

Merryll Saylan, Artist and Woodturner at BAWA Meeting

Merryll Saylan, one of the great woodturners in the country and BAWA life member, will be our presenter on March 12. Merryll has been a pioneer in the woodturning world starting 35 years ago when she was introduced to a lathe in art school. At the time, Ellsworth and other converts to the lathe were searching for spalted wood and importing exotic species for bowls and other vessels. Merryll on the other hand, after getting a masters degree in art explored the use of color, texture and form on turned vessels. Her interest in architecture and design clearly permeates through her three decades of work. Articles about Merryll emphasize that she embraces color and design over material. For Merryll it's not about the wood, rather what you do with the turned form. When looking at the images of Merryll's work, you see her comfort with combing carving, coloring, turning, cutting and reconstruction - and she makes it work artistically. Of major significance, Merryll's work has help woodturning become accepted as an art form rather than just a craft.

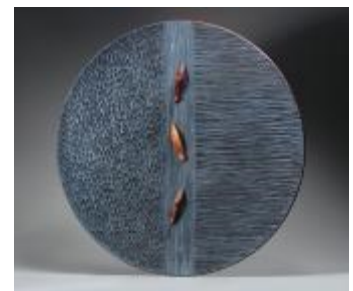
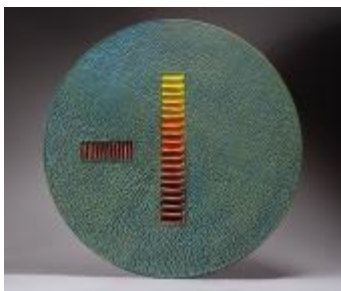


Merryll resume is lengthy, of note she has been on the Board of Directors of AAW and BAWA along with teaching at Anderson Ranch and California College of Arts in San Francisco.

Merryll may not be known as well publicly as David Ellsworth and Bob Stocksdale but her work clearly puts her in that rarefied air of the master woodturners and artists. At our March meeting, Merryll will talk about her process for surface embellishment: paints, carving, hammering, burnishing as well as her process and vision for creating a new piece.

Doors open at 8:30 and the meeting starts promptly at 9:00 and runs until noon. The store and library will be open and the legendary wood raffle will conclude the day. Don't forget to bring a piece for show and tell, we would love to see new members participate!

We look forward to seeing everyone on the 12th.





BAY AREA WOODTURNERS ASSOCIATION

A CALIFORNIA NONPROFIT CORPORATION
LOCAL CHAPTER AAW

Club Meetings

Meetings are the 2nd Saturday of each month unless otherwise noted.

8:30 doors open for setup, use store and library, swap ideas, view displays

9:00—12:30 meeting and demo

Meetings will be held at the PHEC Woodturning Center, 1 Santa Barbara Road, Pleasant Hill, CA.

See bayareawoodturners.org/ for directions and club information.

BAWA Officers Meeting -

Officer meetings are open to all members. Contact [John Cobb](mailto:John.Cobb@bayareawoodturners.org) if you would like to be on the agenda.

2016 Event Schedule

March 12th	Merryl Saylan 8:30-12:00
April 9th	Ashley Harwood 8:30-4:00
May 7th	Tricks and Cheats 8:30-12:00
May 12th-14th	Utah Symposium
June 4th	Brad Adams 8:30-12:00
July 9th	Turn for the Troops 8:30-12:00
August 13th	Picnic 10:00-2:00
September	TBA
October 23rd (Sunday)	Art Liestman 8:30-4:00
November	TBA
December	Holiday Party (Details to Come)

The Bay Area Woodturners Association is a local chapter of the American Association of Woodturners. Our purpose is to provide a meeting place for local turners to share ideas and techniques and to educate the general public regarding the art of turning. The Association usually meets the second Saturday of each month. The Association periodically sponsors exhibitions and demonstrations by local and internationally known turners.

President
John Cobb
president@bayareawoodturners.org

Vice President
Paul Litsky
vp@bayareawoodturners.org

Secretary
David Fleisig
secretary@bayareawoodturners.org

Treasurer
Joel Albert
treasurer@bayareawoodturners.org

Member at Large
Michele Freeze
membership@bayareawoodturners.org

Pleasant Hill Adult Education (PHAE) Liaison
Jim Rodgers
Jlrogers236@comcast.net

Librarian
Cindy Navarro
librarian@bayareawoodturners.org

Membership Co-chairs
Hugh Bevin-Thomas, Karen Rice
membership@bayareawoodturners.org

Store Manager
Richard Kalish
storemanager@bayareawoodturners.org

Webmaster
Greg Ketel & John Cobb
webmaster@bayareawoodturners.org

Newsletter Editor
Louie Silva
newslettereditor@bayareawoodturners.org

Audio Visual

Woodmeister

Educational Coordinator
Jan Blumer
educationalcoordinator@bayareawoodturners.org

Pro Demonstrator Liaison
John Cobb
Cobbemail@gmail.com

Staff Photographer
David Fleisig
dhfleisig@yahoo.com

Social Coordinator
TBA

Eric Lofstrom Teaches Four Projects in One Day

When not turning, Eric is a physical education teacher. Body mechanics are very important to him. We talk a lot about “dancing with the lathe”. This means maintaining tool control by keeping tools held firm and moving the whole body to make cuts. To practice this he had the club stand and balance on one foot and then the other while staring up at the ceiling. This exercise forced us to distribute weight evenly on each foot. Then we moved from side to side without bending sideways. This is the basic whole body motion for turning. He added using knees to go up and down. The center remains straight and the arms firm with the motion coming from the pelvis shifting weight back and forth and the legs moving up and down.

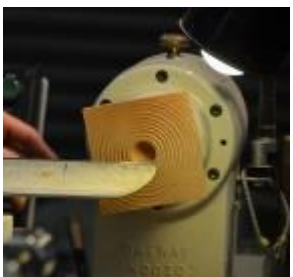


He also talked about the importance of lathe maintenance. Eric files his tool rest 3 or 4 times a day to maintain a smooth surface. He keeps all his equipment in good shape. And he likes his cutting tools sharp. At lunch he demonstrated how sharp they are by shaving his arm hairs off.



His first project of the day was a spinning top. He used a skew to turn the blank round. The peeling cut to do this starts by rubbing the bevel of the skew then peeling up and using a diving motion. He was able to turn the blank round very quickly. It helped that his skew was very sharp. He sharpens on the wheel, then uses 1000 grit diamond stone and finally a strop. He made a tenon and put the blank on the chuck. He profiled the front of the top. He embellished the top with chatterwork and paint.

His second project was a lidded box. After preparing a blank with a tenon on each end he uses the “golden mean” to mark the lid and body sections of the box. He parts off the lid and hollows out the inside with a bowl gouge, point aimed dead center. This is a pull cut because end grain sets down better this way. He uses a negative rake scraper to finish the cut. He then mounts the bottom of the box and uses a jam fit to put on the lid. At this point Eric embellished the lid using rotary tool (a kind of mini chain saw) He angled the tool in different ways to create different effects. Many variations are possible. He removed the top using a strap wrench (available at Lowe’s). He hollowed out the inside using a bowl gouge. Then he created a jam chuck to finish the bottom of the box.



The third project was a square rimmed bowl. His basic idea was to create an artistic piece that would draw people in and encourage them to interact with the object. Thus a square with a small round center designed to catch the eye with ripples on top. The round center can be filled with gold leaf, but he demonstrated using translucent paint. His technique created a swirl pattern in the paint that matched the swirls on the top and bottom of the square. These were made using a very sharp bowl gouge turned on its side and dug into the wood carefully at intervals. Eric sharpens his gouges on the wheel, then uses 320 grit sand paper to cut the burr on the inside of the gouge and 1000 grit diamond cutter on the outside. He used the Proxon rotary tool to embellish the sides. The square rimmed bowl can also be made off-axis to create an interesting visual effect.

His fourth project was a “rice bowl”. This is a simple round bowl with the rim slightly convex, moving toward a perfect circle. Shape the exterior of the bowl with a fingernail grind bowl gouge.

This was a good opportunity for Eric to talk about making a strong tenon. Although we think chuck teeth are either dovetail or dead flat, in fact they are neither. Matching the profile of the chuck is very important. Also the ideal tenon is most effective when the chuck is mostly closed since more wood is encapsulated. Hollow the interior of the bowl in steps, first the rim section and then lower down so you get maximum support from the wood in the lower sections of the bowl. Eric then reversed the piece on a jam chuck to finish the underside and foot of the bowl.



At the end Eric encouraged us to look at turning as a journey full of challenges. If his presentation provided a spark that opened up a new avenue on this journey then it was a success.

Ashley Harwood Heads West to Visit BAWA on April 9th

Bay Area Woodturners Association is pleased to present Ashley Harwood as our professional demonstrator for our April 9 meeting. This will be a full day demonstration.



Ashley studied sculpture and installation while at Carnegie Mellon University. She was always interested in making a living by making things and intended to be a glass blower when she finished college. But her dad, a woodworking hobbyist, invited Harwood to join him at the John C. Campbell Folk School to take a woodturning class and Harwood found her calling.

She went on to apprentice with Stuart Batty for nearly two years. There she perfected not only her technique, but learned how to demonstrate and teach turning as well. She has demonstrated her craft throughout the US as well as in Europe. She is sought after as an instructor. Her works are featured in over a dozen galleries and exhibitions.

Harwood designs and crafts bowls, jewelry and ornaments made with sea urchins and delicate spindles of ebony. She uses salvaged wood, much of which comes from her area. The elegant shapes she creates are influenced by her past in glasswork. “When I make a bowl, I’m very particular about the curve. It has to feel perfect. Our hands can pick up on subtleties that our eyes miss, so I am constantly running my hand inside the bowl to check that the curve is flawless—it should be uninterrupted, fluid, and totally smooth. I think that the feel of the wood is so much a part of what people fall in love with,” she says.

In the future, Harwood’s goal is to transcend functionality and bring conceptual ideas back into her work by incorporating glass and elements of light into the designs. Most of all, she wants to introduce more young people and women to the art form. “I would like to see someone do for woodturning what Dale Chihuly did for glass,” she says.



Parts of this article excerpted from an article by Jessica Dyer, Arts Mag, Charleston, SC

Membership News

By Tim Kennedy

Membership Update

BAWA has 123 paid-up members for 2016 and 6 life members. If you don't know if you paid dues for 2016: go to the website, log in and select “View Profile” at the top right corner under you name.

Tim



DON'T FORGET!

Bring some of that wood you have taking up space in your shop to share in our monthly raffle.



Presidential Ramblings

March 2016



With El Nino returning back to the Bay Area it's a great time to take a step back from the lathe and think about where woodturning has taken you and look around for new sources of inspiration. Recently I was fortunate to have lunch with Merryll Saylan, our March presenter and we had a far ranging conversation. We looked at her collection of bowls from other master turners and then spent a good amount of time talking about her work and the philosophy of good design.

We spent a while discussing form. I will rephrase that, Merryll made me rethink my opinions of what is a "good" shape; does everything have to have pleasing curves according to my lens or can a dog bowl be beautiful. Can a bowl with a heavy looking bottom be "good"? If 6 out of 10 people say that it's heavy and clunky, does that mean you can do better OR have you nailed that shape and it's perfect as you intended.

Now fast forward to my woodturning 201 bowls class that just completed; we had terrific students who way exceed expectations. We spent time talking about their shapes - what was done well and what could be done better. While we evaluated each piece, I kept Merryll's comments in my mind and used them as the framework for my critique. I no longer dismissed the dog bowl immediately, rather I asked if that was the desired shape and if they found it pleasing versus alternatives. My inner Merryll has me accepting and appreciating other designs, even if I don't find it pleasing. My comments would start with asking about how they liked the shape and then we would talk about the execution: did the curves flow, were there flat spots that didn't belong. When you look from the rim to the foot, does that outline make sense.

This is what I love about teaching, looking at all the class pieces is as much of a learning process for the students as it is for me. We might be looking and pondering different things but each piece was an opportunity to appreciate another's design and continue to refine what I like and might try in the future. So I encourage you all to open an artist's book, search the internet, go to a show or museum and ponder shape and design. Find something new that's intriguing which you can incorporate into your design or functionality. Who knows where it goes but my guess it will be invigorating and a worthwhile experience.

Keep turning and learning

John Cobb

President

Bay Area Woodturners Association

February Show and Tell



Jim Kennedy-
Rough-edged Platter



Brad Adams-
Ash and Madrone Burl Bowls



Gary Bingham-
Eight Magnolia Boxes



Dave Plemons-
Rose Engine Box & Bowl



Jay Holland-
Valentine Ornament



Paul Litsky-
Hollow Form



(Continued on following page)

*February Show and Tell
Continued*



Bob Nolan-Vase



John Cobb-Large Bowl



Don White-
Sunburst



Bill Walzer-
Vessel



Harry Levin-Carved Bowl



Ed Steffinger-Compound Mitered Bowls

