

Ask the Pro Signing Work

Between September 2009 and March 2010, the C.O.W. newsletter featured a forum in which members could ask the club's more experienced woodturners questions. What follows is one of the questions asked and the pros' answers.

How do you sign your work? If money was not object, how would you like to sign your work?

Floyd Anstaett:

I use "Micron" archival quality pens in .01 size. I sign on the bare wood after sanding but before applying any finish. I'm satisfied with the results that I get by using these pens.

Mark Damron:

The best method for signing my work that I have found to date is a Dremel engraver. You can get very small and detailed text with it. After the finish is applied I use a metallic wax which is rubbed into the text and wiped off. I use Rub'n Buff which comes in different colors like white, black, gold and silver. I learned this method from Cindy Drosda. At this point I haven't found a better way other than paying someone to do it for me.

Barb Crockett:

Most of the time I sign my work with a very fine archival quality black permanent pen. Many of the pro turners insist that this type of signature detracts from the quality of the work. I have mixed thoughts on this. I have a fairly complicated name to write with an engraver or burning tip. I just can't seem to get it small enough and legible enough so that it doesn't look like a kindergarten kid who just learned to write their name. For this reason, I tend to stick with pen and ink. I sign the pieces after I put the finish on because the ink is alcohol based and most of the finishes will either smear it or remove it entirely. If I engrave the signature, I do it before I apply the finish so that rough edges can be sanded off (did I mention that I'm not very good engraver ;-)) and it also allows you to work some of the finish into the signature so it doesn't have the "raw wood look" As for the cost, all of the money in the world would not help my penmanship with an engraver. The only expense that would help me here is one of time and a great deal of practice.