

american association of woodturners

merging

Merging

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The American Association of Woodturners is dedicated to the appreciation and advancement of woodturning at all levels. Founded in 1986, the AAW has more than 15,000 members and over 350 local chapters in the United States, Canada, Australia, Japan, and Taiwan. The AAW publishes the journal *American Woodturner*, and holds an annual international symposium. The AAW offices and the AAW Gallery of Wood Art are located in Saint Paul, Minnesota.

For more information, visit our websites:

woodturner.org
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Merging

An exhibition organized by the
American Association of Woodturners

Premiere:

29th Annual AAW International Woodturning Symposium
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania June 25–28, 2015

AAW Gallery of Wood Art
Saint Paul, Minnesota September 1–December 27, 2015

Juror Statements

Stephen Keeble, collector

It has been interesting to watch the increasingly challenging themes of these shows mounted at the symposium. *Merging* has proven to be the most challenging yet. Many of the pieces we reviewed showed real thought and skills and required far more than just the ability to turn. I'm encouraged to see the AAW continuing to get makers to stretch and do more than just the functional forms that are at the core of the field. I'd like to commend those that took the time to really take this challenge into their clever imaginations and talented hands. When you consider that almost all of these pieces are the first of their kind, it's really a special show. I'd also like to thank Michael, Derek, and Tib Shaw for their helpful insights about the work we reviewed. We all came at this from different perspectives, but in the end we agreed these were the most successful pieces that responded to the theme.

Michael McMillan, curator

It has been a great honor to be included as part of the jury for the 2015 Members Exhibition of the AAW Symposium. As the field of contemporary woodturning progresses, it is a joy to see the imaginative ways in which today's artists interact with the lathe. I was able to witness this creativity through the diverse body of submissions for *Merging*, as turners tackled this theme with fascinating approaches to their materials, forms, and personal narratives. The nature of pictorial submission makes the decision-making process complex, but the expertise and input of the jurors were helpful in the challenging deliberations. My goal was to find those works that best exemplified the exhibition's theme of merging, and it was a pleasure to see how artists interpreted this subject into their practice. In the end, I believe that we have put together an exhibition that is a snapshot of the field today, as it speaks both to tradition and innovation in the medium of wood.

Derek Weidman, artist

A decade ago, as a maker in his first year making, I remember submitting to an AAW themed show, in this case "ReTURN to the Land of Oz," and how massive an honor it was then to be accepted. Now to be an artist getting invited to help jury a show like this is a new and incredibly important milestone to me. Getting to see all the raw submissions for this concept-driven show was a true delight; with its curlers still in and no lipstick on, the show was still quite beautiful in its own way. Thank you, AAW members, for submitting so much great work. Then working with Michael, Steve, and Tib was great, as everyone approached it quite seriously. Our collective experience and way we see the field is quite broad. Our goal was to trim the entries down to the pieces that would help present a show with clarity and excellence in both idea and execution. So with the curtain raised now, experience this exhibit, see it turn, spin, coalesce, join, come together, and merge.

John Beaver

Pacific Palisades, California



Merging: Almost

Cocobolo
12" x 4" x 4"

The title says it best...*Merging: Almost*. This meandering sculpture almost merges together, but not quite. The wavy design was inspired by the movement of ocean waves, which can also be reflected in Pittsburgh's merging rivers.

Sally Burnett

Staffordshire, United Kingdom



Outside In

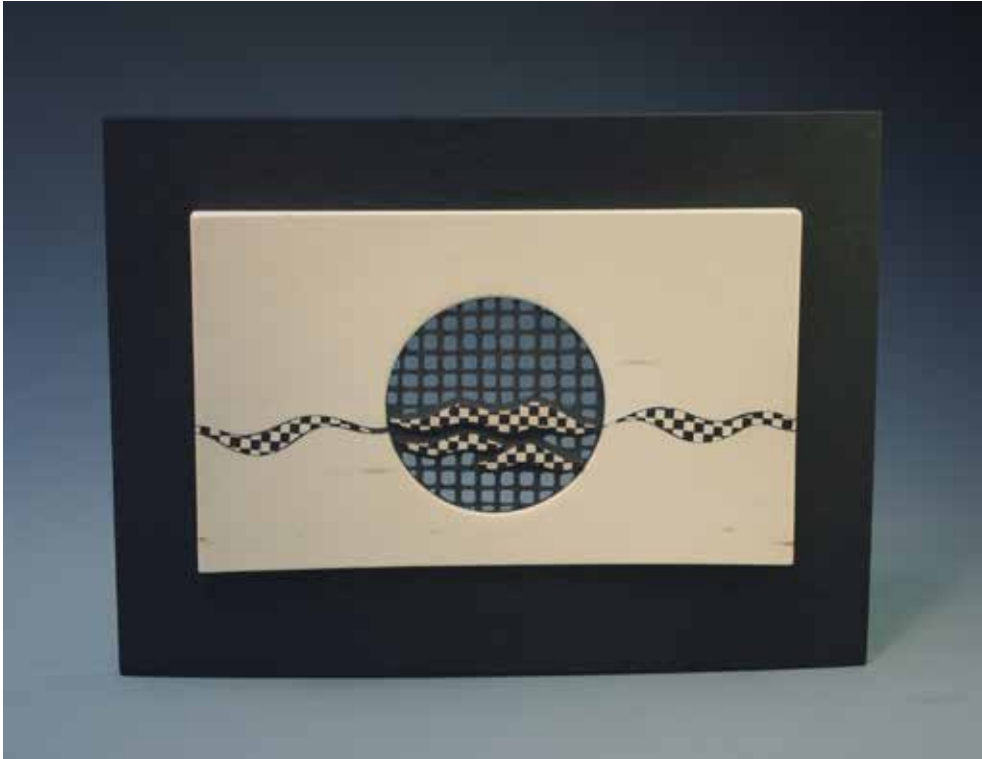
Sycamore, copper

8" x 7" x 7"

This work explores the relationship between the interior and exterior spaces of an open form. The undulating rim creates an ever-changing pattern as the piece is rotated. The outside and the inside merge and meld to create a unique design which plays with light and shade, texture and shadow.

Marilyn Campbell

Kincardine, Ontario



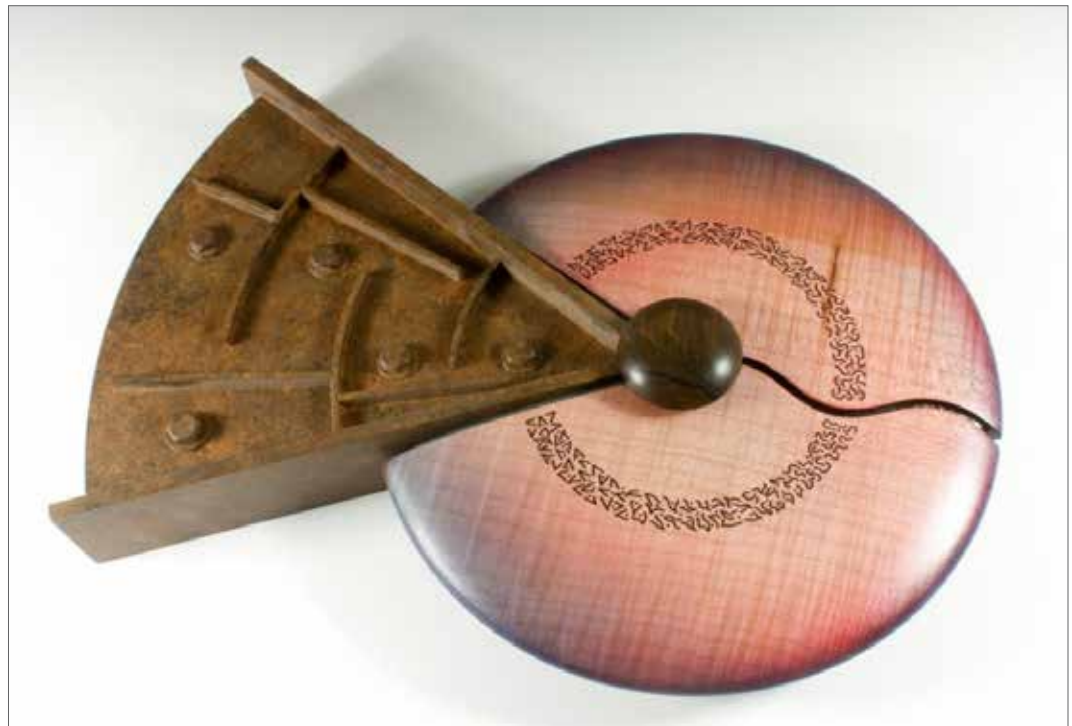
Horizon

Holly, African blackwood,
walnut, epoxy resin, dye
9" x 12.25"

A boat-building experience many years ago was both my introduction to wood and the beginning of a fascination with making things, despite the fact that I was entirely unschooled in shop techniques. The boat also provided me with another medium, epoxy resin, a material I found to be very versatile. In fact, my use of resin developed as a direct result of my shop inexperience—as a self-taught turner, I found a certain freedom from tradition when it came to solving problems. From there I began to experiment with resin as both a design element and a structural component. The combination of these two materials has allowed me to create a variety of effects and to expand the limits usually placed on lathe work. My work has evolved through experimentation of form and method, from platters to vessel and sculptural forms—all using, to some degree, a technique of cutting and reassembly.

Alan Carter

Asheville, North Carolina



Confluence

Colored figured
maple, MDF,
paint, zircote
2" x 10" x 15"

This is an abstract representation of Pittsburgh. The faux-painted MDF references the steel heritage of the city. The black channels are the three rivers, emphasized by the curving shape of one of the channels. The figured maple echos the forested landscape of western Pennsylvania. The gradual change in the shapes and designs of the incised circular pattern represents the influences of both the manufactured and the natural.

Andy DiPietro

Burlington, New Jersey



Merging Iron

Oak

24" x 24" x 24"

In the heart of Pittsburgh, the Ohio River forms where the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers merge together. Like the Ohio River, this city merged iron and technology to form a steady flow of steel that helped build America.

This abstract sculpture features wood structural forms meshing and flowing together in tribute to this steel town.

Cindy Drozda

Boulder, Colorado

Transition

Wood

6" x 2.8" x 2.8"

My world is in transition. Since the loss of my 14-year partner, David Nittmann, my life has gone through changes. I am becoming a new person, shaped by all that I have gone through so far.

Transition merges David's influence and my signature style, using his beads on straight-grained wood, and without the decoration that David would have done.

Now is the time for me to lean on the past, embrace the future, and be solidly here in the present, as I embark on my next great adventure in life.



Harvey Fein

New York, New York



Untitled

Red Mallee burl

11" x 8" x 9"

Just as the Monongahela, Allegheny, and Ohio rivers are in a sense one body of water, so too are these pieces, apparently separate, but flowing from one piece of wood.

Michael Foster

Springfield, Vermont



Confluence

Bigleaf maple burl, dye,
lacquer, epoxy, acrylic

10" x 8" x 8"

Much of my work is inspired by mathematics. In this piece nine separate conic sections merge together into the form of a hemisphere. Since the width of each conic section is the same, the inner edges of the conic sections also describe a hemisphere. It was an interesting exercise in geometry.

Dewey Garrett

Prescott, Arizona



Connections

Wood

8" x 12" x 6"



This box is assembled from twelve cylindrical segments (some angled), a cube segment, and three lids. Each component was hand-turned, then threaded and decorated with a unique pattern on my ornamental turning machine. The individual joints are threaded identically so there are many possible combinations in ordering the assembly. Moreover, the threads have three starts (120 degrees apart) increasing the number of arrangements. The cube section has two inputs and one output like the confluence (merging) of rivers.

Michael Gibson

Hoschton, Georgia

The Kiss

Pear wood, paint
12" x 3.5"

When two souls can
merge into a union they
enhance each other's lives.



Ashley Harwood

Charleston, South Carolina



Marriage

Ebony, chocolate ebony,
sterling silver, leather

10.5" x 5.5" x 0.5"

When I think of “merging,” the most meaningful and most ubiquitous form that comes to mind is when two people merge their lives together. I chose to use rings to represent marriage, with the different tones in the wood representing the individual people. In the middle, where they meet, there are both tones in the same piece of wood. The visual pattern was inspired by the feather found in the fork of a tree. To me, this pattern shows growth, tension, and layers of life.

Stephen Hatcher

Olympia, Washington



River Diamonds

Maple burl, river gravel,
guitar perfling, black mica,
resin, acrylic paint,
colorfast dyes, lacquer
4" x 13" x 13"



Disparate materials are merged in a bowl inlay, creating a design that suggests "river-like." Fine, naturally-polished, multicolored gravel shimmers in clear epoxy like a waterway surface. This is consistent with the three-rivers theme. For contrast, diamonds of black mica were added through void casting, and the inlay is bound by multiple bands of black perfling normally used in guitar building. The black accents are carried to the base with an accent band. The feet are hand carved. The merging of these very different materials and techniques creates a pleasing effect in a relatively simple bowl.

Larry Jensen

Beverly Shores, Indiana



Bessemer

Pulverized anthracite coal, limestone, and iron ore bonded with resin, antique tongs

17" x 13" x 11.5"



As steel is a merger of iron, limestone and coal, this sculpture is a merging of actual iron ore, limestone, and anthracite coal. The antique tongs, which share the characteristics of mill tongs, merge the piece into the historical story of Pittsburgh steel mills.

Ron Layport

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Confluence

Sycamore, pigment

13" x 9" x 9"



A young George Washington stood at this point on the rivers. Forts were built and burned here. Fortunes made and lost here at the confluence of the Allegheny and the Monongahela. Birthplace of the Ohio. Three great rivers, once a cesspool of industry, today reborn.

It's always been about coming together to be greater than. Not just about rivers or resources, but about ideas and people and sweat and beauty. Blue collar and white collar. Only here could technology, robotics, medicine and art have possibly replaced the Bessemer furnace. And so the river flows.

We were told growing up that whirlpools at the confluence of the three rivers, have no bottom. Probably to keep us away from the river. That single recollection inspired this piece.

Janice Levi

Groesbeck, Texas



Black Plus White Equals...

Holly, ebony, zebrawood, stainless steel
10" x 5" x 0.625"

The theme of merging presented a challenging concept. All I could see in my mind were the rivers in Pittsburgh that flow together. The necklace I created is a statement in wood of those two rivers that, once co-mingled, form a new wooden river. The beads were turned to resemble the shape of water droplets cascading downward where they merge into a new series of bi-colored droplets.

Jason Mast

Reedsport, Oregon



Eclipse Series #1

Port Orford cedar, India ink, epoxy,
beeswax, oil

19" x 28" x 3"

Drawing from my interest in astronomy, I sketched several eclipse-style designs, one of which led to this wall hanging, where light and dark begin to merge.

Hal Metlitzky

Claremont, California



Apartheid

Yellowheart, chakte viga, holly, hard maple, tulipwood, old-growth East Indian rosewood, kingwood, Gabon ebony, dyed birch, epoxy resin, lacquer

11.5" x 7.25" x 7.25"



This bowl recalls apartheid South Africa and the newly merged nation of today.

The center of the bowl is black with a thin white ring around it, representing the black majority controlled by a small white minority. The lives of blacks and whites swirled around each other in separate universes of white cities and black townships depicted by large patches on either side of the bowl of white surrounded by black, and black surrounded by white. Near the top of the bowl, the colors of the new South African flag signify the dismantling of apartheid and the emergence of a new multiracial country. The rim celebrates the new society where black and white have merged.

Grace Parliman

Los Alamos, New Mexico

Psalm 30:5 Joy Comes With The Morning

Cherry, boxelder burl, yellow-
heart, purpleheart, bubinga,
lapis lazuli, malachite
2.25" x 13.5" x 13.5"

Joy Comes With the Morning incorporates several different techniques (e.g. carving, stone inlay, wood lamination, and segmented wood design) to produce symbols that convey an idea. The maze represents our path in life, with the knot work encircling the inlaid stone symbolizing God's sovereignty. The spirals represent the passing night and the rising sun and tree of life, a new day and risen Savior. Psalms 30:5 was written by King David in remembrance that as the night passes and a new day dawns, God transforms our sorrows and fears into joy.



Jim Piper
Portland, Oregon



The Ripple Effect

Douglas fir, white oak
3" x 8.5" x 6"



Ripples, or waves of water, reach out as they grow, leaving their impression as they merge with the shore. With each demonstration I attended as a new woodturner, I felt an impression of the work being presented. Sometimes I was more impressed than other times and what I learned left a stronger reflection on my own work, but without exception it always left an impression. The ripples from those demonstrations have and continue to merge within to create my own interpretation of art.

Joey Richardson

Lincolnshire, United Kingdom

Coalesce

Sycamore, cast glass, cast silver,
acrylics

8" x 6" x 6"

The individual elements of wood, glass and silver have been merged to create something completely different. They have coalesced into a beautiful floral form which symbolizes human fragility; flowers, like life, don't last forever. The grey cast-glass petal is cold, fragile, and easily broken, symbolizing the darker moments of life. The warm, tactile wood relates directly to mankind: the tree grows, branches out, blossoms, bears fruit, seeds and then dies. The silver bud, the strongest element, represents new growth, a new life.

All these elements have originated from the same source: the earth; all will return there. Eventually all things will merge into one.



Ric Romano

Golden, Colorado



Three Sisters

Boxelder, compressed wood, paint

6" x 4" x 4"

8" x 5" x 5"

9.5" x 5.5" x 5.5"

These three sisters represent a family. Each sister is unique—she has her own experiences, personality and has faced a life of joys and challenges that, while at times similar to her sisters, is singular to her. The cracks caused by life's sorrows are visible in each woman. But their cracks are mended by bent wood. Each sister's personality radiates through different colors, ages and sizes. Merged, they have a different story that echoes the experiences of three different sisters, but it is also more colorful, more cracked, and more beautiful than any one story on its own.

Robert Rotche

Blacksburg, Virginia

Ginkgo Entropy

Maple, sheet steel,
Gilders Paste, acrylics
12" x 12" x 3"

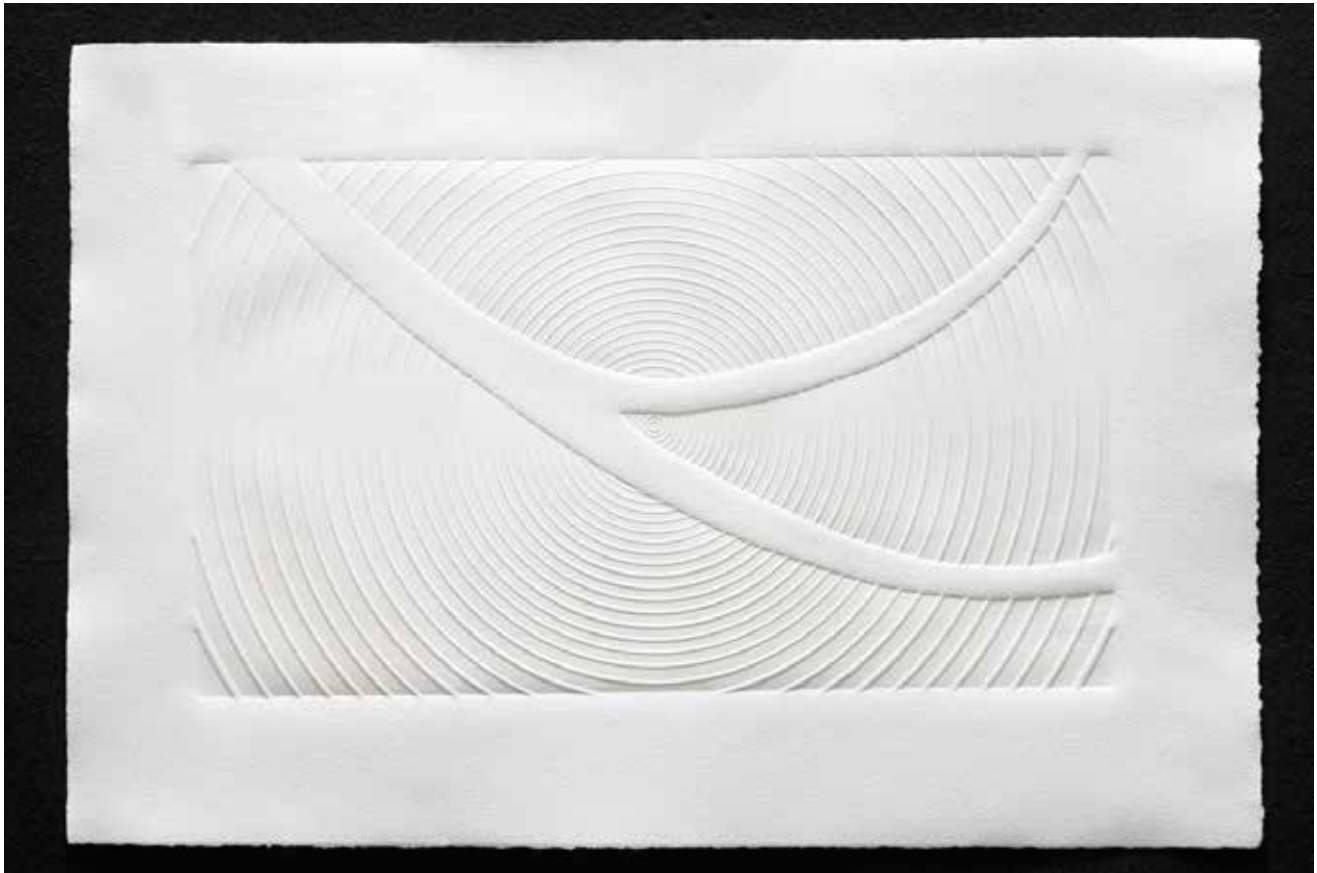


Initially, the design of *Ginkgo Entropy* was intended to represent leaves starting in a state of chaos and merging into a state of order, then devolving back into chaos. As it came together, I realized that this interactive piece was actually a merging of artist, artwork, and observer into a commentary on the human condition.

As the disc is rotated, a random grouping of leaves coalesces into an orderly progression. This orderliness is fleeting as the leaves quickly disperse into their more natural state of chaos, reflecting the course of most of our lives and further exemplified by the fleeting interaction between observer and work.

Betty Scarpino

Indianapolis, Indiana



Merged are woodturning, carving, and embossed printmaking. The concentric circles, created from the process of woodturning, symbolize roads. The Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers join to form the Ohio River at the heart of Pittsburgh. Roads and rivers intersect, complex patterns emerge.

Confluence

Handmade paper

13" x 20"

Mark Sfirri

New Hope, Pennsylvania

Convergence

Wood, paint

10.75" x 3.5" x 3.5"

I had several goals in addressing the theme of *merging* with this piece. The first goal was the blending of the turned surfaces with the carved continuations of them in order to make a seamless transition from one element to the next. This carving, which I term "non-creative carving," is simply following what was already created with the turned planes. The second goal was the highlighting of these inside corners with color to help visually celebrate the merging of the forms.



John (Jack) Shelton

Fort Pierce, Florida



This piece of rosewood crotch captures many different aspects of merging. The overall concept brings together the merging of creative process, technical ability, and nature. It also represents the three rivers that come together in the AAW Symposium host city, Pittsburgh.

Go With the Flow

Rosewood
27" x 25" x 5"

Jay Shepard

Olympia, Washington



Enceladus

Bigleaf maple, acrylic paint,
lacquer, calcite, pigment
2.75" x 11.38" x 11.38"



Enceladus, the sixth-largest moon of Saturn, is unique in that it has “cryo-volcanoes” that shoot geyser-like jets of water vapor, ice particles and other materials into space. Some of that vapor falls back as snow, the rest escapes, merging with and creating the second outermost ring of Saturn. This piece represents that merging. The center lid represents Enceladus, the painted surface represents the materials released from the geysers, and the inlays represent the merging of that material into Saturn’s rings. On a personal level, this piece represents the merging of my formal training in painting with my passion for woodturning.

Thomas Stegall

Peoria, Illinois



Inspired by the city of Pittsburgh with its nearly 500 steel bridges, *Forging* depicts fire, one of man's earliest discoveries; water, one of man's most abundant resources; and the vessel form, one of the earliest tools developed by man and a symbol of human ingenuity. The processes of heating and cooling were once used separately for mere survival, but when merged in the process of forging and combined with man's inventiveness, they led to the development of the great steel structures seen throughout the city and harnessed in Pittsburgh's universities to shape our future.

Forging

White ash,
paint,
acrylic resin
4" x 12" x 7"

Hannah Aliyah Taylor

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Derek Weidman

Skippack, Pennsylvania

Parts of the Whole

Wood, ink
8" x 8" x 8"

To merge, at first different/separate

*Then coming together, losing something, definition,
albeit gaining something new*

*Boundaries are temporary as they slip into existence
only to flutter out*

This piece visually tries to capture multiple levels of the same thing, from mathematical clarity to the impossibilities of dreams, all represented through "layers" of consciousness. Elements of other-ness paired with communication, and shared thoughts play out in the two faces, from duality of self, to completely separate entities. This was a collaboration with themes of separation and distinction being part of a greater whole playing out in concept, look, and process.



Dennis Wattier

Omaha, Nebraska



Transition

Walnut, maple, oak,
cherry, mahogany
16.5" x 7" x 5"



This work is an extension of a series of art pieces I created to draw attention to the influx of invasive species devastating oak, ash, walnut, elm, and pine trees, among others, in the Midwest. The transition of different pod shapes or forms reflects the merging of invasive elements and Nebraska's native species. The multiple wood types used in this piece simulate a mержence of different woods into one.

Andi Wolfe

Upper Arlington, Ohio



Unstony Tafoni

Bigleaf maple
2.5" x 6.75" x 6.75"

Nature has an abundance of structural motifs that are shared among living organisms. Occasionally, motifs are shared among organic and inorganic structures as well. An example is *tafoni* – a geological weathering pattern where small cave-like structures are carved from granular rock. Typically, one sees this honeycomb weathering formation along seashores where sandstone, limestone or granite rock comes into contact with saltwater. Salt crystals forming within rock pores to cause this type of erosion. When I first saw tafoni along sea cliffs in Australia, the geological motif looked amazingly like fractured plant cells one can see in electron micrographs. For the exhibition *Merging*, my theme is to merge structural motifs from organic and inorganic entities to coalesce into an unstony tafoni.

Invited Artists

Marilyn Campbell
Andy DiPietro
Cindy Drozda
Harvey Fein
Ashley Harwood
Ron Layport
Betty Scarpino
Mark Sfirri
Derek Weidman
Andi Wolfe

Juried Artists

John Beaver
Sally Burnett
Alan Carter
Michael Foster
DeweyGarrett
Michael Gibson
Stephen Hatcher
Larry Jensen
Janice Levi
Jason Mast

Hal Metlitzky
Grace Parliman
Jim Piper
Joey Richardson
Ric Romano
Robert Rotche
John (Jack) Shelton
Jay Shepard
Thomas Stegall
Dennis Wattier



Merging, the 2015 juried and invitational member exhibition of the American Association of Woodturners, showcases the beauty of wood as an artistic medium.

Featuring the work of thirty artists, both professional and amateur, *Merging* honors the meeting point of Pittsburgh's waterways, and the essence of the AAW International Symposium – a venue where turners of all levels and approaches meet.

Jurors: Stephen Keeble, former president of the Collectors of Wood Art; Michael McMillan, assistant curator, Fuller Craft Museum; and Derek Weidman, professional artist.

