

News Release

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For Immediate Release

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PIEDMONT CRAFTSMEN'S 55th FAIR – NOVEMBER 17 – 18, 2018

Piedmont Craftsmen's 55th Fair will be held November 17 and 18 at the Benton Convention Center in Winston-Salem, NC.

The one thing visitors to Piedmont Craftsmen's annual Fair can expect is that their expectations will be seriously shaken. This is not your average craft fair. Those looking for fine functional craft will not be disappointed. Neither will those looking for fine art.

Called the "Grande Dame of Craft Fairs" by the Winston-Salem Journal, Piedmont Craftsmen's first Fair was held more than fifty years ago in a building formerly occupied by Krispy Kreme, on the edge of Old Salem. Since its founding by a group of craft makers and craft collectors in 1963, this juried membership guild has consistently attracted the most respected artisans working in their craft media. A rigorous two part peer jury process insures that those invited and accepted for membership are not only masters of their chosen technique, but are creative, producing work that is distinctive and innovative.

And the founding principle, the "handshake" between makers and collectors, has remained an integral part of Piedmont Craftsmen. Artists participating in the show for the first time are sometimes surprised by the warmth, knowledge, and loyalty of those who attend the Fair as shoppers.

A visitor shopping for a simple coffee mug will be hard pressed to choose from among more than 20 clay artists. Stoneware, porcelain, earthenware; brilliantly colored glazes, subtle earth tones, delicate graphic designs; no two are alike. The same holds true for jewelers, working in materials ranging from paper or colored porcelain to silver and copper, to gold and precious stones. Jewelry purchased from the goldsmith's own hands is not just a statement piece, it is the beginning of a beautiful friendship, a connection between maker, materials, object and owner, quite unlike any other purchase.

Although guild membership does not include painters, those looking for art to hang on the wall will find photographs, limited edition engravings, mixed media pieces and fiber art. One-of-a-kind wearables may be woven, felted, knitted, or hand dyed. Glass is hot blown, kiln formed, leaded, fused, or even combined with other materials in totally unexpected ways. Wood finds more expressive qualities than one would have thought possible as carved birds, vessels, and flowers, as well as furniture that invokes traditions from across the globe.

With education as a central part of Piedmont Craftsmen's mission, visitors to the Fair can count on seeing artists demonstrating their techniques throughout the Fair. Some artists demonstrate in their

booths. Other demonstrations, including clay wheelthrowing and handbuilding, glass bead making, metal forming, basketry, and paper pulp painting, are scheduled at specific times at two separate education areas. A demonstration schedule will be available on Piedmont Craftsmen's website before the Fair.

The food concessions available inside the Exhibition hall will feature a limited menu of lunch and snack items, as well as craft beers from local breweries. Admission is \$8.00 for adults, \$7.00 for senior citizens, students and groups, children under 12 free with an adult. Weekend passes are \$12.00. Hours are Saturday, November 17 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.; Sunday, November 18 noon - 5:00 p.m. For information about hotel packages and more, call (336)725-1516 or visit piedmontcraftsmen.org.

Hi-res image files are available on request.