

Cindy Drozda

"The Fine Art of Woodturning"

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Owl Box



Part 1: Prepare the Blanks:

For the Owl's Head (a Sphere): A piece of dry wood 2-5/16"/59mm, to yield a 2 1/4"/57mm diameter trued up cylinder, 2-1/2"/65mm long. Any wood is good for this. Grainy wood like Ash give some interesting patterns in the eyes. A bland wood like Madrone is good for doing pyrography or painting.

For the Owl's Body (Box): A piece of dry wood, 2-1/2"/65mm in diameter, 3-1/2" – 4" (90-100mm) long

For the Jam Chucks: You will need a piece of compressible straight grain (endgrain) wood that is larger in diameter than the Sphere, and at least 2"/50mm long. It needs a tenon on one end to fit the scroll chuck, and a hole through it. You will also need a jam chuck larger than the box diameter for finishing the box halves.

Inlay Materials: I used Opal chips and UV resin for the Owl's eyes. These materials are available from www.easyinlay.com (and other places, too).

Many other treatments can be done on the Owl's eyes, head, and body. Buttons, coins, turned wood pieces, painting, carving, and pyrography, are just a few ideas. Get creative!

Part 2: The Sphere (Owl's Head):

1. Mount the Sphere blank between centers and true it up to 2-1/4"/57mm.
2. Mark the diameter onto the blank and part in to make the length the same as the diameter.
3. Mark the center of the blank, and turn a sphere shape as close as you can. It's better to remove less material than more.
4. Cut a groove about 1/32"/.5mm deep on the center line, and mark it with pencil
5. Create a jam chuck that looks like a bowl, with the inside diameter at the rim being the diameter of the sphere.
6. Put the rough sphere up against the jam chuck, with the pencil line parallel with the lathe bed, and bring up the tailstock

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with a cup chuck to hold the sphere in place.

7. Turn down almost to the pencil line on the one side, then flip the sphere in the jam chuck and do the other side.
8. Tune the fit of the jam chuck to the rough sphere, so that just over half of the sphere sticks out of the chuck, and it jams into the chuck well.
9. Turn the half of the sphere that's out of the chuck down to the pencil line, flip it in the chuck and do the other side.
10. Sand the Sphere by going through the grits, moving it around in the jam chuck to sand the whole Sphere with each grit.

Part 3: The Owl's Eyes

1. Mark out the centers of the eyes, and draw circles with a compass at the diameter of the eyes.
2. Mount the Sphere in the jam chuck with the center of one eye lined up on the center of rotation. The tailstock with a sharp point can help.
3. Hollow out the eye to the marked circle, create your choice of decoration on the center of the eye, and sand.
4. Repeat that process for the other eye. The challenge is in getting both eyes the same.
5. Complete the Owl's Head with your choice of decoration and finish.

Part 4: The Box:

1. Prepare the blank by rounding it between centers to a diameter just larger than the intended Box diameter. Make a chuck tenon on each end.
2. Mount the lid of the box in the scroll chuck.
3. Draw a line along the toolrest where the lid separates from the bottom, and part off the box bottom.
4. Hollow the inside of the lid, making a parallel sided recess at the rim. Decorate the inside of the lid as desired.
5. Put the bottom of the box into the chuck, and jam fit the lid onto a tenon.
6. Shape the lid and box bottom together, truing up the blank.
7. Shape the outside and top of the lid. Create a depression in the top of the lid that fits the Owl's head. Sand the outside of the lid.
8. Remove the lid, and tune the fit of the tenon to be a good box lid fit. Hollow and sand the box bottom.
9. Jam chuck the box onto a waste block to shape and sand the bottom.

Part 3: Resin Inlay for the Eyes:

1. In the Demonstration, I am using UV doming resin by Solarez. It cures by UV light from a flashlight/torch with the correct wavelength. Be sure you have the proper light source for the resin you are using. Always wear UV eye protection (such as a good quality pair of sunglasses) when using a UV light. CA glue will also work for this, and there are other resins, also.
2. Use the jam chuck face up on your bench to hold the Owl Head with the eye in a level position.
3. If you are using Opal chips like I did, they look best over black. A sharpie, India Ink, or tinted CA glue to make the inlay recess black, or the color of your choice.
4. Put down a very thin layer of resin or CA and put the Opal chips in place. Cure the resin.
5. Drop by drop, fill the inlay area with the resin. It will dome up and make a nice smooth surface that doesn't need polishing. If you drip too much resin in, it will break surface tension and run out of the inlay area. It's better to put in too little than too much. Cure the resin, and you are done!
6. If you want to make a black center for the eyes, be careful using black pigment in UV resin. Light won't get through the black, and the resin won't cure. It's best to make a black center using a different resin, or a different

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method altogether, such as an insert, or built in like I do it in the demonstration.

Part 4: Finishing:

1. Using an oil finish, such as Tung Oil, allows you to finish the piece after the inlay or inserts are done. Wipe the oil completely off of the inlay's surface to keep from leaving a residue. It is also possible to do the inlay or glue in inserts after the oil finish is completely dry.
2. A lacquer or polyurethane film finish should be done before putting inserts or resin inlay in the eyes, or the inlay should be masked off, to keep from getting the finish on it.
3. Any finish should be done after pyrography, to keep from creating toxic fumes from burning the finish.

Congratulations on completing your Owl Box!

For safety, Please wear eye and face protection at ALL TIMES

HAVE FUN !!