

Northwest Woodworkers Association

THE SAWDUST NEWS



March 2019

An association for woodworkers of all skill levels to share their common interest

The Next Meeting

Date: April 25, 2019 at 6:30 PM

**Location: Rockler Woodworking – Northgate
832 NE Northgate Way
Seattle, WA 98125**

**Program Highlight: From Furniture to Fine Art
Speaker: Tim Celeski (<https://celeski.com/>)**

March 2019 Meeting Highlights

Meeting Photos by Scott Wilson

Meeting Notes by Tim Newsome

The **March 2019** meeting of the **Northwest Woodworkers Association** was held on **Thursday, March 28, 2019** at **Woodcraft of Seattle**. We want to express our appreciation to **Ron and Michelle Hall** and the **Woodcraft** staff for providing a wonderful venue for this meeting. We really appreciate your long-standing support of the **Association**.



Seventeen members, including two new members, attended this interesting and informative meeting. **Steering Committee Member, Tim Newsome**, conducted the meeting.

Show 'N' Tell



Chris Yee shared with us some of his woodworking experiences from a recent trip to **Bali**. He noted that woodcarving is a very prevalent art form in that country. Apparently, many of the cities and villages have their own resident woodcarvers. One of the most unique objects made by these woodcarvers is the **Garuda**.

According to the **Ancient History Encyclopedia**:

“**Garuda** is a bird creature from Hindu mythology that has a mixture of eagle and human features. He is the vehicle of **Vishnu**, one of the principal deities of Hinduism. **Garuda** traditionally has the torso and arms of a man and the wings, head, beak and talons of an eagle or vulture. **Garuda** represents birth and heaven, and is the enemy of all snakes. In Indian art, **Garuda** gradually acquired more human form over the centuries and so maintained only his wings. In Cambodia, however, he retains even today the great talons and vicious-looking beak of a bird of prey.”



Chris noted that the **Garudas** are typically carved from wood from jackfruit trees. It is hard to imagine the level of creativity, skill, and patience required to do such exquisite carving. Thanks, **Chris**, for sharing this once in a lifetime woodworking experience -- one that most of us will probably never have the opportunity to enjoy in person.

While in Bali, **Chris** purchased an array of carving tools like those used by the local carvers. He noted that they are usually made from steel bar stock without handles, and are struck with a heavy wooden mallet. Surprisingly, he noted that the chisels are typically sharpened manually using a cheap Chinese sharpening stone.

Chris also took a wood carving class, while visiting Bali. Using carving tools he purchased in Bali, and a traditional pattern design frequently used for decorating bedposts, tables, etc., he fashioned a sort of three-dimensional tile from a wooden slab.



Tom English, one of our newer members, displayed a lovely earring cabinet he recently designed and built for his wife. His innovative original design was unique and custom tailored to suit his mounting arrangement. The cabinet was made from oak, and finished with a **Minwax Wood Finish**, a penetrating stain/finish. **Tom** noted that this was his first woodworking project since joining the **Association!**

The cabinet design was unusual in that it had an outer hinged glass door panel which enclosed a second hinged door panel covered with a nylon screen material. The inner hinged screen panel allowed the studs or fixings of the earrings to be inserted through the screen from the front and secured from the back of the hinged panel. In addition, the back panel of the cabinet was covered in a fabric treated with an anti-tarnishing chemical to protect the finish of the silver earrings and jewelry. To round out the custom features, **Tom** routed an undercut in the edge of the outer door to provide a finger grip and installed rare earth magnets to hold the door closed – very clever and functional features of this original design.



In addition, the whole cabinet was designed to be securely attached to the outside of a closet door, using hangers affixed near the top of the back panel and rubber bumpers along the bottom of the panel to prevent marring the finish of the closet door.



Tom fabricated the cabinet box frame using splined miter joints, employing his router table and a **Rockler Router Spline Jig** – noting that the large size of the frame made for an awkward routing situation! One quarter inch walnut splines, which contrasted nicely with the oak frame, provided additional joint reinforcement.



The outer glass door frame was also fabricated using miter joints, but this time he used a **Kreg Micro Pocket Drill Guide** and pocket screws to reinforce the miter joints. Unable to locate suitably sized plugs for this hole size, he filled the pockets with a glue/sawdust mixture. For the corner joints of the interior screened panel, he used half lap joints.

This was a well-designed and executed project, **Tom**, especially for your first one! This was also a great exercise in the use of various joint designs and reinforcement techniques. Congratulations, **Tom** – nice work on the design and build!!



Jim Wilson reported on the progress he has made on a major bathroom remodel. He noted that it wasn't a whole lot of fun installing a new subfloor, which required the installation of some 700+ screws. That oughta hold 'er down though, Jim.....!! He also noted that the remodel job required a lot of preplanning and organization of more individual tasks than he initially envisioned! He said that they had a lot of difficulty moving a 3' x 5' glass mirror. Apparently they have an additional larger 3' x 10' glass mirror to move and he is pondering how he is going to accomplish that task.....!

Program Highlight **The Joys of Lamination**

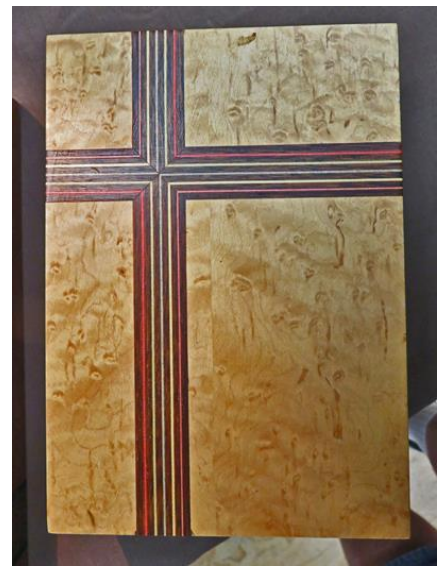
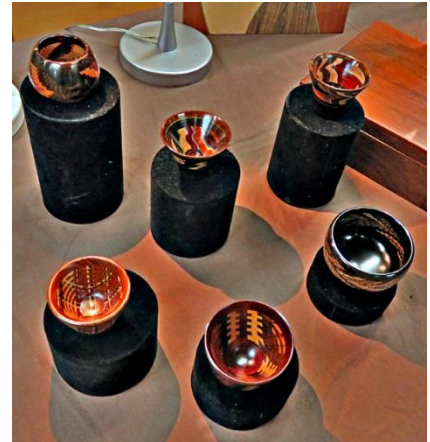


What a pleasure to enjoy the delightful program presentation by our guest speaker, **Martha Collins**, a talented woodworking artist and creator from Sequim, WA. **Martha** noted that her woodworking career spans some 45 years and began as being the first woman to enroll in the Title IX, 2.5-year Cabinet Making Training Program. After working as a cabinet maker for some time, she enrolled in a wood jewelry apprentice program, where she found her creative niche.

Her specialty is creating a wide variety of colorful woodworking objects and jewelry, many samples of which she displayed at our meeting. Typically, the outstanding features of her creations are the patterns and colors produced by laminating various species of hardwoods and veneers, some of which she dyes bright, vivid colors.

The wide variety of beautiful creations she displayed included boxes with inlaid strips of multicolored wood, exquisite wooden bracelets and earrings with intricate patterns and colors of veneers, tiny wooden bowls, some of which contained over 1000 pieces of veneer, colorful wine

stoppers and salt and pepper shakers, as well as other inlaid items. Some of her creations are shown in the photos below.



Martha noted that she only uses hardwoods because they have a similar density, providing more consistent workability and uniformity of finish. She uses both domestic and exotic hardwood species, typically purchased from **Eden Saw** and **Gilmore Woods**, both of whom market sustainable woods – i.e. several trees are planted for each one that is harvested.

To produce her highly colored veneers, **Martha** purchases maple veneer, which she colors with **aniline dyes**. She noted that the dyeing process essentially involves boiling/simmering the veneer outdoors in the dye solution for several hours. But she also noted that a lot of trial and error is involved in the dyeing process, making it difficult to exactly replicate colors from batch to batch, even with careful attention to replicate previous processing steps. Typically, the veneer is “cooked” for a sufficiently long time for the dye to penetrate all the way through so that when fashioned into her beautiful jewelry, the color of the dyed segments is consistent throughout the piece.

As shown in the photos below, choosing from some 40 different species, she typically creates stacks of five wood strips, approximately 1/4” thick, separated by thin veneer strips of contrasting, complementary, or vividly colored dyed veneer, to form blocks of different sizes and



lamination patterns. Interestingly, she noted that even with her vast experience, the resulting laminations and the ways they appear on her creations sometimes surprise her.

She mills the thicker pieces from the various species of solid wood. Based upon her extensive experience, these strips are selected and arranged in an order required to produce pleasing combinations of colors and grain patterns. As can be seen, the possibilities are almost endless! She typically marks the grain direction on the strips to ensure uniformity of appearance. The intended use of the laminated wooden block governs the size and number of component strips – larger projects such as bracelets, require larger blanks; smaller ones such as bottle stoppers or earrings, smaller ones.

Lamination of the wooden blocks appears to be a fairly simple process. Using simple L-shaped jigs, she assembles the stacks of wooden strips and veneer. A low viscosity, long open time epoxy (**RBC Epoxy Resin 1000**), is applied with wooden craft sticks to coat the individual strips for assembly. This epoxy is also used as a final finish for many of her creations. One exception is the finishing of the bottle stoppers, for which she uses **Rudd** brand gloss lacquer, probably because it brings out the intense color of the woods and dyed veneers. She noted that the use of the aniline dyes does not affect the bonding of the veneer laminations.

C-clamps are used to secure the veneer stacks to the jigs, clamping in both the horizontal and vertical directions. Waxed paper is used between the stack and the wooden jigs to prevent adhesion.

Typically, the laminated blocks are further processed into thin strips by further resawing on a finely tuned bandsaw. Some of the blocks are cut into triangular pieces on a miter saw to be reassembled into different patterned blocks.

Martha noted that the setup of her equipment is one of the keys to her success. She equips her saws with sharp blades and sets them up such that the blades and fences are ***exactly 90°*** to the table and uses melamine coated MDF sheets for zero clearance inserts to ensure chip-free cuts. She also specially orders her bandsaw blades, specifying that they be pretested to ensure flutter-free operation, essential to creating the thin laminations she makes for her creations. To further minimize bandsaw blade flutter, she tensions the blade significantly higher than normal.

To ensure a uniform appearance of the intricate veneer patterns in her creations requires that the individual resawn laminations be a consistent thickness. In cutting her laminations, **Martha** attempts to produce actual thickness tolerances at the corners of the laminations of ± 0.002 ", but will settle for ± 0.004 "! Some of the band sawed laminations appeared to be less than 1/16" thick! That takes some very precision setup and careful cutting techniques!!

After band sawing the thin laminations, she lightly sands the strips by hand to smooth out the slight roughness from the band sawing, using a sheet of adhesive-backed sandpaper attached to a flat surface. Any slight variations remaining in the surfaces are filled by the epoxy resin used for bonding the laminations.

As can be seen in the right-hand photo above, laminated blocks used for making some of the beautiful bracelets have three holes drilled into them. These blocks are usually resawed into thin laminations and cut into three equally sized squares. Each of these square laminations is then stacked on a round mandrel and rotated through a slight angle to the underlying one. Careful assembly ensures evenly offset spiral increments of the pattern, producing striking effects, especially when vividly colored laminations are used.



When finished, this technique produces a swirling, diagonal pattern of the laminations – joining two such laminations with laminations rotated in opposite directions produces the V-shaped pattern. Some of her signature bracelets, shown on her website are outstanding examples of this technique.

Interestingly, **Martha** uses both a standard woodworking lathe and a metal lathe to create the bracelets. Using the metal lathe equipped with a parting tool, the circular shape of the bracelet is created by plunging the tool into the face of the blank. The wood lathe is probably used to shape and smooth the contours of the bracelets and for shaping her tiny bowls and wine stoppers.

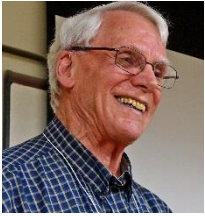
Martha's presentation was indeed a memorable one! Her narrated slide show illustrating her shop, tools, and fabricating techniques was outstanding!

For more information, and an excellent slide presentation, please visit **Martha's** website: www.studiomarthacollins.com. The galleries of photos of her creations are exceptional!

Her website also describes the classes she holds at her shop in Sequim, WA for individual hands-on training in the fine art of laminations, as well as her presentation agenda at various venues.

Thank you so much, **Martha**, for sharing your unique creative talents with us at this meeting.

Notes from the Editor



Well, “I’m back in the saddle again!”, as the song goes. Fortunately, that was a short “retirement”. Thanks to **Herb Stoops**, my night driving transportation issues have been resolved.

But truth be told, I will have to confess that I did miss writing the **Newsletter!** Whether or not I am currently doing anything in my own shop, writing the **Newsletter** is a kind of woodworking “project” for me each month, and allows me to share in yours.

Thanks to the **Association** members who noted missing the **Newsletter** and your enthusiasm about its return. I appreciate your encouraging support and response.

Remember, we **all** have **something** to offer the **Association** – are you doing your part?? We have a **Mega Show’N’Tell** coming up in a few months – this is a great opportunity for you to share your part of the wonderful world of woodworking with the rest of us, even if you have never done it before. It’s pretty easy to talk about your projects.....! 😊 We look forward to hearing about **yours!**

Happy and Safe Woodworking,

Paul

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If you have a woodworking-related problem, question, comment, or item that may be of interest to the membership, we encourage you to contact any of the above individuals. We will endeavor to connect you with someone who can help.

In addition, please visit our website: <https://www.nwoodworkers.org>