

Reading Public Museum
500 Museum Road, Reading, PA 19611

Ronald C. Roth, Director and CEO

Contact: Michael Anderson, Public Relations/Marketing Director
Phone: 610.371.5850 x231 michael.anderson@readingpublicmuseum.org

****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****
NEW EXHIBITION AT READING PUBLIC MUSEUM
EXPLORES CRAFTSMEN'S CREATIVE PATH

Reading, Pa. – June 10, 2009 — *From Raw to Refined: The Creative Path of Master Craftsmen of the Pennsylvania Guild* opens at the Reading Public Museum on July 18, 2009 and continues through October 31, 2009. This exhibition explores the craftsman's path as he or she transforms raw materials and creative energy into exemplary, finished works of art. It features works by members of the Pennsylvania Guild of Craftsmen and will be on display in the Museum's Central and Ground Floor Galleries.

There will be an Opening Reception on Friday, July 17 from 5:30 until 8:00 p.m., open to the public (Guild Members and featured artists and their families admitted free – otherwise, regular Museum admission fees apply), with refreshments available. Meet the artists and discuss their artwork. Details will soon be available on the Museum's Web site.

During a two-day selection, Kevin Lehman, the Guild's VP of Standards, chose 87 pieces out of 175 entries to comprise the exhibition. Among the entries is a staggering variety of handmade crafts ranging from traditional furniture, porcelain pottery, contemporary photography, blacksmithing and designer clothing to lampworked glass, woodturnings, one-of-a-kind jewelry and much more.

"This is going to be a top-notch exhibition — the work submitted was beyond my expectations," explains Lehman. "The three benchmarks I look for in any piece of craft are excellence in craftsmanship, resolved design and unique style. Those helped guide my decision making."

The exhibition is a mix of contemporary and traditional crafts categorized into three groupings: *From the Forest*, *From the Field* and *From the Earth*. The groupings highlight the materials used in the making of each craft. For example, *From the Forest* includes all things created from wood or paper. That includes furniture, carvings, handmade paper designs, paper cutting, etc. *From the Earth* includes anything that would be dug from the ground such as metal, clay and the raw materials for glass. That grouping includes a metal end table, stoneware teapot and large clay and bronze sculptures just to name a few. *From the Field* has pieces made from plant materials such as flowers or cotton and also includes animal sources such as wool or leather.

The exhibition is thematically arranged according to material sources and incorporates multiple displays to illustrate these creative paths. Displays include educational vignettes explaining the steps on the path from raw material to refined craft. Descriptions and images of the craftsman's process accompany each section.

Scott A. Schweigert, Art Curator of the Reading Public Museum stated, "The Museum is proud to partner with the Pennsylvania Guild of Craftsmen for this outstanding exhibition. We are especially pleased by the remarkable variety of approaches using the raw materials, and the number of craftsmen who are pushing the boundaries of the media in their work."

The Reading Public Museum is supported in part by grants from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and is located at 500 Museum Road, Reading, PA 19611. Hours are Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Friday 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.; and Sunday 12 to 5 p.m. Admission to the Museum is: \$7 adults (18-59), \$5 children/seniors/students (w/ID) and free to Members and children under four years old.

Web: www.readingpublicmuseum.org.

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Images available – Contact michael.anderson@readingpublicmuseum.org with request and technical specs