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Ann’s Candlesticks by Toby Hickman

**Women Do Iron**

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**Cover Story**

Ann’s Candlesticks by Toby Hickman

See page 22
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We appreciate and accept written material, graphics and
photography pertaining to the art, science and business of blacksmithing.
Our current writer's guidelines are available upon request
and posted at www.abana.org

We reserve the right to reject or professionally edit any works submitted.

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Accepting tips, techniques, event info for Hammer's Blow.

P R E Z S E Z ...  

H ave you ever spent a lot of time won-dering “how” you could make a piece of iron into the artistic form you have visualized in your mind? Well, so have I! And spent (read “wasted”) considerable time won-dering [read “wasting”] about the problems one may encounter in making the piece.
The purpose of Peter Lynch’s counsel (see right) sounds a lot like a current slogan we have all seen, JUST DO IT!

Whether it is getting the forge hot, gathering some stock, laying out the form and beginning the forging -- working with your local affiliate members to increase the knowledge of forming art in iron -- or educating the public and pro-fessional community on their satisfaction and appreciation gained when your artistry in iron fills their needs and wants.

“JUST DO IT!”

It’s when we focus on three goals of your affiliate and ABANA that real progress is achieved. Sure, there may be some problems needing solving. but by Jiminy, I bet you are just the person(s) who can find the answer!  

Ideas worth reviewing:

1. Are three related businesses in your area that would be anxious to sponsor some activities if they were asked? It always pleases me that the contributions from business firms help make ABANA conferences so successful every time. Make up a “Win-Win” plan and be sur-prised by the responses you get!

“If you spend more than 14 minutes a year worrying about the stock market, you’ve wasted 12 minutes.”

Quote from Peter Lynch, noted stock market guru, 1987.

2. A local or regional gallery exhibit of “iron artistry” acquaints the professional and buying public with our art. Galleries often are anxious to become involved. Sponsors can come from the likely -- and most unlikely sources. Invite a well-known artist to jury the show; everyone likes a little competition -- and recognition.

3. Does your organization have a Media Liaison? Getting awareness in the local news of events, builds membership -- and exposure for the public to learn about and appreciate your art.

4. ABANA formed a new Professional / Aca-demic Outreach Committee last year. Elizabeth Brim and committee are working hard to fur-ther this vital part of our efforts to our mem-bers. Is there an Architecture or Interior Decorat-ing chapter that your organization can form a liaison with? A presentation of the possibil-ities available from your members’ work will surely be of interest. Is there a school or col-lege program in the metal arts to approach with information or demonstrations? The interest is there, and be surprised by the satisfaction when you become associated!

Each of us is always looking towards oppor-tunities for new ideas. 

Speaking of which, don’t forget to put the 2006 Conference of ABANA next July in Seat-tle Washington, on your must-do list. Many demonstrators from around the Pacific Rim will bring different ideas of work to translate and inspire.

Early registration is now open and available for your convenience. Save money and get the jump on your 2006 Conference plans. The early bird saves a buck – and has first choice of accommodations and more. 

See you in Seattle in 2006!

May your clinkers be few, Good forging.
DEAR EDITOR,
It looked great! Thank you for publishing the article about Bob Selvaggio (see Summer 2005 issue of The Ring). I am so glad to see his work in print. I am sure that this article will be an inspiration to other PAABA members to join ABANA or further their skills in blacksmithing. We truly appreciate the “shot in the arm” you provided our affiliate.

Thank you for your effort and for publishing a great magazine.

Ciao!
Chris Holt, Pennsylvania Artist Blacksmith Assn. Secretary/Editor

DEAR EDITOR,
I want to thank you for publishing some of my work in the Summer ’05 issue of The Anvil’s Ring. The professionalism of your magazine is impressive and does an outstanding service to our craft by sharing the work of talented blacksmiths. Keep up the great work!

James R. Johnson, Alvord, Texas.

EDITOR’S NOTE:
In the Summer 2005 issue of The Ring, credits for the photographs contributed to the article “Demonstrations by Iron Master at the Carroll County Museums page 50”, were inadvertently omitted. The photograph of the bird and nest was taken by George L. Hughes, Westminster, MD, and the photos of Nikolai Pakhomov and the other Russian smiths were taken by Ken Knous of Finksburg, MD. Many thanks to both for their submissions.

In the Spring 2005 issue of The Anvil’s Ring regarding the “Forging Ahead: Contemporary American Blacksmiths” exhibit in Louisville, Kentucky, there is a correction to the photo credit on page 40. It should have read: “Botanical Bench,” A collaboration between Erika Strecker and Tony Higdon.

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BLACKSMITHS FORGE THEIR SUCCESS AT THREE COUNTIES SHOW
Four first-year student blacksmiths from Warwickshire College won five awards in the recent Three Counties Show, held at Malvern, England, from June 17th–19th, 2006.

The students, who are all studying the first year of the National Certificate in Blacksmithing funded by the Coventry & Warwickshire Learning & Skills Council at the College’s Morton Morrell Centre, entered their work into a static display of farriery and blacksmithing at the show. Divided into showing categories, the students entered their work into the first-year student class, in which they earned a remarkable second, third, fourth and fifth place.

Student Kosuke Nakasuka, 23, from Japan, currently living in halls of residence at the Morton Morrell Centre, also gained an impressive second place for his farriery testboard in the professional-level category for traditional pieces valued at under £150. In the first-year student class, 25-year-old Paul Possart, from Leamington Spa, gained second place with a wrought iron table composed of female figures. Irishman Steven Murphy, 21, who currently lives in halls of residence at the Morton Morrell Centre, gained third place with a horsehead featuring a tree design. David Verrier, 20, from Leckhamstead, Bucks, was awarded fourth place for a beautifully made pond cover. Kosuke Nakasuka gained fifth place in this category for his farriery testboard.

Michelle Parker, blacksmithing tutor at the College’s Morton Morrell Centre said: “The Three Counties show is the top artistic Blacksmithing show in the country. We are all very proud of them – they have shown exceptional dedication towards their chosen vocation. To have won so many places in the show also indicates the consistent standards of high quality to which we train our students. They will be entering a trade that is very much in demand, with the rise in national interest in home and garden design.”

Ms. Parker, as well as teaching at Warwickshire College, is a renowned blacksmith who has had her work featured in two Chelsea Gold Medal gardens and a Gardener’s World Live Gold Medal Garden.

To find out more about full- and part-time courses in blacksmithing at Warwickshire College, call toll free: 0800 781 67 67 or email enquiries@warkscol.ac.uk

NEW BLACKSMITH CLASSES BEING OFFERED AT OLD CITY PARK MUSEUM
When: Weekends, ongoing
Where: Old City Park Museum, 1717 Gano Street, Dallas, TX. Phone: 214/641-5141. Web site: www.oldcitypark.org/blacksmith.htm. E-mail: OCPBlacksmith@aol.com.

The Old City Park Museum announces that they are now offering weekend classes in Basic Blacksmithing, Advanced Blacksmithing, and Children’s Basic Blacksmithing.

Subjects covered in Basic Blacksmithing are:
- What you need to start out. Building a coal fire. Learn the difference between iron, mild and tool steel. Blacksmithing without modern tools. Learn to make nails and nail header. Make a pair of tongs.
- Subjects covered in Advanced Blacksmithing are: Forge welding, complex twists and journigling. Punch and upset catter making.
- In Children’s Basic Blacksmithing, they will learn: What is iron and steel? How to be safe around a fire. How to make nails and hooks. How to make harts and a horsehead shoe. Cost: $125 per adult student and $75 per child student.

Old City Park Museum members may take the classes at the discounted price of $100 for adults and $65 for children. Limited to two students per class. The classes are two days long, Saturdays 12 – 4 and Sundays 12 – 4.

Children’s classes are for children between 12 and 17 years (with a parent).

PETER C. HOBART ESTABLISHES TWO UNIQUE SCHOLARSHIPS
International entrepreneur and board member of the Hobart Institute of Welding Technology, Peter Cahill Hobart, has established two scholarships in the amount of $1,000 dollars each for selected students to further their education in welding at the Hobart Institute of Welding Technology.

A major collector of welded metal sculpture, the truly American art form, and a long-time advocate of combining the science and technology of welding with art and creativity, Mr. Hobart has designated one of these grants “The David Smith Award”, for a promising artist and welded metal sculptor. In keeping with his life and international interests and the institute’s worldwide reputation, Peter C. Hobart has provided a second scholarship, “The Peter C. Hobart Weldworld Award” for deserving international students from outside the continental USA – a student who is dedicated to the basic industry of welding in his country.

Applications for these scholarships that are due by April 1st of each year may be obtained through The Troy Foundation, 930 West Main Street, Troy, Ohio 45373 U.S.A. For more information about full- and part-time courses in blacksmithing at Warwickshire College, call toll free: 0800 783 67 67 or email enquiries@warkscol.ac.uk

PREVIEWS & NOTES

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Forged to Found: Sculptural Explorations with Stephen Yuskos
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Information about Summer 2006 classes will be available online in January.

Complete information is available online or call for a catalogue.

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The Ozark Folk Center
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MARCH 19-24, 2006

- Blacksmithing with Scott Reidy
- Tinker’s Trades with Robert Stone

Additional classes in craft, fine art, herbs and traditional mountain music.

The Ozark Folk Center
910 West Main Street, Troy, Ohio 45373 U.S.A.

An independent selection committee of The Troy Foundation will review applications and make the awards in May based on the Institute’s professional recommendations. Students may use the scholarships only toward tuition for any program of welding training at the Hobart Institute. Unused portions of any scholarship will be returned to the fund within the Troy Foundation for use by future scholarship winners.

The Troy Foundation manages funds of $48 million dollars that are granted to educational, benevolent, religious, or charitable uses. Established in 1924, The Foundation holds over 145 established funds that provide services to the Troy community. The Troy Foundation 910 West Main Street, Troy, Ohio 45373 U.S.A.

Hobart Institute of Welding Technology, established in 1930, is dedicated to welding training and education excellence and is a non-profit educational facility located at 400 Trade Square East, Troy, OH 45373. Phone: 1-800/332-9448

hiwt@welding.org http://www.welding.org
ABANA BUSINESS

HURRICANE KATRINA

Due to the threat of hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the ABANA Board of Directors has voted to establish the ABANA Disaster Relief Fund for blacksmiths impacted by hurricane Katrina. After evaluating Joseph John’s proposal an ABANA Disaster Relief Fund is being established to aid ABANA members, ABANA Affiliates and members of the public may contribute to this fund. Donations should be by check, US Postal Money Order or Canadian Postal Money Order made out to “ABANA Relief Fund”. ABANA will provide a receipt for all donations of $250 or more. Please address donations to:

ABANA Relief Fund
P O Box 816
Farmington, GA 30638

DEAR ABANA AND AFFILIATE MEMBERS,

John Steele, president of the Pittsburgh Area Artist-Blacksmiths Association (PAAAB) has established a disaster relief fund for blacksmiths impacted by hurricane Katrina. After evaluating Joseph John’s proposal an ABANA Disaster Relief Fund is being established to aid ABANA members, ABANA Affiliates and members of the public may contribute to this fund. Donations should be by check, US Postal Money Order or Canadian Postal Money Order made out to “ABANA Relief Fund”. ABANA will provide a receipt for all donations of $250 or more. Please address donations to:

ABANA Relief Fund
P O Box 816
Farmington, GA 30638

Canadian, Mexican and international donations are welcome, but please make sure your check is drawn on a US bank. Funds will be transferred to the ABANA Relief Fund. If you know of people in need, please pass that information on to the ABANA Relief Fund. The cost of this mailing was underwritten by private individuals and no ABANA funds were used in this project. Please take a moment and consider what you can afford to contribute and never underestimate the power of human kindness.

Sincerely,

Don Kemper, President

ABANA Relief Fund
ABANA Business

ABANA Disaster Relief Fund

Distribution Change

ABANA will provide a receipt for all donations of $250 or more. Please address your check to:

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P O Box 816
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The ABANA membership dues will be increasing from $45 to $55 on January 1, 2006. If you would like to renew for two years before the end of the year at the current rate of $45, you can do so. Send your renewal to:

ABANA Central Office
PO Box 816
Farmingtion, GA 30638

If you have any questions, call the Office at 706-310-1030 or email them at abana@abana.org.

ABANA Board of Directors and their terms extend through 2006. Congratulations to the four incumbents and welcome to Eric Ryser, our newest addition.

The winning number is 90997 is the lucky winner of the hammer, tongs and forging set. A big thanks to Dean Confer of Bigflis Hammer for donating the set and the ABANA Relief Fund for the funds. Congratulations to the winner: Margery Crowly. A big thanks to LeeAnn Mitchell in the Central Office. If you don’t have the winning number please contact LeeAnn Mitchell at the Central Office. If you have the winning number, please contact LeeAnn Mitchell in the Central Office. If you don’t have the winning number, please contact LeeAnn Mitchell at the Central Office.

The Anvil’s Ring

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CONFERENCE 2006 NEWS

OPENING CEREMONY

The Opening Ceremony will feature two keynote speakers: Brent Kington of Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, and Tom Joyce of Santa Fe, New Mexico. Tom will also do a major media presentation on Thursday night of the conference.

CONFERENCE WEB SITE

The 2006 ABANA Conference web site is expanding significantly. Almost half of the demonstrators now have individual web pages. Take a look at www.abana.org.

CALL TO ARTISTS:

Announcing the 2006 ABANA Conference Poster Contest. This will be a contest to choose an “Official Poster” for the 2006 ABANA Conference in Seattle, Washington! Who can participate? Anyone who is over 18 years old is invited to submit their original art work.

WHAT ARE THE RULES?

Be sure to include your name, address, phone number and e-mail with your submission. Submit any 2-D medium or digital file on a CD such as tiff, gif or jpg. (NO E-MAIL!) Size must be smaller than 36” x 36”. The design must include the words: ABANA, 2006, Seattle, Washington, in any configuration that the artist chooses. Keep in mind that the theme of the conference is “Fusion and Transformation in the Ring of Fire!” This will be the second consecutive conference poster contest. The idea is to create a body of biennial art posters that are suitable for framing and collecting. Submissions must be received before April 15, 2006. The winning artist must give copyright permission to ABANA who will produce posters and other novelties featuring the winning design. Sufficient postage and packing material must accompany your work if you wish to have it returned. If you do not want it returned, it will go into the conference auction to raise funds for ABANA.

WHAT IS THE PRIZE?

The winner will receive two free passes to the conference. This does not include room and meals. Interviews with the winner will be published in The Anvil’s Ring and on the ABANA web site. The winner will produce posters and other novelties featuring the winning design. The winning artist must give copyright permission to ABANA who will produce posters and other novelties featuring the winning design. Sufficient postage and packing material must accompany your work if you wish to have it returned. If you do not want it returned, it will go into the conference auction to raise funds for ABANA.

WHO JUDGES THE SUBMISSIONS?

All of the submissions will be displayed at: www.metalsmithinghow-to.com/poster/. Anyone can visit the website and vote for the poster that they like best. We will also have a link on the ABANA website that points to the poster page. The poster receiving the most votes will win. One need not be an ABANA member to vote. Visit www.magichammer .breezervers.com/poster.htm to see the results of the “2006 Poster Contest.”

HOW DO I SUBMIT?

Send your art work or CD before 4/15/06 to: ABANA P.O. Box 816, Farmington, GA 30638 or UPS/FedEx: 1880 Old Salem Road, Watkinsville, GA 30677 (do not send files in e-mail)

DEMONSTRATORS AT THE 2006 ABANA CONFERENCE:

Australian Demo Team: Mark Aspery, Brent Bailey, Phil Baldwin, Brian Brazal, Jay Burzaham-Kidwell, Paul Casey, E.A. Chase, Garri Dayyan, Francisco Gautha, Toby Hickman, Mendel Jonkers, William Jonkers, Alfred Haberman, Troy Hendersen, Hank Knickmeyer, Nick Lyle and Jean Whitesavage, Doug Moseley, Doug Newell, Gary Saffire, Mark Peace, Pete Renzetti, Gonzalo Ricardez, Porfirio Ricardez, Erin Simmons, Dorothy Stenger, Corky Storer, Scott Sizloch, Kominke Takayoshi, James Wallace, Chris Winterstein, Lee Dar Won, Yoshindo Yoshihara

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www.ABANASeattle2006.com
NEW WORKS

Jack Duckworth, Waldorf, Maryland
Atlantic octopus. Mounted inside 12” sch. 80 black pipe, 18” high. Octopus is from 6” sch. 40 black pipe with tentacles of 1” sch. 40 black pipe, ball bearing eyes, finish: hot brass brushing. Base mount: stainless steel.

Phil Abernethy, Nobel, ON, Canada
Winged gazelle. 10” h x 8” w x 5” d. Forged steel, torch-cut base. Finish: flame colored.

“Foenix.” 10” h x 8” w x 5” d. Forged steel, torch-cut base. Finish: flame colored.
Phil Fortwengler, Sr., Shepherdsville, Kentucky
Photos by Kevin Byerly
"Oak Leaf" Table. 24" x 42" x 26" h.
Sch. 10 and sch. 80 pipe. Rustoleum Crystal Clear Enamel spray finish.

Bob Bergman, Postville Blacksmith Shop, Blanchardville, Wisconsin
Chandelier. 60" diameter. Designed by Ted Meows and Howard McCall. Executed by Postville Blacksmith Shop. Traditional techniques, hammer textured.

Pot rack with lighting. 30" x 50". Riveted construction. Designed by Ted Meows and Howard McCall. Executed by Postville Blacksmith Shop. Photo credits: Marona Photo.

Bobby Sharpe, Oakland, California
Balcony railing. Design reflects the development of the oval scroll. Forged and welded mild steel. 40" h x 15" w. Photo by Kevin Gary

Susan Mielarz, Norwich, Connecticut
Garden. 48" l x 22" h. 6" w.Forged and fabricated steel.
My wife Frances needed to produce an “animal” for a charity auction a few years ago. It needed to be lightweight enough to hang on the wall, because it stuck out about 12 inches. For structural purposes, I formed a thoroughly sculpted armature of expanded metal that would require minimal application of paper mache. We started this collaboration on 3-D coyote work in the fall of 2002. We wanted to do a forged piece. Inspired by “Mexican Day of the Dead” skeletal figurines, we decided to make a coyote skeletal sculpture. We chose reinforcing bar for its obvious structural significance.

The first step was to look for pictures of coyote and dog skeletons on the Internet. These, of course, were all two-dimensional profiles. We finally succeeded in obtaining an x-ray view of the spine and pelvis on a veterinary site. It turned out to be a very difficult job to extrapolate three dimensions from pictures, because bones are so sculptural and nonsymmetrical.

Bones are wonderful expressions of the stresses to which they are exposed as well as the mechanical requirements of their articulation. I think it is impossible to forge even a stylized reproduction without some appreciation for these elements. I believe the first art necessary to blacksmithing is, as Samuel Yellin said (paraphrased), “to bring life to cold metal.” This is achieved in forging as in fine art by control of line and weight.

I realized the easy part was that I didn’t need to worry at all about the final configuration until I began to assemble the bones. However, they do have to be accurate. For instance, the bones of the forearm must swivel around one another. The bones of the feet are not made out of rebar because they’re small and delicate, and won’t hold heat. I made the feet out of ultra-low impurity 1005 stock, which is still plastic at very low heat.

The coyote head was originally made in paper mache, but we weren’t satisfied with it. The head needed to be lightweight and we didn’t want a casting. We considered raising some copper, but finally ended up fabbing it out of 16-gauge sheet pewter. (From Oster Pewter in Rhode Island; they were very helpful.)

Traditionally, pewter is worked and attached by fusion welding or puddling with a hot copper. I tried an electric soldering gun, which was frustrating at 400 watts – I needed at least twice the power. However, it was just a pop, so everything got scaled up close to double in order to be in the size range of the first forging. All the joint ends needed to be upset with graceful, accurate tapers. This called for heat control – heat distribution in the stock. Also, because I didn’t want to scale off the ribs and surface texture of the rebar, the material was worked colder than usual. I switched to coke at one point, but went back to my Sandia propane forge.

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Finally, after experimentation and practice, I was able to successfully tig weld. This shortened the time required for what turned out to be a very complex shape – the coyote skull. I really enjoyed forming the bones and noticed that the rebar supply has sizes up to 2” in diameter. T-Rex anyone?

If you are interested in viewing the Rebar Coyotes in person, you can check them out at the Bakersfield Museum of Art until the end of December, where it is part of the “Coyotes Shadows” exhibit. You will find information at www.bmoa.org or (661) 323-7219.

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The Women Do Iron Show will be taken down within days as I sit and write this foreword. My coffee table is littered with magazine and newspaper articles about the show. I open a current edition of the TALON, a small local paper in Aztec. On the inside page a local proprietor has written a letter to the editor about the show. It simply reads: “Thank you to Ambrose, Kathleen and Liz.” “Women Do Iron,” the current art exhibit at the Teasyatwho Gallery in downtown Aztec, is of the caliber to elicit the comment: “I’d be impressed to encounter this work in a New York or London gallery”...from Patricia Miller, Arts and Entertainment Editor of The Durango Herald, a Colorado newspaper.

“This is simply a thank-you note to Ambrose Teasyatwho, owner of the gallery; Liz Stannard, manager of the gallery; Kathleen Holmes who curated the Women Do Iron show; the artists, of course, and anyone else involved in bringing art of this quality to our town. Thanks to all.” Signed, Nikki Rubow

I open New Mexico magazine to page 29, July edition. Large bronze letters read: “Women Do Iron.” The first paragraph reads: “When Kathleen Holmes was offered a show of her iron creations at the A. Teasyatwho Gallery in Aztec, she asked if it could feature other female metal artists. Initially, there was a question if she could get nationally known artists to come to Aztec, in the northwest corner of the state. But Holmes persisted, and accomplished her mission. On the cover of the EXPLORE, Four Corners Arts and Entertainment, artist/blacksmith Maegan Crowley smiles beautifully behind her sculpture, “Full Bloom.” She had just unloaded three of her works from the back of her RV when the photographer from The Daily Times came strolling down the sidewalk. It’s a small town. We don’t get in a hurry here, even if she is originally from the nearby “boom town” of Farmington, New Mexico, and on a shoot for The Daily Times, which has already announced the show...
as far back as April. Inside the cover is a picture, "Cherry Blossom Stand," by Lorelei Sims, on display at the show. It reads: "Lorelei Sims of Illinois, a renowned iron artist who has been blacksmithing for 13 years, said she is proud to be part of the inaugural show. (This is the first national art show in Aztec, NM.) I am honored, very honored. The collection of women artists they have brought together is amazing," Sims noted.

**WOMEN DO IRON PARTICIPANTS**

**Elizabeth Brim, Penland, North Carolina**

Elizabeth Brim is a blacksmith artist whose work looks more like fabric than metal. Most of the items Brim creates are feminine—aprons with ruffles, a disco top with fringe, pillows with buttons and lace, high-heeled shoes and even a tiara. She is a blacksmithing instructor at Penland School of Crafts, North Carolina, and also conducts seminars around the country, focusing on the more nontraditional aspects of blacksmithing.

She has a Master of Fine Arts from the University of Georgia in printmaking. Elizabeth went to Penland in 1980 to study ceramics at first, but the lure of wanting to work with metals overtook the ceramics.

**Paula Castillo, Cordova, New Mexico**

Paula was born in Belen, New Mexico, and currently lives and works in Cordova. Her education includes Yale University, a B.S. from the University of New Mexico, and an M.A. from the College of Santa Fe. Awards: International Sculpture Award, 2000, City of Belen, NM Public Art Commission, 1999; NEA Fellowship, 1993; National Science Foundation Fellowship, 1992. For more information, see www.castillogallery.com.

**Maria Cristalli, Seattle, Washington**

As a blacksmith, Maria is dedicated to the design and execution of quality forged metal work. Whether the project is architectural elements, home furnishings, garden ironwork, or fine art, each piece she creates is forged individually, using traditional hand techniques. She works with a variety of metals, including iron, stainless steel, bronze and copper. See web site: www.mariacristalli.com.

**Maegan E. Crowley, Cortez, Colorado**

Maegan is a studio artist in Colorado, where she creates sculpture, architectural and decorative ironwork. She received her MFA from Cranbrook Academy of Art. She is the former head of the blacksmithing department at Peters Valley Craft Education Centre and has taught at other craft schools such as Penland, Oxbow and New England School of Metalmaking. Maegan has demonstrated at regional and national blacksmithing conferences and is currently serving on the ABANA board of directors. Her work is exhibited nationally and Maegan is a recipient of the 2002 ACC Emerging Artist Grant. See web site www.ironmaegan.com.

She also worked with Francis Whitaker in Carbondale, Colorado. In 2000 she and her husband started their own company, Freedom Metals, LLC, in Montrose, Colorado. Most of the work she and her husband produce is architectural.

**Susan Frary, Las Cruces, New Mexico**

Susan works with steel and copper, using repousse because she loves the dimensionality and draping effects. She accents her pieces with chisel engraving and forging. She is especially indebted to Lefkoy Simmons of Dragon Ash Forge in Mountaïnair, New Mexico, for all he taught her about metalwork.

Susan is planning to show and sell her work online soon.

**Leah Gerrard, Seattle, Washington**

Leah graduated with an art major from Linfield College in McMinnville, Oregon. She began doing metal work professionally after she met her husband, who already had his own shop. The two work together as a team doing high-end custom metal fabrication in residential construction. Their company is called Intent, LLC.

She has been making wire baskets for about ten years and has done pieces ranging in size from 3/8” to 4’ tall. Leah uses many different types of wire; she uses tiny silver wire for necklaces, often incorporating small beads and crystal chips.

The boxes in the show are an example of her love of combining hard and soft materials. The common thread which runs through Leah’s work is her interest in textiles and lines. She has a strong attraction to working with or incorporating string, wire, rubber bands, rope and many other “string-type” materials into her work.

**Erica Gordon, Seattle, Washington**

Erica Gordon is the owner of Steel Toe Studios in Seattle, Washington. She splits her time between a production line of hand-forged buckles (www.steeltoestudios.com), sculptors, and small architectural commissions. Combining her childhood understanding of the natural world with her love for metal working, Erica has produced a series of animal and flower pieces which include a copper duck, a giant ladybug, an adult-sized steel rock climbing monkey, and is currently working on a caterpillar/butterfly commission. The pieces reflect the joy and humor
with which they are made and, ideally, Erica would spend all of her time creating a twisted menagerie to keep her company at the forge.

Ekaterina Harrison, La Sal, Utah
Ekaterina Harrison was born in St. Petersburg, the Soviet Union. She and her family immigrated to the United States in 1979 and settled in Salt Lake City, Utah. Ekaterina attended the University of Utah, majoring in art.

In the early 70's, Kathleen's art studio was a hotel room where Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid often played poker back during the mining town days in Mogollon, New Mexico. Eleven artists lived in this ghost town in the Gila Wilderness and sold their work downstairs in the Gila National Gallery of Art. Up on Fanny Hill, named after the Little Fanny Mine, the blacksmith shop was still intact. Today, the blower from that shop powers her coal forge and the relics from the mining past of Mogollon decorate the outside walls of her forge in Aztec.

Taking Frank Turley's class four years ago was a hallmark event for Kathleen. She started her business, Rustwater Forge, built the shop and fabricated the equipment inside. Kathleen and her husband Joe look forward to many years of working in their shop together and are happy to be a part of the blacksmithing communities of Colorado and New Mexico. See web site, www.rustwater-forge.com.

Lorelei Sims, Charleston, Illinois
Lorelei Sims is a self-employed artist/blacksmith residing in Charleston, Illinois. After graduating from Eastern Illinois University with degrees in sculpture and art education, she opened Five Points Blacksmith Shop in 1993. She specializes in creating functional ironwork which combines her sense of the aesthetics found in nature with utilitarian function. She also provides the traditional services of a blacksmith and welder for her rural community.

Lorelei continues to pursue her study and interest in the creation of botanical forms. Rich textures of leaves, petals, vines, and tendrils are incorporated into works that have an ordered yet asymmetrical composition, the embodiment of her connection to the outside world.


Christina Sporrong, El Prado, New Mexico
Christina runs Spitfire Forge in Taos, NM. Last year while in San Francisco teaching welding and forging at The Crucible, she pursued her long-time interest in kinetic work, and started tinkering late nights in the shop with linkages and throws. "Nine Beating Hearts" is her first motorized kinetic sculpture, incorporating both forging techniques and basic kinetic mechanisms.

This combination has become the primary focus in her work. When not obsessing about moving parts, she finds time to teach other women welding through her Women’s Welding Workshops, held at Spitfire Forge. See web site at www.spitfireforge.com.
In the morning hours on September 12, 2001, I walked through deserted Lower Manhattan to the Coenties Slip Park to check on the forged pieces which I had installed two years earlier. Since it opened in August 1998, this has been a most popular lunchtime spot for office workers. I was asked by the city of New York Parks Department to design the layout of the park and also its furniture. The Dept. of Transportation brought in five-ton boulders to enclose and make a perimeter around the park. This tiny park is surrounded by three forty-story buildings and it was my plan to attract persons looking down from the floors high above. The benches were designed to appear as arrow heads and placed so that they pointed at each other. The pathway appeared as an “X” in the center and people told me it was the “X” that caught their attention. They came down to see what it was and they continued to come back.

In the midst of a busy city such as New York, handcrafted works with their own character can be a refreshing surprise. For the pedestrian in midtown, a few moments on a gracefully crafted bench is not for casual comfort; it can be meaningful for one’s personal spirit. Since the materials being used are solid, a blemish can be sanded.
down and the surface can be renewed. There are no hinges to lubricate, and there is no need to replace moving parts, locks, or broken glass. Deliveries, carting and construction are routine on a city block, and anything on the sidewalk that cannot move on its own will get bumped, leaned upon, or used as a chain post. First and foremost, the handcrafted pieces have to be practically indestructible.

The pieces I designed for the Coenties Park include the following: 4 wing surface benches made of ferro-cement and forged steel, 4 lariat plank benches, 4 lariat litter stands, 2 pedestrian bollards. The bollards create a barrier from vehicles.

The Lariat Design
The name “lariat” relates to the JG bend, a knuckle-like form in which round bar is forged back onto itself before it proceeds in the new direction. These soft corners are much friendlier to shin bones and fine clothing than the sharp corner of a concrete planter. This is a distinct form that I consider original. It results from a simple way to forge a corner that occurred at the forge.

Prior to installing, presentations are needed to obtain New York City regulatory compliance from the Departments of Transportation and Sanitation, the Arts Commission, the Central Park Conservancy, the Landmarks Conservancy, the Fire Department, and the local Community Board. Often a presentation is actually a bolstering experience because the commissioners are delighted to see something that is hand made.

Other Installations
There are four other sites where I have created original designs for public fixtures in New York. The Lariat Handrail resides in Central Park near West 97th Street. At the 33rd Street Subway Station of the #6 subway there are fourteen bronze Lariat Seat Loops that are installed as a Percent for Art Project. At the Dwight School on the Upper West Side the School of Spirit’s Entrance is a set of steel and glass double doors with 90 forged figures. My two most recent installations are the Lariat Seating, located in the lobby of the New York City Police Substation on Washington Street, and the forged bronze Lariat Tree Guard and forged bronze Spheres that act as skateboarding deterrents at DeLaury Plaza located at the corner of Fulton and Gold Streets.

James Garvey graduated from Colorado State University with a Fine Arts degree. After college, he joined a crafts community in upstate New York where he spent ten years. After leaving the community, James joined the New York City Ironworkers Union and began working on replicating the Statue of Liberty’s armature bars. For several months, he observed the effect that watching these artisans at Liberty Island had on the visitors. This setting is what inspired him to search for and bring meaningful street furniture to the public – pieces that would be functional works of art. He and his wife live in upstate New York; his shop is located in New York City.

Wing surface bench. Forged steel 2” dia. round bar. Wood plank 4” x 12”, length 20’. Plank benches adapt well to site conditions because of their A-frame structure. They can be anchored to the pavement.

Lariat gate pivot ring, 3” round bar. Pivot base dome: forged 5/8” thick steel plate 24” in diameter. Pivot ring 3” dia. round bar 30” dia. Gate is designed to provide access for emergency vehicles. A locked gate is discouraged by the Fire Department. The weight acts as a deterrent for persons who would open the gate for convenience. The pivot will continue to work under extreme weather conditions even if it were buried by a snowplow. The “Heads up technoloogy” of the pivot brings an advantage of rugged durability. One end slides along pavement surface on a slope-shaped foot. If necessary, the entire gate can be toppled or lifted from the pivot.

Lariat litter stand. Forged steel or bronze 1 1/2” dia. round bar with 2” dia. base. The top loop restricts large articles and prevents unloading due to wind. There is a hinged retainer ring running along the inside of the hoop that holds the plastic bag in a convenient fashion. It can be mounted to establish a permanent location on the block. The 1 1/2-inch solid round bar provides structural integrity in order to withstand inadvertent collision from utility vehicles, hand trucks or moving dollies. There are no places that cannot be cleaned with a scrub brush and a pail of soapy water.
Nick Moran, London, England

The art nouveau staircase was made for a private client in West London. The client had already installed various art nouveau features in the completely restored house, such as cast iron fireplaces and radiators, and she wanted to continue the theme on the staircase.

I had already made a small section for a staircase a couple of years ago from a design which appeared in a book called *Art Nouveau Decorative Ironwork*, and at the same time made a small sample panel to show to future customers.

When we placed the sample panel on the empty staircase, it worked proportionally very well, so after a few drafts and re-drafts, the final design was agreed upon and the construction and installation was completed.

I have been a blacksmith for ten years. Most of my work are commissions for staircases, gates, railings, fire grates, furniture, planters, sculpture and restoration. My work ranges from contemporary, site-specific designs, to traditional work, designed to be in harmony with existing ironwork.

I began blacksmithing by attending a full-time blacksmithing course in Hereford, West England, for one year. Instructors were Adrian Legge and Dave Field. Their enthusiastic approach to blacksmithing started my fascination for the trade.

During the course we were encouraged to find work placements. I did find a placement with Paul Elliott, a blacksmith based in my home county of Hertfordshire, just north of London. I joined Paul just as he began working on a 100-foot rose arbor, certainly an exciting project for my first endeavor.

Upon completion of my training at Hereford, I began working for Paul full time for the next eight years. During this time I attended a two-year apprenticeship course at the college at Salisbury in southwest England. It was set up for one week of training every eight weeks for two years. It was an intense, traditional hand-forging course tutored by Paul Allen. It showed us how to apply our skills to every aspect of blacksmithing.

For the past four years, I have been accepting commissions from architects and private individuals, as well as supplying and restoring work for various architectural antique dealers in and around London.
ONE CAN LITERALLY STEP OUT OF THE BACK DOOR AND ONTO THE SKI RUN, SKI DOWN THE MOUNTAIN, THEN GET ON THE TRAM AND RETURN TO THE TOP OF THE MOUNTAIN. WHEN YOU GET TIRED, YOUR HOME IS RIGHT THERE.

This is a large home that was built in an upscale community in upper Park City, Utah. The homes here have majestic views of the Park City Valley and the area ski resorts. These homes are actually designed specifically to be “ski in/ski out” communities, with all of the amenities. However, most of these luxury homes sit vacant all year long, except for a few weeks when the owners come to visit and ski, or enjoy leisure time in the solitude of the beautiful mountains.

The design behind the ironwork was to be a combination of an old-world look and an organic, contemporary one. The scrollwork is not meant to be symmetrical. The scrolls were placed in a rather organic-style of design, suggesting that they grew in that position. They didn’t want leaves or other adornments, only scrolls.

The light fixtures were made to match, but carried more of an old-world feel. They were rusted with real rust, and beeswax was added to create a satin finish that wouldn’t rub off; it lends itself well with the rock work. The wood incorporated into the rail is knotty alder, which has a nice, welcoming feel to it.

These carriage lights had to represent the same old-world feel, with large scrolls and rusted finish.

The wine room lights represent old-world dungeon-style candelabras.
THE SCROLLWORK IS NOT MEANT TO BE SYMMETRICAL. THE SCROLLS WERE PLACED IN A RATHER ORGANIC-STYLE OF DESIGN, SUGGESTING THAT THEY GREW IN THAT POSITION.

The railing was made to have a heavy feel, because the wood was so heavy. We added the asymmetrical scroll features to add an old-world effect, but showing a more eclectic style. The elegant stair railing is old-world with a touch of eclectic, and even organic, feel.
The Steeple Cross and Garden Gates
at St. Patrick’s Catholic Church,
Sidney, Nebraska

JERRY SPIKER, SIDNEY, NEBRASKA

The steeple cross is 33 1/2" wide and 72" tall, includ-
ing the base. The cross is made of 4" square tubing, and slides over a 5-foot long piece of 3 1/2" square tubing that was anchored inside the steeple.

The steeple cross base is 24" high and 18 1/2" square at the base. It is made of 14-gauge and 11-gauge steel.

This was a recent project of mine. The Catholic Church parish and the Archdiocese decided to restore and add on to the historic stone structure here in Sidney, Nebraska. I was fortunate enough to be involved with the iron work surrounding the Prayer Garden as well as 11 crosses adorning the church and steeple.

ALL NINE OF THE CROSSES ON THE CHURCH WERE GROUNDED AS A PRECAUTION AGAINST THE POSSIBILITY OF LIGHTNING.

The 158-foot fence is 94" tall and consists of 2 1/2" square tubing, 2" x 1" channel and 1/2" x 1/2" square bar. The crosses on the fence are made out of 3/4" square bar.

All of the ironwork was glass bead blasted, received a phosphate wash, a zinc powder coat primer, an oil rubbed bronze and gold finish, and a gloss clear coat.

The "Prayer Garden" cross is 96" tall with 36 inches extending into the base of the fountain. The cross is made of 5-inch square tubing.

The Prayer Garden gates are both 72" wide. One is 64" tall and the other is 82" tall. They are made of 1 1/4" square tubing, 3/8" x 1/4" bar, 1/2" x 1/2" square bar, 3/4" steel balls. 3/8" plate was used for the hands.
Joseph Koches commissioned Toby Hickman to create these pieces for The Blacksmith Shop Gallery, located in Ferndale, California. The Blacksmith Shop Gallery displays and sells the work of over 90 artist blacksmiths. For more information, see web site at: www.ferndaleblacksmith.com.

**TRIBUTE**

In Memory of

LEONARD MASTERS, CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Submitted by Jonathan Nebor, Northeast Blacksmiths Association

Leonard Masters of Concord, New Hampshire, died on July 26, 2005. He had been suffering from poor health since the 2004 ABANA Conference in Richmond, Kentucky. Leonard, who had been a chief engineer in the Merchant Marine, was the first official Northeast Blacksmiths Association President back in the late 1980s. He remained president until 1993 when he left this area of upper New York State to move to Concord, New Hampshire. Leonard’s concern for the survival of our group was what led us to become more organized with an actual board and officers. We have come a long way from that early push to become legit.

We also have Leonard to thank for the bit of arm twisting it took to get the late Bill Gichner to donate the Little Giant power hammer we have in the Northeast Blacksmiths Association shop. My first trip to Gichner’s antique shop in Delaware was with Leonard to pick up the hammer. It was quite an experience hanging out with the two of them. Leonard and his wife Lilo are best known as the leaders of the ABANA European Blacksmith Tours. They led nine of these tours and made some wonderful contacts with smiths and museums all over Europe. Additionally, the two of them helped connect many European and American smiths with job opportunities on both sides of the Atlantic. When I traveled to Europe, Leonard and Lilo gave me a long list of museums and shops to visit, where I was often welcomed simply because I was a friend of theirs.

Because of their work on these tours, as well as other contributions to ABANA, Leonard was the recipient of the coveted Alex Bealer Award in 2003.

Leonard will be missed by many people in the international blacksmithing community. We can be thankful for the contribution he made to our group’s success.

If you wish to send your condolences to Lilo, her address is: 73 Carrier Road, Concord, NH 03301.

Submitted by Mary and Bob Fredell

We lost a good friend on Tuesday, July 26, 2005. Although Leonard’s quality of life had been severely compromised, he quietly died while living in a care facility near his home in Concord, New Hampshire. He died of congestive heart failure, complicated by other ills. He is survived by his loving wife Lilo and a son Mark. Leonard was cremated and interred at the Concord Unitarian Society Memorial Garden. No immediate service is planned. A “Celebration of Life” gathering will be held at a later date.

Lilo was Leonard’s constant companion in his blacksmithing activities, and they have been together for over 42 years.

Leonard was born in Germany and came to America at the age of two. He became an American citizen and went on to receive a Master’s Degree in International Relations from the University of Chicago. He briefly served as a foreign student advisor at a college in Lakeland, Florida. Most of his working years were spent in the Merchant Marine, eventually retiring as a chief engineer.

We blacksmiths know Leonard as a dear friend, hobbyist blacksmith, and a tireless worker for ABANA. Leonard, along with Lilo, led nine ABANA tours to Europe beginning in 1986. These tours were absolutely wonderful, owing to his understanding of what a blacksmith would like to see and because of the many contacts he had in Europe. His name is internationally recognized. He is a past president of the Northeast Blacksmiths Association. Leonard and Lilo have attended all ABANA conferences since 1980, but for one.

We will sorely miss Leonard. He enriched the lives of so many people. He brought us to the culture, ironwork, art and architecture of Europe. His delightful way of guiding us will be long remembered by those attending his tours. Further, he enabled people to make lasting relationships by bringing them together on his ABANA tours.
The Field Museum owes its fine Pompeii holdings to one of its founders and greatest benefactors, Edward Ayer. In the middle 1890s, Ayer visited Italy and became convinced that the new Field Columbian Museum had to have a representative Roman collection. His first purchase toward that end was made in Naples: almost two hundred replicas of the bronzes that were then being excavated at Pompeii. Legend has it that the original bronzes were taken directly to the workshops of the noted bronze caster Sabatino De Angelis and Sons as soon as they came out of the ground. Only after De Angelis had made a mold and a lost-wax copy were the originals taken to their final destination, the National Museum of Naples. The two hundred replicas first acquired by Ayer were soon joined by about one hundred and fifty more, giving The Field Museum what may be the largest extant collection of De Angelis’s magnificent copies.

During this same time Ayer was acquiring nearly fifty original objects from Pompeii itself, including some fine glass vases, bronze and iron objects with crusts of volcanic debris, and a representative sample of ceramics. These were outshone, however, by another set of originals: objects dug from the rich clusters of villas at Boscoreale, a mile north of Pompeii and destroyed by the same volcanic disaster. Ayer bought more than ten fresco paintings that had just been excavated at Boscoreale, including the two large ones currently exhibited at the Art Institute as a loan from The Field Museum. He also acquired not one but two splendid bronze bath tubs, four gigantic wine jars from the storeroom of an aristocratic vintner, and an assortment of iron objects and fine bronzes. With the Pompeii originals and replicas, the presence of the Boscoreale objects makes The Field Museum the leading repository on this side of the Atlantic for Roman-era artifacts from the Vesuvian region.

Editor’s Note:
For more information, call the museum at 312/922-9410. Visit www.fieldmuseum.org. To purchase tickets call 866/343-5303.

Silver and gold statuette of Mercury, the god of commerce and communication.
An excellent combination of artistic and functional demonstrations were on display at IronFest 2005. The event was held June 3-5, 2005 in Grapevine, Texas. The blacksmiths at IronFest helped to establish the word “artist” in “artist blacksmith.” Jim Wallace, David Ponsler, Peter Sevin, and even vendors and glass artists participated. Jim worked in a full range of chasing, hand hammering and power hammer work to create wonderful ironwork. A harpoon, letter opener and a large kinetic sculpture reeling a feather were a few of Jim’s accomplishments. He entertained the audience with colorful descriptions of the National Ornamental Metal Museum’s large projects. Jim’s knowledge of metalworking is truly amazing.

David Ponsler’s topic, “Beyond Fold-Forming,” produced numerous beautiful examples. Several copper pieces had extraordinary patinas. David created some very difficult fluid forms, effortlessly. His large fold-formed iron sculpture was mounted on a plow disc base. Its fine lines and textures invited touching it and moving around the seemingly massive sculpture.

A Southwestern style was reflected in Peter Sevin’s two excellent table lamps. Sevin assembled the numerous textural pieces into functional lighting items with Spanish and Art Deco influences. Peter also forged a fine double caliper and later a nice rose from one circular plate. He displayed an excellent finial sample for railing use.

In the public area, vendor James R. Johnson showed the many uses of the Anyang power hammer. His examples had detailed and varied textures resembling wood grain. See article on of James R. Johnson, Spring 2005 Anvil’s Ring.

As a fascinating sidelight, Bill Davis of Saltfork Craftsmen worked with the Vetro Glass Studio artist David Gappa to create an iron and glass sculpture. An unusual method was used by blowing the glass into the iron stand. The glass was then removed, annealed and re-inserted for a perfect fit, creating an outstanding work of art.
The blacksmith shop crew worked long hours, including Tom Clark’s nail-making contest. Tom also furnished the use of power hammers for the demonstrators. David “String Bean” Lowry’s auctioneering skills entertained the audience at the excellent auction Saturday night. On display were an extraordinary range of items that were products of a very rewarding conference.

Thanks to all of these fine artists. We’re now looking forward to IronFest, June 1-3, 2007!
TRADITION AND INNOVATION IN THE HISTORY OF IRON MAKING

Reviewed by Daniel Kerem

This book published in 2002 is an unusual collaboration between Indian and Swedish scholars of varied backgrounds: metallurgists, economic historians and anthropologists, addressing the development of iron making in Sweden and India.

The book includes drawings of early smelting processes, early photographs of iron making, and essays dealing with socio-economic, cultural and geo-political factors which shaped the various stages in India’s and Sweden’s indigenous iron industry.

Attempts to introduce “modern industrial” methods and works during the colonial period and, what might be of most interest to North American and European readers, is the third section of the book which is concerned with the survival of traditional “small-scale” iron making in India up to the present.

Never having been in Sweden, I have left those parts of the book for future reading; however, the sections on India – the majority – were fascinating.

Having lived in various parts of India (at different periods over the last three decades) and having come into contact with the Gadhala Lohar – a nomadic blacksmiths’ cast in Rajasthan and Gujarat, I was familiar with many of the places mentioned and some of the practices described. What makes this study so impressive is its comprehensive coverage of a vast subject in a vast country, among numerous and varied ethnic groups.

Iron smelting practiced by tribal artisans dates back to 1200 BC in many parts of India, and by 600 BC it was exporting excellent steel as far away as the Mediterranean. Mention of this is made in the Bible, Ezekiel 27:16.

This technology seems to have developed early and independently, and ample archaelogical sites all over the country – where slag heaps and iron artifacts have been found – attest to the high state of cultural and technological development of the diverse cultures inhabiting the Indus Valley and the Indian Plains, – one more reason, and a very substantial one – for discarding the long-held theory that migrating Aryans carried iron technology to India.

Indeed, India was known not only for its production, but also for its fine metallurgical craftsmanship. From massive pieces such as the Iron Columns of Delhi, believed to have been made in the 4th century AD (24 feet in height and with an estimated weight of 6 tons) and the 24-foot gun at Amber – the world’s largest cannon – to forging of miniature proportions, showing great imagination and skill.

The high quality of Indian iron was further proven in more recent times when it was exported to England,

Although the book answers many questions concerning the making of iron and steel from ancient to modern times, it also makes it blatantly clear how much of this technology has been lost, and to what scant proportions our forging practices have been reduced to today.

The essays on India make fascinating reading not only for their metallurgical content but for their historical and anthropological perspectives, and for some very animated (and controversial) descriptions of life during the British Raj.

This book comes highly recommended for anyone with an interest in iron, in India and its ancient culture and art, or an interest in Sweden.

This hardbound book measuring 15 cm x 24 cm is priced at 1000 rupees [in India] or US$60 [outside India], including postage, and can be paid for with an international money order.

ISBN # 81-86246-19-3

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C A L E N D A R

NOVEMBER 5

Blacksmith Auction. John C. Campbell Folk School, Brasstown, NC. This annual event spotlights some of the finest artist-blacksmiths and other fine craft items for sale. 800/365-5724. See web site: www.folkschool.org.

NOVEMBER 5 – 6

All Blacksmiths Christmas Show and Sale. Agricultural Farm Park, Deerwood, MD. Call Bob Morris, 101/253-2084.

DECEMBER 2 – 4

27th Annual Christmas Showcase featuring over 100 booths of all handmade items and fine art, hand-made wares. Strawhouse Convention Center, Little Rock, AR. Sponsored by the Arkansas Craft Guild. 501/260-3097. E-mail: akcraftguild@indy.net.

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Holiday tours at Carroll County Farm Museum, Westminster, MD. Visit the blacksmith shop, see antique farm machinery, exhibition buildings, nature trail, antique farm machinery and much more. 1-800-344-9465 or 410/876-7177.

DECEMBER 4

Fireside Sale at John C. Campbell Folk School, Brasstown, NC. Shop for handmade gifts at the beautifully decorated Keith House where craftspeople exhibit their wares. Live holiday music and a crackling fire. 800/365-5724. See web site: www.folkschool.org.

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2006

JANUARY 7 – 8

2nd Annual Bill Gichner Memorial Hammer-In. 2nd Annual Bill Gichner Memorial Hammer-In. Cordova, MD. 302/539-6274.

MARCH 11 – 12

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JUNE 17 – 18

Berkshire Blacksmith’s 13th Annual Age of Iron at Hancock Shaker Village, Pittsfield, MA. Approximately two dozen smiths will set up forges around the village and demonstrate a variety of techniques and products. Anybody willing to demonstrate blacksmithing or another craft that would fit in the venue, contact Jim Stapleford, 845/657-8212. E-mail: ariknifgand@indy.net.

Note: Sebastian publishing has a new e-mail address: rob@sebastianpublishing.com
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By Oleh Bankovskyy, Professor, Lviv Academy of Arts, Lviv, Ukraine

The Lviv Academy of Arts is one of the oldest artistic higher educational institutions in Ukraine. Specialists in artistic ceramics, fabrics, glass, clothes modeling, interior design, monumental and decorative sculpture and painting, history and theory of arts, restoration and conservation of works of art have been trained here for over 50 years.

The Chair of Artistic Metal is one of the youngest at the Academy. The curriculum at the Chair is scheduled in a way that a future specialist is able to be oriented in the processes, taking place in contemporary applied and decorative arts, and he knows the history of artistic metal.

The curriculum’s concept is based on two principal directions: one is monumental metal, used in architectural environment and to decorate houses, streets and parts, and the other is chamber metal: creating different adornments, small plastics, and souvenirs. Students learn to make designs of both the unique artistic works and articles of serial production. The six-year program also stipulates design of sacred works, where design of a cross in sacred art is a separate but required course.

The first Christian temples, built in Byzantium, were dominated by a cross. The cross was created by the intersection of vertical and horizontal bars (pivots) at right angles, the vertical one being longer than the horizontal one.

In the ancient Ruthenian tradition, this precise compositional plan was enriched in the majority of cases by gilded circles. The bigger circle was placed in the center of the bar’s intersection and the lesser circle on the ends. This contrast of straight lines and round spots considerably intensified the cross silhouette. Thus, the types of crosses, preserved up until today, were formed on the basis of Byzantine and ancient Ruthenian traditions.

As time passed, under the influence of the European Renaissance, a simple plan of cross construction was becoming more complicated. The vertical bar elongates up, one or two additional transverse bars (pivots) appear, which are embellished by geometric or vegetable ornaments. Thus, the precise symbolic shape of a cross starts to be lost, and it becomes more like a “tree of life.” This motif has gained popularity at churches in located in rural areas.

Crosses made by students at Lviv Academy, Ukraine

A variety of crosses crafted by the artisans at the Chair of Artistic Metal, Lviv Academy, Ukraine
Another direction of the development of cross design appeared under the influence of the Baroque style with its whimsical, restless shapes. Two parallel vertical and horizontal bars with strained bent forms at the ends, in the shape of a lyre or a heart appear instead of two single bars. Angular space between the crossed bars is filled by wavy rays, symbolizing heavenly radiance.

Despite the difference of design, the shapes of cross development are united by one thing: all the details are located flat on one side facing out from the church facade, and are meant to appear as a clear, graphic silhouette against the sky as one looks up at it.

Besides crosses crowning the churches, folk tradition of placing crosses on hillsides near the roads in honor of great historical or religious events was widely accepted in Europe and Ukraine. They also place crosses as symbols of the Christian soul in all Christian cemeteries and on graves. These ground crosses bear different symbols and take their own special place with their own meaning among individuals in the populace.

As we can see from a brief analysis of cross design in historical development, there are many opportunities to reveal the craftsman’s creative personality and professional skills.
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