

## AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEWS

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*Do you know what Jell-O, wedding rings and statues of Stalin have in common?*

## **FROM EVERYDAY OBJECTS TO FINE ART, AUTHORS OF CAST TELL THE STORY OF HOW OUR WORLD IS MADE**

Both art and manufacturing have been shaped and advanced by the transformative process of casting for over 6,000 years. Interview the authors behind the first resource that offers comprehensive and insightful writing and photography on the magical but often unnoticed technique of using a mold to give material form: **CAST: Art and Objects Made Using Humanity's Most Transformational Process** [June 28, Schiffer Publishing], by Jen Townsend and Renee Zettle-Sterling.

"Since the industrial revolution, casting's reputation has been in decline and unfortunately, it's now associated with cheap, mass-produced knock-offs. We understand why people think this way, but it's an over-simplification. Casting is a process just like any other - it can be done well or poorly and be the right or wrong choice in the creation of any given object, casting can be used to mass-produce plastic toys or in the creation of a one-of-a-kind Renaissance bronze. Casting has given us everything from statuary to toilets and bricks to wedding rings - its influence on our world is hard to overstate." says Townsend, a jeweler and metalsmith.

"All you have to do is flip through **CAST** to see how incredibly useful, diverse, and endlessly interesting casting can be." adds Zettle-Sterling, a professor of Three Dimensional Design, Jewelry, Metalsmithing, and Sculpture at Grand Valley State University.

Curating 800+ beautiful photographs and commissioning informative essays by Suzanne Ramljak, Ezra Shales PhD, Susie Silbert, Joseph Antenucci Becherer PhD, Elaine King for this book, the artists/authors would love to expound on the collaborative process that helped them write the book that no one else had written but they wanted to own and they knew would illuminate the art of collaboration in general.

For Townsend, this book was more than an academic exercise. "**CAST**, in some ways, has saved my life," she says, after suffering a wrist injury that has sidelined her artistic practice. "Being a jeweler and metalsmith has always defined who I am - losing that sense of identity has been very difficult. It's a profound loss I grapple with every day, but by refocusing my energy and reinventing myself as a writer, I've been able to collaborate with one of my best friends and create the single largest professional achievement in either of our professional lives."

Zettle-Sterling also has a very personal connection to her work. "Over the last decade, I've been making work that deals with the loss of my brother, Tommy, who passed away in 2002. My work deals specifically at this loss but also looks broadly at mourning and grief in our culture. As a way to honor my brother, I directly burn out parts of his clothing and cast

them in bronze. I use his clothing as a way to honor him. The process burns away the original scrap of fabric, but even though the scrap of clothing is gone, I've gained a kind of permanence through the process."

The authors are available for fascinating and informative interviews on:

- The history of casting and its current applications in the creation of art and objects
- The process's impact on human existence
- The common thread between craftspeople, skilled laborers, manufacturers, and artists
- The omnipresence of casting in our lives
- The fact that you're a caster if you've made ice cubes, muffins, or used a Jell-O mold!

*Jen Townsend and Renée Zettle-Sterling are metalsmiths, authors, and teachers with an insatiable passion for casting of all varieties.*

**TOWNSEND** has been making jewelry since she was 13 years old. She earned an MFA in Jewelry and Metalsmithing from Southern Illinois University Carbondale, where she studied under Richard Mawdsley. For fifteen years, she has run a successful jewelry studio, focusing on bespoke pieces for clients. She has taught throughout the United States, including Millersville University, the metal studio at Dartmouth College, the Penland School of Crafts, and the Mendocino Art Center, among others. In addition, Jen's work can be seen in *Metalsmith Magazine*, *Showcase: 500 Art Necklaces*, and in *Art Jewelry Today 2*. Her work has been shown at The Orkney Museum in Scotland, Shanghai Design Week, and her work is in the permanent collection of the Imperial War Museum in London.

**ZETTLE-STERLING** always knew she wanted to be an artist. She was introduced to casting in high school at the prestigious Governor's School for the Arts and Carnegie Mellon's Pre-College Summer Art Program. She studied fibers and papermaking at Indiana University, where she cast using paper pulp, but her real passion for casting was ignited in graduate school. She earned an MFA in sculpture/installation and an MA and jewelry/metalsmithing at the Edinboro University of Pennsylvania. In her studio practice, she casts and fabricates in a wide range of materials. She has exhibited and curated both nationally and internationally, including exhibitions in Tokyo, New York, and in Art Prize in her local community of Grand Rapids. In service to her field, Renée served as President of the Society of North American Goldsmiths. She is also a tenured professor at Grand Valley State University where she has taught for seventeen years.

Find more on the book at [www.castartandobjects.com](http://www.castartandobjects.com). Follow the project at [facebook.com/CASTthebook](https://facebook.com/CASTthebook) or [instagram.com/cast.art.and.objects](https://instagram.com/cast.art.and.objects).

Connect with Townsend at <http://jentownsend.com> and Zettle-Sterling at [www.zettle-sterling.com](http://www.zettle-sterling.com)

CAST is available at independent bookstores, Barnes and Noble, Amazon and at Schiffer Publishing.

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