

## **RiverArtsFest, Inc.**

### **Art Education Conversations: Rick Cannon and Christopher Taylor**

#### **Artist Rick Cannon**

I have worked with wood most of my life. When I was young, if something wooden in our home broke, we repaired it, mostly out of necessity. But I remember using the tools and the process.

I found out, in those days, that wood working was taught formally in the schools. Cool! I took every advantage of the opportunity.

I found that knowing how to use the tools and repair things was very useful. I also used the shop and tools to balance my “real job” life. After a long shift in the refinery, it helped me relax.

I gained formal training on the lathe through our local club and at Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts. This school in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, would bring world class wood artists in and we could learn from them.

I’ve turned most anything on the lathe, from pens to segmented urns. I’ve “evolved” into a sculptor of sorts, with the process starting at the lathe. When the work, mostly wood, is removed from the lathe I begin the process of carving and coloring it. I use most any tool that will do the job.

I have found that sometimes the goal is simply to leave only enough material to complete the thought of the piece. Either way, I still find a special satisfaction in working with the tools and material.

I enjoy the challenge of taking a thought and then creating something resembling that thought that you can hold in your hand. This puts a smile on my face. And after all, smiling is good.

RixWoodWurx on FaceBook/Instagram

#### **Art Educator Christopher Taylor**

Christopher Taylor is currently teaching at Norman-Binkley in Nashville, Tennessee. He has been a visual arts educator for eight years. Prior to moving to Nashville, he worked at Richland Elementary in Memphis. Christopher describes himself as a teacher who encourages students to find their own unique style and use their art as journey of self-discovery and storytelling.

As an artist, Christopher describes himself as an experimental artist. He enjoys creating eco-art and social justice art. “I love art that makes me think or that uses symbols to convey a message”

Unchained (United States), Contemporary Painter Artist | Artmajeur

## **CENTRAL THEMES OF CONVERSATION**

Rick Cannon and Christopher Taylor emphasize the importance of art education in the schools, the opportunity to face challenges, the necessity of making mistakes and much more in this informative discussion. Viewers will also be able to hear Rick Cannon's story about how he became a wood turner and who and/or what he is inspired by.

## **KEY UNDERSTANDINGS**

In their conversation and exchange of ideas, Rick and Christopher hope participants will understand:

- Art Education is a core subject
- The importance of encouraging mistakes in the classroom and supporting students when they make them
- Art is great tool to build confidence in our students
- Art can be a career

## **VOCABULARY**

A **lathe** is a machine used primarily for shaping wood or metal. A wood lathe is designed specifically for woodworking applications and used to cut, drill, turn and sand wooden workpieces. It rotates the material while a sharp cutting tool is pressed against it to remove the unwanted parts to create the desired shape of the piece.

**Spalting** is a woodworking term defined as any form of wood coloration caused by fungi. Although it is primarily found in dead trees, spalting also occurs in living trees that are under stress. Weight loss and strength loss in the wood may result but the coloration, textures and patterns of spalted wood are highly sought by woodworkers.

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