



# Nova Woodturners' Guild

## Competition Judging Guidelines

### **Context**

The Nova Woodturners Guild holds an annual competition of turned works. The goals of this competition are to provide opportunities for turners to have their work assessed and critiqued by experienced judges, allow for friendly competition and provide public exposure for the Guild and for turned wood art and craft. The completion also provides incentive for turners to push their abilities and try new techniques, designs and materials to enhance the competitive edge.

### **Structure**

The competition is divided into three classes:

#### **Spindle**

Spindle turning is defined as when there is a definite grain pattern that is parallel to the lathe axis when it is being worked. Examples include pepper mills, goblets, rolling pins, end grain hollow forms, etc.

#### **Mandrel**

Mandrel turning involves the mounting of the piece (or its components) for turning on a mandrel. A mandrel is a shaft or device (usually metal) that passes through or nearly through the piece being turned in order to secure the work for turning. Examples include pens / pencils, shaving kits, duck calls, etc.

#### **Faceplate**

Faceplate turning involves turning objects where there is a definite grain pattern that is perpendicular (or nearly so) to the lathe axis when the piece is being worked. Examples include bowls, platters, hollow forms, etc. All pieces not fitting into "spindle" or "mandrel" will be judged in "faceplate" class.

Turners can enter in one of three levels:

#### **Novice**

The Novice class is intended for new turners and those with relatively little turning experience. Pieces should be well executed and should reflect competent skills.

#### **Intermediate**

The Intermediate class is intended for turners who are mastering technical skills and adding artistic and aesthetic elements. Pieces should be of high quality and well executed. Choice of materials, colour and enhancement should complement the overall design and aesthetic.

#### **Open**

The Open class is for advanced amateur and professional turners. Pieces should be flawlessly executed and be of exceptional quality both technically and aesthetically.

## **Guidelines**

### **General**

The aim of judging in this competition is to assist turners in advancing their skills and artistry. The competitive element helps to encourage turners to push their limits and try new techniques or design elements in order to get a competitive edge.

Scoring should reflect the achievement of ideal execution, in consideration of the skill level at which the piece is entered.

Comments and critique from Judges can be very beneficial to a turner's development and motivation, helping turners to elevate their craftsmanship and artistry to higher levels. Comments should be constructive and aimed at enhancing the turner's skills.

### **Scoring**

The Judges Scoring Sheet that is used for recording scores is attached below. One sheet should be completed by each judge for each piece. Each piece should be scored from 1 to 10 in each of 5 criteria:

#### **Craftsmanship**

An assessment of the execution of technical skills (appropriate to the level). Some elements to consider:

- is the project free of tool marks and sanding scratches?
- is it free of crushed fibers or tear-out?
- if a mandrel turned item, is the transition from turned to machined parts smooth/tight?
- if a bowl or a vessel, is wall thickness consistent?
- if a closed form, is the inside smooth?
- is the bottom free of all signs of your holding method?

#### **Tactile Qualities**

An assessment of the overall feel of the design (appropriate to the level). Some elements to consider:

- are transitions in shape smooth when needed (e.g., open curves) or crisp when needed (e.g., transition of bowl into its foot)?
- is it smooth to the touch and free of undulations?
- does the turning look/feel balanced?

#### **Appearance**

An assessment of the overall appearance of the design (appropriate to the level):

- is the shape and form pleasing to the eye?
- does it have clean lines and good proportions?
- is the chosen finish/sheen appropriate for the turning?
- has the chosen finish been applied properly?
- if color/texture has been used does it enhance the turning?
- is the grain alignment correct for turnings cut and reassembled (non-segmented turning)?

## **Uniqueness**

An assessment of the new design/construction methods (appropriate to the level).  
Some elements to consider:

- has special finishes/effects been used?
- has the turner manufactured/cast some of the materials used (visual parts only)?
- was there an innovative change to an old design or technique?

## **Difficulty**

An assessment of boundaries being expanded (appropriate to the level). Some elements to consider:

- were new turning techniques used?
- were special holding methods used?
- were custom/innovative materials used?

## **Levels**

Judges' scoring should reflect the level in which the piece is entered:

### **Novice**

Novice items are turnings created by turners in their early stages of skill development. A critique at this level is focused on helping the turner better execute/improve basic turning skills so they become “rote” and advance with time to higher skill levels.

### **Intermediate**

Intermediate items should be well executed pieces that would receive only minor criticism. A critique at this level is focused on helping the turner become a craftsman, building on the pure execution skills to bring more creativity and artistry to the turning — more focused on helping the craftsman take a great piece of work and make it even better.

### **Open**

Open class items should generally be flawlessly-executed pieces. A critique at this level is more focused on helping the craftsman use it as a springboard for new directions. Examples of elements to consider:

1. originality in shape, use of materials, or post-turning enhancements;
2. artistry and creativity;
3. degree of difficulty appropriate for this level (is it overly simplified);
4. pleasing to the eye or to the touch; and
5. transitions in shape enhance the overall appeal and design.