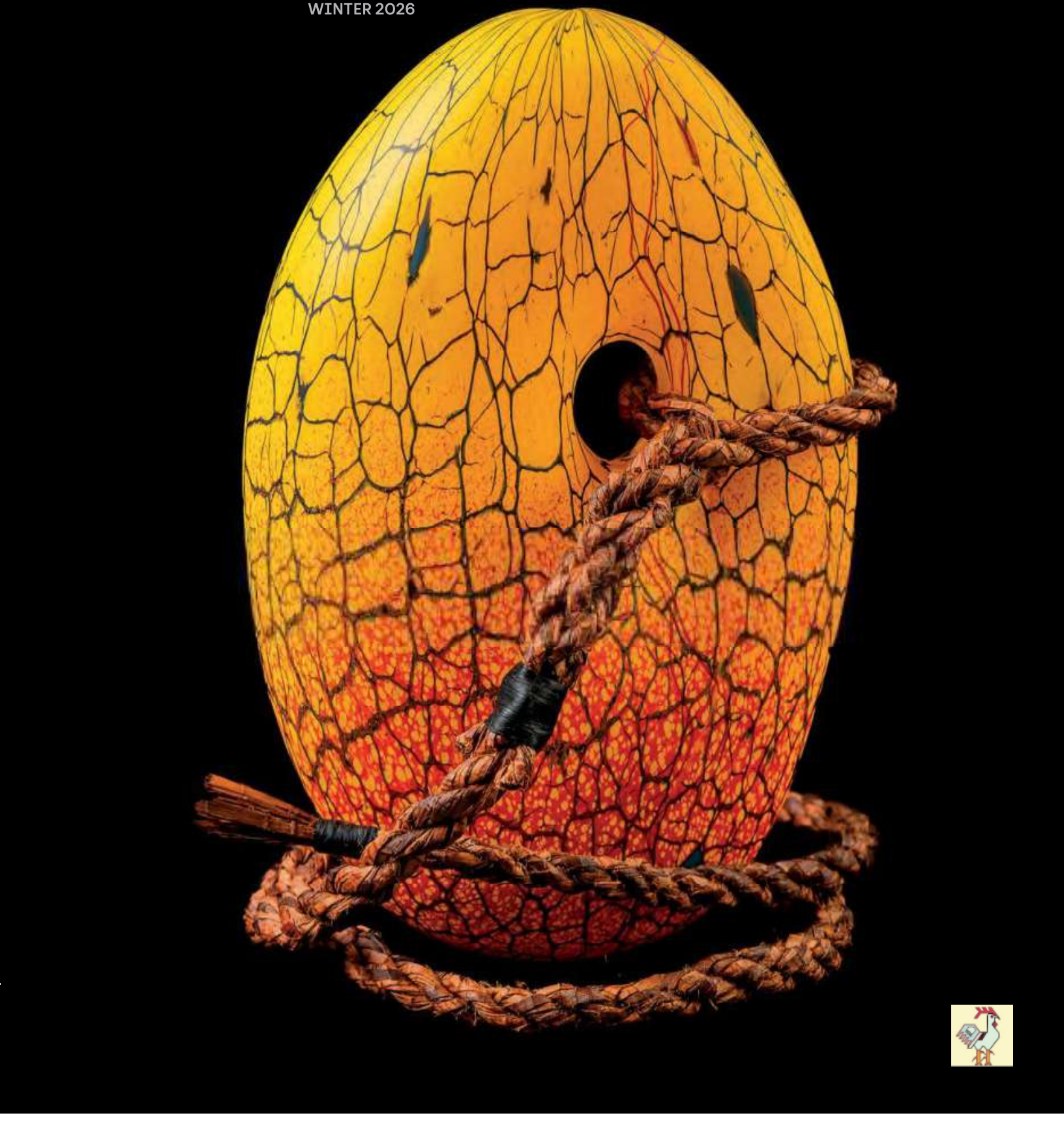
AMERICAN

craft

WINTER 2026



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AMERICAN craft
WINTER 2026 / VOL. 85, No. 4

dream

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Features

ON THE COVER:
Glass artist Dan Friday's *Sxwo'le Anchor with Rope* has deep roots in the salmon-fishing culture of his Lummi heritage. Photo by Ian Lewis. **page 28.**

THIS PAGE:
Santa Fe–based Suni Upshaw honors her Diné and Japanese heritage with her ceramics practice. Read more about the city's extraordinary craft scene on **page 50.**

Photo by Gabriella Marks. OPPOSITE TOP: Photo by Logan Jackson, courtesy of R & Company. OPPOSITE BOTTOM: Photo courtesy of Caitlin Nolan.

Departments

ABOVE: A lantern vessel by ceramist Jolie Ngo. **page 8.** LEFT: Cait Nolan grows the plants to make the dyes that color her hypnotic quilts. **page 12.**

Dan Friday tells stories from his family and culture in his work, as in this hand-sculpted glass piece, *Wex'liem Comb*, 2020, 12 x 6 in. *Wex'liem* means "place of frogs" in the Lummi language. Learn more on **page 28.**

Dream. As the United States reaches its 250th year in 2026, *American Craft* reaches its 85th. During World War II, Aileen Osborn Webb opened the gallery America House in Manhattan with a dream and a plan to support makers by selling their work, and launched a newsletter for the people it represented. That newsletter soon became the magazine *Craft Horizons* and was later renamed *American Craft*.

Over the ensuing eight and a half decades, these pages have honored the work of craftspeople, sharing their stories, materials, processes, and finished works. Generations of artists, writers, editors, photographers, and designers have helped explain and evaluate what's emerging in craft.

The talented and dedicated staff and contractors who currently produce *American Craft* have built upon this history. I'm proud to announce that this work has been recognized again this year by the prestigious Folio Awards, which honor achievements in magazine publishing. As we were getting ready to go to press in October, we received an award for design excellence.

But, as we celebrate these significant milestones, I'm sorry to also let you know that the economics of publishing in print have caught up with us, and that this is the last issue of *American Craft*. For those of us who love craft—like Bruce Pepich, who brought together the largest collection of contemporary craft in North America as founding director of the Racine Art Museum—this is a big blow. In the pantheon of doers, thinkers, and supporters that make the craft community so unique, Pepich holds a special place. He describes the history of the magazine and how important it has been to him and the studio craft field on page 88.

Thankfully, for all the folks out there who are making—and making the world a better place—and for all lovers of craft, the American Craft Council is going to keep publishing stories online, maintaining a digital presence to help foster community. Keep looking to craftcouncil.org for the latest information on craft events and support for makers.

In the meantime, we hope you enjoy this issue focused on the theme *dream*. In the following pages, you'll discover wildly talented and dedicated craftspeople from across the nation, including cover artist Dan Friday, who shares the oral stories of the Lummi Nation in glass.

As editor in chief, it's been an honor to create this magazine over the past five years. Speaking on behalf of our current magazine staff and all of those who preceded us, it's been an honor to be with you over the past 85 years.

We hope you'll continue to treasure work done by hand and support craftspeople, who make meaningful objects that fill our lives with beauty.

Karen

KAREN OLSON / Editor in Chief

Photo by Ian Lewis.

AMERICAN craft

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Meet some of the many writers, artists, and photographers who contributed to this issue.

"Seeing some of northern New Mexico's most celebrated artists featured in these pages, artists who have helped to make The City Different [Santa Fe] synonymous with artistic excellence, is an affirmation of the enduring creative spirit of this beautiful and blessed place," says freelance writer **RoseMary Diaz** (Santa Clara Tewa), who wrote the introduction to our coverage of craft in Santa Fe. **page 50**

Minneapolis-based writer and editor **Joel Hoekstra**, who specializes in design and architecture, regularly contributes to several regional and national publications. "Reporting on the American College of the Building Arts reminded me how much I enjoy the quiet focus it requires to make something beautiful and lasting with your hands," he says. **page 22**

A James Beard Award winner, Seattle-based **Reva Keller** uses vivid color palettes to capture lush and playful images of makers, chefs, and food. We were delighted when she agreed to photograph glass artist Dan Friday in his home studio and hot shop. Previously, she photographed Kevin Reiswig for our Summer 2025 issue. **page 28**

Kasey Payette, *American Craft*'s assistant editor, is a Minneapolis-based writer and MFA candidate through the Bennington Writing Seminars. She wrote about contemporary handmade sconces for this issue's Market page. "I focused on pieces whose texture and tactility is dramatized by illumination," she says. **page 82**

American Craft's associate editor **Shivaun Watchorn** is based in Minneapolis and moonlights as an editor of music books. In this issue, she writes about New York–based sculptor and designer Shaina Tabak, whose furniture, she says, "creates the illusion of movement and energy through forms that resemble raindrops, wind, clouds, and eddies." **page 18**

FROM TOP DOWN: Photo by Kimberly Nesselhauf. Photo courtesy of Joel Hoekstra. Photo courtesy of Reva Keller. Photo by Abi Sutcliffe Photography, LLC. Photo by Grace Ambrose.

Another Dimension

Ceramist Jolie Ngo is creating intricate, ebullient work that brings together craft and emerging technology.

BY PAOLA SINGER

Ceramic artist Jolie Ngo was in her final semester at the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) when the pandemic struck. Until then, she hadn't given much thought to 3D clay printing, a fairly new technology in ceramics. "Covid happened and we all got kicked out of the studio," recalls the Philadelphia-born, California-based artist. "But my professor offered to 3D print and fire models for us, and it became the only way I could continue pushing my practice."

Those pieces—left for her to collect from a box outside the locked studio—were the seed for the work that now defines her: kaleidoscopic, otherworldly objects designed on a computer and realized using a 3D printer, a practice that makes her one of the few ceramists working at the intersection of traditional craft and emerging technology.

Her style is delightfully unruly: some pieces feature shapes that look like flower petals, snail heads, and industrial wheel cogs, while others resemble nothing from this world. Free-form shapes comingle with intricate detail, and rawness with delicacy. Whatever time she saves by using a machine to mold clay, she spends by adding layer upon layer of color (usually airbrushed) and finishes, such as metallic glazes, that are applied to tiny spheres, globules, and other protrusions added to her vessels.

Ngo's ebullient colors and forms have roots in a childhood spent exploring internet worlds in games such as *Minecraft* and *The Sims*. Yet there are no explicit references in her work; Ngo eschews symbolism in favor of emotional tone. "The colors I choose often come from blurred gradients, compressed images, and other digital artifacts," she says. "It's not symbolic or expressive, but rather mood shaping."

One concept that *does* resonate with her is the memory palace, or method of loci, whereby familiar spaces or objects are used as mnemonic devices. In 2021 Ngo translated this into a series of vessels with swooping fins, ridges, and hidden recesses. Shown at Design Miami, they caught the eye of R & Company, the New York gallery that now represents her.

"It is incredibly rare to encounter something in ceramics that feels entirely new," says Evan Snyderman, who co-owns the gallery with Zesty Meyers. "For the first time, in both of our lives, we were so intrigued that we had to figure out how she was making what she was making right away."

To make the vessels, Ngo begins by drawing them on Rhino, the CAD software. "It's more intuitive for me to work in that space when I'm sketching out ideas," she says. "I kind of always start my work with an ellipsis shape and build off of that, and then I create the wings, the flanges, the buttresses."

RIGHT: Ceramist Jolie Ngo with *Table Lamp in Castle in the Sky*, 2025, stoneware, plastic, glaze, 30 x 17 x 15 in. (left) and *Floor Lamp in Glow Stick*, 2025, stoneware, plastic, glaze, 60 x 21 x 19 in. (right). OPPOSITE: *Floor Lamp in Power Clash*, 2025, stoneware, glaze, wire, luster, 60 x 20 x 17 in.

Photos by Logan Jackson, courtesy of R & Company.

“The center of my practice will always be ceramics. But I feel like being able to work with digital tools has cracked it wide open.” —Jolie Ngo

TOP: *Memory Palace in New Horizons*, 2022, colored porcelain, glaze, luster, PLA plastic, 5.5 x 13 x 10 in. LEFT: *Floor Mirror in Power Clash*, 2025, plastic, stoneware, glaze, glass, 65 x 40 x 5 in. ABOVE: *Lantern Vessel in All-Over Print*, 2025, stoneware, glaze, luster, epoxy, 16.5 x 25 x 14 in. OPPOSITE: *Table Lamp in Forced Perspective*, 2024, stoneware, glass, epoxy, wire, luster, PLA plastic, 30 x 13 x 8 in.

TOP: Photo by Joe Kramm. LEFT, RIGHT, OPPOSITE: Photos by Logan Jackson, courtesy of R & Company.

Once satisfied, she processes the model through slicing software to translate it into the language of the printer. The clay—often tinted porcelain—is loaded by hand. Then the printer does its magic, outlining the form one tiny layer at a time, like an ultra-precise, decorative cake frosting. After that, Ngo will do several firings in a kiln, each with a different kind of hand-painted or airbrushed color.

The winged silhouettes in the *Memory Palace* series (and other works) give a nod to one of her favorite potters, the late, iconoclastic Betty Woodman. Another touchstone is Brian Rochefort, whose volcanic, gloopy forms so impressed Ngo that she cold-messaged him, offering to come out to Los Angeles to be his studio assistant. He said yes. That was in 2016, while Ngo was taking time off from school. Working with Rochefort cemented her decision to return to RISD and switch to the ceramics program.

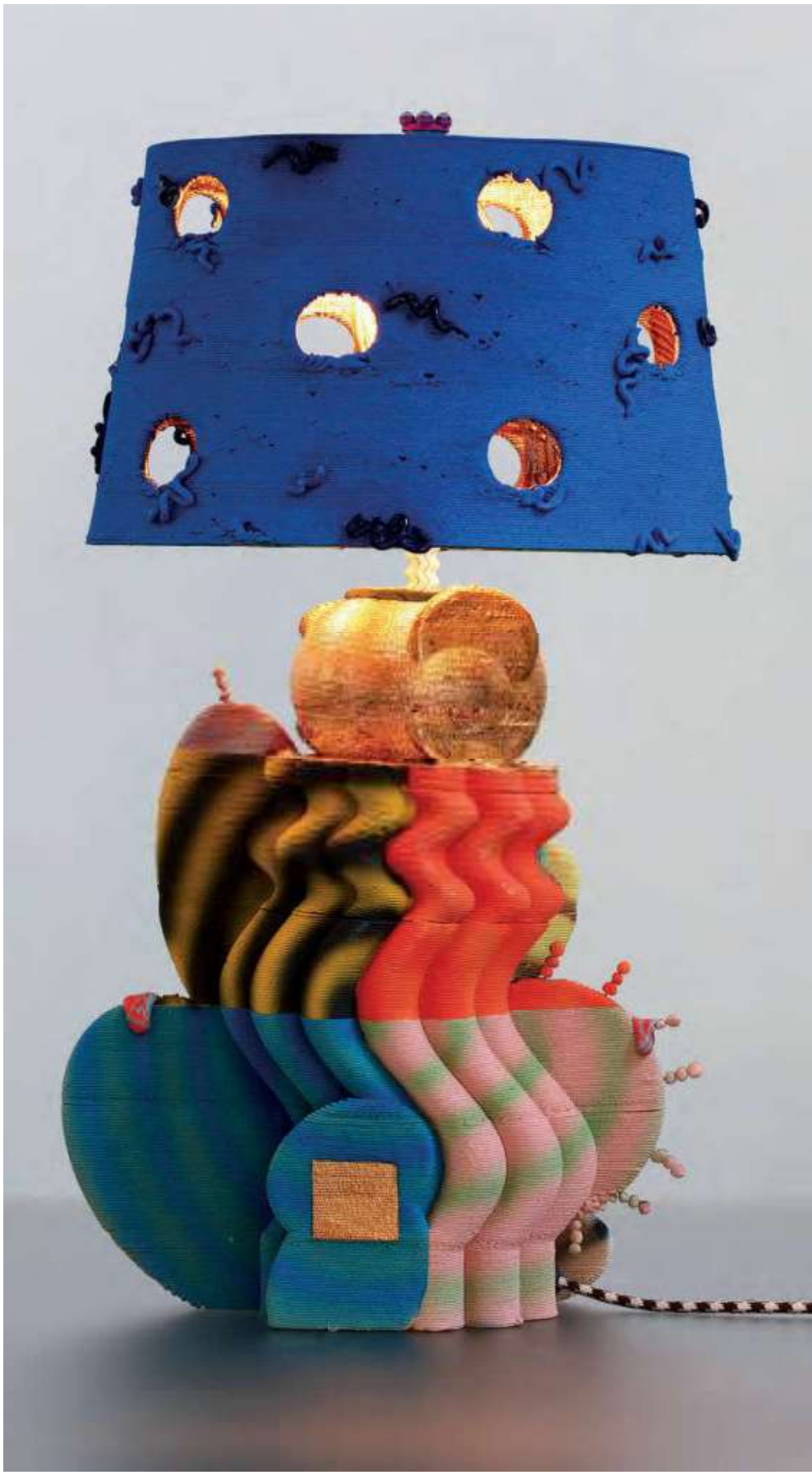
For years, functionality was an afterthought—Ngo's vessels might hold water but were never meant to be vases. Recently, however, she's turned her attention to lighting. These pieces are larger and more complex than anything she's made before, requiring printing in sections and then a painstaking assembly. Some of her lamps were recently exhibited in her solo show, *Power Clash*, at R & Company's Downtown Manhattan space.

This October, Ngo heads to Anderson Ranch Arts Center in Snowmass Village, Colorado, to learn to use a CNC router. Her plan is to make dining room furniture. Is this a shift in direction?

"The center of my practice will always be ceramics," says Ngo. "But I feel like being able to work with digital tools has cracked it wide open, because having the 3D modeling skill set can translate so easily to other materials." ◆

ngojolie.net | @jolienope

Paola Singer, a freelance writer in New York City, is a frequent contributor to *American Craft*.



Stitched from the Soil

In a medium often focused on uniformity and speed, quiltmaker Cait Nolan relishes process, repetition, and giving back.

BY KIMBERLY COBURN

Most quilts begin with a pattern. Cait Nolan's quilts begin with a seed.

Each spring on her small farm in Williamstown, New Jersey, Nolan plants a palette of color: the deep blue of indigo, the sunny yellow of weld, the rich red of madder, the dusky purple of Hopi sunflower. Autumn adds the tannin-rich browns and blacks of foraged black walnut, acorns, and tree barks.

From June to October, she dyes her dwindling stash of secondhand linen with no particular quilt design in mind. In a dye world often focused on uniformity, Nolan embraces unpredictability. She layers and overdyes to build a library of hues and values. Come winter, she turns to her shelves to see what the year has given her. Then, in the dark and dreaming months, she begins quilting.

Nolan's craft practice has evolved over time. She studied printmaking and taught art, gravitating toward pattern and composition: "I've always been very drawn to process, repetition, and scale," Nolan says. "And I have a slightly obsessive personality. So, in hindsight, it's easy to see how that translates to quilting."

The shift began when she returned to the US after teaching overseas. Settling onto a piece of land with her partner, she started gardening and sewing garments. A gift of indigo seeds opened the door to natural dyeing. Soon she found herself wanting to use those hand-dyed fabrics as thoughtfully as possible.

It wasn't just quilting's low-waste appeal that drew her in; it was the way its slow, labor-intensive process countered the speed, excess, and placelessness of modern life. "How fully tied to the land can I make my work?" Nolan asks. "How rooted in the space that I'm occupying can it be?"

Nolan's *Sage Quilt*, 2024, is hand-dyed with homegrown weld, acorn, black walnut, goldenrod, Japanese indigo, 62 x 64 in.

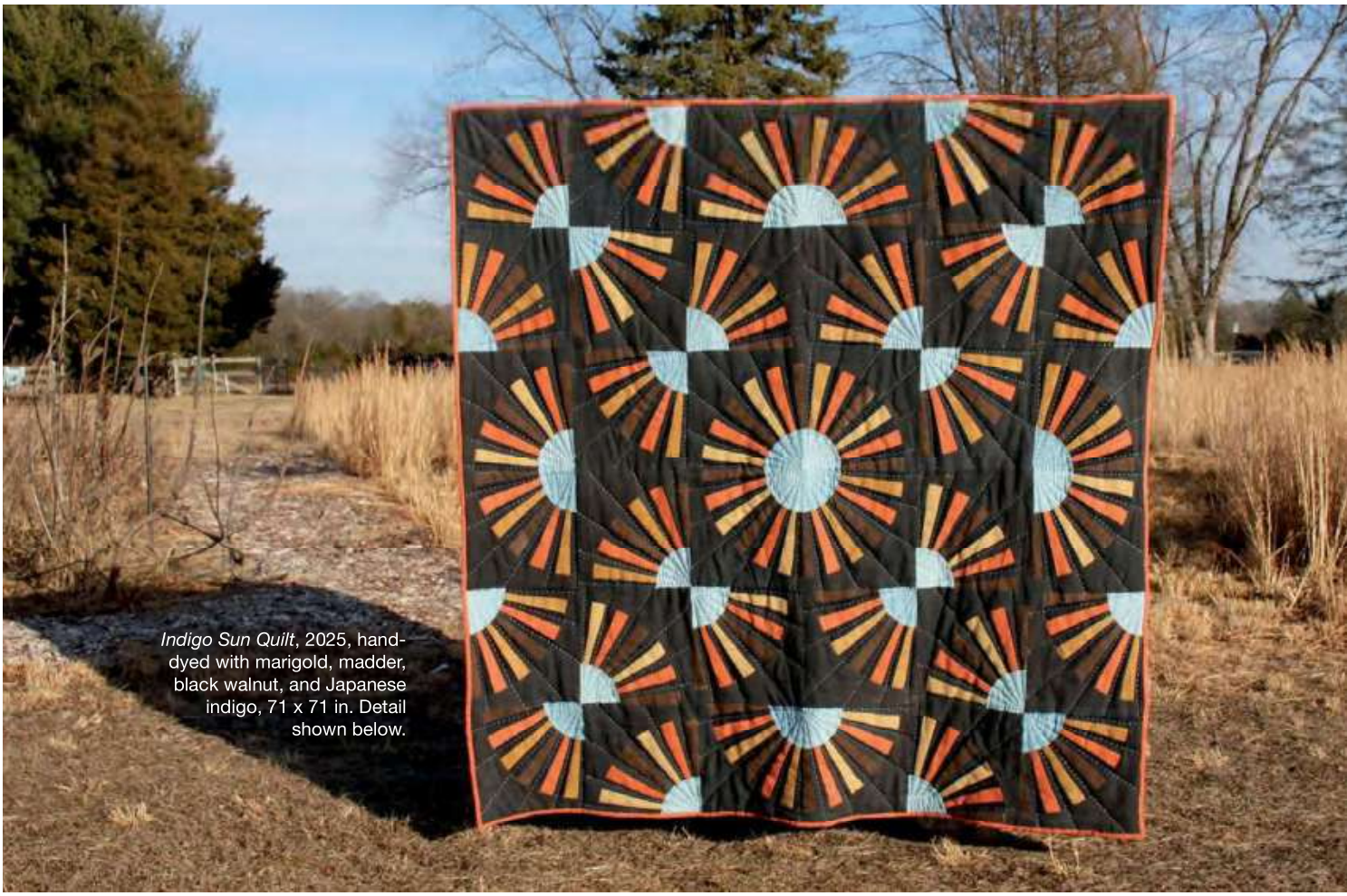
Photo courtesy of Caitlin Nolan.


“How fully tied to the land can I make my work? How rooted in the space that I’m occupying can it be?”
—Cait Nolan

Photos courtesy of Caitlin Nolan.

BELOW: *Small Olive Quilt*, 2025, linen hand-dyed with weld, madder, black Hopi sunflower, and Japanese indigo, 54 x 54 in. OPPOSITE TOP: Nolan with the Japanese indigo plants she uses to create a deep blue dye. OPPOSITE LEFT: Japanese indigo (*Persicaria tinctoria*) leaf. OPPOSITE RIGHT: Nolan's quilts are machine pieced, then hand stitched with sashiko thread.

Poppy Quilt, 2024, hand-dyed with weld, madder, redbuds, goldenrod, marigold, and Japanese indigo, 79 x 79 in.



Indigo Sun Quilt, 2025, hand-dyed with marigold, madder, black walnut, and Japanese indigo, 71 x 71 in. Detail shown below.

Photos courtesy of Caitlin Nolan.

By day, Nolan is a programming coordinator at a public library. She jokes that she's borrowed nearly every Amish quilt book in the New Jersey library system. Drawn to the tradition's darker colors—reflecting the clothing scraps from which they were originally made—she is also inspired by variations on log cabin blocks, for both their visual punch and their minimal waste. When it comes to design, her compositions often begin as pencil sketches that she arranges digitally before piecing the fabric strips by machine and quilting them by hand.

Beyond traditional designs, Nolan's quilts also bind her into a social lineage. From the AIDS Memorial Quilt to the improvisational brilliance of the Gee's Bend quilters, quilting has long offered an avenue for both protest and perseverance. So she has recently begun organizing community quilts and using her own work to raise money for mutual aid and humanitarian relief.

Nolan sees parallels between the unquantifiable amount of labor that goes into each quilt and the roles women and caregivers play in the community. "Every piece you sew together is embedded with your care, and I think that's very tangible for the person who receives it," she says. "Quilting hand-dyed fabrics begs the question: practically, why would you put so much effort into something?" Nolan shrugs, as if the answer were obvious: "Because it takes a lot of work to love."

◆

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Kimberly Coburn is an Atlanta-based writer and maker whose work explores the intersection of craft, the human spirit, and the natural world.

Out of the Elements

New York–based designer Shaina Tabak's fecund imagination pushes materials to the brink.

BY SHIVAUN WATCHORN

Shaina Tabak's sculptural furniture, made from hardwood, thin wood veneer, metal, and unorthodox materials (kitchen sponges, pool noodles), looks as if it's about to evaporate, blow away, or unfurl in the wind. That's by design.

For a recent work, *Extruding Sprout*, Tabak stacked poplar, aluminum, and the aforementioned sponges into a 73-inch-tall, coat rack–esque totem. She 3D-modeled the dimpled wood base, then drilled holes in it with a CNC router before finally hand-shaping them. The sculpture's holey aluminum is plugged with small pieces of wood. At the top, brown-dyed resin-coated sponges peel open like a banana to reveal still more kitchen sponges—in their original yellow hue—assembled into a hollow periscope.

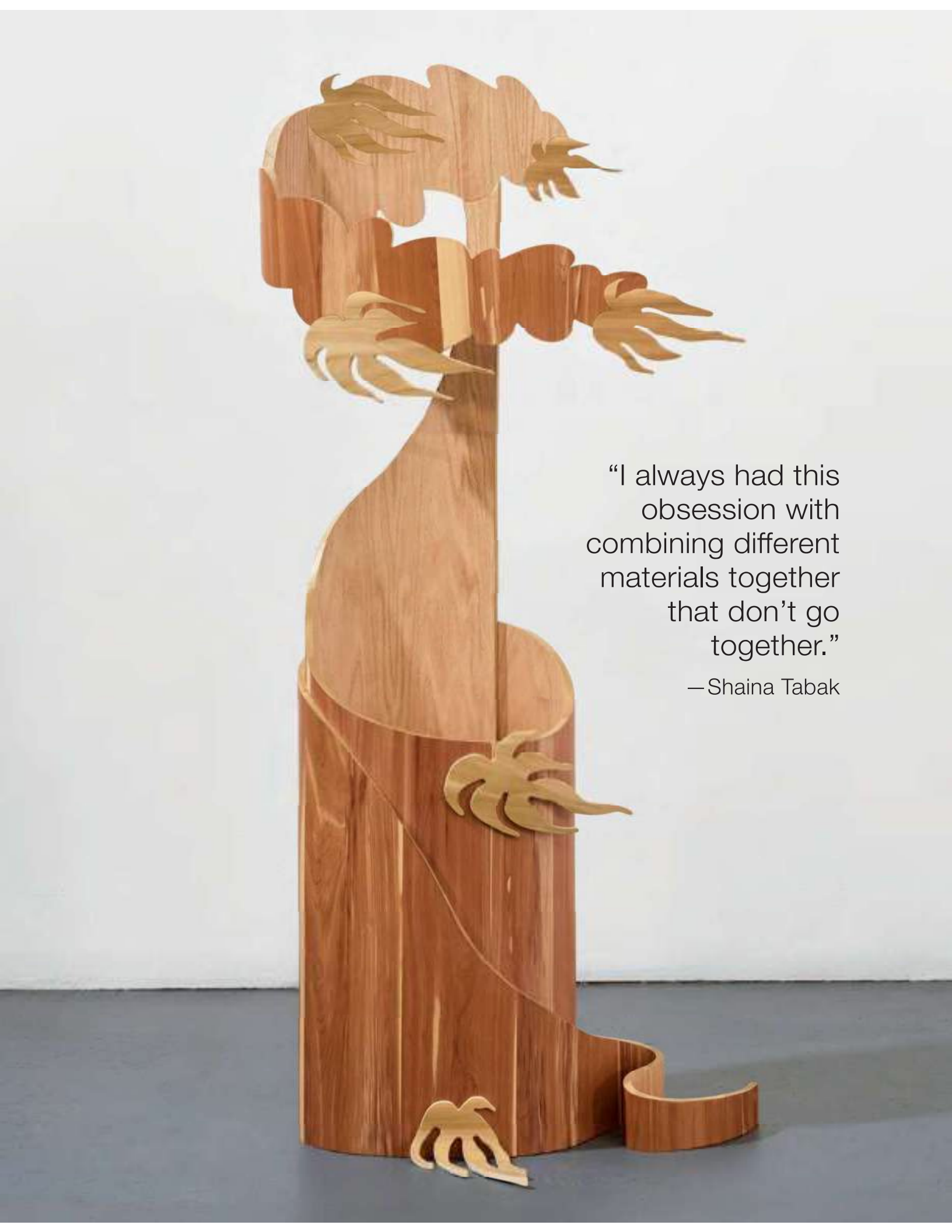
The result is a study in material experimentation. "I always had this obsession with combining different materials together that don't go together," Tabak says. "Wood is the least processed material. Metal is still found in the earth, but it's pretty processed. Manmade sponge is like the most processed out of all of it, but the way I treated these three materials kind of made them look as similar as possible."

The 29-year-old's fluency with technology enables this kind of alchemy. An alumna of the Rhode Island School of Design, Tabak has worked as a fabricator for sculptor Katie Stout, multimedia artist Genesis Belanger, and surrealist woodworker Hugh Hayden. She teaches CNC classes at Gowanus Studio Space in Brooklyn, where she is a member, and uses 3D modeling to map out her work.

Extruding Sprout is named after a command in Rhino, the computer-aided design software that she uses to create patterns and plan her work before fabrication. "I was thinking of a cardboard box," she remembers. "I extruded it vertically and made every material—the wood, metal, and sponge—the same diameter and shape, and stacked

Extruding Sprout, 2024, aluminum, poplar, dish sponge, 73 x 15 x 15 in. OPPOSITE: Works by Tabak installed at her 2023 solo exhibition *On Object Tendency*. *Wrung Out* (left) and *Ingrain* hang on the wall. On the floor, from left to right: *Unravel Roll*, *Rigid Ribbon*, and *River Cuts Through Rock*.

Photo by Jacob Michael Holler. OPPOSITE: Photo by Brian Ferry.



"I always had this obsession with combining different materials together that don't go together."

—Shaina Tabak

TOP LEFT: Shaina Tabak. TOP RIGHT: *River Runs Through Rock,* a 2023 sapele and maple table. ABOVE: *Folding Table 1*, 2021, is made from sapele and poplar. OPPOSITE: Kerfkore flexible plywood panels form the core of *Rootstock*, 2024, 66 x 27 x 10 in.

TOP LEFT and OPPOSITE: Photos by Jacob Michael Holler. TOP RIGHT: Photo by Brian Ferry. BOTTOM: Photo by Tiffany Ng.

them on top of each other in this inorganic, man-made way, while still thinking about something organic, like a sprouting flower."

Tabak's body of work bears out this delicate balance of man-made and organic, rigid and dynamic. The seat of her 2023 aluminum chair *Heavy Metals* resembles a pond of molten mercury into which pebbles have been thrown. At the core of *Rootstock*—a 2024 plywood, veneer, and hardwood sculpture—is a tower of sorts, with cut-out leaves and clouds swirling around as if caught in a strong gale. In *River Cuts Through Rock* (2023), a dead fish carved from maple drapes over a sapele bench riddled with holes and pockmarks. On two sapele folding tables constructed in 2021, wiggly poplar and walnut inlays resemble raindrops, tears, tadpoles, or spermatozoa.

With an eye on supersizing her cerebral approach to materials, Tabak recently relocated from Brooklyn to Manhattan's Morningside Heights to pursue an MFA in sculpture at Columbia University. "I would love to challenge myself with larger-scale works that I previously haven't done, because I've always focused on making human-scaled work," she says.

The shift from the design world to an academic setting excites her, too. Two recent works, unchained from the expectation of functionality, bear this out. "I love *Rootstock* and *Extruding Sprout*," she says. "There's a freedom in those works that I'm excited about."

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Shivaun Watchorn is associate editor of *American Craft*.

Head and Hand

The American College of the Building Arts blends liberal arts courses and building-trades training in a four-year degree.

BY JOEL HOEKSTRA

One morning last summer, Joseph Kincannon, a professor at the American College of the Building Arts in Charleston, South Carolina, stopped amid his classroom rounds to marvel at the noise. Roughly a dozen students were hunched over shoebox-sized blocks of Alabama limestone, transforming the pieces into ornamental rosettes destined for use in a nearby architectural project. The rhythms—hammering, tapping, and clanging—were like a long-forgotten symphony, the sounds of a nearly lost art.

"No two carvings look exactly alike," Kincannon tells his students. He encourages them to put a bit of creativity—but not too much—into their rosette designs. "The lion heads on an old building might look exactly the same, but each of them will be slightly different," he notes. "Each takes on the characteristics of its carver."

Similarly, the graduates of the American College of the Building Arts earn a certificate as valuable as any other college diploma—but their education is distinctly different. The ACBA is the only accredited institution in the US to offer a four-year degree that integrates a liberal arts education and building-trades training. Students take courses in such core curriculum subjects as math, science, literature, and foreign languages, as well as electives in traditional building arts, including blacksmithing, masonry, woodworking, and plastering.

The school got its start in the 1990s, after Hurricane Hugo ravaged the Eastern Seaboard. Historic cities like Charleston, seeking to restore their architectural charm, discovered that carpenters, builders, and metalworkers with knowledge of traditional trades were in short supply, and few craftspeople retained the knowledge or the skill to repair centuries-old architecture. In 1999, a group of preservation-minded civic leaders in Charleston founded the School of the Building Arts. Five years later, the school added a college-level curriculum and changed its name, awarding its first bachelor's degrees in 2009.

Traditional academics are given an artisan spin by the college's faculty. World history, for example, leans heavily into architectural periods, and materials science courses focus on how wood and metals perform in changing conditions. The liberal arts and the trades are integrated; the activities of head and hand are inextricably linked.

The school attracts a rare breed: students who are primarily interested in the building trades but want a college degree. The faculty numbers just 30, and the student body—at 150 enrollees—isn't much larger. But ACBA's alumni have gone on to work at Mount Vernon, the US Capitol, and other historic sites. Countless others have joined studios focused on the building arts or launched their own businesses in the building trades.

Kincannon learned how to sculpt stone in New York City in the 1980s, laboring alongside English stone carvers imported to America to work on the (still-unfinished) Cathedral of St. John the Divine. He says carving stone by hand changes his students: "At first, they come into class reliant on their phones and always looking at screens. But after a couple of weeks, I find they don't do that anymore. Carving requires concentration. It slows them down. It takes time. It's absorbing and meditative."

Students who participate in the school's woodworking program spend their first semester focused solely on working with hand tools. Each student gets a set of chisels,

TOP: Joseph Kincannon, chair of stone carving at American College of the Building Arts, tutors student Noah Pasquinelli. ABOVE: ACBA woodworking professor Charlie Moore with student Dashiell Bennett. OPPOSITE: Weighted hammers used in the stonecarving process.

Photos courtesy of Andrew Cebulka.

handsaws, hand planes, and so on. "They learn how to cut joinery and do dovetailing—it's very 17th- and 18th-century," jokes Charlie Moore, who joined the faculty in 2015. "But when they learn to do the work by hand, they understand the mechanics more intimately."

Of course, modern methods and technologies have their place in contemporary construction, Moore says, but he goes on to stress that what ACBA does best is teach students to appreciate how their heads and hands are linked. "Working with your hands allows you to make creative changes on the fly. You can respond to the material, you can deviate from the original design," Moore says. "In some cases, it's even faster to do things by hand than by using a device you have to plug into a wall."

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Joel Hoekstra is a Minneapolis-based writer and editor who specializes in design and architecture topics.

High Cotton II, 2018, printed at Mullowney Printing from a hand-carved woodblock by Alison Saar, will be on display in *Deep Cuts* at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

NOVEMBER OPENINGS

Deep Cuts:
Block Printing Across Cultures
Los Angeles County Museum of Art
Los Angeles, California
November 9, 2025–September 13, 2026

The organizers of this show call block printing "one of the oldest and most adaptable methods of creating images," suited to both mass production and artistic expression. The 150 works from Europe, Asia, and the Americas on display trace the evolution of techniques and the spread of images across borders, from traditional textiles to German expressionist prints.

The Sylvia L. Rosen
Craft Art Biennial 2025
Burchfield Penney Art Center at
Buffalo State University
Buffalo, New York
November 14, 2025–March 29, 2026

Works by the winners of a juried competition open to artists from western New York working in glass, fiber, wood, clay, metal, and other craft forms will appear in this exhibition. It's the 18th outing of a biennial named for Rosen, a respected potter, educator, and benefactor of the Burchfield Penney Center.

Material Curiosity by Design:
Evelyn & Jerome Ackerman
Craft Contemporary
Los Angeles, California
November 15, 2025–May 10, 2026

This show puts the colorful, breezy designs of the California designer couple into a dialogue with works by contemporary artists Porfirio Gutiérrez, Jolie Ngo, and Vince Skelly. Displaying works in ceramics, textiles, mosaic, wood, and metal, the exhibition also highlights methods and processes, illuminating the relationship between art and craft from mid-century on.

Clearly Indigenous:
Native Visions Reimagined in Glass
National Museum of the American Indian
New York, New York
November 15, 2025–May 29, 2026

Covering 45 years of Native glass art, this display of 120 works by 29 artists reveals the power of the medium for Native American, Māori, and Aboriginal Australian stories, designs, and contemporary concerns. *Clearly Indigenous*, which originated at the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture in Santa Fe, will continue touring the US through 2029.

Amy Usdin: After All
Minneapolis Institute of Art
Minneapolis, Minnesota
November 22, 2025–February 22, 2026

In an exhibition organized by the museum's Minnesota Artists Exhibition Program, Usdin displays fiber pieces in various forms, including curtains and nets in hemp, linen, wool, and cotton. The work, according to the organizers, "portrays the continuous cycle of life and entropy" and "explores the blurred lines between past and present, emphasizing our fragile ties with each other and the earth."

Restitched: Feed Sacks in
Mid-Twentieth Century Quilts
Mingei International Museum
San Diego, California
November 22, 2025–May 10, 2026

During the Great Depression and the 1940s, cash-poor makers crafted quilts and other textiles from sacks that held animal feed and other dry goods, taking advantage of the bright colors that manufacturers printed on the cotton sacks. Seven intricate, colorful quilts by these ingenious artists are on display.

Works in wood by Vince Skelly will appear in *Material Curiosity by Design* at Craft Contemporary in Los Angeles.

Photo courtesy of Vince Skelly. OPPOSITE: Photo © Museum Associates_LACMA.

Chinese textile artist Zheng Yunyang's *Bed Cover* will be on display in *One Hundred Stitches, One Hundred Villages*.

DECEMBER OPENINGS

One Hundred Stitches, One Hundred Villages: The Beauty of Patchwork from Rural China
Museum of Fine Arts
Boston, Massachusetts
December 6, 2025–May 3, 2026

Nancy Berliner, the MFA's senior curator of Chinese art, traveled to villages in northern China to collect the 20 patchwork textiles shown here. Evolved from patched robes worn by Buddhist monks, these abstract compositions, write the organizers, demonstrate "creativity and fine artistic sensibilities that flourish far beyond the borders of established Chinese art canons."

CraftForms 2025
Wayne Art Center
Wayne, Pennsylvania
December 7, 2025–January 24, 2026

This year marks the 30th outing of this annual juried exhibition of fine craft. Visitors will be able to examine works in basketry, ceramics, fiber, furniture, glass, jewelry, leather, metal, mixed media, paper, wearable art, and wood. Pieces made using computer-aided design and manufacturing technologies and 3D printing tools are also in the mix.

JANUARY OPENINGS

Yage Wang
Greenwich House Pottery
New York, New York
January 8–February 20, 2026

This show will feature recent work by China-born, Hong Kong–based Wang, who inverts the usual relationship between ceramics and painting. Instead of applying decorative or representational painting to vessels, he creates "paintings" in ceramic—three-dimensional, loosely interpreted versions of oil-on-canvas works. Adding an additional layer of sly complexity, he often parodies paintings that include ceramic pieces.

Viola Frey: Foundations
Bedford Gallery, Lesher Center for the Arts
Walnut Creek, California
January 10–April 5, 2025

Frey (1933–2004), along with Robert Arneson, Ron Nagle, and other West Coast exponents of the funk art tendency, established ceramics as a sculptural medium by abandoning functionality in her work. This show distinguishes itself from earlier exhibitions by including, along with her signature human figures, works in two dimensions that preceded her turn to clay.

Shaping Futures: The Prison Outreach Program of New Hampshire Furniture Masters
Fuller Craft Museum
Brockton, Massachusetts
January 24–June 7, 2026

This show of handcrafted furniture, representing a wide range of forms and styles, highlights the work of incarcerated men and women enrolled in an initiative that develops woodworking skills as a way to boost self-esteem and community. Work by the program's instructors, all well-established master makers, will also be on view.

Photo courtesy of Museum of Fine Arts Boston. OPPOSITE TOP: Photo courtesy of Yage Wang. OPPOSITE BOTTOM: Photo courtesy of Xiaojing Yan.

ABOVE: Porcelain and stoneware bugs by Yage Wang will be shown at Greenwich House Pottery.
BELOW: Xiaojing Yan's cast-bronze *Marking*, 33.5 x 22 x 1 in., will appear at Contemporary Craft.

Louise Nevelson: Dawn to Dusk
Mobile Museum of Art
Mobile, Alabama
January 29–July 31, 2026

Paintings, reliefs, collages, and jewelry join figurative works in terra-cotta, cast stone, and painted wood in this review of work by the lauded sculptor. The exhibition is organized around themes such as Nevelson's struggles to establish herself as a female Jewish émigré artist in America, her innovative use of materials, and her unorthodox approaches to installation and sculpture.

FEBRUARY OPENINGS

Peregrination: Xiaojing Yan 闫晓静
Contemporary Craft
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
February 6–May 2, 2026

China-born, Toronto-based artist Yan uses a wide variety of media, ranging from wood and paper to mushroom cultures, to explore a personal landscape that includes Chinese mythology, the natural world, and the immigrant journey. It results in what the organizers call "an intricate weaving of folklore, ritual, and nature into a symbolic and dream-like representation of lived experience."

Nick Cave: Mammoth
Smithsonian American Art Museum
Washington, DC
February 13, 2026–January 3, 2027

In this deeply personal exhibition, Cave transforms the gallery space into a paleontological museum, linking everyday experience with the natural world and deep time. A video projection brings the long-extinct mammoth to life, and handcrafted mammoth "bones" and "hides" share space with a giant light table displaying hundreds of transformed found objects, including old tools and Cave's grandmother's thimble collection.

Clutch City Craft
Houston Center for Contemporary Craft
Houston, Texas
February 28–August 8, 2026

The craft culture of Houston—the home of a nationally famous rodeo and NASA's Space Center—includes handmade cowboy boots, mosaic street signs, and fiber artists who design space suits. Those making practices and more will be on display in a show that's part of Handwork: Celebrating American Craft 2026, an initiative of Craft in America and the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

Discover more Craft Happenings at craftcouncil.org/crafthappenings

Permanent Marker

Washington glass artist Dan Friday finds enduring forms for his ancestral Coast Salish history.

BY LAUREN GALLOW

For many of Washington's Indigenous Coast Salish peoples, fish—and salmon in particular—are sacred. Chinook, sockeye, chum, coho, and pink: the five species of salmon native to the Northwest's waterways are more than just a resource. Since time immemorial, the salmon has been a core symbol of identity and culture for Native peoples like the Lummi, who call themselves the *Lhaq'temish*, or People of the Sea, reflecting their close ties to the Salish Sea for their livelihood. It is fitting, then, that a salmon was the impetus for Lummi glass artist Dan Friday (Kwul Kwul Tw) to pursue his calling and true identity as a solo artist.

"As soon as I hung the last fish at the Seattle Aquarium, I knew it was time," says Friday, referring to *Schaenexw (Salmon) Run*, an installation of 33 glass salmon at the

Dan Friday works at the Schack Art Center in Everett, Washington. OPPOSITE: His *Kulshan Bear* shows the silhouette of Mount Baker. Descendents of Friday's great-great-grandfather Frank Hillaire are known as the bear family.

Aquarium's new Ocean Pavilion on the Seattle waterfront, and his synchronous decision to quit his day job. For decades, Friday worked for legendary Seattle glass artists such as Dale Chihuly, Preston Singletary, and Paul Marioni. Although he cultivated his own studio practice alongside his work for other artists, that project is what pushed Friday to at last make it his full-time job.

As the artist sits in his studio in Washington's Skagit Valley, surrounded by glass objects, clay maquettes, and black-and-white photographs of his ancestral Lummi Nation family members, he reflects on his long road to becoming a glass artist, and the central role his family played. "My Aunt Fran was pivotal at that point in my life when I started making my own work," he explains, referring to Fran James (Che Top Ie), a master Coast Salish weaver whose blankets are included in the Smithsonian's collection. "I was feeling insecure about creating work and not having a degree from a fancy university, and she said to me, 'I don't have a degree, and I make my work every day. Why aren't you making your work?'"

Glass is deeply intertwined with Friday's personal life story. He first walked into a Seattle glass studio when he was just 20 years old. Although he was beginning a career as an auto mechanic—following in the footsteps of his father, who died when Friday was only three years old—Friday is open about the pull that glass had on him from the start, and how it saved him from a dark path. "There was a time in my life when I was in addiction and wasn't really betting on myself," he reflects. "I'm grateful for being 16 years sober—it's not a coincidence that I've been blowing glass for 15 years."

Today, Friday's blown and hot-sculpted glass is reflective of both his personal story and his Lummi heritage. "These are story poles," says Friday, gesturing to another family photograph, this time of his great-grandfather Joseph Hillaire (Kwul Kwul Tw, Friday's namesake) standing next to one of his towering creations. Hillaire was a totem pole carver who used his work to share the ways of the Lummi and Coast Salish people, and Friday sees himself as the next link in this ancestral chain. "Art is a way to keep the stories of my family going, to keep their fires burning," he says.

Photo by Reva Keller. OPPOSITE: Photo by Ian Lewis.

“Glass is super fragile, but also super permanent.”

—Dan Friday

Much like his ancestors before him, Friday uses his art to bring his culture into tangible form. “There’s such a storyline to my work, so sculpting became important,” he explains, referring to the hot-sculpting technique he frequently uses to create his art. Using tweezers, shears, and a range of ad hoc tools, Friday pulls, presses, and cuts glass into a desired shape, often molding it into the form of animals and other iconography from his Lummi heritage. Two of the most common figures in Friday’s work are the owl (*kwai-el-hu*) and the bear (*kwái-it-shin*). The owl is associated with knowledge and intuition in Lummi traditions, and the bear holds a deeply personal association for Friday, as children of his great-great-grandfather Frank Hillaire (Hae Tel Uk) are known as the bear family. Fittingly, Friday will often stack many shapes on top of one another into compositions he calls totems.

Unlike the totem poles, weavings, and baskets of earlier generations of his family, Friday sees glass as lending a sense of permanence to his stories. “My great-grandfather’s final totem pole is in front of Whatcom County Courthouse in Bellingham,” says Friday as we walk through his studio. “But most of the totems have returned to the earth through decay. Glass is super fragile, but also super permanent.”

Friday’s technique evokes this sense of permanence. The hot-sculpted totems are transparent and refractive—“an optic, gemlike quality,” as Friday describes it—yet they are solid masses of glass, giving them a heavy, weighty feel. With his blown pieces, Friday often incorporates cane and sandblasting techniques, which similarly give the hollow works a sense of solidity. In a series of works inspired by the stone anchors used by Coast Salish tribes in *Sxwo’le* (reef net) salmon fishing, Friday sandblasts the finished ovoid pieces to conjure the aged look of rock.

Much as the salmon holds both personal and ancestral meaning to Friday, fishing has a similar resonance. Friday grew up fishing, and his father fought in the Fish Wars, a

Forager Totem, 2024, hand-sculpted hot glass, 32 x 6 x 5 in. OPPOSITE TOP: Friday’s home studio in Washington’s Skagit Valley. OPPOSITE BOTTOM: Friday inside his studio with glass totems and bears.

Photo by Ian Lewis. OPPOSITE: Photos by Reva Keller.

"Art is a way to keep the stories of my family going, to keep their fires burning."

—Dan Friday

series of Indigenous-led protests in the Puget Sound in the 1960s and '70s that eventually led to the recognition of tribal fishing rights. "Stories like [those about] the reef nets are stories of this area, and it's important to continue telling them and not let them die," he says.

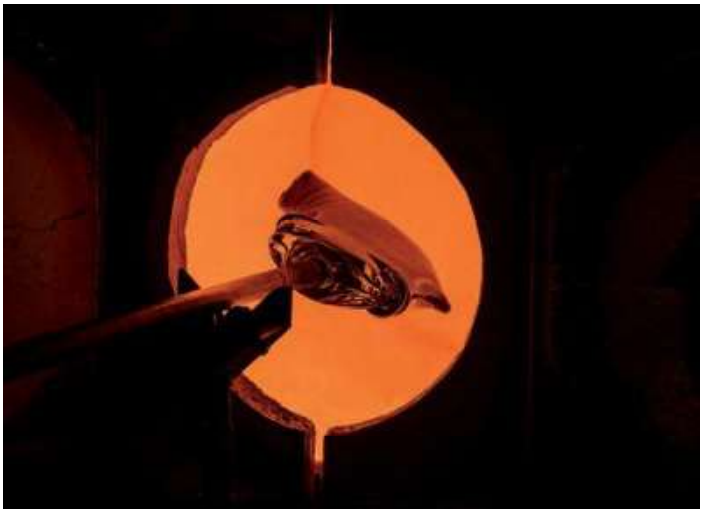
Lately, the artist is finding an even greater sense of permanence in his work as it expands to mediums beyond glass. Friday has increasingly pursued public art commissions, creating work on a monumental scale for sites with thousands of annual visitors: He recently completed a nine-foot-tall bronze anchor that's installed in front of the Gates Foundation campus in downtown Seattle, and is currently working on another large outdoor public work for one of the largest cultural destinations in the city.

At the new Seattle Aquarium Ocean Pavilion, his public art installation expands outwards from the glass salmon of *Schaenexw (Salmon) Run* inside the building; to a radiating abstract pattern called *Spindle Whorl Portal,* integrated in the roof soffit above the entrance; to an exterior installation in the ground outside the entrance called *Grandmother Rock*, with bronze crabs inlaid in a circular concrete pattern. All the elements reference ancestral Lummi tales, and visitors can scan a QR code to listen to a recording of Friday's great-grandfather telling the story of Grandmother Rock, a traditional tale about a rock that sings to calm a storm. It's a testament to Friday's commitment to concretizing but also honoring the forms of his personal history. "I come from an oral tradition," says Friday, alluding to the fact that the stories of his people have been passed down only via spoken word, since there is no written Coast Salish language.

Friday's work for the Aquarium was selected as a means of acknowledging and continuing the Indigenous stories embedded in the pavilion's waterfront site, which is the historical home of the Duwamish people. "Dan brought a connection to the land and a sensitivity to the conservation of natural systems that integrated seamlessly with the mission of the Aquarium," says Osama Quotah, partner at architecture firm LMN, which designed the

THIS PAGE and OPPOSITE BOTTOM: Phoros by Ian Lewis. OPPOSITE TOP: Phoro by Reva Keller.

ABOVE: Friday holds a *Kulshan Bear*, surrounded by totems, *sxwo'le* anchors, and photos of his ancestors. BELOW: The blown and hot-sculpted glass salmon of *Schaenexw (Salmon) Run* honor Coast Salish lifeways. OPPOSITE: *Raven Totem* incorporates caning in depicting the trickster bird of Indigenous Northwest cultures, 16 x 5 x 4 in.



Lummi Lightning Bear, hand-sculpted hot glass, 13 x 8 x 2 in. OPPOSITE LEFT, TOP TO BOTTOM: Friday uses a cherrywood block to shape the glass for a *Lummi Lightning Bear* in the hot shop at Schack Art Center. Cane layout for the bear's herringbone pattern. Rolling up canes that form the surface of the bear. Machine wrapping over the cane pattern. OPPOSITE RIGHT, TOP TO BOTTOM: Heating the bear in the reheating chamber. Shaping the bear's base. Pulling out the bear's nose.

Photo by Ian Lewis. OPPOSITE: Photos by Reva Keller.

building and worked with Friday to execute his artworks. "It was important to us that he add stories to the building, both in glass and other mediums that he might not typically use."

Ultimately, the power of Friday's work lies not in its mediums or even its cultural references, but in the shapes it takes. Abstracting traditional Coast Salish iconography into universally recognizable forms, Friday reminds us that storytelling is what unites us as humans and allows us to dream new futures. Though sourced from his own heritage, Friday's is a language each of us can relate to, no matter our backgrounds; his work is a luminous jumping-off point to conjure stories of our own.

"Dan's work creates a sense of entry by being accessible. People can look at it and recognize the bear, or the owl, or the salmon, even if they don't have personal associations with these things," explains Tami Landis, curator of postwar and contemporary glass at the Corning Museum of Glass, the world's foremost glass collecting and research institution. "At the same time, his work is successful because it tells a story—a really profound, personal story."

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musings in clay

Photos by Joe Painter.

Paul S. Briggs's process-driven, spiritual ceramics practice probes his inner life.

BY CLAIRE VOON

Paul S. Briggs has a saying he is fond of repeating, whether to his friends, students, or at the end of his emails: "Chase the muse!" That simple phrase—exclamation point obligatory—has been a guiding principle for the Alfred, New York–based ceramist, whose journey in clay has been long and wandering, yet never without focus and intention.

Surveying Briggs's body of work, one can immediately glean the breadth of his musings. They range from undulating natural forms such as leaves and flowers expressed in airy and delicately pinched vessels, to more philosophical or political explorations of power dynamics, concretized through abstract slab sculptures. Each new idea is explored gradually and thoroughly, with Briggs often creating dozens of pieces within a series. "You can only get to the place you have your focus on by working, working, working," he says. "That dream that you have? If it's gonna be realized, it's gonna be realized while you are chasing the muse."

Parenthetical, 2021, glazed stoneware, is a part of Paul S. Briggs's *Knot Stories* series of hanging wall sculptures, 18.75 x 15.75 x 5 in. OPPOSITE: *Calyx Krater*, 2021, unglazed ceramic, 9.5 x 13 x 13 in.

"You can only get to the place you have your focus on by working, working, working."

—Paul S. Briggs

Briggs has sustained this remarkable stamina throughout his creative life. Growing up in New York's Hudson Valley, he took his first ceramics class in high school, eventually enrolled at the New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University, earned his MFA from the Massachusetts College of Art and Design, where he also studied metalworking and woodworking, and gained a PhD in art education at Penn State. Today, while cultivating his own practice, he teaches in the ceramics department at Alfred, instilling in his students the values of discipline and slowness that have been foundational to his craft.

His favored processes have worked in tandem to help him maintain momentum over the years. Pinch-forming—the use of steady, methodical pinching to stretch and shape a singular ball of clay—"quiets my mind," Briggs says. "It absorbs me. I have to get into a certain mind space to be able to slow down and really pay attention to the details."

Hours of this meticulous work, sometimes involving as much as 10 pounds of clay, yield the pieces he is perhaps best known for: elegant vessels covered in rows of furled leaves, as if caught mid-twirl in an autumn breeze. They reflect his close, ongoing study of nature's rhythms and forms (pine cones, flowers, sea anemones) and his sensitivity to beauty found in the everyday. By contrast, slab building can be more emotionally demanding. These sculptures bring forth Briggs's more introspective and politically charged work, articulating his inner preoccupations, anxieties, and desires, while revealing how he navigates the world. His series *Cell Personae*, for instance, responds to the punishing realities of the US prison industrial complex, particularly its disproportionate impact on Black lives. Each piece structurally emulates a prison cell, with four connecting walls of black-glazed stoneware punctured by rigid coiled bars. Knots worm through holes in the cage-like pieces, evoking barbed wire.

OPPOSITE: A pedestal vase from Briggs's *Effloresce* series, 2025, was pinch-formed from one ball of black stoneware clay and decorated with succulent green glaze, 7 x 6.5 x 6.75 in. TOP LEFT: Briggs pinches black clay into the foot of a similar pedestal vase, also from the *Effloresce* series. BOTTOM LEFT: The leaves that decorate the vase are shaped and pinched by hand. BELOW RIGHT: Briggs examines the in-progress vase in preparation of flipping it over to create pinched-formed "leaves" that blow in different directions.

Photos courtesy of the artist. OPPOSITE: Photo by Paul S. Briggs.

Briggs began the series after moving to Minnesota to teach at St. Olaf College, just days before Philando Castile was fatally shot by police during a routine traffic stop near St. Paul. In the wake of the killing, Briggs began to feel like, as a Black man, he had to code-switch and present himself differently. "I started to project an image that was not myself. I had a persona. I wasn't living my true self," he says. "But I stopped feeling sorry for myself, and I remembered that there were some people who had no choice about their persona—they had a 'cell persona' because of a stigma in society." The tension and twists in his austere sculptures evoke relentless anxiety and feelings of constraint, visualizing the systemic grip of incarceration and societal policing on racialized bodies.

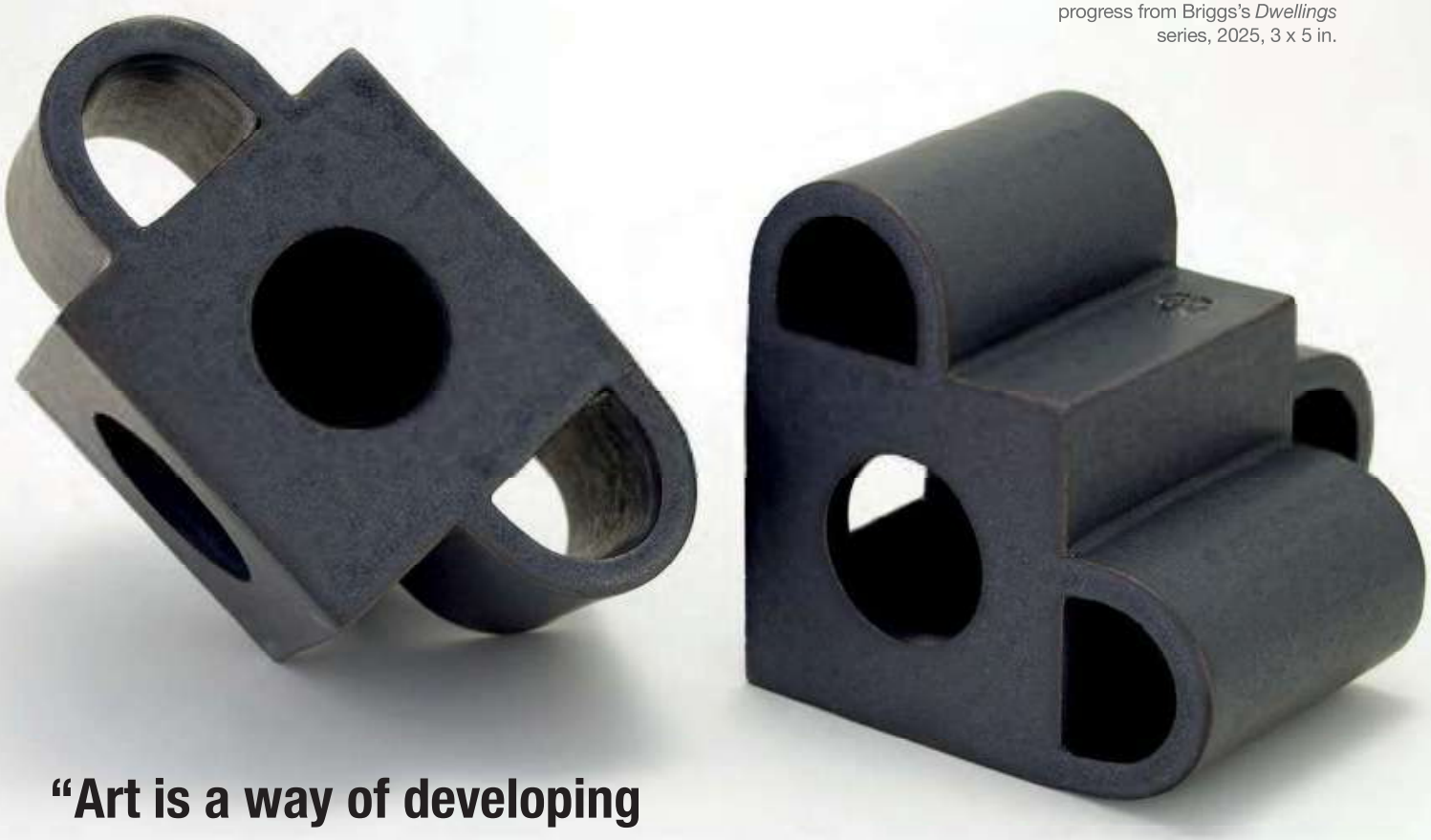
Cell Personae also reflects Briggs's care for and deep investment in community, which grew during his tenure as a Baptist pastor from 2004 to 2014. At Antioch Baptist Church in Bedford Hills, New York—a historically Black congregation founded in 1894—he expanded youth programs and organized art events such as quilting and theater productions. During this period, he also helped establish an organization for unhoused people and taught a media literacy course at a women's correctional facility.

Though Briggs paused his studio practice to initially commit himself to ministry, over time he found a renewed relationship with art that has shaped his studio work ever since. "It was while I was a pastor that artmaking became my primary spiritual practice—that is, it provided me with quiet meditative moments," Briggs says. "Eventually, I found that it was the only practice that brought the 'brain chatter' under control."

During the early years of the COVID pandemic, the clarity and sense of direction that art offered—the chase, as Briggs might say—was disrupted. He experienced health complications and found it difficult to home in on his ideas. "I was kind of lost for a little while, I just couldn't find my way," he says. "I became very unsure of things, and I wasn't able to make work that was true to myself."

He tried for two years to make additional *Cell Personae* but couldn't get the work off the ground, encountering false start after false start. He realized that the idea of the prison industrial complex had, in some ways, been consuming him, and that he needed to shift course. "I always said I'm the most reluctant social-justice artist because that work is really hard

Windflower, a 2017 pinch-formed vessel. ABOVE: The glazed ceramic works that comprise Briggs's 2022 installation *Cell Personae IV* critique the prison industrial complex, 8 x 25 ft. LEFT: *Power Figure*, from the *Gravity* series, 2025, glazed ceramic, 20.5 x 11.5 x 11 in.



New glazed ceramic works in progress from Briggs's *Dwellings* series, 2025, 3 x 5 in.

"Art is a way of developing our internal selves."

—Paul S. Briggs

on the psyche," Briggs says. "But I'm compelled by society to make those pieces. I can't *not* make that work, which is so much a part of my daily experience."

What he really wanted to do, he realized, was experiment again. At a workshop last year, he made a small, slab-built piece at the request of participants. The quick, intuitive process "opened the door to the rest of my work," he says. "I started playing again."

In recent months, Briggs has been making a series of small, black, blocklike pieces with holes in their walls and half-round tube attachments. Reminiscent of birdhouses or Lego bricks, these sculptures, which he calls "dwellings," are inviting, yet seem to harbor secrets; they prompt viewers to get close, their dark interiors brimming with possibility. They capture a subtle interplay between exterior and interior, harboring vulnerability within hard armor.

Another recent series explores Briggs's preoccupations with gravity—specifically, how this universal interaction between masses can be a metaphor for control and agency. "There are forces in our life that are *irresistible*, and we can only be affected by them," he says. Using slabs, he builds dark, totem-like sculptures with gaping apertures, from which emerge jumbles of coils painstakingly pulled into knots to tether the slab work. More than a foot tall and slightly off-kilter, the pieces have a palpable precarity; they seem pulled in different directions and on the verge of release.

Gravity, as the series is titled, is about perseverance in the face of unrelenting forces and the possibilities of freedom in spite of constraints. It is a continuation of Briggs's interest in people's inner lives and systems that govern them, but it's also an exercise of his own freedom: He's making art that feels close to what he's always wanted to make.

Briggs tries to impart that sense of inner orientation, the honoring of one's own motivations above all, to his students, who are typically young artists trying to find success in a competitive and fast-paced environment. "I try to get them to see that there is another plateau—not another award, exhibition, or sale—but another plateau within yourself that is closer to your self-realization than you've been in the past," Briggs says. "Art is a way of developing our internal selves." It's a challenging, lifelong journey, and not always a clear one. But for Briggs, the work an artist truly longs for will always return to the mind's eye if one remains intentional—and one will feel it when it does. "My work is getting quiet again, and I'm glad about it," he says. "I look over and I'm just like, 'OK, whew. That's a lot more soothing.'"

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psbriggs.com | @psbriggs3.0

Claire Voon is a writer and critic based in New York City and a frequent contributor to *American Craft*.

Photo by Paul S. Briggs. OPPOSITE TOP : Photo by Joe Painter. OPPOSITE BOTTOM: Photos by Paul S. Briggs.

carving out a musical tradition

Modern makers look to old-school methods while reviving son jarocho *culture.*

BY JOE HART

Gilberto Gutiérrez started making instruments out of necessity.

In the late 1970s, he and like-minded musicians became passionate champions of the music and dance known as *son jarocho*—one of several genres born in Mexico's rural Gulf Coast region that includes Veracruz.

Gutiérrez and his bandmates in the group Mono Blanco scoured remote villages to record old-timers singing and playing traditional *sones*. Then they launched workshops and meetups where knowledge was transferred to young people eager to learn.

"They had enthusiasm, but there were no instruments," Gutiérrez says of his students through a translator. "So that's why I decided to go learn [to make them] in the summer of 1980."

Among the instruments Gutiérrez hoped to construct was the guitar-like *jarana*, which, built in various sizes, forms the backbone of the rhythm section. Unlike a guitar, glued from various wooden parts, a jarana is carved, body and neck, from a single block of wood.

"That's why I think of the jarana as a sculpture," he says. "It has a lot of detail, especially where the neck and the top meet, and requires a certain skill. And visually, it has to look good."

Gutiérrez learned this sculptural art in the workshop of Don Quirino Montalvo Corro, then in his 80s, who built jaranas by hand using traditional techniques. In the years

OPPOSITE: Musicians, dancers, and onlookers gather at a Milwaukee event center for a *fandango*, at which son jarocho music is played. ABOVE: Dancers perform intricate foot patterns on the *tarima*, a percussive, hollow platform. LEFT: Gilberto Gutiérrez is a leader in the son jarocho movement, dedicated to preserving tradition.

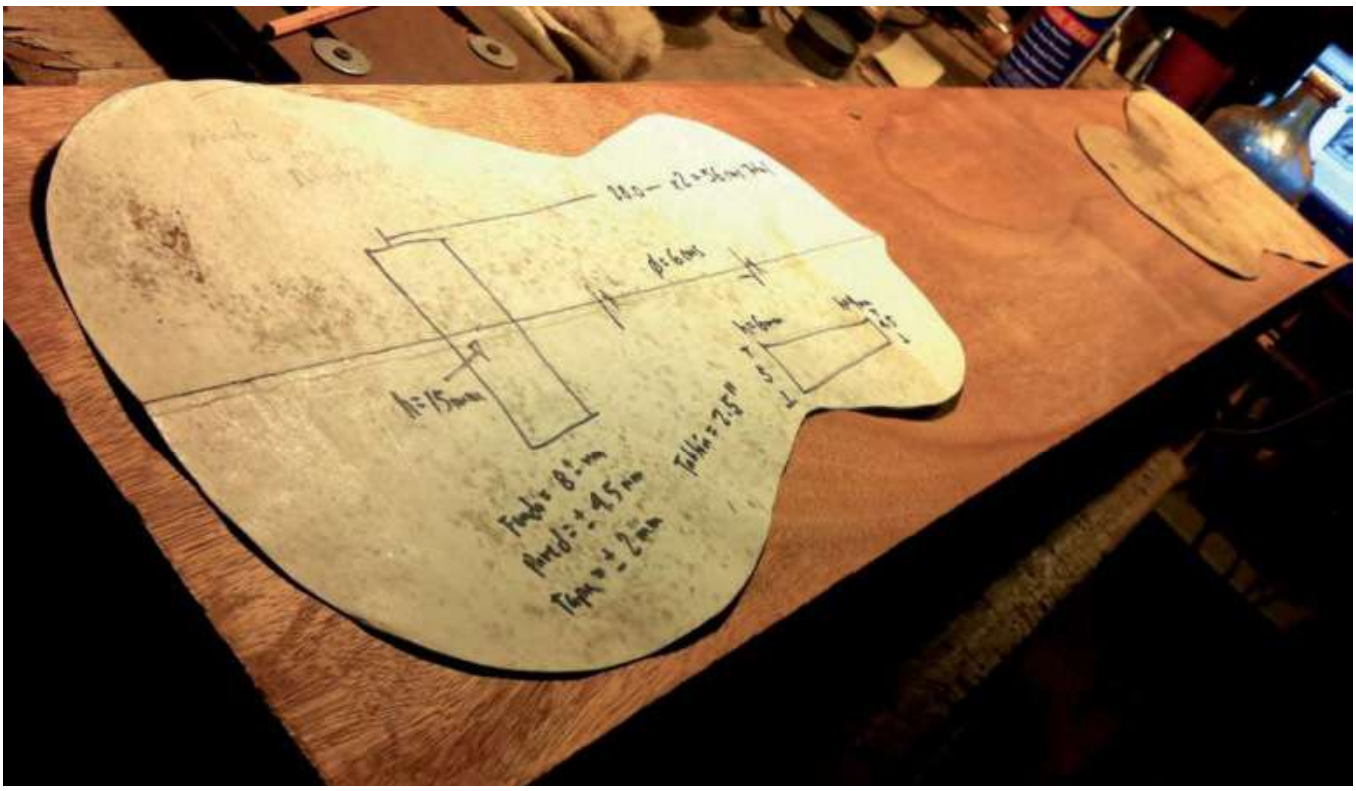
TOP and OPPOSITE: Photos by Joe Brusky.
BOTTOM: Photo by Pau Ortíz.

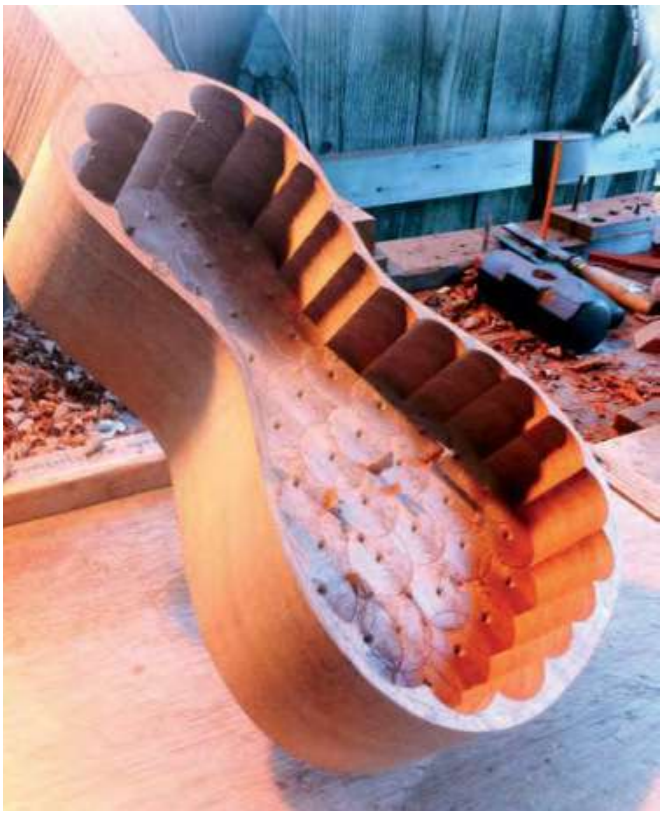
since, Gutiérrez has taught the craft, largely as he learned it, to hundreds of students across Mexico and the United States.

A Return to Cultural Context

Son jarocho has its roots in the cultural mix of 16th-century Veracruz, a diverse, Indigenous region where the Spanish established a port. As the colonizers moved inward, the port served as an entry point for enslaved people arriving from West Africa by way of the Caribbean. Much of the music of the region, including son jarocho, reflects a blend of Indigenous, Spanish, and Afro-Caribbean influences.

Sones, often played in 6/8 time, unfold in a rapid staccato, with the rhythm held by the jaranas and by the *tarima*,





COUNTERCLOKWISE FROM TOP: Unlike many string instruments, assembled from various wood pieces, each jarana is carved from a slab of tropical hardwood. The larger the instrument, the deeper its tone. A drill press is used to carve out the body. Hand tools are used for fine detail work and shaping the neck.

OPPOSITE BOTTOM LEFT: Photo by Chui Sandoval. ALL OTHER IMAGES: Photos courtesy of César Castro.

ABOVE: Now based in Los Angeles, César Castro fell in love with son jarocho when he was a teenager living in his native Mexico. He's helped spread the word about the genre throughout the US. TOP: Castro fits a pair of slender mahogany braces that will help support a jarana's top.

You might think of a jarana as an Indigenous remix of the Spanish guitar.

a platform specially designed to amplify the intricate *zapateado* dance steps that beat out the percussion.

César Castro, who studied with Gutiérrez and now lives in Los Angeles, describes the tarima as a hypnotic foundation for the music.

"You feel it in your chest. That's how strong the percussion is," he says. "We call it the heartbeat of son jarocho."

Other instruments include the *requinto*, a four- or five-stringed melody guitar played with a horn plectrum. Some son jarocho groups also include a harp, various percussion instruments, or a bass instrument.

The son lyrics, typically sung in call and response, follow a complex rhyme scheme and often turn on wry puns and innuendo. For example, the son "Chuchumbé" (a euphemistic reference to private parts) pokes fun at Catholic clergymen who preach chastity more than they practice it. This son was banned by religious authorities in the late 1700s.

TOP: Unlike a guitar, a jarana features a single slab top. MIDDLE: Brass frets are spaced according to a formula common to all Western string instruments. BOTTOM: Makers typically add a unique element to their instruments, often on the bridge, which is between the strings' anchoring point and the jarana's neck.

Originally, son jarocho centered on a *fandango*, a participatory community celebration with food, music, and dance. Over the centuries, however, performers have repackaged the genre for audiences in Mexico and beyond. Folklórico troupes, for example, presented a highly stylized version for audiences in Mexico City. (And Ritchie Valens's signature rock-and-roll version of "La Bamba" bears little resemblance to the traditional son of the same name.)

Gutiérrez and his cohort, in contrast, advocated for a return to roots with a revival of the fandango. They forged what has become known as the "son jarocho movement" to bring back the fundamental cultural context for the music.

Preserving (and Modernizing) Methods

Gutiérrez's approach to instrument making reflects his determination to preserve son jarocho culture. With some concessions to modern techniques, makers schooled in the movement generally cleave to tradition.

You might think of a jarana as an Indigenous remix of the Spanish guitar. The original jarana makers, it's speculated, imitated the guitar shape with whatever tools and materials they could put their hands to.

Construction begins with the selection of a suitable piece of wood. The historical choice is Spanish cedar, a tropical hardwood (not to be confused with softwood juniper cedars common throughout the US). Mahogany is also commonly used.

"You learn to recognize the characteristics for a wood that will give good results," Gutiérrez explains. A jarana is more percussive and less resonant than a guitar; still, the wood carries and amplifies the sound waves and overtones from the plucked strings in a similar way. Thus, in choosing a wood block, the maker determines the timbre of the final instrument.

Castro describes the next step as shaping the rough form of the jarana by tracing a centerline down the block and cutting the outer shape of the instrument. At this point, he says, modern makers use a band saw to ease what would be a lengthy task by hand.

Similarly, an electric drill press with a flat flute bit replaces hand drills in the next phase: removing the bulk of the material to form the hollow body of the instrument. Even with an electric drill, this is painstaking work, according to Castro. On the smallest jarana, the walls can be as thin as 6 millimeters (up to 15 on larger instruments). Makers deploy a variety of hand tools, planes, and chisels to finish the body and shape the jarana's neck to playable form.

The jarana's solid construction helps produce its characteristic bright and percussive tone. So too does the instrument's top—glued to the body and either unbraced or supported with two thin hardwood braces. Castro uses juniper-type cedar for the tops of his jaranas, but when he was learning, he used Spanish cedar.

Photos courtesy of César Castro.

> “Just by looking at an instrument from afar, you might be able to know either who made it or what school that person comes from.”
>
> —César Castro

“In the past, they weren’t that detailed. I remember just going to the lumberyard and asking for some boards as thin as possible,” Castro says. “In guitar building, they use two pieces of wood mirrored, so you have the same density on one side as the other. We don’t do any of that. We just go boom, and place the top in one piece.”

The jarana’s fretted fingerboard is another piece of mahogany. Frets, which signal finger placement, were originally made from bone. Today’s makers typically hammer in modern brass frets. Their placement is determined, like all Western string instruments, by a mathematical formula, along with various tools that simplify the formula.

Although machined brass tuners are used on many modern jaranas, the old-school approach is a wooden tuning peg, like one would find on a violin. The fit must be perfect, as friction between peg and hole holds the string in tune. That’s a tall order with hand tools. So both Gutiérrez and Castro use specialized tools designed for violin makers to simplify the process.

“It’s a nightmare for people who don’t have them,” Castro says. “I remember trying to tune some instruments that were almost impossible because you would have to apply so much pressure to the peg.”

Finishing touches are a matter of taste, according to Castro. “People can get very creative with that, but there’s not a specific way to do it for everybody,” he says. Gutiérrez prefers to highlight the natural beauty of the wood with a shellac finish and minimal adornment.

Still, like every handmade object, the personality of the maker shines through. Gutiérrez has designed a bridge, where the strings connect with the jarana’s top, that is recognizable as his signature. Castro’s instruments can be identified by their unique tuning pegs.

“It becomes a personal touch,” he says. “Just by looking at an instrument from afar, you might be able to know either who made it or what school that person comes from.”

TOP and MIDDLE: Modern makers often install brass tuning machines, but the traditional makers still use tuning pegs (usually made of mahogany or Spanish cedar). BOTTOM: Creating a tight fit to hold the strings in tune is one of the most challenging tasks in building a jarana.

"There's some magic to this music. Something very, very special."

—Jaime Garza

ABOVE and OPPOSITE RIGHT: A band's worth of finished son jarocho string instruments. While the octave range and tone vary by size, all jaranas are strummed with the distinctive 6/8 pattern that forms the backbone of the son jarocho rhythm section. OPPOSITE TOP: A jarana is like a sculpture. Strength, musical resonance, and beauty must be carefuly balanced with each knife stroke. The joints where the neck meet the body are particualrly exacting. OPPOSITE BOTTOM: Finishes vary widely, but the primary choice for jarana makers are natural products, such as shellac, that allow the wood to resonate with the strings without interference.

A Tradition Recontextualized

Forty-five years after its inception, the son jarocho movement has given birth to a generation with renewed appreciation for the fandango—not only in Mexico, but in cities including Los Angeles, Chicago, and Milwaukee where workshops, classes, and visiting guests from Veracruz are common.

The revival centers on the fandango, which Castro likens to a family reunion among strangers—welcoming, participatory, and celebratory. And this collaborative attitude extends to the music itself, according to Gutiérrez.

"It is an ephemeral music—every time we play a son, it doesn't repeat again, because it will always be different, right? A son is a rhythmic, harmonic, melodic structure that lets us express ourselves," Gutiérrez says. "You're free within that structure, as long as you respect the structure."

As with any folk revival, son jarocho contains a tension between tradition and innovation. Some fusion groups incorporate modern instruments into the mix or simply borrow elements of son jarocho, the way Ritchie Valens did in the 1960s. Even among preservationists, a fandango held in a Milwaukee cultural center is distinct from one in rural Sotavento.

"Some of the nuances get misrepresented," explains Linda Serna, a first-generation Mexican American who leads classes and workshops in Milwaukee. "The thing with son jarocho is that even from one community to another, nothing is standardized. Whenever you say, 'This is what it is,' that's not going to be completely accurate. Even the name, son jarocho—some people are resentful because that's the name that academics started to use and just kind of dismissed all the other names."

Despite these nuances, son jarocho lives on—and evolves—sustained by those dedicated to the revival. Jaime Garza, a working musician and promoter based in Chicago, is one of them. He also plays jazz, rock, and other genres, but for him, son jarocho is distinctive.

"Everywhere you go, you talk about son jarocho and immediately, someone who knows about it, their eyes light up, and you become best friends right away," he says. "There's some magic to this music. Something very, very special."

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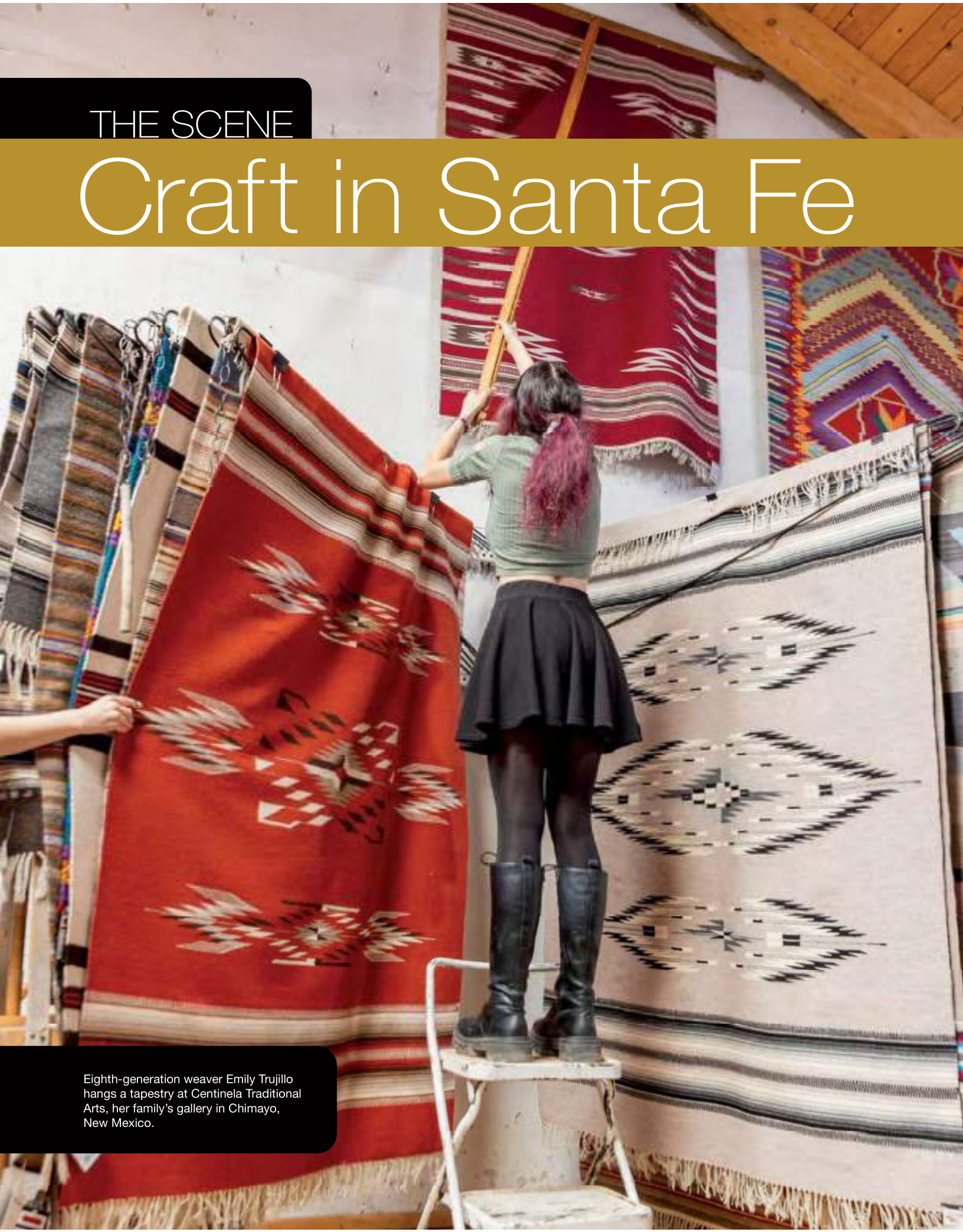
The author would like to acknowledge Gabriela Marvan, who served as translator for this article.

Joe Hart is a freelance writer based in southwestern Wisconsin. He's also served as an editor for *Utne Reader* and *Public Art Review*.

Photos courtesy of César Castro.

THE SCENE

Craft in Santa Fe



Eighth-generation weaver Emily Trujillo hangs a tapestry at Centinela Traditional Arts, her family's gallery in Chimayo, New Mexico.

Local artists share the people and places that define Santa Fe, a city with a complex history that's a nexus of rich cultural influences.

INTRODUCTION:
ROSEMARY DIAZ

ARTIST CONTRIBUTORS:
KERI ATAUMBI, ELODIE HOLMES, PETER ORTEGA, EMILY TRUJILLO, SUNI UPSHAW

CONTRIBUTOR PHOTOS:
GABRIELLA MARKS

STORY PRODUCER:
JENNIFER VOGEL

Nestled in the cedar- and juniper-covered foothills of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in northern New Mexico, Santa Fe has for millennia been regarded as a special, even sacred, place. The Tewa Indians, the original keepers of this land, called it Oga Po'o Kweeng, or "shell-filled lake," a reference to the terrain's evolution over eons, from a prehistoric body of water to the high-desert mountains that now rise from its long-desiccated shores. It is a place at once weighted by the past and propelled forward by it; a place where the enduring creative traditions of long ago nourish the artistic spirit of now; where artists, whether native to the city or drawn by its charms, can embrace their creative visions and live their own unique self-guided art journey.

Santa Fe's history as the oldest capital city in the United States stretches back to 1610, when conquistador Don Pedro de Peralta established it as the capital of the Spanish "Kingdom of New Mexico." Named at the time La Villa Real de la Santa Fe de San Francisco de Asis ("The Royal Town of the Holy Faith of Saint Francis of Assisi"), it is also one of the oldest seats of religious government in the Americas.

Going back even further, before the region was occupied by Spanish colonialists, the town had already been a center of trade and commerce for the region's Indigenous people for centuries. Here in what is now the city's historic plaza, tribesmen of the area—which, in addition to the Tewa, included the Tiwa and Towa Indians—gathered to barter with those from as far away as South America and Canada for the raw materials needed in the traditional arts of the Southwest as we know them today: basketry, wood carving, pottery, and, later, with the arrival of the Spanish, silversmithing and weaving.

Over time, these art forms evolved from the production of practical, everyday objects into the fine art collectibles that now comprise much of its commercial art market. As this happened, Santa Fe became synonymous with many of these cultural arts. A burgeoning tourist market developed, supported by the arrival of the railroad and an influx of tourists from the East, which contributed to the city's evolution into an international art and craft mecca.

Also known as La Ciudad de Santa Fe ("The City of Holy Faith") and "The City Different," Santa Fe has consistently been ranked among the world's top-tier art cities and holds the distinction of having the most galleries per capita of any US city. From its annual art markets—including the Traditional Spanish Market, the International Folk Art Market, and the Southwestern Association for Indian Arts' (SWAIA) Santa Fe Indian Market, which marked its 103rd consecutive year in August—to its world-renowned Santa Fe Opera and Georgia O'Keeffe Museum, the city embraces a rich art legacy that spans not only many generations but a great many genres as well.

The vaunted Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA), cofounded in 1962 by Cherokee artist Lloyd Kiva New and Dr. George Boyce, was until recently chartered as a congressionally funded tribal college and has graduated more than 4,000 students, including some of the premier Indigenous artists practicing today. The importance of this college's role in the contemporary Indian art movement cannot be overstated.

In 2005, Santa Fe was designated a UNESCO Creative City, a recognition centuries in the making by all quantifiable measures, considering the city's countless contributions to art and craft through the ages.

Many notable creatives have made Santa Fe their home, including celebrated literati William S. Burroughs, George R. R. Martin, and N. Scott Momaday; filmmakers Levin Garbisch and Godfrey Reggio; and painters Tony Abeyta and Emmi Whitehorse, each drawn, perhaps, by the vibrant, ever-changing colors of the landscape, the way sunlight reflects off the edges of late-summer clouds as they pass over the mountains, or the warm embrace of piñon smoke on a cold winter evening.

This installment of The Scene showcases some of the best of the city and its surroundings, and collectively reflects the abundance and diversity of northern New Mexico's art and craft traditions—from ceramics and wood carvings made in accordance with traditional materials and techniques to cutting-edge jewelry and glasswork and K-pop-inspired textiles and weavings.

Certainly, Santa Fe's ever-evolving art story, bound by its creative inheritance, will continue to be told in chapters yet to come, wherein the past will always be prologue.

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RoseMary Diaz (Santa Clara Pueblo) is a freelance writer based in Santa Fe, New Mexico. She studied literature and its respective arts at the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA), Naropa University, and the University of California, Santa Cruz.

Note: In the following pages you will find lists of artists and craft-related spaces in Santa Fe that are based on the recommendations of our contributing artists. This coverage is not comprehensive, and we encourage you to explore more of Santa Fe's craft scene.

Photo by Gabriella Marks.

KERI ATAUMBI

Metalsmith, jewelry artist

ataumbi.com | @ataumbimetals

I grew up on the Wind River Indian Reservation in Wyoming. I moved to Santa Fe in 1990 because after attending the Rhode Island School of Design, I wanted to return to the West and my mother was living here. I was attracted to the area because of Santa Fe's modest size, the mix of cultures here, and, of course, the art and craft scene.

Jewelry can create a dialogue between cultures and individuals. My work explores the value systems that different cultures place on materials, techniques, and objects. I combine materials and ideas considered valuable by Native standards with materials made precious by non-Native standards. In doing so, I present aesthetic and environmental questions. Specifically, what is more important, beautiful, and valuable: the intergenerational knowledge and clean environment required to harvest, process, and create using traditional Native knowledge, or the human and environmental resources required to obtain materials used in "fine jewelry"?

The diversity of the Santa Fe craft and arts community is very inspiring. There is so much history here, and there are so many people who are deeply and actively tied to their cultural roots. The extraordinary generational legacies and craftsmanship of the clay work by Pueblo artists are most obviously unique.

Although Santa Fe has grown immensely since I moved here, there is still a strong sense of community. I hear people say they are "self-taught" because they may not have gone to a formal institution to learn their craft. I never understand that, because although an artist may experiment and develop a technique or method, it's not done in a void. We all learn from visiting, working with others, and gathering information from our communities.

Because of the robust community of jewelers in Santa Fe, I have found that if I am developing a piece and don't know a certain technique or want another opinion on how to go about building something, help is just a phone call away.

Photos by Gabriella Marks.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Dentalium shells. Keri Ataumbi working with elk ivories. An 18k gold and diamond cuff with Kiowa beadwork designs. Two repoussé pieces. OPPOSITE: Ataumbi with her dogs, Angus and Furgus.

LOCAL ARTISTS ATAUMBI ADMIRES: Jewelry and metal artists **Samuel LaFountain** and **Jerome Nakagawa**; paper artists **Animkeewa Aankwad White Eagle** and **Ian Kūali'i**; woodworkers **Randy Brokeshoulder**, **Ron Rodriguez Archuleta**, **Nicholas Herrera**, **Arthur López**, and **Dennis Esquivel**; clay artists **Autumn Borts-Medlock**, **Jason Garcia**, and **Tammy Garcia**; fiber artists **D.Y. Begay**, **Ken Williams Jr.**, **Teri Greeves**, and **Penny Singer.**

ELODIE HOLMES

Glass artist

elodieholmes.com | @elodieholmes

After growing up in the Washington, DC, suburbs, I attended the California College of Arts and Crafts (now the California College of the Arts) to further my studies in ceramics and discover what hot glass was all about. As much as I loved working in clay, glass really spoke to me. I moved to Santa Fe in the summer of 1981, fresh out of college, to co-manage a glass shop on Canyon Road. I spent many years working out of other glass- and bronze-making facilities, but now I have my own building with a wonderful crew of people.

My work is made using a combination of glassmaking skills that include glassblowing, hot-sculpting, and flame work. Glass has special properties that are unlike those in any other material: Its three-dimensional light, and the way it moves when molten, helps me define my imagery. I explore pollinator themes, figurative narratives, and abstracted themes of time and movement. Lately, I am focused on our interdependence with the natural world, finding balance, and the vulnerability of all species.

Santa Fe is unique because of the area's cultural diversity and the quality of art and craft created here. The city has a long history as an arts destination, originally known for Indigenous jewelry, clay, stonecarving, and weaving, along with traditional Spanish art forms like colcha embroidery and tinwork. Today, Santa Fe is home to emerging and established artists of all cultures and mediums, including a tight-knit community of glassblowers, which I am fortunate to be part of.

There are classes for absolutely everything here. My studio offers glass experience classes, as does my sister studio, Prairie Dog Glass—and so do Firefly Glass and Tesuque Glassworks. We are surrounded by schools and facilities to study art and artmaking, from the vaunted Institute of American Indian Arts to the well-equipped Santa Fe Community College art department

In Santa Fe you will find hundreds of studios and galleries, and over two dozen museums of excellent quality for inspiration. The city has really grown in the 40-plus years since I moved here, which has meant more artists, more galleries, and more music—in total, a vibrant art and craft scene.

TOP: Holmes heats a glass bird with a torch. BOTTOM: *Blue Crackle Songbird*, 2025, blown and hot-sculpted glass, 9.5 x 5 x 5 in.

BOTTOM LEFT: Photo courtesy of the artist. OPPOSITE TOP RIGHT: Photo by Wendy McAhearn. ALL OTHER IMAGES: Photos by Gabriella Marks.

LOCAL ARTISTS HOLMES ADMIRES: Rose B. Simpson, a Tewa mixed-media artist and sculptor who works in ceramic, metal, fashion, painting, music, performance, and installation; multidisciplinary artist **Erika Wanenmacher**; **Judy Tuwaletstiwa**, a writer, teacher, and multidisciplinary artist working in glass and mixed media; ceramic artist **Sheryl Zacharia**; **Lucy Lyon**, who makes cast-glass sculptures; and **Mary Olson**, who works in clay.

TOP LEFT: Elodie Holmes reheats a blown-glass egg. BOTTOM LEFT: Holmes in her garden with *To See Yourself in the Bee*, 2022. ABOVE: *Worker Bee Girls and Their Garden Tools*, 2012, hot-sculpted, blown, and flame-worked glass on a maple lightbox.

PETER ORTEGA

Woodcarver

ortegafolkart.com

I was born in my parents' home in Tesuque, a small village about six miles north of Santa Fe. I now live in a village just south of Santa Fe called La Cienega. Both are similar in history, culture, and tradition, and both are nestled among clutches of trees and natural beauty.

My inspiration comes from my father, Ben Ortega, a woodcarver who developed his own distinct style for making religious figures—*santos* and *bultos*—and cowboys and animals using native wood and roots twisted and formed by Mother Nature. He taught me how to look at each piece of wood or root to see what shape or creation it wants to be. My work is an adaptation of my father's unique style, which stands out in the world of santos. My gallery includes my carvings of angels, saints, biblical scenes, animals, and cowboys. My favorite subject is Saint Francis of Assisi.

Historically, Santa Fe is a mixture of Native American, Spanish/Mexican, and Anglo-Saxon cultures. The art and craft scene reflects these cultures and combinations. My Hispanic ancestry in New Mexico dates back to the

Photos by Gabriella Marks.

1400s. Back then, people had to use resources like wood, tin, straw, earth, and natural dyes made from plants to make their religious articles. To this day, traditional Spanish colonial art is made from natural materials.

Santa Fe is a hub for all types of art. People from all over the world come to buy craft and artwork here. The variety in Santa Fe is endless, but my craft is mostly traditional Spanish and remains true to that heritage while allowing for creativity.

I enjoy teaching our community how to preserve our culture through art. I have held workshops for youth and adults at the Spanish Colonial Arts Society's Nuevo Mexicano Heritage Arts Museum. I have sponsored my own children, nieces, nephews, and grandchildren in the annual Traditional Spanish Market and other art shows, and privately mentored students of all ages in my studio.

One of the most inspiring aspects of living in Santa Fe is seeing that young people are eager to learn and practice my craft and others.

LEFT: An in-progress aspen carving of St. Joseph and child, 24 x 5 in. TOP RIGHT: Angel wings. BOTTOM RIGHT: Doves carved from cedar, aspen, cottonwood, and various roots. OPPOSITE LEFT: Peter Ortega with a piece of driftwood from a lake near his home. OPPOSITE RIGHT: A nativity scene.

LOCAL ARTISTS ORTEGA ADMIRES: My relatives are among the local artists I admire. My three siblings, **Joe Ortega**, **Mary Agnes LeRouge**, and **Louise Ortega-Alvarez** are also woodcarvers and folk artists. Two of my nieces have taken up the mantle: **Naomi Lowe** specializes in making *retablos* and cultural paintings, while **Andrea Lozano-Ortega** is known for her carvings of birds and saints. I also admire my colleagues who show their art in the annual Traditional Spanish Market and would like to give a special shout-out to **Randy Trujillo** (Spanish colonial furniture and tinwork), **Jerry Montoya** (retablos, tinwork, and jewelry), **Martha Varoz Ewing** (traditional straw appliqué and tinwork), **Juan Lopez** (jewelry made with the art of filigree), and **Arlene Cisneros Sena** (a sought-after retablo artist). If you run across retablos, wood carvings, or *colchas* made by **Monica Sosaya Halford**, grab them. She is a renowned and beloved Santa Fe artist who is now retired.

EMILY TRUJILLO

Weaver, textile artist

@emily_trujillo_weaver

I am from Chimayo, a town about a half hour north of Santa Fe known for its weaving traditions. My family's legacy there stretches back hundreds of years, all the way to Diego Trujillo, who came from Mexico in the 1700s.

I grew up learning from my mom and dad, master weavers Lisa and Irvin Trujillo. But as a kid, I didn't take to weaving. I felt an intense amount of pressure to be good at it simply because of my famous parents. Certain I had something unique to offer, I bristled at those expectations. While attending the University of New Mexico, I majored in psychology and ethnology. There I learned that cultures like mine were dying. So after graduation, when I was 25, I returned to Chimayo to intern with my parents and study weaving in earnest. It turned out I liked it a lot.

My work takes traditional rules and gently bends them into modern art. All of my weavings follow specific and important Rio Grande weaving styles, but it's not obvious unless you know how to look. You can pick out many traditional elements in my work, but you'll notice very modern elements as well. I incorporate my own experiences and ideas as someone who lives in the city—and is a fan of anime and K-pop—while also honoring my family roots.

Chimayo means a lot to me. There's a spiritual connection to the land that I can't explain with science. When I'm there, a part of my soul can breathe that can't breathe anywhere else. I feel a connection to my ancestors, similar to how I feel when I'm weaving.

As for Santa Fe, there is great art and craft there, such as what comes out of the Institute of American Indian Arts. The area's distinctive mix of Spanish, Native, Mexican, and other cultures has created a melting pot of both traditional and modern art forms. To experience this mix of histories and traditions, visit Museum Hill, where you'll find some of my favorite institutions—the Nuevo Mexicano Heritage Arts Museum, the Museum of International Folk Art, and the Museum of Indian Arts & Culture.

ABOVE: Emily Trujillo pores over an 1800s weaving with her parents, Irvin and Lisa. BELOW: A detail of Trujillo's *Taste the Tempest*, 2023, 40 x 60 in., which is inspired by a song by Tempest, a K-pop group. OPPOSITE TOP: Trujillo's studio is filled with K-pop posters and postcards. OPPOSITE BOTTOM: A recent work titled *Hurt Me Less*.

LOCAL ARTISTS TRUJILLO ADMIRES: Irvin Trujillo and **Lisa Trujillo** may be my parents, but they are artists who have earned their reputations. I also love **Louie García**, a Pueblo weaver keeping his unique weaving culture alive. Closer to Santa Fe are **Bernadette Marquez**, a silversmith who is both a wonderful person and an excellent artist, and her husband, **Arthur López**, who makes traditional and modern wood carvings and retablos. **Elizabeth Buckley** is an award-winning and highly acclaimed tapestry artist we are lucky to have. And weaver **Annie MacHale** is my peer, friend, and role model.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Photo by Lisa Trujillo. ALL OTHER IMAGES: Photos by Gabriella Marks.

SUNI UPSHAW

Ceramist

@yesterdaysflowers

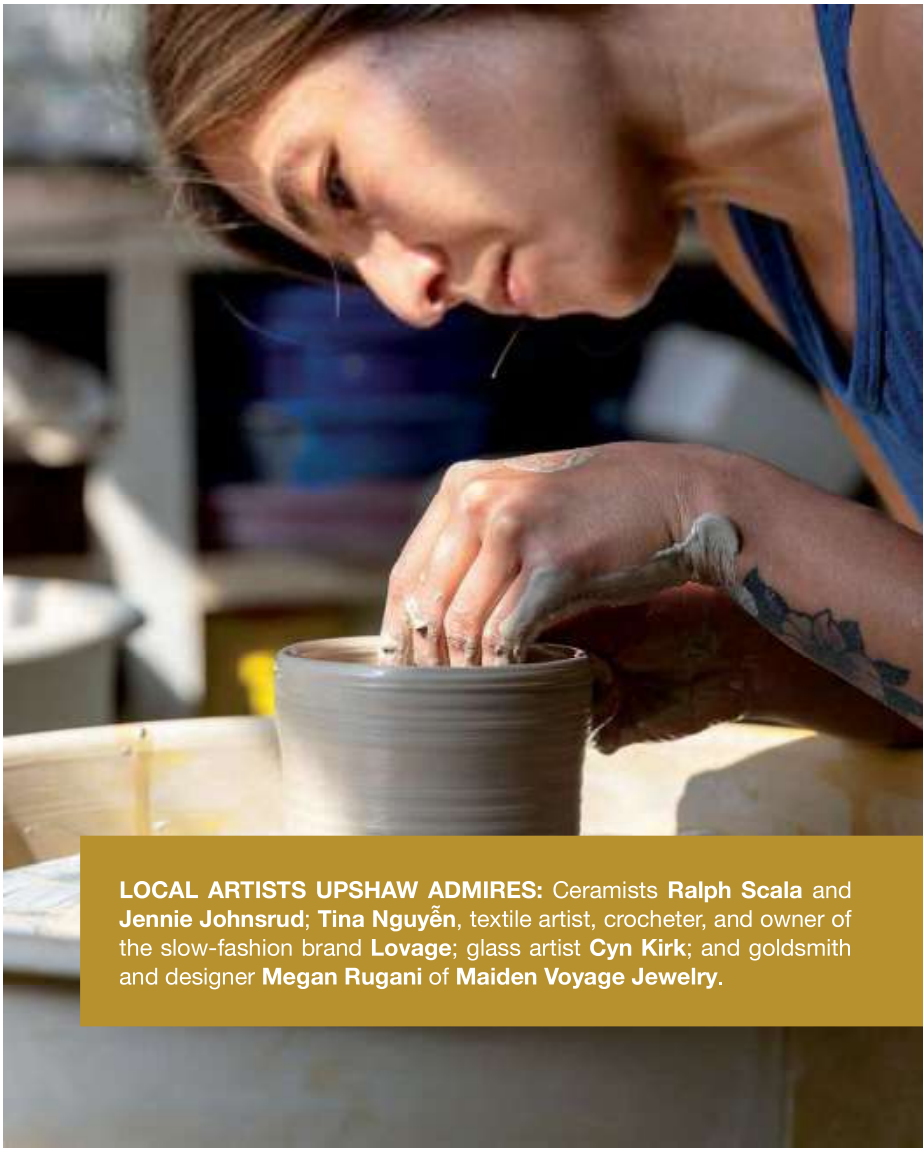
My work explores the space between my Diné and Japanese identities as I search to link ancestral practices through clay and design.

The softness of Santa Fe inspires me, from the curves of the city's adobe architecture and the warm palette of its landscapes to the distinct softness of its light. My work frequently draws upon these elements, aiming to capture the essence and beauty that define Santa Fe.

All year round, Santa Fe is bustling with markets, art shows, and activations. What truly stands out is the way local establishments collaborate with our local creatives. This strong sense of community, with art at its core, brings the city together and creates a unique and inspiring environment for everyone.

I have only lived in Santa Fe for five years, but since I've been here, I have seen positive shifts in the craft and art scene. I've noticed a recent influx of younger gallery and shop owners establishing new spaces in town. These new establishments appear to be moving away from the traditional "Santa Fe style" and embracing a more contemporary aesthetic.

4KINSHIP, a Diné-owned shop and community hub located in the Siler Rufina Art District, is well-known for its vibrant upcycled garments and wearable art, as well as hosting fashion shows, markets, and community activations. The owner, Amy Denet Deal, has been instrumental in reshaping the landscape for Indigenous creatives in Santa Fe and the greater Southwest region.



LOCAL ARTISTS UPSHAW ADMIRES: Ceramists **Ralph Scala** and **Jennie Johnsrud**; **Tina Nguyễn**, textile artist, crocheter, and owner of the slow-fashion brand **Lovage**; glass artist **Cyn Kirk**; and goldsmith and designer **Megan Rugani** of **Maiden Voyage Jewelry.**

TOP: Suni Upshaw prepares materials for the wheel at Baca Street Pottery, a community pottery studio in Santa Fe. BOTTOM: Throwing on the wheel. OPPOSITE LEFT: Upshaw at Baca Street Pottery. OPPOSITE TOP RIGHT: Two hand-built, wood-fired ceramic vessels from 2025, 8 x 5.5 x 5.5 in. (left) and 12 x 7.5 x 7.5 in. (right). OPPOSITE BOTTOM RIGHT: A ceramic bud vase with shino glaze, 2025, 5 x 3.5 x 3.5 in.

Photos by Gabriella Marks.

EXPLORING CRAFT IN SANTA FE: PLACES AND SPACES

If you're traveling to Santa Fe or considering a visit, use this handy insiders' guide to local craft hot spots to plan your itinerary. The fairs, galleries, boutiques, studios, schools, and museums listed here are held dear by Santa Fe contributing artists Keri Ataumbi, Elodie Holmes, Peter Ortega, Emily Trujillo, and Suni Upshaw. We've also included picks from the *American Craft* editorial staff and ACC's board of trustees.

Photos courtesy of © International Folk Art Market.

Fairs, Festivals, Markets

Contemporary Hispanic Market
Held each July near Santa Fe Plaza, organizers declare this to be the world's largest contemporary Hispanic market. Founded in 1986 as a complement to the Traditional Spanish Market, it typically features more than 100 artists. Entrance is free.
contemporaryhispanicmarket.org

Free Indian Market
Launched in 2018, this annual art and craft show is inclusive by design. According to event cofounders Gregory and Angie Schaaf, Free Indian Market serves as a "safety net" for the community and "enhances preservation of the traditional arts, cultures, and languages." Featuring hundreds of artists and makers, a benefit auction, a fashion show, and performances, the market takes place in Federal Park each August.
freeindianmarket.org

Makers from Namibia, Ukraine, and Peru sell their work at the International Folk Art Market, which welcomes more than 150 artists from nearly 60 countries to Sante Fe each July.

IndigenousWays
Founded in 2007 by Tash Terry and Elena Higgins, this organization aims to "uplift communities through music, the arts, and Indigenous Wisdom, fostering connection and resilience." It hosts events throughout the year, including the IndigenousWays Festival, held in May, June, and August in the Railyard Arts District.
indigenousways.org

International Folk Art Market
This global market—held in Railyard Park each July—"envisions a world that values the dignity and humanity of the handmade, honors timeless cultural traditions, and supports the work of artisans serving as entrepreneurs and catalysts for positive social change."
folkartmarket.org

Palace of the Governors
Built in 1610 by the Spanish for colonial administration, the Palace of the Governors today houses the New Mexico History Museum and the Palace Press center for book arts. It's best known for its long portico where Indigenous artists sell handcrafted jewelry, textiles, ceramics, and other works.
nmhistorymuseum.org

Pathways Indigenous Arts Festival
Held at the Buffalo Thunder Resort and Casino each August, this festival is presented by the Poeh Cultural Center and features hundreds of Indigenous artists, creative entrepreneurs, and performers, along with films and food trucks.
poehcenter.org/pathways/

Santa Fe Art Week
This 10-day, citywide festival includes studio tours, artist talks, gallery openings, and special events, and typically takes place in July.
santafe.org/artweek/

Santa Fe Indian Market
The largest juried Native art show in the world, the Santa Fe Indian Market takes place each August on the downtown Santa Fe Plaza and includes more than 1,000 Indigenous artists from over 200 tribes. Stewarded by the Southwestern Association for Indian Arts, it "celebrates fine art, cultural performances, fashion showcases, and exclusive gatherings in the heart of Santa Fe."
swaia.org

Traditional Spanish Market
Held in Santa Fe Plaza each July, this century-old market honors Hispanic heritage with art, food, and music, and celebrates traditional craftsmanship—including embroidery, hide painting, weaving, furniture making, ironwork, and woodcarving.
traditionalspanishmarket.org

Shops, Boutiques

4KINSHIP
Founded in 2022 by clothing designer Amy Denet Deal, this boutique on Rufina Circle emphasizes local Indigenous talent.
4kinship.com

El Nicho
Opened in 1986 by Madeline Dunn, this shop offers a selection of local folk art, including the wood carvings of the Ortega family. Today El Nicho is run by Dunn's niece, Debi Haraden.
elnichosantafe.com

O'Farrell Hat Company
This shop, located on San Francisco Street, declares that its handcrafted beaver felt hats are the finest money can buy. Specializing in custom cowboy hats for 46 years, O'Farrell brings together top-notch materials, meticulous craftsmanship, and the perfect fit.
ofarrellhatco.com

Peyote Bird Designs
Founded in 1974, this boutique offers fine artisan-crafted jewelry—including necklaces, cuffs, rings, and earrings—and celebrates "craftsmanship, heritage, and timeless design."
peyotebird.com

Santa Fe Dry Goods
Counting itself as a "nexus of global fashion and high craft," Santa Fe Dry Goods—with three stores next to each other on Old Santa Fe Trail—showcases designers who make clothing, accessories, jewelry, and home goods.
santafedrygoods.com

Sunwest on the Plaza
This boutique on Santa Fe Plaza features wood carvings by contributing artist Peter Ortega, along with loads of jewelry made of turquoise sourced by Sunwest Silver Co., the family company of shop owner Ernest Montoya.
sunwestontheplaza.com

Art Places, Neighborhoods

Canyon Road
This legendary half-mile stretch in Santa Fe's historic district is home to more than 100 galleries, boutiques, and restaurants, many housed in small adobe buildings bearing colorful doorways and signage.
visitcanyonroad.com

Chimayo
Just a half hour north of Santa Fe, this village is known for its deep weaving traditions. Visit Trujillo's Weaving Shop or the Trujillo family gallery, Centinela Traditional Arts, where contributing artist Emily Trujillo teaches classes. Other highlights include Ortega's Weaving Shop, helmed by master weaver Robert Ortega, and El Santuario de Chimayó, a shrine and Catholic pilgrimage destination that features elaborate wood carvings.
chimayoweavers.com | ortegasweaving.com
nps.gov/places/el-santuario-de-chimayo.htm

Museum Hill
Two miles southeast of downtown Santa Fe, on a hill overlooking the city, this art and craft destination comprises four museums, a café, and a botanical garden.
museumhill.net | museumhillcafe.net | visitsfbg.org

Railyard Arts District
Beginning in 1880, this area southwest of downtown served as the point where the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway trains rolled into town. Today, the district has been revitalized and reinvented as an arts and culture district, hosting a farmers market, an art and craft market, various arts organizations, galleries, performance venues, shops, and the Latino cultural hub El Museo Cultural de Santa Fe. The Railyard includes the Baca District, an eclectic arts community cofounded in 2000 by contributing artist Elodie Holmes.
railyardsantafe.com | elmuseocultural.org
railyardsantafe.com/baca-railyard

Art Places, Neighborhoods continued

Santa Fe Plaza
Arguably the heart of Santa Fe, this plaza was established in 1609 by the Spanish as a strategic defense location. It was the early terminus of the El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, a colonial trade route from Mexico City. In the 19th century, it was where the Santa Fe Trail, a road from Independence, Missouri, ended. Today, bordered by San Francisco Street, Old Santa Fe Trail, and the Palace of the Governors, this congenial gathering place, with its bandstand and fountain, serves as the venue for countless local arts events, including the Santa Fe Indian Market.
nps.gov/places/santa-fe-plaza.htm

Turquoise Trail
Drivers along the Turquoise Trail National Scenic Byway, a 50-mile stretch of Highway 14 connecting Santa Fe to Albuquerque, will be treated to not only breathtaking desert vistas, but also former mining towns thriving with galleries, shops, and installations.
turquoisetrail.org

Schools, Studios

Boyd & Allister
Inside Jonathan Boyd's studio, a former tortilla factory, the furniture maker builds elegant and stylish tables, credenzas, dressers, benches, and chairs using traditional joinery and wood gathered from small sawyers around the country.
boydandallister.com

Española Valley Fiber Arts Center
Located in Española, 25 miles from Santa Fe, this unique resource for "all things fiber" offers classes, apprenticeships, supplies, equipment, and books, emphasizing natural dyes and fibers.
evfac.org

Estambre Studios
Weavers Linda Running Bentley and Kipp Bentley—the proprietors of Estambre Studios, located just south of Santa Fe—make lush, durable wool rugs using a traditional rag-rug technique and offcut wool blanket selvedges from Pendleton Woolen Mills.
estambrestudios.com

Firefly Glass
This small-scale glass hot shop, owned by glass artist Amy Griffin, doubles as a community mental health resource center, offering group experimental workshops, glass therapeutics, and expressive art therapy sessions.
fireflyglass.carrd.co

Galisteo Studio Tour
The fall and winter months feature numerous community-driven studio tours in the rural communities surrounding Santa Fe, including the Dixon Studio Tour, the Eldorado Studio Tour, and the Galisteo Studio Tour.
dixonarts.org | eldoradoarts.org | galisteostudiotour.org

Green River Pottery
Offering private and weekly classes, studio space, and a gallery of stoneware pots, Green River Pottery is the passion project of ceramist Theo Helmstadter, who pursues "the useful form," which is intimately related to "the pursuit of beauty itself."
greenriverpottery.com

Institute of American Indian Arts
Santa Fe boasts the only fine arts college in the world dedicated to the study of contemporary Native American and Alaskan Native arts. Founded in 1962 by Lloyd Kiva New and George Boyce, the IAIA is a mighty force when it comes to advancing and preserving Indigenous art in New Mexico and beyond. The college—also home to a museum and a research center—offers degrees in art history, museum studies, creative writing, studio arts, and more.
iaia.edu

Living Threads Studio
This studio, gathering space, and workshop—founded by Teresa Robinson and Eric Mindling—presents handwoven natural fiber textiles, Oaxacan pottery, and fine art documentary photography.
livingthreads.org

MAKE Santa Fe
This 7,000-square-foot makerspace on All Trades Road offers workshops, a comprehensive array of tools and equipment, a woodworking shop, a blacksmithing forge, a ceramics studio, and more.
makesantafe.org

New Mexico School for the Arts
Located in the Railyard Arts District, this public, statewide high school serves young artists with programs in music, creative writing, dance, theater, and visual arts. With a 97 percent graduation rate, the school says it has "created an education that supports the whole student: as an *artist*, a *scholar*, and a *citizen*."
nmschoolforthearts.org

Paseo Pottery
Offering drop-in and long-term classes, studio space, events, and a gallery of local pottery, this studio on Calle de Comercio is run by ceramist and photographer Angela Smith Kirkman, who donates all net proceeds from her First Friday Pottery Throw Downs to local charities.
paseopottery.com | angelasmithkirkman.com

Prairie Dog Glass
Dubbing itself "Santa Fe's No. 1 place to create your own glass art," Prairie Dog offers the opportunity to make functional works in glass in as few as 15 minutes. Founded by glass artist Elodie Holmes, who also contributed to this iteration of The Scene, this studio is the place to go if you've "ever wondered what it feels like to handle a ball of molten glass at the end of a metal stick."
prairiedogglass.com

Photo courtesy of Fred Ray Lopez.

Inside Santa Fe Tin Works, visitors will find creations like *Peach roses to fill the niche in your heart*, 16 x 20 x 5 in., made with hand-cut, hand-hammered tin and reverse-painted glass by tinsmith Fred Ray Lopez.

Santa Fe Art Institute

Offering a range of residencies and fellowships, this organization offers living space, studios, and a gallery, and aims to "foster and explore the interconnections of contemporary art and society, to enliven public discourse on art, and to support and nurture artists at all phases of their careers."

sfai.org

Santa Fe Tin Works

The tinsmithing tradition in New Mexico dates back to the 1800s, when artisans punched and stamped discarded tin cans in order to make religious objects and household goods. Modern tinsmiths like local legend Fred Ray Lopez create elaborate functional and decorative works from this humble metal. Visitors to Lopez's studio on Don Gaspar Avenue will be dazzled by his tin creations.

santafetinworks.com

Tesuque Glassworks

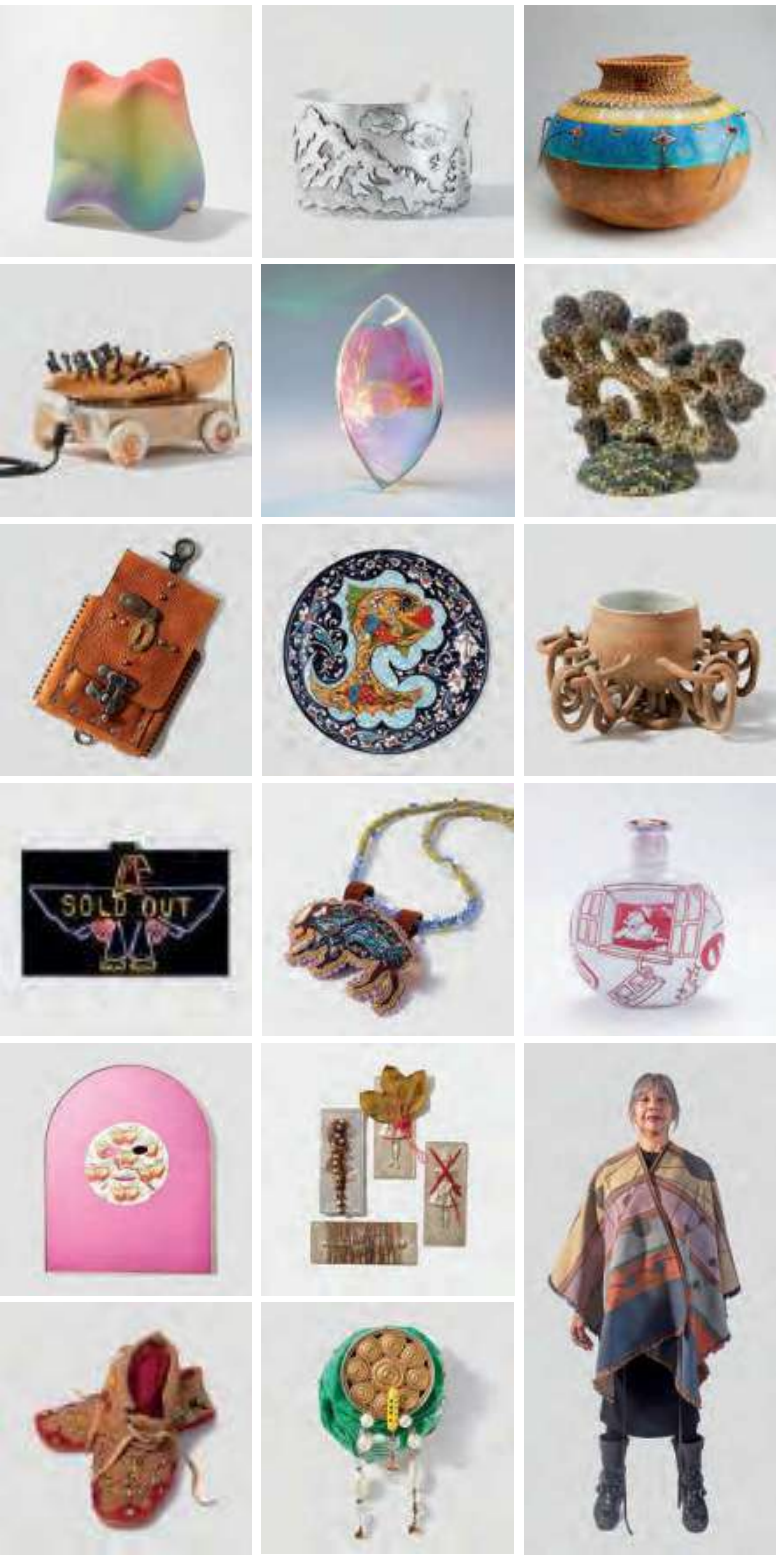
Located in Tesuque, just north of Santa Fe, this glass studio and gallery was founded in 1975 by artist Charlie Miner and offers daily glassblowing demonstrations.

tesuqueglass.com

TLC Stained Glass Studio

Founded by stained glass artist Theresa Cashman, this studio offers workshops, demonstrations, one-on-one studio time, a supply shop, and a gallery.

tlcstainedglass.com



Form & Concept (set to be absorbed by Zane Bennett Contemporary Art in February 2026) exhibits art, craft, and design with a focus on Southwest artists. Above, left to right, work pictured by Angel Oloshove, Annette Doreng-Stearns, Tamara Burgh, Steven Campbell, C Alex Clark, Future Retrieval, R. Melinda Hoffman, Shaarbek Amankul and Heidi Brandow, Natalie Rae Good, Jaque Fragua, Amanda Whitlow, Cyn Kirk, Jennifer Ling Datchuk, Jodi Colella, Mahota Textiles, Clementine Bordeaux, and Robert Ebendorf.

Galleries

Andrea Fisher Fine Pottery

This gallery on San Francisco Street features Native American pottery, including the work of the widely celebrated San Ildefonso Pueblo ceramist Maria Montoya Martinez, who died in 1980.

andreafisherpottery.com

Bahti Indian Arts

Run by Mark Bahti and painter and printmaker Emmi Whitehorse, this gallery—with outlets in Tucson and Santa Fe—focuses on Native American pottery, baskets, textiles, paintings, carvings, and jewelry.

bahti.com

Blue Rain Gallery

Located in the Railyard Arts District, this gallery specializes in "contemporary Southwestern, Native American, Western Heritage, and Studio Glass art" and showcases emerging and established artists with exhibitions and events.

blueraingallery.com

Cielo Handcrafted

Offering a meticulously curated collection of New Mexican and Peruvian craft, this gallery on Canyon Road was created by woodworker Miguel Licona and silversmith and jewelry artist Gloria Olazabal.

cielohandcrafted.com

Form & Concept

With 10,000 square feet of exhibition space, Form & Concept hosts invitational and juried exhibitions "harnessing the power of the cross-pollination of ideas and approaches in contemporary creative practice." In February 2026, the gallery will be absorbed by Zane Bennett Contemporary Art.

formandconcept.center

Hecho a Mano

In the early 1930s, this space at 129 West Palace Avenue housed Leonora Curtin's Native Market. Today it's home to Hecho a Mano, which showcases art occupying the intersection of "imagination, innovation, and tradition." With a focus on printmaking and works on paper, the gallery represents an impressive roster of artists.

hechoamano.org

Keshi the Zuni Connection

Established in 1981 as a co-op promoting the arts and crafts of the Zuni Pueblo people, Keshi offers pottery, jewelry, and Zuni fetishes, which are animal carvings believed to carry special medicine.

keshi.com

Liquid Light Glass Studio and Gallery

This dynamic glass gallery on Baca Street began in 2000 as the private studio of glass artist Elodie Holmes. Today, Liquid Light exhibits works and hosts demonstrations by renowned local and international glass artists, puts on events, and offers classes to the public.

liquidlightglass.com

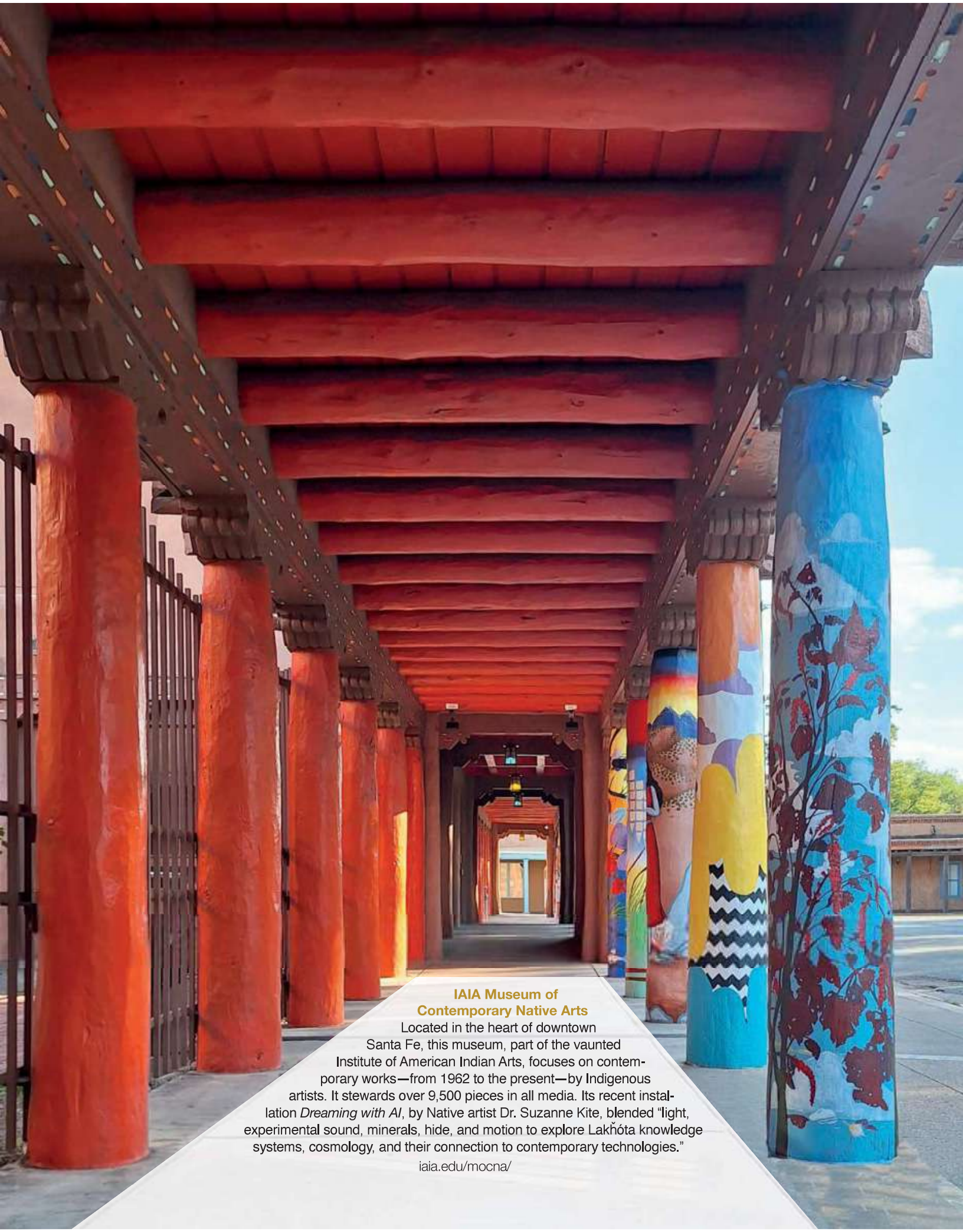
Photos courtesy of Zane Bennett Contemporary Art. OPPOSITE LEFT, TOP AND BOTTOM: Photos by Kate Russell, courtesy of Meow Wolf. OPPOSITE RIGHT: Photo by Atlas Media, courtesy of Meow Wolf.

TOP LEFT: A room within the Art City space of *House of Eternal Return*, Hidden Capsule incorporates black-and-white cartoons from artist Nico Salazar's brand Future Fantasy Delight. TOP RIGHT: Virgil Ortiz's Sirens: Secret Passkeys & Portals installation embodies a futuristic vision of the 1680 Pueblo Revolt. LEFT: The Forest installation is an immersive space within Meow Wolf's *House of Eternal Return* featuring treehouses, sculptural creatures, and interactive fungi.

Meow Wolf

This gallery's distinctive maximalist style is built on installations that are provocative, immersive, and often psychedelic. Launched in Santa Fe in 2008, Meow Wolf has since expanded to Las Vegas; Denver; Houston; and Grapevine, Texas. The Santa Fe original was dreamed up by a hyper-collaborative group of artists, graphic designers, writers, fabricators, musicians, and self-described "rat gang leaders" seeking to push the limits of what an art installation can be and do. Their first permanent exhibit, *House of Eternal Return*, opened in 2016 and is built around the concept of a family that's gone missing after experimenting with interdimensional travel. The exhibit includes Art City, "a warren metropolis of interconnected rooms" built of 50 separate art projects, including one designed by Cochiti Pueblo ceramist Virgil Ortiz, whom *American Craft* profiled in Spring 2023: craftcouncil.org/articles/the-ceramist-and-the-superheroes/

meowwolf.com/visit/santa-fe



IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts

Located in the heart of downtown Santa Fe, this museum, part of the vaunted Institute of American Indian Arts, focuses on contemporary works—from 1962 to the present—by Indigenous artists. It stewards over 9,500 pieces in all media. Its recent installation *Dreaming with AI*, by Native artist Dr. Suzanne Kite, blended "light, experimental sound, minerals, hide, and motion to explore Lakȟóta knowledge systems, cosmology, and their connection to contemporary technologies."

iaia.edu/mocna/

Galleries continued

Patina Gallery
In 1999, metalsmith Allison Buchsbaum opened Patina Gallery, which exhibits exclusive contemporary jewelry and objects of fine art, and represents more than 75 artists.
patina-gallery.com

Seth Anderson Studio Gallery
Located inside the Palace Modern boutique hotel, not far from Santa Fe Plaza, this gallery offers a meticulously curated collection of ceramics, baskets, prints, and lighting.
palacemodern.com
sethandersonstudio.com/gallery

Zane Bennett Contemporary Art
Housed in the same building on Guadalupe Street as Form & Concept, Zane Bennett exhibits a "sister collection" emphasizing modern works on paper, paintings, and sculpture.
zanebennettgallery.com

Museums, Institutions

Indian Arts Research Center
Built around a remarkable collection of some 12,000 meticulously preserved pieces of Southwestern Native American art—including pottery, basketry, jewelry, clothing, and drums—the IARC encourages scholarship and collaboration between artists, researchers, scholars, and community members.
sarweb.org/iarc/

Museum of Indian Arts & Culture
This institution—located on Camino Lejo on Museum Hill—counts itself as a "premier repository of Native art and material culture and tells the stories of the people of the Southwest from pre-history through contemporary art."
indianartsandculture.org

Museum of International Folk Art
Founded in 1953 by Chicago hardware heiress Florence Dibell Bartlett—who described the art of the craftsperson as "a bond between the peoples of the world"—MOIFA is one of just a few international folk art museums in the US. Its collection includes more than 160,000 artifacts from 100 countries.
internationalfolkart.org

New Mexico Museum of Art
Located in a Pueblo Revival style building near the Palace of the Governors, the New Mexico Museum of Art opened in 1917 with a mission to promote the state's rich artistic culture. The powerhouse institution boasts a collection of more than 20,000 works, both historic and modern, as well as regular exhibitions.
nmartmuseum.org

Nuevo Mexicano Heritage Arts Museum
Formerly called the Museum of Spanish Colonial Art, and run by the Spanish Colonial Arts Society, this institution on Museum Hill offers "an unrivaled collection, library, and archive of regional artworks." It features santos, textiles, tinwork, silverwork, goldwork, ironwork, straw appliqué, ceramics, furniture, and more. Nearly half of its collection is derived from Traditional Spanish Market artists from the 1920s to the present.
nmheritagearts.org

Poeh Museum
Founded in 1988 by a Pueblo of Pojoaque Tribal Council resolution, this important institution works to promote and preserve Native American Pueblo art and culture through curation, exhibition, and interaction. Its "rapidly growing collections include current, historical, and archaeological works."
poehcenter.org/museum

SITE SANTA FE
This contemporary arts institution, founded in 1995, places artists at the center of its mission and explores "extraordinary ideas through innovative exhibitions and programs." Located in the Railyard Arts District, SITE offers local and international exhibitions, along with educational and public programming. As a non-collecting institution, it "remains flexible in order to respond to conversations of the moment."
sitesantafe.org

Vladem Contemporary Museum
In 2014, the New Mexico Museum of Art opened a satellite location in the Railyard Arts District dedicated to contemporary New Mexican artists. The Vladem—named after major donors Robert and Ellen Vladem—boasts 9,969 square feet of exhibition space and 2,307 square feet of programmatic space, making way for classes and hands-on art experiences.
nmartmuseum.org/vladem-contemporary/

Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian
A collaborative effort between Boston heiress Mary Cabot Wheelwright and Diné ceremonial practitioner and weaver Hastiin Klah, this museum opened in 1937 to promote and record Diné ceremonial knowledge. Formerly known as the Museum of Navajo Ceremonial Art, the mission changed in the 1970s when it became one of the first museums in the country to repatriate sensitive materials. Today it emphasizes contemporary Diné and other Indigenous North American art.
wheelwright.org

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This edition of The Scene was produced and edited by Jennifer Vogel, contributing editor to *American Craft*.

Photo courtesy of IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts.

Discover more craft destinations by visiting the Travel category in the Stories section of craftcouncil.org.


HANDCRAFTED LIVING

Photo by Heidi Zumbrun.

Felting with Feeling

Based in San Francisco, maker Kristin Colombano's bespoke, painterly textiles are as dreamy as they are functional.

BY DEBORAH BISHOP

Prior to 2010, when Kristin Colombano traveled to Mongolia on a photography assignment, her relationship with felt could be summed up in two words: poodle skirt.

"I think I made one when I was around eight," says Colombano, now 56, perched on a stool in the San Francisco studio where she fashions the intricately patterned and richly textured felt pillows, throws, bedspreads, bolsters, wall hangings, and upholstery fabric sold under her label, Fog & Fury.

During her stay in Mongolia, Colombano, who studied painting and photography at the San Francisco Art Institute, discovered a textile that had little in common with the thin, mass-produced material used in kids' crafts or to dampen the sound in pianos.

As Colombano slept snugly inside a felt-draped yurt on the windswept Mongolian plains, she was introduced to the material's insulative qualities. Once back in the capital city of Ulaanbaatar, she wandered into a shop selling felt souvenirs—scarves, slippers, ornaments—and stood transfixed before a video demonstrating the 5,000-year-old fabrication process.

"The wool was splashed with mare's milk, rolled into bundles, and dragged behind horses to agitate the fibers into binding and shrinking," she recalls. A few years later, she came across a wet-felting workshop at the Sharon Arts Studio in Golden Gate Park, signed up on a whim, and was hooked. While Colombano keeps no horses, her labor-intensive technique for turning fiber into fabric without weaving hews closely to those old-school methods; for her, the dry needle-felting process developed in the 1980s tends to result in pieces that are less expressive, robust, and refined.

Kristin Colombano wraps herself in a piece of her handmade felt, created through an intricate, meditative, and physical process in her San Francisco studio.

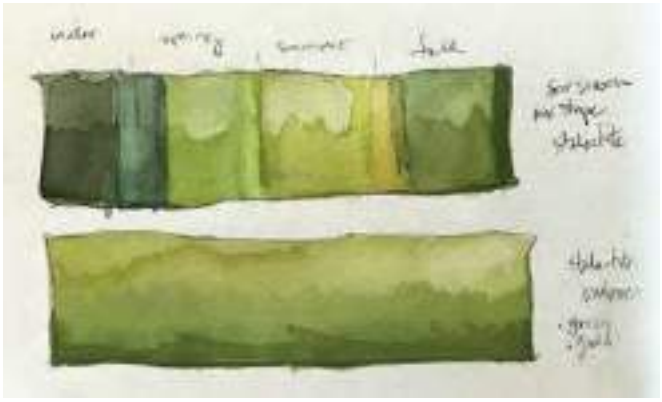
Painting with Fiber

When Colombano embarks on a project, she makes a color sketch, then turns to her shelves, which are piled high with a petting zoo's worth of assorted wools. Boxes devoted to sheep alone read like a who's who of ovine breeds—Falkland, Merino, Manx, Rambouillet, Polwarth, Targhee, Corriedale, and Colombano's favorite workhorse, Bluefaced Leicester ("perfect length, super strong, amazing luster")—in colors ranging from pale cream to caramel, cocoa, and carbon. These are flanked by repositories of camel, yak, alpaca, rabbit, and three types of goat wool (cashmere, mohair—aka angora—and cashgora, a hybrid).

Like a painter prepping her palette, Colombano cards the wool and creates rolags, or neat little rolls of fiber, often mixing varieties and colors together. Working on top of a textured piece of shelf liner, she then pulls out wisps of wool and begins composing. "There's no grid, no warp and woof. It's like drawing or painting on a blank canvas," says Colombano. As she builds overlapping layers (like arranging shingles on a roof), Colombano embeds what she calls *inclusions*—non-wool fibers such as silk, flax, and algae-derived SeaCell—that lend luster, color, and texture. Depending on the formula, a pelt might emerge smooth, nubby, silky, fuzzy, matte, shiny, swirly—or sprouting a froth of curly mohair locks.

Next, Colombano covers the pile with netting to hold it in place, sprinkles it with soapy water, and rubs the surface with a waffle-patterned tool to help the fibers interlock via the tiny barbed scales that cover them. "And then the gloves come off," says Colombano with relish, describing how she covers the piece in progress with bubble wrap and vigorously rolls it on plumbing pipes before squeezing, twisting, squishing, mangling, massaging, and repeatedly flinging the wet mass onto her worktable in a process called shocking. After several hours, the fabric shrinks up like a sweater in the dryer and acquires the density, softness, and warmth for which felt is prized. "So, that explains the 'Fury' part of my company name," says Colombano.

As for the "Fog," Colombano points out the window to a typical misty day in the city by the bay. "Living here informs what I make—the Northern California landscape, palette, ethos, embrace of natural fibers, and the geology," she says, recalling trips with her father to such landmarks as the Devils Postpile National Monument, an unusual rock formation of columnar basalt near Yosemite. "Many of my patterns reflect the metamorphic processes of rocks, plus a bunch of other topographic, botanical, and cosmic phenomena—from cloud formations to salt deposits," says Colombano. Her designs have such descriptive names as *Strata*, *Laminae*, *Stalactite*, *Streaks*, *Chevron*, *Fracture*, *Whorl*, *Oxbow*, *Flare*, *Halo*, *Cirrocumulus*, and *Lunaria*, whose delicate scalloped pattern was prompted by that plant's distinctive dried seed pods.



Colombano, who started as a painter, incorporates dyes in a composed and considered way. TOP: A watercolor study for a custom commission. ABOVE: Hand-carded green fiber bundles for color sampling.

Photos courtesy of Fog & Fury. OPPOSITE TOP LEFT: Photo by Maren Caruso.

TOP LEFT: Colombano holds up the fine netting she uses to secure fibers while felting. LEFT: To begin the process of wet felting, she sprinkles the wool pile with water. TOP RIGHT: Working on a custom ombré felt, she rubs the wet surface with a waffle-patterned tool to encourage the fibers to bond. ABOVE: The finished product is a green ombré bed pillow. 16 x 36 in.

"Living here informs what I make—the Northern California landscape, palette, ethos, embrace of natural fibers, and the geology."

—Kristin Colombano

Expanding the Spectrum

With her visual inspiration so rooted in nature, Colombano long eschewed working with dyed fibers, but eventually took the plunge at the urging of designers who commission her work. "But first, I needed to learn how to exploit all of felt's possibilities for expression, without any of that shiny distraction," she says. Once she began to integrate color (using Italian acid-dyed wool), Colombano opted to treat it as an extension of her neutral palette—the dyed shades melding rather than shouting—as if lavender goats and saffron sheep might plausibly be grazing in the fields. "And that's deliberate," Colombano explains. "After years of learning how to mix fibers, I gained the confidence to concoct hues that feel subtle and organic rather than artificial or—God forbid—garish."

It's telling that Colombano started out as a painter. When a client asked her to translate the verdant landscape of the Napa Valley into a couch cushion, she first made a watercolor to capture the quality of light bathing the surrounding hills. For Colombano's collection of *Color Field* pillows (a shout-out to Mark Rothko's abstract paintings), she frames floating shapes of color—lilac, sky blue, peach—with an edge of mocha and softens the surface with a lustrous sheen of undyed camel down and mulberry silk.

TOP: *Color Field* pillows, 2025, felted wool, camel, yak, silk, 22 x 22 in. LEFT: Kimberly Denman's *Grace* sofa, 2025, upholstered with Fog & Fury's *Steppe* felt, 2024, in the De Sousa Hughes showroom in San Francisco.

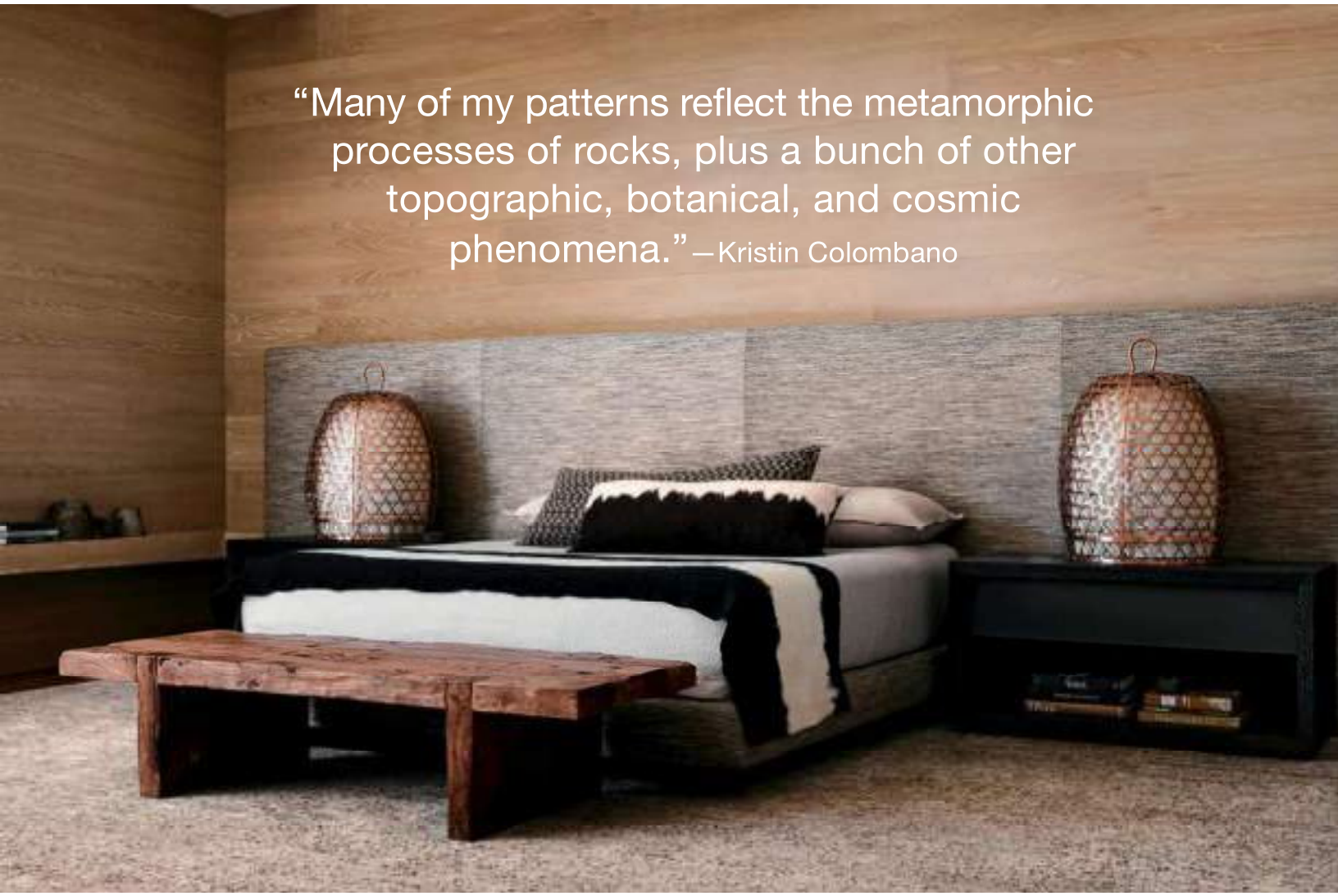
TOP LEFT: Photo courtesy of Fog & Fury. BOTTOM LEFT: Photo by Jose Manuel Alorda. OPPOSITE: Photo by Bess Friday.

Colombano crafted this *Striation* blanket and pillows for a 2020 primary bedroom design by San Francisco's K Interiors.

"Working in this very painterly and considered way has only expanded demand for Kristin's work," notes Erik Hughes, cofounder with Geoffrey De Sousa of the De Sousa Hughes showroom in San Francisco, one of Colombano's early champions. "Another factor has been her artful approach to upholstered furniture," he adds, indicating a commodious sofa on the showroom floor covered in Colombano's *Steppe* pattern, which evokes the Mongolian landscape by striping the Manx sheep's distinctive, cocoa-colored wool with lines of natural flax. As it happens, felt is ideally suited to home furnishings, because wool's lanolin content acts like nature's Scotchgard—rendering it water-repellent, stain resistant, and lightfast.

Design for Dreaming

Colombano is sought out by designers for the rigor and precision of her approach. One of her first forays into making upholstery was at the behest of interior designer Kristen Peña, of San Francisco's K Interiors, who invited her to cover a daybed and bolster in shades of textured cream. Soon thereafter, Peña tapped Colombano to craft a blanket and pillows for the primary bedroom in a home-addition project. "We wanted to evoke a feeling of beautiful tranquility," says Peña, who enlisted decorative artist Caroline Lizarraga to paint the walls and warmed the floors with one of Rosemary Hallgarten's handwoven alpaca rugs. The crafted oak bed is a place for respite and reverie, dressed with felt pieces in Colombano's *Striation* pattern, which riffs on the layering of sedimentary rock and the veining found in marble.



Serenity Mode

"The idea of creating a zen retreat was part of our project mantra," says Suzie Lucas, of Seattle-based Lucas Interior, describing the design for a remodel that evokes a Japonesque vibe. Because the bedroom is so large, Lucas sought elements that could both harmonize and hold their own. Walls are clad in cerused oak; a rustic teak bench abuts the bed, and woven copper lanterns from Alexander Lamont glow from the sides.

Lucas chose Colombano's *Brush* pattern in black and white for the lumbar pillow and bed runner, as its strong graphic presence helps anchor the room. "It reminds me of an ink drawing—very gestural and strong," says Lucas. Made with black llama and a mixture of white sheep's wool and silk, the pattern also suggests the tips of Asian calligraphy brushes.

Time Travelers

When Geoffrey De Sousa scored a pair of Arthur Elrod Lucite chairs (featured in a 1974 issue of *Architectural Digest*) in a Palm Springs vintage furniture store, he sought to replace the Ultrasuede cushions with something that would acknowledge the chairs' pedigree in a fresh and modern way. "This was soon after Kristin had brought her extraordinary work to our showroom," says De Sousa. "And I knew her organic and textural felt could give the chairs new life." In Palm Springs, the gray-and-cream *Striation*-patterned upholstery echoed the ever-shifting aspect of the San Jacinto Mountains, but it is equally evocative holding court in an 1874 building with arched, cast-iron windows overlooking Manhattan.

Mongolia Moderne

Over the summer, Colombano was invited by the Seattle-based architecture firm Olson Kundig—known for pristine modernist buildings that sit lightly on the landscape—to talk with their interior design team about her craft (part of a monthly "mini trade show" organized by the firm, with whom Colombano has collaborated). "I love that juxtaposition of something so modern—maybe potentially cavernous or cold—coexisting with this warm

Photo by Douglas Friedman. OPPOSITE: Photos by Michelle Keim.

LEFT AND BELOW: Troscan's Jackson Lounge Chair and Ottoman upholstered in Fog & Fury's *Striation* felt made with wool, silk, and mohair locks. OPPOSITE: A bed runner and lumbar pillow in Fog & Fury's *Brush* pattern, evoking the tips of Asian calligraphy brushes, serve as the focal point of a 2021 bedroom remodel by Lucas Interior.

and ancient material, which is so tactile and sound absorbing," she says.

Even as demand for her work continues to grow, Colombano keeps a reminder in plain sight of where it all began. On a shelf in her studio sits a jar filled with *shagai*—the small ankle bones of sheep and goats, which in Mongolia are rolled like dice and used for playing games and telling fortunes. "Thinking back, I couldn't have predicted how wandering into a souvenir shop on the other side of the world could change the course of my life," says Colombano. "But the more I work with this material, the more possibilities I find for expression—and the more I realize I've only scratched the surface."

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fogandfury.com | @fogandfury

Deborah Bishop is a longtime contributor to *American Craft*.

Celebrating Studio Craft

How Moderne Gallery came to represent the greats.

BY JON SPAYDE

For four decades, the name of George Nakashima (1905–1990), the visionary furniture designer-maker who turned from architecture to woodworking, has been linked with a visionary showplace in Philadelphia: Moderne Gallery.

Moderne, located in an arts district in the city's riverfront Port Richmond neighborhood, has the largest Nakashima collection in the world. It's the definitive place for seeing and buying the artist's signature conoid chairs, live-edge tables, and other works of wood mastery. Through exhibitions and influence, the gallery has been instrumental in advancing Nakashima's reputation to its current stratospheric heights, as well as in preserving and furthering the legacy of other pioneers of the studio craft movement. And it all started with a phone call.

Robert Aibel was a professor of film at Philly's Drexel University whose interest in craft had led him to collect Americana. On a trip to Paris to interview filmmakers, though, he sought out art deco furniture for his deco-influenced new house back home. "I had a little inherited money," he says, "and I bought too many pieces! But I thought, I love this; I think I'll start a gallery."

He rented a space in Center City, Philadelphia, and began purveying deco. Then, in 1985, he got a call from someone who wanted to sell him some "used furniture" by a man named Nakashima.

Nakashima had established himself in New Hope, Pennsylvania, about 40 miles from Philadelphia, and Aibel knew his work and had even visited his workshop. After paying the caller $3,000 for a table and eight chairs plus a buffet—"in line with what George himself was making back then," Aibel points out—he began to delve into the story of the artist, who became a disciple of the Indian guru Sri Aurobindo and learned Japanese joinery from a master woodworker incarcerated with him in an internment camp for Japanese Americans during World War II.

As he learned more, Aibel's attention shifted from the mainly anonymous art deco aesthetic to the passionately individualistic and restlessly inventive works of the studio

Photos courtesy of Moderne Gallery.

furniture movement. Wharton Esherick (1887–1970), a modernist innovator in many media who was also an early pioneer of studio furniture, had also lived and worked not far from Philadelphia, and Aibel soon added his highly sculptural furniture to his holdings.

An important motive for ex-professor Aibel was educating the public about studio craft artists, many of whom had slipped into obscurity or semi-obscurity—he cites the 1985 caller, who considered his Nakashima pieces mere "used furniture." His initial Nakashima show was soon followed by the first Esherick show anywhere since 1959.

Moderne's treasure trove of historical studio craft pieces grew as "owners of studio pieces sought a gallery to whom they could sell them," Aibel says. "Since very few galleries specialized in studio work, and few still do, our reputation grew."

Vintage pieces by Wendell Castle, Arthur Espenet Carpenter, Sam Maloof, David Ebner, Peter Voulkos, Toshiko Takaezu, Viola Frey, Edward Moulthrop, William Hunter, and many other legendary makers joined the Moderne roster.

RIGHT: Joshua Aibel (left) and Robert Aibel with a George Nakashima dining table. BELOW: Moderne's new Philadelphia location. OPPOSITE: The opening exhibition at the gallery's new location showcased works by both historic and contemporary makers.

In addition to American studio craft, Moderne Gallery presents the work of international artists, such as Tanaka Tomomi. This 2025 installation of *it may be too personal | Tanaka Tomomi*, marks the Japanese ceramist's first solo exhibition in the US. BELOW: Tomomi's *Struggling*, 2018, ceramic, 16.75 x 13 x 11.75 in.

"Working art fairs as a kid was my entry into the gallery's world. I saw underrepresented contemporary woodworkers and ceramicists and I felt it was important for Moderne not only to represent the historical, but to follow the studio craft movement to where it is today." —Joshua Aibel

Caprice Pierucci's wall sculpture *Delicate Loop,* 2024, pine and acrylic, 65 x 45 x 7 in., hangs above George Nakashima's *Triple Sliding Door Wall-Hung Cabinet*, 1980–81, American black walnut, oak, pandanus cloth, 19 x 108 x 18.5 in.

Photos courtesy of Moderne Gallery.

Aibel brought his son, Joshua, into the gallery as codirector in 2010. As Robert tells it, this was Joshua's idea. "I never said, *Hey, Josh, you should come into the business with your dad*. It was his passion, his interest." Joshua's passion for contemporary work helped turn what had been mainly a showcase for vintage furniture into a forward-looking art and design gallery, with an enhanced emphasis on ceramics, which Robert had been collecting since the gallery's early days.

"Working art fairs as a kid was my entry into the gallery's world," says Joshua. "I saw underrepresented contemporary woodworkers and ceramicists and I felt it was important for Moderne not only to represent the historical, but to follow the studio craft movement to where it is today."

Founded as it is on the work of giants like Nakashima, Moderne's standards for acquiring contemporary work are very high. "It has to be on the level of the historical material," Joshua says. "We want the work to be unique, to be incredibly great quality, and to be making a contribution to the field," Robert adds. For him, making a contribution means innovating, whether in shape, form, or process—a hallmark of the studio movement. Contemporary Moderne artists such as Miriam Carpenter, Ashley Joseph Martin, and Michael Hurwitz meet the gallery's criteria for excellence, the father-son team affirms.

Both Aibels are convinced that the legacy of that movement will continue, mainly because it's continuous by nature. "Nearly everybody working today was the student of a studio giant or a student of one of their students," Robert points out. "They created a world, and it just keeps growing and developing."

Meanwhile, the Aibels themselves continue a teaching legacy in their exhibitions at the gallery and in art fairs nationwide, along with providing plenty of information on the gallery's website, mostly written by Joshua. "I was an academic, so teaching is natural to me," says Robert. "But now Josh is doing it, too. I think it's the nature of this work we deal with. It makes you want to share it with others."

◆

modernegallery.com

Jon Spayde is a contributing editor to *American Craft*.

MARKET

Mood Lighting.

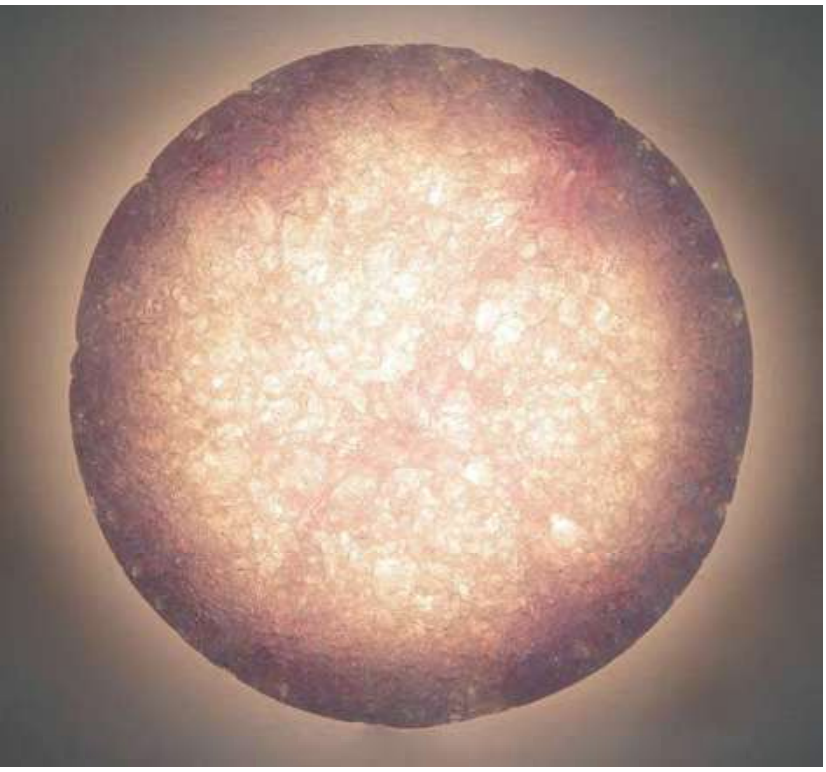
Evolved from wall-mounted torch holders, sconces are a timeless, functional, and atmospheric way to light a room. They can complement other lighting or, on their own, illuminate a reading corner, bedroom, or dining nook. Each of these four handmade sconces—crafted with unique materials, textures, and shapes—radiates a distinct mood.

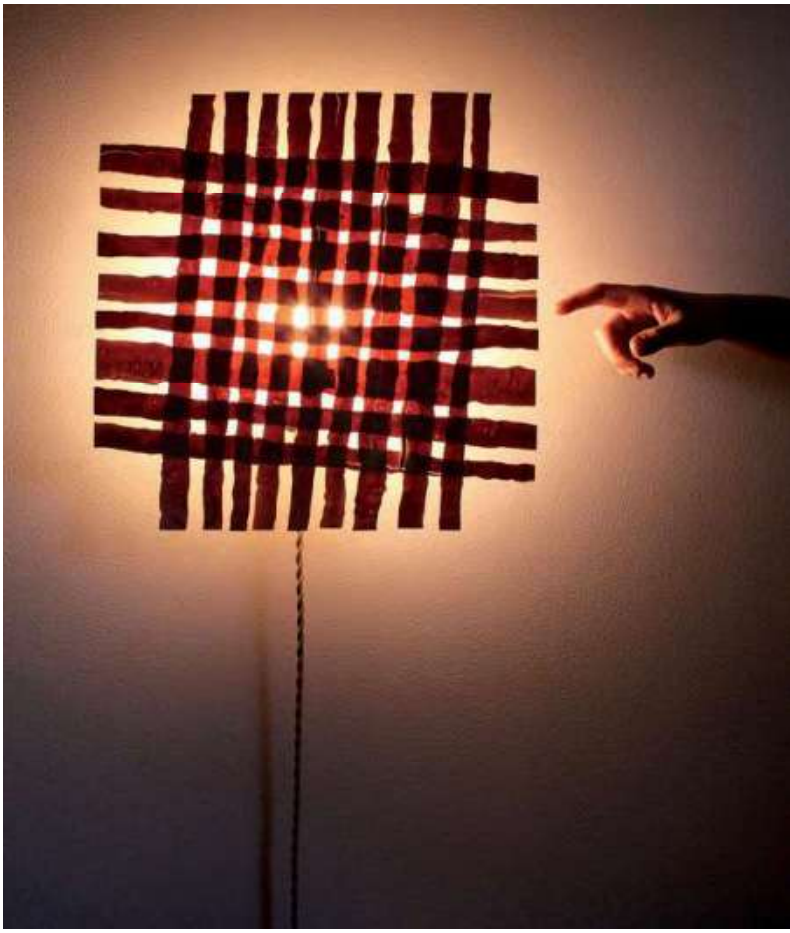
Stephen Shaheen's *Nebula* sconce (above), carved from Macedonian honey onyx, is named for luminous star-forming space clouds. The Brooklyn- and Connecticut-based artist followed the character of the stone as he sculpted, incorporating natural textures and existing saw marks. The cloud-shaped fixture, which at its thinnest is five-eighths of an inch thick, casts an otherworldly glow when illuminated, 16 x 41 x 7 in. / $18,000

stephenshaheen.com | @stephen_shaheen

To create the bubbled texture of his *Fumed Sconce* (below), Philadelphia-based sculptor **Nick Missel** added boiling water to fumed resin, freezing and preserving a moment of chemical breakdown. Shaped and sanded to its final form, the 10-by-10-by-4 in. resin dome is mounted on an aluminum base and fitted with an LED light. / $3,000

nickmissel.com | @nickmisselstudio





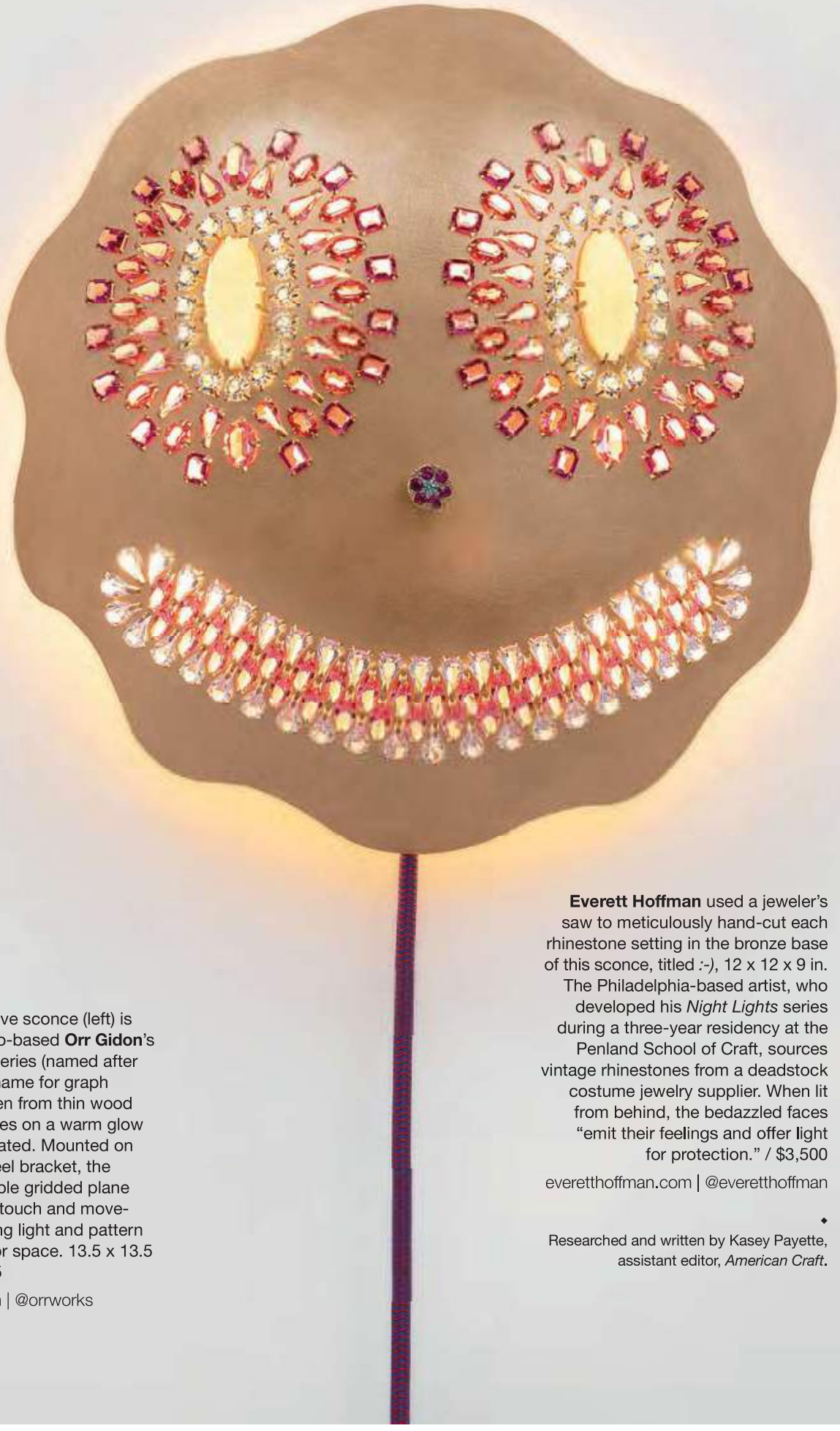


Photo by Loam Marketing. OPPOSITE TOP: Photo courtesy of Wexler Gallery. OPPOSITE BOTTOM LEFT: Photo by Nick Missel. OPPOSITE BOTTOM RIGHT: Photo by Orr Gidon.

This interactive sconce (left) is from Chicago-based **Orr Gidon**'s *Coordinate* series (named after the original name for graph paper). Woven from thin wood veneer, it takes on a warm glow when illuminated. Mounted on a custom steel bracket, the birdseye maple gridded plane responds to touch and movement, bringing light and pattern to any interior space. 13.5 x 13.5 x 3 in. / $375

orrgidon.com | @orrworks

Everett Hoffman used a jeweler's saw to meticulously hand-cut each rhinestone setting in the bronze base of this sconce, titled *:-)*, 12 x 12 x 9 in. The Philadelphia-based artist, who developed his *Night Lights* series during a three-year residency at the Penland School of Craft, sources vintage rhinestones from a deadstock costume jewelry supplier. When lit from behind, the bedazzled faces "emit their feelings and offer light for protection." / $3,500

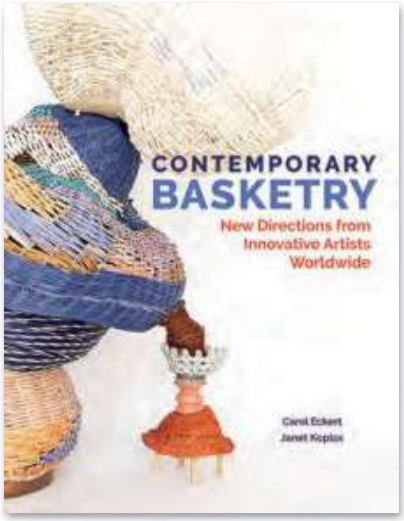
everetthoffman.com | @everetthoffman

◆

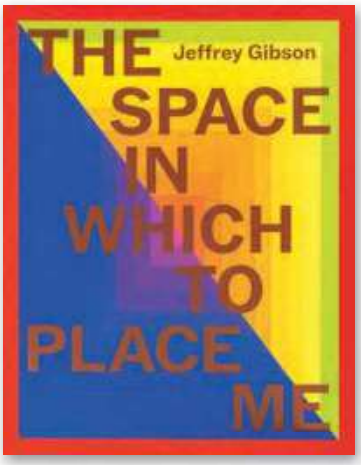
Researched and written by Kasey Payette, assistant editor, *American Craft*.

BOOKS

The idea of a basket as a simple carryall vanishes as you peruse these photos of artworks, ranging from Pat Hickman's netlike creations made of dried hog-intestine fiber, to Joanne Lamb's ultra-delicate paper/wool/mohair cups and Nathalie Miebach's explosive, colorful wood-and-reed sculptures, which seem to fuse basketry and molecular physics. An essay by Koplos guides readers through the diversity of forms.

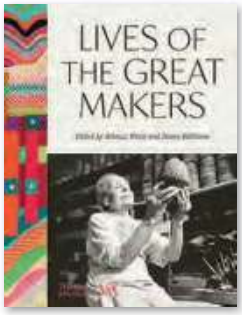


CONTEMPORARY BASKETRY: NEW DIRECTIONS FROM INNOVATIVE ARTISTS WORLDWIDE
By Carol Eckert and Janet Koplos
Schiffer, 2025
$40



JEFFREY GIBSON: THE SPACE IN WHICH TO PLACE ME
Edited with text by Abigail Winograd and Christian Ayne Crouch; foreword by Brian Ferriso and Louis Grachos; text by Kathleen Ash-Milby, Miranda Belarde-Lewis, Philip J. Deloria, Evan Garza, Jeffrey Gibson, and Richard Shiff; contributions by G. Peter Jemison, Elizabeth Alexander, and Layli Long Soldier
DelMonico, 2025
$75

This extensive volume, combining work and studio images with in-depth discussions of Indigeneity in contemporary art, documents Gibson's work as he served as the first Indigenous artist to represent the US at the Venice Biennale. Art blogger Cory Reynolds summed it up: "Printed with special papers, custom inks, multicolored ribbons, gatefolds and fold-out posters, [this] is unlike any other book."



LIVES OF THE GREAT MAKERS: 500 YEARS OF CREATIVE EXCELLENCE
Edited by Rebecca Knott and James Robinson
Thames & Hudson / Victoria & Albert, 2025
$50

Moving from Léonard Limosin (ca. 1505–ca. 1577), enameler to several French kings, to British ceramist Alison Britton (b. 1948), this amply illustrated volume traces the emergence of the celebrity maker in the Renaissance, then provides succinct biographies of the renowned (Wedgwood, Lalique, Chihuly) and the lesser-known, including Scottish arts and crafts pioneer Phoebe Anna Traquair and Augustus Pugin, a pioneer of Gothic Revival architecture.

TEXTILE FINE ART: CONVERSATIONS WITH ARTISTS CREATING BY HAND
By Helen Adams; foreword by Anne Coxon
Laurence King, 2025
$50

Adams, a writer and stylist known online as the Textile Curator, asserts that contemporary textiles belong in the world of "fine" art by including gallery stars such as cover artist Simone Pheulpin, Tracey Emin, and Do Ho Suh in these pages. In interviews with all 50 makers here, she explores the imagery, cultural heritage, and motivations of landmark textile artists.

EVENTUALLY EVERYTHING CONNECTS: MID-CENTURY MODERN DESIGN IN THE US
Edited by Andrew Satake Blauvelt; essays by Bridget Bartal and others
Phaidon, 2025
$89.95

These well-illustrated, in-depth essays on people and projects acknowledge icons such as Charles and Ray Eames and Eero Saarinen, but go beyond them to broaden the canon. Lesser-known female designers and designers of color here include Jane Doggett, who pioneered wayfinding signage; Danny Ho Fong, who ran a curio shop before designing furniture; and Howard Smith, a Black textile artist who worked in Finland.

SHEILA HICKS: A LITTLE BIT OF A LOT OF THINGS
Edited by Gianni Jetzer; text by Jetzer and Robert Storr
Hatje Cantz, 2025
$65

Hicks's long career as a textile artist has seen her combine material and form in unique ways—playing, for example, with the distinction between crafted and found objects. This striking book, with its lay-flat binding and outsize typography, presents a gallery of pieces, a discussion of a major Swiss show, a transcript of a lively artist's talk, and previously unpublished photos.

Photo courtesy of Monacelli.

***CRAFT IN AMERICA*: "EAST" AND "WEST"**
PBS, 2025
craftinamerica.org

Hawaiian feather artist Kawika Lum-Nelmida is featured in *Craft in America*'s "West" episode.

TELEVISION

Craft in America is best known for its eponymous PBS docuseries honoring craft artists, but it's far more than a production company; among other things, it also supports a craft museum and an outreach program in public schools. Next year, it will launch an ambitious nationwide craft initiative to mark the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Called Handwork 2026, it's intended to, organizers write, "showcase the importance of the handmade, both throughout our history and in contemporary life." More than 250 craft centers, museums, and related organizations will host exhibitions and events.

Craft in America's flagship show will offer its own coverage through four hour-long special episodes based on the cardinal points of the compass. "East" and "West," focusing on craft artists in those regions, are set to debut December 19 on PBS, with "North" and "South" to come in December 2026.

"East" and "West" present the makers at work, demonstrating and discussing their histories, aesthetics, and processes, along with assessments from curators, partners, and colleagues. A broad view of American history is on full display.

The portrait of Italian-born master silversmith Ubaldo Vitali in "East," for example, not only illuminates his immigrant experience but also includes a segment on Paul Revere—Vitali restored several of the patriot-silversmith's pieces. Bisa Butler's colorful textile works, often constructed of patterned African cloth, depict African Americans of the recent and more distant past; "East" provides context for her works by adding archival footage of the Black experience. Philadelphia-based Colette Fu, the daughter of Chinese immigrants, found a compelling way to display images in the pop-up book format. She demonstrates a massive hand-cranked volume called *Noodle Mountain*, in which the paper "noodles" that appear are red to represent the blood spilled in anti-Chinese riots in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and yellow for the arson fires that destroyed many Chinatowns.

"West" opens with a quintessential symbol of that region: intricate leather saddles, made in Idaho by Cary Schwarz, a member of the Traditional Cowboy Arts Association. The cowboy boots of Graham Ebner of Austin, Texas, are just as carefully crafted, but hardly traditional: The young artist decorates them with images of Paul Bunyan or a UFO's encounter with an armadillo. Indigenous initiatives are represented by a segment on the New Mexico–based Institute of American Indian Arts, where Native artists exchange ideas and share traditions; and by a group portrait of Native Hawaiian artists introducing sacred crafts like pandanus-leaf weaving and featherwork to a new generation of makers.

It adds up to an account of contemporary American craft that emphasizes its cultural and ethical power as well as its aesthetics and utility. As Cary Schwarz puts it, "Craftsmanship comes down to the pursuit of truth, goodness, and beauty." —Jon Spayde

Photo by Denise Kang.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Dreamy Spaces of *Contemplation Environments*.

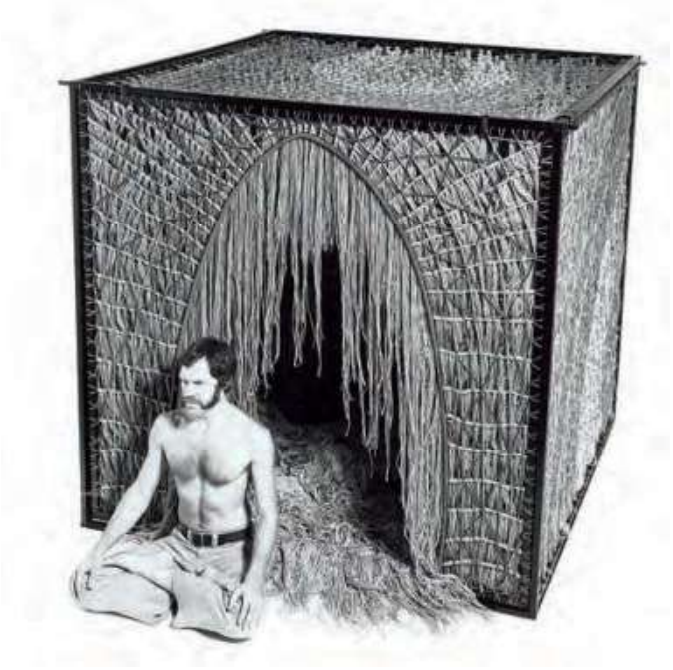
What environments do we dream of? How do our surroundings stimulate our capacity to dream? Where do we, in our contemporary urbanized society, find spaces that allow for contemplation? In 1970, the Museum of Contemporary Crafts explored these questions in an innovative exhibition called *Contemplation Environments*.

Introducing the exhibition catalog, museum director Paul J. Smith wrote, "There can be said to exist a kind of ineffable presence in the architectural space itself which exerts a quieting, peaceful influence on the mind and emotions of the individual who enters it." The exhibition aimed to explore the psychological effect of our physical surroundings, in particular those that were conducive to the act of "considering with attention."

Smith notes that the exhibition was "developed and not collected." Research by museum staff in preparation for the exhibition showed that artists were interested in exploring the design of large-scale environments that could provide a respite from the busyness of daily urban life and allow for purposeful meditation, musing, and dreaming.

The museum, which was founded in 1956 by ACC founder Aileen Osborn Webb and later evolved into the Museum of Arts and Design, commissioned architect Gamal El-Zoghby to consult with each of the participating artists and to unify the 16 separate environments into a singular experience. Visitors were directed to follow a traffic flow that allowed each environment to be experienced in isolation from the others.

Most of the environments reflected unrealized dreams and visions of the artists. Wendell Castle created a laminated wood environment with a skylight, reading light, and an exterior light to indicate when the space was in use. Aleksandra Kasuba's sculptural structure of stretched nylon featured a raised floor that was split with light from below. John Fischer's *Turf Room* surrounded guests with fresh turf on the floor, walls, and ceiling.



Ted Hallman seated outside his *Centering Environment*, 1969, made from woven Acrilon fibers on a steel-framed cube.

Some environments employed sound or other sensory elements to create a contemplative mood, such as USCO/Intermedia's chairs, which featured recorded sound by poet and artist Gerd Stern. Irv Teibel's aural environment simulated sounds of nature, while stepping on the platform of Terry Fugate-Wilcox's *Air Shower* activated warm air currents and lights.

Art and architecture students at Pratt Institute and City College of New York were encouraged to submit sketches of their concepts for public spaces conducive to contemplation in New York City. What dreams could be conjured in an underwater sphere attached to the Staten Island Ferry? Fifty-five years later, we're still left wondering. —Beth Goodrich

A hand peeks out of Wendell Castle's oak and fiberglass *Enclosed Reclining Environment*.

Photos courtesy of the ACC Archives.

Beth Goodrich is the archivist for the American Craft Council. The ACC Archives hold historical documentation of ACC dating back to 1939, as well as the early history of the Museum of Contemporary Crafts/American Craft Museum (now the Museum of Arts and Design) from 1956 to 1990. Many materials from the archives are available online at digital.craftcouncil.org.

American Craft: A Reminiscence

A curator looks back at his relationship with this magazine, its history, and how it became the publication of record for the field of craft.

BY BRUCE W. PEPICH

We have reached the final issue of *American Craft*. As both a longtime reader and sometime subject of the magazine, I feel as though I'm preparing the eulogy for a dear friend. For decades, I have appreciated the importance of this faithful colleague. I have always been proud that the art library of the Racine Art Museum (RAM) has copies of the publication from the late 1940s through today. This friendship has spanned the more than 50 years that I have been professionally affiliated with RAM and this field.

Paging through a copy of an early issue of what was first known as *Craft Horizons* is like catnip for any art historian, as it directly connects you to the past. Looking at the black-and-white photographs and at ads that seem quaint today, you feel as though you are conducting a one-person archaeological dig into the world of artists who worked during and after World War II. Many of the authors were people with respected curatorial or historical knowledge of their sector of the field. The publication also worked with nationally known photographers, including Barbara Morgan and Aaron Siskind. As editor in chief from 1959 to 1979, Rose Slivka responded to a time of postwar change by establishing a solid philosophical footing for the magazine and an emphasis on editorial distinction that commanded respect.

The publication has had two lives: as *Craft Horizons* (1941–1979) and as *American Craft* (1979–2026). I came to *Craft Horizons* after the 1969 launch of the famed *Objects: USA* exhibition, which toured the US. Many view this show, and the media coverage it received, as a watershed, introducing new audiences to our field. As the curator of a university's art collection at the time, I was working with contemporary craft pieces acquired from national competitions, and I sought out the magazine in the university library.

At first, *Craft Horizons* was almost exclusively oriented toward the artists and their needs. *Objects: USA* attracted new and wider audiences interested in knowing not only about craft and its artists but how to collect their work. *Craft Horizons* began to reflect this in the 1970s, and the publication placed even greater emphasis on this kind of content in the decades after it became *American Craft*.

From 1980 through 2000, a new generation of collectors and enthusiasts entered the field. A great deal of experimentation and innovation was going on in every craft medium, and these individuals responded by creating noteworthy collections. They supported the presentation of these works in museums, which began—tentatively at first—to add craft to their collections and exhibitions. The magazine encouraged these efforts and, thanks to the coverage RAM received in *American Craft,* I met collectors from across the country who helped build the collection through their gifts.

Under Lois Moran, who served as editor in chief from 1980 to 2006, the magazine became a gathering place for the field, covering all media and a host of events that took place across the US. Through its coverage of museum exhibitions, book launches, and educational conferences, as well as its new-talent introductions, obituaries, and career opportunity announcements, the publication became an active conduit for what was quickly becoming a national community. Paging through issues from the 1980s and 1990s is a fun, bracing experience as you take in the sheer volume of activity represented by opinion pieces, gallery ads, and large-format, high-quality images of artists' works.

It was in this period that *American Craft* became very helpful to my curatorial practice. The magazine's articles introduced me to artists for potential shows and validated more accomplished talents on whom I set our sights for acquisitions. The magazine did an excellent job of tracking multiple generations of teaching and influence, and I frequently went to back issues to research artists we were acquiring for RAM's permanent collection, drawing connections between them and their teachers and mentors. When one of our exhibitions was covered in any length, it was an accomplishment we celebrated. So while inclusion in the magazine was an important career-building step that could help any artist receive greater gallery representation, it also introduced museums and their curators to collectors.

The Racine Art Museum's library holds issues of *Craft Horizons* and *American Craft* dating back to the late 1940s.

Photo courtesy of the Racine Art Museum.

As the field developed during these decades, the magazine also evolved into the publication of record for the US craft community. Over the past 20 years, I have continued to be a devoted reader as *American Craft* has continued to serve the need for information sharing and ongoing conversations, while recording these discussions for historical documentation. It has introduced a broad readership to America's craft artists and the materials and processes they use in their work. The quality of the visuals, graphic design, and editorial content has been impressive, and the publication has frequently been honored with national awards. This built respect for the magazine and for the artists it covered. While we gather and share information about our field in a variety of ways today, I can still remember waiting for each issue to arrive at a time when it was one of the few sources of information about craft.

This is a very poignant time for the American Craft Council and the field as we say goodbye to an old friend whom we are, indeed, laying to rest. While this saddens me, I also know that, thanks to the efforts of the many professionals who created and maintained this magazine for 85 years, those decades of craft in America are extremely well chronicled. *American Craft* was an essential resource for both my professional and personal life. I am grateful for the historical information it provided for me and for the documentation of our efforts that it provides for generations to come.

◆

Bruce W. Pepich is Founding Director Emeritus of the Racine Art Museum in Racine, Wisconsin, which contains the largest collection of contemporary craft in North America.

Explore More: The American Craft Council has the entire run of *Craft Horizons* in digital format from November 1941 through May 1979, as well as issues of *American Craft* from 1979 to 2011. These can be found at craftcouncil.org.

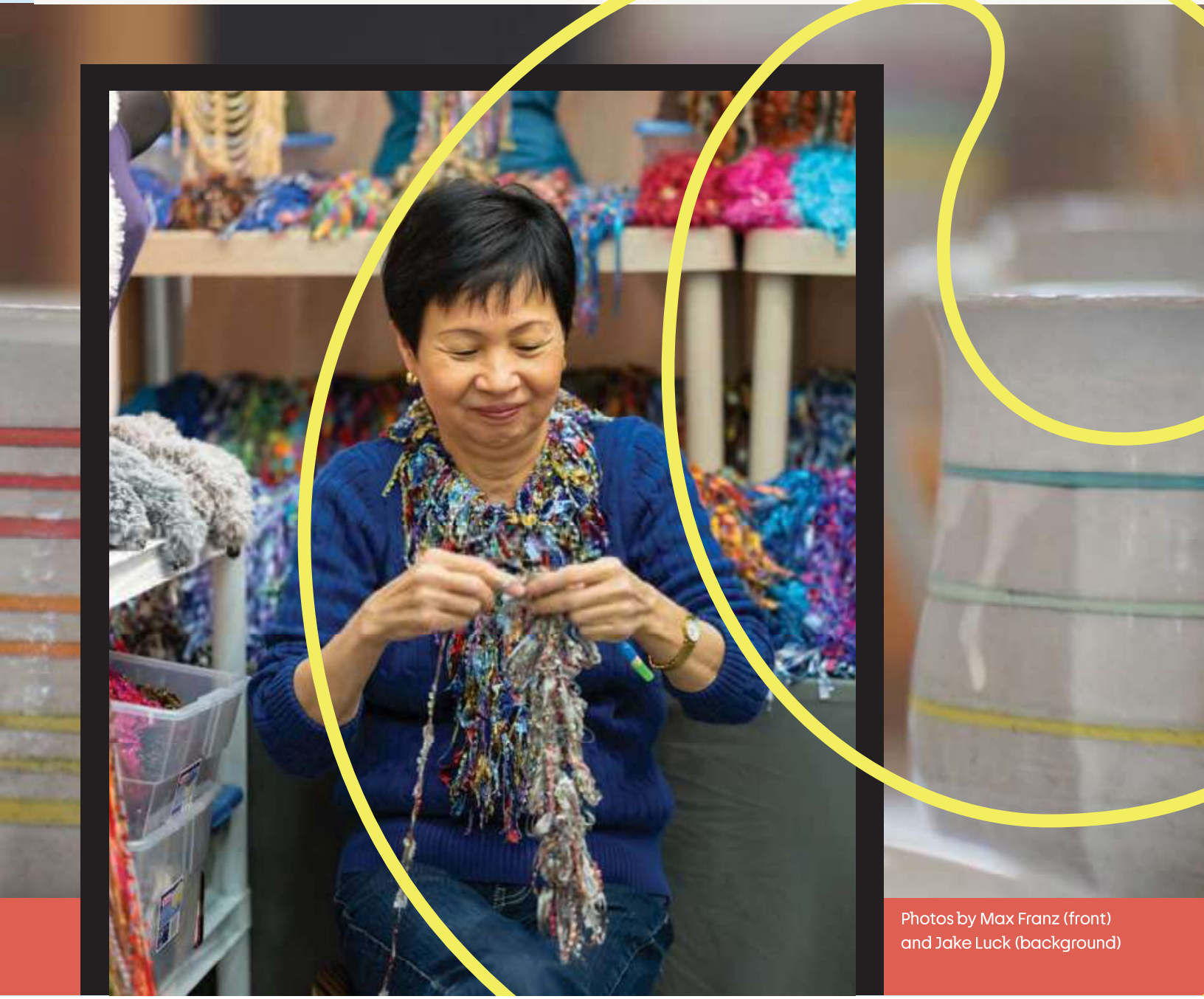
AMERICAN CRAFT COUNCIL NEWS

The American Craft Council is a national nonprofit based in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

We foster livelihoods and ways of living grounded in the artful work of the human hand, creating a more joyful, humane, and regenerative world.

We offer visionary storytelling, resources for artists and makers, and events that build community around craft, including American Craft Made Baltimore, February 20–22, 2026.

Learn more at craftcouncil.org.



Photos by Max Franz (front) and Jake Luck (background)

From Our Leadership: Welcoming a New Era of Access and Connection

For nearly 85 years, the American Craft Council has fostered the livelihoods of American craftspeople and worked to build a broad, nationwide audience for the handcrafted. We have provided essential resources for artists, produced unique experiences that bring makers and appreciators together, convened and supported our field, and served as the premier nonprofit chronicler of the state of American craft.

ACC programs and activities have changed many times and in many ways over the decades, and as ACC Trustee Bruce Pepich notes in his reflections on page 88, *American Craft* magazine is no exception. Innovation and adaptation are as much a part of ACC's story as tradition, and with every era, we have found new ways to advance our vision of a world where objects matter, makers thrive, and craft connects.

In October 2025, we announced a set of bold actions, as outlined below, to become more responsive and accessible to makers and appreciators of American craft and to foster a more connected craft ecosystem:

Craft stories, news, and original online content will be available and free to all through our website, craftcouncil.org, as it evolves to become the go-to resource for the craft community. ACC members and other *American Craft* readers will continue to find an array of stories that delight, surprise, and inform—content about artists, practices, events, and communities that reflect the American craft renaissance taking place across our country.

In 2026, craftcouncil.org will launch an expanded array of online resources, including a more robust and searchable calendar of nationwide craft events, and a place to post job openings and other opportunities for artists and craftspeople. We will partner with diverse organizations nationwide to provide vital information about ways to connect with craft in communities around the country. And ACC members and newsletter subscribers will have easy ways to tailor craft news and information to their unique needs.

Photo by Carina Lofgren

Photo courtesy of the ACC Archives

ACC membership will evolve to be a passport to American craft—a gateway to our vibrant and interconnected craft ecosystem and a source of vital support to early-career and established makers. Members will benefit from exclusive privileges and special discounts with an array of craft-centered organizations, businesses, and events across the country, including admission discounts, materials discounts, members-only access, and more. These benefits will grow and expand over time, shaped by the needs of our members.

ACC will increase the number and variety of our virtual and in-person events, including a national, in-person convening and ACC Awards celebration. And beginning this fall, we will launch more than $100,000 in new grants for artists in our new Early Career Artist Program.

Reflecting our commitment to increase access to craft resources, we are excited to announce that the ACC Library & Archives will move to the Center for Craft's beautiful facility in Asheville, North Carolina. The ACC Library & Archives is a nationally unique asset supporting research on the history of contemporary American craft. Our gift of this asset to the Center will make more than 20,000 books and volumes, 4,000 artist files, and myriad digital assets substantially more accessible to our shared constituents, and leverage and augment the Center's core programs to support craft scholarship and research throughout the United States. We are deeply grateful to the Center for their partnership and to ACC librarian and archivist Beth Goodrich for her wisdom and expertise in this time of transition.

As we prepare this final print issue of *American Craft*, we thank the thousands of members and other readers who have valued this extraordinary magazine, as well as the generations of dedicated editors, writers, designers, and other contributors who have brought it to life. In particular, we honor outgoing editor in chief Karen Olson, whose final message appears on page 4. During her five-year tenure with *American Craft*, Karen brought scores of new writers into the magazine, established a formal partnership with the African American Craft Initiative to copublish articles with the Smithsonian's *Folklife Magazine*, and led *American Craft* to win multiple national Folio Awards and honorable mentions in both design and editorial content. Karen's legacy will live on in the storytelling we do at craftcouncil.org.

America has changed and evolved dramatically since the American Craft Council was founded more than 80 years ago. So has our craft ecosystem. So must we. Thank you for your trust and support as we continue this journey together.

Andrea Specht
Executive Director

Robert L. Lynch
Chair, Board of Trustees

Photo by Carina Lofgren

Fashioning Harmony

An early career artist changes perspectives on consumption.

Motivated by the harmony between innovation and responsibility, experimentation and timelessness, the reused and the contemporary, Kennedy Lor's fashion brand, LOWKEN, reconstructs secondhand goods into modern pieces in a process that prioritizes environmentally responsible consumption. Lor's process begins at thrift stores, where he chooses materials that become starting points for reborn, handmade garments and accessories. LOWKEN pieces are avant-garde but timeless, offering an ethical, no-waste approach to high fashion. "Each piece reflects a dialogue between sustainability and luxury, a quiet yet powerful testament to the modern wardrobe," per the artist's website.

A transplant to Minneapolis after college, Lor arrived in 2022 with few personal or professional connections. A nudge from jewelry maker Ann Erickson led Lor to the American Craft Council, where he quickly found and tapped into ACC's resources for early career artists.

As a 2025 Harlan Boss Artist, Lor participates in an ACC program that provides financial and professional development resources to a cohort of early career craft artists residing in Minnesota. This type of stabilizing support for craft-centered careers enriches our region with artists like Lor, whose innovation strengthens our shared craft ecosystem. The Harlan Boss Artists program is one of several ACC programs that offers direct financial assistance to artists, thanks to the support of funders including the Harlan Boss Foundation and the Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation.

The combination of financial investment and career consultation provided by ACC to the Harlan Boss Artists activated Lor's vision for LOWKEN's evolution. "Professionally, it moved me to level up LOWKEN, and personally, it made me a lot more confident in my next moves for the business," Lor says. He got LOWKEN in front of more customers as a result, both at pop-ups and at American Craft Fest 2025, for which Harlan Boss Artists are granted subsidized participation.

At these events, people have a tactile experience of Lor's work. "They can see the product, see the craft, see what I have actually made and sewn myself as a one-person team," Lor says. He's not just a fashion designer making visually appealing wearable art—he's providing a sensory experience that ends up rewiring people's expectations of what fashion is. LOWKEN's trend-agnostic garb centers Lor's perspective that high fashion does not need to equal excessive waste, and that secondhand materials are not fundamentally low in value. "My customers are spending their hard-earned money on something that can last forever," Lor says.

"American Craft Fest is this very curated, high craft experience," Lor says. "Everyone cares about their work, you can see the passion and drive, and it's all made using their hands, by themselves. There are some markets with manufactured goods, but ACC is all by hand in America. And it really shows. You can see the passion," he adds.

Lor is also in ACC's Early Career Artist Program, which gives artists professional resources that build on the benefits of ACC membership. "All of these resources—the Craft Lab [workshops] and the Harlan Boss Scholarship, getting connected to career consultants—really connect me to other organizations and people who can help small businesses like me," Lor says. New to Minneapolis, and new to small business ownership (LOWKEN is now in its fourth year), Lor found community through ACC.

AMERICAN CRAFT COUNCIL

MISSION

The American Craft Council fosters livelihoods and ways of living grounded in the artful work of the human hand, creating a more joyful, humane, and regenerative world.

EQUITY STATEMENT

The American Craft Council is committed to justice, inclusiveness, and equity. Drawing on craft's rich legacy of openness and its deep roots in all cultures, the Council will work to create opportunities for creative people from all walks of life.

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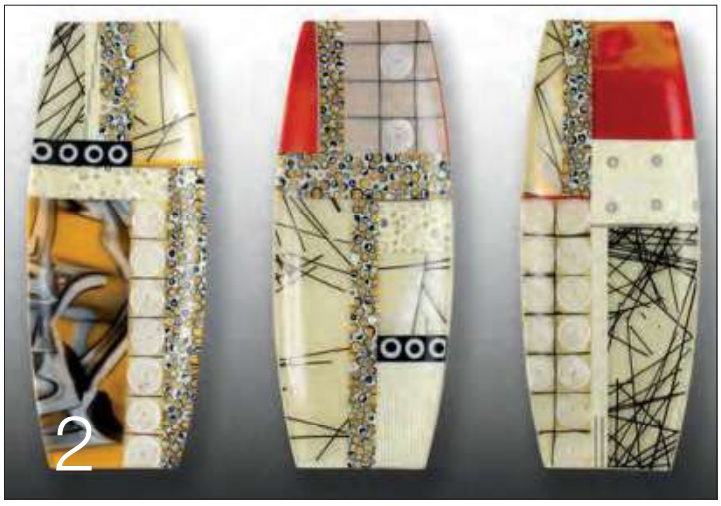

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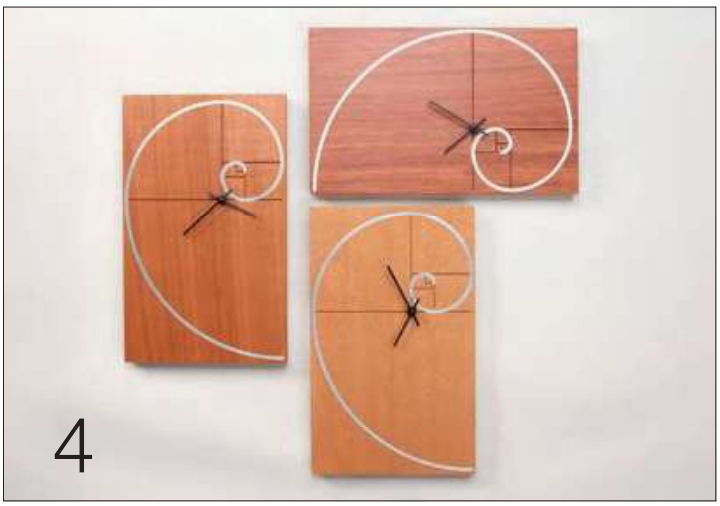

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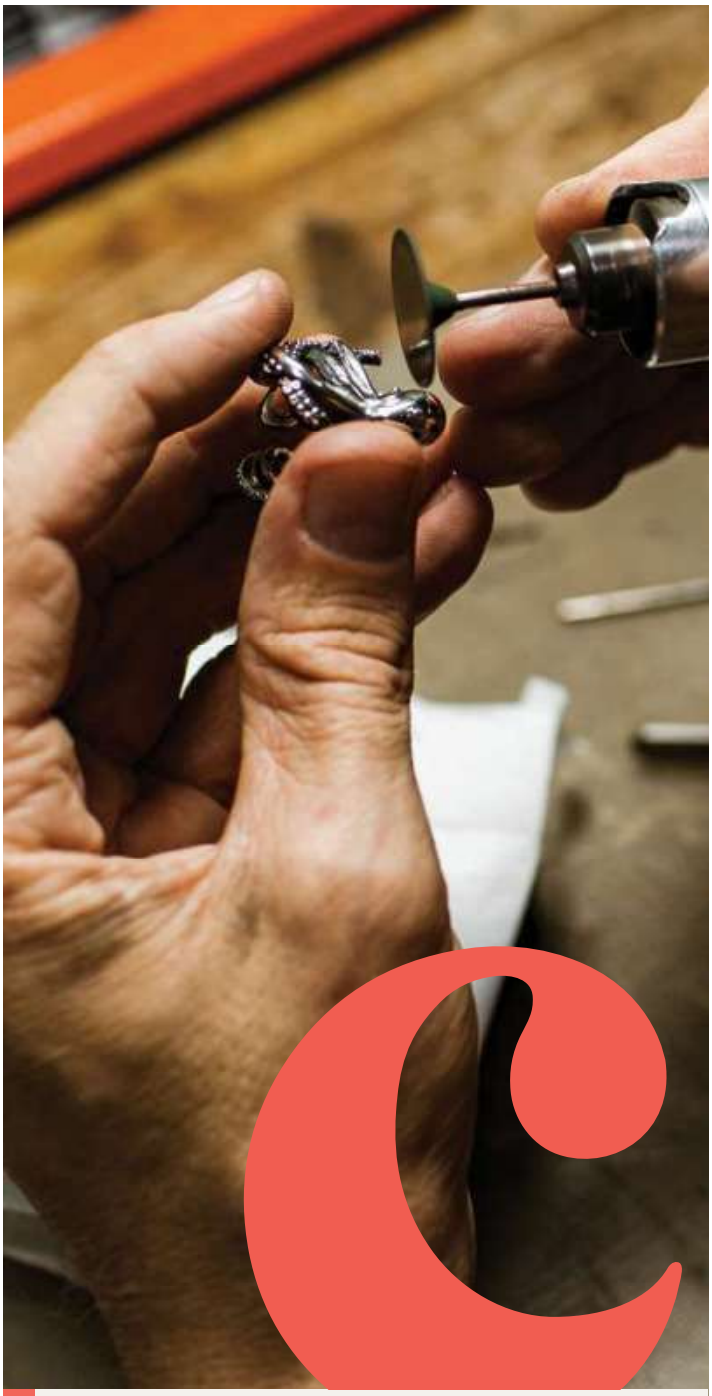

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1. Publication Title: American Craft **2.** Publication No. 0801-0200 **3.** Filing date October 1, 2025 **4.** Issue Frequency: Quarterly **5.** No. of issues published annually: (four) 4 **6.** Annual subscription price: $48.00 **7.** Complete mailing address of known office of publication: American Craft, 1224 Marshall Street NE, Suite 200, Minneapolis, MN 55413-1089 **8.** Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Offices of Publisher: American Craft Council, 1224 Marshall Street NE, Suite 200, Minneapolis, MN 55413-1089 **9.** Executive Director: Andrea Specht, 1224 Marshall Street NE, Suite 200, Minneapolis, MN 55413-1089; Publisher: Andrea Specht, 1224 Marshall Street NE, Suite 200, Minneapolis, MN 55413- 1089; Editor-in-Chief: Karen Olson, 1224 Marshall Street NE, Suite 200, Minneapolis, MN 55413-1089 **10.** Owner: American Craft Council, 1224 Marshall Street NE, Suite 200, Minneapolis, MN 55413-1089 **11.** Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities: None **12.** Tax Status: The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months. **13.** Publication Title: American Craft
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a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run)	14,668	10,543
b. Paid Circulation (By Mail and Outside the Mail)		
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g. Copies not Distributed	4,134	652
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17. Publication of Statement of Ownership Will Be Printed in the Winter 2026 issue of this publication.

18. Andrea Specht, Executive Director, 9/22/2025

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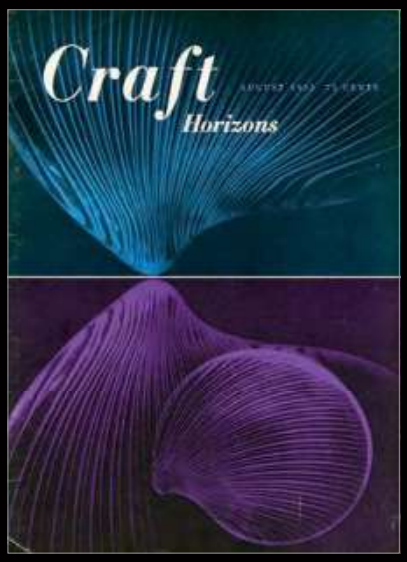

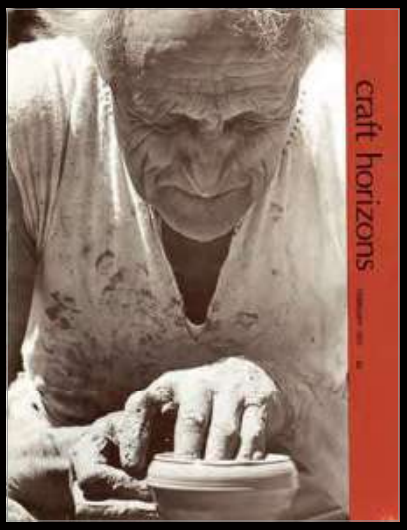

Images courtesy of the ACC Archives.

GALLERY GUIDE

WHITE BIRD GALLERY
Fox of the Equinox
by Valerie Savarie.
Altered book, Acryla gouache,
acrylic ink, thread.
9.5 x 7.25 x 1 in.
Part of the Mixed Media Group Show
November 7–December 15.

THE GRAND HAND GALLERY
Illuminated Ostracods
by Brynne Macosko Paguyo.
Porcelain, cone 10 reduction fired,
handblown glass, luminaire.
11.5 x 4.5 x 4.5 in.

GRAVERS LANE GALLERY
Enframed Scenery
by ChengOu Yu (2024).
Glazed stoneware, 3D scanned
and printed PLA-CF, laser-cut MDF.
28 x 21 x 15 in.
Designed to Dwell exhibition
November 28–January 11.
Solo exhibition, 2027 TBD.

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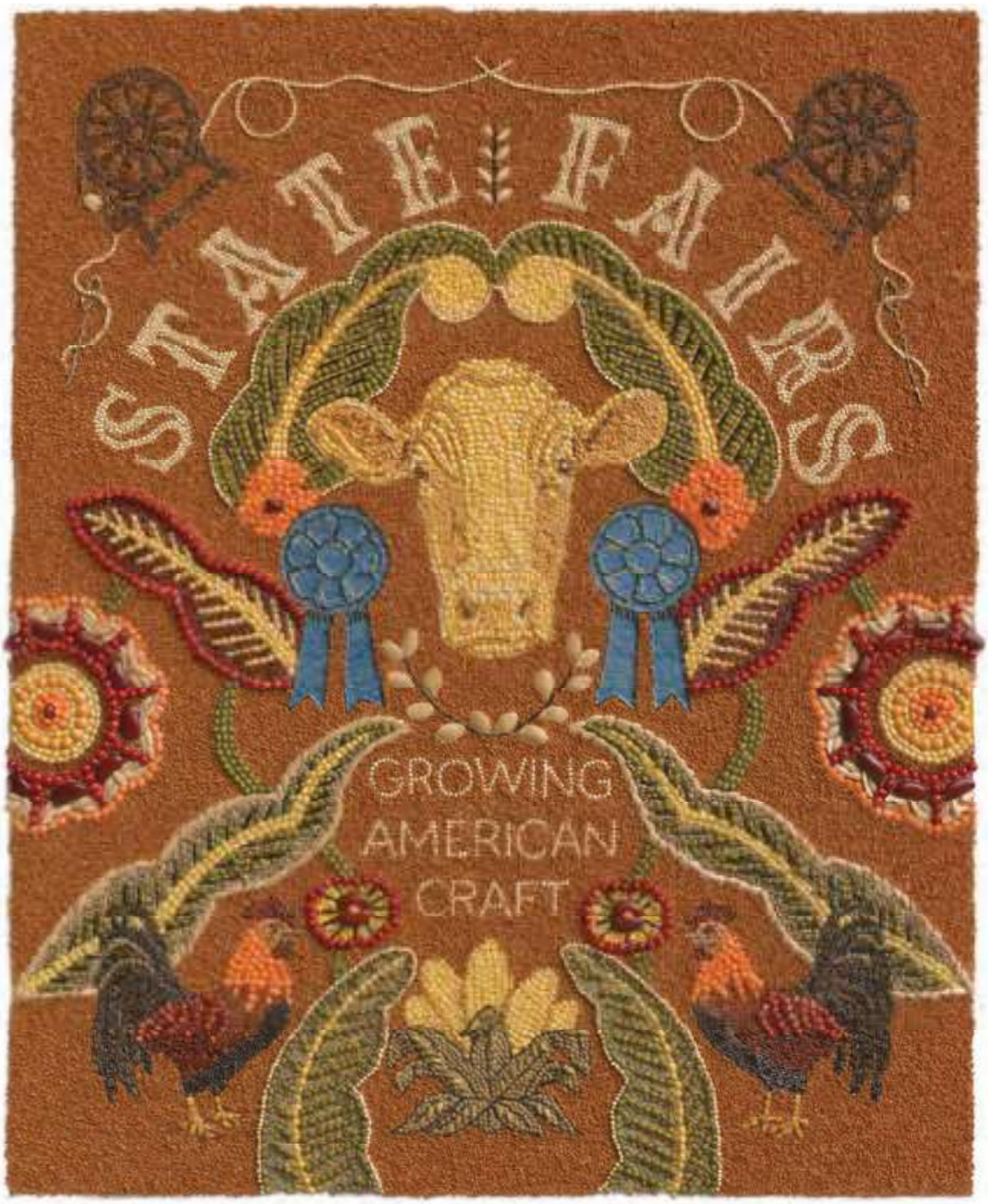

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