

Daniel J Betsill

Woodturner



Artist statement.

My woodturning began simply as the spindle turning required for my work in lutherie (stringed instrument making) but has grown over the past 10 years to become my favorite hobby. I began self-taught, making pegs for early instruments such as lutes and citterns, then studied for a time with Harry Vas Dias, the historic woodwind maker, of Decatur, Georgia. I then learned bowlturning, or faceplate turning, from Bishop Frank Allen while volunteering at Emmaus House, a mission of the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta serving the Peoplestown neighborhood. With Frank's guidance I taught bowl and pen turning to the neighborhood children at a regular Saturday morning program. At that time I was living in the Virginia-Highlands neighborhood and commuting frequently along the length of Ponce De Leon Avenue, which introduced me to a steady stream of large specimen hardwoods being removed most commonly due to storm damage. I realized not only the opportunity for excellent, free turning wood, but the historical value of many of these trees. Many were clearly 100+ years old and had pride of place in historic parks, such as the Olmstead Linear Park in Druid Hills and Oakland Cemetery. I have come to collect wood from historic sites and neighborhoods all around Atlanta and offer a piece of history with every creation.



Current offerings.

At any time I have a selection of woods from 'historic trees' collected from around Atlanta. The following highlights show bowls made from my current stock. The specific bowls pictured may not be available however I have wood sufficient to create more from the same stock upon commission.



The Rhodes Hall Oak.

In November of 2009 an enormous red oak tree was removed from in front of Rhodes Hall on Peachtree Street. The tree pre-dated the 1904 house, as it is already quite large as seen in a photograph of that year. The tree was removed due to severe trunk rot, however I salvaged several pieces of 12" diameter limbs. Currently 2 bowls approximately 8" diameter, \$50 each.



Deepdene Park Red Maple.

Wood collected 10 years ago from a substantial tree downed by storm weather in the Druid Hills Linear Park along Ponce de Leon. The location and size of the tree makes it probable that it was planted as part of Fredrick Law Olmstead's original plans. Currently two bowls at 6 1/2" diameter. \$40 each.



Emory Spalted Red Oak.

Removed from the front entrance of Emory University in June of 2008 to facilitate the reorientation of Dowman Drive, this tree was estimated at 80 years old. The wood was heavily compromised by white rot and spalting, producing a beautiful effect but limiting the quantity and size of bowls to be made from the salvaged wood. Currently one bowl, 6" diameter, \$40.



Brookwood Hills Magnolia.

A very large tree removed during the construction of a new home in the Brookwood Hills Country Club in Buckhead. The tree was a significant landscaping feature of the previous house on the property which was developed in the 1920's and is located in an area on the National Register of Historic Places. One 11" diameter bowl, \$125.

