



HERITAGE  
CRAFTS



# NEWS RELEASE

Wednesday 27 November 2024

## **Sheffield silver spinner wins Heritage Crafts *Precious Metalworker of the Year Award* supported by The Royal Mint**

**Sheffield-based silver spinner Warren Martin has won this year's *Precious Metalworker of the Year Award*, supported by The Royal Mint, including a £2,000 prize and trophy awarded at a special presentation at Eltham Palace on Tuesday 26 November 2024.**

**Heritage Crafts** was set up 14 years ago as a national charity to support and safeguard heritage crafts skills, and has become well known for its *Red List of Endangered Crafts*, the first research of its kind to rank traditional crafts in the UK by the likelihood they will survive the next generation.

The award, supported by **The Royal Mint**, celebrates a heritage craftsperson who has made an outstanding contribution to working with precious metal over the past year. It recognises a contribution that is far beyond the ordinary, based on a proven dedication to a particular metalworking skill. The Royal Mint is Britain's oldest maker, with a heritage of crafting precious metals dating back to 886AD.



*Heritage Crafts is registered as the Heritage Crafts Association  
Charitable Incorporated Organisation 1159208  
Registered office: 81 North Street, Wellington, Somerset TA21 8NA*

Today it is helping to revive the art of British jewellery making at its site in South Wales.

**Warren Martin**, from Sheffield, is a practitioner of the craft of silver spinning, where metal is formed on a lathe into vessels and other hollow shapes, over forms known as chucks. The craft of silver spinning is integral to the creation of some of the world's most prestigious sporting trophies.

Warren is one of a dwindling number of craftspeople in the city known for its metalworking heritage, many of whom work for the trade and rarely receive recognition for their work. Silver spinning is listed as critically endangered on Heritage Crafts' *Red List of Endangered Crafts*.

The Precious Metalworker of the Year trophy presented to Warren was made by the fantastic team of coin designers and craftspeople at The Royal Mint, led by Head of Coin Design Paul Morgan.

The piece is intended to take viewers on a journey of metalwork from its molten stage, through hammering, planishing, repoussé, chasing, and finally through to texture and engraving.

The judging panel for this year's award was made up of **Leighton John** (Director of Operations at The Royal Mint), **Dan Thomas** (King's Assay Master at The Royal Mint), and last year's winner, watch dial enameller **Sally Morrison**.



The two other finalists for the award were **Kitty Griffiths**, a goldsmith jewellery maker who studied at Sheffield University and excels at stone setting, and **Epona Smith**, a silversmith and hand engraver who teaches the art of engraving in London and Birmingham.

The Royal Mint and Heritage Crafts launched their partnership at the beginning of 2023. Since then, they have awarded nine training bursaries to early-career practitioners wanting to develop their skills in precious metals. As an exemplar of British craftsmanship, The Royal Mint is committed to protecting and celebrating craftspeople and developing skills wherever possible.

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## **Contacts:**

- For press information and photographs, contact **Tess Osman**, Grants and Awards Officer – [tess@heritagecrafts.org.uk](mailto:tess@heritagecrafts.org.uk).

## **Photo captions:**

- **Warren Martin**, winner of the 2024 *Precious Metalworker of the Year Award*, and **Paul Morgan**, Head of Coin Design at the Royal Mint. Photo by Robert Wade.
- **Warren Martin**, silver spinner and winner of the 2024 Precious Metalworker of the Year Award.
- **Paul Morgan**, Head of Coin Design at the Royal Mint, inspecting the *Precious Metalworker of the Year* trophy.

## **About The Royal Mint**

The Royal Mint's expertise in precious metals spans over a thousand years. Known as the home of precious metals in the UK, The Royal Mint offer products including gold, silver and platinum commemorative coins, bars for investment, and a digital gold saving option, backed by metal held in their vault.

Earlier this year it unveiled a pioneering new factory to recover precious metals from electronic waste. Recovered metal is being used to create beautiful jewellery pieces in its latest business venture, 886 by The Royal Mint.

[www.royalmint.com](http://www.royalmint.com)

## **About Heritage Crafts**

Founded in 2009, the Heritage Crafts is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) registered as the 'Heritage Crafts Association', the advocacy body for traditional heritage crafts. Working in partnership with government and key agencies, it provides a focus for craftspeople, groups, societies and guilds, as well as individuals who care about the loss of traditional crafts skills, and works towards a healthy and sustainable framework for the future. Its aim is to support and promote heritage crafts as a fundamental part of our living heritage.

[www.heritagecrafts.org.uk](http://www.heritagecrafts.org.uk)

### **About the *Red List of Endangered Crafts***

The Red List of Endangered Crafts, created by Heritage Crafts, was the first to rank traditional crafts in the UK by the likelihood they would survive the next generation. The 2023 edition of the Red List, funded by the Pilgrim Trust, assessed 259 crafts to identify those which are at greatest risk of disappearing, of which 62 have been classified as critically endangered, 84 as endangered and 112 as currently viable.

The Red List shows that the craft knowledge, skills and practices that form an important part of our shared cultural heritage are – for a number of reasons – at risk of being lost. Heritage Crafts believes that these cultural assets are as important as unique heritage buildings and ancient beautiful landscapes and could provide future generations with fantastic opportunities to enrich their lives and the lives of others.

<http://redlist.heritagecrafts.org.uk>