
THE LIBRARY QUARTERLY

First Edition

American **Craft** Council

October 2020

WELCOME TO OUR VERY FIRST NEWSLETTER

Beth Goodrich ACC Librarian

Welcome to the first issue of the newly launched ACC Library Quarterly, a newsletter from the ACC librarian for our library aficionados. Here I will share news and views of current projects, hot topics, new acquisitions, collection highlights, treasures from the archives, and anything else that tickles my fancy. I hope you enjoy the content,

especially during this time when we are unable to invite the public into our space. Please remember that while the library doors are closed to you, I am available as usual to answer any questions by email, phone, or web chat. I look forward to sharing our unique collection and my work with you!



IN THIS ISSUE

WHAT WE'RE WORKING ON

The library might be temporarily closed to visitors, but we've been hard at work curating our material and digital collections.

PAUL J. SMITH

Musings on the incomparable stewardship of the late, great museum director and his tireless championship of the field of craft.

ARCHIVES MONTH

Join us as we celebrate archives as growing, changing entities and explore the living history of face coverings.

DISMANTLING RACISM

Learn how we're committing to asking difficult questions, challenging our past, and building an equitable future for craft.

WHAT WE'RE WORKING ON



ACC's 2020 Gold Medalist Joyce J. Scott. Portrait: John Dean



Materials from the artist file of Gold Medalist Jack Lenor Larsen.

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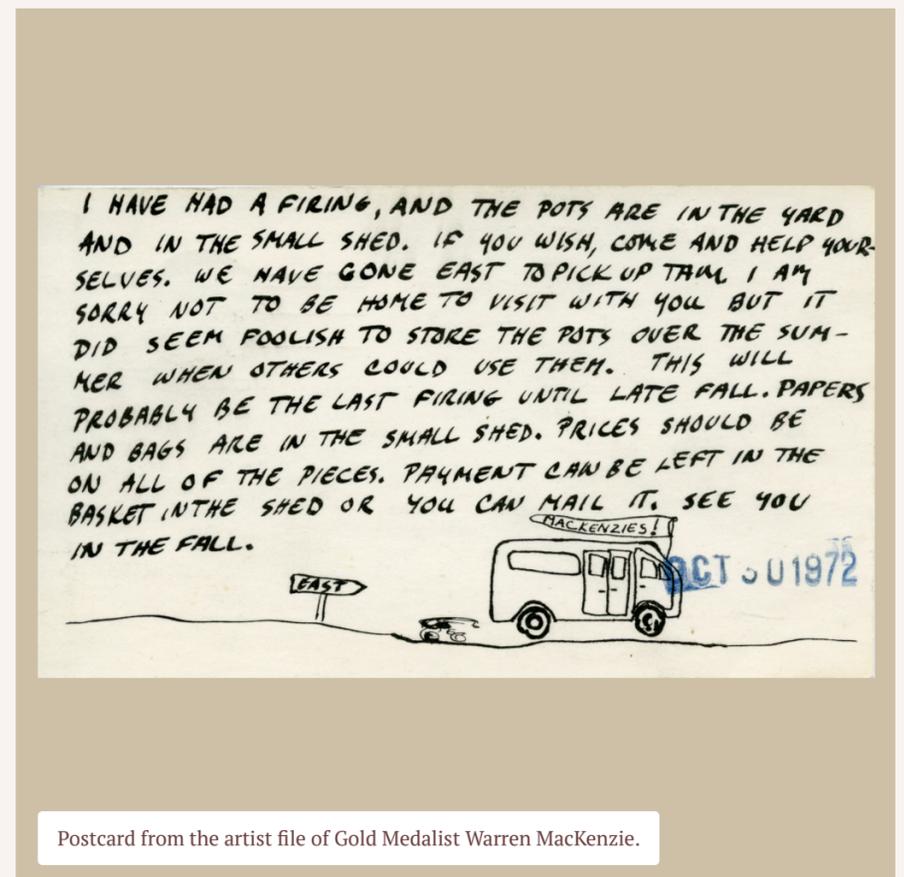
This October, the staff at the ACC hosted a virtual celebration of our latest cohort of ACC Award winning artists: our 2020 Gold medalist Joyce J. Scott, Fellows Sonya Clark, Lisa Gralnick, Katherine Gray, Annabeth Rosen, and Bob Trotman, and Honorary Fellow Patricia Malarcher. For the past several months, we have been gathering digital images shared with us by the artists to include in the ACC Library Digital Collection where everyone can view examples of their phenomenal work.

The ACC Library Artist File collection holds materials representing all of our Fellows dating back to 1975. In our physical files you can find such diverse materials as fabric samples from Ted Hallman, catalogues of **Jack Lenor Larsen** textile designs, slide images of **Toshiko Takaezu's** work, or a hand-written postcard from **Warren MacKenzie** telling potential buyers to "come and help yourselves...payment can be left in the basket in the shed..."



ACC's 2020 cohort of Fellows. Portraits: Courtesy of the artists

Since 2010, we have been collecting and providing access to digital images of work by our College of Fellows and Gold Medalist artists in our digital collection "**Artists and Their Works.**" Primary source materials from these award-winning artists are frequently sought after by researchers, curators, and craft historians, and it is with this in mind that we make these images available in our Digital Collections platform. Head over to our Digital Collection to explore images from both our 2018 and 2020 College of Fellows and Gold Medalist artists.



Postcard from the artist file of Gold Medalist Warren MacKenzie.

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Paul Smith with a ceramic piece by Hui Ka Kwong, 1959.

REFLECTIONS ON PAUL J. SMITH

“Hello, Beth – it is great to hear that you have joined the ACC staff as librarian of its very important research library.”

Thus began my first introduction to Paul J. Smith. He then proceeded to give me a brief biography of his career at the ACC, and pointed out the many interviews he has recorded, and impressed upon me the frequency of the reference questions he received. And he assured me that I could feel free to give out his email address to anyone seeking out his expertise or wanting to mine his memory of the activities at the [Museum of Contemporary Crafts](#) and the ACC. At the time I barely understood the force that was Paul J. Smith. He had a way of making me sit up straighter; after all, I was managing a “very important research library.”

I mention this with the utmost respect for the man and his career – he truly was a force in the field of contemporary craft. He had every reason to toot his own horn, so to speak, because his career was remarkable. He joined the ACC staff in 1957 at the age of 26, one year after the inauguration of the Museum of Contemporary Crafts. Within six years, he was appointed director of the museum after the untimely death of director [David R. Campbell](#) in 1963, and for twenty-four years he guided the museum through nearly two hundred exhibitions. He re-envisioned the art exhibition, breaking it out of its four white walls and bringing it to the streets, parks, and neighborhoods of New York City.

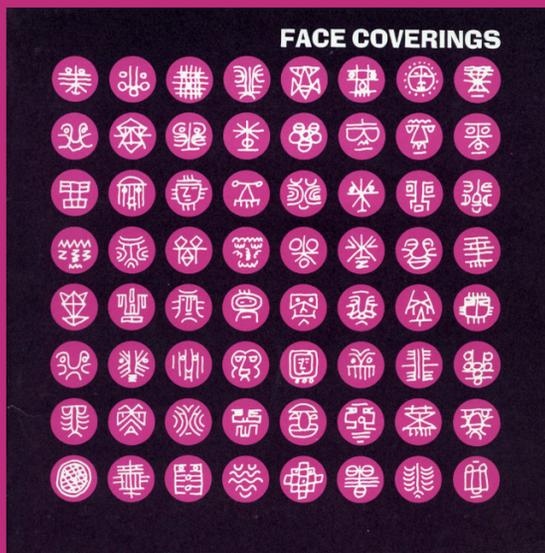
A perpetual student of craft, he stayed wholly engaged in the field and was proud of the fact that he had attended every ACC conference except for the first one in Asilomar, California, in 1957. The most recent [ACC conference in Philadelphia](#) in 2019 was the last time I met with him in person. We shared ice cream and a bus ride from an evening event at Tyler School of Art and Architecture. It was clear he reveled in the energy and creativity of the students, and even in this youthful circle he was approached like a celebrity.



Paul Smith and another guest wear face paint at the opening event for “Face Coverings” (see next page).

Our conversation on the bus that evening turned to the ACC collections and making the archives more widely accessible through digitization. He cared passionately about the ACC library and its unique collections, and he wanted to see information and knowledge freely shared, whether through our institutional archives or through his own memory and insight. In sharing his own knowledge he was generous, and right up to the last weeks of his life I know he was in conversation with researchers. It saddens me to think that he is no longer on the other side of an email, ready to offer his reflections on an exhibition or artist with whom he worked, but I do have ready access to much of his legacy right here in the archives. My personal mission this fall is to do a deep dive into the [Paul J. Smith archives](#) to expand my understanding of the man and his muse. And just to stay in touch.

OCTOBER IS ARCHIVES MONTH



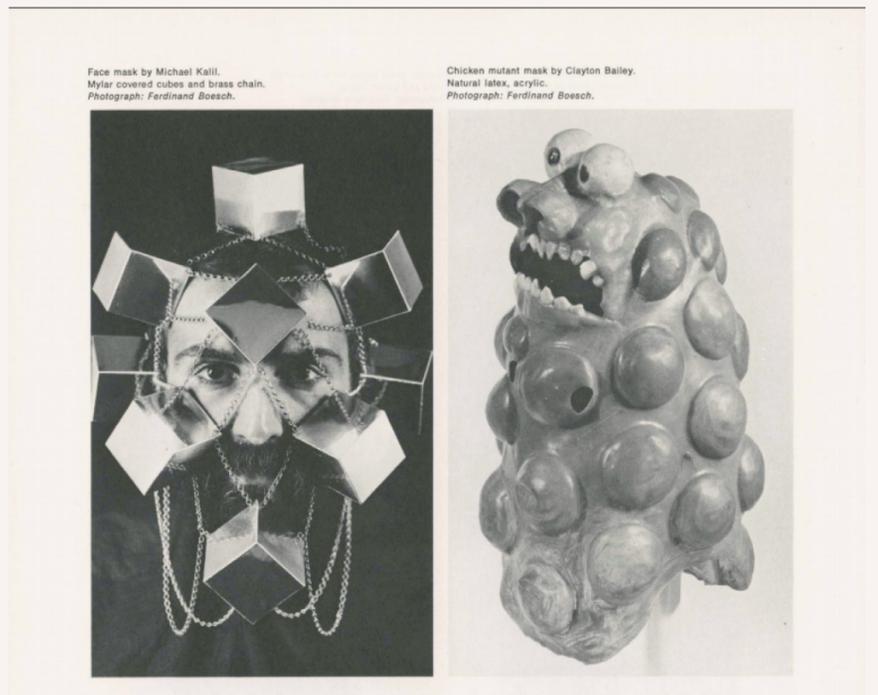
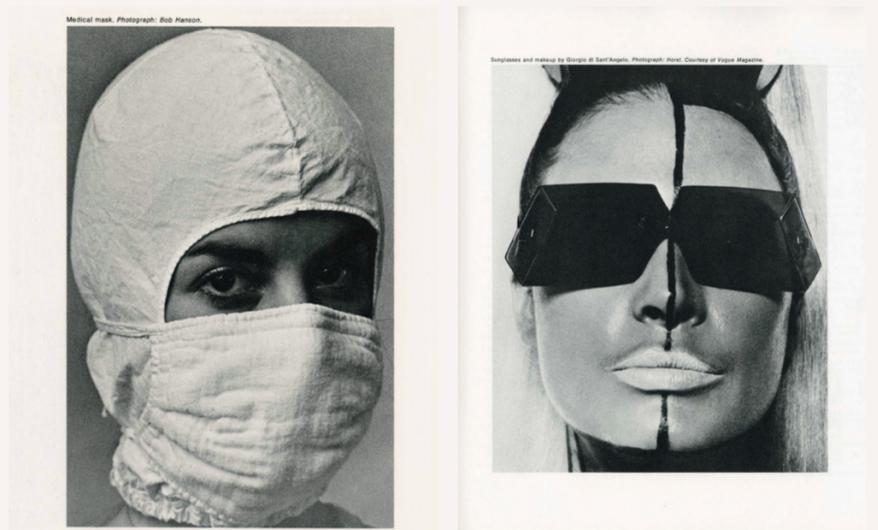
Beth Goodrich ACC Librarian

In celebration of American Archives Month, here are some gems from the archives of an exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Crafts that is seemingly prescient in these COVID times: **"Face Coverings."**

"Face Coverings" was held at the Museum of Contemporary Crafts in New York City from September 30, 1970, through January 3, 1971. The exhibition explored the many means and purposes for covering the face, from full head coverings used for ritual or protection to paints and jewelry applied for adornment or theatrical purposes.

You can [view the full catalogue and images of "Face Coverings"](#) in our digital collection on our website.

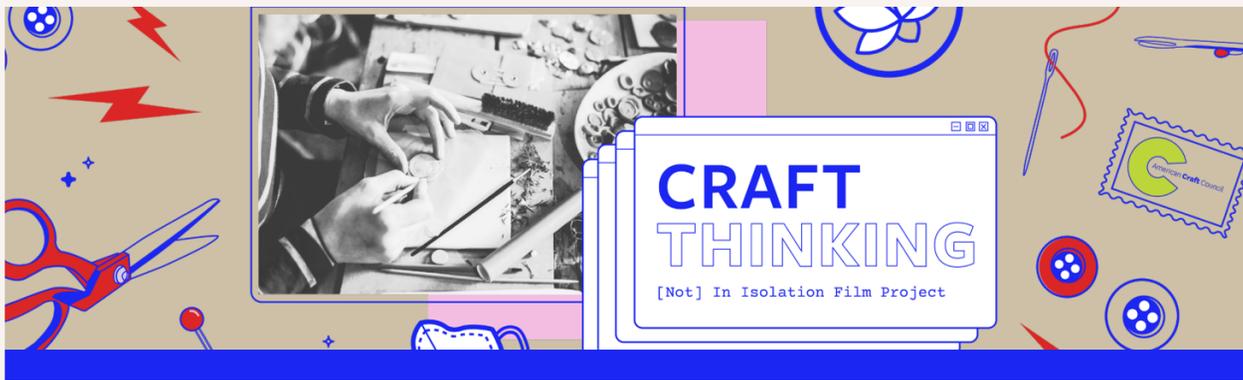
Archives may be viewed by many to be musty collections of dead material, but they are in fact living, growing entities. Archivists always have an eye to future research based on documentation of current events and activities, and new materials are continually added to our collections.



Guests at the exhibition opening were invited to adorn their faces.

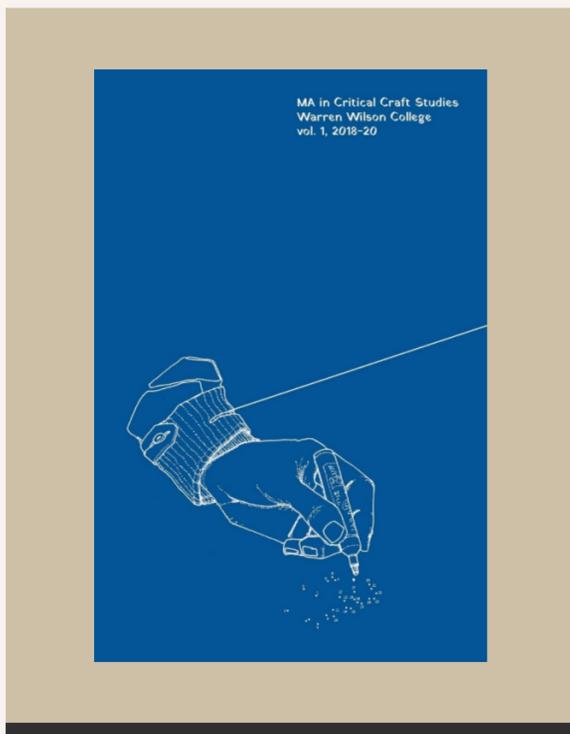
Images from the catalogue for the exhibition "Face Coverings" at the Museum of Contemporary Crafts, 1971.

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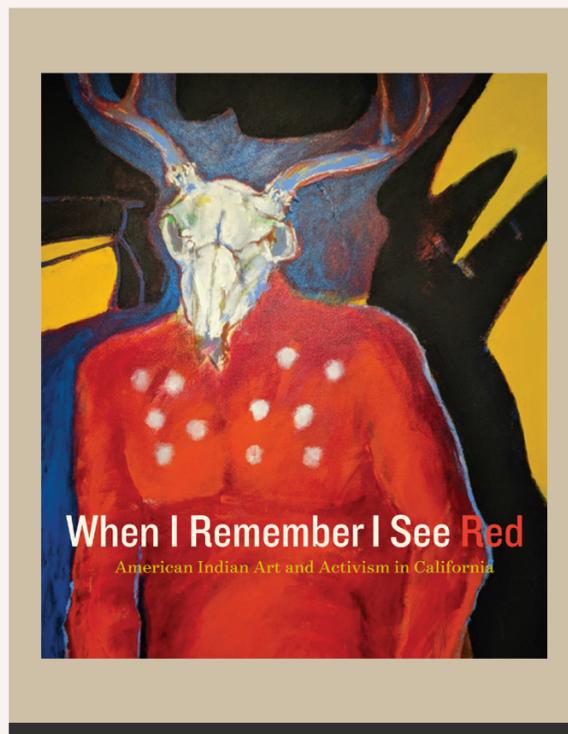


The **[Not] In Isolation Film Project**, a creative effort emanating from the craft community's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, is one of the latest additions to our digital archive of audiovisual material, and the films themselves are currently accessible on our website.

JUST ARRIVED



Mapping Craft: This is How We Meet is the first in a continuing series of publications from the MA Critical Craft Studies program at Warren Wilson College in Swannanoa, North Carolina, headed by Namita Gupta Wiggers. The publication includes a variety of content from each member of the 2020 graduating cohort, as well as contributions from other faculty and guest writers. All proceeds from the sale of the publication go directly into a scholarship fund to support graduate students who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color in the MA in Critical Craft Studies, Warren Wilson College.

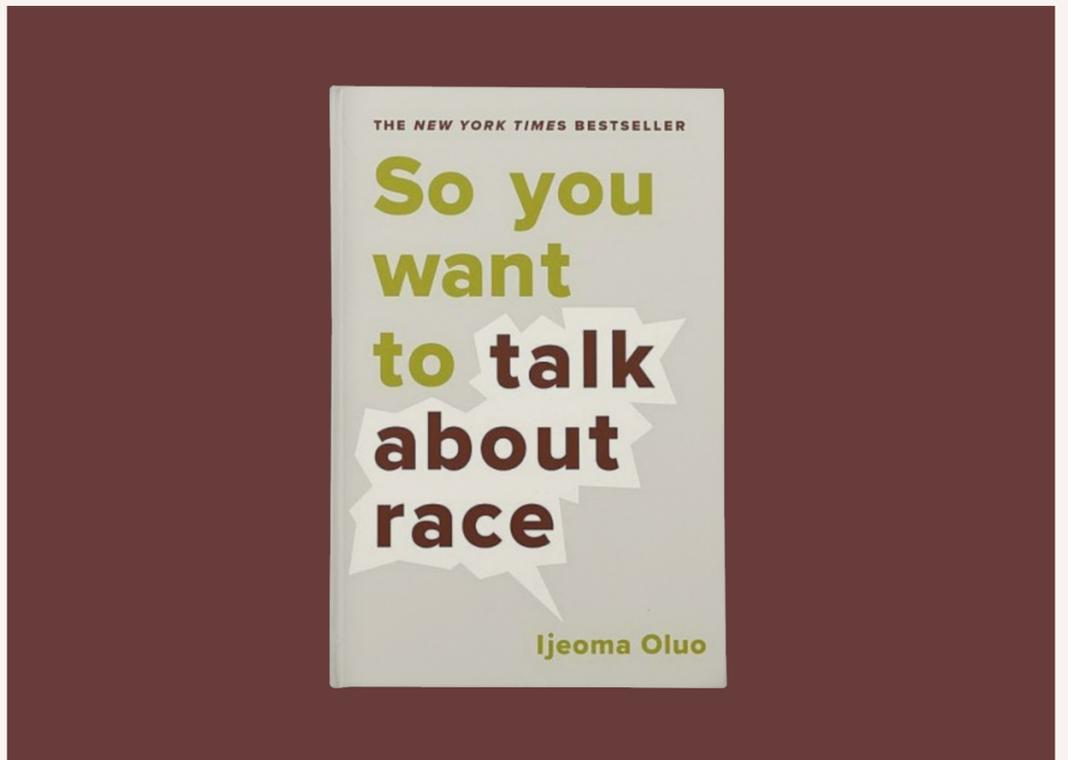


When I Remember I See Red: American Indian Art and Activism in California is published in association with the Crocker Art Museum for the exhibition that took place in Sacramento October 20, 2019–January 26, 2020. This beautiful 176-page, illustrated catalogue “features contemporary art by First Californians and other American Indian artists with strong ties to the state,” including basketry by Linday Aguilar, beadwork by Jamie Okuma, and metalwork by Gerald Clarke, Jr. The exhibition is scheduled to be at the Autry Museum of the American West, Los Angeles through January 2021, pending reopening of the museum.



The inspiration for 1x1 | A Legacy of Craft, Community, and Art in Wood came about from the retirement of Albert LeCoff, founder and Executive Director Emeritus of the Center for Art in Wood in Philadelphia. Members were challenged to create objects that would fit within a one inch cube of space. Fifty-five objects were collected into a container titled Log Full of Love and presented to LeCoff as a retirement gift. We were fortunate to receive the limited edition of the publication documenting this token of appreciation for LeCoff's dedication and passion for the wood arts, which includes 53 artist cards with original signatures of wood artists from around the world.

DISMANTLING RACISM AND OUR LIBRARY COLLECTIONS



Beth Goodrich ACC Librarian

While the ACC has included statements in its governance that speak to the organization's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, it is apparent that legacy institutions such as ours need to take a critical look at correcting the barriers and biases that prevent us from moving the agenda forward. In an effort to recognize these impediments, ACC staff are reading a number of texts on dismantling racism, including *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard For White People To Talk About Racism* by Robin DiAngelo, *So You Want to Talk About Race* by Ijeoma Oluo, and *A Good Time for the Truth: Race in Minnesota* by Sun Yung Shin (which the Twin Cities chapter of the Art Libraries Society selected as its summer book club title). There is an abundance of difficult but important reading to tackle as we work to recognize, address, and dismantle systemic racism in our organization's history and current practice. To paraphrase Robin DiAngelo in her reader's guide for *White Fragility*, the question to ask is not "Is racism taking place?" but rather "How is racism taking place in this context?" To find title

suggestions on the topic, Charis Books in Decatur, Georgia, posts an extensive [reading list for understanding and dismantling racism](#).

Critical Librarianship is an important topic in the library field, and anti-racist work is an urgent component of critical librarianship in these times. There are many ways that this type of work can manifest in our library collections and practices. We are amplifying the voices of artists and craft practices that are underrepresented in our collections, which currently lean toward Euro-centric communities. We are being more intentional with the ways in which we describe our resources, paying attention to subject headings that are problematic in terms of how they represent people, communities, and cultures. We are participating in professional development based on anti-racist pedagogy, such as the courses and webinars offered by [We Here Community School](#), and we look forward to connecting with our colleagues who are also doing this work. The work is ongoing and never completed, but it is so important to serving our library communities fully and equitably.

Important Databases

On the topic of dismantling the dominant narrative in library and archives collections, here are two databases relevant to the field of craft that work to bring forward the historical narrative of people of color that is too often erased, buried, or overlooked.

[Fashion and Race Database](#)

Established in 2017, the Fashion and Race Database is "an online platform filled with open-source tools that expand the narrative of fashion history and challenge mis-representation within the fashion system."

[Black Craftspeople Digital Archive](#)

"The Black Craftspeople Digital Archive seeks to enhance what we know about black craftspeople by telling both a spatial story and a historically informed story that highlights the lives of black craftspeople and the objects they produced." The first phase of the database focuses on the Black craftspeople of the South Carolina lowcountry in the 18th century.

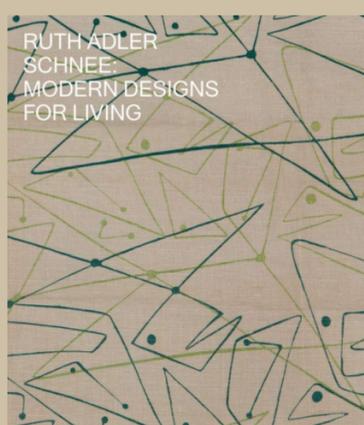
HOW TO SUPPORT THE ACC LIBRARY

If you believe in the power of libraries, as well as craft, to transform lives, please consider [making a donation](#) to the ACC. Your support not only makes it possible for the ACC to maintain the library and its services, but also allows us to cultivate the next generation of makers through our educational programs and marketplace, and to inspire readers through the publication of the award-winning magazine *American Craft*.

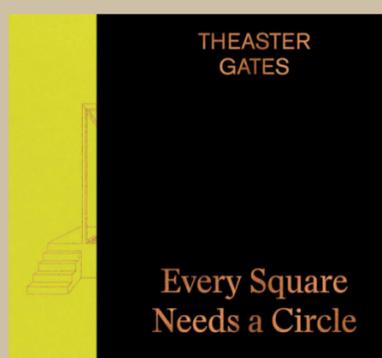
Interested in making a tangible contribution to our collection? For your consideration, here are a few titles from the ACC Library wishlist:



Crafting Dissent: Handicraft as Protest from the American Revolution to the Pussyhats



Ruth Adler Schneer: Modern Designs for Living



Theaster Gates: Every Square Needs a Circle



NATIONAL
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FOR THE
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[The National Endowment for the Humanities: Exploring the human endeavor](#)

The ACC Library is a recipient of a generous NEH CARES grant, without which the creation of this inaugural issue of the ACC Library Quarterly Newsletter would not be possible.

Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this (article, book, exhibition, film, program, database, report, Web resource), do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Ways to connect with the ACC Library:

[Search the Library Catalog](#)

[Explore the Archive](#)

[Search the Digital Collections](#)

[Contact the Librarian](#)