

Turning in the Age of Corona

Santa Cruz Woodturners

Episode 7, May 6, 2020

In our last installment, we looked at bowls turned from **Earl Wynn's** madrone log by 3 of our members, some classic walnut bowls from **John Wells**, and a rescue from the heap of maybes by **Jim Baker**. Then we tuned in to some technical insights for sanding...that dreary but necessary aspect of our craft...from **John** and our treasurer, **Raf Strudley**.

Now let's have a peek at some new work from **Frank Roest** and **Hugo Marchevsky**, and a look at an infrequently chosen wood...magnolia. Then we offer a few hints about **photographing your work**...a preview of a more detailed discussion later this year.



Frank is celebrating diversity...with acacia, monkey pod, and an extraordinary pine burl.

This black acacia came from a lot widely shared with SCW members in the late winter and early spring of 2019. Frank captured the honey brown color of this often unappreciated cousin of Hawaiian Koa in a classic salad bowl form. Once dry, this wood is hard, dense, and impact resistant. Its most impressive virtue is...gorgeous.



Speaking of Hawaii...Frank made this one from Monkey Pod.



And here's the *tour de force*...a Monterey Pine burl...formed as a tree tried to heal an end cut (see 11 o'clock). It was tricky to mount on the lathe, pitchy to turn, but Wow!

Speaking of Monterey, Cypress comes down in the winter around here, and it can be plenty wide. While it's technically a softwood, it turns cleanly once dry, takes finish cheerfully, stands up to household use...and it fills the shop with a beautiful fragrance.

Hugo Marchevsky has a 12" lathe...but ambition that merits one twice that size. One man's firewood is Hugo's table setting.



Morgan Taylor, now the SCW's Unanimous Boxing Champion, took some of the exotic hardwood (either Kingwood or Bocote) from the club's recent sale and turned this exceptional box as an appreciation gesture to our benefactors for premium wood and tools, the Trentman's.

Thank you, Morgan!



The Grateful Dead were humming ***Sugar Magnolia*** on my way to a carpentry project in Mill Valley last July at the crack of dawn. *Boom!* A large magnolia tree collapsed and blocked the road. It's important to carry a chain saw when you go out of town. The home owner was happy to have me cart away some of the baulks.



Magnolia bowl in the Age of Corona, crotch figure, 15" x 6"



Eccentric, shallow magnolia bowl with wild burl and crotch figure on the bottom.

Magnolia has a faintly gray-green tint, similar to poplar, with striking black knots and markings. It turns like cream, dries rather quickly with minimal warping, and makes benign dust. It made a fine gift for the gentleman with the suddenly sunny front yard.

Crazy in the sunlight, yes indeed....

WS, May, 2020

We'd love to share your work. We'll be doing this more often! Send your photo to wells shoemakermd@gmail.com as an attachment to an e-mail, and we'll keep this virtual show and tell show lively until we can all get back together in person.

Here are a few basic hints on photos of woodwork!

1. Try to eliminate clutter from the photo—choose a bland or uniform background so that the viewers' attention is drawn to the turning, rather than the surroundings. It shouldn't be shiny or too bright. A sheet works fine, a non-patterned rug, piece of dark slate, forest floor, even concrete...you get the picture. Play with it!
2. Shadows falling across the bowl may not look out of place to your native eyes when you take the picture—our brain compensates--but the photo image can be jarring.
3. Avoid bright lights that make "burned out" spots on the image. A diffuse light reveals more of the natural beauty of the wood than a spotlight. Example—natural light in bright shade or a cloudy day, or indirect light in a bright room.
4. When you take the picture, make sure you have the whole object in the frame. When in doubt, include more background, which is easy to crop away later.
5. File size should be over 100 KB. Ideal 1 MB or more. Most cell phones can do that, and all SLR's can.
6. Attachments are easier to download and more faithful to your work than inline images. Please don't send as texts and, likewise, please don't send links to online photo galleries—they're sometimes exasperating for publication.



Here's an example of a photo with distraction in the background and an incomplete view of a lovely cherry platter.



It looks a little better with cropping, but the right side of that platter is still begging to be seen.

Just for fun, have a look at two of our pros' images. The bowls are illuminated but not glaring. The background is dark, and all of the attention is drawn to the work.



Raf Strudley, figured redwood bowl



John Wells, Maple burl platter

The images below are not pro's, but they illustrate some of the principles.



Tom Eovaldi, hardwood boxes



Wells Shoemaker, redwood bowl with rust stain and yellow cedar bowls & platter

Use something for scale if your project needs it:



Earl W



And just to remind us why we're still sheltering....

We wear a mask when we're sanding, and please wear one in public, too. It's not like a seat belt for which the goal is to protect you, personally, but rather it's protecting other people in our airspace from what we're possibly carrying around. Without us doing that voluntarily, the authorities will make us stay inside and enforce it.

Stay safe, turn wood, help your neighbors, try something really difficult in your shop and see what happens!

Make sure we're all present when we get back together!

Wells Shoemaker MD
President, SCW