

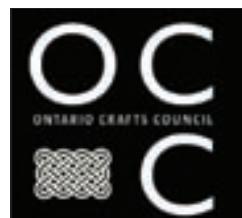


**Elemental Connections**  
AN EXHIBITION OF SUSTAINABLE CRAFT

# Elemental Connections

AN EXHIBITION OF SUSTAINABLE CRAFT

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**craft 2007**  
YEAR  
ANNÉE DES /  
métiers d'art

# Introduction

The Ontario Crafts Council is pleased to present *Elemental Connections*, an exploration of the relationship between craft and sustainability. The works are selected by curator Arlene Gehring, with the intention of making space for craft makers, the public, and the OCC to address vital issues through craft media.

The OCC plays an important role in promoting craft and supporting craftspeople by offering a wide range of programs and services, including the Gallery located at 990 Queen St. W. in Toronto, Ontario. The Gallery hosts members juried and non-juried shows, as well as independently curated exhibitions that serve to represent, explore, and discuss contemporary craft.

*Elemental Connections*, planned as part of Craft Year 2007, is one of the OCC's signature exhibitions that situate craft as an essential component of Canadian culture. Questions of sustainability, environmental impact, and going 'green' are a concern for all Canadians. Placing craft discourse in the realm of this larger discussion brings the OCC closer to the issues affecting the community around us.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to all the artists, curator Arlene Gehring, exhibition coordinators Janna Heimstra and Katherine McKellar, Craft Council president Mark Lewis and the board of directors, the volunteer committee, the support foundation and granting organizations, all of whom were integral to this project.

**Emma Quin**, General Manager



**Chantal Gilbert**

*Printemps*, 2007,

Lame en acier, bronze, dent de morse, socle en acier,

13.8" h x 17" w / 35 cm h x 43 cm w.

Photo courtesy of the artist.

# Sustain Maintain Nourish

ARLENE GEHRING, CURATOR

Curating a show around the theme of sustainability is at once an inspiration and a challenge due to the number of points of view this theme invites. Searching for basic connections, looking at the sources of the things we include in our material world, and caring for our environment, all in some way lead us to craft as an art form.

Sustainability refers to processes that do not destroy, and materials that will not be depleted. As applied to craft, sustainability is almost an oxymoron, for craft is rooted in the direct use of natural materials found in the immediate environment. This connection, however sophisticated, remains central to the evolution of today's craft world. In considering sustainability and going beyond the original survivalist tools for daily life, I have considered four aspects of craft: material, process, product, and paying homage to the natural world.

This show grew in response to the many permutations and combinations of these four aspects. Some of the work uses natural materials that have been carefully harvested and worked by hand with simple tools. Seaweed, gourd, onionskin, smoke-fired clay, bone and tusk, wheat, bark, wasp nests, branches, and trunks and burls from trees have all been used immediately. Dyeing cotton, wool, raffia, and reed and using more complex tools like lathes with wood move up the ladder of production. Metal, clay, and glass pieces have all gone through transformative processes which call upon other resources in working with the basic natural materials. A few of the works recycle pre-existing pieces, redefining the gathering of materials in the immediate environment.

Both craft and sustainability are intricately connected with culture and the way human beings creatively interpret life. Craft is rooted in a long history involving the use of readily available natural materials to enhance daily living. Pots, bowls, tools, baskets, and weapons were all made by hand according to the particular needs of a community. While the vast majority of our practical needs are now filled by industrial production, the urge to use local natural materials, to feel and work with them, continues in both functional and artistic craft.

At the same time, sustainable practices work to counter the way in which consumer culture reduces everything to the level of monotonous, mass-produced objects. Sustainability brings back an

engagement with local environments and their materials, and re-establishes cultural roots.

Contemporary craft is in this sense sustainable. Whether functional or artistic, today's crafts remain defined by skills and processes based in local materials, both natural and man made, and as a result serve to develop our cultural communities. In contrast to the processes and values of industrial capitalism, craft maintains the quality, beauty, and health of an object as primary considerations.

Environmental issues have become a pressing concern across the globe, yet discussions of art and culture are often missing from movements that promote sustainability. Craft has a unique role to play in this regard, for its special quality is the "beauty of intimacy." Craft provides a connection between art and nature by being aware of a material's source and season, and this creates a meaningful relation between one's self and the work that has a depth beyond representation.

The point where earth and art meet must deal with the need to use renewable resources, as well as develop immediate relationships between local environments and the public. The 22 craftspeople showing in *Elemental Connections* have been selected from throughout Canada, so that the link between sustainability and craft is explored in the context of both our regional and national communities. Essentially, the exhibit brings home the importance and possibilities of craft.

This show is dedicated to the artists who have created it and to their artistic community, which keeps our sense of the hand and eye of the maker, and the object that is the bridge between art and nature, alive.

# Anne Boquist



**The Tall One**  
2007, Bull kelp and sea palm,  
17" h x 8.5" w x 8.5" d / 43 cm h  
x 21 cm w x 21 cm d.  
Photo courtesy of the artist.



**Little Creel**

2007, Bull kelp, sea palm, shells and leather,  
6.5" h x 8.5" w x 7" d /  
16 cm h x 21 cm w x 18 cm d.  
Photo courtesy of the artist.

**Kelped 2**

2007, Mexican bottle gourd,  
bull kelp and twine,  
7" h x 9" w x 9" d /  
18 cm h x 23 cm w x 23 cm d.  
Photo courtesy of the artist.

Anne Boquist began weaving baskets with gathered materials in the 1970s. In 1984 she moved to a cabin on Orveas Bay outside of Sooke, British Columbia. It was there that her love affair with seaweed began. Anne wove kelp bread baskets for the Sooke Harbour House and when the guests began buying them, she knew she was onto something! Anne entered her first juried show in 1986 and won the juror's choice award. Since that time has shown her baskets in galleries in Sooke, Saltspring, Victoria, Vancouver, Calgary, Montreal, and Newport Beach.

Anne now lives beside Demamiel Creek, where her work has been transformed by the humble gourd. Her passion for natural materials continues. She now grows her own materials in a greenhouse as well as gathers them on the seashore.

"My work has received gratifying attention since first exhibited; however, I feel more attention needs to be paid to the material itself. It is the natural beauty of the materials that makes my work worthy of note. Every day a little more of our natural world is mowed down or polluted in some way. We all appreciate the beauty of nature but we all need to do more to protect it."

# Tara Bursey



**WING STUDY-Brewers Sparrow**  
2007, Onion skin, graphite and adhesive on paper,  
10" h x 10" w / 25 cm h x 25 cm w.  
Photo courtesy of the artist.



**WING STUDY- Bushtit**  
2007, Onion skin, graphite and adhesive on paper,  
10" h x 10" w / 25 cm h x 25 cm w.  
Photo courtesy of the artist.



**WING STUDY- House Sparrow**  
2007, Onion skin, graphite and adhesive on paper,  
10" h x 10" w / 25 cm h x 25 cm w.  
Photo courtesy of the artist.

Tara Bursey is a recent graduate of the Toronto School of Art's diploma program, and a former student at the Ontario College of Art and Design. Tara's artistic practice encompasses sculpture and installation as well as drawing, printmaking, and craft. Her work is characterized by its ethereal quality and an often obsessive use of repetition, pattern, and delicate sculptural materials such as eggshells, garlic skin, found garments, and paper. During her studies at the Toronto School of Art, Tara was the recipient of the TSA's Barbara Barrett Scholarship (2004) and Matthew David Stein Scholarship (2005). In the past two years, she has exhibited extensively throughout Toronto in such diverse venues as the Textile Museum of Canada, the Gladstone Hotel, Fly Gallery, and the Propeller Centre for the Arts. Tara's most recent projects include a storefront window installation entitled *From Russia with Love*, acting as Curator of She Said Boom! Window Space, and working as one-third of the Toronto Zine Library Collective. In addition to her work as a fine artist, Tara also operates actively within Toronto's independent music and small-press communities as a DJ, illustrator, designer, and writer. She was born and raised in Toronto, Canada.

The *Wing Studies* series is an ongoing body of mixed media collages using onion skins to create size-as wing specimens of existing bird species. Each study attempts to be as true to the real bird wing as possible in terms of colour, shape, size, and number of “feathers.” The result is uncanny, the papery skins evoking the gossamer softness of real bird feathers.

The delicate and ephemeral materials employed to create these *Wing Studies* point to the inherent structural sameness of different life forms (plant, animal, and human) while exploring both ideas surrounding taxonomy and issues of sustainability and endangerment.



WING STUDY-Brewers Sparrow  
Detail

# Karen Cantine

Ever since taking classes in metalwork and jewellery when I was 12, I knew I wanted to be a silversmith “when I grew up.” I continued to study with Florence Hollingsworth at de Cordova Museum in Lincoln, Massachusetts, through high school. I received my B.A. and M.A. from the University of Iowa. My area of concentration was metalwork.

When I moved with my family to Edmonton in 1965, I was disappointed to find I was alone in this profession, so I began teaching classes in my studio. Teaching not only began to cultivate an environment appreciative of handmade silver, it allowed me to remain focused on my craft during the years I raised my three children. My teaching now is limited to “open studio” on Wednesdays for 10 students who have been with me for many years.

These pieces are part of a series using surf and glacially tumbled pebbles. Because of their size, they are natural handles. The series is also an exploration of the deep draw press using a six-inch disc. The press, through a series of dies, forms a cylindrical vessel in a fraction of the time required for hand raising. The vessel is then further shaped by hand.

### **Pebble Pitcher #1**

2007, Sterling and granite,  
3.9" h x 2.2" w x 2" d / 10 cm h x 5 cm w x 5 cm d.

### **Pebble Pitcher #2**

2007, Sterling and granite,  
3.9" h x 3.9" w x 2" d / 10 cm h x 10 cm w x 5 cm d.

### **Pebble Pitcher #3**

2007, Sterling and granite,  
2.8" h x 2.2" w x 2.8" d / 7 cm h x 8 cm w x 7 cm d.  
Photo courtesy of the artist.



# Joanna Close

I am an artist from New Brunswick working in fibre-based media. I define my work in the context of fine art and use fabric and thread to illustrate my ideas.

I began studying at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design in Halifax. I completed my Bachelor of Fine Arts with a major in Textiles in 2004. I continued my studies, completing a Master of Arts degree in Textile and Fibre Art in the United Kingdom in 2006.

My work has involved depicting landscape images through hand-dyed and woven blankets and hangings. In my past work I have explored various aspects of the Atlantic Canadian landscape and represented those views through warm, woven-wool blankets.





**Fresh From the Earth**

Details

Recently my work has taken a more conceptual turn: I continue to look at landscapes and geography, but now I do so in a more critical way. Through this research, I define my identity as Canadian. In the fall of 2005 I began my Masters studies in the United Kingdom, and being displaced from my home gave me a new perspective on my Canadian nationality. I began exploring my own identity, pondering both my family and the space that I am surrounded by when I am living in Canada. The things that I do – my livelihood – become my own definition of what it means for me to be a Canadian.

Being able to experience rural unspoilt places and horizons that are not cropped or contained, and the proximity of the urban environment to the rural environment, is a defining factor in Canadian culture.

I think of my work as a way to externalize my feelings about rural communities and the people that live off their land and know it very well. I appreciate their sense of intuition and literacy for the land. I will continue to explore these ideas through my art.

**Fresh From the Earth**

2007, Handwoven, hand dyed merino wool, alpaca, and mohair, all vegetables are hand-felted wool, 36.6" h x 46" w / 93 cm h x 117 cm w.  
Photos courtesy of the artist.

# Paul Gray Diamond

Working in wood is in many ways like the map of one's life. There are many similar elements between wood and life. Like each day, no two pieces of wood are alike. In each lies effort; sometimes frustration and hard decisions; always surprises, sadness, and joy; and with a creative eye comes the beauty and awe of it all. It is in the seeing and the doing that the day is created and things are formed and invented.

Because wood was once a living thing, it gives us a history of its life and environment in wonderful ways, this is why I like simple, clean lines in my vases. The character of the wood does the rest.

One of my favourite woods to work with is the Banksia Seed Pod. From Australia, the seed pods are unique in the world of woods, and the best part of it all is that you don't have to kill the living tree to obtain them. They are gathered by licensed harvesters, so hopefully the Banksia tree will always be in abundance.

I wish I could be so confident about the wood that makes up the stem and base of the vases. African Blackwood is becoming very rare and many would say that I should not use it at all, and that judgement I will leave up to you. I use only the discards from musical instrument makers and the offcuts and slabwood from the milled wood. I have always hated to see things go to waste. To me cutting down a rare tree and only taking the perfect parts, which the instrument makers require, would be like shooting an elephant and only taking the ivory while leaving the rest to rot.

I waste nothing of the wood. Even the shavings from my turnings are spread on the trails in the forest that I live in, so that they can eventually turn back into soil on the forest floor. In a world of such overwhelming waste, I feel that letting something so rare and so beautiful be left to burn or rot is an even greater injustice.

Maybe if as a society we learn to waste nothing, have respect for all things living, and use our imagination to see and use what this world offers us, the future would have a much better outlook.

**Cycle 1**  
Small: 2007,  
Banksia Seed Pod and African  
Blackwood,  
6.12" h x 2.5" w /  
15.6 cm h x 6.4 cm w.

**Cycle 2**  
Medium: 2007,  
Banksia Seed Pod and African  
Blackwood,  
9.12" h x 2.87" w /  
23.2 cm h x 7.3 cm w.

**Cycle 3**  
Large: 2007,  
Banksia Seed Pod and African  
Blackwood,  
11.75" h x 3.13" w /  
29.8 cm h x 74 cm w.  
Photo courtesy  
of the artist.



Paul Gray Diamond

Phyllis Erwin



My work in ceramics is focused on primitive hand-built, smoke-fired pieces. I think of myself as a “naïve” potter because I am, for the most part, self-taught. Due to the lack of formal training, I have an uninhibited and unrestricted approach to clay. Within the limits of hand-building techniques there is an endless range of design possibilities to explore. The magical results of the smoke-firing process constantly surprise and delight me!

Phyllis Erwin was born in Winnipeg, Manitoba; lived in Toronto, Ontario, from 1956 until 1995; and now resides in Cobourg, Ontario. She studied Interior Design at the University of Manitoba, and transferred to the University of Michigan, where she graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Design. Other studies have included a summer school painting course at the Banff School of Fine Arts, and drawing courses at the Artists’ Workshop in Toronto under John Gould. She has participated in various clay workshops, including those with Tokyo ceramist Kimpei Nishimura, Ruth Duckworth, Paul Soldner, Merton Chambers, Bob Bozack, Jack Sures, and John Chalke. Her clay vessels are hand built using slabs and coils, then coated with terra sigillata, burnished and smoke-fired in wood shavings.

#### **Freeform Vessel**

2007, Hand built earthenware, terra sigillata, burnished, and smoke-fired, 8" w x 9.25" h / 20 cm w x 49 cm h.  
Photo courtesy of Cindy Taylor.

# Mary Fox

*Elemental Connections* stimulated me to develop new ideas and ways of expressing myself. I found the theme broad and inspiring and chose to approach my work using this definition of elemental – the forces of nature, powerful, and uncontrolled.

I focused on earth, water, and planetary life (including my own life), and their many interconnections.

Walking our local beaches with these ideas in mind, I found myself drawn to the breathtaking beauty of the sandstone formations that the sea had slowly sculpted over the years. Awed and inspired by



how the landscape is constantly being altered by the elements, and touched by how we ourselves are changed by love and loss, I began to slowly coax forms out of the clay. As I worked, I realized I was involved in one of the ultimate elemental human connections, using my body to express a thought in physical form.

Born in 1959 in Fredericton, New Brunswick. Mary is self-taught as a ceramic artist. Introduced to ceramics at age 13 in Victoria, British Columbia. She knew very quickly this would be her life's work and pleasure. Mary has worked solely as a potter since 1979, creating both functional and purely decorative works. She resides in Ladysmith, British Columbia.

**Elemental Connection**  
2007, Earthenware, terra sigillata, crawl glazes, oxidation,  
44.4" h x 15.7" w x 11.4" d / 29 cm  
h x 40 cm w x 29 cm d.  
Photo courtesy of Janet Dwyer Photography.



**Primeval Eruption**

2006, Earthenware, terra sigillata, lithium compound, oxidation, mounted in Vancouver Island sandstone, 21" h x 8.7" w x 5.3" d / 53 cm h x 22 cm w x 13 cm d.

Photo courtesy of Janet Dwyer Photography.



**Bottle Vase**

2007, Earthenware, terra sigillata, lithium compound, oxidation

20.5" h x 7.5" w / 52 cm h x 19 cm w.

Photo courtesy of Janet Dwyer Photography.

# Chantal Gilbert

An object that for millennia has served as a tool, the knife has always been associated with force and power. With its sharp edge, it is a weapon, a tool, a useful item, a ritual object, a phallic symbol, and an identity. The knife furnishes the imagination with rich symbolism even as it fulfills numerous functions.

My work as a knife maker covers both ends of the spectrum. I feel the need to keep a sense of the knife as an object, while reinterpreting its range of symbolism. I want to give the knife new perspectives. I explore a function of the knife that is too often shrouded in mystery: ritual, which adds to the practical object a spiritual dimension. My knives are less and less functional, but more sculptural.



**La caresse**

2004, Argent sterling, palissandre, vison  
Lame en acier damasse,  
29.5" h x 1.2" w x 11.8" l / 7.5 cm h x 3 cm w x 30 cm l.  
Photo courtesy of the artist.



#### Basse-cour diptyque

2001, Argent sterling, bronze, bois d'amourette Lame en acier ATS,  
9.4" h x 5.9" w x 7.9" l / 24 cm h x 15 cm w x 20 cm l.  
Photo courtesy of the artist.

#### Printemps

2007, Lame en acier, bronze, dent de morse, socle en acier,  
13.8" h x 17" w / 35 cm h x 43 cm w.  
Photo courtesy of the artist.

I entered the world of knife making by way of jewellery, a field I worked in for many years. I am now able to explore new areas of aesthetics with new forms of sensitivity. Viewing things in this new light, I want to bring out the essence of this “tool-symbol.” My mission illustrates my need to attach myself to the meanings of the object with a feminine lyricism not found in traditional knife making, which is essentially masculine.

Once the creative process is complete and the work is finished, a multitude of interpretations suggest themselves. My accomplice is matter, into which I integrate my cares. I act upon it through modulation, rhythms, and formation of the idea, thus transposing my vision of the world.



**Podospora**

2007, Felted wool Organic Finn,  
Merino, Jacob, Karakul. Silk fibres, silk  
threads, corn fibre,  
14" h x 9" w x 6" d /  
35 cm h x 23 cm w x 15 cm d.  
Photo courtesy of the artist.

# Andrea Graham

Using cleaned, carded, and dyed-wool fibres, felt is created by the addition of water, soap, and agitation. Felt may also be created with barbed felting needles, which have been used in industry for many decades but can also be traced back to their use as an artist sculpting tool in the early '80s.



**Perithecia**  
2007, Felted wool, organic finn, merino, karakul,  
silk fibres and threads,  
12" h x 28" w x 3" d / 30 cm h x 71 cm w x 7 cm d.  
Photo courtesy of the artist.



**Riverbed**  
2007, Felted wool merino, alpaca, romney,  
silk fibre, mohair and other yarns,  
25" h x 36" w x 1" d /  
63 cm h x 91 cm w x 2 cm d.  
Photo courtesy of the artist.

The art of feltmaking connects me to the natural world and ancient culture. During the very physical felting and fulling process, I often think of the ancient nomads, particularly women, and the sacred ritual of feltmaking that was central to their culture.

I love that I can both sculpt and “paint” with wool fibres. My options are limitless and, with so many choices, at times I do not know where to start! The fibres eventually tell me what they want to be, once I am patient enough to listen. My inspiration is the medium itself and the colours before me, the natural world, my own spiritual journey, and the empowerment of women.



**Birds on a Cliff**  
2007, Ivory and fossilized whalebone  
13" h x 7" w x 4" d /  
33 cm h x 18 cm w x 10 cm d.  
Photo courtesy of CAP.

# Emily Illuitok

Emily Pangnerk Illuitok is an Inuk artist born on Kurviguar Island near Pelly Bay. She now resides in Kugaaruk, and works in the mediums of sculpture and drawing. Her sculptural work is often comprised of found materials, which she then shapes by hand. She has shown extensively since 1973, including at the Art Gallery of Ontario, the Winnipeg Art Gallery, and the Musee des Jacobins in Toulouse, France. Her work is also in collections across Canada. Emily's two sons, Liederik and Michael Illuitok, are artists who likewise work in Pelly Bay.



Birds on a Cliff, Detail

# Vivienne Jones



As makers we intertwine the elemental with human gesture. Yet alongside rooted meaning embedded in the expressive nature of material, we now discern the consequences of our ongoing desire to express and possess. Hence one begins to explore how to encompass realizations of the finite along with the pursuit of creativity.

In my *Memento Brooch* series, the elements – whether precious or non-precious – have had a previous incarnation. They are simultaneously new expressions as well as subtle containers of a visible history. As such they function as small reminders that the past creates the present and the present the future.

Born in Wales, Vivienne Jones received her training at Birmingham School of Jewellery in Britain. She has resided in Canada since 1976 and maintains a full-time studio practice in Toronto, Ontario, as a jeweler/artist. Her work has been purchased and exhibited nationally and internationally. Jones' more recent work includes alternative material within jewelry and small sculpture.

**Memento Brooch 1 (family)**  
2007, Remnants of family jewelry  
3" h x 1.5" w x 0.25" d /  
7 cm h x 4 cm w x 0.6 cm d.

**Memento Brooch 2 (beach)**  
2007, Prior jewelry and elements found on various beaches  
2" h x 2.5" w x 0.25" d /  
5 cm h x 6 cm w x 0.6 cm d.

**Memento Brooch 3 (garden)**  
2007, Dried garden vine and copper  
4" h x 1.5" w 1" d /  
10 cm h x 4 cm w x 2 cm d.  
Photo courtesy of the artist.

# Daniel Kramer

**St Jacobs Knot – Original**  
2007, Triticale,  
18" l x 12" w / 45 cm l x 30 cm w.

There are a number of English designs traditionally called “knots.” The beginning and ending of the plaiting in this piece have been looped to bring them together.  
photo courtesy of the artist



Upon my introduction to the craft of corn-dolly making, I think what intrigued me most was the material itself. Every year, I hand cut the upcoming year’s supply of wheat. I feel a connection to those who, in the last ten thousand years, did the same. With the many dozens of traditions and designs that exist, the ongoing challenge is to borrow and then to build on those traditions. Coming up with original designs that “work” is often an evolving process; that is what keeps me interested and motivated.

While I have enjoyed the challenges of creating new designs, I have not forgotten what this craft’s original intentions were – to sustain the spirit of the fields. I hope in some small way that those who value my work gain a glimpse of the past while finding sustenance for their future.

Daniel Kramer is a prize-winning craftsman working in straw. He specializes in the making of corn dollies, elaborate symbolic and ornamental devices of plaited straw. Corn dollies originated in antiquity as harvest talismans. Images of the harvest gods would be crafted out of the last sheaf of grain cut in harvest and ploughed back into the soil the following spring to ensure the success of the next year's harvest.

Daniel was born in Pennsylvania but has lived most of his life in St. Jacobs, Ontario. Today, he plies his trade as a straw worker in the silos in St. Jacobs, where he has operated a shop/studio, The Top Drawer, since 1979. Daniel has been recognized numerous times for his work at shows around Ontario. He has instructed at the Haliburton School of Fine Arts and conducts workshops twice annually in St Jacobs.



**African Fringe – Traditional**  
Durum Wheat, 11" l x 13" w / 28 cm l x 33 cm w.

There are endless pattern possibilities with this ancient design.  
The straws and heads are actually caged in this piece.  
photo courtesy of the artist

# Nancy Latchford



## **Interwoven**

2007, Cotton cording, braided sea grass, dyed raffia, dyed threads, cork, dyed round reed, wire, 13" h x 12" w / 33 cm h x 30 cm w. Photo courtesy of the artist.

I make baskets. It is a simple item, useful, necessary, and an indispensable companion, an integral element of all cultures. Space is contained, and can be used, saved, stored, needed, wanted, made holy. By wrapping it up, we now have ownership. The materials used are whatever is available. It has always been this way with making a basket. Starting with the traditional method of coiling, an ancient practice, I wrap, bind, curve, twist, fold, bend, and stitch form. The process is the layering of colours, of materials, of techniques, and of creating new techniques. This is commitment of the form to pattern, colour, and texture. The continuous line within the overall structure and its relationship to the inner space captures this union. My sense of me as mother, protector, nester, and I believe that the whole of everything is a container.



**Interwoven**  
Detail

Nancy Latchford

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# Ryan Legassicke

Ryan Legassicke is a contemporary Canadian artist whose practice investigates the ways in which ideas are communicated through various processes of sculpture, drawing, and photography. How our experience with representations informs and affects our experience with actual things (and vice versa) is a central theme of his work. Ryan was born in Toronto, Ontario, in 1979 and grew up in the neighboring suburb of Pickering. He currently lives and works in Pickering and Buffalo, NY, where he is beginning work on an MFA at the State University of New York at Buffalo.

Ryan studied at the Alberta College of Art & Design in Calgary, Alberta, graduating with a BFA in 2002. He also studied at Sheridan College in Oakville, Ontario (dip. 2000). Recent exhibitions include *Whisper and Clang* at Harbourfront Centre, Toronto (2007), *Ryan Legassicke & Greg Forrest* at Station Gallery in Whitby (2007), and *Everyday Living and Other Helpful Hints* at LOOP gallery in Toronto (2006). From 2000-01 Ryan's work was included in the exhibition *Looking Forward* (curated by Paul Greenhaugh) which visited several destinations, including The McMaster Museum of Art in Hamilton. Ryan has also participated in a number of off-site exhibitions, including *Come Up to My Room* (installations in hotel rooms at the Gladstone Hotel in Toronto, 2005, 2006) and *Alley Jaunt* (installations in garages and alleys in Toronto, 2005).

Ryan has work in the permanent collection of The Thunder Bay Art Gallery (2002). Awards include best sculpture and best of show for an installation/performance at the Toronto Outdoor Art Exhibition (2001). Recently Ryan worked as an assistant to British sculptor David Nash in Lewes, England, and at his studio in Bleanau Ffestiniog, North Wales, UK (2007). Images of Ryan's work have been featured in publications such as Metropolis Magazine (New York, 2005) and Azure Magazine (Toronto, 2005). In 2004 he self-published a flip book which was exhibited along with a corresponding glass sculpture and paintings at the Toronto Outdoor Art Exhibition.

**Walking Chair**

2007, Driftwood legs and reclaimed components,  
39.5" h x 16.37" w x 16.75" d / 40 cm h x 41 cm w x 42 cm d.  
Photo courtesy of the artist.



# Julie Lockau



I begin to reconstruct my environment into quilts (wall tapestries) and gain a feeling for a particular landscape and how it can be interpreted to yield itself into an image. Quilts have traditionally a sense of home, security, comfort, and warmth about them. I would describe the land around me in the same way. When I combine these properties with the natural properties of smell, touch, and warm earthy colours, a quilt of found indigenous materials is a serene, quiet piece of work for eyes and soul.

In past times our grandmothers sewed by hand. This tradition is not forgotten, and all of the quilts I make are hand sewn, often with bright-coloured thread to draw attention to the detail and care that goes into each work.

The natural materials I use are a versatile resource that could be easily overlooked or discarded. Collecting materials demands a store of knowledge regarding where they are likely to be found. Their harvest is seasonal and

## **The Homemaker**

2007, Wasp nest paper and apple tree branch, 45" h x 19" w x 4" d / 114 cm h x 48 cm w x 10 d cm,  
Photo courtesy of the artist.

specific. For example, birch bark should be harvested in June/July, white fur is harvested in May, bracken fern and swamp tail are collected in October.

Once the materials are collected, the preparation begins, such as pressing flat the barks or drying materials before use. Untried materials are prepared in various ways to best find their strengths and colour changes. Some materials drastically change in sunlight (striped maple), while swamp horsetails need to be stuffed with fern to give stability while I sew.

After my materials are preserved, often a year's supply, I begin to fabricate the tapestries. These tapestries closely reflect traditional pieced quilt patterns, with subtle textures and a natural variety of colours revealing a level of aesthetic refinement not normally associated with wild plant material. Although thought of as simple and commonplace they are actually quite complex.

**Seventy-one Boxes  
and Twenty-one Flowers**  
2007, Hand-folded birch  
bark, roped grass, thread,  
38" h x 17" w 2" d /  
96 cm h x 43 cm w x 5 cm d.  
Photo courtesy of the artist.



# Kirk McEathron

Kirk McEathron was born and raised on the border of Algonquin Park, Ontario, and has been employed in the park as a canoe ranger since 1975. In 1985 he met a local wood turner who introduced him to wood crafting. though he initially learned wood turning on a lathe, Kirk was soon drawn to the free form shapes attained by hand carving.

Since 1985 Kirk has produced hand-carved wooden vessels. As a self-taught artist, he gains experience with each new burl that he carves. As no two burls are identical, there is no formula to follow. Limited pieces are created each year and sold to private collectors.

“Each burl is unique – having its own quality and character. I select individual burls for the possibilities they hold. Through careful hand carving, the bulky, unrefined surface takes on a fluid, almost translucent quality and uncovers the hidden grain below.”



**Spalted Yellow Birch Burl**  
2007, Tung oil finish,  
17" l x 11" w x 8" d /  
43 cm l x 28 cm w x 20 cm d.  
Photo courtesy of the artist.

# Les Manning

The ceramic works by Les Manning find inspiration from ceramic history but are more directly about the dynamic landscape of the Canadian Rocky Mountains. By combining a number of different clay bodies in a specific arrangement based on knowledge of the landscape, then throwing and altering these forms, the techniques applied create a very personal artistic result. The combining of these disparate materials causes stress in the ceramic process similar to the natural forces that created the landscape from which these pieces were inspired.

The objects break with ceramic tradition in that they are responding more to the influence of nature than to the formal histories of the ceramic process. This aesthetic context gives the work a strong “sense of place.” Using the post-firing techniques of sandblasting and the application of silver amalgam, the surfaces are reduced to the cooler colours of a winter landscape with the silver inlays highlighting the stress fractures. These methods allow each piece to be treated as elegantly, subtly, or informally as is deemed suitable. Although the vessels, bowls, and plates are loosely based on an historical context, the interpretation of these forms gives them a new and more contemporary identity. The artist works from inner feelings and intuitive choices to explore new growth in forms not unrelated to the past, but very much about his present.

## **Ice Dam**

2007, 8” h x 8” w x 12” l / 20 cm h x 20 cm w x 31 cm l.

This work is made of laminated stonewares and porcelain, using a highly textured dark clay for foreground, two lighter grey clays with less texture for mid-ground and finally porcelain for background. These clays along with coloured accents (stain added to porcelain) are composed, thrown and altered, glazed with celadon, and fired in reduction to 2300 F with post-fire sandblasted surface and silver amalgam to highlight the stress fractures.

Photo courtesy of the artist.



Les Manning

# Catherine Paleczny

In my most recent work I am concerned with investigating the tension created in my objects by contrasting organic and human-made forms. I am interested in dealing with surface texture and material that references the exterior coatings of organisms. The current approach to my work has developed out of a more surface sensitive (and material sensitive) appeal. Rather than observing my natural sources directly, I instead look to my own personal experiences in interacting within the organic realm. Through this process I am able to inject my personal response to an organic element.

Each design is conceived from nature by combining organic networks of textural and architectural elements that aid in formulating the metamorphosis of the original specimen. The act of combining botanical, ambiguous elements in an architectural fashion helps to create something familiar yet at times somewhat unrecognizable. The use of rhythmic organization can be compared to that of the nature of laying bricks or building supports for walls. These actions aid in the organization of patterns and multiples. Through this technique it is my intention to encapsulate or define a space rather than create mere shapes or forms.



**Petaliferousnook**  
2007, Porcelain, 14" h x 12" w x 10" d /  
36 cm h x 30 cm w x 25 cm d.  
Photo courtesy of the artist.



**Morskibud**

2007, Porcelain,  
5' l x 22" h x 3" d / 13 cm l x 56 cm h x 8 cm d.  
Photo courtesy of the artist.

My work is devoted to the microcosms of the organic world and through my personal hybridization I aim to create a new visual language. The sculptural installations fuse organic crossbreeds in order to establish a new environment that focuses on the integration of bulbous shapes, projections, and carved incisions.

# Bernadette Pratt

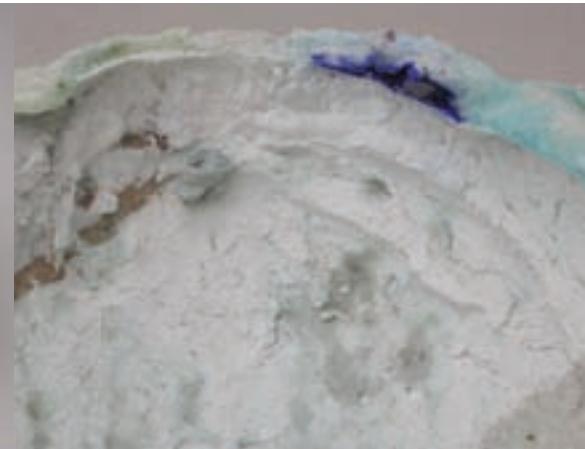


**Fossil**

2007, Egyptian Paste,  
12" h x 8" d / 30 cm h x 20 cm.  
Photo courtesy of the artist.



**Frost**  
2007, Egyptian Paste,  
4" h x 10" d / 10 cm h x 25 cm d.  
Photo courtesy of the artist.



**Frost**  
Detail

In my work I want to investigate traditional methods in ceramics and combine these with aspects of the natural world. It is the calm and chaos of nature that I find stimulating. This seems to reflect the calm and chaos of my own personality, and indeed my own life. In my work I would like to explore these two opposites; the challenge is to integrate these elements, so that each has equal importance in order to allow the union to convey harmony.

The biographical component of my work is connected with my own changing surroundings. In passing through, I was forced to make an existence in the places I have lived in at each given time. New surroundings, impressions, and experiences have enriched my life, while at the same time I have always been aware of a risk of losing my identity and my heritage. Travelling has come to represent my path (der Weg) through life itself.

The ceramic heritage is important in my work because it establishes a link between the old and the new. The ancient recipe of Egyptian Paste is my link to tradition and represents that continuity. However, once Egyptian Paste is fired to extreme temperatures it transmutes and starts to have a new dimension. The unpredictability of this method echoes elements in nature's patterns. It is the juxtaposition of the calm and chaos that fuels my artistic ambition. To fuse both in my work is my aim.

# Ann Schneider

Mark Twain once said that golf is the perfect way to ruin a good walk. Unlike golf, creating bentwood furniture and garden structures is the perfect way to enrich a good walk and in fact encourages me to take many walks. As I explore our property on the Niagara Escarpment in Ontario and marvel at the way nature combines curves, bends, twists, and straight lines, I think of how this can be incorporated into simple yet beautiful and functional pieces for the home and garden. I work with what our environment provides, whether it be dogwood, willow, maple, birch, twigs, ironwood, cedar, apple, bark, or grasses. I gather selectively to ensure that I do no harm and that the shrubs can continue to regenerate. The various textures, colours, and properties of the materials I use allow me to make pieces that are unique, graceful, and soothing. I enjoy maintaining the integrity of these natural materials while I make pieces that are truly functional.

I continue to explore different ways of working with natural materials, as well as combining wood with hand weaving and wood with ceramics in collaborative pieces that I have done with potters Kate McLaren and Hartley Woodside.

## **Maple Arbour**

2007, 8' 7" h x 4' 9" w x 30" d / 262 cm h x 145 cm w x 76 cm d.

The arbour is built using red and silver maple from the road allowances of our property. This is wood that would be knocked down by the snowplough or cut down by the township to allow access. A vine made of pagoda (alternate leaf) dogwood winds through the structure. The arbour is oiled with a combination of boiled linseed oil and pinesap, an environmentally friendly finish.

Photo courtesy of the artist.



# Don Stinson

My goal is to create a piece in such a way that you can experience a bit of the Canadian wilderness in your home. I strive to reflect and retain the organic origins of the material. Traces of tree bark, the run of the grain, a vivid colouring, natural decay marks, even drilled scar holes from tree tapping for maple syrup are enhanced in my work rather than hidden. All my pieces are original and handmade.

I have been a self-employed wood worker for 25 years, after a degree in Anthropology at York and two years at Sheridan College in the Crafts and Design program under Don McKinley. My primary work experience before being a wood worker was as a high-adventure outdoor instructor in white water canoeing , rock climbing, cross-country skiing, and year-round expeditions into the wilderness.



**Wall mounted 2 legged oak hall table**  
2007, Wood, 31" h x 14" w x 48" l /  
79 cm h x 36 cm w x 122 cm l.



**Spaulted Maple Burl**

2007, 9" h x 24" l x 18" w x 4" d / 23 cm h x 61 cm l x 46 cm w x 10 cm d.

Photo courtesy of the artist.

Operating out of a studio space on our small horse farm in eastern Ontario, the studio produces furniture and vessels of wood primarily for the North American market. Our three children, two in university and one graduated, all work within the studio with their own product lines and are paid per piece. My studio work is combined with guiding canoe and kayak trips, and teaching white water canoeing

Highlights of my studio life include rich and famous Canadians and Americans buying my work. But what stands out for me is that Don McKinley, the wood master at Sheridan College, bought my work from the beginning, and that the Emperor of Japan has one of my pieces.

# Ione Thorkelsonne



**Arcadia reconstruction: from memory**

2007, Cast glass, wood, steel.

73.6" h x 17" w / 187 cm h x 43 cm w.

Photo courtesy of the artist.

Ione attended the School of Architecture at the University of Manitoba and was introduced to glass at Sheridan College in Ontario. She established a hot glass studio in Manitoba in 1973 when home-built equipment was a necessity. In the late 1980s she began an internal migration from the fast medium of hot glass to that most unspontaneous of media, cast glass. Subsequently, the sum total of her output has consisted of five major shows beginning in 1993, and the creation of 67 pieces in those 13 years. In these shows she has presented for us a world populated by odd and wonderful creatures, a world that stretched into a pseudo-paleontological or even geological past (future?). Ione has received grants from the Canada Council for the Arts and the Manitoba Arts Council, and has been nominated for both the Bronfman and Chalmers awards on several occasions, being named a finalist for the former in 2000.





## ONTARIO CRAFTS COUNCIL

The OCC is a member-based arts service organization that promotes the recognition of Ontario craft and craftspeople by supporting and developing a strong, talented, distinctive craft community and advocating on its behalf.

The OCC was founded in 1976 through the merger of the Canadian Guild of Crafts (Ontario, 1931) and the Ontario Craft Foundation (1966), and is registered with Revenue Canada as a charitable organization, charitable tax number: 11887 8511 RR 0001

Programs and activities are supported through membership, proceeds from the Ontario Craft Council's retail location The Guild Shop, the Gallery at 990 Queen St. W., and through individual, corporate and foundation donations and sponsorships.



