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Rising

The 27th annual exhibition of the American Association of Woodturners (AAW) at AAW Gallery of Wood Art runs through December 28. The show, titled *Rising*, features work by more than 30 artists from six countries. *Rising* serves not only as the title of the show, but the theme artists interpreted for their work. According to the group, “Those interpretations—executed in a rich variety of woods, textures and finishes—include messages of optimism and destruction, meditations on inner strength and

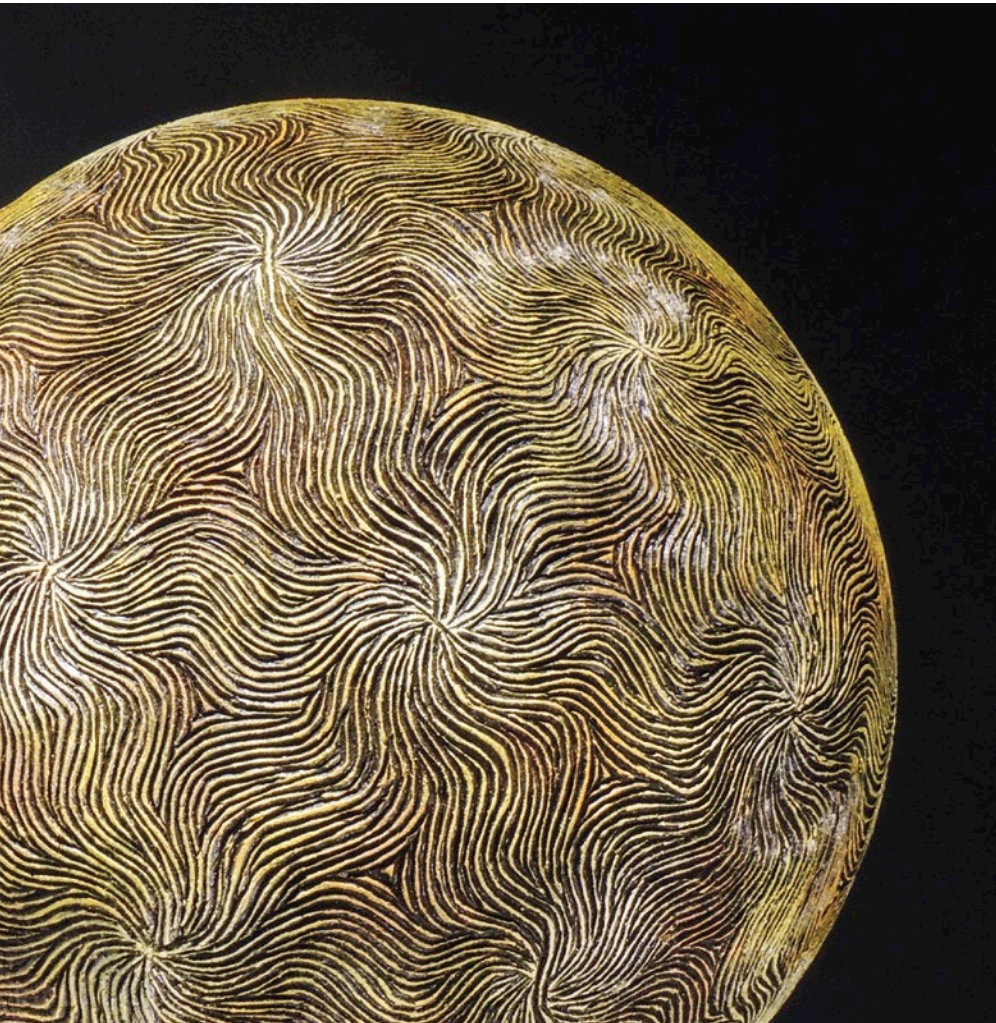
evolution, statements on the ecology and human condition, and more.”

Severing as jurors for the 2014 show were three recognized members of the field: artist Hayley Smith; Heather Sealy Lineberry, associate director and senior curator at Arizona State University Art Museum; and Collectors of Wood Art President Judith Chernoff, M.D. Together, the group whittled down submissions to a well-curated exhibition that displays not only all facets of technique and style, but also varying interpretations of the theme.

“It was wonderful working with the two other jurors,” says Chernoff. “Our points of view were different enough that we brought an array of ideas to the table. But we meshed well and used our varying points of view to create a rich exhibit.”

Included in the show are works by emerging to established artists in the woodturning field. Participants include **Stephen Hatcher, John Beaver, Barbara Dill, Derek Weidman, Hal Metlitzky, Michael Foster, Sally Burnett, Mark Nadeau, and Louis Vadeboncoeur**, among others. While diverse in subject and form, all art in the exhibit was created in part on the lathe. Then, after the work is shaped by the artist on the machine, pieces may be carved, burned, colored or bleached.

Foster’s turned and carved work titled *Euclid’s Phenix* reflects the artist’s interest in math and science, combining a globe and Möbius strip. The artist explains, “Here, a perfect globe rises on the ashes of an imperfect, one-sided Möbius strip.” Foster adds the strip is more complex with the illusion of three twists, while the globe’s flares are “arranged symmetrically based





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1
Michael Foster, *Euclid's Phenix*, sugar maple, cherry, India ink, acrylic paint, 17½ x 7½ x 7½". Photo credit: Michael Foster.

2
John Beaver, *Rising*, sycamore, pigments, 5 x 10 x 10". Photo credit: John Beaver.

3
Derek Weidman, *Phoenix*, holly, pigments, 10 x 9 x 10". Photo credit: John Carlano.

4
Stephen Hatcher, *Island Caldera*, yellow box burl, calcite crystals resin, black mica, acrylic paint, metal-acid dyes, lacquer, 15½ x 15½ x 1½". Photo credit: Tib Shaw/AAW.



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on the points of a dodecahedron superimposed on the globe.”

Phoenix, Weidman’s colorful multi-axis turned work, depicts the mythical firebird. “The anatomy of this sculpture is built with circles, and the piece came to life one sweeping cut after another,” he says. “The gesture from these cuts helped give this firebird its powerful sense of movement and poise.”

Other works in the show are Beaver’s *Rising*, a turned, cut and bent bowl; Hatcher’s double-sided work *Island Caldera*, which combines woodturning and stone-turning to create the impression of an island—one side a caldera, and the other a peak with six summits; and *Wisp*, by Nadeau, with a hand-carved finial “much like smoke rising from an extinguished flame.”

“The American studio wood art movement has been around along with other American studio craft art



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movements for several decades,” says Chernoff. “A perfectly executed simple bowl made from ordinary or complex wood is still a thing of beauty. But artists today are doing amazing work that goes far beyond the bowl. The creative ideas behind a piece and the numerous techniques used to

handle the wood combine in exciting and dynamic ways. Wood art today is much more of a sculptural medium; it has grown and really found its place in the art world.”

AAW was founded in 1986 to provide leadership and education for woodturning enthusiasts, and today has more than 15,000 members, along with more than 300 local chapters in the U.S., Canada, and Taiwan. The group recognizes the growth and diversity of the medium, and notes many collections—corporate and private—are increasingly embracing wood sculptural objects for their warmth and beauty. ●

5
Louis Vadeboncoeur,
Rising from Within,
Manitoba maple, acrylic,
India ink, varnish,
17½ x 4". Photo
credit: Tib Shaw/AAW.

6
Sally Burnett, *Spiral
Stair*, sycamore, gilding,
acrylics, 5 x 5". Courtesy
the artist.

7
Hal Metlizky, *Bubbles
Rising on the Great Barrier
Reef*, exotic hardwoods,
11¼ x 6¾". Photo credit:
Tib Shaw/AAW.

8
Mark Nadeau,
Wisp, curly pyinma,
5¼ x 5¼ x 17⅞".
Courtesy the artist.