

March 2016 - Mark Sanger

Another excellent demo from Mark with clear and interesting explanations at every stage - the Top Tips were coming thick and fast all evening!

Nick demonstrated 2 objects - a two piece decorated vase and a thin walled vessel in wet wood.

Two piece decorated vase ...



The base was a block of builders pine and the stem from 180mm x 40mm spalted beech. The reason for making the vase out of two pieces was that the coloured base could be made out of cheap wood and there would be a lot of wastage if turned out of a single piece of expensive wood.

When selecting the builders pine try to avoid knots as these could affect the colouring - if necessary treat knots with knotting.

Firstly the stem was turned to round and roughly shaped and a spigot created to fit into the base. A 10mm hole was then drilled from the opposite end to the spigot so that if the drill went off line slightly this wouldn't be seen as it would be hidden in the spigot.

Top Tip 1 - first drill a pilot hole using a small drill, then a larger hole, and finally the 10mm hole using a long wood drill.

The base was turned to round and then a hole for the stem spigot made using a forstner bit. The base was roughly shaped noting that the widest part was 1/3rd up from the bottom. With the stem superglued into the base the combined base and stem was then turned to its final shape.



Top Tip 2 - start shaping from the top of the stem to reduce the risk of flexing.

The beads at the top of the stem were created using a point tool rather than a beading tool which potentially would have pierced the side wall at the top of the stem. The stem was then masked from between the beaded top to the top of the base prior to colouring.

Top Tip 3 - at the extremities of the masked area use Hippo Tape to ensure no bleeding of the paint through the edges.

The piece was then reversed into a waste wood chuck with a slightly tapered hole to hold the stem in the head stock. The base of the bottom was then turned to about a 1/3rd of the diameter of the vase.

Top Tip 4 - if the vase is going to be a utility piece, e.g. for displaying ferns etc, then consider increasing the diameter of the foot of the vase to maintain stability, especially if the base has been hollowed out.

The base and stem top were coloured using acrylic paints and makeup brushes (under £10 for a large set on Amazon!).

Top Tip 5 - use good quality acrylic paints to avoid the finished piece fading when subjected to sunlight.



Finally, gold was added to the base colour using the dry brush technique i.e. with paint on the brush, tap it on kitchen paper to remove excess paint and then flick back and forth over the high points.

Thin Walled Vessel ...

Nick uses a lot of wet wood (in this case 32% moisture content) - it's cheaper, less noisy, less dust etc.

Having turned to round and created a spigot the piece was mounted in the chuck and then drilled to depth using a 25mm forstner bit. The vessel opening was increased using a 10mm spindle gouge working gradually down the vessel maintaining a constant wall thickness to within 1/2mm to 1mm tolerance.



Top Tip 6 - when chatter is heard turn down the lathe speed

Lemon oil was liberally brushed on to the piece in its final stages to slow down the drying process - the sludge created when then using abrasive acts as a lubricant. The final hollowing was completed using a round nose scraper and ring tool and then the vessel reversed and held on a mouse mat to finish the base.



Thanks Mark for a very enjoyable and informative evening - the time just flew by.

David Langan