

Julien McCarthy Artist Statement

When I was in Summer camp as an adolescent one of the activities was “shop” where kids could make a Cedar lamp for their parents. I begged to be included several years but was always denied. I resented that a lot but never lost my desire to find a chance to operate a lathe and make utilitarian things with it. About fourteen years ago I was at an estate auction where a cheap beginners lathe went on the block and I got it for a hundred bucks. When I got it running at home I discovered that I had the capacity to turn wood on it and sold a bunch of candle sticks and vases made from American Chestnut fence rail wood. Once I had saved up the dough for a better machine I got a used Powermatic Model 90 spindle lathe and pushed my techniques forward into some original forms that sold well. Again I used the funds from these works to buy a new Powermatic 3420B which does everything I could ever ask of a lathe. By 2011 I had developed a proprietary technique employing nut segments to add a delicate patina to my turnings and won third place, three dimensional fine arts in the annual state competition (nearly passed out). I began selling well at juried shows in the NC piedmont and eventually was accepted as a vendor to The Wood Turning Center in Philadelphia, Pa. My work is now in several continents/countries and has won a few other prizes including my cherished “best in show” at this year’s Mollie Fearing Show at the Dare County Center for Art in Manteo, NC. I use only natural resources that I harvest from disasters and lot clearings along with semiprecious stone. Since I am self-taught my work is fairly unique and not stereotypical. I mean for my work to be utilitarian as well as aesthetically appealing. I am grateful to have been juried in to this gallery where the curators and volunteers are folks close to the Earth- well grounded-respect the public and the artists- understand the material, aesthetic, and economic value of art and the people associated with it. Manteo, NC has more than its’ share of excellence in art among its’ population and I am very happy to be associated with them.