



THE QUARTERLY summer 2010

THE JAMES RENWICK ALLIANCE



Rainware Lifestyle
by Denise Dickens, JRA Day artist

JAMES RENWICK ALLIANCE QUARTERLY

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SPRING CRAFT WEEKEND
March 24-27, 2011



Miriam Rosenthal

From the outgoing president...

The adage “time flies” certainly seems true for the past year. Within a few days of writing this column, the JRA has a new president, new members on its Board of Directors, and new committee chairs and members ready to plan activities for the next several years. End-of-year and end-of-term observations

can serve to highlight events or possible future actions. Among those that I would make are:

The JRA pledge of \$80,479 to the Smithsonian American Art Museum for FY10 supported two notable activities at the Renwick Gallery—*The Art of Gaman* exhibition which attracted numerous viewers to the Renwick, and the acquisition, along with Colleen and John Kotelly, of Karen LaMonte’s masterful cast glass piece, *Dress Impression with Drapery*. The pledge for FY11 is \$95,024, an increase of approximately \$15,000. Some wonderful shows are scheduled for the Renwick over the next year which the JRA pledge will help support.

The Leadership Circle of former JRA presidents agreed to take a leading role and make a combined contribution to the Lloyd Herman Challenge in support of a second curatorial position at the Renwick. This contribution was further boosted by a challenge issued at the Spring Craft Weekend Patrons Dinner which resulted in \$200,000 additional monies pledged.

The JRA increased its web presence with a JRA Facebook page and improved its website capabilities with online membership renewal and event sign-up capability, and acquisition of software and training to enable in-house updating of JRA website content.

Organizationally, the Planning and Nominating Committee started work on a five-year strategic plan, and nominated candidates for the Board of Directors to bring it up to its maximum strength.

In the realm of things to think about, volunteerism and event attendance were down this past year. The JRA depends on volunteers to organize and run its events and on members as well as non-members to attend for events to be successful. Spring Craft Weekend 2010 in particular was affected with the net amount raised less than in previous years. The outcome was not entirely a surprise as member comments, attendance and auction results have been pointing toward a downward trend for several years. All organizations need to re-assess what they are doing from time-to-time. Such an effort is underway now, so watch for changes to take place.

Miriam Ellsworth
President, James Renwick Alliance
July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010



ON THE COVER
Model Bridget McDonough wears a raincoat, rain hat and umbrella made by Denise Dickens, on sale at JRA Day, November 13. See article on page 14. Photos by Cheryl Pascual for Outside Designworks.

From the incoming president...

Clemmer Montague

Miriam Rosenthal

I am excited and happy to be chosen as president of the James Renwick Alliance, and I am pleased that the year is off to a very promising start.

First of all, I asked and received enthusiastic responses from board members to chair the eight standing committees, and now several of the subcommittees and sub subcommittees are filled or partially filled. Our board is a working board, and the contribution that each board member makes is vital to the overall health and stability of the organization.

Next the Renwick Gallery exhibition schedule through 2012 is extraordinary in the quality of craft. JRA's Charles and Fleur Bresler's gift of turned wood to the Renwick opens on Sept. 23. *A Revolution in Turned Wood* offers amazing opportunities to learn about turned wood with a catalogue funded by the Windgate Foundation and numerous interesting educational programs: turned wood demonstrations in the Palm Court at the Renwick, a panel discussion, walk throughs with Fleur and talks by major wood artists. The JRA Distinguished Artist Lecture and Workshop committee is working on a new format for presenting turned wood artists in early 2011. Following is the Renwick 2011 Invitational with four extraordinary artists, Cliff Lee—ceramics, Judith Schachter—glass, Ubaldo Vitali—metal (silver), and furniture maker Matthias Pliessnig being recognized in the exhibition and with the accompanying catalogue funded by JRA's Chihuly Fund (See page 12). Next the White House decorative arts exhibit promises an enlarged audience, and then the *pièce de résistance*, the Renwick Gallery 40th Anniversary celebration and the imaginative exhibition *40 Under 40*, works of 40 artists under the age of 40, curated by Nicholas Bell.

Spring Craft Weekend, taking place as part of the 2011 Invitational program, will have a changed format, and we will recognize five Masters of the Medium and Bernard and Sherley Koteen as recipients of the One-of-a-Kind award. We shall hear more about SCW as its committees are formed and begin working.

So who wouldn't be excited to be president of the James Renwick Alliance when so many wonderful programs are happening?

Thank you for choosing me as president, and I hope to see many of you volunteering for committees and taking part in activities. I promise to be a big voice for craft and the James Renwick Alliance.

Lloyd Herman's Challenge Gift to Endow a Curator of Craft for the Renwick Gallery

The Smithsonian American Art Museum announced the establishment of an endowment to support a curator of craft position at the museum's Renwick Gallery. An \$800,000 challenge gift from Lloyd Herman, who was the founding director of the Renwick Gallery, is the catalyst for attracting an additional \$1.2 million match from private contributors across the United States.

The James Renwick Alliance is involved in promoting contributions to the endowment by individuals. Thus far the first formal attempt is the Leadership Circle of former JRA presidents who agreed to take a leading role and make a combined contribution to the Lloyd Herman Challenge. This contribution was further boosted by a challenge issued at the Spring Craft Weekend Patrons Dinner which resulted in \$200,000 additional monies pledged to the challenge.

Anne Mehringer and David Montague, JRA board members and both former presidents, are in charge of organizing further enhancements to the program; therefore, JRA members can expect more action in this area this fall.

"Though I haven't the wealth of many craft advocates and artists whose friendships I treasure from my 40-year association with the Renwick Gallery, even I can help," said Herman.

JRA BOARD MEETINGS

Tuesday, September 14 @7:30pm
 Tuesday, October 12 @7:30pm
 Tuesday, December 14 @7:30pm
 Tuesday, January 18 @7:30pm
 Tuesday, February 8 @7:30pm
 Tuesday, April 12 @7:30pm
 Tuesday, May 10 @7:30pm
 Saturday, June 18 (time TBA)

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**AFTERNOON OF LEARNING:
RENWICK GALLERY
EXHIBITIONS**

Nicholas Bell, Renwick Gallery curator, outlined exhibitions for the next two years.

Smithsonian American Art Museum Renwick Gallery exhibitions for the next two years offer a wide variety of artists and mediums. Nicholas Bell, curator, talked extensively about the upcoming shows at the Craft Leaders Caucus “Afternoon of Learning” at the home of Robert and Sharon Buchanan on May 23.

The Art of Gaman exhibition of items made in the Japanese internment camps during World War II will continue until Jan. 30, 2011. *A Revolution in Wood: The Bresler Collection* of 66 pieces of turned and carved wood donated to the Smithsonian American Art Museum by the noted collectors, Fleur and Charles Bresler will open on Sept. 23 and continue until Jan. 30, 2011.

The Renwick Craft Invitational 2011 will open on March 24, 2011 and continue until July 31. Works of ceramic artist Cliff Lee, furniture maker Matthias Pliessnig, glass artist Judith Schaechter and silversmith Ubaldo Vitali will be shown. These four extraordinary artists create works of superior craftsmanship that address the classic craft notion of function without sacrificing aesthetics. The four artists included in the exhibition were chosen by Nicholas Bell, curator at the museum’s Renwick Gallery; Ulysses Dietz, senior curator of decorative arts at the Newark Museum in New Jersey; and Andrew Wagner, editor-in-chief of *ReadyMade* magazine. A catalogue, with essays by Nicholas Bell, Ulysses Dietz, and Andrew Wagner, will accompany the exhibition. The Ryna and Melvin Cohen Family Foundation generously supports the Renwick Craft Invitational 2011.

Then an exhibition of White House decorative arts will follow in the summer of 2011, and the finale before the museum closes for renovations will celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Renwick Gallery. Curator Nicholas Bell will be in charge of this exhibition, called *40 Under 40*, including the selection of artists and the publication of a catalogue. He plans to select 40 American artists under the age of 40 for this spectacular show which will travel around the country.

KOTEENS ARE “ONE-OF-A-KIND”

Sherley and Bernard Koteen have been selected for the James Renwick Alliance 2011 One-of-a-Kind award for their extraordinary service to the arts community in the Washington, D.C., area.

The JRA One-of-a-Kind award is given to those in the craft community who have donated immeasurably to the support of American craft, the Renwick Gallery, and the James Renwick Alliance. Sherley has been involved with the Smithsonian Women’s Committee Craft Show and has been a board member of the Alliance. The Koteens have contributed generously to the Patrons program during Spring Craft Weekend.

The award will be presented during Spring Craft Weekend 2011.

MASTER OF THE MEDIUM NOMINATIONS DUE

A call for nominations for the 2011 Master of the Medium in all five craft areas of ceramics, fiber, glass, metal and wood went out to all JRA members in late June with a deadline of August 6.

Spring Craft Weekend 2011 is a year in which the James Renwick Alliance will recognize five Masters of the Medium. Since January 2006 when the Board of Directors of the Alliance voted to change the process by which artists are nominated as candidates for the Masters of the Medium award, all members of the Alliance may nominate artists.

The ad hoc committee composed of President Clemmer Montague, Elmerina Parkman, Brenda Erickson and J.G. Harrington will evaluate the nominations and mail a ballot in mid-August. For any questions about the nomination process, please do not hesitate to call the JRA office, 301-907-3888 or e-mail admin@jra.org.

Past Masters of the Medium are listed below by medium.

CERAMICS

Peter Voukos – 1997; Toshiko Takaazu – 1999; Ruth Duckworth – 2001; Viola Frey – 2003; Wayne Higby – 2005; Rudy Autio – 2007; Warren Mackenzie – 2009.

FIBER

Ed Rossbach – 1997; Lenore Tawney – 1999; Jack Lenor Larsen – 2001; John McQueen – 2003; Lia Cook – 2005; Kay Sekimachi – 2007; Norma Minkowitz – 2009.

GLASS

Harvey Littleton – 1997; Dale Chihuly – 1999; Dan Dailey –

2001; Marvin Lipofsky – 2003; William Morris – 2005; Ginny Ruffner – 2007; Richard Marquis – 2009.

METAL/JEWELRY

Albert Paley – 1997; Mary Lee Hu – 1999; William Harper – 2001; Arline Fisch – 2003; Robert Ebendorf – 2005; Joyce Scott – 2007; June Schwarcz – 2009.

WOOD/FURNITURE

Sam Maloof – 1997; Wendell Castle – 1999; Edward Moulthrop – 2001; Bob Stocksdale – 2003; Judy McKie – 2005; John Cederquist – 2007; David Ellsworth – 2009.



Clemmer Montague

Tim Tate’s video and glass piece *The Paulson Family* was a highlight at the Caucus summer social on Sunday evening, July 18, at the home of Jerry and Gwen Paulson of Alexandria. Sharon Buchanan, host Gwen Paulson and Fleur Bresler view the Paulson clan as one of the events. Sharing food, telling funny stories about Caucus events, being updated about the status of the JRA, greeting old friends and meeting new ones sums up the late afternoon social on a hot summer day.

A Revolution in Wood: The Bresler Collection

1st floor, Renwick Gallery September 24, 2010 – January 30, 2011

A Revolution in Wood celebrates the magnificent gift of 66 pieces of turned and carved wood to the Smithsonian American Art Museum by the noted collectors Fleur and Charles Bresler. Works by this country's best-known wood artists highlight the growing sophistication of American craft's youngest medium and the expressive capacity of its most organic material.

The exhibition opens at the Renwick Gallery on Friday, Sept. 24 and closes on Jan. 30, 2011, the official opening ceremonies being on Thursday, Sept. 23 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Masterpieces by the field's pioneers, including David Ellsworth, William Hunter, Mark and Melvin Lindquist, Edward Moulthrop, and Rude Osolnik, demonstrate the extraordinary range of expression achievable on the lathe, the medium's foundational tool. Compelling recent works by Ron Fleming, Michelle Holzapfel, Hugh McKay, Norm Sartorius, Mark Sfirri, and many others reveal the advent of new techniques, including multi-axis turning, the incorporation of secondary materials, and a strong focus on carving. Many works in the exhibition will be on public display for the first time. Nicholas R. Bell, curator at the Renwick Gallery, is organizing the exhibition.

The museum has produced a 5-minute film, with VideoArt Productions, which will be shown continuously in the exhibition galleries. It features interviews with Fleur Bresler; artists David Ellsworth and Mark Sfirri; and Kenneth R. Trapp, former curator-in-charge at the Renwick Gallery.

The forthcoming catalogue, published by the Smithsonian American Art Museum and distributed by Random House, is written by Nicholas R. Bell with a foreword by Elizabeth Broun, the museum's director, and an interview with Fleur Bresler by Kenneth R. Trapp, former curator-in-charge at the Renwick Gallery. It will be available for \$45 (hardcover) in the museum store, online, and at bookstores nationwide.

A Revolution in Wood: The Bresler Collection is organized and circulated by the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum. The Windgate Charitable Foundation generously supported the publication, and The James Renwick Alliance contributed generously to the film, exhibition and public programs. The Collectors of Wood Art provided funding for the exhibition.

ALLIANCE PRODUCES PROMOTIONAL VIDEO

The James Renwick Alliance has undertaken a project to raise money to hire an independent contractor, Martin Huberman of Washington, D.C., to produce a short video containing information about the Alliance and its various programs.

The Alliance has determined that an informational video would be a very useful tool for membership development. The short video (5–8 minutes), for example, would be used on the JRA web site, at Washington DC's annual "ARTomatic" Show (76,000 people attended last year), the Washington Craft Show, our own JRA Day, possibly SOFA Chicago and New York, and other appropriate venues that could generate further support.

Entitled *JRA Makes a Difference*, the video will focus on three major areas: collectors, artists and the Renwick Gallery.



ABOVE, David Ellsworth, *Patan from the Solstice Series*, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Gift of Fleur and Charles Bresler.



ABOVE, Ron Fleming, *Red Fern*, 1996, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Gift of Fleur and Charles Bresler in honor of Kenneth R. Trapp, curator-in-charge of the Renwick Gallery (1995–2003).

Public Programs

Shop Talk

Friday, September 24, Noon.

Collector Fleur Bresler has formed unique relationships with each of the artists in *A Revolution in Wood: the Bresler Collection*. Curator Nicholas Bell moderates a roundtable discussion with Bresler and wood artists Michelle Holzapfel, Mark Lindquist and Norman Sartorius who share their stories. Book signing to follow.

In the Gallery with the Collector

Wednesdays, October 6

and December 1, Noon.

Collector Fleur Bresler leads gallery talks through *A Revolution in Wood*, sharing the stories and anecdotes she collected along with the artworks in the exhibition.

Lathe Demonstrations

Tuesdays, September–January, Noon–1 p.m.

Second Saturdays, September–January, 2–4 p.m.

Join members of the Capital Area Woodturners as they demonstrate the process artists in *A Revolution in Wood* used to create their unique pieces.

Artist Talk with David Ellsworth

Wednesday, November 10, Noon. Called the grandfather of the contemporary wood art movement, master turner David Ellsworth reveals the lessons he's learned turning wood for 50 years. One of the artists featured in *A Revolution in Wood*, Ellsworth discusses his publication, *Ellsworth on Woodturning*. Book signing follows.

SPRING CRAFT WEEKEND: MARCH 24–27, 2011

Spring Craft Weekend dates have changed from the weekend of the Smithsonian Craft Show April 14–17 to the weekend of the opening of the Renwick Gallery Invitational 2011, March 24–27.

SOFA New York is the same weekend as the Smithsonian Craft Show and traditionally the James Renwick Alliance's Spring Craft Weekend, its major fundraising event. Weekend organizers who do not feel that JRA can compete with SOFA New York for an audience met with the Renwick Gallery chief to discuss all possibilities and the decision was made to move the date forward to March.

The opening of the 2011 Invitational Exhibition gives JRA the opportunity to combine programming with the Renwick. More information will be available once the SCW committee is completely organized.

JRA Distinguished Artist Series Showcases Diversity

The James Renwick Alliance Distinguished Artist Series in April and June centered on the theme of identity and the diverse American population.

The April programs paired two Japanese-American furniture artists: Wendy Maruyama from San Diego, CA, and Mira Nakashima from New Hope, PA. They showcased not only their individual work, but their friendship based in part on their shared heritage as Japanese-Americans who have been deeply affected by the experience of the Internment Camps during the Second World War. Although not included in the Renwick's current show, *The Art of Gaman*, their work has been influenced by the impact of the camps. They both presented talks on Saturday morning, April 10, and at the Renwick Gallery Grand Salon on Sunday afternoon, April 11, and both had furniture pieces in the JRA Spring Craft Weekend auctions later in April.

The Potluck Dinner for Wendy and Mira brought two communities together and was graciously hosted by Dr. Warren and Carol Minami at their art-filled home in Potomac. Over 80 people attended including other Japanese Americans, JRA members, and friends and relatives of the artists. Dr. Minami has a particular personal interest in the Internment, has chaired the National Japanese American Memorial Foundation, and has been a member of the Japanese American Veterans Association, a nationwide veteran's service organization that serves the interests of Asian Pacific American veterans. Carol Minami, a social worker and excellent cook, prepared a superb meal in addition to arranging for a professional sushi bar. The JRA is deeply indebted to the Minamis for their very generous contribution in support of this weekend's Distinguished Artist Series program.



Photos by Clemmer Montague

Consuelo Jimenez Underwood, after lecturing on her work at the Renwick Gallery Grand Salon, discusses the intricate weaving of the Mexican rebozo (wrap) with admirers.

In early June, and following on the theme of identity and the diverse American population, the honored guest was Consuelo Jimenez Underwood, a third generation Mexican-American artist from Cupertino, CA. Consuelo spoke powerfully about her artistic journey as a "Chicana" in both her workshop on embroidery on Saturday and at the lecture at the Renwick Gallery on Sunday, June 5 and 6, respectively.

In 2000 she was included in the biennial Renwick Invitational "Five Women in Craft." Her embroidered and quilted cotton and silk piece, "The Virgin of the Caminos" (or Roads), which depicts the struggles of Mexicans looking for opportunity in the United States, is on display currently at the Luce Center of the Smithsonian American Art Museum, which acquired it in 1996. Her choice of materials is diverse

and directly related to her heritage. The scale of her work has been as small as tapestries no bigger than a playing card and as large as the room they occupy.

Yet her most basic tools are needle, thread, a thimble and a needle threader, (all of which she can carry in what she calls her portable studio, no bigger than an Altoids mint box), and the wealth of her personal experience, which is not measurable and is the fodder for her cultural point of view.

The Distinguished Artist Lecture and Workshop Series has been ably organized and executed by JRA board member Binnie Fry, who, for health reasons, must pass on the baton to others. The James Renwick Alliance is indebted to Binnie for her hard work, originality, exploration and the energy she has contributed to this most successful educational program.



Dr. Warren Minami, host for the dinner following the presentation of Wendy Maruyama and Mira Nakashima, for the Japanese community and the James Renwick Alliance members.

What are the JRA Fellows Doing Now?

Compiled by Elmerina and Paul Parkman

This is the third in a series of four articles about past James Renwick Alliance Fellows. Twenty-eight Fellows have been in residence at the Smithsonian American Art Museum and the Renwick Gallery since the Fellowship was initiated in 1988. They were asked for a brief update about their work and research since their Fellowship ended. Twelve Fellows responded and their articles will conclude in the Fall 2010 issue of the *Quarterly*.

Cynthia A. Fowler

Hooked Rugs and American Modernism
June to August 2007

"I can't express enough how helpful the Renwick Fellowship was for me; it gave me three full months to focus on my research, which was a luxury for a college professor swamped a lot of the time with teaching obligations. Since receiving my Renwick Fellowship in summer 2007, I have continued to work on my book which examines the history of modernist hooked rugs designed by American artists during the 1920s and 30s. This book was the focus of my research as a Renwick Fellow, and the fellowship provided me with the opportunity to map out the chapters of my book and fill in several gaps of my research. During the two years since my fellowship, I have further developed and refined many of the chapters. I began looking for a publisher last fall, and I anticipate the completion of the manuscript by summer 2010.



"In terms of other publications related to my research, I am anticipating the publication in the next few months of my essay "Hooking Magic: Transforming Women's Handicraft into Art," in *Threading Women: Gender and the Material Culture of Textiles*. This publication comes directly from my research completed at the Smithsonian and combines my interests in women's artistic production and craft.

"In fall 2008, I presented a paper titled, "Suturing Old Wounds: The Act of Sewing in Works by Contemporary American Indian

and First Nations Women Artists" at the annual Textile Society of America symposium in Honolulu. I was awarded the Founding Presidents' Award for outstanding scholarship in textiles studies by the Textile Society in support of this paper, currently under review for publication in *American Indian Quarterly*.

"At Emmanuel College in Boston where I am the associate professor of art, I am currently working with my colleague, associate professor Megumi Naitoh, a ceramic artist, to develop a study abroad program to Japan which will focus on contemporary ceramic art. This program will consist of intensive study of the dialogue between American and Japanese ceramic artists since the 1960s."

Kevin Melchionne

A Philosophical Inquiry into the Crafts
1997 to 1998

"I am currently exploring the theoretical implications of my research on the aesthetics of everyday life that brought me to the Smithsonian. Whereas in the past, I was interested in developing descriptions of practices such as handiwork, I am now asking what is it about experience that leads us to have the preferences that we profess. The first installment of this work was *Acquired Taste*, published in *Contemporary Aesthetics* in 2007. Recently completed and currently under review is the es-



say, 'I know nothing about art...' which takes as its point of departure the familiar statement, "I know nothing about art but I know what I like." The essay explores the

limits of self-knowledge of taste, drawing upon recent work in cognitive science and social psychology. If my approach is right, it would mean the models of aesthetic judgment long accepted in philosophical aesthetics fail to account for serious limits in our ability to grasp our own responses to works of art. My web site is www.kevinmelchionne.com."

AMERICAN CRAFT COUNCIL RELOCATES TO MINNEAPOLIS

The American Craft Council moved its offices from the New York City location to their new offices in Minneapolis, MN. As of August 1, 2010 please note that their new address is:

American Craft Council
1224 Marshall Street NE
Suite 200
Minneapolis, MN 55413

The New York offices were vacated on July 16 but the staff continued working through the month of July. Please continue to contact ACC via the same e-mail addresses and phone numbers. New telephone number will be posted when phones are activated in Minneapolis. The 800 number has remained operational so please contact the American Craft Council at 1-800-836-3470 or e-mail at camundsen@craftcouncil.org.

2011 DISTINGUISHED ARTISTS SERIES LECTURE PROGRAMS

The Distinguished Artists Series will feature a wood turner, a husband-wife team (ceramics and jewelry), a metalsmith and a glass artist beginning in January 2011, so says the committee for this program.

In early July the committee formed to come up with ideas for programs which will include formats such as critiques, discussions, demonstrations and a traditional workshop with the four artists finishing with format presentations about their work at the Renwick Gallery Grand Salon. Barbara Wolanin and Phil Brown, David Montague, Chris Shea and Dana Travas are on a committee, chaired by Novie Trump. Details on the programs will be announced later as they are organized.

April 22, 2010 IRISH AMBASSADOR'S RECEPTION April 23, 2010 CAUCUS DAY

Spring Craft Weekend

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MIRIAM ROSENTHAL



The Craft Leaders Caucus study tour to Ireland was center spread with a reception at the residence of Ireland's representative to the United States H.E. Ambassador Michael and Mrs. Marye Collins for patrons, the JRA board and Caucus members on Thursday night. Friday morning the traditional Caucus Day was the visit to the homes of three caucus members: Brenda Erickson, Oscar Fitzgerald and Stephen and Myra Kurzbard.



Clemmer Montague

April 23, 2010 WEEKEND PATRON'S EVENING



Patrons dinner was an energetic affair, conceived by JRA artist and board member Tim Tate, with Ned Blair and Sarah Frey as the welcome committee. Circus performers mingled with guests, dinner was fun, money was raised for the Lloyd Herman endowment challenge, silent auction objects were bid on, Après Dinner guests arrived—it was a fantastic evening.



April 24, 2010 DISTINGUISHED EDUCATORS SYMPOSIUM GALA CELEBRATION

Spring Craft Weekend

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MIRIAM ROSENTHAL



The symposium on Saturday morning at the American Art Museum McEvoy Auditorium, How Craft Makes its Way into the World, featured JRA distinguished educators, academic and commercial personalities: Mark Sfirri, Yoshiko I. Wada, Miriam Ellsworth—JRA president, Paul Greenhalgh—moderator, Tamara Laird, David Yurman, and Randy Johnston. The evening events were a live auction and dinner at the homes of several JRA members.



Gil Schwartz



J.C. Harrington

April 25, 2010 DISTINGUISHED EDUCATORS BRUNCH



Sunday was devoted entirely to the Distinguished Craft Educators at a reception and brunch at a local hotel: Yoshiko I. Wada—fiber, Mark Sfirri—turned wood and Randy Johnston—ceramics. Pictured at left are: Co-organizer Paul Parkman, Renwick Gallery Chief Robyn Kennedy, Educators Mark Sfirri, Yoshiko I. Wada and Randy Johnston, Renwick Gallery Curator Nicholas Bell, Co-organizer Marilyn Barrett and JRA President Miriam Ellsworth.



Board Member to Watch

BECCA CROSS WRITES GRANT PROPOSALS, AND GETS 'EM

Rebecca Cross, “Becca,” began as the publicity committee chair; however, she saw an underdeveloped opportunity and need for grants for JRA projects which fit the descriptions of grants available from the District of Columbia. After first attempting to get a festival grant for new initiative of Craft Week the first year, she reapplied for a grant to fund the core program of the Distinguished Artists Series and was successful, and JRA was awarded a \$5,500 grant for the workshop/Distinguished Lecture Series for 2009–10.

Success spurred her to seek further grants which she submitted this summer. She is an old hand at grant writing, having been awarded a D.C. Commission on the Arts & Humanities and the National Endowment for the Arts Individual Artist Fellowship Grant, twice in 1991 and 1998 and the American Scandinavian Foundation—Grant for Collaboration on Bresee Dansekompni production of “Unstill Lives,” in 1990.

Grant writing is difficult, especially when the author is also owner of a ceramics gallery cross mackenzie gallery of ceramics arts, Georgetown, and has:

- Curated and produced monthly exhibitions, organized solo and group shows, designed and produced announcement cards, created and maintained a web site, made sales, collected DC sales tax, managed gallery and consignment accounts, created artist/gallery contracts, arranged shipping and insurance, supervised assistants and interns;
- Composed press releases, designed and placed advertising;
- Received over 80 pages of international, national and local editorial press coverage: *Architectural Record*, *American Ceramics*, *American Craft Magazine*, *American Style Magazine*, *Architecture DC*, *Ceramics Review Magazine*, *UK*, *Ceramics Monthly Magazine*, *Chesapeake Home Magazine*, *DC Spaces*, *Georgetown*, *Home & Design Magazine*, *Intowner*, *Metropolitan Home*, *Niche Magazine*, *Washingtonian*, *The Washington Post*, *Where Magazine*, *The DC Examiner*, *Northwest Current*, *Richmond Times Dispatch*, *City Paper*, *Old Town Crier* & *Art Blogs*, *DCist*, and *Critical Ceramics*;



Becca, shown here in her gallery with the work of Elizabeth Kendall, begins her fourth year as a James Renwick Alliance board member. She has made her voice heard across the city.

- Placed gallery artists into national museum exhibitions and permanent collections including the State Department’s American Embassy in Nicaragua and the Art in Embassies Program, Mass MOCA in North Adams, MA, and the Smithsonian American Art Museum Renwick Gallery;

- Contributed to books: wrote text, researched copyright issues, edited photographs and copy, acted as the liaison with book publisher and publicist, arranged launches and signings;

- Managed print sales and inventory, tracked edition numbers and collections, showed portfolio, arranged framing, crating, shipping, insurance, archival storage.

Becca has been a working artist—primarily a painter—(her MA is in painting from the Royal College of Art) for more than 25 years. Early on, she worked as an assistant in the studio of British sculptor Sir Anthony Caro for two years, and ceramics has been an outgrowth of that focus.

She opened cross mackenzie ceramic arts in 2006 with her husband and business partner Max Mackenzie, an architectural photographer, and has been showcasing an incredible range of works in clay, some functional, some stimulating and full of meaning. She made her national debut at SOFA New York last April.

CHIHULY RESERVE FUND TAPPED FOR A CATALOGUE

The exhibition celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Renwick Gallery, *40 Under 40*, offers the James Renwick Alliance the opportunity to make good use of the financial reserves known as the Chihuly Fund.

The fund was expressly set up to pay for a catalogue for emerging and young artists. In the late 70s, the then young glass artist Dale Chihuly was appreciative of the exhibition and catalogue at the Renwick Gallery which he attributes as one factor to his becoming the famous artist he is now. To show his gratitude, he donated several pieces to the James Renwick Alliance to sell, the proceeds to be used to support a catalogue for young and emerging artists. With interest, that fund has grown to over \$70,000, the amount required to pay for a catalogue.

That opportunity did not materialize, since the Renwick Gallery has not had an exhibition focusing on young artists until Renwick curator Nicholas Bell announced the 40th anniversary show. JRA President Clemmer Montague formally offered, as her first official act, the gift to fund this catalogue to the Smithsonian American Art Museum. “That is exactly what the fund was set up for,” Founding member Paul Parkman remarked.

Fall Study Tour to Kansas City

The James Renwick Alliance Board of Directors invites both Craft Leaders Caucus and JRA members to join tour leader and Kansas City native Larry Hawk for a craft study tour to the state of Missouri Oct. 6–10. The study tour to Kansas City will be in two parts: Oct. 6–10 will be a Caucus study tour. The general membership group will join up at a reception Thursday evening, Oct. 7, to begin this part of the tour, ending on Sunday, Oct. 10.

The study tour is designed to coincide with the ceramics show at the Kansas City Art Institute’s celebrating of its 125th anniversary and will be centered around special exhibits at museums and galleries such as the Nelson-Atkins Museum and the faculty show at the Sherry Leedy gallery. Cary Esser, head of the KCAI ceramics department, is the curator for that show. Also on the agenda are visits to the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art at Johnson County Community College, a private ceramic collection and visits to the studios of ceramic and fiber artists, lunch at Jack Stack’s Barbeque, a Renwick Alliance sponsored reception on the top floor of the hotel, and

activities associated with the KCAI exhibition opening.

The Caucus group will spend Wednesday visiting private and corporate craft and art collections and artists’ studios. On Thursday, travel will be to Sedalia, Mo., to the Daum Museum, State Fair Community College, to see its vast collection of large scale ceramics and paintings. Craft artists from other locations in Missouri will display their work in a “very mini craft show.” David and Clemmer Montague are organizing this portion of the tour.

The cost of the trip is \$825 per person for Caucus members, (\$125 a nonrefundable contribution to JRA), and \$575 for JRA members, (\$75 the nonrefundable contribution to JRA), based on 20 participants. Cost for non members is \$625. All costs include bus transportation, entrance and tour fees, gratuities, lunches and one dinner. Hotel costs range from \$169–\$199 per room and, as with airfare costs, are not included. Please make the appropriate full payment to the James Renwick Alliance by Sept. 10.

BELOW, *Shoe Pile* by Misty Gamble, Kansas City-based artist



Clemmer Montague



Marsha Gold and Barbara Williams shop at the Philadelphia Clay Studio retail store on the study tour to Philadelphia in March.

NEW MEMBERS THRU JUNE 17, 2010

DUAL CAUCUS

Samuel and Gail Broder
Bethesda, MD

DONOR

Nancy B. Cummings
Washington, DC

Daniel C. Evans
Brownsville, TX

Peter Louis Jennings
Washington, DC

Stacy Sklaver
Rockville, MD

ART (ALLIANCE FOR RENWICK TOMORROW)

Jon Shimabukuro
Washington, DC

GUILD

Carol and Jean-Pierre Hsu
Berkeley Springs, WV

Tim Wallace
Washington, DC

GIFT

Deirdre Bourke
Washington, DC

Judy Braune and
Dennis McLaughlin
Annandale, VA

H.E. Ambassador Michael Collins
and Mrs. Marie Collins
Washington, DC

Tim and Ann Duffield
Philadelphia, PA

Karl Harron
Ireland

Alison Kay
Ireland

Sabrina Meyns
Ireland

Amy Morgan
Pittsburgh, PA

William Pierce
Silver Spring, MD

Fred and Susan Sanders
Brooklyn, NY

Judith Whiton
Gaithersburg, MD



The Smithsonian Craft2Wear show will take place the weekend of Oct. 22–24 at the National Building Museum. The show and sale features 35 artisans from around the country who will be showing their collections of wearable art including jewelry, handbags, scarves and clothing. All exhibitors have participated in past Smithsonian Craft Shows. Sat/Sun hours are 10 a.m.–5 p.m. Admission tickets are \$5.

The Advance Chance Party will be held at the museum on Friday, Oct. 22 from 5:30–8:30 p.m. The party offers first choice shopping, wine and hors d’oeuvres, music, modeling and more. Tickets are \$50 per person and include admission to the show.

More information, including information on all exhibitors, can be found at Craft2Wear.Smithsonian.org or by phone at 888-832-9554. Craft2Wear is a project of the Smithsonian Women’s Committee which, through its grant process, supports education, outreach and research at the Smithsonian Institution.

JRA Day

MEMBER EXHIBITION AND SALE

Mark your calendars for the third JRA Day, Saturday, November 13, 2010 at the Womans Club of Chevy Chase, 7931 Connecticut Avenue.

There's plenty of free parking there as well as 40 spaces across the street at the Chevy Chase Library. We've extended the show hours from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. It's the first Saturday after SOFA Chicago, so hopefully everyone will be in holiday shopping mode. We will be giving a discount to JRA members, so bring your friends, neighbors, relatives, co-workers and shopping pals.

This year we are expanding the fundraising venue for the JRA, "JRA Bay." This is a play on EBay and will be an opportunity for all members to donate previously used items to the effort. We're looking for craft items that came from any of the major craft shows and/or the Renwick Alliance auctions. They need to be in the retail range of \$50 to \$500 and in perfect condition. We will offer them at a "buy-it-now" price and at auction with a minimum bid.

If anyone, other than last year's committee members (I will call upon you!), would like to help this year, or if anyone has questions, please contact Mallory Lawson at 202-337-2805 or the JRA office at 301-907-3888 or e-mail to admin@jra.org. It's a fun day, but we can use lots of help.—*Mallory Lawson*



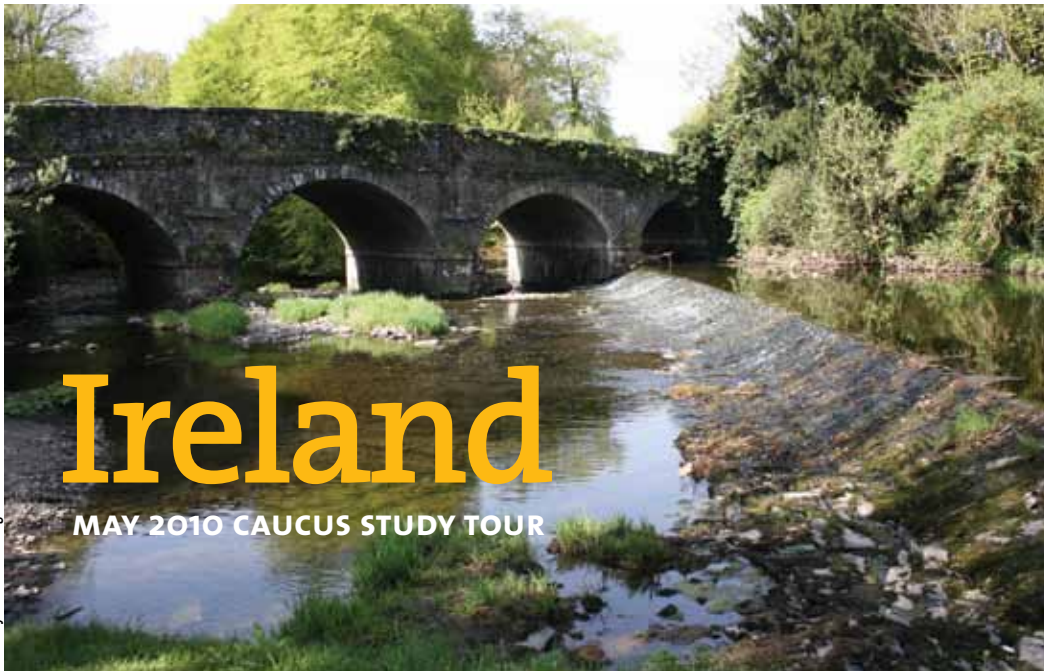
TOP FROM LEFT: William Peirce bowl assembly, turned wood

Sherry Selevan Clock, red, black and frvan, glass clock

Laura Perry "Good Night Tea," porcelain, mixed media
Photo by Miriam Rosenthal

Beverly Tadeu, "Rooted," 18k gold, oxidized sterling silver necklace
Photo by Hap Sakwa

Miriam Rosenthal, hand knitted scarf
Photo by Miriam Rosenthal



Ireland

MAY 2010 CAUCUS STUDY TOUR

Photos by Clemmer Montague

The Craft Leaders Study tour to Ireland May 5–13 was much more than we ever expected it to be. The Irish Craft Council, working with the Irish Tourist Board (Failte Ireland), outdid themselves in showing off the best in Irish Craft, including Northern Ireland. The “cultural tourism” study tour, a combination of culture, nature, history, sociology, geography and craft made for a perfect eight days in this fantastic country.

Lunches and dinners in manors and castles dating back to the 16th century with 15th and 16th generation hosts, visits to ancient historical sites 3,000 years old—older than the pyramids, walks through the best gardens in the country, meetings in studios with some of the top craft makers in the country, visiting the family owned “production” factories where sheep were grown, the wool harvested and spun into yarns then made into clothing, and, of course, scones and tea just at the perfect moment and a glass of Guinness at the end of the day—these were all the parts which made the Ireland study tour so special.

The Irish tourist Board arranged a flight of eight minutes in eight seater, two engine airplanes to the middle of the Aran Island chain, just for lunch and to shop in a local wool store where the sweaters and scarves were woven. What a fantastic day and that was after driving up a mountain on a very narrow road in a 48-passenger bus to the home and studio of basket maker Joe Hogan.

The best part of the program was being given the best tour guide and bus driver in Ireland. History of each location, religious aspects, farming, invasions, ancient history, all the troubles over the centuries, the land, its people and its history came alive under the tutorage of Margaret Bowden, the tour guide, whose services were donated by the Irish Craft Council.

TOP FROM LEFT: Robyn Kennedy with twig sculpture of North Carolinian Patrick Dougherty in Sculpture in the Parklands and Lough Boora, County Offley. Robert and Irene Sinclair and large evergreen column sculpture at Mt. Stewart House and Gardens. Frances Lambe. Ancient bridge at Castlecomer. Entering Bir Castle for dinner with the Earl and Countess of Rosse.

Dear Clemmer and David,
Be assured that your “under mission” has been achieved in Ireland. The collective JRA passion for handmade work coupled with the knowledge and understanding of all aspects relating to the applied arts was communicated in every conversation during your visit.

Your visits and purchases have indeed added to the livelihood of the makers that you have met. But also, perhaps more importantly, the affirmation that you each have brought to the practice of many Irish makers is the part of yourselves that remains in Ireland. This will, I have no doubt, bear fruit in the work that is yet to be made.

Warm regards,
Frances Lambe, *Irish ceramic artist*



Save the Dates! (JRA events in red)

September

JRA Distinguished Craft Educator Mark Sfirri demonstrations:

9 Montgomery County Woodturners, Montgomery College 7–9 p.m. Fee.

10 All day hands-on demonstration, Bryant Education Center, Alexandria, Capital Area Woodturners. Fee.

11 Bryant Education Center, Alexandria, 10 a.m.–3 p.m. Capital Area Woodturners. Fee.

Contact Phil Brown at 301-767-9863 for information on the above.

14 JRA board meeting.

23 *A Revolution in Wood: The Bresler Collection*, opening reception 6:30 p.m. Renwick Gallery, all JRA members invited.

24 Noon, Roundtable discussions with Fleur Bresler and wood artists Michelle Holzapfel, Mark Lindquist and Norman Sartorius, moderated by Renwick Curator Nicholas Bell. Book signing follows. Lathe demonstrations.

Noon–1 p.m., Tuesdays, September through January. Join members of the Capital Area Woodturners as they demonstrate the

process artists in *A Revolution in Wood* used to create their unique pieces.

October

6 Noon, In the Gallery talk with the Collector Fleur Bresler: *A Revolution in Wood*.

6–8 Craft Leaders Caucus Study Tour to Kansas City.

8–10 Alliance Study Tour continues for all JRA members to Kansas, MO, in honor of the 125th Anniversary of the Kansas City Art Institute.

12 JRA board meeting.

21 JRA Annual General Membership meeting, Renwick Gallery Grand Salon. 6:30–8:30 p.m., Curator Nicholas Bell, Speaker.

22–24 Smithsonian Women's Committee Craft2Wear.

November

5–7 SOFA Chicago.

6 JRA Brunch. SOFA Chicago.

10 Noon, Artist Talk with wood artist David Ellsworth, followed by book signing.

13 JRA Day.

19–21 Washington Craft show, JRA membership table.



Lucy Lacoste of Lacoste Gallery, a Gallery Caucus Member located in Concord, Mass., increased her gallery space last winter by an additional 50%.

CAUCUS MEMBERS THRU JULY 26, 2010

Carolyn S. Alper
John and Sharon Amdall
Marilyn and John Barrett
Char Beales
Arnold and Barbara Berlin
Jeffrey Bernstein and Judith Chernoff
Joan Borinstein
Charles and Fleur Bresler
Samuel and Gail Broder*
Simeon Bruner
Robert and Sharon Buchanan
Kevin and Kathleen Buchi
Leonard and Fran Burka
Russell and Marian Burke
Sorrell Caplan
Melvin and Ryna Cohen
Camille and Alex Cook
Jeffery P. Cunard
Bev Denbo
Susan Ellerin and Gretchen Keyworth

Miriam and Leon Ellsworth
Brenda Erickson
Burt and Anne Fishman
Oscar P. Fitzgerald
Genevieve A. Gee
Marilyn and Louis Glickfield
Marsha Gold
Marc and Diane Grainer
J.G. Harrington and Jere Gibber
Tina Fried Heller and Pati Young
Lloyd Herman
Giselle and Benjamin Huberman
Reba and Mark Immergut
Shirley Jacobs
Jerome and Deena Kaplan
Sharon Karmazin and David Greene
William and Sue Kolodner
Sherley and Bernard Koteen
Myra and Dr. Stephen Kurzbard
Barbara Laughlin
Mallory Lawson and Judith Weisman
Anne Mehninger and Terry Beaty
Laurel and Robert Mendelsohn

John Meyerhoff and Lenel Srochi-Meyerhoff
Judith Davis and Michael Mickaliger
Robert Minkoff and Shelley Kushner
Sandy and Norman Mitchell
Clemmer and David Montague
Gwen and Jerome Paulson
Julia Perlman
Rebecca Ravenal
Chris Rifkin
Michael and Karen Rotenberg
Aletta Schaaap
Nancy and William Schneider
Bonnie and Gilbert Schwartz
Ruth and Hugh Sickle
Igal and Diane Silber*
Irene and Robert Sinclair
Jacqueline D. Urow
Kathryn Van Wyk
Barbara Waldman and Dennis Winger
*New members

GALLERY CAUCUS MEMBERS

THRU JULY 26, 2010

ARTISTS CIRCLE FINE ART

Jack Devine
13501 Travilah Rd.
North Potomac, MD 20878
301 947-7400
www.artcfa.com

DEL MANO GALLERY

Jan Peters and Ray Leier
11918 San Vincente Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90049
1-800-del-Mano
www.delmano.com

LACOSTE GALLERY

Lucy Lacoste
25 Main Street
Concord, MA 01742
978 369-0278
www.lacostegallery.com



Phil Brown

New Board member orientation on Saturday, July 17, took place at the home of Ben and Giselle Huberman: Front, from left, Clemmer Montague, president, Johanna Thompson, Jackie Urow, Sandy Mitchell and Pati Young. 2nd row: Elmerina Parkman, Marilyn Barrett, Irene Sinclair, David Montague and Ellen Pollack. Back row: Norman Mitchell, organizer, Giselle Huberman, host, Ruth Sickle, Chris Shea, Mallory Lawson, Barbara Wolanin, Larry Hawk and Paul Parkman. Not pictured—Rebecca Cross.