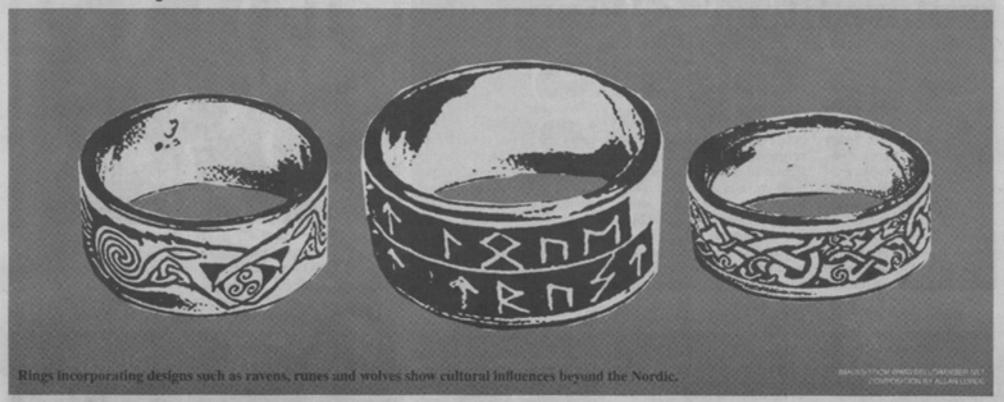
Cross-pollination: Wordic design interlaced



David Jón Fuller

ultural cross-pollination so-called "Dark Ages," tural exchange as well as raiders and pillagers.

a metalsmith of Scottish and from l'Anse aux Meadows. English descent in London, ON, when he visited the Museum of some of the artifacts and repro-Civilization in Ottawa/Hull.

1995, when I started really spe- ravens, holding a triskele and

cializing in Celtic designs," he says. "One of the things that inspired me to do viking pieces is nothing new - in the was that in 2000 my wife and I went to the Museum of Civithe vikings were agents of cul- lization in Hull, and there was a huge viking exhibit of artifacts from Scotland, Iceland, This was thrown into sharp England, Ireland, Greenland, relief for Jason Bellchamber, as well as a couple of the rivets

"So when I saw that, seeing ductions there was just really "I've done viking pieces as inspiring. One of the things that well as Celtic pieces since about I really enjoyed seeing was two

a whalebone that came from , Greenland, and I saw that as a combination of Native American culture and as well as viking culture."

Bellchamber says his first forays into ring-making were exploring the art and designs of the First Nations peoples of the Pacific Northwest. "But," he says, "I felt I couldn't justify selling those because it's not my heritage." He credits his mother with encouraging him to explore his Celtic background.

It's not always easy to separate Nordic and Celtic motifs. For example, he says, "Knotwork in Celtic design had roots in Scandinavian art. I find viking knotwork and motifs have a beginning and end, whereas Celtic knotwork tends to be continuous.

"The vikings, through trade and, shall we say, 'establishing themselves,' in Britain, Scotto the 10th century."

ravens, Huginn and Muninn."

tion to pieces based on Egyphis company makes pieces in- rate rune meanings." spired by the Lord of the Rings and Phantom of the Opera.

tures is the "rune ring" in which creased across the board.

land and Ireland, influenced custom messages are carved in Celtic art from the fifth century runes - but first they are translated into Icelandic. Alaina Aside from actual contact Manning, Product Manager for between ancient peoples, a num- the company, says, "Paul is very ber of symbols seem to take on interested in ancient cultures importance independently. "For and researching the vikings. example, there is the raven," he When he first started research says, "which is very important on the language, with the inin [Pacific] West Coast design, tention of making jewellery, he as well as being the Celtic sun tried to find a book on ancient god Lugh's familiars and Odin's Norse and found that the closest language was Icelandic." Bellchamber isn't the only Given the relative isolation of jeweller who has different mo- Iceland, the written language tifs on offer. Paul J. Badali, stayed nearly the same over master jeweller and President of many centuries. "Icelandic is Badali Jewelry Specialties, has the closest modern language to been working in gold and silver Old Norse," says Manning, who for roughly 30 years. In addi- does some of the translation. "We use Icelandic to translate tian, Celtic, and Nordic designs, the phrases for the most accu-

The specialty rune rings are their most popular item, she One of the company's fea- adds, though their sales have in-

Bellchamber says of his continuing exploration of motifs and designs, "I'm fascinated by the convergence of culture. Through my research I know that one culture doesn't just come in and crase the other - it comes in and if one culture's taken control or at war, it'll mix in with the civilization there, so you'll get a combination of them."