIPATHMANATHAN

David M. Fry

Few people take their first plunge into woodturning by attempting to make a glass-top table supported by massive 17"- (43cm-) diameter acorns of laminated tulip poplar. Equally astonishing is the improvised path that took high school senior Herishegesan Sripathmanathan past obstacles and steep learning curves into the finalist circle at the 2015 Fresh Wood competition in Las Vegas. It certainly helped that he attended Fletcher's Meadow Secondary School in Brampton, Ontario, a woodworking powerhouse claiming multiple award winners at this exhibition of the Association of Woodworking & Furnishings Suppliers. Shop instructor Peter Boeckh served as both motive force and rescue strategist for the team.

Novice Herishegesan Sripathmanathan blithely ventured into territory that would have given many advanced turners pause. Titled *Fallen,* Herishegesan's table nevertheless retains a sense of kinetic energy in its tilting elements.

Preparing the stock

Up to this point, Herishegesan's only woodworking experience had been construction of a mirror in tenth grade. For his senior project, he recalled, "I didn't know what I was getting into. The teacher was pushing me to make something unique for the Las Vegas competition. I wanted to build furniture that had to do with nature. After a while, the acorn idea popped up in my head." Its selection represented a huge leap of faith for both student and school: More than a hundred board feet of 8/4 poplar and hundreds of student and instructor hours hung in the balance.

A tricky assembly that managed to produce tight glue lines.

After devising a pattern for stepped laminations, Herishegesan laboriously cut and stacked ten butcher block sections of varying dimension for each acorn. With a friend and a multitude of clamps, he hastily glued up the blanks within the short open time of the adhesive. He soon discovered, however, that the largest-diameter sections spanned 24" (61cm), larger than the 18" (46cm) swing on his lathe. To make the blanks mountable, he helped rig up a rotating table saw jig with dado blade to cut off just enough to clear the lathe bed.

On and off the lathe

Despite the trimming, the first blank vibrated severely at the lowest rpm, requiring the addition of sandbags to the lathe base. "Then came the scary part," Herishegesan said, "when I had to start cutting the moving blanks with my [square-nose, carbide-tip] scraper, which was the only chisel I used. Because of rough endgrain, I sometimes changed over to a grinder to keep from tearing up the wood. The first acorn came out OK and the second one was good, but on the last one, I took off too much on the cap. My instructor chain-sawed it off and attached a new section. Shaping the tenon/stem was really time consuming. After sanding, I experimented with ten different dyes to get the colors I wanted for the body and cap."

The next challenge was to construct a base out of MDF (medium-density fiberboard) to anchor the acorns. Because the acorns varied in size somewhat, the base incorporated individual cradles with finely adjusted slopes so the glass top would lie level. When it was all done, Herishegesan had invested almost six months in what was supposed to be a one-semester project, often working five or six hours a day.

Moving on

Now enrolled in an electrical engineering technician program at Humber College, Herishegesan misses his old woodshop days at Fletcher's Meadow. But he is eyeing events at the Toronto Woodworking Guild, which meets at a shop on campus. When a course on pen making or segmented bowls comes along, he's likely to sign up: "I don't want to let go of woodworking, even if it remains just a hobby." ■

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

Members' Gallery

Robert Bley, California

I started turning around 1989. I had been making period furniture and needed a lathe to make fluted columns and twisted flaming finials on a grandfather clock. I fell in love with the lathe and primarily turn now.

Untitled (Music Stand), 2005, Cocobolo, wenge, quilted maple, tulipwood, zebrawood, brass, 45" × 18" × 18" (114cm × 46cm × 46cm) with adjustable height and angle

Allen Robinson, North Carolina

I took a class with David Ellsworth in 2013. He asked how long I had been turning, and when I said six years, he remarked, "So all your friends and family have more bowls than they can ever use. How about turning something else that's functional—like a trash can?" Since then, most of my turning projects have been items with a specific use.

You've got to turn a project many times before you get good at it, and when you get good at it, you might get bored with it and want a new idea. The trash can idea lasted a couple years; then came the night lights, and now I'm into swivel-lid boxes. Turning has brought a lot of fun to my life. ▸

Night Light, 2015, Aspen, red cedar, 6½" × 3" (17cm × 8cm)

Untitled (Trash Cans), 2013, Red maple, red cedar, sapele, each can is 11" × 10" (28cm × 25cm)

Eldon DeHaan, Utah

I studied commercial art and design and worked in that field for a few years, but soon turned my attention to furniture design and construction. I spent more than thirty years engaged in woodworking and eventually was introduced to woodturning, which has become the basis of my current artistic work.

Almost all of my work starts on the lathe and then becomes a canvas on which I color, carve, and embellish. Although I may carry a central theme forward in a series, each of my pieces is unique.

European Influence, 2013, Maple, dye, acrylic, 17½" × 17½" × 2" (44cm × 44cm × 5cm)

In the Corner of My Mind, 2015, Poplar, dye, acrylic, 8" × 8" × 1½" (20cm × 20cm × 38mm)

Jim Wilkus, Minnesota

I hollowed the majority of this bowl on the lathe, until I hit punky wood at the bottom, or outside of the burl, which I strengthened with cyanoacrylate (CA) glue. I then carved the rest by hand, including the lip on the right side of the bowl, with hand tools and a sander. I left the rim of this bowl sharp to draw a distinct line between the finished inside and natural outside.

Untitled (bowl), 2015, Burr oak burl, 7" × 11" (18cm × 28cm)

John Krook, Australia

The twisted stem of this fruit stand comprises three outer bines and three inner bines, all shaped by hand after turning the cylinder on the lathe. The outer bines have a left-handed open twist, while the inner bines have a right-handed open twist. The piece is finished with oil.

Untitled, 2015, Australian red cedar, 10⅜" × 9¼" (26cm × 23cm)

JOURNAL ARCHIVE CONNECTION

For more on adding twists to your turnings, see Howard Ford's *AW* article, "Doing the Twist" (vol 12, no 1, page 29). AAW members can access all past journal articles online at woodturner.org.

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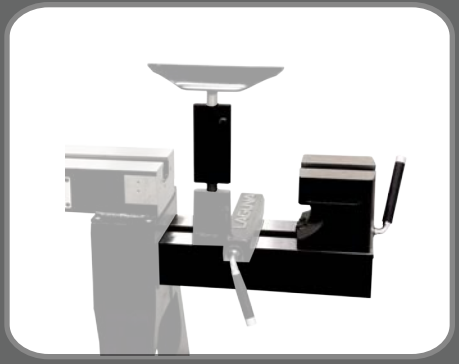

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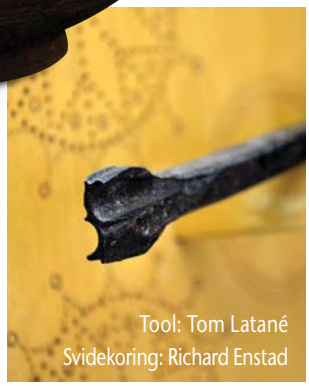
EMBELLISHMENT
Through the Ages
Tib Shaw

The origins of many embellishment techniques we use today are deeply rooted in history; although the pieces pictured here were made between 1300 and the 1930s, people have been painting, incising, lacquering, burning, and branding functional and non-functional wood objects for thousands of years. Truly, the more things change, the more they stay the same.

BRANDING

Photo *at left*: © Vesterheim Museum, Iowa



Four-inch-diameter bowl, undated. *Svidekor,* the Norwegian technique of using shaped hot irons to burn patterns into wood was very popular in the 1700s. When styles changed in the 1800s, the svidekor designs were often painted over.

Tool: Tom Latané
Svidekoring: Richard Enstad

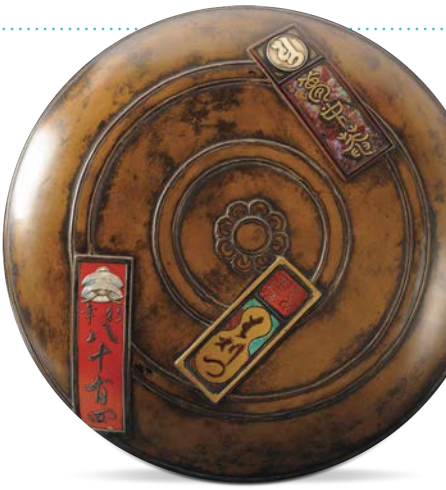
INCISED DESIGN

Photo: From Owen Evan-Thomas' *Domestic Utensils of Wood*, 1937

The 4½" × 5½" (11cm × 14cm) box (*at left*), circa 1930, is an example of *kolrosing*, a centuries-old Scandinavian technique of filling delicately incised lines with coffee grounds or coal dust. The sharply detailed work on the 1610 English pearwood fruit bowl (*at right*) is most likely a combination of skillfully executed incised lines and pyrography.

LACQUER

Urushi lacquer, made from the viscous, toxic sap of the *Toxicodendron vernicifluum* tree, has been used in China since Neolithic times (c. 7000 BCE). It is durable and has strong adhesive properties. Highly versatile, urushi can be built up into a solid block and carved, layered over fiber mesh, or applied over a form. Here, brown lacquer over a turned base is combined with ceramic, ivory, and shell inlays.



Japanese writing box lid, 1746, by Ogawa Haritsu (1663–1747), 2" × 10" (5cm × 25cm)

Photo: © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

PERFECT PROTEINS

Pigments mixed with egg or milk proteins have been used for at least 49,000 years; they were the most common paints during medieval times for both artistic and functional uses. By the mid-15th century, linseed and walnut oil were popular carriers for pigments: the smoother product and longer drying times allowed for greater detail.

Rosemåled bowl, Norway, 18th–19th century, approximately 8" (20cm) diameter

Photo: © Vesterheim Museum, Iowa

Cup, Italy, 15th century, 8¼" × 4" (21cm × 10cm)

Photo: © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Mazer (drinking bowl) lid, 14th century

Photo: © Canterbury Museum, England