It is a privilege and honor to join the James Renwick Alliance for Craft team as editor of the “Craft Quarterly.” As a decorative arts and design scholar, I have deep admiration for JRACraft and its history of uplifting artists and practices not often considered in the halls of major United States museums. JRACraft has proudly supported artists and those interested in their work for 40 years, and this magazine plays a key role in fulfilling the Alliance’s mission to advance “scholarship, education, and public appreciation of craft.” I look forward to working in concert with the editorial staff to bring new voices and perspectives to this admirable mission.

With this issue “Craft across the Country,” we are proud to feature a collection of articles that highlight a breadth of innovative work taking place in artists’ studios and communities, at educational institutions, and through exhibitions and publications. Craft’s efflorescence illuminates the diverse and vital pathways open to artists and offers an inspirational model for those tackling experimental initiatives in the field.

As we look ahead to future issues, we’re excited to share that we will be putting out a call for contributions based on thematic prompts. I hope that this call will welcome emerging scholars and remind those in the field that craft remains full of catalytic potential. As we grow our network, I look forward to seeing our content become more accessible and inclusive as well as energized with fresh perspectives. It is galvanizing to be joining the “Craft Quarterly” team as JRACraft enters its fifth decade. I’m grateful to the committee for their warm welcome and I am eager to see all that we will accomplish together!

Erica Warren

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR
CRAFT RESOURCES MAP

Craft in America’s “Craft Resources Map” is a free, interactive tool to find places to see, make, buy and learn about craft throughout the United States. Craft in America started the Resources Map in 2006, as a printed list included in the organization’s book “Craft in America: Celebrating Two Centuries of Artists and Objects” (Random House, 2007). Since then, the Resources Map has grown and evolved into a digital platform on the Craft in America website, and includes more than 500 places presented on an intuitive Google map. In 2020, Craft in America partnered with the James Renwick Alliance for Craft to also make this map available on jra.org. By zooming in on the map, users can explore offerings in a particular state, or they can use the dropdown menu to search by type: schools and art centers, museums, organizations, and galleries. As a public resource and as a celebration of the craft community, the map is a true reflection of Craft in America’s mission to promote, preserve, and advance handcrafted work.

Organized by Denise Kang and written by Emilia Shaffer-Del-Valle, Craft in America

LEARN MORE AT CRAFTINAMERICA.ORG OR JRA.ORG

sculpture
objects
functional art
and design

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John Kiley
SONOMA HALO | 31865, 2015
Contemporary glass sculpture
17 x 14 x 12 in
(43 x 35 x 30 cm)
Traver Gallery
NOT-TO-BE-MISSED

SUMMER CRAFT EXHIBITIONS

2022 symbolizes new beginnings for some institutions in the craft field and marks important milestones for others, resulting in a dynamic range of engaging exhibitions to see this summer. From coast-to-coast museums, galleries and organizations continue to plan exhibitions that educate, inspire, and encourage us to think.

OPENING FOR THE FIRST TIME

The Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art and Culture opened in Riverside, California this June as part of the Riverside Art Museum. The first rotating exhibition is a retrospective of Mexican-born glass artists Einar and Jamex De La Torre, the two siblings that comprise the artistic duo known as the De La Torre Brothers. The exhibition encompasses almost three decades of work, documenting their Latinx/ American experience through a combination of humor and critical earnestness.

The Clay Studio, founded in 1974 in Philadelphia, debuted their new space this past April, opening with the exhibition “Making Place Matter” (through October 2, 2023). The exhibition, with works by Kukuli Velarde, Ibrahim Said and Molly Hatch, explores the idea of place with regard to personal history, cultural heritage, and social justice.

Coming soon, the Everson Museum of Art in Syracuse, New York will be celebrating a grand opening of what they call a “farm-and-klin-to-table restaurant.” Named Louise, after collector and artist, Louise Rosenfield, it will be the only venue of its kind with over 3,000 objects donated from her private ceramics collection. Guests will enjoy food and drink on functional ceramic art and will have the opportunity to learn more about the objects they are using as well as the artists who made them.
“Clearly Indigenous: Native Visions Reimagined in Glass” at the Museum of Indian Arts + Culture in Santa Fe, New Mexico (through June 12, 2022) is a groundbreaking exhibit of glassworks by 33 Indigenous artists, plus glass artist Dale Chihuly “who introduced glass art to Indian Country.” The expansive exhibit, curated by Dr. Letitia Chambers and Cathy Short, explores the knowledge and iconography of Native traditions as well as contemporary issues impacting Indigenous people.


“Nick Cave: Forothermore” at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago (through October 2) is the first career-spanning retrospective of this celebrated artist, known for his projects that blend immersive installations, textile sculptures, impeccably crafted fashion, and dynamic videos and performances.

Not to be missed, “Fragile: Earth” is on display at Grounds for Sculpture in Hamilton, New Jersey (through January 8, 2023). The exhibition features the work of almost 20 artists, including Syd Carpenter, Adam Chau, Jennifer Ling Datchuk, April Felipe, Salvador Jiménez-Flores, and Virgil Ortiz, who reflect on social, environmental, and individual perceptions of fragility in ceramics. Also on display is “Roberto Lugo: The Village Potter” which centers his largest work to date, “Put Yourself in the Picture,” which stands 27 feet tall and was made on location.

The first museum retrospective of textile artist Marilyn Pappas opened this past March at the Fuller Craft Museum in Brockton, Massachusetts (through August 28, 2022). The exhibition features works from all stages of her 60-year career, from her socially-minded, garment-based work of the 1960s to her travel-inspired collages and her oversized textiles depicting sculptures of ancient goddesses. (Reviewed by Caroline Kipp in this issue).
WHERE WATER OR LAND MEETS SKY

MATT MANALO’S ACTIVISM THROUGH ART

By Kathryn Hall, independent curator based in New York City, formerly Curator at Houston Center for Contemporary Craft.

Photo of artist by Michael Starghill.
Matt Manalo centers his experience as an immigrant living in America within his artistic practice to give visibility to the Filipinx community and bring awareness to the racial and colonial history of America and the Philippines. Born in the Metropolitan Manila region of the Philippines, Manalo studied computer engineering until he and his family immigrated to Houston in 2004 when he was 19-years-old. This was a pivotal moment that catapulted him onto a different trajectory towards a career in the arts.

On April 9, 2019, in an interview with Chelsey Wen and Mai Ton for Rice University’s Houston Asian American Archive, Manalo mentioned that his immigration to the U.S. removed what he called the “golden blanket” of the American Dream, revealing to him the depth of America’s involvement in the colonial occupation of the Philippines. As a person who felt disoriented in his new home, he reflected on how this history has shaped his own experience. Manalo described his use of blue in his work saying, “…for us Asians, being an immigrant, it’s not like a physical wall or mountains that we have to cross. We actually have to cross the ocean and the sky.” Informed by his desire to improve accessibility for those making art, Manalo favors sustainable ways of sourcing materials. His sculptures grip the tension between a scarcity and abundance of resources. As a student with limited means, Manalo was attuned to the social and financial barriers of becoming a full-time artist. He chose to pursue a bachelor of fine arts in painting at the University of Houston in part, because it was more accessible than other programs. In school, he sourced materials from a collection area for leftover art supplies. From there, his practice evolved from painting into something more sculptural as he enjoyed deconstructing and repurposing found objects.

Manalo views his artistic practice as somewhat of a collaboration with friends and family who donate materials. It is a mode of community building where the reciprocity of giving and sharing can strengthen relationships. In the 2019 interview, Manalo said, “It’s... like having people’s memories immigrate... into my own memories... In a way, it becomes personal to me and then it relates to my whole immigrant story.”

For “No Partaking,” Manalo received a collection of handmade vintage placemats, made from pineapple fiber in the Philippines. With no visible authorship, this donation embodies the invisible labor force that sustains the Filipino tourist market. The donor, a friend of Manalo’s, divulged that her mother, who once owned the placemats, was guilty of making racist comments.

In light of this information, Manalo reclaimed the souvenirs by commissioning a family-owned shop on Harwin Drive to embroider “Not Your Brown Brother” onto the cloth. Manalo coined this phrase in response to the American slang, “Little brown...
"Conversation Between Kipling & Twain," 2020. Latex paint, encaustic wax, chairs from a dining set brought from the Philippines when the artist immigrated, 40 x 16 x 18 inches. Photo courtesy of Matt Manalo.

brother." This phrase was first spoken during the U.S. occupation of the Philippines by William Howard Taft, the first American Governor-General of the Philippines and subsequently the 27th President of the United States. Manalo’s slogan is a call to action to resist white supremacy and imperialism that extends to all individuals of color.

Manalo further explores the legacy of colonization in “Conversation Between Kipling & Twain.” He has repurposed two dining chairs that his family brought with them when they immigrated to the U.S. Manalo ‘whitewashed’ the chairs and encased the seats in encaustic wax. On the seat of these chairs, Manalo references Mark Twain’s essay from the “North American Review” in Feb. 1901, “To the Person Sitting in Darkness”, which uses satire to condemn America’s imperialist behavior in the Philippine-American War. The essay is an anti-imperialist response to Rudyard Kipling’s 1899 poem, “The White Man’s Burden: The United States & the Philippine Islands”. Kipling, a staunch imperialist, argued for Western civilization’s moral responsibility to civilize non-white populations and supported America’s annexation of the Philippines. The title of Twain’s essay, “To the Person Sitting in Darkness” ironically references Matthew 4:16, scripture that Christian missionaries, who shared Kipling’s perspective, used to justify their mission work. It wasn’t until 1946 that the U.S. relinquished sovereignty over the Philippines. This period of colonization left a lasting stain on US-Philippines relations.

Having yet to return to his home country, Manalo has spent half of his life in the U.S. He has made a significant impact in Houston. In 2019, Manalo founded Alief Art House as part of DiverseWorks Project Freeway Fellowship. He transformed shipping containers into a gallery space that provides the Alief community a sustainable place for fellowship and creativity. In the same year, he co-founded the Filipinx Artists of Houston with curator Bridget Bray to expand awareness of Filipinx creatives. Together, these community initiatives along with Manalo’s artwork reinforce the power that art has to foster understanding and strengthen relationships.

“Conversation Between Kipling & Twain,” 2020. Latex paint, encaustic wax, chairs from a dining set brought from the Philippines when the artist immigrated, 40 x 16 x 18 inches. Photo courtesy of Matt Manalo.

Concert at Alief Art House. Photo by Sergio Garcia.
NEVERTHELESS SHE PERSISTED

MARILYN PAPPAS’ 60-YEAR CAREER

By Caroline Kipp, curator, artist, and decorative arts historian, currently the Curator of Contemporary Art at The George Washington University Museum and The Textile Museum in Washington, DC

“Marilyn Pappas: A Retrospective” at the Fuller Craft Museum in Brockton, Massachusetts is the first comprehensive museum exhibition this artist has received during her 60-year career. Displayed in a generous gallery, works on view range from her famous “Opera Coat” (originally featured in the groundbreaking 1969 “Objects USA” exhibition and now in the permanent collection of the Museum of Art and Design, New York) to her most recent series titled, “Nevertheless She Persisted,” nodding to both women at large, and more directly to Pappas’ own life and career. Featuring Pappas’ work at the Fuller provides a fitting and timely “return home” for the Brockton-born artist, now in her 10th decade.

Throughout her artistic career, Pappas has employed threads, using them like drawing or painting strokes – veering between abstraction and representation through her assemblages, collages, and goddesses. As early as the 1960s, Lee Nordness and Paul Smith recognized and credited Pappas as “being among the first artists to combine ‘found objects’ with stitching in the creation of pictorial hangings.” Within the textile arts, her consistent engagement with the figure and found objects made her an outlier among the first generation of fiber artists, who, under the long legacy of modernist’s overt influences, valued scale, abstraction, minimalism, and structural manipulation. Here is an artist interested in the personal, the everyday, figuration, collage, and surface design. Pappas was ahead of her time during the 1960s, and was much more at home with the second wave feminists, stylistically, but seems quite comfortable being perpetually avant garde, even now.

While the focus of her imagery has shifted from the 1970s and ‘80s to the evolving Goddess series she began in the early 1990s, all her pieces continue to reference the body and persona as expressed through costume, uniform, or regalia. In accessing these abstracted stand-ins for the human form, Pappas personalizes and anthropomorphizes that which we regularly perceive as inanimate or anonymous. In Pappas’ 1970s era pieces, she routinely employed surplus military garments and worn accessories as the basis for her manipulation and supplementary threads. Yet a military garment, while worn by one person, does not represent a singular identity, but rather a collective, unified force, larger and more powerful than an individual. So too, the goddess and their robes. In a contemporary context, these statuary figures often serve as visual shorthand for “classical,” relics that are only viewed as icons and imagery from a material culture that is not individualized, but rather akin to a uniform denoting “ancient.” When these disparate series of works are viewed together, as in this exhibition, the relational composition and conceptual link between them becomes apparent.

Through comparing “Woman in the Guise of Venus” and “Opera Coat,” we see that for Pappas, a garment and the body as a vessel are parallel experiences. In “Opera Coat” a riot of colorful, fibrous forms erupts from depths of a black, protective shell. It is full to brimming with character, revealing the inner life of an object which witnessed nights out on the town, and perhaps many owners. The coat, as a costume, also allowed its
wearer to become respectable, properly attired for appearance in public. Our Venus, likewise, is also a character and a costume, serving as an archetype of beauty and poise, even in her fragmentary state. With no arms, hands, or face to denote her as unique, she becomes a form that is interchangeable, idealized, and immortalized as a guise of “perfected femininity.” Nearly all of Pappas’ works support this continual, conceptual reinvestigation of both changing notions of beauty in Western culture, and the triumph of women through time. She takes things otherwise discarded – clothing, objects, ephemera, broken statuary – and reveals their commonalities and renews their vitality for a contemporary conversation about how society thinks and has thought women “should be.”

As a final note, the accompanying catalog is also well worth reading to gain greater insight into the artist’s career. Glenn Adamson’s essay is robust, and the interview between curator Beth McLaughlin and Pappas is illuminating. For the sake of posterity and cementing the artist’s legacy, it’s a welcome addition to the limited writings on this foundational artist working in textiles.
What do Nick Cave and his sound suits, Toshiko Takaezu and her ceramic moon pots, Ray and Charles Eames and their iconic chairs, and Vivian Beer and her metal and concrete furniture, all have in common?

Cranbrook Academy of Art.

Each artist spent time at Cranbrook as a graduate student, instructor or department head. They are among the ranks of those who have left an indelible mark on the field of craft. Many artists associated with Cranbrook are already well known to the James Renwick Alliance for Craft, including Michael Monroe, former Curator-in-Charge of the Renwick Gallery, and Sonya Clark, an artist and recipient of the Alliance’s 2018 Distinguished Craft Educator Award, whose work was recently highlighted at the National Museum of Women in the Art in the solo-show “Sonia Clark: Tatter, Bristle, and Mend.”

Located outside of Detroit, in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, Cranbrook was founded by newspaper magnate Henry Booth in 1919. On more than 300 idyllic acres of land, the campus includes a K-12 school, science academy, and art museum. It is perhaps best known for its Academy of Art, a leader in the world of craft education on a national and international level.

In 2022 it welcomed its current director Paul Sacaridiz. A ceramic artist and former head of the Haystack Mountain School of Crafts, he bridges the gap between the history of craft and its future. Haystack’s historic buildings sit alongside the Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s Fab Lab, where MIT graduate students work in tandem with artists, integrating a 3D makers lab into a craft school. Like many craft schools, Haystack also has a history of welcoming Cranbrook graduates as instructors. Rowland Ricketts, who graduated from Cranbrook with an MFA in 2005, participated in Haystack’s 2014 summer conference “Craft Thinking: Ideas on Making, Materials, and Creative Process.” Rickett’s large-scale indigo installations were recently showcased at the Renwick.
Another renowned artist, Olga de Amaral, trained at Cranbrook in the 1950s with Marianne Strengell. Amaral, who creates shimmering sculptures from horsehair, linen, gold leaf, and other materials has work featured in the Renwick’s current show, “This Present Moment: Crafting a Better World” (through April 2, 2023). Amaral was recently the subject of a major retrospective exhibition “To Weave a Rock,” co-organized by the Museum of Fine Arts Houston and Cranbrook. The show’s title cited an assignment she gave her students, “to weave a rock,” while an instructor at Haystack.

One of the twentieth century’s leading designers, Florence Knoll, is another groundbreaking figure who literally grew up at Cranbrook. An orphan who came to Cranbrook’s Kingswood School as a boarder at the age of 12, Knoll was identified as an art prodigy by Eliel Saarinen, Cranbrook’s architect. Knoll’s story, and role in American craft history, is only one of hundreds that begin at Cranbrook and continue beyond, demonstrating the school’s indelible mark on the world of craft and design.

While Cranbrook’s legacy is undeniable, its embrace of the new is equally powerful. It is the only craft school to include 4D design. The program, founded in 2018, explores the intersection of the physical and digital worlds. This new department exists alongside the longstanding studio environments, such as metalsmithing, ceramics, and fiber, that likewise emphasize an experimental approach. Cranbrook values camaraderie among the students, and faculty and staff create a place for artists to explore, inspired by the past, but not limited by any preconceived notions of making.

Those in the DC area familiar with Dulles Airport may not know that it was designed by Eero Saarinen, the son of Eliel Saarinen. For those able to travel, there are many ways to explore Cranbrook year-round, from campus and house tours that showcase the stunning grounds and architecture, to its museum exhibitions and state-of-the-art storage tours, and every summer, graduate student shows astound visitors from around the world.

For those hesitant to make the trip, there are many opportunities to remain connected virtually. Curator Kevin Adkisson and Director Gregory Wittkopp, both part of the Center for Collections and Research team, host lively, online virtual events. Their combination of effervescence and knowledge showcases the treasures and spirit that make Cranbrook unique. They have highlighted overlooked women including Lilian Swann Saarinen, who was connected to Cranbrook through her marriage to Eero Saarinen, made an unparalleled but previously uncelebrated impact on the school. Despite the Zoom screen, these events are almost like being there.

In 1984, the Metropolitan Museum of Art honored Cranbrook with a show, “Design in American: The Cranbrook Vision, 1925–1950.” Twentieth-century art critic Paul Goldberger noted in his glowing New York Times review of April 8, 1984 that, “Cranbrook is like no other institution in the United States. It is part artists’ colony, part school, part museum and part design laboratory, and it has never allowed its students to be bound by the narrow lines separating the various design principles.” As Cranbrook continues to influence and alter the field of craft in the twenty-first century, this nearly 40-year-old comment still rings true.

Pg. 13: Cranbrook School Archway. Photo by Ellen M.
In 1971, a hand-drawn poster advertised “the NO DEPOSIT lots of returns GLASS etc. WORKSHOP.” It depicted rugged landscapes, simple cabins, and towering evergreens, along with expressive drawings of glassblowers at the bench. “FREE TUITION,” it read; “You provide food and camping equipment.”

That June, the art students who answered the poster’s call found themselves on a hilltop in rural Washington overlooking Puget Sound. It was green and wild and ripe with possibility—the first summer at Pilchuck Glass School. “Pilchuck was a total educational experience, functioning on the premise that the way people live, learn, cook, eat, and relate to each other is all part of how they express themselves—their art,” Pilchuck co-founder and renowned glass artist Dale Chihuly wrote. “Students quickly learned to take care of themselves in the woods and gained the confidence to become completely in tune with glass.”

In the decades since, Pilchuck has grown from a camp into a campus, and the school’s community has expanded to include generations of artists from across the globe. The iconic Pilchuck Hot Shop now anchors the quad, and studio buildings supporting a wide range of glassmaking processes surround it. Sleeping cabins dot the hillside, and a three-story lodge beckons with hot meals and lively conversation morning, noon, and night.

Pilchuck quickly became a magnet for those eager to explore the intersection of glass, art, and design. “Pilchuck has prided itself on gathering the best instructors. There is always something new,” says Ginny Ruffner, longtime Pilchuck participant and pioneering glass artist. “Out of all the places in the world, I think Pilchuck is probably the best for investigating new forms in glass.”

Pilchuck’s Artistic Director Benjamin Wright describes his approach to programming as glass and—glass and imagery, glass and performance, glass and installation, glass and a whole plethora of other topics. The original focus on experimenting with hot glass and vessel blowing has expanded to include flameworking, neon, kilnforming, sandcasting, coldworking, stained glass, mosaics, and even glass-plate printmaking.
The spirit of experimentation, of artists teaching artists, remains the heart of the school. One 2022 course, “Casting a Jubilee” with Hank Murta Adams, will combine glass and architecture. Participants will spend their two weeks at Pilchuck moving between the Hot Shop and a wooded site, where they’ll incorporate original sandcastings into a site-specific structure. The course is a reprisal of a similar one led by Adams in 1994 and 1995 that resulted in the Trojan Horse, a beloved oval structure of concrete and glass that has since hosted everything from individual meditation to raucous dance parties.

The upcoming session, “Hold on to Your Molds... It’s About to Blow!” with instructor Benny Hill will combine digital processes with glass. Participants will start in Pilchuck’s BotLab, where they’ll work with 3D computer-aided design programs, computerized numerical control machining, and 3D printing to make molds, and then they’ll combine those molds with traditional hot glass skills to create cast and mold-blown objects that merge the work of the hand with digital design.

A typical Pilchuck session includes five or six concurrent courses, each with about ten students, one or two instructors, and a couple of teaching assistants. These artists are joined on campus by Artists in Residence, talented thinkers and makers working in a wide range of media. They come to Pilchuck to share ideas and work on new projects made possible by Pilchuck’s equipment and skilled community of glass artists. The school has welcomed Nick Cave, Maya Lin, Kiki Smith, and
many other notable names as Artists in Residence over the years. Its environment breeds creativity, camaraderie, and a deep sense of community.

That community has stretched around the globe over the past fifty years. Pilchuck has deep connections with glassmaking centers as far away as Italy, the Czech Republic, and Japan. Its students hail from over seventy countries. Right here in the Pacific Northwest, the core of Pilchuck’s community is stronger than ever. In large part because of the school’s magnetic pull, the greater Seattle area has become a worldwide hotspot for glass. It is now home to many of the most skilled artists working in the medium, and visitors to the area can enjoy dozens of studios, museums, and educational centers dedicated to glass art, from the Museum of Glass in Tacoma, Washington to Chihuly Garden and Glass in Seattle.

It would have been nearly impossible to imagine this rich and innovative glass community in 1971 during Pilchuck’s scrappy, electric beginnings. As Chihuly himself commented, “We never knew that it was going to go on for a second summer—and then for fifty years!” But today, with the incredible momentum and energy around glass in Washington State, it’s easy to imagine a glass community that keeps exploring and innovating. Pilchuck Glass School will be leading the way.
CRAFT FROM YOUR SOFA

RECOMMENDED READS

We asked this issue’s contributing authors as well as some colleagues in the field to suggest a few outstanding books and exhibition catalogues published in 2020 and 2021. These particular volumes might not have received as much attention due to museum closures, limitations on travel, and people's limited capacity due to the many pressing, and even overwhelming concerns of the past few years. If you’re looking for some quality summer reading, here are their recommendations:

**LAURA CAMERLENGO**
Laura is Associate Curator of Costume and Textile Arts in the Caroline and H. McCoy Jones Department of Textile Arts at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. She recently curated the acclaimed exhibition “Patrick Kelly: Runway of Love.”

Glenn Adamson, “Craft: An American History” (Bloomsbury, 2020). In this text, Adamson traces the long history of artisans in the United States across four centuries. An inclusive narrative, he employs a broad definition of craft -- “whenever a skilled person makes something with their hands, that's craft” -- and highlights the work of female, Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and Asian-American makers.

Rebecca Reubens, “Holistic Sustainability Through Craft-Design Collaboration” (Routledge, 2019). Reubens is a Netherlandish scholar who is interested in the intersection of craft, design, and sustainability. In this text, she argues that most “sustainable” design ideas/efforts fall short in some capacity, and for the need for designers to find alternatives to technological-intensive/industrial ways of making.

Anthea Black and Nicole Burisch, “The New Politics of the Handmade: Craft, Art, and Design” (Bloomsbury, 2020). This text features 23 voices who interrogate the creation of the handmade under global capitalism. Particularly interesting and timely are the texts pertaining to craft’s connections to race, cultural identity and sovereignty.

**DIANE CHARNOV**
Diane is a board member of the Center for Craft, James Renwick Alliance, and Penland School of Craft, as well as an independent arts writer.

Andrés Szántó, ed., “The Future of the Museum: 28 Dialogues” (Hatje Cantz, 2020). This insightful volume brings together leaders from 50 art institutions on six continents to explore the future of museums. Fascinating examples include museum leaders consulting with Netflix and Pixar, and a museum president in Benin who invited pop singers to perform as a way to bring in audiences. Closer to home, the Brooklyn Museum and Center for Court Innovation co-founded a program which allows, “young people who have committed minor infractions to take classes in the museum to clear their criminal records.” This collection of conversations and essays that highlight the evolution of the museum’s role in public life will capture the imagination of avid museum goers.

Marilyn Chase, “Everything She Touched: The Life of Ruth Asawa” (Chronicle Books, 2020). The subject of this volume, Ruth Asawa, is one of the few craft artists to ever be honored with a stamp from the U.S. Postal Service. Her poignant life story is told in this volume with images and text that forever leave another kind of stamp on the memory of those who read it. As a Japanese-American she was declared...
an enemy of the United States and incarcerated along with her family and countless others during WWII. During this time, as a child, she learned to weave, a practice which prepared her to hone the looping technique she later employed in her iconic wire sculptures. This complex portrait of the artist, her times, and her fortitude are woven together in a fascinating narrative.

For those wishing to share the incredible story of this artist with a younger set, check out, “A Life Made by Hand: The Story of Ruth Asawa” by Andrea D’Aquino. Asawa’s message, “An artist is an ordinary person who can take ordinary things and make them special,” is told in vibrant drawings and collages.

KEIDRA DANIELS NAVAROLI
Keidra is a McKnight Doctoral Fellow in the Texts & Technology Ph.D. Program at the University of Central Florida and coauthor of the fall 2022 Oxford University Press publication “This is America: Re-Viewing the Art of the United States.”

*Pamela Parmal, Jennifer M. Swope, and Lauren D. Whitley, “Fabric of a Nation: American Quilt Stories” (MFA Publications, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 2021). This catalogue beautifully traces the history and community of quilting in the United States. Drawing on the diverse expressions of historic quilts, such as the rare remaining works of nineteenth-century artist Harriett Powers, and contemporary makers including Sanford Biggers, Bisa Butler, and Faith Ringgold, the Museum of Fine Arts Boston publication focuses on personal narratives, showcasing the literal and symbolically layered explorations of meaning through the artform.


“Textures: The Art and History of Black Hair,” developed and published by Kent State University Museum, effectively draws upon history and scholarly reflections to address the internal and external dialogues involved in the expression and fetishization of Black hair. For African American communities, the intimate practices of hair care – whether enacted in salon or domestic spaces – navigate a discourse embedded in socioeconomic exchange and cultural marginalization. The catalogue, which features artists Sonya Clark, Zanele Muholi, Lorna Simpson, and others, powerfully illustrates the global conversations, connections, and heritage that underscore aesthetic constructions of the Black body.

Manuela Well-Off-Man, Suzanne Newman Fricke, Chelsea M. Herr, David Begay, Teri Greeves, Neal Ambrose-Smith, Jeffrey Veregge, et al, “Indigenous Futurisms, Transcending Past/Present/Future” (Institute of American Indian Arts Museum of Contemporary Native Arts, 2020). The subgenre of Indigenous Futurism, an important movement in contemporary Native art that incorporates forms of artistic expression with elements of science fiction, offers a responsive lens for revisioning, reclaiming, and repurposing Native history and its traumas. “Indigenous Futurisms, Transcending Past/Present/Future” features a variety of multimedia works by groundbreaking artists including Marcus Amerman (Choctaw), Teri Greeves (Kiowa), and Virgil Ortiz (Cochiti Pueblo), several of whom are alumni of the Institute of American Indian Arts. The collaborative exhibition and catalogue illustrate the critical importance of Native-centered making to inclusive craft scholarship.

CAROLINE KIPP
Caroline Kipp is a curator, artist, and decorative arts historian. She is currently the Curator of Contemporary Art at The George Washington University Museum and The Textile Museum in Washington, DC.

Here are 4 amazing shows I didn’t get to see in-person, and am now living vicariously through their publications:


SAVE THE DATES

JULY 20 - 24
South Shore to North Shore Trip to Eastern Massachusetts

AUGUST 1
Application due: 2022 Chrysalis Award for emerging artists working in wood

OCTOBER 27 - NOVEMBER 4
Exploring Spanish Craft Trip Madrid, Spain (Caucus member trip)

DECEMBER 3
JRA Day artist showcase and sale

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