

MAAP

Master Artist Apprentice Program

FY2019



BEN CALDWELL



Master Ben Caldwell | Metalsmithing

I am a classically trained painter and sculptor, and received my Bachelor of Fine Arts from Tufts University in 1991. I then went on to receive further training at The Studio School of New York, Harvard University and The Boston Museum of Fine Arts. I began my career by making handmade West African drums and custom guitars. My late father, Dr. Benjamin Caldwell, was an avid collector of nationally known metalsmith Terry Tally.

Terry was a metal artist who made everything by hand using techniques from centuries ago. He was in the last stages of a serious illness when he approached my father and asked if I would be interested in being his apprentice. The agreement we made was that I would then pass on the skills to his children and the next generation of artists once he was gone, which I have done and continue to do, believing it to be my moral responsibility to continue the legacy of metalsmithing.

I started my business, Ben & Lael, Inc., 17 years ago with the support of my wife and business partner Lael. I have loyal, valued clients that I am incredibly grateful for. My pieces are now sold internationally, as well as regionally. The Tennessee State Museum, the lobby of the Vanderbilt Medical Center in Nashville, The Center for Southern Craft and Design at The

Odgen Museum of Southern Art in New Orleans, and the Tennessee Governor's residence are just a few of the places that display my handmade pieces and enamels. I have also been fortunate to have been featured in *Southern Home*, *Garden & Gun*, *Cottage Journal*, and *Oprah Magazine* to name a few.

I am so happy that I am able to pursue a craft that I love and at the same time be able to support my family. I am pleased to participate in the Master Artist Apprentice Program (MAAP), investing in an apprentice eager to learn not only metalsmithing, but all the many facets of being a professional full-time artist, from operating a studio, working with clients on commissions and selling at craft fairs to name a few.