

Our artistic collaboration began 22 years ago when we met in Rome, Italy during a year abroad program through Tyler School of Art. Immediately we were intrigued by some essential differences in our approach to painting and this led to heated debates. David created large abstract paintings in which the richness of surface treatment was the main focus. Steve's work, in contrast, was based on the question: "How can I make a painting as an object", a fully integrated three-dimensional piece. We liked how our differences challenged our own thinking. As a way to learn from each other, we started trading half-finished drawings and paintings, and working our individual ideas into them.

We discovered that this kind of "swapping" has become an essential element in our collaboration. After years of working side by side, David moved to Santa Fe in 2005. We have tables in our Philadelphia studio with half-finished brooches. Steve sends them to David's Santa Fe studio where he continues to develop before sending them back to Philadelphia.

We've also noticed other threads from our art school days that have continued to be important. While David's strength has always been to push color, pattern and surface in new directions, Steve is constantly fascinated by three-dimensional structures and how things fit together mechanically. Throughout our collaboration, we have often looked to nature for inspiration. In seed clusters, shell formations, and flower buds, for instance, there are carefully organized parts which are arranged beautifully and made up of numerous, seemingly identical, but unique units. These exquisite structures lead us into new ways of envisioning a necklace, for example, both three-dimensionally and texturally.

Many of our brooches are like a collection of fragments. Not necessarily of literal fragments (say, like shards of pottery) but more like "conceptual fragments,"— like a piece of music, a chapter from a story, an ingredient from a cuisine, or an element of a language. At some point, however, we let the references subside a bit and allow the color, abstract patterns and form to lead us. The work feels complete to us when the balance of elements — abstract and imagistic -- comes into focus in some unusual way. The viewer, on the other hand, is free to gather his/her own impression of these suggested images.