



# Washington Guild of Goldsmiths Newsletter

Summer Issue

2017

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## EDITOR'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the heat of summer. Many of us are participating in fine craft shows during this challenging weather – and economic conditions. Now, more than ever, we need to refresh our desire to create exciting adornments and features. We cannot forget to nourish ourselves and our spirit, as well.

For me, anyway, it's time to push out of my comfort zone and challenge myself with new techniques and workshops. Now I need to put what I've learned into practice, and it hurts a little bit, but I know it's good for me.

In this Newsletter, we, WGG members, are invited to participate in the Radical Jewelry Makeover Project by Ethical Metalsmiths. Essentially, it is an effort to recycle and re-assemble jewelry and found objects with a goal of highlighting results of creatively producing new work that is environmentally friendly and beneficial. The Project is touring the country. Artists interested in participating need to apply by August 1<sup>st</sup>.

Speaking of refreshing ideas, please forward any ideas or concepts for 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday meetings to Marla Rudnick and Jody Sachs. Please share your suggestions, as well as reports of your shows and adventures over this summer. You, our membership, have so much expertise in so many different areas, you are encouraged present a workshop that will benefit your colleagues. Again, Marla and Jody are anxious to hear from you.

This Summer issue also offers a wonderful article by Cyd Rowley with the "How To" steps to delving deeper into your artistic vision. Also included here is the final section of the "Photographing Jewelry" article by David Terao - the first part appeared in the Spring issue of the WGG Newsletter.

As the heatwave continues, I, for one, am looking forward to autumn. Don't you fall weather energizes and inspires me, in a joyful, productive spirit. We thank each member for their participation. As a volunteer group, new voices and faces enrich the Guild, and offer new opportunities for everyone.

**Sherry Terao, WGG Newsletter Editor**

## WGG MEMBERSHIP NEWS & INFORMATION

### DUES REMINDER:

Membership dues for the Washington Guild of Goldsmiths are valid for ONE calendar year (January – December) and are **subject to renewal on January 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.**

**TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP** for **2017**, please use the application form on page 11, or you can now renew online on our website, [www.washingtonguildofgoldsmiths.com](http://www.washingtonguildofgoldsmiths.com)

### **WELCOME RENEWING AND NEW MEMBERS**

#### Membership benefits:

Membership benefits include, but are not limited to: participation in monthly **“3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday” meetings** *that stir your creative juices*, receipt of **quarterly newsletters** and other **Guild e-mailings** (i.e. Calls For Entries, business opportunities, etc.), inclusion in the annual **Membership Directory** (published each year), opportunity to **participate in the biennial METALWORKS Show** sponsored by the Guild, and ability to participate (at **reduced rates**) in **workshops** offered by the Guild and Creative Metalworks School. In addition, our Guild offers a **free 1-web-page posting on our WGG website** for members in good standing. This can be used to feature several pieces of your work in addition to a brief artist statement. Submission requirements are provided on the website page.

#### Help recruit members:

We encourage you to invite other jewelry associates to participate in our activities and to join our Guild. A membership application form is included with this newsletter and is also available on our Guild web page: [www.washingtonguildofgoldsmiths.com](http://www.washingtonguildofgoldsmiths.com). Completed applications and dues payments should be mailed to our Treasurer. Questions may be addressed to our Membership Coordinator. Contact information for these individuals is provided on the application form.

#### Keep your contact information up to date:

Please remember to keep the Membership Coordinator informed of any changes to your membership information (name, address, email, etc.) to be sure that you receive all WGG mailings. You can send the information to the Membership Coordinator as shown on the application form (page 11).

#### Receiving email notices from the WGG?

To save on postage and processing time (we're all volunteers, and we haven't raised the dues in a long time), members of the WGG Board use the email method of informing members of items of interest between Newsletter publication times. If you do not yet have an email account, please set one up at your convenience. Many are free (e.g. Yahoo, gmail) and computer access is available at your public library. If you are using a “spam filter” on your own computer and have not entered the email addresses of the WGG Board members into your email directory, the notices may be directed to your email spam folder. If you delete messages in your spam folder without reviewing them first, you may miss important news items from the Guild (for example: shows and workshops you can attend, key application and membership renewal deadlines, newsletter submission reminders, etc.). Each quarterly Newsletter lists the Board members with their respective email addresses.

**Get *your* PERSONAL FREE WEB PAGE on the WGG Guild website.**

Information on how to set up a personal web page can be found at the bottom of our website's Member Information Page. Go to:

<http://www.washingtonguildofgoldsmiths.com/members/>

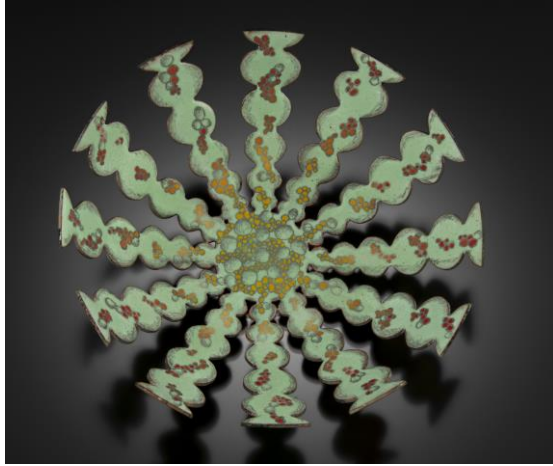
**RIGHT NOW** it is time to **UPDATE YOUR MEMBER PAGE.**

Website Coordinator: Natalie Barat [nb@nataliebarat.com](mailto:nb@nataliebarat.com) (240) 893-1505

## **MEMBER NEWS**

*WGG Members – Please let us know about your achievements, recognition and awards. It is not bragging and will certainly encourage your co-members in their artistic endeavors.*

**WGG Member, Anne Havel's piece, "Blowing Out Buys Time When You Are Drowning,"** from her Segmented Bowl Series, was acquired by the Enamel Arts Foundation Feb 2017



More of her work is being featured in the following exhibitions:

- ◆ "My Precious: An Exploration of Materiality in Contemporary Jewelry," Invitational Exhibition, at College of the Albemarle Professional Arts Gallery, Pullen Arts Center Gallery in NC. Feb-Mar 2017
- ◆ "A Women's Voice: Messages from the Jewel Box," Flux Metal Arts, Mentor, OH Mar-Apr 2017
- ◆ Enamelist Society's 16<sup>th</sup> Juried Int'l Enamel Exhibition, "Alchemy4," July 2017-Apr 2018
- ◆ Arrowmont Instructor Exhibition, Gatlinburg, TN May-July 2017
- ◆ Ohio Craft Museum, Columbus, OH Sept-Oct 2017
- ◆ National Ornamental Metals Museum, Memphis, TN Jan-Apr 2018

Also, Anne is teaching her torch firing techniques at the following locations:

May 2017 "All Fired Up: Who Knew a Torch Could Do All This!" Thompson Enamel, Bellevue, KY.

June 2017 "All Fired Up: Who Knew a Torch Could Do All This!" Idyllwild ARTS, Idyllwild, CA.

June 2017 "Enamel & Setting as Equal Partners" Charmed I'm Sure Studio, Mechanicsburg, PA.

June-July 2017 "All Fired Up: Who Knew a Torch Could Do All This!" Arrowmont, Gatlinburg, TN.

July 2017 "All Fired Up: Who Knew a Torch Could Do All This!" Touchstone Center for Crafts, Farmington, PA.

July 2017 "In the Heat of the Moment: Explore/Expand/Excel with Torch-fired Enameling," & "In the Line of Fire: Torch-fired Enameling" John Campbell Folk School, Brasstown, NC.

Aug 2017 "In the Line of Fire: Torch-fired Enameling" Society for Midwest Metalsmiths, St Louis, MO.

Aug 2017 "All Fired Up: Who Knew a Torch Could Do All This!" The Ranch, Snohomish, WA.

Oct 2017 "All Fired Up: Who Knew a Torch Could Do All This!" Thompson Enamel, Bellevue, KY.

Oct-Nov 2017 "In the Heat of the Moment: Explore/Expand/Excel with Torch-fired Enameling" Eureka Springs School of Art, Eureka Springs, AR.

Nov 2017 "In the Heat of the Moment: Explore/Expand/Excel with Torch-fired Enameling" Flux Metal Arts, Mentor, OH

March 2018 "In the Line of Fire: Torch-fired Enameling" Denver School of Metal Arts, Denver, CO.

May 2018 "In the Heat of the Moment: Explore/Expand/Excel with Torch-fired Enameling" Boulder Metalsmithing Association, Boulder, CO.

June 2018 "Enamel & Setting as Equal Partners" Charmed I'm Sure Studio, Mechanicsburg, PA.

June 2018 "All Fired Up: Who Knew a Torch Could Do All This! & In the Line of Fire: Torch-fired Enameling" Snow Farm, Williamsburg, MA.

# **WGG WORKSHOP REPORT**

Please watch your email for Workshop News that will be sent out by Sandra Zacharia. Meanwhile, Cyd offers us this great report on finding our personal artistic voice.

## **FINDING OUR ARTISTIC VOICE**

What does this mean? It means producing work that is deeply felt and personal, that connects us with some aspect of our experience of humanness and hopefully speaks to others' hearts, who connect with our art, although this last part is not a requirement. However, if we feel we have something to say with our art, we hope that others can hear it, too.

Generally speaking, *our artistic voice* manifests itself through a unique and recognizable style that is ours alone. Why do we need to find it? We don't necessarily, but finding it will deepen the pleasure and satisfaction we derive from making art. If we're doing art professionally, finding our voice will help us be successful, whether selling, exhibiting, teaching, or publishing.

### ***It's a Journey, Not a Destination***

Our unique biography is where we find the first threads leading us to our voice. The sum total of our experiences, including our earliest passions, and influences help shape our art. When I got seriously into jewelry fabrication, I looked back on my life with the realization that all things seemed to lead me to this point (e.g. "all roads lead to Rome!") and I could connect the dots in an interesting pattern. Growing up, my mother owned an antique shop, so I was steeped in the decorative arts and art history. She then became a museum curator, and watercolorist and my sister became an oil painter. I didn't realize that art was calling me, too. So I decided to become a sociologist and got a bachelors and a master's degree and landed a job in that field. I also lived abroad for many years, but, when I moved back, I decided to go to art school in Baltimore. I eventually found my way into the jewelry program there.

All of that influenced what I make now. Integrating all the different threads of our past is the key to revealing who we are, as artists. I realized that what looked like a random set of experiences have actually shaped the work I produce. I didn't leave my love of sociology at the door when I entered the jewelry studio. I'm inspired by other cultures, current and past, and how those cultures express themselves in material items. I love "ethnic" work and have collected textiles, jewelry, glassware etc. from all over the world. Lessons learned in my travels also show through the work I produce.

If you haven't connected the dots in your own unique biography, you may find it an interesting exercise. And, of course, it goes on for the rest of your life, as you read new books, see new exhibitions, visit new places which continue to shape who you are and what you want to say, hence the subtitle above: *it's a journey, not a destination*.

### ***Create Stillness***

I believe that we each have an artistic voice, if we choose to find it. But I also believe that it needs to be coaxed, nurtured, fed and watered. It starts out as a very faint thing. In order to hear and understand it, you need to be willing to create stillness.

This means that, like any type of artist, you need to find a "Room of One's Own", (a la Virginia Woolf), a place where you have no distractions, no drama, no interruptions. When I create that stillness, I use it to sketch, look at books in my art library, flip through Pinterest (although that can become a huge distraction), or meditate on my art. It's one of the things I struggle hardest to create for several reasons: **one**, *it can be uncomfortable*, like looking at a blank canvas, and **two**, it's easy to forget the value of the time spent this way, especially when you still have bills to pay, dogs to walk, deadlines to meet. But I believe that it's important and instrumental to enhancing and deepening your work.

When I look back on my life over the last ten years, I realize that the periods when I was dealing with a lot of conflict, drama, intensity and such, I was unhappy, or least content, because I couldn't locate my voice. I felt deeply anxious and frustrated. Hence, the idea of finding your voice, not just developing it, requires that you create *quiet in order to hear it*.

### ***Take Risks***

This is a biggie. For me, it can sometimes take the courage needed to jumping off a cliff, (spiritually, of course). But I know I can never succeed in finding my voice if I play it safe. So what does it mean "*to take a risk*"? This is unique for each artist, but there are some common realities to confront.

It can be scary to face situations we'd rather avoid. We may feel exposed by putting our art out in the world. We will be judged, appraised, and critiqued. This is necessary part of the territory and making art isn't for wimps. That's why we wouldn't do this, if we didn't feel passionate about it. So we need to develop strategies for coping with this anxiety, which affects different people to different degrees. Also, I have found that the more I do it, the more comfortable I become, and the more I feel I understand my artistic voice, the less daunted I am by these risks.

Taking a risk may mean going in a whole new artistic direction that's unfamiliar or in which we feel unsure. Examples might be applying to a show or exhibition for the first time. Keep the faith that everything we make or do DOES have

value, in terms of getting us to the next stage, even if we can't see it yet. Accept new results and new outcomes and give it time to grow and speak to you. Give yourself permission to "fail". We may put aside a whole body of work or make no sales at a show and have a sense of failure. But we're on a journey, and I don't believe there is such a thing "failure" in making art, just steps on the journey.

One rule of thumb I have is "Aspire to Being Uncomfortable Every Day." There are lots of opportunities for this: creating a website, writing your artist's statement, learning a new bench skill, attending a conference for the first time, attending a workshop. Each of these challenges can all put us outside our comfort zone. But this is **exactly where we need to be**.

### ***Skills vs. Originality***

Be wary of one trap that is easy to fall into. That is to keep producing the same work, without changing it up, as a way of *staying in our comfort zone*. But, repeating ourselves for the sake of reducing anxiety *leads to stale art*. Or conversely, we may produce work that's wildly different, one from the next, because we want to try everything and jump around. The body of work then is not cohesive and doesn't look like it's from the same person.

It's important to continually edit our work to keep it fresh. **Does it feel original? Or are we just relying on our skill set?** Are there aspects that detract from the power of the work? Are we in a rut? This may be a time to either go back to that stillness and listen, and/or ask someone you trust to give you a critique. Though we work alone, we're part of a community and **it's always valuable to get well intentioned, high quality feedback**.

### ***Articulate Your Intentions***

Sometimes I don't realize something about myself until I've had to express it out loud to someone. I find that really interesting. Each of us needs to be able to communicate our artistic intentions with words, as well as through our art. This is the way to help ourselves (and others) fully understand who we are as artists. Merely going through the exercise can bring a new level of awareness and freshness to what we do.

I have a page in my Apple Notes app called "Artists Statement" that I started years ago. Every time I revise it or create a new one, I add it to the end of the page. There are now about 15 to 20 statements and I'm sure I'll continue adding to it going forward. One of the most important and yet most difficult things to do is to come up with our "elevator pitch". In three sentences or less what do we make and what makes it unique, special and different? If we can't answer that, we don't understand our art as well as we should.

### ***Make a Commitment***

Finding our artistic voice involves making a commitment to ourselves, whether it's to be in the studio two days a week or five, or seven, or to enter 3 shows a year or 10. The important thing is showing up for our lives in whatever form we've committed to.

I remember when I finished taking all the semester-long jewelry fabrication classes I could in Baltimore and I set up my own studio in my basement. I felt at sea a lot of the time without the comfort of class assignments, friends, teachers etc. I felt like I melted more at the bench than I created, and I had a lot of doubts. But I forced myself to keep showing up. When I decided to rent a space outside my house I lost a lot of sleep about the expense and whether it would turn out okay. But I felt it was an important step in **proving my commitment to myself**, that I was serious about this. It's very difficult, if not impossible to find your artistic voice, if you're trying to fit it in between other life stuff **only when it's convenient**.

I find I'm a lot happier in life when I'm living with intention and I'm taking actions that are moving me closer to those intentions. For me, that involves understanding my artistic voice, which, as mentioned, is a continuous and meaningful journey.

Cyd Rowley, Metalsmith / Jeweler

## **3<sup>rd</sup> TUESDAY GATHERINGS**

### **WGG 3rd Tuesday – July**

On July 18, Cyd Rowley will be giving a slide presentation on the recent 2017 SNAG Conference. She is bringing all the handouts including the conference catalogue, postcards, marketing postcards etc. that I got at SNAG, as well as many of the trinkets she collected there.

As always, these meetings depend on input from YOU, each of the members. Our President, Marla Rudnick and our Membership Coordinator, Jody Sachs are assuming the job of planning these events. Therefore, please send your suggestions or definite offers to Marla at [marlasrud@netscape.net](mailto:marlasrud@netscape.net) or Jody at [jsachs2005@gmail.com](mailto:jsachs2005@gmail.com).

## **CERF+ GRANTS AVAILABLE**

CERF+ announces new "Get Ready" Grants to help artists working in craft disciplines safeguard their studios and protect their careers. Up to 10 grants will be awarded on a competitive basis in two grant cycles to eligible artists towards the purchase of goods or services that will have a direct impact on increasing their emergency readiness. Deadline: **August 15, 2017**. Details at

<https://cerfplus.org/news/new-artists-get-ready-grants/?org=808&vl=100&ite=511&lea=209043&ctr=0&par=1&trk=>

## **CALLS FOR ENTRIES** (exhibitions and shows to enter)

### **Deadlines** (in bold)

**August 15, 2017 - Taste of the Mountains Main Street Festival** Main Street - Madison, VA September 2, 2017

**August 12, 2017 - Arts on the Riverwalk** Downtown New Castle - New Castle, PA September 9, 2017

**September 10, 2017 – 36<sup>th</sup> Smithsonian Craft Show**, Washington, DC, April 26-29, 2018 [smithsoniancraftshow.org](http://smithsoniancraftshow.org)

**September 15, 2017 –Craft Forms Exhibit**, Wayne Art Center, Wayne, PA- [www.wayneart.org](http://www.wayneart.org) - 610-688-3553

**October 1, 2017 – Prince Georges Oktoberfest** Bowie Town Center - Bowie, MD October 14, 2017

**October 5, 2017 -- Holiday Craft Fair** Mullen Hall, St. Francis Center for Renewal - Bethlehem, PA Nov.4, 2017

**November 5, 2017 -- Kris Kringle** Charles County Fair Grounds - Laplata, MD December 8 - 10, 2017

## **ONLINE JEWELRY INFO SITES**

**GIA LIBRARY DIGITIZES RARE JEWELRY BOOKS** These works are available for free download from the GIA library's website: <https://archive.org/details/gialibrary&tab=collection>

**FREE JEWELRY DICTIONARY: CRACK THE CODE ON JEWELRY TERMS-** Do you know what a "boule" is? Have you ever heard of a collet hammer? What's the difference between iridescence and luster? There are hundreds if not thousands of terms, techniques, and tool names specific to metalsmithing and working with gemstones, and we've compiled every one we could think of into this handy downloadable and printable jewelry-making dictionary or glossary. In our free eBook, you'll learn about everything from abrasives to zirconium oxide and hundreds of terms in between. You will need to create a free account with Jewelry Making Daily to download the e-book. (Thanks to FSG Newsletter!) <http://www.jewelrymakingdaily.com/jewelry-dictionary/?a=je141024&mid=651311&rid=3647131>

**METALSMITH BENCH TALK-** Jay Whaley interviews metalsmiths on his show live Thursdays at 3pm PST. Shows are archived for your listening convenience at <http://www.blogtalkradio.com/whaleystudios>

## **CLASSIFIEDS**

**FSG (Florida Society of Goldsmiths)** now. *Website for the Florida Society of Goldsmiths has changed its name to [www.FSGmetal.org](http://www.FSGmetal.org). Start at [www.FSGmetal.org](http://www.FSGmetal.org) to become a part of the vital and vibrant community of artists, students, educators, art lovers, and innovators that together form the second largest, most diverse, nonprofit metal based guild of its kind. FSG's workshops are nationally acknowledged epicenters of growth and artistic development, including their annual Wild Acres Workshops with acclaimed teachers. Check it out!*

**SNAG (Society of North American Goldsmiths)** The Society of North American Goldsmiths, established in 1969, advances jewelry and metalsmithing by inspiring creativity, encouraging education, and fostering community. It is an international nonprofit organization that serves as the primary organization of jewelers and metal artists in North America. Members include independent studio artists, teachers, students, gallerists, collectors, curators, and writers. <http://www.snagspace.org/about>

**SAS (Society of American Silversmiths)** The Society of American Silversmiths is the go-to resource for anything related to the art and craft of silversmithing. SAS was founded in April 1989 as the nation's only organization dedicated to the preservation and promotion of silversmithing. Its Artisan members, those silversmiths who have been juried into the Society based on their outstanding technical and design skills, are provided with support, networking, and greater access to the market. Through its comprehensive Web site, SAS educates the public in silversmithing techniques, silver care, restoration & conservation, and the aesthetic value of this art form. <http://www.silversmithing.com/>

### **WGG MEMBERS:**

***Do YOU have something to sell or buy? You may find what you want among the Guild members.***

# **PHOTOGRAPHING JEWELRY – A QUICK OVERVIEW** Part 2

by David Terao

*This article was written for photographers. This is part 2 of 2; part 1 was in Spring 2017 newsletter.*

*You may recognize several pics used in this presentation, as most pieces shown are creations of WGG members.*

## **What camera settings are best for photographing jewelry?**

When shooting jewelry, it is best to use manual focus and manual exposure. By using manual focus, you have much better control over where focus is achieved. It is recommended to choose your focus point such that 1/3 of the depth-of-field lies in front of and 2/3 lies behind the critical portion of the jewelry piece to ensure that as much of the piece is in focus. It is best to use small apertures (e.g., f/11- f/32) for maximum depth-of-field. Recognize that using very small apertures (e.g., smaller than f/16) will cause diffraction blur. It is a trade-off to allow some diffraction blur while trying to get as much depth-of-field to keep the entire piece in sharp focus.

## **What other tips or advice can you offer?**

Watch out for dust (on black plastic material and on the camera sensor). When shooting, you cannot see dust on black plastic easily. Use a squeeze blower to blow off the areas around your subject just before releasing the shutter. Use a thin-gauge wire for hanging earrings or holding an object upright if it does not stand on its own. This will require some post-processing to clone out the wire in the final image. You can also use small pieces of a kneaded eraser to hold object upright by placing it between the jewelry piece and the background material. Small weights are ideal for use behind a solid piece of jewelry to keep it upright.



## **How much post-processing is used to produce the final image?**

The degree of post-processing (e.g., Adobe Lightroom, Photoshop, etc.) is a personal choice. If wire was used to position the jewelry piece, then I use Photoshop to clone out the wire. I often use Photoshop's Spot Healing Brush to clone out dust spots in the background or minor blemishes in the piece itself. Sometimes, I might use Photoshop to create a different background. I found it is best not to modify the jewelry piece or add excessive saturation to the piece that might mislead one's conception of the actual piece. Below is an example of using post-processing to enhance the background.



It is hoped that these tips are helpful in your efforts to photograph your jewelry.

## **RADICAL JEWELRY MAKEOVER PROJECT**

The Baltimore Jewelry Center is hosting the internationally recognized, community based, collaborative project called Radical Jewelry Makeover. We are excited to announce that Montgomery College has been invited to participate, and I would like to invite you to participate too! The project will begin in June 2017 and culminate in January 2018 in a exhibition/sale, with many events and programming opportunities in between. The biggest of these will be a one-day symposium held on September 17 including demos, and around 5 professional lectures relating to best practices, making strategies, and other relevant topics. This is truly a unique and amazing project to participate in. Your participation will make it even better.

What is Radical Jewelry Makeover? RJM is a traveling community mining and recycling project of Ethical Metalsmiths\* that uses donated jewelry to create an alternative to mining and manufactured jewelry. The project encourages consideration of the social and environmental impacts of mining and jewelry production. RJM draws public attention to the creativity and skills of jewelry designers, reveals the stories behind our personal collections and encourages re-consideration of our habits of consumption. Jewelers donate their time and skills to this community focused project, and the community donates the material. Radical Jewelry Makeover has reached thousands of people since it was launched in 2007 in Richmond, VA at Virginia Commonwealth University.

I would like to invite you to be one of the artists that makes new work from the "mined" material. This would include receiving a collection of material to work from which may include both fine and costume materials. You would then create at least one piece from the material to donate for the final exhibition/sale event.

There are additional ways you could participate such as assisting with sorting and appraising materials, or demonstrating a technique during one of the public education programming events that will occur during RJM. Let me know what interests you.

Radical Jewelry Makeover: Baltimore is built on the belief that all jewelry has intrinsic value and that jewelry is a powerful means of collecting and transmuting memories and narratives. By creating an egalitarian space around jewelry, we can increase connection, empathy, and understanding for both ourselves and others. Radical Jewelry Makeover: Baltimore will achieve the following goals: increase the visibility art jewelry in Baltimore and the surrounding region; increase the accessibility of jewelry making resources like the Baltimore Jewelry Center and Montgomery College to both new and established artists; create accessible opportunities for dialogue and education around jewelry; and increase community engagement around jewelry through partnerships with local arts and culture organizations.

We are excited about the potential to collaborate with you. If you would like to participate, please commit to doing so by emailing [Lucy.derickson@montgomerycollege.edu](mailto:Lucy.derickson@montgomerycollege.edu), by August 1st.

Kindest regards,

Lucy Derickson, Instructor and Coordinator  
Metalsmithing and Craft Area Department of Art  
Montgomery College, Rockville Campus



## **5 CLASSIC CASTING TIPS FROM EXPERTS**

Originally published in MJSA Journal, reproduced in Ganoksin Resources

These slow, quiet days of summer are always a good time to review your shop practices before the busy holiday season kicks into high gear. To help you prepare to successfully cast all of the pieces you hope will be big sellers this year, we've compiled some of the best casting tips that have filled these pages over the years. From easier wax carving to minimizing metal waste, these tips are bound to have you casting like a champ just in time for those holiday orders.

### **Brush Up: Drawing Patterns on Carving Wax** by Kate Wolf

When drawing a layout on carving wax, I use black brush markers, which are available from arts and crafts supply stores: If I don't like the pattern, I can wipe it off and draw it again. However, a marker's ink will tend to bead up on the wax surface. To break this surface tension, I wipe the marker across a bar of soap before I begin drawing. Now the ink will evenly cover the surface of the wax.

If you are working on darker waxes, instead of a marker, use white tempera paint with a drop of dish washing soap in it. However, make sure you wash off all of the paint before using a wax pen: Tempera paint, mixed into molten wax, can cause porosity. When the design looks acceptable, I scribe through the pattern into the wax, then fill the scribed line with the marker or paint.

### **Materials Matter** by Linus Drogs III

Variances in the chemical composition of metals and water can ruin a casting. To establish some basic control, make sure you use de-ionized water, and always measure the pH balance. With a simple pH meter, you'll want to look for a consistent reading from your water supply—rather than a particular pH number—and adjust your casting processes in accord with that consistent pH level.

If the pH in your water source changes significantly from day to day, such as from 6.9 to 7.5, and you don't know it, you'll struggle with unexplained variances in your casting output. You should also take samples and analyze your raw materials. Do they have too much oxygen or trace elements that will affect the quality of the casting? The best way to know this is to have the supplier or an outside contractor do an X-ray fluorescence (XRF) test on a sample. (You can also invest in your own small XRF machine, which can now be had for around \$15,000.) An XRF does not create a compositional profile, however. You tell the testing company what substances to look for, and it will tell you how much the metal contains in parts per million. For example, you might have sterling silver analyzed for oxygen and phosphorous content—both can contribute to poor castings. With purple gold, an extremely difficult alloy to cast, there's no room for variance in its gold and aluminum content.

An XRF for likely contaminants will also alert you to future adjustments that may be necessary as you reuse metals from previous castings. Contaminants may build up over successive castings, requiring higher ratios of fresh metal for each batch. At \$20 to \$30 per XRF test, the cost is cheap compared with the casting problems prevented.

### **Investing, the Right Weight** by Daniel Grandi

Many companies use spring-operated scales to weigh their investment in pounds or kilograms. However, these scales can often be inaccurate when measuring weights of 20 lbs. or more.

In our shop, we use a large digital scale similar to the ones used by meat departments in grocery stores. These scales are very accurate and can easily accommodate the required weights necessary for most home and commercial casters. Place a simple plastic bucket on the scale and "tare" or zero the scale (to account for the added weight), then weigh your investment according to the investment manufacturer's guidelines.

When it comes to weighing water, most investment manufacturers tell you to measure your water in cubic centimeters (cc's) or milliliters. Most casters will buy a graduated cylinder for this purpose— not realizing that they can weigh the water. In the metric system, 1 cc = 1 gram, so if you need 182 cc's of water, you will also need 182 grams. We use an inexpensive digital postal scale to weigh our water, which will measure up to 10 lbs. (over 4,500 grams) and is perfect for small shops. Weigh the water in a large plastic container (again, account for the added weight). This way, you can use a sponge to easily add or reduce water as needed, without removing the container from the scale.

# 2017 WGG BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## Officers and Coordinators

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### NEWSLETTER DEADLINES: (on the 20th of the month)

September 20<sup>th</sup> for Fall 2017  
December 20<sup>th</sup> for Winter 2018  
March 20<sup>th</sup> for Spring 2018  
June 20th for Summer 2018

**Contributed articles and suggestions for the Newsletter are ALWAYS welcome!**



# Washington Guild of Goldsmiths

## 2017 Membership Application

JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Type of Membership:  Individual One Year \$40

Full-Time Student \$20

NEW Member -or-  Renewing Member

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**ALL MEMBERSHIPS RENEW IN JANUARY - Due By Feb. 1<sup>st</sup> \***

FIRST TIME NEW MEMBERS after 6/30 pay only ½ ANNUAL Dues

Please provide the following information about yourself and your business as you would like it to appear in the WGG Membership Directory:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Business Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Website: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE CHECK HERE IF YOU WANT A HARDCOPY OF THE NEWSLETTER.**

**ALL MEMBERS RECEIVE AN EMAIL COPY OF THE QUARTERLY WGG NEWSLETTER.**

### VOLUNTEERS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME AND NEEDED

Please check those areas where you could help the Guild with its activities & programs:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Third Tuesday Activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Workshop Committee           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teach Workshops          | <input type="checkbox"/> Biennial Show                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advertise and Promotions | <input type="checkbox"/> Hospitality                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter               | <input type="checkbox"/> Contribute to the Newsletter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Website                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Advice for Artists     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Materials Supply Sources | <input type="checkbox"/> Serve on Guild Board         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> As needed, just call me  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                  |

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to the WGG and mail via USPS to:

**WGG Treasurer, Michael Brehl - 4407 29<sup>th</sup> Street Mt. Rainer, MD 20712**

Membership inquiries – Jody Sachs, Membership Coordinator, [jsachs2005@gmail.com](mailto:jsachs2005@gmail.com), h (301) 216-2272; c (301)602-2548

\*To be included in the Guild Directory

Rev. 12/9/2016



# **Washington Guild of Goldsmiths**

## **SUMMER 2017 - NEWSLETTER**

**Dated Material**

**Please Read Now**



**Washington Guild of Goldsmiths**

Sherry Terao, WGG Newsletter Editor

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