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It is my belief that the best way a curator has to understanding the objects we study, write, talk, and care about is to have firsthand experience in the attempt of making—in this case, wood turning. We curators pride ourselves on our knowledge of materials, the technology of how things are created and what tools are involved, what is realized by the artist stylistically and its importance. It is rare that we actually put ourselves into the maker's situation, thinking critically about the material and how we are going to utilize it ourselves to realize a work of art. The ITE experience provided me an opportunity of a curatorial lifetime.

I take away firsthand knowledge of the inner workings of a tree, how an artist thinks critically about the wood they choose and the piece they intend to make out of it, the difficulty of wood turning and an appreciation of the skill involved to create beautiful objects—or any object, for that matter. Albeit crude, I will cherish the mortar I turned at the ITE. It symbolizes my new bond to wood and my fellow residents who helped me realize it, my ability—however amateurish—to work wood with sharp implements on a lathe, and my week as a craftsman in the company of exceptional talent, my fellow residents: Lynne Yamaguchi, Jean-Francois Delorme, Siegfried Schreiber, Peter Harrison, and Sean Ohrenich.