

National Contemporary Turning Exhibition
by Robin Goodman

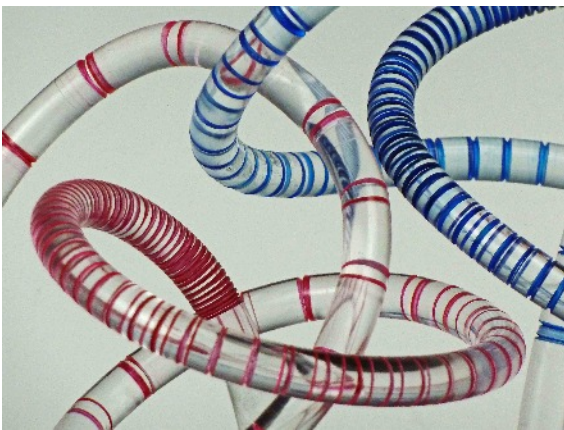
Feb 8 – March 10th 2012

For many of us the main opportunities to exhibit and sell our work are either craft events like Westonbirt, local Art trails, or at special turning events such as the biennial AWGB Loughborough seminar and Axminster 'Strictly Woodturning'. A rare opportunity arose this year with a turning exhibition in an art gallery – One Church Street Gallery, Great Missenden, just outside London. This seemed to bridge the gap between art and craft.

Adventurous turners who use not only wood but a wide and diverse variety of materials to make objects were invited to submit works for selection for this one off exhibition, where all works had to be for sale. Selection was carried out by Jonathan Cuff and Sinclair who own the Daniel Collection, Mark Baker, editor of Woodturning magazine, and Lyndsey and Dennis Keeling who own the One Church Street Gallery. Works selected were by 27 artists including many well known woodturners such as Nick Arnull, Jason Breach, Sue Harker, Phil Irons, Stuart King, Stuart Mortimer, Joey Richardson and Dave Springett, together with relative newcomers such as 3 from our club – Andy Mason, Malcolm Farrant and myself.

At the open evening in February, when many of the turners were present, Nicholas Somers from the Worshipful Company of Turners chose the 'Best of Show award' and this award went to Andy for his beautifully crafted 'Anemone' bowl in pear (*see cover photo - Ed*). He deserves many congratulations for this, especially in view of the many very experienced turners represented in the Exhibition. Details of this piece are provided by Andy below. I was there when some very experienced turners were informally discussing how Andy could have made his piece and they thought that he must have used a router plus jig and indexing wheel to shape at least part of it. They were wrong, as you can see from Andy's description. There is often no substitute for painstaking careful work with basic tools, after initial turning on the lathe. In the event, very few non-wood items were selected. Apart from a couple of small resin hollow forms by Stuart Mortimer, mine seemed to be the only one. I used clear acrylic rod in 80cm lengths, turned, coloured and heated to form the 'Loop the Loop 1' piece, total height 20cm. Temperature is critical – just hot enough that the smooth curves could be made in my hands, but not too hot, when it becomes too soft and floppy. The 3 D nature of the loops meant that formers cannot be used. A domestic oven was satisfactory, except that the rods had to be locally heated and pre-bent to fit in it.

See photographs below. It was very different from any other pieces in the exhibition. Although there is space for lights in the base, I did not incorporate them on this occasion. Previously I have used LED lights



Robin Goodman's "Loop the Loop" acrylic sculpture

to enhance the acrylic rods, as I did for one of the items exhibited in the gallery at Loughborough last August.

Pieces by Andy and Malcolm are detailed by them below; for photographs of some of the other pieces in