

## ***Coloring/Texturing and Other Thoughts***

*on what to do after the lathe work is finished – Douglas Pearson*

Texture ranges from a finely sanded, high glass finish to a surface covered with pyrography, cracks, ridges, paint, gliding, holes and whatever else you can think to add to the surface.

Some of the tools I use are:

Detail Master woodburning system  
A reciprocating carving tool using Flexcut cutting tools  
Foredom Power Carver  
Dremel Rotary Tool  
Turbo Carver - Dental Drill (400,000 rpm) with diamond bits  
Dental picks from my dentist's office  
Wire brushes  
Airbrush  
Dye (Behlen Solar-Lux)  
Wood Bleach  
Rifflers  
Air powered saw  
Sandpaper  
And though I've not used it yet, an Abrasive Blaster

You can get most, if not all of the above items here from Nick, at The Woodworkers Club.

The Detail Master woodburning tool creates unlimited textures depending on the pen and technique used. Depending on your artistic skills, beautiful artwork can be created using pyrography techniques.

I use Razortip pens and find the skew, spear and writing tip pens to be very useful. My favorite 'special use' pen is the 'Circle Stamper' which burns a small circle in the surface of the wood. It's easy to get carried away with these pens as there are a large number to choose from, but a few and go a long way in creating lots of different patterns.

Flexcut carving tools used in a reciprocating carver, work great for removing material quickly and easily. I use the Handcraft carver because that is the tool that Betty Scarpino uses! If you haven't seen Scarpino's work, you should check it out on the web.

A small bit in a Foredom or Dremel tool also works well for creating texture – either carving or drilling. For piercing a thin walled vessel, the Turbo Carver could be used, though due to the sound of the tool, I would try the Foredom/Dremel tools first.

I like to add color by using one or more Behlen Solar-Lux Stains. These are alcohol based dyes and dry very quickly. Frequently I'll combine these dyes with pyrography, acrylic paint and metal leaf. Prior to adding the metal leaf, I will sometimes paint the background black and apply the metal leaf in such a way as to allow the black to show through the cracks. I usually use black gesso for the paint, as this seals the wood and allows the leaf adhesive to stay on the surface. If a black dye is used, a sealer must be used to seal the wood, otherwise the leaf adhesive will just be absorbed.

Have you ever been frustrated when a piece cracks despite your best efforts to dry it properly? I used to put these pieces in the firepit along with the chainsaw cutoffs. Now, depending on the piece, if it doesn't crack, I'll burn a crack or two in myself using the Razortip skew or spear pens.

On some vessels, I'll leave the rim as the chainsaw left it, uneven and rough. I'll then burn the rim with pyrography pens to add additional texture and color. I usually paint the inside of these vessels black so the natural wood color won't distract when viewed.

If a vessel has a lot of rough texture or cracks, I'll spray on a clear coat finish. This is a quick and fairly easy finish to apply. On a smoother piece, I'll start with a coat of Watco Danish Oil. Then after 3 days of drying, I'll usually put on 3+ coats of Watco or Minwax Poly Wipe-on. On some pieces, I'll put on 12 or more coats to get a deep, rich finish.

Once the finish has cured thoroughly, I'll buff it using the Beall Buff System.

So, think outside the box, try something that may seem outrageous. Not all pieces have to be finished to a beautiful, fine finish (unless you're Phil Brown!). Many of the pieces I brought in tonight were first thought to be rejects. They almost made the firepit due to disappointing cracks and warping until I looked at them from a different point-of-view. Now these vessels have become my favorite pieces (I have many traditionally turned and finished pieces as well!). I now frequently turn green wood hoping for distortion and cracking so I can highlight the 'problems' by adding texture and color, though at times I still get upset when cracks appear in some pieces.

Perhaps one day you will consider adding a little 'spice' to one of your turnings. It's a lot of fun and you may discover a whole different side of yourself you never knew existed.

***Doug Pearson***  
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