



BCC Jewelry Studio Newsletter

Volume 1, Edition 1

Winter, 2012



"Hedgehog with a Mohawk" pendant.
Quirky. Sterling with fine silver weaving
and hundreds of moving "quills."
Inspired by Joy's pet hedgehogs.

Spotlight: BCC Faculty

Joy Raskin

A silversmith since 1984, Joy has exhibited throughout the United States, Ireland and New Zealand, showcasing both jewelry and flatware designs. Joy is a native of New Hampshire. She was accepted as a member of the League of NH Craftsmen while still in high school. She received her BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design, and her MFA from the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth. Joy is an instructor at Metalwerx in Waltham, MA, at Snow Farm in Williamsburg, MA, and at Brookfield Craft Center in Brookfield, CT. Joy also teaches workshops on jewelry making, metalsmithing, wireweaving, and various metal techniques at craft programs throughout New England. Her studio is in Concord, NH.



Joy is scheduled to teach "Knitting, Weaving & More with Wire" and "Rock on! Stonesetting with Joy Raskin" this winter. Joy's work can be seen in the BCC gallery and via her website at:

<http://www.joyraskin.com/>

Joy has, in addition to other animals, two pet English hedgehogs who often travel with her to classes and even more often, inspire her designs!

Contents

Spotlight: BCC Faculty.....	1
Design Challenge.....	1
Spotlight: Upcoming Classes.....	2
BCC Gets Back to Basics.....	2
Open Studio Sessions Going Strong.....	2
Private & Semi-Private Instruction.....	2
Cool Tools at the School.....	3
BCC, Social Media, & You!.....	3
Donating Gently Used Equipment.....	4
How Classes Get Scheduled.....	4
Buying Gemstones: A Hard Habit to Break.....	5
Jewelry Studio Wish List.....	6
BCC Gallery & Gift Shop	6

Design Challenge! Inspiration from Our Instructors

Joy Raskin's **Knitting, Weaving, and More with Wire** class is coming up on January 14-15 (**spaces still available**) and she's got some techniques to teach us which are well beyond wire wrapping. Check out some of Joy's wire designs:

<http://www.joyraskin.com/necklaces.html>

...and come up with ideas her work inspires in you. Send us sketches or photos of the finished work that we can share with the community.

Spotlight: Upcoming Classes



Buttons, Buckles, and Bangles, Oh, My! **Waxworking for Cast Objects**

This introductory wax working class is jewelry for the non-jeweler (and for experienced jewelers, too)! You can work

on a piece of jewelry such as a ring or pendant, but you can also design small sculptural forms, such as animals or plants, or craft a belt buckle or buttons. Students will not learn casting techniques in this class – we’re focusing on designing and finishing the components which will be cast professionally. It’s a fun “play around” class – if you don’t like the first piece you create, melt it down and make another! We’ll only send the ones you really like to be cast.

Rock On! Creative Stonesetting with Joy Raskin

March 10-11, Joy Raskin returns to us for another round of stone setting techniques. This two day workshop covers various types of settings, from the basic bezel mounts to more elaborate tube bezel settings, prong setting for round, oval, square, trillion, emerald-cut faceted stone and more. Flush setting to set small stones in ring bands will also be covered. Joy is well renowned as an artist and a skilled production jeweler – in addition to the core topics covered, you’ll come away from her classes with a number of exceptional day to day metalworking tips that will enhance your own design work. When Joy last ran this class at BCC it was quite popular – don’t wait to register and Rock On!



Silversmithing 101 & 102

In Silversmithing 101, you will learn the fundamentals of working with silver as you create a sterling silver ring. Along the way, you will become familiar with the tools of the trade: Saws, hammers, torches, and more. You learn the basics of incorporating a gemstone to your ring and then work on an additional project of your own design. In Silversmithing 102, you build on your skills, learning more advanced stone setting techniques, making a bezel (the piece that holds a stone in place) and get more practice with soldering and using the torch as you expand your design experience.

BCC Gets Back to Basics – 101 & 102 Level Classes

Heather Lawless, BCC's Education Coordinator, is committed to providing a solid set of introductory courses in all our major media throughout the year. These short courses are designed to allow students to dabble in something new or decide if they’re interested in learning more.

Courses are generally 12 hours or so of instruction, and cover the how-to of tool use, safety, and project work. In most cases, if you’re a returning student who just wants a refresher or who wants a bit of guided instruction but don’t need the full gamut, you can still register repeatedly for the intro classes (check with the instructor to be sure).

If you’re interested in getting started or keeping going in Ceramics, Fiber Arts, Woodturning, Smithing, Glasswork (Lampworking, Fused Glass, or Mosaics), or Jewelry, check the website for upcoming classes. As always, we continue to provide exceptional intermediate and master level classes as time and student interest permits.

Open Studio Sessions Going Strong

Sometimes our students find themselves so inspired by a class that they want more time in the studio to hone their skills. For member students who have completed at least one 101 or equivalent class, BCC has Open Studio blocks with a knowledgeable studio monitor present to answer basic questions. Jewelry has a Wednesday PM (7-10) slot and will begin a Tuesday day (10-1) slot in February. If we get 3 or more commitments for alternate time slots, we’ll open another block. Buy a 4 session pass good for 6 weeks at \$12/hour or an 8 session pass good for 12 weeks at \$10/hour on our website, via phone, or in person. Sessions are 3 hours. Open studio is also expanding to the Forge, Ceramics, and Fiber Arts studios this winter.

Private and Semi-Private Instruction

Many of BCC’s instructors are available for one-on-one tutoring or for semi-private lessons (2 students). If you’ve been wanting a little extra guidance on a specific skill set that you didn’t quite get down in class, call to make an appointment. These sessions generally require a minimum of 4 hours and are \$50/hour for private or \$35/hour for semi-private lessons. Materials are not included.

Cool Tools at the School: Bonny Doon Press



If you've ever come into the studio and wondered what the large olive green mechanism sitting amongst the vises on the table is, you're not alone. It looks like someone spray painted a car jack and stuck it there. No surprise, the Bonny Doon hydraulic press IS pretty much a fancified car jack – in fact, some people make their own presses out of old jacks picked up at

garage sales.

Last month, students in Joanne Conant's "Bracelets & the Hydraulic Press" class got a lesson in just how powerful that press can be for a jewelry artist. During the class students made a series of folded form bracelets by laying down brass wire on copper and silver sheet, embedding it into the metal using the weight of the press to flatten it down. The press pushed it into the annealed sheet making lines running roughly horizontal to the edge of the bracelet. The sheet is then wrapped around a form and crushed, slowly and purposefully, from the long edge – it was fun to watch! Where the metal had been weakened along the wire indentation, it folded in on itself. The forms that were created were earthy and organic and allowed for considerable variety in the designs.

Students then learned how to use press forms to

create synclastic and anticlastic shapes (think of synclastic as a bowl shape and anticlastic as a Pringles' potato chip shape). The press can also be used to embed textural elements into the pieces and to make a closed loop synclastic or anticlastic ring for creating the walls of a small vessel.

These are just a few of the many things that can be done with the press – Joanne also teaches a course in die form making which allows you to impress a pattern onto metal over and over again with ease. She uses the technique sometimes to create a design into which she places enamels, showcasing the shapes with color.

It's an impressive device, with a whole lot of power behind it – as with many of the tools in the shop, it can be dangerous if used incorrectly, but once you learn the basics, it's really quite easy and fun. We'll be scheduling more hydraulic press classes with Joanne in 2012 – keep an eye out and join us!



Joanne Conant's Sterling Bracelet Using Hydraulic Press

BCC, Social Media, & You!

Did you know BCC has a Facebook page? Check us out and Like us at:

<https://www.facebook.com/BrookfieldCraft>

There's also a blog with periodic postings about goings on in the area art scene in general, and BCC in particular, available at:

<http://www.brookfieldcraft.org/blog/>

We're just preparing to roll out our new forums, starting with Jewelry and adding other media if there's interest. You can register and help us kick off the discussions at:

<http://community.brookfieldcraft.org/>

Your Donations Count (and count again with Matching Grants)

Right now, BCC has several open matching grants that mean any donation you make can potentially be doubled or better. The Windgate Foundation has renewed our major grant for the year for \$100,000, so every dollar you donate becomes two. Additionally, through March 31st, 2012, the BCC Jewelry Studio has a special big ticket equipment grant – we’re seeking \$500 to match this anonymous grant which will help us work on expanding and improving the existing gear in the studio. If you want to help out, please be sure to clarify that your donation should be used for the Jewelry Studio fund.

Furthermore, if your workplace has a matching grant program, you may be able to make each dollar count even more. If so, please let us know when you donate and tell us who we need to contact to request the match.

To donate, either go online to

<https://store.brookfieldcraftcenter.org/donate.asp>

or mail a check to us with a note clarifying that it is a donation and not a class or membership registration to:

Brookfield Craft Center
286 Whisconier Road (Route 25 at 202)
Brookfield, CT 06804

Every dollar helps keep arts education alive in CT!

Donating Gently Used Equipment &

Do you have a craft room that’s overflowing with extra supplies and equipment you never use? If so, why not consider donating it to the Craft Center? Whether it’s a kiln you no longer use, hammers you’ve replaced with newer, shinier models, or a batch of copper cutouts from your stint learning to enamel, there’s a chance someone here can make great art with it! Not only that, but your contribution is often tax deductible. We’re interested in gear that is functional as is or which may just need a little TLC to restore (and not a lot of money). Not sure if it’s a good item for us? Get in touch with the appropriate studio advocate or Heather Lawless, the Education Coordinator, and ask. The Jewelry Studio Advocate is Rachel Morris, who can be reached at rmorris@brookfieldcraft.org. Heather can be reached at hlawless@brookfieldcraft.org.



How Classes Get Scheduled

We have great classes being added to the schedule weekly, but you may not see the one you’ve been waiting for. Why? We may not know you want it! A number of our classes are being scheduled based on interest – we’d rather book a class that we know has the student base to run than risk having to cancel a class and disappoint students and teachers alike. If you have an idea for a class you’d like to take, let Heather Lawless (hlawless@brookfieldcraft.org), our Education Coordinator, know.

Right now, we know there’s interest but need a few more people for: Enameling, Precious Metal Clay (PMC), etching, cold connections, and goldsmithing classes.

We’re also looking to expand our open studio hours – tell us what days of the week and times of day work best for you, and as we get enough attendees together (usually 3), we’ll set up studio blocks too.

Become a Member!

BCC is a non-profit craft school which remains open through the generosity of its members and donors. As a member, you show your support for our ongoing efforts to keep craft education in Connecticut accessible to both amateur and professional artists alike. As a member, you will also be invited to special events such as show openings at the gallery and members-only specialty classes in your choice of media. Members will occasionally receive notice of additional benefits, such as the recent 30% off post holiday sale at the gallery. Additionally, your membership contribution is tax deductible and may help BCC fulfill a matching grant, effectively doubling your dollars!

Join us online at:

<http://www.brookfieldcraft.org/>

“Danger! Danger, Will Robinson!” - Buying Gemstones: A Hard Habit to Break

By Rachel Morris, BCC Jewelry Faculty



One of the most frequently asked questions from my students is “Where do you get your stones?” To be fair, I have a LOT of stones - faceted, cabochon, rough cut and calibrated – I love

them all!

The real answer is, “Wherever I can!” I’ve bought pearls in Munich, Germany and in backwater Tennessee. Opals in New Zealand and, well, pretty much anywhere I can lay hands on them. I buy unusual cuts from small stone cutters doing private shows and bulk stones from online dealers (though the latter only after having gotten to know their work in person).

But most of all, I go to gem, bead and mineral shows. They’re dangerous places for a gemaholic like me. One of the largest in the area is called the East Coast Gem, Mineral, & Fossil Show, and is held at the Big E convention center in Springfield, MA, once a year. (The next one is Aug 10-12, 2012 and it’s produced by Martin Zinn Expositions - <http://www.mzexpos.com/>.) Two much smaller shows are also held there, produced by G&LW (<http://www.glwshows.com/>) in April and October. Still smaller shows are found at the Westchester County Center, though the quality there has been declining in recent years.

Be careful when attending – I recommend you set a budget and bring only that much in cash. Don’t bring additional credit cards or checks if you are serious about sticking to the budget – trust me, you won’t. The first time I attended the MZE East Coast show I was there for the very last 15 minutes it was open. Not enough time to do much harm, right? Wrong! \$450 worth of opals and rutilated quartz later...

Also note that many shows have a large retail area and a smaller wholesale area. If you have a tax ID you can get in to the wholesale section but beware – not all the wholesale deals are better than what’s in retail, and they’re often, surprisingly, worse, especially on findings and chains and the like. What the wholesale section does provide is a less crowded environment and more likelihood of striking a deal with the vendor if you’re buying big. In the retail section, there are usually several low-

grade bulk gemstone dealers. Two of my favorites are BestInGems.com and Gems4Less.com. These vendors sell faceted and cabbed stones in small lots for very good prices. Careful - they’re almost never well calibrated, even if sized, and often have a lot of flaws and inclusions. Take your time and pick over the bargain bins cautiously. Pay special attention to finish - some treated stones may not look good in better light.

Pick your shows wisely – there’s a distinct difference between Gem shows, Mineral Shows, and Bead shows. They all have a place in our industry, but may disappoint if you go in thinking they’re all setting stones. Gem shows tend to focus on cut stones, with some rough cut and specialty specimen mineral dealers present.

Mineral shows tend to be more of a 50/50 mix in this area, often with a spectacular

representation of raw minerals and fossils (the recent East Coast show had about a 1000' display area set aside for museum-quality showpieces – gorgeous!). Both of the above will have some bead vendors, usually stone and pearls, and a few findings vendors. Bead shows will have very few cut gem dealers and row upon row of strung beads and piecemeal beads. They often have non-precious findings vendors, too. Shows

listed as “Gem & Jewelry” shows often have more pre-made jewelry than stones, much of it looking mass produced, from overseas manufacturers.

The biggest “show,” the Tucson, AZ Gem and Mineral Show in late January, early February, is actually many shows in one. Entire sections of town have vendors– some wholesale only, some retail only, and some mixed. Close to 50,000 people visit in the two weeks it runs. I haven’t dared go – if I dropped \$450 at the East Coast expo, I’d probably need a second mortgage by the time I left Tucson!

If you’ve been to the Tucson shows and would like to write about the experience for us, or if you have a favorite local show you recommend, please email Rachel at rmorris@brookfieldcraft.org.



Jewelry Studio Wish List

We've got a lot of items on our wouldn't-it-be-nice list, and some on our must-haves list, ranging from \$500 pieces of equipment down to \$25 items. If you'd like to donate or sponsor the purchase of a specific item, please select from the list below. If you'd like to help but aren't sure how, consider a cash donation earmarked for our current Jewelry Equipment matching grant:



- Mid-sized ultrasonic cleaner
- 9 lb Polishing Tumbler
- Stainless Steel Shot (mixed – 5 lbs)
- Disc cutter set for Bonny Doon press
- 0 and 00 Smith Acetylene Torch Tips
- Y splitter and Work Surface for Smith Little Torch workstation
- Bezel forming punch sets (round, oval, square, pear, trillium)
- Set of Riveting Hammers (Various sm to med/lg heads)
- Flush cutters (2-4 pairs)
- Set of Wire Forming Jigs & Pegs
- Set of Texturing Hammers
- 90 degree Hart Burr Set
- Setting Burr Set
- 45 degree Hart Burr Set
- Inverted Cone Burr Set
- Die form urethanes for Bonny Doon
- Bracelet forms for Bonny Doon
- Jump Ring maker
- Necklace mandrel

Contact Rachel Morris, Jewelry Studio Advocate, to discuss equipment sponsorship..

BCC Gallery & Gift Shop

After a short period to transition from the Holiday Sale, the Craft Center Gift Shop returns to regular hours Thurs-Sat 11-5, Sun 12-4, and Mon-Wed by appointment only. During the year, we anticipate several smaller gallery events will showcase area artists – keep an eye out!

Contact Us

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The mission of Brookfield Craft Center is to teach and preserve the skills of fine craftsmanship and enable creativity and personal growth through craft education.

**Want to write for our new quarterly newsletter?
Email Rachel Morris:**

rmorris@brookfieldcraft.org

Brookfield Craft Center

286 Whisconier Road (Route 25 @ 202)
Brookfield, CT 06804
203-775-4526

<http://brookfieldcraft.org>



Winter/Spring 2012 BCC Jewelry Classes

(Partial – See BCC Website for More)

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1/9	1/10	1/11 PM Open Studio (7-10)	1/12	1/13	1/14 Knitting, Weaving & More w/ Wire (Raskin - all day)
1/15 Knitting, Weaving & More w/ Wire (Raskin - all day)	1/16	1/17	1/18 Silversmithing 101 (Morris 10-2) PM Open Studio (7-10)	1/19	1/20 All Day Open Studio (10a-6p)	1/21
1/22	1/23	1/24	1/25 Silversmithing 101 (Morris 10-2) PM Open Studio (7-10)	1/26	1/27	1/28
1/29	1/30	1/31	2/1 Silversmithing 101 (Morris 10-2) PM Open Studio (7-10)	2/2	2/3	2/4 Plug me in: Web presence for Artists/Artisans (Lawless – 12-3)
2/5	2/6	2/7 Daytime Open Studio (10a-1p)	2/8 PM Open Studio (7-10)	2/9	2/10 All Day Open Studio (10a-6p) – Last minute Valentines work!	2/11 Silversmithing 101 (Morris - all day) Glass Pendants & Hearts (Licata – 10a-1p OR 2-5p)
2/12 Silversmithing 101 (Morris - all day)	2/13	2/14 Daytime Open Studio (10a-1p)	2/15 Silversmithing 102 (Morris 10-2) PM Open Studio (7-10)	2/16	2/17	2/18 Putting Your Best Foot Forward: Networking & Presentation Tips for Artists (Cook – 12-2) Glass Beadmaking 102 (Saari – all day)
2/19 Glass Beadmaking 102 (Saari – all day)	2/20	2/21 Daytime Open Studio (10a-1p)	2/22 Silversmithing 102 (Morris 10-2)	2/23	2/24	2/25
2/26	2/27	2/28 Daytime Open Studio (10a-1p)	2/29 Silversmithing 102 (Morris 10-2) PM Open Studio (7-10)	3/1	3/2	3/3 Writing an Artist's Statement (Cook – 12-4)
3/4 Waxworking for Cast Objects (Morris - all day)	3/5	3/6 Daytime Open Studio (10a-1p) Concepts of Design (Morris – 10-1)	3/7 PM Open Studio (7-10)	3/8	3/9	3/10 Rock on! Stonesetting (Raskin – all day)
3/11 Rock on! Stonesetting (Raskin - all day)	3/12	3/13 Daytime Open Studio (10a-1p)	3/14 PM Open Studio (7-10)	3/15	3/16 All Day Open Studio (10a-6p)	3/17 Silversmithing 102 (Morris - all day) Writing on the Wall: Social Media for Artists (Lawless – 12-2)
3/17 Silversmithing 102 (Morris - all day)	3/19	3/20 Daytime Open Studio (10a-1p)	3/21 PM Open Studio (7-10)	3/22	3/23	3/24
3/25 Waxworking for Cast Objects (Morris - all day)	3/26	3/27 Daytime Open Studio (10a-1p)	3/28 PM Open Studio (7-10)	3/29	3/30	

