



The Washington Guild of Goldsmiths

Newsletter Fall 2023

The Washington Guild of Goldsmiths welcomes you to our community of creatives. One of its purposes is providing a means for the exchange of information and ideas, as well as educational opportunities.

In this issue of our newsletter, we pay tribute to our dear friend and longtime WGG member, Jan Maddox. In addition, we explore the carving technique and how the refined, three-dimensional forms it creates takes jewelry to a whole other level! We also explore the beautiful work of the international Latvian artist Maija Vitola-Zitmane; each piece of her jewelry is an exquisite small sculpture... And, there's more in this issue!

Photo credit: Jan Maddox- Metalwork 2016

Letter from the President

Dear WGG Members,

I want to begin by honoring Jan Maddox, who passed away early this month. She was a longtime WGG member and friend to many of us. Jan helped to establish the guild in its early days, and her enthusiasm and support were instrumental in making WGG what it is today. We will miss her.

Cooler weather is here again, and WGG has a full schedule of events. Members have been asking for more in-person gatherings, so here's our fall lineup of opportunities for getting together in person.

First, we had a wonderful first annual tools-and-materials sale and swap at Nick Barnes' house earlier this month. This event kicked off our post-summer agenda and gave us a chance to relax together, sell and swap tools, and benefit METALWORK 2024. In addition, members generously contributed tools to the Toolbox Initiative that Michael Brehl coordinates. The goal of this initiative is multifaceted: Local schools get a boost to their jewelry studios, and WGG helps to grow new generations of jewelers.

Coming soon, Dan Valencia, owner and instructor of Jewelryclassdc, is hosting three gem sales in his studio. The



sales will enable members to purchase high-quality gems at fair prices, see Dan's fully equipped studio, hobnob with guild members, and meet other jewelers in the area. Dan will also be offering a one-day workshop for WGG members before the holidays, giving us a chance to make a handcrafted gift. Keep your eyes out for forthcoming details.

In October, the guild will be voting on the president and secretary for the next two-year term. Please join our October 17 Zoom meeting at 7 pm or fill out the online ballot. You will receive more information on the voting procedure soon.

On the purely social end, our new WGG POP UPs will launch soon with a happy hour get-together, so members and friends can catch up over a glass of wine, a cup of coffee, or a soft drink. Finally, for the holidays, Louise Rothenberg has kindly offered to host our annual December party this year. You will see details on all activities in upcoming emails. See you soon!

President, *Elyse Demaray*



Jan Maddox

As a founding member of the Washington Guild of Goldsmiths and a dedicated member for over 40 years, Jan Maddox was a beloved friend and colleague of many WGG members and the artistic community more broadly. She worked closely with both the Guild's biennial METALWORK show and the biennial Creative Crafts Council shows. Jan described her work as classical – intellectual, romantic, emotional.

As an art major at the University of Nebraska, Jan took a jewelry class almost by accident. She had focused her studies on ceramics and painting, but neither quite suited her. Needing an extra class, she found a jewelry class offered at night and discovered a whole new world of tools, vocabulary, and materials. Her first piece was a cabochon setting in a ring, and she never looked back. In graduate school at Indiana University (IU), she studied under Alma Eikerman, founder of IU's exceptional metals program and created a line of jewelry that "didn't look like it came out of a jewelry store."



Photo credit: Jan Maddox,
Metalwork 2010

1967 found Jan teaching at Montgomery College where she set up art classes. Over the next 25 years, Jan taught classes in art appreciation, two- and three-dimensional design, jewelry, and general crafts. Komelia Okim, longtime WGG member and colleague of Jan's remembers: "Jan Maddox was very kind and enthusiastic for teaching. After her retirement from the college, she continually loved doing metal art jewelries with many innovative techniques and actively exhibited while taking care of the administrative functions for several years at Bethesda's Waverly Street

Gallery.” Jan also supported the Renwick Alliance with fundraising efforts and activities over several decades and joined Pleiades in 1989 when they were exhibiting in the Garrett Park Town Hall.

Perhaps most importantly, Jan Maddox supported her students and fellow metalworkers both emotionally and professionally. Professional metalworker Chris Shea remembers her as both a mentor and colleague:

“When I came to DC as a novice metalsmith trying to build a career, Jan Maddox was someone I could turn to for frank advice and meaningful encouragement that truly made a difference in my life. Mostly though, I’ll remember Jan as a person who had not a whiff of nonsense about her — in the most wonderful and refreshing way. To me, Jan always had the wry smile of a person who understood the absurdity of life and wasn’t having any of it. To see Jan smiling at me across the room at even the stuffiest museum event was to feel a bit of the pretension draining away and warmth and comfort taking its place. I’ll miss that and I’ll miss Jan.”

We will all miss Jan Maddox, but her beautiful jewelry and her unending dedication to furthering art and artists will carry on her legacy.

Third Tuesdays Virtual Conversations Carol-lynn Swol, *Third Tuesday* Coordinator

We had three terrific *Third Tuesday* artist conversations since our last newsletter: Biba Schutz, Susan Chin, and Holly Anne Mitchell. We have two more artists scheduled this season, as well as the WGG Annual Meeting (and elections) and our December Holiday Party.

Please mark your calendars for:

- **September 19:** Arthur Hash
- **October 17:** Annual Meeting and Elections
- **November 21:** Jamie Obermeier
- **December 19:** Holiday Party

These virtual gatherings are a wonderful way to engage with our colleague metalsmiths and jewelers. Enjoy these casual presentations from the comfort of home with a favorite snack or beverage. Consider our *Third Tuesday* virtual conversations as an engaging balm in what may be a busy month.

Please send questions or comments my way via 3rdtuesday@washingtonguildofgoldsmiths.com. Did you miss a *Third Tuesday* or wish to rewatch one? Please check your emails for the YouTube link to view past conversations.



Photo credit: Arthur Hash

Meet the Maker

On July 15, three of our members participated in the Creative Craft Council’s (CCC’s) new event, called “Meet the Maker.” Tina Chisena, Anna Nava-Leiss, and Jenny Peng Windheim demonstrated some of the jewelry techniques they use to create their work in enameling, etching, and forming, respectively. Each guild that participates in the CCC had its own “Meet the Maker” day to introduce visitors to the artists in the show and to show the processes involved in making fine crafts. WGG made membership benefits and sign-up readily available for anyone interested in becoming a WGG member. It paid off with two new WGG members. **Keep spreading the word!**



Photos credit: Andrew Windheim

Member Spotlight

Lucy Louise Derickson is an educator and an artist. She grew up in Wisconsin and got her Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) degree from University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM), along with a K-12 teaching certification. She spent two years teaching elementary and high school art before moving to Richmond, VA, to work towards her Master of Fine Arts (MFA) degree with a focus on metalsmithing at Virginia Commonwealth University in the Department of Craft and Material Studies. She left for DC immediately after graduate school to accept her current position at Montgomery College as the coordinator of the Jewelry & Metalsmithing/Craft area on the Rockville campus. Read on to find out more about Lucy's artistic journey. Also visit Lucy's fascinating website (<https://lucyderickson.com>) and follow her on these Instagram pages: [@Lucyderickson](#), [@MC_Metals](#), and [@ethicalmetalsmiths](#).



Vessel Series 4

The pieces in this series create challenges for those who attempt to use them.

Made: 2010

Photos credit: Lucy Louise Derickson



Potato Root Rings

In part a reaction to the isolation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, this most recent series includes jewelry objects that have been neglected and have grown their own roots.

Made: 2022

Lucy shares her journey: From a young age, I have had a fascination with objects; and, as a child, my hands were always busy making things and exploring new materials. As a young adult, I attempted my first artistic business as a lampworker, creating items out of borosilicate glass. After a few years, I decided a formal art education would help me take the next step. When I was finally introduced to metalsmithing at UWM, my work became more conceptually focused, and I began to explore object theory and functionality through a number of vessel series. I enjoyed laborious processes, such as wax carving, forming, spinning. I also developed a particular love for large scale soldering.

Fast forward to the present day, in my studio practice I create a world of objects and devices that call attention to our human tendencies. More specifically, I investigate how objects allow us to experience the world and extend our senses by influencing and exciting our interests, inquisitive nature, habits, and memories. For example, my "Surrogate Devices" expel fabricated scent associations related to the habits of my parents, such as vintage dryer sheets or a mix of cigarettes

and cough drops.

In my most recent work, I have been using cast potato roots to create a commentary on the objects in our life that get ignored or neglected. Starting with a collection of silver rings, I attempt to provoke empathy by showcasing neglected objects that have grown their own roots.

My studio time is very limited since becoming a full-time educator. I'm very dedicated to my position and put most of my time into managing the Montgomery College metals studio and course offerings. Recently, I have been building up the noncredit course offerings in an effort to create a place of community and continued learning for the area. Additionally, I am an active volunteer and board member of the nonprofit organization, Ethical Metalsmiths. I manage a number of their educational programs, including their upcoming webinar, International State of Practice.

[Find out more here!](#)

The Best Smell 1986-1992

These pieces store and displace the smell of laundry. The device contains dryer sheets my mother used when I was young enough to be delighted to find the mysterious, scented foam squares hidden in my clean clothes.

Made: 2013



Only a Year to Go, Folks!

METALWORK 2024

**Heads Up! Put It On Your To-Do List!
Keep It In Mind! Take Part! Volunteer!**

Dates: August – September, 2024

Venue: Sarah Silberman Art Gallery at
Montgomery College, Rockville Campus

Coordinator: Nick Barnes

email: WGGMETALWORK2024@gmail.com

text: 301-641-1503

Planning meetings for jurying, related workshops, and show publicity are underway as I type this. If you have volunteered for duty in your membership application, I will be spending the Fall contacting and talking to you about what you can do to make METALWORK 2024 a success.

If you can't wait to get involved, please get in touch at our new METALWORK2024 email address below. Everybody can help!

Email: WGGMETALWORK2024@gmail.com

Help Needed with..

LINKED 2024

**Washington Guild of Goldsmiths (WGG)
Educational Scholarship Fund**

Your design and organizing skills can be used to great effect for this important event.

To get involved with Linked 2024, contact wggeduawards@gmail.com

The WGG LINKED necklace is a direct way for members to pay it forward with their time, design skills, and philanthropy to raise funds for the WGG Educational Scholarship Award. The scholarship is granted to three winning entries from local metal arts schools in the Washington metropolitan area.

This year's awards will be sponsored in part by Tevel at Allcraft USA.

The necklace will be displayed and auctioned as part of METALWORK 2024.

International Feature



Maija Vitola-Zitmane

Photos credit: Maija Vitola-Zitmane

WGG: Please tell us a bit about yourself! For example, when did you first realize you wanted to become a jewelry designer?

Maija: Growing up in a family of artists, I have been interested in art since early childhood. I've felt a strong impulse to make things with my hands since I was a kid.

For a long time, I was infatuated with graphic art due to its delicacy and technical possibilities. For a period of time, I soul-searched and expressed myself in different fields. I studied iconography and worked in a sculpture workshop. My interest in jewelry design developed only in recent years. Actually, I became a jewelry artist by accident. I decided to study something new, so I chose metal design. But, at the same time, I discovered a new chapter in my life.

I acquired bachelor's and master's degrees at the Art Academy of Latvia in the Department of Metal Design, where I got enthralled with metal and realized the three-dimensional enchantment of it. Making jewelry and working with metal enraptured me because of the possibilities this material provides, as well as the incredible plasticity of its forms. The impulse to express myself and to try something new has grown stronger over the years, and I have applied it to my works. Each piece of my jewelry is a small sculpture.

I continue working in this sector because of the creative process. Creating new works is my inner need without which I cannot imagine my daily life. It is a set of feelings and thoughts that make up my spiritual growth.

WGG: Tell us about your choice of materials: camel bone, ebony wood, buffalo horn, silver.

Maija: I love working with natural materials, such as bone, wood, and horn. I have widened my experience in this area for the past few years. For me, it's important to have the experience of feeling materials before giving them form. Wood is a material with its own tactile texture and temperature; and, sometimes, with small cracks, it adds something to the process. It reminds me that I'm not in control of everything; there can be some kind of contingency that I don't expect.



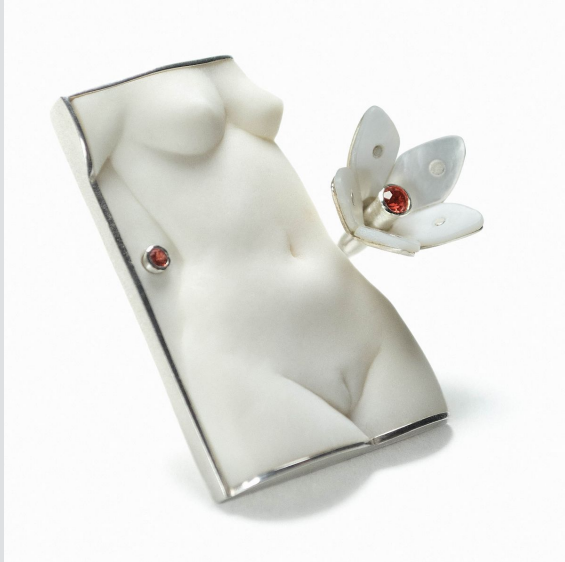
Material is very important to me, but the choice of material depends on the purpose of the work and how I want to translate my thoughts or ideas into the final objects. For example, bone itself has been a part of wildlife, so it always maintains a feeling of life and soul as it has been, in a sense, a life carrier, which attracts me.

WGG The carving process must be intricate and fascinating. Could you please give us an idea on how it's done?

Maija Creating jewelry for me is a beautiful, creative, and time-consuming process. Since I work at home, my studio and living space are one and the same. For me, this is the best option, because

there are no strict working hours and everything I do—sketching, carving objects or just listening to music, or browsing through art books—is all part of my working process.

I like to feel the material in my hands, slowly sculpting it. I know what I want to create, but it's more of a rough idea of how it should look like in the end. For me, it's all about the connection between my mind and hands. It is only classic carving or sculpting from a block of wood or camel bone using very simple tools, such as an engraving stichel, files, and sandpaper. I think there can never be a replacement for the human brain and hand skills. When I'm carving material by hand it feels like the material tells its own story, allowing me to create works that are unique and sculptural representations of my world. Over the years, I found out that I really enjoy making works that are difficult and time consuming; I have found it for myself to be like some kind of meditation.



WGG: What is the most valuable thing you learned over the years working in the field?

Maija: Be honest when creating new pieces of work. Don't think about whether others will like it or not. The most important thing is that what you do goes along with your inner self. I would like to think that I put a small piece of my soul in every one of my pieces.

WGG: Who have been your biggest mentors in this industry, and what is the best advice they have ever given you?

Maija: I don't have mentors in this industry. I prefer to look outside of the jewelry field and try to find things and artists that infatuate me in other art fields, such as sculpture or graphic art. I admire the quality of the greatest sculptors and of ancient Japanese graphic art due to its delicacy and technical possibilities. Growing up in a family of artists, I have been interested in art since early childhood. I think my parents have been my biggest mentors, always understanding and supportive.

WGG: Where do you go for inspiration?

Maija: On one hand, inspiration for my work is the course of a human life. On the other hand, it's my own experience and feelings, my confession.

Through my work, I try to show values that I believe in and what is important to me, like love, which is the first feeling that we meet at the beginning of our life. It is the force that leads us and the foundation of our life's comprehension. The sensual intimate message and technical perfectionism are equally important to me. There have always been many symbols in my works; this is the way I express my inner feelings. But, at the same time, I leave space for interpretation, and each viewer is invited to create his or her own story.

WGG: What advice would you give to new artists who want to start a career in jewelry design?

Maija: Don't be afraid to be different. When you believe in what you do by yourself, go on and just be yourself.



The Art of Carving and Engraving in Jewelry

The Jewellery Editor

Carving an artwork in gems: An ancient art form that requires great skill and technique, gem carving adds a whole new level of sculptural detail to jewellery

17 October 2015 by Ase Anderson

<https://www.thejewelleryeditor.com/jewellery/article/carving-artwork-gems/>

“The line between art and jewellery has always been blurred, and carved gemstones are a perfect example of how the two worlds continue to collide. These miniature sculptures, carefully crafted from different types of gemstone, add incredibly intricate detail to a piece of jewellery...”

Photo credit: Pushkar ring from the Étourdissant Cartier high jewellery collection in white gold with carved mandarin garnets, carved tsavorite garnets, carved tanzanites, cabochon-cut opals and brilliant-cut diamonds.



How Bone Carvers In India Are Keeping A Prehistoric Art Alive | Still Standing

Youtube

Video credit: Insider Business
Septemer 3/2021

“Bone carving is an ancient art form popularized by royals in India around the 16th century. More recently, a shrinking market and scarcity of materials have pushed many carvers away from the craft. Jalaluddin Akhtar and his son Akheel are determined to keep the craft alive in Lucknow.”



Lakota Buffalo Horn Artist Kevin Pourier

Youtube

Video credit: Today's wild west
June 3/ 2022

“Lakota Artist Kevin Pourier transforms buffalo horns into beautiful works of art - in this excerpt from Today's Wild West!”



Forging Ahead...



Jim Cohen's book, *Modern Judaica: Today's Makers, Today's Sacred Objects*, was published this spring (2023) by Schiffer Books. The book presents interviews Jim, a WGG member, conducted with more than 50 Judaica makers from around the world—19 of whom are metalsmiths—about why they make Judaica and what their works mean to them. The transcribed and edited interviews are accompanied by more than 250 full color photographs. The book is available from Amazon, local booksellers, and Jim (<http://jimcohenjudaica.com>). The book also has an Instagram page (@cohenmodernjudaica), in which one image a day from the book is posted with information about the work.



Nick Barnes will be teaching at The Art League School in Alexandria, Virginia, through June 2024. After June 2024, the school hopes to be relocating to its new forever studios.

Nick will also be teaching a series of in-studio classes at Montgomery College for the fall 2023 and for the spring and summer 2024. To check out the classes, on the PDF of the *Montgomery College*

Learning opportunities:

Looking for classes or workshops to hone or expand your skills? The WGG Newsletter is interested in publishing educational opportunities for guild members in the DC, Maryland, and Virginia area (aka, the DMV). The listing below is not at all exhaustive; it's just a start. In addition to the name of the venue, it includes (if available) the studio head or main instructor, as well as the website address so you can find out more.

If you teach or can recommend other places/instructors in the DMV, email us at wggnewsletter@washingtonguildofgoldsmiths.com to include in future issues of the newsletter. We also invite you to provide a short comment about your recommendation to publish with the listing. We think guild members would find what you have to say very helpful. And, if you have experience with any of the opportunities listed here, let us know!

Baltimore Jewelry Center: [click](#) here.

JewelryClassesDC: Daniel Valencia, [click](#) here.

Joy of Glass: Merrilee Harrigan (WGG member), [click](#) here.

Montgomery College Jewelry and Metalsmithing: Lucy Louise Derickson [click](#) here.

SilverWorks Studio and Gallery: Blair Anderson, [click](#) here.

Wear Ever Jewelry: Jennifer Jordan Park (WGG member), [click](#) here.

Events in the Area!



The poster for the 35th Annual Art Jewelry Show features a collage of jewelry images. On the left, a necklace is displayed. In the center, a circular inset shows a close-up of a ring. On the right, a set of seven cylindrical pendants with perforated patterns is shown. The text is arranged in a clean, modern layout with a yellow background for the bottom half.

PLEIADES
EXHIBIT & SALE

**35TH ANNUAL
ART JEWELRY SHOW**
NOVEMBER 4 & 5, 11AM - 5PM
THE MANSION AT STRATHMORE
10701 ROCKVILLE PIKE
NORTH BETHESDA, MD 20852

FREE ADMISSION
FREE PARKING AT THE MANSION
ADDITIONAL FREE PARKING
IN THE GROSVENOR-STRATHMORE
METRO GARAGE

We are a sisterhood of Metro DC area jewelers who offer one another support, knowledge, and opportunities to showcase our artwork. The group was founded in 1985 when seven women came together to create the Pleiades Art Jewelry group, taking the name from the Seven Sisters of Greek myth and the Orion star cluster. During our annual autumn exhibit and sale, artists from the local area and beyond participate. Many of our members and guests are represented in private collections, galleries, and museums, including the Renwick Museum of Contemporary Art in Washington, DC.

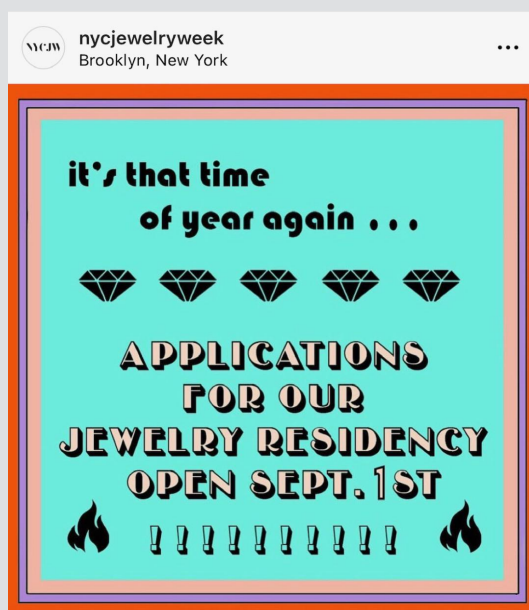
For more information, click [here](#), or email us at info@pleaidesartjewelry.com

Come discover 77 local artists showing their work in 31 homes/studios around Chevy Chase, MD, and Washington, DC. Stroll, bike, or drive around to see the art and meet friends at the most talked about event in the area! Maps with the locations and the artists' names/media will be available at local businesses soon. Check out the passport on the map to win great prizes! Founded in 2018, Ch/Art is a lively, growing, and supportive "out of the box" nonprofit community arts organization. Its artists offer work in a wide range of media: painting, sculpture, jewelry, pottery, ceramic art, photography, fabric art, and mixed media.

For more information about the Art Walk, click [here](#). Follow Ch/Art on Instagram [@chevy_chase_artists](#) to meet the artists and their work.



More events...



Would you like WGG to feature your work here? Get in touch with us!

We want to continue featuring our members, their work, achievements, recognition, and awards! So if you are interested, please send a brief paragraph about yourself (250 words or less) and a photo of your work to wggnewsletter@washingtonguildofgoldsmiths.com.

We are so excited for you!

Not a WGG member? Join us today!

The Washington Guild of Goldsmiths is dedicated to furthering knowledge and interest in all things metal. We welcome jewelers, metalsmiths, artisans and other interested individuals. Join our lively group to share ideas and techniques and to improve your skills. For more information, click below.

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