

BEST OF JURY ARTIST

Artist Achieves Success, Bead by Bead

Bead artist, Bonny Waters, earns the Bank of the Cascades Bend Summer Festival 'Best of Jury' honor

By Susan Springer, for The Bulletin
Special Projects Department

Bonny Waters became an artist by accident. Five years ago, Waters went to an art show in Logan, Utah, and was captivated by a booth featuring handmade glass beads. She returned each day of the show and begged the artist to teach her everything she knew.

"I walked into her booth and touched every piece of jewelry she had in there," said Waters.

Finally lampwork bead artisan Von Schroeder said yes. Schroeder was experienced in using a torch to soften glass rods from Moretti, Italy, then

mold them into glass beads. Waters began working out of her new friend's studio learning how to turn the glass rods into beautiful beads full of color and pattern. Waters first art show was a success and she was hooked. Six months later, she quit her full-time job as a manager at a gym and today makes her living as a jeweler. Waters' schedule is packed with art shows and she sells her jewelry in galleries and shops in several states. Also, she creates custom jewelry pieces.

Recently, Waters opened her mail from the Bend Summer Festival thinking all she would find was her booth assignment for the show she is attending for the first time. Instead, she was "thrilled" to discover she had been awarded Best of Jury.

Festival Art Vendor Coordinator Darlene Clawson said the jury committee looked through the slides of the 150 artists who show at the Festival to find art

which stood out. In addition to the honor, the Best of Jury artist wins a \$500 prize.

"We look for something that catches our eye – that is unique," said Clawson.

"It's really neat – it validates what I'm doing," said Waters.

Waters said the award made her feel she could finally call herself an artist. Her success in a few short years is especially amazing for a woman who didn't think she had a "creative bone" in her body yet found her passion making jewelry with fire.

A few years ago, Waters noticed more people making glass beads so she wanted to move her work in a direction that would keep it unique. She decided to take a silversmithing class in her home state of Utah. The teacher helped advance her work into high-end sterling silver and glass jewelry.

"I feel like I'm making jewelry – not just making beads," said Waters.

Just as she made mistakes learning to melt glass into "something spec-



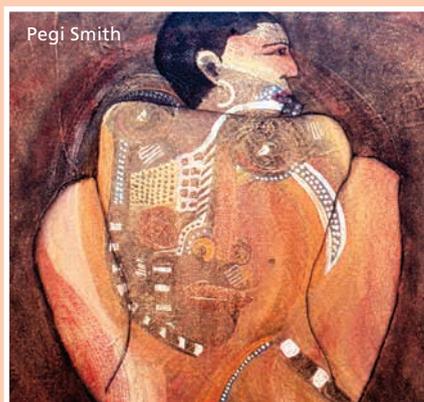
tacular," Waters said she has a bag of silver melted beyond recognition. But climbing the learning curve has paid off - her bracelets, necklaces, and pendants truly stand out. One bright colored jumble of disc-shaped beads is titled Disco Cuff. Another textured metal pendant with Pyrex cabochon is a stunning mix. Some beads are translucent confections, while others are saturated with rich color.

Waters said her journey as an artist has been helped by other artists who were willing to teach and share.

"I have found these incredible women who have taken me under their wing and nurtured and guided me" said Waters.



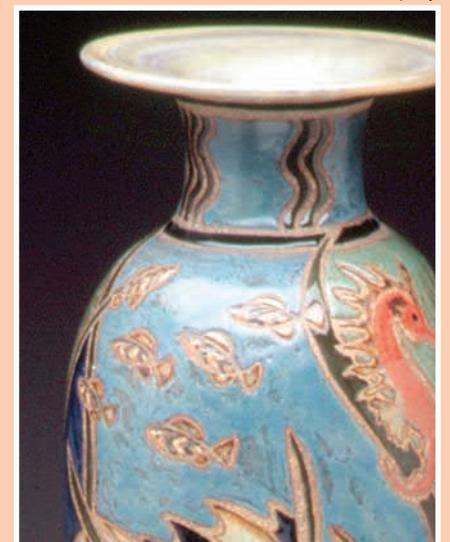
Jeff Nelson	Wood	A20
Curtiss Olson	Fused Glass	C132
Don Perry	Metal	A33
West Phipps	Metal	C118



Donna Pioli	Jewelry	C105
Jerry Polan	Wood	C126
Beth & Mike Pollitz	StainedGlass/Jewelry	C150-152
Diane Postma	Metal	BB6
Dori Pratt	Jewelry	B82
Steven Provence	Pottery	C95
Red Oak Glass	Glass Lights	B74
Charlene Rivers	Painting	B50
Thomas Rude	Print Making Sculpture	C129
Seth San Filippo	Wood	C121
Eli Sanders	Miscellaneous	A14
Shane Schaeffer	Metal	C108
Michael Schneider	Jewelry	A34
Sabine Schram-Collings	Jewelry	B72
Terry Serdy	Wood	C154/156
Ian Sexton	Painting	C107
Paul Sloan	Fine Art	C115
Keith Sluder	Painting	B60

Graham Smith	Photography	B57
Pegi Smith	Painting	B51
Jim Snook	Cartoonist	C141
Jim Spiegel	Wood	A27/29
Michael Stems	Children's Books	A19
Nancy & Rick Stewart	Wood	B52
Paula Taylor	Metal	A24
Richard Taylor	Miscellaneous	C139
Scott Taylor	Wood	C138
Jessica Turner	Jewelry	A35
Maurus Uhlom	Metal	C134
Vincent Varela	Metal	C127
Sharon Walling	Wood, Textiles	A30
Bonny Waters	Jewelry	C125
W. Scott Watson	Painting	C120
Kari Wells/Monte Ready	Fiber	A22
Vicky L. Wilson	Jewelry	A10
Ron Wolf	Photography	B54-56

Eleanor Murphey





Today Waters works in her studio in a small town in Southern Utah where she is surrounded by a big rack of colored glass rods, a torch, kiln and oxygen generator. She said there's a bead on every flat surface of her house. She enjoys learning new techniques and seeing the progression of her work. She said she's "going to ride this for awhile."

Waters' summer calendar is busy with art shows for several weekends in a row. Sometimes she panics about having enough inventory but tries to slow down so she continues to enjoy her work. She still finds inspiration just looking at a glass rod and she knows each bead she creates is unique. Waters stays fresh by allowing one day each week just to "play" with the glass.

Waters finds time to blog about her work at beadsbybonny.blogspot.com. She finds her new skill of metalwork a "blast" and hopes her creations are enjoyed for generations.

"There's a little piece of my soul that goes in every piece that goes out," said Waters.

