



The League of New Hampshire Craftsmen considers three primary areas of expertise for State Jury status. As well as technical proficiency and aesthetics, the jurors evaluate "**Spirit of the Maker**".

Spirit of the Maker is what makes each craftsperson's work truly their own.

Spirit of the Maker goes beyond technique and shows attention to detail in every aspect of the work.

Spirit of the Maker is the catalyst that brings technical proficiency and aesthetics to life.

Spirit of the Maker is respect; respect for materials and tools; respect for those who have helped nurture and inspire you and for those who you will help nurture and inspire in the future.

Spirit of the Maker is part dedication, part humanity, part personal vision and all important.

Spirit of the Maker is the heartfelt need to simply make good art. Your creations must come from the heart if you want them to work.

The League does not draw a hard and fast line between "utility" and "art." Craft mediums have great expressive power, and the primary function of a piece may be expressive or decorative, rather than utilitarian.

STANDARDS CRITERIA FOR KNIFEMAKING

The category of KNIFEMAKING includes but is not exclusive to: hand-forged and/or stock removal knives of any sort; high carbon or stainless steel, fixed blade, folding, damascus, monosteel, san-mai, and knives for any and all uses; cooking, hunting, camping, decorative, etc.

League standards for knife making require that the materials used be fundamentally transformed by the craftsman, resulting in work that demonstrates technical fluency, integrity of intent and result, and a spirited sense of personal vision.

League standards require that the work be technically well crafted of high-quality materials, with every attention paid to detail and function. Knifemaking must also comply with related media standards guidelines as appropriate. Examples could include leather, wood, or fiber sheaths and/or cases.

Technical Guidelines

1. Overall design and form should reflect a strong, consistent, and original stylistic vision. The maker should present a body of work that demonstrates range and technical ability. All designs must be original to the maker; no knife kits or pre-shaped parts are permitted. Open-source designs are only permitted for folding knives (an industry standard), but all components must be made by the applicant.
2. The maker should be prepared to speak to all aspects of the work and answer for all decisions made about the piece, including metallurgy, edge geometry, ergonomics, function, and design. In particular the maker should be able to represent a functional knowledge of their chosen steel with respect to its advantages and performance characteristics.

3. Each piece should demonstrate that attention has been paid to all surfaces. Finishes should be consistent and purposeful. There must be no errant tool marks or lower grit scratches remaining on any surface, except where employed for aesthetic effect.
4. Blades must be shaped and ground purposefully. There should be no wobbles, dips, ridges, or gouges that do not clearly belong in the blade. If a blade is meant to be symmetrical, it should be symmetrical. Any transitions in the cross section of the blade (e.g. bevels into ricasso) must demonstrate planning and execution. The sharpened edge of any blade should be *sharp*.
5. Transitions between materials and/or components must be steady and deliberate; if a transition is meant to be flush, surfaces must be level and smooth, and if it is meant to be stepped the transition must be even.
6. The work should be durable and well made so that it has a reasonable lifespan when used for its intended purpose.
7. To the extent that any knife is intended for use, its design and ergonomics should reflect and welcome that use. There should be no sharp corners or projections to resist or impair the wielder's grip. The shape and volumes of the knife should serve the intended purpose of the design.
8. If the maker wishes to use damascus or other laminated blade material, the material must be either self-made or sourced from a reputable supplier. If the material has been purchased, the maker must be able to attest to the quality and metallurgy of the steel.
9. Any purchased parts (e.g. mosaic pin stock, bails and/or beads, etc..) must be of high quality and must be well integrated in the work. Purchased parts may not constitute the central design element of any piece, as determined by jurors.
10. The applicant is not required to submit any form of sheath or case for the knives presented. However, should the applicant wish to represent such items under the auspices of the League, it is advised that these be presented at the time of the jury; otherwise, the applicant will need to submit to the League for a New Product Review later on.
11. The applicant is not required to perform their own heat treatment, as it is a common practice among makers to send work out for professional services. However, the applicant *is* expected to understand the fundamentals of the process.

STANDARDS GUIDELINES APPLICABLE TO ALL MEDIUMS

Components and Accessories:

Components or accessories are parts that are not made in the studio of the juried LNHC member, which are incorporated into craft objects. Such components and/or accessories are acceptable and appropriate only if: they are of high-quality construction and materials; they do not visually dominate the finished object; and they would not be reasonably interpreted, based upon appearance, as objects created by juried LNHC members.

Any purchased parts must be of high quality and be well integrated into the work. While the League does not accept work based primarily in assembling purchased components (bead stringing, for example) exceptions may be made for work that demonstrates strong personal vision and transformation of basic materials through individual creative intent.

Commercial Production Techniques:

The League's focus is on work made by hand by individual craftspeople. Commercial production methods used solely for speed or high volume are not acceptable by League Standards, although exceptions may be made, especially if the following criteria are met.

1. The finished product is best made by this particular method, with a higher aesthetic and technical quality resulting than if by hand.
2. The work has an extremely high level of originality and expressiveness in design.
3. The original model for any master molds are produced solely through the concept and hand of the juried craftspeople.
4. All other guidelines for the media apply.
5. Commercially produced items are numbered and limited in quantity.

Craftspeople who utilize machine assisted production methods must maintain an extremely high level of originality and expressiveness of design. The juried craftspeople must create the imagery, color choices, and design.

Truth in Labeling:

Work made by the individual state juried craftspeople may be personally signed or stamped. Craftspeople are encouraged to permanently sign or stamp their work. If the craftspeople decides that signing their work would detract from the object, a tag or label should accompany the work. Labeling must comply with League state and juried standards.

All federal and state copyright laws must be strictly adhered to.

Health and Safety Guidelines:

The craftspeople is responsible for assurance that craftwork meets all federal, state, and local health and safety requirements.

Cultural Appropriation Guidelines:

Cultural appropriation refers to the use of objects or elements of a minority culture in a manner which reinforces stereotypes or contributes to marginalization and does not respect original intent or meaning or give credit to the source.

The League of NH Craftsmen does not accept work that demonstrates cultural appropriation. We will not allow the incorporation of styles, motifs, content, or other elements from a culture outside of the maker's own experience when used in a manner that is considered harmful, offensive, insincere or unoriginal. We are sensitive to the fact that certain cultural aesthetics might not be deemed objectionable and could be a source of creative inspiration that does not affect a culture in a negative way. Suspected instances of cultural appropriation will be carefully examined by League staff and our Standards Committee.