

Artist Profile

Leon Kula

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Leon Kula's wood pieces are formed from a variety of local and exotic woods. He works primarily on a lathe, using hand carving for details in some instances. He frequently focuses on the vessel form, but selects wood with imperfections that provide a counterpoint to that type of functionality. He prefers to work with wood that has natural imperfections, enjoying the challenge of keeping its unique beauty intact in the transforming process of turning and polishing.

Artist Bio

Leon Kula was born in rural Michigan in 1939. His formal art education took place at the Society of Arts and Crafts in Detroit, Michigan, the Bloomfield Art Association in Bloomfield, Michigan, Anderson Ranch, Colorado, and the University of Miami, Florida.

He first started woodturning in the early 1960s, as a hobby in college. In the 1970s he studied Oriental art and became fascinated with the plastic medium of clay. In his long career as a studio potter, he participated in many national juried art shows and received a number of awards.

As his clay work progressed from the functional to the sculptural, his studies and interest also moved, to the art of bronze casting. In this field, he enjoyed the creation of sculptural forms in a temporary medium such as clay or wax that became transformed into permanent pieces of strength and delicacy, through the process of lost-wax bronze casting.

In recent years he has returned to his original love of woodworking, turning and carving pieces of local and exotic woods into a variety of vessels and sculptural forms, both functional and whimsical.



Artist Statement

I enjoy the variety of color and texture that wood offers. I especially like to work with wood with spalting, knot holes, and other openings, that cannot be duplicated by manmade processes. I feel a sense of discovery when my original piece of unfinished wood is converted into a work of art while maintaining its own unique character.