



fall 2012

# THE QUARTERLY

THE JAMES RENWICK ALLIANCE



Paul and Elmerina Parkman  
*One-of-a-Kind 2013*

## JAMES RENWICK ALLIANCE QUARTERLY

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# From the president...

The James Renwick Alliance has a lot to be thankful for, and I recognize five who contribute innumerable services. I received this note which warms my heart and I want to share it with you, since the subject—Brenda Erickson—is a valuable resource for the James Renwick Alliance for all she contributes as treasurer and mainly for her publication of the Monthly Online Newsletter, which is religiously on time each month.

*"Clemmer, I am sure she has gotten numerous kudos for the huge amount of work she puts in to compile the list of exhibits and other events nationwide, but I wanted to add my appreciation of Brenda Erickson for all her hard work. We visit La Jolla on occasion where I grew up and I am always interested in what is going on at the Mingei Museum. My son lives in North Carolina and we visit there too, so I am always on the lookout for craft exhibits there and in Florida too where my sister-in-law lives. We have seen some great exhibits that we would never have known about but for Brenda's work. It is a great service and I just wanted her to know that it is deeply appreciated."*—Oscar Fitzgerald

Next is a trio: Mallory Lawson for her foresightedness to set up JRA Day, organizing and directing it for four years. Also due our gratitude is the team taking over from her: Jere Gibber and J.G. Harrington. They demonstrated great leadership and organization skills for the December 1 JRA Day exhibition and sale, making it a tremendous success, and we, the Board of Directors and JRA members, are eternally thankful for their hard work. They are so excited over the outcome that they already have selected a date for 2013. (See article, page 10.)

Then we have the Renwick Gallery staff, curators and assistants to be grateful for. Nicholas Bell reminded the entire world that the Renwick Gallery is at the forefront of the future of craft with the *40 Under 40: Craft Futures* exhibition and the follow-on symposium of academic voices *Nation Building: Craft and Contemporary American Culture* on November 8–9, 2012. He did not do everything by himself, being ably assisted by benefactor Fleur Bresler who funded an assistant for this project: Debrah Donner. And he had the support and encouragement of Renwick Chief Robyn Kennedy and American Art Director Betsy Broun. And we thank all of them (see article, page 15).

I would like for us to remember all that we have to be thankful for as this year ends and another emerges. Our support contributes to the Renwick Gallery's place in the museum community, and we are thankful for the opportunity to demonstrate that commitment.

Now the message to you from this story is this: Please do your part to support the Renwick Alliance and ultimately the Renwick Gallery by buying tickets to the New Year's Eve Party and Spring Craft Weekend. I am looking forward to seeing all of you at these events.

*Clemmer*

Clemmer Montague, *JRA President*

P.S. The Nick Cave *Soundsuit 2009* is on display at the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Lincoln Gallery on the third floor. JRA donated 51% of the cost to purchase the piece.



Miriam Rosenthal

The Distinguished Artist Series is one of my favorite activities. Here I make a tile in Jason Walker's workshop.

### JRA BOARD MEETINGS\*

Tuesday, Jan 8 @7:30 p.m.  
Tuesday, Feb 12 @7:30 p.m.  
Tuesday, March 12 @7:30 p.m.  
Tuesday, May 14 @7:30 p.m.  
Saturday, June 15 @2 p.m.

\*Subject to change



## ABOUT THE RENWICK GALLERY

The Smithsonian American Art Museum celebrates the vision and creativity of Americans with works of art in all media spanning more than three centuries.

The museum's branch for craft and decorative arts, the Renwick Gallery, located on Pennsylvania Avenue at 17<sup>th</sup> Street N.W., Washington, D.C., is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., except Dec. 25. Admission is free.

Metrorail station: Farragut North (Red line) and Farragut West (Blue and Orange lines). Smithsonian Information: 202 633-1000; 202 633-5285 (TTY). Museum information (recorded): 202 633-7970. Web site: [americanart.si.edu](http://americanart.si.edu). Follow the museum on Twitter, Facebook, Flickr, ArtBabble, iTunes and YouTube.



### ON THE COVER

Elmerina and Paul Parkman—hamming it up at a 2009 Spring Craft Weekend Caucus Day event—are the One-of-a-Kind award recipients for their lifetime of dedicated service to the JRA, the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Renwick Gallery and the craft community. Photos by Miriam Rosenthal



JRA Fellow Bibiana Obler (left) with Molly Dougherty, executive director of Philadelphia Art Alliance, Stephanie Meyer, director of Creative Craft Council of North Carolina, and scholar Helen Drutt. Photo by Clemmer Montague

## BIBIANA OBLER EXPRESSES THANKS TO JRA

Thanks to the James Renwick Fellowship in American Craft,\* I was able to make substantial headway on my book manuscript, *The Anti-Craft Tradition*. Through conversations with curators and other Fellows as well as extensive primary research, my book took shape: I am now well on my way to writing a history of the relationship between fine art and studio craft from the 1960s through the 1990s. *The Anti-Craft Tradition* will focus on case studies of this interchange in a number of craft genres: ceramics, glass, jewelry, woodwork and the fiber arts.

For the first several months, I concentrated on the first chapter, the core of which I presented at my Fellows talk: "Lynda Benglis Recrafts Abstract Expressionism." The second half of my time as a Fellow was dedicated to my second chapter, which addresses the relation between performance art and avant-garde studio jewelry from the late 1960s to the 1980s. A generous travel stipend made it possible for me to travel to Europe to talk with a number of artists and jewelers involved in the international phenomena of the "new jewelry" and "body art," study works in various museum collections (mostly in storage), and to consult archives. In addition, I was able to make preliminary forays into research on El Anatsui, whose work on wood will form the nucleus of my third chapter. For my research on all three chapters, I have benefited tremendously from the resources at the Smithsonian, including the Archives of American Art, the artist files and rich library holdings at the Hirshhorn and SAAM, as well, of course, as the art in the collections.

My eight months at the Smithsonian allowed me to complete the research on the first two chapters of *The Anti-Craft Tradition*; shaped the project into a more historically cohesive and ambitious book; and launched me on my research for the third chapter on El Anatsui. While I was able to take great advantage of the Smithsonian's resources, inevitably I was not able to go through all the relevant archives and published sources. Happily, since I live in DC, I will be able to return to the Smithsonian for further research as needed and will continue to develop the relationships with curators and others at the Smithsonian that were formed thanks to this fellowship.—Bibiana Obler

\* Ms Obler's fellowship was funded as part of the James Renwick Alliance's pledge to the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

## JAMES RENWICK FELLOWSHIP IN AMERICAN CRAFT

The James Renwick Fellowship in American Craft is available for research in American studio crafts or decorative arts from the nineteenth century to the present. This fellowship is supported by the **James Renwick Alliance**. January 15 is the application deadline for fellowships that begin on or after June 1, 2013.

The Smithsonian American Art Museum and its Renwick Gallery invite applications for research fellowships in art and visual culture of the United States. Fellowships are residential and support full-time independent and dissertation research.

The collection of the American Art Museum spans the nation's artistic heritage, representing outstanding visual accomplishments from the seventeenth century to the present day. American craft is featured in the Renwick Gallery, a curatorial department of the Museum located across from the White House in a restored building designed in 1858 by James Renwick.

During their stay at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, scholars will be part of one of the nation's oldest and most distinguished fellowship programs in American art and will have the opportunity to attend a variety of lectures, symposiums, and professional workshops.

The James Renwick Fellowship has been awarded to 30 scholars since its inception in 1988. The most recent Fellow, **Bibiana Obler**, completed her research in June 2012 (*see article at left*).

For applications or general information: Call the American Art Fellowship Office at 202-633-8353 or e-mail [AmericanArtFellowships@si.edu](mailto:AmericanArtFellowships@si.edu). The application is available online at [AmericanArt.si.edu/fellowships](http://AmericanArt.si.edu/fellowships).

# Spring Craft Weekend 2013

## *Stars of Today and Tomorrow*

*Stars of Today and Tomorrow* is the theme of **Spring Craft Weekend**, April 5–7, 2013, the major fund-raising event for the James Renwick Alliance. Each year the amount earned from weekend patrons' support, ticket sales and the silent and live auctions is used to fund the JRA pledge to the Smithsonian American Art Museum and operate the JRA. The JRA donation to American Art funds exhibitions and programs at the Renwick Gallery, acquires objects for its permanent collection and supports scholarship on craft through the James Renwick Fellowship in American Craft program.

Co-chairing the event is **Giselle Huberman**, president-elect and vice president for development, and **Brigitte Savage** whose career has been in development of non-profit organizations. The business background of both co-chairs combines to promise a stellar weekend for fund raising. As always, **Shirley Jacobs** is in charge of the Patrons promotion in an effort to encourage participation and upgrades in patron levels. Letters to patrons, lapsed patrons and JRA members went out in late October.

Barbara Berlin and Sandy Mitchell are working with Giselle and Brigitte on the Caucus Day program which includes caucus members who are not patrons and a festive evening for all JRA members and the public. Barbara Wolanin is organizing a panel discussion for Saturday morning at the Renwick Gallery's Grand Salon. Panelists will be two masters of the medium, Bruce Metcalf and Adrian Saxe, the Stars of Today, and two up-and-coming

young Stars of Tomorrow, Hunt Clark of Tennessee and local artist Sean Hennessey. Cindi Strauss, curator of modern and contemporary decorative arts and design, and assistant director of programming at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, is the moderator. Bonnie Schwartz again will astonish gala goers with a magical kingdom at the Willard Hotel. Anne Mehringer is in charge of the auctions, having 10 objects in the live auction and up to 40 in the silent auction, assisted in installation by Judith Weisman and her team. Gwen Paulson is in charge of hospitality. Honorees this year are the One-of-a-Kind award to **Elmerina and Paul Parkman** and Masters of the

Medium (shown opposite, page 5): Adrian Saxe for ceramics, Mary Giles for fiber, Paul Stankard for glass, Bruce Metcalf for metal and William Hunter for wood. Lois Jecklin and Paul Parkman are co-chairs for the brunch for the Masters on Sunday.

Johanna Thompson and Elmerina Parkman are co-editors of all published materials. Cicie Sattarilasskorn and Kathrin Halpern will be on the home front in the office.

Prices and the agenda are being set, and invitations will be mailed to members in February with details on weekend events. Join us for a memorable Spring Craft Weekend.



Beverly Tadeu,  
*Rooted Hoops*, 18K gold, oxid silver  
Spring Craft Weekend auction item



Syl Mathis will be exhibiting at the April 5th Stars of Tomorrow show and sale. Shown above is *Bridged*, a 32" cast glass, oxidized steel structure. Photo by anythingphoto.net

### MEET STARS OF TOMORROW AT A SOUTHERN MARYLAND BBQ

*Stars of Today and Tomorrow*—theme of the 2013 Spring Craft Weekend—offers the opportunity to meet a large number of Washington, D.C., metropolitan area Stars of Tomorrow during the three-day event.

The work of Stars of Tomorrow will be featured in a special exhibition and sale at the **Washington Glass School**. The extravaganza

of local artists begins at 11 a.m. on Friday, April 5, and will continue throughout the day. Demonstrations in glass and clay will show observers just how work is made.

Southern Maryland Barbecue with all the trimmings, potato salad, coleslaw, dessert and soft drinks are on the menu. Patrons and Caucus members may depart

at 1 p.m. for the Caucus/Patrons Day events.

The event is open to all JRA members and their friends and family, as well as the general public. Price is \$35 a person. Invitations will be mailed out in February, and tickets may be purchased from the JRA office as well as Washington Glass School.

## SPRING CRAFT WEEKEND 2013 MASTERS OF THE MEDIUM



**Adrian Saxe**  
clay



**Paul Stankard**  
glass



**Mary Giles**  
fiber/baskets



**William Hunter**  
wood



**Bruce Metcalf**  
metal/jewelry



Catherine Burns models silver woven glass tubing and swinging glass tubes by Nancy DuBois. Photo by Stephen Wild

## WHEN GLASS MEET FASHION – GLASS TO WEAR: A FASHION SHOW

When glass art meets fashion, the results can be explosive. Tickets will be on sale in February for those JRA members who want to see the latest in fashion made from glass, curated by that charismatic, larger-than-life artist **Laura Donefer**.

Full of vitality and playful energy, Donefer organizes the breathtaking, sometimes risqué, and always eye-opening displays of wearable art that close out the annual Glass Art Society gatherings where artists show off their stunning creations. For this event Laura will be assisted by costume designer/glass artist Nancy DuBois who, along with many others, will be creating spectacular garments that

“push the limits” of glass as a fashion material. The show begins as part of the Moonlight Festive Evening on Friday, April 5, at 6 p.m.

The 2012 glass fashion strut brought down the house in Toledo, where the Glass Art Society was celebrating 50 years of Studio Glass, and Laura has organized nine fashion shows since she began in 1989 in cities such as New Orleans and Montreal, where she collaborated with top couture designers. The results have been immortalized in two books of extraordinary photos.

For the first time, this unique fashion extravaganza is coming to Washington, D.C., to the James Renwick Alliance during Spring

Craft Weekend. At this event, Donefer will once again amaze with the latest installment of her one-of-a-kind glass fashion spectacles, which will take place at the Women in Military Service For America Memorial Building at Arlington National Cemetery.

The show will end the Caucus Day program. All JRA members and their friends are invited to attend this once in a lifetime show. There will be food and the ticket price is \$150 per person. Come out and support a good cause—for JRA to continue its mission of supporting people who make such things and the Renwick Gallery. Robert Minkoff is a primary sponsor of the event.

## SCW 2013 SCHEDULE

### THURSDAY April 4

Starry Evening Dinner for Grand Salon, Dedicated to Arts and Renwick Society Patrons and Masters of the Medium. By invitation only.

### FRIDAY April 5

*Stars of Tomorrow* exhibition/sale and Southern Maryland BBQ lunch for all JRA members and friends, Washington Glass School.

Caucus/Patrons Day. Mid-afternoon private tours and a Moonlight Festive Evening with cocktails, dinner, Special Recognition for Achievement in the Arts to artist Joyce Scott and Glass to Wear: A Fashion Show. Location: Women in Military Service for America Memorial Building, Arlington National Cemetery. The Moonlight Festive Evening is open to all JRA members and to the public.

### SATURDAY AM April 6

Panel Discussion at the Renwick Gallery's Grand Salon with moderator Cindi Strauss and panelists Bruce Metcalf and Adrian Saxe, Stars of Today, and Hunt Clark and Sean Hennessey, Stars of Tomorrow.

### SATURDAY PM April 6

Preview Reception for Patrons, Benefit Dinner and Silent and Live Auctions at the Historic Willard Hotel, One-of-a-Kind Award presented by Lloyd Herman to Elmerina and Paul Parkman.

### SUNDAY AM April 7

Awards brunch honoring the five Masters of the Medium: Adrian Saxe for ceramics, Mary Giles for fiber, Paul Stankard for glass, Bruce Metcalf for metal and William Hunter for wood at the finest address in Washington, the St. Regis Hotel.

Mark your calendars and plan to join the celebration. Contact the JRA for ticket information.

## A Pair That's 'One-of-a-Kind:' Elmerina and Paul Parkman



Sharing a Spring Craft Weekend event with the Parkmans are: from left, Gwen Paulson, Ryna Cohen, Elmerina, Jerry Paulson, Paul and Myrtle Katzen. Photo by Miriam Rosenthal

There was no contest—Paul and Elmerina Parkman were the absolute, hands-down unanimous choice for the 2013 One-of-a-Kind Award! And that is clearly a well deserved award: the Parkmans have been involved as founders, leaders and innovators with the Alliance since its inception in 1982, playing a major role in making the organization what it is today.

The impetus for a passion which has directed much of one's life is often clearly remembered as is the case with the Parkmans' more than 40 year involvement with glass art. In the late 1960s, clearing out his childhood home, Paul found several pieces of antique glass, and shipped them home to Bethesda. Their arrival piqued Elmerina's curiosity, and, as luck would have it, she read of a class with a focus on glass. The class was so intriguing that she continued attending for many years, and Paul went also when his schedule allowed.

Very early they fed their interest by reading magazines, going to exhibits, going to lectures at the Renwick Gallery when it opened in 1972 and traveling to meet artists and to make purchases. And those purchases were far from random.

Through visiting Penland and later Dominick Labino in Ohio and reading *Craft Horizons*, the Parkmans were aware of a major change happening in glass technology. They visited galleries and craft shops which focused on this new glass art and attended exhibits such as *Objects: USA*. The catalogues from this exhibit and from the three Toledo Glass National Exhibitions became guides for them as they educated themselves about, and ventured into acquiring, pieces of studio glass.

Much of this journey of looking, learning, and buying is chronicled in 11 beautifully hand-written volumes of "journals" kept by Paul from 1979 to 1993. In addition to his prose, the journals contain invitations, newspaper clippings and other ephemera documenting their foray into craft. Fortunately, this treasure will eventually reside at the Archives of American Art at the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

In 1981, concerned that a cutback in funding would mean the end of the public lecture programs so beloved by the Parkmans, Lloyd Herman, founding director of the Renwick Gallery, asked them to join a group focused on creating a support organization. The task was daunting as at that time there were not

any models to follow of independent museum support groups. But they persevered, obtaining 501c (3) status on March 17, 1982 for the James Renwick Collectors Alliance.

And then the work began: Elmerina, as the first secretary, assisted in drafting letters to be sent to prospective members. She was the coordinator of the pre-cursor of the Spring Craft Weekend with Joan Mondale as a speaker. During the same year, working with the late Charlie Gailis, then president, she initiated what is now *The Quarterly*. Then she became the Alliance's second president beginning her term in 1984. That was before the Alliance had support staff so the president did everything, including, in Elmerina's case, sticking stamps on a mailing while they drove to upstate New York.

Since then Elmerina has continued her involvement, such as launching the James Renwick Fellowship in American Craft in 1987 and holding chairmanship of the Planning and Nominating Committee in 2001.

Paul's more active involvement came after his retirement in 1990. Earlier he had helped in writing successful grant applications to support programs and planning efforts. While he was president, from 1993 to 1995, potluck dinners for the Distinguished Artist Series were started.

Paul not only initiated the Patrons Dinner during the SCW, a very effective fundraiser, but he also arranged for a showy decorative theme. He managed to have the spectacular stage sets designed by Dale Chihuly for a Seattle opera production ensconced in the Renwick's Grand Salon. The pieces remained on view and drew the second highest attendance in the Renwick's history at that time.

The Parkmans both have remained active in the Alliance, devoting much of their lives to an organization they both love. Either one or the other has remained on the board at all times and are called upon for that corporate memory almost daily.

The Alliance would certainly be a different organization were it not for all of the ideas and hard work of this pair over the years. It is richer for their dedicated efforts and their unwavering support for the JRA and the Renwick.

It is for these reasons that the James Renwick Alliance bestows the title of One-of-a-Kind on Elmerina and Paul Parkman.

—Johanna Thompson



**SCW 2013 PRICES**

Prices for attendance at Spring Craft Weekend events have changed, due to higher costs for putting on such an elaborate weekend of activities. Here is the breakdown:

**Patrons:** Octagon Room  
**\$2,000** (up from \$1,850)

**Patrons:** Palm Court  
**\$3,000** (up from \$2,500)

Other levels remain the same.

**Costs per person** for individual events for SCW are as follows:

**\$35** Stars of Tomorrow exhibition/sale and Southern Maryland BBQ lunch, Washington Glass School. All JRA members are invited to attend and to bring the family.

**\$250** Caucus Day for non Patron Caucus members

**\$150** Moonlight Festive Evening: cocktails, dinner, Joyce Scott recognition and Glass To Wear: A Fashion Show

**\$325** Gala/Auctions  
 Patrons and members at all levels are invited to share the gala/auction evening with local artists, especially those who have pieces in the auction or who serve on the JRA board or make other contributions. Call the office with your contributions, and remember, it is partially tax deductible.

**\$95** Awards Brunch

(See main SCW article, page 4, for dates and descriptions of events.)



Submissions for the live and silent auctions are beginning to trickle in. Here are samples of offerings that we have received so far. Anne Mehringer is in charge of the auction.

**ABOVE LEFT,** *Gulf Coast Amulet Basket* by Laura Donefer  
 hand blown and frameworked glass

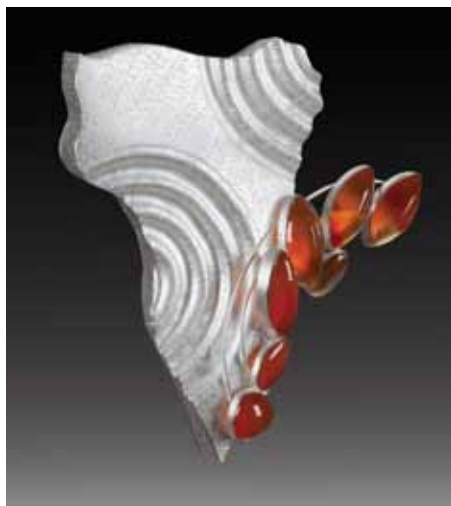
**ABOVE,** Barbourville Winery and restaurant are the venues for 16 people who will learn about wine and food, offered as an auction item for Spring Craft Weekend. Photo courtesy of Barbourville Winery

**LEFT,** *Quiet Standing* by Charissa Brock  
 Bamboo, fused glass, rattan and plywood

**BELOW LEFT,** *Wad* by Hoss Haley  
 Steel with paint (washing machine skin)

**BELOW,** *A State of Wonder* brooch by Jeong Ju Lee  
 Silver and carnelian stones

**BELOW RIGHT,** *Audio Cabinet with Peony Fabric* by Andrew Christenberry  
 Wood, metal and fabric



# Once Again from the Auctions: Those Fabulous Dinners with Suzanne and Norman Cohn

Photos by Clemmer Montague



I hope no one wants money back for the fabulous evening spent with Suzanne and Norman Cohn and “Thomas Jefferson” on Saturday night, September 8, in Philadelphia.

Nothing doing. How do you say “NO” to an evening donated and designed around the Renwick Gallery and the James Renwick Alliance? The evening was a craft extravaganza—everything one saw, touched and consumed was handmade—handcrafted, down to the personal, friendly service and acceptance of food. Marian Burke could not stay away from the oyster and shrimp bar; Rebecca and Gary Stevens did not miss a second of the enthusiastic walk through the craft-filled apartment with its fantastic views of the city that Suzanne led, probably for the 100th time, and still with resounding eloquence. Pat Arnold, taking her second time around, (she was here last May and could not stay away; neither could David and I), flittered around the

apartment with child-like glee, reacquainted herself with vignettes from last year.

“We are so grateful to have attended,” said Russell and Marian Burke who came from their summer house in Rhode Island. “The weekend was enjoyable and, Oh, that Dinner!” explained Marilyn Hardis. “I was so high with excitement that I could not calm down once I got back to the hotel,” said Giselle Huberman. “Me, too,” others chimed in.

The first tantalizing sight occurred as one opened the menu—a beautiful drawing in chocolate of the Renwick’s Albert Paley gates, followed by a page with the JRA insignia and a personal welcome message from the hosts. Artists were credited for each piece by course as a remembrance of the creativity we were celebrating.

Dinner was small servings, presided over by Suzanne and Maitre D’ Michael D. Smith, and paired

with wines, selected by the master sommelier Norman Cohn.

Ahi tuna tartare, sea urchin brulee, truffled sweet pea risotto, lobster two ways (one was a fresh lobster tempura), Kobe beef ribs and chilled raspberry Chambord “shake.” served in front of a chocolate plate with the image of the Paley gates made in sugar.

Before we tasted the last drop of Madeira, the eloquent “Thomas Jefferson” (Steven Edenbo) invited us to the cabaret for an intellectual discussion centered around Jefferson’s leadership and vision, the forefront of historical and patriotic events. Lastly, we met Humpty Dumpty, sitting on our dessert plates. You know that he took a great fall and could not be put together again. Well, with small hammers, we each smashed Humpty to smithereens, then scooped up the tantalizing key lime pie inside.

The evening ended with the presentation of a gift from the

**ABOVE LEFT,** The eloquent “Thomas Jefferson” (Steven Edenbo), with Norman and Suzanne Cohn, made an appearance after dinner.

**ABOVE,** The Cohns accept the gift from the James Renwick Alliance—a cast glass piece by Board member Sean Hennessey.

Humpty Dumpty had a great fall. With small hammers, he was smashed to smithereens as guests scooped up the tantalizing key lime pie inside.

**RIGHT,** Ready to hammer Humpty are Giselle Huberman, Marian Burke and Marilyn Hardis.

Pat Arnold is amazed at the work of artists at the Center for Art in Wood exhibition of resident artists.



James Renwick Alliance, a cast glass piece by JRA Board Member Sean Hennessey. When we left, Suzanne and Norman were discussing the best way to display Sean's wall piece.

Suzanne and Norman donated the dinner at their Philadelphia apartment on Washington Square. Chefs were Cyrus Khambatta and Oscar Fuentes; captains Hyen David and Joel Becker; and creative assistants David French, Anja Mikkola and Kranh Tran.

Earlier that afternoon, we visited the Center for Art in Wood, hosted by Executive Director Albert LeCoff who has put together an amazing center for exhibitions, research and open storage for its collection. Snyderman-Works Gallery and Wexler Gallery were also on the list.

Sunday morning we visited the studio/home of furniture maker Michael Hurwitz whose slatted chaise is on the cover of the book, *Renwick Studio Furniture*, authored by Oscar Fitzgerald on the Renwick's furniture collection. He took us through the entire process from conception of design for a piece of furniture to its final resting place. His wife, Mami Kato, a fiber artist who uses rice stalks (from Japan), eggshells and leaf skeletons, introduced us to her work.

Pat Arnold, Pati Young, Carolyn Alper, Marilyn Hardis, Anne Mehringer and Terry Beaty and their friends from Philadelphia Lisel Zack and Lee Marks, Marian and Russell Burke, Giselle and Ben Huberman, Gary and Rebecca Stevens and David Montague and I were recipients of the auction item.—*Clemmer Montague*



# JRA Day Sets a New Record for Artist Sales

This year's JRA Day was a great success, drawing more than 350 visitors and setting a new record for artist sales. A total of 37 artist members of the JRA showed and sold their work, and more than 20 volunteers contributed their time to make the event possible. JRA administrator Cicie Sattarnilasskorn worked the entire show without a break to run credit cards using the JRA's new iPad credit card app. Gross sales were over \$26,000. Net profit will be determined once all expenses are paid.

For the first time ever, admission to JRA Day was free, thanks to generous contributions by sponsors: Fran and Leonard Burka, Marilyn Hardis, Jere Gibber and J.G. Harrington, Giselle and Ben Huberman, Shirley Jacobs, Sandy and Norman Mitchell, Clemmer and David Montague, Bonnie and Gilbert Schwartz, Irene Sinclair and Pati Young.

"With free admission, we doubled attendance from last year, giving more people the opportunity to learn about the artists and the JRA, and giving the artists more opportunities to sell their work. We're already looking forward to JRA Day 2013 on Saturday, December 7, and hope you are too."—*Jere Gibber and J.G. Harrington, co-chairs*



**ABOVE,** Mirian Rosenthal hugs her repeat customer Judy Chernoff.

**BELOW,** Thirty-seven artists showed their work during the day. Seated, Cicie Sattarnilasskorn, JRA administrator, checks out customers while Jere Gibber, co-chair, tallies sales.



Photos by Clemmer Montague



## BUS FULL FOR GLASS MEDIUM STUDY TOUR

We had a full bus plus for the JRA Glass Media Tour on September 29. At our first stop we visited the collection and colorful home of artist **Nancy Weisser** and musician Chuck Underwood in Silver Spring. Nancy, who has created, collected, taught and been in the glass business for over 20 years, showcased a wide spectrum of glass art in every possible technique. A time-lapse video of one of her "in situ" installation pieces gave a hint of Nancy's upcoming show at Kramer Gallery in December. The most stunning sculpture in their collection, *Autumn Sunset Kimono*, introduced the work of the next hosts.

**Eric Markow** and **Thom Norris** demonstrated the technique of woven glass at their hilltop country home and studio. They created unique color palettes of vitro-graph threads for their works, building complex sculptures. Their woven creations stretch from the simple nest babies, baskets, table and wall tableaus to the intricate: origami cranes, a six-foot tall dragonfly and the Kimono Series. The high point of the tour was the first public unveiling of their third kimono *Spring Dawn* which sold the first evening of SOFA Chicago 2012 for \$125,000.

The last stop was to the custom-built Glen Echo home of professional photographer and glass artist **Rhoda Baer**. Rhoda showcased her vessel series which explores ancient imagery and mythology with a contemporary aesthetic. Artist **Nikki O'Neill** displayed her evocative and mystical undersea forms. A scientist

Photos by Miriam Rosenthal



**TOP LEFT,** Mary Tobin (left) and Renita Johnson watch as Eric Markow and Thom Norris unveil their third kimono *Spring Dawn* at the September 29 glass medium day.

**TOP RIGHT,** Pati Young intensely studies a piece as Rhoda Baer demonstrates her special technique of fused glass.

**ABOVE,** Nancy Weisser shows her fused glass work to Renita Johnson, Stanley Asrael and Marilyn Hardis.

**ABOVE RIGHT,** Nikki O'Neill talks about the chemistry and science behind her kiln-cast and highly polished sculptures which inspire her imagery.

and naturalist by training, Nikki talked about the chemistry and science behind her kiln-cast and highly polished sculptures and the mystery and wonder which inspire her imagery.

All five of these artists, Nancy, Thom, Eric, Rhoda and Nikki are exchanging work for tickets to the JRA New Year's Eve Party. Their pieces will be available that evening in **Le Store**. Chuck Underwood will be playing guitar during the evening. Come join them at the party.—*Pat Arnold*



## CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF GLASS, A TALK AT THE RENWICK GALLERY

Fans of glass art were treated to a program at the Renwick on September 7 in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the studio glass movement.

The program was introduced by **William Warmus**, former curator of modern glass at Corning Museum of Glass. Since leaving Corning Mr. Warmus has been an independent curator, historian and appraiser, specializing in modern glass. He displayed his glass history bona fides by taking the audience through 3,500 years in 10 minutes. Supported by slides, he galloped from the Egyptians to the spectacular new Apple building in New York.

Next, well-known glass artist **Toots Zynsky** sketched her artis-

tic career, which seems to be one of constantly "pushing the envelope." Toots, a student of Dale Chihuly at the Rhode Island School of Design in 1971, was in the first class at Pilchuck. The experimentation and innovation of the early glass scene were stimulating for her because "everything was so new." And then she began to find her own completely new style by first combining pulled glass threads with blown glass, and then evolving to vessels made purely of glass thread.

**Matthew Szosz**, a participant in the current *40 Under 40: Craft Futures* exhibit at the Renwick, seems to start with the premise that all glass-working techniques used by others are merely back-

ground for further exploration. He showed a video of some of his work, much of which resulted in failure but all of which taught him something new about glass. However, the experiment of inflating glass pieces clearly was not a failure, as witness his pieces on exhibit at the Renwick. They are quite magical!

Following the program Ms. Zynsky and Mr. Szosz joined several members of the JRA Board for lunch and further discussion of their approaches. Also joining the group were **Rhoda Baer** and **Nikki O'Neill**, two glass artists who displayed their work at the JRA's Craft Media Study Tour on September 29.

—*Johanna Thompson*

# Fun, Games, Food, Shopping Expedition, Bubbly: What a New Year's Eve Party!

Miriam Rosenthal



New Year's Eve, from 8 p.m. December 31 to January 1, at 12:30 a.m. is a major fun(d) raising event for the James Renwick Alliance, and everyone is invited—at a cost. Proceeds will replenish the JRA Dale Chihuly Publication Fund, a restricted fund which supports Renwick Gallery publications.

The party, hosted by **Benjamin and Giselle Huberman** at their Potomac, MD, home, will be limited to the first 100 people to sign and pay. The price is \$250 per person and includes \$50 in chips to be used at the Craft Casino. The tax deductible amount is \$150.

**Le Store**, where party goers can exchange their chips (or buy more, if needed) for fabulous events and things, will be packed full of goodies: a box of homemade pickles, a weekend in a beach house, lessons, craft objects, handmade scarves, goblets, jewelry, a small silent auction, etc. Giselle has organized special entertainment, featuring the American Crafties who will be singing and dancing (Giselle, Mallory Lawson, Elmerina Parkman and Clemmer Montague). Chuck Underwood has donated his guitar and his music for the evening. Bubbly will be served at midnight, and traditional New Year's Eve songs will be part of midnight festivities. Artists are exchanging pieces of their work valued from \$250 for tickets, and 21 already have been identified. **Robyn Kennedy** and **Betsy Broun** of American Art Museum are joining in the festivities.

The buffet dinner is catered, and guests may donate wines, beverages and appetizers or money to defray expenses. Valet parking is available, and guests are requested to drive to the front door to leave keys with the valets.

Planning the party are: Giselle Huberman, chair; Ben Huberman, Mallory Lawson, Reba Immergut, Sean Hennessey, Tim Tate, Elizabeth Doyle, Lois Jecklin, Elmerina and Paul Parkman, Clemmer Montague, Marilyn Hardis, Bonnie Schwartz, Miriam Rosenthal, Pati Young and Brigitte Savage.

Tickets are available for everyone and all friends, so contact the JRA office at 301-907-3888 or [admin@jra.org](mailto:admin@jra.org) if you want to attend, donate food, beverages or services or money. Should one not be able to attend, the Renwick Alliance accepts donations.



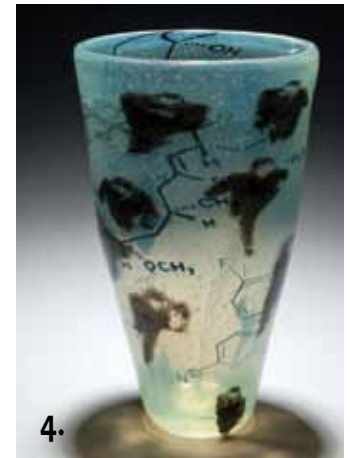
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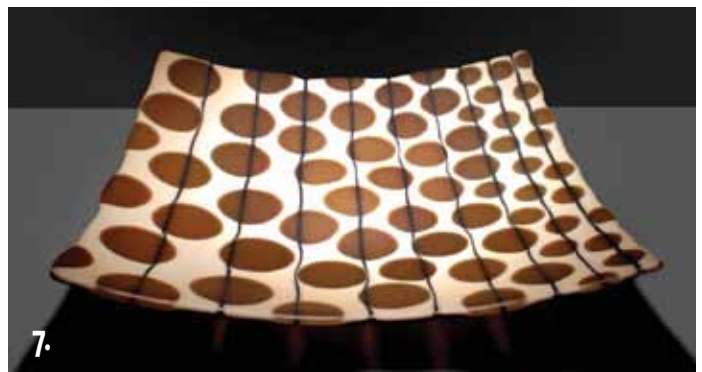
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## CELEBRATING THE CREATIVE SPIRIT OF AMERICA: THE 31ST ANNUAL SMITHSONIAN CRAFT SHOW, APRIL 25–28, 2013

April 25 marks the opening of the 31st Smithsonian Craft Show at the National Building Museum. The show will continue through Sunday, the 28. The Preview Night Benefit on Wednesday, April 24, offers the first chance to see the unique combination of American master crafts created by 121 exhibitors selected for this show.

The jurors who selected the participants in next year's show were **Jane Adlin**, associate curator for design and architecture in the department of modern and contemporary art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, **Cindi Strauss**, curator of modern and contemporary decorative arts and design, and assistant director of programming, at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and **Paul Kotula**, a noted ceramicist and assistant professor of ceramics at Michigan State University. They selected 121 artists who exemplify the innovation, creativity and technical merit that the show is known for. The categories represented this year are: basketry, ceramics, decorative fibers, furniture, glass, jewelry, metal, mixed media, paper, wearable art and wood.

There are 46 new exhibitors who will share the National Building Museum floor with award winners from previous years. This year's show will continue the tradition of providing a showcase for the students from the **Savannah College of Art and Design** to present their innovative work in a special exhibit.

"Dinners by Design" is back this year on Saturday, April 27. Five outstanding Washington-based interior designers will open their homes for an evening of "art and design" featuring cocktails, dinner, house tour, and craft artists' informal talk. The Smithsonian Associates will kick off the week with a craft lecture on Tuesday evening, April 23. The Craft Show will also present a Saturday lecture, a raffle and online auction, featuring over 100 works of art. Information for all of these events will be on the Smithsonian

Craft Show's website as of January 2013. Nancy Low and Ann Marie Shuyler are the 2013 Craft Show co-chairs.

The Smithsonian Women's Committee, guided by its mission to promote the Smithsonian through advocacy and grants, distributes proceeds from the Craft Show to Smithsonian museums, libraries, and research facilities in an annual competitive grants process. Nearly \$10 million in grants and endowments have been awarded since 1966.

For more information on the show, including tickets for Preview Night and daily admission, raffle, auction and other special event information and a list of recent funded grants can be found at [www.smithsoniancraftshow.org](http://www.smithsoniancraftshow.org) starting January, 2013. —Amy Meadows

### AMERICAN CRAFT COUNCIL ANNOUNCES CRAFT SHOW DATES

The American Craft Council annual juried marketplaces in Baltimore, Atlanta, St. Paul, and San Francisco feature original work by more than 1,500 of the country's top contemporary craft artists and attract more than 50,000 collectors and craft enthusiasts. 2013 show dates are:

Baltimore

*Wholesale:* February 20–21

*Retail:* February 22–24

Atlanta: March 15–17

St. Paul: April 19–21

San Francisco: August 2–4

### JRA MEMBERS SERVE ON AMERICAN CRAFT COUNCIL BOARD

Four James Renwick Alliance members are on the Board of Trustees of the American Craft Council. Barbara Waldman of San Francisco is the board chair; Barbara Berlin of Potomac, MD, is the Board vice chair.

Also serving are Sonya Clark of Richmond and Barbara Laughlin of Charlotte.

#### LE STORE OFFERINGS

1. Hand-painted silk blouse
2. Trout fly fishing lesson from Dennis McCloud
3. *Nest Babies* by Thom Norris and Eric Markow
4. *Crossing Paths*, fused and hot sculpted glass by Michael Janis
5. Weekend in Cape May
6. Aspen Leaf bowl by Nikki O'Neill
7. Chocolate Chip platter by Rhoda Baer
8. Silk scarf made by Judith Bird
9. *Lilac Teapot* by Laura Peery
10. Freshwater pearls and polished stones by Jackie Urow

# JRA Members Contribute to Purchase Works From *40 Under 40* Exhibition



Photos by Miriam Rosenthal

**ABOVE,** Ann Byron, JRA artist member, Pat N. Arnold, vice president for programs and Diane Grainer, past JRA president, attended the preview reception.

**RIGHT,** Robyn Kennedy, Renwick Gallery chief, Nicholas Bell, curator and creator of the exhibition, and Debrah Dunner, assistant, celebrate at the preview.

**BELOW,** Banners at the front of the Renwick Gallery invite passersby to view the show.



The Renwick Gallery's *40 Under 40: Craft Futures* exhibition opened on July 19 with accolades from around the country and with James Renwick Alliance members attending to witness its success.

Programs at the gallery will take place until the exhibition closes on February 3. Some programs are gallery talks by the Gallery's curators and staff members, and others are discussions from visiting artists whose work is in the show. (See **Save the Dates** for a description of events and times, page 20.)

Twenty-one donors (couples and individuals) who are James Renwick Alliance members contributed a total of \$48,770 to the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Renwick Gallery to purchase works for the permanent collection from the *40 Under 40: Craft Futures* exhibition. This is in furtherance of curator Nicholas Bell's expressed hope to be able to acquire at least one object from each of the 40 exhibitors for the museum's permanent collection. Donors are: Carol Bresler and Carolyn Billingham, Phyllis and Sydney Bresler, Cross MacKenzie Gallery (Rebecca Cross and Max MacKenzie), Miriam and Leon Ellsworth, Brenda Erickson, Jere Gibber and J.G. Harrington, Marsha Gold, the Gottfried family, Diane and Marc Grainer, Giselle and Ben Huberman, Shirley Jacobs, Myrna and Stephen Kurzbard, Clemmer and David Montague, Sandy and Norman Mitchell, Elmerina and Paul Parkman, Gwen and Jerome Paulson, Chris Rifkin, Cicie Sattarnilas-korn, Robert and Irene Sinclair, Judith Weisman and Pati Young.



## A Symposium

**Nation Building:  
Craft and Contemporary American Culture  
November 8–9, 2012**

**Organized by Nicholas Bell, The Fleur and Charles  
Bresler Curator of American Craft and Decorative Art**

From the agenda: “The symposium examined craft’s increasing urgent role within contemporary American culture. Coinciding with the 40th anniversary of the Smithsonian American Art Museum’s Renwick Gallery, the program sought to broaden the dialogue surrounding craft’s recent histories and to articulate rapid changes to the field since the beginning of the current century.

“Research was presented by both senior and emerging scholars to deepen understanding of modern craft as a response to mass culture and to probe the evolution of the field beyond the studio movement. Themes were: the politics of craft within the museum, new directions in technology and education, craft at war, converging practices in craft and the contemporary art, changing aesthetics, craft’s role in industry and the burgeoning of DIY movement.

“The title of the symposium referenced modern craft history as a regenerative (and often political) force in society, but also a 20th century political theorist assertion that what fundamentally distinguishes as a species in the capacity for “world building.” The value of craft as evidence of diverse human agency and its impact on the American experience is at the heart of this project.”—*Nicholas Bell*

The symposium is webcast live and archived; view it at [AmericanArt.si.edu/Renwick/symposium](http://AmericanArt.si.edu/Renwick/symposium). Selections will be published in print form in 2013.

Of particular interest was a report on the results of a survey on how museums handle craft. The survey was sent to large and smaller institutions about craft in their museums, presented by Julie Muniz, associate curator of Decorative Arts & Design, Oakland Museum of California, and Jennifer Scanlan, associate curator, Museum of Arts and Design, New York.

A familiar figure to JRA members was Ulysses Dietz, senior curator and curator of decorative arts at the Newark Museum, whose theme was that museum collections began as depositories of art purchased by very wealthy people. In his talk, entitled *Taste, Money, Museums and the Subversion of American Craft*, Mr. Dietz pointed out pieces of the museum’s collection and the rising of prices of work.

Bibiana Obler, the most recent James Renwick Fellow of American Craft, presented an article on *Craft as a Response to War* about craft such as quilts originated as a reminder of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and Elissa Auther spoke about aesthetic frontiers: *He is Survived By His Longtime Companion: The Representation of Feeling in the Work of Josh Faught*.

Joanna Marsh, The James Dickie Curator of Contemporary Art, Smithsonian American Art Museum, presented the theme that works of art can cross the lines between craft and art, such as the sharing of the Nick Cave *Soundsuit* by American Art and the Renwick Gallery.

Other presenters tied the theme of nation building into their papers to give the symposium a solid sense of completeness.



Photos by Miriam Koseenthal

### BROUN ADDRESSES JRA MEMBERS AT THE ANNUAL MEETING

**Betsy Broun**, The Margaret and Terry Stent Director of the Smithsonian American Art Museum, updated JRA members on matters relative to the Renwick Gallery and the Alliance at the annual membership meeting on Tuesday, October 23.

She touched on subjects such as the closing and remodeling of the Gallery, the status of future hiring of a curator, the Lloyd Herman endowment for a second curatorial position and the success of the *40 Under 40: Craft Futures* exhibition. **Robyn Kennedy**, Renwick Gallery chief, highlighted upcoming exhibitions and events at the gallery.

JRA officers were introduced and an update of the status of the JRA followed, including financial, programs, New Year’s Eve party and Spring Craft Weekend 2013.

The annual membership meeting takes place once a year as required to report to members on the status of the organization, its finances and programs. Pati Young was the organizer.



**TOP**, Betsy Broun addresses JRA members at the annual membership meeting in the Renwick Gallery’s Grand Salon.

**ABOVE**, Giselle Huberman, co-chair of Spring Craft Weekend and chair of the New Year’s Eve Party committees, tells members about each event as she encourages attendance at both.

# 2012 Distinguished Artist Series



Miriam Rosenthal

Distinguished Artist Jason Walker demonstrated to workshop participants the process of painting on a piece of ceramic, then each painted a clay tile.

## JASON WALKER DEMONSTRATES HIS PROCESS AND TALKS ABOUT HIS WORK

Ceramist Jason Walker demonstrated how he comes up with his ideas for his ceramic sculptures, how he applies paints to surfaces and how his work changes with new experiences. This all took place on October 6 at Flux Studios with Novie Trump, Laurel Lukaszewski and Tamara Laird organizing the day's events. About 20 people attended the workshop, followed by a fabulous potluck dinner at the home of Rebecca Cross and Max MacKenzie.

Jason's inspiration comes from his association with the outdoors—trips through the mountains with his dog as a companion, and an awareness of how technology has changed how man looks at nature. He also made a recent trip to China where he learned about China painting and now applies this technique, giving a brilliant range of colors.

By the time the workshop was over, those in attendance had decorated a tile using Jason's methods of applying paint to a surface. His friendly presentation is typical of what makes Distinguished Artist Series events worthwhile: fun, educational and productive.

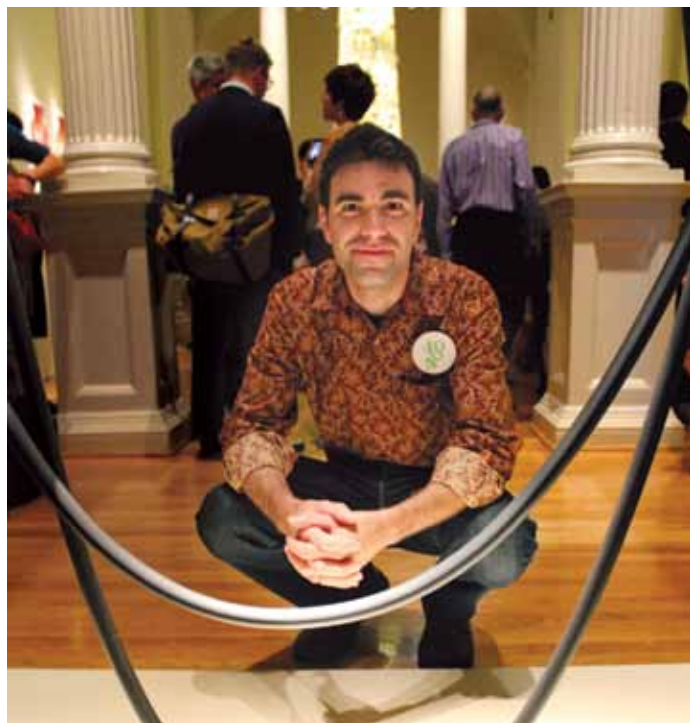
Jason also talked about the progression of his work in a lecture at the Renwick Gallery on Sunday, October 7.

## LOUISE CORT SETS TONE FOR CONTEMPORARY JAPANESE CERAMICS MEDIUM DAY

Louise A. Cort, David and Clemmer Montague and Laurel Lukaszewski gave an in depth study on the topic of contemporary Japanese ceramics on Saturday, December 8 as a ceramics medium day program. Irene Sinclair was the JRA organizer.

Louise Cort, curator of ceramics at the Freer and Sackler Gallery, set the tone of the study with her scholarly review of 12 pieces on view in the museum's collection of currently living Japanese ceramic artists from the Kyoto area of Japan. When she finished, the group of 18 were ready to view the Montagues collection of Japanese ceramics where aspects she discussed could be seen close up and held in hand.

Laurel Lukaszewski finished the day with her explanation of how Japanese aesthetics subtly influences her work, especially in selecting titles for her work.



Marc Maiorana was at the opening of *40 Under 40: Craft Futures* with his work *Renwick Gate*, 2011, iron, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Gift of Patty Stone-sifer and Michael Kinsley in honor of the 40th anniversary of the Renwick Gallery. Photo courtesy of the Smithsonian American Art Museum

## MARC MAIORANA BLACKSMITH WORKSHOP JANUARY 26–27

Location: Maryland Blacksmith Studio of Chris Shea  
Time: 10 a.m.–1 p.m. Limited to 20 participants

On Saturday January 26 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Marc will demonstrate ways he takes a linear raw material such as steel bar stock and gives it three-dimensional qualities with the application of fire and the various tools of the blacksmith. People commonly think of steel only in rigid, geometric forms, yet workshop participants will be able to watch and learn as he bends, forges, twists, and pulls steel bar into shapes that are dynamic and elegant. Note: dress to enjoy the morning in a chilly, dusty metal studio!

A potluck dinner will take place at the home of Clemmer and David Montague, 1012 Broadview Road, Fort Washington, MD at 6:30 p.m. Pati Young, organizer, will send out a sign up list nearer to the event.

In addition, Marc Maiorana will present a lecture on his work on Sunday, January 27 at 2 p.m. in the Grand Salon of the Renwick Gallery.

Marc Maiorana learned blacksmithing from his father and earned a BFA in Metalsmithing from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. He was a resident artist at the Penland School of Crafts and has taught at numerous institutions. Marc has exhibited at the National Ornamental Metals Museum in Memphis and the Kentucky and Mobile (AL) Museums of Art. His work has been published in five Schiffer books of contemporary metalwork, and featured in *Audi*, *American Craft*, *Gourmet*, *Dwell*, *Food and Wine*, the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times*. Recently Marc's ironwork was featured on the DIY Network TV Show: "Man Caves." He is one of the artists in the Renwick exhibition *40 Under 40: Craft Futures*, curated by Nicholas Bell.

A workshop of furniture making techniques with Michael Puryear is scheduled for April 27 with a potluck that night. He will lecture at the Renwick Gallery on Sunday, April 28, at 2 p.m. Andy Paiko, glass artist, will finish the year on June 1 and 2.



# Board Members To Watch: Novie Trump and Chris Shea

by Johanna Thompson

For the last 2.5 years, the Distinguished Artist Series (DAS) has been organized by Novie Trump with the able assistance of Chris Shea—a team of artists that has brought great enthusiasm and a clear purpose to the series.

They come to the program from quite different vantage points: Ceramist Novie had been executive director of an art center in Arlington, VA that had an active program of bringing in visiting artists, and she found that she missed this synergy when she moved her studio to MD. Chris, a blacksmith, believes that his best contribution to the JRA is by providing a strong voice for the artist's point of view.

It is natural for craft collectors to focus on the end-product: the object created. Novie feels that it is also important for the collector to have some insight into the process behind the piece. And, Chris believes that artists are often so involved in the creative process itself that they can forget that collectors aren't aware of the skills, techniques and thought

processes involved. The DAS provides a chance for the artist to explicate what is back of the finished object.

Watching a master work, and explain what he is doing and why, can bridge the gap. In planning the Distinguished Artist weekends, Chris and Novie intend that the whole package: the workshop, the pot luck dinner and the lecture on Sunday encourages a mutually beneficial interaction between artist and the attendees.

Novie points to a second purpose in planning the DAS programs: outreach to non-JRA members. By spreading the word about upcoming programs among their contact lists, local artist organizations involved in the medium to be featured, and people associated with the venue, new audiences can be attracted and the JRA increases its visibility.

The process of planning a DAS weekend begins with the choice of an artist. It could be someone whose work they have admired, or a suggestion by a JRA board member. Chris and Novie



Chris Shea sponsored Artist Jennifer Trask for a Distinguished Artist Series weekend.

also consult with Curator Nicholas Bell and Renwick Gallery Chief Robyn Kennedy about upcoming Gallery exhibits so that the DAS program can coordinate with exhibits at the Renwick.

Organizing a DAS weekend is many-faceted. First Novie contacts the chosen artist to obtain their agreement to conduct the workshop and lecture. Establishing a mutually agreeable date is complex since JRA events, Renwick exhibition dates, and of course the artist's schedule must all be considered. And, sometimes unrelated events creep into the mix: this year the Presidential inauguration ceremonies necessitated a change in date of one DAS weekend.

And there is the delicate process of developing a format to maximize the effectiveness of contact between attendees and artist. Recent workshops have varied from pure demonstration

through complete involvement of attendees in the creative process, to new formats. For example, learning of the charming volubility of Ubaldo Vitali, a "salon discussion" approach was developed that was very successful in bringing together collectors, metal artists, and silver historians.

The final step in the planning process is fine-tuning the logistics at the venue of the workshop. Novie and Chris want to assure that the artist is comfortable in the surroundings and has the materials he/she needs so that they can be at their best and most communicative.

The next artist in this series is Marc Maiorana who will be demonstrating his metalworking at Chris Shea's Blacksmith Studio on January 26, and giving a lecture on the 27th at the Renwick Gallery (*see article, opposite page*). Contact the JRA office for details.



Novie and Chris Trump at the New Year's Eve Party December 31, 2011.

# Silent Auction Item: Ceramics Study Tour to New York

At this year's Spring Craft Weekend, Alice and Halsey North, Judith and Martin Schwartz and Joan Mirviss offered visits to their respective homes and gallery. A group of 11 (Sandy and Norman Mitchell, Bob and Sharon Buchanan, Bonnie and Gil Schwartz, Marsha Gold, Tina Heller, Pati Young, and Diane and Marc Grainer) signed up during the silent auction for this tour.

We were also invited to the New Jersey home of Linda and Henry Wasserstein.

The Wassersteins greeted us warmly and guided us through their exquisite collection of contemporary glass. Each piece was selected with great care and wonderfully displayed with just the perfect lighting. Their home was large which allowed for each object to be displayed to its best advantage.

On Saturday in Manhattan, we visited the Joan Mirviss Gallery, which specializes in contemporary Japanese ceramics. Joan explained the work of Kishi Eiko, whose ceramic objects incorporate grog and slip, and the work of other artists in the gallery.



**ABOVE,** Judith Schwartz talks to JRA members about her collection of "Confrontations Ceramics" at her home in Armonk, NY. **BELOW,** Halsey and Alice North teach the JRA members about Japanese contemporary ceramics. Photos by Norman Mitchell

We all treated ourselves with a gourmet late lunch at Jean-George with a view of Central Park and all the hubbub of New York. The meal and conversation were won-

derful. The auction item included a \$50 allowance for lunch, and Jean-George presents a truly fantastic lunch for about that amount.

We were then welcomed at the home of Alice and Halsey North. Their collection focuses on contemporary Japanese ceramics of the highest quality in both craftsmanship and esthetics. Their discussion, using their collection as illustration, was an art historical excursion. We all commented afterwards that we had a much greater understanding and appreciation of the field.

On a sunny Sunday morning we drove to Armonk, NY, to enjoy a visit and brunch with Judith and

Martin Schwartz. Although they seemed to have escaped catastrophe, their neighbors' land displayed much evidence of Hurricane Sandy's legacy. Their collection, which Judith explained in wonderful detail, covers a wide and deep area of ceramics. They also have a terrific collection of Nippon ware of the 1930s. Judith also makes felt hats and explained her process of fabrication.

Many thanks to all our generous hosts who warmly welcomed us and fed both our minds and bodies. We all left the trip satiated and invigorated.

—Norman Mitchell





**ABOVE,** Ceramist Michael Sherrill demonstrates how the glass green and black snakes, made by glass practitioners, fit on his porcelain flower. Intrigued are Stanley Asrael, Mallory Lawson, Fred and Susan Sanders, Jackie Urow and Elizabeth Doyle. **BELOW RIGHT,** The incredible sunrises confirmed just how high we were and how spectacular the vistas are at our home at the Little Switzerland Hotel. Photos by Clemmer Montague

## PENLAND STUDY TOUR: OUT OF THIS WORLD

The study tour to Penland, NC was out of this world, and we felt that way as we made our way up the winding road to the top of the mountain to our weekend home at the Little Switzerland Hotel, just off the Blue Ridge Parkway. The next morning the incredible sunrise confirmed just how high we were and how spectacular the vistas are.

Sixteen JRA members, led by Tim Tate and ably assisted by Sean Hennessey, spent the weekend of August 8–12 visiting internationally recognized artists in the

Asheville, NC, area and attending the Penland School of Crafts annual auctions.

Ceramist Michael Sherrill, wood artist Stony Lamar, metal workers Hoss Haley and Dan Essig, glass sculptor Alex Bernstein and the Blue Spiral Gallery were highlights as well as the room full of secessionist glass artists. Then there were the Bringle sisters, Cynthia and Edwina (ceramics and weaver) and ceramics with Cristina Cordova (ceramics) and glass of Pablo DeSato. The exciting part was visiting the studios

of the residents and meeting such outstanding artists as Dustin Farnsworth who uses wood to express his concern for the people of Detroit as their lives changed as the city and automobile industry changed, and Tom Shields

who reconfigures throwaway chairs from the Penland cafeteria, turning them into contemporary workable chairs. (Ask Pati Young who purchased one.)

The auctions were indeed different from the JRA auctions, having work of all qualities and prices and much in the live auctions finding a home in JRA collections. We learned what works well at Penland does not necessarily work for JRA fundraising efforts.

Unscheduled stops at artists' homes such as Rick and Mallory Beck who have participated in JRA auctions in the past ended a perfect weekend. Then we wound our way back down the mountain to the valley and home.

—Clemmer Montague



## CRANBROOK: A ONCE IN A LIFETIME VISIT

On a beautiful fall day in October, ten JRA members began their once in a lifetime visit to the legendary Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield Hills, MI, arranged by Gerhardt Knodel, master educator and past director of the Academy.

The trip, an auction event from the 2012 Spring Craft Weekend, included a tour of the Cranbrook gardens, iconic Kingswood School designed by Eliel Saarinen, the resplendent Weiss glass collection, and Knodel's personal textile museum—and that was only the first day!

Among the many highlights of the trip were meals in private collectors' homes, a tour of the

recently renovated and expanded Cranbrook Museum with Director Gregg Wittkopp, lunch with current Academy director Reed Kroloff and studio visits with Cranbrook resident artists Anders Ruhwald (ceramics), Iris Eichenberg (metals), Mark Newport (fibers) and a lively morning in Knodel's own studio where he discussed his recent work. Perhaps the most surprising part of the trip was a night drive to see *Delectric*, a series of temporary light installations in downtown Detroit, celebrating the rebirth through art of this once mighty American city.

The four day trip concluded with a farewell brunch for the travelers, Cranbrook artists, and a big

thank you to the gracious hosts—Hal and Myra Weiss, Maxine and Stuart Frankel, Allan and Joy Nachman, Oscar and Dede Feldman, Gerhardt Knodel and Kenneth Goss, and departure from The Townsend Hotel, our home away from home during this best yet weekend. All the travelers are now eagerly awaiting the 2013 auction when other fabulous events will be on offer to the lucky highest bidders.

—Rebecca Stevens

**RIGHT:** Gerhardt Knodel organized a three-day trip as an auction item to Bloomfield Hills, MI outside of Detroit in early October. *Whoosh*, a room-size installation with recorded sound activated by the visitor, is a sample of his work.



Photo courtesy of the artist

# Save the Dates! (JRA events in red)

## December

31 New Year's Eve Party

## January 2013

3, 10, 17, 24, 31 (final)

Sit 'n' Stitch, 12:30 to 2 p.m.

Renwick Gallery

6 Sit 'n' Stitch, 2–4 p.m.

8 **JRA Board Meeting**

9 Gallery Talk with Debrah Dunner on Bohyun Yoon's work, 12 noon

11 Gallery Talk with *40 Under 40* artist Sebastian Martorana, (*Impressions*), 12 noon

16 Screening of documentary *Between the Folds* with *40 Under 40* artist Erik Demaine followed by a demonstration of his origami, 12 noon

23 Gallery Talk with Nicholas Bell, exhibition overview, 12 noon

23 Handi-hour with *40 Under 40* artist Stacey Lee Weber (*The Craftsmen Series: Shovels*), 5:30–8 p.m., Renwick's crafting happy hour. Cost: \$20 for drink tickets (craft beer), live music and hands-on craft projects.

26 **Distinguished Artist Lecture Series** workshop with Marc Maiorana, studio of Chris Shea 10 a.m.–1 p.m.

26 Potluck Dinner at Clemmer and David Montague, 6:30 p.m.

27 Marc Maiorana lecture, Renwick Gallery, 2 p.m.

## February

1 *Lasers: Beyond the Light Show* with *40 Under 40* artist Christy Oates, a lecture and laser marquetry demo, 12 noon

3 *40 Under 40: Craft Futures* closes.

10–17 **Craft Leaders Study Tour to San Miguel de Allende, Mexico**

19 **JRA Board Meeting**

20 American Craft Council Baltimore Craft Show—*Wholesale*

21–24 American Craft Council Baltimore Craft Show—*Retail*

## March

12 **JRA Board Meeting**

## April

5–7 Spring Craft Weekend

5 Southern Maryland BBQ and Stars of Tomorrow exhibition, Washington Glass School, beginning at 11 a.m.

5 Caucus/Patrons Day 1:30–8:30 p.m. 6–8:30 p.m. Dinner, Wearable Glass Fashion Show

6 Panel Discussion, Renwick Gallery, 10:30 a.m.–12 noon

6 **Gala/Auctions**, Willard Hotel 6 p.m.

7 **Brunch for Masters of the Medium**, St. Regis Hotel, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.

12 *Thomas Day: Master Craftsman and Free Man of Color*, Renwick Gallery Exhibition opens, first public program at 12 noon, title TBD

25–28 Smithsonian Craft Show

27 **Distinguished Artist Lecture Series** workshop with furniture maker Michael Puryear, 10 a.m.–2 p.m., Potluck Dinner TBA

28 **Distinguished Artist Lecture** Renwick Gallery, 2 p.m.

30 **JRA Board Meeting**

## June

1 **Distinguished Artist Lecture Series** workshop with glass maker Andy Paiko, DC Glass Works, 10 a.m.–2 p.m., Potluck Dinner TBA

2 **Distinguished Artist Lecture** Renwick Gallery, 2 p.m.

15 **JRA Board Meeting**

23 or 30 **Caucus Summer Social** TBD



Robert Devers

## CAUCUS STUDY TOUR EXPLORES SAN MIGUEL DE ALLENDE, MEXICO

The James Renwick Alliance Craft Leaders Caucus members are in for an unforgettable craft study tour to San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, exploring the unique art, history, architecture and craft of this enchanting colonial town on February 10–17.

The seven day adventure is already drawing attention from local United States ex-patriots living in San Miguel who have offered a fantastic cocktail party at the end of the first day in their magnificent Hacienda Estate filled with art work: Missouri oil painters from 1900–1950, North American Indian pots and beadwork and contemporary artists living in San Miguel. Other Caucus members in San Miguel for a few weeks are anxious to find out what the Caucus group is doing and hoping to join a few ventures.

The itinerary will include an introduction to art of the Mexicos, masks from one area, weavings from another, carved and painted wood from another, which makes it decidedly different from its North American neighbors of the United States and Canada.

Most familiar with the ceramics community, Robert Devers and Erin Higgins, organizers, will share their exploration of the winding cobblestone streets, charming pastel buildings, and stunning historic churches of San Miguel. Admire the 17th- and 18th-century architecture of the city and tour elegant Spanish colonial homes; stroll through the bustling artisan's market and visit private Mexican folk art collections, fabulous contemporary art galleries and artists' studios; and take a scenic drive to Dolores Hidalgo to visit ceramic workshops and learn from the artisans how Mexican Talavera pottery is made.

Optional evenings will be tapas trials, tequila tastings in an exquisite private home, dining at San Miguel's finest restaurants of delicious traditional and contemporary Mexican cuisine, and, of course, enjoy plenty of free time for shopping, browsing and bargaining.

The tour is organized and led by Robert Devers, Chair of Ceramics and Study Away Programs at the Corcoran Gallery of Art and College of Art + Design, and Erin Higgins, Public Programs Manager at the Corcoran Gallery of Art and College of Art + Design.

A few spaces yet may be available. Call the JRA office for details.