American Craft Council
2020 Annual Report
A Year of Transformation

2020 revealed what the craft community is made of: resourcefulness, creativity, action.

2020 will go down in history as a year of change in so many aspects of our lives—a year that prompted us to reflect and evolve in the midst of uncertainty. The pandemic presented significant challenges to the American Craft Council, just as it did for artists and other cultural organizations across the country. As calls for racial justice amplified nationally, we worked to confront the racist systems underlying not just our society but also the craft field. Through it all, our community stuck together and did what it does best—transform the raw material of the world into something useful and beautiful.

We saw example after example of makers and organizations rising to the occasion, employing their skills to serve others and finding innovative ways to stay connected and engaged. ACC evolved alongside our community, shifting programs online and launching entirely new efforts, and we’re honored to have been able to support so many inspiring people and projects last year. The following pages showcase how our efforts transformed to serve the craft community in new ways.

The American Craft Council connects and galvanizes diverse craft communities to advance craft’s impact in contemporary American life.

Though ACC’s initiatives may evolve over time, the four pillars that guide our work remain the same: creative economies, public voice for craft, stewardship and legacy, and social impact and community. What matters is how we realize these pillars amid changing circumstances, and 2020 affirmed the important role craft can play in our lives today. It connects us to one another and the world around us, carries forward our traditions, and can serve as a powerful medium for addressing the issues we face as a society.

Thank you for your support in 2020 as we responded to our current moment and continued to elevate craft and champion its makers. 2021 will be a year of building upon new foundations, and we look forward to doing it together.

Sincerely,

Sarah Schultz
Executive Director

Gary J. Smith
Board Chair
Four Pillars Guiding Our Work

**Creative Economies**
Investing in makers and their entrepreneurial efforts so they can fully live creative and sustainable lives.

**Public Voice for Craft**
Serving as the nexus of information, content producer, and national network building broader audiences who participate in and support craft.

**Stewardship & Legacy**
Documenting and preserving generational knowledge and supporting new research and scholarship in the field.

**Social Impact & Community**
Investing in and supporting the diverse ways that craft impacts communities and culture, the humanity it connects us to, and the futures it’s creating.
Baltimore 2020 American Craft Show

Before the pandemic in February, our flagship American Craft Show in Baltimore brought together artists, shoppers, students, regional entrepreneurs, and community organizations to connect in the craft marketplace.

685 exhibiting artists
17,124 show attendees
$3.4M estimated artist sales
60 emerging artist program participants
28 craft students from 4 School-to-Market partner institutions
6 Let’s Make community activation partners

Responding to the Impact of Canceled Shows

While we had to cancel our Atlanta, St. Paul, and San Francisco shows with the onset of the pandemic, we were proud to refund artists’ booth fees in keeping with our mission to support their livelihoods.
Creating Online Platforms for Craft Commerce

When the pandemic ruled out in-person shows, we got to work building ways to support artists’ livelihoods online. As ACC’s first-ever online marketplace event, San Francisco Bay Area Craft Week supported more than 100 diverse artists from across the country and celebrated regional craft culture through a range of online programming.

Our second online marketplace, Craft Bash, featured over 90 artists and emphasized the value of giving handmade gifts—particularly meaningful at the end of a tumultuous year.

- **204** participating artists
- **60K** unique visitors to the ecommerce site
- **$207K** in artist sales
- **35%** of participants were BIPOC

Online Maker Meetups, regional craft guides, artist playlists, and more

Online Directory Redesign

We also redesigned our online artist directories for our shows in an effort to facilitate ongoing ecommerce for ACC exhibitors.
American Craft Magazine

Through six innovative issues, American Craft magazine offered new perspectives on craft and underscored its relevance to our rapidly changing times.

516,364 estimated readers of print and online content
102 diverse artists and craft organizations featured
113 contributing writers and photographers

Fresh Online Content

Two new collaborative blog post series launched this year, The Queue and Maker x Maker, help highlight artists and engage the craft community online.

Magazine metrics reflect ACC’s 2020 fiscal year (October 2019–September 2020).
2020 ACC Awards

ACC celebrated 50 years of honoring distinction in the craft field through our 2020 awards. We recognized nine recipients' exceptional contributions through an online ceremony in October, as well as through features in our magazine and The Queue.

All photos courtesy of the awardees.
Housed in our main offices in Minneapolis, the ACC Library & Archives comprises more than 20,000 books and exhibition catalogues and more than 3,000 individual artist files. This one-of-a-kind resource is helping celebrate craft’s history while supporting new work in the field.

In 2020, we launched a brand new quarterly library newsletter to share exciting projects, offer recommended reading and resources, provide access to rare finds from our collections, and more.

- 361 library patrons and researchers assisted
- 1,611 readers of the library newsletter
- 110 books and catalogs added to the collection
- 16 files created or updated for ACC Fellows and other craft organizations
- 2 events hosted, including an Art + Feminism Wikipedia Edit-a-thon

Library metrics reflect ACC’s 2020 fiscal year (October 2019–September 2020).
American Craft Forum

Last year’s rapidly changing social and economic landscape led to the launch of the American Craft Forum, two series of online discussions exploring craft’s role in addressing the challenges we face.

1,580 estimated American Craft Forum participants
24 presenters from diverse craft backgrounds
9 program partners

[Not] In Isolation Film Project

In collaboration with artists, filmmakers, and organizations, ACC commissioned 10 short video projects to tell the stories of makers putting their skills to use to respond to pandemic-driven needs in their communities.
2020 saw the launch of a new ACC residency program designed to elevate craft communities, support and encourage artists, and preserve and advance craft knowledge. Minneapolis artist Tamara Aupaumut (Stockbridge-Munsee Community Band of Mohican Indians, Oneida Nation of Wisconsin, and Brothertown Indian Nation) helped shape the first iteration of Craft Labs, facilitating a series of workshops in which three Ojibwe artists from across the region shared their craft practices and learned from one another.

ACC was proud to team up with Purpose Built Schools Atlanta last year to provide children in Southeast Atlanta with everything they would need to stay engaged in craft-based activities while homebound over the summer due to the pandemic. This collaboration led to the creation of more than 400 craft boxes containing supplies and instructions for 16 different projects, which were delivered to students in July 2020.
Ongoing Commitment to Diversity in Our Work

As an organization invested in supporting the voices, work, and livelihoods of makers, we cannot turn away from recognizing the deep inequities embedded in the socio-economic structure and cultural fabric of our country and how they tragically and disproportionately affect Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities.

ACC has been working hard to address its own history of bias and exclusion, including the adoption of an inclusion and equity statement written by the ACC's Board of Trustees. While we are proud of the work we've been doing, we also know that the work of real change is never-ending and imperfect. It requires that we listen, learn, cede power, and hold ourselves accountable everyday.

Craft, with its deep roots in all cultures, embodies a spirit of openness. We will continue to work within that spirit and with more intention toward a more inclusive, just, and equitable community.
ACC’s financial statements are audited annually by certified public accountants CliftonLarsonAllen. Audited financial statements are available upon request.
Enjoy New Benefits and Make More Possible

New membership levels allow you to increase your support and enjoy new benefits when you renew at a higher level. Find benefit details and renew at go.craftcouncil.org/support.

**Member** • $60 annually ($5 per month)
Become a member of a community inspired to live a creative life

**Immersed** • $120 annually ($10 per month)
Immersed in the joy of the handmade

**Committed** • $250 annually ($21 per month)
Committed to the essential role of makers

**Motivated** • $500 annually ($42 per month)
Motivated to create a vibrant future for the field

**Dedicated** • $1,000 annually ($83 per month)
Dedicated to nurturing craft’s upcoming generations

**Engaged** • $2,500 annually ($209 per month)
Engaged in building new audiences for craft

**Energized** • $5,000 annually ($417 per month)
Energized to advance ACC’s future

**Inspired** • $10,000 annually ($834 per month)
Inspired to make it all happen—marketplaces, support for makers, American Craft magazine, ACC Library & Archives, awards—everything we do
Thank You to Our Supporters

The people and organizations on these pages have been generous partners in our efforts, and we thank them deeply for their commitment to the continued vitality and growth of the craft field. This report recognizes those who donated to ACC between October 1, 2019, and September 30, 2020, for any purpose, including annual giving, project support, and event sponsorship. Every contribution is important, and all of our supporters have our heartfelt thanks.

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