

ajf ART JEWELRY FORUM news

by Jane Shannon

My Philadelphia Story:

An AJF Newcomer Describes our 2002 Tour

Last November, as AJF members would meet each morning in the Sofitel hotel lobby, we created a virtual art jewelry exhibit that changed daily, or even more frequently, as we dressed for dinner. It was fascinating to see such a range of jewelry on real people instead of in showcases. This daily bit of excitement was just one of many pleasant surprises in store for me.

Each day offered multiple new wonders, and absolutely every aspect of this tour was a delight. Since this was my first AJF tour, let me share some impressions and memories with you.

For starters, I was most impressed with the easy camaraderie of our group—a mix of interesting people from throughout the country who make, sell, and buy (or, like me, want to buy) contemporary art jewelry. Plus, there were so many feasts for the eyes, as well as so much to learn—in schools, in the homes we visited where we enjoyed such extraordinary hospitality, and with the artists we met.

There were real feasts, too, featuring food from around the world, culminating with a Saturday night dinner at Tangerine, rated one of the top 100 restaurants in the country. On an individual culinary note, **Elizabeth Shypertt**, of Velvet DaVinci in San Francisco, enjoyed her first genuine Philadelphia cheese steak sandwich.



ERIC BLESSEOR

University of the Arts

STUDENT WORK AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ARTS (FORMERLY THE PHILADELPHIA COLLEGE OF ARTS) WAS A REAL TREAT.

And, yes, gentle reader, if you missed this tour, you missed superb shopping—at The Philadelphia Museum Craft Show, directly from talented artists, and in local galleries like the Snyderman/Works Gallery, owned by tour hosts **Ruth and Rick Snyderman**.

Each day, Ruth escorted our group of 22, and here are just a few highlights of the adventures she and Rick so carefully planned, and we so thoroughly enjoyed.

Going back to school: We visited two prestigious schools known for producing talented artists in many fields. **Sharon Church** presented an overview of the metals program at the

Philadelphia College of Art, while **Stanley Lechtzin** and his associates did the same at Tyler School of Art. In both schools, we saw innovative work by both students and professors. In particular, Tyler student **Jennifer Stoltis** impressed me with her talent, poise, and innovative jewelry—all of her flexible pieces change depending on how the wearer wants to put them on.

continued on page three

EMERGING ARTIST AWARD CALL FOR ENTRIES GOES OUT: AWARD AMOUNT INCREASED FOR SECOND TIME

The AJF will grant its 4th "Emerging Artist Award" in 2003.

The award will be a cash award of \$2000 and a year's membership to SNAG. The award will be announced at SOFA Chicago, October 16-19.

Jurors for the AJF EMERGING ARTIST AWARD 2003:

Nancy Worden—Northwest Jewelry Artist, teacher, curator, collector; **Jo Lauria**—Independent curator and scholar; former Decorative Arts curator of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; and **Mia McElDowney**—dependent curator, collector, CERF trustee, AJF trustee, and member of *ArtTable*.

AJF San Francisco Trip Update: Change in Plans

Since mailing out trip information/registration for the proposed San Francisco trip in conjunction with SNAG in late May, we have heard from many of you about various concerns (the war which has turned some off from air travel, the proximity of the trip to SOFA/NY which impacts our East Coast members, the continuing downturn in the economy, etc.).

As a result, the Board has decided to cancel the trip as previously described but plans to offer AJF members and their guests an evening reception on Thursday, May 22, at the home of board member **Pat Rodimer**. The cost for this evening will be \$45. Pat's home is just minutes by cab (or public transportation) from Union Square. We will be gathering there starting at 5:30. So for those of you who will be in the area and/or attending the SNAG conference, please RVSP to Pat directly by leaving a message on the AJF phone line: **415.522.2924**.

We also want to remind people that on Sunday:

DeNovo will have an opening for a group show with 6 incredible German goldsmiths and lapidaries. The artists included in the show will be **Wilhelm** and **Ute Buchert** and **Bernd, Jorg, Tom** and **Jutta Munsteiner**. Bernd and Jorg Munsteiner will be coming from Germany to be at the gallery that day to talk with visitors about their work.

Tercera Gallery will be featuring a special show with **Donald Friedlich** and he will be at the gallery that day.

The Stanford tour will include seeing a new sculptural installation by **Andy Goldsworthy**, a fountain and sculpture by **Mia Lin**, the Rodin sculpture garden, and a visit to the Paupa New Guinea Sculpture garden, and more.

— WHY DO WE BUY WHAT WE BUY? —

Trip provokes members to ponder **by Susan Cummins**

During the AJF trip to Philadelphia **Bruce Metcalf** brought up the question of what criteria collectors use to decide what jewelry to purchase. It is a question that provoked a lot of discussion. The following list suggests some of the possibilities gathered from Bruce as well as others. Which ones do you think about?

- 1 Originality/Invention.** How much does it resemble work you have seen before? Is it influenced, a clever quotation, or an imitation? Is there integrity in the design and/or the concept?
- 2 Quality of craftsmanship.** Is the artist skilled? How are the materials, form and color used to further the design? Is there a resolution? Are all aspects of the design and conception worked out?
- 3 Intelligence.** What is the relationship of the materials to each other? To the meaning embedded in the object? Does the object make a compelling argument for itself? Does it make a compelling statement that is appropriate to its time? Does it effectively communicate the artist's intent? Is it clear?
- 4 Wearable.** If a piece is made to be wearable has the artist considered the issues of practicality? Size, weight, scale, the functioning of the findings, and so forth.
- 5 Multiples or unique statements.** Is it clear that what you are buying is a multiple? Or a unique piece? Can you tell the difference?
- 6 Defining your collection.** Do you want to collect some pieces to wear? And/or others to contemplate or give to a museum in the future? Are you comfortable with jewelry that makes a statement in public? Do you want to be identified by the uniqueness of what you are wearing? Can you articulate what draws you to certain pieces? What relationship do you have to your jewelry collection?

In order to collect intelligently it is important to expose yourself to a wide range of work. And then over time to think about what appeals to you and why. Then reading books and magazine articles and engaging in an open discussion with artists, dealers, and others interested in this area will educate you. As most of you know the trips sponsored by AJF offer the greatest opportunity to expand your knowledge and expose yourself directly to the people and objects that most inform your future decisions. It can be a very exciting and fun process. It also means that your discerning taste will encourage the artist to better and better work. That's a good thing. ●

BOARD MEETING NOTES

We will regularly use this newsletter to brief members on items discussed by the AJF Board. The Board meets quarterly in a virtual meeting via conference call.

● ● ●
WE WELCOME A NEW BOARD MEMBER, JO LAURIA. Jo is currently an independent curator and scholar, known to many of you in the former role of Decorative Arts curator of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Based in L.A., Jo is currently working on several exhibition projects and is presently negotiating with Chronicle Books to co-author a book with **Suzanne Balzerman**, the Imogene Gieling

Curator of Crafts and Decorative Arts at the Oakland Museum of California. The subject of the proposed publication is "California Design: 1955-1976" and it will include an overview of metals and jewelry of the period.

● ● ●
UNDERWROTE ONE OF THIS YEAR'S SNAG CONFERENCE SPEAKERS. We felt it fitting to support Steve Cabella's presentation on 25 years of collecting art jewelry along with tips for collectors.

● ● ●
APPROVED A DONATION OF \$1500 to the Museum of Craft and Folk Art in San Francisco which is mounting a jewelry exhibition, "Valuables: Jewelry in the New Millennium" in May in conjunction with SNAG. The donation is specific to support the curator documentation of the show to appear in the museum's publication, *A Report*.

● ● ●
APPROVED, FOR THE SECOND TIME, an increase in the amount of the Emerging Artist Award to \$2000.

My Philadelphia Story:

An AJF Newcomer Describes our 2002 Tour

continued from page one



SUNDAY'S STAR WAS CLEARLY ISAIAH ZAGAR AND THE FANCIFUL MOSAIC WORLD HE HAD CREATED WITHIN HIS HOME AND NEIGHBORHOOD

Visiting artists in residence:

Because I've rarely visited jewelry artists at work, I especially enjoyed meeting with **Jan Yager, Bruce Metcalf, Mardi-Jo Cohen, and Ray King** in their studios. These sessions were rich with learning more about the process from the time an artist gets a brilliant idea to the display of finished work. The differences in the artists' approach, body of work, materials, space, range, and inspiration were fascinating to see up close.

Jan's work evolves from inspiration she finds, quite literally, at the doorstep of her studio in an industrial area of the city. She replicates in metal those scrappy little plants that survive on a concrete diet, and she creates elegant, flowing brooches. She weaves crack vials into a ruff collar as delicate as any from the Elizabethan age.

Upstairs, in another studio in the same building, Bruce presented us with an informed way to evaluate the work we see, and he shared his definition of art as always about exploration. (See related article on buying criteria.) He wants his work to provoke

conversation, and indeed, his necklaces on exhibit at the Wexler Gallery achieved that goal.

Mardi-Jo Cohen works and lives in the same space, with inspiration surrounding her on just about every surface possible. Her work can be delicate, polished, sophisticated, and whimsical all at the same time. You expect some of her pieces to get up and move like an animated cartoon.

Ray King's creations take advantage of the properties of light that allow it to reflect and refract. His work ranges from wall sconce commissions to city sculptures (we were treated to a recent installation at an intersection leading to the Arts District in Philadelphia) to jewelry that takes advantage of light traveling through prism shapes and creating dazzling rainbows.



EMILY GURTMAN SPECTACULAR CALDER NECKPIECE WORN BY HOPE MAKLER, HOME VISITS WERE A TRIP HIGHLIGHT FOR MANY.

Staying at home: Special thanks to the generous people who opened their homes to us—**Hope and Paul Makler, Helen and Leonard Evelev, Gail and Bob Brown, Clara and Ben Hollander, and Ruth and Rick Snyderman.**

Some special images for me: Hope Makler wearing an unmistakably Alexander Calder necklace that looked substantial

and stunning on her delicate frame in a simple black dress; the rich colors in the Evelev's home and the exotic way jewelry, art, and light accented the rooms; **Gail Brown's** engaging passion about her wonderful art collection and her special display cases for jewelry; **Clara Hollander's** innovative display of jewelry on top of flowers, fruits, and vegetables in the dining room; and the predictably wonderful Snyderman home, filled with treasures everywhere.

Each home provided a special environment for jewelry as well as all forms of art and craft. While we saw great diversity from home to home, synergy ranked as the common denominator—the "whole" of each home was definitely greater than the "sum of all the parts." Speaking of synergy, have you ever met Isaiah Zagar?

Piecing it all together:

On our last day together, we visited **Julia and Isaiah Zagar**, for what was described in our program as "a light breakfast, followed by a walking tour of some of Isaiah's mosaic installations in the neighboring area." I looked forward to Sunday, imagining small, delicate little mosaic touches to a neighborhood park or walkway.

And now, for something completely different. Quite simply, Isaiah has built an impressive huge mosaic city

within the city of Philadelphia—imagine amazing flowing sparkling mosaics creating pictures and words out of pieces of tile, glass, mirrors, and found objects, covering walls and buildings and blocks as far as the eye can see. Your eye just doesn't know where to start or stop.

Inside his home, Isaiah's mosaics cover just about every bit of wall and ceiling space in almost every room, including a basement that must boggle the mind of every meter reader or plumber who has ever seen it. In his separate studio, Isaiah used mosaics to create some of the most unusual outdoor aeries and decks I've ever seen.

Julia and Isaiah's home was the perfect setting for **Mimi Livingston's** lovely tribute that expressed the gratitude we all felt to Ruth and Rick Snyderman—and all the Philadelphians they persuaded to contribute to this tour—for their time and thoughtfulness in making our visit so memorable.

Would I join another AJF tour? In a New York minute. Thank you to **Pat Rodimer** for inviting me on this one. I hope to see members of the Philadelphia tour on many more great AJF adventures.

Jane Shannon lives in Ancramdale, NY, where she works as an independent communication consultant, workshop leader, and author. You can see her new book, 73 Ways to Improve Your Employee Communication Program, at www.davisandco.com.



GOOD FOOD AND GREAT HOSPITALITY FROM HOSTS RUTH AND RICK SNYDERMAN ARE ENJOYED HERE BY (LEFT TO RIGHT): SHARON CHURCH, EMILY GURTMAN, SUSAN CUMMINS, DONNA BRISKIN, JOAN DUTTON AND RAY KING.

GALLERIES

DeNovo

250 University Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94301
650.327.1256

"Generations of Brilliance in Gemstones and Jewelry",
Features six outstanding
master German goldsmiths
and lapidaries. [May 3–May 31]
Opening reception on Saturday,
May 24.

Facéré Jewelry Art Gallery

US Bank/City Centre
1420 5th Avenue #108
Seattle, WA 98101
206.624.6768

"All Mixed Up": a mixed metal
show. [April 23–May 10, 2003]
Opening reception April 23 with
lecture the same day. "Glass
Dimensions—Beyond the Bead":
invitational, curated by **Ginger
Kelley** [from April–June 2003]
This show is at the Washington
State Convention and Trade
Center, 800 Pike Street, Seattle.

"Group Glass Jewelry Exhibit":
invitational at the Vetri Gallery,
1404 1st Avenue, Seattle.
[June 2003]

"Translucent/Transparent":
Invitational Glass Jewelry Show.
[June 4–21]

"Color Has It" an enamel jewelry
art show, [August 15–30].

Mobilia

358 Huron Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138
617.876.2109

"Suzan Rezac": new jewelry by
a master metalsmith. [May 3–31]

"Art for the Ear": Earrings by over
50 artists from around the U.S.
and abroad. [May 3–May 27].

"The Ring": exhibition of over
300 rings by artists all over the
world, continues to travel. It will
be at The Gallery in Ruthin,
Wales, through May 18.

Patina Gallery

131 West Palace Avenue
Santa Fe, NM 87501
505.986.3432

"Artists at the Forge," studio
jewelry in steel and 22k gold.

**Na Mu Cho/Robin Martin-
Cust** [April 4–May 4]

"The Veiled Beauty of Michael
Zobel," **Michael Zobel** [May
22–June 22]

"Layered Edges/Tinted Forms",
studio jewelry and assembles
in metal, **Allison B-Barnett/
Ivan Barnett** [October 31–
November 20]

"Diamonds and Rust", **Pat
Flynn** [December 5–January 4]

Velvet da Vinci

508 Hayes Street
San Francisco, CA 94102
415.626.7478

"Chess", a touring exhibition of
contemporary chessmen by
international metalsmiths. [May
1–31] The exhibition will present
pieces by individual artists that
will be combined to create
complete chess sets. There
will be over 90 artists from 10
different countries making the
pieces. After San Francisco, the
exhibition will travel to the Vennel
Gallery in Scotland, the Flow
Gallery in London and conclude
at **Thomas Mann's Gallery
I/O** in New Orleans in the fall
of 2003.

**OTHER
SHOWS**

"The Art of Gold", featuring 79
pieces of the finest contemporary
goldwork by 78 artists, opened at
the **Crocker Museum**, in
Sacramento, CA. Next it goes to
University of Richmond,
[September 1–October 20]
Arkansas Arts Center in Little
Rock [January 28–March 15,
2004]; **Mint Museum of Craft
+ Design** in Charlotte from
[April 3–8, 2004]; and finally to
Anchorage Museum in Alaska
from [November 10–January 7]
AJF contributed to the catalog for
this show.



AJF Art Jewelry Forum
P.O. Box 590216
San Francisco, CA 94059

**The deadline for receiving
material for the next issue of our
newsletter is August 15, 2003 for
publication in September.**

- Please send your contributions directly to **Pat Rodimer**,
59 Webster Street, San Francisco, CA 94117.
- Calendar contributions should be emailed to **info@artjewelryforum.org**
- If you have any questions about this publication, please call
Pat at **415.522.2924**.