



# IWG News

The Newsletter of the Island Woodturners Guild

April 2021



## About the IWG :

The [Island Woodturners Guild](#) meets from 1:00 - 4:00 PM on the 4th Saturday of each month (except for July/Aug) at the Central Saanich Senior Citizens' Centre, [1229 Clarke Road](#), Brentwood Bay, BC.

**Visitors are welcome.**

## Executive Committee

**President:**  
**Tim Karpiak**

**Vice President:**  
**Vik Peck**

**Secretary:**  
**Michael McEwan**

**Treasurer:**  
**Peter Pardee**

**Member at Large:**  
**Emma Banner**

**Member at Large:**  
**John Kilcoyne**

**Member at Large:**  
**Virginia Lee**

**Past President:**  
**Steve Werner**

**Newsletter Editor:**  
**John Kilcoyne**

The IWG gratefully acknowledges the support of the following companies:

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## THE PRESIDENT'S TURN

Well, the good weather looks like it might be here to stay. It is so nice to open the doors and let the fresh air in and the spiders out! I am really looking forward to more time in the shop.

I hope everyone enjoyed the Martin Saban-Smith demo last month. He is such a great demonstrator. It was nice that the demo was available to view afterwards for those who were not able to see it live. That option is not always available as it depends on the wishes of the individual demonstrator. This month's demonstration will be Michael Kehs. I am particularly interested as it will be a bit different from what we're used to.

In May we will be having our annual general meeting. As well as reviewing our books and the events of the last year, we will be forming a new Executive for the upcoming year. This past year has been different from anything we have ever experienced. I am very proud of the effort the Executive has put into making sure the Guild remains active and interesting. We've been fortunate to have dedicated people taking care of our newsletter, website and organizing demos as well as all the behind-the-scenes stuff that quietly gets done.

Please consider stepping up to help. It does not require a ton of time and your skill level as a woodturner is not a prerequisite. (good thing for me!) It simply requires a desire to contribute to making our Guild the great organization it is. If you would like to discuss serving on the Executive (or helping with other tasks which will arise once we are meeting again in person), please email or call me.

In the meantime, I'll see everyone on Saturday! As always, if you are having trouble with Zoom, call me and we will get it figured out. Keep in mind that you can always view the demo without having to talk or share your video. (although we would love to see your smiling faces!)

Cheers,

Tim

## **NEXT MEETING: SATURDAY APRIL 24<sup>TH</sup>: 1:00 p.m.**



Our next meeting will feature a live remote demonstration by Michael Kehs from Bucks County, Pennsylvania.

A turner and carver for over 27 years, Michael has a well established national and international reputation for works that are unique for their texture and colour.



For this meeting he will demonstrate turning his signature piece: a Viking horn.

To see more of Michael's work, check out his website:  
<https://michaelkehswoodworks.com/>

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## **MAY MEETING**

The May meeting will feature a short segment devoted to the Annual General Meeting which will include electing a new Executive. If you are willing to help by serving on the Executive, please contact Tim Karpiak ([timkarp@shaw.ca](mailto:timkarp@shaw.ca)). No experience needed.



We are hopeful that this will be followed by a live remote demonstration by a member of the Fraser Valley Woodturners Guild. Details will be provided once this has been confirmed.

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## **MARCH RECAP**

Martin Saban-Smith gave an interesting demonstration on colouring. The following are the highlights.

### **1. Introduction**

Martin demonstrated how he develops what he terms an **Atmosphere effect**. The process begins with the application of dyes followed by a sealer coat and then multiple coats of wax.

### **2. Wood Selection**

For this colouring treatment, Martin recommends using a piece that has some figure (and he does not shy away from a piece that includes knots). He has found that plain wood does not show this colouring effect to full advantage.

### **3. Sanding**

While he normally uses an inertia sander for sanding (right), for the demonstration he used a power drill.



He typically begins at 120 grit and moves up to 400 grit. Any higher grit would fill the wood pores which could interfere with absorption of the dye. With each successive grit, he reverses the direction of the turning. However, unlike many other turners, he does not reverse the drill rotation when reversing the lathe direction which is likely attributable to his normal use of an inertia sander.

He emphasized the importance of maintaining a consistent pressure through the various grits. Otherwise, you run the risk of creating scratches that will not be removed by higher grit sandpaper.

**Dust Collection:** Interestingly, he has a ceiling fan mounted over his lathe which helps to direct dust into his dust collection hood.

## 4. Dying (The good kind)

This stage involves the application of multiple dyes to various portions of the turning.

### a. Dyes

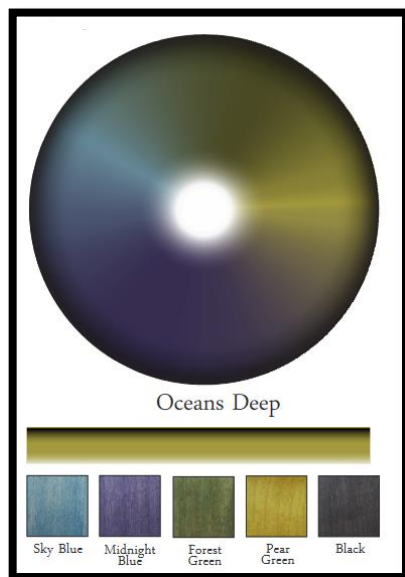
He uses water-based dyes which he manufactures and sells through his finishing business. He prefers these to alcohol-based dyes as they dry slower which affords more working time for an even coat and blending.

While they do raise the grain more than alcohol-based dyes, he finds it only takes a few seconds to sand off the “fuzz”.

They are available in 12 colours.



### b. Colour Combinations



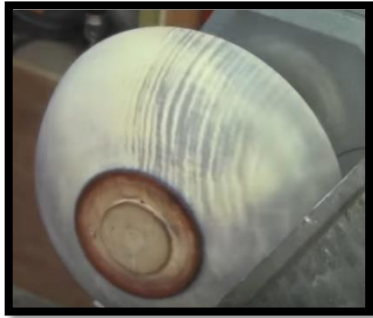
To assist in selecting attractive dye combinations, Martin has identified 6 “recipes”.

For the demonstration he selected “*Oceans Deep*” which involves 5 colours.

*(For more information on colouring, see the discussion following this note.)*

### c. Base Colour

The base colour, which is applied to the entire turning, should be the darkest colour that will be applied. While he used black in the demo, he indicated that one could also use Earth or Forest Green.



He uses a hot air gun to dry the dye and then begins to sand off this coat. He indicated that there is no right answer as to how much base colour to remove. However, consistent pressure and lathe speed is crucial to ensure an even removal of the dye.

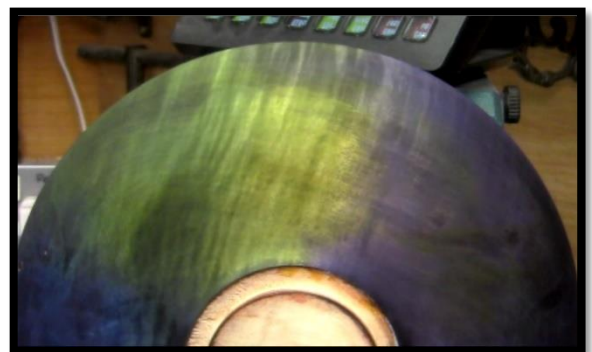
He begins with 400 grit and, if necessary, moves to 280 or even 180. In the latter case, you would then have to re-sand with a light touch using 280 and then 400 grit paper.

### d. Application of Subsequent Colours

While one can use a variety of application techniques (brush, cloth, airbrush), Martin prefers to use a “rubber” made from a folded household paper towel. (He finds “shop towels” are too coarse.) While he recommends using light “feather-like” pressure, he does take care to ensure that he has consistent coverage and colour.

He applies each colour to various portions of the turning. He began with Sky Blue before moving on to Pearl Green, Forest Green and finishing with Midnight Blue. Care was taken to blend each of the colours into the adjacent ones and he pays particular attention to figured areas.

He then dries the dyes using a hot air gun and burnishes the turning using a paper towel.



## 5. Seal Coat

To seal the dyed surface Martin uses nitrocellulose (NC) sanding sealer in a rattle can. He noted that the end grain portion of the turning will require more coats.



A comparable product can be obtained from Richilieu (Mohawk: \$15) or Woodchuckers (Mylands: \$31)



Once the sealer is dry, Martin burnishes with either shavings or a 3M pad.

### Safety Notes

- i. Martin noted that NC sanding sealers contain a range of very dangerous chemicals. **Gloves, eye protection and an organic-filter respirator are essential.**
- ii. Let the coat dry naturally. **NB: Never use a hot air gun on a lacquer-based product.**

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### NOTE ON SANDING SEALERS

1. *Sanding sealers are typically used by turners as a base coat to seal wood pores and produce a smooth surface for a high gloss finish.*
2. *While any film finish – shellac, lacquer or varnish - can be used to “seal” wood, these finishes may be slow to dry (e.g., varnish), multiple coats may be needed to completely fill the pores (e.g., lacquer) and the finish may be difficult to sand (e.g., varnish).*

*In response, sanding sealers were developed which typically dry very quickly and contain zinc stearate (mineral soap) which is a dry lubricant that fills the pores more quickly and minimizes clogging of sandpaper. For these reasons, sanding sealers are particularly useful for production wood working and for large, open-pore woods such as oak, ash and walnut.*

3. The two most common types of sanding sealer are nitrocellulose (NC) and acrylic. The former is lacquer-based while latter is obviously water-based (LV: Enduro: \$33.50). Both have stearates added.



(A third type of sanding sealer is vinyl sealer which is made by modifying lacquer with vinyl resin. It is designed to provide greater water-resistance – which is unlikely to be a factor for turners – and does not include stearates which means it does not fill the pores as well and is harder to sand.)

4. Bob Flexner, author of Understanding Wood Finishing, cautions that you must use a sealer that is made for the top finish you intend to use. i.e., NC sealer for a lacquer top coat and acrylic sealer for a water-based finish. If you choose to use wax as your “topcoat” as Martin did, either product could be used.

5. Many turners use dewaxed shellac as a sanding sealer. Zinsser Seal Coat, which is a pre-mixed 2 lb. cut of clear dewaxed shellac is one of the most popular products. However, while it dries very fast and sands well, it may dissolve the dye and will take multiple coats to provide a smooth surface. A stearate product will fill the pores much quicker.



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## 6. Topcoat

Subject to compatibility with the sealer that was used, Martin indicated that you could use any film finish as a topcoat. He chose to use a high gloss wax (Hampshire Sheen Finishing Wax: \$29: Woodslee Summercraft).



With the lathe off, he applied 2 coats of wax ensuring that it was distributed evenly on the turning. He then buffs it with the lathe at approximately 1000 rpm. He cautioned against applying too much pressure, lest it melt the wax. He then applies an additional light coat of wax and buffs it to complete the project.



## 7. Miscellaneous Points

### a. Remounting

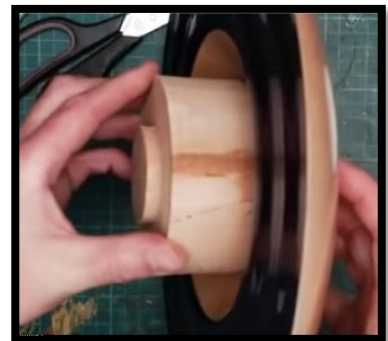
A turning may be remounted for returning in the event of a twice-turned bowl or for removing a tenon on the base.



While Martin uses a vacuum chuck, he noted that if you do not have one, you could use Cole Jaws (left) or a custom-made friction drive (below).

For information on how to make the latter, see the following video (at the 9-minute mark).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p21bKeOp3bk>



Whatever method you use, Martin emphasized the need to ensure that you have a dimple on the centre of the tenon/recess for alignment using the tailstock.

### b. Bowl Gouge Bevel

While noting that a 45-degree bevel is the most common one, for general work Martin prefers a 55-degree angle with an Irish or swept-back grind. He finds that it is less aggressive and easier to control.





## GRAEME EVANS

Graeme decided to try out Martin Saban-Smith's colouring method with impressive results.



The form of this natural edge goblet was inspired by Cindy Drozda's work. Turned from a piece of maple burl, the bowl portion is 5" wide and 2" deep.

Using *Chestnut Spirit Stains*, a coat of yellow was applied and then covered by a light application of red. While he initially tried to adopt Martin's technique of applying the colours to different areas of the bowl portion, he found that the piece was too small and so simply applied both colours to the entire piece.

He found that Martin's technique worked much better on his second effort which is also turned from maple burl (8" x 3"). He applied an initial coat of black (India ink) and then sanded it back. Inspired by coral reef colours, he first applied a coat of yellow to the "reef" areas only. He then applied a coat of blue stain lightly on the reef areas (which produced the beautiful green swirls) and a much heavier coat on the "deep blue sea" areas.



The only downside is that the beautiful colouring is hidden on the underside of the bowl. He is going to consider making a plinth to raise the piece and make the colouring more visible. Two beautiful pieces.

# COLOUR THEORY AND COLOUR WHEELS

## Introduction

Colour theory is a collection of rules and guidelines which are used to determine appealing colour themes. The most popular one for artists is based on a colour wheel which is used to produce an arrangement of colours that is harmonious or pleasing to the eye. Originally developed by Sir Isaac Newton in 1666, the contemporary wheel allows one to select colour combinations that engage the viewer and create an inner sense of order or balance in the visual experience.



*When something is not harmonious, it's either boring or chaotic. At one extreme is a visual experience that is so bland that the viewer is not engaged. The human brain will reject under-stimulating information. At the other extreme is a visual experience that is so overdone, so chaotic that the viewer can't stand to look at it. The human brain rejects what it cannot organize, what it cannot understand. (Color Matters)*

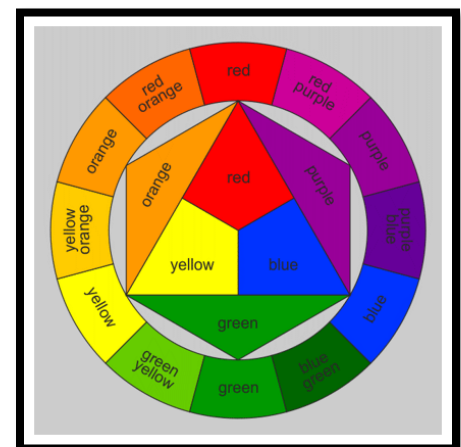
## Classic Colour Wheel

The classic colour wheel consists of:

**Primary** colours (red, yellow, blue) which are the only colours that cannot be formed from any combination of other colours.

**Secondary** colors (green, orange, purple) which are colours made by mixing any two primary colours, and

**Tertiary or Intermediate** colours (Yellow-orange, red-orange, red-purple, blue-purple, blue-green & yellow-green) which are formed by mixing a primary colour and its nearest secondary colour on the wheel).

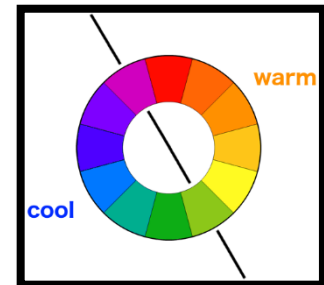




While there are many available, two of the most popular wheels are the **Artist's Color Wheel** (\$12.00: Opus) and the **Grumbacher Color Computer** (\$10.95 less 10%: Island Blue Print).

## Warm and Cool Colours

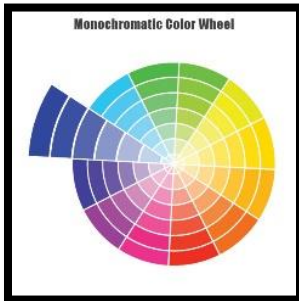
The colour combinations on a wheel have a balance of warm and cool colours which will evoke different feelings. Warm colours (red, orange, yellow) are said to produce coziness and energy while cool colours (blue, green, purple) are associated with serenity and isolation.



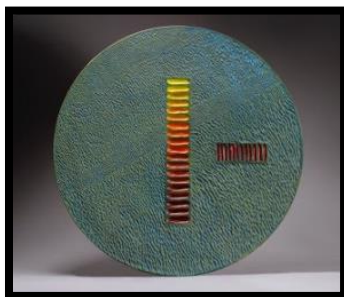
## Classic Colour Combinations

While there are obviously limitless combinations, the following are the most common ones:

### Monochromatic

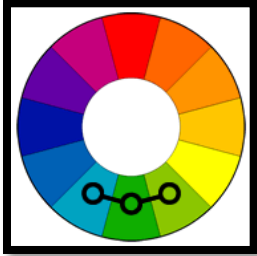


This scheme uses variations in lightness and saturation of a single colour using shades (black) and/or tones (white). It is said that this scheme looks clean and elegant. It produces a soothing effect and is easy on the eyes.



If you are going to use a single colour on a piece, noted turner Merryll Saylen recommends that one should always use at least two tones of that colour to produce a more engaging view.

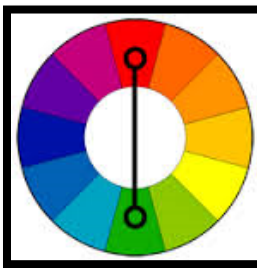
## Analogous



An analogous scheme uses colours that are beside one another on the colour wheel. While typically, one colour is used as the dominant one while the others are used as accents, all 3 colours can be used equally to convey a sense of movement to the piece.



## Complementary

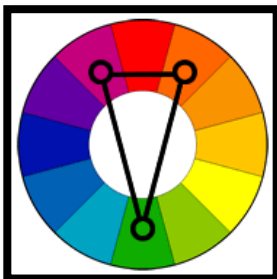


This scheme consists of two colours that are opposite each other on the colour wheel. This produces a high contrast scheme where both colours will appear brighter and more prominent.

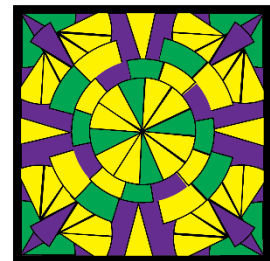


It is said to look best when a warm colour is placed against a cool colour (e.g., red on green-blue).

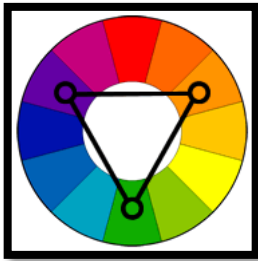
## Split Complementary



As a variation on a complementary arrangement, this scheme uses a colour and the two colours beside its complementary. The result is a high contrast without the strong tension of a complementary scheme.



## Triadic



This scheme uses 3 colours which are equally spaced around the wheel. It is one of the most popular schemes for painters since it offers strong visual contrast while retaining harmony and balance.



As is the case with any colouring, you should test your combinations on a scrap of the same wood, before applying them to your finished piece since the colour of the wood will always affect the look of any colourant.

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## A HOMEMADE “VISUALIZER”: HARVEY PFLUGER

In need of a hollowing measuring device which would assist in turning a consistent wall thickness, Harvey decided to build what is commonly known as a *Visualizer*.

### Introduction

Most turners use a laser mounted on the hollowing rig with the laser point offset from the cutter by the desired thickness of the turning. When the laser point “falls off” the turning, the desired thickness is reached. However, the position of the laser must be constantly adjusted to match the inside form of the turning.



In 2014 Trent Bosch developed a alternative tool which he termed the *Visualizer*. It consists of an endoscope camera which is mounted on the hollowing rig and a video monitor which displays the camera picture.



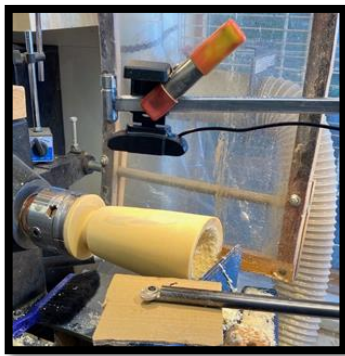
The camera is focused on the cutter and locked in position. A clear plastic overlay is attached to the monitor and a pen is used to draw an outline of the cutter as it appears on the monitor screen and, if needed, an additional line which reflects the desired wall thickness.



When the cutter “disappears” into the hollow form, the lines on the monitor continue to give a precise view of where the cutter is on the inside (left photo).

(For a brief video showing this tool in use, see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bCg7jXCesEA>.)

However, at US\$695, it is an expensive alternative. As there are a number of videos on line which show how to build an inexpensive version, Harvey decided to give it a try.



As a test project, he wanted to keep it simple and cheap.

Accordingly, he used an inexpensive web camera (\$20) and an old laptop connected by an HDMI extension cable.





Instead of drawing on the screen using an erasable pen, he tapes a piece of clear plastic to the monitor which enables him to swap out for different cutters. He reports that his “experiment” works very well. At a total cost of \$20, it is an amazing bargain!

For information on how to build one of these units, see the following video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pidLwThKHSw>

For tips on using this device, see the discussion at the following location:

<https://www.aawforum.org/community/index.php?threads/hollowing-with-video.15948/>

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## **AAW CALENDAR OF REMOTE DEMONSTRATIONS**

In addition to offering its own remote demonstrations, the AAW also maintains a list of demonstrations offered by individual turners. Most of these sessions cost between US\$10 – 12.

**Remote Demo  
Calendar**

If you are a member of the AAW, you can access this list at:  
<https://community.woodturner.org/events/ird-demonstrations>.

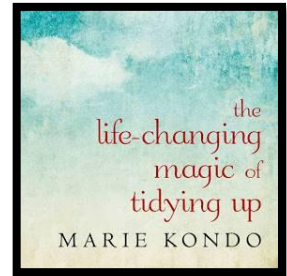
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## SPRING CLEANING: ANDRE'S RECOVERY

I am happy to report that Andre Robin is doing well and recovering from the trauma of decluttering.

While it is unknown whether he was prompted by Marie Kondo's book, Andre recently downsized his wood stash. The fruits of decades of chain sawing, band sawing, sealing, and labelling were all gone in a matter of days. (Only a slight watering of his eyes revealed the emotional turmoil he experienced.)



While the oldest piece he found was dated 2002, he confessed that he did not always mark the date since he always assumed that he would be processing them the same year. (It is very possible that some of them date back to biblical times!)

He very generously shared many hundreds of blanks with Guild members.



PS. In what must be the ultimate irony, shortly after cleaning up, a neighbour informed him that he had just cut down a maple tree and asked Andre if he wanted any wood. Other neighbours report hearing a very loud "NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!!!!!!"

PPS. In the interests of getting more blanks, I am considering sending a copy of Marie Kondo's book to other members of the Guild. Please forward possible names.

## PARTING OFF

Thanks to the members of the Executive for continuing to keep the Guild operating with a great line-up of remote demonstrators.

A special thanks this edition to Andre for his generosity in providing blanks to a host of Guild members. It was greatly appreciated. (And we cannot wait for his next clean up!)

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## CONCLUDING THOT

