



Wood Art / Harald Kurreck

WORK PHASES – a short introduction

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In the past the first major step for me was, to go on Rossdohan Island to find the wood.



Here one tree I found: an approximately 60 year old white oak, which had fallen by a heavy storm.



I cut a slice of wood corresponding to the diameter of the object to be obtained. Unless the piece is worked immediately, it will be packed away to maintain just the right humidity. A first rough squaring of the piece is made with the aid of a chainsaw.

The turning of the external form begins, resulting in a form already very similar to the definitive piece. Cracks in the core wood area are stabilized at this time with Butterfly's.



The outside form is again turned until the object reaches its final size. At this stage, the grooves are also incorporated.

Having completed the external operations, work begins again on the inside surface to make the object the desired thickness. Particularly long tools are also used, specially made to reach the deepest parts of the object.

The object has its final shape. It is very good to see that the wood is still wet.



For bigger vessels I use a support system, which is very much important for the flying turning.



Since I work almost only with wet/green wood, I wrap the vessel in the evening in a wet cloth. This keeps the wood moist until the work is done and is essential for the final result of the vessel.



REFINEMENT – working with the texture of the grain



Many of my vessels, even the larger ones, are extremely light. The walls average between 3-6 mm and appear paper-like and delicate.

The surfaces of the ‘Tree trilogy of Glashnacre’ vessels are methodically worked with gouges, giving a grooved and beveled appearance.



I refine the fine line work by clearing the softer annual rings with a metal brush. The irregularities that appear between the wood’s grain and the grooves put a stronger emphasis on the woods’ natural grains and therefore present a more tactile texture to us. It is a testament to the incredible age and life of the original Oak.



For the ‘Tree trilogy of Glashnacre’ vessels I have further refined the surfaces by enhancing the underlying colours of the wood using natural minerals. The grooves added have a purpose beyond the aesthetic as they allow the minerals to penetrate deeply into the fibers. Iron oxides and volcanic ash are applied to the surfaces to achieve more intense hues. The vessels are then submerged in limewater, an alkaline solution that reacts with the tannins found naturally in oak, giving a matte appearance.

As a result, the wood loses its oily colour, turning a light brown and giving the sculpture a more muted, cloudier tone. The sculptures possess a texture of even greater natural rawness.



For the process of the wood staining I test different recipes on the same wood. Essentially, I work with natural stains: catechu, blue wood, walnut, volcanic ash etc.

For the ‘Tree trilogy of Glashnacre’ vessels, I have decided to stain them with volcanic ash. This operation lasts about a week. It is then soaked in water and lime. After natural drying has been completed, the object is brushed to get rid of any residual lime.



For the object below, I have decided on the following procedure:

The object is soaked in a lime bath. This operation lasts about two weeks. It is then also soaked in water and later on for two weeks treated with volcanic ash. After natural drying has been completed, the object is brushed to get rid of any residual lime and the volcanic ash.



After drying you can see the natural change in shape. The object is now treated using a solution of poppy oil and then orange oil, which together give it a special shine and distinctive smell. After wiping away with a cloth any excess oil, soft brushing is carried out. After drying of the oil I give sometimes a light beeswax finish. The object is finished at last. It is signed on the base and marked with a number and the year it was made.



On these objects you can see very nicely how the drying process (about 6 months) determines the final shape.



On this vessel you can see cracks which gives the vessel a certain tension.

