

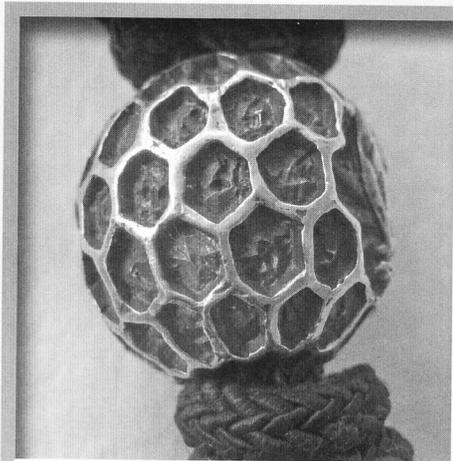
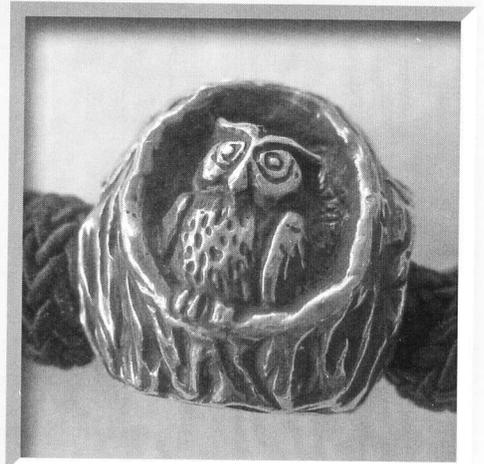
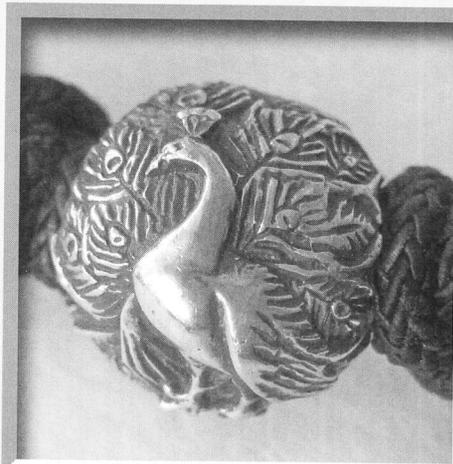
Diane  
Fitzgerald

# Lessons from a master

Even though they are small, exhibits at the Goldstein Museum of Design (part of the University of Minnesota) always give me inspiration and insights. The exhibit of costumes 'Character is Costume' was no exception. It is a retrospective of the work of Jack Edwards, lead costume designer for the Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis for more than 12 years.

A review of the exhibit in the Minneapolis Star Tribune caught my eye and near the end it mentioned Edwards' jewellery designs for men. Hmm...I thought...there must be a story here and I promptly got in touch with him about an interview.

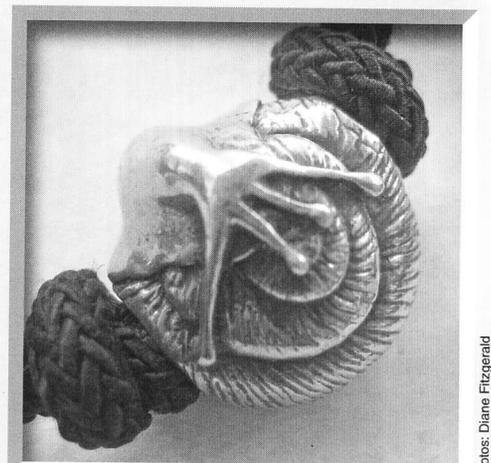
Edwards described his approach to costume design which can easily be applied



to designing with beads.

First, thoroughly research the character to determine the essence and the message the character is bringing to the story. When designing with beads, ask yourself what message or idea you'd like to represent. Understanding what the character is trying to convey suggests the purpose of the costume and reinforces the play's theme.

The next step for Edwards was to survey the available materials. He felt there was no point in designing a costume if one might not be able to find the right fabric or embellishments to complete it. It is at this point that the mind must take over to meld the purpose and the materials and to bring these elements together...not an easy task



but satisfying when successful whether it is costumes or beads one is working with.

Edwards said that for many years he had collected unusual men's jewellery and naturally, I expressed an interest in seeing it.

The first piece he showed me was immediately recognisable as the work of Lucia Antonelli – a large metal pendant supported by multiple strands of braided steel cut beads – the kind painstakingly removed from old purses. It was fit for a king.

The next piece was a double-rope lariat knotted to hold large cast silver beads in place. At more than a yard or two in length, the rope supported 15 unique

Photos: Diane Fitzgerald

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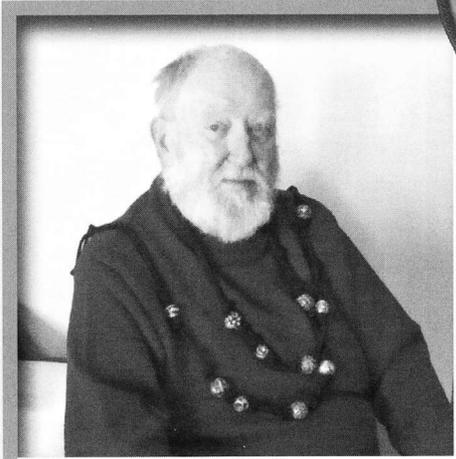
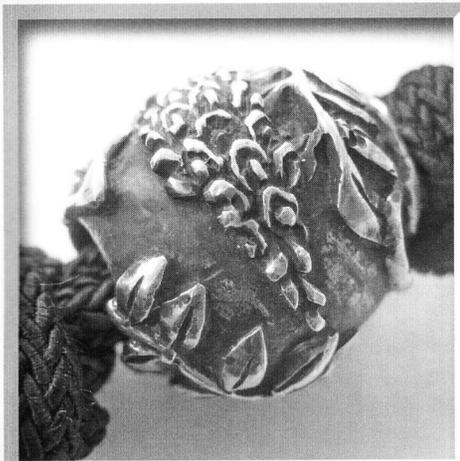
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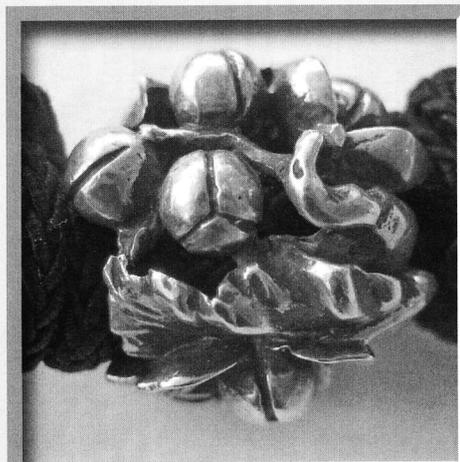
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# costume designer



beads each perhaps an inch and a half in diameter. The beads are the work of Indiana silversmith Clifton Nicholson Jr. ([www.clnjr.com](http://www.clnjr.com)).

The next hour was spent enjoying his collection of jewellery and beaded items. Wish you could have been there but I've picked the best to show you!



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