

**Art Adventure | Sam Dalkilic-Miestowski**

# Three jewels of Fourth Friday arts



Last year Fourth Friday Arts introduced Crown Point to many talented artists whose subject matter and mediums ranged from photography, painting, collage, sculpture, music, dance

and the theater. Three artists who participated a handful of times were jewelry artists, Twyla Butler, Lyn Martin, and Jamie Zweig. Their pieces were exhibited and at "Settings" at 120 South Main Street in Crown Point. This trio of artists oftentimes showcase their work together throughout northwest Indiana and beyond.

Personally, I have always enjoyed one-of-a-kind jewelry. In a society where diamonds can be purchased at K-mart, and Kohls and on the Internet, diamonds have become commonplace. When the holidays come around, it isn't unusual to see diamonds marked down more than 50, 60, and even 70 percent in major big box retailers' advertisements. Which makes me wonder; what are they really worth? Are diamonds just a big scam? It is almost too easy to get diamonds and have, in a sense, lost their mystique.

I value the thoughtful one-of-a-kind creations by these jewelry artists. I asked Butler what got her started creating and designing one-of-a-kind jewelry.

"I have always expressed myself through art. I started with art glass," she said. "After joining Sourlis Glass Studio, I began combining glass and metal. My fascination with metals was ignited. The desire to design and construct jewelry was the outcome. I began taking classes in metalsmithing in the Chicago area, and knew this artistic expression was for me. As my skill grew, so did my interest in different mediums and techniques. Presently I work with mixed metals, gemstones and glass. Recently I began experimenting with silver metal clay medium," Butler said.

"My inspirations come from architecture, nature, geometry and movement. My pieces reflect both timeless and natural qualities. I see new designs for jewelry in my everyday surroundings. I always have my sketch book close by. I continue to experiment with new techniques and materials. I am constantly challenged to construct unique pieces of jewelry."

Lyn Martin's story is similar. But, in addition to being a jewelry artist, Lyn Martin is also an elementary school educator.



All photos provided to the Star

Three artists, Jamie Zweig, Twyla Butler and Lyn Martin work as designers and creators of contemporary jewelry pieces, featured at Settings and the Steeple Gallery in St. John. At Fourth Friday Arts, Sam Dalkilic-Miestowski spoke with the three about their designs. Above is a dragonfly with jasper and leather pendant by Butler. At center is a sandblasted Argentium Silver, sterling silver and pearl pendant by Zweig. At far right, top, is a Geisha pendant by Butler; at center is another pendant. Below at right is a pendant by Zweig made of brass, etched copper and brass rivets.



"My personal journey with jewelry design began with a fascination for stones, and a desire to create unique one-of-a-kind art jewelry," Martin said. "I brought my desire for the 'unordinary' to my first metalsmithing class and after fabricating my first piece, I was hooked. I knew I wanted to design and fabricate jewelry, and that I wanted to do only one-of-a-kind custom work. I wanted each piece to be a work of art, a wearable sculpture, a marriage of beauty and functionality.

"As I grew in experience, designing and metal techniques, my work has become more interesting, mixing metals, textures, forms and interweaving with precious and semi-precious stones," Martin said.

"My ideas and inspirations often come from the stones I purchase or have cut. Their color and texture often start the conversation and collaboration with tools, the natural world, geometrics, imagination and metals which then form an interaction to create a unique piece of jewelry art. Currently, I am active working on fabrications, commissions and custom work, learning more about the marriage of metals.... gold, silver, copper, and brass.

"My artistic fantasy is for every woman to have their own signature piece that shouts: 'Here I am.'"




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## — Jewelry, continued from page 2

“My pieces are constructed from an original drawing, influenced by nature, architecture, science and the characteristics of light. I begin the fabrication process with bezel wire, metal sheet/wire of sterling silver, fine silver and or



carat gold.

The process begins with the choosing of precious or semi-precious gemstones.

Sometimes, when a specific cabochon form is needed, I will hand cut the stone from a slab. The cabochon/gemstone is then bezeled and soldered.

Working with metal sheet/wire is the next step, with additional soldering and pickling to clean the metals.

Throughout the process, changes are made to the design when necessary to achieve an art jewelry form. When I am satisfied the design is balanced and aesthetically pleasing, changes are then incorporated into the original design,” she said.

“Then the bezels are set and pre-polishing begins to remove any fire scale or scratches, and then on to the final polish. In each new piece that I design and fabricate, I strive to try new techniques such as fold forming, mixing materials, micro-soldering, tube setting, and cutting and shaping with the flex shaft which challenge my skills and leave each client with an art jewelry

Photo provided to the Star

At top left is a pendant, **Etched Copper Swallowtail in Flight**, by Twyla Butler. Lyn Martin’s work includes the object d’art above right and center. At top right, is **Cleopatra’s collar** by Martin. It was designed as a memory piece and contains stones and gold from pieces from her husband’s gold watch, her wedding band, and diamonds from the engagement and wedding rings, an opal that was a ring given to her by her mom and dad, and gemstones from earrings and rings that were gifts. It was designed to encompass these memories into a unique piece. The gold triangles were from the watch band, and the spirals connecting the piece were also from the watch. These were melted to make the gold wire. The center of the piece is an Australian opal that the client chose, merging something new with something old. At center, a silver box holds a detachable pendant that was a retirement gift for a veteran teacher of 40 years. The box is silver and trimmed in gold. The stone for the pendant was a specialty cut from Steve Schultz, a Gemmy award winner. The stone is an amethyst agate. The box is functional, the lid lifts off, for the purpose of storage, and the slit in the box holds the chain of the attached pendant. At bottom right is another group of works by Jamie Zweig. The three rings are made from Lake Michigan granite beach rock, sterling silver and fancy sapphire.



piece that is one of a kind.”

The third talented jeweler, is Jamie Zweig who is also a professor at the School of Nursing at Purdue Calumet. She shared with me how she got started in jewelry making.

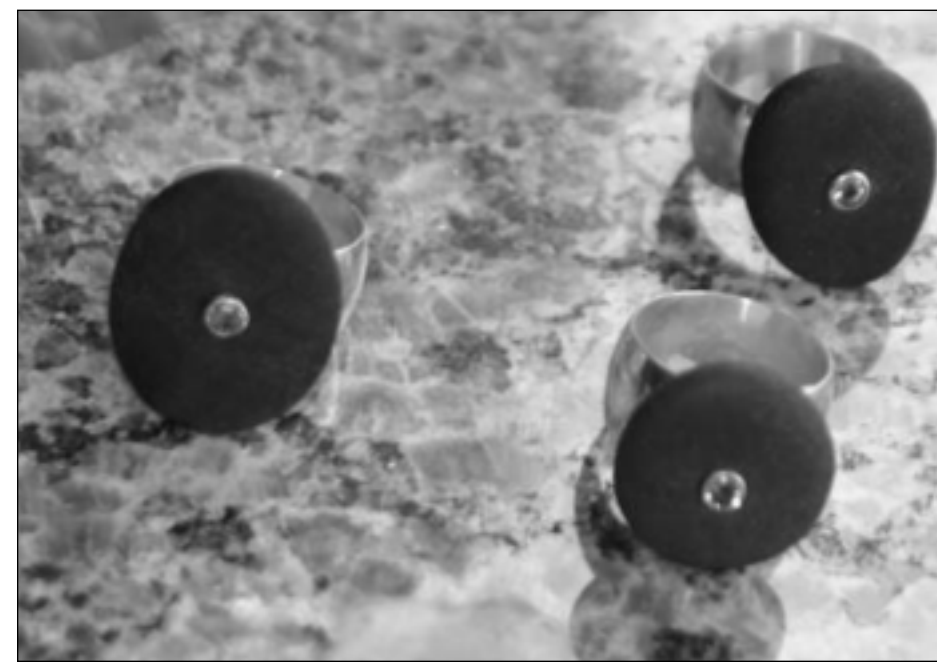
“I grew up in lapidary and metalsmithing shops. My mother always cut stones and made jewelry, which is probably why I have always loved jewelry and good design,” said Zweig.

“My work is influenced by nature, science, and architecture. I enjoy the challenge of making something that is less than perfect into unique, whimsical and fun pieces. My pieces are fun and inexpensive, it is intended that the wearer smile when wearing them.

“My next endeavor is creating fun and beautiful medical alert jewelry, because having a

chronic condition is not fun, but the jewelry can be.”

Tired of the same old jewelry? You don’t have to take a walk down Michigan Avenue to enjoy good design. You never know what may be lurking in small shops and businesses you pass everyday. Take a stroll through the Courthouse Shops and look closely. You may also do some window shopping and see these one-of-a-kind creations for the next couple of months at The Steeple Gallery, 11107 Thiel St., St. John. Call or e-mail samowner@sbcglobal.net, (219) 365-1014.



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