

# CRAFT IN AMERICA

memory: fragments



## Preview

A fragment is, by definition, a small piece of some larger whole. In this section of Educator Guide: Memory, teachers will help students develop an understanding of how selected craft artists work with the notion of fragments and then guide them through a variety of inquiry-based explorations. By working with the notion of fragments themselves, students will deepen their knowledge and understanding and gain greater insight into this important aspect of craft in America.

## Featured Artists

Tom Joyce (blacksmithing/Memory)  
Jan Yager (jewelry/Landscape)

## Related Artists

Mississippi Cultural Crossroads (quilting/Community)  
Kit Carson (jewelry and sculpture/Landscape)

## fragments

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# education guide information

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## Craft in America, Inc.

Craft In America Inc. is a non-profit organization dedicated to the exploration of craft in the United States and its impact on our nation's cultural heritage. The centerpiece of the company's efforts is the production of a nationally broadcast television documentary series celebrating American craft and the artists who bring it to life. The project currently includes a three-part television documentary series supported by CRAFT IN AMERICA: Expanding Traditions, a nationally touring exhibition of exceptional craft objects, as well as a companion book, and a comprehensive Web site. Carol Sauvion is the founder and director of Craft in America.

## Craft in America Mission Statement

The mission of Craft in America is to document and advance original handcrafted work through programs in all media made accessible to all Americans.

## Craft in America: The Series

Craft in America's nationally broadcast PBS documentary series seeks to celebrate craft by honoring the artists who create it. In three episodes entitled Memory, Landscape and Community, Craft in America television viewers will travel throughout the United States visiting America's premier craft artists in their studios to witness the creation of hand-made objects, and into the homes, businesses and public spaces where functional art is employed and celebrated. The primary objective of the series is to convey to a national audience the breadth and beauty of handmade objects in our culture.

## Viewing the Series

Craft in America may be taped off the air and used for educational purposes at no cost for one year from the date of the first national broadcast—May 30, 2007. Check local PBS station listings as broadcast times may vary.



## Ordering the DVD and Companion Book

For long-term viewing and in-classroom use, the Craft in America: The series enhanced format DVD may be purchased through PBS Video, 1-800-752-9727, or [www.shoppbs.com/teachers](http://www.shoppbs.com/teachers)

To order the companion book, CRAFT IN AMERICA Celebrating Two Centuries of Artists and Objects contact 1-800-424-7963 or [www.shoppbs.com/teachers](http://www.shoppbs.com/teachers)

## Audience

Craft in America is produced for a public television audience. Companion Educator Guides written for teachers support each of the three episodes—Memory, Landscape and Community. These guides are intended primarily for use with middle and high school students; however, the content can be adapted for students of all ages and for use in other educational settings.

# education guide information

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## Craft in America Educator Guides

Three Educator Guides have been designed to accompany Craft in America. Each guide—Memory, Landscape and Community—relate to and reflect the core ideas, artists, and art forms presented in the corresponding series episode. The themes presented in each guide allow additional entry points into the material found in the three episodes.

## How to Use the Guides

The material presented in the three Craft in America Educator Guides is organized into thematic groupings and written to support middle and high school art education curricula. Teachers are encouraged to use the content as presented or to enhance and further their established programs of study. The guides can also be adapted for use in other subject areas. The primary purpose of the guides is to deepen students' knowledge, understanding and appreciation of craft in America.

## Scope and Sequence

The three thematic Educator Guides—Memory, Landscape and Community—can be used in whatever sequence is appropriate. The guides can be used independently or sequentially. Time for each suggested activity will vary depending on the depth of inquiry.

Each theme within an Educator Guide features the following components:

### Preview

A brief overview of the theme and related activities

### Featured Artists

Each theme features two artists, one of whom is highlighted in the related episode

### Related Artists

In addition to featured artists, each theme references at least two other artists whose work illustrates the theme

### Background Information

An introduction to the theme, the featured artists, and their connection to the broader world of craft, intended for teacher use

### Craft in Action

Provides questions for the teacher to use with students prior to and following viewing of the DVDs

### Craft in the Classroom

Suggested activities for exploring and investigating key concepts and opportunities for art making and reflection

### Worksheets

Support selected activities

The Educator Guides are designed to complement the series, but there are additional resources available on the Craft in America Web site that can be used by both teachers and students. It is recommended that teachers preview materials on the DVD and Web site prior to introducing the theme to students.

# FRAGMENTS

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“ My mother being a quilt maker and my father being an amateur archeologist and thinking about the fragments of things and their use with the culture. [sic] It has taught me of course about the value of the smallest pieces that are generated in the shop. ”

Tom Joyce



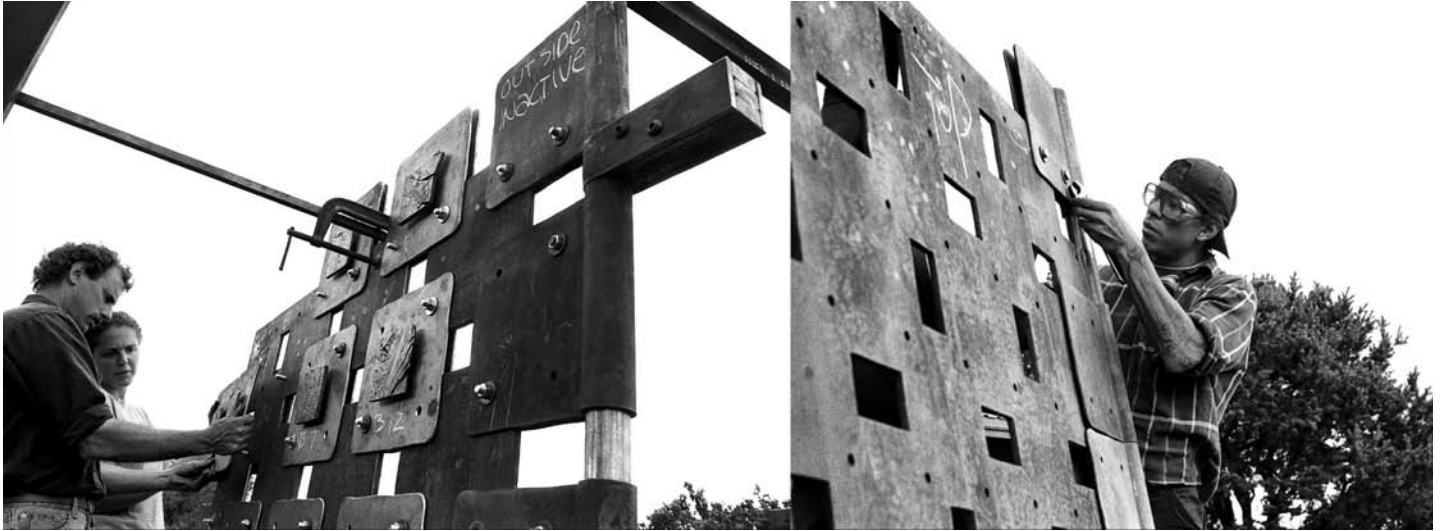
You reach into a coat pocket and pull out a ticket stub, a reminder of the movie you saw over the weekend. You decide to save or discard this piece of your past—this tiny fragment of your life. We often choose to hang on to such items. Concert programs, notes from friends, postcards, sports ribbons, report cards, and other parts of our lived experience can be found on desktops and countertops, in drawers and scrapbooks. These things are personal. We are emotionally attached to our saved fragments and the memories they call up.

We also encounter and sometimes collect fragments from the lives of others: a letter penned from one stranger to another; a well-worn tool, used by a woodworker long since departed; or a special piece of china handed down through several generations. These small objects are parts of whole lives. When we collect objects from the past, we collect fragments of lives once lived. Sometimes we collect in large scale. The Smithsonian National Museum of American History houses fragments of our nation's history. George Washington's battle sword, the ruby slippers from *The Wizard of Oz*, Prince's rock guitar, and the original Kermit the Frog are among the many thousands of objects in that museum's collection. These snippets from the past, now on display, were once touched and used by real people. They are also fragments from the lives of people who may not have physically handled them, but whose lives were certainly touched by them.

A fragment is, by definition, a small piece of some larger whole. Some artists think about the notion of fragments. They work with this idea and incorporate it into their art making. Some do it more consciously than others.

Tom Joyce, Rio Grande Gates, 1997, Nick Merrick Photograph





Assembling the Rio Grande Gates, 1997, Kate Joyce Photograph

## Tom Joyce

Born 1956 Tulsa, Oklahoma

Drawn to the possibilities of transforming metal with hammer and anvil for more than thirty years

Fascinated with blacksmithing since high school

Lived in and around Sante Fe, New Mexico since the age of twelve

Operates a blacksmith shop he constructed on the five-acre property he shares with his wife and two daughters

In 2003, became one of twenty-four recipients of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation's "genius grant," a fellowship awarded to artists, writers, scientists, humanitarians, entrepreneurs, teachers, and others who demonstrate originality and dedication in their creative pursuits

Work can be found in museums and private collections throughout the world



Tom Joyce, Installation Two to One

Tom Joyce talks about iron having a "memory." This son of a quilter takes iron pieces forged years ago for purposes often unknown today and transforms them into bowls, gates, tables and other sculpted objects. His fragments are recycled as a matter of course. As he recycles tools from the past, he remembers those who used them over the years, still mindful of the blacksmiths who initially forged them. For him, metal holds the emotions and energies of everyone who has touched it.

Some of Joyce's projects accentuate the notions of fragments and memory. In preparing to make a baptismal font for the Santa Maria de la Paz Catholic Community in Santa Fe, New Mexico, he asked community members to donate metal objects that represented important memories. The font was forged from such items as garden fencing that surrounded the garden of a parishioner's deceased grandmother, a key found by a nun on a pilgrimage in Israel, and hardware from a family home destroyed by fire. To celebrate the anniversary of the United Nations World Center in San Francisco, the artist was commissioned to create a lectern from fragments of dismantled nuclear weapons once belonging to the United States and the former Soviet Union. In another project, trash gathered from the banks of the Rio Grande River was transformed into a gate for a museum.



Jan Yager  
Born 1951, Detroit, Michigan

Artist in fine metals for more than thirty years

Earned a BFA in jewelry and metalsmithing from Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo in 1974 and an MFA from Rhode Island School of Design, Providence in 1981

Achieved post-graduation commercial success in the New York fashion industry

Eventually turned her sights to working as an independent studio artist

Brings a different approach to jewelry, which has traditionally been a vehicle for personal adornment and for the display of precious metals and stones

City Flotsam series juxtaposes the residue of her Philadelphia neighborhood, such as bullet casings, pen caps, and crack vials, with traditional jewelry forms

Work has been shown in a solo exhibition at The Victoria and Albert Museum, London and can be found in other museum and private collections



Jan Yager, *The Tiara of Useful Knowledge*, 2006, Jack Ramsdale Photograph

Jan Yager picks up fragments of the street culture in her North Philadelphia neighborhood. Limiting her search to one square block around her studio, she gathers up the cast-offs from the urban environment in which she lives. What she collects—the cigarette butts, bullet casings, crack vials and syringes—are symbols of violence and death, fragments of life in early 21st-century urban America. As these cast-off objects pass through the artist's hands, she transforms them, neutralizing their negativity and bestowing upon them new meaning and purpose. What was once an ugly reminder of city life out of control now tells a story about beauty and adornment—jewelry to be worn or admired. This series of pieces is called *City Flotsam*, recalling both meanings of "flotsam": both the refuse found on the street and the offensive characterization of people living on the margins who toss their debris at her doorstep.



Jan Yager, *The Tiara of Useful Knowledge - In Parts*, 2006, Jack Ramsdale Photograph

## The Craft Connection

Both Tom Joyce and Jan Yager purposely collect fragments to create their work. Both work with metals, but in very different ways. Their artworks remind us that fragments can range in size and form. Although each artist has embraced the idea of fragments, each also works within a well-established craft tradition. Materials are transformed through a process in which skill is highly important. The artists bring the special skills and techniques of their respective traditions to their projects, all the while imbuing their pieces with their own individual ideas and aesthetic sensibilities. Their completed works are functional but are layered with meaning. For these two artists, the meaning is tied to the notion of fragments.



## Craft in Action

### Discuss

Hold a discussion about what kinds of things we save and why we save them. Possible questions: *Given an event or special visit or trip, what do you save? What do you throw away? What have you saved from your childhood—toys, sports equipment, birthday cards, letters? What will you save from high school?*

Prior to class discussion, collect and then display the types of objects or mementos that your students might save. For example: baseball caps, baseballs, movie or concert ticket stubs or programs, amusement park prizes, trophies, school awards, club membership badges or sashes, family vacation souvenirs, postcards, greeting cards, key chains, etc.

From this sampling, ask students to identify an object that is similar to one they have saved or might save. Pair students and have them interview each other with the What We Save Interview (Memory: Fragments Worksheet #1). Allow approximately ten minutes for the pair interviews. Engage students in a large group discussion about their findings. Ask: *What kinds of things do we, as a class, save? What role does memory have in our tendency to save and collect objects such as these?*

Introduce the notion of fragments. Have students refer to the definition of "fragment" (a piece, usually a small piece, of a something larger), and ask them to tell how the objects that they save are fragments. *What might be considered the larger "whole"?* Help students consider the things that they save as fragments of their individual lives.

Broaden the discussion to show how collections, such as those found in the Smithsonian National Museum of American History, are fragments of the American experience in a broader sense, as they evoke our shared memory.

### View

Have students watch the DVD segments featuring Tom Joyce (blacksmith/Memory) and Jan Yager (jewelry/Landscape). Prior to viewing, explain to students that they will encounter two artists who have used the idea of fragments in their work. Suggest that as they view the DVD segments, they should look for how Jan Yager and Tom Joyce use the idea of fragments and how each artist uses the idea differently.

After viewing the DVD segments, ask students: *How did Jan Yager and Tom Joyce make use of the idea of fragments in their work? Is the idea of fragments the same in each? What meaning does the idea of fragments have in each? Imagine that you could meet the artists. What questions would you like to ask them?* These questions should be used to guide the students during a second viewing of these DVD sections. During the second showing, have the students look and listen for ways to address the questions asked.

At some point, show the DVD segments a third time with an emphasis on the processes employed by each of the artists. Note the artist studios, attending to how tools and equipment are arranged.



Geraldine Nash, *Geraldine's Strings*, Rachel Gehlhar Photograph



Tom Joyce, Rio Grande Gates in Process, Kate Joyce Photograph

## Craft in the Classroom

### Explore

View additional DVD and Web site segments on featured artists Tom Joyce and Jan Yager.

### Explore

Examine DVD or Web site segments for other artists and art forms that explore the theme Fragments. How do these artists or art forms incorporate the notion of fragments? Compare and contrast Mississippi Cultural Crossroads (quilting/Community) and Kit Carson (jewelry and sculpture/Landscape) with Tom Joyce and Jan Yager.

### Explore

Consider other art making experiences. *How have you used the notion of fragments in your own artwork? What fragments are important in your life?*

### Explore

Consider other artists, art forms, and daily life. *Can you think of artists you have encountered who use the idea of fragments in their work (e.g., Robert Rauschenberg, Louise Nevelson, or Barbara Kruger)? What about other art forms (e.g., quilts, collage, or assemblage/found object sculpture)?* Have students consider where they have encountered fragments in objects made and used in daily life (e.g., recycled objects used as handbags, quilts, jewelry, or scrapbooking).

### Investigate

Have students research blacksmithing. Working in small groups or pairs, have them create a storyboard that shows the process of blacksmithing using the template provided (Memory: Fragments Worksheet #2). What can they fill in immediately from having viewed the DVDs and clips on the Web site? What more do they need to know to complete the storyboard? View the video and additional DVD clips. Excerpts about Timberline Lodge show blacksmiths at work. To complete the storyboards, students may investigate other sources such as books and Web sites, as available. Follow up student investigations with a discussion about process: *Who can be a blacksmith? Can a blacksmith work alone? What do you find most interesting about the process? Most challenging? Is there a blacksmithing tradition in your family or community? Imagine that Tom Joyce or another blacksmith comes to visit our class. What questions would you have regarding blacksmithing process and techniques?*

### Investigate

Show students the DVD segment featuring Kit Carson and his "Library of Visual Solutions." Create a classroom "Library of Visual Solutions" with donated objects small enough to hold in one hand. This classroom resource can be re-stocked as items are used in various art-making projects.



## Make

### Metal Fragments

Have students make jewelry and other personal accessories using cold-connection joining. Cold metal work involves the connecting of metal fragments without the use of heat. Students can connect found metal objects and metal hardware items by wrapping them with wire, joining, tying, riveting, etc. For more detailed information on cold-connecting techniques, see Joanna Gollberg's *Making Metal Jewelry: Projects, Techniques, Inspiration*, Lark Books, 2003.

### Mixed Media Fragments

Fragments can be anything: ticket stubs, parts of letters or e-mails, recipes, baseball cards, small toys, sea glass, shells, souvenirs, personal trinkets, etc. Have students make jewelry and other personal accessories using cabachons (pre-cast clay jewelry forms), polyester casting resin (a clear liquid that hardens when dry), or cold-connection techniques.

### Paper Fragments

Using fragments from consumer packaging (candy wrappers, cereal boxes, newspaper, etc.), have students weave or sew baskets or other vessels.

Have students create handmade paper or papier-mâché objects embedded with snippets from letters, e-mails, greeting cards, drawings, etc.

### Textile Fragments

Textile fragments can be any fabric including old clothing, blankets, scarves, linens, yardage, yarn, string, etc. Textiles can have personal meaning if they were worn by someone special or are mementos such as a t-shirt from a vacation. Have students gather fabric pieces that represent themselves and combine them into a small quilt or weaving. This can be done individually or as a group.

## Reflect

Pair students and have them interview each other about the object they created. Use the following questions to support the interview: *What was the original fragment, and where did it come from? What is the connection between the fragment and your own personal experience? How is it transformed in this new context? What would you title your artwork? How important is it to you that this object was made by hand? Are you planning to wear it or use it, or are you planning to give it to someone else? If so, to whom will you give it and why? Are you pleased with the result, or are there things you would do differently the next time?* After the interviews are complete, have the interviewer write a label about the interviewee's artwork. Display the artwork with the label.

### Craft in Your World

*Where have your students seen forged products? Have them look for gates, banisters, wrought-iron hooks, curtain rods, weather vanes and other forged items. Can they tell if these objects were handcrafted or massed produced?*

Many people use quilts as part of their daily life. Sometimes these are handcrafted by a member of the family. Ask students to talk to a relative to see if there are any special quilts in their family.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Memory: Fragments Worksheet #1 – What We Save Interview

Which object from those on display is most like something you have saved or might save?  
How is it similar? How is it different?

Why did you save this object? What prompted you to keep something that you might otherwise throw away?

What value does it have to you? Why is it special?

Where do you keep this object? How did you choose this place? What was important to consider when you decided where to keep it?

How long do you think you will keep this object? Why?

Do you know of anyone else who saves objects like this one?

If someone else were to see this object would he or she be likely to consider it as valuable as you do? Why or why not?

Do you have save objects that are special to you?

Do you consider yourself a collector? Why or why not?



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Memory: Fragments Worksheet #2 – Storyboard Template

### Blacksmithing in Action

In the boxes below, draw the sequence from raw metal to finished object. Write short descriptions beneath each in the box provided. Add more boxes as needed.

	➔		➔	
	➔		➔	
	➔		➔	

# additional web resources

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American Craft Council  
<http://www.craftcouncil.org/>

Smithsonian Archives for American Art  
<http://archivesofamericanart.si.edu/exhibits/pastexhibits/craft/craft.htm>

Museum of Arts and Design, NYC (formerly the American Craft Museum)  
<http://www.madmuseum.org>

Museum of Craft and Folk Art, San Francisco  
<http://www.mocfa.org/>

Craft and Folk Art Museum, Los Angeles  
<http://www.cafam.org/current.html>

## Featured and Related Artists

Einar and Jamex de la Torre  
<http://www.delatorrebros.com/>  
<http://artscenecal.com/ArticlesFile/Archive/Articles2005/Articles1105/EJdelaTorreA.html>

Pat Courtney Gold  
[http://www.turtleislandstorytellers.net/tis\\_oregon/transcript01\\_pc\\_gold.htm](http://www.turtleislandstorytellers.net/tis_oregon/transcript01_pc_gold.htm)  
<http://www.l3-lewisandclark.com/ShowOneObject.asp?SiteID=66&ObjectID=981>

Sarah Jaeger  
<http://www.unitedstatesartists.org/Public/USAFellows2006/USAFellows2006/SarahJaeger/index.cfm>  
<http://www.archiebray.org/residents/jaeger/index.html>  
<http://www.northernclaycenter.org/offline/popups/Jaeger.php>

Tom Joyce  
<http://www.artmetal.com/project/News/Hephaist/JoyceTom.html>  
<http://www.anvilmag.com/smith/910d4.htm>  
[http://www.theconnection.org/shows/2003/10/20031030\\_b\\_main.asp](http://www.theconnection.org/shows/2003/10/20031030_b_main.asp)

Sam Maloof  
<http://www.malooffoundation.org/>  
<http://americanart.si.edu/maloof/introduction/index.html>

Jan Yager  
[http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/fashion/object\\_stories/tiara/index.html](http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/fashion/object_stories/tiara/index.html)  
<http://www.pewarts.org/2003/yager/main.html>  
<http://art.wmich.edu/alumni/academy/yager/>

# additional web resources

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## Art Forms

### Book Arts

Book Arts Web  
The Center for Book Arts  
Book Arts Guild  
Projet Mobilivre/Bookmobile Project

<http://www.philobiblon.com/>  
<http://www.centerforbookarts.org/>  
<http://bookartsguild.org/>  
<http://www.mobilivre.org/>

### Ceramics

American Ceramic Society  
Ceramics Today  
National Council on Education  
for the Ceramic Arts

<http://www.ceramics.org/>  
<http://www.ceramicstoday.com/>  
<http://www.nceca.net/>

### Fibers

All Fiber Arts  
Handweavers Guild of America  
National Basketry Organization  
PBS's The Art of Quilting Series

<http://www.allfiberarts.com/>  
<http://www.weavespindye.org/>  
<http://www.nationalbasketry.org/>  
<http://www.pbs.org/americaquilts/>

### Glass

Glass Art Society  
Contemporary Glass Society (UK)  
Stained Glass Association of America

<http://www.glassart.org/>  
<http://www.cgs.org.uk>  
<http://www.stainedglass.org/>

### Metals

Anvil Fire  
Lapidary Journal  
Art Metal  
Metal Arts Guild of San Francisco  
Society of American Silversmiths  
Society of North American Goldsmiths

<http://www.anvilfire.com/>  
<http://www.lapidaryjournal.com/>  
<http://www.artmetal.com/>  
<http://www.metalartsguildsf.org/>  
<http://www.silversmithing.com/>  
<http://snagmetalsmith.org/>

### Paper

Hand Papermaking  
International Association of  
Hand Papermakers and Paper Artists

<http://www.handpapermaking.org/>  
<http://www.iapma.info/>

### Wood

Woodworkers Website Association  
Fine Woodworking  
Wood Magazine

<http://www.woodworking.org/>  
<http://www.taunton.com/finewoodworking/>  
<http://www.woodmagazine.com/>

## National Visual Art Standards

ArtsEdge, Kennedy Center

<http://www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org/teach/standards.cfm>

## Credits & Copyright

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