

AAW Virtual Symposium July 2020

VIRTUAL
SYMPOSIUM 2020
AAW | OF WOODTURNERS



by Robin Goodman

The American Association of Woodturners (AAW) were due to hold their annual symposium in Louisville, Ohio, in July 2020. They had lined up 28 turners to demonstrate and participate in various panel discussions, with 16 demos and events taking place simultaneously for a full 3 days. The Coronavirus put paid to that; however the association decided to downsize it to an online event. They could only have one demo or event at a time on Zoom, but it did open up the Symposium to a larger audience. Nearly 4,000 people from at least 26 countries signed up for the Symposium and about 1 in 10 submitted photos of a piece on line for the Instant Gallery. At only \$20 (£16) for 3 days it was a bargain. Fortunately the time zone difference of 5 hrs was not a problem; for UK time the sessions ran from 4.45pm to 10.30pm.



Irishman **Glen Lucas**, **photo 1**, set the bar high with the first demo: making a beaded salad bowl, **photo 2**. He had mastered the technology and ably switched between several cameras for the optimum view. He used to make 1,000's of bowls a year and with his experience in demonstrating, he provided an excellent fluent demo.

'Gismo and Gadgets.' He eos and ideas over many



Next came **Rob Wallace** with an illustrated talk has accumulated short vid-years. He discussed at



length many different ways of storing and stacking woodturning tools with safety very much in mind. In particular it is important not to have tool racks that require you to reach over the sharp end of a tool to reach one behind, **photo 3**. Other topics included using worm-drive clips as shaft collars for tool rests, **photo 4**, and for homemade chucks, **photo 5**; multiple uses for magnets in the workshop; heat



shrink non-slip handles for tools; homemade calliper setting gauge and many other ideas.

Rudolph Lopez from Florida gave a demo on 'Thin-stemmed Natural



Edge Goblet', **photo 6**. Turning them from green wood means that he can bend the stems afterwards; he uses



7 what he calls his 'torture rack', **photo 7**: a pegboard with movable pegs and rubber bands to tension the wood to form curves in the stem.



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A panel made up of Americans **Paul Fennell, Michael Hosaluk, John Beaver** and **Michael Peterson** then talked about 'Evolving a Body of Work – Inspiration and Iteration'; the session was moderated by **Curt Theobald**. Each one describing some of his work and inspirations. **Photos 8,9,10, 11 & 12.**



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Next day **Trent Bosch, photo 13**, gave an interesting demo on 'Vessels and surfaces'. He first made a vessel, included the hollowing, which he finished off with a radius cutter in scraping mode, **photo 14**. Then he showed various methods of texturing and decorating with various tools such as reciprocating carver, die grinder and burners.

For the 'Best of Woodturning Tips', a series of video clips was shown from a variety of international turners. These included a wide variety of topics including using non-stick baking paper to keep adhesives, such as CA and epoxy, off hands and items; also mixing epoxy on disposable post-it notes etc.



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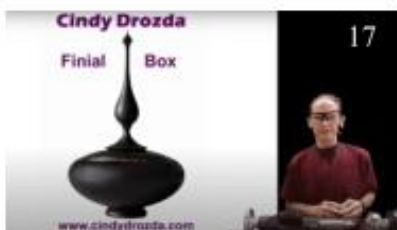


15

Well known **Mike Mahoney, photo 15**, discussed his woodturning journey over 35 years. His best sellers are bowls and burial urns (even for cats & dogs!) He likes to do sets of bowls as per **photo 16**. We had a tour of his workshop as part of his presentation.



16



17

Cindy Drozda, photo 17, is best known for her finials and she demonstrated how she makes her finial boxes. She was followed by **Beth Ireland** talking about her 'Journey in Woodturning.'



18

Craig Timmerman, photo 18, gave the final mo 'turning an arch bowl'. Turning a rectangular section means that cutting is partly in air or as 'interrupted spin' as he called it. This makes it difficult to obtain a good finish and it is easy to get tear out on the trailing edge of the wood. He emphasised safety, especially when shaping the underside, **photo 19**.



19

The final panel was one discussing 'Turning for Profit and Marketing through social media' with **Nick Cook, Rebecca DeGroot, Mike Mahoney** and

Kimberley White. Subjects not often covered at these events, but useful for some turners.

The **Virtual Instant Gallery workshop critique** was carried out by **Suzanne Kahn, Kip Christenson and Kirsten Muenster.** It was difficult for them, because they only had 3 photos of a piece to see and of course no physical feel or interaction. For critiquing, they chose to group the limited number of pieces into categories: Form, Additive Detail, Presentation, Sum of the Parts and Alternative materials. It is interesting to hear other people's ideas about pieces; sometimes you agree sometimes not. A total of 470 pieces, including 15 from the UK, were submitted on-line and a few are shown in the **photos on next page.**

A **virtual trade show** was also included. Many firms had their own zoom sessions and demos as well as links to their normal promotional videos.

You did not have to be an AAW member to sign up for the Symposium. In the comfort of your own home, it was a good opportunity to see some world class turners in action and to hear opinions in panel discussions. The chat and Q&A buttons enabled questions to be put in real time to the demonstrators, sometimes grouped together by an intermediate moderator, and the chat option was at times useful for providing extra info such equipment sources, techniques and other feedback. There seem very few downsides to the demos going on line and I think this will be a continuing trend in the future. I believe that very few ABWT club members took the opportunity to join this important symposium, but I do know that I was the only one to submit an entry in the Instant Gallery.

Photos and titles:-

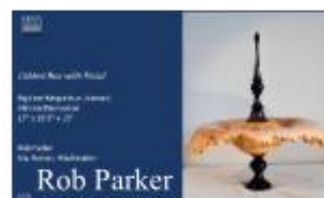
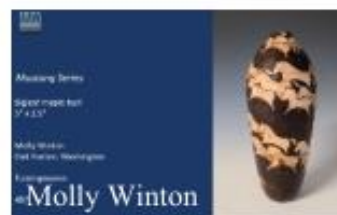
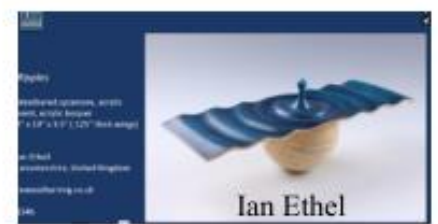
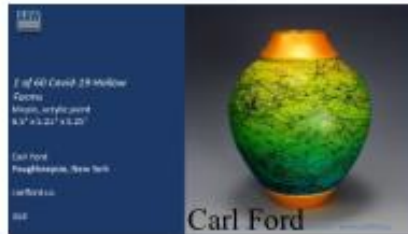
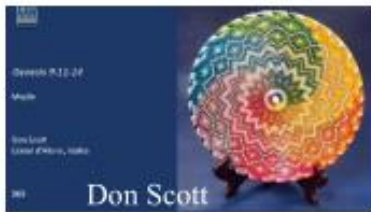
1. Glen Lucas
2. Beaded bowl
3. Dangerous toolrack !
4. Circlip toolrest collar
5. Circlip with chuck
6. Long stemmed goblet
7. Bending rack
8. Paul Fennel piece
9. Mike Hosaluk pieces
10. John Beaver bowl
11. Michael Peterson hollow form
12. Curt Theobald pieces
13. Trent Bosch
14. Bosch vessel
15. Mike Mahoney
16. Mike Mahoney nest of bowls
17. Cindy Drozda
18. Craig Timmerman
19. Underside arch bowl

Postscript

The **AWGB** have gone down a different route (see pp 3 & 4) and postponed their October symposium completely; now to take place in September 2021. As you will have seen from your AWGB bulletins and website, they have been running on line zoom sessions since late April. These 'Talking Turning Online Sessions' involve many woodturners from their own workshops, also many stand-alone 'Chat and Q&A' sessions. At the time of writing most of these video sessions are still available on the AWGB website. Zoom sessions are continuing every Tuesday and Friday evenings.

Robin

For some virtual gallery items see overleaf



AAW Virtual Instant Gallery (above)

Anthony Yakonick, Arthur McVicar, Carl Ford, Claude Dupuis, Don Scott, Gordon Fowler, Helen Baillie, Ian Ethel, Karl Koch, Klaus Kirchner, Michael Alguire, Molly Winton, Rebecca DeGroot, Rob Parker, Robin Goodman, Roger Becker.