

Celebrating the creative vision of artists working in clay, fiber, glass, metal & wood

QUARTERLY

WINTER 2016

 James Renwick Alliance



Pat Arnold
2016 Distinguished
Service Award

THE JRA QUARTERLY

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Any opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the JRA, its Board of Directors or the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Renwick Gallery and its staff.

The JRA Quarterly is published for members of the James Renwick Alliance and is not for sale.

Although efforts have been made to eliminate errors of fact, spelling and grammar, the editor apologizes in advance for any such errors that may remain.

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Dear JRA Members and Friends,

It's all about WONDER. It is also the beginning of an amazing opening of our beloved Renwick Gallery. I hope that you have had a chance to be astounded and riveted by the exhibitions at the Gallery. All of them. But most of all, I hope that you are gratified by the symbol of your generosity. We have named a gallery. We have contributed to a worthy cause. I hope you are all proud. I know I am.

During the opening ceremonies of the Gallery it was my good luck to sit near Jennifer Angus, the artist who created the exhibit in the JRA gallery. She was charmed by the warmth and intimacy of our gallery. People were fascinated — amazed — by her show. Her elaborate installation using real insects elicited a huge variety of comments. But the most telling, and the one that I think reflects our own organization, is Jennifer's own description about her work: her installation inspires emotion and wonder. It creates the awe and inventiveness that the JRA culture so admires and is devoted to.

We do not stop learning and marveling at the creativity of craft and yes, even at the inexplicable beauty of an installation made entirely of insects. We are a group of interested, intellectually curious people and because of that, because of our wonder, we continue to grow, and to learn and to thrive.

Enjoy the monumental show. And please do not forget that Spring Craft Weekend, with its own wonder and surprises and erudition, is just around the corner.

And please don't forget the needy.

"Wonder — it is the beginning of wisdom."
—Socrates

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Giselle Huberman".

Giselle Huberman
JRA President

Giselle's necklace by Bruce Metcalf.



James Renwick Alliance



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FROM THE EDITOR



The first order of business is for the editor to offer sincerest apologies to the individuals who, inadvertently, were left off the list of donors to the Renwick renovation printed in the last issue. Somehow, in sending the list back and forth between editor and designer, the internet gremlins shortened the list. However, their names are included here to assure them — and all those who helped make the James Renwick Alliance Gallery a reality — that we are most grateful for their contributions.

Ms. Barbara Wolanin and Mr. Phil F. Brown

Ms. Anne Wright Wilson

Dr. Deborah Winn and Dr. Allan Jaworski

Ms. Lise Woodard and Dr. John Reilly

Ms. Pati Young

The Renwick's reopening following its renovation, and the inaugural exhibit WONDER, have been getting a lot of press coverage. For a listing of these articles, you can go to americanart.si.edu/exhibitions/archive/2015/wonder.

You will notice that the focus of this issue of the Quarterly is on the upcoming Spring Craft Weekend, April 1 – 3, 2016. Do look at the listing of events and noteworthy people who will be here for the occasion. I hope you won't miss the opportunity to see beautiful crafts, see the renovated Renwick Gallery, hob nob with charming people — and support the JRA! ■

BECOMING A 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*
- BENEFACITOR** \$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 510, Bethesda, MD 20814

Or join or renew online at: **JRA.org**

SAVE THE DATE
SPRING CRAFT WEEKEND APRIL 1 - 3, 2016



JAMES RENWICK ALLIANCE



Photo by Miriam Rosenthal.

DISTINGUISHED
SERVICE
AWARD

The first trip Pat organized for the JRA was to East Tennessee, the place where her love of craft and art began. She took JRA members to the studios of well-known as well as emerging artists; timed the trip to attend gallery show openings and exhibitions by local wood and fiber guilds and organized dinners with local collectors. She remembers: "The reward was the trip itself, but the people I met organizing it gave me a whole new community in my home town."

Pat is also a dedicated artist. Her medium of choice has evolved over the years from fiber, drawing, sculpture, and clay to glass. Her husband Dennis believes she has never met a technique or medium that she didn't like. But, Pat says her real art form is synergy – bringing passionate collectors and talented artists together to create a mutually beneficial experience.

Over the years Pat has surrounded herself with artwork made by artists she has met on her travels and with pieces collected from new and old friends. She believes that art collections of any size and cost can bring great satisfaction. Her first purchase was a \$25 glass goblet that she still displays. She would like JRA programs to introduce the next generation of collectors to the joy of living with handcrafted objects.

When Pat was asked what it has meant to her to be part of the JRA she said: "The JRA is a forum where I can contribute and make a difference. In return the JRA has afforded me the opportunity to go behind the scenes in the arts community: to meet incredible artists; to see amazing private collections; to tour working artists' studios; and to experience art work that I could not even imagine. It has been a privilege to be a part of the JRA."

The James Renwick Alliance 2016 Distinguished Service Award is presented to Pat in recognition and appreciation for all she has done to enhance and enrich the lives of the JRA community and the arts in general. ■

Rhoda Baer

Pat Arnold's involvement with The James Renwick Alliance started with a dinner. To be precise, a JRA potluck dinner for the renowned stained glass artist Judith Schaechter. Pat brought a Chicken Enchilada Casserole.

Little did Pat, or anyone else at the dinner, know the seminal role she would subsequently play in the ongoing JRA mission to support the James Renwick Gallery, and how that would evolve into a commitment to support American craft artists personally and through JRA programs.

With an art collection assembled over forty-three years and a twenty-five year career in the computer business as a problem solver, Pat was ready to bring her combined skills and passion to the JRA. Over the past eleven years as a JRA Board member and four years as Vice-President for Programs, Pat has worked tirelessly on special activities, including artist lectures, studio visits, trips and potluck dinners. Most recently she led the herculean task of creating and implementing a new and comprehensive website (www.JRA.org).

Spring Craft Weekend 2016

A CRAFT ADVENTURE

CAUCUS DAY

Telling Tales/Crafting Adventures

Friday April 1, 12:00 – 3:00 pm

Range Restaurant
5335 Wisconsin Avenue, NW
#201 Chevy Chase
Washington, DC

The adventure starts with lunch at Range, Bryan Voltaggio's restaurant in Chevy Chase. This will be followed by a visit with the former Curator-in-Charge of the Renwick Gallery Michael Monroe who will engage Caucus guests in lively conversation including clues, hot tips and sage advice for their collecting adventures. Plus---there are rumors of a surprise guest.

SYMPOSIUM

A Craft Quartet—

Weaving People to Create Communities

Saturday April 2, 10:30 am – 12:00 pm

Renwick Gallery
1700 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC

Stuart Kestenbaum, former Director of the Haystack Mountain School of Crafts, will moderate a panel discussion between Sonya Clark, chair of the Craft and Material Studies Dept. at VCU, Theresa Secord of the Maine Indian Basketmakers Alliance, David Keefe, creator of Combat Paper NJ, and Alleghany Meadows, a ceramist and founder of Artstream Nomadic Gallery.

GALA

Galapalooza

Saturday April 2, 5:30 pm

Willard Intercontinental Hotel
1401 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC
Reception, Dinner, Auctions and Awards

Of course there will be the silent auction and later the live auction. New this year will be drawings for a selection of table top items. And, during the evening the award for Distinguished Service will be presented to Pat Arnold, JRA Vice President for Programs, Michael Monroe will be made a Lifetime Patron of the JRA Spring Craft Weekend, and the first ever Chrysalis award for Outstanding Emerging Artist will be presented.

EDUCATOR AWARDS BRUNCH

Innovation and Exploration

Sunday April 3, 11:00 am – 2:00 pm

Mayflower Hotel
1127 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC

Celebrate this biennial award for individuals or organizations in the craft world who have made significant and innovative contributions in craft education. This year's awardees are Jamie Bennett, Chunghi Choo, Jean McLaughlin and Haystack Mountain School of Crafts' Fab Lab.

SPRING CRAFT WEEKEND

TO BE HONORED



Michael Monroe

At the Gala three special awards will be made. Michael Monroe, who was the Renwick's Curator-in-Charge from 1986 until 1995, will be honored as a Lifetime Patron of the JRA Spring Craft Weekend.



Pat Arnold

Pat Arnold, profiled on page 3, will be recognized with the JRA Distinguished Service Award.



Chrysalis Award

And, a person not yet identified at press time will be presented with the first ever Chrysalis Award for Outstanding Emerging Artist.

In addition to artful objects available at the Gala auction, attendees will have the opportunity to bid on "adventures."

One of the adventures will be a special tour of the US Holocaust Museum, conducted by docent Nat Shaffir. What makes the tour special is that it will be held before the Museum opens to the public on May 23, and will be conducted by a Holocaust 'survivor.'

Nat Shaffir is a walking encyclopedia of the history of WW II's holocaust – both its effects on individuals and on how it effected and was effected by the larger geo-political forces.

Six years ago some acquaintances of Nat's, survivors of the holocaust and volunteers at the holocaust museum, invited Nat on a visit to the museum. He was so totally captivated by the museum and its exhibits that he signed on as a volunteer, helping as a

PATRON LEVELS

RENWICK SOCIETY PATRONS

\$ 10,000

DEDICATED TO ART PATRONS

\$ 7,500

GRAND SALON PATRONS

\$ 5,500

PALM COURT PATRONS

\$ 3,500

OCTAGON ROOM PATRONS

\$ 2,500

INDIVIDUAL PATRON

\$ 1,250

PRICES FOR SPRING CRAFT WEEKEND

CAUCUS DAY \$ 150

SYMPOSIUM \$ 0

GALA AND AUCTIONS \$ 395

AWARDS BRUNCH \$ 145

translator, at the information desk, wherever he was needed. That experience was so engrossing that he took the 13 week course to become a docent. He remains actively involved as a docent and speaker, sharing his perspective as a 'survivor.'

The US Holocaust Memorial Museum, now 22 years old, is funded in part by the government and in part privately. The museum here in Washington designs the exhibits and administers its functions, but the objects on display are owned by Poland. They are here on a 20-year loan and are returned to Poland on a rotating basis for cleaning and maintenance. ■

SYMPOSIUM

A CRAFT QUARTET WEAVING PEOPLE TO CREATE COMMUNITIES

Moderated by Stuart Kestenbaum

“Craft makes it possible for us to see what we have in common. These four artists have developed innovative approaches to engaging groups and strengthening bonds between people. Whether it is veterans addressing their military experience through making paper, Native Americans reinvigorating their ancient basket making traditions or people from wide-ranging communities learning about the power of the work of the hand, craft joins together innovation and tradition in dynamic ways.”

—Stuart Kestenbaum

STUART KESTENBAUM



Stuart Kestenbaum has written and spoken widely on craft making and creativity. For over twenty-five years he was the director of the Haystack Mountain School of Crafts in Deer Isle, Maine. He was elected an honorary fellow of the American Craft Council in 2006 and received the Distinguished Educator Award from the James Renwick Alliance in 2007. He is currently the Chair of the Board of the American Craft Council and is also the strategist and spokesperson for a consortium of intensive craft workshops in the US, titled *craftschools us*. Stuart Kestenbaum is the author of four collections of poems and a book of brief essays on craft and community.

SPRING CRAFT WEEKEND

THERESA SECORD



Theresa Secord is a traditional Penobscot basket maker and the founding executive director of the Maine Indian Basketmakers Alliance. Her basketry has received many awards including at the Santa Fe Indian Market, the Eiteljorg Indian Market and the Heard Museum Guild Indian Fair and Market. She has served as guest curator at

national Native America basketry exhibitions. In 2015 she co-curated Wabanaki basketry exhibitions at Maine Fiber Arts in Brunswick, ME and the Maine Historical Society in Portland, ME.

Theresa is most proud of her current work for the First Peoples Fund, coaching and training emerging artists, and working on policy issues to advocate for artists on tribal reservations.

DAVID KEEFE



David Keefe is an artist, educator, activist, administrator, and a combat veteran who served in the United States Marine Corps in Iraq. He has won national recognition and awards for Combat Paper NJ (CPNJ), a community art project bringing veterans and non-veterans together to make paper and art from military uniforms. He has led teams

in teaching paper making, print making, and art to veterans and non-veterans. He is Senior Assistant Dean for Veteran Initiatives at Columbia University and the co-founder of Frontline Arts, which provides support for community-building art movements. He was awarded the Krider Prize for Creativity in 2013 and holds an MFA degree from Montclair State University and a BFA from the University of Delaware.

ALLEGHANY MEADOWS



Ceramist Alleghany Meadows received his MFA from Alfred University and BA from Pitzer College. He is the recipient of a Watson Fellowship and the Gropius Master Award. He was an artist in residence at Anderson Ranch, studied with Takashi Nazato in Karatsu, Japan, and currently maintains a studio in Carbondale, CO. Along with exhibiting and teaching extensively throughout the country, he works widely in the art field, with Harvey/Meadows Gallery, Artstream Nomadic Gallery, Studio for Arts and Works, and is a board member of Haystack Mountain School of Crafts.

SONYA CLARK



Since 2006 Sonya Clark has been Chair of the Craft and Material Studies Department at Virginia Commonwealth University. She holds an MFA from Cranbrook Academy of Art and a BFA from the Art Institute of Chicago. Recently, she was awarded an honorary doctorate from Amherst College where she received a B.A.

She is the recipient of awards including the Art Prize for the Hair Craft Project, a Pollock-Krasner Grant, a Smithsonian Artist Research Fellowship, a Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship, an 1858 Prize for Contemporary Southern Art, and a United States Artist Fellowship. Her work is in the permanent collections of the Indianapolis Museum of Art, Virginia Museum of Fine Art, Philadelphia Museum of Art, and the National Museum of Women in the Arts.

Distinguished Educators Awards Brunch



JAMIE
BENNETT

Photo by Anat Shifan.

Jamie is an American artist and educator known for his enameled jewelry. Following a workshop at Penland, Jamie developed a unique painterly approach, using only opaque colors unlike the jewel-like enamels of the time. Over his forty year career, Bennett has experimented with the centuries-old process of enameling, discovering new techniques of setting, and creating new colors of enamel on matte surfaces.

Soon after finishing graduate work at State University of New York (SUNY) New Paltz, Bennett began teaching at the Memphis Art Academy. From there he went to the Program in Artistry at Boston University where he taught until 1985. Bennett then taught at SUNY New Paltz for thirty years before retiring.



*Golden Hybrid Brooch, enamel, 800 gold, 2 1/2" x 2 1/2" 2015.
Photo by Anat Shifan.*

Jamie Bennett, when asked, describes himself as an artist first, and an educator second. And that directs his path as an educator. Rather than thinking about himself as a "teacher," he actively discusses ideas and concepts, challenging these young artists to come up with their own ideas. Of course, we know Jamie best as an artist since we own one of his exquisite brooches and a delightful painting. We are pleased that the James Renwick Alliance is recognizing him in 2016 as a distinguished educator.

— Marc and Diane Grainer, JRA Members

CHUNGHI CHOO



Born in Korea, Chunghi Choo came to the United States in 1961 to study metalsmithing, weaving and ceramics at Cranbrook Academy of Art. She has become internationally renowned as a jewelry designer and metalsmith.

Her teaching career began at the University of Northern Iowa where she taught metalsmithing and fiber arts. At the University of Iowa, Iowa City, Choo has taught jewelry and metalsmithing since 1968 and is now the F. Wendell Miller Distinguished Professor of Art, Emerita at the University of Iowa. Choo believes it is essential to teach techniques and aesthetics, and to be intuitive in responding to individual student's style and aspirations.

Chunghi is loyal and devoted to her students, following them for years after their graduation. I have never met another teacher whose very life blood is so given to transfusing the sense of possibility, the belief in a student's worth as an artist, and to point the way for that student to transfuse their ability into a map to their life and their career.

— Lois Jecklin, JRA Member



*Vase. Electroformed copper, silver plated.
8.5" x 6" x 6". Photo by Peter Krumhardt.*



JEAN MCLAUGHLIN

Jean McLaughlin has been director of the Penland School of Crafts in North Carolina since 1998. She believes that Penland is a place for people to step out of their daily lives and retreat to study different craft forms. And she thinks it is important to preserve the handmade tradition of America. Craft objects that are handmade, she says, tell the story of the artist who made them and the material behind them. Along with trying to preserve traditions that are centuries old, Penland also seeks to evolve those traditions and find new ways of crafting. She wants students at Penland to feel that they have been able to express a part of themselves that they may never have been able to express before.



Photo by Robin Dreyer.

Jean McLaughlin became director of the Penland School of Crafts in 1998 while I was a student there. She has taken that small craft school to the prestigious art colony it is today serving 1,400 students. Most of the amazing craft artists and distinguished craft educators that we revere today have benefitted from that spectacular campus in the beautiful North Carolina hills, housing some of the most advanced and well equipped artists' studios in the country.

— Tim Tate, JRA Member

FAB LAB AT HAYSTACK MOUNTAIN SCHOOL OF CRAFT

Since its first invitational symposium in 2002 in collaboration with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Haystack Mountain School of Crafts in Maine has been a leader in exploring how digital techniques can enhance the creative process. In 2009, the director of MIT's Center for Bits and Atoms led a digital workshop at Haystack, and returned in 2010 as a visiting scientist. In 2012, Haystack fitted out a Fab Lab, a digital fabrication facility with a CNC Router, laser cutter, 3D printer, milling machines and computer terminals, thus providing craft artists, working with highly skilled technicians, with digital tools to design and fabricate craft objects.

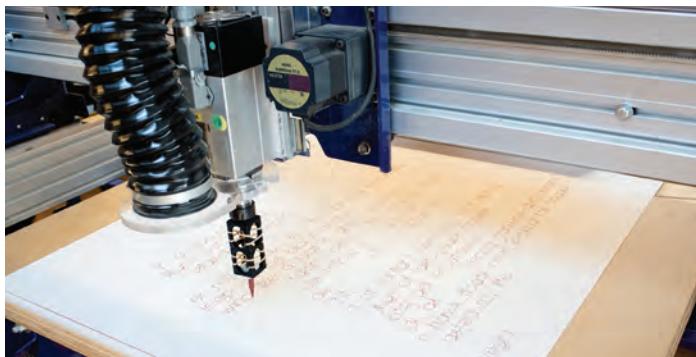


Instructor Kenzo Abiko shows students capabilities of digital fabrication.
Photos by Robin Dreyer.

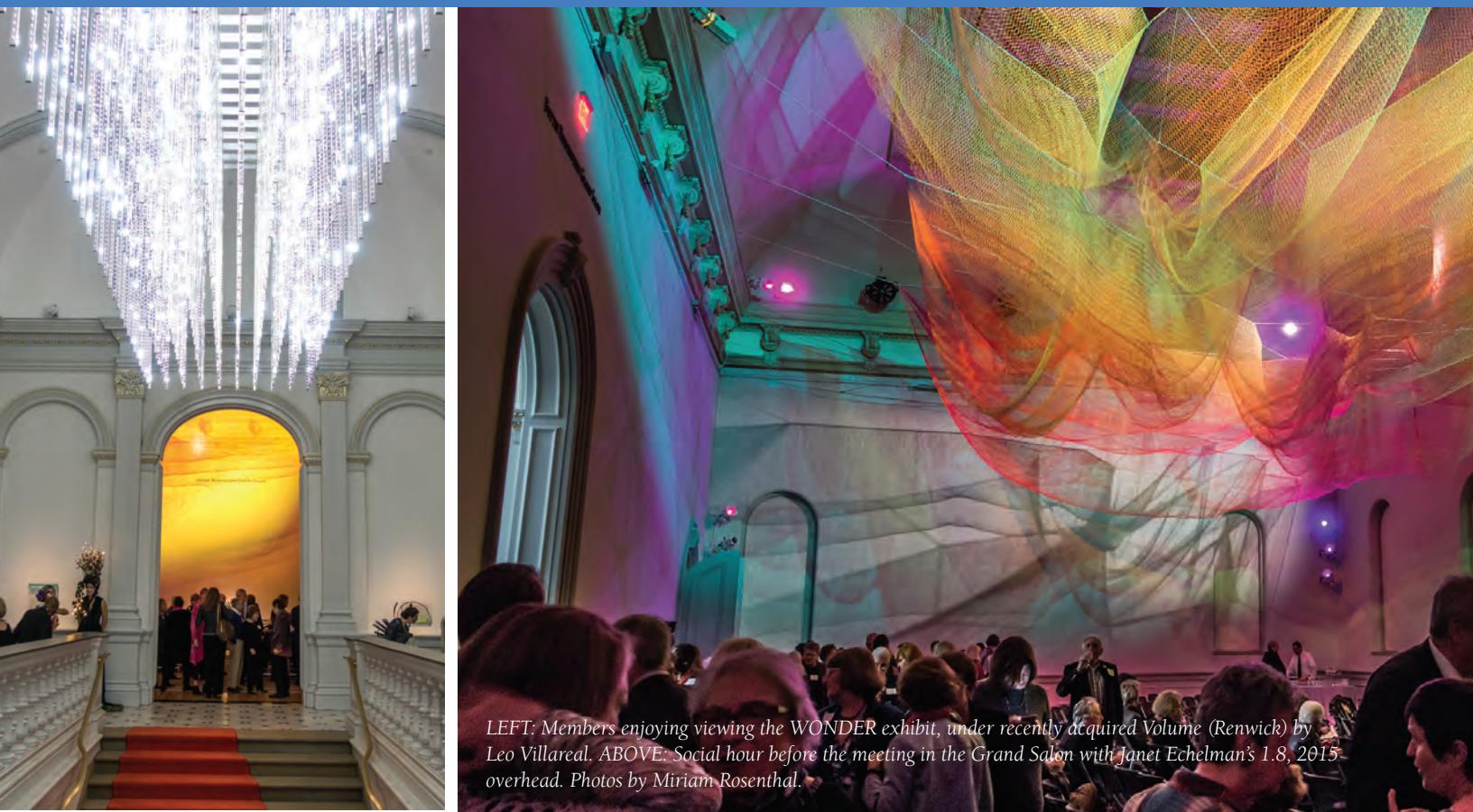
Haystack and its former Director Stuart Kestenbaum have been leaders in providing rural communities with opportunities to design and create tools to solve local problems. When the Haystack campus is closed from November until April, the Fab Lab is moved to the school's Center for Community Programs in Deer Isle village. This provides a convenient and accessible space for teachers and students from local schools to attend training sessions and to use the equipment.

For its pioneering work in developing a Fab Lab with advanced digital tools and techniques to forge new perspectives in design and to enhance the creative process, Haystack Fab Lab has proved itself to be a Distinguished Craft Educator.

— David Montague, JRA Member



A marker has been attached to a programmed ShopBot, normally used for cutting. Here it is writing poetry.



LEFT: Members enjoying viewing the WONDER exhibit, under recently acquired Volume (Renwick) by Leo Villareal. ABOVE: Social hour before the meeting in the Grand Salon with Janet Echelman's 1.8, 2015 overhead. Photos by Miriam Rosenthal.

JRA Membership Meeting

Ann Miller

This year's JRA Annual Members Meeting was held at the Renwick Gallery on Tuesday, November 17, 2015. Upon arrival, members and their guests were invited to enjoy a glass of prosecco while wandering through the museum's galleries. To celebrate the newly renovated Renwick Gallery and its exceptional inaugural exhibit, WONDER, the JRA added a special touch by inviting the winners of the 2015 ManneqART national wearable arts competition to join our members before the meeting.

ManneqART is a national arts and arts education non-profit based in Howard County, MD. Its mission is to inspire creativity and reward excellence in the field of wearable art. Two of the group's co-founders, Lee Andersen and Al Scolnik, and sponsor Rebecca Ripley, joined the nine award winners as they modeled their artwork at the reception.

At 7 pm, JRA President Giselle Huberman announced the winning designs, which included a deep-sea angler fish with long fangs and its own guiding light and a gown made from books.

Giselle gave a warm welcome and introduced the 2015-2016 James Renwick Fellow in American Craft Ruthie Dibble, who will be performing research concerned with the effect of the Civil War on craft objects created and displayed during the period.

Chief Administrator Robyn Kennedy talked about the Renwick Gallery's recent renovation and what a difference the changes have made, including opening up hidden architectural features, removing period drapes in the Grand Salon, and changing paint colors.

Next, The Fleur and Charles Bresler Curator-in-Charge Nicholas Bell explained how he developed the idea for WONDER. To use the expanded space in the gallery he invited significant artists who are "makers" to create surprising things that people can interact with in three dimensions. He gave credit to the JRA for its many contributions. He also announced that the Smithsonian American Art Museum had approved the Renwick Gallery's acquisition of the light sculpture over the stairway by Leo Villareal.

Lloyd Herman Curator of Craft Nora Atkinson gave a preview of two upcoming exhibitions. The first — scheduled to open on July 16, 2016 — will feature art from the permanent collection including some pieces purchased with JRA funding. In fall 2016 the Renwick Invitational will open. This biennial exhibition will feature work of four artists whose art "can be seen to represent a current fascination in American craft with themes of ruin, resilience and rebirth."

Special thanks to the Membership committee members and board members who helped fund the reception, as well as those who contributed their time and ideas, making this a remarkable event. ■

New Members 2015

Even though the Renwick Gallery was closed for renovation until late 2015, the JRA's active schedule of programs and trips has reached many craft aficionados. Since the beginning of 2015 until mid November, the following people have joined the organization. We welcome:

Ms Anita LoMonico
 & Mr. Urs Affolter
 Ms Lee Anderson
 Ms Kathy Barnard
 Mr. Carl Bedell
 Mr. Kevin Bell
 Mrs. Tess Cammack
 Mr. William Carlson
 Ms Veta Carney
 Mr. Howard Clare
 Mr. & Mrs.
 Michael Conlin
 Ms Rosemary Covey
 Ms Jean Fausser
 Ms Flo Feinberg &
 Mr. Ben Geizhal
 Mr. Dan Finnegan
 Mrs. Marcy Friedman
 Mr. Angel Gil-Ordóñez
 Ms Judy Goodman
 Ms Shan Goshorn
 Ms Therese Greey
 Mr. & Mrs. Fred Gurtman
 Ms Elizabeth Hennigan
 Mr. Michael F. James
 Ms Myra Kaiser
 Ms Karen Kaplan
 Ms Dolores Kaye
 Mr. John A. C. Keith
 Ms Patricia Kent
 Ms Lisa Klakulak
 Ms Judith Kornett
 Mr. Stephen Lally
 Ms Karen R. Leath

Mr. & Mrs. Cliff Lee
 Ms Gayla Lee
 Ms Francine Lubran
 Ms Bodil Lund
 Ms Allegra Marquart
 Ms Brigitte Martin
 Ms Sherry Masters
 Ms Christy McCampbell
 Ms Holley Morse
 Ms Kristin Muller
 Ms Joan Nathan
 & Mr. Allen Gerson
 Ms Janet Orr
 Ms Amy Peck Abraham
 Ms Katrina Roecklein
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert Rogers
 Ms Sharon Ross
 Ms Alison Ruzsa
 Ms Laura Salarano
 Ms Elizabeth A. Sanford
 Mr. Kevin Savage &
 Ms Britta Lindgren
 Ms Mary Shaffer
 Ms Jan Solomon
 Dr. & Mrs.
 Benjamin Strahl
 Ms Seena Sussman
 Ms Jessica Tava
 Ms Sherry Terao
 Mr. & Mrs. Jack Tozier
 Mr. Tony Urreta
 Mr. Frank Van Riper
 Ms Grethe Wittrock



JRA members watch Einar and Jamex de la Torre create glass sculpture. Photo by Miriam Rosenthal.



Members involved in making clay sculptures at Debra Fritts' workshop. Photo by Miriam Rosenthal.

Distinguished Artists Series 2016

Rebecca Ravenal

The 2016 lineup of Distinguished Artists is now available. We include here a brief listing of the artists and dates; as further information is obtained, it will be published in the weekly JRA Newsletter. You may register for individual workshops or for the series at the JRA website: JRA.org ■



*Middle Fork (Cascades) 2015.
Photo by Ron Blunt*



Snowchild, by Sibylle Peretti.

Charred Split Birch Log Teapot, by Eric Serritella, ceramic, 23" x 19" x 7," 2013. Photo by Jason Dowdle. BOTTOM RIGHT: Enamel piece by Don Friedlich.



JOHN GRADE: February 27 at Artists and Makers Studios 11810 Parklawn Drive, Rockville, MD

Grade is a mixed media artist being featured in the Renwick Gallery's opening show, WONDER. He uses natural materials in unusual ways, creating large-scale pieces that are designed to reside and eventually decay in various outdoor settings. John will lead a hands-on workshop in which participants will help to create a new branch for his amazing tree.

SIBYLLE PERETTI: May 21 at Nancy Weisser Studio Kensington, MD

Sibylle makes detailed large-scale glass sculpture. Using children as her primary subject, she "strives to uncover hidden worlds in which a harmony can exist and heal."

ERIC SERRITELLA: April 16 at Robert Devers' Studio 3700 Wells Avenue, Mt. Rainier, MD

Eric is a master at trompe l'oeil ceramics. You may have seen his amazing vessels that mimic tree bark at the Smithsonian Craft Show and in craft publications. He will give a demonstration workshop entitled "Open Earth". He will show unusual techniques, such as using a blow torch to create dramatic effects while stretching his clay.

DON FRIEDLICH: June 4 at DC Glassworks 5346 46th Avenue, Hyattsville, MD

Don excels at both metalsmithing and glasswork, sometimes combining the techniques, to create stunning jewelry pieces. He will reveal some of these techniques at a demonstration workshop.

We are introducing a slightly different format for this upcoming DAS season. We will begin our Saturday workshops at 9:30 with a coffee and pastry meet-and-greet with the artist. The workshops will last from 10-12. No group lunch hour will follow. The fee will be \$50 members/\$60 non-members. For the series, \$160 members/\$220 non-members. Each of the artists will present a lecture on the Sunday following their workshop. These will be held in the newly renovated Renwick Grand Salon from 2:00 – 3:00 pm.

REOPENING – AT LAST

First there was the closing of the Renwick – two years ago. During the construction, we heard stories of finding liquor bottles hidden within walls, multiple false ceilings to hide multiple updates such as new ductwork, etc. Then in May, 2015 we had a chance to see the gutted and partially reconstructed interior of the museum and hear of the major changes being made to the infrastructure, including custom LED lighting throughout, all new custom made windows, etc.

Then, Nov. 13 arrived, we witnessed a ribbon cutting – and the doors opened!

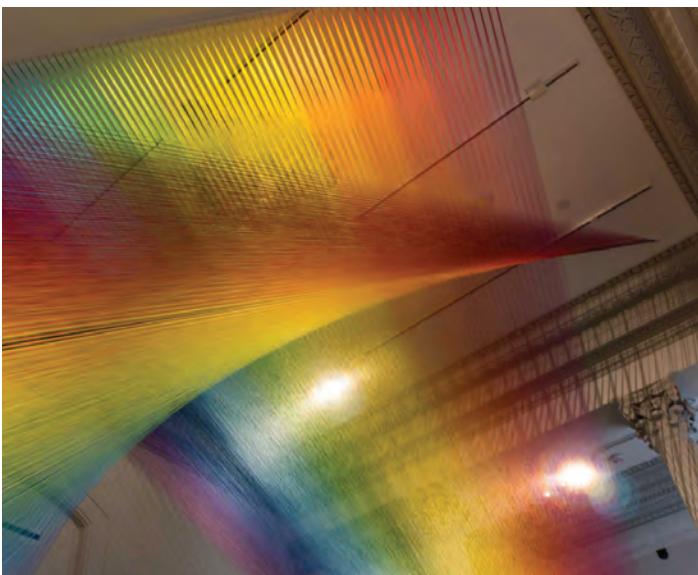


Well, we knew the electrical system needed to be upgraded.



The publicity prior to the actual reopening had alerted us to the fact that the first exhibit would be NINE artworks, by nine artists and as a group titled WONDER. The artists, selected because of their ability to transform spaces through installations, each chose a location within the museum and created work that responded to that space.

TOP LEFT: David M. Rubenstein, Co-Founder and Co-CEO of The Carlyle Group and Member of the Smithsonian Board of Regents; Betsy Broun, Margaret and Terry Stent Director, Smithsonian American Art Museum, and Smithsonian Secretary David Skorton do the honors. MIDDLE LEFT: JRA founding members Paul and Elmerina Parkman happily cross the threshold.



Plexus A1, 2015 by Gabriel Dawe.



Photos by Miriam Rosenthal.

And in the James Renwick Alliance Gallery, the installation is *In the Midnight Garden*, by Jennifer Angus. The walls are decorated with preserved insects, many iridescent, with an overall effect of Victorian wallpaper. While most of the renovated Renwick has neutral off-white walls, good background color for art, in this gallery the walls have been tinted with ground-up Cochineal insects which live on cacti in Central and South America. ■

JAPAN

Four participants on the trip to Japan were asked to share their main impressions.

Pat Arnold

For me the trip itself was my favorite thing — the pace, the breadth, the art, the people, the food, the immersion in Japanese culture and our leader. It was a two week dream traveling with a small group of friends who shared my passion and curiosity about art, people and culture.

Our leader Jeff Shapiro lived and trained as a ceramicist for almost a decade in Japan. His fluent Japanese combined with his personal relationships with the arts community to give us “behind the scenes” experiences few tourists have — even on art tours. He brought insight, sensitivity and humor to bridging Japanese and American cultures.

The “trip of a lifetime” was how this was billed . . . but for me it may prove to be just the beginning. ■

Pati Young

THE CRAFT OF FOOD IN JAPAN

In a country where you can drink the water and eat the street foods, an abundance of amazing creatively crafted meals were enjoyed by all. From traditional Kaiseki (haute cuisine, multiple-course meals), to precisely arranged Bento lunch boxes, to savory handmade noodles (both Soba and Udon), to crispy tempura (batter-dipped and fried), and decorative mochi (rice dough) covered sweets or fruits and artful tea cakes, the art of food was everywhere. Japanese fare was meticulously presented in an array of colors, patterns, textures, and shapes. Even the local market wares were artfully set out leaving no mystery as to the high level of freshness consistently honored in Japanese cuisine.

Our best meal was outside of Tokyo in Okiruno at the Toutouan Restaurant where we had a traditional Japanese Kaiseki dinner. Served by lovely women in beautiful Kimonos in an austere yet handsome private dining room embellished only by perfectly arranged flowers, each dish was arranged with precision — often in hand-crafted dishes and some in fresh cut bamboo.

As this course with its magnificent set of dishes (pictured right) was set down, I found tears flowing down my face. It was so beautiful and artfully put together — all very moving and quite delicious.



Ceramic piece by Living National Treasure Isezabki Jun. Photo by Jacqueline Urow.



Kaiseki dinner at Japan's Toutouan Restaurant. Photo by Pati Young.

Marsha Gold

Focus on Material and Tradition

Our trip to Japan was an immersion in a fascinating culture where details matter and form is observed, even in the most mundane matters. Through our trip leader, Jeffrey Shapiro, we were able to gain some personal insight into this culture resulting in a moving appreciation of this country.

We learned that in Japan, ceramics is all about the clay. Early in the trip, we visited the studio of Higashida Shigemasa. While known for his use of Oribe and Shino glazes, with him clay takes center stage, as he demonstrated by thrusting a big stick into a clay cylinder to create a vessel whose outside he then embellished by cutting away the edges. The glazes highlight the material. These ceramics are made to be used, as they were in the tea and sweets we shared.

With Jeff's help, we visited different ceramic artists, including several in areas with original kilns that were built in rich and diverse clay areas. These included Suzuki Goro residing north of Nagoya, Japanese national treasure Isezabki Jun and his son Koichiro, also a ceramic artist, in Bizen; and Rye Kyurazaki in Shigaraki. For a broader perspective, we visited several museum exhibitions as well as Rob Yellen's gallery in Kyoto.

Acquisitions are in person, usually made after tea has been shared. Few artists used credit cards and purchases rely on later receipt of wired funds after cherished items are delivered.

Japanese ceramic artists do incredible work and their skills are venerated, but there are expectations. There is a constant tension between tradition and innovation, with those straying too far being much more reliant on an international audience. ■



Jeffrey Shapiro and Higashida Shigemasa. Photo by Jacqueline Urow.

Wabi-Sabi

I was thrilled to learn that I was going to Japan! For several years I had been hoping to go to Japan to immerse myself in the Japanese aesthetic. The JRA trip sounded perfect! To prepare for the trip, a friend who had lived in Japan for many years urged me to read *Wabi-Sabi for Artists, Designers, Poets & Philosophers*.

The book defines wabi-sabi as "a beauty of things imperfect, impermanent, and incomplete. It is a beauty of things modest and humble. It is a beauty of things unconventional."

Understanding wabi-sabi is elusive, and I saw it everywhere in Japan. On our first evening we attended a tea ceremony. A stone path with a few random splashes of water led to the teahouse where the floor was covered with tatami mats. The room was sparsely decorated with a simple flower arrangement and a scroll. At first

Lynn Chadwick

glance these details seemed very casual. A second look revealed the exquisite care involved in the seemingly plain arrangement.

On the walk back to our hotel that evening we passed a street with a lane blocked off by Hello Kitty traffic barriers! More wabi-sabi!

As our trip continued, I saw wabi-sabi in the surfaces of wood fired ceramics, in the baskets woven of dried kudzu vines, and in the hot spring bath surrounded by boulders.

The trip was an experience beyond my expectations. I am filled with ideas about how to incorporate the beauty of wabi-sabi in my jewelry and artwork. And I am grateful to the JRA and everyone who made this trip possible. ■

Clemmer Montague

To understand Tulsa now one needs to understand the events of the 1920-1930s. The discovery of oil which made Tulsa the capital of the oil world brought educated, intellectual people from the east who built a treasure trove of beautiful structures. And, through their philanthropy and foresight, they enhanced the cultural and social aspects of Tulsa by aiding the development of such public institutions as museums, parks, libraries, theaters, schools and universities.

The Gilcrease Museum of Art holds some of the best western art and some of the best scholars on the subject. The currently developing Brady Arts District in the city center supports the idea that the best in art and craft, local, national and international, should be shown here. The Philbrook Downtown displays modern and contemporary art. The nonprofit 108 Contemporary displays contemporary fine craft, and the AHHA - Arts & Humanities Hardesty Arts Center - provides space for young artists to produce and display their art.

Against this background, 19 James Renwick Alliance members explored the Tulsa whose dedication to the arts is not well known.

At the 108 Contemporary the group was introduced to the work of artist Crystal Wagner who combines 2D and 3D forms while investigating alternative uses of materials through hybrid approaches to printmaking, sculpture and installation. We saw her amazing sculpture made of chicken wire and filled with pieces of colored plastic tablecloths. It reminded one of the migration of millions of butterflies.

A most spectacular piece of art was made by Kansas City glass artist Kathy Barnard whom a JRA group met several years ago. She was commissioned by a bank to create a four story tall wall of carved and engraved glass which depicts Oklahoma flora and fauna.

Shan Goshorn, an eastern Cherokee, an activist in the American Indian world and the art world, is a strong believer that artists must preserve their archives for future study. She demonstrated this for us in her home-studio.

A side trip to Crystal Bridges Art Museum reacquainted all with familiar American paintings and periods of art. The day ended in Hughesville, AR, at the studio of JRA Distinguished Artist basket maker Leon Niehues.

What made this trip memorable was that it introduced us to some of the best preserved Art Deco structures, museums with extraordinary collections and scholars, amazing artists including Jean Fausser, a fiber artist and the brains behind the Hardesty Art Center, and the philanthropic community of leaders who have promoted art in Tulsa. ■



Biotica and Follies by Crystal Wagner. Wire sculpture filled with plastic tablecloths. Photo by Clemmer Montague.



Oklahoma Life. Kathy Barnard. Commissioned by Bank SNB, Tulsa, OK. It is made of 24 carved, etched glass panels. Photo by Clemmer Montague.

Roy Lichtenstein 1966.
Jackson China Co., Durable Dish Co.,
Falls Creek, PA

Margaret Carney with
Eva Zeisel Hallcraft dinnerware.

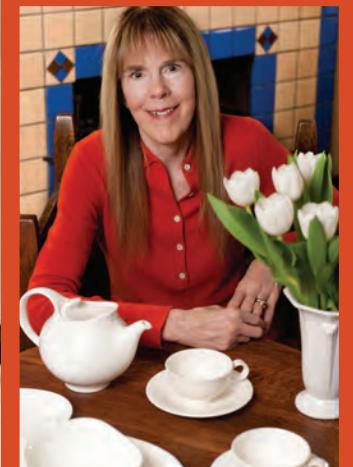


Photo: Courtesy of Mark Bialek.

Margaret
Carney

JRA Fellow Establishes Museum

The path to establishing the Dinnerware Museum in Ann Arbor, Michigan in 2012 began decades ago with a lifetime passion for collecting, researching, and sharing information. As a young child I collected many treasures, including paper napkins (which may have foreshadowed my current preoccupation). I wasn't satisfied with constantly changing the bulletin board display in my bedroom at home. I volunteered to design and install hallway bulletin board displays in grade school.

While working in the curator's office at Hoover Presidential Library and Museum in the early 1970s, I learned that I loved working in museums even more than I liked being a visitor. And I learned that museums actually paid you money to collect, research, and share information. So I spent happy decades getting advanced art history degrees and working as a curator and museum director. I even studied Chinese museum studies while living in China for several years.

In 1991, when I formally established the Museum of Ceramic Art at the New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University, there were thousands of objects that had been accumulating over 90 years. There my colleagues were the artists and fellow faculty members, some retired, Bob Turner, Bill Parry, Val Cushing, Wayne Higby, and others. A decade later, after I had met and become friends with several legendary designers such as Eva Zeisel, Don Schreckengost and his brother Viktor, two exhibitions that I curated at the Alfred museum really clarified my focus. The exhibitions were centered around Glidden Pottery and dinnerware designed by Eva Zeisel.

It was at that time that I spoke with Eva and others about establishing a dinnerware museum. Yet it wasn't until Eva passed away in 2011, at the age of 105, that I realized life was short (for most people, if not Eva), and that I shouldn't wait any longer.

In 2012, when my husband's job took us to Ann Arbor MI, the Dinnerware Museum was established as a 501 (c)(3) tax exempt organization. Its first exhibits opened in 2013, and the collection has grown appreciably in this brief time. The permanent collection features international dinnerware from ancient to futuristic times; created from ceramic, glass, plastic, metal, lacquer, fiber, paper, wood, and more. Our exhibitions highlight masterpieces of the tabletop genre created by contemporary artists, as well as notable historic dinnerware by leading designers for industry, juxtaposed with an uncommon focus on non-functional fine art that references dining and a bit of kitsch thrown in for good measure. We are proud to be the only museum in the world devoted exclusively to dinnerware. Currently our exhibitions are on view at "pop-up" locations, as our most looming opportunity/obstacle is securing funding for our own exhibition space.

My James Renwick Alliance Senior Fellowship in 1993-94, taught me to maintain a balance between focused research and other museum responsibilities. And life has taught me to follow my bliss. ■

Paul Kotula, 2011 Stoneware, laminated wood, glass 7.5" x 23.5" 20"
Photo: Courtesy of Tim Thayer.



SAVE THE DATES

FEBRUARY 10

5:30 – 8:00 pm Handi-hour. Renwick Gallery, Grand Salon
CURRENTLY SOLD OUT

FEBRUARY 17 – 21

ACC Craft Show at Baltimore Convention Center. During the show the JRA award for Excellence in Innovation will be presented.

FEBRUARY 17

12:00 noon. Renovation Building Tour with Renwick Chief Administrator Robyn Kennedy

FEBRUARY 20

10:00 am – 4:00 pm. ManneqART Workshop.
At ManneqART/Lee Anderson Studio, 9010 Maier Road #104, Laurel MD. Design and build unique wearable sculpture. \$75.00, includes lunch and materials.

FEBRUARY 26

5:30 pm. Artist talk by Maya Lin at Renwick Gallery.
CURRENTLY SOLD OUT

FEBRUARY 27

9:30 am. John Grade Workshop at Artists and Makers Studios, 11810 Parklawn Drive, Rockville, MD

FEBRUARY 28

2:00 pm. Lecture by John Grade, Renwick Grand Salon

APRIL 1 – 3

JRA's Spring Craft Weekend (See page 4 for schedule of events)

APRIL 16

9:30 am. Eric Serritella Workshop at Robert Devers' Studio, 3700 Wells Ave, Mt. Rainier, MD

APRIL 17

2:00 pm. Lecture by Eric Serritella, Renwick Grand Salon

APRIL 20 – 24

Smithsonian Craft Show National Building Museum

MAY 9

6:30 – 8:30 pm Cake Decorating Class by owner of Fancy Cakes. Supplies included. An 'adventure' available at SCW for \$135.00.

MAY 21

9:30 am. Sibylle Peretti workshop at Weisserglass, 4080 Howard Avenue, Kensington, MD

MAY 22

2:00 pm. Lecture by Sibylle Peretti Renwick Grand Salon

MAY 26

Private tour of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum conducted by a Holocaust survivor. An 'adventure' to be available at SCW.

JUNE 4

9:30 am. Don Friedrich Workshop at DC Glassworks, 5346 46th Avenue, Hyattsville, MD

JUNE 5

2:00 pm. Lecture by Don Friedrich Renwick Grand Salon

JUNE 18

2:00 – 4:00 pm. Caucus Afternoon of Learning Larry Sibrack, Board of Trustees of Creative Glass Center of America.



Sunny skies, a parking lot that was full most of the day, and lots of people buying holiday gifts for their loved ones (and themselves) made the 8th Annual JRA Day a rousing success. Hundreds of visitors greeted the more than 35 artists showing their work, with a sale every 40 seconds on average. In the end, sales were the second highest ever. Thanks to our sponsors free admission helped build the crowd and increase sales. We also want to thank our volunteers, who made everything run smoothly and, most of all, the artists who make the show possible.

Planning already has begun for the 9th Annual JRA Day. Mark your calendars now for Saturday, December 3 and join us then. ■