

The National Society of Craftsmen, New York, New York (1906-1920)

& the New York Society of Craftsmen (1920-1957):

A Craft Continuum from the Arts and Crafts Movement

to the Studio Craft Movement

Sandra Giles Jenkins

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.....	II
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	XI
INTRODUCTION	1
The Evolution of Craft: From Arts and Crafts to Studio Craft	3
MEMBERSHIP OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETY OF CRAFTSMEN	15
Philosophy of the National Society of Craftsmen	17
Society Members' Work.....	20
<i>The National Society of Craftsmen "Style"</i>	20
<i>Arthur Wesley Dow and Charles Fergus Binns</i>	21
<i>Handicraft Genres</i>	24
Metalwork	24
Textiles.....	29
Ceramics	33
Broader Applications of Craft	35
<i>Craft as Occupational Therapy</i>	35
Craft Process and the Evolution of Craft.....	39
CHRONOLOGY OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETY OF CRAFTSMEN	43
The National Society of Craftsmen and The Society of Arts and Crafts, Boston.....	46
Society Guilds	49
Location of the National Society of Craftsmen	50
Society Exhibitions.....	55
The New York Society of Craftsmen	60
<i>The New York Society of Craftsmen and the Art Center</i>	61
The New York Society of Craftsmen in the 1920s: The School of Craftsmen	63
<i>The School of Craftsmen</i>	64
School of Craftsmen Classes	66
Conservatism, Handicraft, and the School for Craftsmen	68
Modernism and the New York Society of Craftsmen.....	70
The New York Society of Craftsmen in the 1930s	74
<i>Maurice Heaton</i>	78
<i>Laurits Eichner</i>	80
The New York Society of Craftsmen in the 1940s	82
<i>Adda Husted-Andersen</i>	84
The End and the Beginning of an Era: The New York Society of Craftsmen in the mid-1950s	85
CONCLUSION	89
BIBLIOGRAPHY	91
ILLUSTRATIONS	104

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1. a) Binns throwing a pot (from a lantern slide that Binns used for teaching); b) Charles Fergus Binns, *Vase*, 1905, International Museum of Ceramic Art at Alfred. From Margaret Carney, *Charles Fergus Binns: The Father of American Studio Ceramics* (New York: Hudson Hills Press in association with the International Museum of Ceramic Art, New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University, 1998): 19 and 121.
2. Janet Payne Bowles, *Chalice*, c.1925-28, silver, gold. This piece constituted the centerpiece of her solo exhibition at the Art Center, New York, December 1929. Indianapolis Museum of Art, 68.21.2. From Barry Shifman, *The Arts and Crafts Metalwork of Janet Payne Bowles* (Indianapolis: Indianapolis Museum of Art in cooperation with Indiana University Press, 1993) 10fig.1.
3. Pieces by Waylande DeSantis Gregory. a) *Mermaid Bowl*, c.1940, collection of the New Jersey State Museum, Trenton, gift of the Friends of the New Jersey State Museum, 1988 Forbes Benefit and Museum Purchase; b) *The Airman*, c.1942, ceramic with crystal glaze, Waylande Gregory Collection. Both from Janet Kardon, editor, *Craft in the Machine Age 1920-1945* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, in association with the American Craft Museum, 1996): 170-171.
4. a) Maurice Heaton in his studio. Photographs show Heaton's process from designing an object, to applying enamel to clear glass, to slumping the glass over a mold in his glass furnace; b) Finished glass pieces by Maurice Heaton include the piece shown in process in the three photographs on the left. From Eleanor Bittermann, "Heaton's Wizardry with Glass," *Craft Horizon* 14 (May 1954): 10-14.
5. J. William Fosdick in his studio using a surgical thermo-cauterizing tool that he adapted to the practice of pyrography. From J. William Fosdick, "Burnt-Wood Decoration," *The Art Interchange* (July-August 1894): 14-16. Permission for one-time use from Kathleen M. Garvey Menendez, curator, E-Museum of Pyrographic Art, http://www.geocities.com/pyroart_emuseum/jwfosdick_1894.html. Photographed from original article by Sharon H. Garvey.
6. J. William Fosdick, *Adoration of St. Joan of Arc*, 1896, fire-etched wood relief, three panels, each: 109 3/4 x 49 1/2 in., Smithsonian American Art Museum 1910.9.8. From Smithsonian American Art Museum, "Adoration of St. Joan of Arc," <http://americanart.si.edu/collections/>.
7. Photographs showing the varying display at the second annual exhibition of the National Society of Craftsmen. From Eva Lovett, "Second Annual Exhibition of the National Society of Craftsmen (Concluded)," *International Studio* 33 (January 1908): n.p.

8. Decorative arts pieces produced by participants in the British Arts and Crafts Movement, indicative of pieces J. William Fosdick would have seen during his 1907 exploration of the British and European Arts and Crafts Movements. a) C.R. Ashbee, cutlery, silver, stained ivory, malachite, stained bone, turquoise finial, bowenite, Britain, 1900-1902, made by the Guild of Handicraft, V&A, circ. 367-1959; circ. 368-1959; circ. 357-1959; circ. 358-1959. From Mary Greensted, "Nature and the Rural Idyll," *International Arts and Crafts*, Karen Livingstone and Linda Parry, editors (London: V & A Publications, 2005): 105; b) Godfrey Blount, *The Spies*, appliqué panel of hand-woven linen on linen embroidery with silks, Britain, c. 1900, embroidered by the Haslemere Peasant Industries, V&A: T.218.1953. From Greensted, "Nature and the Rural Idyll," 106.

9. Photographs of exhibition arrangements from the second annual exhibition of the National Society of Craftsmen, December 1907. a) Arrangement of ceramics and textiles in the Long Hall of the Main Gallery of the National Arts Club. From National Arts Club records, 1898-1960, 4260: 976-1138, Smithsonian Archives of American Art; b) Display of wood carving. The oak desk and chair shown in the photograph were carved by Karl von Rydingsvärd. The oak chest at the edge of the platform, by Mrs. Angela R. Vedder. Other pieces interspersed may be antique pieces or those produced by craftworkers in Britain and Europe. Visible in the background may be photographs taken by J. William Fosdick of the work of British and European craftworkers. From Gustav Stickley, editor, "The Annual Arts and Crafts Exhibition at the National Arts Club, New York," *The Craftsman XIII*, no. 4 (January 1908): 477.

10. a) A portion of the fourth exhibition of the National Society of Craftsmen, 1910, possibly showing the "large case" of Charles Fergus Binns's pottery that stood next to pottery examples from the Hau Dynasty. From J. William Fosdick, "The Fourth Annual Exhibition of the National Society of Craftsmen," *International Studio* 42 (February 1911): lxxix; b) Inset photograph shows a jar by Charles Fergus Binns, dated 1910, similar to one visible in the case. Charles Fergus Binns, *Jar*, 1910, stoneware, glazed, International Museum of Ceramic Art at Alfred, Binns Collection (1910.1). From Margaret Carney, *Charles Fergus Binns: The Father of American Studio Ceramics* (New York: Hudson Hills Press in association with the International Museum of Ceramic Art, New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University, 1998): 135.

11. a) Ceramics display at the first exhibition of the National Society of Craftsmen by Grueby Studios, Charles Binns, Russell Crook, Miss Walker, and Newcomb College. From Eva Lovett, "The Exhibition of the National Society of Craftsmen," *International Studio* 30 (January 1907): lxxv.

12. Examples of color woodcuts by Arthur Wesley Dow. In this series, Dow demonstrates how the artist might simulate a change in seasons or in time of day through changes in color and tone. From Frederick C Moffat, *Arthur Wesley Dow*

- (1857 – 1922) (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press for the National Collection of Fine Arts, 1977): 68-69.
13. Arthur Wesley Dow, *Rain in May*, c. 1907, color woodcut on paper. Courtesy of the Ipswich Historical Society From Moffatt, *Arthur Wesley Dow (1857 – 1922)*, 74.
 14. a) A tooled leather panel from Charlotte Buske, Buske Studios. The use of the diagonal in the composition is reminiscent of Dow's compositional theories, as indicated by the sample page from Dow's book, *Composition*. Mrs. Charlotte H. Buske, carved, tooled, and illuminated leather panel with pear motif. From Fosdick, "The Fourth Annual Exhibition of the National Society of Craftsmen," lxxxii; b) Arthur Wesley Dow, "Principles of Composition III," *Composition*, 1899. From Frederick C. Moffatt, "Composition," in *Arthur Wesley Dow (1857-1922) His Art and His Influence* (New York: Spanierman Gallery, LLC, 1999): 40.
 15. Groupings of craft genres from the second annual exhibition of the National Society of Craftsmen. a) Display of glass, metal, and leather, including a wooden screen (center) by Minna D. Behr with insets of copper and yellow opalescent glass. Shown below the screen is a beaten copper fender with nail accents and copper and iron andirons by Miss M. H. Norton. Descriptions from Stickley, "The Annual Arts and Crafts Exhibition at the National Arts Club, New York," 481.; photo from Lovett, "Second Annual Exhibition of National Society of Craftsmen," xciii; b) Silverware case from the second exhibition. Photograph may include pieces from J. Charles Burdick (hammered copper fern disk, tray, and candlestick decorated with glass and metal medallions); Mary C. Knight (silver repoussé bowl, plate, and ladle decorated with a grapevine motif of blue enamel); Louise C. Anderson (silver plates and a bowl mounted with semi-precious stones); Elizabeth Mosenthal (card-boxes and desk accessories with sgraffito decoration). From Lovett, "Second Annual Exhibition of National Society of Craftsmen," xcii.
 16. Grace Hazen, *Spirit of Youth*, gold, jade, and pearls. From Haswell C. Jeffrey "The National Society of Craftsmen Random Notes," *International Studio* 58 (March 1916): xxix.
 17. Early jewelry pieces by Janet Payne Bowles. a) *Pendant*, c.1907-11, cast silver, lapis lazuli, enamel, Indianapolis Museum of Art, 68.21.52, exhibited at the Art Center, New York, December 1929. From Barry Shifman, *The Arts and Crafts Metalwork of Janet Payne Bowles*, 73fig.13; b) *Pendant with chain*, c.1910-1912, cast bronze copper wire, gold wash, silver, rose gold with yellow gold wash, cotton cord, Indianapolis Museum of Art, 68.21.56. From Shifman, *The Arts and Crafts Metalwork of Janet Payne Bowles*, 76fig.6.
 18. Georg Jensen silver displayed in the Main Gallery of the Art Center under the auspices of the New York Society of Craftsmen, November 1922. From "The Silverware of Georg Jensen," *Bulletin of the Art Center* I, no. 4 (November 1922): 58.

19. a) Floyd Nash Ackley, *Pendant*, green gold with enamel—black opal, exhibited at the Art Institute of Chicago as well as at the Art Center. From Julia S. Alexander, associate editor, *Bulletin of the Art Center* II, no. 8 (April 1924): 256; b) Helen Scheier Adelman, *Bracelet*, silver, c.1959; c) Helen Scheier Adelman, *Pendant*, carved silver and citrine quartz. b) and c) from Walker Art Center, “American Jewelry” *Design Quarterly* 45/46 (1959): 4.
20. a) Maxwell M. Chayat, *Silver necklace with semi-precious stones*, c.1955. From New York Society of Craftsmen, *50th Anniversary Exhibition* (New York: New York Society of Craftsmen, c.1955): n.p, in “Printed Material New York Society of Craftsmen,” undated, 1955-1957, box 1, Bernard and Phyllis Fischer papers, [ca.1915-1977], Smithsonian Archives of American Art, Washington, DC; b) Paul Lobel, *Horse*, brooch, sterling silver, n.d.; c) Paul Lobel, forged sterling silver necklace, c.1950s. b) and c) from Marbeth Schon, *Modernist Jewelry 1930-1960: The Wearable Art Movement* (Atglen: Schiffer Publishing Ltd., 2004): 58-59.
21. a) Mary Schimpff, *Necklace*, sterling silver with quartz crystal and cultured pearls; b) Mary Schimpff, *Ring*, gold and silver with pearls; c) Walter Rhodes, *Pin*, silver with forged sheet metal; d) Walter Rhodes, *Bracelet*, forged silver. From Walker Art Center, “American Jewelry,” *Everyday Art Quarterly* no. 7 (Spring 1948): 38-39.
22. a) Bernard Fischer, *Ducks*, c.1957; b) Margot Kempe, *Bird*, c.1957. Both from New York Society of Ceramic Arts and New York Society of Craftsmen, *Studios & Workshops Today* (New York: New York Society of Ceramic Arts and New York Society of Craftsmen, c.1957): n.p.
23. Amy Mali Hicks, *Works in the revival art of batik*, c.1907. From Gustav Stickley, editor, “The Revival of a Primitive Form of Batik,” *The Craftsman* (March 1907): 785-788.
24. Photo of the fifth exhibition of the National Society of Craftmen, Dec 1911, showing tapestry. From National Arts Club records, 1898-1960, 4260: 976-1138, Smithsonian Archives of American Art.
25. a) Opening exhibition of the Detroit Society of Arts and Crafts, Watson Street building, 1916. From Smithsonian Archives of American Art, “Detroit Society of Arts and Crafts, opening exhibition at the Watson Street building, 1916” unidentified photographer, slide: 1, Center for Creative Studies records, 1906-1982, Archives of American Art, http://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/searchimages/images/image_6546_12021.htm.; b) Gustav Stickley, editor, “The Aubusson Looms: Where American Tapestries are Designed and Woven by an American Artist, Albert Herter,” *The Craftsman* (May 1909): 226-231. <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/DLDecArts.hdv13n04>.

26. a) *Miramir*, Josef Hoffmann for the Wiener Werkstätte, 1910-1915, fabric; b) Fabric sample, Josef Hoffman, 1909. From Riley, Noël, editor, *The Elements of Design: A Practical Encyclopedia of the Decorative Arts from the Renaissance to the Present* (New York: Free Press, A Division of Simon & Schuster Inc., 2003): 349.
27. a) Lydia Bush-Brown, *Syrian Olive Tree*, wax resist-dyed Chinese silk with cotton backing, between 1919 and 1926. From Karen Davies, *At Home in Manhattan: Modern Decorative Arts, 1925 to the Depression* (New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1983): 43; b) Batik panel by Lydia Bush-Brown (other work shown: chest by Elizabeth A. Nedwill, scarf by Mrs. D. Brooks, decorated bowl by Dorothea O'Hara) in the New York Society of Craftsmen's exhibition at Mrs. Ehrich's Gallery. From *Bulletin of the Art Center III*, no. 4 (December 1924): 10.
28. a) Lydia Bush-Brown, *The Castle*, a batik wall panel displayed in the October 1923 exhibition of the New York Society of Craftsmen. From Julia S. Alexander, associate editor, *Bulletin of the Art Center II*, no. 3 (November 1923): 77; b) Lydia Bush-Brown, *New York Waterfront*, c.1928. silk, wax-resist dyed, Cooper Hewitt Museum, National Museum of Design, Smithsonian Institution, New York, gift of Lydia Bush-Brown. From Kardon, *Craft in the Machine Age* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, in association with the American Craft Museum, 1996): 195.
29. a) Woven purses produced by the Snow-Abbott Studios. Metal clasps may be by Grace Hazen and Floyd Nash Ackley. From *Bulletin of the Art Center II*, no. 10 (June 1924): 319. The author writes that the work done at the Snow-Abbott studios uses new patterns, rather than revival ones as has been the practice. They use chenille as a filler in a honeycomb pattern.
30. Ceramic display at the first exhibition of the National Society of Craftsmen, December 1906. Pieces are by Adelaide Alsop Robineau, Charles Volkmar, Miss Van Briggie, and Jane Hoagland. From Lovett, "The Exhibition of the National Society of Craftsmen," lxxii.
31. a) Paul Revere Pottery, *Painted China Bowl with Flapping Geese*, decorated by Fanny Levine for the Saturday Evening Girls, c.1914, courtesy of Jim Bidon and John van Doren. From Green, *Arthur Wesley Dow: His Art and His Influence*, 57fig.48; b) Paul Revere Pottery, *Toilet Set*, c.1911. From Gustav Stickley, editor, "The Fifth Exhibition of the National Society of Craftsmen," *The Craftsman* (February 1912): 567.
32. Decorative tiles displayed at the December 1908 exhibition of the National Society of Craftsmen. Tiles are from Charles and Leon Volkmar, Grueby, Rookwood, and Marblehead. From Gardner Teall, "The National Arts Club of New York: Its Position as a Factor in the Encouragement of the Fine Art and Why it is Worth While," *The Craftsman* (February 1909): 608.

33. a) Display of Jugtown Pottery at the New York Society of Craftsmen. From Jane Hoagland, associate editor, *Bulletin of the Art Center I*, no. 9 (April 1923): 167; b) Attributed to Benjamin Wade Owen, *Four-Handled Dragon Vase*, c.1940s, red stoneware, Chinese blue glaze, 14x5x5, Jugtown Pottery, collection Milton Bloch and Mary Karen Vellines; c) Benjamin Wade Owen, *Pair of Candlesticks*, c.1922, stoneware, cobalt-blue decoration, 11 1/4 x 5 1/3, Jugtown Pottery, gift from Mint Museum Auxiliary and Daisy Wade Bridges. b) and c) from Janet Kardon, editor, *Revivals! Diverse Traditions* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, in association with the American Craft Museum, 1994): 159-160.
34. a) Dorothy A. Larson, *Covered Jar*, c.1957; b) Mario Minewski, *Covered Jar*, c.1957; c) Vivika and Otto Heino, *Pot*, c.1957. All from New York Society of Ceramic Arts and New York Society of Craftsmen. *Studios & Workshops Today*, n.p.
35. a) Ella Winterroll, *Team*, c.1957; b) Ilse Johnson, *Piper*, c.1957; c) Jane Wasey, *Telegraph Pole*, c.1957. All from New York Society of Ceramic Arts and New York Society of Craftsmen. *Studios & Workshops Today*, n.p.
36. a) Landscape tea set and vases from the handicraft shop at Marblehead Pottery. From Gustav Stickley, editor, "The Annual Arts and Crafts Exhibition at the National Arts Club, New York," *The Craftsman* (January 1908): 479; b) Arthur E. Baggs, *Vase*, c.1907-1909, ceramic, Marblehead Pottery, private collection. From Janet Kardon, *The Ideal Home, 1900-1920: The History of Twentieth-Century American Craft* (New York: Harry N. Abrams with the American Craft Museum, 1995): 138.
37. Exhibition of the Occupational Therapy Guild of the New York Society of Craftsmen. From Anna P. Paret, associate editor, "New York Society of Craftsmen," *Bulletin of the Art Center V*, no. 9 (May 1927): 165.
38. Frank M. Wight, *Toluca*, c.1957, displayed in the "New York Society of Craftsmen's 1957 exhibition. From New York Society of Craftsmen, *Studios & Workshops Today*, n.p.
39. a) Dorothea Warren O'Hara, *Bowl*, c.1914, from the eighth exhibition of the National Society of Craftsmen, December 1914. From Maude E. Woodruff, "The National Society of Craftsmen," *International Studio* 54 (January 1915): xciii; b) Dorothea Warren O'Hara, *Vase*, c. 1920. From "An Artist in Ceramics," *Christian Science Monitor* (March 30, 1922): 18; c) Photo of Mrs. Dorothea Warren O'Hara. From Amy Bonner Written, "Great American Ceramist, Finds Work Greatest Joy," *Christian Science Monitor* (June 10, 1941): 10.
40. a) Marie Zimmermann, *Vase*, cast and patinated bronze, c.1920-1935; b) Marie Zimmermann, *Green Vase, Blue Bowl, Red Vase*, 1921, patinated metals. All from David Cole, "Marie Zimmerman: From Tiaras to Tombstones," *Metalsmith* 25, no. 1(2005): 26-35.

41. Grace Hazen and pieces of her work. From "Acute Handicraft of a Woman," *Boston Daily Globe* (December 17, 1911): SM8; b) Grace Hazen, *Necklace*, c.1914, exhibited at the eighth exhibition of the National Society of Craftsmen, December 1914. From Woodruff, "The National Society of Craftsmen," *International Studio* 54 (January 1915): xci.

42. a) View of the Exhibition Hall, eighth exhibition, National Society of Craftsmen, December 1914. From National Arts Club records, 1898-1960, 4260: 976-1138, Smithsonian Archives of American Art; b) Design by F.S. Lamb, execution by J. & R. Lamb, *John Milton Writing the Plea for the Liberty of the Press*, stained glass. From Woodruff, "The National Society of Craftsmen," xciii.

43. a) South end of the National Society of Craftsmen Exhibit Hall showing a cartoon for a stained glass window by Lamb Studios, December 1917. From National Arts Club records, 1898-1960, 4260: 123-125, Smithsonian Archives of American; b) A similar design drawing for a mural for Church of the Divine Paternity showing Christ washing apostle's feet. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, Lamb Studios Archive [LC-DIG-ppmsca-17092] (digital file from original design drawing). http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/res/550_lamb.html.

44. Eighth exhibition, National Society of Craftsmen, December 1914. From National Arts Club records, 1898-1960, 4259: 1026-1044, Smithsonian Archives of American Art.

45. Ninth exhibition, National Society of Craftsmen, December 1915. From Gustav Stickley, editor, "More Color at the Annual Exhibition this Year: High-School Children Make a Good Showing," *The Craftsman* XXIX, no. 5 (February 1916): 550.

46. a) Breakfast Room in the South Gallery, ninth exhibition, National Society of Craftsmen, December 1915. From National Arts Club records, 1898-1960, 4260: 110, Smithsonian Archives of American Art.; b) Karl von Rydingsgård, *Carved Oak Furniture*, Breakfast Room display, ninth exhibition, National Society of Craftsmen, December 1915. From Stickley, "More Color at the Annual Exhibition this Year: High-School Children Make a Good Showing," 549.

47. Students of Stuyvesant High School (recipient of the Harding Prize), *Wrought Iron Pieces*, ninth exhibition, National Society of Craftsmen, December 1915. From Stickley, "More Color at the Annual Exhibition this Year: High-School Children Make a Good Showing," 551.

48. View of the society's 1922 joint exhibition with the Art Alliance, held November 20 to December 20, 1922 in the Art Alliance Galleries, third floor, Art Center, Inc. From "News of the Craftsmen for December," *Bulletin of the Art Center* I, no.5 (December 1922): 81.

49. Front of the Art Center Building, 65-67 East Fifty-sixth Street, New York City. From Art Center Annual report for the year 1920-1921 (New York: Art Center, Inc.): cover.
50. Main floor of the Art Center building showing the Main Gallery and Gallery B (right of the stairway) and part of the “Stage Gallery” above. The Lower Stairway Gallery and the Upper Stairway Gallery can also be seen behind the stairway. Photograph by H. Shobbrock. From *Bulletin of the Art Center I*, no. 3 (October 1922): 35.
51. Floor Plan of the Art Center at 65-67 East 56th Street. From the Art Center annual report for the year 1920-1921, n.p.
52. Mold and “hand built” pottery by Charles B. Upjohn. From Julia S. Alexander, associate editor, *Bulletin of the Art Center II*, no. 5 (January 1924): 149-151.
53. Loom in the Snow-Abbott Studios, Art Center, Inc. From *Art Center Bulletin II*, no. 10 (June 1924): 320
54. Illustration of Jay Hambidge’s principles of Dynamic Symmetry made by Gustavus A. Eisen From *Bulletin of the Art Center I*, no. 7 (February 1923): 131
55. The Members Lounge, Art Center. From “The New Associate Membership of the Art Center,” *Bulletin of the Art Center I*, no. 2 (September 1922): 12.
56. Art Center Member’s Lounge, newly re-decorated in 1927. Re-decorated by Mrs. John O. Blanchard using pieces from twenty-two American manufacturers. All from “The Art Center’s New Lounge,” *Bulletin of the Art Center V*, no. 9 (May 1927): 159-163.
57. Photo of items of handicraft from a 1932 joint exhibition of the New York Society of Craftsmen, the Boston Society of Craftsmen, the Philadelphia Guild of Arts and Crafts, the Detroit Society of Arts and Crafts and craft workers from the West Coast and Southern states. Photo likely shows a pointed toile tray by Feurer and a pot from Charles Fergus Binns. From Rendell Storey, “Craftsmen Who Challenge the Machine,” *The New York Times* (October 9, 1932): SM10.
58. Logo for the New York Society of Craftsmen, designed by Mary Ware Dennett. From The Papers of Mary Ware Dennett, 1872-1947, women’s studies manuscript collections from the Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe College, microfilm no. 21, 262, files 176-178, 9:0910, Manuscript Reading Room, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

59. a) Maurice Heaton, *Plexiglas-glass panels*. a) From Tom Bayne, "Maurice Heaton's Laminated Panels," *Craft Horizons* 30 (August 1970): 25; b) From Eleanor Bittermann, "Heaton's Wizardry with Glass," *Craft Horizon* 14 (May 1954): 10-14.
60. Laurits Eichner, *Shallow Bowl #40*, c.1935. From Kardon, *Craft in the Machine Age*, 180.
61. Adda Husted-Andersen, *Necklace*. From Marbeth Schon, *Modernist Jewelry 1930-1960: The Wearable Art Movement* (Atglen: Schiffer Publishing Ltd., 2004): 93.
62. a) Bernard Fischer, *Plate*, c.1955; Walter Rhodes, *Ladle*, silver with rosewood handle, c.1955; c) Oppi Untracht, *Candy Dish*, c.1955. From *New York Society of Craftsmen, Fiftieth Annual Exhibition* (New York: New York Society of Craftsmen, 1955): n.p.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis chronicles the activities and exhibitions of the National Society of Craftsmen and its successor, the New York Society of Craftsmen, and analyzes them in relation not only to the Arts and Crafts Movement (A&CM), but also in the context of the design trends of the first half of the twentieth century and the continuum of craft practice from the A&CM to the Studio Craft Movement.

Scholars who have published work on the Arts and Crafts Movement, the evolution of American craft, the career of art educator Arthur Wesley Dow, and even the development of industrial design in the United States, have documented the existence of the National and the later New York Society of Craftsmen. Coy L. Ludwig provides basic information on the National Society of Craftsmen in *The Arts & Crafts Movement in New York State 1890s – 1920s*.¹ W. Scott Braznell notes the comparative nature of the collection of pieces in an early society exhibition in his essay, “Metalsmithing and Jewelmaking, 1900-1920” in Janet Kardon’s *The Ideal Home: The History of Twentieth-Century American Craft 1900-1920*.² All three of Janet Kardon’s publications on craft, *The Ideal Home*, *Craft in the Machine Age*, and *Revivals! Diverse Traditions*, published in conjunction with exhibitions at the American Craft Museum, contain descriptions of the work of society members.³ Marilee Boyd Meyer’s essay, “Arthur

¹ Coy L Ludwig, *Arts & Crafts Movement in New York State: 1890s – 1920s* (New York: Gallery Association of New York State, 1983).

² Janet Kardon, ed., *The Ideal Home, 1900-1920: The History of Twentieth-Century American Craft* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, in association with the American Craft Museum, 1995).

³ Janet Kardon, ed., *Revivals! Diverse Traditions: The History of Twentieth Century American Craft 1920-1945* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, in association with the American Craft Museum, 1994) and Janet Kardon, ed., *Craft in the Machine Age: The History of Twentieth-Century American Craft 1920-1945* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, in association with the American Craft Museum, 1996).

Wesley Dow and His Influence on Arts and Crafts,” in *Arthur Wesley Dow: His Art and His Influence*, provides rich information on those many members of the National Society of Craftsmen who studied under Arthur Wesley Dow, a founding member of the society.⁴ Finally, Jeffrey Meikle references the later New York Society of Craftsmen and its effect on the state-of-the-art of design in the late 1920s and early 1930s in *Twentieth Century Limited: Industrial Design in America, 1925-1939*.⁵

Those works confirm the National Society of Craftsmen’s participation in the design movements of the years directly following the turn of the century, and they show that its membership included individuals whose careers played pivotal roles in the artistic and handicraft movements of that period. However, this thesis chronicles for the first time the history of the National Society of Craftsmen, and represents the first attempt to place this society into the broader context of the evolution of American craft from the Arts and Crafts Movement to the Studio Craft Movement. That evolution is not a description of disparate movements with definitive historical dates and philosophical boundaries, but a story of the seamless development of craft knowledge and process, passed through time by individuals, educational institutions, and, in this case, by an arts and crafts society where those entities came together. Throughout the existence of the National Society of Craftsmen, its members maintained a determination to provide educational opportunities for craftspeople, a desire to explore the processes of craft creation, and a belief in the intrinsic value of works of handicraft.

⁴ Nancy E Green, et al., *Arthur Wesley Dow (1857-1922) His Art and His Influence* (New York: Spanierman Gallery, LLC, 1999).

⁵ Jeffrey L Meikle, *Twentieth Century Limited* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1979).

The Evolution of Craft: From Arts and Crafts to Studio Craft

The Arts and Crafts Movement began first in Britain in the 1880s as an artistic, social, and philosophical movement that developed in reaction to increasing industrialization and its negative effects on standards of product design and production, on the workforce, and on society as a whole. The movement took its direction from writer and philosopher John Ruskin, and from William Morris, a decorative arts designer and manufacturer, and eventual political activist. Both sought to return the dignity and fulfillment in work increasingly denied the individual industrial worker, who merely produced work designed by someone else.

John Ruskin's mid-nineteenth-century book *The Stones of Venice* sang the praises of the rough, hand-wrought character of Venetian Gothic architecture; the nobility of the honest, hardworking medieval craftsmen who created it; and as follows, the value of a society where both existed. Ruskin's book became a guide for William Morris and his followers in the British Arts and Crafts Movement. A&CM practitioners applied Ruskinian philosophies to the production of decorative arts pieces, and, at times, even conjured a vision of an entire society renewed by the revival of handicraft and a return to a pre-industrial, rural lifestyle.⁶

A&CM craftspeople created decorative arts pieces that they believed to be in the spirit of the medieval craftsman—entirely or partially hand-wrought, often inspired by Gothic or medieval objects and design motifs. In truth, however, A&CM practitioners looked to myriad design sources for inspiration. Objects produced under the auspices of

⁶ Alan Crawford, "The Arts and Crafts Movement: A Sketch," *Hammer and Hand: The Arts and Crafts Movement in England* (Birmingham: Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, 1984): 5-26.

the A&CM often shared design characteristics with those produced by participants in previous, concurrent, and overlapping movements, such as Aestheticism and *L'Art Nouveau*. In the United States, the A&CM found commonalities with Colonial Revivalism. Those two movements shared a nostalgia for past values and lifestyles, as well as a quest to revive and celebrate pre-industrial means of object production, that is “craft” or “handicraft.”

A&CM designers and craftspeople also built on the dictates of the mid-century design reform movement. Mid-nineteenth-century British design reformers had desired to improve the standards of British manufacturing by instituting design guidelines and standards that could be taught to cadres of young designers for industry. Such concerns were not necessarily shared by members of the A&CM. However, A&CM followers did share reformers’ beliefs that even utilitarian objects should be well-designed, with an emphasis on function rather than superfluous surface treatment, and that objects could be designed in such a way as to bring art and beauty into everyday life.⁷

To many followers of the A&CM, the creation of beautiful objects held meaning beyond mere object design. Members of the movement viewed the infusing of beauty into everyday life as a bifurcated path to social reform. A&CM followers believed that engaging in the production of beautiful objects could provide spiritual benefit to the producer, as well as a means of income, if the producer was among the less fortunate. Followers of the A&CM also believed that everyone, including those of modest means, should have the opportunity to own objects as beautiful as those owned by the wealthy. A&CM followers sought to elevate and enrich the lives of those less fortunate, to

⁷ Karen Livingstone and Linda Parry, eds., *International Arts and Crafts* (London: V&A Publications, 2006): 40-43.

providing a means of income to them, and to surround them with art and beauty, thereby moving all toward a utopian, egalitarian society.

Such desire for egalitarianism extended to the status of the objects themselves. Leaders of the Arts and Crafts Movement joined design reformers in arguing for a “Unity of Art,” which would break down the hierarchy imposed on the arts in late-Victorian Britain. Under those strictures, all “arts” were ranked according to their perceived artistic and societal value with the fine arts at the top, architecture in the middle, and the decorative arts at the bottom.”⁸

The Arts and Crafts Movement and its partner movements of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries placed emphasis on the decorative arts object: its design, its method of construction, its status alongside other creative products, and its intrinsic value to both maker and owner.⁹ But rather than bringing clarity to discussions of such objects, as well as to their production, that emphasis brought a proliferation of terms used to define the objects. Essayists, reporters, even the artists themselves, used the terms “decorative arts,” “applied arts,” and “industrial arts”¹⁰ interchangeably to describe a broad spectrum of objects: architectural fittings and accessories for the home or the

⁸ Alan Crawford, “Ideas and Objects: The Arts and Crafts Movement in Britain,” *Design Issues* 13, no. 1(Spring 1997): 16.

⁹ Livingstone and Parry, *International Arts and Crafts*, 10-12.

¹⁰ In *Modern Design in the Metropolitan Museum of Art 1890-1990*, R. Craig Miller notes that the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s 1920-1921 exhibition marked the first use of the phrase “American industrial art.” Miller reiterates Lucic’s point that the term “industrial art” had a different meaning prior to World War II. Richard Bach, director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s industrial art exhibitions, sought to move the emphasis on the exhibitions to machine production. “Bach defined ‘quantity production’ as ‘the manufacture of a number of pieces at a time from a single design, or the manufacture of a number of identical pieces from time to time, but from a model or drawing returned for the purpose.’ It was not necessary that large numbers were produced or that objects be made completely by machine. What mattered was the intention of the designer that multiples be made in the most straightforward manner.” Richard Bach, *Architectural Record* (December 1923): 266, quoted in R. Craig Miller, *Modern Design in the Metropolitan Museum of Art 1890-1990* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1990): 13.

individual, which included ceramics, metalwork, glass, textiles, bookbinding and printing, and more. Such proliferation of terminology extended from the nineteenth century into the 1930s and, as the century progressed, denoted not only one-off items made by hand or machine—what we now consider craft—but mass-produced objects. The defining feature was “usefulness,” not “method of manufacture.”¹¹

Of the categories identified by those terms, craft has suffered a particularly ignoble fate. Art historians have long left the parameters of craft undefined and have relegated it to a position at the very bottom of the hierarchy of the arts. Craft has been considered the lowest subset of a broad category of decorative arts, all of which have an often-negative association with utility, the serving of food or the clothing of the body—the mundane needs and processes of everyday life.

American craft in particular has struggled for respect in the world of decorative arts. Like craft in general, it has long been associated with utility. And, historians and academicians have treated American craft as merely the by-products of the American Arts and Crafts Movement, itself, many consider, a watered down version of its British counterpart.¹² American craft has also been misidentified as solely American indigenous or folk art objects, those produced by untrained workers, under the auspices of “Colonial, Hispanic, Native American, Southern Appalachian, and African-American” revival movements.¹³

¹¹ Karen Lucic, “Seeing Through Surfaces, American Craft as Material Culture,” *Craft in the Machine Age*, 53.

¹² See Janet Kardon, “A Centenary Project: Stage One—The Home as Ideological Platform,” *The Ideal Home*, 23.

¹³ Janet Kardon, “Craft in the Machine Age: The History of Twentieth-Century American Craft 1920-1945,” *Craft in the Machine Age*, 20.

Janet Kardon, former director of the American Craft Museum, disagrees with those previously held notions of American craft. In conjunction with three exhibitions on American craft produced by the museum in the 1990s, Kardon criticized past American A&CM exhibitions. Although they did display craft objects, they presented them solely in association with the American A&CM. Kardon's aim in the creation of the first exhibition was to present those objects in a different light, as representing the origins of an American craft movement.¹⁴

In her exhibitions, Kardon presented craft objects as evidence of a distinct American craft movement that began alongside the American Arts and Crafts Movement (which extended roughly from the turn of the century to the middle of the 1920s); endured through the interwar period, despite its emphasis on industrial production; and gained renewed strength and cohesion mid-century as the Studio Craft Movement. The craft practices of the members of the National Society of Craftsmen and its successor New York society support Kardon's theories. Many members were practicing professional and award-winning craftspeople who earned their livings by means of their craft and spent decades perfecting their skills, as did later studio craft practitioners.

In her essay, "A Centenary Project: Stage One—The Home as Ideological Platform," in the first of three publications produced by the American Craft Museum in association with its exhibitions, Janet Kardon used a series of criteria to hone the definition of craft. She wrote that function remains "an enduring voice in craft production," either as its purpose or as a deliberate denial or parody thereof. But in addition, craft objects must possess "aesthetic distinction, cultural significance,

¹⁴ Kardon, "A Centenary Project: Stage One—The Home as Ideological Platform," *The Ideal Home*, 23.

intellectual content” and “evidence of innovation.”¹⁵ And the craftsman, Kardon writes, “is generally a technical master who has received formal training through schools, workshops, or apprenticeships.”¹⁶ Here, Kardon’s definition of craft and the craft practitioner may be used to identify some elements of studio craft and those practitioners.

The museum’s first exhibition displayed craft objects for the home, many of which were produced during the American Arts and Crafts Movement. The museum’s second exhibition focused on folk art and American indigenous craft, its third on craft produced during the interwar period, between 1920 and 1945. During that period, American manufacturers and consumers began to increasingly favor products that at least appeared to be produced by machine, and that reflected the influence of European modernism—sleek surfaces and simple, geometricized shapes, inspired by the machines themselves.

But, exhibition curator Janet Kardon is quick to point out that during the interwar period, American craftspeople continued to produce objects that today we consider to be craft. Craftspeople working in the interwar period persisted in pushing the boundaries of their art, experimenting with a wealth of new materials and techniques made available through technological advances. And, Kardon explains, artist-craftspeople produced one-of-a-kind objects that were not appreciated at the time because of manufacturers and society’s emphasis on industrial design:

Much of what was then called design or industrial art would be called craft today, since the objects were unique, displayed a reverence for natural or exotic materials, and evidenced technical prowess. Even ‘modern-looking’ metal objects with reduced industrial forms that appear to have been manufactured were

¹⁵ Ibid., 25.

¹⁶ Ibid., 26.

actually handmade, and unique. Too, works intended for factory production were produced in such small quantities that they could be defined more appropriately as limited studio production.¹⁷

There, Kardon clarifies the use of the terms “design” and “industrial art” and explains that much of what has been identified by those terms was actually craft.

Kardon’s point reinforces the argument that the history of American craft after the turn of the century is not comprised of disparate movements, but is a continuous narrative that extends through the twentieth century (and now beyond).

In the collection of essays that comprise *Craft in the Machine Age*, produced in conjunction with the American Craft Museum’s third exhibition, Janet Kardon and her fellow essayists trace the development of decorative arts—and handicraft—production during the interwar period. They describe the relationship between one-off objects made by hand, sometimes produced in a “studio” setting; handmade objects created as prototypes for industry, which may or may not have ever been serially or mass-produced in an industrial setting; and mass-produced objects.

Through chapters focused on particular craft genres—metal, glass, textiles, wood, ceramics—those essayists also describe the emergence during that period of models of individuals and production processes that they identify as “studio craft.” Some of those individuals were members of the National and New York craft societies. In using them as models of studio craft practice, those authors accomplish two things: they continue the problematic task of defining studio craft, which Kardon begins, and they lay the groundwork for the argument that the membership of the National and New York craft societies, which extended from the beginning to the middle of the twentieth century,

¹⁷ Kardon, “Craft in the Machine Age,” 27-28.

provides a real-life chronological link between the Arts and Crafts Movement and the mid-century Studio Craft Movement.

Heretofore, scholars have identified the Studio Craft Movement as beginning after World War II. During that period, emigrant craftspeople came to the United States from Europe. Many found work in universities that were expanding craft programs that began in the early decades of the twentieth century. There, teachers and students, some of whom were returning veterans attending school on the GI Bill, studied the nuances of both craft design and production. And what emerged from those academic programs was cadres of craftspeople who made careers of conceiving and creating works of craft, by exploring and honoring the nuances and potentialities of craft materials. In “Values, Skills, and Dreams: Crafts in America,” Barbaralee Diamonstein describes the evolution of the movement:

During the 1950s, younger craft artists embraced the “truth-to-materials” doctrine. The leaders of the movement, encouraged by university support, expanded the technical and aesthetic boundaries of each discipline. That set the stage for a broadly based group—a new craftspeople’s movement.¹⁸

Following are examples of members of the National and New York Society of Craftsmen who are identified as early studio craft practitioners. Elements of those artists’ practices characterize studio craft practice. Those individuals designed and produced works of craft that pushed the boundaries of their chosen material and, at times, began to blur the line between art and craft. In the following chapters of this thesis, I will note

¹⁸ Barbaralee Diamonstein, “Values, Skills, and Dreams: Crafts in America,” in *The White House Collection of American Crafts* by Michael W. Monroe (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc. 1995): 27.

instances when those elements are found in the work practices of other members of the National and New York craft societies.

In “Charting a New Educational Vision,” clay artist and museum curator Marcia Yockey Manhart identifies Charles Fergus Binns, a member of both the National and New York craft societies, as having laid the groundwork for the American studio pottery movement. Binns’s approach was tied to the Arts and Crafts Movement, and anticipated the Studio Craft Movement, in his emphasis on the study of the material, and his belief that the finished object should reflect the nature of the craft material from which it was made, in this case, clay.¹⁹ Binns’s publication, *The Potter’s Craft*, became the bible for next generations of studio potters, such as Adelaide Alsop Robineau and Arthur Baggs, both also members of the National Society of Craftsmen and followers of the A&CM. In her essay, Manhart identifies characteristics of studio craft as emphasizing materials in both craft process and in the finished product. (fig. 1)

Although she does not identify Janet Payne Bowles specifically as a studio craftsperson, artist and art historian Jewel Stern describes Bowles, an exhibitor in early National Society of Craftsmen exhibitions and in New York society exhibitions in the 1920s, as a “nonconformist” in both her artistic and creative approach to craft and in the craft objects that she produced.²⁰ Bowles designed and created her own pieces, “from instinct and emotion, aspiring to an expression eternal. Her forms evolved by working

¹⁹ As part of her description of Binns’s approach, Marcia Yockey Manhart uses a quote from Donhauser: “intelligent design depends largely upon a knowledge of materials.” Paul S. Donhauser, *History of American Ceramics: The Studio Potter* (Dubuque: Kendall/Hunt Publishing, 1978): 66, quoted in Marcia Yockey Manhart, “Charting a New Educational Vision,” in *Craft in the Machine Age*, 70.

²⁰ Jewel Stern, “Striking the Modern Note in Metal,” in *Craft in the Machine Age*, 123.

metal spontaneously, in what she termed as “creative flow.”²¹ Stern quotes W. Scott Braznell in describing a chalice produced by Bowles as

...an astonishing example of the daring sculptural elements Bowles brought to ritual vessels. Form is radically distorted to interact with space, light, and shadow...Elements wrap, encircle, frame, penetrate, and enclose space. Hollows become important with negative space active in the overall arrangement. Allowing no rest for the eye, the play of light and shadow—moving in, out, and over changes of shape and texture—is constantly agitated and evanescent, but nonetheless it resolves formal harmonies of balance and proportion.²²

Stern observes that Bowles’s work anticipates the expressionist sculpture of the 1940s and 1950s. In doing so, Stern draws a comparison between craft produced in the second decade of the twentieth century and that produced as much as thirty years later. And Braznell’s description of Bowles’s piece provides additional elements in the definition of studio craft—the exploration of the nuances of a particular craft material by the artist-craftsperson, and the creation of objects that blur the boundaries between craft and fine art. (fig. 2)

Maurice Heaton and Waylande Gregory, members of the New York Society of Craftsmen starting in the mid-1930s, are identified by curator and historian April Kingsley as role models for the American studio glass movement. In “The Making of Modern Art Glass,” Kingsley writes that both Heaton and Gregory established independent home-studios where they experimented with formulas that combined glass

²¹ Rena Tucker Kohlman, “Her Metalcraft Spiritual,” *International Studio* 80 (October 1924): 54-55, quoted in Stern, “Strking the Modern Note in Metal,” *Craft in the Machine Age*, 123.

²² W. Scott Braznell, “The Metalcraft and Jewelry of Janet Payne Bowles,” in *The Arts and Crafts Metalwork of Janet Payne Bowles*, by Barry Shifman (Indianapolis: Indianapolis Museum of Art in cooperation with Indiana University Press, 1993): 64, quoted in “Striking the Modern Note in Metal,” 125.

with other materials.²³ There, Kingsley adds additional elements to the studio craft definition; she describes two craftspeople who explored the potentialities of craft materials using technological advances. Although both Heaton and Gregory did produce utilitarian wares, they, like Janet Payne Bowles, also produced work that blurred the line between art and craft. (fig. 3-4)

Kingsley reinforces the argument that examples of studio craft practitioners can be found long before the movement was acknowledged, when she points out that processes described in the 1960s as representing new trends in independent glassmaking, were, in fact like those practiced by glassmakers such as Heaton and Gregory twenty and thirty years earlier. Kingsley quotes Paul Perrot, writing in *Craft Horizons* that

[c]ontemporary technology, which has made easily available pure and consistent raw materials and dependable, inexpensive sources of fuel, has for the first time permitted the craftsman to go it alone, or almost so. Furnaces can be built with standard refractories; molds and pots can be thrown from readily available clays; and the total investment need be little more than for a good pottery kiln.²⁴

Still, definitions and models of studio craft and its practitioners are legion. Studio craft practitioners most certainly focus on craft materials, their nature, and their nuances, through their processes and in their finished products. And in doing so, they blur the boundaries between craft and fine art. Because of the experimental nature of their work, studio craft practitioners do not work in manufactories that produce products in multiples for a broad consumer market. Rather, they often work in their own hand-built studios, testing new techniques and technologies that will yield one-of-a-kind objects.

²³ April Kingsley, "The Making of Modern Art Glass," *Craft in the Machine Age*, eds., Janet Kardon, 90-92.

²⁴ Paul Perrot, "New Directions in Glassmaking," *Craft Horizons* 20 (November-December 1960): 24, quoted in Kingsley, "The Making of Modern Art Glass," 92.

Not all members of the National and New York craft societies were studio craft practitioners. Members and exhibitors comprise all types of craft practitioners from hobbyist to professional, from laborer to designer, from independent crafts person to workshop owner and employee. Society members produced works ranging from those reflecting the influence of primitive art to pieces fabricated to appear machine-made.

Regardless of the varied identities and work practices of members of the National and New York craft societies, what emerges from a study of the history of those societies is a chronology of the evolution of American craft in the twentieth century and a set of characteristics shared by craftspeople over time. And, like a jigsaw puzzle in which the whole gradually takes shape as pieces are positioned, fit together, and repositioned to form recognizable images, through a study of the National and New York craft societies and their membership, the image of the modern studio craft practitioner begins to emerge.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETY OF CRAFTSMEN

In 1906, members of the National Arts Club, New York City, formed the National Society of Craftsmen. In doing so, they sought to create an organization that would bring together craftspeople and craft societies throughout the United States to form a more cohesive craft community, to provide training for burgeoning craftspeople, and to educate the public on the breadth and commercial value of handicraft.

Indeed, the society did seek to act as a repository of information on and for craftspeople throughout the United States. A November 1907 article in *International Studio* noted the National society's "unique undertaking" to create a comprehensive directory of American craftspeople, that would list names and addresses of craftspeople throughout the country and indicate the type of handicraft work that each person practiced.²⁵ In the introduction to the 1907-1908 directory, the society boasted that through great effort, it was providing information to professional craftspeople, hobbyists, and students that was "not obtainable elsewhere." At a cost of one dollar, the directory provided a list of societies, guilds, and commercial enterprises in twenty-three states and the District of Columbia. It listed the names and addresses of 950 craftspeople arranged first by the handicraft they practiced, then by state, then alphabetically. Craft workers hailed from thirty-six states and the District of Columbia, from as far north as Maine, as far south as Louisiana, and from the westernmost states of New Mexico and California.²⁶

²⁵ "The National Society of Craftsmen," *International Studio* (November 1906): xxii.

²⁶ National Society of Craftsmen, *A National Directory of Workers in the Artistic Crafts 1907-1908* (New York: National Society of Craftsmen, 1906): n.p.

From its 1906 launch until its 1920 reorganization into the New York Society of Craftsmen, the National society sponsored thirteen annual exhibitions, as well as lectures and classes. Participants ranged from sizeable workshops to individuals, from professionals to hobbyists. As was characteristic of participants in the A&CM in general, members of the National Society of Craftsmen included the upper class or intelligentsia, who participated in craft practices as therapy for physical or mental illness, or as a social or political statement; immigrant craftspeople, who came to the United States in search of professional opportunities and the promise of a better life that this country offered; and teachers and social activists, who saw craftwork as a means of assisting those less fortunate.²⁷

Under the auspices of the New York Society of Craftsmen, the organization existed through mid-century, still providing educational, social, and sales opportunities for its membership. Just before 1920, the society joined with other arts organizations to investigate existing educational opportunities for craftspeople, and in 1920 the society itself launched a school to train craftspeople. Shortly after, the society joined with six other applied arts organizations to form the Art Center, Inc.

Beginning in the 1920s, the society seemed to focus its mandate solely toward the promotion of objects made by hand. And, articles written about the society in the 1930s cast it as upholding the quixotic pursuit of promoting handicraft and the lingering tenets of the Arts and Crafts Movement in face of ever-growing industry.

²⁷ In his essay, "Metalsmithing and Jewelmaking, 1900-1920," W. Scott Braznell uses a similar description in characterizing the individuals who took up metalwork after the turn of the century. But Braznell's description can be expanded to include participants in the A&CM. W. Scott Braznell, "Metalsmithing and Jewelmaking, 1900-1920," *The Ideal Home*, 63.

Surviving both the Depression and two World Wars, the society remained in existence through the 1940s and into the 1950s, still sponsoring or participating in exhibitions of handicraft. In those later decades, society membership still comprised a range of craft practitioners; however, catalogues from the society's exhibitions and articles on those exhibitions include the names of craftspeople identified by craft scholars as renowned early studio craft practitioners.

Philosophy of the National Society of Craftsmen

Early members of the National Society of Craftsmen echo the idealistic philosophies of the British Arts and Crafts Movement in their respect for the medieval tradesman, the nobility of his handwork, and what they imagined to be his love for pre-industrial means of craft production. In her article, "Craftsmanship," for the August 1909 edition of the *National Arts Club Bulletin*, society member Mira Burr Edson writes:

The craftsman knows that the right kind of doing brings more than bread alone—or brings the other thing surely and bread incidentally—and this deliberate assuming of work, of the right kind, is an ideal that has not commonly prevailed hitherto in just this form. Genius works because it must express, and the toiler because he must be fed....To-day work is embraced as a means of development and self-expression, and for the work's sake.²⁸

Edson also attempts to capture the intrinsic value of handicraft and the effect that undertaking such work had on the craftsperson:

An effort has often been made to explain the charm which articles of handicraft exercise upon us, but more than this, and better, the charm is easily felt. No argument is needed in their favor, for they can speak for themselves with a more comprehensive grace. The influence of craftsmanship upon the

²⁸ Mira Burr Edson, "Craftsmanship," *National Arts Club Bulletin* no. 5 (August 1909), National Arts Club records, 1898-1960, 4260: 976-1138, Smithsonian Archives of American Art.

craftsman is equally difficult to define....But the allurements, the happy or stimulating discouragements, the renewed interest with which beauty in old and new is sought and viewed, the zest of beginning each new piece, the perplexities of queries by the way, the choices at each step, the pleasure taken when the results satisfies, the deeper inquiry into causes, when still open to criticism—all this and the zest it brings into each morning and evening can only be known to the initiated. All this puts a value upon work.²⁹

In an article for *Century Magazine*, J. William Fosdick, founding vice-president of the society, echoes the words of John Ruskin in describing the enduring quality of ancient handcraftsmanship:

The decorations which have best withstood the ravages of time, and are the most chaste and refined, have been produced with the simplest means possible—chisel, mallet, and marble; chisel and wood; modeling-tool, clay, and fire; sheet-metal and hammer.³⁰

But, like their British A&CM colleagues, Fosdick and his fellow society members did not wholly eschew the use of machinery and modern innovations. Fosdick himself used metal, rather than copper soldering tools, fueled by naphtha gas, and used a surgical thermo-cauterizing tool to etch designs into wood.³¹ (fig. 5) But he drew the line at the use of sandpaper to finish work. Instead, he again borrows liberally from John Ruskin in his favoring of the rough and irregular, and in his appreciation of the lingering evidence of the craftsman's hand on the surface of the work:

The wood-carvings and wrought-metalwork of the middle ages attract the lover of the picturesque by certain irregularities of line and angularities of curve and plane, which do no injury to the whole, yet give it a character not found in

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 4260: 976-1138.

³⁰ J. William Fosdick, "Burnt Wood in Decoration with Ancient and Modern Examples," *The Century* 52, Issue 4 (August 1896): 496.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 496.

the rounded sandpapered school of to-day. The tools of these masters were often crude, and many of these accidental accents were doubtless due to this fact. Yet these men expressed grand ideals, and their work as it stands to-day has an individuality which is largely due to this very picturesqueness.³² (fig. 6)

Charles De Kay, founder of the National Arts Club, out of which the National Society of Craftsmen was formed, shared the belief of A&CM participants and design reformers in the need for unity in art. In 1907, De Kay wrote of the newly formed society's intention to display works of craft in the best possible light. De Kay predicted that soon, works of industrial art would be exhibited in the same manner as pieces of fine art. Also, De Kay touched on another issue that would be a source of perennial debate for the National Society of Craftsmen, New York Society of Craftsmen, and craftsmen today—the tension between creating saleable work, often utilitarian objects, and creating “art,” or work expressive of the craftsman's personal aesthetic:

...the painter and sculptor are apt to so arrange matters that their commissioned work has a chance to be seen at an exhibition by the general public before it goes to the buyer. And so it will come about with objects of the industrial arts produced by masters....Exhibitions are becoming fixed dates like those for painters, sculptors, and other workmen in fine arts....The Society of Craftsmen offers to ambitious workers in the arts and crafts occasions to display objects made less for the immediate necessity of bread-winning than for the expression of personality and ideals. Its aim is to place the artisan where the painter and sculptor are, on a higher plane than that of men who struggle merely to keep the pot boiling. Its purpose is not to ignore the needs of selling work, but it thinks first of quality and purpose....Visitors to its exhibitions are not made to feel that they are at a church fair where everyone is expected to buy, but in an art atmosphere where the enjoyment of beautiful and novel things is paramount.³³

³² Ibid., 496.

³³ Charles De Kay, “The Arts and Crafts in America: Pottery as a Fine Art,” *Putnam's Magazine: A Magazine of Literature Art and Life* I, no. 4 (January 1907): 397-406.

Society Members' Work

The National Society of Craftsmen "Style"

True of the Arts and Crafts Movement in general, society members drew inspiration from myriad sources and many art, design, and philosophical movements of the period. *The Craftsman* noted the pervasive influence of the sinuous curves of *L'Art Nouveau* in the jewelry display in the society's 1908 exhibition. Unfortunately, it found the pieces derivative and wanting in creativity.³⁴ Society members embraced the exotic eclecticism of the Aesthetic Movement; the rough beauty of Gothic and Medieval wares; the celebration of primitive craft and America's past, as manifested through the Colonial Revival; as well as design motifs from indigenous craft of the Native American community. (fig. 7)

Initially, the National Society of Craftsmen looked directly to the British Arts and Crafts Movement and its participants for design inspiration. In the summer of 1907, J. William Fosdick toured France, Switzerland, and England, and returned to the society bringing photographs and examples of work from the European and British A&CM.³⁵ (fig. 8) The society's scheme for its annual exhibition of displaying those items next to handicraft objects produced by American craftspeople received high praise in Gustav Stickley's *The Craftsman*:

The Arts and Crafts Exhibition...afforded perhaps the best opportunity ever given in this country to see representative examples of the work that is being done by people who are devoting their time to one form or another of the applied arts, and to compare these with examples and representations of

³⁴ Gustav Stickley, ed., "The Annual Arts and Crafts Exhibition at the National Arts Club, New York," *The Craftsman* XIII, no. 4 (January 1908): 476.

³⁵ J. William Fosdick, "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition," *National Arts Club Bulletin* 1 (December 1907): 13.

similar work that is now being done abroad and also with some of the beautiful old things wrought by mediaeval craftsmen. The fact that this opportunity for comparison was such a prominent feature of the exhibition was perhaps the best reason for its significance to craft workers and layman alike.³⁶ (fig. 9)

As the article notes, the society also looked to medieval objects for example, and displayed its members' work alongside objects from prestigious private collections. In doing so, the society followed the lead of British and European design schools, as well as that of the Metropolitan Museum. In 1905, Henry W. Kent, assistant secretary of the museum, developed an educational division of the museum, which encouraged students and the public to investigate the museum's growing collections of objects. Kent also organized study rooms and a lecture series on applied arts topics.³⁷ From 1917 until 1940,³⁸ the museum would produce a renowned series of industrial art exhibitions, under the direction of the museum's Associate in Industrial Arts Richard Bach. National Society of Craftsmen members Grace Hazen, Robert Dulk, Amy Mali Hicks, and J & R Lamb Studios were among the participants in the museum's 1919 exhibition.³⁹

Arthur Wesley Dow and Charles Fergus Binns

National Society of Craftsmen members Charles Fergus Binns and Arthur Wesley Dow merit focus here because of the sphere of influence both men had as educators,

³⁶ Stickley, "The Annual Arts and Crafts Exhibition at the National Arts Club, New York," 475.

³⁷ Miller, *Modern Design in the Metropolitan Museum of Art 1890-1990*, 7.

³⁸ See Miller, *Modern Design in the Metropolitan Museum of Art 1890-1990*, 10-30, for a chronological account of the museum's annual industrial art exhibitions.

³⁹ The Metropolitan Museum of Art, *The Museum as a Laboratory: Exhibition of Work by Manufacturers, Designers and Craftsmen* (January 13-February 16, 1919): n.p.

as well as craftsmen. Each produced notable work themselves and influenced that of countless students—and students of students—through their long careers as teachers and craft practitioners. Each man’s work, therefore, is representative of larger bodies of work that would have been present in National Society of Craftsmen exhibitions.

Binns, like many fellow potters, looked to the East for both his methodology for creating pieces of wheel-thrown stoneware and his aesthetic of spare shapes and minimal glaze. In fact, J. William Fosdick writes that Binns’s work compared quite favorably to ancient Chinese pieces displayed in the society’s 1910 exhibition:

In the department of Pottery, the opportunity for comparative study was excellent, as a collector loaned a case filled with examples of ancient Chinese pottery of the Hau Dynasty, 202 B.C. to 220 A.D....A large case of gray, neat surfaced pottery by Charles Binns, stood well the test of juxtaposition with the Hau Dynasty pottery.⁴⁰ (fig. 10)

Binns’s minimalist work, and that of his students, would have made for interesting contrasts with pieces from ceramicists who represented noted art potteries. William H. Grueby exhibited pottery with glazes that created a rind-like texture on the surfaces of his vases. And, Newcomb Pottery’s flat decorative treatment, defined by incised lines, was more reflective of Arthur Wesley Dow’s influence.⁴¹ (fig. 11)

Dow too looked to Asian art to formulate his design ethos. Dow taught compositional tools based on Japanese principles of line, juxtaposition of light and

⁴⁰ References to the “Hau,” rather than the “Han” Dynasty may have been Fosdick’s errors or a misprint by the publication. J. William Fosdick, “American Handicrafts: The Fourth Annual Exhibition of the National Society of Craftsmen,” *Art and Progress* 2 (February 1911): 101-102.

⁴¹ In her essay, “Arthur Wesley Dow and His Influence on Arts and Crafts,” Marilee Boyd Meyer writes of Dow’s widespread influence on A&CM craft practitioners. She specifically notes the connection between Dow and Newcomb Pottery. Marilee Boyd Meyer, “Arthur Wesley Dow and His Influence on Arts and Crafts,” *Arthur Wesley Dow: His Art and His Influence* (New York: Spanierman Gallery, LLC, 1999): 58.

dark, and color, to countless students at Pratt Institute, Columbia Teacher's College, and the Ipswich Summer School. (fig. 12) And, he exhibited his own woodcut prints in society exhibitions. (fig. 13)

Dow's tools could be applied to the surface design of ceramics pieces. As noted above, ceramics pieces from Newcomb pottery evince the influence of Dow's design methodology. But, those tools could be equally well adapted to other craft genres. For the society's fourth exhibition in 1910, Charlotte Busck displayed a decorative panel of tooled leather that shows another potential application of Dow's design methodology.⁴² (fig. 14)

Dow also advocated for a study of primitive craft production. At the Ipswich Summer School, Dow's curriculum fed into the interest that Ipswich, Connecticut, like many New England towns, had in exploring and exploiting its own Colonial heritage. Dow encouraged students to draw inspiration from the scenery of the seaside community; to explore its natural resources of clays, grasses, and woods; and to attempt to exploit the natural properties of those materials in the production of their craft pieces.⁴³ In doing so, Dow presented to his cadre of students ideas that permeated the A&CM and also anticipate those embraced by studio craft practitioners half a century later.

⁴² Ibid., 52.

⁴³ See Sylvester Baxter, "Handicraft, and its Extension, at Ipswich," *Handicraft* I, no. xi (February 1903): 249-268.

Handicraft Genres

A range of handicraft genres would have been included in National Society of Craftsmen exhibitions, from bookbinding, to needlecraft, to stained glass, to furniture. The society's 1907-1908 directory lists thirty-nine different handicrafts practiced by society members.⁴⁴ (fig. 15) The array of handicrafts in society exhibitions must have dazzled those attending and made all the more difficult the task of choosing Christmas gifts from the mix. But throughout the existence of the National and New York craft societies, three craft genres—metalwork, specifically jewelry; textiles; and ceramics—emerge as dominant in reviews of the exhibitions and in the renown of their practitioners.

Metalwork

In his essay, "Metalsmithing and Jewelmaking, 1900-1920," W. Scott Braznell traces the development of the craft of metalworking and jewelry-making in the context of the American Arts and Crafts Movement. Apropos to this thesis, he describes the emergence of cadres of metal- and jewelry-smiths who worked outside the factory system, seeking "spiritual rewards in an environment in which they were responsible for the product through every stage of its development...." He writes:

At the beginning of the century, few people were both designing and fabricating metalware, enamels, or jewelry, but within the short span of a decade, individuals across the nation unified these skills in a renaissance of preindustrial craft activity....Women as well as men pursued art metalwork, and they comprised the majority of the new breed of studio jewelers and enamellists.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ In some instances the directory made distinctions between craft practices—such as that between cabinetmaking and wood carving—that might be grouped together today. National Society of Craftsmen, *A National Directory of Workers in the Artistic Crafts 1907-1908*.

⁴⁵ Braznell, "Metalsmithing and Jewelmaking, 1900-1920," 63.

Braznell traces the promotion of the practice of metalwork and the development of formal and informal educational opportunities for burgeoning metalworkers, which, as he explains, continue today:

In the movement to ally artist with artisan, a generation not only practiced these crafts but promoted their dissemination and ensured their perpetuation. Training as developed for apprentices in small shops, conducted in school classes, and advanced through exhibitions of Arts and Crafts societies and museums, laid the foundation for formal educational programs on the craft of metal and the related crafts of jewelry and enamels as they continue today.⁴⁶

Training in metalwork began to be offered by academic institutions such as Pratt Institute just after the turn of the century.⁴⁷ In the society's 1907 exhibition, at least fourteen Pratt students exhibited pieces alongside established jewelry-makers such as Boston studio jeweler Josephine Hartwell Shaw and Grace Hazen.⁴⁸

Grace Hazen had studied jewelry-making at Pratt Institute before embarking on a professional career during which she would garner considerable recognition from the National society and beyond. In 1914, Hazen won second honorable mention

⁴⁶ Ibid., 63.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 55.

⁴⁸ Josephine Hartwell Shaw is described as such by W. Scott Braznell in Braznell, "Metalsmithing and Jewelmaking, 1900-1920," 61. Shaw and Hazen are listed in the exhibition catalogue. The National Arts Club, *Arts and Crafts Exhibition* (New York: The National Arts Club in collaboration with The National Society of Craftsmen, 1907): 1-9.

for jewelry she displayed at the society's eighth annual exhibition.⁴⁹ Two years later, she won the society's highest honor, the life membership prize.⁵⁰

Jewelry-makers of the period—Hazen among them—often crafted their pieces as narratives.⁵¹ And, color became of paramount importance in jewelry pieces: craftspeople set iridescent pearls, shells, glass, and semiprecious stones in oxidized silver, gold, copper, and brass.⁵² In *International Studio*, Hazel Adler described Hazen's piece, "The Spirit of 1915," a necklace of beaten gold and black opal, with gold miniatures of men engaged in warfare alongside then-current inventions, as reflecting the timbre of the times in its mixture of "turbulence and unrest" and "rugged hopefulness."⁵³ A photograph of another Hazen piece, "Spirit of Youth," displayed at the society's ninth exhibition the previous year may hint at the nature of Hazen's award-winning piece. (fig. 16)

Among Hazen's fellow exhibitors in jewelry and other forms of metalwork was Janet Payne Bowles. Bowles's participation in early society exhibitions may have proved lucrative for her. Notations from Bowles's personal papers suggest that a piece of her cast jewelry received recognition from society president and

⁴⁹ No records exist for a 1909 exhibition. The Society held its third annual exhibition in 1908 and its fourth annual exhibition in 1910. The eighth annual exhibition was held in December 1914. The society awarded Karl von Rydingsvärd the life membership prize for woodcarving; Dorothea Warren O'Hara, first honorable mention for work in ceramics; Grace Hazen, second honorable mention for jewelry; and Robert Dulk, third honorable mention for metalwork. "Society of Craftsmen's Awards," *The New York Times* (December 9, 1914): 12.

⁵⁰ Hazel H. Adler, "The National Society of Craftsmen," *International Studio* LX, no. 240 (February 1917): cxxxix.

⁵¹ Pieces might include references to current events, allegory, myth, etc.

⁵² Braznell, "Metalsmithing and Jewelmaking, 1900-1920," 61.

⁵³ Adler, "The National Society of Craftsmen," cxxxix.

philanthropist Spencer Trask, and may have led to additional commissions from Trask.⁵⁴ (fig. 17)

An essay from the catalogue of a 1994 Indianapolis Museum exhibition of Bowles's work traces the design movements and individuals that influenced Bowles. Bowles followed the design philosophies of her fellow National Society of Craftsmen member, Arthur Wesley Dow, and was also influenced by the work of Danish silversmith Georg Jensen. Jensen would become a member of the New York Society of Craftsmen in the 1920s and would exhibit his work in a one-man show at the Art Center in 1924.⁵⁵ (fig. 18) In December 1929, the Art Center would host a show of jewelry and metalwork by Bowles herself. (fig. 2 is an example of work included in Bowles's 1929 exhibition)

Jewelry-maker Floyd Nash Ackley exhibited jewelry pieces and taught jewelry-making classes at the New York Society of Craftsmen's school in the early 1920s. (fig. 19) Ackley taught classes in his Greenwich Village studio at 139 Macdougall Street. There, he demonstrated the handwork technique of *plique à jour*, applying vitreous enamel to open compartments in metal jewelry pieces to create a stained glass effect.⁵⁶

At mid-century, the society could boast among its membership a cadre of prominent studio jewelry-smiths. During World War II, the craft of metalwork and

⁵⁴ Barry Shifman, *The Arts & Crafts Metalwork of Janet Payne Bowles*, 16 and 24n25-27 and Braznell, "The Metalcraft and Jewelry of Janet Payne Bowles," 50.

⁵⁵ Braznell, "The Metalcraft and Jewelry of Janet Payne Bowles," 61.

⁵⁶ Associate Editor Len R. Howard explains Ackley's technique in the January 1925 issue of the *Bulletin of the Art Center*. Len R. Howard, "New York Society of Craftsmen, *Bulletin of the Art Center* III, no. 5 (January 1925): 127-128; see also John Fleming and Hugh Honour, *The Penguin Dictionary of Decorative Arts* (London: Penguin Books, Ltd., 1977): 274-278.

jewelry-making all but disappeared due to the restrictions on the use of metal outside of the war effort. After the war, Greenwich Village became a haven for a burgeoning group of metal- and jewelry-smiths comprising European emigrant craftspeople; war veterans, who had trained as mechanics and metalworkers during the war; and other self-taught craftspeople, attracted by the Village's bohemian lifestyle.⁵⁷

Among the jewelry-smiths who exhibited with the society after the second World War were Maxwell Chayat, Paul Lobel, Walter Rhodes, and Mary Schimpff. In the 1950s, sculptural pieces by these independent artists evinced influences of abstract and primitive art, as well as that of atomic-age innovation. They became known as “wearable art,” thus blurring the line between craft and art. (fig. 20-21)

Figure 20b shows the brooch, *Horse*, by industrial designer and independent jewelry-smith Paul Lobel, who would serve as president of the New York Society of Craftsmen during the mid-1950s.⁵⁸ Lobel's brooch is an example of the then-current taste for figurative work of animals, which Lobel interprets through a cubistic lens. Lobel may have shown similar near-sculptural pieces in the society's mid-century exhibitions. Margot Kempe's near-abstract sculpture, *Bird*, and Bernard Fischer's

⁵⁷ For a detailed description of the re-development of the jewelrymaking profession after World War II, see W. Scott Braznell, “The Early Career of Ronald Hayes Pearson and the Post-World War II Revival of American Silversmithing and Jewelrymaking,” *Winterthur Portfolio* 34, no. 4 (Winter 1999): 185-213 and Marbeth Schon, *Form & Function: American Modernist Jewelry, 1940-1970* (Atglen: Schiffer Publishing Ltd., 2008): 15-36.

⁵⁸ Paul Lobel is listed as a member of the Board of Directors of the New York Society in its 1955 exhibition catalogue, and as president of the society in its 1957 catalogue. New York Society of Craftsmen, *50th Annual Exhibition* (New York: New York Society of Craftsmen): n.p. in “Printed Material New York Society of Craftsmen,” 1955-1957, box 1, Bernard and Phyllis Fischer papers, [ca.1915-1977], Smithsonian Archives of American Art, Washington, DC and New York Society of Ceramic Arts and New York Society of Craftsmen, *Studios & Workshops Today*, (New York: New York Society of Ceramic Arts and New York Society of Craftsmen): n.p.

Ducks evince the same influences. But Kempe and Fischer use craft materials in a purely sculptural manner. (fig. 22)

Textiles

Textile work—woven and printed rugs, purses, shawls, and other personal and home accessories—was also well represented in National and New York craft society exhibitions. In her essay, “Boston and the Society of Arts and Crafts: Textiles,” in *Inspiring Reform: Boston’s Arts and Crafts Movement*, Nicola J. Shilliam explains that among the proliferation of textile work seen at The Society of Arts and Crafts, Boston exhibitions was the revival art of batik. Batik was unknown in the United States prior to the turn of the century, but became increasingly fashionable after the Dutch East Indies exhibited samples of Javanese batik textiles at the 1900 Paris International Exposition. Shilliam credits New York craftspeople with pioneering the use of this technique in the United States, and explains that its popularity continued into the second decade of the twentieth century, as a means of encouraging innovation in American textile design using primitive and non-Western sources.⁵⁹

Indeed, members of the National Society of Craftsmen were on the cutting edge in studying, producing, and teaching the process of wax-resist batik. In “Arthur Wesley Dow and His Influence on Arts and Crafts,” Marilee Boyd Meyer attributes the popularity of calico printing and wax-resist batik directly to Arthur Wesley Dow, citing as her source a 1907 *International Studio* article by household design and handicraft maven Mabel Tuke Priestman.⁶⁰ Priestman featured the work of Amy Mali

⁵⁹ Nicola J. Shilliam, “Boston and the Society of Arts and Crafts: Textiles,” *Inspiring Reform: Boston’s Arts and Crafts Movement* (Wellesley: Davis Museum and Cultural Center, 1997): 114-115.

⁶⁰ Meyer, “Arthur Wesley Dow and His Influence on Arts and Crafts,” 52-53.

Hicks in another article that she wrote in 1907 for *The Craftsman*. (fig. 23) Hicks, like Dow, had been a founding member of the National Society of Craftsmen. Hicks promoted the use of natural dyes in her own book, *The Craft of Hand-made Rugs*.⁶¹

Javanese batik and dyeing techniques also interested Charles Pellew, who, like Dow, taught at Columbia Teachers College. Pellew was an early member of the National Society of Craftsmen, served as president of the New York Society of Craftsmen during the 1920s, and taught classes in the New York craft society's craft school. *The Craftsman* heralded the innovation in dyeing in which Charles Pellew participated, boasting that the dyes developed through special courses in Columbia University's chemistry department could withstand all types of weather and were as good as any dyes developed by any craftsperson anywhere in the world.⁶²

Around 1909, Pellew collaborated with Albert Herter in dye and color experimentation for the production of textiles that Herter exhibited in early National society exhibitions. J. William Fosdick described Herter's display in the National Art Club's Tilden Gallery as

...a rich tonality of deep blue, with touches of orange and gold....There is little doubt, judging by these virile evidences of texture and color, that Mr. Herter, both in figure work and conventional design, will soon demonstrate that color in its fullest, richest sense may be applied to tapestries with magnificent results....⁶³

Herter may have exhibited both figural work and conventional design again, two years later, in the society's 1911 exhibition. A photograph from that exhibition

⁶¹ See Amy Mali Hicks, *The Craft of Hand-made Rugs* (New York: McBride, Nast & Company, 1914).

⁶² Stickley, "The Fifth Exhibition of the National Society of Craftsmen," 564.

⁶³ J. William Fosdick, "Third Annual Exhibition of the National Society of Craftsmen," *International Studio* (February 1909): cxxxii.

shows a tapestry of a knight battling what may be a griffin; unfortunately, descriptions of that exhibition do not provide information on that tapestry. (fig. 24) However, a second photograph from the 1916 exhibition of the Detroit Society of Arts and Crafts shows perhaps the exact same tapestry. This time the tapestry is attributed to Herter Looms.⁶⁴ (fig. 25) In designing such tapestries, Herter borrowed liberally from fifteenth-century Flemish tapestry models both in his subject matter and his use of a floral and foliage background for his battle scene and its rectilinear decorative border.

Other textile samples in the photograph from the National society's 1911 exhibition may also be by Albert Herter. The May 1909 issue of *The Craftsman* shows a sample by Herter that is similar to other textile pieces shown in the 1911 exhibition photo. The sample from the 1909 article is much different from Herter's ornate fifteenth-century-inspired tapestry. The 1909 sample—and possibly those in the 1911 photograph—are decorated with simple, repeating geometric shapes. (see again fig. 24 and 25) There, Herter's work may show the influence of textiles produced in the Viennese craft workshop, the *Wiener Werkstätte* (fig. 26). Use of such inspiration would not have been uncommon for a member of the textile industry at that time.⁶⁵

Charles Pellew also shared his knowledge of dyeing techniques with his student, Lydia Bush-Brown.⁶⁶ Before joining the New York Society of Craftsmen,

⁶⁴ Detroit Society of Arts and Crafts, opening exhibition at the Watson Street building, 1916, slide 1, Center for Creative Studies records, 1906-1982, Archives of American Art.

⁶⁵ See Mary Schoeser, "Textiles, Surface, Structure, and Serial Production," *Craft in the Machine Age*, 110 for a description of the influence of the Wiener Werkstätte on American textiles.

⁶⁶ Bush-Brown was daughter of painter Margaret and sculptor Henry Bush-Brown.

Bush-Brown studied at Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, under Salome and Ralph Helm Johonnot, a student of Arthur Wesley Dow. In the 1920s and 1930s, she worked as a decorator, while still participating in New York Society of Craftsmen exhibitions. Exhibiting in this country and abroad, Bush-Brown displayed elaborate silk murals.⁶⁷ Bush-Brown drew inspiration from her practice of rhythmic dancing,⁶⁸ and from myriad sources: her travels in the Middle East, the New York cityscape, and imaginary medieval settings. (fig. 27-28)⁶⁹ In *At Home in Manhattan*, Karen Davies observes that the “delicate, mystical symbolism” of Bush-Brown’s work in the 1920s did not become prevalent in decorative arts production until the 1930s.⁷⁰

In their experimentation with textile printing techniques, members of the National Society of Craftsmen used an innovation: the linoleum block. Czech teacher and commercial artist Vojtěch Preissig introduced the practice of using linoleum blocks in woodcut printing in classes at Columbia Teachers College in 1914, teaching on invitation from Arthur Wesley Dow. Although the linoleum block lacked the interesting texture of the wood block, it would prove practical, durable, and easy to

⁶⁷ In 1941, Bush-Brown exhibited her silk murals in an exhibition at the Corcoran Gallery of Art. The Corcoran Gallery of Art website indicates that Lydia Bush-Brown exhibited silk murals in the gallery from May 17, 1941 to June 8, 1941. Corcoran Gallery of Art, “Archives: Results for the year 1941,” Corcoran Gallery of Art, http://www.corcoran.org/exhibitions/archive_results.asp?Year=1941. Further information on this exhibition was, unfortunately, unavailable during this research and writing process due to renovation of the Corcoran facility. Jennifer Adams, manager of curatorial affairs, e-mail to the author (September 11, 2008).

⁶⁸ “Craftsman Notes,” *Bulletin of the Art Center II*, no. 4 (December 1923): 114.

⁶⁹ See Elizabeth H. Russell, “Silk Murals as Wall Decorations: Showing, the Work of Lydia Bush-Brown,” *The House Beautiful* 56 (August 1924): 109-111; Karen Davies, *At Home in Manhattan: Modern Decorative Arts, 1925 to the Depression* (New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1983): 23, 28, 86; Kardon, *The Ideal Home*, 105; Kardon, *Craft in the Machine Age*, 112-114, 195, 231; Gillian Moss, Lydia Bush-Brown entry in Wendy Kaplan, *“The Art that is Life”: The Arts & Crafts Movement in America, 1875-1920* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1987): 320-321.

⁷⁰ Karen Davies, *At Home in Manhattan: Modern Decorative Arts, 1925 to the Depression* (New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1983): 43.

use.⁷¹ Society member John Bacon, a participant in early National society exhibitions, taught the practice of wallpaper printing using hand-cut linoleum blocks in society-sponsored classes in the 1920s.⁷²

Weaving was another popular handicraft in National Society of Craftsmen exhibitions. Early exhibitions featured the work of Ralph Whitehead and weavers from the Byrdcliffe Arts and Crafts Colony in Woodstock, New York, among others. Later, weavers Beatrice Vail Abbott and Edith Snow used an Art Center studio to work and teach classes in primitive weaving techniques. Students of the Snow-Abbott Looms exhibited their own work alongside that of their instructors in New York Society of Craftsmen exhibitions.⁷³ Snow and Abbott also collaborated on at least one occasion with jewelry-makers Grace Hazen and Floyd Ackley, who made clasps for Snow-Abbott woven bags.⁷⁴ (fig. 29)

Ceramics

Ceramic work dominated the exhibitions of both the National and New York societies. The reasons for this may be manifold, but are at least in part due to the fact that, like the National Society of Craftsmen, the New York Society of Ceramic Art exhibited at the National Arts Club and would eventually be subsumed by the

⁷¹ Preissig claimed to have been the first to use the linocut method in the United States. "Color Printing for the Festival," *Teachers College Record* 17 (January 1916): 183, in *Arthur Wesley Dow (1857 – 1922)* by Frederick C. Moffat (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press for the National Collection of Fine Arts, 1977): 150n289.

⁷² Julia S. Alexander, associate ed., "New York Society of Craftsmen," *Bulletin of the Art Center* II, no. 5 (January 1924): 151.

⁷³ Julia S. Alexander, associate editor, "New York Society of Craftsmen," *Art Center Bulletin* II, no. 6 (February 1924): 192.

⁷⁴ Julia S. Alexander, "New York Society of Craftsmen," *Art Center Bulletin* II, no. 10 (June 1924): 320.

National craft society.⁷⁵ Also, New York had a productive clayworking industry built on the state's wealth of natural clay deposits.⁷⁶

A host of notable ceramicists participated in National Society of Craftsmen exhibitions. Existing catalogues and exhibition reviews read like "Who's Who's" of A&CM ceramicists. The society boasted among its exhibitors William H. Grueby, Charles and Leon Volkmar, Paul Revere Pottery, Rookwood Pottery, Van Briggle Pottery Company, Newcomb College, Walrath Pottery, Marblehead Pottery, Fulper Pottery Company, and, as noted, Charles Fergus Binns. (fig. 30-32)

Binns was joined in the society by another potter and educator, Charles Upjohn, a professor at Columbia University. At the turn of the century, Upjohn worked as an art director for art-pottery manufacturer Weller Pottery, creating Dickens Ware, a line of pottery decorated with illustrations from Charles Dickens's novels.⁷⁷ Upjohn attempted to open his own small pottery just after the turn of the century, but the pottery did not survive.⁷⁸ He would serve as president of the New York Society of Craftsmen in the 1920s, and gave demonstrations to society members on various methods of pottery production.

In the mid-1920s, the New York Society of Craftsmen hosted other demonstrations and exhibitions by independent potteries, such as Jugtown Pottery of Moore County, North Carolina. There, owners Jacques and Juliana Busbee created

⁷⁵ By 1912, the New York Society of Ceramic Art had been absorbed by the National Society of Craftsmen. Meyer, "Arthur Wesley Dow and His Influence on Arts and Crafts," 71n17.

⁷⁶ Susan R. Strong, "The Searching Flame," *Charles Fergus Binns: The Father of American Studio Ceramics* by Margaret Carney (New York: Hudson Hills Press, in association with the International Museum of Ceramic Art, New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University, 1998): 90.

⁷⁷ Anne and Len Bowers, "Mid Ohio Collectibles," <http://www.midohiocollectibles.com/History/weller.html>.

⁷⁸ Kardon, C.B. Upjohn Pottery entry in *The Ideal Home*, 266.

work inspired by Oriental forms and glazes. Their pottery was among many cottage-industry potteries that developed in North Carolina in the 1920s, transforming the area's pottery production from that of strictly utilitarian ware to pieces reflecting myriad artistic inspiration.⁷⁹ (fig. 33)

In the 1950s, potters, like other craftspeople, exhibited work that showed influences of Asian and primitive art. Some work evinced trends in the studio ceramics movement in exploring the nature of the craft materials themselves. Pieces boasted bold Asian-inspired forms and minimal glazes that enhanced the rough surface texture of the clay. And, some ceramicists followed the lead of their metalsmith colleagues, exhibiting figural work, or even whimsical combinations of figure and vessel. (fig. 34-35)

Broader Applications of Craft

Craft as Occupational Therapy

Both the National and New York craft societies included in their annual exhibitions handicraft produced by people with disabilities, disabled veterans, and people participating in occupational therapy programs. The society's attention to the needs of people with disabilities was indicative of a larger theme of social conscience and philanthropy in the Arts and Crafts Movement in Britain and the United States.

For the society's second exhibition, The Cleveland Society for Promoting the Interests of the Blind submitted textile work done by blind craftspeople. Sampler

⁷⁹ Daisy Wade Bridges, ed., "Potters of the Catawba Valley," *Journal of Studies, Ceramic Circle of Charlotte* 4 (1980): 43 and Gay Mahaffy Hertzman, *Jugtown Pottery: The Busbee Vision* (Raleigh: Museum of Art, 1984): 3, quoted in Kardon, *Revivals! Diverse Traditions*, 132.

designs in cross-stitch predominated and according to *The Craftsman*, “the standard of the work was high.”⁸⁰

Marblehead pottery exhibited consistently in National Society of Craftsmen exhibitions. Dr. Herbert J. Hall began that small pottery operation in association with a sanatorium in Marblehead, Massachusetts. Initially, sanatorium patients conducted simple tasks in pottery production as part of their therapy. But as the production expanded, Hall recruited Arthur E. Baggs, a student of Charles Fergus Binns at Alfred University. Baggs expanded Marblehead’s pottery production process.⁸¹ (fig. 36)

Hall also invited weaver Edith Snow to participate in a lecture course at the sanatorium and to observe the curative effects of craft production on sanatorium patients. In fact, Snow knew first-hand the healing power of craft; weaving had helped Snow recover from an illness. Among the patients at the sanatorium were disabled veterans from World War I. And in one summer, Snow witnessed the recuperative effect—both the physical and emotional—that craft could have on the many young men wounded in the war.⁸²

At the same time, the National Society of Craftsmen placed the focus of its annual exhibitions on metalwork, textiles, and baskets produced by wounded veterans. Some occupational therapy programs for veterans aspired to train former soldiers to the degree that they could eventually earn a living performing some aspect of craft production; others, like the program at Bloomingdale Hospital, used craft

⁸⁰ Stickley, “The Annual Arts and Crafts Exhibition at the National Arts Club, New York,” 481.

⁸¹ Paul Evans, “Context and Theory,” *Charles Fergus Binns: The Father of American Studio Ceramics*, 107 and Kardon, *The Ideal Home*, 85.

⁸² Louise Llewellyn Jarecka, “Edith Huntington Snow: Weaver, Artist, Craftsman,” *Handweaver & Craftsman* 26, no. 2 (April 1975): 10.

exercises to provide veterans with relaxation and a sense of accomplishment to aid in their recovery.⁸³

In the 1920s, Edith Snow, encouraged by members of the National Association of Occupational Therapy, began conducting weaving classes in the New York Society of Craftsmen's studio space. Snow's students included patients and their caregivers, as well as those interested in the craft of weaving as hobby or profession.⁸⁴ Among the medical professionals who supported Edith Snow's efforts were Dr. Frederick Tilney, a professor of neurology at Columbia University, and Dr. Thomas Salmon, medical director of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene.⁸⁵ Dr. Salmon had served as senior psychiatrist for the U.S. Army during World War I, and had developed a system for treating traumatized soldiers near the front. After the war, Salmon continued his work on behalf of war veterans, teaming with the American Legion to ensure disabled veterans received proper care once they returned home.⁸⁶

Society members continued their work in craft as occupational therapy well into the 1920s. The society's Occupational Therapy Guild, whose members were occupational therapists themselves, continued to "use crafts scientifically as curative agents for the many types of patients who come under their care." In April 1927, the

⁸³ "National Society Of Craftsmen Holds Annual Exhibition," *New York Times* (December 8, 1918) and "A Correction," *New York Times* (Dec 22, 1918).

⁸⁴ Jarecka, "Edith Huntington Snow: Weaver, Artist, Craftsman," 10.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁸⁶ Lucy Ozarin, M.D., "Thomas William Salmon: Psychiatry in Time of War," *Psychiatric News* 37, no. 13 (July 5, 2002): 38.

guild received corporate sponsorship for an exhibition of craft work produced by participants in eleven occupational therapy programs.⁸⁷ (fig. 37)

In 1945 and 1946, the New York craft society sponsored activities related to craft produced by veterans of the Second World War. In 1946, it teamed with the YMCA to exhibit 200 items of handicraft produced by veterans from the New York area.⁸⁸ At least one war veteran who exhibited in a post-war show continued to work as a craft practitioner. A 1956 newsletter from the New York Society of Craftsmen boasted that new member Frank M. Wight of Hayward, California, initially became interested in craft work because of the encouragement he had received from the society after returning from the war. Wight had won third prize for a piece of block-printed fabric that he submitted to one of the society's shows held at the YMCA. This recognition, the article explained, combined with another win by Wight at a subsequent show, encouraged him to continue his craft work. Wight became a regular exhibitor in art galleries, as well as an art and craft instructor at a California high school.⁸⁹ Wight also exhibited a piece of block-printed fabric, entitled, *Toluca*, in the society's 1957 show at the Cooper Union Museum. (fig. 38)

⁸⁷ Participating programs included Metropolitan, Presbyterian, Sea View, City, U.S. Veterans 81, U.S. Naval, Neurological, Orthopedic Montefiore Hospitals, Vanderbilt Clinic, and the Fraternity for Friendly Service. Anna P. Paret, associate ed., "New York Society of Craftsmen," *Bulletin of the Art Center V*, no. 6 (May 1927): 165.

⁸⁸ "Service Men Win Awards," *The New York Times* (April 21, 1945) and "GI Craft Work Shown: 200 Items Displayed in Y.M.C.A. in West 34 Street," *The New York Times* (April 29, 1946).

⁸⁹ New York Society of Craftsmen, "News from New York Society of Craftsmen," in "Printed Material New York Society of Craftsmen," 1955-1957, box 1, Bernard and Phyllis Fischer papers, [ca.1915-1977], Smithsonian Archives of American Art, Washington, DC.

Craft Process and the Evolution of Craft

Near the turn of the century, the practice of china painting moved from a Victorian factory practice to one found in small studios, classrooms, and homes, particularly in Boston's major ceramics production center. The practice became increasingly popular after the turn of the century, when "local china painters produced work for themselves and for sale, and taught classes as professionals and amateurs." The Asian motifs often used in china painting reflected Boston's larger fascination with the Orient.⁹⁰

The National Society of Craftsmen counted numerous china painters among its membership; they, like practitioners in the Boston area, included both hobbyists and professionals. At least two members of the National Society of Craftsmen made the transition from merely painting decorative designs on the surface of ceramic pieces to becoming directly involved in every aspect of ceramic production, from design to execution. The careers of these two individuals—both women—show the development of the craftsperson during the A&CM, from dilettante, hobbyist, and movement follower to professional studio craftsperson. Too, their careers support Janet Kardon's argument that professional craftspeople working during the period of the A&CM represented early members of an American craft movement, as well as followers of the A&CM.

In his essay, "Context and Theory: Binns as the Father of American Studio Ceramics," Paul Evans writes that Adelaide Alsop Robineau, a student of both Arthur Wesley Dow and Charles Fergus Binns, "personifies the transformation of the

⁹⁰ Susan J. Montgomery, "The Potter's Art in Boston: Individuality and Expression," *Inspiring Reform: Boston's Arts and Crafts Movement* (Wellesley: Davis Museum and Cultural Center, 1997): 59-64.

overglaze china decorator into that of studio potter.” And, in “Somebody’s Aunt and Nobody’s Mother: The American China Painter and Her Work, 1870-1920,” in *Winterthur Portfolio*, author Cynthia A. Brandimarte identifies Dorothea Warren O’Hara as having become “involved in all phases of production including shaping the vessel.”⁹¹ O’Hara’s craft practice, like Robineau’s, established the groundwork for the practice of studio pottery.

Dorothea O’Hara studied ceramics in New York with Adelaide Alsop Robineau and Marshall Fry of Columbia Teachers College.⁹² O’Hara taught classes herself in Silvermine, Connecticut, and in Darien Connecticut at her own Apple Tree Lane Pottery, which she established around 1924.⁹³ She participated in both National and New York Society of Craftsmen exhibitions, showing work that reflected not only the Japanese and Chinese motifs favored by other china painters, but also Middle Eastern and American Indian motifs.⁹⁴ In 1914, O’Hara won first honorable mention for work she exhibited in the National Society of Craftsmen’s eighth annual exhibition; the following year, she received the society’s life membership prize.⁹⁵ Her

⁹¹ Cynthia A. Brandimarte, “Somebody’s Aunt and Nobody’s Mother: The American China Painter and Her Work, 1870-1920,” *Winterthur Portfolio* 23, no. 4 (Winter 1988): 206.

⁹² Dorothea Warren O’Hara studied art in Kansas City, at the Herr von Debschitz School of Design in Munich, and at London’s Royal College of Art. She studied pottery production in New York with Adelaide Robineau, Franz Bischoff, and Marshall Fry. For information on Dorothea Warren O’Hara see “Vases Sent Out As Salesmen,” *Christian Science Monitor* (April 18, 1914): 12; “An Artist in Ceramics,” *Christian Science Monitor* (March 30, 1922): 18; “Dates’ Back to the Eighteenth Century” *New York Times* (August 8, 1943): RE2; Amy Bonner Written, “Mrs. Dorothea Warren O’Hara, Great American Ceramist, Finds Work Greatest Joy,” *Christian Science Monitor* (June 10, 1941): 10; Ellen Paul Denker and Bert R. Denker, Dorothea Warren O’Hara entry in Kaplan, *The Art that is Life*, 254-255.

⁹³ Julia S. Alexander, associate ed., *Fourth Annual Exhibition Number, Bulletin of the Art Center III*, no. 2 (October 1924): 42.

⁹⁴ Paul Denker and Bert R. Denker, “*The Art that is Life*,” 254-255.

⁹⁵ “Society of Craftsmen’s Awards,” *New York Times* (December 9, 1914): 12 and “Art Notes,” *New York Times* (December 19, 1915): 16

work received further recognition on a national and international scale when she won a gold medal at the 1915 Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco. Two of her vases were subsequently purchased by the National Museum in Tokyo.⁹⁶ (fig. 39) A vase by O'Hara featured in a 1922 article in *Christian Science Monitor* resembles the batik work exhibited by O'Hara's New York Society of Craftmen colleague, Lydia Bush-Brown. Both evince a sophistication and use of exotic influences that extend beyond the confines of the A&CM.⁹⁷ (see again fig. 27)

Robineau and O'Hara represent a larger body of craftspeople who took their craft practice beyond that of the upper-class hobbyist who wished to fill idle days with handwork, or to make presents for friends and relatives. Many craftspeople like Robineau and O'Hara, who were members of the National and New York craft societies, worked at their craft for years, exploring new processes and new applications for their craft practices. Their continued membership in the society evinces their enduring interest, and their own writings, as well as articles about them, provide additional proof of their commitment to craft.

The following chapter chronicles the history of the National Society of Craftsmen and its successor New York Society. This chapter describes other craftspeople, who like Robineau and O'Hara, participated in the Arts and Crafts Movement. But, like Robineau and O'Hara, these craftspeople were also members of an American craft movement, which began just after the turn of the century and evolved into the Studio Craft Movement at mid-century. Such craftspeople may have

⁹⁶ "An Artist in Ceramics," *Christian Science Monitor* (March, 30, 1922): 18 and Kaplan, "The Art that is Life," 254-255.

⁹⁷ "An Artist in Ceramics," *Christian Science Monitor* (March 30, 1922): 18.

been followers of the A&CM, but they were not just movement devotees. They were first generations of artist-craftspeople, who designed and manufactured works of craft that explored the nuances and potentialities of the materials and blurred the line between art and craft.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETY OF CRAFTSMEN

The National Society of Craftsmen was created by members of the National Arts Club (NAC), which included members of the craft community, fine artists, art critics, wealthy art patrons, and art and craft collectors. At a conference held at the National Arts Club on March 1, 1906, club members introduced the notion of forming a national craft society, believing that the American Arts and Crafts Movement had grown sufficiently in size and importance to vie for national attention. The society was officially organized at a convention held for that purpose on April 27, 1906. Among those present at the launch of the society were philanthropist Spencer Trask, then-president of the National Arts Club; artist Taber Sears; glassmaker Frederick S. Lamb, of J & R Lamb Studios; pyrographer J. William Fosdick; and ceramicist Charles Volkmar.⁹⁸

From the outset, the society sought to support itself through the sale of craft pieces from society members, membership dues,⁹⁹ fees from specialty work, and entrance fees from the exhibitions:

To maintain the highest standard, to do the greatest amount of good, the society needed the financial support, naturally of craftsmen and connoisseurs as well as their cooperation in other ways, but only in the degree that it might by itself earn all that it received. Otherwise the ethical value of the existence of the movement's right to be would have been negated. Not one cent has the Society accepted or ever will accept as a charity, for it insists on finding its support and maintenance solely in the encouragement of those who can

⁹⁸ "Red Russia Gives Us a Real Citizen," *New York Times* (April 28, 1906): 11.

⁹⁹ Professional members paid dues of five dollars per year; the associates, ten dollars. Both groups would have representation on the board of directors and among the officers of the society. "The World of Art and Artists," *New York Times* (May 20, 1906): X4.

appreciate how much a movement of the sort may be made to mean in the artistic development of America.¹⁰⁰

A notation in the society's December 1911 bulletin indicates that the society struggled to maintain solvency and urged members to pursue a variety of means to bring in funds:

It is requested that all members bestir themselves to make the coming exhibition an unprecedented success; that they interest Craftsmen to send in their work; that they bring possible buyers to the galleries; and that they offer their services, etc., and do all in their power to help the Society weather the financial storm through which it is passing.¹⁰¹

Initially, the society viewed the objects produced by its members as products of the Arts and Crafts Movement, created with the ideals set forth by John Ruskin and William Morris, who stressed the importance of art in all aspects of life. The society hoped to educate the general public on the value of such items, not only through its annual exhibitions, but through practical demonstrations and permanent craft displays in the National Arts Club.

Its constitution, published in its first national directory, proclaimed its three-part objective as 1) promoting “the creation and sale of products of the Arts and Crafts;” 2) maintaining “a permanent exhibition;” and 3) establishing “a Bureau of Information for Craftsmen and Clients.”¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ Frederick S. Lamb, quoted in Gardner Teall, “The National Arts Club of New York: Its Position as a Factor in the Encouragement of the Fine Arts, and Why it is Worth While,” *The Craftsman* Gustav Stickley, ed. XV, no. 5 (February 1909): 604.

¹⁰¹ Mira Burr Edson, ed., *Arts & Crafts Bulletin* (December 1911): 6.

¹⁰² National Society of Craftsmen, “Constitution,” *A National Directory of Workers in the Artistic Crafts 1907-1908* (New York: National Society of Craftsmen, 1906): n.p.

The society's yearbook for the year 1915 to 1916 contained the same objective. An essay by Amy Mali Hicks indicates that through the decade society members had improved their standards of workmanship and worked to educate the public on elements of good design. Hicks applauded the skill and artistry with which society members approached their crafts, and noted their efforts to promote handicraft through both sales and education. Reflecting the A&CM belief in the democratization of art, Hicks seems to purposefully describe her colleagues' work as "fine arts." Hicks also writes of the society's bold efforts to promote the "Handicraft movement." The society's dogged promotion of handicraft would be its leitmotif through mid-century and represents the seeds of the America craft movement to which Janet Kardon refers.

The first decade of the National Society of Craftsmen has been an almost pioneer struggle to advance the interests of the Handicraft movement in New York City.....The amount of success reached by the Society has come because of this sincere attitude toward craftsmanship, and because among its members are many men and women of ability who, having become successful in what are called the fine arts, have also devoted themselves to express beauty through mediums full of technical difficulty with all the skill and consecration of the artist.

Perhaps one of the most obvious results of the Society's work are seen in the commercial world around us, where the influence of design has immensely improved the commercial product....Within its wall the Society has steadily grown, and its activities, both commercial and educational, have steadily increased.¹⁰³

¹⁰³ Amy Mali Hicks, "Our First Ten Years," National Society of Craftsmen [Year book] (New York: New York Society of Craftsmen, c.1915/16): 3.

The National Society of Craftsmen and The Society of Arts and Crafts, Boston

At the National society's inception in 1906, there were a number of regional craft societies already in existence, as well as other guilds and societies of craftspeople celebrating specific craft genres. Like the National Society of Craftsmen, other organizations offered both educational and social opportunities for their membership and the public.¹⁰⁴

The National society shared its closest ties, through common membership and close proximity, with The Society of Arts and Crafts, Boston.¹⁰⁵ Both societies followed the lead of the British Arts and Crafts Movement in initially seeking to infuse beauty into all aspects of life, as well as to educate the public on standards of good design and on the value of items of handicraft.

However, as explained by essayist Beverly K. Brandt in *Inspiring Reform: Boston's Arts and Crafts Movement*, the Boston society's mandate reflected its roots in the city's Brahmin class in the forcefulness of its dictates, as well as its "conservative aesthetic policy."¹⁰⁶ It sought to "counteract the popular impatience of Law and Form, and the desire for over-ornamentation and specious originality." Echoing the prescriptive of early British design reform, the society stressed "the necessity of sobriety and restraint, of ordered arrangement, of due regard for the

¹⁰⁴ Eileen Boris, *Art and Labor* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986): 32.

¹⁰⁵ The Boston Society of Arts and Crafts maintained a salesroom in New York after the turn of the century. Members of the Boston society who exhibited their work at the New York shop may have naturally gravitated toward the National Society of Craftsmen as participants there as well.

¹⁰⁶ Beverly K. Brandt, "'All Workmen, Artists, and Lovers of Art': The Organizational Structure of the Society of Arts and Crafts, Boston," *Inspiring Reform: Boston's Arts and Crafts Movement*, 33.

relation between the form of an object and its use, and of harmony and fitness in the decoration put upon it.”¹⁰⁷

While the National society also aspired to “adopt and maintain a broad and elevated standard of artistic and technical excellence,” it does not appear to have approached that goal with the same dogmatism as did its Boston counterpart.

And, although both organizations had the objective of bringing craftspeople together to learn from each other, the National society at least expressed its aims in a more expansive manner. While the Boston society sought to “bring together Designers and Workmen into mutually helpful relations, and to encourage workmen to execute designs on their own,”¹⁰⁸ the National society reached out to individual craftspeople, emphasizing fellowship and exchange of ideas as its membership increased. It looked to craftspeople who “are working, each in some individual way, apart in villages and towns, and without the support and encouragement of cooperation.” The society offered those individuals

...the charm of the association with fellow-craftsmen, chances of learning and advancement by such companionship, and, what is invaluable to the artist, a proper appreciation of his own work by comparison with that of others.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ Beverly K. Brandt explains that the statement she quotes was most likely drafted by Charles Eliot Norton and Herbert Langford Warren. *Announcements for MDCCCXCIX, The Society of Arts and Crafts, Boston, Massachusetts*, produced by the Thomas P. Smith Printing Company on December 30, 1898 and April 2, 1899. *Scrapbook 1897-1904*, Archives of the Society of Arts and Crafts, Boston; Boston Public Library, quoted in Brandt, “‘All Workmen, Artists, and Lovers of Art’: The Organizational Structure of the Society of Arts and Crafts, Boston,” *Inspiring Reform: Boston’s Arts and Crafts Movement*, 33.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 33.

¹⁰⁹ “The National Society of Craftsmen,” *International Studio* 30 (November 1906): xxii.

In *Art and Labor*, Eileen Boris points out the folly in the Boston society's imposing of rigorous standards of taste and designs upon its members, which lead the society away from an emphasis on the craftsman and his work:

Good taste became an end in and for itself rather than the handmaiden of a higher spirituality or the guide to a more humane workplace. This orientation encouraged a focus on unique, precious, often purely decorative objects and inhibited plans to uplift industrial design.¹¹⁰

Indeed, the differences in the composition of the leadership of the two societies may have contributed to the differences in their emphases. Both societies boasted more professional members than associate members. Professional members were craft workers; associate members were arts patrons, collectors, and the like.¹¹¹ But while the National Society of Craftsmen's leadership comprised mostly craftspeople, the Boston society's leadership, a more complex structure entirely, comprised a discrete group of associate members and "masters," or those with well-established professional standing.¹¹²

At its inception, the National society elected philanthropist Spencer Trask as president; pyrographer J. William Fosdick, vice-president; businessman Philip J. Mosenthal, treasurer; and glassmaker Frederick S. Lamb, secretary. The society appointed a twelve-member board of directors comprised predominantly of craftspeople working in the various craft genres, who also participated in society

¹¹⁰ Boris, *Art and Labor*, 44.

¹¹¹ Of the national society's initial membership, approximately 112 practicing craftspeople had the status "professional member"; seventeen were "associates," arts patrons, collectors, or the like. A year later, the society had increased its rolls to 250 professional members and the 120 associates. Florence N Levy, ed., "National Society of Craftsmen, 1907-1908," *American Art Annual VI* (New York: American Art Annual, Inc., 1908): 208.

¹¹² Brandt, "All Workmen, Artists, and Lovers of Art", 34.

exhibitions.¹¹³ A number of those same craftspeople served on the jury for the National society's first exhibition. Of that fifteen-person jury, all were craftspeople.¹¹⁴

Decisions on the direction of The Society of Arts and Crafts, Boston were made by the select upper echelons of the society. And as Beverly K. Brandt explains, the small group of elected officials, a majority architects, were chosen more based on their prestige than their craft experience:

...election or appointment to either was less a reflection of expertise in the handicrafts than of professional credentials, and ironically those most involved in decision-making had least hands-on knowledge of crafts.¹¹⁵

Society Guilds

A 1924 retrospective report published by The Society of Arts and Crafts, Boston described the development within its own society of individual craft guilds in the tradition of medieval craft guilds. The society's early guilds were established to support the society's broad mandate of improving the standards of design and workmanship, to "combat the impersonality of increased size" of the Boston society, as well as to reinforce the allegiance to the society."¹¹⁶ The Boston society's guild system evolved to include a hierarchical structure within the guilds. Eventually, different guilds sported different colored smocks; master guild members wore gowns in addition to smocks. That practice was the society's homage to a "new feudalism,"

¹¹³ National Society of Craftsmen, *Arts and Crafts Exhibition* (New York: National Society of Craftsmen, November 1907): n.p.

¹¹⁴ See "National Society of Craftsmen," *International Studio* (November 1906): xxi.

¹¹⁵ Brandt, "All Workmen, Artists, and Lovers of Art," 34-35.

¹¹⁶ The Society of Arts and Crafts, Boston, "Twenty Second Annual Report 1919," 21 and Eileen Boris, *Art and Labor*, 44.

whereby the individual craftsperson would be given creative freedom, as well as a fair wage.¹¹⁷

The National Society of Craftsmen did follow the lead of the Boston Society in establishing its own individual craft guilds, which took measures to impose standards of craftsmanship and exhibition on the individual craft genres. The scant documentation that exists on those guilds does not indicate the National society took its guild structure to the same lengths as did the Boston society in developing a hierarchical system. However, documentation from the early years of the National society and later documentation from its New York successor indicate that the guilds held monthly meetings and were active in staging craft demonstrations, organizing the display of craft work, and ensuring that such work met appropriate standards of craftsmanship.¹¹⁸

Location of the National Society of Craftsmen

After its official launch in 1906, the National Society of Craftsmen established itself in rooms in the studio building of the National Arts Club's newly renovated space on East Nineteenth Street, near Fourth Avenue in New York City. The society would remain at that location until late 1920.¹¹⁹ Within the club, the society's space included

¹¹⁷ Boris, *Art and Labor*, 150-155.

¹¹⁸ The December 1923 issue of the *Bulletin of the Art Center* notes the schedule for the monthly guild meetings and lists the extant guilds and their chairs: Basketry, Miss Ethel M. Groyt; Pottery, Cecil Jones; Painting, Wilford S. Conrow; Wood carving, Robert J. Kuhn; Weaving, Miss Mary Hibbard; Jewelry Miss Elizabeth Benton; Block printing, John R. Bacon; Stained glass, Leonard Howard; Metals, William A. Bode; Bookbinding, Miss Edith Diehl; China painting, Mrs. Nina Hatfield; Design Julian W. Bowes. "Craftsman Notes," *Bulletin of the Art Center II*, no. 4 (December 1923): 114.

¹¹⁹ The January 30, 1921 edition of *The New York Times* announced that the New York Society of Craftsmen had moved into new quarters at the Art Center building on East Fifty-sixth Street. The exact

a large exhibition gallery, two connecting rooms on the second floor, and a members' sitting room and office on the third floor.

There, society members would have been surrounded by renowned artists and craftspeople who visited, worked, and even lived at the club. One can imagine the creative energy that must have permeated that Gramercy Park setting. Some artists and craftspeople no doubt labored for long hours in their studios to perfect their work; others came to encourage friends and colleagues or to bring their own work for exhibition.

One craftsperson who maintained a studio at the club was Marie Zimmermann, herself a member of the National society. In the article, *Marie Zimmermann: From Tiaras to Tombstones*, author and metalsmith David Cole surmises that the young Zimmermann must have been impressed to live and work in spaces frequented by some of the most distinguished artists of the day. However, Zimmermann too was to become a versatile craftsperson, who exhibited and commissioned works ranging from jewelry, to tableware, to architectural elements.¹²⁰

Zimmermann's body of work evinces a continued exploration of materials (different metals); forms; and surface treatments.¹²¹ Photos of her work show her versatility and scope. (fig. 40) "Always faithful to the nature of metal, Zimmermann

date of the society's departure from the National Arts Club is not known. "New Galleries for the New York Society of Craftsmen," *New York Times* (January 30, 1921).

¹²⁰ Frank B. Gilbert, "Female Cellini Shows Art Here," *News and Courier* (March 1935), quoted in David Cole, "Marie Zimmerman: From Tiaras to Tombstones," *Metalsmith* 25, no. 1(2005): 28.

¹²¹ W. Scott Braznell, Marie Zimmermann entry in Kaplan, "*The Art that is Life*," 270-271.

employed her considerable skills to coax its hidden character to the surface,” and encouraged other craftspeople to do so as well.¹²²

In her article, “Cinderella of the Metal World,” Marie Zimmermann traces the history of the use of ironwork in architectural settings. And, she urges then-current-day craftspeople working in iron to appreciate the true nature of that craft material rather than attempting to disguise its qualities through “tricks and illusions.” In articulating such “truth in materials” philosophies, Zimmermann anticipates those of the mid-twentieth-century Studio Craft Movement:

It is very important that material for this work should not be taken from its proper sphere and used by tricks and illusions for other environments. There are workers in iron today who attempt to make this metal look like wood, gold or bronze, losing the significance of ironwork. Without the correct finish the full beauty of the metal cannot be appreciated. Iron, like any other material, must be finished according to its use and purpose.¹²³

If Marie Zimmermann emerged from her studio, perhaps to take a break during her ten- to twelve-hour work days,¹²⁴ she might have encountered fellow metalsmith Grace Hazen, who also maintained a studio at the National Arts Club. There, Hazen offered jewelry-making classes to students, some of whom exhibited their work in National Society of Craftsmen exhibitions alongside that of their teacher.¹²⁵

¹²² Joan Bamberger, “‘Nature in her Most Joyous Moods...’ Metalsmith Marie Zimmerman,” *American Craft* 53 (April/May 1993): 48.

¹²³ Marie Zimmermann, “Cinderella of the Metal World,” *Arts & Decoration* 52 (May 1940): 39.

¹²⁴ In *Marie Zimmermann: From Tiaras to Tombstone*, David Cole explains that Marie Zimmermann worked ten to twelve hours a day in her studio for twenty-five years to develop her craft. Cole, “Marie Zimmermann: From Tiaras to Tombstones,” 26-35.

¹²⁵ Hazen established a studio in Gloucester (summer) and taught classes under the auspices of the Hazen Craft School. Julia S. Alexander, associate editor, *Bulletin of the Art Center* I, no. 11 (June 1923): 228 and “Grace Hazen,” *New York Times* (March 5, 1940): 27.

Like Zimmermann, Grace Hazen believed in the value of working metal by hand, even to the extent that she forged the tools that she would use to craft her jewelry pieces:

I took up this work naturally...I was always fond of working with my hands, and I always had dreams and plans in my head that I simply had to work out in metal.... I went to a blacksmith shop and forged my own tools. Then, securing some copper, I made a heavy chain with large links, and large and small medallions chased with the queen's lace....From that time on I could not leave the work alone.¹²⁶

Using her hand-wrought tools, Hazen made one-of-kind pieces that reflected her personal aesthetic and fascination with nature. Inspired by her walks in the woods and along the shores of Gloucester, Massachusetts, where she established a school, Grace Hazen would paint landscapes and seascapes using the jewelry-smith's materials of metal and gems:

I receive most inspiration in the woods and by the sea. The pine cone, the buds in Spring, the seaweed and delicate shells all waken dreams which I realize in different pieces of jewelry. I never take a stroll among the rocks without my sketch pad on which I jot down the ideas which come to me there....I use my metals and jewels just as a painter or sculptor uses his materials. I love my work, and when I get up in the morning my head is always full of ideas which demand expression.¹²⁷ (fig. 41)

Celebrated artists Constance and Maxwell Armfield also lived and worked in the National Arts Club after they emigrated from Britain to the United States in 1915. The work of Constance and Maxwell Armfield was included in a 1916 society exhibition of artists whose work was in the vanguard of theatrical design. However,

¹²⁶ "Jewelry to Express Ideas: Miss Grace Hazen Leads in Almost Empty Field," *Boston Daily Globe* (July 6, 1913): 53.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 53.

the Armfield's interest in the arts extended far beyond theatrical design and production.

While in New York, Constance Armfield pursued her interest in embroidery, studying the state-of-the-art of American embroidery production and commenting on the need for more color and vitality in American embroidery work. Armfield criticized American needleworkers for working in a Colonial Revival style, and encouraged them to be more creative in their work: "The artist in embroidery must first saturate herself with the principles of traditional decoration and then must forget it all, and proceed to evolve something with joy and energy expressing her own personality."¹²⁸ Years later, Edith Snow, director of the New York society's craft school, would echo Armfield's suggestions on the importance of personal expression in her articles on weaving methodologies.

The Armfield's eventually established their own design studio, also in Gramercy Park, where they produced decorative pieces for the home that were much sought after by fashionable New York.¹²⁹

The approaches that both Zimmermann and Hazen took to their craft, of exploring the potential of their chosen craft genre—metal—and expressing their own personal aesthetic through their craft practice, and creating often one-of-a-kind pieces, anticipate those that will later define a studio craft practice. Perhaps Zimmermann and Hazen, as well as other craftspeople who spent time in the National Arts Club, absorbed the atmosphere of verve and artistic exploration created by artists

¹²⁸ Constance Armfield, quoted in Julia C. Harris, "National Society of Craftsmen—The Work of the Armfields," *International Studio*, supplement to vol. 15 (November 1916): xxvii.

¹²⁹ Nicola Gordon Bowe, "Constance and Maxwell Armfield: An American Interlude 1915-1922," *The Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts* Vol. 14 (Autumn 1989): 20.

such as Constance and Maxwell Armfield. While no evidence exists to confirm that Grace Hazen specifically followed Constance Armfield's advice on how craftspeople should approach their craft, Hazen's own words indicate that she did infuse her work with joy and energy, and that she sought to express her own aesthetic through the pieces that she designed and manufactured, rather than solely catering to fashion or to the tastes of her clientele.¹³⁰

Society Exhibitions

In its initial exhibition forays, the National society cast a wide net, inviting all craftspeople to participate in its annual exhibitions. (Its placement of British arts and crafts objects and medieval objects alongside work from its members has been discussed previously in this thesis.) Over time, however, the society honed both the themes of its exhibitions and the manner in which objects were displayed.

Some of the genres of handicraft that predominated in society exhibitions have been discussed earlier in this thesis. Although glassmakers did not represent a large portion of the society membership, several glassmakers were prominent and long-term members of the society. John R. Bacon, a founding member of the National Society of Craftsmen, maintained an association with the society until at least 1939.¹³¹ Bacon initially exhibited what might have been early experiments in binding glass to

¹³⁰ Ibid., xxvii.

¹³¹ John R. Bacon is listed as a life member in the society's 1939 membership list. New York Society of Craftmen, *List of Members as of April, 1939* (New York: New York Society of Craftsmen, c.1939): 1, in The Papers of Mary Ware Dennett, 1872-1947, Women's studies manuscript collections from the Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe College, microfilm no. 21, 262, files 176-178, 9:00010, Manuscript Reading Room, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

other materials. Such experimentation would be undertaken later by two of Bacon's fellow New York society members, identified as early studio glass artists. Bacon called his creation "Volterano glass." Its production process, although shrouded in secrecy, involved overlaying layers of glass "with a semitransparent cement, in combination with coloring matter."¹³² Unfortunately, the details of Bacon's work remain secret. Perhaps concentrated research on John R. Bacon would yield more information on his work and whether his early experiments were in any way linked to those of his later craftsmen colleagues.¹³³

Most of the glasswork exhibited at National Society of Craftsmen exhibitions was stained glass. And of that, much was meant for ecclesiastical purposes. Prominent among its producers was Frederick Stymetz Lamb of J. & R. Lamb Studios in New York City. Members of the A&CM saw that "one of the greatest opportunities before the craftsman to-day is the service of the Christian Church through the fashion of the innumerable items that go to the furnishing of the sanctuary and that make possible the perfection of the religious ceremony."¹³⁴ The Church provided lucrative patronage for the craft community.

From its inception, the National Society of Craftsmen had displayed items meant for ecclesiastic use. But, beginning in its seventh exhibition in 1913, the society became more deliberate in displaying objects in the settings in which they might be used—ecclesiastic objects in particular.

¹³² Fosdick, "The Fourth Annual Exhibition of the National Society of Craftsmen," lxxxiii.

¹³³ In the 1930s, Maurice Heaton and Waylande DeSantis Gregory experimented with fusing glass with other materials such as cement or clay. See Kingsley, "The Making of Modern Art Glass," 90-92.

¹³⁴ Arts and Crafts Society Boston, *Exhibition of the Society of Arts and Crafts* (Boston: The Society of Arts and Crafts, Boston, February 5-26, 1907): xi, in Society of Arts and Crafts records, 1897-1960, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.

In 1915, F.S. Lamb exhibited a stained glass window designed and executed for Plymouth Church in Brooklyn. Lamb's window, which depicted John Milton writing the plea to Parliament for the liberty of the press, was one of a series of eight windows that Lamb Studios designed for the church. (fig. 42) Other windows featured scenes from "the history of Congregationalism, beginning with the efforts to induce Charles I. to grant freedom of worship."¹³⁵ A second window in the series had as its subject, *William Penn, Peace Movement, Pennsylvania*.¹³⁶

In 1917, the society devoted both ends of its gallery to exhibits with ecclesiastical themes. The focus of the exhibit at the south end of the gallery was a large cartoon for a mosaic by Lamb Studios. (fig. 43) At the north end of the gallery, the society placed Conrad Scapecchi's carved wooden and leather pieces also for ecclesiastic use.¹³⁷

During the 1920s, glass artists such as Charles Connick; Len Howard; and Katherine Lamb, the daughter of Frederick S. Lamb, exhibited samples of their work in the New York society's studio. Those artists continued to produce works for ecclesiastic purposes, as well as secular settings.

The society also created displays of objects for the home. Carefully designed and crafted objects might inspire homeowners to decorate interiors to reflect their

¹³⁵ "Decking Plymouth Church: Eight Stained Glass Windows Will Color the Staid Interior—Prominent Members of Henry Ward Beecher's Church Donate Scenes from English Congregational History," *The New York Times* (December 16, 1906).

¹³⁶ A presentation piece on this window is among the collection of decorative arts objects now held by the Brooklyn Museum. Brooklyn Museum, "William Penn, Peace Movement, Pennsylvania" Brooklyn Museum, https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/1916/Presentation_Window,_William_Penn,_Peace_Movement,_Pennsylvania?referring-q=lamb.

¹³⁷ "Art Notes. Exhibition of the National Society of Craftsmen," *The New York Times* (December 6, 1917).

individuality, as well as their discriminating taste. Pieces from textile artists Albert Herter and Amy Mali Hicks are highlighted in *International Studio*'s description of the society's December 1914 display. There, author Maude Woodruff notes the continued presence of dyed and block-printed textiles in society exhibitions:

The wall hangings and table covers were contributions of stenciled, block-printed or dyed velvets, silks and linens, and hand-woven rugs. A noticeable example was in Pompeian reds and greens, with motif of peacock feather tips.... This note was carried on a step in the Herter portieres of fancy weaves in silk manufactured from guncotton, which will wash like linen. These had a lovely luster and were double-faced in colour, to harmonize with two rooms. There was also a characteristic tapestry, and a triplex painted by Mr. Herter himself was a splendid addition to the room. The dyed and stenciled fine silks from a few leading workers showed charming results in colour, that of Amy Mali Hicks being very rich....¹³⁸ (fig. 44)

Unfortunately, *The New York Times* was not as favorably impressed with that exhibition. It found the exhibition to be disappointing—not showing the imagination or range of objects necessary to suitably furnish the fashionable New York home. Noted in particular was the lack of structural features and metalwork for the home—fireplace furnishings, mantels, doorknobs, hinges, radiator shields.¹³⁹

In December 1915, the society responded by creating displays of objects on a mantel, (fig. 45) as well as arranging a breakfast room in its south gallery. The breakfast room display included furniture by prominent society member Karl von Rydingsvärd, a society participant since its inception, and winner of the life membership prize in 1914.¹⁴⁰ (fig. 46) The society also wisely included a display of

¹³⁸ Maude E. Woodruff, "The National Society of Craftsmen," *International Studio* 54 (January 1915): xci.

¹³⁹ "Exhibition of American Handicrafts Now Open," *New York Time* (December 13, 1914): SM8.

¹⁴⁰ "Society of Craftsmen's Awards," *New York Times* (December 9, 1914): 12.

iron architectural fittings made by students from the Stuyvesant High School craft club. (fig. 47)

That same year, Albert Herter joined with a group of New York textile manufacturers, designers, and even museum officials such as Richard Bach, who sought to encourage the American textile industry to look more deliberately to non-European design sources for inspiration in textile design. As previously noted, Herter may have looked to Viennese design models for his own inspiration.

The American textile industry's access to European design sources had been interrupted because of World War I, and American designers and manufacturers now looked to other sources out of commercial interest and an increasing sense of jingoistic pride. Albert Herter was one of many craftspeople who began to call for the creation of a distinct American style. For the next twenty-five years, American decorative arts designers would look to art of primitive cultures, to the urban skyline, and to the shape and motion of modern machinery for inspiration in developing such a style.¹⁴¹

Some members of the National Society of Craftsmen did eventually embrace those new design idioms; others would cling for decades to come to European historical influences, as well as those of America's Colonial Revival.

The final exhibition hosted by the National Society of Craftsmen in 1918 focused on the work done by wounded veterans of World War I. Details of that exhibition and the society's support of craft produced by people with disabilities has been highlighted elsewhere in this thesis.

¹⁴¹ Mary Schoeser, "Textiles, Surface, Structure, and Serial Production," 110.

The New York Society of Craftsmen

In June 1920, the National Society of Craftsmen announced that it had officially changed its name to the New York Society of Craftsmen and ceded its responsibilities for the increasingly complex task of affiliating regional societies to the American Federation of Arts.¹⁴² After the National Society of Craftsmen “reorganized” and became the New York Society of Craftsmen, it initially shared quarters with the Art Alliance of America. The two societies held several joint exhibitions beginning in 1919.¹⁴³ A photo from the 1922 exhibition suggests that the joint exhibitions were modest compared to those mounted by the National society in its heyday. (fig. 48)

In the decades to come, the society struggled to achieve one of its primary goals, that of educating the public on the value of handicraft. America’s post-World War I industrial boon in the 1920s, its Great Depression at the end of that decade, and a second World War ten years later all contributed to the decline in popularity of one-of-a-kind handmade objects, and to the predominance of machine-made objects in the marketplace and in the minds of consumers. However, the society would endure all of those major events in American history. It would, at times, scramble to find locations to exhibit members’ work and even to find places to hold its meetings. But nonetheless, the society continued. And in doing so, it perpetuated the practice of handicraft production into mid-century, into a new era, when craft would be

¹⁴² “Art: Problems, Summer Exhibitions and Notes” *New York Times* (June 13, 1920).

¹⁴³ “Notes on Current Art,” *New York Times* (November 23, 1919): XX9.

“reconceived and reconstituted, and moved closer to the realm of fine arts in terms of practices, training, and exhibition venues.”¹⁴⁴

The New York Society of Craftsmen and the Art Center

In 1921, the New York Society of Craftsmen joined with six other New York-based applied arts organizations to form the Art Center. The organization joined two buildings, #65 and #67 East Fifty-Sixth Street, to create the five galleries, lounges, and studios that would comprise its clubhouse. (fig. 49-51) There, members “devoted to the applied arts and handicrafts” vowed to work together to provide educational and exhibition opportunities for their own, and to rally “all societies having the development of decorative and ornamental design at heart and that are devoted to the practical application of American Art to trade and industry.”¹⁴⁵

As noted in the previous chapter of this thesis, members of the textile industry had begun to advocate for the use of non-European design sources in textile production in the early years of World War I. As the war progressed, Americans—designers, manufacturers, and the general public—became even more acutely aware of the country’s weakness in decorative arts production as compared to Europe. And although the nation did emerge victorious from the war, with its industrial prowess unrivaled, members of the American arts community were still cowed by their European counterparts. In the years following the war, American designers and

¹⁴⁴ Lucic, “Seeing Through Surfaces: American Craft as Material Culture,” 60-61.

¹⁴⁵ Art Center Incorporated, *Art Center Annual Report 1920-1921*, n.p. The outcome of a conference of six artists organizations was the formation of the Art Centre, Inc. The New York Society of Craftsmen moved into the Art Centre’s Fifty-sixth Street location prior to January 1921. “Current News: Happenings and Comment in the Field of Architecture and the Allied Arts,” *The American Architect* (June 23, 1920) and “New Galleries for the New York Society of Craftsmen” *New York Times* (January 30, 1921).

manufacturers grappled to identify a style that would be uniquely American and that could set American products apart from those produced by European manufacturers.¹⁴⁶ In banding together under the auspices of the Art Center, those seven applied arts associations no doubt hoped to work together to bolster America's decorative arts production.

Of the societies, the American Art Alliance, whose membership included Paul Frankl, Donald Deskey, Viktor Schrekengost, Russel Wright, and Samuel Yellin, provided a meeting place for artists, manufacturers, and advertisers. The Art Directors' Club saw itself as the bridge between art and commerce. Its membership comprised art directors, designers, and producers from the publishing industry, as well as artists from the theatre and the new medium of motion pictures. The American Institute of Graphic Arts, which boasted members such as Bolton Brown, concerned itself with the issues of the graphic arts profession. At least two members of the Pictorial Photographers of America, Clarence White and Gertrude Kasebier, shared with members of the New York Society of Craftsmen a connection to Pratt Institute, Columbia University, and lasting friendship with Arthur Wesley Dow. The society itself would work to support the increasing number of individuals working in the field of photography. The Society of Illustrators aimed to advance the field of commercial art in books, magazines, and posters. Members of The Stowaways, such as Walter Dorwin Teague and "Pop" Harden, concerned themselves with topics related, broadly, to the graphic arts.

¹⁴⁶ Karen Lucic, "Seeing Through Surfaces: American Craft as Material Culture," 52-61.

The New York Society of Craftsmen in the 1920s: The School of Craftsmen

In 1921, when the New York Society of Craftsmen joined with other arts associations to form the Art Center, the society declared its purpose as encouraging

the production of works of domestic and industrial art, by hand rather than by mechanical means; it also develops the true spirit of craftsmanship, namely, the appreciation of work for its beauty rather than solely for its commercial value. This is being done by social intercourse; by exhibitions; and by founding and developing schools in the various forms of handicrafts.¹⁴⁷

As noted, the associations who formed the Art Center likely envisaged playing a lead role in altering American decorative arts production in the years directly following the First World War. Having declared that its purpose, as quoted above, was to continue to support and perpetuate handicraft production, the New York Society of Craftsmen must have believed that handicraft could somehow contribute to that effort.

From its inception, the National Society of Craftsmen had acknowledged the important role that education played in fulfilling the goals of the A&CM and in strengthening and perpetuating handicraft practice. The society had hosted lectures on craft practices. Its guilds had sponsored demonstrations of craft practices at its annual exhibitions. And, numerous society members, among them Arthur Wesley Dow,

¹⁴⁷ In addition to the seven societies listed above, the Art Center housed The Tiffany Foundation (Louis Comfort Tiffany is listed as a member of the Advisory for the Center) and the Inter-Theatre Arts Society, whose activities would eventually be reported on by the New York Society of Craftsmen. Art Center Inc., *Art Center [annual report], 1920-1921*, n.p.

Charles Fergus Binns, Charles Pellew, Amy Mali Hicks, and Dorothea Warren O'Hara, wrote articles and manuals detailing handicraft processes.¹⁴⁸

But in the years following the war, the need to educate craftspeople became an imperative. Now, society members joined with the larger arts community to devise means to train craftspeople to work in a rapidly changing economic landscape.

The School of Craftsmen

In 1919, the National Society of Craftsmen had already begun to work with other applied arts organizations, as well as American manufacturers, to explore possibilities for the development of training opportunities and schools for craftspeople. That drive to provide education for craftspeople may have, at least temporarily, been taken up by a unified movement of societies and commercial enterprises. The Architectural League appointed a committee to explore the formation of an industrial school and craft shop. The National Academy of Design appointed a committee to study industrial art training. The Municipal Art Society appointed a committee on industrial art. And, the National Society of Craftsmen appointed a committee on schools.¹⁴⁹

One result of the National society's committee on schools may have been its formation of the School of Craftsmen. In the school prospectus, director Conrad Scapecchi wrote:

¹⁴⁸ Examples include Arthur Wesley Dow, *Composition* (New York: Doubleday, Doran and Co, Inc., 1899); Charles Fergus Binns, *The Potter's Craft: A Practical Guide for the Studio and Workshop* (New York: Van Nostrand, 1910); Charles E. Pellew, *Dyes and Dyeing* (New York: Robert M. McBride & Company, 1918); Amy Mali Hicks, *The Craft of Hand-Made Rugs* (New York: McBride Nast, 1914); Dorothea Warren O'Hara, *The Art of Enameling on Porcelain* (New York City, Madison Square Press, c.1912).

¹⁴⁹ *The American Architect*, "Current News: Reconstruction of Art Study," *The American Architect* (January 4, 1919).

Though the world's war has brought sorrow and sadness to the various nations engaged, it has revealed to us many useful things of which America should take advantage. It is almost the duty of this country to prepare its own artists and craftsmen and to create artistic taste where it is not.¹⁵⁰

Scapecchi speculates that if the model was successful in New York, it could be replicated, perhaps with government sponsorship, throughout the United States:

Schools like ours will create in the near future a new form of institution. The Factory School, the ideal institute where the students of limited financial resources can obtain instruction on their vocational craft and acquire the practical knowledge while they would be self-supporting. It is a dream of the future, but I wish this country would build many Factory Schools so as to be able to meet the need of architects, decorators and manufacturers.¹⁵¹

Despite the lofty goals that Scapecchi articulated in 1920, the society's educational offerings two years later seem to have been modest at best. Although the school offered instruction in a range of craft genres—textiles, metalwork, pottery, illumination, book-binding, and photography—a 1922 bulletin described individual courses as “short courses.” They were “not only to give the technical knowledge for a fearless start to creative handwork, but to enable students already advanced along these lines a chance for individual instruction from experts.”¹⁵² Gone from that

¹⁵⁰ Conrad Scapecchi, quoted in *The American Architect* (January 14, 1920): 52.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 52.

¹⁵² Classes and teachers are described in the Art Center's monthly bulletins from October and November 1922. Mildred P. Ashley taught basketry; Charlotte Howell Busck and John R. Bacon taught batik and block printing; Eleanor Van Sweringen taught book-binding; Edmund Prentis taught illumination; Charles Pellew, whose work is discussed previously in this thesis, taught dyeing; Anne Trousdale taught lace making; and Floyd Nask Ackley taught jewelrymaking. Columbia University staff included Charles Upjohn, teaching pottery, and Clarence White, teaching photography. Evelyn L. Collins is listed as a visiting teacher. The November 1922 bulletin indicates that classes would begin in November, and that five classes would be taught at the Art Center, eight would be taught in other studios. National Society of Craftsmen, “A Little History of the Society of Craftsmen,” *Bulletin of the Art Center* I, no. 3 (October 1922): 38 and National Society of Craftsmen, “School of Craftsmen,” *Bulletin of the Art Center New York* I, no. 4 (November 1922): 61.

description is Scapecchi's notion of a model institution that could be replicated to form a national network of vocational schools.

Perhaps further study of the activities of the New York Society of Craftsmen will yield additional documentation on the school's curriculum or an explanation of why the nature of the school seems to have changed so dramatically in two years.¹⁵³

School of Craftsmen Classes

Of the classes that the school did offer from 1922 to 1931, the content and the instructional approaches seem to vary widely, and it is not always clear from bulletin descriptions if all lectures and classes took place under the auspices of the school, or if some were merely hosted by the society and perhaps open to the general public.

Charles Upjohn, the society president, taught classes on the history and varying methods of ceramics production, from coil-forming, to wheel-throwing, to molding. Of the classes described in Art Center bulletins, Upjohn's classes seem to come closest to the type of class envisioned by Conrad Scapecchi. They appear to have been primarily lecture-based, including diagrams and perhaps some practical demonstrations.¹⁵⁴

In presenting to students descriptions of a range of ceramics manufacturing methods, Upjohn would seem to have been offering instruction that could be used by craftspeople who sought to work in industry, producing either one-off items or models for serial production. (fig. 52) Other classes, such as the dyeing classes taught

¹⁵³ See Conrad Scapecchi, quoted in *The American Architect* (January 14, 1920): 52 as compared to National Society of Craftsmen, "A Little History of the Society of Craftsmen," *Bulletin of the Art Center I*, no. 3 (October 1922): 38 and National Society of Craftsmen, "School of Craftsmen," *Bulletin of the Art Center New York I*, no. 4 (November 1922): 61.

¹⁵⁴ Julia S. Alexander, associate ed. "New York Society of Craftsmen," *Bulletin of the Art Center II*, no. 5 (January 1924): 149-151.

by Charles Pellew, and weaving classes taught by Edith Snow and Beatrice Abbott, may have included more practical demonstration and hands-on experimentation in Pellew and Snow's studio spaces.¹⁵⁵ (fig. 53) Those classes may have been more focused on production of one-off items alone. As previously noted in this thesis, Snow's students included occupational therapy patients and practitioners, as well as practicing craftspeople.

Design theorist Jay Hambidge¹⁵⁶ also gave lectures under the auspices of the New York Society of Craftsmen.¹⁵⁷ Hambidge's theories do not seem to be studied widely today, but in the 1920s, they received attention from artists and craftspeople alike.

At the beginning of the decade, Jay Hambidge used his monthly magazine, *The Diagonal*, to outline his design theories based on classical Greek design.¹⁵⁸ In the

¹⁵⁵ Julia S. Alexander, associate editor, "New York Society of Craftsmen," *Art Center Bulletin* II, no. 6 (February 1924): 192.

¹⁵⁶ The Hambidge Center, Rabun Gap, Georgia, was founded by Jay Hambidge's wife, Mary, after his sudden death in 1924. George Bellows, Maxfield Parrish, Robert Henri, and William Sargent Kendall are among the artists who used Hambidge's theories in their work; Tiffany and Company based a jewelry collection on his design theory; and the Chrysler Corporation used his theories to design an automobile line. After Hambidge's death, Mary Hambidge returned to New York. There, she used her husband's design theories and her knowledge of weaving to design and weave myriad pieces including pieces for opera. In the mid-1930s, she founded the Weavers of Rabun. In 1937, she won a *Diplome Me'daille d'Or* at the *Exposition Internationale des Arts et des Techniques* in Paris. That same year, Mary opened a shop in New York City, Rabun Studios, which showcased the work of the Weavers of Rabun. Clientele included Georgia O'Keefe and Greta Garbo. In 1947, the studio was selected to weave all of the fabrics to be used on President Truman's yacht, the "Williamsburg." The center now houses a residency program from artists and includes studio space for artists. "Hambidge," <http://www.hambidge.org/Home/tabid/101/Default.aspx> and Philis Alvic, "The Weavers of Rabun," *Weavers of the Southern Highlands* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, c.2003): 96-112.

¹⁵⁷ The lecture course by Jay Hambidge is described in an Art Center bulletin as held *in addition* to the School of Craftsmen classes. "News of the Craftsmen for December," *Bulletin of the Art Center* (December 1922): 81; Jane Hoagland, associate ed., "Dynamic Symmetry," *Bulletin of the Art Center New York* I, no. 7 (February 1923): 131; Julia S. Alexander, associate ed. "New York Society of Craftsmen," *Bulletin of the Art Center New York* II, no. 5 (January 1924): 151.

¹⁵⁸ *The Diagonal* was published for Jay Hambidge by Yale University Press from November 1919 to October 1920.

1920s, Jay Hambidge's design system may have overshadowed that of Arthur Wesley Dow.¹⁵⁹ While Dow's theories strove for the achievement of a harmonious composition through the balance of the elements of line, form, and tone, Hambidge's called for the arrangement of design elements based on the exact mathematical principles of the golden mean, a system that Hambidge believed could replace the design community's "'pilfering' of historical styles."¹⁶⁰ (fig. 54)

A study of the impact of Jay Hambidge's theories on the work of the entire craft society membership is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, members of the Art Center societies, such as noted industrial designer Walter Dorwin Teague, did incorporate Hambidge's ideas into their own work.

The presentation of Hambidge's theories may represent efforts on the part of the New York craft society and the Art Center membership to break free of their reliance on historical models and employ new design theories that would enable them to design and produce objects more reflective of modernist trends toward simplicity and geometrically based design. However, members of the Art Center were slow to embrace the new.

Conservatism, Handicraft, and the School for Craftsmen

Of the seven associations that comprised the Art Center, the New York Society of Craftsmen may have been the most reactionary in its dogged promotion of hand-methods of craft production. In 1927, the school offered classes in weaving and other

¹⁵⁹ Barbara Jaffee, "Jackson Pollock's Industrial Expressionism," *Art Journal* 63, no. 4 (Winter 2004): 73.

¹⁶⁰ Jay Hambidge, "Introduction," *The Elements of Dynamic Symmetry* (New York: Brentano's, c.1926), quoted in Jeffrey L. Meikle, *Twentieth Century Limited* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1979): 45.

crafts, “Basketry, Rug-hooking, Woodcarving, Block Printing, Metal Work, Leather Work, Clay Modeling and Pottery.” All classes were taught in the Snow Looms, now under the sole directorship of Edith Huntington Snow.¹⁶¹

A 1950 article on Edith Snow in *Handweaver & Craftsman* described the myriad types of looms, from “old Colonial looms” to “modern floor looms,” which Snow used and made available to her students.¹⁶² Snow herself published articles in *The Handicrafter* detailing processes for tapestry and embroidery weaving.¹⁶³ Like Charles Upjohn’s classes, Snow’s classes may have initially been designed to teach weavers to work in industry. But, Snow seemed to have placed more emphasis on an in-depth study of the nuances of handweaving processes, inspired by historical models, and may have aligned herself more with a community of independent weavers, “who prefer to make individual compositions, for special orders, special people and special purposes.”¹⁶⁴

Given the paucity of information on the New York Society of Craftsmen’s membership and activities during the 1920s, it is not possible to gauge whether Edith Snow’s approach to craft was representative of the entire society. However, since Edith Snow was the director of the craft school that the society housed and sponsored until 1931, Snow’s approach to craft production—her emphasis on the nuances of

¹⁶¹ The bulletin also announced that Beatrice Abbott had withdrawn from Snow-Abbott Looms due to illness. Anna P. Paret, associate ed., “New York Society of Craftsmen,” *Art Center Bulletin* VI, no. 1 (October 1927): 13.

¹⁶² Jarecka, “Edith Huntington Snow, Weaver, Artist, Craftsman,” 10.

¹⁶³ See Edith Huntington Snow, “Modern Treatments of Tapestry and Embroidery Weaves,” *Handicrafter* I, no. 6 (August/September 1929): 29-36 and Edith Huntington Snow, “Variations on Embroidery Weaves,” *Handicrafter* XX: 12-15.

¹⁶⁴ Edith Huntington Snow, as quoted in Jarecka, “Edith Huntington Snow, Weaver, Artist, Craftsman,” 13.

handicraft process and her preference for one-of-a-kind work—may have at least predominated.¹⁶⁵

Although such an approach may have contributed to the perpetuation of handicraft practice in the long term, and to the appreciation of virtuosity in craft production, in the late 1920s it could have placed the society increasingly at odds with the other members of the Art Center, as well with as the decorative arts community at large. In an American arts community that was casting about to prove its artistic and industrial capacity as compared to its European counterparts, the New York Society of Craftsmen’s philosophies and methodologies might have seemed, to some, increasingly quixotic and impractical.

Modernism and the New York Society of Craftsmen

In *Twentieth Century Limited: Industrial Design in America, 1925-1939*, Jeffrey Meikle writes that in the 1920s, the Art Center and its seven constituent organizations played a role in sustaining the conservative design establishment. Meikle notes that the Art Center’s craftspeople and designers were still producing one-of-a-kind items inspired by objects from antiquity, rather than working to further the country’s production of objects reflecting the sleek, geometricized iterations of Modernism.¹⁶⁶

This practice among designers and craftspeople of producing luxury goods based on

¹⁶⁵ In light of Jarecka’s description of Snow’s work, which conveyed her in-depth focus on weaving processes, it seems unlikely that Snow herself taught classes in other craft genre in addition to teaching weaving. Other school instructors may have used Snow’s studio to conduct their classes. Jarecka, “Edith Huntington Snow, Weaver, Artist, Craftsman,” 10.

¹⁶⁶ Report of the U.S. Commission, *International Exposition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Art in Paris, 1925* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1925): 18, quoted in Meikle, *Twentieth Century Limited*, 19-20.

then-hackneyed design models had caused the country to be embarrassed on the occasion of a Worlds Fair. In 1925, the United States declined to participate in the 1925 *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Moderne* because the country was not producing objects appropriate for display in an international forum, particularly one held in the most fashionable city in the world, Paris.¹⁶⁷

The objects displayed at the 1925 Paris exposition reflected the influence of the modernist movement, most notably of French *art moderne*. *Art moderne* objects boasted sleek surfaces, exotic materials, and simplified silhouettes. After the Paris exposition, Americans quickly embraced this new style, while designers and manufacturers scrambled to respond.

Curiously, despite their collective goal of participating in efforts to bolster American object production, the associations that comprised the Art Center seemed to remain steeped in historicism. Even the physical environs of the Art Center may have reflected this mindset. We would expect that a comparison of photographs of the Art Center lounge from 1922 (fig. 55) with those from a then-recently redesigned lounge in 1927 (fig. 56) would show a drastic change in the style of the interior décor from earlier to later. It is no surprise that in 1922, the Art Center's lounge was decorated with examples of Colonial Revival furniture. But in 1927, we might expect to at least see examples of *art moderne*-inspired objects or hints of the German Bauhaus, boldly colored furniture crafted in tubular steel. But this is not the case. Photographs of the Art Center lounge in 1927 show conservative furnishing, albeit all American-made, still in the Colonial Revival style.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 19.

The Art Center's non-professional membership, members of society's elite, may have contributed to the Art Center's hesitance to embrace modernism. A continued attachment to the past, to Colonial Revival, was indicative of the mindset of an entire segment of American society. In the years following the First World War, the United States experienced a surge of technological advances in the realms of manufacturing, transportation, communications, and more. Some Americans resisted those changes. Instead of embracing Modernism and modernist styles, the bastions of conservatism in the United States looked nostalgically to revival styles, such as the Colonial Revival, and styles reflective of America's indigenous cultures.¹⁶⁸

During the latter 1920s and into the 1930s, members of the New York Society of Craftsmen may have had more in common with the more conservative segment of the society than they did with younger, more adventurous artists. After all, through the 1920s a portion of the New York society's membership still comprised older founding members of the National society. Those members likely continued to work in their own well-established oeuvres, emphasizing the production of handicraft by means of pre-industrial craft processes, using historical models of design. And too, during increasingly harsh financial times, the society may have had to rely more heavily on the patronage of, and thus have been more influenced by, its non-professional members.

Into the 1930s, the New York society exhibited the work of artists working in revival styles. The society received considerable coverage in the press for its

¹⁶⁸ In Kardon, *Craft in the Machine Age*, Kardon and her fellow essayist describe American's reaction to industrialization during the interwar period and the popularity of revival styles among segments of the population. Janet Kardon introduces this topic in her opening essay. Kardon, "Craft in the Machine Age," 24.

exhibition of work by Charles F. Feurer of Philadelphia. Feurer was among a group of craftspeople who produced works of tôle, a highly labor-intensive japanning technique.¹⁶⁹ Mid-seventeenth century British and European craftsmen developed the technique of japanning to reproduce the look of ancient Asian lacquerware. That technique, called Toleware or Tolerware, was revived in the United States in the middle of the eighteenth century and enjoyed renewed popularity in the twentieth among New Englanders with conservative tastes.¹⁷⁰ (fig. 57)

The society's stubborn loyalty to handicraft likely contributed to the perpetuation of those processes through many lean years when handicraft was not fashionable. But, that focus may have contributed to the society's break in the early 1930s with the other organizations comprising the Arts Center.

In March 1932, the Art Center reorganized to form a new corporation, the National Alliance of Art and Industry. Its aim, "the practical application of beauty in design to articles produced in quantities," seemed to now focus on the development of quality design in mass production.¹⁷¹ In the following years, the National Alliance would move toward the promotion of a new American style, streamlining, America's answer to modern design.¹⁷² Author Meikle presents the alliance's efforts as indicative of the fact that American industrial designers were beginning to make their mark on

¹⁶⁹ Helen Johnson Keyes, "Examples of a Vanishing Art," *Christian Science Monitor* (October 17, 1931): 9 and Walter Rendell Storey, "Craftsmen Who Challenge the Machine," *New York Times* (October 9, 1932): SM10.

¹⁷⁰ John Fleming and Hugh Honour, *The Penguin Dictionary of Decorative Arts*, 414-415 and 796.

¹⁷¹ "Art Centre Forms a New Corporation," *The New York Times* (March 26, 1932). The alliance left 65 East Fifty-sixth Street and moved to Rockefeller Center. "Rockefeller Center Houses Art Alliance: Art Centre Building, Scene of 667 Exhibits in 13 Years, Has Been Leased," *The New York Times* (April 21, 1933).

¹⁷² Meikle, *Twentieth Century Limited*, 181.

the field of industrial design. But, it took the new alliance's mandate far from that of the New York Society of Craftsmen.

By 1933, the society sought a new home and other like-minded organizations with which it could join. An excerpt from the society's 1933 annual report indicates that the society was aware of the quixotic nature of its pursuits: that of creating one-of-a-kind objects of handicraft in an industry now focused on speed, efficiency, affordability, and mass-appeal:

...we, a small organization operating in a more or less hidden corner, with no publicity and with objects for sale which are classed as luxuries, have struggled hard to maintain our ideals and our foothold....I have been lead to believe that the various craft organizations...will lend a willing ear to some working basis for cooperation. Perhaps we are being forced at the psychological moment to look for larger quarters in order that a closer and more constructive bond be formed among those who are interested in the same things. If it be true that "in unity there is strength", let us endeavor to unite with those whose interests will be of mutual benefit in encouraging the further and better development of craftsmanship in America, and in establishing a strong center in our own city.¹⁷³

The New York Society of Craftsmen in the 1930s

During the 1920s, the machine began to rapidly outpace handwork as the most efficient and fashionable method of object production. At times, even objects made by hand were crafted to appear to have been made by machine, a practice perfected by craftspeople at the Bauhaus.¹⁷⁴ But what might, at times, have been mere fashion during the 1920s became the imperative in the 1930s. During the Depression,

¹⁷³ Nan Son, Executive Secretary, New York Society of Craftsmen, "Annual Report of the Executive Secretary: March 1st, 1932 to February 28th, 1933, Mary Ware Dennet papers, reel 8: 0874-0916.

¹⁷⁴ Lucic, "Seeing Through Surfaces: American Craft as Material Culture," 60-61.

manufacturers needed to use machine technology to mass-produce goods that were affordable to the consumer, whose buying capacity had been severely diminished. Industry now needed craftspeople not to produce goods by hand, but to design attractive products for mass-production.¹⁷⁵

Members of the New York Society of Craftsmen seemed to be craftspeople who continued to manufacture objects by hand as a main facet of their careers. However, increasingly craftspeople needed to work in different ways to supplement their income. In the essay, “Striking the Modern Note in Metal,” included in *Craft in the Machine Age*, Jewel Stern explains that during the interwar period from 1920 to 1940, independent metalsmiths—who ideally might have worked only as studio practitioners—taught classes, operated shops, and designed for industry to survive. Although Stern’s description is specific to metalworkers and Stern populates her text with craftspeople who worked in that genre, this example can be extrapolated to include craftspeople working in numerous craft genres during that period:

Although the quantity of work and number of those engaged in the craft diminished because of the Depression...the quality of the work was outstanding. Metalsmiths survived mainly by teaching (Bertoia, Bowles, Eichner, Kirk, Livingston, Mueller-Munk, Penington) or by operating a shop (Armour, August, Bach, Blanchard, Cauman, Dodge, Eichner, Lobel, De Matteo, Noyes, Palmer, Parzinger, Petterson, Rebajes, Smed, Welles). In some instances, income was augmented by designing for industry (Lobel, Magnussen, Mueller-Munk, Noyes, Smed), in others, by gallery sales (Bertoia, Calder, De Patta, Diederich, Livingston, Mueller-Munk, Oakes, Zimmermann).¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁵ Kardon, *Craft in the Machine Age*, 27-29.

¹⁷⁶ Jewel Stern, “Striking the Modern Note in Metal,” 134.

In her text, Stern notes several metalsmiths who were members of the New York Society of Craftsmen. We recall that Marie Zimmermann lived in a studio in the National Arts Club and exhibited work in early National Society of Craftsmen exhibitions. Janet Payne Bowles exhibited her work in early National Society of Craftsmen exhibitions and with the New York Society of Craftsmen in the 1920s. In 1939, both Arthur Neville Kirk and Rebecca Cauman were listed as members of the New York Society of Craftsmen at the same time that Laurits Eichner was president of the society.¹⁷⁷ And, Cauman's name is included again in the catalogue from the society's 1955 exhibition, alongside that of Paul Lobel.¹⁷⁸

The New York Times coverage of the society's annual exhibitions through the 1930s provides some information on the society during that period. A collection of personal papers from Mary Ware Dennett, a practicing craftsperson and member of the New York Society of Craftsmen from 1927 until at least 1940, provides additional insight into the society's activities, changes that the society made in its structure to accommodate its financial situation, as well its physical movements from its Art Center location to various temporary headquarters throughout New York City.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁷ New York Society of Crafts, *List of Members as of April, 1939*, 3, 8, in the papers of Mary Ware Dennett, microfilm no. 21, 262, files 176-178, reel 9:00010.

¹⁷⁸ New York Society of Craftsmen, *50th Annual Exhibition*, n.p. in "Printed Material New York Society of Craftsmen," box 1, in Bernard and Phyllis Fischer papers and New York Society of Ceramic Arts and New York Society of Craftsmen, *Studios & Workshops Today*, n.p.

¹⁷⁹ In April 1927, Dennett spoke at the New York craft society's monthly dinner; her talk, titled "Spanish Tooled Wall Leathers and their Modern Revival," described her study of volumes produced by fifteenth- and sixteenth-century leatherworkers and her attempts to revive the ancient practice of producing silver-gilded and tooled leather wall hangings, or *Guadamaciles*, which originated in North Africa and spread to Italy, France, Spain, and later England. Dennett's efforts were hampered by the effects of contemporary tanning processes, which removed the natural oils from leather and left them difficult to tool. Anna P. Paret, "New York Society of Craftsmen," *Bulletin of the Art Center* V, No. 10 (June 1927): 194.

Included in Dennett's papers is her own design for a logo for the society, which the society did use on its letterhead. (fig. 58)

Society financial reports and correspondence among Dennett's papers prove that the society did survive during the Depression.¹⁸⁰ However, in 1935, as the society looked for a new permanent home, it also faced the age-old debate on the nature of its public space: self-sustaining salesroom versus non-profit gallery.¹⁸¹

That debate must have been familiar to Mary Ware Dennett. Years before, she had participated in The Society of Arts and Crafts, Boston debate over the direction the society and its Handicraft Shop should take. Dennett argued for a society that worked to promote social equality, which would allow the independent craft worker to develop artistically, rather than having to just work to live. As conceived, the Handicraft Shop supported that ideal. However, Dennett's opinion was overruled by that of other members of the society who advocated for a self-supporting salesroom, which derived its income in part through commissions on the sales of members' work.¹⁸² The Boston society's emphasis on taste and decoration, as opposed to the individuality and integrity of the craftsman's work, has been described earlier in this thesis.

As a member of the New York Society of Craftsmen, Dennett again encountered debate over the purpose of the society's public exhibit and sales space, and she again argued that a salesroom that displayed artists' work on commission

¹⁸⁰ See The papers of Mary Ware Dennett, 1872-1947, microfilm no. 21, 262, files, 176-178, reel 8:0874-0916, 9:0001-0039.

¹⁸¹ Correspondence from Maurice Heaton, president of the New York Society of Craftsmen to membership, February 11, 1935 and March 7, 1935, in The papers of Mary Ware Dennett, 1872-1947, microfilm no. 21, 262, files, 176-178, reel 8: 0874-0916

¹⁸² Boris, *Art and Labor*, 38-41.

compromised the artistic integrity of the independent craftsperson. Dennett favored a gallery supported largely by membership dues and donations from patrons. Such a gallery, Dennett believed, could also provide the means to introduce craftspeople to wealthy potential customers. The craftspeople would be provided with lucrative associations without having the immediate pressure of producing saleable work.¹⁸³

Members of the society did favor a non-profit gallery to be sustained at the cost of \$8,000 per year in dues, with an initial \$2,000 in pledged support from patrons. However, the society found this plan difficult to execute in times when even the wealthiest of patrons suffered economic hardship. In February 1935, the society closed its existing temporary gallery and re-organized its governing structure so that it could function despite the lack of a meeting place. The society's exhibition committee secured opportunities for some members to display work in local galleries, but those opportunities were limited by the genres of objects those galleries displayed.¹⁸⁴

Maurice Heaton

During difficult financial times in the mid-1930s, glassmaker Maurice Heaton served as president of the New York Society of Craftsmen.¹⁸⁵ In 1932, Heaton had joined fellow society members Waylande Gregory, Charles Fergus Binns, Arthur Neville

¹⁸³ Correspondence from Mary Ware Dennett to Maurice Heaton, February 15, 1935, in The papers of Mary Ware Dennett, 1872-1947, microfilm no. 21, 262, files, 176-178, reel 8: 927.

¹⁸⁴The society held one exhibition at Gerard, 48 East 48th Street, and two exhibitions at Arundell Clarke in Rockefeller Center. Correspondence from Robert D. Barrett to members of the National Society of Craftsmen June 22, 1936. papers of Mary Ware Dennet, 8:948-949.

¹⁸⁵ For all correspondence between Maurice Heaton and Mary Ware Dennett, see the papers of Mary Ware Dennett, 1872-1947, microfilm no. 21, 262, files, 176-178, reel 8:0874-0916, 9:0001-, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

Kirk, and Frank Gardner Hale in submitting work for a traveling exhibition co-sponsored by craft societies from around the United States. There, Heaton exhibited sets of domestic glassware.

The production of glass for domestic settings was family tradition for Maurice Heaton. Heaton's grandfather had founded the stained glass manufacturing and decorating firm of Heaton, Butler and Baynes. Heaton's father, Clement, was a member of the Century Guild, a group of British designers who, in the A&CM tradition, sought to bring principles of art to architectural industries, and bring to craft the respect and professional regard afforded works of fine arts. Later, Clement Heaton, who specialized in work in cloisonné enamel, established the firm of Cloisonné Mosaics Ltd.¹⁸⁶

Photographs of Clement Heaton's work may have been among the examples of exemplary work from the British A&CM that J. William Fosdick collected during his 1907 trip to Britain and Europe, and then displayed at the National Society of Craftsmen's next annual exhibition.

Maurice Heaton's work was not confined to conventional domestic glassware. In 1936, Heaton submitted to the society's exhibition a work of "considerable daring," two glass candlesticks "cut and bent into various shapes, almost as if they were metal."¹⁸⁷ Such work was only the beginning of Heaton's experimentation in the medium of glass. By mid-century, Heaton would emerge as a pioneer in studio glass.

¹⁸⁶ Gillian Naylor, *The Arts and Crafts Movement*, 118-119.

¹⁸⁷ Coverage of the society's exhibitions is minimal during this period. Heaton may have submitted work to other annual exhibitions during the period between 1932 and 1936. Walter Rendell Storey, "Craftsmen Who Challenge the Machine," *New York Times* (October 9, 1932) and Walter Rendell Storey, "The Craftsman's Art in the Modern Room," *New York Times* (December 13, 1936): SM16.

¹⁸⁸ In his studio, Heaton took concepts that he had learned working with his father on stained glass projects and adapted them for use with modern materials and equipment. In the 1970s, Heaton would create his own version of stained glass windows by combining glass and Plexiglass.¹⁸⁹ (fig. 59)

Laurits Eichner

At the end of the 1930s, Danish-born Laurits Christian Eichner assumed the presidency of the New York craft society. Eichner had trained as an engineer before turning to metalwork during a period of unemployment. Eichner was among a group of craftworkers who emigrated from Europe to the United States after the First World War, and formed an enclave of ex-patriot artists and craftspeople who drove America's embrace of modern design following the 1925 Paris Exposition.¹⁹⁰ Eichner himself produced work reflecting a range of stylistic influences from the Colonial Revival to Modernism. Of Eichner's work, Jewel Stern writes that "[h]e endowed a low, wide-rimmed copper bowl with the telescoping shape that was emblematic of modern design in the late 1920s...."¹⁹¹ (fig. 60)

In 1937, Eichner displayed work in Paris at the 1937 *Exposition*

Internationale des Arts et Techniques dans la Vie Moderne, for which he won a gold

¹⁸⁸ Identified as such in *Craft and the Machine Age* and *Sotheby's Concise Encyclopedia of Glass*. Kingsley, "The Making of Modern Art Glass," 88 and Battie, David and Simon Cottle, general editors. *Sotheby's Concise Encyclopedia of Glass* (London: Conran Octopus Limited, 1991): 177.

¹⁸⁹ Tom Bayne, "Maurice Heaton's Laminated Panels," *Craft Horizons* 30 (August 1970): 24-5 and Eleanor Bittermann, "Heaton's Wizardry with Glass," *Craft Horizon* 14 (May 1954): 10-14.

¹⁹⁰ Stern, "Striking the Modern Note in Metal," 123.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 129.

metal,¹⁹² and in New York at the Metropolitan Museum of Art's exhibition, "Silver: An Exhibition of Contemporary American Design."¹⁹³ Eichner joined fellow society member Maurice Heaton in displaying his creations at America House in New York City.¹⁹⁴ There, Eichner's work attracted the attention of the founder of America House, Aileen Osborn Webb. Webb had founded America House to provide sales opportunities for rural craftspeople. Webb would continue her efforts to promote American handicraft by founding the renowned publication *Craft Horizons*, and the American Craftsmen's Council, now the American Craft Council.

In 1944, Webb also founded the School for American Craftsmen; later, she called upon Laurits Eichner to teach in the school's metalwork program.¹⁹⁵ In his essay, "The Early Career of Ronald Pearson and the Post: World War II Revival of American Silversmithing and Jewelmaking," for *Winterthur Portfolio*, W. Scott Braznell speculates that instructor Laurits Eichner inspired the work of studio silversmith Ronald Hayes Pearson, who was recognized "as a leading artist and professional in both metals and jewelry" in the second half of the twentieth century.¹⁹⁶

There, the careers of two New York Society of Craftsmen presidents show the seamless evolution of society members from members of the A&CM to members of the Studio Craft Movement. All were working to produce American craft. In his studio work, Heaton drew inspiration from his formative years, assisting his father, a

¹⁹² Tara Leigh Tappert, Laurits Christian Eichner entry in *Craft in the Machine Age*, 234.

¹⁹³ Stern, "Striking the Modern Note in Metal," 129.

¹⁹⁴ Heaton's participation in America House noted in Patricia Malarcher, "A Pioneer of Glass at a Show in Tenafly," *The New York Times* (October 30, 1983): 18.

¹⁹⁵ W. Scott Braznell, "The Early Career of Ronald Pearson and the Post: World War II Revival of American Silversmithing and Jewelmaking," *Winterthur Portfolio* 34, no. 4 (Winter 1999): 190-194.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 185.

participant in the British Arts and Crafts Movement. Laurits Eichner himself produced pieces of metal hollowware in a range of styles, and he instructed another studio artist whose work was emblematic of studio metalwork after mid-century.

The New York Society of Craftsmen in the 1940s

In a letter to the membership in early 1940, New York Society of Craftsmen President Laurits Eichner declared that the society not only survived the Depression, but slightly expanded its membership. At the dawn of a new decade, the society looked ahead to the possibility of once again opening a gallery. However, Eichner acknowledged that the society's goal might be delayed, depending on events unfolding in Europe.¹⁹⁷

Indeed, the society did have to postpone the establishment of its own gallery and seek out other locations in which to hold its annual exhibitions.¹⁹⁸ The spirit of compromise and flexibility extended to craftspeople's use of materials as well. In 1942, the New York Society of Craftsmen's annual exhibition showed the remains of a pre-war type of craft, made from increasingly war-rationed materials, alongside craft objects evincing the craftsperson's resiliency in using alternative materials:

...silver and other metal articles as well as wool weaving and embroidery may soon be termed "pre-war" art...To compensate, there are suggestions of new

¹⁹⁷ Correspondence from Laurits O. Eichner, president, New York Society of Craftsmen to society membership, n.d., papers of Mary Ware Dennett, 9:033.

¹⁹⁸ In 1941 the society held its annual exhibition at the Artist-Craftsman gallery, 64 East Fifty-Fifth Street; in 1947, at the Barbizon Plaza Gallery at 101 West Fifty-Eighth Street; in 1948, at the Barbizon Plaza Gallery; "Craft on Display" *The New York Times* (April 13, 1941); in 1950, at the Barbizon Plaza Gallery. "Accessories for the Home Are Included in Exhibit by Craftsmen Opening Today" *The New York Times* (March 19, 1947); "Home Craftsmen Open Show Today: How a Few Accessories May Enliven a Room to be Seen at the Exhibition" *The New York Times* (November 10, 1948); "Craftsmen's Society Opens Annual Show" *The New York Times* (April 19, 1950).

media....In weaving, raffia and slender rods of wood, and strange forms of plastics; on pottery, matt glazes instead of some of the shiny ones which require metals such as tin and lead....¹⁹⁹

In 1947, the society's forty-fourth annual exhibition boasted the presence of guest exhibitor, Ruth Reeves, who showed samples of hand-screenprinted fabric.²⁰⁰ Reeves's textile design work had dominated the industry in the late 1930s. In 1943, the U.S. Government had asked the textile industry to relinquish its stock of copper print rollers for use in the war. As a result, the textile industry lost a major means of printing fabric. In response, textile craftspeople turned to hand-screenprinting. In her essay, "Textiles, Surface, Structure, and Serial Production," in *Craft in the Machine Age*, Mary Schoeser explains that hand-screenprinting allowed textile artists to explore the nuances of texture:

"These artists used hand-screenprinting to make marks uniquely suited to the process—marks that interact with the surface instead of merely being placed upon it. They explored a technique that was as untried in Europe as in the United States, and in so doing nurtured a new textile aesthetic through the years of World War II."²⁰¹

Members of the New York Society of Craftsmen would continue to display examples of hand-screenprinted fabric into the 1950s. In 1950, *The New York Times* noted the handwoven fabric—a yellow wool tweed of "nubby" soft texture—that

¹⁹⁹ Walter Rendell Storey, "Home Decoration: The Return to Simplicity," *The New York Times* (March 15, 1942): D8.

²⁰⁰ "Accessories for the Home Are Included In Exhibit by Craftsmen Opening Today," *New York Times* (March 19, 1947): 22.

²⁰¹ [Elinor Hillyer], "Backgrounds: A Study of the Determining Factors in Fall Decorating," *Arts & Decoration* 41 (August 1934): 29, quoted in Schoeser, "Textiles, Surface, Structure, and Serial Production," 121.

Claire Freeman displayed at the society's annual exhibition. Mrs. John H. Miller contributed a like "nubby" handwoven blue tweed fabric of wool and rayon.

Such exploration of texture and the nuances of the surface of craft objects was not unique to the textile industry. Rather than continuing to create work in the modern idiom—sleek pieces that appeared to be made by machine—craftspeople began to focus again on the characteristics of craft materials. They resumed creating works that were self-referential, that highlighted the nature of the craft material and its individual properties.²⁰²

In the society's 1947 exhibition, ceramicist Rolf Key-Oberg displayed a tall vase decorated with free-form motifs against a "light blue pebbly-textured" background.²⁰³ In 1948, Walter Rhodes showed a small, scooped hors d'oeuvre dish of hammered silver.²⁰⁴

Adda Husted-Andersen

Society president Adda Husted-Andersen also exhibited work in the New York Society of Craftsmen exhibitions in the late 1940s. Husted-Andersen was part of what would be a growing number of prominent jewelry-makers who exhibited with the society in the final decade of its existence. In her New York shop, Husted-Andersen produced bold, sculptural jewelry pieces. Some had crisp, geometric shapes. Others,

²⁰² See Karen Lucic's description of Maija Grotell's 1951 ceramic work in Lucic, "Seeing Through Surfaces, American Craft as Material Culture," 60.

²⁰³ "Accessories for the Home Are Included in Exhibit by Craftsmen Opening Today" *The New York Times* (March 19, 1947).

²⁰⁴ "Home Craftsmen Open Show Today: How a Few Accessories May Enliven a Room to be Seen at the Exhibition" *The New York Times* (November 10, 1948).

indicative of her Danish roots, evinced the flowing biomorphic forms of organic modernism, made popular by modernist designer Alvar Aalto. (fig. 61)

Adda Husted-Andersen was one of two New York Society of Craftsmen jewelry workers whose work was included in the Museum of Modern Art's (MOMA) 1946 landmark exhibition, "Modern Jewelry Design." MOMA also included work from former society president Paul Lobel. MOMA's 1946 exhibition was pivotal in changing the face of the jewelry-making profession. The exhibition marked the beginning of the "wearable art" movement in the United States, in that it placed work from independent jewelry-makers working in studio settings alongside that of metalsmiths creating experimental non-jewelry pieces.²⁰⁵

The End and the Beginning of an Era: The New York Society of Craftsmen in the mid-1950s

In the years following the Second World War, jewelry-makers were not the only craftspeople who aspired to redefine the nature of their profession and to challenge the historic divide between craft and fine art. Craftspeople, many of whom now had the benefit of university education, worked to expand the boundaries of craft practice. They sought to create craft objects that were no longer strictly utilitarian, objects that blurred the boundaries between art and craft. They applied new technologies to their work with traditional craft materials, thus creating works of craft that looked nothing like traditional craft, and therefore confounded categorization.

²⁰⁵ Marbeth Schon, *Modernist Jewelry 1930-1960: The Wearable Art Movement* (Atglen: Schiffer Publishing Ltd., 2004): 88.

Some members of that movement were refugees or immigrant craftspeople who came to the United States from Europe during World War II. Others were soldiers, who, after fulfilling their obligations in the military, returned from the war and used the GI Bill to enroll in one of the craft-based programs developing in colleges across the country. Those individuals may have had good reason to reject society and industry. They had experienced directly the horrors of war and the wholesale destruction wrought by industrially produced weapons of war.²⁰⁶

Regardless of their backgrounds, craftspeople found an increased market for their wares at mid-century. After World War II, Americans experienced a surge of prosperity, which brought with it the growth of a middleclass with money to spend and an interest in defining itself through home and possession. Like their ancestors at the turn of the century, mid-twentieth-century American homeowners looked to define their personalities and to display their newly earned prosperity through objects for their homes. Unlike consumers in the Depression who had been forced to rely on affordable mass-produced items for home decoration and everyday use, mid-century consumers once again had the luxury of asserting their individuality, of making social, political, and artistic statements, by purchasing one-of-a-kind objects made by hand.²⁰⁷

Two existing catalogs from New York Society of Craftsmen exhibitions in 1955 and 1957 indicate that members of the society did, as always, represent a range of craft practitioners. Some work pictured in those catalogues shows craftspeople

²⁰⁶ Diamonstein, "Values, Skills, and Dreams: Crafts in America," 27.

²⁰⁷ "Picturing a Moment: American Craft Over Five Decades," in *American Craft* (August/September 1993): 82.

catered to that new group of consumers, those with disposable income and a taste for the exotic. In 1955, objects are those for the home—plates, candy dishes, cutlery. Most are highly decorated with abstract designs that show the influence of Asian and African art. (fig. 62) The society's 1957 catalogue depicts work in metal and clay that is now purely sculptural, decisively stepping over the line between craft and art. (See again fig. 22 and 35)

The society mounted its 1957 exhibition and craft demonstrations in conjunction with the New York Society of Ceramic Arts. After the show, the New York craft society considered whether to merge with its partner society. The previous year, Aileen Osborn Webb's efforts to promote American craft had led to the establishment of the Museum of Contemporary Crafts (now the American Craft Museum), the first museum devoted to the promotion of contemporary craft.²⁰⁸ Perhaps emboldened by response to that museum, The Joint Committee for Merger believed that merging the two societies would afford both more prestige and entrée to better exhibition venues.²⁰⁹

Did the New York Society of Craftsmen merge with its partner ceramic society, and did that new society identify a role for itself in the second half of the twentieth century, in a new era of craft? The current-day website for the Artist-Craftsmen of New York, Inc. notes that the organization was formed in 1958, comprised of members of the New York Society of Ceramic Arts and the New York

²⁰⁸ Diamonstein, "Values, Skills, and Dreams: Crafts in America," 27.

²⁰⁹ Bernard W. Fischer, meeting report from the Joint Committee for Merger, May 15, 1957, in "Printed Material New York Society of Craftsmen," 1955-1957, box 1, Bernard and Phyllis Fischer papers.

Society of Craftsmen. An investigation of that society and its evolution is beyond the scope of the research for this thesis. However, that society's membership and activities in the second half of the twentieth century and the early years of the twenty-first would most certainly provide rich topics for future study of the evolution of American craft.²¹⁰

²¹⁰ Artist Craftsmen of New York, "ACNY Artist Craftsmen of New York," <http://www.artistcraftsmenofnewyork.com/index.html>.

CONCLUSION

From its inception in the early years of the twentieth century, members of the National Society of Craftsmen studied handicraft and celebrated its creation through exhibitions and craft demonstrations. In most cases, those craftspeople do not neatly fit a mid- or late-twentieth-century definition of a studio artist, one who makes a career of expressing a personal aesthetic through the exploration of the subtleties, nuances, and potentialities of a particular material, be it clay, wood, metal, fiber, or glass. As in any endeavor, studio craft had to walk before it could run. Through educational initiatives and personal craft practices, early craft practitioners laid the groundwork for successive generations of craftspeople, first by merely reviving an interest in craft in both the practitioner and the patron; by exploring pre-industrial craft practices, many that, even then, were near obsolescence; by integrating into those archaic practices the results of artistic experimentation, as well as scientific and industrial innovation; by imposing quality benchmarks for craft through juried exhibitions; and by bringing together societies and guilds of like-minded individuals who brought creativity and ingenuity to the teaching and production of handicraft products.

Together the National Society of Craftsmen and the New York Society of Craftsmen spanned the first half of the twentieth century, as a distinct American craft movement emerged and evolved. Discrete examples of studio craft emerged along the way, and a unified Studio Craft Movement gained recognition mid-century after World War II.

At mid-century, members of the New York Society of Craftsmen still exhibited works of craft in annual exhibitions and members still gave craft demonstrations to the public. At that time, some members of the society were practicing, recognized studio craftspeople who applied new materials and technologies to their experimentation with traditional craft materials. In doing so, they pushed the boundaries of craft practice even beyond what their ancestors may have envisaged craft to be.

Through this study of the membership and activities of the National Society of Craftsmen and its successor New York Society of Craftsmen, we can now see the Arts and Crafts Movement and the Studio Craft Movement not as disparate events, but as powerful contributing forces that drove the progression of a still-evolving American craft movement.

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