



# VISUAL ARTS CENTER OF RICHMOND

## Letter from Jo

January 2010

Dear Friends,

Many of you know by now of my decision to retire at the end of this fiscal year, June 2010. As you can imagine, this was a bittersweet decision for me.



I came to the Hand Workshop in 2000 for a two-month interim stay. At the end of those two months, I was hooked. Awed by the legacy and inspired by the possibilities of its future, I chose to stay. Thus began a decade-long journey, or more aptly, a true labor of love to transform the center into the best it could be.

What a fun and interesting journey that has been -- we've covered a lot of ground. We now have a permanent home -- a beautifully renovated space that greatly expands our program capacity and our presence in the community. We've experienced substantial growth in our programs and in the people we serve. We are on sound financial footing and, even in these challenging times, we've managed to expand our free programming for underserved audiences and at-risk children. Most importantly, we have a dedicated and creative staff, a strong and engaged board and a team of talented instructors who will continue the legacy and the mission of engaging the community in the creative process.

While I feel that much has been accomplished, much remains to be done. The new director will have many exciting challenges and ideas for new directions. Fortunately, he or she will be building on a strong foundation of a 47-year history of making art accessible to the community. And best of all, he or she will have the support and good energy of wonderful friends such as you. I hope you know how much your abiding support means to the organization. You make it all possible. Many, many thanks to you!

Here's wishing you a healthy, happy, and creative new year.



Jo Kennedy  
President & CEO

## Center Implements ABC Model

Service-cost drivers, activity-based costing, FTE allocation --these are not terms generally associated with a non-profit arts organization. Yet, in today's tough economy, when non-profits are being just as hard hit as for-profit businesses, some organizations are using business school methodologies to search for ways to cut costs and balance budgets. The Visual Arts Center has been doing just that.

Senior staff from the Visual Arts Center of Richmond spent a recent Saturday with VCU Business School Professor John Hill and his MBA students to apply the Activity Based Costing methodology to the services they provide to the community -- art classes, exhibitions and programs for school children. They spent the day allocating employee time, facility space, utility costs and other overhead to particular services such as providing a clay class to adults.

"We needed to know the precise cost of the services we offer so that we could make good financial decisions going forward in a very tough economic time," said Jo Kennedy, President of the Visual Arts Center. "Non-profits are generally flat organizations, so the common corporate practice of reducing staff to cut costs isn't generally the best solution for us. When you let go of a talented employee, you greatly reduce your capacity to carry out your mission, and it leaves you unprepared to respond to the return of a better economy. So we needed to look for more creative ways to reduce or recover our costs and we couldn't really do that without honing in on our expenses in a more precise and systematic way."

What the Visual Arts Center learned that Saturday provided them with more than a new way to look at their current financials. It also gave them a process or methodology to apply in the future for continued close analysis of costs and revenue.

"We not only gained new insight into creating a better financial model through our work with Jon Hill and his MBA students, but we also formed a valuable partnership. VCU School of Business is right down the street from us. I feel that we can use them as a great resource in the future," Kennedy concluded.

## Tuesday-Morning Art + Coffee Promises Great Spring Line-Up

January 12 -- **The Curatorial Process**



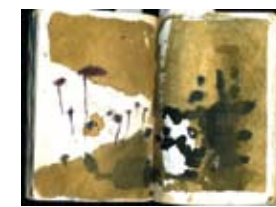
Learn about what happens after you submit your work to a gallery. Maggie Smith, Curatorial Administrator at Quirk Gallery, will explain their submission and adjudication process.

January 26 - **Narrative Jewelry**

The "Wearable Art" movement increased awareness of texture and imbued surfaces with meaning. Artist and jeweler Lynalise Woodlief will introduce surface texturing on metal using letter stamps, enamel and patina techniques. Watch as layer upon layer of rich and colorful textures start to take on shape and meaning. Bring your ideas, experiences and stories and share in the creation of this narrative piece of jewelry.



February 9 - **The Intuitive Line Workshop**



Professional artist and teacher Amie Oliver will demonstrate new ways to think about drawing and mark-making. She will explore gesture, observation, texture and contour using unique combinations of tools and techniques.

February 23  
**Robin Kranitzky and Kim Overstreet - Book signing**

The artists featured in *Fragments of Our Imagination* will sell and sign copies of the 150-page, full-color catalogue published by the Helsinki Design Museum in conjunction with their 2008 exhibition.

March 9 - **TBA**

March 23 -- **Wire Crochet with Glass Beads**  
Learn to crochet with wire and glass beads with VisArts instructor Shelley Jones! You will learn to crochet wire, using a simple chain stitch. Beginners will also pick up some basic jewelry techniques.

## Clay Guild Succeeds at Handmade Holiday

The new Clay Guild held their first show and sale in conjunction with the Richmond Craft Mafia's Handmade Holiday event on Dec. 11 and 12. Setting up in the Pottery I studio, eight of the 18 Guild members showed their clay creations and talked to the many shoppers during the show. Everyone had a great time and the group sold a collective total of about \$2,500. Knowing the enthusiasm that Guild members have for VisArts, we're sure they were also inviting visitors to join them in the upcoming January clay classes!

The Guild will work with VisArts staff to plan other ways to strengthen the relationship between the Center and its clay community. To join the Guild, or for more information, contact Susan Early at 353-0094, ext. 215, or susanearly@visarts.org.

At right, Mark Koslow, our newest Clay Guild member, displays his work.



## Exhibition Features Opulent Jewelry

Opening Friday, January 15, 2010, *Fragments of Our Imagination: Narrative Jewelry by the Collaborative Partnership of Kranitzky & Overstreet* surveys the creations of a pair of Richmond artists. The collaboration between Robin Kranitzky and Kim Overstreet began more than 20 years ago when a mutual interest in found objects sparked the beginning of their jewelry venture, *Lost & Found*. They started creating one-of-a-kind jewelry pieces from objects scavenged and saved, and sold pieces from this collection during the 1980s at Miller & Rhoads, Thalheimer's, and the Visual Arts Center's (then the Hand Workshop) annual Craft + Design Show, among local venues.

Robin Kranitzky earned her BFA in Crafts from Virginia Commonwealth University, majoring in ceramics. Kim Overstreet received her graphic design training at Virginia Western Community College in Roanoke. The pair met when both worked at retailer Miller and Rhoads, collaborating in the store's advertising department. They left Miller and Rhoads in 1985 to pursue creation of their *Lost & Found* designs full time.



Robin Kranitzky and Kim Overstreet, *Sleepwalk*, 1994 2 5/8" x 3 1/8" x 1 1/4"  
Copper, Micarta, acrylic, brass, acetate, postcard fragments & found objects.  
From the Collection of Deborah Rogers.

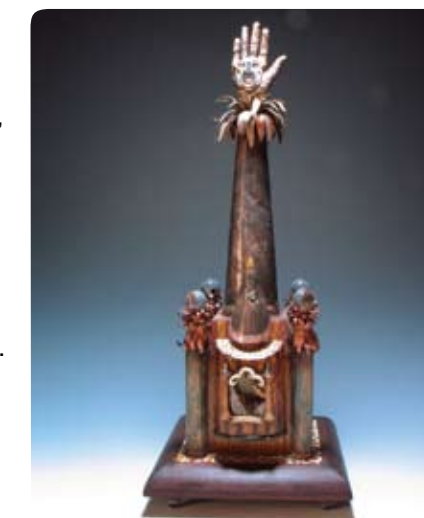
As their jewelry gained popularity and blossomed into a career that has earned them international acclaim, their collaboration has deepened. "Their jewelry pieces have evolved into dreamlike narratives," explained Katherine Huntoon, the Center's Director of Exhibition Programming. "The ephemera they use as art materials are exalted by their storytelling," she added, noting, for example, that adolescent particles from crushed shells of a necklace belonging to Kranitzky's grandmother are used in the belt-buckle frame of one piece. Insect wings, postcard fragments, glass beads and jewelry parts all make their way into the tiny vignettes, inspiring wonder.

While the brooches are titled with narrative depictions, the artists leave room for the viewer to interpret the pieces through his or her own imagination. "Like Alice down the rabbit hole, we are drawn into the tiny scenes and treated to an alternate reality," Huntoon notes, as in the work of two of their artistic influences, American assemblage artist Joseph Cornell (1903-1972) and Dutch painter Hieronymus Bosch (1453-1516). The pair also find their ideas evolve from simple things such as a dissected flower, historical illustrations or a dried lemon peel. Through their creativity, materials from diverse times and cultural avenues are transformed into supernatural dreams, divine nightmares and mythical visions.

Their exquisitely detailed, narrative brooches are sought after by major collectors and included in permanent museum collections including the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Philadelphia Museum of Art. In 2008 the Design Museum of Helsinki presented a solo exhibition of their work, accompanied by a catalog titled *Symbiotic Realms - Robin Kranitzky and Kim Overstreet Selected Works 1985-2008*. Internationally renowned contemporary jewelry collector and gallerist Helen Drutt of Philadelphia recently donated a large portion of her collection, including 11 pieces by Kranitzky & Overstreet, to the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston. They are included in a traveling exhibition, *Ornament as Art: Avant-Garde Jewelry from the Helen Williams Drutt Collection*. The exhibition appeared at the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Renwick Gallery and the Mint Museum of Craft + Design in 2007. Their work has been awarded Best in Show at the 1993 Philadelphia Craft Show and the Award for Excellence at the 1991 Smithsonian Craft Show, among other honors.

Robin Kranitzky and Kim Overstreet will together present a demonstration workshop, "Beneath the Surface - A Closer Look at Objects & Techniques," on January 23, at 1-3 PM. They will discuss their work, the found objects and talk about the materials and techniques they use. The pair will demonstrate a selection of those techniques using found objects & other materials. On Tuesday, February 23, the Center's free semi-monthly Art & Coffee program at 9:30-10:30 AM features Robin Kranitzky and Kim Overstreet presenting a gallery talk and book signing.

The exhibition continues in the True F. Luck Gallery through March 21, 2010. Support for the exhibition is provided in part by Altria Group, Inc. *Fragments of Our Imagination: Narrative Jewelry by the Collaborative Partnership of Kranitzky & Overstreet* is presented in conjunction with *Minds Wide Open: Virginia Celebrates Women in the Arts*, the first statewide celebration of its kind. Between March and June of 2010, thousands of special events will occur to honor contributions by women to arts and culture.



Robin Kranitzky and Kim Overstreet, *Evolution*, 1998  
From the Collection of Diane & Marc Grainer

## 24th Collectors Night Art Auction "Inspired Possibilities"

Save the Date: Friday, March 19

"Anything is possible when you're the one drawing it." 6th grade Art After School student

A dynamic Collectors Night 2010 committee headed by Chair Stacy Struminger has recently picked the theme for the upcoming Collectors Night Art Auction benefiting all of the worthwhile programming at the Visual Arts Center, including the Art After School program, SOHO and Side-by-Side Saturdays. Work has already begun on one of the best social events of the spring season. Mark your calendars for Friday, March 19!

Many of this year's committee members are new to the Visual Arts Center. Their ideas and energy have already added a sizzling dimension to the planning, sure to translate to a fun and successful event. Inspired by the good works that are achieved through these programs aimed at at-risk youth, the theme of "Inspired Possibilities" was chosen as a way to reinforce our goals and achievements via these initiatives.

Expect to see this theme and a moving quote by a sixth-grade Art After School student ("Anything is possible when you're the one drawing it.") incorporated into all of the printed materials supporting the event, as well as at the event itself as a way to directly connect the importance of bidding generously and the programs the proceeds support.

Two hundred patrons are expected to attend Collectors Night, which begins with a cocktail party featuring music, open bars and a silent auction. The evening progresses to a live auction of significant works by local and nationally prominent artists, as well as fabulous experience packages. This year we are excited to announce in advance that we will honor dedicated supporters and former board members Hans Karras and True Luck at the event. Hans will receive the Distinguished Service Award, and True the new Visionary Award. Tickets are \$150 per person. If you are interested in donating an item to the event or want to assure that your name is on the invitation list, please contact Special Event Coordinator Karen Miller at kmiller@visarts.org.

This year we hope to tent the back parking lot as well as the Courtyard so that the event can be slightly expanded, and, more importantly, so that we can go back to the format of round tables for dining during the live auction. This will also mean that groups of supporters can purchase a whole table in sponsorship of this important fundraising event. For more information about purchasing a table at this year's Collectors Night, please contact Cindy Wray at cindywray@visarts.org.

The 2010 Collectors Night Committee is chaired by Stacy Struminger and includes Laurie Barnes, Robyn Bivens, Kelly Chenault, Katie Gilstrap, Amy Leibowitz, Suzanne Morris, Donna Silvestri and Rachel Teysier.

## Creativity Program Unveiled

To be launched in fall 2010, *Creativity at Work* is a new program that will bring together artists and business leaders to explore the creative process and apply it to workplace challenges. Through artist demonstrations and talks, hands-on creative workshops, video, small and large group activities, participants will explore the themes of *Igniting the Creative Spark*, *Seeing with a Unique Vision*, *Improvisation and Experimentation*, and the *Intersection of Collaboration and Innovation*.

*Creativity at Work* is designed to address the ongoing need for creative thinking and innovation in the business world. Applications for the program will be available in April 2010. For more information, contact Jo Kennedy at jokenedy@visarts.org.

## Craft + Design Show Wows in 45th Year

The 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Craft + Design Show was a huge hit, taking place the weekend before Thanksgiving at the Science Museum of Virginia. Seventy-five top-notch artists from around the country participated, more than 60 volunteers worked the event and more than 25 vendors helped produce our biggest fundraiser of the year. It was a tremendous effort also made possible by our generous corporate sponsor, Dominion Resources!

The exit survey results and the artists' evaluations have been compiled, and while attendance at the public days was slightly lower than we had hoped for, the overwhelming feedback was extremely positive. Many attendees commented that it was our best show ever, noting the high quality, number of new artists featured, as well as the diversity of craft as highlights of this year's show. We celebrated this special year with a unique partnership with Richmond's Quirk Gallery. And everyone likes being in the Rotunda again - our thanks to the Science Museum of Virginia!

The event netted \$17,000 more than last year and exceeded our financial goal. We did this despite

### Craft + Design Show 2009 Award Winners

**Elisabeth Scott Bocock Best in Show Award**  
Ingrid Bernhardt, Richmond, VA

**Hoover & Strong Award for Design in Precious Metal**  
Seung-Hea Lee, Providence, RI

**The Kayhoe-Hofstetter-Irvin Award for Traditional Craft Materials, in loving memory of William F. Kayhoe, Julian R. Irvin and Mary Kayhoe**  
Jeung-Hwa Park, Providence, RI

**The Kayhoe-Hofstetter-Irvin Award for Innovative Materials or Processes, in loving memory of William F. Kayhoe, Julian R. Irvin and Mary Kayhoe**  
Deborah Rogers, Norfolk, VA

**ECO Supply Center Award for Wood or Recycled Materials**  
Deborah Kracht, Palmer, MA

**BB&T Ceramics Award**  
Jenny Mendez, Quirk, Richmond, VA

**Mary Lou Deal Contemporary Design Award**  
Anthony Cioe, Richmond, VA

**Award for Wearable Art sponsored by The Phoenix in Carytown**  
Ignatius Creegan and Rod Givens, Petersburg, VA

the fact that the show went from a three-day to a two-day public format in large part by aggressively cutting expenses and securing sponsorships. Attendance at the Patrons Preview was up 30 percent from the previous year. But the Craft + Design Show serves a much broader purpose than fundraising. It is truly about friend-raising and sustaining a long-term Richmond tradition.

For information about the 2010 Craft + Design Show (calls for entry for artists will be available in February), contact: Karen Miller, Special Events and Volunteer Coordinator, at kmiller@visarts.org.

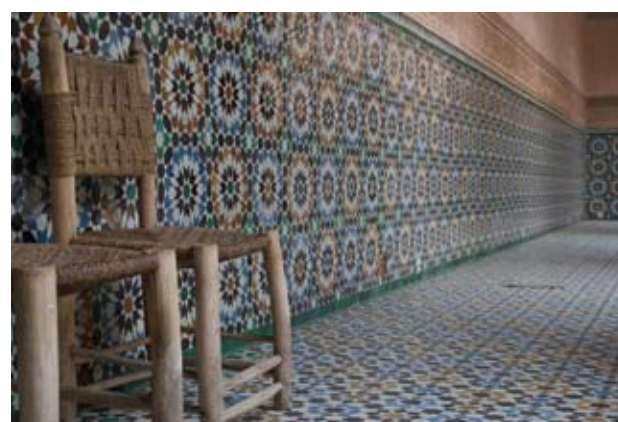


VisArts Business Manager Betsy Townes wears her new hat made by Award for Wearable Art winners Rod Givens (center) and Ignatius Creegan.

### In Your Words: Richard Corbett

"My spring 2009 class at the Visual Arts Center of Richmond, *Introduction to Digital Photography*, has been life changing. Yeah, I know, that sounds pretty dramatic. But, it's true. Consider this: I'll never again have to let my camera decide what's "best" for a particular shot. I'll never again look at a disappointing photograph and have to wonder what went wrong . . . because I'll be able to tell. And, quite possibly, I'll have far fewer disappointing photographs to look at—*period*. Over the course of six weeks my instructor, Regi Franz, has unlocked for me the mysteries of aperture, shutter speed, ISO, light metering and white balance—concepts that I, for various reasons (ranging from the complexity of the subject material to my own laziness), had previously found too challenging to grasp on my own. Over the course of six weeks she's helped me to understand my dSLR camera more thoroughly than any manufacturer's manual possibly could. Over the course of six weeks she's inspired me to "frame my world" and to "get in close"—to become a *photographer* instead of a snapshot taker. Six weeks, six classes and too many laughs and *ah-ha!* moments to count.

"I'll never hold a camera, look through a view finder, or attempt to capture the world around me in quite the same way ever again. I'd say that qualifies as life changing."



PHOTOS: Richard Corbett

## Poet Pair Share Shiel Scholarship

Each year the Visual Arts Center is pleased to award the Leslie Shiel Scholarship for Creative Writing to a student at the Visual Arts Center. This award is made possible by an endowment from Carole Weinstein to promote and reward excellence in the craft of writing at the Visual Arts Center of Richmond. This endowment also acknowledges the teaching excellence of Leslie Shiel, who has taught poetry classes at the Visual Arts Center for many years.

This year, Kathleen Markowitz and Chet Naylor are co-recipients of the 2009 Leslie Shiel Scholarship for Creative Writing. In choosing these individuals, Leslie Shiel said, "I applaud the quality of their individual poems, as well as the strength of their ongoing public engagement. Their critiques, questions and revisions have consciously deepened our class discussion. I am constantly affected by how hard-working and humble both of these writers are." It is interesting to note that both writers are also visual artists!

Congratulations to Kathleen and Chet. And our thanks to Carole Weinstein for this endowment gift that honors Leslie and gives a boost to aspiring writers.

### Film Considers Women Artists

*Skirt Magazine* & the Visual Arts Center of Richmond invite you to a screening & panel discussion of the groundbreaking documentary "Who Does She Think She Is?" The film's only Central Virginia screening will take place at VisArts Sunday, February 28, 2 - 5 PM.

The film follows five female artists (an actor/singer, sculptors, a painter and a printmaker) as they juggle the competing demands of art and family. The film's director, Pamela Tanner Boll, is an artist, writer, filmmaker and activist who co-executive produced the Academy award-winning documentary, *Born into Brothels*.

Panel members include: Lisa Edwards Burrs (opera singer), Robin Kranitzky (visual artist), Katherine Louis (actress), Deirdra McAfee (writer), Kim Overstreet (visual artist) and Leslie Shiel (poet).

Women represent at least half of all students in fine arts programs around the country, yet after school, they largely disappear—marginalized in art museums, publishing houses, and, as they age, in dramatic roles.

Can women turn the simultaneous tug of creative energy and family responsibilities into a dynamic that feeds their art rather than frustrating it? Join us on February 28 as we explore this question.

### Studio S: New Partners, New Friends

The goal of our new seniors in the arts program, Studio S, is to improve the quality of life for seniors by helping them engage in the creative process. The Visual Arts Center is working with Senior Connections, the YMCA of Greater Richmond, and The United Way as part of the United Way Wellness Initiative grant partnership.

Successful aging requires access to meaningful activities. Activities that strengthen social networks and interpersonal interactions are particularly vital. Studio S is designed to stimulate creative thinking, help seniors realize hidden talents, and provide social opportunities in a creative atmosphere. Working with color, pattern, and different textures and mediums keeps the mind flexible and improves memory. Art classes for Studio S are being designed to unearth hidden skills, utilize memories of youth, and ignite the imagination. Classes will meet once a week for six weeks for four sessions from January through May.

For more information, contact Aimee Joyaux at 353-0094 or Mary Catherine Kolbert at 353-3171.

### New Player Joins the Team

Cindy Wray has joined the development staff as membership and sponsorship coordinator. A Norfolk native, She's been in Richmond for nearly three decades, and earned a degree in Fine Art from VCU. Her previous positions have included advertising posts with Thalheimer's, The Martin Agency, Circuit City and Capital One.



"Volunteering got me involved in working with nonprofit organizations," Cindy said, noting her work for the Science Museum, American Heart Association, Children's Museum, First Presbyterian Church, and SCAN (Stop Child Abuse Now). She started working part-time four years ago with Gateway Homes, a treatment program for mentally ill adults, doing marketing and development.

Cindy has many diverse interests. "I went back to school 10 years ago and got a continuing education degree in Landscape Design and am an avid gardener," she shared. Her other hobbies are skiing, going to the beach, and spending time with family, including her two daughters and a feisty Scottish terrier named Scout.

## Meet the Teacher: Ingrid Bernhardt

I am a former New Yorker who moved to Richmond by choice 15 years ago. As a small city (in comparison to NYC) it offers the art, cultural diversity, urban life and country views in a far more human scale. Within my first months in Richmond, I learned about The Hand Workshop (the Visual Arts Center) and took up the many opportunities of classes it offered.

Beads have always intrigued me as a medium. Even as a child, I collected, sorted, played and used them in my simplest art forms. The treasures I collected included glass-bead necklaces purchased at the local five & dime store, which I took apart and then made Christmas ornaments or beaded flowers with them. I also acquired big mayonnaise jars of sequins and beads that were given to me by a neighbor who worked on the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade and brought home the remnants from the costumes and floats. And then there were the childhood lessons from elders: grandmothers teaching their granddaughters to crochet and mothers showing daughters how to needlepoint. I tried many forms of craft, perfected some, but the passion was missing.

Finding a vehicle to use my ever-increasing bead collection was a slow and deliberate process. As in a Seurat painting, points of color, assembled together in what at first seems almost random, take on shape from afar. But the question was how to accomplish points of color three dimensionally.



Ingrid, center, receives the 2009 Elisabeth Scott Bocock Award at the Craft + Design Show from McGuireWoods' Jackie Stone, left, and Jo Kennedy, right.

Years later, I found an article describing how an artist knitted with beads for evening purses. I took my basic crochet skills and began experimenting with beads in a two-dimensional form. Over the years, my crocheting has evolved to three-dimensional work where I am able to crowd beads per stitch to bring structure to my three-dimensional forms.

I continued to work with beads in this format when I saw an article about the master bead artist Joyce Scott [who was featured in VACR's 2009 From Sand glass exhibition]. Her incredible bead sculptures were created working without a loom, and she was still able to create wild (and crazy) 3-D sculptures. The article mentioned Joyce's workshops held at the University of Minnesota's Summer Arts program called Split Rock. With great excitement I knew I had to expand my art. Over the years I've had the good fortune to go to Split Rock to learn from the masters, including David Chatt and Virginia Blakelocke, where I expanded my skills to weave, embellish and learn it with 15 other crazy bead ladies from around the country. I was no longer alone in my reams of beads.

As I continue to work with beads in various art forms with all the passion I first discovered as a child, I find that passing on my knowledge to children and adults so important to my own creativity. I want them to find their passion and express it, with or without beads.

## VisArts Launches Studio Guild Program

### Student initiative results in new membership model

The great success of our newly formed Clay Guild has encouraged us to pitch the idea to other popular studios here at the Arts Center.

Our dedicated clay students helped shape their guild around the ideals that guild members value the VisArts community and the special place it holds in their life. In addition to financial support for VisArts, Guild members provide counsel on issues pertaining to studio operations and the VisArts community.

Craft guilds have been around for hundreds of years and have traditionally been made up of experienced and confirmed experts in their field of handicraft, called master craftsmen. Before a new member could rise to the level of mastery, he had to go through a schooling period during which he was first called an apprentice. After being employed by a master for several years, and after producing a qualifying piece of work, the apprentice was granted the rank of journeyman. After several more years a journeyman could be received as master craftsman. This would typically require the approval of all masters of a guild, a donation of money, and the production of a so-called masterpiece, which would illustrate the abilities of the aspiring master craftsman.

Our guilds exist to support our student communities, to enhance their learning opportunities, and to provide them with an outlet to the larger arts and crafts scene locally. We plan on hosting at least one guild sale a year to show off and share our members' work. Jewelry/Metals, Glass, and Painting are all on our radar in the coming year for new guilds.

Ask us about our new Guild programs, we would love to hear from you. Strong studio communities engage all of us more fully in the wealth of beauty and joy that art and art making offer.

Help VisArts grow our new blacksmithing / sculpture programs. We are looking for an anvil.

If you have one you're not using or know of a lead on one, please contact Aimee Joyaux at 343.0094 x 211. Thanks!



## VisArts Students Decorate Tree

Binford Elementary School students participating in Art After School made holiday ornaments for the Governor's Mansion. On December 14, a small group of children representing the program and their school made a brief visit to meet First Lady Anne Holton and see the end result of their hard work on the tree. Students also presented the First Lady with a holiday card signed by the whole program.



(PHOTOS: Michaele L. White, Governor's Photographer)



## VisArts Is Web 2.0!

There's so much going on at VisArts, and we want everyone to be able to see it, know about it and be a part of it! That's why we've joined Facebook, Twitter and Flickr! Search for "visarts richmond" on any of these social networking sites and add us as your friend to get invitations to events, view photographs and learn more about the Visual Arts Center and what we're up to!

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