The Anvil's Ring (ISSN 0889-177X) is the official publication of the Artist-Blacksmith's Association of North America, Inc. It is mailed to the members on a quarterly basis in Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter by ABANA, P.O. Box 816, Farmington, GA 30638-0816. Membership is available to any individual or organization interested in the art of blacksmithing. The annual fee for a regular membership is $45; $24 of this amount is for a subscription to The Anvil's Ring for one year. Permit to mail at periodical postage rates is registered at Farmington, GA, and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: send address changes to The Anvil's Ring, P.O. Box 816, Farmington, GA 30638-0816. Matters related only to membership and subscription, including dues, change of address and subscription complaints, should be addressed to LeeAnn Mitchell, ABANA Executive Secretary, P.O. Box 816, Farmington, GA 30638-0816. (706) 310-1030 or e-mail to abana@abana.org. All editorially related materials, such as articles, book reviews, queries, tips, announcements of activities, ads, etc., should be mailed to The Anvil's Ring, Sebastian Publishing, P.O. Box 1849, 6690 Wentworth Springs Rd., Georgetown, CA 95634. Include SASE for material return. (530) 333-2687 phone or (530) 333-2689 fax or e-mail to thering@sebastianpublishing.com. The contents of this publication may not be reproduced either in whole or in part without the permission of the editor or the individual contributors. Contributors retain all copyright privileges; the material is copyrighted solely for their protection. The Anvil's Ring, ©2004 The Artist-Blacksmith’s Association of North America, Inc.

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A Call For Metal 2004 Conference

On the Cover
Hex pods by Doug Whaley. Made out of 1 1/2" hexagonal mild steel. Photo by Jo Whaley.

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Winter 2004 | Anvil’s Ring 1
We have received word that Bill Manley recently passed away. He was a long-time supporter of ABANA, his local Affiliates, and the community of blacksmithing in general. He was a very important figure in the American Metalurgical Society (which was founded by blacksmiths), was instrumental in the Sloan Furnaces Conference in Birmingham in 1988, and received ABANA’s highest honor, the Bealer Award, for his long service to our community. Thanks for everything Bill, you will be missed.

The annual meeting of your ABANA board met in Memphis at the National Ornamental Metal Museum in November. I want to thank Jim Wallace and staff for hosting the meeting, Dr. John and Nancy Mitchell (our own ABANA office administrator, LeaAnn Mitchell’s father and sister) for great lunches, and President Bob Rogers and the River Bluff Forge Council for hosting a barbecue dinner. Rob Keeler did the "Q" as they say in Memphis, and Herman King grilled Bananas Foster on the bank overlooking the Mississippi. That Southern Memphis hospitality will be long remembered!

The museum has the finest view of the Mississippi and is a not-to-miss central focal point for blacksmithing. It was my first time at the museum and I realized what a great opportunity I had missed! Annual membership support is only $15 per year and donations for the remodeling of an 1890s historic building into a national blacksmith/metal arts library will be gratefully received.

With full board attendance, the very full agenda was efficiently completed–kudos to the board! Larry Stevens of Marble Falls, Texas, sat through three days of meetings, then critiqued the board with, “I have come to the conclusion that ABANA leadership is in good hands.” High praise from a dedicated member/observer indeed! Larry came after hearing some negative comments and wanted to see first hand the board’s actions. Thanks, Larry, for taking the time.

Board minutes and actions taken are on the ABANA web site, www.abana.org, as well as a list of committee chairs to contact with communications or questions. So if you hear a rumor or have a question, just contact the committee chair or me for the facts. FIRST-HAND communication is the ONLY WAY! Now the exciting news…The 2004 Conference in Richmond, Kentucky, is going to be an event not to be missed! Chairman Dave Kornegi has done a spectacular job of organization and planning.

Dave and many volunteers are hard at work in making this an outstanding blacksmithing experience. Look for exciting ways you can participate — SEE YOU THERE!

On behalf of ABANA, I would like to thank outgoing President Scott Lankton for his positive and progressive course for the future. Also, Will Hightower for his many years serving as our treasurer. A large part of ABANA’s financial strength today is due to Will’s selfless vigilance over the purse strings.

And a special note of appreciation to new treasurer, Dorothy Stiegler. Dorothy has contributed greatly to ABANA through her many years of service and has demonstrated unparalleled dedication for the good of all ABANA members.

President Claire Yelin and Bob Jacoby join returning secretary Jerry Kagle to round out the elected officers. Oh, and I almost forgot… I was elected president. As we finish 2003 and begin 2004, “May your forge burn bright — projects crowd your mind for attention — Think — Be safe — Get it hot and hit it!!!”

Best, Don Kemper
DEAR EDITOR,

The reason I am writing to you is that I am looking for someone to work together with, who might need my experience. I would like to make some furniture in Canada or the United States in order to show my pieces, by way of exhibition, and see how people react to the work. I need someone with whom I can join together to achieve that purpose for both our advantage. Tools and my special equipment, along with materials, I can bring to Canada.

My work was shown on television here in magazines, but truthfully, Poland is not the place where the average customer can afford to buy such amber or malachite furniture made with steel. What can you do if the Polish customer has an average salary of $500 per month?

Best wishes to all of you, Henryk Machnik, Gydnia 81047 ul. Gniewska 2/01, POLAND

DEAR EDITOR,

Yes, I sell hammers, but there are some times when you just stand back and let things happen. While demonstrating my hammer at California Blacksmiths Association Octoberfest, there was some open time available for serious blacksmiths to use this new hammer. To my surprise and delight, one of those rare moments happened when I saw Mike Chisham (below, left) and his son Cody get an introduction of hands-on power hammer experience. This is what makes the blacksmithing family grow strong and solid in our industry. This annual event was again hosted by Fritz Hagist at his shop in the northern California coast mountains. Truly a good day.

Keep Smiling, Bob Graham, ANYANGUSA.COM

DEAR EDITOR,

Many thanks for publishing my coral reef pictures and for doing such a great job on the entire issue (see page 44, The Anvil’s Ring, fall 2003). I’m looking forward to the next one. Jerry R. Spiker, Sidney, Nebraska

DEAR EDITOR,

I’m enclosing a picture of my warhorse “Increase,” arrayed in his terrible, menacing armor. The chaffron (head armor for a horse) is made from stainless steel and was inspired by German and English armor and also by drawings and sculpture of armor. I used high-density foam rubber covered with black denim material for the padding beneath the armor. The sword, “Jasper Recompense,” is not finished as of yet. The T-rex skull in the background is 4’ x 6’ and won first place and Judge’s Choice Award at the 2002 Fresno County Fair. I am presently owner, commander and sole member of the Central Valley Colonial from the Civil War. Frank Jackson, Clovis, California

DEAR EDITOR,

I agree with John W. Morash that ABANA should promote good safety practices through The Anvil’s Ring, but I do not agree with him (see Fall 2003 issue of The Ring) that a photo should be rejected because a smith or spectator is not wearing safety glasses. A note from the editor pointing out that someone in the photo should consider safety precautions would be helpful.

I think photographs like the ones submitted by Dan MacLeod of the smiths working in the Arabian Peninsula (see Summer 2003 issue) are an important addition to the pool of knowledge. Those were excellent photos of smiths doing what they do (what a lot of people might not think could be done without heavy equipment). Those photos and the ones from India in Daniel Kerem’s article in the same issue about the Rajasthani Vessels in India bring us broader traditions than if we only limited publication to photographs of smiths in full safety gear.

I am surprised however, that the Austrian students in the article translated by Robert Ruhloff, also in the Summer 2003 issue, are not wearing eye or ear protection. I believe a better lesson would be delivered if an editorial note pointed out the advisability of safety precautions rather than if the article were rejected because of the lack thereof.

I want the goal of The Anvil’s Ring to be to record a wide range of traditions. Safety must be promoted, but not by limiting the scope of the publication.

Tom Latané, Pepin, Wisconsin &

Editor’s Note: Subjects for article suggestions are always appreciated. If you want to see an article on a particular subject, please feel free to submit one or suggest that someone familiar with the subject you’re interested in submit one.

Frank Jackson, Clovis, California

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Editor’s Note: In the fall 2003 issue of The Anvil’s Ring, there was a Call for Entries from author Dona Z. Meilach. According to Ms. Meilach, the revised deadline for entries for her new book titled TEAPOTS has been moved from March 1, 2004 to April 1, 2004. It will be in a similar format to her Architectural Ironwork and The Contemporary Blacksmith books. The contact information for Dona Meilach is: phone: 760/436-4395, e-mail: dmeilach@msn.com.

Editor’s Note: Subjects for article suggestions are always appreciated. If you want to see an article on a particular subject, please feel free to submit one or suggest that someone familiar with the subject you’re interested in submit one.

CALL TO ARTISTS: ABANA’s FIRST ANNUAL ART POSTER CONTEST

Open to everyone, no jurying fee, prize is two paid admissions to the 2004 ABANA Conference in Richmond, KY (does not include room and board). Any 2-D medium, size must be smaller than 36” x 36”. Must include the text: ABANA 2004 Richmond, Kentucky, in any configuration that artist chooses. The theme of this year’s conference, by the way, is: “Design and Build.” The idea is to create a biennial art poster suitable for framing and collecting. Submissions must be received before April 15, 2004. Send original art work to: Dave Mudge, Member Services Director 15227 Middelford Road, Bogalusa, LA 70427-0147. Phone: 985-735-0049

ATTENTION YOUNG BLACKSMITHS!

Matthew Catling, a television producer from Great Britain, is working on a documentary series for the Discovery Channel which will explore the “Super Weapons” built by the ancient Greeks and Romans. In each program a life-sized working replica of these weapons will be constructed. The contenders include a giant siege engine with a 20-meter-long battering ram, an enormous catapult and other strange devices which were at the cutting edge of military technology 2000 years ago.

Once constructed, the awesome, destructive power of these weapons will be tested against stone walls, wooden boats and other objects. The need is to put together teams containing engineers, timber framers, blacksmiths and other experts who will design, build and test these ancient inventions on screen.

Candidates should be men or women with the following qualities:

- An enthusiastic and outgoing personality. They must be comfortable with the idea of being part of a lively on-screen team.
- Teams will consist of young men and women no older than their early 30’s.
- The series will be filmed between February and March, 2004, probably at a Mediterranean location. A different team will be put together to construct each weapon. In each case it will involve 10-14 days of filming.
Interested individuals should send a brief e-mail describing who they are and what they do. Also include a photo or a link to a photo. The people who might work best in the teams being drawn up will then be contacted.

Darlow Smithson Productions is a leading producer of documentary programming. They make films for the Discovery Channel, PBS, The History Channel, the BBC, National Geographic and a number of other broadcasters.

Contact Matthew Catling, Darlow Smithson Productions, Ltd., Highgate Business Centre, 33 Greenwood Place, London, NW5 1LB, ENG- LAND. Phone: 44 (0) 207 4829620. E-mail: matthew.catling@darlowsmithson.com.

iFGs exHiBitioN

What: International Exhibition of the IFGS at the upcoming National Horticultural Show
When: April 22, 2005 through October 22, 2005
Where: Bad Hall, Austria
Contact: Peter Matthias, president IFGS
Tel: 0049 (0) 2402 25841
E-mail: ifgs@gmx.de
Web Site: www.ifgs-org.de

The International Professional Association of Designing Blacksmiths (IFGS) will take part in the National Horticultural Show. The topic of the show will be "flowers, steel and water.”

Highlights will be displays of large metal sculptures, sound sculptures, wind and water-play, and kinetic art made of metal.

Two hundred-thousand visitors are expected during the six months that the National Horticultural Show will be open. Public transportation to the exhibition will be offered and there are suitable accommodations around the area.

For members of the IFGS the exhibition is free. For nonmembers the cost will be 50 euro.

SUSAN MADACSI RECEIVES ARTIST FELLOWSHIP GRANT

Artist/Blacksmith Susan Madacsi, from Norwich, Connecticut, has received one of six Artist Fellowship grants in the Craft’s category given by the Connecticut Commission on Art, Culture, History, and Film. This annual award program is given to select artists who have demonstrated a history of professional activity in the state, encouraging them to continue their art form.

Artistic merit was the single review criteria used to make the artist selections. Madacsi plans to use the endowment to purchase studio equipment to enhance her capabilities in producing her custom metalwork for her clientele. Madacsi has a gallery/showroom, Madacsi Metalwork, in Mystic, Connecticut, located at 18 B Holmes Street. Examples of Susan’s work are shown above.

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Surfboard: Forged steel, artist's pigment. 22” tall x 7 1/2” base, 40 lbs ea.

Previews & Notes cont. on page 8

CONFERENCE

The next ABANA Conference will be held July 7 - 11, 2004, at East Kentucky University in Richmond, Kentucky. See information on some of the demonstrators at the conference in this issue. The rest of the demonstrators will be featured in the Spring 2004 issue of The Ring.

CONTRACTS

Central Office contract will be reviewed yearly and extends until 2004.

The Anvil’s Ring contract extends until the year 2004.

Hammer’s Blow contract extends until 2006.

REPRINT POLICY

ABANA Affiliate newsletter editors are authorized to reprint anything published in either The Anvil’s Ring or Hammer’s Blow in their affiliate newsletter.

SCHOLARSHIPS

ABANA scholarships are available to all ABANA members. The closing dates are: January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1. Information can be obtained from the ABANA Central Office, call 706/310-1030.

SUSAN Madacsi receives artist fellowship grant

Artist/Blacksmith Susan Madacsi, from Norwich, Connecticut, has received one of six Artist Fellowship grants in the Crafts category given by the Connecticut Commission on Art, Culture, History, and Film. This annual award program is given to select artists who have demonstrated a history of professional activity in the state, encouraging them to continue their art form. Artistic merit was the single review criteria used to make the artist selections. Madacsi plans to use the endowment to purchase studio equipment to enhance her capabilities in producing her custom metalwork for her clientele. Madacsi has a gallery/showroom, Madacsi Metalwork, in Mystic, Connecticut, located at 18 B Holmes Street. Examples of Susan’s work are shown above.

Previews & Notes cont. from page 9
Kootenay Blacksmiths Association

By John Smith, President

The Kootenay Blacksmiths’ Association was formed in 1996, and now has a membership of 55. Our members are mostly in the east and west Kootenay regions in southeast British Columbia, Canada. Some of our members are in the neighboring US states, and a few are from Calgary and southwestern Alberta.

We recently completed this project as our first joint effort. The frames of this room divider were made at one of our hands-on meetings, then nine members went home, armed with inspiration and two measurements, and created their panels.

The room divider was assembled at our next meeting, crated up and shipped off to the CANIRON IV conference in Hamilton, Ontario, which was held last July, 2003. It was donated to their fundraising auction, and we were pleased to hear it raised the most money of any item at the auction!

Those involved in the project were Tony Austin, Bert LeBlanc, Gunner Jorgensen, Derry Cook, Chris Waters, Patrick McIvor, Dallas Hagerud and John Smith.

Photo by John Smith

Kootenay Blacksmiths Association
Crawford Bay, BC, Canada

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DEMONSTRATORS AT THE 2004 ABANA CONFERENCE:

Michele Bendele - Delphos, Ohio, USA
Joseph Bonifas - Spencerville, Ohio, USA
Wendell Broussard - Smithville, Texas, USA
Steve Dunn - Smiths Grove, Kentucky, USA
Terence Clark & Peter Parkinson - England
Mindy Gardner - Farmer City, Illinois, USA
Willem Jonkers III - The Netherlands
Darryl Nelson - Eatonville, Washington, USA
Jouko Nieminen - Finland
Doug Wilson - Little Deer Isle, Maine, USA
Patient Order of Meritable Metalsmiths - USA - include:
Tina Chinena
Kevin Clancy
Carl Close, Jr.
Tom Latane
Michael McCarthy
Peter Rausetti
Paul Spaulding
Nigel Tudor

Keep checking the ABANA website: www.abana.org for new conference developments. Things are going to start moving faster in the coming months. This will be the first place to learn who will be demonstrating, what is planned for the classrooms and family programs and how to get involved as a volunteer, vendor and/or tailgater. See you in Richmond!

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ArtMetal presents

Tony Higdon, Lexington, Kentucky
This model is 24” x 10” w X 7” h and is 1/3 scale. It is forged steel and bronze with a cast bronze top. The top features castings of two plant types, sea grapes and bird of paradise. It was a collaborative project done by Tony Higdon and Erika Strecker.

Ryan Blewey, Brookfield, Connecticut
“Bowl 1.1” 10” diameter x 4” h. Forged steel.

Richard Bovee, Elko, Nevada
Fireplace screen and tools. Screen is 38” x 42” tall, mild steel. The stained glass work, also done by the artist/blacksmith, is of a lead/zinc cane construction. The fireplace tools and stand are 38” tall, mild steel. All work was done in a coal-fired forge, no arc welding. The design uses rivets as structural support.

Terje Granaas, Arendal, Norway
Lady of Light Candleholder. 70 cm x 50 cm. Iron

Ryan Blewey, Brookfield, Connecticut
“Bowl 1.1” 10” diameter x 4” h. Forged steel.

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Fireplace screen and tools. Screen is 38” x 42” tall, mild steel. The stained glass work, also done by the artist/blacksmith, is of a lead/zinc cane construction. The fireplace tools and stand are 38” tall, mild steel. All work was done in a coal-fired forge, no arc welding. The design uses rivets as structural support.

Terje Granaas, Arendal, Norway
Lady of Light Candleholder. 70 cm x 50 cm. Iron
Joseph Bonifas began his career as a blacksmith in 1976. Using the techniques of blacksmithing as a means of creating sculptures and functional work, he crafts sculpture, entry gates, railings, tables and beds. He has demonstrated at many regional blacksmithing events as well as national ABANA conferences. Joseph has produced work for clients throughout the United States including ArtSpace Lima, Bowling Green University and Bluffton College in Ohio, State University of Oregon in Eugene, Oregon, Design Institute of America in Chicago, Illinois, and Majestic Reproductions in New York. His work can also be found in several collections in Japan.

Joseph is a full-time instructor of art in the Shawnee school system in Lima, Ohio, and holds his MFA degree from Bowling Green State University. He also owns and operates Black Oak Forge Metal Design Studio in Spencerville, Ohio. He uses a NcStar 3B power hammer in the production of much of the work and will demonstrate design development: tooling to create the design and working from the concept to create a finished piece during his demonstrations at ABANA in Kentucky.

**JOSEPH BONIFAS**
**SPENCERVILLE, OHIO USA**

*Feminist Harvester Series* plant stand. Private collection. 22” w x 22” d x 52” h.

Tranquility Tree - Catawba Island Cemetery, Port Clinton, Ohio. 4’ w x 4’ d x 4’ h.

Wave table. Private collection. 48” w x 17” d x 28” h.

Transpiration Porch. Designed for ArtSpace Lima, art association in Lima, Ohio. Gates are on entryway to the art gallery. 8’ w x 6’ h.

Balcony railing with sculptural accents. Private collection. 8’ w x 4’ h.

Detail of sculptural elements.
Darryl Nelson has been a full-time blacksmith since the ’70s. He has executed numerous commissions for both public and private clients. Due to the area of the United States where he lives, the Pacific Northwest, the majority of the work he crafts is known as “Cascadian Style” or sometimes known as “Lodge Style.” This style utilizes motifs from native plants, wildlife, Native Americans and pioneers. The technique used to produce these motifs is sculptural, which will be the focus of his demonstrations at this year’s ABANA conference.

As owner and operator of Fire Mountain Forge, he has produced work for the Oregon College of Arts & Crafts, the Catlin Gable School and the U.S. Forest Service. Darryl has served on the board of directors for both the Northwest Blacksmith Association and ABANA. In 1986 he received the International Blacksmithing Award for Whimsy, known as the “Wally Award.”

Chandelier for a private lodge in Camp Sherman, Oregon. Shade is of goat skin.

Detail on sides of sign displaying several tools depict classes taught at Oregon College of Art & Craft. Copper vine and leaves.

Detail of Forest Service gates:

Chain firescreen and eagle head andirons made from 5” round stock. Fireplace opening 8’ tall by 7’ wide. Great room at Skamania Lodge.

Walrus head forged from copper. Tusks are nickel. Made for Cannon Beach Art Association Gallery, Oregon.

Copper lantern for private residence.

Bi-fold gates made for the U.S. Forest Service at Skamania Lodge, Stevenson, Washington.

Left, sign lettering made of copper and bronze.
Mindy Gardner’s interest in chasing and repoussé began in 1997 after attending the Upper Midwest Regional Blacksmithing Conference and watching others demonstrate the use of the treadle hammer. She and her husband Mark built a treadle hammer and began to play around with forms and shapes. In 1998 they purchased an old blacksmith shop and Mindy has been at the treadle hammer ever since, putting in long hours chasing and finishing her delicate work.

Mindy selects natural forms in her work, concentrating on the flora and fauna in her native state of Illinois. In 2002 Mindy was invited to represent the state of Illinois by making an ornament for the White House’s permanent collection. (See article in The Anvil’s Ring, Spring 2003.)

Mindy has demonstrated at many local and regional blacksmithing events, serves on the board of directors for the Illinois Valley Blacksmith Association and operates Flood Plain Forge with her husband Mark in Farmer City.

All photos are 14 gauge mild steel repoussés unless otherwise stated.
The project for the 2004 ABANA Conference

A 12 1/2" x 7" x 6 1/2" iron chest with a 10-bolt lock in the lid. The four panels on the sides and front will feature repoussé scenes depicting the story of King Alfred choosing the most valuable craftsmen: King Alfred announced that, upon the completion of his palace, he would honor the "father of all craftsmen." When the building was done, a banquet was held. Unable to decide between all the construction trades, King Alfred bestowed the honor upon his tailor who had recently provided the king with a fine set of robes. The blacksmith was insulted and in his anger refused to return to his forge. Needing tools made and repaired, the other artisans broke into the blacksmith shop to do the work themselves, only to experience embarrassing results. St. Clement, patron saint of smiths, walked into the shop and was amused. A second banquet was held in honor of St. Clement, at which time King Alfred declared the blacksmith the most valuable craftsman. In jealous defiance the tailor crawled beneath the table and snipped the apron of the smith. Since then, some smiths have worn aprons with fringe at the bottom in honor of St. Clement. Demonstration team at the ABANA Conference for the Patient Order of Meticulous Metalsmiths will be:

TINA CHESINA, WEATON, MARYLAND
Tina is a Maryland jeweler and metalsmith; she will be piercing and chasing the decorative panel which covers the lock mechanism under the chest lid.

CARL CLOSE, JR., MALDEN, MASSACHUSETTS
Carl runs Hammersmith Studios in Malden, Massachusetts, producing lighting and larger ornamental ironwork inspired by the revival styles of the 19th and 20th century Arts and Crafts movement. Carl will produce two of the repoussé panels set in the walls of the chest.

Tom produces locks and other hardware using hand methods of traditions varying from medieval to Early American, in his shop in Pepin, Wisconsin. He drew the basic chest design. The design, necessary for the coordination of all parts, leaves room for embellishment as team members feel inspired. Tom will construct the key and ward box for the lid lock.

MICHAE LE MCCARTHY, COOPERSTOWN, NEW YORK
At the Cooperstown Museum, Michael reproduces historic 19th century tools and hardware and at his home shop he works in renaissance and classical styles. Michael and his apprentice, Paul Spaulding, will be responsible this year for constructing the chest case-swaging and filing the moldings, forming and fitting the sides, lid, bottom, and hinges. They will produce two repoussé panels and fit the panels and other elements forged by the rest of the team into the case.

PAUL SPAULDING, CHERRY VALLEY, NEW YORK
Paul works with Michael McCarthy as his apprentice.

OTHER CONTRIBUTORS:
 Kevin Clancy, a locksmith and producer of historical 17th, 18th, and 19th century-style hardware in Eldersburg, Maryland, donated the keeper for the 2002 masterpiece lock. He has volunteered to contribute the carved handle on top of the chest.
 Nigel Tudor produces architectural ironwork and smaller projects in his shop in Avella, Pennsylvania. He has volunteered to provide the forged feet for the chest.

Standing, L to R: Paul Spaulding, Pete Renzetti, Tina Chesina.
Kneeling: Carl Close Jr. and Tom Latane


Peter Renzetti at work (a while back)

Rendering of 2004 Conference project.
RING: What’s your real name, Shark?
SHARK: Christopher Lambdin, but I never really felt like a Christopher.
RING: How did you come by the name of Shark?
SHARK: Various nicknames and ‘handles’ just kind of evolve and latch themselves onto you. I picked that one up when I was in high school; I was kind of a dork during those high school years and was happy to take on anything that would help. After awhile, just grew into that name more and more.
RING: How long have you been a blacksmith?
SHARK: Twelve years.
RING: Primarily, you’ve been involved in the local Renaissance Faires in regard to the sale of your blacksmith work.
SHARK: That’s true. I find that the Renaissance Fair, or Festival, while appealing to my perpetual appreciation for things past and the artistry that used to exist, also provides me with a very targeted clientele in cutlery, which is what I’ve been specializing in.
RING: What would you say are the pluses and minuses to someone selling their blacksmith products at Renaissance Fairs and events similar to that?
SHARK: First and foremost, the availability of a space is of paramount importance. Crafts coordinators like to have lots of leather workers, jewelers, wood sculptors, box makers and costumers, but you can only have a couple of blade smiths at a given fair. If you can get in, you can make really good money if you put your nose to the grindstone in the nine weeks of a fair, but then you’ve got to have another fair lined up within the next few months.
RING: I’ve attended and conversed with blacksmiths there, everyone always seemed to have such a good time. I guess there’s a price you pay finan- cially, but the camaraderie seems terrific.
SHARK: We have a blast. It’s a lot of fun. People go to the Renaissance Festival for the activities, the good food, the beer, the wine, and the great hand-made products. At most Renaissance Festivals at least 90 percent of any given product has to be hand made and the maker is supposed to be there at the faire. So that makes for very high-quality products. It’s not like you’re going someplace and buying some knockoff from a foreign country that may or may not have a screw loose—you’re buying it directly from the merchant and this person takes a lot a pride in his product and he’s right there to stand behind it. Most of the people who work the Renais- sance Faires are educated, even if they have blue hair and lots of piercings. Most of them have at least a couple of years of college and a huge percent- age have degrees as high as doctorate and have decided that society is too complicated. They would rather deal with the other complications of owning their own business and the politics of dealing with Faire management. It’s a completely different atmosphere to work within, rather than having a boss constantly looking over your shoulder to see if you’ve crossed your t’s and dotted your i’s. Renaissance Faires are events similar to that.
RING: There’s a certain amount of free- dom there, that’s true.
SHARK: Absolutely, but once again, there are some restraints and one of the difficulties I have had is in the actual business management arena. I have no problems making the money. I do have a problem making it last until my next large show. Had I been able to get into more shows of that nature, I wouldn’t have had a problem. Also, most of the craft fairs that are out there are extremely expensive to get into.
RING: Are most of the fairs quite selective, or do they allow in as crafters and craftsmen? SHARK: They are. I had to send them a full portfolio; in fact, I even sent them a video of some of the demos that I do, such as cutting demonstra- tions, blacksmithing demonstrations—
-the whole bit. Unless you know someone who knows someone in charge, they have to check your stuff to make sure it’s appropriate and up to the skill level they require.
RING: Is your income largely based on how much inventory you can generate between shows?
SHARK: Yes. And I have learned that custom work is a pain in the neck. It’s really nice to do wonderful things for people that they have been cooking up in their imaginations and you’re building their dream—their special something. There is a very huge satisfaction in being able to do that, and I love that part. I’ve learned to be able to ask the right questions so you do in this interview, to find out what the people are into and what they would like and what they wouldn’t. There have been times when I’ve actually given them something when they said something else, and they were glad that I did it the way I saw it—they liked it better. But when it comes down to making money, if you don’t have the merchandise on the shelf you won’t have anything for someone to zip out a credit card for, or a check or cash. Of course if you have it right there they can say, ‘I want that!’ especially if you’re creating one- of-a-kind items. Therefore, stock and inventory becomes the most important thing over and above custom work. You’ve got to have lots of inventory, unless all you do is make things one at a time, when people order and you only make three different styles—in which case you can have three products there and state ‘By Order Only.’ But you’re going to sell a lot fewer products than you will if you’ve got a whole bucket load of stock with you on display.
RING: So then you’ve got to have a shop to build up your inventory before you go to the next event.
SHARK: Yes.
RING: You’ve worked out of small shops for the most part?
SHARK: I’ve worked out of small shops most of my life, mainly from necessity. Either you’re working out of the spare room of your apart- ment or you’re working out of the garage of the house. I am fortunate enough presently to have a great location where I’ve built a steel building on a friend’s property and it’s a nice, spacious 20’ x 30’ shop. It’s the big- est shop I’ve ever had. Realistically, I could use twice that much space. But you’ve got to...
look at a shop that big and know you’re able to heat it when it gets cold. You’re also got to be able to find things if you have it packed very densely. Then again, doing blacksmithing, as we all know, you’ve got to have space to move around.

RING: As far as tools go, what about a power hammer?

SHARK: I would love to have a power hammer! I’ve covered one ever since I worked for Sky Castle Swords. We made 150 billets of 200-layer Damascus there, which were really beautiful. We were working with a 25-lb. Little Giant hammer. I’ve wanted one ever since.

RING: Earlier you mentioned to me something about 1600 swords. Were all those done on that 25-lb. Little Giant?

SHARK: Actually those were all done by stock removal; those were not Damascus swords, they were made of 1075 high-carbon steel, factory heat-treated to 57 Rockwell and then fitted with whatever handles and accessories to complete them. That is what we call armor steel. Those are the things you can shovel through a car door and not worry about it—you can bust concrete blocks with them. You can take them out and ‘sword bash’ with them and that is the type of thing you would pass out to an army that is going out into combat; as opposed to the more art-oriented stuff that I make. There is very straightforward. My work in swords is much more sculpted and organic.

RING: So you do much more forging, then.

SHARK: I do a lot of forging in my pieces, yes, as opposed to where I’ve worked at other shops doing strictly stock removal.

RING: A lot of blade smiths seem to be making that transition because of the aesthetics involved in forging a blade rather than stock removal.

SHARK: With the materials that are available now and the alloys, if you just want a blade—the ultimate blade—no problem. There are some great alloys out there. They’re very pretty, they all stay shiny, they’re great. If you really want a blade that holds cool, aside from its silhouette or the furniture that’s on it or the etching that’s on it, there is nothing like Damascus in all its patterns.

RING: Have you worked in other metals as well?

SHARK: I’ve worked pretty much in all media. I am a classically trained painter, not quite yet attaining a degree in commercial graphics and illustration. I’ve been making my own tools and tools and various other items since I was a little kid. I work in bronze as well; I worked for a foundry in Phoenix, Arizona, where I was the wax chaser and learned to do molds and that type of thing. I would clean up the boss’s sculpture and then work on a bunch of my own fittings and small sculpted items on my lunch hour. So that has led me in my own facility to build my own bronze casting smelter that enables one man to pour bronze into a hot vessel without having to have a second person there and without having to lug around a bunch of molten material.

RING: Could you describe that? It sounds like a pretty nifty system.

SHARK: I based it on what I perceive to be an industrial smelter. Basically I cast a 4-crucible inside a plastic bucket and around that crucible I created a spiral passageway; I run an accelerated air burner, essentially a roofer’s torch, and the flame runs in the bottom of this refractory cement ‘bucket,’ for all practical purposes. The flame races around in a spiral, around the crucible and jets out the top. In the process, I get extreme efficiency out of my burners in such a way that I have to watch not to burn the sulphur out of my bronze. I can then hold a hot investment flask underneath the pour spout and step on the pedal. The whole assembly tips and pours bronze into it. Anyone who has ever had to grab a hot crucible full of bronze and pour it, especially without having anyone to help, would appreciate this design.

RING: I’ll say they would. Have you demonstrated this to anybody? It sounds like a really unique system that a whole lot of shops could use.

SHARK: No one’s ever seen it. I figured it was just a knockoff of traditional industrial techniques. Maybe no one has ever thought about doing it on a small scale, that’s all. Usually people farm out their bronzes to large foundries because it’s more practical. Silver fittings you can do in your basement, but casting a couple of pounds of bronze at a shot—usually between two and ten pounds of bronze in a batch—is best left to professionals, unless you’ve got the time and interest to finesse it all. It’s difficult to get real consistent, high-quality results with safety.

RING: As far as your sculpture is concerned, do you do free-form sculpture?

SHARK: I like to let the pieces develop themselves a little bit. Sometimes I talk to them nicely, and at times I talk to them anthropology, but then let the pieces kind of ‘grow’ pretty much on their own. I’ll start out with a concept that just sort of rolls around in my brain for awhile and chew on. Sometimes it comes on me as a burst, but then I’ll toss it around and ponder how it should be executed. Then I’ll start building on it. Sometimes you just can’t stop, and you come out with a finished product. Over the years I’ve had to learn to be able to put something down and walk away from it, sometimes for days—then come back to it again, especially if it’s giving me problems and the inspiration isn’t right, or whatever. I’ll stop and work on a piece.

RING: Yes, it can be humbling when the piece...
and most fabrication projects of any kind is problem solving, unless you’re starting with a blueprint where someone else has already described, designed and drawn up the parts. After awhile, if the inspiration is not flowing on a project, it begins to be like pushing a car uphill without the engine running. But when the engine’s running, you can get it going right up and boom! you’re done.

RING: Do you find the same thing happening with some of your blades?
SHARK: Definitely. They take on a life of their own and I’m notorious for having as many as 20-30 pieces sitting in a bucket somewhere just waiting for the lightning to strike me. One thing that has kept me so involved with blades is because they enable me to show-case the different materials that I’ve learned to work with. Each piece of steel is different. Every time you heat-treat a piece, even if you have it professionally heat-treated in an oven or in your electric furnace which does everything the same every time, there is always going to be variation: in the way you quench, in the way you draw, and in the way you assemble something and carve or chase out the fittings as well as the handle wrappings. Is it wood, is it bone, is it leather, is it an engraved blade, is it silver, is it black? Some of the decisions just take care of themselves because it’s the logical way. And then there are other projects where there is a lot of decision making and problem solving and a lot of wracking the brain for the answer to what is the right way to do something. I’ve got boxes and buckets here and there that have bits and pieces and half-forged blades—all kinds of things.

RING: And so you’ll just get back to those when the inspiration hits you?
SHARK: Oh, yes—in fact, this past season at the Renaissance Festival I really hadn’t produced anything new because I had been building up my shop and renovating the house. I didn’t start much that was new. I made up a few little bodice daggers and small letter openers, items that women like to wear in their cleavage. But mostly I was digging into my boxes and pulling out one, saying, ‘Oh! Here’s a couple of nice Damascus blades that already have guards on them. I just have to put a handle on it.’

RING: What appeals to you about blade smithing? That seems to be your real strong area of skill and expertise.
SHARK: It’s rare that you really get to do projects that people will ever do anything with, that will ever interact with a human on any basis. I prefer to make something, like a knife, that does interact more closely with the owner, something they can carry with them. I like to make something that has a function, to begin with. Functional art or domestic artifacts, as I’ve always called them, are my favorite. I think that blades are the most utilitarian and versatile of any tool that man has ever created. There are incredible varieties of things that are based on the idea of shearing action. So while I do daggers and bowls and furniture—that sort of thing as well—the blade has a life of its own; it’s got a spring and a flex and a balance and a feel, and it is, of course, even capable of taking a life. It is capable of getting your food and preparing it, as well as defending it. In the old days it was capable of getting you a place to live as well as a mate, and defending them both. That’s pretty basic. That’s right up there with fire, the wheel and the lever! Even before blades were made from bronze or iron, there were obsidian knives. The blade is the earliest of man’s inventions except maybe fire. Maybe that’s why I’m drawn to the blade. But then I always have to ‘pretty them up,’ of course.

RING: You’ve dealt with a lot of the anachronism folks in regard to your blades, haven’t you?
SHARK: Yes. There is something special about putting on animer and picking up what passes for a sword in the Society for Creative Anachronism. They use a rattan stick about 1 1/4 inches around. It’s about the size of a shovel handle. The Society is a medieval re-creationist group. I’ve also participated with the Adrian Empire and related organizations. They are a similar re-creationist group except they fight with live steel: rapiers, sabres, battle axes, broadswords—that sort of thing.

RING: Sounds like it could get real interesting.
SHARK: Yes! There are events with up to 15,000 people attending. This is across the U.S. and also internationally. It’s a place to go and have a working holiday as I set up a booth.
RING: What kind of knives do you use on a working holiday?
SHARK: Sounds to have a lot more ornament in them.
SHARK: Well, once again, it depends on what you’re doing with it. If all you’re going to do is whack on another sword, I make combat blades that have a nice rounded edge so that they don’t...
create stress or fractures in other blades or take fractures themselves. You want something like that to last. I've done movie props and stage swords, and fancy armor with crossbows and shields. Everything has to be designed for a purpose. My stuff is nowhere near as fancy as a lot of the Renaissance work.

RING: Do you get more of an aesthetic change out of doing blades than other things?

SHARK: For one thing, it's a lot easier to pack a couple of hundred dollars' worth of safe power into your pocket—something that someone can take away with them and they might use or give as a gift—than it is to sell a couple of hundred dollars' worth of steel scions for someone's living room. I think people have a more basic connection, like I do, with cutlery. You've got a lot of people who really aren't comfortable with blades because they consider blades or knives as weapons. And I tell them: 'Do you like kitchen knives? Do you cook?' The truth of the matter is that everyone uses a knife; it depends on your mentality as to whether you want something that is born of our industrial society or something that is handmade. I can't match the paper-thin knives that you can buy for $15 and maybe one of them will last you as a paring knife for a year—and he careful because you'll cut yourself. Mine will last long enough to pass down to your kids.

RING: Yes, that's something to think about.

SHARK: That's the only immortality I'm likely to get. But I'd really like to have the opportunity to do some large work now.

RING: So your goal is to work in a big shop?

SHARK: Yes, I think so. It would be nice to work with other people for a change. I definitely would love to learn more and it would be an advantage to have someone who could help me or I could help them on a heavy project for a change.

RING: Well, your talents are quite apparent from what I've seen of your work. You mentioned to me earlier the ancient realm and the spirituality involved in knife making. Can you explain what you mean by that?

SHARK: Sure. Everything is energy; that's already been well documented. So I find in my work that my state of mind can make a big difference on how a given piece develops. I also have a tendency to do things like heat treating or forging during full moons or eclipses. I think that the blade, because it's a special thing, has to be treated as special. You can make just the basic kitchen knife, you can make just the sword that looks nice and it's going to hang on the wall, but it has an abbreviated life energy; it's just there. Or you can really put your focus—your energy—into it and make a difference, I believe, in how the piece comes along and how it feels and performs even 50 years down the road. Will it ever break? I think there are ways you can control that which have nothing to do with documented scientific metallurgy. I'm not a real 'white light' New Age person, but by the same token, charisma points have their place and that's why I like to do rope-cutting demonstrations and axe and knife-throwing demonstrations. I like to bend a broadsword 65 degrees out of straight and snap it back and have people 'ohh and ahh' at that. When it comes down to the function and the structure of a blade, the blade itself and some of the structural parts absolutely have to be perfect, regardless of how plain it looks. With an art piece, you can make what you think is a mistake, and often people will just think it's part of the art and never notice. Not so with blades. They have to be perfect. So there is a spirit to the art.

I always wanted to 'move' people like so many well-known painters and sculptors do. For the longest time I really didn't think my work had that much effect on people. Then after awhile it was pointed out to me that people would pick up a sword or a knife in their hands and next thing they were doing was staring off into space. They're not looking at me, they're seeing or feeling or doing something other than standing right where they're standing, if for just a moment. Then they get a kind of half-smile on their face. Sometimes it turns into a grin, and sometimes they just reach for their credit card! And that's a good thing. But evidently I do have some sort of impact on others, and it took me a long while to realize that. I would like to reach more people and that's part of the reason I'd like to do bigger projects and more public work.

RING: It sounds like a change is quite appropriate for you at this point in time. Thanks so much, Shark, we wish you the best in 2004 and beyond, with all your endeavors.
When Claude Novotny, the current chairman of the Thiers Information Centre, wanted blacksmiths to participate in the Summer Solstice Festival in the French town of Thiers (locally called La Saint-Eloi de Fraises), the local blacksmiths agreed to give a public demonstration of forging. It was decided that they would forge an iron sign to adorn the new site of the Information Centre office, right in the heart of the medieval city, also known as Chateau du Pirou.

The sign the blacksmiths envisioned and subsequently created shows an “I”, the common symbol of European Information Centres, crowned by a knife. The model sketch used was the one created by the Cutlers’ Guild (the famous Confrérie du Couteau de Thiers) in 1994.

After transforming the metal for two days, Dominique Chambriard, Henri Viallon and Jean-Pierre Veysseyre, masterly led by Jean-Claude Goutte, riveted the last bits of this collective masterpiece, as they were observed admiringly by the members of the town council, together with a bemused and fascinated audience.

With such works of craft, the four blacksmiths, all members of the Cutlers’ Guild, carry on a traditional and ancestral know-how. Their collective achievement is a powerful illustration of transmitting their heritage to future generations.
Blacksmith Craig Kaviar has a message for the world. The traditional art of blacksmithing is now mainstream and it’s here to stay. The message will be loud and clear when an Extraordinary Forged Iron show – Contemporary Forged Iron – descends upon Louisville, Kentucky, April through June of 2005. The exhibition will feature the work of approximately 70 blacksmiths from North America and will be showcased at the Kentucky Museum of Arts + Design. From there, organizers hope to travel the show to venues throughout the country for three to five years.

The exhibition will be a celebration of forged metal, honoring the ancient art of blacksmithing that has been developed into a contemporary art form. “The mission of this exhibition is to put the art of contemporary blacksmithing on the main stage of American cultural life, and to reach and inform potential collectors of our art form,” says Kaviar. “We feel strongly that with the maturing of the art form and the recent documentation of the current blacksmithing movement from the formation of ABANA in 1965 to the present. Dimitri Gerakaris has agreed to write about his views on how the ‘Anvil’s Ring’ has contributed as an educational vehicle to the development of the current blacksmith community. Dr. Richard Wattenmader from the Smithsonian will write an essay on how forging iron has transitioned from an industrial necessity to its current artist expression. Nol Putnam will also put his poetic vision of blacksmithing into words for the catalog.

The exhibition will be featured in the newly renovated facility of the Kentucky Museum of Arts + Design, which just won the Kentucky Society of Architects Honor Award for Excellence in Architectural Design. The Museum has a long tradition of exceptional exhibitions and educational programming. Some of the recent major exhibitions include The Glass Vessel: An Interdisciplinary Program. Photo by David Modica Photographic.

The exhibition will feature many of the artists who have appeared in “The Anvil’s Ring” in recent years. A few of the participating artists include Jim Wallace, Rick Smith, Scott Lankton and many more. Special events for the public will be part of the celebration. This includes a weekend during which Main Street will be closed in front of the Museum, allowing for public demonstrations and a street sale of ironwork – all to educate and promote ironwork.

Educational programming will be an important element of the celebration. Workshops will include simple copper cold forging for school children and hot-forging iron workshops for the general public (beginner and intermediate level) held at Kaviar Forge in Louisville.

With over 70 artists exhibiting, this will be one of the largest ironwork exhibits ever assembled. Along with the exhibit, there will be a catalog featuring approximately 100 photos. Jim Wallace will provide an essay on the history of the modern blacksmithing movement from the formation of ABANA in 1965 to the present. Dimitri Gerakaris has agreed to write about his views on how the ‘Anvil’s Ring’ has contributed as an educational vehicle to the development of the current blacksmith community. Dr. Richard Wattenmader from the Smithsonian will write an essay on how forging iron has transitioned from an industrial necessity to its current artist expression. Nol Putnam will also put his poetic vision of blacksmithing into words for the catalog.

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The great proliferation of caskets, coffers, trunks and the like in the Medieval Period attests to the rise of private ownership and the transition from an agrarian market economy to monetary surplus. Moreover, the transitory lifestyle of the upper classes of medieval society often entailed an endless succession of moves – from one abode to another – when the entire contents of a household were packed and moved. Although the number of possessions was meager by modern standards, the care and diligence lavished on common objects, as well as the laborious nature of their manufacture, has seldom been rivaled by successive generations.

The medieval craftsmen who exercised boundless imagination and superb taste ensured that their artifacts would pass on to posterity simply to see if they ‘could be pulled off’. The majority of these pieces are goldsmith’s art, for the most part elaborate drinking services, table pieces and fountains.

Such possessions fulfilled a two-fold purpose: although functional, they were prominet and ostentatiously displayed as a mark of economic prosperity and power in the burgher-class’s steady march to economic nobility. The coffee mill and its case were made for a very serious coffee drinker, who informed me he planned to move to a new abode and packed the mill for the journey. The hinges, which take up almost the entire border or top end of a tinned funnel into which the coffee beans or peppercorns are dropped. The case has a handle at its top so that it can be carried, and its sides and top are carved with ‘mouchettes’ in the French gothic style. The case’s interior is divided into compartments which hold a brass Arabian coffee pot, mortar and pestle, velvet bag containing coffee beans and several small coffee cups. The excavated boss is in the shape of a heraldic shield bearing my monogram and covering a small brass case lock.

By Daniel Kerem, Godfrey, ON Canada

Photos by Daniel Kerem

The hinges, which take up almost the entire door panel, serve two purposes: functioning to open and close the door, and they also form a beading that keeps the panel from warping. The hinges ‘design is based on that of ‘the tree of life’, whose origin may be traced back to the ancient Near East – and which served as the primary inspiration for gothic hingework, i.e., a tree placed horizontally. The strips of the hinges bear an engraved Latin inscription: ‘uno eum que amat laborum’ – I love her who loves work.

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A Success Story
of an Artist-Blacksmith

by Carl C. Curfman

At a very early age Dean demonstrated an artistic flair with paint, clay and wood, but not much with metal—no tools, no opportunity for such.

Newly graduated from the foothills of Western North Carolina, under the shadow of Grandfather Mountain, a few miles North of Morganton, located off the beaten path intentionally, is the home of Oak Hill Iron Works. The building itself is a modern 50’ x 100’ structure clad in blue steel with a sculpture garden emerging against a wooded backdrop. There is a dock at which both delivery of materials and shipping of products come and go all day long.

When one enters the gallery area they are greeted by an array of forged samples such as fireplace sets, railings, wall hangings, candle holders and other similar items. It is in this area that customer imagination is thrilled by the vastness of conception, crafting and design, which eventually emerges into reality.

As one steps inside the work area, it takes several moments to grasp the efficient interworking of material, equipment, and skill. There are racks of iron in varying sizes and shapes available. In the center stands a band saw that can cut accurately any piece needed. Over in the opposite corner is the forging center, which is the heart of the operation. There are gas forges and a coke forge, a number of power hammers, anvils, shaping tools, and vices; there is heat, noise, sweat and skill combining to turn iron into twists, curves, leaves and rosettes, that were first only envisioned in someone’s imagination, but now begin to take shape.

These individual pieces must then be precisely positioned on a layout table and then meticulously riveted or welded together into a unified piece that is a sculpture, a fireplace screen, a railing or gate of intricate design. Often the machines that surround the opposite end of the working area: the presses, the drills, the lathes, the shapers and small hand tools are also employed in bringing the piece to its desired finish. And it is that finish—the cleaning, waxing, polishing, and sometimes painting that becomes the final touch before the piece is deemed worthy to leave with the owner’s stamp of approval.

The person who conceived and manages Oak Hill Iron Works, Inc. is my 40-year-old son Dean Curfman. Dean and his brothers grew up on our dairy farm in the mountain valleys of South Central Pennsylvania, an area 50 miles away from anything of significance.

There were many acres of farm, forest, caves, and streams, and buddies to explore it all with. There was also a home building and remodeling connected with the daily business—plenty to keep an industrious boy occupied. Dean, his brothers and his buddies were encouraged to think, to make, to do. Access to tools and shop equipment enabled the boys to turn out products to sell or trade, or just to see if it could be done.

At a very early age Dean demonstrated an artistic flair with paint, clay and wood, but not much with metal—no tools, no opportunity for such.

Dean’s interest in the varying aspects of the building business led him to taking ownership of all areas of it—the planning, the work, purchasing, and the marketing. Dean’s education of learning to work with customers was part of a process of preparation. It was in this period of life that he became briefly exposed to working with hot iron, and then he was hooked.

In the mid-eighties Dean and his wife and daughter made a decision to move to North Carolina. In this new environment his interests moved from home construction to the machine shop, to fabrication, to maintenance of machines and an array of equipment. In a small shop, he began a love affair with hot iron that blossomed and became increasingly fruitful. All this became the backdrop to what would eventually lead Dean to develop his artistic talents in the field of forged and shaped metals.

A natural workaholic, Dean began to expand his shop, his materials on hand, his equipment, tools, and product line to bring in needed cash. He began attending blacksmith conferences and gatherings of local blacksmiths. This in turn brought requests for him to do public demonstrations and teaching.

Knowing he needed some teaching himself, Dean enrolled in some college courses of design and drafting and related study. It was among all this business that a concept was conceived to design and build a power hammer: one of unique design that could use ordinary shop air, no electric motors, no moving parts except the up-and-down motion of the head. It would need to have a range of infinite control, from a soft touch to full blow using a foot control. It would have to be easily affordable for the hobby shop, yet rugged enough for continual production. He would draw on all the skills required during his multi-employment years.

With a sense of satisfaction that his blue iron mass became shape and form. These techniques taught by Uri became implanted in the student’s mind. It was another step that would move Dean closer to achieving his goal of becoming a master artist blacksmith. This was the winter of 2002.

Since that time Uri has held two teaching schedules in the U.S. Dean attended both of them and the close bond between the teacher and his student continues. During the last session, Dean supplied his power hammer for Uri’s use while demonstrating. Uri quickly put his stamp of approval on its design, its user friendliness, and approachability from an arc of 180.

A new chapter is being added to the Oak Hill Iron Works story: Dean is now both the sole manufacturer and marketer of the “Big Blu” power hammer. It will enable customers to have access to the manufacturer without any middleman. Questions and problems are readily answered, and training sessions are being planned for prospective buyers.

Meanwhile, the busy work goes on at Oak Hill Iron Works, Inc. A reliable crew of talented men continues to build power hammers, produce sculptures, and construct intricately designed railings, gates, fireplace sets, and an array of items for those who love ironwork. Satisfied customers continually return, also sending others who are looking for the type of ironwork crafted at the shop.

Dean experienced life at Uri’s kibbutz, adapting to the communal lifestyle in which everyone contributes to the daily work and betterment of the whole—the salaries, no food bills, no personal expenses. Dean worked six days a week under the watchful eye of the master teacher, with keen observation by the determined student. Dean’s sojourn was supported by access to Uri’s library, both in the shop and in his home, which led to questions and discussions that became experience at the forge and the anvil. Hot iron mass became shape and form. These techniques taught by Uri became implanted in the student’s mind. It was another step that would move Dean closer to achieving his goal of becoming a master artist blacksmith. This was the winter of 2002.

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Color on Metal: 50 Artists Share Insights and Techniques

By Tim McCreight and Nicole Bsullak
Reviewed by Chuck Hamsa,
Reviewers Consortium

Internet: http://www.fwpub.com
Alternative Ordering: Guild Publications, 931 East Main Street, Suite 9, Madison, WI 53703 (608) 344-8453 for orders.

Metal coloration at one time amounted to such things as scale, tarnish and rust. The 15th century saw the use of urine, oil of turpentine and cow dung to form a paste. Evolutionary movements opened vistas for creating a wide range of color on metals. McCreight and Bsullak present the creations of 50 metalworking artisans through such techniques as patinas, enamels, paints and dyes or resins and avant-garde. The entire group of contributing artisans are in separate alphabetical index listings, in addition to the general index. Each presentation lists the particular artisan.

Any of these techniques has the potential for opening metals to a truly awesome array of colors. An opening presentation grounds us in the techniques, followed by full-color photographs of the completed works. Sidebars provide us with both tips and safety precautions. Along with the photographs, there is a description of the raw materials used.

I particularly enjoyed Harlan W. Butt’s creation of a small pumpkin vessel, where he used enamel on copper. The results are an almost realistic—appearing six-inch pumpkin, something that goes beyond the wildest expectations. Enamels generally do not excite me, but this one did! Another is David H. Clifford’s engraved anodized aluminum cup. I am sure that others will find their own favorites as well.

Books like this are important because they open our collective eyes to new chances to both experiment and create.

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Books like this are important because they open our collective eyes to new chances to both experiment and create.
After completing some twisted handrails and an oak panel for a balcony guardrail, I was asked by the owners to build seven fireplace screens. Six were to be designed by me and the seventh by another artist by Hugh C. Culley, Salt Lake City, Utah.

I am a one-man operation in Salt Lake City, where the winters in the surrounding mountains can be brutally cold. In Park City just east of Salt Lake, they claim some of the best powder snow on the planet. Up there, provided you can afford it, you can ski right from your house onto the slopes. Those houses are big and expensive and over the past ten years have afforded me a good living making specialty metal items such as stove hoods, door hardware, railings, fireplace sets, fireplace screens and other items.

In one such home, after completing some twisted handrails and an oak panel for a balcony guardrail, I was asked by the owners to build seven fireplace screens. Six were to be designed by me and the seventh by another artist whose work they also liked.

We met and discussed the types of materials to be used. I presented them with photographs of previous screens I had built, as well as sample pieces of copper and steel hammered in various techniques. I spent the next week working up drawings between the existing jobs at my shop and at home in the evenings.

I completed six finished ink renderings and a couple of variations on 14” x 18” sheets. I feel it is important, while ideas are fresh, to set them into drawings as quickly as possible. This was a good way for me to exploit my creative energy while letting the client know I was serious and interested in their project.

All of the designs were a combination of steel and copper, incorporating natural themes such as leaves, berries, pinecones, branches, and wild animal footprints. Since the clients collected Native American artifacts, I studied Indian arrows and made some out of metal to use as fire screen door pulls.

Two screens had copper repoussé incorporated into the designs. Three were freestanding screens and the rest were inserted and bolted onto the surrounding stone. As an added safety measure, I made a clip on tether steel cable for each of the freestanding screens.

I met with the clients again to work up a schedule and a priority list. I already had work scheduled into my shop, but was still able to push parts along, completing approximately one fire screen per month for the next seven months. This one-a-month agreement satisfied the clients, who then commissioned me again to design and build a garden gate for them the next spring.
ATTENTION

ABANA MEMBERS!

A Call For Metal

This is an invitation to all ABANA members who wish to submit metalwork for exhibition in one of two galleries at the 2004 ABANA Conference as well as donate examples of your work, tools and blacksmith-related items for three fund-raising events during the conference: the daily silent auctions, the live auction and Iron-in-The-Hat. All funds raised during the silent and live auctions will go into ABANA’s general fund. All funds raised with Iron-in-The-Hat will go into ABANA’s Scholarship Fund.

MEMBERS’ EXHIBITIONS

The 2004 ABANA Conference, to be held on the campus of Eastern Kentucky University (EKU) in Richmond, Kentucky, will feature two separate venues for the exhibition of members’ work. One venue will be formal, the other informal. The formal 2004 exhibition of ABANA members’ work is entitled Overview: Works from the ABANA Membership,* and will be presented at EKU’s Giles Gallery, a beautiful, 2,500 square foot two-level setting. The Walk-In-Gallery, the informal setting for ABANA members’ work, will be presented in the Perkins Building.

OVERVIEW:

*Works From the ABANA Membership

ABANA members who wish to have their work exhibited in a professional manner at the Giles Gallery will please read and agree to the following:

• Each contributor is responsible for the shipping costs of his/her work to and from the exhibition. Contributors may retrieve their work from the Giles Gallery Sunday morning, July 11, 2004. Items not retrieved on July 11 will be shipped by Elizabeth Brim, Exhibitions Chairperson, from Richmond by July 13, 2004 via UPS ground / freight collect (COD).

• All work must be sent to the EKU address listed below and be received on or before June 21 – July 2, 2004. No late shipments are accepted for exhibition! To:

EASTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY
EKU CONTINUING EDUCATION AND OUTREACH
ATTENTION: ABANA CONFERENCE EXHIBITIONS
521 LANCASTER AVENUE
RICHMOND, KY 40475-3102

• Contributors to “Overview: Works From the ABANA Membership,” are encouraged to volunteer a maximum of two hours of their time in the gallery for the purpose of hosting and sharing information about the exhibition with the ABANA membership and the public. This kind of participation augments ABANA’s ongoing mission of promoting quality blacksmithing.

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• Contributors to “Overview: Works From the ABANA Membership” are invited to exhibit their work in a professional manner at the Giles Gallery. Contributors are responsible for the shipping costs of their work to and from the exhibition. Contributors may retrieve their work from the Giles Gallery Sunday morning, July 11, 2004. Items not retrieved on July 11 will be shipped by Elizabeth Brim, Exhibitions Chairperson, from Richmond by July 13, 2004 via UPS ground / freight collect (COD).

SIZE RESTRICTIONS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

• The maximum weight is 150 pounds (US).
• The maximum size is 130 inches total girth. To calculate maximum size, calculate the length + width x height / 2.

While “Overview: Works From the ABANA Membership” is not a juried exhibition, Elizabeth Brim will have the final decision concerning the display of the work based on size and space considerations.

“WALK-IN-GALLERY”

The informal Walk-in-gallery will be located in the Perkins Building near the registration area. This exhibition is open to all ABANA members who offer submissions at the time of registration. These items must be retrieved by the owner no later than Sunday, July 11, 2004.

AUCTION EVENTS

Silent & Live Auction Donations

The conference auctions are critical fund-raising events for ABANA. Tim Ryan is in charge of these events at the 2004 Conference and is inviting all members to donate examples of their work, tools or smithing-related items to ABANA. Tim and his crew will make every effort to get the highest price for your donation through either the silent auctions or the live auction. The live auction is scheduled to begin at 4:00 PM Saturday afternoon, July 10, 2004. Auction items can be donated during registration or during the Conference.

Iron-in-the-Hat

This year’s ABANA Conference will once again feature Iron-in-the-Hat. Please consider bringing an item for donation to this worthwhile event. All proceeds benefit the ABANA Scholarship Fund. Please donate Iron-In-The-Hat items at the time of registration in the Perkins Building.

After 25 years in the Washington, DC suburbs, Brad has recently moved his metal art studio to Burgettstown, a rural area west of Pittsburgh, PA. While continuing to create sculpture, commissioned work, and a line of drawer pulls in forged metal, he has founded The Mesa Creative Arts Center in Burgettstown. As well as the usual subjects like painting, drawing, sculpture, ceramics, stained glass, and blacksmithing, students at The Mesa will also learn to make “spiritual art for their hearts and souls, based on the traditions of many cultures,” says Brad.

Housed in a hangar and offices of a closed small airport, The Mesa is a community center open to all who want to expand their creativity and awareness. At The Mesa, Brad is working in new materials along with teaching art, craft, and the healing arts to adults and children with his partner, Kate Neal. He has started to combine wood, glass, leather, ceramics, and other mediums with forged metal as well as using his metal stampings to impress clay and other materials.

“I had been looking for a way to use my skills as an artist, teacher and healer to do something to serve the greater community. It had been my dream to create a place where people could take part in art in whatever ways appealed to them: take or teach a class, use studio time for their own projects, see and buy my work, just watch, or simply hang out! I wanted to restore a sense of community that is missing from many people’s lives these days, and center it around the arts, using our creativity to heal ourselves and each other,” says Silberberg.

“We felt in love with the airport site because of the great work space, beautiful view from the hill top, and its closeness to nature. It felt like I had come home. Being here has given me the chance to combine my spiritual path with my art, learning to make ‘singing’ bowls and energy healing tools out of metal, while continuing to make custom blacksmithing work and sculpture.” &

**Squashed container:** "Vessel with Chevrons", Forged steel. Sanded black oxide finish. 5-1/4" x 5-1/4" x 5-3/4" high.

**"Time Table."** Forged and stamped steel, brasses and copper with beach stones. Electric pump. 18-1/2" dia. bowl x 33" high overall.

**"Chopstick Fountain"**. Forged and stamped steel, brasses and copper with beach stones. Electric pump. 16-1/2" dia. bowl x 23" high overall.

**"Samurai Table"**. Forged and stamped steel and brass with glass top. Sanded black oxide finish. 20" x 21" x 27" high.
Sometimes people ask me how I managed to get where I am as an artist-blacksmith. One of the most important things to remember is to do the best work that you are capable of at any given time. "Quality is not an act, it is a habit." Aristotle. A second trait that serves us well is tenacity. Never give up, be tenacious and keep trying to do the best job that is possible under the circumstances.

I see two things as being vital to producing good art or craft. One is the idea or concept, and the second is the quality of the execution of that idea. Neither is enough on its own. A great design or idea is not fully expressed and communicated if the craftsmanship is poor. By the same token, superior crafting of a poor design tends to be empty and unsatisfying. We need both together; it's simple, but not always so easy.

So, good design and good craftsmanship—is that enough? Probably not. Another thing that is important is to pay attention to the business of being a blacksmith. Manfred Bredohl said, “Half of the work of the smith is in the office.” No wonder I had trouble making money! Artists must also learn to market themselves and their work. Being good is simply not good enough. There are some not-very-good artists and craftspeople who are great at marketing their work and make a lot of money. There are truly great artists who die poor because they are terrible at selling their work. Hopefully there is some middle ground. Look for it.

Trust your instincts about what to make and who to make it for. If you really can’t relate to a job or the customer, even though you may want to, walk away. This way you will not be too busy to take the right opportunity when it does come along. I love the saying, “Good judgment often comes from bad experience, and a bad experience is often the result of bad judgment!” We all have to eat and pay the bills, but make what you like yourself, because with all the challenges that we face as artists, you deserve to enjoy your job.

So how does an artist maintain their edge and keep their work fresh? The simple answer is by playing, and by being open to new ideas.

“Quality is not an act, it is a habit.”
~ Aristotle.
and techniques. Set aside specific time during the week to work on something that is not the usual stuff—not for money, just do something that’s just for your own fun. Experiment, screw things up, play with the metal and see where it takes you.

There are two ways to do something: the first way and the right way, and they are never the same. By blindly attempting the new, a better way is often revealed. This kind of work is fun, if frustrating, and brings you energy and ideas. Many good ideas come directly from the work itself. The hammer, fire, and iron become your best teachers.

The most fun for me is making presents for people whom I know. It is an opportunity to put a lot of “juice” into these pieces and you are making them for the joy of the process and the simple reward of making someone happy. I realized a long time ago that part of my job as an artist is making others, as well as myself, happy through the enjoyment of the work.

Teaching is another great way to more fully understand what you are already doing. When you have to explain to a student or assistant why you want it done a certain way, then you understand it better yourself. Also, others bring a fresh approach that you might never have thought of. There is a great painting by Goya of a very old man and a young boy. The boy is lighting his candle from the old man’s candle. It illustrates that one candle can light a thousand others without being diminished in any way itself. So it is with teaching.

But most of all, I feel lucky to have chosen to make a living as a smith and that I’ve stuck with it through thick and thin. Now that the leadership of ABANA has been handed off into very capable hands I will have a lot more time to play and make a living for my family, who have been so supportive, doing something that I still enjoy (most days) after over 25 years of it! Can’t complain. So many hammers, so little time.

But most of all, I feel lucky to have chosen to make a living as a smith and that I’ve stuck with it through thick and thin.

By blindly attempting the new, a better way is often revealed.
M y art explores the wonders and torments of life using the age-old craft of blacksmithing. Each piece is an exploration and discovery of this little-known art form. Because of its role in shaping the industrial revolution—almost inventing itself out of existence—blacksmithing has become a nearly extinct craft. In the exploratory realm of the artist, blacksmithing is reborn as a medium of expression.

I transform iron, my primary medium, from its cold, static, raw condition into lyrical, rhythmic works. Metals defy their character and appear delicate and feather light in my sculptures. Elements of blown glass, bronze and wood are used to infuse warmth and color in the work. All my work is meticulously executed with a strong sense of formal design that, like a trellis in a garden, lends support to a more organic, biomorphic and expressive sensibility.

My pieces exhibit a beauty and darkness reminiscent of nature, where growth, decay and ultimately birth exist in a continuous cycle where each stage overlaps and intertwines with the next. African, Japanese and Cycladic art, as well as the works of Brancusi, Modigliani and Smith have significantly influenced me. My sculptures are a quest to express emotion with the most economical use of line and space.

James DeMartis, Sag Harbor, New York

Photography by Tom Lee

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### C A L E N D A R

**February 8 - May 9**

A Work in Progress: 25 Years. The National Ornamental Metal Museum, Memphis, TN, celebrates its 25th year with an invitational exhibit of work by 25 metal artists who have worked at the museum. 901/774-6380 or go to web site: www.metalmuseum.org.

**March 13 - 14**

Bangin’ on the Bayou, Louisiana Metalsmiths Association’s 10th Annual Conference with demonstrators Elmer Roush and Lynda Metcalfe. Lafayette, LA. Jerry Baker 337/232-7958. E-mail: jbaker517@earthlink.net.

**March 26 – 28**

Forging on the River XI. Sponsored by the River Bluff Forge Council, Memphis, TN. Demonstrations by Dan Nau- man, Tom Latane’, and Eric and Jeff Morbison on the grounds of the National Ornamental Metal Museum. Bob Rogers, (901) 278-7826. E-mail: hbr@prodigy.net. See web site: www.rbcmemphis.com.

**April 2 - 4**

California Blacksmith Association Spring Conference. Vista, CA. Gordon Kirby 707/996-8541. E-mail: gordonsforge@peoplepc.com.

**April 30 - May 2**

13th Annual Ozark Conference with demonstrators Dan Nau- man, Toby Hickman and Devin Thomas. Hosted by the Blacksmith Association of Missouri. Warrenton, MO. Fred Weisenborn 417/589-2497. E-mail: jweisenb@llion.org. See web site www.bamsite.org.

**April 30 - May 2**

Northwest Ohio Blacksmiths 18th Annual Hammer-In. Auglaize Village, west of Defiance, OH. Demonstrator is Marty Reisig. Bill Martin 419/287-4084.

**May 1 - 2**

Appalachian Blacksmiths Association Annual Spring Conference. Cedar Lakes Park, Ripley, WV. Tailgaters, Iron in the Hat, auction. Dave Allen 304/624-7248. E-mail: anvilwork@aol.com. Web site: www.appaltree.net/aba.

**May 15 - 17**


**May 16 - July 12**


**July 7 - 11**

ABANA Conference: Design & Build 2004. Eastern Kentucky University Campus, Richmond, KY. See ABANA web site for used power hammers reconditioned and ready for use.

**ANVIL’s RING**

52 Winter 2004 | Anvil’s Ring

**For Interviews with:**
- Stephen Bondi
- Elizabeth Brim
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- Toby Hickman
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- Bruce Northridge
- Bob Patrick
- Bill Pihl
- John Rais
- Frank Turley
- Francis Whitaker

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**Mark Campbell.**

End table. Forged mild steel and palo chino wood. 29” high.

**Ira Wiesenfeld.**

*Empty Nester’s Table.* Forged mild steel and mesquite. 30” high.

**Susan Madacsi.**

Parsons fire screen. 50” l x 34” h x 8” d. Mild steel and copper mesh. Forged mild steel mortise and tenon joinery, leaves and vines forged and welded together, and so combining traditional and non-traditional blacksmithing techniques to develop a piece of work.

**Mark Campbell, Frederick, Maryland**

Forged on-the-run hand-forged garden gate - Overall Size: 38” x 42”. A combination of 1/4 inch, 3/8 inch, and 1/2 inch round stock was used. It was finished in a rust patina. Inspired by the beautiful venues of Middleburg, Virginia.

**Ira Wiesenfeld, Tucson, Arizona**

Table - Overall Size: 5 ft. x 6 ft. A combination of 2-inch square steel tubing and 3/4-inch square steel tubing was used. Black satin finish.
MARCH 5 - 7
Blacksmithing with John Stevens. Brookfield Craft Center, Brookfield, CT. 203/377-4526. E-mail: info@brookfieldcraftcenter.org. See web site: www.brookfieldcraftcenter.org.

MARCH 7 - 13

MARCH 11 - 14
Repousse with Sue Sachs. Brookfield Craft Center, Brookfield, CT. 203/377-4526. E-mail: info@brookfieldcraftcenter.org. See web site: www.brookfieldcraftcenter.org.

MARCH 13 - 14
Demure Blacksmithing with Bob Crogan. Appalachian Center for Crafts, Sylva, NC. 828/357-0601. E-mail: craftcenter@tncmc.org.

MARCH 21 - 27

MARCH 25 - 26
Design by Peter Parkinson (author of The Artist Blacksmith). The Cold Hanworth Forge & Blacksmithing School. Alvingham near Louth, Lincolnshire, England. E-mail: bobokeakes@teachblacksmithing.com.

MARCH 28 - APRIL 3
Forging Forgets with Elizabeth Bunn and Zachary Noble. John C. Campbell Folk School, Brasstown, NC. 1-800/FOLK-SCH. See web site: www.folkschool.org.

APRIL 9 - 11

APRIL 13 - 14
Decorative Blacksmithing with Bob Crogan. Appalachian Center for Crafts, Sylva, NC. 828/357-0601. E-mail: craftcenter@tncmc.org.

APRIL 21 - 27
Traditional Jorney Projects with Clay Sparks. John C. Campbell Folk School, Brasstown, NC. 1-800/FOLK-SCH. See web site: www.folkschool.org.

APRIL 25 - 26

APRIL 28 - MAY 2
Copper Room and Mere with Dick Jay. John C. Campbell Folk School, Brasstown, NC. 1-800/FOLK-SCH. See web site: www.folkschool.org.

MAY 7 - 9

For additional listings, go to www.abana.org.

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NC Whisper Low Boy
- Three-burner forge
- Low profile/Open end ports
- 3” x 9” D x 12” W Firebox
- 2” x 3” Rear bar stock door
- 3” x 4” opening in door
- Also available with open end port
- Rapid recovery time for quick turn-around
- Ideal for knife makers and smithing procedures
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Gas-Fired Blacksmith Forges
- Exclusive, high-efficiency burners • Uniform Heat... Self-regulating to 2350°
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Model #2
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- 6” H x 9” D x 12” W Firebox
- 2” x 3” Rear bar stock door
- 3” x 4” opening in door
- Also available with open end port
- This unit works well for production of larger objects or when a large number of small parts need to be heated at one time.
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<td>2002 ABANA Conference CD</td>
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<td>337 images from five exhibitions and demonstrations held during the Conference. Photographs taken by Sandy Andrews, ABANA Conference photographer, and Brian Gilbert, editor of the Hammer's Blow.</td>
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<td>gas forge plans donated by Robb Gunter and Sandra Lab. Full size blueprints included. 22 pgs, drawings/photos</td>
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<td>Simple Air Hammer Plans</td>
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<td>ABANA T-Shirts. Available in BLACK, SAND, ASH</td>
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POETRY IN IRON

The 6th International “SMITHS in the Wind” exhibition was a great success on
the Baltic Sea coast in Eckernförde, Germany. Tremendous resonance enabled the
International Professional Association of Artist Smiths to extend by two months
the smithing and metal exhibition on the picturesque Baltic shores.

The special exhibition “Sacred Art” will travel on to Kiel and, in 2004, to Berlin.

The jury selected almost 150 works by 62 metal designers and smiths, sculptors, and architects for the international exhibition “SMITHS in the Wind” and the special exhibition “Sacred Art”, making them, together, the most extensive metal art exhibition in German history. The exhibition’s great resonance confirmed the decision of the organizers and thus of the International Professional Association of Artist Smiths. In difficult times, the artists were especially gratified to see sculptures and wind-driven works valued at 20,000 euros change hands.

The newly-constructed Borbyer shore promenade in Eckernförde seemed as if specially created to present the metal designers’ expansive sculptures. Silvery stainless steel glittered in the sun in a setting of lush green and the company of the patinaed, rusty steel of the past and a sprinkling of brilliant colors. Strolling local citizens and Baltic coast tourists viewed and contemplated the hand-forged sculptures, filigreed sails of stainless steel, floral elements, and wind-driven kinetic objects created to meet the highest aesthetic and technical challenges. One of these was the 11-meter wind object by Achim Kühn. Viewers often went beyond visual inspection to “grasp” the cool metal, hands-on, and to bring the artist’s idea literally into motion.

A sail from a stainless steel panel.

Erik Gjendem from Norway.
KICKING OFF WITH THE SYMPOSIUM

The always-popular smithing show was held in the marketplace. Local smiths shaped their works on anvils beside the internationally famed Uri Hof of Israel and colleagues from Norway and France. Many worked in accordance with precise drawings to enable spectators to follow the process and recognize the emerging work – as well as to demonstrate the long way from idea to well-finished smithing art.

But viewers also saw that working together with iron and fire brings artists together emotionally. Shaping together at the hearth created collegial ties and the strength and motivation to organize later solo exhibitions.

All around the symposium, models presented the fantastic, prize-winning stainless steel “Fischernetz” clothing of IPAAS member Werner Zimmermann. The contrast could not have been more striking: surrounded by fire, glowing iron, and the smiths’ hard labor, the four models displayed the unique, filigree elegance of finest special steel turned into fascinating body adornment. Haughty in fine silk, the models were a magnet for the eyes of audience and artists alike.

At the same time, silversmith Martin Bläske’s lecture enchanted listeners in the Town Hall. This master of pure tone celebrated it on the sound bowls and polished bronze gongs he forges.

In his lecture at the special exhibition “Sacred Art”, the famed metal designer Hermann Gradinger elucidated the altar he created for the Catholic Technical College in Mainz, a model of which can be viewed in the exhibition. Grappling with form, space, color, and material, he developed fascinating solutions: for example, corroded steel in combination with gold leaf gilding, or aluminum with beech wood.

The exhibition “Sacred Art” invited guests to a spiritual dialogue with the works of international smithing art – altar designs, baptismal fonts, grave crosses, candelabras, and chalices, to name a selection. Artist smiths are, traditionally, at the forefront of sacred church furnishings. Even today, the smiths need the old techniques to create contemporary works. The 12 Easter candelabras of the Technical College of Hildesheim, each almost as large as a man, were a calming eye-catcher. Students in the Department of Metal Design created them for a competition, with the aim of providing impetus to bringing a church design in step with modern times. The exhibition also included fascinating Japanese contributions, whose elegantly simple crafting provided a glimpse of another culture.

Goestal Gablik from Berlin forges a violin.

A grave cross by Kurt Lange.

Sculpture crafted by Josef Bzdok.

Father and son enjoying some forging time together.