James Malenda

James Malenda
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EDUCATION
S.U.N.Y. New Paltz, Gold & Silversmithing, MFA 1975
Kent State University, Design & Crafts, BFA 1971

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE
Professor, Fine Metals, Certaldo Italy, ECU 2016
Professor Emeritus, Fine Metals, Kutztown University, PA 19530 2015
Professor, Fine Metals, Kutztown University, PA 19530 1987-2015
Associate Professor, Metal Arts, Bradley University, Peoria, IL 1976-87

SELECTED EXHIBITION
2018- ITALY INTENSIVE, ECU Gallery, Greenville NC

2013- TOP 10 AT 10, Charles A. Wurstum Museum of Fine Arts, Racine, WI
2012- KEAD EXHIBITION, Insa Art Center, Seoul, South Korea
2011- WORLD DESIGN INTERNATIONAL Songshan Creative Cultural Center, Taipei, Taiwan
2010- RE-MAKE-RE-MODEL, National Ornamental Metal Museum, Memphis, TN
2009- 7th ENAMEL FESTIVAL EXHIBITION, Giraefe, Morez, France
2008- WEDDING RITUALS, Tong In Gallery, Seoul, South Korea
2007- RING SHOW; THEN AND NOW, National Ornamental Metal Museum, Memphis, TN
2006- ONE-MAN EXHIBITION, Galerie Schmuck und Objekt, Ute Wolff-Brinckmann, Erfurt, Germany
2005- METAMORPHOSIS, Sandra Blain Gallery, Arrowmont School of Crafts, Gatlinburg, TN
2004- NANCY YAW GALLERY, Birmingham, MI
2003- KOREAN ENAMELING ART ASSOCIATION EXHIBITION, Insa Art Center, Seoul South, Korea
2002- GEORGE E. OHR ART CHALLENGE, Ohr-O'Keefe Museum, Biloxi, MS
2001- COLOR AND LIGHT, National Handcraft Museum, New Delhi, India
2000 - AMERICAN ENAMELS. Random Modern Gallery, Tacoma, WA
1999- SOFA, NYC, CHICAGO, Nancy Yaw Gallery, Birmingham, MI
1997- BEGUILING AND BRILLIANT BROOCHES, Studio Fusion, London, England

SELECTED WORKSHOPS AND LECTURES

Workshop-Enamelist Society Montserrat College, Beverly MA 2015
Workshop- R.I.T. Rochester Institute if Technology, 2014
Workshop- Enamel, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH, 2012
Workshop- Enamel, J. C. Campbell Folk School, Brasstown, NC 2009
Workshop- Enamel, Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts, Gatlinburg, TN, 2008, 2014
Workshop- Fabrication/ Enamel, Penland School of Arts & Crafts, Penland, NC 1975- 2005,
Workshop- Enamel, Azuay University, Cuenca, Ecuador, 2004
Lecture- "American Enamel", Buckinghamshire Chiltens University, High Wycombe, England, 2003
Workshop- Enamel, Art Zone, Bellevue CC, Seattle, WA, 2002
Workshop- Enamel, Newark Museum, Newark, NJ, 2001
Workshop- Enamel, Pennsylvania Society of Goldsmiths, 2000
Lecture- "American Enamel", China Central Art and Craft College, Bejing; Xi'an Academy of F.A. 1999
Workshop- Enamel, International Enamel Symposium, East Carolina University, Greenville, NC 1998
Workshop- Cloisonne', Enamel Soc., Arrowmont School of Arts & Crafts, Gatlinburg, TN 1997
Workshop- Fabrication for 3-D Enamel Forms, Peninsula Fine Arts Center, Newport News, VA 1995
Lecture- "Retrospective & American Enamel", Queens Road College, Bristol, England, 1994
Workshop- Fabrication for 3-D Enamel Forms, National Enamelist Guild, Washington, DC, 1993

AWARDS AND GRANTS

Thompson Enamel Award
House of Humor and Satire, Sculpture Award, Gabrovo, Bulgaria
Artists' Fellowship, Illinois Arts Council

COLLECTIONS

Museum of Art and Design, NYC
Enamel Arts Foundation, Los Angeles, CA
Nordenfjeldske Kunstrindustrimuseum, Trondheim, Norway

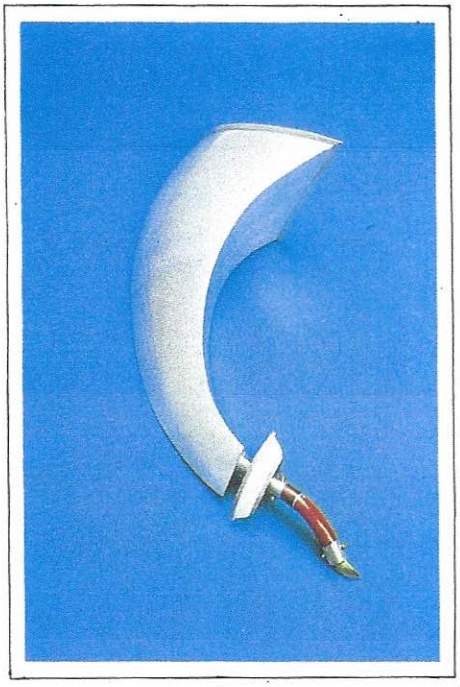
CONTEMPORARY PRACTICE OF AN ANCIENT CRAFT

BY SUSAN BARAHAL

Today, too few artists work in enamel. The process requires meticulous craftsmanship and considerable time, and unlike precious metals and stones, the material itself is of very little intrinsic value—enamel is essentially soft glass. However, throughout history the brilliant colors and jewel-like quality of enamels have evoked an almost spiritual dimension.

The art of enameling, which is basically the application of pulverized or crushed glass to a metal surface, can be traced to ancient Greece. The glass, or enamel, is fused to its metallic base by heat. In its pure form, the glass is colorless and transparent, but can be colored by adding various metallic oxides and made opaque by adding a clay-like substance. A range of greens can be obtained from copper, blues from cobalt and purples from manganese. Traditionally, the metal base to which the enamel is fused is either gold, silver or copper, although bronze, brass and even iron have been used.

James Malenda is one young artist who works in the tradition of the ancient metalsmiths and enamelists. He fabricates and hand raises his metal hollowware, many of which are enhanced with semi-precious and precious stones as well as enamel. Hand raising is the process of transforming a flat metal sheet into a three dimensional form. The metal is formed, or "raised" to its ultimate position by hammering it over steel stakes of various shapes. The metal must be heated often during this process in order to readjust its molecular structure, which as a result of the hammering is altered, making the metal resistant, and eventually likely to split. Heating relaxes the metal, allowing it to be continually reshaped. Because hammering scars the metal surface, the piece is then smoothed by a process called planishing. A planished form is one in which a smooth-faced hammer, called a planishing hammer, is consistently worked over the surface, removing irregular marks. The entire process is extremely time consuming. These techniques, like his combinations of materials, are traditional, yet the forms reflect Malenda's contemporary rendering.



Sail Piece, Vessel; Malenda (Sterling, gold, gold plate, enamel, ivory 14" long)

THROUGHOUT HISTORY THE BRILLIANT COLORS AND JEWEL-LIKE QUALITY OF ENAMELS HAVE EVOKED AN ALMOST SPIRITUAL DIMENSION. JAMES MALENDA IS ONE YOUNG ARTIST WHO HAS RESPECT FOR HISTORIC TECHNIQUES AND TRANSLATES THESE TRADITIONS INTO MODERN FORMS.

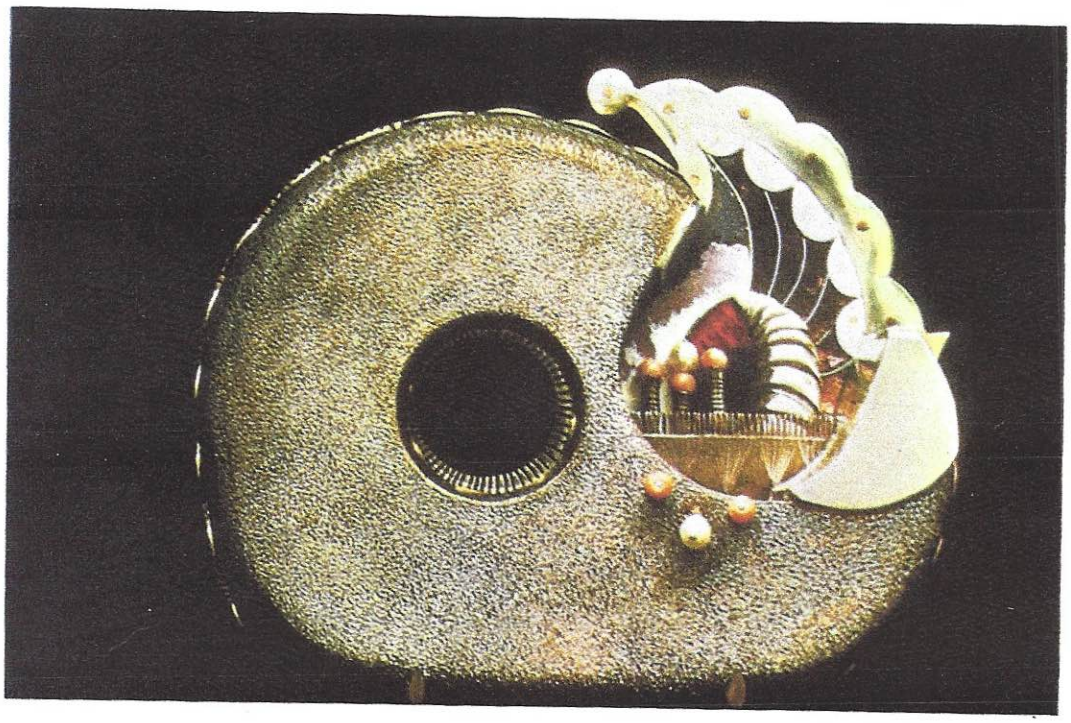
Malenda is not only keeping this ancient art alive, but he resorts frequently to its oldest form, the technique traceable to Greece in the fourth century B.C. known as *cloissoné*. The term derives from the French word "*cloison*," which means cell, or more exactly, the walls that form the cell. Thin metal ribbons or wires are formed into patterns and designs and adhered to the metal base. This creates a network or honeycomb of little compartments or cloisons. Each cell is then filled with variously colored enamels. The crushed enamel is mixed with a few drops of water to form a paste. A small amount of this mixture is lifted, usually with the aid of a dental tool or small brush, and is carefully packed into the tiny cells.

The piece is then fired in a kiln until the glass melts. After it is removed and allowed to cool, another layer of enamel is added to each cell. This process is repeated several times, since after each firing the enamels shrink to about two-thirds their original height. Each firing is a very crucial and potentially dangerous stage in the enameling process, since an excessive moment or two in the kiln could over fire the piece, thus burning the enamels and possibly melting the wires. Such damage is irreparable.

When the enamel level is slightly above the wires, the filling process is complete and the piece is then ground with a polishing stone to the level of the wires. The piece is then given a final firing to obtain a high gloss finish, since the grinding process dulls the enamel. The surface is smooth to the touch and yet the wires clearly separate one color from the other, giving distinct linear designs.

Malenda's "Spectacle Pin" is an example of this *cloissoné* process. He departs from the strict traditionalist approach in that separate colors are not confined to separate compartments. In some portions of the piece there is a blending of two or more colors within a *cloison*. He views his "Spectacle Pin" as "a sketch in which I work out plays on perspective and form through the use of line and color."

Spectacle Pin; Malenda (cloisonne enamel, 5½").



Belt Buckle; Malenda (bronze, brass, copper, silver, pearls, coral).

He uses both opaque and transparent enamels. Here the transparent colors are applied thinly over a gold or silver textured foil which is sandwiched between the enamel and the base metal. This creates a shimmering quality as well as an alternate texture. Ordinary spectacles have glass lenses within the frames. Here we also have glass lenses. But what a wonderful transformation of glass! A fantasy! A perspective reflection! In fact the right lens is a reversed reflection of the left. His "Belt Buckle," which is a combination of cast and fabricated metals, with stones and *cloisonné* enamel, also employs these fantasy images. A burst of fantastic shapes and colors come forth in a gushing fountain-like spray from a bronze cast tape dispenser.

Enameling on metal was very rare in the United States until the 1930's. After the *National Ceramic Exhibition of Enamels and Pottery* in 1932, enameling began to grow as a profession and craft, and also began to be introduced into high school and university art curricula. James Malenda was born in 1946 and did his undergraduate work in design at Kent State University in the early 1970's. He received his master of fine arts degree in gold and silversmithing at the State University of New York at New Paltz. It was not until graduate school that he discovered the possibilities and potential of combining metalsmithing and enameling. Malenda said that some years ago he was involved with painting, but discovered that he "could achieve the scale and feeling of monumentality, along with a richer color, by working quite small." He then began working more and more with enamels. Often his work is a combination of enamel and metalsmithing, and he feels it is strongest when he combines these two techniques in a single piece.

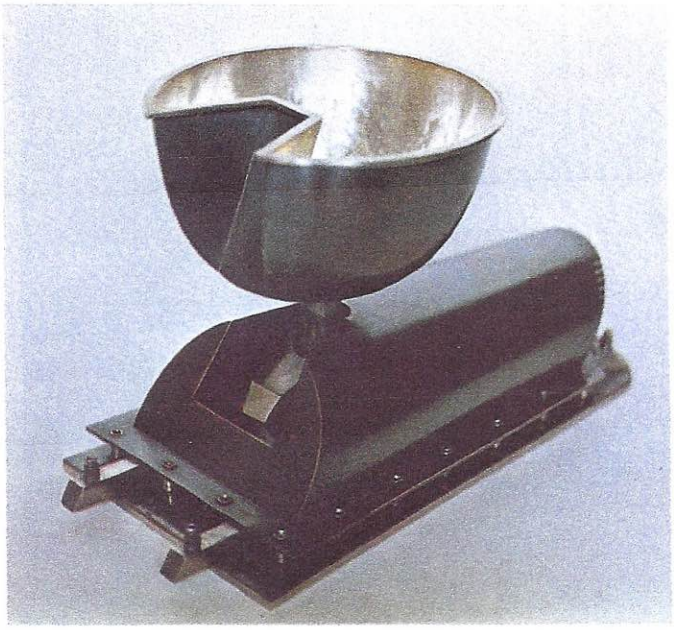
His work is very much a reflection of contemporary America. "Many of the forms I deal with are derived from architecture and structures—not only

opposite page: Detail of *Sail Piece, Vessel;* Malenda.

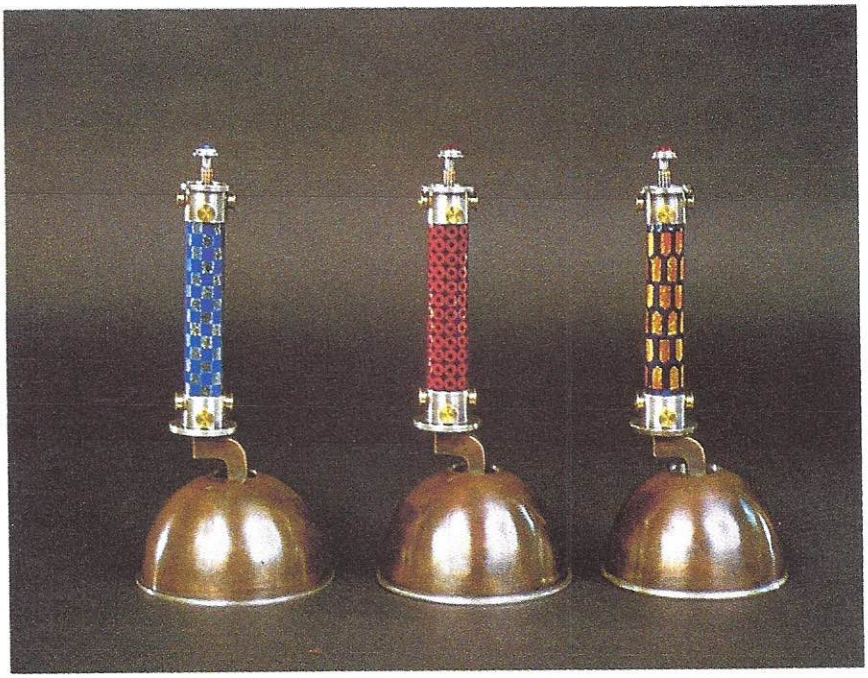
top left: Sphinx Cup; Malenda (copper, sterling, silver plate, enamel, spinels, sapphires; 12" long).

lower left: Bowl; Malenda (copper, silver, brass, ivory, garnets, rubies, sapphires, 12").

right: Spoon; Fabergé (cloisonné enamel).



top: Passion Cups; Malenda (copper, silver, silver plate, enamel; 10" high).



Detail of *Passion Cups;* Malenda.

buildings, but dams, bridges and large areas of earth excavation and terracing," he writes. And yet, there is a strong element of the past in his work. He has respect for historic metal techniques and translates these traditions into modern forms.

His "Sail Piece, Vessel" combines fabricated silver and gold with enamel and ivory and is alive with a fluid soaring. It recalls the Thracian *rhytons* of the fifth century B.C. Its title suggests a duality. It is a drinking vessel and yet suggests another type of vessel as well. Its curved hollow form seems to be billowing like a sail in the wind. The enameled "keel" serves as a handle and aids in the control and balance of the drinking vessel just as a ship's keel gives stability. His "Sphinx Cup" is contemporary in its unconventional combination of sterling and sapphires with copper, and yet its title recalls antiquity. The forward thrust of the horizontal base is likened to the Great Sphinx at Giza. The two "foot-like" extensions are capped with sapphires. The Sphinx at Giza towers to 65 feet. Malenda achieves a feeling of monumentality in miniature. His raised and fabricated silver "Bowl" also recalls antiquity. Its form appears to be a contemporary translation of Roman armor, perhaps an upside-down helmet. And yet again we see Malenda's unconventional combination of materials. Copper and brass are combined with rubies and sapphires in a single piece.

One does not have to seek only connections with antiquity in Malenda's work. Indeed, without pressing the point, one finds some interesting similarities with the objects from the workshop of Fabergé. Peter Carl Fabergé was a master artist and court jeweler to the Romanovs in Czarist Russia between the years 1881-1917. The name Fabergé was synonomous with meticulous craftsmanship. The long tradition of metalworking and enameling, including old Russian, Greek and Italian Renaissance artistry,

reached its culmination in the Faberge era. Although precious metals and stones were used, it was always the impeccable craftsmanship that was emphasized. The desire for a harmony and elegance of design was sought.

It was this elegance, in addition to the unique enamel shades of opalescent whites and subtle mauves, the combinations of green, pink and yellow gold alloys, as well as the shimmering quality created by fusing transparent enamels over engraved gold or silver surfaces (*guilloché*), which distinguished the Fabergé workshop. The intrinsic value of the materials was subordinate to the artistic value of the piece. Many of the stones used by Fabergé were semi-precious moonstones, amethysts or tourmalines. In fact, it is rare to find the much publicized diamond tiaras, and more frequent to see ingeniously crafted functional objects such as cigarette cases, pen holders, snuff boxes and enameled serving spoons. The spoon pictured here is an example of Fabergé *cloisonné* enameling, showing the opalescent white, the mauves and the care for detail. Every object is first an entity unto itself and then, and only then, is it possibly an object of function.

It is here that one might draw a parallel to Malenda's work. Like Fabergé objects, Malenda's are first imaginative, three-dimensional forms and then perhaps a pin, a belt buckle or a drink-vessel. He writes, "I enjoy seeing metal work that comes off the body. Only when the work comes off the body can it realize its full potential." He is reviving and sustaining the Fabergé emphasis and concern for the elegance of design and impeccable craftsmanship while de-emphasizing the use of highly precious gems and metals.

His "Passion Cups" serve as examples. They are raised and fabricated from copper and silver and the stems are enamelled. On all three he fuses transparent enamels over shapes of textured gold or silver foil. In one, he alternates squares of foil under transparent blue, giving a checkerboard effect. In another, a pattern of gold circles shimmer from under a transparent red against a blue background. The third has gold pentagons, shaped like Gothic arches against a blue field. Each cup has its own motif echoed in miniature on a small round enamel set like a jewel inside the cup. His "Ivory Cup" stands 11 inches high and combines sterling, gold, ivory and *cloisonné* enamel. This trapezoidal ivory cup stands at an angle on a silver pedestal which has been pierced with elongated trapezoidal shapes. There is a forward thrust created as a result of its tilted and therefore tenuous position. It is animated. Malenda combines the whiteness and purity of ivory with the whiteness of highly polished silver. He relies on the primary colors—red, blue and yellow—for the *cloisonné* enameling on the base. There is a lively play of curves. The roundness of the carved cup is reinforced by the round *cloisonné* cells, the rivets, the pedestal and the base.

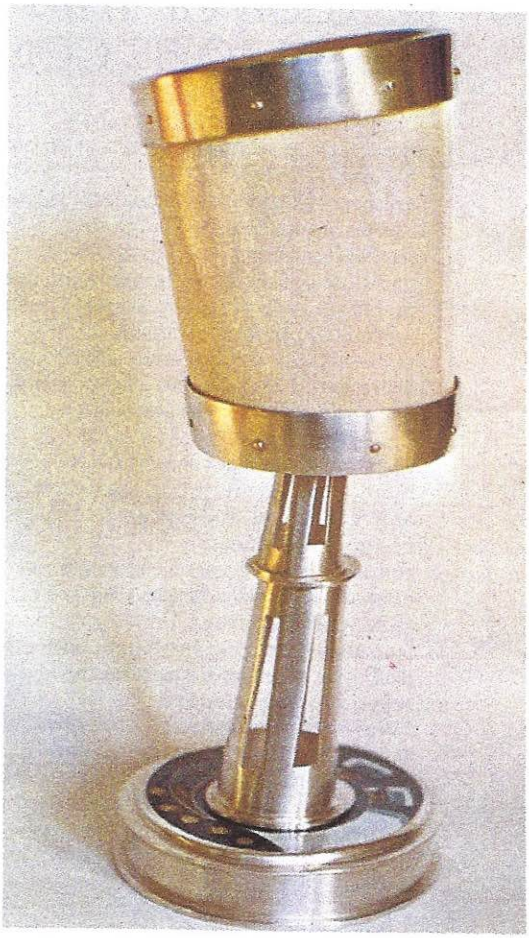
In describing his cups and bowls Malenda says, "Many of the cups are simple raised hemisphere forms which have been cut into and rearranged. There is always a moment of excitement just before the first cut is made into a newly raised and planished form. Unexpected planes are set up within the interior of the form when it is finally put back together. This upsetting of what is usually conceived of as a complete circle invokes the feeling and philosophy I believe in concerning cyclical events: that things eventually do come full circle; however, quite often there is someone or something that upsets this cycle."

A. Kenneth Snowman, in his definitive study of Carl Fabergé, observed:

As the office blocks rise like huge dead crossword puzzles, and standards of individual craftsmanship fall, the consumer who still has eyes in his head will naturally tend to cherish in a special way any objects which show some evidence of human endeavour–things unavailable in supermarkets and chain stores.

It is hardly surprising, then, that articles which have successfully run the critical gauntlet imposed by the stern uncompromising eye of Carl Fabergé should be sought today with all the desperate energy of a rescue operation.

Young artists such as James Malenda continue to create objects of high quality which surely would have been appreciated by Fabergé himself. □



Ivory Cup: Malenda (sterling, gold, 11" high).

Susan Barahal is the fine arts editor of Decade *magazine.*

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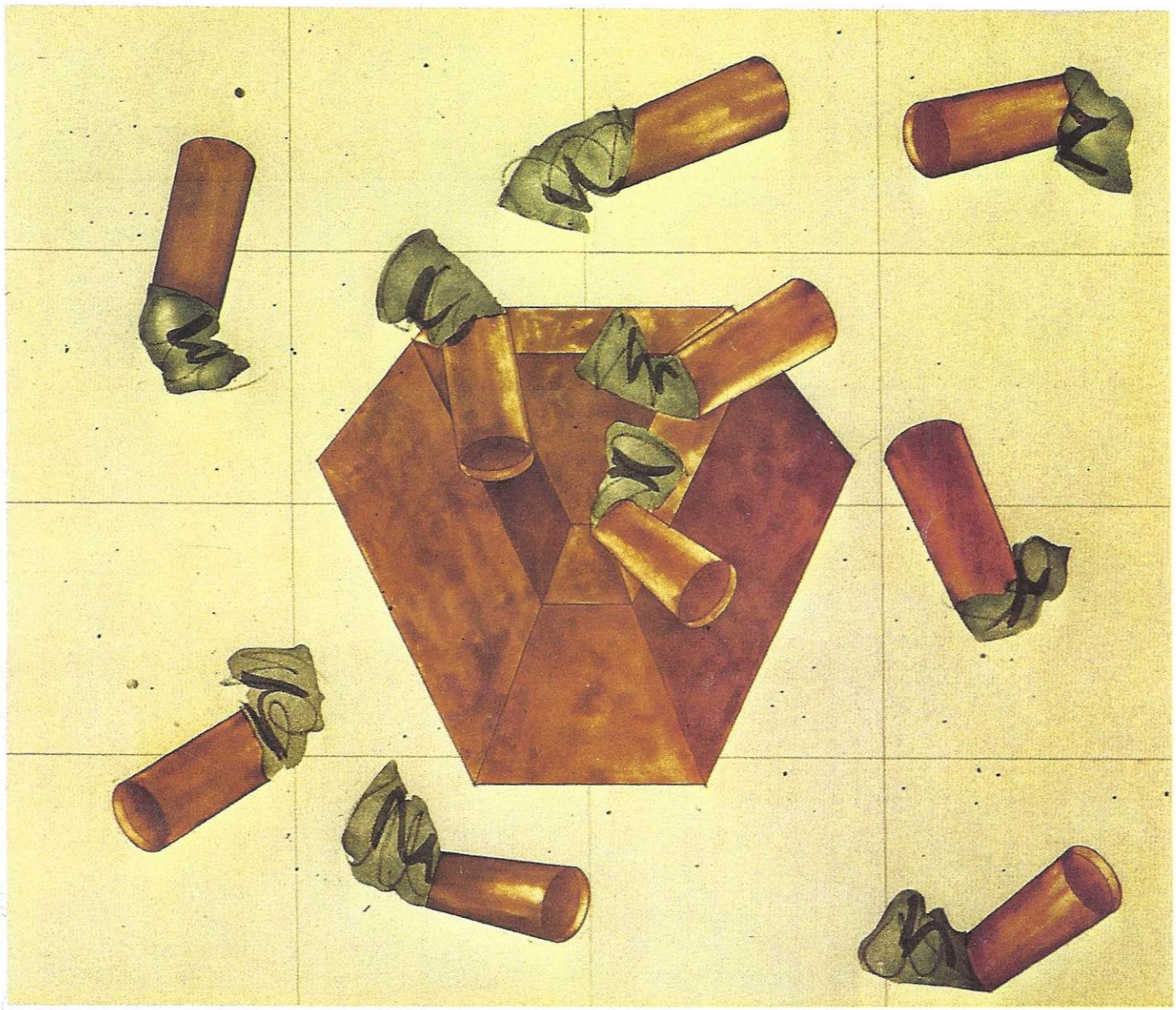

and one or two full semesters of enameling are now taken by all metals majors.

With an undergraduate degree in Ceramics and Art Education, Linda began her enamel education at Penland School of Crafts 20 years ago, studying metals and enameling with more than 30 teachers while serving as an administrative assistant to the director. Linda has received frequent awards and recognition for her metalwork at the national and international level. In addition to the university, Linda has taught enameling at Arrowmont School of Crafts, Penland school of Crafts and John C. Campbell Folk School. In 1995 she received the North Carolina Board of Governor's award for Teaching Excellence at East Carolina University.

Appointed to the Enamelist Society Board of Trustees in 1995, Linda's major role has been coordinating the 1997 Conference in Gatlinburg. She also serves on the Board of Trustees of Penland School of Crafts and is active in the Society of North American Goldsmiths.

Gretchen Goss

I began enameling in 1976, at Kent State University. After receiving a Bachelor of Fine Arts in 1978, with a major emphasis in Jewelry/ Metals, I continued at KSU seeking a Master of Fine Arts, with a focus on enamel. During the three years of graduate school I was the graduate teaching assistant for the enamel department. That teaching experience with beginning enameling students led me to the career path I've pursued. While at KSU I had several influential teachers in metals, and Mel Someroski throughout in enameling. Mel was the most consistent influence and inspiration, and provided gentile guidance throughout my years of education. Mary Ann Scherr, David Laplantz, and Lisa Gralnick were other outstanding teachers/artists that I studied with. After KSU, I spent five years as a studio artist attending American Craft Enterprises exhibits, and the Philadelphia and Smithsonian Craft Shows. In 1989 I spent one semester teaching enameling at San Diego State University, and since the fall '89 have taught enameling full time at the Cleveland Institute of Art. Other teaching experience includes classes taught at KSU, SDSU, Haystack Mountain School of Crafts and Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts. I currently exhibit work with Nancy Sachs Gallery, St Louis, William Busta Gallery, Cleveland, and Blue Heron Gallery, Deer Isle, ME.

Paula B. Jones

My art career began when I was old enough to use crayons, and progressed through school in the form of volunteering for "blackboard art" and taking all the art classes offered. At that time, there were not many.

My first exposure to a fine arts museum was at age 26, in the National Museum of Art in Washington, D.C. I walked into a gallery featuring Phillip Rothko's work, and was so stunned by it, that I had to sit down. That forever set my priority for color first, then form and content.

After graduating high school, I attended college for two years, again taking all the art classes available (still a limited offering). Married, worked, raised children, returned to college after a 20 year hiatus and found myself at San Diego State University in the '70s, an art major at last!

During my college career, I studied enameling with Dr. JoAnn Tanzer. The combination of fire and color was compelling, and I fell in love with the art of enameling. I earned my B.A. Degree in Painting and Printmaking. I have been an enamel artist in San Diego for the past 20 years.

I exhibit annually in the juried exhibitions of San Diego Enamel Guild; Enamel Guild: West; by invitation in local galleries and the Lancaster Museum.

Locally and regionally, I have served on the boards of San Diego Enamel Guild and Enamel Guild: West, serving as president of both guilds; filled various positions on the Enamel Guild: West newsletter, "Vitreous Voice" —advertising, layout, editor, and general factotum.

I believe the old argument of whether enameling is an art or craft is quite useless. The artist who puts no thought or emotion into her work, does not explore and push, and does not aim for excellence in technique and design, reduces enameling to the mundane. The craftswoman who expresses herself through her artistic decisions regarding her work, who looks for variation, explores her material and aims always for excellence, produces art through enameling.

Barbara Lipp

Born 1939 in Bielefeld/Germany; Abitur 1959; Education of art-studies in Karlsruhe/Germany. Working as a teacher in Southern Germany - marriage - two children. First contact with enamel in her mother's enamel-studio. Continuing art-lectures: Stanford - University, USA, 1978. Further enamel-training at "Goldschmiedeschule Pforzheim" 1983 - 1987. Working as a free enamel - artist in Karlsruhe.

Scholarships for several Enamel-symposiums in Kecskemét, Hungary and Erfurt, Germany.

Awards in Germany, USA and Japan (e.g., 1989 "Chairman's Award", Tokyo, Japan).

Works exhibited in Austria, Canada, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Japan, USA, Russia.

Works represented in museums in Germany, several foreign countries and in private collections.

James Malenda

I was introduced to enameling as an undergraduate student at Kent State University in 1970. Since then I have remained active in producing, exhibiting, and conducting workshops. Currently I am a Professor of Fine Metals at Kutztown University, PA where enameling is a major component of the B.F.A. program. My involvement with the 1997 Enameling Conference, Tradition and Transformation, has reaffirmed my belief that the society should foster an appeal to a broader base of artists who use enamel.

(Continued on page 42)

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work contact me directly. Even though I have been fortunate to be represented by good galleries all over the country, I have not been able to provide them with any work in the past two years, not finding enough time to produce new work besides the commissioned work. For the past year I have been working almost exclusively on two large projects with two Seattle hospitals, Children's and Swedish. My next large wind sculpture with porcelain enamel cut-outs will be installed in a park in the city of Tukwila, not far from the Seattle airport.

Background info: I was born and raised in France, in a small village in the foothills of the Massif Central, where my parents were my teachers. I went on to study Philosophy and Foreign Languages at the Sorbonne in Paris, finishing my studies as an interpreter at the University of Heidelberg in Germany.

I never studied art but it is something I always did, as far as I can remember and needed to do to keep sane. Over the years I have taken workshops or classes when I wanted to learn a skill I felt I needed to progress with my work. That's how I learned to weld and forge steel.

After several years of designing and making soft sculpture for all the Nordstrom store's Children's Department permanent displays, I have been working with steel and porcelain enamel for the past 14 years.

I have lived on Bainbridge Island for the past 26 years with my husband Kent who is a graphic designer but also my photographer, computer programmer and installation partner. We have two grown children, Tarquin and Solia, who also love to create art.

Since 1977 Michele G. Van Slyke has produced over 42 major public art commissioned works in Washington, Oregon, California, Missouri, Illinois and Paris, France. Since 1980 to present her works have been in 62 exhibitions in Washington, Oregon, Colorado, Ohio, New Mexico, California, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Maine, Massachusetts and Quebec, Canada.

She will be teaching a three-day workshop along with David Berfield in large scale enameling on steel. The workshop will be held on August 15-17, 1997 at both artists' studios on Bainbridge Island, Washington. The fee is $200.00 plus materials. For information call 206-842-6210 or FAX 206-780-1619.

Enamelist Society Trustee Election Candidates
(Continued from page 37, James Malenda)

Achievement of this goal, through the promotion of diverse approaches, including supportive techniques and processes, would also contribute to the growth and refinement of the society's mission.

Ray Parisi

Ray Parisi, full time enamelist was born in October, 1993 when he retired from 29 years of practice as a Board-Certified Obstetrician Gynecologist. He began enameling fifteen years ago and studied extensively with Gwen Anderson, Orsini, at Glen Echo, Maryland.

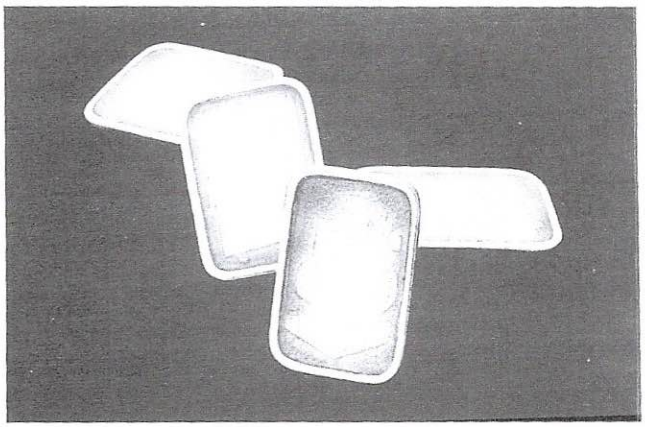
Ray has been an active member of the National Enamelist Guild and has served as Workshop Chairperson from 1992-1997 and as President from 1995-1997. He was the Exhibition Chairman for the National Enamelist Guild Juried Exhibition, North America East Enamels 1997 Expressions in Glass on Metal.

You will frequently hear him say, "it's amazing what you can accomplish if you just try!"

The History Of Tour Of Guillocher

(a.k.a. Rose Lathe)

The art of Guilloche enamel was first introduced around 1750 when Henry d' Allemagne wrote of a Parisian craftsman, Gorin, who specialized in a mechanically engraved wavy pattern resembling moire silk and noted the technique to be particularly attractive when seen through a thin layer of clear or translucent enamel. The process became known as Guillochage or Guilloche and the machine as the Tour a Guillocher (in America, called the Rose Lathe).



Pictured above: Foster & Bailey Co., sterling silver, blue and white enameled cuff links (circa: 1910). Left rear image: Industrial Firing Kiln. Right forefront image: Tour a Guillocher or Rose Lathe.

Guilloche soon became the most popular method for decorating small jewelry in the 18'h Century. The process remained popular into the early 20'h Century, reaching its zenith in the workshops of Faberge and facing near extinction when his shop was closed in 1918. The Tour a Guillocher machines have weathered time in small numbers throughout the world and are still used by a specialized, elite group of craftsmen.

The unique look is achieved by applying a thin layer of vitreous enamel over a Guilloched surface of gold, sterling silver or copper and firing at a temperature of 1450 degrees Fahrenheit.

Derek Anastasia
The National Cuff Link Society

ONE APPROACH TO LARGE SCALE ENAMELING

By James Malenda

Reprinted from Jewelry/Metalwork Survey #3, © 1993 David LaPlantz. Photo Credit: Jeff Unger.

Each person must decide for themselves how safety conscious they will be. This article shows one artist's approach to their own studio work. Do not follow it verbatim - decide for yourself on the important issues of health and safety.

The terms *large scale* and *small scale* are relative terms. In enameling, my personal definition of large scale has evolved and become focused as my work progressed. To me, *large scale* means forms which I have difficulty working with, or forms which do not fit into a conventional front opening enameling furnace.

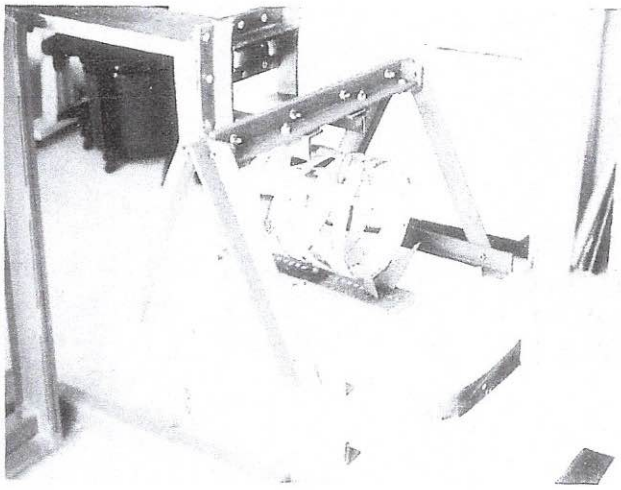
Work is positioned over opened, hot kiln.

I first confronted large scale problems about seven years ago when I was enameling a series of "Weight" pieces (See Glass On Metal, Vol. 5, No. 2, The Breakdown of Static 3-D Forms Through Multi-Positioning (Part 1) pp. 24-27 and Vol. 5, No. 3, Part (2), pp. 40, 41). In metal, they weighed about six pounds each, with dimensions of approximately 24"L x 6"D x 8"H. To accomplish the firing of these forms I used a front loading sculpture burn-out casting kiln.

Work is lowered into kiln.

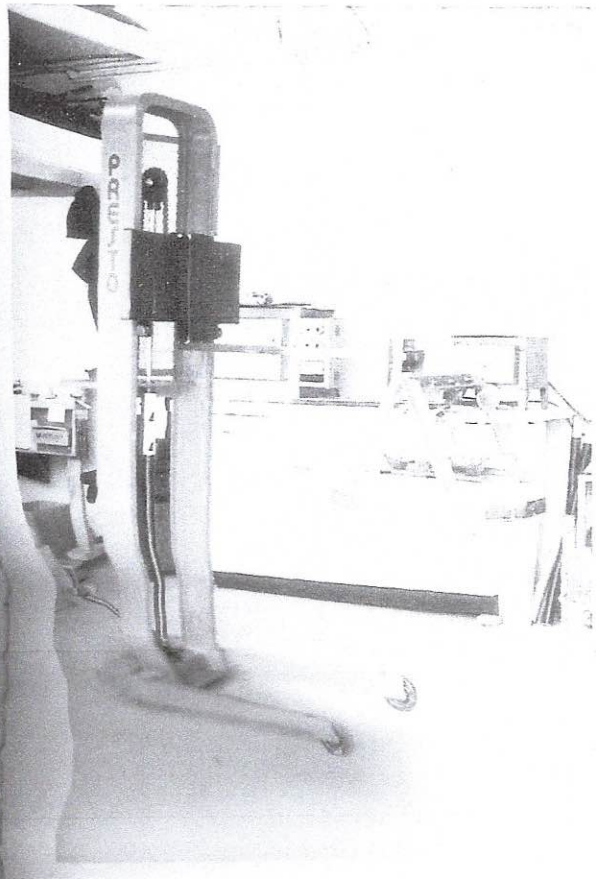
To facilitate the firing, I fabricated a metal trivet and rack which rested on the kiln floor. I made a hand-held fork of steel about six foot long resembling a large spatula which fit under the rack to allow me to lift the piece into, and out of, the hot kiln. The resulting leverage from the six foot fork length effectively

After work is inserted into kiln, the lift truck is backed away from the kiln and the lid is closed. The firing lasts approximately 30 minutes.



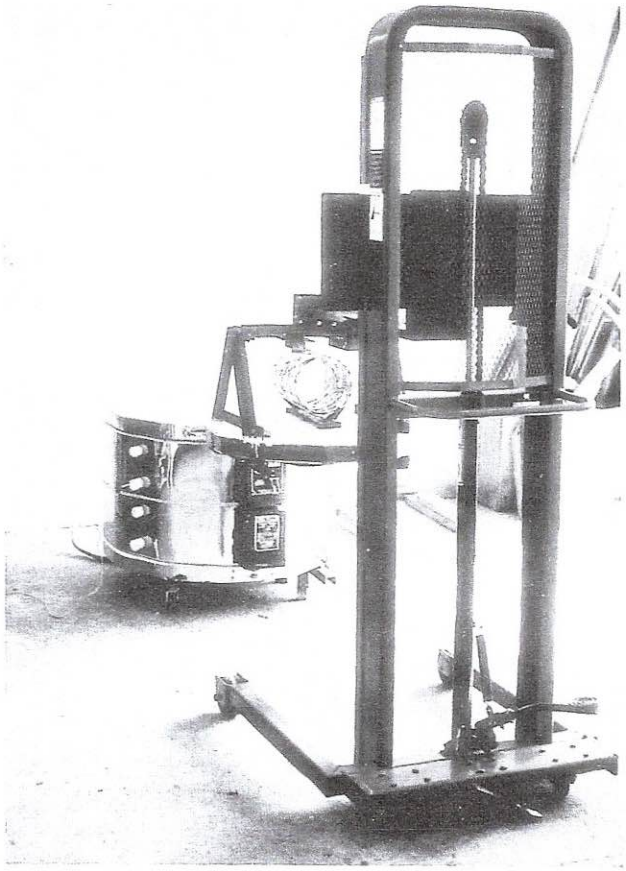
Basket made of 1" angle iron, attached to kiln floor (enamel form 12" x 8" dia.).

increased the weight of the pieces. In some cases it was, and is, necessary to fire a single piece as many as twenty times. Placing heavy, unstable pieces in and out of the kiln repeatedly became increasingly tedious, dangerous and precarious work. I could see that continuing to fire in this manner was guaranteed to increase the risk of accidental damage to the works as well as eventual physical damage to my back. There became obvious need for mind over matter.



Basket suspended from arms/forks of lift truck.

I purchased, with the help of an Illinois State Artist's Fellowship, a top loading ceramic kiln, made up of a series of stackable elements/chambers. I chose the stackable chambers to increase or decrease the height as needed and dictated by the individual work(s). The interior width of the firing space is about 28" in diameter. My original intent was to raise the chambers from my studio floor by stacking them on fire-brick legs. I would support the enamel work on a trivet and rack placed on the kiln floor which would then rest on the forks of a hand and foot operated, lift truck. The lift truck would allow me to insert and remove the hot work from the bottom with-



Back of lift truck.

out raising the kiln or dealing with front loading leverage/balancing difficulties (and eventual back problems).

After receiving a grant from the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education Faculty Professional Development Council, I purchased my lift truck. At this point, I realized, this method of firing (by inserting from below) was not practical. I would need yet another lift truck, jack, or support of some type to keep a second floor under the kiln to eliminate losing heat, while I maneuvered the items in and out. I soon realized that the difficulty of seeing around the equipment created problems in position judgement and in centering the work.

The eventual solution was to use the kiln as it was originally designed and intended, loading from the top. Loading the kiln from the top necessitated

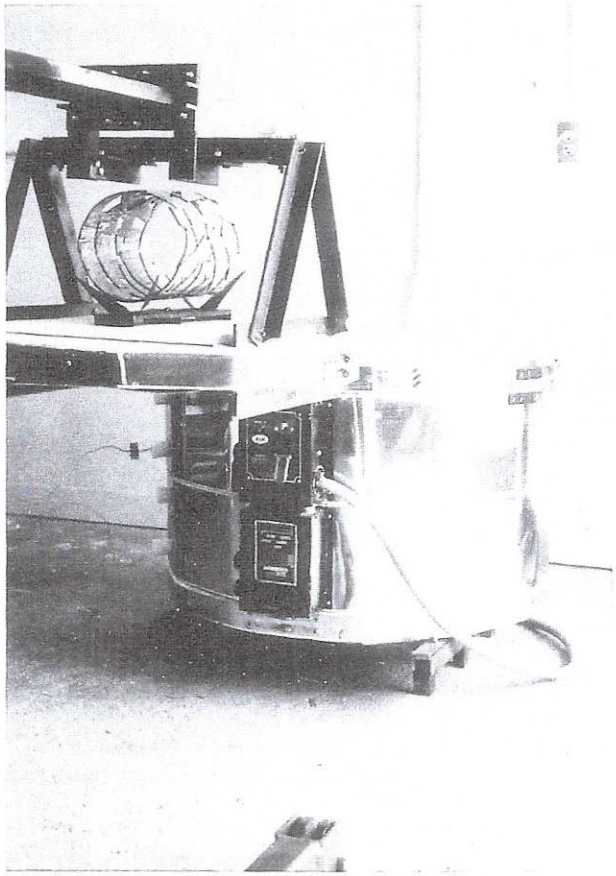
the purchase of another kiln floor. To this, I fabricated and fastened a basket from one inch angle iron.

Although it would be possible to use a winch or hoist to insert the basket containing the enamel in and out of the kiln, this would confine the operation to one spot. Using the lift truck provides flexibility, movement, and allows for the relocation of the process to any location in the studio.

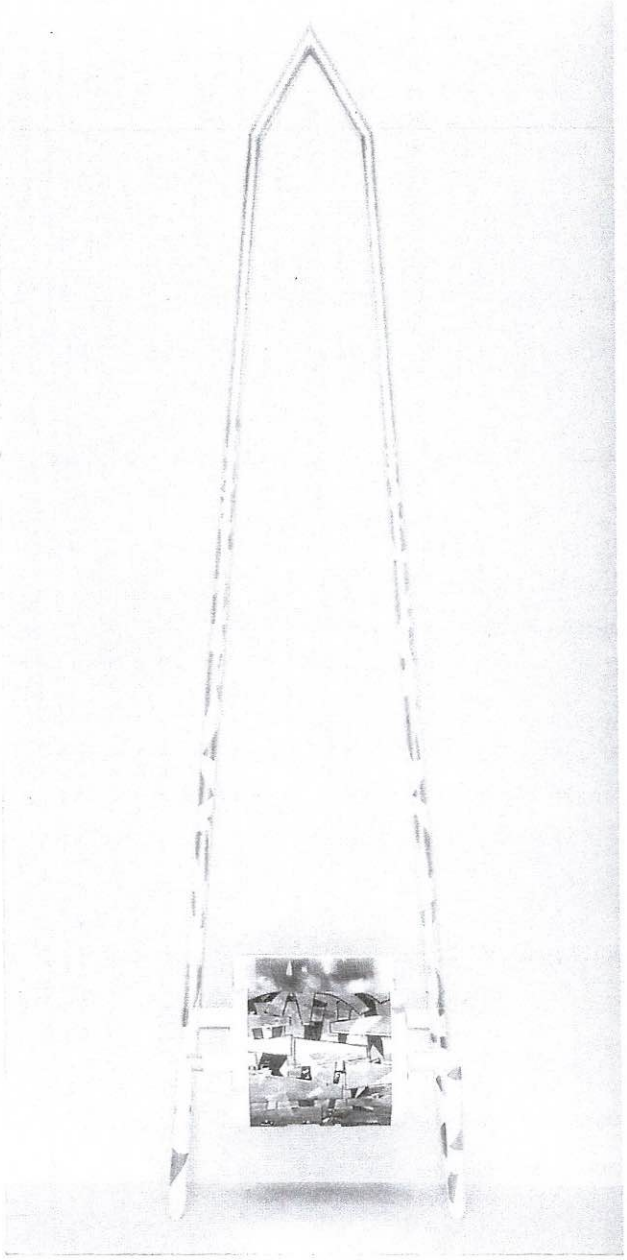
The arms or forks of the lift truck raise the basket containing the floor, and the enameled work into and out of the kiln, while I remain at a safe distance without stress or strain to any part of my back, legs, or arms.

Surprisingly, the angle iron gives off very little fire scale. I have, in fact, experienced no problems with it falling on the surface of my enamels. But, as a precaution, to prevent a build-up and avoid the risk of possible surface damage, I use a Shop-vac to vacuum the angle iron basket after each firing.

Enamelists work in a pre-heated kiln (1400-1500° F) to expedite the firing process. This allows for multiple and numerous firings in one studio session. Using this equipment the average length of time needed to fire a piece is normally about thirty minutes. If, however, you were not pressed for time, it is interesting to note that, it is possible to place a piece into a cold kiln and raise the temperature until the enamel is mature. Once the enamel has matured, the kiln can be turned off, the piece left in until it has cooled down and can be handled. So large scale enamel work is possible with simple access to a ceramic kiln or large heat source. There is no real need to devise a method for inserting and removing work from a hot kiln, if time is not a factor.

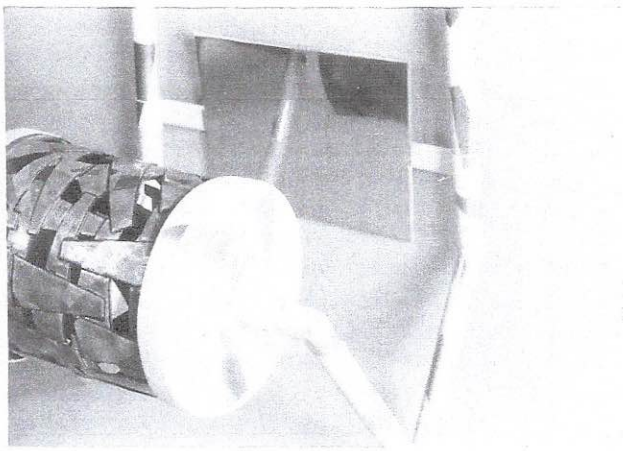


Work being maneuvered into position.

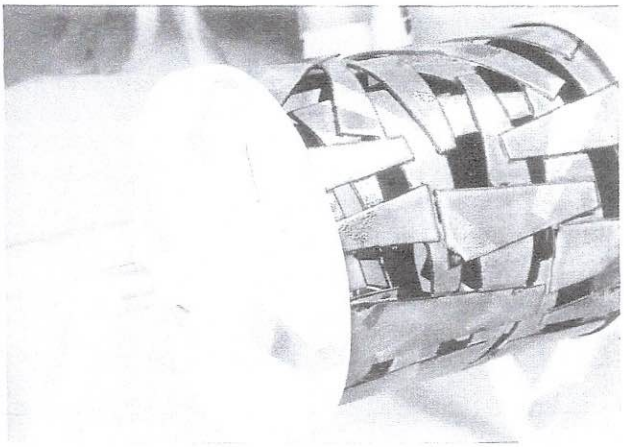


Finished work shown being enameled in this article. "Station of Cross", Fabricated, enameled, sand blasted; enamel, aluminum, copper; enamel - measures 16" x 18" x 74", 1993, by James Malenda.

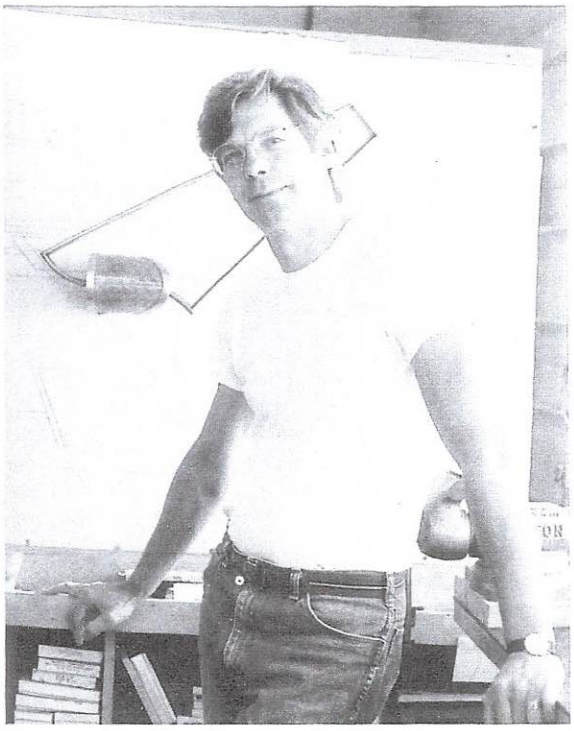
The equipment however, has other uses which adds to its value. In addition to using the kiln for enameling I have found it to be a useful tool for annealing large pieces of metal. The lift truck is also used to raise and move heavy objects, as well as to support and suspend work for soldering/welding, and spraying. Although, my daughters have found another use for it: giving each other elevator rides. "Watch those fingers in that chain!!!"



"Station of Cross" (detail).



"Station of Cross" (detail).



James Malenda received his MFA degree in Gold and Silversmithing from S.U.N.Y. in New Paltz, New York in 1975. He has taught at Mohave Community College in Arizona and Bradley University in Illinois. For the past six years he has been teaching at Kutztown University in Pennsylvania. The past four years of studio work have involved enamel and metal wall pieces. James has been a past contributor to Glass On Metal.

PLIQUE-A-JOUR Workshops

with renowned Russian Master Valeri Timofeev

Valeri Timofeev was born in Riga, Latvia, in 1941. In 1967 he moved to Moscow, Russia. It was here that he decided his life would become devoted to the arts, initially, the jewelry arts. As his jewelry work progressed, enamel became an integral part of his work because of enamel's unique characteristics such as color, transmission of light, its compatibility with metal, and its precious qualities.

Valeri became fascinated with the study of traditional enameling techniques of the Russian Masters. The Applied Arts Masters Workshops of the early 20th century were almost completely destroyed by the Russian Revolution. Many technical secrets were lost during this period. He felt someone should recover these secrets before they were gone forever. For years he researched many old books and spent hours upon end in Russian museums which housed traditional plique-a-jour work in an effort to re-discover this technology.

At first he tried to replicate the work of Russian Masters such as Faberge. After he felt secure in his skill and knowledge of plique-a-jour, he began to develop his own style of contemporary plique-a-jour. He has taken up where the old Masters were forced to let go.

In November 1992 Valeri was one of three artists invited to exhibit his plique-a-jour work in conjunction with the celebration of 150 years of the Faberge Firm, held in the Kremlin, Moscow. Valeri has also acted as an expert consultant on different metalwork technologies for Russia's most important museum, the Armory Chamber in the Kremlin, which houses the Faberge Collection.

Valeri shares his research and knowledge of plique-a-jour as historian and practicing master artist by lecturing and demonstrating the techniques to many groups. To date, he has instructed 16 workshops in enameling guilds, universities and schools across the United States.

His workshops include: 2-day plique-a-jour workshop (jewelry); 5-day plique-a-jour workshop (goblet or container); and 2 or 5 day jewelry technology workshops (filigree, wire & bezel making, solder making and soldering techniques).

For more information on scheduling a workshop, write or call: Tom Ellis, Thompson Enamel, P.O Box 310, Newport, KY 41072 Phone: 606-291-3800

THE BREAKDOWN OF STATIC 3-D FORMS THROUGH MULTI-POSITIONING

(Part 1)

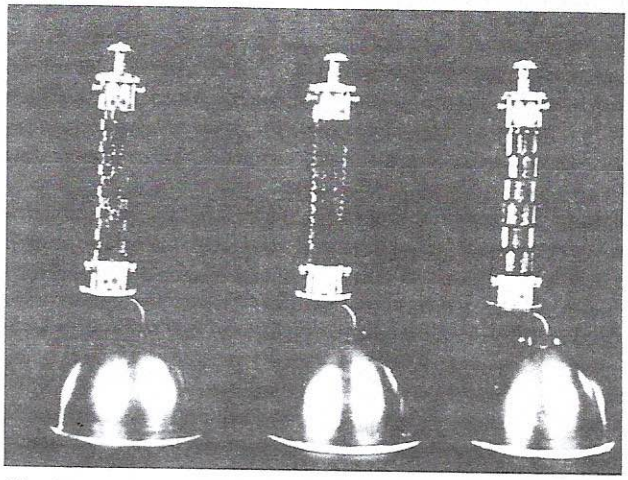
By James Malenda

Perfection . . . The search for perfection . . . The perfect piece . . . The perfect visual statement . . . The perfect communication. It's an illusion, an impossibility, like the Golden Mean. It is interesting to see how close we can come, but, how close to what? A circular search . . .

The arc or section of the circle I am currently investigating involves a departure from static positioning or anchoring of 3-D work; that is, those objects which occupy space and are capable of doing little more. These represent a dead-end way of seeing. Such pieces do little in the way of advancing visual literacy. How many people actually get to see the top of contemporary "monumental" 3-D works? How many artists care? At their best these works are incomplete in their dimensions, essentially two and a half. The idea seems to be "If you can't make it good, at least make it big." Viewers seem to have an easier time appreciating big, but not small. It must be better, because it's bigger than they are.

My work involves the multipositioning of 3-D objects. It is an investigation of the totality of the piece. It allows the viewer to pick the piece up and position it in any way it will support itself. What was once the base is now the top, and vice versa. This is a complete investigation of space, vis-a-vis a singular form. Or, perhaps more correctly stated, space investigates the form by defining its extremities. (When I speak of form, I refer to 3-D form, not the pattern or composition of 2-D work.) My work is not kinetic. The pieces are not large in size, nor are they tiny. However, they are monumental in the truest sense of the word. They are not large size, because to move or re-position would require assistance. They are not tiny, hand held objects, or finger pieces which result in a lack of positioning. (More accurately these would be finger manipulations.) They are as they should be, somewhere in between.

Without my realizing it, this investigation began about ten years ago, when I raised and fabricated my first "passion cup". My chosen materials were metal and vitreous enamel. I had been well trained in, and was well aware of their traditional objects and methods. As most recent graduates do, I had assimilated this information and proceeded to strike out on my own. My materials remained the same — metal to establish form, enamel for color. (Hot Color!!! I have not yet found a color medium as hot, exciting, and intense as enamel. It is an affair which has lasted longer than I would have ever expected.) The object of my focus was the chalice, which I saw as having a three part formula; the cup, the stem, and the base. My first assault began with the elimination of the base, leaving the cup/body, and stem. Others combined the cup and the stem (Fig. 1). Still others combined the stem and base. The result however, was always a drinking cup which had no base. This meant then, a vessel which contained a liquid (preferably wine) to be drunk, and when filled, could not be put down without spilling its contents. The more one drank—the more passionate one became . . . . Unexpectedly, after completing four or five of these pieces, I saw the **THRACIAN—TREASURES FROM BULGARIA**, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City in the summer of 1977. There I saw a **Rhyton**, the most beautiful vessel I had seen until, and since that time. The pieces have left a vivid impression, never to be forgotten. These are the closest historical associations I have found. They are close in form, but, not in function. Whereas, the Rhyton's function is to dispense and aerate wine[1], the purpose and function of my pieces is to make one passionate through its positioning, or lack of positioning.



(Fig. 1) PASSION CUPS—Copper, Sterling, Silver Plate, Enamel; 10x4x4"; 1978; photo: James Bontemps

Maybe it's a sign of the times, my training, or reaction to the Renaissance hangover from which all art suffers, but I wanted to shed "wearable functionalism" and the stigma connected with it. (Because of its isolationism, separatism, self-indulgence, and elitism— the Renaissance is the biggest scam humanity has perpetrated on itself, Art, and the environment in the history of the world.) Even the great Benvenuto Cellini thought little of jewelry making, and held most jeweler/metalsmiths in contempt. He reserved his highest admiration for the sculptors of his time. The support of the New Medici—the University—was not enough for me. I agreed with Cellini, contemporary historians, critics, and writers, and sought a way to discard my "ornaments". It was not easy. I found it necessary to hold on to function, and let go little by little. This explains why the "passion cups" took on such a systematic approach to the editing of the chalice. The cups finally became so large (two feet long) they were impossible to use.

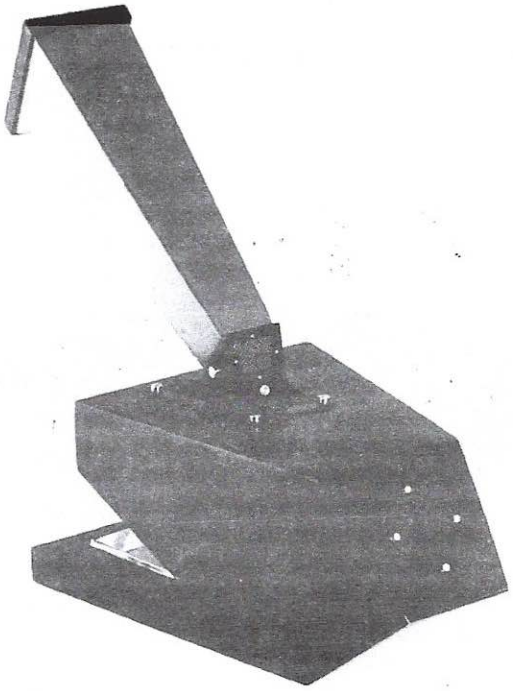
The first piece which was to do away entirely with any hint of function was a "weight". This was a form which was to look heavy. It did not have to physically be heavy, but simply look heavy. I sometimes think the first was the most successful. At this time I spoke a great deal about 3-D horizontally, and how artists had forgotten it. Most 3-D people want to make things go up, be vertical— I can only assume architectural competition. (Although, one of the greatest expectations to this trend towards verticality was the architect Frank Lloyd Wright.)

With this non-functional weight I introduced laminated, spray painted wood into my pieces. I found it to be a beautiful material to shape, carve, and paint, but unstable once completed. This first weight was fabricated in copper, heavily oxidized to a deep black and waxed (Fig. 2). Enamel was also used, with window screen embedded into the surface (champleve)[3], as well as trapped in the fabricated areas. I have stopped using screen for two reasons. First, it is used so often, and is so accessible, it's become common, an easy grid—a symbol of the 1980's especially in graphics and printmaking. 1980's artists like grids—surface. (TV flattens

the retina). Images which are painted, printed, drawn, videoed, photographed, or filmed are too subjective. Such media can only provide an illusion of space, not elucidate it. 3-D art deals with real, tactile, physical space. When the "weight" was seen for the first time, the viewer(s) became afraid; scared to the point where they did not want to be in the same room with it. It was also antiseptic. I wanted it to be all these things alienating, antiseptic, to occupy a real tactile space, as well as "heavy", but I did not want the symmetry.

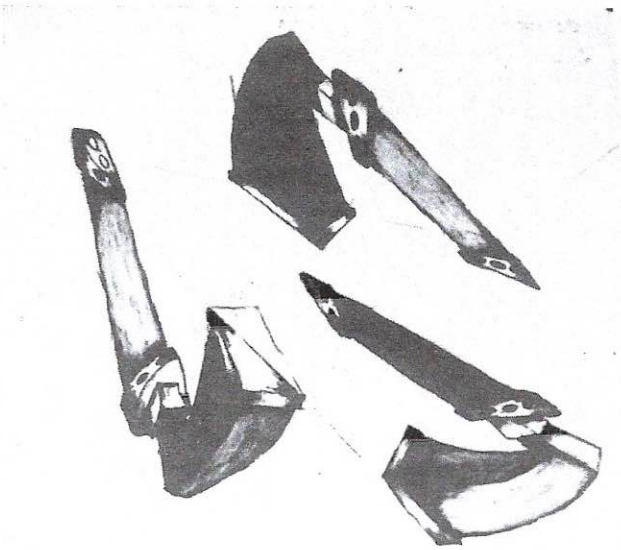
The second reason I abandoned the use of screen is that I view media as a means to realize concept. Material is subservient to concept. At best (and in only a few cases) it is as important. There is a beauty in what screen does, and can do. That is, it will allow gases and liquids to pass through it, but not solids . . . I found this an intriguing and unaddressed aspect of screen. Unfortunately, inherent in the material is far too much surface pattern. I saw no further reason to use this ready made grid, because I investigate form, not material. Material is investigated, only to clarify form.

The work became increasingly involved with color. Surfaces no longer were left as bare and/or oxidized metal—they were enameled. The wood continued to be painted, because the surface of the grain would compete with the solid colors of the enameled surfaces. I am well aware that color relies on shape, form, and other colors to delineate it. Form does not rely on color in the same manner. A form may just happen to be a certain color—the color of the material it is made from. That is true until one understands the manner in which the seductive material called vitreous enamel can be utilized. Besides, the absence of color on form, or use of merely a single color, is a contemporary invention—a fad! In actuality color has been used for centuries.



(Fig. 2) WEIGHT #1—Copper, Enamel, Wood, Paint, Screen; 12x6x9"; 1979; photo: Al Harkrader

When I consider how my forms are conceived, generated, and executed, the middle ground or connection between response/idea and finished art is shape. First, drawings are made to full scale with color materials. In each drawing I visualize my forms in as many positions as possible (Fig. 3). From this point they evolve through paper maquettes to fabricated, finished pieces. There is no such thing as creation in the making of art, only response and reaction.

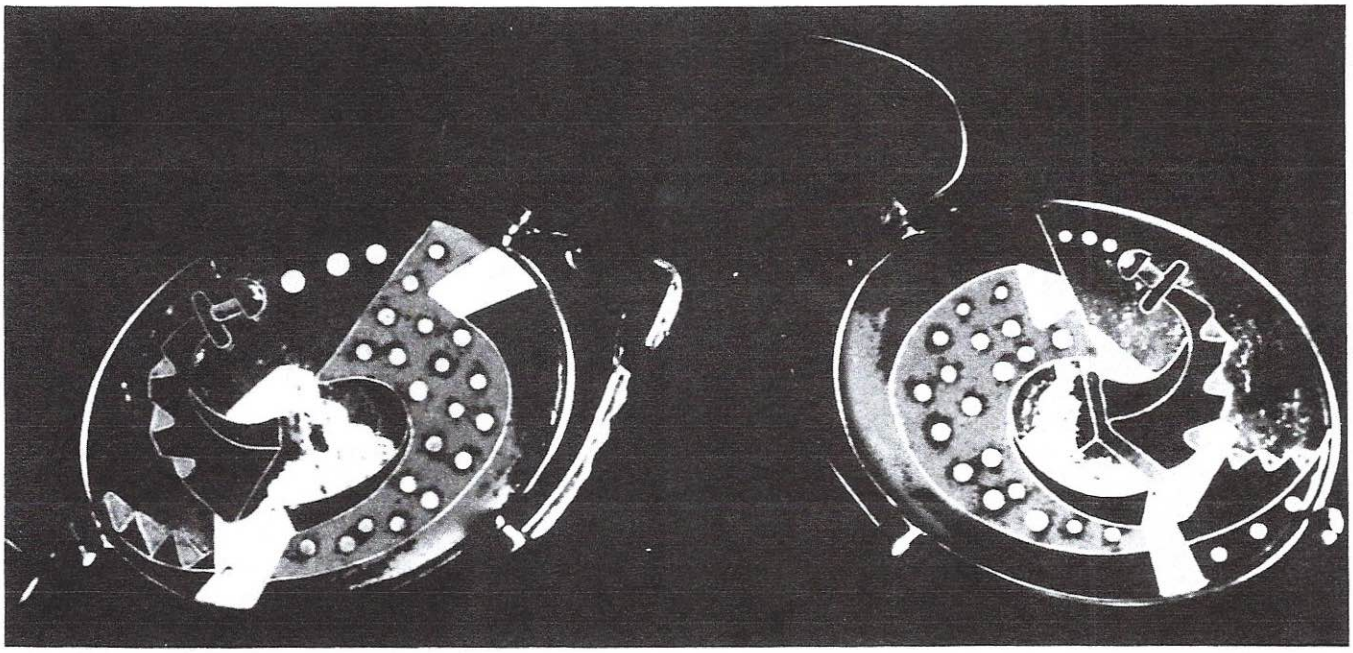


(Fig. 3) WEIGHT DRAWING—Mixed media on paper; 36x36"; 1983; photo: Artist

Line is the most common element used in drawing. To elucidate form in drawing we use shape—as described by line. Apart from circles, the least complicated shape one could describe and still have shape is one of three sides. (Any less and it remains lines). Since I am involved in the practicing and teaching of visual literacy, I consider this awareness to be a refinement of seeing; if one needs only three sides to delineate shape, these are all one needs to construct a form. For this reason, I feel it is not necessary to use any more. Conversely, the reason the series developed in threes had nothing to do with the graphic description of shape. I found, if an idea was worth pursuing, one piece was never enough. I always had questions: "What could have happened if I did this—or that?" Even two is not enough. Three pieces have thus far provided a satisfactory basis for searching, development, researching, refinement, and conclusion of concept.

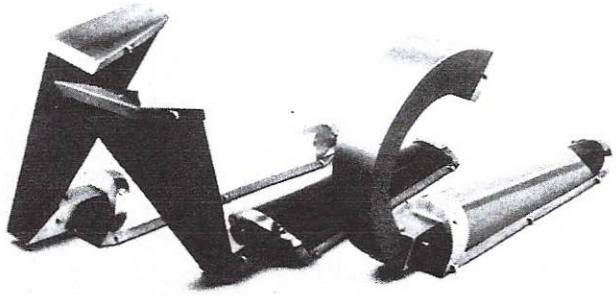
A transitional series I started sometime before the last "passion cups", and completed after the first "weight" was called "sail series". I had used a similar form in the design of a number of "passion cups": What intrigued me about the sail was the fact that it is a shape in the truest sense of the word—but it is also mutable . . . what happens, or can happen within this three sided shape when it is caught by the wind is limitless. The motion, gesticulation, contour and cross contour is a simple, refined, and timeless variation of form. This, too, is a quality I strive to endow my pieces with, i.e., the appearance of timelessness—not simply "timely".

Parallel to these investigations, I had also begun making spectacle pieces. These are small enamel works, usually flat cloisonne,[4] in which I remove lenses of eyeglasses and replace them with ones of enamel. Because of their shape, the types of frames I have become most fond of using are pince-nez (Fig. 4). In some ways I consider the spectacle pieces a metaphor for visual literacy. These pieces were, and remain, image oriented, an attempt to make a comment about the first significant eye contact which I had consciously experienced. (The moment of contact seemed so long, so clear, and so revealing. It was as if I were seeing into this person's soul.) No other media or vehicle seemed or continues to be more appropriate than the frames. The first piece was done using plique-a-jour enamel. This was more for conceptual reasons than technical. The plique-a-jour method was chosen because of its transparent qualities.[5] The eye contact, as well as the iconographic implications of the pince-nez frames provide impetus as vehicles of and for investiga-



(Fig. 4) SPECTACLES—Enamel on Copper; 3x5"; 1980; photo: Artist

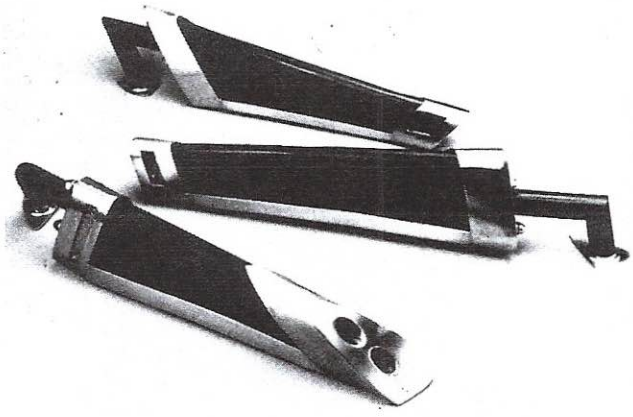
tion. When I do the pieces today, they are quite often done as color studies for larger works. They are flat with images of various positions of the larger works. Because of the problem solving and study they provide for the larger works, as well as the dialogue they present between 2-D and 3-D investigations, there seems to be no reason to search for a new image to put inside the frames.



(Fig. 5) WEIGHTS—Enamel, Copper, Nickel Silver, Wood, Paint; avg. size: 15x6x28"; 1981; photo: Al Harkrader

My concern with three sided shapes and its transition to form from drawing as I've previously described would repeat itself in my next series, For lack of a better title I continue to call them "weights", although they seemed to be less and less involved with the concept of visual weight. In fact they became faster and faster, revealing more concern for the juxtapositioning of form(s), and with appropriate color for appropriate form(s). As Kandinsky would suggest appropriate color for appropriate shapes.[6] These pieces had to do with the control of seeing from various positions. That is, a manipulation of color and form establishing control of the viewer's eye speed—how fast or slow one's eye moves from one area to another . . . . Not only are the forms three-sided but their relationship to one another produces yet another triangular formation with two complete contours and one implied contour, which is produced visually by connecting the two forms across negative space. This introduces the consideration and approach I've not yet investigated—the design and composition of a piece originating in its negative space.

From this point my works took a side step which eschewed color/speed. They were flat, black and anchored to the floor or pedestal, as a painting, print, drawing, or photo is anchored to a wall. My thoughts about drawings, forms (as focal point) and contour of forms (as secondary focal point) needed a break. I had to work, but not with the same hot color, and fast/slow form considerations. The next series was one of black, triangular, horizontal forms. I needed black at this point,



(Fig. 6) BLACK WEIGHTS—Enamel, Copper, Nickel Silver, Paint; avg. size: 6x5x18"; 1982; photo: Mark Arrigoni

because I felt my love for vitreous enamel colors was interfering with the triangular and horizontal explorations. I needed to separate these considerations from the complexities of hue. For most enamelists, except those working in Grisaille[7], this approach would seem to be a nightmare. The reason being this investigation did not exploit enamel's most prominent qualities: hue and chroma. Three dimensionally I dealt with direction, rather than form. So strongly did the pieces suggest direction, they almost dictated a need for a holster. Form subservient to direction is easier to realize than FORM with its intrinsic direction. To be continued.

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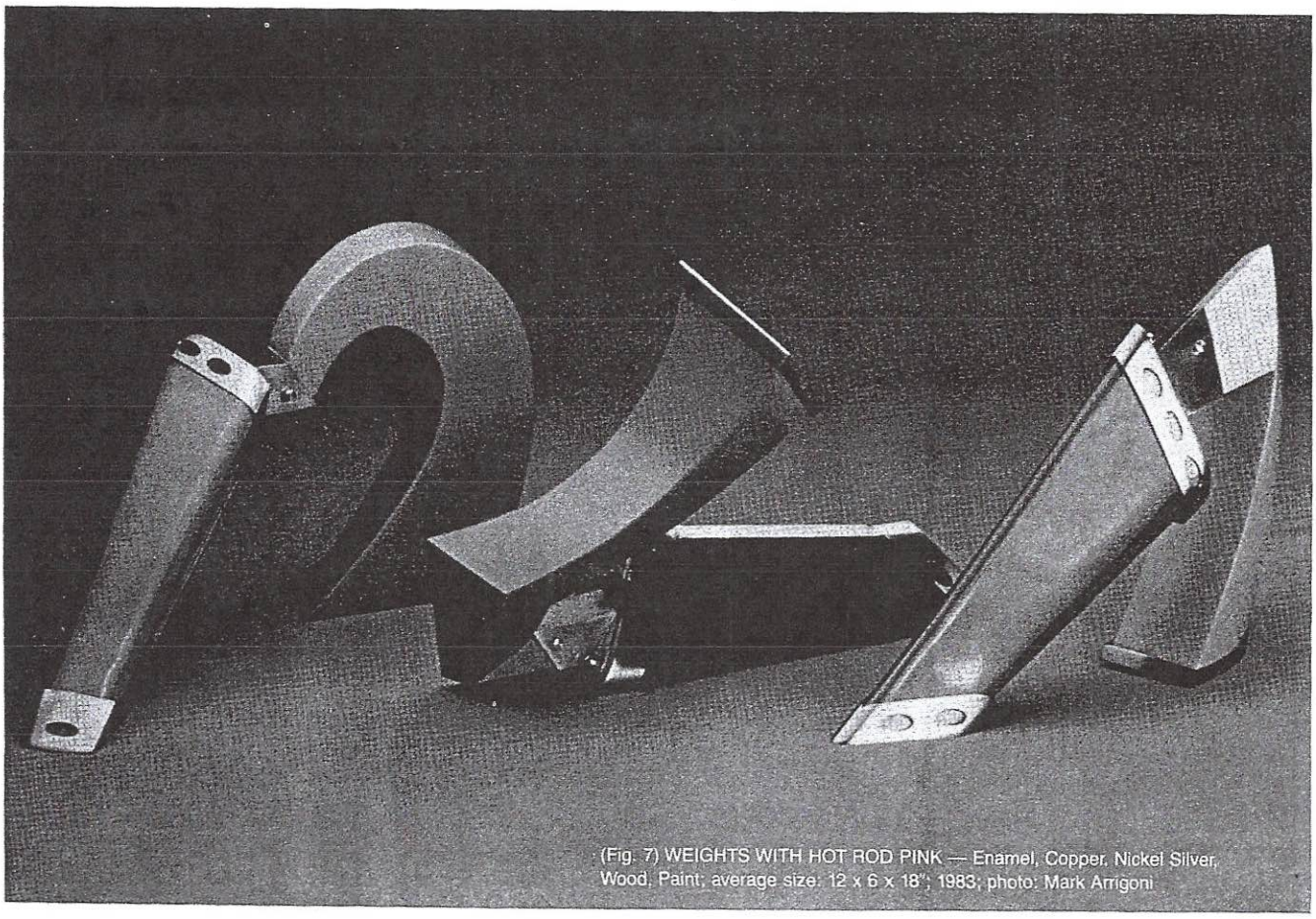


(Fig. 7) WEIGHTS WITH HOT ROD PINK — Enamel, Copper, Nickel Silver, Wood, Paint; average size: 12 x 6 x 18"; 1983; photo: Mark Arrigoni

THE BREAKDOWN OF STATIC 3-D FORMS THROUGH MULTI-POSITIONING

(Part 2)

By James Malenda

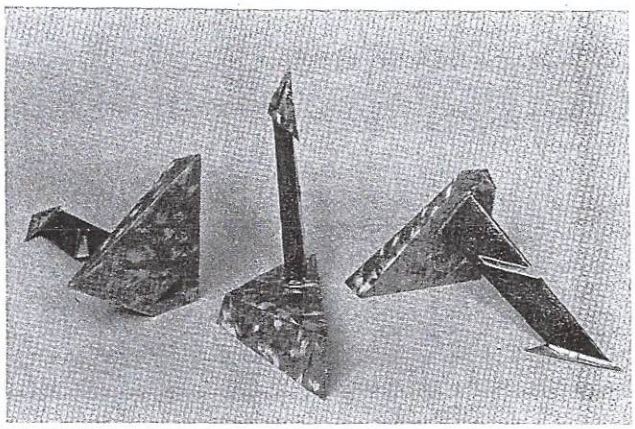
Following the break from form and color, the new series became saturated in hue and volume variations. Hot Rod Pink (car paint) was a favorite of this series. To this point almost all the forms in my work were very gestural — and animated. In fact, I recall showing one of the early "passion cups" to a dancer and explaining the title. His reaction was to immediately lie down on the floor, and begin to put his body in the positions of the cup. Thus with the new series of saturated color I began to investigate the multi-positioning of the forms (Fig. 7). I strove to make each piece function in three positions, aesthetically and physically, in essence three in one piece. The problem was not so much one of simple positioning, but of aesthetic positioning. The pieces had to appear different in each position. (A sphere for instance is a form that can be multi-positioned. But, why bother? You see the same thing with each revolution). They had to support themselves, without falling for lack of equal weight distribution, and also without compromising the visual weight, color, value, and form. Integration of the elements just mentioned, combined with the areas of negative volume, adjusted because of the physical considerations, presented a tremendous challenge. I believe this was the closest I have come to consciously giving the negative space more significance than the physical object. This is of course the reverse of most artists' primary concerns.

One of the most successful elements about this series was the transitional areas; those fabricated sections of the piece which moved from color to color, from areas of one material to another, and from form to form. (As in earlier series, certain forms were constructed for technical reasons in laminated gray painted wood, and others in fabricated copper, nickel silver, and vitreous enamel.)

Maybe it was the move from the "black holster" pieces to color formed gestural works, but to some degree the color and movement in this series exceeded my intentions. At that time my concerns were not so much with color, but with movement and positioning. The forms were so animated, that any viewer, other than myself, would not have the slightest inkling, when seeing the forms in one position, that they could in fact be placed in more than a single position.

I then decided on a compromise between the "black holster" forms and "hot rod pink" manipulations. The result was a mix of color: browns, greens, blues, salmon, and metallic white/grey. The color of nickel silver combined with the full range of brown enamels. Blues, greens, and salmon were highlights of transparent enamel over foils. The laminated spray painted wood component was now fabricated in nickel silver, which provided necessary neutrality and stability (Fig. 8). Fabricating these forms in nickel silver, as opposed to

shaping them in laminated wood, resulted in the awareness that, when one constructs, one encloses space . . . I began to consider the opening up of form. The first result, though not so successful as later attempts — was an interesting way to look at enclosed space. In this series the multi-positioning seemed a bit obvious as compared to the previous series. If anyone had seen the pieces and did not consider the multi-positioning possibilities, I would have to question their visual literacy.

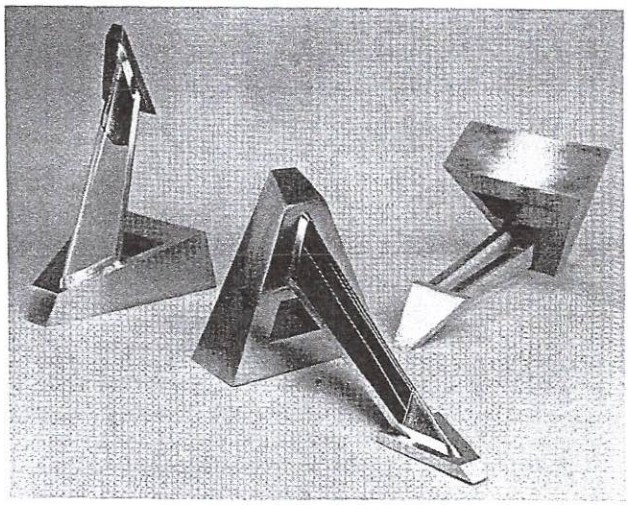


(Fig. 8) NICKEL WEIGHTS — Enamel, Copper, Nickel Silver; size ea. 12 x 10 x 18″; 1984; photo: Mark Arrigoni

I had wondered at times, if a more suitable name could not be found for the multi-position pieces. Perhaps an appropriate name would be "Kamasutra", since they are no longer concerned primarily with weight. The concept for the next series necessitated multi-positioning which was neither ill defined nor predictable while addressing opening the enclosed space(s) in a more integrated manner. In these pieces the forms moved into and out of each other (Fig. 9). There is less of an assembled look to them, because the openings move through the entire form. The opening is singular, penetrating the three component forms, as opposed to the previous pieces which had different openings for each component. The latter produces a more successful integration of inside/outside forms. My thinking is — as form with volume is established, the most convenient way of seeing and presenting it is as an exterior or contour. In reaction to this, I'm forcing myself, and also anyone who views the pieces to deal with the interior spaces; to become aware that, just because these interior spaces are covered, does not mean they no longer exist. It is a simple realization: we can not have interior without exterior space(s). In some ways I have thought of the interior as a possible 4th physical position — if not in this series, at least for future consideration . . .

With these inside/outside pieces, the positioning is the most successful it has been. It is neither predictable nor obscure. One can look at the work in any position, and see potential for the additional positions. To achieve this quality, the line of the contours does not include any curves that establish the concave and convex planes which result in difficult visual transitions and cloud the multi-positioning possibilities. Unlike the "hot rod pink" pieces, all contours in this new series remain angular and straight. Similarly the "predictable" group had not employed soft or curved line, but due to the symmetry and the stability of their contours the *movement from plane to plane was static and choppy.* The multi-positioning of this last series is successful, because there are FORMS with intrinsic direction. The contours are exciting, lacking right angles, and the flow of cross-contour planes is fluid, achieving an extention of direction.

In addition to the possibilities of interior positioning, future pieces could involve the working up of negative space as one would consider and compose positive volume. It will be



(Fig. 9) INSIDE/OUTSIDE WEIGHTS — Enamel, Bronze; avg. size: 15 x 20 x 30″; 1985; photo: Jim Brey

an interesting process to see how the tangible, tactile forms will fall into place . . . I have come to realize that "perfection", as most people understand it, leaves no room for change, for the adaptation of concerns and whims inherent in time, culture, and location. Enslavement to the perfect formula, mean or prescription in the strict sense of the word eliminates options; curtailing the response and reaction which allows for the multiplicity found in art. This then is the point. Perfection is not an absolute. Its essence is to allow for change. Perfection is timeless as well as timely. ■

COVER PHOTO **photo credit: Bill Helwig**

Contemporary Grotesque, white on black enamel on 18 gauge repoussé copper, approximate size is 2x3x1 inches. The mask-like grotesque is made of three separate enameled parts and one hollow form sterling silver tongue. The shell shaped forehead, eyes and cheeks form the basic support structure to which the nose, brow are riveted; the lower jaw form hangs from a bar hinge which also supports the sterling silver tongue. The lower jaw and tongue articulate and each move independent of each other. The nose form is ridged to the base form.

This unique piece illustrates that enamel in the hands of a competent metalsmith can surpass the usual flat plane treatment which tends to dominate much of enamel work today.

The piece was designed and created by Theo Janson during an enamel workshop a few years back. hbh