



From left to right: Maggi Debaecke, Paul Bierker, Anna Hattendorf, Julia Bareilo, Aline Bykowski, Boris Bady, Lu Heintz, Tzu-ju Chen, Sue Amendolara

## GUEST TECHNICAL ARTICLE.....

### Forming Heavy Gauge Rings

By Nurit Asher Vagner

In my 27 years of being a silver and goldsmith bench jeweler, I remember how many hours I and my classmates spent in art school forming heavy gauge rings until the point that there was no light coming through the two ends of the rings.

Years of experience, thousands of rings later, a few broken good expensive pliers, and the lack of time to spend on the process of filing the ends; firm them; check if they match and then do it all over again; helped me come up with a better trick.

Here is my tip in 7 stages:

**1. Anneal the metal:**

*SILVER:* Apply a torch flame on the metal to hit the whole surface. Let it cool down quickly by soaking it right away after hitting in cold water and than soak it in a pickle-safe solution or any other cleaning acid.

*GOLD 18K and less:* Apply a torch flame on the metal surface and let it cool down slow. When cold, soak it in a pickle-safe solution or any other cleaning acid.

*GOLD over 18K* is usually soft enough to forge and won't need annealing.

**2. Cleaning:** Wash with water and use a brass brush to clean the remaining acid.

**3. Bending:** First use a round ring Mandrel and bend the center of the ring.

**4.** Use a round ring Mandrel to bend each of the two ends of the ring.

**5.** Use a flat steel anvil or a hard wood block (if there is a pattern you would like to protect). Place the ring up right on the anvil. Use a plastic, wood or leather hammer to force the strip's end into a curved shape. Continue the bending as far as possible to close the gap by mating the circle together with a strong tension between the two ends.

**6. Sawing:** Instead of using files to match the two edges, use an adjustable jeweler's saw frame to saw insideout and/or outside-in. Repeat this process several times, until the ring is absolutely firmed and ready for soldering.

**7.** Solder the ring and, after cleaning, round it on a ring mandrel using a plastic, wood or leather hammer.

Nurit Asher Vagner  
Nurit & Mick Arts, Inc.  
<[www.nuritandmickarts.com](http://www.nuritandmickarts.com)>

