

My Story

I've been making things and working with my hands almost since birth. Growing up on a farm, I was deeply involved with planting, growing livestock, and observing. My Dad had a low bench in his machine shop, where I could work/play with wire and metal scraps. My Mom had me embroidering as soon as I could hold onto a needle. Coming from a farming background, being an artist just wasn't advised as practical, when I was starting out in the world to make a living. I know my family was trying to protect me from certain starvation, but I could never stop being creative.

When I was twenty years old, I became a flight attendant, hostess back then. This career started my education in reverse. I had the great gift of seeing the world, while I worked. On most layovers, I was off to a museum in London, walking the beautiful streets of Paris taking in the architecture, or visiting a gallery in Rome, New York, or Madrid. In my mid-thirties I started my art schooling, studying graphic design. That practical farm upbringing was speaking in this study choice, instead of fine art. I got a degree and worked as a graphic designer for several years, but tired of sitting at a computer day in and day out. I craved working with my hands. Meanwhile, a friend was becoming a lamp work artist. Playing around with her beads started a true love affair that continues today.

While living in New York City, I met people from all walks of life, but gradually it was evident that my real friends were artists, writers, actors, painters. I started to see that artists can make a living. Meanwhile, I had continued to fly, went through two bankruptcies, downsizing, and a buyout, before losing the job entirely. That job loss prompted me to make the leap and become a full time artist/maker. By this time I was living in St. Louis, and I returned to school at Maryville University, and studied metalsmithing under [Sherri Jaudes](#). I wanted to make all of the metal elements for my beaded creations. This time in school was thrilling to me (school is that way when you are older). Art history was especially thrilling, as I had viewed so many of the paintings and visited much of the great architecture that was flashed up on the screen during my travels. My education in reverse.

Twelve years have gone by since that job loss, and I've been working as an artist all of that time. I am so grateful to be doing what I love. I'm not going to paint a rosy picture of bliss, it has been a lot of hard work, but it is so exciting to have my own business, and in control of my destiny. I create art jewelry, teach jewelry techniques locally and nationally, have an active web presence and two Etsy shops, participate in local and national art fairs and am currently serving as President of the Society for Midwest Metalsmiths. It's a busy creative life, filled with new and exciting challenges every day.