


CELEBRATING 35 YEARS OF SUPPORT FOR ARTISTS WORKING IN CLAY, FIBER, GLASS, METAL & WOOD

# JRA QUARTERLY

FALL 2016

 James Renwick Alliance



Harvey K. Littleton. *Opalescent Red Crown.*

# THE JRA QUARTERLY

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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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**COVER PHOTO:** Harvey K. Littleton, *Opalescent Red Crown*, 1983. Glass, 27 3/4 x 29 1/2 x 24 3/4 in. Smithsonian American Art Museum. Museum purchase made possible in part by Mr. and Mrs. R. Philip Hanes, Jr., Victor Gross, Joseph Davenport, Jr., John Hauberg, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Judelson, Mr. Samuel Johnson, and Edward Elson. *Intimate Collaborations* by Bibiana K. Obler.

# PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear JRA Members and Friends,



Jacqueline Urow

This year marks the 35th birthday of the James Renwick Alliance. We are planning a big birthday bash for Spring Craft Weekend in April. Look for details in our next *Quarterly* and plan to celebrate.

There are changes afoot for the JRA. Returning to an informal relationship with the Smithsonian frees the Alliance to choose among a number of museums, craft schools, and other groups to support, in addition to the Renwick Gallery, and affords us new opportunities to single out artists to honor for their excellence, creativity and accomplishment. This year we are delighted to partner with the American University Museum at the Katzen Arts Center, which will host our annual membership meeting and free public programming.

This new relationship also positions the JRA to pursue wider fundraising strategies. Geraldine Ostrove, Vice President for Development, will be spearheading our efforts to become more conversant with twenty-first century methods of fundraising. If you have the skills or interest in helping us to develop the financial resources that make everything else possible, please join us in this important endeavor.

You will notice in our weekly and monthly e-mail newsletters the many trips and experiences that we are offering in 2016-2017. Please partake: sign up for a trip; do your holiday shopping at JRA Day on December 3; enjoy the Distinguished Artist Series: Local Treasures; and become an active member of our vibrant alliance.

I look forward to seeing you at the membership meeting on November 15 and at many of our other events throughout the year.

Jacqueline Urow  
JRA President



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Pedestal Table by Chris Shea.  
Photo by Anything Photographic.

## BECOMING A MEMBER

- DONOR** \$125 single | \$200 dual\*
- ART** (Alliance for Renwick Tomorrow) \$80 single
- SPONSOR** \$300 single | \$500 dual\*
- GALLERY** \$500 (for galleries and art organizations)
- CRAFT LEADERS CAUCUS** \$1000 single | \$1800 dual\*
- BENEFACTOR** \$2500

\*dual—two members at the same address

- New     Renewal
- Mr.    Mrs.    Ms.    Miss    Other \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Are you an Artist?    Yes    No

If yes, website address: www. \_\_\_\_\_

Second member (dual member at the same address)

- Mr.    Mrs.    Ms.    Miss    Other \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Are you an Artist?    Yes    No

If yes, website address: www. \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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## FROM THE EDITOR



The JRA is celebrating a very special event – its own thirty-fifth anniversary! Founded in 1982 at the request of Lloyd E. Herman, then Director of the Renwick Gallery, a stalwart group of eleven craft art collectors launched a support organization that has become a vibrant, many-faceted organization of over 400 members country wide. (See article page 8 by one of those founding members.)

The image on our cover, *Opalescent Red Crown*, made just two years later by a founder of the studio glass movement Harvey K. Littleton, was chosen because of its festive appearance. What a spectacular way to celebrate our anniversary issue!

This issue continues a focus on the Renwick's permanent collection. On June 30 there was an event to welcome back many pieces from the Renwick's permanent collection (though not the Littleton piece) in an exhibit entitled *Connections*. See page 11 for photos of some of the many people who attended and who are engaged in appreciating the art on display. We also include the second half of Marc Grainer's article examining the role of a museum's permanent collection.

Geraldine Ostrove's helpful article about managing the documents one acquires along with the objects in a craft collection is accompanied by an image of Kim Schmahmann's *Bureau of Breaucracy* from the Renwick collection. It would make a magnificent place to keep all those documents!

Please don't miss our Interesting People section. This time we focus on four individuals: a former fellow, two artists, and a very special collector, plus celebrate the award to be given to a long-term member. ■

From the cover of  
*Intimate Collaborations*  
by Bibiana K. Obler

## Distinguished Artists Series 2016

## SIBYLLE PERETTI



Sibylle applying soap to model before coating it with wax. Photo by Clemmer Montague.

On May 21 and 22 glass artist Sibylle Peretti presented a workshop and lecture illustrating her techniques and the thinking back of her mystical, dream-like glass pieces.

Sibylle grew up in Germany in an area with many glass factories. Her interest in the medium was piqued since, as a child, she saw glass making as 'magic.' Sibylle attended the State School for Glass Making in Zwiesel, Germany and learned the techniques of enameling, engraving, cutting and designing. However, the emphasis there on traditional decorative pieces she knew would not allow her to express her own point of view.

The Academy of Fine Art in Cologne was next, to expand her skills into sculpture. There she found the freedom to express her artistic vision in the glass medium. That vision drew its inspiration from nature, and focused on humanity's temporal existence. The fragility and translucency of glass were thus the perfect attributes to express this, and the children that figure in much of her work represent innocence and vulnerability.

Sibylle has developed several techniques that allow her to portray a mysterious world, a dreamlike atmosphere where connections are tenuous and brittle. Among these are enclosing sculptural pieces under glass domes that are thought of as protectors. But the domes also provide an extra surface on which to apply an image.

During the workshop Sibylle demonstrated some of the meticulous, complex processes she uses to produce her work, including painting a 'model' with soap, then with hot wax. When the wax cools it is removed and used to create a mold for glass.

In its natural state glass is clear; to create the ethereal, dreamy effect she desires, Sibylle will make it "foggy" by controlling the temperature. With medium temperature it becomes opalescent, with higher temperature it will become opaque. ■

## Distinguished Artists Series 2016



## DONALD FRIEDLICH

Asparagus stalk about to become a mold model.  
 Inset: Display of jewelry made by Don Friedlich. Photos by Cleaver Mouton

Jacqueline Urow

In June, Donald Friedlich presented a talk and demonstration of the techniques he uses to make his stunning glass brooches.

Don was a goldsmith for many years before he spent a month at the Corning Museum of Glass. He first collaborated with a glassblower and then with a master engraver. When the residency was over, Don had produced twenty-seven boxes filled with glass objects, and a new passion was ignited.

It took years before Don figured out how to turn his small glass shapes into jewelry and then to create molds that would produce the designs he imagined. The simplest solutions are often not simple to discover. He might spend three days searching for a solution that could save fifteen minutes of fabrication time, but the shortcut can be useful ever after.

Art, for Don, is a pursuit for learning, creating and playing. He is attracted to the color, form and sensuality of glass. His humor

and playfulness are evident in the purple and blue glass asparagus stalk brooches for which he is becoming known. Don casts these pieces directly from vegetables. The organic material is burned out of the plaster mold and replaced by glass. Then, cold working brings the object into its final form.

Choice of materials, design and adapting technology to the creation of art fascinate Don. "Brooches live in a fabric world," he notes. Therefore he may focus on how their design alters the appearance of the fabric on which they are worn. And, his magnification series uses clear glass to magnify and distort the weave of the underlying fabric.

Don is first a small scale sculptor. Working in series, playing, experimenting, "obsessing," and always learning, Don leaves us with this thought: "If you do ten variations, one will purr." His jewelry had us all purring at the Distinguished Artist Workshop this spring. ■

# Craft Tour Pittsburgh: Up and Down the Three Rivers



(Left) Ed Eberle demonstrating his meticulous painting technique. Right: The kitchen in Luke and Barbara Ward's art-filled home. Photos by Stanley Klein.

Patricia Lemur

On JRA's Japan trip in October 2015, Pat Arnold, Pat Young and I proposed a trip to Pittsburgh. Nine months later, 20 enthusiastic Alliance travelers crossed dozens of Pittsburgh's 446 bridges to explore its galleries, art institutions, and private collections. They were awed by how this once grimy steel town has transformed itself into an exciting craft destination.

Two galleries were highlights: the Morgan Glass Gallery welcomed visitors with a cocktail hour, and metal artist Michael Enn Strvet showed us his spectacular new work at the James Gallery. [ Strvet was selected by JRA to receive the Recognition of Excellence in Metal in 2009 for work shown at Art-a-matic.ed.]

Private homes visited included contemporary glass in Luke and Barbara Ward's townhouse, which included works by William Morris and JRA's Liz Mears. Ada and Rob Brandege's lifetime collection of folk art and handmade furniture filled three loft apartments with breathtaking views of the city.

The studio of internationally known ceramics artist Ed Eberle was a treat. Eberle's black and white pieces range from simple faces on tiny teardrops to huge multi-piece constructions.

The tour coincided with the 22nd triennial FiberArtInternational (fi2016), an event that uses the term "fiber" expansively. Familiar

materials such as yarn, felt, cord and fabric, joined unlikely art supplies such as Q-tips, cosmetic sponges and tampon applicators to make stunning products of beauty and meaning. Lauren Sims, fi2016 Director and Kate Lydon from the Society of Contemporary Craft spoke knowledgeably about the work from 14 countries.

Two other temporary exhibits wowed the Pittsburgh visitors. "Killer Heels" is a retrospective of boots' and shoes' glamorous history at the Frick Museum. And "Turned On," a show of contemporary chandeliers at the Pittsburgh Glass Center, included works by Susan Taylor Glasgow and Carmen Lozar.

The narrow cobblestone streets and Federal houses in the North Side area contrasted with the modern installations at the Mattress Factory Museum, Randyland, The City of Asylum and the Manchester Craftsmen Guild. At this last venue visitors were treated to a description of how instruction in ceramics can benefit a troubled young person's life.

We dined sumptuously on Asian fare in Shadyside, with Pittsburgh's premier chef Kevin Sousa across from a steel mill in Braddock, in the famous Strip District and atop Mt. Washington overlooking the confluence of Pittsburgh's three rivers. The trip was "delicious" in every way! ■

# Helena and the Bray

*The Bray Foundation "is a place where people come of age, finding a niche in the centuries-old continuum of the ceramic arts."*

—Peter Held, in *A Ceramic Continuum: Fifty Years of The Archie Bray Influence*

## Robert Sinclair

A busload of enthusiasts from the James Renwick Alliance and Arizona State University spent an eventful week in and around Helena, Montana, visiting the Archie Bray Foundation while meeting the myriad craft artists in the area and basking in Montana's laid-back hospitality. Visitors from the sweltering East especially enjoyed the respite from extreme heat and humidity.

The week of our visit coincided with the Bray's 65th anniversary. Archie Bray, whose day job was running the biggest brickworks in Montana, set up his foundation in 1951. The first resident artists he brought in were Peter Voukos from Bozeman and Rudy Autio from Butte. Voukos and Autio became leaders in the post-World War II revolution in American ceramics, and the Bray has gone from strength to strength since then.

Peter Held, our guide on this trip, had been a resident artist at the Bray, and for 11 years was executive director and curator of Helena's Holter Museum of Art. Peter seemed to know everyone. He was a fount of information about the Bray and the people we visited. Essential logistical backup was provided by tour coordinator Clemmer Montague of the Renwick Alliance.

Ceramics are the focus of the Bray Foundation, and although we didn't ignore other media, they were our trip's focus as well. All told, we saw roughly 40 ceramic artists in and around Helena and Bozeman. These are just a few of the highlights, ceramic and otherwise:

- The work of current resident director Steven Young Lee, whose ceramics are on the cover of *Craft for a Modern World: The Renwick Gallery Collection* by Nora Atkinson, and in the Renwick Gallery's current exhibition, *Connections*.
- The ceramic works of Josh DeWeese, a former resident director of the Bray, who builds large vessels with intricate glazing.
- The reclaimed, repurposed art of Robert Harrison.
- The anthropomorphic ceramic animals of Beth Cavener.
- Deborah Butterfield's sculptures of horses made from found objects, especially pieces of wood.

- John Buck's "mechanical kinetic sculptures." Buck's constructions are all made from wood. They are incredibly large and complex, and they *move*. The piece he was working on at the time of our visit filled one side of his cavernous studio.
- And in downtown Helena, the mosaic mural, designed and installed by participants at a Bray workshop, that came into being during our visit.

Everything came together raucously Saturday evening at the 65th anniversary craft auction. Bray artists, supporters from the surrounding area, and outlanders like our group all participated vigorously, impelled by the excellent auctioneer. The enthusiasm at the auction, not to mention its success, are measures of the affection inspired by the Bray. ■



Founder Archie Bray Sr. and resident artist Rudy Autio at the Archie Bray Foundation, July 22, 1951. Photo courtesy of the Archie Bray Foundation.



# JRA'S BEGINNINGS

Paul Parkman

In the fall of 1980, Lloyd Herman, Founding Director of the Renwick Gallery, had lost financial support for the gallery's popular lecture series on American crafts. It occurred to him to found a "Friends" organization and he asked his friend Charles R. Gailis to approach a small group of local craft enthusiasts for their interest in working with him to make this happen – and the James Renwick Alliance was born!

That small group of enthusiasts developed the idea of becoming an independent nonprofit organization supporting not only public programs, but assisting the Renwick Gallery in expanding its collection of contemporary craft art.

Looking back at the 35 years since the JRA's founding, it is amazing how successful this effort has been. Perhaps foremost of our accomplishments has been the Alliance's ability to fund the purchase of 184 wonderful objects for the Renwick's permanent collection.

Among the other important efforts the Alliance has supported are:

- Annual "Spring Craft Weekend," our major fund raising event.
- Educational programs, including artist demonstrations, lectures and symposia.
- A named Fellowship, "The James Renwick Fellowship in American Craft."
- Publications, including the *Quarterly*, and three books: *Skilled Work: American Craft in the Renwick Gallery*; *40 under 40: Craft Futures*; and, most recently, the book for the wildly popular reopening exhibition after the renovation, *WONDER*.
- Study tours to national and international venues to meet craft artists, tour museums and visit private collections.
- Awards honoring *Masters of the Medium* and *Distinguished Educators*; awards to special supporters – *One of a Kind* and the *Distinguished Service Awards*; and the *Chrysalis Award* for outstanding emerging craft artists.

From its modest beginnings more than three decades ago, who would have thought it possible that our organization could have made all of this happen? What a proud history! ■

Photo by Miriam Rosenthal.

Renwick Gallery

Renwick Gallery

**WONDER**

OPENING NOVEMBER 13

ARTISTS

JENNIFER ANGUS  
CHAKAIA BOOKER  
GABRIEL DAWE

Renwick Gallery

Here they are, front and center, and enjoying the talk at the de la Torre Brothers DAS workshop. Photo by Miriam Rosenthal.



# Tribute to Slalwart Founders

## THE PARKMANS

As we celebrate the 35th anniversary of the Alliance it is appropriate to count the organization's blessings: numbered among those blessings are Paul and Elmerina Parkman. The Parkmans who were among the eleven founding members of the JRA are now its unofficial archivists. Their memories of the events and people that have shaped the JRA over the years are a great resource for the JRA [and for this *Quarterly* editor]!

Not only were Elmerina and Paul there at the creation, they have continued their strong support for the JRA and the Renwick Gallery, in part by taking leadership roles. Elmerina was President

1984-86, Paul was President 1993-95 and there has always been at least one Parkman on the JRA Board. Paul and Elmerina have served on and been chairs of various committees, as well as being instrumental in starting the *Quarterly*, the James Renwick Fellowship in American Craft program, and the traditional dinners with visiting Distinguished Artists. Elmerina and Paul have been Patrons of every Spring Craft Weekend, from 1983 onward!

But perhaps their greatest claim to fame is attendance at just about every JRA program, from 1982 on. Paul and Elmerina arrive early, obtain front row seats, and don't miss a word! ■

# REBECCA STEVENS To Receive Award



Rebecca Stevens  
Photo by Miriam Rosenthal.

The Board of Trustees of the George Washington University Museum and The Textile Museum will honor their Consulting Curator of Contemporary Textiles Rebecca Stevens on November 3. At the dinner and award presentation Rebecca will receive the Award of Distinction "for exceptional contributions that have advanced The Textile Museum in fulfilling its mission".

The JRA has also benefitted from Rebecca's organizing skill and enthusiasm for craft, since she joined the organization almost from its beginning. She has been on the Alliance Board, has been a vice president and was a founder of the Craft Leaders Caucus. The JRA certainly congratulates Rebecca on this recognition of her contribution to scholarship and appreciation of textile craft. ■



THE GEORGE WASHINGTON  
UNIVERSITY MUSEUM

THE TEXTILE MUSEUM

## Afternoon of Learning: **Glass Sculpture**

Gwen Paulson

Larry Sibrack was enlightening and entertaining at the June 18th Craft Leaders Caucus Afternoon of Learning. Organized by Gwen Paulson and held at the lovely home of Sandy and Norman Mitchell, about 20 people were educated by Larry's insightful comparisons between aspects of sculpture in the medium of glass and contemporary sculptural works in numerous media.

Like so many JRA members, Larry's interest in contemporary crafts started with a single medium, in his case ceramics, and then through diligent study and explorations of ACC craft shows, Larry's interests broadened and his knowledge deepened. He and his wife Rita now pursue glass as their primary medium of interest.

Spending six months a year in Naples, Florida and away from his medical practice in Connecticut, Larry has immersed himself in the study of contemporary art as a docent at the Baker Museum (formerly Naples Museum of Art) Larry has studied topics such as abstract expressionism, minimalism, and conceptual art. The argument that Larry made in his well-received presentation was that one can find examples of each of these streams of art in sculptures made in glass, but that neither the glass art world nor



Speaker Larry Sibrack with JRA President Jackie Urow. Photo by Gwen Paulson.

the broader contemporary art world recognizes the congruence between sculptures in glass and sculptures in Cor-ten steel or marble or bronze. The art world is poorer because of this missed opportunity, and the artists using glass as a medium are poorer because their work is significantly undervalued relative to comparable works in the other media. ■

# Ninth Annual JRA DAY

J. G. Harrington



Grasses Bottle by Marilee Schumann.



Collage of hand knit scarves by Miriam Rosenthal.

Mark your calendars now for the ninth annual JRA Day Craft Artist Exhibition and Sale on Saturday, December 3 at the Woman's Club of Chevy Chase. JRA Day features artists who are members of the James Renwick Alliance. The proceeds benefit the Alliance.

Close to 40 artists across all of the craft media will be participating in this year's show. Returning artists include Cara Jablon (jewelry), Gayla Lee (glass), William Peirce (wood), Miriam Rosenthal (hand knit scarves and photography), and Sandra Zacharia (jewelry). This year's show also features six new artists, including textile artist Leslie Bowman-Friedlander, glass artist Merrilee Harrigan, and ceramic artist Marilee Schumann. Information on all of the artists is available on the JRA Day web site ([www.jraday.org](http://www.jraday.org)) and Facebook page (at JRA Day Show). This year's show features artists whose work has been shown at the American Craft Council's Baltimore Craft Show, the Torpedo Factory in Alexandria, and at Glen Echo.

The last two JRA Days have had the highest sales and the most visitors since the show began, and we're trying for more records this year. The JRA Day committee is once again looking for sponsors to help support free admission to the show. We also need volunteers to help on the day of the show – everything from set-up and take-down to bringing lunch to the artists. If you're interested in helping, please get in touch with the JRA office or co-chairs Jere Gibber ([jgibber@aol.com](mailto:jgibber@aol.com)) or J.G. Harrington ([jgharrington@cooley.com](mailto:jgharrington@cooley.com)). ■

# CONNECTIONS OPENING:

Some of the many people attending the exhibit opening on June 30 who were engaged by the craft art pieces.



A



D



B



E



C



F

- A: Wendell Castle *Ghost Clock*.<sup>16</sup> Peter Voulkus. *Hole in One*.<sup>17</sup>
- B: (from top) Mary Lee Hu. *Choker*.<sup>12</sup> Richard Mawdsley. *Feast Bracelet*.<sup>14</sup> Joshua DeMonte. *Curtains and Balcony Bracelet*.<sup>14</sup>
- C: (from left) Dale Chihuley. *Irish Moors Cylinder with drawing*.<sup>1</sup> Dale Chihuley. *Untitled from Blanket Cylinder Series*.<sup>2</sup> Dan Dailey. *Parkman Coupe*.<sup>3</sup> Ed Rossbach. *The Plains*.<sup>4</sup>
- D: (from left) Ron Layport. *The Running*.<sup>8</sup> Robyn Horn. *Slashed Millstone*.<sup>10</sup>
- E: Andy Paiko. *Spinning Wheel*.<sup>13</sup>
- F: Judith Schechter. *The Birth of Eve*.<sup>6</sup>

(For footnotes, refer to back cover) Photos by Gary Slaven.



G



I



J



H



K

- G: Terese Agnew. *Practice Bomber Range in the Mississippi Flyway.*<sup>3</sup>
- H: (from back) Laurel Roth Hope. *Biodiversity Reclamation Suit: Passenger Pigeon.*<sup>20</sup>  
Laurel Roth Hope. *Biodiversity Reclamation Suit: Carolina Parakeet.*<sup>21</sup>
- I: Edward Moulthrop. *Hackberry Spheroid.*<sup>19</sup>
- J: Ehren Tool. *198 of Thousands.*<sup>9</sup>
- K: David Ellsworth. *Black Pot.*<sup>8</sup>

Photos by Gary Slayen

# SHARON BUCHANAN

Photo by Miriam Rosenthal



Sharon Buchanan

Sharon Buchanan, who grew up in a museum-free town in Oklahoma, was initially sensitized to art by her mother whose flare for creating unique and artistic table settings using ordinary objects was sought out by friends.

With that limited exposure to art, spending her first two college years in New York City was an eye-opening treat. But, with no formal education in art, she did not trust

her understanding of what she saw. She returned to the University of Oklahoma for a year, and then took her senior year in Vienna, Austria with art history as a focus.

After graduation, she and new husband Bob went to Japan for three years where they experienced many of the artistic aspects of life. Food, ceramics, floral arrangements, bonsai gardens, and woven fences - all aspects of daily life - were created thoughtfully and beautifully. It was during this period that she and Bob began collecting art by visiting ceramics villages and antique stores for older craft objects.

Now fully engaged by art, when Sharon returned to Washington she became a docent at the Corcoran Gallery of Art following rigorous training. She was introduced to avant garde art, and heard lectures by such luminaries as Gene Davis of the Washington Color School.

Augmenting the experience, there were gallery openings that rose to the level of 'happenings.'

With this acquired knowledge, in 1972 she started an art consulting firm that acted as a liaison between artists, architects and owners of commercial spaces. Some of the art that was commissioned challenged the artists to stretch beyond their comfort zone to create large scale, site-specific work.

In the mid 1990s Sharon's friend Anne Mehringer suggested that she might be interested in the programs and travel of the JRA. Anne was right, and starting with the Gala of 1995 at which the Buchanans acquired an auction piece, Sharon has been involved. She has held many positions of responsibility: Board member, chair of Caucus Day, organizer of a Patrons Evening at which the Chinese Ambassador appeared, and is now a member of the Acquisitions sub-Committee.

Traveling with the JRA has been an enriching experience since it allows Sharon and Bob to learn new ways of looking at handmade objects. In an artist's studio one can absorb their aesthetic and hear about why they took a particular creative road.

Sharon and Bob live surrounded by art objects collected on their travels. They feel fortunate both to possess art that is both sculptural and blends with Sharon's focus on nature and the environment. They also remind her of their travel to remote places to better understand the peoples of the various places where they spent time. ■

Bibiana K. Obler

## FELLOW BIBIANA OBLER RESEARCHES "ANTI-CRAFT TRADITION"



Bibiana K. Obler

My James Renwick Fellowship in American Craft in 2012 gave me the time to immerse myself in a new project: *The Anti-Craft Tradition*, a book on the relation between fine art and studio craft from the 1960s through the 1990s. When I began the fellowship, I had a hypothesis that there was a strand of artistic thought manifesting ambivalence towards craft that ran through the later decades of the twentieth century

but that had not been noticed by art historians. I worried that the "anti-craft tradition" might be so subterranean and unconscious as to be historically irrelevant. My research supported these suspicions and further shaped my argument.

There is a widespread understanding that, with the rise of conceptual art beginning in the late 1960s, a deep rift arose between the art world, dominated by conceptualism, and the craft world, which emphasized the importance of skill. These decades arguably witnessed an apex in the polarization between

art and craft. Yet close interchange existed as well, with fine and craft artists often tapping into the friction between the worlds in order to investigate the merits and limitations of skill and/or its absence. *The Anti-Craft Tradition* will focus on case studies of this interchange in a number of craft genres: ceramics, glass, jewelry, woodwork, and the fiber arts.

My time at the Smithsonian was crucial to the development of this project. When I left, I had a different list of artist exemplars than when I started. Since then I have made a great deal of progress on writing *The Anti-Craft Tradition*. In the meantime, my first book, *Intimate Collaborations: Kandinsky and Matisse, Arp and Tschubar* (Yale University Press, 2014) was published. Other recent highlights include the publication of my essay, "Craft as a Response to War," in *Nation Building: Craft and Contemporary American Culture*, and in 2014 I was promoted to Associate Professor at George Washington University.

My months as a Renwick Fellow were valuable for the resources made available to launch my book, and also through meeting a fantastic cohort of Smithsonian Fellows and members of the Renwick community. ■

# DAVID D'ORIO

HYATTSVILLE'S GLASS AND SCULPTURE MASTER



(Left) David picking up ground glass on his gather at the de la Torre brothers DAS workshop. (Right) David in his natural habitat with Richard Jolley (third from the left) Tommie Rush (third from the right) and three able assistants. Photos by Miriam Rosenthal.

David D'Orio's path to being the Executive Director of DC Glass Works has been circuitous. Finding what he really wanted to do with his life took a while, but has reached a happy conclusion.

His story started in Litchfield, Connecticut, then a farming community. He started as an apprentice in plumbing, but that ended when the housing bubble burst. Then he became a studio assistant for sculptor Philip Grausman, working on a sculpture of a human head sixteen feet high! Though daunting, this experience convinced David that he wanted to work in the arts.

After some training, he became involved with creating molds for sculpture. This work taught him how essential working within a team was to him. The myth of the lone artist faded with the rich interaction with coworkers who became friends.

Within the sculpture program at the University of Hartford, David built a glass studio. Glass attracted his attention when watching a glass blower; the material was transparent, yet was still within the ambit of sculpture.

The art that he is currently making utilizes a mixture of found objects, blown glass and industrial materials that create symbolic imagery. That symbolism is intended to communicate David's view that our belief that technology can solve social problems is misguided since every solution realized creates new social or environmental problems.

David has made an enormous contribution to the art scene of the Washington area by having founded the D.C. Glassworks. When he returned to Washington after college he discovered some glassblowers with a studio on Capitol Hill. They provided him some blowing time in exchange for assistance with their work, and a community was born. Later the group moved to their present location in Hyattsville.

The JRA is much indebted to David for allowing JRA's Distinguished Artist Series to use his studio, the only hot glass shop in the area. Most recent was Don Friedlich's presentation; over the last few years the de la Torre brothers, Richard Jolley and Tommie Rush, and Lino Tagliapietra have demonstrated there

Thank you David ■





Chris Shea, Embassy Row Grille, Forged steel. Private residence, Washington, D.C. Photo by Anything Photographic.

## CHRIS SHEA JRA'S ARTISTIC BLACKSMITH



Chris Shea

How likely would it be that Chris Shea, now a successful blacksmith, had started his adult life with a degree in literature and then spent six years working at the Shakespeare Theatre Company while hoping to become a novelist? Not very.

In his late 20's, Chris began to "make things" in his spare time, finding a pleasure in that pursuit that he remembered from childhood. That led to his taking courses in ceramics and woodworking. Noticing that he liked the look of metal paint on his ceramic pieces he sensed that he might enjoy working in metal.

So off he went to Tennessee to the Appalachian Center for Craft for two and a half years to learn metalworking techniques. There he had classes, contact with experienced metalworkers and, most valuable, lots of studio time.

The protracted time it took Chris to settle on his medium gave him the opportunity to ponder what is needed to make such a decision wisely: have an affinity for the material, enjoy the process of working with it, and the resulting forms and textures must have compatibility with the vision the artist wishes to express.

Because of the physical demands, one thinks of a blacksmith as working with at least one other person. Chris prefers to work alone, so fortunately the forms he likes lend themselves to being made in parts which are manageable by one person. The variety of joinery methods he uses add interest to the whole: "that's the poetry."

Though his routine is to work alone, he is not isolated. There is a community of sharing among blacksmiths. They call on one another when a large project is involved, or when one is using a technique that is new to them. Chris has sought input when, for example, he needed to use an alloy he was unfamiliar with, and he has provided advice to other blacksmiths. He reports that blacksmiths are open-hearted and willing to share knowledge.

Chris believes that his design ideas have not changed substantially over time; they were strong and clear from the beginning. What have changed are his abilities. He welcomes learning new techniques as that allows him new ways of expressing his aesthetic.

And what a lovely aesthetic it is! The curling, organic shapes in porch railings, the amusing insect-like legs on his updated "bentwood" chairs, and the functional corkscrew that is a thing of beauty. Maybe some of the literature is coming through the metal? ■

## WHAT IS A MUSEUM'S Permanent Collection?

Marc Grainer

*Editor's note: This is the second part of the article by Marc Grainer giving interesting background, largely from the museum's perspective, on permanent collections. The first part was published in the Summer JRA Quarterly.*

### How are art objects accessioned into a museum's permanent collection?

While details of the selection process vary, a generic decision-making process includes:

- A museum's curatorial staff does the initial review of "candidate" art objects being considered.
- Objects, then, are recommended to an acquisitions/collections committee, which either accepts or rejects items outright or makes recommendations to a museum's full board.

### Do all museums maintain permanent collections?

While most do, some museums just provide a platform for temporary exhibits. These are often called Kunsthallen.

### What sources of funds are there for acquiring items for a museum's permanent collection?

- Support organizations like the JRA.
- Individual private donors providing money or contributions of art objects (e.g. many JRA members funded acquisitions from the *40 under 40: Craft Futures* exhibition.)
- A museum's restricted funds that are earmarked for acquisitions that meet specified criteria.
- Unrestricted museum funds (less and less available every year).

### How much of a museum's permanent collection is on display at any one time?

Usually only a small percentage. One way museums like the Renwick Gallery have expanded their display capacity is by having open storage. The Luce Center at SAAM provides space to display hundreds more craft objects than are exhibited at the Renwick Gallery.

### Does a museum ever deaccession items from its permanent collection?

This is rarely done, but deaccessioning can occur if a museum stops collecting items from a specific genre or has too many similar items. However, to do so, very rigorous guidelines must be followed, and the proceeds of any sales must be used to support a museum's permanent collection.

### May a donor of an item require that it will never be deaccessioned or that it will always be on display?

The general policy of most museums is not to accept donations of art encumbered by such restrictions.

### What collateral material does the museum try to collect?

When Ken Trapp was Curator-in-Charge of the Renwick Gallery, he attempted to collect working drawings, maquettes, bills of sale, gallery brochures and similar materials whenever possible. These items provide an historical context for an item being accessioned. ■



Richard Marquis. Teapot Goblets.<sup>12</sup>

## WHAT TO DO WITH ALL THAT STUFF?

Geraldine Ostrove

Although art collectors think first about the objects they acquire, along with them come a variety of documents. You may wonder, "What am I to do with all this stuff?" This article focuses on the importance of these documents and their treatment by collectors. Here, "documents" covers such items as receipts, exhibit catalogs, correspondence, recorded interviews, videos, and books. Such supporting materials can:

- definitively identify the objects: artist, type of object, title, date it was created, and a physical description;
- give acquisition information: the date, from whom purchased, its cost or if free or in exchange;
- provide a working history of your collection;
- be conveyed with the object when it changes hands; and
- be used in research. The need for documentation may gain significance with time.

Managing documents consists of caring for the physical materials as well as for the information they contain.

The physical materials can be a challenge because of their varying sizes, conditions, durability, and needs for storage. Organizing information requires recognition of categories of data, as well as the media on which it is recorded.

The condition of fragile documents needs prompt attention. Consider photographing or photocopying these documents. Unfold folded papers and straighten bent corners, carefully remove staples, metal paper clips, and rubber bands. Never use cellophane tape which damages documents and may itself deteriorate.

The preservation requirements of audio-visual materials differ: photographic images fade; projection and playback equipment becomes obsolete. Older materials may need to be transferred to more stable or more current media. The temperature under which audio and visual materials are kept is of particular importance to their preservation. Planning for the usability of audio-visual materials over time may best be done in consultation with specialists in the document media.

For many documents housing is important. Avoid damage from tightly jamming documents together in their container. It may be appropriate to interleave fragile paper documents with sheets of acid-free paper or store them in Mylar sleeves or acid-free folders or boxes. There are firms that specialize in the manufacture of such materials and have product catalogs.

The second group of tasks concerns information related to the craft object itself, including a description of the object (identifying the individual artist or culture). You may also record the object's acquisition, its exhibition history, address of the artist, photo-

graph of the object, bibliography of the object or artist, and where the object is housed.

The best management of data is achieved by recording it electronically in a structured computer program so that it can easily be retrieved. If you use one of the standard suites of programs, one component is likely a spreadsheet, generic software that is basically an automated ledger. If you choose this type of program you need to create a list of data categories. There are also software packages designed specifically for recording data about collections of objects. Such packages incorporate data categories and data manipulation strategies that you would otherwise have to figure out yourself, thereby saving you some conceptual work. Resources available on the Web can also be helpful. Even a simple search such as "documenting your collection" brings up some very useful hits, including document management forms and manuals from various archival organizations, as well as strategies and advice for non-specialists from several state historical societies.

*Geraldine Ostrove is a librarian recently retired from the Library of Congress.* ■



Kim Schmahmann. *Bureau of Bureaucracy*.<sup>17</sup>

## SAVE THE DATES

### ARTIST TALK BY NORWOOD VIVIANO

October 13, 5:30pm

Renwick Gallery, Rubenstein Grand Salon

### CURATOR GALLERY TALK WITH LLOYD HERMAN CURATOR OF CRAFT NORA ATKINSON

October 21, Noon

Meet in Renwick lobby

### ARTIST TALK BY KRISTEN MORGIN

Discussing how her unglazed ceramic work reflects American nostalgia through collaged effects

October 30, 2:00pm

Renwick Gallery, Rubenstein Grand Salon

### HANDI-HOUR

Crafting and craft beer happy hour. This time: flowers and foliage bookmark and pillar candle.

November 10, 5:30-8:00pm

Tickets at [AmericanArt.com/handihour](http://AmericanArt.com/handihour)

### JRA'S ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

November 15, 7:00-8:30pm

In the Katzen Arts Center at American University Museum



Glass Bowl by Merrilee Harrigan, JRA Day artist.

The JRA trips and tours planning committees are going through major reorganization. They have a number of enticing events in various stages of planning, but at press time there were still many loose ends to be confirmed. Thus we suggest that you keep an eye on the weekly email newsletter from the JRA Office. This will be your best source of information about events as it becomes available and will indicate how you can register. ■

## CREDITS FOR ART WORKS FROM THE SMITHSONIAN AMERICAN ART MUSEUM

1. Dale Chihuly. *Irish Moors Cylinder with Drawing*. Ca. 1975. Glass. 9x7x7 in. Gift of the James F. Dicke Family. © Chihuly Studio. All rights reserved.
2. Dale Chihuly. *Blanket Cylinder Series*. 1984. Glass 13 1/2 x 9 1/2 in. Gift of Eleanor T. and Samuel J. Rosenfeld. © 1984 Dale Chihuly
3. Dan Dailey. *Parkman Coupe*. 1988. Glass and bronze 17 1/4 x 10 x 10 in. Gift of Elmerina and Paul Parkman. © 1988 Dan Dailey
4. Ed Rossbach. *The Plains*. 1990. Ash, bark, cotton, paint, string, and rice paper. 14 3/4 x 11 5/8 x 8 1/4 in. Gift of Eleanor T. and Samuel J. Rosenfeld
5. Terese Agnew. *Practice Bomber Range in the Mississippi Flyway*. 1999-2002 cottons, bridal tulle, and denim 80 x 95 in. Gift of W and R Pieper Family
6. David Ellsworth. *Black Pot*. 1944 white ash 14 1/8 x 13 1/2 in. Gift of Jane and Arthur K. Mason on the occasion of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Renwick Gallery
7. Ehren Tool. *198 of Thousands*. 2014-2015. Stoneware with glaze and decals each approx. 5 x 3 1/2 in. Gift of the artist in honor of the people who give the work meaning. © 2015, Ehren Tool.
8. Judith Schaechter. *The Birth of Eve*. 2013. Flash glass, vitreous paint, silver stain, and copper foil. 57 x 31 x 2 in. Gift of the James Renwick Alliance. © 2013, Judith Schaechter.
9. Ron Layport. *The Running*. 2008. Bleached maple, paint, dye, stain, and resin. 6 1/2 x 18 in. Museum purchase made possible by the Windgate Charitable Foundation. © 2007, Ron Layport.
10. Robyn Horn. *Slashed Millstone*. 1996. Ebonized redwood burl and ebony. 21 3/8 x 19 5/8 x 8 in. Gift of Margot R. Heckman.
11. Andy Paiko. *Spinning Wheel*. 2007. glass, cocobolo, steel, brass and leather. 60 x 38 x 20 in. Gift of Peg and Bob Van Andel. © 2007 Andy Paiko.
12. Mary Lee Hu. *Choker (#38)* 1978. Fine and sterling silver, 18k and 24k gold, and lacquered copper. 9 5/8 x 6 12 x 7/8 in. Gift of the James Renwick Alliance.
13. Richard Mawdsley. *Feast Bracelet*. 1974. Sterling silver, jade and pearls. 3 3/4 x 2 3/4 x 4 1/2 in. Gift of the James Renwick Alliance in honor of Lloyd E. Herman, director emeritus, Renwick Gallery.
14. Joshua DeMonte. *Curtains and Balcony Bracelet*. 2008. 33% glass-filled polyamide. 6 x 7 x 5 in. Gift of Irene and Bob Sinclair. © 2008, Joshua DeMonte.
15. Peter Vouklos. *Hole in One*. 1978. Ceramic. 43 12 x 16 1/2 in. Bequest of Edith S. and Arthur J. Levin. © 1978, Vouklos Family Trust.
16. Wendell Castle. *Ghost Clock*. 1985. Bleached Honduras mahogany. 86 1/4 x 24 1/2 x 15 in. Museum purchase through the Smithsonian Institution Collections Acquisition Program. © 1985, Wendell Castle.
19. Edward Moulthrop. *Hackberry Spheroid*. 1995. Hackberry. 17 5/8 x 17 7/8 in. Gift of the James Renwick Alliance on the occasion of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Renwick Gallery.
20. Laurel Roth Hope. *Biodiversity Reclamation Suit: Passenger Pigeon*. 2008. Suit: cotton, silk, bamboo, wool and acrylic blended yarn. Mannequin: basswood, acrylic paint, gouache, glass, pewter, and walnut. 17 x 8 x 9 in. Gift of Daniel Greenberg and Susan Steinhäuser. © 2008, Laurel Roth Hope.
21. Laurel Roth Hope. *Biodiversity Reclamation Suit: Carolina Parakeet*. 2009. Suit: cotton, silk, bamboo, wool, and acrylic blended yarn. Mannequin: basswood, acrylic paint, gouache, glass, pewter and walnut. 9 x 8 x 13 in. Gift of Joyce Schwartz in honor of Judith S. Weisman, museum purchase, and museum purchase from friends of the Renwick Gallery. © 2009, Laurel Roth Hope.
22. Richard Marquis. *Teapot Goblets*. 1991-94. Glass. 7 5/8 x 5 3/4. Gift of the James Renwick Alliance.
23. Kim Schmahmann. *Bureau of Bureaucracy*. 1993-1999. Various hardwoods, neneers, marquetry, mother of pearl, gold leaf, and brass. 96 x 36 x 24 in. Gift of an anonymous donor. © 1993, Kim S. Schmahmann.