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LAPIDARY JOURNAL

JEWELRY ARTIST

MAY/JUNE 2014



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Bill Fretz's
Fluted Bangle
PAGE 30

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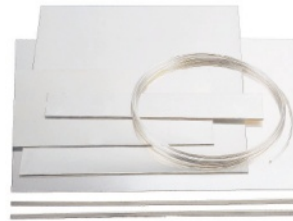
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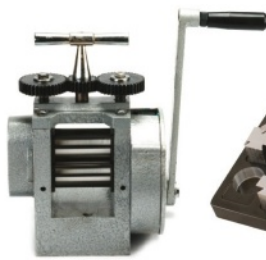
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PHOTOS: JIM LAWSON



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Luxuriously Unexpected



IF IT'S SPRING, CAN FUR be far behind? At first it seemed odd to me, too, but when I thought a bit more, I had to admit there was a certain logic to this idea.

Jewelry designer and member of the famous Italian design family of the same name, Delfina Delettrez Fendi has released her spring collection of sleek metal cuffs, rings, and ear cuffs sprouting puffs of fur in pastel or brilliant hues. Artisan jewelers have been working fiber into designs for years and one of the

hottest trends now is leather in jewelry for every season (see Trends, page 42), so fur would seem like a natural progression. Consider also the feathers Fendi sometimes uses and the glittering Swarovski crystals reminiscent of iridescently colored birds, and besides a pretty good representation of the animal kingdom from four legs to two wings, you have the spirit of a pervasive aesthetic finely distilled: bold forms, whimsical touches, and an anything-goes approach to mixing media.

Fendi's pieces have all the suggestions of luxury you'd expect, yet none of the materials belong to the club of fine jewelry. The otherwise unidentified "white metal" is presumably a base metal, the crystals are highly dispersive glass, not stone, and while a mark of luxury clothing, the fur, feathers, and leathers are not traditional jewelry materials at all.

That twist is what gets our attention. What keeps it is the coherence of the work. While surprising, the combination does not come off as incongruous but instead achieves an appealingly playful elegance. Also conjuring up the days, or rather nights, when the phrase "dress for dinner" was au courant and meant white tie and tails or evening gowns (as distinct from the gowns ladies wore during the day), the collection looks like another nod to the popular PBS series *Downton Abbey*, updated to a contemporary cheekiness. And, unlike a lot of outlandish fashion or super fine craftwork, this collection does successfully address one question I frequently ask myself when face to face with some over-the-top design: where or when would anyone ever use it?

While I won't be running to find the nearest Fendi retailer to pick up a piece or two for myself, I am intrigued by the work and would enjoy seeing someone wearing a pair of those ear cuffs at a restaurant, a shop, or walking down the street. Both casual and dressy rather than neither, they would be in place anywhere that person might wear any pair of earrings, and would be the perfect jewel any time that person wanted to turn a few heads.

Merle White
MWhite@Interweave.com

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NEXT TIME:



William Fretz's fluted brass bangle, COVER

Riff on a design feature of this piece such as color, texture, form, value, line, space, repetition, balance, contrast, unity, or variety for your sketch.



Sketch a setting for the faceted quartz and Mintabie opal Galaxy Gem by Mark Oros, page 24.

DEADLINES:
JUNE 30, 2014

Email digital scans at 300 DPI or send photocopies of no more than three sketches per challenge, indicating the design factor that is your starting point. Sketches will not be returned.

WRITE TO US ANYTIME:

What do you think about what you've seen and read in *Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist*?

SEND SKETCHES & LETTERS for possible print or online publication to: KRosenbusch@interweave.com; or Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist, 88 Glocker Way, #299, Pottstown, PA 19465.

Include your name, city, and state, and indicate "Your Turn" on the subject line or envelope.

> DESIGN CHALLENGES

YOUR COVER RIFFS:

Designs based on Lexi Erickson's sterling and goldstone ladies' bolo, January/February 2014.



Rima Kent
Reno, Nevada



Shevvy Baker
Louisville, Kentucky

YOUR SETTINGS:

Designs based on jessite cabochon, cut by John H. Heusler, G.G., January/February 2014.



Rima Kent
Reno, Nevada



Florence Slagel
Plainfield, Illinois



Brandy-Michelle Byard
Arlington, Texas



Elaine Songer
Mims, Florida



Gloria Shaner
Wynnewood, Pennsylvania

› LETTERS

Re: "Guatemalan Jade," March 2014

My copy of *Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist* arrived yesterday, and I just completed reading Jim Perkins's article on Guatemalan jade. I've always enjoyed reading Jim's articles, but I must say, this is by far the best one yet. I hope everyone gets the opportunity to read it. It is well worth the time.

Ernie Hawes
Albuquerque, New Mexico



Re: Cool Tools & Hip Tips, March 2014

In Cool Tools & Hip Tips in the March issue, Helen I. Driggs reviewed the SOBA One saw frame. I have listed my name to purchase the frame, but I would also like to know what blades would be recommended by Helen.

Barbara Yeager Goldberg
Columbus, Ohio

Helen Driggs responds: Purchase the best quality blades you can when learning to saw – then when you break a blade, you can rule it out as faulty and focus on improving your technique! I like the Laser Golds from Rio and the Pike Blades from Allcraft.



THEIR TURN

a gallery of this issue's contributors



**ALEV OZTEN'S
Twister Cuff**

Sterling silver, 18K gold
"Learn to Succeed"
Page 52

PHOTO: HAP SAKWA



**ROGER HALAS'S
Stingray Pendant**

Brass nickel/silver mokumé gané, aquamarine,
white sapphires

"Cap Mounted Pendant with Solder Inlay"
Page 46

PHOTO: ROGER HALAS



**JOHN F. HEUSLER, G.G.'S
Ring**

Midnight Kaily gemstone, 18K yellow
gold, sterling silver, .20ct diamond

Cool Tools & Hip Tips
Page 14

PHOTO: JOHN F. HEUSLER, G.G.



PHOTO: MARK OROS

**MARK OROS'S
Pendant and Earrings**

Carved Turkish purple jade, Welo
opal cabochon, silver. Designed
and carved by Mark Oros, set by
Carla Bijouterie.

"Galaxy Gem"
Page 24

PHOTO: EMIKO OYE



**JENNY REEVES'S
Ring**

Argentium® sterling silver,
18K gold, green tourmaline,
diamonds

“Learn to Succeed”
Page 52

PHOTO: LISA JOHNSON, THE ARMORY ART CENTER



**ELLEN LEVY'S
Pendant**

Sterling silver, Tampa Bay coral

“Learn to Succeed”
Page 52

PHOTO: COURTESY JNW MIGNOT GALLERY



**WENDY MIGNOT'S
South Sea Snake Necklace**

South sea pearls, leather

Trends
Page 42

**DAVID
BRACKNA'S
5.78ct Nigerian
Spessartite**

Smokin' Stones
Page 22

PHOTO: DAVID BRACKNA



WANT TO CONTRIBUTE?

Share your expertise with other readers in a project, demo, or article and you'll be invited to show an example of your work here. Contributors' guidelines can be requested by emailing MWhite@Interweave.com, subject line: LJJG Guidelines.

By Cathleen McCarthy

Product Placement

put your jewelry in the spotlight — literally!

Many jewelry designers dream of having a star wear their jewelry on the red carpet. But unless you can afford to loan out \$100,000 baubles, you have a better shot at having your jewelry picked up by a film or TV show — preferably one fashion bloggers feast on each week, posting screen shots of the latest episode's beautiful, accessorized stars that get picked up on social media.

This is not pie in the sky. There is an entire industry built on supplying costumes and props for television and film sets. You can attempt to knock at this door yourself and send samples of your jewelry to costume designers. Or you can sign up with people who make a living doing precisely that. Jessica Cohen is one.

REGISTER WITH AN AGENCY

Cohen began her career in 1995, working on the production of a movie for 20th Century Fox. She worked as a set decorator for the next eight years, getting to know a lot of costume designers along the way. She became frustrated at how difficult it was to line up products for a set.

"Because of all the non-compete clauses, I would have to call ten different companies just to line up one piece," Cohen says. "In particular, I saw that no one was really handling product placement for fine designer jewelry."

When *Sex and the City* premiered on HBO in 1998, Cohen supplied jewelry for the pilot. It went so well, the costume designer relied on her for jewelry for the rest of the show's six seasons. As you probably know, that show was a smash success, spawned



two spin-off movies and countless fashion trends.

With Cohen's help, that show put some little-known designers on the map. Sarah Jessica Parker became a customer of one of them, Renee

Lewis, and Akiyo Montsuoka's career was made.

Since then, Cohen has placed jewelry in other trend-setting prime-time slots, including *Gossip Girl*, *Girls*, *Nurse Jackie*, and *The Good Wife*.

Jewelry designer Amelia Rose found herself in the spotlight after a necklace Cohen supplied wound up on the throat of Catherine Zeta-Jones on the set of the 2008 movie *The Rebound* and photographed by paparazzi. Her jewelry has since cropped up on all kinds of movies and shows.

Alex Woo's jewelry became a favorite on *Gossip Girl*, a series centered around a group of Upper East Side Manhattan teens, another trend-setting show. When the costume designers moved on to *The Vampire Diaries*, Alex Woo and her jewelry went with them.

In February, Cohen launched her redesigned site, LupRocks.com, where she offers a couple levels of entry. Most accessible is the \$99 per month plan, which gets you a page on her site devoted to your jewelry, as many images as you like, links to your website and social media, and plugs in a digital newsletter that goes out to 400 production contacts.

WORN AND SEEN, TOO

Having someone famous wear your jewelry doesn't do you much good if you don't have photographic evidence. "When someone famous is wearing something in their personal life, you have to try to find them," Cohen says. "They probably aren't going to send you photos. So you can stalk the tabloids, but it's much harder to spot and it's not really what we do."

Fact is, having a celebrity don a piece of your jewelry is only the first step — and if she wears it on her off hours, the rest of the world will probably never know about it. Even if she's snapped with your necklace on, what is the likelihood she will identify you, let alone have your name appear in the caption under the photograph? More likely, you'll never even know your jewelry stepped out on celebrated flesh.

"A lot depends on the way a designer markets it and gets the message out.

Catherine Necklace

BY AMELIA ROSE®

as seen on

thegoodwife



Sometimes, it's overnight success," Cohen says. If your jewelry appears in a popular movie or television show, on the other hand, you know millions of people are viewing it. If you stream the show on your computer, you can take a screen shot and send it out to your social media followers.

Now that most of us know what "product placement" means and TV costume designers have their own blogs and sometimes their own branded jewelry lines, it's not quite as easy to place jewelry on a show as influential as *Sex and the City*. You have a much better chance of getting placement working with someone like Cohen, with a track record for placements.

SPREAD THE WORD

It's up to you to track where that jewelry appears and get the word out. Cohen represents close to a hundred designers, each of whom have several collections represented on her site. She can't possibly track the appearance of every piece, especially since costume designers rarely bother to alert their suppliers which products have appeared when.

Having a solid social media following in place helps a lot. So does the advent of live streaming. It used to be that you had to tape a show on your DVR, then have it professionally translated into a still image. So much for immediacy.

Now you can stream most shows on your personal computer. If you spot your jewelry, you just hit pause, take a screen shot, and then share it on social media. Chances are good that other people will be doing the same thing. "A lot of blogs cover this now and different people post about it on social media," she says.

Many designers now have an "As Seen On" page on their website, where they show photographs of celebrities wearing their jewels or the covers of magazines and broadcast media that featured their work. If this kind of exposure is your idea of a dream come true, maybe it's time to give that dream a shot.

CATHLEEN MCCARTHY IS a freelance writer whose stories appear in *Town & Country*, *Art & Antiques*, and her own site, TheJewelryLoupe.com.

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"How to Get Your Jewelry on TV and in Films"



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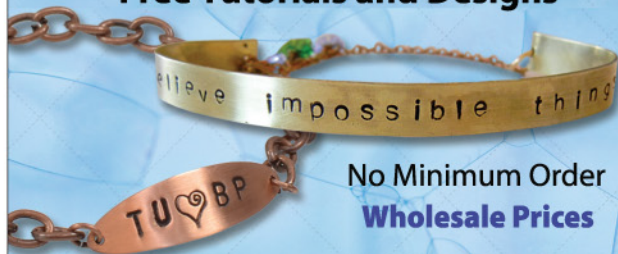
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BY HELEN I. DRIGGS | PRODUCT PHOTOS: JIM LAWSON



Metalsmithing and lapidary finds from the 2014 shows

Treasures from Tucson

Every winter, I am lucky enough to get to the amazing mix of Tucson gem, mineral, jewelry, fossil, and bead shows to discover what's new and interesting in jewelry making and gem cutting tools and supplies. It's harder work than you might think, although of course I love it. Because of a weather delay this year, some of the tools I shipped got home before I did, and I started right in on unpacking the second I got back — who needs sleep?

For Stone — and Metal, Too

Now that I've started cutting stones, I really love to play stone off metal and back in my work and my studio has become a creative playground for my dual focus. It's really interesting when tools work for both metalsmithing and lapidary work instead of either/or, and several of these new finds can do just that. The downside to all this duality? It just takes me a bit longer to shut down the studio for the night.

I've been shopping for a large flat lap for quite some time. Although I own a little 6" unit I dearly love, I was looking for something with a larger work surface that's tough, compact, easy to use, and versatile — something I could take along when I travel. Enter Rio Grande's Dura-Bull line.

The **Dura-Bull Slant Cabber** (204-121) included the variable-speed base unit, a 180-grit metal disc, a hex wrench, and four backing discs. You do have the option of selecting a range of adhesive-backed sanding and smoothing discs, but the included 325, 600, and 1200 standard ones seemed logical, because they augment and fit into the range of grits (80, 220, 280, 1200, and 3000) I use on my Diamond Pacific Genie. The fourth disc is used with a softer Tech-10 polish pad and includes a syringe of 14,000 diamond compound to charge it, but you could probably use it with any other water-based stone polishing compound.

There are so many positive features about this cabber, I don't know where to start. It is easy to set up, easy to use, easy to clean, not deafeningly loud, virtually maintenance free, and made in the USA. Clocking in at a 2.5' x 2.5' worktop footprint, it's compact and light but sturdy, making it beginner friendly and very portable — with the addition of a power source and a wastewater bucket. My top-favorite thing about it is the drip supply — off



is really off and on is really on, which may sound picky, but keep in mind the damage that unintended moisture can do to metal — including metal grinding wheels and discs. Rust happens while you are distracted with soldering!

Another fabulous feature is the slant. Though technically not a flat lap, the flat discs serve the same function with one important difference. I am tall, so cutting rock for long stretches of time in a cold studio can really kill my lower back. This unit solves that problem — the grinding wheel is both elevated and positioned so you can see what you are doing without crunching down — a double plus to those of us with older eyes and spines.

But don't overlook this unit if you don't cut rock: it also works on non-ferrous metals, glass, and ceramic. The entire Dura-Bull line is designed with the dual or

This saw allows you to cut into a slab from any direction, isolate and trim out just what you want from the interior, and then back out of the same kerf — thereby preserving the rest of the slab.

multi craftsperson in mind. The line's wide range of workshop equipment includes trim saws, tumblers, polishing units, grinding and casting equipment, and dust collectors. If I were starting to equip my studio again, this is the way I'd go.

> [MORE AT RIOGRANDE.COM](http://MOREATRIOGRANDE.COM)

The **Taurus Ring Saw 3** by Gemini Saw Co. is a tool that stopped me absolutely dead in my tracks. Here's why: the blade cuts and simultaneously grinds intricate cuts in any direction. This feature is awesome because it virtually eliminates waste.

Picture this scenario: there's a great feature smack dab in the middle of a slab you'd like to cut a cab from — however, you'll need to saw through something else that's equally nice to get to it. Hate that, right? This saw allows you to cut into a slab from any direction, isolate and trim out just what you want from the interior, and then back out of the same kerf — thereby preserving the rest of the slab.

OK. I'll give you a minute so your heart rate slows down. Take a deep breath now, so I can list the other amazing features.

Stone, glass, non-ferrous metals, plastic, ceramic, and tile are no match for the seven different specialty blades available to purchase. One even separates — meaning you can drill a hole in a slab, thread the blade into the opening, and then make interior cuts such as rings, loops, washers, whatever. All the blades cut with water, not oil, and there is a blade stabilizer, face shield, large work surface, and built-in lamp. The saw even snaps out of the base to function as a hand-held unit.

A wide range of replacement and accessory parts is available, including a 45-degree bevel edger, straight edge, and circle cutter. It comes with a three-year warranty,

weighs 15 pounds, and is packaged with an illustrated setup manual and a super-hilarious instructional DVD that will not only answer every setup and maintenance question you might have about the saw, it will make you laugh as you are doing so. After I did this, It took me about 15 minutes to start cutting. PS: everything is made in the USA.

> [MORE AT GEMINISAW.COM](http://MOREATGEMINISAW.COM)



IF YOU CUT

Here are 10 super-important tips for lapidary work

1 Don't argue. **Wear your goggles** when you grind or cut rock. Actually, wear them when you grind or cut anything.

2 **Run clean water** over the work and the wheels whenever it is possible. Some units recirculate water, some don't. I make it a point to check and change the water in the trays at every logical stopping point: after the first set of wheels, after changing a disc, after trimming a big slab, etc. Cleanliness is king when you are making any work, but especially lapidary. Add a wetting agent to your cutting water, like Diamond Pacific's blue **Water Aid**, to extend the life of your wheels and blades.

3 **Avoiding cross contamination** of grits is critical — unless you like those big scratches on your stone. Always wash whatever you are cutting thoroughly before you change wheels or discs. Otherwise, lingering particles of coarse grit might contaminate the next finer grit wheel as you use it. I keep a pitcher of clean water on the worktop just for filling trays and rinsing stones.

4 **Look** at what you are doing every now and then. It's easy to become hypnotized by the spinning wheels and running water. Rinse your stone, dry it off, and walk out into the light with your Optivisor on and take a peek at the surface of the stone. I guarantee you'll see things that you didn't see at the running machine.

5 **Clean and dry discs.** After using each disc on a flat lap, run clean water over the surface to clear it of slurry. Then, turn off the water, and run the machine until the wheel surface is dry. Remove it from the machine, clean off the back and let it air dry completely before storing it. My process is to clean at night and bag it dry the next morning. I store my discs in

clearly marked zip-style bags or plastic containers with a notation of both the color of the disc and grit number.

6 **And the machine.** When you are finished working for the day, drain the machine after running warm, clear water through it to clear away any lingering slurry. I use a big pitcher and a big yellow squarish cat litter bucket just for cleaning my lapidary equipment. Then, use a clean rag to wipe down the worktop, equipment and floor, unless you like those gritty, gray splats all over the place.

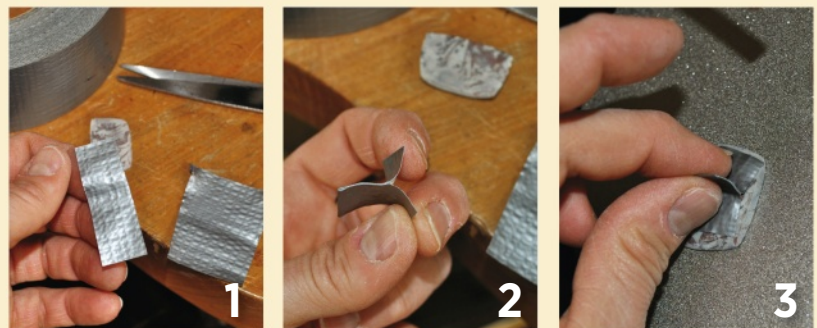
7 **Do not ever dump waste water from stone cutting down the drain.** Once the sediment settles, it becomes quite cement-like, and it will create a plumbing nightmare. Dump your stone cutting waste water outside on the ground — those minerals will fertilize the plants for you.

8 **Position first.** Flat laps can sometimes "steal" a piece right out of your hand as you approach a running machine to grind on it. I find it helpful to

position a stone — or a soldered bezel I need to reduce the height of — on the lap first and then slowly turn on the motor. That way, I know it is positioned flat and level before I grind, and I can increase speed accordingly. Dop sticks or other holding devices will be your best friend here.

9 **Make a "handle"** out of duct tape to hold on to tiny stones, parts, or bits you want to grind. Your fingerprints will thank you (see demo below).

10 **Protect your nails?** Some stone material, such as psilomelane, is so dirty that your fingernails will be disgusting for weeks after cutting. That, in addition to your dried-out skin and ratty cuticles from constant wet hands, virtually guarantees snide remarks about your manicure. To combat this, scrape your fingernails on a bar of wet soap to pack it under them, and then wear latex or nitrile gloves when cutting dark materials. Though not picture-perfect, at least your hands will be presentable. Thanks to John Heusler for that one.



DUCT TAPE HANDLES AT THE FLAT LAP

Photo 1 Cut a strip of duct tape.

Photo 2 Fold it in the middle, but don't allow the ends to connect.

The tape will form a T shape.

Photo 3 Press the ends of the tape down on whatever you need to

hold and burnish down the tape with your thumbnail for a tight seal. Get thee to the flat lap.



Normally, I don't use templates when I cut rock. I changed my thinking on that after I saw these **Slabstocabs.com Templates** at the Diamond Pacific tent in Electric Park. Designed by John Heusler G.G.(GIA), a frequent contributor to *Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist*, these particular templates have such fantastic shapes that you must take a look at them yourself.

While designed with gem cutting in mind, they're also very useful for the metalwork part of creating jewelry: beautiful pendants, earrings, and other jewelry objects will get a great design start with these contours. And think of the advantage of identical outlines that step up in size: cut a stone using the smallest size, then saw out a metal back plate from a few sizes up, and voilà! Perfect match. Also consider this: saw out a metal blank following the contours, grab a forming hammer or two, and see where those shaped blanks take you with synclastic, anticlastic, or fold-formed objects . . . so much fun it should be illegal!

> [MORE AT SLABSTOCABS.COM](http://MOREATSLABSTOCABS.COM) AND DIAMONDPACIFIC.COM

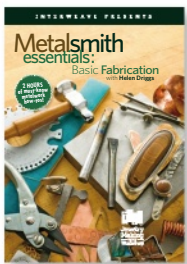
SEE MORE WORK
their turn » **PAGE 8**

learn more
from *helen driggs*

Riveting and Cold Connections (video)

The Jewelry Maker's Field Guide (book)

Basic Fabrication (video)



and more!

> shop.jewelrymakingdaily.com

try this, too

Five Tool Challenge

> JewelryMakingDaily.com/Blogs-LJJA-Artist-Design-Challenge

For Metal and Stone

The **Foredom Tools Portable Micro motor** (K.1030) is fantastic for putting in your toolbox for workshops, classes, and travel, and makes it easy to bring most of the features of a full-size flex-shaft unit with you. A control box with a dial allows 0-30,000 RPM adjustments that you can monitor on the digital display, plus the compact handpiece can be used for detail work, polishing or grinding on metal, wood, glass and other materials. The hand piece features a twist release rotary collet for $\frac{3}{32}$ " attachments. A collet for $\frac{1}{8}$ " shanks is also available, as well as collet adaptors which allow you to step down without having to switch out.

You have the option to plug it in for all-day use, or adapt it with the built-in rechargeable Li-ion batteries, which will run for about 5 hours after a 3-hour charge. Includes a two year limited warranty, a carrying case, and a cradle for the handpiece. Foredom tools are available from well-stocked jewelry supply vendors.

> [MORE AT FOREDOM.NET](http://MOREATFOREDOM.NET)



USE A TEMPLATE FOR STONE AND METAL

Photo 1 Choose a shape and trace it on the metal sheet. Saw it out.

Photo 2 Texture, stamp, etch, pattern, sand, polish, drill, punch — whatever — the surface of the sawn shape. Or not. Whatever you decide, at least file the burr off those edges.

Photo 3 Using a smaller version of the same shape, mark a slab. Take it to the trim saw and cut away the excess.

Photo 4 Preform at the lapidary unit.

Photo 5 After the first few wheels, dry off the stone and compare it to the templates and sawn-out back plate. Your

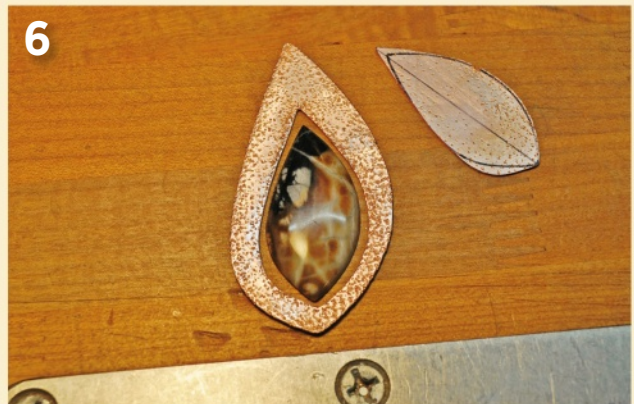
contours should be close, if not identical. True confession: as a kid, I violently rebelled when I was pressured to stay in the lines in a coloring book, but look at me now.

Photo 6 As you see, my finished cab is not exact, but close enough to the contours of the metal that I can live with it. It didn't help that I dropped the stone and chipped it when the phone rang, so I had to regrind the lower left quadrant to a shallower curve, but you get the idea.

At this point, there are lots of options for the metalwork. Here are some key

words to get you thinking: bezel, rivet, drill, overlay, backplate, tabs, inset. And remember, it doesn't have to be a stone, either. Cut an alternate metal for the smaller unit if you don't cut stone.

Using this method of designing with templates is a really great way to experiment and not freak out about it, because repetition of a similar form is one of the pillars of good design. Whatever you do, it will work because John's great shapes will allow you to experience pressure-free play. So, have at it.





For Metal and Enamel

Oh, happy dance time — because now I get to share something so cool, new, and amazing with you! Love that.

This brand new **Riveting System** was designed by mixed-media artisan Eugenia Chan, of Eugenia C Design — an incredibly nice and talented artist I discovered through one of my students. She's living proof that the best tool designers are the people who use them and can anticipate a real-life application for them. Her riveting tool system has three individual components, and please hang with me (before you rush off to your computer to order) because there is a surprise tool, too.

The **four hole cutter/ punch** is used for creating perfectly calibrated 18-, 16-, 14-, and 12-gauge-wire-rivet holes in metal sheet up to 18 gauge (or several, thinner sheets combined). You may have tried other punches, but the nice thing about this one is the well machined steel: you'll find your metal does not deform when you punch, one of the drawbacks of similar tools on the market. A simple hex wrench gives you the leverage to punch through work-hardened sheet, and a positioning bracket allows you to "lock down" the tool to a specific measurement, both to maintain parallel positioning and for repeatable results. A countersunk magnet on the cutter makes the perfect parking place for the hex wrench.

There is a **three hole cutter/punch** with identical features except that it punches holes that correspond with commercially manufactured tube rivets (eyelets): $\frac{1}{16}$ ", $\frac{3}{32}$ " and $\frac{1}{8}$ " (1.6 mm, 2.4 mm and 3.2 mm). I think of it this way: the four-hole is for wire rivets, the three-hole is for tube rivets.

Eugenia's **steel riveting block** makes it effortless to determine how long to cut a rivet wire in order to create a well-formed rivet head — on both sides of the piece. There's a middle row of dimples for supporting both the rivet wire and the piece as you snip, so simply stack your parts on the wire, insert it in the dimple, cut the wire, and then you are ready to hammer.

Those O shaped small circles on the left side of the block are for riveting commercial tube rivets without flattening the rolled flanges. Those dimples on the right side are for rivet heads. For versatility, the block can also be mounted in a vise for riveting on curved surfaces — that's what the dimples on the narrow edges are for.

Until I sat down in Tucson at the J.O.G.S. show with her, I didn't even know about Eugenia's **Torching Basket for Enameling**. This is one of those "stroke of genius" tools that make you wonder why you didn't think of it. This three-part stainless steel beauty allows you to torch-fire with ease. When used in combination with a tripod, you can get to any part

coming soon!

- Riveting system
- Enamel basket

> shop.jewelrymakingdaily.com/

of a piece, use the basket from several angles, or unscrew the basket and switch to a regular fork for transporting standard enameling trivets in and out of a kiln effortlessly.

Until this point, the baskets were manufactured in Hong Kong, but as I write, Eugenia's tools are in the process of being manufactured by EuroTool and are soon to be distributed by jewelrytools.com. For updates and to view Eugenia's instructional videos for these tools, visit eugenia-c.com.

> Both the Riveting System and Torching Basket for Enamel will soon be available at shop.jewelrymakingdaily.com/tools.

Somewhere on the internet there's a funny clip of my goldsmith's hammer head falling off — right in the middle of hammering — during the filming of my *Metalsmith Essentials: Basic Fabrication* video. I am now the proud user of a miracle product that will prevent that silly but dangerous scenario from ever — and I mean ever — happening again.

If you've struggled to keep your hammer heads secure in a dry climate or studio, trust me — get yourself a bottle of "Chair Loc®." Just a few drops on the handle endgrain and wedge, and your hammer head will never come off again. I found a bottle on Amazon.com, but it can also be found at several chain woodworking supply stores. I owe Mark Nelson of Rio Grande a margarita for this one!



coming next time >>
New stock options



HAVE A TOOL, MODIFICATION, OR BENCH TRICK TO SHARE?

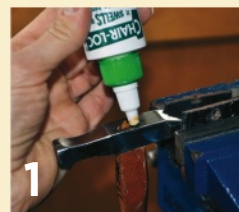
? Email us at HDriggs@interweave.com, subject line "Cool Tools." Please include your complete contact information with all submissions.

CHAIR LOC® A LOOSE HAMMER HEAD

Photo 1 Push down the hammer head on the handle to its proper position and apply a generous amount of Chair Loc over the wedges and end grain of the wood. I put a strip of leather in the vise and let the hammer hang there as I work — but do not put the handle in the vise, just the steel hammer head.

Photo 2 If there is excess liquid on the steel hammer head, wipe it off with a clean rag before you let it dry.

Photo 3 Let the treated hammer air dry for about 8 hours and test the hammer head. It should be securely held on the handle. Go wail on some metal.



DEMO PHOTOS: HELEN I. DRIGGS

HELEN DRIGGS is a Senior Editor for *Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist* and an experienced metalsmith and teacher. Follow her twitter feed @fabricationista.

By Sharon Elaine Thompson

David Brackna

designer cuts and then some



“IF SOMEONE TAKES THE TIME to design a unique piece of jewelry, it doesn’t make sense to put in the same type of stone everyone else uses. Designer pieces deserve designer stones,” says Maryland gem cutter and designer David Brackna. With more than 35 years spent cutting more than 20,000 gem materials of all kinds, Brackna is one of the best at cutting designer gemstones.

You may remember reading about Brackna’s “Lightscapes,” gemstone art pieces assembled from many cut pieces, or his Optical Inlays, faceted gem material in which he incorporated cabs of opal in such a way that the opal’s play-of- color shot throughout the stone. Brackna rarely cuts these kinds of novelties now, though, and prefers to focus on cutting the most beautiful gems out of the most beautiful rough he can find.

Brackna has been cutting a lot of Nigerian morganite, the pink- to salmon-colored beryl, but also cuts the other beryls: heliodor or golden beryl, and aquamarine, even the occasional emerald. In fact, two of his Cutting Edge Award-winning heliodors from Tajikistan are on permanent display at the Smithsonian Institution. His favorite gem, however, is the

CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT:
4.56ct Peridot
Antique Cushion
cut

6.21ct Heliodor
Iguana cut

1.24ct Sapphire
Flash cut

“Designer pieces deserve a designer stone.”

Merelani mint garnet (a chromium/vanadium grossular garnet from Merelani, Tanzania). One stone he doesn't like to cut is kunzite, notorious for cleaving and breaking during the faceting process.

Brackna cuts all shapes — his favorite is the shield — but doesn't cut caliber cuts (standard sizes, such as 5 x 3 mm oval) unless it just happens that way. He can find no good reason, he says, to remove good gem material from a piece of rough simply to fit a standard mounting. It's the unusual cuts and the exceptional gem quality that make top designers seek him out. that nephrite can be dyed.

How much does it cost? Brackna only sells to jewelry designers. Every stone is priced differently depending on the size, cut, and material. “I have sold six-figure stones,” says Brackna. However, on average, his gemstones retail from \$1200 on up.

How hard is it to find? Brackna only does one show per year: Tucson. You can find him at the AGTA Gem Fair. He does not do custom cutting.

2.20ct Morganite
Turkish Star cut



3.14ct Merelani
Mint Garnet
Striated
Horizon cut

What kind of jewelry can I put this in?

This depends on the type of stone. In addition to the beryls, Brackna often cuts the ever-popular tanzanite. While beryls take more wear and can be worn in rings, tanzanites, with their brittle facet junctions, are much better in pendants, earrings, and brooches.

How easy is it to set? Stones can be set with prongs, but it takes some skill. These are not stones you want to learn to set on.

What settings are best for this stone?

These stones are meant to be seen. They are best set in prongs, in a custom-made basket or setting.

Artisan/studio dos and don'ts:

Depends on the type of material. Because of the uniqueness of these stones, you'll want to take all precautions.

Wearer dos and don'ts: Depends on the type of material. Brackna's unique stones, set in unique mountings, command respect. Care for them gently and store them carefully. And “don't drop them,” says Brackna.

SHARON ELAINE THOMPSON has written for *Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist* since 1987. Her book, *Good Bones: the Elements and Principles of Design for Jewelry Makers*, is coming soon from Brynmorgen Press. You can learn more about her at sharonelainethompson.com.



7.53ct Optical Inlay
Quartz/Opal

create
optical
effects



PAGE
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GALAXY GEM

SKILLS

- Advanced faceting

TIME IT TOOK

6 hours (excluding glue curing time)



Galaxy Gem

*A touch of opal in a faceted quartz inspired by
Lapidary Journal's 1972 Space Gem cover*

BY MARK OROS

IT STARTED WITH A CASUAL REMARK

while I was purchasing some lapidary supplies, and one thing just led to another.

I was placing a year-end Diamond Pacific order with the Rock Peddler when Jeanne Ridolfi mentioned a call from Tony Geonnotti about some faceting equipment and rough. I emailed Tony and found out that his father was the driving force behind the American Facetor machine, and Tony was selling off some unused laps and old stock facet rough, including some military optical quartz that I purchased. Then Tony told me about a Mr. Earl Montgomery who used the same quartz to make his Space gems, which I discovered had been featured on the cover of *Lapidary Journal* in August 1972, with cutting instructions for them presented in October 1973.

A Space gem was an opal triplet in which the top quartz cabochon was carved with recesses and set with opal to represent the vastness of our cosmos. Using optical quartz and opal cabochons and chips backed with black obsidian, Montgomery sculpted and painted planets and galaxies in miniature, four of which were shown on that cover. Intrigued, and after much contemplation, I developed my own variation on his grand idea. I call my opal-enhanced, faceted quartz a Galaxy gem.



Earl Montgomery's original Space gems on the August 1972 cover of *Lapidary Journal*.
CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: earth rise over moon, earth and moon, Andromeda galaxy, Saturn.



Its spectral colors visible throughout the face-up gem, the opal is actually just a small piece set into the culet of the quartz.

PHOTOS:
JIM LAWSON

Inspiration

At first, I intended to create a Space gem myself. I already had optical quartz and some old stock Mintabie opal and black jade, but then was presented with an interesting dilemma: in the 40 years since the Space gems were created, the world of lapidary techniques and equipment had changed dramatically, and I would have some figuring out to do whether I learned the earlier carving and setting processes described or went to my own modern tools from Diamond Pacific, Covington, and Ultra Tec.

As I was contemplating this, I was also working with my new Fantasy machine, experimenting with stone combinations inspired by Henry Hunt's books on gem carving, and faceting some optical quartz as a

design template for a large piece of Uruguayan amethyst — and then it came to me: I would use *faceted* quartz. The development was lengthy — Montgomery had cut over 200 opals before he finished his first 14 pieces — and I created a test gem and eight prototypes, then modified three of those along the way.

Faceting the gem in various designs can either focus the view on the opal centered in the gem, give the opal a kaleidoscopic view, or act as a magnifying glass. It is also possible to combine the different attributes by modifying the design parameters to complement the opal color and create a unique stone every time. Upon showing the eight prototypes to collectors, gemologists, and jewelers,

MATERIALS

Facet grade clear quartz, preferably military optical
Mintabie opal
Consumables: Beast diamond polish, Snake Oil lap lube and cleaner, zirconium oxide Battstik™, Elmer's glue, clear nail polish, Loctite 404 quick set adhesive, HXTAL adhesive epoxy, 99% isopropyl alcohol, paper towels

TOOLS

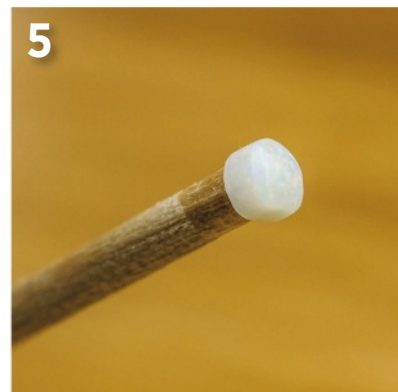
Diamond Pacific Genie™
Ultra Tec V5 faceting machine
Ultra Tec Fantasy Machine
Covington 10" trim saw
Ameritool 4" lapidary trim saw
Crystalite steel laps
Lighting Lap Natural
Wooden dowels

SOURCES

Most of the tools and materials for this project will be available from well-stocked lapidary supply vendors, many of whom can be found in our Advertisers' Index, page 79.

Design Start

Space gems by Earl Montgomery, featured in August 1972 and October 1973 *Lapidary Journal*, series of opal in quartz cabochon triplets. I wanted to give it a contemporary spin. It started as an experiment and was met with enthusiasm by my customers.



#1 Design Features

- Facet design of the quartz, because of how it affects the behavior of the light within the stone and the viewer's perception of the opal

I found it interesting to see that all eight stones had their champions, but those with higher crowns tended to be favored.

You can select a faceting design from among your favorites. Given that the process of cutting the gem is somewhat involved, I recommend starting with a facet design you are comfortable cutting, staying within a finished stone size of 8-10 carats.

Select the Rough

Photo 1 The most critical decision in the development of the Galaxy gem is the selection of materials, and for my gem,

I wanted the highest grades I could locate. Remember that the quartz needs to be as clear as possible in order to allow the opal to be viewed, which is why I selected military optical quartz.

Photo 2 I found that pin fire opal works best due to the concentration of different colors in a stone this small. I suggest avoiding broad flash material.

Photo 3 Use a 10" saw when cutting the quartz blanks.

Photo 4 Because I needed only a very small opal, I used trimmings from my finest opal cabochons.

Photo 5 Preform the quartz and opal blanks on Genie wheels. Dop the quartz on the faceting dop and dop the opal on a wooden dop stick. Preform again on the wheels, holding them by the dops.

Start the Quartz Pavilion

Photo 6 Put the quartz on the faceting machine and cut to design at 600 grit.

Photo 7 Put the quartz on a tabling adapter and cut a culet (pavilion table) to size.

The opal does not have to be large relative to the finished gem. In fact, because the quartz will act as magnifying glass, if the opal is too large, the piece tends toward a traditional doublet design.



Photo 8 One could simply polish the culet and attach a flat opal to the bottom of the gem, but concaving the culet is what makes this gem so wonderful. Use the Ultra Tec Fantasy or similar lathe-based machine for this step. Leave the gem in the faceting mast. Move the mast to the Fantasy and use a 200 grit metal ball tool in the lathe to cut the rough concave sphere into the culet of the quartz.

This takes careful alignment and a slow approach to get right. Concave the culet directly in the center and cut to a depth that removes the flat culet, leaving only a rough concave dimple in the bottom of the pavilion.

Fit the Opal

Photo 9 It is now time to prepare the opal for fitting. Cab the opal at 280 grit on a wheel until it is 25% larger than the culet dimple.

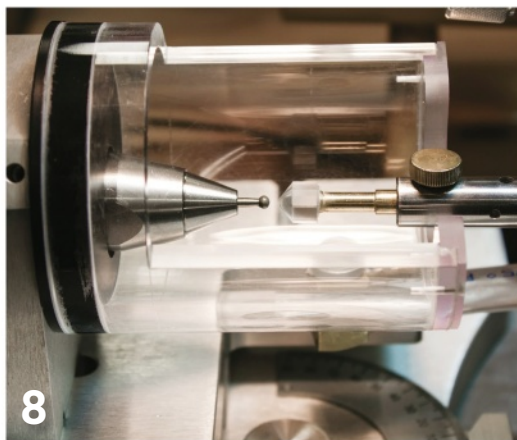
Photo 10 At this point, view the opal and observe its potential.

I have a finished quartz Galaxy gem minus the opal that I use to view potential opals for color. I put a drop of Snake Oil (lap lube and cleaner) in the dimple of the quartz and place the opal in it, then make sure the opal has the colors and consistency (no dead spots) that I desire. Please note that all attributes of the opal, good or bad, will be magnified in the finished gem.

Photo 11 Now you'll fit the opal to the quartz and polish both stones in the process. Remove the mast from the Fantasy machine and place the quartz dop in the lathe. Apply 600 grit diamond paste to the inside of the dimple; a little will go a long way. Lock the lateral movement of the machine and set the lathe direction to counterclockwise. Turn the machine onto medium speed and carefully, by hand, insert the opal into the diamond paste dimple.

At this point, you are carving the quartz dimple larger and the opal cabochon smaller. Given that the quartz and opal are close to the same hardness, this allows the two materials to carve each other to a close fit. Add more diamond paste as necessary and use lubricating oil if the stones start to get warm.

After the stones have a close fit, clean both thoroughly and repeat this process with diamond paste in the



following grits for the stages noted:

- 1,200: carving, to a matte surface with no rings
- 3,000: prepolish
- 8,000: prepolish
- 14,000: prepolish
- 50,000: polish
- 100,000: take the polish up a notch

Bond the Stones Together

Remove the quartz from the lathe and place in a dop holder standing as straight as possible. Remove the opal from its dop. Clean both stones with alcohol. Mix your favorite lapidary epoxy, and glue the opal into the dimple, being sure to use the minimum amount of glue required. Make sure the opal has a perfect fit while the glue is setting.

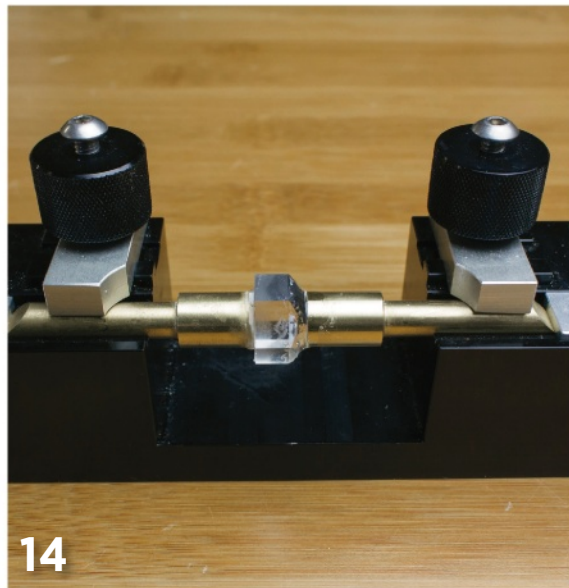
Photo 12 Follow the epoxy manufacturer's instructions for curing, and be patient: you are going to put a lot of heat and pressure on the stone in the next step.



SEE MORE WORK
their turn » PAGE 8



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14



15

#1 Design Challenges

- Getting light into the gem, achieved by getting it out front as a pendant
- Fitting the opal and quartz seamlessly, achieved with a series of eight grits from carving to polish
- The cost of high-end opal, skirted with the use of trimmings from larger stones

Finish the Pavilion, Cut the Crown

Place the quartz dop back on the faceting mast and using the index splitter, align the stone by recutting a girdle facet at 600 grit.

Recut the pavilion at 600 grit, being careful to leave as much opal as possible. I have been known to make a miscalculation or cut and facet too deep, which leads to the complete loss of the opal. Keep in mind that you should now treat the two stones as one whole.

Photo 13 Cut and polish the pavilion and girdle as you would on a non-composite stone.

Photo 14 Transfer your stone to cut the crown.

Photo 15 Cut and polish the crown per your design.

Remove the Dop

This can be tricky, given that you have a composite stone with an epoxy seam. Heat or solvents might detach the opal if you are not careful. Hang the dop just to the top in acetone, leaving the opal out of the acetone.

Photo 16 Check the stone frequently so as not to leave the gem in the acetone too long.

Photo 17 Clean the gem and enjoy your creation.

Soon after the eight Galaxy prototypes were finished, I wanted to have one set as an example for my customers, which also coincided with my wife Heidi's upcoming birthday. I selected Lainey Papageorge because of her approach and philosophy to creating jewelry, "The Earth is my inspiration and my teacher." My wife recently wore the pendant for the first time at a social gathering, and I was besieged with orders for new gems, proving once again that the most stunning showcase for a piece of jewelry is the person you love the most.



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17

MARK OROS started his lapidary business after leaving the higher education and research arena where he worked on National Science Foundation grants developing and building the early computer-based networks that metamorphosed into today's Internet. The name of his lapidary business, Hashnu Stones & Gems, comes from a Japanese folk tale about a stone cutter named Hashnu. Although Mark cuts, carves, and facets for many jewelry designers, he also custom cuts stone for crafters and artists that venture into the world of multi-media. You can find Mark in his studio in central New York surrounded by old stock rough material and the latest in new lapidary technology.



SHOWCASING YOUR PASSION FOR
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SKILLS

- Soldering
- Metal forming
- Finishing

TIME IT TOOK

3 hours



AN EASIER WAY

Save time and sawing,
see page 32



Domed Fluted Bangle: *A Bracelet Evolves*

Same blank and an entirely new form

BY BILL FRETZ

METALSMITHING IS A SKILL

of variables. Different ways of doing things belong to the multiple traditions and cultures that contribute to the craft, and knowing the many different types of tools for cutting and forming metal gives you many options. The more a craftsperson knows about process, the easier it is to create work that ventures into new arenas of design.

The way a tool works often determines how a project will look — and some tools are just more fun to use. Some tools offer quick solutions, but investing in specialized tools may not be warranted: it's a personal decision based on what you wish to accomplish and the time you have to do so. Learning different techniques will help you weigh both time and cost to help you decide if a particular tool is worth the purchase price, or if perhaps a slower method will suffice.

This bracelet uses the same metal blank pattern as the concave bracelet I wrote about in "3D Brass Bangle with Onyx Beads" (January/February 2014). Here, we will create a domed, fluted bangle. If you make both bangles, you will see that choosing different stakes and hammers will create a new piece that doesn't remotely resemble the other, even though they started out the same. Along the way we will explore variations of how a specific step may be done, and the pros and cons of each solution.



Cut and Anneal the Blank

We're going to cut a pattern in the metal using a paper pattern. If you made the previous bracelet ("3D Brass Bangle with Onyx Beads," January/February 2014) and want to appreciate how difference the design can be starting with the same blank, be sure to use the same pattern you used before.

You can trace the design on paper with a marker or glue it down with rubber cement. If you use rubber cement, make sure you have a backup pattern as the original will become useless after it is removed.

Photo 1 Transfer the pattern to a piece of sheet brass 8½" x 2" x 18 gauge.

A wide pine board clamped to the



workbench with a C-clamp makes a perfect bench pin or V-block. To cut out the bracelet blank, use a deep saw frame with ⅜" or thinner saw blades. Doing it this way usually requires reversing the blank and sawing in from both ends.

Photo 2 One quick way to get this done is to use a Beverly shear, which is just a large compound cutting device with a slightly domed cutting surface. The long handle on the shear also gives added leverage for making the cutting effortless on thin brass.

We are using metal — and the tools from any metal process can come in handy in fabricating jewelry. Studying other metal trades is a good way to expand the techniques available to the

MATERIALS

Hard silver solder

Cartridge brass (70% copper, 30% zinc)

TOOLS

Fretz hammers, stakes, and holders: HMR-107 large insert hammer, HMR-101 large planishing hammer, HMR-9 rounded wide raising hammer, H-1L long holder with hardware (option not shown), VH-101 vise holder for 100 series stakes, H-101 bench holder for 100 series stakes (option not shown), T-101 double ended holder, M-111 40 mm convex cuff stake /36 mm long, M-113A starting fluting stake, M-113B finishing fluting stake

LAYOUT: scissors, rubber cement, paper, thin line marker

HAND: bracelet mandrel, parallel pliers, 5"-plus saw frame, 2/0 saw blades, 4/0 saw blades

SOLDERING: torch, annealing pan, white flux, small flux brush, tweezers, fire bricks

OTHER: workbench, heavy vise

SOURCES

Brass is available from Rio Grande, Otto Frei, or Fretz Design. Bracelet blank at shop.jewelrymakingdaily.com/Fretz. Most of the tools and materials for this project will be available from well-stocked jewelry supply vendors, many of whom can be found in our Advertisers' Index, page 79.

Although the file actually cuts only on the forward motion, if you do not lift the #0 cut file from the bevel, your angle will be more accurate. Brass is softer than the file, so this method won't damage the file.



AN EASIER WAY



Instead of making a paper pattern and sawing out your own blank, start with a premade wavy brass blank.

jeweler. This shear is typically used by sculptors, sheet metal fabricators, and custom cycle shops.

The trick with this shear is to adjust the blades so they are very close but don't bind as the shear handle is pulled down. The shear may make the shape slightly bowed, but since we're going to form it round, this is not a problem.

The tradeoff is speed: cutting time drops from 20 minutes with the saw to about two with the shear. Quicker still would be having a die made for a really large production run — but then we are moving away from hand work and the “pleasure of the process” to a business model. Since our focus is on the art of metal working, I will leave industrial techniques to others. Decisions concerning tool use and purchase always involve the same questions: do these tools help with designs that will be made repeatedly, and is the cost vs. time justified?

Photo 3 Annealing is the process of softening metal by heating it. With the brass alloy of 70% copper and 30% zinc, the correct temperature can be achieved by heating the metal to a dull red in a darkened room.

If the annealing pan is well lit and the color is hard to see, you can use handy flux as a heat indicator. The flux will turn glossy at about 1200°F, indicating the temperature is about right. A bed

of pumice is a good reflecting surface. Make a flat bed by placing a fire brick on the pumice and move it back and forth, then remove the brick so the flat surface will ensure even heating.

TIP: You can purchase a sheet metal annealing pan, or you can make one from two cast iron frying pans and lazy-susan hardware. The advantage of cast iron is that it won't warp from repeated use. Having the annealing pan rotating smoothly is a big help for large soldering projects.

Prep the Seam for Soldering

Photo 4 In the “3D Brass Bangle with Onyx Beads” project, the ends of the blank were soldered with a simple butt seam: bringing two flat ends together and soldering them closed with hard silver solder. The butt seam will hold unless it is stressed by severe hammering.

Another method of closing the bracelet is to do a lap seam, which is formed by filing the opposite ends of the blank to flat bevels, and then having the two sides overlap. Be sure to flip the bracelet blank over after filing one end so that the bevels are on opposite sides.

First mark the opposite ends of the bracelet with a caliper opened 2 mm. An easy way to indicate the filing line is to slide the calipers along while the lower side is tracking the straight end cut.

File using smooth strokes, much like

find a...
wavy blank



Find a precut wavy bracelet blank for this project.

> shop.jewelrymakingdaily.com/Fretz

shooting pool. Although the file actually cuts only on the forward motion, if you do not lift the #0 cut file from the bevel, your angle will be more accurate. Brass is softer than the file, so this process won't damage the file; filing this way on steel, however, is not recommended because it will dull the file.

Even though preparing a lap seam joint is more difficult than a butt seam, it has some major advantages with strength and accuracy if the final seam is longer than an inch. Another benefit is the seam will compress and get tighter when hammered, unlike the butt seam, which spreads and widens as it is hammered. This type of seam is also very useful for box and hollowware designs, as it will work on pieces up to a foot long and keep the seam even.

Photo 5 Before you bend the bracelet into a circle, saw small tabs on either side of the bottom end. Mark the outside of the bracelet so the lower side becomes obvious. Using a saw blade #4 or finer, cut into the ends about 1.5 mm to 2 mm from the edge, sawing past the bevel line by about 1 mm. Try to design the bracelet blank so the tabs will be cut away later, giving you a cleaner seam line.

Form the bracelet into a circle over a stake or bracelet mandrel. Then use parallel flat pliers and form a flat area about 6-10 mm from the ends to create a nice "shelf" for the solder and to keep the piece stable during soldering.

Bend the tabs up slightly to form stops while the ends are still apart. Then, bend the two ends past each other so the metal becomes springy, which will make it possible for the two beveled sides to come together correctly. Pinch the seam tight with the parallel flat pliers to lock the sides together. An alternate method is to tap the tabs down with the flat side of a planishing hammer over a flat T-stake.

Solder the Seam

Photo 6 The bracelet needs to be in a stable position during soldering so the metal doesn't warp when the intense heat is applied with the torch. Place the project between two kiln bricks with just the corners touching so the bricks don't absorb too much heat. This will keep the form from collapsing into an oval and losing tightness of the seam.

TIP: If you have a lapidary or diamond



saw, cut fire bricks into small cubes for easier handling in the annealing pan. The small pumice rocks will make a good support system while the heat is reflected around the solder joint.

Use plenty of white Handy Flux or an equal mix of borax and boric acid to keep the hard silver solder clean from oxidation during soldering. For long seams, 20 gauge wire solder is useful cut in 4-5 mm lengths. The wire solder tracks nicely into a straight line with the lap seam, which will require more solder than a butt seam because of the larger surface area. A solder pick is very useful for keeping the solder pieces in place.

TIP: If you attempt this project with very heavy sheet metal, you can twist the wire solder with a drill into a spiral rod to add solder volume for the length of the seam.

Photo 7 The seam needs to be soldered once with enough solder to do the job, then all traces of extra solder have to be removed. We want as thin a solder line as possible.

You can remove extra solder with needle files, but a flat #2 rifle file works better because the working surface touches just the area to be filed. A straight file is hard to use on a flat surface without removing metal unintentionally. Remember, you only need to remove solder, nothing else.



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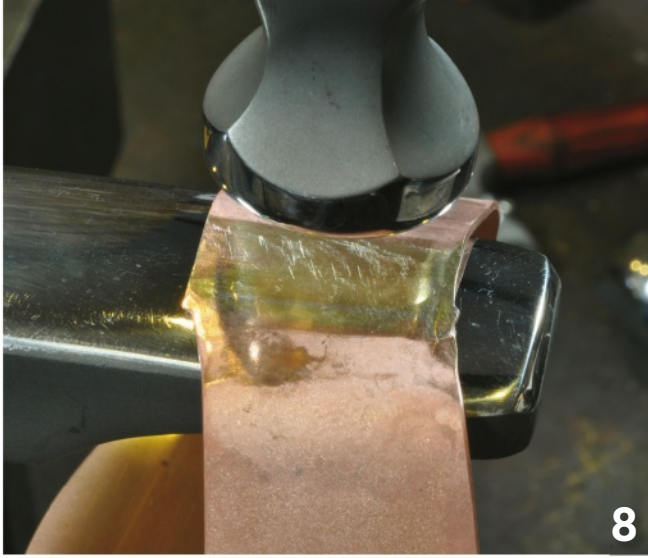
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8



9

Form the Bracelet

Photo 8 Both the seam and the surrounding metal need to be the same gauge, so it is necessary to compress the seam to blend it away. Use a raising stake (R-101) or a stake that has the same curve as the bracelet. Hammer with the rounded side of a heavy planishing hammer (HMR-101) or something similar, so the metal gauge feels the same thickness throughout; use the round side of the hammer because it is very easy to make half moon marks with the flat side of the hammer on a flat surface. Then, file the outer edges of the bracelet so they are not ragged.

Photo 9 Round the bracelet on the raising stake (R-101) or on a bracelet mandrel. Use the flat end of a non-marring hammer (HMR-107). The horn of an anvil would be another option. A regular steel planishing hammer is also an option, but the marks would have to be removed in future steps.

Each full hammering of the shape is called a course. After each course, the metal needs to be annealed to bring it back to a soft state before the next round of forming.

Photo 10 Embossing a bracelet, or doming it from the inside with hammers, will thin the bracelet as it is stretched. Another way to dome is to raise the metal towards the middle of the form. If this is done correctly, the edge will not stretch, but compress and thicken. Raising from the outside is a very useful technique to know because some closed forms are very difficult to emboss.

The setup I used was a mushroom insert stake (M-111) held in an extension arm stake holder (T-101). The extension

arm stake holder (T-101) was in turn held in the stake holder (VH-101) mounted in a large vise. Another holder (not shown, H-101) is available to mount on a heavy workbench or stump.

A simpler setup would be to hold the mushroom stake (M-111) in an extended holder (H-1L) on a jeweler's bench. The primary curve of the mushroom stake (M-111) fits exactly into a 2" circle — perfect for bracelet forming. There are advantages in the multiple holders and they will become apparent. The metal is formed on the mushroom stake (M-111) and will take on the curve of this stake as we go. Actual raising is done with a flat cross peen with a nylon end (HMR-107, #9 end), wood, or Delrin face.

Start the first course line about 8 mm from the edge. It is important to have an air gap between the metal and the stake. The metal under the hammer is compressed down to the stake with overlapping hammer blows. As the metal is compressed, the outer edge will start to ripple if the raising process is too aggressive. The nylon ends are



10

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by bill fretz



"3D Brass Bangle with Onyx Beads"

Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist, January/February 2014

"Handwrought Brass Bangle"

Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist, July 2010

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The action is actually a double blow: the hammer will drive the metal downward while the stake drives the metal up from the inside.

useful as they compress the metal like a steel hammer, but they don't texture or stretch the metal. Stretching with a steel hammer will happen once the metal reaches the stake and the hammer continues to hit the same spot.

Using a steel hammer is a traditional option that requires the smith to both feel and hear the metal becoming firm against the stake. When this happens, it is time to move one hammer width around the form. Both sides of the bracelet need to be raised and then it is time to anneal again. The raising process will take between two and three courses until the metal conforms to the stake.



Form the Flutes

Photo 11 The bracelet has been made to fit the mushroom stake (M-111). Now it is time to transform it with the fluting.

The first fluting stake is the peaked mushroom stake with a rounded edge (M-113A). This stake has a primary curve that matches the forming mushroom insert stake (M-111).

The M-113A is actually the M-113 stake reground to make a crest or top curve into a medium sharp peak. You could also grind this shape from steel bar stock. The peak is ground with two angles so side 1 is less sharp than side 2. Side 1 will form shallow flutes and side 2 will form deep flutes or flutes very closely.

NOTE: Rotate the T-holder (T-101) to face at right angles to the vise mounted holder (VH-101) so the project will then face straight out for fluting. The fluting will be done with a T-Holder (T-101) position that is at right angles to the raising process. If using an H-1L holder mounted to a workbench, you will have to swing your chair around to do the fluting. If your holder is mounted on a wood block (VB-1), just rotate the block in the vise.

Mark the bracelet with the desired flute lines using a thin black marker. Because the forming may require a few

courses and the lines will disappear during annealing, it is necessary to establish more permanent reference points. I use a saw frame and thin blade for nicking the edge of the form with a small notch; a small triangle needle file also works. These marks will keep the flute layout from wandering during forming.

If the flute lines are straight, a straight rounded cross peen hammer (HMR-2's thinner end) may be used. If the flutes are slightly curved, then a cross peen with a rounded face will be necessary to follow the ink lines. Because curved flutes look correct with a free-form shape, I'm selecting rounded cross peen hammer (HMR-9) with the narrower face. The hammer blows fall on either side of the black lines with an air pocket of about 2-3 mm between the bracelet metal and the stake. As the hammer strikes the metal, the stake forms a line inside the bracelet.

Because the first fluting stake has a rounded peak the inner line will not be sharp. This has the advantage of letting the smith move the line slightly with repeated hammer blows. The action is actually a double blow: the hammer will drive the metal downward while the stake drives the metal up

#1 Design Challenge

Keeping track of the stake as you flute



12



13

from the inside. This upward motion is called snarling, and is actually a type of embossing. (There are special stakes called snarling irons, topic of a future discussion.)

After the line is articulated from one side of the bracelet, it is then reversed and hammered from the other side of the line to rough out the first flute. The process continues until the whole fluted area is blocked out.

Photo 12 The non-fluted areas of the bracelet can be refined with the round side of the full-sized silversmith's planishing hammer (HMR-101). You may opt for a jeweler's planishing hammer (HMR-1) if a delicate texture is your goal. The original mushroom forming stake (M-111) is again chosen, as it fits the shape. Working the metal from the center to the edges, cover the entire surface with even, overlapping marks. The metal is now work hardened and must be annealed.

Photo 13 The second fluting course will follow the same lines, so it would be helpful to mark the design again. If only slightly rounded flutes are desired, then the forming should stop with the first fluting stake (M-113A).

Our goal for this bracelet is for a sharper peak line, so we'll switch to the sharper fluting stake (M-113B). This stake is identical to the first fluting stake (M-113A) but the top crest is sharp. Planishing on this stake will bring the flutes up and the degree of crispness will depend on how much and how lightly the planishing is done. The second course with the sharper fluting

stake (M-113B) depends on having a track to follow that was developed by the slightly rounded fluting stake (M-113A). If the sharp fluting stake (M-113B) is used first, the interior line very much tends to become choppy and the score line to be ragged.

Finish the Bracelet

Stop hammering when you've produced the texture you desire. File the bracelet edges and emery them if you desire a smooth edge. An alternate finish is to "upset" or texture the edge with a cross peen hammer to make the edges appear thicker and less mechanical.

The only remaining step is to polish. If the working hammers are in a pristine condition, the polishing should go very quickly with a finish compound like white diamond on an unstitched cotton buff.

This bracelet looks totally different from the blank that was formed into a concave shape.

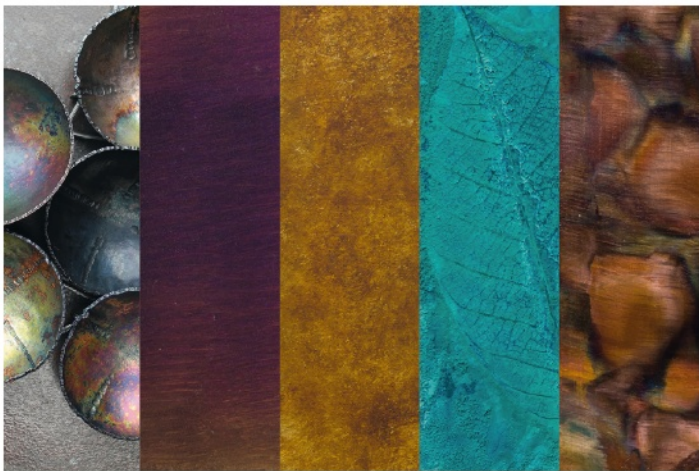
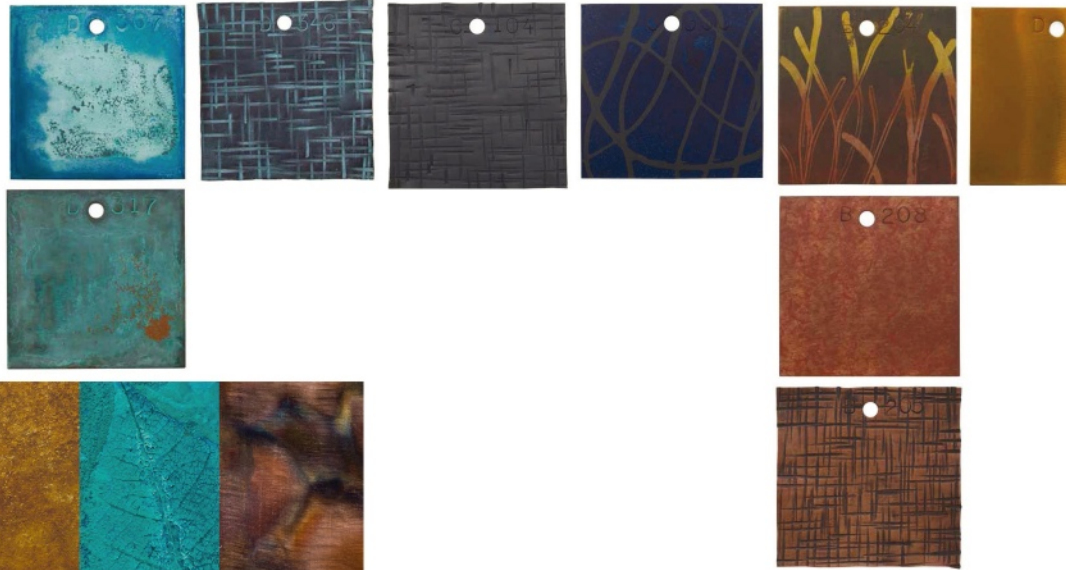
The choices you make on a project are yours and each step can vary the outcome. A simple piece of metal, transformed by the maker's efforts, makes it a creative piece.

The choice of metal, finish, and shape makes metalsmithing a never-ending exploration.

WILLIAM FRETZ, from Bucksport, Maine, began to develop his line of jeweler's tools in 2001, including miniature stakes and a line of new jeweler's and silversmithing hammers. A graduate of the School for American Craftsmen, Rochester Institute of Technology, he is currently working on a new line of tools. More of his work can be seen at fretzdesign.com.

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Thomas Dailing solders at his bench with a Smith Little Torch.



Thomas Dailing

Life Series Pendant

The solder used is 14K white easy and/or yellow gold easy. The piece has 41 solders.

PHOTO: AZAD



Thomas Dailing

I don't solder nearly as much as I used to. I create far more cast than fabricated pieces, although tying into a piece with 30 or so soldering points is like going home.

I have owned a Smith Little Torch for a very long time and it is a workhorse. I use it for most soldering situations.

It is a tremendously simple system. The hoses do get brittle and break after many years, but they are a breeze to replace; the tips do get clogged on occasion, but a few minutes in the ultrasonic and they are ready to go again.

I use the smallest tip, #2, set very low to heat sand my wax models. I use the #4 tip for almost all soldering; I can accomplish most any soldering task with a stronger or lighter setting with this tip. The #6 tip comes out when I need to really blast something. With the Little Torch, I use oxy acetylene for most soldering and oxygen propane for platinum and palladium.

In school in the '80s, I started on a Hi-Heat torch handpiece. It looked like something left over from World War II. Looking back, I am amazed at what we made with it. I tried the Krohn Flux Flame torch system for a short while. It was such a cool idea, burning the hydrogen it separated out of water, but it was a bit finicky.

In research for this article, I went into our basement and looked through the "island of misfit tools" and found an amazing array of no-longer-used torch handles, annealing tips, annealing trays, soldering stands, and the like. I think what happens is that either you find the tool that fits your needs — then you learn to do endless things with it — or you modify what you do to what the tool allows.

Most of my casting is done with a vacuum casting machine and an automatic melting furnace, but on the rare occasion of using the centrifuge, which I still like to use for casting silver, I use an old Prest-o-lite torch. It offers

a great casting and a nice bit of nostalgia, reminding me of the days before so many extremely advanced tools made so many techniques so much easier.

My soldering area is on my metalworking bench. I have two working surfaces side by side — wax to the left, metal to the right. My metal bench is used for cleaning castings, setting gems, and soldering.

I don't heat my pickle solution: I don't like the added vapors, and I find a cold pickle solution works just fine. I quench my pieces in my flux; it is always available and doesn't throw out the vapors as pickle does.

THOMAS DAILING designs jewelry at Lee Ayers Jewelers in Stevens Point, Wisconsin. The creations of Thomas Dailing Designs regularly grace the pages of major jewelry magazines. His award-winning work features high-quality gemstones, including concave faceted gems by Richard Homer. See more of his work at dailingdesigns.com.



Thomas Dailing
Cityscape Series
Pendant
The solder used is 14K white easy and/or yellow gold easy. The piece has 13 solders.
PHOTO: AZAD

My soldering area is on my metalworking bench. I have two working surfaces side by side — wax to the left, metal to the right. My metal bench is used for cleaning castings, setting gems, and soldering.



Thomas Dailing's soldering station. Note the torch holder on the right-hand side. It is a rig Dailing made from wire, designed like a modified holster for an Old West gunslinger.

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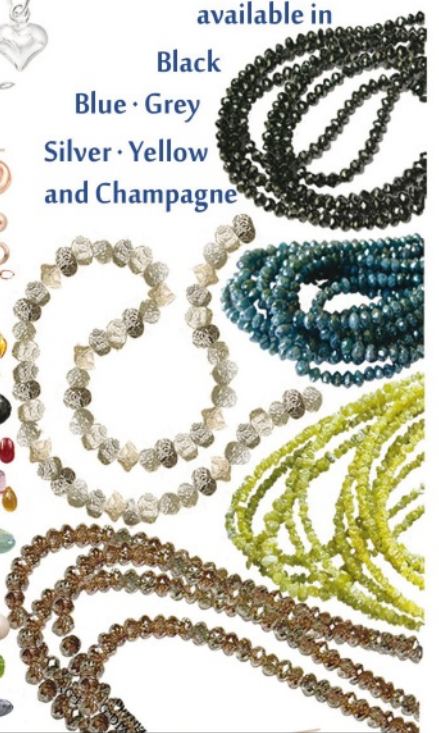
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By Deborah Yonick

Jacque AicheNecklace
Pistachio polished stingray
leather, diamonds, cream
leatherPHOTOS: COURTESY
JACQUE AICHE


Hell Bent for Leather

a hot look for all seasons

Leather gloves, leather footwear and a leather coat are all wardrobe staples, but what about leather . . . everything else? Designers have clung to the fabric in droves, with everyone from Chanel and Alexander Wang to Rodarte and Catherine Malandrino incorporating leather in all aspects of fashion. Undoubtedly, leather is a key component for the fall/winter seasons, but its relevance extends throughout the year as more designers in their spring/summer apparel are using lightweight leathers in a variety of bright colors.

Leather has also emerged as a favorite medium for fine jewelry designers, who are using natural, handcrafted leathers and exotic skins with precious metals and gems. Among the designers who are innovating in this category are Orlanda Olsen, Wendy and Jean-Noel Mignot, and Jacque Aiche — each spinning their own angle to create organic precious jewels that work from casual to couture.



make leather jewelry



“K2, Silver and Leather Bracelet”
 Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist,
 September/October 2013
 > shop.jewelrymakingdaily.com

JACQUIE AICHE

Jacque Aiche creates handcrafted designs that speak to her upbringing in a family with two diverse cultural influences — her father is Egyptian and her mother American Indian. Tribal, organic, full of meaning and whimsy, her designs incorporate a variety of materials including gold, silver, and leather with assorted gems, minerals, rocks, and fossils. Her unique styles make their way into pieces from ear cuffs and finger bracelets to body chains and headpieces.

The Los Angeles designer built her name with a line of handcrafted spiritual-inspired jewels, Blesslev (meaning blessed heart) amulets aimed to bring an inner sense of well being and emotional support in an outer world that’s full of instability and stress. It is in this collection that she started using leather and exotic skins like alligator, crocodile, lizard, and stingray with gems such as labradorite, moonstone, lapis, chrysoprase, and carnelian.

“We hand cut all the pieces and then stitch diamond bezels to the center. I love mixing all textures, metals, and colors. I’m an untraditional kind of woman. Combining the fine jewelry with the raw skins just brings such excitement to me while creating.”

jacquieaiche.com; myblesslev.com



TIP: Start thin and get the right tools.
 “Our greatest challenge is working with the exotic skins, as each is a one-of-a-kind. Punching those holes through the thick skin can work up a sweat. Just make sure you have all the right tools. My advice is to work with thinner skins at first and be patient when running into obstacles.”

ABOVE
Jacque Aiche
 Blesslev Exotic Amulets
 Braided leather, diamond bezels, assorted gemstones

RIGHT
Jacque Aiche
 Necklace
 Cream polished stingray leather, diamond, labradorite, plated pyrite rondelles
 PHOTOS: COURTESY JACQUIE AICHE

TIP: Follow your heart and learn from mistakes.

“You have to design what appeals to you and is innate. Be patient, you learn by experience and making lots of mistakes. I’m fortunate to work with some wonderful craftsmen who provide me with my leather and exotic skins. We work together to develop new ideas and overcome challenges like when the leather doesn’t turn or fall correctly.”



ABOVE
Orlanda Olsen
 Equestrian Collection
 Necklace/Eyeglass Holder
 Braided brown leather, 18K gold, black onyx, diamonds
 PHOTOS: COURTESY ORLANDA OLSEN

LEFT
Orlanda Olsen
 Egyptian Vine Eyeglass Holder/Necklace
 Braided black leather, 18K gold, studded beadwork

BELOW
Orlanda Olsen
 Savage Iguana Collection Ring and Bracelet
 Black Hornback crocodile leather, sterling silver, emerald, black rhodium
 PHOTO: COURTESY ORLANDA OLSEN

ORLANDA OLSEN

For jewelry designer and former model Orlanda Olsen, the most important aspects of design are a keen sense of proportion and meticulous attention to detail. Timelessly on trend, her highly defined and focused designs are crafted with quality and wearability in mind. Her best-known pieces are marvels of jewelry engineering, for which she holds copyrights, including her bracelet-ring and folding heart pendant.

An important part of her collections, the New York City based Olsen has been designing with leather and precious materials since the 1990s, when she was asked to do a leather and gold eyeglass ring for Saks Fifth Avenue’s Fifth Avenue Club members. The design then evolved into her Eye’deas® necklace collection.

“I love the incongruity of working with leather and precious gems and metals. You can make a great statement from blue jeans to black tie.” She uses a range of skins including alligator, stingray, and ostrich — anything substantial enough to hold up to her bold designs. Drawing inspiration from everywhere, she’s influenced by art, architecture, fashion, and nature, especially iguanas, a favorite of an important collector.

orlandaolsen.com





SEE MORE WORK

their turn » PAGE 8

LEFT

Wendy and Jean-Noel Mignot

Bracelet

Tahitian pearls, turquoise, leather

PHOTOS: COURTESY JNW MIGNOT GALLERY

BELOW

Wendy and Jean-Noel Mignot

Necklace

Tahitian pearls, leather



WENDY AND JEAN-NOEL MIGNOT

Artists Wendy and Jean-Noel Mignot put a twist on the once traditional strand of pearls, combining a variety of natural color cultured pearls (Tahitian, South Sea, freshwater) in different colors, shapes, and textures with natural leather in designs that mold themselves to your body. Wendy wraps and knots them with soft, yet durable leather that Jean-Noel hand cuts and rolls. Long before leather and pearls were trendy, this seafaring couple combined these materials, also mixing in shells, sea glass, and antique coins recovered from shipwrecks to show in the JNW Mignot Gallery, in Seaside, Florida.

The way Wendy sees it pearls should be worn, not stowed away for special occasions. “They’re organic and they need to get out,” she proclaims. “They need to breathe and go swimming in the ocean.” And, like the leather they’re paired with, pearls are most lustrous when worn. She notes that it’s important to condition the leather, as it can get dry and crack. “We recommend using shea butter to keep it supple and beautiful; we provide some with every purchase.”

With sailors’ know-how, the husband and wife team incorporate braiding, weaving, and knotting the leather with the pearls in designs that lend themselves to layering. Wendy cites the biggest challenge is in drilling a hole big enough to accommodate the leather used for their designs, which is Jean-Noel’s expertise.

jnwignot.com

TIP: You can go big and keep costs down.

“A big attraction in working with leather is that it reduces or eliminates the need for metals, which keeps it organic and also keeps costs down, especially for larger designs.” A proponent of using the best materials available, Wendy says the designing duo stays creative by continually examining what works and what doesn’t and how they can evolve existing designs into new inspirations.

use your scraps



“Leather as Jeweler’s Tool”

Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist,

April 2014

> shop.jewelrymakingdaily.com

DEBORAH YONICK has been writing about jewelry and fashion trends for more than 20 years for trade and consumer publications and online, and has loved both for much longer! With roots in New York, she presently lives and works in York, PA.

SKILLS

- Fabrication
- Piercing
- Solder inlay

TIME IT TOOK

8 hours

Cap Mounted Pendant *with Solder Inlay*

A technique commonly used with pearls applied to an alligator tooth "Cajun swamp" totem

BY ROGER HALAS



WITH THE POPULARITY of television shows about survival, ingenuity, and the virtues of self-reliance in the natural world — a world that is often hostile to our species — there is something to be said for the tenacity of the human spirit. We're knocked down and we get back up, often stronger and even more willing to get back into the fight. This tendency has kept us around for thousands of years, and it is perpetuated by a force that transcends the barriers of language, culture, and even the intimidating dimensions of Time itself.

Totems are a way to summon this spiritual or mystical force, and may become highly significant to us. Typically of natural origin, they are often used to impart related energy to the wearer: by donning a wolf's tooth, the wearer feels infused with wolf energy; if the totem is a gemstone or a crystal, one may feel invigorated by that material's assumed powers.

In this pendant, I wanted to use an alligator tooth to create a power totem that reflects the strength and courage necessary to survive in the wilderness, specifically, the Louisiana swamps. The alligator also recalls the old ways practiced by Native Americans and early European settlers, who remembered the animal for its sacrifice in providing food and income for those men and women living within this harsh environment.

So where do you get an alligator tooth? All over the Internet, for a fair price. Anything under two inches, we're talking less than \$30.



Create the Cap

Photo 1 Structurally speaking, an alligator tooth is just a cylinder, which makes it easy to mount. So take a piece of masking or painter's tape about $\frac{5}{8}$ " high, and wrap it around the base. Mark it and transfer that to a piece of 18 gauge sterling.

Photo 2 With pliers or a ring mandrel or an anvil, bend or forge that 18 gauge sterling into a cap. Then, solder it closed.

TIP: Notice the hallmark, which should be stamped *before* you bend the metal.

Photo 3 Solder the cap onto a plate of 18 gauge sterling sheet. Pickle, rinse, and dry.



MATERIALS

- Alligator tooth
- 18 gauge sterling sheet
- 20 gauge copper sheet
- 14 gauge round sterling wire
- 10 gauge square sterling wire

TOOLS

LAYOUT: pen, ruler, masking tape, super glue

SOLDERING: torch setup, soldering clamp, soldering station with clamps

HAND: jeweler's saw, ring mandrel or anvil, nylon hammer, set of pliers

FINISHING AND SETTING: flex shaft, cutting burs, file set, hammer handpiece, drill press, standard drill bit set, 400 and 600 grit sandpaper, 400 grit radial bristle brush, chemical finish such as Birchwood Casey M-38 Brown, wax sealant

SOURCES

Most of the tools and materials for this project will be available from well-stocked jewelry supply vendors, many of whom can be found in our Advertisers' Index, page 79.

I'll use anything from the tip of an anvil to a screwdriver, as long as it works. Of course, thousands of dollars' worth of equipment is always helpful, but with a little ingenuity and a modest budget, amazing things can happen at your workbench.



Design Start

Survival theme and alligator tooth, for a rustic, mountain man, or tribal piece. Since the tooth is cylindrical, the rest came down to constructing a basic bezel and decorating it.

#1 Design Features

- **Ace of spades** riveted to center
- **Contrast** of silver and copper

Photo 4 Texture the piece. If you don't have a hammer handpiece, you can texture the metal with a knife, a graver, or the tip of a nail. Anything will work, but I think the strikes from the hammer handpiece give the piece a more refined, almost machined look.

Pierce the Decorative Element

Photo 5 Piercing is a skill that requires steady hands and patience. As we come to the decorative stage of the fabrication, let's use the ace of spades from a traditional deck of cards to enhance the mojo of this piece; in many cultures, it's a symbol of good luck. Draw the shape onto a piece of 20 gauge copper sheet, drill a pilot hole for threading the blade through the metal, and cut away the excess. You can refine after sawing using a small file.

Photo 6 The finished piece should be symmetrical, so make corrections if necessary.

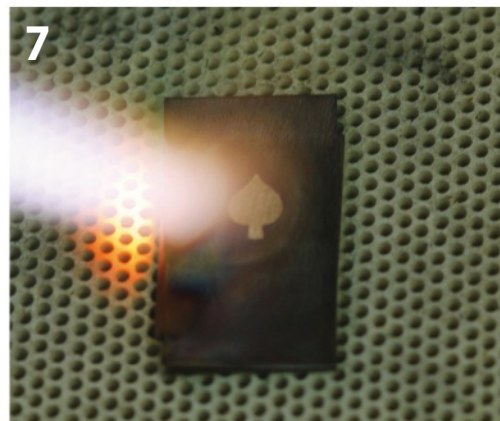
Create the Solder Inlay

Photo 7 Place the saw pierced piece, we'll call it a template, on top of another piece of 20 gauge copper sheet: now you have a mold. Fill it with medium silver solder.

TIP: I advise medium instead of hard because you might overheat things trying to get it to flow properly, so it's not worth the risk.

It might take a couple of attempts to fill the mold, so just like filling a glass with water, keep adding bits of solder until it fills up to the top. Then back off.

Photo 8 Trim the edges and square everything with a file.



Make the Rivets

Once the solder fills the mold, you are ready to drill the holes for the rivets.

Photo 9 At this point, it's also a good idea to round off the edges of the "card." Use 400 grit sandpaper to make everything nice and smooth.

Photo 10 You can drill with either a flex shaft or a drill press. It is very important to measure the distance between the holes, which will depend on how large you made the card — and remember that you don't want to drill too close to the edges. I'd give it about a $\frac{3}{32}$ " (2.38 mm) allowance.

Photo 11 Using a nylon hammer and a ring mandrel, forge the card so that it will seat properly against the curvature of the cap.

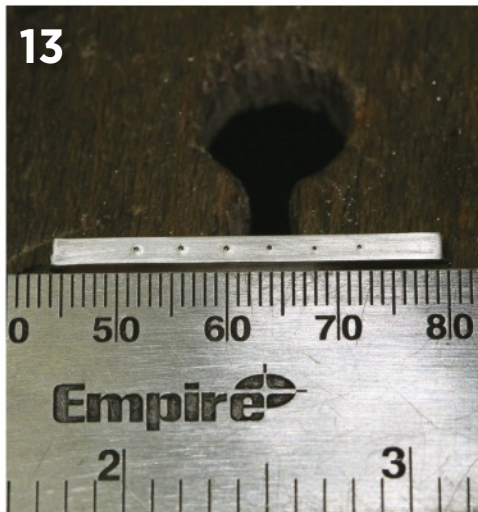
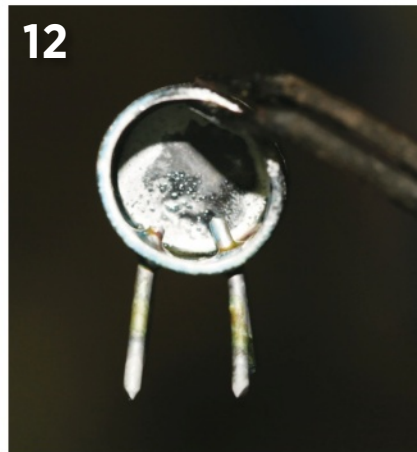
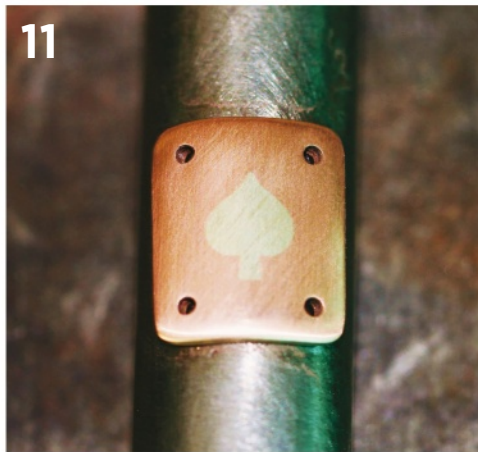
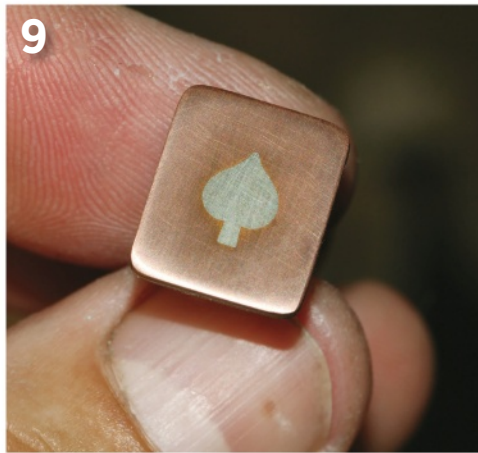
Photo 12 Your card has become a template again, meaning all you do at this point is place it on top of the cap and mark the hole positions with a pen. Then, drill the holes out, run 4 lengths of 14 gauge wire through them, and solder them into place. Trim and grind the inside of the cap flat, making adjustments until the tooth fits.

Fabricate the Bail

Photo 13 Cut a length of 12 gauge sterling wire to about $2\frac{1}{4}$ " (35 mm) long for the bail. Mark spaces across the piece to serve as a guide for further detailing later on — I think details always enhance the piece — or don't detail it at all: your choice.

Photo 14 Bend the bail around a drill bit or other suitable, rounded forging surface.

TIP: I'll use anything from the tip of an anvil to a screwdriver, as long as it works. Of course, thousands of dollars' worth of equipment is always helpful, but with a little ingenuity and a modest budget, amazing things can happen at your workbench.



#1 Design Challenges

- **Aligning the bail** to hang front forward after selecting the front of the tooth
- **Riveting** the edges of the ace of spades without striking and marring the "card" face

You can drill evenly spaced holes, or texture it however you want, but please — do something to jazz it up, otherwise it will look like everything else out there, and you don't want that.



15



16



17

Photo 15 This is how the bail should fit. To get there, file the base of the cap so it allows the tooth to sit vertically when worn. If you solder the bail vertically (straight up and down), then the tooth will swoop back too much, and the pendant will tip forward and look awkward. Instead, file an angle at the base of the bail, at about 20 to 30 degrees, so that it will lean forward once it's attached to the cap.

Then, using a soldering clamp and your torch, make the connection being careful not to overheat anything. All it takes is one wrong move and things can go from great to a literal meltdown.

Notice the notches I made across the bail to enhance the aesthetics. You can drill evenly spaced holes, or texture it however you want, but please — do something to jazz it up, otherwise it will look like everything else out there, and you don't want that. You want something unique.

Rivet, Finish, Set

Photo 16 Slip the card over the rivets. Using your hammer handpiece or, if you don't have one, then a riveting hammer, flatten the rivets down until the card is secure. Be careful not to damage the card itself during this process, which can happen if you lose your focus.

Once the rivets are secured, finish the

surface with a blue radial bristle brush. This is a good time to use your patina. I like the M-38 Brown because it's subtle. Or you can use heat.

It all works, so it's up to you how you want to play this, although it's a good idea to use something, anything, because copper will always tarnish over time. Think of this as simply expediting a process that will occur anyway.

After you are happy with the patina, coat it with wax to seal it.

Photo 17 Before you sport your stunning new swamp totem, you have one more task to complete. After setting the tooth into the cap, add a drop of super glue to secure it. Drill a small hole through the collar, into the tooth, and jam a piece of 14 gauge wire into it. Finally, hammer the wire down so it functions as a "safety rivet" or peg to hold the tooth in place.

Get yourself a chain or a leather thong, and put some good mojo around your neck. And remember the people who made it all possible, engaged in an age-old tradition that brought this wonderful material to your humble workbench.

ROGER HALAS is a stone cutter, metalsmith, and jewelry designer in Southern California. His work has been featured in both film and television and can be seen regularly on Facebook. When not working with metal, he writes screenplays, mostly science fiction and fantasy. He can be reached at rhalas@jungleintrigue.com.

SEE MORE WORK
their turn » PAGE 8

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Jewelry classes at SCAD allow students to learn their craft in a university setting.
PHOTO: COURTESY SCAD



Learn to *Succeed*

Five jewelry artists share their skill-building experiences
and their benefits

BY SHARON ELAINE THOMPSON



Whatever works for you: that's the best environment for your craft education. Happily, there are literally hundreds of places and ways to learn to make jewelry all over the world, with something to fit the goals and needs of just about everyone, whether it's learning a new skill, building on existing ones, or starting from scratch.

You can find structured classroom situations in community colleges and universities and community or parks and recreation centers. You can find occasional opportunities at a pop-up craft center, through the auspices of a vendor of supplies and equipment, and at periodic three-hour workshops at shows or shops. Some might be nearby and others out of town or abroad: the perfect opportunity for a bit of travel, if you can swing it. You can find educational programs dedicated strictly to the making of jewelry that are formal, very casual, and anywhere in between.

For many makers, there is nothing like a one-on-one with someone more experienced, whether that's working alongside a friend or in an Old World style atelier. And while individual in-person instruction may give you the most attention of all, learning at your own pace is also possible remotely, on YouTube, from online classes and lectures, and from videos, books, and magazines such as (we might point out) the one you are holding.

Too many choices? Not to worry. We've talked to five successful jewelry makers who learned their skills in different ways and for different reasons to help you think about your own needs and desires. We asked this group why they chose a particular method of education, its pros and cons, what they might do differently knowing what they now know, and the effect that their choice had on their jewelry career.

Specific, Comprehensive, Intensive

Jenny Reeves in San Francisco, California, started out making jewelry as a hobby and taking classes at San Francisco City College. When she decided she wanted to make it her career, however, she chose that city's Revere Academy of Jewelry Arts. "I wanted to develop a complete foundation of technical skills," she says.

In her 30s when she made the decision, she'd

ABOVE, LEFT
Jenny Reeves

Pin/pendant
Argentium® sterling silver,
18K gold, Mexican opal,
indicolite

PHOTO: HAP SAKWA

ABOVE, RIGHT

A student at the Revere Academy of Jewelry Arts receives hands-on training in casting.

PHOTO: COURTESY REVERE ACADEMY OF JEWELRY ARTS



ABOVE
Jenny Reeves
 Earrings
 Argentium® sterling silver,
 18K gold, iolite, diamonds
 PHOTO: HAP SAKWA

LEFT
 Alan Revere works closely with students at
 the Revere Academy.
 PHOTO: COURTESY REVERE ACADEMY OF
 JEWELRY ARTS

already been to college once and was working a full-time job as a bartender. “I didn’t want the time and financial commitment of a full-scale arts program. I just wanted to really learn the technical skills and get an idea of where I wanted to go in the jewelry business. I wanted to live, sleep, eat, and breathe jewelry for eight weeks.”

She chose Revere’s Jewelry Technician Intensive program, continuing to work at night, and finished the Graduate Jeweler program through a series of three-day, open session classes. She

was also drawn by Alan Revere’s reputation. “He was classically trained in Germany. [I knew] I would receive the high level of education I wanted.” In addition, she says, “the program of graduated skills works with how I learn.”

The choice has deeply affected her career, says Reeves. In addition to acquiring all the skills she wanted, she discovered other valuable lessons. “I learned the importance of developing a unique artistic identity. The importance of making really finely crafted jewelry, and the importance of putting it in front of people who want to buy it. All those three things — artistry, craftsmanship and commercial viability — are all things that coalesced for me at the Revere Academy.”

Reeves benefited from the on-the-spot critiques and mentoring Alan Revere and the other instructors at the academy were willing to give. But she also found a band of like-minded makers in her fellow classmates.

One student started a group they

called the Jewelry Artisans Collective. They met monthly, did design projects, shared their experiences with marketing and making, talked over technical problems, and hosted a holiday trunk show as a group. “It helped accelerate everyone’s business to have that sort of environment that was supported by the academy,” says Reeves. The group continues to meet.

For Reeves, a jewelry-specific training school was the perfect fit. She says she would make the same choice again, though perhaps not while she was still working nights!

> See Jenny Reeves’s work at jennyreeves.com.

The Revere Academy, revereacademy.com, located in San Francisco, California, offers training in traditional jewelry-making methods in several learning formats.

One on One and Self Directed

Alev Ozten worked in the high-tech world of Silicon Valley for 14 years, making jewelry as a hobby and learning skills in a variety of venues: a structured class environment, an art center, and the studio of metalsmith Davide Bigazzi. In 2011, deciding she wanted more creative work, she began making jewelry full time and studying exclusively with Bigazzi.

Bigazzi has only four benches and teaches one on one. Ozten found the environment a perfect fit. “It’s more like a jeweler would work in the real world,” says Ozten, because in a jewelry-making shop, over time, you would learn everything from alloying your own metal to fine setting. “You learn a lot by watching the hands of the teacher, how he works,” she says. “Working closely with him, having him help

Jenny Reeves

Ring Stack
 Argentium® sterling silver, 18K gold, black spinel, garnet, green tourmaline, iolite, chocolate diamonds, yellow sapphires
 PHOTO: HAP SAKWA



“I learned I did not want to make my own beads; that wire wrapping was beautiful, but I don’t have the patience for it. Bead Fest is perfect to help you figure out where you want to go with your dream.”

me, that was very important.”

At Bigazzi’s studio, Ozten found there were short, three-day workshops focusing on a particular technique and in which the student finishes a specific project. For ongoing instruction, students have the option to register for a 12-hour-class package which they execute in three-hour blocks of time. During this time, they choose what they want to learn. Want to improve your soldering skills? You can work with Bigazzi to design projects that will help you do that. Have a great idea for a piece that exceeds your skills? Learn the skills you need as you craft a piece near to your heart.

This kind of learning is not for everyone. It requires self-direction and knowing what you want to learn, as essentially you’ll be designing your

own curriculum. It’s often easier just to follow directions. It also may require that you’ve done some training elsewhere so that you *do* know what you want to learn.

But following instructions is not how the real world works, says Ozten. Every piece you make is going to be different, and you have to be able to figure out how to do that particular design — which is another reason she appreciates the environment at Bigazzi’s. He teaches you how to solve problems, she says, to think of other ways to do something, not just blindly do it the way he teaches you. “He pushes you. You’re not just going by rote learning.”

> Alev Ozten, alevozten.com, sells her work through Bigazzi’s gallery, through private shows, and online through her website and Etsy. She specializes in sterling silver, gold, and precious stones. Davide Bigazzi, davidebigazzistudio.com, is a jeweler and metalsmith, and chasing and repoussé master classically trained in Italy. He teaches small, personalized classes at his studio in Menlo Park, California.

Sampling and One on One

Liz Bell has hauled horses for a living for many years. She discovered jewelry making from her friend, Pattie Haney, who is also in the business of horses. Haney taught Bell the fundamentals of jewelry making, and they eventually started the business Bunkhouse Designs together.

But Bell wanted to learn more. From the small town of Mineral Wells, Texas, however, she didn’t know where to start looking for jewelry classes. Although she could have taken a structured program, “I wanted to zero in on what I wanted to focus on.” She did not want to take a lot of classes at a university or art school level that had no relevance to what she wanted to learn. In addition, she still runs her horse-hauling business, so committing to a long program was out of the question.

The turning point for Bell was Bead Fest 2010. Bead Fest gave Bell the chance to try a lot of things in a very compressed timeframe. Focusing on three-hour classes, she was able



TOP
Alev Ozten
Triangle Toggle Necklace
14K gold, sterling silver

ABOVE
Alev Ozten
Scribble Earrings
Sterling silver, freshwater pearls
PHOTO: HAP SAKWA

LEFT
Alev Ozten
Askew Ring
Sterling silver, 18K gold,
3mm round diamond
PHOTO: HAP SAKWA

FAR LEFT
Metalsmith Davide Bigazzi offers well-equipped workstations for the students with whom he works.
PHOTOS: COURTESY DAVIDE BIGAZZI STUDIO





ABOVE
Bead Fest offers students a wide variety of classes in an array of jewelry-making techniques.

PHOTOS: COURTESY BEAD FEST, F+W MEDIA

to take eight classes over the four-day event. “I probably overdid it,” says Bell. “I took everything I could.”

The experience helped her hone her desires. “I learned I did not want to make my own beads; that wire wrapping was beautiful, but I don’t have the patience for it. Bead Fest is perfect to help you figure out where you want to go with your dream.”

At Bead Fest, Bell also met metalsmith and jewelry-making instructor Lexi Erickson. Bell now spends time studying one on one with the Colorado jewelry artist — a method of training that works even better with her erratic work schedule. While Bell still does some workshops, she prefers working one on one.

“You have the instructor’s full attention,” she says. While she loved the opportunity to try a variety of things at Bead Fest, she says, classes were sometimes overbooked, and classes scheduled back to back left no time to ask questions after class.

Working with Erickson, she says, she is not only learning technical skills, she is also learning the jewelry business: how to pick a show, determining if it was truly successful, figuring out what inventory to take, and how to set up the booth. However, she’s still grateful for the chance she had to try many things at Bead Fest.

> Liz Bell learned basics with Pattie Haney, and together they started Bunkhouse Designs; you can see their work on Facebook. Bead Fest, beadfest.com, was launched by Lapidary Journal and is now offered at several different venues a year. Lexi Erickson, lexierickson.com, offers limited private lessons and is a Contributing Editor to Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist and a frequent instructor at Bead Fest events.

Well Rounded, University Setting

Eric Wreede had studied all kinds of art from the time he was 11. On graduation from high school, he knew he wanted to continue as a professional artist. He considered graphic design, animation, and advertising, he says, but “I didn’t want to sit at a computer all day.” However, when he saw the jewelry program in a catalog from SCAD (formerly Savannah College of Art and Design) everything clicked: at a gem and mineral show he’d attended as a boy, he’d been fascinated by the process of gem cutting and carving, and later was inspired by the work of René Lalique.

“I wanted to do more than create something,” he says, “I wanted to push the boundaries.” The field of jewelry making would allow him to apply everything he’d ever learned in art: sculpture, drawing, rendering, enameling, color. “I knew I could make a living as a jeweler, and still get the pleasure of doing the work,” he says.

Although Wreede considered apprenticeships and other modes of jewelry education, he felt “a well-rounded education” at a university “would help me best.” He put himself into his studies with such dedication that within a year of graduating he landed a position on the design team at David Yurman in New York.

There, his SCAD training stands him in good stead. One of the assignments given by department chair Jay Song was to do 100 sketches for one piece in two days. After a class critique, students picked three or four of those, and made another 10 to 15 refinements of each. “No student *wants* to do that,” he says. But the assignment, he says, “prepared me for what I’m doing now.”

Although he does not now work at a bench, he sought out and values the hands-on education he received at SCAD, especially he says, his experience in stone setting and mechanisms. Focusing on design without bench experience can limit you, says Wreede. “When you’ve fabricated dozens of mechanisms, and can fully wrap your mind around how it works, you can



RIGHT Eric Wreede

Wedding/Engagement
Rings
Colorless VS diamonds,
18K palladium
white gold

PHOTO: ERIC WREEDE

insert it, design-wise, into any form. Once you know stone setting, you can creatively manipulate setting styles into a piece. You can push the boundaries.”

The downside of attending a university, says Wreede, can be that you have to apply yourself in order to get the most out of it. In an apprenticeship, someone is there guiding you along, pushing you to do the hard stuff. At a university, you can pick and choose between electives, and some difficult material might be in classes that aren't required. Students, intimidated by the drive to keep their grades up, might not “take classes that in the long run can benefit them,” says Wreede. “I saw it happening around me, that students weren't willing to take the classes they needed.”

For example, while he doesn't love computer-aided design, Wreede says he took an advanced CAD course so that he would have “an idea of what can be done with [that particular tool].” He also learned welding and wood carving because he could see how he might use them later in his career. “At some point, I would like to design display cases that will hold jewelry,” he says. “I want to apply my creativity to every aspect of my career going forward. I couldn't learn that doing an apprenticeship, or at a jewelry-specific school.”

“You can have talent and get somewhere, and have skill and get somewhere,” says Wreede. “But if you have talent and refine your skill, there is no limit to where you can go. That's why I chose the educational route I did.”

> Eric Wreede is a member of the design team at David Yurman: davidyurman.com. SCAD, scad.edu, is located in Savannah, Georgia, and has a complete program of jewelry-making and design in its fine arts curriculum.

Local and Flexible

Ellen Levy was a retired business professional when, in 1996, her husband recommended they take some classes at the Armory Art Center near where they wintered in Florida. She chose jewelry making because she loved jewelry.

The space was dark and the room was under-supplied, she says, but “there was a very good instructor,” so she continued to take classes when they stayed in Florida. When the Armory turned to the Levys, they sponsored the renovation of the jewelry studios into the light, bright, well-equipped and -stocked spaces they are today, and the couple continues to support the program.

Levy chose the Armory primarily for convenience. It was close to where they stayed in Florida, and she could drop in and out whenever the Levys were in town. (They also spent part of the year in New Mexico.)

She started making jewelry as a hobby. “I found it incredibly enjoyable. I never felt talented, but it made me feel good.” She was surprised to find and develop an ability she did not know she had, eventually selling her work in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and Austin, Texas. She has since stopped selling her work but continues to make jewelry as a hobby, which “gives me an enormous amount of pleasure.”



find your place to learn

Visit our extensive directory of schools, classes, and other educational opportunities at jewelrymakingdaily.com/forums/t/5304

BELOW

Eric Wreede

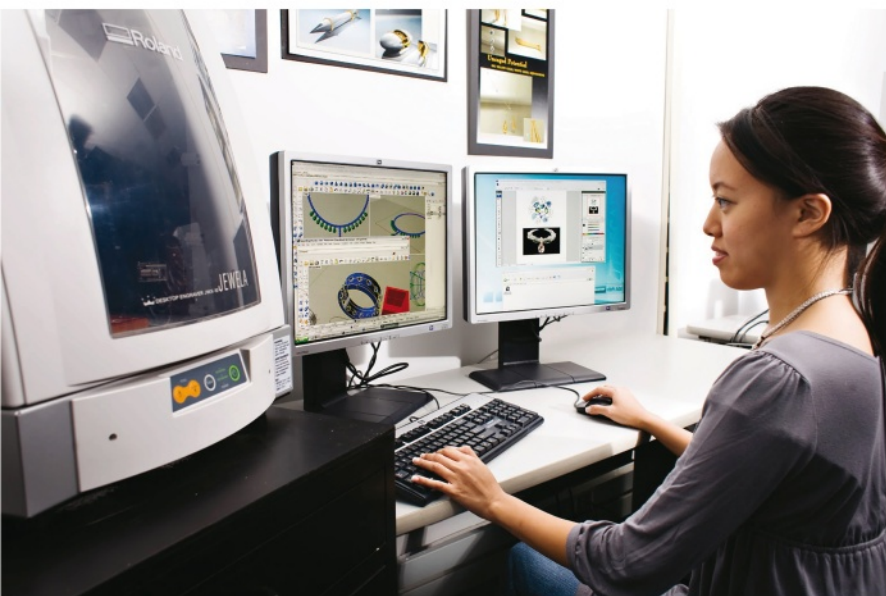
Celestiaessence Angel Necklace
Sterling silver, amethyst, diamond

PHOTO: ERIC WREEDE

LEFT AND BELOW LEFT

Students at SCAD can take advantage of the latest equipment and talented instructors.

PHOTOS: COURTESY SCAD





TOP
Ellen Levy
Necklace
Gray and black leather,
sterling silver

ABOVE
Ellen Levy
Ring
Sterling silver,
reticulated silver, blue
drusy quartz, tube set
diamonds, sapphire
PHOTOS: LISA JOHNSON,
THE ARMORY ART CENTER

SEE MORE WORK
their turn » PAGE 8



Levy says that a community center offers students affordability and flexibility. Larger, more dedicated centers, such as the Armory, may also sponsor artists in residence or a master artist program where major artists from around the country come to teach workshops in their specialty techniques.

“People who come for the classes are very serious,” says Levy, “not necessarily because they’re going into business, although a number are selling at local galleries. They come because the teaching is terrific, and the studio space [according to master artists who have taught there] is one of the finest facilities in the US. We have every piece of equipment you can possibly imagine.”

Jewelry making was the last in a line of several professional careers for Levy. If she were starting out, now, however, knowing she wanted to make jewelry, “I would go to school and learn from the bottom up.” However, she says, for people who are through with school, and want an avocation, something to “enjoy as much as I do, then the Armory is a wonderful pathway.”

If there is a downside to getting education at a community center, through workshops and short-term classes, she says, it’s that “I have gaps in my jewelry education. I will never have everything as perfect as I want it to be. But it gives me great pleasure, so I don’t think there really is a downside.”

> Ellen Levy does not currently show her work. The Armory Art Center, armoryart.org, offers a variety of intergenerational art and crafts classes and workshops for all ages, and is located in West Palm Beach, Florida.

SHARON ELAINE THOMPSON has written for *Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist* since 1987. Her book, *Good Bones: the Elements and Principles of Design for Jewelry Makers*, is coming soon from Brynmorgen Press. You can learn more about her at sharonelainethompson.com.

5 THINGS TO ASK YOURSELF

The best way to ensure getting the most out of your jewelry education is to have a good idea about what you want from it. As you think about your answers to these five overarching questions and the questions they pose, you’ll be going a long way toward figuring out what kind of training will work best for you.

1 What other demands are there on you?

- How much time and money could you invest in your jewelry education?
- What demands do work, family, or other commitments make on your time and energy?
- Do you need to stop and start, to fit your training in between other responsibilities?

2 What’s your learning style?

- Do you work through problems best on your own, or do you benefit from talking things out with classmates?
- Do you prefer a structured program, or are you willing and able to direct your own education?
- Do you want to dabble, or would you prefer to go from start to finish?

3 How committed are you?

- Do you want to make jewelry as a career, or is this a great hobby, a way to keep your hands busy and your mind creative?
- Do you just want a new experience or to make something once – your wedding rings, for example?
- Do you have the tools and space available to you to practice your skills?

4 Where do you live?

- Is there a learning opportunity nearby?
- Would you want to travel for your training to another part of the state, the country, or the world?
- Could you afford to travel to learn, including the additional expenses of transportation, housing, food, and so on?

5 How skilled are you already?

- While most educational venues have something for everyone, others might require some basic level of demonstrable skill. If so, consider honestly: can you really keep up with what will be demanded of you?

focus
on...

A special section for jewelry artists

education



jewelry by: Lori Hollander

TO BE CONTINUED

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The Denver School of Metal Arts offers a variety of creative metalsmithing classes for both novice and experienced students. Classes are taught by knowledgeable jewelry artists and teachers, who provide a stimulating environment in which small classes and excellent facilities allow students to take their metalsmithing to the next level. Offering year-round metal art jewelry classes, weekend workshops, and summer intensive courses. Some classes include silversmithing (all levels), PMC, enameling, dichroic glass, and many more. Conveniently located next to Naja Tool and Supply, Inc. to accommodate all the tools jewelry students need.

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WHITE COPPRCLAY™

Rio Grande and Metal Adventures recently introduced a new metal clay, White COPPRclay™. Like other metal clay varieties, it can be textured or accented with color using oxidizers or patinas, or simply polished to a white shine. After firing, the solid metal piece that emerges from the kiln is an alloy of nickel and copper. White COPPRclay™ is available in 30g, 100g, or 200g packages.

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THE NEW GEMMYS

Get your entries in now for the Gemmys, a new competition sponsored by *Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist*. The contest is open to metalsmiths, gem cutters, and other jewelry artists and is an opportunity to showcase your designs for jewelry, metal objects, gems, and jewelry or gem sets or suites. You must execute the designs yourself or with others. The designs will be judged on visual appeal and impact, originality, execution, and (for jewelry) wearability. Winners will be published in the *2015 Gemmys Annual*. For complete contest rules and to enter, visit jewelrymakingdaily.com/Gemmys. The early bird deadline for entries is June 15, 2014, and the final deadline is July 1, 2014. So send your designs in today!

VIDEO WORKSHOPS

Metalsmith Essentials: Stone on Stone Setting

With Michael Boyd

Metalsmith Essentials: Shell Forming for Jewelry Making with Hammers and Stakes

With Andrea Harvin-Kennington

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From the editors of *Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist*

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By Cathleen McCarthy

BOOKS

Wire + Metal: 30 Easy Metalsmithing Designs

By Denise Peck and Jane Dickerson

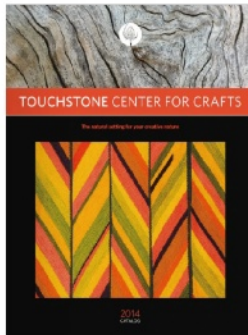
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ALCHEMIST PICNIC

The Touchstone Center for Crafts will present the Alchemist Picnic, a metals retreat, at the metals studio of its Farmington, Pennsylvania, campus on May 3 and 4. The retreat will be hosted by metalsmith and jewelry designer Wayne Werner and will give jewelry artists a chance to network and share their talents and designs. Demonstrations and presentations will be presented each day, and roundtable discussions will take place each evening.

Camping, cabin, and dorm accommodations are available at Touchstone's woodland campus for the weekend.

MORE AT TOUCHSTONECRAFTS.ORG



Halstead Call for Entries

Halstead Bead is calling for entries to its 9th annual grant competition. The Halstead Grant is awarded each year to a promising new jewelry designer working primarily in silver. The winner receives a \$5000 cash start-up grant plus \$1000 in supplies as well as industry recognition.

The deadline for entries is June 9, 2014.

MORE AT HALSTEADBEAD.COM/GRANT

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? Facets accepts news and images of new products, innovations, industry happenings, and events as space permits. Share your news by sending items to: KRosenbusch@interweave.com; or Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist, 88 Glocker Way, #299, Pottstown, PA 19465. Please be sure to indicate "Facets" on the subject line or envelope.

By Tom & Kay Benham,
contributing editors

WHICH ENGRAVING TOOL?

Q *I'd like to start engraving brass plates that I could rivet to leather strips to create bracelets. My problem is I don't know what kind of engraving tool(s) I'd need.*

Trinipirate

via JewelryMakingDaily.com/AskTheExperts

A The image of the sample bracelet you sent along with your question to jewelrymakingdaily.com/asktheexperts is actually stamped. Lucky for you stamping is a much simpler technique than engraving, is faster to learn, and requires less expensive equipment. Stamps are widely available in a huge array: alpha, numeric, and decorative. Once you locate a source of metal, all you need are metal stamps, a brass mallet or hammer, a steel bench block, ruler, pencil or marker, and tape.

First, you need to learn to lay out a baseline and figure out the stamp spacing — for this you'll need to practice. Always write out any words, dates, and so on that you wish to stamp, and be sure to double check that whatever you are stamping is spelled correctly. Secure the metal to the bench block with tape (we prefer blue painters tape) so it doesn't move while you're stamping. With practice, you'll learn how hard to strike the stamp so that you get a clean image each time without distorting the metal. Of course, you'll also need to find a source of leather strips (you might look at the project "K2, Silver and Leather Bracelet" by Pam Levin, September/October 2013, for leather sources and a wealth of other information about creating leather and metal jewelry).

If you decide to attach your stamped metal to the leather strips using rivets, we like the new Crafted Findings rivet tool sold online through most jewelry suppliers. You punch the opening with



one end of the tool and with the other end crimp a perfect rivet every time.

The tool is available in $\frac{1}{16}$ " and $\frac{3}{32}$ " diameters along with ready-made rivets sold in both diameters in assorted lengths. See our "10 Favorite Tools" feature from November 2012 for more. And good luck!

COPPER/SILVER CONVERSIONS

Q *I made a byzantine chain bracelet out of copper that weighs just under 0.5 troy ounce. I like it and would like to make one in silver. I would like to know how to estimate the weight of silver needed in troy ounces for the bracelet. I am sure that there is a ratio, but I do not know it.*

I am really glad that I started with copper. I tried several sizes of jump rings before I settled on 18 gauge wire with a 4 mm inside diameter.

Linda Osburn
Garrison, Minnesota

A It's helpful to test chain patterns in base metals prior to working with precious metals so you can work out any kinks in patterns and determine the best size jump rings to use. Good thinking!

To recreate the original copper chain in silver, you will need to know the density of both silver and copper, which you can find with a Google search. Divide the larger density by the smaller density for the ratio. Then use the ratio

TIP | Get More from a Slab

I recently purchased a 14mm thick slab of jadeite, and to reduce it to the thickness I wanted, I ordered a bottle of water glass from Johnson Brothers Lapidary (\$14 for 32 ounces; johnsonbrotherslapidary.com). Water glass is sodium silicate that can be used for sealing radiators, preserving eggs, and gluing cardboard boxes — but it also works great for gluing a slab to a scrap of 2 x 4 so it can be clamped in a saw vise.



Once the last slab has been cut, place the board in a bucket of water to soak, and the water glass will dissolve so the last bit of stone can be salvaged. I prefer this product rather than epoxy or other cements for this application.

JIM PERKINS

Many of you may be familiar with Jim, who contributes faceting designs and other lapidary or stone articles to Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist.

to multiply the weight of the original copper chain to give you the weight required of silver for the silver chain.

JEWELRY MAKING FOR OTHER ART

Q *I'm an abstract artist and my goal isn't to make traditional jewelry to*

Lucky for you stamping is a much simpler technique than engraving, is faster to learn, and requires less expensive equipment.

wear, but to make parts to glue them in my paintings and assemblage pieces and to create miniature sculptures. I am considering three forms: wire jewelry, beading, and metal clay. The thought of hammering stuff also appeals to me. Though metal clay appeals to me, I need something where I wouldn't have to bake anything with lots of chemical smells: maybe just buying metal sheets and forming my own pieces would work best.

Brian Sommers
Millersburg, Ohio

A Your idea of combining jewelry elements in assemblages is intriguing. Working with beads can be very low tech, of course, and can be accomplished with some form of stringing material. Many quilters cross boundaries and incorporate beads and buttons to add texture and dimension to their art quilts.

Wire is available in gold, silver, copper, brass, and more, and comes in a variety of gauge. Working with wire requires the use of only a few hand tools you may already have at hand: round nose, needle nose, flat nose, and chain nose pliers, nippers, and side cutters.

Metal clay requires a larger investment and time commitment to learn the basics of the material, and different metals or alloys have different requirements. You can find metal clay in fine silver, sterling, fine gold, copper, brass, steel . . . there seem to be new

metals all the time. Some metal clays can be torch fired so you wouldn't necessarily need the expense of a kiln. As long as you work in a well-ventilated area and wear a mask, the fumes shouldn't pose too much of a problem.

We believe you may be more fulfilled artistically working with copper sheets to incorporate dimension, texture, and color in your assemblages. Copper is less expensive than precious metals and requires a much shorter learning curve to manipulate it. Stamping, texturing, and fold forming are three ways to transform plain sheets of copper. We recommend the excellent book *Foldforming* by Charles Lewton-Brain, which will lead you through the process and flood your imagination with possibilities.

You may be able to purchase scrap copper from local roofing companies, and you can experiment with a torch to achieve striking colors on the copper. Basic tools would include a torch for annealing, hammers, mallets, saws, shears, and stamps. A word of warning: hammering metal can be addictive.

CAB KING 8

Q I'm new to lapidary and am looking into possibly buying the Cab King 8" model. I can get a very good deal on a new one plus the trim saw attachment.

I'd to know more about other people's experience with this machine. There's not much on the Internet but most everything I read was positive. I have used the 6" version and like it except for the close spacing of the wheels. The 8" model has the wheels spread out quite a bit more.

redmanjr1

via JewelryMakingDaily.com/AskTheExperts

A We concur with you; online, users all tout their overall satisfaction with this unit. The sealed motor, stainless steel



splash hoods, individual water shut off valves, and the extra spacing between wheels indicate a well-engineered piece of equipment. We're all about the cleanup process, so the plastic pans with drain holes really appeal to us.

We say, "Go for it," especially if you have a good deal. It should provide many years of satisfying lapidary work for you. We have never had the opportunity to use the Cab King 8" ourselves, but after looking at it on the website we are very impressed with its features. We would consider it if we were in the market for a new machine; however, we still haven't worn out our 27-year-old Diamond Pacific Genie.

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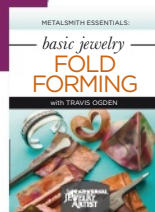
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Please include your full name and where you live. Answers and tips will appear in print with more online.

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Precious Fruit
by Csilla Csirmaz



What Was Old Is New Again
by Larissa Miller



Aztecs
by Ulyana Seryankina

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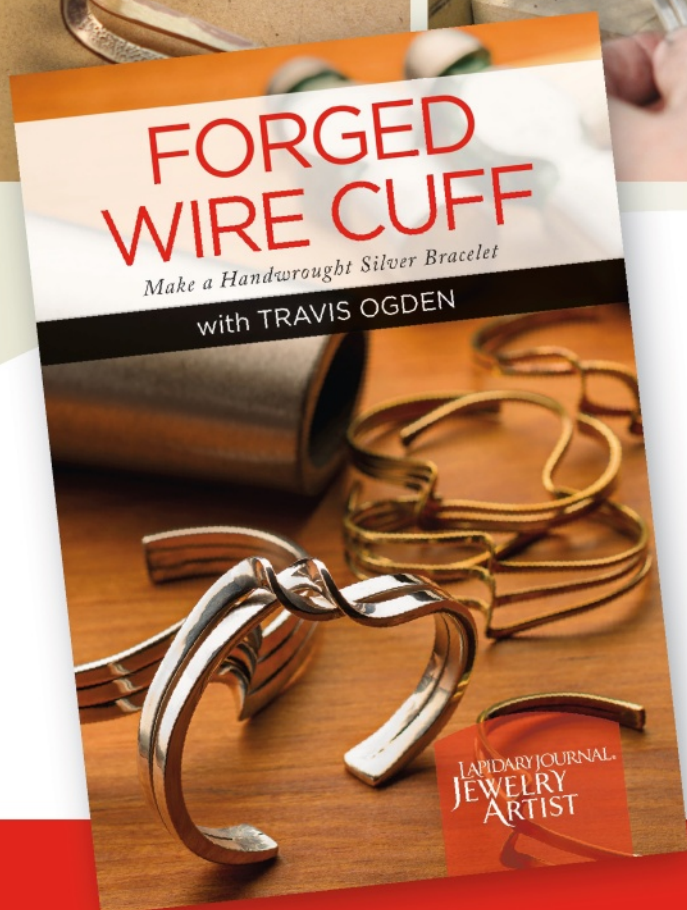
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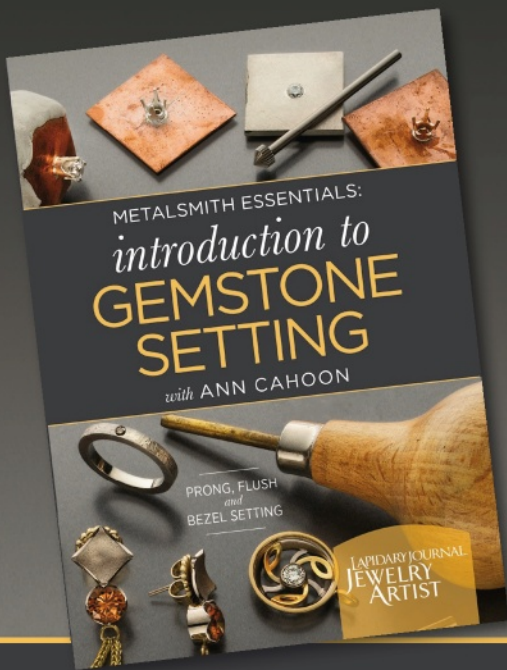
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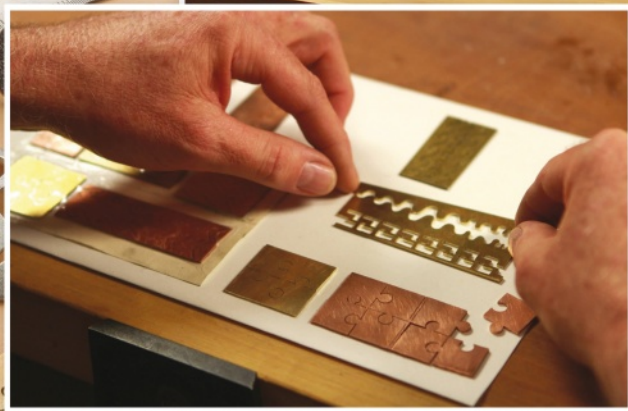
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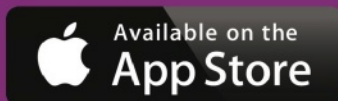


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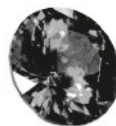
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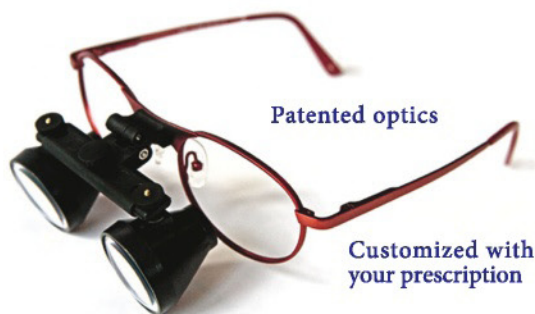
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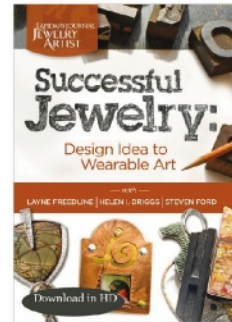
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well over a thousand of these and brings her own ideas to the work. David fits the polymer clay into the silver openings, reacting to the design Maryanne started. Then Steve might tweak the clay color with a wash of oil paint or gild the silver top before gluing the two halves together.

THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY

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ON BENCH NOW

Steve is working on a series of earrings that have cast bezels, and flat sheet silver backs with clay inlay. Steve tends to make most of the beads and his process is to mix color for a few days until his head gets focused on polymer, then he makes beads at random, then the best bead designs are set aside and adapted to make earrings.

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Steven Ford & David Forlano

DONE

We have work in about a dozen museum collections around the world, including the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, and the Helsinki Design Museo.

DOING

We're continuing a series of tube necklaces and an ongoing series of brooches.

FIRST PIECE

I think it's a very sloppy necklace that we still have in our archive. It looks as awful as everyone's first piece of polymer jewelry.

HEROES

Bruce Metcalf, Peter Chang, Art Smith, Alexander Calder.

DESIGN SOURCES

Natural forms, things like seed pods, plants, ocean life. We're working with a man-made material, so part of the fun is to make it look like something you'd find in nature — but something new.

FAVORITE PART OF DOING

The surprising things that happen in collaboration with others. In the piece shown, the silver top is hydraulically formed with a Plexiglass mold, and the metal comes first. Our metalsmith, Maryanne Petrus-Gilbert, has made

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—Pixie7,
jewelry designer



"Ah, Venice" earrings design
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