



a



b

47. a) Margaret De Patta and photographer Romeo Rollette in her Laidley Street home kitchen, San Francisco, CA, c.1946; b) Margaret de Patta's renovated modern home on Laidley Street, San Francisco, CA. From Margaret De Patta Archives, Bielawski Trust, Point Richmond, CA.



48. Designs Contemporary catalog. From Margaret De Patta Archives, Bielawski Trust, Point Richmond, CA.



a



b

49. a) Designs Contemporary production mold; b) Designs Contemporary line of production rings. Photo by Margaret De Patta. Both a) and b) from Margaret De Patta Archives, Bielawski Trust, Point Richmond, CA.

DE PATTA

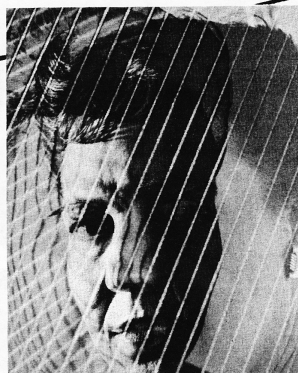
What happens to an artist when the demand for his work exceeds his ability to supply it? If he is realistic, he reaps the benefit of raising the price to the point where a temporary equilibrium is established between supply and demand. What then happens to this artist's work? It necessarily becomes the possession of the very few who are in a position to pay these luxury prices. This is the situation I found myself in—a multitude of friends of my work who were unable to own and enjoy it.

For quite some time I had become aware of contradictions between my social viewpoints and my method of work. Contact with the Bauhaus in Chicago clarified and strengthened the tendencies toward social integration. However, I was justifiably apprehensive of the time demands of business that would interfere with my working and designing time—also the cost factors of even simple production plans appeared appalling. Believing firmly in the modern production potentialities to produce better articles in greater volume, I attempted to become an artist craftsman accepting the challenge of bridging the gap between the craftsman and production. Here then was the aim—to produce more than one piece of each design and to sell these pieces at a lower cost. It would have been possible to proceed upon another path—to produce more pieces and by increasing the number of retail outlets to place these at the same figure as formerly. I wanted to place my designs upon the market at a figure to compete with the comparable material quality costume jewelry. The problems entailed in this production venture can be best understood only by other designers also engaged in however small industrial production. In the entire field of jewelry production I found

a perpetuation of traditional technics and in spite of the innovation of a few modern processes the designs were still of past eras. A good design reflects the technics and the view points of its age, therefore no matter how beautiful an old design may be it is still a sad mistaken thing when copied or imitated in our own day. That vital element necessary to good design—the interaction of the tool and material upon the designer, and of the designer upon tools and material had been completely lost. Here we are living in an age of high precision machine production and the effect of this upon jewelry design, production, and stone cutting has been less than nothing. What are the factors that perpetuate this lack of contemporary expression in a field apparently so unlimited?

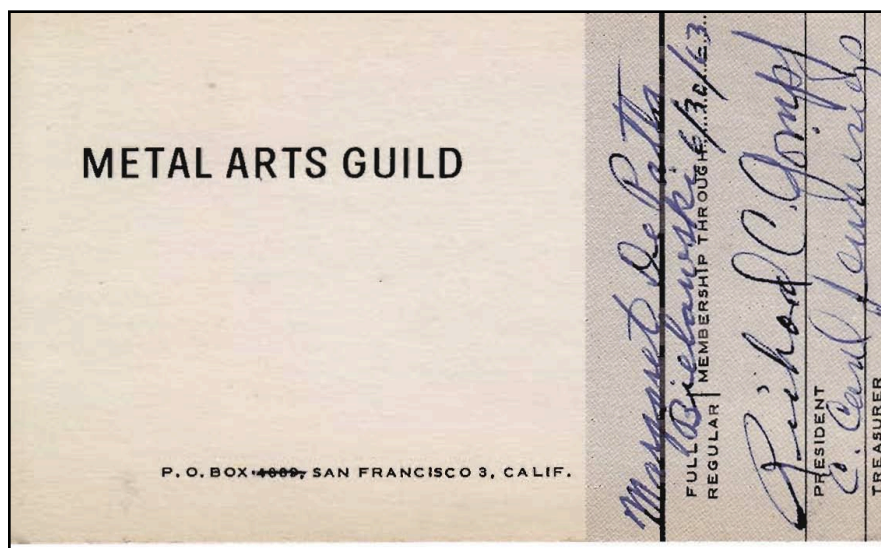
Goods are purchased on the basis of previous sales—automatically continuing the life of the old and excluding the presentation of the new. The purchaser taste is thus conditioned by the choice between one conventional design and another just as bad.

I am proud of the fact that the popularly priced piece is indistinguishable from the "one of a kind" piece. It delights me to display a group of these things and see the baffled frustration on the faces of the "handcraft for handcraft's sakers" as they realize their inability to distinguish one group from the other. The design and the model are produced by me. The materials used are the same sterling silver and semi-precious stones. The workmanship and finish are of exact same quality. The remaining difference being in the number of pieces produced of a given design. This might be a legitimate objection if a tremendous number of pieces flooded a small area, (continued on Page 54)



Photographs by Halberstadt.

50. "De Patta," *Arts and Architecture* 64, no. 7 (July 1947): 30. From Margaret De Patta Archives, Bielawski Trust, Point Richmond, CA.



51. Margaret De Patta's Metal Arts Guild membership card, c.1962. From Margaret De Patta Archives, Bielawski Trust, Point Richmond, CA.



a



b



c

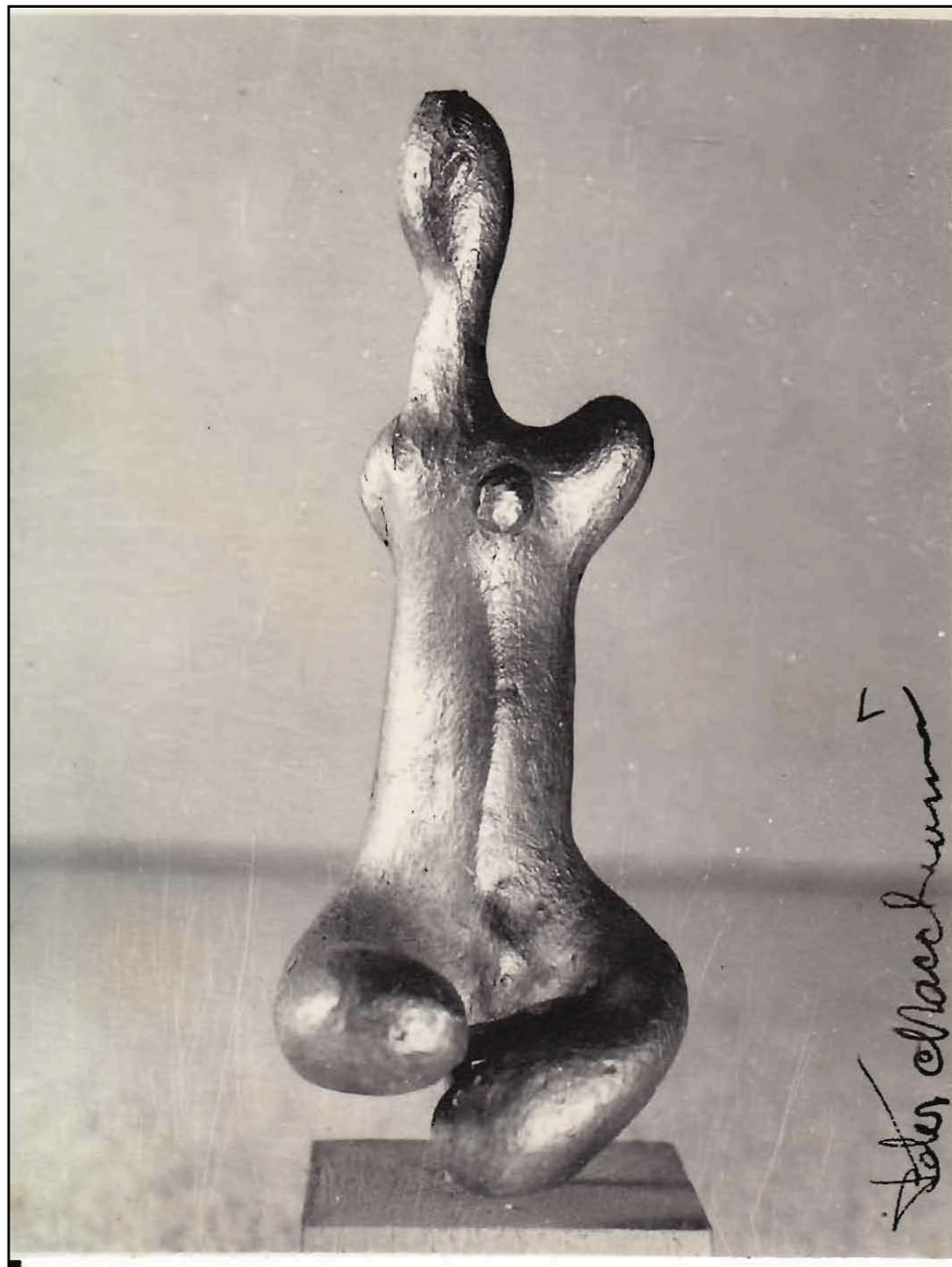
52. a) WPA Marionette Vaudeville, *Diver and Mermaid*, 1937; b) Ralph Chesse and assistant with puppets in the WPA Theatre, 1936; c) WPA Marionette Vaudeville, *Circus*, 1937. From Peter Macchiarini Archives, Daniel Macchiarini Creative Designs, San Francisco, CA.



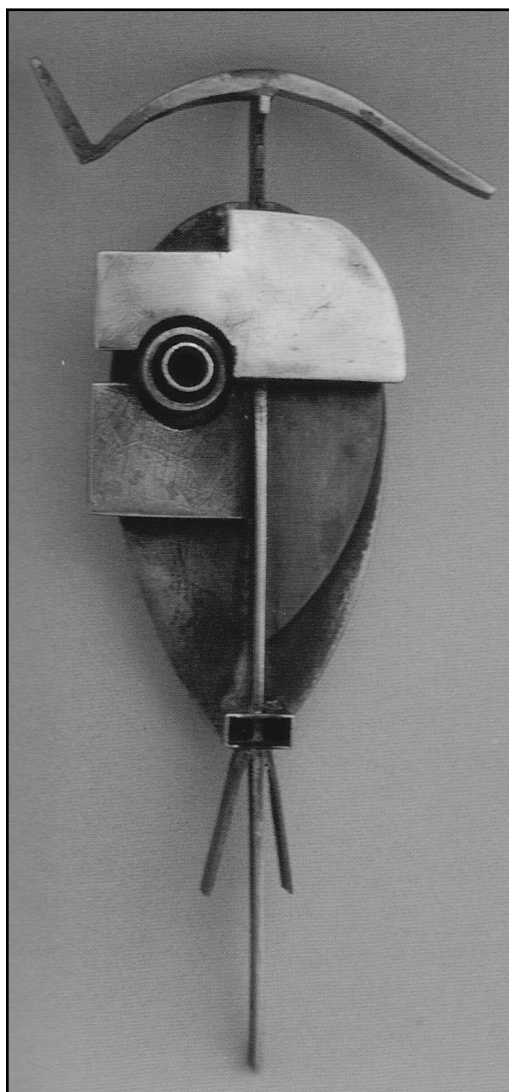
53. Peter Macchiarini collaborated with Margaret De Patta on this mask piece. Macchiarini did the wood carving and Margaret De Patta did the metalwork, ebony and nickel silver, 1937. From Marbeth Schon, *Modernist Jewelry 1930-1960: The Wearable Art Movement* (Atglen: Schiffer Publishing Ltd., 2004): 36.



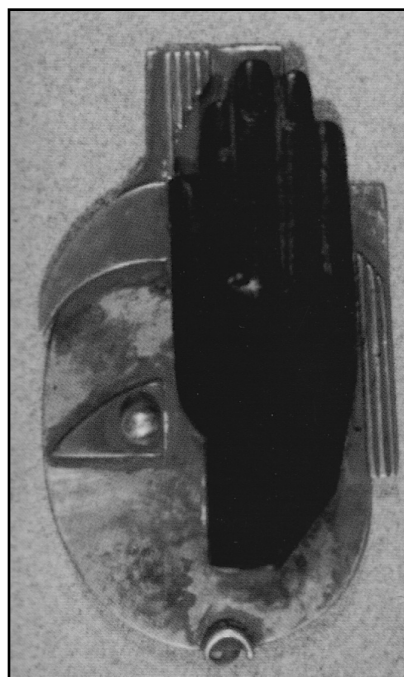
54. Will Rogers (left) and Beniamino Bufano (middle) visit Peter Macchiarini in jail, c. 1934. From Peter Macchiarini Archives, Daniel Macchiarini Creative Designs, San Francisco, CA.



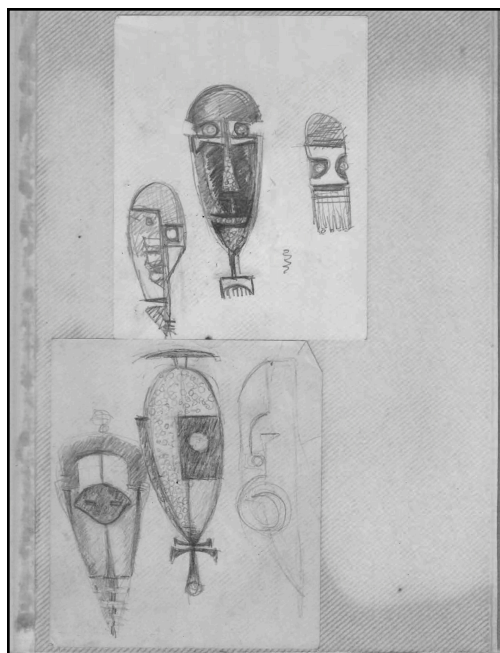
55. Peter Macchiarni, *Sculpture*, n.d. From Peter Macchiarini Archives, Daniel Macchiarini Creative Designs, San Francisco, CA.



b



a



c

56. a) Peter Macchiarni, *Mask with Hand*, copper and nickel silver, c. 1937; b) Peter Macchiarni, *Goat Brooch*, silver, brass, and copper, n.d. Both a) and b) from Marbeth Schon, *Modernist Jewelry 1930-1960: The Wearable Art Movement* (Atglen: Schiffer Publishing Ltd., 2004): 35-37; c) Peter Macchiarini sketch studies of masks. From Peter Macchiarini Archives, Daniel Macchiarini Creative Designs, San Francisco, CA.