
An interview with CoMA member Amy Bailey September 2020



Tell us about yourself.

My name is Amy Bailey. I am Faculty and Area Coordinator for Jewelry Metal Arts at Arapahoe Community College (ACC). I studied with Kee-ho Yuen and graduated with a B.A. in Art and a M.A. from University of Northern Iowa in 2000. Then, I received a M.F.A. in Jewelry Metal Arts from California College of the Arts in San Francisco/Oakland in 2003. There I was fortunate to study with Marilyn and Jack da Silva, Deb Lozier, and Susan Wood. Immediately after graduating, I started teaching at different colleges and workshops in California. After moving to Colorado in 2008, I taught as adjunct faculty at ACC and MSU Denver for 5 years before getting a full-time position at ACC. In addition to teaching, I was a Co-Show Manager for the International Caribbean Art Fair in NYC for two years in 2007-2008.

What brought you to metalsmithing and how long have you been doing it?

I went to college for graphic design. I took 3D Foundations with Kee-ho Yuen and he introduced me to jewelry metals. I was hooked and didn't take graphic design until my senior year. Kee-ho was a huge mentor to me and my beginning to metalsmithing.

Tell us a bit about your practice.

I am greatly influenced by my surroundings and architecture/structures. My work explores ideas of memory, landscape, and the soul. I mainly work with silver and copper but sometimes like to incorporate stones, resin, cement, or wood. I love learning and am inspired through teaching.



My Center (Brooch), Sterling silver, 18k Gold, Carnelian, 2019 (Photographed by Artist.)



Unlock From Within, Copper, Enamel, Brass, 2003 (Photographed by M. Lee Fatherree.)

What is the most memorable thing you have made?

I think the most memorable things I have made are my teapots. I was told once that if you can make a teapot you can do anything in metal. I don't know if that is true, but the teapots definitely taught me a lot about working bigger and exploring how to make all the parts work together sculpturally. Although the teapots are about the content versus functionality, all the parts exist and work: the lid, spout, and handle.

What do you love about working with metal?

I enjoy the problem solving. Every piece is a design and technical challenge. I enjoy figuring out how to make something work compositionally as well as mechanically.

Why do you enjoy about being a CoMA member?

CoMA provides a valuable connection to others in the metalsmithing community. The Conference and Demo Days are inspiring and energizing. We are fortunate to have CoMA.

I am constantly exploring traditional techniques from enameling to chasing & repoussé, as well as more contemporary ones such as 3D modeling/printing and laser cutting.

I have a studio space set up at home. However, with 4-year-old twin boys I don't get to work in that space very much. At home, the boys and I will work with clay, paper, drawing, and play in the sandbox. The boys see things differently than I do and I enjoy watching them develop. ACC has become a place that I can explore, work, and share ideas in metal. I have a lot of talented students and it is exciting and inspiring to work with them. Because I teach, I end up with a lot of samples and parts that I demo with. However, during this time in my life, between home and school, I don't get a lot of pieces finished. There are so many series of work that I have done in my mind but have yet to become metal.

Where can we see your work?

I have shown work in various exhibitions throughout the U.S., including part of the permanent collection at the de Young Museum. Currently, my work is in the Virtual Faculty Show through the Arapahoe Community College. Links to that and ACC's Student Show are below:

<https://www.arapahoe.edu/acc-instructor-art-exhibition>

<https://www.arapahoe.edu/acc-art-design-student-show>



Untitled (Channel Inlay Bracelet), Sterling silver, Noreena Jasper, Petrified Wood, 2020 (Photographed by Artist.)