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## 32nd Annual Philadelphia Museum of Art Craft Show

Written by Jim Weaver

Thursday, 01 January 2009



At this year's Philadelphia Museum of Art Craft Show, held November 13 through 16 at the Pennsylvania Convention Center, 23 leading Israeli craft artists showcased their work. Presented annually since 1977 by the Museum's Women's Committee, it benefits the museum's acquisition, conservation and education programs. Known in the past simply as the Philadelphia Craft Show, it has been renamed to give recognition to its tie with the museum and to the artistic quality of exhibited works. It is widely considered the top show of its kind in the nation.

The show committee and management worked closely with the Association of Israel's Decorative Arts (AIDA) and the Israeli Consulate in Philadelphia on the selection and promotion of the guest artists from Israel. AIDA's New York director, Erika Vogel, announced, "We're thrilled to work together on this project as it's an outstanding opportunity for both Israel and Philadelphia. The spirit of cooperation

and celebration brings everyone closer together."



The show offered a special opportunity to meet the artists personally and to learn about and purchase their work. The artists at the Philadelphia Museum of Art Craft Show represent the best contemporary craft art in the country and the world, and are selected from more than 1,400 applicants working in various craft media and technique.

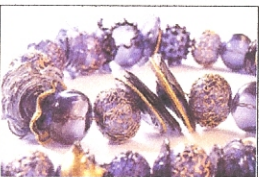
The 23 Israeli craft artists displayed and sold a range of media including ceramics (6), fiber (6), jewelry (8), mixed media (1), and metal (2). All are well-established artists who have exhibited widely abroad as well as in Israel.



The Israeli guest artist participation this year was the eighth international group to be featured in the show. Past guest artist groups were from Canada (2007), Finland (2006), Germany (2005), Ireland (2004), Great Britain (2003), First Nation (2002), and Japan (2001).

In addition to the guest artists, the 2008 show featured 195 American craft artists from throughout the nation, selected by a distinguished jury from more than 1,400 entrants.

Rick Snyderman, owner of [Snyderman-Works](#), the city's leading art crafts gallery, recalls that it has been more than a decade since the first significant exhibition of contemporary Israeli craft was held at The Clay Studio. "It was a memorable exhibit and it's exciting that we [were] able to revisit the works of Israeli craft artists at this year's Philadelphia Craft Show," he said, adding. "The annual event has been an important showcase for craft artists, both Americans and those from abroad, throughout it's more than 30-year history."



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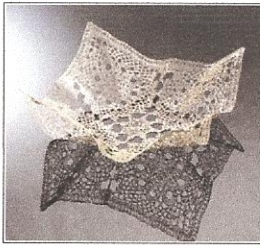
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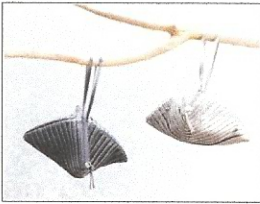
CRAFTS INSIGHT allows artists to share their business insights with fellow craftspeople in the same genre.



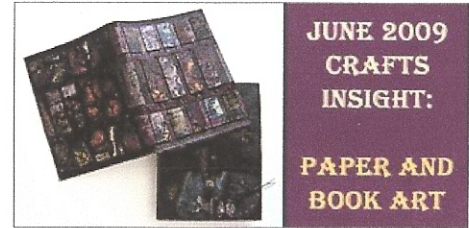
"I find the craft arts of Israel reflect the dynamic energy of this land that has incorporated people of vastly different cultural backgrounds, while simultaneously striving for a distinctly Jewish identity," emphasizes Jimmy Clark, executive director at [Peters Valley Crafts Center](#) in Layton, N.J., and curator of the Israeli ceramics show at The Clay Studio in 1995. "The strength of the Israeli craft movement is that it embraces vitality and a wide range of technique and at the same time enjoys a collegiality only possible in such a small country. Despite its diversity, the work reflects a commonality and cultural identity that could only have come from Israel," he continues.



Chestnut Hill, Pa., gallery owner [Carol Schwartz](#) first discovered Israeli crafts 30 years ago (she visited there 18 times over a 10-year period) and has been selling Israeli jewelry and paintings in her gallery ever since. "Israeli artists, like others there, are under considerable stress and often find in their art a means to a personal peace," she believes. "Their jewelry is very distinctive and often incorporates many brightly colored stones in a variety of attractive settings. The wearable fiber art is all high style and of unusual designs and material. It's really quite wonderful."



The 32nd annual [Philadelphia Museum of Art Craft Show](#) was organized by Eve Walker, chair; Amy Fox, vice-chair; and Nancy C. O'Meara, show manager.<sup>TCR</sup>



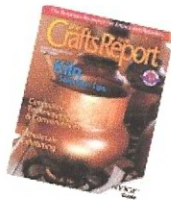
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