

SOFA Right Around the Corner And We'll Be There

The Art Jewelry Forum is proud to sponsor Tina Rath as our lecture speaker this November at SOFA/Chicago. Tina's topic will be: Lineage: Drawings from Western Art History: Looking at aristocratic portraiture from the 16th Century with its relevance and thoughts on how it translates into her current work. Tina is an enthusiastic speaker and her current work is fascinating. It should be a great lecture.

Another lecture that our members won't want to miss is Southern Artists - Voices of a New Generation by Mary Douglas, curator, Mint Museum of Craft + Design, Charlotte, NC. A look at some artists working in the southern states today, with an emphasis on those in the Mint's collection, whose practice will be contextualized with older generations and traditional craft of the region. Mary will be speaking to our group on November 5th at noon.

SNAG is also sponsoring 4 lectures this year:

- Art Jewelry: Dimensions of Intimacy. Speaker: Tracey Rosolowski. The variety of ways that contemporary artists exploit jewelry's intimacy with the body - from sensual statement to visions of the "functional body."
- Object Lessons: Collecting, Corting and Fisual Display, and its Relationship to Making Art. Speaker: Kathleen Browne. Kathleen will explore the relationship between what artists collect and the work they produce.
- From Jewelry to Holloware to Teapots. Speaker: Billie Jean Thiede. A discussion of the influences and experiences that have led to her recent metalwork.
- Christina Y. Smith. Speaker: Christina Y. Smith. A discussion of the way in which poliics, both national and personal, inspire the stories depicted in her brooch, container and teapot forms.

As you can see, jewelry and metals will be heavily represented at the SOFA/Chicago Lecture Series. Please refer to the SOFA brochure for dates, times and lecture rooms.

Save this Date!

SNAG has announced the dates for their 2000 Conference in Boston. Mark your calendars now for March 8 through March 11. The conference title is "The Status of the Hand." AJF members Libby and JoAnne Cooper of Mobilia Gallery will be putting together several events around the conference, and AJF's first Emerging Artist Award will be given at this conference.

JoAnne writes us from the East Coast: We are both looking forward to seeing the Art Jewelry Forum in March 2000. Mobilia Gallery is planning two exhibitions to coincide with "The Status of the Hand," The two shows are "Structure, Symbol, and Substance: The Power of Jewelry" and "Boston Tea: A Party." The first exhibition will focus on contemporary art jewelry. The second will explore the possibilities of the teapot form, using innovative forms, techniques and materials. We are planning to have an opening reception for this event, with slide presentations by some of the participating artists. Mary will be speaking to our group on November 5th at noon.

Sandy Grotta Collection

AJF members were treated to an exquisite day in the New Jersey countryside at the home of Sandy and Lou Grotta, where Sandy gave us a guided tour of her jewelry and then modeled several pieces for us. This is just one of the valued membership benefits - an inside look at collections not available to the general public. Back at SOFA N.Y., the AJF sponsored a panel discussion moderated by David McFadden, Chief Curator of the American Craft Museum, to a capacity crowd.



A Woman of Many Parts: an interview with Ramona Solberg

by Karen Lorene, owner of Facere Jewelry Art Gallery



We meet for an early morning interview at Ramona Solberg's condominium near Lake Washington in Seattle. The breakfast table is set with an abundance of fresh strawberries, lemons, powdered sugar and jam as

garnishments to the Dutch Babies Ramona is about to prepare. As I wait, the room filling with the rich smell of melting butter, I have a chance to take in the visual feast that surrounds me. On every wall and on every surface, reside masks, sculptural objects, prints and paintings. These exotic items give witness to Ramona Solberg's adventuresome life of travel, her excellent collecting eye, her generous friends and the wonderful system of barter that has allowed her to occasionally trade her exceptional jewelry for equally exceptional works of art.

Behind the kitchen in the family room, is her jeweler's bench surrounded by cubicles filled with buttons and beads and talismen of every sort, those items that find their way into the jewelry that Ramona has made for the last sixty plus years. We eat. We catch up on news and then we proceed with our interview.

Q: You have been a major influence on jewelers such as Ron Ho, Kiff Slemmons and Laurie Hall. Talk of those mentors who influenced you.

The people you mentioned are all dear friends and I must say that we have influenced each other and supported each other for many years. It has never been a one-way street.

The people that have influenced me the greatest have been varied and not always directly teachers. Probably the most obvious and direct influence is Ruth Penington. She taught me at the University of Washington, encouraged me to take more jewelry classes and later we taught together. My bead necklaces probably show the most direct influence from Ruth.

Beads were always a great interest of mine, both from travel and from family (my father traded with Indians in the Dakota's and as a child I remember the pleasure and excitement of Indian bead work he gave me). Working silver with beads was how I originally started and to this day part of my work is still a combination of ancient and modern beads along with the beads I construct. I have never forsaken this first love which Ruth Penington encouraged me to pursue.

My sister was equally important to me. She is twelve

years older than I and from the very beginning I remember her as being artistic and smart! She inspired me to always do better. She was more talented than I and when I went to school I had to somehow meet the standards she set. She recently retired from a gallery in Ellensburg, Washington, where she was the volunteer director for thirty years.

Another person who had a great influence on me was my father. He collected. He collected Indian artifacts and had a variety of artistic interests. My mother was a painter and she always encouraged me to pursue art as a career.

Q: Of all the art forms, what made you choose metal? Jewelry art?

When I was a student, Ruth Penington gave me an "A" in my first jewelry class. She was a tough grader, so this was enough encouragement to take more metal classes and eventually get an MFA in metalwork.

Q: How would you describe your work?

People think of my work primarily as "found object." I have done many pieces (almost always necklaces) which include found objects. The use of dominos, and Chinese gambling pieces that look like dominos, became a prominent theme in my work. Many of these gaming pieces came from my early travels to India and the Orient. Once, I bought a whole basket of dominos at the Seattle Goodwill for about 35 cents each. I gave them away to all my jeweler friends. At one time when Ron Ho, Kiff Slemmons, Laurie Hall and I had a show together we each made a domino piece and they were vastly different.

I still use dominos. Compasses are another 'totem', you might say, that are connected to my work. I have also cast many pieces and to this day love to see the earlier work I did with cast rabbits, birds and small toys. One of my favorites was a variation on a theme I did called 'Crackerjack Choo-choo' using castings from the plastic train piece in a Cracker Jack box.

However, I don't want anyone to think I just do found object work. I've spent equal time using beads, both those which I make and those which I have purchased on my travels. In the bead series there are my 'romantic' necklaces and my more ethnic necklaces. The 'romantic' necklaces tend to include gemstones such as moonstones or garnets with cast or fabricated floral designs. I guess I should also mention my 'amber' series which seem to be in great demand, which is good because I have enough amber to probably last me my life time!

Q: What advice do you have for collectors?

First, buy what you like! Second, wear your jewelry! Third, realize that your collection will need a home someday, other than the one it has presently with you.

Become aware of those museums who will honor the gifting of your collection. I have already donated pieces to the Tacoma Art Museum by Kiff Slemmons, Ron Ho, Laurie Hall and myself. I am presently working on a major piece of my own that will be purchased by the endowment at the Tacoma Art Museum that carries my name, an endowment generously bestowed by another jeweler and collector here in the northwest, Flora Book.

Q: What advice do you have for new jewelers?

Get good tools. Start working. If you don't know the techniques, get books, like the Tim McCreight series. Don't give up!

Q: Any final words you would like to add?

I think my work is consistent. I'm happy making the type of jewelry I do using a variety of materials, whether found or precious or fabricated or cast. It pleases me that people are still interested in what I do!

Newsletter News

With this issue of the AJF Newsletter, Susan Cummins passes the editorial baton to Pat Rodimer. The Art Jewelry Forum owes Susan a huge debt of gratitude for her work in sustaining and growing this important voice for our organization. Bruce Metcalf will continue to coordinate the Calendar portion of the newsletter.

Call for Entry Goes Out AJF's Emerging Artist Award

With the call for entries now in the mail, another major milestone has been reached in the Art Jewelry Forum's goal of presenting its first Emerging Artist Award in the spring of 2000.

Applications are open to makers of art jewelry who have not been a featured artist in a commercial gallery; who are currently taking classes (must finish school by August 2000), and to those who aren't now taking classes but have or shortly will enter the professional world. The deadline for applications is January 8, 2000. The \$1,000 award plus a year membership in SNAG will be presented at the SNAG 2000 Conference in Boston.



Madeline K. Albright (Center)

Appreciation from Helen Drutt

The Art Jewelry Forum co-sponsored "Brooching it Diplomatically: A Tribute to Madeline K. Albright" which ran at The American Craft Museum through August 8. Curated by AJF member Helen Drutt, the exhibition was a hit, even getting coverage on CNN. Helen wrote us to express her appreciation for our support. Additionally, she wrote: "Madeline Albright attended the venue in New York. Recently, I received a letter in which Madeline stated that 'the jewelry was interesting, beautiful and even thought-provoking...it was fabulous!' How wonderful that her presence and interest in jewelry could bring global attention to the field."

This exhibition has now moved on to The Contemporary Museum in Honolulu through November 7 and in December appears at the Philadelphia International Airport Exhibitions Program, Terminal C/D.

Yes! Sign me up for the Art Jewelry Forum

NAME _____ STREET _____
CITY, STATE, ZIP _____
PHONE (Day) _____ (Evening) _____ (Fax) _____

- ___ \$135 Single
- ___ \$175 Dual/Family
- ___ \$200 AJF Single/SFC&FAM Dual Sponsor
- ___ \$225 AJF Dual/SFC&FAM Dual Sponsor

All membership categories both Art Jewelry Forum and the San Francisco Craft & Folk Art Museum annual dues and are fully tax deductible. Sponsors are able to participate in approximately 10 special lectures and tours of artist studios and private collections each year in the SF Bay Area.

___ Send all AJF mailings & minimum SFC&FAM mailings ___ Send all AJF mailings and all SFC&FAM mailings
Make check payable to: AJF of the SFC&FAM. Mail to Art Jewelry Forum, 38 Miller Ave., Mill Valley, CA 94941
For more information, phone the San Francisco Craft & Folk Art Museum at (415) 775-0991

CALENDAR

Arkansas Arts Center 501-371-4000

MacArthur Park, 9th and Commerce
Little Rock, AK 72203

"Beyond the Obvious: Rethinking Jewelry"
January 23 - February 27.

Susan Cummins Gallery 415-381-1512

12 Miller Avenue
Mill Valley, CA 94941

Petra Class "Mons Aureolus - Mons Adamas"
jewelry, October 5-30. Keith Lewis "Uncover" -
jewelry, November 2 - December 4. "The
Shadow of Memory" - a group show, December
7 - 31.

De Novo 650-327-1256

250 University Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94301

"Canadian Gold Show" through November 30;
"Stephen Dixon, New Work", November 6 -
December 31". Artist present at November 6
opening, from 12-6.

Helen Drutt Gallery 215-735-1625

1721 Walnut Street, 2nd floor
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Manfred Bischoff through October 23; Gallery
Group plus new works by Dobler, Pavan and
Martinazzi, November 6 - 27; David Watkins,
December 4 - January 22, 2000.

Facere Jewelry Art 206-624-6768

1420 Fifth Avenue #1108
Seattle, WA 98101

"Encore" show opening October 8 of works by

13 previously shown artists with lecture at 4 p.m.,
reception at 5; through October 24.
"Semi-annual Antique Show and Lecture" on
November 5 by Christie Romero, author of
Warman's Jewelry's (2nd Edition); 4 p.m. lecture,
tickets \$12. November 6 clinic with Christie and
Karen Lorene from 1-4 p.m. Open to public.
"Holiday Artist Show and Ornament Giveaway",
December 1, from 5-7 p.m. with 27 artists repre-
sented and a dessert buffet. Ornament giveaways
to those who RSVP and attend.

JewelersWork 202-293-0249

2000 Pennsylvania Avenue,
NW, Washington, D.C. 20000

"Midnight Sun" new jewelry by Barbara
Seidenath, October 8-29; "Ski Pins" by Pavel
Opocensky from November 12 - December 3.

Mobilia Gallery 617-876-2109

358 Huron Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138

"New Work by Katen Paust" beaded jewelry
through September 31; "New Jewelry by Suzan
Rezac", October 16 - November 13; "50 Years of
Studio Jewelry" Presenting a retrospective as
well as new work by several art jewelers.
November 20 - December 31

The San Francisco Craft & Folk Museum

415-775-0991

Landmark Building A, Fort Mason
San Francisco, CA

"Beyond the Obvious: Rethinking Jewelry" from
October 23 through January 2, 2000.

The Society of Arts and Crafts

617-266-1810

175 Newbury Street

Boston, MA 02116

"Polymer Clay" from November 13 - January 2,
2000 presents a wide range of work such as
jewelry, furniture, purses and sculpture by artists
from across the country.

Toledo Museum of Art 419-255-8000

2445 Monroe St. at Scottwood Avenue
Toledo, OH

"Beyond the Obvious: Rethinking Jewelry" from
January 23 through February 27, 2000. A perma-
nent jewelry gallery has been added to the
Museum as a natural complement to its collec-
tion of metalwork. Particular focus has been
placed on items manufactured between 1800
and the present. Pieces on exhibit are expected
to rotate as the collection expands.

Velvet da Vinci 415-626-7478

508 Hayes Street

San Francisco, CA 94102

"Sweden/USA Exhibition" - the first such show in
over 20 years - opens October 13-November 21.
This is an exchange exhibition of contemporary
jewelry and metalwork from leading artists in
Sweden and the U.S. The exhibition coincides with
the annual conference of the Art Jewelry Forum
also to be held in San Francisco in October.

ajf

Art Jewelry Forum
38 Miller Avenue, Ste. 214
Mill Valley, CA 94941



The deadline date for receiving
material for the next issue of the
newsletter is January 4. Please
send your contributions directly
to Pat Rodimer, 59 Webster
Street, San Francisco, CA 94117.
If you have any questions about
this publication, you may call Pat
at 415-626-7755.