

# ARGENTIUM GUILD NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 5, JULY 2012  
ARGENTIUMGUILD.COM

SPECIAL EDITION FOR THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN SILVERSMITHS



## DEAR ARGENTIUM GUILD MEMBER

This Argentium Silver Guild Newsletter is distributed to our Members bi-monthly - keeping you up-to-date with all things Argentium. We would love to hear from you, so if you have an Argentium related story to tell, article to feature or photos to share, please contact [info@argentiumguild.com](mailto:info@argentiumguild.com).

### IN THIS EDITION



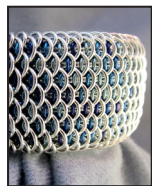
#### WHAT'S NEW?...

Allied Gold becomes new UK distributor



#### FEATURED MEMBERS

Jasper Coulombe, Laurel & Michael Davern, Julia Kay Taylor, 'In-Union' Rings



#### YOUR ARGENTIUM

We talk to Bridgette Rallo about her career in jewellery making



#### TECH TIPS

Patinating your Argentium... with shampoo!

### WHAT'S NEW?...

#### ALLIED GOLD BECOMES UK DISTRIBUTOR

Allied Gold has been established in the jewellery manufacturing

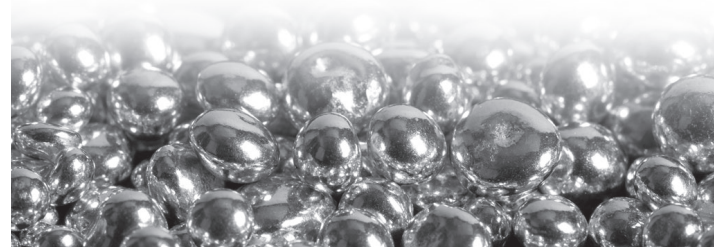


industry for over 20 years. Jerry Abraham (Director) stated, "Allied is proud to become the official UK distributor for Argentium grain, sheet and wire". He also spoke about Allied's experience with Argentium, "We have been manufacturing Argentium for over 4 years. Argentium is such a wonderful advancement, a modern silver alloy that brings about so many major changes that improves the production process and leaves you with a far better end product. Obviously firestain elimination and a very high tarnish resistance are just two of the major improvements but also the ability to work with Argentium 960 is greatly welcomed. We are so impressed with the results that we are changing all of our silver manufacturing lines into Argentium silver".

If you would like to purchase Argentium silver products from Allied, please email or call them:

E: [info@alliedgoldltd.com](mailto:info@alliedgoldltd.com)

T: +44 (0)20 7249 4422



### KEEP IN TOUCH

You can keep in touch with us through Email, Facebook, Twitter and our Blog.



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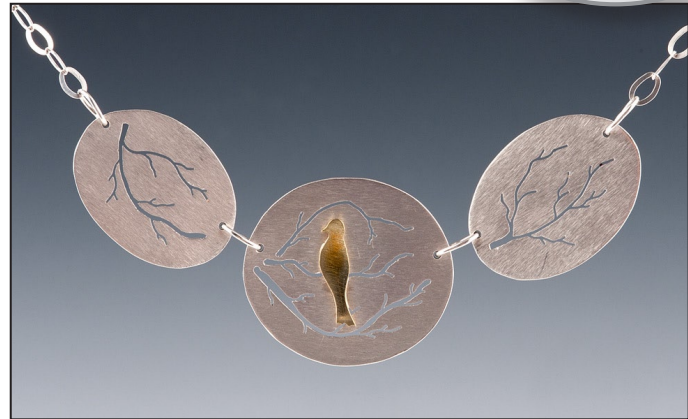


## FEATURED MEMBERS (June 12)



### Jasper Coulombe [jewelsbyjasper.ca](http://jewelsbyjasper.ca)

At Jewels by Jasper you will find original handcrafted jewellery. Designed by Jasper herself, each piece is meticulously crafted to bring a sense of beauty to the wearer, whilst exploring the possibilities of Argentium silver. Utilising Argentium's ability to be fused, Jasper creates unique links that are impossible to replicate. Signature links are distinct to Jewels by Jasper and you will find them integrated into bracelets, necklaces, earrings, scarf rings, and more. Her pieces are truly wearable art jewellery!



### Laurel & Michael Davern [lmarts.net](http://lmarts.net)

Laurel & Michael Davern are a husband and wife team from Western New York, USA - creating unique pieces of wearable fine art jewellery. Pieces are fabricated by piercing, casting and texturing, in Argentium silver, 14k gold, fused glass and stone. Their one of a kind jewellery depicts nature scenes and a special series featuring the tree of life. "We are continuously on the path to learning our craft. We read, experiment and teach ourselves most of what we know today. Over the past ten years we have been able to study with some of the master artisans in our mediums and have continued to learn new techniques - as we grow, so will our designs."

## FEATURED MEMBERS (July 12)



### Julia Kay Taylor [juliakaytaylor.com](http://juliakaytaylor.com)

"I am a self taught jewelry artist crafting one of a kind and limited production pieces in 18k gold, and sterling silver for nearly twenty years. I experimented with Argentium two years ago while searching for more expedient and environmentally sound ways to reduce firescale and tarnishing of my sterling jewelry. I quickly discovered many additional benefits such as superior ductility, solder-free fusion of joints and the convenience of heat-hardening finished pieces. It has become one of my favorite materials to work with and my sterling pieces are now crafted exclusively with Argentium silver."



### Novel Designs/Kemp Metals

The 'In-Union' wedding bands, designed and manufactured by [Novell Design Studio](http://Novell Design Studio) from bands supplied by [Kemp Metal Products](http://Kemp Metal Products), are made by pairing gold and Argentium silver with a unique bonding technology. A solid gold band is designed, finished and carefully fused to a strong Argentium liner. The fusion synergy is created by spinning the Argentium silver liner into the gold band, taking advantage of a natural, cold weld. The joint is then completed by directing heat so the two metals are indistinguishable. This results in a resilient product with great potential for color and design."

# ARGENTIUM GUILD NEWSLETTER



## YOUR ARGENTIUM - BRIDGETTE RALLO OF THE GREENWOODS STUDIO



### **When did you develop your passion for jewelry?**

I've always loved jewelry. As a young girl, I used to 'borrow' my mother's pieces and wear them to school. She wasn't very pleased about it, I can tell you that! I began making my own necklaces and bracelets in high school. They were made from beads, seeds, shells, wire, leather, feathers - you name it! Classmates started asking me to make pieces for them and things took off from there.

### **What made you choose silver as a medium to work in and where did you learn your silversmithing skills?**

I love silver. I love the color of it, the mellow look of old silver, the softness and malleability of the metal. There's nothing I don't like about silver. My father was a jazz musician and some of his band mates' wives wore really avant garde pieces - this was the 1950's and modern was 'in'. One of the wives was a silversmith and she got me started with basic techniques. I learned from whoever would teach me after that.

After choosing to move away from the hectic pace of being a newspaper reporter, Bridgette Rallo returned to what she truly loved and began a second career in hand-crafting jewelry. Her designs pay close attention to detail, featuring beautiful stones and wonderful textures. In Bridgette's own words... "Jewelry is wearable art".

### **Your chainmaille designs are stunning... is it a difficult technique to learn and do you have any advice for anybody who would like to start to make chainmaille pieces?**

Take a beginner's class. Basic chainmaille is easy to learn and becomes progressively more involved as you go along. The prerequisite for mailling is an ability to use your hands; you are working with pliers and a certain amount of manual dexterity is needed. That being said, if you want to learn and you've never held tools, enthusiasm will take you a long way.

### **What inspires you to be creative?**

Everything! I saw an article in a magazine a while back that talked about the resurgence in popularity of sunburst mirrors. I love them and so I've got a half-finished brooch on my workbench that is based on a sunburst mirror pattern. I also love things with a twist; I'm currently working on a bracelet made from vintage bicycle reflectors. They are a flashy red and orange mix and probably came from old toys.

**Please can you explain your design process - do you develop your pieces from sketches, photographs and model making?** Sometimes I find a wonderful stone or I come across some gorgeous handmade glass beads and they beg to be made into something.



Legend Earrings

I don't have a rigid design process. There are just things that I like and things that I don't like. For example, I love Celtic knot work, so I've designed several pieces that reflect my fascination with knots.



Blue Peru Earrings and Bracelet

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## You use some beautiful stones... what do you look for when you are choosing a stone to make into a piece of jewelry?

First of all, the type of stone calls to me. There are some stones I don't care for, even if they are popular. Color is the next criteria and, if the stone has a characteristic pattern, it has to be crisp and pleasing to the eye. Then I look at the cut; I prefer a stone with straight sides about four or five millimeters deep. The overall size of the stone isn't as important. I use a few great suppliers and one of my favorites is a British couple, Jane and Alex. Their company is called Designer Cabochons and is located in Ilkley in West Yorkshire. It's primarily an internet company and they are a very talented pair.

## How and when did you first discover Argentium silver?

I started using Argentium sterling almost as soon as it became available here in the United States. I read an article about it and was intrigued, of course, by its anti-tarnish properties but that's not what wound up selling me on the product. It was the color of the metal - that gleaming color that Argentium has.

## You use different materials in your jewellery that work so well together... what are the features of Argentium that you like to utilise?

Argentium has such a high-end look to it. It gives my pieces a luxurious appearance... just a little feeling of "je ne sais quoi." I've made silver converts out of gold lovers because of that quality. Also, it works almost like fine silver and is very forgiving. That's a big plus when the entire piece is handmade.



Wicked Bracelet

## Do you have a favourite piece that you have made?

Actually, I do have a favorite... it's one of my simpler pieces and I'm usually wearing it. It's called the Wicked Bracelet and there's a story behind it. A friend of mine insisted that the quotation, "By the pricking of my thumbs, something wicked this way comes," was written by Ray Bradbury, the science fiction writer, because he used part of the quote as the title for a rather famous short story. As a great, big clue to the author's true identity, I made an ID bracelet for my friend with the quote imprinted on it followed by the name, 'Macbeth'.

## How do you market/sell your work?

I have a private client list that's grown over the years, mostly by word of mouth. And I sell from two galleries: The Guilded Lynx in Ridgefield, Connecticut, USA, and the Princess Street Gallery in Harbour Island, Eleuthera, Bahamas. The Guilded Lynx is a jewelry studio, school and gallery, and I teach in addition to selling there. I also have a website and a public Facebook page: [greenwoodsstudio.com](http://greenwoodsstudio.com); [Bridgette L. Rallo Jeweler and Artist on Facebook](#).

**Please could you offer three pieces of advice to anybody wishing to set up their own business, making and selling their jewelry designs?**

One of the easiest things I do to promote myself is to wear my own jewelry everywhere I go. I can't tell you how many times I've sold things I was wearing! Another simple marketing idea is to find a popular business in your area - a busy pub or a restaurant is great - and let a few of the staff wear some of your sturdier pieces. They'll talk about them, hand out your business cards and generally direct people to your workshop. Finally, make sure your work is beautifully finished. Put in the time to make the pieces look and feel professional, as nothing damages your reputation faster than poorly finished backs, tool marks on silver or loose settings. Make the best product you are capable of making and ask people for testimonials - use them to sell yourself. It's easier to find a sales outlet if you are well recommended.



Sky Dragon Cuff

You can see more of Bridgette Rallo's creations at: [thegreenwoodsstudio.com](http://thegreenwoodsstudio.com)

# ARGENTIUM GUILD NEWSLETTER



## PATINATING YOUR ARGENTIUM SILVER... WITH SHAMPOO!

### Dandruff and Argentium

A short while ago a jewellery forum posting caught my eye... a lady had requested advice after she had shampooed her hair with an anti-dandruff shampoo, only to find that the Argentium wire, woven into her hair, had turned from bright and sparkling to black! Whilst a problem for the lady, I thought that this could possibly be of use to anybody wishing to patinate their Argentium silver.



By Clare Felgate

### Selenium sulphide

Some anti-dandruff shampoos contain an active ingredient called selenium sulphide. Apart from the medicinal properties, this ingredient will oxidise silver. The benefit of the selenium sulphide within a shampoo is that it is very easy to apply to your piece of jewellery or silverware that you wish to patinate - heating is not required and good/even coverage is easy to achieve.

### Health and safety check

Even though this is a product to be used on skin, please remember to follow the product's safety instructions, wear protective gloves and always work in a well ventilated area.

### 'Sham-patinating' your Argentium

- 1) Clean the surface (I use liquid soap with a brass brush)
- 2) Fully immerse the piece in the shampoo
- 3) Brass brush the surface and rinse thoroughly in clean water
- 4) Repeat steps 1-3 until you achieve your desired effect



Clean the surface



Apply shampoo



Initial colouration



Dark patina

### DID YOU KNOW?

Argentium silver can be heat hardened in a conventional oven... Jim McIntosh shows us how in this You Tube video: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJDkXyvNkJM&list=P L8AB04287C1C531AE&index=1&feature=pl\\_pp\\_video](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJDkXyvNkJM&list=P L8AB04287C1C531AE&index=1&feature=pl_pp_video)

### KEEP IN TOUCH

If you have an Argentium related story to tell, would like to be a Featured Member, have photos to share, or if you have any events coming up - please contact: [info@argentiumguild.com](mailto:info@argentiumguild.com)

**We look forward to hearing from you.**