Maine Crafts Association Members Exhibition

Maine Craft Association, founded in 1983, is a Maine-based art organization dedicated to creating opportunities for Maine craft artists to develop their professional careers through educational and marketing programs, as well as to increase their income through retail and wholesale sales.

The Maine Crafts Association serves craft artists throughout the state with educational activities such as workshops and conferences, promotion of Maine Craft fairs, Haystack Workshop Weekend, a Master Craft Awards program, exhibitions and demonstration opportunities. Members also have access to markets such as wholesale and retail trade shows. The Maine Crafts Association and seasonal craft markets. In a state with a widespread population, MCA programming caters small Maine businesses interact with Maine’s summer residents, visitors and larger marketplaces in Maine and New England. www.mainecrafts.org

**Atrium Art Gallery**
Located in the University of Southern Maine’s Lewiston-Auburn College, the Atrium Art Gallery features exhibitions of sculpture, painting, drawing, and contemporary crafts. In 2008 the Atrium Art Gallery, working in collaboration with the Maine Crafts Association, hosted the "In Hand" exhibit. Its success led to the development of the annual exhibition as a showcase of work by members of the Maine Crafts Association.

The Maine Crafts Association

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**The Inspired Hand VI**


Stephanie Briggs, Radiant or the Night (pin/pendant), faceted and glowing paraiba tourmaline set in 22kt gold with 18kt gold filigree and a rutilated quartz cabochon.
Hand in Hand

In an interview with the American Craft Council about his new book *Why We Make Things and Why It Matters*, Peter Korn states, “What matters about making is that it is a form of being creatively engaged in the world that seems to really be a key to finding meaning and fulfillment in one’s life.”

Hands are, in a manner of speaking, the agents of that sought-after meaning and fulfillment. They turn the clay, guide the chisel, hammer the silver. Hands are inspired to shape and style by the creative visions the artists have in their heads. Somehow the intellect and the extremities go, well, hand in hand.

It must be said that in this remarkable collaboration, the hands do most of the hard work. While they may be at the beck and call of the mind, they hold the tools and test the heat; they clutch and cobble and grip and glue. They callous and sometimes get cut; they take a stitch for the team.

In this time of constant updated technology, it is with extra wonder and respect that we look upon people using their hands to create something. No nostalgia here: it’s just plain awe we feel when a piece of brown ash is split and transformed into a glorious basket.

Not that hands-free is bad; we need to keep our eyes on the road. And technology can enhance the creative process as Haystack Mountain School of Crafts director Stuart Kestenbaum recently noted. Describing the partnership his school and MIT established at the “Digital Dialogues: Technology and the Hand” conference in Deer Isle in 2002, he envisions technology representing “a continuum in our lives as makers.”

I’m a hands-on person too. In my early 20s I taught myself to type. Mastering the keyboard gave me a sense of great accomplishment. Since then, I have typed many poems, articles and books, each time my fingers reaching for the letters.

I type the words you read here with a special spring in my fingers because I’m celebrating the spirit of craft artists in Maine who use their hands to make objects that delight and engage us, and help us connect with the world. Their fulfillment is our fulfillment as we don the painted silk scarf, lift the glazed bowl to our lips or dance to a handmade drum.

The late William Coperthwaite (1930-2013) once stated, “I want to live in a society where people are intoxicated with the joy of making things.” The 58 artists in *The Inspired Hand VI* are helping to create that society, one cherished object at a time. I have to hand it to them.

Carl Little, juror for *The Inspired Hand VI*, is a longtime contributor to *Ornament* magazine. The Maine Crafts Association presented him with the first individual award for contributions to the field of craft in Maine in May 2009.

Notes:
- Peter Korn interview: craftcouncil.org/post/why-we-make-things-up-peter-korn
- Stuart Kestenbaum, “From the Director,” *Haystack Gateway*, fall 2013.
- Karen Gola
- Sarah Koebl
- Charles Grosjean
- Suzanne Grosjean
- Wayne Hall
- Cathy Schoenker Hammond
- Paul Heroes
- Andrea House
- Sherrill Hunnibell
- Lisa Hunter
- Gerald Jacobs
- Peggy Johnson
- Michael Kagan
- Betty Kelley
- Diane Langley
- Susan Mills
- Jason Montgomery
- Robert Maine
- Cindy Papkin
- Jeannie Seronde Perkins
- Willy Reddick
- Joy Scott
- Theresa Second
- Stephanie Semich
- Suzi Shaw
- Anthony Takes
- Jacques Vuey
- Barbara Walsh
- Fred Woell

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