

Gill Bridgestock

- Tenterden Artists

Gill grew up in the 50's/60's, in a home where her father was a photographer. There was a steady stream of journalist friends, scriptwriters and artists; and parties, including a whacky photoshoot on a fire engine with Lord Snowdon!



The result was that Gill immersed herself for decades drawing, painting, and taking photographs and creating set designs. She has worked for a myriad of people such as Darius Photography (in the days of Angel Delight!), potter Betty Sims, and - a slight detour - designing a hand book for the elderly.

Some years later, Gill then trained for five years with silversmith, Owen Madhloppe-Philips. Four pieces of her

jewellery were hired by BBC drama *New Tricks*, and were worn by actress, Anna Calder Marshall, in the episode *Objects of Desire*.

Since then, Gill has enjoyed the wonderful design possibilities of pewter. Encouraged by The Worshipful Company of Pewterers at *Pewter Live* where, in 2014, she won the Neish Award for Design and Collectability, Gill gained the confidence to work on a larger scale, making sculptural pieces for the home that includes domestic-ware.



Gill has her stamp at the London assay office for hallmarking, and she is also a member of The Association of Pewter Craftsmen.



Cast pewter with copper candle holders

Gill is a member of the Tenterden Artists, run by four artists of various mediums who run 2 - 3 art shows a year in Tenterden and Rye; artists are invited every other year to participate. She said of last year's Tenterden Exhibition: "I was one of 16 artists who participated in the annual exhibition in December 2017 in Tenterden, Kent. It was a huge success; and for me, well my pewter sculpture (above, right) was bought by the town's retired mayoress, Mrs J Crickmore-Porter, so I was over the moon!

"At shows such as this it is a great opportunity to plug pewter. It's surprising that even now people still think of pewter as 'that dark metal' in the form of tankards. So it is always a pleasure to educate the public.

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Piece showing at Pewter Now Sheffield: the bowl was raised and the rim melted to create a more natural form, it's attached to a piece

"I like to experiment with pewter, testing its boundaries, always looking for a new way of using it. This in turn intrigues the public and encourages them to ask questions. My work is hugely influenced by the sea, interpreting the rough and smooth textures of rock pools, riverbeds and especially the movement of water, which is of constant fascination to me.

"I'm now concentrating on a pewter piece for the Pewter Live 2018 competition which has involved a lot of folding - a technique I love, as it lends itself so well to natural forms."

The candlestick is amongst others of Gill's pieces that are on display at the ArtSpring Gallery, Tonbridge - until the end of February.

Alan Williams

Gill Bridgestock T: 01580 765 347 M: 07767 120 011

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Editor: Alan Williams

Published by Alan Williams, 14 Dandridge House, 31 Lamb Street, Spitalfields, London E1 6ED and endorsed by the Worshipful Company of Pewterers, Pewterers' Hall, Oat Lane, London EC2V 7DE

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