league of N.H. Craftsmen signature of excellence
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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.

TECHNICAL GUIDELINES

Objects should meet the criteria listed below:

1. High quality finish at least 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 by today's standards.
5. The piece should show the maker's spirit and individuality of design. This includes toys and small tabletop objects.

Some of the specific things generally 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 the immediately identifies a robin as a robin.

Artistry of a piece involves design and composition. Presentation, innovation and creativity all come into play. Line, from, 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 craftsperson.
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, irregardless 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.

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 craftsperson’s creative spirit.

Truth in Labeling

State Juried craftspeople are encouraged to permanently sign or stamp their work and to provide supplemental materials that educate the public on craft and process. Labeling must comply with

League State Juried Standards. Craftspeople must comply with any specific legal requirements for labeling their craft.

Aesthetic Criteria

The work must demonstrate more than technical proficiency, more than reproduction of a recognized style; it should express the personal aesthetic and vision of the maker, and demonstrate a coherent stylistic development, with every attention to detail, design, function and finish. A harmony of intent, process and result is the measure of successful work.

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.

Musical Instruments

Successful League-juried musical instruments can originate in any of a number of media (ceramics, wood, metal, etc.). An applicant must successfully meet the standards guidelines of the particular medium in which the instrument is crafted. Refer to specific media guidelines.

The applicant will provide the jury with either a live performance, or the opportunity for jurors or consultants to play the instrument. Jurors will evaluate, not the technical proficiency of the performance or aesthetics of particular musical selections, but rather the extent to which the particular musical instrument is capable of sound that is consistent with other instruments of its type and/or the intention of its maker.

A successful jury result means the applicant has been approved only for the class of instrument for which he or she was juried. If the individual later wishes to represent other types of instruments as “League juried” he or she must repeat the jurying process for the new instrument class. For example, a successful “violin” result does not generalize to “classical guitars”. Nor does a successful “recorder” generalize to “flutes”.

1. Quality of sound. The successful League-juried instrument should demonstrate that the builder has technical knowledge of the aesthetic qualities of the sound produced by an instrument. These include loudness, sustain, complexity of waveform, richness of overtone structure, speed of attack, and balance of volume across the range of the instrument.

2. Musical accuracy. The instrument must produce technically correct sound within the context of its manufactured genre (other instruments of a similar type). This may include temper, tuning, and intonation, befitting the context of its design.

3. Technical excellence. The instrument must demonstrate high levels of technical craftsmanship and quality showing a thorough and professional understanding of that type of instrument. Innovations to the instrument should be justifiable (eg. contribution to the desired sound, durability of the instrument, ease of maintenance, ease of playability, overall aesthetic visual impact, etc..).

4. Repair ability. All instruments need repair and maintenance. The instrument must be designed and built to make this straightforward.

5. Materials. The overwhelming majority of the instrument must be hand-made by the maker. Instruments constructed from kits are not acceptable.