



FALL 2014

THE QUARTERLY

THE JAMES RENWICK ALLIANCE



**David and
Clemmer Montague**

*Recognition for
Distinguished Service*

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Cicie Sattarnilasskorn

Director



I am wearing a necklace by Elise Winters, an artist and innovator in polymer with luminous surfaces, subtle sophisticated color and elegant forms in art jewelry and sculpture. Photo by Miriam Rosenthal

From the president...

I have been pondering what makes an organization great, and I think that the answer is: a clearly defined mission with members who heed and respect that mission. Our JRA has a specific mission: to educate the public and support the Renwick Gallery and its public programs and publications. And we have been adhering to that mission religiously.

To wit, since the JRA was formed in 1982, it has given the Renwick over \$3 million for acquisitions, education and exhibitions and support for over 30 fellows. In addition, we have helped acquire almost 200 fine craft objects—not bad for such a young organization.

What makes our organization exceptional, I believe, is the passion of our members—their zeal, their enthusiasm and service to the organization. The JRA has that kind of members. The best examples are JRA's past presidents Clemmer and David Montague. They are the embodiment of what I consider to be perfect members. They work hard. They lead trips. Clemmer spends countless hours editing *The Quarterly* which you are now reading, editing our invitations, planning our programs and so much more. This is the reason we are honoring Clemmer and David during our Spring Craft Weekend 2015 with the first ever recognition for Distinguished Service. (See page 8 for more about the Montagues.)

It is also during SCW that we recognize great masters and educators. SCW is the tool for our most important fundraiser. And we must raise funds in order to fulfill our mission to support the Renwick and our fellows. (See pages 4–7 for more information.)

However, you may ask, why do we need funds when the Renwick is closed for renovations? Because the fellowship programs continue; educational programs have not stopped; and we are continuing to provide funds for important craft acquisitions to be unveiled during the Renwick's grand opening in late 2015.

So, please attend Spring Craft Weekend. Please help us honor Clemmer and David. Come meet the great masters to whom we are paying homage. Bid on fantastic objects and experiences. See great collections. Learn from a knowledgeable panel. Join us!

I wish all of you and your loved ones a lot of joy during the upcoming holidays.

And please don't forget the needy!

Giselle Huberman, JRA President

JRA BOARD MEETINGS*

Tuesday, January 6 @7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, February 24 @7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, April 21 @7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, May 16 @7:30 p.m.

*Dates and times are subject to change

**ON THE COVER**

During Spring Craft Weekend's Gala on March 28, 2015, Clemmer and David Montague will be recognized for Distinguished Service to the James Renwick Alliance (See page 8). Photos by Miriam Rosenthal

JRA Gifts Schaechter's *The Birth of Eve* to the Renwick Gallery Collection

The James Renwick Alliance Acquisitions Committee voted on Wednesday, December 3, to purchase *The Birth of Eve*, 2013, a stained glass light box, by Philadelphia artist Judith Schaechter for \$75,000. This marks the second piece from Judith which the Alliance has gifted the museum, the first being in 1991: *A Little Torch*, 1990.

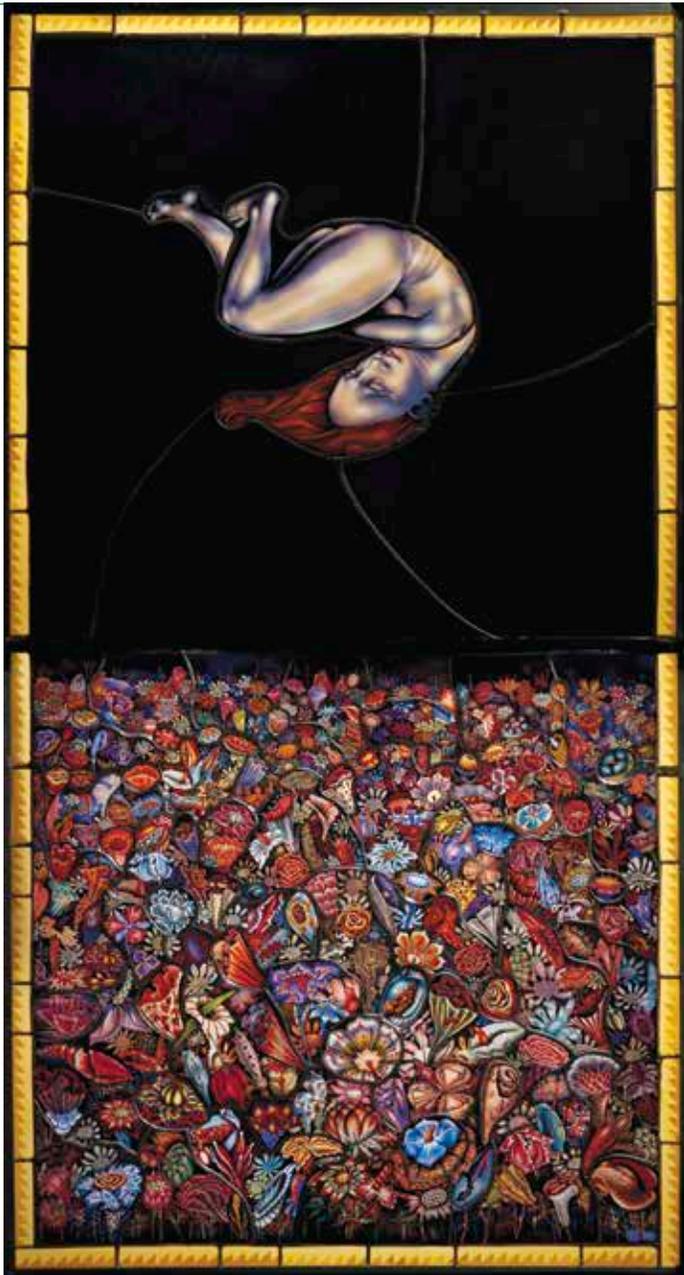
For more than 30 years, the labor-intensive medium of stained glass has been Judith's singular obsession, and today she is recognized, not only as one of the foremost innovators, teachers, and practitioners in her field, but also one of an elite few glass artists to have gained critical attention from both the world of craft and the overlapping sphere of fine art.

Following an intensive, two-year long installation at Eastern State Penitentiary, a former prison turned art space from 2010–2012, *The Birth of Eve* marks Judith's return to the meticulous, unapologetically decorative style which has become one of her hallmarks. Her technical virtuosity is evident in the lush sea of flowers covering the lower panel, constructed of up to five layers of cut, sandblasted and enameled glass, stacked to produce variations of pattern, color gradient and depth. Schaechter shows unusual restraint in balancing this dizzying vision of 'Eden' with the calm of the void above, from which Eve tumbles, her face in a delicately etched pensive expression. A notable departure from secular themes, she has referred to this recent work as a 'masterpiece' of her oeuvre.

The Acquisitions Committee is made up of founding members of the Alliance, all present Board members, all former Board members in the first two years after completion of their service on the Board, all former presidents and Craft Leaders Caucus members. Judy Weisman is the chair of this committee.

LEFT, Judith Schaechter, *The Birth of Eve*, 2013, stained glass light box, 57 x 31 x 2 inches (145 x 79 x 5 cm) © 2013 Judith Schaechter

Image courtesy of Claire Oliver Gallery, the artist and Dom Episcopo



ABOUT THE RENWICK GALLERY

The Smithsonian American Art Museum celebrates the vision and creativity of Americana 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 17th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., is currently closed until a renovation is completed in late 2015 or early 2016.

In the meantime, the Smithsonian American Art Museum facilities at F and G Streets between 7th and 9th Streets will be used for JRA activities. Hours are daily from 11:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. except December 25. Admission is free. Metro stations: Gallery Place/Chinatown (Red, Green and Yellow) and Metro Center (Orange, Red and Blue).



ABOVE, Bruce Metcalf, jeweler, scholar and author, addressed guests at a special event featuring him and his work. The discussion and display of his current and past work took place at the home of Giselle and Ben Huberman on the weekend of September 27 and 28. Photo by Miriam Rosenthal

SET ASIDE MARCH 26–29 FOR

Spring Craft Weekend 2015

Craft as Art is the theme of Spring Craft Weekend, March 26–29, 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.

Honorees for 2015 are Clemmer and David Montague who will be recognized for Distinguished Service to the JRA and five Masters of the Medium awards:

Richard Shaw, *ceramics*

Michael James, *fiber*

Karen LaMonte, *glass*

Maureen and Michael Banner, *metal*

Silas Kopf, *wood/furniture*

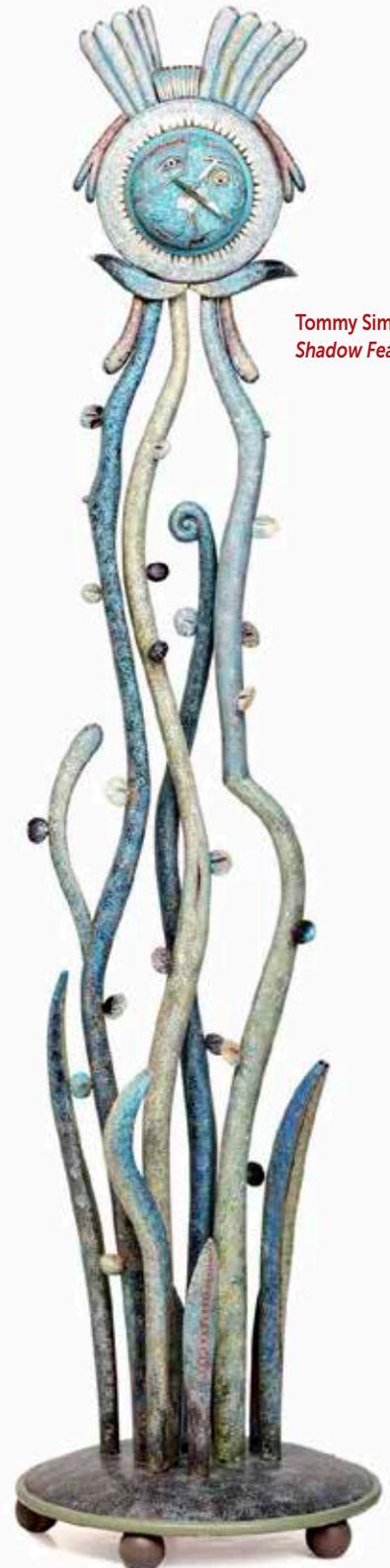
Co-chairing the event are Brenda Erickson and Brigitte Savage. As always, Shirley Jacobs is in charge of the Patrons promotion in an effort to encourage participation and upgrades in patron levels. Letters to patrons, lapsed patrons and JRA members went out in mid-November.

The weekend festivities begin with a special welcome for honorees, the Masters of the Medium, panelists for the Saturday panel discussion and other guests on Thursday night. This event is by invitation only.

Barbara Berlin and Sandy Mitchell are creating a special day for Caucus members and patrons, titled *Craft: Four Ways*. First, guests

will begin the formal activities of the weekend with a visit to the home of Lisa Kimball who collects Mexican folk art for one way of craft. The second way is the studio of photographer Allan Gerson who prints on silver and precious metals to create jewelry. His wife Joan Nathan presents the third craft as the author of 10 cookbooks, one of which was named one of the 10 best cookbooks by NPR, *Food and Wine* and *Bon Appétit* magazines; she will address the topic of the "Craft of Food" and will surprise the audience with her special creations. The fourth craft is the art of symphonic orchestra conducting, featuring Angel Gil-Ordóñez, music director of the PostClassical Ensemble, a chamber orchestra which programs thematic and cross disciplinary concerts. He will address his profession as an extraordinary craft. The day begins with parking at the Cosmos Club and ends there for dinner.

Nikki O'Neill and Barbara Wolanin are organizing a panel discussion for Saturday morning at the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Nan Tucker McEvoy Auditorium. Jeweler, scholar and author Bruce Metcalf is the moderator. The panel is composed of Ulysses Dietz, chief curator and curator of Decorative Arts, Newark Museum of Art, NJ; Garth Clark, specialist in modern and contemporary ceramic art; Judith Schaechter, stained glass artist; and Molly Hatch, conceptual ceramicist. The theme is *The Decorative in Contemporary Craft*. In the high modern era, decoration was forbidden; everything was "form follows function." Craft, however, was often covertly decorative. Now craft embraces a whole range of the decorative, from the conceptual to the riotously ornamental.



Tommy Simpson,
Shadow Feathers



PRE-SCW EVENT

As a prelude to Spring Craft Weekend, Angel Gil-Ordóñez, music director of PostClassical Ensemble and Caucus Day speaker, will conduct a concert, *Iberian Mystics: A Confluence of Faiths*, on March 10 at 7:30 p.m. at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Family Theatre. Tickets will be on sale for \$30 each at Kennedy Center Box office about two months prior to the concert. A backstage reception follows the concert.

SCW 2015 PRICES

\$150 per person Caucus Day

Craft: Four Ways for

Caucus and Patrons only

\$350 per person Gala and Auctions

\$125 per person Awards Brunch

PATRON LEVELS

\$10,000 Renwick Society

\$7,500 Dedicated to Art Society

\$5,000 Grand Salon

\$3,000 Palm Court

\$2,000 Octagon Room

\$1,000 Individual Patron

The panel intends to explore the contemporary decorative impulse: its intentions, its meanings and its devices.

Co-chairs Bonnie Schwartz and Raeanne Hytone again will astonish gala goers with magic at the Willard Intercontinental Hotel. Anne Mehringer, assisted by Clemmer Montague and Sharon Buchanan, is in charge of the auctions with 10 objects in the live auction and up to 40 in the silent. Judith Weisman and her team artfully will install both auctions. Diane Grainer and Sandy Mitchell will assign seating for the gala. Gwen Paulson is in charge of hospitality.

Marilyn Hardis and Paul Parkman are co-chairs of the Master of the Medium Awards Brunch at the Mayflower Hotel. Johanna Thompson and Elmerina Parkman are co-editors of all published materials. Cicie Sattarnilasskorn will be on the home front in the office. Ann Byron will run the back room operation, making sure each patron receives purchases timely.

Prices and the agenda are being finalized, and invitations will be mailed to members in early February with details on weekend events.

Co-Chairs Erickson and Savage encourage all JRA members and friends to become SCW patrons, reminding all that a privilege of being a patron is attendance at all events at no extra cost. Caucus Day is available for Caucus members and patrons only, and Caucus members do not have to be patrons to purchase tickets. "Members who are not SCW patrons are encouraged to purchase tickets a-la-carte to the gala/auctions and award brunch," they said.

Mark your calendars and plan to join the celebration. Contact the James Renwick Alliance at 301-907-3888 for event and ticket information. Registration will be available on the JRA website at www.jra.org.



ABOVE, Spring Craft Weekend Committee members and staff are: seated, from left, Giselle Huberman, Barbara Berlin and Paul Parkman. Back row, from left, Danielle Mouledoux, Pat Arnold, Cicie Sattarnilasskorn, Brigitte Savage, Marilyn Hardis, Raeanne Hytone, Shirley Jacobs, Amanda Barrett, Sandy Mitchell, Brenda Erickson, Barbara Wolanin, Johanna Thompson and Elmerina Parkman. Photo by Miriam Rosenthal

SPRING CRAFT WEEKEND – CRAFT AS ART – EVENTS

Tuesday, March 10, 7:30 p.m.

PRE-SCW EVENT PostClassical Ensemble presents *Iberian Mystics: A Confluence of Faiths* at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Family Theatre. Reception follows. For Palm Court (\$3,000) patrons and above. Space is limited.

Thursday, March 26, 6:30 p.m.

WELCOME DINNER for Masters of the Medium, Saturday panelists and other guests. By invitation only.

Friday, March 27, 2:30 p.m.

CAUCUS DAY for Caucus members and Patrons only.

Craft Four Ways: Mid-afternoon tours: Lisa Kimball's private collection of Mexican Folk Art and a studio visit with Allan Gerson, a photographer who prints on silver and precious metals to create jewelry. Cocktails and dinner are at the Cosmos Club with a talk about *Food as Craft* by Joan Nathan, a cookbook author, and Angel Gil-Ordóñez, music director of the PostClassical Ensemble, discussing conducting as a craft.

Saturday morning, March 28, 10:30 a.m. to 12 noon

PANEL DISCUSSION *The Decorative in Contemporary Craft*

Jeweler, scholar and author Bruce Metcalf is the moderator of a panel composed of Ulysses Dietz, chief curator and curator of Decorative Arts, Newark Museum of Art, NJ; Garth Clark, specialist in modern and contemporary ceramic art; Judith Schaechter, stained glass artist; and Molly Hatch, conceptual ceramicist.

Saturday evening, March 28

GALA, SILENT AND LIVE AUCTIONS AND DISTINGUISHED SERVICE RECOGNITION

6 p.m. Patrons reception and auction review

6:30 p.m. General check-in, cocktail hour and silent auction

8 p.m. Dinner and live auction

Sunday morning, March 29, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

MASTERS OF THE MEDIUM AWARD BRUNCH

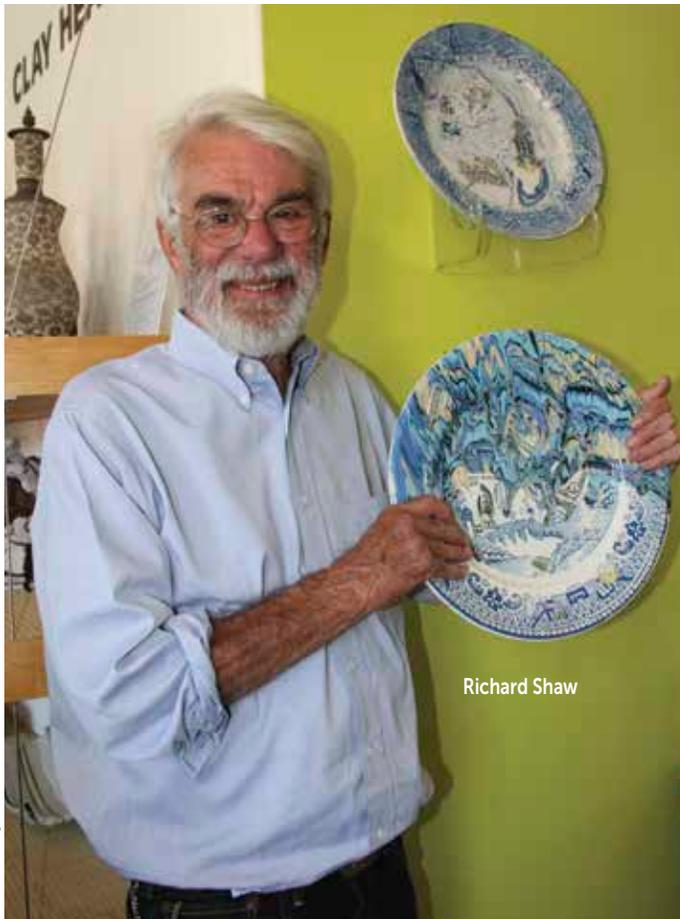
Richard Shaw, *ceramics*; Michael James, *fiber*; Karen LaMonte, *glass*; Maureen and Michael Banner, *metal*; and Silas, Kopf, *wood/furniture*

James Renwick Alliance Awards Go To Much Loved 2015 Masters of the Medium

Five Masters of the Medium awards will be presented at a special event during the 2015 Spring Craft Weekend to Richard Shaw, *ceramics*; Michael James, *fiber*; Karen LaMonte, *glass*; Maureen and Michael Banner, *metal*; and Silas Kopf, *wood/furniture*. All have a piece or pieces in the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Renwick Gallery collection, gifted totally or partially by the James Renwick Alliance.

Richard Shaw, ceramics. In the world of contemporary ceramics, Richard Shaw, 73, is the master of trompe-l'oeil sculpture. He has developed an astonishing array of techniques, including perfectly cast porcelain objects and

over glaze transfer decals. By combining the commonplace with the whimsical, the humorous with the mundane, Richard captures the poetic and the surreal with the sensibility of a comedian. As one of the most respected and collected artists in contemporary ceramics, he came out of the San Francisco Bay Area art scene in the late 1960s and continues to add to his skills and to appropriate from mass culture. He has developed a vocabulary of found objects which form intimate still life sculptures, complex figures and personally referential assemblages. Richard brings life to the detritus of the studio, as a cartoonist animates the page.



Richard Shaw

Clemmer-Montague



Michael James

Greg Nathan/UML

His *Carrie 1992* is a gift from JRA to the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Renwick Gallery.

Michael James, fiber. Michael James, 65, is an American artist, educator, author and lecturer and is perhaps best known as a leader of the art quilt movement that began in the 1970s. Michael serves as department chair and Ardis James Professor in Textiles, Merchandising & Fashion Design in the College of Education and Human Sciences at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. There he works closely with the International Quilt Study Center & Museum and teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in the areas of foundation design, textile design and quilt studies. His textiles have been recognized and exhibited internationally. His work is in many museum collections and the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum; *Quilt #150, Rehoboth Meander, 1993* is a gift of the James Renwick Alliance. He was a JRA 2012 Distinguished Artist Series lecturer.

Karen LaMonte, glass. Karen LaMonte, 47, is an American artist known for her life-size sculptures in ceramic, bronze and cast glass as well as her large scale monotype prints. Her art deals largely with the central themes of beauty and loss, exploring the fragility of the human condition through a sartorial lens. She started using clothing as a metaphor for identity and exploring the human absentia in her early work of blown glass puppets and marionettes shortly after graduating from the Rhode Island School of Design in 1990. She continued probing the disparity between natural skin and social skin, clothing which is used to obscure and conceal, protecting the individual and projecting a person. Karen's latest body of work draws inspiration from Japan, exploring the same themes through a different cultural lens. JRA and funds from a private collector purchased *Reclining Dress Impression with Drapery, 2009* for the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Renwick Gallery collection in 2010.



Karen LaMonte

Clemmer Montague

Maureen and Michael Banner, metal. Michael, 75, first learned to coax metal into stunning forms while taking a jewelry-making class at Western Michigan University in the late 1950s. Smitten with the craft, he later enrolled at the Cleveland Institute of Art,

where he learned how to make hollowware and to use enamels. Within a few years, he met Maureen, an artist who would become his wife and lifelong collaborator. Since 1977, the Banners have lived and worked in the Berkshires, where they use their con-

verted garage as a studio. Maureen, 68, focuses on jewelry and creates shimmering enamel collages for Michael's teapot lids. Michael works primarily on tea and coffee sets, though he will occasionally craft candleholders and vases. Retired from the high-end craft-show circuit, they spend the bulk of their time doing the two things they love the most: making art and tending to their expansive garden; however, that does not mean they are slowing down. Their teapots can be found in many museums and a tea service with teapot, bowl and creamer are in the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Renwick Gallery collection, a gift from JRA.

Silas Kopf, wood/furniture. Silas, 65, has been making studio furniture since 1973. He is a graduate of Princeton University with a degree in architecture and later was an apprentice to Wendell Castle for two years. In 1988 he was the recipient of a Craftsman's Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. He used the Fellowship to study traditional marquetry methods at the École Boulle in Paris with Pierre Ramond. Subsequently Silas had the opportunity to travel and study marquetry and inlay techniques in Italy, England, and Sweden, expanding his understanding of the history of European marquetry within decorative arts. Silas incorporates a wide variety of techniques to decorate the furniture he both designs and builds. The standards are exacting and every attempt is made to build work of the highest caliber, creating work that is sought after by collectors. Most of the marquetry is made with wood, but occasionally other materials are used: brass, copper, aluminum, mother-of-pearl, abalone and reconstituted stone. His shop is in Easthampton, Mass. Silas's work is found in museums and private collections around the world. JRA gifted the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Renwick Gallery with *Bad Hare Day, 1991*.



Silas Kopf

Photo courtesy of the artist



Michael and Maureen Banner

Pat Amow

Special Recognition for Distinguished Service to JRA: Clemmer and David Montague

Clemmer and David Montague are the first recipients of the JRA's Distinguished Service Award. Both of them, each during their terms as JRA president, led the organization with skill, a steady hand, and a view to make JRA better. And their efforts did not stop when their terms expired. They have conceived and led many trips, both nationally and internationally, with great preparation, knowledge and charm. They care for craft and for craft artists as their extensive and well-chosen collection clearly shows. They are tireless leaders, teachers and great friends; therefore the first JRA Distinguished Service Award could not go to a more deserving pair.—Giselle Huberman, President

Even a brief look at JRA's history over the last 30 years makes it clear why Clemmer and David Montague will be the recipients of the Special Recognition for Distinguished Service to the James Renwick Alliance at the 2015 Spring Craft Weekend celebration. The recognition will be presented during the Spring Craft Weekend Gala and Auctions on Saturday, March 28.

They each have contributed enormous amounts of time and innovative energy to furthering the mission of the JRA, and their conversation is peppered with comments about how the organization has grown and what the future promises.

David was president from 1999 to 2001 and believes one of his important contributions was developing strong relationships with similar art support organizations to network productively. Also under his watch, the Distinguished Educators awards were initiated for alternate even years with the Masters of the Medium awards.

Clemmer, president from 2010 to 2013, successfully oversaw a bylaw revision splitting the vice presidency into two positions—a vice president for programs and a vice president for development. These additional officers take considerable burden off the president. In addition, she has

been editor of *The Quarterly* for more than seven years, turning it into a sprightly record of the JRA's activities with her inexhaustible fount of ideas.

Shortly after the Montagues were introduced to the JRA in the mid 80s, David was asked to be on the board and was placed on the Distinguished Artist Series committee in its inaugural years. That was the beginning of their long commitment to the organization. This involvement has led each of them to develop a vision for its growth. David believes that it will be healthiest if the organization develops a wide variety of programs to appeal to a broad spectrum of craft enthusiasts. And he sees an increase in the prestige of the Renwick with the recent addition of a second curator.

Clemmer has a list of wishes: to maintain and develop membership, increase the involvement of members in JRA activities, recruit more volunteers to organize programs and tours, continue the publication of *The Quarterly* and enhance the JRA's role in the national craft community.

Both their missions always have been the social, financial and organizational health and welfare of the James Renwick Alliance, a goal they both support, verbalize and promote continuously.

Clemmer and David have developed an impressive craft collection, and, in the process, have acquired many friendships with artists.

The Montague's love for and experience with travel certainly has benefited the JRA. They learned the advantage of traveling to see art collections while organizing trips for what was then the Friends of the Corcoran Gallery,



as they found them to be "incredible learning experiences." So when they joined JRA they had some expertise, and since there was not an existing travel program, Clemmer started planning Craft Leaders Caucus and general membership study tours,



ABOVE, David Montague speaks at the residence of the Republic of Ireland ambassador to the United States about a Caucus study tour to Ireland.

using their friendships with artists, collectors, gallerists and others all over the country (and around the world) as resources.

The giving of time and energy to the JRA does provide some payback for them. Clemmer says that she gets much pleasure from seeing people enjoy something new. Introducing people to exciting learning experiences, while at the same time strengthening the JRA, is rewarding for them both. —Johanna Thompson



ABOVE, Clemmer Montague, Robyn Kennedy, chief of the Renwick Gallery, and Peter Held, 2014 Distinguished Educator, meet at the Spring Craft Weekend awards brunch. Photos by Miriam Rosenthal

Distinguished Artist Series Features Jolley, Pappas, de la Torre Brothers and Beth Cavener

Fiber/mixed media artist **Marilyn Pappas** of Cambridge, Mass., is the second of the four artists to take part in the Distinguished Artist Series program. She will conduct a workshop on Saturday, January 24, at the home of Giselle and Ben Huberman with the following schedule:

1–2:30 p.m. Lunch for workshop participants at a local restaurant

3–5 p.m. Workshop at the home of Giselle and Ben Huberman

5–6 p.m. Trunk show of Marilyn's work at the Hubermans, installed by Synderman-Works Gallery

6–9 p.m. Potluck dinner

Participants registered for the workshop will be invited to a potluck dinner in honor of the artist on Saturday night at the home of Giselle and Ben Huberman. Space is limited.

Marilyn will present a lecture about her work in the MacMillan

BELOW, Marilyn Pappas' piece *The Life of Color: Kore* is in the collection of Giselle and Ben Huberman.



Miriam Rosenthal

Education Center at the Smithsonian American Art Museum on Sunday, January 25, at 2 p.m. The new room is cozier and equipped with A/V capabilities, more suited to the smaller audience than the McEvoy auditorium. Her lecture on Sunday at 2 p.m. is free and open to the public.

Marilyn is a fiber artist whose work stretches boundaries. She creates "stitched drawings" which use classical references to examine the "ways we view, interpret, question and learn from the mysteries of antiquity." Her collages evoke themes of travel and also look back in time to a "pre-GPS" world. She comments on her process: "In this high speed world, I rejoice in the meditative process of the work, grateful for the pleasure and comfort that comes from developing images slowly over time." She has had numerous solo exhibitions and her work is included in private and museum collections around the country.

Highlights for the two remaining programs in the series feature Mexican/American brothers **Jamex and Einar de la Torre** who work in glass and use themes from their countries of origin and residence. Their workshop will be held on May 2 and the lecture will be May 3 with the potluck dinner on Friday, May 1.

Ceramist **Beth Cavener** who creates a focus on human psychology, articulated through animal and human forms, will finish the year with a workshop and potluck dinner. Details on time and location are to be determined.

Each workshop is \$60 for JRA members and \$75 for non-JRA members.



RICHARD JOLLEY AND TOMMIE RUSH BEGIN THE DISTINGUISHED ARTIST SERIES IN GRAND STYLE

The 2014–15 Distinguished Artist Series was kicked off in grand style by glass artists **Richard Jolley** and **Tommie Rush** of Knoxville, Tenn. The husband-and-wife glass duo gave a workshop which was filled with fiery feats of strength and finesse on Saturday, October 25. Richard and a team of assistants from DC Glassworks created a large head of blown glass, a process which mesmerized the audience of about 30 JRA attendees. While Richard guided the team through multiple gathers of hot glass and nuanced shapes and cuts to the glowing head, Tommie gave expert commentary and answered questions. Later in the evening, Bonnie and Gil Schwartz hosted a stylish potluck dinner for the artist pair and guests. The special feature of the evening was the showing of a documentary about Richard's recent five-year project, an epic steel and glass installation at the Knoxville Museum of Art.

Richard and Tommie presented a lecture at the McEvoy Auditorium at SAAM on Sunday afternoon which reviewed their long and illustrious careers. Each

showed images of their work and influences, following their growth over 40 years of working in glass. Over that time they went from new graduates cobbling together first studios to master artists creating major museum and corporate installations. Richard and Tommie truly are "distinguished artists" and gave JRA members a weekend of exciting events.—*Rebecca Ravenal*

ABOVE, Richard Jolley presents a history of his work at the Sunday lecture.

BELOW, Richard Jolley works with the crew at DC Glassworks at a Distinguished Artist workshop. Photos by Miriam Rosenthal



It Takes a Great Tour Leader to Make a Great Tour: The San Francisco Saga

Participants on the San Francisco Craft Leaders Caucus study tour are most grateful to trip coordinator **Jeffrey Spahn** for overseeing a beautifully organized and well-executed plan. Each of the four trip days was spent in a distinct Bay Area region: Wednesday's focus was Silicon Valley; Thursday was Sacramento; Friday, San Francisco, Marin County and Napa and Pope Valleys, and Saturday, across the Bay into Oakland and Berkeley.

This plan really pushed trip participants to their limit with 8:30 a.m. departures and late evening returns, but it allowed everyone to have an amazingly wide range of experiences. Additionally, the bus trips were highly enhanced by the extensive background information Jeffrey provided on each venue.

What better way to start a San Francisco area craft study tour than at the Menlo Park home of Dorothy Saxe, a doyenne of the craft collectors of the Bay Area! She and her late husband George, together with their friends Anita and Ronald Wornick, were pioneers in acquiring extensive museum quality craft collections, and both couples have made very



ABOVE, Tour leader Jeffrey Spahn explains to Miriam Ellsworth, left, and Marsha Gold the intricacies of the work of Christa Assad, Josie Jurczenia and Jessica Wertz in the Clay Studio in Berkeley. Photos by Clemmer Montague

major donations to important museums: the Saxes to de Young Museum in San Francisco and the Wornicks to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

So it was a real privilege to hear Dorothy describe how she and George started collecting craft, how the collection evolved and the criteria they used in making acquisition decisions.

Our next host Lois Anderson also had a very clear statement about her collecting decisions, "I have to like it. It has to speak to me," she said. A ceramic artist in her own right, Lois's collection was wonderfully reflective of her

warm, good-natured personality. Lois is also a great cook, and she was kind enough to fix a tasty and healthy lunch for all.

Our third host of the day Susan Hyatt could not have been more effusive in welcoming the Alliance group to her stunning home in Atherton. The daughter of the late Senator Howard Metzenbaum, (D-Ohio), she described how her family always had been passionate about the arts and how she and her husband Joel had built on family traditions in their collection.

Our next stop was a very special privilege: an invitation for a specially arranged tour of Oracle Corporation's co-founder and Chairman Larry Ellison's Japanese garden. Modeled on a 16th century Japanese imperial garden, the California version blends local fauna and flora with traditional Japanese vegetation and art forms to stunning effect. Alliance participants will long remember the stroll through this magnificent venue.

Our first day concluded with a wonderful reunion visit to the home of longtime Renwick Alli-

ance members and supporters Judy and Robert Aptekar who had hosted the Alliance at dinner on a previous San Francisco area visit. They were once again enormously welcoming and hospitable to this group.

On subsequent days, Jeffrey opened numerous doors of people he knows, from the huge collection of studio ceramics at the Crocker Museum of Art in Sacramento, the very private home (and not often opened) of jewelry collectors Susan Cummins and Rose Roven, (See sidebar, page 11), to the homes of Sacramento collectors Paul and Sharon Dauer, Marcy Friedman and her son Mark Friedman and his wife Marjorie. JRA 2011 Master of the Medium of wood Garry Knox Bennett, although not there, made his presence felt at the Velvet da Vince jewelry gallery through his collection of "roach clips" from the 60s as did 2009 Master of the Medium June Schwarcz (age 96 and still working) with her enameled vessels. That day many of both artists' work made their way into the collections of JRA members.



ABOVE, The visit to the studio of glass master Marvin Lipofsky, 2003 Master of the Medium of Glass, was a good lesson in organizing one's work and collection. His work is all catalogued and recorded in an orderly way.



ABOVE, Christened by JRA members at dinner in the Pope Valley prior to its world premiere, this line of dinnerware by Carter and Kostow was designed by Eric Van Dermolen, a chef and ceramist. As is the custom of the love of good craft, JRA members bought dinnerware from Eric as dinner was being served.



ABOVE, One of the favorite spots was in the garden of Marcy Friedman of Sacramento. Surrounding the Jun Kaneko sculpture are, from left, Toni Alaimo, Cathy Grundy, Elizabeth Doyle, Leon Ellsworth, David Montague, Roberta Van Haeften, Pat Arnold, Carol Green, Marcy Friedman, Diane and Marc Grainer, Marsha Gold, Giselle Huberman, Brenda Erickson, Dirk and Lois Jecklin, Jeffrey Spahn, Dick Fryklund, and Deena and Jerry Kaplan. Photos by Clemmer Montague

A truly remarkable highlight occurred with a trip up the side of a mountain overlooking the Napa Valley to the estate of Anita and Ronald Wornick and their fabulous craft-art filled private home. Welcomed warmly by the Wornicks and served delicious food and wine, the Alliance group had the opportunity to interact genuinely with their hosts. Ron is truly passionate about the art he and Anita have collected, and he is very adept at conveying this enthusiasm, explaining what various pieces in the collection mean to him. Perhaps the only regret is that we did not have much time to spend in such a stimulating environment.

Yet the party that day did end with a truly magnificent evening at the home, studio and gallery of studio potter Richard Carter. When Napa Valley-based Christopher Kostow, a Michelin three-star-chef, decided to create a line of dinnerware, he knew about local Pope Valley artist and ceramicist Richard Carter's treatment of surfaces in his wood-fired kilns. The two collaborated, choosing designer and chef Eric Van Dermolen to create the line of Carter|Kostow. Kostow was not present that night, but his assistant chef Lisa prepared dinner for us, christening the inaugural set of dinnerware before its

world premiere. Eric was the server that night and here is how the conversation among the staff went: "I have never seen anything like this! They are buying the plates and bowls on which we are serving food as soon as the plates arrive at the table." That's the story of JRA members who like what they see and take it home with them.

The tour did not end with just these venues, but continued into Oakland and Berkeley homes, galleries and studios. Familiar faces such as ceramist Nancy Selvin who was a recent guest of the Caucus Afternoon of Learning program, 2005 Master of Fiber Lia Cook and Marvin Liposky, 2003 Master of Glass, ceramists Sandy Simon (TRAX Gallery owner) and Robert Brady and new faces—robot master and museum director Clayton Bailey, sculptor Bruce Beasley, furniture maker Sam Perry and a trio of ceramists in one gallery: Christa Assad, Josie Jurczenia and Jessica Wertz, rose from the mist of endless venues. Sandy Simon invited artists in her current show *Clay Heavies* which opened later that night to join us at lunch. We were fortunate to meet there the 2015 Master of the Medium of Ceramics, Richard Shaw. Jeffrey and his partner Paul Bentekoe were truly gracious by inviting us to visit

their "temporary office and home" with its amazing collection of ceramics, while they wait for a new house to be built.

The tour would have been wonderful anyway; however,

without Jeffrey's stories, it wouldn't have been as much fun. Pati Young and Giselle Huberman assisted Jeffrey with the logistical tasks such as restaurant selections. —Clemmer and David Montague

THE SUSAN CUMMINS COLLECTION: A HIGHLIGHT OF THE TOUR

JRA President Giselle Huberman posed this question to those at her table at the farewell dinner for the San Francisco Craft Leaders Caucus study tour: "What, for you, was the highlight of the trip?" Given the fact that the JRA group had had the opportunity to visit a number of truly outstanding public and private collections, this was not an easy question to answer; however, in my mind, one collection did stand out as uniquely different and especially intellectually stimulating: the jewelry collection of Susan Cummins and Rose Roven.

They designed their house on Tiburon Island with the jewelry collection as a focus. The house itself is magnificent: simple, sparse geometric forms in a spectacular hillside environment overlooking portions of the San Francisco Bay. The jewelry collection is housed in such a way that it can be highly visible with drawers of carefully arranged jewelry art or it can disappear completely and be invisible.

The drawer arrangement allowed for individual drawers of jewelry to be displayed elsewhere, in this case, on the dining room table, for closer viewing and discussion. Susan Cummins gave a brilliant talk, using individual pieces to explain what art jewelry means to her and why she collects it. Quite amazingly, she does not wear jewelry; it is instead to discover and revel in the inherent power and artistic merit of this particular form of artistic expression.

Like their jewelry collection, Susan and Rose's home is both austere and magnificent with brilliant wall hangings, spectacular views and very minimal pieces of furniture. It represents a rare opportunity to witness craft art as an organizing principal of human endeavor. —David Montague



Lunch at a pub, **ABOVE**, and dinner at a local seafood restaurant were fun parts of the tour to the Solomon's Island, Md., area. **ABOVE RIGHT**, Burton Blistein walks in the rain to a sculpture at Annmarie Sculpture Garden. **RIGHT**, Brenda Erickson studies one of the woolies, hand-stitched portraits of ships created by British seamen between the 1830s and 1880s. Photos by Clemmer Montague

A FINE, RAINY SEPTEMBER AFTERNOON AT SOLOMON'S ISLAND

Brigitte Savage, in spite of the downpour of rain, led a tour of 20 JRA members to the stunning outdoor sculpture at the Annmarie Sculpture Garden and Arts Center in lovely Solomon's Island on September 20.

The exhibition on display in the art center is *Sailor Made: The Return of the Woolies*. Long hours at sea, coupled with the on-the-job knowledge of sewing, gave sailors the time and talent to create these exceptional works of art. This unusual collection was on loan from Donald Berezoski who was on hand to talk about the works. The exhibit is on display until January 25.



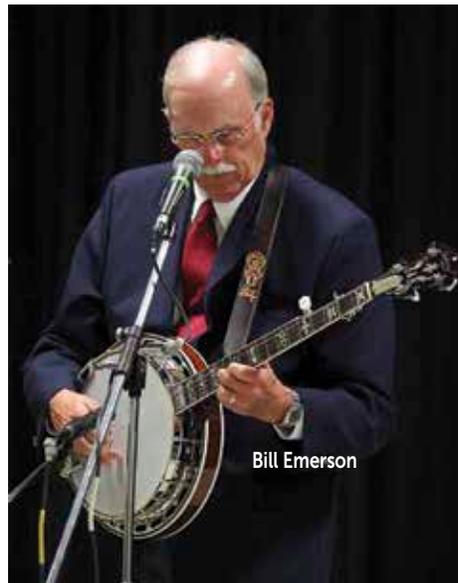
TAKE PART IN A CELEBRATION OF CRAFT AND MUSIC

Have you ever wondered how stringed wood instruments such as guitars, violins and ukuleles are made? Join the James Renwick Alliance, luthiers, artists, musicians, collectors and others in the auditorium of the Katzen Arts Center of the American University on February 7, from 1–5 p.m. for a unique, exciting program.

From Bach to Bluegrass: The Craft of Stringed Wood Instruments and the Music They Make will be presented in three parts. The first is a panel of renowned luthiers, musicians and collectors/historians who will discuss the making of contemporary wood instruments from the selection of woods to the finished object and how the choices made during the creation of a fine instrument affect its sound.

Parts Two and Three will include a performance of the music of Bach by the Arco-voce Chamber Ensemble and the guest trio Amuse, followed by a performance by the Bill Emerson Bluegrass Band. Listeners will be able to compare and contrast the sounds of the instruments through the lens of their newly acquired knowledge about the challenges and methods of instrument making.

Contemporary instruments will be on display, and luthiers and musicians will be available to answer questions. Cost of the program will be announced once final plans are confirmed. Please register for the program with the JRA office at 301-907-3888, admin@jra.org or the JRA website at www.jra.org (Events, Local Programs, Craft of Music.)



AN "INNOVATION IN CRAFT" AWARD GOES TO ACC BALTIMORE ARTISTS AT THE FEBRUARY CRAFT SHOW

JRA will present an award for Innovation in Craft at the Baltimore American Craft Council Show, which will be held on February 20–22. The award will feature a \$1,000 prize, as well as recognition in our JRA publications, guaranteed entry into the next ACC show and several prizes yet to be named.

The JRA partnered with ACC to create this award to highlight artists who are using innovative techniques or materials in their work.

A jury of three JRA members will review artists in all media at the ACC Baltimore Craft Show and make their determination of the winner. Marc Grainer, Judy Weisman and Sean Hennessey are jurors for 2015. Their wealth of craft expertise will make the JRA award a meaningful and coveted prize for ACC artists. Glass artist and JRA Board member Tim Tate has graciously offered to craft a small sculpture to be presented to the winner.—*Rebecca Ravenal*



Fleur Bresler is surrounded by the objects of her affection—part of her wood art collection.

Photos by Miriam Rosenthal

BRESLER RECEIVES AILEEN OSBORN WEBB AWARD

The American Craft Council recognized Fleur Bresler with the Aileen Osborn Webb Award for Philanthropy for exceptional contributions to and support of the field of craft on Saturday, November 15, at the Museum of Arts and Design (MAD), New York. Eighteen JRA members were in attendance.

Fleur has invested time and money to make the craft field thrive. For the ACC story of Fleur, see <http://craftcouncil.org/magazine/article/masters-fleur-bresler#sthash.2wtzGK91.dpuf>. Inducted into the ACC College of Fellows that evening were William Carlson, John Gill, Michael Hurwitz, Jane Lackey, Bruce Metcalf, Judith Schaechter and Tina Oldknow.

On Saturday the group toured the Metropolitan Museum of Art's decorative art collection and MAD's exhibitions of Joyce Scott's work and Latin American art, craft and design. Sunday morning was brunch with jewelry gallerist Charon Kransen and an afternoon discussion at UrbanGlass with ACC Fellows Tina Oldknow, William Carlson and Judith Schaechter. Pat Arnold was the organizer.

SEVEN BEGIN 2-YEAR TERMS ON THE JRA BOARD

The 2014–2015 programming year is off to a good start with three new and four returning members on the Board of Directors.

New members on the Board for the next two years are Toni Alaimo, Michele Manatt and Nikki O'Neill. Those returning are Rebecca Cross, Reba Immergut, Leslie Lane and Robert Minkoff.

Those who contributed distinguished service over the past two to six years and rotate off the Board are: Robert Devers, Sandy Hoexter, Shirley Jacobs, Anne Mehringer, Miriam Rosenthal, Bonnie Schwartz, Gary Stevens and Novie Trump.

Board members serve for two-year terms and may be renewed up to six years when they must go off the Board for at least one year before returning.

THE JAMES RENWICK ALLIANCE PLEDGES \$110,000 TO THE SMITHSONIAN AMERICAN ART MUSEUM FOR ACQUISITIONS, EXHIBITIONS, EDUCATION SUPPORT

The James Renwick Alliance Board of Directors voted to pledge \$110,000 to the Smithsonian American Art Museum for FY2015. A letter expressing that intent was sent to Betsy Broun, The Margaret and Terry Stent Director of American Art, and she submitted to the JRA Board a written plan as to how the pledged amount is to be spent and with a schedule of payments. The pledge was approved by email messages this summer. The first payment of \$40,000 was paid October 1; the second of \$35,000 is due on January 1 and the final on June 1 of \$35,000.

Under the Memorandum of Agreement between JRA and American Art, the minimum annual pledge is set via a formula. The formula is intended to set a pledge that is a percentage of the JRA's actual net income from unrestricted sources. The formula takes the net income on the previous year's tax return, adds back the amount actually paid to the Smithsonian in that fiscal year and subtracts revenues from income on restricted funds and any new contributions to those funds, multiplied by 75%.

The pledge of \$110,000 means that the Renwick Alliance, in FY 2015, may host two events at the Smithsonian American Art Museum facilities that are not open to the public, but related to the Alliance's mission and purpose. This does not include events which take place during the Gallery's normal hours, such as the Distinguished Artist Lecture Series nor the Acquisitions Committee meeting.

The MOA also lays out the groundwork of how the funds will be spent: acquisitions, education, scholarly activities and exhibition support. The museum follows an elaborate reporting system of how the monies are spent and describes any adjustments in the distribution.

Liz and Mike Mears: A Duo in Glass and Stringed Instruments



Anything Photographic

ABOVE, Elizabeth Ryland (Liz) Mears, in her flameworking studio, focuses on expressing deeply personal thoughts and feelings in her artwork.

Elizabeth (Liz) Mears' recent and best-known glasswork is produced by flame working; however, she started in stained glass. That work was recognized and admired enough that she was commissioned to make windows for four local churches.

Then she discovered flame working—a technique used primarily to produce scientific instruments and for street vendors to amaze their audiences. In the early 90s its artistic potential was recognized, it did not require the extensive design work of stained glass and would allow her to work in three dimensions.

Having found her medium, she began working at it seven days a week using ferocious self-discipline to “get to the level where I wanted to be.”

As her technical facility developed, Liz' glass work soon focused on expressing deeply personal thoughts and feelings. For example, Liz went through a fight

with cancer and found that she had been changed profoundly. After her cancer, Liz' recurring symbolic bundles of sticks frequently progressed from dark to light in color to represent the journey from unenlightened to knowing and then to recovery.

Another recurring theme in her work is shelter: a structure is used to protect symbolic objects. In *Shelter for Endings that Beget Beginnings*, the shelter is protecting eggs, representing new life, which contain the charred remains of an object burned at Pilchuck School of Glass during a time of personal transformation for her.

Liz' work is deeply laden with personal significance, but she does not expect the observer to fully apprehend the significance for the creator. She does, however, hope that observers will bring their own story to the piece and that it thus will evoke some level of emotional response.

The house Liz and husband Mike live in is a testament to the creativity in both of them. Mike drew up the plans for the house in about 1983. Aside from the dry wall and shingling, they built the house themselves. Mike did the plumbing and heating work. Not to be left out, Liz took a course in electrical wiring and then did all the electrical work in the house. The result is a lovely, bright, high-ceilinged abode with plenty of space to display Liz's glasswork.

Music has been central to Mike Mears' life since he was 10 and taught himself to play folk guitar, which morphed into bluegrass about 25 years ago. However, bluegrass, of course, is best played by a group of instrumentalists; therefore, Mike started going to “jams”—informal musical gatherings. That led to the formation of a band that has been playing together for 20 years. They are delightful to listen to with the lead moving smoothly from one player to another, while the others provide an interesting backdrop.

Mike's interest in stringed instruments did not stop with playing. When visiting an instrument factory he noticed there was a pile of parts out back and learned they were for sale. He selected some, took them home, and built a saleable guitar. Now he is working on his 325th guitar.

He also makes fiddles and ukuleles and does instrument repair. In addition, he has come a long way from buying rejected factory parts—he now imports Koa wood from Hawaii. Along the way he has learned that making a piece with exactly the right

specifications does not necessarily produce a fine musical instrument. One must “listen to the wood.” If raw wood produces a complex sound when tapped, it is a candidate.

On February 7, 2015, JRA members have an opportunity to hear the craft of stringed instruments discussed, and listen to a performance of *Bach to Bluegrass* on these instruments. (See page 12 for more information on *From Bach to Bluegrass: the Craft of Stringed Wood Instruments and the Music They Make.*)—Johanna Thompson

BELOW, Michael (Mike) Mears' interest in stringed instruments led not only to playing them but to making them.



Elizabeth Ryland Mears

JRA Brunch at SOFA Chicago Brings in New, Old Friends

Photos by Clemmer Montague



ABOVE, Sharing the morning are Robyn Kennedy, Renwick Gallery chief; Giselle Huberman, JRA president; and Patricia Lemer of Pittsburgh, JRA Caucus member. **BELOW**, Grabbing a bite to eat for brunch were Rebecca Robinson, Renwick Gallery Assistant to the Chief; Robert Minkoff, Diane Charnov and Debrah Dunner.



LEFT, Sharon Buchanan meets with furniture maker Tommy Simpson at his display at SOFA Chicago. **BELOW**, Gloria and Sonny Kamm, the teapot collectors, meet with Nora Atkinson, the Renwick Gallery Lloyd Herman Curator of Craft.



Tim Tate and Susan Sanders take part in the JRA study tour to Asheville, N.C., and the Penland School of Crafts auction in August. Selfie by Tim Tate

JRA GETS WINDGATE GRANT

The James Renwick Alliance was granted matching funding of \$7,025 by the Windgate Charitable Foundation to support the James Renwick Alliance's educational programs, chiefly the Distinguished Artist Series.

JRA invites four artists a year, beginning in the fall and ending in the spring, to participate in the Distinguished Artist Series. The program allows craft artists prominent in their fields the opportunity to conduct workshops for JRA members and the general public. The program ends with the artist's lecture at the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Renwick Gallery, open to the public. Until the Renwick Gallery reopens in late 2015/early 2016, these lectures will take place in a Smithsonian American Art Museum auditorium.

"This grant allows JRA to provide an honorarium, purchase supplies, rent an appropriate facility and invite a larger public audience to participate," Rebecca Cross, chair of the grants committee, said.

The Windgate Charitable Foundation provides funds to projects and organizations which support craft artists, schools and research. The foundation tends to make one-time grants or to support two-to three-year projects. Guidelines state that it "prefers program support over capital funds," gives priority to matching-fund requests and does not give grants for undesignated annual-fund gifts, debt retirement or completed projects or to private religious schools or individuals. It prefers to fund projects of its own initiative rather than unsolicited requests.

“Join the Finely Crafted” Annual Meeting Attracts Lots of Potential New Members



The 2014 annual membership meeting on Tuesday, October 27, generated excitement about craft and the JRA among more than 200 guests, 90 new to JRA programs.

Under the leadership of Membership Committee Co-chairs **Nedra Agnew** and **Barbara Wolanin**, the membership committee, wearing “finely crafted” buttons, orchestrated the event which began with drinks, hors d’oeuvres and conversation in the Luce Foundation Center of the Smithsonian American Art Museum. Moving from there to the McEvoy Auditorium, projected images set to music began with JRA gifts to the Smithsonian American Art Museum’s Renwick Gallery.

JRA President Giselle Huberman’s overview of the financial status of the organization was followed by a video of Nick Cave’s soundsuits, assembled and edited by a volunteer, previews of the upcoming JRA Day and other programs planned by Vice President for Programs Pat Arnold. A colorful “Save the Dates” bookmark allowed guests to take the program plans home with them.

Chief of the Renwick Gallery Robyn Kennedy showed images of the Renwick Gallery renovation progress, and The Fleur and Charles Bresler Senior Curator of American Craft and Decorative Art Nicholas Bell shared his plans for the opening exhibition. Master of ceremonies J.G. Harrington ended by highlighting the new JRA website and its QR code and coordinated drawings for door prizes, including spaces on a local trip for two.

—Barbara Wolanin



ABOVE, The evening began with a reception in the Luce Center of the Smithsonian American Art Museum. **TOP,** Signing in guests were volunteers Brigitte Savage, Nelio Vargas Sejas and Dennis McCloud. Ben Huberman and Elizabeth Doyle are in the background. Photos by Miriam Rosenthal



ABOVE. Membership committee members who contributed to the plans for the evening were, from left, Peter Agnew, Barbara Wolanin, Nedra Agnew, Dennis McCloud, Irene Sinclair, Kathy Furlong, Toni Alaimo, Ann Miller, Robert Sinclair, Elizabeth Doyle and Phil Brown. **BELOW,** Pat Arnold, vice president of programs, presented a discussion of extensive programs. Photos by Miriam Rosenthal



JAMES RENWICK ALLIANCE MEMBERSHIP LIST INCREASES MONTHLY SINCE EARLY SEPTEMBER

The James Renwick Alliance membership roles change with new members added every month. New members since September 1 are listed below.

Jaimianne Amicucci, Amanda Barrett, Jonathan Becker, Sue Bogner, Chase DeForest and Francine and Michael Goldberg.

Maria Eugenia Gomez, Peter Held, Cara Jablon, Kira Kibler, Nancy Klotz and Heidi Lippman.

Patricia Mitchell, Danielle Mouledoux, Jane Petit and Amy Schwartz and William Gudenrath.

Lise Woodard of Pittsburgh and Paul Bentekoe of Berkeley, CA, are new Craft Leaders Caucus members, and Washington area residents Lynn Chadwick and Kathy Furlong upgraded their memberships to the Caucus level.

 **BECOME A JRA MEMBER**

- DONOR** \$100 single | \$150 dual*
- ART** (Alliance for Renwick Tomorrow) \$60 single
- SPONSOR** \$300 single | \$500 dual*
- GALLERY** \$500 (for galleries and art organizations)
- CRAFT LEADERS CAUCUS** \$800 single | \$1500 dual*
- BENEFACTOR** \$2500

*dual—two members at the same address

New Renewal

Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss Other _____

Name _____

Email _____

Are you an Artist? Yes No

If yes, website address: www. _____

Second member (dual member at the same address)

Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss Other _____

Name _____

Email _____

Are you an Artist? Yes No

If yes, website address: www. _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Country _____ Phone _____

Communications Preference:

Email Mail Phone

METHOD OF PAYMENT

\$ _____ Check payable to James Renwick Alliance

\$ _____ Charge:

Visa MasterCard AMEX Discover

Account No. _____ Exp. _____

Signature (required) _____

Mail to: James Renwick Alliance
4405 East-West Highway, Suite 520
Bethesda, MD 20814



Or join or renew online at:
JRA.org

Thoughts On Finding a Good Home for Your Collection



Nick Somoski

ABOVE, The presentation ceremony of a glass art collection to the Honors College within Michigan State University was attended by, from left, the Paulson's daughter Jill Randolph, Dean Cynthia Elmoore Jackson, Katie Mc Murray, Gwen and Jerry Paulson, and their daughter Mindy Eisenberg.

If you are a collector, often one of the first questions that you ask yourself when contemplating buying a new piece is, "What am I going to do with this when I get it home?" At some point in the future, the question may change to, "What am I going to do with this piece...when I downsize, when I don't like it any more, or, when I die?"

Some collectors can give it to their children; some choose to sell their works on the secondary market and others begin to think about giving the work to an institution where it would create an enduring legacy and an opportunity to provide enjoyment and education to future generations. Many collectors have probably heard the stories about trying to give works to large museums which:

- Do not want a total collection, only a small part
- Want a substantial donation to accompany the objects
- Will not display the pieces in the collection very much if at all
- Reserve the right to de-accession the collection

In thinking about how to give back to my alma mater and to

engage a new generation of individuals in contemporary art in craft media, I will describe another path. I am a graduate of the Honors College within Michigan State University. I have many fond memories; however, I also remember a somewhat dreary study lounge. I thought that by placing part of our contemporary craft collection on display in the lounge, I could enliven the place

for all and encourage a new generation to be interested in crafts.

When I had an opportunity to show the dean of the Honors College our collection, she was extremely enthusiastic about bringing the works to the lounge. I felt that this would be a unique and exciting way of sharing with students, faculty and guests of the University part of the collection that Jerry and I had put together.

My husband Jerry and I recognized that the lounge would need museum-quality display cabinets to house the collection and arranged to have them made.

We selected 31 works from our collection and worked out an arrangement with the Honors College that the collection would be on permanent display without any rotation.

We believe that giving back to one's community and specifically to my alma mater is very important. Jerry and I encourage JRA members to consider gifting to other parts of a university beyond the university's museum. (For a time-lapse video of the installation go to www.youtube.com/watch?v=zwNbRTovc5Y

—Gwen and Jerry Paulson



Honors College Michigan State University

Caucus Afternoon of Learning Focuses on the Future of Art in Wood



Clemmer Montague

The "Afternoon of Learning" focuses on The Future of Art in Wood with special guests Albert LeCoff, executive director of the Center for Art in Wood in Philadelphia, and master furniture maker Tommy Simpson, **ABOVE,** of New Preston, Conn.

The Craft Leaders Caucus Afternoon of Learning will take place on January 11 from 2 to 4 p.m. at the home of Fleur Bresler, featuring two outstanding personalities in the world of art in wood.

The program, organized by Gwen Paulson, focuses on The Future of Art in Wood. Special guests are **Albert LeCoff**, executive director of the Center for Art in Wood in Philadelphia, and master furniture maker **Tommy Simpson** of New Preston, Conn.

The Center for Art in Wood is an art and educational institution, promoting artists and their cre-

ation and design of art in wood and wood in combination with other materials.

Regardless of the medium, there is a readily identifiable Tommy Simpson style, a vocabulary of forms and a palette which are unmistakable. Whether he is making a piece of furniture, forms a purely nonfunctional object, whether it is two-dimensional or three, whether it is monumental or intimate in size, Tommy's works are organic and voluptuous.

Attendance is limited to Caucus members only.

Craft Leaders Study Tour Options Keep JRA Members Traveling the World

Eight tours to destinations near and far are on the agenda for JRA members through October 2016. Other tours will be added as the opportunities come up!

JRA craft study tours for the **general membership** include the following choices:

- The 2014 Distinguished Educator Peter Held organized February 11–16 study tour to benefit the 2014 SCW auction, focusing on the master craftspeople and collectors in the Phoenix-Scottsdale, Arizona areas. A very special treat will be an excursion to Sedona to visit the studio and home of the late Don Reitz, JRA's 2006 Distinguished Educator, who willed his studio and property to Arizona State University. Peter organized the day to include a stop by the studio of past JRA board member Novie Trump who moved to the artists' conclave of Jerome, AZ within miles of the Reitz property. The tour is sold out and the waitlist has been closed.

- The Corning Museum of Glass and New York's Finger Lakes region for April 15–19 with visits to the studios of Albert Paley, Wendell Castle and Nancy Jurs, Michael Rogers and Michael Taylor as well as visits to Alfred University to meet renowned ceramicists such as Andrea and John Gill, Ann Courier, Linda Sikora and Mathew Metz and Wayne Higby. Sign up for the trip will open in early January.

- The Crafts and Music of the Blue Ridge organized by Liz and Mike Mears between May 27 and 31 to include an exploration of museums, artist studios, galleries and collections of Roanoke, Floyd and the mountains of



ABOVE, Chris Rifkin's house, wrapping around the shores of Hingham Bay, south of Boston, was designed for the display of her significant collection of the best glass, jewelry, studio furniture, fiber and baskets. Photo by Chris Rifkin.

BELOW, Guests will enjoy breathtaking views of the Crystal Bridges' ponds and landscapes from the Museum's Great Hall or Eleven Restaurant with Jeff Koons' *Hanging Heart* in the center of the room. Photo by Clemmer Montague

southwest Virginia. Liz and Mike have organized this tour coinciding with Virginia's Blue Ridge Music Festival, "Ode to Joy in the Mountains," a classical music festival set in the heart of Blue Grass country.

- 2015 auction study tour to Tulsa, Okla., September 14–17, which offers delightful and informed collectors, mature artists and world-class restaurants. Tulsa was, in the 1920s and 1930s, the home of the oil industry and that oil money still lingers. The craft and art there are remarkable as are the museums devoted to historic and contemporary western art. The tour will include an excursion to Crystal Bridges Museum in Bentonville, Arkansas. Crystal Bridges is a museum dedicated to American art. Basket maker and 2012 Distinguished Artist Leon Niehues is on the agenda. This general membership trip will be limited to 35 people.

Craft Leaders Caucus Tours

- The World of Chris Rifkin, Hingham, Mass. May 4–7 is devoted to the home, collection

and artists of Hingham, Mass., connoisseur and Caucus member Chris Rifkin. The tour explores how a collector plans, organizes and builds a home for a gigantic collection of some of the best glass, jewelry, studio furniture and baskets in the craft community. The visit to Chris' home will be followed by visits with local artists she commissioned to help create her house and objects for her collection. Local venues are such as Mobilia Gallery, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts craft collection and homes of other artists and private collectors.

- The Kilns and Craft of Japan, October 6–21, led by ceramist Jeff Shapiro who lived in Japan for about 10 years as an apprentice and practicing ceramist until he returned to the New York area to set up his studio and kilns. The tour group of 13 will have a 16-day in-depth experience of Japan through visits to studios, museums, galleries, restaurants and private kitchens in the magnificent cities of Tokyo and Kyoto as well as other magical locations.



- Prague, The Czech Republic is in the initial planning stages for May 2016 organized for the JRA by Katya and Douglas Heller of Heller Gallery, New York.

These are not all of the tours which will be offered; others will be added as the opportunities arise. The greatest obstacle is the lack of people to organize and escort study tours. The work involved requires excellent organization skills, intellectual curiosity and ability to make contacts and the time and energy to put all these considerations together. The rewards are enormous. We would love to see other members offer interesting tours with different angles than ours.—*Pat Arnold and Clemmer Montague*

Save the dates!

JRA EVENTS IN RED

JANUARY 2015

- 6 JRA Board meeting
- 24 DAS workshop and potluck dinner with Marilyn Pappas
- 25 DAS lecture with Marilyn Pappas, Smithsonian American Art Museum 2 p.m.

FEBRUARY

- 7 *A Celebration of the Craft of Music I*, Katzen Arts Center, American University, 1–5 p.m.
- 11–16 Arizona Study Tour: Phoenix, Scottsdale, Sedona, led by Peter Held
- 20–22 American Craft Council Baltimore Craft show
- 20 JRA Awards and Guided Experience
- 24 JRA Board meeting

MARCH

- 26–29 Spring Craft Weekend
- 27 Caucus/Patrons Day
- 28 Panel Discussion 10:30 a.m. to 12 noon
- 28 Gala and Auctions 6 p.m.
- 29 Masters of the Medium Awards Brunch 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

APRIL

- 15–19 Study tour to Corning, NY, and its environs
- 21 JRA Board meeting
- 23–26 Smithsonian Craft Show

MAY

- 1 Potluck Dinner for Workshop of Einar and Jamex de la Torre
- 2 DAS workshop with Einar and Jamex de la Torre
- 3 DAS lecture with Einar and Jamex de la Torre at Smithson-

ian American Art Museum, 2 p.m.

4–7 Craft Leaders Caucus Study Tour: Chris Rifkin's World

- 16 JRA Board meeting
- 21 Women in Technology
- 27–31 Study Tour: *A Celebration of the Craft of Music II*, Floyd, Va., Date TBA

JUNE

- 6 DAS workshop and potluck dinner for Beth Cavener, TBA
- 7 DAS lecture with Beth Cavener, TBA

JULY

- 4 Craft Explosion and Holiday Celebration

SEPTEMBER

- 9–14 Study tour to Tulsa, Okla., and Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art

OCTOBER

- 6–21 Craft Leaders Caucus Study Tour to Japan

MAY 2016

- TBA Craft Leaders Study Tour to Prague

OCTOBER 2016

- TBA Craft Leaders Study Tour to Japan



Clemmer Montague

ABOVE, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art galleries are surrounded by ponds, fed from natural springs.

JRA DAY IS ONCE AGAIN A HUGE SUCCESS

Braving the chilly rain Saturday, December 6, hundreds of visitors made this year's JRA Day at the Woman's Club of Chevy Chase the most successful show ever. The show was busy all day, and sales may far exceed last year's record. Our sponsors made it possible once again to offer free admission which boosted attendance and sales. Many thanks to the efforts of our 41 artists and many volunteers, the day went smoothly from beginning to end.—*J.G. Harrington and Jere Gibber*



ABOVE, A sign of success of JRA Day was a room filled with guests who were shopping with enthusiasm, including JRA members who took home their share of treasures, made by artist members. Photo by Clemmer Montague

CICIE ASSUMES THE TITLE OF JRA DIRECTOR



Miriam Rosenthal

Cicie Sattarnilasskorn was promoted by the James Renwick Alliance Board of Directors to the position of director. She was the administrator for three years before she began director's duties on October 1.

In addition to the day-to-day operations of the organization, Cicie will continue to ensure ongoing programmatic excellence, consistent quality of financial reporting and strong business and operations systems. She is responsible for the content management of the new JRA website and various social media platforms. She also will oversee the strategic plan to develop a stronger JRA brand in order to stay engaged with current members while establishing a presence in newer markets.

LEONARD BURKA, AUGUST 26, 1933–OCTOBER 28, 2014

Leonard Walter Burka of Chevy Chase, Md., died on October 28, 2014. He was 81 years old. It will seem lonely in the art world we know without Leonard and Frances Burka as a couple. David and I "grew up" with the Burkas, first at the events and travels of the Friends of the Corcoran Gallery of Art when it was in existence, on local and trips afar from Washington, then with the James Renwick Alliance. They were always in attendance and participated in supporting programs. We all stayed involved with the Friends, then became more so in the James Renwick Alliance. "Leonard could not resist a good auction," Fran said. "And that drew him in. One reason he liked being a member of the JRA so much was because of the people he met in the JRA, beginning with a trip to Montreal. He had a very good time because everyone was so nice and such fun to be with." We will all miss him.—*Clemmer Montague*



Miriam Rosenthal