

Betty Scarpino Receives CWA Award

Betty J. Scarpino has received the 2015 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Collectors of Wood Art (CWA). She was chosen as the 15th winner of the award by CWA's board of directors in recognition of her more than thirty years of contributions to the wood art field as an artist, teacher, editor, writer, and strong advocate/role model for women in the field.

Scarpino has always had an influential presence among wood artists. Her emphasis on sculptural lines and form over material in the 1990s was often cause for debate. Her work is now represented in the permanent collections of more than twenty museums.

She became a sought-after demonstrator as the field grew. As a woman, she was not always welcomed in a male-dominated world but soon gained respect when her vast knowledge and experience became evident. Her familiarity with tool and technique came from a degree in industrial arts from the University of Missouri and a subsequent job as supervisor of the university's craft studio.

Her stature grew during her tenure as editor of *American Woodturner*. Her recent years as editor (2009–2014) were especially challenging, as escalating production costs and pressure to switch to digital format prompted the AAW board of directors to question many aspects of the publication. She was also faced with the ongoing challenge of balancing journal content for an increasingly varied audience.

Jean LeGwin, Chair of AAW's publications committee, said, "Because Betty is both a working artist and an excellent editor, she brought a unique mix of experience and qualities that few can match. Her extensive knowledge of the woodturning community gave her a special perspective in handling pressure coming from different directions and dramatically improved the excellence of the journal."

Since stepping down as editor, Scarpino has returned to working in



Photo: Terry Martin

Betty Scarpino, *River of Decisions*, 2004, Sycamore, 8' (2.4m) tall

Collection of Rhonda Fox Waltz and Kevin Waltz

her studio and has been in demand once again as a demonstrator.

Albert LeCoff, Executive Director of the Center for Art in Wood, noted, "Betty's work always stood out because she is a sculptor who works with a lathe. Her work is not vessel-based, but more about lines and form with the containment of a thought. There is no singular point of focus, but multiple compositions within one piece."

"We've seen her go from artist to teacher to writer to editor and now back to artist," LeCoff continued. "I can't think of anyone who has had such a profound effect on woodturning and wood art in so many areas. She is truly deserving of this award." ■

For more on Collectors of Wood Art, visit collectorsofwoodart.org.

—Dave Long