



A journey to the origins, artists and techniques of American craft

CRAFT IN AMERICA

CRAFT IN AMERICA: SERVICE

ARTISTS' BIOS

Sunday, November 2, 2014 at 10:30pm* on PBS



Ehren Tool, Ceramic artist

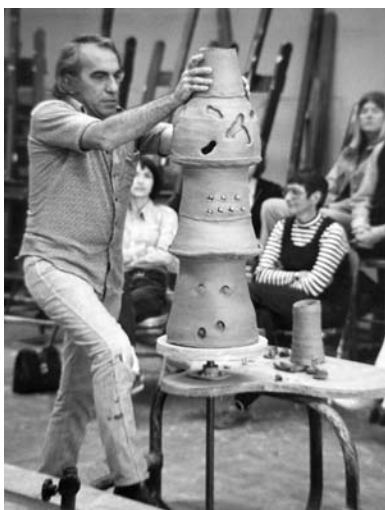
Senior Laboratory Mechanician at the Ceramic Department at U.C. Berkeley and Marine Veteran of the 1991 Gulf War. Ehren Tool says of his work, "The images on the cups are often graphic and hard to look at. You may be for or against a particular war but I think it is too easy for us to look away. I think we as a country and as humans should look at what is actually going on... I would like my work to vindicate the principles of peace and justice in the world. That is a lot to ask of a cup... I hope that some of the cups can be starting points for conversations about unspeakable things. I hope conversations flourish between veterans and the people who are close to them. I also hope that some honest conversation can happen about war and its causes."¹

Tool received his MFA from the University of California, Berkeley and BFA from the University of Southern California. He was greatly influenced by the American ceramic sculptor Peter Voulkos. Tool's vessels have been exhibited at the Oakland Museum of California, the Craft and Folk Art Museum (Los Angeles, CA), the Berkeley Art Center (CA), the Bellevue Arts Museum (WA), and the Clay Studio (Philadelphia, PA) among others. "Containers of Community: Ehren Tool" opens July 1, 2014 at the Palo Alto Art Center (CA). ¹ www.dirtycanteen.com/ehren-tool.html



Judas Recendez, ceramic artist

Recendez spent his youth in sunny Visalia, CA surfing, hiking and exploring an interest in fine art and ceramics. Recendez is a U.S. Army Veteran of the Iraq War who participated in 2 tours of combat before an IED explosion caused him to lose both legs in 2006. During recuperation, he honed his ceramic practice at the Walter Reed Art Center, then at the Corcoran College of Art + Design (Washington, DC) and now in his new home/studio built for him in Fredericksburg, VA by Homes for Our Troops in 2011. His custom home is designed to accommodate his special needs and his pottery wheel is adapted with a hand pump. His wife Kristine states that through his art he has found a voice - "He's served, he's sacrificed, he's healed through pottery".



Peter Voulkos, artist (1924-2002)

Voulkos is one of America's greatest ceramic artists whose influence and importance to the art world is undeniable. Exposure to great Abstract Expressionist artists Robert Rauschenberg, John Cage, Merce Cunningham, Philip Guston, Willem de Kooning, at Black Mountain College and NYC in the 50's, caused him to abandon tradition and approach ceramics differently. Aggressively slashing, piercing clay and using glaze as paint, he made work that was large and sculptural rather than functional or decorative, and by challenging restrictive conventions, he polarized the ceramic community.

Voulkos taught his aggressive and fearless techniques to students at Otis (Los Angeles County Art Institute) and the University of California, Berkeley among others, causing controversy and conflict wherever he went. His work is represented in major museum collections including the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, the Museum of Modern Art, New York and the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.



Pam DeLuco, paper artist

Paper Dolls: stories from women who served contains 20 stories spanning more than 40 years of service and all branches of the military. These stories represent the collective experience of women in the armed forces. Using paper created from military uniforms as a starting point, De Luco asked women veterans to share personal stories, donate uniforms, and participate in the hand making of these carefully conceived limited edition books in an attempt to change people's preconceived ideas of women in the military. DeLuco completed her studies in Notre Dame, IN and Los Altos, CA. After years of traveling the world to explore indigenous artisans and handicrafts, De Luco settled in San Francisco intending to live a handmade life. "It is my mission to surround myself with handmade items using raw materials and handmade tools from sources I can trace. My work is a lot about the process and the satisfaction that comes from knowing I am able to produce many everyday household items."² Besides a textile/book artist and co-founder of SF's Shotwell Paper Mill, she is the founder/art director for BAND-made Books (www.bandmadebooks.com). Her bees provide wax for the hand-spun linen thread for bindings and her silkworms provide silk for the headbands of the bound books. ² www.pamdeluco.com



Eugene Burks, Jr., Saddler, 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard)

Eugene Burks Jr. learned many aspects of his leather craft from his grandmother, a dressmaker. Trained in canvas and light textile repair, Burks worked in the Caisson Platoon Leather Shop from 1981 until he retired in 1997. He was brought back as a civilian to run the Leather Shop in order to continue the historically important work done there. He taught himself to make the leather tack and harness and standardized the practice that is passed on to the young soldiers. Everything had been made by hand until 2003 when the Shop started using sewing machines. There are up to 7 funerals per day at Arlington National Cemetery and preparation of the horses and caissons is a solemn task that requires perfection and precision. "The Old Guard is one of the most remarkable units in the world, and I hope to always be a part of it," said Burks, "It offers a great service for Soldiers that have given their lives and that's motivation for me to continue doing my best." ³ www.army.mil/article/97045/An_enduring_service_to_a_solemn_mission

*check local listings
Mark Markley photographs

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Additional images of all the artists' work are available at:

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