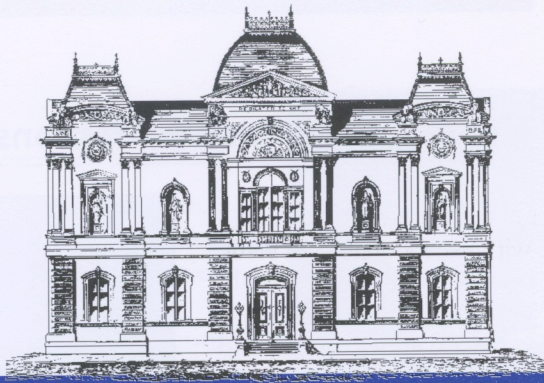


## James Renwick Alliance



March-May 1996

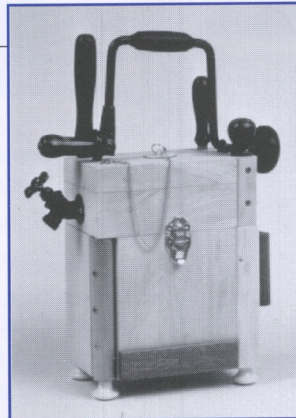
### Craft Weekend

This year's Spring Craft Weekend promises to be full of fun, excitement and lots of teapots.

"Things are really in place for a weekend with lots of wonderful events," says Sandra Oken, overall chair. "A lot of people have worked hard to make this a very special weekend."

This year's theme will focus on teapots and tea-related objects, and there will be lots of items by well known craft artists for sale at Saturday night's benefit, "A Madcap Teapot Party."

For Alliance members, weekend events will begin Friday, April 26, with the Patrons Dinner in the Grand Salon of the Renwick



"Old Handyman's Tea," wood, by Glenn Elvig

will also be an optional dinner in a private home that night which is being arranged by Susan Klaus. Susan Agger and Barbara Dickstein are in charge of events for Caucus Day which will include a morning at the

*continued on page 2*

### April 26-28

Gallery, chaired by Sharon Buchanan.

Events for Alliance/Caucus members will begin a day earlier. An acquisitions meeting is scheduled for April 25 at which the Renwick's Curator-in-Charge Ken Trapp will make his first recommendations for items to be added to the Gallery's collection. Jackie Bailey Labovitz is in charge of the reception preceding the meeting. There

### "Something Different" Winter Fun Event

Which Alliance member usually takes a chain saw with him when he goes on vacation? Who is a vascular surgeon as well as an award-winning photographer? And whose son was commissioned personally by Hillary Clinton to design the peace dove cufflinks that she gave to the President for Christmas last year?

If you came to the Alliance's new winter fun event "Something Different," you would know the answers. Uncovering some serious accomplishments as well as whimsical things people have done was



Shirley and Marshall Jacobs are delighted as they open a package at the elegant white elephant exchange at the "Something Different" winter fun event. Photo by Paul Parkman.

all part of getting better acquainted during the relaxed, fun-filled evening on January 20 at Avenel's Tournament Players Club in Potomac, Md.

As people checked in, they got a sheet of paper with some facts and descriptions that they used to identify other Alliance members.

"I thought by putting in a mix of serious accomplish-

ments and more whimsical aspects of things people had done made it more fun," says Sue Pierce, who co-chaired the event with Sandy Mitchell. "I think the reason it worked so well

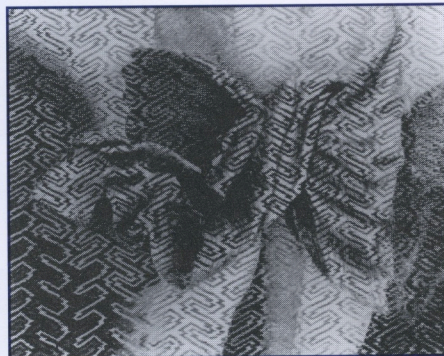
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## Lindquist and Cook Exhibitions Open at Renwick by Jeremy Adamson

On March 15 two important one-person shows open at the Renwick. Both examine the work of two vanguard craft artists at mid-career. The exhibition "*Lia Cook: Material Allusions*" contains 25 works made between 1982 and 1995 by the internationally renowned Berkeley, California, fiber artist. One is an exciting six-part installation piece titled "Material Pleasures." "*Mark Lindquist: Revolutions In Wood*" is a retrospective that includes 42 lathe-turned pieces from 1969 to 1995. These pieces document the increasingly sculptural work of this outstanding, Florida-based studio wood-turner. Both are traveling shows. The Lindquist exhibition was organized and circulated by the Hand Workshop Art Center, Richmond, Virginia, while the Cook show was produced by The Oakland Museum in



"Loin Cloth Series: Anonymous" 1995; linen, rayon, paint, and dye: 52 in. x 65 in. Collection of the artist.

California. Prof. Robert Hobbs, holder of the Rhoda Thalheimer Endowed Chair of American Art at Virginia Commonwealth University, was guest curator for the Lindquist show and authored the accompanying book. Inez Brooks-Myers, Curator of Costume and Textiles at The Oakland Museum, organized the Cook exhibition and wrote the introduction to the catalogue which contains interpretive essays

by Matthew Kangas, Chelsea Miller Goin, and Janis Jefferies. Both publications are available for sale in the Renwick shop.

Introductory text panels at the entrance to each show will help visitors appreciate the two artists' separate intentions and achievements. Prof. Hobbs, who prepared the text for Lindquist's work, writes: During the past 26 years, Mark Lindquist has dramatically transformed the studio

*continued on page 4*

### Craft Weekend

*continued from page 1*

Renwick with Ken Trapp and Gallery staff who will explain all that's involved with "The Birth of an Exhibition." The group will have lunch in a beautiful home with a collection and then visit another private home with a collection.

Saturday morning's symposium, open to the public and co-chaired by Andrea Uravitch and B.J. Adams, will feature several speakers who will talk about teapot design, decoration and use. Symposium participants will also enjoy a sumptuous morning tea.

Saturday afternoon is free to visit the annual Smithsonian Craft Show at the National Building Museum, sponsored by the Smithsonian Women's Committee.

The benefit gala on Saturday night, which is always a highlight of the weekend, will be held

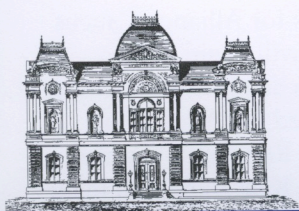


"Jade Lily Tea," clay, by Nancy Yturriaga-Adams

again this year at the National Museum of American Art. Shirley Jacobs and Sherley Koteen are co-chairs for the evening. This year's event, A Madcap Teapot Party, will begin downstairs in the museum with cocktails and the exciting sale of dozens of very special teapots that range from the traditional to the sublime, and other tea-related objects, all juried by a

special committee. They are crafted in a variety of media, and you won't want to miss out on owning one of them. Afterwards, we'll move upstairs to the Lincoln Gallery for a memorable dinner.

On Sunday, Arnold Berlin and Norman Mitchell have assembled a tour of several homes, a gallery and a studio. Sign up now so you don't miss out on any of these exciting events.



## James Renwick Alliance QUARTERLY March - May 1996

The Quarterly is published four times a year by the James Renwick Alliance, a national nonprofit organization created to support the Renwick Gallery of the National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.

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## An Evening with Ken

by Jerry Paulson

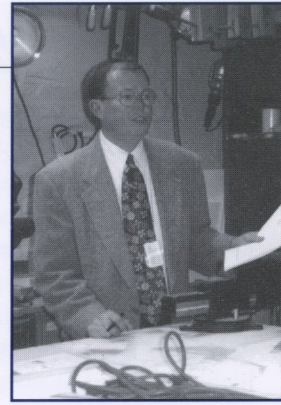
It was an evening like many other marvelous evenings. Members of the Acquisitions Committee and guests who were ART members and Renwick docents gathered expectantly in the Grand Salon of the Renwick Gallery on a cold December evening. It was a time to see old friends and greet new Committee members.

But this meeting was different than previous ones. Ken Trapp, the new Curator-in-Charge of the Renwick Gallery, wanted to build a solid foundation to begin a long-standing relationship between himself, the Renwick Gallery and the James Renwick Alliance. He and his staff guided four groups on a tour of the Gallery: the building – its strengths as a showplace for contemporary crafts, and its many needs for improvement; the people – the dedicated staff who make the Gallery function; and the collection – where it is stored and displayed. Ken, Jeremy Adamson, Ellen Myette, and Allen Bassing who helped lead the tours, also discussed the relationship between the Renwick Gallery and the National Museum of American Art.

The December event was an exciting prelude to the Committee's next meeting in

April. By that time, Ken expects to have completed his review of the Gallery's permanent collection and will talk about the strengths and weaknesses of the collection as well as his vision for building the collection over the next several years.

At that meeting, he plans to present his first recommendations for objects that he would like to see included in the permanent collection. The Committee will view those objects in the context of their new understanding of the overall collection; and they will have the opportunity to vote on the use of Renwick Alliance funds to support the purchase of the objects.



During a tour of the Renwick building, Curator-in-Charge Ken Trapp explains how objects in the Gallery's collections are cared for and stored. Photo by Ginny Friend.



Alliance members who braved a cold winter evening get a detailed look at the Gallery and its collection. Photo by Ginny Friend.

## "Something Different"

continued from page 1

is that we have such an interesting group of people who are members of the Alliance."

It may have been cold outside, but inside comfort was the order of the evening with two big fireplaces with roaring fires and a buffet dinner of roast turkey and lots of wonderful side dishes.

And no one will forget the elegant white elephant exchange. Everyone who brought one of their own treasures – hand crafted and valued between \$75-\$250 – left with a treasure that belonged to someone else. "A lot of people were really pleased with the idea," Pierce says. "It was like a gift exchange. I know myself that there are often things



Left to right: Shelley Gollust, Jackie Urow, Sandy Mitchell are all on hand as Anne Durand checks in for the Alliance's first winter fun event at the Tournament Players Club in January. Photo by Paul Parkman.

around the home you don't want to get rid of but don't have a place for anymore."

Packages came wrapped creatively in all sorts of ways, from fancy paper to newspaper to trash bags with ribbons. Everyone chose a number from a basket and when it was their turn they could

pick out a wrapped gift or choose an unwrapped item from the person before them. More than a few items were passed through several hands.

"It was really lots of fun," Mitchell says. "It was an opportunity to have a good time and to use crafts. Everybody seemed really happy. Let's do it again next year."



Sue Pierce, co-chair of the evening, offers welcoming remarks to Alliance members at the "Something Different" winter event. Photo by Paul Parkman.

wood-turning movement. Among his contributions are popularizing the use of spalted wood discovered by his father, Melvin Lindquist, in the 1950s, artificially inducing spalting, developing the natural top bowl, and mining the aesthetics of bark inclusions and other so-called imperfections.

Lindquist has redefined the turned vessel in sculptural terms, rejected accepted rules about highly-polished finishes in favor of the expressivity of ragged and tooled surfaces, and rethought the craft of wood turning in terms of robotics, also making extensive use of the chain saw and creating large lathe-turned sculptures. During this period, he has increasingly closed the gap between artistry and art. At the same time, he has transformed wood turning from handcraft



*"Turned and Carved Sculptural Bowl with Carved Spoon" 1975; spalted maple; 6 1/4 in. x 8 1/2 in. Collection of Greenville County Museum of Art, South Carolina. Purchased with assistance from the National Endowment for the Arts.*

to an art form dependent on the percussion of primitive machines forced beyond their expected tolerance to become highly expressive devices.

Although his work has been lauded, often emulated, and eagerly collected, many of Lindquist's revolutions in wood have been so successful that they have been accepted as truisms of the field and have merged into the standard practices of the modern wood-turning movement. It is hoped that the examination of Lindquist's contributions occasioned by this retrospective exhibition will encourage wood turners, collectors, and historians of the genre to reflect on his many advances that have helped make the modern studio wood-turning movement so exciting in the past quarter century, and to consider the aesthetic merits of his work.

In the introductory text for Lia Cook's display, Renwick curator Jeremy Adamson writes that Lia Cook is among the most inventive artists working in fiber media today. A professor at California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland, she has long been fascinated not only by the physical properties of woven cloth, but by the importance and meanings different cultures historically have attached to textiles. The artist laments the current under-valuation of fabric, and in her work attempts to reawaken contemporary viewers to its beauty, sensuality, and

cultural significance.

In Cook's distinctive wall hangings, "fabric" is both object and subject. The colorful pieces not only explore intricate weaving patterns, but simultaneously communicate, through separate, painted images of drapery, cloth's intimate, tactile connection to the human body. "I create sensual and complex works," the artist states, "that focus on the meaning of cloth and what that suggests about our humanness and vulnerability." In her most recent work, appropriating details from Old Master paintings, she centers attention on the sensuous point of touch between fabric and skin, underscoring cloth's both mundane and extraordinary value.

Cook begins a piece by sketching a composition on paper and then transferring the weaving pattern onto the loom. The vertical warp is made up of threads of tough rayon of a sort used in the manufacture of automobile tires. The weft is composed either of similar rayon, or strips of silk, linen, or abaca (banana fiber) paper. At times, Cook manipulates the construction of her pieces by distorting the tension of the loom to change the direction of the warp.

Once the fabric has been woven on a large, twenty-harness "dobby" type loom, it is washed, then typically pounded with a hammer or run through a large etching press. After the flattened cloth has dried and been stabilized with a backing, Cook treats the surface as a painter's canvas, carefully dyeing the threads and tinting the strips to create lively, colorful, and visually sophisticated compositions. Since the mid-1980s, her works increasingly have incorporated pictorial images of draped and folded textiles---curtains, quilts, and drapery.

Although her painted images of draped cloth are firmly grounded in the surface structure of each wall hanging, they appear to have an independent life of their own. Through a constant visual interplay between two and three dimensions, discrete images of drapery emerge from and fade back into dense geometric surface patterns. But, through variations in light, color, and texture, even these pressed, decorated planes appear to be composed of a multitude of spatial layers, further visually enlivening Lia Cook's extraordinary "woven paintings."

Both exhibitions close July 7, 1996.

## Upcoming Trips

### **Rochester**

The Alliance trip to Rochester, N.Y., on March 22-23 will be an exciting one according to trip leaders Lee and Mel Eagle. This is the first Alliance trip to be held in conjunction with the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA). The conference, which is expected to draw 1,500-2,000 people, begins Wednesday, March 20, and Alliance trip participants are invited to join in activities for the entire event. NCECA was established in 1967 to help stimulate, promote and improve education in the ceramic arts.

On Friday, March 22, Alliance members will have their choice of attending a panel discussion on Public Works Executed in Industry, or a session on throwing demonstrations, or an International Slide Forum on Terra-Cotta Public Art-2000. The afternoon will include a lecture by a representative of Christie's followed by a roundtable discussion on the Valuation of Art that will be held at the Strong Museum. Valuation will be assessed several ways: for donation, for estate, for sale and for equitable distribution.

Following the lecture, the group will go to the home of well-known artists Wendell Castle and Nancy Jurs for a guided tour of their studios followed by dinner. Jurs works in clay and has worked in both functional and sculptural objects and recently had a piece of her work installed in the Rochester Airport. Castle is one of the leading designers and furniture makers in the world.

On Saturday, the group will see exhibits in the area by well-known ceramic artists and attend a discussion and/or tour by a gallery owner and Jim Tanner, NCECA president-elect, whose work is shown at the Maurine Littleton Gallery in Washington, D.C. Val Cushing will provide a firsthand glimpse of the objects that have been donated by artists for Saturday's auction that follows a reception-buffet at the Strong Museum which our group will attend. Space is still available.

### **Baltimore**

The Alliance's day trip to Baltimore on Sunday, March 10, includes a special tour of the



*"Vargo Series," Wendell Castle*

Chihuly exhibit at the Baltimore Museum of Art, a visit to a ceramic gallery as well as three craft artist studios.

With trip leaders John Kotelly and Mary Hartzler at the helm, and assistance from Lenel Srochi-Myerhoff,

the group will depart Washington at 8:30 a.m. for the Baltimore Museum of Art where a docent will lead a special tour of the exhibit *"Dale Chihuly: Installations 1964-1996."* The exhibit, which is touring several museums, recreates several of Chihuly's large-scale installations from the past three decades. This exhibit complements the exhibition of Chihuly's *"Seaforms"* which opened in February at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington.

In Baltimore, the group will also visit the home and studio of glass artist Gianni Toso, who is well known for creating small, exquisitely detailed glass figures in religious and secular settings, along with his much sought-after chess sets. He'll demonstrate his lamp-work techniques and give a tour of his private collection of glass art. There will also be a stop at the Baltimore Clayworks which is featuring a retrospective of nine regional ceramic artists including Peter Kaizer, Marcia Jaestadt, Deborah Dickinson and Bill VanGilder. Then it will be on to visit the studios of Baltimore craft artists Luran Schott and David Paige to see their recent work in jewelry and mixed-media sculptural masks.

### **Colorado Caucus Study Tour**

Barbara Dickstein says to mark your calendars now for September 26-28 for an exciting Craft Leaders Caucus trip to Aspen, Colorado. The trip includes visits to some beautiful homes with first class craft collections and a stop at the Anderson Ranch Center where a number of crafts are taught and practiced. And it's all set amidst one of Mother Nature's own spectacular creations – the Rockies. If you want to stay through Sunday, September 29, you can see the back country firsthand on hikes led by Barbara and Sid Dickstein, Ruth and Dick Conant Trip leaders are Barbara and Sid Dickstein and Susan Agger.

## President's Column

by Barbara Berlin



This column is being written as the deep snow begins to melt and there is a short moment in time to stop and reflect upon what is about to happen within the Alliance and what recently has taken place.

I look forward with great anticipation to our 14th annual Craft Weekend on April 26-28, which happens in conjunction with the Smithsonian Women's Committee's Craft Show. This weekend resembles a wonderful fireworks display with burst after burst of colorful and exciting events shared with enthusiastic participants.

An enormous amount of energy and thought has been put into developing this weekend which will feature a teapot sale. A special thank you to Sandra Oken, the overall chairman, and to Shirley Jacobs and Sherley Koteen, chairmen of Saturday night's benefit. I also salute all of the other chairmen and committee members along with Ken Trapp, Curator-in-Charge of the Renwick Gallery, and Betsy Broun, Director of the National Museum of American Art, for their help and guidance in planning our events.

We have a number of anniversaries coming up, beginning with the ART members who celebrate their first anniversary this spring.

In 1997, we will celebrate the 15th anniversary of the Alliance and the 25th anniversary of the Renwick Gallery.

In February, we co-sponsored two events with and at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in conjunction with an exhibition of works by Dale Chihuly. We enjoyed Alliance exposure in the Washington art community.

The Development Committee headed by Rebecca Klemm will meet soon, and the Planning and Nominating Committee under the direction of John Kotelly is in the midst of creating a three-year plan for the Alliance.

This spring we offer a fine variety of trips. The Craft Leaders Caucus traveled to Los Angeles on February 28-March 3, led by Ruth and Dick Conant and Lillian and Ellis Berkowitz. On March 10, John Kotelly and Mary Hartzler have put together a wonderful day trip to Baltimore and Lee and Mel Eagle have designed a superb trip for Alliance members March 22-23 in conjunction with the National Council for Education in the Ceramic Arts (NCECA) conference in Rochester, New York. Thank you leaders!

Our spring workshop series has begun under the capable hands of Mary George Kronstadt and

her committee, and our Educational Outreach Committee headed by Shelly Brunner and David Montague are working on a the new joint program that will involve the Renwick Gallery, the Kennedy Center and the Corcoran Gallery of Art.

I know you will want to see the Lia Cook and Mark Lindquist exhibitions that open on March 15.

Looking back, I wish to thank Marilyn Barrett and Deena Kaplan for chairing the first, and very successful "Member Bring-A-Member" event at the Renwick last fall, and for also making possible our membership booth at the Washington Craft Show.

A special thank you to Judy Bloomfield and Myrna Zuckerman who led our first Alliance trip of the year to New York City. We especially enjoyed the hospitality of Judy and Marty Bloomfield and Bob and Myrna Zuckerman, as well as Dale and Doug Anderson, who graciously invited us into their homes to see their wonderful collections and enjoy New York hospitality. Our thanks also to Simona and Jerry Chazen for inviting us to view New York from lofty heights and view their collection as well. Thank you so much New York Caucus members who helped to make this trip one to remember.

Our December evening with Ken Trapp was a special learning experience for Board and Caucus members, ART members and Renwick docents. The Renwick staff, introduced to us by Ken Trapp, guided us through the behind-the-scenes spaces – which most of us had never seen before – to give us a better understanding of the physical space and how the staff operates. Jerry Paulson helped to coordinate the evening.

I was very pleased to see so many new faces at the fine event in December at the Embassy of Finland coordinated by Sue Bralove. Our January winter event, "Something Different," chaired by Sandy Mitchell and Sue Pierce, was indeed fun and a good opportunity for continuing and new Alliance members to get to know each other better. David Montague, we'll miss you without your necklace!

A special thank you to Charlie Gailis for his long and dedicated service as the Graphic Designer for the Quarterly and the Craft Leaders Report.

I am proud of the James Renwick Alliance. We are loyal and energetic, our membership and activity base has broadened and we are looking ahead to our future. I welcome your thoughts. See you at Craft Weekend. Think teapots!

## James Renwick Alliance 1996 Spring Craft Workshop Series

Continuing to build on the popularity of the Alliance craft workshops, held in the Fall and Spring each year, the 1996 Spring series features artists working in ceramics, turned wood, fiber and glass. The series is sponsored by the James Renwick Alliance in conjunction with the Renwick Gallery of the National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. In addition to the workshop, each artist gives a lecture at the Renwick Gallery on the day following the workshop. An exhibition at a local gallery coincides with each workshop and lecture. To register for a workshop, please complete the form below. Students in accredited DC area schools are encouraged to apply for free admission to these workshops as space allows. For further information, call Mary George Kronstadt at (202) 966-7757.

### Linda Arbuckle, Clay

#### Ceramic Workshop (Held on February 10)

Linda Arbuckle is a well known ceramic artist and teacher. Her workshop explored the majolica technique and her hand forming process.

### Mark Lindquist, Wood

#### March 23 — Workshop

Mark Lindquist is a wood turner currently using a chain saw to texture many of the surfaces of his vessels. Referring to the concepts illustrated in his book, *Sculpting Wood*, he will demonstrate techniques in the workshop for creating sculptural vessels by methods other than with a chain saw. The workshop is planned as a friendly, interactive

session involving discussions about previsualizing form in material, and safe procedures for shaping and finishing the sculptural vessel. Mark will demonstrate and discuss the evolution of the carving process, originally handed down to him from his father, Melvin Lindquist, a pioneer wood turner, as well as the current techniques that he uses in his studio.

### Ana Lisa Hedstrom, Fiber

#### March 30 — Workshop

Ana Lisa Hedstrom is a fiber artist known for her innovative resist dyed and pleated fabrics and clothing. She specializes in the Japanese "shibori" technique. She will conduct a hands-on workshop. One piece of her work will be on view in *"The Kimono Inspiration: Art and Art-to-Wear in America"* at the Textile Museum through August, 1996.

### Emilio Santini, Glass

#### May 18 — Workshop

Emilio Santini is a glass artist working in the flame technique. Using solid glass rods, he heats and bends the materials to produce wine glasses and small sculptures. He was born into a family of glass blowers in Milan, Italy, and moved to the United States in 1988.



Workshop participants get firsthand experience

about painting on ceramics from Laney Oxman who led a ceramics workshop at the Fillmore Arts Center last fall. Photo by Penny Pagano.

## Workshop Registration Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime phone \_\_\_\_\_ Evening phone \_\_\_\_\_

### Artists in the full series:

#### Artist

Linda Arbuckle  
Ceramics

Mark Lindquist  
Turned Wood

Ana Lisa Hedstrom  
Fiber

Emilio Santini  
Glass

#### Workshop

Held on February 10  
10:00 AM - 3:00 PM  
George Washington Univ.

March 23  
10:00 AM - 3:00 PM  
Fillmore Arts Center

March 30  
10:00 AM - 3:00 PM  
Fillmore Arts Center

May 18  
10:00 AM - 3:00 PM  
Montgomery College

#### Lecture

February 11  
3:00 PM  
Renwick Gallery

March 24  
3:00 PM  
Renwick Gallery

March 31  
3:00 PM  
Renwick Gallery

May 19  
3:00 PM  
Renwick Gallery

#### Exhibition Opening

February 11  
Jackie Chalkley

March 24  
5:00 - 7:00 PM  
Maurine Littleton Gallery

Work included in Textile  
Museum exhibition

May 19  
5:00 - 7:00 PM  
The Glass Gallery

### Please enroll me for the following workshops:

Full series of four workshops at \$160 per person (\$140 for Alliance members)

Individual workshops at \$50 each, per person (\$45 for Alliance members)

Mark Lindquist, wood, March 23

Ana Lisa Hedstrom, fiber, March 30

Emilio Santini, glass, May 18

Priority will be given to full series subscribers. Workshop participants will provide their own lunch and beverage. No refunds can be made on workshop fees. Please make your check payable to the James Renwick Alliance, and send it with this registration form and a stamped, self-addressed envelope to:

Mary George Kronstadt  
4414 Klinge Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20016

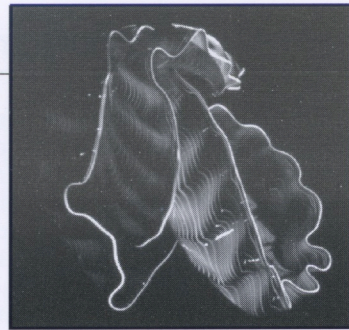
## Chihuly at the Corcoran

In February, the Corcoran Gallery of Art opened its show of "Dale Chihuly: *Seaforms*," an exhibition slated to travel for the next several years. Chihuly's "Seaforms" sculptures are glass organisms inspired by marine life and Venetian blown glass. Like the marine creatures they recall, they have a toughness that belies their apparent fragility.

The Corcoran show consists of 25 glass sculptures and six drawings created by the distinguished contemporary glass artist over the past 15 years. The exhibition was coordinated by

Deputy Director/Chief Curator Jack Cowart, who has organized other exhibitions of Chihuly's work and who has written about its relation to contemporary art and the studio glass movement. The Corcoran show ends on April 29, 1996.

To mark the show's opening in Washington, the James Renwick Alliance and the Friends of the Corcoran Gallery of Art jointly sponsored a preview



"Watteau Blue Seaform Set" 1994

by David Montague

reception on Friday, February 16, which included a buffet supper, a short talk about Chihuly's work and an opportunity to see the exhibition firsthand. A second

program, also sponsored by the Corcoran and the Alliance, was held at the Corcoran in the afternoon on Sunday, February 18, and featured Dale Chihuly who talked about his art and showed slides and videos.

## A New Membership Event



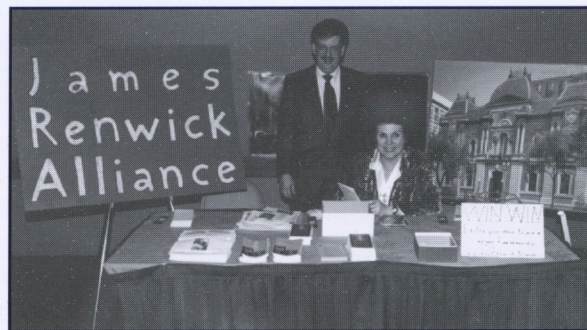
New Alliance member Paula Silvert Moore talks with Renwick Curator-in-Charge Ken Trapp. Photo by Paul Parkman.

An enthusiastic crowd attended the first "Member Bring-A-Member" event at the Renwick in November. Ken Trapp captivated the audience with a slide show of crafts in the Renwick's permanent collection. Marilyn Barrett and Deena Kaplan, co-chairs of the event, drew tickets for a dozen prizes that ranged

from autographed books to lunch with Ken Trapp. Response to the Alliance questionnaire that queried members interests was excellent, and prompted a number of responses to volunteer to help with events. The evening added 52 new members, including five who joined at the Craft Leaders Caucus level. Participants toured the permanent collection and enjoyed a fall buffet supper in the Grand Salon. Everyone went home able to compose their thoughts about the Alliance with some bright blue pencils with the Albert Paley gates monogrammed in gold.

## Membership Booth

Everyone who entered the Washington Craft Show at the Sheraton Washington Hotel last fall passed by the membership table for the James Renwick Alliance. Enlarged pictures of the Renwick and of the "Game Fish" from the permanent collection drew lots of comments including "I've been there," or "What's that?" or "I enjoy the Renwick." Thanks to Barbara and Arnold Berlin's daughter Danielle



Jerry Paulson stops by the Renwick's membership table at the Washington Craft Show to say hello to Membership Committee chair Marilyn Barrett. Photo by Paul Parkman.

for the graphic lettering for the sign. We signed up some new Alliance members and depleted our supply of brochures by the end of the Craft Show. Pam Simpich, who stopped at the table to say she wanted to learn more about crafts, won a free membership in the Alliance by putting her name in the fish bowl. We began 1996 with 600 members, including 95 at the Caucus level.



The seven employees (we are all Federal) of the Renwick Gallery are back to work after two unprecedented government shutdowns and the Blizzard of '96 that extended our compelled "vacation" by four days. We have returned to our work, yes, but with a sharpened sense that powerful forces are in motion to reshape and redefine our culture with an urgency unparalleled in our experience.

Indeed, museums are not immune to these forces. The NMAA curatorial retreat on December 13 made clear that we curators are very much aware that our own institutional world is rapidly changing. How we adapt and respond to the new realities is of great concern to us. Many of these changes give rise to anxieties and fears; for however much we might say we embrace change, it is human nature to fear the unknown. Change is the unknown.

There are changes afoot at the Renwick Gallery. The closing of Pennsylvania Avenue between 15th and 17th Streets to vehicular traffic and increased security at the White House and Blair House are carefully watched from our prime real estate. The staffs of the Renwick Gallery and NMAA in concert with the Smithsonian Institution are working closely with the National Park Service and the Secret Service to develop a suitable design for Pennsylvania Avenue as a pedestrian mall and architectural park that also meets our special needs. I have compiled a brief history of the Renwick Gallery along with our preferences for the design of Pennsylvania Avenue and submitted them to the National Park Service.

I would like to see the Renwick Gallery bathed in light at night to complement the dramatic lighting of the magnificent Old Executive Office Building which faces the Renwick. With both Victorian facades lighted to maximum advantage, our corner of Pennsylvania Avenue would be balanced visually. I am also hopeful that we may

dress the Renwick Gallery with appropriate banners to announce our identity to pedestrians.

On a bitterly cold night last December 11, members of the Acquisitions Committee, along with ART members and Renwick docents, met in the Grand Salon for an introduction to the Renwick Gallery, the building as well as the collection of contemporary American studio craft. The timing was priceless: With Shimon Peres next door, security was tighter than the proverbial drum. Guests were escorted into the building by the Secret Service, a courtesy that we do not always provide, by the way. All that was missing was Secret Service valet parking. Next time.

My agenda was simple: While I thought it premature to present works of art to the Alliance acquisitions committee for purchase, I wanted to take the time that evening to "present" the Renwick Gallery to our loyal supporters. Jeremy Adamson, curator, Allen Bassing, head of education, and Ellen Myette, operations and building manager, joined me in guiding four groups through the building, from the Grand Salon to the permanent collection, from the basement facilities and offices to the first floor temporary exhibitions areas.

I was eager to answer questions about the Renwick Gallery because, as the curator-in-charge, I am also the steward of this historical national landmark and responsible for its proper maintenance. To tell me that the Renwick Gallery can be a historical landmark and yet house a collection of late 20th century craft in harmonious display is to speak to the converted. I do not have to be convinced. The aesthetic disparity between a Victorian art gallery and a collection of late 20th century craft does not strike me as an anomaly. In fact, I think the two aesthetic experiences can be used to advantage, one aesthetic playing with and against another. A sensitive designer can accomplish amazingly instructive

effects with seemingly contradictory artistic components. It is my hope that we can create such a magical design and provide our viewers in the near future with a memorable experience.

To my surprise, my well-intentioned evening of introductions was thought by some to mask an ulterior motive. Was I discussing the deterioration of the Grand Salon outer walls as a lead-in to a plea for money from the Alliance? Was the evening a setup to ask for financial help with the reinstallation of the permanent collection? What was my REAL agenda? I have been accused of being fast, but trust me, I am not that fast. No, the occasion simply was what it was, a lovely evening of getting to know each other.

I was also happy to present some of my ideas for the Renwick's future. In that light, I think it is important to address the pressing needs of the permanent collection as soon as possible. I have already begun working with John Zelenick, the new designer for the NMAA, to discuss how we might best arrange and display our developing collection.

A redesign of the permanent collection cannot, of course, compensate for glaring omissions in the collection. Despite some wonderful and choice objects – pieces that will become icons of American craft if they are not so already – the current collection calls for more thorough and systematic development. A serious collection must be developed and not left to grow without rhyme or reason. To give the permanent collection a depth of aesthetic and historical maturity, it is imperative that we begin to add works that are considered "historical" in spite of having been created in our life time.

In a future column I will address the issue of the collection and of collecting in a museum. This issue is of great concern to curators, collections managers, and of course to collectors.

It is my hope that this year ages more felicitously than it began. And may we all prosper!

## March 8

Gallery Short Talk: As part of Women's History Month, Renwick Programs Coordinator Allen Bassing will discuss "A Little Torch," by Judith Schaechter, a work of cut glass and fired enamels. At Noon. Meet in lobby.

## March 21 and 28

Video Program: "Turned Wood '93" is a detailed video catalogue of work by contemporary woodturners including David Ellsworth, William Hunter, Ron Kent, and Philip Moulthrop, whose works are in the Renwick Gallery's permanent collection. Program support comes from the del Mano Gallery, Los Angeles, California. From 10 AM to 3 PM. (Length: 180 min.)

## March 24

Gallery Talk: Textile artist Lia Cook will discuss her woven layered work that includes such materials as silk, banana plant fiber, linen, and rayon, and has images that accentuate the ordinary and extraordinary values of cloth. At 1 PM. Meet in lobby.

Lecture: Lia Cook will continue a discussion of her innovative painted and woven works that are full of color, light, and movement, and draw from the history of textiles and painting. Both programs are supported by the Stephen Thurston Memorial Fund. At 2 PM.

Gallery Talk: Woodturner Mark Lindquist will discuss his innovative vessels as sculptural forms rich in cultural and stylistic associations. At 3 PM. Meet in lobby.

Lecture: Mark Lindquist will elaborate on his artistic reconfiguration of woodturning in terms of Korean and Japanese ceramics, Oriental philosophy, and Judeo-Christian symbols. Mark Lindquist will be joined in his programs by Professor Robert Hobbs, curator of the Lindquist exhibit and holder of the Rhoda Thalhimer Chair of American Art at Virginia Commonwealth University, in a point-counterpoint conversation about crossing established boundaries in thinking about and experiencing art. Both programs are supported by the James Renwick Alliance and the Maurine Littleton Gallery. At 4 PM.

## March 31

Lecture: Textile artist Ana Lisa Hedstrom will discuss her innovative resist dyed and pleated fabric and clothing. Program support comes from the James Renwick Alliance. At 3 PM.

## April 6 and 7

Craft Demonstration: Metalsmith Komelia Hungja Okim, professor of art in metals, Montgomery College, Rockville, Maryland, will show materials and techniques she uses to fabricate her jewelry. Rescheduled from November 18 and 19, 1995. Program support comes from the Pearl Rappaport Kaplan Fund. From 11 AM to 3 PM.

## April 11

Video Program: "Turned Wood '95" is a detailed catalogue of work by contemporary woodturners including David Ellsworth, William Hunter, Ron Kent, and Philip Moulthrop, whose works are in the Renwick Gallery's permanent collection. Program support comes from the del Mano Gallery, Los Angeles, California. From 10 AM to 3 PM. (Length: 180 min.)

## April 19

Lecture: Renwick Programs Coordinator Allen Bassing will discuss the history of the Renwick Gallery starting with James Renwick's architectural commission from William Wilson Corcoran in 1858. At Noon.

## April 21

Lecture: Renwick Gallery Curator-in-Charge Kenneth Trapp will discuss his ideas about forming a collection for the Renwick Gallery. At 3 PM.

## April 25

Video Program: "Turned Wood '95" is a detailed catalogue of work by contemporary woodturners including David Ellsworth, William Hunter, Ron Kent, and Philip Moulthrop, whose works are in the Renwick Gallery's permanent collection. Program support comes from the del Mano Gallery, Los Angeles, California. From 10 AM to 3 PM. (Length: 180 min.)

All programs are free to the public and will take place in the Grand Salon unless otherwise noted.

## April 28

Lecture: Woodworking artist Ron Fleming will discuss his own work and that of other craftspeople who create turned-and-carved vessels. Fleming combines shapes from nature with simple well-proportioned vessel forms. One of his pieces was selected for the White House Craft Collection. Program support comes from the Sansar Gallery, Washington, DC. At 1 PM.

## May 4 and 5

Craft Demonstration: John and Marsha Thies of Monocacy Pottery, Thurmont, Maryland, will show how they produce their one-of-a-kind wood-fired pottery using glazes and slips that bring out the best in their work. Program support comes from the Pearl Rappaport Kaplan Fund. From 11 AM to 3 PM.

## May 9 and May 23

Video Program: "Handmade in America," part of a series on contemporary American crafts people. This session is an interview with Lia Cook and how she designs and fabricates her textiles. Program support comes from Barbaralee Diamondstein-Spielvogel who also interviews Cook and produced the series. From 10 AM to 3 PM. (Length: 29 min.)

## May 19

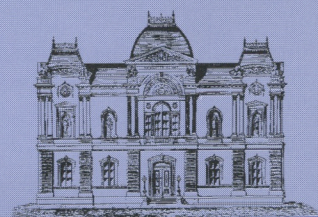
Lecture: Ceramic artist Randy Johnston will discuss his wood-fired functional work done in the Bernard Leach tradition. At 1 PM.

Lecture: Glass artist Emilio Santini will talk about torchworking as a sculptural medium in the creation of his figures and goblets. Program support comes from the James Renwick Alliance and The Glass Gallery. At 3 PM.

## May 24

Lecture: Renwick Programs Coordinator Allen Bassing will survey textiles produced in America during the 18th and 19th centuries, including the handiwork of women of colonial and later times; fabrics by professional weavers and the early textile mills. At Noon.

**Renwick Gallery of the National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution**  
 Pennsylvania Ave. at 17th Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20560  
 Kenneth R. Trapp Curator-in-Charge  
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## Remembering the Big Apple

by Jamienne Studley and Gary Smith

The Alliance trip to New York last November had it all, with exceptional craft collections and talented, gracious hosts welcoming craft lovers.

The itinerary was studded with gems set tightly, yet imaginately, by tour leaders Myrna Zuckerman and Judy Bloomfield.

Friday emphasized the sparkle of the Big Apple with a full plate of activities that included a welcome brunch at the Leo Kaplan Modern gallery, lunch at the home of Judy and Marty Bloomfield (where the creative closet doors almost outshone the fine glass and wood), and a visit to the wonder-packed loft of Dawn Bennett and Marty Davidson. Hosts Dale and Doug Anderson shared their superb, eclectic, and beautifully show-cased collection, their stories, and a lovely reception. Dinner at Sea Grill,

complete with a quintessential New York view of the Rockefeller Center skating rink, found new and old friends comparing craft notes. Even the most seasoned collectors were still exclaiming over the 48th floor aerie of Jerry and Simona Chazen, with its breathtaking 360 degree view and equally impressive collection of glass, furniture, sculpture and paintings.

Craft studios dominated Saturday's agenda. Marek Cecula and Jim Makins welcomed us to their Greenwich Village studios and the Greenwich House Potters to their community workshops. The only problem was that the picturesque Village lanes were downright inhospitable to our lumbering tour bus. Then it was on to the East Village studio of Michael Lucero, ceramics and Cheryl Laemmle, painting: the blazing glass furnaces of Brooklyn's Urban Workshop, and the

studio of Arnie Zimmerman and Kim Dickey. The evening featured a reception and the work of marvelous furniture artists at the Peter Joseph Gallery, hosted by Michael Monroe, former Curator-in-Charge of the Renwick Gallery, followed by dinner at Judson's Grill.

On Sunday, we expanded our horizons, traveling to the Zuckerman home to enjoy their dazzling collection and a sumptuous brunch. Artists Grace Knowlton and Kiyomi Iwata welcomed us to their homes, both of which mirrored their distinctive approaches to art, materials, and experimentation.

Memories resurface even after many months: faux boulders in a Westchester meadow; the shear strength of woven brass cloth; the billiard table packed with antique French ceramics; and on, those tiny, twisting streets.

## A Night at the Embassy of Finland

More than 70 people signed up for an evening at the Embassy of Finland on December 14 with a special reception and tour of the Cross Over Consortium's "America-Bound II" exhibit.

Jane Farmer, executive director of the program, described the exhibit which

included works of art on paper that were produced during a unique one-month collaboration between four European artists and the master printers and papermakers at four non-profit projects in the United States: Pyramid Atlantic in Riverdale, Md., The Lower East Side

Printshop in New York City, The Print Club in Philadelphia, Pa., and the Rutgers Center for Innovative Printmaking in New Brunswick, N.J.

"It was a bright crowd with lots of new faces," says Sue Bralove. "It was really a great success."

## Calendar of Upcoming Events

### March, 1996

- 1-3 Baltimore Craft Fair (retail)
- 10 Alliance day trip to Baltimore
- 14-17 SOFA in Miami
- 15 Mark Lindquist and Lia Cook exhibits open at Renwick Gallery
- 18 Alliance Board meeting
- 22-23 Alliance trip to Rochester, NY
- 23 Mark Lindquist workshop
- 24 Mark Lindquist lecture. Renwick Gallery. 3 PM
- 24 Mark Lindquist reception at the Maurine Littleton Gallery. 5-7 PM
- 29 Kimono Inspirations exhibit. The Textile Museum
- 30 Ana Lisa Hedstrom workshop
- 31 Ana Lisa Hedstrom lecture. Renwick Gallery. 3 PM

### April, 1996

- 8 Glass exhibition at New York Metropolitan Museum of Art
- 8 Alliance Board meeting
- 11-14 Fiber Art Weekend, Racine, Wis.
- 24 Smithsonian Craft Show Opening (by invitation)
- 25 Alliance Board/Caucus meeting. Renwick Gallery
- 25-28 Smithsonian Craft Show
- 25-28 Craft Leaders Caucus meeting and Craft Weekend in Washington
- 26-28 Craft Weekend in Washington

### May, 1996

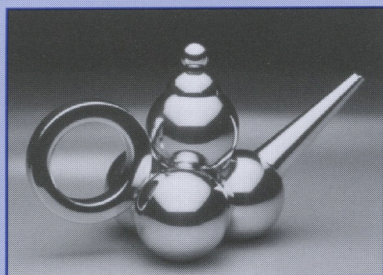
- 6 Alliance Board meeting
- 18 Emilio Santini workshop
- 19 Emilio Santini lecture. Renwick Gallery. 3 PM
- 19 Emilio Santini works on display. The Glass Gallery. 5-7 PM

### June, 1996

- 3 Alliance Board meeting
- 6-9 Glass Art Society Conference, Boston
- 12-15 Society of North American Goldsmiths Conference Washington, D.C.

6801 Winterberry Lane  
Bethesda, MD 20817

James  
Renwick  
Alliance



*"Playball," pewter, by Randy Stromsoe*

### April 26-28 is Spring Craft Weekend in Washington...

Come to a special sale of teapots and tea-related objects....Learn about teapot decoration....Meet other craft enthusiasts....Have fun at the gala benefit, A Madcap Teapot Party....Tour private homes and galleries.



## Children at the Renwick

Children from a District of Columbia elementary school gather in the Grand Salon of the Renwick Gallery. They proudly show the colorful designs that they hand-painted on fabric shoulder pads in their school art class and then assembled in a free-form design. On earlier visits, the children toured the Renwick as part of the Gallery's educational outreach program and learned about contemporary crafts. Shelly Brunner, who heads the Alliance's Educational Outreach Committee with David Montague, and who is also a docent at the Gallery, says that the children's colorful designs reflected "their response to some of the ideas they got from seeing the Nancy Crow quilts." Photos by Ginny Friend.

