

## Jerry Wedekind Wood Turning



Forty odd years ago, while kayaking in Northern California, Jerry walked into a gallery in Mendocino and saw redwood burl tables for the first time. He didn't know it then, but that was the moment that would change his life forever. He was so inspired by their unique grain and rich beauty, he returned to Colorado and shifted his focus from rough carpentry to fine wood working. He began to notice aspen burls as he rode along the mountain biking trails—burls he had previously overlooked. He sensed there was potential there, but wasn't quite sure what direction to take. He borrowed his brother's lathe and began turning the wood. The early turnings were primitive, but promising. As his techniques improved, his efforts suggested perhaps he had stumbled upon a marketable skill. Being young and naïve, not knowing how difficult it would be to make a living as an artist, he forged ahead, signing up for art shows across the West, and looking for galleries to show his work.

As a wood turner in Colorado, the most coveted gallery in which to show your work was known to be Toklat, in Aspen. Stuart Mace was supportive of new artists, but had a keen eye for quality and a low tolerance for amateurs. Jerry was reluctant to even approach him, but ultimately found the courage to ask him to review his work. To his surprise, Mr. Mace decided to accept his turnings. That was 35 years ago.

Jerry has come full-circle. He works in his shop in Hotchkiss, Colorado, turning on a huge, antique Oliver lathe, with tools he has invented and customized over the years. His work can be found in galleries throughout the Southwest. In addition to one-of-a-kind aspen turnings, he also creates juniper and cedar lamps...and redwood burl tables.

Toklat Gallery, 255 Gold Rivers Court #150 (at Riverside Plaza on Two Rivers Road) Basalt  
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