

5 QUESTIONS WITH CHALLENGE WINNER DAWNA GILLESPIE



Do you have that one piece of jewelry that rises above the clouds and represents a rise to a higher point in your design aesthetic? Did you master a technique or a stitch, take a near-perfect piece out of the kiln or tumbler, bend a prong to perfection? Did your beads come together in a perfect palette on the tenth time you tried? We asked our readers these questions for our November Design Challenge theme, ASCEND.

One of our winners, Dawna Gillespie of Lubbock, TX, submitted this stunning cuff made from hand-sawed and hand-fabricated copper and brass. Dawna's description of how this piece ASCENDS:

"This is the first cuff that I have successfully mastered a torch-fired heat patina that retained its beautiful color through the forming and fabrication process. I am incredibly proud and pleased with this piece. "

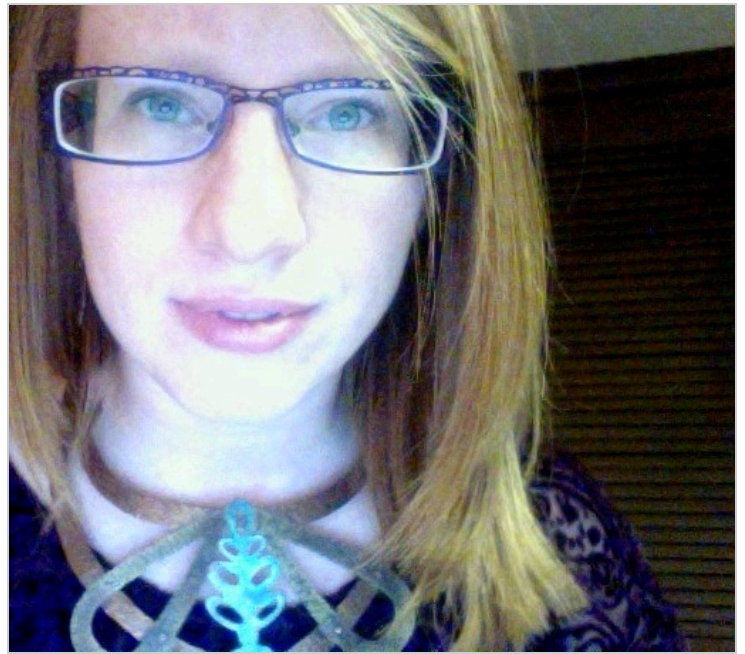
The cuff is made from copper, brass, and pipe, with torch-fired heat patina and a ferric chloride etch. The piece uses almost every metalsmithing technique there is: it was pierced, forged, etched, hammered, cold connected, and oxidized, then waxed to preserve the stunning patina.

We caught up with Dawna to learn more about her work.

TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF.

I am the owner/designer of Copper d Studio in Lubbock, TX. I am a Texas Tech University School of Art alumni; I graduated with a Bachelor's of Fine Arts in Visual Studies (Art Education K-12). I have been pursuing all facets of art for over 25 years; focusing on jewelry/metal work for the last six. I am a hobbyist turned professional, and I work, mostly, with brass and copper; creating statement pieces to adorn the body.

In my undergrad at Texas Tech, I took an Intro to Jewelry/Metalsmithing. It took one class and I was hooked; an immediate connection to the metal and sawing! Surprisingly, I have only had one actual class; everything past that has been self-taught through reading, videos, and trial-and-error.



WHAT STYLE OF JEWELRY DO YOU MAKE?

My statement hand-fabricated metal pieces are influenced by styles such as Gothic, Romanesque, medieval, Baroque, Renaissance, and even a little bit of the South West. Making statement pieces is the bones and very being of what I love to create. However, I recently encountered a few admirers of my jewelry that liked my style but not the size. So taking that into account, I will be incorporating a slightly smaller scale into the mix for 2017.

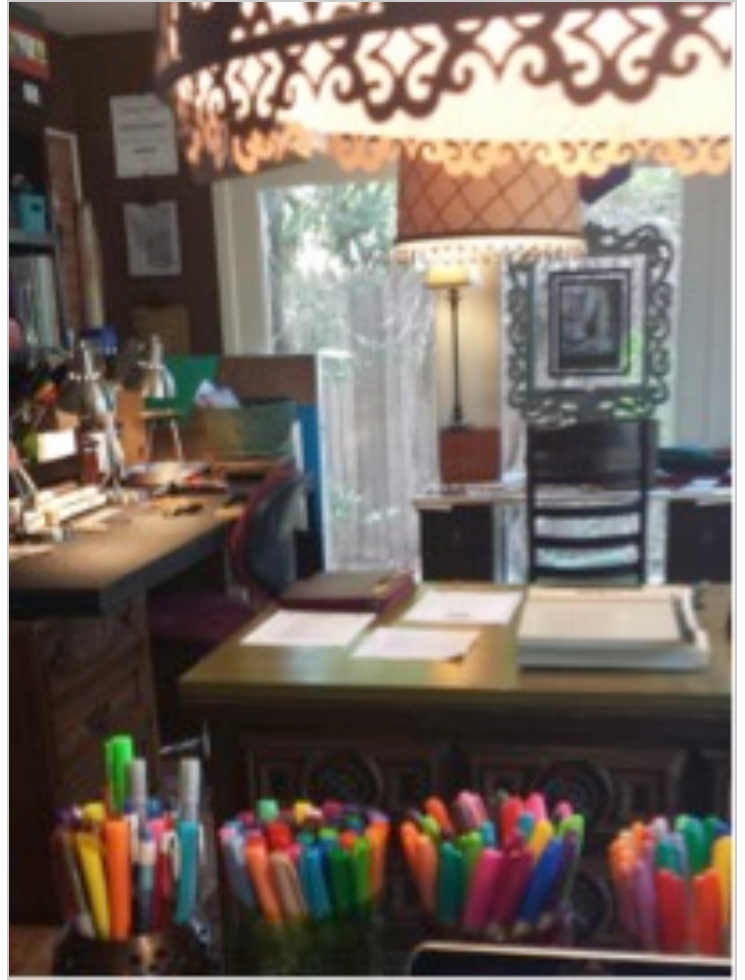
I work with mostly metal: copper, brass, aluminum, and sterling silver. However, I do a lot of mixed media pieces as well; incorporating anything from personal mementos to children's bristle blocks.

WHAT IS YOUR WORKSPACE LIKE?

Eclectic, handmade, personal, unique, and worn are words I would use to describe my workspace. It is filled with handmade pieces of art that my friends and favorite artists have created. It is a space where I can escape my reality and delve into fantasy, dreams, and bear my soul. Here's a little glimpse into my studio where I create my statement metal pieces!

WHAT'S THE GOOFIEST MISTAKE THAT YOU EVER MADE?

Most recently, I was in the process of fabricating a cuff. When I reached the forming stage, I grabbed my hammer and mandrel. However, I quickly realized that the metal was not going to form, as I completely forgot to anneal.....the piece is now a necklace. In reality, though, I am the only one that even knows it was supposed to be a cuff!



WHAT'S THE BEST ADVICE THAT YOU EVER GOT FROM A TEACHER OR A MENTOR?

The best advice I have ever received is from my mentor and friend, Future Atkins. She provokes contemplation and soul searching when it comes to making art by advising belief: belief in my ability to create, belief in my power to express my deepest feelings, and belief in myself as an artist in general. Belief is the first step towards success.

WHERE DO YOU FIND INSPIRATION FOR YOUR WORK?

My inspiration depends on what is going on in my life and what I am needing to “release”. Currently, my work depicts the concepts of sexuality, femininity, and fertility.

WHAT PROJECTS ARE YOU WORKING ON? WHERE CAN PEOPLE SEE MORE OF YOUR WORK?

I am in the process of creating a new body of work for a few galleries and magazines/books, in hopes that they will appreciate my pieces. In the meantime, people can keep up-to-date on my progress by following my Facebook page, [Facebook.com/CopperdStudio](https://www.facebook.com/CopperdStudio).



INSPIRED? Join in the fun by entering one of your own works on art into Facet's next Design Challenge!

For February, we celebrate SHADOWS.

Spring is getting closer, the sun is in a new place in the sky and shadows fall on the melting snow. The groundhog peeks his head out to investigate, but the woods still lay bare and silent, waiting for renewal. A shadow, a two-dimensional silhouette: blocking the light yet casting a lovely outline. The mood is eerie and quiet as the dark and the light battle for their rightful places. What will emerge from your jewelry-making in February?

Any time between February 2-22, 2017, you can **submit up to two entries** and potentially find yourself and your jewelry featured here on Facet!

A banner with a blue background featuring diagonal light and shadow stripes. The text 'facet' is in a small, white, sans-serif font. 'Shadows' is in a large, white, handwritten-style font. 'Design Challenge' is in a smaller, white, sans-serif font below 'Shadows'.

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Shadows
Design Challenge

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