

DESIGN PORTFOLIO

'There is a great revival in the jeweller's art,' wrote Douglas Bennett in the 20th Anniversary edition of the *Irish Arts Review*. Whether in precious metals or unconventional materials, both new and established talents have pushed past the Claddagh ring barrier to take Irish jewellery into the realms of vibrant creativity. 2004 has been a good year for Irish jewellery. For the first time Irish jewellers were invited to exhibit in this year's LOOT! – the prestigious exhibition at the Museum of Arts & Design in New York that takes place every two years. Another highlight in the calendar was 'Influence – Contemporary Metals &

ELEANOR FLEGG is won over by a glittering array of contemporary Irish jewellers this season



Garrett Mallon is another rising star in jewellery design. In July his piece, 'Pillow Talk' won 1st prize in the jewellery section of the National Crafts Competition. The same piece also won the Award of Excellence from the Association of Goldsmiths of Dublin. The award winning necklace features etched sterling silver shaped into domed 'pillows' with 9ct gold and silver hearts. Another jeweller to watch out for in the future, **Carl Parker**

for anyone looking to buy jewellery as Christmas presents. Lovers of meticulously crafted jewellery will find also exquisite examples at the studio of **Rudolf Heltzel** who worked in Germany and Sweden before settling in Ireland in 1968. Heltzel has had a significant influence on the development of Irish silversmithing since he opened his studio in Kilkenny in 1968. He has been honoured by the Franklin Mint in the USA, which nominated him as one of the 'World's Greatest Silversmiths' and his studio as one of the 'World's Greatest Gem Houses'. Heltzel is exhibiting with **Sonja Landweer**, who consistently pushes the boundaries of what we assume jewellery to be, at the National Craft Gallery until 30 January.



Jewellery' at the National Museum of Ireland, Collins Barracks, organised to focus attention on the potential in contemporary metals and jewellery design. The **Made For America Design Award** is a particularly savvy initiative created to stimulate new product development for the American Celtic market, jointly sponsored and organised by the Crafts Council of Ireland and the North American Celtic Buyers Association. Entrants submit a single piece which, given that the product is literally 'made for America', must show an obvious Celtic connection. This year's winners included **Clarisse Wisser**, who won against tough competition with a sterling silver swan pendant entitled 'Celtica Forever', inspired by the myth immortalised by Yeats in *The Love Song of Wandering Aengus*.

- 1 Tamsyn Speight at Influence
- 2 Edward Cook
- 3 Garrett Mallon
- 4 Aidan Breen
- 5 Ring by Niessing from Designyard at Whichcraft
- 6 Clarisse Wisser

has secured two prizes in the RDS National Craft Competition less than a year after graduating from the Crafts Council of Ireland Jewellery Skills course. Parker won first prize in the 'Alternative Materials' section for a 3-D effect piece in sterling silver and pearls, and the first prize in the 'Gold, Silver and Other Precious Metals' section for a pillbox in gold, silver, and topaz with a miniature, perfectly proportioned, Renaissance building on the lid. **Whichcraft's** incorporation of Designyard's jewellery into its outlet at Cow's Lane, Temple Bar is good news

Wayland's Forge is a silversmithing and jewellery workshop set up by **Edward Cook** in Skerries, Co Dublin. Cook has travelled extensively, gaining insights from the visual arts of diverse cultures, and he worked with some of the world's leading silversmiths before setting up his own workshop. Coffee spoons by Wayland Forge were selected for Index 100 at Showcase 2004. Another jeweller at the peak of his powers is Dubliner Aidan Breen. Breen has always looked to his Irish heritage as a source of inspiration, fostered by numerous visits to the National Museum when he was a boy. It is an interest that has endured, and Celtic heritage is evident in his work, which ranges from jewellery to letter openers. Eleanor Flegg writes regularly for some of Ireland's leading design magazines.

