

Scholarly (Creative, Artistic) Productivity

by Greg Senn

The past few years have been very good ones for me. My research into new areas and my learning of new techniques have given me a whole new direction to pursue actively (the cast iron) as well as a number of possible other options which may yield serious pieces either by themselves or in combination. The joy of learning new techniques makes me a student again and brings fresh to my mind all the early frustrations of not having things work the way one wants them to the first time. I feel that this keeps me in touch with the students and their occasional frustrations - and this is one of the reasons I believe in life long learning and continual taking of classes.

The chainmaille has been very enjoyable and has already demonstrated much of its worth and potential to me in terms of its use in jewelry making. I'd like to take it into 3-D fabrication but haven't finished the problem solving dealing with making it rigid. (It's interesting working with steel and finding that you can't make it rigid when you need to...) I am very interested in combining the chainmaille with cast metal forms. It has also been well received in the "real jewelry " world as is witnessed by the awards given to my by the New Mexico Jewelers Association and by the sales and commissions I receive whenever I show the work. I have every intention of continuing with the chainmaille approach to jewelry and have been experimenting with techniques for working with other metals - like titanium and niobium.

I continue to submit my work to a variety of shows in New Mexico and elsewhere. I am somewhat hampered in this process as my primary media at this time is jewelry, and there are very few juried art shows which accept fine art jewelry submissions. I am pleased to have shown work and won awards in the New Mexico Jewelers Association annual shows, which consist almost entirely of work by professional jewelers. I've also been represented by three galleries, in three different parts of the country. In addition to larger state and national shows, I continue to submit my work to smaller, local exhibits. This allows my work to be seen by others in the community, lets me compare my work to that by other local artists, and also presents a positive image of ENMU, the College of Fine Arts, and the Art Department. Although not included on my listing of shows, I've entered my jewelry and metalworking pieces, and won awards, each year in the Roosevelt County Fair. This not only provides exposure for my work and for the department, but also offers an evaluation of the craftsmanship of my fine art pieces. There are limited opportunities for people in this area to see fine art, and I like to encourage and support as many local exhibits as possible.

I am a studio artist and my creative and scholarly work consists almost entirely of jewelry and sculpture pieces. However, I do have two projects in progress right now which are a little different for me.

The first project is an Introduction to Chainmaille booklet that I've just begun to work on. It will include information for the beginner on what kind of supplies are needed, as well as suggestions on where to locate them. It will also have basic information on how to construct chainmaille items, along with illustrations and simple patterns for a number of pieces. The resource section will have a list of publications, videos, and web sites that may be of use to a chainmaille artist or craftsman. I hope to make this booklet available to the people who become interested in chainmaille after seeing my work and ask for my help in getting started with it. Although my plans now are for a simple, privately-printed booklet I am also considering the possibility of turning it into a book some time in the future.

The second project is a web site of my artwork. To start with, it will be just a gallery of my artwork, a place people can go when they want to see more of my pieces. Later I plan to include commentary about my work and possibly some in-progress photos. Eventually, I may use it as an opportunity to sell my work to people who can't see it in person. Although it is only in the very beginning stage, this site can be seen at www.gregsenn.com.

Also, I was included in the ENMU Art Department's 2003 publication *Contour*. This publication can be used to publicize and promote the individual artists (all ENMU Art faculty members) as well as the department and the university.