



# Makers: A History of American Studio Craft

By Janet Koplos, Bruce Metcalf

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**Makers: A History of American Studio Craft** By Janet Koplos, Bruce Metcalf

Here is the first comprehensive survey of modern craft in the United States. *Makers* follows the development of studio craft--objects in fiber, clay, glass, wood, and metal--from its roots in nineteenth-century reform movements to the rich diversity of expression at the end of the twentieth century.

More than four hundred illustrations complement this chronological exploration of the American craft tradition. Keeping as their main focus the objects and the makers, Janet Koplos and Bruce Metcalf offer a detailed analysis of seminal works and discussions of education, institutional support, and the philosophical underpinnings of craft. In a vivid and accessible narrative, they highlight the value of physical skill, examine craft as a force for moral reform, and consider the role of craft as an aesthetic alternative.

Exploring craft's relationship to fine arts and design, Koplos and Metcalf foster a critical understanding of the field and help explain craft's place in contemporary culture. *Makers* will be an indispensable volume for craftspeople, curators, collectors, critics, historians, students, and anyone who is interested in American craft.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

A wide-ranging and thoughtful survey--lucid, accessible and often compelling. . . .The most comprehensive compendium of information on studio craft and craftspeople to date." --*The Burlington Magazine*

Janet Koplos and Bruce Metcalf have provided us with . . . [a] canon, and in so doing have taken on a very difficult task, for which we may be grateful.--*Glass Quarterly*

A comprehensive, absorbing account. . . . In accessible and unpretentious prose, the authors personalize and locate each maker, noting relevant biography, education, training, and connections. . . . Written with grace, erudition, and wit, peopled by a cast of hundreds of women and men . . . and copiously illustrated, *Makers* is a definitive work. . . . Essential.--*Choice*

If you can't crisscross the country touring new museum wings and exhibitions, immerse yourself in *Makers*. . . . Don't miss the last two chapters--that's where the authors really dig in with detailed biographies, and where you'll find the anchors of the craft community we know today.--*AmericanStyle*

A reference for artists, educators, and scholars interested in the field. . . . Koplos and Metcalf consolidate, review, and analyze the literature already available on craft, while adding primary research of their own.--*Ceramics Monthly*

A welcome addition to the literature on the Arts and Crafts Movement in America. . . . A definitive text covering two centuries that will also become a standard reference in the field.--*Art Libraries Society of North America*

This is not a mystery novel and yet I have the impulse to write 'It's a page turner if there ever was one!'....[*Makers*] is an exciting narrative work of nonfiction....An important contribution to American world craft and textile history.--*The Velvet Highway*

A wonderful book. . . . Interesting and useful. . . . The inclusion of some biographical detail and the consideration of each artist's career choices and influences . . . make the text highly readable. . . . Anyone

with an interest in making art or craft will love this book.--*Shuttle Spindle & Dyepot*

Every part of this book is important. . . .It's been a long time coming.--*Surface Design*

For a field that has been without a definitive text for over a century and a half, [*Makers*] represents a high water mark. . . . An inspired reference that grounds craft movements in various contexts of craft education, production, display, sales and collecting. . . . Goes far toward paving the way for the study of studio craft to gain the credibility it has long deserved.--*American Craft*

#### Review

Koplos and Metcalf thoughtfully interweave their independent perspectives to construct an engaging narrative of American Studio Craft. *Makers* successfully blends existing scholarship with new insights on historical developments of material and technological innovations. A remarkable resource that will stimulate new research and theorization of craft history and material culture.--Patricia C. Phillips, Dean of Graduate Studies, Rhode Island School of Design

A coherent, well-contextualized, appropriately theorized, and artifact-driven introduction to a field currently dominated by scattered articles, narrowly focused volumes on canonical figures, media-specific surveys, and uncritical hagiography. By arguing that the field of craft is sometimes in synch with and sometimes at odds with larger cultural issues and by offering analysis and explanation of these trends, the authors have invigorated this often obscure field.--Edward S. Cooke Jr., Yale University

In *Makers* the American crafts have their *Iliad*: a must-read story, a pantheon, and the first substantial ground for contention over the origins, agents, motives, and boundaries of what is functionally a cultural identity."  
--Glen R. Brown, Kansas State University

#### About the Author

Janet Koplos, a longtime writer and editor for *Art in America* magazine in New York, recently served as guest editor of *American Craft* magazine. She is author of *Contemporary Japanese Sculpture* and other books.

Bruce Metcalf is a studio jeweler and writer based in Philadelphia. He has taught at Kent State University and the University of the Arts and has exhibited his jewelry, sculpture, and drawings internationally.

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