

Craft Video Dictionary: Tools, Techniques, Materials

Proposal for the Decorative Arts Trust



CRAFT IN AMERICA

Mission

To generate an online video dictionary of process and technique spanning all decorative arts media that will serve as an evergreen, widely accessible, free resource for researchers, art historians, students, and the general public. Each “entry” will consist of a short video of a professional artist-maker demonstrating a specific process or technique. This online video dictionary will serve as a craft process Wikipedia, giving users/viewers the chance to view and to deepen understanding of what each process entails.

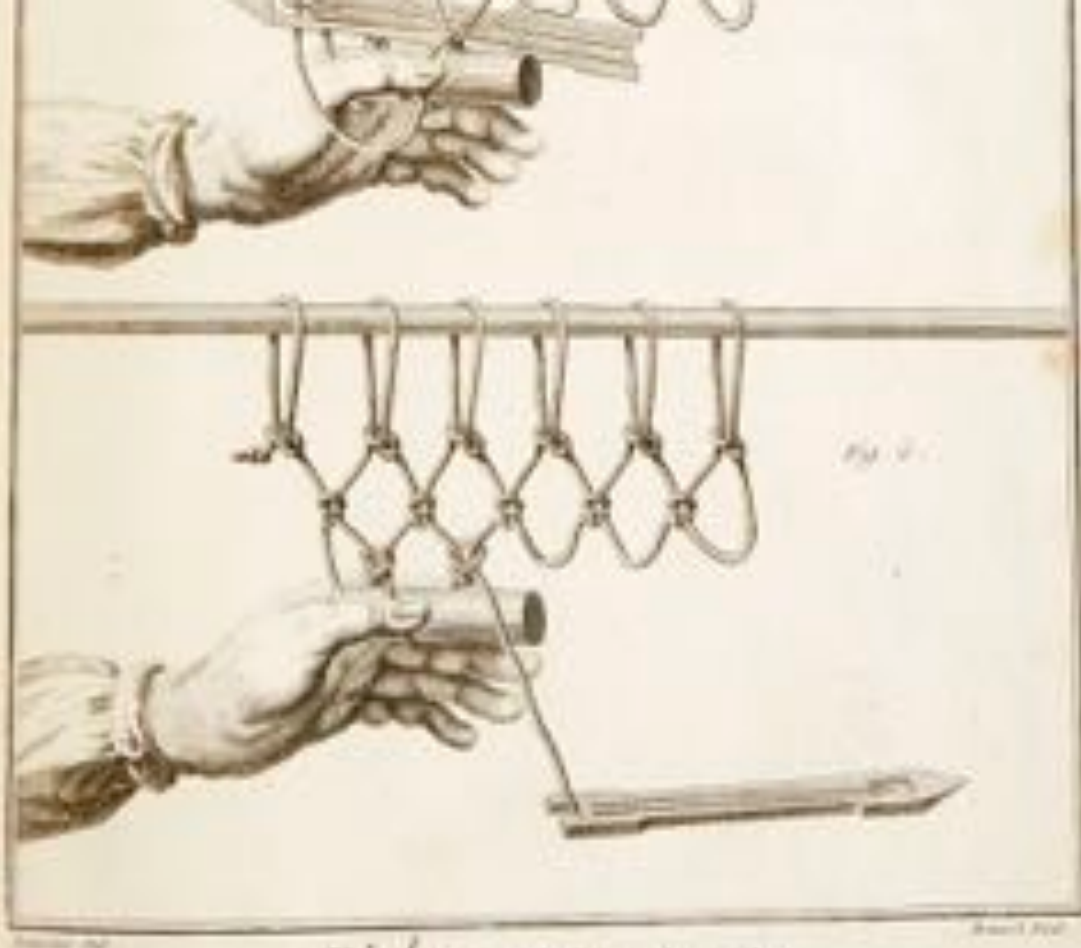
CRAFT IN AMERICA is a Los Angeles-based 501(c)(3) non-profit organization established in 2004 with a mission to promote and advance original handcrafted work, through educational programs in all media, accessible to all, including a PBS documentary series with 23 episodes to date, a growing archival website, a large social media presence, and in-person activities and exhibitions at the Craft in America Center. We are dedicated to the exploration, preservation, and celebration of craft and craft artists, the work of the hand, and their impact on our nation’s cultural heritage and economy. By utilizing our organizational expertise in craft, digital media and film and by collaborating with our national network of craft leaders, we will generate a bank of digital resources that the public can reference online, anywhere, at any time.





Words, text and images only go so far for explaining the tools, techniques, and materials used in the decorative arts. Through years of experience as a national voice for educating the public about handmade craft of all kinds, we recognize the need for a resource to exist that clearly gives people an immediate, clear way to understand the definition of complex processes that are hard to define without visual aids. Craft is best learned through a crafts person. The absolute best way to provide this definition is via video, a tool that we as an organization are specifically attuned to tap into in this day and age. Some resources exist currently that include video of various craft processes, but they have never been centralized and organized as a searchable bank, nor have they been academically verified for accuracy as reliable sources.

This project will enhance appreciation of the breadth, depth and complexities of the decorative arts. By viewing the skilled motions and movements of each filmed artist, people will have a chance to understand the physical mastery, timing, and hand-eye coordination that craft entails.



*Pêche, fabrication des filets
d'après M. de Maillet, 4^e, 5^e et 6^e édition.*

These resources will assist future researchers, up and coming and those established, those in other academic and artistic fields needing deeper understanding of craft processes at the basis of the decorative arts. It will ideally become, like Wikipedia, the definitive household name/go-to source for elucidating and comprehensible depictions of techniques and other terminology related to the living decorative arts and craft.

This project will be the launch and establishment of the craft process video dictionary and moving forward, it will continue to grow and expand into the future as entries are added, based on available support and resources.



Outcomes

Existing in perpetuity online, the video dictionary project will increase awareness and appreciation of craft, the decorative arts, design, and the fine arts for museum professionals, curators, conservators, art historians, students, and the general art-interested public.

Videos will be organized as a searchable compendium.

We plan to partner with professional teaching artists who can demonstrate the range of fundamental, important techniques across media, focusing on glass, ceramics, wood, metal, fiber and miscellaneous materials. We will identify and partner with artists and institutions with studios that are best equipped to demonstrate in short format the most significant techniques in use within the decorative arts.

These diverse, contemporary makers will bring the processes alive through demonstration.



Examples

Nikki Lewis on Potter's Wheel



Richard Notkin on Slip Casting



Sarah Jaeger Glazes a Teapot



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Images from Craft in America's PBS documentary series and
Encyclopédie, or a Systematic Dictionary of the Sciences, Arts, and Crafts