



2025 Year in Review

**Dear friends and supporters,**

For nearly 85 years, the American Craft Council has supported the people, ideas, and traditions that shape American craft. Across generations, ACC has connected makers and appreciators, provided critical resources for artists, and documented the evolving state of craft in this country, always guided by the belief that craft is uniquely powerful at forging human connections.

**This past year marked a turning point.** In October 2025, we announced a set of strategic actions designed to position ACC for long-term relevance and impact. For example, the ACC Library & Archives will move to the Center for Craft's National Craft Innovation Hub in Asheville, North Carolina. These changes represent the first phase of a three-year plan: year one focuses on implementing difficult but necessary decisions, year two centers on rebuilding and strengthening partnerships, and year three will allow us to grow with clarity and purpose.

**A core part of this evolution is how we share craft stories.** As we release the final print issue of *American Craft*, we do so with deep appreciation for the readers and creators who shaped the award-winning magazine over decades. Moving forward, ACC's storytelling continues and expands online. Craft news, original features, and artist stories are now freely available at [craftcouncil.org](http://craftcouncil.org), which is becoming a central resource for the national craft community. As of early 2026, the site includes expanded tools such as a national events calendar, a searchable opportunities board, and partnerships with organizations through our new "passport to craft" membership model, offering exclusive access, discounts, and experiences for all ACC members.

**In 2026 ACC will stand tall as a connector, convener, and national resource for craftspeople and the individuals, organizations, and businesses who value them.** In the coming year, we will increase the number and variety of virtual and in-person programs designed to serve artists, organizations, and craft supporters nationwide. This includes a re-envisioned national conference and ACC Awards celebration, which will bring together makers, advocates, and partners to share knowledge, celebrate excellence, and strengthen relationships across regions and disciplines. In addition to our Forums, Craft Labs, highly esteemed craft fairs, and more, we will host in-person Object Stories events,

and a National Craft Open Studios Weekend to reach communities across the nation as a part of Handwork 2026, a national celebration of American Craft.

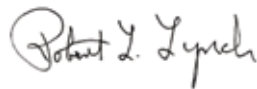
**The craft field, and the world around it, has changed dramatically since ACC's founding. Our work must evolve as well.**

As we enter 2026, we invest in the future of American craft, launching more than \$100,000 in new grants through our Early Career Artist Program, outreaching to culture nonprofits and stepping boldly into a new era of access and connection.

With great appreciation,



**Andrea Specht**  
Executive Director



**Bob Lynch**  
Chair, Board of Trustees



Photo by G Marks Photo.



Photo by Cindy McDonald.



## Events

The American Craft Council brings our mission to life through a dynamic mix of in-person and virtual experiences, from nationally recognized craft fairs to compelling educational talks and programs. These gatherings serve as vital platforms for artists to share and sustain their work while also inviting collectors, enthusiasts, and the broader public to engage with craft firsthand. They are opportunities for inspiration and community building, providing economic and cultural vitality to the craft community.

Photos (left, bottom)  
by Max Franz.





Photo by Max Franz.

## American Craft Made Baltimore

February 21–23, 2025

American Craft Made Baltimore is ACC’s flagship event and the largest juried craft fair on the East Coast. It has served as a celebrated local institution for 48 years, showcasing the best in craft. In 2025, nearly 10,000 attendees shopped for work from 388 artists, enjoyed activities and demonstrations led by 13 partner organizations, and explored four School-to-Market booths.



Photo by Carina Lofgren.

## American Craft Fest St. Paul

June 28–29, 2025

American Craft Fest is an immersive celebration of contemporary craft for all ages. In its second year, American Craft Fest featured 59 early-career artists, local food vendors, and 13 Let’s Make! partner organizations providing hands-on activities and demonstrations. More than 3,200 attendees joined us to appreciate, learn about, and purchase the handcrafted.

## Craft Fairs by the numbers

- 511 artists and makers
- \$2.99 million in estimated artist sales
- 12,314 attendees
- 26 organizational partners
- 45 volunteers



## American Craft Forums and More

A dynamic programming series, American Craft Forums brings together the past, present, and future of craft through artist spotlights, deep dives into creative practices, archival explorations, and timely conversations that connect contemporary issues with the handmade world. In our two 2025 Forums, attendees explored the crafts of neon and block printing, took a virtual house and studio tour, and got behind-the-scenes insights on editing *American Craft* magazine.

In May, we also hosted a popular online program, *Craft in a Time of Tariffs*, in partnership with Craft Emergency Relief Fund (CERF+) and The Furniture Society. The timely conversation attracted more than 600 registrants eager to join the discussion about the impacts of tariffs on American makers and craft-centered small businesses, and the potential for individual and collective responses.

**Virtual Programs by the numbers**

**Virtual events attracted more than 1,100 registrants in 2025.**



## Artist Support

Guided by our mission to foster livelihoods and ways of living grounded in the artful work of the human hand, the American Craft Council supports craft artists from a wide range of cultural backgrounds, practice types, career stages, and pathways into craft.

Photo courtesy of Adiante Franszoon.



Photos (top, bottom) by Max Franz.



## Early Career Artist Program

Our Early Career Artist Program, launched in April 2025, empowers emerging makers to transform their creative passion into a sustainable professional practice. The program provides subsidized booth fees at ACC's craft fairs nationwide, ongoing professional development and access to \$100,000 in grants. Members also benefit from peer mentorship through American Craft Made Baltimore, strengthening networks and fostering long-term career growth.

- **186 Early Career Artist Program members**
- **46 artist grant applications**
- **\$39,000 awarded to artists**



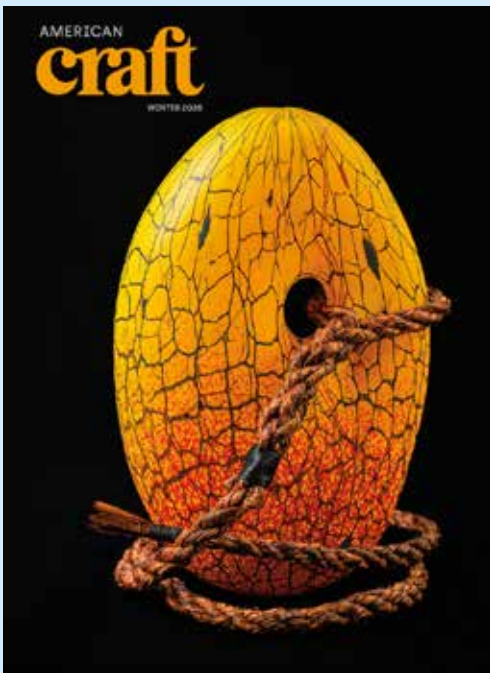
## Craft Lab Workshops

The Craft Lab workshop series delivers high-impact educational programming that supports practicing artists at every stage of their careers. Through engaging conversations with leaders and innovators in the craft and entrepreneurial fields, and presentations focused on practical skills, artists gain expert guidance on essential topics including product photography, financial tools, and marketing. This investment in professional development strengthens artists' capacity to sustain and grow their creative practices, ensuring a more resilient and thriving craft community.

- **8 Craft Lab workshops**
- **595 program registrants**



Photo courtesy of Dani Kaes.



## Crafted Stories

Storytelling is central to how we connect people to the value and impact of craft. By sharing artists' voices and perspectives through *American Craft*, digital publishing, newsletters, and in-person storytelling events, ACC builds community, deepens appreciation for the artful work of the human hand, and supports sustainable creative livelihoods. In late 2025, ACC began the transition to digital-only publishing, expanding access to craft news, information and storytelling for all.





Photo by Robert Alan Grand.

## Artist-Crafted Content

Our Artist-Crafted Content initiative pays artists for writing, photography, and video for ACC's editorial platforms. Elevating artists' perspectives deepens public understanding of craft in all its diversity while supporting sustainable creative livelihoods. In 2025, ACC produced our final four issues of *American Craft* in print, and published original digital content connecting thousands to the latest in craft. With an eye toward multi-platform expansion, particularly in video, this initiative continues to evolve as a cornerstone of ACC's commitment to centering artist voices.

- **686 makers and 482 organizations covered in stories**
- **283 collaborators (writers, photographers, designers, etc.)**
- **99k social media followers**
- **42k Craft Dispatch email subscribers**



Photo by Cindy McDonald.

## Object Stories

Storytelling came to life through Object Stories, an in-person event series that invited makers and members of the craft community to share personal narratives tied to the objects that shape their creative lives. The events illuminated the lived experience of making, from inherited knowledge and mentorship to the tools and processes that sustain craft practice. Object Stories deepened appreciation for the human hand at work and reinforced craft's role in building meaningful, community-centered ways of living.

- **2 events**
- **15 storytellers**
- **177 attendees**

## Exciting Things Ahead

**The American Craft Council is stepping into a new era of access and connection.** Over the next year, ACC is rolling out major initiatives to broaden participation, strengthen networks, and build a more vibrant national craft ecosystem.

**Storytelling goes fully digital** — Craftcouncil.org becomes the national hub for stories, news, and voices from across the craft field.

**A new national resource platform launches** — ACC debuts expanded online tools in early 2026, including a nationwide events calendar, job listings, and artist opportunities tailored to users' interests.

**Membership becomes a “passport to craft”** — A redesigned membership program unlocks exclusive benefits and discounts through partner organizations nationwide.

**Library & Archives move to the Center for Craft** — ACC's world-class collections gain a new home in Asheville, expanding access for researchers and the public as ACC transitions to a fully remote organization.

**Events grow and diversify** — Longstanding favorites like American Craft Made Baltimore are joined by new online and in-person events for makers, collectors, and advocates.

**National Craft Open Studios Weekend launches** — This new event invites artists, studios, and craft spaces nationwide to open their doors, spotlighting makers in communities of all sizes.

**A national craft conference arrives in Fall 2026** — Our first major conference since 2019, ACC Craft Connects will foster collaboration, build community, and celebrate our honorees with the “Oscars of Craft!”

**More than \$100,000 in new grants open for early-career artists** — ACC launches new funding programs to support tools, training, and career-building opportunities for emerging makers.

## Making Meaning: A Campaign for American Craft

Building on 80+ years of national leadership, ACC is taking bold steps to foster craft-centered livelihoods and achieve a new level of national impact by mobilizing the American craft ecosystem.

We laid the groundwork in 2025 by streamlining operations, preparing for exclusively digital publishing, and focusing on activities with the greatest impact for makers and our field. New programs and revenue-generating activities will launch in 2026 to strengthen ACC's role as a national connector and convener, and by 2027, initiatives showing the greatest promise will inspire our next strategic plan.

To fund this new era of access and connection, ACC has launched a three-year advancement campaign, now in its second phase. Learn more at [craftcouncil.org/making-meaning-campaign](https://craftcouncil.org/making-meaning-campaign).





## Our Supporters



Photos by Max Franz.

# Thank you to our supporters

The American Craft Council relies on vital operating, project, and campaign support provided by members and donors at all levels, as well as our community partners. This report recognizes all supporters who made contributions for any purpose between October 1, 2024 and November 30, 2025. Every contribution is important, and we are deeply grateful to the following individuals, corporations, foundations, and public funders.

ACC makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of our supporter listings. To request a correction, please contact Rachel Kollar at [rkollar@craftcouncil.org](mailto:rkollar@craftcouncil.org).

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 Pinny Wen  
 William Wenger  
 Susan Wertheimer-David and  
 Alexander David  
 Meg White  
 Patience White  
 Helen Williams  
 Monica Dreuth Williams  
 Oliver Williams and  
 Mary Ann Holloway  
 Eric Wilson  
 Julia Wilson  
 Karen Wilson  
 Maureen Wilson  
 Laura Winger  
 Wayne Winistorfer  
 Wendy Wolf  
 Nancy and Gaylord Workman  
 Chris Worland  
 Pat Worrell  
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**Aileen Osborn Webb**

**Legacy Circle**

Named for ACC's founder, the Aileen Osborn Webb Legacy Circle recognizes generous supporters who have made planned gifts to support our work into the future. To learn more about joining the Circle, please contact Director of Development Jaimianne Jacobin at [jjacobin@craftcouncil.org](mailto:jjacobin@craftcouncil.org).

- Theresa Capuana\*
- Betty Cooke\*
- Leilani Lattin Duke
- Ann M. Krestensen\*
- Mark Laub
- Jack Lenor Larsen\*
- Michael McKay
- Jean McLaughlin
- Ernest Meadows\*
- Joan Newman Cohen
- Holli Schwartz
- Carla Vincent

\*In Memoriam

**Ambassadors Circle**

We thank the following friends of ACC for seeking opportunities to promote our organization's work and connect us with people and organizations with whom we have common cause.

- Peter Barile
- Lisa Bayne Astor
- Barbara Berlin
- Matt Cohn
- Chuck Duddingston
- Carl Fisher
- Jan Fisher
- Jim Hackney
- Katherine Harris
- Charlotte Herrera
- Raul Herrera
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- Alexandra Moses
- Rebecca Ravenal
- Carol Sauvion
- Dorothy Saxe
- Jamienne Studley
- Tim Tate
- Lucille Tenazas
- Chris Triola
- Judith Weisman
- Patricia Young

## Remembering Jim Rustad, ACC Trustee

In fall 2025, we lost a dear friend, advisor, advocate, philanthropist, and role model. By “we,” I mean me, the American Craft Council and so many other nonprofits, and the large, diverse circle of people lucky enough to know and love Jim Rustad (1942-2025).

Jim joined the ACC Board of Trustees in 2022 and was a highly engaged, respected member of our finance committee. Throughout his tenure and even in his last months, which were filled with medical appointments, he made it a priority to attend all ACC meetings. Jim and Kay Thomas, his partner of more than 30 years, opened their beautiful St. Paul home as hosts for our events and traveled with us to Baltimore and Atlanta. He was a remarkably effective and generous board member, and his time with ACC has left a lasting impact.

Jim had an impressive, varied career, served as a dedicated board member for countless organizations, and was deeply supportive of the arts as a collector and provider of moral support. He was exceptionally smart, informed, curious, kind, gentle, progressive, adventurous, funny, refined, grounded, and irreverent and reverent in exactly the right ways. Wherever he traveled, his presence was powerful enough to create a microclimate of joy and possibility.

Jim was also humble. Though I suspect he often was the smartest person in the room, he didn't seem to care whether others noticed. To talk to Jim was to feel listened to, and worthy of his interest and concern. The focus and respect he brought to every interaction were Jim's greatest gift. Maybe they also explain why he, the giver, remained perpetually young in heart and mind.

Thank you, Jim, and may we all follow your example.



Andrea Specht  
Executive Director



Jim Rustad with Kay  
Thomas at a community  
event in May 2025.

## Tribute Gifts

This section recognizes gifts made between October 1, 2024 and November 30, 2025, in honor or memory of craft artists, appreciators, and advocates, including many who have served as mentors and leading lights within our field.

Steve and Nancy Apfelbacher  
In memory of Frances Bolden  
Adrienne C. McCoy  
In honor of Greg Bullard  
Andrea Specht and Joseph Ford  
In honor of Joanna Chin  
Cheryl Yuen  
In memory of Randall Darwall  
Wendy Wolf  
In memory of Lucretia Davie Chase  
Judy Connor Jones  
In honor of Peter Embarrato  
Susan Fox  
In memory of Arline Fisch  
Wendy Maruyama and William Schairer  
In honor of Lucy G. Feller  
Bruce W. Pepich and Lisa Englander  
In honor of Harriett Green  
Jerry Dell Gimarc  
Andrea Specht and Joseph Ford  
In honor of the hardworking staff of ACC  
Thomas Loeser and Bird Ross  
In honor of Tsuruko Higa Campbell  
Catherine Campbell  
In honor of Katherine Hubley  
Jennifer Hughes  
Lynn Gertzog  
In memory of Mitchell Jaworski  
Denise Mathews  
In memory of Stephen Kurzbard  
Myra Kurzbard  
In honor of Lorene Lassiter  
Sara and Robert McDonnell  
In honor of Robert Lynch and Dianne Brace  
Terri Moreland  
Andrea Specht and Joseph Ford  
In honor of Sara McDonnell

Russell Sizemore  
In honor of Jean McLaughlin  
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In honor of Suzye Ogawa  
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Christina Wallerstein  
In memory of Jan Peters  
Cissy Mccaa Laroche  
In honor of Lynn Pollard  
Ginny Harris  
Catherine Neiner  
Andrea Specht and Joseph Ford  
In memory of Jim Rustad  
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Robert L. Lynch and Dianne Brace Family Foundation  
Lynn Pollard  
Andrea Specht and Joseph Ford  
Barbara Waldman  
Woodie and Steve Wisebram  
In memory of LuAnn Smith  
Jessica Mohl  
In honor of Andrea Specht  
Roberta Allan  
Amy Newton  
Annamarie Schalk  
In memory of Robert Sperry  
Patti Warashina  
In honor of Mark Stinson  
Kathleen Weaver  
In honor of Woodie Wisebram  
Andrea Specht and Joseph Ford



Photo by Max Franz.



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