

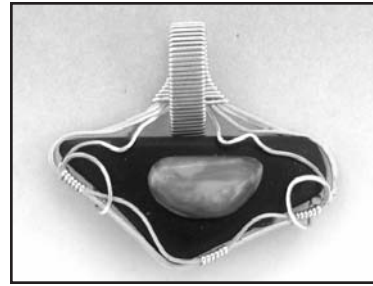
Local Jewish Artists to Exhibit at Charlotte Fine Arts Show

By Amy Krakovitz

Murray Simon laughs when it's suggested that the way he and wife Linda make their jewelry mirrors the very definition of a good marriage. But it's a quiet, thoughtful laugh and the listener can tell he agrees.

Linda and Murray Simon make fine handmade jewelry, and they will be among the featured artists at the Charlotte Fine Art Show at the Merchandise Mart on October 24 and 25.

After 45 years of marriage, this is a partnership that came naturally to them, but they haven't always been artists. Murray was a dentist in Charlotte for many years. "I was used to grinding and making interesting designs from hard materials," he jokes. Now, instead of teeth, he grinds and designs semi-precious stones — a skill known as cabochon. And Linda was a fabric designer and operated a drapery workshop for interior decorators. Her transition



One of the many pendants the Simons craft. Murray grinds the stones and Linda creates the setting.

from fine fabrics to fine metals was smooth and natural.

Murray either digs for stones locally or in Georgia, or orders them from Mexico, South Africa, Madagascar, Australia, and the Pacific Northwest. Then he cuts, shapes, and polishes the stones to a lustrous shine, bringing out their natural colors and shape, and exposing the interior beauty. Linda then "uses the stone as her inspiration" to turn them into pendants, bracelets, or rings, using

fine sterling silver or gold-filled wire.

"I have a sort of Art Deco flair," she explains, "and I like mixing gold and silver in a single setting."

The idea that Murray's creations inspire her and then she creates a setting that completes the piece is what appears to be a metaphor for a good, strong marriage. "And," Murray adds, "we are exclusive to one another."

Both the Simons feel strongly about appearing only in shows that are juried, as they tend to feature more fine art and less craft. In fact, they are applying to the Smithsonian Show for the second time this year. "We were in the top 25 rejects," jokes Linda. The Smithsonian invited them to reappear this year.



A bracelet of semi-precious stones crafted by the husband and wife team of Murray and Linda Simon.

Other Jewish artists appearing at the Charlotte Fine Arts show are Lisa Aronzon, a glass artist from Virginia; Ken Hoff, a metal sculptor from Georgia, and Jo Ann Page, a leather crafter from California.

The Charlotte Fine Arts Show runs October 24 and 25 at the Merchandise Mart on Independence Blvd., from 10 AM-5 PM. Tickets are \$5. ☆

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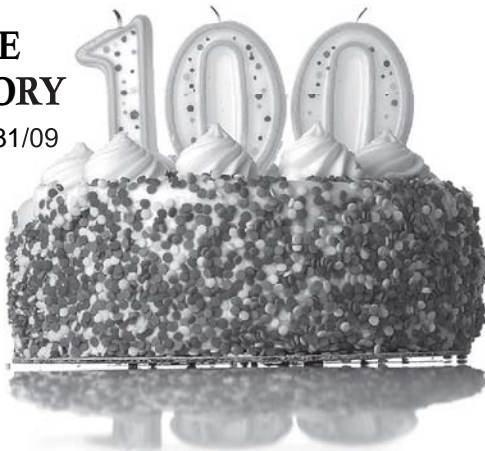


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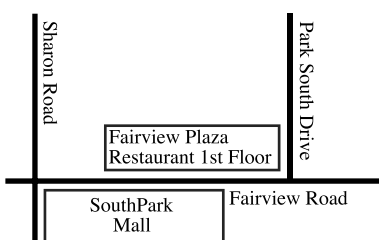


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Directions

Exit South Park Mall turning right on Fairview Rd. Travel approx. 1/8 mile and turn left on Park South Drive (by AT&T/Panera Bread). Make second left into large office building lot. Enter lower lobby; opposite Fairview Plaza Restaurant.

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