

I was not prepared to actually really like this object. I frankly do not care a bit about baseball as a sport. I selected this object expressly because school groups seem to either bump into constantly or one student always has to lunge at it.

Having stated my disclaimer, I really am enamored with Rejects.

I would suggest using the iPad and playing a short section of his YouTube Woodworking Magazine interview showing exactly what the "multiple-axis" technique is. The video really makes the object very accessible and understandable.

In many ways Sfirri is your high school shop teacher but with a creative and imaginative edge he loves to explore. He has no deep purpose or statement he is expressing but rather utilizing math, engineering, technique and execution to create stunning forms from wood. That is statement enough.

Great questions and conversation regarding is this art or craft?

*Object of the Month-July 2011*

*Sheila-Marie Untiedt*

*Rejects From the Bat Factory*



*This photo is NOT the MIA piece but very similar. Please refer to the description*

*Medium: Decorative Arts and Utilitarian Objects, Woodwork | Ash, mahogany*

*Creation Place: United States, Pennsylvania, New Hope*

*Culture: United States, Pennsylvania*

*Style: 20th century*

*Physical Description: group of five baseball bats and rack for display: a: baseball bat, curved and flat at wide end; burned logo with title and artist's name; "Super!" and "CURVED!" also burned into bat; b: baseball bat, off-centered near center (as if 2 segments were rejoined crooked); end of handle off center; burned logo with title and artist's name; "OVER TEMPERED" and "SEMI-PROFESSIONAL" also burned into bat; c: baseball bat with handle at each end, meeting off-center at middle; d: baseball bat with 2 flattened areas opposite 2 rounded areas at widest point; burned logo with title and artist's name; "ODDLY TEMPERED" and "HARDLY PROFESSIONAL" also burned into bat; e: baseball bat with central inverted section (small end and large end reversed) and 2 disjointed areas; burned logo with title and artist's name; "OVER TEMPERED" and "UN-PROFESSIONAL" burned into bat; f: asymmetrical rack for displaying bats; angled edges*

*Credit: Collection Minneapolis Institute of Arts; Gift of Various Donors, by exchange*

*Accession Number: 2002.63a-f*

*Gallery 275*

*Created 1993 by Mark Sfirri*

*Quotes:*

*"My mentor (Tage Frid) said that the lathe is a very creative tool that most people don't use that way. They make bowls and spindles and that's it. So I thought I should really try to do something here."- Mark Sfirri*

*"My work requires math, engineering, technique and execution."- Mark Sfirri*

*Biography:*

*Woodworker Mark Sfirri continually blurs the line separating woodturning from sculpture. Sfirri, who earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Rhode Island School of Design in 1974, and his Master of Fine Arts from the same institution in 1978, was heavily influenced by his mentor Tage Frid, who encouraged the young Sfirri to use his primary tool, the lathe in new, creative ways. Sfirri uses the lathe to create conventional bowls and spindles which he then manipulates using multi-centered spindles, and a series of crosscuts; the resulting pieces combine concave and convex surfaces with curvilinear contours. Well known for his bold composition and meticulous attention to detail, Sfirri has collaborated on individual pieces with numerous other artists, including Michael Hosaluk and painter Robert Dodge. Sfirri has taught at Bucks County Community College since 1981 as an Associate Professor of Fine Woodworking. He is a member of the Bucks Woodturners, the local chapter of the American Association of Woodturners, and has a studio in New Hope, Pennsylvania. Sfirri has published numerous articles in journals such as American Woodworker, and Fine Woodworking.*

*Around 1976 he began creatively using the "multiple-axis" technique, which he employed to make these humorous bats. This entails repeatedly repositioning a piece of wood on the lathe at different angles during the turning process. The cubist rack is meant to conjure up the work of seminal studio furniture maker and sculptor Wharton Esherick (1887-1970), as are the ash bats, which reference Esherick's use of ash axe handles in the production of a series of stools. Ash is also the principal material used in making baseball bats.*

*Resources:*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7uZNMvwHHIY>

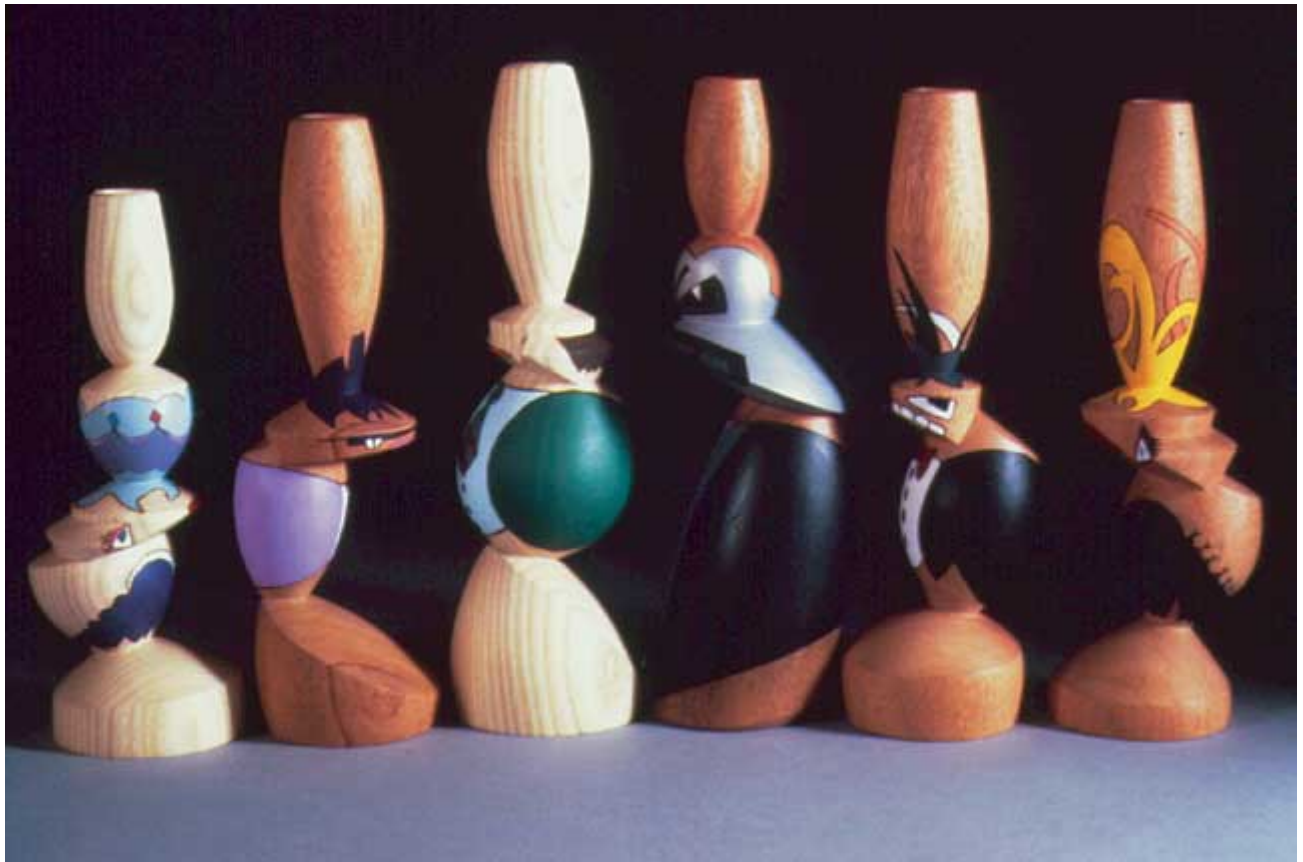
*YouTube video of WoodWorkers' Magazine interview- would be great on the iPad*

<http://www.lynnemaguchi.com/wordpress/2007/07/13/mark-sfirri%E2%80%99s-july-8/visitor-to-his-workshop-blog-entry>

<http://www.mintmuseum.org/mason/masonsite/sfirri5.html>

*video clip of Mark Sfirri teaching his technique*

*Additional works:*



*Attendees to the Ball*



*Ash Furniture set*



*Hall Table*



*Oak Folding Screen*