

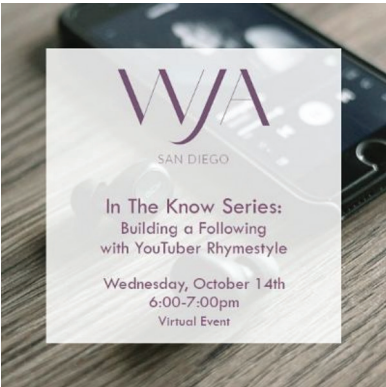


SAN DIEGO

Fall 2020

# WJA San Diego

We thank our members for their continued support!



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@wjasandiego



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### Newsletter

Judy Colbert  
Copy Editor

Orasa Weldon  
Designer & Editor



## Hello Members & Friends of WJA San Diego!



WJA San Diego Chapter President  
Christine Lopez

**I hope you are each thriving and enjoying the fall season.** We had a great summer connecting with you via Zoom and are looking forward to hosting more on-line engagements as we close out 2020.

Thank you to everyone who attended our events over the summer season, your presence, participation, and support is always greatly appreciated. Our summer events included: Awards for Excellence, In The Know: Shaping Your Brand with Ben Smithee, a co-hosted Happy Hour with WJA Los Angeles, the first ever Jewelry Night In, In The Know: Shaping a Following with Dino Rhymestyle, and two intimate Happy Hours where we shared our favorite jewelry and most coveted crystals.

Coming up next, we have our Halloween Happy Hour (Oct. 29th), In The Know: Shaping Design Part 5 (Nov. 19th), and our all-time favorite event—our Annual Holiday Party (Dec. 20th). We will be doing something extra special this year for our Holiday Party, in addition to celebrating our past Shining Stars who have done so much for our chapter and community over the years. We will also be exploring ways that we can come together to support our local community during the holiday season.

You can now vote to select WJA San Diego's 2020 Shining Star! The WJA Shining Star Award gives recognition to Chapter members who have provided extraordinary service to their Chapter throughout the year. Criteria for Award Recipients: more than 2 years of membership, active participation in our San Diego Chapter, current member in good standing, and they cannot be a sitting president at the time of nomination. Please submit your nominations to our chapter's email address at [SanDiegoChapter@WomensJewelryAssociation.com](mailto:SanDiegoChapter@WomensJewelryAssociation.com) along with a few words on why you nominated your selected individual by November 15th, 2020. This year's winner will be announced at our Holiday Party on December 20th, 2020. Past winners are listed.

This year has been odd to say the least and I would like to say on a personal note that everyone is always welcome at WJA San Diego, active member or not. We understand that many of us are facing new challenges and definitions of normal which may have affected our priorities, but please know that WJA is here for you now and will be here for you when you need us. All of our San Diego Chapter events are now open to the public and we encourage past members and those curious about our organization to join us for our events. WJA is evermore dedicated to enriching and advancing the professional lives of the women in the jewelry and watch industries.

Thank you everyone for your continued support of our chapter!

Christine Lopez G.G. A.J.P.

WJA San Diego President 2020-2021

### WJA San Diego's Shining Stars

2019-Jennifer DeMoro  
2018-Christine Lopez  
2017-Julia Popovich  
2016-Marreena Appleton  
2015-Pheap Lorn-Canossi  
2014-Irene Canivet  
2013-Lisa Slovis-Mandel  
2012-Allison Neumann  
2011-Judy Colbert  
2010-Orasa Weldon  
2009-Dana Meyer-Maxwell  
2008-Kate Donovan

# 5 questions for our Member: SARA REY

## 1. How long have you been in our industry?

I've been in the jewelry industry for 11 years. After graduating high school, I got an associate degree in Jewelry Manufacturing & Repair in Minneapolis. I eventually moved to Carlsbad for GIA in 2011, then ended up staying and working in wholesale & retail locally before I started my photography business in 2014.

## 2. If you could offer one piece of advice to WJA members, what would it be?

Get involved! Your local board & chapter members love to see you at events, and are here to connect you with others in the industry who can help you in your business or career. Remember that there are also ways to be involved in WJA outside your local chapter, such as through WJA National events or at trade shows.

**“Things that seem the scariest, or like the biggest risks, are the things that pay off the most, whether that is in a job, a business, or industry relationships. Don't be afraid to try something new”.**

## 3. Who has most influenced you in the jewelry business and why?

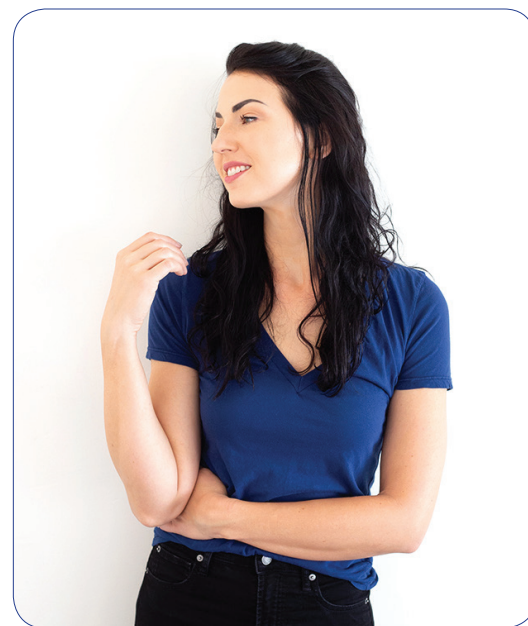
One of my earliest mentors, who I still look up to, is *Sara Commers*. She's a jeweler and business owner in Minneapolis (and a WJA member!) who really helped encourage me early on in my career. She is a great role model as an innovative business owner in the jewelry industry, and I am grateful to consider her a friend!

## 4. What do you know now you wish your younger self had known?

I wish my younger self had known that the things that seem the scariest, or like the biggest risks, are the things that pay off the most, whether that is in a job, a business, or industry relationships. Don't be afraid to try something new, or to introduce yourself to someone you haven't met yet. Years later, you'll look back and see these decisions as pivotal moments in your career.

## 5. Tell us one more reason of the value behind joining WJA.

The biggest value of being a WJA member is being able to connect with other engaged jewelers around the country. It's a privilege to be part of an active community of welcoming women and men who like to lift each other up and see each other succeed.



Sara Rey

Have a look at Sara's beautiful gems and jewelry photography

[www.sararey.com](http://www.sararey.com)

# Chicago Responsible Jewelry Conference: 2019 Recap

By Niki Grandics

Flying home from the Chicago Responsible Jewelry Conference (CRJC) last year left me humbled and inspired.

It was a weekend of incredible firsts for me: I met chiefs from different corners of the Amazon rainforest, I went to workshops with Tanzanian miners and I saw tech companies offering solutions that would further connect industry leaders to small business owners and miners. Thanks to the conference, I had the privilege of being in a jewelry store where the whole mine-to-market supply chain was represented, from Tanzanian women miners, to the store's clients.

Meeting some of the East African women who mine our industry's gems was a personal highlight. Knowing the lengths they went to to be in Chicago, it felt only right to honor them by taking their message to heart. These women are part of a groundbreaking venture called Moyo Gems, a pioneer responsible sourcing effort born from the Chicago Responsible Jewelry Conference three years ago. Moyo Gems is a joint venture of an NGO called Pact, private companies Anza Gems, Nineteen 48, Everledger, and the Tanzanian Women Miners Association (TAWOMA) to source fully traceable colored gemstones using blockchain technology. Their mission is simple: they strive to empower women miners to work safely, mine more effectively, improve their financial security, and create stable, equitable markets for fair trade of the gemstones they mine. Pact has also worked collaboratively with the Gemological Institute of America to help bring training to the same group of women miners, which has helped them significantly increase their incomes (on average by 3-5 times) and invest in their communities.

Another highlight was hearing from the Colombian gold mining cooperative Coodmilla, which presented at the conference. They showcased that they have eliminated the use of mercury



and cyanide at their mine by organizing and becoming a certified Fairmined operation. Coodmilla is helping the local miners develop their community and are working to reforest the area surrounding the mine by planting over 7,000 trees. The miners would be the first to tell you that they are proud of the work that they do and that mining responsibly benefits everyone involved.

Both of these initiatives are proof that when artisanal miners organize, work legally, and reinvest in their communities and businesses, they can improve their lives. However, artisanal miners often still face challenges in scaling their operations to meet market demands and enter the legitimate export

market. They want to do better for their families and communities by selling more, but all the additional organization requires quite a bit of capital investment.

This is part of what brought Chief Lucas of the Tukano tribe and Chief Miguel of the Paiter-Surui tribe to Chicago to address the jewelry industry, representing a coalition of 23 indigenous tribes from the Brazilian Amazon. Both leaders expressed a desire to work with people who have the capital and technological expertise to help them mine responsibly while also protecting their land from illegal mining that devastates the forest. Mining for gold and gemstones is responsible for about 10% of deforestation in the Amazon rainforest, according to Global Forest Watch, another presenter at the conference.

As I typed this post on my iPad, wearing my gold rings, sitting on an airplane flying back home, I realized I would not have been on that plane if we stopped mining altogether. You wouldn't be reading this on your device without mining; it is simply a reality of our lives. What we can focus on is how we can do better and mine for these materials in a way where all stakeholders benefit.

Above Image: Chief Lucas of the Tukano tribe, photo by: Tina Rhodes.





Chicago Responsible Jewelry Conference 2019 workshop led by Monica Gichuhi (far left) and Carrie George. Photo by: Alexandra Hart.



Coodmilla gold miners and visitors. Image courtesy of Coodmilla.



Moyo Gems collaborators, Anza Gems, Pact, Nineteen 48ltd and TAWOMA at Tanzanian gem mine. Image courtesy of Pact.

Hearing the voices of indigenous leaders and artisanal miners is enormous for an industry that has historically shied away from giving them a seat at the table. It's only by having all of the stakeholders represented in this dialogue that we can create solutions which work for everyone, not just the "big guys at the top."

Too often, solutions are sold as a quick and easy fix, a stamp to placate sensibility, but the issues in the supply chain are vast and complex and require real dialogue with stakeholders all over the world. Shying away from having these complex discussions that challenge perspective is

no longer optional. Change happens by having these complicated dialogues with stakeholders from all over the world and representing each part of the supply chain and putting one foot in front of the other to make that change happen. While this is a start, it isn't an exhaustive list of all the good news and fantastic progress that has been made. Last year's conference was a prime example of people working together to create an industry that truly benefits everyone in the supply chain. I believe it is important to celebrate these milestones in the effort to create a more compassionate and transparent jewelry industry. We are

on our way - I hope you can find inspiration moving forward through these noteworthy movements.

While this year's conference will be entirely virtual November 6-7, you can still learn more about international initiatives in responsible sourcing, join important dialogues that bring us closer to innovative solutions, and be part of the change you want to see in our industry. Get details about this year's conference and register here at..

[www.responsiblejewelryconference.com](http://www.responsiblejewelryconference.com)

To learn more about Niki visit her website at [enjistudiojewelry.com](http://enjistudiojewelry.com)

## ABOUT US

### WJA San Diego's chapter

We are a diverse group of jewelers, artisans, retailers, and educators. Our chapter members are from all over San Diego County. The members of our chapter are engaging, supportive, and committed to helping each other grow in our careers and family businesses. The San Diego chapter hosts both social and educational events throughout the year, encouraging networking, business development, and camaraderie.

If you are looking to meet new friends in the gem and jewelry business and make incredible connections, please join us at our next event or contact us at. [SanDiegoChapter@WomensJewelryAssociation.com](mailto:SanDiegoChapter@WomensJewelryAssociation.com) We look forward to connecting with you soon!



Joseph Charles



Name | Joseph Charles

Hometown | Santa Fe, New Mexico and San Diego.

Skills | Custom jewelry design; 3D modeling and rendering; traditional hand gouache rendering

*Meet* Joseph Charles! Joseph is new to our San Diego Chapter as of late last year and is currently an independent jewelry designer under the name Joseph Charles Jewelry.

During his formative years, Joseph grew up amongst the rolling grasslands and farmlands in Kansas; but later, as a university student was drawn to the city, namely New Brunswick, New Jersey, where he attended Rutgers University. After acquiring his Bachelors of Science in Landscape Architecture in 2003, he began a successful career in this industry and for the past 15 years he has worked in New Mexico with the firm 'Surroundings' as a licensed professional.

In 2017, Joseph came to the realization that he wanted to explore his love and allure of jewelry and set forth learning more about the industry. After some searching he landed at GIA where he has earned most of his jewelry credentials. To date, he has completed the AJP certificate, followed by the initial Diamond Grading, Gem ID, and Pearls Coursework. In 2019, he was awarded a full scholarship to take the Jewelry Design and Technology class, from which he graduated this past May. Beyond GIA, he has earned a Cultured Pearls Association of America, 'Pearls As One' Certificate through their online course.

Though relatively "new" to the field, Joseph has a strong jewelry viewpoint. He sees jewelry as a special and beguiling art form, full of color and light. Personally, he enjoys the designing process, but ultimately learning about the unique stories that a piece of jewelry encapsulates for each person is what he finds rewarding. As for his own aesthetic, that is ever-changing from piece to piece. He characterizes his jewelry as sculptural and volumetric, imbued with color, yet elegantly playful.

Joseph was first introduced to WJA during his coursework at GIA and decided to join shortly thereafter. He states, "I was drawn because of the members who are very supportive and encouraging, as well as the incredible knowledge base WJA offers." He admits that he is still learning much about the organization and the various opportunities it offers. At the moment, he is participating in the WJA Mentorship Program, and is excited to see how the process can help him to hone his current career objectives.

We are so happy to have Joseph Charles as a member of our San Diego Chapter and are rooting for him in his new role as Chapter Ambassador.

To see more modeling and rendering by Joseph [www.josephcharlesjewelry.com](http://www.josephcharlesjewelry.com)

By Jennifer DeMoro President Elect VP of Membership

"He sees jewelry as a special and beguiling art form, full of color and light. Personally, he enjoys the designing process, but ultimately learning about the unique stories that a piece of jewelry encapsulates for each person is what he finds rewarding."



# Malletology 101

Bench Tips from Robert Ackermann



Our **forebears** used hard, blunt objects like rocks and cudgels to crush such things as nuts, shells and the skulls of their adversaries. While a surprisingly large number of humans haven't moved past that level of development, others have evolved such tools to a diverse family of finely-tuned instruments no goldsmith or silversmith studio could ever do without.

Monkeys make short work of getting to their food. A sizable rock does the trick for them. Image: From Public Library of Science via wikipedia.

Over the millennia, hammers, also referred to as mallets (from Latin malleus: hammer) have become sophisticated instruments in a goldsmith's and silversmith's universe, typically for forging, spreading, planishing and driving all manner of purpose-specific punches, e.g. for repoussé, setting stones, riveting, etc. and the list goes on.

If you visit a goldsmith's or a silversmith's studio of the old school, you will find a wide array of hammers of different sizes. Size does matter here, if only because mass is a critical parameter of the force of a hammer's impact.

Sure, we "metalheads" live for our toys, but then they need to be highly efficient, because we rely on them for a living.

Unlike our evolutionary forebears' cruder prototypes, the hammers of goldsmiths and silversmiths are precision tools. Pros need to be able to exert highly controlled and directional forces as if they were applying vector physics.

No matter what the task, it's not about how much down force the hand can exert upon a hammer. Experienced tradespersons know that the harder they drive a hammer,

the greater the risk of inaccuracy. You can't sell an item that shows dings, dents and distortions, or where the stones are crooked or fractured in their settings.

What then, might you ask, is the most effective method? You might call it the Technique of the Controlled Drop, since the hand merely guides the hammer's fall. It merely facilitates the gravitational pull of the hammer, constantly guiding its drop. That's where the appropriate mass of the hammer comes in. Paradoxically, the strength of the operator's wrist and hand are of little to no consequence here.

Upon impact, the combined elasticity of the workpiece (whatever metal it's made of), the head of the hammer (steel is highly elastic) and the handle (hard, elastic wood) create a rebound that merely requires a light and smooth lift to extend the rebound to the appropriate height that sets the hammer up for the next controlled drop.

When master goldsmiths and silversmiths purchase a hammer they pay special attention to the handle. Wood of the ash tree has been the standard for handles in the Western Hemisphere since time immemorial. The long, hard grain of the ash provides

both strength and a considerable amount of elasticity. Asian countries routinely opt for bamboo which has an even longer cellular structure that provides superior elasticity.

Short handles facilitate accurate, controlled drop, but due to the potentially shorter drop the force of the impact and rebound are limited.

Longer handles make it harder to maintain accuracy and control of the drop, but impact, blow and recoil are greater. With the technique down, lifting the hammer to the desired height for the next blow is effortless

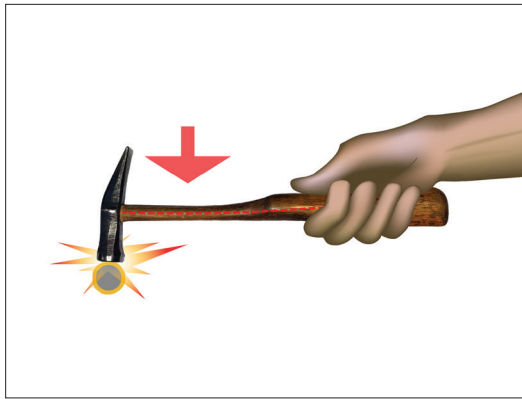
## Parts of a Hammer



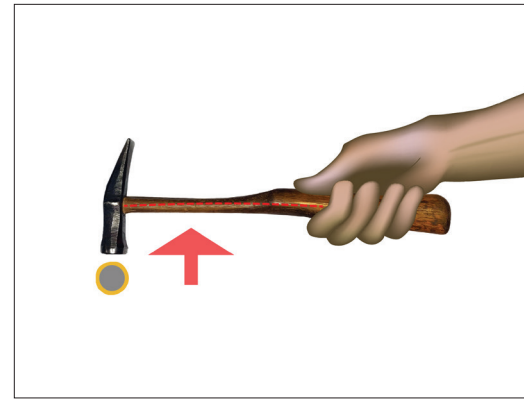




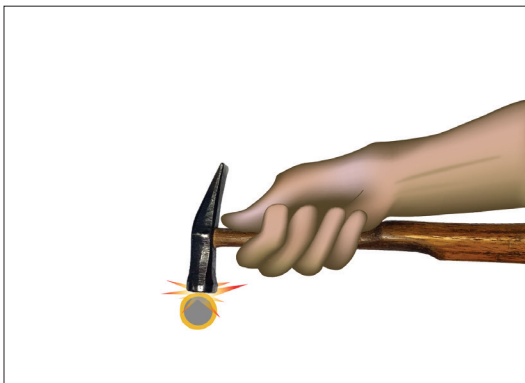
You'll find a wide array of hammers of different sizes, particularly in silversmith studios of the old school. Photo courtesy of Jeffrey Herman Silver Restoration & Conservation.



Upon impact the handle flexes with the downward momentum (purposefully exaggerated). Hard wood with a long grain like ash is best suited for hammer handles.



The rebound following the impact merely requires a light and smooth lift to raise the hammer back to the appropriate height for the next drop (purposefully exaggerated).



How not to use a hammer: holding the handle near the head is closer to a neolithic technique that reduces both effectiveness and accuracy.

That said, there's a sweet spot between the two everyone has to find out for themselves, according to the task a hammer's been customized for, its weight and the specific preferences of the operator's anatomy.

Moderate increases in impact force are accomplished by controlled drops from a greater height. Conversely, a reduction in drop height decreases impact force.

A significant increase of the impact force requires a heavier hammer, a significant decrease a lighter one, which is why you might find similar shapes of hammers neatly lined up in racks ranging from cute little baby hammers to large ones that might be overkill for goldsmiths or silversmiths.

The consistent, relaxed and smoothly executed cycle of controlled drop—impact and blow—rebound and lift exerts a highly effective summary force on the workpiece



A goldsmith's studio in 17th century Germany. Thanks to the artistic freedom of the person who made the etching this goldsmith is winding his hammer up too much. It's impossible to maintain control of the work and the operator would contract health problems in his right arm very shortly.

while being quite effortless, even if it's an involved job where lots of metal is being moved around. Good technique significantly reduces the risk of injury to the hand from tendonitis or CTS.

A word of caution in closing. The din from metal striking metal inevitably puts your hearing at risk. It may also damage your good standing with your landlord and your neighbors. Be sure to protect your ears with ear plugs or ear muffs; your bench and forging trunk — those tree trunks carrying your stakes and anvils — belong on a



Chasing hammers perform best when the handles are so thin they barely can carry the head. The flexing part of this one's handle was replaced with a bamboo chop stick and performs better than new!

concrete floor.

Robert Ackermann is an award-winning goldsmith, gemologist, jewelry designer, jewelry educator and the owner of [www.learnjewelrydesign.org](http://www.learnjewelrydesign.org), an educational site for jewelry creators. See his YouTube channel, "Tricks and Tips for Goldsmiths" for more tech advice.

## Member Benefits

The WJA offers members many ways to learn, connect, and grow professionally both online and in person.

All members receive:



Access to the WJA website and member directory which offers an incredible network of professionals in the jewelry and watch industries.

Networking events at all major shows internationally

WJA Connect, an online community platform for members to collaborate, share true knowledge, and build relationships

Virtual Career Center community to post open positions and seek out new career opportunities

Mentorship via local chapters as well as the international mentorship and leadership development program

Members-only prices for WJA events

Leadership and skill development through local and national board service and committee work

Exclusive member discount on GIA distance education courses and lab classes

Access to member grants and scholarships

Access to recognition platforms like the DIVA design contest, Shining Star awards, and more.

Educational webinars and workshops at industry trade shows

Free Pearl As One Course through The Cultured Pearl Association of America

Online self-paced negotiable training course