



JAMES
RENWICK
ALLIANCE

The James Renwick Craft Weekend 2000

April 27-30, 2000

Celebrating the Renwick Gallery exhibitions:

The First Renwick Invitational: Five Women in Craft

The Art Of John Cederquist: Reality of Illusion

For devotees of the craft arts, Spring and the Renwick Alliance Craft Weekend go hand in hand. Once again we will be sharing fun and information with like-minded friends. At the same time we will be supporting the James Renwick Alliance and the Renwick Gallery of the National Museum of American Art. And of course we will be enjoying the craft art on display at the annual Smithsonian Craft Show.

The Craft Weekend team, led by Norman Mitchell, has put together a remarkable assemblage of events:

■ **Thursday evening, April 27, an acquisition meeting**, followed by a tour of the current Renwick Gallery exhibitions led by Curator-in-Charge Kenneth R. Trapp.

■ **Friday, April 28, Craft Leaders Caucus Day**, featuring visits to private collections and other interesting venues.

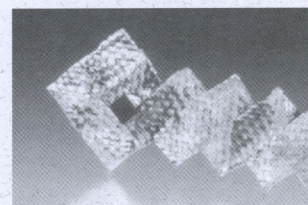
■ **Friday evening, the Patrons dinner** hosted by Marilyn and John Barrett. The first three recipients of the Distinguished Craft Educators Award—Kenneth Ferguson, Arline Fisch, and Harvey Littleton—will be honored at the dinner.

■ **Saturday morning, April 29, a Symposium**, “Speaking Personally: Artists talk about their Lives and their Art.” The speakers will be Myra Mimplitsch Gray, Janel Jacobson, Sondra Sherman, and Consuelo Jiménez Underwood—four of the five artists featured in the Renwick Gallery exhibition, *The First Renwick Invitational: Five Women in Craft*.

■ **Saturday afternoon, meeting of the National Resource Board.**

■ **Saturday evening, the piece de resistance: the annual Gala Benefit.**

■ **Sunday, April 30, an all-day Craft Study Tour.** There will be a rich menu of visits to private collections and artists’ studios. Diane and Marc Grainer will host lunch at their home in Potomac. ■



▲ **Folded Zigzag Brooch by
Distinguished Craft Educator
Arline M. Fisch.**

From the President

I am looking forward with great anticipation to this year's Craft Weekend. The Smithsonian Craft Show affords the James Renwick Alliance the opportunity to program a wide range of craft-related activities in a concentrated period of time. This year the Craft Weekend Committee, chaired by Norman Mitchell, has certainly made the most of this opportunity.

There will be a number of "firsts" this year, including the first presentation of the Distinguished Craft Educators Awards and the first meeting of the recently established National Resource Board. As of this writing, all three recipients of the Distinguished Craft Educators Award—Ken Ferguson, Arline Fisch, and Harvey Littleton—will be present to receive the honor.

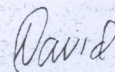
Another Craft Weekend "first": for the first time, the Alliance has received more than \$100,000 in pledges from Craft Weekend Patrons. To our Patrons, thank you most sincerely for your support, and to the co-chairs of the Patrons Committee, Shirley Jacobs and David Stearman, a special thanks for their dedicated effort in enabling the Alliance to surpass its \$100,000 goal. The culmination of the Patrons' program will be a special dinner at the home of Marilyn and John Barrett, when the Distinguished Educators Awards will be presented.

Still another "first" is the inclusion of an eBay™ component in Saturday evening's gala benefit auction, "Ornament for Person and Place." Bidding for eBay™ auction items will begin on the World Wide Web seven days before the gala, and the online bidding will be timed to end during the silent auction/eBay™ portion of the gala. Those of you attending the gala who are not familiar with the intricacies of the Internet do not have to worry. Technicians will be available to place your eBay™ bids for you. The array of craft items and

craft related trips being auctioned a most impressive one, so plan to attend the gala, bid often, and have a wonderful evening.

Another exciting aspect of Craft Weekend is that four of the five artists in the *First Renwick Invitational: Five Women in Craft* will be participating in the Saturday morning symposium. This symposium, "Speaking Personally: Artists Talk About Their Lives and Their Art," has been designed to enable each artist to discuss the philosophy and values which underlie her work, and it should offer valuable insights into the meaning of craft art.

Craft Weekend would not be possible without an enormous amount of work by dedicated Alliance members. To each of you who has contributed time and effort to making the weekend possible, thank you most sincerely.



David Montague
President

JAMES RENWICK ALLIANCE

Quarterly

Spring 2000

The Quarterly is published four times a year by the James Renwick Alliance, a national independent nonprofit organization created to celebrate and encourage American craft artists and their works, and to support the Renwick Gallery of the National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.

Editor

Bob Sinclair

Graphic Design

Cox & Associates, Inc.

Contributors

Allen Bassing
Barbara Berlin
Julia Brennan
Brenda Erickson
Harriet Friedman
Norman Mitchell
Sandy Morse

James Renwick Alliance

Julia Brennan,
Executive Assistant

209 N. Edgewood Street
Arlington, VA 22201

703•812•4500
fax 703•812•0300
web www•jra•org

I am looking forward with great anticipation to this year's Craft Weekend. There will be a number of "firsts" this year – the first presentation/meeting of the National Resource Board, the first time the Alliance has received more than \$100,000 in pledges from Craft Weekend Patrons, and the first inclusion of eBay™ in the gala benefit auction.

Make Way for the Gala!

You will have a chance to bid on craft pieces by outstanding artists, including:

Philip Moulthrop
Don Reitz
Judy McKie
Toots Zynsky
Randy Shull
Wendell Castle
Ron Kent
Ferne Jacobs
Petra Class
Axel Russmeyer
Paul Knoblauch
Therman Statom
Tom Rippon
Laura Foster Nicholson

Schools Participating in the James Renwick Alliance Student Competition

Arizona State University
School of Art
California College
of Arts and Crafts
Rhode Island School
of Design
Rochester Institute
of Technology
Savannah College
of Art and Design
State University
of New York, New Paltz
State University
of New York, Potsdam
University of Kentucky
University of Washington
University of
Wisconsin—Madison

The Alliance Gala 2000 promises to be one of our most exciting events ever. The venue is the historic U.S. Chamber of Commerce building overlooking Lafayette Square; the theme is “Ornament for Person and Place.”

This year the Alliance invited selected students from universities and craft schools all over the country to participate in a competition for the most innovative table decorations. The winning entry will be included in the live auction; the remainder will be for sale.

In addition to cocktails and a stellar dinner, we will be auctioning a rich array of over 70 items, including craft objects from all media as

well as not-to-be-missed trips. For the first time you can participate even if you are unable to attend the Gala. Beginning on April 22 and concluding before the Gala dinner on April 29, you can get information and bid on selected items online. Just visit eBay's™ charity auctions page at www.ebay.com.

Alliance members should have received their invitations to this fabulous event by now. Please return your acceptances as soon as possible. And spread the word among your friends!

For more information, please contact Julia Brennan at (703) 812-4500 or visit the Alliance Web site at www.jra.org. ■

Some lucky bidder will win these trips:

■ **Bluegrass Hospitality:** Artists Sergei Isopov and Linda Fifield, the Kentucky Art and Craft Foundation, and the Ferrin Gallery team up for a weekend for six, including a visit to Sergei Isopov's home and studio, tours of private collections in Louisville, and a trip to Berea, the craft capital of Kentucky.

■ **New York, New York:** Franklin Parrasch will escort you on tours of the studios of ceramic artists and two private collections. You will lunch at one of New York's “swell restaurants”. The evening will include four tickets to a Broadway or off-Broadway production.

■ **Three Masters—Wendell Castle, Albert Paley, Dan Dailey:** Scott Jacobsen of Leo Kaplan Modern will welcome a party of four to a memorable two and a half days, beginning with a visit to Rochester, N.Y.

and the studios of Wendell Castle and Albert Paley. There will be other tours tailored to your wishes. Then fly to Boston, where Scott will chauffeur you to the studios of Dan Dailey and Linda Macneil in Manchester, New Hampshire.

■ **Collectors at Home:** Diane and Marc Grainer's house was designed as an homage to Richard Meier. Their outstanding collection was featured in *American Craft* magazine last year. Brunch for six at their home will give you a feast for your eyes and your palate—an opportunity to dine and tour in a living museum.

■ **Williamsburg Weekend:** Two nights in a private condo in King Mill Plantation, Williamsburg. Four rounds of golf, ten hours of tennis, a spa package, fitness club passes, hiking, biking, boating.

The Craft Leaders Caucus: Review and What's New

by **Barbara Berlin**

The Craft Leaders Caucus, the upper membership group of the James Renwick Alliance, offers the opportunity to give more financial support to the Renwick Gallery and to gain greater personal rewards.

More numerous and more extensive trips are offered, and a special bond develops among members. An historical memory develops as members share educational opportunities in this country and abroad. Members also vote on proposed acquisitions for the Renwick Gallery. We welcome the most recent additions to the Caucus: Lois and Edward Anderson, Joan and Milton Baxt, Fleur and Charles Bresler, Susan Ellerin, Jere Gibber and J.G. Harrington, Heather Kaye and Alan Jacobs, Arlene Kaufman and Sanford Baklor, Wanda Rappaport and George Mueller, Mary and Peter Rousselot, and Deane and Paul Shatz.

Members received a special treat last December. Along with Alliance board members, they were invited to luncheon at La Bergerie restaurant in Alexandria, Virginia, to hear Wendell Castle, one

of the country's foremost studio furniture makers. During this delightful and educational couple of hours, Wendell updated us on current directions in his work and his future plans. The event was organized by Solveig Cox and Barbara Berlin.

In December, the Alliance board approved a new benefit for Caucus members. You can now give a one-year membership at the Donor level (\$100) to a friend who has not been a member during the past three years. This is a wonderful opportunity to introduce others to the Alliance. It may also be a good way to attract younger people to our group. The benefit has been introduced on a two-year trial basis.

We thank Judy Bloomfield and Norman Mitchell for all their hard work on this spring's trip to Australia. Be sure to check the next issue of the *Quarterly* for photos and details about the trip.

Our next Caucus trip will be to San Francisco on November 11-14. Trip leaders are Bob and Judy Aptekar, Dorothy Saxe, and Ruth Conant, with assistance from Barbara Waldman. We are currently looking at possibilities for a spring 2001 trip.

We look forward to our special Caucus Day on April 28 under the leadership of Jackie Chalkley. It is sure to be a high point of Craft Weekend. ■

The Alliance board approved a new benefit for Caucus members. You can now give a one-year membership at the Donor level (\$100) to a friend who has not been a member during the past three years. This is a wonderful opportunity to introduce others to the Alliance.

The Alliance Web Page: A Calendar Resource

by **Brenda Erickson**

One of the most valuable features of the Alliance Web page is its extensive calendar of coming events. The information there is far more diverse and detailed than can ever be included in the *Quarterly*. Just go to www.jra.org, and look under "Calendar" and "What's New." Anyone who wishes more detail can send an e-mail to julia.brennan@jra.org or leave a voice message at (703) 812-4500. Updates on the events can also be

e-mailed, if requested. Here are two items that are currently listed on the Web site in some detail:

April 8, 2000, Philadelphia: Symposium, "Discovered Collections: Fiber Art in Museums." Friends of Fiber International (*See the box about the fiber-oriented Alliance craft study trip to Philadelphia on page 5 of this issue.*)

June 22-25, 2000, Cincinnati: Conference, "Convergence 2000." Handweavers Guild of America. ■

Alliance Establishes Distinguished Craft Educators Award

by **Norman Mitchell**

Recognizing the critical importance of craft education in training artists in the techniques of their media, grounding them in the contributions of their predecessors, and developing their artistic vision, the James Renwick Alliance has established a Distinguished Craft Educators Award. Recipients may be current or retired educators. They must meet the following criteria:

1. Their peers in the craft field recognize them as distinguished educators.
2. They have made significant contributions to American craft education.
3. They have a reputation for excellence and innovation in teaching.
4. They have had exceptional influence on students in a craft education program.

The Alliance received suggestions from all over the country. The first recipients meet these four criteria and then some. Our awardees are:

Kenneth Ferguson. Ken Ferguson is one of the outstanding ceramics teachers of our time. For more than two decades he headed the craft division of the Kansas City Art Institute. In that period he

built the undergraduate ceramic program into one of the best in the country. Postgraduate institutions say that students from the Institute's ceramics program are consistently among the best prepared they see.

Arline Fisch. A leading American metalsmith, Arline Fisch has taught at San Diego State University since 1961. Her travels over the years—through Fulbright and Danforth grants, among others—have brought an international dimension to both her teaching and her own work. Through her book, *Textile Techniques in Metal*, and her workshops throughout the country, she has passed her knowledge and skills to many others within and beyond academe.

Harvey Littleton. Harvey Littleton is a true trailblazer. It is largely because of him that glass today occupies a position fully equal to other craft media. At the University of Wisconsin he started the first creative glass program at an American university within the context of an art department. His students carried his passion for glass into other educational institutions, in this country and abroad. Directly and indirectly, he has influenced generations of young people. ■

Last Call for Philadelphia

There may still be space on the Alliance Craft Study Tour to Philadelphia on April 8th. The bus leaves at 8:00 am for a day of fiber art and more, taking advantage of the exhibits associated with the Friends of Fiber Art symposium. For further information call Julia Brennan at (703) 812-4500.

Roads Less Traveled: A Tour of Rockville and Environs

by **Harriet Friedman**

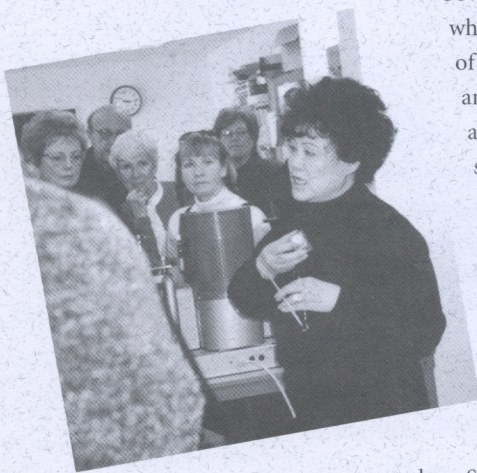
People often get enthralled by distant exotica while ignoring good things right under their noses. A truism perhaps, but the truism came alive for the participants in the Alliance tour of the area around Rockville, MD, led by Joan Wessel and Jan Maddox. The tour proved that you don't have to

move far from your doorstep to find fascinating craft work.

We stopped first at Montgomery College of Art, where metalworker Komelia Okim demonstrated how she applies gold leaf to one of her beautiful

continued on page 6

Rockville continued from page 5



▲ Komelia Okim discusses her work at Montgomery College.

bowls. She was followed by Robert Cohen, who creates art from diamond-shaped pieces of matboard. He paints these with acrylics and assembles them into collages that give a real sense of depth. Ceramist Kevin Hluch spoke about his concept of combining art and usability in his current pieces; he then showed slides of his own and his students' work.

Then it was on to the Rockville Arts Place and an exhibit of quilts from the Manhattan Quilters Guild—gorgeous shapes, colors, and designs!

After lunch we visited Glenview Mansion, where Sara Brown spoke about the fabric collages that she makes from faded photos, remnants of old clothing, and the like, creating works that combine nostalgia with a sense of the present. We also viewed Mike Shaffers's work, made from reclaimed

junk made into tantalizing shapes; and Sabine Carlson's paintings, whose common theme—a distributor cap—seemed to take on an otherworldly feeling from painting to painting.

We then moved on to Kensington, where Michael Schwartz spoke with great enthusiasm about how he manufactures metalwork for art and industry. We were shown some of the technology involved in the production of a piece of metalwork—amazing stuff! And as if that wasn't enough, we were treated to coffee, tea, and delicious snacks.

In charming Garrett Park, finally, we walked down a snowy street, left unplowed so children could sled down it, to the fiber studio of Mary Alice Hearn, who spoke of the flow of ideas guiding the creation of works like those she had on display. All in all, it was a fascinating day spent with creative people in our own neighborhood. ■

Hello and Happy New Year from the Alliance Office

by Julia Brennan

Thanks for your enthusiastic response to our December/January membership drive. Many of you have renewed your membership, and we all welcome you to another year of craft activities. Thanks to our generous supporters, and welcome to our many new members!

For those who have not yet renewed for 2000, you should have received a final reminder in early February. If you have misplaced it, you can use the membership form in the last issue of the *Quarterly* or renew online at www.jra.org. If you have questions about your membership, don't hesitate to call me at (703) 812-4500. But please send in your renewal as soon as possible.

One important administrative note: If you donate securities to the Alliance, you need to inform me of the donation directly. Donated securities arrive at our broker with no indication

who the former owner was, and we cannot match your donation with your name if you have not contacted the Alliance office. Right now, we cannot properly attribute the proceeds from a donation of Bellsouth securities last December. If you are the donor, I would appreciate a call.

Craft Weekend 2000 is just around the corner, and you can tell from the announcements in this issue of the *Quarterly* that it will be fantastic. Let me know if you would like invitations sent to friends. And again, call me if you have questions about the weekend's events. Craft Weekend Chair, Norman Mitchell, and a large number of dedicated Alliance Volunteers are working all-out to make this the best weekend ever for all of you!

See you at the Renwick Gallery openings on March 30th and at Craft Weekend in April. ■

Welcome, New Alliance Members!

Craft Leaders Caucus

Lois and Edward Anderson
Joan and Milton Baxt
Fleur and Charles Bresler
Susan Ellerin
Jere Gibber and J.G. Harrington
Heather Kaye and Alan Jacobs

Arlene Kaufman and Sanford Baklor
Wanda Rappaport and
George Mueller
Mary and Peter Rousselot
Deane and Paul Shatz

Sponsors

Randee and Joseph Seiger
Sybil and Daniel Silver

Donors

Nina Asher
Joanne Bast
Ruth and Joseph Bloom
Claudia and Wayne Burke
Leonore and Stanley Dorfman
Judi and Jerry Friedman
Dianne Greg
Molly Haley and Ed Freitag
Kate Hughes and John Christian
Mr. and Mrs. Norman Jacobs

Jillian Poole
Carol and Steve Rosenblum
Sharon and Fred Schomer
Victoria Schonfeld and
Victor Friedman
Bonnie and Gilbert Schwartz
Myrna Seale
Stefanie and Robert Sigal
Lynn A. Soukup
Patti and Jerry Sowalsky

Guild

Jon Eric Riis
Norm Sartorius
Mary Ann Scherr

ART

Mindy Barron

Alliance Spring Workshops: The Theme is Glass

This spring the James Renwick Alliance is offering workshops by two exceptional glass artists: Sidney Hutter and Colin Reid. Details of the workshops are given below, followed by an application form. Participants must provide their own meals. For additional information call Julia Brennan at (703) 812-4500.

Lost Wax

Colin Reid

Introduction to Kilncast Glass by the Lost Wax Method

Saturday, May 6, 2000

10 am to 3 pm, and

Monday, May 8, 2000

6 pm to 8 pm

Rockville Arts Place, 100 East Middle Lane, Rockville MD 20850



British Artist Colin Reid has established an international presence with sculptures of cast glass. His workshop, "Introduction to Kilncast Glass by the Lost Wax Method," introduces the basics of making an object in glass by modeling in wax and then casting in a kiln. It will be a hands-on workshop, and participants will learn by making their own glass pieces.

The workshop is limited to 10 people. The cost is \$130 for Alliance members and \$150 for non-members, plus a possible materials fee.

Colin Reid will also give a lecture at the Renwick Gallery at 3 pm on Sunday, May 7. There will be a reception to meet the artist from 5 pm to 7 pm at the Maurine Littleton Gallery, 1667 Wisconsin Avenue, NW in Washington, telephone (202) 333-9307.

WORKSHOP REGISTRATION

Attendance is limited. **Each workshop participant will provide his/her own meal and beverage.**

There will be no refunds on workshops. A list of paid participants will be at the door for each workshop. Call Julia Brennan at (703) 812-4500 for more information.

Name

Address

City

State/Zip

Telephone: Day

Evening

Guild Affiliation, if any

Please mark the workshops you wish to attend:

Colin Reid Workshop, Kiln Cast Glass, May 6, 2000 and May 8, 2000 at \$150 (\$130 for Alliance Members)

Sidney Hutter Workshop, Plate Glass Techniques, May 20, 2000 at \$95 (\$75 for Alliance Members)

Make checks payable to the James Renwick Alliance. Please send your check with this form to:

Julia Brennan
209 N. Edgewood St.
Arlington, VA 22201.

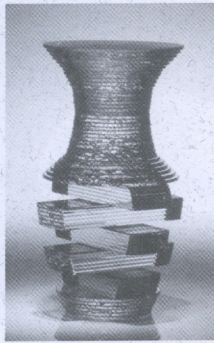


Photo: Charles Mayer

Plate Glass

Sidney Hutter

Exploration of Plate Glass Working Techniques

Saturday, May 20, 2000

10 am to 4 pm

Madison Street Annex of the Torpedo Factory, 305 Madison St., Alexandria, VA

Sidney Hutter is a full-time studio glass artist residing in the Boston area who is internationally recognized for his sculptural, plate-glass vessels. The focus of the workshop will be the exploration of plate glass working techniques. Discussions will begin with the conceptual approach to making a piece of art through the use of drawings and models. This will be followed by a more technical introduction to various types of glass, and the adhesives and materials used to create finished objects. Cold glass working techniques will be demonstrated which will show participants how to cut, grind, polish, and laminate glass. There will be some hands-on participation during this portion of the workshop. Further topics covered will be finding sources for equipment and materials. The artist will also talk about his experiences as a plate glass sculptor.

The cost of the workshop will be \$75 for Alliance members and \$95 for non-members. A \$20 materials and handout fee will be payable at the workshop.

Sidney Hutter will also give a lecture at the Renwick Gallery at 3 pm on Sunday, May 21. There will be a reception to meet the artist from 5 pm to 7 pm at the Glass Gallery, 4720 Hampden Lane, Bethesda, MD, telephone (301) 657-3478.

Student Reaction to *Guerra*

by **Sandy Morse**

In 1999 the James Renwick Alliance purchased *Guerra*, a fiber art piece by the Hispanic artist Arturo Alonzo Sandoval, for the Renwick Gallery. The piece is controversial in the eyes of many: based on an American flag with a red background and images of graffiti, skeletons, and skulls, it attacks the viewer with a heavily political message. Renwick docents conducting student tours, however, have found that of all the craft art on display in the gallery, the Sandoval elicits the most animated response.

We have hosted several middle-school groups from the Washington metropolitan area who represent a very diverse ethnic population. The Hispanic students are excited to see a piece of art with Spanish words and are proud to be able to translate, "500 years of what?" for their non-Spanish-speaking classmates. These children feel more connected to the gallery since they see their language, their history, and their culture as part of the art community.

But the effectiveness of the piece reaches further than this. We have talked about war and about ways

to express frustration with the violence in the world. We have been able to explore with these students the concept of using art to express a point of view.

Typically, the kids sit on the floor and examine the art for a few minutes. Then we launch into a discussion with the question, "What's going on here?" We follow up on their response with another question: "What do you see that makes you say that?" More students want to offer their reaction to this piece than to anything else in the gallery.

With one tour for kids with learning disabilities, it was a bit difficult to hold their attention—until the docent reached the Sandoval piece. The kids really reacted to the art. The discussion was very lively, including several students who had previously been silent, and the whole mood of the group changed.

In short, controversial or not, the Sandoval piece is doing a good job with the Renwick Gallery's younger visitors. The kids who have seen the piece *love* it. ■

Docents and the Renwick Gallery

by Allen Bassing, Renwick Gallery

When the Renwick Gallery opened to the public in January 1972, there were no docents in place to give guided tours to the public. Tours were given by the staff.

In the fall of 1973, docent training combined learning about the collection of what was then the National Collection of Fine Arts (now the National Museum of American Art—NMAA) and the history of the NCFCA and Renwick Gallery buildings. After the completion of training, docents were given the option of staying at NCFCA or going to the Renwick. In this period, the Renwick had no permanent collection and during its first decade averaged between four and 14 exhibitions yearly. Docents had to become very quick learners.

When I joined the Renwick in June 1974, one of my first tasks was to recruit and add to the cadre of docents. Over the past 25 years, there has been a need for only four training programs. Our docents are an incredibly loyal, dedicated, and enthusiastic group. Many have been with us for decades. They have always been ready and willing to take on numerous exhibition subjects. In addition, at exhibition openings and other social occasions, the docents make themselves available to act as hosts for invited guests.

Presently, each docent sets aside one weekday to give scheduled group tours for a wide variety of groups, from grade school to college to senior citizens, in one-, two-, and three-part programs. Our adult groups come from all over the United States, the majority of them from the east coast.

Renwick docents also participate in outreach programs to schools and senior centers. Outreach education uses the touchpack (a selection of craft materials and objects that can be held) and slide talks. Outreach programs also include a visit to the Renwick Gallery.

With special exhibitions, the docents give walk-in tours at noon on weekdays. If visitors wish to have information about the building and its period settings or the permanent craft collection exhibition, they need but ask. There is no time limit for either the scheduled or the walk-in tours, so it is not unusual to have tours go beyond the scheduled time. The docents are always pleased when there are questions and comments from visitors.

Docents also help us in putting together and working at the Family Days and other public programs funded by the James Renwick Alliance and

the Windgate Charitable Foundation. Two program endowments add to the public's understanding of our exhibitions: the Steven Thurston Memorial Fund defrays the cost of fiber-related programs, and the Pearl Rappaport Kaplan Fund covers the cost of craft demonstrations. This fund is quite special since Pearl Kaplan was a Renwick docent and felt that the craft demonstrations gave museum-goers an opportunity to interact with craft artists.

For the next three years while the NMAA is closed, 25 NMAA docents will be based at the Renwick; they have been in training during February and March. Already equipped with a wealth of information about American painting and sculpture, these docents will help us bring to life the newly refurbished period settings—the Grand Salon and the Octagon Room—reopening this spring with art from the NMAA.

Why do docents choose the Renwick? The most common response is that they have already been coming often to enjoy our exhibitions and public programs.

What makes a good docent? Three attributes are important: the ability to communicate to a wide variety of visitors, the ability to absorb new information quickly, and enthusiasm about crafts and decorative arts (but not necessarily as an expert in any particular medium).

How does one become a Renwick docent? It is necessary to call the Renwick Gallery and request an application form, which is submitted to the education office. This is followed by an interview. If all goes well, the individual is placed on a waiting list for the next training program.

What craft art does the public ask about? Docents say that Wendell Castle's *Ghost Clock* and Larry Fuente's *Game Fish* are the two pieces that receive the most questions and comments (although Arturo Alonzo Sandoval's *Guerra* is also popular among younger visitors—see the article on page 9).

The mandate of the Renwick Gallery is to present traditional and contemporary American craft and decorative art exhibitions and public programs. The Renwick Gallery docents are an important part of our public face; frankly, we could not do our job without their help. This is even truer at the moment, when the gallery is the only NMAA department open for exhibitions to the public in Washington. The gallery and its docents are playing a vital role in maintaining a presence for the National Museum of American Art. ■

Save the Date!

During the SOFA show in New York this June, all members of the Alliance are invited to attend a reception hosted by Scott Jacobsen of Leo Kaplan Modern, located at 41 E 57th Street. The date: June 1, from 5:00 to 6:30 pm.

Upcoming Events

James Renwick Alliance and Related Events

Alliance-sponsored events
are shown in bold italic.

Note: The location of many programs will remain uncertain until it becomes clear when the renovation of the Renwick Gallery's Grand Salon will be completed. As long as the gallery is closed, programs will be held in Room 105 except as noted. Seating is available in Room 105 for thirty people on a first-come-first-served basis.

April

Noon walk-in tours of the Renwick Gallery's special exhibitions begin April 10 and continue weekdays until June 14 (exception - May 29).

April 2 (Sunday)

Slide Lecture, 3 pm, Renwick Gallery

Studio furniture maker John Cederquist discusses how he executes painterly illusions on flat surfaces.

April 2 (Sunday)

Exhibition Talk, 4 pm, Renwick Gallery, lobby

John Cederquist surveys the furniture in his exhibition and the influences on them.

April 7 (Friday)

Video, noon to 4 pm (continuous), Renwick Gallery

In "Cut Loose: New American Furniture Makers", four contemporary furniture designers talk about their work (29 minutes).

April 8 (Saturday)

Alliance Craft Study Tour to Philadelphia, PA, including the Fiber Art in Museums Symposium

April 14 (Friday)

Video, noon to 4 pm (continuous, repeat of April 7 program)

April 19 (Wednesday)

Architecture Tour, noon, Renwick Gallery, lobby

Renwick programs coordinator Allen Bassing looks at the Second Empire-style facade of the Renwick Gallery and other 19th century buildings in the area.

April 21 (Friday)

Video, noon - 4 pm (continuous, repeat of April 7 program)

April 26 (Wednesday)

Smithsonian Craft Show benefit opening

April 27-30 (Thursday-Sunday)

Smithsonian Craft Show

JRA Craft Weekend 2000

► For further information on upcoming events, call Julia Brennan at (703) 812-4500.

May

May 4 (Thursday)

Alliance gallery tour, noon, Renwick Gallery

Curator-in-Charge Kenneth R. Trapp leads a tour of the exhibits, *The First Renwick Invitational: Five Women in Craft* and *The Art Of John Cederquist: Reality of Illusion*. By reservation; call Julia Brennan at (703) 812-4500.

May 5 (Friday)

Video, noon - 4 pm (continuous), Renwick Gallery

"The Korean Onggi Potter" documents with 1920s and contemporary films the making of large stoneware pots (onggi) used for storage and for the fermentation of "kimchi", a spicy cabbage-based dish (24 minutes).

May 6 (Saturday), 10 am to 3 pm, and May 8 (Monday), 6 pm to 8 pm

Colin Reid Workshop, Rockville Arts Place, 100 East Middle Lane, Rockville, MD

By reservation.

May 7 (Sunday)

Alliance gallery tour, 2 pm, Renwick Gallery

Curator-in-Charge Kenneth R. Trapp leads a tour of the exhibits, *The First Renwick Invitational: Five Women in Craft* and *The Art Of John Cederquist: Reality of Illusion*. By reservation; call Julia Brennan at (703) 812-4500.

Slide Lecture, 3 pm, Renwick Gallery

Glass artist Colin Reid discusses how he creates three-dimensional forms while exploring the fragile and often lush forms of nature. Free and open to the public. Supported by the James Renwick Alliance.

May 12 (Friday)

"Craft Talks", 1 pm, Renwick Gallery, lobby

Works by four Asian-American craft artists in the permanent collection exhibition, who blend traditional Asian and contemporary American materials and techniques, are surveyed by Renwick programs coordinator Allen Bassing.

May 19 (Friday)

Video, noon - 4 pm (continuous, repeat of May 5 program)

May 20 (Saturday)

Sidney Hutter Workshop, 10 am - 4 pm, Madison Street Annex of the Torpedo Factory, 305 Madison St., Alexandria, VA

By reservation.

May 21 (Sunday)

Slide Lecture, 3 pm, Renwick Gallery

Glass artist Sydney Hutter employs the mechanical methods of the plate glass factory and laminates precisely cut pieces using an ultra-violet-light curing glue. Free and open to the public. Supported by the James Renwick Alliance.

May 31 (Wednesday)

SOFA New York benefit opening

June

June 1-4 (Thursday-Sunday)

SOFA New York

June 1 (Thursday)

Reception for Alliance members, 5:00-6:30 pm, at Leo Kaplan Modern, 41 East 57th Street, NYC

June 2 (Friday)

Video, noon to 4 pm (continuous), Renwick Gallery

In "Cut Loose: New American Furniture Makers", four contemporary furniture designers talk about their work (29 minutes).

June 8 (Thursday)

A party "Crafting the Night Away", 6:30 pm, Ningaloo's, Arlington, VA

Cocktails, food, crafts, fun.

June 9 (Friday)

"Craft Talks", 1 pm, Renwick Gallery, lobby

In the permanent collection exhibition, visitors are particularly intrigued by such works as Larry Fuente's *Game Fish* and Wendell Castle's *Ghost Clock*. These and other unique pieces will be discussed by Renwick programs coordinator Allen Bassing.

June 16 (Friday)

Video, noon to 4 pm (continuous, repeat of June 2 program)

June 23 (Friday)

Exhibition Discussion, 1 pm, Renwick Gallery, lobby

Museum visitors will be encouraged to discuss the works in the John Cederquist exhibition with Renwick programs coordinator Allen Bassing.

September

September 7-10 (Thursday-Sunday)

Alliance Craft Study Tour to Montreal, Canada

October

October 6 (Friday)

Exhibition opening, Renwick Gallery, 6-8 pm.

"Amish Quilts from the Collection of Faith and Stephen Brown" and "Spirits of the Cloth: Contemporary African-American Quilts"

By Reservation.

November

November 11-14

Craft Leaders Caucus Craft Study Tour to San Francisco.



**JAMES
RENWICK
ALLIANCE**

209 N. Edgewood Street
Arlington, VA 22201

BULK RATE
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 4297
ROCKVILLE, MD

Quarterly

Spring 2000

The James Renwick Craft Weekend 2000	1
From the President	2
Make Way for the Gala!	3
The Craft Leaders Caucus	4
The Alliance Web Page: A Calendar Resource	4
Alliance Establishes Distinguished Craft Educators Award	5
Roads Less Traveled: A Tour of Rockville and Environs	5
Hello and Happy New Year from the Alliance Office	6
Welcome, New Alliance Members!	7
Alliance Spring Workshops: The Theme is Glass	8
Student Reaction to <i>Guerra</i>	9
Docents and the Renwick Gallery	10
Upcoming Events	11



**James Renwick Alliance
Craft Weekend 2000**

◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

Celebrating the Renwick Gallery exhibitions
"The First Renwick Invitational: Five
Women in Craft" and "The Art of John
Cederquist: Reality of Illusion"

▶ **Thursday, April 27, 2000**
Acquisitions Meeting

▶ **Friday, April 28, 2000**
Craft Leaders Caucus Day
(Caucus members only)
Patrons Dinner

▶ **Saturday, April 29, 2000**
Symposium
Gala Benefit: Ornament for
Person and Place

▶ **Saturday, April 29, 2000**
Craft Study Tour