

# ABSTRACT

## Mountmaking Focus Studio: Virtual Shop Tour

### Presenter:

**Jamie Hascall, Mountmaking Focus, Seattle, Washington, USA**

Mountmaking Focus Studio is a private mountmaking shop and teaching facility run by Jamie Hascall. Located in an 80 year old industrial building in North Seattle, the studio shares a floor with jewelry, architecture, photography, and vintage clothing businesses, and the lower level is a woodworking floor with cabinet, furniture restoration, light construction, and sculpture studios. The 500 square foot studio is a good example of how much can be done with carefully chosen equipment in a flexible workspace. The shop is primarily designed for fabrication of brass mounts, but is fully equipped for building medium sized steel mounts, and mounts of acrylic and other plastics. Our focus is on using straightforward design and appropriate materials to maintain object and personal safety.

As we start our tour, I'll talk about my primary trio of mountmaking tools; a good bandsaw, 1" belt/8" disc sander, and generously-sized fire table with torches and fume evacuation. This small group, along with a complement of hand tools, does the lion's share of the work. From there, we will explore the machines that expand our capabilities and make the work easier and more accurate. A small vertical milling machine, metal lathe, bending equipment, and a small bead-blast cabinet bring additional design possibilities, improved fit, and easier finishing to the mountmaking process.

Being a teaching facility, the shop is equipped with multiple benches to provide work stations for up to six people(pre-Covid). There is also a central fabrication bench with multiple vises, drills, taps and dies, and other fabrication tools. The pair of fire-brick topped hot tables feature an array of torches, from a small oxygen/propane setup to multiple different MAP/PRO gas and air torches. An exhaust fan system with flexible collection ducts provides fume extraction for safe and smoke free brazing. Being an old wooden building, there is no electric welding equipment in use, as per the request of the building owner.

For teaching purposes, we also have boxes of odd and interesting objects that become examples for the mountmaking classes. Some are my personal collection, and some are sourced locally for students to take with when the class is done. At the close of each class, all the objects and mounts are installed in an "Exhibit" so the effects of mount design on installation are fully realized. As in the real world of exhibits, we adjust position and mounting systems to harmonize the fit and appearance of the grouping.

In slow times the shop becomes a repair and restoration studio for vintage banjos and whatever else crosses the threshold, and hosts occasional jam sessions other members of the community. I look forward to a time when we can again gather here and I can share it with you in person.

# BIO



Jamie Hascall is a mountmaker/trainer in private practice in Seattle Washington, USA. His nearly 30 year career includes work with both institutional and private collections with a strong emphasis on mounting cultural artifacts. He has worked on numerous new-museum and major renovation projects including the Seattle Art Museum, Burke Museum, Washington State History Museum, and the Alaska State Museum. He spent seven years as Chief Preparator for the Museums of New Mexico in Santa Fe.

Jamie's strong interest in the field of Conservation has helped him integrate appropriate materials and conservation measures into his mountmaking and exhibit work. His initial work with Seattle Art Museum made seismic safety an essential part of all his mount design and served well to help protect a collection of Pre-Columbian artifacts he installed shortly before the 2001 Nisqually earthquake.

Jamie earned an MS in Museology from the University of Washington after previous careers building musical instruments, furniture and cabinets, and in ornamental horticulture. In recent years, he has trained museum professionals in mountmaking through classes at Mountmaking Focus Studio in Seattle, and on site at institutions. Jamie is currently seeking ways to continue this training and mentorship in today's COVID world.