

Community + Creativity + Confidence = Future Artistic Leaders

The 2022 Virtual WIT eXchange



FOR FURTHER READING

EXPLORE!

Log on at woodturner.org and use the Explore! search tool to find these *American Woodturner* articles about past WIT eXchanges and WIT's approach to creativity.

- "Uproarious Reciprocation: The 2018 Women in Turning eXchange," by Lynne Yamaguchi and Kathleen Duncan, February 2019 (vol 34, no 1, page 42)
- "Abundant Imagination: A Case Study in Fostering Creativity," by Lynne Yamaguchi, August 2019 (vol 34, no 4, page 37)
- "Breaking Boundaries and Removing Limitations," by Linda Ferber and Marie Anderson, April 2021 (vol 36, no 2, page 42)
- "Ripples Become a Tsunami: The 2021 Virtual WIT eXchange," by Linda Ferber and Marie Anderson, December 2021 (vol 36, no 6, page 32)



In the spring of 2022, forty-eight women from eight countries came together for an online community event called the 2022 Virtual WIT eXchange. As part of AAW's Women in Turning (WIT) program, these women took the challenge to push beyond their comfort zone, remained committed to the creative process, and came out the other side with new confidence, new skills, and new friends. Some of the participants were eXchange veterans, and some were complete newbies. Working on a team, managing and blending three distinct personalities within a specific timeframe on a spontaneous project was the assignment. All approached the challenge with various levels of trepidation.

As in previous WIT eXchange events, the 2022 teams mostly consisted of a beginner, intermediate, and an advanced turner. Each team was given two inspiration words—a noun and a modifier—and was asked to come up with a creative project based on those two words.

Empowering women

The WIT committee envisioned the eXchange events with the goal of empowering all attendees through a creative journey. The women share their skills and document their experiences so others can also be inspired. The focus has always been on the *process* rather than the end project. Why? You may hear different reasons. The truth is, collaboration is uncomfortable. Working on a team can be extremely stressful. Removing the expectation of having to

create a gallery-quality finished project opens the door to experimentation, allowing creative risk-taking. This recipe has increased the confidence of many who have participated in past eXchanges.

There have now been two in-person and three virtual WIT eXchanges. With each event, the feedback from participants (both in-person and virtual) has been positive. Participants have created a supportive community whose members encourage, inspire, and uplift each other. It has helped many to take the next step in their artistic journey. Past participants say their eXchange experience encouraged them to go beyond their comfort zone. Some have applied for calls for entry found on the AAW website, including the annual POP Showcase Artist and Symposium demonstrator opportunities. Others have decided to take the leap and try demonstrating at a local club or regional symposium. Several past participants have also organized their own eXchange events modeled after the WIT eXchange. And still others have used the confidence they gained to step up to a leadership role in their local club. The community we've built encourages all to take that next step, even if it is scary! ■

Niles Bottle stoppers (nilesbottlestoppers.com) has sponsored the WIT eXchange since the event's inception in 2018. The WIT committee is deeply grateful to Carl and Robin Jacobson of Niles Bottle Stoppers for continuing this legacy, started by former owner Ruth Niles, with a commitment to sponsor the upcoming 2023 Virtual WIT eXchange.

—Marie Anderson and Linda Ferber

In Their Own Words

“As a very new turner, I was hesitant to sign up. I thought, *What can I add to this project?* I decided to join anyway, and I’m so glad I did. I learned a lot about myself, gained confidence and met some new friends who happen to be great mentors!”

“The eXchange has given me a connection to other women, which has helped me get through some isolation I was feeling. The creativity boost was a bonus!”

“The WIT eXchange has fostered my creativity and helped me grow as a woodturner and artist. I started my first eXchange as a complete novice, but with each collaboration, I have gained skill and confidence. Moreover, I have developed lasting friendships and now feel welcome and included in the woodturning community.”

“This spring, I participated in my third Virtual WIT eXchange. As I have come to learn, one of the best parts of woodturning is the community that comes along with it, and I am so thankful to WIT for introducing me to an incredible, inspiring group of makers. I have forged lasting friendships that have encouraged, inspired, and challenged me.”

“I have learned about and experimented in so many new material techniques in these past few eXchanges—carving, texturing, coloring, burning—and I am excited to see these processes become a part of my emerging artistic style.”



Team 23 N' US (Marie Anderson, Julie Schmidt, Janet Low)

Connective Language, 2022, Elm, walnut, maple, red oak, bamboo, poplar, basswood, boxelder, wire, acrylic paint, embroidery floss, seed beads, pearl, feathers, 13" x 14" (33cm x 36cm)



Team Bee ironic (Crystal Earley, Beth Lockamy, Suzanne Troclair)

Ironic Containment, 2022, Various woods, resin, beads, feathers, antlers, 16" x 28" x 30" (41cm x 71cm x 76cm)



Team The California Girls

(Cindy Navarro, Stephanie Fuchs, Amanda DeNoyer)

Extravagant Pride, 2022, Spalted birch, cherry, ironwood, Douglas fir, plywood, acrylic paints, epoxy resin, glass beads, embellishing wax, walnut oil, metallic thread, LED fairy lights, mirrored spinning base, 13" x 18" (33cm x 46cm)



Team The Dryads

(Jan Brown, Deb Chapin, Robin McIntyre)

Undulating Spirit, 2022, Wood, glass, 9" x 5" (23cm x 13cm)



The Easter EGG Group

(Evelin Schirmacher, Patricia Spero, Christine Wenzhöfer)

Translation Controlled, 2022, Various woods, 6" x 15¾" x 8" (15cm x 40cm x 20cm)



Team Dances with Lathes (Linda Ferber, Alexa Calliguri, Cindy Pei-Si Young)

Fluid Solution, 2022, Ash, cherry, eucalyptus, birch, zebra wood, walnut, padauk, plywood, leather, wire, goatskin, acrylic paints, 5" x 24½" x 16" (13cm x 62cm x 41cm)

Team Sparkling Sisters Twisters (Iris Laven, Stinne Lund Vestergaard, Esther Assamat)

Love Intricate, 2022, Various woods, 8" x 15¾"
(20cm x 40cm)



Team Rocky Road (Katheryn Casebolt, Suzette Edwards, Ellen Starr)

Integrated Transfiguration, 2022, Wood, metal, velour, 11" x 5" (28cm x 13cm)



Team Minnesota Mavens (Janese Evans, Rosanne Gold, Bonnie McDermid)

Frontier Flawed, 2022, Maple, myrtle, paint, 12" x 10" (30cm x 25cm)

Team Round the Clockers (Molly Johnson, Kathleen Gardiner, Melissa (Bee) Fantasia)

Noisy Mimicry, 2022, Wood, resin, paint, epoxy, feathers, wax, water pump and tubing, music box, moss, 14" x 32" x 25"
(36cm x 81cm x 64cm)

**Team Unknown
Collisionist** (Joan Busby, Paula McClain, Kandie Candelaria)

Unruly Collision, 2022, Mesquite, beetle pine, purpleheart, cherry, resin, 10" x 12" x 10" (25cm x 30cm x 25cm)



Team Tempestuous Turners
(Shawn Preus, Pippa Lattey, Sheila Balzer)

Stormy Source, 2022, Maple, dogwood, apple, pear, oak, lilac, elm, yellowwood, cedar, plywood, spalted spruce, boxwood, laurel, maple burl, copper grounding wire, carded fiber, hardware, lazy Susan base, 36" x 20" (91cm x 51cm)



**Team Sky Bridge
Strippers** (Susan Rennie, Joyce Botsch, Lupe Nielsen)

Wild Getaway, 2022, Wood, wood, wood, a little bit of glue, paint, and a couple of pins, 30" x 24" x 14" (76cm x 61cm x 36cm)





Team Three Beeches

(Alex Bradley, Jessica Edwards, Heather Marusiak)

Rhythmic Dance, 2022, Red oak, maple, walnut, acrylic paint, 20½" x 29½" x 5" (52cm x 75cm x 13cm)



Team The Wood Sirens

(Nicole MacDonald, Donna Rhindress, Joanne Sauvageau)

Ample Reciprocity, 2022, Wood, plastic, 14" x 11" x 17" (36cm x 28cm x 43cm)

Team The Twirling Sages

(Pam Bozkurt, Phyllis Moffitt, Laura van Leeuwen)

Home and Reborn, 2022, Cherry, cedar, cold bend wood, encaustic paint, preserved moss, resurrection fern, 10" x 8" (25cm x 20cm)



2023 WIT eXchange and More

Please watch for details and plan to join us for the 2023 Virtual WIT eXchange. Registration opened February 1, and the event will run March 1 through April 15, with the presentation of projects taking place April 29, 2023. Women are invited to join us to take the next step in their creative journey.

Visit tiny.cc/WIT to register for the event and to learn more about AAW's WIT program, view video recordings of past WIT Presents and WIT eXchange projects, read WIT newsletters, and more.

