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Tennessee Craft Week Sweeps American Craft Week National Awards

Five Tennessee Craft Week Events Honored

NASHVILLE, TN (November 3, 2016) Tennessee Craft received five [American Craft Week STAR AWARDS](#) during its second year of [Tennessee Craft Week](#) (TCW). Led by the Honorary Chairman **Gene Johnson**, a member of the GRAMMY Award winning band Diamond Rio, this year's celebration doubled the number of events held in 2015.

The five top TCW events honored with the American Craft Week national Star Award include:

Most Innovative Event Concept

The Clay Lady's Campus, Nashville, TN: Progressive Dinner and Studio Tour

(Guests received handmade plates, enjoyed appetizers and explored the Co-op)

Influx, Nashville, TN: 12 x 12 at the Dozen Bakery

(Group event with twelve ceramic artists whom each created a dozen functional pieces)

Outstanding Family Event

Shimai Gallery of Contemporary Craft, Nashville, TN: Shimai presents: The Heart and Soul of Middle Tennessee, at the Bellevue Branch of the Nashville Public Library
(Seven demonstrations and three interactive workshops)

Most Informative Speaker

Gene Johnson, Honorary Chairman, Tennessee Craft Week
(Advocate for the value and legacy of handmade craft in Tennessee)

Outstanding Legacy of Craft Education & Demonstrations

Pink Palace Craft Fair, Memphis, TN

(44 years of timeless live craft demonstrations to nourish and sustain traditional crafts)

Tennessee Craft Week is a collection of craft events and happenings designed to connect and celebrate Craft Artists, the work they create and the businesses that support them. In 2016, hundreds of artists showcased their handmade crafts at more than 60 events across the state. Sponsored by the nonprofit organization Tennessee Craft, TCW shines a spotlight on the collective impact that craft has on our culture, community and economy.

Tennessee Craft Executive Director Teri Alea says, "Tennessee Craft Week provides a pathway for *all* craft artists across the state to participate by creating fine craft happenings, small and large, where

personal interaction between the artist and the collector provides meaningful art experiences.”

“As our craft artists interact within the community, visitors and residents feel an emotional connection with the artists they meet and become part of the economic growth across Tennessee. When artisans demonstrate their process and share their unique stories, a bridge is built toward better understanding and appreciation of the talent and imagination of handmade craft. This annual week-long focus expands the visibility of Tennessee’s craft heritage and its tradition of excellence.”

Alea adds, “Based on the increase of participating artists, the higher number of innovative events, and the level of excitement this year – Tennessee Craft Week is building momentum! I am looking forward to TCW 2017, as we continue to accelerate the success of the first two years, focusing on talented artisans, which is the heart and soul of our mission.”

During the October 7-16, celebration, “Arts at the Airport” featured demonstrations throughout the week at the [Nashville International Airport](#). All 14 Tennessee Welcome Centers hosted craft artists from their community to demonstrate their skills, and encourage guests to take a moment from their travels – to experience the rich tradition of crafts “[Made in Tennessee](#).”

Funding for TCW generously provided by Metro Nashville Arts Commission, Tennessee Arts Commission, Tennessee Department of Tourist Development, and Arts at the Airport.

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Celebrating fifty years, **Tennessee Craft**, formerly The Tennessee Association of Craft Artists (TACA), is a nonprofit organization working to continue and create Tennessee’s fine craft tradition. With more than 500 members throughout the state, Tennessee Craft serves as the premier connecting point for local, independent makers and their audiences through Craft Fairs, exhibitions, professional development, networking, mentorship and other educational programs. Visit www.tennesseecraft.org to learn more.