



League of NH Craftsmen
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NHCRAFTS.ORG

The League of New Hampshire Craftsmen consider 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.

STANDARDS CRITERIA FOR STITCHERY

League standards for stitchery require that the materials be fundamentally transformed by the craftsperson, resulting in finished work, which demonstrates technical fluency, integrity of intent and result, and a spirited sense of personal vision.

A successful stitched piece is made from materials appropriate for its primary function, whether expressive, decorative, or utilitarian. The League accepts both traditional stitchery and contemporary innovation, including wearables, decorative accessories, and functional and non-functional objects.

General Requirements:

Applicants should present a body of work that demonstrate range and mastery of craft, as well as individual focus. Outdated and/or worn work is discouraged.

1. The finished product must be made from high quality materials suitable for the intended purpose. Enhancements to the finished piece (hanging supports, garment findings, purchased components and embellishments) should be well made and not dominate the work. Thread color choices should be considered in the design of the object.
2. Precision is required, whether work is machine or hand stitched. This includes:
 - a. Uniform stitching and tension throughout the object. Appropriate fabric, thread, and other materials used, with no visible markings.
 - b. All seams and raw edges finished in a functional and aesthetic manner. Bulk of materials handled properly in layering or seams.
 - c. Consideration given to cut, drape and bias.
 - d. All corners of machine or hand stitched pieces should be precise and even. Stripes, plaids and other patterns precisely matched wherever appropriate.
3. All fabrics should be washed or dry-cleaned, and suitably prepped before use. Fabrics should be wearability tested. All washing instructions should be thoroughly tested. As appropriate, finished objects should be pressed, dry-cleaned or steamed.

4. Purchased/commercial patterns may be used, but their use is not encouraged. If commercial patterns are used, the finished object should transcend the pattern by way of material, fabric choices, piecing and/or embellishments to show the craftsperson's personal creative vision. Jurors may request a craftsperson show examples of their patterns, whether original or purchased.
5. Backing materials for finished objects should complement the piece and not be of a lesser quality, functionally or aesthetically.

Guidelines for Quilts – Design:

1. The piece should have a balance, rhythm, and unity.
2. If a traditional pattern is used, it should be creatively varied to reflect the maker's vision.
3. The quilting stitching should enrich the quilt. Stitchery techniques and fabric dyeing, and other manipulation may be used to give originality.
4. Color fabric choices should be consciously chosen, with attention to color values, visual interest, overall design, and movement.
5. Border, binding and backing fabrics should enhance the design of the quilt.

Guidelines for Quilts – Construction:

1. Mitered corners should be precise.
2. The binding should be a separate piece of fabric from the main body of the quilt.
3. Batting choices should reflect final use of quilt (i.e.: non-bearding, non-separating, appropriate loft.)
4. Tied quilts should be tied every 4 inches to ensure batting security unless the ties are strictly embellishments.
5. Bias edging is recommended for quality and durability for functional quilts.
6. Wall quilts/objects need not meet all washing considerations. However, all other guidelines should be followed. The hanging device of the wall piece should be clear thought out in terms of function, quality, and aesthetics. On the care label sunlight and "wear" considerations should be clear.

Guidelines For Clothing and Wearables:

1. The object or "couturier/designer collection" of the craftsperson should be personally expressive as well as technically and functionally successful.
2. "Collections" may be state juried. However, it is possible that component or single items within a collection may not be suitable for League standards when presented as individual objects. i.e., the scarf or hat of a three-piece set might not meet criteria listed above, when presented out of context.
3. French seams, bound buttonholes, lace trim, hand stitching rather than machine stitching, and other finishing tailoring techniques are highly encouraged when appropriate for aesthetics and function.

Guidelines for Surface Design:

1. Mastery of technique is required. This includes painting, stenciling, shibori, appliqué, stamping, batik, etc.
2. The work should show originality and personal expression, as well as mastery of technique. If surface design is the primary focus of the object, the design should reflect expressive qualities particular to the maker.
3. Materials and fabrics used should complement the process being applied.
4. The use of commercial pre-stitched products is strongly discouraged and not recommended in the category of surface design.
5. All dyes or textile paints used in surface design must be properly heat or steam set and washed. Professional steamers are encouraged for high quality dye setting.
6. Objects must be wash tested (or dry cleaned) by the craftsperson before marketing. Care labels must be clear and detailed, listing fabrics, techniques used, and care instructions.
7. Vat dyed fabric should be free of streaks and soda or salt blemishes unless this is clearly intended in the design of the piece.
8. If hand screened techniques are used, the hand screening should be precise and consistent, i.e., matching corners or overlays. If the design is intended to be irregular, it should be obviously intentional.
9. If using fabric resist, the resist must be properly removed from the fabric (if necessary) and not leave "halos", yellowing, or an unsuitable texture.

Commercial Production Techniques:

The League's focus is on work made by individual craftspeople. However, the League acknowledges that to improve efficiency and production, some craftspeople will wish to employ tools, technology, and other people to their best advantage. Production techniques used solely for high volume output may prove unacceptable for League standards if such techniques do not add to the overall quality and design, or if they are not performed with all the skill and craftsmanship required for League acceptance.

The end product should not be dominated or limited by a machine's capability. However the work is produced, it must speak to the individual craftsperson's creative spirit.

Truth In Labeling:

Work made by the individual state juried craftsperson may be personally signed or stamped. Labeling must comply with League state juried standards, as well as any Federal or State requirements.

1. Children's toys must be labeled in accordance with Federal requirements.
2. Care instructions are required.
3. Labels should be viewed as education as well as a truthful account of the handwork involved in making of the object.

Standards Guidelines for Juried Work - Applicable to all media categories

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.

Health and Safety Guidelines

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