The background of the entire image is a close-up photograph of wood grain. The wood has a warm, orange-brown hue with prominent, wavy grain patterns and several circular knots. A dark, irregular line, possibly a crack or a stain, runs diagonally across the lower-left portion of the image. The central text is set against a solid black rectangular background.

**AGAINST THE GRAIN**

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**BEYOND TRADITIONAL  
WOODTURNING**

**NOVA WOODTURNERS' GUILD**



# Against the grain: Beyond traditional woodturning

A juried exhibition of works by the  
Nova Woodturners' Guild

*Mary E Black*  
GALLERY

Mary E. Black Gallery,  
July 16- Aug 31, 2015.

Photography by Steve Farmer

# Message from the Nova Woodturners' Guild President

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As president of the Nova Woodturners' Guild and Chair of the Mary E. Black Exhibition Committee, it is my pleasure to introduce this catalogue of artistic wood turnings from the exhibition, "Turning Against the Grain: Beyond Traditional Woodturning". It is an honour for our Guild members to have such a juried exhibition, the second we have had at the Mary E. Black Gallery (the first being in 2004).

The Nova Woodturners' Guild (NWG) welcomes individuals actively interested in woodturning, from very experienced individuals to rank novices who are very new to the craft, and those in between. We have been active since the late 1990's, drawing turners from across mainland Nova Scotia. Central to the NWG is the sharing of interests, of experience, of techniques.

In this juried exhibition NWG members were challenged to develop the artistic side of their woodturning. The results show the diverse expertise of the group, and the excitement with which they took up this challenge. The exhibition and catalogue serve as a celebration of their works.

As is usually the case, many people were involved in the production of this exhibition and catalogue. I'd like to thank Dave McLachlan and Peter Nicholl for their work on the Committee with me. Appreciation is also due to the jurors (Jeff Cowling, John MacNab and Steven Kennard) and the curator, Shannon Parker, for the fine job they did choosing the pieces and organizing the exhibition display. Susan Charles of Mary E. Black Gallery was very helpful at many steps of the process. Steve Farmer took the wonderful photographs of the pieces, and Shelly McCarron worked her magic to put it all together into this fine catalogue.

The Nova Woodturners' Guild recognizes the support of the Province of Nova Scotia through the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage for this exhibition and this catalogue. We are pleased to work in partnership with the Province of Nova Scotia in this way.

E. Dianne Looker

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# BRANCHING OUT

DON MOORE

I was fortunate enough to go to Chamborigaud, in the south of France, to study with Alain Mailland for two weeks in the spring of 2013. While comprehending Alain's techniques was my intent, he also stressed the importance of incorporating design, shape, and form, before and during the creation of each piece. Alain also taught me how to make the various tools required using his techniques.

This particular piece, made from Madrone Root Burl, became to signify my "Branching Out", back into the realm of woodturning. I had suffered a personal loss, my reason to be, and my passion to turn had evaporated along with this loss.

This piece depicts the Cyclone of emotions that grief evokes. The rise, then the descent, only to rise again to perhaps a little higher branch, yet only to descend once again. This piece also represents how fragile life is, as the cyclone continues to this day.

## THE PIECE

Madrone root burl  
Created in 2014  
10cm x 10cm  
Riverport, NS





## STEPS TO HEAVEN

GORDON MARSHALL

The inspiration for "Steps to Heaven" came from a set of painted red, double sided stairs, at the entrance of a white stone church in New Hampshire. I wanted to draw the viewer's eyes from the base to the top just as my eyes were drawn from the ground up to the church steeple. I chose two very different woods for this turning, Maple for the stonewalls and Bloodwood for the stairs. The dramatic color of the Bloodwood coupled with the small diameter and tall height of the turning elevates the eyes upwards as if looking to the heavens. The turning was finished with an oil/varnish blend that provides a durable yet repairable finish.

### THE PIECE

Maple and Bloodwood  
with an oil/varnish blend  
Upper Tantallon, NS  
Created in 2011  
4" X 11 ½"



## WALNUT FRUIT BOWL

DOUG MCGUIRE

The walnut wood used in this piece came from a tree that was damaged in a wind storm in Mahone Bay. I have always wanted to turn a bowl with a rolled rim however I was reluctant because a rolled rim presented a very real challenge to me. When the time came to tackle this challenge, I decided

the walnut would work well because it was a clear and straight grained wood allowing for ease of turning. The resulting bowl met my expectations for a new challenge and gave me incentive to perhaps try a rolled rim again sometime in the future.

### THE PIECE

Walnut with polymerized tung oil and buffed with Beall system  
Shingle Lake, New Elm  
Created in 2015  
9" X 3"

## FOREST TRIO

STUART TAYLOR



The idea was to use small and irregular burls to form fungal forms. The natural edge of the wood gives a truly organic appeal. These fungal forms are eventually selected for size, shape, and 'species' and arranged and fitted to a suitable base to make a pleasing natural arrangement.

A variety of sizes are initially made all turned green, and completely finished and allowed to 'season'. A base of a suitable size is selected to give the forms a substantial base, with the impression that the forms have evolved from the base itself.

This process of selection, coordination, and assembly of a pleasing arrangement is basically the same as I use with my flower form arrangements.

### THE PIECE

Cogmagun, Hants County, NS

Cherry and Cherry Burl

Created in 2000

6" X 7 1/2"



## REFLECTION

ROBERT ATKINSON

For this piece, I decided to create a neck where the branch met the burl and to then flare the top back out towards the ends of the branches. This also created a shoulder that was linked the main body to the branches. The two branches, sticking out on the sides, seemed to create a "reflection"

of each other. As the bark on the branches was not totally intact, I took the remaining bit off the edges and left the surface natural. This provided a nice contrast to the finished top and bottom of the branches.

### THE PIECE

Maple with a tung oil finish  
Hardwood Lands, NS  
Created in 2015  
4" X 6"



## ONION SKIN

GORDON MARSHALL

"Onion skin" was inspired by the chives that have been growing in the garden by our front door for the last ten years. Every year they have the most beautiful purple flowers. Chives are a member of the onion family so I used the basic form of an onion and adapted to include the shoots and flowers of the chive. Using a light coloured wood, segmented and turned, allowed me to do a wash in a green water based dye. The effect is the colour variance you see on an actual onion; hence the name "Onion skin".

### THE PIECE

Maple, birch and cedar finished  
with an oil/varnish blend  
Upper Tantallon, NS  
Created in 2013  
4 ½" X 16"



## NUPTIAL

JENNI BLACKMORE & CALUM EWING

Jenni Blackmore (image) / Calum Ewing (turning). Initially, the concept of collaboration seemed to be rife with the potential for artistic misadventure and marital unrest. Calum and Jenni approach their art making indifferent ways; his method is studied and well thought out, hers (she claims) is haphazard and intuitive. Hovering over a finely turned bowl with a tool of potential destruction (a searing-hot stylus), was a terrifying position to be in,

certainly not conducive to the warm, sensuous image Jenni had envisioned would echo the evocative curves of the wood. Once the fear of destroying an already perfect piece of art was overcome, the tactile allure of the surface seemed to welcome Jenni's obsession with the voluptuous quality of poppies. The open, supine form of the bowl echoing the invitation of the poppy. The flower, with all its joy and intensity nestled comfortably within the gentle strength and security of the

vessel. The title, "Nuptial" speaks to the wedding of strength and flamboyance that unite here as single creation of enduring beauty.

### THE PIECE

Butternut, pyrography, acrylic paint, Tung oil finish.

Seaforth, NS/ Seaforth, NS

Created in 2015

22 ½ cm X 4 ½ cm



## MIND BENDER

GORDON MARSHALL

“Mind Bender” is a turning where I was testing the limits of my open segmented turning abilities. This design, inspired by the techniques of turner Bill Smith, an individual who has pushed the boundaries of this field of segmented turning. I had done quite a few open segmented turnings using conventional layout, with this shape, I explored using larger pieces of solid wood in the design. Construction was quite different, as I had to pre-assemble and turn the end sections then glue in the staves and finish turning the complete form. I chose woods to blend in color and to provide an earthy feel to a technical piece.

### THE PIECE

Birdseye Maple and Jatoba  
finished with an oil/varnish blend  
Upper Tantallon, NS  
Created in 2011  
4 ½" X 7"



## THE DEVIL'S CAULDRON

DOUG MCGUIRE

This burl was a challenge to turn with its many voids and irregularities. The threat of a catch and resulting destruction of the piece was always present. The highs and lows of the bowl edge reminded me of the highs and lows of life. The swirls in the

wood made me think of a boiling cauldron. I began to see the bowl as a reflection of the difficulties we face in life. With all of these factors in mind the bowl became known as "The Devil's Cauldron".

### THE PIECE

Maple burl finished with Danish Oil followed by the Beall buffing system  
Shingle Lake, New Elm  
Created in 2015  
10" X 8"



## LOST BOUQUET

ROBERT ATKINSON

The vase is part one of a two part project: the second part is to add a bouquet to put in the vase. The vase has to be thin walled to allow for piercing, have a cut away area to display the stems of the bouquet, and have a substantial enough base to allow for the drilling of holes to secure the bouquet to the vase. The shape was designed to facilitate seeing the bouquet arising from the bottom of the vase, and not just above the vase lip.

I extended the natural pin holes that were in the wood, to go around the cut away and across the top. These holes were like a necklace, and so I put a clasp at the back of the vase.

### THE PIECE

Maple with a tung oil finish  
Hardwood Lands, NS  
Created in 2015  
4" X 6"



## EVOCATION

STUART TAYLOR

This piece of cherry burl consisted of a trunk section with 2 limbs. There seemed to be a crack or split between the limbs. The thought of female anatomy sprang to mind! The piece was from a standing dead tree so I knew the remaining bark would easily come off revealing the surface figuring of the burl.

It was this figuring that I wanted to preserve in some way. I also wanted a sculptural piece to be viewed from more than one side. The way that the wood had been cut from the tree made it impractical to have her standing, so to speak, on her legs, this is my solution.

### THE PIECE

Cherry burl  
Cogmagun, Hants County, NS  
Created in 2009  
12" X 12"

## SPALTED VASE

LOWELL JENKINS



Some time ago I obtained a block of maple which already showed signs of spalting. Spalting is a procedure that occurs when the wood starts to decay. A fungus works through the wood and leaves lines and patterns. These can be very striking and certainly add interest to the wood. I decided to cover both ends with a sealer and store it on a cool concrete floor for several months so that the spalting process might continue. The block was large enough to obtain two finished vases, so I roughly sketched two shapes side by side and cut the block between the sketches. This vase is one of two turned from this block of wood. As I turned the vase, I was delighted to find that spalting had progressed significantly, producing the very interesting lines and patterns that I hoped to see.

I also like to sometimes have irregular edges on pieces that I am turning and was pleased that I was able to leave a natural edge on this vase.

### THE PIECE

Spalted maple  
New Glasgow, NS  
Created in 2014  
5 ½" X 7"

# BORED

STUART TAYLOR

This piece of maple crotch wood with an interesting small branch on one side and several obvious worm holes seemed very interesting to me; but, for months I couldn't quite decide how best to take advantage of this unique piece.

Then it came to me, a donut shape, but retaining the obvious crotch with its figuring, saving the stub of the small branch. I wanted to set it up so it could be viewed from either side. A conscious decision was made to leave the worm holes as holes and name the piece Bored, since it was "bored" by both myself and the worms.

## THE PIECE

Maple

Cogmagun, Hants County, NS

Created in 2013

13" X 7 1/2"





## I'M ALL SQUARE

DR. ANDREW WATSON

I was pressed to find a way to overcome my usual functional turnings, which I enjoy seeing used. Melding black walnut with birds-eye maple, making square bowls

as opposed to round, and turning down the corners I felt fitted with the definition of "artistic" as required for the Mary E. Black gallery.

### THE PIECE

Black walnut, birds-eye maple  
Mahone Bay, NS  
Created in 2015  
15" X 15" & 7" X 7"

## SEED POD

NORM JOLIVET

I wanted to capture the delicate symmetry of a fully expended dry seed pod, its purpose fulfilled but still holding a beauty in its form.

### THE PIECE

Maple, Kingwood, Padauk  
Liverpool, NS  
Created in 2015  
5" X 6" X 3"





## GENIE'S DOUBLE BOX

DAVID DUGGAN

The wood I choose for the best end grain and look for this box was cocobolo. My intent was to showcase the look of a somewhat flattened box. I had the idea of turning a box with two sections, hence the double box design. I wanted the top of the box to highlight a finial (holly), but did not want an ordinary middle section that lifted off the bottom. So I designed the top with a hole through the

center and attached the finial to the center section. The tall stand (also holly) added the sleek finishing touch. The box is turned with matching the grain from top to bottom. The holly seats were added to separate the grain and add colour, and are the only part of the piece that is not spindle oriented. The cocobolo is polished to a shine, but the holly is covered with diamond

coat, and then conservator's wax for a flat finish. The box was inspired by, and named for, my Granddaughter Genie.

### THE PIECE

Cocobolo, holly  
Halifax, NS  
Created in 2015  
9 cm X 21 cm



## SUNSPOTS

NORM JOLIVET

I wanted to capture the image and texture of sunspot activity as seen by NASA's Solar Dynamics Observatory and translate it into the medium of wood.

### THE PIECE

Birdseye maple, maple, walnut, paduak, purple heart, mahogany and bukote  
Liverpool, NS

Created in 2015  
13" X 13" X 2"



## BACK TO EARTH

DAVID DUGGAN

Over a year ago, I obtained a piece of Claro walnut. I loved the wood, and decided to turn something different with it. I turned a round bottomed bowl, not really sure as to how I would finish it at the time, and set it aside.

As I worked on other projects, the bowl continued to be moved from place to place. As time passed, I thought if I don't do something with this bowl soon, it will go back to the earth. But the story did not end there. At a recent meeting, a speaker suggested that setting your work aside for awhile can spark inspiration. Sure enough, when looking at the bowl after some time, I remembered the phrase back to earth, and envisioned tall grass in the corners of a yard enveloping a piece of wood that, if not cared for, how it would eventually rot and return to back to the earth (ashes to ashes type scenario). I then took the bowl, contemplated that a tall stand would be best suited (Holly), on the ground (Walnut), and I perceive the grass reeds as fingers coming up from the ground bringing it "back to the earth".

### THE PIECE

Claro walnut and Holly finished with boiled Linseed oil and lightly polished with Beall system

Halifax, NS

Created in 2015

30 cm X 46 cm



## AR-DOR

TED MONK

Made of Cherry burl from the Hants County area of Nova Scotia, Canada this natural edged piece exemplifies the unusual, accelerated growth pattern of this abnormal phenomenon. The piece was inspired by The Fiery Furnace, a confusing maze of narrow red stone canyons and rock formations created by sandstone fins, located in Arches National Park, Utah, USA, where I was planning a trip while creating this piece.

Since Ar-dor reflects, both literally and figuratively, the wild movement of flame and ember, the notion of fire as well as a Phoenix rising from it plays a large part in the symbolism of this piece. Likewise, the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from the Book of Daniel who were saved by divine intervention from the Babylonian execution of being burned alive in a fiery furnace comes to mind. The pedestal, stained a complementing colour, was not only

necessary to elevate the piece but also to give it a torch-like effect when viewed from afar.

### THE PIECE

Cherry burl  
Westphal, NS  
Created in 2015  
6" X 4"



## CHANNELING THE LIGHT

DIANNE LOOKER

The light-reflecting "chatoyance" in the lighter curly maple captures the light and evokes the idea of channeling light into our lives. It contrasts with the dark wood of the cherry that makes up the bulk of the piece. The upper, smaller inverted split bowl is like a half moon, reflecting the light of the sun. The V of the inserts creates a funnel channeling the light downwards. The lower, larger section has a straight, unbroken line of light

cutting through it, representing the light at the core of our beings. It ties together the different parts of the piece. Joining the two sections is a cone of light that connects the light above to the light below, symbolizing the interconnections in our lives. At the base, there is a curve of light figured wood, holding the rest of the piece in what could be seen as a smiling embrace. It supports both

the light and the dark parts of the piece, and pulls them together.

### THE PIECE

Cherry and curly maple finished with wipe on polyurethane and beeswax  
Gaspereau, NS  
Created in 2014  
7 ¾" X 1" X 7 ½"

## BUTTERNUT VASE

RICHARD FORD

I helped a friend and fellow wood turner cut up some wood he had been given. When we were finished, he kindly offered me some of this beautiful Butternut.

I had recently finished making a new hollowing rig that I had been developing. I had a design in mind for a simple elegant vase, it had a gentle curve, it was tall and thin walled. This was the first hollow form I made with the finished rig and it worked flawlessly, allowing me to make the walls thin and smooth. Although I had rough turned the vase and allowed it to dry for several months, there was still some moisture in the wood and when I was hollowing, the walls were very flexible and delicate. I had to support them and be very gentle with adjustments and cuts. The area with a branch passage and bark inclusion added both difficulty and beauty with its swirling grain, bringing reward for the extra effort.

### THE PIECE

Butternut, shellac, finished with  
double boiled linseed oil and wax  
New Glasgow, NS  
Created in 2014  
4½" X 11"





## GOING INTO THE DARK

DIANNE LOOKER

The inspiration for this piece comes from a song by Rose Cousins with the poignant repeated line: "To take a light into the dark is to know the light / To know the dark, go into the dark." Cousins tells us the darkness "...will provide." In this woodturning, the funnel of dark (walnut) wood at the top, catches and channels "darkness" down into a river that divides the lighter maple panels both front and back. The dark river cuts

through the piece - as darkness can cut through our lives - but it also binds the wooden panels together into a whole. And the river flows into a dark base - a sea of darkness that carries the vessel along. The whole piece evokes not turmoil, but peace. The split halves of the bowl are joined by a dark line along their spine, as well as by the curved course of the "river". The whole is supported by the smooth dark sea on which

it rests. The darkness provides: a contrast, a path, a support, a challenge, a reality.

### THE PIECE

Maple and walnut finished with Bush oil

Gaspereau, NS

Created in 2015

9 ¾" X 1 ½" X 9 ½"



## THE FLOATING BOX

TED MONK

A simple box floating on a sea of blue... containment or container? Man is such a fragile species living on an equally fragile world. Floating on an ocean, floating in space. Of water, both. Mystery of the deep. One and all, we contain things within while being contained ourselves. And oh, how

carefully we must carry and be carried about! Careful for sure since we would not want to drop or to be dropped, possibly cracking... or have we already? Remember Pandora's box! Floating Box is suggestive of this simple analogy and becomes full circle as one stands on firm ground

and picks up the piece, becoming a container standing on a container carrying a container containing a container.

### THE PIECE

Cherry, paint and tung oil finish  
Westphal, NS  
Created in 2015  
10" X 3 1/2"



## BLUENOSE II - BRIDGING SCHOONERS DARRELL EISNER

This piece celebrates the Bluenose II schooner, a well recognized, iconic Canadian symbol. The original Bluenose, a working fishing vessel built in Lunenburg, NS and launched in 1920, became an international racing star by winning the International Fisherman's trophy 17 years in a row. Its image is portrayed on the Bluenose stamp issued in 1929 (reissued in 1982) as well as the Bluenose dime, issued in 1937, both acknowledging the international fame of this racing schooner. In 1963, a replica of

the Bluenose was built in Lunenburg using the original design and it was named Bluenose II. As the current restoration of Bluenose II was being built, I was commissioned to make pens for a Nova Scotia economic conference using the Bluenose II wood. Bridging the gap between past and present, I designed my pen using oak from the 1995 refit (rail) of the original Bluenose II and Angelique, which was used as construction material in the hull of the restored Bluenose II. The coin and stamp are references to

the past, included to further help bridge that gap. The presentation box represents the black painted hull of the Bluenose II with its gold lettering engraved on the lid of the box.

### THE PIECE

Oak from the Bluenose II 1995 refit, Angelique from the restored Bluenose II, Stamp, Coin, presentation box.  
Halifax, NS  
Created in 2014



## LIVE EDGE BOWL

CALUM EWING

Every turning starts out as a chunk of wood. This one started out as a wedge-shaped piece split from a log, like a chunk of firewood. Unfortunately the split was off-centre and uneven. The first task was to trim the blank to center the grain. In this way the even grain pattern of the Laurel would be centered as a series of concentric ellipses within the bowl, draw-

ing the eye in. The second task was to trim the blank selectively to determine an accurate center for the bowl so that the lighter sapwood would be even around the entire bowl. The overall shape combines multiple curves in the profile to echo the sweeping, changing curves of the natural edge of the piece, emphasizing the difference between heartwood and

sapwood, yet tying the two together.

### THE PIECE

East Indian Laurel, Tung Oil Finish

Seaforth, NS

Created in 2015

13 ½ cm X 8 cm



## LARGE YELLOW BIRCH DISH

RICHARD FORD

This bowl became possible when I obtained some 4" slabs of yellow birch. This was the widest piece at 20". At the time this shallow dish shape was very popular with me (and it still is). Turning the undercut at the rim was quite tricky until I developed a tool for the job. I was so pleased with the tool,

I made a video showing how well it cut and how safe it was to use to do things like the undercut. I posted that video on YouTube; this is the actual dish I made in the video. This dish is ideal for presenting special treats etc at gatherings or displaying a fruit selection.

### THE PIECE

Yellow birch, finished with double boiled linseed oil and wax  
New Glasgow, NS  
Created in 2011  
19¼" X 3½"



## ON THE WINGS OF CHAOS

DIANNE LOOKER

This piece is inspired by chaos theory which emphasizes the potentially dramatic effect of minor differences in initial conditions. This piece involves concentric circles, some narrow with crisp shoulders, some wider with soft shoulders. There are two pieces of walnut of similar but slightly different colour, turned front and back. The two pieces are then cut, reassembled and intertwined. There are an incredible number of ways

the slices of the wood could be cut and reassembled. Hence the tie to chaos theory – minor variations in the creative process and the assembly affect the ultimate shape. The shape I chose forms a winged “V”; the repeated swirls along the outer edges suggest a stag’s head, proudly raised. These swirls contrast with the crisp vertical lines of the slices of wood that form the pattern. The dark wood, shading to lighter in

places, echoes the “dark” edge of chaos that surrounds us, but the repeated patterns show the almost fractal order that is also key to our understanding of our lives.

### THE PIECE

Walnut finished with Bush oil  
Gaspereau  
Created in 2015  
9" X ¾" X 16 ¾"



## HAND OF FIRE

RICHARD FORD

This maple burl bowl blank was presented to me as a challenge by a friend who had tried to turn its sister and destroyed it when he had a mighty "catch". My intent was to learn more about turning burls and pass on whatever I learned to my friend. It was a challenge with the twisted interlocking grain, but with sharp tools and persistence the resulting

bowl was more than worth it. In the process, I improved some shear scraping techniques, which I passed on to my friend. As I turned the bowl, the stunning grain pattern emerged that looks like flames in the shape of a hand. The rounded bead base is one of my favourites, and sets the piece off well.

### THE PIECE

Maple burl, finished with double boiled linseed oil and wax  
New Glasgow, NS  
Created in 2010  
11" X 4"



## FORCES OF ARTHUR

DAVID BARRY

The title of this piece, Forces of Arthur, comes from the hurricane that brought down a tree - the wood from this tree forms the base in my piece. The bowl is from a tree I removed due to poor health so I like the fact that I can now re purpose /recycle the wood. The bowl was carved on the outside with a chainsaw, as I loved the idea of a rough looking bowl with marks on the surface; inspired from an

article I read by a fellow artist, Mark Lindquist. The brass and aluminum were added to attract the eye to the bowl and were filled with dowels of blood and cocobolo wood which I felt gave the bowl a sense of warmth. The base was stripped of its bark, burnt and wire brushed. Five coats of oil were added to reveal the beauty of the grain.

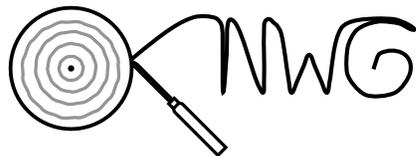
### THE PIECE

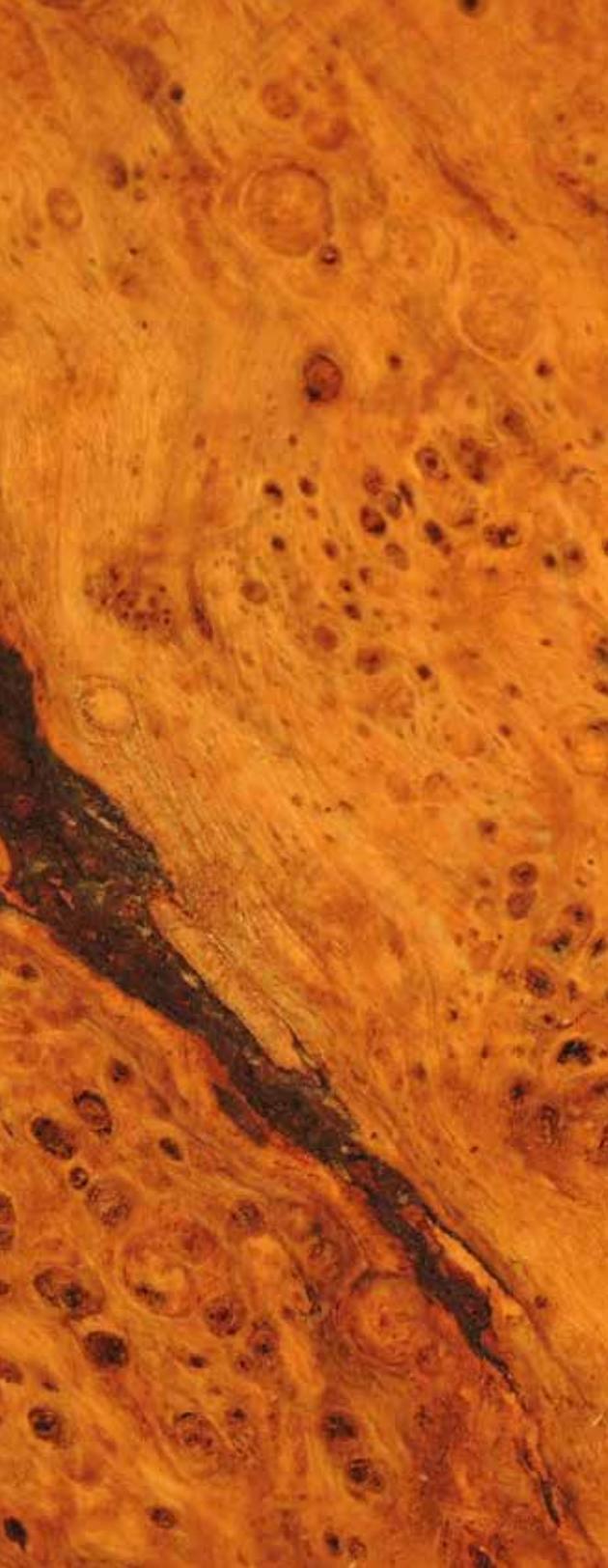
Birch, maple, cocobolo, bloodwood, aluminum, brass, and steel finished with walnut oil.  
Fall River, NS  
Created in 2015  
13" X 52"



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The Nova Woodturners' Guild is pleased to recognize the support of the Province of Nova Scotia through the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage.





MARY E. BLACK GALLERY 2015  
[WWW.NOVAWOODTURNERSGUILD.COM](http://WWW.NOVAWOODTURNERSGUILD.COM)