

## INTRODUCTION

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This book represents several years of intensive research and experimentation. Information from hundreds of sources has been collected, distilled and illustrated. It is intended to be both a text and a tool, a blend of instruction and reference. Like any tool, its value increases as you bring to it your own perceptions and skills. It is designed to make the information easily accessible, and built to stand up to years of bench-side use.

Like any craft, metalsmithing involves some chemicals and procedures that are potentially dangerous. Great care has been taken to omit hazards where possible and to give clear warnings wherever they apply. These will be only as effective as you make them. Before using this book, please take the time to read the health and safety suggestions on page 172. Because we can't be on hand to control the application of this information, the author and publisher cannot be held responsible for incorrect interpretations or use of this material.

THE COMPLETE METALSMITH takes a somewhat unusual approach to the material it presents. Unlike most books that progress from basic to advanced techniques, information has been arranged here according to the process involved. For example, you'll find all the information about holding things together, from simple tabs to sophisticated granulation is grouped in the chapter called *Joining*. In most cases each technique is confined to a single page. This makes it easy to get a quick overview of the nature of the process. The wire binding will allow the book to lay flat and take up only a little room on your bench top.

Dark rectangles along the edge of each page will guide you to the correct chapter. These may be augmented by adding your own index tabs at the beginning of each chapter or on frequently used pages. Buy plastic sleeves from an office supply store or cut the chapter heading tabs on the next page and glue one at the opening of each chapter.