

A UNIQUE COLLECTION: GREGARIOUS MUSHROOMS • A QUICK GLOSS FINISH ON THE LATHE • TURNED RIBBONS DEMYSTIFIED

AMERICAN WOODTURNER

Journal of the American Association of Woodturners

August 2020 vol 35, no 4 • woodturner.org

ERNST GAMPERL
SEEING THE WOOD
FROM THE TREES

GILDING 101 FOR WOODTURNERS:
FINISHING WITH REAL GOLD

.....
WOODTURNERS
CONNECTING
VIRTUALLY

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FOR AAW BOARD
CANDIDATES
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Step Up to the Plate—Second Inning

2020 AAW Member Exhibition

The theme for the 2020 AAW member exhibition, *Step Up to the Plate—Second Inning*, was chosen to celebrate our second Symposium in Louisville, Kentucky, and to echo our first show there, *Step Up to the Plate* (2006). The show brings together works that speak passionately about courage and those that are light, nostalgic, and humorous. The AAW member shows provide both turners and visitors insight into the diversity of techniques, materials, and styles at play today, as well as the multiple ways the creative mind can approach a simple phrase, “Step up to the plate.”

The exhibition, originally slated to be on view at the 2020 AAW Symposium, will instead get an extra inning at the 2021 Symposium in Omaha, Nebraska, alongside *Finding the Center*, the 2021 member show.

Shown here is a sampling of works from this year’s AAW member exhibition. Invited artists were Mark Sfirri and Suzanne Bonsall Kahn. The jurors were Dixie Biggs (artist), Dave Long (collector), and James Thurman (sculptor and associate professor and program coordinator of metalsmithing and jewelry at the University of North Texas). ■

—Tib Shaw, AAW Arts Administrator/Curator

Sally Ault, California

Leaky Rice Bowl, Box Elder, 3" x 4" (8cm x 10cm)

“Sometimes a plate is a bowl. Many people in this world have no plates, have no tables, and eat from a bowl. A full bowl is as satisfying as a plate of food, but many in our world seldom have enough food to fill their bowl. We need to step up to the plate and share our abundance.”



John Beaver, California

Step Up On The Plate, Maple, acrylic paint, 11" x 17" x 17" (28cm x 43cm x 43cm)

“A slight ‘misinterpretation’ of the show title, this piece is a footstool with a regulation-sized wood home plate held up by five turned mini-baseball bats.”



Denis Tapley, Washington

Second inning. Two out. Bases loaded., Sheoak, Chinese tallow, sassafras, sandalwood, 8½" x 12" x 10" (22cm x 30cm x 25cm)

“...the moment of extreme tension as a fast curve ball meets an overly aggressive bat.”



Dewey Garrett, Arizona

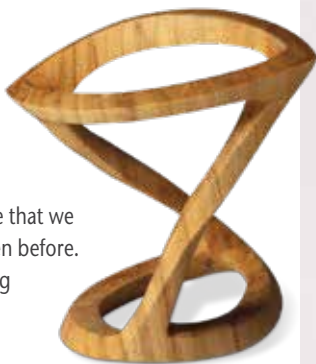
3D Home Plate, Birch plywood, walnut, 6" x 6" x 6" (15cm x 15cm x 15cm)

“Baseball is played on a two-dimensional surface, but the players and the ball trajectory act above the field in our third dimension. What if the game were set in a three-dimensional space and the ball hit to another dimension? Surely home plate would be more complex for such an otherworldly game! This work was constructed from multiple patterned layers cut from thin plywood sections on my homebuilt ornamental turning machine.”

Barbara Dill, Virginia

Exoskeleton, Cherry, 4" x 5" x 4½"
(10cm x 13cm x 11cm)

"Many worthwhile endeavors require that we imagine the world as it has never been before. Brazen. The birth of a groundbreaking idea may begin by joining together unexpected members. It may appear empty, full of holes. It may seem sketchy and lacking in substance. Its shape may appear vulnerable. The idea begins small but soon grows and gains tensile strength. Finally, it emerges fully formed. Solid. Beautiful. Utterly unique. And perfectly suited to its vital purpose."



Simon Begg, Australia

Kentucky Derby, Mahogany, ink, 3" x 6¾" x 3" (8cm x 17cm x 8cm)

"As an Australian, I don't know a lot about Kentucky, but I know that one of the biggest events is the Kentucky Derby. I wanted to capture the power of a rearing horse and highlight the movement. For such a common shape, it took some work to get the form to show these qualities. The technique of German ring turning means that I don't see the shape until the work is cut in half."



Rick Crawford, Oregon

Oddballs' Odd Balls, All repurposed materials: Rhododendron, old growth Douglas fir, parallel-strand lumber, purpleheart, Western red cedar, copper pipe, pewter, brass screw, patinas, wood bleach, dye, 7" x 11" x 11" (18cm x 28cm x 28cm)

"Unbeknownst to most baseball fans, baseball manufacturers have a top secret development laboratory, the sole purpose of which is to design the perfect baseball. One of the design team members comes up with the oddest designs and has been given the nickname 'Oddball.' Herewith, I present just a mere sampling of Oddball's odd balls."



Ena Dubnoff, California

Clear Cut, Oak, redwood, ash, 15½" x 17" x 8¼" (39cm x 43cm x 21cm)

"Our forests are essential to the balance of nature and the future of the planet. The redwood forests, with specimens up to 2000 years old, have been logged to near extinction by the practice of clear cutting. The 'trees' in this piece—made from a long-dead redwood tree found on a construction site—symbolize all the trees we have lost."



Tim Heil, Minnesota

Spinning, Curly maple, 20" x 16" x 16" (51cm x 41cm x 41cm)

"The phrase, 'Step up to the plate,' brings me back to playing little league baseball. That, combined with a childhood memory of clowns spinning plates at the circus, gave me the idea for this entry."

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

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Journal of the American Association of Woodturners

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Photo: Bernhard Spöttel

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

A NOTE ABOUT SAFETY

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

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

*Web address is case sensitive.

Editor's Note



The article submissions and queries I receive on behalf of AAW collectively reflect “the voice” of our woodturning community. And subsequently, the journal archives (available at woodturner.org) amount to a historical record of what’s on your mind. Not surprisingly, readers lately have told me how they are continuing to stay engaged in woodturning during this time of COVID-19.

A few of these accounts are shared in “From the Editor’s Inbox,” page 11.

Betty Scarpino wrote an informative article (page 34) that takes account of the current state of affairs of interactive remote

demonstrations (IRDs). Focusing on key considerations important to both demonstrators and chapters, she offers valuable information for those currently looking to connect online.

Finally, I have been quite moved by artistic representations of what could be called the prevailing angst over various issues facing us today. In addition to coronavirus, these issues include racial tensions and immigration. Some of these works are featured on the Members’ Gallery pages, beginning on page 50.



—Joshua Friend

From the President



AAW in the age of coronavirus

During a time when getting dressed includes putting on a face mask and people

will drive ten hours to avoid taking a plane, can AAW continue to operate on a “business as usual” model? I doubt it. Will AAW continue to be the premier organization for the promotion and education of woodturning? It will, there is no question about it. During the last few years, you have seen more and more services provided on the Internet; that evolution will, by necessity, be accelerated. This pandemic seemed to come out of nowhere and took us all by surprise. But, fortunately, we were well prepared to weather this storm. We have online structures in place, including newly acquired digital technology tools whose transition is almost complete. And our current financial position, bolstered by strong unrestricted reserves, remains generally healthy. We are poised for continued success.

Currently, there are more questions than answers. When will we go back to normal chapter meetings? Can a club thrive in an environment that includes minimal social interaction? Will national and regional symposia continue, as in the past? What about professionals, demonstrators, instructors, artists, manufacturers, and vendors—can they successfully adapt to this new environment? Will we see a decline in AAW’s membership? How

about local chapters? Our organization’s success is dependent on how we deal with these questions.

By now, many of you have experienced online remote demonstrations on a Zoom platform. Your chapter might have hired a demonstrator or you individually paid to see a demonstration. Our WIT (Women in Turning) committee has organized webinars where an artist shows and discusses her work, gives a tour of her studio, and answers questions. They are outstanding. Possibly your chapter has arranged online meetings that include business activities, gallery displays, turning tips, and future club activities.

In July, I hope you attended our first AAW Virtual Symposium. It was put together in a relatively short period of time. As it included live demonstrators, panels, auctions, special interest presentations, and vendor information, all involved did an outstanding job. Special recognition should be given to Janet Collins, our Symposium Chair, and her committee members, our continually reemerging auctioneer John Hill for his most professional service, and our staff, especially Tib Shaw, Kim Rymer, and Phil McDonald. Finally, Board member Rick Baker, our behind-the-scenes ringleader, made the Symposium run like a clock.

So, what’s next? Get away from your computers, forget virtual, and get busy in your shop. You’ve seen demos from the best. They’ve given you ideas, shown you techniques, and provided encouragement.

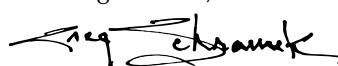
Use your extra shop time to stretch your competencies, try new skills, and even make firewood. Laugh at your failures, and brag about your successes. But try not to dwell on the current health crisis. Do something positive instead.

If you’re a chapter leader, now is the time to keep your members enthused and active in woodturning. Place emphasis on turning for charities. Whether it be ornaments for a local hospice, boxes for Beads of Courage, turnings for food kitchens to auction, or pens for our first responders, keeping your club members involved will help retain your membership as well as help your communities. You’ve always made a difference during normal times; you can really show what you are made of now.

Board vote

During the month of August, all AAW members are given the opportunity to vote for Board members for the term beginning January 2021. We have an excellent group of candidates who are well qualified to represent you. Please review their qualifications on page 8 of this issue and cast your votes. Our organization depends on volunteers, and I’d like to thank the candidates and all those individuals who selflessly serve our organization.

Looking forward,



Greg Schramek
President, AAW Board of Directors

AAW Program Director Linda Ferber Retires

Program Director Linda Ferber retired in May after a vibrant thirteen-year career with the AAW. An excellent ambassador for the Association (and for woodturning in general), Linda took well-deserved pride in her instrumental roles in the creation and implementation of *Woodturning FUNdamentals*, the Tool Bank, the Youth Turning Program, and the Discover Woodturning section of the AAW website. She also attended countless regional symposia as a representative of the AAW. Through listening and

learning, she succeeded in her mission of bringing people into the enjoyable and fulfilling world of woodturning.

Community was at the heart of Linda's career with the AAW. A woodturner herself, she shared her own passion for turning with AAW members and potential members alike. Linda's role in facilitating donations for Beads of Courage, Empty Bowls, the Girl Scouts train-the-trainer program, and Turn for Troops reflects her belief in the vital importance of service to the greater

community. She was also instrumental in facilitating operational details for many AAW Symposia, seemingly with the ability to be in two places at once.

Linda is looking forward to spending more time with family and friends, traveling, and, of course, turning wood. Wherever she is and whatever she does, we expect Linda will continue to inspire others to follow their passions, particularly if those passions involve woodturning!

Thank you, Linda Ferber, for your years of dedicated service to the AAW. ■



Linda (far right) enjoying a fun moment at the 2019 WIT eXchange, Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts. Pictured with Linda are Jean LeGwin (left) and Debbie Chapin.

Photo: Courtesy of Debbie Chapin



"Serving AAW members has given me a great sense of accomplishment and lasting friendships," says Linda Ferber. After Linda's retirement in May, many AAW members made a top especially for her, as a way of letting her know that in the eyes of the woodturning community, she's "tops"!

2021 POP ARTIST SHOWCASE OPPORTUNITY

Application period: August 15 to October 1, 2020

Each year the Professional Outreach Program (POP) showcases one or two wood artists at the AAW's Annual International Symposium. They are either experienced artists who have made significant contributions to the woodturning field but have not received appropriate recognition or emerging artists who have the potential for making significant contributions to the field. The selected artists each give two demonstrations and receive free Symposium registration plus a small honorarium. Their work is displayed prominently in the Instant Gallery.

Artist applications are invited for the 2021 AAW Symposium in Omaha, Nebraska. Applications will be juried by the POP committee. The application period is August 15 to October 1, 2020; see online application at tiny.cc/Calls. ■

Apply for an AAW Grant

AAW Grants are available to individuals, chapters, schools, and non-profit organizations. Examples include but are not limited to outreach programs and/or events to encourage youth and under-represented populations (women, minority, disabled, etc.) to learn and pursue woodturning, support of existing or developing unique woodturning programs, educational workshops or class participation, professional development opportunities, chapter projects, etc. In addition to monetary awards, up to ten mini-lathe packages are available for award each year.

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

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

Call for Entries

Finding the Center: 2021 AAW Member Exhibition

Application period:
January 1 to March 15, 2021

The theme for the 2021 Symposium AAW member show is *Finding the Center*. The themes for the annual member show traditionally draw from the host city or state, and since Omaha lies a mere 170 miles from the geological center of the United States, next year's theme was a natural fit. Working with the idea of center is essential to turning: the spinning axis defines what we do, and the act of "finding the center" is one of the most basic operations.

The openness of the theme offers many possible interpretations, whether your motivation is metaphor, material, techniques, or just the pleasure of turning. Beyond the lathe, in life, "finding your center" or a place of calm steadiness and equilibrium is a goal for many. We "center" our attention, our hopes, and our focus; values and ideas may be "central" to discussions and debates. So, center your thoughts, center your wood, and get turning!

Eligibility/application details

- The show is open to any current AAW member and to fulltime students in art, design, or industry-related degree programs, regardless of AAW membership status.



Jim Piper, *Treasure in the Ruins*, 2018, Douglas fir, 4¼" × 5¾" × 4¾" (11cm × 15cm × 12cm)

"*Treasure in the Ruins* pays homage to the devastation of the 2017 Eagle Creek Fire in the Columbia River Gorge Scenic Area. Even the charred remains of a tree encase a treasure untouched by the flames."

- Work for the annual AAW member exhibition is juried through photographs; all entries are anonymous. Accepted works that differ from the submitted images may be refused at AAW's discretion.
- All types of turnings are welcome: sculptural, functional, segmented, ornamental, green-turned, traditional, etc.
- Collaborations are also welcome.
- Entry fee: \$25 for up to three submissions. The application fee is waived for fulltime students in art, design, or industry-related degree programs.
- A theme statement of up to 100 words is required. Describe how the work fits your interpretation of the theme.
- You are free to use any media, but the work must be created at least partially on the lathe.
- Work must have been created in the past two years (March 2019 to March 2021).

Where and when to apply

- Apply online at tinyurl.com/AAWshow.
- Application period: January 1 to March 15, 2021, 11:59 p.m. CST. All artists will be notified by March 31, 2021.

Other info

Images

Submit digital images in .jpg or .jpeg format, less than 4 MB per file. You may submit up to three images for each entry. The main image should be an overall shot; the remaining two images can include details or alternative views. The show is juried through photographs, so it is important that images be clear, properly exposed, and in focus. A plain background is recommended. Do not watermark or include your name on the images.

On view

Finding the Center will premiere at the AAW's Annual International

Woodturning Symposium in Omaha, Nebraska, July 15-18, 2021. The exhibition will then travel to the AAW Gallery of Wood Art, Saint Paul, Minnesota, where it will be on display until the end of the year.

Delivery and display

Accepted work can be shipped ahead to the Symposium site in Omaha, to arrive by July 8, 2021, or hand-delivered on Wednesday, July 14, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., or Thursday, July 15, 9:00 a.m. to noon. Artwork must be in excellent condition, be as shown in the entry images, and ready for installation. All work must be freestanding or with an easel or other support provided. Support subject to approval.

Sales

Displayed work need not be for sale, but for pieces that are sold, the AAW/artist split will be 45%/55%. Sold work must remain with the show until it closes in Saint Paul at the end of December 2021 or may be replaced at the curator's discretion.

Awards

There will be a Masters' Choice Award of \$300 and a People's Choice Award of \$200.

Catalog

A full-color catalog will be available. Participating artists will receive a complimentary copy.

For more, check the woodturner.org Calls for Entry page, <https://tinyurl.com/AAWshow>, or contact Tib Shaw at galleries@woodturner.org. To see past exhibition catalogs, visit galleriesofwoodart.org.

Call for Entries

Elements: 2021 POP Exhibition and Auction

Application Period:
December 1, 2020, to January 15, 2021

The Professional Outreach Program (POP) is pleased to announce its 2021 exhibition and auction theme, *Elements*.

As a theme, “elements” offers much to explore: from the concrete definition as an irreducible part of something else, to the ancient worldview that earth, air, fire, and water are the constituents of all things; from the way we think about sorting out and reordering elements when creating new forms, to the feeling of being “in one’s element” or—sadly—out of it.

We are excited to be sharing next year’s exhibition theme with the American Tapestry Alliance’s biennial international small tapestries exhibition, which will be co-exhibited at the AAW Gallery of Wood Art, March 14 to June 13, 2021. For more, visit americantapestryalliance.org.

As always, the POP exhibition features small-scale works, with a 6" × 6" × 6" (15cm × 15cm × 15cm) size limit. Work submitted for consideration must be at least in part turned on the lathe.

Eligibility/application details

- The juried portion of the show is open to any AAW member and to fulltime students in art, design, or industry-related degree programs, regardless of AAW membership status.
- All types of turnings are welcome: sculptural, functional, segmented, ornamental, green-turned, etc. All entries must include turning.
- Work, in the configuration in which it will be displayed, must fit into a 6" (15cm) cube. No exceptions.
- Any material may be used.
- Artists may submit up to three works for consideration. Only one piece

per applicant will be exhibited, if chosen. Accepted works that differ from the submitted images may be refused at AAW’s discretion.

- Entry fee: \$25 for up to three submissions. The application fee is waived for fulltime students in art, design, or industry-related degree programs.
- A theme statement of up to 100 words is required.

Where and when to apply

- Apply online at tinyurl.com/POP2021.
- Application period: December 1, 2020, to January 15, 2021, 11:59 p.m. CST. All artists will be notified by January 31, 2021.

Other info

Entry images

Submit digital images in .jpg or .jpeg format less than 4 MB per file. You may submit up to three images of each entry. The main image should be an overall shot; the remaining two images can include details or alternative views. The work is juried through photographs, so it is important that images are clear, properly exposed, and in focus. A plain background is recommended.

On view

Elements will premiere at the AAW Gallery of Wood Art in Saint Paul, Minnesota, and be on view March 14 to June 13, 2021, before traveling to the 2021 AAW International Woodturning Symposium in Omaha, Nebraska.

Delivery and display

Accepted work must be shipped to arrive at the AAW Gallery of Wood Art, Attn: Tib Shaw, 222 Landmark Center, Saint Paul, MN, 55102, by



Hans Weissflog, *Shifted Rocking Bowl*, 2020, African blackwood, boxwood, 3 1/8" × 5 1/4" × 3 3/4" (9cm × 13cm × 10cm)

February 28, 2021. Artwork must be in excellent condition, as shown in the entry images, and ready for installation. All work must be free-standing or with an easel or other support provided. Support subject to approval.

Sales/auction

This show concludes with a simultaneous live and online auction of all pieces at the AAW Symposium in Omaha, Nebraska. Funds raised support POP programs, including the Instant Gallery awards, critiques, fellowships, Artist Showcase, panel discussions, and other professional development initiatives. Artists may set a reserve price and retain up to 50% of the proceeds.

Catalog

All work will be professionally photographed and compiled into a full-color catalog. Participating artists will receive complimentary copies.

For more, check the woodturner.org Calls for Entry page, tinyurl.com/POP2021, or contact Tib Shaw at gallery@woodturner.org. To see past exhibition catalogs, visit galleryofwoodart.org.

2021 Board Candidates

The Nominating Committee is pleased to present the following five candidates, who are running for the AAW Board of Directors. AAW members elect a nine-member Board to volunteer their time and energy to represent the membership in moving the AAW forward. Board members may serve two consecutive three-year terms.

You may vote for up to three candidates. There are two ways to vote: 1) by electronic ballot, available on the AAW website at tiny.cc/BoardVote (case sensitive) or 2) by paper ballot. If you would like to cast your vote by paper ballot, please request a paper ballot be sent to you by calling or emailing the AAW at 877-595-9094 (toll free) or memberservices@woodturner.org.

We encourage you to participate in the voting process and hope you will help make this election turnout significant. Your vote must be cast electronically or received in Saint Paul between August 1, 2020, and midnight CDT August 31, 2020.

—Kathleen Duncan, Chair, Nominating Committee

VOTE NOW!
Cast Your Vote
August 1 – 31!

CANDIDATE VIDEOS

To view video interviews with each of the candidates, visit tiny.cc/BoardVote or scan the QR code with your mobile device.



Gary Vance, Ohio



I love woodturning! I have been a woodworker since my childhood and a woodturner for the past sixteen years. The AAW has been a wonderful asset in helping me to

develop my woodturning skills over the years. I have been blessed to become a mentor and demonstrator. Now, as my retirement from being a senior vice-president of investments at a major worldwide brokerage firm nears, I wish to turn my time and attention towards improving the organization that has helped me so much in improving my turning skills.

I have served as a member of the investment committee for a council of the national organization of Boy Scouts of America. There, I was instrumental in setting up an investment policy statement for the safe management of a multi-million-dollar endowment fund. This instrument facilitates the safety and steady growth of the endowment money. Every non-profit organization needs a proper investment policy statement to serve as a constitution for their investments. My thirty years as an investment professional gives me knowledge in investment manager searches as well as methods of evaluating their ongoing performance. I have managed over \$70 million of other people's money. I

have served on the building committee for the construction of a multi-million-dollar church building. In this capacity, I helped select the architect-builders and oversee the design and construction.

I have also been a Scoutmaster for twenty-eight years. There, I had to identify, motivate, and oversee many other adult volunteers.

I am a member of two different local woodturning chapters, Ohio Valley Woodturners Guild and Central Ohio Woodturners. It is my desire to use my acquired skills to improve the AAW and to ensure the safe growth of its finances, regardless of what conditions the financial markets might bring upon us.

Jay Brown, Utah



What an honor to be considered as a candidate for an AAW Board position! I highly respect the AAW and would be honored to serve. I love woodturning!

I especially enjoy meeting and learning from other woodturners. Having been a hobby woodworker doing primarily flatwork for many years, I was totally smitten after my sweetheart gave me a lathe as a Christmas gift over twenty-five years ago. I still have a shop full of flatwork tools, but

my heart, time, and attention is always with a lathe.

I have had the privilege of knowing and learning from lots of great turners, starting with Dale Nish. His example of selfless service and freely sharing his knowledge was a great example to me and may be the catalyst for my desire to serve here.

I have been a business owner and employer for thirty-six years in Salt Lake City, where I have long enjoyed membership in my local AAW chapter. I have served in nearly every role there, including doing demos and several years as president. I am a natural problem-solver who enjoys a challenge. As a lifelong volunteer Scouter, I understand knowing

and using resources and teambuilding. I am a people person who enjoys interaction with others from all walks of life.

I have been very involved in teaching and mentoring youth in woodturning and other areas of life. I was fortunate to have been involved with the Utah Woodturning Symposium for many years and served as director of that event for several years.

I am confident that my background and skills will help me to make a meaningful contribution if I am fortunate enough to be elected. Thank you for your service in whatever ways you choose, and for your consideration here. My motto: "Let's make and keep it fun!"

Linda Britt, Georgia



After being heavily involved with the 2016 Atlanta Symposium, and as a volunteer at other AAW Symposia, I realized I would like to further contribute to the continued success

of the AAW. The business part of a large non-profit is essential, and certain skills are important to its survival. I believe my work and volunteer experience have provided me with the skills required to be an active participant on the Board.

During my forty years with the U.S. District Court in Florida and the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals (Atlanta, Georgia), I held

increasingly responsible positions, including assistant financial disbursing officer, assistant systems manager, and I retired as the IT and procurement specialist at the 11th Circuit. There, I managed a million-dollar annual budget, including issuing RFQs and processing payments. I managed automation training for all staff and the deployment of automation hardware and software in three states. At both Courts, I planned large conferences for federal judges, clerks of court, court staff, the Federal Court Clerks Association, and automation managers.

I have been active with the Georgia Association of Woodturners for fifteen-plus years, first as executive board secretary and now on our symposium

committee. I was board secretary and membership chair of my local Cultural Arts Council (CAC). I am on the Gallery Committee at the CAC and the Douglas County commissioner's office, curating and installing revolving art exhibits for the CAC, the county courthouse, the Douglasville mayor's office, a public library, and other local agencies. I frequently judge area art shows, including the annual student art exhibit for U.S. Congressman David Scott's office. For over ten years, I have been president of the Douglas County Art Guild.

It is exciting to anticipate being part of the planning and execution of the future goals of the AAW. I would appreciate your support and vote.

Rick Baker, Pennsylvania



As I come to the end of my first term, I thought a review of my contributions to AAW would be a good way for you to determine if I deserve your vote to serve another term.

I redesigned the audio/visual systems used in the annual Symposium demo rooms, published the instructions on how I made the camera boom, and made the plans available free on the AAW website. I participate in visits to possible future symposium sites to determine their viability and make room layout drawings of each

demo room so rooms are used efficiently. At each Symposium, I manage the setup and operation of the A/V systems. I developed a training program for the Symposium videographers to improve the audience experience. I redesigned the rotation grid in the Symposium handout book to make it more user-friendly.

As chair of the Safety Committee, I rewrote the AAW safety procedures to help new and inexperienced turners turn safely, and I review all videos that are put into AAW's online Video Source to make sure they adhere to the safety procedures.

As a member of the Contracts Committee, I evaluate all large contracts to make sure AAW gets a fair deal. Currently, I

am reorganizing the Board handbook—the document that lays out how the association functions, AAW's playbook.

I am the president and a founding member of the Mid Atlantic Woodturning Symposium.

As we move forward in these uncertain times, I will use my experience in founding and heading a meeting services business for forty-two years to help AAW navigate the precarious times ahead. My company survived the economic downturns of the past, which gave me the knowledge to help the association thrive in unpredictable times.

If you feel I should continue on the Board, I would appreciate your vote.

Willie Simmons, Virginia



I accidentally became a woodturner when I needed to make replacement parts for furniture repairs while working for my father restoring antiques. As a profit-

able small business owner and craftsman for the last forty years and newly retired as a magistrate, I now find myself running for the AAW Board.

I first joined my local club nearly thirty years ago to access demonstration tapes and improve my skills. Along with access to videos, I also found a like-minded cohort

of turners who invested in me through their time, loaning tools, offering critiques, and connecting me to the larger AAW community. I've served multiple terms as president and program director in my local club and attended dozens of regional and national symposia and demonstrations. I am an infinitely better woodturner as a result of this sharing.

I believe my career as a magistrate has prepared me to make impartial decisions on behalf of the organization and am prepared to make AAW an even stronger organization and introduce woodturning to a new generation.

For me, woodturning has always been primarily a business and I would bring this

mindset and a different view to the Board. Running a business requires thinking about your market, and what they need. We need to recognize that woodturning is expensive, and this presents a real barrier for anyone interested. As a Board member, I will focus on improving the existing fundamentals program by offering more partnerships through local clubs, vocational programs, demonstrations, etc., so people of all ages can try woodturning. Some folks will have a new appreciation for the work and buy our turnings as art. Others will want to join us, but regardless, providing more introductions to turning will strengthen the organization for the next generation.

I'd be honored to receive your vote. ■

Prize Drawing for AAW Members

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

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

At the end of 2020, we will draw another name from our membership roster to give away a Powermatic 3520C lathe. That winner will name a local chapter to win either a JET 1642 or five JET mini-lathes. The Powermatic and JET lathes are donated by Powermatic/JET. Free shipping is included within the continental USA; international winners will be responsible for shipping costs from the U.S.

2020 Donors

(Others may be added during the year.)

Vendors

- Powermatic/JET (jpwindustries.com/brands) Lathes
- Backgate Industries (backgateindustries.com) Salt/Pepper Mill Kits
- David Ellsworth (ellsworthstudios.com) Set of four DVDs
- Mike Mahoney (bowlmakerinc.com) 16 oz. utility oil
- Thompson Lathe Tools (thompsonlathetools.com) \$100 gift certificates
- Hunter Tool Systems (huntertoolsystems.com) \$100 gift certificates
- Trent Bosch (trentbosch.com) Trent Bosch DVDs
- Nick Cook Woodturner (nickcookwoodturner.com) Nick Cook DVDs
- Glenn Lucas (glennlucaswoodturning.com) Series of 5 DVDs "Mastering Woodturning"
- Niles Bottle Stoppers (nilesbottlestoppers.com) Gift certificates
- Rockler Woodworking and Hardware (rockler.com) Gift certificate
- Preservation Solutions (preservation-solutions.com) Gift certificates
- Carter and Son Toolworks (carterandsontoolworks.com) Gift certificates
- AAW (woodturner.org) *Getting Started in Woodturning* (books)
- Totally Turning Symposium (woodworker.org/about-totally-turning) Symposium registrations

2020 Best Chapter Newsletter/Best Chapter Website Contest Results

Congratulations to the following AAW local chapters for winning the website contest:

1st Place

New Mexico Woodturners
nmwoodturners.org
Dave Stein, Webmaster



2nd Place

Association of Revolutionary Turners
www.revolutionary-turners.com
Catherine Francis, Webmaster



3rd Place

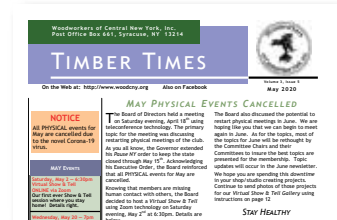
Tennessee Association of Woodturners
tnwoodturners.org
Jeff Brockett, Webmaster



Congratulations to the following AAW local chapters for winning the newsletter contest:

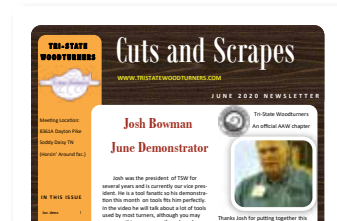
1st Place

Woodworkers of Central New York, Inc.
woodcny.org
Barbara Raymond-LaPrease, Editor



2nd Place

Tristate Woodturners
tristatewoodturners.com
John Dekle, Editor



3rd Place

South Plains Woodturners
southplainswoodturners.org
Michael Woodard, Editor



Want to enter next year's competition? Visit tiny.cc/chapterwinners to find contest rules and to submit your newsletter or website. Links to the websites of past and present winners are also posted on this webpage.

Correction

On page 9 of Malcolm Zander's article in the June 2020 issue of *American Woodturner* (vol 35, no 3), "Betty Scarpino: 2020 AAW Honorary Lifetime Member," we included a reference and link to an excellent video, *Signatures in Wood*, featuring Betty Scarpino and others. However, we regrettably failed to note that the video was created and produced by Pam Vogt, a long-time AAW member.



I am a 93-year-old resident of a retirement community, and due to COVID-19, I am no longer able to work in our community woodshop, where I had spent about three hours each morning turning. I have been an active member of the Baltimore Area Turners for many years but had to stop attending meetings, as I found night driving increasingly difficult. But it was through the club that I learned of the AAW and its *American Woodturner* journal.

Faced with much extra time, I turned to the AAW. Over about two weeks, I scanned old issues, going back to vol 1, no 1. I could see the flow of new ideas, the development of sub-groups, and, from time to time, similar educational articles. There have been many book reviews over the years. Ray Hooper's and Peter Child's books were given good reviews, so I purchased them through my second-hand book site for about \$5.00 each.

To further pass the time, I have been collecting brown paper bags, cutting them into squares, and laminating them with homemade wheat paste to make blocks some 3½" (9cm) thick, out of which I will turn a bowl when I am allowed to be back in the shop. Here is a bowl I turned from paulownia, 12" (30cm) in diameter. It is very light but strong and makes a good salad bowl.

—J. Courtland Robinson, Maryland



The Seattle Woodturners were as surprised as anyone by the arrival of COVID-19 and the resultant impacts. However, we were fortuitously in the right place at the right time and were quickly able to host a direct streaming presentation from a national demonstrator. We had planned to have our first remote demo in early March 2020 with Cindy Drozda, but that would have required our high-risk membership to gather in close proximity to view it. Instead, we ended up doing a purely virtual meeting, with Cindy streaming direct to all members.

This would not have happened without the support, encouragement, and willingness of Cindy Drozda. In addition, Alan Zenreich (and other members of Lucid Woodturners) had been a primary force over the last couple years, helping us acquire remote demo capability. We had started actively talking about how to reach our members who cannot make meetings regularly, whether from illness, inability to drive at night, or distance.

We also got all our board members up to speed on

Zoom and followed that with a test session for members. This preparation culminated in March's virtual membership meeting and demo. We have about 180 members, with regular physical attendance ranging from seventy to eighty-five. Our first Zoom meeting had more than sixty connections, including some long-time members who hadn't been able to make it to a meeting recently, as well as out-of-town members.

Since that March meeting, we have continued to host remote demonstrators each month, along with virtual "Sawdust Sessions," where we "go" into a local shop, and one of our members provides a demo/discussion. We've continued to have good turnouts and lots of positive feedback. Our biggest current challenge is serving our new/beginning members, since face-to-face and hands-on mentoring sessions are not recommended. In response, we are developing the capability to deliver Zoom-based one-on-one mentoring, and hope to start this activity soon.

—Tim Tibbetts, Seattle Woodturners

Here are some large pendants I have made to give to friends. Usually, I spend the early spring skiing, but, being quarantined, I spent more time in my shop. I have made probably 200 of these and enjoy using hardwoods such as cocobolo, pink ivory, ebony, zebrawood, and orange agate. My shop has been a great place to pass quarantine time.

—Don Wadsworth, Oregon



Exhibition Highlights 50 Years of Peters Valley

From the Ground Up: Peters Valley School of Craft, opening at the Hunterdon Art Museum in Clinton, New Jersey, in October, will examine the fifty-year history of this nationally recognized education center nestled in the Delaware Water Gap National Park. The exhibition will be on view through January 10, 2021.

Peters Valley School of Craft was first proposed as a colony of artists and craftspeople, and the resident blacksmiths, ceramists, fiber artists, metalsmiths, woodworkers, and photographers who populated the site's 18th- and 19th-century buildings created a vibrant community engaged in craft. Woodworking was one of the first studios to open when Peters Valley began in 1970. Major figures in the field regularly taught there, including Sam Maloof, Jere Osgood, and Edgar and Joyce Anderson. Emil Milan, who taught at Peters Valley from 1971 to 1984, became both a formal instructor and informal resident, mentoring

students, assistants, and young residents like Andrew Willner and Karl Seemuller, the wood studio's first two artists-in-residence.

Although the field of woodworking has often been male-dominated, examples of women have been a part of Peters Valley history from nearly the beginning, when Joyce Anderson mentored a young assistant, Carolyn Grew-Sheridan. Carolyn and her husband John Sheridan would go on to found their own furniture studio, Grew-Sheridan Studios, which John recalls as a haven for women working in wood. Continuing in this tradition is Philadelphia-based woodworker and upcoming Peters Valley instructor Janine Wang, who will be among the artists-in-residence, creating her hybrid turned wood and woven baskets in the Hunterdon Art Museum's galleries this November.

"Peters Valley has engaged hundreds of artists and thousands of students over its fifty-year history, yet its story has

never been told," says Curator Elizabeth Essner. *From the Ground Up* captures the vital spirit and historic contributions of this important craft institution. ■

—Brian Kearney, Hunterdon Art Museum

For more, visit petersvalley.org and hunterdonartmuseum.org. And see an informative video, "Peters Valley School of Craft - 50 Years in the Making," at tiny.cc/PetersValley.



Karl Seemuller (designer) and John Sheridan (fabricator), *Fish Rattles*, 1973, Rosewood, walnut, mineral oil, each approx.: 1½" x 7" x 2" (4cm x 18cm x 5cm)

Photo: Mario Gallucci

Collection of John Sheridan

Ron Pursell, Stalwart Club Member

Three years ago, I found myself driving down a long dirt road, past a house located in Southwest Ranches, Florida, to find out what woodturning was all about. I wanted to learn, but this story is not about me—it's about Ron Pursell, a dedicated and generous



Ron Pursell opens his well-equipped backyard shop so he and fellow members of the Gold Coast Woodturners can share their love of woodturning with anyone who wants to learn.

mentor and long-time member of the Gold Coast Woodturners.

As I parked my car, I saw a giant pile of wood and a shop abuzz with activity. Before I knew it, I was face to face with the welcoming smile of Ron. Ron, who I have come to learn, rarely says no. Ron, who recently endured a stroke but made a full recovery and still insists on prepping a piece of wood for you when you visit. He was thrilled to show me around the shop and tell me about woodturning.

I asked Ron about his role in the Gold Coast Woodturners and how this shop came to be. He said about ten years ago, he had a friend who was bored with his life. Ron invited him to his shop, which at the time had two lathes in it. Before he knew it, there was another friend and

another after that. Around that time, Ron was serving as treasurer for the club. They decided to add on to Ron's shop and make it a place where Ron and other club members could mentor new turners. Today, the shop has nine working lathes and every conceivable item a person would need to get started. Ron and other club members are always happy to share their knowledge, time, and skills.

When I asked Ron what he likes most about having the shop in his backyard, he proclaimed, "I just love to teach." And teach he does. I am grateful that I can go to Ron's place to turn a couple times a week and that he helped me and many others catch the woodturning bug. ■

—Lara Baker, Gold Coast Woodturners

Third-Generation Family Tree Keeps on Giving Rick Orr

Black Locust Senior

I was born and raised near downtown Billings, Montana, where my parents owned their first home from 1935 to 1968. My three brothers and I were raised in that small two-bedroom, one-bathroom home. In the backyard, among many trees, was a black locust, which none of us paid much attention to. It was just part of the yard. The one thing I do recall about the tree was the need to pick up the many seedpods it shed each year, a chore that fell to one of us boys. We would come to name that tree Black Locust Senior.

My father had a shop in the basement of a second house, or cottage, at the rear of our property. The shop contained a variety of tools, including a metal lathe, a homemade wood lathe that Dad built, and other equipment. It was there that all us brothers were exposed to wood-working, turning, and generally getting our hands dirty with all types of jobs.

Black Locust Junior

In 1968, my parents sold the property for commercial development and moved to the west end of Billings. That fall, my father planted one of the seeds from Senior in a small pot and later transplanted it to our new backyard. What possessed my dad to keep some of those locust seeds is something I will never know. The new tree, named Junior, flourished, even after being run over with a lawn mower by my brother Tom.

When Junior was mature, my father again collected seeds from its fallen pods and put them away in a plastic film canister. For some unexplained reason, I ended up with possession of the canister. We sold the house after my parents died in 1987, and my brothers and I moved to various places around the U.S. and the world.

Black Locust III

In 1995, I built a new home in the Denver area. There, I planted one of

Junior's seeds in a small pot and later transplanted the seedling in our new backyard. That tree, known to us as Black Locust III, was planted in 2000. Today, it is about 30' (9m) tall with a 6"- (15cm-) diameter base. The tree has been professionally trimmed and shaped at least twice in these twenty years. In an early effort at trimming the tree myself, I saved some small branches, sealed their ends, and stored them for later use.

While looking for projects during the COVID-19 pandemic, I came across those small branches from Black Locust III. They had been stored for almost five years, so I figured the wood should be dry. I turned a series of small, simple lidded boxes for my siblings and for various grandchildren. In each of the boxes, I put some of the family locust tree seeds. I know my parents would be happy with the boxes made from this third-generation tree. And perhaps its seeds will be planted for yet another family tree to be nurtured into maturity. ■

Rick Orr is a past president of the Front Range Woodturners in Denver, Colorado, and a frequent demonstrator at the Rocky Mountain Woodturners Symposium. He lives in the Denver metro area with his wife Lorraine and Black Locust III.



The author stands with Black Locust III, a third-generation family tree.



Family heirloom boxes, turned from trimmings from the multi-generation Orr-family locust tree, contain the seeds for future offspring.



"Woodturning has been a stress-reliever for us."

Tips

Handled needle unclogs glue bottles

If you use much cyanoacrylate (CA) glue in your woodturning, you probably have encountered a clogged tip on the glue bottle. I find that a size 14 to 19 sewing machine needle works great to open the clogged tip. (Be sure to use a sharp needle, not a ballpoint needle.) A turned wood handle and a plastic cap are great additions for safe use of this tool.

For a cap, I found an old ballpoint pen cap and turned a tenon on the wood handle sized to accept it with a friction fit. Drill an appropriately sized hole to accept the needle, and glue it in using medium or thick CA glue. Now you have a tool that can be stored safely and is always ready to keep your CA glue flowing.

—Gary Gobel, Virginia



Headlight polishing pad as sanding mandrel

Many turners use hook-and-loop sanding disks mounted on a pad for power sanding. However, keeping a supply of hook-and-loop disks is an expense I found a way to avoid. If you've ever brought the clarity back to the headlights of your car, chances are you have an essential tool for rotary sanding: the drill-powered polishing pad from a headlight kit. That pad, an electric drill, a can of spray adhesive, a pair of scissors, and a variety of sandpaper grits make up an inexpensive sanding kit.

Use the polishing pad to mark a circle on the underside of the sandpaper, then cut out the sanding disk with scissors. Attach this disk to the polishing pad with spray adhesive. Chuck the pad stem into your drill and sand away. I found that my purchase of a headlight kit paid for itself in a short time.

—James Putnam, Wisconsin



Mirror allows easier belt view

I hope to someday have an electronic variable-speed lathe. For now, however, I have to adjust the drive belts manually to change lathe speeds. To do this, I had to almost stand on my head to see into the small rear-facing drive-belt access door. I solved this problem by cutting a small mirror and attaching it with double-sided tape to the inside of the access door. This makes it easier to see and change belt positions. A side benefit is being able to visually confirm the belts are seated properly.

—Bill Wells, Washington



Bandsaw blade cleaning

In the April 2020 issue of AW (vol 35, no 2), I saw Kevin Gustafson's helpful Tip about using a water heater pan when cleaning bandsaw blades. Rather than using a purchased cleaning solution, I use hot water, which is environmentally safe. Heat the water as hot as you can get it; even hot tap water works. Tree sap is sugar based, so hot water can effectively dissolve the residue buildup on blades. After soaking the blade in hot water, brush off any remaining gum using a nylon brush. An added benefit is that the blade will air-dry easily due to the heat. Simple and cheap.

—Lyndal Anthony, Iowa

Micro faceplates for the job at hand

It can be challenging to mount small objects on the lathe when all you have is a large lathe and faceplate. My lathe spindle has M33 threads, and the smallest faceplate currently available for it is about 4" (10cm) in diameter. My solution is to use either a spindle adapter or the much rarer Morse taper adapter to reduce the spindle size to $\frac{3}{4}$ " (19mm), 16 tpi. It is very easy to find 2" (5cm) faceplates that will fit this spindle size.

These smaller faceplates are much less expensive than larger ones. Or you can make your own at no expense. I have filled a basket with permanently mounted fixtures, like jam chucks and pin chucks, and I have several more with pre-mounted wasteblocks at the ready.

—David Staeheli, Alaska



A Morse taper adapter (left center) and spindle adapter (right center) allow for the use of small faceplates on a larger lathe.

Tailstock and banjo storage

I often have to remove the tailstock and banjo from my lathe to create space for sanding and finishing. In order to store these heavy lathe accessories safely, I converted an old rolling cart into a custom holder. In addition to the tailstock and banjo, there is storage for a straight and curved toolrest. The size and configuration of the cart could be adapted easily to accommodate different accessories.

When the items are not needed at the lathe, it is easy to place them securely on the cart and roll them to a safe location.

—Dex Hallwood, British Columbia, Canada



Finish saver

It can be frustrating to open a partially used can of finish to find the contents skimmed over. To prevent this, I seal the surface with a thin piece of plastic before closing the can. Next time I open the can and remove the plastic, I'm assured of a skim-free liquid finish.

—Tim Heil, Minnesota



Octagonal template cuts corners

Lots of people use circular templates to mark and cut out turning blanks. When I make a plate or shallow bowl out of dimensional lumber, I just cut the corners off my blanks before turning. I have found that an octagonal template allows me to mark several blanks quickly, showing where the corners need to be cut off.

After marking the blanks, I use a simple jig that allows me to cut the corners off my blanks at the table saw. The jig is just a piece of $\frac{3}{4}$ "- (19mm-) thick plywood that safely holds the blank at 45 degrees and rides along the saw fence.

—Carl Ford, New York



Calendar of Events

Send event info to editor@woodturner.org. October issue deadline: August 15.
See AAW's online Calendar at tiny.cc/AAWCalendar.

Canada

July 16–19, 2021, Saskatchewan Woodturners Symposium, Regina Trades and Skills Centre, Regina. Sponsored by the South Saskatchewan Woodturning Guild, this event features an instant gallery, wine and cheese gathering, banquet, lunches, auction, and demonstrations. Demonstrators to include Jean-François Escoulen, Nick Agar, Jason Breach, Michael Hoseluk, and others. Early registration cutoff is March 31, 2021. For the latest information, visit southsaskwoodturners.ca.

Colorado

2020 CANCELLATION NOTICE: Due to the health risks associated with COVID-19, Rocky Mountain Woodturning Symposium, originally scheduled for September 18–20, 2020, at the The Ranch Larimer County Fairgrounds in Loveland, has been cancelled. Organizers have already scheduled next year's event for September 17–19, 2021. For more, visit rmwoodturningsymposium.com.

Minnesota

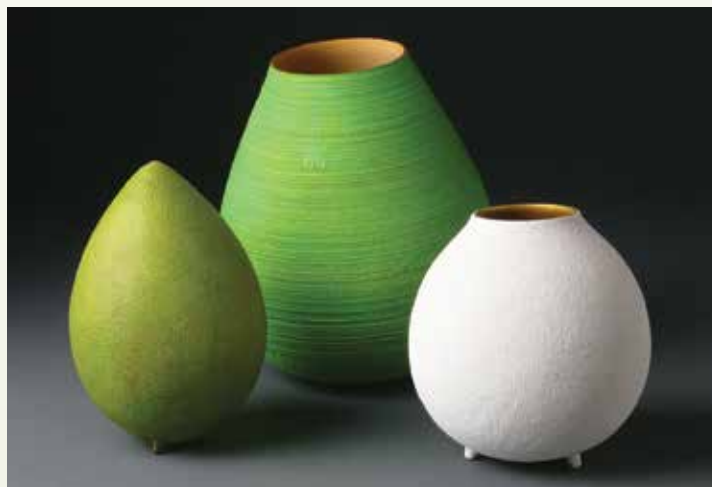
Multiple exhibitions, AAW's Gallery of Wood Art, Landmark Center, Saint Paul:
• September 8–December 29, 2020: *Step up to the Plate—Second Inning* (annual AAW-member exhibition).

Leon Thomas,

Untitled Vessels,
2005-2006, Fruitwood,
acrylic paint, largest:
7" x 6" (18cm x 15cm)

AAW Permanent
Collection, donated by
Lois Laycraft in memory
of Frank Sudol

Photo: Tib Shaw/AAW



- Ongoing displays: *Touch This!* family-friendly education room; *Art from the Lathe—Selections from the Permanent Collection*; gallery gift shop; and vintage and reproduction lathes.

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

Montana

2020 CANCELLATION NOTICE: Due to the health risks associated with COVID-19, Yellowstone Woodturners Symposium, originally scheduled for September 19, 20, 2020, at the Roaring 20's Club House in Billings, has been cancelled. For more, visit yellowstonewoodturners.org or call Tim Morgan at 406-690-8730 or Dr. Van at 406-545-0777.

New Jersey

October 4, 2020–January 10, 2021, *From the Ground Up: Peters Valley School of Craft*, an exhibition highlighting the impact and history of the 50-year-old school, Hunterdon Art Museum, Clinton. The show includes works in various media and multiple artists-in-residence. Woodworker Janine Wang, current visiting instructor at Peters Valley,

will focus on woven and turned baskets during her residency in November. Other artists include Karl Seemuller, John Sheridan, Carolyn Grew-Sheridan, Joyce Anderson, Emil Milan, and Andrew Willner. Curated by Elizabeth Essner. For more, visit hunterdonartmuseum.org.

Pennsylvania

CANCELLATION NOTICE: Due to the health risks associated with COVID-19, the 5th annual Mid Atlantic Woodturning Symposium, previously scheduled for September 25–27, 2020, at the Lancaster Marriott Hotel and Convention Center, has been cancelled. For more, visit mawts.com.

Tennessee

CANCELLATION NOTICE: Out of an abundance of caution for the health and safety of attendees, demonstrators, vendors, and symposium volunteers related to COVID-19, the Tennessee Association of Woodturners 33rd Annual Woodturning Symposium, originally scheduled for January 29 and 30, 2021, has been cancelled. Please visit tnwoodturners.org, symposium tab, for information and updates about the 2022 symposium, January 28 and 29, 2022.

Texas

2020 CANCELLATION NOTICE: Due to the health risks associated with COVID-19, the SWAT (Southwest Association of Turners) annual symposium, originally scheduled for August 28–30, 2020, at the Texas Convention Center in Waco, has been cancelled. For more, visit swaturners.org.

Virginia

2020 CANCELLATION NOTICE: Due to the health risks associated with COVID-19, the Virginia Woodturners Symposium, originally scheduled for November 7, 8, 2020, at Expoland in Fishersville, has been cancelled. Organizers are planning the next event for November 2022. For more, visit virginiawoodturners.com. ■

A Quick GLOSS FINISH *on the Lathe*

Jay Shepard

Photos by Dawne Gardiska.



I overheard some people talking about the finish on one of my pieces displayed in an instant gallery. “It’s wipe-on poly,” one person said. The others around him accepted his comment and moved along. In fact, the finish was a sprayed-on water-based lacquer. I had applied multiple coats, well over twelve, and wet-sanded and buffed it to a glossy mirror finish. The questioning of my finish got me thinking and led me to experiment further with water-based lacquer. Ultimately, I discovered I could achieve a fine finish much faster using a wipe-on version of water-based lacquer.

Shopmade wipe-on lacquer

I was curious—just what is “wipe-on” poly and why did those viewers think it was my finish? Well, it is polyurethane that has been thinned with mineral spirits to make it easier to wipe on. (You can easily make your own at a reduced cost by thinning polyurethane with mineral spirits.) Wipe-on poly can be applied while your work is still on the lathe. It dries fairly quickly for subsequent coats, but you’ll have to wait longer to begin sanding and buffing (at least the next day, depending on humidity). Also, it is spirit based, so there is a toxicity factor to consider. You’ll want to wear

a respirator while using it. There are some water-based wipe-on finishes on the market, but at \$20 a pint, I thought I could do better.

I have been a water-based lacquer user. And while people admire my finishes, most admit they don’t have the time or patience for my spray, sand, and buff method. While water-based lacquer has worked well for me and is very safe, the appeal of a wipe-on finish that I could apply on the lathe sounded attractive and worth investigating.

The “solvent” for water-based finishes is, well, water. However, if I used water to thin the lacquer, it wouldn’t dry any faster and in fact might take longer. So I asked myself, what else could I thin my water-based lacquer with that flashes quickly, is safe to use, and would leave the surface dry enough to accept subsequent coats? Denatured alcohol! It is hygroscopic (it likes water) and evaporates fairly quickly.

I thinned my water-based lacquer 50% with denatured alcohol and gave it a try on a test piece. I applied it to the piece with the lathe turning at 1200 to 1500 rpm. The higher speed created some friction, and the heat generated helped evaporate both the water and the alcohol. Great! In less than a minute, the first coat was applied and

dried! On went the second coat. Dry. Then the third and fourth and fifth. The later coats were applied lightly, without as much pressure. The spinning of the piece seemed to generate “wind” that helped dry the finish. Going beyond a sixth coat provided diminishing returns, so that felt like a good place to stop.

At this point, I checked the finish. It felt a little cool, indicating the alcohol was still evaporating, so I let it spin a little longer.

I then tried to sand the test piece. I used wet/dry sandpaper dry, starting with 400 grit, with the piece still spinning on the lathe, but now at less than 500 rpm. The result was a fine white powder, which meant the finish was dry enough to be sanded, leveled, and buffed. My experiment worked! I followed with successive grits through 2000. The sanding took only a light touch, as I didn’t want to sand through the finish.

The next step was to buff out the lacquer, resulting in a high-gloss finish.

My previous finishing method—spraying on multiple coats (up to twenty), letting the finish dry, wet-sanding, and buffing—was a multi-day event. Now I have found that water-based lacquer thinned with ►

Sand the outside



The author uses a random-orbit sander hooked up to a vacuum to prepare the wood surface on the outside of the vessel.

denatured alcohol, wiped on, allows me to achieve a gloss finish in fifteen to thirty minutes. While this finish isn't as perfect as a sprayed finish, it offers a very high-quality look in a fraction of the time.

Drawbacks

Note that if the alcohol-thinned lacquer were applied to a surface that was colored with an alcohol-based dye, the dye would smear. Second, the build-up with this method is not as thick as a sprayed finish, so the protection the lacquer provides is not as strong. Be cautious when sanding so you don't sand through the thinner finish.

I have also noticed, not surprisingly, that this finish dries much faster in lower-humidity conditions. In months with higher humidity, I help the drying along with a heat gun. But if you try this, be careful not to overheat your piece, as it could blister or otherwise damage the surface. That said, if you want a quick high-gloss finish that looks really good, give this a try.

Sand the inside



Sand the inside using a hemostat, clamping sandpaper around a wad of cloth. Move the angle of the sandpaper to match the angle of the inside contour.

A sample project

Sanding

The key to success with all finishes is surface preparation. Get as smooth a cut off the tool as you can, then sand. I use a random-orbit sander, progressing to 400 grit (*Photo 1*). If you use sandpaper by hand, you could leave circular scratches around the piece that will be visible under the finish. I find the random-orbit sander, with the lathe spinning at about 500 rpm, eliminates that concern.

If you are turning a hollow vessel, sand the inside with 80 to 120-grit abrasive (*Photos 2, 3*). That should provide a surface that is smooth to the touch.

When you are satisfied with the quality of the surface, partially cut the foot, leaving a stem connecting the piece to the tenon portion of the wood. Sand the foot to the same grit as you did on the main body of the piece (*Photos 4, 5*).

Turn and sand the foot



Turn down the foot and prepare it for finishing.

A shopmade finishing recipe



6 Mix water-based lacquer and denatured alcohol in a 50/50 ratio.

Finishing

The water-based lacquer I use is Hydrocote Resisthane Plus, gloss finish, from Hood Finishing Products. Thin the lacquer 50% with denatured alcohol (*Photo 6*). Once you mix it, keep the container sealed. Alcohol evaporates quickly.

Turn your lathe speed up to 1200 to 1500 rpm. Apply the thinned lacquer with a cloth, being careful not to wrap the cloth around your fingers (*Photo 7*). When the surface feels dry to the touch, apply subsequent coats, testing for dryness between coats. Apply moderate pressure for the first few coats and gentle pressure for the final few coats.

After the sixth coat of lacquer, let the piece spin on the lathe until thoroughly dry. The presence of alcohol will make the surface feel cold; wait until the surface feels dry to the touch and not cold. Ambient air temperature and humidity will dictate just how long it will take the lacquer to dry. If you try this method, your drying time may vary because of these factors.

After you have built up the lacquer finish, it is time to sand it with a high-quality wet/dry sandpaper, using it dry. Start at 400 to 600 grit and proceed to 2000. The lathe should be turning slowly, at about 500 rpm or less (*Photo 8*). Use very light pressure and keep

Apply and sand the finish



7 With the lathe spinning fairly quickly, apply multiple coats of the “wipe-on” lacquer, allowing them to dry to the touch between applications.



8 With the lathe turning slowly, sand the lacquer with a light touch, using a fine-grit abrasive. If the finish is sufficiently dry, this will produce a fine white powder.

Complete the foot



9 With the vessel reverse-mounted on a jam chuck and the tailstock brought up for support, carefully complete the turning of the foot. Sand and apply lacquer to the foot.

the sandpaper moving. A fine white powder should be coming off as you sand. You want to smooth the surface of the lacquer, not remove it, so apply gentle pressure. The finish should look even and smooth after sanding.

Next, remove the piece from the lathe and reverse-mount it so you can complete the turning of the foot (*Photo 9*). Finish the foot by sanding lightly, then apply a few coats of the diluted lacquer.

The final step in the process is buffing. I spin the buff at around 1000 rpm on my lathe (*Photo 10*). I begin with a Tripoli compound on the wheel, then white diamond, and finally carnauba wax.

Buff the finish



10 Run the buffing wheel at about 1000 rpm. Hold the piece securely.

I discovered that by adding denatured alcohol to water-based lacquer, I could create a “wipe-on” lacquer finish that can be fully applied, sanded, and buffed very quickly. Give it a try! It’s a great solution if you are short on time but want a nice, high-gloss finish. ■

Jay Shepard lives in Olympia, Washington, and is a member of Woodturners of Olympia. He has an MFA from Arizona State University. While Jay has become known for his polychrome, high-gloss turnings, he also enjoys turning simple bowls and creating pieces with multiple turned parts.

TURNUED RIBBONS *Demystified*



A ribbon streptohedron, turned on the lathe.

David Springett Drawings by Robin Springett.

A “closed,” or solid, streptohedron



The ribbon form’s inspiration, a solid streptohedron, based upon a hexagon. The author’s challenge: how to make an “open” form version?

I was playing with split turnings to produce streptohedrons, or twisted polyhedrons. These geometric solids, whose cross-section has rotational symmetry, create interesting shapes when split, twisted and re-joined.

Photo 1 shows a solid streptohedron based upon a hexagon. When I showed the finished example to a mathematician friend, he asked if it could be turned without a center (“hollow”). What did he know? He was no turner—it would be impossible. But that question caused me to change my thinking, and I will always be grateful to him for it.

I made the streptohedron shown in *Photo 1* from a simple turned form that I had glued up from two pieces of wood with a newspaper glue joint, so I could split it into two equal parts without losing any wood. I realized that if I turned three rings, two small and one large, each with equal-sided triangular cross sections (*Photo 2*) and those rings were split, twisted, and re-joined, I could create a “ribbon” form. This amounted to the original streptohedron shape but without a center. Here’s how I made it.

Layout

Figure 1 shows that this ribbon form is based on a 3"- (8cm-) diameter circle divided into six equal parts. At 90 degrees to each of the radiating lines a ½" (13mm) line has been drawn. This line is the base of an equal-sided triangle with sides ½" long (colored tan).

Join with separate horizontal lines the top two triangles, the middle two triangles, and the lower two triangles to produce the profiles of rings 3, 1, and 2, respectively. Note that rings 2 and 3 are the same size and shape.

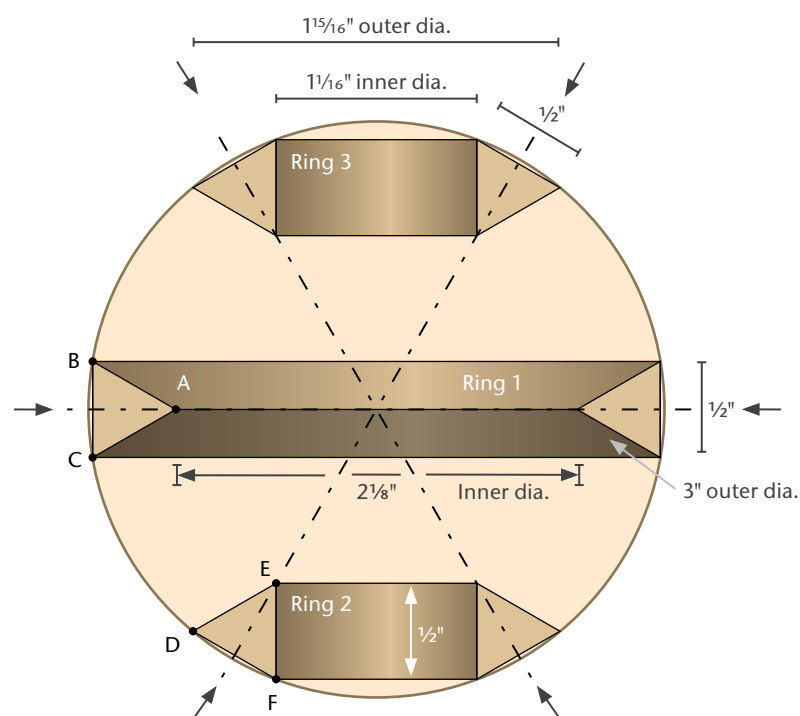
Working from the diagram, turning the three rings is a matter of locating the sets of lettered points ABC and DEF on and inside the blanks, then connecting them to create the ring surfaces. The largest ring can be turned entirely on a small wood faceplate with a dowel center, with the aid of hot-melt glue. The two small rings will need a shopmade support collar to hold them in position on the faceplate. I prefer to finish each new surface as it’s turned, so it can be friction-polished on the lathe.

Prepare ring blanks

Start with three hardwood blanks for the rings:

- One blank for ring 1: 3⅜" (9cm) square by ½" thick
- Two blanks for rings 2 and 3: 2¼" (6cm) square by ½" thick

Elements of a ribbon form



(Left) Figure 1. Diagram indicating the shapes and dimensions of three turned rings, which are halved after turning.

(2) Ribbon elements—turned ring halves triangular in cross-section are the building blocks of an “open” streptohedron.

The blanks need to be halved and reglued with a newspaper glue joint, so they can be broken into two parts after turning without losing any wood. For each blank, mark the centerline, with the grain, in pencil. Bandsaw through the centerline of each blank, then plane each cut face flat, true, and square to the surface.

Re-join the planed edges of each blank with glue and a layer of newspaper between the pieces, and clamp until the glue has dried (*Photo 3*). Make absolutely sure the glued blank is perfectly flat. After the glue has dried, set a compass point on the joint line on the larger blank and mark a $3\frac{3}{8}$ "-diameter circle. Bandsaw on the outer edge of the marked circle. On each of the two smaller blanks, mark a $2\frac{1}{4}$ "-diameter circle. Bandsaw on the outer edge of these marked circles. Finally, at the marked center of all three circular blanks, accurately bore a $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6mm) hole (*Photo 4*). ►

Prepare ring blanks



Glue and clamp blanks with a layer of newspaper in the joint, so you can split them apart later with no loss of wood.



Bandsaw the blanks to the specified diameters, then bore $\frac{1}{4}$ " holes at the center.

Shopmade Faceplate

The ring blanks can be chucked on a simple shopmade faceplate with a center dowel. To make the faceplate, mount a softwood disk $3\frac{3}{4}$ " (10cm) in diameter and $\frac{3}{4}$ " (19mm) thick on a metal faceplate on the lathe. Turn the face flat and true, then true the edge 90 degrees to the face. Bore a $\frac{1}{4}$ " centered hole, and glue a $\frac{1}{4}$ " dowel into the hole, leaving $\frac{3}{8}$ " (9mm) showing. Slightly round over the end of the dowel.



Turn and polish outer edge



5 Mount the blank for ring 1 on the faceplate, inserting the faceplate's dowel into the hole in the blank. Use a scrap ram between the tailstock and the workpiece. Turn the outer edge to 3" diameter, then sand and polish.



6

Turn ring 1

All three rings are turned in the same way, so I'll detail only the first one, the large center ring.

Outer edge and first angled face

Press the largest hardwood blank, for ring 1, onto the central dowel of the faceplate. Between the tailstock center and the blank, fit a small turned piece of wood to act as a non-marring ram. Turn the outer edge to a precise 3" diameter, with the edge 90 degrees to the face. Sand and polish the edge, keeping the corners crisp (Photos 5, 6).

Turn inside the ring



7 Use hot-melt glue to hold the workpiece to the softwood faceplate. This will allow you to remove the tailstock for access.

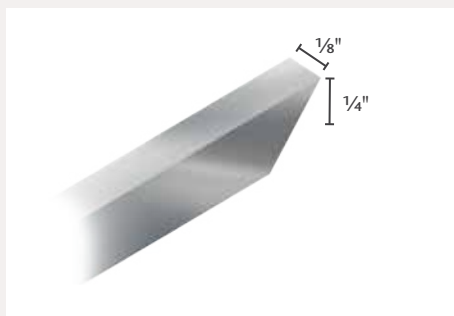


Figure 2. A representation of the author's square-end tool.



8 Use a square-end tool presented on a wide-shelf toolrest to cut 1/4" deep inside ring 1.

Turn first angled face



9 Point A is at the bottom of the turned groove, and point B is the crisp outer edge. Cut the angled face using a small gouge, connecting points A and B.



10



11 Peel off the hot-melt glue so ring 1 can be removed from the faceplate.

Turn second angled face



12 Reverse-mount the partially turned ring, using the faceplate dowel to center and hot-melt glue to hold it in place. Cut the second angled face, just as you did the first.



13



14

To work on the inside of the ring, you'll need to proceed without the tailstock, so use hot-melt glue to weld the edge of the workpiece to the wood faceplate (*Photo 7*). Lay out the central waste area by marking a 2½" (5cm) concentric circle on the face of the workpiece.

I use a small square-end tool, as shown in *Figure 2*. Make a depth mark on the top of the tool, ¼" back from the cutting edge. Set the tool on a wide-shelf toolrest so it cuts at center height and is 90 degrees to the work. On the inside of the pencil line, turn in precisely to the marked depth (*Photo 8*). This will be point A as shown on ring 1 in *Figure 1*.

The outer rim of the blank is point B on *Figure 1*. Turn from point B to point A to create the first correctly angled face (*Photos 9, 10*). Carefully polish the turned face.

Second angled face

To turn the second angled face, from point C to A, reverse-mount the ring on the faceplate. Peel off the hot-melt glue to release the blank (*Photo 11*). Then flip the ring, reposition it on the faceplate dowel, and hot-melt glue it in place.

Mark a 2½" (28mm) concentric circle on the new face of the work. Turn inside this circle to ¼" depth using the square-end tool, as you did on the first side (*Photo 12*). This will locate point

Break apart ring 1



15



16

Ring 1 completely turned, removed from the faceplate, and broken apart at the newspaper glue joint, revealing the triangular cross-section.

A, as before, and will also release the core. Carefully turn from point C, the disk edge, to A. Polish the angled face. Remove the hot-melt glue, and ring 1 is completed (*Photos 13-15*).

The newspaper glue joint can be snapped like a cookie (be careful of short-grain), or a craft knife can be used to ease the joint open. This will expose the equal-sided triangular faces (*Photo 16*). Clean off any newspaper residue. ►

Support collar dimensions

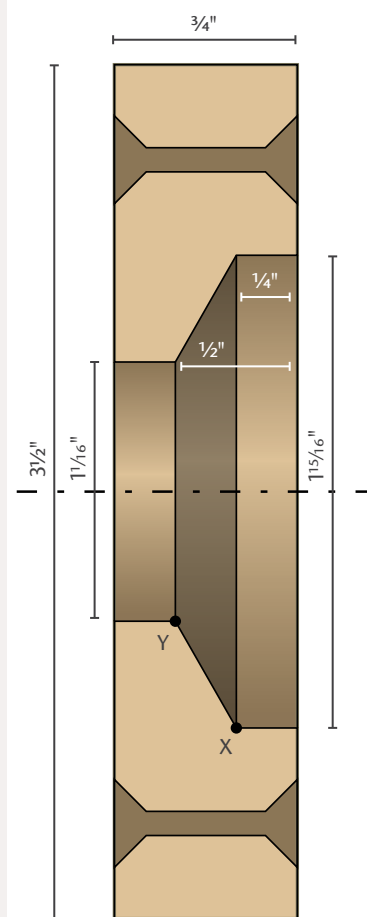


Figure 3. Dimensions and shape of the support collar, turned from softwood scrap screwed to the faceplate.

Turn support collar



17 Fit a support collar blank to the faceplate, centering it on the dowel and screwing it in place.



18 Mark and turn to the depths shown in *Figure 3*. Then connect the dots with a gouge, turning a flat, angled surface.



19 Then connect the dots with a gouge, turning a flat, angled surface.

Collar supports smaller rings



20 Support collar retains partly turned small rings, where hot-melt glue wouldn't suffice.



21 The small rings are broken apart at the newspaper glue joint.



22 The small rings are broken apart at the newspaper glue joint.

Orientation of parts



23 Half rings stood on the *Figure 1* drawing show how the ribbon parts connect.

Turn rings 2 and 3

The two smaller rings, rings 2 and 3 in *Figure 1*, have pointed outer edges that require a support collar to hold them on the wood faceplate, rather than hot-melt glue. Make the collar from a softwood disk $3\frac{1}{2}$ " (9cm) in diameter to the dimensions shown in *Figure 3*.

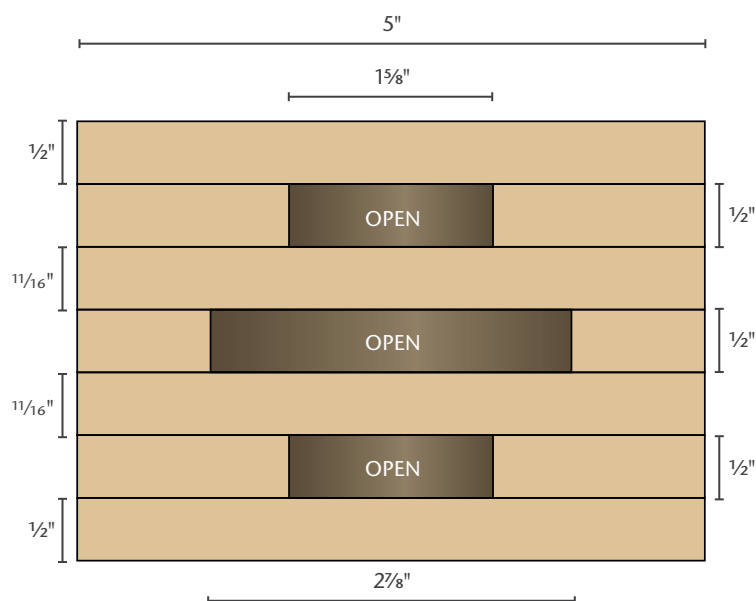
Place a compass point at the marked center to draw a $2\frac{3}{4}$ " (7cm) circle. Mark four points around that circle; drill through and counter-sink both sides for No. 8 screws. At the center of this disk, bore a $\frac{1}{4}$ " hole to fit onto the dowel in the faceplate. Screw it firmly in place (*Photo 17*).

On the exposed face of the collar blank, mark a $1\frac{1}{16}$ " (27mm-) diameter circle. On the inside of that line, using the square-end tool held at 90 degrees to the face, turn to a depth of $\frac{1}{2}$ ". This will locate point Y on *Figure 3*.

Mark a second circle, $1\frac{15}{16}$ " (49mm) diameter, and on the inside of that line, turn to a depth of $\frac{1}{4}$ ". This will be point X on *Figure 3*. Using a gouge, join point X to point Y, making a straight angled face (*Photos 18, 19*).

Remove the screws and turn the collar over. Screw it in place and mark a datum across the faceplate and collar, so the collar can be

Assembly jig



(Left) Figure 4. Dimensions of the ribbon assembly jig.

(24) The assembly jig holds the half-rings in place for gluing.

removed and replaced in the same position. Mark a 1 1/16" circle and turn through on the inside of this line. The support collar is now ready to be used to turn the two smaller rings, which are formed in the same manner as the first, as detailed above. Use the support collar's center hole as a guide to cut the inside of the rings, with the square-end tool, half the thickness from each side (Photos 20-22).

Glue the parts together

Photo 23 shows how the top section of half-rings line up on the lower section, but holding the parts for gluing can be like wrestling an octopus. I glued up blocks to make an assembly jig, Figure 4. The central gap is 1/2" wide by 2 7/8" (7cm) long. The two outer gaps are 1/2" wide by 1 1/8" (41mm) long. The distance between each opening is 11/16". Try a dry run

and make adjustments before gluing (Photo 24).

To strengthen the glue joints, use toothpick "dowels." At the center of each triangular face, drill a hole fractionally larger than the diameter of a toothpick. This will allow for some adjustment while gluing but provide additional strength when the glue dries.

Carefully assemble the parts with masking tape to hold the joints firmly while the glue dries (Photo 25). The glued joints, if they are not perfectly aligned, may need to be sanded to a smooth, seamless line.

These forms have triangular cross-section rings, but there is no reason why other regular polygonal cross-sections could not be used. With so many variables, this example is just the tip of an iceberg containing many interesting forms.

Glue ribbon parts



Masking tape holds the ribbon parts together while the glue dries.

David Springett is a British woodturner known for his inventive creations. He is the author of *Woodturning Wizardry*, *Woodturning Full Circle*, *Woodturning Magic*, and, with Nick Agar, *Woodturning Evolution*. Email David at davidbspringett@gmail.com.

GILDING 101 FOR WOODTURNERS:

Finishing with Real Gold



*Brides of a
Thousand Nights*
by AB Word

Barrie Lynn Bryant

One way to add value and panache to your woodturning projects is to use real gold as an accent or as your entire finish. Several years into my career as a picture frame designer and maker, I got hooked on the beauty of gilding by adhering whisper-thin gold leaf sheets to some of my frames. I soon began studying the ancient art of gilding and discovered how simple and versatile the process is and that it has been practiced for nearly five millennia to beautify and glorify objects.

The real thing

When I discovered gilding in 1999, I called my local arts and crafts store to research gold leaf. I learned that they carried “gold leaf,” but I was only able to purchase base-metal imitation gold leaf, which is essentially brass, as well as copper leaf, fake silver leaf (aluminum),

and the ever-intriguing but still base-metal imitation, variegated leaf. The store even sold me a quick adhesive white liquid, so I could apply the leaf to decorative objects and to my frames. And the store also stocked a gold leaf sealant to apply over the leafed surface, so the base metals in this brass alloy imitation leaf would not tarnish so easily.

That was all well and good for what it was. However, imitation leaf, no matter how we view it, is so far from being real gold or even looking like it. Imitation gold has a shiny

trumpet-brass look

to it. Sure,

imitation leaf can be toned to look more like real gold, but eventually the base metals will discolor and darken to a browner shade of brass, no matter how well it is sealed. The real thing—precious metal karat gold leaf—will always look like real gold because it is real gold.

Perhaps the main reason precious metal leaf isn't the first choice for many is that it is available from only a handful of suppliers. Arts and crafts stores mostly handle lesser expensive merchandise

Precious Metal Gold Leaf Suppliers

• Easy Leaf Products
nnigroup.com

• Sepp Leaf Products
seppleaf.com

• W&B Gold Leaf
wbgoldleaf.com

• Sinopia
sinopia.com

to make it more attractive to hobbyists. Further, precious metal leaf costs about sixteen times the cost of imitation leaf. But think of the cost in relation to how you value your woods for turning. We want more interesting and exotic woods with character so that our turning projects aren't dull. Using real gold and other precious metal leaf will have the same effect as choosing finer quality woods.

Wood for gilding

Just about any kind of wood is suitable for gilding. That doesn't mean you'd want to cover large areas of a madrone burl with gold. I usually select inexpensive, straight-grained softer woods for gilding, such as basswood or poplar. Both are great choices for spindle and bowl turning, and basswood is especially suitable for carving ornamental details off the lathe. This kind of decoration is especially suited for gilding.

Since I am a picture frame maker, I also use medium density fiberboard (MDF) for turning round picture frames, called tondos. Some might balk at choosing MDF as a turning material, but with proper safety precautions, such as using particulate dust filters rated for MDF, the woodworking experience can still be safe and enjoyable. Because I completely cover the MDF over with gold, it doesn't matter that it's MDF. The goal is to use the gilding entirely as the finish.

Sometimes red- or yellow-colored woods can be good choices because the natural colors in the wood help the gold radiate more brightly. Historically, gilding has been used over the top of red and yellow clay grounds. Modern gilders mostly follow suit with this practice, unless they are creating signs on glass. Glass gilding is an expansive subject itself, where gold is applied directly to the surface in order for it to shine brightly in perfect golden glory. Otherwise, for the most part, gilders apply gold over surfaces they have properly prepared and finished with a red- or

Add color under gold leaf



(1, 2) Contemporary picture frame makers often continue the Italian Renaissance tradition of using yellow ochre and oxide red under their gilding. The red is usually applied to the tops of details so that distressing of the gold surface will allow the red to peek through.

Gilding over oak



Gilding directly over oak wood with minimal surface preparation will show the wood grain.

Smooth surface = bright gilding



A highly polished and sealed surface of a tondo, ready for gilding.

yellow-colored ground, and sometimes a combination of both (Photos 1, 2).

Another interesting choice is oak, with its distinct, visible grain pattern. During the Victorian period in England, in the 1860s, the artist George Frederick Watts applied gold directly over the oak grain of his picture frames so the grain could be seen clearly through the gold¹. That innovation created another aesthetic trend in gilding and picture framing. Other decorative patterns had been

used under gold, but not the distinct oak or other wood grain pattern (Photo 3).

Prepare the surface

For most gilding, we labor over surface preparation in order for the gold to have an ultra smooth surface upon which to be applied. Surfaces that are blemish-free and polished will render the gold at its brightest (Photo 4). Blemishes and unpolished surfaces will create interference beneath the gold, dulling its final appearance. ►

Burnish Sealer prepares small projects



5 Yellow Dux Burnish Sealer is a great choice for surfacing finials and small decorative objects prior to gilding.

There are several ways to achieve a good surface, and your chosen method will depend on the gilding type being employed. The longstanding traditional method of gilding is called water gilding. The other, more modern, choice is mordant size gilding with oil-based gold leaf size. In this article, I describe both types but focus in more detail on mordant size gilding since it is the simplest and most versatile approach.

Water gilding method

The traditional method to accomplish the brightest gild possible was defined by Cennino Cennini during the Italian Renaissance in *The Craftsman's Handbook* (*Il Libro Dell' Arte*) of 1437 (translated by Daniel V. Thompson, Jr., Dover Publications, 2016). Cennini's process, which gilders have adapted for modern use, involves combining a rabbit skin glue solution with a gilder's whiting or calcium carbonate to make a fine gesso. After applying numerous coats of gesso, the rabbit skin glue solution is mixed with bole

Brushes and gilding size



6



7

Common inexpensive golden and white taklon synthetic fiber brushes, in various widths, are great for gilding. Dux Paint Co. gold leaf oil-based size will gum up around the can opening, and partially full cans of Quick Dry type will usually skin over during storage. Remove skin and stir the contents of every can before applying size.

(a fine, compact earthy clay), applied to the surface, and polished. The gilder then floods the surface with water and applies gold directly to it. This is done multiple times, until the gilding is completed. After the surface is completely dry, the gilder can burnish the surface to a mirror finish.

Water gilding might be the method we should all aspire to. It is the finest method but also the most challenging.

Oil gilding method

Mordant size gilding with an oil-based gold leaf size is simpler to accomplish, quite beautiful, and rewarding nonetheless. It is also more versatile than water gilding since it can be used for exterior applications, such as on state capitol domes and outdoor sculptures, on business signs, for pinstriping automobiles, and for naming boats on their hulls. Unlike water gilding, oil gilding cannot be burnished to a mirror finish; it will have a bright matte sheen. But there are techniques to help improve its radiance, and laboring over surface preparation is once again the first step to achieving a brighter oil gild.

The same shopmade gesso used in water gilding can be used in oil

gilding, too. I do this often because the gesso works well on larger surface areas requiring superior preparation. Rabbit skin glue and calcium carbonate gesso does this best. You could also use a burnt sienna casein paint in much the same way, as casein also sands smoothly and easily. But for smaller surfaces like woodturned objects, an alkyd oil-based primer such as Dux Paint Company's Yellow and Red Burnish Sealer will simplify the process and work very well. The Dux products are made for the gilding industry and are especially suited for gilding smaller wood projects, such as small finials and ornaments (*Photo 5*). Since the Dux Burnish Sealer is an oil-based product, it is necessary to allow for at least four hours of drying time before applying a second coat or moving on to the next gilding step.

I am careful to avoid smudging the surface during this period, but I do inspect it for blemishes and brush strokes. You can lightly buff the surface with the palm of your hand to smooth it and begin to polish the alkyd paint. Once I'm certain the burnish sealer is dry, I'll use a fine oil-free steel wool to lightly smooth and polish the surface.

Apply size



8



9



10

Polish the sealed surface with oil-free 0000 steel wool and remove any dust and debris before applying gold leaf size with a brush. Check for proper tack by placing the back of your finger on the surface and slowly pulling it off.

A fine mesh sanding screen (like 400-grit Abranet) can also be used to smooth any blemishes.

When I am satisfied with the polishing, I seal the surface with a 1-pound cut of shellac. This prevents the oil-based size from soaking into the burnish sealer unevenly. Dewaxed shellac works best, and I often use Zinsser Seal Coat combined with denatured alcohol to make my “cuts.” Shellac dries within a few hours and can be buffed and polished then, but I usually let it dry at least overnight before continuing with gilding.

Smaller spindle-turned projects can also be sealed with cyanoacrylate (CA) glue or shellac and polished to a mirror finish on the lathe before gilding. The ability to seal and polish projects quickly at the lathe is a benefit unique to woodturners. It is an advantage in gilding since the more polished a surface is under the gold, the brighter the gilding will appear.

Oil-based gold leaf size is a type of varnish that, once completely dry, offers a high-gloss sheen. Dux Paint Company manufactures oil-based gilding size, and presently this is the most readily available size in the U.S. (Photos 6, 7). In the U.K. and Europe,

there are sizes made by Manetti, Wrights of Lymm, and Charbonnel. Recently, Giusto Manetti began exporting oil-based gold leaf size from Italy to the U.S. to the delight of gilders, whereas Charbonnel, after many years of availability, recently stopped exporting to the U.S. Another company, OneShot, which makes products for sign painters, also offers an oil-based gold leaf size. Luco is yet another brand in the U.S. All of the companies make both quick-dry and slow-set versions of oil size, except OneShot, which is quick-dry only. Whichever size you use, always stir the entire can upon opening it to thoroughly mix all the components, which settle during storage.

Brush the gold leaf size onto the surface to be gilded as lightly as possible, avoiding any pooling. It seems that the thinner the application of size, the brighter the gild will appear. It can be difficult to see the application of the size when applied to a highly polished surface, so proceed with care (Photos 8-10).

Before applying size, wet your brush with a little mineral spirits to keep the brush workable and easier to clean later. Blot the brush on a paper towel

to remove as much of the solvent as possible. Then dip the brush in the size and blot the brush onto the towel again, to remove some of the size and to charge the brush. Begin applying a light coat of size to the surface you plan to gild. Once you’ve completely sized the surface, set the project aside and wait until the wet sticky size begins to dry to a tacky adhesive state.

Quick-dry size is designed to reach its proper “tack” in less than an hour, whereas slow-set size will take eight hours or more. OneShot reaches proper tack in about fifteen minutes. Humidity and air temperature will affect the tack time also. The best time to apply the gold to the tacky surface is just before the size loses its tack. Be careful not to wait too long, especially if you are using quick-dry size, which does not remain tacky as long as slow-set size.

The open gilding time for quick-dry size might be less than an hour. Slow-set size might have an open gilding time of three hours or more. Check for proper tack by using the back of your finger. Lightly touch your finger to the surface and then slowly pull it off. You’ll know if your surface is sticky wet, pretty tacky, slightly tacky, or dry. ►

If you gild over a sticky wet size, the gold will wrinkle and be ugly.

Quick-dry size is mostly suitable for small projects and for patching areas where the leaf has broken apart or where it didn't overlap when laid down. Gilders call these areas "holidays." Slow-set size is better for larger projects, and it also produces a brighter gild. Depending on how long it takes to size a project, it might be better to do it in stages. Size and gild one part now, then another part later or the next day.

Selecting precious metal leaf

Precious metal leaf is available in many karats and shades, the most common being 22k or 23k. Pure gold and platinum do not tarnish over time, so they always retain their beauty. Another benefit of high-karat gold leaf is that it does not have to be sealed over with a clear coat. Precious metal leaf is also made in lower

karats, but anything below 22k will have to be sealed with a topcoat to keep the base metals from tarnishing. Generally, any clear coat applied over gold will make it look a little less gold. If you find it necessary to clear coat your gilding, do so sparingly. Using leaf for exterior applications requires the leaf to be of very high karat, such as 23.5k and higher.

The two most common types of precious metal gold leaf are *surface* and *patent*. Surface gold leaf comes packaged in books of twenty-five loose sheets, each one sandwiched between thin tissue papers making up the book. Patent gold leaf, also packaged in books of twenty-five sheets, are lightly affixed to a backing of tissue paper. Patent leaf is designed to be used outdoors or in upright situations, where handling surface leaf would be difficult. Both surface and patent leaf are suitable for using in mordant size gilding with

oil-based gold leaf size, but only surface leaf is suitable for water gilding.

The standard size of a sheet of precious metal leaf is 85mm, or 3⅜". But it is available in larger sheets as well as in 67' (20m) rolls of various widths. Rolls are patent leaf and can be a good choice for gilding rims on turned objects.

Gold leaf is made through a beating process, historically done by hand with various weight hammers. According to Urban R. Billmeier of W&B Gold Leaf, their hand-beating process starts with a 16 lb. hammer and finishes with an 8 lb. hammer. Established in 1905, W&B is the only manufacturer of gold leaf remaining in the U.S. today. Gold beating now is mostly accomplished by machines worldwide.

Standard gold leaf is sold by the book and by the pack. A pack of leaf consists of 500 sheets, packaged in twenty books of twenty-five sheets each. A typical price for a pack of top-quality gold leaf is around \$750, which makes the price of each sheet of gold \$1.50. A single book of top-quality leaf will cost \$40 to \$50.

I prefer to use surface leaf on most of my projects, and handling surface leaf requires the use of a gilder's tip and knife. The tip is usually a thin but wide squirrel-hair brush about the size of a sheet of leaf.

Laying down the gold

Make sure you begin laying down the leaf where you first applied the gold leaf size. On small projects, this will matter less than on the big ones. Be careful handling the leaf. Even with a gilder's tip, it can be easy to break the leaf and make a mess. Precious metal leaf is very forgiving, however. It is easy to patch holidays because it is soft and workable.

Apply the leaf all around the work to be gilded. Use a gilder's knife to cut surface type gold leaf to a smaller size. Then lightly lay the gilder's tip down on the gold and pull it out of the book (*Photos 11, 12*). I normally work closely

Apply surface type gold leaf



When using a gilder's knife to cut surface type gold leaf, place a piece of thin cardboard behind the bottom sheet of gold at the back of the book so you'll have a rigid surface on which to cut. Work from the back of the book forward to avoid damaging other sheets of gold.



A gilder's tip is a brush used to grab and move gold leaf. You can "charge" a gilder's tip by rubbing it across the oils on your forehead or face. Some gilders rub a scant amount of petroleum jelly on their forearm for this purpose. Lightly lay the tip down on the gold and pull it out of the book.

Apply patent type leaf



13 Applying patent type gold leaf, which comes affixed to a tissue backing.

Patent leaf on a roll



14 Patent gold leaf from a long roll is handy for application around a rim or edge and on small turned projects.



15

to the project, so I do not have very far to move the gold from the book to the tacky sized surface.

To apply patent type leaf, position the leaf with one hand and apply pressure to the backing paper with the other so that the gold releases onto the surface (*Photo 13*). Roll gold is rolled up patent leaf, and it can be handy for gilding long flat runs or on small projects like turned finials (*Photos 14, 15*).

After the leaf is applied, tamp the surface using a soft brush to remove the skewings (extra gold leaf not adhered to the surface) and move them around to cover the entire surface (*Photos 16, 17*). Work lightly, but ensure you are applying enough pressure to fill in places that might be missing gold. Pick up skewings from the worktable with a small brush and apply them over the holidays. Then with the softest cloth you have, lightly rub the surface, being careful not to scratch the gold. Note that the surface will be especially fragile until the gold leaf size has hardened and cured.

When you are satisfied with your gilding, set the project aside to let the gold leaf size cure. Dux Quick Dry Size cures in twenty-four to thirty-six hours, while slow-set size takes at least seventy-two hours to cure. Do not clear-coat your gilding unless

Tamp down, deskew



16



17

Tamp down the gold slowly and methodically with a very soft taklon brush to help with the deskewing process. Carefully move gold skewings around the surface and onto holidays. Save excess skewings in a jar for later use.

the gilded object will be handled frequently or you feel people will be apt to rub their hands over the gold surface. A thin cut of shellac is a good choice to use as a clear coating, but only do this after the gilding has properly cured. Interestingly, exterior gilding normally does not receive a protective clear coating.

Conclusion

Using precious metal leaf on your woodturning projects will add panache and value to them. Woodturners value burls and exotics as much as gilders

value precious metals. A madrone or buckeye burl is to woodturners what karat gold or platinum is to a gilder. What's the point in imitating your gilded finish? Finish with precious metal leaf instead. ■

Fundamentally a collaborator, Barrie Lynn Bryant has become known for the tondo frames he turns for his wife's paintings. See them on their website, merglennstudios.com, and much more on his Instagram feed, @BarrieLynnBryant. Barrie's work is supported by grants from the Wyoming Arts Council through funding from the National Endowment for the Arts.



Turn a Tondo Frame

Barrie Lynn Bryant

I turn tondo frames in medium density fiberboard (MDF), knowing the entire frame will be covered in gold leaf and/or paint. Use a dust mask appropriately rated by NIOSH (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health) for MDF dust.

STEP 1

MOUNT MDF BLANK

I begin every frame with a full- or half-scale drawing on graph paper. I cut a square of MDF, mark the center, and draw both the frame's inner "sight" edge and outer edges using a compass. I mount the tondo blank to a wood block securely attached to a faceplate, using screws driven from the front side of the tondo.



STEP 2

PRESHAPE BLANK AND MARK FEATURE LINES

In preparation for turning, I cut off the square corners and measure and mark the sections to be turned.



STEP 3 DEFINE INNER SIGHT EDGE

Begin defining the sight, or inner, edge, establishing the depths of the deepest cuts using a parting tool. Using a $\frac{1}{16}$ " (1.5mm) drill bit, drill a depth-finder hole just beside the sight edge. You can then remove the bit from the drill and periodically insert it through the hole to determine depth of cut. A low, $\frac{1}{8}$ " (3mm) thickness at the sight edge minimizes shadows falling across the artwork once installed in the frame.



STEP 4 TURN TONDO FEATURES, SAND

Use a $\frac{1}{2}$ " (13mm) bowl gouge to form coves and to establish the outer edge details. Sand the cuts and details as needed.



STEP 5 PART OFF

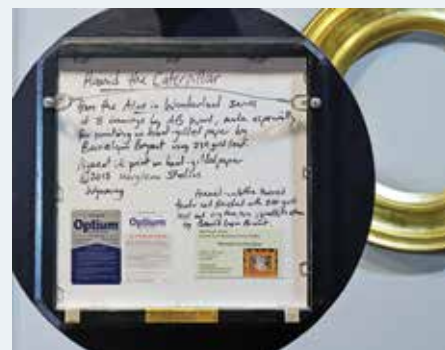
Use a parting tool to remove the tondo from the lathe. Hand-cranking with the lathe off can help prevent tearing the MDF as you near the completion of the cut.



STEP 6 MOUNT ARTWORK

The artwork is mounted within a rabbet attached to the back. Rabbet shapes and construction may vary, depending upon the shape of the artwork, the width of the face of the frame, and the depth of the rabbet in relation to the shape of the frame profile. A square rabbet (*top*) is the simplest for managing artwork and glazing. In some cases, a multi-sided rabbet can be constructed (*bottom*), but this complicates the glazing process.

If the artwork to be framed is round, then a circular rabbet can be made on the lathe, parted off, and then glued to the back of the tondo. To ensure the artwork will fit in the rabbet, make its inner edge diameter slightly larger than the diameter of the artwork. It is also possible to mount round artwork without a rabbet, simply by setting it within a turned recess in the back.



WOODTURNERS CONNECTING VIRTUALLY

Betty J. Scarpino

Even several years before the COVID-19 pandemic, a handful of demonstrators had been offering interactive remote demonstrations (IRDs), live-streaming directly to woodturning clubs and to groups of individuals. The past few months have seen an exponential growth in local chapters' use of IRDs, as well as club meetings being conducted virtually. Previously-less-than-tech-savvy woodturners are now proudly



Cindy Drozda's IRD setup with lathe, cameras, lights, audio, and a control panel allows her to live-stream close-up turning action, such as this overhead shot.

holding turned bowls, boxes, and vessels in front of cameras for others to view. Demonstrations, meetings, and show-and-tell are alive and well! The consensus is that this platform will continue into the future, regardless of the pandemic.

IRDs and the AAW

Years ago, Alan Zenreich spearheaded woodturners' initial experiences with IRDs, bringing a wealth of knowledge and enthusiastic sharing of all things tech for videography and *interactive* remote demonstrating. At several recent AAW Symposia, he has conducted special-interest sessions to help woodturners understand and embrace remote demonstrations. His website, lucidwoodturners.com, contains a vast amount of technical information to help woodturners and club officers learn the ins and outs of videography. And just so you know, Alan is also an accomplished woodturner. His wife, Lauren Zenreich, collaborates on many of his turnings.

Alan has shared much of his knowledge with the AAW, not only directly, but through training others. Thanks to Alan's encouragement and ongoing support, the AAW website contains many helpful videos, articles, tip sheets, and a growing list of woodturners who offer remote demonstrations.

AAW's Women in Turning (WIT) recently launched a new program focused on recording professional female demonstrators during live Zoom sessions. These hour-long videos showcase each presenter's artwork,

take you on a tour of her workshop, and provide a platform for her to discuss her career in the woodturning field. These videos reside on the AAW website, available to all members.

Two years ago, Alan helped Dixie Biggs and me learn about some of the initial considerations for recording videos for DVDs. I quickly realized that the amount of time, effort, and cost was not something I wanted to invest in. Additionally, I stopped doing in-person woodturning demonstrations to focus on my own work. Recently, however, after hearing two rather negative stories about administrative issues for hiring and hosting remote demonstrators, I became curious about the parameters related to, and business relationships between, demonstrators and the clubs that hire them. My research uncovered factors I could not have imagined. There is more to consider when arranging for IRDs than I initially thought, from the points of view of both demonstrators and woodturning clubs.

Fee structure

Costs for IRDs cover a wide range but generally are similar to having a professional demonstrator at your

There is more to consider when arranging for IRDs, from the points of view of both demonstrators and woodturning clubs.

club in person. Depending on the size and makeup of the club, the demonstration could be free to members or carry a modest charge. For clubs that already collect dues through a website, there may be only minimal additional administrative effort.

Before the pandemic, clubs regularly shared in-person demonstrators with neighboring clubs, especially if both clubs had small memberships. In the case of IRDs, however, is it okay for two or more clubs to share the cost of the demonstrator's fee, with both groups' members watching at the same time? Some demonstrators approve of that setup; some don't and instead offer a graduated fee, such as one price for one club, and additional charges for each additional club joining the session. For smaller clubs, cost sharing might be essential to being able to afford an IRD.

Demonstrators who offer IRDs to individuals who sign up through their websites usually charge a per-person rate. A Zoom professional account (\$150 a year) accommodates 100 participants, or even more with a \$55/month upgrade. An in-demand demonstrator, consistently filling 100 "seats," could seemingly earn top-dollar, but longtime demonstrator Cindy Drozda notes, "It is nowhere near as lucrative as it sounds." She recently adjusted her fee structure to more closely reflect the true cost of administrative time, demo time, expenses, and equipment costs—not to mention the days and weeks spent during months of start-up.

In between a club paying a demonstrator directly and a demonstrator arranging an IRD through his or her website is a gray area involving available viewing seats. For instance, a club arranges for an IRD at an agreed-upon price. That is straightforward, but it is also important for clubs and demonstrators to agree upon the use of *available viewing slots*—Who sells them? Who profits? Do additional viewers decrease future income for a



Multiple cameras and a green screen behind Cindy's lathe give her the option to augment close-up tool and technique shots with a smaller, "picture in picture" view of herself at the lathe.

demonstrator? Cost sharing makes it financially feasible for small chapters to host IRDs, but with larger numbers of viewers (if additional seats are sold), is the interactive aspect of IRDs compromised?

Earlier this year, a woodturner arranged for a remote demonstration for his club, then promoted the IRD to individual non-club members. They sold all 100 viewing slots. Making a profit hadn't been the intention of the club, which was a small group simply looking to help offset the demo fee. The windfall, however, brings up the need to set policy between the club and demonstrator ahead of time. Who should benefit with increased attendance of non-club members? In the past, many clubs profited from in-person demonstrators in a variety of ways—that was understood and accepted. IRDs, however, have different parameters.

Cindy Drozda's new fee structure helps her recoup more of her actual costs. She will offer a demo at the club's normal meeting time, with the club paying a per-person rate (and a guaranteed minimum). For clubs with few members, she will sell the remaining seats through her website. Perhaps the only downside is if two clubs pair up to hire Cindy, only one club will receive her demo piece.

Audience numbers and participation

How many viewers are optimal for a truly *interactive* experience? John Kelsey taught his local chapter members how to be effective consumers of Zoom sessions, not only for club meetings but for viewing demonstrations. Their weekly morning coffee sessions became an opportunity for members to participate in show-and-tell and to learn how to navigate Zoom. John suggests a maximum of about forty participants is optimal for achieving *interactive* status. More than that and it's difficult for the host(s) to manage questions and comments, which means decreased opportunity for members to connect personally.

Several demonstrators I talked with mentioned the audience's energy as a factor. Cindy Drozda said, "Numbers seem to have less to do with it than the individual group's energy. I have seen small groups (twenty people) with very little interaction and large groups (more than eighty) with a lot of interaction. Demonstrators and club members need to learn ways to encourage interaction. I think we all need to learn some new relationship skills for this new world."

Even though some woodturning clubs have high membership numbers, IRDs *can* achieve a sense of being ►

interactive—members can see and hear their friends participating. In addition, this platform allows participation by snowbird members and those who live too far away to drive at night or in wintry weather. The chat feature on Zoom is a handy tool; just be aware of the possibility that everyone can read your comments. Don't assume "private" comments *are* private.

The possibility exists for clubs to increase membership numbers, with long-distance woodturners joining to take advantage of remote demonstrations. A woodturner with no club nearby can become a member of a club anywhere in the world, just to view IRDs. Cindy says, "More and more clubs are considering (or actively getting set up for) streaming their regular in-place meetings out to members who can't be there. I think we will see that become the 'norm' for club meetings."

Interactive aspect

Most IRD sessions start a half-hour or more ahead of the demo, which provides an opportunity for using the chat room to greet fellow club members, to conduct club business,

It can actually be easier in an IRD session for the audience to participate than during an in-person demo.

or to help less-tech-savvy members successfully connect. Most demonstrators include this additional time as part of their fee.

IRDs are not the same as watching a DVD or viewing on YouTube. If you don't understand a technique, you can ask questions. To that end, it's important to have an experienced Zoom host, so he or she can make sure questions are brought forward and answered.

Many demonstrators feed off the energy of the audience, so it can be helpful when viewers ask questions and make engaging comments. In addition, it can actually be *easier* in an IRD session for the audience to participate than during an in-person demo. The same is true for learning techniques. Even clubs with excellent A/V equipment struggle to ensure everyone

present can clearly see and hear the demonstration. For IRDs, it's definitely easier for the demonstrator to hear questions.

Some demonstrators are exploring ways to more fully engage their audiences during IRDs. Professional Irish turner Glenn Lucas notes, "I can also give a tour of my workshop and my wood yard, adding a great deal more to the experience of seeing my wood-turning process and techniques." As this platform increases in usage and more demonstrators and clubs get involved, methods of audience engagement will be discovered, implemented, and shared.

Cindy Drozda is one of several demonstrators who include a demo item for auction or for a drawing. Both activities are possible for a remote demo. Random-number generator software is available free of charge online, or an administrator could put all the viewers' names into a hat and, at the end of the demo, draw a winner. Auctions can be conducted through Zoom's chat feature. The demonstrator would ship the item directly to the winner. Mailing costs can be covered in the initial demo fee or by sharing part of the auction sale with the demonstrator.

Recording IRDs, safety, and contracts

While some demonstrators allow clubs to record IRDs, most generally do not allow it, preferring to maintain control of their intellectual property. Many demonstrators, however, post their own recording of the session to their website for a specified time, so if you've paid for the initial IRD, you may be entitled to a second viewing.

Some advice: Do not live-stream or advertise an IRD on a public Facebook page. Connecting a Zoom meeting via *any* public platform invites unwanted guests and also creates the potential for unauthorized recording. Cindy



Earlier this year, the author shared her PowerPoint presentation, "Bowl and Vessel Design and Creativity," with John Kelsey and the Lancaster Area Woodturners (of Pennsylvania) in exchange for feedback and coaching during her first remote presentation. This screenshot shows what viewers saw on their screens.

Photo: John Kelsey

cautions that it is “not a good idea to publish the meeting ID and password anywhere the public might get ahold of it.” Recently, a club in the U.K. was “Zoom-bombed” with incredibly unpleasant videos, which took a few minutes to take down. Yes, they had advertised the session widely through social media. Additionally, they had not put in place registration, didn’t have a “waiting room,” and failed to designate trained hosts.

Contracts between clubs and IRD demonstrators probably are not necessary, as has been true for most in-person demonstrations. Cindy Drozda emails her “Terms and Conditions” document to each club at the onset of the hiring process. Her dedication to clear, effective communication helps prevent misunderstandings and educates clubs new to IRDs.

Quality of IRDs

Based on the activity and interest shown on Alan Zenreich’s Lucid Woodturners website, there has been an explosion of demonstrators doing IRDs. But be warned: The range of quality is vast (also true for in-person demonstrators). Some demonstrators spend upwards of \$2,500 for the equipment and software needed for a professional-quality remote demo. Some live-stream their demo using a bare-bones setup, even though most viewers appreciate a higher quality. Therefore, clubs looking to hire a demonstrator would be wise to ask other clubs about their experience with that demonstrator and/or ask to monitor an IRD to confirm quality. Also, the AAW is developing a community information exchange program for club officers—word will get around about who’s good and who doesn’t measure up.

During the actual IRD, make sure your club (or the demonstrator) assigns a designated host or two—people familiar with Zoom. These invaluable



As with online videos and DVDs, IRDs present an opportunity for demonstrators to create brand recognition and to promote lathe and tool suppliers by using their products. In his IRDs, Lyle Jamieson effectively incorporates branding visuals with instruction.

facilitators help ensure questions are asked and answered and also mute and unmute microphones.

When IRDs begin to happen again for in-person club meetings (with the demonstrator in a remote location), it’s helpful if the demonstrator consults with the club’s A/V officer ahead of time to test the setup and reception. In some cases, this pre-meeting may have to take place a month ahead to ensure problems can be worked out in time. For now, Zoom practice sessions have taken their place.

The social aspect

Woodturning clubs—local AAW chapters—are dedicated to learning and sharing woodturning information. The clubs that thrive do so by being effective at this, while at the same time providing a social component. Essential to lively, supportive interactions is effective communication, which can be taught and learned. John Kelsey’s club regularly practices Zoom sessions, and yours can, too. Zoom sessions have the ability to bring people together and strengthen the bonds that contribute to a club’s ongoing viability.

Importantly, IRDs are also being well received by individual woodturners separate from the club experience. Glenn Lucas observes, “At my non-club demos, I have people from every continent gather virtually in my workshop, even if it is the middle of the night in Darwin, the crack of dawn on the Pacific West Coast, or supertime in Western Europe. Never has the word ‘global village’ meant more to me.”

Betty J. Scarpino lives in Indianapolis. Additional articles and her artwork can be seen on her website, bettyscarpino.com, or on her Instagram, @bettyscarpino. Cindy Drozda contributed expert, professional advice for this article. Her website is cindydrozda.com.



Demonstrator Glenn Lucas (upper right-hand corner), regularly connects virtually with groups and individuals. It is important for him to see who is at his demos, so he asks that a camera be placed above the group’s TV monitor, which allows him to look directly at the audience. This helps everyone feel directly connected to Glenn.

WOOD AS ART

A Mid-Columbia Woodturners Exhibition

The Gallery at the Park in Richland, Washington, hosted the exhibition *Wood as Art*, which featured items created by members of the Mid-Columbia Woodturners, an AAW chapter that meets in Pasco, Washington. The exhibition was displayed for the public in March 2020. Dennis Brunson, a local artist, was the juror.

The Best of Show Award went to Ron Gerton for his piece, *I Will Never Forget You*, a wall hanging comprising thousands of pieces of laser-cut wood scraps obtained from Crosswoods (Kennewick, Washington) and Kallenshaan Woods (Las Vegas, Nevada). The wood pieces are glued to a frame and more than two-thirds of them had to be placed using tweezers. Gerton explained, "I don't keep track of how long it takes to make one of these, but I go through a lot of books on tape in the process." His work also received the People's Choice Award.

John Barany received the award for Most Innovative Use of Materials. His piece, *BackFlip*, is a wall-mounted platter featuring a raku ceramic mask made by Gary Dismukes. The work depicts an acrobat in a full-flight backflip, feet readying to "stick" the landing. It is a metaphor for our daily lives, as we find ourselves furiously performing mental, physical, and emotional feats of virtuosity, trying to please everybody at once and finish each task right down to the last detail.



Pat and Karen Miller,

An Ode to Tribulus Terrestris, 2019, Maple, walnut, steel, paint, 14" x 10" x 8" (36cm x 25cm x 20cm)



Inspiration: *Tribulus terrestris*

Photo: Krzysztof Ziarnek, Kenraiz / CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=66748531>

Another wall item on display was *Universal Steam Timepiece* by Jerry Decker. The body is turned and hollowed walnut, while the sphere is acrylic. Decoration was accomplished with brass accents, acrylic paint, and interference paint.

Pat and Karen Miller's *An Ode to Tribulus Terrestris* is a whimsical piece created after they had to remove "Goatheads" (also known as Devil's Thorn and Puncture Vine) from bike tires and shoes. Pat and Karen noted that Goatheads have made their way into Eastern medicine and it is sometimes fun to explore the "unexplorable."

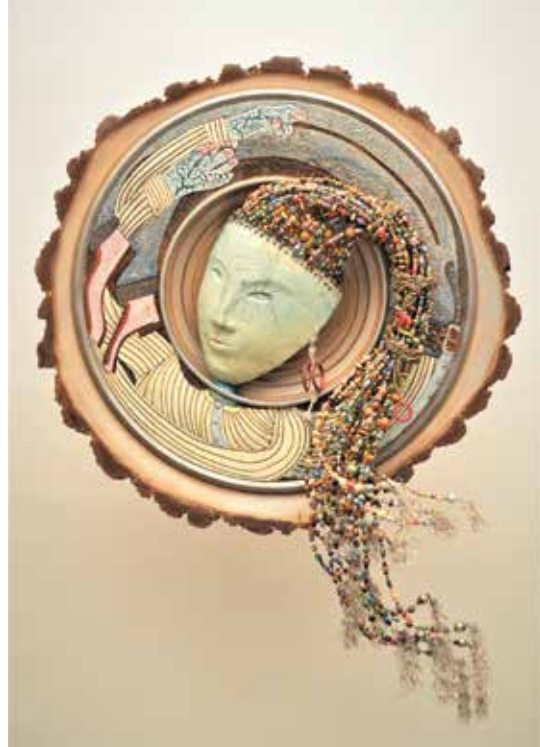
Bob Cutler's piece, *A Wolf, the Night, and a Moon*, received many positive comments from Gallery visitors. The bowl is spalted and curly silver maple, and the trim around the lid opening is curly black walnut. The inlays and handle are made from black walnut, silver maple,

mahogany, shed moose antler, bronze, silver, and copper.

More classic forms were provided in the items made by Jim Christiansen and Todd Thornock. Jim's piece, *Commitment*, was turned from maple and then carved, textured, and painted with acrylic paint. Todd's piece, *Big Red*, was made from bigleaf maple burl, with a lid of ebonized walnut. The vessel was dyed and the voids filled with mica.

The Mid-Columbia Woodturners had asked Michael Hosaluk to give a presentation and a few days of lessons that would have occurred during the exhibition, but the situation with COVID-19 led to this being cancelled. Michael was asked to be a guest artist for the exhibition, and he delighted us with his signature box forms in turned, cut, carved, and decorated maple. ■

—Jerry Johnson, Mid-Columbia Woodturners



John Barany, *BackFlip*, 2019, Ginkgo wood, steel, paper, glass, wood beads, rope, acrylic paint 26" x 26" x 4" (66cm x 66cm x 10cm)



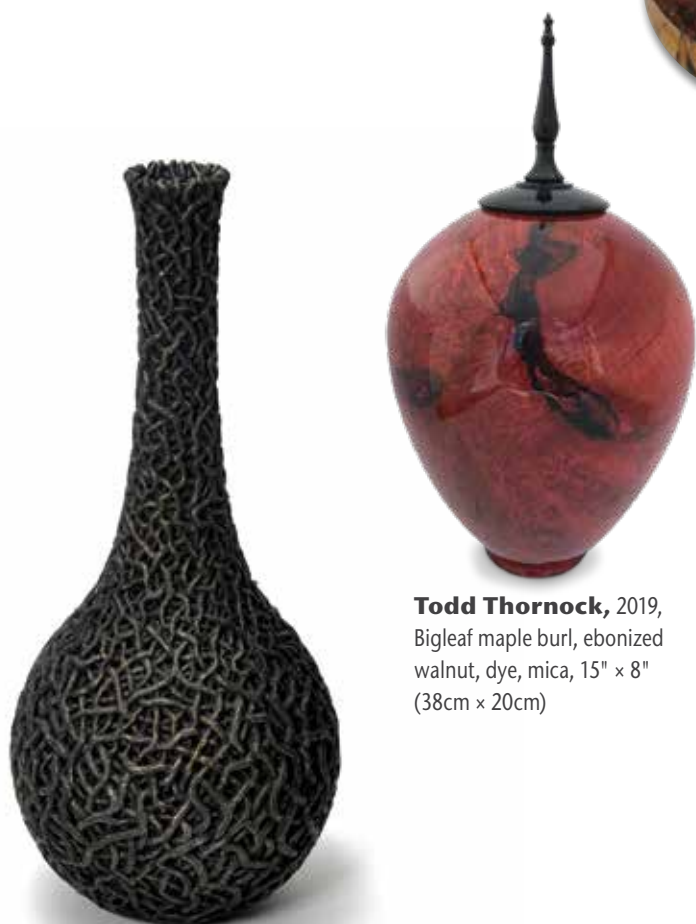
Jerry Decker, *Universal Steam Timepiece*, 2019, Walnut, acrylic, brass, acrylic and interference paints 12½" x 10" (32cm x 25cm)



Michael Hosaluk, *Family*, 2019, Maple, milk paint, wax, largest: 3½" x 12" (9cm x 30cm)



Bob Cutler, *A Wolf, the Night, and a Moon*, 2019, Spalted and curly silver maple, black walnut, mahogany, shed moose antler, bronze, silver, copper 5" x 10" (13cm x 25cm)



Jim Christiansen, *Commitment*, 2019, Maple, acrylic paint, 22½" x 8" (57cm x 20cm)



Todd Thornock, 2019, Bigleaf maple burl, ebonized walnut, dye, mica, 15" x 8" (38cm x 20cm)

Ron Gerton, *I Will Never Forget You*, 2018, various woods, 3' x 2' (91cm x 61cm)



A Unique Collection: *Gregarious Mushrooms*

Melissa Gunther *Photos by Mariah Gunther.*

It all began in 2004, when I took my first woodturning class at the John C. Campbell Folk School in Brasstown, North Carolina. Dave Barriger was the instructor and had some of his work on a table for display. I saw a mushroom he had turned and asked if it was for sale. He said I could have it, and that turned mushroom became the first in what was to be a collection that now numbers 253 (not counting individual mushrooms presented in clusters). One hundred fifty-eight people have very generously contributed to my collection. Nearly all the pieces were turned in wood, although a few were hand-carved and some were turned from other materials. Some are boxes, some are wine stoppers, one is a pen, one is a spurtle, some are tree ornaments, a few are salt and pepper mills and shakers, and one is a night light. Each and every piece is as unique as its contributor!

Joining “the club”

I came to learn about woodturning when my husband Bob retired in 2002 and spoke with John Hill, who told him about the Carolina Mountain Woodturners (CMW) club. Bob attended a meeting, joined the club, and quickly became involved by doing write-ups of monthly demonstrations. Since he does not use the computer, the task of typing his written notes fell to me. It was like learning a foreign language! I did not know what a lathe was, let alone a headstock or tailstock, a toolrest, etc. Bob bought me a lathe, but it took me



Two of the three cabinets housing the author's collection of turned mushrooms, which seem to share the “gregarious” growth habit of some of their live counterparts: not typically occurring alone but in groups, or collective association.

six months to want to try it—inspiration came after I attended the AAW Annual Symposium in Orlando, Florida, 2004, where I watched various demonstrations that sparked my interest in learning to turn.

How did I meet so many woodturners who would eventually contribute to my collection of mushrooms? I became a member of CMW and became very involved in the club. Bob and I were in charge of setting up hands-on classes for club members with those who demonstrated for the

club at our monthly meetings. Then Bob was asked to demonstrate for the Tri Cities Woodturners (Tennessee), and I accompanied him. Everyone there was so friendly, we joined that club. Later, Bob became a member of the Board of the North Carolina Woodturning Symposium and served in that capacity for a number of years, which got me involved by virtue of being the email go-between. We attended many AAW Symposia after the one in Orlando. All these activities were wonderful

opportunities to meet others interested in woodturning.

Growing a collection

As I met demonstrators and teachers, I would ask if they would turn a mushroom for my treasured little collection. I also asked club members and others I met at various symposia. Most very generously obliged. As my collection grew, I stopped calling it my “little” collection.

I was interested to learn that a number of accomplished woodturners had never before turned a mushroom. Some of them thanked me for asking them to do it and told me what fun it was. It is intriguing to see how different and creative each mushroom is. Each piece is very special to me because it reminds me of the person who so thoughtfully and generously gave it to me. Being the recipient is quite remarkable and extremely humbling!

Due to the constraints of journal publication, I am unable to list all of the makers in my collection, but a representation follows: Allan Batty, Nick Agar, Jimmy Clewes, and Stuart Mortimer (England); Glenn Lucas (Ireland); Hans Weissflog (Germany); Jean-François Escoulen, Alain Mailland, and Christophe Nancey (France); George Hatfield (Australia); Avelino Samuel (St. John, Virgin Islands); Michael Hosaluk, Marilyn Campbell, and Douglas Fisher (Canada); and Nick Cook, Mike Mahoney, Stuart Batty, David Ellsworth, Trent Bosch, Mike Lee, and my mentor Alan Leland (U.S.).

I cracked up laughing when my daughter Mariah gave me a mushroom she had made for me. She told me she “didn’t want Dad’s help” and she wanted it to be better than the one her (younger) brother had made me. She textured the mushroom cap by burning it, and some who have seen my treasured collection commented on her mushroom, not knowing who had made it. ►



Chris Ramsey. The small sign reads: “Rosewood Burl Shitake”

Cook over medium heat in olive oil, lots of garlic, salt and pepper. Mushroom will remain crunchy and, no matter how much garlic you use, it will still taste like SHITake.



Tucker Garrison



Christophe Nancey



Alan Leland



Great Dane Oreo scrutinizes a cluster of mushrooms made by Bob Gunther.



(Left to right) Mariah Gunther and Link Gunther



Cynthia Carden Gibson and Michael Gibson



Joe Ruminski



(Left to right) Marilyn Campbell, Warren Carpenter, Kimberly Winkle



Nick Agar

On display

My mushroom collection resides in our front hall in three display cabinets. Bob was kind enough to transform his gun cabinet into a display case for me.

When a box arrived from woodturner Chris Ramsey, I was stunned by the beautiful mushroom he had turned from Honduran rosewood burl, which he mounted on a maple burl base.

In photo albums, I keep pictures and brief biographies of those who have so kindly contributed to my collection. In order to share my collection, I have taken the photo albums to meetings and symposia and presented them as "show and tell." When I receive a mushroom, I write a handwritten thank you note on a card made from an original oil painting I did.

My treasured mushroom collection has enabled me to get to know lots of people, and I have gained many new friends along the way. It has shown me what a wonderfully generous and thoughtful group woodturners are. I am so grateful for how the woodturning world has enriched my life! ■

Melissa Gunther and her husband Bob are woodturning enthusiasts living in Asheville, North Carolina, with their Great Dane Oreo and their daughter Mariah's French Bulldog Sumo. Bob and Melissa are members of the AAW, Carolina Mountain Woodturners, and Tri Cities Woodturners.

MUSHROOM HOW-TO

Look to the August 2020 edition of *Woodturning FUNDamentals*, available at woodturner.org, for instructions on how you can turn your own mushroom forms on the lathe.



Photo: Linda Ferber

POST-MILLENNIAL STANDOUT: KATIE STOFEL

David M. Fry

Supercharging a budding career through social media

In mid-November 2019, 20-year-old Katie Stofel of Columbia, Tennessee, faced a daunting quandary: how to fill thirty-five holiday orders that arrived almost overnight after *Tennessee Home and Farm* ran a web-linked article on her woodturning. Many of the orders included both bowls and wooden-handled kitchen utensils, but her stock of products and materials was low. Complicating matters, she was nearing semester's end at college, 150 miles from her home shop. Luckily, a friend near campus made his garage available for her moonlighting. But restocking, alone, would take up precious time, as customers emailed back and forth about details like color preferences.

Forging ahead, Katie upped her shop time from ten hours a week, ultimately filling orders through December 9, her deadline for Christmas delivery. "November was a busy month," she recalls with understatement.

This was not the first time the web unexpectedly dumped orders into Katie's inbox. After commissioning a set of decorative, user-friendly biscuit cutters, a local baker "shouted her out" on Facebook, directing visitors to Katie's Instagram page. Twenty people contacted her by the end of the day. Such serendipities stood apart from her dashed expectations for a rented website that produced only two sales in one year. Social media had made the difference.

Learning and teaching

Katie's launch into woodworking began six years ago in her grandfather's tool-packed shop and developed with further inspiration on YouTube. When she tried out the lathe to make a softball bat, it was both exhilarating and frustrating. She loved the process but blundered by

using a soft cedar branch containing the pith. After the wood split hopelessly, she eventually succeeded with a laminated blank. It turned out to be a pivotal victory. Lathe work, especially spindle turning, became an abiding passion.

Realizing the limitations of YouTube instruction and the tools at hand, Katie joined AAW chapters in Columbia, Franklin, and Shelbyville, and landed a job in a Nashville Woodcraft. At the store, she noticed that novices "often neglected to budget for a good sharpening system when they shopped for lathes. The sharpening system should come first." In her own shop, a repurposed Frito-Lay trailer, Katie started adding equipment. Although she "never anticipated owning four lathes," she found bargains hard to resist, including two deeply discounted mid-sized lathes and a mini-lathe for \$36.

The mini proved handy for teaching what Katie had learned. Dozens of children, college students, and adults used it to turn pens and other gifts at church camp, the local art center, and on campus. A few showed interest in pursuing woodturning further, but the cost of equipment usually proved prohibitive. Some of her 2,500 followers



Photo: Glenn Lucas

Although spindles make up the bulk of her business, Frito Woodworking, Katie also continues to rely on bowl-making skills developed during her apprenticeship to production turner Glenn Lucas.

on Instagram, who seek her advice, do seem to be exploring the craft.

Recently, Katie interned with a production bowl turner, Ireland's Glenn Lucas. He impressed her most with his entrepreneurial grasp of diversified cash flow, from the sale of vessels, tools, and videos to his home-based and peripatetic teaching. Katie would like to follow suit when she finishes college in two years, but the emphasis is likely to be on retail sales of kitchen utensils rather than bowls, which have disappointed her at craft fairs.

Whether online or in person, interaction with the customer is key. Katie notes, "I've had people come up and say how they use my coffee scoop every day and think of me, and that makes it all worth it." ■

For more, follow Katie on Instagram: @fritowoodworking.

David M. Fry lives and turns in Cabin John, Maryland.



Katie (left) teaches in the Youth room at the AAW Symposium, Raleigh, 2019.

Photo: Andi Wolfe

Popular coffee scoops, various woods, 5½" (14cm) long.



ERNST GAMPERL

Seeing the Wood from the Trees

D Wood

Richard Powers' book, *The Overstory* (Norton, 2018), which won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 2019, focuses on a cast of nine human characters whose lives become dominated by an element of the natural environment. As the novel progresses, we learn that trees of various species played significant

roles in the young lives of three of the protagonists, Nick Hoel, Mimi Ma, and Neelay Mehta. As these people age and link with others, the connections with trees amplify so that the reader is immersed in a veritable forest of plot lines devoted to evergreen and deciduous trees. While the narrative resides almost wholly



*Photos by Bernhard Spöttel
unless otherwise noted.*

in the United States, its message about our relationship with trees is universal: "You and the tree in your backyard come from a common ancestor. A billion and a half years ago, the two of you parted ways. But even now, after an immense journey in separate directions, that tree and you still share a quarter of your genes."

In an interview with environmental activist Bill McKibben, Powers states that one of his motivations for placing trees at the center of *The Overstory* is that between 95 and 98 percent of the earth's original primary forest has been cut and will never grow back. The book avoids statistics like this yet contains messages that convey the anthropocentric world view:

No one sees trees. We see fruit, we see nuts, we see wood, we see shade. We see ornaments or pretty fall foliage. Obstacles blocking the road or wrecking the ski slope. Dark, threatening places that must be cleared. We see branches about to crush our roof. We see a cash crop. But trees—trees are invisible.

Powers chose to make trees visible in the medium of literature by telling a story in which every fact in the fictional context is scientifically correct. The *dramatis personae* may be imagined, but details about the foliage are not.

Powers gives special attention to species such as American chestnut, sequoia (redwood), jacaranda, and oak as they relate to a character's development. For instance, we learn that the oak is a genus with more than six hundred species. When Dorothy Cazaly consults a plant guide, she muses, "Way more oaks than good taste would recommend. Red, yellow, white, black, gray, scarlet, iron, live, bur, valley, and water, with leaves that deny all relation to each other." And when future game designer Neelay Mehta falls out of an oak, incurring a life-changing injury, he lies on the ground contemplating the trunk and comes to the conclusion that it is "the most perfect piece of self-writing code that his eyes could hope to see."

German woodturner Ernst Gamperl knows what it's like to be preoccupied with oak. For ten years beginning in 2009, his life centered on a 230-year-old Bavarian oak that was 39' (12m) high and 8' (2.5m) in diameter. The tree overtook



Tree of Life Series, 2018, Oak, taller: 24¾" × 10" (63cm × 25cm)

Tree of Life Series, 2015, Oak, 23½" (60cm) diameter



Tree of Life Series, 2019, Oak, 42" × 12½" (107cm × 32cm)

his mind, his practice, his workshop and his worldview. Not surprisingly, he named the project *Tree of Life*, reflecting his background and creative ethos.

Master woodturner

Ernst Gamperl initially studied furniture making in his late teens. His teachers at the vocational school took no interest in the lathe that occupied a corner of the workshop. It seems strange that turned furniture parts were not part of the curriculum, yet, as is often the case with young people, the unknown was tantalizing. Ernst

wanted to try the lathe but, without instruction, he had no understanding of how to fix wood to a chuck. He says the machine "teased" him by making the wood airborne. Despite this early initiation into the hazards, he became enthusiastic about turning, purchased a small lathe, and used Richard Raffan as his guide. Raffan's *Turning Wood* became Ernst's "Bible" as he practiced the craft and became adept with its techniques. In addition to gouges and parting tools for the lathe, his workshop was outfitted solely with a bandsaw and chainsaw. ►

Expertise warranted selling his product, with the result that Ernst spent about five years attending small craft fairs and markets throughout Europe. He attended the Frankfurt Trade Fairs, *Ambiente* and *Tendence*, the International Fair of Handicrafts in Munich and in Paris, *Maison et Objet*, assembling his booth at thirty to forty fairs at this stage of his career. He says, "When I was there, on my stand, surrounded by my pieces, I got feedback direct from my clients, and it was always very good for my ego and for my work." Nevertheless, Ernst wanted more from himself and his lathe and got in touch with a professor, who happened to be a turner and taught at a design school in Hildesheim. The professor trained Ernst for one year for the qualification of Master of Turnery and, undoubtedly, enhanced his design aesthetic. The German Confederation of Craft Skills oversees vocational training in more than 150 craft skills, including carpentry, stonemasonry, hairdressing, baking, tailoring, clock making, and shoe repair. Some, such as bricklaying, require a Master's certificate in order to be self-employed under the

Handwerksordnung (Trade and Crafts Code); in other crafts, Master is an indication of quality workmanship, business management, and safety standards. Ernst has that stamp of approval.

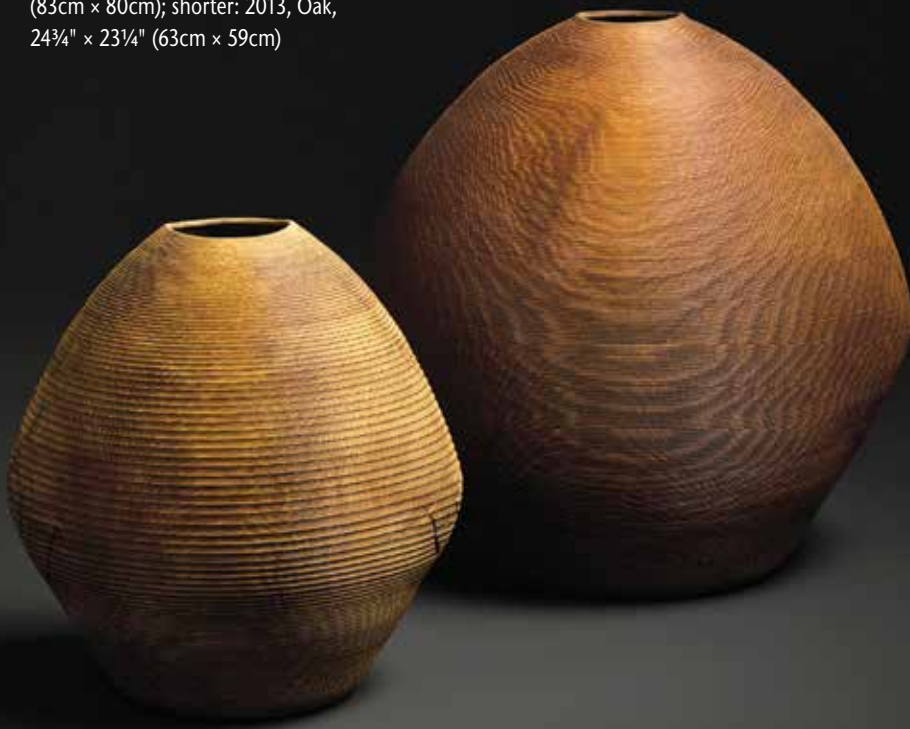
Initially, he was enamored of exotic woods but came to appreciate European species such as maple, beech, olive, and oak. Ernst's design sense and acute observation of the natural properties of a tree contribute to the minimalist beauty of his objects. Using only green wood, he turns a shape, then carefully controls the drying. He says, "In my career, I have found thirty different possibilities of how to take a bowl or an object from a trunk to get certain results. It's not like I do something and it happens by itself. It's a lot of control about how I cut the object from the trunk to get a certain form." Ernst's close attention to the inherent quality of the wood echoes the observation of one of the characters in *The Overstory*: "The grain under his fingers swings in uneven bands—thick light, thin dark. It shocks him to realize, after a lifetime of looking at wood: He's staring at the seasons, the year's pendulum, the burst of spring and the enfolding of fall,

the beat of a two-four song recorded here, in a medium that the piece itself created."

Mastery of woodturning

In a professional career that is now thirty years long, Ernst has reached a stage where he no longer attends craft fairs. He misses contact with the public and feels that his work has become "anonymous," even though each piece is inscribed with his mark, work number, date of production, and the age of the tree. The age of the tree is important—it is a subtle reminder of the humility of man relative to nature. Ernst's reverence for the arboreal realm influences his practice: "It's very hard for me to cut a living tree. Most of the time, I look for trees that are already cut down for some reason or they were uprooted by a storm or they are lying [on the ground] because of worms or parasites or whatever." He is currently working with Bosnian fiddleback maple that had an unusual source. A wood dealer specializing in violin wood contacted Ernst to say he had a huge trunk that was unusable because the interior was rotten. Ernst purchased the outside ring of the tree and is pleased to be

Tree of Life Series, taller: 2018, Oak, 32¾" × 31½" (83cm × 80cm); shorter: 2013, Oak, 24¾" × 23¼" (63cm × 59cm)



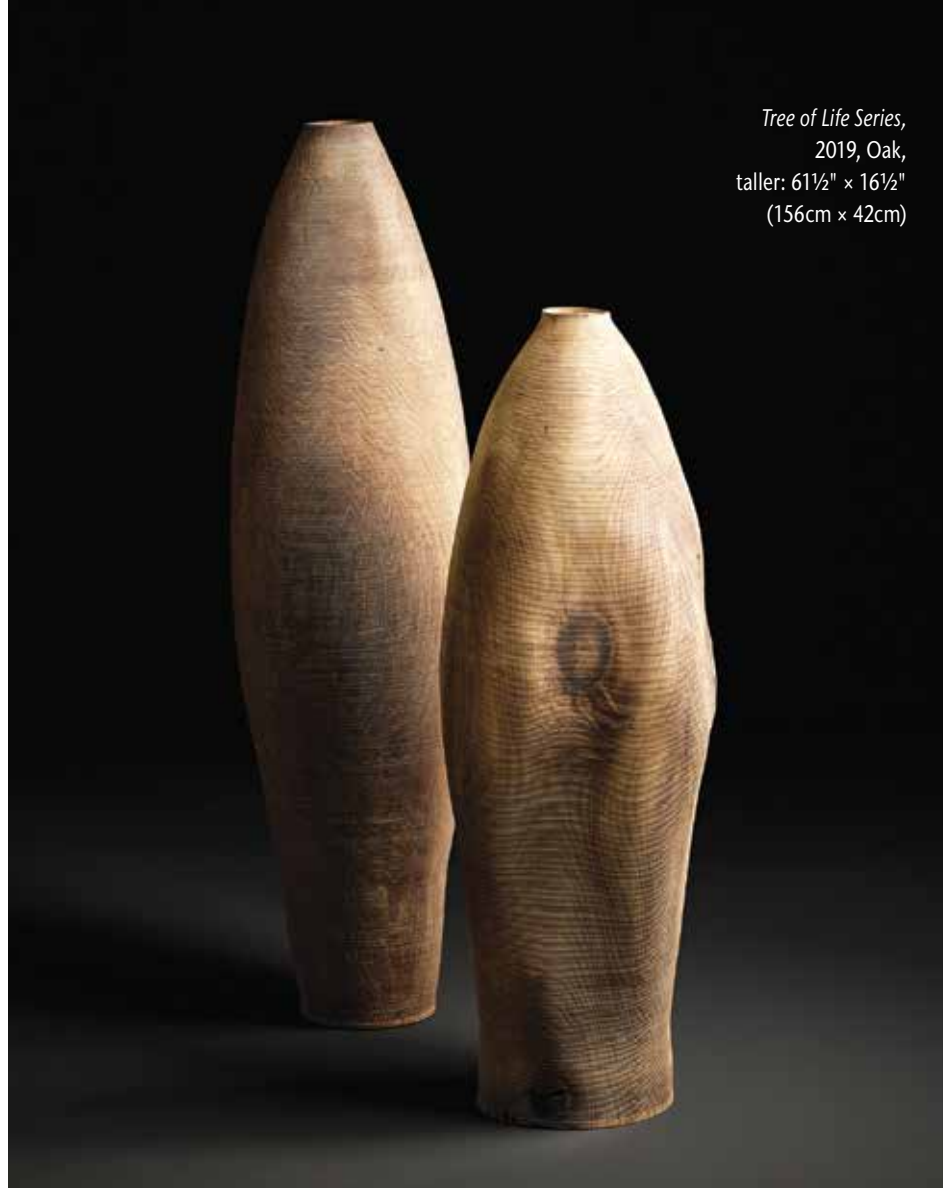
Untitled, 2018, Curly maple, taller: 21¼" × 8" (54cm × 20cm)

working with a different scent than that of his customary material, oak.

Pieces in the fiddleback maple eventually will be shipped to one of the commercial galleries that represent him. The association with galleries began when Sonya Park, the owner of the design store Arts&Science in Tokyo, visited him in his booth at the Paris *Maison et Objet* and purchased items for sale in Japan. European design stores also bought pieces from the fairs, but that method of marketing ceased when galleries showed interest. Ernst's work is now intended largely for the art market, where he has attracted collectors from Germany, Austria, Switzerland, England, and Spain, as well as Hong Kong, Korea, Japan, and the United States. He concentrates on solo exhibitions or exhibitions that are staged in relation to a space requiring a design for the entire environment that includes his woodturning.

The work is selling in the range of \$40,000 (U.S.). This places obligations on the artist: "I am getting more and more critical of myself and recently I have more pieces for which I say, okay, it's nice. But I have done better ones, so I don't put them into shows. I do three pieces and one is a really good one that I give to shows." Rejection is not only of the turning. Ernst is cognizant of the wood grain and coloring, the foibles of branches and burls, innate cracks, and knots. Taking account of the tree is paramount, according to a note on his website: "Whether it is solitary or grove-growing, on fertile or hungry soil, exposed to wind and weather and outside influences—all these factors are engraved indelibly on the 'memory of the grain' and give the receptacle its final form." Ernst's experience provides a sense of how the piece will move in the drying process, and sometimes there are surprises when the wood warps in an ugly way. Those pieces go to the fire.

From forest to gallery, each piece is on an intensive trajectory that starts with considered extraction from the



Tree of Life Series,
2019, Oak,
taller: 61½" x 16½"
(156cm x 42cm)



Team members,
left to right:
Steeves Danguy,
Ulrike Spengler,
Ernst Gamperl

Photo: David Leonhard
Gamperl

tree and proceeds to turning, being wrapped to maintain moisture, having cracks repaired, more turning, brushing, hollowing, washing, drying, treatment with minerals that react with the natural tannins of the timber, oiling, and waxing. Preparation prior to drying, which lasts for about two months, takes

three to four weeks. For the last twelve years, Ernst has engaged freelancer Steeves Danguy as his assistant. For really large pieces, "we are hollowing together. We mix it up because it's too hard for one person all day. For one hour or two hours, Steeves is hollowing, then I am hollowing." Ernst is fortunate to ►



Ernst Gamperl applies texture to a *Tree of Life* vessel.

“
IT’S A PROCESS.
THE WOOD IS FORMING
ME, AND I’M ALSO
FORMING THE WOOD.
— ERNST GAMPERL

also have his wife, Ulrike, for administration, marketing, gallery contacts and contracts, and the many other tasks that take artists away from making.

Tree of Life

One phrase stands out from the narrative of *The Overstory*, particularly in relation to woodturning: “What you make from a tree should be at least as miraculous as what you cut down.” Although the Bavarian oak that was the provocation for the *Tree of Life* project was felled by a hurricane, Ernst Gamperl has created an astounding legacy for the over-two-centuries-old *Quercus*. Ninety-seven objects were crafted from the tree and its branches, of which sixty-seven were first shown at the Gewerbemuseum for art and design in Winterthur, Switzerland, in 2019. Its second iteration, originally scheduled to open in April 2020 at the Cheongju Craft Museum, South Korea, took the form of an online exhibition due to the impact of COVID-19. Subsequent shows will take place in England, Germany, and Korea, at the Amorepacific Museum of Art in Seoul, conditions permitting. This huge undertaking of ten years may not occur in Ernst’s lifetime again.

The diameter of the oak’s trunk and its weight required cutting it into blocks where the tree came down. At first, the tree’s owner assumed that only the trunk was wanted, but Ernst also retrieved the branches from a firewood pile. In order to accommodate the size of the raw material, Ernst’s workshop had to be expanded and two custom lathes built. Although his preferred timber is oak and he knows its idiosyncrasies well, this tree proved to be idiosyncratic. Looking back on the evolution of the project, Ernst noticed, “I was lucky because all the pieces I was working with were moving very well and smoothly. Everything looked good out of this trunk.” He recognized that “the whole project had some good spirit to realize it.” Visitors who saw the exhibition in Winterthur considered it special and were appreciative of close-up access to the objects as well as viewing the related documentary. Thirty smaller pieces from the oak were sold at the Gewerbemuseum to provide revenue to publish a book, *Ernst Gamperl: Zwiesprache Dialogue*. The exhibition gave the artist an opportunity to connect with the public again: he gave a number of lectures and guided tours, talking about

the process of realizing a unique and miraculous dream.

Tree of Life impressed not only museum patrons. In 2017, Ernst submitted two pieces from the project to the jury for the inaugural Loewe Craft Prize. From 3,900 entries, a *Tree of Life* vessel was chosen as the winner. The Loewe Foundation, established in 1988, is intended “to promote creativity, educational programs and to safeguard heritage in the fields of poetry, dance, photography, art and craft.” The website for the Craft Prize states that it “seeks to acknowledge and support international artisans of any age (over 18) or gender who demonstrate an exceptional ability to create objects of superior aesthetic value. By identifying work that reinterprets existing knowledge to make it relevant today while reflecting its maker’s personal language and distinct hand, the Loewe Foundation aims to highlight the continuing contribution of craft to the culture of our time.” The recognition is worth €50,000 and, in 2017, the twenty-six finalists were exhibited together in Madrid, New York, and Tokyo.

A video of Ernst was recorded following his receipt of the prestigious award. It provides a sense of the man, his workshop, and his process (visit tiny.cc/Gamperl).



Tree of Life Series,
2013-2018, Oak,
tallest: 26½" (67cm)



Tree of Life Series, 2018,
Oak, 30" × 30¼"
(76cm × 77cm)

In it, he talks about how craft is a necessary tool for obtaining a good result, but once the craft has become second nature, you must engage with “the higher spiritual level of the work ... If it’s touching you in a spiritual way, then for me it’s a strong object. And often I feel it with goose pimples.” He explains that while he creates forms that have not previously existed, he must interact with the wood in a dialogue. He knows, “I cannot put my will directly on the wood because then I overwhelm the wood and it’s dead. So I always have to work to combine my will of shaping, together with whatever the wood is asking for.” It is a balance between the artist’s ego and being sensitive of and sensible with what’s on the lathe. “It’s a process. The wood is forming me, and I’m also forming the wood.” Equally important is the craft and intellect of planning each step from the beginning, connecting all the individual steps, tools, and techniques to ensure a good outcome. Woodturning excellence doesn’t just happen, it’s an accumulation of know-how, experience, and perception.

Conclusion

The most resonant character in Richard Powers’ compelling book is Patricia Westerfield, a scientist who has dedicated her life to trees, their habits, habitat, character, and preservation. Her heart aches watching their demise because, “Love for trees grows out of her—the grace of them, their supple experimentation, the constant variety and surprise. These slow, deliberate creatures with their elaborate vocabularies, each distinctive, shaping each other, breeding birds, sinking carbon, purifying water, filtering poisons from the ground, stabilizing the microclimate.” She knows the major responsibility for dwindling forests lies with humanity and, despite her efforts to create a seed repository as an inheritance for future generations, she despairs.

Artists like Ernst Gamperl are able to use their talent and mastery to educate us about the splendor of trees. His woodturning is not only about objects on pedestals. It is about care for trees, to the extent of highlighting their

natural beauty as well as letting them speak for themselves. Seeing the entire collection of *Tree of Life*—and Ernst intends to keep the sixty-three items together as long as he can—is to see a downed oak brought back to life in a unique and challenging story.

For more, visit ernst-gamperl.de. ■

D Wood designed and made furniture to earn a Diploma in Crafts and Design at Sheridan College in Canada and an MFA at the Rhode Island School of Design. In 2012, she earned a PhD in Design Studies from University of Otago.

MEMBERS' GALLERY



Pat and Karen Miller, Washington

I tend to err on the side of optimism. Mostly, I feel healthy, safe, and secure. Then came early 2020 and some disquieting but distant news of a new flu-like virus, still far from our shores and not to be worried about. A month later, thirty-five people died within 140 miles of our home, and I didn't feel quite so healthy, safe, or secure. Those in charge did not know what to do, media started to run amok, and my optimism started to fade.

Fear Stalks the Planet is a reflection of that fade. It is neither joyful nor uplifting and hopefully not forever.

The vessel takes its shape from an old *Star Trek* episode, "The Doomsday Machine." The darkness and caverns and reptilian image wrapping the vessel all evoke fear, regardless of facts. The tendrils, with only a hint of color, might be virus, might be serpents, might be webs. All the while, the orb is being consumed, dissolved by the corrosive brew of worry and trepidation.

I go there on occasion so I don't have to live there...

Fear Stalks the Planet, 2020, Birch, filbert branches, maple, spirit dyes, graphite spray, gilders paste, acrylic paint, 15" x 7" (38cm x 18cm)

Ron Campbell, Michigan

Early in March 2020, when the coronavirus started spreading quickly across our country, it infected many in New York City, which became the East Coast's epicenter. There was a shortage of personal protection equipment (PPE) and ventilators. Tragically, this was not unique to the U.S., but a worldwide crisis. Many hospitals resembled a MASH unit in a war zone.

In some hospitals, PPE was only issued once a day, and healthcare providers were forced to wear the same PPE as they treated one patient after another. Doctors and nurses commonly worked very long shifts. Some slept in the hospital where they worked, fearing that if they went home, they would transmit the virus to their family members.

Dr. Lorna Breen became infected while working as an emergency room director in NYC. After ten days in quarantine, she returned to work. She described tragic scenes of devastation wrought by the disease, recalling how some patients died before they could even be carried out of ambulances. On April 26th, Dr. Breen took her own life, the unrelenting crisis having become more than she could bear. This sculpture is dedicated to her struggle and the struggle of so many healthcare workers still on the front lines throughout our nation. May she rest in peace.



The Last Shift, 2020, Cherry, bleached madrone, paper towels, milk paint, 6" x 11" x 11" (15cm x 28cm x 28cm)



COVID-19 Roulette, 2020, Osage orange seedpod (turned and cast in bronze resin), silver glaze, cultured opal, ebonized cherry, 4" x 3" (10cm x 8cm)



Racial Croquet, 2020, Cherry, milk paint, 10" x 7" x 8" (25cm x 18cm x 20cm)



Scott Grove, New York

As an artist, I find inspiration everywhere, and typically my work reflects a positive outlook and a deeper spiritual meaning. But in the last few years, I have been inspired by my own emotional response to the darkening world around me. Lately, my artwork has served as a vehicle for voicing my concerns about deeply troubling issues in our world.

Steve Loar (Michigan) Greg Gallegos (Michigan) Christian Burchard (Oregon)

In the early 1990s, I began joining shards and cast-offs from other turners with my own forms to create compositions. These discards have always come from outstanding turners who are committed to exploration. Here, I have modified and arranged cast-off pods made by Greg Gallegos and shards from Christian Burchard to suggest immigrants conferring in the limiting space of a border.



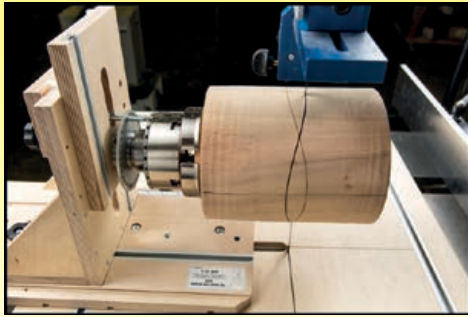
La Conversacion en la Frontera (Conversation at the Border), 2020, American hardwoods, found objects, 7" x 20" x 12" (18cm x 51cm x 30cm)

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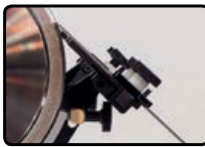
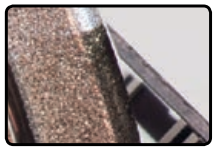


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- Our carbide cutters are not mass produced from foreign suppliers. We design and manufacture our own carbide cutters in-house, specifically for woodturning, ensuring end-to-end quality.



Turning Tools



Turning Accessories



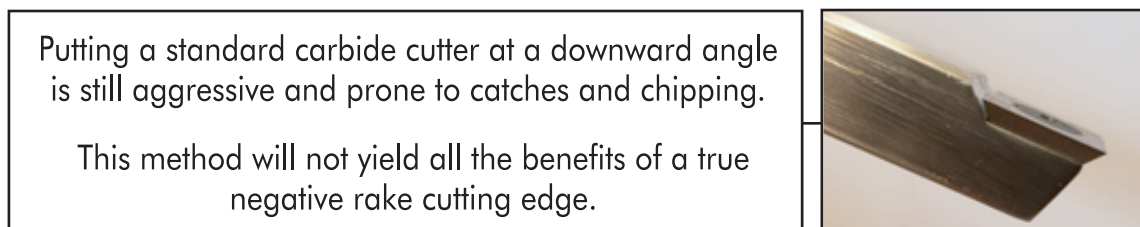
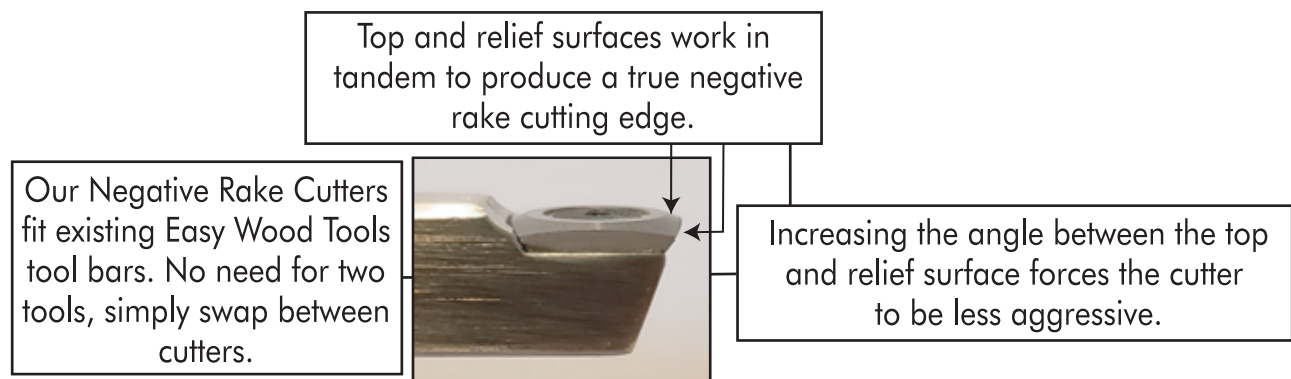
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As industry experts in the carbide field, we design and manufacture our Standard and Negative Rake Carbide Cutters* with the best combination of grade, grind, and geometry specifically designed for turning.

- Optimum grade of carbide for the longest lasting sharp cutting edge
- Proprietary grinding process that results in the sharpest edge possible
- Precision ground finish. We don't polish our carbide cutters as the polishing process is prone to chipping the cutting edge

We are the first to create a Negative Rake Carbide Cutter to improve the turning experience with a less aggressive carbide cutter that virtually eliminates chipping, catches and blowouts. Our Negative Rake Cutters create smooth, safe, continuous cuts and make turning man-made materials and ultra-hardwoods safer and easier.



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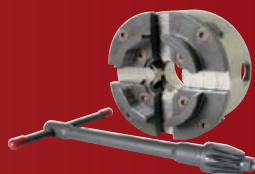
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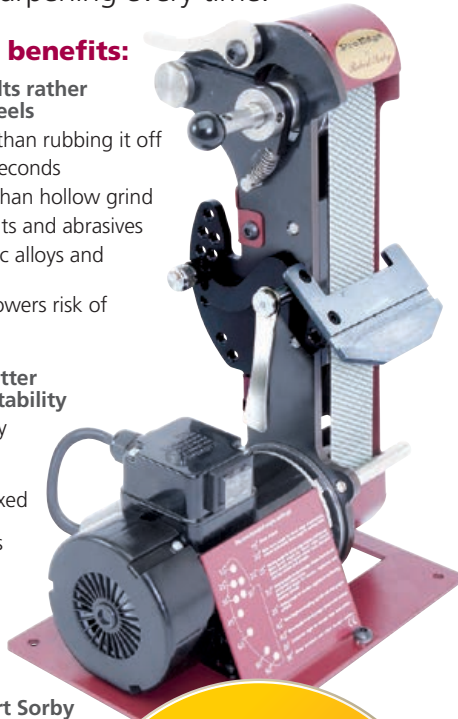
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* Carbide tools require use of diamond belt

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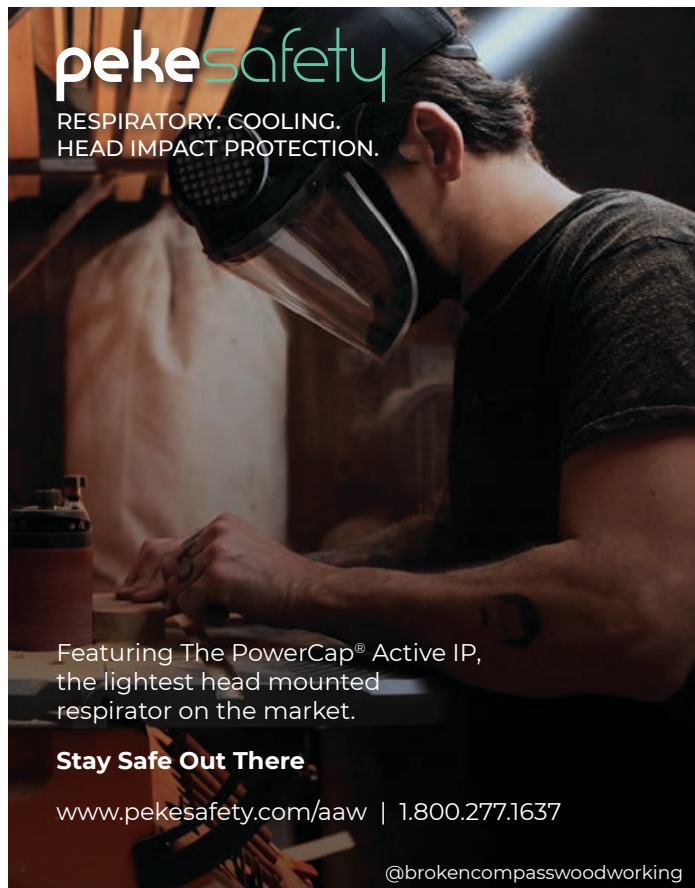
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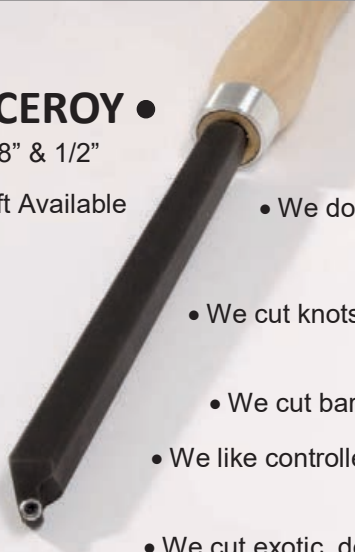
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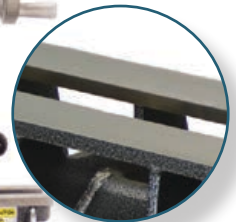
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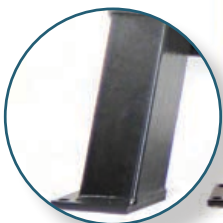
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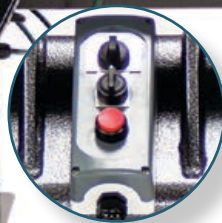
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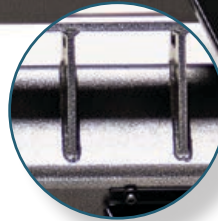
Adjustable Height



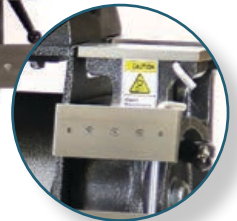
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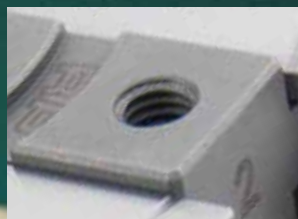
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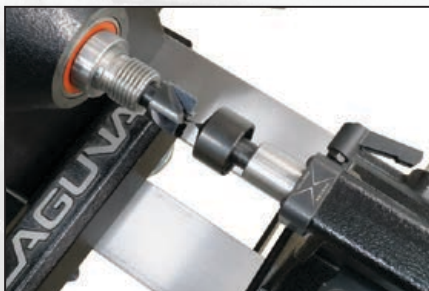
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BARRIE LYNN BRYANT WYOMING

I am fundamentally a collaborator, whether it be with wood, gold leaf, artwork, my wife, life, the void, whatever. Through collaborations, I feel that I accomplish tenfold what I might otherwise be able to do alone or through egocentrism. And I prefer to pursue the unknown and to brave new territory often, which means I get to entertain the probability of failure as much as I do triumph. In retrospect, my best art happens when I am able to cross the threshold that's usually just one step beyond my failure. It's a good feeling to know my failures can be rewarded.

Shown here are collaborative works made with my wife, artist AB Word. Her pastel drawings, pigment ink prints on 22k hand-gilded paper, reside in tondo frames I turned on the lathe and adorned with real gold leaf.

For more, visit merglennstudios.com.

MORE INSIDE!

To learn how Barrie turns tondo frames and adorns them with gold leaf, see his article in this issue, page 26.



Mad Hatter, by AB Word, 2018,
Medium-density fiberboard,
22k gold leaf, egg tempera
sgraffito, 15½" (39cm) diameter



Alice Falling, by AB Word, 2018,
Medium-density fiberboard,
22k gold leaf, egg tempera
sgraffito, 15½" (39cm) diameter

