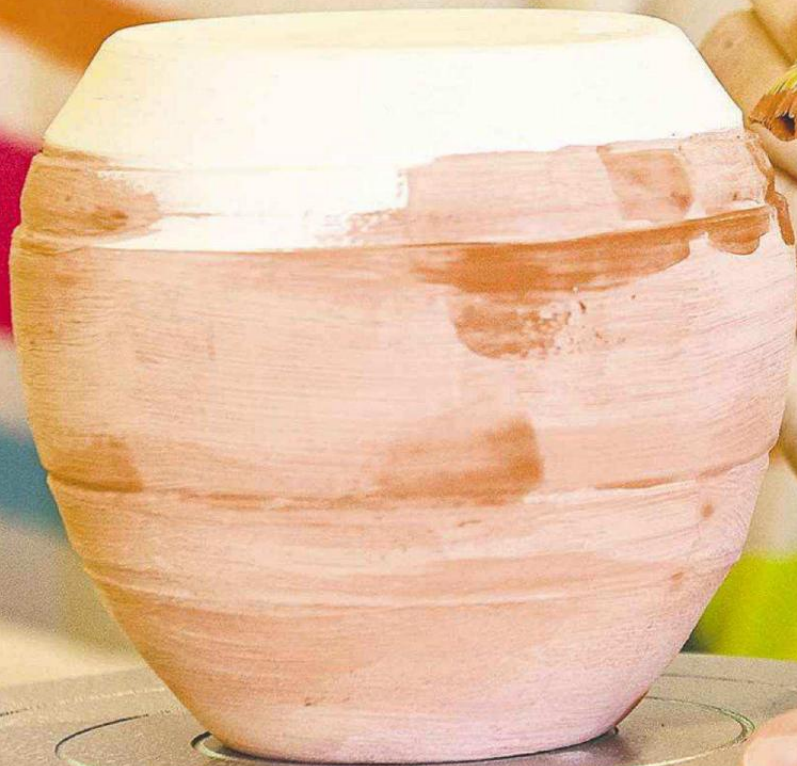


explore LI



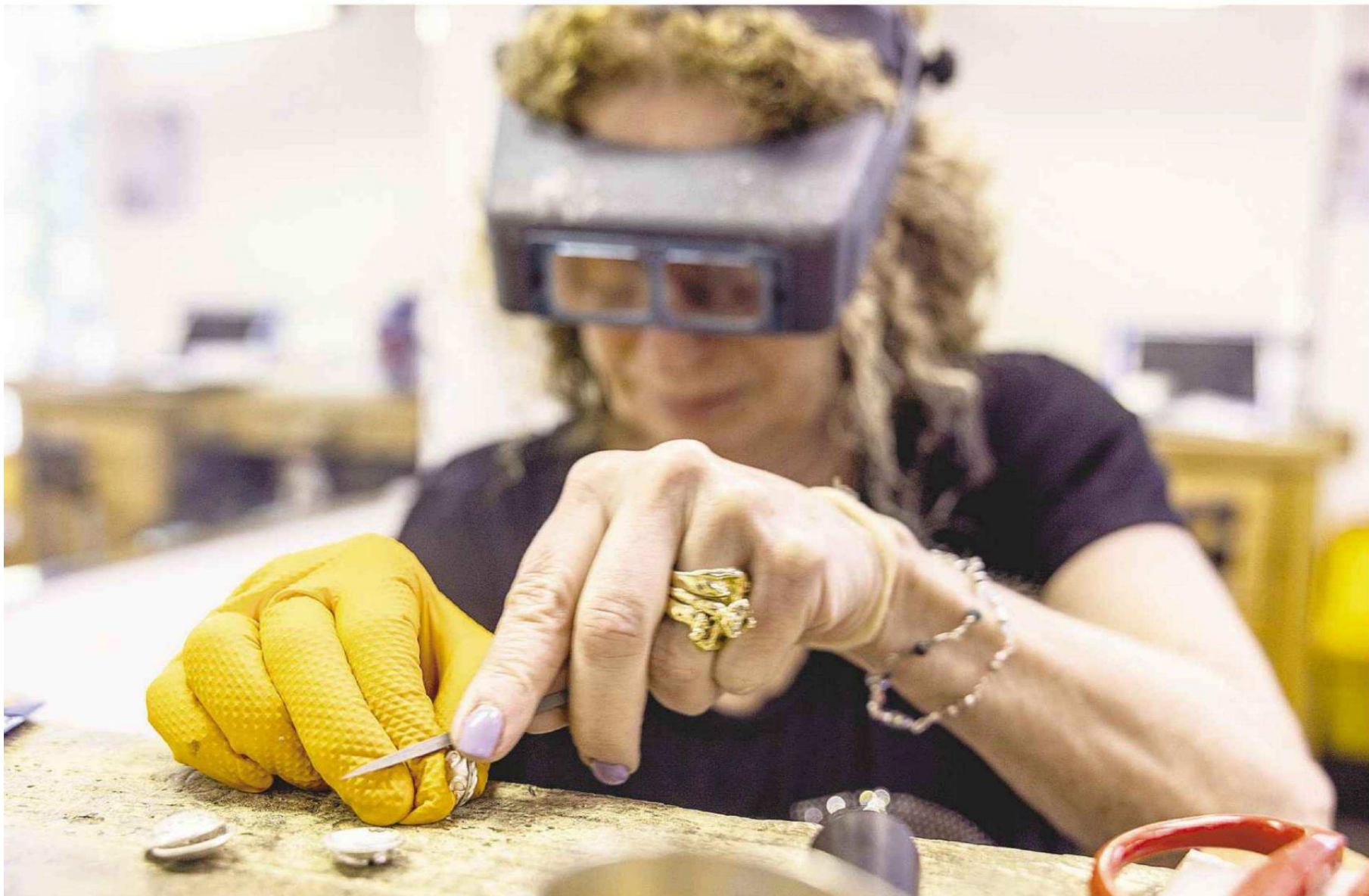
MUSEUMS WITH CLASS

WHERE YOU CAN SEE
ARTISTIC CREATIONS, AND LEARN
TO MAKE YOUR OWN

B2

THINK FAST! Speed dating makes a comeback newsday.com/lifestyle


VIDEO

 Learn how to make pottery and jewelry at LI museums
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NEWSDAY / ALEANDRA VILLA LOARCA

Tina Rotstein takes part in a silversmithing class at the Art League of Long Island. "A creative spirit, that's all you need," said Amy Tischler, marketing and engagement coordinator.

Renew your ARTISTIC LICENSE

Make pottery and jewelry at LI museums

BY MARY GREGORY
Special to Newsday

Museums and arts centers are great places to see artistic creations, but they're also learning centers with classes designed to help you craft your own masterpieces. From Roslyn Harbor's Nassau County Museum of Art to the Art League of Long Island in Dix Hills, as well as at many other arts centers, courses for kids and adults are available all year.

Some classes are traditional (watercolor, sketching and painting), others require technical training. Learn wheel-thrown pottery or, if pyrotechnical endeavors are your thing, try jewelry making and silversmithing.

BREAK OUT THE BLOWTORCH

At the Art League of Long Island, students work with smelters, Bunsen

burners and torches to create handmade jewelry. "These are advanced skills, said Marianne Della Croce, executive director. "They're not just something you can pick up."

But everyone can try. "A creative spirit, that's all you need," said Amy Tischler, marketing and engagement coordinator.

The goal of each class, from beginners on, is to learn metalworking and end up with a unique piece of jewelry — not "cookie-cutter" designs, Della Croce said. "All our teachers really focus on the individual artist, making sure that you're supported in your individual artistic ideas."

Classes are three to four hours each and run for six to eight weeks. New sessions open throughout the year, and a summer session will be added to the calendar soon. You'll get everything you need, including guidance and encouragement from skilled jewelers like Marla



DAWN MCCORMICK

Jana Nesbitt-Gale works on the pottery wheel at the Nassau Museum of Art.

Mencher. “I love instructing the students,” she said. “Watching them start to get it, and then they’ll actually go and get a piece done. That’s really exciting to me.”

“I’m a bit jewelry obsessed,” admitted Alison Cornell, a veterinarian from Northport, who’s been taking the classes for about a year and half. “I always wanted to be able to do it myself. I just think it’s fascinating that you can use a torch and shape metal. It’s the coolest thing ever.”

Along with one-of-a-kind wearable artworks, Cornell has made new friends. “My husband and I don’t have kids, and it’s kind of hard to break into a community when you’re on Long Island. This is a really great way to meet people who like to do the same things.”

PUT YOUR SHOULDER TO THE WHEEL

Pottery may be as old as the clay in the hills, but in Hollywood it’s trending, with actors like Brad Pitt, Leonardo DiCaprio and Seth Rogen crafting ceramic bowls and vases. And who can forget that haunting love scene with Demi Moore and Patrick Swayze in “Ghost”? If slinging some mud appeals to your artistic side, the Nassau County Museum of Art has recently added wheel-thrown pottery to its offerings.

“You might find romance. You might not. But you will definitely fall in love with wheel throwing,” said Reem Hussein, manager of the museum’s Manes Art & Education Center. “The sessions are about six to seven weeks, and everybody does walk out with something,” she explained.

New sessions will be starting in the summer, and in the fall she hopes to offer evening classes.

Laura Badke, an instructor who helped build the program, promises that just about anyone can learn pottery. “You don’t need to know about art. You just need to know

WHAT Introduction to Wheel Throwing

WHEN | WHERE 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday and 1:30-4 p.m. Tuesday-Wednesday, Nassau County Museum of Art’s Manes Art & Education Center, 1 Museum Dr., Roslyn Harbor

INFO \$427.50-\$525 for six- to seven-week courses; 516-626-5280, nassaumuseum.org

WHAT Beginner to Intermediate Silversmithing

WHEN | WHERE 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and 1-5 p.m. Tuesday and 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Saturday, the Art League of Long Island, 107 E. Deer Park Rd., Dix Hills

INFO \$391-\$535 for six sessions plus a material fee; 631-462-5400, artleagueli.org

what you like,” she said. “I’m teaching you the skills.”

“To learn wheel throwing takes time and patience,” Hussein noted. “You need several classes to really get the hang of it. But once people do, they’re so excited.”

Pottery is only one part of the appeal, she added. “People not only get to learn from a skilled instructor, but they develop this great camaraderie and social time with people who have similar interests.” She sees a lot of students going out for lunch after sessions or celebrating birthdays in class.

Is it finally time to tap into your inner artist? For Cornell it was. “The only thing I regret is not going sooner. I would look at the registration online. I would pore over the classes and I put stuff in the basket, but I just wouldn’t do it,” she said. “I feel it would’ve made me a lot happier in my life if I had had this as an outlet for the last 10 years instead of just the last year and a half. It does bring a ton of joy to my life.”

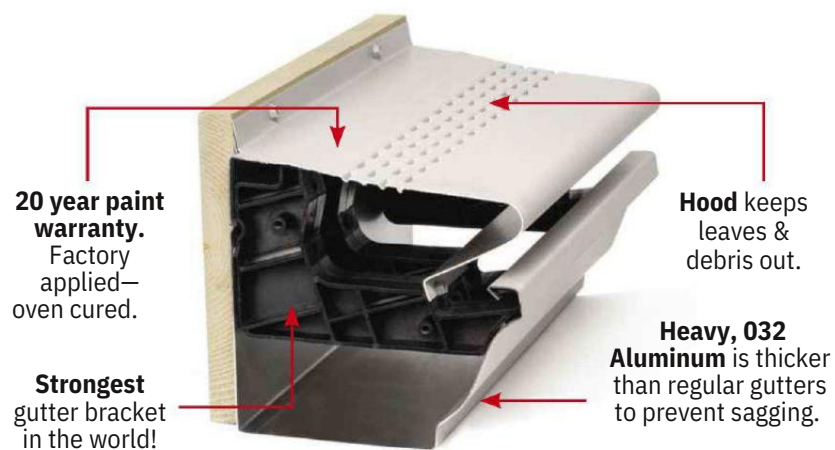
ON THE COVER Jana Nesbitt-Gale paints her bowl during a pottery class at the Nassau County Museum of Art’s Manes Art & Education Center.

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