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Buy Local. Buy Handmade.

4th annual Pennsylvania Guild Fine Craft Fair is the Brandywine Valley's largest premier show

All New: special section features emerging craftsmen

July 31 & August 1, 2010

Wilmington, DE: Individual works of art, each created one-at-a-time by a master craftsman, are what make the Pennsylvania Guild of Craftsmen Fine Craft Fairs unique. And learning to become masters are seven emerging artists, new to the Pennsylvania Guild at its 4th annual Fine Craft Fair, July 31 & August 1, at the Chase Center on the Riverfront.

This beloved event is the Brandywine Valley's largest premier Fine Craft Fair, bringing thousands of loyal art patrons to Wilmington's Riverfront in search of exquisite contemporary and heritage fine crafts.

The 2010 fair features more than 170 master craftsmen and women, plus seven new emerging artists, in all crafts including furniture, clothing, jewelry, household goods, sculpture, fine art and decorative works. Special works on display for purchase include pottery, photography, fiber sculptures, leather goods, basketry, quilts, and more. Precious gemstones are set in hand-worked sterling silver or gold; blown glass, turned wood and carved marble are displayed; all sizes of skirts, jackets and scarves may be examined, and functional goods for the home round out this exciting show. Fair hours are 10 am to 6pm Saturday and 10 am to 5 pm Sunday.

A resurgence of interest in the handmade craft movement can be linked to the heartfelt desire to support local artists and buy handmade. As one of the nation's largest craft non-profit organizations, the Pennsylvania Guild works closely with 1,300 craftsmen in 33 states and specializes in those who individually design and create each piece of craft one at a time. This attention to detail is a requirement that makes the Guild's Fine Craft Fair different from other shows.

"The Guild is a 501-c-3 arts non-profit, and our focus is on education and achieving excellence in craftsmanship," explained Guild Executive Director Sherrie Boyer. "We work with hundreds of craftsmen and thousands of pieces of craft work every year. We bring the very, very best to this show in Wilmington."

This year's show offers 12 demonstration areas where craftsmen and women show how individual crafts are created. Some of these include:

- Greg Hardy, newly relocated from New Mexico to Central Pennsylvania, will hand-build cooking pots using Micaceous clay in a centuries-old process used by American Indians of the Southwest. The pots can be used in everyday life on gas or electric stoves.
- Tom Laudenslager of Coopersburg will demonstrate a different aspect of hand-building stoneware as he forms vases and then adds three-dimensional tree limbs and sculpted trunks to the semi-moist clay. He also paints onto the surfaces with liquid clay.

- Scott Gold of Oxford will show how using an adz, a gouge and a mallet combine with traditional training and skill to create hand-hewn salt boxes, wooden bowls and utensils sturdy and elegant enough for everyday life and a fine table.
- Marie-Helene Grabman of Alexandria, VA, is an internationally-recognized expert in the art of paper-cutting or Scherenschnitte. Her work is on display and in demand at museums and art galleries.

Other demonstrations include embossed paper and mold making, theorem painting, wood turning, tatted jewelry (lace making), marble carving, spoon-making, and weaving on a simple 2-harness loom.

Brad Smith, of Worcester, is the featured artist of this year’s fair. As a boy growing up in Pennsylvania farm country, Smith was fascinated by the beauty and functionality of traditional farm implements. As an adult, he combined his love of wood working with those elements, creating dining room chairs with “pitchfork” backs, stools with “ax handle” legs, and contemporary four-poster beds with whimsical rural quails as end knobs.

New to this show are seven emerging artists who have been working in craft for only a few years. This year’s emerging artists are in clay and jewelry mediums.

“Our mission is to all about celebrating craft, the craft-maker, and the individual who uses craft in their everyday life,” said Boyer. “So connecting a lover of craft with the craft-maker, and connecting the emerging artist with the expert, not only keeps our craftsmen vibrant, but it also develops a future culture of appreciation for the handmade.”

This year, more than 35 of the fair’s craftsmen live within 30 miles of Wilmington, and nearly two-thirds live within 100 miles, making this show a regional celebration. Buying local is often a by-product of eating locally, and the measure for local foods is typically referred to as the 100-mile diet.

GENERAL PUBLIC INFORMATION:

The Pennsylvania Guild Fine Craft Fair is open Saturday, July 31 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday, August 1, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., at the Chase Center on the Riverfront, Wilmington. Admission is \$8/adults (\$1 off with coupon from www.pacrafts.org or this newspaper article) and free for children under 12. Admission proceeds are used to make this nonprofit event possible. Members get in free! Join as a supporter of craft at www.pacrafts.org today. For more information, call **717-431-8706** or visit **www.pacrafts.org**.

PRESS INFORMATION: IMAGES: Images (artisans, fair images and logos) available

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