

Nested Bowls 2



A while ago I put up a set of nested bowls made from a single piece of soft [red]wood. These were made by holding the piece with a small (75mm) faceplate from each side and cutting through with a parting tool. The outer surface of the bowls was concave, which not everyone liked. So I have had another go with ripple sycamore with a convex outer surface, made the same way.

This is a bit trickier for various reasons:-

- the top now needs to be larger diameter than the base so that the separate bottom can be introduced through it (the previous bowls were symmetrical)
- the 80mm thick wood did not allow enough spare for the bottoms to be made from the same piece as last time, so I made separate bottoms from 3mm birch ply (on the lathe). This was stained pre-assembly red/orange/yellow (of course the smallest bowl is hollowed from solid in the conventional way and has no base). Lit from above the bowls glow nicely as above - but the stain is only on the base.
- the soft jaw chuck now needs to grip inside the rings rather than outside, thus potentially opening up any cracks. I got away with this but needs care!
- the ripple wood looks lovely but the grain does tend to tear, particularly when machining the inside of the rings. I tried a number of tools and the most satisfactory (least unsatisfactory) was a 15mm Tungsten Carbide disk - but a good deal of post sanding was still needed.

Working notes:-

Mostly just see the pictures below but note:-

- There is initially a small depression cut on both sides that matches the faceplate to enable accurate reversing of the piece (this of course gets lost when the smallest bowl is made)
- The parting tool is put in at an angle when making the rings, and a double width groove cut, leaving a roughly conical shape.
- The outer surfaces are cut before each ring is separated.
- The rings separate quite gently but a fairly slow lathe speed is a good idea.

- Trimming the birch ply (from a rough circle cut with a bandsaw) worked better than I expected with a sharp roughing gouge, but the final shaping (including ring-matching slight taper) still works better with sandpaper
- When shaping the ply on the lathe it was sandwiched between two round pieces held on head/tailstock (see pic) but it helps to secure the headstock side with double-sided sticky tape so that the tailstock side can be moved back to test the size with the (completed) ring.

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Sunday, 20 December 2020

