

# **The Artists Training and Career Project: Craftspeople**

Report Prepared for  
The Research Center for Arts and Culture  
Columbia University

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# Acknowledgment

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## INTRODUCTION

Many ceramists have "prayer gods," or small totems they make and put on top of their kilns during the firing process, as a hedge against things they cannot control.

There are craftspeople who believe you can actually see the love they have put into their work, or at least the results of it.

Over and over again, craftspeople spoke about respect for their material, as if the work was a compact, as though the material had to AGREE somehow to be used in a certain way for success to be achieved.

. . . observations during the study, 1990

THE ARTISTS TRAINING AND CAREER PROJECT (ATC) is a study of the training and career choices and patterns of craftspeople, painters and actors; the first phase of the project focuses on craftspeople. Artists themselves are at the heart of this study, for they have been asked to describe, in systematic ways, the impact of these choices on their work, their requirements for doing their work over time, and their career development and satisfaction. This study examines artists' responses to institutions, society and culture by using two distinct and complementary methodologies---first, a series of personal narrative interviews with thirty-five artists and fifteen "related experts" in each field, followed by a national survey of a sampling of artists in each discipline. The areas of investigation have been developed through the creation of a seven-stage "validation sequence" from early childhood through mature careers.

By eliciting information about the kinds of validations as well as the kinds of resistances the artist meets, the Research Center for Arts and Culture (RCAC) will be able to begin to describe the training and career development of craftspeople, painters, and actors; it will also contribute to a growing literature on careers that includes research in the scientific, legal, medical, and police professions, and is sadly lacking in the arts. It will provide important information for advocates and funders, and will give training institutions a better idea of the points of greatest need for training, and arts service organizations information about appropriate assistance for artists and when such assistance is most helpful. Finally, it will document the position of the artist as an integral member of society.

## BACKGROUND

In order to develop an analytic model of the training and career development of artists that was comparable to that of other professions and which simultaneously would have relevance for those involved in the artist's world, the Research Center conducted a literature review, developed a

working bibliography of sources, studied interview literature and technique, and did substantial research on the sociology of work.

The Center also broke out relevant data concerning craftspeople from its previous study, INFORMATION ON ARTISTS (IOA), which explored the work-related human and social service needs of artists in ten United States locations: Boston, Cape Cod, Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles, Minneapolis/St. Paul, New York City, Philadelphia, San Francisco, and western Massachusetts. Information on training and career development, income, and art-related expenditures of craftspeople and painters was broken out for further comparison with the current study. The information on actors was analyzed as a separate study, thanks to the cooperation of Actors' Equity Association.<sup>1</sup>

During this time, the Research Center also commissioned three separate essays on the history and development of the craftspeople, the painter, and the actor in the United States, from colonial times to the present day. These essays provided an important context for our work, and a common reference point for the artists and related experts who offered advice and help through various forums sponsored by the Research Center during the formative stages of this study. Finally, these essays will serve as the introduction to a volume of artist interviews in each of the fields.

## PERSONAL NARRATIVE INTERVIEWS

A list of approximately 310 artists and 100 related experts (people whose work deals closely with the work of craftspeople, but who are not necessarily craftspeople themselves) was created through personal knowledge of the Research Center staff, discussions and "think tanks" with craftspeople and related experts, including craft organization directors, curators, teachers, publishers, and others. Additional research was carried out by reviewing craft publications and media-specific magazines and journals, the oral history interviews of the Oral History Collection at Columbia University, and the American Craft Council Information Center's national artists' registry. We chose 35 craftspeople and 15 "related experts" to interview. (See Appendix 1 for list of people interviewed.)

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<sup>1</sup> The INFORMATION ON ARTISTS PROJECT was a 1989 Research Center survey that was sent to 10,000 artists (visual, performing, and literary), covering work-related, human, and social service needs in areas of health, pensions, legal, financial, and space requirements. Important demographic information was included as well as the beginning of our exploration into issues of professionalism. Further information is available from the Research Center.

Media: Throughout the study, both for the personal narrative interviews and the survey, all craft media were represented: clay, fiber, glass, leather, metal, mixed media, paper, and wood.

Demographic balance: For the all personal narratives, attempts were made to insure geographic representation from all over the country, ethnic diversity, different ages, males and females, and people who were trained in a variety of ways.

Career stages: Three broad career stages were chosen to categorize artists--emerging, established, and mature. This was not a distinction defined by age, but by recognition, years of serious work in the field, and the body of work accomplished. Related experts were chosen to deepen the profile of artists; while we were interested in their career stages, we were also very interested in their intersection with craft artists' lives both at the time of the interview and throughout their careers.

### THINK TANKS

As we developed lines of inquiry according to the seven-stage career model we had created, we asked the field to assist us in making certain the investigation was relevant to the real, working lives of craftspeople, and that they would help us communicate the importance of our work and disseminate the results of our findings to the crafts community. To these ends, we invited a group of six related expert advisers to meet with us after they had read the proposed work plan and the essay on the history of the craftsperson in the United States. In January 1990, Research Center staff met with the director of a state arts foundation, an art educator, a psychiatrist having done personal narratives of craftspeople, two directors of crafts centers, and a marketing specialist and publisher.

In March 1990, we met in similar fashion with four craft artist advisers. In both sessions we discussed the project and its components and also raised questions about finding artists outside the mainstream, folk and ethnic crafts, as well as criteria for choosing artists and related experts for the personal narratives, how to target lists of craftspeople for the 4,000-person survey, and ideas for dissemination of the personal narratives (in book form) and the survey results.

Throughout the life of the project we kept these advisers involved, including asking their help in market-testing the questionnaire during the survey phase, and sending them updates on our progress.

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

A complete set of interview questions was compiled, one for artists and one for related experts, and these were reviewed and shaped with the help of staff of the Oral History Collection. The seven-stage career model was the basis; the Oral History staff helped us to learn how to ask questions and to get the most out of the subject of the interview.

## SELECTION OF CRAFT ARTISTS AND RELATED EXPERTS

In addition to the criteria mentioned above, we were aware of the very different but excellent existing collection of oral histories of craftspeople in Columbia University's Oral History Collection. Therefore, in addition to our other criteria, we selected five artists who had given oral histories already, since we felt our interviews would add depth for interested researchers and others who wanted to investigate a craftspeople's life and work. We also became aware of the oral histories being done throughout the country by the Archives of American Art, whom we contacted and agreed to share our listings, so that future researchers or investigators could find a wealth of material through one source.

## SELECTION OF INTERVIEWS FOR PUBLICATION

All fifty interviews were taped; the budget allowed for twenty-five of them to be transcribed. Interviewees were sent release forms for the tapes and transcripts to be housed at the Oral History Collection, and for possible publication. In 1992, The Craftsperson Speaks, a volume of ten-to-twelve of our craftspeople interviews will be published by Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc. Each interview will be accompanied by brief biographical information, a list of the permanent collections in which the craftspeople's work resides, our history of the craftspeople in the United States, and a brief bibliography.

## IDENTIFYING CRAFTSPEOPLE FOR THE SURVEY

Research Center staff compiled a list inventory of organizations around the country with craftspeople-members. These ranged from highly visible national service organizations, to media-specific local organizations. Again, the RCAC sought to identify lists that would represent a wide geographic dispersion (national, regional, and local), all media together as well as discipline-specific interests, profit as well as non-profit venues (fairs, galleries, exhibitions), and ethnic variety, until an appropriate "list inventory" was developed. The RCAC contacted each organization on the list to determine:

- \* name of organization, address, phone number
- \* person to contact
- \* kind of organization: service, membership, art center, school, arts council, publication, etc.
- \* crafts disciplines represented
- \* national, regional, state, local members
- \* number of people on list, number of artists on list, and whether they could be separated from other entries
- \* list currency, date last cleaned
- \* requirements for getting included on list

- \* form of list: computer disc, labels, etc.
- \* permission to use list
- \* cost of list

### PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN COLLECTING LISTS OF CRAFTSPEOPLE

Aside from the normal and always frustrating problems of initial and follow-up phone calls, different time zones and telephone tag, as well as the need on the part of the responding organization to trust the Research Center's assurance of anonymity for all survey respondents, and our commitment to use the list only to send the original questionnaire and a reminder post-card, there were other difficulties in getting some organizations to participate. Reasons included:

- \* Some organizations never sell or give their lists out, no matter what the reason or how worthy the cause.
- \* Some organizations have not cleaned their lists in such a long a period of time, or have organized or recorded their lists in such a way that they were not usable by the Research Center. In many instances, we paid to have the names and addresses entered on a format compatible with our computer system.
- \* Some organizations had no listed phone number.
- \* Some organizations had disbanded.
- \* Some were in the process of putting their lists on computer, and no total usable list was ready in time for our own deadlines.
- \* Stipulations that the questionnaire be mailed through an organizations's own mailing house could not be accommodated, as duplications might occur, thereby compromising the total sample picked.

A problem which we were able to turn to our advantage was the need by many organizations for information about the project in writing before they would agree to even discuss their lists. This need for more information was less a result of suspicion and more a desire on the part of the organizations a) to understand the project, and b) to have some appropriate information for their boards of directors, since many needed board approval. There were consistently interested responses to the project, pleasure that we were doing this much needed research, and inquiries as to how to find out about the results.

### QUESTIONNAIRE DEVELOPMENT

During the entire first part of the project, the questionnaire that would go to the 4,000 craftspeople was being developed. Advice that emerged from think tanks, from informal discussions with members of the field, and from our research, allowed us to continue to refine the survey instrument over a period of six months. Our basic schema for investigation was a seven-stage career model which had been created after in-depth research into sociological career models and, in the arts, an investigation of the few models that existed in other arts careers, such as orchestra musicians. A pilot study had also been conducted for the Music Assistance Fund, which entailed doing personal narratives of black symphony orchestra musicians across the United States, focusing on training and career development.

The seven stages are: Initial Influences; Training and Preparation; Professional Institutions; Peer Influences; Marketplace Judgments; Critical Evaluation, and Late Careers.

The questionnaire went through several modifications and was then market-tested on twenty-five craftspeople, with over 50% responding. After this test, the questionnaire was finalized and included the following sections:

- \* Important Background Information
- \* Initial Influences
- \* Education, Training and Preparation
- \* Career Entry
- \* Peers and Colleagues
- \* Marketplace Judgments
- \* Critical Evaluation and Public Response
- \* Career Satisfaction and Maturity
- \* Current Activity
- \* Comments

A cover letter was written to accompany this 151-question questionnaire which assured the respondent anonymity, and gave a list of crafts agencies and organizations that had helped us in the study. A postage-paid return envelope was also included. A reminder postcard was sent ten days after the questionnaire, to increase the rate of response.

## REPRESENTATION

Our intention was to have a very broad spectrum from which to choose a sample, using lists that a) were geographically different, representing all parts of the country; b) had different constituencies: national, regional, state, and local; c) represented all the craft media: clay, fiber, glass, leather, metals, mixed media, paper, wood; d) were from different types of organizations: arts centers, local guilds, membership organizations, galleries, magazines, craft fairs, craft councils, marketing organizations, and schools, and e) covered different ages, gender, and ethnic background.

There were 41,705 names submitted to us; they broke down the following way:

<b>General:</b>	21,928
<b>By media:</b>	
Clay:	2,670
Fibers:	1,936
Glass:	2,000
Leather:	21
Metals:	5,500
Paper:	650
Wood:	<u>7,000</u>
<b>TOTAL:</b>	41,705

It should be noted, however, that no formal membership organizations at the national, regional, or local level could be found for either mixed media or leather as individual categories of making art, although both of these were indicated as media worked in by respondents, as were painting, sculpture, book conservation, and many other craft-related categories.

In terms of distribution of coverage, the number of names submitted broke down in the following way:

National:	34,517
Regional:	5,907
Local:	<u>1,366</u>
	41,790

Note: since the same numbers are being tallied in different ways, the totals do not match.

After these 41,795 names were merged and purged to avoid duplicates, a random sample of 4,195 was chosen. After labels were printed for the sample, a second check was done by hand to remove duplicates, business or organizational listings, and incomplete addresses. Adjustments were made, and in September 1990, 3,942 questionnaires were mailed; postcards reminding craftspeople to fill out the survey were sent approximately ten days later.

## RESPONSE

There was a total return rate of 33%, with the last percent arriving long after data entry; an additional 6% of the returns were bad addresses, the same rate found on the INFORMATION ON ARTISTS PROJECT, our last national survey. 33% is a very high rate of return, especially for a questionnaire as long and detailed as this one, requiring well over 30 minutes of time and a high degree of reflective thought and response. In addition, almost half (48%) of the respondents provided additional commentary concerning issues of particular concern to them, issues they felt to

be insufficiently dealt with in the questionnaire, and other matters under the final "Comment" section.

## **GENERAL DEMOGRAPHICS**

The median age of respondents was 42, and the mean age was 44, with the oldest respondent age 89. 54% of the respondents are female, and 46% are male.<sup>2</sup> 69% of the respondents are married, 18% are single, with the remaining 13% divorced, widowed, or other. This compares with the 1988 general population figures of 68% married, 22% single, and 15% other. The range of dependents for respondents is one to eight, with a median of 2.

This population is slightly older than the respondents for our previous study, INFORMATION ON ARTISTS. There, the median age was 37, and the mean age 39; 57% of the respondents were female, 43% male. 42% were married, 42% were single, and 18% "other." The largest percentage (54%) had only a single dependent, counting themselves, 26% had 2 dependents, and 18% 3-4 dependents.

Geographic distribution: All but one state (Missouri) of the fifty were represented, plus one response from Guam. (See Appendix 2 for distribution by state.)

The respondents are predominantly of white, non-Hispanic background, (92%). 1% indicated "Hispanic" 1% selected "Asian," under 1% each indicated "American Indian/Alaskan Native," and "Black," and 5% selected "other" or "specify further" as their response. It should be noted that two of the organizations that contributed lists were multi-media Native American organizations, while there were no similar multi-media ethnic organizations for Blacks, Hispanics, or Asians. This compares to the ethnic breakdown found in the INFORMATION ON ARTISTS PROJECT, which included visual, literary, and performing artists, which was: 89% white non-Hispanic, 4% black or African-American, 2% Hispanic, 2% Asian or Pacific Islanders, 1% other, and less than 1% American Indian or Alaskan native.

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<sup>2</sup> Percentages are generally rounded to the nearest number, which may result in totals exceeding 100%. Percentages may also add up to more than 100%, since some questions asked for an answer that included as many choices as applied; occasionally people answered with several choices per question, even when instructed otherwise. Also the number of respondents to individual questions varied, but averaged between 1150 and 1246 for all but very specialized items. The margin for error is plus or minus 3%, and in certain selected questions, plus or minus .5%.

	White	Amer Ind	Asian	Black	Hispanic	other/ specify
ATC	92%	<1%	1%	<1%	1%	5%
IOA	89%	<1%	2%	4%	2%	1%
IOA:Crafts	94%	0%	1%	1%	<1%	<1%

ATC: ARTISTS TRAINING AND CAREER PROJECT

IOA: INFORMATION ON ARTISTS PROJECT, general

IOA: CRAFTS: INFORMATION ON ARTIST PROJECT, Crafts data only

It is interesting to note that when we broke out craftspeople from the INFORMATION ON ARTISTS study, even though our craftsperson respondents numbered only 187 to this question, 94% were non-Hispanic white, very near our current study's figure of 92%.<sup>3</sup>

The extremely low percentages of craftspeople of color is a matter of some concern. Several explanations are possible. First, the primary craft tradition in America has grown out of middle and working class European traditions; second, there may be a greater tradition of membership in professionally oriented organizations by white Americans, than there is by people of color. Third, it is possible that in some cases, the predominant craft form produced by people of color is widely considered to be folk art, a form practiced primarily by those who are organized, if at all, by family heritage and clan traditions rather than professional membership organizations.

It is also possible that the current craft organizations are not serving the needs of people of color: the organizations are not attracting them as members in the first place, either because people of color have been unaware of the existence of such organizations or because the organizational concerns have not responded to the needs of artists of color; they also may not have chosen to remain members once they have joined. This is reinforced by a comment made by an African American mixed media artist, who said in our accompanying narrative interview project that such organizations seemed to have no relevance for her or her work.

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<sup>3</sup> For comparative purposes, throughout this report we make reference to the results of our previous study, INFORMATION ON ARTISTS. Where possible, we have broken out the data that apply exclusively to the craftspeople surveyed in that study, for whom there were approximately 187 respondents. Although predictions based on this small a number should be treated with some caution, the comparisons are important because each study targets populations of craftspeople, the studies are two years apart in timing, and many of the questions were asked in exactly the same way both times.

Since, to the best of our knowledge, there is no source that can give us the universe of craft media or the percentages of craftspeople represented in each craft field, the aggregate percentages which merge ALL craft media together may not be representative.<sup>4</sup> By comparing our responses in each medium with an average of percentage breakdowns by media in a handful of directories and organizations which represent both the profit and nonprofit sectors, we find that clay, fiber and glass are represented at a slightly lower rate in our survey (7-5% lower) and metals, wood, and "other" (paper, leather, mixed media) at a slightly higher rate in our survey (5-9% higher). These percentages are not enough to warrant weighting of the data, since we have no field standard with which to conform. The figures for each separate medium, moreover, are accurate, since they reflect the actual response percentages we received, and are not in relation to respondents in other media.

Area of major craft work	clay	fiber	glass	metal	wood	other: paper, mixed media, leather
ATC	20%	15%	5%	27%	16%	17%

## **PROFESSIONALISM**

The issue of professionalism has provided an ongoing area of inquiry for the Research Center throughout its studies of artists, and is especially relevant for craftspeople, as 86% of the respondents consider themselves to be professionals. Although the word professionalism has various meanings, it seems that several separate and distinct definitions are constantly being meshed, confused, or used interchangeably. First, a common definition of professionalism relies on standard occupational measures such as hours per week worked and major income derived; it is quite common in the arts that artists' major work, their art, is not their major source of income, nor

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<sup>4</sup> We had hoped to use the 1980 Survey of Craft-Artists conducted by J. George Cerf, Constance F. Citro, Matthew Black, and Audrey MacDonald of the Center for Policy Research for the National Endowment for the Arts (published 1982) for comparisons, even with the time span between their survey and ours. Indeed, the voluminous report was interesting for general guidance and background. Unfortunately, craftspeople were defined in terms we found too broad or inappropriate for our use, including the following: "to be considered a crafts-artist, any one of the following responses was sufficient: Only partly involved in crafts; Used to participate; Do some crafts-related activity; Teach or took a course in crafts; Collect crafts or go to fairs or galleries; Any other statement indicating a past or present interest or involvement in crafts." (ED 226 110, p. 45.)

necessarily what they spend the largest percentage of their time in doing for payment. Second, there is a definition of professionalism that relies on official credentialing as a result of examination--attorneys take the state bar exam, for example. Finally, when people use the word "professional" as a descriptor they often refer to the quality of the work and of production, rather than the credentials of the producer. Rather than create yet another definition which we feel would be neither better nor worse than existing ones, the Research Center is constantly asking artists themselves to define professionalism.

These overlapping and confusing concepts of professionalism affect the craftsperson in several ways. First, one of the issues mentioned frequently by craftspeople is that they, and their work, like the work of many other visual and performing artists, are insufficiently appreciated by society. This may be due in part to the fact that craftspeople often consider themselves craftspeople/craftartists because they define themselves as such, not because they fulfill the measurable characteristics found in other fields. Second, the production of craft/art is the major source of income for just half, but less than half (36%) of the respondents support themselves entirely from their craft work, so they fail one of the standard marketplace criteria. Third, their work is often identified with that of the avocational learner or hobbyist, which may contribute an aura of recreational intent or lack of seriousness to those who do it professionally. Fourth, there has been no trade or professional association, other than the media-specific membership organizations, that is clearly identified, and well known to the population at large, with professional standards or accrediting validation.

#### Definitions: self

If we look at the respondents' own views as to how they define "professional craftsperson," we gain some clues as to how these respondents defined "professional" both for themselves and for others.

Respondents were asked to indicate their first three choices of definition, out of 13 possible choices, which included marketplace definitions (earning or intending to earn money from one's craft), definition by education or association, and self definition. Highest ranking for the first choice was "inner drive to make art/craft" (31%), a self-definition. Among the first choices, however, were both market definitions "makes living as a craftsperson" (24%), and two self definitions: "considers self to be a craftsperson" (11%), and "has a special talent" (8%). It is interesting to note that in a later question in the survey asking for identification of the most important factor influencing respondents to pursue their careers in crafts, the "inner drive to make art/craft" choice received the second highest percentage (29%), with "personal satisfaction" highest at 30%.

Time spent and peer recognition ranked highest for respondents' second choices, with "spend a substantial amount of time working on my art/craft" (17%), "recognized by peers as a craftsperson" (15%) and "have a special talent" (11%), along with the same "inner drive to make art" (16%).

The third choices added "receives some public recognition for his/her craft/art" (17%), and continued with "recognized by peers as a craftsperson" (16%), and "spends a substantial amount of time working at art/craft" (12%).

Similarly, the majority of craftspeople in the IOA study chose statements indicating self-definition as a craftspeople to be most important, well above definitions by the market or by peers.

#### Definitions: someone else

The respondents were also asked what three factors they considered most important in defining someone else as a professional. In this case once again the self definition of "inner drive to make art/craft" was the first ranked choice of 27% of the respondents, while 24% gave "makes living as a craftspeople" first ranking, and 11% gave "peer recognition."

Second choice also reflected the peer recognition factor: 19% chose "recognized by peers as a craftspeople," 18% chose "spends a substantial amount of time working at art/craft," and 15% chose "has special talent."

As a third choice, 16% chose "recognized by peers as a craftspeople," 13% chose "spends a substantial amount of time working at art/craft," and 13% each chose "inner drive to make art/craft," and "receives some public recognition."

While these findings are consistent with the IOA data on craftspeople, in that study it was clear that craftspeople ranked a "market definition" ("I make my living as a craftspeople") more when applied to themselves as professionals than to others.

Such choices may be interpreted as indicating that craftspeople are more willing to accept a marketplace definition of professionalism than artists at large, and use such definitions more easily. It could also mean that more of them make a living at their craft, and therefore accept it as a primary definition, as we see below. It is also important to note the consistent need for peer and public recognition as an affirmation of one's professional status.

The major difference between the definitions for self and for others was the inclusion of "has special talent," for oneself on the ATC survey as the third rank of the first choice, replaced by "peer recognition" in considering someone else. Otherwise they are very much the same.

#### Occupation

It should be noted here that respondents seem to have differing perceptions of their "occupations" versus their "careers." This was first brought to our attention in the advisory meetings with both craftspeople and related experts. While this survey cannot detail the nature of these perceptions, it was noted that, in the world of the arts at least, the concept of a "career," along with the concept of professionalism as applied to artists, may be a relatively recent phenomenon, occurring within the last few decades.

74% of the respondents felt that their crafts or crafts-related occupation was the most important occupation to them, whether or not it was their primary source of income. While we have not investigated whether these respondents are the same as the 86% who responded that they

considered themselves to be professional craftspeople, the two figures are close enough, and each include such a large number of the respondents, it is likely that there is substantial crossover. Only 60%, however, chose the word "craftsperson" to describe their career, while 11% chose "small business man or woman."

It is also interesting to compare these figures with those of the IOA study, in which 82% of all respondents, and 72% of the crafts respondents, considered their career as artist to be most important to them, and 89% of all respondents, and 83% of craft respondents considered themselves "professional artists."

### Craft Earnings

Earning major income from one's work is one of several indications of professionalism. 92% of the respondents indicated that they did earn money from their craftwork, and for 80% of the respondents, this money covered their craft-related costs. However, in answering whether the respondent was supported entirely from his craftwork, only 36% indicated that they supported themselves entirely from their craftwork. 50% of the respondents earned their major income from their work as a craftsperson, and 17% earned theirs from various craft related occupations (9% from teaching art or crafts, and 7% from an assortment of other occupations such as architecture, sales of craft supplies, curatorial work, and 1% from arts administration or management.)

For those whose major incomes were from non-craft related sources, 48% had independent incomes, spousal support, or pensions, and 20% were in occupations such as education, medical illustration, landscape, and graphic design.

In the IOA study, 93% of the crafts respondents earned money from their art, and in comparison, only 36% earned their major income from their work as artists, 14% as art instructors, 4% as arts managers or administrators, and 23% in other art-related occupations.

### Time spent on craft

53% of the respondents spent 31 or more hours on their craft and craft-related activities, and for 37% of these, over 40 hours were spent. This is consistent with the 56% of the IOA craft respondents who spent 31 or more hours on their art and art-related activities, with 35% spending more than 40 hours.

### Relationship to Other Employment

48% of the respondents spent no time on other employment, while 31% spend more than 21 hours per week at other employment. When asked to define the relationship between their craft work and their other employment, 28% felt that their other employment reinforces their craftwork, and 25% felt that their other employment pays to support their craftwork. 23% felt the two kinds of work were intertwined, and 24% felt that their other employment bore no relation to their craft work.

In comparison, a similar 31% of the IOA craft respondents spent more than 20 hours on outside employment, with 14% spending 10-20 hours, and 44% spending 0-10 hours.

### Life and Art

In response to a question concerning the relationship between their art work and their lives, rather than their craft and non-related craft employment, 88% of the respondents indicated that their art work and life are intertwined, while only 11% indicated that they clearly separate the two.

### Years spent as craftsman:

When asked "How long have you been a craftsman?" 33% answered "more than 20 years," and 40% answered for 11-20 years. 19% had been at it between 5-10 years, leaving only a small per cent (7%) who had been involved less than 5 years.

The respondents have been serious about their work, in seeing crafts as their primary career. For 15% of them, crafts had been their primary career all their life, and an additional 46% have considered it their primary career for over 11 years. For 21%, crafts have been a primary career for 6-10 years.

### Five Year Goals

Another way of looking at the craftsman's idea of professionalism is to look at his or her goals for the next five years, as goal setting indicates a certain dedication and sense of purpose. Despite the fact that 58% of the respondents said they had not previously set professional benchmarks during their careers, 92% of the respondents indicated that they did in fact have goals. 40% chose "reaching a higher level of artistic expression/achievement," a goal indicating that art-making is a central concern. The second choice was increasing sales of unique works (20%), which is clearly a marketplace goal. 13% expressed a desire to further develop artistic competence, and 10% to spend more time on crafts. It is not until much later that overall sales and recognition become important goals.

## **MARKETPLACE**

We must recognize that the nonprofit world is as much of marketplace as the profit sector. Thus, in discussing marketplace issues, we need to look at the kind of work produced, the income and costs related to the production of the work, the venues for its distribution, the business activities and practices that provide a context for its production, and the grants and awards systems as they are available to and used by craftspeople.

In dealing with the issues of how the craftsman relates to the marketplace, it should be mentioned first that there is no single definition of that crafts marketplace. The process sounds simple enough: the craftsman creates work, an object that is then sold to a buyer. However, craftspeople employ

a large variety of venues, including individual sales to clients, sales through agents, sales at wholesale and retail crafts fairs, local festivals that may be annual, seasonal or weekly, catalog sales, craft shops, gift shops, and formal art galleries. They also make public art and work on commission.

Their relationship to the marketplace also depends on their career stage, not unusual in the art world at large. In our interviews, some craftspeople have described a progression, from selling retail at local summer fairs and festivals to using an agent, to wholesale distribution through catalogs or wholesale fairs only, to participation in the large national craft fairs. Some then move further into the world of one-of-a-kind nonfunctional art pieces, others do not, by preference. Some deal only through fine art galleries.

### The Work

52% of the respondents said their work was one-of-a-kind, 43% said their work was both one-of-a-kind and production, and 4% said their work was production only. 26% said their craft work was fine art, 21% said it was utilitarian, 20% said both, and 33% said some of each. 50% of the respondents sometimes created work to meet the demands of the market, and another 30% indicated that they often did so.

48% indicated that they had received money for their craft work from both the profit and nonprofit worlds; 33% indicated that they had not; 19% did not know.

### Income

While 92% of the respondents indicated that they earned money from their craftwork, and 80% of those indicated that their earnings covered their craft-related costs, there was a big split on the gross individual income levels produced by craft/art work:

47% earned \$7,000 or less,  
9% earned between \$7,000-12,000,  
12% earned between \$12,000-20,000,  
a total of 68% earning less than \$20,000.

14% earned between \$20,001-\$40,000, and  
17% earned over \$40,000.

For those earning over \$40,000, the mean income was \$114,505, and the median income was \$78,000. 112 (65% of 173) earned under \$100,000, and 60 (35%) earned between \$100,000 and \$200,000.

Gross Indiv Income	\$1-500	\$501-3000	\$3001-7000	\$7001-12000	\$12001-20000	\$20001-40000	\$40000+
ATC indiv gross from craft 1989	15%	19%	13%	9%	12%	14%	17%
IOA indiv gross from craft 1988	12%	23%	18%	10%	14%	16%	5%

Looking at gross income for individual craftspeople, including all sources:

- 20% had incomes of less than \$10,000,
- 20% had incomes between \$10,000-\$20,000,
- 19% had incomes between \$20,000-\$30,000,
- 16% had incomes between \$30,000-\$40,000, and
- 25% had incomes of over \$40,000.

As the national average for disposable personal income per capita in 1987 was \$14,107,<sup>5</sup> it sounds favorable at first glance that 80% of the respondents made \$20,000 or above. It must be noted, however, that a large part of the working population receives income as salary, and does not take the expense of running a business out of that salary. These figures would look quite different if cross-tabulated with expenses, resulting in a net amount for living expenses similar to those

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<sup>5</sup> The following figures for the population at large are from the National Data Book: Statistical Abstract of the United States, US Department of Commerce and the Bureau of the Census, 1990, Charts 716, 726, and 734.

covered by a regular salary; we suspect that for many individual craftspeople "disposable" income is less than for other segments of the population.

While we chose different income categories than those used by the Bureau of Labor, we can make a few comparisons of a general nature. 17% of the respondents had income from their craftwork over \$40,000, and 25% had individual gross income over \$40,000, while only 20% of the general working population had individual income over \$35,000.

In looking at total gross household income:

- 6% had incomes of less than \$10,000,
- 11% had incomes between \$10,001-\$20,000,
- 17% had incomes between \$20,001-\$30,000,
- 17% had incomes between \$30,001-\$40,000, and
- almost half (49%) had incomes over \$40,000.

Total Gross Income	\$0-5000	5001-10000	10001-20000	20001-30000	30001-40000	40001-60000	60000+
ATC total <u>indiv</u> 1989	9%	11%	20%	19%	16%	25%	na
ATC total <u>hsehold</u> 1989	2%	4%	11%	17%	17%	24%	25%

49% of the respondents had gross household income over \$40,000, while only 36% of the general population had gross household income over \$35,000. This indicates that for the most part craftspeople's households fell above the range of household income for the general population.

It is also notable that 57% of the respondents sometimes barter their skills and work in exchange for necessities or services, and 17% often do so.

Costs: The largest percentage (21%) had craft-related costs between \$500-\$2500, and 47% had costs of under \$5000. Only 18% had costs over \$20,000. In all categories, materials, labor, marketing, insurance and other, the majority of respondents said costs had increased since their early careers. The cost of materials have taken the biggest jump, seconded by the increased cost of marketing, which may be attributable to the increased investment in marketing practices which have developed in the last twenty years, as much as the increased cost of the marketing itself.

Venues of representation

One of the major issues for many craftspeople is that of representation. Working alone in a studio is consonant with the inner drive to make art/craft, and implies devotion to the process of creating,

but answers neither the need for income nor the need for recognition from the outside world. These issues of exhibition and sale of work present different challenges, complicated by the fact that art by its very nature is always in the process of creating its own demand: there is rarely a call for specific artwork until that artwork has been made public enough for demand to develop. there is no generic or practical need for non-functional work, and the needs for functional work have been provided for by commercial industry since the Industrial Revolution. However, in our survey, 82% of the respondents stated that they had exhibited within the past 12 months.

Once the needs both for sale of work and for public attention are recognized, and representation is acknowledged as a tool for both, there remains the question of the most effective means of representation.

In response to "Who represents you?" 73% of the respondents represented themselves, 53% were represented by a gallery, 11% were represented by a spouse, and 11% were represented by an agent.

#### Age first represented

The respondents got started in the marketplace relatively early: the largest percentage (36%) indicated that they were first represented in the market between the ages of 18-25, and 33% indicated the ages of 26-35. The third largest group (12%) entered the marketplace between the ages of 36-45.

#### Fairs, exhibitions

Another way of looking at the ways in which craftspeople deal with the marketplace is to find out the degree of participation in the certain activities (art/craft fairs, group competition exhibits, group-invited exhibitions, juried events, one-person exhibitions, unjuried community events, juried community events) during the last twelve months. Out of 999 respondents, 59% had participated in art/crafts fairs, 57% had participated in group-invited exhibitions, 49% had participated in juried events, and 39% had participated in group competition exhibits.

#### Business practices:

Looking at the business practices in which they engage also helps us get a picture of their relation to the marketplace. 71% of the respondents got involved in the business side of their craft/art work before the age of 35 (40% between the ages of 26-35, and 28% between the ages of 18-25). 72% of the respondents said they ran a small business, and 41% of 756 responses said they were incorporated as a profit business. 57% were not incorporated at all. As telling, over two thirds of the respondents talked about managing the production of craftwork as a small business. The median number of years for such a business was 10, with a maximum of 40 and a minimum of one year.

79% of the respondents indicated that they have been involved in setting prices for their own work for their entire career in crafts; and 12% indicated that it had been for almost their entire career. Another indication of business practices is the establishment of separate studio space. While over half the respondents had their production facility in their home (53%), 47% maintained a separate studio, workshop or private facility.

### Grants and Awards

One of the major marketplace issues for craftspeople is that of grants, as an additional source of income to support the creation of their art, either a specific piece or project, or to enable them to spend time doing exploration and research. Although the question of grants as artistic validation was not included in the survey questionnaire, it was frequently referred to in the interviews with craftspeople as one of the major benefits, often more important than the money itself.

23% of the respondents to this question (257 of 1111 respondents), or 21% of our total sample, indicated they had received art-related grants. 46% of those receiving grants had only received one, 46% had received grants from 2 to 4 times, and 8% had received 5 or more such grants.

Although in the above question, only 257 respondents said they had received art-related grants, when asked if the number of grants received had increased or decreased with the progression of their career, only 218 responded. 45% of those received an increased number of grants, 35% received the same number, and 20% have received fewer grants.

When asked if the financial amount of individual grants or fellowship awards changed with the progression of their career, 45% of the 194 respondents said that the amount of grants had increased, 38% said they had stayed the same, and 18% said the amounts had decreased.

When asked for the sources of the grants, 353 responded, of whom 37% had received grants from state agencies, 35% from educational institutions, 25% from "other" sources, and 21% from the National Endowment for the Arts. Listed under "other" were art colonies, the Craft Emergency Relief Fund, Fulbrights, Rotary, the GI Bill, and private foundations.

The range in size of grant awards was from \$25 to \$50,000 with a median of \$700. Since only 125 respondents answered this question, the figures should be viewed with caution.

## **EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

In looking at the educational training that craftspeople have received we began with an examination of the initial influences of childhood, continued with elementary and high school preparation, college, graduate work and other continuing education programs.

### INITIAL INFLUENCES

#### Home, Parents, Art

It is interesting that, as might be expected, 63% of the respondents participated in their first art experiences at home, and 60% at school. (Respondents were asked to circle as many answers as

applied for this question, so percentages add up to more than 100%.) Friends, relatives, art centers, and camp each received less than 15% as being the location of first art experiences.

63% of the respondents indicated that the members of the household in which they grew up were supportive of their explorations in craft, 22% indicated "yes and no," and 15% indicated that there was no support.

This seems to be in line with the finding that mothers were selected as the most supportive (48%), although we have no information on a particular period of time during which mothers were most supportive. This is consonant with research done in other art forms, most notably the work of Donald Shetler of the Eastman School of Music, who carried out a study of symphony orchestra musicians in the late 1970s, and found a high incidence of support from the mother (63%).

30% indicated that their childhood households had viewed art as of average importance, while 28% viewed it as important, and 14% viewed it as very important. 29% viewed it as unimportant, or of no importance at all.

A surprising 48% of the respondents indicated that no one worked in art/craft at home, 28% indicated that the mother had done such work, 18% that the father had done so, and the final 37% indicated that other friends or relatives within the household had done so.

### Family

#### Father's primary occupation:

Of the occupations written in by the respondents, 48% fell into the first category of the Standard Occupational Codes listed by the Bureau of Labor, that of Executive, Administrative, and Managerial occupations. Of those, 28% were engineers, surveyors and architects, 27% were in management or administrative positions, 4% natural scientists/mathematicians, 25% were teachers/social workers, lawyers or clergy, and 15% in the Writers, Artists, Entertainers, and Athletes category. 20% worked in technical, clerical and sales related jobs, with 67% of those working in sales. 27% worked in jobs that were service oriented, with 62% of those working in blue collar construction, precision production and fabrication and operation jobs. It should be noted that some of the listings were difficult or impossible to categorize from the one or two word description, so the figures should be viewed with caution.

#### Mother's primary occupation:

65% listed their mother's primary occupation as centered in the home, (Mother, Housewife, Homemaker, Parenting, Mom, Domestic Engineer, Domestic Goddess, Wife, Raising 8 Children). 9% of the mothers were teachers, followed by secretaries (7%), artists (5%), and health care workers (5%). Again, some occupations listed could not be categorized.

## EARLY EDUCATION AND TRAINING

### Elementary school

60% said that they had a few art classes in school; only 16% said they had many art classes. 36% said they had visits to museums, and galleries, and 20% said they had after school or weekend classes. It is notable that 15% said they had no exposure at all. At least one third of the respondents said that they had two forms of exposure, and 11% said they had three forms of exposure.

### High School:

By high school the percentage of those indicating that they had a few art classes in school dropped to 31%, and rose to 27% for those who had many art classes. 25% indicated that they had no art classes, 18% had one or more semesters of art.

### Early Validation

89% of the total number of respondents answered the question asking what educational experiences had provided "early validation." There was no further clarification of "early," which could be interpreted as either youth or early career. The choices of validation offered fell into two groups: validation from a specific person or persons, and validation by some form of public acclaim, either sales or exhibition opportunities or awards. While it could be argued that sales or exhibition opportunities are not "educational experiences," they are clear indications of approbation, and they do provide knowledge not available in other ways. It is possible that the validation from people rather than public acclaim could be interpreted to be more relevant to accomplishments during youth, while the latter might be perceived as being more relevant at beginning career stages.

Validation by teachers received 58% response, peer approval 49%, and family attention 44%. Sale of work was 38%, and influence by another artist was 22%, closely followed by validation from mentors (22%), and winning awards (22%) and competitions (21%).

### Early Resistances

The number of respondents dropped significantly to 838 (67%) in discussing early educational experiences that had provided resistance. Again, it could be argued that the following choices are not all specific educational experiences, but they are included here in order to group and compare early negative experiences. Generally the lower response indicates a positive rather than negative attitude, which was supported by remarks added in the Comment section, in which the positive far outweighed the negative. 32% cited lack of financial support, followed by lack of or negative family attention (25%), and no sale of work (22%). A large percent (21%) selected "other," which included an assortment of written responses, including the statement that there had been no resistances.

### Peers:

Given the importance of peers in providing validation, we should note who they were. 87% indicated that their peers in high school were friends, 13% indicated "others outside school," and 7% indicated artists.

### LATER TRAINING:

Artists in our survey began artistic training in their mid-to-late teens, the median age being 16, the mean age, 18; the median age was 18 for craftspeople in the IOA study, and the mean age 19. Consistent with other profiles of artists, they have a high degree of formal education, 42% with college degrees, compared with 46% for craftspeople in the IOA study, and another 34% with graduate degrees, compared with 32% for IOA.

In addition to the above statistics on formal degrees, we found that 64% indicated that they had a formal degree in the arts, 34% had studied with one or more private teachers, 17% had studied at a conservatory or professional school, 10% had studied in a technical or vocational program, and 10% had studied in a certificate program. Some respondents had received training in all these areas.

Other educational experiences respondents had in preparation for their work in crafts included the following:

- 72% were self taught,
- 43% had worked with a mentor or Master Craftsperson,
- 27% had attended a crafts school,
- 24% had experience as an apprentice,
- 19% had alternative schooling experience,
- 18% had community-based arts experience, and
- 9% had summer camp experience.

Of these 44% felt that the self-teaching was the most important post-high school art/craft training that they received, followed closely by university/college (41%), and workshops (30%). Art schools received 13% and mentors received 12%.

A very high 82% of the respondents had been exposed to professional craftspeople in their training.

The "Comments," at the end of the survey elicited comments about the need for greater education in the business area of a crafts career, the importance of self-teaching, and community based art experiences.

56% of the respondents selected one or more reasons why their educational training did not adequately prepare them for a career as a craftsperson. 64% chose "little or no preparation for the real world," 31% cited too little advisement, and 21% inadequate facilities or materials. An additional 33% selected "other" as a response, and specified a variety of reasons for their dissatisfaction, among which were lack of business training, being in a different field of study, and not yet being interested or sufficiently mature.

Many received additional preparation outside the formal system:

- 61% from the "school of hard knocks,"
- 43% from craft fairs,
- 41% from peers,
- 37% from friends,
- 23% from mentors, and
- 15% each from gallery owners and parents.

40% of the respondents indicated that they actively continued outside training in their artistic discipline, at least on a sporadic basis (36%). 20% participated on an annual basis, and 17% attended weekly classes. 17% participated semi-annually, and 10% monthly. While the question did not specify how many hours per week of study took place, we did ask how many weeks of training were pursued on an annual basis. While 34% received less than one week, 26% studied for more than five weeks, such as a summer program or full semester. 40% received between one and four weeks. 60% of the respondents indicated that they planned to seek additional training in crafts or crafts-related disciplines.

### Apprenticeships

Approximately 24% (303 respondents) of the respondents had served as apprentices, for periods of less than 6 months to three or more years. 48% had worked for between six months and two years, and 33% had worked for two or more years. 112 of the 299 respondents to this question indicated that they had served more than one apprenticeship; lumping all the ages together, the mean age was 24, and the median age was 18.

For those who did work as apprentices, 48% worked more than 30 hours per week, 32% worked between ten and thirty hours, and 20% worked 0-10 hours.

59% of the respondents who had apprenticeships felt that the most valuable aspect of their apprenticeship was technical knowledge gained, and 26% felt that it was the opportunity to work with a master.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Even though the 1979 Crafts-Artists in the United States (ED 226 111, V. 29) study used definitions of craft artists that were either too broad or inappropriate for our own use, preventing us from using their results in other ways, George J. Cerf et al correlated certain kinds of training, including apprenticeships, with earnings. In their study, "...it appears that taking college courses and serving as an apprentice have a positive and significant impact on hourly earnings...each month of apprenticeship leads to over a one percent gain in wages."

## CAREER

### Career Entry

While a number of artists have remarked that "career" is a very modern notion when applied to artists, respondents were asked to identify both the step marking their career entry, and their first professional recognition. While these two are very similar, the former is a specific event, while the latter implies a perception of acceptance that may or may not be accompanied by one specific action. For the step marking career entry, 21% identified the first sale of their work, 19% participation in their first crafts fair, and 17% as getting their own studio. Smaller numbers indicated a change in attitude such as taking their work seriously, or purchasing their own equipment.

In identifying the venue of their first professional recognition,  
36% identified their first professional recognition as the first sale of their work,  
30% identified it as an award or honor,  
25% a gallery show, and  
14% as winning a competition.

The mean age at which craftspeople began their career was 29, and the median age was 27.

In identifying a specific person who had been most helpful during the career entry period, 33% indicated their spouse, 28% a teacher, an additional 27% a friend, and 22% their mothers. Only 80% of the respondents answered a question about people barring their way to a career, and of those, 75% stated that no one had barred the way.

### Competitions

824 respondents entered competitions, at a median age of 25; 679 respondents first won competitions at a median age of 26.

### Peers

About three-quarters of the respondents answered questions concerning peers. As noted earlier, during high school, peers were 87% friends, and 13% others outside school. During the early career stage, 53% defined their peers as craftspeople or artists working in the same medium, and for 48%, craftspeople or artists working in different media. Family members were also peers for 37% of the

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It is unlikely that the apprenticeship climate in crafts in this country is the same as it was over a decade ago, nevertheless, it would be interesting to cross-tabulate apprenticeships and earnings among our respondents to see if there is positive or negative correlation, or, in fact, no correlation at all.

respondents. During their early careers, 30% of the respondents found their peers very important and 39% of the respondents thought peers were somewhat important. After high school age, peers served functions of friendship for 80% of the respondents, information exchange for 57%, and as support group for 45%. The function of healthy criticism received 37%, and "career advice/help" 25%.

#### Job other than craftwork, early career:

74% of the respondents said they had held a job other than their craft work to support their craft work, and 37% of those respondents indicated that their other employment paid to support their craftwork. An additional 20% felt that their other work reinforced their craftwork, and 16% felt that their other work intertwined with their craftwork. Only 27% felt that their other work had no relationship at all to their craftwork.

55% of the respondents taught arts/crafts at the beginning of their artistic careers, 22% in workshops, 16% at the college level, and the other 17% in assorted locations. Their major motivation for teaching was money (49%), followed by "staying in touch with people and ideas" (38%).

### CURRENT CAREER

#### Peers

71% of the respondents describe their current peer group as craftspeople or artists in different media, 57% as craftspeople working in their own medium, 54% as friends from adulthood, and 49% as people outside the art world, and 40% as family members.

Although only 34% rely on their peers for validation of their work, 48% rely on them for critical review. Peer groups were divided about equally among local, regional and national groups, with local peers slightly higher than the others (36%), followed by national (34%). In addition, 14% of the respondents defined their peer groups as international.

#### The Public

While the general public has been the most involved audience for our respondents, both in their early and current careers, when evaluating critical review, 44% chose themselves as their most important critics, followed by peers and then friends. These choices overrode magazine and newspaper critics, mentors, teachers, gallery representatives and collectors. Additional information concerning critical review was gained in our interviews with craft artists, most of whom said that real critical review in the craft field was sadly lacking. In our survey, however, 82% of those who had had some kind of critical review felt that it had helped their work.

#### Career Satisfaction

While 60% used the word "craftsperson" to describe their career, 11% called themselves small businessmen or women. The four highest choices of reasons for pursuing the crafts, however, were

"source of great personal satisfaction (30%), "inner drive to make art/craft" (29%), "love of the process" (17%), and "personal expression" (16%).

73% said they were satisfied or very satisfied with their careers and 89% said they would choose the same career if they had it to do over again. The following table gives a range of satisfactions and dissatisfactions about different aspects of our respondents in relation to their careers:

	v. satis.	med satis.	med dissat.	v.dissat.
critical review	23%	42%	26%	9%
doing the work	50%	37%	10%	3%
money	9%	31%	38%	22%
buyers	18%	49%	25%	8%
personal satisfaction w work	51%	37%	9%	3%
public recogn	21%	48%	24%	7%
status/prestige	18%	47%	27%	7%

### Satisfactions and Disappointments

The last two questions on the questionnaire asked respondents to describe the moment of greatest disappointment and the moment of greatest satisfaction in their careers. It was interesting to see these written replies alongside those questions asking them to indicate career satisfaction at this point in their lives.

Clearly the greatest disappointments centered around money and acceptance. No or low sales, not being able to make a living or have any financial security were prime concerns. Another version of this was not getting a National Endowment for the Arts or other professional grant, or losing the grant due to an inability to raise matching funds.

An equally important area of disappointment was the area of acceptance--not being accepted to a craft fair, a gallery, a juried show, not winning an award or competition, or rejection of a previously commissioned work.

Especially in clay and glass, some respondents' disappointments centered on having ruined the work itself, and there were several references to work or equipment having been stolen, studios vandalized, or work altered by the purchaser. Some craftspeople tried to illustrate their disappointment with a cultural system in which they feel their work is denigrated or not taken seriously, such as the person whose greatest disappointment was being asked "to produce an eight

foot replica of a strawberry." Others expressed frustration with being unable to translate their own vision: one expressed the greatest disappointment as being "When I can't get a piece out of my head and through my hands."

The same two areas--money and acceptance--provided many moments of satisfaction. A positive relationship with the market was very important--sale of designs as well as works, consumer acceptance, NEA grants and other grants and fellowships. Acceptance of work at a show, fair, gallery, juried exhibition, or museum were events marking great satisfaction, as were awards, honors, or being chosen or singled out--often for the first time.

Equally shared with these two areas of satisfaction was a third--the work itself. One of the major areas of greatest satisfaction centered on personal gratification, including excitement about the work (one's own and others'), project completion, and creating the work itself.

One artist, paraphrasing James Joyce's Molly Bloom, said her moment of greatest career satisfaction is "probably the completion of a body of work in the studio--you stand and look at what never was before, and say YES, YES, YES!!"

## COMMENTS

The COMMENTS section provided some important insights for us, especially since a staggering 48% of the respondents added comments after completing a 151-question, eight-page questionnaire!

The Commerce versus Art argument surfaced many times, with one respondent describing his greatest disappointment as having been formally introduced to the Internal Revenue Service. While many respondents expressed ambivalence about the use of commercial business practices, many others called for more business-of-art/business-of-craft training programs, especially at the college and university level. And some, because the equipment and materials of their specific medium are so expensive, yearned for some economic analysis of the survey results that will deal with these questions.

Serious issues of health dangers were raised, including toxicity, illness, discipline-specific dangers like metal dust, and medical problems such as carpal tunnel syndrome.

The Artist-versus-Craftsperson argument surfaced, evoking strong feelings and including comments where respondents clearly considered themselves one or the other, and provided us with their own definitions.

Some respondents, as with our IOA survey, brought up the important issue of the artist's relationship to society. Some suggested that we find out how artists contribute to their communities, and one, thanking us, stated:

Culture and the arts play such an insignificant role in American society and receives (sic) very little grassroots support.

Quite a few respondents mentioned the spiritual and intellectual foundations of the work and, for many, there was a very specific "story" as to why they became craftspeople. Included was one who recalled that, instead of the traditional childhood lemonade stand she set up a jewelry stand in front of her house where she sold her own hand-made jewelry. By the time she was ten, she was selling her work to three stores in town.

Some respondents reminded us that artists work in a variety of media, and that artists have often changed media throughout their lives; some have even moved back and forth between the performing and visual arts. For some, it is clearly the quest of being an artist; one of the craftspeople in the interview portion of the study told us that, if her particular medium (glass) had not been available to her, "I'd be an artist with mud, or sticks, or twigs, or dirt."<sup>7</sup>

The subject of arts in education and training received a great many comments throughout this questionnaire. Self-teaching was very important for many, including the games one played as a child, as was learning from one's failures and mistakes. Art for the young child and elementary school classes were mentioned as was the vulnerability of the artist/craftsperson because of the creative process:

When we wear our lives on our sleeves and offer a part of ourselves to the world, we are placing the fabric of our existence right out there in the open. We are saying, 'Here it is! How do you like it?' Once we have become someone, few people dare to tread upon our expressions. When we still aren't anyone, the sterile vultures do love to tear us asunder.

A seventy-three year old bookbinder who has been "in the craft" since he was fifteen perhaps best summed up the need for the future in a perceptive essay about a lifetime spent in the craft. Near the end, he wrote:

The Arts must be nurtured and not force-fed within our culture and within our educational structures. Creativity spawns a plethora of good, common seeds. It encourages and aids curiosity, invention, ingenuity, preservation, and often cooperation. All and any of

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<sup>7</sup> Interview with Mary Kay Simoni, February 27, 1990, by the Research Center for Arts and Culture, Baltimore, Maryland.

these traits would greatly enhance a social fabric that in this country is becoming thinner and more inflexible all the time.

Among other things, he calls for a "transference of knowledge from our great and increasingly aged craftpeople to the younger generation of craftsmen and artists. We should learn from this great legacy before it is gone."<sup>8</sup>

While quite a few respondents thanked us (one "from the trenches") more were anxious for copies of the results, not merely out of curiosity, but in the hopes that such information could be used for "lobbying and the general edification of the banking, funding, and granting institutions" which might be able to offer the craftsperson help. In addition, some respondents, referring to recent social, health and political crises, questioned themselves, saying "What is my responsibility?"

Some made no distinction between their work and their lives. As one respondent put it:

My work is my life. I make no excuses for my failures.  
I pay no tributes to my success. I find doing what  
I do to be just slightly less frustrating than not doing  
what I do.

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<sup>8</sup> Although the questionnaire was anonymous, the craftsperson Fritz Eberhardt identified himself, and affixed a copyright notice to his comments--nine pages of them. Thus, this and the preceding quotation are noted as the work of Fritz Eberhardt, October 14, 1990.