
This exhibition catalog published by the Mint Museum of Craft + Design, offers a comprehensive look at the metalwork of Gary Lee Noffke. The curator of the project and editor of the book, Annie Farlowe, is the former Assistant Curator of Craft + Design at the Mint and a long time student and friend of Noffke.

Attitude and Alchemy is the first and only book devoted entirely to Noffke, one of the leading metalsmiths in the United States. Having taught at the University of Georgia for over thirty years, Noffe is known in the field for his expressively-worked yet functional everyday objects. He is also responsible for important metalsmithing innovations such as the hot-forging of gold and silver.

The catalog includes eleven short, heartfelt essays written by his closest students, colleagues, and friends. They provide insight into Noffke’s early history, including his family life, education, exhibitions, and his admirable work traits. In addition, the essays describe in some detail his personality and hobbies outside of being a metalsmith with inspiring anecdotes. They are a key component of this catalog, mainly because they give the reader a well-rounded look at the innovation and uniqueness that makes Noffke a nationally and internationally recognized tradesman.

Most valuable are the eighty-seven pages of plates, arranged chronologically covering over fifty years of work, complete with year, material, and dimension information for each. Close to 130 works are included and with close attention paid to the richly detailed surfaces. Most photographs are 5” x 7”, large enough for the reader to admire the detail and appreciate the craftsmanship of his work.

An exhibition checklist, chronology of exhibitions and collections, selected bibliography, and glossary makes this a valuable resource for old and new Noffke enthusiasts alike. It is highly recommended for libraries with a collection in metalwork or jewelry making and would be a valuable addition to any medium- or large-sized art library as well.

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