

Founders' Circle Bulletin

SPECIAL SOFA ISSUE



The Mint Museums

Founders' Circle

Mint Museum of Craft + Design



As the new president of the Founders' Circle, I am thinking of each of you and the exciting events we have planned in the year ahead. I'd also like to let you know about some of our recent accomplishments. This being our most recent accomplishment.....*The Founders' Circle Bulletin.*

We are very excited about our great trip program with small groups having gone to Prague and London in the last two years. Our next fabulous trip put together

by Rebecca Klemm and Diane Grainer is coming up shortly. We will be going to Santa Fe from October 29-November 1 to visit with collectors, artists, galleries and just have fun. A special thank you to our outgoing inaugural President Barbara Berlin, for being a significant force in the creation of the Founders' Circle and bringing us successfully through our first four years. Thank you to Michael Monroe and his Nominating Committee who have helped with our new slate of officers and four new board members.

We are pleased to tell you that the Founders' Circle has designated \$54,000 to fund the exhibit *American Quilt Classics 1800-1980: The Bresler Collection*, which just opened to a huge crowd at the museum on September 5, 2003. An additional \$70,000 has been earmarked to fund the exhibit *The Artful Teapot: 20th Century Expressions from the Kamm Collection*, opening January 31, 2004. The teapot exhibit will be featured at the museum during the Founders' Circle Weekend (April 16-18) along with a fabulous Teapot Symposium (April 15-18). Both exhibits are "must sees."

We hope that all of you who have not joined the Founders' Circle yet will consider joining at SOFA. The Mint Museum of Craft+Design is one of the largest all-craft museums in the world with superb craft collections. We are also most fortunate to have one of the finest craft specialists in Mark Leach, who was Founding Director of The Mint Museum of Craft+Design and was recently promoted to Deputy Director of the Mint Museums. His new position includes both MMC+D and The Mint Museum of Art.

Our funds are devoted to programs, exhibitions and publications. We need your help. This is not only a support group but also a joy!

Sincerely,

Patty Gorelick

President, Founders' Circle, Ltd.

The Founders' Circle is pleased to sponsor a Panel Discussion at SOFA on Saturday, October 18th, 2:30 to 4:00 pm in Room 301. The Panel is entitled "*The Role of the Gallery in the New Millennium*", and is moderated by Mark Leach, Deputy Director of the Mint Museums. The all-star cast of panelists includes Leslie Ferrin, Doug Heller, Scott Jacobson and R. Duane Reed.



Arthur Mason

FROM THE EDITOR

I have learned (again!) that making suggestions is dangerous. I suggested to the board that the Founders' Circle should have a newsletter and they made me the Editor. In any case I am pleased to present the first edition of the *Founders Circle Bulletin* to keep our members and members-to-be up-to-date on what is going on in Charlotte at the Mint Museum of Craft+Design, and the craft movement in general. This will be useful to our national members outside of the Charlotte area who have supported us so generously over the years and don't have the opportunity to visit Charlotte or the Museum.

continued on page 2

FROM THE EDITOR continued from page 1

It's been a busy year with the opening of the Breslers' *American Quilt Classics* and Linda MacNeils' *Sculptural Radiance* in September. Earlier we had the superb Raymon Elozua retrospective as well as *Coming of Age* and *Point of View*, focusing on the building of a collection and the vision of collectors. The year began with the installation of the Great Wall of Charlotte, *Relations*, the magnificent last piece by Stanislav Libenský and Jaroslava Brychtová that dominates the entrance to the Museum. Next year should be equally exciting with *The Artful Teapot*, the *Art of Gold* and the Penland retrospective. We are honored that our Director, Mark Leach has been promoted to Deputy Director of the whole Mint Museum system with a great increase in responsibility. Our Curator, Melissa Post has capably shouldered an additional load.

Rebecca Klemm and Diane Grainer will lead a trip to Santa Fe at the end of October and needless to say it will be great fun because it is hard not to have fun in that capital of crafts.

Many other things have happened in the craft world.

- We have lost two personal friends—Bob Stocksdale and Ed Moulthrop—pioneers in the art of the turned wood bowl. They will be missed. The Museum is fortunate to have several wonderful examples of their work.
- The American Craft Museum changed its name to the Museum of Arts and Design (MAD) to a mixed and emotionally charged reaction, fueled by two articles in the *New York Times*. Mark Leach advises me that the Museum of Craft+Design has no plans to change its name.
- Ken Trapp has retired as Curator-in-Charge at the Renwick Gallery in Washington and we wish him well.

We plan to publish several times a year but the venture is too young to call itself a quarterly or a bi-monthly or the like. At the beginning our schedule will be "occasional", So if there's anything you would like to say to our members email it to me at amazon@zuckerman.com.

Arthur Mason

American Quilt Classics 1800-1980: The Charles and Fleur Bresler Collection opened to great acclaim at the Museum on August 30 and was seen by some 650 people on Friday September 5 in a joint celebration with the Linda MacNeil exhibit. Melissa Post, Mint curator, termed the collection "nothing short of amazing." The exhibit consisted of 36 pieces, all of which have been donated to the Mint's permanent collection.

Fleur Bresler has been a key figure in American crafts. She is the immediate past president of the Woodturning Center of Philadelphia. She is a member of the Board of the James Renwick Alliance and has served as a docent at the Renwick for the past ten years. Prior to that she was a docent at the Smithsonian's Museum of Natural History where she met and learned from quilt scholar Doris Bowman. From that experience emerged this collection. It has been a twenty-year journey and the Mint is the lucky recipient of the effort. As Melissa says, her collection covering over 180 years of American quilting includes all but two of the known quilting styles in American quilting history, adding "very few gifts of collections come to a museum with the extent of research, provenance, condition reports and correspondence that came with the Bresler Collection." The exhibit continues through January 4, 2004.



Fleur and Charles Bresler

FROM THE BRESLERS

We who are collectors and live with our collections feel a sense of loss when our collections leave us. So, we must admit, there was not only anticipation, but also a slight feeling of fear and apprehension when we arrived in Charlotte for the opening of the *American Quilt Classics* exhibit. Shortly after our arrival a package was delivered to our hotel room. It was the *American Quilt Classics 1800-1980: the Bresler Collection* catalogue. Viewing the quilts pictured in the catalogue and reading the accompanying text, my apprehension began to fade. Surrounded by our family friends and an outpouring of local supporters of the Mint Museum it was truly a memorable opening. We are most grateful to the Founders' Circle, the Arts and Science Council, and the Mint Museum staff for the beautiful color catalogue and the mounting of the show.

Cotton Crazy Quilt



Sunshine & Shadow Quilt



BRESLER OPENING

Mark Leach



FROM THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR

In the coming year, exciting and momentous occasions, exhibitions and programs are in the offing. The Mint Museum of Craft+Design celebrates its 5th year anniversary in the coming year. To commemorate Penland School of Craft's 75th anniversary and North Carolina's craft heritage and related institutions, Governor Mike Easley has designated 2004 the Year of North Carolina Craft.

Since opening in January 1999, the Mint Museum of Craft+Design has continually sought out institutional partners who, together with the museum's resources, can leverage greater educational results to benefit the broadest possible audience. Thus, it is in the spirit of cooperation and learning that the museum is proud to be an organizing partner with the Penland School of Crafts in the development of *The Nature of Craft and the Penland Experience*. The exhibition opens July 3, 2004 at MMC+D.

The Mint Museum of Craft+Design's goal, as it relates to the craft sector of our mission, is to foster an understanding and appreciation for the hand made form, its heritage and its place in today's global society. In order to accomplish this goal, we are committed to developing an international collection of studio craft and functional utensils that exemplify the highest achievements in design, technique, and aesthetics.

For 75 years, the Penland School of Crafts has been a pioneering force in craft education. Equally compelling, the school has been an extraordinary haven for an international cadre of established and emerging craft artists. Penland has served as a hotbed of creativity and innovation, a place where artists have honed their skills and transformed their creative visions into extraordinary works of art. *The Nature of Craft and the Penland Experience* illustrates in vivid detail the ascendancy and evolution of the school. It portrays the depth of the school's involvement in stewarding craft heritage while influencing generations of talented makers. Together, the Penland School of Crafts and the Mint Museum of Craft+Design are committed to promoting the singular and beneficial dividends that accrue to the timeless human instinct to transform materials by hand into useful, visually enticing and durable forms.

We remain grateful to the Founders' Circle for its support. We couldn't do without you.

Mark Richard Leach
Deputy Director
The Mint Museums

TEAPOTS TEAPOTS TEAPOTS

Teapots, Teapots everywhere but not a drop to drink. The Mint Museum will be the center of the teapot world next February when it opens *The Artful Teapot: 20th Century Expressions from the Kamm Collection*- to run from February 1, 2004. The husband and wife team of Gloria and Sonny Kamm of Los Angeles collected over 6,000 teapots over twenty years. From this collection the noted scholar and curator Garth Clark has selected some 250 objects. These include teapots by painter Roy Lichtenstein, ceramists Betty Woodman and Adrian Saxe, sculptor Michael Lucero, glass artists David Gilhooly and many other notable artists.

The collection was acquired from artists, auctions, flea markets and commissions. The exhibition shows off the teapot as a thing of beauty beyond its function of serving tea. It is humorous, playful, provocative and profound and has met with great acclaim in the previous venues in Napa, Toronto, Long Beach and Chicago.

In conjunction with Founders' Circle Weekend, we hope to draw teapot enthusiasts from all around the country. Founders' Circle members who attend the *Mint Condition Gala* on April 16-18 will be able to attend the Teapot Symposium sponsored by the Founders' Circle and the Mint, and chaired by our own Barbara Berlin and Leslie Ferrin of Ferrin Gallery. It will include visits to Seagrove, North Carolina, a guided tour of the Kamm collection and lectures and discussions with leading artists and curators.

MINT CONDITION GALA

The Fourth Annual *Mint Condition Gala* is scheduled for Saturday, April 17, 2004. It promises to be a unique and special evening. The cocktails and silent auction art stations will take place on the 59 and 60th floor of the Bank of America building. Guests will continue the evening festivities in Founders' Hall, where the seated diner and live auction will take place. Bank of America's legendary chefs will make this an exquisite culinary experience. Our theme will revolve around the two exhibits open at this time: *The Artful Teapot* and *Art of Gold*. We have received wonderful feedback from our past patrons about the auction and it promises to be the best one ever! You will NOT want to miss this event. Mark your calendars for an energetic and fun evening. We want to have as many of you at the event as possible!

ROCHELLE GRUBB – MARJORIE SERRALLES-RUSSELL, Co-Chairs



Linda says.....

Attending the opening of my exhibition at the Mint Museum of Craft+Design was my first time in Charlotte, North Carolina. A few years ago when the museum opened, I was amazed to learn that collectors, gallery directors and artists flocked to Charlotte to attend the grand gala. It was also intriguing to know that the museum had received donations and support to build a very important collection of objects made

from the five major mediums. I felt this museum would be a good place to show my work.

A year ago I met CEO, Phil Kline with Deputy Director, Mark Leach viewing my recent jewelry at SOFA Chicago. Several weeks later I was told that a proposal for my exhibition had been approved. Suzanne Ramljak, Editor of *Metalsmith* magazine and author of my book *United in Beauty: The Jewelry and Collectors of Linda MacNeil* was asked to be the guest curator of my exhibition. She is an expert in exhibition production and is a scholar of twentieth century art and craft. I worked closely with Suzanne who in turn corresponded with Curator Melissa Post and Mark Leach. Kurt Warnke, Head of Design and Installation was assigned the task of designing the installation. He was advised by Suzanne to understand the way each series relates to another, and to design the chronological display. The set-up went so well that the show was installed two weeks early! Phil Busher of Public Relations was also a great help to the success of the show. He asked for my past artist statements, series descriptions, printed articles and photography to get to know me and the development of my art over twenty five years.



Mesh Necklace #70, 1997



Green Pâte de Verre Vessel, 1983

Kristen Watts, Curatorial Research Associate and Mary Beth Ausman of the Education Department were excellent in communicating with me by phone and e-mail. I appreciated being informed as the exhibition planning progressed. Mary Beth extended an invitation to me to speak during my visit. She discussed the subject of my lecture, and she advised me from her perspective as an educator.

So much effort goes into an exhibition that is not obvious to the visitors. After nine months of preparation, the day arrived when I walked up into the exhibition space. I was excited and nervous to see the look of my show, but perhaps more nervous about seeing much of my life's work in front of me together in an organized manner. I wondered how I would feel about myself and my accomplishments.

Some collectors I spoke with at the opening were surprised to know that I made objects other than jewelry until 1989. My wrists and shoulders were bothering me so much from grinding and shaping heavy glass, so I went back to making jewelry that is easier on me physically. I was happy that the museum included some of these older pieces in the show, as I consider myself a sculptor who happens to be making jewelry now, (*see pictures*).

I appreciate the opportunity to educate the public about the evolution of my work. Having the Mint Museum of Craft+Design exhibit my work and a staff that cared deeply about getting the details right gave me confidence that it would be an excellent show. I am proud to have had a special opportunity to show here and to meet the members of The Founders' Circle who are so important to the direction and future of the Museum.

Linda MacNeil

RADIANT OBJECTS

The Founders' Circle Board was fortunate to time its Fall retreat so it could attend the opening of *Sculptural Radiance: The Jewelry and Objects of Linda MacNeil*, a spectacular exhibition by one of America's foremost jewelry artists. The show consisted of almost exclusively necklaces, most of which had been sold to collectors and loaned back to the Museum for the show. Indeed one of Linda's necklaces was prominently worn by the Founders' Circle President, Patty Gorelick at the reception on Friday, September 5, and other owners of work in the exhibition were also there. The reception attracted over 650 Mint members to Craft+Design's superb party space on the roof of the Museum. Linda was in attendance with her husband, glass artist, Dan Dailey.

In his review of the show, Tom Patterson in the Sunday edition of the Winston-Salem Observer said:

RADIANT OBJECTS

continued from other side

“What most obviously sets Linda MacNeil’s work apart from that of her fellow jewelry-makers is that it’s jewel free.” “My world is totally open,” she said, noting that by using her own glass instead of jewels she can control color, shape and size, while also remaining free of the “stifling” cost of diamonds and other precious stones.

The guest curator of the exhibit was Susan Ramljak, a well-known writer, curator and scholar in the field and currently editor of *Metalsmith* magazine.

The exhibit continues at MMC+D through November 23, 2003. All members are urged to see it if they get a chance. The catalog *United in Beauty, The Jewelry and Collectors of Linda MacNeil* is available from the Museum shop (704-337-2061 or mgayle@mintmuseum.org). The book is exciting because most of the photographs of the work have been taken while being worn by their owner/collector. It is striking work on striking people.

MESSAGE FROM BARBARA

I retired as President of the Founder’s Circle on July 1, 2003 and I welcome the selection of Patty Gorelick as my successor. Patty’s enthusiasm and tireless dedication provides assurance that the FC will continue to grow and prosper. I will do whatever I can to help in the transition and I remain committed to the Circle that I helped to found. I am told that the board plans to amend the by-laws to include past president as directors in some form and I would be pleased to serve.

I am also pleased that the original concept of the Founders’ Circle has been preserved and will serve as a strong base for the future. The Charlotte community appreciates the national presence that we have created for the Museum. Likewise the national members enjoy our experiences with the Charlotte members and we are all learning from each other. All in all we should be proud of the Mint Museum of Craft+Design and our very strong Founders’ Circle support group

This is not a goodbye. I’ll be around

Barbara Berlin



MMC+D balcony party



Nancy MacNeil & Allison Dailey



Kurt Warnke, Linda MacNeil, Mary Beth Ausman

BRESLER-MACNEIL OPENING NIGHT



The Bresler Family



Mark Leach w/Paul & Amy Gumbinner



Carolyn Mints, Cheryl Palmer, Charles Mo