

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### National Celebration of Craft Comes to Puget Sound

*Puget Sound organizations join nationwide initiative, Handwork: Celebrating American Craft 2026*

**PUGET SOUND, Wash.** – As part of America250, museums, community art spaces, and creative organizations across Puget Sound are proud to participate in [Handwork: Celebrating American Craft 2026](#), a national initiative organized by Craft in America.

Among the more than 250 organizations taking part across the country, some of the local Puget Sound participants include Bainbridge Island Museum of Art (BIMA), Bainbridge Artisan Resource Network (BARN), s'gwi gwi ? altxw: House of Welcome, Northwest Designer Craftartists (NWDC), Museum of Glass, and Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture.

*Handwork 2026* is a nationwide initiative to honor the handmade during America's Semiquincentennial. Throughout 2026, museums, cultural centers, schools, and organizations across the country will present exhibitions, community events, workshops, and more to honor and showcase the legacy and vitality of craft in the country.

"The incredible diversity of handwork across America reflects the diversity of our nation itself and connects generations and communities," said Greg Robinson, Cynthia Sears Endowed Chief Curator at BIMA. "Each tradition brings its own history, methods, and stories to the art of craft. It's a joy to honor both the legacy of these creative forms and to uplift the new directions that artists are taking them today."

Across Puget Sound, each participating organization will highlight the spirit of *Handwork 2026* through unique programming:

**[Bainbridge Island Museum of Art](#):** Beginning in March 2026, BIMA's exhibitions will center on the yearlong theme of "Connected by Craft." Each exhibition in 2026 will explore craft through different mediums and perspectives, each with its own story to tell and history to share. BIMA's nine exhibitions will be complemented by a dynamic range of presentations, panel discussions,

workshops, videos, print publications, and other related programs and activations.

- Spring, March 6-June 7: *George & David Lewis: Deeply Rooted, Crafting Futures: Emerging Artists Invitational*, *Aimee Lee: Tethered*
- Summer, July 3-September 20: *Carletta Carrington Wilson: Object Lessons, Indigenous Craft, Cloth, Paper, Stitches* (Artists' Books)
- Fall, October 2-January 31: *Pratt Fine Arts Center @ 50, Heikki Seppä: Master Metalsmith, and Booking: Artists' Books by Black Artists*

**Bainbridge Artisan Resource Network**: From April 26 to May 1, 2026, BARN will host "Handwork Week," a series of workshops led by renowned instructors to celebrate the many forms of craft, from basketmaking to creative writing.

**Northwest Designer Craftartists**: In 2026, NWDC will contribute to Handwork with exhibitions that showcase the creativity of Northwest artists working in clay, wood, glass, metal, fiber, and mixed media.

- The series opens in April at Gallery at the Park in Richland, WA, where Vicki Piper and Ron Gerton will serve as jurors, then continues in July at Postmark Center for the Arts in Auburn, WA, where Barbara Matilsky will serve as juror, and concludes in October at Kirkland Arts Center in Kirkland, WA.
- Alongside the exhibitions, NWDC will feature The Living Treasures Project, their ongoing series of video portraits documenting the lives, work, and influence of the Northwest's most important elder craft artists.
- NWDC also continues its Zoom Member Artist Talk series, giving members and the public opportunities to connect directly with artists, learn about their techniques, and hear the stories behind their work.

**s'gwi gwi ? altxw: House of Welcome**: Programming to be announced.

**Museum of Glass**: Museum of Glass celebrates the handmade every day in its Hot Shop. Each year, the Museum's Visiting Artist Residency Program invites over 40 artists to the Hot Shop to create new works in glass with the Hot Shop Team. This year's Visiting Artist lineup includes Preston Singletary, Martin Janecky, Raven Skyriver, Kelly O'Dell, Sam Drumgoole, Anya Gallaccio, Kartini Thomas, Einar and Jamex de la Torre, and more. The complete Visiting Artist lineup will be announced in late 2025.

**Burke Museum**: This year, the Burke Museum celebrates the handwork of Coast Salish weavers in its new exhibition, *Woven in Wool: Resilience in Coast Salish Weaving*. Co-curated by weavers from the Coast Salish Wool Weaving Center, this first-of-its-kind exhibition brings to the forefront more than a thousand years of artistic weaving traditions. It showcases both historical and contemporary woven creations, including blankets, tunics, hoods, and skirts.

Visitors will journey through the seasonal cycle of weaving, from gathering materials and spinning wool to dyeing with natural ingredients and weaving intricate designs. The exhibit features firsthand stories from the weavers themselves, items from the Burke collections, 15 new creations — all woven with goat hair collected over 10 years — and significant historical items on loan from other museums.

"Craft has this remarkable power to bring people together across all kinds of boundaries—cultural, generational, geographic," said Grae Drake, BARN's Executive Director. "When you gather makers this accomplished and this diverse in one place, something extraordinary happens. We're not just teaching techniques; we're creating connections that honor our creative heritage while inspiring innovation. I'm incredibly proud that BARN can serve as the gathering place for this kind of transformative community building."

The lead partners of *Handwork 2026* are Craft in America and the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum. Learn more and see other participants at [www.handwork2026.org](http://www.handwork2026.org).

#### **About Bainbridge Island Museum of Art:**

Bainbridge Island Museum of Art (BIMA) inspires curiosity, wonder, and understanding by connecting people with the contemporary art and craft of the Puget Sound region. The art museum exhibits, interprets, preserves, collects, and promotes works of proven cultural value as well as new works by emerging artists and craftspeople.

The art museum is open daily from 10 AM to 5 PM. Free admission. BIMA is located in beautiful downtown Bainbridge Island, at the corner of Hwy 305 and Winslow Way, just steps away from the ferry terminal, and with easy access via public transportation or by car from the Kitsap Peninsula. <https://www.biartmuseum.org/>

#### **About Bainbridge Artisan Resource Network:**

BARN (Bainbridge Artisan Resource Network) emerged in 2012 when local artisans sought a collaborative space for learning and creating. In 2017, BARN opened its 25,000-square-foot purpose-built facility. Today, BARN operates as one of the Pacific Northwest's most comprehensive creative learning centers, housing 11 specialized studios. Each studio is volunteer-led.

BARN aims to grow and inspire a creative community through craft, learning, and service. Programming includes classes for all skill levels, Open Studio time for independent work, youth programs, intensive workshops with renowned visiting artisans, and community service projects that apply craft skills to local needs. <https://bainbridgebarn.org>

**About s'gwi gwí ? altxw: House of Welcome:** The Evergreen State College's House of Welcome Cultural Arts Center is a public service center, and our mission is to advance Native

American Tribal arts and cultures through education, cultural exchange, intergenerational teaching and learning, and economic opportunity while embracing and advancing relationships with Indigenous peoples in the world. Art forms range from customary forms to contemporary forms, with our artists working in a variety of media.

The House of Welcome opened on The Evergreen State College Olympia campus in September 1995. It is the first building of its kind on a public campus in the United States. This multi-purpose facility is designed to serve a variety of educational, cultural and community functions. Founded upon a vision of hospitality and service, it is a gathering place for people of all cultural backgrounds to teach and learn with each other. It was built in collaboration with Northwest Tribes. Its name, "s'gwi gwi ? altx<sup>w</sup>", means House of Welcome. Learn more at [www.evergreen.edu/houseofwelcome](http://www.evergreen.edu/houseofwelcome).

**About Northwest Designer Craftartists (NWDC):** Since 1954, Northwest Designer Craftartists (NWDC) has championed excellence in design and craftsmanship while fostering public appreciation for fine craft across Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, and Alaska. Founded by visionary Seattle artisans including Russell Day, Hella Skowronski, Coralynn Pence, Lizel Salzer, Henry Lin, Evert Sodergren, Irene McGowan, Robert Sperry, and Ruth Penington, NWDC was created to support innovation, skill, and creative freedom while building a thriving community for makers, educators, arts managers, and collectors throughout the region. <https://nwdesignercraftartists.org/>

**About Museum of Glass:** Located in Tacoma, Washington, Museum of Glass is a premier contemporary art museum dedicated to glass and glassmaking with the West Coast's largest and most active museum glass studio. Opened in 2002, the Museum has established a reputation for hosting impactful and engaging artist residencies, organizing nationally traveling exhibitions, and creating unique programs for visitors while building a growing permanent collection chronicling the development of modern and contemporary glass. Museum of Glass provides an environment for artists and the public to ignite creativity, fuel discovery, and enrich their lives through glass and glassmaking. <https://www.museumofglass.org/>

**About Burke Museum:** The Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture, located on the University of Washington campus, is an active research museum that hosts a collection of more than 18 million artifacts, specimens, and cultural belongings. The collections are wide and varied, and include canoes, Northwest Native art, archaeological tools, and dinosaur fossils dating back millions of years. With research and lab work that happens in plain view of visitors and three floors of one-of-a-kind items, the Burke is an ever-changing place of curiosity and wonder. For more information, visit [burkemuseum.org](http://burkemuseum.org).