

Idea Sketch Book

Wally Dickerman

Every woodturner should have an idea sketch book. When you see a form or a design that appeals to you, and it triggers an idea, write it down. Draw sketches. Go back to it later and improve it. Do some doodling. Then go to the shop and turn it. Make changes as you go. For me, most everything in my turnings that I've found to be successful has started this way. Many of my ideas have never gone beyond the sketch book but occasionally I go through my book and an idea that I may have had years ago, will strike a new spark and the process starts over. Often you'll see a turning that you especially like that was done by someone else. Or perhaps just some features of that piece. Draw some sketches. From the sketches, develop some changes that you think might improve it and that will make it your own design.

Often my ideas come from things that aren't woodturnings. A picture in a magazine, a pottery form, something from nature. Just about anything might spark a new idea. Write it down and make some sketches before it's out of your mind.

Give some close examination to some of your older turnings that appeal to you. Think of ways that they could be improved by some changes in the form or by adding some sort of design. Draw some sketches and go to work.