

# MASSC

**Newsletter**  
**March 2021**



# Presidents Message

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Greetings Fellow Metalsmiths!



I hope this message finds you all safe and healthy. I don't know about you but I am elbows deep into early spring cleaning. It's a great time to start if you haven't already and an even better time to pull out the old tools and equipment you don't want that's taking up space on your shelves. Our Swap and Shop event is Online this year, and we're looking for tools and equipment to highlight. So pull out your goods, take some photos and toss them in a presentation for sale on March 13th!

While you're cleaning up your studio, why don't you take some pictures of your work space? We'd love to come over (virtually) and see where you make magic happen. March 21st we will be visiting studios that our members open up to share. Please consider sharing your space for this fun gathering.

I really miss taking you all on a walking tour of Downtown Los Angeles, but some of our favorite places are just too far to walk to. So this year we are bringing you The walk-free walking tour! That's right we are hosting a Virtual Jewelry Tour of our favorite online-friendly Vendors! This event is the first of it's kind for us where we virtually visit several of our downtown LA vendors from past Jewelry Tours as well as a few others that are too far to walk to. Visit with Allcraft in NY, S.O.C. Lasers in Rosemead, A to Z in DTLA, and others during this 4 (ish) hour tour. The tour is FREE and MEMBERS ONLY.

Until next time, stay safe and distanced.



## Letter from the Editor: Erin Proctor

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It's March and Spring is about to be sprung! Time to start thinking about a little spring studio cleaning, and that is a theme in this months issue.

Read on for info on upcoming events and tips for clearing the clutter and getting back into the groove of making!

### **I want to hear from you too!**

Are you planning an event, a sale, or an upcoming workshop?

Would you like to post it in the Events section of our monthly newsletter??

MASSC members can email the address below any time with details and photos and the event will be posted in an upcoming newsletter for all to see!

### **We want to hear all about it!**



# Upcoming MASSC Sponsored Events

**Saturday, March 13th 10am-12pm**



It's our first ever (Simulated) Swap & Shop, to be held safely and virtually on Zoom. Open to everyone!

[RSVP](#)

**Sunday, March 21st 10am-12pm**



Show us your workspace or just come to watch! Open to everyone!

[RSVP](#)

**Saturday, April 24th 10:30am-2:30p**



**Virtual Jewelry Vendor Tour!**

The Downtown Jewelry District Tour is going virtual this year, which means we will be visiting with vendors within the downtown area and exotic places beyond! More details will come, but for now you can RSVP and save the date for this special Members Only Event.

[RSVP](#)

**\*\*All events are virtual, via Zoom\*\***

**More to look forward to:**

**Monthly Makers Challenge!  
See next page for details**

**Metals Challenge Zoom "Luncheon"  
Date/Time TBD (June-ish)**

**MASSC Board Meetings  
(10am-12pm)**

**April 11th -> Click to RSVP**

**June 12th**

**Summer Show & Tell**

**June 27th, Time TBD**

# MASSC Sponsored Events...Continued

This month's  
Makers Challenge:



## Box Rings/ Hollow Rings!

Here's a challenge that's a little more advanced for those of you who'd really like a good fabrication challenge!

This classic signet style ring is sometimes referred to as a box ring due to the way it is constructed out of multiple pieces and features hollow sections which makes it much lighter in weight than it appears. For the geometry buffs out there, you'll enjoy playing with the proportions and angles to create various shapes than can range from classic to pretty wild!

There are plenty of tutorials to be found on the inter webs, but to get your started I've listed a few links that I used, which includes an interesting template maker tool:



[Rounded Hollow Ring Tutorial by Alan Revere](#)

[Box Ring Modifications: A thread on Ganoksin with info on template modifications](#)

[Box Ring Obsession: A continuation of the thread above with even more interesting discussion](#)

[Ring Template Tool: It's a little complicated, but might be fun for some of you to play with](#)

**Join us via Zoom on  
Saturday, April 3rd at 10am**  
to show off your creation(s) or  
to check out what your peers  
have done and get in some  
good Q&A!



How will you finish yours?? Stones?  
Engraving? Can't wait to see!

**TAKE THE  
CHALLENGE**

# Events hosted by our Members (non-MASSC Sponsored)

Check out these MASSC member websites with upcoming classes and workshops on offer:

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## **Diane Weimer:**

Advanced Blanking Dies with Jayne Redman, April 23-26  
Drawing On Metal with Deb Karesh, May 15/16 and 22/23  
And more...

<https://dianeweimer.com/collections/workshops>

## **Anne Wolf:**

Stamped Mokume Gane Pendant, March 20-21  
And more...

<https://www.annevillestudio.com>

## **Corliss Rose:**

Beaded Mosaic Workshop, May 1  
And more...

<https://2roses.com/workshops/>

## **Kent Raible:**

Architecture of a Ring, Dates ongoing online  
Going Tubular, Dates ongoing online  
And more...

<https://kentraible.com/online-programs/>

## **Erin Proctor:**

Torch Fired Enameling, bookable dates for online instruction  
Enamel Decals, bookable dates for online instruction  
And More...

<http://www.saturn5studio.com>

**Want to be added to this list? Email your info to:**

**[massc.editor@gmail.com](mailto:massc.editor@gmail.com)**



# Ask Betsy!

By Betsy Manheimer

**Q: I love working with silver but prices have been so high lately. How can I stretch my stash?**

A: We did get used to rather reasonable prices on silver for the last 6 or 7 years, but it has risen and the pundits are calling for it to rise even more. While pundits are often wrong, rather than wait and see, I'll offer some tips on making the most of the supply you have and can afford.

Save all of your scrap! Here are some suggestions as to what you can do with your scrap metal:

-Use it for casting either into an ingot or with one of the direct casting methods such as broom casting, water casting, etc. If this interests you, I wrote an Ask Betsy column in the February 2020 newsletter different types of direct casting which you can find on <https://massconline.com/newsletter>

-Use pieces of scrap for decoration. Fuse it onto sheet, cut it into shapes and solder/fuse/ rivet it onto another type of metal for a mixed-metal piece or even onto something like Faux Bone or wood.

- When making a bezel, opt for an open backplate by sawing out the interior of the backplate leaving just a big enough lip to support the stone. Save that extra cut out piece for other purposes like earrings or smaller settings.

-If you work in wire, either save up the ends or make them into silver balls. You'll have a collection to use for decoration, granulation or using in a shot plate.

-If you have a built up supply, send it to a refiner! A refiner will often either send you a check for your scrap or a credit that you can use to purchase new stock if they offer it. There's usually a fee, and they will vary from company to company. Keep your eye out for a more in depth article on this topic in next months newsletter!

Finally, consider alternative metals. Copper, brass and bronze are less expensive but you can use the skills you have from working with silver to create your work. A number of jewelers are using mild steel, stainless steel, pewter, aluminum and other alternatives. Be advised, though, that these metals use different techniques than you may be used to. There is a lot of information online, including some classes, which give you information on what type of solder, pickle, torch (or no torch) to use and

different techniques for working them. If you have any questions on any of these, please feel free to send them in.



**Send your questions to [askmassc@gmail.com](mailto:askmassc@gmail.com)**

# Bench Tips

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## from Brad Smith

Check out Brad's how-to books:  
[www.amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith](http://www.amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith)



### SHARP KNIVES FOR CUTTING MOLDS



Cutting molds is easier and more precise with a sharp blade. A new Xacto blade is sufficient for cutting RTV molds but is usually not sharp enough for vulcanized rubber. For that it's best to use scalpel blades available from most jewelry supply companies.

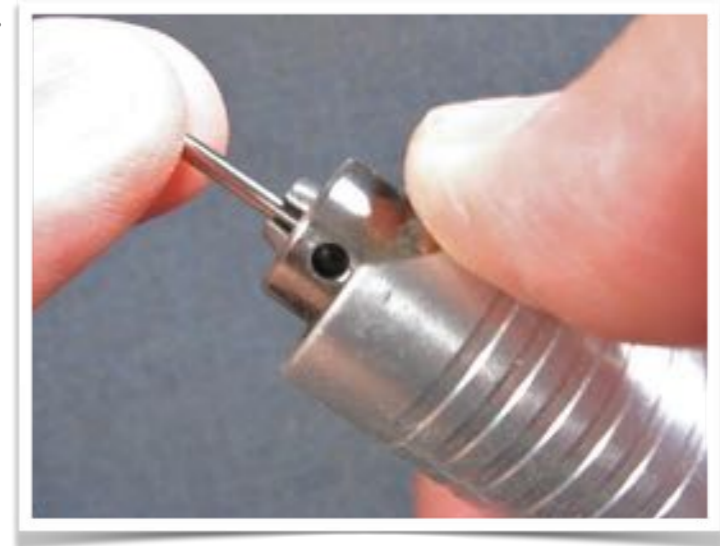
The #11 blade is triangle shaped, and the #12 is hawksbill shaped. I find the hawksbill is particularly nice for cutting the registration keys of the mold.

### USE YOUR THUMB

When using multiple bits in a Foredom, we often have to deal with several different shaft sizes - the usual 3/32 inch burs, the larger 1/8 inch shafts sizes and of course the many different sizes of drills. For some reason I really dislike having to turn the key multiple times to open or close the jaws of the hand piece chuck.

I have two ways to speed up that task. For opening up the jaws, I just remember "four", the number of turns I have to make to open the chuck just enough from the 3/32 bur shaft size to the larger 1/8 bur shaft size.

For closing the jaws around a smaller shaft, there's a neat trick. Hold the new bit in the center of the open jaws of the chuck, put your thumb lightly onto the outer toothed collar of the chuck, and gently start up the Foredom. As the chuck turns, it will naturally tighten the jaws around the bur shaft or the drill bit. Then all you have to do is a final tightening with the key.



**Do you have a nifty bench tip?**

Email tip and photos to: [massc.editor@gmail.com](mailto:massc.editor@gmail.com)



# Highlights from Last Months Makers Challenge

## Bill Gallagher

When we first discussed the upcoming makers challenge, and that the focus would be wire work, I immediately thought I already had a piece for it, but I could see the pearls were a problem. The next photo shows my solution, using the ball pins themselves as the ornaments for the main bent-wire element.

Everything is made of wire, from the main element, to the ball pins for the pearls, to the ear hook, no problem! I used 16ga for the main element, 18ga for the ball pin ornaments, and 21ga for the ear hooks. Here is the wire-bending jig I used to form the main elements of the earrings, to get a consistent form.



## Ruth Shapiro

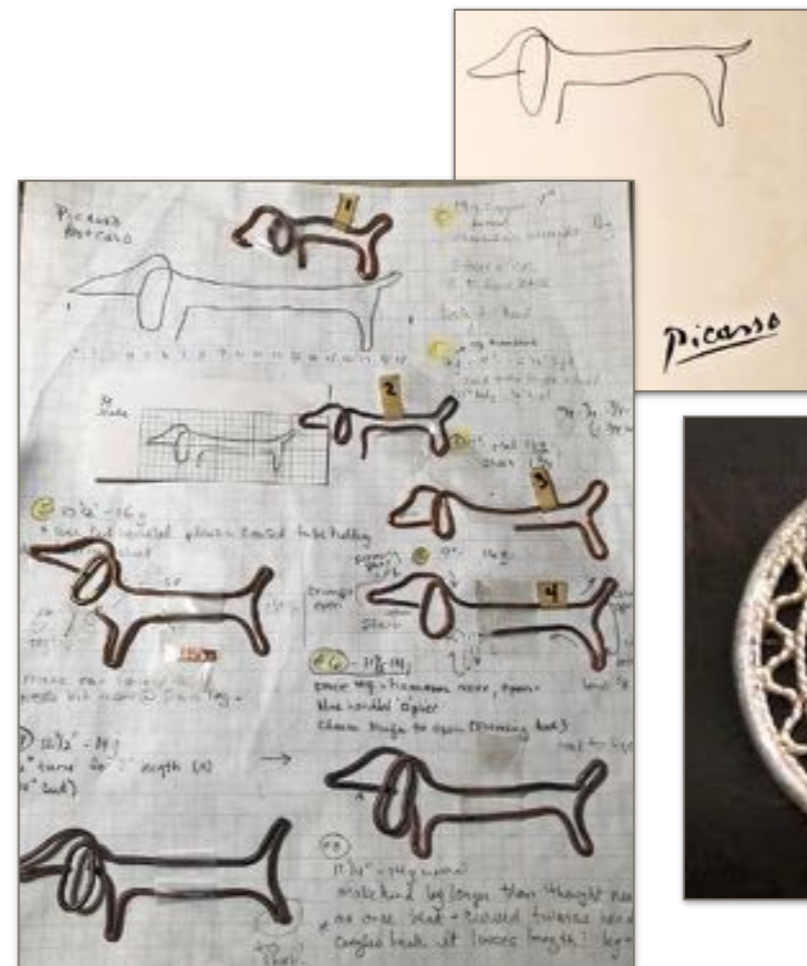
Bangle, Copper, sterling; rolled, crimped, hammer texture, file work, stamped, pierced, riveted. All pieces are connected to the others.



## Virginia Hyatt

Silver filigree

Copper wire figure, several versions and sketches, inspired by a Picasso drawing



# ...Continued from Last Months Makers Challenge

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## John Rose

The "Medieval" series of jewelry items stems from a long-standing interest in military regalia and its precursor, medieval insignia of rank jewelry. The forms are constructed of patterned nickel and stainless steel wire. The wire is patterned by hand in our shop, often using 250-300-year-old dies acquired in India. The wire has to be custom drawn to fit the dies before forge forming. The finished wire is then well-annealed, which softens and patinas it, before using various specialized pliers and jigs to exert the required force on small sections of wire to bend them into shape. The shaped pieces of wire are then fitted and woven into the final design. All the components of the final assembly are then welded using a micro pulse arc welder.

"Big Bug" is one of a series of insects imagined in wire form. These are fabricated using standard gauges of stainless steel wire that is bent and forged to shape and then welded.



## Jean Vormelker

The inspiration for Swirls was a photo my daughter found. With the deadline looming, simplification was the order of the day. Heat patination of the copper echoes the color in the landscape.



# ~Membership

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If you're joining us for the first time, then hooray! We can't wait to share all of our exciting events with you this year!

[Learn all about your member benefits and register here!](#)

Membership is good from the date you register until December 31st, 2021.

## **Here are some reasons to think about joining:**

- If you bought a Metals Challenge Box you **MUST** be a current member to enter a piece into the competition!
- Receive Members Only access to video library!
- Special pricing on MASSC sponsored workshops & access to members only classes and events like the Jewelry District Vendor Tour (all events online this year)

## **Membership Dues for 2021**

**Individual    \$50**

**Dual            \$75**

**Student        \$30**

[JOIN HERE](#)

**Consider Sponsoring A Student:** A big part of MASSC's mission is to preserve metal art heritage, and to share our knowledge and resources within the metal arts community. To stay true to our vision, we will be reaching out to local metalsmithing programs in order to offer up-and-coming student metalsmiths a sponsored MASSC membership for 2021.

Students who are awarded a sponsored membership will be required to complete their public artist profile on our website, contribute content to our monthly newsletter, and must attend at least 2 board meetings per year.

We believe that boosting student involvement is an investment in the future of our organization, and MASSC would like to invite you to help by considering sponsoring a student membership. Your donation is tax deductible and will help to infuse our organization with fresh talent, perspectives and skills that will benefit the membership as a whole.

Please join us in this effort to cultivate and sustain the future of our craft.

[BECOME A SPONSOR](#)

# Our Sponsors Are The Best!



**Brad Smith:** <http://www.bradsmithjewelry.com/>

**2 Roses:** <https://2roses.com/>

**Rio Grande:** <https://www.riogrande.com/>

**JoolTool:** <https://jooltool.com/>

**A to Z Jewelry Tools:** <https://atoztoolsonline.com/>

**Allcraft:** <https://www.allcraftusa.com>

**NC Black:** <https://www.ncblack.com/>

# MASSC Merch Shop: Available on [massconline.com](http://massconline.com)

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# 2021 MASSC Board Member Directory

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Secretary: Betsy Manheimer [massc.secretary@gmail.com](mailto:massc.secretary@gmail.com)

Treasurer: Position Open (acting Treasurer, Stella Schloss)

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Erin Proctor, Newsletter Editor [massc.editor@gmail.com](mailto:massc.editor@gmail.com)

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North Hospitality Chair: Lori Hooks [lorihooks@gmail.com](mailto:lorihooks@gmail.com)

South Hospitality Chair: Position Open



Would you like to volunteer? Email: [massc.president@gmail.com](mailto:massc.president@gmail.com)