

Kurt's clinic

Kurt Hertzog gives some answers to readers' questions

Thread chasing

Question: I am interested in adding threads to my lidded boxes. I've seen high-priced threading tools to mount to my lathe as well as hand tools. They all seem to require a lot of special skills. What species are recommended for threading? What is the best way I can get started?



Hand chasing threads is an easy skill to master with a bit of practice. Like the skew, there are only a couple of rules

Answer: Putting threads into the wood itself does much better in certain species of wood. In my experience, harder, denser woods such as African blackwood or boxwood are better for durable threading results. Other species work and most can be made to work with stiffening through chemical means. If you insert threads, then your parent species is important only in the manner it receives and keeps

your inserted thread mechanisms. An overview of threading turnings can be found in *WT262* – January 2014. If you are in it for the long haul, I suggest you learn to hand chase threads. Not the easiest method to begin with but I believe it is the most versatile for the long term. It is the most modest investment and the flexibility of your results are tremendous. Skills needed to hand chase threads can

be developed with some practice and, once learned, can be called on as needed during your turning career. Some warm-up and practice is helpful if you've let the skills go dormant but I believe it is a valuable skill you can add to your turning repertoire. There are a few companies that make a variety of hand chasing threading tools, including a recent addition with newer metallurgy.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY KURT HERTZOG

Flawed work

Question: Does anyone sell their reject turnings for a reduced price? Do people want them? What are the pros and cons?

Answer: I have often seen turnings that I think are 'rejects' offered for sale. I can't tell you whether they were intentionally sold as lower quality or just the state of the skills of the creator. With quality of results varying, what do you do with the less than the best? People will buy anything provided the price is commensurate with what they perceive as the correct value. That said, you can certainly cost the lesser pieces at a lower price for those who value a bargain. The typical consumer at craft outlets rarely has a turning background and buys on price and the appeal of the piece to them. Galleries have a different consumer but, other than the skilled eye of certain collectors, the situation is still price and appeal, although the level of perfection is required to be higher. Do people want 'rejects'? I don't think they want rejects called as such but can be enticed to buy pieces that aren't top shelf if the prices are appropriately set. Obviously, the pros are that you can market your entire output rather than have saleable and a burn pile. Much better from the financial standpoint of receiving something at a lesser amount than nothing for some of the work. If selling all and maximum receipts are your goal, go ahead and sell all. If making a name for yourself, including your creativity and quality, then I recommend you never let lesser results see the outside of your shop. Only you can decide why you are in the game. Make your own decision and even that may change or waver back and forth over time.



Rejects that can't be readily fixed are pretty obvious. Do you really want your name associated with poor work?

Coloured effects

Question: I want to add some colour to my woodturnings. I'm not much of an artist so what do you recommend for someone new to the process?

Answer: There are many ways to add colour to your woodturnings. These can include species selection, dyes, stains, paints, decals, inlay, stabilisation with colours, and more. With your comment about not being much of an artist and starting from new, a simple way to begin your colour exploration is milk paints. These will allow you to dramatically change the colour of your work with a relatively simple paint job. Traditional milk paints, while nostalgic, are far more demanding than the modern acrylic versions. A primer on the subject of milk paints can be found in *WT284* – October 2015. There are a variety of effects and 'looks' that can be created with milk paint and the durability of it as a finish is superb. After you've experimented with those, you may wish to try some of the effects available with alcohol dyes then move on to the myriad artistic opportunities there are. Don't be afraid to collaborate with someone who has the artistic skills you may not currently have.



Available milk paint colours and techniques offer a wide selection of options for your colouration wishes

Send your questions to Kurt's email: kurt@kurthertzog.com