



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

# CRAFT IN AMERICA

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## CRAFT IN AMERICA: SERVICE

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

*SERVICE - exploring creativity, healing and our nation's soldiers and veterans*

Los Angeles, CA - CRAFT IN AMERICA, the Peabody Award-winning series, continues to explore America's creative spirit through the language and traditions of the handmade. The newest episode, *SERVICE*, part of the PBS veterans initiative *Stories of Service\*\**, is the story of craft and the military and premieres on PBS Sunday, November 2, 2014 at 10:30pm. From the origins of the Army Arts & Crafts Program and the G.I. Bill to contemporary soldiers and veterans, *SERVICE* documents the power of the handmade to inspire, motivate and heal.



**Ehren Tool**, third generation Service member, Marine veteran of the Gulf War, and ceramic artist says his work is not antiwar. By making clay cups by hand and giving them away, his intention is to draw attention to war and its consequences. Since 2001, Tool has given over 14,000 cups to everyone from homeless veterans to President George W. Bush. "I make work that you can drink out of and hold. The images on the cups are often graphic and hard to look at. I hope that the cups can be a starting point for conversations about unspeakable things." For Tool, peace is the only adequate war memorial. We follow the artist from home and work in Berkeley, CA to the Clay Studio (Philadelphia, PA) for a 40 hour endurance project, "Occupation" which speaks to his war experience as well as to his vocation.



**Judas Recendez** lost both legs in an IED explosion in Iraq. During rehabilitation at Walter Reed Military Medical Center, he refined his ceramic practice at the Army Arts and Crafts Center. "I came here to be treated and spent every moment I could throwing pots. Without this, I don't know what I would have done. The Center changed my life." Like many veterans, the G.I. Bill was important for Recendez who obtained a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Corcoran College of Art + Design (Washington, DC) and now works from his home/studio in Virginia. "I was able to pursue something that I never thought I would do" says Recendez about his new career.



The G.I. Bill turns 70 years old this year. One of the most significant legislations ever passed, it has allowed millions of WWII veterans to continue their educations to join the work force at a higher level. After difficult war experiences, many veterans yearned to create, and chose to study art making. Among these was **Peter Voulkos**, possibly America's greatest ceramic artist, whose influence on the art world is undeniable. After serving as an airplane gunner in the Pacific, Voulkos graduated college and got his MFA in ceramics thru the G.I. Bill. Today, Voulkos's remarkable work is legendary, bridging the gap between fine art and craft.

Courtesy of the Voulkos & Co. Catalogue Project



**Pam DeLuco**, a papermaker and co-owner of Shotwell Paper Mill (San Francisco, CA) is the architect of the project *Paper Dolls: stories from women who served*, a fully-functioning paper doll book crafted by female soldiers on paper they made from their uniforms. Describing the acclaimed limited edition book, DeLuco says, "It struck me that while a uniform is not meant to be unique, the individual's relationship with it most definitely is... Paper dolls have been in existence for as long as there's been paper. Most everyone knows what a paper doll is; but not the lesser known experiences of women in the armed forces."



Respectfully and finally, we turn to Army veteran **Eugene Burks, Jr.**, saddler and senior horse tack specialist of the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard) in Fort Myer, VA, the Army's official ceremonial unit and oldest active duty regiment, dating from 1784. Burks makes and maintains leather horse tack for the caissons that gracefully transport the remains of fallen comrades to their final resting place in Arlington National Cemetery and has done so for over 30 years. Burks explains "The craft is handed down from one generation to another. It's a privilege to do this. Every one of us here is using our skill to honor those who served this country. Each funeral should be done the same way regardless if it's Private Johnson or President Kennedy. The standard is the same every time."

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The Craft in America series is the result of years of advocacy, research and film making by Executive Producer/Director Carol Sauvion. "Craft is once again proving its relevance as people return to the handmade." Ancillary projects include hours of online videos and interactive learning materials, museum exhibitions, the Random House book *Craft in America: Celebrating Two Centuries of Artists and Objects*, and the free-to-the-public Craft in America Center located in Los Angeles, offering artist talks, exhibitions, workshops and a library of publications on the history and techniques of craft.

To view the artist bios online, visit [http://www.craftinamerica.org/tvseries/story\\_2284.php](http://www.craftinamerica.org/tvseries/story_2284.php)

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

<http://pressroom.pbs.org/Programs/c/CRAFT-IN-AMERICA/601-Service.aspx>

(Please scroll down to the bottom, there is a PHOTOS tab. Please sign in/register in order to download/view photos.)

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**\*\*About PBS *Stories of Service*:** As America's storyteller, PBS is bringing together multi-platform content and powerful conversations around U.S. military veterans under the banner of *Stories of Service*. The national programming content features compelling stories of those who have served and provides a deeper understanding of our nation's military history. Spanning across public television on air and on PBS.org, PBS member stations will be creating their own local content and providing community resources for returning veterans and their families. The *Stories of Service* initiative was announced in May 2014 along with a community engagement campaign for select PBS member stations and their local veterans and funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), called *Veterans Coming Home*. The PBS programming under *Stories of Service*, many with funding support from CPB, includes *Coming Back with Wes Moore* (May 13); *National Memorial Day Concert* (May 25); *Death and the Civil War: American Experience* (May 26); *D-Day 360* (May 27); *NOVA D-Day's Sunken Secrets* (May 28); *Makers Women & War* (Sep 2014); *Craft in America Service* (Nov 2014); *Last Days in Vietnam* (Winter/Spring 2015); *Homefront* (Winter/Spring 2015); *La Batalla* (2015); and Ken Burns and Lynn Novick's *The Vietnam War* w.t. (2016).