TURNED-AND-CARVED FLOWER-PETAL BOWL • GARAGE SALE BOWL GETS MAKEOVER AND A WORTHY PURPOSE

# AMERICAN WOODTURNER

Journal of the American Association of Woodturners
October 2024 vol 39, no 5 • woodturner.org

## MARK SFIRRI
**2024 POP MERIT AWARD RECIPIENT**

**NATURAL-EDGE CROTCH PLATTER WITH CARVED FEET**

***COMMON ROOTS* 2024 AAW MEMBER EXHIBITION**

**BILL LUCE: THE QUIET POWER OF UNDERSTATED FORM**

# Danielle M. Barbour

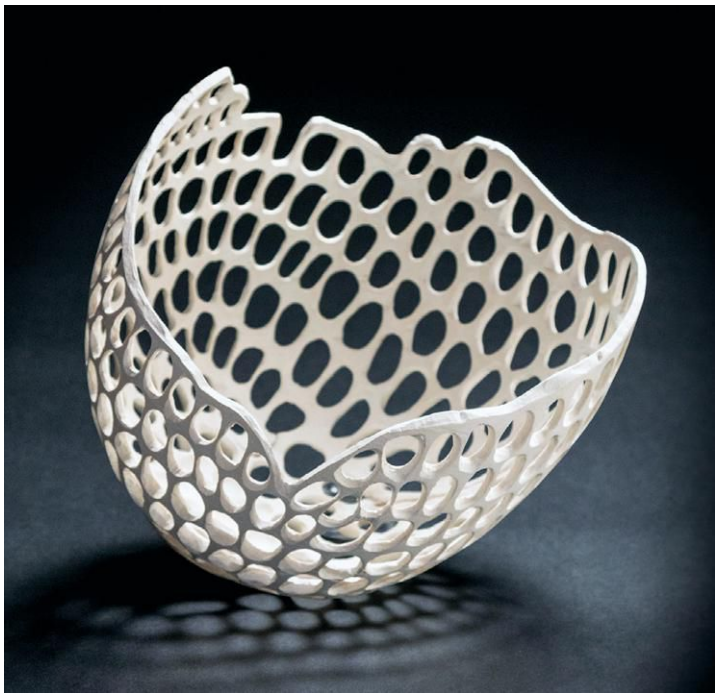
## Pennsylvania

I was introduced to woodturning on a date night with my husband. What was meant to be simply a fun activity for a couple of Saturdays turned my life upside down. I fell in love with the craft immediately. After joining my local AAW chapter, I sought out the club experts in bowl making, coring, hollow forms, boxes, carving, and embellishment. I spent my days off from the emergency department, where I work as a nurse practitioner, absorbing all I could from these very generous teachers, including David Ellsworth.

It is not a struggle for me to combine the science and art sides of my brain. My abilities with an 11 blade has made for good muscle memory with a skew. My attention to detail has made my finishing work much stronger. And my ability to remain calm under pressure on the job has made me a braver, more focused woodturner.

Although I have been turning for only eight years, I have gathered a foundation of skills from the best teachers. That allows me to focus on my own priorities—how a finished piece feels in my hand, creating strong and balanced shapes, adding delicate embellishment. These are the markers that have guided me as I have developed my own body of work.

*For more, follow Danielle on Instagram, @daniellebarbourwoodturning.*



*Coral Shadows*, 2021, Bleached holly, lacquer, 8" × 7½" (20cm × 19cm)

*Skew-Turned Flowers in Vase*, 2023, Maple (flowers), silver ambrosia maple (vase), acrylic paint, lacquer, 24" × 20" (61cm × 51cm)

*Best Friend's Gift*, 2017, Bleached holly (globe), ash (cap), acrylic paint, 5" (13cm) diameter

*Coral Bouquet*, 2023, Bleached holly, acrylic paint, lacquer, 3½" × 13" × 13" (9cm × 33cm × 33cm)

*The White Whale*, 2023, Spalted silver maple (bleached), paste wax, 5½" × 17" (14cm × 43cm)

*Reaching for the Galaxy*, 2023, Elm burl, ebony, lacquer, 6" × 4" (15cm × 10cm)

*Bridal Veil Mushroom Life Cycle*, 2022, Bleached holly, black walnut husk, elm burl, moss, acrylic paint, lacquer, 8" × 8" (20cm × 20cm)

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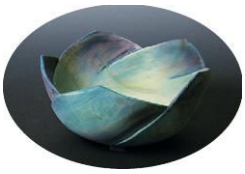

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Journal of the American Association of Woodturners


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**Back cover:** Christina M. Vincent

## Editor's Note

One of the things I love most about the AAW is the broad range of interests across its membership. The word *woodturning* encompasses so much and probably means something different for each of us. If you were to ask a cross-section of the AAW membership what is important to them in woodturning, the scope of answers would include everything from plain utilitarian work to wildly artistic interpretations and everything in between. We've got folks thriving on segmenting, pen making, ring turning, box making, bowl turning, hollow forms, multiaxis work, piercing, carving, coloring, collecting—you name it. Some want to highlight the beauty of the wood; some want to use turned forms as a canvas. Some are professionals, many are hobbyists. Some are actively making; some are content to observe.

Fortunately, the AAW is welcoming, and its scope is expansive. In this journal, I try to offer something for everyone and to represent our broad range of interests. AAW publications are *by* woodturning enthusiasts *for* woodturning enthusiasts. So if there is a topic you are not seeing within these pages or in *Woodturning Fundamentals*, please reach out with your ideas.

—Joshua Friend

# From the President

### Outreach

Each summer, I am involved with a local school for orchestra conductors. Sixty-four young, mostly professional musicians gather in the woods of Downeast Maine to spend six weeks honing their performing and conducting skills. A few years ago, I offered to help some of them turn their own batons. The orchestra sees a white shaft, but the handle of a baton can be unique to the conductor, and the weight and balance can be adjusted to meet the preferences of the owner. Initially, only three or four students took part, but this year, twenty-eight batons were created by folks who have spent most of their lives perfecting their musical skills but have never touched or been exposed to power tools or carving instruments. Several students said that their woodturning sessions were the most fun of the summer (other than performing, of course). A few of them have sought out a local woodturning chapter, and at least one has purchased his first lathe. For them, there seems to be a natural connection between musical performance and making things with their hands.

I describe this as an example of how woodturning can affect other areas of human existence in a positive way. I wonder how many of us have been able to share our passion for woodturning like this, demonstrating at local fairs or mentoring new turners in our clubs and chapters. On the flipside, how many of us see woodturning as a solitary and meditative activity with its own benefits for mental and physical health? Can the two approaches be combined?

On a slightly different tangent, have you considered sharing your interest and skills in woodturning by demonstrating locally or regionally? Have you considered drafting an article for the Journal or *Woodturning Fundamentals*? Even if you do not have an interest in teaching in your shop or demonstrating, drafting an article is a wonderful way to share your skills and interests.

### Strategic planning

Our strategic planning exercise continues, and we extend our heartfelt thanks to the more than 5,000 individuals—members, former members, and non-members—who participated and contributed to the research phase. Your honest perspectives, extensive experience, and enthusiasm for the future of woodturning and AAW were invaluable. The Board recently met for two days in Waco, Texas, following the SWAT symposium, to use the data from the research phase to evaluate and align the organization's mission, vision, and values. The strategic planning process will continue as we develop actionable strategies to best support the art and craft of woodturning, as well as the woodturning community.

### Transitions

You may have noticed that this space has recently been alternating between a president's letter and an update from Jennifer Newberg, our executive director. This is my last chance to communicate with you as your president, since my term ends at the end of this year. A new president will be elected by the Board in November. It has been my privilege and honor to serve the organization for the last four-and-a-half years, and I particularly want to thank you—the membership of AAW, Board members, committee members, staff, and so many volunteers who keep the AAW running throughout the year. You have made my job much easier. I am excited about the continued evolution of our organization and look forward to its bright future.

Keep turning,

Mike H. Summerer
President, AAW Board of Directors

2025 AAW International Woodturning Symposium

# Join Us in Saint Paul, Minnesota

## June 12-15, 2025

Registration Opens in November

## WIN A FREE SYMPOSIUM PACKAGE

- Full Registration
- AAW Banquet Ticket
- St. Paul Hotel Room
- Plus, a Travel Stipend

Enter for a Chance to Win at
AAWSYMPOSIUM.ORG

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# Call for Entries *Open/Closed* 2025 POP Exhibition and Auction

*Submission Period: December 1, 2024, to January 15, 2025*

The Professional Outreach Program (POP) is pleased to announce the theme for its 19th annual show and auction, *Open/Closed*, an exhibition of boxes. Each year, these shows have featured an exciting mix of excellent work created by a roster of national and international established and emerging artists.

POP themes are chosen to provide a dynamic springboard for creative ideas and a showcase for extraordinary small-scale work. Psychology has shown that limits spur creative thinking, and the format of the box and limitation in size (6" × 6" × 6", or 15cm × 15cm × 15cm) provide creative constraints that we hope will spark your imagination and ingenuity.

Woodturning has long been associated with vessels and containers, and this theme offers so much to explore: themes of privacy, enclosure, preciousness, practicality, history, the polarity of open and closed, the secret and the secret revealed.

## Eligibility/submission details

- Entry fee: $25 for up to three separate pieces. Fees are waived for students in full-time accredited art- or wood industry-related programs or apprenticeships.
- A 100-word or shorter theme statement connecting your piece to the exhibition theme is required.
- Work must be a box, actual or conceptual.
- The show is open to any current AAW member anywhere in the world, 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, but any material may be used.
- Work, as it will be displayed, must fit into the area of a 6" (interior dimensions) cube. No exceptions.

## Where and when to apply

- Apply online at tiny.cc/Calls.
- Submission period: December 1, 2024, to January 15, 2025, 11:59 p.m. CST. All artists will be notified by February 15, 2025.

## Other info

### *Entry images*

Submit digital images in .jpg format, maximum size 2 MB per file. You may provide 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. Since the show is juried through photographs, it is important that images be clear, properly exposed, and in focus. Do not watermark or include your name on the images. A plain background is preferred for jurying, and Instagram-style images are discouraged.

### *On view*

*Open/Closed* will premiere at the AAW Gallery of Wood Art in Saint Paul, Minnesota, and be on view March 16 to May 18, 2025. The exhibition will be on view at the AAW International Woodturning Symposium, also in Saint Paul, from June 12-15, 2025. The live/online auction will be held June 14, 2025.

### *Delivery and display*

Accepted work must be shipped to arrive at the AAW Gallery of Wood Art in Saint Paul by March 1, 2025. Artwork must be ready for installation—freestanding or with an easel or other support provided. Support subject to approval.

**Yann Marot,**
*The Unbearable Lightness of Balance,*
2023, Maple, 4¼" × 3½" × 6" (11cm × 9cm × 15cm)

**Kalia Kliban,**
*Rough Years,* 2022,
Redwood burl, 3¼" × 4"
(8cm × 10cm)

### *Sales/auction*

This show concludes with a live and online auction at the AAW Symposium. 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*

Artworks will be professionally photographed and compiled in a full-color catalog. Participating artists receive complimentary copies.

For more, check the AAW's Calls for Entry page, found at tiny.cc/Calls, or email Tib Shaw at tib@woodturner.org. ■

# Call for Entries *Beginnings* 2025 AAW Member Exhibition

*Submission Period: January 1 to March 15, 2025*

The theme for the 2025 AAW member show is *Beginnings*. Each year, our goal is to host a Symposium exhibition that showcases and celebrates the full scope of excellent work being created by our members. This year, our theme also reflects the host state of Minnesota, home to the headwaters of the Mississippi River.

As always, artists are encouraged to interpret the theme for themselves, and we are hoping to see entries ranging from impeccably crafted "round and brown" to innovative sculptures that push the boundaries. Do you already have a piece that fits this theme perfectly? If it was made in the past two years, it is eligible.

Work will be selected through a blind jurying process. There are two cash prizes for this exhibition: the $300 Masters' Choice, selected by the jurors or their representatives, and the $200 People's Choice, selected by attendees at the AAW Symposium in Saint Paul, Minnesota, June 12-15, 2025.

## Eligibility/submission details

- The show is open to any current AAW member anywhere in the world, and to fulltime students in art, design, or industry-related degree programs, regardless of AAW membership status.
- 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. Please contact Tib Shaw if your project is more than 48" (122cm) tall or wide.
- Collaborations are welcome. A single designated contact person is required.
- Entry fee: $25 for up to three submissions. The fee is waived for fulltime students in art, design, or industry-related degree programs.
- A theme statement of up to 100 words that describes your interpretation of the theme is required. Tips on writing your statement are on the calls for entry website.
- You are free to use any medium, but work must be created at least in part on the lathe.
- Work must have been created in the past two years (between March 2023 and March 15, 2025).

## Where and when to apply

- Apply online at tiny.cc/Calls.
- Submission period: January 1 to March 15, 2025, 11:59 p.m. CST. All artists will be notified by April 15, 2025.

## Other info

### *Entry images*

Submit digital images in .jpg format, maximum size: 2MB per file. Minimum 2800 pixels per inch on the longest side. You may provide 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. Since the show is juried through photographs, it is important that images be clear, properly exposed, and in focus. Do not watermark or include your name on the images. A plain background is strongly preferred for jurying, and Instagram-style images are discouraged.

### *On view*

*Beginnings* will premiere at the AAW Symposium in Saint Paul, Minnesota, June 12-15, 2025, before moving to the AAW Gallery of Wood Art, Saint Paul, Minnesota, where it will be on display August 10-November 30, 2025.

### *Delivery and display*

Accepted work can be shipped ahead to the Symposium staging site to arrive by June 6, or hand-delivered on Wednesday, June 11, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Artwork must be in excellent condition, be as shown in the entry images, and be ready for installation. All work must be freestanding or with an easel or other support provided. Support design 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 November 2025. Sold work may be replaced at the curator's discretion.

### *Awards*

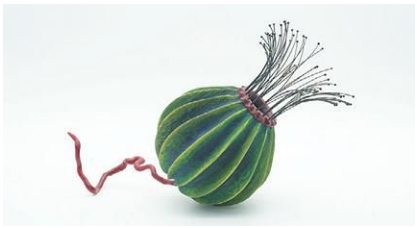
- Masters' Choice Award of $300
- People's Choice Award of $200

### *Catalog*

A full-color catalog will be available. Participating artists will receive a complimentary copy. Collaborative projects will be allotted two complimentary catalogs.

For more, check the AAW's Calls for Entry page, found at tiny.cc/Calls, or email Tib Shaw at gallery@woodturner.org.

**Pat Cogdal,** *Wobble Box*, 2024, Leopard wood, stainless steel, epoxy, 4¼" × 3¼" (11cm × 8cm)



**Evelin Schirrmacher,** *Fruit of Life*, 2024, Maple, wire, acrylic paint, 9½" × 13¾" × 6¼" (24cm × 35cm × 16cm)

# 2024 AAW Symposium Youth Turning Program

*Photos by Andi Wolfe.*

The 2024 AAW Symposium Youth Turning Program, held in Portland, Oregon, May 23 to 26, was a wonderful success, with twenty-nine AAW registered youth, twenty-five young ladies from Girls Build of Portland, and seven adults (when openings were available) taking part in ten "hands-on" turning rotations throughout the weekend. The rotations were taught by instructors Preston Christensen, Ron Day, Raleigh Lockhart, and Paul Otterstrom. In addition to the instructors, dozens of volunteers helped mentor the turners to ensure it was a safe and fun-filled event. The youth turners had opportunities to participate in several rotations, and again this year any open lathes in were filled with big kids aged 19 to 99. It was great to see the excitement of the kids, regardless of age, and their enthusiasm for woodturning.

## Lucky lathe winners

This year, through the generosity of our wonderful Youth Room sponsors, four JET mini-lathe packages were raffled in a drawing for all youth who took part. The lathe packages included a JET mini-lathe with stand, a Nova self-centering scroll chuck, a set of Crown woodturning tools, a set of EasyWood carbide woodturning tools, and a faceshield from Woodcraft.

The lucky winners were Abigail Christensen, Jasmine DuShane, Brynn Walter, and Edward Yarbrough.

Since this program has been in place, nearly 350 lathes—with tools, chucks, and safety equipment—have been awarded to youth participants.

## Generous supporters

This program would not be possible without the generosity of the vendors who provided the equipment and supplies for the classes. The following vendors have supported this program from the beginning:

- JET/Powermatic (lathes and stands)
- Crown Hand Tools (tool sets)
- Teknatool International (chucks)
- EasyWood Tools (tool sets)
- Woodcraft Supply (faceshields)

In addition, the following vendors have supported the program for multiple years:

- Craft Supplies USA (project supplies)
- Robust Tools (toolrests)
- Vince's WoodNWonders (abrasives)

The success of the AAW's Youth Program does not just happen—it is due to the support of many volunteers who give their time before, during, and after the Symposium. The Youth Program Committee includes Linda Britt, Kip Christensen, Kailee Bosch, Linda Ferber, Denis Delehanty, Carlos Angulo, Wells Shoemaker, Kris and DiAnn Roberts, and Ron Day. Many AAW woodturners donate their time setting up the Youth Room, mentoring our young turners, and then taking the Youth Room down and packing it all up for next year.

Planning is already underway for an even better Youth Turning Program at the 2025 AAW Symposium in Saint Paul, Minnesota. Having such experienced instructors introduce youth to the craft ensures woodturning will stay new and interesting in the eyes of our next generations. ■

*—Kris and DiAnn Roberts, National Youth Room Coordinators*


Four lucky youth participants won lathes donated by JET/Powermatic, as well as accessories from other generous vendors.

Preston Christensen demonstrates technique during the hands-on Youth Program at the 2024 AAW Symposium, Portland, Oregon.

## AAW Board of Directors Election Results

On behalf of the Board, Nominating Committee, and staff, I would like to congratulate Chuck Lobaito and Kimberly Winkle, who have been elected to three-year terms starting January 2, 2025. I would also like to announce that David Fellows has been appointed to a three-year term starting January 2, 2025. A total of 3,084 votes were cast via online ballots, and the results of the 2025 Board election were validated by Olsen Thielen, our external auditors.

These Board changes are in keeping with the AAW bylaws, which state: "In each election, the two candidates receiving the most votes by those casting ballots will serve for three years. The third Board member will be appointed by a two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Directors." The ability to appoint one Board member helps to ensure a healthy diversity of talent, so that all areas of expertise remain fulfilled. Also consistent with our bylaws, the Board appoints members to fill and complete unexpired terms as needed.

Respectfully,
Jennifer Newberg
AAW Executive Director

# Badger Woodturners' Mentoring Program Engages SkillsUSA

*Photos by Dennis Clayton.*

As part of its outreach, the Badger Woodturners (Madison, Wisconsin) has run a woodturning program at West High School since 2010. And this year, four of our students entered SkillsUSA, a state-wide competition.

SkillsUSA (skillsusa.org) offers three categories for woodshop students based on the cost of materials (under $50, $50 to $150, and over $150). West High School students were the only ones in Wisconsin to submit turned objects, and two of them won top awards—Clarity Watson, who made a marionette using multiaxis turning, and Lorenzo Ferrazzano, who turned a segmented bowl. Luke Wichern placed third with a segmented vase, and Jacob Scully submitted an open-segmented bowl with epoxy.

## Teaching our youth

Our ability to mentor students at West High School exists because of the deep belief that Jim Van Fossen, the shop teacher, has in the program. We started with two turning classes per day, but word got out and we had to increase to five classes each day. We have a very diverse group of students who participate in the program. Initially, we had almost no young women in our program, but now almost a quarter of our new students are female. Students sometimes come to turn during their lunch and open/free periods, and several have convinced their parents to purchase lathes.

The Badger Woodturners has provided multiple lathes to the program as well as most of the tools and supplies. West High School has purchased lathes to replace those that have worn out, in addition to purchasing lathes to grow the program. Our club has raised almost $20,000 to support the program since its inception, and the school's shop budget now includes additional funding. This past year, seven mentors worked with the students; each day, one or two of them spent six hours teaching woodturning and sharpening.

Each woodshop class at West typically has about twenty-five students; six or seven can sign up for one of the three six-week rotations per semester in the turning shop. Beginning students start with a rolling pin, progress to an egg and egg cup, and then a bowl. We regularly have students who are scared when starting out with a roughing gouge—and then there is the thrill of watching them confidently navigate a bowl gouge across the bottom of a bowl several weeks later. They are tackling something they knew little about and over time they are able to be successful. It is profound when a student says for the very first time, "I made something beautiful!" Students are allowed to take woodworking each of the four years in high school, so some of our students have worked with us multiple years and developed skills that have allowed them to perform well in this year's SkillsUSA competition.

Although some of our students may be failing or are disruptive in their other classes, they do very well working one-on-one at the lathe. For a surprising number of them, the woodshop is the one place where they can thrive.

Our work at West High School helps the Badger Woodturners meet one of our primary objectives—to introduce young people to woodturning—and brings our member mentors great satisfaction from having worked with hundreds of students over the years. ■

*—David Hiller and David Caes, Badger Woodturners Program Coordinators*

Jacob Scully

Lorenzo Ferrazzano

Luke Wichern

Clarity Watson

FROM THE EDITOR'S INBOX

Send emails to editor@woodturner.org

As a recently published author in *American Woodturner*, I am writing to say I am extremely grateful for your help in designing, editing, and getting my work to the finish line. The process was very pleasant and easy. I would recommend to anyone to submit ideas and articles to the Journal. The AAW is an invaluable resource for all of us in the woodturning community, and I am truly humbled to be a small part of your mission for learning, sharing work, and ideas.
*—Gabriel Hoff, Ohio Valley Woodturners Guild*

The Lancaster Area Woodturners (LAW) applied for and received an invitation to present their work at the Lancaster Amtrak station, which is the second most used station in Pennsylvania. Our turned work was on display from May to August this year. We had good participation, as thirty-two LAW members contributed seventy-two pieces for this opportunity. The items were not juried by the committee but simply chosen to represent each member's interpretation of a lathe-turned item.

The Amtrak display comprised a wide variety of turned work, and we provided fliers that directed visitors and observers to our club website. You may view more photos of the display at lancasterareawoodturners.org.

*—Dave Bleil, Lancaster Area Woodturners*


For over twelve years, we have hosted an online ornament challenge. The challenge has evolved and grown over the years, and we would like to invite all in the woodturning community to participate. The process is simple: create an ornament for the season and submit a photo (or photos) of it at our website, **ornamentchallenge.com**. It is open to any and all crafts, media, skill levels, and techniques and is open to all people. In past years, some ornaments submitted were traditionally turned globes, but others were compositions, intarsia, and scroll sawn creations. There have been a variety of crafts other than woodturning, including glasswork, wire, and needlepoint. Each year, we are inspired by the talent and diversity shown in the ornaments submitted.

There are very few rules for creation: it must be in good taste and considered to be an ornament. While the ornament can be created in advance, it must be submitted during the month of November 2024. Afterwards, we encourage makers to do something good with their ornament, such as donate it to a worthy cause.

In early December, we will post a video displaying all submissions and invite everyone to vote for their five favorites. Based on the public votes and the hosts' favorites, grand prizes will be awarded and highlighted in a final video. Some of our vendor sponsors provide the grand prizes for the top pics; others provide bonus prizes for all participants in the form of discounts. We ask participants to identify their turning club, and as an incentive for clubs to promote the challenge, we offer a complimentary IRD (interactive remote demonstration) to the three clubs with the most participants.

This year marks our 14th annual challenge, and we invite all craftspeople, young and old, new or experienced, to create an ornament and let the world enjoy their talent. Hope to see you in November at **ornamentchallenge.com**.
*—Alan Stratton (Utah) and Matt Deighton (Utah), co-hosts*

Ornaments from the 2023 challenge by (from left) Bruce Jordan, Mike Lober, and Jose Esteban Cruz.

# Calendar of Events

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

## Ireland

October 12, 13, 2024, Irish Woodturners Guild (IWG) Seminar, Tullamore Court Hotel, Tullamore, County Offaly. Demonstrators to include Emmet Kane, Derek Weidman, Chris Parker, Nikos Siragas, and Roberto Cecconello. For more, visit iwg.ie.

## Florida

February 14–16, 2025, Florida Woodturning Symposium, RP Funding Center, Lakeland. Demonstrators to include Kip Christensen, Phil Irons, Seri Robinson, Donna Zils-Banfield, Ron Browning, Bill Dalton, Don Geiger, and James McClure. Event to include an instant gallery, raffle, auctions, and great vendor market. For more, visit floridawoodturningsymposium.com.

## Illinois

September 26–28, 2025, Segmented Woodturners Symposium, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Northbrook. The only symposium fully dedicated to segmenting. Save the date for next year; details to come. For more, visit segmentedwoodturners.org.

## Minnesota

Multiple 2024 exhibitions, AAW's Gallery of Wood Art, Landmark Center, Saint Paul:

- September 8–December 29, 2024: *Common Roots* (AAW's 2024 member exhibition)
- Ongoing: *Touch This!; Around the Hus—Turning in Scandinavian Domestic Life; She's Tops! Selections from the Linda Ferber Collection*; vintage and historic lathes and turned items

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

## Oregon

March 14–16, 2025, Oregon Woodturning Symposium, Linn County Expo Center, Albany. Biennial event features vendor tradeshow and fifty rotations from demonstrators including Trent Bosch, Dan Tilden, Dave Gutschmidt, Craig Timmerman, Laurent Niclot, Curt Theobald, Kimberly Winkle, Kurt Hertzog, Elizabeth Weber, Michael Hosaluk, and Kevin Jesequel. For more, visit oregonwoodturningsymposium.com.

## Tennessee

January 31–February 1, 2025, Tennessee Association of Woodturners' 36th Annual Woodturning Symposium, Marriott Hotel and Convention Center, Franklin. Featured demonstrators to include Donna Banfield, Trent Bosch, Laurent Niclot, and Matt Monaco. One of the longest-running and most successful regional symposia in the U.S., the 2025 event will feature a tradeshow, instant gallery, People's Choice award, and Saturday night banquet with auction. For more, visit tnwoodturners.org, or email David Sapp at symposium@tnwoodturners.org. Vendors contact Grant Hitt at vendorinfo@tnwoodturners.org.

## Virginia

November 2, 3, 2024, Virginia Woodturners, Inc., biennial symposium, Expoland, Fishersville. Headline artists include Donna Zils Banfield, Trent Bosch, JoHannes Michelsen, Kristin LeVier, Andi Wolfe, Bob Rotche, Nick Agar, Joe Fleming, Barry Gross, Jeff Hornung, Linda Ferber, Willie Simmons, and Steve Schwartz. Forty-six demonstrations, large vendor tradeshow, instant gallery. For more, visit virginiawoodturners.com.

## Washington

October 19, 2024, Northwest Washington Woodturners' 12th-annual all-day demo, A Day with Keith Gotschall, Anacortes First Baptist Church, Anacortes. Full-day demonstration including bowl-turning techniques and turning a stool. Deli lunch provided, and classes will also be available. For more, visit nwwwt.org, email questions to info@nwwwt.org, or call Charley Drake at (425) 785-2994 or Rod Parker at (480) 338-3395.

## From AAW's Permanent Collection

**Michael Hosaluk,** *Firebirds*, Undated, Birch, 11" (28cm) diameter

Donated in 2009 by Lois Laycraft in honor of Frank Sudol

Photo: Tib Shaw/AAW

# Tips

***Share your turning ideas!***

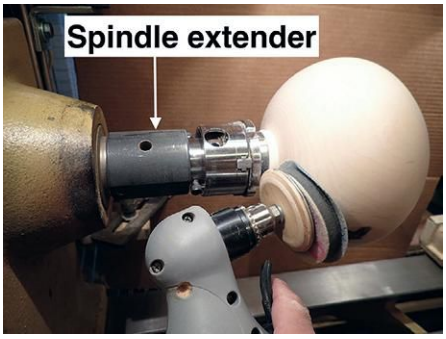
If we publish your tip, we'll pay you $35. Email your tips along with relevant photos or illustrations to editor@woodturner.org. —Joshua Friend, Editor

## Spindle extender improves sanding access

Using a readily available spindle extender makes sanding a lot easier. It creates more working access, so I can get my sanding drill in close between the headstock and the workpiece. The photo shows a 2½"- (6cm-) long spindle extender, which threads onto the lathe spindle.

Note: There is an important difference between a spindle *extender* and a spindle *adapter*. An *adapter* converts one thread size to a different thread size. For example, you may want to reduce your lathe spindle thread size from 1¼" × 8 tpi to 1" × 8 tpi. A spindle *extender* does not convert from one thread size to another; it simply extends the reach of the lathe spindle.

*—Carl Ford, New York, AAW member since 2001*




## Alternative chucking idea

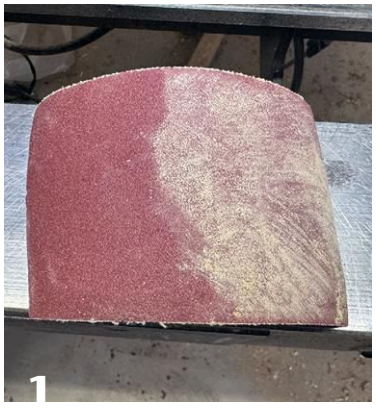
Lately I have been turning small boxes and finishing off the bottom by using a jam chuck, which involves sizing the jam chuck just right and maybe using some paper towels to improve the fit. The aluminum plate jaws (jumbo jaws) that I use for reverse-mounting bowls do not constrict small enough to clamp the boxes. While I was looking at pictures in a vendor's catalog for a solution, a lightbulb moment happened. Why couldn't I use the grippers from the plate jaws and screw them directly onto the chuck body? It worked great and I had everything I needed in the shop.

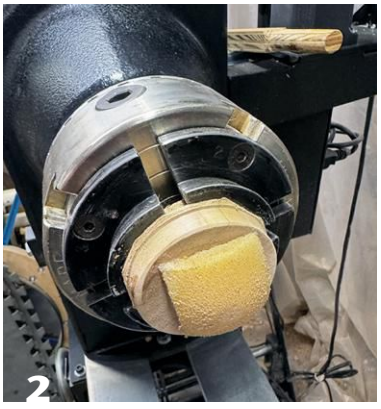
*—Loren Heyer, California, AAW member since 1993*

## Mount sandpaper cleaning stick on lathe

A lot of us use those rubbery sanding belt cleaners to clean abrasives such as sanding belts and abrasive disks. But very often we sand by hand with smaller pieces of sandpaper. When they get clogged with dust, it can be difficult to clean them efficiently (*Photo 1*). My solution was to glue a short section of sanding belt cleaner stick to a piece of wood mounted in my chuck (*Photo 2*). With the lathe running slowly, I just gently apply the clogged sandpaper to the cleaning stick. The results are amazing, and your sanding cutouts will get a life extension, saving you money.

*—Pavle Ancevski, New Jersey, AAW member since 2020*



## Labels for sandpaper

When I was teaching pen turning recently, no matter what I did, the sandpaper grits kept getting mixed up, and it wasted valuable time having to get them back in order. My solution was to use 1" (25mm) sticky "flags" on the folded sandpaper. It worked so well that I now use the method on all folded sandpaper bundles. I purchased a pack of 960 generic sticky flags online at a cost of 1¢ per flag, and they work great.

*—Larry Sefton, Tennessee, AAW member since 2004*



## Turntable for even spray finishing

When applying spray finishes, I often struggle to achieve a consistent, light coat. I spray one section of the piece, manually rotate it, and then spray again, but it's challenging to maintain even coverage. Recently, I discovered a used turntable online, and it has greatly improved my spraying results. I can now achieve a smooth finish by spraying the piece as the turntable rotates. The turntable has three rotation speeds—33⅓, 45, and 78 rpm—which are ideal for spraying. You can find used turntables online for about $15. The one I found is powered by a USB power bank, which makes it very portable for spraying outdoors. Various parts of the turntable can be protected with plastic sheeting as needed.

*—Ron Giordano, Texas, AAW member since 2019*

## Window-mounted fan clears the air

While my shop has a couple of windows, potentially harmful fumes seem to linger when I'm using cyanoacrylate (CA) glue, epoxy, and some finishes. Opening the windows doesn't really clear out the fumes, so I bought a twin-motor portable window fan. I put it in the window only when I need it. The fan is held in place simply by closing the sliding window against it—no fancy mounting brackets needed. However, since the fan wasn't quite high enough to fill the top part of the window opening, I made a filler panel out of some scrap wood to close off the open space. There's a bonus with this fan: I can use it either as an exhaust fan or I can reverse it to pull in fresh air. It's easy to install and remove.

*Editor's Note: Never use a household fan to evacuate finishes sprayed in a spray booth. This could pose an ignition hazard when using flammable materials. Proper spray booths are equipped with enclosed explosion-proof motors that are made for that application.*

*—Rich Sabreen, Connecticut, AAW member since 2015*

## Contact cleaner keeps the lights on

The flexible goose-neck lights I use at the lathe have a common problem of not turning on due to corrosion or dust buildup on the internal contacts. I solve this issue by spraying some aerosol electronics contact cleaner directly into the switch. Flip the switch once or twice and the lights work again. I routinely do this more than once a week and have been for more than five years.

*—Steve Schwartz, Virginia, AAW member since 1999*


# ARCHITECTURALLY INSPIRED DOME BOX

Taj Mahal, by Kristian Bertel, CC BY-SA 4.0 via Wikimedia Commons

Bill Kram

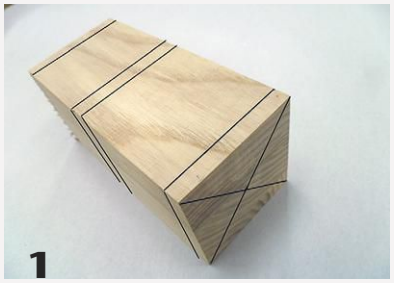
Here is a box design concept based on a familiar architectural element seen in many buildings around the world. The dome is used widely in public buildings, houses of worship, sports arenas, and both commercial and private structures. The shapes vary in their details, and some are incredibly striking. A few examples of outstanding dome designs include the U.S. Capitol, the Duomo (Italy), the Taj Mahal (India), the Temple Mount (Israel), and the Kremlin (Russia). Borrowing from these examples, this turned box design comprises a rectangular block as the base that simulates the supporting structure under a domed lid. Both elements can feature a variety of shape and embellishment options.

The project described here is a basic domed box. The making process covers a combination of traditional box construction steps with the cutting of a modified (concave) pommel—the turned transition from square to round, often found on furniture parts—a useful cut to add to your turning repertoire.

## Initial turning

Start with a rectangular turning blank cut square on the table saw. The box

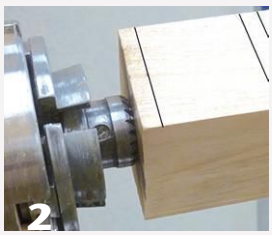
### Prepare turning blank



1

Take care to cut the blank accurately square. Then draw lines marking the width of the end tenons, or spigots, and parting section between the base and lid. Also mark the turning centers on the ends.

### Mount between centers, form spigots



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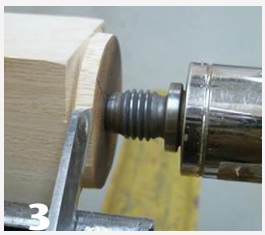

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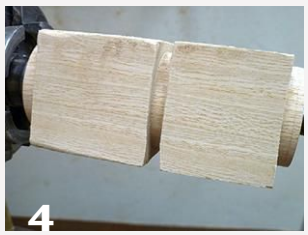
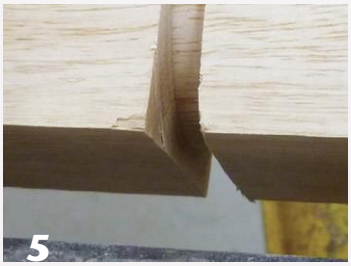


4

With the workpiece mounted between centers, use a parting tool to form the spigots and to part down in the central area. Note the drive center clamped in a scroll chuck rather than being mounted in the lathe spindle.

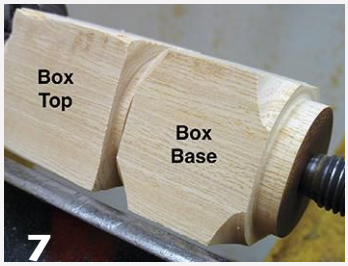
## Cutting the corners


5


6

Sometimes a parting tool can chip out wood at the corners. The author remedies this problem by "cutting corners" on the box base using a gouge. These cuts help ease the transition from the square base to the round domed top.

## Remount in chuck, detail bottom



7

With the corners cut on the base section, the drive center is removed and the top tenon is mounted in the chuck.


8

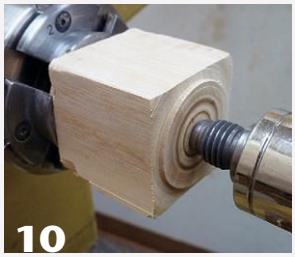
The author details the bottom of the box using a small detail gouge.

## Part bottom section off


9

A thin parting tool separates the bottom from the lid section.

## Turn top section round


10


11

The top section remains in the chuck and is turned to a cylinder slightly smaller than the blank width.

involves endgrain hollowing, so the turning is mounted in spindle orientation (with the grain running parallel to the lathe's bed ways). Choose wood with straight grain and of medium hardness. I started with a blank that was 2⅜" (6cm) square and 5½" (14cm) long.

*Photo 1* shows the box blank with lines indicating the location of chucking tenons 5/16" (8mm) wide. The two parting lines near the center, 5/16" apart from each other, establish the box base as a square 2⅜" × 2⅜". I also marked the center of the ends of the stock for mounting between centers on the lathe.

The turning starts with the stock mounted between centers. I like to use a Steb center clamped in a scroll chuck (*Photo 2*), but you could also use a drive mounted directly in the lathe spindle.

Using a parting tool, make a peeling cut to form a chucking tenon at each end, sized to fit your chuck jaws (*Photo 3*). Also part down between the two central lines 3/16" (5mm) deep to achieve a diameter of 2" (5cm), or ⅜" (9.5mm) smaller than the blank width, as shown in *Photo 4*.

The parting tool might leave some splintering at the corners (*Photo 5*), but making a concave pommel cut, or "cutting the corners," will take care of that and adds a nice design touch. I cut these transition points using a small gouge (*Photo 6*). The distance between corner rounds should result in a diameter of 2⅝" (7cm), or a diameter that is ¼" (6mm) larger than the blank width. This will leave a visually pleasing transition from top to bottom.

### Turn and part bottom

After you have cut the transitions for the base section, remove the workpiece from between centers and remount it in the chuck, grabbing the top tenon in the jaws (*Photo 7*). I like to turn some features into the bottom of the box using a small detail gouge (*Photo 8*).

Now part the bottom section from the top using a thin paring tool, leaving the spigot on the top section of the box (*Photo 9*). If a small portion of the spigot remains on the base as well, it can serve as a useful guide when fitting the base to the spigot of the top.

### Shape and hollow domed lid

Turn the top section remaining in the chuck to a diameter of 2⅜", to where the flats are just turned away (*Photos 10, 11*). I have found that the slightly smaller diameter leaves a more visually pleasing transition from top to bottom.

Next, I partially shaped the exterior of the dome before hollowing it using a gouge and both square and round scrapers (*Photos 12, 13*). Hollowing endgrain with a spindle gouge is very efficient with back-hollowing cuts, which may have first been described by Richard Raffan. A search on YouTube will show several videos demonstrating this fast hollowing technique. ▸

## Shape and hollow top


12


13

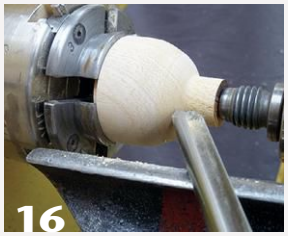
The author begins to shape the domed lid and uses a gouge and scrapers to hollow the lid.


14

The spigot is refined to a suitable length with parallel sides, and the shoulder undercut slightly for a good fit to the base.

## Reverse-mount, shape dome


15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17

Reverse-mount the top with the spigot used as a chucking tenon. Carefully turn the dome shape, keeping the tailstock in place as long as possible. The author forms a subtle band at the bottom and a small finial at the top.

## Hollow the box's base


18


19


20

Mount the base and drill to depth. Then hollow the base and carefully size the interior width for a good fit to the spigot on the lid.

I further refined the spigot to a suitable length and ensured its sides were parallel. The shoulders of the spigot should be slightly undercut to eliminate any gap between the top and base (*Photo 14*).

To complete the final shape of the top, reverse-mount it in the chuck, using the spigot as a tenon and clamping down with moderate pressure to avoid cracking the hollowed top. I used a small gouge to complete the dome shape and add a small finial on top (*Photos 15-17*).

### Complete the base

The last step is to hollow the base and achieve a good fit for the top. Remount the base in the chuck using the tenon at the bottom. The width of the hollowed area can be guided by the small outline of spigot remaining at the top of the base.

First, drill to your desired depth, and then hollow the base using a spindle gouge and square and round scrapers as before (*Photos 18, 19*). Take care when hollowing to keep the inside diameter undersized at first and then adjust it incrementally, testing the fit of the top as you go. I used a side-cutting scraper to clean up the interior walls and ensure they were parallel. After the fit of the top is achieved, slightly undercut the matching base shoulder to avoid having a gap (*Photo 20*). ■

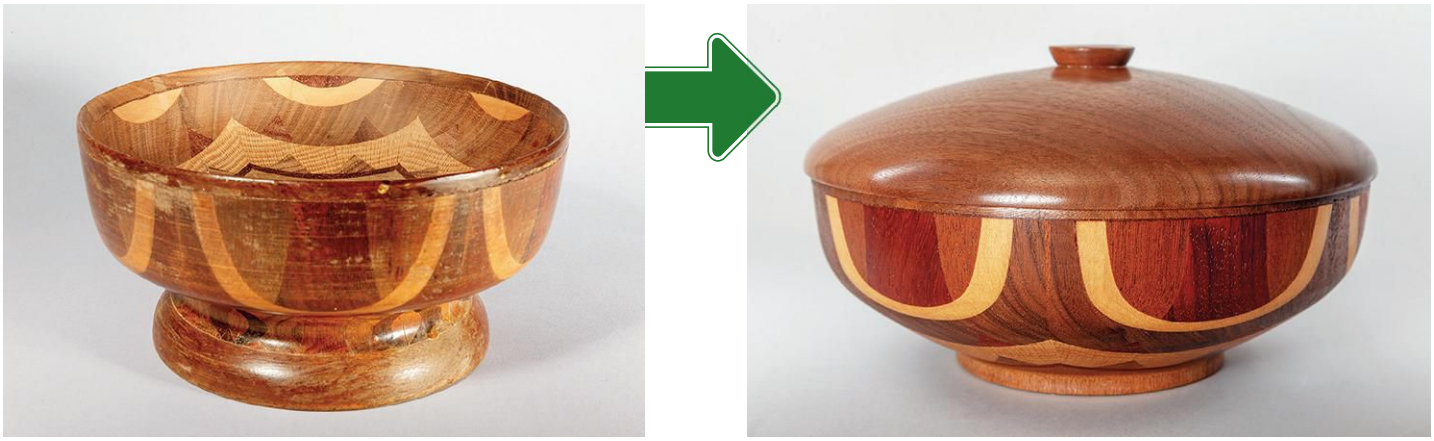
*Bill Kram is a retired electrical engineer who worked for General Electric in New York, Oklahoma, and New Hampshire. He currently lives in Sun City West, Arizona, and is a member of AAW, the Arizona Woodturners, and the Prescott Area Woodturners. Bill has been an active turner for more than twenty years.*

## Optional Embellishment

One design option is to add detail to the sides of the square base, as shown in some of the boxes in the *opening image* of this article. In this example, I glued a contrasting wood disk to the side and turned a ring pattern in it. A means of chucking and centering the base is needed; I used a chuck with large deep jaws and protected the box base with thin strips of wood. I used the tailstock to center the work and glue the contrasting disk to it. I then cut the ring pattern using a thin parting tool and a detail gouge. Another option is to form the ring pattern directly on the box sides.

# GARAGE SALE BOWL
## Gets Makeover and a Worthy Purpose

Kurt Hertzog



During a recent visit, a friend showed me a bowl he had bought at a garage sale. A non-turner, he bought it for a buck with the intention of sanding it as a side project for amusement. A quick look showed that sanding away the current finish wasn't going to yield the finished project he was expecting. Coincidentally, I was planning on turning a Beads of Courage lidded bowl/box for a young man. My friend and I decided that his garage sale bowl could be the foundation for my project. I knew it wasn't the most accomplished bowl but thought that perhaps some reworking would make it suitable for this worthy purpose.

### The plan

Examining the bowl a bit closer showed that the original maker had undertaken a significant segmenting challenge and had done the best they could at that point in their turning journey. For a segmented piece, it had a puzzling inlay in the bowl center along with a rather clunky solid base with the original faceplate mounting screw holes still evident (*Photos 1, 2*). I'm uncertain as to why these features were retained in the finished bowl, but they might have been to cover up errors of some kind. At this early stage, I hoped that whatever surprises revealed themselves could be adequately overcome. The starting bowl was rather beefy in its overall shape and finish. My plan was to trim as much weight as possible from the starting 26 oz. and refine the bowl's chunky proportions.

### First mounting

To trim excess from the base and reshape the bowl, I decided to reverse-mount the piece on a chuck with large plate jaws (Cole jaws). The rim of the ▸

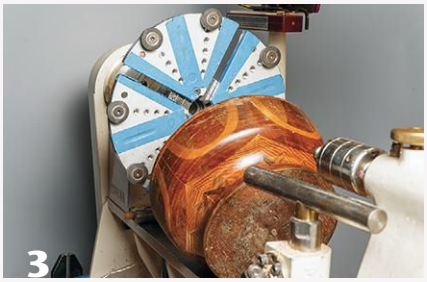
The Beads of Courage (BoC) program for youngsters undergoing treatments for life-threatening illnesses has long been supported by the AAW. Our annual International Symposium as well as many regional events have encouraged attendees to turn lidded boxes and bowls to hold the beads these youngsters receive after each of their medical treatments. It is a small bright spot for young people undergoing serious medical care.

BoC offers important guidelines for woodturners who want to donate turned boxes. Learn more at beadsofcourage.org/bead-bowls.

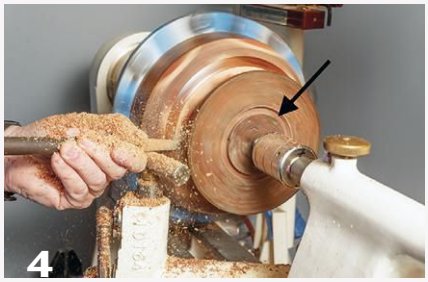
### The original bowl

A garage sale bowl, purchased for $1.00, began as an ambitious segmenting challenge but was clunky in design. It initially weighed 26 oz., with a lot of excess material in the base. After its makeover, the bowl lost more than half its weight, taking on a new shape and a more elegant appearance.

## First mounting: jumbo jaws



The author first mounts the bowl on a set of jumbo, or Cole, jaws, along with the tail center for support. Note the tape on the jaws to protect the workpiece.



A chucking tenon is formed in the bottom (see arrow) for a later mounting. Also, the body of the bowl is trued and reshaped.

## Assessing the interior

With the underside thinned and reshaped, the interior is addressed while there is still sufficient wall thickness for some cutting and reshaping as needed.

bowl wasn't round or flat, but using the jaws with most of the buttons engaged got close enough to center the bowl, allowing me to true it up (*Photo 3*). Then I could engage the tail center to create a new "true" center point.

A parting tool made quick work of creating a pocket in the base for the jaws of my chuck (*Photo 4*). While this groove was wide enough for either compression or expansion of the chuck jaws, I almost always hold workpieces in compression mode.

With the bowl mounted using the Cole jaws as a friction drive and the bowl securely held in place with tailstock pressure, much of the excess stock in the side walls and base could be removed. But while I could have removed more of the excess at this point, I left some of it in place, as it would provide added support as I worked on the bowl from the top.

### Looking inside

The chucking groove I had formed in the bowl bottom allowed me to remount the bowl centered accurately and with full access to the inside and much of the outside. I was eager not only to get the original finish stripped away, but also to see what the "Z" or "N" inlay was all about. Some light cutting and power-sanding uncovered a solid walnut block in the center with a screw hole. At some point, this bowl was held on a mounting screw (*Photos 5, 6*).

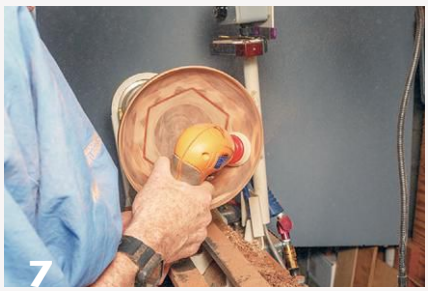
Not a lot of reshaping of the inside was required, so I was able to focus on power-sanding and filling the many gaps from the original glue-up using wood glue and sanding dust. Once the glue had cured, I continued power-sanding to get back to the raw wood (*Photo 7*). Not all but most of the construction gaps were filled. I applied epoxy in the central interior screw hole. Since it took quite a bit of epoxy, I guessed the screw hole went quite deep or there was a hidden grotto beneath the surface.

### Visual review

While many turners can design on the fly with the work remaining on the lathe, I'm not one of them. Depending on the project, I find that I do much better removing the work and setting it at the height where it will ultimately be used. In that position, I can get a better idea of the final appearance. Many times, I leave the

## Turning and sanding

The author turns away the inlay in the bottom, revealing a solid Walnut block with a threaded hole. Apparently, the bowl had been mounted on a screw at one point.



The interior is reshaped and the walls thinned. With the work mounted securely in the chuck, the author power-sands and fills the central hole with epoxy.

## Visual assessment

A good way to assess the design of a work in progress is to remove it from the lathe. Hence, the importance of reliable mounting and remounting methods. Thus far, the bowl shape is nearly complete, but the base must be reduced further.

work mounted in the chuck, unthread the chuck from the lathe spindle, and set the chuck and work down for review. However, since this bowl would be reverse-mounted to continue the process, there was no reason not to dismount from the chuck for visual review.

Discounting the abnormal lift and massive base, I was pleased with the thinning of the wall thickness and the new contours thus far (*Photo 8*).

## Workholding

Throughout this process, I used a variety of workholding methods, and there was a series of mountings and remountings. In my opinion, one of the keys to success in woodturning is the ability to mount work safely, accurately, and repeatably. Therefore, one rule of thumb is never turn away any positioning or mounting features from the workpiece until you absolutely need to. A good example is the tail center impression/indent. With that still in place, you can accurately recenter a workpiece many times simply by aligning the indent with the live center. My advice is to leave it intact until you *must* remove it; there have been many times I've regretted turning it away too soon.

## Refining the base

With the inside of the bowl acceptably shaped and roughly sanded, it was time to tackle the base and foot. The easiest mounting method was to again use the Cole jaws, clamping with as many buttons as possible around the bowl rim and with the work being pressed into place by tailstock pressure. I used the live center point to help recenter the work, as I wanted the newly created base to blend into the outside bowl walls as seamlessly as possible.

Now it was time to remove the big chunk of solid wood at the base and find out what it was hiding inside. Cutting toward the headstock provided the best support and allowed the tool to cut facegrain continuously (*Photo 9*). If I had cut from the outside in, I would have been alternately cutting long grain and endgrain with each rotation, likely causing tearout.

Cutting away the solid base exposed the screw holes used for the faceplate attachment but also, interestingly, a hidden pocket. There was a hollow chamber beneath the solid block. The screw mount hole originally used evidently had not been sufficient, so a solid block was glued in place. It had served as a cover for the original, now unusable screw mount, threaded hole, and the faceplate screw mounting material.

With the solid base removed, I had opened a recess revealing the bottom of the screw mounting hole along with a tattered perimeter of wood fibers (*Photos 10, 11*). Now I was able to turn away the tattered edges and cut the inset solid base flat. Removing the tatters exposed some gaps around the solid block. Since these gaps were evident only from the underside, I figured there must have been some engagement near the top of the block. Regardless, I drizzled epoxy into the gap and turned it flush to the corner after it had cured. That would fully fasten that solid center block into the bowl securely.

Finally, I cleaned up and sanded the bottom while the bowl was still held in ▸

### Removing wastewood

9 With the bowl remounted on the Cole jaws, the author reduces the solid base, making cuts toward the headstock.

### A surprise cavity

10

11 A surprise! The solid base had been glued over an opening in the base. Evidently, the solid block was added to provide a mount since the screw hold wasn't sufficient.

### A new foot

12 The surprise opening at the bottom, along with the bottom rim, will make for a nice foot. The gaps in the corners will be filled with epoxy and then trued up when the base interior is finish-turned.

### Another progress check

13 The bowl is removed from the lathe once again for a visual assessment. The outside shape is acceptable, the base sizing and lift look good, and the bulk of the sanding is complete.

## Prepare lid material

14

Time for the lid. A block of walnut with sufficient thickness to allow for decent shaping is selected and marked for rough cutting.

## Rough-turn lid

15

After cutting the corners from the square lid blank, the walnut block is mounted between centers and turned round.

## Shape and fit lid interior

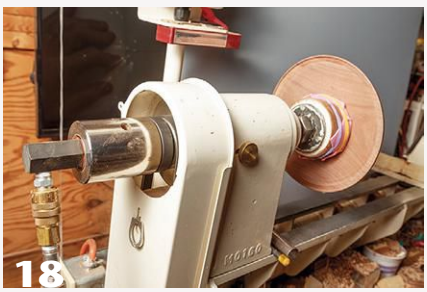
16

Now the lid is mounted on the Cole jaws, which act as a friction drive with the tailstock providing holding pressure. The dome of the lid interior is hollowed, and the rim is established.

17

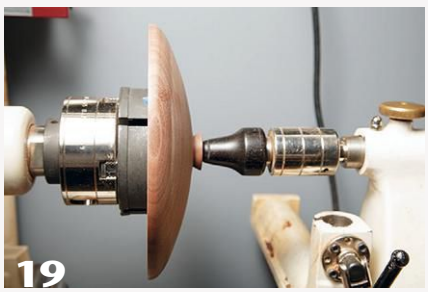
The lid is sized for a good fit to the bowl. The author tests the fit manually, makes small adjustments, and sneaks up on the right fit.

## Reverse-mounting, two methods



18

The lid must be remounted for access to its top. One method is a vacuum chuck, which provides full access from center to the edges.



19

Another mounting method is to use a scroll chuck as a jam chuck, or friction drive. Press the workpiece against the jaws, lined with protective tape, with tailstock pressure. Regardless of the mounting method, using the tail center until it has to be removed provides added security.

this orientation. I trued up and reduced the size of the foot, making a smooth transition from foot to bowl wall (*Photo 12*).

Of note was a metal particle in the outside of the bowl. It looked like a small brad that was impaled in the padauk. It didn't appear on the inside of the bowl, so it didn't go all the way through. Since it was securely embedded, I just left it in place and sanded it smooth, figuring that digging it out would leave a scar worse than the metal itself.

Removing the bowl from the mounting allowed for a re-examination of the shape. Turning it upside down helped me assess the new curves (*Photo 13*), and I was pleased with the results of my efforts. Now it was time to move on to the lid.

### Turning the lid

Rather than measuring the size of the lid, I traced around the bowl rim onto the lid material, as this works quickly and just as accurately (*Photo 14*). I found a block of walnut that was thick enough to allow for sufficient shaping of a lid as well as incorporating a knob. Cutting the corners off the lid blank saved a lot of extra turning and left some small stock for other projects.

I turned the walnut blank between centers to make it round for subsequent mounting on the Cole jaws (*Photo 15*). With the blank round and flat on both sides, I mounted it on the plate jaws, using the tail center indent to help align the work on center. Since the blank had the bowl perimeter marked on its surface, I sized the inside edge of the lid. I shaped the inside contour by eye and created a flat for seating near the inside rim (*Photo 16*).

By removing the tailstock, I had access to check the fit of the bowl to the lid (*Photo 17*). I had intentionally left it undersized, and this allowed me to creep up on the fit that I wanted. A few test fits with minor adjustments created my desired fit. Also with the tailstock removed, I was able to turn away the material that was under the tail center and shape and sand the internal contour of the lid.

Next up was to reverse-mount the lid to turn its top surface. Cole jaws would restrict access to the edges, so I wanted to use a different workholding method. Generally, there are two easy methods of holding the lid from the inside, allowing full access to the edges of the workpiece. If you have a vacuum system on your lathe, you can use a vacuum chuck to hold the lid from the inside (*Photo 18*). Barring that, you can use a friction chuck to drive the lid blank, as shown in *Photo 19*. A simple friction drive can be fashioned by taping over the jaws of a chuck whose jaws expand enough to provide a good platform. In either mounting method, the tail center is engaged for added support, essentially trapping the work between centers. As noted earlier, the tail center point allows for accurate re-positioning of the blank.

With the lid reverse-mounted, I turned a gentle curve to complement the overall shape of the bowl. I then sanded the lid, except for the center area where the knob would be (*Photos 20, 21*).

To turn a knob, I remounted the lid on the jumbo (Cole) jaws, which gave me full access to the center of the lid. I shaped and sanded the knob/pull (*Photo 22*).

## Finishing

The lid was already sanded to the desired level for finishing. At this point, I remounted the bowl, exposing the bottom using the Cole jaws to do any additional sanding. This mounting allowed access to everything except the rim. Once the sanding was completed on the bottom, I remounted the bowl, now with the inside exposed, using the chuck I had previously used as a friction drive. With the tape padding on the jaws still in place, a light clamping of the base provided access to the rim and inside of the bowl. Slow-speed turning and power-sanding made the inside as ready as it could be.

I chose a simple wipe-on polyurethane finish. Multiple coats per the instructions with plenty of curing time took me to buffing out the finish (*Photos 23, 24*). I have an attachment to mount my buffing wheels or internal buffs on my lathe. Buffing safely involves appropriate speeds and proper workholding. A common mistake made when buffing is using too much compound on whichever wheel you are working with. In the age of "more is better," many load up the wheel with far too much compound, creating more mess than effective buffing.

## Completion and a new home

I was pleased with this bowl's transition from a garage sale junker to an elegant Beads of Courage bowl. As I completed the writing of this article, the bowl was being packed for shipment to its new owner, a young man in the Beads of Courage program. I hope the bowl brings him some happiness during what must be a difficult journey of medical treatments. ■

*Kurt Hertzog, a retired engineer, has been turning a wide variety of items—from pens to pierced ornaments—for more than twenty-five years. A past AAW president, Kurt has demonstrated and written extensively on woodturning with more than 250 published articles. You can find examples of his work and articles at kurthertzog.com.*

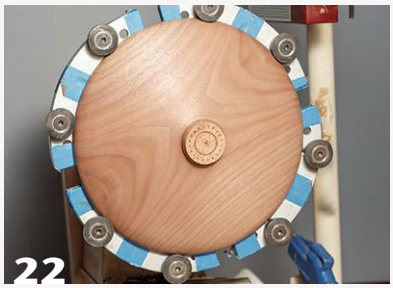
## Shape and sand top of lid


20


21

The author turns and power-sands the top of the lid.

## Turn knob/pull

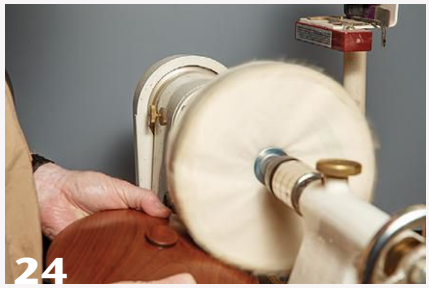

22

Now the lid is remounted on the jumbo jaws to provide access for turning the knob/pull.

## Finish and buff

23

Taking advantage of a warm spring day, the author applies multiple coats of wipe-on polyurethane outdoors.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Once the finish has cured, both the lid and the bowl make a trip through the lathe-mounted buffing wheels to achieve the final sheen.

# Natural-Edge Crotch Platter WITH CARVED FEET

Steve Wilson

Producing turned work with beautifully figured grain is something many of us want to do, but wood with interesting figure isn't always easy to come by. Well, one place to look for it that seems to be neglected is in tree crotches. This is the part of a tree where a branch diverges from the trunk or from another branch, forming a Y shape. Even in wood with plain grain, a crotch will have interesting swirls, wavy "flame" grain, and/or color variations.

This article offers some tips and ideas on how to harvest this interesting wood and use it to turn a platter, which is the ideal project for displaying crotch grain. You could turn the platter fully round, but here I offer a natural-edge variation that retains the shape of the crotch with the bark along the outside edges. Either approach will show off the crotch grain prominently.

## Found wood!

A neighborhood tree was cut down, and this crotch piece was left near the curb. This crotch is honey locust and measures 25" (64cm) wide and 18" (46cm) tall.

## STEP 1 MARK PITH CENTERS

The first step is to saw the crotch straight through all three pith centers. To do this, block up the crotch with wedges, so that the pith on the trunk and the two branches are the same height from the floor.

Strike a level line through each pith using a carpenter's level. This defines a flat plane to guide the chainsaw. Extend all the lines onto the bark, so that the near end can be sawn while sighting the other end of the bark.

## STEP 2 CUT THROUGH THE CROTCH

Keep to one side of the pencil line all the way around the crotch. Saw a notch about 1½" (38mm) across each of the four outside corners. When cutting with a chainsaw (action not shown), be sure to secure the workpiece in place and follow safe practices.

Starting with a corner, begin sawing all the way through. Sight the cut line as you line the blade up with the next section. With practice, a crotch can be sawn through sufficiently flat.

## STEP 3 CUT SLABS

With the two halves flat side down on the floor, use a block or pencil holder to mark a cut line all around each piece. Here, I've marked each slab at 2⅝" (7cm) thick. Saw notches at the corners, as before, and saw off the cheeks for additional platters or bowls.

## STEP 4 ATTACH FACEPLATE

Choose the flattest side and mount a faceplate; this will ultimately be the bottom of the platter. Here, I've chosen the pith side as the bottom, as it shows interesting grain that will be revealed as I turn into the top surface. If the faceplate rocks and doesn't sit flat, use small pieces of veneer or plywood to support the faceplate. Use all of the available screw holes in the faceplate; mine allows for twelve. I chose flathead screws ¾" (19mm) long, as these shorter screws won't go too deep and leave holes in what will be the actual platter bottom.

## STEP 5 TURN FACEPLATE MOUNT ON TOP

I like to start by establishing a flat faceplate mount on the top surface to create a reliable surface for remounting the work. The faceplate mount includes a central stub that fits snugly inside the threaded hole of the faceplate and helps center it. Be sure to turn this stub down low enough so that the faceplate will sit flat on its turned mount. ▶

## STEP 6 ROUGH-TURN TOP SURFACE

Leaving the faceplate mount alone, begin to rough out the top of the platter. Most of the turning on platters this large is done at slow lathe speeds, less than 300 rpm. Before turning on the lathe, set the speed dial all the way down. Increase the speed slowly until the lathe begins to vibrate, then back off until the vibration stops. This is a good way to determine a safe lathe speed for out-of-round pieces.

Some of this face work can be cut in the usual way with the gouge handle low and the bevel rubbing (as shown). But if the tool begins to bounce on the toolrest, approach the work with the gouge horizontal and the flute at 45 degrees. This puts all the force down on the toolrest, so the tendency to bounce is reduced.

## STEP 7 REMOUNT, TURN BOTTOM/FOOT

Remount the work by affixing the faceplate to the top of the platter (not shown). Rough-turn the bottom, leaving the thickness a little over 1" (25mm). Form a faceplate mount on the bottom, just as you had done on the top. Here, I have also roughed in a wider foot ring, from which I will later carve four small feet.

***Air-drying***

At this point, I set the rough-turned platter aside for air-drying. All the endgrain areas receive a thinned coat of aliphatic resin, including all the areas where the grain swirls to the surface. After the resin dries, I apply a coat of wax emulsion sealer and allow the piece to air-dry, which ultimately can take a year or more. To complete this article and illustrate the remaining the steps, I selected an already-dried Norway maple crotch platter. I mounted a faceplate on the bottom of the platter and trued up the top and the top faceplate mount. I then mounted the faceplate on the top and trued up the bottom and the foot ring.

## STEP 8 AFTER DRYING, LAY OUT FEET

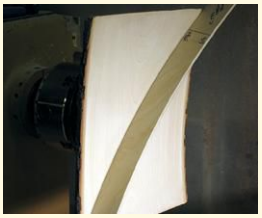
Use a compass and a little geometry to lay out the placement of the four feet. Saw the side angle of the feet down to the roughed in surface now because the saw usually scratches this surface. Finish turning and sanding the platter bottom (not shown). Careful work here will pay dividends later when blending the inner and outer surfaces of the bottom.

## STEP 9 REMOUNT, COMPLETE THE TOP

I remounted the platter by affixing the faceplate to the foot ring on the bottom. With the work in this orientation, I turned away the top faceplate mount and thinned the platter to about ⅜" (10mm) thickness.

For this project, I used a 60" (152cm) radius template (see sidebar). I have made several of these templates in various sizes and use them as a guide for the inside and outside curves, which results in a spherical platter. The template shown here is used on a different (non-crotch) workpiece for illustration purposes.

## Make a Radius Template



When turning large platters, I like to use a radius template to ensure a consistent gradual curve on both the platter top and bottom. In practice, the template is held against the bottom and top surfaces to reveal irregularities and indicate where some fine-turning is needed. The templates can also be used to make custom sanding blocks that conform exactly to a turned profile.

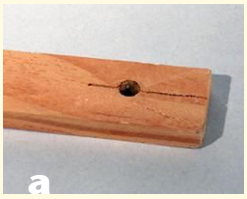
### Construction

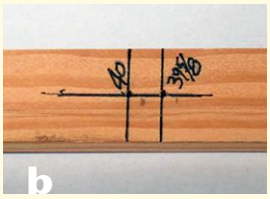
To start, you'll need a really big compass, otherwise known as a long stick with holes in it. I started with a length of wood 8' (2.4m) feet long, 1⅛" (29mm) wide, and ⅜" (10mm) thick. Drill a 9/32"- (7mm-) diameter hole through the thickness 1" (25mm) from the end and centered on the width. Now cut a slot from the end through this hole (*Photo a*). With a small clamp, this will hold a pencil tightly.

If you want your platter to be consistently ⅜" thick, the inside radius must be ⅜" shorter than the outside radius. Mark the stick at your desired radii, ⅜" apart (*Photo b*). Use an awl to start the two holes, then drill through for a tight fit of an anchoring nail.

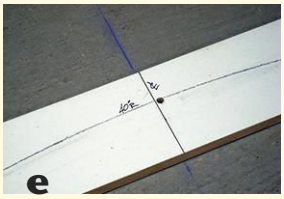
When anchoring the compass with a nail in use, I used a ½"- (13mm-) thick piece of wood to raise the compass up and keep it from teetering (*Photo c*).

I snapped a chalk line on an open area of the floor, then using the long compass drew an arc on the floor extending 15" (38cm) on either side of the chalk line (*Photo d*). Accurately measure and mark 14" (36cm) on either side of the chalk line intersecting with the arc. Line up a straight edge exactly on these intersections and draw the perpendicular. Carefully lay your template blank material on the perpendicular with its centerline over the chalk line. Draw the first arc on the template blank (*Photo e*). Leaving the template blank in place, move the compass nail to the other hole. Draw the second arc onto the blank. Bandsaw the radii and carefully sand to the lines.






## STEP 10 CARVE FEET

With all of the turning completed, it was time to carve the feet. I placed the platter on a folded towel to protect the top surface. With a chainsaw disk in an angle grinder, I gently removed the center stub and the material between the marked feet. I then used a 50-grit abrasive disk to get close to the finished bottom surface.

## STEP 11 FINALIZE/SAND FEET AND BOTTOM

Use a sharp chisel to pare the sides of the feet to size. With the feet now cleanly defined, blend the foot ring remnants with the outer and inner surfaces. To get the best surface and a continuous curve, I use a custom sanding block made from the radius template I had used earlier.

Even after all of this work, the platter is bound to teeter on two of the feet. To remedy this situation, place a sheet of 220-grit sandpaper on a flat table, grit side up, and stroke each of the two high feet until the platter sits without rocking. ■


*Steve Wilson has been turning since the mid 1970s, showing his work since 2010, and demonstrating and teaching since 2008. For more, visit theboxandbowl.com.*

# TURNED-AND-CARVED FLOWER-PETAL BOWL

Walt Wager

The flower bowl described in this article was inspired by a bowl made by Alabama ceramic artist Larry Allen. Larry's bowl was formed on the potter's wheel, and while the clay was still wet, the sides of the bowl were cut and overlapped, giving it the flower petal shape shown in *Photo 1*. As a woodturner, I wondered if this process could be replicated with wood, and the answer is, maybe—but I wasn't successful. Even after soaking and steaming the wood and applying clamps to bend it, I had no luck. So, I resorted to turning and carving a likeness of Larry's flower bowl.

## Divide and conquer

The project begins with a turned bowl. The bowl I used was 6" (15cm) in diameter with walls about 3⁄16" (5mm) thick. I found that shallow open bowls are the easiest to carve. If you want to incorporate feet on the bowl, leave extra wood at the bottom.

Marking with a pencil, I divided the bowl's circumference into the number of petals I wanted to carve. While Larry's ceramic bowl had five petals, you can make as many as you wish. I used a polar graph generated from an app, Paper Graph Maker, to divide the bowl into five equal segments. I then extended the division lines down the walls of the bowl (*Photos 2, 3*).

Continue the lines inside the bowl (*Photo 4*).

## Define petal shapes

The next step is to define the shape of the petals. I did this by making a paper template. I sized the template by measuring the distance between two of the petals and cutting a rectangle from card stock that is half the height of the bowl by the distance between the petals. The template should be at least half the depth of the bowl. Fold the

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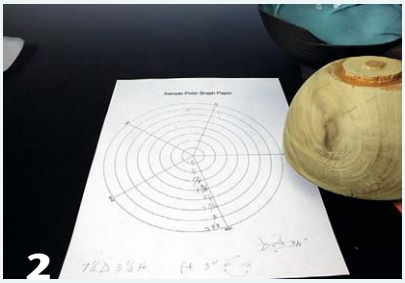
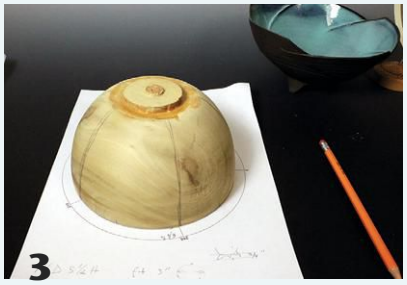
### Inspiration!

The author's wood-carved bowl was inspired by this cut and formed ceramic bowl by Larry Allen.

## Lay out petal widths





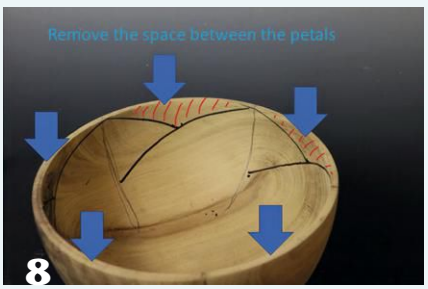
*(2-4)* The author uses a polar graph to lay out equal sections around the rim of the bowl, then transfers the lines down the bowl walls outside and in.




## Template petal shapes

A paper template is used to apply the petal shapes inside the bowl.

## Cut away waste material






Identify the waste material and cut it away. Here, the author uses a coping saw.

template in half and draw one side of a petal, cut the line with scissors, and open the petal template (*Photos 5, 6*).

To make the illusion that one petal disappears behind the other, use the template to draw a line to the bottom of the template on one side (e.g., the left side) and to meet the line on the other side (*Photo 7*). The next step is to cut away the voids between the petals. I used a coping saw with a bench support (*Photos 8-10*). ▸


## Continue petal shapes on exterior

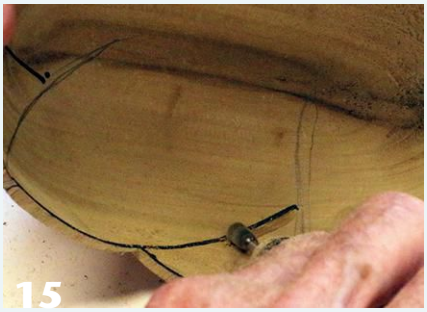
Use the cut petal-tip angles to continue the petal shapes on the bowl's exterior.

## Carve petal transitions, exterior

The author uses a micromotor rotary tool with a tapered carbide bur to carve the lines of the exterior petals.




## Carve overlapping petals, interior





Carve the interior petal lines.

Now draw the edges of the petals on the outside of the bowl, extending the lines from inside (*Photo 11*).

### Carve and sand petals

Now it is time to carve the edges and define each petal as it overlaps the one next to it. I used a micromotor and a tapered carbide bur to carve the line on the outside of the petal about 1/16" (1.5mm) deep. This defines the edge of the overlapping petal. Using a bur with a smooth-flat bottom makes it easier to follow the line (*Photos 12-14*).

After carving the outside edge of a petal, carve the corresponding inside petal to give the illusion that the outside petal overlaps the inside of the petal next to it (*Photos 15, 16*). When all of the edges have been carved, blend the carved edges into the petals. I used a sanding sleeve on the micromotor tool to do this (*Photo 17*).

I make sanding sticks by gluing sandpaper to craft sticks. I used these sticks to continue smoothing the edges of the petals and to define the overlapping edges (*Photo 18*).

I then used a sharp knife to define the petals' crossing edges, as shown in *Photo 19*. A knife-edge bur can also be used to undercut the edge to deepen the overlapping effect (*Photo 20*).

## Sand and refine



The author uses a sanding sleeve in a micromotor tool and shopmade sanding sticks to refine the petal surfaces and edges.


A sharp knife is used to define tight transitions.

## Refine and sand

A knife-edge bur is used to undercut petal transitions, making them look even more realistic.

A lathe-mounted pneumatic sanding drum is used to refine the bowl's exterior.

## Reverse-mount, turn base

With the bowl reverse-mounted on the lathe, turn the base and create a foot ring.

I used a pneumatic sanding mandrel mounted on the lathe to smooth out lines left from the carving (*Photo 21*).

### Form feet

After carving the petals, I remounted the bowl on a jam chuck with the tailstock live center providing holding pressure. In this orientation, I turned the bottom of the bowl, defining the foot and rounding the base (*Photo 22*).

I then laid out three feet and used a razor saw to cut away the excess wood between the feet (*Photos 23, 24*). I blended the shape of the bowl into the foot using a knife and sanding sticks (*Photos 25, 26*).

Finally, after masking along the petal lines, I used an airbrush to emphasize the edges of the petals on the inside and outside of the bowl (*Photo 27*). And *voila!* A little carving and lots of sanding can transform a bowl into a flower bowl. ■

*Walt Wager has been a member of the North Florida Woodturners and the AAW since 2004. He taught woodturning at Camelot's Woodworking Studio in Tallahassee, Florida, and demonstrates regionally and nationally, in-person and remotely. Contact Walt through his website, waltwager.com.*

## Cut away waste at foot


Cut away the waste wood from the foot ring, leaving only three small feet.

## Carve and sand feet


The author uses a knife and sanding sticks to refine the feet and base.

## Airbrush accents

Airbrushed accents help to define the flower petals.


# BILL LUCE

## THE QUIET POWER OF UNDERSTATED FORM

Malcolm Zander

*Photos by Bill Luce unless otherwise noted.*


Photo: William Edwards

## A personal pursuit

Bill Luce had been invited to demonstrate at the 25th anniversary Utah symposium in 2004—his first ever symposium as a demonstrator. He had two topics: "Turning a Round-Bottomed Bowl" and "Bowl Design: Pursuit of Form." For the second topic, he brought a series of about ten bowls, holding them up in sequence and asking the audience for comments. Each looked a little better than the previous one. He put the last and best one, made from monkey puzzle wood, on a glass sheet, and seemingly one or two atoms of wood touched the surface. Bill stated that it had taken him 4,000 bowls to achieve this form.

Wood artist Ron Gerton was in the audience and thought, "Wow, that is surprisingly beautiful. I have to meet this guy." After the session, he sought out Bill, who invited Ron to see another bowl in the instant gallery. It was 15" (38cm) in diameter, also of monkey puzzle wood, larger than the first, with a price on it. Ron offered to buy it, but Bill said he had never sold anything at a symposium and was not sure if he wanted to sell it. Ron insisted, so Bill then went to his car and brought back a third bowl in the same wood, intermediate in size. Ron offered to buy all three. Bill was speechless but finally agreed.

At the end of the symposium, Bill asked if he could buy back the three bowls. Ron demurred but agreed to bring them to Bill's house so that they could at least be photographed. He had a good visit, toured the shop, and came to the garage. It was lined with shelves and all 3,999 of the not-quite-perfect bowls were there. Bill had not been exaggerating. Ron had never seen so many bowls together in his life. Bill explained that he hadn't sold any of them because they were not good enough.

## Early years to retirement

Bill Luce was a meticulous, innovative, and highly talented woodturner. The fifth of twelve children, he was born in 1952 in Stuttgart, Germany, where his father was stationed with the U.S. military. Shortly afterwards the family returned to America and spent seven years in Baltimore, and then in 1959 moved to Okinawa, Japan. The six years in Okinawa left a lasting impression on Bill, which surfaced many years later in his aesthetic views and approach to wood art.

High school was in Spokane, Washington. Bill was an excellent student. After graduating, he spent a couple of years in college, then worked in a mine and laid railroad tracks to earn money to support his musical interests. For about ten years, he played multiple instruments with several musician friends (saxophone, banjo, guitar, fiddle, vibraphone, piano) but eventually decided he was "never good enough" to do so professionally and enrolled in Western Washington University to study education. He had nearly completed the degree when he switched into math and computing science. He graduated, married his girlfriend Monica, and subsequently joined Microsoft as a systems programmer, where he worked until an illness led to his retirement in 1996.

Upon retirement Bill considered woodworking and became fascinated with hand planes while building a workbench. He acquired many. One, an antique, had a broken knob, so he decided to restore it and make a new knob. Knowing nothing of woodturning, he bought a small lathe and used a flat-bladed Stanley wood chisel to try turning a knob. It did not go well. That was the point at which Bill transitioned from planes to lathes.

## A turning career

The woodturning journey began in 1997 in the local library with videotapes and books, especially those by Richard Raffan, whose emphasis on form had a powerful effect on Bill. Neighbor Bonnie Klein, an accomplished woodturner, helped Bill turn a bowl in his garage and mentored him. He discovered the AAW, took a ▸

Untitled Bowls, 2004, Monkey puzzle, Largest: 9" × 15" (23cm × 38cm)

Bill in his booth at the Bellevue Arts Fair.

course at Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts with David Ellsworth, and built a 2400-square-foot workshop on his Renton, Washington, property. He showed his turnings at the Bellevue Arts Fair for two or three years, but it was not the right venue for him—his work was priced too high.

He did some public demonstrations, notably a "Mutt and Jeff" show with good friend and woodturner Dave Schweitzer. For a club audience, the two of them worked simultaneously on turning a log from opposite ends. It was great fun.

In the early 2000s, Bonnie Klein brought Richard Raffan to visit. She wanted him to persuade Bill to get his work into public view. Richard writes, "He had hundreds of wonderful pieces in a storeroom, none of which he deemed good enough to go on display anywhere. Most were way better in all respects than anything I've seen in instant galleries at numerous symposiums."

Bill and Richard corresponded. A website went up. Bill wrote to Richard, "Thanks for looking at my website. It does seem that nobody is successfully selling any kind of 'art' online. I believe my work is of the nature that one must touch and hold the work to eventually want to own it. I am hoping to use the site as a sort of online business card, although I am still struggling with whether or not my woodturning voice will ever have something significant to say." Bill's goals were to have his work recognized and appreciated, to have photos of his work in books, and to be an invited artist to exhibitions. Two years later, he had accomplished all of those goals. On his website, he summarized his ethos:

*I spent much of my formative years living on the island of Okinawa, now part of Japan. Many years later, well after I had begun turning bowls, I realized that I had long-forgotten yet vivid memories of certain aspects of that culture that continue to influence me today. I remember as a young boy examining in detail ceremonial lacquered wooden bowls, admiring their simple excellence and the wonderful way they felt so natural in the hand. These many years later I have found welling up in me the passion to create objects that have a similar quiet power both when viewed and held. The shapes I am drawn to are not the same as those first bowls in my memory, but my overriding zeal for excellence at all costs may be due in part to those Ryukyuuan craftsmen who dedicated their lives to making the absolute best vessels possible.*


A screenshot from a video shows Dave Schweitzer (left) and Bill Luce doing their "Mutt and Jeff" show for the Woodturners of Olympia, c. 2006.

Bill had been a software engineer/computer scientist at Microsoft, and that scientific approach carried over into everything he did, including his photography. He owned thousands of dollars in cameras. Any time he bought a new lens he would set up a tripod and shoot three images of a complex pattern of lines and fonts at a fixed distance; he would do this for every aperture. He then picked the best of the three and studied them to determine the best compromise for aperture and depth of field. (In Bill's language, there was no perfection, only compromise.)

> "The study of how small nuances in simple forms relate to the emotional impact of the piece is now my life's work." –Bill Luce

## Bowls of all kinds

How does this meticulous attitude translate to bowls? Bill took a tree and studied its grain, its ring structure, the width of its rings, and the nature of the shapes it would produce. And from there he turned a bowl and studied the result. Then another, slightly different—maybe taller or more open or closed. From there another, slightly different again, until he had turned some two to three dozen bowls from that tree, each a progression toward the most satisfying compromise. He would hold a bowl in his hand and evaluate it, then set it on a flat surface and view it again. Look high, get down low. Pick it up again. Evaluate it some more. Examine the rim—if the rim fails, the entire bowl is lost. Look at the belly, too high or low and it's unbalanced. What about the texture? Bill spoke about the textures and how they interacted with the viewer's experience; it was very important to him that people not only see, but also hold and feel the mass and the tactile balance in the hand. His goal was to create vessels with the greatest emotional impact on the participant/viewer.

Bill was always exploring. He could chuck a half log onto the lathe and turn an amazing bowl in twenty minutes. For him, it was just an exercise in getting to know that particular tree. Beyond the 10,000 pieces he left behind after his death, another 3,000 to 5,000 rejects were tossed holus-bowlus into the trees on the three-acre Renton property. He called it "feeding the woods." A visitor to the Renton shop said at the end of his visit, "This is not a woodturning shop. It's a bowl research laboratory."

There was a whole study of turnings in Douglas fir that started very flat and then curved up ever so slightly, then more so. Bill was looking to see when one crossed the threshold from a platter to what might be called a bowl. Where is the transition point? And taking it further, where is the transition from a bowl to a hollow form? *Open and Closed* was part of this series.

The serenely simple *Selene*, named after the Greek goddess of the moon, was also an exploration. After Bill died, his good friend William Edwards and Monica packed up Bill's huge inventory and found the lineage of *Selene*. It was very clear. There were maybe ten bowls from one tree, each slightly different. The bead would move up or down, the opening more or less closed, each a progression leading up to *Selene*. ▸

Bill Luce's *Open and Closed* series (2007, Douglas fir) explored the distinctions between platters and bowls.

*Selene*, 2002, Holly, 4¾" × 6½" (12cm × 17cm)

*Reunion* (*Strata* series), 2007, Douglas fir

Untitled Natural-Edge Bowl, 2005, Curly maple (bleached), 6" × 10" (15cm × 25cm)

*Selene* is a classic example of what Bill wrote on his website:

*My personal mission statement: "The exploration of the quiet power of understated form."*

*That passion is a major focus of my life, and I devote myself full-time to the various aspects of woodturning as an art form and a business. I am dedicated to the ongoing goal of expressing myself in shapes that are a balance of harmony and tension. The harmony in the form gives a sense of comfort or pleasure while some tension is needed to add interest and surprise. The study of how small nuances in simple forms relate to the emotional impact of the piece is now my life's work.*

Of all the pieces which Bill left, 90% were round-bottom bowls. He felt that this form can create a statement of elegance and refinement.

## *Bonnie's Bowl*

One day when Bonnie Klein was touring Bill's shop, she spotted a finished, signed bowl in the gallery room. She picked it up and was drawn in. The form, the curve, the balance... it all spoke to her on a very emotional level. However, Bill would not sell it to her. He must have enjoyed it too much. The bowl was put in a show, and then about two years later, he went to Bonnie's house in Renton, handed it to her, and announced its title was *Bonnie's Bowl* and that it was meant to be with her. There were tears in his eyes—and in Bonnie's, too.

## Square bowls

In a minimalist series, Bill explored square bowls and sometimes sandblasted them for texture. He wrote, "The shape contains a certain intrigue for me in the flatness of the partial rim, the straightness of the sides, the near rectangular outline of the bowl when viewed from above, the simple curve when viewed from the side, and the power of the grain running the long way in the bowl." This led to a series of unique variations on the square-bowl form.

## Sales

Most of Bill's sales were at symposia. They were few. One of his contradictions was that while he wanted to show his best work, he had a very hard time letting it go. He would show a bowl in an instant gallery with a price on it, but when approached for a sale would often say, "No, no, I don't think so." He tried to buy back Ron Gerton's three monkey puzzle bowls several times, offering far more than the original price. When David Ellsworth asked to buy a bowl, Bill first checked with Monica as to whether he should. Those bowls that did meet his Olympian standards he preferred to keep for display in his own

*Bonnie's Bowl*, Madrone, 5" × 11" (13cm × 28cm)

gallery room. Given the enormous amount of research, development, time, and energy spent making a piece culminating in something like *Selene*, Bill's reluctance to part with it is perhaps not surprising. Consequently, his work was less widely known than it merited.

## Wood

With Dave Schweitzer or William Edwards, Bill would find fallen trees listed on craigslist.org and then go out, maybe once a month, buck the trees, and load up to 4,000 lbs. of rounds into his trailer, custom-made with a large box in front to hold chainsaws and other gear.

Elm was a huge favorite, as was madrone. He turned some wet madrone burls that wrinkled and morphed into crumpled paper bags that he really enjoyed. His *Entropy* series is an example. ▸

*Essence: #3*, c. 2006, Douglas fir, colored rim, 4¼" × 13" × 8¼" (11cm × 33cm × 21cm)

*Serie Facetta*, 2011, Douglas fir, 8" × 14" × 10" (20cm × 36cm × 25cm)

*Entropy* series, 2006, Madrone, 4½" × 6" (11cm × 15cm)

## Harvesting wood

Harvesting blocks from a Douglas fir tree. The blocks cut from it are meticulously planned, measured, and chainsawn.

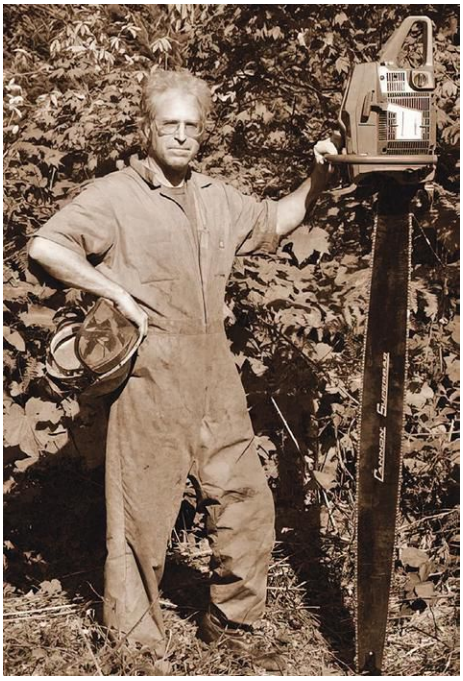
Holly, laburnum, and black locust were also favorites—the grain in black locust was magical and the sapwood had a nice contrast. Fir came later; it had to have the right rings and no pitch pockets. All were candidates for wet-turning, though Bill did dry-turn some maple and madrone. To keep the wood wet, he stored it in log form or as half logs immersed in giant tubs of water or in one of several freezers. When turning wet bowls, he strove to control the drying using various methods—from storing them in plastic or wet shavings-filled paper bags to soaking the wood in alcohol to microwaving it. He also sometimes boiled his bowls.

## Tools and equipment

For his gouges, Bill tried many different brands and steel types. He would grind them and, if the quality was not up to his standards, send them back. Those he really liked he stocked up by the case. He used a series of gouges with four or five different grind angles for taking out the interior of a bowl.

Bill had multiple chucks, as he did not like changing jaws. When he bought a new chuck, he'd true it on the lathe, tightening the jaws and turning them to ensure they ran true. Who else does this?

Bill had as many as forty chainsaws—electric, gas, hydraulic—and some of the largest one could buy, from dime-tip saws to monsters with a 5-foot (1.5m) bar. He had chainsaws in all different weights and brands, not because he was a collector but because he had to know the best compromise between weight, horsepower, and balance. He was meticulous with them. There were different widths and grinds of chains, which he maintained and kept in top form, super sharp, with an electric chainsaw sharpener. He always wore Kevlar chaps and a full-face mask and helmet any time he was cutting. He would talk to anybody about chainsaws—how many cc, what size chain to use, how long it would last, what you cut with it, and which in his view were good or bad. When D-Way Tools owner



Bill Luce, September 2008.

Photo: Richard Raffan

## Many gouges!

Photo: William Edwards

## Exploring sandblasting

(*Left*) Untitled Natural-Edge Bowl, 2010, Douglas fir (exterior textured by sandblasting), dye, 6¾" × 7¼" (17cm × 18cm)

Photo: Malcolm Zander

(*Right*) Untitled Bowl, 2009, Douglas Fir (both exterior and interior textured by sandblasting), dye, 5" × 6½" × 6" (13cm × 17cm × 15cm)

Photo: Malcolm Zander

Dave Schweitzer had a client with a chainsaw question, he referred that person to Bill, who would share his knowledge on the phone for hours at a time.

## Sandblasting

In the early 2000s, Bill began experimenting with sandblasting to highlight grain patterns in Douglas fir. He found that he could abrade the softer growth rings and leave a very tactile surface texture. William Edwards recalls, "He would have you pick up a smooth bowl sanded out beyond 800 grit. Feel it, rub it, put it down, and then feel a sandblasted bowl about the same size. Feel the texture with your fingertips. Then go back to the first bowl and marvel at how dead it felt compared to the other."

Sometimes Bill would even texture the inside or rub dye into the grain to enhance the visual elements of texture and color.

Around 2004 to 2006, when French turner Pascal Oudet and Philadelphia-based turner Michael Brolly were independently experimenting with the same technique, Bill discovered that if he sandblasted further, the softer rings could be completely removed, leaving a skeletal form. This led to a series which he called *Bones of the Tree*. It was a painstaking process. The fine 180-grit glass or garnet beads made barely a dent in the wood. He had three sandblasting cabinets, so he could use different media at the same time, and it took up to twelve hours to finish a piece. Many did not survive. He had to take breaks for the cramps in his arms and legs. Ribs were created using blue painter's masking tape. He invested a tremendous amount of time, labor, and money into refining the art and did not give up his secrets lightly. When asked how he did it, he generally gave a smile and a non-committal answer.

## *Bones of the Tree* series

Untitled Bowl (*Bones of the Tree* series), Douglas fir, sandblast-carved

Untitled Bowl (*Bones of the Tree* series), 2008, Douglas fir, sandblast-carved, 7" × 9½" × 8½" (18cm × 24cm × 22cm)

A blind visitor at the 2011 AAW Symposium in Saint Paul, Minnesota, explores one of Bill's skeletal pieces, an example of the tactile attraction of his sandblasted forms. Photographer Andi Wolfe commented, "I was intrigued about how delicate a touch this person used to explore the surface."

Photo: Andi Wolfe

## More innovations—tubes

Bill turned and hollowed some tube forms on the lathe and then sandblasted them. Then one day he carved a mushroom with a chainsaw. It was an enjoyable experiment, so he thought to try chainsaws for hollowing, and his large tubes were born. Dave Schweitzer describes Bill taking a 6"- (15cm-) diameter alder log and plunge-cutting a 40" (102cm) bar straight down the log without coming through the sides, leaving a tube with walls of no more than 1" (25mm) thick. Dave made Bill some large calipers to measure wall thicknesses. Bill produced many such tubes, the goal being to create pieces inspired by the lathe but without using a lathe. Next, the artist in him kicked in, and Bill put a bend in the tubes and began to call them *Knees*.

Driven to make yet bigger tubes, Bill took even larger logs, and to hollow them he turned to hydraulic chainsaws (used by scuba divers to cut underwater piers). These have two long lines going back to a stationary engine running the hydraulics, which then turn the chain in the saw. All the noise came from the engine, housed in a shed 50 feet (15m) away. Bill ordered a custom saw with a five horsepower electric motor (quieter) and a hydraulic ▸

## Turned and sandblasted tube

*Skeleton Tube Series #2*, 2010, Douglas fir, turned and sandblast-carved, 20½" × 5¼" (52cm × 13cm)

## Chainsawn *Knees* and tubes

Bill Luce with one of his chainsawn *Knee* forms, Renton, Washington, 2010.

Photo: Malcolm Zander

Bill poses with his giant tubes cut from Douglas fir.

Photo: William Edwards

chain. With a very long bar and hydraulic holders, it was difficult to maneuver and had to be moved with a tractor, but it was much used. Once the forms were hollowed, the tube exteriors were carved.

One day Bill and William Edwards dragged a group of these tubes out onto the driveway, photographed them for fifteen minutes, and then put them all back away. He never sold one. The chainsawn tubes and the Knees were all an intentional and deliberate exploration of form.

### Final days

In 2014, Bill and Monica decided to move from Renton to Gig Harbor, Washington, and bought a property in the middle of a forest. Bill built a 3,000-square-foot set of workshops. He had big plans—there was a turning area with a large lathe, a drying room, a kitchen, a photography room, a chainsaw room, and a gallery area with exactingly designed podiums and lighting to display his best work. In July 2015, as it neared completion, Richard Raffan came to visit. He observed, "One thing is for certain. Bill didn't believe in doing things by halves."

However, in 2016 tragedy struck. At the height of his powers, Bill had a horrific motorcycle accident and was severely incapacitated. The dream workshops were never used, and he never turned again. Six years later, on May 29, 2022, Bill Luce died. He once said (with characteristic humility) that he hoped to be at least a footnote in the history of woodturning. He was way more than that. He was a unique talent and an extraordinary artist. ■

*The author is deeply grateful for information provided by William Edwards, Ron Gerton, Bonnie Klein, Monica Luce, Richard Raffan, and Dave Schweitzer. Their assistance was invaluable.*

*Malcolm Zander is a New Zealand-born wood artist living in Ottawa, Canada. For more, visit his website, malcolmzander.com.*

## Online Auction

In the April 2024 issue of *American Woodturner* (vol 39, no 2), we published an article about the Bill Luce Collaboration Project, where many of Bill's unfinished forms were distributed to selected artists worldwide to be completed in their own style. **An online auction of all of these collaborative works will be held on October 26, 2024**, with the AAW receiving 50% of the proceeds and the participating artists 50%. Many thanks to Monica Luce for her donation of Bill's work to this project. To learn more about the auction, visit auction.woodturner.org.

# MARK SFIRRI

Kimberly Winkle


## 2024 POP Merit Award Recipient

Photo: John Carlano

*Photos by Mark Sfirri unless otherwise noted.*

*Each year the AAW's Professional Outreach Program (POP) awards its esteemed Merit Award to an artist who has shown exceptional development and whose artwork and creative practice have directly influenced or had a significant impact on other artists within the woodturning field. Learn more about the program, the Merit Award, and past recipients at tiny.cc/AAWPOP.*

*The 2024 AAW POP Merit Award recipient is Mark Sfirri. Museum for Art in Wood Executive Director and Chief Curator Jennifer-Navva Milliken states, "It's impossible to overestimate the impact of Mark Sfirri's contributions to creativity in wood. He brings a unique exuberance and mirth to his work that invites participation from his viewers. It's underscored by rigorous technique and practice; however, it demonstrates to us that creating and sharing joy is hard but rewarding work."* ***View a video made in tribute to Mark's POP Merit Award at tiny.cc/SfirriMeritAward*** *(URL is case-sensitive).* ▸

### SYMPOSIUM DEMONSTRATOR IN SAINT PAUL!

Photo: Sam Sfirri

Mark Sfirri will be a demonstrator at AAW's International Woodturning Symposium in Saint Paul, Minnesota, June 12-15, 2025, where he will share his wealth of experience with attendees. Don't miss this chance to learn from Mark, live and in person! For the latest details, visit aawsymposium.org.

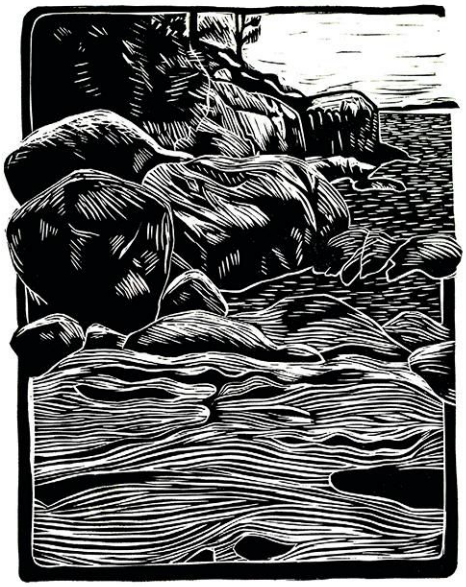
## An inspired career

Mark Sfirri's career has been extensive and diverse. In addition to being an accomplished woodturner, he is also an award-winning educator, researcher, writer, collaborator, photographer, and printmaker—aspects of his career that complement each other with creative overlap. The volume, breadth, and depth of his professional activities are truly remarkable. He has delivered more than 200 lectures and workshops and demonstrated at more than twenty woodturning symposia worldwide; his work is included in more than 250 publications, and he has authored more than twenty articles and reviews in notable books and journals; and he has exhibited his work in more than 300 exhibitions, curated or adjudicated more than thirty shows, and has work held in the permanent collections of twenty-eight public institutions, including the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian, Yale Art Gallery, Museum of Art & Design NYC, Minneapolis Institute of Art, Museum for Art in Wood, the Carnegie Museum of Art, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and the James A. Michener Art Museum, among others.

Mark states, "I have always scanned the horizon to look for opportunities that were of interest. I view a career as collecting building blocks to build a wall of unknown width and height with no idea of where it would lead. I challenge myself with my own practice and research. I have always been inquisitive and the diversity of things that I do keeps it all fresh." To know Mark is to know that he assumes each aspect of his career with profound seriousness, preparedness, and focus.

Mark Sfirri, 2006, demonstrating at Bucks County Community College in Newtown, Pennsylvania, where he taught from 1981-2017.

Photo: Frank Pronesti



*Haystack* (Mountain School of Crafts, Deer Isle, Maine), Block Print Edition of 28, 2017, 8¾" × 7" (22cm × 18cm)

*Carved Serving Tray*, 1975, Honduras mahogany, 2" × 27" × 18" (5cm × 69cm × 46cm)

Collection of the Artist, Exhibited at the Museum for Contemporary Craft, *Young Americans*, 1978

Mark Sfirri's passion and lifelong pursuit of working with wood developed at a very young age. He carved a dog out of oak in the seventh grade and, in junior high shop class, made a box that had two drawers. Simultaneously nurtured and challenged by a strong art program at school, he continued woodworking and woodcarving throughout his teens. Mark states, "I was a serious art student in high school. We could major in art—five days a week! It was a rigorous program. I loved it all." In his high school art program, students were given weekly in-class assignments, weekly homework assignments, monthly reading and writing assignments, quarterly assignments, and a yearly assignment. "Being forced to think about ideas for assignments forced me to put on my creative hat frequently and come up with an idea; I had a pretty good work ethic growing up, but this pushed it into high gear in high school."

Certainly his formative art experience in high school prepared him to pursue art in college, and it provided a solid foundation for a disciplined creative practice that he continues today. His parents permitted him to study art at the highly regarded Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) if he studied architecture, which he pursued but disliked. He describes wandering around the school one day visiting every studio, and when he walked into the woodshop, he found not only his calling but also his major.

Sfirri ultimately earned both his bachelor of fine arts and master of fine arts degrees in furniture design from RISD. Under the tutelage of the skillful

and influential professor of woodworking Tage Frid, Sfirri developed a strong technical foundation of woodworking processes, which has provided him with a virtuosic set of skills to utilize as he explores and tests the limits and creative potential of the medium. Seeing some of Sfirri's early explorations in turning and carving, such as his *Carved Serving Tray* (1975), Frid encouraged him to explore incorporating lathe-turned components in his furniture. This suggestion ultimately played a defining role in Mark's future work, as seen in *Hall Table* (2011), now in the permanent collection of the AAW.

## Influence and collaboration

Mark attended RISD in the 1970s during a particularly strong period of the American Studio Craft Movement, when attendance in university craft programs was high and the conversations about craft were robust, which inspired new directions and interpretations of traditional craft forms and their expressions. During his time at RISD, Mark was inspired by the work of late furniture maker and educator Alphonse Mattia, who was a graduate student in the program at the time. Mattia's conceptually developed and impeccably crafted work (see *Architect's Valet*) had a significant impact on Mark. The use of the furniture format and wood as a means of expression by Mattia and other makers served as a source of inspiration for Mark, influencing his work throughout much of his career.

In 1978, after completing his MFA, he found a job in the woodworking industry, working for three years in Rochester, New York, as a director of design and engineering. In the fall of 1981, he began his longtime teaching career at Bucks County Community College in Newtown, Pennsylvania, where he led the Fine Woodworking Program and guided students—including notable woodturning artists Derek Weidman, Miriam Carpenter, Dan Zobel, and others—to success until his retirement in 2017.

*Hall Table*, 2011, Bubinga, mahogany, paint, 36" × 41" × 15½" (91cm × 104cm × 39cm)

Collection of Kathy Hiban and AAW Permanent Collection, donated by Deena and Jerome Kaplan

*Split-Turned Mirror*, 1978, Walnut, 34" × 22" × 3" (86cm × 56cm × 8cm)

Collection of Jack Stevens

In 1983, he and his wife bought a house and property in New Hope, Pennsylvania, where he eventually built the studio he continues to work in today. Always eager to learn and seize opportunities, Mark also became a machine dealer, buying equipment, fixing it up, and setting up his shop. By 1986, his shop was complete and he felt ready to start his own thing, but he didn't quite know just yet what that would be. He made a lot of double-rimmed bowls and applied to several art-and-craft shows. Although he initially faced rejection, he persisted and eventually gained some acceptances. ▸

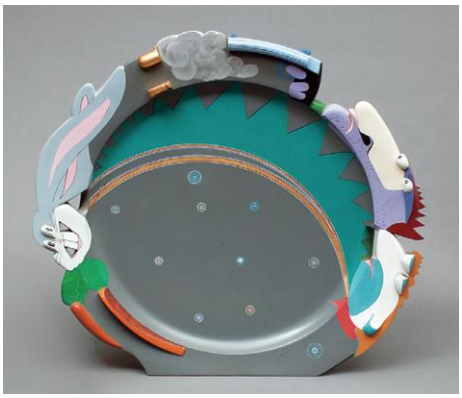
**Alphonse Mattia,** *Architect's Valet*, 1989, Ebonized walnut, pau amarillo, wenge, ebony, Delron® (acetal plastic), paint, 78¼" × 21¾" × 17¼" (2m × 55cm × 44cm)

Photo courtesy of Rago/Wright Auctions

*Double Rimmed Bowl Revisited*, 2007 but a design Sfirri first explored in 1978, Figured mahogany, 3" × 10¾" × 7" (8cm × 27cm × 18cm)

Collection of the Artist

During this time, Mark also started collaborating with painter Robert Dodge on both furniture and other objects, including several folding screens and turned work such as *Bugs and Thugs*. These early collaborative works reveal stylistic characteristics that are common in Sfirri's work, such as the strong use of color, exaggerated gestures, carved surfaces, broken or shifted planes, and wit. Moreover, these early collaborative works illustrate Mark's uncanny ability to synthesize disparate media and voices into a uniquely cohesive and wildly creative whole; collaboration has remained influential and an important component of his artistic practice.



*Bugs and Thugs* (collaboration with Robert Dodge), 1987, Poplar, goldleaf, paint, 4" × 20" × 20" (10cm × 51cm × 51cm)

Collection of the Museum for Art in Wood

Photo: John Carlano

*Folding Screen* (collaboration with Robert Dodge), 1989, Maple, wenge, pear, goldleaf, paint, Approx. 76" × 48" × 12" (2m × 1.2m × 30cm)

Private Collection

## An expanding repertoire

The late 1980s and early 1990s were a prolific period for Sfirri; he continued to collaborate with Dodge while creating new bodies of work. His inventive style garnered the attention of publications such as *American Craft* and *American Woodturner*, and he began exhibiting in high-end galleries such as Jane Korman's Swann Gallery on Rittenhouse Square in Philadelphia and Sansar Gallery in Washington, D.C. Maintaining a very active schedule and prolific production, he continued to teach full time and make furniture in his home studio with the assistance of two full-time employees.

*Rejects from the Bat Factory*, 2002 (first set made in 1993), Ash, poplar, paint, 38" × 24" × 6" (97cm × 61cm × 15cm)

Sets are in various collections, including National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum, Yale Art Gallery, and The Museum for Art in Wood

The financial recession in the early 90s resulted in a major downturn in sales for studio furniture, and Mark concluded that if he were going to make work that wasn't going to sell, he might as well make objects that satisfied his own creative urges. This realization and determination set him on a new course, and he began incorporating illusion, spontaneity, animation, and humor into his designs. He also started his work in multiaxis turning with candlesticks, baseball bats, painted "vessel" forms, figures, spoons, rolling pins, and sculpture.

In 1992, Canadian woodturner Michael Hosaluk invited Mark to Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, for a conference that ultimately evolved into the Emma Collaboration. The experience inspired him to try something new; he wanted to see if he could make a turned spindle appear bent. This direction was his start in the turning world and a stronger involvement with the AAW.

The 90s and beyond were growth years for Mark for varied reasons and were inspired by varied interests. Mark states, "When something sparks my interest, I go after it. What I've loved so much about my career is the fact that I have so many interests and have managed to wear different hats to address things that interest me. Having a teaching career played a large part in giving me time and a salary to do that."

In 2006, Mark made the conscious decision to step away from his singular focus on a solo career to explore the works of artists such as Wharton Esherick and Stephen Hogbin. He sought to understand what inspired them and to see the world of creative woodwork from their perspective. Reflecting on Stephen Hogbin's work, Mark was impressed by his innovative designs, especially his *Walking Bowl* series, which expanded the concept of traditional bowls in a way that was ahead of its time. Sfirri notes

*Branch Rolling Pin,* 2006, Honduras mahogany, 3" × 22" × 4" (8cm × 56cm × 10cm)

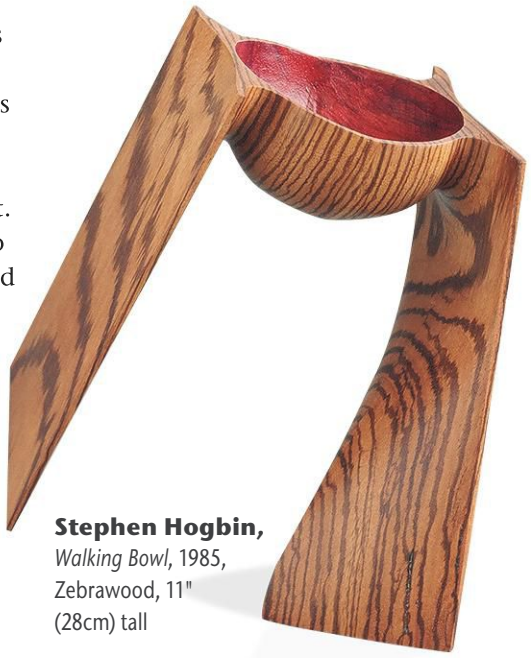
Collection of Tina and Albert LeCoff

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

Private Collection

that Hogbin's *Walking Bowls* "touch on turned forms, but they expanded the notion of what a bowl could be in a way that no one was thinking about. He was so thoughtful about the concept behind his designs. Taking risks and pushing ideas is what inspired me." As an educator, Mark found it important to expose his students to a broader field of furniture making and woodturning, as it was equally educational and inspirational for him. His studies on other makers, particularly Wharton Esherick, not only influenced his own creative practice but also led him to write articles and deliver presentations on Esherick's work.

Sfirri's own work continues to evolve, morph, and expand the limits of what woodturning can be. Through his disciplined studio practice, he has become adept at skills that span the spectrum of woodworking and woodturning—skills that afford him the flexibility to manipulate the material in just about any conceivable way, resulting in a creative output that is wide-ranging yet displays a common thread that is distinctly his own. When asked about his work, Mark says, "Looking at it one way, it's too much all over the place. I have had to reinvent the wheel so many times, sometimes for just one project. Wouldn't it have made more sense to come up with one thing that I figured out how to do really well and stick with that? There are two answers to that—absolutely *yes* from a marketing standpoint and absolutely *no* from a creativity standpoint. I am nothing if not a creative person. It is what excites me to get up in the morning and go out to my studio. The spark of the new is what excites me." ▸



**Stephen Hogbin,** *Walking Bowl*, 1985, Zebrawood, 11" (28cm) tall


*Night Moves*, 2003, Douglas fir, poplar, paint, 10½" × 18¾" × 5½" (27cm × 48cm × 14cm)

Collection of the Artist

*Sea of Spoons*, 2006, Various woods and sizes

*The Pawns*, 2022, Claro walnut, 3" to 5" (8cm to 13cm) tall

Collection of the Artist

*Family Tree*, 2020, Western yellow cedar, paint, Each: 11" × 5½" × 3½" (28cm × 14cm × 9cm)

Collection of the Artist

## New work, two shows

It is manifestly Mark's creativity—enabled by a willingness to take risks, trust, and follow his curiosity—combined with an impressive work ethic that has contributed to his copious output. In fact, the stream of recent work has led to two upcoming solo exhibitions at major venues: the Museum for Art in Wood and the James A. Michener Art Museum, both in Pennsylvania.

### *La Famiglia*

*La Famiglia* will open at Philadelphia's Museum for Art in Wood November 1, 2024, and will run through February 16, 2025. The exhibition features work that expresses the theme of "family" in a variety of ways. Jennifer Navva-Milliken describes the exhibition as "inviting a way of thinking about the definition of family and its meaning through different lenses...." The exhibition includes a range of works that display techniques and styles that are characteristically Sfirri's, including multiaxis-turned-and-carved forms, color, impeccable craft, loads of personality, and apparent deftness of skill.

Different groupings of stylistically similar forms collectively create the various family assemblages that comprise the exhibition. They range in complexity from the simple, clean, and understated works in *The Pawns* to forms and families that are more complex in shape, surface,

*Cousins Immortalized* (I-IV), 2022, Bronze, pine, paint, 69½" to 72½" (1.7m to 1.8m) tall

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*Cousins* (I-IV), 2019, Western yellow cedar, paint, 36" to 44¾" (91cm to 114cm) tall × 8¼" × 8¼" (21cm × 21cm)

Collection of the Artist

and character as seen in *Family Tree*. A pawn is the simplest and most expendable piece in the game of chess, but it represents half of the pieces on the board. Sfirri describes *The Pawns* as "a middle-class family in suburbia." If *The Pawns* are from suburbia, one wonders where the figures in *Family Tree* came from—given the spectrum of color, animation, and character. Exaggerated facial features and saturated color bring the characters to life in such extreme fashion that they appear to be breaking free from the angular carved frames that attempt to restrain them. Sfirri describes this family of characters as "rough sketches that became more and more refined during the carving process. The spontaneity of design played a big part in this series. There is a freshness about this approach that really works for me." These families, while stylistically quite different, are respectively united through their shared characteristics.

Throughout the works comprising *La Famiglia*, like evolution itself, there is often a nod or glance back to former pieces or series. *Cousins Immortalized*, a family of cast bronze totemic columns displaying stacked carved heads perpetually posed with expressive faces, is an evolution of a prior work, *Cousins*. This previous effort was inspired by a collaborative piece Mark worked on with a Māori carver from New Zealand, Lyonel Grant, and other artists at Emma Collaboration in 2012. Due to the resplendent nature of bronze, the shadows and highlights in *Cousins Immortalized* are more pronounced and contrasting than in their wood predecessors.

The largest family in *La Famiglia* is *Ellis Islanders* (featured on the front cover of this issue), which comprises twenty-nine members ranging in height from 4" (10cm) to almost 16" (41cm). The title references immigrants who came to the U.S. through Ellis Island in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, as all of Sfirri's grandparents did. Reminiscent of the era,

(*Left*) Mark Sfirri with Lyonel Grant at the Emma Lake conference, Saskatchewan, Canada, 2012, with the tall carved Western yellow cedar column they worked on in collaboration with other artists.

(*Right*) *Ellis Islander* (#8), 2021, Holly, 11¼" × 3" × 3" (29cm × 8cm × 8cm)

Collection of the Artist

Sfirri chose to depict each family member wearing a hat.

While the forms are sophisticated, unique, and thoughtfully executed, Sfirri did very little drawing for any of them—only the occasional rough sketch. He would draw out some basic shapes on the wood, estimate the locations of the turning centers, and then turn them. Utilizing multiple non-parallel axes resulted in more animated forms. This process was followed by shaping and carving. Like the evolution of any family, each member's design was based on the one, or ones, before it. Turned and carved from white holly, the unpainted surfaces bring focus to the individual features, expressions, and resulting personality of the family members. Their uniform androgyny invites interpretation, allowing the viewer to create or project their own familial associations and narratives.

Deviating from the medium of wood but drawing on his extensive experience with collaboration, Sfirri invited a selection of artists, most of whom he's known for years, to collaborate on *The Immigrant*. He asked each contributor to create a small two-dimensional artwork showing the interpretation of their own immigrant story as it relates to their family. In some cases, it was of the artists themselves or a parent, grandparent, or a distant relative whom they never met. ▸

*The Immigrant I* (one of five frames comprising a total of forty-five artists' work), 2023, Mixed media, each frame: 23" × 23" × 1¼" (58cm × 58cm × 32mm); this frame includes work by Sandra Scicchitani, Fabiane Garcia, John Mydock, Barbara Serratore, Isabel and Alphonse Mattia, Kimberly Winkle, Alex Henderson, Michael Kabbash, and Paul Sasso

Collection of the Artist

*Wedding Bouquets*, 2022, Poplar, bamboo, paint, Each: 40" × 12" × 12" (102cm × 30cm × 30cm)

Collection of the Artist

Trusting the collaborative process and each of the artist's ability, Mark knew it would succeed. The forty-five individual artworks are accompanied by a brief description of the immigrant being depicted. In reading through the descriptions, heartstrings are plucked, admiration stirs, and collectively they weave the various and complex fibers that comprise not only our nation but also our families. While the format and material may seem uncharacteristic for Mark, an artist so well known for his mastery of working with wood, it is exactly this unexpectedness, sensitivity, and thoughtfulness that render him exceptional and which keep his work ever evolving and new.

### *The Flower Show*

The marriage of Mark's son Sam led to the creation of the work comprising Sfirri's second solo exhibition, *The Flower Show*, which will be on exhibit at the James A. Michener Art Museum December 14, 2024, to May 4, 2025. Due to concerns about pollen, the venue in which Sam was to be married did not allow fresh flowers to be used, so Mark volunteered to make them from wood instead. Rather than diving into research on flowers to better understand the various species and anatomy, he chose to rely on the image of flowers that he had in his mind and combine that image with his turning, carving, and coloring skills. As he did with the assignments he was given in school, he sprang into action, turning, carving, and painting what ended up being two vases, each containing a dozen wooden flowers of different types and designs. The red, pink, and purple flowers were contrasted by vases made by Sfirri that featured his well-known "slate" finish. Each vase was positioned on either side of the bride and groom as they took their vows. Inspired (and challenged) by his wife to create a more "bushy" effect, Sfirri also created the bride's bouquet, then the groom's boutonniere. In perfect form, Mark created a spectacular floral display for the wedding, but to no surprise this was only the start of a new inquiry into the possibilities the format presented.

Sfirri engaged in the creative potential of the flower format by articulating and acknowledging that there are two basic ways of looking at flowers: from the top and from the side. The side view reveals three-dimensional forms, and the top view appears flatter in dimension; he approached his next phase of flower production anew by focusing on the top view equally as much as the side view.

*Bridal Bouquet*, 2022, Holly, brass, 15" × 6" × 6" (38cm × 15cm × 15cm)

Collection of Kim Sfirri

*Neuf Fleurs*, 2023, Holly, pear, French boxwood, pink ivory, pau amarillo, brass, poplar, paint, 9¾" × 8" × 6" (25cm × 20cm × 15cm)

Collection of the Artist

*Spring Hopes Eternal*, 2023, Holly, brass, mahogany, paint, 6" × 6" × 6" (15cm × 15cm × 15cm)

Collection of the Artist

He added movement and gesture to the flower stems by forgoing the rigid stalks of bamboo used in the wedding bouquets for malleable brass, which he forged on a pitted anvil to leave impressions and texture reminiscent of nature. *Neuf Fleurs* brings all these aspects to fruition. The arrangement, like a natural bouquet, includes flowers ranging in size, color, character, and placement. The white holly flowers punctuate the arrangement through their almost luminescent quality, and the small pod-like flowers serve well to create texture and fill space, much like baby's breath in a natural arrangement. Sfirri's use of his slate finish vase allows the complex flower shapes to be the focus.

The blossoms throughout the series range stylistically from complex and dynamic, much like an exotic flower, to simple, almost pod-like forms. *Spring Hopes Eternal* includes the widest range of stylistic approaches combined with the carved tray forms he is also known for. Mark's ability to breathe life and movement into his works, including his flowers, is evident in *One Dozen*. The clean white forms of the holly appear much like origami or a pleated garment folding and unfolding to reveal the stylized and elegant blossoms. His attention to detail and precision are remarkable, as can be seen in the way he carves the intersection of petals or the implied mass and swell of swollen forms; individually they are special, collectively they are spectacular.

*Wall Flowers I* exhibits a unified blending of techniques common in Sfirri's work: woodturning, carving, and humor. The floral arrangements are set against a carved background from which a highly animated multiaxis vase form emerges. The way in which he has carved the vase results in an interesting, somewhat skewed and exaggerated aerial viewpoint, much like a cartoon drawing. The sculpted flowers are similarly animated, with their dynamic stems twisting and arcing fancifully.

## Insatiable creativity

Upon reflecting on his two upcoming exhibitions, one can see how Mark Sfirri's life experiences and creative path have influenced his work. His extensive training, curious mind, insatiable creativity, and disciplined studio practice have led to a remarkable collective body of work. Sfirri's development and refinement of techniques, scholarly and artistic contributions, impactful teaching, and his prolific production have attracted well-deserved attention and praise, including the 2024 POP Merit Award. ■

*Kimberly Winkle is a woodturner, furniture maker, and professor of art at Tennessee Tech University, where she serves as the director of the School of Art, Craft & Design and its satellite campus, the Appalachian Center for Craft.*

*One Dozen*, 2024, Holly, brass, mahogany, paint, 17" × 8" × 7" (43cm × 20cm × 18cm)

Collection of the Artist

*Wall Flowers I*, 2024, Mahogany, brass, holly, boxwood, pear, paint, 16¾" × 8" × 6" (43cm × 20cm × 15cm)

Collection of the Artist

## Mark Sfirri's New Work on View!

***La Famiglia***

- November 1, 2024, to February 16, 2025
- Museum for Art in Wood, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- Curator: Jennifer-Navva Milliken
- Learn more: museumforartinwood.org/exhibition/mark-sfirri-la-famiglia

***The Flower Show***

- December 14, 2024, to May 4, 2025
- The James A. Michener Art Museum, Doylestown, Pennsylvania
- Curator: Laura Turner Igoe, Ph.D
- Learn more: michenerartmuseum.org/mam_exhibitions/mark-sfirri-the-flower-show

# Common Roots

## 2024 AAW Member Exhibition

*Photos courtesy of the artists.*

The 2024 AAW member exhibition theme, *Common Roots*, was chosen in recognition of the many branches that have grown and evolved from the lathe's early origins. The explosion of creativity over past decades is shown here, too, as each member adapted the theme of common roots to their individual vision.

The jury panel consisted of artists Dixie Biggs and Art Liestman, and craft scholar (and woodturner) Craig Edelbrock. The three-member panel individually carefully reviewed the eighty anonymized submissions for the first round, then met online to determine the final twenty-seven selections.

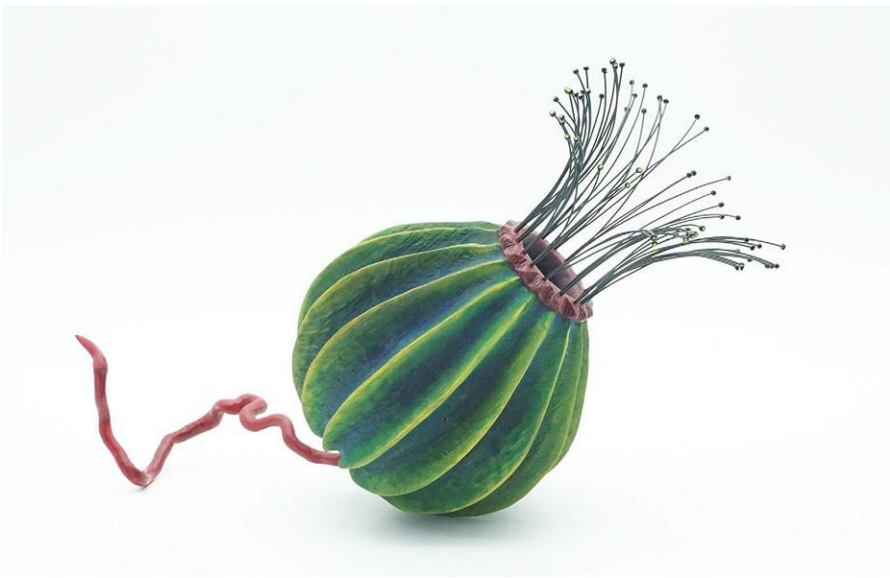
The selected artists drew freely from family, history, humor, music, culture, agriculture, and nature, creating an exhibition that touches not only on woodturning, but on the common roots of our human experience. All works were created between April 2022 and March 2024.

Two prizes were awarded at the AAW International Symposium in Portland, Oregon, this past May. For the Masters' Choice Award, selected by the jury, $300 was awarded to Andi Wolfe for her piece, Eve. For the People's Choice Award, $200 went to Christine Smith for her work, *One More Piece of Joy*. Congratulations to all of the artists selected for this show. ■

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

**Dewey Garrett (Arizona),** *Blue Layers*, Dyed plywood, 5½" × 4½" (14cm × 11cm)

*My earliest woodworking projects were utilitarian: shop cabinets, jigs, and fixtures. Most of these learning projects used conventional plywood and led to later work in furniture making. However, once I discovered the joys of woodturning, I seldom worked with that material or any "flatwork." The availability of commercial plywood in dyed, multi-colored varieties has now led to the creation of new hollow forms that explore the potential of this unique material.*



**Evelin Schirrmacher (Germany),** *Fruit of Life*, Maple, wire, acrylic paint, 9½" × 13¾" × 6⅜" (24cm × 35cm × 16cm)

*This piece was inspired by the thought, "No root, no life." Although underground and unseen, roots support growth and vitality, providing moisture, nutrients, and support for the plant above ground. Without roots, there are no stems or branches, no leaves, no flowers, no seeds. Long after the roots have withered and died, the life they nurtured lives on through seeds.*

MASTERS' CHOICE AWARD!

**Andi Wolfe (Ohio),** Eve, Maple, flame-worked borosilicate glass, 13" × 10" × 9" (33cm × 25cm × 23cm)

*The inspiration for* Eve *is rooted in my career as a molecular systematist. Reconstructing phylogenetic trees to determine evolutionary relationships was an important part of my scientific career. The roots emerging from the vessel resemble a phylogeny; the egg represents maternal inheritance. Mitochondria have their own genomes and are inherited only from the eggs of females. Scientists who study these molecules and their evolutionary pattern have determined that modern humans have a mitochondrial Eve, who lived in eastern Africa around 155,000 years ago.*

**Mike Jackofsky (California) and Georgianne Jackofsky (New York),** *Underwood II*, Madrone burl, 3¾" × 4" (10cm × 10cm)

*The intricate pattern at the bottom gradually gives way to a tree branching out in the top half. There are common elements between top and bottom, but depending on which half you view, they can be perceived as completely different. An uncommon piece with roots in two very different designs.*

**Dave Landers (Colorado),** *R is for Rocket Box*, Bigleaf maple burl, maple, 11" × 3" (28cm × 8cm)

*As I was making this piece, my subconscious kept tugging at me, but I didn't know why. When I posted a photo online, someone mentioned Ray Bradbury. Ding! My subconscious was drawing from forgotten memories (roots) of classic sci-fi I had read as a youth. I searched and found an edition of Bradbury's short story collection,* R is for Rocket, *with an eerily similar rocket on the cover!*

*I now know what my subconscious was trying to tell me.*

**Bob Rotche (Virginia),** *Synergy*, Walnut, acrylic paint, 1" × 15" (25mm × 38cm)

Common Roots *suggests a shared background or shared foundation. As woodturners, we draw from those roots, from the foundations laid by those who came before us. We also, however, continue to share and exchange ideas, represented here by the connecting branches. The ability to draw from common roots and to share, even via divergent branches, creates a synergy that fosters the growth of all.*

**Nikos Siragas (Greece),** *Greek Treasure*, Ericaceae root, 11¼" × 8" × 6⅜" (29cm × 20cm × 16cm)

*This work is my interpretation of ancient Greek amphorae resting on the seabed. These amphorae represent ancient Greece, which produced ideas and philosophies that formed the roots of modern Western civilization. This piece has been created from the whole root of an ericaceae bush, a member of the heather family known for producing root briars.*

**Daniel Zobel (Pennsylvania),** *Holey Trinity*, Holly, maple, brass, pigments, 8" × 12" × 12" (20cm × 30cm × 30cm)

Holey Trinity *is a trio of Holey Bowleys with the concept of each mating to the next through the center point of the asymmetrical bases. The variation in color and asymmetric bases show how pieces of wood from the same tree can grow to differ but are can still be linked together through their common roots.*

**Tom Hale (Ohio),** *Tuft Stuff*, Ash, boar bristles, 6½" × 10" × 5¼" (17cm × 25cm × 13cm)

*I give thanks to all the people who have influenced me over the years, with whom I feel the common roots of the love of wood and of creating with wood as a primary medium. To those from whom I have taken classes, seen demonstrating, worked with or talked with, or watched videos, or read books—thank you.*

**Cory White (Texas) and Rick Cannon (Tennessee),** *Fossilis*, Mesquite, 10" × 9½" × 5" (25cm × 24cm × 13cm)

*For miles in every direction, wind-swept desert dunes and the occasional weathered rock outcrops are the only things in sight. However, millions of years ago, this land was a tropical paradise of abundant land, plant, and animal life. In early spring of 2024, fossilized evidence was unearthed, providing a first look at a previously unknown plant species. Based on that evidence, this never-before-seen three-dimensional model was constructed by artists working in collaboration. This yet-to-be named plant species is thought to provide an important link or "common root" connection to many of our modern-day plants, whose beauty we enjoy today.*

**David Chapin (North Carolina),** *Creativity Has Legs*, Maple, cherry, 1⅝" × 8" (41mm × 20cm)

*All woodturners are creative, in both senses of that word. We create forms (we make stuff) and we are creative (we develop innovative ideas and solutions to challenges). In all cases, creativity is our common root, our fundamental touchstone. It is supported by three components, just as I envisioned supporting this simple maple platter on three legs: our vision, our skill in the craft, and the details that realize our vision. Without vision, we are simply copyists. Without skill, we are inept. Without the polish of details, our visions will never be realized. Creativity is our common root.*

**Derek Bencomo (Hawai'i),** *Come to Me Dancing*, Hawaiian milo, 5¾" × 6" × 8" (15cm × 15cm × 20cm)

*To me, "roots" means a foundation, a beginning of an idea, a base from which to move forward without losing the past. In the beginning we all grow with our ideas. We branch out with new thoughts, while still being committed to our original foundation—our roots, which also grow with us, keep us in place.*

**Ena Dubnoff (California),** *Forest*, Cherry, maple, acrylic paint, 8¼" × 17½" × 7" (21cm × 44cm × 18cm)

*The trees in forests live in communities. They create ecosystems that store water, create humidity, moderate temperature, and share nutrients. Tree roots form networks for communication and support. If we acknowledge shared roots and interdependence, maybe we could learn a thing or two from the trees.*

**Jay Shepard (Washington),** *We All See One Moon*, Maple, blackwood, lacquer, varnish, paint, felt, 10¾" × 8¼" × 3⅛" (27cm × 21cm × 8cm)

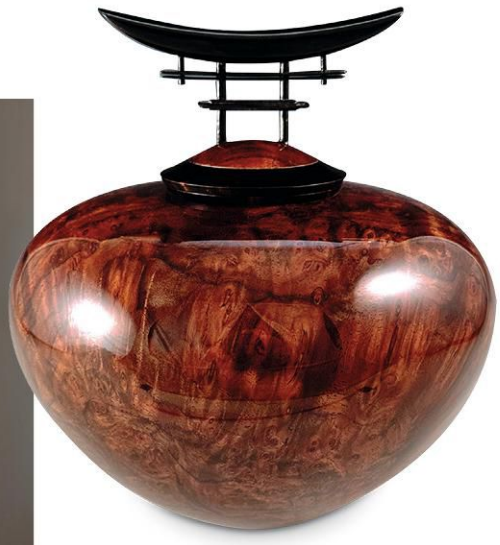
*We all see one moon. We share one Earth. We are one. Our common roots are shared.*

**Tom Sampson (Michigan),** *Generations*, Pine, slate, 15" × 11" × 6" (38cm × 28cm × 15cm)

Common Roots *evokes thoughts of beginnings, similarities, and transitions.* Generations *is comprised of three turned and carved hollow forms. These forms, while different in size, share common elements, evoking a single species fossilized at different growth stages, exhibiting a transition from young and new to maybe older and a little weathered. Nestling them together with open shells emphasizes their genetic similarities while providing a comparison of size and age.*

**Mark Gottlieb (Virginia),** *Serving Tray*, Bamboo, compressed paper, epoxy, 1" × 12" (25mm × 30cm)

*This piece combines natural materials like bamboo with man-made ones like epoxy. But these materials have common roots. Wood is composed mostly of the following elements: 50% carbon, 42% oxygen, 6% hydrogen, 1% nitrogen, and 1% other elements. Clear epoxy is an organic compound made up of chains of carbon linked to other elements such as hydrogen, oxygen, or nitrogen. Common roots, yet completely different characteristics. Together they make a beautiful piece.*



**Stephen Hatcher (Washington),** *Black Walnut Root Vase*, Black walnut, African blackwood, 7¾" × 7" (20cm × 18cm)

*This vase is made from a fairly common black walnut root burl. The finial, a* torii, *represents living in harmony with nature and each other, a goal we all share. Especially turners, who are a special community, willing to share techniques and ideas openly with each other.*

**Stuart Kendig (Pennsylvania),** *Castle #4*, Cherry, sycamore, alcohol dye, lacquer, enclosed lead pellets, 15" × 12" × 12" (38cm × 30cm × 30cm)

*As a child I spent many hours building things with a set of modular wooden blocks. After spending forty years as an architect, I made sets of blocks for my family's children. Each set became increasingly intricate. These projects are not models, but they utilize iconic shapes and images in a modular fashion, so they can be arranged in many configurations.*

*This project reflects the common roots of childhood experiences that influence our directions and inspirations for a lifetime.*


**Marcel van Berkel, Anja Lauvenberg, and Albert Jan Rouwkema (The Netherlands),** *Musical Roots*, Yew, wenge, brass, 13¾" × 8¾" (35cm × 22cm)

*Music is deeply rooted in us, all over the world. Whether you play the piano, violin, guitar, trumpet or dance or sing a song—remember that the roots run deep, connecting us all through the universal language of music.*

**Michael Gibson (Georgia) and Lisa Rosenmeier (Georgia),** *It's 4 O'Clock Somewhere*, Bradford pear, oil paints, 6" × 7½" × 4½" (15cm × 19cm × 11cm)

*The artists who created this teapot are both Brits living in the United States. In common with their countrymen, they know that tea is more than heritage steeped in tradition: it's a way of life.*

**Michael Anderson (Tennesse),** *Scales*, Bradford pear, India ink, 3¼" × 7¼" (8cm × 18cm)

*Though we are all individuals, we share similarities in form. We lean on one another. We protect one another. Absences are noticeable. Beneath the surface, we are all connected.*

**Don Scott (Idaho),** *World Globe*, Maple, walnut, 26½" × 18" × 16¾" (67cm × 46cm × 43cm)

*There are many who would have you believe otherwise, but it doesn't matter where we live, what we do, or who we are; we all live on the same terrestrial globe. We all have the same common roots. There are no exceptions.*

**Tiprin Follett (California),** *Basket of Common Roots*, Ash, maple, oak, rose, morning glory dye, reed, wool, 13" × 13" × 10" (33cm × 33cm × 25cm)

*My piece is a nod to the time-honored still life, with a turner's sense of humor. To meet the requirements of craftsmanship in this traditional fine art, I demonstrated advanced skills in different techniques such as objective realism in painting, needle felting, and basketry. I left the turned ends on many of the individual parts to ask my viewers to remember that this basket is not just one of common roots—but made from common roots as well.*

PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD!

**Christine Smith (North Carolina),** *Just One More Piece of Joy*, Black walnut, tupelo, acrylic paint, pewter, glass, 17" × 9" × 9" (43cm × 23cm × 23cm)

*This blue jay is holding a promise for the future: an acorn. He adamantly collects yet "one more piece of joy" to feed on during winter. His forgotten acorns grow into roots by spring.*

*We are connected through the ecosystem. As acorns root, they grow into large beautiful trees which we can harvest, or they simply provide shade and clean air we can breathe.*

**John Beaver (California),** *Common Roots Chalice*, Western red cedar, walnut, 9" × 8" (23cm × 20cm)

*From ancient times through the present, the chalice has been used in ceremonies to share a drink in common. The base of this chalice represents a tree and its roots. Intertwining the two elements gives us common roots.*

**Kevin Jesequel (Oregon),** *Thinking of John*, American chestnut, Portland Heritage Tree #182, 7" × 7½" × 8" (18cm × 19cm × 20cm)

*Giants don't die. They change shape and transform us. This tree saw the City of Portland grow around it, and John Jordan saw the field of woodturning grow around him. They weren't the only ones around, but they were a couple of the biggest. As they grew, they nurtured and nourished those around them.*

*When this tree fell in the fall of 2022, I rushed to give it new life and created this vessel. When I learned that John had fallen, I textured and carved it to reflect the influence John has had on me as an artist. When the great ones fall, they stay with us, and wherever we are, so too are they.*

**Steve and Susan Criscenzo (North Carolina),** *Nexus*, Bigleaf maple burl, stained glass, 16" × 15" × 3" (41cm × 38cm × 8cm)

Nexus *brings together two distinct artistic mediums: turned wood and stained glass. The sides form a foundation, starting with a sharp textured natural edge, transitioning to a smooth circular form representing the enduring strength and interconnectedness of nature. Encased within the burl, the glass panel completes the circle, creating a sense of diversity and inclusivity.*

Nexus *reminds us of our common bonds and serves as a testament to the idea that—despite our differences—we are all rooted in the same earth, connected by our shared humanity and the common thread of existence.*

# Members' Gallery

## Steven Cipolla, New Jersey

Although I am not a woodworker by trade, I believe I've always been an artist, having been introduced to woodturning, pencil drawing, airbrushing, and watercolor as I was growing up. These media continue to resonate with me, and my passion for working in wood has grown. I started turning pens, which I still enjoy today, but I tend to be a "one-of-a kind" artist, exploring one idea at a time. Gradually, my repertoire expanded and my sense of style evolved—clean, simple, and often whimsical with a touch of humor.

Earlier this year, I attended the eight-week woodturning intensive taught by Beth Ireland at the Center for Furniture Craftsmanship (Rockport, Maine). The class's final project was to create a stool that incorporated what we learned. This was an opportunity to tell the story of my journey as a woodworker and woodturner. The "book," aside from providing a comfortable seat, represents my past, present, and future.

*Follow Steven on Instagram, @stevetheonion2024.*



*Storybook of an Artistic Journey*, 2024, Maple (seat, airbrush, and paintbrush tip), walnut (legs, stretchers, paintbrush and airbrush parts), cherry (pencil), bacote (pen), acrylic paint, mica paint, gel stain, Tried & True™ finish, lacquer, 16½" × 17" × 14" (42cm × 43cm × 36cm)

## Jon Reiver, Tennessee

I retired to Crossville, Tennessee, following my career as a nuclear submarine officer. In Crossville, I met the great, talented members of the Cumberland Woodturners, who got me hooked on woodturning. The craft appeals to my engineering side, but it really surprised my wife that I also have an artistic bent. That was twenty-four years ago. Now I divide my time between farming, livestock, and woodturning.

After perusing my website, a client commissioned me to turn a large cherry burl that weighed 88 lbs. I turned the exterior of the burl globe and noted on one side a deep crack running from top to bottom and a huge void on the opposite side. I knew I would have to figure out how to turn it safely and keep it from flying apart during hollowing. After much thought, I built a doughnut jig that held the work securely. Instead of striving for a uniform wall thickness, I chose to let the wall thickness increase as the depth increased in order to showcase the burl figure. ▸

*For more, visit dreamsinwood.net.*

*A Weighty Opponent*, 2024, Cherry burl, walnut oil, 16" (41cm) diameter

## Carey Caires, California

*Photos by Gary Loitz.*

Back in 2000, I purchased a small lathe but at the time didn't do much with it. Then I attended a woodworking show in Pomona, California, where members of the Glendale Woodturners Guild were demonstrating and showing their work. I joined the club the next month and was hooked. Generous club members gave me lessons and inspiration—and continue to do so.

I've always been drawn to tiny things, and since I turn in the breakfast nook of my apartment, I specialize in small and dollhouse-size turnings.

(*Top left*) *Box with Finial Lid*, 2018, Black and white ebony, ebony, friction polish

(*Top right*) *Spool of Thread Box*, 2023, Rosewood, ebony, metal wire, paint, friction polish

(*Bottom left*) *Goblet*, 2024, Buckeye burl, African blackwood, friction polish

(*Bottom right*) *Hollow Form with Lid*, 2023, Betel nut, rosewood, walnut oil

## David Forrest, Alaska

Forty years ago, I purchased a starter lathe and turning tools from Sears. When I retired in 2018, I was given a midi-lathe and the creative spark really took off. Initially, I found YouTube very helpful, watching techniques and styles from any turner I could find online. Then an invitation to attend a meeting of the Tongass Turners lead to a bigger lathe and the loan of a coring tool. (Thanks, Al Tingley!)

Untitled Bowls, 2023, Myrtle wood root ball, tinted resin, walnut oil, carnauba wax, shellac, Larger bowl: 5" × 11" (13cm × 28cm)

(*Above*) Untitled Bowl, 2023, Spalted red alder, walnut oil, carnauba wax, shellac, 3¾" × 9" (10cm × 23cm)

In 2022, I was commissioned by a local auto dealer to turn more than 250 bowls 4" to 6" (10cm to 15cm) in diameter, using mostly red alder, birch, and yellow cedar, all sourced from Southeast Alaska. The auto dealership gave away a bowl with each new car they sold.

Currently, I find most of my hard woods traveling through Oregon. Not being able to toss away a piece of wood, I started using resin as a crack and split filler. When I start a new piece, I have no idea what the finished work will look like, as it reveals itself to me as I turn.

Attending the 2024 AAW Symposium in Portland, Oregon, with its speakers, demos, and array of styles, has encouraged me to take more risks. All of these experiences have challenged and expanded my skills, tested my patience, and allowed me to push my creativity.

## Nathan McCollim, Florida

I have been a woodworker for over ten years and a woodturner for about four. After seeing how many small scraps of exotic wood I was keeping from my flatwork projects, my dad suggested I give pen turning a try on a small lathe. Turning became something I really enjoyed, so I upgraded my lathe.

One of my favorite things to do at the lathe is to take popular techniques and add my own twist to them. Inside-out turning is a fun challenge, and I was inspired to use this method to make various objects and shapes. I started with a simple tree and progressed to a snowman. After doing those and a few ornaments, I had the idea to make an inside-out lightbulb. For me, nothing is more fun than disassembling the four pieces after initial turning and flipping them around to see what they reveal. If you haven't tried inside-out turning, give it a go and you might get hooked on it as well.

*Inside-Out Lightbulb Ornament*, 2024, Epoxy, pigments, cherry burl, wax, 4¼" × 1½" (11cm × 38mm)

*Inside-Out Christmas Ornaments*, 2023, Various woods and sizes

*Inside-Out Snowman Lamp*, 2024, Black walnut, oil finish, 7" × 3" × 3" (18cm × 8cm × 8cm)

*New Beginnings 332*, 2022, Sycamore, blackwood, lacquer, 18" × 9" (46cm × 23cm)

*Pierced New Beginnings 54*, 2021, Sycamore, pink ivory, paint, lacquer, 11" × 4" (28cm × 10cm)

## Joe Creed-Kaile, England

I began woodturning as a young man with guidance from my grandfather and was soon introduced to some of the most renowned woodturning artists worldwide. I became the youngest approved tutor at just 16 years old by the Association of Woodturners of Great Britain. In 2019, I was awarded The Worshipful Company of Turners Bursary and then went on to be recognized by the Register of Professional Turners in 2020 and given my RPT title. In 2022, I was honored to become a yeoman to the Worshipful Company of Turners.

There is an abundance of beauty in nature—textures, colors, and complex proportions—that many people seem to take for granted. In my turned work, I try to manifest the shapes and wonders we often overlook and bring them to luster.

## Mitchell Friedman, New York

With my background in naval architecture and store fixture display design, I've learned to focus on good proportions and the pleasing effect of a fair, simple curve. When I started turning, I made functional bowls and boxes, many from cherry burl using real turquoise, brass, and pipestone to fill voids and stabilize the work. But as I progressed, I started to think more in the way of artwork and was inspired by Native American pottery. I began to embellish an entire bowl or hollow form to add interest. My goal now is to make thin, light, embellished pieces that present themselves as art to be held and admired.

Thank you to my mentors and friends at the Long Island Woodturners Association for their help and support. ■

*Cherry Burl Lidded Box*, 2021, Cherry burl, turquoise, brass, oil finish, 2" × 6" (5cm × 15cm)

*Poplar Hollow Form*, 2024, Poplar, pyrography, acrylic ink stain, oil finish, 4" × 9" (10cm × 23cm)

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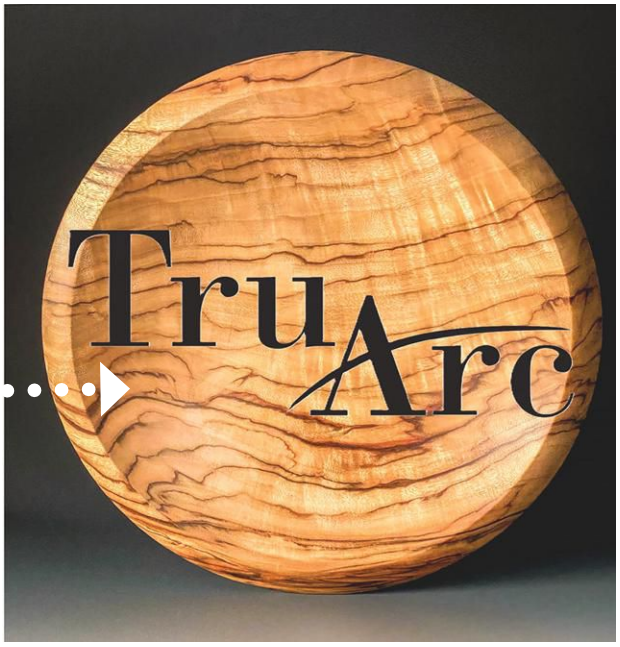


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# CHRISTINA M. VINCENT
## MAINE

*Chickadee*, 2024, Yellow flame birch (stool), maple (birds and eggs), paper birch (nest), acrylic paint, O.B. Shine Juice (mixture of boiled linseed oil, shellac, and denatured alcohol), wax, 24" × 24" × 19" (61cm × 61cm × 48cm)

Through my company, Christina M. Vincent Studio, I design and handcraft original furniture, wall art, and wooden jewelry. The pieces I create join together art and traditional woodcraft. My mission is twofold: for my company to exude a work ethic of design, durability, and sustainability and to inspire, include, and empower others through the arts and trades. I always endeavor to achieve my motto: "Designed and crafted beautifully to live beautifully."

Each piece is handmade in my studio, and I strive to use a palette of native hardwoods. Every piece of rough timber is hand-selected for its unique qualities such as color, pattern, and texture. Embracing the unique characters and colors of each material is an integral part of design.

I draw inspiration from the vast beauty of nature that surrounds me here in Maine. This inspiration can be seen in the angles, tapers, and design details but also in the joinery, how each piece of wood meets to create form. These details give each piece its originality.

*For more, visit christinamvincent.com, and follow Christina on Instagram, @christinamvincent.*