



colorado metalsmithing association
P.O. Box 631898 • Littleton • CO • 80163

Letter from the Chair

Susan Kentroti

Hello all! Hope you have all reserved the weekend of July 13-15 for *Happy 11th on Friday the 13th*, the 11th annual COMA Conference in Salida. The board has been working hard to organize what we believe will be an extremely rewarding conference.

The speakers are all first-rate, as usual, with presentations from enamelist Harlan Butt; engraver Amayak Stepanyan; fused-metal artist Marne Ryan; woven metal jewelry artist Mary Lee Hu and photographer Ralph Gabriner. All are national and international legends.

A special thanks goes out to all of you who helped arrange for these stellar artists

to join us in Salida: Nancy Blair, Lori Colina-Lee, Anne Hallam, Judy Hoch, Elizabeth McDevitt, Lew Wackler, CeCe Wire and Yuko Yagisawa and to Geraldine Alexander for all of her work on the "on-site" organization. As you can see, I've done practically nothing.

In addition, Marne and Mary Lee are conducting pre- and post-conference workshops, respectively, to be held in Denver. Contact us at comaforum@comcast.net to register.

I am hoping to expand my pin collection in Salida this summer by trading with you all. I have my theme developed and hope to find time to make them in between work and vegetable gardening (it may help that it is currently

snowing outside).

We are also planning a "Mediterranean Night" banquet, which may or may not include *Greek Dancing* (depending on how much wine I drink during the silent auction). Sorry, that was politically incorrect. I'll bring the dancing tapes, anyway. If any of you out there have a karaoke machine and are willing to admit it, we need a P.A. system for the banquet hall (a.k.a. the "pigeon room"). Let me know by e-mail at comaforum@comcast.net and THANKS.

All of the information regarding the conference and workshops can be found in this issue of the newsletter and posted on the website See Chair on page 9

Call for Entries: COMA All Members' Show

Start planning now to submit your work for the All Member's Show. This is a great opportunity for all COMA metalsmiths to present your work to the public and to be identified with our organization, which is known and respected throughout the country.

We would like to have an especially good turnout for the All-Members' Show in Salida this year. *Every member* is encouraged to submit their work and attend the opening in Salida. The show

is again hosted by Geraldine Alexander and Michael Boyd at cultureclash, 101 North "F" Street in Salida. Geraldine is a member of the COMA board of directors and a great supporter of COMA and our artists. Michael is a world-renowned artist, as well as a tireless educator for the metalsmithing and lapidary arts in Colorado.

To Participate:

1. You may submit a maximum of 3 pieces. Each piece must be for sale.

2. Each piece must be labeled with your last name, a piece number (1-3) and the purchase price. The gallery retains 40% of the purchase price, so price your work accordingly.

3. On a separate page, provide, in duplicate, your name, address, phone number, and e-mail address. List each piece you are submitting by name, title, materials and retail price as shown above. include a 1-paragraph artist

See Members on page 9

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Marne Ryan

Utilizing flame in a constructive manner is the foundation of all my work" explains how Marne Ryan incorporates fire into her unique designs. She starts with a very thin gauge of metal, which is run through the wire mill, then folded, milled and folded again to create a textured look. Fire is applied, and then the texture pieces are fused together until the pattern and texture that suit her needs are achieved. Many of her pieces feature stones. Sometimes stones will suggest the design; other times the design selects the stone. In either case one complements the other.

In 30 years of hard work, she has perfected her craftsmanship and created the "Marne Ryan" style. This style, in turn, has won her many awards and commis-

sions in the United States and abroad. She has won the Rolex Award for Innovation & Excellence in Metal at the Philadelphia Craft show, the Debeers International Diamond Competition, and awards for entries in the



Japanese International Pearl Competition. Her work, featuring jewelry, bowls, teapots and sake sets, is regularly seen at the Philadelphia Craft Show, the Baltimore and San Francisco ACC shows, and Cherry Creek Arts Festival (Denver, CO). When she isn't on the show circuit,



she is teaching at various arts centers and to many art guilds across the country.

Marne earned her BFA in

Jewelry & Metalsmithing from Moore College of Art, Philadelphia, PA. Her first instructor was Eleanor Moty (a well-known metalsmith in her own right). Other instructors that have influenced her artistic development include Olaf Skoogfors, Betty Helen Longhi, Elliott Puegot, John Cogswell, Jean Stark, Heikki Seppa, and Charles Lewton Brain.



Harlan Butt

with master metalsmith Shumei Tanaka and at the Biso Cloisonné Company. He is a fellow of the American Craft Council and served as president of The Enamellist Society from 1998-1999.

Inspired by the beauty of nature in areas where he has lived and traveled, Butt produces raised vessels in sil-

ver which are embellished with cloisonné and basse taille enamel and Haiku poetry. The theme of repetition is prominent in his work, which is distinguished by a surface of cloisonné enameled cells, through which visions of nature emerge. In his *Earth Beneath My Feet* series, he presents views of land-

scapes, both large and minute: moments in time which capture the essence of what he sees, whether it is a portion of the forest floor, the world of a tidal pool, or a moment of sunset in the wilderness. The tops of the vessels are close-up, 3-D views of the flora and fauna inhabiting the landscapes: snakes, bees, butterflies, starfish, leaves and twigs.

His work has been exhibited internationally, in Australia, Canada, England, Germany, India, Japan, Korea and Russia.

Harlan Butt's work is in numerous collections, including the National Gallery of Australia; Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts; the Museum of Art and Design, New York; The Renwick Gallery; the National Ornamental Metal Museum; and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Harlan Butt, an internationally-renowned metalsmith and enamel artist, is currently Regents Professor of Art at the University of North Texas in Denton, where he has taught since 1976. Professor Butt received his BFA from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, and his MFA from the Tyler School of Art in Philadelphia.

He studied in Kyoto, Japan



Mary Lee Hu

Using traditional textile techniques—weaving, twining, wrapping, braiding—Mary Lee Hu transforms wire into sumptuous body sculpture. Her main tools are her fingers. “The many hours of



repetitive twining are a meditative activity,” she says. Mary Lee professes an early love of metals that developed into more than 34 years of jewelry making in which she has explored the possibilities and limits of wire.

Gold, with all its associations of value and timelessness, is her metal of choice.

“By using the deep yellow color of the high karat gold, symmetry, and intimate detail, I hope to reference the Classical Greek, Etruscan or Celtic,” she says. Not only does Mary Lee enjoy looking at jewelry objects from the past, she studies anthropology and jewelry history to learn about their cultural

context. Noting the importance of body adornment in ancient and traditional societies, Mary Lee strives in her own pieces to create art forms that are stunningly beautiful, yet fully wearable. She hopes her jewelry’s owners will find a personal connection with it and pass it down to their descendants as a link to their history.

Educated at the University of Miami, Ohio for two years and then Cranbrook Academy of Art, Bloomfield, Michigan to complete her undergraduate degree, Mary Lee learned various metals techniques. She went on to graduate school at University of Southern Illinois at Carbondale, where her work consisted mostly of jewelry and small-scale objects. Mary Lee’s designs were based on natural forms, movements and symmetry. During her second year of graduate school, Mary

See **Mary Lee** on page 6

Amayak Stepanyan

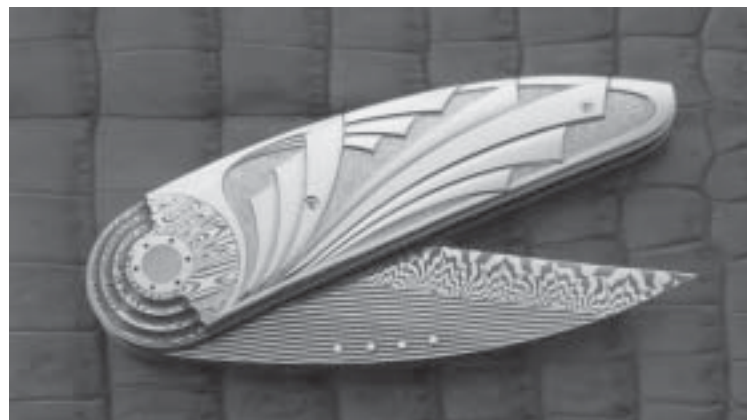
Amayak Stepanyan is a master engraver in steel and precious metals. He was born in Yerevan, the capital of Armenia, and moved with his family to Russia when he was a young child. At the age of 17 he became an apprentice watchmaker, following the profession for the next 11 years. He was intrigued by watching his master engraver using the flex shaft and decided to teach himself the art of engraving using gravers that he made himself. He practiced with the aid of information in a book by Brepohl, and became so proficient that within a few years, he was able to leave watchmaking and become a professional engraver and an expert in engraving intricate steel dies for multiple production.

He was employed at the

Russian Souvenir Company in Moscow, a company which was well known for its commemorative medals and badges, as well as enameled souvenirs of famous sites such as monasteries and the Kremlin, for sale to foreigners for foreign currency. He developed into a highly skilled, meticulous, techni-

cally-accomplished artist and an inspired designer with a unique style of engraving.

In 1996, friends near Boulder invited him to visit the United States. He brought samples of his work to show his skills, which led him to Lew Wackler, through whom he made important professional contacts. He received



letters of support from Alan Revere, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the editor of *Lapidary Journal*. On the strength of his extraordinary ability and with the continued support of his American friends Lew, Bill Brinker, and John Rohner, he was permitted to immigrate to the United States in 2000.

He moved to Arvada, Colorado. See **Amayak** on page 9

Member News

Todd Reed, Jerry Scavezze, Jeff and Susan Wise, Jeffrey Kaphan and Julie Jerman-Melka all have work in the *500 Earrings* book, published by Lark Books. The book will be released in May 2007. The juror was Alan Revere.

Todd Reed was the recent winner of a Niche award for gold jewelry.

Pay Your Dues and don't miss all the FUN!

Take a look at the **new** COMA website designed by Suzanne Nayduch. Email her your digital image and she'll put it in the Gallery. Email her your web address and she'll make a link between the COMA website and yours. You must be a COMA member in good standing (2007 Dues paid) to participate in this great marketing value.

Call for Entries

Oregon College of Art & Craft announces a call for entries for the exhibition *Craft Biennial: A Review of Northwest Art & Craft*. Artists in Oregon and Washington are invited to submit slides of work that investigate and redefine the traditional form of the object. To receive a Call For Entries Form, please call (503) 297-5544 or download at www.ocac.edu. Deadline for submitting slides is May 25, 2007. The *Craft Biennial* exhibition runs August 2 - September 27, 2007 with an opening reception on Thursday, August 2 from 4 to 7 p.m.

Gabriner in Colorado

As most jewelry artists will admit, one of the most difficult peripheral aspects of their jobs is conveying the beauty of their creations in two dimensions. To capture photographically the beauty of the stones, the subtleties of metal textures, and the intricacies of design is a daunting but required task. The process is, in fact, an art all its own. Many photographers have made it their life's work to master this art, but few have done it as skillfully as Ralph Gabriner. His artwork appears ubiquitously in the jewelry and gemstone world. A Google search of his name yields 803 article hits, most of which reference his work in journal articles for the jewelry and gemstone trade. Ralph Gabriner has been a studio photographer for 20

years, and he has specialized in jewelry for the past 10 years. At his studio in Yonkers, New York, he



receives artwork from hundreds of artists from across the country, and his resulting photographs appear with credit in every major trade journal. We met Ralph for the first time at the Buyer's Mar-

ket of American Craft 2006 summer show in Philadelphia, where he is the jewelry photographer of choice by the Rosen Group. After a short spiel, we were able to coax him to come to Colorado to share

his ideas with us. In addition to being a gifted artist, Ralph is congenial, bright and accessible. In short, he will be a great addition to this year's COMA conference!

Healthy Choice

Judy Hoch

One compelling reason to consider mass finishing is your lungs.

Most of us make jewelry that needs some smoothing and polishing. When doing it manually standing over the buff, you are ingesting massive amounts of tiny buffing particles that settle in your lungs. Carried with that are tiny bits of precious metals that can poison you. Even if you wear a dust mask like the wood workers use, you are getting this stuff in your lungs. If you have a perpetual hacking cough or trouble breathing, you know this. If you really like the filth of buff-

ing compound on your hands, face and clothes, at least wear a respirator to protect your lungs. Read the MSDS for your buffing compounds. I know of at least one jeweler that died from precious metal poisoning.

Mass finishing techniques greatly reduce the contaminants in your air. Most of the processes are wet, and all are contained in a device. You can wear rubber gloves to keep the process liquids from your skin.

Mass finishing has another advantage—it removes very little metal, about 0.25 percent by weight. Conven-

tional buffing removes from 3 percent to 7 percent of the metal. That's a lot to throw away or breathe. Not green.

Mass finishing has come a long way. You have many choices of media and machines to smooth your pieces. You have at least four choices on how to burnish. Mass finishing is a sophisticated answer to getting quality work out the door. It is not a short cut. It is how nearly all jewelers finish work in Europe. It is how all commercial jewelry manufacturers in the United States finish goods. It is a healthy choice.

End of sermon.

What's New?

Judy Hoch

My sister is an artist and does many of the same shows that I like. She posed this question: "Have you ever read anything about what percentage of your work should be new each year?"

I've never read such a thing—so we talked about how to figure that out. Some things seem obvious. The new work should be evolutionary, not radically different from what your clients have purchased in the past few years. Last year most of my work was without major stones, a huge change. Moreover, my sales showed it. Some new clients loved the new look, and some old clients thought I was a new artist. While that might be good, it really makes it hard to keep your existing client base.

Regardless of how much fun it is to push the envelope of acceptability, it all comes down to what you can make, paint, or weave that has some relation to what your clients understand. This is the evolution part, a relationship to what is known. Sometimes, it is fun to make an outrageous piece. Surround it with work that has a relationship both to last year's work and to the new far out design.

I know of one artist that annually chooses a new technique to use. That becomes their "new stuff." Choose something, a technique, new type of metal, a different kind of stone, anything. Make a conscious decision to change. I would suggest a general rule: not more than half of your work should be a noticeable departure from the past. And a minimum of 25 percent should be new. What do you think?

In any case, it is important

to have something to show when folks walk into your booth with the ever present question, "What's new?" They don't come to a show to see the same old stuff.

However, here's another question on what's new—how and when do you raise prices? By how much? Do you raise them on leftover inventory (do you have any?) or just on new stuff?

My thoughts go something like this. Your material prices have gone up. Sharing is good. Raise prices. Remember, the price you have to charge for wholesale or consignment is where you raise your prices. If you only raise the retail price by what your materials have increased, you are losing money on wholesale or consignment. Have you also raised your labor price?

If you have old inventory that you want to have fly out the door, leave the old prices on it. Do not lower prices on products that closely resemble past work. Your clients that purchased last year will not be back when they find that last year's treasure is now a bargain basement item.

My sister is adamant that you should display prices on everything. She has a story for each of her hand-painted pictures and on the story card are the measurements and the price. I've taken a slightly different approach. I have

each piece of jewelry priced on the back, but display prices on about 20 percent of the inventory. Customers seem to find it useful to know the range. That pretty much reflects Bruce Baker's approach.

Let us look at that idea of marking each piece. First, there is a practical problem with marking on the back—

the easy way is to use magic marker. But when you handle the piece, the price comes off, or if it doesn't, then you have the problem of removing it when you sell it. Have you ever seen a nice jewelry store with magic

marker prices? If you use little gummy tags, they fall off when the jewelry gets hot. If you use string tags, they mess up the display by just hanging out there or partially hiding under your smaller pieces. If you put a string tag on a chain for a pendant, the first thing the client will want to try is another chain. Now you have lost the price.

I think it is messy to have prices displayed on each piece. You absolutely must have the price written down somewhere. If you hesitate even a nanosecond when asked the price, the client assumes that it is open for bargaining. I try to have pages
See *New* on page 8

Last year most of my work was without major stones, a huge change. Some new clients loved the new look, and some old clients thought I was a new artist.

2007 Jewelry Design Competition

The Naja is hosting its first Jewelry Design Competition. The purpose is to reward excellence within the Colorado artist community. This year's theme is Bracelets, and pieces must be designed to be worn on the wrist, arm or ankle.

To be eligible, the entry must be all your own with the exception of stones. No purchased castings or findings will be accepted. Each entry will be judged on the basis of creativity, originality of design, execution of technique and functionality of the piece. Prizes starting at \$200 will be awarded.

An artist may enter up to five pieces. A \$10 entry fee and completed entry form must be submitted with each piece. The work, entry fee, and entry form must be at the Naja by June 2, 2007 and remain on premise until June 17, 2007.

More information is available at the Naja 6810 N. Broadway, Unit J, Denver, CO 80221 303-426-6284

Jewelry Appraisal Workshop

An in-depth jewelry appraisal workshop will be held in Reno, Nevada at the Peppermill Hotel and Casino on May 15 - 17. Nancy Stacy and LaShawn Bauer will present on behalf of MasterValuer International. This is a program of practical knowledge applied to accurate and legitimate appraisals and a "must attend" for any person who is presented with a "worth" question. Please check out www.mastervaluer.com and email for information.

Call for Shell Forming Images

Betty Helen Longhi and Cynthia Eid are writing a book about shell forming, which will be edited by Tim McCreight and published by Brynmorgen Press. The working title is *Shell Forming for Jewelers and Metalsmiths: Creative Paths to Form*. We are looking for photographs of shell formed metalwork to include in the book. The work may be wholly shell formed, or incorporate parts made using synclastic or anticlastic forming, or a combination of the two. Jewelry, hollowware, and sculpture of any scale, and made of any metal are all of interest. Digital images are preferable, but slides are fine. Digital images need to be at least 4" x 6" x 300 dpi in TIF. Please send up to 3 images for consideration. Images due July 31, 2007.

For complete guidelines contact:
ceid@cynthiaeid.com or
bhl@fluidformsinmetal.com.

Gallery Opportunity

Dear Metalsmiths,
 Please submit your work to the Green Horse Gallery in Manitou Springs. The artists and owners of Filthy Wilma's Art Gallery are moving to a better location in a charming old building in the heart of the business district. We are also changing our name. Our new space is bigger, well lit, and beautiful. Wilma's has been around for thirteen years, just off the avenue in an all right location. We hope to enjoy much more success in our new spot. Our gallery will have highly crafted pottery, paintings, etchings, textiles, sculpture, and **jewelry**. Please contact me, Tina Riesterer, if you are interested.
 719-685-1282
kriest14@aol.com

PMC Publications Coming Your Way

Available now:

PMC Decade, Edited by Tim McCreight, Essay by Donald Friedlich \$35

It has been ten years since Mitsubishi Materials Corporation developed and patented Precious Metal Clay. The first decade of PMC has seen tremendous growth, not only in the development of additional forms of the material, but in the innovative ways that artists are using metal clay to create unique and exciting works. This high quality presentation book will be the first to showcase the best work being done around the world.

To be released later this summer:

COMA Member Publishes New Book

CeCe Wire's new book on PMC, *New Directions in Metal Clay: 25 Creative Jewelry Projects*, is to be released in June 2007.

It is possible to pre-order through Amazon.com by using CeCe Wire in the search box. It is published by Lark Books. NOTE: The cover design is a temporary graphic showing pieces from my first book. All 25 projects are new, and the updated cover design will reflect this.

CeCe has a heavy schedule teaching PMC. You can find part of her schedule at www.riorewards.com and www.beadandbutton.com

PMC Technic, Edited by Tim McCreight

This innovative book presents the work of ten leaders of the Precious Metal Clay community who share techniques they have researched and taught in the last few years. Following the format of the *Metals Technic*, published in 1996, this full-color book provides a wealth of information about innovative techniques being used with metal clay. Clear instructions, detailed drawings, and photos of finished work will make this an important addition to the field. Contributors and topics include:

Tonya Davidson—*Using the PMC Syringe*

Celie Fago—*PMC Hinges*

Jennifer Kahn—*PMC Bezels*
 Doris King—*Fusing Sterling to PMC*

Terry Kovalcik—*Viscosity Painting*

Noortje Meijerink—*PMC on Ceramics*

Kelly Russell—*Using Stencils with PMC*

Barbara Simon—*Lampworking and PMC*

CeCe Wire—*Water Etching*

J. Fred Woell—*Coreless Beads*

New Directions in Metal Clay: 25 Creative Jewelry Projects, by CeCe Wire
 Available June 2007

Mary Lee from page 3

Lee started to investigate weaving and knotting techniques with wire. She wanted to emulate the lines in her sketches in her metalwork. Mary Lee quickly noticed that the twined wire recreated this effect. Her unique woven metal jewelry has a place in many permanent collections including The American Craft Museum, New York City; Renwick Gallery, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC; The Art Institute of Chicago; and The Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England, among others.

Mary Lee Hu has taught metalsmithing at University of Washington, Seattle since 1980. She recently retired from the university and remains committed to sharing her expertise and passion as a weaver of metal. She gives lectures and workshops throughout the country and has been active in numerous crafts organizations. She has

served as president of the Society of North American Goldsmiths and on the board of trustees of the American Craft Council and World Craft Council. We are enormously pleased to have her join us for the 11th annual COMA conference in Salida. Mary Lee will also conduct a two-day post-conference workshop for COMA members in Denver on July 16-17, 2007. For more information and to sign up for the workshop, check out the COMA website www.coloradometalsmiths.org or e-mail us at comaforum@comcast.net.

No lions are ever caught in mousetraps. To catch lions you must think in terms of lions, not in terms of mice. Your mind is always creating traps of one kind or another, and what you catch depends on the thinking you do. It is your thinking that attracts you to what you receive.

Thomas Dreier

On the Trail of a Good Case

Judy Hoch

When you are looking for display cases, you have several things to consider. While cost is certainly one important factor, consider also security, weight, reflections, ease of lighting inside case, and on what you are going to place the cases. If you have angled tops on your displays, you need to allocate a flat space somewhere to show individual pieces out of the case. Also, consider how much space you have to transport the cases.

One of the major considerations with cases is how you are going to get them to a show. For ten years, I did shows out of my VW Passat wagon. Initially I had all the stuff inside, but eventually bought a large car-top carrier for the tent and poles. Consider how you would load your vehicle. Tent weights go on the bottom always. Do you have to entirely unload your car to begin setting up because the tent is under everything? Last year I bought a used GMC passenger van, removed all but the two front seats and fitted out the van so that everything can be accessed individually. It has greatly simplified my life because I never unload it. I treat it like a trailer that happens to have a motor. It is a real treat to go to a show without having to load up all the stuff first. If you are going to use the family car for shows, do you have a place to put all the display stuff?

I currently have several Arizona case displays. I had them make the portable cases only 16 inches deep (back to front) instead of the standard 22 inches. I display them on propane podiums, which are 30 x 16 inches, and I use 42 inch tall ones. The Arizona cases are secure: I can

lock them and actually go to the bathroom without fear of being ripped off. I have halogen lights for inside shows and bright LEDs in a string for outdoors. In general, I really like them, and they look very professional. All of the transparent windows are tempered glass. That makes them heavy — about 35 pounds without the carrying case. They set up very fast without tools, an important point where the unions have rules about tools. You can buy relatively inexpensive packing cases for storage and shipping and schlepping. My cases are powder coated black. The inside LED lights are very cool, and the halogens don't heat the case up too much. I have deep cycle marine batteries to power an outdoor show, and also a low noise e1000-type generator to use where allowed. I can run the LED lights all weekend on one battery. Halogens take more power.

My prior set up was with Dynamic Display System (DDS) cases. I had three double-angled glass cases and one stackable single cube. They are lightweight, and fold up into practically nothing. They look really good.



They are not secure in any way: the Plexiglas is too flexible, it scratches, and the doors are a joke. The bases wiggle and scare folks away. If you put the cases on a sturdy base, for example a propane podium, they are sturdier but not secure. And if you put them on something other than the DDS bases, you have to modify the posts that hold up the walls because they go below the flat plate of the base. They are fiddly to set up and the little screws are a nuisance. The more you use them, the more the bases wiggle. And until they get wiggly, they are very difficult to get them to give up and fold down. These don't come with storage cases,

See Cases on page 8

Magazine Changes Name

Lapidary Journal is changing its name to *Jewelry Artist* and **Michael Boyd** is on the cover of both issues—April 2007 and the new June 2007 issue. **Michael** is also on the **Board of directors** of *Jewelry Artist*. That makes **TWO** board of directorships that Michael is lending his expertise to. He is also on the board of the Sangre de Cristo Art Museum and the founder and President of the Mobile Metals Program. The Mobile Metals Program will be holding a program in Walsenberg, Colorado on April 30, May 1 & 2 at the local high school. Nancy Blair, Susan Kentroti, and Elizabeth McDevitt will be assisting the Mobile Metals program. In the April issue, Michael's work appears as "Where are They Now," along with Harold O'Connor, Andy Cooperman and COMA 2007 presenter Marne Ryan. COMA members know where all of these artist are, and they are terrific.

Grabbing the Brass Ring—Not Quite

In the ongoing saga of my attempt to get accepted to an ACC show, I got an email last week that I am on the wait list for the San Francisco show. I was elated. But the bubble deflated when I found out that I am number 86 on the wait list. Oh well, that is probably as close as I will get after 10 years of applying.
—Judy Hoch

FYI

Rio Grande has a new publication, **The Artisan's Quarterly**. This issue is filled with tips on metal-smithing, business and marketing. Call Rio for an issue, 800-545-6566.

Santa Fe Symposium
www.santafesymposium.org

Bead & Button show
www.beadandbuttonshow.com

SNAG
www.snagmetalsmith.com

Metal Clay Conference
www.ce1.com/MCWC

CLASP (in Denver)
www.claspconvergence.com

Clear Creek Academy of Jewelry & Metal Arts has started its new session. In addition to a full class schedule, they are offering many weekend workshops in metal technique and marketing. New this session is "Open Studio Days" on Saturday and/or Sunday. Contact Kathy Pritchett at (303) 429-1401 or visit www.clearcreekacademy.com.

The **Sweetman/Allen studio** is offering a variety of metal techniques classes to its students. Information on upcoming workshops and classes can be gotten from Richard at (303) 358-6430.

2007 Snag Conference
Directions Unknown:
Looking Forward, Learning From History
June 13-16, 2007 Memphis, Tennessee.
www.snagmetalsmith.org

Clasp—A *Convergence of Jewelers*
September 14-16, 2007
Denver, Colorado

New from page 5

of pictures of all the pieces with me, and I write the price on the pictures to make sure I'm consistent. Few things will upset customers more than getting one price in the morning and a different one in the afternoon. Having fixed prices also means that you can actually have someone help you without having to ask prices all the time.

I have seen a couple of solutions to the problems of displaying prices on everything. One jeweler used tiny brass discs with the price displayed next to the jewelry. It was unobtrusive but informative. That solution depends on placing the jewelry back in the case in exactly the same place each time.

A really nice solution was done by our COMA president, Susan. She makes labels on the computer describing the stones, the name of the piece and the price. She sticks the label on a bit of paper or foam core and places that next to the item.

By using a relatively small font and printing everything on the same size label, the regularity of the labels makes the display work. While this is a nearly perfect answer, it requires an incredible organization skill. Haven't we all made just one more piece the night before we leave for a show? Where is the label for that? Maybe I should be making labels the night before the show.

I think I'm going to try for more organization and display prices on everything. When I was in Susan's studio, I saw something I'd never thought of doing. She had all of her display materials, risers, prices and jewelry, laid out on a table. She actually makes the display prior to getting to the booth and throwing the stuff out. Wow, no wonder she looks so organized at a show—she is!

Cases from page 7

rather the legs are supplied with canvas sacks. I put the top in a pillowcase and made fleece fitted cases for the Plexiglas. The posts store in a flat piece of cloth that you roll up and secure with rubber bands. Light bars are also in canvas sacks, and I stored the lights in egg cartons because they are fragile and expensive. Their available shipping cases look like what you ship golf bags in and are expensive and bulky. In retrospect, the DDS system is ideal for shipping because it is lightweight and it looks good. It lacks substance in my opinion. Another consideration with the DDS cases is that their halogen lights run very hot, and the way the cases are made, you need two strings of lights.

I've used Abstracta cases. They fold down flatter than anything. They go together fast. They don't like to come apart when you break down. There are a jillion ways to set them up and they are sturdy. They are the 90 percent choice of artists at big shows like the Buyers Market of American Craft. They look like Abstracta. They are not particularly secure—again Plexiglas is the culprit. Lots of fiddly little clips and holders break at nearly every use. It is an erector set for jewelry display. We made bases out of foam core for the inside floor and the inside shelf. We made skirts for them out of surplus fireproof fabric from the local art theatre. The tops with Plexiglas are so insecure that at the last show we skipped using the Plexiglas at all and displayed jewelry au naturel on open bases. That was in a relatively secure, vetted wholesale show. It didn't feel good to have it all out there in the open, but we lost nothing.

I didn't start out with all

nice stuff. Here is the tale of how I built my displays from the beginning. My first cases were the flat three-inch ones from Arizona case that you open the top at an angle and there you are. Not secure, attractive or professional.

Then I found some "dump tables" on sale at a fabric store that was closing out. We made some supports and angled some Plexiglas into the tables, put pretty blue pleated skirts on the tables and had our first tent display. We even put pleated blue curtains over the top and down the sides. It was awful—it looked like a second rate puppet theatre, and the curtains wrinkled and got dirty so you had to wash and iron (!) them before every show. It all was on a cheap EZ-up tent. We did put that all together for under \$300 for a first try, however. Our second lesson with this display (the first was the ironing) was that the nice full skirts on the tables moved in the wind and scared customers away.

At one time, I had some Allstate cases—the 14-inch tall aluminum things that look a lot like aquariums. Another try was some hand made oak cases from a lapidary in Utah. They went together with nylon straps, and had sharp corners, and in their carry cases, they weighed over 60 pounds each. We made plywood covered with indoor/outdoor carpet for the bases with shelves on straps and held the mess together with bungee cords. You get the picture: a Rube Goldberg contraption. Each 24" wide case and base weighed over 100 pounds, and we had five of them. That weight issue is what took me to the DDS cases.

Bottom line, I've gone from the erector set—cheap—to See Cases on page 9

gallery 150

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Amayak from page 3

rado, where he currently lives with his wife Svetlana. He has worked with Bill Brinker, Lew Wackler and Baron Andreas von Zadora engraving objects of extraordinary scale and beauty.

In 2002, Lew introduced Amayak to the custom knife world through his connections with Dick Hodgson, a well-known professional knifemaker (now deceased). Through Dick, Amayak met Jerry McClure, who invited him to the Dallas Knife Show, eventually leading to a successful collaboration with Owen Wood in 2003.

Amayak now spends his creative energy collaborating with Owen, engraving knife handles of extraordinary beauty.

Amayak's work has been published in the journals *Knife Annual*, *Numismatist*, *Blade Magazine* and *Excalibur*.

Chair from page 1

www.coloradometalsmiths.org. Speaking of which, check out the cutting-edge new look of the website. Suzanne Naydych has completely redesigned it with awesome results. She is now accepting quality images to be posted in the members' gallery. You can also include a link to your personal/business website. We have received several inquiries from the public about artists whose images are shown. Feel free to use this as a tool to expand the exposure of your business. This tool is open to current members only. Submit your images directly to Suzanne at snaydych@comcast.net.

In a final note, I would also like to wish Yuko and Oscar congratulations on the birth of their beautiful daughter, Maya.

See you in Salida!

Members from page 1

- statement.
4. Pieces must be delivered to the gallery: cultureclash, 101 North "F", Salida, Colorado 80121 by June 29, 2007. The show runs through July 27, 2007. Please pick up work by July 30. Artists are responsible for return shipping.
 5. Please contact Geraldine Alexander at (719) 539-3118 or email her at cultureclash@hotmail.com with further questions.

The artist's reception is Friday, July 13 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at cultureclash. Be there to hear about and purchase the latest designs from your friends and fellow artists. It's a great opportunity to expand your art collection!

Cases from page 8

the Dynamic Display stylin' deal, and have happily settled on the Arizona cases—flat and vertical portable ones. I think I'll stay where I am for a while. They work well and look great. Incidentally, the Arizona case solution is less expensive than the dynamic display one.

Reference these websites for current pricing:

www.dynamicdisplaysystems.com
www.arizonacase.com
www.propanels.com

cultureclash

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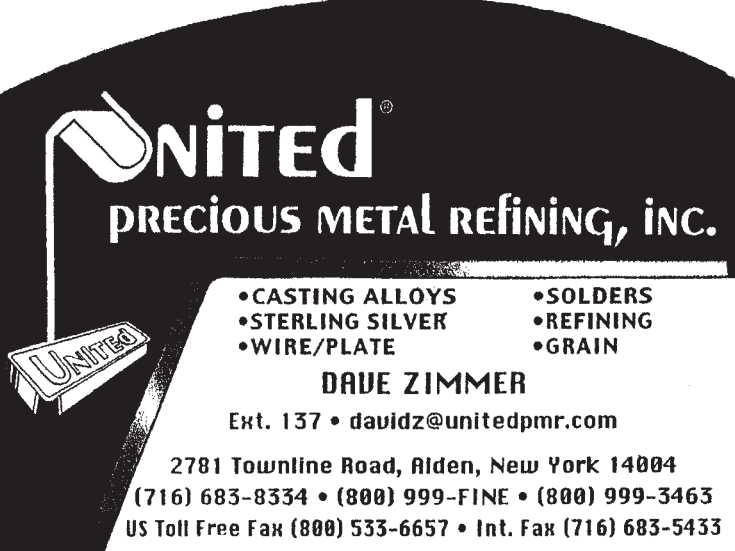
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My interests are: Marketing Advertising Computer Programs Phones

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We will be compiling our member information into a directory for distribution among current members ONLY. The directory will include name, business name, address and email address. You may opt out of this directory by placing a check in the space below.
_____ I would like my information EXCLUDED from the COMA directory.

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Deadlines for submissions will be the last day of March, June, September and December. E-mail articles and materials to Nancy Blair at dnblair@msn.com.

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