

1. Why personalize?
 - a) To cover a problem in the wood, or to take advantage of defects.
 - b) To add "wow" to otherwise ordinary turning.
 - c) Only one side of the turned piece is figured or colorful—the other side is too plain—what to do.
 - d) Just for the enjoyment, self satisfaction.
 - e) To create a "signature" for your turning style!

2. How? I'm not a production turner, have never turned two identical pieces.
 - a) I turn in "batches", runs (now 10 to 30 vases or 10 platters or 10 off center pieces at a time.
 - b) In these "batches" no two pieces are the same shape, size, same wood.
 - c) I rough turn wet wood, wax let dry and then re-turn to finish when dry.
 - d) I use dedicated lathes rather than change lathe configuration for each step.
 - e) One lathe has full time vacuum setup; one lathe for deep hollowing with boring bar, large steady rest attached; one lathe for shaping, sanding, decorating; one lathe (small) for bottom finishing.
 - f) My work horse lathes are Powermatic 3520B's, a One Way 2436 is a base for the vacuum and turning large off center platters 16" to 40" etc.

3. Tools? Off the shelf (catalog) tools I modify to do the job better in my hands, these personal adjustments don't always fit other turners better!
 - a) I increase boring bar lengths and diameters and have dedicated cutting inserts made rather than change tips often.

4. Wood? I use only chunks, burls, worm eaten, stressed, twisted, figured, colorful, interesting wood; never dimensional lumber!
 - a) Maple is best in my hands, the figure can be enhanced with inks, dyes, wood burning, relief carving.
 - b) If the wood is extra ordinary, leave it alone, don't add artwork that will not add up to what Nature has created – you will fail! If the wood is plain, uninteresting, why turn it?

5. Shapes? I don't turn bowls; vases, hollow forms, platters, off center work is more fun. These shapes leave the color, figure, uniqueness of the wood to be enjoyed, bowls leave most of these attributes on the floor in the form of shavings.
 - a) Tall elegant vases are a favorite using the lathe setups to their utmost.
 - b) Low profile hollow forms use my modified boring bars, 12" to 20" diameter and 2" to 4" tall pieces keep all of the wood's features in the finished piece.
 - c) Let your imagination run wild – safely of course!

6. Art work? My ideas come from observations, photos, history books, nature (leaves, mountains, fishes, insects, plants).
 - a) Our area is rich in old fishing boats, logging locomotives, antique airplanes.
 - b) Fall leaf patterns and colors are great; gather, press, dry, and save for future uses.
 - c) If the wood piece is figured on one side, plain on the other side see if you can use your leaf, insect, boat images on the plain surface. Perhaps you can add "wow" in this way?
 - d) Wood burning details, textures are nice. Dental drills or power carvers are easy to use and add effective design relief.

7. Art work--to-wood? A fine copy machine is a great tool to bring your leaves, photos, drawings to proper size for the wood turning to be personalized.
 - a) Make a master sheet of your desired designs, save it to be used on or modified for other projects.
 - b) Copy the art work to a "Stick-N-Burn" adhesive copy sheet so you can cut, place, arrange, rearrange and create the final composition to your desired turning surface.
 - c) Wood burn with tip of choice this image to your wood surface, remove the waste pieces, wash with acetone to get rid of any residual adhesive.
 - d) Then paint, dye, texture these outlined images.

8. Finish? I use several types: 4:1 oil/thane, Maloof, Deft, Krylon or any you are comfortable with.
 - a) Use Doug Fisher's style finishes --you can't go wrong!
 - b) Stephen Hatcher's style of inlay and finishing is excellent also.

9. Enough? Have fun!!

Supply sources

1. "Fun With Gourds" Welburn Catalog
 - 1) Heat activated glue.
 - 2) Metal leafing (Green, Red, Black variegated colors)
(Gold, Copper, Silver solid colors)
 - 3) Ink dyes.
 - 4) Fine liner brushes.
 - 5) Blank "Stick-N-Burn" copy paper for ink jet printers.
 - 6) Heat tool (gun).
 - 7) Wood Burning Buddy.

2. Razor Tip (1-877-729-3787) wood burning pens.
Ball tips/Spear points F5S/ skewers.
3. Dental hand piece Brian McEvoy (1-780-476-7989)
Elio drives " "
4. Master carver Craft Supply/Packard
Carbide cutters "A" type – Rotary chisel.com (1-800-388-2797)
5. Dyes/India Ink – Wood Crafters
6. Sand papers - Dry Ice (Sanding Glove)/Siasoft
7. Magnifiers