



Monthly Newsletter

March 10, 2015

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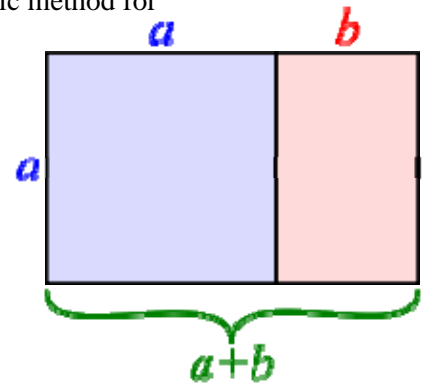
March 10, 2015 Regular Monthly Meeting-

- Attendance this evening was at 33. The next open house was in Hainesport on March 17th, starting at 7 PM. Phil will continue to host the open houses on the 3rd Tuesday of each month.
- Next month's meeting (April) will feature pen turner Barry Gross as our presenter. In addition to outside demonstrators, the DelVal meeting will do a walking tour of the Center for Art in Wood on North Third Street in Philadelphia in May. Hawaiian woodturner Pat Kramer will visit in June to close out our spring meeting schedule.
- Members that either have not been issued a name tag or may have misplaced their original nametag can contact Dave Potts via email (dpotts77@yahoo.com) for a nametag.
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- May 9th is the date for the New England Woodturning Symposium & Expo held at the Pinkerton Academy in Derry, NH. To learn more about the 8th Annual event click on this link:
<http://www.gnhw.org/>
- Please remember that the [AAW 2015 Convention](#) in Pittsburgh happens June 25 to 28, 2015. Hotel bookings have begun. In fact, two of the first hotels in the que have sold out of rooms, but more hotels have been added.
- September of 2016 is the planned unveiling of the MidAtlantic Wood Turning Association Symposium in Lancaster, PA. A bevy of well-known turners have been assembled and the Lancaster Marriot and Convention Center have been booked for the event. Keep in touch with progress by checking in at <http://www.mawts.com/>.
- The DelVal Members' section of the web page has a new password. Please use **turning!23** to access this feature.



Jeff Turi- Creating Great Design

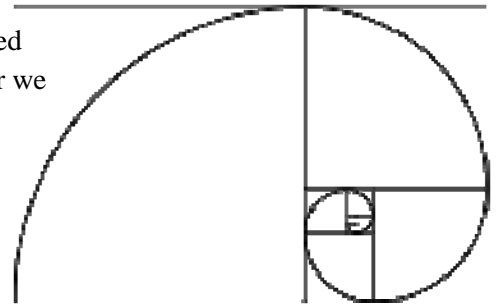
The DelVal March meeting was dedicated to helping members find a more systematic method for planning and producing turnings with great design. Jeff Turi is president of the Delaware First State Turners club and helped share his own insight with our members. Jeff had assigned two readings as *homework* and those documents are attached at the end of this newsletter. He also provided some valuable tips and tricks that will be listed here, as well. Several times during his presentation he stressed that our goal should be to take a \$20 block of wood and convert it into a \$200 item; Not produce something that will sell for \$2. The color of wood will fade; the grain in a burl will oneday be less visible. The shape and design of a turning will not change, however, so it should be well planned in the beginning.



Mr. Turi began the meeting by reviewing a few *gold standards* of design: the Golden Ratio and the Fibonacci Number Sequence. These numeric concepts both share the quantity of 1.618 as an ideal ratio for ratios that humans consider natural and appealing. While the Golden Rectangle is calculated by the application of some geometric measurements, the Fibonacci Number Sequence is derived from the simple addition of consecutive numbers:

1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, 55, 89

This number sequence is generated by adding the adjacent numbers together, so the next number in this array would be $55 + 89$, or 144. The ratio is determined by comparing adjacent numbers and the higher we go in the sequence, the closer we would come to .618, the ideal ratio. Our presenter went on to include that this ratio is not simply used for comparing height to width in a vessel, but also for proportioning the location of the widest cross-section of a turning to its base or to its top. The number also would be used in laying out an ogee curve and the placement of the breaking point between the concave and convex portions of the profile. Jeff recommended that the audience check out the works of English turner Bert Marsh, as he is regarded by many as Master of the Ogee.



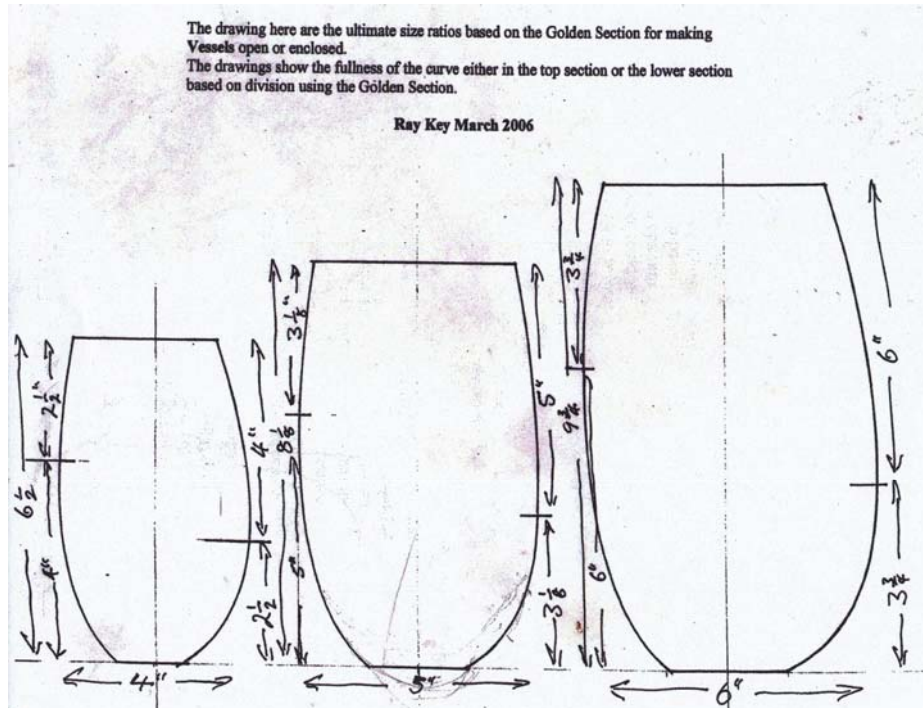
A few tips offered by our presenter included:

To better visualize your piece's profile, take the chuck off of the lathe and hold the piece and your chuck upside down, right-side up, and in a variety of angles to get a different perspective of the ratios used in your design.

For your object's rim or lip, be sure to define the breaking point. A sharp change in surface helps the viewer to delineate between what's inside and outside of the vessel and, therefore, improves design.

Paper cut-outs are a GREAT way to better visualize four ideas and concepts. Layout a paper that is the size of your billet, fold along the centerline, and cut-out the profile you've designed utilizing the ratios mentioned. Unfold and analyze your work.

Grab some scrap wood and turn some profiles for evaluating the exterior shape only. Do a series. Paint them black to remove distractions from grain, etc. Just evaluate and compare the profiles you've created.



50/50 Drawing

Winning this month's loot

- Bill Nyberg went home with \$65
- Anthony Cristaldi- Craft Supplies Gift Certificate
- Walt Knitweiss- Woodturning



Treasurer's Report None this month



Library Report – None: The Club Librarian is Mark Allan. All are welcome to share from the club's collection of books, magazines, and DVDs. Member are asked to make a list of DVDs that might be worthy of adding to the club library.

Remember, **SAFETY FIRST**. We will strive to emphasize this message at each meeting, and if you have a particular safety topic of concern please feel free to bring it up for discussion.

Please regularly review the recommendations established by the AAW. Even taking one new measure a week may prevent an accident.

<http://www.woodturner.org/?page=Safety>

An Instructional Course on the Process of Design:

by Jeff Turi

1. QUIZ
 - a. Vote on which form you like Best
2. DEFINITIONS
 - a. Why is Form important
 - b. "Good" Form vs. "Bad" Form – it's all IMHO
3. PROPORTION
 - a. The Golden Ratio – definitions
 - b. The Fibonacci series
 - c. A Practical approach to applying the Golden Ratio
4. LINE
 - a. Continuous Flow
 - b. Applying Calculus to the line - transitions
5. REVISITING THE QUIZ
 - a. Critiquing the objects
6. COMMON WOODTURNING FORMS
 - a. The Bowl
 - b. The Platter
 - c. The Open Vessel
 - d. The Hollow Form
 - e. The Box
 - What design aspects make each of these forms more successful
7. DESIGN EXERCISE
 - a. Creating a design on paper first
8. ON-LATHE DEMO
 - a. Reproducing a good form – Left Brain (mathematical) vs. Right Brain (artistic)
 - b. Refining a Form
 - c. Decision Making process
9. CREATING A SERIES OF PROTOTYPES

CREDIT: I am able to provide these design ideas to you because the following turners were unselfishly willing to share their knowledge with me: Kip Christensen, Don Derry, Ray Key, Michael Mocho & Malcolm Zander.

WHY IS FORM IMPORTANT?

Most woods fade with time. Pink Ivory, Osage Orange, Walnut, Cocobolo, etc. Once the pretty wood is gone, all you are left with is FORM.

A turner can take a \$20 piece of wood and change it into a \$2 or a \$2,000 piece for sale. Their design choices can either detract or add value to the wood.

Don't "insult the tree" by making its wood worth less!

If you start with a great pure form initially, most everything else you do to the piece will only enhance it.

Conversely, "you can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear". Don't spend days carving or burning a piece when the underlying form is weak. All you'll end up with is a mediocre piece.

Details added to any piece must be in concert with the overall design of the work. Details should be refined.

LINE:

The best line is a continuously flowing one that constantly accelerates or decelerates in a subtle way

NO flat spots

NO abrupt changes in direction

NO bumps – visual or tactile (hands can feel things the eye can not see)

The Ogee Curve: Very beautiful but tough to achieve successfully. Be careful.

Figure S shape, different size top and bottom, subtle transitions, great proportions.

Bert Marsh from England is the master! Check out his work.



COMMON WOODTURNING FORMS

The Bowl – Rim is the largest diameter of the piece.

- Rim clearly delineates the line of the inside of the bowl from the line of the outside. Best to create a visual hard stop. Don't come to a weak point.
- Functional bowls vs. artistic bowls. Whole design should clearly reflect one or the other.
- Diameter of the foot is one key that will dictate whether it is a functional piece (wider) or art piece (narrower)
- Foot – If you are going to do it, make it intentional.

The Platter – Much wider than it is high - flatter shape than the bowl. Defined rim that is distinct from the interior bowl.

- See examples for great rim details

The Open Vessel – Rim is narrower than the widest diameter mark on the piece. But the mouth of the piece is still fairly large (a variant of the hollow form)

- Clearly make the piece either a high shoulder or low shoulder form

The Hollow Form – Rim is narrower than the widest diameter mark on the piece. Opening on top is quite narrow.

- Diameter of the opening must be in proportion to the overall diameter.
- The shoulder of the piece should adhere to the Golden Ratio.
- Any piece by David Ellsworth should be studied

The Box – A top and bottom that fit together to create a whole piece

- Proportion between the top and bottom are critical
- Subtle flow of the line between the halves
- Terrific finials really add to boxes. But only if they are terrific (see Cindy Drozda's work)
- The fit determines a successful box so work on it

The Art of Critique

By Jim Christiansen

My development as a woodturner followed a typical pattern. Cheap dull tools, overuse of sandpaper, a reject pile that was large enough to be a fire hazard all resulting in a series of misshapen, thick-bottomed work given to relatives—pieces that are still around today as a haunting reminder of the early years.

Then, I had the opportunity to meet the only two other turners in my remote area of Idaho. We formed a group and met weekly to give each other feedback and to develop new ideas.


I had my first chance to attend a woodturning symposium. While touring the instant gallery, I saw John Jordan near what I thought was my best work to date. On impulse, I requested that he give me a critique. What followed made a life-changing impression on me. After a careful examination, he provided me with a list of possible changes.

The suggestions he made in one short session led to significant progress in my work in a very short time.

The importance of critique was made very obvious to me.

Later, when I joined a woodturning club in a nearby city, I discovered

that for most woodturners, critique is a big problem. I heard many horror stories where a "bad" critique resulted in hurt feelings, turners giving up the hobby, and, in one case, threatened physical assault. Because critique has been such a positive experience for me, I decided to find a way to make it a helpful experience for everyone.



Ben Swartz, an AAW member from Des Moines, holds his 10" x 5" purpleheart and cocobolo bowl for critique.

Photo: John Hetherington

The original plan I developed has undergone a number of revisions. The following outline represents my current thinking that will undoubtedly evolve and change as I receive feedback and suggestions.

Overview and goals of a woodturning critique

A good critique provides feedback that can improve future work and assist in developing new ideas. Without constructive feedback, the turner is not only destined to repeat past mistakes but to not see new ways to improve his or her work.

A critique—poorly done—can result in discouragement, anger, and a possible loss of enthusiasm and creativity. It is important, then, to make sure that when critiques are given, they are “good” ones that enlighten and inspire. It is important to remember, however, that good evaluation is not easy. It is a process that requires shared understanding, sensitivity, and good communication. The first step is to develop an understanding about what we expect from the process.

The following goals represent what we hope to learn from critique:

- To develop an awareness of special factors that determines the quality of your work.
- To enhance your ability to perceive subtle elements of shape, form, and design.
- To expand your range of

thought by becoming more aware of new options, possibilities, and directions for your work.

- To discover better ways to produce your work.
- To develop a basis for effective self-criticism.

The critique process

Although the details for the process may vary to some degree—depending on the type of critique being given—I believe the process is a starting point for all types of critique. Simply put, the process requires the evaluator to look at a piece of work and then to describe the strengths and weaknesses of the piece through his or her perspective.

Unfortunately, in the real world, there is much to consider. First, the manner in which you “look” at a piece of work is important. As the person whose work is being judged is likely watching your every move, it is important to take time to look at the work in a careful, systematic manner. Holding the work carefully, even gingerly, communicates respect for the work.

Many research studies support the view that non-verbal communication constitutes 80 to 90 percent of the shared meaning in human interactions. Therefore, the evaluator should be careful not to communicate the wrong message by an expression of disinterest or a scowl or grimace. It is possible that a sensitive observer will be unable to “hear”

what you actually say if you have set a negative tone through your non-verbal communication.

Put what you see into words as you examine the work. Describe specific characteristics rather than providing judgments. For example, say, “...this line flattens out here” rather than “...this is a poor line” or “...this shape is awkward.” Liberal use of “I feel” statements or sentences that begin with “In my opinion...” helps people understand that points being made are the evaluators subjective opinion. Others may have a different view. Such statements are less likely to elicit a defensive reaction in the turner whose work is being evaluated.

The Quality Indicator Checklist

The content of the critique is another element to consider. I believe that providing the beginner with too much information can be confusing or defeating. A critique of the advanced turner’s work that does not provide enough depth also is problematic.

I have developed a more or less hierarchical scheme where the critique starts at an appropriate level and then proceeds until enough elements are identified to give the individual enough to work on for the next project. For many turners, an important part of the process will be to provide suggestions for taking the work to a higher level. I have developed a Quality Indicator Checklist for this purpose.

Continued

Quality Indicator Checklist

The checklist provides a guide to focus on elements that are appropriate for the beginning and the advanced turner. The checklist does not contain information related to the quality of the overall design. That is material for my next article. I hope others will join me in promoting effective critique as an important next step in the development of the field of woodturning. Effective critique provides us with a way to see our work through the eyes of others and to develop a heightened sensitivity for subtle elements of quality design. The process can also help us become aware of new ideas and possibilities in our work.

This evaluation form and checklist are available on the AAW web site.

LEVEL 1

Beginning woodturner

Finish Elements

- ☐ Torn surface (wood fiber broken rather than sliced cleanly).
- ☐ "Bruised" surface (dark area in finish indicating damage beneath the surface of the piece).
- ☐ Sanding marks (visible scratches or lines).
- ☐ Tool marks (ripples, break in line continuity, gouge, spirals, or chatter marks).

Form/line Elements

- ☐ Inside lines are inconsistent (inside and outside shapes are inconsistent).
- ☐ Flat or high spots (lines that do not flow smoothly or transition smoothly).

Thickness

- ☐ Too thick (a judgment call; form does not relate to function or

where object is not aesthetically pleasing).

- ☐ Too light (piece is not usable or too fragile to be practical).
- ☐ Balance (object is too top heavy or bottom heavy to be pleasing).

Style Elements

- ☐ Consistency (style elements do not fit together).
- ☐ Size (style elements not sized correctly to be aesthetically pleasing or practical for use).

LEVEL II

Intermediate woodturner

Finish Elements

- ☐ Finish is not consistent (may vary in thickness, gloss, color).
- ☐ Finish gloss/smoothness not appropriate for piece (finish impractical or not consistent with style).
- ☐ Texture (if used) is not appropriate or texture detracts.
- ☐ Minor flaws in surface (small places where surface flaw detracts from overall quality).

Form/Line Elements

- ☐ Inconsistent style elements (features clash with the artistic style or intent).
- ☐ Shape does not achieve potential for form. A piece made in a certain style may vary greatly in the shape of its elements; certain shapes can be deemed more effective.
- ☐ Minor areas where lines do not flow (minor curve issues characterized by subtle bulging or straightening of the line).
- ☐ Form is not consistent quality when viewed from all angles. Size and execution of some elements may not add to the work's quality.

Style Elements

- ☐ Overall design below potential. Suggest changes in materials used for construction, selection/execution of design elements, color/finish.

LEVEL III

Advanced woodturner

A critique using Level III checklist items is generally reserved for well-executed pieces that generally receive no criticism on Level I and Level II checklist items. A critique at this level is more focused on helping the craftsman take a great piece of work and make it better or use it as a springboard for new directions.

Finish Elements

- ☐ A different surface treatment would likely add appeal. A different surface would add to or enhance the piece; be prepared to describe and tell why a change would help.
- ☐ Color/stain would help. Color warrants change; describe the potential effects of a color change.

Form/Line Elements

- ☐ A change in size would improve the impact of the work. Scale impacts how we view a work; describe how scaling up or down would help.
- ☐ Some changes/additions/deletions of elements would increase the impact of the work. Sometimes simplicity (and conversely, complexity) improve a piece. Identify specific possibilities and describe how they might help.

Possibilities

- ☐ Future potential. Provide the artist with some ideas for changing the work or using it as a basis for new work; this is important to advanced turners who may need new ideas to keep growing and developing as woodturners.

Jim Christiansen
(jimchristiansen@moscow.com)
is a professional turner who lives
in Moscow, ID.

Evaluation Form

Comments:

Piece Identifier: _____

Finish: Comments

- ☒ SMOOTH APPROPRIATE SHEEN
- ☐ FOR PIECE/STYLE
- ☒ CHOICE OF WOOD LOOKS GOOD
- ☐ CONTRASTS WELL

Form/Line Elements: Comments

- ☒ CURVES NOT RELATED/CONSISTENT
- ☒ CURVE DOESN'T CONTINUE
- ☒ CURVE IS "POINTY"
- ☐ _____

LINE
STRAIGHTENS
OUT

Style Elements: Comments

- ☒ PATTERNS DON'T MATCH
- ☒ FOR SW STYLE TOP IS TOO TALL

Possibilities: Comments

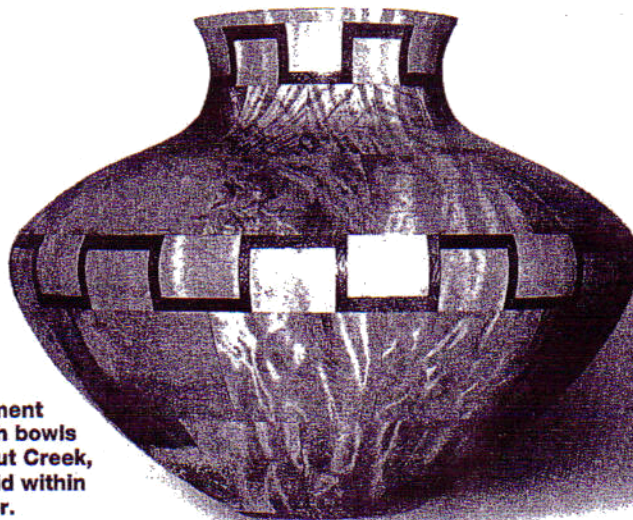
- ☒ WITH MIND FORM/PATTERN
- ☐ ADJUSTMENT'S PIECE WILL REPRESENT "TRADITIONAL" STYLE.

Evaluator JIM C.

Date 8-11-03



George Lucido of Orinda, CA, asked Jim Christiansen to critique the poplar bowl at left. Jim's comments are shown in the Evaluation Form above.



After reviewing Jim's comments, George reworked his segment bowl design and turned the maple bowl shown at right. Both bowls were on display for a show at the Valley Art Gallery in Walnut Creek, CA. George's maple bowl incorporating Jim's comments sold within an hour of the opening; the poplar bowl was purchased later.

Evaluation Form

Comments:

Piece Identifier: _____

Finish: Comments

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Form/Line Elements: Comments

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Style Elements: Comments

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Possibilities: Comments

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Evaluator _____

Date _____

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LEVEL I Beginning woodturner

Finish Elements

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Possibilities

- ☐ Future potential. Provide the artist with some ideas for changing the work or using it as a basis for new work; this is important to advanced turners who may need new ideas to keep growing and developing as woodturners.

Thanks to Jim Christiansen for developing this form.