

**2005 –
IRISH CROCHET TO FREEFORM**

**“NEW” KNITTING
THE EXTRAORDINARY EXPRESSIONS OF
DEBBIE NEW**

**An invitational exhibition of contemporary
crochet and knitting
organized by
Melanie Gill**

**To accompany the exhibit
IRISH CROCHET LACE – 150 Years of a Tradition
at the**

LACIS MUSEUM OF LACE AND TEXTILES

**on the occasion of the joint annual conference of the
Crochet Guild of America
and the Knitting Guild of America
being held in Oakland July 22 – 24, 2005**



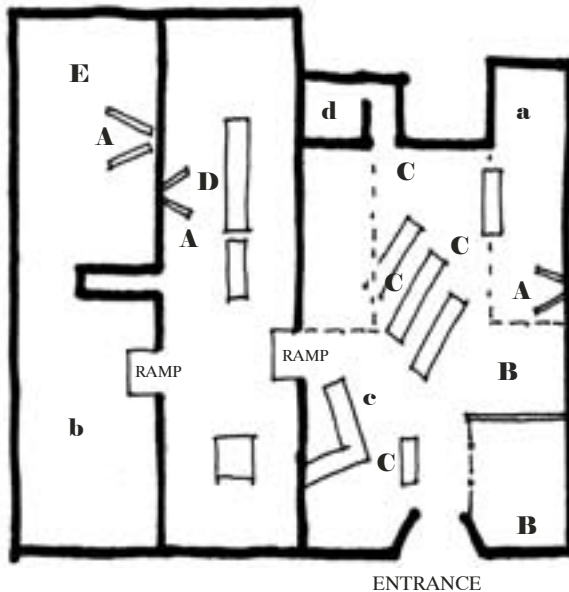
“Tiffany” by Debbie New

WELCOME to the
LACIS MUSEUM OF LACE AND TEXTILES

LMLT is a unique Museum entity. Occupying 6,000 sf of floor area, displays of the Lacis permanent lace and textile collection are integrated within the overall sales area. Supported solely by sales from the Museum Shop and contributions from Lacis Wholesale, there are no admission charges. The spirit of Lacis, as created by Kaethe Klot, the founder of Lacis will continue as a place of support, knowledge and encouragement for all involved with the textile arts.

In addition to the permanent collection of antique and vintage laces, special exhibits are arranged throughout the floor

Please visit all the displays throughout the Museum using the following map as a guide.



- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| A. Permanent Displays | a. Book Alcove |
| B. Special Exhibits | b. Bridal Gallery |
| C. Special Exhibits (above) | c. Checkout |
| D. Showcase Exhibits | d. Bathroom |
| E. Main Changing Gallery | |

FREEFORM

IRISH CROCHET, which developed in the mid-19th century as a means to save Ireland from poverty, succeeded magnificently. Its success relied on the contributions of all who remained on Ireland's barren soil. It has become a tribute to the people's dedication and ingenuity. With the rebirth of the land, Irish Crochet remained a symbol of the dignity and beauty of those dedicated to Ireland's survival.

By creating small elements or motifs (from simple roses to complex floral bouquets), all levels of skill and all ages could participate in a lace creation. After the individual pieces were made and taken to the lace-making center in the city, they were placed on a pattern to create a new whole, far more precious than the individual parts. This new "whole" represented a community.

It is in this context that LMLT has taken FREEFORM CROCHET as a 21st century expression of Irish Crochet. With color and texture now on the palette, the passion of creation can only be more intense. The creator is predominant as the motifs explode from small traditional floral elements to wonderful abstract "scumbles" playing on the moods and enthusiasm of the creator. Not working to a pattern but constantly working toward a whole, each piece grows to become and reflect the artist. Judgment is left to the creator where the only criteria are the involvement and adventure in the fiber medium.

And this is so fitting with LMLT where lace and textiles are preserved within the context of the passion of the creators and the wonder of the human hand and spirit.

And so we asked Melanie Gil, who found purpose in making us aware of this contemporary crochet expression, to bring this art form to the Museum and to work with us in putting together an exhibit of contemporary Freeform Crochet in time for the annual conference of the Crochet Guild of America and The Knitting Guild of America in July.

In representing free expression in knitting Melanie introduced us to Debbie New who truly astounded us with her very personal extensions into worlds reaching far beyond needles and yarn.

In capturing this evolution, the traditional skills of classic Irish Crochet can be seen in the current works of Maire Treanor and Dee Stanziano and the passionate free expression of Martha Sherick Shen working in thread alone.



THE ARTISTS TO WHOM WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR SHARING THEIR EXPRESSIONS.

(Contributor statements edited, with liberty, by Jules Klot)

JUDITH COMBS

Irish crochet is the inspiration in my fiber creations. The size, flexibility, tension and translucency of the padding cord are all considered as modulators of the working fibers which determine the sculptural aspects of the finished motifs. Her work has been exhibited worldwide in numerous venues. Her web site can be viewed at www.nornsneedlework.com.

JENNY DOWDE

Learning the technique from the masters, James Walters and Sylvia Cosh, she has been working in, and teaching freeform technique since, completing, in 2004, her first book *FREE-FORM KNITTING AND CROCHET* for Sterling Publishing and currently working on her second.

MELANIE GILL

James Walters reference to Mel as the “freeform ambassador” is most fitting. A woman of boundless energy, Mel goes beyond giving all. Her creative talents surely show in her scrumbles and fiber output, while her encouragement and support for all around her can only be perceived by knowing her. Her life as we know her, is entirely devoted to crochet, crocheters, crochet hooks and LMLT as she brought the current exhibition from a dream to a reality.

MARGARET HUBERT

Shop owner, designer and instructor with designs published in such magazines as *Ladies Home Journal*, *Woman’s Day*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Interweave Knits*, *Crochet Fantasy* and *Belle Armoire*. Author of many project books including *ONE PIECE KNITS THAT FIT*, *WEEKEND CROCHET PROJECTS* and *FREE FORM CROCHET* and producer of teaching videos on *FREE FORM KNITTING* and *FREE FORM CROCHET*. Current retirement activities include writing, teaching and designing innovative pieces for the yarn industry.

PRUDENCE MAPSTONE

Teacher and author of universal recognition and one of the definers of “Freeform,” established by her book *FREEFORM: SERENDIPITOUS DESIGN TECHNIQUES FOR KNITTING & CROCHET*, her work stands at the forefront of adventure with fiber. *BULLIONS AND BEYOND* further extends this fascination of exploration.

LANG ANH PHAM

A regular at Lacis, her enthusiasm for the fiber arts, leaves her the consummate student, only to reinforce her creative talents

BONNIE PIERCE

Internationally recognized as a free form fiber artist, and designer, with authored works including *24 BLOCKS ON A ROLL* and contributions to *CREATIVE PARTNERS*, *AMERICAN SCHOOL OF NEEDLEWORK*, *HOUSE OF WHITE BIRCHES*, *STERLING PUBLISHING*, *LEISURE ARTS*, *CROCHET!* and *ANNIE’S ATTIC SCRAP YARN CLUB*. Winner of many exhibit awards as well as that from Interweave Press as “Crocheter of the Year.” Teaching herself to knit at age 11, and then crochet, holding both the yarn and the hook in her right hand, similar to knitting, her current area of specialty is the bullion stitch. Her website can be viewed at: www.elegantcrochet.com and www.elegantcrochetfreeform.com

SUSAN SETTLE

Introduced to free form crochet in 1994 by Sylvia Cosh and James Walters *The Crochet Workbook*, she realized that crocheting could be an art to explore and convey what she

sees in her mind, as well as allowing the release of any preconceived ideas, and letting her creativity lead the way. Free forming has enabled her to simultaneously listen to the medium and her own inner creativity while treasuring the dance of hook and yarn.

MARTHA SHERICK SHEN

Born with a needle in her hand, thread in her veins and passion in her heart Martha, left unbridled, could make all possible. To share all knowledge is her mantra, to share joy is in her work. With humility, reborn and inspired by the spirit of Laxis, she became the mother of LMLT.

DEE STANZIANO

An avid crocheter since childhood, loves experimenting, exploring books and studying with the "Masters." As a Certified Crochet Teacher, she takes pleasure in sharing through classes and web correspondence. Her web site can be viewed at www.crochetwithdee.com and www.CaseysCrochet.com.

JEANNE TAYLOR

Resident of New Zealand, her connection with fibers extends back to age seven. Her instinctive fascination with color and natural forms was fulfilled in the fiber arts, earning her many degrees and awards and leading to her world wide recognition as teacher and artist in areas ranging from feltmaking to crochet.

MÁIRE TREANOR

A primary school teacher, Máire has been crocheting and researching Clones Lace since 1989, when she realized that this beautiful craft, first introduced to Clones as a famine relief scheme in 1847, would become extinct if she didn't learn it from the older crocheters. Along with Mamo MacDonald, an acknowledged spokesperson on Irish Women's affairs, she formed the Clones Lace Guild, making and selling Clones Lace. Author of *THE STORY AND PATTERNS OF CLONES LACE* and *CLONES LACE*

ALISON VINCENT

Liberation of the creative spirit was the outcome of discovering freeform crochet. Knitting, sewing, patchwork and jewelry making all became part of this new freedom. Her threads extend to wire and her expressions encompass philosophical thought. Her works are featured have been featured in gallery and project sections part of Jenny Dowde's *Freeform Knitting and Crochet*.

JANET WILSON

Janet Wilson remains our mystery. We know her from a soulful black purse arriving at our door and wonder.

MYRA WOOD

With a natural creative spirit she studied followed by studies at The Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. She and her husband own "Woodworks" where they make finished art for the movie industry. Both her professional and private works have been exhibited in galleries across the nation.

DEBBIE NEW

Debbie New was born in Australia and has lived in Canada since 1970. She shares her innovative knitting techniques in workshops around the world. Her knitted artworks include such oddities as a seaworthy boat and a ticking clock and range in size from knitted teacups to a walk-through labyrinth. Her book *UNEXPECTED KNITTING* (Schoolhouse Press) includes both galleries and workshops. She and her husband spend their summers on a Narrow Boat barge in England, where Debbie works the locks and dreams of knitting.

GUIDE TO EXHIBIT PIECES

ARRANGEMENT BASED ON ORDER RECEIVED

PRUDENCE MAPSTONE

- 01-1 Large green and gold frontal
- 01-2 Orange and rose vest
- 01-3 Multi-colored pastel vest
- 01-4 Small green-toned scrumple
- 01-5 Small green-toned scrumple
- 01-6 Small green-toned scrumple

MYRA WOOD

- 02-1 White crocheted vest
- 02-2 Ecru beaded doily - Gift to LMLT

MARGARET HUBERT

(PIECES ON LOAN COURTESY DRG PUBLICATIONS)

- 03-1 Purple sweater
- 03-2 Gold and Tan sweater
- 03-3 Brown shawl
- 03-4 Gold and tan purse
- 03-5 Flowered rug

BONNIE PIERCE

- 04-1 Misty blue coat
- 04-2 Cream color vest
- 04-3 Blue turquoise and black vest
- 04-4 Wire crocheted butterfly
- 04-5 Set of 7 scrumple

LANG ANH PHAM

- 05-1 Purse on plastic mesh form

JENNY DOWDE

- 06-1 "Spring" vest
- 06-2 "Red Centre" Wire and bead Neckpiece

DEE STANZIANO

- 07-1 Irish Clones Lace Class Project

JEANNE TAYLOR

- 08-1 Undersea Creature
- 08-2 Woodland Babies
- 08-3 3-D Bird in a Hoop
- 08-4 Grandson in Irish Crochet Frame

JANET WILSON

- 09-1 Black Purse

SUSAN SETTLE

- 10-1 Freeform Crochet Shawl
- 10-2 Round Robin FFC Guild Project

MELANIE GILL COLLECTION

- 11-1 Judith Comb: "Desert Flowers"
- 11-2 Susie BWM of OZ: 2 Butterflies
- 11-3 Susie BWM of OZ: Grapes with Beads
- 11-4 Susie BWM of OZ: Purple Pansy
- 11-5 Susie BWM of OZ: Purple Pansy
- 11-6 Prudence Mapstone: Scrumble
- 11-7 FFC Round Robin Nov 2004 - Feb 2005
- 11-8 Jody Bishel: "The Queen of TCP"
- 11-9 Prudence Mapstone: "Head in the Clouds"
- 11-10 Shelby Allaho: Black Necklace
- 11-11 Shelby Allaho: Black Card

MELANIE GILL

- 12-1 Large Scrumble in Pinks and Violets
- 12-2 Large Scrumble in Greens and Aqua

DEBBIE NEW

- 13-1 Two Cup and Saucer Sets
- 13-2 Dancing with Chains
- 13-3 Four Shells
- 13-4 Three Figures and a Bench
- 13-5 "Tiffany" Quilt
- 13-6 Madonna & Child
- 13-7 "Spider's Vest"
- 13-8 Swirl Socks
- 13-9 Lidded Wedgewood Box
- 13-10 "Some Assembly Required"
- 13-11 Reclining Figure

MÁIRE TREANOR

- 14-1 Clones Lace Christening Bonnet
- 14-2 Clones Lace Christening Collar
- 14-3 Wild Rose Garden
- 14-4 Irish Vine Garden
- 14-5 Irish Wild Rose

ALISON VINCENT

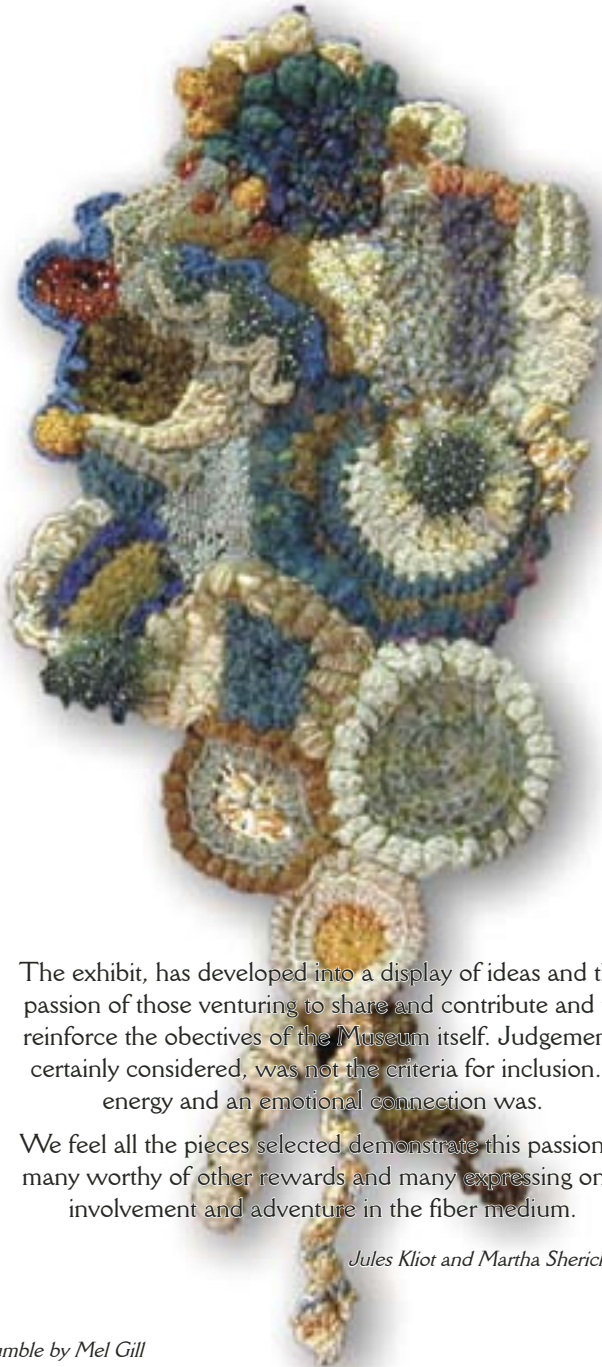
- 15-1 "Midnight" Hat
- 15-2 "Green Thumb" Hat
- 15-3 "Surfing"
- 15-4 "Claire's Necklace"
- 15-5 "Rajasthan"
- 15-6 "Opulence"

MARTHA SHERICK SHEN

- 16-1 "Joshua"

JUDITH COMBS

- 17-1 "Vines and Leaves Afterimage"



The exhibit, has developed into a display of ideas and the passion of those venturing to share and contribute and to reinforce the objectives of the Museum itself. Judgement, certainly considered, was not the criteria for inclusion... energy and an emotional connection was.

We feel all the pieces selected demonstrate this passion... many worthy of other rewards and many expressing only involvement and adventure in the fiber medium.

Jules Kliot and Martha Sherick Shen

Scrumble by Mel Gill