The **American Craft Council Awards** are taking place this year, which means the library is busy acquiring new materials related to our most recent awardees. In this issue of *The Crafty Librarian*, we are excited to share a brief history of the ACC Awards program, what it takes to honor our awardees’ work through our archives, and new books about our 2022 Awards cohort.

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History of the ACC Awards

ACC gave out its first ever Award of Merit to textile designer Dorothy Liebes in 1970. In 1975, seeking to develop an ongoing program to recognize those who made significant contributions to advancing the craft field, our board of trustees established the Academy of Fellows of the American Crafts Council. A special committee of the trustees appointed seventeen artists, educators, and administrators in the craft field into the first cohort of ACC Fellows. By 1977, the members of the College of Fellows took on the process of nominating new members. Additional awards, including the Gold Medal for Consummate Craftsmanship (ACC’s highest honor), the Award of Distinction, and the Aileen Osborn Webb Award of Philanthropy, were inaugurated in the early 1980s. The frequency of the awards varied over the years, taking place annually for periods of time and biannually at others. Currently, ACC presents its awards program biannually.

Assistant Librarian Kirsi Ritosalmi-Kisner reflects on her work enhancing the library’s collection of artist files for the 2022 cohort of ACC awardees.

Kirsi Ritosalmi-Kisner  ACC Assistant Librarian

My first project since starting as the assistant librarian was to gather material relating to ACC’s 2022 Gold Medal and Fellows nominations. The ACC Library already had artist files for most of the awardees with materials such as biographies, exhibition catalogs, and work images. We’re always on the lookout for information updates, but we actively solicit for new material from new awardees. Each nominated artist’s file was updated with material they provided and additional information such as interviews, artist profiles, and gallery and exhibition reviews I found online. ACC Librarian Beth Goodrich has also acquired books and exhibition catalogs about the new awardees (see a partial list below).

The ACC Library has a vast collection of material in its digital collections. In the Artists and Their Work collection there are 4,700 images of works by craft artists. I was excited to learn how to add images onto CONTENTdm, our digital asset management system. In addition to images themselves, each image file has metadata attached to it such as the creator’s name, work’s title, and description. Images and metadata are loaded onto the CONTENTdm server, and they become available in the digital collection.
The Crafty Librarian

The biggest collection in the ACC Library’s archives is ACC’s organizational papers, and one of its largest portions, or series, relates to ACC’s Awards and Fellows. The series consists of correspondence, administrative, photographic, and publicity material relating to awards granted by and received by ACC, and the series had no publicly available finding aid, which is the description of the box contents. In processing this series I rearranged and condensed portions of the existing files and added previously unprocessed documents relating to more recent nomination cycles. I removed rusted staples and paper clips, which can harm documents. There are also some non-paper and oversize materials included in the series, such as Gold Medal award prototypes and a wooden ACC Rare Craft Fellowship Award plaque. I enhanced the existing finding aid’s Scope and Content, and Historical Notes. Another learning experience for me was to edit the .xml file, which is the behind-the-scenes “body” of the finding aid’s online version.

Highlights of going through these materials have included learning about the versatility and overarching skill and talent of ACC Fellows and Gold Medalists. It has also been wonderful to come across awardees’ responses to nomination letters, which reflect the delight and honor many artists feel upon receiving news of their nomination. In a similar way, the existing fellows’ nomination letters for future members of the college demonstrate the high level of respect and admiration fellows have towards their nominees’ craft. I invite you to browse ACC’s digital library’s Artists and Their Works section and dive into the images of awe-inspiring works that are presented there.

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American Craft Council

ACC Awards

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NEW BOOKS IN THE COLLECTION: THE 2022 ACC FELLOWS

**Journey of Hope: Quilts Inspired by President Barack Obama** by Carolyn L. Mazloomi

This 2010 publication by Dr. Carolyn Mazloomi is a compilation of 103 quilts inspired by the campaign and election of Barack Obama as the 44th president of the United States. The full-page images of the quilts capture the powerful and very personal expressions of hope and joy each maker put into their work.

**Patti Warashina** by Tahlia Aghily

This survey of Patti Warashina’s career examines the range of her playful and irreverent work, which is full of humor and socio-political commentary. Spanning over five decades, the book is arranged in sections highlighting different series of works, which often mirrored her personal life experiences.

**Preston Singletary: Raven and the Box of Daylight**, essays by Miranda Shkik Belarde-Lewis and John Drury

The exhibition *Preston Singletary: Raven and the Box of Daylight* depicts a version of the Tlingit creation story in which Raven brings daylight to the world. The narrative of the tale is interspersed with exquisite photographs of individual works and installation images of the 2018 exhibition held at the Museum of Glass in Tacoma, Washington.

**Karen Hampton: The Journey North**, texts by Susanna White, Stephen J. Goldberg, Gylbert Coker

Artist Karen Hampton considers herself a griot, or storyteller in the West African tradition. But, her storytelling takes shape in textile rather than oral tradition. In the 2015 exhibition *Karen Hampton: The Journey North* the artist examines her familial story, incorporating images from her parents’ multicultural ancestry, as well as images of noted abolitionists, who all shaped the story of the African American experience, and ultimately the story of Hampton herself.
NOW AVAILABLE FOR RESEARCH

The Ruth DeYoung Kohler Foundation Grant that the ACC Library received in 2021 allowed staff to process several smaller archives collections for individuals and organizations, as well as new materials for the ACC archives. Below is a list of new collections that are now available for research.

M. Anna Fariello papers
Anna Fariello is a ceramic artist, metalsmith, curator, and researcher currently based in North Carolina. She graduated from James Madison University in 1993 with an MFA in Studio Art and has taught as an associate professor at Western Carolina University, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, and Radford University. She has also been a Fulbright Scholar, a research fellow at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, and a researcher for the Smithsonian Folklife Center.

Michael McTwigan papers - American Ceramics magazine
Michael McTwigan is a writer and journalist currently based in Connecticut. He studied anthropology at Lake Forest College and continued his education in anthropology, art history, and linguistics at Columbia University. McTwigan was the founding editor of the magazine American Ceramics in 1982 and served as its editor until 1993.

Art Jewelry Forum
Art Jewelry Forum is a nonprofit organization established in 1997 to advocate for the international field of contemporary art jewelry through education, publications, events and by providing financial grants to artists and speakers.

Susan Cummins Gallery
The Susan Cummins Gallery was founded in 1983 in Mill Valley, California. Specializing in contemporary American art jewelry, the gallery notably melded the distinct worlds of fine art and craft.

Year of American Craft (Series 20, Subseries F)
The year 1993 was designated “The Year of American Craft” through a congressional resolution and presidential proclamation by George H. W. Bush. ACC worked with the National Steering Committee in order to organize events across the US to recognize, celebrate, and promote the broad spectrum of craft involvement in America. There were events and programs in every US state and also in Canada and Latin America.

We’ve updated the Archives page on the library website to include links to the finding aids for these and other special collections. Additional finding aids will be added as they become available.
REMEMBERING RITZI JACOBI (1941–2022)

We learned recently of the passing of Ritzi Jacobi, a Romanian-born textile and fiber artist who created enormous works from a variety of fiber materials such as sisal, jute, goat hair, and coconut fiber. She was part of the “new tapestry” movement that pushed tapestry into the realm of abstraction and included such artists as Magdalena Abakanowicz, Lenore Tawney, and Sheila Hicks. She and her husband Peter worked collaboratively for the nearly two decades that they were married.

Their work gained attention at the 1969 International Tapestry Biennial. After receiving a special visa to travel from Romania to participate in the Venice Biennale in 1970, they defected to Germany. The marriage ended in 1984, and Ritzi continued to work as a solo artist.

Images of two works by the Jacobis from the 1969 Lausanne Biennial can be found in our digital collections, as well as an article in American Craft about their first major solo exhibition Ritzi and Peter Jacobi at the Detroit Institute of Arts in 1981.

The catalog from this exhibition, and many others featuring the Jacobis, can be found in Fiber: Sculpture 1960-Present published by Prestel, 2014. Explore these resources to learn more about this innovative textile artist.

An oral history interview with Ritzi Jacobi conducted by Jane Milosch can be found at the Archives of American Art. Note that the interview was recorded in German.

ONLINE RESOURCE: MATERIAL INTELLIGENCE

The Chipstone Foundation based in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, is producing an exciting new digital magazine focused on the study of craft and material culture, Material Intelligence. Edited by writer and historian Glenn Adamson with contributions from writer and maker Carolyn Herrera-Perez, each issue examines the nature of a common material, making connections between art and science and the ways material shapes and is shaped by human culture. Contributing authors include educators, journalists, poets, designers, and all manner of artists with an affinity for material. The magazine is beautifully illustrated, is freely available, and can be downloaded.
Thank You to the Friends of the ACC Library & Archives

This list recognizes those who donated $60 or more to the Friends of the ACC Library & Archives through August 3, 2022.

* Asterisk indicates new Library Friend

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Learn More

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**Special Thanks to the Foundations Supporting Our Library**

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GATHERING IN THE LIBRARY

We’re looking forward to the Fall 2022 issue of American Craft, which is centered on the theme of “Gather.” While we have the ability to serve patrons across the nation and the globe, we do love to see folks gather in the library space!

This past winter, a ceramics class from the University of Minnesota visited to explore the many print resources in our collection and learn how to incorporate scholarly research into an artistic practice.

We are grateful to the St. Catherine University student chapter of the Society of American Archivists, who gathered in February for a service project processing materials in the library.

ACC Fellows Mary Lee Hu and James Wallace stopped in at the library on a leg of their cross-country road trip in June. They have been strong supporters of the library, both as members of the Library Friends and as material donors to the library collection. We were so glad to welcome them to our space!