American Woodturner

The Journal of the American Association of Woodturners

Albuquerque Symposium

Hollow Vessel, Turned and Carved

Tapered Tenons

Wood and Color

Spring 2009 Vol. 24, No. 1
$7.50

Restful Places: Cremation Urns and Objects

Photo: Tib Shaw

Pam Reilly, untitled, 2008,
Silver maple, ebony, 8½" × 5¼"

Photo: Randy Batista

Dixie Biggs, *The Rest Is History,*
2009, Cherry, ebony, 12" × 8"

Rudolph Lopez, untitled, 2008,
Canary Palm, rose peroba, 13¾" × 8"

The AAW's Gallery of Wood Art is pleased to present "Restful Places: Cremation Urns and Objects" at its Landmark Center gallery January 16 through March 29, 2009.

As baby boomers age, there is a movement toward greater individualism in approaching dying, the rituals surrounding death and memorials, and an increased interest in ceremonies, urns, and caskets that better reflect individuals' lives and interests.

"Restful Places" features cremation urns by twenty-five established and emerging artists. The works are a far cry from typical mass-produced funeral home offerings. They represent a wide array of aesthetic approaches, techniques, and outlooks on life and death. Artists were selected with the goal of creating a diverse exhibit.

The impetus for the exhibit came three years ago when Tib Shaw, exhibit curator, was helping choose an urn for her stepfather's ashes. She commented, "He was an aesthetic man, with a keen sense of beauty. We felt that what was available would have horrified him. I believe an urn should reflect the person and be something the family would want to live with."

A wide variety of urn sizes are in the exhibit, from companion vessels meant for the ashes of two people, to smaller ones suitable for pets or as keepsake urns for portions of ashes.

A weekend workshop will be offered in conjunction with the show. Jim Sannerud will teach basic techniques and work alongside novice turners to create and individualize urns. ■

To view the exhibit, visit www.galleryofwoodart.org.

Greg Haugen,
Keepsake Urn,
2008, Curly maple,
4½" × 2¾"

Photo: Tib Shaw

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

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Back Cover – *Secret Box,* 2008, Pierre Delétraz, France

woodturner.org

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A NOTE ABOUT SAFETY

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

Take appropriate precautions when you turn. Safety guidelines are published in the *AAW Resource Directory.* Following them will help ensure that you can continue to enjoy woodturning.

From the Editor

It is with much enthusiasm that I invite you to read my first issue as editor of *American Woodturner*. Thirty some years ago, Dabney Doty, shop teacher extraordinaire, introduced me to the lathe at the University of Missouri. Many years later and heaps of sawdust swept up, I've combined my solid background in woodturning with my interest in carving, coloring, and texturing.

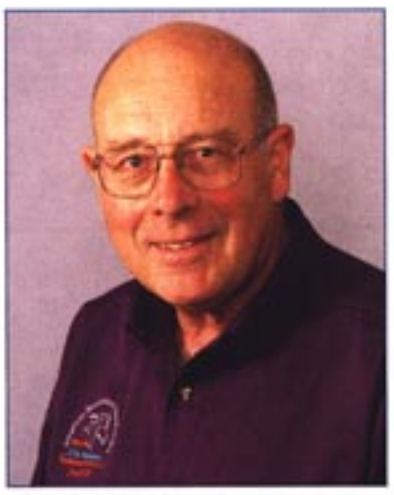
In the early 1990s, I was editor of *American Woodturner* for three years. For the past four years, I wrote a regular column on woodturning techniques for *Woodworker's Journal*, where I honed my writing skills. Over the years, I've written dozens of articles, from basic instruction to design techniques while continuing to make things, teach, and demonstrate woodturning and related techniques.

I believe in mastering the basics, thanks to Mr. Doty, so I will be regularly including articles on basic techniques. Many readers enjoy project articles. Those will continue. Others primarily read features that focus on artistic topics. This issue will certainly please that contingent. Profile articles will appear on a regular basis. Some articles you will enjoy more than others, but it is my hope that you sample everything with the same enthusiasm I offer them.

Perhaps my favorite piece in this issue is Keith Burn's, "Turning, Inspiration, and Friendship" in the Members Gallery. It sums up my feelings about the AAW: As members of this organization, we learn from each other and share friendships, all the while making exciting work.

– Betty Scarpino

President's Letter



At our November AAW Board of Directors meeting, we thanked outgoing Board members Al Hockenbery, Corey Anderson, and past president Angelo Iafrate for their service and wished them well. We look forward to working with and welcoming new 2009 Board members, Dale Larson, Binh Pho, and Cassandra Speier, knowing they will bring fresh energy, ideas, and effort to our organization. In early February, the Board met in Albuquerque to finalize plans for the symposium this summer in that enchanted Southwestern city. It should be an exciting conference in a delightful area of our country.

This past year, the AAW continued to grow, adding new members and chapters. Membership ended at just over 14,000, and the 301st chapter joined us in December. Along with this growth, your Board continues to look for ways to better serve members and local chapters. With that in mind, here are some recent and in-process initiatives that keep the AAW moving forward:

- Staff changes in the home office and the promotion of Mary Lacer to our Executive Director.
- Bringing a new *American Woodturner* editor, Betty Scarpino, on board who has creative ideas and also restructuring the journal's production in order to be more cost effective. We are preparing for expanding publication of *American Woodturner* from four to six issues per year, hopefully in 2010.
- Arranging cost-effective insurance for AAW members for medical, dental, and other insurance coverage.
- Implementing new software systems so that communications can be sent to every local chapter and each member, keeping everyone better informed. A new system to better serve the Professional Outreach Program members is under development.
- Planning for a special 25th AAW anniversary celebration in St. Paul in 2011, including a colorful and expansive book on the AAW and woodturning.
- Initiating new programs for helping local chapters with youth activities and education.

I truly believe we have much to be proud of in the AAW, and we can be appreciative of all that is offered and available. There is much more to be done, however, and we look to our members for their involvement, energy, and ideas. Take a look at the organization and committee structure on the AAW website (www.woodturner.org, AAW Info) to see if there is an area where you can focus your passion and experience and become involved. Then contact the lead person for that committee or program and offer your services. You can make a difference and the AAW can be better for it.

Bill

Bill Haskell
bill@woodturner.org

23rd Annual AAW National Symposium

Albuquerque • June 26-28, 2009

Albuquerque and New Mexico, which proudly proclaims itself "The Land of Enchantment," play hosts to AAW members seeking to be educated, entertained, and enchanted at the 23rd Annual AAW National Symposium in Albuquerque.

The complete symposium will feature 49 demonstrators, 168 rotations, a dozen more events targeted for professional/ studio turners, and Special Interest Night for penturning, segmented work, ornamental turning, and more.

Please join us at the Albuquerque Convention Center.

Garry Knox Bennett, California

- **Twirlings by a Chairmaker**
  Join Garry in a walkthrough of his Twirlings exhibit for discussion, questions, and answers.
- **Instant Gallery Critique**

Trent Bosch, Colorado

- **Vessels and Surfaces**
- **What Makes a Good Demonstration, Professionalism in Conveying the Message**
  Panel discussion.
- **Cool Tools**
  I am addicted to tools. I have searched far and wide for tools that allow me to create the desired effect in wood. Participants can expect to spend a lot of money on tools after this demonstration, learn lots of ways to sculpt wood, and be amazed by all the ways wood can be manipulated with cool tools.
- **Sunburst Platter**

Marilyn Campbell, Canada

- **Half-Moon Vessel Using Epoxy**
  In this demonstration, I'll show how to make a "split bowl" using epoxy resin to create the design. A slideshow overview of the process will clarify the technique and help you generate ideas. I'll cover the process of designing and drawing the pattern and demonstrate how to layup the blank with the resin components. I will include turning tips such as how to achieve an even wall thickness as well as piercing and texturing the finished piece. Stands and stand design will be discussed.
- **Get Creative with Epoxy**

Andrew Chen, Texas

- **Corian, an Alternative Material**
  Corian is a fascinating material but because it comes only in ½" thickness, one must glue it together to turn a vessel of any significant size. Corian behaves very differently from wood, and cutting and gluing it requires significantly different techniques from working with wood. This demonstration will cover the techniques and pitfalls of turning Corian.

continued

23rd Annual AAW National Symposium in Albuquerque

Nick Cook, Georgia

- **Turning Pepper Mills with Pizzazz**
  This session will show you how to design and create a peppermill. We will look at stock selection and glue-up for laminated mills. I will show the proper sequence for drilling the blank and how to chuck the blank for turning the mill. Sanding and finishing will also be discussed.
- **Turning for Profit**
- **Dynamic Plates and Platters**

Virginia Dotson, Arizona

- **Secrets of Laminated Woodturning**

This presentation will emphasize design. It will help participants create beautiful and exciting work.

- **Natural Perspectives**
  Participants will be encouraged, through images, to look more closely at things in the world around them to find inspiration for new work.
- **Weather Reports**

David Ellsworth, Pennsylvania

- **Open Forum Discussions**
  Panel discussion.
- **State of the Art of Woodturning**
  Panel discussion.

Jean-François Escoulen, France

- **Resident Artist**
  Jean-François will demonstrate his incredible woodturning techniques in a special area set aside for the resident artist. Throughout the symposium, attendees will have the opportunity to talk with Jean-François about his work and his woodturning techniques.

Charles Faucher, New Hampshire

- **Sideways: A Different Way to Segment**
  I will explain and demonstrate my technique of nesting segmented rings to produce unusual turned forms. I will narrate a PowerPoint slideshow that will show step by step how this is done. I will share jigs, partially assembled work, and finished pieces. This rotation will focus on works done on one center. I will turn an assembled work.
- **Sideways: Multi-Center, Multi-Axis**

J. Paul Fennell, Arizona

- **Seeing Your Way Toward Signature Work**
  I will discuss personal creative expression and inspirations, the creative process and personal growth, and understanding the language of expression.
- **After the Form**
  Learn how to create hollow vessels that become expressive. I will demonstrate how ideas can be incorporated into your work. We will talk about creating bodies of work in a recurring theme. Audience participation is encouraged.
- **Creating Hollow Vessels, Techniques**
- **Creating Hollow Vessels**

Barry Gross, Pennsylvania

- **Casting, Turning, and Finishing Acrylic Pen Blanks**

You will learn how to cast your own acrylic pen blanks using a clear liquid acrylic to coat the pen blanks, incorporating a number of different materials such as recycled beet caps, vintage cigar labels, Abalone pieces, and recycled watch parts. I will turn and finish an acrylic pen blank to demonstrate proper tool technique to show how to keep the acrylic from blowing apart. It will then be assembled into a one-of-a-kind fine writing instrument.

- **Segmented Pens from Exotic Wood**

Matthew Hill, Oklahoma

- **Lidded Boxes and the Art of Cutting and Shear Scraping**
  Put away the sandpaper (but don't throw it out). I will demonstrate all the steps involved in creating a small endgrain box. I will show how I use the skew chisel, the detail gouge, and shear scrapers to refine form and create crisp detail. For the inside of a box, a good round nose scraper is essential. I'll show some pieces that I have made, as well as demonstrate the use of endgrain cutting tools.
- **Dye Stains, Glazes, and Top Coats**
- **Changing the Surface**
  Surface decoration is one part skill, ten parts experimentation, and an almost unhealthy amount of patience. In this demonstration, I'll show some of the textures I've experimented with. I'll also demonstrate how I make my wood burning tips and at least 500 ways to develop patience.

Allen Hockenbery, Florida

- **Hands-on Class for Youth, Gavels**
  Participants will learn how to use spindle techniques to turn a gavel head and bore a mortise hole to accept the handles.

Sherry Hockenbery, Florida

- **Hands-on Class for Youth, Gavel Handles**
  Participants will learn how to use spindle techniques to turn a gavel handle with a tenon to fit the gavel heads.

Michael Hosaluk, Canada

- **Open Forum Discussions**
  Panel discussion.
- **Turning Thin/Sanding Wet**
  Learn how to turn madrone burl thin, using cutting tools. I will demonstrate the basics of shear scraping and show how to sand wood with the use of water.

Peter Hromek, Germany

- **Flower**
- **Spindle**
- **Capsula**

Learn how to endgrain hollow with a hook tool and a bowl gouge.

William Ray Hughes, Texas

- **Bagpipe Making, Methods, and Design**
  I will demonstrate the use of gun drills to bore long holes. Counter boring techniques, tools, jigs, and special turning techniques will be presented. I will discuss wind instrument design, especially as it applies to bagpipes.
- **Introduction to Hand Chasing Threads**

23rd Annual AAW National Symposium in Albuquerque

Youth Turning Program

The AAW will again offer woodturning instruction in Albuquerque to youth, ages ten through seventeen. Youth must be accompanied by a registered adult. Youth registration is free. Contact the AAW office at 651-484-9094 to register by May 15.

The youth turning room will feature twenty-five new turning stations. Participating youth will be eligible to win a complete turning station donated by our generous supporters: WHM Tool Group (JET midi-lathes on stands), Teknatool International (Nova Precision midi-chucks and dead cup drive centers), Crown Tools (basic tool sets), Vince's WoodNWonders (finishing supplies), and Woodcraft Supplies (face shields). Freight from Albuquerque will be the responsibility of the winners.

Separate youth display tables will be set up in the Instant Gallery.

Christian Barry and Gavin Lewis at last year's symposium in Richmond. Christian won a JET lathe in the drawing, but because he already had a lathe at home, he gave the JET lathe to his new friend, Gavin Lewis.

David Nittmann, Colorado

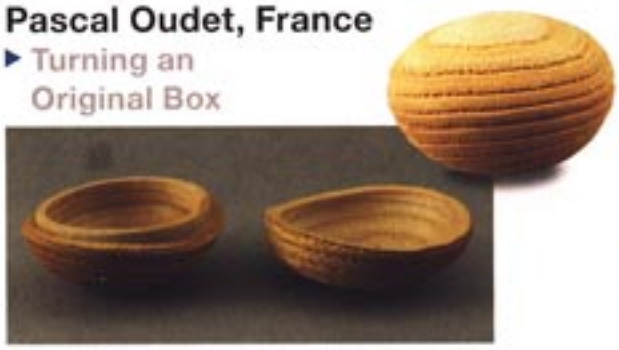
- Basket Illusion: The Cutting Technique

  Join me for a PowerPoint presentation of the entire process: wood selection, cutting, progression, burning detail, methods, design choices and inspiration, coloring the chosen design, and finishing the project.
- Basket Illusion: The Process and Inspiration
- Airbrush Basics
- Evolution of Signature Work

  This is a collaborative demonstration with Cindy Drozda.

Pascal Oudet, France

- Turning an Original Box



  I will show you an original technique to make almost invisible joints, following the growth rings of the wood. Sandblasting is normally used to emphasize the grain. I'll explain this technique and the equipment needed.
- Spherical Box Emerging from a Cube
- Spiky Creatures

Binh Pho, Illinois

- Ask Us Anything

  Panel discussion, moderator.

Chris Pytlik, Utah

- Signature Dye Stain

  Learn how to find your own voice with color. I will discuss the development of a signature dye stain technique for hollow forms, followed by a lacquering and buffing process that results in a high gloss finish. I will demonstrate my dyeing techniques by dyeing a hollow form.

Joe Ruminski, North Carolina

- Hands-on Class for Youth, Ball and Cup

  During this class, students will learn the basics of spindle turning in a safe, friendly environment. Safety and tool technique will be stressed. Instruction will be done in a step-by-step process. Every participant should leave with a completed project.
- Hands-on Class for Youth, Basic Bowls

Merryll Saylan, California

- Instant Gallery Critique
- POP Merit Award Recipient for 2009

  Special exhibit in the Instant Gallery of Merryll's work.

Betty Scarpino, Indiana

- What Makes a Good Demonstration, Professionalism in Conveying the Message

  Panel discussion, moderator.

June 26-28, 2009 / 49 demonstrators / 168 rotations

Mark Sfirri, Pennsylvania

- Spindle Basics
- Multi-Axis Candlestick
- Mother-in-Law Rolling Pin

This demonstration of between centers turning will focus on design and technical considerations for a functional, or not so functional, rolling pin. Basic cutting and shaping techniques will be demonstrated. Basic relationships with the Mother-in-Law will also be discussed.

Steve Sinner, Iowa

- High-Efficiency Deep Hollowing

I will demonstrate the complete process of turning a deep hollow vessel including controlling thickness, drying a turned green vessel, preparing the dry vessel for the second turning, and fast and accurate sanding methods.

- Thin, Pierced Goblets
- Surface Treatments

Jack Slentz, New Mexico

- Santa Fe Art Scene

Panel discussion, moderator.

Bill Smith

Bill Smith, Pennsylvania

- Basics of Open Segment Construction
- Design Ideas for Open Segment Vessels

This demonstration is a survey of advanced design ideas that can be incorporated in open segmented constructed vessels. I will include details of construction and show examples of results.

David Springett, United Kingdom

- Spheres and Turning Inside Them

Learn how to turn accurate spheres the easy way. I will cover marking out spheres and making chucks to help the turning a "harlequin" ball.

- Streptohedrons

- Six-Point Star in a Cube and Lattice Turning the Simple Way

Bill Tilson, Texas

- Flower Vessels

With today's environmental issues, I wanted to develop a method with which I could capture the maximum volume in a vessel using the minimal amount of wood. I will show the basic steps in creating a flower petal form and a stem to make a goblet and a bowl.

Kevin Wallace, California

- From Garage to Gallery: Strategies for a Career in Creative Woodturning

Panel discussion.

Michael Werner, Washington

- Crisp-It-Up! Better Detailed Turnings

Observe fundamentals to freshen and enhance your skills to help create better, crisper turnings. Tools, chucking methods, technique, problem solving, and detailing will be illustrated with spindle and faceplate turning a three-piece hors d'oeuvres dish with small off-center element. Tips and tricks combined with the right sequence of steps will produce precisely fitting parts.

- Go Off Center, Multi-Center Turning Techniques A–Z

continued

Accommodations

Hyatt Regency Albuquerque
330 Tijeras Northwest
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102
(800) 233-1234

The Hyatt Regency Albuquerque will host the AAW symposium. Room rates are $135 for a single/double.

Be sure to mention the AAW when you call for reservations at any of the hotels.

Alternative Hotels:

Doubletree Hotel Albuquerque
201 Marquette Avenue NW
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102
(505) 247-3344

Doubletree Hotel Albuquerque room rates are $139 for a single/double.

Plaza Inn Downtown Albuquerque
900 Medical Arts Avenue NE
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102
(505) 243-5693

Plaza Inn Downtown Albuquerque room rates are $99 for a single/double.

23rd Annual AAW National Symposium in Albuquerque

John Wessels, South Africa

- Woodturning in South Africa

  How South African woodturning has progressed and where it is today.
- Sheet Pewter Surface Enhancement
- Casting and Turning Pewter

Molly Winton, Washington

- Homemade Brands and Commercial Pyrography Pens

  Making unique, one-of-a-kind branding tips provides individualized styles of branding that cannot be achieved through the use of standard pen tips. This demonstration will show how brands are made using various materials, their application on turned vessels, and the use of commercial pens to enhance the surface of turned work.
- Mini Vessels with Carving

Andi Wolfe, Ohio

- Coloring and Painting Techniques for Woodturnings

I will demonstrate the use of art markers for applying translucent inks and acrylic paint techniques using a paintbrush. For some of my botanical motifs, I feature the grain of the wood as part of the design. Prismacolor markers highlight the patterns and chatoyance of the grain. Other design motifs feature the use of acrylic paints to achieve spectacular effects of iridescence or the buildup of paint to create an illusion of 3-D. I will discuss preparation of the wood surface and finishing protocols, as well as issues about archival qualities of art markers.

- Basics of Surface Enhancement

Photo courtesy of It's a Trip Albuquerque Convention and Visitor Bureau. Sandia Mountain Sunset Photo: Jay Blackwood

Ten great reasons to visit Albuquerque

1. Indian Pueblo Cultural Center
2. Albuquerque Balloon Park
3. Rio Grande Botanic Gardens and Aquarium
4. Albuquerque Old Town
5. Sandia Peak Aerial Tramway
6. Wheels Transportation Museum
7. Petroglyph National Monument
8. Turquoise Trail National Scenic Byway
9. Albuquerque Zoo
10. Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Reserve

More great places in New Mexico

- Chaco Canyon
- Georgia O'Keeffe Museum, Santa Fe
- Santa Fe historic sites and Old Town
- Gila Cliff Dwellings & National Forest
- Taos historic sites

Highlights

The Largest Woodturning Trade Show
You won't see a larger exhibit of woodturning equipment and supplies anywhere. Many of the major lathe manufacturers and specialty suppliers will be present. Bring an empty suitcase to carry home your purchases.

Resident Artist
Jean-François Escoulen will be the resident artist this year. Stop by to watch his amazing turning skills, view his wonderful work, and discuss his methods. Jean-François will be set up in a special area and will be working throughout the three-day conference.

Instant Gallery
Surround yourself with inspiring work created by attendees. More than 1,000 pieces will be on display. Excellence awards will be presented. This event is open to the public free of charge, so if you have friends in Albuquerque, urge them to check out AAW's Instant Gallery.

Spirit of the Southwest Exhibit
An annual AAW sponsored, juried exhibit will be on display. This year's theme is "Spirit of the Southwest," which challenges turners to capture the history, environment, flora, fauna, or various past and present cultures of the Southwest.

The Spindle
This year's theme for the Professional Outreach Program's (POP) exhibit is "the spindle". You will see on display 50-plus spindles, limited to no larger than 12" × 4" × 4", turned by invited members of the POP. All of the objects will be sold at auction.

EOG Auction
Join us Saturday evening for an auction of turned pieces. Proceeds from the auction benefit the AAW Educational Opportunity Grant (EOG) program.

Outstanding Panel Discussions
Check out the panel discussions, such as "Open Forum" with David Ellsworth, Michael Hosaluk, and Alain Mailland; "Thirty Years of Marketing" with Deborah and Jerry Kermode; and "State of the Art in Woodturning" with David Ellsworth and Terry Martin.

Friday SIN
Make plans to attend one of the special interest sessions (SIN) on Friday night. ■

POP News

The mission of the Professional Outreach Program is to promote a greater understanding of professionalism within the field of contemporary woodturning.

Merryll Saylan, *Salad Bowl Table,* 1988, Walnut, poplar, paint, 29" × 20"

2009 Merit Award Winner

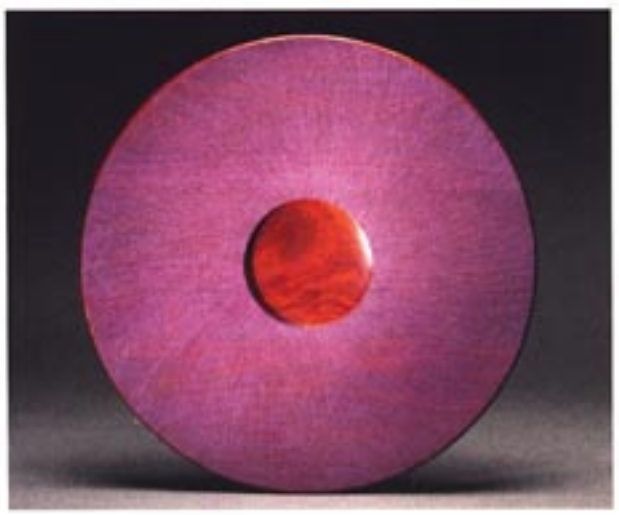
Merryll Saylan, California, is the POP committee's 2009 Merit Award recipient. As such, she will be a guest at the symposium in Albuquerque and a special display of her work will be in the Instant Gallery. Merryll has a long, established career as an artist and woodturner. Watch for a profile article about Merryll in the next issue of the journal.

Resident Artist Program

For the second year, there will be a special, innovative presentation by a major woodturner. Jean-François Escoulen from France will create his work in a continual process throughout the weekend of the symposium, allowing participants to view his techniques at any time, especially in between rotations. Some of his finished work will be part of the EOG auction Saturday evening.

"The Spindle," Exhibit and Auction

Following the success of the last two POP exhibitions, "Japanese Bowl: A Western Perspective" and "The Sphere," this year's theme, "the spindle", will be on exhibit at the Albuquerque symposium. Included is the work of more than fifty invited woodturners. Pieces will be on display Thursday, June 25 through Sunday, June 28. The exhibit will end with a live auction. Proceeds from these works of art help support future POP events, functions, and awards.



Merryll Saylan, *Birches Purpling,* 1990, Cherry, dye 20"

Instant Gallery Awards

The POP committee has allotted $7,000–$10,000 for awards at this year's symposium Instant Gallery. We will be purchasing up to three pieces for AAW's permanent collection as well as awarding six excellence awards of $500 each; two collegian awards of $300 each; and two youth awards of $300 each. Funds for these awards were generated from POP exhibit auctions and from a percentage of the EOG auction.

POP Fellowship Grant

Do you have an idea you would like to pursue with your woodturning and need the funds to make it happen? Check out the POP Fellowship Grants. Grants will be awarded in 2010 and 2012. Details and application requirements can be found in the POP section of the AAW website. To apply, download and print the application form in the community section of the AAW website. Mail the completed form, along with supporting materials to the POP committee chair (as stated on the form). *Packets for 2010 must be postmarked by June 1, 2009.* No late proposals will be considered. All applicants must be current AAW members to be eligible.

Seeking Proposals

The POP committee is always interested in your input, especially for proposals for future symposium presentations that relate to the growth of professionalism in woodturning. Proposals need not be in great detail, simply send your idea or topic to Jacques Vesery at jvesery@tidewater.net. ■

POP committee members:
Trent Bosch, Barbara Crockett, David Ellsworth, J. Paul Fennell, Jerry Kermode, Bonnie Klein, Binh Pho, Betty Scarpino, and Jacques Vesery, chair.

Educational Opportunity Grant

Eighth Graders Introduced to Woodturning

Linda VanGehuchten turning one of the many bowls she provided for students to decorate.

Last spring, the Society for Contemporary Craft (SCC) provided an introduction to woodturning for eighth graders at South Brook Middle School in Pittsburgh. Through the Museum School Partnership, Linda VanGehuchten, board member of the AAW, helped students create pens and decorate wood bowls. This project was funded, in part, through an Educational Opportunity Grant by the AAW.

For most of the students, this was their first introduction to the lathe and its safe use. VanGehuchten provided every student with a pre-turned bowl that they burned, textured, and painted using their own designs. The themes that emerged reflected the wide range of student interests and individual personalities.

Students also worked one-on-one on the lathe with Linda and William Hays, a volunteer from Turners Anonymous, the Pittsburgh chapter of AAW, to create a pen. "Turning appeals to students because they get instant results. If they do the wrong thing, they know immediately," notes VanGehuchten.

The students were grateful for this introduction to woodturning. "I loved that we got the opportunity to sculpt and burn wood to our own creative eye. A chance like this doesn't come that often," said one student.

"Linda provided a hands-on experience that I could have never provided for my students. Her vast knowledge, experience, and demeanor made my students excited and comfortable to turn a wooden pen. Students made connections to family members who are craftsmen and to an everyday material made into a piece of art that they carried proudly with them," said art teacher Meghan Mager.

One of the goals of the Museum School Partnership is to help students learn how craft relates to other curriculum. Math teacher Rose Schmidt said, "We used the wooden bowls in class to celebrate Pi Day, March 14 (3.14), by using the ratio of the circumference of their bowl and to the diameter."

The enthusiasm and leadership provided by Mager was an important factor in the success of this partnership. "Working with Meghan was great. Her students were engaged in the projects and allowed to create freely. She complimented students for their good ideas," Linda says.

"I couldn't have been more pleased with Linda's residency at South Brook. The entire school was excited about what was going on, and the art room seemed to crackle with energy," said Laura Rundell, Education Director for SCC.

SCC was founded by Elizabeth R. Raphael in 1971 as the Store for Arts and Crafts and People Made Things. In 1979, the Store became the Society for Arts in Crafts. The organization adopted the name Society for Contemporary Craft in 1986, and since then, SCC has organized over 200 exhibitions. It provides outreach programs in the western Pennsylvania region and offers classes in the Studio, led by regionally and nationally recognized teaching artists. ■

For more information on the Museum School Partnership, please contact Laura Rundell at thestudio@contemporarycraft.org.

Woodturning at a County Fair

Robert Schweitzer

The Badger Woodturners Chapter of the AAW in Madison, Wisconsin, has had the greatest time being part of the many events offered at the Jefferson County Fair for the past four years. We demonstrated woodturning using two JET minilathes and a grinder obtained through the AAW, making tops, pens, small bowls, goblets, and even a sock darner.

At our chapter meetings, we easily fill up a sign-up sheet for all the available days and times to turn at the fair. Everyone involved says, "It is so enjoyable. I have lots of fun and everyone is very interested. Kids of all ages color with markers and even try some turning. What a refreshing experience!" This past year, the lathes were going from 10 AM until 9 PM because there were so many children, youth, and adults putting a tool onto wood!

Our woodturning at the fair started at a Badger Woodturners meeting when the conversation changed to, "How can we get youth interested in turning?" It was my wife, Sharon, who suggested, "Why don't you do woodturning at the fair?"

Our activity is included in the publicity that the fair produces. I supply some photos and a short article and they do the rest. We have free passes to enter the fairgrounds. And, of course, there is food everywhere and wonderful exhibits to check out while taking a break.

I find it helpful to have turned items and turning magazines on display. Taking time to "talk woodturning" with people who stop can lead to some very interesting conversations. People may have a lathe, have free wood available to share, or they are turners and want to learn but haven't had the time yet.

We have had children as young as seven step up on our riser box and smile as the wood shavings fly! Often, adults remember doing some lathe project in high school. When people see how much we love the hobby, they are open to giving it a try.

If your local chapter decides to become involved with a county fair, you will most likely have to explain what you mean by "woodturning." Be sure to say that you are volunteers and all you need is a little space and a power outlet. Once you get there and shavings start flying, the kids will be there asking, "What are you doing? That looks like fun! Will you make something? How much does it cost? (It's free!) Can I try it?"

It is hard to turn off the lathe at the end of the day. Even though we are a bit tired, we say, "Come back tomorrow and we'll turn some more!" It is absolutely amazing how much wood we use during five days of turning.

The majority of the turning takes 2" × 2" stock, 6" to 10" long to make simple finger tops. After a little sanding, each child selects marker pens and decorates their top while the lathe spins slowly. After parting off, all tops need to pass the trial spin test to become official! We have made goblets for women, a gearshift knob for a Mustang, and spindle-turned pens, predrilled to accept the filler pulled from a plastic tube pen. Small bowls bring big smiles. We use various friction finishes that are fast drying.

As a result of the interest generated at the fair, we have turning sessions scheduled in the local high school woodshop. Adults are attending evening sessions and they use one of the chapter's minilathes and one lathe that the high school has available. Soon we will be able to welcome younger turners.

Just think, if those of us who started turning in our fifties (or even later) had started when we were children or teenagers, our abilities would be enhanced beyond our imagination!

Go to the fair and take your lathe with you! ■

Robert Schweitzer is a member of Badger Woodturners, Madison, Wisconsin.

John Nicholson of Badger Woodturners demonstrates woodturning at the county fair.

Turn Up and Have Fun

Steve Butler

I love turning. I don't know much about it other than how to turn a basic spindle for a table leg, but I love it. I love the community woodturners have formed. I'm a studio furniture maker—a flat worker. I'm active in the field, I exhibit my work regularly, I go to most of the furniture conferences, and I occasionally teach at other craft schools. I am currently the department head of the wood studio at Peters Valley Craft Center, and as such, I was instrumental in setting up a woodturning program at this school.

It is by teaching at other craft schools, such as Arrowmont School for Arts and Crafts, that I first became aware of just how tight and close the turning community is, much greater than is true of the furniture making community. Or, at least it's different. I wanted to bring this feeling of community and enthusiasm back to Peters Valley.

Like many schools, mine suffers from government cutbacks to arts organizations and relies heavily on grants and donations from outside sources and donors. How in the world did I pull off setting up a new facility dedicated to woodturning?

Let me go back in time: In the summer of 2006, I had just moved from Worcester, Massachusetts, where I had spent the last year as department head of the wood studio at the Worcester Center for Crafts and moved to Layton, New Jersey, to work at Peters Valley. Both craft centers are nonprofit organizations specializing in multimedia craft education. The Worcester Center for Crafts is all under one roof and located in a once-thriving industrial part of Massachusetts. Peters Valley is situated in the serene Delaware Water Gap Recreation area with its campus spread over many miles. We offer workshops in many media from mid-May to mid-September.

In 2006, when I moved into my home at Peters Valley, I literally dropped the boxes onto the floor, and proceeded to teach the first workshop of the season. A month later, I drove to Gatlinburg, Tennessee, to teach a weeklong woodworking class at Arrowmont. The facilities at Arrowmont are excellent. The woodworking studio and the woodturning studio are in the same building next to each other, separated by a gallery space. This was my first visit to Arrowmont; I was made to feel very welcomed.

During my stay there, I met quite a few people taking various workshops. All were excited at what they were learning, and most couldn't wait to get back into the studios, especially the woodturners. Long after each day's class had ended, I noticed that the students in the turning class would still be there practicing some technique they had learned only a few hours earlier or trying something new. There was a lot of infectious energy coming from the studio: if it's fun, it's infectious, and I caught it.

What a great community. I must admit I was a little jealous. Michael Mocho, a wood artist who hails from New Mexico, was the turning instructor that week, and Graeme Priddle was an assistant. Graeme had taught the week prior and stuck around the studio an extra week to help out. No wonder there was so much fun and energy coming out of the studio with those two at the helm.

In the evenings, most instructors would convene on the porch of the faculty house and talk about the day's events or life in general, sharing a glass or two of their favorite beverage. It was during this time that I remembered being in Worcester, Massachusetts, remembering how well the adult education woodturning classes did compared to all the others. When all other classes wouldn't fill, the woodturning always seem to. Turning is not only fun but is also good business.

So, here I was, only a month and a half into my new position as department head of the Peters Valley wood studio, and I'm wondering what I can do to increase my enrollment for the next season. That's it! I'll start woodturning at the Valley. It seemed easy enough. All I needed was to get some lathes and hire a teacher. It was then that I said to Graeme, "Why don't you

Looking towards the wood studio at Peters Valley Craft Center, Layton, New Jersey.

teach a workshop at Peters Valley next summer?"

We talked about it for a bit, shook hands, and it was a done deal. I taught my class, drove back to New Jersey and continued on with my duties for the rest of the season. Late fall I got an email from Graeme: "Gidday Steve, how are ya mate? Listen—I just realized you hired me to teach a turning class but you don't have any lathes. Oh well, we'll make it work." Graeme was right, I had hired him to teach a turning class, and I didn't even have lathes. I don't know if I was confidant, cocky, or crazy when I hired him, but I got caught up in the energy, and it hasn't stopped since.

Inside the woodworking studio at Peters Valley Craft Center.

In 2007, six JET minilathes were generously donated and we borrowed two in order to make Graeme's class run. His class filled up the first week registration opened: a great complement to Graeme and also a testament to the popularity of woodturning. Graeme taught a five-day workshop that season at Peters Valley, and each evening the studio was full of very energetic students eager to practice what they had just been taught, even after being in class all day. Again, the sense of community I felt and saw was terrific, each student helping and encouraging the other, creating an infectious, fun energy and a great learning environment. Turners seem eager to share what they know and are quick to jump in and help each other.

The buzz at Peters Valley about turning was great. The class was a big success and generated a lot of interest. I couldn't wait for the following season.

In the fall of 2007, Peters Valley was the recipient of a generous donation of equipment which included nine new Oneway lathes and accessories. It has been my vision to create a separate woodturning center at Peters Valley, operating on its own, offering a full curriculum of workshops. This was a great start.

With programming for summer 2008 underway, I divided the workshops evenly with half woodworking and half woodturning, testing the waters. Guess what? I had cancellations in a few woodworking classes but only one in the woodturning classes. I keep coming back to the community surrounding woodturning, and I credit this community with filling my classes up.

In the spring of 2008, I started a local chapter of the AAW, Watergap Woodturners. We had our first meeting in April. We meet the first Wednesday of each month at the wood studio at Peters Valley Craft Center. I joined the AAW myself, even though I'm not much of a turner. I used the resource directory to get in touch with members from New Jersey to spread the word about our new club. The club is already thriving because turning is popular, and there wasn't another group close to this area of northwest New Jersey.

As of the time I'm writing this article, we are six months old and have a dues-paying membership of twenty. Many of these members took classes over the summer and helped to support the new curriculum at the Valley. I must admit, I'm hooked. I look forward to each meeting, the show-and-tell session, the demos, the camaraderie. This energy is what first engaged me at Arrowmont and still engages me now. It's all about the lure of woodturning and the sense of community it creates. I can't wait for next season, to see old friends and make new ones. ■

A big thanks to Graeme for letting me borrow his saying for the title of this article.

Steve Butler, Wood Studio Department Head, Peters Valley Craft Center.

Announcements

Fleur Bresler was presented with the first Special Lifetime Achievement Award for Excellence in the Arts by the Arts and Humanities Council. The award was presented to Fleur on October 20, 2008, by Isiah Leggett, Montgomery County Executive at the Strathmore Music Center. Chairman Leggett said, "This is the most prestigious honor conferred on a patron of the arts and humanities."

David Ellsworth has been elected the 2009 recipient of the James A. Renwick Alliance Master of the Medium award for wood. The award is given out every other year in all media by a vote of the members of the James A. Renwick Alliance. Previous winners in wood are Wendell Castle, John Cederquist, Judy McKie, Sam Maloof, Ed Moulthrop, and Bob Stocksdale. The ceremony for the awards will be held in April 2009 in Washington, DC.

Peter Hromek from Germany has been awarded the Hessian Design Award for his turned sculpture. This award is given every second year. Artists are invited to enter the competition organized by the Craft Chamber of Hessia, one of Germany's territories.

Jacques Vesery has been awarded First Place in sculpture in *Art Buzz, The 2009 Collection*, a juried annual competition and publication. His work will be featured in this hardcover, coffee table book. For more information visit www.artbuzz.org. Jacques has also been juried into "Celebrate the Healing Power of Art 2008" exhibition at Manhattan Arts International, December 7, 2008 through March 31, 2009, and was awarded First Place. For more information visit www.manhattanarts.com. ■

New Gallery for Woodturning Debuts at SOFA

The rakovaBRECKERgallery, Dania Beach, Florida, made its debut at the Sculpture Objects & Functional Art (SOFA) exhibit this past November in Chicago with a major exhibit titled "Icons: A Tribute to Mel Lindquist".

In the introduction to the amazing catalog that accompanied the exhibit, gallery founder and owner, Donald Brecker, says, "We have chosen to present this unique moment in wood art as a tribute to Mel, his life and his work." Along with the work of Mel Lindquist, six other wood sculptors were included in the exhibit: Mark Lindquist, David Ellsworth, Giles Gilson, Stoney Lamar, Howard Werner, and Gary Stevens.

Catalog essayist, Terry Martin, writes, "Although this is the first time the seven artists in this exhibition have all been shown together, they have long been connected in many ways. In particular, for many years they have been linked by the strongest of bonds: friendship and respect. They were all born into times of change and embraced their opportunities to create new ways of seeing wood and the art that can be made from it. These artists are, in every way, icons of their field." ■

For more information on this exhibit and a copy of the catalog visit www.rakovabreckergallery.com.

Calendar of Events

Summer Calendar Deadline: March 31

Send information to editorscarpino@gmail.com

California

March 14–15, The Contemporary Crafts Market, Festival Pavilion at the historic Fort Mason Center, San Francisco. Showcasing over 230 of the nation's finest artists and their distinctive works. For more information call 415-995-4925 or visit www.CraftSource.org.

Hawaii

March 6–27, Eleventh Annual Big Island Woodturners Woodturning show at the Wailoa Center in Hilo. Demonstrations every Saturday. For information contact Mark Stebbins at 808-982-9974 or markstebbins@hawaiiantel.net or Wailoa Center at 808-933-0416.

Idaho

May 2–3, Idaho Artistry in Wood Show, Brown's Gallery, 1022 Main St., Boise. Registration and set up Friday, May 1, 12–5 PM. Fees: $3 per piece in advance, $4 on setup day. Admission: $3, under 16 free. Judged competition, demonstrations, provision for sales. Contact Doug Rose, Idaho Woodcarvers Guild, roseboise@yahoo.com.

Minnesota

January 16–March 29, St. Paul, "Restful Places: Cremation Urns and Objects," American Association of Woodturners Gallery of Wood Art, Landmark Center, 75 W. 5th. For more information visit www.galleryofwoodart.org.

Photo: Tib Shaw

Jon Sauer,
Shagreen Box, 2009,
African blackwood, tagua nut, shagreen (stingray skin),
4" × 2½"

New Hampshire

May 23, The Sixth New England Woodturning Symposium at Pinkerton Academy in Derry, NH. Demonstrators include: Allan Lacer, Bob Rosand, Al Stirt, Beth Ireland, Peter Bloch, Mark St. Leger, and JoHannes Michelson. Special events include a Youth Symposium on May 22. For more information contact Bob DeAngelis at 603-456-6242 or rdeangelis@tds.net.

North Carolina

March 20–May 11, Grovewood Gallery, Asheville, "Turning to the Future: A Fresh Look at Wood Art." Juried exhibition sponsored by the AAW. For more information visit www.grovewood.com.

April 2–5, Asheville, Collectors of Wood Art Forum. Keynote speakers, presentations by local wood artists, first Friday night Art Walk, Saturday evening banquet, studio tours. Registration information at www.collectorsofwoodart.org or admin1.cwa@gmail.com.

October 23–25, Greensboro, NC Woodturning Symposium. Demonstrators include Allan Batty, Stewart Batty, Jimmy Clewes, Ray Key, Steward Mortimer, Chris Ramsey, Nick Cook, and many more regional and local demonstrators. Vendor signups happening now. For more information contact lbbunn3@hotmail.com or visit www.northcarolinawoodturning.com.

New York

March 28, 29 NWA Woodworkers Showcase 2009 and Totally Turning, Saratoga Springs City Center, 522 Broadway, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866. 10 AM to 5 PM daily.

Professional guests include Molly Winton, Adam Cerubini, and William Edwards. For more information visit www.nwawoodworkingshow.org or www.totallyturning.com.

Ohio

October 16–18, "Turning 2009" biennial symposium of the Ohio Valley Woodturners Guild. This sixth annual symposium features turners David Ellsworth, Jean-François Escoulen, Bonnie Klein, Alan Lacer, Jon Magill, Stuart Mortimer, Jennifer Shirley, and Jacques Vesery, plus other local guest demonstrators. For more information visit www.ovwg.org or contact Pete Kekel at 859-525-4092, pkekl@fuse.net.

Pennsylvania

March 6–April 11, "Selections from the Collection," Wood Turning Center, 501 Vine Street, Philadelphia. For information visit www.woodturningcenter.org.

Wisconsin

Harry Nohr Woodturners, 300th chartered chapter of the AAW, just formed with twenty members. For more information contact Clyde Holverson, holversc@uwplatt.edu.

Utah

May 14–16, Provo, 30th Annual Utah Woodturning Symposium. Overseas presenters include Glenn Lucas, Ireland; Hans Weissflog, Germany; Brian McEvoy, Canada; Guilio Marcolongo and Richard Raffan, Australia; along with Dale Nish, Mike Mahoney, David Nittmann and Cindy Drozda and many other world-class turners. For more information visit www.utahwoodturning.com. ■

Wood and Color
Some History

Arthur Mason

Louise Hibbert,
Radiolarian Vessel VII, 2004,
English sycamore, silver, texture paste,
acrylic ink, 2½" × 6"

The subtitle of this piece might well be "From Prestini to Binh Pho." When I heard that the Collectors of Wood Art was sponsoring a curated exhibit at SOFA (Sculpture Objects & Functional Art) Chicago, titled "The Perfect Marriage: Wood and Color," my first thought was, "they must be newlyweds." That may be an overstatement, but it has been a long and somewhat reluctant courtship. With this exhibit, the marriage may prove to be a fruitful one.

When I discussed this article with Albert LeCoff, executive director of the Wood Turning Center (WTC), we both regarded the adding of color to wood as a fairly recent phenomenon. For example, in Albert's landmark show, "North American Turned Objects," ▸

1981, Merryll Saylan's *Jelly Doughnut* was the only work he could recall that contained added color.

How did we evolve from the point where wood artists' occasional early flirtation with color ripened into something called "marriage"? This exhibit makes a case for color in the woodturning world, and, as such, is stimulating thought and debate among artists, curators, and collectors as to the place of color in the field of woodturning.

This exhibit contained the work of twenty-three artists, representing the fields of furniture, woodturning, and sculpture; however, my remarks are addressed solely to the *turned-object* component of the show. In the furniture world, color has long been a staple.

My wife, Jane, and I began our wood art collection in 1986 when we saw the Jacobson Collection exhibit, "Art of the Turned Wood Bowl." Of the twenty-one artists represented, Giles Gilson was the only artist who used color, and despite the exquisite quality of his work, he had few followers. In the early years, we rarely encountered work with color and even more rarely acquired one. There were exciting exceptions: Saylan's *Jelly Doughnut* and her vegetable-dyed plates, Hap Sakwa's *De Chirico's Garden* and his mosaic of Madonna, several works of Giles Gilson, a trio from David Ellsworth's Solstice series, Bonnie Klein's tiny miracles, work by Steven Hogbin, and finally the exciting streaking of a Mark Lindquist tall trunk.

The basic reason for the slow development of adding color to wood was that we, along with most of the artists, curators, and collectors of the time, were, and still are, intrigued with wood as a material. Wood brings its own color: pink ivory, purple heart,

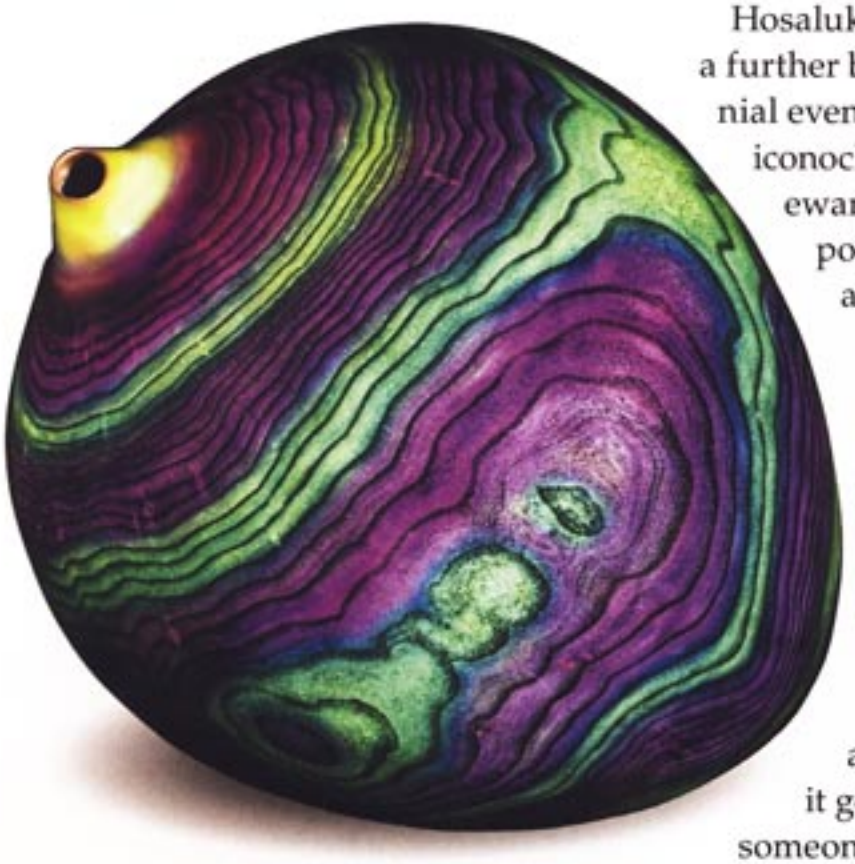
Merryll Saylan, *Jelly Doughnut*, 1979, Poplar, cast polyester resin, Collection of the Mint Museum of Art

ebony, wenge, bubinga, cocobolo. The brilliant effects of spalting and red fungus were vividly exploited by the reigning masters of that early period: David Ellsworth, the Lindquists, the Moulthrops, Bill Hunter, Bruce Mitchell, Michelle Holzapfel, Ron Kent, Todd Hoyer, Michael Peterson, and others. The swirl of figuring, markings, imperfections, bark inclusions, rough texturing, and tactile eccentricities are so rewarding to the viewer that adding color seems to be sacrilege.

Giles Gilson was a delightful exception. As noted by Glenn Adamson in his essay in *Wood Turning in North America Since 1930*, Gilson had, "little respect for the inherent characteristics of the wood so prized by other innovative turners . . . and he clearly enjoyed the indignant attention his work received." Adamson notes in the same essay that Saylan had taken the "shock value out of color." If Giles was the patron saint of color in the wood world, then Merryll was its patroness. Their contributions were vital.

I define color to be something added to the wood such as paint, dye, lacquer, gold and silver leaf, and other foreign substances. The broader chromatic standard, adopted by Adamson, includes laminated, segmented, and constructed work that uses contrasting woods. These polychromatic assemblages date back to the 1970s, led by Rude Osolnik, Steven Hogbin, Michael Shuler, Michael Mode, Clay Foster, Virginia Dotson, Addie Draper, and Bud Latven. Nevertheless, this polychromatic work still featured natural wood. Black and white coloring produced by burning or bleaching is an in-between category that grew rapidly after the ▸

Giles Gilson, *Fantasy Unleashed*, 2004, Basswood, lacquer, aluminum, 8" × 15"



Donald Derry, *American Chopper*, 2008, Elm, pigment, dye, lacquer, 22" × 24"

"International Turned Object Show" (ITOS) in 1988.

The ITOS in 1988, a major exhibit organized by the WTC, marked a turning point in the appearance of color. In ITOS, almost a quarter of the ninety-eight artists included work with paint or dye; color came of age with this show. Although still dominated by the work of old masters and soon-to-be masters who worked exclusively in natural wood, color was out of the closet. The woodturning movement was more open, not just to color, but to alabaster, cement, gold, silver, and any other material. Artists were bleaching, dying, lacquering, burning, and painting.

Michael Hosaluk and Emma Lake

Michael Hosaluk describes the impact of the ITOS in his superb book, *Scratching the Surface* (Guild, 2002). He says, "painted turned wood was here to stay." Not everybody was so enthused; Hosaluk quotes a critic for *American Craft* magazine as describing one of the pieces as, "painted beyond redemption." But there was no turning back.

Hosaluk gave the color movement a further boost by sponsoring a biennial event known as Emma Lake, an iconoclastic retreat in Saskatchewan, Canada, attended by a potpourri of international artists, aspiring and arrived, uninhibited, and eager to question existing standards. The world of collaboration exploded here: Put a piece down for an instant and it gets grabbed by someone else, taken to the Emma paint shop and covered with paint. It was in this manner that Gordon Peteran made his famous red-leather-wrapped piece in 1998, complete with dangling strings.

Emma Lake made it clear to me that color was not for everyone. The training, skills, and tastes in art and design that made a superb turner or sculptor were not necessarily the same as those required for multichromatic work. Use of color introduced a new element of risk. Does color enhance or detract from the beauty and artistry of the piece?

WTC's Challenge Shows

The WTC advanced the color movement in a series of shows, "Challenges III, IV, V, and VI," and "Curator's Focus," all of which increased attention to the use of color. Nevertheless, the dominant theme remained wood in its natural state. The 2001 landmark show, produced by the WTC and the Yale University Gallery of Art, "Wood Turning in North America Since 1930," was a retrospective of the vision and history of woodturning. The statistics

Mark Lindquist, *Hompashiki II (Ichiboku Series)*, 1995, Cherry, polychrome, steel, 58" × 28"

Michael Hosaluk, *Bowl of Strange Fruit*, 2007, Wood, paint, hair, 9" × 30" × 7"

Photo: Trent Watts

are revealing. It displayed the work of sixty-nine artists of whom no more than fifteen used any form of color in their work, and in most cases color was not central to their work.

"Challenge VII," which opened at the Wood Turning Center in 2008, provides a glimpse into some new approaches to the field of wood art. But the use of paint on wood is limited to only three artists. By contrast, the work of Michael Brolly, in his wonderful plate series, shows what can be done by the shading of natural wood to provide dramatic effects without the use of added color.

Since 2001, there has been an explosive growth in the successful use of color with wood. This Collectors of Wood Art (CWA) show, curated by Paul Richelson, Chief Curator for the Mobile Museum of Art, highlights the wide range of opportunities for the use of color. Out of the historical and classical line of the wood movement came Binh Pho. He studied with Frank Sudol, a devoted colorist. Binh's work comes from his own inner vision and his Vietnamese culture. He is unique in this exhibit, in that his world is color and wood is merely his medium.

Three old masters of the turning movement are included: David Ellsworth, Giles Gilson, and Mark Lindquist. It is good to see David's Solstice series back on display. His color sense is superb with a restrained and nuanced use of paint that never lets viewers forget that he is working with wood. Giles's emotional masterpiece uses rich, vibrant coloring that exploits the sinewy shape and texture of the wood. Mark's *Hompashiki II* is an object that could still be growing in the forest, yet it becomes lyrical with the narrow, sensuous, tinted lines moving stealthily and erratically up and around the trunk.

Included with these three masters are other artists. Louise Hibbert's delicately dot-painted objects are painterly, elegant, and a joy. Don Derry has always been a frank and unapologetic believer in the place of color with wood, and he lets us know about it with glossy exuberance. Jacques Vesery combines color with wood in a way that brings out the beauty of ▸

Roger Bennett,
Bowl, 2008,
Colored sycamore, inlaid silver,
1¾" × 9¾"

Binh Pho, *Realm of Dream*, 2007,
Box elder, acrylic paint, gold leaf, dye, 14" × 7½"
Collection of Mint Museum of Art

Photo: David Peters

David Ellsworth,
Nelaq II, 1991, Ash, paint, 11"

the wood. Roger Bennett uses color to show his feelings, such as the inspiring look of a starry sky.

There is no question that color can be a valuable design feature in wood art and that it can enhance the beauty and appeal of the work. But it also can diminish the pleasing effects of the natural features of wood. An artist's decision to use color results from balancing these considerations, as well as from his or her ability to use color to an artistic advantage. ■

I thank my wife, Jane, not just for her editing, but for providing me an artist's perception to the field. I also thank Albert LeCoff for sharing his historical perspectives.

To obtain a catalog of this exhibit, contact the Collectors of Wood Art at admin1.CWA@gmail.com.

A Perfect Marriage Wood and Color

Terry Martin

Jake Antonelli,
Green Cup, 2008,
Poplar, cashew paint,
3½" × 3½" × 2¾"

Photo: John Carlano

On the weekend of November 7–9, 2008, the prestigious annual SOFA (Sculpture Objects & Functional Art) fair was held at Navy Pier in downtown Chicago. Among the hundreds of offerings was an exhibition commissioned by Collectors of Wood Art (CWA). CWA's charter commits it to the "development and appreciation of studio wood art (including turned objects, sculpture, and furniture) among collectors, artists, educators, art critics, galleries, museums, and the general public." The exhibition they sponsored was "A Perfect Marriage: Wood and Color." The curator, Paul W. Richelson of the Mobile Museum of Art, states in his introduction to the catalog that the "work in this exhibition has been selected because, whether it is a sculptural object or an example of functional furniture, color is the all important expressive feature of the piece."

I found much to like among the pieces in this show. The rich colors of Craig Nutt's carved wooden loveseat, *Burning*, drew me from far away, and I was not alone as people gathered and commented. It was flanked by two chairs that also drew a lot of attention: Jay Stanger's *Further Into* and Tommy Simpson's *Cheek to Cheek*. Each of these pieces was a lesson in how to playfully stretch design and how to catch ▸

Craig Nutt, *Burning*, 2002, Wood, oil paint, lacquer, flame woven chenille with discharged fabric by Janet Taylor, 46" × 57" × 31"

Photo: John Lucas

the buyer's eye. I was also delighted to see a few pieces by artists I had not seen before, such as the charming small bowl by Jake Antonelli called *Green Cup*. It was a simple form, beautifully colored and executed with delicate precision.

For those more interested in turning, the obviously turned work included Irishman Roger Bennett's *Bowl*, a piece as unpretentious as its title, delightfully decorated with hundreds of finely inlaid dots of silver wire. There were other pieces that still rely on the turning process, even if the turning was subsequently overwhelmed by other work. They included Binh Pho's *Realm of Dream*, Giles Gilson's *Fantasy Unleashed*, and David Nittmann's *Nature Heals All Wounds*. Today, however, we often have to play detective if we are to pick the turned pieces in an exhibition of wood art. I like that, as turning is, after all, just a process. The creativity shown in its application is what has distinguished modern turning.

Although I liked many pieces in the show, I was left with some questions about how it was put together and its supposed context. Such questions are important as reviews that attempt to please everybody leave those who don't know the difference thinking everything must be marvelous, even if the reason why it is so eludes them. Those who do know better simply have it confirmed that standards remain low.

After reading what CWA's charter commits them to, we might expect a wide range of sculptural work, furniture, and turning-based pieces, but

SOFA visitor examining Tommy Simpson's chair, *Cheek to Cheek*

Photo: John McFaddin

CWA's exhibit at SOFA, *A Perfect Marriage: Wood and Color*

in fact, turned work dominated the show. The catalog essay was written by Arthur Mason, an influential CWA member and long-time collector who has concentrated on turned wood. The essay is a one-sided celebration of woodturning and it left me wondering how those artists who submitted non-turned work must have felt when they read it.

I was perplexed by the inclusion of some of the naturally "wood-colored" work or bleached pieces, such as Michael Mode's *Conjunction Ascending* or Christian Burchard's *Torso in Motion*. In a show supposedly dedicated to color I am not convinced by the curator's rationale that some of the artists "exploit the 'natural' aspects of wood." While wood does "bring its own color," as Arthur Mason states in his essay, I suspect almost everybody would understand that a "perfect marriage" of wood and color means *added* color.

Sadly, the catalog did not support the exhibition as it should have. Apart from patchy information imparted in the two essays, there is no further biographical information given about the artists. Who are they and why were they selected? Furthermore, with a show that is focused on color, it seems self-evident that the catalog should reflect the qualities of color that led the pieces to be chosen. Unfortunately, this catalog was so badly printed that some of the pieces were about as colorful as mud. Wendy Maruyama's subtly colored and fascinating autobiographical sculpture looked like a featureless block in the catalog. The photographs that *did* show color were so unlike the original colors that in some cases they looked like different pieces. I know it was not the photographs themselves, as I have seen many of these photos before. I understand that budget restraints are severe in these times, but this is so fundamental to the notion of an exhibition on color that I have to give the catalog a thumbs down.

I also find it surprising that the curator, and by association CWA, did not cast a wider net to find artists. Fifteen out of the twenty-three artists in the show were linked to del Mano Gallery. I know that del Mano does represent many wood artists, but ▸

CWA would fulfill its goals better by supporting diversification and an expansion of opportunity, which means more galleries and different artists. It should benefit collectors and artists alike.

CWA claims one of its goals is the advancement of "scholarship in the field of studio wood art." This sounds good, but one has to doubt the ability of an organization to further scholarship when their own website has the year they were founded as 1987, when

Detail

Detail

Wendy Maruyama,
Kanzashi Series Tall Comb (Red Tines), 2008,
Polychromed wood,
mixed media,
60" × 12" × 2"

Photos: Jared Nelson

in fact it was formed some ten years later. It was probably a typographical error, but it has been left uncorrected for some time and getting such simple facts right is fundamental to good scholarship.

Arthur Mason has won respect as a collector and patron of the wood art field, and he is a valued friend of mine, but I disagree with much of what he presents as history. In his essay, "Wood and Color—Some History," he repeats many of the myths that have been unquestioningly accepted in the American turning scene. In fairness, this may be due to the input of Albert LeCoff who Arthur acknowledges for his "historical perspectives."

Mason evokes the name of Prestini as the progenitor of studio turning, but this is just bad history. It is sometimes acknowledged that Prestini was influenced by the Bauhaus, but it is never mentioned that much of his work was similar to conventional German turning and that examples of work almost identical to his can be found in German publications that predate Prestini's work by decades. Even though a few American scholars, such as Edward S. Cooke Jr., have pointed out that his work could be described as the first of its kind in *American* studio turning, this has been taken by most to mean that it was unique – the first anywhere. This is just not true and it needs to be acknowledged that the development of woodturning has been a continuum.

Mason's essay gives the impression that color was not much used on wood before Giles Gilson and that it was the new generation of turners who were innovative enough to explore it. This idea has been around so long in the wood art field that it is often unquestioningly repeated. Although Gilson did outrage many of the *new* generation in the turning field with his use of glossy automotive lacquer, to suggest that he was among the first to apply color to wood is again bad history. Wooden furniture, turning, and accessories have been colored at least since the Egyptians and probably before that. As one example, the Japanese have applied color to their turned work for over a thousand years.

Allie Farlowe, Assistant Curator, Mint Museum of Art and Binh Pho discussing Binh's piece, *Realm of Dream*. The Mint Museum acquired this piece for their permanent collection.

There was a relatively brief period in the late twentieth century when the beauty and natural qualities of wood itself were particularly celebrated, both in the furniture field (Nakashima is one example) and the turning field (Mel Lindquist comes to mind). It was during this period that many of the early collectors in CWA started buying turned wood, but to use this work to make generalizations about all prior and subsequent work means that some are not looking beyond their own living rooms.

The CWA needs to address these shortcomings as they are a result of decisions they made in organizing the show – what the theme would be, who would curate it, who would write the essay, who would oversee standards for the catalog, and so on. If they want to promote a preconceived package of what should be collected and, by association, their own reputations, this show might have done its job. However, if they are really committed to the development of wood art, I'd like to see less self-referential commentary and a more outgoing approach. What is needed is more independent essayists and curators who can objectively place this organization's efforts into a wider context.

For those devoted to woodturning, the interest is probably whether turning even has a part to play in such a broadly inclusive genre. While the field that is now called "wood art" certainly began with turning, the turning itself has lost its primacy because it is often just another technique that is part of the sculptural repertoire. I take an optimistic view that there is something to be gained from considered appreciation of all forms of art, wood-based or otherwise. My hope is that CWA will consider its role more deeply and expand beyond the clubby mentality that seems to be holding it back from achieving its own goals. ■

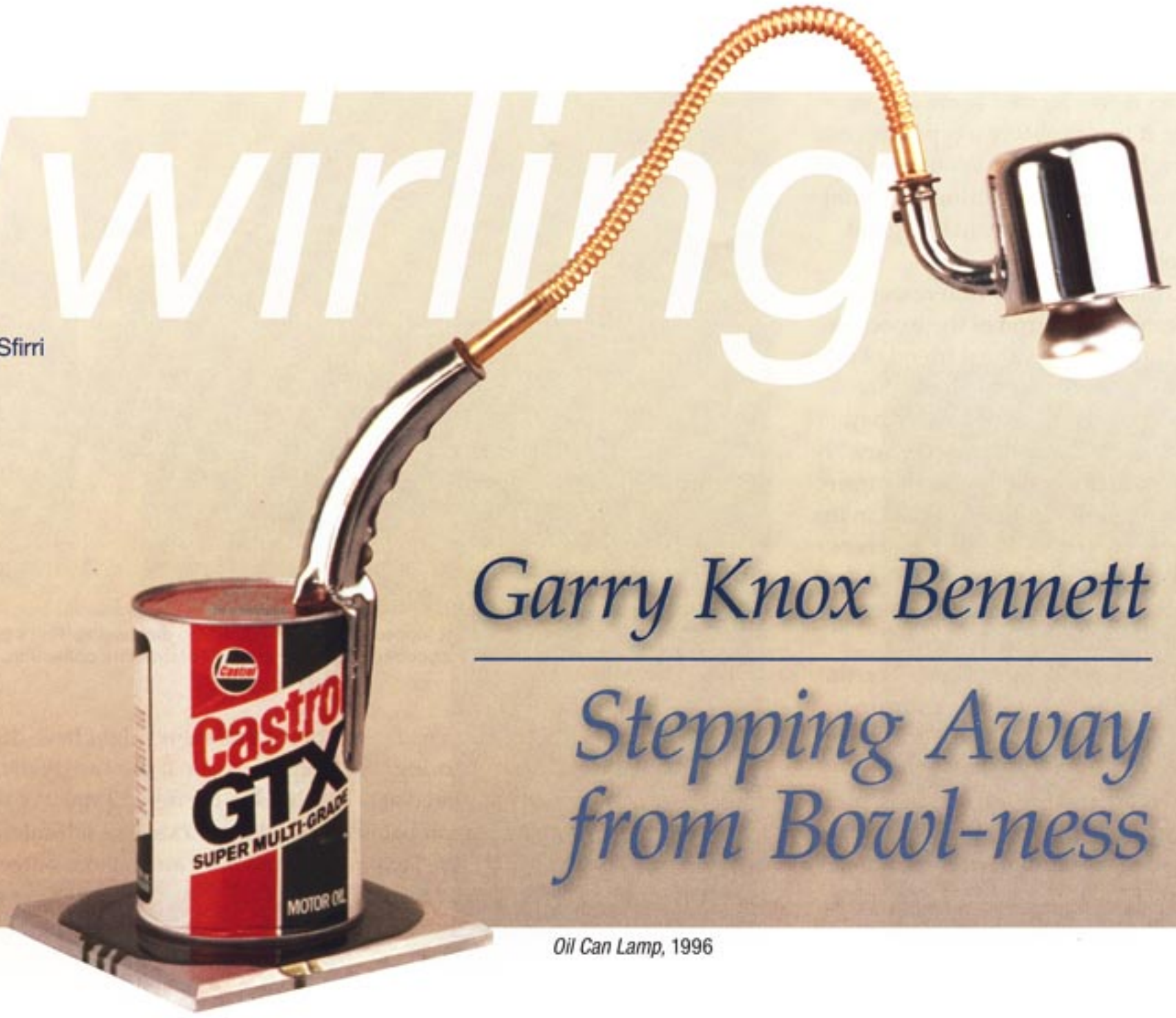
Terry Martin is a wood artist, writer, and curator who lives and works in Brisbane, Australia. He can be contacted at eltel@optusnet.com.au.

Twirling

Mark Sfirri

Garry Knox Bennett

Stepping Away from Bowl-ness



Photos: John R. Bagley

Oil Can Lamp, 1996

Who is Garry Knox Bennett? And why does he deserve to have his own exhibition at the annual AAW conference in Albuquerque? That the first question is even asked tells us that the divide between the two main branches of woodworking—furniture and turning—is wide. As one of the few members of both worlds, I am continually amazed at how little they know of one another. Furniture makers are hard pressed to name more than one or two turners and vice versa. Here, therefore, is an introduction of Garry Knox Bennett and an explanation of the POP's (Professional Outreach Program's) decision to present him to you.

I first met Bennett at a conference in Saskatoon, Canada. His favorite machine is the bandsaw, so his workspace contained a 30" bandsaw with a brand-new blade. Bennett was pleased. I had a chunk of wood that, because of its size, could only be cut on "his" bandsaw. As I got halfway through the cut, the piece of wood got jammed and I couldn't move it forward or back it off. I had struggled with it for several minutes when Bennett walked up and said "I wish you #%&!*!@ twirlers would stay away from my bandsaw!" Then he walked away. That was my formal introduction. I mentioned that I was a furniture maker as well, but it had no affect on his assessment of the situation. One is a "twirler" or one is not. I detected a mild derogatory meaning.

Bennett is a furniture maker in Oakland, California. Since he is also quite proficient at metalworking, plastics, bronze casting, and painting, all of which he incorporates into his work, you could also call him a multimedia artist. He began his art and craft career with metal jewelry in the 1960s, building a very successful business, and expanded into wood in 1974. He made a big splash in the world of studio furniture in 1979 when he exhibited an exquisitely designed and executed curved glass front cabinet with one unusual detail. At eye level, Bennett had driven a nail into a wooden door panel and bent it over. A photograph of the piece appeared on the back cover of *Fine Woodworking* magazine with the title, "Decoration vs. Desecra-

tion" (September 1980, Issue 24). While the piece was on display in New York, someone made off with the nail for reasons of his or her own and Bennett was obliged to replace it.

Bennett's understanding of multiple materials allows him to blend them, seemingly effortlessly, in a fluid way. He tends to design in series, an approach that allows him to explore many solutions to a single problem. If he is exhibiting lamps, for instance, he'll make 100 lamps, using a range of materials and techniques and variations on themes. "100 Lamps" was a major exhibition at the prestigious Peter Joseph Gallery in 1996. Bennett fashioned some lamps from wood and brass pieces, dovetailed together. For one lamp, he used a commercial metal bucket filled with lightbulbs, one of which lit up when the lamp was turned on. A coffee can filled with pencils, sticks, and other objects, including lightbulbs fascinated me; when I touched the can, the bulbs turned on. The volume and variety of work, and especially Bennett's creative conceptual approach, made for an impressive exhibit.

In addition to a long list of other exhibitions, Bennett had four solo shows at Peter Joseph. Only a select few furniture makers achieved the distinction of even one. In 1996, Bennett was named a Fellow of the American Craft Council.

Photo: M. Lee Fatherree

Nail Cabinet, detail, 1979

In 2001, the American Craft Museum in NYC (now the Museum of Art and Design) organized a major retrospective of Bennett's work. The show traveled to the Oakland Museum in his hometown. An accompanying biographical catalog, which took the form of a large hardcover book, is the best way to experience the full range of his work. (*Made in Oakland: The Furniture of Garry Knox Bennett* is available from www.gkb-furniture.com.)

In 2004, The Furniture Society, contemporary studio furniture's only organization in the United States, presented Bennett with an "Award of Distinction." This international honor is given to a living person, not necessarily a maker, who has had a profound impact on the field of studio furniture. Bennett is one of only sixteen recipients to date. The award, conferred by a committee of museum curators, scholars, gallery owners, and makers, illustrates Bennett's importance to the field.

The PBS program, "Craft in America," features an entertaining and informative talk with him about his work. Recently, Bennett has been working on another series, in this case over a hundred chairs, resulting in an exhibition of more than half of them, titled "Garry Knox Bennett: Call Me Chairmaker." It's currently traveling throughout the United States. He has interpreted designs by many makers of historical importance, including George Nakashima, Rietveld, and Thonet. There is an accompanying catalog by the same name.

Bennett paints under the pseudonym Ambrose Pillphister. He often

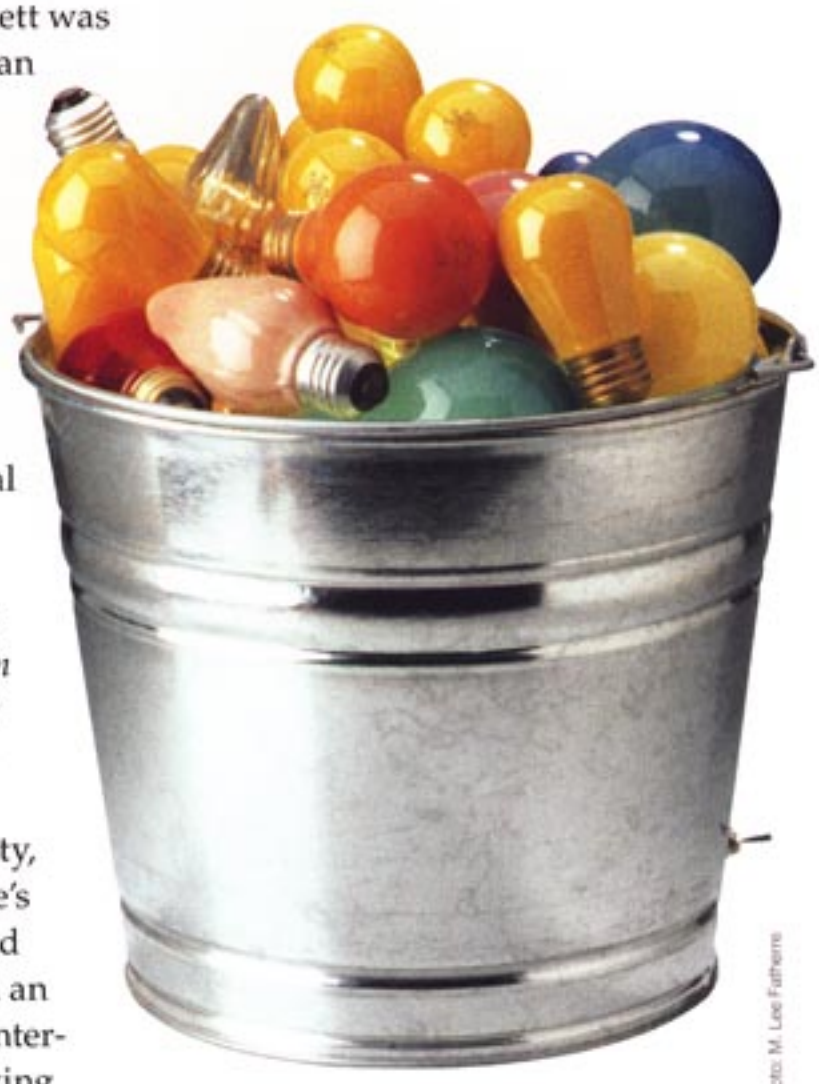


Photo: M. Lee Fatherree

Bucket o' Bulbs, 1996

collaborates with Pillphister on projects that require painting. Bennett has embraced the notion of collaboration with people other than himself as well and played a major role in the collaborative conferences leading up to and during the now famous Emma Lake conferences.

So why does Garry Knox Bennett deserve to have his own exhibition at the AAW? Clearly, Bennett is a big-time furniture maker, but what is his connection to turning? While Bennett has used turned wood and metal elements, the turnings were done on his machinist's metal lathe for the purpose of making round dovetail shapes. For specially turned elements, Bennett used to call up Bob Stocksdale, a useful resource, you might say. Since the number of turned parts in Bennett's furniture work was and is minimal, and he doesn't turn them ▸

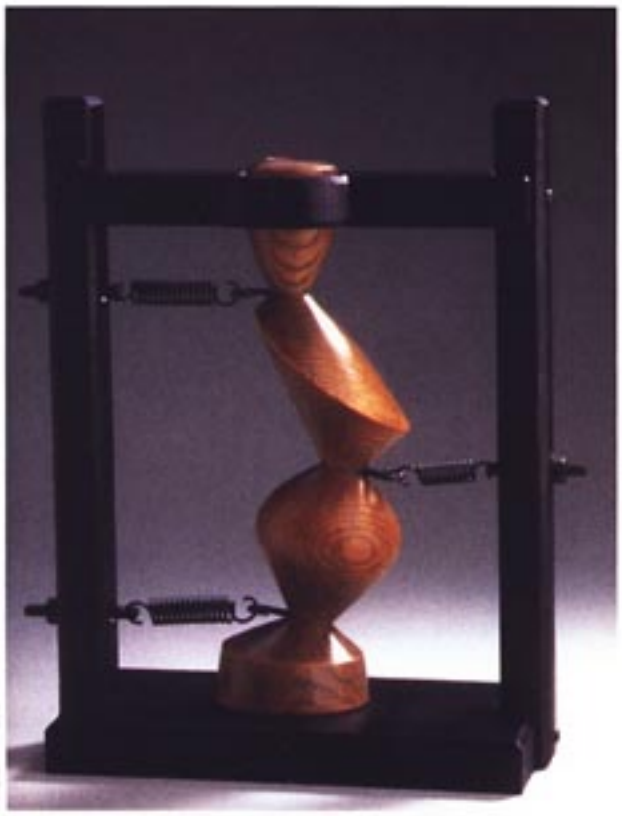


Photo: M. Lee Fatherree

Candle Holder, 2002

himself, and the venues for his work focus on furniture and not turning, I have not yet answered that question.

In 2000, David Ellsworth invited Bennett to contribute to a turning exhibition at the Brookfield Craft Center. His submission was a block of square wood with a circle the full size of the block drawn on the end and the center marked. It was all ready to put on the lathe. "Preturned Wood Object" was written on the side in wide felt-tipped marker. The exhibition included pieces that demonstrated a variety of concepts in turning, but Bennett's piece was completely conceptual, in the sense that it hadn't even been turned. It would be easy for someone to say, "Anyone could do that," but the point is, no one else did. It's a glimpse of Bennett's wit.

With turning, so to speak, on his mind, in 2002 Bennett dedicated one of his many solo exhibitions at Leo Kaplan Modern Gallery in NYC to turning. He made his point, as Bennett will do, by titling the exhibition "Reconstructed Twirlings." There was only one problem: He didn't turn, nor did he have interest in learning. So he asked David Ellsworth, Michael Hosaluk, and me to send him turned parts with which to work.

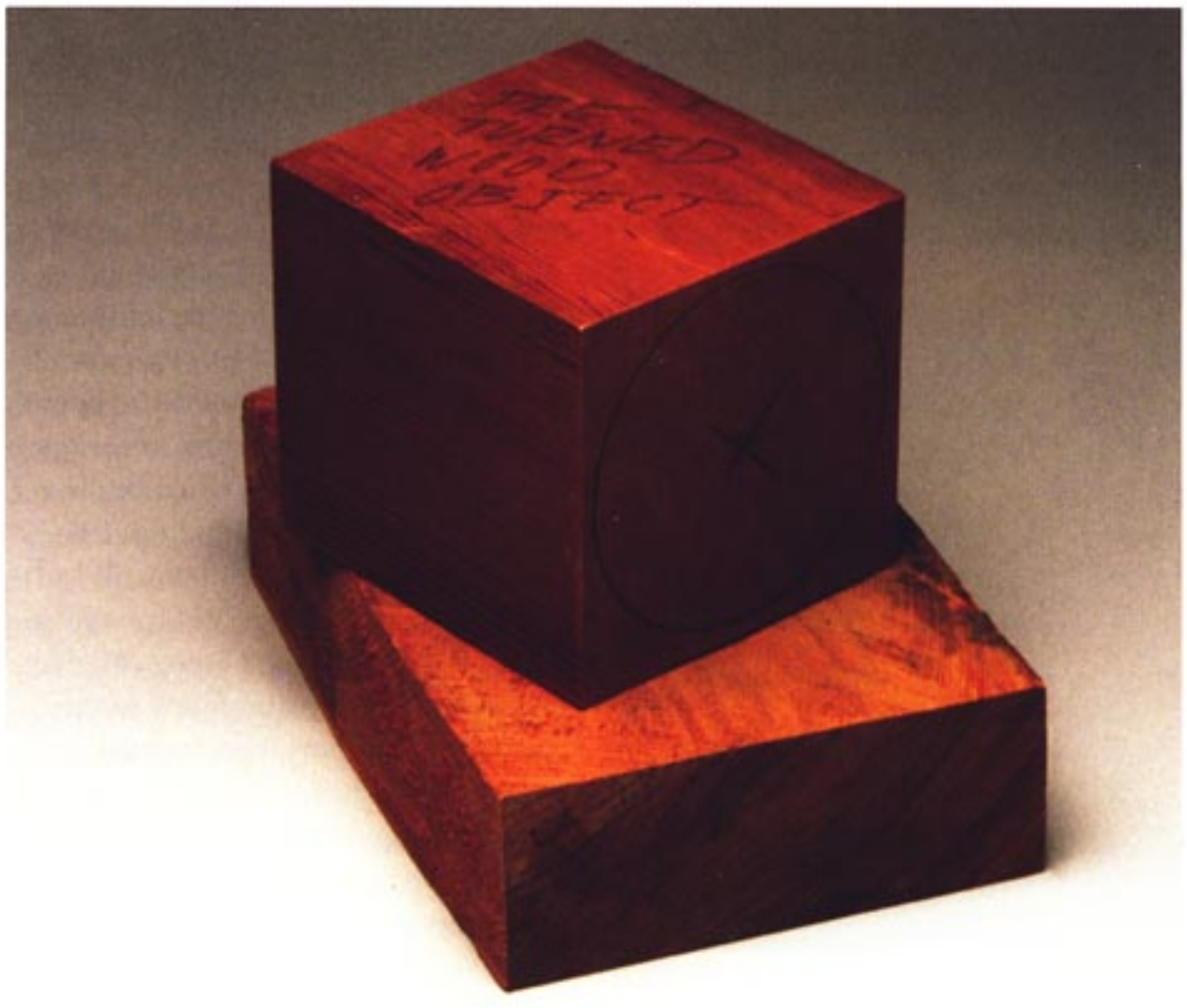
In my case, he stopped by my studio. I had collected a bunch of samples and parts for him, put aside for one reason or another. He went through them one by one, studying each part, and deciding whether to take it. I didn't realize at the time that his mind is so quick that he had a concept for each piece on the spot or he discarded it.

It was a wonderful exhibition showcasing Bennett's cleverness and creativity in placing these "found objects" in a different context. One of the great rewards of collaboration is to see how someone else interprets your forms. For example, he took one of my multi-axis candlesticks and made a frame around it that captured the top and bottom. He then attached springs connecting the frame to the candlestick, creating the illusion that the frame was a torture rack that had taken a straight turning and made it crooked.

So the POP committee's motives in bringing Garry Knox Bennett and his work to the Albuquerque conference come from our admiration and respect for him, and from a desire to expose our members to fresh ways of looking at turning, in this case, by someone from outside the field. Whether it's a bent nail, or a block of wood that could be turned but isn't, one thing is certain, there will be a lot of head scratching going on. ■

Mark Sfirri is a professor and coordinator of the Fine Woodworking Program at Bucks County Community College in Newtown, Pennsylvania. He has a studio in New Hope, Pennsylvania where he makes furniture and sculpture that incorporate lathe-turned parts.

Pre Turned Wood Object, 2000, Collection of the Wood Turning Center



Alternate Realities

Recent Works by Sharon Doughtie and Pat Kramer

Kevin Wallace

The world of contemporary art is seemingly mysterious in many ways. Some artists, who have yet to be discovered, are curious as to why other artists have been spotlighted. They may wonder about how relationships between galleries and artists are formed. The story of how Sharon Doughtie and Pat Kramer came to be featured in the first exhibition dedicated to turned wood at the Beatrice Wood Center for the Arts explains some of this mystery.

In 2004, I traveled to Hawaii to curate an exhibition presented by Hawaii Craftsmen, a nonprofit organization that provides support, opportunities, and community for artists living and working on the Hawaiian Islands. It was a wonderful experience, as it entailed traveling from island to island, hosted by the artists involved in the organization and selecting works, as well as ▸

A view of the Beatrice Wood Center for the Arts, Happy Valley

giving talks on the current state of contemporary craft art. I was also responsible for judging the best work in each of the craft categories in the resulting exhibition.

When it came to wood, I had difficulty selecting first place as there were two artists, Sharon Doughtie and Pat Kramer, who stood out from the others. I ultimately relied on the advice of those who were involved in the organization. It turned out that the two were married; Pat was a longtime woodworker while Sharon was fairly new to the field. I ended up giving Pat first place and Sharon second place, had the opportunity to meet the two of them, and have followed their work ever since.

In 2005, I assisted in the creation of the Beatrice Wood Center for the Arts, which is housed in a compound that includes the home of legendary ceramic artist Beatrice Wood. Due to this association with ceramic art, I felt we should have exhibitions that featured this medium, yet I have always believed that works in craft media benefit from being exhibited within the larger context of contemporary art.

Those who had known me for years in the wood realm, who heard about the Center, often misunderstood its name and was convinced that I was Director of the Beatrice *Wood* Center for the Arts. Indeed, the field I had devoted almost two decades to and the name of the artist were coincidentally the same, and I was planning on exhibiting work by *wood* artists at the Center.

Sharon Doughtie and Pat Kramer were ideal candidates for the first exhibition dedicated to turned wood at the Center. They had not pursued careers on the mainland and therefore were not overexposed in the gallery scene or already in all of the major collections. Most important, I recognized in them that special combination of vision and quality that is the sign of truly talented artists. I was pleased to find I'd made the right decision, when I began to receive images of the work for the exhibition and, even more so, when I began to unpack the boxes of work. Sharon and Pat had set aside almost the entire year leading up to the exhibition to create wonderful, highly individual works of art.

Sharon Doughtie, Her Words, Her Work, 2008

The Beatrice Wood Center for the Arts is situated on 450 acres of land. Two mountain ranges, that cross each other, traverse it. A huge array of flora and fauna thrive there; plants that we consider tropical nestle cheek to jowl with desert plants. The place is buzzing with life.

The display area is situated throughout two houses. The main exhibition area contains large display cases and many shelves. It evokes a feeling of intimacy, yet there is room for plenty of work. Kevin Wallace and Janat Dundas did a wonderful job mounting our show, creating a flow from one piece to another.

The Center's permanent collection is mostly comprised of Beatrice Wood's fascinating pieces. A highly prolific ceramicist, she lived to be 105, producing her largest body of work the last fifty years of her life. She is a true inspiration.

We had the good fortune to stay at the Center during our time in Ojai. We were privileged to stay in a room full of artwork in a house full of artwork. An open patio stretched the length of both

Sharon Doughtie,
Tide Pools, Norfolk island pine,
Turned, burned, pierced, and ebonized,
2" × 5" to 3¾" × 7½"

houses and we witnessed soft morning and vivid evening light as we watched the changing vista. Between the houses is a wall of bamboo with an arched doorway cut into it so, while there is a feeling of spaciousness, there is also a cozy privacy. It was deliciously restful.

The intention that Beatrice Wood set for her home and land is being well sustained by both Janat Dundas, Manager, and Kevin Wallace, Director. It is at once inspiring and restful, captivating and serene. While I was there, I wanted to make things and just sit back and breathe in the beauty.

Hoku Hele

When I made this piece I was thinking of how the Polynesian people steered their vessels by the stars. This very loose Celtic knot is my version of those sky pathways. The circular stippled areas represent stars or planets. When I finished the piece, I was pleasantly surprised to see that it reminded me of the traveling canoe Hokulea, so I named the piece *Hoku Hele*, which means traveling star.

Tide Pools

I walk the beach several times a week and there is a section that is mostly rocks with almost no sand. It tends to be shady and cooler there, with many tide pools. This piece is about the water swirling through those temporary pools.

Night Surge

This piece is a Celtic knot wave form done in a Japanese woodcut print style. I love to take night walks on the beach. Waves are revealed as vague shadows under the moon. This piece references the transition of a wave as it arcs and builds energy. There is a brief calm as the water is suspended for a moment, just before tipping toward the shore and crashing on the beach. Many times I hear the rush before I can see the surge splashing up through the darkness, barely visible under the stars.

—*Sharon*

Sharon Doughtie,
Night Surge, Norfolk island pine,
Turned, burned, and ebonized,
3¼" × 15"

Sharon Doughtie, *Hoku Hele,*
Norfolk island pine and Honduras mahogany,
Turned, carved, burned, and ebonized,
6" × 8½"

Pat Kramer, His Words, His Work, 2008

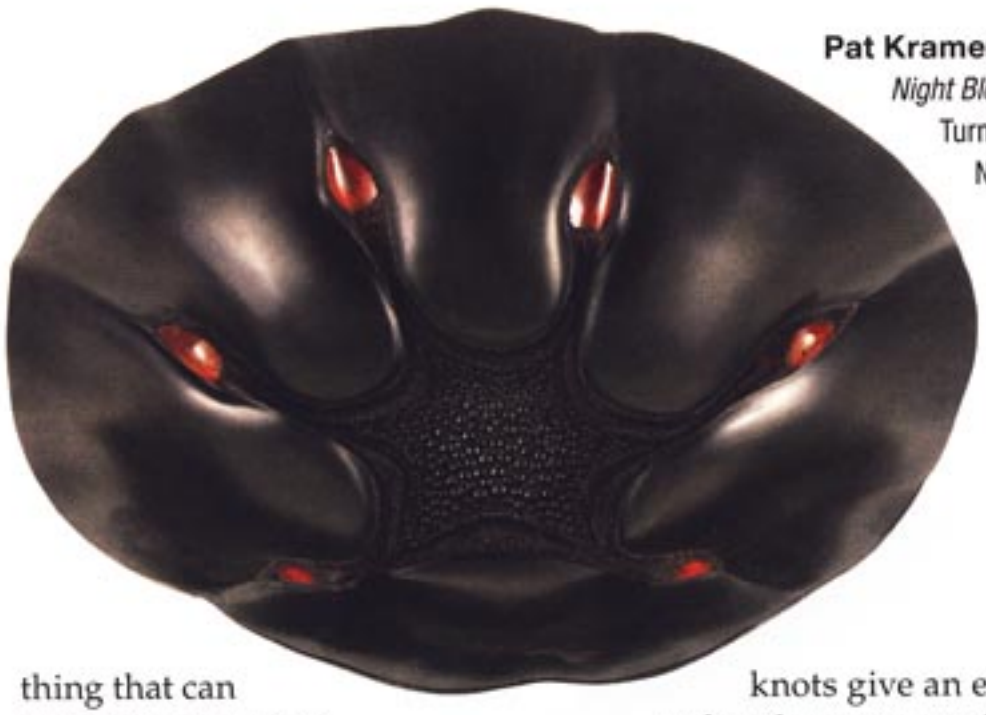
Night Blooming Serious

This piece is part of a series of natural-edged endgrain turnings. The intent with this particular piece was to start by finishing the rough turning and see what sort of mood would surface. I tend to think of Norfolk pine as a wood that paints a picture rather than as a material that has its strengths in displaying the figure of its grain. The interplay of the shape of the piece, with the knots contained within, creates a geometric design that sets the look and feel for the piece.

It seemed obvious that this was a piece with a full figure and nice lines. It desperately wanted to be pretty, but dangerous. I followed this thread, carving and refining the shape and lines, and cutting and burning textures to add to the emotional context I was trying to maintain. It may sound like I'm talking more about personality than mood, and I suppose that might be true. A lot of my pieces end up being critter-like. I think most pieces that are created inherit some sort of persona.

First Flight

I intended this piece to be tactile. It is a two-hander, meaning that it is some- ▸



Pat Kramer,
Night Blooming Serious,
Turned, carved, burned, and ebonized,
Norfolk island pine, 5" × 15½"

thing that can be held and cradled using both hands. I had a wonderful piece of Cook pine with satiny ribbons and lots of colors running through the wood. I thought it needed to become something that wanted to be picked up and held, like when I find an eggshell that has fallen to the ground after the young birds have left the nest. I decided to turn the familiar egg shape and carve in some organic rippling. Distinct markings separated the sapwood and heartwood. I took the opportunity to carve a soft undulating rim that followed the sapwood to have something nice to feel when the piece was picked up. The low stand makes the piece approachable. It is intentionally organic and nonobtrusive and invites the viewer to pick the piece up and hold it.

Ten

This piece is my interpretation of Santa Clara pottery done in wood. I wanted the finish to have a gunmetal look and the form of the piece to have some of the elements of pottery. I also wanted to remind the viewer that this is wood crossing the boundary between the two mediums. The ten knots protruding from the piece draw attention to the fact that this is wood.

I like that the shape is obviously not typical for Santa Clara pottery, yet it still has some of the feel. The knots give an edginess that is softer than you would find in ceramics, yet they are warmer to the touch and also retain the tactile quality that we love in wood.

—*Pat* ■

Kevin Wallace is Director of the Beatrice Wood Center for the Arts, Ojai, California. Sharon Doughtie (sharondoughtie.com) and Pat Kramer (patkramer.net) share a studio on the Island of Oahu.

Pat Kramer, *First Flight,*
Cook island pine,
Turned and carved,
Stand is carved, textured, and ebonized,
14½" × 13"

Pat Kramer, *Ten,*
Norfolk island pine,
Turned, carved,
burned, and ebonized,
13½" × 16"

Seeing Woodturning Differently

Dennis DeVendra

Blind woodturner Dennis DeVendra.

I am blind. It may seem unlikely that I would take up woodturning as a hobby. I could have chosen book reading, meditation, or cooking instead, but I do these things as well. My physical limitations do not mean I have a limited passion for woodworking. I've been interested in woodworking for over thirty years, before I lost my sight.

I am writing this article so that others with challenges like mine will see these challenges as opportunities rather than as barriers. I use the word *challenge* instead of physical impairment. We all have challenges. The true test is whether we let these challenges keep us from pursuing the things we want to accomplish.

To help overcome challenges or just learn new skills, we all need the assistance of others. Many people do not know how to deal with those who may appear different. People with disabilities have the same desires and inner workings as everyone else. No one should be afraid to mention or acknowledge another person's limitations. As a matter of fact, the sooner the subject of disabilities is brought up, the sooner other more important topics can be discussed.

After reading this article, you may have a better insight into woodturning, like why turners do the things they do, such as rubbing the bevel or being aware of how the fibers in the wood are placed. By looking at a task in a different way, you may get a better understanding of your own woodturning methods.

Help from Genia

I have been married for over twenty years to Genia. Fortunately, she tolerates and sometimes participates in my woodworking activities. For example, when someone drops off a load of green logs, she will help cut the pieces using the bandsaw. I usually request that the donor split the wood lengthwise so I can get it through my bandsaw. We will rip boards together on the tablesaw as well. For some of my finishing work, like bowls and peppermills, Genia will apply the polyurethane finish.

Turning challenges

When I started learning woodturning, I would take two steps forward and one step backward. Sharpening was the first major challenge. I purchased a variable speed bench grinder and ▸

Dennis setting up a turning tool in a jig for sharpening on the Tormek.

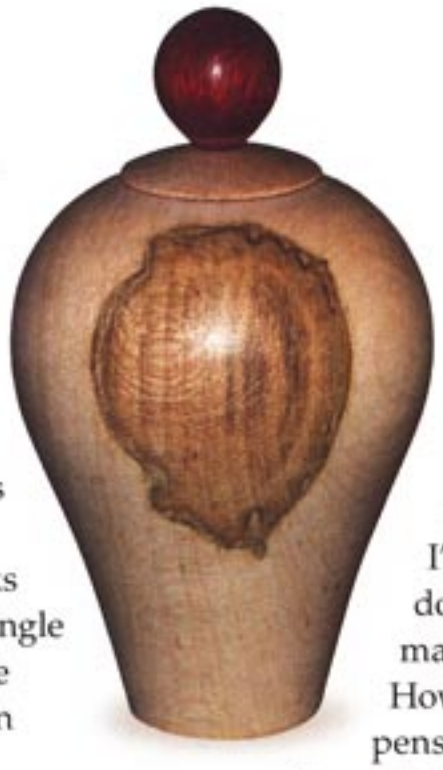
a popular jig system that had a setup for sharpening skews and scrapers. The scraper part was pretty easy. It consisted of a platform that I adjusted to get a specific angle on the scraper. This was the same no matter the length of the scraper.

The real challenge came when sharpening skews and gouges. The jig is arranged so that you place the end of the handle in a cup attached to a long square rod. By adjusting the cup closer or father away from the grinding wheel, you determine the angle of the bevel. The key is to look at the bevel and try to have it lay flat on the stone. Try this some time with your eyes closed. You do not need to be very far off to grind away from the cutting edge or grind down the cutting edge. In either case, the result is not a razor-sharp edge. I have talked to many people who say their tools look pretty bad after they have been grinding on them for awhile, even if they use a jig. Being sighted does not always ensure that a person can sharpen.

I solved this problem at first by having Genia set up the jig for the gouges. The only drawback was that I could only use one gouge unless I had her readjust the jig for a different tool.

But I solved this dilemma by purchasing the Tormek slow speed, wet grinder with the Touch and Turn (TNT) system. The grinder has a 10" diameter grinding stone and a rod that runs across the front of the stone. The rod can be adjusted closer or farther away from the stone. The system provides a template to position the rod at a preset distance from the stone. The template also has slots that provide a means to measure the length of the steel that protrudes from the jig for sharpening gouges. Once these two items are set, I mount the jig on the rod and start sharpening. It works every time with the same bevel angle and grind. Problem solved. I have sighted friends come over so I can sharpen their tools!

There are other challenges such as marking the center of a blank, rubbing the bevel, measuring distances (the regular tape measure does not work), attaching waste blocks with CA glue, keeping track of sandpaper grits, and placing a faceplate in the center of a blank. I will leave these for another time.



Lidded box, maple and cherry.

Learning turning techniques with help from others

I started turning by making pens. Pens are fun and I got immediate, positive feedback. As a matter of fact, I've sold several dozen and given many others as gifts. However, turning pens got a little old after awhile and I wanted to do more. I rented videos and read articles on the Internet. Most of the information I received depended on looking at pictures that went along with the descriptions. For example, I would hear "now hold the gouge like this and move it like this." So I had Genia watch the videos with me. This was a big mistake. It was like asking someone to learn to drive by watching a movie about driving. Genia had no idea what she was looking at, much less how to describe it. So what to do? I needed to have a teacher.

But this was just not happening. I would ask for help and either I received a response from someone saying that I would not be able to turn or that they were just not interested in helping. I was fortunate to have the AAW and my local club the Central Ohio Woodturners (COW) as a resource. The club would hold mentoring sessions once a month and I would get some basics from each session.

I then received an education grant from the AAW. The COW members helped me fill out forms and arrange for an instructor. In April 2008, I made my first trip to visit Robert Rosand and his wife, Susan, in Pennsylvania. Robert and I spent two intensive days working together while Genia, who literally came along for the ride, spent time reading and shopping with Susan.

Dennis turning with Bob Rosand assisting.

Dennis standing on the opposite side of the lathe, feeling what happens when Bob turns the wood. Bob's eyes are closed so that he can experience what it's like to turn blind.

Robert and I spent many hours talking about what we would work on prior to the visit. We decided on four projects: a tool handle, an egg, an acorn Christmas ornament, and an icicle ornament. Our challenges came early as Robert provided me guidance. Since he had not taught a blind turner before, we spent the first morning getting accustomed to how this would all work.

One thing I remember was Robert telling me to hold the end of the tool handle while turning. I did not have much control while doing this. Robert then tried it with his eyes closed and quickly realized what I was talking about. We adjusted our approach as we went. Robert would demonstrate part of the project and I would try it. He would describe what he was doing, stop the lathe to let me feel what he had done, and then he would start the demonstration again.

This was pretty slow and not working all that well, so I moved to the opposite side of the lathe and put my hand on the wood while it was turning. I would feel the cuts and the shape forming as he described his work. This was a great step forward in our progress. After awhile, Robert would just close his eyes and try out various turning techniques. By lunchtime, we were getting a nice rhythm to the turning instruction and learning process. This was great.

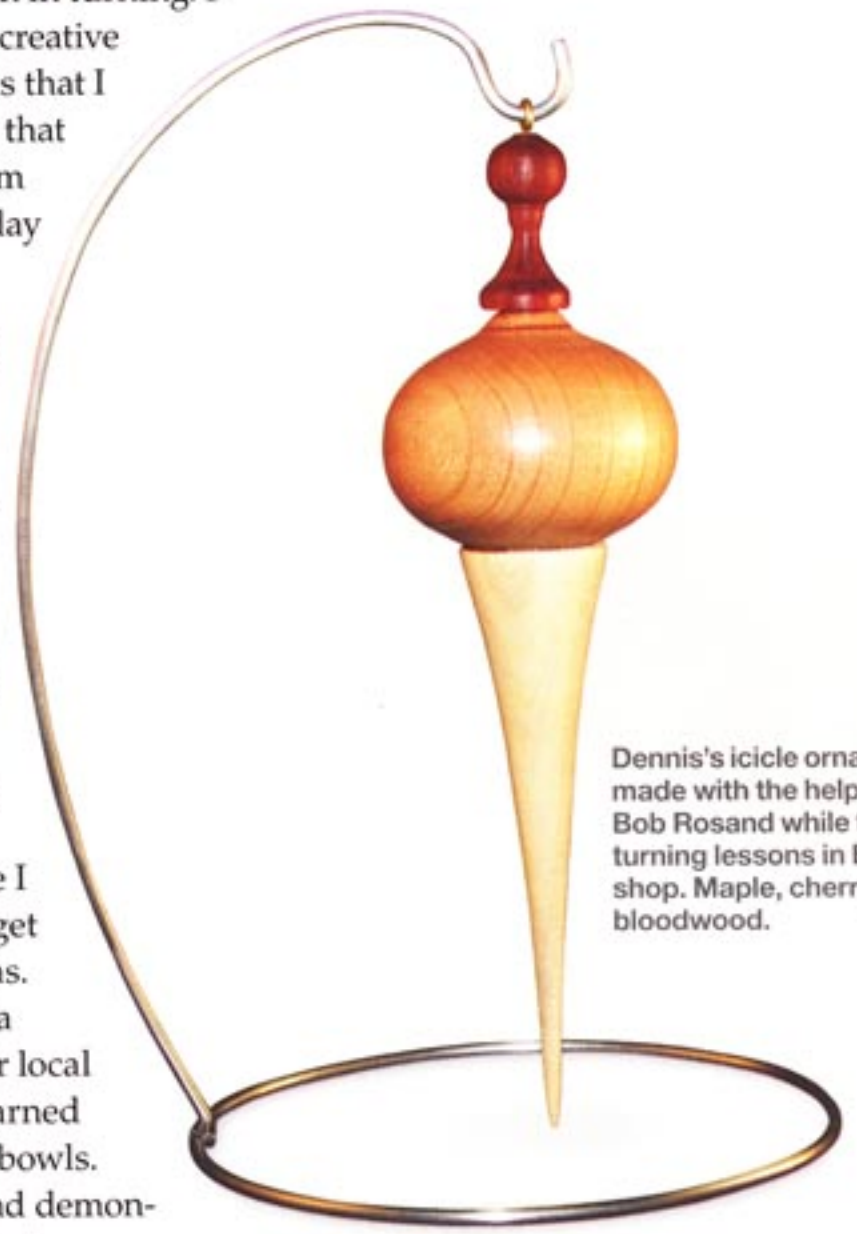
Passion for turning

I have found a passion in turning. I think part of it is the creative outlet. Another part is that I am doing something that others appreciate. I am going to retire someday and I want to keep my hands and mind busy after I leave my current job. There is a part of me that wants to help others. I started my career as a high school teacher in the 1970s. A combination of all of these things continues to provide me a reason to turn.

For the near future I want to continue to get better in several areas. Recently, I attended a demonstration at our local club meeting and learned more about turning bowls. Attending classes and demonstrations continues to improve my skills. I would like to focus more on hollow turning because I do not have to see what I'm doing when hollowing a vessel. This may be an advantage.

My long-term goals are to write articles like this, as well as teach turning. As I started writing this article, I realized that taking on challenges and learning how to overcome them is something all of us do every day; however, there is a bit more of this for someone who is disabled because most instruction is targeted at those who do not have disabilities. I am planning, in subsequent articles, to describe more of my technical challenges and how I have overcome them in order to give turners another way of thinking about how they approach woodturning. ■

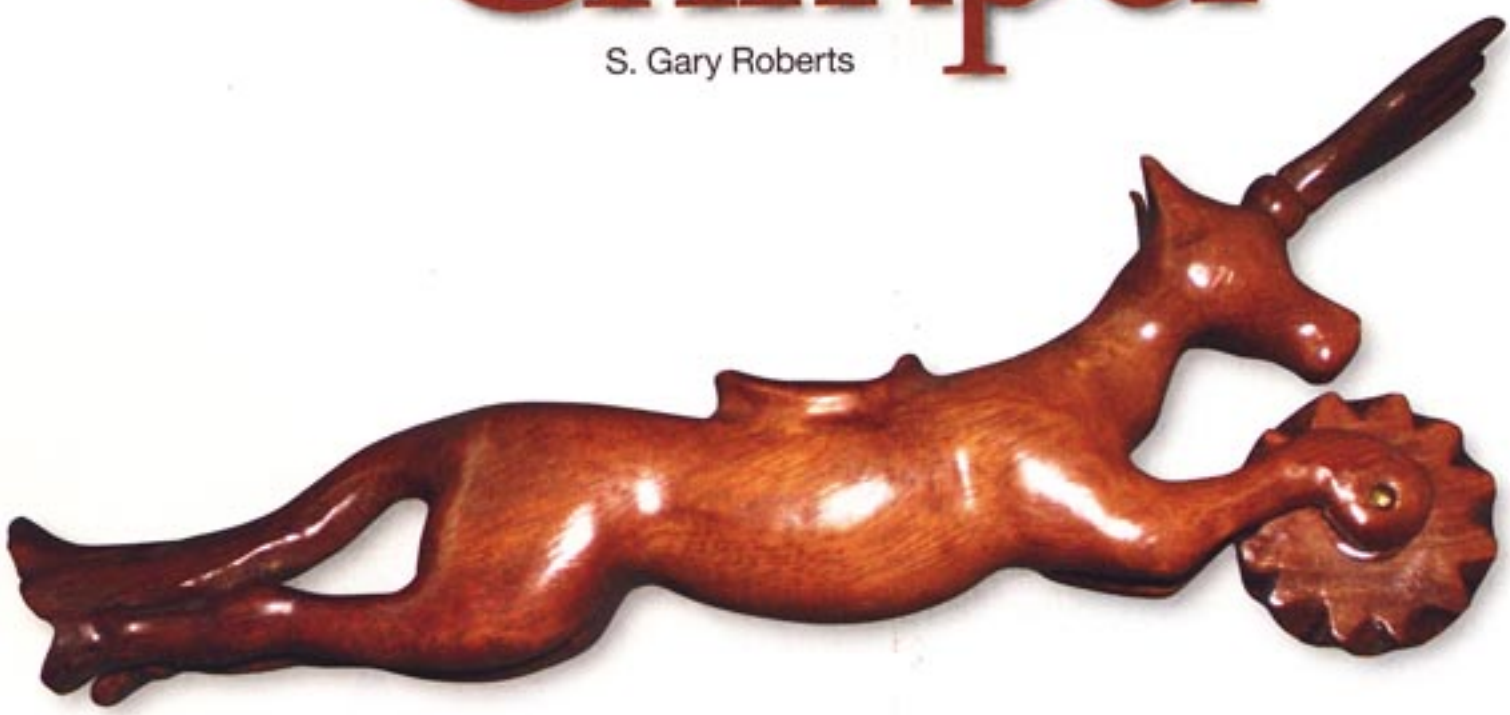
Dennis DeVendra lives in Columbus, Ohio.



Dennis's icicle ornament, made with the help of Bob Rosand while taking turning lessons in Bob's shop. Maple, cherry, bloodwood.

Antique Piecrust Crimper

S. Gary Roberts



A replica of the antique piecrust crimper that Gary used as his model. The model came from a photo in an antique magazine, featuring an article on items carved from whalebone.

A replica of an antique piecrust crimper is one of those turned items that is instantly destined to become a family heirloom and score brownie points with the dearly beloved. As you create this antique piecrust crimper, you can almost smell the pie baking in the oven.

For those of you who are not kitchen familiar: apple pies, as well as other fruit pies, are made with two crusts, one for the bottom of the pie and one for the top. Where the two meet at the edge of the pie pan, they are crimped together before baking. Crimping can be done by hand or with this amazing little wheel. It works quite well: just press the wheel down and follow the edge of the crust around the circumference of the pie plate.

I discovered a hand-carved piecrust crimper in an antique magazine article featuring items carved from whalebone by sailors in centuries past. I thought it could be redesigned to make a good turning project. Upon completion, I asked for a trial run from my wife, and it worked so well that we now have apple pie quite often.

Making the handle

I used mesquite wood for the finished example, however, your favorite hardwood would work equally well. First, cut a square 1" by 6" long. This will allow for some waste at each end. Mark a centerline on two sides at 90° to each other. Using a drill press, drill a ⅛"-diameter hole, centered about ½" back from the end of the square blank.

Measure back ¾" from that hole and drill a ½"-diameter hole at 90° from the first hole (*Photo 1*). Note: It is much easier to drill these two holes before the handle is turned.

Place the blank between centers of your lathe to turn the handle (*Photo 2*). You can style the handle to fulfill your creative desires. Just remember that this implement will be used to prepare food, so it will need to be cleaned. Smooth surfaces and gentle curves are easily

Gary's Low Sugar Apple Pie Recipe

In case you do not have a good apple pie recipe, here's the one I use. It's quick, easy, and tastes great!

1. Buy a package of two frozen piecrusts. I know, you could make your own, but we're talking easy here. Just don't tell anyone. Peel, core, and slice apples into thin pieces to make **5 cups of apples**. Place the sliced apples in a large mixing bowl and using your hands, mix in **⅝ cup sugar, 1 teaspoon cinnamon, 2 tablespoons butter, and ⅛ teaspoon salt**. This is the fun part because you get to work the ingredients with your hands and get all messy.
2. Place the defrosted bottom piecrust in a 9" pie plate. Pour the ingredients into the pan and cover with the top crust. Trim the excess crust off with a knife. Use your new antique piecrust crimper and press the two crusts together at the edge of the pan. This will leave a nice pattern around the edge of the pie. With a knife, cut a couple of small slits in the top crust to let out the steam and juices while the pie is baking.
3. Bake in a preheated oven at 425° for 30 to 40 minutes.
4. You may have to wait a few minutes when it's done for it to cool a bit. Serve a slice hot with a topping of ice cream and/or whipped cream . . . that's why we cut back on the sugar in the pie itself.

Now, isn't this a great way to enjoy turning?

cleaned, so take that into consideration when you are planning your design.

To cut the slot for the wheel, use a V-block to stabilize the turned piece. Bandsaw out the waste (*Photo 3*). The ½"-diameter hole will provide a guide for width. Leave the square waste attached to the handle until you have sawn out the slot. This will help keep ▸

Drilling the ½" hole.

The turning blank mounted on the lathe. Note the smaller ⅛" hole located on the wood, positioned just above the right-hand side of the toolrest.

Handle of the crimper turned and mounted in a block, ready to have the waste removed for the slot.

The brass rod mounted in a Jacobs chuck. Mount the wheel blank onto the brass rod, then bring up the live center of the tailstock before turning the shape of the wheel.

the blank vertical on the bandsaw table until you have cut out the slot waste. Sand the inside of the slot.

The wheel

Cut a ½"-thick block out of the same wood used for the handle or use wood of a contrasting color. Using a compass, draw a 1"-diameter circle. Drill a ⅛" hole in the center of that circle.

You will need ⅛"-diameter brass rod. Cut a length of it 1" long, using pliers to make the cut. The cut end of this rod will be slightly larger than the ⅛" hole you just drilled, and you will use this slightly larger-diameter end to ream out the inside of the ⅛" hole.

Mount the rod into your drillpress, and use the rod to ream out the hole. This slightly larger hole will allow the wheel to turn easily on the shaft when inserted in the handle. Cut the circle using your bandsaw.

To mount the wheel on the lathe, first insert the brass rod into a Jacobs chuck, mounted on the headstock (*Photo 4*). Leave about ¼" sticking out. Center the wheel on the brass rod. The rod will not stick out of the other side of the wood, which will leave the hole open. Press the center point of the live center into that hole. Tighten slightly. This will create enough friction so that you will be able to turn the wheel to round.

Indexing the wheel

Index the edge of the wheel to use as a guide to create a pattern around the edge of the wheel. The pattern on this piecrust crimper has twenty-four segments, each at 15°. I used a ½"-diameter sanding drum mounted in a Dremel-type grinder to create the twelve notches on each side of the wheel. A centerline around the edge of the wheel will keep you oriented during the process of cutting the notches.

If you do not have an index wheel on your lathe, you can make one easily with little cost or shop time. Cut out a piece of cardboard from the side of an empty cereal or cracker box. Using a compass, draw and cut out a circle about the same size as your lathe's hand wheel. Using the pinpoint made by the compass as the center point, use a protractor and divide the circle into as many segments as is called for in your design or project. The lines should extend to the edge of the cardboard wheel (*Photo 5*).

Measure the diameter of your lathe's spindle. Use the compass to mark the center of the cardboard index wheel, then draw a circle the same diameter as your lathe's spindle. Cut the center hole out to that same size. Just be sure you end up with a fairly snug fit.

Use double-stick tape to secure your new index wheel to the lathe spindle. This will let you turn the index wheel and the work piece at the same time.

Set the toolrest near the spindle height as well as near to the work piece. Place a small magnet on the headstock of the lathe, and attach a bent metal pointer or paperclip to it. This metal pointer will serve as a marker to the edge of the index wheel. Now you can rotate the piece by hand, and each time a mark aligns with the pointer, mark the work piece at the top of the toolrest (*Photo 6*). This shop-made system is accurate, economical, and easy to use. Save the index wheel, along with others you make, and you will soon have an inventory from which to choose for future projects.

Shopmade indexing wheel with the tools needed to create it.

Setup for indexing the crimper wheel. The wheel is attached with the brass rod mounted in a Jacobs chuck.

Notching the wheel using a small sanding drum. Follow the "Vs" inscribed on the side of the wheel.

Finished crimper before assembly.

Finished piecrust crimper, made from mesquite wood.

well it works and what a good investment it has become.

Mount the Jacobs chuck onto the headstock of your lathe and secure the small sanding drum in the chuck. Slower lathe speeds, say 400 to 500 rpm, will work better than higher speeds. Hold the turned blank by hand. That will give you positive control and good visibility. Grind into the line on one side of the "V," then the other (*Photo 7*). After you have made two or three of the notches, you will feel more confident and become rather efficient. See, this does work very well!

Notching the wheel

To make the notches on the jagging wheel, I used a ½"-diameter sanding drum that came with my Dremel tool. Or, if you prefer, use a carving knife or chisel. I find that a knife tends to split some of the sidegrain in these small notches. I prefer the quick and easy and therefore use the Dremel sanding drum.

Wear appropriate eye and lung protection. It's always a good time to practice these safety procedures. If you have a dust collector system, now is an opportunity to brag on how

Finishing and assembly

I used a Beall buffing system to finish the wheel and handle. Carnuba wax is the final finish and is not toxic on utensils used to prepare food.

Measure and cut the ⅛"-diameter brass shaft to the proper length. It should end up protruding just slightly from both sides of the handle. A belt sander will round and polish the ends of the brass shaft (*Photo 8*). Assemble the two parts. Check to make sure the wheel turns freely on the shaft and does not bind up in the slot.

Now comes the good part! Ask the cook in your life to bake an apple pie, "just to see if the crimper works, okay?" This is one project you will enjoy again and again. Now can't you just smell that apple pie?! ■

S. Gary Roberts is a longtime contributor to American Woodturner. *He currently lives in Texas. His book,* Masterful Woodturning: Projects and Inspiration for the Skilled Turner *(Sterling Publishing Co., Inc.), was reissued in 2008.*

Tapered Mortise and Tenon

A Simple Joint That Packs Great Rewards

Peter Galbert

As I look back on the time I spent learning to make chairs, one of the greatest revelations is the tapered mortise and tenon. Look no further than your lathe to find this joint hard at work. The drive center in most lathes is held in the headstock with a tapered tenon. It is a mechanical joint that doesn't rely on glue or tightening a bolt. It frees with a simple tap, but once tightened, it holds like grim death. I became a devotee, for the simplicity of making it, its amazing strength, and its many design possibilities. (*Drawing 1*)

A tapered tenon doesn't rely on perfect sizing, but on good geometry. The fact that the joint gets increasingly tighter as the tenon is driven home suits the shifting nature of wood. Seasonal shifting in a tapered tenon could potentially break the glue bond, but it won't affect the ability of the joint to hold tight. (*Drawing 2*)

Benefits of the tapered tenon

- The lathe and the drill are perfectly suited to make the matching components of a tapered tenon.
- Tapered tenons make the assembly of complex angled structures easier because the joints are not tight until driven home, unlike parallel-sided tenons that must be perfectly aligned from the moment the tenon enters the mortise. This is important in chair assembly when multiple parts must be assembled simultaneously. (*Drawing 3*)
- The mating surfaces in a cylindrical mortise and tenon are often starved of glue because glue is scraped away while the tenon is driven in. With a tapered tenon, the glue stays in place.
- The ability to fine-tune a tapered tenon gives great freedom of design in chairmaking, greatly simplifying working with curved pieces. When working with curves, I often use points along the curve as references, then make slight adjustments in the mortise to ensure that the reference points are in the correct position.

Tips on making tapered tenons

Driving a wedge into the small end of a through tenon can tighten the joint, as well as add aesthetic interest. While the exposed endgrain of the tenon may increase the seasonal moisture exchange in the joint, wedging the joint adds to its tightness. (*Drawing 4*)

When planning placement of the wedges, it is vital to correctly orient them to prevent splitting the mortise piece. The wedge must exert pressure on the endgrain of the mortise to lessen the chance of splitting.

With the use of reversible hide glue, the joint is easily repairable. Slightly retracting a loose tenon will result in a gap large enough to add fresh glue to the joint. In square-joined work, complete disassembly is required.

Types of reamers

There are a number of reamers available commercially. (Go to my website at www.petergalbertchairmaker.com for a description of how to make your

Reamers come in a variety of angles, sizes and types. *From left to right:* A cello reamer, a spoon bit style reamer for use in a brace, a shopmade wooden reamer and a hardware store plumbers reamer.

own reamer and for a list of other types of reamers.) (*Photo 1*)

I prefer a taper of about 6°. The reamers often marketed as chairmakers' reamers are in the 11° to 12° range. Besides the lesser holding power of this angle, many of my students have had great difficulty with these reamers. They cut aggressively and can be difficult to control.

Some reamers are meant to be chucked into a brace. This seems to add another element of speed and leverage at the expense of control. Not to say that it isn't a skill one could acquire, but it isn't the method I recommend as an introduction to making this joint.

A small plumber's reamer, sold at local hardware stores, is a cheap and easy introduction to making tapered tenons. While obviously not specifically designed to cut wood, the taper angle and the slower cutting action make the tool easy to control.

Dryness of the tenons

It is important that the tenons be superdried to prevent shrinkage after the joint is assembled. Tenons that dry will shrink, possibly resulting in glue failure and shifting of the joint.

I use a shopmade kiln, a simple box made of foil-faced rigid foam insulation with a lightbulb inside. I set the tenons in holes in the top of the box. Fire safety should be a prime consideration when making and using a kiln! Once the tenons have dried, usually a couple of days at around 130° to 140°, I chuck them back in the lathe and turn them to their final taper, shaping the leg as well. The tenons should be kept in the kiln until they are needed for trial assembly, then returned until it is time for final assembly.

The project

Now to a project that puts this joint to use. This oval footstool is fun to make and handy to have around. Select a hardwood board, 1½" thick, 10" wide, and 24" long. Crosscut it at 14" to separate the piece for the stool's top from the material for the legs. Gluing up wood will work fine, as long as the joint doesn't pass directly through any of the joints. I use oak, hard maple, or cherry that has been airdried. Straight-grained wood will make for stronger legs. (*Photo 2*)

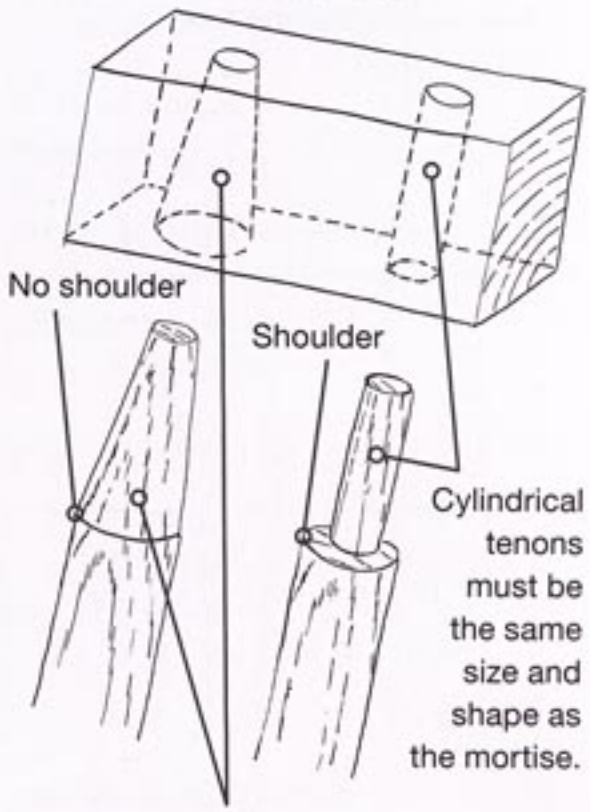
The desired alignment is achieved when the center point of the reamer is in line with the sightline, when viewed down the edge of the square.

Begin by establishing a location and diameter for the larger end of the taper and marking it with a score mark. This baseline mark is where the tenon begins to taper. This mark also helps to ensure consistent sizing of the tenons. Turn a true cylinder over the length of the tenon the same diameter as the baseline. Then, turn part of the leg below the tenon line. Remove the leg from the lathe and superdry the end of the tenon. Follow this procedure for all four legs. (*Drawing 5*)

You are now ready to rechuck each leg in the lathe and cut the taper of the tenon. As I mentioned before, I cut my tenons at 6°. A simple jig will help you sight the correct angle. The jig consists of a flat magnet glued to a strip of wood that has been sized to fit snugly into the gap in my lathe bed. When a piece of paper is slipped into that gap, ▸

1 Tapered Tenons vs. Cylindrical

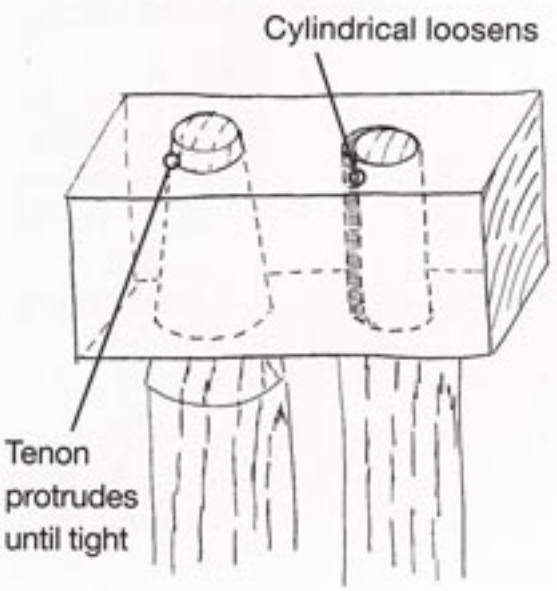
The tapered tenon (on the left) drives into the mortise until it is tight, while the cylindrical tenon (on the right) drives until the shoulder makes contact.



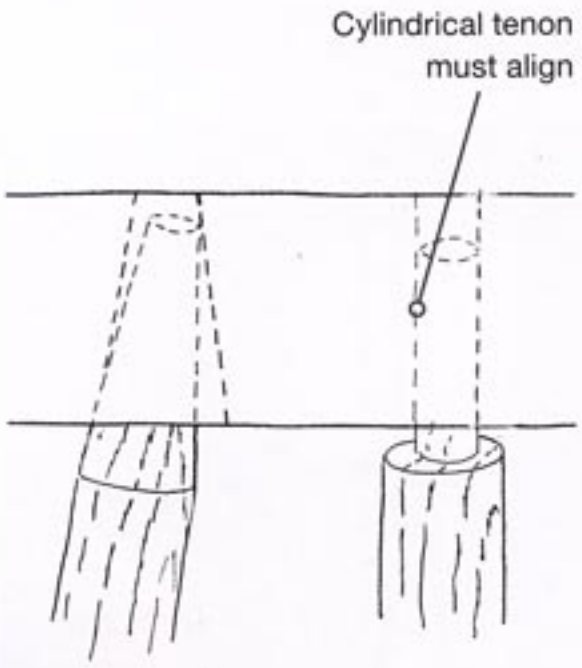
Tapered tenons must be the same angle as the mortise.

2 Shrinking Tenons Act Differently

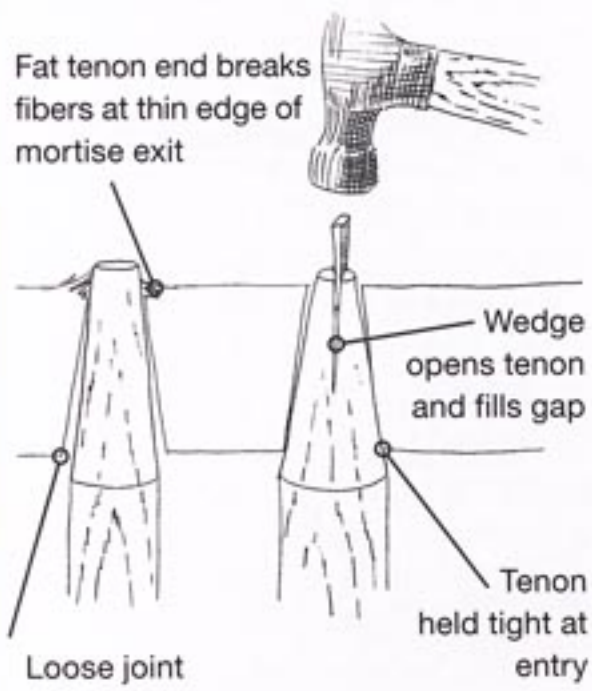
The tapered tenon (left) will continue to advance in the hole until tight, unlike the cylindrical tenon which relies on the diameter of the tenon and mortise to form a tight joint.



3 Misaligned Tenon Assembly
Tapered tenons are loose in the mortise until driven home, allowing parts to be slightly out of alignment. This is especially helpful in chairs where multiple parts must be assemble simultaneously.



4 Poorly Fitting Tenon and Wedge
A slight gap as the tenon exits the mortise is easily filled by driving a wedge (right), whereas a gap at the mortise entrance leaves a poor fit and risks splitting the fragile edge at the exit.



(Left) **The line on the template shows that the tenon is not correctly tapered.**

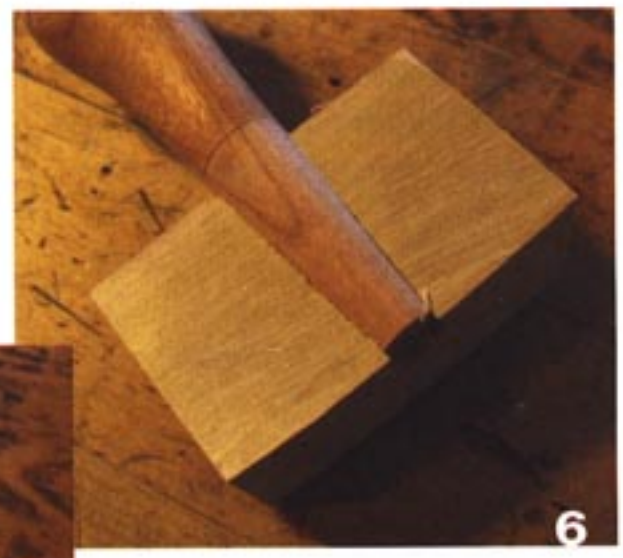
(Right) **The angle of the tenon is now parallel to the line on the template showing that the tenon now has the correct taper.**

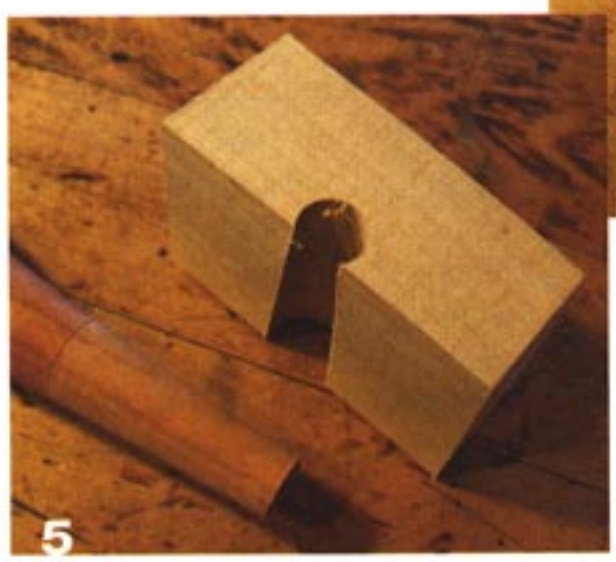
a line scribed on it is at 3° to the axis of the centers. (*Photos 3 and 4*)

Begin cutting the taper with a rough cut, then check it by aligning the top of the taper with the template below. If the taper lines up unevenly with the template, cut where the taper and the line visually eclipse. Repeat this process until the taper is parallel to the line on the template.

Another method for achieving the correct angle of the taper is to ream a hole of the approximate mortise size in a test block and then cut the block lengthwise. It helps to cut the block slightly more than halfway through so that it actually wraps around the tenon. After cutting an approximation of the taper, stop the lathe and test it in the half mortise. If you are careful in sizing your mortise block, you can check the tenon while it is still chucked in the lathe (turned off of course). (*Photos 5 and 6*)

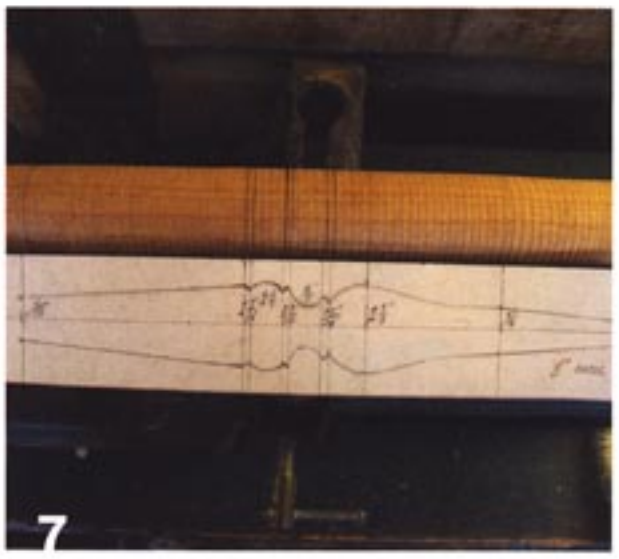
Once the shape of the tenon is close to being correct, finish it off with a skew chisel, which gives a clean surface and a clearer line by which to judge the angle. It is important that the sides of the taper are straight and not sunken in or bellied out. Turn the shape of the rest of the stool's leg. (*Drawing 6, Photos 7–10*)



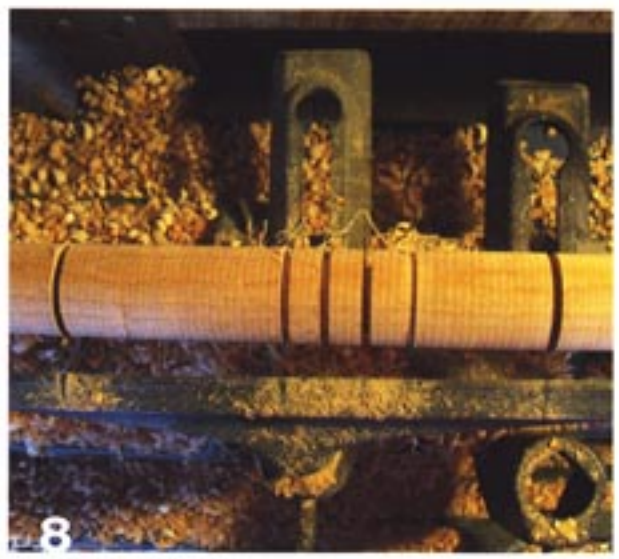


(Above) **The tenon in the test block shows a snug fit.**

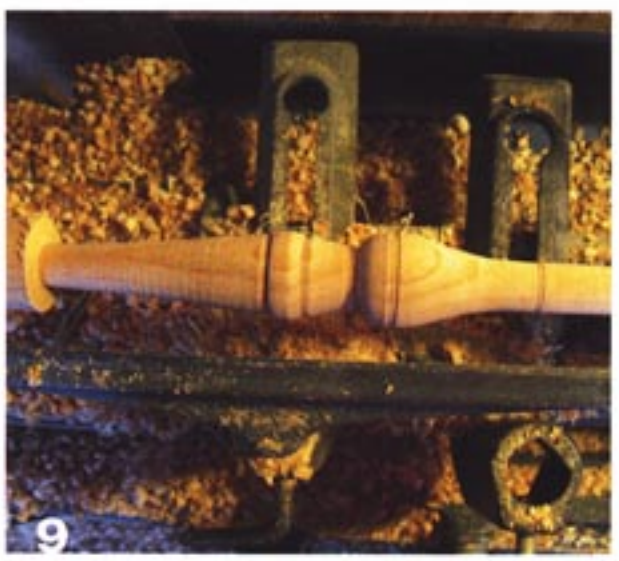
(Left) **A simple test block, made with the reamer for the project, can be used to test the fit of the tenon.**



Transfer the diameters from the template to the rounded leg blank.



The leg blank after sizing the diameters.



The rough turned leg.

Except for the tenon, the leg is finished and oiled. Note that the tenon has been left cylindrical. After drying in the kiln, it will be turned to the correct taper.

Making the top of the stool

Trace an oval template onto the seat plank, which should be planed to 1¼" thickness. You are now ready to drill mortise holes, which will later be reamed out for the tapered tenons. Each leg will cant out 107°. Determine that angle by eye with the help of sight lines. (*Drawing 7*)

I like to use mirrors, one parallel to the sight line and the other perpendicular, to help match the drill bit to the square and bevel square without moving my head. It is important that you see a small gap in the mirror between the drill bit and the measuring tools. Parallelism is easier to see when there is a small gap. (*Photo 11*)

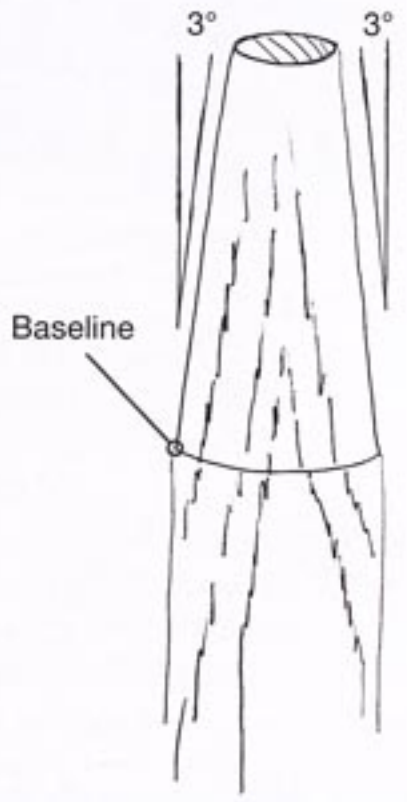
The angle of the mirrors in their holders is set at about 15°, which works for most average-height people. Taller folks may need to adjust the angles a bit. Drill the four holes from the bottom of the seat using a 7/16" diameter drill bit (or one that is slightly larger than the smallest diameter of the tenon).

Now it's time to ream the holes to receive the tapered tenons. Once again, you can use the mirrors, square, and angle to help sight the reamer, just as you did the drill bit.

Only take two or three turns before removing the reamer to clean out the shavings and check the angles. If you are using the shopmade reamer, you'll ▸

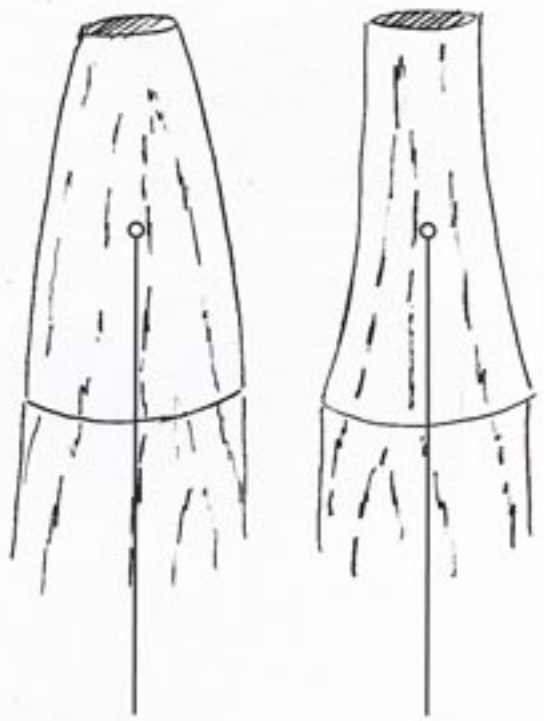
5 6° Taper Starting at the Baseline

The taper is sized by turning a baseline to the desired diameter and then tapering 3° from each side.



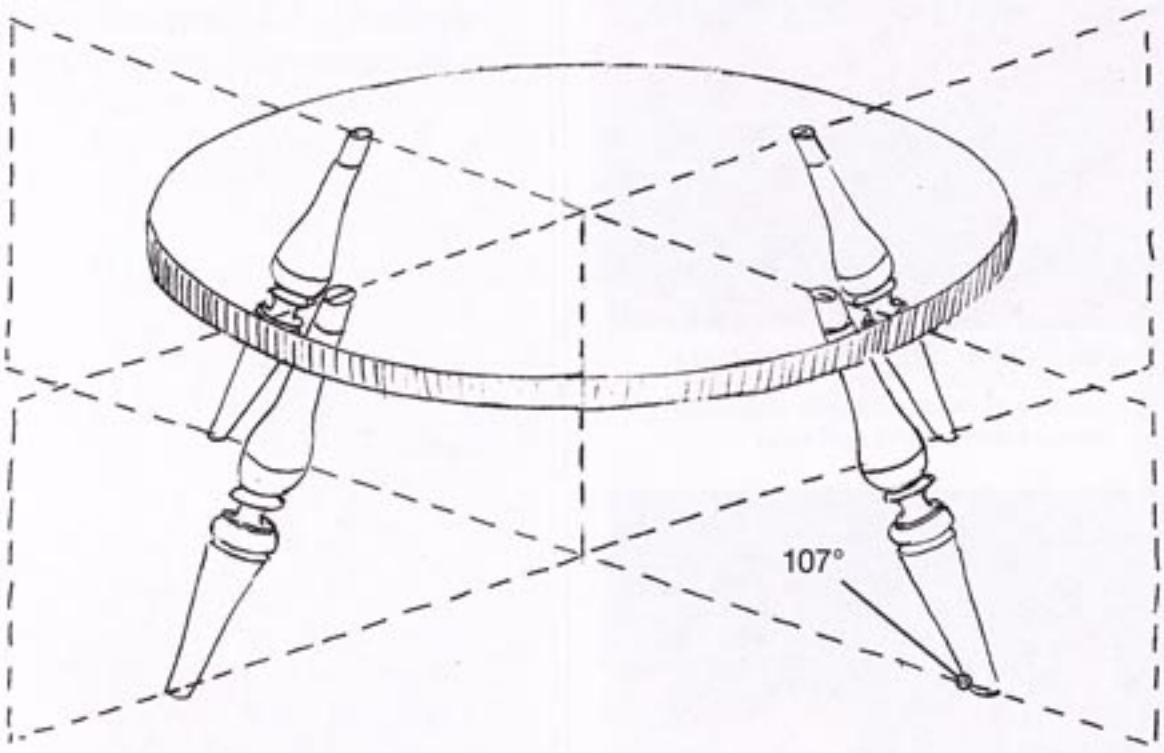
6 Bellied and Sunken Tenons

Misshaped tenons like the ones shown render poor fitting joints.



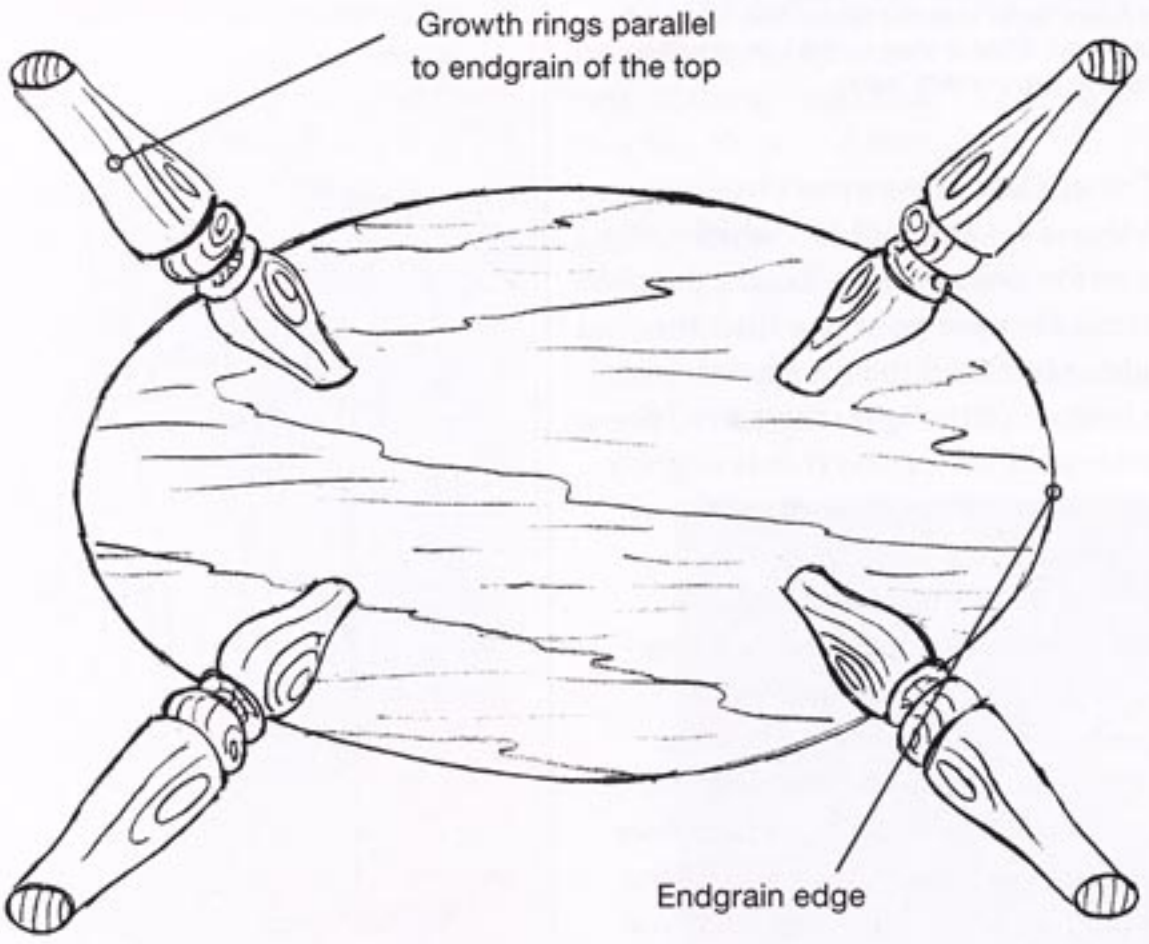
7 Drawing of Sight Lines

The legs lie in planes that intersect at the center of the top.

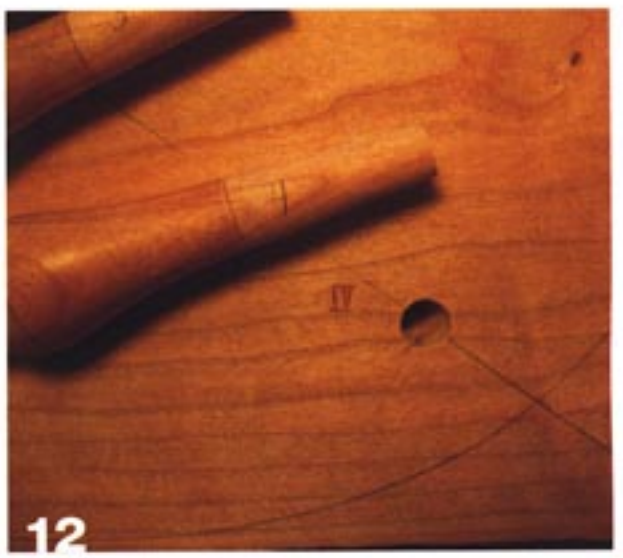


8 Legs in Alignment with the Top

Correctly orienting the grain direction in the legs with the grain direction in the top of the stool helps ensure that the seasonal swelling of the tenons doesn't split the wood.



Two mirrors, one parallel to the sight line and one perpendicular to it, are helpful aids to aligning the drill. A small gap between the drill bit and the measuring tools, as seen in the mirrors, shows the alignment.



Numbering the tenons and mortises ensures that the legs are assembled in the correct locations.

want to actually pull the blade from the slot to clean out any shavings that may have gotten jammed in the kerf.

By placing the reamer in the hole and viewing its alignment with the square and the bevel square, you can check the accuracy of the mortise. If the reamer is out of alignment, which it probably will be, make a mental note of which direction will correct it and ream once again. This time, put extra pressure laterally on the reamer in the direction you want the leg to move. It is vital that the reamer be fully seated in the mortise even when trying to adjust the alignment. Worse

than a slightly off leg is a misshaped mortise that will never hold. As soon as the leg will fit into the mortise, I use it to check the fit. Because each tenon may be slightly different in size, it is important to label each leg to correspond to a specific hole. (*Photo 12*)

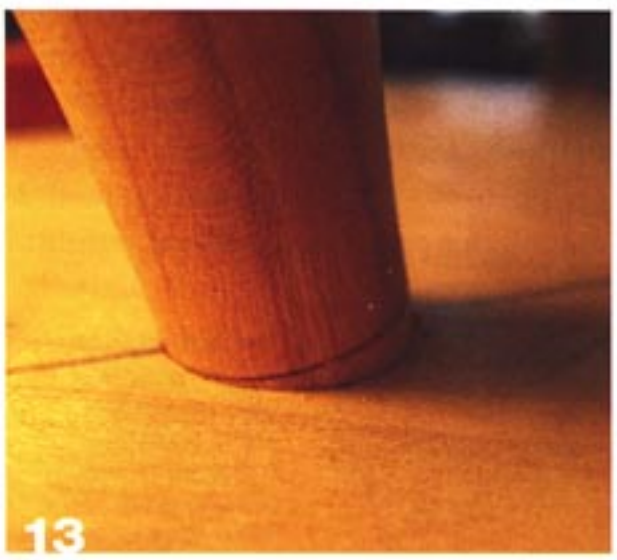
To finish, simply repeat these steps until the leg almost advances to the line that denotes the end of the tapered tenon. Stop about 1/32" shy to allow for pounding the leg into the mortise. (*Photo 13*)

I align the leg so that the growth rings are parallel to the endgrain of the seat. (*Drawing 8*)

This ensures that seasonal movement of the seat plank and the movement of the leg will be in harmony.

Reaming a leg is a lot like landing a plane. The pilot doesn't stop paying attention just because he is pointing in the right direction. The joint will change throughout the process even when you are not trying to adjust the alignment. It is easier to adjust the alignment early on when the reamer is making contact with less of the mortise than near the end. Attempts to make large changes in alignment often overshoot the goal.

Once all four mortises are reamed, place the legs in their respective holes and in proper alignment. Mark the tops perpendicular to the long fibers of the seat.



The tenon is reamed until the baseline makes contact with the entrance of the mortise.

Adding a saw kerf and wedge

Remove the legs and saw a kerf to within ¼" of the tenon baseline. (*Photo 14*)

Make your wedges out of the same wood as the stool or use a contrasting wood. They can be bandsawn or split from a small block of wood and shaved to shape.

After aligning the legs in the top of the stool, mark them for the wedges. Cut a thin kerf in the end of each tenon.

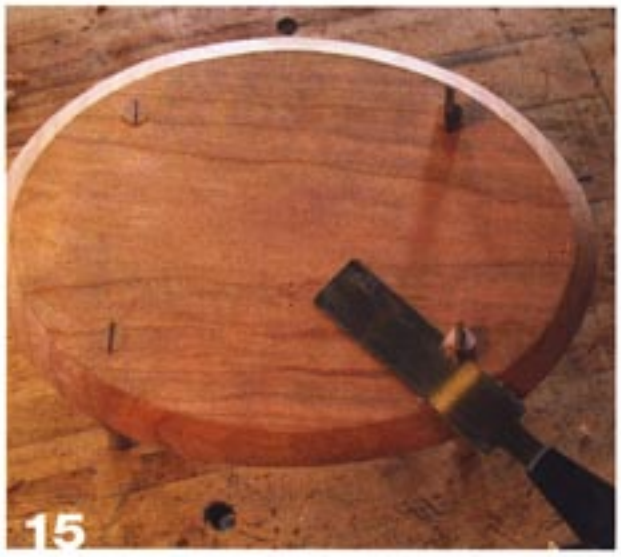
Bandsaw the wood for the top of the stool to an oval pattern. Bevel the edges. You are now ready to glue each leg in, one at a time.

Gluing the project

Start by putting hide glue in the mortise, then on the tenon. Orient the leg correctly and then knock it home with a mallet.

The noise will change to a dull thud when the tenon is fully seated. Take caution not to use overdue force. The taper can act as a wedge and split the seat! Once the tenon is seated, take a wedge and put glue on one side of it. Support the leg on the benchtop, and drive the wedge until it makes the dull thud.

Clean off the glue and let it dry overnight before trimming the top off,



Cut the protruding tenons flush to the top of the stool.

level to the seat. Cut the legs to level if needed. Finish sanding the stool, and apply whatever finish you prefer. (*Photo 15*)

The tapered mortise and tenon is a simple joint to make that packs some great rewards. By being able to adjust the mortise, I am able to take less than perfect, handshaped parts and assemble complex pieces. This joint has tamed the often daunting angles and curves involved in making chairs and given me a great deal of freedom. While there may be a learning curve to the reaming process, once it is in hand, you may just start seeing applications in your own work. ■

Peter Galbert, chairmaker, lives in Bethel, New York. He is the creator of the Galbert Caliper for woodturning. Read more about his chairmaking at www.petergalbertchairmaker.com.

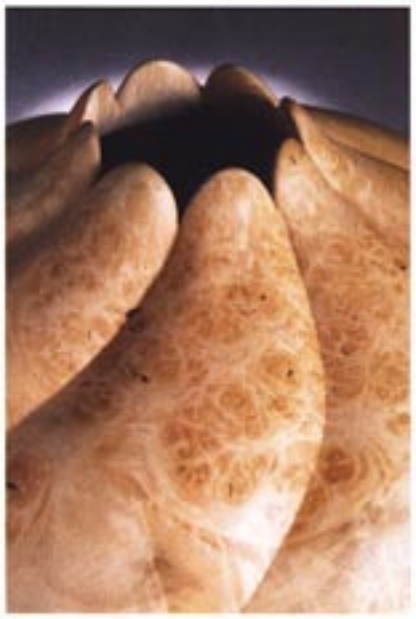
Turned and Carved Hollow Vessel

John Jordan

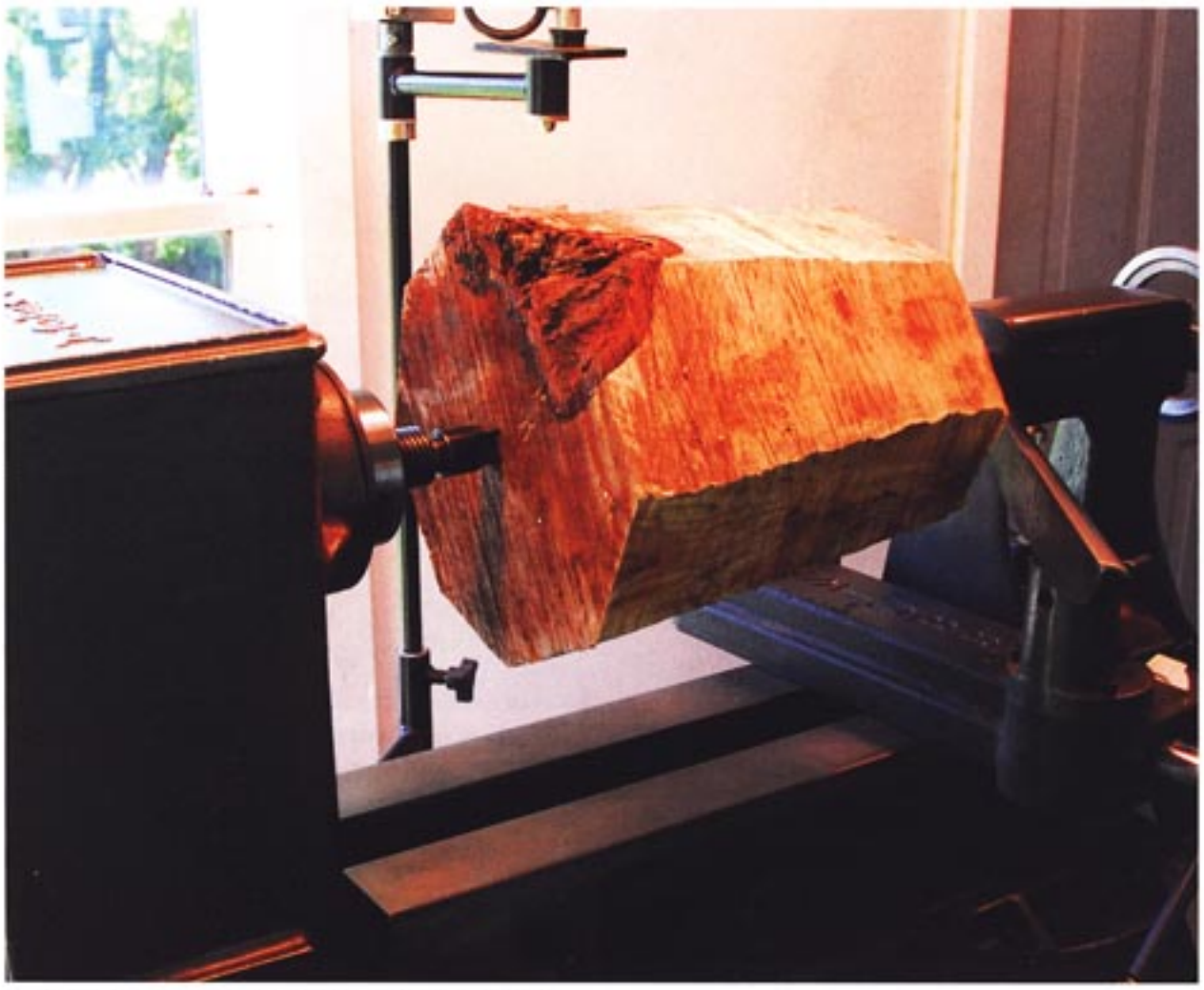
John Jordan, Silver maple burl vessel, 9" × 8"

Hollow-turned vessels with fairly small openings are the basis of all my work. They provide the perfect palette for the carving, surface treatments, and textures that are an integral part of what I make. Smooth, rough, patterned, or random, it is the look, feel, contrasts, and possibilities of these surfaces that keep me interested and motivated. In this article, I describe the basic steps I use to make a hollow vessel with carved spiral flutes.

Wood selection and orientation are very important in the success of a piece. Even if you are simply practicing or experimenting (which I strongly encourage), avoid the use of crappy wood, which will produce frustration and negative results. Nice, straight-grained fresh wood is best and it does not need to be fancy. Plain wood is just fine for practice and is what I often prefer for some of my carved pieces, particularly the ones I dye black. (For more information on wood and wood selection, see "Understanding Green Wood," *AW*, Spring 1998, or John's DVD, *The Aesthetics and Properties of Wood*.)

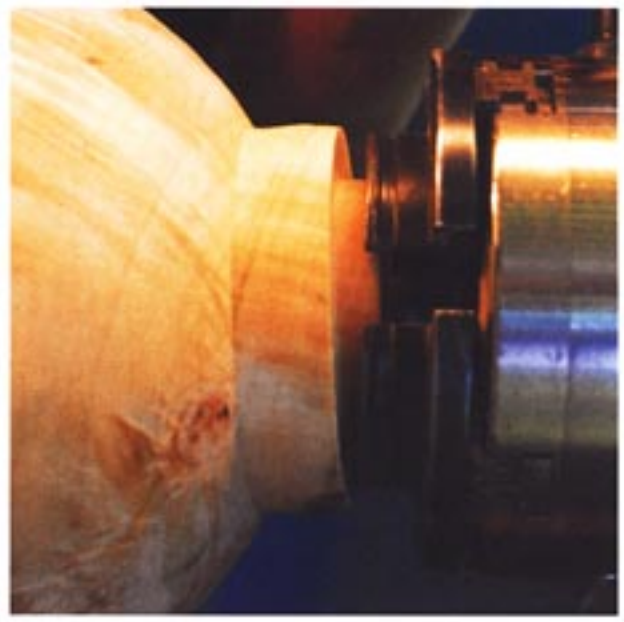


All of my work is turned from green wood, start to finish. There is little danger of cracking, as the wood is sound to begin with and the vessel will be turned relatively thin, allowing it to dry evenly. Thicknesses for most of my pieces range from around ¼" to as much as ½" for the vessels that will be deeply carved. I turn vessels both endgrain and sidegrain, and there is not a lot of difference in the making, but the visual difference may be quite dramatic. The apparent movement of the wood as it



Rough sawn blank mounted between centers.

Rough shaping between centers.



Mounting the roughed-out vessel in a chuck. The shoulder on the wood and the shoulder of the chuck must touch.

Rough shaping between centers using a ½" side-ground bowl gouge to establish a tenon for mounting in a chuck.

dries will typically be less noticeable with endgrain orientation.

The wood I'm using for this vessel is silver maple burl. Although burl may have grain going in many directions, this piece has a sidegrain orientation. The foot is oriented toward and centered on the pith of the log. This ensures that the movement will be symmetrical and that the burl eyes and figure are strongest on the top of the form.

Each day before turning, I do a little lathe maintenance. Every time I turn, I polish the toolrest with sandpaper and WD-40, then spray the bed and the moving parts of the toolrest base and spindle threads, then wipe it all down. Just the act of polishing and lubricating will improve your turning and the lathe parts will work easily and smoothly. I am near fanatical about this. Ask anyone who knows me.

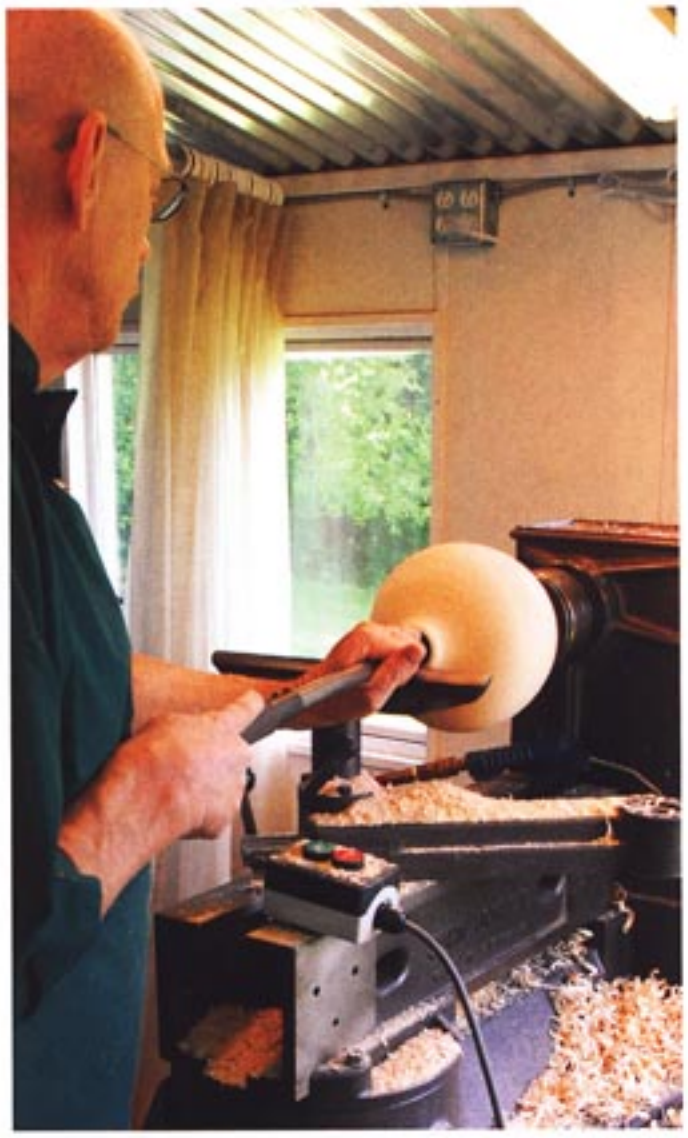
There are several ways to go about hollow turning, and the ones that are successful have one thing in common: a simple and basic step-by-step, logical approach. Everything I do in my turning is as simple as I have been able to make it. There is nothing complicated. I complete each step before moving on to the next.

Rough shaping the vessel

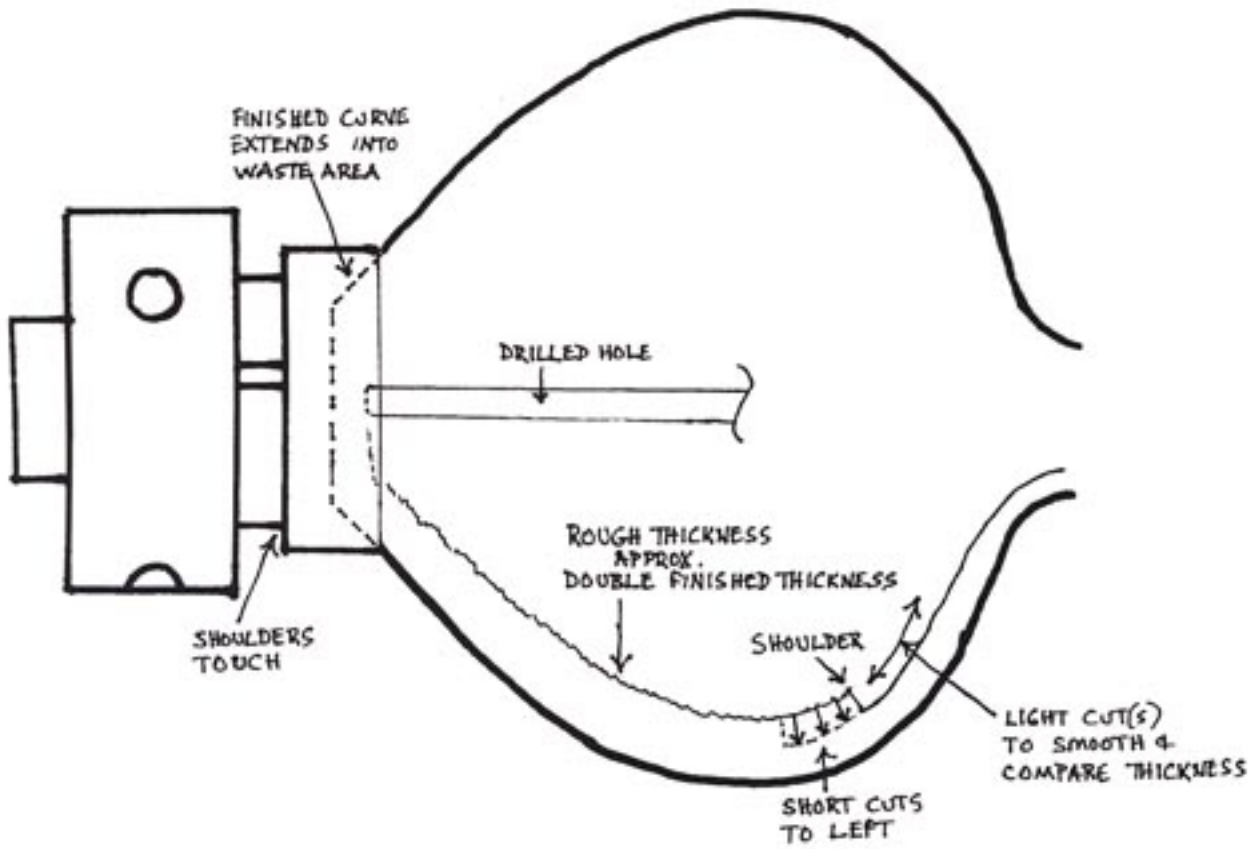
After selecting a log, I cut off several inches from the end, mark out my piece, and chainsaw it to square. I then cut the corners off. The first step at the lathe is to rough shape the wood. All of my pieces are started between centers, which allows me to shift the blank around. I can adjust for balance, ▸

Hook tool.

Blowing out shavings with compressed air.



Body position is upright and relaxed, tool handle next to body.



burr using a ceramic slipstone and use that burr to make the cut. The edge of the tool is presented to the wood at a 45° angle and pulled along the surface. This cut allows for a fine refinement of the shape and leaves a very smooth surface. This surface requires minimal sanding and it allows me to draw my layout lines without sanding.

Next, I use a small detail gouge to do any remaining shaping on the lip, which in this case is a simple rounded shape that will fit nicely with the carving to come. I use the same gouge to open up the vessel a bit, just inside the lip. I make a small dimple in the center as a point to start the drill bit.

Drilling for depth

I mark a ⅜" drill bit with a piece of tape to indicate the inside depth of the vessel. I typically eyeball the distance, but a straightedge can be helpful to lend accuracy. Accuracy is important, as too much wood left at the bottom is not desirable and too little wood is unfortunate indeed! The drill I use is about 15" long and I hold it in a pair of locking pliers. It's necessary to push the drill bit in an inch or so at a time, then pull it out to clear the chips, in order to keep the chips from swelling and binding the drill bit.

Tools for hollowing

The hollowing process is done with tools that I make: a straight tool and two different hook tools. This vessel will only require the #1 hook tool. These tools use a 3⁄16" square HSS

First cuts with a hook tool to open the shoulder.

Hollowing tools.

Expanding and contracting of left hand controls the tool movement.

Measuring wall thickness with calipers.

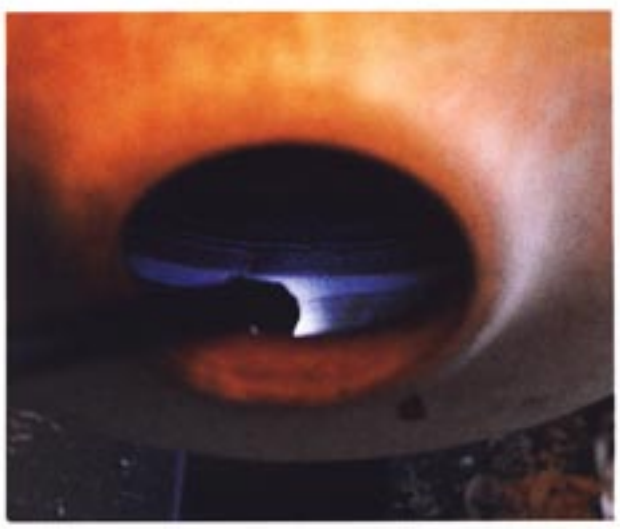
scraper tip with a full-round fingernail shape on the end. Larger tips can present too much cutting edge when working into the shoulder areas, making the tool difficult to control, which can lead to a catch. I sometimes use a slightly larger tip in the straight tool if I think it will allow me to take a somewhat larger cut without creating problems.

The design of this hook tool works because the cutting tip is near the centerline of the tool, so there is no rotational force or twist, as long as the toolrest is behind the hook portion of the tool. This geometry and the small-diameter scraper tips make these tools very easy to control.

An arm-brace handle of my own design is my preference, and the Stewart and Sorby handles work well, too. These arm-brace handles are particularly well suited to short-bed lathes. Your lathe should be about elbow height at the spindle to get the most out of the arm-brace handles. Some people like straight handles and others use some of the various versions of a captured handle. The captured handles or systems are fine and may be helpful to the casual turner, but I prefer handheld tools because they are less cumbersome. As much as possible, simple is better; however, I do on occasion use a captured handle on a really large piece. Often, these types of handles/systems use a laser as a thickness gauge. Again, there is nothing wrong with that, it works well, but it does add complexity. Regardless of the type of handle, the ▸

Wiping paraffin (wax) on toolrest and tool to reduce friction before final cuts are made.

Ready to reverse turn.



Checking finished thickness, shoulder, and rough thickness with a light.

Turning a tenon and shoulder on a waste block to fit the vessel's opening.

hook tool advantages are the same, as is the process of hollowing.

Hollowing the vessel

In a sidegrain piece, the direction of cut is not too important, so I'll cut whichever way is most convenient or easiest. On larger pieces there may be chatter when cutting to the side, so I'll make the cuts toward the center, which puts the load along the axis where there is more support. As most of the mass is removed, this tendency to chatter lessens. I use the straight tool first and alternate with the hook tool, using whichever is most convenient for removing the bulk of the wood, yet still leaving plenty of thickness.

It's important to stop often and blow out the shavings since fighting them will result in difficulty and possibly breaking something. As more waste is removed, I can make more progress each time because there is more room for shavings inside the vessel. This rough shaping of the inside continues until the depth of the hole is reached.

The next stage is to reduce the wall to a fairly even thickness and to smooth the inside surface. At this point, I'm aiming for a wall thickness approximately double the finished thickness. I make short cuts to the left, then move the tool back to compare that cut to the previous cut and I smooth the wall as I go. These cuts are controlled by my left hand expanding and contracting on the toolrest to make short, smooth movements. The only cuts up and down

Revolving tailstock center is used to put light pressure on the vessel against the waste block.

The newly turned area is finished with a shear scraper.

The vessel's bottom is made slightly concave and the nub is turned smaller.

Waste area is carefully turned away.

the wall are to lightly smooth the previous inch or two.

Finishing cuts

I *always* put a fresh burr on the cutter for the finish cuts. I also wipe a block of paraffin along the toolrest and the shaft of the hook tool. This helps me to feel the tip cutting rather than feeling the tool dragging along the toolrest and it's also helpful in getting smooth, even surfaces inside the vessel.

Starting inside the top of the vessel, I make several cuts reducing the thickness by about half, smoothing along for an inch or two, leaving a distinct shoulder where I stop. I measure the thickness, using just my fingers for this first section. Farther in I will use calipers to measure thickness. There are now two references: the known thickness of the part I just finished and the shoulder that was left. I locate the shoulder with the tip of the tool and just lift away. I turn the lathe on and make one, two, or three cuts to the left, then move the tool up the wall and compare those cuts to the known thickness, smoothing as needed. There's a rhythm to this that is pretty easy to pick up.

I blow out the shavings and then check the thickness with calipers. This vessel will be about ⅜" thick, leaving enough thickness for carving. I may take a look with my light, which helps me keep a mental picture of where I am. I want a relatively smooth and even surface inside the vessel. Tool marks are appropriate to the piece, but lumps and bumps are not. If there is a bump or rough area, I ▸

Faceplate Attachment

For larger vessels or for an alternative to using a chuck, a faceplate provides a secure and solid mount that's hard to beat. In these photos, the piece has a bit of extra wood so that the screw holes will not be an issue. If you need to use the full depth of the wood, a larger faceplate and/or consideration of the shape of the vessel will allow the finished form to fit within the holes made by the screws.

Measure the inside opening of your faceplate.

Add a few thousandths of an inch and turn and measure a short tenon on the bottom of your vessel.

Remove the waste nub if it is too long.

Slightly thread the faceplate onto the tenon.

I'm using #12, 1¼" screws (SPAX brand) to secure this particular faceplate to the vessel.

Photos: John Jordan


The remaining nub is pared away using a hand chisel.


Turning is complete.

note it relative to the shoulder, which makes it easy to find and smooth up. I continue this process until I reach the bottom of hole I drilled. The shorter the sections, the less danger of cutting too thin, but on a good day I can do a long section before stopping to measure. Also, at this stage, shavings will accumulate and may interfere with the cut.

This step-by-step process of small cuts reducing the thickness and smoothing short sections at a time continues right to the bottom. When I reach the bottom, I make a light pass across, blending the bottom into the side. If the cuts look good and the thickness is correct, hollowing is finished.

Preparing the vessel for remounting and finishing the bottom

Turning away the unfinished area at the base is next. Insert a waste block into the chuck and turn a tenon and shoulder of a size to just fit snugly inside the opening of the vessel, but not tight or tapered, as that would split the piece. I place the opening of the vessel over the tenon and rest it against the shoulder, then bring up the revolving center of the tailstock. On the bottom of this vessel, there is an accurate center mark left over from the initial rough turning, which helps center the vessel. The piece will be held with light pressure from the tailstock.

I turn away the excess wood with light cuts. The vessel is being driven by friction only. At this point, I'm

Initial carving is done with a reciprocating carver and V-gouge.

Spiral flutes are partially roughed in.

Rough shaping with pneumatic die grinder and carbide burr.

Defining the spiral lines with a small round rasp.

careful not to remove too much wood too soon. I want the shape to continue, flowing down to the base or bottom. I use the gouge and shear scraper to smooth up this last bit before turning a slight concavity in the bottom and turning away most of the remaining nub.

When finished with turning the vessel, I remove it from the lathe and use a sharp carving gouge to remove the last bit of the nub. The bottom will have a subtle carved texture at the very end of the carving process.

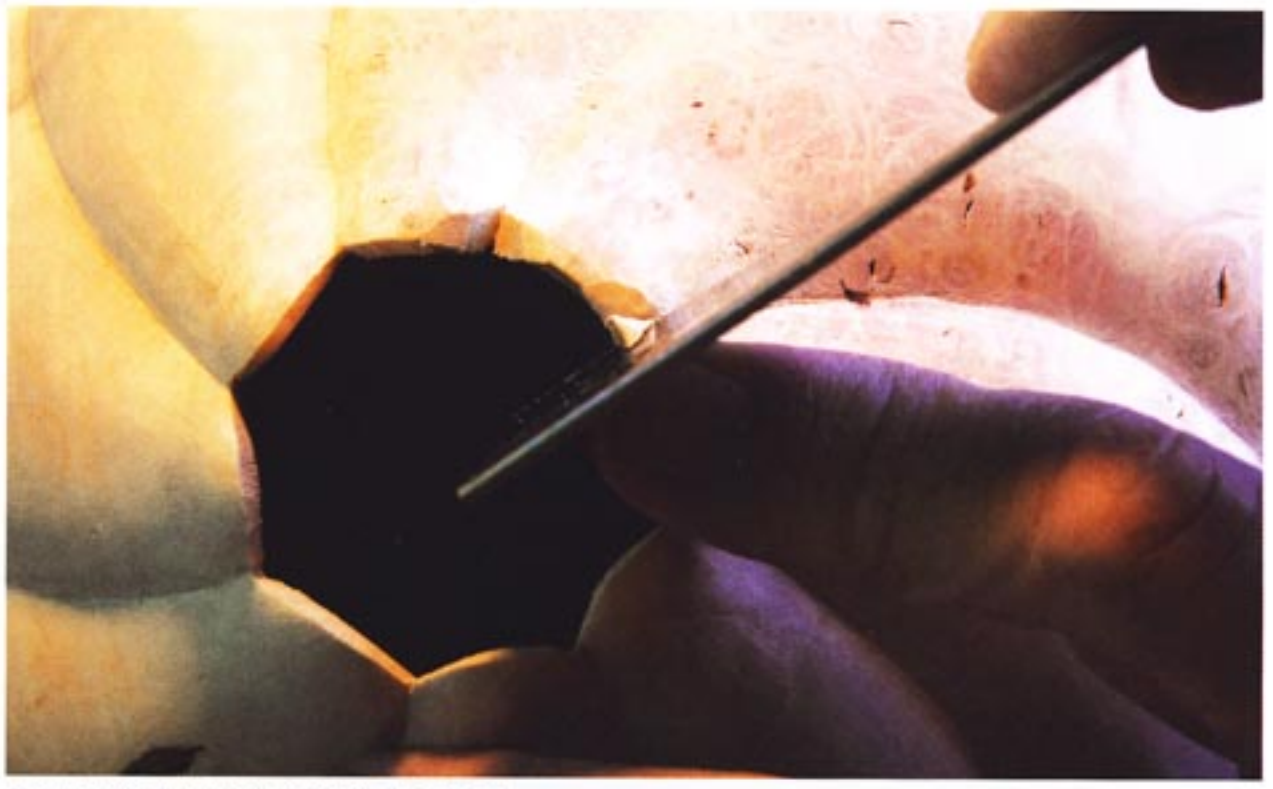
This piece is still quite wet, so I use compressed air to blow out the free water. This will help prevent light-colored wood from becoming stained as a result of fungal growth. There is some evidence of staining in the wood already, but I don't want it to go all gray and muddy looking. After spending a few minutes blowing out the free water, I put the piece into a cabinet, to moderate the air flow and slow the drying enough to prevent cracking. It will take a week or two to dry and I don't want to start any heavy carving before then, as the wood could crack along the thinner areas. Some textures and carving can be done on the green vessels, if the thickness isn't changed very much.

Carving the vessel

My friend Carol Ventura, who did the photography for this article, is going to be the owner of the vessel. She requested spiral flutes and a smooth surface, a good choice for this highly figured burl.

I start by dividing the vessel into eight segments using vertical lines. I ▸

Further shaping with wood rasps and files.



Shaping the vessel's lip with small saw.

Sanding, using a flexible, leather-padded stick.

Further shaping of the lip using a carving knife.

then draw one line around the circumference about two-thirds of the way up. This forms a very simple grid for drawing spirals from corner to corner of each grid block. I do the layout and drawing by hand and by eye. I like the quality that results from this type of process. Using an index causes the work to look like it has been jigged and machined.

I start by defining the spirals with a reciprocating carver using a V-gouge. The spirals are then rough shaped with a pneumatic die grinder and a nonferrous "Aluma-Cut" spiral-cut burr. These burrs also come in a steel or ferrous metals cutting version that have twice as many teeth and are less aggressive. This tool removes the excess wood quickly, but it is very aggressive and things can go wrong rather quickly, so I take care at this stage. I used to carve by hand with large carving gouges. That works well and is considerably less violent, but is much slower.

The rough-carved spirals are then defined further with rasps. I use the Nicholson 49 and 50, and I really like the Auriou rasps from France, although they are currently hard to come by. Sanding sticks, padded with leather and sticky-backed paper are very effective for further refinement. I make these from sawn strips of thin hardwood for flexibility. I also use fine jewelers files, in addition to finer grits of sandpaper. After the spirals have been sanded to about 150-grit, I

Refining the lip with a file.

Detailing the spiral line with fine-tooth riffler.

Sanding the lip.

The surface of the vessel is wetted between each round of sanding and detailing.

Some of my favorite carving tools.

use a small craft saw, a carving knife, V-gouge, and rasps to shape and refine the tips of the spirals at the opening of the vessel.

After each step of sanding, I wet the piece. This pops up any damaged grain and makes it easy to see where I need to sand, file, or carve. These final steps take a large investment in time. It's all about the detailing. There will be many small adjustments with the small V-gouge and files along with using more sandpaper. I will continue wetting the piece between rounds of 320-grit until the vessel is completely smooth and no defects can be seen. I use a small riffler to provide a shadow line between the spirals. Finally, I flatten the bottom with a sanding block and lightly carve it with a shallow gouge.

I use acrylic artist's fixative for finish, Krylon Crystal Clear in matte or Krylon Matte Finish. I spray a couple of light coats, let it dry and rub with 0000 steel wool, then apply a couple more light coats. I usually rub with the steel wool again and polish with a paper towel. If it looks just right, I'm done. If not, I'll do another couple of light coats. The last thing I do is sign my name, using an electric engraver. ■

John Jordan is a woodturner from Cane Ridge (Nashville), TN, and has been an AAW member since year one. John's work, articles, and tools can be seen at www.johnjordanwoodturning.com.

Photos: Carol Ventura

"California Contours" Exhibit, 2008

"California Contours" is an annual exhibit that combines woodturning with fiber arts for a month-long exhibit and sale at the San Luis Obispo Art Center, San Luis Obispo, California (www.sloartcenter.org). The event was sponsored, in part, by fifteen California chapters of the AAW and hosted by the Central Coast Woodturners.

Thirty-five turned objects were selected for initial presentation from eighty-eight entries by Tennessee wood artist, John Jordan. Top award winners were selected by jurors, Skip Shaw, Collectors of Wood Art; Lauren Luker, architect; and Bud Tullis, furniture maker.

Best of Show
Dewey Garrett, *R & B Box,*
Blackwood,
Turned on an ornamental lathe,
2" × 3"

Curator's Choice
Dewey Garrett,
Penrose tile box,
Canary wood,
2¾" × 3"

1st Runner Up
Mike Jackofsky,
Natural edge hollow form,
Maple burl,
12" × 16"

2nd Runner Up
Joshua Salesin, *Cosmic Burst,*
Osage orange,
Rose engine turned,
5½" × 9"

Burns / Costelle
Keith Burns, Ebony finial,
Robin Costelle, Curly maple segmented box,
10" × 3½"

Turning, Inspiration, and Friendship

Keith Burns

I was in my shop turning one afternoon and began thinking about offering a challenge to a couple of friends, Robin Costelle from Kentucky and Ed Koenig from New Jersey. I know them from the World of Woodturners' Internet forum. I decided to send them one of my signature exclamation-point finials with the challenge to "put something under it." Their response was amazing and it was an inspiration to see what Robin and Ed came up with.

In return, Robin sent Ed and me one of his signature pedestals and challenged us to "put something on it." I asked for nothing in return, but received so much more than I ever could have asked for. We now have turnings in our collections that have a part of each of us in them. More important though, it has galvanized friendships. Someday I will meet Ed and Robin in person and I know it will be like seeing old friends. ■

(Right) **Costelle / Burns**
Robin Costelle, Blackwood pedestal,
Keith Burns, Spalted maple box and ebony finial,
12½" × 2¾"

(Top right) **Costelle / Koenig**
Robin Costelle, Blackwood pedestal,
Ed Koenig, Yellow birch hollow form and blackwood finial,
13" × 4½"

Burns / Koenig
Keith Burns,
Ebony finial,
Ed Koenig,
Cocobolo box
with carved feet,
12" × 2"

Secret Box

Secret Box, 2008, Pierre Delétraz, France. The password for opening is "SPINDLES." Turn the ring for the password. The idea of this project is to show various civilizations: the column is Tuscan, the letters on the ring are from Latin and Greek, and the inside column has Egyptian characters. Open the box and discover a tube with a trembler piece. The box is turned from sycamore maple, the trembler is made from service tree, and the finish is a crackle varnish.

Pierre made this piece for the Professional Outreach Program's third annual exhibit and auction. The theme for 2009 is "the spindle" and the finished object should measure no larger than 12" × 4" × 4". Pieces for this show will be on display, then auctioned, at the AAW symposium in Albuquerque. A catalog of the show will be available from www.woodturner.org.