

# CRAFT IN AMERICA

memory: roots



## Preview

Some craft artists look to their culture, heritage, and traditions for ideas and inspiration to incorporate into their art making. These artists understand who they are in terms of what came before them and consciously incorporate these ideas, stories, and struggles into their art. In this section of Educator Guide: Memory, students will discover the importance of “roots” to selected craft artists and investigate their own roots through inquiry-based activities.

## Featured Artists

Pat Courtney Gold (basket maker/Memory)  
Einar and Jamex de la Torre (glassblowing/Community)

## Related Artists

Mary Jackson (basket maker/Memory)  
Denise and Samuel Wallace (jewelers/Community)

## roots

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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.

# ROOTS

“ A search for identity is a great part of our work. It has to do with our Catholic background and our Mexican heritage. ”

Jamex de la Torre



Einar & Jamex de la Torre, *What Really Happened*, 2006

Who are you? Where are you from? What do you know about your family or heritage? Some people know a lot, others know little. What we know for certain is that we all have ancestors that root us to our past. Everyone comes from someone, somewhere. Our roots not only connect us to our families and to our heritage, but they define who we are today. Roots provide stability and nourish us, allowing us to grow, often in ways we do not fully grasp.

Many people's roots are embedded in community, stories, and objects. Our relatives and their stories connect us to our culture, history, and traditions. But what role do objects play? How do they connect us to our past? Family heirlooms are precious objects, souvenirs of a person, place, occasion and/or moment in time. They are passed from generation to generation, embedded with meaning. Often displayed with honor and handled with care, these objects teach us about the past so we can appreciate the present and look toward the future.

While some people struggle to reconnect or stay rooted to their heritage, others seek to break away, to chart their own course. However, even when people choose a different or new path, their identity—who they are today and who they will be tomorrow—remains rooted in their heritage.

Some artists think about the notion of roots, looking to their culture, heritage, and traditions for inspiration. Some artists' roots are strong, and they make art in order to carry on the traditions of their ancestors. Other artists question their heritage and whether they should embrace it. No matter what their perspective, these artists understand their roots and consciously incorporate ideas, stories, and struggles from the past into their art.





*Pat Courtney Gold*  
Born 1939 Warm Springs, Oregon

A Wasco-Tlingit Native American reviving the art of Wasco Basket weaving

Baskets combine traditional Wasco techniques, styles, stories and materials with contemporary motifs

Earned a Bachelor's degree in mathematics from Whitman College, Walla Walla, Washington

Taught math at community colleges, and worked as a math and computer specialist

In 1999, after years of learning the tradition of Wasco baskets from tribal Elders, traveled over 3000 miles from Oregon to the Peabody Museum at Harvard University to hold a 200-year-old basket given to the Lewis and Clark expedition by the Wasco people

Peabody Museum moment was a spiritual experience, as she was probably the first Wasco Indian to touch the basket in seven generations

Lectures on plateau tribal art and teaches classes throughout the Pacific Northwest

Work has been exhibited nationally and internationally and can be found in museum collections



Pat Courtney Gold, Sturgeon Basket

A phone call from Native American Pat Courtney Gold's sister changed her life: their elders were looking for someone to revive and carry on their Wasco Nation basket making tradition. No one in Gold's family had ever done this work. While her community was working to preserve its language, no one had tried to save basket making. A mathematician for seventeen years, Gold immediately embraced the challenge to revive the tradition.

She started her journey focusing on technique—visiting museums, learning from elders, studying traditional plants, and practicing. Slowly she began to combine images of the past with contemporary motifs, thus expressing her own vision and identity through her work. While she draws on today's world for ideas, all her baskets are firmly rooted in the stories and traditions of the Wasco people. Gold views her art form as her own unique way of deepening her connection to her people, their stories, and their once traditional way of life. She continues to feel a strong connection with the past and makes Wasco baskets because she feels it is important and she finds pleasure in it, her identity and roots woven into each one. Once the student, now she is the teacher. The future of Wasco basket making is in the strong, confident, knowing hands of Pat Courtney Gold, whose cultural roots run deep and will live on long after she is gone.



Rob Whitworth Photograph

*Einar de la Torre*

Born 1963, Guadalajara, Mexico

*Jamex de la Torre*

Born 1960, Guadalajara, Mexico

Brothers born in Mexico, but moved to California in 1972

Both attended California State University at Long Beach, where they learned how to work in glass and where Einar earned a BFA in sculpture

Entered the glass arts through ceramics

Artistic nomads, they prefer to travel around the world, taking up residence in glass shops, art centers and schools to create their art and teach glassblowing rather than maintaining their own elaborate glass studios

Served as guest artists at Pilchuck School of Glass; Penland School of Crafts; The Glass Furnace, Istanbul; and many art schools and universities

Reside and work in both Ensenada, Mexico and San Diego, California and consider themselves Mexican-American bicultural artists

Creation. Destruction. Sacrifice. Renewal. These concepts do not immediately come to mind when one thinks about the blown glass tradition. But they are the themes that fuel the work of Einar and Jamex de la Torre, brothers whose bicultural ancestry (Mexican and American), religious upbringing, and cultural traditions provide a constant flow of ideas and inspiration for their glass work. With a sense of humor and a critical eye, the de la Torre brothers use "insider knowledge" of their ancestry to stretch the boundaries of glass blowing, fusing found objects with traditional glass blowing techniques.

Living in both California and Mexico facilitates the brothers' ability to juxtapose their ancestry with American popular culture. Additionally, their work references Aztec gods, Mexican folk art, and political and economic issues. They struggle to make sense of the world around them and the culture into which they were born. Both past and present are subjects in their artwork. For the de la Torre brothers, the coming together of opposites results in blown glass that is at once sculpture, installation, and social commentary. The subject, scale, and craftsmanship revealed by each piece emphasize that the brothers have not only mastered glass blowing, but they are charting a new direction for the medium that is firmly rooted in their current identity with a deep respect for their ancestry.



Einar & Jamex de la Torre, Quita Pone Bean Pot, 2005





Pat Courtney Gold, Honor the Wasco Weaver of the 1805 Basket Collected by Lewis and Clark, 2003

### The Craft Connection

Pat Courtney Gold and the de la Torre brothers look to their roots to create art, albeit in very different ways. Their crafts represent personal connections with their cultures. While Gold has revived a dying weaving tradition and the de la Torre brothers are pushing the boundaries of glass blowing, all three search their ancestry for ideas and inspiration. They pay attention to detail and process, and work collaboratively—Gold with elders and ancestors, the de la Torre brothers with each other, other glass blowers, and their forebears. Their objects, like the works of many other craft artists, teach us about the past so we can appreciate the present and look toward the future.



## Craft in Action Discuss

As a class, begin a conversation with your students about their roots. Suggested questions include: *Who are you? Where are you from? What do you know about your family or heritage?* Discuss how some people know a lot, while others know little. Emphasize that they all have roots, embedded ties to their family, heritage, and culture. Roots are a foundation, they stabilize us, they are grounding, nourishing, and not always obvious.

Use *Roots Revealed – Student worksheet* (Memory: *Roots Worksheet #1 and #2*) and the questions provided to have students begin the process of identifying their roots—geographical, racial/ethnic, artistic/aesthetic, recreational, health and body, and family.

After students complete the worksheets, ask them: *What's the most important or interesting thing this exercise taught you about yourself? Have students use the small squares in the reflection boxes to prioritize the importance of each identity. What does the ranking reveal? Discuss.*

## View

Have students watch the DVD segments featuring Einar and Jamex de la Torre (glass/Community) and Pat Courtney Gold (basket making/Memory). Ask them to think about the importance of each artist's cultural roots and how they are reflected in his or her work.

After viewing the DVD segments, divide the class in half and have one half focus on the de la Torre brothers and the other half focus on Pat Courtney Gold. Once divided, have students work together to complete *Roots Revealed – Artist worksheet* (Memory: *Roots Worksheet #3 and #4*) and the questions provided to guide them. Students should develop an understanding of how these artists reveal their roots through their art.

Discuss the discoveries of the *Roots Revealed – Artist worksheets*. Which roots seem to be most important for each artist? Have students share what they have learned and make a list of what they still want to know: *If the artist were in the room, what questions would you ask?* These questions should be used to guide students during a second viewing of the DVD segments on these artists.

After the second viewing, further the conversation about these artists. *To what extent do the roots of these artists enter into the work they make? Explain how. Have the students add to the worksheets as they learn more about each artist. Then ask: Do you have anything in common with either of the artists? Which artist or artists resonate most with you? Why?*



Denise and Samuel Wallace, *Woman in the Moon*, Photography by Kiyoshi Togashi

## Craft in the Classroom

### Explore

View additional DVD and Web site segments on featured artists Einar and Jamex de la Torre and Pat Courtney Gold. What can they add to their Roots Revealed – Artist worksheet (Memory: Roots Worksheet #3) that they did not know before?

### Explore

Examine DVD or Web site segments for other artists and art forms that explore the theme Roots. *How do these artists or art forms incorporate the notion of roots into their work?* Compare and contrast Mary Jackson (basket maker/Memory) and Denise Wallace (jewelry/Community) with the de la Torre brothers and Pat Courtney Gold.

### Investigate

Working in small groups or pairs, have students create a storyboard that shows the process of glassblowing using the template provided (Memory: Roots Worksheet #5). *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?* Post and discuss the storyboards. To complete the storyboards students should view DVD and/or Web site segments again and investigate other sources such as books and Web sites, as available. Follow up student investigations with a discussion: *How is glass blowing like a dance? Could it be done alone? How does it compare to certain sports? Take it further: Is there a tradition of glassblowing in your family, culture, or community?*

### Investigate

*Who are some other artists working in glass?* Have students explore the work of Dale Chihuly. View additional DVD and web site segments as well as other resources. There are a variety of resources available on Chihuly including a DVD entitled Chihuly Over Venice. Discuss with students: *How does Chihuly compare to the work of the de la Torre brothers? Are his roots reflected in his artworks?*

### Investigate

Reveal your students' roots in craft. *What is the influence of craft in their lives? Engage students in a discussion of craft traditions in their lives, communities, and families. Who in your family or community makes things? What do they make? Why? Who teaches the craft processes? Has this person made the craft process her or his own? How? Are this person's roots evident in the artwork? What role, if any, does gender play in this person's art making?*



Denise and Samuel Wallace, Crossroads of Continents Belt, 1990, Photography by Kiyoshi Togashi

## Make

Students can engage themselves in a variety of different projects, the challenge being to tie the project to an aspect of their roots, heritage, or community. Bring ideas generated in discussions about the artists and the Roots Revealed – Students worksheet, and have them incorporate these ideas into the making of a handcrafted object. Some project ideas include:

Create a lidded vessel as a container to store symbolic objects and/or writings that reveal an aspect of your roots. The vessels can be clay, metal, fiber, or paper. Embellish the container with imagery and materials that also represent who you are and what you care about.

Make a handmade book. The book could tell the story of your family through drawings and text. To deepen the experience, interview a family or community member. If making handmade paper, embed fragments into the paper and embellish the covers.

## Reflect

Ask students to think about the artists they have studied, the questions asked, and the activities they pursued while learning about the importance of roots as a theme in craft. Prompt a conversation: What is the most important thing you learned about craft, about these artists, and about yourself?

## Craft in Your World

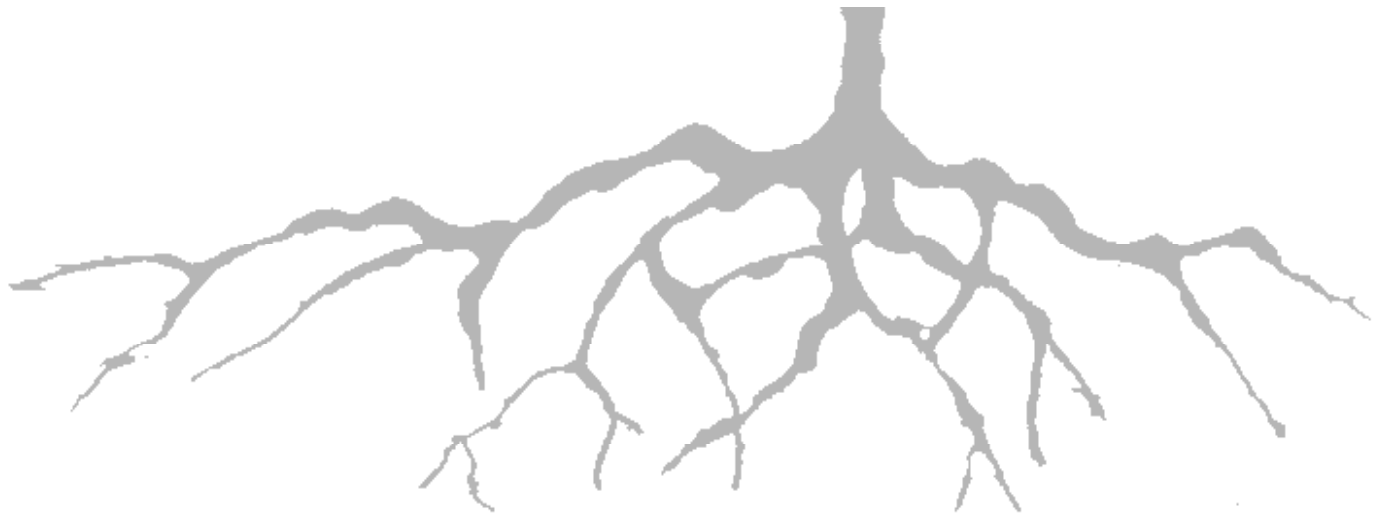
Baskets are a part of our daily life. They are used every day to hold objects of all shapes and sizes. They are made in different ways. Basket materials and forms typically are rooted in the original use of the basket. Have students look for different types of baskets and compare and contrast the ways in which they are made and the materials used.

Glass has many different uses in our world. Have students look for as many uses of glass as possible and keep a running list. How many of these objects are handcrafted? How can you tell?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Memory: Roots Worksheet #1 – Roots Revealed – Student



**Geographic Identity**

Blank space for writing.

**Family Identity**

Blank space for writing.

**Recreational Identity**

Blank space for writing.

**Racial/Ethnic Identity**

Blank space for writing.

**Health and Body Identity**

Blank space for writing.

**Aesthetic Identity**

Blank space for writing.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Memory: Roots Worksheet #2 – Roots Revealed – Student Questions

Use the following prompts to guide your responses in the boxes attached to the “roots” of your Roots Revealed tree.

### Geographical Identity

- When people ask me where I am from, it is easy or hard to answer because...
- I consider my home to be where?
- I am a rural, suburban or urban person because...
- I need or do not need to have a sense of roots in a particular place or geographical community because...

### Family Identity

- Family is very important to me or not because...
- I choose or do not choose to spend leisure time with members of my family because...
- My definition of family is...

### Recreational Identity

- In my spare time, I (read, hang out with friends, play music, play sports, go to movies, play video games, etc.)...
- I connect with other people with similar recreational interests by (reading the same magazines, wearing similar clothes, etc.)...

### Racial/Ethnic Identity

- My ancestors are mainly (Spanish, Italian, Mexican, African-American, Native American, etc.)
- I consider myself to be (White, Black, mainstream, mixed, I don't like being asked this question, etc.)...
- I consider my ethnic identity a heritage that is influenced by my biological heritage or cultural experiences because...
- This part of my identity is important or not so important because...

### Health and Body Identity

- My physical attributes greatly affect or do not affect the way I see myself and the way others see me because...
- My physical and mental health play an important role in the ways that I view the world because...
- Members of my health and body identity communities recognize and communicate their shared experiences with one another in what ways?

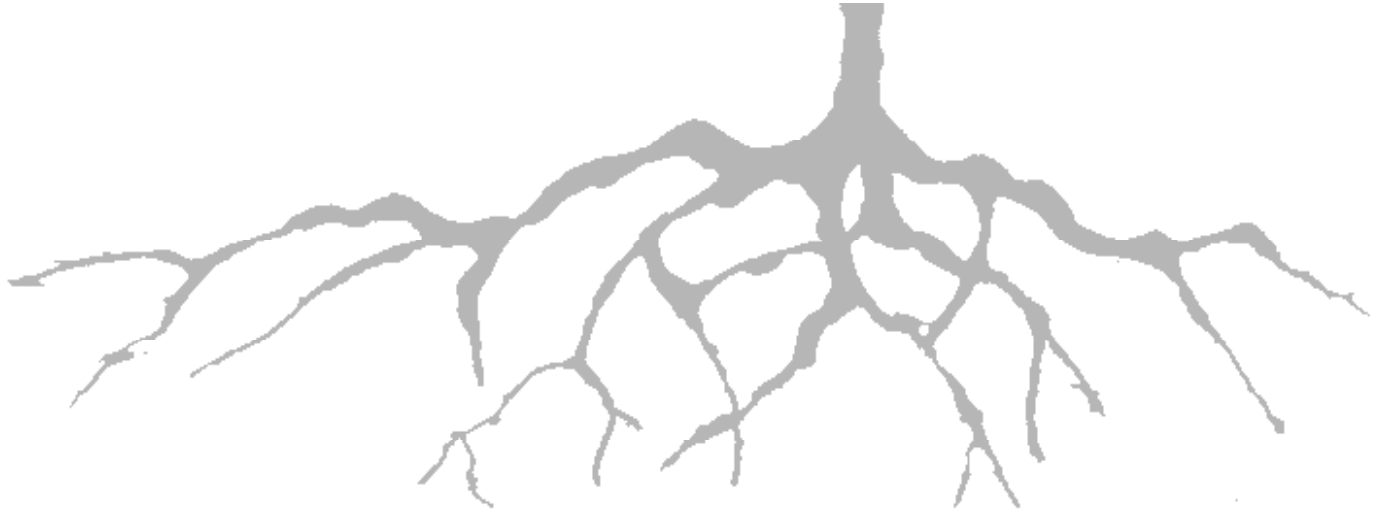
### Artistic/Aesthetic Identity

- My artwork is representative of the other communities above to which I belong.
- My artwork is influenced by other artists I've studied or encountered.
- You can or cannot tell who I am by the way I dress.
- My outward appearance is representative of the other communities above to which I belong.
- I spend a lot or a little energy, money, and/or time on shoes, t-shirts, jewelry, etc. because...

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Memory: Roots Worksheet #3 – Roots Revealed – Artist



**Geographic Identity**

**Family Identity**

**Ethnic/Racial Identity**

**Artistic/Aesthetic Identity**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Memory: Roots Worksheet #4 – Roots Revealed – Artist

Use the following prompts to guide your responses in the boxes attached to the “roots” of the Roots Revealed tree for your artist.

Artist(s) \_\_\_\_\_

### Geographical Identity

- When people ask my artist where he/she is from, it is easy or hard to answer because...
- He/she considers his/her home to be where?
- He/she is a rural, suburban or urban person because...
- He/she needs or does not need to have a sense of roots in a particular place or geographical community because...

### Family Identity

- Family is very important to my artist or not because...
- My artist's definition of family is...

### Racial/Ethnic Identity

- My artist's ancestors are mainly (Spanish, Italian, Mexican, African-American, Native American, etc.)...
- He/she considers himself/herself to be (White, Black, mainstream, mixed, he/she doesn't like being asked this question, etc.)...
- He/she considers his/her ethnic identity a heritage that is influenced by his/her biological heritage or cultural experiences because...
- This part of my artist's identity is important or not so important because...

### Artistic/Aesthetic Identity

- My artist's artwork is representative of the other communities above to which he or she belongs.
- My artist's artwork is influenced by other artists he or she has studied or encountered.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Memory: Roots Worksheet #5 – Storyboard Template

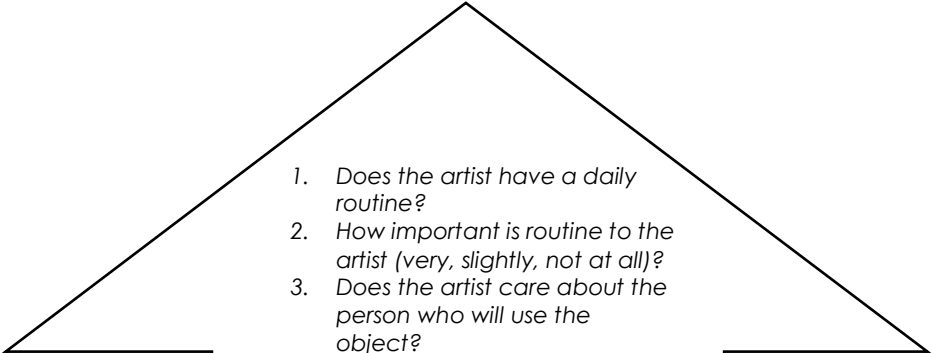
### Glass in Action

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

	→		→	
	→		→	
	→		→	



# Memory: Hand to Home Worksheet #1 – Handcrafted



1. Does the artist have a daily routine?
2. How important is routine to the artist (very, slightly, not at all)?
3. Does the artist care about the person who will use the object?  
How important is this to the artist? How do you know?
4. How important is function?
5. For each artist, what makes a beautiful object?

**Sam Maloof**

**Sarah Jaeger**

1 \_\_\_\_\_  
2 \_\_\_\_\_  
3 \_\_\_\_\_  
4 \_\_\_\_\_  
5 \_\_\_\_\_  
6 \_\_\_\_\_

1 \_\_\_\_\_  
2 \_\_\_\_\_  
3 \_\_\_\_\_  
4 \_\_\_\_\_  
5 \_\_\_\_\_  
6 \_\_\_\_\_

**What is important?**

# 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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