



# behind the MASC

NEWSLETTER OF THE MEDALLIC ART SOCIETY OF CANADA

August 2007, Issue 18

## President's Message



In my last message, I indicated that I would continue my reflections on the theme of inspiration in medal making in the next message. That time has come, but recent events have overshadowed this theme, and I would like to focus on them first.

A few weeks ago, on July 14, 2007 the MASC Annual General Meeting and Directors' Reception took place at the beautiful Fallsview Sheraton Hotel at the very edge of the spectacular Niagara Falls. Once again, this occurred in conjunction with the Canadian Numismatic Association (C.N.A) annual convention – a great convenience for MASC, as we rode almost effortlessly once again on the coattails of this organization's generosity. MASC is truly grateful to Paul Petch, our vice-president, who is also a Fellow of the C.N.A., for his excellent planning and extensive effort in staging both of these events. Also, thanks to MASC executive members John Carolan, Eileen Millen, Deborah Paterson Dass, and Ray Scott for their efforts in assisting with preparations, manning the MASC display table, and participating in the meeting. Likewise thanks to MASC directors Yoshiko Sunahara and Eleanor Konkle, and of course, the ever helpful past president and co-founder director Del Newbigging for his assistance in almost every detail of this event.

Not to be forgotten are those who attended not because of their official roles in MASC, but those, who like the executive and directors, take a keen interest in the life of MASC – members Georgina Zmatlik, Andrea Yermy, Lorraine Wright and their friends, as well as interested C.N.A members who partook of

guest speaker William Waychison's excellent presentation of "Development of a Canadian Identity in Medallistic Art", complete with actual samples screened during his talk. Our sincere thanks is extended to them as well.

And to those who never attend, excluding those who are prevented from participating, I can only say, you are missing a fine outing in a lovely location, and are missing out on great displays in both medallistic art and coin and bill artefacts.

The Directors' Reception, conducted in an ambiance of hotel hospitality and fine refreshments, focused on a review of 2006 AGM resolutions and new directions. So many of the 2006 AGM resolutions have now been implemented. Some are on the main hot plate – others are on slow burners. Some have been identified as long-term prospects, but all of our AGM resolutions depend upon volunteer and general membership participation.

Not to be forgotten are those MASC members who responded to our call for entry to the Canadian Sculpture centre permanent display in Toronto. Your contributions of 30 medals allowed a complete rejuvenation of our exhibit, and a special thanks goes out to you all.

A highlight of the 2007 MASC AGM was the presentation by Del Newbigging to Venessa Pica, the winner of the Student Medal Competition. The 2008 contest is announced on page 8 of this issue.

MASC is working diligently to find public gallery space for our medallistic output in B.C. for 2010 or any year for that matter. Recently, the Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art in Toronto was approached and looks promising. Think clay my fellow members. And for the 2008 exhibit at the Geert Maas Sculpture Studio and gallery exhibit in Kelowna, inspire yourselves with the theme of "EFFORT".

Sincerely, Saulius Jaskus

## MASC Student Medal Competition Winner "Artistemma"

by Venessa Pica



Obverse  
2007 Cast bronze

In creating this medal, my passion was to explore the characteristics of early Renaissance medals and coins; and their value in representing an individual's uniqueness. This medal is my rendition of an Italian ancestral coin.

On the reverse side, is the artist's hand at work, holding a paintbrush in one hand and gripping a palette in the other. Creativity, faith, and devotion are the roots of this hard-working hand.

On the obverse side, is my self-portrait depicted as a young artisan from the guild community.

The word 'ARTISTEMMA' is a word I coined, derived from my Italian heritage, meaning 'roots of an artist'.



Reverse  
2007 Cast bronze



## The Art Medal: An Appreciation Part 2

By Paul R. Petch

An address delivered at the MASC 2006 Annual General Meeting

### Part II: The Circle of Friends of the Medallion

The great international expositions of the turn of this century were a vital forum for introducing the public to art in general and especially to recent developments and trends in art taking place in other countries. No country was more identified with the early universal expositions than France, and its art came to dominate North American fairs as well; the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893 is recognized as a critical point in the dissemination of French influence, under the banner of Beaux-Arts style, into art of all media. The French schools themselves served as the training ground for the most important of American medalists: the sculptors Saint-Gaudens, French, Flanagan and Brenner stand out in this regard. The name of Saint-Gaudens constantly recurs in discussion of later American Beaux-Arts medalists; through his teachings at the Art Students League and his training of many apprentices and assistants, he transmitted his approach to the medal to a whole generation of medallists. American artists were quick to put their own mark on the medium, both through the use of indigenous subjects, but also through a distinctive vigor and looseness of modeling and the adoption of specifically Renaissance formats. The one work of art that the average fair-goer could bring home as a physical souvenir of their visit was a medal.

Among medalists who became active in the first years of this century, the medal also became a convenient medium for personal enterprise. Janet Scudder set up a studio in Paris to make small portrait plaquettes of visiting Americans; framed like paintings, these deluxe souvenirs of the Grand Tour were easily portable and could be distributed in multiple copies. They became a collectible sought by art enthusiasts and numismatists alike. Bela Pratt made extra copies of a commissioned portrait as a speculative venture. Theodore Spicer-Simson produced a whole series of medallions of famous authors as a commercial venture.

The twentieth century saw the entrance of another party into the process of the creation of medals—the collector. Already in the early years of the century, John Cotton Dana had sponsored the production of medals for the benefit of a museum and its constituents. It was with such groups as the Circle of Friends of the Medallion and its successor, the Society of Medalists, that the collectors themselves took the lead in sponsoring medallic creation. As with so many aspects of the modern medal, such enterprises had their origins in the early days of the medium, when Italian Renaissance princes

and Nuremburg burghers sponsored the creation of their own medals to fill their collections.

### Collecting the Art Medal

The early history of the Circle of Friends of the Medallion, America's first private collector medal series, are intertwined among the Weil and Deitsch brothers and two other well-off men, all of them from New York City. Most important, perhaps, were the Weil brothers, Henri and Felix, who made the first medals and who were later to operate the Medallic Art Company. Henri had worked for the other set of brothers, Edward and Charles Deitsch, who operated their own medallic company for a brief time.

The other two well-off men were Robert Hewitt Jr. and Charles de Kay. Hewitt was a medal collector, forming an extensive collection of Lincoln medals that ended up at the Smithsonian. De Kay was an author, newspaper columnist, gadabout, and today would be called a "jetsetter."

Both of these men had traveled extensively in the early 1900s and had purchased medals in Europe. At this time there were two series of medals being issued, one in Paris and another in Belgium. Who got the idea to commence a similar series of medals back home in the United States we do not know.

Hewitt and de Kay approached the Deitsch brothers to produce medals. Hewitt, who had made his fortune in New York City real estate, probably underwrote the venture under the name of the Circle of Friends of the Medallion. De Kay would promote the series, both in his writings and, indeed, among his vast circle of friends, including the well-to-do and art patrons.

The Deitsches were involved at the start in 1909, but only for a brief time. They wanted out after the first two medals were issued. They sold the medal-making equipment to the Weils (and ultimately the Medallic Art Company name), but surreptitiously sold the rights to the Circle of Friends to competitors in Philadelphia, Joseph K. Davison's Sons. After four years and nine medals the Davison's dropped out. In 1915 the Weils produced the last medal – number 12 – and the series lacked the momentum to carry on after that.

Edge lettering on the medal series varies. The first two issues bear a diamond-D mintmark of the Deitsch brothers and later reissues bear the Medallic Art Company name. Davisons usually spelled out their last name in full on their medals. Issue number twelve is, of course, signed Medallic Art Company.



***The medals of the Circle of Friends of the Medallion series were inset into diecut holes in the pages of uniformly sized brown cloth books. Each book also had a few pages of descriptions and artists' notes. This is issue number 9, 1913, depicting John C. Fremont, sculpted by Rene Theophile de Quelin***



The Circle of Friends of the Medallion Medals were issued in diecut pages bound in tan cloth books making the set a book-shelf collection. Printers and binders varied as well over the seven-year term. Their names are found in the colophon at the end of each volume. Two such varying names exist on issues four and nine.

From published membership lists it can be surmised that no

more than 500 of any of the individual medals were produced. The last medal, Allan Newman's number twelve, is the scarcest. Victor Brenner's number four, Motherhood, is the most popular. Paul Manship's number eleven is the most expensive, being sought after by art galleries. Members of the Bahai religion seek issue number seven of Abdul Baha, since their religion did not sanction portraits.

The Circle of Friends series did serve a greater purpose, however, as the forerunner for The Society of Medalists, which began at the Weils' Medallion Art Company a generation later, in 1930.



*Issue number 1,  
1909, Hudson-Fulton, John Flanagan*



*Issue number 4,  
1911, Motherhood, Victor D. Brenner*



*Issue number 12,  
1915, Joan of Arc, Allen G. Newman*



*Issue number 11,  
1914, Tercentenary of New York, Paul Manship*



*Issue number 7,  
1912, Abdul Baha, Louis Potter*

*Coming up in part three: The Society of Medalists*

### Condolences

MASC expresses sympathy to Founding Member and Honourary Director Anne Lazare-Mirvish upon the death of her husband on July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

Edwin "Honest Ed" Mirvish, OC, CBE (July 24, 1914 - July 11, 2007) was a Canadian businessman, philanthropist and theatrical impresario who lived in Toronto, Ontario. He is known not only for his flagship business, Honest Ed's, a landmark discount store in downtown Toronto, but also as a patron of the arts, instrumental in revitalizing the theatre scene in Toronto.



## The Parallel Exhibition: Dora de Pédery-Hunt

By Del Newbigging, FIDEM Canada Delegate

### The Parallel Exhibition

At each FIDEM congress an exhibition of medals by FIDEM members is displayed. This year for the first time a parallel exhibition is being exhibited. Both of these shows will be on view at the congress in Colorado Springs in September and will continue to be shown until June 2008.

The theme for the parallel exhibition marks the seventy years of FIDEM as an international art medal organization. Each country was invited to choose a living distinguished medal artist who was born in 1937 or before. Ten medals (twenty sides) are shown for each artist. Dora de Pédery-Hunt was chosen to represent Canada. She is the only Canadian artist who has made a living as a medalist. Besides other artworks she has created over 500 medals. There will be a catalogue produced on the medals of the Parallel Exhibition.

MASC member, Leonda Froehlich Finke will represent the U.S. A. in the Parallel Exhibition

### Dora de Pédery-Hunt

Dora de Pédery-Hunt was born in Budapest, Hungary in 1913. She studied sculpture and design at the Royal School of Applied Arts in Budapest where she received her diploma in 1943.

She came to Canada in 1948 where she worked as an art teacher and designed church interiors. During this period, her sculptures were included in group shows quite regularly. Her first one-man show of medals and small sculptures took place in 1965. This successful display was followed by many other shows and established her as a sculptor and medal designer. She specialized in designing Canadian coins, for example, the \$100 Olympic gold coin and the \$100 Peace gold. Her effigy of the queen has been on all Canadian coins from 1990 to 2003. This is the first time that the portrait of the monarch was designed by a Canadian artist. In 2002 she was commissioned to create a commemorative medal for His Holiness Pope John Paul II's visit to Toronto.

Ms. Hunt is the recipient of numerous awards including the Order of Canada (O.C.), several honorary doctorates and most recently The J. Sanford Saltus Award

Dora de Pédery-Hunt takes pride in exhibiting and promoting the art of the medal. This is her greatest contribution to Canadian art. For over thirty-five years Ms. Hunt represented Canada at FIDEM (International Art Medal Society). She is also a founding member of MASC (Medallic Art Society of Canada) and AMSA (American Association of Medallic Sculpture)



*My Garden*  
120 mm x 100 mm Bronze 1961



*Welcome John Simon Tooke*  
75 mm diameter Bronze 1961



*The Great Owl*  
102 mm x 98 mm Bronze 1964



*Adam & Eve with Owl*  
72 mm x 72 mm Bronze 1965



*Dante*  
97 mm diameter Bronze 1965



*Old Age*  
75 mm diameter Bronze 1966



The Parallel Exhibition: Dora de Pédery-Hunt



Freedom For Hungary 1956-1966  
100 mm diameter Bronze 1966



Expo '70 Osaka  
92 mm x 85 mm Bronze 1970



Churchill Falls Power Station  
97mm diameter Bronze 1970



We All Thank You  
98 mm diameter Bronze 1972



Frontier College -Canada  
85 mm diameter Bronze 1974



Governor General's Award  
95 mm diameter Bronze 1974



The Last Supper  
90 mm diameter Bronze 1979



Royal Canadian Academy of Arts  
80 mm diameter Bronze 1980  
Obverse



Royal Canadian Academy of Arts  
80 mm diameter Bronze 1980  
Reverse



Young Beethoven  
80 mm x 85 mm Bronze 1983



In Praise of Dandelions  
80 mm x 85 mm Bronze 1991



XIIth International Congress  
on Archives  
90 mm diameter Bronze 1992



Theodor Herzl  
(First Zionist Congress, Basel, 1897)  
90 mm X 100 mm Bronze 1997



The Sermon on the Mount  
98 mm diameter Bronze 2002



## Student Medal Competition

This year MASC sponsored a competition for students in medal making. The Call for Entry was sent out early in the school year. Students participated in the contest by submitting photographs of their creations. From the photographs several finalists were chosen and asked to send in the actual medal. The medals were presented to a jury who had the difficult task of choosing the winner of the competition. The jury was pleased with the quality and originality shown in the student works.



*Venessa Pica*

The medal created by Venessa Pica from The Ontario College of Art & Design was the winner of the \$1000 prize. Curtis Dwyer from The Nova Scotia College of Art & Design received an Honourable Mention. All of the finalists received a year's membership to MASC.

MASC will be sponsoring the contest again next year. It is hoped that this might create interest in medal making in educational institutions.. By making a medal much can be learned about modeling and casting, research and history. Because of the small size of the medal all of this can be done at little expense. The prize in 2008 will remain at \$1000. There will be no age restriction. The theme and shape will be open. There will be a size restriction with special emphasis on the thickness of the medal. The Call for Entry will be sent out by the end of August 2007. The deadline to submit for the contest will be April 15, 2008.



**Grotesque Mask & Sun Face Mask by James Miko (The Art Centre, Central Technical School, Toronto)**



*Grotesque Mask  
Left: Obverse  
Right: Reverse*



*Sun Face Mask  
Right: Obverse  
Left: Reverse*



**Environmental Awareness by Erin Siegel (Ontario College of Art & Design)**



*Environment Awareness  
Top Left: Obverse  
Bottom Left: Reverse*

**Medal of War by Curtis Dwyer (Nova Scotia College of Art & Design)**



**Duality & Identity by Erin Parton (The Art Centre, Central Technical School, Toronto)**



*Duality & Identity  
Top Right: Obverse  
Bottom Right: Reverse*





## The Sixth Annual General Meeting

The AGM was held on July 14, 2007 at the Sheraton Fallsview Hotel and Convention Centre in Niagara Falls, Ontario in association with the Canadian Numismatic Association convention. In the morning a Directors' Reception was organized for directors and MASC members to review the on-going projects and the ideas that might be implemented in the future. A most important item that was discussed is the exhibition that will be held at Geert Maas Sculpture Gardens & Gallery in Kelowna, B.C. in the summer of 2008.

The AGM began in the afternoon with a talk by guest speaker, William Waychison who gave an illustrated presentation entitled, "Development of a Canadian Identity in Medallion Art". The topics that were covered ranged from pre 1759 up to 1957. We will be printing some of the information for all to enjoy in future newsletters.

The guest speaker's talk was followed by a presentation of first prize to the winner of the Student Medal Competition, Venessa Pica.



*Student medal award winner Venessa Pica receives her prize from Del Newbigging*

Venessa is a student at The Ontario College of Art & Design (OCAD). Her winning medal is featured in this issue of 'behind the MASC'. The Competition will be offered again next year with the Call for Entry going out by the

end of August 2007.

After a brief break the business part of the meeting was chaired by MASC President, Saulius Jaskus. Ray Scott, MASC Treasurer gave the financial report. MASC has a balance of \$1,780.39.

Several donations towards the Student Medal Competition have been received. Membership Secretary, Eileen Milne reported that she has received 27 renewals and will send out a second notice in August to remind those who are slow to renew their membership.

The finalist medals from the Student Medal Competition were displayed at the convention along with a display of MASC medals from our members. The MASC member medals will be moved to an exhibition at the Canadian Sculpture Centre in Toronto for an extended showing. MASC Vice-President, Paul Petch has created a website for MASC. He will be adding new items to the website in the near future. Please check it out.

MASC website: [www.nunet.ca](http://www.nunet.ca) (click medals)



*MASC Volunteer Co-Ordinator, Deborah Patterson-Dass presents guest speaker, William Waychison with a gift.*



*Attending the MASC meeting from L to R Andrea Yermy, Georgina Zmatlik, Yoshiko Sunahara*

## Member News

### Happy Birthday

Congratulations to Dr. Alexander Husveti upon the occasion of his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. Alex is shown here with his lovely wife, Anna and their daughter, Leonora.



Alex is working on a new commission from the Cistercian Alumni Association. This medal will celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of the association.



**CALL FOR ENTRY  
STUDENT AWARD FOR ART  
MEDAL**

**\$1000.00**

**Deadline: April 15, 2008**

Theme: Open  
Size: Not larger than 6" (150mm) in diameter  
Shape: No restrictions Thickness: No more than 10mm thick  
One -Sided or Two - Sided.  
Material: Non-malleable (will not lose its shape when touched)

**Medals juried from 4"x 6" photographs.  
Include a head & shoulders photo of the artist**

**Final ten medals juried from actual medals**  
(Students will be notified if they make the short list)

**Entry Fee: \$10.00**  
(Personal cheque or Money Order made out to MASC)

Send photographs and entry fee to:  
MASC Medal Award  
1288 Ritson Road North, Suite 212, Oshawa, Ontario, Canada L1G 8B2  
Inquiries about this award should be directed by e-mail to  
Del Newbigging at: newcar@sympatico.ca

**Donations**

MASC is appreciative for the following donations to the Student Medal Competition.

- Yoshiko Sunahara -----\$100
- Eleanor Konkle -----\$100
- Paul Petch ----- \$50
- Deborah Patterson Dass -----\$60
- Ann Pollack-----\$20
- Paul Sheppard -----\$10
- Georgina Zmatlik -----\$30
- Del Newbigging -----\$100
- Roger Hannan -----\$5

*behind the MASC*

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*Balance*  
by Del Newbigging  
70 mm x 75 mm  
2006 Cast bronze

- Canada's leading sculpture foundry
- Casting bronze, stainless steel, aluminum, silver and pewter
- Enlarging, mold-making, polishing, patinating
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*The Spirit of Peace*  
by Deborah Patterson Dass  
70 mm x 75 mm  
2007 Cast bronze

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