

Woodturning Today

A Dramatic Evolution

Celebrating THE AMERICAN
ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS
25th Anniversary
1986-2011



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SCULPTURE FOR THE SOUL : LYNDA SMITH-BÜGGE

In 1975, right after college graduation, I accepted a dream job of teaching woodworking to New York City young people, who came for one week or more to experience nature, a small working farm, and woodworking in the beautiful Catskill Mountains at Goddard-Riverside Camp. There was a lathe and shop in a stone-hewn barn by the pond. I had just graduated from Hunter College in New York City where I majored in sculpture, fell in love with the college's woodshop, and with Henry Moore's designs and work with wood.

This dream job took me by surprise. Creativity flowed through me in a way that I had never experienced. I helped build the shop and set up workstations to explore the properties of wood. Over the next three years, I discovered lore and poetry about the trees around us. I also discovered burning qualities of specific woods for our 50 gallon heating barrel set up to heat the shop during cold winters.



My intense research with our surrounding trees led me to develop a multi-sensory program for city kids. I set up workstations for the kids to use all their senses to explore the properties of wood: hearing sight, smell, taste, and touch. Hearing—how woods made different sounds in simple musical instruments; sight—how colors and textures are richly different in the abundant cherry, juniper, hemlock, maple, nut trees of the local area; smell and taste—how sassafras and sweet birch were used for food and medicine; and touch—how turned woods of the same size weighed differently according to the species.

One of the favorite stations in the woodshop was the lathe, where students turned a baseball bat from a local ash tree for their school back in New York City.

After three glorious years, the funding was cut. I went on to earn a degree in museum education at Bank Street College of Education. The forest was my museum, and the trees were part of the museum collection upon which I based much of my museum education program.

MENDING 34 x 16 x 16 inches Cherry / Walnut / Copper

Succeeding museum jobs continued in natural history and outdoor education.

From directing a children's museum in Florida, I eventually brought my museum skills to various contracts at the Smithsonian, the Library of Congress, and the Society of Woman Geographers.

In 1998, I came back to trees. It is as if I never left my first love. My first sculptures were juried into exhibitions in the Washington D.C. area. J. Carter Brown's (former director of the National Gallery of Art) "Sculpture/Mixed Media" award for my sculpture MENDING, inspired me to continue creating sculptures. Along the way, I joined the Capital Area Woodturners (CAW), where I constantly learn new skills and receive much support. In 2003, CAW offered me a grant to Arrowmont, where I took a class with Christian Burchard. I am astounded by the creativity and excellence being done in the American Association of Woodturners. Although I consider myself more a sculptor than a woodturner, I continue to use turned elements to balance or juxtapose an organic natural form.

After ten years of returning to my love for trees and my sculpture roots, I am ready to offer my sculptures to the world.