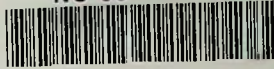


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THE NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

THE JEWELLERY OF KENT RAIBLE AND JAMES BARKER

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO

THE FACULTY OF HISTORY OF ART AND DESIGN

& COMPLIMENTARY STUDIES

AND

IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE

FACULTY OF CRAFT

DEPARTMENT OF METALWORK

BY

BLAWNIN CLANCY

MARCH 1991

Joan Fowler

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Synopsis

I am writing about two contemporary American jewellers, Kent Raible and James Barker, whose work I admire. I am looking at their methods of creating jewellery, their influences, styles, and attitudes towards their work. I have also chosen a few other jewellers, from the past and from the present whose work I feel can be compared to the work of Raible and Barker.

## INTRODUCTION

In 3,000 B.C. man discovered gold in the earth beneath his feet and gold started being used as the basic medium for jewellery making. It has traditionally been utilised because of its physical properties, malleability, longevity, colour, and lustre.

Jewels in the past were seen as a practical way of keeping wealth because they were small, portable and easy to hide. 'Anything bright and colourful found in the earth or sea was prized by early man, perhaps because possession of it set the person apart.' (1). The wearing of jewellery denoted the higher status of the wearer. They had attained something that the others had not; not only the mark of individuality, but also the privilege of ownership.

'Up to the present, jewellery has been an individual adornment quick to identify rank, authority, wealth, and influence to those who wear it.' (2). The uses of jewellery have meanings for the society in which it is worn: in practical use such as clothing fasteners, royal ceremonial use, religious use, and for important occasions in everyday life.

Jewellery and jewels have aroused unequalled passions as emblems of deities to be worshipped or as tokens of love, magic and power. This concept is still with us, albeit in a somewhat muted form: the basic need for reassurance and the desire to convey

certain aspects of our personality that go beyond mere ornamentation or pure material considerations. (3)

Gold jewellery, with its purity and colour, has a value based on wealth, while gemstones have value that are associated with their colour, strength, and size. In the past, gemstones were reputed to have actual physical power over the wearer.

Pearls, diamonds, turquoise, coral, emeralds, and other stones have been credited with occult powers since ancient times. They were, first, perhaps worn as amulets and later as ornaments, many astrologers and students of ancient teachings believe that each stone has its own personality and attributes. (4).

An amulet is described as 'a thing worn as a charm against evil' (5). In the days of dragons, witches, and alchemy, people would readily believe in these things. If a gemstone could protect them in some way from supernatural forces they would most likely accept it as a protective object.

Magicians and sorcerers have traditionally been linked with the power of jewellery and its mystical energies. Talismans and amulets have also been used for religious purposes, such as bishops' rings or Charlemagne's talisman, which was buried with him in 814 A.D.. This is a pendant said to enclose a splinter of the true cross. (fig 1). In the past, gems were also reputed to have curative powers, a belief founded on their colour.

The values placed upon jewellery and the powers imbued in it are different for contemporary society. 'Currently the gesture of self-adornment is associated with the will to seduce others and is perhaps a surrogate for spirituality now largely absent from modern life'. (6). The role of jewellery is now more relevant to its function as ornamentation for the body than as talismanic objects. Less beliefs



are placed in it's mystical values, but a higher degree of belief placed in it's monetary values: 'Only in the last few hundred years were they (jewels) considered a form of monetary exchange. For most of man's history they were considered to have magical powers.' (7)

Jewellery is the most personal type of art. It can be expressly made and designed for the individual. It can 'illustrate the conscious and unconscious thoughts of both maker and owner' (8). It can be an object that enhances the wearer's appearance but also involves the senses, since it is actually on the body.

Any fragment of history or society is judged and assessed of it greatness by what it has left to be discovered, by what artifacts can be gleaned from it's existence.

We judge a society on the products of their cultural activities, art, music, literature, architecture, and by their technological abilities. Looking at the jewellery they have made, we can try to understand parts of their fashions and technical advances that happened in that period of time.

The works I am examining are the output of two contemporary jewellers, Kent Raible and James Barker, who both currently live and work in America. One of the chief characteristics of contemporary American art jewellery is technical specialization.

Many jewellers remained faithful to a particular process, devoting an enormous amount of time to it's investigation, and producing a body of work in which that technique became identified with the individual. (9)

The two artists who I am writing about, specialize in gold granulation. They make wearable jewellery with



high carat gold and precious gems. Their work is known and identified because of their technique and mastery of skill. Their work has a relationship with the past: The power of gold and gems, of talismans and amulets, and the belief that jewellery can have a spiritual element. Both jewellers feel they are guided by an inner voice or intuition to guide them through every step of their work. Barker calls it "free creation, the beautiful experience of heart, head, and hands in alignment" (10). Their approach to their craft is in the classical tradition, and far from modernized mass production.

Their technique too, has a relation with the past. The art of gold granulation has been in existence for around 5,000 years.

Although Raible's and Barker's methods are ancient and historically based, their pieces are relevant in the contemporary jewellery world. They are part of a trend of making jewellery using the traditional material of gold, unlike the movements of the recent past and present, employing synthetic, non-metallic, and man-made metals and fibres.

In 1990 the new generation of artists have re-adopted gold, the noblest of all metals, and the embodiment of traditional power, in order to search for the holy meaning of life and purity, or, to search for the divine significance of a jewel. (11)

I am writing about Raible and Barker's individual work and influences and their procedures, but also their attitudes and feelings towards their art and the properties, magic, symbols, powers, and spirituality that they believe it contains. Columbus said of gold 'gold is the most exquisite of all things.....whoever possesses gold can acquire all that he desires in this world". I believe that Kent Raible and James Barker would readily agree with this statement.



Figure 1: Charlemagne's Talisman

Jewel from the 7th century A.D. gold and various  
precious gems. From A History of Jewellery, 5,000  
Years.



Footnotes from introduction

1. SCHIFFER, Nancy The Power of Jewellery, p.6-7
2. ibid
3. CARTLIDGE, Barbara 20th Century Jewellery, p.7.
4. SCHIFFER, Nancy The Power of Jewellery, p.6-7
5. Concise Oxford Dictionary
6. LAMBERT, Silvie Art Aurea, issue 1-1991, p.60-61
7. SCHIFFER, Nancy The Power of Jewellery, p.6-7
8. WOLF, Toni Lesser Masterworks of Contemporary American Jewellery p.8 (introduction)
9. UNTRACHT, Oppi Masterworks of Contemporary American Jewellery p.6 (preface)
10. BARKER, James personal C.V., p.5
11. LAMBERT, Silvie Art Aurea, issue 1-1991, pp.60-61

CHAPTER 1

Kent Raible makes wearable jewellery out of 18 karat gold and a range of precious gemstones, diamonds, emeralds, blue sapphires, pearls, Australian opals, amethysts, garnets, rutilated quartz, and green tourmalines. He employs the use of granulation on every piece he makes and most are set with stones. He makes bracelets, rings, earrings and necklaces. In all his pieces he uses woven gold wire instead of linked gold chain. (figure 2). The woven gold is very intricate and delicate, resembling a textile material more than a rigid metal material. (See Appendix A for questionnaire).

The jewellery is encrusted with incredibly small granular decoration, applied with intense geometrical exactness. As a craftsman <sup>he</sup> is technically brilliant.

Granulation is a very ancient technique. I think that Raible is expressly using this technique on his pieces so that they look antique.

He is using the antiquated look that granulation gives a piece, to give his work a historical theme which may add to it's estimation and monetary value to the piece. It also carries across his ideas of mysticism and spiritualism in jewellery that are often associated with ancient jewellery.

To me his work looks regal or royal, he has named one piece The Garnet King's Ring (figure 3) which is gold granulated set with a rhodolite garnet, and is reminiscent of medieval rings that could have possibly belonged to a King or some other ruler. His earrings of fine gold mesh knitting and granulated gold spheres, remind me of ancient Greek or Roman



jewels. (figure 4). One pair is entitled Omega Hoop Earrings (figure 5), and are in the shape of that letter of the Greek Language.

Raible feels that his work has the amuletic and spiritual qualities often associated with ancient or tribal jewellery that has been made from gold and precious gems. By using gold he is making the pieces valuable and therefore precious to the owner. Because the work is precious for the owner, it becomes part of a psychological need, a need to possess the object.

Since gold is such an expensive material to work with, it needs to be given special attention and refinement of size, so the gold is not wasted. Raible finds granulation is fascinating because of it's 'rich golden shimmer' (1) --a quality he thinks aluring and magical. 'The geometric patterns reflect and enhance the mysterious qualities of the gems'. (2)

In Medieval times, symbols and stones were used to give beneficial protection. Jewellery was used also to create a system of hierachy in the noble classes. The themes of spiritual protection and status are a part of his work. The piece's amuletic associations provide the protection of the spirit and their material and cost provide obvious status to the wearer. Raible is using shapes and forms and the patterns of granulation to achieve this result. The pieces do not necessarily do anything to the wearer but their style is meant to be reminiscent of the style used in ancient jewellery that was believed to have powers. People can easily, if they wish, transfer the ancient beliefs to his work, and give it those powers, because of the way it looks.

His resevoir of influences is diverse. The 'Regal' look is emphasised more by the materials he uses. Gold, by it's nature, and expense, is and always has been the rich man's metal, and therefore lends itself well to use in Raible's work. 'They have a heraldic feel, the forms suggesting ancient shields and scepters, crowns, and

crests'. (3) The pieces retain the ancient faux-medieval style. They look more theatrical, like a prop out of Camelot or Robin Hood, than out of a museum.

America, with it's cinematic history, has often in films, taken objects from the creative arts and given them the 'Hollywood' treatment, to make the object more understandable and glamorous for use in costume. This is done mostly to apparel and period costumes and architecture --but also with personal decoration, such as crowns, swords, armour, etc. So perhaps it is a natural process that Raible treats his pieces in this way.

The styles on which he is basing his designs are not strictly of an American nature, but of a European and Asian origin. He uses a repitoire of historical styles and sifts through them. The outcome is a reinterpretation of something old. His work is too new looking, too slick and precise to be authentic. I am aware that he is not attempting to make reproductions, but is producing work that has a historical basis and theme.

Raible's work is small. He uses magnifying glasses to do the granulation: 'His field of vision is filled with a globe smaller than a teardrop, it's contents composed of golden grains so tiny they would be lost in the grooves of a fingerprint' (4). Using granulation enriches and embellishes the surface of his pieces, and gives them a tactile quality. The granulation, 'enhances their regal quality, as if each piece has been lifted from a pharoe's treasure chest, glinting from an opulence of reflective surfaces.' (5).

The very smallness and exactness of his designs (figure 6), make them undoubtedly contemporary with advanced technology and the frequent miniturization of objects in our habitat occurring frequently, it seems expected and normal that some types of decoration will shrink in size and structure, such as Kent Raible's pieces.



Kent Raible began making jewellery in a class in high school twenty years ago in order to be with his girlfriend, he claims. He says that, 'the first pieces I made were the ugliest stuff you ever saw, but after a while people started buying things' (6).

After High School he attended the College of Marin in Kentfield, California, where he continued making pieces, but not selling a great deal of his work. Here he used mostly the technique of casting and he says that there he did 'bulky stuff, large rings, the look that was happening in the 1970's, there was a lot of refinement in some of the pieces, but I hadn't developed as an artist at that point'. (7)

Raible left California and proceeded to travel in Europe. In West Germany he met a friend studying at the Fachhochschule fuer Gestaltung, which is near Stuttgart. He was entitled to study there for a short period of time as a guest.

Here, he changed the style of his work dramatically and he learned the technique of granulation from notes and information left there by a former teacher. It took him, he says, 'six months developing the technique, I am still improving on it after six years'. (8).

Raible also studied at the Revere Academy in San Francisco. He has also taken part in various classes and workshops. He now produces work out of his home in Bolinas, California. He makes his jewellery with the help of two assistant goldsmiths and his wife, who manages and markets his work.

His prices range from \$900-\$16,000. Most of his work sells in American fine craft galleries. He no longer sells his work at craft fairs. He says that about 10% of his work is done on a commission basis for private customers. 'I actually prefer to not have other people's input on the design of a piece. I like to make it my way and then sell it.' (9). Kent Raible has only one production line, a cast, then granulated range of wedding rings. The remainder of his pieces are one off's.

The way that Kent Raible's jewellery is made and designed is quite spontaneous. He is confident enough with his designs and talented enough to work directly with the gold. When asked if he puts his designs on paper first, he replied 'If my idea is concrete enough in my mind, or loose enough not to need paper, I work directly in the metal. The larger and more complex pieces, such as the bracelets, are sketched out first'. (10).

I find that he is able to work in this way quite amazing, for his pieces are confident and exquisitely made, with no visible mistakes or technical faults. It is obvious that they were pre-planned, at least mentally, if not on paper.

He says that many of his strong ideas for jewellery come to him in dreams. He sees the finished piece in his head. 'The vision was presenting itself in my mind and I wouldn't ignore it, so I said "okay I'll make it"'. (11). At other times his starting point will be a gem and he will proceed to build up the setting around that. His ideas for designing are evolutionary. One piece will spark off an idea for the next. He has an ongoing process of experiment, learning from mistakes, and adding new parts as he makes. This evolution of the design process can be seen plainly in his work. No two pieces are exactly the same, but all have a common thread, not only of the granular surface but of shapes and forms. For example, the clasp of a necklace (figure 7) on a woven gold chain is the same basic shape as a pair of tapered pendular earrings (figure 4). The bezel shapes of some of his rings are the same pattern as a bracelet front set with stones. Designing to him is 'ongoing. I'll add a technique here, a different design element or pattern of granulation there, or see something inspiring to add.' (12).

He works on between five to ten pieces at a time, with his two assistants. All the parts, catches and clasps are fabricated by him.



He also makes all his own gold sheet and wire with the help of a rolling mill. By working this way he has the ability to make a piece exactly the way and to what specifications he wants. Every component of a piece is lavishly decorated with granulation.

The granules describe geometric shapes upon the surface of the gold. They make elegant patterns but don't encrust the entire surface. The approach is precise and symmetrical. It has graceful line and curves but is not overtly geometrical.

The technique of true gold granulation is only recently rediscovered by 'Littledale in 1934' (13), which he called collodial hard soldering (see appendix C). Others had recreated the effect such as Castellani in the early 19th century, but it was not exactly the same as the original ancient process dating back about 5,000 years.

Granulation is a time-consuming technique that requires concentration, patience and good eyesight. The precise method Raible uses, there are many, is very similar, he believes, to what the original granulists used.

The original granulists were the Etruscans. Kent Raible's work is influenced by the surviving pieces of their work. Since Raible's work is so influenced by historical and ancient themes, I feel it is important to look at the Etruscans. The work of the Etruscans and Raible's work has aspects that are technically and visually common to both. He says that he is also influenced by Egyptian and Celtic jewellery, but this influence is not readily apparent in the look of his work, which is more comparable to the Etruscan's because of their use of granulation.

The Etruscans emerged at the beginning of the 7th Century B.C. in Northern Italy. The new civilization lay

between the rivers Arno and Tiber, an area known as Etruria. 'In the 400 years that it flourished, it produced jewellery of unparalleled beauty.' (14). Anthropologists are uncertain of where the Etruscans came from, but it is believed they were migrants from Asia Minor.

For the Etruscans, gold jewellery provided the opportunity to show off their imagination and techniques. Instead of using precious or semi-precious stones to enrich a flat surface, as the Egyptians did, they gave the gold a sculptural quality by working with the gold. Their most elaborate and complicated technique is granulation. The Etruscans favoured heavy encrustation, to give a richness and weightiness to the pieces.

Most of the pieces that have survived the last 2,600 years, have been found in tombs from around the 7th Century B.C. 'Inside the tombs was found a great mixture of treasures. The workmanship of these pieces is quite amazing'. (15). The Etruscans executed repousse, filigree, and granulation with a precision and skill that has been imitated but never equalled in contemporary work. (figure 8).

The Etruscans developed the already existing, simple, safety pin, into the fibula, a jewellery item for fastening clothing. They decorated them heavily with granulation, adding on three dimensional miniature horses, sphinxes, and lions. (figure 9). In these fibulae all known techniques were used, with the finest workmanship. Etruscan civilization continued on, until about the mid 3rd Century B.C., when it became part of the expanding Roman Empire.

The Etruscans have been a major influence on contemporary jewellers, such as Raible. Their influence on Raible can be seen in the intricate details of his

granulation. Raible's art borrows the technical excellence of the Etruscan jewellery but not the use of animal motifs. The way they used rows of granules for abstract patterning is similar to the way Raible uses his granules to outline and emphasise the form of a piece. For example in the Etruscan fibula with lions, and on Barker's gold and amethyst chain clasp.

Raible is also inspired by the works of Castellani and Giuliano, the revivalist jewellers of the 19th Century. 'The 19th Century is characterised by a spirit of introspection in the arts'. (16).

The jewellery of Castellani and Guiliano, who worked in the 19th century is also important to Kent Raible because he is influenced by their style. Castellani and Guiliano were revivalist jewellers and the style of their work diverse, from neo-classical to neo-gothic. In this way they can be compared to Raible because his work is a mixture of a wide variety of historical styles. The Castellani firm also learned to copy Etruscan granulation, the first instance of the technique in 19th century jewellery. From these points their influence can be seen in Raible's work. The gold necklace of (figure 10) differing sized carved scarabs, with heavy use of granulation, by Castellani, is alike in precision and symmetry of detail of Raible's work.

The public was becoming more interested in the history of the past. 'The earth was giving up antique treasures at an unprecedented rate, and the museum system over most of Europe was sufficiently well established to make recent discoveries known to the public.' (17).

The middle classes had started to be able to afford to travel abroad. On tours to Rome

no 19th century lady of fashion would consider her tour complete without calling at the Castellani's shop to acquire one of the famous pieces of Italian archaeological jewellery offered there.' (18).



The Castellani firm was founded by Fourtunato Pio Castellani (1794-1865), in Rome. It was later taken over by his sons Augusto (1829-1914) and Alessandro (1823-1883), they eventually expanded into France and later to London, where Carlo Giuliano (1832-1895) first managed the shop, which closed in 1914.

The Castellani's had studied archeological treasures and became masters in reproducing the Greek, Etruscan, and Roman styles. Including a type of granulation that was a deviation of the ancient technique. They greatly admired the ancient jewellers for their mastery of techniques and vitality of design, which the Castellanis felt was lacking in the contemporary 19th century design. Perhaps Kent Raible feels the same way about design in the 1990's, and prefers the more traditional ideals that he uses in his work.

The Castellani's felt their work was obviously brilliant but 'he did admit that he was unable to match the most delicate ancient work' (19), felt Augusto and Alessandro Castellani.

I find it interesting that Raible is inclined to be influenced by the Castellani's who were essentially re-making pieces of jewellery, and not re-developing ideas in any way. The majority of their pieces are non-original and copies of existing works of archaeologocial interest. Raible's work, although not reproductions, does not contain many elements that are new or completely unique to him. It is a pastiche of various styles.

Barker's influences that I am looking at are not all from the past. His style is also formed by an interest in contemporary work.

I have chosen to discuss John Paul Miller as an influence on Barker's work because he is an important figure in modern jewellery making. Miller was the first art jeweller in the 20th century to



habitually use gold granulation in a confident and skilled manner. Miller is credited with reintroducing a delicacy and fineness in jewellery that had been missing in many of his peer's work. For this style of work, Miller is widely known by jewellers and is a relevant influence on Raible's style.

After World War Two, the contemporary studio jewellery movement emerged, which had its roots in modern European fine art movements. Jewellery previous to this date was based on tradition and techniques rather than expression of the artist and ideas derived from the painting and sculpture of the time.

Although most studio jewellers of the late 1940's and early 1950's did not follow Western jewellery traditions, a small number were intrigued by ancient metal techniques and artifacts, and the possibilities of using this knowledge. John Paul Miller was the first studio jeweller-craftsman to veer away from the expressionist style and to take up the European style of refinement and focus on technical expertise.

Miller was born in 1918, and later taught at the Cleveland Institute of Art in Ohio.

Miller's subject matter is mostly animal, marine and insect life (figures 11-14), crabs, scorpions, octopuses, bats, moths, and fish. The creatures are three-dimensional and stylized. 'The abstraction of the subject is definitely 20th century' (20). They are made in gold with granulation and coloured transparent enamel. Miller's work contains the high degree of craftsmanship of the ancients, but the new approach is in the style of the 20th century.

Raible's work is similar to Miller's, and the influence can be seen in Raible's work. The high polish finish, the use of decorated clasps, and woven chains. Although John Paul Miller uses a textile cord whereas Raible uses a woven gold chain. Miller's work also does not have set stones, but relies on enamelling for delicate, transparent colour. In ways Miller's work is more akin to James Barker's jewellery because of the abstract qualities his work has,

but since Miller was the first and most well known modern gold granulist, he has influenced many recent jewellers.

Pre-existing jewellery is not the only thing that influences and inspires Kent Raible. He says, 'nature is a big inspiration and the spiritual realm as well, to me jewellery can be a link between the physical, spiritual, and emotional aspects of humanity. It (jewellery) can represent points of power to people'. (21). Within almost all of us is the desire to have in our possession 'a small tactile object with very personal associations'. (22). Items of jewellery become important to us for their emotional and spiritual content; this idea of amuletic jewellery is an influence on Raible and the designs he thinks up. He wants his pieces to be wearable art that can evoke 'timeless mystery and majesty'. (23).

Handmade jewellery, such as Raible makes, has a special significance because it links the wearer and the maker of the piece. Raible feels that he makes the pieces so that people can wear them, 'with the sense that a fine object is really an expression of the fineness and majesty that can be found within themselves.

Raible lets his inspirations come from various sources but does not feel an affinity with current trends in other art fields. He says that when he first began jewellery making, he attempted to emulate fashionable styles and trends, but was not satisfied with designing in that manner.

His various influences of role models is apparent in his work, the delicate gold work of the Etruscans, the use of gemstones as in the Castellanis' work, and the modernity of John Paul Miller's work, but I do feel that Raible's jewellery still attains its own uniqueness and identity.

17a.

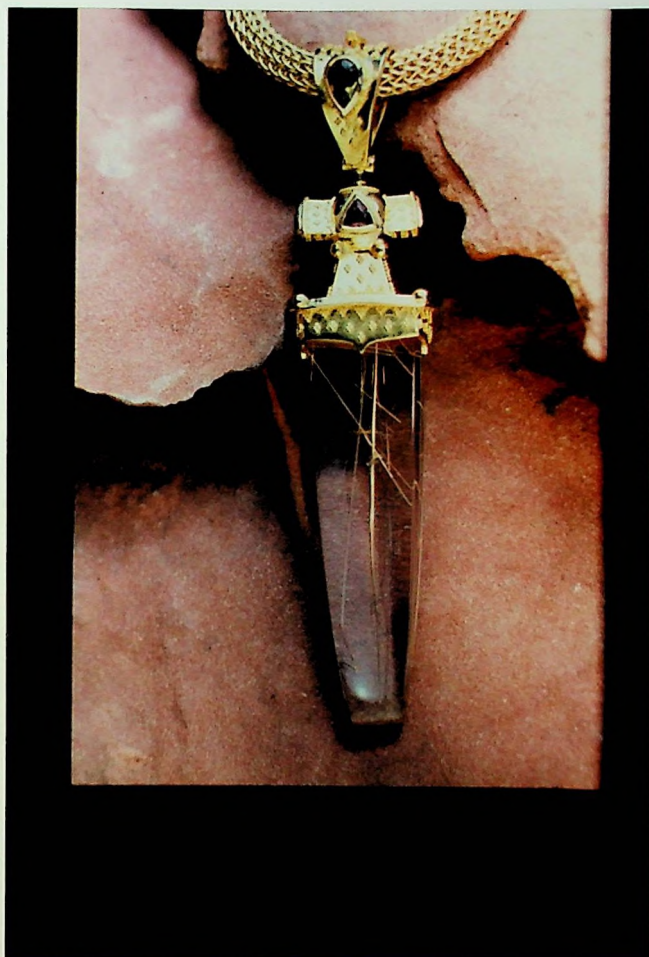


Figure 2

Pendant by Kent Raible

Gold, faceted quartz and amethysts.



17b.



**GARNET KINGS RING, 18K gold (15g), granulation. 8.37ct about 10000**  
garnet. 2.9cm H. 80000 10000

Figure 3

Gold and garnet granulated ring by Kent Raible  
Garnet King's Ring from Ornament.



Figures 4 & 5

Earrings - Kent Raible, gold with granulation and  
Omega Earrings from Ornament.



17d.



Figure 6

Detail of bracelet by Kent Raible showing the smallness of the granules. Gold with amethysts.



17e.



Figure 7

Clasp on a hand woven chain by Kent Raible.  
Gold and amethyst.

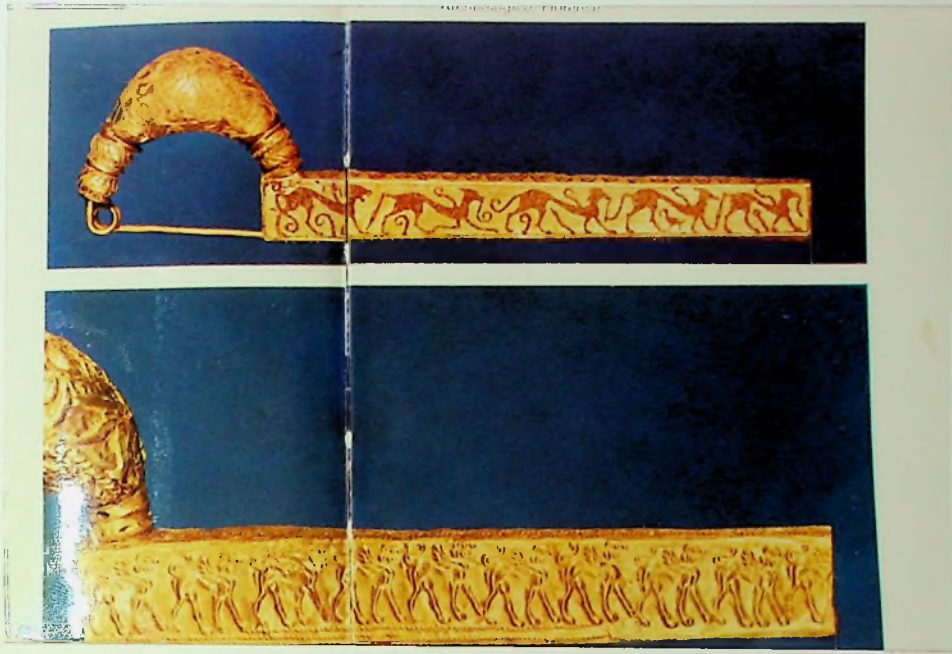


Figure 8 Etruscan gold granulated fibulae

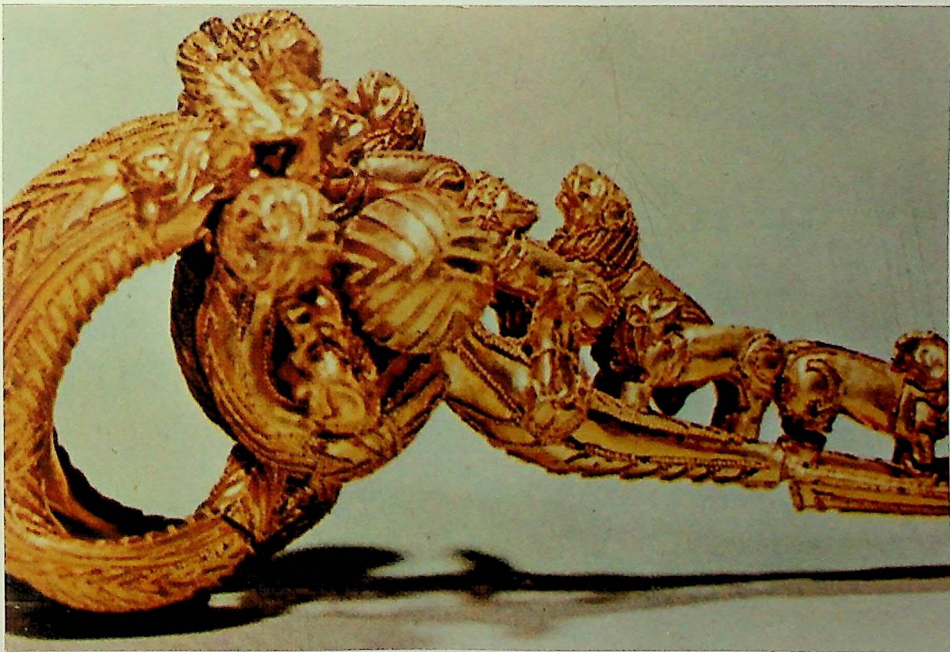


Figure 9 Detail of Etruscan gold granulated fibula showing three dimensional animals.

Both illustrations from Greek and Roman Jewellery.



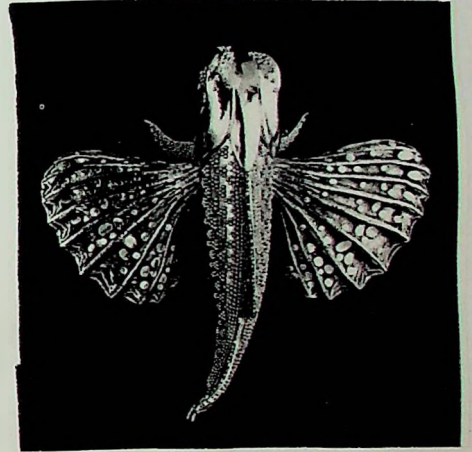
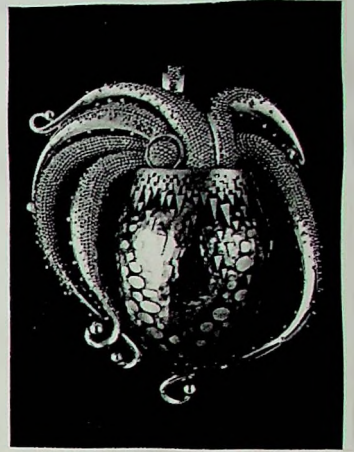
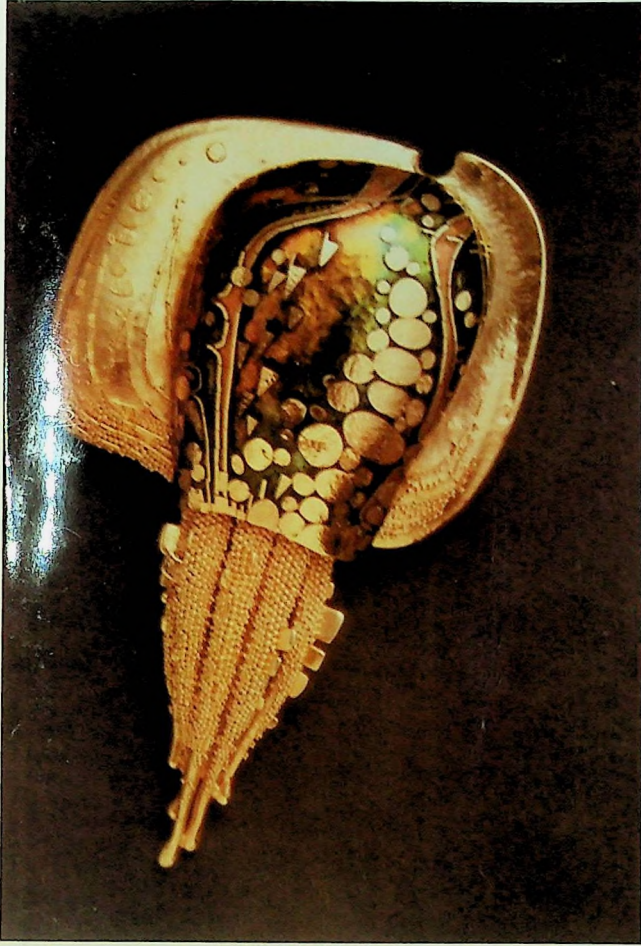


Figure 10

Gold granulated and carved scarab necklace by  
by Castellani & Guiliano.

From Castellani and Guiliano - Revivalist Jewellers  
of the 19th Century.





Figures 11 - 14

Pendants by John Paul Miller.

All 18K gold, granulated and  
enamel, from Metal

Techniques for Craftsmen.

Footnotes on Chapter 1

1. HAMAKER, Barbara, Santa Fe East, Winter-fall 1990, pp.22
2. ibid
3. SANTIAGO, Chiori, Ornament, Summer 1990, p.46
4. SANTIAGO, Chiori, Ornament, Summer 1990, p.44
5. ibid
6. SANTIAGO, Chiori, Ornament, Summer 1990, p.45
7. ibid
8. Questionnaire from Kent Raible
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17. ibid
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21. Questionnaire from Kent Raible
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CHAPTER 2

James Barker's jewellery (see Appendix B for questionnaire) is made out of 14, 18, and 22 carat gold. He uses, in most cases, 18 carat gold because he admires its colour, weight, and texture. All of his brooches, pendants, earrings, and necklaces are set with precious and semi-precious gems. He uses Tibetan turquoise, pearls, sapphires, rubies, moonstones, opals, garnets, chrysacolla, tourmaline, zircon, and emeralds.

His jewellery is elaborate, delicate in form, and diminutive in scale. His pieces are highly textured. The gold has been fused with small particles of gold filings to give a rough finish. Small wires, squares, triangles, circles, granules, and other shapes are fused on, building up a richly encrusted surface which is sprinkled with faceted and other gems (figure 15).

His jewellery attains a layered effect. The front and back of the pieces are given equal attention. They are subtly enriched with tiny bits of gold, and also by chasing and engraving. His work has a surprising 'voluptuous colour and conveys an idiosyncratic organic quality.' (1).

One pair of earrings are a good example of this approach, and are from his "Ancient Future" series of 1990. They are composed of 18K and 22K gold with .35 carat diamonds and oriental pearls. (figure 16). They are both provided with the same basic shapes, on top a triangle with curved points, and dangling from those, an elongated triangular shape. They are piled with applied granules, randomly placed and hammered strips of wire, embedded with grey pearls, and diamonds, also randomly



placed but still giving a sense of balance and asymmetry. This method of unaligned decoration is a distinctive hallmark of Barker's work. None of his pieces is ever an exactly matching pair, but at the same time never look uneven or off balance. The use of asymmetry gives his pieces a fresh and unique look.

His work is, I think, spontaneous and imaginative. The shapes of Barker's jewellery are freely outlined; circular brooches are not compass drawn, but look more like a suggestion of a circle. Parts of the edges on the pieces are cut away and added to, small granules perch on the very edges of a piece, looking as if they were about to pull off (figure 17). The gold is often textured, worked and chased so that it may 'imply great age and impart timeless quality that he (Barker) so values.' (2). The end result of adding and detracting from the gold gives the finished piece a stressed, worn, and battered quality of surface texture. It is a time-consuming technique, but all of the pieces turn out differently and are unique. Barker says of his work

I want the process to show in my jewellery - I want evidence of how it was made. The spiritual power in my work conveys emotion, not precision. (3).

Barker's work strongly reflects his avid interest in archaeology and in ancient primitive jewellery. The street plan of the Peruvian town of Cruzca was the initial basis for some work. He is also interested in the jewellery of the Navajos, a Native American tribe. He has lately begun to use more turquoise, an bright blue coloured stones usually set in silver. He looks toward past work and 'rarely looks at contemporary work' (4), but his work is not a re-shuffling of past ideas. It is vital and refreshingly fluid, as pieces of ethnic and tribal jewellery are, that are made by varied cultures and diverse societies and that are not mass produced.

His jewellery confidently reflects aspects related to the traditional principles and rules of design; precision, scale, balance, and harmony, along with line and colour. Skills he would have learned in his fine art

training. He blends the archaeological look and his own personal aesthetic instincts.

He has had a recent series called Ancient Future, with pieces called names such as The Shield of the Mystic (figure 19), Shaman's Shield (figure 20), Warrior of the Heart, and Healer's Shield (figure 21). These titles reflect the influence and interest in the native American tribes and their cultural language. The pieces are a mix of the past and Barker's own personal vision. His work is strongly imaginative and paid great attention to details and displays a high degree of skill in goldsmithing.

What I'm trying to do in my work is carry on this marvelous tradition of goldsmithing that spans the last five of six thousand years.....to work within that tradition - that whole genre, and all the beautiful things that have been created, and hopefully to add to that library of work. It's a means for me to express who I am. (5).

James Barker was born in Wisconsin, USA, in 1941. He received formal fine art training in painting and sculpture from the Layton School of Art, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, from 1959-1961. The following ten years were spent as a professional freelance graphic designer. He has also worked in the areas of display design, photography, and cinematography. All of his promotional postcards and photographed by himself. Barker is self-taught in metal work and jewellery, which he started in 1972 after buying Oppi Untracht's book Metal Techniques for Craftsmen.

After living and working in California for 17 years, he recently moved to Abiquiu, New Mexico, which is near the home of the late painter Gerogia O'Keeffe. Here in the desert he has his studio, where he lives 'a life of simplicity and moderation' (6), existing without newspapers or television and the only media contact being



the radio. He has sought a lifestyle that is remote from most people and it's self-contained by design. Barker chooses solitude not only for personal needs but also for artistic needs. He requires a great deal of time to make his pieces, and time to himself to think and design. He is a self-professed hermit. Barker spends much of his time merely looking at a piece in progress. At times he will be working on two or three pieces simultaneously and often works a 12 hour day.

Barker currently exhibits in art jewellery galleries, ranging from the Aaron Faber Gallery in New York on Fifth Avenue, to the Santa Fe East Gallery in New Mexico, and galleries geographically in between. He is also currently showing work in Japan, his first foreign exhibition.

He is also a distinguished member of SNAG, the Society of North American Goldsmiths. He has won several awards, including the grand prize at Intergold 1983, sponsored by the International Gold Corporation in New York. The winning piece was a gold necklace with diamonds, pearls, and moonstone.

The price of Barker's work varies from a few thousand up to \$30,000. He also does private commissions for people, about one a year. He says that he prefers to work with people who can give a general description and price range of the piece they desire, but will allow him the freedom in the design and creation of the piece.

The ideas for James Barker's work usually comes from the material itself, the medium he uses dictates his design. He says of this method

Often an idea comes from a piece of gold that is rolled out from my mill in a particular shape, or from pieces of metal left over from other pieces laying on my bench. (7)

This way of initiating ideas is apparent in his work, pieces contain a lot of the same decorative elements,



particularly on the surface of the gold. Small triangular negative spaces are used, and the corresponding positive triangular shape is used as low relief on another place on the jewel, for example on his earrings in 18K and 22K gold, with opals, pearls, and diamonds (figure 22).

The gems that Barker uses inspires his designs too. The colours, or combination of colours provide a starting point, 'pushing them around in various combinations until some sort of idea clicks in'. (8). He uses a lot of fancy sapphires, which come in a range of colours besides blue. He uses their colours to paint upon the jewels.

Barker sometimes sketches to outline his ideas prior to making. He sketches roughly, usually making gestures on the page describing movement to give a general sense of the piece, rather than doing detailed technical drawings.

I start out with the crudest abbreviated sketches. I have a foggy image in my head. I may have a couple of pieces or metal laying around, scraps or something half worked, things that may have provided inspiration for a sketch. If I do have something like that, they'll serve as a starting point, (9)

says Barker. Sometimes he often will not use a drawing to make a piece from, until a much later date, even years afterwards.

Barker is in control of his materials from the beginning to the end of the creative process. He buys fine pure gold and they alloys it, (mixes it with other substances). He uses five parts copper to one part silver added to the gold, to produce a reddish tinted gold ore.

Barker says he is not very much influenced by any other modern jewellers. There are a few working at the moment whom he admires, not necessarily because their work is like his, but because they are skilled craftspeople, and their work is excellent. He is not prone to liking experimental or avant garde jewellers' work, which

is, in his opinion 'not easily worn or is dangerous to the wearer and the viewer' (10). He is more influenced by Native American cultures and by their pre-historic ruins, which are existing and can be seen in New Mexico, where he lives.

African art, too, is an influence. 'Not recreating any of those forms necessarily, but in the emotional vitality he gets from seeing those things.' (11). He mostly studies African sculpture, of which he has an enormous interest and appreciation. This African interest is not terribly visible in the style of his work, except for the common lavish use of gold, which is frequently found in African jewellery.

Barker says of his work, 'I want it to be contemporary but I still want it's roots to be in the past and still be viewed as an interesting piece of work in the future.' (12). His work is of a vision and creation of jewellery for his concept of the ancient future.

He does not wish to be influenced by trends or fads of today's society. This is apparent by the solitary way he lives and his strong disinterest in other contemporary jewellery. Instead, he reaches back to ancient and primitive past and peoples, and their art as his inspiration. Of course no matter how hard one tries not to be affected by fashions and trends, it is inevitable. It is true that Barker's work is a part of a trend rediscovering the beauty of gold, but it is not being trendy for the sake of it. It just happens to be that his work fits in with what is happening in jewellery now. He is not adjusting his style or aesthetic principles to be fashionable and a good seller, but is creating work that pleases himself. He considers himself very fortunate to be able to work in this way and make a living from it.

It is accepted by some jewellers that jewellery can represent many things, including position, faith, magic, romance, mystery and beauty, as well as wealth, status, even philosophy. It can also represent the self-expression and ideas, the personal statements, creative visions and spirituality of the maker.



Barker agrees with this principle that jewellery can represent many different things to both the wearer and maker. The idea that jewellery represents in some way the spirituality of the creator is something Barker wholeheartedly agrees with. To Barker, making his jewellery is a way of communicating his personality, ideas, and spirituality to his customers. Since Barker lives alone, and in solitude his way of communicating with the outside world is through his art. All of his energies and thoughts go into a piece. He feels that when someone views his work, they are viewing a part of him.

He looks on the creative process, and Raible does too, but to a lesser extent, as a spiritual journey that he as an artist must go through to achieve the symbolic, magican, and spiritual aspects that he believes are a part of his work.

This way, and by his intellectual approach to making and creating, an artist can make the images or items that portray hidden or invented meanings and signifiance. By doing this, the artist is satisfying their own personal idea of creating something that goes beyond pure functionalism but covers the areas of beauty, meaning, and signifigance.

By this process that Barker goes through, he believes that the spirituality and magic he imbues upon a piece may be transferred upon the wearer, because they possess a piece of his work and therefore a piece of his spirituality.

The concept of magical animism, is 'that natural objects possess a soul and to wear the proper form of adornment can impart a much desired quality to the wearer'. (13). Barker feels close to this idea that jewellery has the power to transform the wearer. The ancient beliefs of magical stones and lucky talismans, corresponds with the idea of magical animism.

Many cultures throughout the ages and up to today



have endowed upon jewellery these powers and magical properties, although not as widely believed today; some of these beliefs in the spirituality of jewellery, can be present in some forms, for example in James Barker's work.

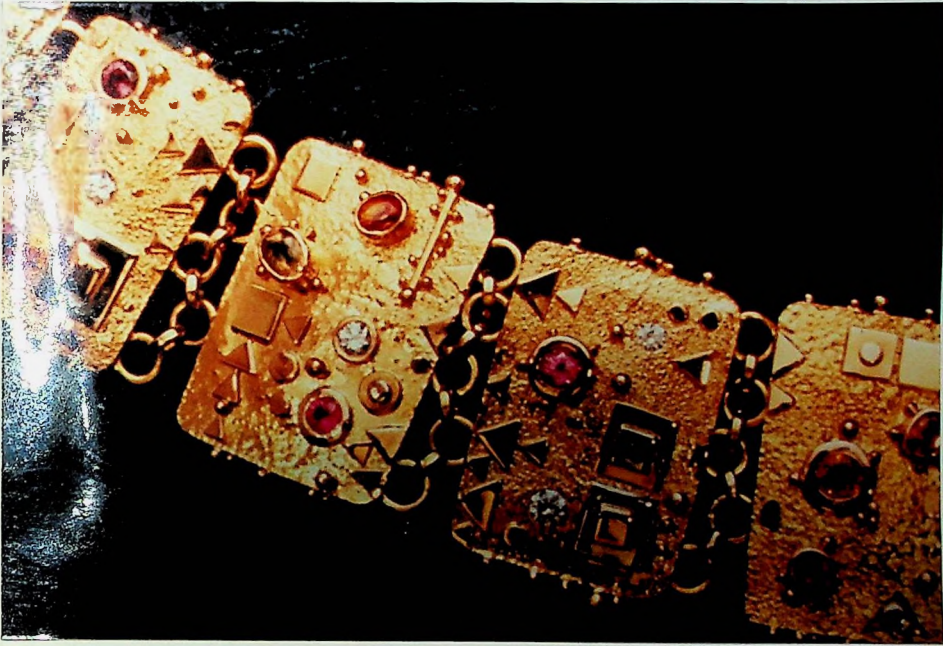


Figure 15

Rainbow Talisman detail of bracelet showing surface texture and gemstones. James Barker. 18K and 22K gold, fancy sapphires and diamonds.



Figure 16

Earrings by James Barker from Ancient Future series  
with 18K - 22K gold, diamonds, and pearls.

From Ornament.



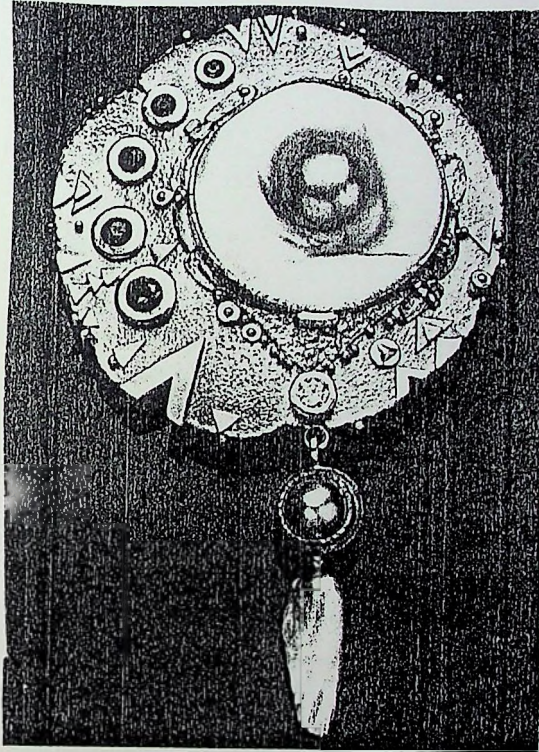


Figure 17

Brooch /pendant by James Barker.

18K - 22K gold, pearls, diamond, and  
Tsavorite.

From Ornament



Figure 18

Gold earrings with turquoise and pink tourmaline and pearls, by James Barker.



26e.



**JAMES BARKER**

FIGURE 19  
Brooch - pendant, Shield of the Mystic, by James Barker  
18K and 22K gold, diamonds, sapphire, and pearls.





Figure 20

Shaman's Shield

Brooch /pendant by James Barker

18K and 22K gold, fancy sapphires, and pearls.

26g.



Figure 21

Healer's Shield

Brooch - pendant by James Barker.

18K - 22K gold with chartreuse tourmaline,  
pearls and diamonds.

Santa Fe East.



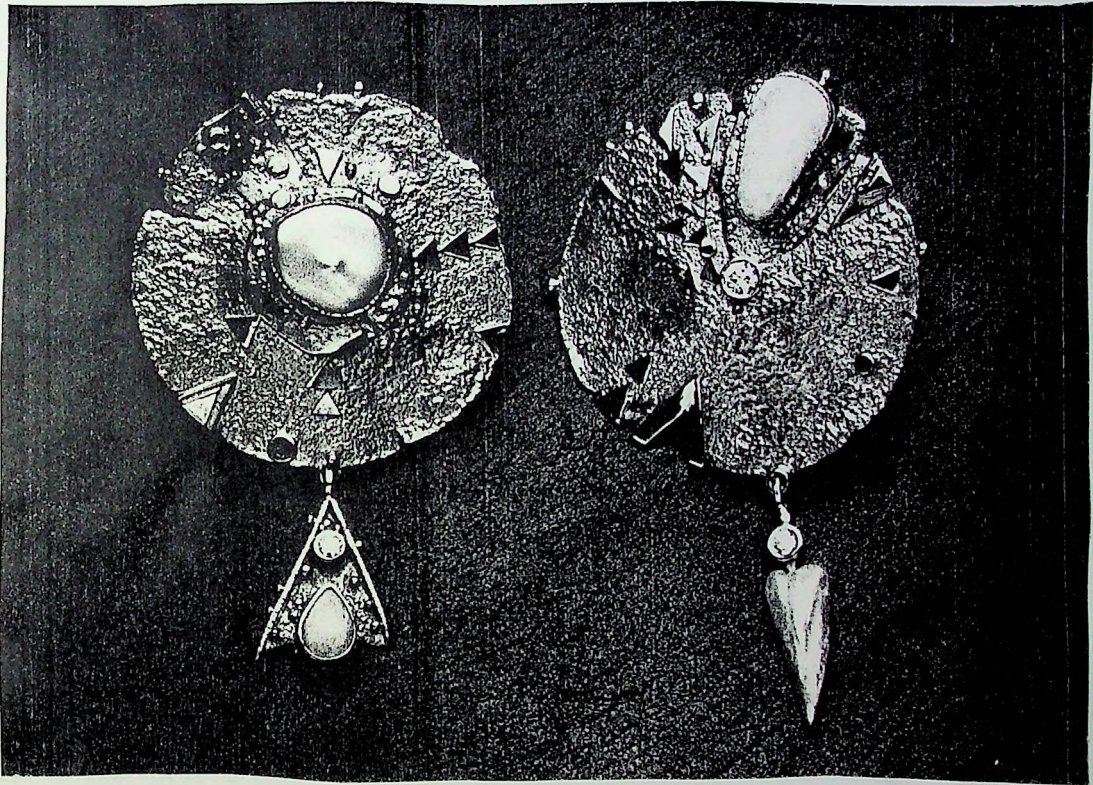


Figure 22

Earrings by James Barker 18K - 22K gold, opals, pearls,  
and diamonds.

From Ornament.



Footnotes for Chapter 2

1. BENESH, Carolyn L.E., Ornament, Spring 1990, p.63
2. BENESH, Carolyn L.E., Ornament, Winter 1985, p.35
3. HAMAKER, Barbara, Santa Fe East, Summer-Fall 1990, p.19
4. GRUNDER, Ann, Metalsmith, Summer 1987, p.51
5. HAMAKER, Barbara, Santa Fe East, Summer-Fall 1990, p.19
6. BENESH, Carolyn L.E., Ornament, Spring 1980, p.60
7. Questionnaire from James Barker
8. ibid
9. BENESH, Carolyn L.E., Ornament, Winter 1985, p.35
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12. BENESH, Carolyn L.E., Ornament, Winter 1985, p.35
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CHAPTER 3

While I highly appreciate the work of Kent Raible and James Barker, it is important that their work be compared to other artists' creative products. In doing so we gain an understanding of how they fit into the contemporary trends in America and possibly, globally. It is also important that work cannot be fairly looked at and reviewed without criticism to balance praise.

Firstly comparisons must be made between Raible's and Barker's work. Both artists, by using a lot of the same techniques and materials, gold granulation and precious gems, have arrived at startling different destinations. Stylistically James Barker has created jewellery that is aimed at the spirit and the soul, to fulfil a place in human needs, that is largely empty in society today, the need for mystery and spiritualism. Kent Raible's work has some of these mystical qualities, but his work is more glamorous. It is made for showing-off and flaunting. In ways it has not as much personality and vitality as Barker's pieces, but what it lacks in vigour, it makes up for in beauty and opulent splendor. Raible's jewellery is made to be seen and worn, Barker's too, to be worn for decorative purposes but also to provide the wearer with positive mental assurance.

I think that James Barker's current work is less likely to look dated in time, because of it's primitive and abstract aesthetic qualities. It will probably fulfill his wish to make jewellery of the Ancient Future. Whereas



Raible's work is still classically based and very beautifully made, it fits in with the catalogue of work from goldsmiths of the latter part of the 20th century.

Kent Raible has not been working alone in the field of modern gold granulation. There are a number of jewellers in America currently producing work made with this technique. To name but two, Michael Winsten and Susan Reinstein, who work in the same price range and market type as Raible's. They also use gold and gems as he does in his own pieces.

Michael Winsten became interested in making jewellery in the early 1980's. Previously he had been a researcher on history, art, and Ethnic Asian jewellery.

He became intrigued with the possibilities of granulation after reading about the Kulicke-Stark Academy and on Littledale (for details see appendix C), who both rediscovered the secrets of technical success in gold granulation. Winsten felt that it could be possible to develop his own techniques with patience and experimentation.

Originally his work was a combination of ancient stone components and new metalwork, which caused some confusion in the marketplace, 'while there are galleries for contemporary work and galleries for ancient work, Winsten's jewellery did not fit into either category.' (1.). Winsten now uses all new parts in constructing his work. I, personally, don't think that his neckpieces could be sold as antiques, their condition is too perfect and the polish too bright, to be thought of as anything but recent work (figure 23).

He wants to recreate the richness and splendor of the ancient realm in his own way, but is not attempting to make copies. He says of his work, 'copies always look stiff and somehow dead, my work is very modern, somewhat abstract and very involved with geometric abstraction!' (2).

The abstract qualities of Winsten's work is comparative to Raible's, even though Winsten's is more rigidly and formally geometric. The neckpieces which he makes are very much more flat and two-dimensional than Raible's pendants. He uses strung beads as a colourful background

of the necklace, whereas Raible uses his woven gold chains. Both ways of suspension of a necklace give equal flexibility and suppleness to conform to the body. Winsten's beads impart a tribal and primitive flavour to the work.

Winsten does not feel that his use of granulation gives a neo-classical look, but in his work the look is more influenced by ancient Asia and Sumeria. The size of the granules he uses are of a huge size compared to the tiny delicacy of Raible's. I feel the coarseness of the grains is meant to heighten the primitive aura of his work, or perhaps he has not fully mastered the technique yet. (figure 24).

Susan Reinstien works and sells in New York City. Her work is very similar to Raible's but in a less refined way. She uses an alloy of 22K gold mixed with copper to make what she calls, apricot coloured gold. She also works in yellow gold.

Most of the pieces made in her workshop are for special commissions for the clients. She feels that there is a special relationship between customers and creator, a feeling shared by Barker and Raible. Over the years she has been in business, she has built up a loyal following of collectors of her work.

Most pieces are heavily granulated , she says

my style is to completely cover the surface, but I'm not interested in reproducing the patterns the ancients used. I like texture. A lot of contemporary jewellery has pavé diamonds, we use granulation the way other people use pavé diamonds. (3).

Reinstien does not use sketches, but works immediately with the gold and stones, choosing the colours of both the gems and the shade of gold in the same way that Barker paints with his coloured sapphires. 'First we facet the stones, then I'll play with the composition of the piece. I think the process is very architectural.' (4). It is true that her work does have a very linear and well defined quality.

The stones she uses are very colourful. Some pieces have up to seven differently coloured large gemstones, faceted and cabachon cut, which to my eye is too gaudy and



not harmonious. The magic carpet (figure 25) bracelet has a monochromatic colour scheme, and to me is more appealing, colourwise. Her standard of granulation is well below the fineness that Raible has achieved and somehow looks slightly messy. I think that her work is interesting and different to the usual boring offers from retail outlets, but compared to Raible's and Barker's work, is quite tame and a concession to main-stream commercialism.

James Barker's work has a close affinity with Gerda Flockinger's work, a British jeweller born in Innsbruck, Austria in 1927. They both use gold fusing and layering techniques in their jewels, along with the use of pearls, diamonds, and other gems. Each of these artists' work is abstract and textural. Their work is technically similar and visually alike, although each artist's work is distinctly identifiable and individual. Barker's work is more chunky and weighty looking, while Gerda Flockinger's pieces are more delicate and lighter. (figure 26).

Gerda Flockinger went to England in 1938 and studied at St. Martin's School of Art and at the Central School of Art. In 1971 she was the first woman and art jeweller to be honoured with having an exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, and because of this her work is widely known and recognized.

'Her overall concepts are a subtle blend of the abstract form and Eastern jewels, with a faint hint of Art Nouveau' (5). Barker's work shares abstract form and also some Eastern influence; his recent brooch-pendant that is based on a haiku, an oriental poem. The piece may be literary based but it contains no figurative or narrative motifs.

Flockinger uses diamonds in her work, she uses them frequently on pieces to be 'lightly dewing the crusty gold and silver surfaces essential to her style.' (6). The different pieces that make up her jewels are fused together without the use of solder. The assembled elements are arranged asymmetrically, no single part is a pair or part of a matching set. It is controlled and compact

asymmetry; her pieces contain a pleasing mixture of balance and variety. All her work is executed by her own hands. She refuses to work with the help of assistants. All the gems she uses are hand cut and polished.

The independence that Flockinger maintains in her method of working, is similar to Barker's. He too works alone to possess complete control over his ideas and the materials he works with.

Movement is an important aspect of Flockinger's work. By incorporating flexibility into the pieces they harmonize better with the human body, instead of being a static decoration.

She supplies it (movement), with a variety of drops and pendants: slender pendants of fused metal, shimmering fringes of baroque pearls tipped with burnished tags, and most characteristically, long rods wrapped with half melted spirals. (7).

This style of moving ornamentation can be seen in one of her silver rings, set with a carved Indian emerald, off of which dangles a baroque pearl and the wrapped rod. (figure 27). Barker uses this technique, which I will later discuss.

She also frequently uses pearls, fresh water and cultured, which are artificially strained to a silver grey colour. Her chains are always handmade, never machine made. The links are either cut out of flat sheet and decorated or are of wire. All the links are ornamented differently.

The attention to the overall detail of a piece is the same the attention Barker gives to the individual components of a jewel. He too, habitually uses pearl drops and pendants to supply movement to a brooch or earring. On Shaman's Shield, he has added a hanging pearl and his gold earrings with diamonds and pearls are in two separate sections to allow them to sparkle and glint on the wearer.

Gerda Flockinger's 18K gold earrings with diamonds and pearls are 'another classic example of her great ability in bringing out the inherent beauty of gold



(figure 28), (8). They are comprised of geometric shapes, circles, squares, and rectangles, but not with the exact mathematical outlines, Barker shares this technique. They are attached by means of jump rings, so they swing back and forth. The surface is accented with minute grains and swirling encrusted wires, and tiny sparkling diamonds. This pair of earrings is made of exactly the same materials as James Barker's pair (figure 16). Some of the qualities of texture and movement are alike in both pairs. Barker's are more three dimensional and rugged, while Flockinger's lie flatter and attain a delicate and lace-like form. While their work has it's obvious similarities and parallels, it would be unlikely to confuse the two jewellers work. They both use the same medium but the result of their labour is personal and distinct.

I don't think that Barker and Raible's work can be set in with any kind of global jewellery trends. Firstly, because what is being produced by art jewellers is so extremely diverse and that so-called 'trends' are usually a small number of people making similar work, in a group or singly, knowingly or unknowingly. But Barker and Raible are definitely part of a movement that is bringing back the use of gold as the main material for making jewellery. Also, internationally there is granulated jewellery being produced but in a traditional national style, such as in Thailand, Indian, and Middle Eastern cultures. But this type of artifact cannot be compared to the work of modern artist-craftsmen (and women) who are employing the technique but in a totally different way.

Most of the aspects of Raible's and Barker's work I admire. If I had the chance to choose one piece of their work to keep, it would be a difficult decision to make. I think that Raible's work appeals to the greed naturally existing in the human mind, because of the opulence and costliness of the work and for it's blatant flaunting of

precious gems. But I think Barker's work is more appealing to the artistically minded side because of its interesting abstractness, and its natural and textural qualities.

Of course there are aspects of their work I don't like either. In James Barker's work I find that in many of his pieces there are small additions to the jewel. Small pieces of formed metal and pearls that dangle off the end of a piece. In much the same way that Gerda Flockinger has. In one way these small bits would create movement and perhaps sound when worn. In his piece The Shield of The Mystic, these parts can be seen, and also on the Haiku Brooch (figure 29). In a way they seem to be afterthoughts applied to the piece, and look to me to be slightly out of proportion with the size of the piece. To my eye they look as if they should be of a larger size and in scale to the jewel, or not be attached to the piece at all.

Another hallmark of Barker's work, the random asymmetry of the set gems, works well most of the time and gives a pleasing sense of spontaneity but does not in all cases, so successfully. Again, the example is the Haiku (figure 29) Brooch. The top row of stones, the purple and red ones could be seen as eyes, the larger opal in the centre, the nose, and at the bottom the red, orange, and purple gems a frowning mouth (figure 30). I'm not sure if this little face is intentional or not, but I feel it does not really correspond with the haiku the piece is based upon:

Lady Butterfly  
Perfumes her wings by floating  
Over the orchid. --By Basho

Another element that Barker uses, turquoise, based on his interest in Native Americans and their culture. Their jewellery is very distinct and identifiable because of their use of turquoise, always in conjunction with silver. In



In some recent pieces Barker uses this gem with gold. For example, his turquoise earrings of 18K and 22K gold, diamonds, turquoise, and freshwater pearl drop (Figure 31). I think that the strong brightness of the blue clashes with the gold, and the end result is a cheapened looking piece. The round cabochon cut turquoises look fake, like plastic. This plastic effect can also be seen in his single ear ornament (figure 32). The blue does not harmonize with the gold in the way silver would, and looks synthetic. In this piece he also has a pearl and diamond pendant, which as I have previously said looks unneeded and as if it is an afterthought to the piece.

Kent Raible's jewellery is very rigidly geometric at times, I think this strictness looks too stiff and unimaginative. His work is too overly precise and perfect and can tend to look stale, not because it is a copy or reproduction, but because of the careful decoration he applies. The granules are always placed either around the setting of the gem, or radiating outwards from it. Also, his work is so new looking and brightly polished, a mirror finish which looks as if it came straight from a shop window and contradicts the archaic feel he is trying to give to his work. (figure 33).

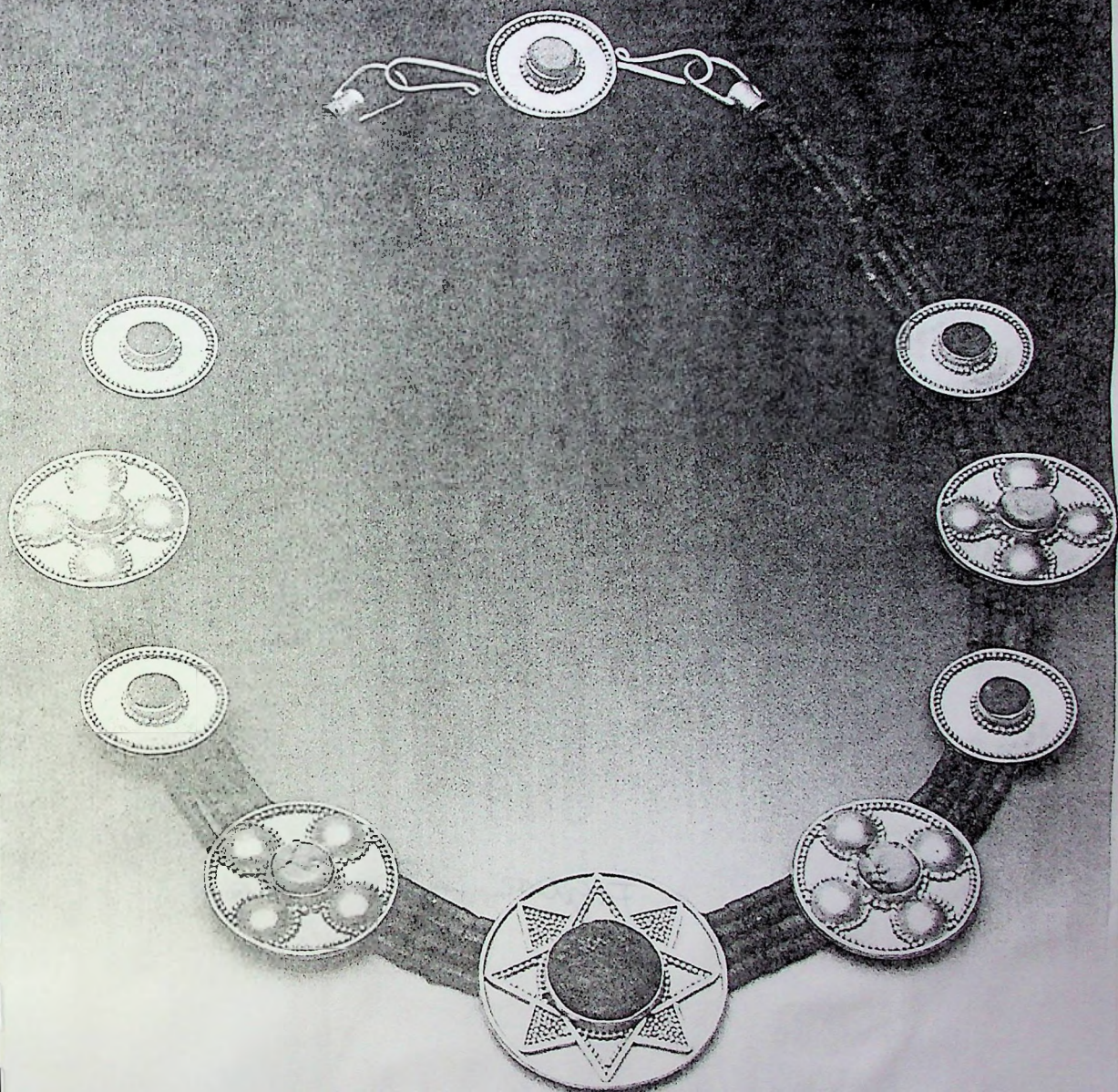
His work is extremely skillfully made, but I think that it is perhaps a display of showmanship and technique, rather than an example of inventive design. I think that his bracelets are overly decorated. With the large gems of amethyst, the intricate granulation, and finely woven wire chain, the eye does not know where to look first. There is too much going on in the piece for it to be clearly read and deciphered.

In one of his newest pieces, a necklace with a peach coloured opal and diamonds, he has achieved, I think, to make a very commercially acceptable piece, price is \$11,670. Here in this piece he is using diamonds more than ever before, and the necklace looks extremely theatrical, gaudy

and flashy (figure 34).

I do admire their respective work and the theory behind it, the thoughts and ideologies that the artists have about their work. The common idea they both share, that the hand, heart, and head have to be unified to create and to bring the sense of magic back into jewellery. Instead of being merely an object the piece turns into a personal amuletic thing. I am intrigued by the intricacy of the gold granulation and am pleased to see the ancient technique given a new life in the 1990's, and I respect and envy Barker's and Raible's excellent technical skills.





MICHAEL WINSTEN  
 Being Inspired by the Muse

*David Ebbinghouse*

**"SKY AND WATERS" NECKLACE:** Multistrand necklace of lapis lazuli beads, with ornamented discs interspersed; electrum and 23K gold, set with turquoise and lapis; surface colored and depletion gilded; \$5,000. The center disc (3.7cm D) is set with an eight pointed star of Ishtar with granulation filling the points; this disc "floats" above the waters which are symbolized by the four strands of tiny cylindrical lapis beads. The four discs set with turquoise have bosses which have been outlined with granulation to provide negative shapes of axe heads. The gold has been colored with a red-orange patina achieved by boiling the metal in various chemical solutions of his own formulation. In time, some of the patina will wear away from the high points and the backs of the discs, to reveal the lighter lemon yellow of the electrum forming the base plates of the discs. All photos by *Ornament* except where noted.

Figure 23



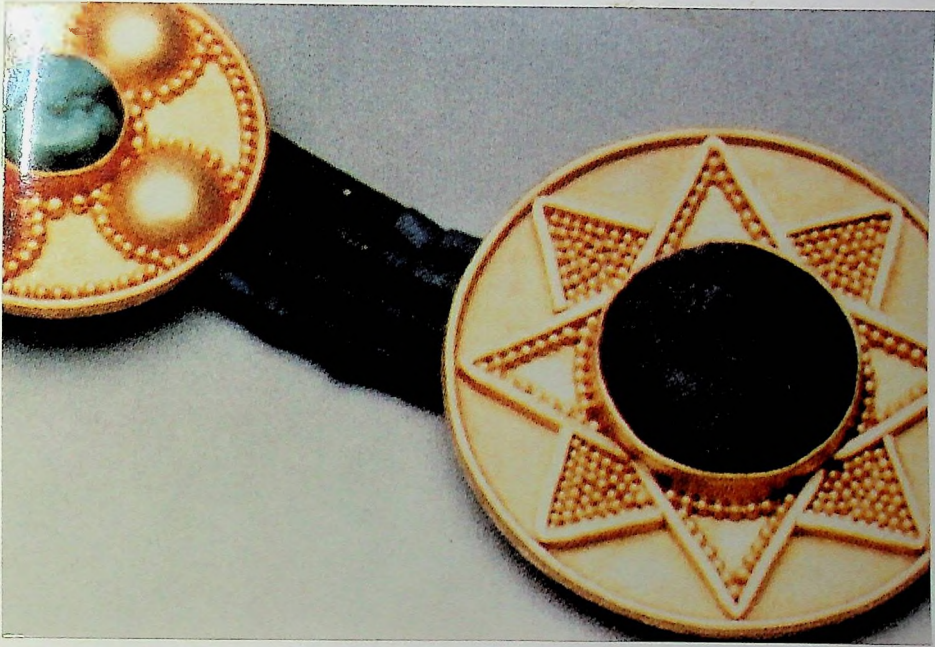


Figure 24

Detail of necklace showing granulation by Michael Winsten.  
From Ornament.



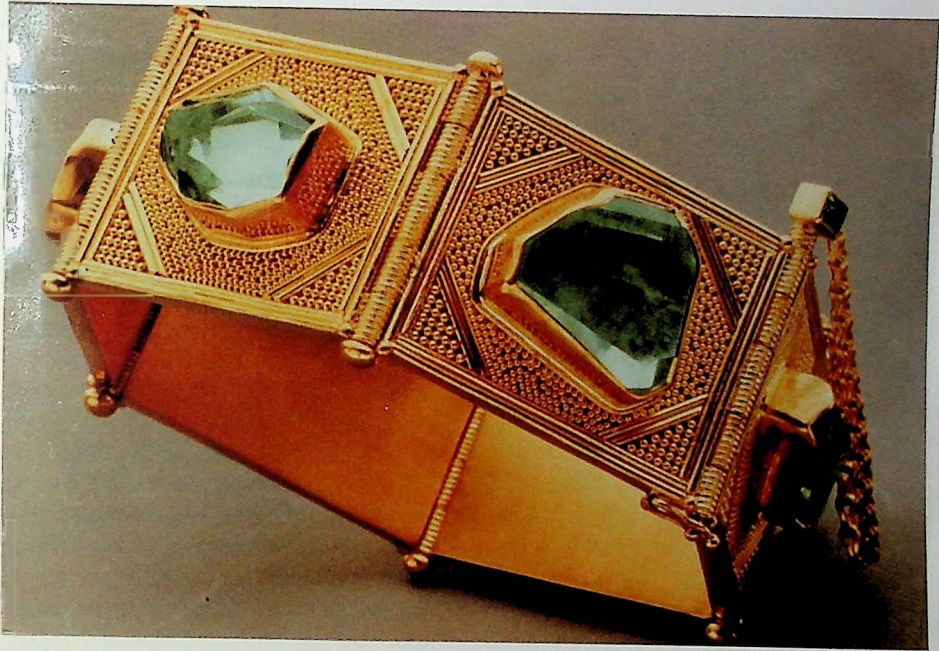


Figure 25

Gold and granulated Magic Carpet Bracelet by Susan Reinstien



Figure 26

Gold, pearls, and gemstones  
Necklace by Gerda Flockinger  
From 20th Century Jewellery





Figure 27

Rings by Gerda Flockinger

Silver, pearl and emerald

from 20th Century British Jewellery 1900-1980



Figure 28

Gold, pearl and diamond earrings  
by Gerda Flockinger  
From 20th Century Jewellery



36g.

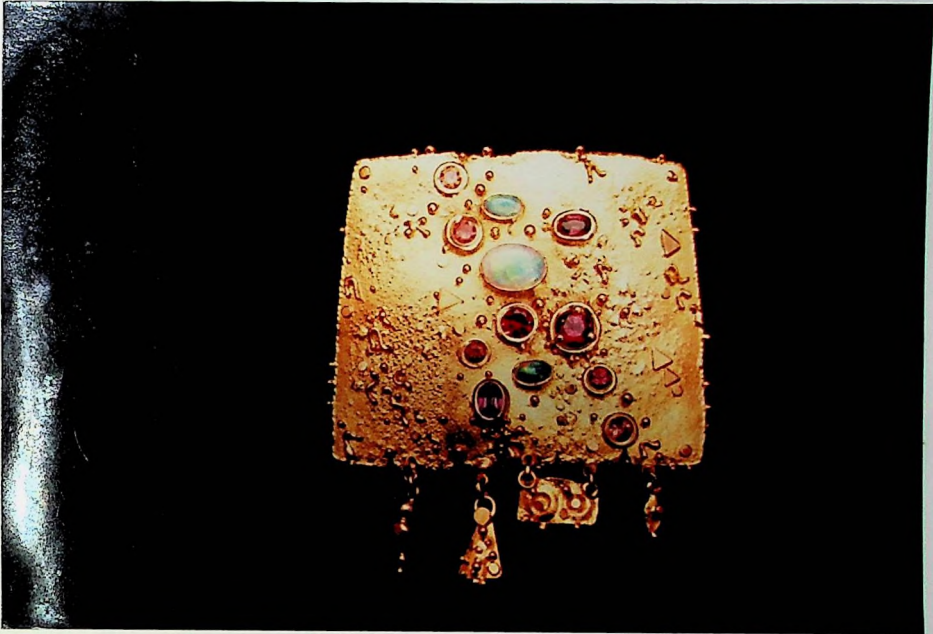


Figure 29

Haiku Brooch /Pendant 18K and 22K gold with fancy sapphires and opals. By Francis Barker.



Figure 30

Haiku Brooch by James Barker, showing a frowning face.



Figure 31

Earrings, gold, pearl, turquoise,  
by James Barker

From Santa Fe East





Figure 32

Ear ornament, gold, pearl, turquoise.

By James Barker, from Ornament.



Amethyst bracelet with 66.6 grams of 18K gold,  
9.133 karats of amethyst, 3.1 karats of rhodolite garnets.  
Kent Raible, 1990.

© 1990 Joanne Lyon Gallery, Inc.

Figure 33

Bracelet by Kent Raibe



36k.



Figure 34

Peach opal, gold and diamond necklace by  
Kent Raible.

From Santa Fe East

CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY

Jewellery can represent many aspects of life. The work of Kent Raible and James Barker represents, they believe, the spirituality of the artist, because their jewellery is made by a process they have journeyed through.

I have examined their technical skills and methods, their influences, and compared them to a few selected artists to give a view of their work in a wider context.



Appendix A

Questionarre from Kent Raible.

1. How did you get into jewelry making?

At age 15 I enrolled in a high school jewelry class to be with my girlfriend - and I never quit. I also grew up in an artistic family.

2. What art schools or colleges did you go to?

College of Marin in Kentfield, California,  
and The Fachhochschule für Gestaltung in  
Schwäbisch Gmünd, West Germany.  
Revere Academy in San Francisco  
and other workshops and classes by  
various artists.

3. Do you think formal training has helped your work?

I received little "formal" training, and mostly used the information I received in classes to experiment and increase my awareness of metals, stones and techniques. I almost always did independent study when I went to school.

4. What (or who) influences and inspires you?

Nature is a big inspiration and the spiritual realm as well. Other Jewelers, who I'll mention later, were also role models. The materials I work with - Gold & natural gems also inspire me.



5. Does what's going on in the other arts influence what you produce, in any way?

In my earlier years I tried to emulate certain styles and trends, and found that to be less than gratifying. Now I just do what I like, and let inspiration come from whatever the source.

6. Do you see your work as wearable art pieces, or more as decoration for the body?

Both and more - I see them as talismans and pieces that evoke certain aspects of people. They are meant to be wearable art that evokes timeless mystery and majesty.

7. How do you get ideas, starting points, for your work?

It's an ongoing process of experiential learning from mistakes, and adding new intuitions as I go along. The sources of ideas are countless and oft not even consciously sought out.

8. Has travelling and seeing other cultures influenced your work?

Yes. Studying in Germany changed the way I worked completely, and I do get ideas from older cultures, from books and museums.

9. Do you think that your style is continually developing and evolving?

Yes, it is an ongoing evolution - I'll add a technique here, a different design element or pattern of granulation there, or see something inspiring to add -

10. Do you design on paper first, or work immediately with the metal. Does your materials dictate the design?

If my idea is concrete enough in my mind, or is loose enough to not need paper - I work directly in the metal. The larger more complex pieces, such as the bracelets - are sketched out first

11. Would you rather have your work on exhibition or being worn by people?

Both are fine - people must see it first on exhibition to then want to buy it and wear it - which is the end event I like to see.

12. Did your technique of using granulation take long to perfect? Is it a unique recipe that you use?

I learned granulation in Germany and spent 6 months developing the technique. I am still improving on it after 6 years. The recipe is one of many I have seen used, and one I believe to be very similar to the recipe used in ancient times.



13. Do you feel that pieces of jewelry can hold a magical or mystical quality?

Definitely - Some jewels can be a link between the physical and spiritual and emotional aspects of humanity. They can represent points of power to people and improve their well-being.

14. Do you see your work as unique and different in comparison to other contemporary jewelry being shown, or are you part of a trend at the moment?

There is a trend in America toward the type of work I'm doing now. There are a growing number of granulationists appearing in the country now that are popularizing the "ancient look".

15. Do you work on one piece at a time?

I work on 5 to 10 pieces at a time, but I no longer work alone - I employ two goldsmiths who work under my supervision, and my partner and wife, Lynn, also helps with the goldwork and marketing.

16. A lot of your work looks reminiscent of ancient artifacts, or lost treasures. Does past history play a part in your art?

I don't design my pieces to emulate past work, although I have been greatly influenced by the old master jewelers. I basically create to satisfy my own vision.

17. Have you ever made larger sculptural work or used other mediums for jewelry making?

I have done large, raised vessels in silver - small sculpture - but have stayed mainly with traditional gold and silver smithing technique.

18. What direction do you see your work heading in. Will your style change?

I seem to be doing more and more elaborate and expensive pieces - My style will change slowly, if at all -

19. Where do you think the place will be for jewelry in the future?

I hope that people will always enjoy wearing jewelry; that has always been and probably always will be. Perhaps there will be less of an emphasis on flashy stones and monetary value - and more emphasis on design and workmanship.

20. Do you have a favourite jeweler or movement in craft?

My favorite past jewelers and role models have been Rene Lalique, John Paul Miller (an American granulist and enamelist in Gold still living) the Castellani's of 19th century Italy, The Etruscans, Egyptians, Romans, Celts, and other ancient gold artists,



21. Do you think your work is a uniquely American style?  
Would your work sell universally?

It isn't an American style, more European. It sells well in America but would also do very well in Germany and Italy. Elsewhere I'm not sure.

22. Your work is in a high price range. Have you ever made inexpensive items. Have you always used gold and precious gems?

I started out making 20-100 dollar silver items, and my pieces increased in price as my skills increased and as I started using more Gold and gems. I have been working almost exclusively in 18K for the last 6 years.

23. How and where did you first start selling your work?

High School - I made earrings and pot pipes that were popular. However I never made much money until I started working in gold and selling through more exclusive galleries.

24. Do you do production lines?

Just have one line of wedding bands that are cast and then granulated. All pieces besides that are unique.

25. Do you work by commissions?

about 10% of my work is on a commission basis - I actually prefer to not have other people's input on the design of a piece, I like to make it my way and then sell it.

26. Do you sell work at craft fairs?

I used to in the beginning - It's very tough work to set up - see a thousand faces walk by, then take down. I haven't done a fair since 1980.

27. Do you have any plans to show any of your work in Ireland or Britain in the future?

Not at this time - If you know of any opportunities or shows that would be appropriate to my work, please let me know.

Please feel free to add anything else if you want. If you can think of anyone else I could write to for information on slides, their address would be most helpful. Thank you for your time in answering my many questions. I enclose a self-addressed envelope and will gladly reimburse postage costs.

If you haven't contacted SNAG, the society of North American Goldsmiths, they do have a slide library you might find useful.

Good luck with your Thesis!



Appendix B.

Questionnaire from James Barker  
and C.V.

1. How did you get into jewelry making?

While attending art school, the state of Wisconsin had a yearly exhibition "THE WISCONSIN PAINTERS & Sculptors / DESIGNER CRAFTSMAN SHOW" — where jewelry and other fine crafts work were exhibited in conjunction with (so-called) FINE ARTS. . . . AND I BECAME FASCINATED WITH THE SKILLS AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SHOWN IN THE DESIGNER CRAFTSMAN PART OF THE SHOW, AND THOUGHT TO MYSELF "I'D LIKE TO DO THAT KIND OF STUFF" . . . . IN 1971 I BOUGHT A BOOK BY OPI UNTRACT ON METALSMITHING AND A FEW WEEKS LATER BOUGHT SOME TOOLS AND SILVER.

2. What art schools or colleges did you go to?

I ATTENDED THE LAUTON SCHOOL OF ART IN MILWAUKEE, WISC. FOR TWO YEARS STUDYING FINE ARTS, PARTICULARLY PAINTING, AND WORKED AS A FINE ARTS PAINTER BEFORE GETTING INVOLVED IN JEWELRY.  
— 1959 TO 1961

STARTED MAKING JEWELRY IN 1972, I AM SELF TAUGHT AS A METALSMITH — .

3. Do you think formal training has helped your work?

YES, IN THAT I HAD A COUPLE OF VERY GOOD TEACHERS THAT REALLY TAUGHT ME "HOW TO SEE"

4. What (or who) influences and inspires you?

I AM VERY MOVED BY ANCIENT AND/OR "PRIMITIVE" ART — WITH AN ENORMOUS FASCINATION AND APPRECIATION OF AFRICAN SCULPTURE. I OFTEN BEGIN MY DAY OF WORK BY HAVING MORNING COFFEE AND GOING THROUGH A COUPLE OF AFRICAN SCULPTURE BOOKS FROM MY LIBRARY. I GUESS I GET SOME SORT OF EMOTIONAL CHARGE FROM LOOKING AT THE SCULPTURE. — I DON'T PAY VERY MUCH ATTENTION AT ALL TO OTHER CONTEMPORARY JEWELRY, NOT WANTING TO BE SOMEHOW INFLUENCED BY



5. Does what's going on in the other arts influence what you produce, in any way?

YES IT DOES ..... BUT I'M NOT SURE  
HOW TO ARTICULATE PRECISELY HOW IT DOES INFLUENCE  
ME — BUT I LOVE TO SEE THINGS THAT  
ARE PRODUCED WITH AN OBVIOUS ALIGNMENT OF  
HEAD, HANDS, HEART AND SPIRIT !

6. Do you see your work as wearable art pieces, or more as decoration for the body?

I HOPE THAT THEY ARE BOTH ! I GUESS I'M TRYING TO  
CREATE A NEW VISION OF "JEWELLERY" THAT IS BOTH APPROPRIATE  
FOR TODAY AND THE FUTURE AS WELL AS CONTINUING ~~THE~~ THE  
7,000 YEARS OR SO TRADITION OF METALSMITHING — WORK THAT  
SOMEHOW IS OF AN "ANCIENT FUTURE" — JEWELLERY IS  
DEFINATELY SOMETHING TO BE WORN, AND I REALLY DON'T HAVE  
MUCH ROOM FOR THE SO-CALLED ART-JEWELLERY HEAD TRIP ABOUT  
GRAND STUFF THAT CAN'T BE EASILY WORN OR IS DANGEROUS TO BOTH  
THE WEARER AND THE VIEWER —

7. How do you get ideas, starting points, for your work?

OFTEN AN IDEA COMES FROM A PIECE OF GOLD  
THAT'S ROLLED OUT FROM MY MILL IN A PARTICULAR SHAPE, OR FROM  
PIECES OF METAL LEFT OVER FROM OTHER PIECES LAYING ON MY  
BENCH. VARIOUS STONES OR COMBINATIONS OF STONES OFTEN PROVIDE  
A STARTING PLACE TOO — PUSHING THEM AROUND IN VARIOUS COMBINATIONS  
UNTIL SOME SORT OF IDEA 'CLICKS-IN' — I ALSO DO LITTLE  
SKETCHES SOMETIMES AND WILL USE THEM AS A STARTING POINT ... SOMETIMES  
YEARS AFTER THE SKETCH WAS MADE —

8. Has travelling and seeing other cultures influenced your work?

YES. ALTHOUGH I HAVE NOT BEEN OUTSIDE OF THE U.S.,  
THE TRAVELS I HAVE DONE HERE, PARTICULARLY IN THE  
SOUTHWEST, WITH THE NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURES AND THE  
MANY RUINS OF THE PREHISTORIC CULTURES OF THE AREA  
HAVE MOVED MY SOUL VERY MUCH. AGAIN, THE VISUALS OF  
STUDYING ANCIENT ART AND AFRICAN ART HAS BEEN A BIG  
INFLUENCE ..... NOT IN RE-CREATING ANY OF THOSE FORMS NECESSARILY  
BUT IN THE EMOTIONAL VITALITY I GET FROM SEEING THOSE  
THINGS —

Blawstin Clancy / James Barker

3.

9. Do you think that your style is continually developing and evolving?

ABSOLUTELY! EVER SINCE I FIRST BEGAN WORKING I HAVE CHALLENGED MYSELF TO MAKE MY LATEST PIECE OF WORK BETTER THAN THE LAST. ALWAYS WORKING MY WAY UP SOME SORT OF INVISIBLE LADDER.

10. Do you design on paper first, or work immediately with the metal. Does your materials dictate the design?

I DO BOTH. AND YES, MATERIALS OFTEN DO INSPIRE A DESIGN OR PROVIDE A STARTING POINT —

11. Would you rather have your work on exhibition or being worn by people?

MY WORK IS MADE TO BE WORN! IT'S NICE TO HAVE IT EXHIBITED TOO, BUT EXHIBITED SO PEOPLE WILL FALL IN LOVE WITH IT AND TAKE IT HOME!

12. Did your technique of layering and texturing take long to perfect?

I GUESS SO.... I'M GETTING MORE AND MORE PROFICIENT AT IT, WITH MY MORE RECENT WORK BEING MORE COMPLEX AND INVOLVED THAN MY EARLIER WORK. I AM CONSTANTLY LEARNING HOW TO BE A JEWELLER.



13. Do you feel that pieces of jewelry can hold a magical or mystical quality?

DEFINATELY. I THINK THEY CAN ALSO HOLD A SPIRITUAL QUALITY. I THINK TOO THAT THE TITLES OF MY PIECES CONVEY MY FEELINGS IN THOSE AREAS ———.

14. Do you see your work as unique and different in comparison to other contemporary jewelry being shown, or are you part of a trend at the moment?

I HOPE SO. I DON'T WANT MY WORK TO LOOK LIKE ANYTHING ELSE. I FEEL THAT SO MUCH OF THE WORK THAT IS PART OF THE 'TREND OF THE MOMENT' HAS SORT OF A HOMOGINIZED LOOK TO IT, RATHER THAN DISPLAYING THE PARTICULAR VISION OF THE MAKER. LOOKING AT A LOT OF THE CONTEMPORARY JEWELLERY OUT THERE GIVES ONE THE IMPRESSION THAT THERE ARE ONLY 6 OR 7 PEOPLE MAKING ALL OF IT! A LOT OF IT HAS SORT OF A BORING 'SAMENESS' TO IT.

15. Do you work on one piece at a time?

SOMETIMES .... BUT OFTEN AS NOT I FIND MYSELF WORKING ON 2 OR 3 PIECES AT A TIME, SINCE I CAN BE WORKING ON ONE THING WHILE THE OTHER IS BEING PICKLED ———

16. A lot of your work looks reminiscent of ancient artifacts, or lost treasures. Does past history play a part in your art?

VERY MUCH SO ..... I THINK I'VE EXPLAINED THAT IN SOME OF MY PREVIOUS ANSWERS.

Blawin Clancy / James Barker

5.

17. Have you ever made larger sculptural work or used other mediums for jewelry making?

NO.

18. What direction do you see your work heading in?  
Will your style change?

I DON'T KNOW WHERE IT'S GOING ..... I JUST SORT OF FOLLOW MY NOSE. I HOPE THAT MY "STYLE" WILL CONSTANTLY CHANGE AND EVOLVE. DOING ONE PIECE USUALLY INSPIRES A DOZEN MORE.... AND THEN I CHOOSE ONE OF THOSE TO MAKE NEXT. I SELDOM HAVE MUCH TROUBLE COMING UP WITH A NEW DESIGN OR IDEA.

19. Where do you think the place will be for jewelry in the future?

THAT'S A BIG QUESTION! I DON'T KNOW AS IF I HAVE ANY IDEAS ON THAT. I GUESS I JUST WANT TO BE ONE OF THOSE PEOPLE THAT HELPS CARRY ON THE 7000 YEAR OLD TRADITION OF GOLDSMITHING, CREATING THINGS THAT WILL STILL BE BEAUTIFUL THOUSANDS OF YEARS FROM NOW.

20. Do you have a favourite jeweler or movement in craft?

I DO HAVE SEVERAL FAVORITE JEWELLERS .... WHO DO WORK THAT SHOWS EVIDENCE OF SIMILAR AESTHETIC SENSIBILITIES TO MY OWN ———. NOT THAT THEIR WORK LOOKS LIKE MINE NECESSARILY, BUT SHOWS A SIMILAR APPRECIATION TO MATERIALS AND WORK OF THE PAST AND WHO ARE ALSO CREATING THEIR OWN VISION IN THEIR WORK.



21. Do you think your work is a uniquely American style? Would your work sell universally?

Uniquely American ... No —. NOT AT ALL. YES, I would like to sell my work internationally, and feel that there is probably a much bigger market for my work there (Paris, Tokyo, Sao Paulo, etc.) than there is in America. The problem is getting it out there for those people to see. I'm currently working with a woman in Virginia who is taking a collection of art jewelry to Tokyo next week. We'll see what happens. She wants to develop an ongoing business marketing American art jewelry in Japan.

22. Your work is in a high price range. Have you ever made inexpensive items. Have you always used gold and precious gems?

I started out working with silver, and for the past 12 years have been working only in gold. .... 18K and 22K .... it is simply so beautiful! I work with high karat gold and precious stones not necessarily because of their intrinsic value, but because they simply are so beautiful in their own right. My pieces do end up being relatively expensive because of the materials and labor intensive nature of my work. The large necklace in my slide pack took me two months to make (a lot of 12 to 18 hour work days!) and cost me \$11,000 in materials. I make about 30 pieces a year.

23. How and where did you first start selling your work?

Started selling to small shops and friends, at various art fairs, and then to galleries across the U.S. I am currently working with 5 or 6 galleries as I can't produce enough work to work with more .... I like each gallery to have 8 to 15 pieces of my work so they have a representative selection of my pieces and price range. Price range is basically \$3,500 to 8,000 with some more expensive pieces.

24. Do you do production lines?

No, No, No!! THE IDEA of doing a production line absolutely bores me to tears!! I simply could not stand doing the same things over and over. I am very fortunate to have the luxury of creating only one-of-a-kind pieces! I couldn't psychologically handle doing it any other way!

Blawnin Clancy / James Barker

7.

25. Do you work by commissions?

SELDOM. PERHAPS I DO ONE COMMISSION  
PIECE A YEAR..... PERHAPS! I WOULD MUCH  
RATHER CREATE THE PIECES I WANT TO CREATE AND HAVE  
~~PEOPLE~~ PEOPLE BUY THEM. WHEN I DO COMMISSIONS PEOPLE  
GENERALLY GIVE ME A PRICE RANGE TO WORK IN, AND AN IDEA  
OF WHAT IT IS THEY LIKE ABOUT MY WORK AND ALLOW ME TO CREATE  
A PIECE FOR THEM. I HAVE TO HAVE THAT KIND OF FREEDOM!

26. Do you sell work at craft fairs?

NO, NOT ANYMORE. ALTHOUGH IN THE PAST TWO YEARS  
I HAVE PARTICIPATED IN THE PHILADELPHIA CRAFT SHOW  
WHICH IS PROBABLY THE VERY BEST RETAIL SHOW IN AMERICA,  
AND WAS VERY SUCCESSFUL BOTH YEARS. IT'S ALSO KIND OF  
INTERESTING TO GET THAT SORT OF DIRECT FEEDBACK AS WELL AS  
BEING ABLE TO SELL MY WORK AT RETAIL PRICES. BUT I COULDN'T  
HANDLE DOING MORE THAN ONE OR TWO SHOWS A YEAR. I'M GLAD TO  
DEAL WITH GALLERIES, LETTING THEM GET THEIR COMMISSION FOR SELLING MY  
27. Do you have any plans to show any of your work  
in Ireland or Britain in the future? work.

I DON'T HAVE ANY PLANS FOR THAT, BUT  
CERTAINLY WOULD CONSIDER THE IDEA IF  
ANYTHING PRESENTED ITSELF.

Please feel free to add anything else if you want.  
If you can think of anyone else I could write to for  
information on slides, their address would be  
most helpful. Thank you for your time in  
answering my many questions. I enclose a self-  
addressed envelope and will gladly reimburse  
postage costs.

I THINK I HAVE PRETTY WELL ANSWERED MOST ALL OF YOUR  
QUESTIONS.... IF YOU HAVE ANY MORE PLEASE LET ME  
KNOW. I'D BE MOST INTERESTED IN SEEING SOME OF YOUR WORK!  
I HOPE THAT THE ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS AND SLIDES I HAVE  
PROVIDED WILL BE HELPFUL TO YOU. I'M INCLUDING  
SOME OTHER ARTIST/JEWELLERS ON A SEPARATE PIECE OF  
PAPER.

THANKS SO MUCH FOR YOUR INTEREST IN MY WORK.

James Barker.



JAMES BARKERARTIST/GOLDSMITH

Box 705 \* Medanales \* New Mexico \* 87548 \* 505-685-4332

Born in Wisconsin in 1941, James received formal Fine Arts training in painting and sculpture at the Layton School of Art in Milwaukee, Wisconsin from 1959 to 1961. The following 10 years were spent professionally active as a painter and as a freelance designer of graphics and typography. He has had experience in the areas of Display Design, Photography and Cinematography. James is self-taught in the art of jewellery and metalsmithing, and began work in these fields in the fall of 1972.

After living and working in California for 17 years, a recent move was made to New Mexico, where he now maintains a studio north of Santa Fe, near Abiquiu, the long-time home of artist Georgia O'Keefe.

There he alloys his own special colours of gold from which he rolls out the sheet metal and draws down the various configurations of wires that are used in fabricating his one-of-a-kind pieces of designer jewellery. Preferring not to use casting or wax carving in the creation of his work, he instead employs the same labor-intensive handworking methods that have been used, virtually unchanged, for more than 5,000 years. The techniques of sawing, filing, forging, soldering, fusing, repoussage, chasing and reticulation are some of the mastered skills he uses to transform the glimmer of an idea into a finished piece of jewellery. Combining 18k and 22k golds with the finest of precious gems, pearls, and other rare materials, his work strongly reflects his avid interest in Archeology and ancient and "primitive" jewellery, as well as showing the great respect and appreciation he has for the materials he uses. In blending these influences with his personal aesthetic, the work, the fruit of much thought, time and labor, has been called jewellery of the "Ancient Future". It is work that is both unique and imaginative in look, strong in character, with great attention having been paid to detail and excellent craftsmanship.

While most of his creations are made to be displayed and sold in fine art jewellery galleries across the country, James also does custom designs for private commissions. He prefers to work with people who provide a general description of their desires and aesthetic interest, and who will then allow him to immerse himself into the designing and creation of the work. He feels that this degree of trust, confidence and freedom bestowed by his clients has helped inspire the creation of some of his finest work.

RECENT EXHIBITIONS AND INVITATIONAL GROUP SHOWS1989:

- "The Gold Show" - Quadrum Gallery, Boston
- "The Philadelphia Crafts Show" - Sponsored by The Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, Pa.
- "Turquoise and Gold Show" - Santa Fe East, Santa Fe, N.M.
- "The Santa Fe Collection" - Heller Fine Jewelry, Chevy Chase, Maryland
- "New Names - New Works" - Santa Fe East, Santa Fe, N.M.

1988:

- "Pearls and Opals Show" - The Works Gallery, Philadelphia, Pa.
- Fancy Coloured Diamonds Show - Aaron Faber Gallery, N.Y.C.
- "Designer Jewellery Show" - Lee Sclar Gallery, Morristown, N.J.
- "Rings \* One Show" - Quadrum Gallery, Chestnut Hill, Mass.
- "Rings \* 1988" - Elaine Potter Gallery, San Francisco

1987:

- "Fine Art Jewellery in America - 1987" - Cross Creek Gallery, Malibu, Calif.
- Portfolio Exhibition - Aaron Faber Gallery, N.Y.C.
- "The Faust Collection" - Elaine Potter Gallery/San Francisco Opera, San Francisco

1986:

- "Group Show" - Aaron Faber Gallery, N.Y.C.
- "Fine Art Jewellery in America - 1986" - Cross Creek Gallery, Malibu, Calif.
- One Person Show - Gallery Fair, Mendocino, Calif.
- "California" - Elaine Potter Gallery, San Francisco
- "Ear Expo. VI" - Aaron Faber Gallery, N.Y.C.
- "Reflections of the American Southwest" - Two person show, Loanna Clark Gallery, Petaluma, Calif.
- Group Show - El Parion de Santa Fe, Santa Fe, N.M.
- "Palms" - Group Show - White Tops Gallery, Palm Desert, Calif.

1985:

- "Fine Art Jewellery in America - 1985" - Cross Creek Gallery, Malibu, Calif.
- Two Person Show - Slant Gallery, Sacramento, Calif.
- One Person Show - Stary-Sheets Gallery, Gualala, Calif.
- Falkirk Tenth Annual Portrait's Show - San Rafael, Calif.
- "35 Selected American Artisans Show" - Cross Creek Gallery, Malibu, Calif.

1984:

- "Jewellery and Enamels '84" - Del Mano Gallery, Los Angeles
- One Person Show - Park Row Gallery - Santa Fe, N.M.
- "California Designs/Jewellery" - Freehand Gallery, Los Angeles

1983:

- One Person Show - Park Row Gallery, Santa Fe, N.M.



RECENT EXHIBITIONS AND INVITATIONAL GROUP SHOWS, cont.

1982:

Second Annual National Invitational Wedding Ring Show  
Precious Objects Gallery, Los Gatos, Calif.

1981:

"Objects '81 - National Invitational" - Grand Junction, Colo.  
"Goldsmith '81" - University of Kansas/Society of North  
American Goldsmiths  
"Fabrications in Precious Metals" - Del Mano Gallery  
Los Angeles  
"Jewellery '81" - Contemporary Artisans Gallery, San  
Francisco  
National Invitational Wedding Ring Show - Precious Objects  
Gallery, Los Gatos, Calif.

1980:

MCCN National '80 - Marietta College, Marietta, Ohio  
Arizona National Invitational - Scottsdale Center For the Arts,  
Scottsdale

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Distinguished Member - Society of North American Goldsmiths  
(SNAG)  
New Mexico Metalsmiths Association - Santa Fe, N.M.  
Metal Arts Guild - San Francisco  
California Design Group - San Francisco  
The Bead Society - Los Angeles

PRESENT GALLERY AFFILIATIONS

Santa Fe East Gallery - Santa Fe, N.M.  
Quadrum Gallery - Chestnut Hill, Mass.  
Artrium Gallery - New York City  
The Works Gallery - Philadelphia, Penn.  
Del Mano Gallery - Los Angeles, Calif.

AWARDS

Grand Prize - INTERGOLD '83 - International Gold Corporation,  
New York, N.Y.  
First Prize - Ornament Magazine Jewellery Design Competition,  
1983  
Award of Distinguished Merit - San Francisco Arts Commission

PUBLICATIONS

THE ART OF AMERICAN JEWELRY 1970-1990 - Laura Kruger  
ORNAMENT MAGAZINE - Feature Article - Winter Issue 1985  
METAL JEWELRY TECHNIQUES - Marcia Chamberlain

COLLECTIONS OF:

Joni Mitchell - Singer/Songwriter  
Ruth Pointer - The Pointer Sisters  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert De Niro  
John Denver and Family  
Alvin Sargeant - Oscar Winning Screen Writer  
The Estate of Lillian Hellman - Author

plus many private collections throughout the United States and  
Europe



Appendix C

Technical notes on granulation.

## Granulation Procedures

Gold Used	Welding Substance	Glue or Gum for Granule Placement	Heat Source
Rosenberg-Treskow 900/1000 gold 50/1000 silver 50/1000 copper	The granule is coated with gold carbide as a result of being formed in charcoal, the carbide having a melting point 160°C below that of the gold used	Spittle, which contains ptyalin, the amylase of saliva, an enzyme that accelerates the hydrolysis of starch, a complex carbohydrate. Spittle itself is weakly alkaline.	Reducing torch flame or kiln with reducing atmosphere
Littledale 750/100 red gold (250/1000 parts copper, or 125/1000* parts copper and 125/1000 parts silver)	1 part copper hydroxide (a copper salt. Salts are any of a class of compounds derived from acids by the replacement of part or all of the acid hydrogen by a metal. Salts are formed by the reaction of acids with metals and oxides, and other ways). Cupric hydroxide $\text{Cu}(\text{OH})_2$ , finely divided, or other copper salts.	1 part organic glue, as siccotine + water, or gum tragacanth + water, or gum acacia + water. Mix with copper hydroxide to form a paste, apply with a brush to granule during granule placement.	Reducing torch flame, heat to 1634°F (890°C)
Wilm-Roethel 750/1000 red gold 585/1000 red gold containing copper	At the start, copper chloride, then halfway: copper oxide, flux, water, one third each	Flux and water. Borax flux the ground and place granules.	Reducing torch flame
750/1000 red gold 585/1000 red gold both containing copper	Pre-heat granules and base metal separately to achieve copper oxidized surface with an oxidizing torch	Borax flux the ground and granules	Reducing torch flame
Miller 750/1000 yellow gold	Preheat granules only for surface oxide. Place them on depletion-gilded nearly 24k gold surface base metal	Gum tragacanth on brush when placing granules	Reducing torch flame, object placed over charcoal bed
750/1000 red gold	Coat base with finely divided copper oxide powder mixed with gum	Gum tragacanth mixed with borax used on brush to place granules	Reducing torch flame
Kulicke-Stark 22k gold (22 dwt 24k gold, 1.5 dwt fine silver, .5 dwt copper or fine silver)	Depletion gild the base. Plate or paint the base metal of electrum (gold silver alloy) with copper by immersing it in copper-saturated nitric acid, in which some iron such as a piece of iron binding wire is present and in contact with the granules to cause the plating action, or by applying it with a brush. Coat granules with same for gold, but not silver unless they are large.	Hide glue and water, proportioned 1-10 respectively for flat surfaces. Add 1 part hard soldering flux to the above for curved surfaces.	Heat in small kiln with glass cover, till red, then apply reducing torch flame.



# SPHEROIDIZING: PREPARING THE GRANULES

1 Long, thin strips are cut from a sheet of 34 gauge B.&S. 18K yellow gold (75% gold and 25% copper and silver). Hand- or foot-operated *guillotine shears* are used for this purpose. The strips are fed endwise to the shear blades, and shear cropped into small, more or less uniform pieces. Alternately, fine wire arranged in a bundle can be cut by *hand* or *bench alligator shears*. Very small granules of the *pulviscolo* type can be made from coarse filings of precious metals.

2 The resulting minute square and rectangular gold chips can be granulated to the base in that form, a practice often followed by Miller. Frequently they are formed into small, round balls or granules, the traditional form used for granulation. The process of making these small, round balls is called *spheroidizing*, which is the heating, fusing, and cooling of metal that results in a rounded or globular form. The term can also be used to describe the making of larger balls called *shot*, normally too large for use in granulation. *Shooting*, a process by which the refiner prepares metal in rounded pellets for use in casting, is also a form of spheroidizing.

By a metallurgical principle, when small amounts of metal are melted to the *liquidus point*, a cohering surface tension force causes them to contract, or become reduced to a form having the smallest possible surface area consistent with the material and the force of gravity in a shape that can contain the liquid result. In this case, the shape is a *sphere* which when small enough becomes a granule when allowed to cool and solidify in this form. The sphere shape has the minimum surface-to-volume ratio.

To accomplish spheroidizing by one method used by Miller, the gold chips are sifted on a leveled layer of *powdered charcoal* placed in a *stainless steel container*. These chips are distributed so that as much as possible they do not touch each other, because if they do, they will join under heat and form larger balls when the larger mass of metal fuses. A second layer of charcoal is sifted over the chips to a depth sufficient to prevent the next distribution of chips deposited upon it from sinking through the first. For this reason, the charcoal should not be too finely powdered. Only three or four layers are so made in the container, their total depth being about 1 1/4 in (5.7 cm). If you make too many layers at once you risk the interior not reaching the necessary temperature. More granules than you expect to use are made because of the relatively wide variation in sizes that results as a function of the inequality of chip sizes.

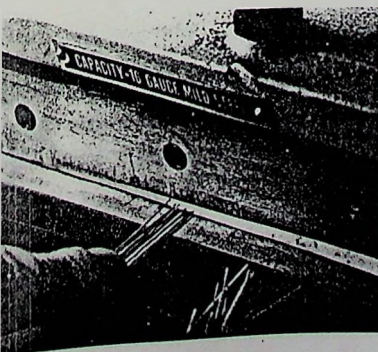
3 The container with charcoal and gold chips is placed in an *electric kiln* preheated to about 2000° F

## GOLD GRANULATION: Practice DEMONSTRATION 16

JOHN PAUL MILLER illustrates one granulation method while making a pendant/brooch

Photos: John Paul Miller

Shown in the following sequence is only *one* of the several gold granulation techniques used by the artist. Here an 18K gold granulation ornamented pendant/brooch in the form of a cephalopod is fabricated.



1

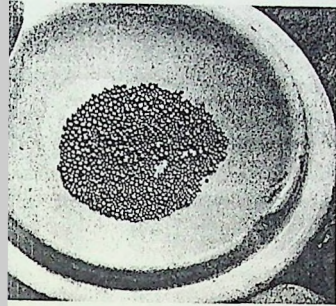


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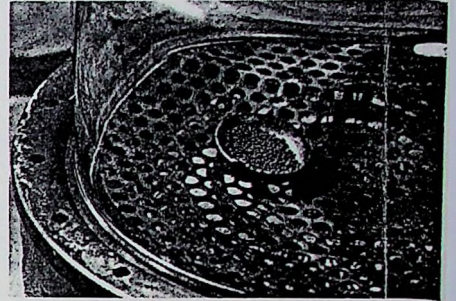




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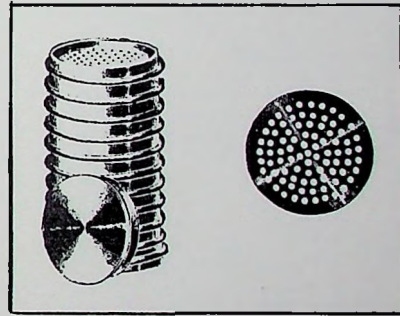
6

(1093.3° C). A container 4 in  $\times$  2.5 in (10.2 cm  $\times$  5.7 cm) requires about 20 minutes in the kiln for the chips to contract to their smallest surface and form spheres, each separated from the other by the powdered charcoal. The loose physical condition of the powdered charcoal does not resist the spheroidizing process or cause any surface flatness, as would occur if solid, flat charcoal or other refractory material is used, unless a depression is made for each granule, obviously impossible when they are very small, but possible when making shot.

4 The container is removed from the kiln and its contents are poured directly into another *container of water* and some detergent, and the charcoal is washed away, leaving behind the gold granules, which because of their weight, gather at the bottom of the container. The presence of the charcoal surrounding each granule during formation creates a reducing atmosphere around each sphere so that their surfaces remain bright and oxide-free. Even slight variations in chip sizes result in spheres of many slightly differing diameters.

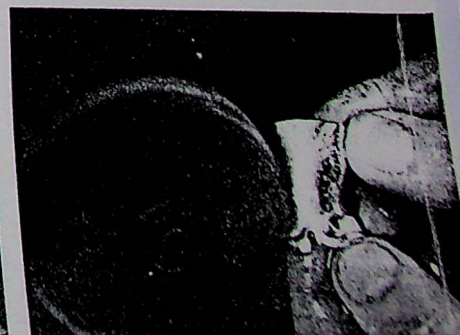
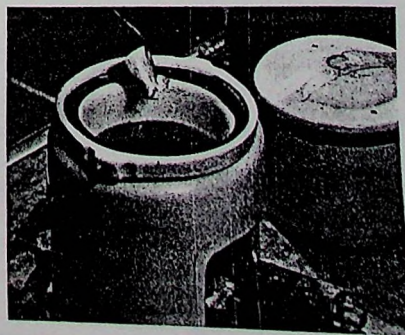
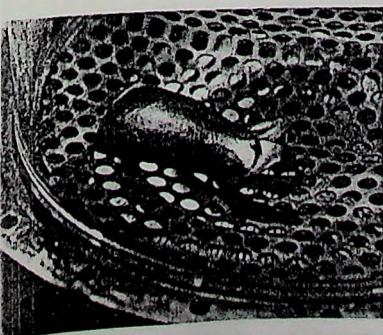
5 Because ornamental granules are generally grouped by size, they are now sorted into eight different diameters by sifting them through a *series of sieves*, starting with the one having the smallest mesh openings, and continuing to those progressively larger. No. 8 is the smallest granule of uniform size and has an 0.008 in (0.205 mm) diameter; No. 2 is the largest uniform size and is 0.030 in (0.762 mm) in diameter; and No. 1 is large, ungraded sizes.

6 The granules selected for use are placed in a container of pure or 18K gold, put into a *small electric kiln* having a *heatproof glass cover* so they can be observed, and are heated to 1200° F (648.8° C) and kept at that temperature for several minutes. During this time, their surfaces, which contain copper, become oxidized and uniformly covered with black cupric oxide, CuO, also

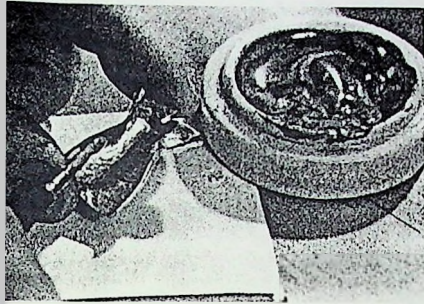


9-57 TEN-TIERED SIEVE. This is used for sorting the sizes of spheroid-shaped granules to obtain uniformity of size. Sieves are available and can be made to specifications by Karl Fischer, Pfalzheim.

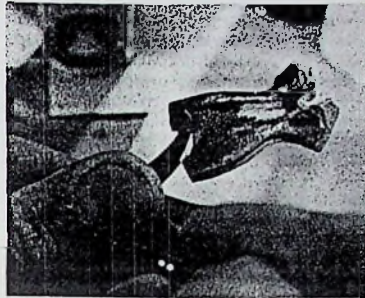
called copper monoxide, or black oxide of copper; in jeweler's parlance it is called firescale. Below the outer layer of black copper oxide is red oxide of copper,  $\text{Cu}_2\text{O}$ , also called copper suboxide, cuprous oxide, and copper hemioxide. The difference in its composition from black copper oxide is due to the fact that it has been created under reduced atmospheric conditions. The outer layers become black copper oxide because they are exposed to a greater amount of atmospheric oxygen. The granules emerge from the kiln looking like black poppy seeds, making them highly visible during their placement in a pattern.







10



11



12

#### DEPLETION GILDING: PREPARING THE SURFACE

7 The next aim is to develop a surface of nearly pure gold on the repoussé-worked and chased form on which the granules will be applied. This is done by a process called *depletion gilding*, an ancient technique for creating a final surface of nearly pure gold on any object made of even low gold content alloys. In the process, by chemical means, all metals in the alloy except the gold that exist in the outer surface are removed. In the present context, the need to create the pure gold surface on the 18K gold base is that it will act more favorably in this particular granulation technique. Some oxide may form on a depletion-gilded surface when it is heated, but very much less than if the surface had not been gold enriched.

Depletion gilding involves three steps. The first is to heat the object in the electric kiln to 1200° F (648.8° C) which causes the copper molecules in the outermost layers of the alloy to combine with oxygen, oxidize, and form a firescale on its surface.

8 The next step is to immerse the object in a hot, dilute solution of nitric acid which dissolves the surface scale (cupric oxide), leaches out surface copper, and leaves a greater number of gold molecules exposed than formerly. The nitric acid attacks only the copper (and the silver, if any is present in the alloy), not the gold. The object is rinsed well in running water to remove acid traces.

9 The surface is next scratch brushed which has the effect of burnishing it without removing any metal, and compressing it at the same time. For this, a *nickel silver, fine crimped wire brush* fed a constant thin stream of soapy water as lubricant, is used.

These last three steps are repeated in sequence a maxi-

mum of three times as a surface more gold enriched than this seems to result in a weaker joint of the granule. The surface thereafter acts almost as one of pure gold.

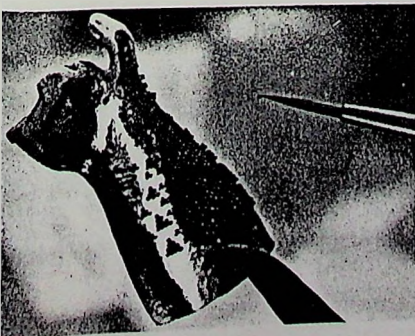
#### GRANULE PLACEMENT: USING GUM AND BRUSH TO MANIPULATE GRANULE POSITION

10 A thin coat of a special soldering investment plaster slurry, used for holding parts together while soldering, and a great help in other difficult soldering operations (see Soldering, Chapter 10), is here applied to the edges of the work to prevent them from becoming overheated during the soldering process that follows. Edges are always attacked by heat first and therefore tend to melt before the rest of the metal has reached a high enough temperature; the plaster by its insulating refractory property prevents this from happening.

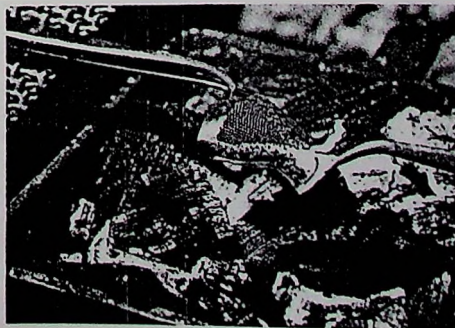
11 A solution of *gum tragacanth* is prepared. One-tenth of a gram of gum powder is combined with half an ounce of water, which makes a relatively thin solution. A brush moistened with this gum solution picks up the granules and deposits them on the upper thumb where they are checked for uniformity of size and shape.

12 Granules are transferred to their position on the metal base which is hand held with *self-locking tweezers*. In the process of transfer, each granule becomes completely coated with a gum amount sufficient to hold the granule in place. To assist the gum in its job of holding the granules in place, the work is turned so that the area of granule placement is facing upward.

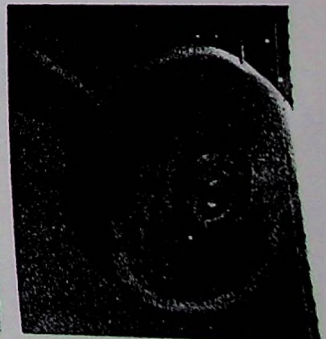
13 The granules positioned in one area are allowed to dry before turning a three-dimensional form in another direction to place granules on another part. As the amount of moisture in the gum is small the gum dries in air, and ordinarily it is not necessary to heat the work to hasten



13

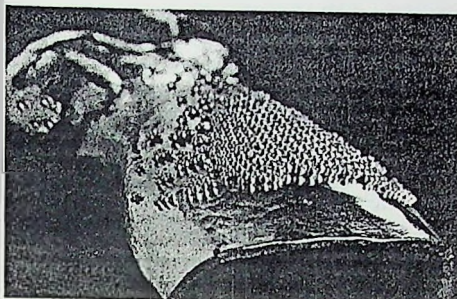


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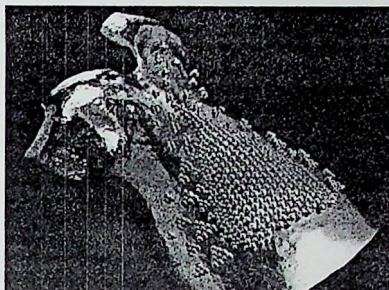


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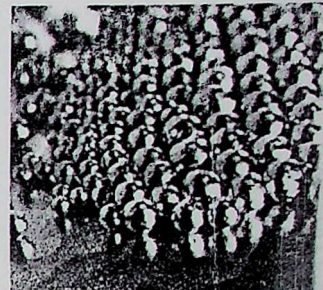




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drying. The gum, however, must be *thoroughly dry* so that excess moisture will not boil up under subsequent heating and cause possible granule displacement.

#### GRANULATION: GRANULE FUSION WELD BONDING

14 The piece is held in air above a premade bed of glowing charcoal in a *brazier* by clamping two stainless steel *self-locking tweezers* at either end. To free the hands, they are then laid flat on and anchored to a *heating frame* placed on either side of the brazier level with its top. Sometimes a piece is placed on a *fine iron wire screen*. Discretion must be used, as holding tools can act to absorb too much heat. The glowing charcoal under the piece works to establish a uniform temperature over the entire piece, a condition essential to the success of the process. The edges of a large surface heat faster than the center and the heat from the charcoal tends to balance the heat supply.

The flame of a *torch* set to a reducing condition is applied to the work from above (out of view). Its size is sufficiently large so that the outer flame envelope shields and further protects the metal by excluding and preventing atmospheric oxygen attack. Heating is fast to avoid the dissipation of carbon formed from the binder. For large areas, Miller uses a *fluxing unit* set to introduce a small amount of gas/flux into the flame and increase its reducing condition. Creating a reducing flame, and its control by playing it over the metal without overheating it, are critical for successful granulation. Contrary to normal heating practice, a *bright light* is used during the heating in order to better observe the changes that occur to the surfaces of the base metal and the granules as the temperature of the metal rises.

Under the heat of the reducing flame, in the reduced atmosphere, it is the chemical change that occurs that allows the joining of a granule to the base. The black cupric oxide,  $\text{CuO}$ , on the granule surface turns to cuprous oxide,  $\text{Cu}_2\text{O}$ . The gum carbonizes, and the oxygen in the cuprous oxide combines with the carbon and passes off as carbon dioxide gas, leaving behind a very thin film of pure molten copper that completely covers the granule surface. The copper in a high-alloy gold acts to lower the melting temperature to a minimum of  $1623.2^\circ\text{F}$  ( $884^\circ\text{C}$ ), the liquidus temperature of the copper and gold alloy used which also contains some silver.

As the workpiece nears red heat, the granules look dark, and the surrounding carbonized glue becomes bright red. As the heating continues and the liquidus of the alloy is approached, the surface tension of the copper film breaks

down and, because of capillarity, the copper flushes and migrates to the point of contact between granule and base, in the manner of solder when it becomes liquid in a joint. Usually the enriched, almost pure gold surface becomes bright, but the granules shimmer, as does the area immediately near them where some of the copper flows over it.

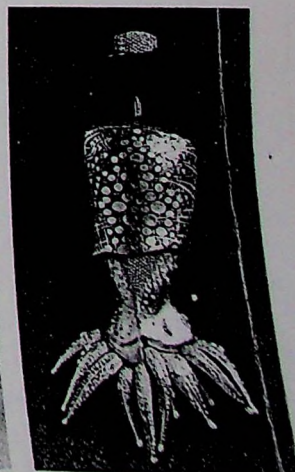
At this point—the “moment of truth” in granulation—in a few seconds a welding and bonding action takes place. The touching metal surfaces are in the plastic range of both the copper and the gold, but under controlled conditions the rest of the metal does not reach the liquidus temperature before the completion of the bond or the metal would collapse. The bond occurs when the molecules of the molten copper flow to the contacting surfaces by capillary attraction, and in this action, the contacting atoms of both metals interpenetrate. Thus the granules join where they touch each other and the base simultaneously. The success of the whole process, even after careful preparation and meeting all other necessary conditions, depends upon the judgment of that point at which the above action has taken place in the final, critical few seconds. The flame is then immediately withdrawn. At this point, the metal turns black upon cooling.

The point of contact is a small fillet of a copper gold alloy. As mentioned, there must be a sufficient fillet to make the joint firm, and it can be seen under magnification, but to the naked eye it seems not to exist. Overheating is to be avoided since this may cause a large fillet,

19



20





which will also occur if there is too much copper in the welding medium.

It is sometimes necessary to make two or more applications of granules, and the second and subsequent firing process becomes even more critical.

#### FINISHING: SURFACE PROCESSING AND ASSEMBLY

15 The piece is pickled to remove the surface firescale. All cleaning action must be *gentle* and done with great care in this delicate work. The surface is burnished with the same *nickel wire brush* as before, using soapy water as a lubricant. The spindle is operated at the slow speed of 1800 rpm.

16 Here we see the completed granulated unit which is only a part of the total pendant/brooch.

17 These close-ups show by the reflection of the inverted image of the granule in the mirror-bright surface of the base metal, that the point of its contact to the base is absolutely *minimal*. This is the main characteristic of successful granulation.

18 The base metal is 18 gauge B.&S. (0.040 in or 1.02 mm), and the smallest granules here are eight thousandths of an inch (0.008 in or 0.205 mm).

19 The assembled basic units of the incomplete pendant/brooch. The central section ornamented with granulation is  $1\frac{1}{8}$  in  $\times$   $\frac{3}{4}$  in (3.6 cm  $\times$  1.9 cm).

20 The completed pendant/brooch. Enamel has been fired in the spaces between the granules and chips in the upper section. The tentacles are also granulated with chips and flattened pellets, as well as round granules.

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