

# GOLD PAGES NEWSLETTER

EDITOR: JEFF MCGEE



HMAG members share an evening at the Boheme Café and Wine Bar on August 9th as part of [Spacetaker's Cultured Cocktails](#). A portion of the bar's takings were donated to our vibrant organization. Join us for more upcoming HMAG events in the future!

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# Letter from the President

By Mary Jarvis

Did you hear that Forbes Magazine named Houston the “Coolest City?” It is an exciting time to be a Houstonian. The arts community is vibrant. Just take a look at all the art events listed in the local news magazines. According to an article in *Culture Map Houston*, “the creative industry in Houston earned \$4.32 billion in 2011, with an economic impact of more than \$9.1 billion and saw an eight percent gain between 2001 and 2011.” The arts in Houston are expected to grow another seven percent in the next five years. That is pretty COOL.

Our Houston Metal Arts Guild fits well with this pattern of growth when you look at how we have developed, not only in the number of active members, but also in the number of events and activities over the past 4 or 5 years. It is exciting to live in Houston, and it’s also an exciting time to be a member of HMAG!

Our new Board of Directors is only two months old, but we started like a jack rabbit. This is one of the reasons we were motivated to get this newsletter in your hands, because we had so much to tell, and an email just wouldn’t express the whole story. So read all about it here! Please take a look at the list of our Board members. We have a great mix of talent with fresh ideas, energy, enthusiasm and experience, as well as devotion to make sure HMAG stays true to it’s mission: *to provide education and promote public awareness and interest in the metal arts and enrich the local community through activities promoting the metal arts*. Please let these

Board members know how you can help with one of the many areas of HMAG.

When I joined HMAG four years ago, I was new to metalsmithing and new to Houston. Through HMAG I have been able to get to know other metalsmiths, and learn new skills and techniques. I have been able get my work out in the community and beyond through juried shows, and connections I have made with the encouraging people of HMAG. So it is exciting to see others growing and thriving within our HMAG community, for example: seeing their work in a gallery for the first time or getting connected with a client through the HMAG Facebook page. I can’t wait to see how the recipient of our new scholarship will flourish through HMAG.

As I write this, I am looking forward to attending “Cultured Cocktails” on Aug. 9 giving even more exposure to HMAG. I am confident that when Houston hears about all that we are doing here at HMAG, and sees the fabulous work our members are creating, more exciting events and opportunities for our members will follow.

See you soon at the many events you’ll find in this newsletter!

**Mary Jarvis**  
**President, HMAG**



Mary Jarvis is a studio art jeweler living in Houston, Texas. She has a BA from The University of Mississippi in Graphic Design. Her award winning metal work is represented at 18 Hands Gallery and Buchanan Gallery. She was recently published in “Humor in Craft” and featured in *Craft Texas 2010*. She has served on the Board of Directors of Houston Metal Arts Guild as President for the past two years. .



HMAG Lifetime Achievement Award winner Val Link receiving his Golden Hammer and HMAG Apron from Guild President Mary Jarvis at the annual holiday party.



**Houston Metal Arts Guild (HMAG)** exists to provide education and promote public awareness and interest in the metal arts by enriching the local community through activities relating to the fields of metalsmithing and jewelry. HMAG membership is open to anyone interested in supporting the metal arts. Membership benefits include discounted workshops, a free page in the HMAG.org Member Gallery, invitations to exhibit your work, and technical and business programs. Join HMAG today! In addition, HMAG communicates breaking news and artist opportunities

via email. These communications are free and a great way to stay in touch with the Houston metal arts community.

### **HMAG Statement of Purpose**

The Houston Metal Arts Guild, Inc. is a non-profit organization made up of people with varying interests and involvement in traditional and contemporary jewelry and metalsmithing. The Guild was founded to provide for the exchange of ideas and information, as well as offer affordable educational opportunities to its members and the public. Our activities include: a bi-annual newsletter, exhibitions and a series of aesthetic, technical and business workshops/lectures. The skills, energy and enthusiasm of the Houston Metals Arts Guild, Inc. members promote and sustain its successful programs. We welcome and encourage participation by everyone.

(See page 22 for membership information.)

# Professional Practices

## Suggestions for Presenting Yourself as an Entrepreneurial Maker

By Jeff McGee

As a maker, it is important to maintain a professional identity. In particular, an identity you can be confident in when approaching colleagues, clients, and collaborators. After all, even the most introverted of us need some form of social persona to stay afloat in the business of making. Whether you are a sole proprietor, student, or educator, the general advice in this article will serve as a manual to get you started or as a refresher course for our contemporary professional world.

The following guidelines speak of the tips I have accumulated over the past 10 years as an entrepreneurial maker. Enjoy!

### Promotion

You are your best and only promoter. Most artists cannot afford to pay someone else to design websites, business cards, and other promotional materials. Instead I recommend spending a little bit of time to functionally experiment with design programs like Adobe Photoshop. As an educator, I should be telling you to take a graphic arts class, but programs like Photoshop offer built-in tutorials and “help” functions that will get most novices through the basic operations needed to design a logo or edit images. If you are worried about the intimidating price tag on Adobe products I recommend purchasing Photoshop Elements which will generally be available for around \$75 alone or \$100 if you buy it bundled with Adobe Premier video editing software. These consumer-friendly versions are paired down, but will serve your needs as a frugal entrepreneur just fine.

### Branding

Once you feel comfortable with a design program, go ahead and start creating a visual language that will identify and distinguish your brand from the herd. If you

are designing a logo, one trick might be to create a list of adjectives that describe your work matched up with visual symbols that portray your ideas. Take the best two or three from your list, and using your design prowess, put together an iconic image that will promote your intended identity. Remember that color schemes, fonts, and symbols should be consistent throughout each item you design from business cards to your online profiles. It can be very tempting to utilize the free, stock templates offered by printers and domain providers, but they will not help your brand grow into a professional asset. Keep a list of color numbers (yes they are numbered) and fonts as they will stay relatively consistent across different design programs and webpage builders. In the end, keep your promotional materials updated, coherent, and looking professional.

### Online Presence

A strong and appropriate internet footprint is probably the most important aspect of any contemporary entrepreneurial endeavor. In most instances the first real contact you will have with a gallery, employer, or potential buyer will be via your website or a social media profile like [Etsy](#) or [Crafthaus](#). What? You don't have a Crafthaus profile yet? Well what are you waiting for? This article will still be here once you've finished setting up your member page! In case you haven't heard, Crafthaus has quickly become the most efficient way to network and gain exposure in the craft field. It's affordable and you get the benefit of focused job postings, calls for entry, relevant articles and image resources in a one-stop-shopping kind of online arena.

Social media has not just become a popular way to pass the time, in fact it has almost become THE internet! If you are a

candidate for a job, the first thing any H.R. rep will do is look you up on Facebook. So if you find yourself in that situation, clean up your profile, make your party pics visible to your friends only and make sure your user photo portrays you as an up-standing member of society. If you are not a social media type, but still want an online portfolio, then a web domain is the way to go. It is worth the cost to purchase a web address that will be easily accessible to your audience. I purchased the rights to my domain name and pay a monthly hosting charge of about \$20. Worth every penny!

### **Images**

So you've got your website and profiles set up, now you need to master the most painstaking aspect of promoting yourself as a maker; portfolio images! I will not go into the intricacies of the actual photographic process, as that is an entirely different article written by someone much more knowledgeable than myself. What I would like to talk about is preparing your images to be viewed by a gallery owner, client, or employer.

I will start with images that will be placed on a portfolio CD, as most gallery owners and employers will require a CD of 10-20 images in JPEG format. The best rule to remember in this situation is to keep your files around 2MB (megabytes). You can adjust the image size with any photo editing software. Generally I like to keep my CD images at 300dpi (dots per inch) and no larger than 7 inches in its largest dimension. This will ensure that when someone opens your file it does not overfill the screen and all they see is the upper left corner of the background! There is nothing more annoying to a reviewer than having to adjust the zoom on their photo viewer just to see the image. More often than not, that is grounds for rejection regardless of how great your work is.

The same concept applies for web-ready images, however the rules are different; in

websites and social media profiles, your JPEGs should be at 72dpi. Uploading larger images can seemingly take forever to process and are unnecessary since web browsers only output JPEGs at 72dpi anyway. If you happen to be uploading images to a portfolio submission site like Slideroom, then you can use your high-res files since the program is designed to handle CD quality images. Remember, your images are your first line of communication with the outside world, they are what define you as a maker. Keep them clean, readable, and straightforward.

### **Resume / Curriculum Vitae**

When designing a resume, remember this one rule; it's a DESIGN! Each element has to have a reason for being there, and fit into the location where it belongs. As an artist, your exhibition record should be the first subcategory on the page below your name and contact information. Keep your shows organized chronologically by year starting with the most recent. If you are an inexperienced exhibitor, you may want to lead your resume with either your work experience or education. Once you've accumulated a couple of years of shows, then bump that section to the top. My resume is formatted with the calendar year on the left with the show's name, the location (gallery and city), and type (juried, invitational, solo, etc.) starting on the first indent. If you have more than one show during the year, do not repeat the date on each line, simply list your shows and distinguish individual events by italicizing the titles.

One mistake many people make on resumes is inconsistency in formatting throughout the document. It's important to remember that there is not a hard-and-fast rule that says one item should be in bold font and another should be in italics, but as you compile your various subcategories and lists, the formatting should remain constant throughout. I have served on several selection committees for colleges.

(continued on next page)

As I wade through the pile of applicants to be reviewed, one of the things I note is the “readability” of their resume. If you cannot even take it upon yourself to tell the story of your career in a fluent manner that is easy to discern from an outsider’s point of view, then you are automatically bumped to the bottom of the pile. Keep your resume clean, consistent, and comprehensible!

## Networking

This aspect of being a professional is all about proactivity. The more networking you do, the more connections you make. This opens opportunities that would never be there otherwise. I’ve touched on this a bit already but social media sites and email provide an easy way to start a connection with someone you would like to work with. Just be sure you make the effort to meet your connections in person at some point. At minimum, make a phone call if your connection is not local.

However you initiate contact with someone, keep the conversation relaxed and formal. You do not want to sound assumptive or pushy. On the other hand you also want to give the impression that you are serious about whatever situation you are discussing. Act the part, even if you are not 100% confident in your approach. Sometimes we have to give the impression of success before it actually comes to us.

Networking can feel like it takes a lot of effort on occasion, and make no mistake, it does. That feeling of “work” can be alleviated if you do your networking at social events like exhibit receptions and lectures. Occasionally getting out of the house or studio and attending an event can recharge your creative juices and provide an easily navigated situation for making connections. After all, getting the conversation



HMAG members network at  
[Hanson Galleries](#) *Kaleidoscope of  
Color* Exhibition.

started is half the battle and you obviously have something in common with everyone at the event. Remember to have a handful of business cards on you and shake as many hands as possible. Because you never know who you might meet!

## Conclusion

I should say that the previous advice is intended for a general audience of makers. Everyone’s situation is unique and how you go about your professional circumstances will have to be determined by your own personality and experiences.

I will leave you with this final piece of advice: times change and so your professional identity should change with them. Keep yourself up-to-date on social networking, and don’t let your website and profiles become stale. A proactive entrepreneur can accomplish much with very little. The variable is how active you choose to be.

[www.jeffmcgeeart.com](http://www.jeffmcgeeart.com)



[Jeff McGee](#) is a Professor of Art at [San Jacinto College](#) South Campus where he heads the Metals and Sculpture area. He received his MFA from the [University of Kansas](#) in 2009. His award winning metal work has been exhibited nationally and internationally.



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**PMC**

In the 1990s scientists in Japan developed a combination of binders and metal particles to create a material with the working properties of modeling clay, known as precious metal clay, or PMC. This water-soluble product is available from several manufacturers in the form of lump, sheets, slip, and ready-to-use syringes.

An organic binder provides elasticity while holding microscopic grains of metal in suspension. After the water is driven off, the object is heated to the fusing temperature of the constituent metal. During heating, the binding material burns away, which causes the object to shrink to a degree equal to the volume originally occupied by the binder.

The process is easiest with pure silver and pure gold because these noble metals resist the formation of oxides and fuse at easily attainable temperatures. Platinum (the other noble metal) is also available in a clay but requires temperatures beyond the reach of most kilns.

Sterling silver, bronze, copper and steel are the newest additions to the metal clay family and are best fired in the absence of oxygen.



<http://pmcguild.com/getting-started-with-pmc/>

# Tips, Tricks, & Assorted Trivia

By Priscilla Frake

1. To reconstitute dried-out paste solder, stir in one drop of mineral oil at a time until thoroughly combined. Do this in a glass container, as metal may contaminate the solder. The process will go quicker if the glass container is warmed. The oil may cause the solder to flare up when soldering. Do not throw out old solder, as it may contain cadmium, but it can be refined with other metal scrap items.  
*-Beth Katz of [MyUniqueSolutions.com](http://MyUniqueSolutions.com) in Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist*
2. Rub bits and scraps of charcoal blocks onto surfaces of white fire bricks to create a reducing atmosphere (like a charcoal block).  
*-[Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist](#)*
3. Things to remember when soldering:
  - Solder flows in the direction of the heat
  - Solder will not bridge gaps- it works by capillary action
  - Solder will ball up before it melts
  - When soldering a smaller piece of metal to a larger piece (like wire to sheet), keep the heat on the larger piece
  - Each time you reheat solder it will become harder to reheat it.
  - Solder expands to 3 times its original size when heated  
*-[Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist](#)*
4. The tip of a jack hammer makes a great square stake if you grind off the tips and sand it.  
*-Val Link*
4. For chasing large pieces, make two frames from MDF board with regularly spaced holes for screws. Screw the metal down between the frames. Now you can easily work the metal from both sides and remove it for annealing. You can rest the frame on wood blocks to get more depth. A ball-peen hammer can be used as a chasing punch.  
*-[Jan Harrell](#)*
5. Monofilament fishing line is great for cold connections. You can bead up the ends with a Bic lighter. With care, you can even bead up the line right next to a pearl.  
*-[Marjorie Simon](#)*
6. Use separating disks to:
  - Make grooves and slots
  - Clean up the inside angle of a 'T' seam.
  - Cut a groove or slot in the middle of a sheet or tube.
  - Grind (like a lapidary flat lap)
  - Cut sprues from castings
  - Make a variety of surface textures by cross-hatching, etc.  
*-[Andy Cooperman](#)*
7. To make a nail for riveting: bead wire, then put through a drawplate to hold the wire with the bead at the surface. Use a hammer or stamp to shape the head.  
*-[Jan Harrell](#)*
9. Cylindrical pillar files (used for sharpening chain and available at hardware stores) are useful for a number of applications since they don't taper. They come in a variety of sizes.  
*-Val Link*



10. 14K makes for better prongs than sterling because it's stronger.  
*-[Linda Darty](#)*
11. Don't put soap on your enameling glass brush! You could contaminate the enamel.  
*-[Linda Darty](#)*
12. When filing, keep your wrist stiff and don't fall off the edge of the metal. Using a larger file is more efficient.  
*-[Val Link](#)*

13. Use a solution of two parts white vinegar and one part hydrogen peroxide (from the drugstore) to clean brass. The brass will turn a buttery yellow as surface lead and tarnish is removed and some small bubbles should be visible on the metal. The brass should be removed before the solution turns slightly greenish or the brass darkens. This will go very quickly- anywhere from a few seconds to 5 minutes depending on the piece and the freshness of the hydrogen peroxide, which degrades when exposed to air. If the brass gets dark, make a fresh solution and re-clean it for a shorter period of time. However, further passes may begin to etch the brass.  
*-[Patty Scott](#)*

14. Both bronze and brass are yellow alloys of copper but bronze contains tin (typically 12%) and brass contains zinc (typically 10%). Bronze can be quenched while red hot, but brass will go hard and brittle if treated this way. Copper oxide rises to the surface of bronze during heating and should be removed from areas to be soldered.  
*-[Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist](#)*



[Andy Cooperman](#) demonstrates surface techniques at the May workshop.

\*\*\*If you run across an interesting tip, trick, or online video, please share it with your fellow HMAGers. E-mail [HMAGComm@gmail.com](mailto:HMAGComm@gmail.com) (put 'Tips and Tricks' in the subject line) and indicate your source.



[Priscilla Frake](#) has been making jewelry, enameled, and metal objects for over ten years. She took classes at [Revere Academy](#) and currently studies enameling at [Glassell School of Art](#).

# HMAG Library Report

By Sissie O'Malley

Why does HMAG have a library? Do we even need one? What can books on art and jewelry provide us? What can we learn from these wonderful books that we have in our library?

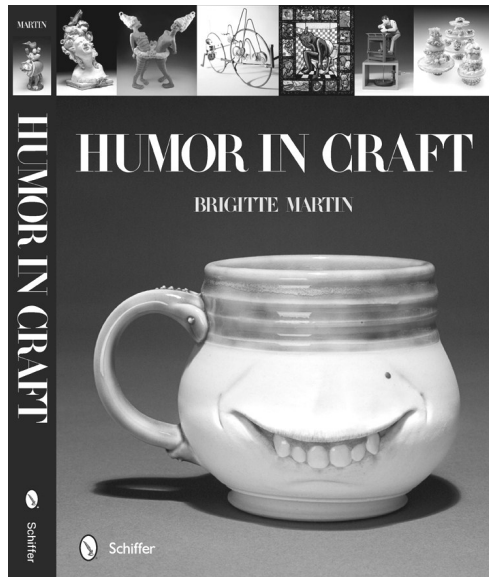
- Inspiration from design and proportion seen in others' works
- Encouragement to try out ideas that we have
- Introduction to a more discerning and sophisticated approach to our work
- Efficiency in ways of attacking problems with new techniques
- Enjoyment from the works of others
- Motivation to try something out of our comfort zone
- Stimulation to help us out of a creative rut

You may even find a book you would like to own yourself. This is why I love our library.

Click on "Members Only" at the HMAG site and find our library catalog. Email me a list of the books you want to checkout and I will bring them to the next meeting.

[HMAGLibr@gmail.com](mailto:HMAGLibr@gmail.com)

Sissie O'Malley  
Library Director



I am a Texan artist who loves working with metal. The concept that someone will wear my work and hopefully find pleasure in it keeps me loving the search for new textures and ways of expressing myself.

# 2011/12 HMAG Highlights

## July 2011

- Donna Milstein of [Hanson Galleries](#), gave a presentation on "Cutting Edge Social Media and Marketing for the Craft Artist"

## September 2011

- Panel Discussion and Q&A: [Heidi Gerstacker](#), [Diane Falkenhagen](#) and [Mary Rogers](#)

## October 2011

- [Hanson Galleries](#): *Kaleidoscope of Color*, HMAG Member Show Oct. 7-16

## November 2011

- November Program: [Micki Lippe](#) presented her work and life as a metal artist

## December 2011

- Holiday Party: Held at the home of Cathy Prieto-Smith, Val Link was presented with the 1st HMAG Lifetime Achievement Award

## January 2012

- Val Link Workshop: *Chasing & Repoussé and Tool Making* at [Glassell](#)

## February 2012

- 18 Hands sponsored Member Show: *Heart of Art*, juried by Martha Ferguson

## March 2012

- [Jeff McGee](#): *Collaborative Exchange* Solo show, performance, and artist's talk at Rice University

## May 2012

- [Andy Cooperman](#) artist's talk and workshop: *Creative Surface Development* at [Glassell](#)

## July 2012

- [18 Hands Gallery Show](#): *Green Jewelry*
- [Jemco USA](#) Product Presentation: *Testing Stones and Metals* at Glassell
- [Brigitte Martin](#): *Humor in Craft* book signing and lecture at the [Houston Center for Contemporary Craft](#)

## August 2012

- HMAG social event : [Cultured Cocktails](#) at [Boheme Café and Wine Bar](#)
- [Leslie Shershow](#) Workshop: *Mold Making and Resin*

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# Education Report

By Corey Ackelmire

HMAG is currently working on a number of exciting educational [scholarship opportunities](#) for members of the Houston area.

The first is our HMAG Educational Scholarship, which will award \$500 annually to an area student for the purpose of enrolling in a semester-long Metalsmithing and Jewelry course at a greater Houston area college or university.

In exchange for the scholarship, the recipient will make a presentation to the HMAG membership in the form of a brief live lecture or short article for the HMAG newsletter following the experience.

The recipient will also receive a complimentary year-long membership to HMAG and will be featured in the HMAG newsletter as well as on the HMAG website.



A [San Jacinto College South](#) student learns casting from Professor [Jeff McGee](#).

The awardee will be chosen based on a combination of merit and need. Applicants need not be HMAG members, but must reside in the Houston area (within a 60 mile radius of downtown Houston).

The submission deadline will be October 15, 2012 for use during the 2013 academic school year. HMAG will coordinate with the student's chosen school to award the scholarship funds.



[Corey Ackelmire](#) earned her Bachelor's of Fine Art degree in Jewelry and Metalsmithing from [Missouri State University](#) in 2003. She earned her Master's of Fine Art in Jewelry/Metals/Enameling from [Kent State University](#) in 2007. Corey has been an educator since 2005, is a published author, and has exhibited her work in numerous national and international exhibitions. Currently she is the full-time Art Metals Instructor at [Houston Community College](#).

## Metalsmithing / Jewelry Courses in the Houston Area

**Alvin Junior College**—Diane Falkenhagen ([diane@dianefalkenhagen.com](mailto:diane@dianefalkenhagen.com))

- <http://www.alvincollege.edu>
- **Jewelry and Art Metals 1&2**—Mon/Wed 9:30am-12:20pm, Mon/Wed—1pm-3:50pm. 8/29-12/7
- **Advanced Mechanisms**—Sat 10am-4pm 8/29-12/7

**Art League of Houston**—Mary Rogers ([maryrogers60@hotmail.com](mailto:maryrogers60@hotmail.com))

- <http://www.artleaguehouston.org/artclasses.html>
- **Jewelry, all levels**—Mon 6:30-9:30pm, 9/17-11/17

**Glassell School, MFAH**—Sandie Zilker ([spzilker@sbcglobal.net](mailto:spzilker@sbcglobal.net))

- <http://www.mfah.org/visit/glassell-studio-school>
- **Beginning Jewelry**—Tue 9:30am-12:30pm, Tue 1:00-4:00pm, Wed 6:30-9:30pm
- **Intermediate Jewelry**—Mon 6:30-9:30pm, Wed 9:30am-12:30pm
- **Advanced Jewelry**—Tue 6:30-9:30pm, Thu 9:30am-12:30pm
- **Beg/Int/Adv Enameling**—Mon 9:30am-12:30pm, Thu 6:30-9:30pm
- **Advanced Enameling**—Mon 1:00-4:00pm

**Houston Community College Central**—Corey Ackelmire ([corey.ackelmire@hccs.edu](mailto:corey.ackelmire@hccs.edu))

- <http://central.hccs.edu/portal/site/central>
- **Art Metals 1**—Mon/Wed 9:30am-12:30pm, Tue/Thu 9:00am-12:00pm, Tue/Thu 1:00-4:00pm, Fri 9:00am-3:00pm
- **Art Metals 2**—Mon/Wed 9:30am-12:30pm, Tue/Thu 6:00-9:00pm, Fri 9:00am-3:00pm

**Houston Community College Stafford**—Martha Ferguson ([mfergusonstudio@gmail.com](mailto:mfergusonstudio@gmail.com))

- <http://southwest.hccs.edu/portal/site/southwest>
- **Fall 2012, Art Metals 1&2**—Mon/Wed 6:00-9:30pm
- **Spring 2013, Art Metals 1&2**—Mon/Wed 6:00-9:30pm, Tue/Thu TBA

**Lone Star College CyFair**—Kristi Rae Wilson ([kraewilson@gmail.com](mailto:kraewilson@gmail.com))

- <http://www.lonestar.edu/cyfair.htm>
- **Art Metals 1 & 2**—Mon/Wed 1:30-4:25pm

**San Jacinto College South**—Jeff McGee ([Jeffrey.McGee@sjcd.edu](mailto:Jeffrey.McGee@sjcd.edu))

- <http://www.sanjac.edu>
- **Fall 2012, Art Metals 1 & 2**—Mon/Wed 2:30-5:20 pm

# HMAG Workshop Review

## Chasing and Repoussé with Val Link

By Priscilla Frake

For 5 days in January, Houston's own Val Link taught a chasing and repoussé workshop extraordinaire to 12 eager students.

We began by making our own furnaces from soft firebricks, then Val taught us about the properties of steel and how to approach tool-making logically. He demonstrated how to forge, harden, and temper our tools and demonstrated these techniques over and over, both to the group and to individuals as we began to hammer, file, and grind.

There's nothing like watching a master in action, being able to try it yourself, and then being gently corrected and trying it again, to really 'get it'!

We learned about pitch: varieties, properties, and how to use it. And, after Val demonstrated the basics of working in this new material, we experimented with our Japanese-style curved and straight liners and began working on our own pieces.

Finally, we made an elegant, useful, double-ended Japanese-style curved scraper.

As a bonus, Val left us with a list of basic chasing and repousse' tools and then taught us how to make a simple set of tools to use in tube riveting. He even gave lessons on hammer repair when several of us loosened the heads!

By the end of the class most of us realized the workshop was only an introduction to a complex set of skills which have produced

some of the most amazing pieces of metal in the history of the craft.

Many thanks Patty for arranging the workshop and hats off to Val for his seemingly inexhaustible patience, kindness, and generosity. His years of teaching the metals program at the [University of Houston](#) make him a treasure to our community.

P.S. The HMAG library has recently acquired "[Chasing: Ancient Metalworking Technique with Modern Applications](#)" by Marcia Lewis. Check it out!



Val Link demonstrates forging during the January workshop.



[Priscilla Frake](#) has been making jewelry, enameled, and metal objects for over ten years. She took classes at [Revere Academy](#) and currently studies enameling at [Glassell School of Art](#).





Pitch bowl, chasing hammer, file, and hand-made punches.  
The tools of the Chasing and Repoussé trade



Val Link teaches with a smile  
on his face!



Thanks for another great workshop!  
Remember to sign up for Val's  
[electroplating workshop](#) in January.

# What is it About a Toy?

By Jeff McGee

(Originally featured on Crafthaus' [Kinetic Revelations](#) Blog)

What is it about a toy? For children the toy represents an escape to another world, an object which can transcend



reality. Adults often look at toys as novelties, nostalgic tchotchkes that belong in a plastic storage container in a child's closet. I myself had a large collection of those

robots that changed into vehicles. What were they called again?

Thinking back on my connection to those toy robots, it was always the kinetics that fascinated me the most. I would spend hours transforming my collection into and out of their alternate forms, forsaking the epic battle-royale I had set up on the dining room table.

For many contemporary artists the concept of play is a major component in the creative process. Exploring and creating new worlds is a significant consequence of using the imagination. For most, kinetic toys act as conduits for world conception; they make it easier for the user to expand the imaginary world by giving it a feeling of concrete reality. The kinetic artist infuses objects with this validity by giving the viewer an experience they have not come to expect; the experience of authenticity.

In your lifetime how many figurative sculptures have you seen that provide a convincing sense of actual motion? The traditions of western art have given us the non-kinetic artifices of contraposto and implied movement. These ruses,



though genius and necessary in their own right leave the human mind wanting more.

The popularity of motion pictures is a testament to this complex part of

the human psyche. What kind of history would be written if Bernini's *The Ecstasy of St Teresa* moved before our eyes? Her robe writhing as the cherub strikes her with his golden arrow.

The ancient Egyptians wanted more from their figural objects... or at least their children did.

This figurine of a peasant kneading dough incorporates simple axles



through the hips and shoulders. When the child pulls the string the figure animates. This same kind of modest apparatus is reminiscent of the simple mechanisms employed by the metalsmith and stop-motion armature designer [Miel-Margarita Paredes](#), in particular her animal pull toy collection made with pewter and copper. Paredes' kinetic work contains elements of anatomical accuracy combined with a hint of mutilation and indentured servitude. The animals appear to be slaves to their own kinesthetic physiology despite the obvious "toyness" of the work. One gets the feeling that these characters did not choose the reciprocal nature of their motions but through the reassembly of their bodies they are

awarded another lease on life, as demonstrated below by *Hopping Bunny Push Toy*.



In addition to kinetic toys relying on the drive of levers and chords the ancient Egyptian culture developed some of the earliest board games in the world; notably the games of Senet and Tjau. The ivory game box below left was carved from a single block and is one of the four complete sets found in the tomb of King Tutankhamun. It consists of a sliding drawer holding a number of pawn-like pieces. One side of the box contains the playing field for Senet while the other contains the board for Tjau (shown). The precise gameplay of Senet is up for debate but scholars do know that it required the use of both luck and skill. The word “senet” means “pass” and players would use strategy to block their opponents



from making moves. This direct manipulation of and interaction with the object is something we all take for granted today. A kinetic action has consequences no matter how trivial.

Metalsmith [Nathan Dube's](#) work is reminiscent of the simple board games and toys that continue to be some of the most popular in our society. Taking pages from both adolescent frivolity and the contemporary reliance on technology, Dube affords the viewer a nostalgic sense of calm in a world overloaded with texts, emails, and tweets. In the below image, his piece *PLBA (Personal Light Bright Assistant)* reminds one of the time -eradicating video games we carry around in our pockets,



(*Angry Birds* anyone?) He accomplishes this while taking us through a short time-warp to an age just before the digital revolution,

an age when you actually had to grab a game piece in your fingers to move it, an age when “Ctrl + Z” did not exist.

Kinetic toys and games hold sway in the contemporary art world. Their appeal goes beyond their mechanical intricacies and into the realm of the psychological. In a world without toys, would there be any artists? Or is it the other way around?



[Jeff McGee](#) is a Professor of Art at [San Jacinto College](#) South Campus where he heads the Metals and Sculpture area. He received his MFA from the [University of Kansas](#) in 2009. His award winning metal work has been exhibited nationally and internationally.

# 2011/12 Member Achievements

## Ellen Aresty

- Built her new studio after moving to Houston
- Received her first commission
- Opened business Facebook page for [Ellen Aresty Designs](#)

## Anke Bohmer

- Honorable Mention—*Art of the Heart*, [18 Hands Gallery](#)
- Honorable Mention—*Heart of Art*, [18 Hands Gallery](#)

## Nathan Dube

- Work published in the book [Humor in Craft](#), by Brigitte Martin

## Martha Ferguson

- Guest Lecturer, [Pearl Fincher Museum of Fine Arts Guild](#)
- Juror, *Heart of Art* (HMAG member show), [18 Hands Gallery](#)
- Best of Show, Green Jewelry: *Up cycled/ Recycled*, [18 Hands Gallery](#)

## Jan Arthur Harrell

- Solo Exhibit, *Offerings-Gifts for the Muse*, [Mesa Art Center](#), Mesa, AZ, held during the 2012 SNAG Conference,
- Special Award, *Alchemy Exhibition*, 13th Biennial International Juried Exhibition, venues in Gatlinburg, Knoxville, and Memphis, TN
- *Beyond Useful and Beautiful: Rethinking Domestic Craft*, [Houston Center for Contemporary Craft](#), Houston, TX,

## Mary Jarvis

- Work published in the book [Humor in Craft](#), by Brigitte Martin

## Jeff McGee

- Honorable Mention—[Cheongju International Craft Biennale](#), Cheongju, Korea
- 1st place—*Heart of Art*, [18 Hands Gallery](#)
- CU 29 Contemporary Copper, [Mesa Art Center](#), Mesa, AZ, held during the 2012 SNAG Conference.

## Silvia Otaola

- Work accepted in the juried exhibit *Screenplay 2012*, [East Carolina University](#)

## Jo Preston

- Three pieces accepted in the juried exhibit *Screenplay 2012*, [East Carolina University](#)

## Mary Rogers

- Work purchased by the [City of Houston Civic Art Collection](#) and will be displayed at the Bush Intercontinental Airport

## Sandra Zilker

- Named one of 100 Most Creative People in Houston by The Houston Press
- 4 pieces purchased by the City of Houston Airport Portable Art Exhibition
- Invitational exhibition—*Art of Influence*, [East Caroline University](#), Greenville, NC

# Exhibition Opportunities

## ***Theme and Variation, HMAG Member Show*** (10/5/12-11/3/12)

- [Hanson Galleries](#), Center at Post Oak, 5000 Westheimer, #106
- Submissions due at [HMAC.org](http://HMAC.org) on 8/29/12—\$25 members, \$55 non-members (includes membership fee)

## ***Materials: Hard & Soft*** (2/9/13-4/5/13)

- [Greater Denton Arts Council](#), 400 East Hickory St., Denton, TX, 76201
- Submissions due 9/7/12—\$30 entry fee
- Download prospectus at <http://www.dentonarts.com/subsite2/materialshands.html>

## ***Tongue-in-Cheek*** (1/10/12-1/23/12)

- [Greenville Museum of Art](#) in conjunction with the 2013 [East Carolina University Metals Symposium](#) “Making Marks”
- Submissions due 9/1/12—\$20 entry fee
- Download prospectus at <http://crafthaus.ning.com/page/calls-for-artists>

## ***CraftForms 2012*** (12/1/12-1/26/13)

- [Wayne Art Center](#), 413 Maplewood Ave, Wayne, PA 19087
- Submissions due 9/13/12—\$40 entry fee
- Application info at <http://www.wayneart.org/exhibition/craft-forms-2012>

## ***The 31st Annual Smithsonian Craft Show 2013*** (4/25/13-4/28/13)

- [National Building Museum](#), 401 F St., NW, Washington DC
- Submissions due 9/14/12—\$50 entry fee
- Apply at <http://www.smithsoniancraftshow.org/>

## ***Ferrous - A Cooperative Exhibition between Velvet Da Vinci Gallery, SF and Crafthaus*** (3/6/12-4/6/12)

- [Velvet da Vinci Gallery](#), 2015 Polk Street, San Francisco, CA 94109  
info@velvetdavinci.com
- Submissions due at <http://www.velvetdavinci.com> on 10/1/12—\$35 entry fee

## ***Holding Place: A Repository of Containers and Vessels by Metalsmiths Around the World*** (Online Exhibition)

- [The Ganoksin Project](#), <http://www.ganoksin.com/gnkurl/vessels>
- Submissions due 1/15/13

## Upcoming Events

**September 15, 2012**—Gathering of the Guilds at the [Houston Center for Contemporary Craft](#)

**September 29 to December 30, 2012**—*Craft Texas 2012* at the [Houston Center for Contemporary Craft](#)

**October 5 to November 3rd**—*Theme and Variation HMAG Member Show* at [Hanson Galleries](#) in association with American Craft Week

**October 15th**—[HMAG Educational Scholarship](#) Application Due

**December 2012**—HMAG Holiday Party at President Mary Jarvis's new home in "The Heights", date TBD

**January 12 & 13, 2013**—[Electroplating Workshop](#) with Val Link at San Jacinto College South

Join the celebration!  
**AMERICAN  
CRAFT  
WEEK**  
OCTOBER 5-14



[www.americancraftweek.com](http://www.americancraftweek.com)



## HMAG Board Members

**President:** *Mary Jarvis*

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**Communications/Newsletter:** *Jeff McGee*

[HMAGComm@gmail.com](mailto:HMAGComm@gmail.com)

**Membership:** *Nathan Dube*

[HMAGMembr@gmail.com](mailto:HMAGMembr@gmail.com)

**Secretary:** *Diana Diebold*

[HMAGSecr@gmail.com](mailto:HMAGSecr@gmail.com)

**Volunteer Coordinator:** *Julia Morrison*

[HMAGVol@gmail.com](mailto:HMAGVol@gmail.com)

**Workshops:** *Kristi Wilson*

[HMAGWkshp@gmail.com](mailto:HMAGWkshp@gmail.com)

## HMAG Membership Benefits

- Discounted workshops
- Invitations to exhibit your work
- Technical and business programs
- Visiting artist lectures and panel discussions
- Available online gallery space at HMAG.org
- Full access to website including member directory
- Access to our comprehensive library
- Networking with local and visiting artists
- Exhibition openings
- Social events
- 10% discount at Jemco USA store

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## HMAG MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Company Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Membership is annual and runs from June 1 through May 31

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Member @ \$30        | <input type="checkbox"/> Renewing Member @ \$30   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Member @ \$50     | <input type="checkbox"/> Full Time Student @ \$15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Member @ \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Member under 18 @ \$10   |

Please enclose a check made payable to the Houston Metal Arts Guild, Inc. and return to:

**Houston Metal Arts Guild, Inc.**

**PO Box 270452**

**Houston, TX 77277-0452**

You can also join online by visiting [HMAG.org](http://HMAG.org) and clicking on the join button on the right side of the screen.

As a non-profit organization managed by volunteers, we need assistance from our members with various HMAG functions.

☐ I'm interested in volunteering.





**Houston Metal Arts Guild, Inc.**  
PO Box 270452  
Houston, TX 77277-0452

[Facebook](#)



[HMAAG Website](#)



#### **DON'T FORGET**

Hanson Galleries is looking forward to seeing the entries for "Theme and Variations" during American Craft Week's show opening October 5<sup>th</sup>. Don't forget your images must be to HMAAG by August 29<sup>th</sup>. Take a design and see how many ways it can be changed, or take an object and morph it into other forms. Have fun!

Thanks,  
Larry Williams  
Hanson Galleries  
713-552-1242  
[crafts@hansongalleries.com](mailto:crafts@hansongalleries.com)

\*\*\*See page 17 for more info