



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 WOOD

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

The league does not draw a hard and fast line between "utility" and "art." Wood is a craft material of great expressive power, and the primary function of a piece may be expressive or decorative, rather than utilitarian.

Wood will be affected by seasonal changes in humidity and temperature, and pieces need to be able to accommodate all the extremes that could be expected. Applicants need to demonstrate a basic understanding of the principals involved.

TECHNICAL GUIDELINES

Objects should meet the criteria listed below:

1. High quality finish throughout the piece should at least be equal to any fine interior furniture.
2. Attention to all areas of the piece, including the back, bottom, and inside.
3. Good quality hardware, well installed.
4. The construction of the piece should be of the best quality.
5. The piece should show the maker's spirit, individuality and sense of good design.

Some of the specific things not accepted are:

1. Poorly or not completely sanded surfaces, machine or hand tool "tear out" areas, poorly applied finishes such as brush applied polyurethane, surfaces that are not polished, have runs, dust, etc.
2. Anywhere on the piece with glue squeeze out, machine marks, low quality hardware and materials, or overall lack of care. Even if a piece is done "in the manner of" a reproduction, nails, distress marks, or poor paint application will be suspect.
3. Look alike woodwork. This is especially true with toys and small items, overuse of the router with round over bits, etc.

STANDARDS CRITERIA FOR WOOD CARVING

The League accepts realistic, interpretive, and folk carving. League standards for bird carving require that the materials used be fundamentally transformed by the carver, resulting in finished work which demonstrates technical fluency, integrity of intent and result, and a spirited sense of personal vision.

Craftsmanship refers to the technical skills involved in bird carving: sculpting, painting and finishing techniques and their execution, including the bird, any habitat or accessories and/or base. Craftsmanship should be consistent throughout the entire piece.

Accuracy involves the correctness of a piece from a scientific perspective. I.E.: is the bird the right size? Are the feathers the right shape? Are the color and pattern correct? Do the toes have the right number of joints? Accuracy involves the natural history of the whole piece, all of its components, and the appropriateness of those components together.

Essence of Species involves taking accuracy one step further. It involves a thorough knowledge of one's subject and the ability to capture an attitude in wood. The essence of the bird is visible without a feather count, measurement of length or check of color. It is the hop and the cock of the head that immediately identifies a robin as a robin.

Artistry of a piece involves design and composition. Presentation, innovation, and creativity all come into play. Line, form, content, color, mass, and movement should all be working together to create an integrated whole.

Technical Guidelines

1. Painting and decoration should fit and enhance the form in a way that is integral to the function and expression of the piece.
2. Any purchased parts must be of high quality, well integrated within the work.
3. Each bird must be individually carved by the juried craftsman.
4. Mounting and display should enhance, and not dominate, the carving.
5. Realistic carving, whether songbirds or waterfowl, must reflect the species accurately.
6. Decoys are considered as functional objects, regardless of their use as decorative objects. Considerations of form, function and finishing details also include floatation, ballast, lines, and fastenings.
7. Folk carving and interpretive carving may rely less on accuracy for impact. All other requirements apply.

STANDARDS CRITERIA FOR WOOD TURNING

Technical Guidelines

Objects should meet the criteria listed below:

1. The Line and Profile of the object should not have anomalies and discontinuities that do not seem deliberate.

2. Edges that are meant to indicate a radical change in the profile need to be crisp, but not uncomfortably sharp.
3. Avoid edges that have lost their definition because of over sanding.
4. The finish should be durable, and appropriate to the intended function.
5. The inner surfaces of hollow vessels that can be easily touched need to be smooth.
6. With segmented turnings the segments need to be accurately aligned.
7. The chucking method that was used to attach the piece to the lathe should be invisible in the finished piece or turned into a design element.

STANDARDS FOR LASER ENGRAVING

The League of New Hampshire Craftsmen has an unwavering commitment to high standards of self-expression, vision and quality craftsmanship. In this current technology-rich culture of making, we continue to refine our standards that are applicable to evolving tools and practices while still maintaining a signature of excellence that represents the League and its members.

Regarding using a laser: the form and/or object on which laser engraving is done should be finely crafted; demonstrating clear intention, integrity, and focus, while being finished appropriately on all surfaces. The value imparted by the work implemented by the laser should be a minor portion of the product.

All engraving residue should be removed, with attention paid to engraving on end-grain, and any other areas where residue tends to seep.

The end product must be finished appropriately and professionally. Work should not be engraved after the final finish because that area of the work will not be sealed. Laser work that has tear out, fuzzy, or “hairy” lines is unacceptable. There should be no visible laser marks or burns that were not intended, nor should there be rough edges.

The craftsman should consider the texture, shape and line when using engraving techniques. Depth of the engraving can be varied intentionally, and craftsmen are encouraged to consider utilizing that feature to enhance depth. Additionally, after the initial engraving, the tool can be re-programmed and additional layers of engraving can be added.

The color and tone of the engraving can vary, and craftsmen are encouraged/expected to incorporate and master the skill to intentionally do so. In order to achieve darker colors either the speed of the engraver needs to be decreased or the power needs to be increased. It requires a delicate balance and ratio of the two factors.

Both the engraved design and the overall form must be original, intentional and integrated in the design, so they are synergistically informed and balanced. The final design is a combination of visual elements and balanced within a form.

Full disclosure of the process is mandatory. Signage is required describing how the work is made.

Commercial Production Techniques:

The League's focus is on work made by hand 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 craftspeople's creative spirit.

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. Labeling must comply with League state and juried standards.

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