american craft

Fall 2024

BEST IN CRAFT

Meet the 2024 American Craft Council Awardees

Nick Cave, one of three Gold Medal awardees.
page 44

Artfully Woven

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Modern Ceramics + Frank Lloyd Wright

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american craft

Fall 2024 / Vol. 84, No. 3

weave

Bringing materials—and people—together

Features

ON THE COVER:
Nick Cave, shown here in his studio, is one of three recipients of the Gold Medal for Consummate Craftsmanship in the 2024 ACC Awards. **page 44.**

THIS PAGE:
Cassandra Mayela interviewed more than 200 Venezuelan migrants and incorporated some of their belongings into this tapestry, *Maps of Displacement Vol I: NYC 2021*. **page 24**.

Departments

NEW & NOTEWORTHY

THE CRAFTED LIFE

ABOVE LEFT: A Tampico turkey wing broom and leather dustpan from Sunhouse Craft in Berea, Kentucky. **page 16**. ABOVE RIGHT: A piece from Terumi Saito's *Intertwine* project combines hand-built stoneware and naturally dyed silk woven on a backstrap loom, 11 x 12 x 8 in. **page 74**. LEFT: Yukiya Izumita used clay with a lot of salt to make this *Sekisoh Tea Bowl*, 4 x 4.75 x 3.75 in., part of an extraordinary ceramics collection at a Frank Lloyd Wright house in Idaho. **page 34**.

TOP LEFT: Photo by Cynthia Main. TOP RIGHT: Photo by Terumi Saito. BOTTOM: Photo by Gabe Border. OPPOSITE: Photo courtesy of Olympia and JO-HS.

Using her backstrap loom, Terumi Saito weaves a sculpture while a 2023 resident at the Houston Center for Contemporary Craft. She takes us on a tour of her home studio on page 74.

Photo by Katy Anderson, courtesy of Houston Center for Contemporary Craft.

Weave. To weave is to entwine separate elements in order to create something new. As humans, we weave together materials, stories, and even our lives—often into patterns that surprise and delight. In this issue, you'll find artists and makers who employ weaving techniques to create stunning works. You'll discover baskets lovingly fashioned for our tenderest moments, brooms that make cleaning more joyous, and sculptural works in textiles, wood, and clay that tell stories about migration and place. And you'll learn about backstrap weaving from a maker who integrates her work into an apartment she's turned into an artistic sanctuary.

You'll also find 30 pages devoted to celebrating some of today's most accomplished American craftspeople. Every two years the American Craft Council Awards are given to artists who've been chosen as recipients by their peers. Also honored are craft advocates, scholars, curators, and philanthropists. These are people who've devoted their lives to craft, and it's a joy to recognize them.

We're also delighted to share the story of Teater's Knoll, an artist's studio in Idaho designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, and how the current homeowner's collection of 21st-century Japanese and American ceramics feels right at home. After craft historian and author Glenn Adamson brought us this story, he searched our archives and discovered very little coverage of craft in the Gem State. "In 1949," back when *American Craft* was known as *Craft Horizons*, Adamson told us, the magazine ran a story "about Glenn and Lee Wright of Sun Valley, who created domestic accessories out of 'beaver-wood'—bits of poplar shaped by the animals as they work on their dams." There were also brief mentions, he continued, "of George Nakashima, who discovered his métier of woodworking at a wartime Japanese internment camp in the state; Craig Zweifel, who made glass art at his workshop near Ketchum for thirty years—and the odd listing of a local fair or museum exhibit." In other words, not much.

Here at *American Craft* we're endeavoring to expand our coverage of work created in all parts of this nation. We rely on you, our readers, to let us know about artists and makers you admire—and people whose lives are enriched because they live with the handcrafted. We welcome your suggestions for stories. Learn more on the Writer's Guidelines page on our website: craftcouncil.org/Magazine/Writers-Guidelines.

I hope you'll find this to be a rich and varied issue, one that will inspire you to seek and treasure the handmade.

Karen

KAREN OLSON / Editor in Chief

american craft

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Printed in the U.S.A.

LEGAL

American Craft®
(ISSN-0194-8008) is published by the American Craft Council
1224 Marshall St. NE, Suite 200
Minneapolis, MN 55413
craftcouncil.org

Periodicals postage paid at Minneapolis, MN, and additional mailing offices.

ACC membership rate is $48 per year and includes a subscription to *American Craft*, at craftcouncil.org/Subscribe
Canadian and foreign orders: email for rates. Subscription correspondence:
membership@craftcouncil.org
American Craft
P.O. Box 3000
Denville, NJ 07834
844-653-3989 or 612-206-3131
For change of address, give old and new addresses with zip code. Allow six weeks for change to take effect.

American Craft Council publishes *American Craft* magazine on a quarterly basis, but reserves the right to change the number of issues in an annual term, including discontinuing any format and substituting and/or modifying the manner in which the subscription is distributed. The opinions expressed in *American Craft* are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the American Craft Council.

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Minneapolis, MN 55413

American Craft (formerly *Craft Horizons*) is indexed in the Art Index, Design and Applied Arts Index, and Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature. Book reviews are also indexed in Book Review Index.

POSTMASTER:
Address changes to:
American Craft
P.O. Box 3000
Denville, NJ 07834

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

It was from the Ippodo Gallery in New York City that craft historian **Glenn Adamson** (left) learned about architectural writer Henry Whiting, who has been collecting 21st-century Japanese and American pots and bowls and housing them at Teater's Knoll, his Frank Lloyd Wright–designed home in Bliss, Idaho. Adamson thought a story about Whiting's collection, housed in a "little-known, remote structure by America's most famous Japanese-influenced architect," would be of interest to our readers. We thought so too. For this story, we sent award-winning architectural and interiors photographer **Gabe Border** (right) to Teater's Knoll. Based in Boise, Idaho, Border has worked with numerous architecture firms, and his work has been featured in publications including *Dwell*. **page 34.**

Minneapolis-based **Kristi Anderson** is a consulting designer for *American Craft* and has been the art director for magazines including *Utne Reader* and *Minnesota Alumni*. Her design of the 2022 ACC Awards section in our Fall 2022 issue won an Ozzie for design at the 2023 Folio Awards. This year she again hired photographers across the country to make portraits of the 2024 ACC awardees and designed the award pages in this issue. **page 44.**

M. Ferreira Vogel writes about Cassandra Mayela's woven works, which document the stories of Venezuelan migrants. Ferreira Vogel, who splits her time between several cities including Washington, DC, is an independent art and history researcher and writer who often focuses on textiles, socio-ecological conflicts, and underrepresented histories related to Latin America. **page 24.**

Terumi Saito, originally from Japan, has studied and practiced the ancient craft of backstrap weaving in the forests of Peru and Guatemala, where she anchored her mobile looms to trees. Today she creates her cascading works in a light-filled home, located in a former toy factory in Brooklyn. Here, she takes us on a tour of her apartment studio, which doubles as a gallery. **page 74.**

FROM TOP DOWN: Photo courtesy of the John Michael Kohler Arts Center. Photo by Emily Border. Photo courtesy of Kristi Anderson. Photo by M. Ferreira Vogel. Photo by Darin Buzon.

Brilliant! I showed the Summer 2024 issue to friends who are not subscribed. They were so impressed. It's likely that they may join!

—Anne Jaques, Lewes, Delaware

I am always inspired, engaged, and appreciative of the art in the magazine.

—Eileen Kelly, Gainesville, Georgia

I enjoyed the Summer issue of the magazine. I would like to see more instances of upcoming exhibits/shows to see crafts.

—Joan Hutten, Fairfax, Virginia

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Get American Craft Council's inspiring emails—including the monthly *Craft Dispatch* and artist interviews in *The Queue*—at craftcouncil.org/Signup.

Talk to Us

We welcome your letters and comments at letters@craftcouncil.org.
Find us on social at @craftcouncil.

Letters from Readers

Savoring the Summer 2024 Issue

I loved the spotlight on Minnesota ("The Scene: Craft in the Twin Cities"). Can you do one on the DC craft scene? Can you do an issue spotlighting craft jewelry?

—Gail Hochhauser, Washington, DC

Editors respond: We're already working on the next iteration of The Scene, which will run in the Winter 2025 issue and will focus on Baltimore, which is right in DC's backyard.

American Craft Forums

After each issue of *American Craft* is published, ACC hosts an online forum during which artists and others discuss topics related to each issue's theme. The forum "Knives Out: Craft of the Bladesmith"—a spin on Summer 2024 theme *savor*—took place on July 18. It featured several knife makers who discussed technique as well as inspiration, and was moderated by James Beard Award finalist Chef Yia Vang of Union Hmong Kitchen in Minneapolis. A recording of that conversation, and all of our forums, can be found at craftcouncil.org/Forums.

Three knifemakers participated in the Summer Forum. LEFT TO RIGHT: A set of knives by Virginia-based Vu Nguyen. Everett Noel creates his knives in an off-the-grid California cabin. Bob Kramer, who lives in Washington, used insert welding to create these artful works.

BOTTOM, LEFT TO RIGHT: Photo by Vu Nguyen. Photo by Everett Noel. Photo by Jess Peterson.

ABOVE: Bibi Seck and Ayse Birsel's *Madame Dakar Chair*, designed for Moroso, will appear in *Take a Seat*. BELOW: Benjamin Dory's 2024 plastic and stainless steel *Orbit Bracelet*, 1.5 x 6.25 x 6.25 in., is part of *Bracelets, Bangles & Cuffs*.

Craft Happenings

ONGOING

Take a Seat: Understanding the Modern Chair
Philadelphia Museum of Art
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
May 25–October 20, 2024

Wendell Castle's *Nirvana Chair* is bulbous, curvy, and deep purple. Tom Dixon's *Pylon Chair* resembles an electrical grid gone wild. The *Meedo Chair*, by Jomo Tariku, is basically an Afro comb you can sit on. These three chairs and other quirky masterpieces of contemporary design from the museum's permanent collection celebrate innovation in sculptural seating.

Bracelets, Bangles & Cuffs: 1948–2024
Metal Museum
Memphis, Tennessee
June 9–November 17, 2024

One goal of this show is to demonstrate how much cultural, political, and personal meaning can be wrapped around a wrist. Along with displaying a wide variety of forms and artistic intentions, the more than 90 works by international artists, spanning 76 years, also provide a showcase of traditional metalsmithing, experimental methods, new processes, and unconventional materials.

TOP: Photo courtesy of the Philadelphia Museum of Art. BOTTOM: Photo courtesy of the artist.

AUGUST OPENINGS

Architectural Pottery: Ceramics for a Modern Landscape
American Museum of Ceramic Art
Pomona, California
August 17, 2024–March 2, 2025

In 1949, Los Angeles ceramist and professor LaGardo Tackett challenged his students to create ceramic planters that would harmonize with the economical flat-roofed, open-plan, wide-windowed houses being built after World War II. The ultimate result was the Architectural Pottery company, whose products are on display here, along with ceramics, drawings, and photos from 13 other artists and designers whose work helps to explain this chapter of midcentury design.

Architectural Pottery's midcentury ceramics will be featured at the American Museum of Ceramic Art.

Magdalena Suarez Frimkess: The Finest Disregard
Los Angeles County Museum of Art
Los Angeles, California
August 18, 2024–January 5, 2025

This Venezuela-born, LA-based artist, who trained as a painter, printmaker, and sculptor, found fame with ceramics that celebrate the quirkier elements of everyday life, including cartoons. Multiple veins of humor, art history, and autobiography enliven this set of works covering five decades of her long career, including pieces created in collaboration with her husband, ceramist Michael Frimkess.

WEAR | Contemporary Jewelry: Wonderment, Seduction, and Artifice
Penland Gallery
Penland, North Carolina
August 20–October 5, 2024

Penland's annual show of the very latest in design and material usage in jewelry invites established and emerging makers from the US and the UK to exhibit work that organizers say is "futuristic and fantastical, slick, shimmery, and full of opulent trickery."

Magdalena Suarez Frimkess's *Mickey Mouse Circus Jar with Minnie Mouse Finial* will appear at LACMA with other whimsical works from her long career.

Sascha Brastoff: California King
Everson Museum of Art
Syracuse, New York
Opening August 31, 2024

The Everson presents the first comprehensive solo museum show of this mind-bogglingly versatile and free-spirited artist. Best known for designing midcentury dinnerware, Brastoff was also a mainstay of LA's queer underground, performed drag as the character GI Carmen Miranda, and created religious art, jewelry, and sculptures (some of which appeared in the sci-fi classic *Forbidden Planet*).

SEPTEMBER OPENINGS

Carolyn Mazloomi: Whole Cloth, Narratives in Black and White
Claire Oliver Gallery
New York, New York
September 3–November 16, 2024

"These are not the quilts that grandma made," says Mazloomi, one of the pioneers of social justice in quilting. "I create art that deals with tough subjects that people may not normally want to talk about." Her quilts, stitched in high-contrast black and white, address issues such as police reform, gun violence, literacy in Black neighborhoods, and voting rights.

Jiyong Lee's 2024 glass sculpture *Green Ovoid Diatom* will be shown at Duane Reed Gallery, 8 x 11 x 8 in.

Jiyong Lee
Duane Reed Gallery
St. Louis, Missouri
September 6–October 12, 2024

The abstract glassworks that this lauded artist, who teaches at Southern Illinois University, presents in this show are both translucent and opaque, and they shimmer and transform as viewers walk around them. Suggesting living cells, they embody the interplay of clarity and mystery that the artist sees in biology—and in life itself.

Hugh Hayden: Homecoming
Nasher Sculpture Center
Dallas, Texas
September 14, 2024–January 5, 2025

Hayden comments mordantly on America by creating wooden objects with surreal, often threatening details. For this show, he will re-create Kidsville, a playground in his Dallas-area neighborhood. He'll cover the nostalgic forms of old wooden playground equipment—mostly gone today—with thorns, suggesting the anxieties and discomforts that accompany the joys of a Black childhood.

Sublime Light:
Tapestry Art of DY Begay
National Museum of the American Indian
Washington, DC
September 20, 2024–Summer 2025

Diné artist Begay weaves tapestries that combine innovations in fiber art and the Native traditions in which she was trained, creating, in the organizers' words, "art that expresses a non-Western way of being to a contemporary audience." This exhibition, the first retrospective of her three-decades-plus career, showcases 48 of her most important works.

OCTOBER OPENINGS

The Future of Clay
Clay Studio
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
October 5–December 31, 2024

As a part of the Clay Studio's 50th anniversary programming, curators worked closely with artists to design this show about where clay is headed. Artists Morel Doucet, Chase Kahwinhut Earles, Nicki Green, Kristy Moreno, Holly Wilson, Cesar Viveros, Jolie Ngo, and Anne Adams will contribute work exploring technical and artistic change and growing social and ethnic diversity in this important craft sector.

So Near, So Far: Ryan Preciado
Palm Springs Art Museum
Palm Springs, California
October 5, 2024–May 12, 2025

In 1932, a Nicaraguan carpenter named Manuel Sandoval joined Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin Fellowship, hoping to train as an architect—but Wright and others employed him solely to do fine woodwork for their projects. In this exhibition, his first solo museum show, Los Angeles artist Preciado shows furniture, lighting, and sculpture inspired by and in conversation with Sandoval's exquisite work.

Nancy Callan: Forces at Play
Museum of Glass
Tacoma, Washington
October 5, 2024–Summer 2025

Callan is a glass artist whose sources of inspiration—pop art, graphic design, textile patterns, and natural and cosmic phenomena—are practically limitless. The show will group her witty, technical, and profound work thematically, and the pieces—including new ones commissioned by the museum—will be accompanied by studio vignettes, source material, and videos.

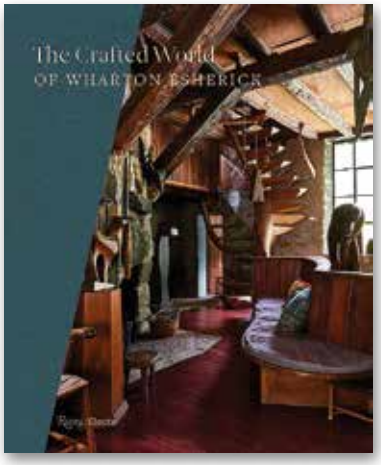
NOVEMBER OPENING

Mark Sfirri: La Famiglia
Museum for Art in Wood
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
November 1, 2024–February 16, 2025

Using his highly spontaneous "flow-state" approach to woodturning and carving, Sfirri has created a series of new sculptures that, in the words of the organizers of the show, "[present] a way of thinking about the definition of family and its meanings through different lenses"—lenses that include ethnicity, generational change, love, and dysfunction.

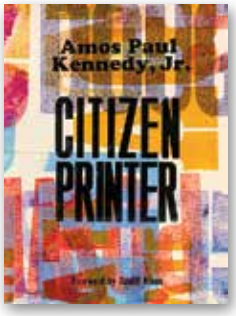
These 29 figures in Mark Sfirri's 2021 *Ellis Islanders* series will appear in his new exhibition examining immigration and family at the Museum for Art in Wood.

TOP: Photo courtesy of the artist. BOTTOM: Photo courtesy of the artist.



Wharton Esherick, widely considered the father of the studio furniture movement, began as a printmaker before moving into three dimensions. Between 1926 and 1966, he built an extraordinary sculptural environment in the form of his studio and home on Valley Forge Mountain near Philadelphia. This lavishly photographed book explores the sculpted and crafted elements of the beautifully idiosyncratic building, which fuse expressionist and modernist dynamism with a profound feel for the soul of wood.

THE CRAFTED WORLD OF WHARTON ESHERICK
By Sarah Archer, Colin Fanning, Ann Glasscock, Holly Gore, and Emily Zilber; photographs by Joshua McHugh
Rizzoli Electa, 2024
$65



AMOS PAUL KENNEDY, JR.: CITIZEN PRINTER
Edited by Amos Paul Kennedy, Jr.; foreword by Austin Kleon; text by Myron Beasley and Kelly Walters
Letterform Archive Books, 2024
$60

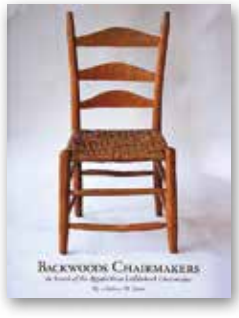
"I've always considered myself . . . a social activist with a press," says Kennedy. Born in 1948, he chucked a corporate job at age 40 when he discovered letterpress and its power to embody his convictions about Blackness, justice, and the democratization of knowledge. The freedom-granting energy of Kennedy's unrestrained, wildly colorful posters, bearing strong messages such as "Freedom Is Never Given; It Is Won," fills this volume, along with essays by scholars and a powerful manifesto by the artist.

JAPANESE BLACKSMITHING: TRADITIONAL FORGING METHODS FOR KNIVES, SWORDS, AND TOOLS
By Rudolf Dick
Schiffer Craft, 2024
$24.99

Japanese blacksmithing has produced some of the world's finest swords. This comprehensive guide to smithing in the Land of the Rising Sun gives plenty of space to sword-making, but also explains methods for crafting hammers, chisels, axes, hatchets, machetes, sickles, fish knives, folding knives, and straight razors. Tables detail materials, chemistry, and temperatures for working with metal, and more than 150 color photos illuminate forging processes via glimpses into makers' workshops.

WELL WORN: VISIBLE MENDING FOR THE CLOTHES YOU LOVE
By Skye Pennant
Princeton Architectural Press, 2024
$24.95

White stitches on a pair of jeans. A tan triangle on dark leggings. Blue, yellow, and red spots of darning on a green sweater. These are a few of the mendings celebrated and explained by Pennant, who advocates for visible mending as a way to keep worn clothing out of the waste bin—and as a colorful craft in its own right. Organized by clothing type, the book offers color photos and easy-to-follow drawings to guide the aspiring mender.



BACKWOODS CHAIRMAKERS: IN SEARCH OF THE APPALACHIAN LADDERBACK CHAIRMAKER
By Andrew D. Glenn; foreword by Curtis Buchanan
Lost Art Press, 2023
$47

Maine-based furniture maker Glenn wondered if factory production had put the traditional ladder-back chair makers of Appalachia, who sold only to friends and the occasional tourist, out of business. When he ventured into the region with a camera and a tape recorder, he discovered more than 20 makers still active. This book documents their survival and their craftsmanship in profiles rich in quotes from the artists themselves, illustrated by scores of color photos.

Evocations. Staff from the American Craft Council share five craft objects that spark memories and emotions.

"**Tamara Murphy's** incandescent ***Plasma Lamp No. 1 (Earth Light)*** evokes fond childhood memories of touching the plasma globe at the science museum, the tendrils of plasma seemingly magically rushing to my hand. Murphy, who lives in Chico, California, fashioned local clay into a sort of inverted pleated lampshade and blew the amber glass and flooded it with xenon and neon gas to make it glow."

—Shivaun Watchorn, associate editor, *American Craft*

@godspajamas

Dimensions: 18 x 6 x 6 in.

Photo by Dani Padgett Watson.

Interior and exterior views of Larissa Huff's *Hurricane Cabinet*.

ABOVE: "Not long after Hurricane Ian swept across south Florida in September 2022, destroying the homes and belongings of her family and friends, Philadelphia-based furniture maker **Larissa Huff** created ***Hurricane Cabinet*** out of ash and walnut with handmade brass toggles. Designed to be hung 7 feet up, above floodwaters, Huff outfitted the cabinet with inlaid scupper drains and cubbies and drawers for small sentimental items. I admire this piece for its elegance, ingenuity, and wholeheartedness." —Jennifer Vogel, senior editor, *American Craft*

larissahuff.com | @larissa.huff
Dimensions: 8 x 49 x 11 in.

TOP LEFT: "The natural beauty and modern sensibility of this necklace stopped me in my tracks at ACC's Baltimore show in March. Wenjing Yang of Portland, Oregon–based **A Nod to Design** told me the untitled **necklace** was her attempt to recapture the joy and hope she felt on the High Line in New York City when she realized nature and concrete metropolises can coexist. She succeeded—I felt the joy and hope seeing it, and a sense of peace." —Karen Olson, editor in chief, *American Craft*

anodtodesign.com | @a.nod.to.design
Dimensions: 32 x 1.25 in.

MIDDLE LEFT: "**Aimee Lee** uses traditional Korean *hanji* paper to create dress forms, woven books, and basket-like sculptures in her studio near Cleveland. She used the methods of *jiseung*, where strips of hanji are rolled into cords and woven into forms, to make 2015's ***Sky Duck***. The work is tedious, 'like a full body workout,' Lee once wrote, but the contrast between the mind-boggling effort by the maker and the simple, vibrant forms that result is what makes them so evocative."
—Michael Fallon, publisher and director of membership

aimeelee.net
Dimensions: 5.25 x 7.25 x 3 in.

BOTTOM LEFT: "**Katayoun Amjadi's *Soup Can Mug*** caught my eye as I wandered through her Northeast Minneapolis studio during Art-A-Whirl 2022. With its unmistakable soup-can ridges and vintage rose decoration, the mug immediately evoked memories of grandmothers, kitchens, and the simplest of meals. Amjadi's work defamiliarizes food items and household objects in a way that prompts reexamination of associations and memories." —Kasey Payette, communications specialist

katayoun.com | @katceramics
Dimensions: 4.75 x 2.5 x 2.5 in.

TOP LEFT: Photo by Kris LeBoeuf, courtesy of A Nod to Design. MIDDLE LEFT: Photo by Stefan Hagen, courtesy of the artist. BOTTOM LEFT: Photo courtesy of the artist. TOP RIGHT: Photos by Andre Rucker.

Beyond the Loom

BY ACC LIBRARIAN BETH GOODRICH

Within the realm of contemporary art, weaving is having a moment. Several exhibitions, such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art's recent *Weaving Abstraction in Ancient and Modern Art*, the National Gallery of Art's *Woven Histories: Textiles and Modern Abstraction*, and the currently running *Subversive, Skilled, Sublime: Fiber Art by Women* at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, place textile arts and weaving firmly in the realm of fine art.

A shift in the approach to handweaving began with the industrial age. Later weavers who were trained at the German Bauhaus, such as Anni Albers, were instilled with a sense of freedom to experiment with the qualities of different materials. By midcentury, power weaving took over the production of fabric for interiors and furniture, which afforded weavers an option to design textiles for production or to produce work for nonutilitarian purposes.

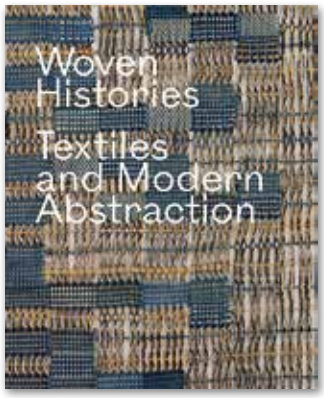
Long dismissed in the Western art canon as "domestic arts," woven works came to be recognized as aesthetic objects in the 1960s. The Museum of Contemporary Crafts (now the Museum of Arts and Design in New York City), which was founded by the precursor to the American Craft Council, mounted the exhibition *Woven Forms* in 1963. It featured the work of Alice Adams, Sheila Hicks, Lenore Tawney, Dorian Zachai, and Claire Zeisler, who created pieces on the loom that were not shaped by the loom. In 1969 the Museum of Modern Art presented the seminal fiber art exhibition *Wall Hangings* that viewed the works "within the context of twentieth-century art." And in 1972 the Museum of Contemporary Crafts pushed their explorations further in *Sculpture in Fiber*, examining structural works created off the loom by such artists as Françoise Grossen, Ferne Jacobs, Ed Rossbach, Neda Al-Hilali, Barbara Shawcroft, Zeisler, and others.

Fifty years later, weaving is still celebrated for its power as an art form. There are plenty of resources to explore, both contemporary and historical. A published catalog of the National Gallery's *Woven Histories* is available from the University of Chicago Press. Fine examples of abstract weaving can also be found in *Fiber Art Now* magazine, and Australia's *Textile Fibre Forum* showcases particularly exciting and innovative examples of textile arts.

For historical perspectives on abstract weaving, you can find an interview with French-American artist Louise Bourgeois, where she expresses her views of MoMA's *Wall Hangings,* and poet and writer Rose Slivka's take on *Woven Forms* in our digitized issues of *Craft Horizons* (which is now *American Craft*). Go to digital.craftcouncil.org to read more.

Fiber artist Claire Zeisler with her sculpture *Red Forest I*, which was included in the 1972 Museum of Contemporary Crafts exhibition *Sculpture in Fiber.*

THIS PAGE and OPPOSITE RIGHT: Images courtesy of the American Craft Council Library & Archives. OPPOSITE LEFT, TOP and BOTTOM: Covers courtesy of the publishers. MIDDLE: Cover courtesy of the artist.



TOP RIGHT: The 1963 exhibition *Woven Forms* at the Museum of Contemporary Crafts included works by fiber artist Lenore Tawney. LEFT, FROM TOP: *Woven Histories* catalog, available from University of Chicago Press at press.uchicago.edu. Nicole Dextras's 2018 digital collage, *Chronos and Yucca*, on the cover of *Fiber Art Now*. Australia's *Textile Fibre Forum*.

About the ACC Library

The American Craft Council Library & Archives in Minneapolis contains the country's most comprehensive archive of contemporary American craft history, with more than 20,000 print publications, files on nearly 4,000 craft artists, four major archival collections, and a robust digital collection. For information about joining the Friends of the ACC Library & Archives, contact ACC Executive Director Andrea Specht at aspecht@craftcouncil.org.

More on New Weaving

To read more on this topic, check out these *Craft Horizons* articles in our digital collection:

"The New Tapestry" by Rose Slivka, March/April 1963, page 10
craftcouncil.org/TheNewTapestry

"The New Weaving" by Jack Lenor Larsen, March/April 1969, page 22
craftcouncil.org/TheNewWeaving

"The Fabric of Construction" by Louise Bourgeois, March/April 1969, page 31
craftcouncil.org/FabricOfConstruction

"When Will Weaving Be an Art Form?" by Virginia Hoffman, August 1970, page 19
craftcouncil.org/WeavingAsArt

Clean Sweep. The American broom industry took off nearly two centuries ago to serve a rapidly growing nation. But after the North American Free Trade Agreement took effect in 1994 and cheap imported brooms became the norm, it all but died. All this time, individual makers and small companies have continued the tradition of handcrafting brooms. The five makers here make woven brooms—frequently using locally gathered materials—that are built to last and beautiful to display.

At **Sunhouse Craft**, housed in a historic storefront in downtown Berea, Kentucky, Cynthia Main weaves organic linen and cotton thread and Tampico fiber from agave plants into versatile turkey wing brooms. This one, measuring 11 x 5.5 x 1.5 in., is accompanied by a handmade leather dustpan available in black and natural, 7.5 x 7.75 in. / $45 for the set

sunhousecraft.com

Husband-and-wife team Marlow and Diana Gates of North Carolina–based **Friendswood Brooms** are the second generation of a storied broom family. Marlow's father, Ralph, learned the trade in 1973. This double-headed wedding broom, 55 x 16 x 4 in., combines a twisty persimmon wood handle and broomcorn criss-crossing in a loving embrace, a fitting gift for a new union. / $650

friendswoodbrooms.com

LEFT: Photo by Cynthia Main. RIGHT: Photo by Diana Gates. OPPOSITE LEFT: Photo by Husk Brooms. OPPOSITE MIDDLE: Photo by Jamie Lea Bertsch. OPPOSITE RIGHT: Photo by Melinda Rivers.

Designed specifically for tackling hard-to-reach corners and nooks, **Husk Brooms**' cobwebber brooms, 36 x 3 x 3 in., combine long pieces of wispy broomcorn and a loop of manila rope, making them appealing to hang on a wall as a piece of art. Tia Tumminello, the Pittsburgh-based artist behind Husk, aims for her work to help us "shift away from plastic tools in homes and sacred spaces." / $45

huskbrooms.com

Pattern designer and artist Jamie Lea Bertsch of Port Washington, Wisconsin–based **SWEVEN** braids Tampico fiber into this round whisk table broom for cleaning workbenches, countertops, and other surfaces, 7.5 x 2 x 2 in. Pictured here in poppy, the polished cotton cord that fastens the braid is also available in mint, mauve, and brown. / $21

jamieleabertsch.com

Dustin Cecil describes his hearth broom—made from broomcorn and a turned wooden handle with bark intact, 36 x 6 x 3 in.—as ideal for "sweeping medium sized messes." Cecil, a woodworker based in Olive Hill, Kentucky, has been making **Broomtown** brooms since 2018 and teaches workshops throughout the region, inducting participants as "citizens of Broomtown" upon completion. / $65

etsy.com/shop/broomtown

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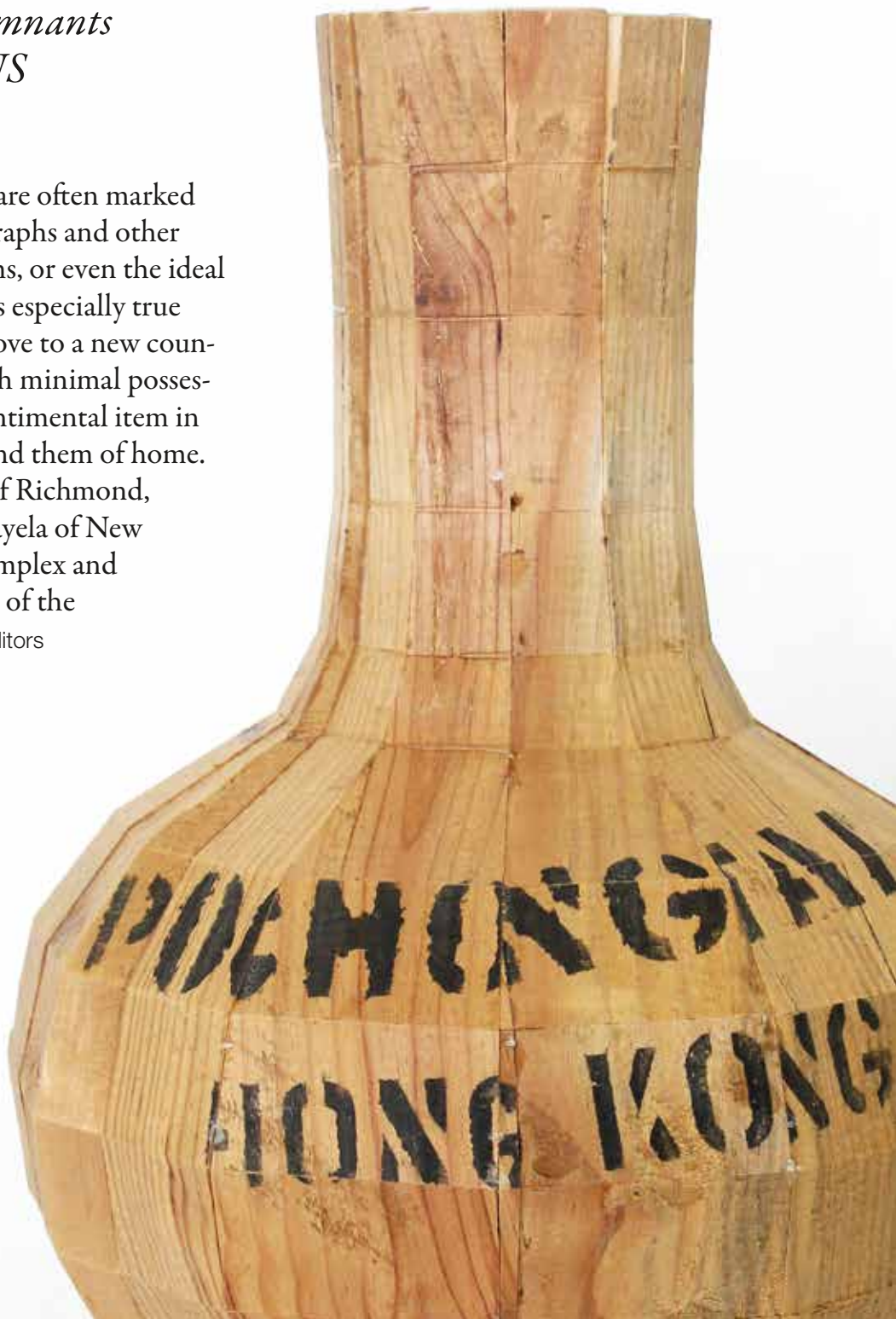
Researched and written by Shivaun Watchorn, associate editor of *American Craft*.

the things

they carried

Two artists weave remnants of migration to the US into new works.

Life's momentous journeys are often marked by objects, whether photographs and other mementos, good luck charms, or even the ideal handbag or backpack. That's especially true when people uproot and move to a new country. Migrants may travel with minimal possessions, but often there is a sentimental item in the mix, something to remind them of home. Two artists—Vivian Chiu of Richmond, Virginia, and Cassandra Mayela of New York City—have crafted complex and moving works from vestiges of the migrant experience. —The Editors



Vivian Chiu transformed pine crate wood from Wing on Wo & Co. into *Tianqiuping Vase I*, 2024, 16 x 11 x 11 in. OPPOSITE: A swimsuit top and a shirt collar are woven into Cassandra Mayela's *Maps of Displacement Vol I: NYC 2021*, 90 x 144 x 2 in.

Photo by Vivian Chiu. OPPOSITE: Photo courtesy of Olympia and JO-HS.

containing memories

Richmond, Virginia–based woodworker Vivian Chiu created vessels from wooden shipping crates collected by Wing on Wo & Co., a store that opened in 1890 in New York City's Chinatown.

BY CLAIRE VOON

The cargo arrived in January 2023: a truckful of hardwood panels, driven from Manhattan's Chinatown to Richmond, Virginia, where Vivian Chiu received them at her studio. Stenciled on their weathered surfaces were numbers and a shipping company's name, in Chinese characters—marks of their past lives as crates that ferried Chinese porcelain and other wares across the Pacific to America. In Richmond, they were raw material for Chiu, an artist and woodworker, who sized up her challenge ahead. "None of it was straight or flat; the wood was warped; it had different thicknesses," she says. "It carried the mark of human hands."

By that summer, Chiu had transformed several panels into sculptures through her own labor-intensive process. The wood is no longer rough-edged but streamlined, contoured into elegant replicas of traditional Chinese vases,

"I'm paying homage to everyone who's made that journey, including my parents." —Vivian Chiu

ABOVE: A stack of Wing on Wo & Co. crates wait to be pulled apart and reassembled at Chiu's studio in Richmond, Virginia. RIGHT: A photo of the crates in Hong Kong circa the 1980s. OPPOSITE: *Planter Vase*, 2024, made from pine crate wood from Wing on Wo, sits on a rosewood stand, 8.5 x 10 x 10 in.

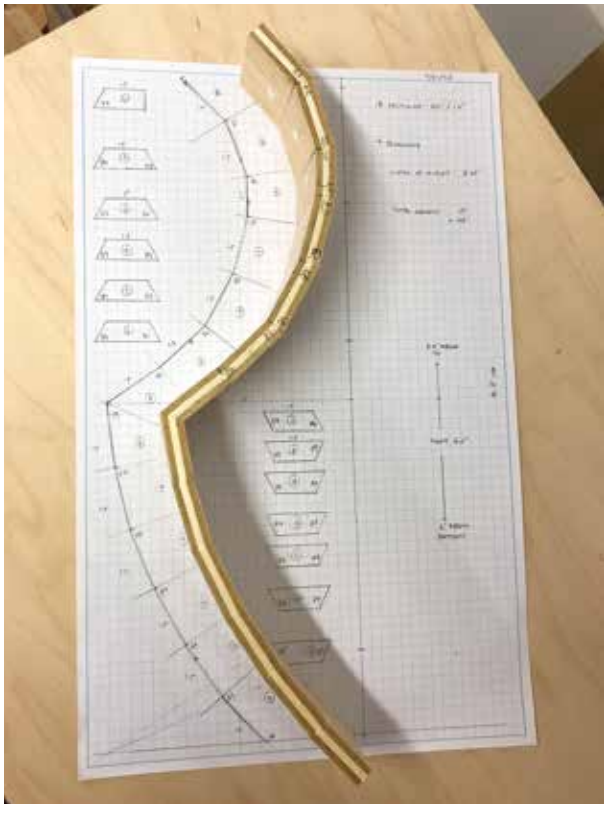
LEFT: Photo by Vivian Chiu. RIGHT: Photo courtesy of the Lum Family Archives. OPPOSITE: Photo by Vivian Chiu.

from pear-shaped vessels to a bulbous double-gourd piece. They are tributes to not only the crates' former contents but also the business that for decades received those shipments, before finally gifting the crates to Chiu: Wing on Wo & Co., the oldest store in New York City's Chinatown, managed today by fifth-generation owner Mei Lum.

Left unfinished to display traces of their utilitarian pasts, Chiu's sculptures evoke the intertwined migration paths of objects and the lives of those who've cared for them. "By elevating this material, I'm elevating the journey of how they came to America, and how Mei's family did that immigration journey," Chiu says. "I'm paying homage to everyone who's made that journey, including my parents." They and Chiu's grandparents "were the crate," she adds, "and what wear and tear they endured to protect me." She titled the series *Passages (those that carried us)*.

Born in Los Angeles, Chiu emigrated to her ancestral homeland of Hong Kong at age 3. She returned to the US to study at the Rhode Island School of Design, where she majored in furniture design and found her love of woodworking. "It's the language I speak most clearly in," she says. "I love the tools, and my hands and brain gravitate toward the techniques." After graduating in 2011, she moved to New York to assist the sculptor Ursula von Rydingsvard and later enrolled in Columbia University's MFA program. Her work has always drawn on personal experiences, reflecting in particular her identity as a queer Asian American: undulating, split-turned sculptures that explore tensions of desire and subjectivity; interlocking, abstract forms whose optical illusions play subtly with notions of camouflage and passing.

More representational, *Passages* is a formal pivot. It is also Chiu's most outward-looking project yet, evoking generations



LEFT TOP: Chiu arranges crate pieces in her studio in Richmond, Virginia. LEFT BOTTOM: This plywood model for part of a vessel matches the angles in Chiu's hand-drafted drawing. OPPOSITE LEFT: *Bowl with Nails*, 2024, 7 x 14.5 x 14.5 in. OPPOSITE RIGHT: Chiu's *Huluping Vase I*, 20.5 x 9.5 x 9.5 in., was presented at the 2024 *This Side Up* exhibition at the Houston Center for Contemporary Craft.

of upheaval, separation, and arduous rebuilding that diasporic groups experience as they seek better lives outside their home countries. "The material is the main character," she says, noting that it symbolizes a long span of time and many, many people. "This was me speaking through this symbol. . . . I was the vessel for this story."

Bearing the Marks of History

The story *Passages* tells is of heritage kept alive across borders and generations through materials: wood as a kind of refuge and container for memories, and porcelain as an enduring source of survival in a foreign land, serving practically as merchandise people could sell and culturally as a tangible tether to traditions.

One of this story's many threads begins in the year 1964, when Mei Lum's grandmother took over Wing on Wo, established in 1890 as a general store. Nancy and her husband, Shuck, traveled to Hong Kong, selecting porcelain at showrooms to sell to the Chinese immigrants in Lower Manhattan who, encountering racism and repression in a foreign land, were building their own haven. Lum's father, Gary, helped around the Mott Street store from a young age and has strong memories of artisanal goods arriving in the crates. With his future father-in-law, he cracked open and broke down the boxes, saving every nail and using the panels to construct shelving in the basement. The experience was formative for the American-born teen who, as the youngest of five, had observed his family's assimilation in the US and was figuring out his own identity in a constantly evolving Chinatown. "That was my bonding with my father-in-law," Gary Lum says. "It was my connection with mainland China, a tactile experience of something that came from mainland China."

The old wood never left the premises, even as Wing on Wo began replacing crates with cardboard around the new millennium. In 2016, Mei Lum took ownership of the shop and launched the W.O.W. Project, a satellite initiative that resists displacement and gentrification in Chinatown through socially oriented collaborations. One effort has involved giving artists the crate wood to repurpose—so the material has "a regenerative life for the community," says Lum. The effort ramped up as W.O.W. prepared to renovate the store's basement, leading Lum to reach out to Chiu in 2022. "Her work just seemed perfect in terms of her own migration history and explorations around identity."

TOP: Photo by Sarah Darro. BOTTOM: Photo by Vivian Chiu.

Cutting and Reshaping the Wood

For Chiu, the idea to turn the crates into vessels was clear. She knew Wing on Wo from living in New York and wanted to create works that honor the wood's patina and stenciling, themselves records of history. Executing her vision was harder, given the material's condition. With the advice of sculptor Yuri Kobayashi at the Center for Furniture Craftsmanship (learn more on page 60), she developed a technique to take apart and reconfigure each crate while preserving its outer surface. The process is adaptable to vessels of various shapes, but it is particularly challenging because the aged pine is far from uniform and can have twists, knots, and cracks.

A single finished vessel may comprise more than 200 small wood pieces that Chiu builds up in segments, creating 12 narrow columns, or staves, that she glues together in a circle. But first she has to deconstruct each crate panel by removing the nails and cross braces that hold the planks together. She then levels out the planks' edges with a jointer before gluing them into a single, more uniform plane. Using a table saw, she makes dozens of cuts as if following the lines of a warped grid: she slices the plane into equal columns, then makes short cuts across each column, varying the angle of the cut as she moves from top to bottom. Each column is then rebuilt as Chiu glues fragments on top of one another, their beveled edges now meeting to gradually form a curving, rather than straight, wall.

With hand-drawn sketches as her blueprints—and many sticker labels—Chiu meticulously tracks the positions of each fragment as she works. "I can't take a break for too long or else I'll lose focus," she says. "If one angle is wrong, it messes up the whole piece." Once she has 12 near-identical columns, she uses a band saw to make 15-degree-angle cuts along each long edge. This final refinement allows her to connect the staves into a rounded form using glue, masking tape, and hose clamps.

Due to its age, the wood can sometimes crack as she saws. But rather than tossing the material, she strengthens the fissures with glue. "It's an honoring of the architecture," she says, "just like paying homage to those before you, because sometimes you forget what it took to get here."

This spring, Chiu sent several vessels to Wing on Wo, where they were exhibited among merchandise. For Mei Lum, their presence felt "like a return, like they're returning home. We think a lot about W.O.W. as an institution in Chinatown, facilitating these cycles of return for diasporic folks. . . . [T]his material [is] making different journeys, and this is another cycle back."

For Gary Lum, the works animate another crucial piece of family history: his father's grueling voyage in 1920 to America from a mountain village near Guangzhou, as a stowaway on a cargo ship—where he was hidden in a crate. "They embody the soul and spirit of China for me, traveling from homeland to a strange land, and now returning into a shape and form that's more relatable to China and the Chinese experience," he says. Unpacking Chiu's works, feeling the familiar crates refigured, summoned decades of memories, past and present layered in the material. "Touching them? It was electric."

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vivianchiustudio.com | @viv_chiu
wingonwoand.co | @wingonwoandco

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

Photos by Vivian Chiu.

weaving their stories

Brooklyn-based artist Cassandra Mayela weaves the garments and sentimental items of Venezuelan migrants into tapestries that tell their stories.

BY M. FERREIRA VOGEL

While growing up on Isla de Margarita, an island off the coast of Venezuela, Cassandra Mayela reworked her clothing instinctively. "My mom was terrified of me and my clothes because I would bleach them or paint them or cut them," she says. "[I would] alter them somehow, and it was very intuitive. I remember I was in weaving classes when I was nine."

After years of working in digital textile design and selling vintage and secondhand clothing in her native country, Mayela fled Venezuela in 2014, just as she turned 25, due to ongoing unrest. Eventually she settled in New York City, where she began her artistic and modeling careers.

Since then, she has documented the migratory stories of Venezuelans through her textile series *Mapas de Desplazamiento* (Maps of Displacement) and similar works. The series, launched in 2021, so far consists of two enormous hanging tapestries: *Maps of Displacement Vol I: NYC 2021* and *Maps of Displacement Vol II: East Coast 2022*. These pieces, which explore how identity is shaped, are the result of more than 200 interviews with Venezuelan migrants and incorporate the clothing and other items they've donated. The works have been shown in galleries across the US and Mexico, as well as in the Venezuelan Embassy in Washington, DC.

> " . . . as a migrant, you come with all these things that build your identity or your life and then, in a way, you have to assimilate and shed some of that and turn into something new." —Cassandra Mayela

Artist and model Cassandra Mayela grew up on an island off the coast of Venezuela and now lives and works in New York City. OPPOSITE: Mayela's *Maps of Displacement Vol I: NYC 2021*, documents the migratory stories of Venezuelans who fled their home country, 90 x 144 x 2 in.

Photo by Shana Jade Trajanoska. OPPOSITE: Photo courtesy of Olympia and JO-HS.

Mapas started with observation. In 2019, Mayela noticed an increasing number of Venezuelan restaurants and establishments in the city and often heard the accent of her homeland. Interested in why Venezuelans were coming to New York, she stopped people on the street to inquire about their stories. At the same time, the Brooklyn-based artist noted the lack of Venezuelan voices in the news whenever the country's political and economic crises were discussed.

As of April, more than 7.5 million people had been displaced from Venezuela—the largest forced migration from a Latin American country and one of the most dire humanitarian crises in the world.

In response to what Mayela was witnessing, she issued an open call through social media in 2021, asking Venezuelan migrants in the city to donate sentimental objects that represented their migratory experience. As she received stuffed animals, blankets, kitchen towels, jerseys, work uniforms, and everyday clothing, Mayela recorded the donor's name, where in Venezuela they migrated from, and the significance of the article that was given.

The artist then cut the textile pieces through the seams to create a patchwork. However, she determined that this method didn't transmit the message she wanted, so she shifted to using the stretcher frame her husband used for paintings. One night, she hammered nails one inch apart on the top and bottom of the frame and warped it into a loom. Donated items were woven together on this makeshift loom to create a single panel. After removing a completed panel from the loom, Mayela connected it to another to create the larger work *Maps of Displacement Vol I: NYC 2021*.

With a show scheduled for fall 2021 at Olympia in Manhattan, Mayela knew she wanted to exhibit this new piece. She decided the work would be hung from the ceiling to allow viewers to move around it. On the front side, she maintained identifiable aspects, such as buttons and collars, but the back was flat, showing only the woven texture. Mayela did this intentionally, as she knew that viewers would connect with something familiar. "In a way, I feel, as a migrant, you come with all these things that build your identity or your life and then, in a way, you have to assimilate and shed some of that and turn into something new," she says. "If you see the front of the piece and then the back, it's kind of like a clean slate."

Originally, Mayela intended to map the individual cities to which Venezuelans were fleeing. But it proved difficult to gather enough donated pieces in a single

Photo courtesy of Olympia and JO-HS. OPPOSITE: Photo by apexart.

RIGHT: In the foreground, Mayela's *Healing Color*, 2023, was made as a healing gesture to migrants who have donated materials, 48 x 45 in. OPPOSITE: *Maps of Displacement Vol II: East Coast 2022* contains fragments from more than 80 people, 123 x 94 x 3 in.

city, so she decided the second piece in the series would cover a larger area. *Maps of Displacement Vol II: East Coast 2022* is composed of fragments received from more than 80 people in Virginia, New York, Florida, Pennsylvania, DC, and New Jersey. The massive textile, which hangs at 123 by 94 by 3 inches, contains splashes of bright yellow, pink, red, orange, and blue in the upper right corner, contrasting with the darker, earthy colors in the lower left corner of the rug-shaped work.

While Mayela's newer works don't map the movement of displaced people per se—the artist now combines fragments of donations from Venezuelan migrants with out-of-season items she receives while holding clothing drives to support migrants—she's still addressing their experiences. Inspired by a friend's comment on the healing power of the color blue, Mayela created *Healing Color*, 2023, by sifting through the abundance of blue textile fragments among the piles in her studio. Composed of four vertical panels that are connected at the top and bottom, the 48-by-45-inch installation serves as a healing gesture to migrants who have previously donated materials.

Mayela's *Mapas* series offers a pathway to humanize migrants and break away from stereotypes and repeated narratives. Regardless of the iteration, Mayela not only physically weaves donated garments, but she also metaphorically weaves the multitude of stories. It's impossible to look at one of her tapestries without noticing all the different textile fragments, just as we can't understand what has taken place in Venezuela without considering the multitude of lived experiences.

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cassandramayela.me | @cassandramayela

M. Ferreira Vogel is an independent art and history writer and researcher who creates subject-specific cultural projects, often centered on textiles, socio-ecological conflicts, and underrepresented histories related to Latin America. Ferreira Vogel, who splits her time between Lisbon, Portugal; Bogotá, Colombia; and Washington, DC, works with galleries and writes for arts publications such as *Dovetail*.

holding space

Drawing on Irish traditions, Port Townsend, Washington–based artist Maureen Walrath weaves local willow into baskets that help usher souls into the next world.

BY KIMBERLY COBURN

Walrath wove this vessel for Laurence, a living elder, "to hold him when death inevitably comes." The coffin's willow was grown, tended, and harvested by hand in Chimacum, Washington. The "spine" of the lid is an old cedar fence board and the handles are made of rope.

Photos by Maureen Walrath.

The gray sea light of Port Townsend, Washington, washes through the window of Maureen Walrath's barn loft studio. Goats and chickens squabble below. Bundles of cured willow hang along the slanted eaves in shades ranging from butter to molasses, the possibility of a hundred baskets held within them.

On a long wooden table in the middle of the room, a willow coffin grows row by woven row. Walrath's hands move in a steady rhythm set by the low tune she hums. The otherworldly light casts shadows that pool in the emerging spaces, in the ridges between the willow rounds, in the coffin's long mouth. The shadows ask of everything they touch: *what can you hold?* Walrath herself carries the swimming promise of her unborn child. She reaches out to weave over her growing belly.

A gentle inquiry into the art of holding is at the heart of Walrath's craft. "I love considering the whole picture when I'm making these vessels, of how they're going to hold someone," she reflects. "Both how they're going to hold the one inside and also how they're going to hold the space for those who surround the basket."

Originally from Chicago, Walrath worked in arts education until a pull to live closer to the land led her to a series of intentional communities in Missouri. There, inspiration tugged at her sleeve again. "I came to baskets very intuitively," she recounts. "It was a very spontaneous messenger that just said 'baskets.'"

A friend connected her with Oregon-based ethnobotanist and basketmaker Margaret Mathewson, but Mathewson wasn't taking on apprentices at the time. She did, however, offer Walrath another option. "She told me, 'Well, you could just get on a train and come out here. Bring a sleeping bag and a knife.' That's where my relationship with willow started, where the willow rhythm entered my life."

Maureen Walrath holds a basket woven mostly from wild willows, including *Salix exigua* from New Mexico.

"Ancestral crafts like basketry have a way of being a part of everyday humanness, of living with human culture. There's a natural, organic connection with birth and death work."

—Maureen Walrath

The soul boat for a man named Emerson was adorned with flowers and ritual objects just before his burial at White Eagle Memorial Preserve, a conservation burial ground in southeastern Washington. OPPOSITE: Walrath harvests willow in November, the dormant season, in Salem, Oregon.

Walrath's days continue to move at a pace set by willow. "It has become a part of who I am. Not necessarily as an identity, but as part of my seasonal and yearly rhythm."

Alongside her creative practice, Walrath has guided members of her community through their most intimate transitions as both a birth and a death doula. These liminal landscapes inform her work. "Ancestral crafts like basketry have a way of being a part of everyday humanness, of living with human culture," she says. "There's a natural, organic connection with birth and death work. The practice has within it this ancient tendril: we've always been weaving baskets, we've always been tending to birth and showing up at the threshold of death."

Walrath wove her first coffin while visiting the western coast of Ireland, her family's ancestral home. On that trip, she received news of her grandmother's passing. Standing at the sea's edge, watching boats sail toward the horizon, she caught the glimmer of an insight. "That was the beginning of my understanding of baskets as spirit vessels."

Walrath incorporated cradles and coffins into her practice: baskets to welcome spirits into this world and to usher them gently from it. Though she has woven fewer cradles since having her own children, she has deepened her work in coffin weaving. She shares her expertise not only in basketry but also in navigating the logistics of "green" or "conservation burials," an increasingly popular option in death care.

Walrath partners with a local orchard and cidery to grow over 40 varieties of basketry willow. It takes about three years of growth for a willow variety to show its full expression. "Willow is a shapeshifter," Walrath says, explaining how the plants swap genes to form new varieties. "In the wild, willow very, very readily crosses. The soil, the water, the sunlight—the whole ecological web affects what the willow looks like and feels like, how it grows."

Collecting material for willow basketry demands forethought, especially for projects as large as coffins, which require more than 700 sticks ranging from 5 to 9 feet in length. "You have to think two years in advance," Walrath explains. Once the willow drops its leaves in autumn, Walrath coppices it, cutting it back to the ground. After harvesting, she sorts the sticks by size and bundles them to cure for a year. Walrath then soaks the cured willow in a stock

THIS PAGE: Photo courtesy of Jodie Buller. OPPOSITE: Photo by Maureen Walrath.

TOP LEFT: Walrath tends this willow—which grows in Washington next to Chimacum Creek on the traditional lands of the Chimakum (Aqokúlo) people—and uses it in her work. TOP RIGHT: Soul boats like this one, 6 ft. long x 22 in. wide, are made to hold shrouded bodies for burial or be used ceremonially before natural organic reduction or body composting. MIDDLE, LEFT TO RIGHT: Walrath weaves a coffin for a local couple still living. Here, she finishes the border on the first coffin she wove in Donegal, Ireland, using a bodkin, or awl, that opens up pathways in the weave to make way for the willow to slip through. To finish the base for a coffin, Walrath weaves the willow around slats of wood. BOTTOM: The artist uses four weaving sets and alternates the weave to create an arrow or herringbone effect on a willow coffin. OPPOSITE: The hands of many beloveds rest on the lid of a woven coffin "in a moment of farewell, reverence, and togetherness."

"Weaving opens a portal to be with the unknown, the liminal, the shimmering in-between." —Maureen Walrath

tank for anywhere from 7 to 20 days and then "mellows" it, wrapped in a tarp, for another 3 to 7 days. Then the willow is pliable enough to work with and weaving can begin.

In her online course "How I Hold You," offered in partnership with the largely virtual Coyote Willow School House, Walrath walks participants through the process of creating both a coffin and an open willow tray she calls a "Soul Boat." She guides students through five phases of construction: building a sturdy wooden frame as the bones of the base, weaving the base from the head and foot toward the center, inserting uprights and building up the walls of the coffin, repeating the steps of the base to create a lid, and finally adding cordage, toggles, and handles.

The process is deeply meditative and fundamentally embodied. Though Walrath relies on a handful of tools—pruning shears, a knife, a basket awl or bodkin for opening spaces, and a rapping iron to pack the willow evenly—her most reliable instrument is her own body, even for measurement: a forearm's span for the length of a cut, the breadth of three fingers between uprights, a wingspan (plus a bit) of rope for the handles. From design to decomposition, these baskets reflect an intimate collaboration between willow and the human form.

The willow coffin's capacity for holding extends beyond ferrying the body of the beloved. Walrath finds that the process of building coffins offers the weaver solace and creates a tangible place for her grief. "Weaving opens a portal to be with the unknown," she says, "the liminal, the shimmering in-between."

It invites us to sit with the fruitful questions that rarely make their way into polite conversation. "How can calling closer the ways we want to be held in dying and in death bring so many tender gifts to the way we are held in life?" Walrath asks.

"Willow," she adds, "is an incredible companion to walk alongside death with."

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woventhresholds.com | @woventhresholds
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Kimberly Coburn is an Atlanta-based writer and maker whose work explores the intersection between craft, the human spirit, and the natural world. kimberlycoburnwrites.com

THIS PAGE: Photo by Marit Olivia. OPPOSITE TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT: Photo by Michael Swierz. Photo by Maureen Walrath. OPPOSITE MIDDLE, LEFT TO RIGHT: Photo by Marit Olivia. Photo by Kathleen O'Hara Farren. Photo by Maureen Walrath. OPPOSITE BOTTOM: Photo by Maureen Walrath.

A Match Made in Idaho

The story of a studio designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, its restoration, and how its current owner lives there today—surrounded by contemporary craft.

BY GLENN ADAMSON

Photos by Gabe Border.

In 2017, on a trip to Japan with the Frank Lloyd Wright Trust, architectural writer Henry Whiting encountered the work of the ceramist Shiro Tsujimura at Kou Gallery in Kyoto. He noticed in particular a vase with a pale spot on its surface (he later learned it had been masked by a small cup in the kiln). "That yellow eye kept following me as I moved around the space," he says. "It was as if the pot chose me."

Whiting bought the pot, of course. It was the first of many by Tsujimura that he would acquire, along with the works of other Japanese potters, ranging from the young phenom Kodai Ujiie, who enlivens his work with fine inlays of polychrome lacquer, and the eminent Suzuki Goro, who has infused the venerable tradition of Oribe ware with seismic deconstructivist energy. Also in his collection are representative examples of leading American ceramists past and present, including the work of Richard DeVore, Gertrud and Otto Natzler, and Toshiko Takaezu. It's a diverse collection that finds perfect unity at Whiting's residence, Teater's Knoll, a special place located in Bliss, Idaho. "The synergy between the architecture and the ceramics, something that was totally unplanned, was a revelation for me," says Whiting.

LEFT: At the entry to Teater's Knoll are granite sculptures, a cast iron pot from Korea, a bench by Idaho craftsmen Anthony Bowler and James King, and "Henry the Dog." ABOVE: Henry Whiting says seeing this 8-by-7-in. Shigaraki clay vase by Shiro Tsujimura, with its yellow "eye," changed his life.

The masonry of the Teater's Knoll "prow" was created by Kent Hale in 1953 out of Oakley Stone. Whiting based his selection of Shigaraki clay ceramics—such as this 11-by-14-in. vase by Shiro Tsujimura (opposite)—on the rockwork's color value and texture.

An 1,800-square-foot artist's studio perched on a basalt cliff high above the Snake River, Teater's Knoll is the only building in the state designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. The sublimely round works by Tsujimura—inspired by storage jars from the old kilns of Korea and Japan, noble in their proportions and marvelously subtle in their coloration, each one the archaeological record of its own making and firing—are the perfect complement to the angular prow of Teater's Knoll, which juts into the valley like a boat cresting a wave. It's a scene one of its original owners, Archie Boyd Teater, painted many times, and never the same twice.

The Build: An Artist, His Wife, an Architect, a Stonemason

The story of Teater's Knoll is a tale of art and artisanship, ruin and resurrection. The narrative begins with Archie Boyd Teater, one of the 20th-century's most prominent Western-style artists and one of its most prolific; he is thought to have created more than 4,000 paintings over the course of his career. Born in Boise in 1901, Teater was a restless and enterprising soul. As a teenager he was kicked out of school for his incessant doodling, so he took to an outdoor existence, fishing for salmon, trapping game, and drawing and painting whatever he saw. By the time he was 20, he'd sold enough mink and muskrat pelts to afford brief spells of tuition at the Portland Art Museum.

It was the only formal training he ever received. Teater was effectively self-taught, and his style remained untouched by modernist currents. It has something better than sophistication, though: a vivid, you-are-there reportorial style that brings

The sublimely round works by Tsujimura . . . are the perfect complement to the angular prow of Teater's Knoll.

Photos by Gabe Border.

his subjects to life—the mining and logging camps where he picked up occasional work, the glorious Sawtooth and Grand Teton mountain ranges, and life in downtown Jackson Hole, Wyoming, where he spent much of his time.

It was in Jackson Hole that he met his future wife, Patricia Wilson, who would play a decisive role in both his career and the creation of Teater's Knoll. An amateur artist in her own right, she had a true gift for promotion and put all her talents and energy into publicizing her husband's work. Patricia had been raised in Oak Park, Illinois, where Wright conducted his early career, and it was her idea to commission him to create a studio in the dramatic setting of the Hagerman Valley, where Archie had been intermittently living in an abandoned bootlegger's shack.

The Teaters purchased a two-acre piece of land up on a high knoll for $125. Shortly afterward, Patricia gathered her courage and wrote to Wright directly: "Is there any possibility of having some student of yours do an architectural plan—the only way we could compensate him would be to pay with a painting in oils by Mr. Teater." She specified an upper limit to their construction budget: $6,000.

Amazingly, the world-famous architect not only responded to this modest overture but suggested a meeting to discuss the prospect. This was duly arranged at Taliesin West in March 1952. Wright informed the presumably dazed but ecstatic couple that he himself would be taking on the commission. By September, they had received a floor plan and elevation. It showed a compact but geometrically complex structure based

on intersecting equilateral triangles, with an exterior of horizontally laid masonry—a material expression not dissimilar from what he'd used in his masterpiece, Fallingwater. Wright also specified that the stone be sourced locally, as was his customary practice. The Teaters wrote back immediately and enthusiastically: ". . . everyone here is awestruck. The idea of building such a structure seems incredible to the natives who tell us wont [sic] live long enough to get it built!" They also added, encouragingly, "We have quite a lot of rock."

Here another important character enters the story: a young mason by the name of Kent Hale, who lived in Oakley, about 80 miles to the southeast. It seems likely that Patricia Teater viewed the studio project at least partly as a marketing investment; Archie's paintings could only grow in stature through association with Wright. Hale made a similar calculation. He had studied (and greatly admired) Fallingwater in his college landscape architecture courses, but he also reckoned that his involvement in the project would be a terrific calling card for his new business.

Hale got the job and proved to be the perfect man for it. He had already experimented with local quartzite—weathered Oakley stone that was collected from the surface of the land—having used it to build a fireplace for his family home. Teater's Knoll would be a vastly more challenging project. The exterior has six 60- and 120-degree angles, each of which gradually tapers upward from the ground. It features a commanding hearth—which Wright always viewed as the symbolic center of a home—and the whole building is set upon a steep grade, so it is only 6 feet tall at one end but 40 at the other. Undaunted by these demanding parameters, Hale spent the winter quarrying stone and laid his first piece in February 1954. Meanwhile, other local builders, under the supervision of Wright's apprentices, were setting to work on the house's extraordinary roof, which has deep overhangs along its edges and a dramatic 25-foot cantilever, pointing over the valley like a compass or an arrowhead.

Unfortunately, as the Teaters poured time and money into the project, they began to run out of patience—especially with Kent Hale. There were disagreements about payment, delays, and materials. Eventually, with little justification, they dismissed him, and other masons with no understanding of Wright's aesthetic were brought in to complete the stonework. It took three years, but the tiny, powerful building was finally completed at the end of 1957. The Teaters would live there on and off for nearly 20 years, until Archie's failing health prompted the couple to move to Carmel, California. He died in 1978, and Patricia three years later.

Photos by Gabe Border.

TOP: This masonry wall was the last created by Kent Hale, the building's original stonemason, in 1998 when he was 78 years old. ABOVE LEFT: Approximately 60 of these 3.5-square-inch Frank Lloyd Wright signture tiles exist on Wright buildings. This one was given to Whiting by his father-in-law, Randall Fawcett, an original client of Wright's. RIGHT: A blueprint of Wright's original floor plan for Teater's Knoll. OPPOSITE: Teater's Knoll is perched 300 feet above the Snake River. Painter Archie Teater chose this location for its views and the ever-present sound of the rapids below.

The Restoration: A Writer-Collector and the Return of the Stonemason

Meanwhile, Henry Whiting was falling in love with Frank Lloyd Wright's architecture, little suspecting the central role it would occupy in his life. He hails from Midland, Michigan, which is known for two things: it is the headquarters of Dow Chemical and has the largest concentration of buildings by the modernist architect Alden B. Dow, a former member of Wright's Taliesin Fellowship, who was also Whiting's great uncle and the son of the chemical company's founder.

Whiting grew up quite literally surrounded by Dow's work: the hospital where he was born, the house where he lived, and his junior high school were all designed by Dow. He also attended high school at Cranbrook School, which is next door to Cranbrook Academy of Art—a campus that includes Saarinen House, Eliel Saarinen's "total work of art"—and then went on to the University of Wisconsin–Madison (not far from Taliesin), where he was able to study Wright's architecture in depth with the historian John Kienitz. Upon graduation, Whiting happened to get a job in Idaho working for architect Neil Morrison Wright (not a relation of Frank Lloyd Wright, but a great admirer of his work). He naturally sought out Teater's Knoll, which he knew only from published photographs.

Whiting was both intrigued and shocked when he first visited the site in summer 1977. The building was abandoned and surrounded by a fence that was topped, prisonlike, with barbed wire. He tried to contact the Teaters, without success. Years went by; the place deteriorated further. Finally, in 1982, he learned that the house was on the market. Wasting no time, he went to a viewing and stepped inside.

It was a chaotic scene. The house had been pillaged of Archie's work, there was dust everywhere, and it was freezing cold—the place hadn't been heated in years. The dramatic cantilevers had begun to fail and were propped up, bizarrely, by jury-rigged TV antennae. But Wright's furniture, including a set of high-backed dining chairs, was still in place. And even in its sorry state, the building was breathtakingly beautiful.

Whiting, all of 26 years old at the time, conceived a wild plan: he would bring Teater's Knoll back to Wright's original vision. He bought the house, moved in, and got the fireplace going. Right away he discovered a cache of drawings and documents, including a box marked "Hale Mess," which held the sad story of disintegrating relations between the Teaters and their talented mason. He could see for himself the disparity in quality in the house's stonework and realized how gifted Kent Hale must have been. So he reached out—Hale was still living and working in Oakley—and asked him to join forces, effectively completing the job that had started his career. Full circles like this rarely come around in life, much less in architectural preservation.

Photos by Gabe Border.

FAR LEFT: Whiting stands in front of "some of mason Kent Hale's best work" near the prow of Teater's Knoll. Whiting designed the "pagoda lanterns" next to him in 1985; they were built in 2018 by woodworker Paul Bates, who was also part of the 1982–83 restoration. ABOVE LEFT: Frank Lloyd Wright's original dining table and chairs for Teater's Knoll. A "thousand paper cranes" made by the nieces and nephews of Whiting's late wife, sculptor Lynn Fawcett Whiting. A watercolor portrait of the Whitings by their neighbor, Masako Robbins. ABOVE RIGHT: Whiting agrees with many who've claimed Wright's fireplaces—such as this 5-by-9-ft. design built by Hale—were like *tokonomas*, dedicated spaces for displaying art in a Japanese house. The bronze vessels inside and outside the fireplace were made by Fawcett Whiting. The couple purchased the Native American ceramic vessels inside the fireplace in Idaho and California. LEFT: Wright designed the *Origami Chairs* in 1949, and Whiting had them made in 1984 from plans left in the studio. Shiro Tsujimura made the large bowl on top of the left ottoman in 2023, as well as the two vessels sitting on the floor. On the table are two medium-sized bowls by Richard DeVore. A landscape painted by Archie Teater rests on the couch.

"To me, the tea bowls make the architectural space more beautiful, and vice versa."

—Henry Whiting

ABOVE: A platter made in Bizen, Japan, and five tea bowls by Tsujimura: three Shigaraki, one Raku with kintsugi repair (third from left), and one Shino (top right). BELOW: White Shigaraki tea bowls by Tsujimura. OPPOSITE TOP: A view into the library and kitchen, which Whiting redesigned in 1982, reveals how he displays his collection of tea bowls and ceramics. OPPOSITE BOTTOM: Whiting purchased Japanese ceramist Yukiya Izumita's *Sekisoh Layers*, 2020, 11 x 17 x 4 in., from the Ippodo Gallery in New York City.

Photos by Gabe Border.

Forty-odd years later, Whiting is still at Teater's Knoll. He has not only completed the restoration project but also written a beautiful book about it (*At Nature's Edge*, published by the University of Utah Press, and the main source for this article). What's more, he has brought art back into the studio—of a kind that Frank Lloyd Wright would surely have loved, given his admiration for all things Japanese. Perhaps this is why the ceramics that Whiting has gathered here look so very right. The dramatic landscape surrounding the house, which Archie Teater painted so many times, is quintessentially Idahoan. But the materials gathered here in such elemental form—earth, water, wood, and light itself—are the same the world over. The Snake River Valley may seem remote, but for these ceramics, and for Whiting himself, there could be no better home.

"I love to sit in the studio and experience the feeling of the space as the sun moves through the sky, illuminating different parts of the interior," Whiting says. "The same applies to the moon as it moves through the sky and shines in different parts of the interior, creating much more mysterious feelings out of the darkness." He notes that while most architects, historians, and critics are interested in the structure or the history of a building, he has spent an "inordinate amount of time in the last forty-two years" contemplating the nature of the space enclosed.

"One of the unexpected revelations of the tea bowls comes when I'm sitting with them, holding them in my hands, and doing the same kind of contemplation of their interior," Whiting continues. "This is a deeper way of looking at how the ceramics affect my life, and simple as it sounds, I've spent hundreds of hours in this contemplation. To me, the tea bowls make the architectural space more beautiful, and vice versa. I, of course, love holding them and feeling their tactility, just as I love touching the rock walls, visually or tactilely, of Teater's Knoll."

◆

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THE 2024 AMERICAN CRAFT COUNCIL AWARDS

Meet the artists and advocates whose contributions are being honored by their colleagues in the field of craft.

INTERVIEWS BY **CHIKARA MOTOMURA**
TEXT BY **CAMILLE LEFEVRE**
DESIGN BY **KRISTI ANDERSON**
PORTRAITS BY **ARIUS PHOTOGRAPHY, SAHAR COSTON-HARDY, REGINALD CUNNINGHAM, DARREL ELLIS, AZUREE HOLLOWAY, MARC OLIVIER LE BLANC, ANJALI PINTO, CARA ROMERO, JENNY SIEGWART, SARA RUBINSTEIN, AND DANIELLE SYKES**

SINCE 1975, the American Craft Council has recognized artists, scholars, teachers, and advocates for their legacy of outstanding achievement in and dedication to the field of craft with the biannual ACC Awards. Two groups are responsible for giving out these awards.

The American Craft Council and its Board of Trustees give the Award of Distinction and the Aileen Osborn Webb Award for Philanthropy. ACC's College of Fellows gives the remaining awards. During each awards year, a committee of past fellows —who are all artists or honorary fellows—decides who will be inducted next. This year, the committee inducted nine new ACC Fellows into the College of Fellows, awarded three previous inductees the Gold Medal for Consummate Craftsmanship, and celebrated two honorary fellows.

Regardless of upbringing, education, or entrenched societal disparities dealt with during their careers, the Fellows and Gold Medalists honored by the 2024 ACC Awards have delved deeply into their identities, proclivities, and creativity to produce astounding bodies of work that extend and enhance definitions of craft. Their work may be conceptual or functional; figurative, performative, or decorative. Their materials may be pins and string, wood and paint, metal and seashells, clay and glass, or discarded TV sets, fabric, and sequins. Along the way they also invested in themselves, continuously experimenting and innovating to reach this level of excellence, while also teaching and mentoring. Others honored in the 2024 ACC Awards have contributed deeply to the field of craft outside the studio, through writing, curating, and advocacy.

In the following pages, you can read about, marvel at, and revel in their astonishing work.

This year, the American Craft Council is also excited to announce a new grant from the Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation, which will fund cash awards of $5,000 each for the nine 2024 ACC Fellows and $20,000 each for the three 2024 Gold Medal for Consummate Craftsmanship recipients. This funding comes in addition to longstanding support we have received from the Windgate Charitable Foundation for general operating costs for this awards program. ACC is grateful to both organizations for their generous support. —*The Editors*

Photo by Anjali Pinto.

Nick Cave in his Chicago studio.

GOLD MEDAL FOR CONSUMMATE CRAFTSMANSHIP

Nick Cave

Chicago, Illinois

One of seven boys growing up in Fulton, Missouri, Nick Cave sought to distinguish himself within his sports- and community-oriented family. Cave and his brother Jack started watercolor and oil painting, and building objects using discarded materials. Since then, the African American artist and dancer has achieved international acclaim for his constructions crafted from "surplus," including mosaics, table sculptures, floral wall hangings, and notably his *Soundsuits*: fantastical fabric sculptures that address racial and gender expectations, and in which he often performs.

"MAKING TODAY ALLOWS ME TO ASK DEEP QUESTIONS, TO STAY PRESENT AND RELEVANT IN A TIME OF NEED." —Nick Cave

ABOVE: Nick Cave's multimedia installation *Until*, 2016–2017, at MASS MoCA. OPPOSITE LEFT: *Heard*, a performance at the Dallas Museum of Art. OPPOSITE RIGHT: *Soundsuit*, 2013.

Cave studied fiber arts at the Kansas City Art Institute before receiving his MFA from Cranbrook Academy of Art in 1989. After finishing school, he became director of the fashion program at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Inspired by such artists as Barkley L. Hendricks and Faith Ringgold, he'd always considered issues of racial inequality in his work. Then came the police beating of Rodney King in 1992.

While in a park reflecting on the tragedy, Cave thought about "what it feels like to be discarded, dismissed, and profiled," he told Art21 in 2018. "I thought, the moment I step outside of the privacy of my home, I could be profiled. I'm an artist and a professor, yet I could be in a situation in which my career has no effect on what I look like and how I'm perceived."

He picked up a twig, then more twigs, later sewing them into his first *Soundsuit*. Shaping it to his body, Cave realized he could wear the sculpture and, like a second skin or suit of armor, the *Soundsuit* concealed his race, gender, and class. The sculpture, fabricated from other found objects, also rattled and dinged when he moved. Having studied at Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, he began performing in his *Soundsuits* at clubs. His artmaking had a new purpose.

Since then, Cave has crafted more than 500 *Soundsuits*. The majestic, surrealistic sculptures draw inspiration from

African tribal regalia and often resemble creatures from science fiction and mythology; but their components are quotidian—plastic buttons, sequins, raffia, glitter, woven synthetic hair in fluorescent green and hot pink. The juxtaposition creates a lively tension between the familiar and the imaginary. Similarly, Cave subverts traditional definitions of art and craft with *Soundsuits*, which blur distinctions between sculpture, fashion, and performance while shining a light on the creativity of material reuse in craft.

Today, Cave's work is in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Detroit Institute of Arts, and the High Museum of Art in Atlanta, among others. He leads the fashion, body, and garment graduate program at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and is represented by Jack Shainman Gallery in New York City. He's fashioned *Soundsuits* resembling horses for 60 Alvin Ailey dancers in the performance *Heard NY* at Grand Central Station and has orchestrated performances for children.

His 2022 retrospective at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, *Nick Cave: Forothermore*, included his iconic *Soundsuits* and the installation *Spinner Forest*, composed of colorful spinning mobiles, cascading from the ceiling in shapes such as bullets and tears to comment on gun violence. The retrospective then moved to New York's Guggenheim Museum.

Cave, who was inducted into the College of Fellows in 2016, describes himself as a "messenger, artist, educator, in that order." He's hailed by others as a leading voice in American craft for his joyful and socially trenchant work. "Making today allows me to ask deep questions," he says, "to stay present and relevant in a time of need. And then, out of that, we create the future."

nickcaveart.com | @nickcaveart

Photos by James Prinz, courtesy of the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery.

GOLD MEDAL FOR CONSUMMATE CRAFTSMANSHIP

Wendy Maruyama

San Diego, California

Within the worlds of furniture art and craft, mere mention of Wendy Maruyama conjures images of sleek yet sumptuous wood tables, cabinets, and wall pieces merging curvilinear and rectilinear forms, while infused with vivid color, animated with carved treatments, and integrated with historic or fantastical imagery. The San Diego–based furniture artist has been called "a bit of a provocateur," and her early work "playful" and "kicky." Maruyama says she's simply grateful "to work the way I do," a sentiment more profound than it appears.

Born in La Junta, Colorado, to second-generation Japanese American parents, Maruyama was thrilled to discover art classes in elementary school. "Being deaf," says the artist, who was also born with cerebral palsy, "I realized art was something I was really good

"TODAY I'M GOING BACK …TO WHAT MAKES ME JOYFUL AND HAPPY." —Wendy Maruyama

at and felt confident doing." In junior college, her first wood project was an epiphany: "I could be a woodworker," she realized. "I was really intrigued with the idea of making one-of-a-kind furniture, and that was my beginning as a craftsperson."

Maruyama excelled in woodworking at San Diego State University, receiving her BA in 1975 while also studying with jewelry artist Arline Fisch (a 1979 ACC Fellow). In 1980, Maruyama was the second woman, and the first deaf student, to complete an MFA at the Rochester Institute of Technology's School for American Crafts in New York. She was one of the first women in the field of studio furniture.

Initially, Maruyama crafted 15 to 20 pieces a year that challenged woodworking's masculine heritage and traditional expectations of furniture making with humor and social commentary, sculptural forms and color. Her 1982 *Mickey Mackintosh* chair, for instance, pays homage to Mickey Mouse and Scottish designers Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh. Her 1992 maple and mahogany chest *Candy* has surfboard-like wings and is painted cherry red.

ABOVE RIGHT: Wendy Maruyama's *Untitled*, 2020, branches, gold leaf, black lacquer, 25 x 30 x 5 in. RIGHT: *Bell Shrine*, 2015, wood, bronze, ink, 65 x 16 x 12 in. OPPOSITE: Maruyama in her San Diego studio.

TOP: Photo courtesy of the artist. BOTTOM: Photo by Scott Cartwright and David Harrison. OPPOSITE: Photo by Jenny Siegwart.

LEFT: *Candy*, 1992, wood, 55 x 25 x 12 in.
ABOVE: Designed in 1981, this *Mickey Mackintosh* chair is one of 25 Maruyama built from poplar and zolatone paint, 60 x 33 x 18 in.

Maruyama's most recent work has boldly reflected her social consciousness and explored her heritage. In 2012, after several trips to Japan, she created *Executive Order 9066* and *The Tag Project* in response to President Franklin Roosevelt's internment of American citizens and resident aliens of Japanese ancestry in 1942. The first piece includes wall-mounted cabinets, reliquary formats, and sculptures enshrining elements from the internment camps (tar paper, barbed wire, painted rice bowls) and images based on documentary photographs by Dorothea Lange and Toyo Miyatake. *The Tag Project* consists of 120,000 replicas of paper internee identification tags suspended from the ceiling in 10 bundles.

Maruyama's 2015 *wildLIFE Project* was inspired by trips to Kenya, where she learned about animal poaching (particularly elephants), and by her residency at the Pilchuck Glass School (her blown-glass tusks became part of her 2015 work *Sarcophagus*). *WildLIFE* consists of six life-sized elephant heads constructed of stitched, painted-wood segments, and a Buddhist-style *Bell Shrine* with burning incense and a bronze bell that rings every 15 minutes in memory of elephants killed for their tusks.

All the while, Maruyama—who was inducted into the College of Fellows in 2008—has influenced younger makers. From 1980 to 1985 she taught at the Appalachian Center for Craft. She was also a professor of woodworking and furniture design at the California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland, and at San Diego State University (where she's now professor emerita). Maruyama received several grants from the National Endowment for the Arts as well as numerous fellowships and awards while lecturing and exhibiting around the world. She has served on panels, juries, advisory boards, and boards of trustees for a diversity of craft organizations.

"Today," Maruyama says, "I'm moving away from all of that serious work and going back to furniture-like pieces, to what makes me joyful and happy."

wendymaruyama.com | @wendymaruyama

Photos courtesy of the artist.

Anne Wilson in her Evanston, Illinois, studio.

Photo by Azuree Holloway.

GOLD MEDAL FOR CONSUMMATE CRAFTSMANSHIP

Anne Wilson

Evanston, Illinois

In her work, Anne Wilson has subverted middle-class propriety and the gendered feminine. She's animated the static through pixilation and performance. She's examined artists' processes of making in relationship to the ways their "products" are seen and sold. The materials she's used in innovating this post-disciplinary approach to craft and context have remained quotidian: bedsheets, table linens, pins, thread, wire, glass, lace. They are the "props of both domestic culture and larger social systems," says the Chicago-area textile artist, through which she ushers "material culture studies into the conceptual arena of contemporary art."

Wilson began her practice in the 1970s after studying sculpture and textiles while receiving her MFA from the California College of the Arts. Her artistic lineage lies with the post-minimalists (including Eva Hesse and Robert Morris); feminist artists (such as Faith Ringgold and Judy Chicago); and fiber artists Magdalena Abakanowicz and Claire Zeisler, who used rope, thread, and cloth to challenge minimalism's rigidity and sculpture's traditional material categories, while critiquing sexism and racism.

Wilson's early works incorporated faux fur cut in irregular shapes and painted with oils to resemble freshly flayed skin; and synthetic felt cut, stitched, and painted to replicate animal hide. In the late 1980s, Wilson threaded human hair into cloth works she calls "material drawings" or "physical drawings," exploring the territories of hair's eroticism (when attached to

FAR LEFT: *Wind-Up: Walking the Warp*, 2008, Anne Wilson's performance and sculpture at Rhona Hoffman Gallery. Performance team included Sara Rabinowitz, Carla Duarte, Annie Egleson, Jongock Kim, Rosemary Lee, Christy Matson, Rachel Moore, Rana Siegel, and Anne Wilson. LEFT: Wilson working with delicate fibers. RIGHT: *Topologies: Made at the V&A*, 2008, lace, thread, insect pins, painted wood support, 54 x 74 in. BELOW: Detail of *Hair Work*, 1991–93, hair, thread, cloth, 63.5 x 55.5 x 3.5 in.

"TEXTILES ARE CARRIERS OF SKILL-BASED KNOWLEDGE . . . AND FAMILIAL AND CULTURAL HISTORIES." —Anne Wilson

the body) and the distaste it stirs (when detached from the body). She exhibited her stitched constructions during the 2000 solo exhibition *Anne Wilson: Anatomy of Wear* at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago. That work grew into *Topologies* for the 2002 Whitney Biennial, in which a diminutive landscape and an architecture of pins and netted lace sprawls across fields of white.

Out of this work emerged *Errant Behaviors* (2004), Wilson's stop-motion animation of *Topologies*, in which lace fragments danced to found sounds by Shawn Decker. In 2008, at Rhona Hoffman Gallery in Chicago, Wilson presented three interrelated works: *Wind-Up*, a series of performances including *Walking the Warp*, a five-day

TOP LEFT: Photo by Surabhi Ghosh. TOP RIGHT: Photo by Azuree Holloway. BOTTOM: Photo by Mary Jo Toles.

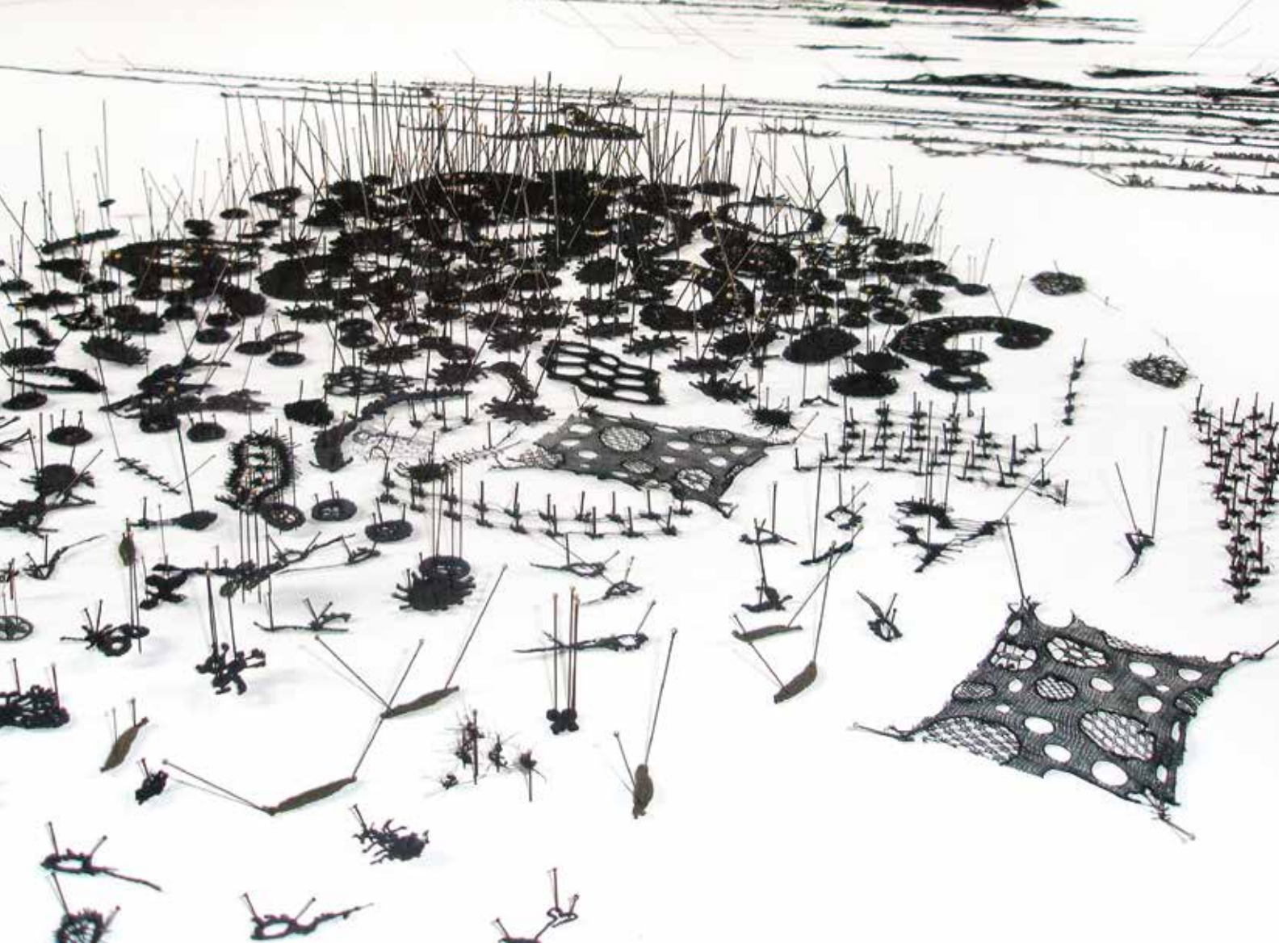

Photo courtesy of Anne Wilson Studio.

experience of walking, counting, rolling, and winding as Wilson and nine collaborators built a 40-yard weaving warp on a 17-by-7-foot frame; *Notations*, Wilson's photographs of motion sequences based on a system capturing the repetitive, rhythmic, and cumulative hand gestures underlying winding, knitting, and crocheting; and an iteration of both works called *Portable City*, consisting of 47 steel and wood vitrines holding thread or filament structures under tension, suspension, compression, or collapse.

Since 1979, Wilson has taught in the fiber and material studies program at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago; she is now professor emerita. She has written and lectured extensively on the history of textiles. She was inducted into the 2000 ACC College of Fellows, is a United States Artists Distinguished Fellow, a Fellow of the Textile Society of America, and has received awards from the Driehaus Foundation, Artadia, the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation, NASAD (citation recipient), Cranbrook Academy of Art (Distinguished Alumni award), the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Illinois Arts Council. At the Museum of Arts and Design, Wilson recently launched the MAD Drawing Room, in which visitors can explore her personal archives of lace and open work textiles.

Wilson's art is in the permanent collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Museum of Arts and Design in New York; the Art Institute of Chicago; the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago; and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, among others.

For more than 30 years, Wilson's practice has infused craft with a singular fiber-based aesthetic impulse, while engaging with sociopolitical frameworks that dictate and inform the production of her work. "Although I've worked between drawing and sculpture and performance, my artwork has always been grounded in a textile language," she told *Northwestern Art Review*. "Textiles are carriers of skill-based knowledge, concepts, and expression, aesthetic tradition, and familial and cultural histories; they can express both personal and cultural narratives. Today, textiles are a robust participant in contemporary art."

annewilsonartist.com | @annewilsonartist

2024 FELLOW

Syd Carpenter

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Syd Carpenter's collaborative relationship with clay began on the potter's wheel. But her mixed-media sculptures are inspired by her generational relationship with the land she nurtures. "Clay, as a material, is extremely animated in that it responds, and that response is so provocative for me," says the Philadelphia-based artist. Similarly, "I'm influenced by what I observe in the garden I've tended for almost 30 years, which connects me to the history of African Americans [including her mother and grandmother] as stewards of their own land." She is "drawn to the texture of soil, the undulation of the earth's surface," just as she reacts "to the transitory and ephemeral in materials like clay, steel, glass, and fabric, none of which are transitory or ephemeral."

Carpenter was a painter before discovering clay, finding "the processes used to make an object engaging," along with the capacity to hone her techniques through "tried and true shapes." She graduated with a BA and MFA from Tyler School of Art in the 1970s, after which Carpenter and her husband, Steve Donegan, founded the 915 Spring Garden Studio Building, a facility for more than 100 artists, where she began "subverting the imperative of stability in clay," she explains. "I try to incorporate irregularity in my sculptures, avoiding flattened bottoms and bases where possible. It's a challenge that often leads to surprising results."

Her series *Places of Our Own*, for instance, was inspired by maps of southern African American farms and gardens created by landscape architect Richard Westmacott. Carpenter's dynamic sculptural evocations reference such everyday objects as clothespins and bottles, tangled into rebus-like configurations with representations of trees, fence posts, and

Photo by Sahar Coston-Hardy.

LEFT: Syd Carpenter surrounded by her work in Philadelphia. RIGHT: Carpenter's *Mother Pin Arise*, 2020, clay, underglaze, glaze, graphite, 28 x 19 x 19 in. BELOW RIGHT: *Ervin and Cornelius Holifield*, graphite on clay with water-based paint, 26 x 24 x 6 in.

railroad tracks. In these object landscapes, food, labor, wealth, and poverty are equally present.

Her teaching at Swarthmore College, where she's now professor emerita, exposed Carpenter "to an intellectual environment, and a diverse and rigorous range of disciplines, including the arts." She's humbled by "the visionary expressiveness in the architecture, spirituality, and wonder captured by the handmade" discovered during travels around the globe, which she has absorbed into her own work.

Carpenter's widely exhibited work is in the collections at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Swedish National museum, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Tang Teaching Museum of Skidmore College, the RISD Museum of Art, Fuller Craft Museum, the James A. Michener Art Museum, and the Woodmere Art Museum. She's received awards from United States Artists, Anonymous Was a Woman, the Pew Center for Arts and Heritage, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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Photos courtesy of the artist.

2024 FELLOW

Michael A. Cummings

New York City

Southern California in the 1950s was "Technicolor," says Michael A. Cummings of his childhood. "The cars, the houses, the Christmas trees came in different colors. I was used to a lot of lush color all around me, which became a foundation for the way I look at the world." So, while hosting a banner-making event at the American Craft Museum in the 1970s, he cut up some colorful fabrics and "everybody was amazed," he recalls. He taught himself to stitch with needle and thread and to do appliqué. But when he finally bought a sewing machine, it became his "dance partner, because she learned all my moves in taking fabric through all my twists and turns."

After meeting Romare Bearden, Cummings realized he too could create narratives about African American history and life through collage—but by using fabric rather than paper. Synthesizing the aesthetic qualities of folk art, African and African American art, and jazz with his own cut-out approach and often semi-abstract sensibility, Cummings has created boldly colorful and texturally arresting expressions. Large-scale storytelling works such as the *James Baldwin* and *African Jazz* series and the three-part *Slave Ship Henrietta Marie* (now in the collection of the International Quilt Museum in Lincoln, Nebraska) cemented his reputation. His more recent works, influenced by Bob Rauschenberg's readymades and Faith Ringgold's texts, incorporate plastic, wood, metal, words, textile paint, keys, safety pins, and silk flowers.

Cummings is a true griot with his masterful textile language. His quilts are in many private collections as well as the Renwick Gallery, Manhattan's Museum of Arts and Design, the Studio Museum in Harlem, the American Embassy collection in Mali, and the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, DC. His commissions include the House of Seagram (for the Absolut Vodka ad series), the Helias Foundation (commemorating children who died in the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing), and the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center. He's exhibited internationally, including in the 2022 Festival of Quilts in Birmingham, England. He received a Heritage Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts in 2023.

michaelcummings.com | @michael_a._cummings

BELOW: Photo by Tom Pich.
ALL OTHER IMAGES: Photos by Christopher Burke Studio.

LEFT: Michael A. Cummings holds his quilt *Henri Matisse in Harlem's Cotton Club*, 2018, 78 x 64 in. OPPOSITE TOP: *James Baldwin: Born Into a Lie #1*, 2019, recycled textiles, 72 x 64 in. ABOVE LEFT: *Slave Ship Henrietta Marie*, 2007, recycled textiles, 120 x 156 in. ABOVE RIGHT: *President Barack Obama*, 2010, 60 x 46 in.

2024 FELLOWS

Einar and Jamex de la Torre

San Diego, California

Born in Guadalajara, Mexico, brothers Einar and Jamex de la Torre were preteens when their artistic family moved to Southern California. The duality of living on both sides of a contentious border significantly influences their collaborative blown-glass mixed-media work; their sculptures and installations not only critique cultural stereotypes but provoke insights on contemporary society. "Perhaps our greatest contribution to the medium of hot glass is our approach," say the brothers. "We strive for the freedom of self-expression, unencumbered by the mores of taste and propriety."

So much so that during their 1995 exhibition at MACLA in San Jose, California, an angry visitor destroyed all of their works. "A disastrous moment like that really focuses your will and intent," says Einar. But the brothers, who had studied at California State University at Long Beach, left their successful business producing lamp-work figures and followed the advice of mentor glass artist Therman Statom (a 1999 ACC Fellow) to follow their own path. They did, continuing to make, exhibit, and teach.

Their inspirations include baroque church art, Mesoamerican art, Mexican folk art, German expressionism, science, history, and cultural politics. Their oeuvre includes colorful, exquisitely rendered, hand-blown glass objects. They're also infamous for installations in which they combine their glass pieces with TV sets, cell phones, minivans, and other objects of American consumerism in neobaroque assemblages that embody a garish Mexican aesthetic while critiquing crass American commercialism.

The brothers work hot glass, they told *Art Week*, to "speak more about our disjointed lives than about its own overbearing beauty. The answer for us was to treat glass the same way we have treated different aspects of culture—with qualified irreverence." That irreverence has rewards.

The brothers have had 18 museum exhibitions, completed eight major public art projects, and participated in four biennales. They were selected for the inaugural artists exhibition at the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Latino. Their exhibition at the Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art & Culture in Riverside, California, is traveling to six venues, including the Corning Museum of Glass. The duo has received grants from the Joan Mitchell Foundation, the Louis Comfort Tiffany

ABOVE: Jamex de la Torre (left) and Einar de la Torre—known as the "de la Torre Brothers"—collaborate in their San Diego studio. OPPOSITE TOP: The de la Torre Brothers' *2020!*, 2020, mixed-media, blown glass sculpture with resin casting, 33 x 22 x 14 in. OPPOSITE MIDDLE: *Darwin's Secret*, 2012, blown glass, mixed-media wall installation, 69 x 57 x 12 in. OPPOSITE BOTTOM: *Colonial Atmosphere*, 2002, mixed-media sculpture installation, 140 x 360 x 450 in., pictured at the 2023 *de la Torre Brothers: Post-Columbian Futurism* exhibition at the Institute of Contemporary Art, San Diego.

Photo by Jenny Siegwart.

Foundation, and United States Artists. Each brother has also received a State of California Legacy Award.

Their most recent work includes lenticular aspects. "Our work is layered in terms of being collaborators, binational, and the themes we explore in the mix of media we utilize," says Jamex. "The layering is a metaphor for complexity and connectivity in the human condition. We're maximalists. We love embellishing. Now, with lenticular printing, we're developing digitally manipulated lenses of self-expression that allow us to produce complex, deeply layered compositions through the use of various optical illusions."

delatorrebrothers.art | @delatorrebros

RIGHT, TOP TO BOTTOM: Photos by Philip Rittermann.

2024 FELLOW

Yuri Kobayashi

Rockport, Maine

Yuri Kobayashi's curiosity about puzzles was inspired by her interest in working with wood, resulting in a visionary oeuvre of wondrous, delicate forms abstracted from the organic—human and natural—with masterful care and precision. Growing up in Japan, she was intrigued by wooden shrines, temples, and residences, particularly her grandparents' old house. No surprise, then, that her BA was in architectural design from Musashino Art University. But after stepping into a woodshop and taking in the smells, the tools, and the numerous components prepared for assembly into an object, Kobayashi thought, "Yeah. Okay. This is what I want to do. This is my calling." She earned a woodworking certificate from Shinrin Takumi Juku. From Japanese master Shoji Osamu she absorbed lessons in crafting with perfection, "and that was good," she says.

She moved to the US and earned her MFA in furniture design at San Diego State University while studying with Wendy Maruyama. "When I began," she told *American Craft* in 2021, "I didn't know English. I learned to communicate my feelings and thoughts in my work. The thoughts themselves are both simple and complicated, and, yes, poetic." She learned to craft elegant, functional furnishings. Through working with Maruyama and other SDSU students, she realized: "It wasn't always necessary to make a practical or utilitarian object. I could be okay with whatever I could make. And that was a breakthrough moment."

Kobayashi's sculptural works are miraculous compositions of numerous wood pieces, often of ash, conjoined by hand into an organic whole: a feat of endurance as well as imagination. Recently, Kobayashi has been bending her material, rendering increasingly complex forms through a more technically and physically challenging process. For more than a decade, she taught at Rhode Island School of Design. She's received residencies at State University of New York at Purchase, the University of Wisconsin–Madison, and the Arizona State University Art Museum. Based in Rockport, Maine, Kobayashi is currently an instructor and lead studio fellow at the Center for Furniture Craftsmanship, where she mentors others in developing a devotion to nature, rendering the imaginary in wood, and exploring the magic of craft.

yurikobayashi.studio | @ykcurio

ABOVE: Yuri Kobayashi at the Center for Furniture Craftsmanship in Rockport, Maine. TOP LEFT: Kobayashi's *Scribblr*, 2024, ash, LED light. OPPOSITE BOTTOM LEFT: *Breathe*, 2020, ash, oil, 25 x 30 x 29 in. OPPOSITE BOTTOM RIGHT: *Whisper*, 2013, ash, oil, 25 x 30 x 29 in.

TOP LEFT: Photo by Mark Juliana. TOP RIGHT: Photo by Danielle Sykes. OPPOSITE BOTTOM LEFT: Photo by Michael D. Wilson. OPPOSITE BOTTOM RIGHT: Photo by Yuri Kobayashi.

2024 FELLOW

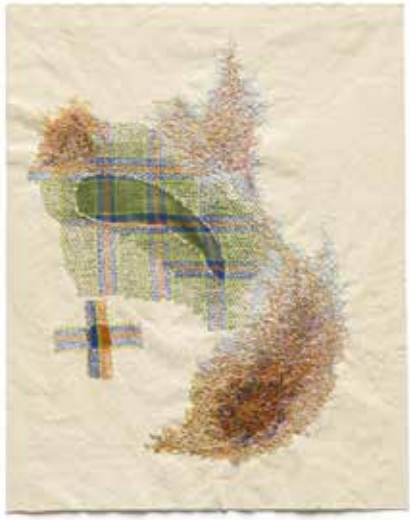
Mark Newport

Hamtramck, Michigan

Since Mark Newport's grandmother taught him to knit, sew, and embroider—so he and his brother wouldn't "run around and tear up her house," he recalls—he has been interested in craft. While studying painting at the Kansas City Art Institute (where he earned a BA), Newport took a fiber arts class and, under 2014 ACC Fellow Jane Lackey's tutelage, learned not only weaving and dyeing but "how to think through the process and materials I was working with," he says, "to understand making as a way of thinking and speaking."

While studying with Anne Wilson at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (where he earned his MFA), Newport began delving into textile work's gender politics. "I was drawn to the ways textiles share our most important moments, project our identities, and protect us," he says. His famous *Sweaterman* superhero costumes embody all of these concerns. Full-body sweaters he hand-knits with acrylic yarn, Newport's comic-book renditions, while large and bombastically male, embody the softer aesthetic of embroidery and stitching, with bulging muscles obscured by beads and French knots. The masculine and feminine blur in these works, as well as in his textile portraits of professional athletes, cowboys, and rock stars, dispensing a nuanced expression both provocative and liberating.

Moreover, Newport explains, "You can protect by standing in front of somebody



OPPOSITE: Mark Newport in front of a new work. CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Newport's *Sweaterman 6*, 2012, hand-knit acrylic and buttons. *Mend 12*, 2017, cotton mending and embroidery in muslin. Newport makes fine stitches using an embroidery hoop. *Reclaim 3*, 2022, cotton mending and embroidery in cotton and polyester.

—and there's a vulnerability to trying to protect, so the hero should be vulnerable also—but you can also protect by knitting them a nice warm sweater so they don't get cold." The sweaters led to a series of photographic prints, performances, and videos challenging masculinity. Next came mending projects, first resembling patches of skin or landscapes, then using found garments to create works that speak of memory and repair, body and experience, and history.

Newport taught at Cranbrook Academy of Art beginning in 2007, and served as artist-in-residence and head of the Fiber Department; he left in 2023 to focus on his studio practice. His work was included in the Hangzhou Triennial of Fiber Art 2019, China; the 2019 Rijswijk Textile Biennial in the Netherlands; and in group exhibitions at the Textile Museum of Canada, the Mint Museum, and the Museum of Arts and Design. He has had solo exhibitions at the Arizona State University Art Museum, the Cranbrook Art Museum, and the Chicago Cultural Center. He received a Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Fellowship, a 2011 Kresge Artist Fellowship, and a Creative Capital Foundation grant. His work is in the collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Renwick Gallery, the Saint Louis Art Museum, and the Racine Art Museum, as well as private collections.

marknewportartist.com | @newportmark

MIDDLE RIGHT and OPPOSITE: Photos by Darrel Ellis. ALL OTHER IMAGES: Photos by Tim Thayer.

2024 FELLOW

Michael Puryear

Shokan, New York

Human culture and experiences are at the core of furniture maker Michael Puryear's life and work. A graduate of Howard University in Washington, DC, with a degree in anthropology, Puryear has traveled extensively throughout Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia, North and South America, and the Arctic. But no culture interests him or has impacted his work as much as his own. One of his significant works, the *Dan Chair*, now in the Smithsonian Museum of African American History and Culture, exemplifies "my pride in being African American and what we've contributed to this country."

A self-taught artisan who lives in the Catskill Mountains in New York, Puryear credits the men of his childhood, including his father, as mentors who "knew their way around tools and took on a variety of home improvement tasks without hesitation," he told ACC's *American Craft Inquiry* in 2019. "It was this can-do attitude that taught me the value of handwork and its satisfactions." He also traces his attraction to furniture making to an "early awareness and appreciation of the clarity and directness of Shaker and Scandinavian design," he says, evident in such pieces as his *Barrow Chair* of bubinga and leather.

His *Dan Chair*, however, quietly relays histories of African Americans in the US. Named for chairs used by the Dan people of west-central Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast) and nearby Liberia, Puryear's piece is constructed of pecan from George Washington's Mount Vernon plantation and poplar from Thomas Jefferson's slave-maintained Monticello, and burnished in graphite. On the chair's front legs, Puryear used the technique of ukibori to create raised marks that allude to what he calls "the scars of bondage." With his critical consciousness and masterful skill, "Puryear creates objects that suggest political and social analysis can be produced with block plane, dovetail saw, mortise chisel, and joiner's mallet, and that an archive can consist of more than a collection of books and personal documents," wrote Seph Rodney in *American Craft Inquiry*.

Puryear's work has been exhibited at the Museum of Arts and Design in New York City; Mint Museum in Charlotte, North Carolina; and the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts, and has been widely published. He's taught extensively at craft schools throughout the US, as well as at Parsons School of Design and at State University of New York at Purchase. He is a former trustee of the Furniture Society. In 2023, he received the Furniture Society's Award of Distinction.

michaelpuryear.com

ABOVE: Michael Puryear in his Shokan, New York, woodshop. LEFT: *Chess Bench*, 2013, ash, poplar, cherry, and cast iron, 19 x 80.5 x 20.5 in. OPPOSITE RIGHT: *Torii Tansu* chest, made from burled tamo and wenge wood. OPPOSITE FAR RIGHT: *Dan Chair*, 2010, enamel paint and graphite on poplar and pecan wood, 27.5 x 31 x 17 in.

TOP: Photo by Arius Photography. ALL OTHER IMAGES: Photos courtesy of the artist.

2024 FELLOW

Diego Romero

Santa Fe, New Mexico

As a young boy, Diego Romero's passion for hero narratives was fueled by comic books, *The Iliad*, *The Odyssey*, and his father's stories of daring marines, corsairs, and Vikings. The Cochiti Pueblo artist avidly created superhero drawings and his own comic books until attending the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe. There, Hopi potter Otellie Loloma grounded Romero with her grandmother wisdom and taught him to dig and mix clay from the earth, hand-coil pots, burnish them with stone, and fire them outside. "It became church," Romero says. "Since then, pottery has been tied to my spiritual consciousness."

But his imagination continued to take flight, and his figurative, narrative work transcends his Native American heritage by integrating traditional materials and techniques with well-muscled Greek and Roman figures, self-deprecating humor, pop-culture imagery, and wry social commentary on politics, climate change, racism, colonialism, love, life, and loss. Romero describes himself as "a chronologist on the absurdity of human nature in life," and loves to watch people crack up laughing when they look at his artwork. The humorous intercultural interplay in Romero's bowls, vessels, and amphorae also elevate his expert craftsmanship and artistry to, as one critic says, "Olympian stature."

Romero studied with Ralph Bacerra at Otis College of Art and Design, earning his BFA, and with Adrian Saxe at UCLA, where he earned his MFA. In the 1990s, Romero's *Chongo Brothers* polychrome earthenware series garnered attention in the Southwest ceramics world; the characters represent both Romero and his brother Mateo (a renowned painter) and the mythical Pueblo twin heroes who protect the people.

ABOVE: *Chac Mool*, a ceramic bowl in memory of Jack Kirby, 6.25 x 16.25 in. RIGHT: A ceramic vase called *Prometheus*, 2020, 14.5 x 8.5 in. OPPOSITE: Romero holding *Man in the Anthropocene* and seated in front of *American Infamy #3*, a painting by Roger Shimomura.

Romero's lively and thought-provoking work has been exhibited throughout the US and Europe and is in collections at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Fondation Cartier, France; the Peabody Essex Museum, Massachusetts; the Heard Museum, Arizona; the British Museum, London; the National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh; and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. "As human beings, our pursuit of enlightenment, spirituality, or superheroism make us better people," Romero says, adding that his work has evolved to embrace "these universal narratives."

@romeroartprojects

Photos courtesy of Shiprock Gallery. OPPOSITE: Photo by Cara Romero.

2024 FELLOW

Lynda Watson

Santa Cruz, California

From an early age, Lynda Watson was drawn to metal's magnetism. She wore, collected, and made jewelry, constructing one piece out of vacuum-cleaner parts in a friend's garage. Not until college, however, did she recognize metalsmithing as a career.

After receiving her AA in commercial art from Orange Coast College in Costa Mesa, California, and then working in an unsatisfying job, she enrolled at California State University, Long Beach, where she took a jewelry seminar and "was smitten," she says. "I loved the scale, intimacy, precision, and process—and working with precious materials." She did undergraduate work in drawing and illustration before receiving a BA in general crafts and jewelry, followed by an MA and MFA in jewelry/metals.

Her work, Watson told the Metal Museum, "regardless of media, is mostly about places and what I find in them. Travel, adventures, encounters, celebrations, family gatherings, friendships, and relationships are all associated with places and provide and inform the visual information that drives my work." To create jewelry that reflects her life experience, she continually innovates. An early series, for example, using a wax-into-clay technique, was inspired by row houses in Pittsburgh. She's drawn in color on metal surfaces in another series. A set of brooches and necklaces represented travels to Cape Cod, Mexico, Ireland, Prague, Southeast Asia, and other places, using found shells and rocks combined with metal and small drawings under watch crystals.

In 1969, Watson was included in the significant *Objects: USA* exhibition. In 1970, she was hired to found the jewelry/metals program at Cabrillo College in Aptos, California, where she taught full-time for 25 years. She retired in 1995 in order to travel and accelerate her production of work. She has lectured and run workshops at colleges, universities, and art schools throughout the country, and led tours to Mexico for metalsmiths. She was involved with Summervail Art Workshop (Vail, Colorado) and has served in various leadership roles for the Yuma Art Symposium in Yuma, Arizona. She's been awarded two National Endowment for the Arts individual fellowships. In 2022, she was selected Master Metalsmith by the Metal Museum in Memphis, Tennessee.

Her recent work is "important to me emotionally and physically, because the memory's involved," says Watson, who lives in Santa Cruz, California. "My work is always about things that happened in places. And I use places as metaphors, and things that are in places as metaphors. Making things has always excited me, and I have never felt any desire to move away from metal and drawing."

lyndawatsonart.com

ABOVE: *Landscape Neckpiece*, 1969, cast and fabricated neckpiece, sterling silver, vitreous enamel, 14 x 9 x .25 in. TOP LEFT: *Cape Cod Remembered*, 2000, cast and fabricated neckpiece, fine and sterling silver, pencil drawings on paper, watch crystals, stone, shells from Cape Cod, 13 x 2.5 x .5 in. LEFT: *Where is Aung San Suu Kyi?*, 2003, sterling silver, 24k gold leaf, 5.5 x 5 x .0625 in. OPPOSITE: Watson at her work table in Santa Cruz, California.

TOP LEFT and BOTTOM RIGHT: Photos by r.r. jones. TOP RIGHT: Photo courtesy of the artist. OPPOSITE: Photo by Marc Olivier Le Blanc.

HONORARY FELLOW

Diana Baird N'Diaye, PhD

Cheverly, Maryland

As senior curator and cultural specialist at the Smithsonian's Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, Diana Baird N'Diaye's focus was the expressive cultures of Africa and its diasporas, and curating Folklife Festival programs and exhibitions. In 2020 she developed and curated the African American Craft Initiative (AACI), which grew out of Baird N'Diaye's participatory research projects/exhibitions *The Crafts of African Fashion*, which spotlighted African artisans' textiles, jewelry, and leatherwork for fashion designers, and *The Will to Adorn*, which focused on the diversity of African American style.

"I noticed throughout the craft sector that African American makers were grossly underrepresented and under-documented. With few exceptions, we were disconnected from the national and regional studio arts organizations—and each other," she recalls. The AACI strove "to promote exchanges between Black makers and within the field as a whole" through a variety of programs, resources, and services, including publishing partnerships. While the work of AACI has ended at the Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, it has continued as the African American Craft Alliance, supported by the Folk School Alliance.

Baird N'Diaye, featured in a 2022 *American Craft* article about visionaries in craft, balances her research-based curatorial practice and folklore scholarship with her studio practice in textile art. Shaped by conversations and stories experienced in childhood during needlework training with her elder Caribbean aunties, and inspired by the symbolism, patterns, and spiritual meanings discovered in textile traditions learned from master makers and storytellers around the world, Baird N'Diaye creates visual stories in cloth about identity and heritage, history and aspirational futures. Her artwork resides in public and private collections.

With degrees in anthropology and a PhD from Union Institute Graduate School, Baird N'Diaye continues to advocate for equal representation in the crafts sector. She sits on the board of directors of the Center for Craft and has been awarded the Americo Paredes Award for community-centered folklore work from the American Folklore Society, where she is a fellow. Her work was recently exhibited in *Afrofuturism & Quilts* at the Union Gallery at Michigan State University. She was commissioned by the US Embassy to Senegal to curate the American participation in the DakArt Biennale, November 7 to December 6, 2024.

Diana N'Diaye with *Ba and Her Daughters*, a quilt she made to honor her great grandmother.

"I'M IN THE EMPLOY OF THE ANCESTORS."

—Diana Baird N'Diaye

"I'm in the employ of the ancestors," she says, "in terms of my family heritage and the larger heritage of global Africa. It has taken such strength, discipline, and creative spirit for our ancestors to overcome our challenges. Craft—the freedom, the self-sufficiency, the joy it brings—has been an essential part of that."

ndiayedesign.myportfolio.com/work | @dndiaye

Photo by Reginald Cunningham.

HONORARY FELLOW

Cindi Strauss

Houston, Texas

"For those of us who spend our career in craft, we have the pleasure, and the imperative, to introduce people beyond our field to the works of art and the artists," says Cindi Strauss, Sara and Bill Morgan Curator of Decorative Arts, Craft, and Design at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. In her 30 years at MFAH, Strauss has done just that, by assembling an internationally recognized collection of contemporary craft; curating major exhibitions and producing catalogs that educate visitors on artists, media, techniques, history, and the importance of craft; and opening MFAH's Nancy and Rich Kinder Building in 2020, a permanent gallery devoted to craft.

Strauss has also lectured widely on craft and written in publications including *Metalsmith*, *Ceramic Review*, and *American Craft*. Her catalog for her exhibition *Ornament as Art: Avant-Garde Jewelry from the Helen Williams Drutt Collection* received the George Wittenborn Memorial Book Award from the Art Libraries Society of North America "for outstanding publications in the visual arts and architecture which combine the highest standards of scholarship, design, and production." As a board member for the American Craft Council, Center for Craft, Art Jewelry Forum, and Houston Center for Contemporary Craft, she's led advancement in the dialogue about craft.

While earning a degree in art history (BA, Hamilton College), Strauss "learned about every medium under the sun, but not about craft, decorative arts, or design." Then she took a seminar on decorative arts and "fell in love. I decided this is what I want to do for the rest of my life—study it, research it, write about it, and work in a museum where I can engage with these materials." After earning her MA in the history of decorative arts from Cooper Hewitt / Parsons School of Design, she arrived in Houston as a curatorial assistant in decorative arts. Soon after, the museum began developing its craft collection—and Strauss never left.

Photo by Thomas R. DuBrock.

Her outstanding exhibitions include the aforementioned *Ornament as Art* (2007); *Shifting Paradigms in Contemporary Ceramics: The Garth Clark and Mark Del Vecchio Collection* (2012); and *Beyond Craft: Decorative Arts from the Leatrice S. and Melvin B. Eagle Collection* (2014). Two of those exhibitions traveled nationwide. She is also the co-author of the book *In Flux: American Jewelry and the Counterculture* (2021). Craft, says Strauss, has been "for me a career-wide and career-long investigation and engagement. And I still feel that way today."

mfah.org

Cindi Strauss acquired the work behind her—Byung Hoon Choi's basalt sculpture *Scholar's Way*, designed in 2017 and made 2017 to 2019—for the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

AWARD OF DISTINCTION

Carol Sauvion

Beverly Hills, California

Craft is Carol Sauvion's lifelong passion. After earning her BA in art history from Manhattanville College in Purchase, New York, she became a potter. She later moved to Los Angeles, where she opened Freehand Gallery in 1980, a shop specializing in functional craft. After her husband's death in 1992, Sauvion took their 12-year-old son on a road trip, traveling to baseball games, as well as museums, craft galleries, and artist studios. And Sauvion had a revelation.

The craftspeople she met comprised a singular world that "is the best part of who we are as a country," she told *American Craft* in 2014. They're "idealistic in their varied interests, and they're talented, and they're problem solvers, and they're community-based. More people need to know about this." So, Southern California's exuberant purveyor of crafts developed the Peabody Award–winning PBS documentary series *Craft in America*. The series is the centerpiece of the educational nonprofit Craft in America, of which Sauvion is executive director. Each hour-long episode explores a theme—such as "Landscape," "Family," or "Crossroads"—from a multidimensional perspective, showcasing contemporary makers in their element.

To advance knowledge of the handmade, Sauvion also participates in conferences and lectures on craft. She's served on the board of the Craft Emergency Relief Fund and the American Craft Council. She is currently on the planning committee for *Handwork: Celebrating American Craft 2026*, a Semiquincentennial initiative to honor the diverse and dedicated group of makers who have built our country since before the Declaration of Independence, and who continue to contribute to our nation. In 2020 Craft in America was awarded the Distinguished Educator Award from the James Renwick Alliance for Craft.

"What is craft?" she was asked by the *LA Times*. "Craft is when someone combines skill, creativity, and intellect and has made something unique," she replied, adding that craft is an essential part of America's material culture: the place where utility meets art.

craftinamerica.org | freehand.com | handwork2026.org

AWARD OF DISTINCTION

JoAnn Edwards

San Francisco, California

JoAnn Edwards, cofounder of the Museum of Craft and Design, is passionate about giving people the recognition they deserve. Her professional life began as a therapist working with clinically depressed women, survivors of intimate partner abuse, and with people on the margins of society. When she fell in love with craft, she discovered that craft artists, too, were undervalued.

"I co-owned galleries with my brother for 26 years, where we featured contemporary craft and two-dimensional art," she says. "Over time, it became clear that craft was not an accepted form of art. Museums were intentionally ignoring it. Many gallerists frowned upon it."

Edwards was impassioned to elevate craft in the public's eye and to honor makers. But when she floated the idea of a craft museum, "Some said, 'Keep craft out of the name, or you won't be able to raise money.'"

Undaunted, she and her brother, the late Seb Hamamjian, opened the Museum of Craft and Design in downtown San Francisco in 2004, pioneering by pairing craft with design. In 2013, after two years of MCD pop-ups, she

TOP: Photo by Marc Olivier Le Blanc. LEFT: Photo courtesy of Craft in America.

moved the museum to its permanent home in the Dogpatch neighborhood. "It was a time when cabs and rideshares wouldn't go there," Edwards says, "but I felt that it was exactly right for MCD. Behind roll-up doors, creative things were happening."

Creative things, including robust community outreach and an emphasis on women makers, have continued to happen at MCD as it has become a central fixture in the world of craft and design around the globe. Edwards, a lauded expert in the field who retired as the museum's executive director in April 2024, has been able to see changes—dedicated craft museums, craft collections in major art museums, craft in contemporary galleries, and an increasing sense that craft is art—that her vision and courage helped set in motion.

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AILEEN OSBORN WEBB AWARD FOR PHILANTHROPY

Charles Duddingston

Minneapolis, Minnesota

"My wife would say that it started with a collection of coffee cups," says Charles Duddingston, laughing, "but then she's a jewelry collector." Duddingston, senior vice president, wealth management advisor, and a founder of the Duddingston Sylvester Group at Merrill Lynch in Minneapolis, has long been a collector of craft.

"Not every piece is the same; it hasn't come off of a conveyor belt," he says. "What you find has imperfections in it, like life itself. It becomes a piece of you that isn't perfect, and I think that always appealed to me when it comes to handcraft."

An ACC board member from 2013 to 2020, and board chair from 2018 to 2020, Duddingston has integrated his board work with his business by gifting American Craft Council memberships to the families with which his team works. Moreover, he and his team have sponsored nearly all local ACC events for the past decade.

"I always attended our shows, no matter where they were," he says, "to see the impact they had on the artists, the public, and young people working at the make-it-yourself displays and trying a medium they'd never encountered before. It was really satisfying."

Navigating the pandemic was one of Duddingston's primary challenges as board chair. "Those were difficult times," he recalls, "and I'm proud that we got the organization through that era successfully, and with the ability to move forward and continue with leadership." Duddingston adds that he appreciates his time with ACC and the connections he's made with artists. "My hope for the future of craft is that we continue creating new ways to get people together, to create new modes of commerce between makers and patrons."

Photo by Sara Rubinstein.

A large desk anchors the workstation in Terumi Saito's home studio. OPPOSITE: Saito's *Whispering Streams*, 2021, cotton, Japanese indigo, manila rope, bamboo, 52 x 20 x 2 in.

Building an Artistic Sanctuary

Terumi Saito's Brooklyn apartment serves as a studio space for her backstrap weaving—and a gallery for her vibrant, inventive works.

BY TERUMI SAITO

I live with my partner in a studio apartment in Brooklyn, New York, nestled within a building that was constructed in 1930 as a toy factory. Our apartment is more than just a living space—it's a sanctuary for creativity. The high ceilings and ample natural light provide the perfect backdrop for my textile art. The space seamlessly integrates living, working, and resting areas into a single cohesive environment. Over time, I have imbued it with my personal touches through a series of DIY projects, including painting walls and kitchen cabinets and refurbishing shelves to optimize functionality.

I have devised a routine to wake up early and weave before work and again after I come back from work until late at night, in addition to my other studio days. I especially like to weave with the natural light in the morning so that I can see the beautiful colors of naturally dyed yarns. I feel this is the unique and special part of having a home studio corner space—I can start working right after I wake up or I can work until very late, right before going to bed.

Navigating the balance of daily life between a full-time job and the pursuit of an artistic practice and maintaining momentum in my creative endeavors has been a journey with challenges, particularly after completing my master's program without a dedicated studio space or a nurturing artistic community. In the face of adversity, I've found solace in the act of creation itself—a source of joy and rejuvenation that transcends the challenges of my circumstances. Whether weaving, experimenting with natural dyes, or molding clay into new forms, each creative endeavor has served as a lifeline, giving me a sense of purpose and vitality.

At the heart of my practice lies the ancient art of backstrap weaving, a technique that has a rich history in Asia and in Central and South America. Unlike traditional floor looms, backstrap weaving requires minimal space. Whether nestled amidst the verdant

Photo by Izaac Costiniano. OPPOSITE: Photo by Terumi Saito.

I especially like to weave with the natural light in the morning so that I can see the beautiful colors of natural-dyed yarns.

landscapes of Peru and Guatemala or within the confines of my New York apartment, the backstrap loom emerges as a versatile tool, capable of transcending geographical boundaries and cultural divides.

Backstrap weaving uses a simple loom made of thread and rods, but it involves complex operations. Unlike advanced looms, it does not have wooden frameworks and metal heddles. Warp threads are manipulated with string heddles, attached individually each time. Tension is maintained by anchoring threads to the weaver's waist and a post or foot, requiring full-body engagement.

My backstrap weaving loom is secured to a substantial custom-built desk with a DeWalt clamp, which has emerged as a steadfast ally in the pursuit of precision and stability. Crafted in collaboration with my partner from durable wooden boards and reinforced with sturdy table legs, this workstation is central to my studio's functionality.

While alternative setups, such as attaching the loom to a steel rack shelf, have proven viable in other environments, nothing quite compares to the immersive experience of weaving amid the scenic views of Peru and Guatemala during my residency and research trip, where the loom was attached to trees or wooden poles.

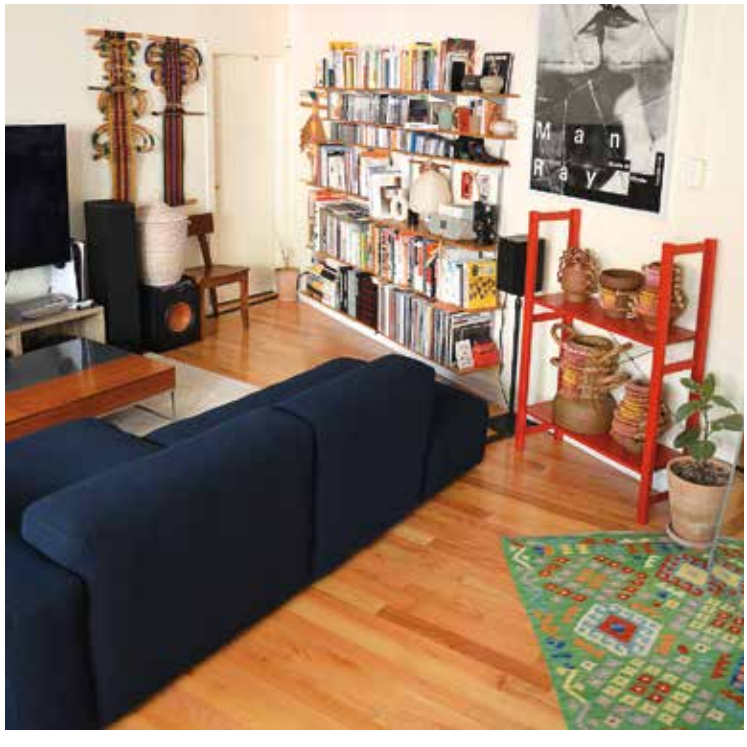
I use tools from Peru and Guatemala as well as some that I've made. One of the essential tools is a beater, which is a flat wooden strip with a sharpened edge that helps to separate the warps and create enough space to insert the weft, and to tighten the weft and the entire woven structure. I have been using backstrap loom beaters from both Peru and Guatemala, treasures that I cannot imagine weaving without.

ABOVE LEFT: Saito hand-dyed natural silk for *Seeking Light*, 2023, 29 x 21 x 1 in. ABOVE RIGHT: A pot holds tools for backstrap weaving. Dyed silk warp is laid out for an in-progress piece. OPPOSITE: Saito relies on a DeWalt clamp to hold her loom in place.

LEFT: Photo by Izaac Costiniano. RIGHT: Photo by Terumi Saito. OPPOSITE: Photo by Terumi Saito.

My home studio serves not only as a workspace but also as a personal gallery where creativity knows no bounds. The flexibility inherent in this multifunctional environment allows me to integrate my artwork into the living space. I am grateful for my supportive partner who enables the expansion of my workspace in our shared apartment. In this unique setting, I have the liberty to display my pieces on the walls or suspended from the ceiling. Though challenged by occasional constraints in storage space, I transform limitation into opportunity. Whether showcased in the area of workspace, living room, or bedroom, each placement serves to enrich the environment while underscoring the symbiotic relationship between art and everyday life.

My studio's dual role as both a workspace and a gallery also gives me the opportunity to share my passion with others, inviting visitors for studio visits and meetings to experience firsthand the



ABOVE: The supplementary desk (left) in Saito's studio is home to her natural dyeing and ceramics. RIGHT: Completed works are installed throughout the space.

Photos by Terumi Saito.

A piece from Saito's *Intertwine* project, 2024, stoneware, silk, madder root dye, manila rope, wool, 11 x 12 x 8 in.

evolution of my projects and the inspiration behind them. I prepare tea and snacks, welcoming guests with the hospitality ingrained in my Japanese cultural heritage. My home town, Shizuoka, is renowned for green tea, and my family also grows their own green tea.

In tandem with weaving, ceramics plays a pivotal role in my mixed-media creations. I recently introduced a supplementary desk adjacent to my primary workstation, a dedicated space tailored to the creation of ceramics and natural dyes. While a scarcity of kilns and studio spaces has posed challenges for me in New York City, recent residencies at the Houston Center for Contemporary Craft and the Vermont Studio Center gave me access to kilns and communal studio spaces, enabling me to bring my ceramics to life. I am excited for my residency this fall at the Museum of Arts and Design in New York, where I'll have the opportunity to access equipment such as kilns and an environment conducive to creative exploration.

As I continue to explore the intersection of fiber and ceramics, my studio remains a beacon of creativity—a space where artistic vision flourishes and boundaries dissolve. Inside its walls, the past converges with the present and tradition melds with innovation. With each creation, I am reminded of the transformative power of art to connect, inspire, and elevate the human experience.

In the timeless art of backstrap weaving, I find not only a source of artistic expression but also a profound connection to the shared heritage of humanity—a thread that binds us together in our cultural diversity and creative ingenuity. As I weave the threads of tradition and innovation, my practice embraces the spirit of exploration and discovery.

◆

terumisaito.com | @terumi_saito_

Terumi Saito is an artist and designer based in New York. Her sculptures explore an unconventional approach to backstrap weaving, incorporating natural dyes and hand-built ceramics. Her practice is centered on preserving and reviving traditional techniques from a contemporary perspective.

Photos courtesy of Vacation With an Artist.

Learning from Makers

Vacation With an Artist gives ordinary travelers a chance to learn from extraordinary artists—right in their studios.

BY COURTNEY HELGOE

On the final day of her vacation to Ubud, Indonesia, designer Geetika Agrawal spent the afternoon in a silversmith's studio. She had only a few hours, but it was long enough to learn to craft her own silver ring. On her way back to New York, Agrawal wondered how much more she could have learned if she'd spent her entire vacation in that studio.

"I've always seen the act of making as a way to discover yourself, but also as a way to discover the world," she says. "Traveling puts you in a new frame of mind, and if you're able to spend that time creating, it's very powerful."

A few years later, Agrawal founded her own program to connect travelers with master artisans for "mini-apprenticeships": Vacation With an Artist (VAWAA). Agrawal had discovered her love of apprenticing during her college days in India, where she spent summers working with local artisans in Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu. Later, attending graduate school for design in the US, she embraced the Bauhaus school's egalitarian principles, which hold that beauty and design are for everyone, not just artists and patrons. These values are the "real seed" of VAWAA, says Agrawal.

"Society is going through a soul crisis," she notes. "Deep inside our souls we are not feeling alive." She believes craft making can be an antidote to this soul sickness. "I find making and doing so nourishing, so inspiring. It can be a spiritual practice to focus on just one thing."

As she built VAWAA, starting in 2015, Agrawal searched for skilled artisans who shared her values of preserving craft and culture, and who enjoyed sharing their knowledge with others. The program now coordinates visits with more than 150 artists. Their practices range from handweaving and stone carving to bookbinding and puppet making. Visits include private instruction, materials, and studio time—and often local sightseeing. Visitors leave with a finished work of craft and, importantly, the knowledge required to make it again.

Here's what three VAWAA participants made of their opportunities—and how artists benefit beyond an additional income stream.

vawaa.com | @vawaa_

Through Vacation With an Artist, apprentices can learn craft skills from accomplished makers such as Loretta Pettway Bennett (opposite), Persephenie Lea (above left), and Nancy Basket (left).

Weaving Kudzu and Longleaf Pine Needles

Fiber artist Terry Lee lives in the Bluegrass region of Kentucky, and she's spent most of her life in the company of skilled makers. "Growing up around women who did handwork and made many of the clothes I wore has no doubt been part of my drive to learn all hand skills," she says. "Especially to make necessary items the way we did prior to industrialization."

Now a master quilter and silk painter, several of Lee's pieces have been shown in galleries as well as the National Quilt Museum in Paducah, Kentucky. She says she's been hooked on fiber arts since her first batik experience in middle school and had long been curious about basket weaving.

With some vacation time from her government job approaching, a search led Lee to VAWAA. There she found the listing for learning Indigenous basketry and pine needle fiber arts from Nancy Basket in Walhalla, South Carolina. A descendant of Margaret Basket, a Cherokee woman who lived in Virginia in the mid-1800s, Basket has been telling stories at powwows and teaching basket making for over 30 years. She received the South Carolina Jean Laney Harris Folk Heritage Award for basketry in 2005.

TOP: Nancy Basket welcomes apprentices at her barn, built from bales of kudzu. ABOVE: The artist's pine needle baskets, some of which include Catawba clay centers, Tenerife pottery centers, or lids made with found turtle shells.

> "Nancy was far more than a basket-weaving instructor; she was an elder . . ." —Terry Lee

Lee sensed a kindred spirit and someone who shared her pragmatic values. "Nancy was far more than a basket-weaving instructor; she was an elder, a weaver of baskets and fabric, a papermaker and environmentally conscious artist," she recalls. "If that wasn't amazing enough, she was doing all of this with kudzu, a plant that anyone in the southeastern part of the United States considers an invasive and unrelenting pest."

Lee contacted VAWAA to ask if she could arrange a weeklong trip to learn all three crafts: basket weaving, papermaking, and fabric making. Basket agreed, and VAWAA arranged a custom experience just for Lee and her best friend, Phoebe Sophocles.

"We worked with many different fibers, all sourced right on Nancy's property," Lee remembers. Their main fiber was kudzu, but they also collected wild honeysuckle, wisteria, and wild olive for ribbed baskets, as well as long-leaf pine needles for coiled baskets. Basket encouraged experimentation and never failed to impart a spirit of play. "The kudzu fermenting and papermaking processes were messy and a little smelly but amounted to the same fun as making mud pies when you were a kid," Lee says.

ABOVE: Basket reveals persimmons on a tree recently cleared of kudzu.
BELOW: Basket shows how to make a ribbed basket from kudzu, wisteria, Cherokee sweet shrub, autumn olive, and other vines from her yard.

Photos courtesy of Vacation With an Artist.

Basket directed the women to treasures tucked into the surrounding mountains that they could visit during non-class hours, and there were delicious lunches prepared by Basket's daughter and eaten alongside Basket's mother. The three generations of women laughed and shared stories.

By week's end, Lee and Sophocles had made three types of baskets, woven a square of fabric from the silky inner fibers of the kudzu vines, and produced a big stack of assorted papers. Lee also left with a new perspective. "Nancy's teachings led to a very different way of looking at all that is around me," she says. "I was surprised to learn how much is right outside of my door . . . plants I have looked at each day without realizing how truly useful all of it can be."

For Basket, working with VAWAA allows her to share her culture with people worldwide. "A greater connection to nature and 'All That Is,' through harvesting what some call weeds, changes us as beings," she says. "Fiber arts of basketry, papermaking, and cloth weaving from kudzu and other pervasive vines are medicine for the people when combined with ancient Indigenous stories."

nancybasket.com | @nancy.basket

ABOVE: While kudzu paper dries on a clothesline, water drips onto a plastic sheet and then into an ice cream bucket that's emptied outside on willow withies. "Water is honored here," Basket says. LEFT: Sophocles (left) concentrates on learning a basketry technique while Basket watches, waiting to help if needed.

Photos courtesy of Vacation With an Artist.

Handcrafting Incense and Perfumes

After Shirley Hendrickson had her first child during the pandemic, her attention turned inward. She had been a hustling creative in a corporate setting in Seattle; now she was a stay-at-home parent in an uncertain world. "This was a deeply introspective time for me," she recalls. "And it really called me back to doing something with my hands."

Hendrickson's husband saw she was struggling. Knowing his wife's interest in natural scents, he booked her a VAWAA experience with Persephenie Lea, a maker of natural incense and perfumes who lives in Los Angeles.

A health crisis a few years prior had led Hendrickson to learn about the potential harms of synthetic fragrance, so she was already making her own skincare products. Her yoga and meditation practices had attuned her to the power of incense. Still, she says, when it came to the art of scent making, "the door really opened when I got to study with Persephenie."

"Crafting scents can feel deeply moving for guests. One's olfactory sense is personal and intimate," says Lea,

ABOVE: Shirley Hendrickson gathers plant materials during her VAWAA apprenticeship. BELOW: Persephenie Lea (left) working with another VAWAA participant.

> "I learned more in four days than in my entire college career."
>
> —Shirley Hendrickson

who teaches the materials, techniques, and history of incense and perfume craft and appreciates the human connection that's created during VAWAA workshops. "Scent and working with plants to make incense is a portal, a very unique realm. More always comes alive—inspiration, spirit, connection, and possibilities."

The two women spent four days in the artist's LA studio, where the walls are lined with bottles and jars full of natural materials. They cooked rose petals and rolled them into fragrant beads, said to be the original method for making rosaries. They created fermented plum incense. They visited the Getty Museum to view an exhibit of antique perfume vessels.

Throughout the visit, Lea shared stories, such as how Japanese incense masters created "incense clocks," with different scents indicating different times of day. "She is trying to keep this art form alive," Hendrickson notes. "That's what VAWAA is all about, keeping these rituals and forms alive."

Lea showed Hendrickson how the perfume-making process is "like writing a song but in scent." A perfume is a chord, with a top note, middle note, and bass note. A captivating fragrance creates an original harmony between them. "I left with the scent that my husband and I now wear every day," Hendrickson says, a custom blend that contains pink pepper, yuzu, and frankincense.

This is not all she took home. Hendrickson departed with a wealth of knowledge—"I learned more in four days than in my entire college career," she says—as well as renewed confidence in her creative abilities. She and Lea now text routinely as she builds her own perfume and incense business in Ghana, where her family relocated to start a creative venture.

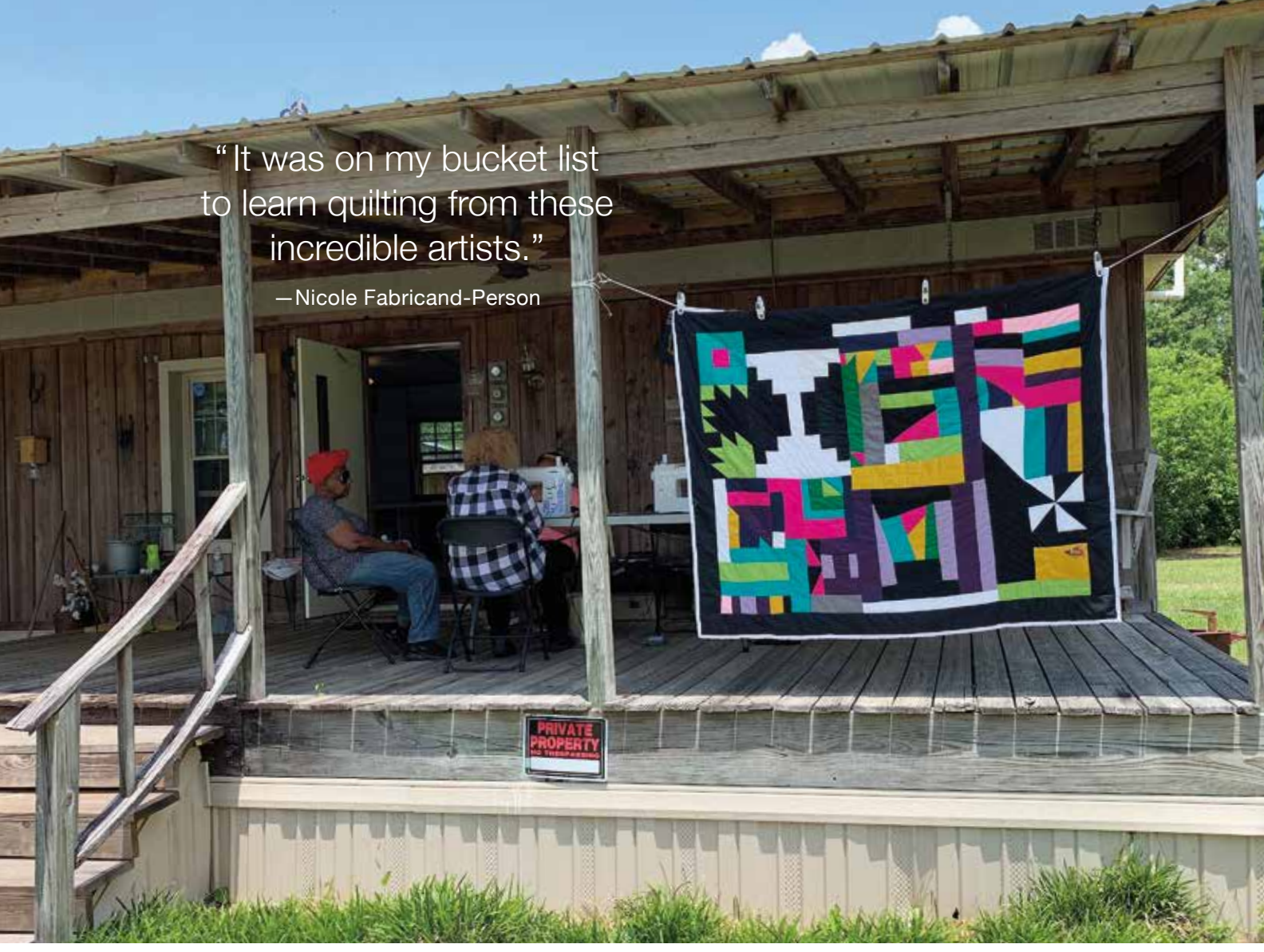
"I had always dreamed of being an artist," Hendrickson says. "Sometimes it takes meeting someone to see that it's possible."

persephenie.com | @persephenie_studio

TOP LEFT: Hendrickson squeezes excess water out of organic matter used to make rose beads. LEFT: Here, she measures essential oils and absolutes to create her personal perfume.

Photos by Persephenie Lea, courtesy of Vacation With an Artist.

Hendrickson learned different approaches to crafting incense while working with Lea. She also made perfumes in multiple forms: solids, oils, and grain spirits.



"It was on my bucket list to learn quilting from these incredible artists."

—Nicole Fabricand-Person

Quilting with Friends and Family

The generations of women who create the bold geometric quilts in Gee's Bend, Alabama, are indisputable masters of American quilting. Yet even someone with no experience is welcome to learn from third-generation quilters Loretta Pettway Bennett and Marlene Bennett Jones.

"I had only sewn with a needle and thread in elementary school," says Halcyon Person, a children's television writer from Brooklyn. Yet the moment she arrived in Gee's Bend with her mother, Nicole Fabricand-Person, an art historian and Japanese art specialist in the rare book collection at Princeton University, they felt welcome. Pettway Bennett greeted them with a toolbox and informed them of their first task: fixing the town's sign.

"It felt immediately like we were part of a team," Person remembers. "That's a generosity I didn't expect."

According to her daughter, Fabricand-Person has a natural aptitude for craft and can pick up just about any practice. She had done other VAWAA apprenticeships online during the pandemic, so Person surprised her at Christmas with a mother-daughter trip to Gee's Bend. "It was on my bucket list to learn quilting from these incredible artists," Fabricand-Person says.

They spent four days in Gee's Bend. The first and most of the second were devoted to choosing materials. These included new fabric, clothes from local thrift stores, and fabric recycled from Pettway Bennett's and Bennett Jones's own collections. All of those disparate materials came together in the final design.

"Marlene is a master of color theory," says Person. "She would explain how different fabrics interact, what happens when a third is added, how you can create busyness, calm, complication, just through color."

Person and her mother then spent plenty of time sewing (or in Person's case, learning to sew) as well as being driven around

ABOVE: Halcyon Person and her mother Nicole Fabricand-Person created this quilt with Loretta Pettway Bennett and Marlene Bennett Jones during their VAWAA apprenticeship in Gee's Bend, Alabama.

LEFT: Halcyon Person (left) learns quilting skills from Loretta Pettway Bennett (middle) and Marlene Bennett Jones (right). BELOW MIDDLE: Pettway Bennett lays out a quilt. BOTTOM: After finishing their quilt, Person (left) and Fabricand-Person made small quilt blocks to incorporate into future projects.

Gee's Bend by Pettway Bennett, meeting neighbors and hearing stories. They also explored historic sites in Montgomery and Selma, including the Edmund Pettus Bridge. These visits were deeply meaningful for them. Being in Alabama allowed Person—whose father's family has roots next door, in Georgia—to connect to her heritage in a new way.

"My family was part of the Great Migration north, and it felt good to spend time in a community that reminds me of my family," says Person, whose great-grandmother was a quilter. "I got to see so many parallels, talking with Loretta and Marlene about the traditions they've kept."

The mother-daughter duo left Gee's Bend with a finished quilt that is now a family heirloom. And through VAWAA they brought home lasting friendships.

"Most of the participants become like forever friends because we become connected to one another like thread and fabric when sewn together," says Pettway Bennett. Bennett Jones adds that meeting VAWAA participants is like "traveling all around the world without leaving Gee's Bend. I get to learn about their families, cultures, and traditions like they are learning about mine."

Fabricand-Person, who texts pictures of her projects to Pettway Bennett and Bennett Jones, says, "I'm now in love with making quilts, even as I'm very slow. I have nothing but praise for VAWAA, the way you look at the world differently after these trips. The experience changed me."

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@geesbendquiltmakers

Courtney Helgoe is a writer, editor, and art lover who lives in Minneapolis.

Photos courtesy of Vacation With an Artist.

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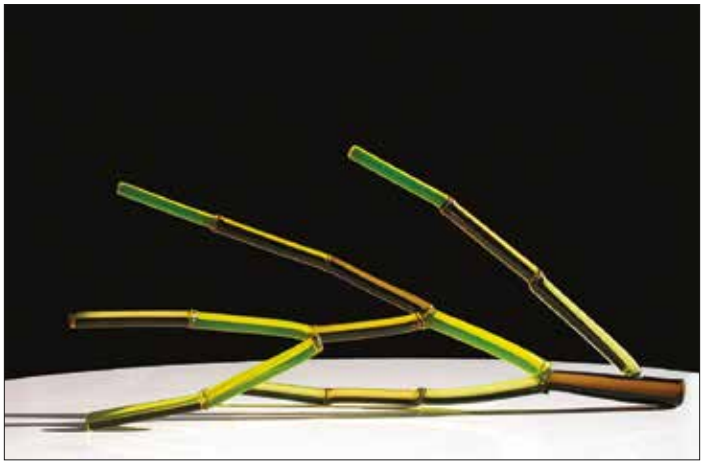

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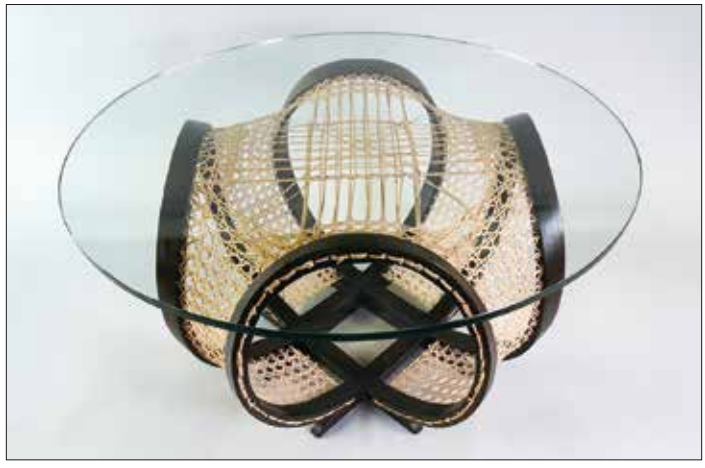

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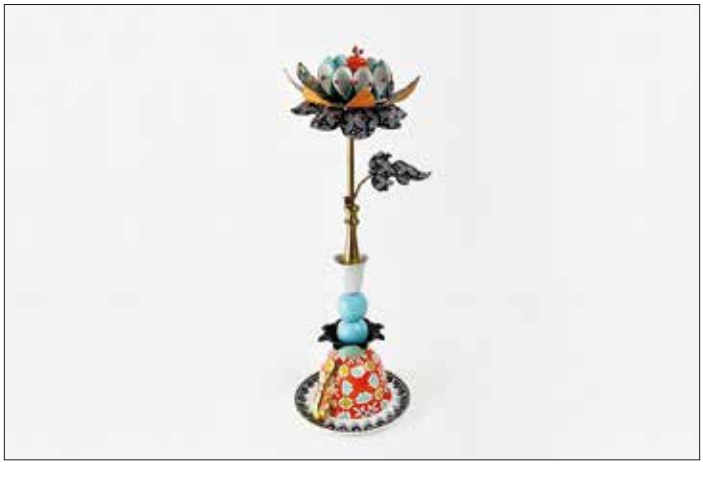

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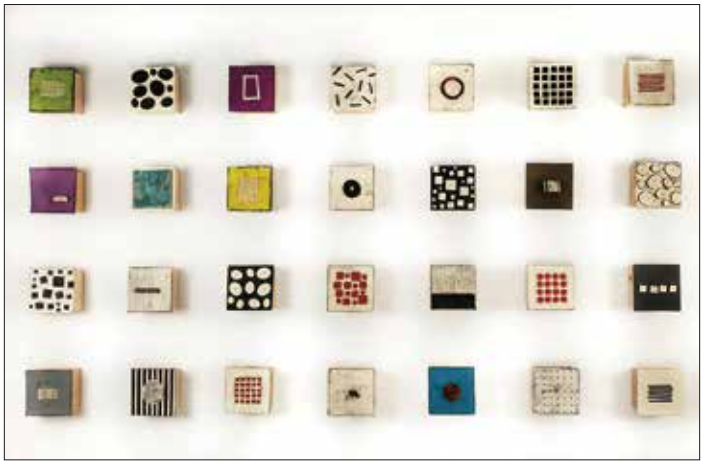

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Maggie Thompson. Photo by Jaida Grey Eagle.

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American Craft Fest. Photo by Carina Lofgren.

American **Craft** Council

American Craft Fest. Photos by Carina Lofgren.

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 via *American Craft* and other platforms; resources for artists and makers; and events that build community around craft, including American Craft Made Baltimore, the largest juried craft show on the East Coast.

Learn more at craftcouncil.org.

From the Executive Director

Dear friends and supporters,

Summer has unfolded as a season to celebrate for the American Craft Council. On the weekend of June 8–9, ACC welcomed approximately 2,700 people of all ages to the historic Union Depot in Saint Paul, Minnesota, to explore, celebrate, and purchase craft at our first American Craft Fest. Our collaborators in producing this joyful event included 40 predominantly early-career artists and other makers, and a dozen regional partners that facilitated make-and-take projects and demonstrations in woodturning, weaving, shoemaking, and more. We were inspired by the diversity and liveliness of the crowds, the spirit of community, and a prevailing happiness, apparent and expressed.

In-person events are uniquely powerful in fostering craft-centered livelihoods and building a broad, appreciative audience for the handcrafted. American Craft Fest allowed us to introduce a multigenerational audience to the richness and breadth of craft, to the vitality of the Twin Cities' maker community, and to ACC. As we continue building on American Craft Fest and our annual flagship marketplace in Baltimore, we are exploring how ACC could introduce additional events in these and other locations. Partners and sponsors will be key, and we are eager to build meaningful collaborations that serve artists at all career stages, along with appreciators and communities.

Speaking of partners and sponsors, support from the Windgate Foundation and the Minnesota State Arts Board made American Craft Fest possible. These generous funders, and all ACC donors and members, are essential to our ability to deliver mission-centered programs that create a more joyful, humane, and regenerative world through craft. To everyone who has recently contributed to ACC, and especially those who came together to donate more than $110,000 for the most successful Giving Week campaign in ACC's history, thank you. We are profoundly grateful for your support.

Andrea Specht
Executive Director, American Craft Council

On Recognition

An Interview with American Craft Council Fellow Karen Hampton

Karen Hampton's relationship with the American Craft Council goes back decades—she recalls reading *American Craft*, then titled *Craft Horizons*, in the 1970s and 1980s. Back then, Karen was just discovering a love of weaving that would propel her to the forefront of contemporary fiber arts, eventually earning her an invitation from peers to join ACC's College of Fellows.

Now well-known for her narrative textile work that honors and investigates her own ancestors, including the racism and enslavement that they endured, Karen's career got a boost when she was featured in *American Craft* in 2016. "I was one of the first African Americans featured in the magazine and the first contemporary fiber artist whose work focused on historical narrative storytelling, rather than solely emphasizing technique."

In 2022, Karen became an ACC Fellow, an award bestowed since 1975 (see page 44 for more information about the College of Fellows). On becoming an ACC Fellow, Karen reflects, "It put me at the level of the artists I admired. It was a huge honor to be counted among them." The award has validated her unique approach to textiles and provided a platform for her to share her expertise and bring other historically excluded artists into the community.

The College of Fellows distinction coincided with a significant period of growth in Karen's career. Around the time she became a Fellow, Karen secured a commission from LA Metro and also moved from Massachusetts to New Mexico. The ACC award, contributing to her growing recognition, facilitated a way for her to connect with new artistic communities as she relocated.

Karen's involvement with ACC grew when she was asked to join the committee responsible for selecting the next group of Fellows. As a selection committee member, Karen brought a broad lens to discussions about the forms that excellence in craft can take and a desire to amplify the work of other craft artists, particularly artists of color whose contributions have often gone overlooked.

Karen is excited to see the impact of the ACC Fellows distinction go even deeper with the addition of monetary awards funded by a grant from the Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation, starting in 2024. "The psychological effect of receiving money is huge," she explains. "It really says that you are something." She believes that financial support is a crucial aspect of artistic recognition and is key to enabling craftartists to continue to develop new ideas, forms, and methods.

Photo by Kayana Szymczak for the American Craft Council.

"If there was no ACC, there would be no authoritative organization to carry craft. It's so much more than a magazine."
—Karen Hampton

Looking ahead, Hampton is excited to deepen her engagement with ACC as it supports craft artists in new ways. "ACC Fellows have great potential for creating leadership value. Crafts need it," she explains. Emphasizing the importance of mentorship and discussions between artists of multiple generations and career stages, she believes that ACC plays a pivotal role in preserving and promoting the rich history of craft. "If there was no ACC, there would be no authoritative organization to carry craft. It's so much more than a magazine."

Join us in honoring the 2024 ACC Awards recipients at the virtual Awards Celebration, Thursday, September 19. Visit craftcouncil.org for more information and to register.

American **Craft** Council

Upcoming Events

Get up close with craft and support extraordinary artists at these public events. ACC members receive early access, free tickets, and other exciting advantages.

Online Artists Directory Marketplace

September 9–22

The American Craft Council's Online Artists Directory Marketplace provides an opportunity for craft appreciators to shop a curated collection of world-class handmade goods while supporting extraordinary artists. ACC members receive early shopping access.

Learn more at craftcouncil.org.

American Craft Forum

Quarterly

Be part of the conversation around craft with the ACC's free, quarterly American Craft Forums. Tied to themes in each issue of *American Craft*, these online discussions feature artists, writers, curators, community organizers, and more—diverse voices working together to move the craft field forward.

View upcoming conversations today at craftcouncil.org.

American Craft Made Baltimore

February 21–23, 2025

The largest juried craft show on the East Coast, American Craft Made Baltimore features work by hundreds of the nation's best handcraft artists and makers alongside an array of regional craft organizations and arts partners. Entering its 48th year in 2025, this event presents an unparalleled opportunity to shop, support, and celebrate the artful work of the human hand.

Visit craftcouncil.org for more.

American Craft Fest Saint Paul. Photo by Carina Lofgren.

Make someone's day.

Give the maker in your life a membership to the American Craft Council.

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- One-year subscription to *American Craft* magazine
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Memberships begin at only $48

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American **Craft** Council

The American Craft Council has valued, celebrated, and advocated for craft and its makers since 1941. As a national nonprofit, we rely on members and donors who share our passion for fostering craft-centered livelihoods, developing an audience for craft, and building community among artists, makers, and those who value their work.

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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Thank you! The American Craft Council relies on members, donors, and community partners for ongoing support.

American Craft Council donors of $1,000 or more annually are a part of our Craft Champions Circle. Craft Champions are invited to exclusive craft events across the United States. This list recognizes those who donated to ACC between June 1, 2023, and May 31, 2024, for any purpose, including annual giving, project support, and event sponsorship. ACC has made every effort to ensure the accuracy of this listing. If your name is not listed correctly, please notify Rachel Kollar at rkollar@craftcouncil.org.

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If you would like to learn more about becoming a Craft Champion, please reach out to Andrea Specht at aspecht@craftcouncil.org.

This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a Minnesota State Arts Board Operating Support grant, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.

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Deadline:
September 26, 2024, for the 2025 Winter/December-January-February issue.

Photo by Max Franz.

american craft MARKETPLACE

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To place a Marketplace ad, please contact **Joanne Smith** | 612-206-3122 | **jsmith@craftcouncil.org**

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My Universe 23 by Sunyoung Cheong

Wayne Art Center Call for Entries

CraftForms 2024: 29th International Juried Exhibition of Contemporary Fine Craft
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craftforms.org

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Have a story idea for us?
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Earth, Entwined. From a short distance, Casey Whittier's 2024 *Looking for... (Florida, Colorado, Texas, Maine, Minnesota)* catches the eye as an ethereal textile piece. Up close, however, the viewer discovers it's made from beads that shimmer vibrantly due to the natural patterns and subpatterns of clay.

The project evolved—from formless notion to polished piece—while Whittier was on a yearlong sabbatical from teaching ceramics at the Kansas City Art Institute. In the beginning, all she knew for sure was that she'd be traveling widely and wanted to create something "in between moments, between the things I'd committed to."

Using terra-cotta clay harvested behind her Missouri home, Whittier began making beads, first fired there and then on the road in other artists' kilns. She incorporated other types of earthenware clay gathered along the way. "I mix clays because of the way we all carry the landscapes we're familiar with—and the things we expect—with us," explains Whittier, who also is president of Artaxis, an independent network of contemporary artists.

While visiting Florida in August 2023, Whittier was grounded in her hotel room with COVID for five days, so she began stringing the beads together with fishing line. "I come upon my creative ideas, including titles, first through contemplation," she says, "and then by finding actions that allow me to work through whatever emotions present themselves in the moment."

Over the next six months, Whittier kept adding to *Looking for...* as she trekked to and from Florida, Colorado, Texas, Maine, and Minnesota. But, growing in size and weight, it eventually became too heavy to carry. "It was time to put a border on it," she says. "For me, the work proved really meditative. I knew I was taking a journey into the unknown, and I allowed myself to just go with that—to create something without an exact plan." —David Schimke

◆

caseywhittier.com | @caseywhittier

Photo by T. Maxwell Wagner.

CONTEMPORARY CRAFT

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22 x 21 x 6 in.
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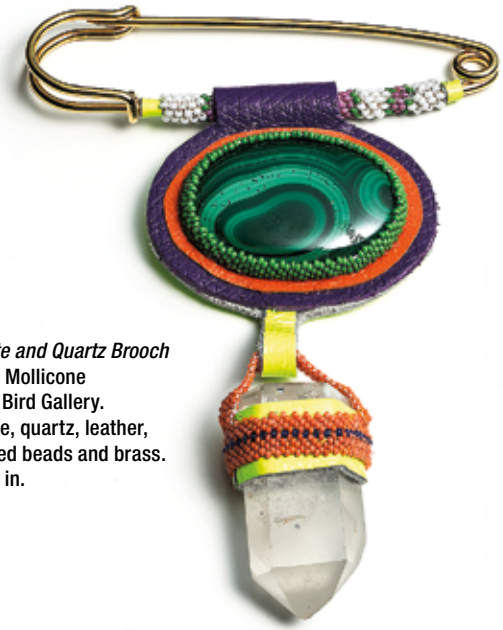

Malachite and Quartz Brooch
by Robin Mollicone
at White Bird Gallery.
Malachite, quartz, leather,
glass seed beads and brass.
3.5 x 4.5 in.

Let Me Carry You
by Kimberly Wetzel
at The Grand Hand Gallery.
Charcoal on Yupo.
20 x 26 in.

Teapot
by Marty Fielding
at Signature.
Hand-built cone 3 red clay,
terra sigillata, glaze.
7.25 x 7 x 3.5 in.

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Emma Amos, *Winning*, 1982, acrylic on linen with hand-woven fabric, Smithsonian American Art Museum