

August 2012

the Crafts Report®

The Business Resource for Artists and Retailers

8 Simple Ways to Sell Your Craft

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NYIGF Established a Place for Crafts in the Gift Market

When you consider the history of craft wholesaling, one event stands out for comprehensively introducing artisanal products to the gift and home industry—the *New York International Gift Fair*® (NYIGF®).

Today, NYIGF's *Handmade*® is an extensive, juried selection of cross-category handcrafted items with two distinct sections: **Handmade Designer Maker**, showcasing 350 limited-production makers from around the world, and **Handmade Global Design**, featuring 135 international resources that combine sophisticated design with traditional artisanal techniques.

The concept for today's NYIGF's *Handmade*, however, began nearly 30 years ago when tradeshow organizer George Little Management, LLC (GLM®) identified a growing demand within the gift industry for high-end craft products. Up until this time, the market's craft resources had been limited to handicrafts. Inspiration led to innovation, and in 1985, dedicated floor space was established for craft artisans at the nation's premier gift, home and lifestyle marketplace. Here's a look at the history of and the successful trail NYIGF has blazed.

1984

NYIGF launches *Accent on Design*®, a new division which featured a sampling of contemporary craftspeople. This roused the interest of the craft community and led to a demand for high-end, non-contemporary craft items.



Andy Glanzman, founder of Northern Lights Candles, poses in his first booth at the launch of *Handmade* in 1985.

1985

American & International Crafts, the precursor to today's *Handmade*, debuted at NYIGF with 228 exhibitors. To ensure exhibitor quality and diversity, GLM adopted a jury process considering originality, authenticity, and appropriateness for the gift market with an emphasis on how products are made. This was similar to the process used by wholesale craft show producers, but virtually unknown in the gift industry at that time.

From the start, the division showcased international artists and designer exhibiting both independently and as part of government-sponsored groups. Over the years, international participants have hailed from Australia, Canada, Chile, England, France, Germany, India, Ireland, Japan, Mexico, Morocco, Nova Scotia, Peru, Scotland, and South Africa.

1991

GLM partnered with American Craft Enterprises (ACE) to further expand craft resources through the introduction of *Handmade in the USA*. This division featured products created exclusively by U.S. artists and selected to exhibit by ACE. The first edition presented 169 exhibitors at New York City's Pier 90. After two successful winter events, ACE chose to move in a different direction.

The Kentucky Craft Marketing Program's advertising campaign in 1980s, promoting its line of crafted goods.



1992

Carol Sedestrom Ross, former ACE president, joined GLM to expand opportunities for American craft artists in the mainstream marketplace. Ross, a pivotal figure in bringing contemporary crafts into American merchandising, was among the first to recognize that a vast potential market existed for fine crafts. Ross continued her association with *Handmade* at NYIGF for 18 years until her untimely passing in June 2010.



Carol Sedestrom Ross

Mary and Robin Reed, owners of Appalachian Crafts, are supervised by their dog Rubin while crafting baskets next to Ross Creek in Kentucky in 1987.

Sheila Bean, production manager of Mountain Meadows Pottery, crafts a new ceramic bowl in preparation of the company's 1985 *Handmade* debut.



1993

Handmade at the San Francisco International Gift Fair® was launched as the second largest *Handmade* division at a GLM-managed show. *Handmade* divisions were also added to markets in Atlanta, Boston, Dallas, Los Angeles, Seattle and Washington DC. Each edition featured crafts from the region as well as artists seeking national distribution.

1996

GLM combined the two divisions – *American & International Crafts* and *Handmade in the USA* – with a single *Handmade* moniker. The name was selected to ensure that buyers understood what types of products were featured in the division and that they would be limited in quantity and, in many cases, more expensive than products found in other NYIGF divisions.

2005

Handmade® celebrated its 20-year anniversary at NYIGF with a retrospective display and a partnership with the Museum of Arts & Design granting exclusive access to NYIGF participants. *Handmade* exhibitors received recognition at the *Gifts & Decorative Accessories Retail Excellence Awards*, and three outstanding craft retailers – Sundance Catalog, risd|works and Bob and Sally Silberberg of The Clay Pot – received special awards.



(Center L-R): Carol Sedestrom Ross, GLM's director of craft marketing, and Paula Bertolotti, Handmade divisional manager, with Handmade charter exhibitors at the 20th anniversary celebration.

2008

The "*Made in the USA*" designation was re-introduced as a buyer's aid to source American-made craft. Booth and show floor signage identified approximately 30 exhibitors offering U.S.-produced merchandise, including Alison Evans Ceramics, dbO Home and Kentucky Craft Marketing. During the summer 2008 market, the "designer-maker" identification system area was introduced to *Handmade* to help buyers find hundreds of exhibitors whose individually hand-crafted work distinguished it from production craft. Among the designated exhibitors: Michael Ruh, Hudson Beach Glass, David Changar, Art Department, Duane Scherer, and Elizabeth Garvin.

Craft associations also have played a pivotal role in the division's development. Participating groups have included Aid to Artisans, American Artists Collection, American Craft Retailers Association, Artisan Source, Berea College Student Craft Guild, Hockingcraft Alliance, Kentucky Craft Marketing Program, Kentucky Department of the Arts, Kentucky Wood Products, Maine Jewelers Guild, Maine Product Marketing, National Craft Showroom, Selfhelp Crafts, and Watermark Association of Artisans.

2010

NYIGF announced the start of its multi-year "Focus Forward 2013" strategic plan, which will grow the event into the defining marketplace for design-driven home, gift, and lifestyle resources. New category areas include *Handmade*, as well as *Lifestyle*, *Home*, and *New*.

During the summer 2010 market, *Handmade* was separated into two distinct sections to classify craft artisans by process and provenance: *Handmade Designer Maker* debuts in the brand new Javits Center North with 360 limited-production makers from around the world. *Handmade Global Design* features 200 global import resources with a focus on good design, traditional craftsmanship, and community building through global artisan workshops. Both sections are separately juried, continuing GLM's long-standing process to maintain a high quality of resources.

NYIGF also begins an ongoing partnership with CRAFT (Craft Retailers & Artists for Tomorrow) to produce a series of educational seminars for retailers at NYIGF.

2011

Two emerging designers and artisans – String Theory and Haptic Lab – receive the first *Carol Sedestrom Ross "Maker-to-Market"* scholarships from NYIGF. The scholarship, designed to foster the growth of young craft artisans, honors Ross' life and industry contributions.

2012

Handmade Global Design will relocate to its new location: Level 4 Galleria of the Javits Center. Within this division, a new "Fair Trade Neighborhood" will debut with nearly 20 Fair Trade Federation members.

A new "Emerging Designer Maker Platform," showcasing talented designers – in particular design students and recent graduates in business for one year or less – will be introduced in connection with *Handmade Designer Maker*.

Melissa Chao of To Boldly Fold will receive the second annual Carol Sedestrom Ross "Maker-to-Market" scholarship awarded by NYIGF.

In response to growing demand, GLM will launch *Artisan Resource*™, a first-of-its-kind artisan production-sourcing event for U.S.-based importers, direct import retailers and wholesalers.



GLM's Dorothy Belshaw, Liz Beauregard and Michelle Kis officially open the Javits Center North with a ribbon-cutting celebration.

Preview *Handmade*[®] at NYIGF

New, Global, Design-Focused

by Traci L. Suppa

**NY
IGF**

**NEW
DATE
PATTERN**

NY INTERNATIONAL GIFT FAIR[®]
AUGUST 18 - 22, 2012
JAVITS CENTER - PIERS 92 + 94

Artisanal craft resources are abundant within the *Handmade*[®] division of the New York International Gift Fair[®] (NYIGF[®]). What's more, the resources strongly focus on high-quality designer maker craft, as well as global resources with a fair trade component. Numerous product introductions are the norm at NYIGF, with new, fresh, innovative lines awaiting craft buyers.

Handmade is divided into two distinct sections, classifying artisans by process and provenance. *Handmade Designer Maker*[®] showcases 350 limited-production makers - across all categories and in all media - from around the world. *Handmade Global Design*[®] features 135 international resources which combine sophisticated design with traditional artisanal techniques. (Look for Handmade Global Design's new location, the Level 4 Galleria at the Javits Center, this August).

NYIGF's concentration of craft resources, alongside its overall 2,800+ exhibitors (showcasing 100,000 product lines in ten divisions), offers unparalleled sourcing opportunities. For information and registration - free for qualified retailers through August 14 - visit www.nyigf.com.

NYIGF continues to simplify sourcing for global resources!

- The **new** "Fair Trade Neighborhood" in Handmade Global Design will feature nearly 20 Fair Trade Federation members offering international resources produced responsibly and sustainably.
- For volume import buyers, a brand new tradeshow - *Artisan Resource*[®] - will run concurrently with NYIGF beginning this August. This market connects U.S.-based volume importers with select international producers and exporters representing global artisan groups in countries like Afghanistan, Colombia, Guatemala, Haiti, India, Mexico, Nepal, Peru, Philippines, and West Africa.

Handmade Design

Here is a representative sampling of new and unique resources to be offered at Handmade at NYIGF this August:

Medium Leather Journal by To Boldly Fold

It looks as good as it feels. The luxurious paper within this handmade journal is lightweight and cottony to the touch, and loves both pen and pencil. The acid-free artist paper is bound in rich leather and strong linen thread. Massachusetts-based artist Melissa Chao will introduce a travel journal with a stamped brass tag at the summer market. Chao, winner of the 2012 Carol Sedstrom Ross Scholarship granted by NYIGF for promising craft artisans, has a fine arts background, and divines inspiration from Alexander Calder, Giorgio Morandi and Abelardo Morell. www.toboldlyfold.com



"I've been an artist my entire life, but started learning book-binding in 2005. I do as much of it by hand as possible. I tear every sheet of paper, which means that my books all have hand torn edges. I find this to be more aesthetically pleasing than a cut edge." — *Melissa Chao, To Boldly Fold*

Miro Necklace by Dahlia Kanner Studio

A meticulously-crafted combination of casting and fabrication is used to develop this piece, made of sterling silver with a patina and 22k gold. The pendant, revealing the rustic texture of tool marks, is about 50mm in diameter, while the chain length ranges from 16" to 30". "Obsessed" with the tactile world, jewelry artist and designer Dahlia Kanner creates pieces which offer hints of forms, textures and moods. She focuses much of her attention on the circle. The continuity, simplicity, and strength of rings and round elements inspire her. www.dahliakannerstudio.com



The Tabletopper by Forked Up Art

When a group of college students couldn't find jobs in 2010 due to the Recession, they created their own work through a whimsical twist on metal art, and a line of tabletopper stands. This all-in-one version holds both salt and pepper shakers and napkins. Made of forks and spoons, each piece is bent by hand by a team of American artists, and each displays their initials. The dishwasher-safe stand comes with two grid-style shakers. New pieces being added to the line include two versions of a tennis player, a surfer and the "tequila party." www.ForkedUpArt.com



"I still like to get out into the general public at a craft fair or art festival and see what people think of new designs.

I feel strongly that the best way to know what designs people want is to listen to them, and they will tell you."

— Judson Jennings, Forked Up Art

Turkana Nesting Baskets by Bamboula Ltd.

This set of three baskets is made of Doum palm, indigenous and plentiful in the forests and woodlands in northwestern Kenya. Sustainable bark and stones produce the dyes used to add the geometric designs.

Two smaller baskets nest inside the largest, which measures approximately 21" x 21" x 21". They are handmade by a cooperative of Turkana women under Fair Trade practices, generating work and income for the artisans.



The cottage industry of basket making plays a critical role in generating income that these nomadic women use for food and clothing. www.bamboulaltd.com

Chevron Shawl by STRING THEORY

The chevron pattern may have been popular in Crete back in 1800 BC, but it's enjoying a resurgence. Textile designer Meghan Price knows that good design is timeless, so she's re-introduced the chevron in this shawl woven in small runs at an artisanal mill in the US. The weft thread is a blend of two sustainable materials: un-dyed Peruvian baby alpaca and bamboo, which is extremely soft and has a beautiful drape. At the August NYIGF, this design will be introduced in a new red colorway. 81" x 28.5" www.stringtheory.ws



As constructed textile designers, we are inspired by patterns and structures observed in the built and natural world, and those that emerge through the organization of information. Essentially, we are interested in how our world comes together and falls apart, and the patterns that occur in the process." — Meghan Price, STRING THEORY

Small Square Vase by dinner-ware

Gail Garcia's ceramics are all one-of-a-kind paintings designed with a harmonious color palette for easy mix and match. Her intention – to make unique, functional art – is realized in these simple forms which can be used as serving vessels, art for the table or decorative home accents. Each piece is hand-painted in a rich abstract style, with drawings adding embellishment. The lightweight, food-safe earthenware has a matt exterior and gloss interior. Dimensions: 4" x 4" x 2". www.dinner-ware.com



Wrap Pitcher by Two Tone Studios

There are two voices behind the work of this Seattle glass studio: those of husband and wife team Boyd Sugiki and Lisa Zerkowitz. There are also predominantly two color stories in their contemporary collection of handmade blown glassware; decanters, cups, vases, bowls and custom work.



This set, a glass pitcher, stir stick and cups, combine design and utility. The couple draws inspiration from their travels to places which allow them to experience the outdoors and different cultures. The pitchers are 12.5"h, or 19"h with stick; the cups measure 4.5"h x 2.5"w. www.twotonestudios.com

The couple draws inspiration from their travels to places which allow them to experience the outdoors and different cultures. The pitchers are 12.5"h, or 19"h with stick; the cups measure 4.5"h x 2.5"w. www.twotonestudios.com

"The work we create blends contemporary design with a nod to the past. We strive to produce objects that are both bold and unique, and we hope that people will enjoy them each day, as if everyday marks a special occasion."

— Lisa Zerkowitz, Two Tone Studios

Ice Cream Ornaments by Melange Collection

Colorful glass beads are meticulously woven together by hand to create three-dimensional ornaments in a fun, familiar shape. Other whimsical designs include brightly-colored birds, as well as ballerina cows and pigs. The winter-themed collection includes hats and mittens, elf hats, and mini sweaters. They are produced under Fair Trade guidelines by a cooperative of talented women in Guatemala. All Melange products are created in a safe work environment, where the artisans earn a living wage and their cultural traditions are respected. www.wholesale.melangecollection.com

