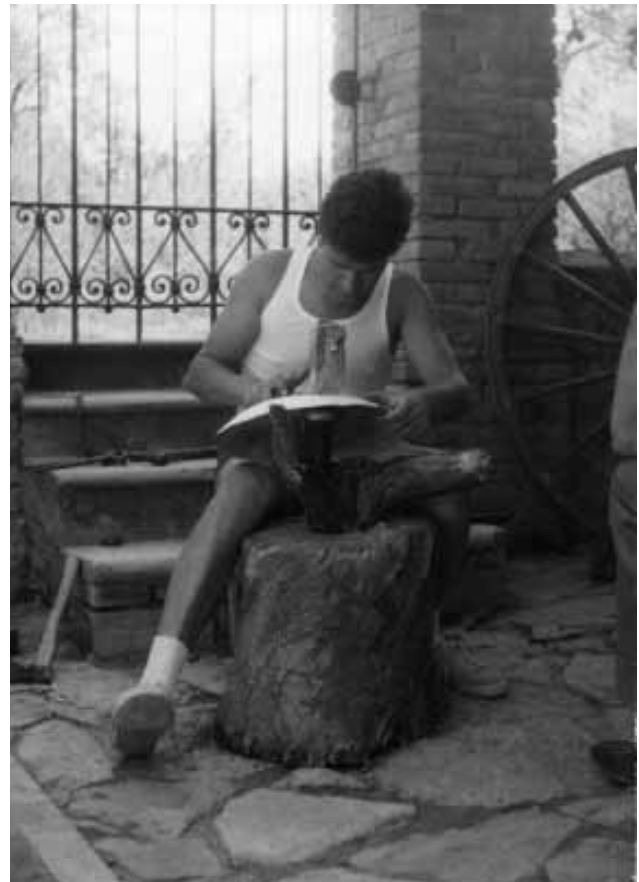


ubaldo vitali

Born in 1944 and raised in Rome, Ubaldo Vitali is a fourth-generation silversmith who learned the craft from his father and grandfather. Vitali studied drawing, painting, sculpture, and art history in Rome at the Liceo Artistico Ripetta, architecture at the Università di Roma, and sculpture at the Accademia di Belle Arti, where he met his future wife, Anita, who is American. He immigrated to the United States in 1967 and set up a studio in Belleville, New Jersey, near a Tiffany & Co. silver factory.

A master craftsman in silver and gold, Vitali is also a restorer, conservator, scholar, and sculptor. He has done extensive work for companies such as Tiffany, Bulgari, Cartier, Steuben, and Movado, as well as for auction houses, museums, and private collectors. Vitali has also executed commissions for popes, kings, queens, and American presidents. He has written several articles for magazines on historical practices, such as lost-wax casting, and essays for exhibition catalogues. Vitali has been featured in many museum exhibits, including one at the Newark



Museum in 1990; he made a number of objects in collaboration with Leonard DiNardo. Vitali's work is in several museum collections, including the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX, and the Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT. His workshop is in Maplewood, New Jersey.

cliff lee

Cliff Lee was born in Vienna, Austria, in 1951, where his father was stationed as ambassador. Lee began his education in Taiwan and moved to the United States in 1968 to attend Eastern Mennonite College, where he earned a degree in biology in 1971. He attended medical school in the 1970s at the Hershey Medical Center, Pennsylvania State College, specializing in neurosurgery. After starting work as a physician, and looking to reduce stress after long workdays, Lee enrolled in a ceramics class at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia. It was there that he found the two passions of his life: studio pottery and his future bride, Holly, a jewelry designer. Lee enrolled in the school's ceramics master's program and received his degree in 1976.

From the start, Lee and his wife have sold their own work. Their first gallery was in Arlington, Virginia, followed by the Georgetown section of Washington, DC. They currently live near Stevens, Pennsylvania, and sell work directly from their studio or at major craft shows such as the ACC Baltimore Show, the Philadelphia Museum of Art Craft Show, and the Smithsonian Craft Show. In 1993, President and Mrs. Clinton invited Lee to contribute to the White House Collection of American Crafts,



an exhibition that toured the country. Lee's work is now included in the permanent collections of several museums, including the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Renwick Gallery; the Mint Museum of Craft + Design, Charlotte, NC; Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT; and the Racine Art Museum, Wisconsin. He has received numerous awards at craft shows. His work has been exhibited around the world and featured in publications, including *Craft in America: Celebrating Two Centuries of Artists and Objects* (2007) and the subsequent television series.

judith schaechter

Judith Schaechter was born in 1961 in Gainesville, Florida, and grew up in Newton, Massachusetts. She remembers visiting the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, as a child with her parents, where she particularly liked looking at Gothic art. Schaechter's work today reflects the influence of this imagery, as well as other sources such as cartoons, comic books, TV, design, history, and music, especially the expressive ideas found in the lyrics of new wave and punk rock.

Schaechter started her BFA training in 1979 as a painting major at the Rhode Island School of Design, in Providence. During her sophomore year, she took an elective stained glass class with Richard Harned and graduate student Ursula Huth, an experience that changed the direction of her artistic career. She switched her major to glass and graduated from RISD in 1983. The challenge of learning the technical skills to master a medium not many people had considered using for composing personal narratives excited and ignited her creative impulses. Today, Schaechter is known nationally and internationally for her stained glass pieces and as an innovator in the field.

Schaechter has received numerous awards and fellowships, among them a John Simon Guggenheim



Fellowship, two grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, and a Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Award. Her work has been in many solo and group exhibitions, most recently at the Claire Oliver Gallery in New York and at the Contemporary Art Center of Virginia in Virginia Beach. Her work can be found in the permanent collections of American and European museums, including the Philadelphia Museum of Art in Pennsylvania, the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Museum of Arts and Design in New York. She also had work featured in the Renwick's *Glassworks* exhibition in 1990 and in the 2002 Whitney Biennial. Schaechter maintains a studio in Philadelphia.

matthias pliessnig

Born in New Orleans in 1978, Pliessnig as a child was interested in aviation, drawing, and knowing what made things work. He started his art education in the sculpture department at the Kansas City Art Institute and then transferred to the furniture department of the Rhode Island School of Design. It was there that he developed his penchant for wood-working and discovered the sympathetic relationship between design software and craft processes. After graduating from RISD in 2003, Pliessnig stayed in Providence, doing commission work for architects and occasionally exhibiting pieces in shows. He also became interested in boat design. While completing his MFA at the University of Wisconsin–Madison (2005–8), Pliessnig undertook a boat-building project with Professor Tom Loeser and fellow graduate student Benjamin Wooten that dramatically altered the direction of his work. The marine design–influenced pieces created since that experience have been exhibited and published widely over the last five years.

Pliessnig received grants in 2008 and 2009 from the Joan Mitchell Foundation and the Louis Comfort



Tiffany Foundation, respectively. In 2008, *Interior Design Magazine* recognized Providence with a Best of Year award for lounge seating. His work is in the collection of the Museum of Arts and Design, New York. Pliessnig currently maintains his studio in Philadelphia.