



**METAL
ARTS**
SOCIETY OF
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Jan/Feb 2011



TWO FEBRUARY WORKSHOPS

**FORMING TECHNIQUES
FOR JEWELRY
FEBRUARY 11, 12, 13
AT SADDLEBACK COLLEGE**

**FORMING TECHNIQUES
FOR JEWELRY
FEBRUARY 18, 19, 20
AT SADDLEBACK COLLEGE**

**Both Workshops Feature Three Full Days of Hands-On Instruction
with Betty Helen Longhi**

Workshop fee: \$295 MASSC Members, \$345. Non-Members - for three full days - for either workshop
Materials and Tools Kit \$25-75 (varies with tools student already has)

MASSC is very happy to once again join nationally renowned artist Betty Helen Longhi as she teaches the use of hammers and simple wooden stakes to create elegant and functional jewelry. Students will learn how to quickly and easily form sheet metal into unique forms through hands-on instruction in the basic techniques of synclastic and anticlastic forming as well as ways to make transitions from one form to the other. Students will gain a new insight into ways to manipulate sheet metal, while creating a unique group of jewelry items. This workshop is appropriate for both beginning and experienced metals students.

Details regarding the materials, tools charges will be forthcoming to final registered attendees.

This workshop will be filled via the MASSC lottery system with MASSC members receiving priority. To put your name in the lottery, contact Corliss Rose by January 15th. Be sure to include the date of the workshop you wish to attend. Everyone will be contacted on February 1st with the lottery results. Send an email to Corliss@2Roses.com and put "MASSC February Workshop lottery" in the subject line. Or phone: 714-778-5336 (9am - 5pm) and ask for Corliss.

VICTORIA LANSFORD

EASTERN REPOUSSE

WORKSHOP

By Victor Alfonsi



Victoria Lansford teaches Eastern repousse technique which is quite distinct. It differs from any like skill we learned taking an art curriculum in college and it

For repousse, face the work squarely, not off to the side. Your height in relation to the work piece should be slightly above it so that the hammer never raises higher than your elbow when working. Hold the chasing hammer by the ball of the handle and use light taps, letting the hammer bounce when striking.

Laying out the design

Tape your work piece to a suitable bench block. Draw your design on the work piece with marker. This will be the FRONT of your work piece. Lightly scribe the design into the metal. This will act as a guide for your lining tool. Hold your lining tool at a slight angle with the leading edge a bit higher than the heel. Using light blows, line out

is also quite different than any other workshop I've taken since that time. She also teaches the class using her own repousse tools, which she designed.

To perform this technique you will need a metal bench block, a wooden bench block, plasticine (common modeling clay) and bowl with pitch. Victoria prefers Red German Pitch.

Victoria starts out with an explanation and demonstration of correct posture and position for repousse work. After working in a studio for several decades, we've come to appreciate the safety and posture tips we pick up in these workshops. These make a world of difference in the outcome of the product and how you feel after spending 10-12 hours at the bench.





TIPS & TRICKS

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MASSC Newsgroup:

MetalArtsSociety-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

MASSC serves the needs and interests of artists working in metals and provides an environment for the exchange of information, instructional workshops, demonstrations, lectures, and panel discussions. Annual dues Sept 1-Aug 31); Regular Member, \$30; Family, \$45; Full-time Student \$20. Please add \$5 to your annual dues if you would like to receive a printed copy of the MASSC newsletter. All others will receive the newsletter via email. Membership forms are available at www.MASSCOnline.com

INEXPENSIVE ELECTRIC WAX PEN

by Brad Smith

You can make your own wax pen from a small soldering iron plugged into a light dimmer switch for heat control. Both components are easily found at Radio Shack, a big hardware store or www.AllElectronics.com Look for a soldering iron of around 25-30 watts. File the tip to get the shape you prefer or get a soldering iron with a replaceable tip. Then you can make several tip shapes for different tasks.

MINIATURE ROTARY HAMMER

by Jon Lovegren

Rotary hammers are very useful for removing small porosity holes/pits that are too small to drill & fill. Here is how to make your own. Take a mandrel (the kind with a screw/washer in the end).

Remove the screw & washer.

Slightly round off the top edge (where a wheel would bear) and polish. Be sure to do this or you'll leave a tool mark from the unrounded edge.

Then just barely bend the small diameter part of the shaft just below where it is enlarged, i.e., the part of the small diameter shaft away from where it is chucked.

You just want a very tiny bend that will make the business end of the mandrel wobble slightly. Use this in your flex shaft to hammer out small porosities or even small tool marks. Note that this will work harden the immediate area, So, you may have to anneal and continue for larger pits/marks.



PEWTER

a workshop at Pasadena City College with Lisa Slovis Mandel

by Kathleen Fochtman-Gambis

Silver was nearly \$29.00/ounce the other day. Pewter is still under \$2.00/ounce. That alone might tempt a silversmith to dabble with this less precious material. But seriously, it is time to take a fresh look at it. Pewter has been around for more than 3,000 years. It no longer contains lead; therefore, it is food-safe. The material work-softens, rather than work-hardens (a weird concept to a silversmith). It comes in familiar sheets, wires and ingots. It can be fabricated or cast. It can be chased, etched and even patinated. Surfaces can be burnished to a mirror finish. With Lisa Slovis Mandel as our pied piper, we all jumped in, feet first, to explore the exciting alloy.

MATERIALS--The pewter that was used came from Stellar Technical. It is commonly called Britannia: an alloy of tin (92%), antimony (6%) and copper (2%). The solder recently changed its alloy to include a hint of silver, which has made it less brittle. Lisa introduced the watery Supersafe

Soldering Flux, from H & N Electronics. It is both organic and non-toxic. (...and they make a version for silver soldering!)

CAUTION--Although food-safe pewter no longer contains lead, it is still a contaminant. Pewter grit can ruin silver pieces, when the silver is being annealed or soldered. With a melting temp of only 465°, any pewter grit left on silver's surface will

alloy with silver, leaving permanent pits and scars. Be mindful when using any tool or surface that creates or holds grit (files, saw blades, rawhide mallets, soldering bricks...). Mark them. Clean surfaces before introducing precious metals to shared work surfaces.



WORKSHOP--In two days, participants worked on creating fabricated vessels, similar to the one featured on Lisa's book, *Pewter Studio*. We also poured several castings and created serving utensils (forged sheet,

cast handle, then fused and soldered). Two workshop mantras still ring clear: Nothing goes to waste, and anything can be fixed. All scrap is saved for casting. Fabrication mishaps really are repairable. If a hole melts through sheet, repair it by fusing. Fusing is much like welding, but done with a tiny Smith ØØ tip or a weak crème brûlée torch. When having trouble fusing, try more flux and less heat. Lisa's masterful touch made the processes look effortless.

FABRICATION -- Pewter sheet can be cut with bench shears, hand shears and saws. Shapes can be modified with coarse files. Edges can be cleaned up with a cheap 80 grit abrasive paper. Sheet is highly malleable, and can be bent by hand. Since pewter is soft, creating rigid seams gives essential structure and strength. We learned when to fuse and when to solder. Outside edges that can be filed and refined are candidates for fusing, especially when the inside of the seam is not visible. Crisp seams, which are perfectly aligned, are best for soldering, once fusing and forging operations are complete. Pewter fabrication is kind of magical--hollow forms may be stuffed with paper to maintain shape during fusing/soldering. Pins can help position pieces on bricks for soldering, but it is often unnecessary. Masking tape can hold wires in place while soldering. Yes, masking tape! When it starts to burn, just peel it off and keep going! Really! Rely on gravity and flux to assist with the flow. During fusing and soldering, pewter may be handled. When it becomes a bit too hot-to-handle, just quench it in water, re-flux and keep on going. To refine seams, the flexshaft becomes a close friend. Sanding drums followed by rubber abrasives work well. Lisa's favorite flexshaft tool is a snap-on sanding disc that is plastic-backed. (Rio #337228). It was remarkable.

CASTING was a blast. There is no crucible necessary, only a cast iron ladle. Estimate the needed volume for the mold and heat it until it melts. Heating from the bottom with a torch works well. Before pouring, use a popsicle stick to remove the slag floating on the top. Hold the end of the popsicle stick in the liquid and feel the stick. If it is trembling, the pewter is too hot to pour. Scrape off more slag and test again before pouring. After pouring, watch the pewter. When it solidifies, it may be dumped into wa-



ter to quench. When casting glass in place, be patient and refrain from quenching.

CREATING MOLDS--To create a plaster mold, pour plaster slurry into cups, then wait until bone dry before using. Plaster may be carved with a rotary tool or a dental tool. To ensure success, carve a depression, or bed, then continue carving a relief. Pour molten pewter in the mold; see how you like it, then modify if necessary. Wood can be ground with rotary tool. Wood's grain is evident in the casting. Amazingly, wood does not burn during the process. Use cuttle bone to create a two-part pouring mold. Casting is nearly odor-free with pewter, AND if the cuttle bone stays dry, the mold can be used repeatedly! Wow! Aluminum foil is a spontaneous mold material, which yields some surprising results. All of the wrinkles in the foil show in the pewter. Foil can be pressed against a relief to borrow its shape. Foil can also be manipulated in the hand to create molds. Objects can be held in place by foil, then the molten pewter will surround the objects. Pewter will not melt the foil! It was so cool to watch. To create a fast mold with more predictable results, try Delft Clay. With a push, it accepts impressions of buttons, shells, pencil points, etc. It is fast, fun and successful. For litho-molds, try carving into soft stones, like tufa or pumice. With all molds, remember that when casting a stone in place, the stone will float, if it can. To hold the stone down in the mold, push a pencil into its backside while pouring and cooling.

Experiment. It is fun. And as Lisa reminded us...love what you are doing!



the design. Go over the design several times to create clear lines. Avoid making deep lines and thinning the metal out too much, as you will be going over them many times in the course of making the

piece. Deep lines will quickly fatigue and break. Using a rubber pad or even a towel under your bench block will deaden the sound and make for a much quieter work environment.

Repousse - Puffing out the shape

Turn the work piece over to the BACK. Place it on a hard but resilient surface such as hard wood or delrin. Do not use metal. You will now form the spaces defined by the lines you just made. Using a planishing tool, lightly hammer while moving the tool in small concentric circles. This will cause the work piece to puff out slightly.

Turn the piece over again, so that the front is up. With the lining tool, true up the outline of the shape. The objective is to make sure that the outer edges of your shape are always flat and resting level on your block. Once the work piece is trued up, anneal it.

Place the work piece with the BACK up onto a mound of the plasticine clay. Using a push tool, lightly hammer in small concentric circles to further puff out the shape. You will have to reshape and reposition the plasticine frequently. To further define the line work of the design, hold the push tool at a 45° angle and lightly hammer along the inside of the line. Do not hammer on the line.

When the piece begins to work harden, turn it over and re-level the outline, then anneal.

Repeat until the desired height is achieved. Typically this takes 4 to 5 rounds.

Chasing - defining the line and form

Start by building a mound of pitch in the middle of your pitch bowl. The mound should be a bit larger than the size of your work piece. Mount the work piece onto the pitch mound with FRONT side up. Test the piece by tapping it with the hammer and listen for hollow sounds. Using the liner tool go over all of the exterior lines. Using the planishing tool use light taps to smooth and further refine the shapes.

Finishing



Small marks can be burnished out. Rubber abrasive wheels can be used to smooth surfaces.

Oh yes, about those tools of Victoria's. I have built up a substantial set of chasing and repousse tools over the years. Some inherited some purchased and some made by myself. I can honestly say that Victoria Lansford's tool design is superior to anything I have used yet. To be sure, the tools are pricey, but they are of exceptional quality and design, and perform extraordinarily well. These are carefully thought out professional-grade tools that are well worth your consideration.

Jewelry Design



Diane Weimer's Anne Boleyn Neckpiece was featured in the Nov. issue of Art Jewelry. Cast and fabricated.



Swan ring by Roman designer Luigi Scialanga



When the French designer Marie-Hélène de Taillac was asked to bring her jewelry skills to gloves, she did not focus on gem-studded leather. Instead, she worked with Jane Cattani and Emanuela Calvi and the couture embroiderer Lesage to transform her delicate jewelry into "rings" decorating elbow-length cashmere gloves.

MASSC Video Library Now Available on DVD

The MASSC video library currently has 18 videos on DVD of past workshops that members can check out. These DVDs are direct videotapes of actual workshops and have not been edited. Watching a MASSC workshop video is akin to being there in person.

Workshop Videos Include:

Alison Antleman - Custom Clasps

Belle Brooke Barer - Sculptural Hollow Ring

Diane Falkenhagen - Mixed Media Techniques for Jewelry

Leslee Frumin - Classy Clasps

Mary Lee Hu - Weaving and Chains

Charles Lewton Brain - Fold Folding

Betsy Manheimer - Fold Forming

Trish McAleer - Metal Corrugation

Bruce Metcalf - Jewelry Alternatives

Ben Neubauer - Wire Fabrication

Harold O' Connor - Surface Embellishments & Efficient Workshop Methods

Katherine Palochnik - Tufa Casting

2Roses - Metal Patination

Carol Sivets - Metal Reticulation

Lisa Slovis Mandel - Hydraulic Press

Carl Stanley - Cuff Bracelet

Pauline Warg - Metal Beads

Wayne Werner - Stone Setting

A \$20 donation is necessary to check out each DVD. This includes the use of the DVD plus 2-way shipping. There is no additional security deposit. Members can keep each DVD for up to 30 days. Videos can be checked out on the MASSC website at www.massconline.com. Click the "Video Library" link on the home page.



MAKING A ROLLER PRINTED RING

&

HOW TO MAKE A BANGLE BRACELET



JAY WHALEY STUDIOS RELEASES TWO NEW DVDS

Jay Whaley Studios in San Diego has a long history of innovative workshops and thorough instruction in the metal arts and jewelry. These two DVDs show why Jay has earned a solid reputation as a teacher and a master jeweler. Each DVD contains a complete step by step project along with a wealth of tips, tricks and “show how” that you just can’t get from a book.

The DVDs are produced by Gregg Masters, who has spared no effort to make sure that the quality of each DVD is top notch. The video is crisp, well lighted and shows every pro-

cedure in crystal clear detail. Jay’s years as a college instructor show in his smooth delivery and just-right pacing. We particularly liked all the extra features that were included on the discs. This was like hanging with the instructor after-class and getting a whole bunch of additional tips.

By all means take one of Jay’s workshops, but if you can’t, these DVDs are a good close second.

Available from Whaley Studios, 3848 5th Ave, San Diego, CA 92103 877.594.2539 jay@whaleystudios.com



1644 S.CLEMENTINE ST, ANAHEIM CA 92802

Upcoming Events

Next MASSC Board Meeting
Feb 6th, 2011 to RSVP 949-276-4300
all members welcome

April 2011
Chain Making
with Jeanne Jerousec-McAnnich

Nov 2011
**Chasing &
Repousse**
with Nancy Megan Corwin

Did you change your address or email? Don't miss your MASSC newsletter and workshop announcements. Send changes to Diane Weimer diaweimer@verizon.net