

Jewelry Artisan Seeks Out Masters of Glass Art



When fine art jewelry artisan Angie Roberts began searching for a master course that would elevate her knowledge of glass art she never dreamed that she'd find the perfect program in Spencer, Iowa.

Roberts, co-owner of BIMS Bangles, specializes in one-of-a-kind, hand fabricated fine art jewelry. BIMS Bangles offers a wide variety of handcrafted lampwork bead, gemstone and sterling silver jewelry designs including bracelets, necklaces and earrings. They recently decided to expand their work to include a

jewelry line that would feature a more unique hand blown lampwork glass bead than they've ever produced before. This decision prompted the duo to enhance their knowledge of glass art.

Wanting to expand her talents in lampworking, Roberts decided to seek out world renown glass art experts. The decision of where to go was a tough one, but she finally decided upon Louis "Tony" Curiel and his team of glass art masters.

When asked why she decided on making the journey to Iowa from her base of operation outside Tampa, Florida, Roberts said, "I didn't want instruction that focused on the traditional, and well-known, lampwork bead creation techniques, I wanted a master course that would offer an intense hands-on focus that would challenge me to create beads that force the viewer to wonder what they were made of and be irresistible to the admirer." Roberts also wanted a master-level instructor with an in-depth scientific background in glass art, lots of torch time and the freedom to experiment.

After an extensive search for just the right glass art master, Roberts knew that Tony and Jon Curiel from the Curiel/Reynolds School of Visual Arts offered the high-level of intense instruction she was seeking. According to Roberts, "this school makes it possible for busy jewelry artisans to receive professional master workshops and courses needed to hone their individual talents to produce intricate glass art and expand their design repertoire."

Roberts isn't the first top artisan to seek out this type of master offering in Spencer. Curiel's school is attracting artisans from around the world as well as across Iowa. Artisan Helen Hugunot from Grenoble, France came to Spencer to instruct a master workshop in glass and metal under the direction of Tony Curiel. John Brommel, a Des Moines artisan, plans to teach a master metal workshop this summer at the school.

The Curiel/Reynolds School of Visual Arts is committed to providing students with the knowledge to achieve their goals, offering a variety of fine art programs that serve a variety of student needs and interests. Instructors are experts in their field and include both local and a host of out-of-state master artists. One such instructor is Rex Stych, a previous University of Nebraska English Professor, plans to teach a formal Creative Writing Workshop at the school next year, but is currently available this summer for anyone wanting to improve their mastery over creative writing.

Structured offerings at the school this summer include the Open Studio for High School students that will begin on Friday, June 26th from 7pm – 9:30pm. July 10 - 12 there will be a beginning Silversmithing (Piercing Silver) Workshop, then July 17 – 19 a Glass and Metal Lamination Workshop will be conducted, and July 24 – 26 a Casting Silver Workshop will balance out the workshop schedule for students desiring instruction in these mediums. Exact times will be announced in the near future. For more information contact: Louis “Tony” Curiel at 712-580-5035.

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Photo Caption: Pictured is Louis “Tony” Curiel demonstrating a torch technique to jewelry artist Angie Roberts during a practice session that allows her to experiment with her torch technique and bead color combinations. **Photo by Amelia Painter*