

Some thoughts from Molly Winton:

The first pieces I produced with what is now my signature style, were hollow vessels with a very Grecian, classical form, and finished off with ebony collars. They were a blatant copy of the forms Art Leistman was producing at the time. I had never made hollow vessels before, and I admired his work, so used his forms as a place to start mine. I made his style of vessel and applied my primitive designs on the surface.

With pride I took them with me to the 2004 Utah Woodturning Symposium in Provo, Utah, and displayed them in the Instant Gallery. Reports from friends were that Ray Leier (co-owner of del Mano Gallery) had been seen looking at my work, and taking notes. I knew I had been 'discovered'! Alas, during the following months I heard nothing from him. I did however, hear from Don Derry. At the time we had never met, but he emailed me his interest in my work stating he thought they were "break through pieces". Through subsequent conversations he offered me a critique. I jumped at the opportunity. We met in his living room. He asked pointed questions related to my choices and thought processes when making my pieces. "Why did you choose this form? Why do you have the collar? Have you considered the various elements of your design and how they flow or compete with one another?" and so on. It was invigorating, thought provoking, nerve wracking, and powerful!

As a result of the critique I made modifications and changes to the forms I used. I was more thoughtful and deliberate in the compositional structure of my new work. The following summer, one year after the 2004 Utah Symposium, I brought my new pieces to the 2005 AAW Symposium in Overland Park, Kansas. I was arranging them in the Instant Gallery when a gentleman walked up beside me and commented, "Those are nice. Didn't you have similar work last year in Provo?" I said, "Yes, but I've made some changes." "You sure have!" He handed me his business card and asked if I'd send him images of more of my work. Looking down at the card it read, *Ray Leier, del Mano Gallery*. I was invited to participate in their Small Treasures Exhibit.

The difference between being noticed, but dismissed in Utah, to being invited to participate in an exhibit hosted by del Mano, was Don Derry taking the time and consideration, to offer and perform a valuable critique. Needless to say, I am a strong proponent of thoughtful, constructive, professional, critiques.