

The Gathering of the Guilds is a *great* show. And I should know – I’ve had a booth at the show for the past six years. I’ve sold my jewelry at various craft fairs throughout Oregon since 2006.

Thanks in part to having my jewelry featured in movies, like *The Descendants*, and TV shows, such as *Grimm*, my wholesale business is taking off, and you can find my pieces in about 30 boutiques nationwide. So now I’m scaling back my show schedule and only doing my favorite shows, like GOTG.

GOTG, which will take place May 2-4 at the Convention Center in Portland, launches the busy summer season for Oregon artists and includes one-of-a-kind art made by five Oregon arts guilds: the Portland Bead Society (which is my guild), the Oregon Glass Guild, Portland Handweavers Guild, the Creative Metal Arts Guild, and the Woodworkers Guild of Oregon.

I’ve been busy preparing for GOTG for months. I create bead and metal work, focusing on semi-precious gemstones and antique and ancient components mixed with metal chains. I am having so much fun playing around with unusual items. I do a lot of custom pieces for GOTG, which aren’t available on my website. It’s a fantastic place to test out new material and get feedback.

Right now I’m using some rustic, rough-cut diamonds and extraordinary gold pieces. I come from a family of beaders. My mom has a bead store, which my sister helps run, and my stepdad is an African bead dealer. I’m lucky I have ready access to rare and unusual beads—including ancient glass and stone pieces which are up to 2,000 years old.

I draw an incredible amount of inspiration from the beads themselves. I like to take these old beads from large, traditional ethnic pieces and work them into simple, modern designs. I incorporate little bits of history into an everyday necklace, always careful to focus on high-quality craftsmanship and materials and wearability.

I’ve been making jewelry for a while, but still, I can never predict which pieces people are going to be drawn to. It’s fascinating to me when customers are repeatedly drawn to the same pieces, and this show gives me a great sense for that. This year I’m making earring posts and rings for the first time to sell at GOTG.

I’m testing out a couple of different textures on metal, including hammering some amazing Native American stamps into silver. I am excited to see what will appeal most to people.

But it’s not just making and selling my work that makes me love this show so much. I love seeing the pieces other vendors have created. I’m a beader at heart, but I work with metal and I love to see what my friends at CMAG are doing. It’s fun to see how other artists’ styles have changed and progressed over the years. My family is so far away, and I have adopted some of these people as my in-town, artist family.

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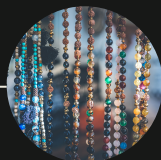
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They support me, as much as I support them. It’s such a great community. I’m so grateful that Oregon really does love and support its artists. And as much as I’m psyched to see old friends, I’m eager to make new connections and ...

Gathering of the Guilds

TASI Designs



Taya Koschnick

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