



MEDIA ADVISORY

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Pike Place Market Celebrates American Craft Week October 5-14

A short documentary video honoring the Market's 225 craftspeople
to be released October 9, 2012

SEATTLE – Pike Place Market celebrates American Craft Week, October 5-14, and recognizes the thousands of American artists who produce handmade decorative and functional artisan crafts that fuel our creative economy, brighten our living and work spaces and connect us to our past. As the home to an internationally-recognized crafts market with 225 talented craftspeople, the Market is proud to be a regional sponsor of American Craft Week.

To honor the essential role craftspeople play in the Market, the Pike Place Market Preservation and Development Authority (PDA) brought in a film crew to discover their individual stories and products. The result is a two-minute documentary short that delves into the ideas, passions, dedication and savvy needed to be a craftspeople in the singular universe of Pike Place Market. The video will be released to the public via the Market's website (pikeplacemarket.org) and YouTube channel on October 9, 2012.

"American Craft Week has given us a great opportunity to formally recognize the important contribution our craft community makes to Pike Place Market," says Ben Franz-Knight, Executive Director of the PDA. "The artists provide an exciting avenue for shoppers to discover hundreds of handmade objects and to meet the craftspeople behind the work. This goes to the core of our 'Meet the Producer' founding tradition."

Located in the covered arcade on the northwest side of Pike Place, the crafts market or "craft line," features a diverse selection of products made from metal, glass, wood, clay, fabric and other material. All crafts are handmade; all of the artists create their work locally. This concentration of craftspeople makes the Pike Place Market one of the biggest collectives of its kind in North America and a unique incubator of craft businesses.

Kim Strang, a knitwear designer with a fashion degree, is relatively new on the craft line with her Im Strang apparel. She has found the crafts market to be a one-of-a-kind experience for both shoppers and the artists. "It's very uncommon that you get this many artists in one community," she says. "Everything here is unique, everything is handmade. There is a lot of thought that has gone into each and every product here."

The crafts market became an integral part of Pike Place Market in the early 1970s. As the craft line grew from a handful to several dozen to more than 200 craftspeople today, the guiding principal has remained the same—to provide a marketplace where craftspeople could sell their handmade goods directly to consumers and to provide a supportive environment for craftspeople to flourish.

The “Meet the Producer” founding tradition of Pike Place Market has created deep and meaningful connections between the craftspeople and many of their clients that have lasted decades. For both the producers of the hand-crafted products and the consumers who buy them, this personal connection remains the touchstone of shopping the Market’s craft line.

The crafts market has indeed flourished as is easily witnessed each morning at the 9 a.m. roll call and the ringing of the Market opening bell. At roll call, craftspeople selling at the Market that day select their selling locations according to seniority. Once their table is assigned, each craftsperson quickly moves to set up and create a dynamic display for that day.

Within an hour, the empty arcade is transformed into a bustling marketplace filled with reclaimed hardwood carvings, hand blown glass beads, intricately patterned ceramics, hand worked sterling silver with semi-precious stones, metal sculpture and much more.

With this process occurring every day, 362 days a year, there are only two constants to the Pike Place Market craft line – that it will be a completely unique experience, with different crafts people in different locations every day and, most importantly, that every item featured will have been created by hand by a local craftsperson, often the very same person who is there greeting customers.

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***The Pike Place Market** is one of the oldest continuously operating public markets in the U.S. It is a Historic District with 250 commercial businesses, 100 farmers, 225 craftspeople, 300 street performers, and 500 residents. In addition, there are social services to help downtown’s low-income residents. It is often called the “Soul of Seattle.”*

***The Pike Place Market Preservation & Development Authority (PDA)** is a not-for-profit, public corporation chartered by the City of Seattle in 1973 to manage the properties in the nine-acre Market Historic District. The PDA is required to preserve, rehabilitate and protect the Market’s buildings, increase opportunities for farm and food retailing in the Market, incubate and support small and marginal businesses, and provide services for low-income people. www.pikeplacemarket.org*

***American Craft Week** now in its third year, is the annual coast-to-coast recognition of the makers, retailers, collectors and exhibitors of handmade craft. The week is a project of CRAFT, an association of galleries, shops, schools and artists that are dedicated to presenting work with one common characteristic - it's handmade in the U.S.A. The goal of CRAFT is to promote awareness of American made craft through marketing, networking, education and communications programs.*