

ARROWMONT

SCHOOL OF ARTS AND CRAFTS

Medium: Woodturning

Instructor: Dixie Biggs

Dates: June 21-26, 2026

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This workshop is open to all skill levels (good manual dexterity is recommended) and explores embellishment techniques that expand the visual impact of work for woodturners, furniture makers, or other wood artists. Students will learn techniques for power relief carving using a micro-motor rotary power carver, the use of woodburners for adding texture and detail, and incorporating color with acrylic paints through the dry-brush technique. Students will go step-by-step through a relief-carving process, from layout and bit selection to finishing detail on provided sample discs and blocks. This workshop is focused on off-the-lathe techniques; students will use beginning exercises to develop skills that they can incorporate into additional dry work they are encouraged to bring with them. No previous power-carving or painting experience is necessary.

WHAT TO BRING

- **Arrowmont has micro-motor carvers and wood burners for students use. No need to purchase these unless you would like to have your own. You WILL need the set of carving burs**
- **Micro-motor rotary power carver** - Suggestions are any one of the Ram units found at www.mdiwoodcarvers.com or the Mastercarver Micro-Pro Champion, found at www.woodcarverssupply.com . No need to get the foot control but some come with it.
- **Be sure to have a 3/32" collet for your carver.** Contact Dixie if you have any questions
- - **Carving Burrs** – Please bring the following burs plus your favorites. These can be found at MDI Woodcarvers Supply www.mdiwoodcarvers.com 1-800-866-5728
- The full bur pack link is: <https://mdiwoodcarvers.com/shop/ols/products/dixie-biggs-embellishing-2024-seminar-bur-set-85-dixie24>
- **Wood burner.** Bring handpieces with a spear/spade tip (preferred) or long skew and one with a loop/writing tip. If you have others, you can bring those, as well.
- Bring turned pieces or woodwork that are dried and ready to carve.
- **(See Below** for things to consider)
- Old toothbrush or paint brush for brushing away carving dust.
- Inexpensive set of artist paint brushes. Make sure at least one is about ¼" flat brush.
- If you need magnifiers for detailed work, do not forget to bring those.
- Paper and pencil
- Dust mask or respirator (I like the GVS Elipse P100 with Nuisance Odor Filter)
- Ear plugs
- Task light is very helpful
- Cushion to sit on is highly recommended. It makes long hours of sitting so much easier!

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- **A few things to think about for the work you bring to carve on:**
- Thicker is better. I would recommend a wall thickness of around 3/8".
- Have something that is straight grained and rather plain. Cherry, pear, dogwood would be good choices. You really do not want figure or color variations to compete with your carving. Select wood with a nice tight grain, open grain can cause problems for students just starting out.
- Please do not bring exotics because some in the class may be allergic.
- Woodturners, you can bring most anything.... bowls, vessels, or platters with a wide rim. Just give it a bit of thought about where you might like to carve. You might want to carve the whole thing or just leave a wide band that is thicker around the piece where you can do the carving. Size does not really matter; it just depends on how ambitious you are. You might want to start out with smaller pieces to get started.
- The pieces need to be fully dry (no green wood) for rotary power carving. Wet wood will gum up your carving burs.
- Suggestions:
 - Woodturners: bring turnings that are ready to carve.
 - Furniture Makers: bring something of a manageable size you would like to carve on
 - Sculptors: if you have a piece of wood you've been wanting to work on, bring that.
 - Everyone: there will be turned discs and sample blocks provided for the beginning exercises plus extra if you want to continue working on those

Planning to purchase materials from the Supply Store for your workshop? Keep in mind that the Supply Store carries a limited selection and cannot guarantee that all materials listed by your instructor will be in stock. Please call **865-436-5860 Ext. 25** or email Celeste Rudd at crudd@arrowmont.org to reserve your selection prior to arrival.

MATERIALS FEES | **\$70.00-\$100.00**

Fees are assessed on an individual class basis and may vary from class to class depending on the amount of materials used and the number of students in the class, this keeps your out-of-pocket costs lower than a typical flat fee. Fees include all provided studio materials as assigned by the Instructor. Material fees are to be paid in the Supply Store no later than midday on the last day of workshop instruction.

Please be advised that the above course description and materials list has been written and approved by the instructor.

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Instructor Contact
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