

ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS OF SOUTH AFRICA



ROOTED IN AFRICA

AWSA SYMPOSIUM 2026
LEARN • TEACH • CREATE

2-5 OCTOBER 2026

WELCOME

Welcome to the Association of Woodturners of South Africa Symposium 2026.

It is our pleasure to welcome woodturners, demonstrators, exhibitors and friends from across South Africa and beyond as we gather to celebrate our shared passion for woodturning.

This year's theme, Rooted in Africa, reflects more than the timber we work with—it celebrates the heritage, landscapes and traditions that inspire us. Like the growth rings of a tree, every woodturner has a unique story. Each project, each lesson shared and each friendship formed adds another ring to the legacy of our craft.

Our roots run deep. They are found in the indigenous woods of our continent, in the knowledge passed from mentor to student, and in the willingness of our community to learn, teach, and create together.

Over the four days you will experience demonstrations from talented turners, discover new techniques and products, exchange ideas with fellow makers, and strengthen the friendships that make the AWSA community so special.

Whether this is your first symposium or you have attended many before, we hope you leave inspired, challenged and proud to be part of a community that continues to grow while remaining firmly rooted in Africa.

A particularly exciting part of this year's symposium is the opportunity to nurture the next generation of South African woodturners. During September, eight enthusiastic young woodturners from New Hope School will take part in a basic woodturning course, where they will develop their skills and gain hands-on experience in the school's workshop. During the symposium weekend, these young turners will have the opportunity to put their newly acquired skills into practice, both in the New Hope School workshop and through dedicated demonstrations as part of the symposium programme. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to Carel van der Merwe of Creative Turning SA for generously sharing his knowledge and expertise and for guiding these young woodturners on the beginning of their woodturning journey. We look forward to seeing them grow in confidence and skill and to showcasing their talents during the symposium.

Thank you to our demonstrators, exhibitors, sponsors, volunteers and organising committee whose dedication has made this symposium possible.

Like the rings of a tree, every symposium marks another year of growth. Every conversation strengthens our roots. Every demonstration helps shape the future of woodturning in Africa.

We wish you an enjoyable, inspiring and memorable Symposium 2026.

Learn • Teach • Create

The AWSA Symposium Organising Committee

SYMPOSIUM PROGRAMME – Main Hall

(Subject to change)

Friday 2 October 2026	
<i>TIME</i>	<i>DESCRIPTION</i>
<i>14h00 - 17h30</i>	<i>Registration and Admin</i>
<i>17h30 - 18h00</i>	<i>Informal Meet and Greet</i>
<i>18h00 - 22h00</i>	<i>Welcome and Cocktail Event – Main Hall</i>

Saturday 3 October 2026		
<i>TIME</i>	<i>DESCRIPTION</i>	<i>DEMONSTRATOR</i>
<i>08h30 - 10h00</i>	<i>Celebrating Local Innovation</i>	<i>Poena Coetzee</i>
<i>10h00 - 10h30</i>	<i>Tea / Coffee break</i>	
<i>10h30 - 11h30</i>	<i>Woodoc: Rooted in Fort Beaufort</i>	<i>Woodoc Family</i>
<i>11h30 - 12h00</i>	<i>Tea / Coffee break</i>	
<i>12h00 - 13h00</i>	<i>The Art of Eco-Conscious Coring</i>	<i>Carel van der Merwe</i>
<i>13h00 - 14h00</i>	<i>Lunch</i>	
<i>14h00 - 15h30</i>	<i>Medieval Helmets born from African Roots</i>	<i>Andrew Bourke</i>
<i>15h30 - 16h00</i>	<i>Tea / Coffee break</i>	
<i>16h00 - 17h30</i>	<i>Rooted in Colour – Vacuum and/ or pressure</i>	<i>Gerrit van Niekerk</i>
<i>17h30</i>	<i>Branching Out: Introducing the New Era of</i>	<i>Creative Turning</i>

Sunday 4 October 2026		
<i>TIME</i>	<i>DESCRIPTION</i>	<i>DEMONSTRATOR</i>
<i>08h30 - 09h30</i>	<i>Root of the Sphere</i>	<i>Jan Richter</i>
<i>09h30 - 10h00</i>	<i>Tea / Coffee break</i>	
<i>10h00 - 11h30</i>	<i>Evolution of the Sphere</i>	<i>Poena Coetzee</i>
<i>11h30 - 12h30</i>	<i>Lunch</i>	
<i>12h30 - 14h00</i>	<i>Basket Weave: Carry in Africa</i>	<i>Carel van der Merwe</i>
<i>14h00 - 14h30</i>	<i>Tea / Coffee break</i>	
<i>14h30 - 15h00</i>	<i>Connecting with Nature: Our Wood Art Journey</i>	<i>Hylton and Steph Oliver</i>
<i>15h00 - 16h00</i>	<i>The African Egg: Elliptical Forms in Hardwood</i>	<i>Alan Crawford</i>
<i>16h00- 16h30</i>	<i>AGM</i>	
<i>18h00 - 23h00</i>	<i>GALA Function: School Dining Hall</i>	<i>AWSA</i>

Monday 5 October 2026		
<i>TIME</i>	<i>DESCRIPTION</i>	<i>DEMONSTRATOR</i>
<i>08h30 - 10h00</i>	<i>Learn, Teach and Create</i>	<i>Poena Coetzee</i>
<i>10h00 - 10h30</i>	<i>Tea / Coffee break</i>	
<i>10h30 - 12h00</i>	<i>Spindle and Bowl Gouge Techniques</i>	<i>Andy Sutton</i>
<i>12h00</i>	<i>Closing & Raffle</i>	<i>AWSA – Main Hall</i>

SPONSORS

- New Hope School
- Creative Turning
- Woodoc
- Mr Woodturner
- Thundertools
- Silverton Houthandelaars
- Hardware Centre
- Rubio Monocoat
- ProNature
- ProSono
- Tormek

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