

METAL ARTS

SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

January - February 2012

Steve Rossman

2 WORKSHOPS IN APRIL

Chris Hentz

Jewelry Photography Workshop



Sat, April 28, 2012

10am-6pm

Dana Point, CA

Join reknowned Southern California jewelry photographer Steve Rossman as he leads you through everything you want to know about photographing your jewelry to its best advantage. In this full day workshop, Steve will cover details on how to take the best shots for selling your jewelry, getting it published, and winning juried competitions. You'll learn the basic principles of digital photography; cameras, lenses and settings; studio requirements and set-up; lighting techniques; and artful display, as well as basic digital editing skills to present your work in its very best light.

Register via email to ketarah@earthlink.net by March 30, 2012. You will be sent back the registration information. Workshop fee: MASSC Members \$40; Non-members \$60. Workshop address will be furnished to registered participants.

Outrageously Thorough Soldering Workshop



April 20, 21, 22, 2012

Long Beach City College

Develop and improve your fabrication in silver, copper or bronze. Chris will present essential information and numerous short cuts for accomplishing many tasks. The goal is to give the participant the ability to comfortably solve silver soldering problems. There will be a variety of projects for the participants to work on during class that will allow the participants to learn, experience and refine the act of silver soldering. Creative use of soldering tools, fabrication techniques and numerous tricks will also be covered.

This workshop will be filled via the MASSC lottery system with MASSC members receiving priority. To put your name in the lottery, send an email to ketarah@earthlink.net by February 27th, 2012 and put "MASSC April Workshop lottery" in the subject line. Everyone will be contacted on February 28th with the lottery results.

President's Message

~ A Potpourri of Thoughts ~

A 3-1/2" green, sea glass Christmas tree, an blue enameled sun flower, an etched trio of shapes were all entries in the ornament exchange at the MASSC Christmas/Holiday Party on Dec. 17 at Angela Roskelley's house in Downey. It was great fun to see the ingenuity of our members. We also shared our latest finished piece and some delicious food. Thank you for hosting the party, Angela. I know it is a lot of work. If YOU weren't there, you missed a great time!

Fast and furious.... 208 people have voted for the Masks of MASSC. The winners are: First Place Cheryl Lommatsch with "I am Curious Fellow", Second Place went to Kathleen Fochtman-Gambis for her mask entitled "Inconspicuous", and Third Place to Toni Burns with "Wings of Beauty"

Volunteer to help, so MASSC activities happen. It may be something as small as making phone calls or as time intensive as being the workshop coordinator, but it all helps MASSC provide something that we value. It is the opportunity to learn a new technique, to share our latest piece and to come together for this common passion ...working with metal. Raminta Jautokas did a wonderful job organizing the Megan Corwin Chasing/Repousse' Workshop in No-

vember. Big thanks to her for taking the time, so we all benefitted! If you are so inclined, you might want to contact me (diaweimer@verizon.net) or Ketarah (ketarah@earthlink.net) to volunteer for a job.



We have been contacting other guilds on the west coast, offering to exchange newsletters. We have the latest Seattle Metals Guild (SMG) newsletter and will soon have the Monterey Bay Metal Arts Guild newsletter (MBMAG). They are reviving theirs after a long hiatus. These vibrant guilds' newsletters will be seen on our website very soon.

Signing up for the MASSC Studio Tour in March will begin mid January. We are very grateful that Deb Jemmott, Natalie Reed and Jonna Faulkner are allowing us to visit and experience their studios. Remember, lunch is at Stone Brewery in Escondido. It should be a great day! There will be a link on the webpage by Jan. 15, if you wish to participate.

Looking forward to a great 2012!

This spectacular, one of a kind hammer was created by master engraver Les Bryant and generously donated to MASSC by NC BLACK. The hammer was recently auctioned off as a MASSC fundraiser that was only open to MASSC members. LaVerne Christenson was the winner of this very special hammer.

Congratulations LaVerne.



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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 \$20 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

Members in the News



Corliss Rose of 2Roses is the newly elected Vice President of the International Polymer Clay Association. Among her many achievements Corliss has served as President of MASSC and has been on our Board for many years. She is the owner of 2Roses studios in Anaheim California, which has won numerous national and international awards for its creative designs. Corliss' work is noted regularly in books and articles on contemporary art jewelry as well as exhibited in 14 countries.

TIPS & TRICKS

by Ketarah Shaffer



Nevr Dull is a wonder for cleaning up tools and rust removal. Nevr heard of it? I bought it to remove rust from some of my tools and it worked great!. So I then decided to use it on a piece of jewelry.

I had worn my Betty Helen Longhi nu-gold bead in *Naples Italy* (had to throw that in). It was against my skin and I became rather hot & sweaty during the day. Between sweat and sunscreen it ended the day a rather blackish color and needed a good cleaning. Nevr Dull cleaned it right up without scratching, and my bead is back to being all shiny and new looking.

The best part - I got my Nevr Dull at Walmart for less than \$5.

Chasing and Repousse with Nancy Megan Corwin

By Sharon Renfro Todd

Nancy Megan Corwin spent three days sharing tips and techniques with those of us fortunate enough to attend her chasing and repousse class. These ancient techniques, used for more than 6000 years, are what Megan referred to as her “greatest love in terms of process.” The term “repousse” means “hammered into relief from both sides or either side,” and repousse tools are typically called “punches.” “Chasing” refers to “detailing the front



side of the piece” using “chasing tools” made from materials such as steel, wood, or plastic.

The most common material used to support the metal in this process is pitch, and Megan has a preference for the “medium” German red variety. While some reportedly feel pitch is a challenge to work with, she believes it is the most flexible material to use for this work. “It grabs on and doesn’t give out until you want it to, and it is the only material that does this.” One of Megan’s most valuable tools turned out to be basic chapstick. A thin coating on the side of the metal that goes into the pitch will help it come off cleanly when you want it to...a critical step toward enjoying these techniques.

Optimally, the pitch bowl should be made of iron

for weight and stability and deep enough to smoothly tilt for comfort and access to your design details. A good base, like a lawn mower tire, helps, too. A deep, 8-inch bowl across, will work for most jewelry and even some vessels. Another preference Megan shared is that the bowl should be filled completely with pitch rather than partially with concrete as is suggested by some sources. If a different material is used to fill the base, the pitch could become disconnected from the bowl as you work and contaminated by the other material. Making the investment to fill the bowl completely with pitch will pay off in the long run. “If you take care of your pitch, it can last a lifetime.”



Your choice of chasing tools will be unique to your desired fit and style. The range of shape, size, and material is wide. One of the most valuable experiences of the workshop was learning first-hand what the right tool can do for your design. A great tool can be as simple as a dapping punch or a cylinder of Delrin. It all depends on the desired outcome of your piece.

The working position of the tool and hammering technique are important as well. Megan demonstrated the proper method of holding the chasing tool with the pinky finger resting on the metal at the “working end” of the tool with her thumb and forefinger loosely resting around the “striking” end of it. The hammer literally moves the tool along the metal, and your fingers act as a gentle guide. The grip on the hammer should be somewhat loose with your index finger resting along the neck of the handle. The proper hammering technique is one that allows the head to bounce off the striking end of the punch. “You are not throwing the hammer down,



you are letting the bounce do most of the work.” You can see then, that the weight and balance of the hammerhead is a consideration in tool selection.

Megan has designed a set of tools

forged by Bill Dawson (available at www.billdawson-metalsmith.com) and is an enthusiastic proponent of making your own. Although the class wasn't designed to do so, we were treated to a demonstration of altering existing tools to meet individual needs. We watched her change the shape of tools, create a new



tool from a regular dapping punch, and grind a professional finish on some commercial tools. (Megan prefers a 400 to 600 grit finish on her own tools rather than a smooth polish.)

She even went as far as to grind a tool to

the point of overheating it (it will show a change of color on the steel) so she we could watch the process of annealing the tool and tempering the tip. Though Megan made the process appear easy, it is best to avoid the need to re-temper a tool by paying close attention as you grind. Grind a little and immediately quench in water, grind a little more and quench. You get the picture.



Chasing and repousse are techniques that take time. Trying to rush the process will result in frustration at best. To have success with it, you must be patient. One of Megan's mantras is “fast is slow, and slow is fast.” She

fell in love with the process when first introduced to it and expressed the importance of that love when you choose this metalwork technique. “If you fight the process, it will show up in the product.”

A highlight of our weekend was Megan's “Survey of Chasing and Repousse” presentation. In it she shared dozens of photos of renown work and work of notable artists. You may be familiar with a couple of the most famous pieces of art using chasing and repousse: the Gates of Paradise in Florence, Italy, and our own Statue of Liberty, the world's largest work of repousse.

Nancy Megan Corwin is a gifted artist and teacher who is clearly passionate about chasing and repousse. This was my first serious attempt with the process, and it was obvious that a lot of practice was needed. Still, I enjoyed the work and was excited to leave with a bracelet I am proud to wear. Megan writes in her class handout, “Don't try to make your first experience in chasing and repousse into a finished object. There is a lot to learn, and samples are invaluable



tools for skills and understanding of the technique.” This is sage advice. Fortunately, Megan has written a beautiful and highly acclaimed book, *Chasing and Repousse: Methods Ancient and Modern*, that serves as an extensive reference on the subject. If you are intrigued with these techniques, I encourage you to take a closer look.

Source: Australia, China, Iran, Sinai, Southwest USA (Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico), Mexico

Turquoise (Türkis or Türkisblau German) was among the first gems to be mined, dating back as far as 6000 BC. Ancient Egyptians mined turquoise at the Wadi Maghara mines, on the Sinai Peninsula, and turquoise was also a popular gemstone with the

Turquoise



ancient Egyptians, Mesopotamians, Persians, Shang Dynasty Chinese, and Native American Anasazi, and Aztec Indians. The name “turquoise” is derived from the French “pierre turquoise,” or “Turkish stone,” referring to the location of the caravan trade routes that originated in, or passed through greater Persia.

The sky-blue (aka “robin’s egg blue”) color of cut turquoise can change to a greenish-blue over time, as the stone oxidizes through exposure to air. The copper component that acts as the primary coloring agent in turquoise, may come from copper sulfides such as chalcopyrite or from secondary carbonates such as malachite or azurite. The phosphorus component from apatite, and the aluminum component may be derive from the presence of feldspar. Turquoise from Nevada can contain trace amounts of iron, giving it a pale green to yellow-green color.

The black, brown, or light veining in turquoise is referred to as its matrix, which can be called “cobweb,” “edisonite,” “egg-shell,” or “spiderweb,” depending on its characteristic pattern. Typically turquoise mineralization is restricted to a relatively shallow depth of less than 60 to 70 feet, although it does occur along deeper fracture zones where secondary solutions have greater penetration.

Turquoise is typically found in arid regions of Australia, China, Chile, Iran, Mexico, Sinai, and the Southwestern United States in Arizona, Nevada and New Mexico. Turquoise is found either filling, or encrusting cavities and fractures in volcanic rock, and is often associated with limonite or other iron oxides. As a secondary mineral, turquoise forms by the action of

percolating acidic aqueous solutions during the weathering and oxidation of pre-existing minerals. Due to its total opacity, turquoise is cut and shaped into beads or a cabochon cut.

Persian Turquoise

The ancient Persians mined turquoise as far back as 2000 BC. Persian turquoise was sometimes referred to as Meshhed Turquoise or Meshed Turquoise, referring to the mines that were located at Nishâpur (Nishapur), in the Khorassan province (in the Alimersai Mountain region of what is now the north-eastern part of Iran). Turquoise was categorized based on quality, with the finest being called Anqushtari. Lesser stones were referred to as Arabi or Barkhaneh.

American Turquoise

Turquoise has been used by the Native American Indians for over 2000 years. Pre-Columbian artifacts from the Anasazi, Aztec, and Hohokam tribes show the importance of the stone in art, religious rituals, and trade. Turquoise beaded jewelry, referred to as ‘heishi,’ (strung beads or shells) was popularized by the Santo Domingo and San Felipe Pueblo Indians of the American Southwest.

Sleeping Beauty Turquoise

The term “sleeping beauty turquoise” (aka “Persian turquoise”) refers to a rare, matrix-free variety of turquoise that occurs in association with granite host-rock. One of the few sources for this pure-colored stone is the ‘Sleeping Beauty Mountain Mine’, located

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in Globe, Arizona. The color range for this variety is described as darker 'Royal Blue' or lighter 'Sky Blue.' The majority of 'Sleeping Beauty' material coming from the mine may have been altered or enhanced in some manner, so you should always inquire with your jeweler (see 'Enhancements' below).

Turquoise Enhancements

Turquoise is a gemstone material that is commonly enhanced to improve appearance and durability. When in doubt, you should assume that a given piece of turquoise has been treated and/or altered in some manner. The typical methods of treatment are:

- * **Backed Turquoise:** Natural stone backed by epoxy, or plastic resin bonding agent.
- * **Block Turquoise:** Simulant made of ceramic, plastic or other 'non-turquoise' material.
- * **Dyed (Chalk) Turquoise:** Treated with chemical dyes to improve or even out color.
- * **Natural Processed Turquoise:** Treated with natural chemicals then soaked in water.
- * **Enhanced Turquoise:** Treated with chemicals, then heated to enhance durability.
- * **Reconstituted (Oriental) Turquoise:** Pulverized, mixed with binders, pressed into solid.
- * **Stabilized Turquoise:** Treated with epoxy or acrylic resin to bond the material.
- * **Waxing:** Treated with paraffin wax to improve surface luster.
- * **Zachary Process:** Treated with chemicals, then heated to enhance color and strength.

Turquoise that has been treated with the 'Zachary Process' is difficult to differentiate from untreated material. The process is designed to strengthen the material, then heat it to dissipate any traces of residual chemicals used in the treatment. Natural material can also be strengthened by impregnating it with vaporized quartz.

The up-side of 'Enhanced' or 'Natural Processed' turquoise is that the color remains stable over time as opposed to natural, untreated turquoise which can oxidize, turning green over a long period of time. Natural stone is porous, which can be detected under a loupe, as opposed to enhanced material which will be totally smooth.

MASSC Video Library

Now Available on DVD

The MASSC video library currently has 19 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 Palochak** - 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
- Betty Helen Longhi** - Forming Techniques

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.

Historical Jewels

Napoleon gave this turquoise and diamond Diadem to his second wife, the Empress Marie-Louise, on the occasion of their marriage. Originally the diadem, commissioned in 1810, was set with emeralds, which were replaced in the mid-1950s, with turquoise. It was made by Etienne Nitot et Fils of Paris. The diadem was one piece of a parure that also included a necklace and earrings (now in the Louvre) and comb (disassembled), all in emeralds, diamonds, silver and gold. Marie-Louise bequeathed the diadem and accompanying jewelry to her Hapsburg aunt, Archduchess Elise. The jewelry was acquired by Van Cleef & Arpels from one of Archduchess Elise's descendants, Archduke



Karl Stefan Hapsburg of Sweden, in 1953, along with a document attesting to their provenance. The emeralds were removed from the diadem by Van Cleef & Arpels and sold individually in pieces of jewelry. A newspaper advertisement placed by the company in 1955 promised: "An emerald for you from the historic Napoleonic Tiara..." In 1962, the diadem, with turquoise, was displayed in the Louvre Museum in Paris along with the necklace, earrings, and comb, as part of a special exhibition on Empress Marie-Louise. Marjorie Merriweather Post purchased the diadem from Van Cleef & Arpels and donated it to the Smithsonian in 1971. The diadem* is an elaborate design of scrolls, palmettes and medallions and contains 79 Persian turquoise stones (totaling 540cts) and 1,006 old mine cut diamonds (totaling 700cts) set in silver and gold.

*A crown encircles the head in a complete circle and can be worn by men and women; diadems and tiaras are forms of crowns: a diadem is not a complete circle (usually $\frac{3}{4}$ way around), it has an opening in the back and can also be worn by men and women; a tiara (semi-circular high crown) is a smaller headpiece worn at the front of the head, by women only.



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Upcoming MASSC Events

March 10th & 11th, 2012
Designs in Metal Weaving
by Jeanie Pratt

March 24th, 2012
"A day in San Marcos/Escondido"
Studio tours and lunch

June 2nd & 3rd, 2012
"Mokume Gane Band Rings in Metal
Clay" by Hadar Jacobson

MASSC Board Meetings

2111 Fanwood Ave., Long Beach
Jan 8 Sun 10am -12
Mar 4 Sun, 10am-12

RSVP to Diane at: diaweimer@verizon.net

Did you change your address or email? Don't miss your MASSC newsletter and workshop announcements. Send changes to Janis Carlson at janis@threehandstudio.com