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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Art Liestman

Our December field trip was a great deal of fun. See Myrna Berera's article for details. Thanks to Fred Baldwin and Jack Bothell for organizing it!

Hopefully everyone has had a bit of a midwinter break that included some time in the shop. I'm looking forward to seeing the President's challenge items for January – you know, that paperweight that you've been working on for the past two months!

Since the November meeting, we have been busy arranging classes with Stuart Batty for the end of January and beginning of February – see the article on page 5 of the newsletter. Unfortunately, we were unable to squeeze in a demonstration for Stuart on this trip. Sorry about that! However, we have just arranged for his father, Allan Batty, to visit us in August. I hope that will make up for it. Next up, Christian Burchard will be doing a demonstration and two days of classes in mid March.



NEXT MEETING ON JANUARY 23, 2002

at the Sapperton Pensioners Hall
318 Kearny St., New Westminster

Focus on Fundamentals

(Starts at 6:30 p.m.)

LEVEL 1 – Mounting Systems I

Spur centers and faceplates

LEVEL 2 – Interesting Projects I

One of String-o-Beads, Tops
or Honey Dipper

LEVEL 3 –Basic Cuts III

Using a bowl gouge and scrapers

MAIN EVENT:

Art Liestman will demonstrate
how he turns a vessel, then
carves and dyes the outside.

A Reminder for the January Meeting Food Providers

We ask that the following members please provide some food for the meeting on January 23rd:

David Donnan, John Flanagan, Andrew Forrest, Norm Forshaw, Andrew Forsyth, Ted Fromson, George Geurts.

(Food is supplied in alphabetical rotation. Your contributions are greatly appreciated. Yum!)

GOLD LEAF GILDING TECHNIQUES WITH BRIAN DELORA

Myrna Berera

On December 15, 2001 at 9:30a.m., the members of the GVWG were invited to Brian Delora's workshop to observe the whole process of Gilding with gold and silver leaf.



Brian mixes French chalk with Rabbit Skin glue to make Gesso Grosso.

Brian began by introducing himself to the 30 members that gathered around his work tables and gave us a brief history as to how he became a Gilder.

He instructed us on how to prepare and seal raw wood frames before gilding by painting them with warm rabbit skin glue. The rabbit skin is placed between sheets of newspaper and hammered before heating in a double boiler. It's important to make sure that the glue doesn't boil. The proportions were 80 grams of rabbit skin glue to 32 ounces of water and after heating to dissolve he let this sit overnight.

To make the Gesso Grosso formula which is used to fill holes or restore frames, he uses 8 ounces of rabbit skin liquid to 8 ounces of French violet natural chalk, which is very absorbent. To this



Sample frame prepared for Gilding with real gold leaf.

he added cheap toilet paper to make a poo-like substance (sic). This is stirred slowly with a wooden spoon while heating so no water bubbles form. It is then pushed through a food strainer several times. If a crackled effect is desired he adds corn starch.

This Gesso Grosso formula is then brushed over the entire frame using six coats. It is brushed wet on wet, continuously to avoid cracking. He then used a wet rag to rub the frame smooth.

After this, a clay coat, which consists of one teaspoon of clay to 2 teaspoons of food grade gelatin and a bit of distilled water was painted onto the frame. Each coat must be totally dry before adding the next. This clay can be obtained in twelve different colours and the colour chosen will affect the burnished colour.



Sample frame prepared for Gilding using artificial gold.



With a steady hand Brian applies artificial gold to frame.

The frame was sanded with a white Scotch-Brite pad to cut down on the burnishing.

A coating of gilding liqueur was then brushed on. It consisted of ten ounces of water to two ounces of 20% rubbing alcohol, and 1/4 teaspoon edible gelatin.

At this point the decision is made to use either real gold leaf or imitation gold leaf. If using imitation gold leaf the frame is first prepared with two coats of oil shellac consisting of equal parts of orange shellac and thinner.

The gold leaf was applied using a holder made of a rectangular foam core with velvet glue at the long edge. The gold leaf was patted down with



Brian brushes on real gold leaf on a prepared frame.

cheesecloth and the corners were tapped in with a mica-powdered brush. Up to five coats of gold leaf can be applied and the higher and brighter the gold leaf the better the end result. A squirrel tip is used for gold leaf and a badger tip for silver leaf. To prevent static charge he applied chapstick to his cheek and rubbed the top against the chapstick before handling the gold or silver leaf.

After the gold leaf was applied, it was burnished with an agate or wolf tooth burnisher resulting in a rich, deep gold finish.

He mentioned that when using real gold leaf on wood turnings make sure you start on top so no gilding water drips on and stains the gold leaf.

After a break for lunch we demonstrated finishing techniques. The finished piece was



Brian demonstrates burnishing gold on a woodturned piece.

lacquered to get a dark modern finish or can be shellaced to get a softer, older look.

The gold leaf can be sprayed with a crystal clean Krylon lacquer or on textured wood, ash falcom tar can be brushed on and tapped with a cheese cloth and then dried. Another method is using a white shellac mixed with black tempera powder that can be flicked on.

The whole day was filled with fascinating information and interspersed with lunch in China Town.

Thank you Brian for your precise, clear instruction and formulas on how to gild with gold or silver leaf.

A LETTER IN THE AFTERMATH OF SEPT 11

Reprinted from American Woodturner

Friends of the Greater Vancouver Woodturners Guild, I would like to thank all of you for welcoming me to Vancouver, B.C. and hosting me to demonstrate and teach some of my passion for wood turning. Due to the terrorist attacks on September 11 that stole the entire world's attention and just three days before I arrived, this trip developed into something quite special. Even in hindsight it is difficult for me to express how deeply this international trip meant to me professionally and personally.

I was deeply shocked and then stunned by watching this tragedy unfold on television and was left with a feeling of "Now what should I do?" It was my great fortune that your organization had made the commitment that would let me answer this question with the resolve and confidence that I normally count on in my daily life.

The day after the tragedy your club president, Art Liestman called me on the phone to see if I would want or need to cancel the trip. His concern of course was due to the inevitable uncertainties that this terrible tragedy brought upon us all. We sheepishly discussed the logistics of getting across the border and whether it would be better off to postpone the trip for the sake my wife and daughter. Mutually we decided that any difficulties that might arise would be worth overcoming and we made the decision to continue with our plans as they were originally laid out months before.

Upon arrival in Vancouver I was touched by the universal concern I felt from those of you I came in contact with. Almost everyone made a point to ask me how it was getting across the border and expressed, in one way or another, that "we were all in this together." Even when it was not openly expressed, I could feel the sense that we were all dealing with the tragedy the only way we could and this is by doing what woodturners do the best. We share ourselves and our craft with a passion that is truly unique and special. We were a long way from "Ground Zero" that

weekend, but in spite of the tragedy we made a lot of wood chips, enjoyed telling stories and in a small way and we helped to "keep the world turning".

Because of all of you in the Greater Vancouver Woodturners' Guild, I will no longer refer to these mad men as terrorists. They could not terrorize us enough to stop our humble, but nevertheless international, get-together. From now on I will only refer to them as, "the evil doers," for this is truly all they really are.

Donald Derry

RUDY OSOLNIK

Stan Clarke

The winter issue of the "American Woodturner" contained the following announcement: "Rude Ozolnik, Dean of U.S. turners dies. Rudy Ozolnik, one of the worlds master turners, died at his home on Poverty Ridge in Berea, KY on November 18, 2001. He was 86."

I met Rudy in the summer of 1990 when he was the star presenter at the first Woodturner's Symposium produced by Ian Waymark in Abbotsford. Rudy was a terrific turner, a great story teller and a real gentleman. I seldom pick up a skew without remembering the time Rudy was demonstrating tool sharpening and someone asked him how he would sharpen a skew. His reply was, "I would pick it up by the handle with my right hand – and throw it as far away as possible". Rudy did not like skews. He told of buying a large box of tool steel from a war surplus store from which he made his own turning tools. The "Ozolnik Candlesticks" are world famous. He told about getting up at four in the morning, turning candlesticks until six, then breakfast and to work. Rudy said he "made thousands of them" and they had put his kids through college.

As part of the symposium a contest was held with the theme of "TIME". My entry was an hourglass. This had an Indian Rosewood base, two uprights of Prima Vera (a light coloured

wood) and a cylinder of occobolo hollowed out and with windows which contained the hourglass and which swung between the two uprights. I was quite proud of it but Rudy, the juror, rejected it. During the symposium dinner I asked Rudy about it and he said that the concept was good and the piece was well turned, but he disliked (no HATED) the light-coloured uprights. The piece sat on a shelf in my shop for several years until one day I was looking for something to put into the Cloverdale contest, so I dug it out, cut off the uprights and replaced them with cocobolo. The piece won an honourable mention and was sold to a lawyer for a very good price. During a conversation with Rudy at the AAW symposium at Tacoma three years ago I reminded him about the piece, told him I had remembered his criticism, had modified the piece, and subsequently sold it. Rudy smiled, patted me on the shoulder and said, "I am so glad my criticism did you some good". I am two years older than Rudy but he made me feel like a schoolboy.

STUART BATTY CLASSES

Art Liestman

The very talented and energetic young English woodturner, Stuart Batty, will be teaching several courses for us at the end of January and into February.

Stuart, a third generation woodturner, began turning at the age of twelve, learning from his father Allan Batty. At the age of sixteen he started working for his father's woodturning business as a production spindle turner and teacher. He spent several years as in-house demonstrator and teacher at Craft Supplies Ltd. in England and has also been very busy setting up and running sawmills in the UK and in four different African countries. He has demonstrate at over thirty International Woodturning Seminars in ten different countries including the annual AAW Symposium. He makes his living from teaching and demonstrating woodturning, as well as making pieces for British galleries.

I was lucky enough to take a 5-day course from Stuart about 2¹/₂ years ago. It was a wonderful

experience. He is an exceptional teacher and I highly recommend his classes. You won't regret being able to learn from Stuart.

On this trip, Stuart is offering two types of classes – a two-day "techniques" class and a three-day "making" class. The classes will be held at KMS Tools in Coquitlam from 9:30 to approximately 5pm each day and will cost \$150 per day for each participant.

The two-day class has changed slightly from last time he was here and is structured much more to improving the students' skills in all areas of woodturning. The students will make several bowls but none of the work will be finished in class. The focus is strictly on improving turning skills. Stuart believes that this is the very best way to dramatically improve ones skills in cutting. Students will acquire an understanding of how the tools work. Each student will also be able to grind and sharpen well before the two day class is complete.

The three-day class is only available to those who have attended the two-day class either this year or last. This class follows up on the two-day class and will be focused more on making objects.

There will be three 2-day classes:

Monday, January 28 –
Tuesday, January 29;
Thursday, January 31 –
Friday, February 1;
Saturday, February 2 –
Sunday, February 3.

There will be one 3-day class from Monday, February 4 through Wednesday, February 6. At the time of this writing, there are still places available in the first two 2-day classes and in the 3-day class. Contact me as soon as possible for a space or to be put on the waiting list. If you are taking a 2-day class and think you might want to add the 3-day class, let me know.

*Goblet by
Stuart Batty*



BEN'S WOOD

Stan Clarke

Ben is a river man. He works on the Fraser, pile driving dredging, etc. But in between jobs he cuts "Music Wood". The musical instrument makers want figured maple but they only want white wood. So if Ben cuts a big maple the part near the stump is stained and they don't want it, but woodturners do. I seldom get nice tidy turning blanks from Ben – he brings huge blocks in his pickup and that is a problem. Ben is six foot three of solid muscle so he can lift a 200 pound block off his truck and set it down in my wood yard. I am five foot eight of solid flab, so bring out the chainsaw.

I was roughing out a piece of Ben's wood to make a bowl when I cut into a large nail. I am always wary of "Back Yard" or "Farm Yard" wood but this was cut in the bush north of Hope. I tried to pull the nail out but although it was loose it would not come out. I finally gave up and took a hatchet to the piece and found, to my surprise, a two-piece porcelain insulator on the nail into which was attached a piece of copper wire. According to the position of the block in the tree and the growth rings, this nail went into the tree a long long time ago. It is obviously part of an old "bush telephone", but from where to where? Did it go to a small mine, a survey camp, loggers or what?

On another occasion I was turning a bowl from Ben's wood and I saw something flashing as it turned. I stopped the lathe and found that it was a .22 calibre bullet which, being lead, was cutting just as nicely as the maple. I pried the remains of the bullet out and continued turning. I soon ran into another bullet and another then a nail, soon I had removed five bullets and two nails. The piece had gone from a 12" deep bowl to a small fruit bowl on a stand. While cutting the inside I hit two more bullets but by that time the piece was too thin to remove the bullets so I left them there and finished the bowl bullets and all. According to the growth rings those bullets went into a small tree about 80 years ago. The tree survived (no lead poisoning) and grew into a huge figured maple. But who shot it? Picture a group of prospectors, surveyors, hunters or maybe the guys that put up the bush telephone,

sitting around after dinner on a summer evening. They start to argue about their prowess with a rifle and to settle the argument they nail a target to a small maple and fire away. At least one of them was a lousy shot because some bullets were seven inches away from the others.

I was participating in a group show at the Pendulum Gallery in Vancouver and needed every piece in my shop. So I named the piece "Bullet Bowl" and mounted the bullets and nails on a card to which I attached my story of the bullets and how they got there. A customer bought the piece to take as a gift to friends in Scotland and I eventually received a very nice card saying how much they appreciated the bowl and the story. Reminds me of the old saying: "It's an ill wind that blows nobody some good".



IMPROVE YOUR STANDING IN COMPETITIONS

Bruce Campbell

I participated in the AAW Discussion List on-line. Herb Ishii from Hawaii posted a question about what to do differently when turning objects to enter into competitions. I thought some of you might be interested in my response:

I have had the good fortune to chair the West Coast Woodturning Competition for the last two years. This year we distributed \$4000 in prize money and lots of merchandise prizes too. One of my duties was to assist the judges as they made their evaluations. Here is what I have overheard and been told over and over by a wide range of judges including well-known turners like Bonnie Klein, Jason Marlow, Fred Holder, and other craftspeople such as potters, gallery curators, etc.

First the finish – it must be superb. The rule in competitive turning appears to be a flawless finish or a well-executed texture. Tear-out and tool marks are simply not acceptable. Sanding marks are only slightly less tolerable. I watched lots of pieces get left on the table because the

judges did not like the finish. Similarly, I have seen quite modest pieces given awards based on a superb finish. The actual kind of finish is not so important except that it must look and feel great.

Next, what happens around shoulders and corners? If a curve flows into a corner it must be sanded into that shape. If the curve “washes out” as it approaches the corner or edge you will lose points.

Then comes form – this one is a little more difficult to express but let me try. First, curves need to be continuous. That is, they should flow smoothly and consistently from where they start to where they end. There should not be any waves or bumps in them. Curves should also be complementary, both visually and tactually. On a bowl, the wall does not need to be the same thickness throughout. Indeed, some such as Richard Raffin, suggest that the inside and outside curves should vary but must be complementary. He does an excellent job of explaining this in one of his books, but I forget which one.

This concept applies to curves on each side a piece as well. For example, take a standard American football and stand it on end. Look at the form. As a football it is perfect but as a turned vessel it leaves something to be desired. For example, the widest point is in the middle. Now, just take that object and raise the middle to about two thirds of the height (actually 62% of the way – check out The Golden Proportion). Suddenly the thing takes on a much more pleasing shape. Now, visually extend the curves of a bowl or vessel into the foot and ask where do the curves intersect. In our football case the object ends on a point that meets almost exactly on the surface it is standing on and “looks” very tippy. Now, put a foot on it. Depending on what kind of foot you put on it the intersection of the sides may be above or below the surface (say, a table) that it is sitting on. If the point is below the table the object will look “heavy” or settled into the table. If it is above the table then the form will look “lighter” or lifted. Now, if the piece “looks” heavy but feels light it may be a pleasing surprise to the viewer – or an unpleasant contradiction. This is something you, as the turner, have to play with. The study of these

concepts has been going on for thousands of years. The Greeks expressed the use of ratio and visual lift in vessels, sculpture, and buildings. The Romans re-used (stole) a lot of Greek thinking but changed it to be somewhat squarer and thus more “rigid”. This whole thinking pattern was developed independently in the Orient (China and Japan) with subtle differences but very similar foundations. Some say that the definition of a pleasing shape is encoded in our DNA. I am more of the belief that it is as a result of the ratio of the height and breath of our visual frame. A little reading in your local library on form and function will give you lots to think about. Or, if you ever get the chance to take Don Derry’s two-day “Sharpening the Eye” class, don’t miss it! He leads you through a bunch of this in a fun, hands-on way.

Innovation is often useful in competitions. If you can do something that is unusual – and do it well – you will get noticed. Paradoxically, if you break the rules then **BREAK THE RULES!** Don’t mess around. If you decide to use tear-out as a texturing then **DO IT**. If there is just a little it will look like a mistake. If it is clear, where you want it to be, and it is well executed then it is an innovation and that will get noticed. But remember, once you have someone’s attention you have to deliver a finely crafted product or you will leave them feeling cheated.

It is a tiny trifle on all that has been written and said about Form and Function but it is at the heart of what we are all doing. We are looking to create beautiful things. I will close by speaking to each of you that says, “I have no creativity”. Balderdash! You have eyes and hands. You like certain shapes over others. You are drawn to certain colours and textures. Each of us is a highly tuned and extremely sophisticated judge of Quality. Simply use that judgment on your own work. When it looks good to you; when you like it; when it speaks to you and moves you; then it is Art and, regardless of what anyone else thinks, it is Beautiful.

Happy turning

Bruce

UPCOMING EVENTS

Fred Baldwin – Education Co-ordinator

FEBRUARY 27, 2002 – Ron Graham of the Mt. Vernon chapter will present how he does segmented and inlaid bowls.

MARCH 27, 2002 – Threaded boxes are the theme and Bruce Campbell will turn the lid and bottom of a box then show how he cuts the threads.

APRIL 24, 2002 – TBA

MAY 22, 2002 – Bowls can have handles – really – and John Bese will take on this challenge.

That's all so far. For future meetings if you have any suggestions please give me a call – 604-224-5780 or email me at fbaldwin@telus.net.

CLASSIFIED

FOR SALE – 33" King wood lathe in excellent condition. Includes: Stand, face plate, live center, spur center, tool rest and tool rest extension. This lathe has a cast iron bed, spindle lock, swivel headstock, variable speed 600 RPM to 3000 RPM. Paid \$399 plus GST & PST. Asking \$299. Call Al at 604-273-6995.

FOR SALE – Maple and sometimes other species for turning, block size and thickness vary. All spalted and/or figured. \$3.00-\$3.50/bft. Call Steve at 604-574-3927 or email steve.likness@gems2gov.bc

FOR SALE – Slabs and Burls in stock. Phone toll-free 1-877-777-3292 or email Matte from Hatzic Lake area at tedtd@uniserve.com

FOR SALE – A.R. Williams cast iron lathe, 12"x48", 3/4 hp, one face plate, asking \$600, phone Dave at 604-795-5882. Thread is same as a General 160 or Nova 3000.

REQUEST FOR SERVICES – I need someone that can re-saw a plank of mahogany into 1/2 inch thick planks, 14 inches wide! A tall order? I will pay handsomely and/or sharpen the saw and/or barter in timber. Please let me know if you or someone locally can do this. Call Steve Hansen at 604-585-0638.

WANTED – Anyone interested in splitting 5 gals of water-based check wax? 5 gals costs about \$100. 20 quarts at \$5 plus container cost. We need a source of container – tin or plastic. Contact Dave Broomhead at the January meeting.

WEB SITE TO VISIT

Here's a couple of sites I came across will trying to find some pictures for the newsletter.

<http://www.pathway98.org>

<http://www.kestrelcreek.com>

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Please be sure to email me any articles you would like to see in the next newsletter by February 4th, 2002. Send attachments as text only to Thom_Chadwick@telus.net

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