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News Release

Metal Museum honors Lynda Watson as 2022 Master Metalsmith

California native receives international recognition for her lifetime of work as an educator, artist



Lynda Watson photo courtesy of r.r. jones.

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MEMPHIS, Tenn. (Sept. 24, 2022) – The Metal Museum announces artist [Lynda Watson](#) as the 2022 Master Metalsmith, honoring the Southern California native for her prolific work as a lifelong educator and mixed-media artist.

A two-time recipient of the National Endowment for the Arts Individual Fellowship, Watson has seen her works shown both nationally and internationally as well as included in the permanent collection of the Museum of Art and Design, New York, as well as private collections.

As Master Metalsmith, Watson will receive the Keeler Award and have her works on display at the Metal Museum from Oct. 2, 2022, to Jan. 29, 2023.

Watson, whose wanderlust has taken her to places around the world, documents those global journeys, personal experiences and life transitions through her art, weaving together narrative and nostalgia.

“While I have been inspired by the same subject matter—my life and travels—for more than 50 years, part of the challenge and excitement has come from exploring and making my pieces with so many different materials and techniques,” Watson said. “Being named Master Metalsmith is a huge honor and a validation of my years of work. I’m so happy to be able to share my times and places through the exhibition and the catalog.”

Many of the works to be displayed recount her adventures across the country and abroad, as well as her love of her childhood home in Orange, California. Her work incorporates materials such as metal, felt and charcoal in addition to found objects, creating a detailed 3D scrapbook of her memories.

Through that variety of found objects, Watson establishes a vibrant and tactile sense of place in her pieces, from Mexican pesos and pressed souvenir pennies from around California to the shells, stones and fossils discovered in her travels in North America and the United Kingdom.

Always drawn to the creative, Watson began her studies in Commercial Art at Orange Coast College before earning a bachelor’s degree in general crafts and jewelry and a master of fine arts in jewelry/metals from California State University, Long Beach.

In 1970 Watson was tapped to start a jewelry/metals program at Cabrillo College in Aptos, California. She stayed there for 25 years as the program’s director, inspiring countless students and future artists.

“Lynda Watson’s impact on the metals and jewelry communities is significant. Her distinctive style, her ability to reinvent herself through her works, and her accessibility to students as a dynamic educator has helped shape the arts world in ways that will be felt for generations to come,” said Metal Museum Executive Director Carissa Hussong. “It is our pleasure to recognize Watson as the 2022 Master Metalsmith and invite her to join the ranks of other internationally acclaimed artists who have earned this honor.”

Watson’s work has appeared in numerous publications over the years, starting notably in 1969 with *Objects USA*. Other publications include *Jewelry Concepts and Technology*, *American Craft*, *Ornament*, *Metalsmith* and *Metalsmith Exhibition in Print*.

The Master Metalsmith series, which was created nearly 40 years ago, honors artists who have at least 20 years of experience in the field of fine metal work and who are known for educating and innovating with a solo exhibition and accompanying catalog.

The series began in 1983 as a way for the Metal Museum to honor the most influential metal artists of the day. In the years since its inception it has brought the work of more than 30 metalsmiths to Memphis for solo exhibitions in the MidSouth.

Event Details:

Master Metalsmith: Lynda Watson | Looking Back will be on display in the Keeler and Gasparrini Galleries at the Metal Museum from Oct. 2, 2022, to Jan. 29, 2023.

An accompanying exhibition catalog features a prologue and essay written by Susan Cummins, photography by r.r. jones and design by Marc D'Estout. The catalog will be available in the Metal Museum Store in person and online.

About the Metal Museum

The Metal Museum is the only institution in the United States devoted exclusively to the preservation, promotion, and advancement of the art and craft of fine metalwork. This mission is achieved through four primary program areas – exhibitions, collections, studio practice, and community education and engagement. Programs are facilitated on the Museum grounds and at locations across the Mid-South. Located on 3.2 acres of historic property overlooking the Mississippi River, the Museum grounds include the main Museum building as well as the Metalworking Facilities, Library + Resource Center, and private artist residences. Learn more about the Museum and its programs by visiting our website at metalmuseum.org.

The Museum receives operating support from ArtsMemphis and the Tennessee Arts Commission. Programming support is received from Hyde Family Foundations, the Windgate Charitable Foundation, and hundreds of corporate, foundation, and individual supporters.

High-resolution images of artwork and exhibit graphics are available upon request. A copy of the exhibition catalog for reviewing purposes will be made available for credentialed media members and those affiliated with an arts organization. Please contact Jenn Godwin, Communications Manager for the Metal Museum, at (901) 774-6380 or jenngodwin@metalmuseum.org.