



**Morris Museum**  
**New Jersey Arts Annual:**  
**Crafts**

October 7, 2006 – January 7, 2007





The New Jersey Arts Annual is a unique series of exhibitions that highlights the works of visual artists and craftspeople in the state. Two exhibitions take place each year in alternating sequence, Fine Arts in Spring/Summer and Crafts in Fall/Winter. The series of exhibitions is co-sponsored by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State in collaboration with six organizations: Jersey City Museum, Montclair Art Museum, Morris Museum, The Newark Museum, New Jersey State Museum and The Noyes Museum of Art.

### Upcoming Arts Annual exhibitions:

Fine Arts – Spring 2007  
Crafts – Fall 2007

The Noyes Museum of Art  
New Jersey State Museum

# New Jersey Arts Annual: Crafts



October 7, 2006 through January 7, 2007

*Juried by Stacy C. Hollander, Senior Curator/Director of Exhibitions, American Folk Art Museum;  
Anne Q. McKeown, Master Papermaker, Rutgers Center for Innovative Print and Paper;  
and Laura Galvanek, Curator of Exhibitions, Morris Museum*

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*Governor*

The Honorable Nina Mitchell Wells  
*Secretary of State*



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## STATEMENT FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE

It is my great pleasure to extend congratulations and best wishes to the artists represented in this year's New Jersey Arts Annual exhibition of crafts and to all of the sponsoring organizations who have come together to make this event such a success. Arts Annual exhibitions illustrate the extraordinary vitality of New Jersey's artists and reinforce the value of art in our lives. Programs such as this exhibit create a wonderful synergy between artists and the public. Our most talented artists showcase their work in some of the most important museums in the state, and the people of New Jersey share in and connect to the quality and diversity of that marvelous creative experience, which is uniquely our own.

The Department of State and the New Jersey State Council on the Arts are proud to help make this program possible. Thank you to all the participating museums for celebrating New Jersey's artistic community, but most especially the Morris Museum for hosting such an exciting exhibit. You have all ensured its success.

With the on-going commitment by the Council and its museum co-sponsors, the Arts Annual will continue to stand as a testament to artistic excellence and a celebration of New Jersey at its best.

Nina Mitchell Wells, Esq.

## **STATEMENT FROM THE NEW JERSEY STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS**

On behalf of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts we congratulate the artists represented in the 2006 New Jersey Arts Annual exhibition in Crafts. We are all enriched by the work of artists who help us to see the world and its possibilities in new ways. We are doubly blessed to have so many superb craft artists call New Jersey home. The New Jersey Arts Annual exhibition series continues to serve as an important forum for artists in both crafts and fine arts, and the Council is proud to co-sponsor this outstanding exhibit with the Morris Museum.

The Arts Annual series is just one of many ways that the Council supports the work and advancement of New Jersey artists. The Council awards fellowships, provides technical assistance, co-sponsors showcase opportunities, hosts a virtual gallery at the [www.jerseyarts.com](http://www.jerseyarts.com) web site and provides grants and incentives to arts organizations to showcase and better serve New Jersey artists. The Council also manages the Arts Inclusion Program, through which art is commissioned for State buildings. It is some of our most important and rewarding work.

The council applauds the boards and staff of the six participating museums: Jersey City Museum, Montclair Art Museum, The Newark Museum, New Jersey State Museum, The Noyes Museum of Art and most especially, the Morris Museum for their support and commitment to the work of New Jersey artists featured in the Arts Annual exhibition series. We particularly thank Steve Miller, Executive Director of the Morris Museum and the Board and Staff for making such a substantial investment in the success of this program and for mounting this beautiful exhibit.

Carol Herbert  
*Chair*

David A. Miller  
*Executive Director*

Tom Moran  
*Senior Program Officer, Artist Services*

## STATEMENT FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Morris Museum is delighted to present the exhibit the *New Jersey Arts Annual: Crafts*. The process of selecting the most recent innovative or traditional, practical or pleasing craft is a challenge in a state so rich in creative practitioners of an ancient art. I think you will agree that the jurors for this year's exhibition did a superior job. We are grateful for the fine work of Stacy C. Hollander, senior curator/director of exhibitions of the American Folk Art Museum; Anne Q. McKeown, master papermaker, Rutgers Center for Innovative Print and Paper; and Laura Galvanek, curator of exhibitions, Morris Museum.

Craft as an art is as old as any form of human creative expression. The pieces shown in this exhibition offer a wonderful array of the customary and new, the practical and the contemplative – or, any combination thereof. Craft may have originally been based on functional application but it is now far flung and not easily confined to some specific use alone.

The New Jersey Arts Annual is an unusual duo of exhibitions presenting contemporary visual artists and artisans. They are co-sponsored by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, and a New Jersey museum. One exhibition is for the visual arts and the other is for crafts. They are held separately and rotate amongst New Jersey museums, including Morris Museum; Montclair Art Museum; New Jersey State Museum; Jersey City Museum; The Newark Museum; and The Noyes Museum of Art.

Steven H. Miller



## STATEMENT FROM THE CURATOR

The *New Jersey Arts Annual: Crafts* exhibition highlights the contemporary work of eighteen New Jersey artists. The exhibition jury was comprised of Stacy C. Hollander, senior curator/director of exhibitions at the American Folk Art Museum; Anne Q. McKeown, master papermaker at Rutgers Center for Innovative Print and Paper; and myself. I am grateful to my co-jurors who spent countless hours poring through the works of New Jersey's talented crafts artists.

The jury selected a diverse group of work that exemplifies not only the innovation of New Jersey artists, but the ever changing and expanding definition of crafts. This exhibition celebrates crafts for their visual artistic expression, which encompasses the functional, conceptual and design aesthetic. The work chosen shows the broad range of mediums from the more traditional, such as glass, silver and stoneware, to more unique materials like bamboo, salvaged textiles, paoauk and leopard wood, to name a few.

The Morris Museum is proud to host this year's *New Jersey Arts Annual: Crafts* exhibition.

Laura Galvanek

## STATEMENTS FROM THE JURORS

In judging the artworks submitted for this exhibition, one of the challenges was to be receptive to the wide-ranging response artists have to the notion of craft. Of course the very act of judging means judgment: of quality, aesthetic, and the success of conception and implementation. And the judge brings his or her own experiences, preconceptions, and predilections to the process. Craft itself is an interesting word with a long history of association. It implies pride in the artful work of one's hands and the attainment of a high level of skill. Its darker side hints of deceit and the proletariat qualities of manual, as opposed to intellectual, dexterity. Craft evokes a mixed metaphor of meaning, and an open call elicits a similar mixed response. Some artworks dissemble, mimicking the appearance of one material or object though they are fashioned from quite another. Some revel in the purity of their own materiality, testing the limits of their physical nature and their maker's ingenuity. What binds these artworks — and is intrinsic to the idea of craft — is a sense of humanity: the laying on of hands, whether to shape moments of pain or wonderment.

Stacy C. Hollander

Senior Curator, American Folk Art Museum, New York

The range of the work submitted spans the field of art making from traditional to technological. The fine silver work of Kenneth C. McBain is met with the equally fine *Chuck, Up Close* in Merino wool by Susan Spencer Reckford. Though Diane Savona's use of "salvaged textile" comes out of a quilting tradition, I wonder how often pieces of "frozen road cloth" made their way into finished work by Vasileki C. Birrell. *Vaia's Narrative* records the memory of a life by encompassing the hidden papers of the beloved in a robe of handmade paper. Computer imaging has a presence in several pieces. In *Joni's Book* by Leslie Nobler Farber, overlays and transition of images wed technology and book. My thanks to all the artists who submitted work. In the pluralistic art world of today I encourage continued boundary crossing in the pursuit of statement, beauty and creation of new ways to reflect the world around us.

Anne Q. McKeown

Master Papermaker, Rutgers Center for Innovative Print and Paper, New Brunswick

# **New Jersey Arts Annual: Crafts**

Vasileki C. Birrell

Harry Bower

Phyllis Carlin

Leslie Nobler Farber

Richard A. Freiwald

Beverly Hertler

Susan Hoenig

Susan Holford

Linda Vonderschmidt-LaStella

Judy Langille

Rachel Leibman

Donna L. Lish

Kenneth C. MacBain

Susan Spencer Reckford

Diane Savona

Marian Slepian

Peter Tischler

Barry Zawacki



## Vasileki C. Birrell

*Fanwood, New Jersey*

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This piece is a transformational alteration of a large hand-made paper dress that I won at a Chinese auction at the Book Arts Roundtable in South Orange, New Jersey. It is a wearable “accordion” page book — a perfect vehicle to document some insight about my mother through a few intimate objects, vintage photos and letters.

The inside hides and protects.

A wooden portrait represents her as a bartered and unwilling, unhappy bride, marrying a man she had never met and emigrating to a foreign land. She was 18; he was 42.

The lining is a series of dressmaker patterns representing her talent as a fine seamstress. The letters she kept hidden on her person; at times, she read them and wept.

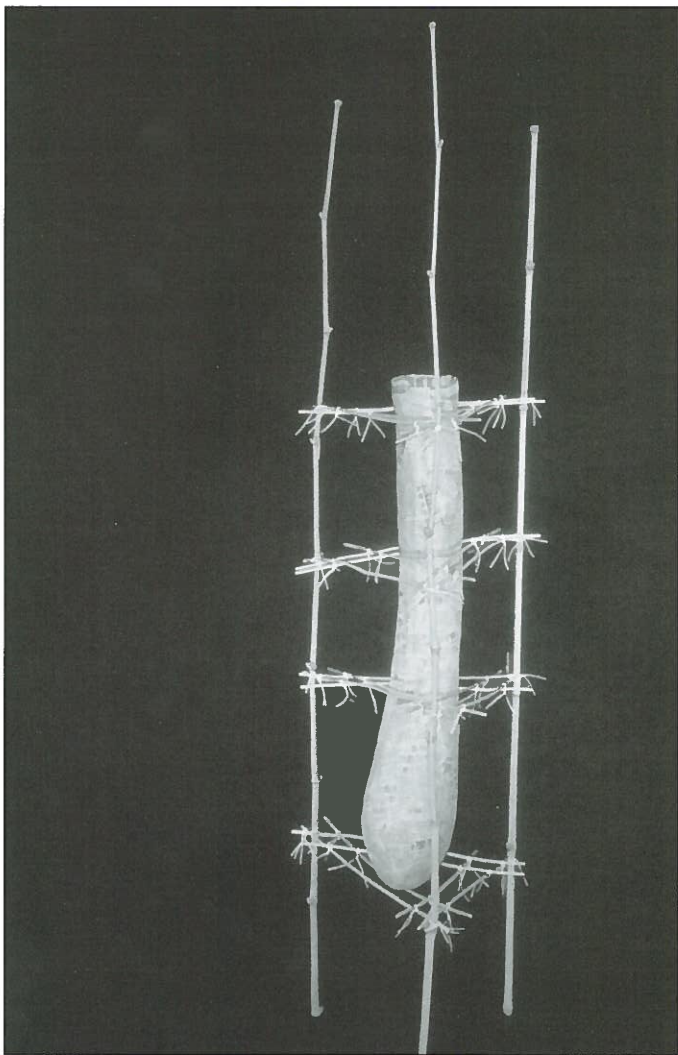
The outside exposes.

On the outside back and center is a large embroidery of a peacock done by Mother that was part of her dowry. The peacock is a symbol of royalty, colorfulness and pride mythologically associated with the Greek goddess Hera, the zealous protectress of marriage and home. Also included are some fragments of her crochet and tatting. The spine pages are supported with thin dowel rods.

The wearable book may be viewed folded on a flat surface, one panel at a time, or unfolded, hanging on a padded hanger open and exposing Mother’s full talents and hidden emotions. This is my portrait of a beautiful, talented Greek maiden from a rural mountain village.



*Vaia's Narrative*, 2005  
Handmade paper and mixed media  
60" x 24"



*1 Pod, 3 Sticks, 2005*  
Bamboo and paper  
48" x 9" x 9"

## Harry Bower

*Island Heights, New Jersey*

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Over the past fifteen years, I have seen a major shift in my style, techniques, materials and the way in which I approach "fiber arts" as a craft form. What once were traditional techniques and materials have now become an exploration of nontraditional techniques and unconventional materials. Two questions I keep asking myself are: "What is fiber arts?" and "When does craft cross over to art?"

## Phyllis Carlin

*Maplewood, New Jersey*

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I have always needed to work building a momentum, day after day, creating an atmosphere in the studio that allows the unexpected to happen.

I break almost as many pieces as I make, and think that I learn much about my work by doing so.



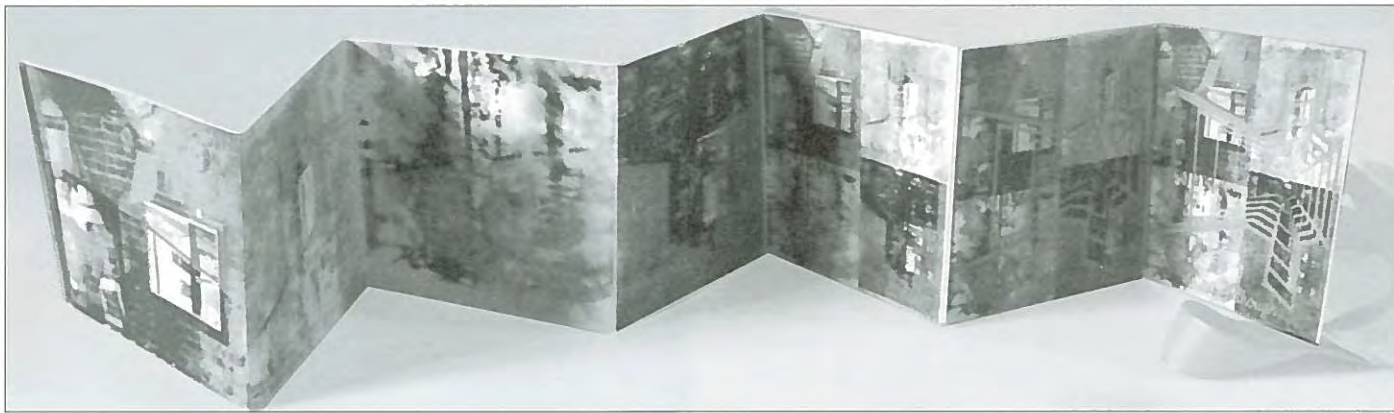
*See, Hear, Speak, No Evil*, 2005  
Wood and ceramic  
4' x 6" x 8"

## Leslie Nobler Farber

*Demarest, New Jersey*

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While focusing on reasserting the human hand over the computer/machine, the ritual and meaning of ancient prayer is referenced. These tradigital (work that blends the strengths of the digital art-making process with those of traditional techniques or technologies) prints juxtapose with spiritual rhythms until their mathematical cadences eventually collide in this collage-based book. Influences of Pop and Op artists, along with feminism and religion, are visible. Serial art forms are my vehicles for grappling with technology and mass-production versus the spiritual soul, nature and patterns of time.



*Joni's Book*, 2005  
Paper and mixed media  
6" x 22"

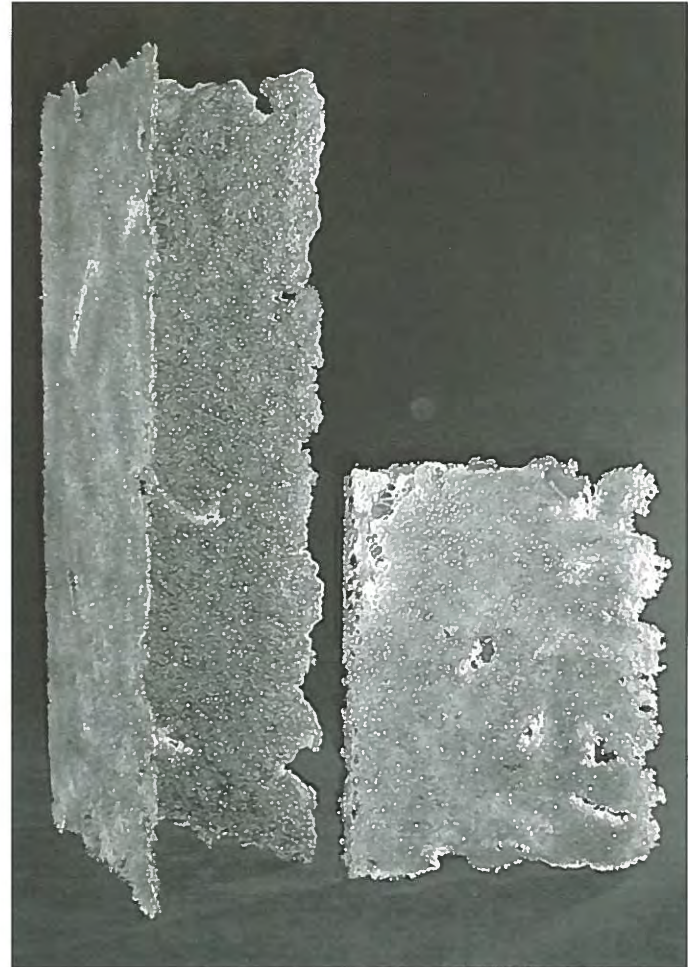


## Richard A. Freiwald

*Highland Park, New Jersey*

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My work interests center on metaphorical and conceptual processes coupled with seductive forms and surfaces. Through direct intentional manipulation of various mediums such as pate de verre glass, clay, ferro cement, metal, paint and often found objects, I construct a visual narrative to tell stories of encounters with pain, disability, recovery and dignity.



*Two Tales, 2005*  
Glass cast  
31" x 26" x 14"

## **Beverly Hertler**

*Red Bank, New Jersey*

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Through my work I strive to achieve a personal reflection and statement — honest, open, uncomplicated and straightforward — with texture, design and color (the factors that stimulate my imagination). Fractured piecing and interaction of colors are the basis of my work. I develop my designs after careful study of the fabric and incorporate it into my piece to achieve overall continuity.

An intellectual statement is not the result I am striving to make, but rather an uplifting visual experience that can be whimsical or not. My work is what it is.



*Mixed Animals, 2005*

Fiber and assorted beads

15 ½" x 40 ¾"

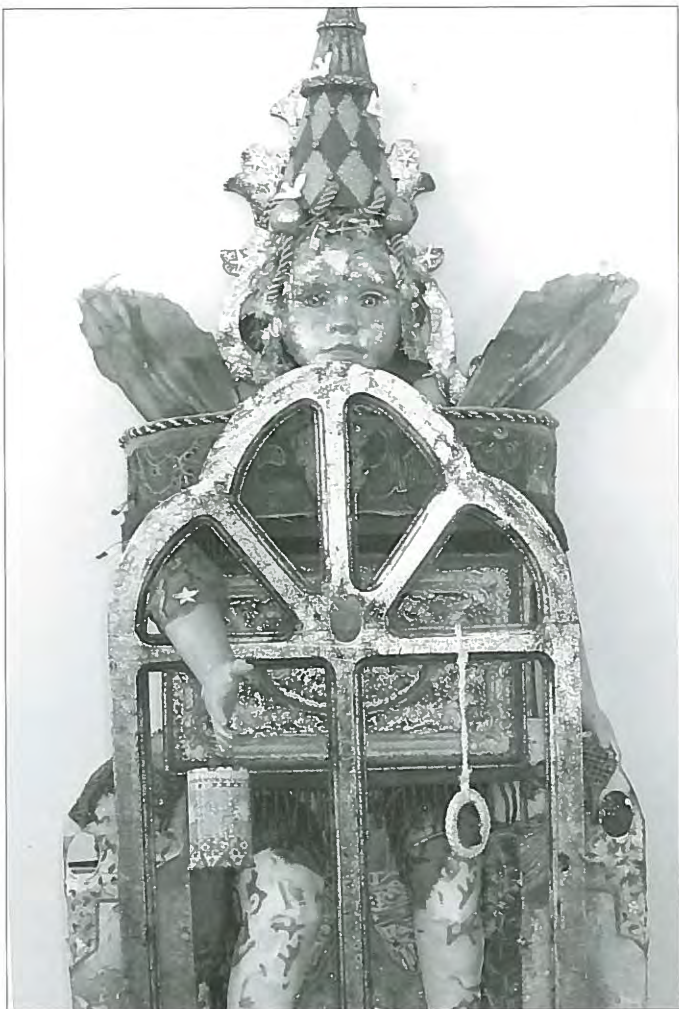
## Susan Hoenig

*Princeton, New Jersey*

The animal reliefs are made of burlap and painted in earth tones. They include a raven, a crab, owls, sea skates, frogs, turtles and birds. The designs are inspired by a variety of cultures and locations around the world. The totem art of the Alaskan Haida and geoglyphs of the Peruvian Nazca contribute to my imagery.



*Red-Bellied Woodpecker, 2004*  
Acrylic on burlap  
20" x 9" x 1"



*Dream Keeper*, 2005  
Mixed Media  
27" x 13"

## **Susan Holford**

*Denville, New Jersey*

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Collaborators—my artistic world is filled with them. As an artist I cannot conceive of working without many influences, which may come in wondrous textures, shapes, forms and colors. What brings my work to life is the inspiration of thoughts, feelings and ideas. Most importantly, I bow to all the artists whose journeys have helped me see in another way.



## Linda Vonderschmidt-LaStella

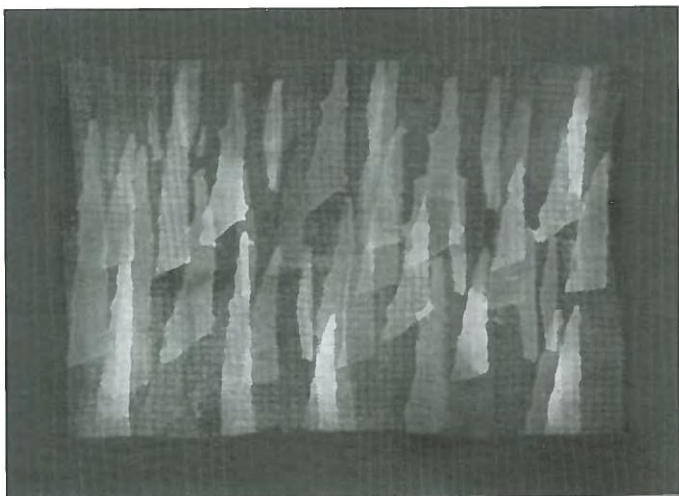
*Metuchen, New Jersey*

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My current work, embodied in the *Wave Series*, allows me to continue my dialogue with the ceramic medium. At this point, my creations are really about my relationship with clay, the dance that working with clay has become: knowing how far to stretch, how close to pierce, how large to make an individual piece, how thick, how thin, how wet, how dry. Having worked with the materials for several decades, I recognize that I come as a willing partner. Happily, clay has befriended me, allowed me to know some of her secrets, and invited me to play with her in new ways. My work now is not so much about this or that, but is a dance of creation with that partner. My hope is that those who see my work recognize the joy of that deepening relationship.



*Wave II*, 2006  
Stoneware  
20" diameter



*Torn Flags I*, 2005  
Fabric  
16" x 23"

## Judy Langille

*Glen Ridge, New Jersey*

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*Torn Flags I* is part of a new series of whole cloth quilts with which I have been experimenting. I use torn paper as a resist and screen discharge paste through a blank silkscreen frame to remove as much color as I can from black fabric. Using thickened dyes, I paint the forms that have color removed from them and then repeat the process of discharge and paint several more times until I have my desired composition. The colors and shapes that emerge from within the different black areas of these fabrics create a mysterious new element to my work. These whole pieces of fabric are then layered with batting and a backing, and machine stitched with a variety of threads. The stitching creates a line that is drawn onto the surface of the fabric to bring the composition together.

## Rachel Leibman

*Montclair, New Jersey*

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For my collages, I use small pieces of paper as my palette and “paint” colorful, detailed and often elaborate pictures. They are called “illuminations” and are composed of images of ancient manuscripts. For each collage, I consciously used manuscripts of all different religions, languages and styles. The imagery within the collages is also cross-cultural, depicting items such as hybrid creatures, planetary objects and elaborate intersecting lines that are typical symbols for almost every religion. Although my illuminations employ a classic religious mode of storytelling, I do not think of them as being religious per se. Rather, for me, this cultural amalgamation represents a characteristically modern and American view: the freedom to embrace the meaningful and reject the stifling, regardless of the randomness of birth.



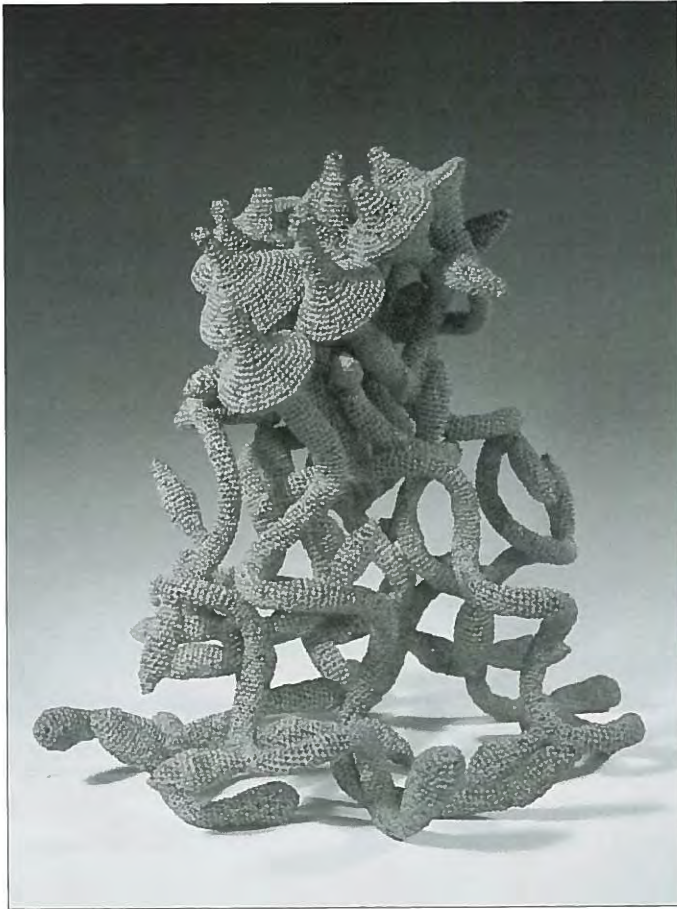
*Illumination #6, 2004*

Collage composed of ancient manuscript  
images on masonite  
18" x 24"



*Illumination #7, 2005*

Collage composed of ancient manuscript  
images on masonite  
24" x 36"



*Sole Invicta*, 2006  
Crochet  
14" x 11" x 11"

**Donna L. Lish**  
*Clinton, New Jersey*

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Form is the heart of my exploration. *Sole Invicta* is the crochet impression of tunnels and chambers constructed by ants for survival. I was smitten by the structural ingenuity of these creatures, the dance of their work, and the inherent rhythm I glean from creating one stitch at a time.



## Kenneth C. MacBain

*Morristown, New Jersey*

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My interest in crafts began many years ago with a desire to create sculptural forms that were more relevant to the human experience. I prefer works of art that are functional, tactile and inviting, which is why I work in the crafts as a metalsmith and jeweler. To see a well-designed work of art is exciting, but to be able to touch and use it provides a more intimate experience that can prove to be more meaningful and fulfilling.

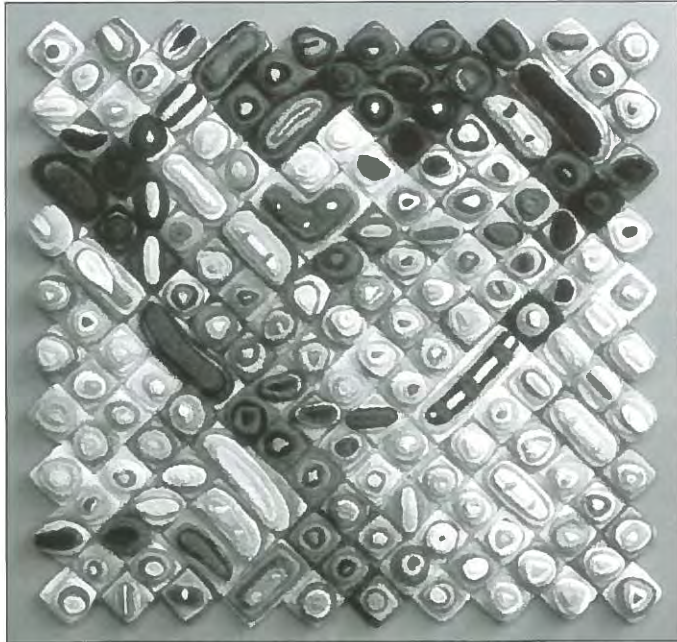
My influences often come from nature and non-Western cultures. The shield forms and wood textures evoke qualities far removed from our contemporary industrial society and provide a bit of fantasy. The materials I work with pay respect to the earth and the connection that we have to it. Charcoal, rusted steel, and textured metal speak to the evolutionary forces of nature and lets us see them in a different light.

The forms that I work with are intended to be bold and unconventional without sacrificing the functional aspects of the piece. The study of how simple geometric forms relate to each other has always intrigued me and is a strong part of my work. By combining forms in specific ways, I am able to create work that is meaningful and expressive.



*Tea and Coffee Set, 2005*  
Silver  
9" x 15 1/2" x 4"





*Chuck, Up Close, 2005*  
Merino wool  
24" x 24" x 1"

## **Susan Spencer Reckford**

*Short Hills, New Jersey*

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The colorful, complex construction of Chuck Close's paintings drew me in from the moment I first saw them. By layering pieces of fabric that I created through knitting and felting, I translated a small section of one of his paintings with the goal of achieving a Close-like illusion.

## **Diane Savona**

*Passaic, New Jersey*

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*Road Cloth: Factory Windows* was constructed mostly from clothing found on Main Street, Passaic. Digital photos of nearby walls, windows, concrete columns and a manhole cover were printed on silk, fused and hand sewn to the road cloth. Domestic and industrial findings were batiked onto the cloth before dyeing. By using these found materials, I stitch together people and place.



*Road Cloth: Factory Windows, 2006*

Salvaged textiles

35" x 62"



## **Marian Slepian**

*Bridgewater, New Jersey*

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These solid sterling candlesticks are embellished with a 'girdle' of fine silver cloisonné enamel and four gemstones. The gemstones represent the Four Matriarchs of the Old Testament, because it is women who light the Sabbath Candles to welcome the Sabbath Day.

*Sabbath Candlesticks, 2004*

Fine Silver

7" x 2"

## Peter Tischler

*Washington, New Jersey*

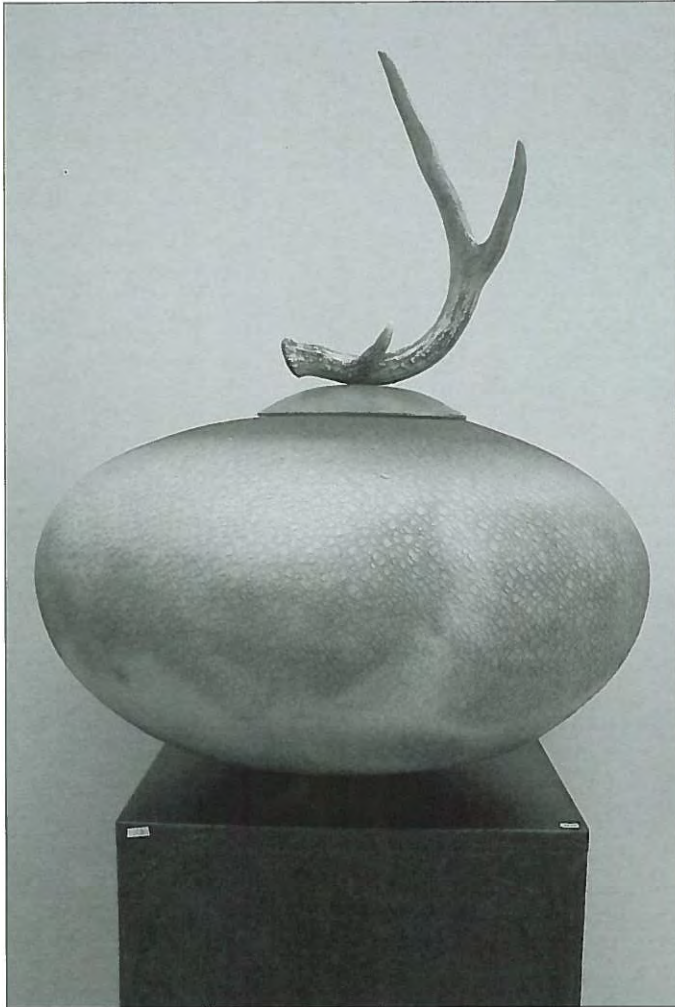
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Just as a tree sets its roots firmly in the ground, my furniture is deeply planted in the cabinetmaker's tradition of always striving for excellence. My goal is to produce contemporary furniture whose shape is derived mainly from its function, its beauty from the organic nature of the wood itself, and its construction from the most logical and efficient means of production.



*President's Chair, 2006*  
Paoauk and leopard wood  
48" x 24" x 21"





*Nature's Spirit #1, 2005*  
Raku  
17" x 22"

## **Barry Zawacki**

*Mountain Lakes, New Jersey*

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Simplicity is at the core of my philosophy and approach to painting and ceramics. I strive to maintain and express the inherent aesthetic qualities of each media. In my painting and pottery, the visual relationship of color, proportions, and form are the primary focus. I seek to create harmony and tensions through varied use of these elements. The philosophy that "less is more" encompasses innate challenges and delicate balances that can be easily destroyed through a lack of conviction to the strength of a simple visual statement.

My work in both media is very direct. Visual clutter, social innuendo, and psychological metaphor play no role in my personal interpretation of visual images or forms. My work allows itself to be open for interpretation by the viewer.

The simple beauty of color relationships and purity of form have always excited me. Through my work, I attempt to convey those perceptions.



## Checklist for the Crafts Annual

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