







Sorry to say, neither book was finished in time for the jewelry artists to read. Our directives were thematic but open.

### **Can you talk about why you believe in the power of the word and in stories?**

Karen Lorene: Yesterday, my second novel arrived from the publisher. On the third page, all by itself, is a quote from Joan Didion: "We tell ourselves stories in order to live." She said it precisely.

I was just listening to a lecture by Rebecca Solnit that took place in Seattle recently. She talked about stories and how they can change us, and that the stories we tell ourselves can profoundly affect who we are. What is the story contemporary jewelry tells itself?

Karen Lorene: Aha, the book I have yet to write, but the effect in which I totally believe. Jewelry art defines those who wear it, invites comment and conversation, gives meaning to the wearer, and, should it be a gift, binds the giver and the receiver. All magic.

### **What is the story that contemporary jewelry should be telling itself?**

Karen Lorene: I think it is the artist who should be telling his or her story through the work. I, as a gallery owner, have the privilege of passing that story along.

**I guess what I am asking here is a bigger question about the field. As a field we are telling ourselves we are insulated and we don't pay attention to the world at large. This is a story that probably keeps us insulated and not paying attention ... Instead, what story would inspire us to have a different view of what contemporary jewelry is, what is its history, what is its story? How would you tell that story?**

Karen Lorene: The jewelry world owes it to itself to encompass the world from which it grows. Jewelry art should celebrate the fact that it is part of a larger world of makers, creators, and collectors. In the best of worlds, jewelry art reaches out to involve maker, wearer, and observer. Perhaps jewelry art is perceived by some to be an insulated field because jewelry art makes such an intimate personal statement for maker and wearer. The art is the maker's story. However, the choice to wear jewelry art spreads the story and expands the story by the wearer adding to the experience. And finally, jewelry art invites the observers to join in that circle. At its heart, jewelry art is all about engagement. It is by its very nature an extroverted and community-based form of expression.

Cross-pollinating in the arts expands our community and audience. Take for instance this image of a jewelry art piece by Marcia Meyers, which is part of this fall's Signs of Life show. This image spurred the following poem by the previous Washington State Poet Laureate, Kathleen Flenniken:

## Shield

Where you're going, the sky dangles a double moon—  
twice the lunacy and so far away.

There's little I can pack for you, no lucky charm  
or incantation, only years and years of daily instruction

I hope you've heard. I'll be the waving hand  
and hesitation in the window, then I end

and the road begins. If you grow lonely for me,  
rest your cheek on the breast of a gold grass hill

or the breast of a sand dune erased and rewritten  
by the wind, look for the shape of me in an ocean swell

and decide that's all you need,  
and I'll imagine the trinkets you leave behind

as a quieter version of you. If I can.  
And with my long arm raise my shield,

larger than any moon, shining  
because I've polished it in my mind

since before you were born.



At the opening, when this poem is read, with the image by Marcia Meyers on the screen behind the reader, the audience will experience a connection they never dreamed would happen! It will be “goose-bump” time and we will all share in that moment of pure connection between the audience, the jewelry art, and the poetry. That moment connects us all.

Thank you.

