

Ethnically diverse, approximately 40 percent of the school's student body was African-American, and included poet Maya Angelou.<sup>58</sup>

The initial brochure of 1942, entitled "Education for Victory," focused on the American labor movement and offered such courses as *Trade Unions and The War; History of the California Labor Movement; Labor Journalism; The Struggle for National Independence; The Negro People; Life in the Soviet Union; Marxism; Civilian Protection; and English and Citizenship*. By the Spring of 1944, CLS expanded to include social sciences, dramatics, dancing, radio writing and production, and arts and crafts to its curriculum. Eugene Bielawski, formerly of the School of Design in Chicago, came to San Francisco to head the CLS Art Department in 1945. The Art Executive Committee included Adelyne Cross, Bielawski, Margaret De Patta, Freda Koblick, Giacomo Patri, Mildred Rosenthal, and Henry Wachs. Throughout the Arts and Crafts Department's existence, courses included *Layout; Large Crafts; Modern Design for Small Crafts; Life Drawing; Experimental Stage Design; Basic Design Workshop; Color Workshop; Advanced Furniture Construction; Composition; Ceramics; Metal Workshop; Modern Homes and Interiors; Painting for Pleasure; Photography; Plastics; Sculpture; Figure Drawing; What is Modern Architecture; Color and Light; Silkscreen; Architecture and the Home; Art and the People; Social History of Art; Cartoon and Illustration; Dressmaking and Designing; Wood and Linoleum Cuts; Mural Painting; Arts and Society; Home Planning on a Shoestring; and Gardens – Planning and Planting*.<sup>59</sup> CLS offered these courses to students as a way to learn about "a functional approach to art and job training for new professions and industries."<sup>60</sup> (fig. 10)

Accomplished artists and craftsmen who taught at CLS included: designer, painter, graphic artist, Adelyne Cross; illustrator and painter, Giacomo Patri; sculptor, painter, and muralist, Claire Falkenstein; sculptor, engineer, and plastic designer, Frieda Koblick; furniture designer Louise Gilbert; graphic artist, Max Broeske; painter and printmaker, Pele deLappe; ceramist, Edith Heath; ceramist, Mary Tuthill; sculptor and jeweler, Philip Morton; painter, Victor Arnautoff; sculptor, Ralph Stackpole; photographer, Milton Halberstadt; jeweler, painter, photographer and MAG founder, Margaret De Patta; industrial designer, educator, jeweler and MAG founder, Eugene Bielawski; and sculptor, jeweler, and MAG founder, Peter Macchiarini.<sup>61</sup> Many of the art instructors had international experience and connections to some of the most innovative art schools of that era. De Patta was student at the School of Design in Chicago, Bielawski and Cross were instructors at the Institute of Design, and Gustav Friedman studied at the Bauhaus in Germany. At the same time, instructors introduced modernism to CLS, they also advanced the California labor movement by training the next generation of skilled craftspeople. Historian Marc Dean Johnson refers to the labor school as, “among the brightest flashes produced by the combined chemistry of labor and art in California.”<sup>62</sup> (fig. 11)

By as late as 1945, at the request of the United States government, CLS hosted the labor delegation from the Soviet Union for the founding meeting of the United Nations held in San Francisco.<sup>63</sup> Thereafter, with the rise of the Soviet Union at the end World War II, public sentiment for anything associated with the Communist Party declined rapidly. While once enjoying the support of both the local and federal governments, the

changing political atmosphere left CLS and its instructors vulnerable, as many were sympathetic to Socialist and Communist ideology.

As the Cold War began, CLS faced charges of being a Communist front organization. In September 1946, school directors David Jenkins and Holland Roberts were subpoenaed by the State Federation of Labor's California's Un-American Affairs Committee. At the same time, a group called the American Veterans of World War II asked that the Veterans Administration to investigate CLS and withhold G.I. Bill funding.<sup>64</sup> Soon, the California Federation of Labor charged that the school contained Communists and taught Communist propaganda. Unions soon began withdrawing their support from the school. In July 1947, hearings were held before the California House of Representatives' Committee on Un-American Activities to propose bills, H.R. 1884 and H.R. 2122 which would curb or outlaw the Communist Party.<sup>65</sup> In doing so, many California organizations and individuals were labeled as "red," and blacklisted. This included CLS, directors and instructors, and among them were Macchiarini, De Patta, and Bielawski – who would later go on to form MAG.<sup>66</sup> The school eventually was closed in 1957 due to financial and political pressure facing the school in the McCarthy era; however, CLS never backed down from their beliefs and believed that they were being persecuted. (fig. 12)

## Artists Equity Association

The Artist Equity Association (AEA), established in 1947 with the goal of serving painters, sculptors, photographers, and graphic artists, was an organization that inspired MAG's founders. Faced with some similar economic and political challenges as the CLS, the AEA was founded as an apolitical organization despite the activism among many of its members. In 1946, Yasuo Kuniyoshi, an artist-activist, met with his contemporaries in Woodstock, New York, to discuss forming an organization to serve the economic interests of artists. It is during this time, that the American press, including Hearst newspapers and *Look* magazine, criticized contemporary art and artists who participated in the U.S. State Department-funded traveling exhibition, *Advancing American Art*. The artists were portrayed as, "leftist radicals who were set on destroying conventional artistic standards as part of their antidemocratic and radical egalitarianism."<sup>67</sup> As the negative press spread and influenced opinion, the criticism reached the various levels of government, and the Republican party seized the opportunity to embarrass President Harry S. Truman.<sup>68</sup> The State Department feared the outcome of the conflict and canceled remaining exhibitions.<sup>69</sup> AEA's founding members were, "[f]ully aware that they had learned something during both the [Great] [D]epression and the war about both generating public support and the need to band together, ... [and] developed the structure of an organization that also scrupulously avoided any aesthetic allegiance and tried never to take public stands other than on matters of financial importance to its member artists."<sup>70</sup>

The AEA was an inclusive organization; however, artists needed to meet certain criteria before they were accepted as members. Instead of judging by aesthetic criterion or academic background, artists were accepted based on whether they were “recognized” in the field by being included in a major exhibition or one-person show. The term “recognized” was challenged from time to time.<sup>71</sup> Additionally, members would include museum directors and artist organizations. The first AEA meeting held at The Museum of Modern Art on April 30, 1947, addressed the issues the organization would start to tackle in its inaugural year, which included: writing a constitution, developing a legal service to address copyright law and reproduction rights, setting up a welfare fund for members, establishing a group insurance plan, setting initiatives for getting artists covered by Social Security, and addressing public policy issues, among others.<sup>72</sup> Some of these aims would be addressed and modeled in the forming of MAG’s initiatives and its constitution.

As a result of receiving positive press following this meeting, AEA membership grew steadily. Regional chapters were established to spread the AEA’s influence and reach throughout the United States. In 1952, AEA’s Northern California Chapter membership had over 100 members, and at some point during its existence, members included former CLS artists Victor Arnautoff, Ralph Stackpole, Peter Macchiarini, Irena Brynner, Margaret De Patta, and the Metal Arts Guild of San Francisco itself.<sup>73</sup>

## **Formation of the Metal Arts Guild**

In the Spring of 1951, a small group of metal artists, including Margaret De Patta, Eugene Bielawski, Peter Macchiarini, Harry Dixon, and Caroline Rosene, met in San Francisco to discuss the idea of developing an organization dedicated to the metal arts. Up until that time, there was no group or union in the United States that specifically addressed the unique needs of studio jewelers or metal craftspeople. Having already faced numerous obstacles, including being blacklisted by the U.S. government, these metal artists banded together to form an organization “which would do for them what Artists Equity was established to do for painters and sculptors.”<sup>74</sup> After a few initial discussions, the group invited Bay Area metal artists to a meeting in order to gauge their interest in forming a non-profit organization. The meeting was held on March 28, 1951 in Room 139 of the Marina Jr. High School in San Francisco. (fig. 13) De Patta recalled that, “[t]he desirability of an organization was unanimously admitted and steps were taken to establish temporary officers until a formal election could be held and a committee was appointed to formulate the aims and objectives of the prospective guild.”<sup>75</sup> Founding members documented their ideas for the shaping of the organization. It was the intent of the Guild that “[n]o person should be excluded because of their particular style or technique. Instead, the main consideration should be given to quality of workmanship.”<sup>76</sup> It was also important that Guild members emphasize originality, creativity, and be open-minded to the exchange of all views.<sup>77</sup> This included being an

all-inclusive organization that was “non-political and non-sectarian, and [that] no one should be excluded from membership because of color, race, or nationality.”<sup>78</sup>

Organizing committee members included Neal George (President), Mayer Segal (Vice President), A’leen Runkle (Recording Secretary), David Loveless (Corresponding Secretary), Peter Macchiarini (Treasurer), Virginia Macchiarini, Marguerite Segal, Connie Grothkopp, Caroline Rosene, Roy Walker, Merry Renk, Vera Allison, Irena Brynner, Harry Dixon, Byron Menendez, Phyllis Menendez, Roxane Marden, Josephene Mount, Marguerite Kelly, Hal Davies, Loren Lee Davies, Fallie Lind, Margaret De Patta, Eugene Bielawski, Bob Winston, and Franz W. Bergmann. Over the next four months, these metalworkers, coppersmiths, blacksmiths, goldsmiths, lapidaries, and jewelers discussed their issues and concerns facing the contemporary artist-craftsmen in the field of metalwork, and outlined a constitution defining the principles of an organization that would become known as the Metal Arts Guild of San Francisco.

As early as May 30, 1951, the working name for the group was the “Jeweler’s Organization.” However, the founders wanted a more accurate name to describe the association.<sup>79</sup> Everyone wanted the name to be inclusive of all metalworkers, and therefore did not want the term “jeweler” or “jewelry” in the name. Committee members began by writing words on a board, but they could not agree on a name. After this unsuccessful effort, Renk suggested that they combine individual words they like to describe the organization.<sup>80</sup> The group chose “metal,” “arts,” and “guild.” Thus, the formal name of the Metal Arts Guild was proposed by Mayer Segal and adopted on June 27, 1951.<sup>81</sup> That same day, the organizing committee elected its first slate of officers:

Margaret De Patta (President), Mayer Segal (Vice President), Vera Allison (Recording Secretary), Byron Menendez (Corresponding Secretary), and Peter Macchiarini (Treasurer). During this time, MAG's constitution underwent changes and debate. The document was eventually approved with an effective date of July 1, 1951. The constitution detailed the organization's objectives, members' roles and responsibilities, and operational rules.

MAG's primary aims were addressed in Article II of the constitution. Its mission statement stipulated that, "[t]he object of this Guild shall be to bring together the metal craftsmen, workers in jewelry, metal ware, or metal sculpture, in an association for their mutual strength and advantage."<sup>82</sup> MAG founders believed collectively that the organization would create a supporting network for metalworkers by providing artistic, economic, technical, and educational support. Aims included: establishing professional guidelines and standards between guild members and the business community; protecting the rights and interests of its membership; furnishing legal advice; providing a forum for the artists to exchange information and ideas; reducing costs of materials and supplies; and promoting metalwork as an art form through educational exhibits and lectures.<sup>83</sup>

The program committee believed that in order to hold the interest of professional jewelers, MAG should establish trade practices and strive for the "possibility of having something like New York City's America House," which indicates that the committee was considering opening a shop to sell the members' work.<sup>84</sup> This concept never came to fruition; however, MAG supported individual jewelers efforts to sell their work through fair, galleries, and shops.



The notoriety of many of MAG's committee members and officers within the American studio jewelry movement helped attract new members to the organization. Many artist-jewelers looked to De Patta as the icon of modernist jewelry. Founding member Irena Brynner recalled, "Margaret De Patta was really our goddess in this. She guided us and she helped us all a lot. We met regularly. We started meeting together and then we decided to call this group the Metal Arts Guild."<sup>85</sup> Florence Resnikoff, a charter member, recalled, "Margaret De Patta, of course, was the leading person and she was anxious that this guild be started ... we were all very much in awe of Margaret because she was so well known and her work was so [impressive] ... she was a beacon that everybody followed and emulated."<sup>86</sup>

Expanding the membership was important to MAG's financial stability and consistent with the aims of the organization. By the end of the first year, MAG had 45 members.<sup>87</sup> Membership dues in 1952 were five dollars per year, and paid for the organization's insurance, festival expenses, photography, awards, office supplies, and entertainment expenses. (fig. 14) MAG sought to establish a professional organization to attract established metalsmiths. In an effort to be an inclusive organization, MAG wished to welcome all metal artists, but chose to distinguish between the established craftsperson, student, and hobbyist. To achieve this, the Guild separated metalsmiths into two membership categories: full members and regular members. The membership committee determined the classification of membership by evaluating the artist's experience. The Guild stated that one reason to differentiate members was to recognize established artists in the field and give impetus to emerging metalsmiths to achieve such

standards.<sup>88</sup> Borrowing from AEA guidelines, full membership denoted that the individual “had work accepted for exhibition in an open juried show in a major museum or gallery or shall have had an invited one-man show in a major museum, during the last three years.”<sup>89</sup> This requirement could be waived by submitting a minimum of 10 pieces before MAG’s Jury of Acceptance committee who vetted the work based on craftsmanship, quality, and design.<sup>90</sup> Full members were also eligible to run for office and vote on all matters. Although, regular members had access to all services, they could neither vote nor hold office. The controversial division of membership was eliminated a few years later.<sup>91</sup>

As part of fulfilling some of its economic aims, MAG established professional standards for artists when working with shops, galleries, and museums. As if taking a page out of a union handbook, MAG set guidelines for its members to follow. These best business practices with galleries, retailers, and exhibitors included: (1) establishing acceptance of responsibility and/or insurance, (2) shipping costs, (3) special order policies regarding designs submits and deposits to start work, (4) established standards for pricing – wholesale versus consignment, (5) determining a fair price for repair work; (6) establishing sales terms regarding payments and discounts; (7) running a small business; and (8) seeking the Guild’s advice on legal matters. These guidelines empowered the artists as individuals, because they knew they had the backing of the Guild.<sup>92</sup> These guidelines were addressed during MAG’s monthly meetings, and additional resources could be found in MAG’s library.<sup>93</sup>

The Guild was very concerned about establishing proper commercial relationships with retailers. In fact, many of these guidelines were put in place so that the Guild could establish a universal practice within the field. One particular point of contention was whether or not jewelers should require outright purchase of work or allow their work to be on consignment. MAG members were concerned about making a livable income as independent jewelers; therefore, the subject of pricing and product placement was of great interest to its membership. In fact, the Organizing Committee, consulted with Bill Brewer, a manager of the interior design and furniture retailer Kneedler Fauchère, to discuss the problems that both the craftsmen and retailers faced. Brewer assessed the jewelry marketplace:

Where is the market for jewelry craftsmen! [sic] This is a problem because jewelry items are not useful, only decorative. The type of design does not fit into regular jewelry stores. The only place that is a market is in the small experimental shop. The cost of selling jewelry is high in relation to other things. It costs just as much to sell it as it does to make it. Therefore it is standard practice to mark up 100%. A store cannot operate on less.<sup>94</sup>

When discussing putting work on consignment with stores, Brewer advised, “[t]here is no profit in taking articles on consignment at 33-1/3% [and Brewer] is opposed to consignment business because it is not profitable and does not treat the craftsmen correctly. Many small shops work on consignment basis because they do not have money to buy and therefore the market is limited.”<sup>95</sup> MAG members shared these sentiments in the earlier meetings. “While it is difficult to have work purchased outright because of established agreements between craftsmen and retailers, it should be the aim of the

organization to work for and establish the trend for outright purchase by retailers.”<sup>96</sup> Members understood the financial burden they faced when putting work in galleries and stores on a consignment basis, but with limited venues to sell their work during this time, metalsmith’s often had no choice. Therefore, it was important for artist-jewelers to set specific payment terms and consider not only the materials when costing an item, but also labor, overhead, and profit. Artist-jewelers were so concerned regarding pricing that a special meeting was called on August 14, 1955, at the home of Margaret De Patta, for “the subject [of pricing] is of such scope and interest to its members that a more complete coverage is desirable. ... It is expected that some definite conclusions regarding pricing policies and methods will result.”<sup>97</sup> This makes it even more evident that MAG was trying to set policy standards between retailers, customers, and the artist-jeweler. MAG addressed the rationale behind charging fees for repair work:

Many craftsmen are called upon to repair jewelry items and are often at a loss as to prices to charge for such services. The organization’s function is to determine a fair price for such work, especially since there is a union for jewelry established by the A. F. of L. It is good policy to see it that fair prices for such work be maintained. Our objective is to have and hold the welfare of other such unions. <sup>98</sup>

MAG was clearly aware of the International Jewelry Workers Union and sought to better artist-jewelers’ circumstances. As individuals, very few artists had the power to dictate terms; however united as group, MAG had strength in numbers.

MAG’s influence went beyond pricing matters. Although it was not established as a political organization, the Guild was very active in protecting the economic interests of its membership. MAG encouraged letter-writing campaigns on a local, state, and

federal level. It supported the San Francisco Arts Commission Art Festival, and the backing of the bill H.R. 3541 calling for the formation of the Federal Advisory Commission on the Arts. MAG joined with other art organizations in challenging art festival organizers who were beginning to charge artist entry fees for the California State Fair in Sacramento. An all-points-bulletin went out to MAG members on June 24, 1955:

In keeping with established Guild policy of working toward eventual elimination of all entry fees for shows and exhibits – the following motions (2) were made and carried UNANIMOUSLY at the last regular MAG meeting, June 22, 1955.

Motion – ‘The Metal Arts Guild will take a definite stand against the newly established policy of charging entry fees for Art and Craft exhibits at the 1955 California State Fair and Exposition. This action to be binding on the total membership not to exhibit at the Fair.’

Motion – ‘All MAG members are to return entry blanks (Card #5) with the notation that they are not exhibiting because of the entry fee charged. Returned blank to be signed as individuals.’<sup>99</sup>

In addition, Margaret De Patta, on behalf of MAG, drafted a letter to California State Senator George Miller expressing its position on the artist entry fees:

This letter is written officially representing the MAG of C – an organization of artist craftsman [sic] who have joined together to mutually aid one another in meeting the various problems facing the contemporary craftsman actively engaged in the field of metalwork. Our organization is five years old and in that period has sponsored numerous exhibits of museums and art shows and has participated as a group in the S[an] F[rancisco] Art Festivals. The cultural and educational activities of our group have proven of interest and of value to our community.

All feel very strongly that cultural exhibits at the State Fair should not require entry fees as was initiated at the 1955 State Fair. The worker in any of the

cultural fields, while adding profoundly to the richness and depth of his community, finds little commercial market for his efforts and therefore should not be additionally burdened by having fees set upon the public presentation of his work. We hope that you will be able to present our viewpoints whenever the opportunity presents itself. If this can be done we will be most grateful. The discouragement of artist participation in our State Fair can only damage the Fair's value to the people as a whole.<sup>100</sup>

These are but a few examples showing how MAG wielded its influence to support its members. Further, it is clear that what an individual artist could not accomplish, MAG as a collective could.

While MAG was able to provide its members with the power to effect change as a group, the Guild's aim was also to cultivate the individual metalsmith. MAG created an environment conducive for the exchange of information between its members. The organization encouraged both artistic and professional development through Guild programs. Members participated in technical demonstrations, networking opportunities, group discount purchase of materials, and informational exchanges of commercial and exhibition opportunities, among others. Merry Renk felt, "[t]he Metal Arts Guild was a very wonderful organization for jewelers and metal people, because it was a very supportive organization."<sup>101</sup> This support was documented in MAG's monthly newsletter, *Guildletter*. (fig. 15) The publication reveals the interplay and communication between metal artists and the Guild's activity over the years. Striving to meet its objectives, MAG held monthly meetings for both the board and its general membership. Meetings were held in various members' homes to discuss Guild business, plan exhibitions, and participate in educational programs.

Fulfilling MAG's educational aim, senior MAG members often held demonstrations on metalworking techniques and discussions on design philosophy. Margaret De Patta held seminars on fundamental principles of design. Victor Ries spoke on the subject of metal alloys and the endless possibility of metal coloring. Merry Renk lectured on methods and techniques of enameling. Classes were held concerning basic principles of electroplating. Eugene Bielawski explained casting techniques for production lines. Byron Wilson demonstrated the techniques for preparing wax models for casting. Giacomo Patri lectured on "The Study of Spontaneous Forms." Bob Randolph gave a talk on principles of photography. Jack Craven, Jr. of Cratex Manufacturing discussed the use of abrasive wheels and polishing metalwork. Films were shown on Swedish Craft, and slides were shown of Margaret De Patta and Eugene Bielawski's travel to Mexico and Japan. (fig. 16)

MAG members also continued their education with senior members who taught metalsmithing courses at institutions such as the College of Marin (A'leen Runkle), California College of Arts and Crafts (Bob Winston, Margaret De Patta), and Mills College (Peter Macchiarini). These classes were publicized in the *Guildletter*. In the Summer of 1952, metalsmith A'leen Runkle invited MAG members to take a class sponsored by Handy and Harmon for the first Silversmithing Workshop to be taught at the College of Marin.<sup>102</sup> In attendance for the metal raising course were Vera Allison, Irena Brynner, Milton Cavagnaro, Margaret De Patta, Edward Fourtane, Neal George, Orrin Grossman, Helen Heick, Siegbert Lazar, Sgt. Henry Lienay, David Loveless,

Patricia Pope, Antonio Prieto, Merry Renk, Florence Resnikoff, Caroline Rosene, Muriel Savin, and Mayer Segal.<sup>103</sup>

Education was not limited to technical elements of metalsmithing. Artists were able to learn other aspects of working as a self-supporting craftsman. This included critiquing each other's works, learning the nature of the jewelry business, and providing one another with leads and other opportunities to showcase their work. Galleries such as Nanny's, Pacific Shop, Amberg Hirth Gallery, and the Design Gallery are a few of the shops that showcased MAG members work. (fig. 17) According to Irena Brynner, "in Berkeley, there was a big outlet that both Merry [Renk] and I gave things to. And with Merry, it worked beautifully. Merry would find a new place, she would tell me, and I would go and immediately I would tell about her... So we kind of pushed each other."<sup>104</sup> Merry Renk agreed that, "what [was] wonderful is we exchanged names of customers, we exchanged names of sources, we exchanged names of classes. We were able to just be as open with each other [in a way] that no guild that we have heard of [in] the past had. We had ... exhibits that the group was invited to, or the organization accumulated cases and equipment that we could show [at] an open fair; the art festival was one. To me it was amazing."<sup>105</sup> This type of mutual exchange and support laid the foundation for MAG members to successfully establish themselves within the studio jewelry movement.

In tandem with MAG's educational and economic objectives, the Guild's public relations committee worked to inform and promote metal crafts to the public. This was done through organizing traveling jewelry and metal arts exhibitions throughout California and the United States. Members were encouraged to participate and submit



work for solo and group exhibitions. Throughout the year, MAG organized and participated in several California exhibitions and fairs, including: the San Francisco Art Festival, the Metal Arts Guild Annual Show, the Metal Arts Guild traveling exhibition, the California State Fair in Sacramento, and the Annual Designer-Craftsmen of California Exhibition. (figs. 18-19) The jewelry and objects in these exhibitions were jury selected through either MAG's Jury of Acceptance or through the sponsoring organization's jury.

The San Francisco Art Festival began in 1946 and was “the first municipally sponsored Arts Festival[,] ... a collaborative effort between the San Francisco Arts Commission [SFAC] and a group of artists frustrated by the scarcity of local museums and galleries, drew hundreds of participants and firmly established the viability of a highly democratized alternative to the relative exclusivity of existing exhibition venues.”<sup>106</sup> The fair featured ceramics, graphics, sculpture, watercolor, weaving, painting, photography, and metalwork. Organizations such as the California Society of Etchers, the San Francisco Potters Association, the Professional Weavers Guild, the San Francisco Women Artists, the Marin Society of Artists, the Society of Western Artists, and the Metal Arts Guild had showcases at the fair. MAG used the platform of the San Francisco Art Festival, held at the Palace of Fine Arts in San Francisco from October 16-21, 1951, as its first venue for its inaugural exhibition. (fig. 20) MAG members included: Irena Brynner (MAG award); Mabel Bush; Milton Cavagnaro (3<sup>rd</sup> Prize SFAC Award); Stella Chen; Hal Davies; Margaret De Patta (Co-First Prize SFAC award, MAG award); Margaret Dhaemers; Robert Dhaemers; Harry Dixon; Loyola and Edward Fourtane; Orran Grossman (award winner); Connie Grothkopp; Helen Heick; Leslie

Klepper (2<sup>nd</sup> Prize SFAC award, MAG award); Barbara Langford; David Loveless; Peter Macchiarini (Co-First Prize SFAC award); Virginia Macchiarini; Byron Menendez; Patricia Pope; Merry Renk; Victor Ries; A'leen Runkle (MAG award); Caroline Rosene; Mayer Segal; Patrick Sieler; Francis Sperisen; Roy Walker; and Byron Wilson.<sup>107</sup>

MAG's booth, set up in accordance with Festival plans by Frank Merwin, was installed and designed by MAG's educational committee. MAG used photography as part of its exhibition design. Peter Macchiarini recalled, "[t]he photographs were mounted upon large cardboard backs set upon a large wall board suspended from the scaffolding. The entire exhibit, which included work benches and sales tables, presented a very effective display. The art festival jury declared it to be the most attractive of all the organizational displays."<sup>108</sup> (figs. 21-24) This translated into a "great success by all," as the jewelry sales totaled approximately \$1,000, and generated public interest in contemporary art jewelry.<sup>109</sup> Such success led MAG to continue showing at the San Francisco Art Festival; however, the Guild eventually created its own separate exhibitions as well.

The Metal Arts Guild Annual Show typically followed the San Francisco Art Festival to give incentive to customers to purchase jewelry and metal items for Christmas gifts. Although finding a venue for the exhibition was often challenging, sites included the M.H. de Young Museum and the California Palace of the Legion of Honor. Clearly aware of an exhibition's impact on the perception of MAG, the Guild set its sights on achieving widespread acceptance among the public and in the arts. MAG emphasized this in its August 1958 *Guildletter*, "[t]he museum people will be watching our show with some interest. If it proves to be an attraction in its own right, we very possibly will have

found a permanent location for our Annuals and will not have to scrounge around trying to find some place to hold them. This is important to the Guild. The Palace of the Legion of Honor is a prestige location. Repeated showings in this location can do much for the members individually as well as for the Guild as a whole. Therefore, it is to our advantage to make this the best show we can.”<sup>110</sup> The Guild strategically chose venues to expose both studio jewelry and its members not only to the public, but also to influential people in the arts to bolster credence to the field of contemporary art jewelry.

While MAG primarily focused on promoting Bay Area jewelers and metalsmiths in California, the Guild created traveling shows specifically set up to showcase MAG members' work throughout North America. MAG's first traveling show entitled *Jewelry: Past and Present* (a.k.a. *6,000 Years of Jewelry*) (1957), was circulated throughout the United States and showcased ancient and contemporary jewelry as well as metalwork. (fig. 25) The second exhibition (1958) eliminated the ancient pieces and consisted of six cases made “entirely of MAG members' work” selected by a non-MAG jury. Due to the increasing public interest, the Guild's second traveling show added more works by members Vera Allison, Marian Bassett, Margaret De Patta Bielawski, Florence Dixon, Harry Dixon, Philip Eden, Afton Giacomini, Connie Grothkopp, Tom Little, Jack Nutting, Margaret Willis, Robert Pearl, Margaret Randolph, Florence Resnikoff, Byron Wilson, and Sally Wilson. Exhibition venues included the Richmond Art Center in Richmond, CA; Henry Art Gallery, University of Washington in Seattle, WA; the Museum of Art in Long Beach, CA; the Art Department at the San Jose State College in San Jose, CA; the Art Department at San Francisco State College in San Francisco, CA;

Larsen Gallery at Yakima, WA, University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada and the Alabama Polytechnic Institute in Auburn, AL. Evidence also indicates that the show traveled to Spokane, WA; Bozeman, MT; Missoula, MT; Medford, OR. In addition it went to New York, Georgia, Florida, and the Carolinas. MAG described the first show as “enthusiastically received at its various stop-overs with particularly favorable comment on the contemporary jewelry.”<sup>111</sup> MAG’s traveling shows helped expand its reach beyond California and validated MAG’s (and its members’) place in the studio jewelry movement.

### **The Collective Output of the Metal Arts Guild**

The collective output of MAG was quite diverse. While there was no particular aesthetic that emerged from the Guild, artists were influenced by their peers, instructors, backgrounds, and their surrounding environment. The group was made a mix of blacksmiths, coppersmiths, goldsmiths, metalsmiths, and lapidaries, and their work and objects produced were as varied as their backgrounds. Some artists had strong ties to the Arts and Crafts movement, while others had shifted their focus to a more modernist approach.<sup>112</sup> One defining characteristic that did unite many of the members of the Guild was their individual approaches to design. MAG members specialized in techniques that would distinguish themselves from other jewelers.

Margaret De Patta collaborated with MAG member and lapidary Francis Sperisen and realized her constructivist designs by incorporating opti-cut gemstones. Bob Winston