

I thank the kind readers who pointed out to me the fact that my quarterly newsletter had an identical title to a long-standing academic journal published by the University of Chicago Press. This was a glaring oversight, and entirely unintentional. So, with my sincerest apologies to *The Library Quarterly*, this and all subsequent issues of my newsletter will be released under the name:

# THE CRAFTY LIBRARIAN

THIRD EDITION

American **Craft** Council

MAY 2021



## WELCOME TO ISSUE THREE

Beth Goodrich ACC Librarian

### It has been over a year since the library closed to the public.

For ten weeks, I worked primarily from home, providing remote reference and reproduction services as best I could, with rare trips into the library to furiously scan as much material as was required by library patrons and staff. In June of 2020, I returned to working in a mostly empty office—a lonely work environment, but reasonably safe since I rarely saw another person. It allowed me to serve patrons more quickly, and to better provide the necessary collection maintenance. A large amount of my time was spent drafting grant proposals, strategizing, and sorting through new material acquisitions. As it became more apparent that the library would remain

closed into 2021, I put my head down and plowed ahead with various collection inventories and reorganizing. I was able to enlist some help from volunteers Kate, Jan, and Meg to continue cataloging books and magazines from home, as well as from St. Catherine University MLIS students Clare and Liz, who helped with description of digitized materials entirely remotely. I wish to offer my sincere thanks to these students and volunteers who have been willing to put up with technical glitches, communication challenges, and masked material hand-offs at the front door. Thank you also to ACC IT manager Jason, who helped facilitate remote access to my students. Your help has been invaluable during the long winter.

Now spring is in full swing, and an optimism I haven’t felt since the “before times” is settling in. I am vaccinated, looking up, and looking forward. My collection projects, which have managed to spread out over every work surface in the library (Ugh!), will soon be sorted and stored. Plans are underway for reopening the library in a considered manner, and I am anxious to see patrons in person once again. Stay tuned for further announcements in the coming months!

### IN THIS ISSUE

#### MAGAZINE TURNS 80

We take a look at how Rose Slivka transformed *Craft Horizons* as editor from 1960–1979.

#### ART FOR SOCIAL ACTION

Check out these resources showing how art can help us respond to pressing issues.

#### EXPLORING WHARTON ESHERICK’S WORK

A peek at this furniture and sculptural artists’ career ahead of an upcoming panel discussion.

#### NEW CATALOGS AND MORE

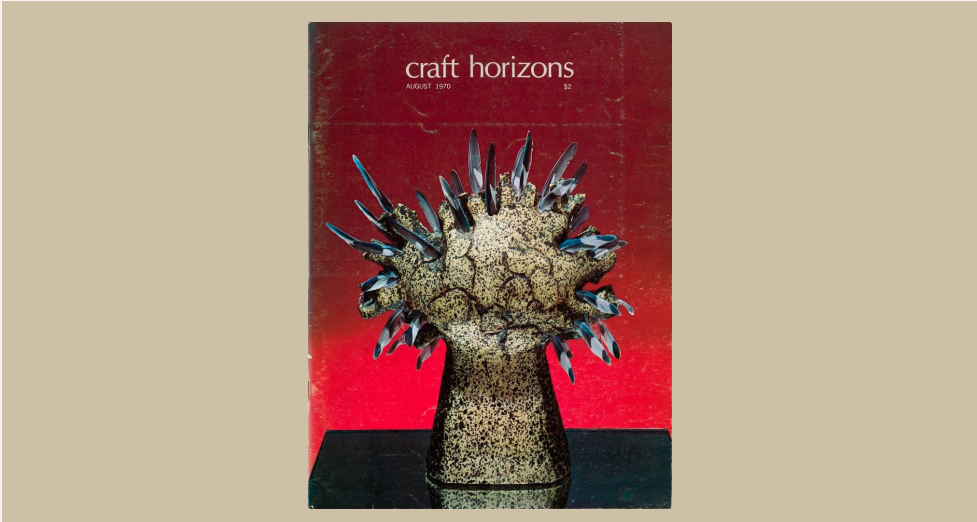
See what exciting publications we’ve just acquired—and an object that continues to “flourish.”



# CELEBRATING 80 YEARS OF CRAFT PUBLISHING

Beth Goodrich ACC Librarian

Throughout 2021, the Crafty Librarian will be highlighting the 80th anniversary of American Craft magazine, the publication of the American Craft Council. Originally published under the title Craft Horizons, the magazine has been a printed voice for the field of American craft since its inaugural issue in November 1941. In this issue, I look at the magazine during its years under the direction of Rose Slivka, who was influential in altering and shaping the discourse around the field of craft during the boom of the studio craft movement.



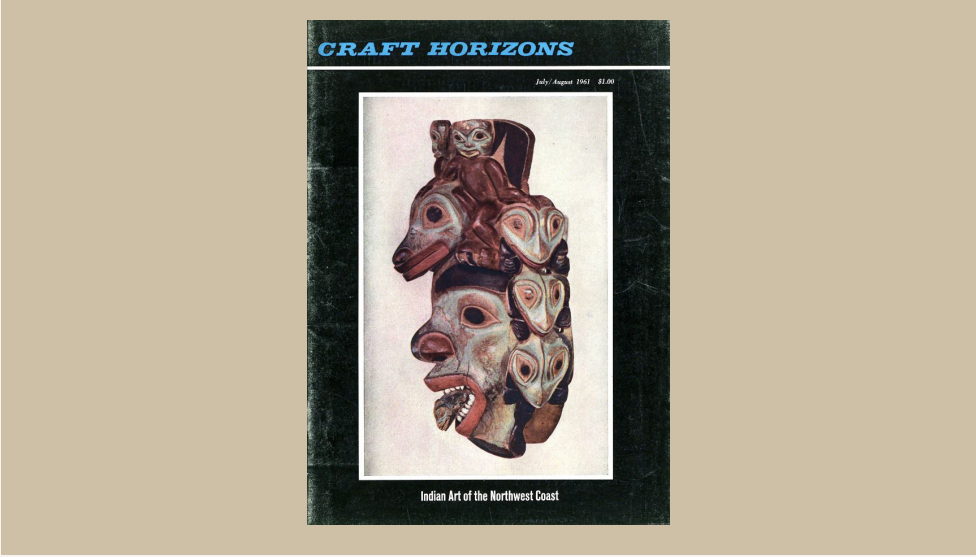
## Craft Horizons: The Rose Slivka Years, 1960-1979

In the November/December 1959 issue of *Craft Horizons*, ACC founder and then chairman of the board Aileen Osborn Webb announced “changes, plans and great expectations” for *Craft Horizons* magazine entering a new decade. The legal organization of the magazine, which had previously operated as a separate corporation, would be newly incorporated into the American Craftsmen’s Council in order to pool resources and to broaden the scope of its coverage. Rose Slivka, who joined the magazine staff as associate editor in 1955, stepped in to succeed Conrad Brown as editor with the final issue of 1959. Rose served as editor of *Craft Horizons* for the next twenty years.



In the exhibition *The Good Making of Good Things: Craft Horizons Magazine 1941-1979*, curators Elizabeth Essner, Lily Kane, and Meaghan Roddy pay particular attention to the Rose Slivka years, referencing a “seismic shift” that occurred with the magazine under her leadership, moving from discussion of material and technique to that of critical discourse. Rose took an expansive view of craft during her tenure, which coincided with the boom of the studio craft movement in the late 1950s and early 1960s. In her article *“A New Ceramic Presence”* Rose recognized and embraced the abstract expressionist work of California artists such as Peter Voulkos working in clay. The piece became a seminal article in the examination of contemporary American craft.

Yet, the traditional crafts still held importance; the same issue included a piece on the indigenous art of the American Northwest. A greater recognition of international crafts in *Craft Horizons* coincided with the formation of the World Crafts Council in 1964 and the building of international camaraderie in the craft community. Rose offered up the magazine as a platform for honest discussion, including the letters to the editor, and she did not shy away from printing bold criticism.



Throughout the 1970s, the field of craft saw further expansion and growth. Handmade products were reaching mainstream acceptance, and the marketplace for craft items exploded in popularity. *Craft Horizons* responded to the surge in the craft marketplace by offering expanded coverage and reviews of craft fairs, exhibitions, and events across the country. Many new publications emerged that were material-specific, such as *Studio Potter*, *Glass Art Magazine*, *Bead Journal* (*Ornament*), *Surface Design*, and *Golddust/Goldsmiths Journal* (*Metalsmith*). *Craft Horizons* magazine was no longer the singular voice for craft discourse in print. By 1978, the American Crafts Council logo was featured prominently on the magazine cover, and other restructuring plans would take place. For example, the American Crafts Council would rebrand all its major programs (museum, craft fairs, and magazine) in an effort to align public recognition of the many functions of the ACC, and *Craft Horizons* became *American Craft* in 1979. Rose Slivka wrote her final essay as editor in the *inaugural issue of American Craft*, where she warned of the danger of commodification over passion and commitment to craftsmanship. Lois Moran succeeded Rose Slivka as editor-in-chief, and Lois went on to serve as the longest-acting editor of the magazine to date.



### For Further Reading

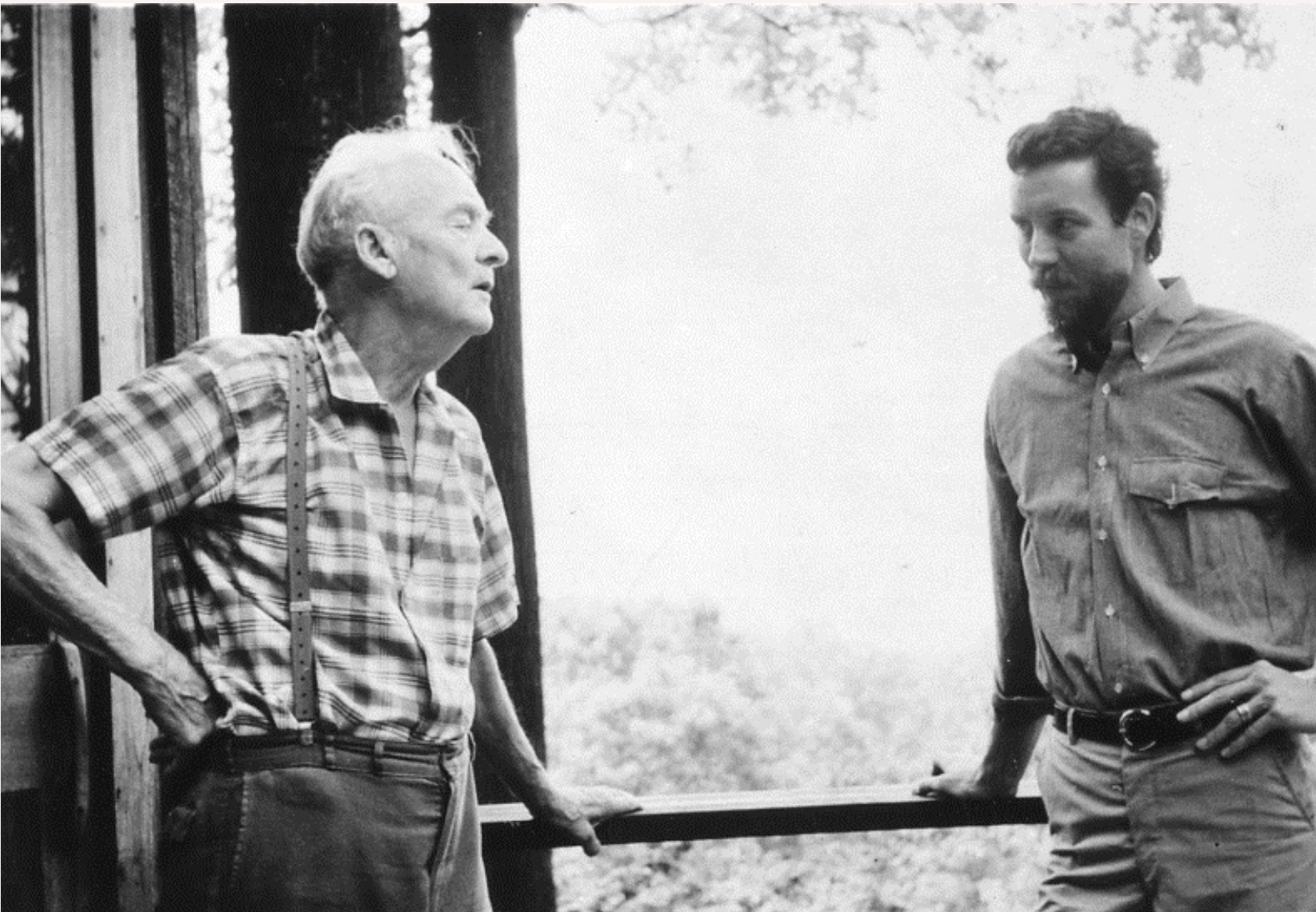
The [full run of Craft Horizons](#) can be viewed in our Digital Collections. [Rose Slivka’s papers](#) are housed at the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

*In the next issue we will examine American Craft magazine in the years closing out the twentieth century.*



# THE FURNITURE AND SCULPTURE OF WHARTON ESHERICK

Beth Goodrich ACC Librarian



I am honored to be invited by the Wharton Esherick Museum to participate in their virtual event [“Curator Conversation: Exploring the American Craft Council Digital Collections” on June 10, 2021.](#) Director of curatorial affairs Emily Zilber and I will discuss Wharton Esherick’s 1958–1959 exhibition *The Furniture and Sculpture of Wharton Esherick* at the Museum of Contemporary Crafts, as well as his relationship with other craft artists such as [Henry Varnum Poor](#) and Ruth Reeves.



Wharton Esherick (1887–1970) studied painting at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art and began his foray into woodworking by carving decorative frames and woodcuts for printing. This led to his exploration of sculpture using wood as a medium and eventually into an art practice creating interior furnishings. He considered himself an artist rather than a craftsman, focusing on the nature of material and the form of the object over the technique of construction. [The 1958 exhibition \*The Furniture and Sculpture of Wharton Esherick\*](#) was the first solo exhibition of an artist to be held at the Museum of Contemporary Crafts (now the [Museum of Arts and Design](#)).

Esherick’s influence on the field of studio woodworking is unmistakable. The 25th Anniversary issue of *Craft Horizons* took a look at the first generation of artists who were integral to the rapid growth of the studio craft movement in the US coming out of World War II. A conversation between Wharton Esherick and a young Donald McKinley and Sam Maloof was recorded, and the [transcript was printed in the June 1966 issue.](#) Images, exhibition catalogs, and other [materials related to Wharton Esherick](#) can also be found in the ACC Digital Collections.

The Wharton Esherick Museum is housed in the historic home and studio of the artist located in Chester County, Pennsylvania. The [“Curator Conversation” on June 10](#) is free and open to everyone. Information and registration (required) are available on the Museum website.

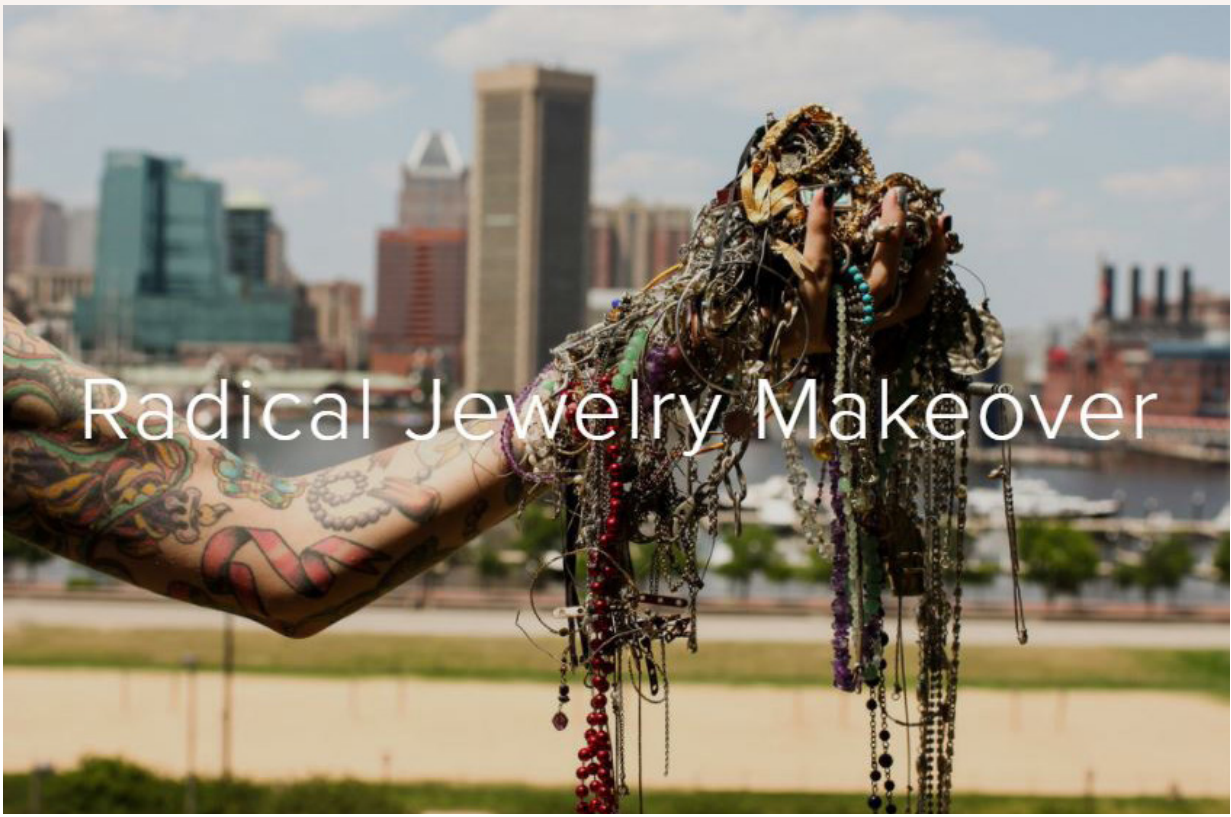


# ART RESOURCES WITH A SOCIAL ACTION FOCUS

Beth Goodrich ACC Librarian



In the time since the killing of George Floyd, public expressions of grief and anger emerged in the form of street art around the world. Professors Heather Shirey, Paul Lorah, and Todd Lawrence from the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota, developed [The Urban Art Mapping Project](#), a project intended to capture and preserve images of street art that are ephemeral by nature. The Urban Art Mapping Project currently has developed two street art databases, the [George Floyd & Anti-Racist Street Art](#) database and the [COVID-19 Street Art](#) database, each of which collects images of street art from around the world through crowdsourced submissions. These collections serve to capture the immediate public response to our recent global and local moments of crisis.

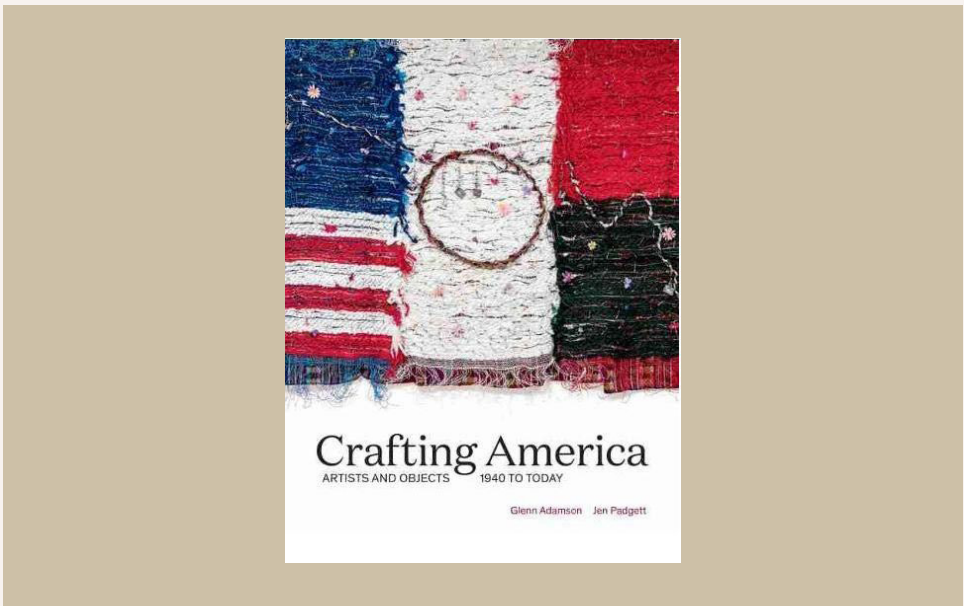


## Radical Jewelry Makeover

The film [Radical Jewelry Makeover](#) is a short film that showcases the fourth edition of [the project of the same name](#) developed by the nonprofit organization [Ethical Metalsmiths](#) around the issues of mining and recycling materials. The 13-minute film by Dana Richardson and Sarah Zentz documents the event that took place as a two-week workshop at Penland School for Craft in 2009. The film debuted at the Museum of Arts and Design in New York City, and is available for rental or purchase through [Artfilms](#).



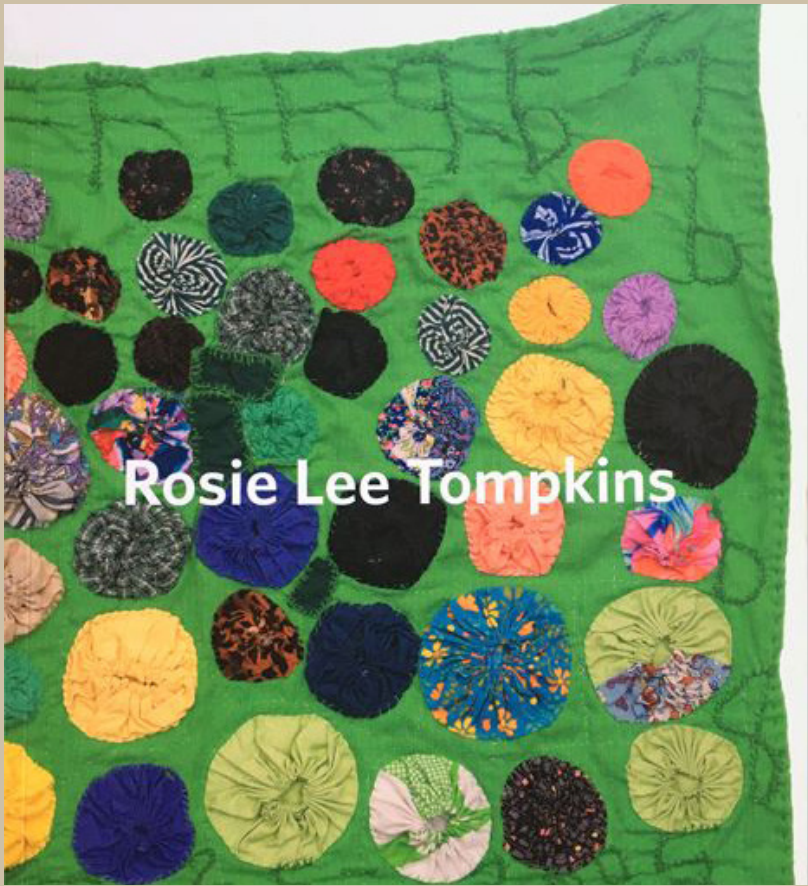
JUST ARRIVED IN OUR COLLECTION



The exhibition *Crafting America*, curated by Glenn Adamson and Jen Padgett for *Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art*, follows an “expansive range of skilled making” in the US that intersects with and reflects the widely varied American experience. *Crafting America: Artists and Objects, 1940 to Today*, the hardcover catalog published by the University of Arkansas Press, includes rich essays by Seph Rodney, Anya Montiel, Jenni Sorkin, and Bernard L. Herman, as well as more than 100 color images of work illustrating the diverse and “expansive” American identity through craft.



*From the Ground Up: Peters Valley School of Craft* is the first major survey on the history of the school since its founding in 1970. During a period when studio craft was entering mainstream culture and the counterculture was embracing a back-to-the-land ethos, Peters Valley emerged as a new generation of craft school that served as a retreat for both practicing artists and students alike. The Hunterdon Art Museum partnered with Peters Valley to present this exhibition honoring the 50-year history of the school.



*Rosie Lee Tompkins: A Retrospective* documents the most comprehensive exhibition of Tompkins’ work to date, which is currently on view virtually through July 18, 2021, at *the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA)*. Tompkins, whose given name was Effie Mae Howard (1936–2006), was an inventive and spiritual quilt maker, who combined traditional patterns with her personal sensibility of material and color choice, to stunning effect. BAMPFA holds one of the largest collections of quilts by African American artists in the world, thanks in large part to a donation of more than 3,000 quilts from the estate of collector Eli Leon, an early appreciator and advocate of African American quilting traditions.

# FEATURED OBJECT: THE FLOURISHES OF CYNTHIA BRINGLE



The Summer issue of *American Craft* magazine will be released soon, and the theme is “flourish.” Thinking on this theme, I am reminded of one of the many objects in the ACC Library collection. The graceful flourishes on this piece by North Carolina artist and ACC Fellow Cynthia Bringle make it one of my favorite ceramic pieces in our collection. Enjoy!

### How To Support the ACC Library & Archives

If you believe in the power of libraries and craft to transform lives, please consider supporting the American Craft Council to help us maintain the library and its services. Whether you join as a member or make a donation, you’ll be helping preserve the legacy of the American studio craft movement while providing invaluable resources to future generations of artists and scholars.

Support ACC



### Ways To Engage With the ACC Library

- [Search the Library Catalog](#)
- [Explore the Archive](#)
- [Search the Digital Collections](#)
- [Contact the Librarian](#)