Chapter Fourteen: Other Three Dimensional Media

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

- Craft Media
- Mixed Media

Works in Progress
Peter Voulkos’s X-Neck
Hanna Hoch’s Cut With the Kitchen Knife
Goat Island’s How Dear to Me the Hour When Daylight Dies

The Critical Process
Thinking About Other Three-Dimensional Media

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

This Chapter Will:
- define and distinguish between craft and fine art
- identify and illustrate methods and types of ceramics
- discuss the process of weaving and embroidery
- identify and illustrate major forms of mixed-media art

KEY TERMS

craft  tapestry
ceramics  embroidery
firing  mixed media
glazing  collage
slab construction  photomontage
coiling  installation
throwing  Happenings
potter’s wheel  performance art
tapestry  embroidery
earthenware  mixed media
stoneware  collage
porcelain  photomontage
glassblowing  installation
metal  Happenings
wood  performance art
fiber  Happenings
weaving  performance art
warp/weft  performance art
LECTURE AND DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. More on The Third Dimension
Chapter 14 examines the creative approach to using Other Three-dimensional Media, including craft media, mixed media, installation, multimedia, and performance art. As in Chapter 13, Sculpture, the artists discussed in Chapter 14 have explored traditional processes, as well as newer, non-traditional approaches, as exemplified in Marcia Gygli King’s, *Springs Upstate* (fig. 400).

2. CRAFT or ART?
Differentiating between craft and art is difficult, and classification into one category or another is sometimes controversial. Craft objects are traditionally thought of as those created for utilitarian usage. In the 20th century, the crafts lost their traditional association with functionality. In many ways, craft artists, like fine artists, were able to shed their bonds to utilitarian concerns, and create works that expressed the creative spirit of the individual. Other artists such as Miriam Shapiro (See an example of Shapiro’s femmage in fig. 212) created art using “craft” media as a conceptual basis for their work. Consider Shapiro’s statement “decoration pulls us all together and is not elitist, non-sexist, and non-racist.”

We identify Pablo Picasso’s *Meeed* (fig. 401) as a utilitarian object, a pitcher, yet we also view it as a painting because of the image he painted on the vase with glaze. What would you consider *Meeed* to be? Craft or Art? How much of your opinion is based upon your understanding of the value of Picasso’s work?

3. Clay
The process of creating ceramics is one that invites variation of technique from the early stage of constructing a form to the type of glazing applied, to the type of kiln the work is fired in. If at all possible, make arrangements to visit a ceramic studio to see actual ceramic works in the various stages of production. Watching an artist ‘throw a pot’ on the wheel is fascinating (see fig. 404 Wheel Throwing).

Clay has been universally embraced to create utilitarian vessels, plates and pitchers throughout history. See Hon’ami Koetsu’s tea bowl *Amaguno* (Rain Clouds, fig. 402) Maria Montoya Martinez, *Jar* (fig. 403), Euthymides, *Revelers* (fig. 405) and Ming Dynasty *Plate* (fig. 406) to compare and contrast the aesthetics of these dinnerware pieces by various cultures:

4. Glass
Glass is one of the most ancient materials made by heating sand or silica until it becomes liquid. What a discovery! Investigate the inherent properties associated with glass and elaborate upon how artists expressively manipulate these materials. Paperweights, vases, pitchers…the list can go on and on of the various forms and functions of glassware created for utilitarian purposes. But, what about glass sculptures? Modern artists began to see the inherent possibilities of glass and began making sculpture with them. For example, the glass artist Dale Chihuly embraces the plasticity of molten glass when
creating his fluid forms. See Chihuly’s, *Alabaster Basket Set with Oxblood Wraps* (fig. 413).

5. **Fiber**
Fiber arts include many different materials, derived from natural materials, and techniques, traditionally thought of as craft skills. Needlepoint, embroidery, weaving, knitting and crocheting are examples of fiber-based, utilitarian, craft forms, some of which have crossed boundaries and are defined as fine art. One such example from the chapter is *The Hunt of the Unicorn. VII: The Unicorn in Captivity* (fig. 414). Originally woven as an aesthetic wall hanging that would also act as insulation against cold stone walls of a mansion or castle, this piece is now a highly popular work of art.

Contemporary artists use fiber-based materials in their work as well, as seen in the work of Magdalena Abakanowicz, *Backs in Landscape* (fig. 417). Burlap and string are formed into repetitive figures that become a metaphor for the fiber process of weaving.

6. **Metal**
The most durable, and most precious of the craft media are the metals. Often used for items used daily, such as eating utensils, metals are also used for objects of adornment. A survey of jewelry from various cultures will reveal metal’s universal usage for adornment. Examples from the chapter include the *Griffin Bracelet, from the Oxus Treasure* (fig. 418) and Benvenuto Cellini’s *Saltcellar of Francis I*, (fig. 419).

7. **Wood**
Because of its availability, and ability to replenish itself, wood has been a cost-effective and readily used material by artisans. Unfortunately, because it is prone to the elements of nature, and general wear and tear, very few wooden artifacts have survived from ancient cultures. Wood is a warm, texturally pleasing medium and is mostly used for furniture and other objects for living. Discuss pieces of family heirloom furniture, or items seen on the *Antiques Road Show* in terms of their aesthetic qualities and craftsmanship. Examples from the chapter include the *Bent-Corner Chest* from the Heiltsuk culture and Antoni Gaudi’s, *Oak Armchair for the Casa Calvet* (fig. 421).

8. **Mixed Media: Collage and Assemblage**
Known for its spontaneous creation, *Glass and Bottle of Suze* (fig. 422) by Pablo Picasso purposely contradicts the tradition of painting by incorporating scraps of actual materials from real life into the composition. The reasons that artists work in collage are many. However, one is the very fact that collage challenges the integrity and tradition of painting. Collage integrates images derived, or found, from real life objects such as magazines and product labels, and in doing so, simulates the appearance of a painting. In this regard, our sensibilities of reality are challenged. Collage also evokes notions in some of the skill involved in cutting and pasting papers as opposed to drawing or painting. Some judge the skills of collage artists as inferior to those who work in traditional media, however, their judgments soon change after they work in this challenging medium.
Robert Rauschenberg’s *Monogram*, (fig. 427) is an example of assemblage. Rauschenberg coined the term “combine painting” to describe his high relief painting, that can also be considered a sculpture. Unifying many parts to make a new whole is the challenge that excites collage and assemblage artists. The artist Louise Nevelson, was well versed in assemblage and constructed wall reliefs and freestanding assemblages, such as *Sky Cathedral* (fig. 428) that incorporate many disparate parts into a unified whole.

9. Installation
An installation is an inclusive medium in that it will incorporate anything and everything into its realm of possible supplies and techniques. The three dimensionality of an installation becomes an environment that the viewer participates in. Judy Pfaff’s installation *Rock/Paper/Scissors* (fig. 429) transforms the architectural space of the gallery into an array of color, line, and form. *Rock/Paper/Scissors* is a child’s game of chance that is often used to “see who goes first.” How has the artist represented this child’s game in her installation?

Gaho Taniguchi was trained in the art of ikebana, the ancient Japanese art of flower arranging. In *Plant Body* (fig. 430), she has implanted soybeans, rice, millet, straw, and root like rope into a surface of dried clay that seems barely to cling to the wall of the gallery. A sort of room size live ceramic sculpture, the piece compresses the time of the seasons, from the wetness of the time when the seeds are planted to the hard dry soil of the harvest. The installation embodies, in interior space, the entire agricultural cycle. Analyze Taniguchi’s piece in terms of the philosophy of Joseph Beuys. How is her installation a teaching process? What are we learning? Why would she create this installation, rather than depict the processes of nature with botanical drawings?

5. Performance Art
Chapter fourteen ends with a discussion of performance art, which encompasses sculpture and installation, with movement and human interaction, performed over a period of time. In this regard, performance art is temporal, as the viewer must move through time and space to view it completely. Performance art exceeds the visual, and as a result, is often identified as multi-disciplinary, by combining the arts of drama, dance, poetry and music.

Allan Kaprow, *Household* (fig. 434)
Alan Kaprow invented an early form of performance art in the 1950s called the Happening. He defined happenings as “assemblages of events performed or perceived in more than one time and place…A Happening is art but seems closer to life.” Kaprow’s philosophy that art was naturally associated to daily life stems from his interest in the paintings of Jackson Pollock. Works such as *Full Fathom Five* (fig. 433) with the added components of nails, tacks, coins, and matches buried into the paint caused Kaprow to realize that art could include everything, as well as real people acting in real time.
Joseph Beuys, *I Like America and America Likes Me* (fig. 435)
Joseph Beuys created what he preferred to call “actions.” These performances were designed to reveal what he believed to be the real function of art—teaching people to be creative so that through their creativity, they might change contemporary society. He is quoted as saying: "To make people free is the aim of art, therefore art for me is the science of freedom."

George Maciunas, *An Anthology* (fig. 439)
The composer John Cage provided a springboard for a group of performance artists known as Fluxus. In the classes Cage taught at the New School in New York, during the 1960s, he inspired his students to experiment with unusual approaches to creating and composing. Fluxus encouraged artists to create scripts or scenarios for a group to perform, or experience that would be so diverse that they bordered on being surreal experiences. Artists associated with this group included George Brecht, and Yoko Ono. A collection of works by these artists was organized together in an anthology, titled *An Anthology* by La Monte Young with title pages designed by George Maciunas.

Laurie Anderson *United States Part II* (fig. 440)
Laurie Anderson is a performance artist who performs ‘in concert’ in front of large audiences, and then markets her performances in the form of videos, films and recordings, for mass consumption. Conveying her conceptual messages about technology, through technology, Anderson’s work is always on the cutting-edge as technology evolves and offers her new performance abilities, as well as content. In *United States Part II* (fig. 440) is part of a seven-hour-long performance that involved an array of technological effects, sophisticated choreography, and an assemblage of complex visual imagery.

**CRITICAL THINKING: More Opportunities to Think About Art**
Several artworks are detailed in the Critical Thinking and Works in Progress features found in this chapter. In addition, diverse opportunities for studying these works are located on the Companion Website and Companion CDROM.

1. **Works In Progress: Peter Voulkos’s X-Neck**
Peter Voulkos’s *X-Neck* (figs. 408-410) is yet another example in this chapter of an artist who works in a traditional craft media, and uses that media to create fine art sculptures. Ceramics is a temperamental medium, one that is open to accidental effects. Volkous embraces the serendipity of the process.

2. **Works In Progress: Hanna Hoch’s Cut With the Kitchen Knife**
Hannah Höch’s *Cut With the Kitchen Knife* (figs. 423-424) is featured in this chapter and introduces the three-dimensional art form of assemblage. An important artist historically, Hannah Höch’s process and impetus for creating this work is addressed in this chapter. Concepts such as the powerful effect of using popular culture imagery and the power of the visual arts to promote political change are addressed in Höch’s work.
3. **Works In Progress: Goat Island's How Dear to Me the Hour When Daylight Dies**

*How Dear to Me the Hour When Daylight Dies* (figs. 436-438), a work by the collaborative performance troupe Goat Island is a *Works In Progress* feature of this chapter and one of the feature videos in the *Works in Progress* video series.

Named after an island in Rhode Island, the name suggests rough terrain, the kind of ground they want their work to traverse. The concept of *How Dear to Me the Hour When Daylight Dies* was initially derived from the idea of portraying a pilgrimage, but evolved into much more as the group collaborated and developed the performance. See the VIEWING GUIDE at the end of this text for a detailed analysis of this performance work, and the artists who created it.

4. **Thinking About Other Three-Dimensional Media, Ann Hamilton’s ‘a round’**

As a medium, sculpture is more active than two-dimensional media because of the very actions the viewer must perform in order to see the whole work of art. We walk around sculpture, or through it, and our experience of it changes as our point of view changes. As contemporary artists present us with more and more innovative uses of space, and challenge our senses as we participate in the viewing experience, we engage in an experience that is far beyond what the early sculptors might have envisioned. Ann Hamilton’s installation ‘*a round*’ (fig. 441) is a spatially complex installation that relates directly to its site, as do all her projects. It consisted of twelve hundred human shaped cotton bags, wrestling dummies, cut and sewn industrially, and filled, manually, with sawdust, and piled around the walls, suggesting the transformation of the human into a commodity. The floor resembles a boxing ring, and at the top of two massive pillars are two mechanized leather punching bags, which periodically burst into motion, disrupting the silence, hence the work’s title. Between them, an extraordinary length of white yarn was stretched in a wide horizontal band, which during the course of the installation is gradually unraveled by a seated woman knitting a white shawl in isolation in the middle of the room. What is sculptural about this space? How is the viewing experience of this work comparable to that of a performance piece? Contrast the experience of viewing this work with a more traditional sculpture such as Michelangelo’s David. Be sure to refer to the detailed analysis of this work, which answers many of the questions posed, found in the back of the textbook.

**WRITING ASSIGNMENTS**

Direct students to their Student Study Guide when assigning Writing Assignments as the following assignments are written as instruction for the student and are contained in the Student Study Guide as they are here.

1. **In the Round**

In the discussion of sculpture in-the-round in Chapter 13, we noted that one of its characteristics is that it is an active as opposed to passive medium – more precisely, it requires the active participation of the view, who must physically move around it in order to experience its various aspects fully. No one view is sufficient to explain it. This spatial ambiguity is in many ways comparable to the intentional ambiguities of much performance art. Compare and contrast the audience’s relation to a sculptural piece such
as David Smith’s *Blackburn: Song of an Irish Blacksmith* (figs. 366 and 367) and to a performance piece such as Goat Island’s *How Dear to Me the Hour When Daylight Dies* (figs. 436-438).

2. **Pluralistic or Noise?**

One of the arguments against art forms such as collage, installation, and performance art is that in their very inclusiveness—their willingness to admit anything and everything into the space of art—they debase, or even destroy the art itself. From this point of view, these forms of art are to art proper as noise is to music. Write an essay that develops this analogy with the understanding that one person’s noise is often another person’s music.

3. **The Value of Craft**

Identify the various types of craft-oriented objects you own or encounter on a daily basis. Write an essay describing the value of these objects to you, and their value within your civilization.

4. **World Ceramic Vessels**


5. **Ceramic Production**

Visit a ceramic studio to witness ceramists throwing clay on a wheel. Interview the ceramicist and ask questions such relating to their philosophy concerning ceramics and how they acquire their skill. Record your interview within an essay that also elaborates upon your experience of visiting the ceramic studio.

4. **Glass Factory Tour**

Visit web sites of major glass production studios such as Corning, Lalique, Steuben, and the Pilchuck Glass School co-founded by glass artist Dale Chihuly. Write a detailed description of the processes involved in creating glass art. How does this analysis of the process add or detract from your aesthetic appreciation of glass art?

5. **Performance Art Script**

Write a script for a performance piece that conceptualizes an idea. Include a description of the characters involved, sets, media used, and of course, concept addressed. Optional: perform the script.

**HANDS-ON PROJECTS**

*Direct students to their Student Study Guide when assigning Hands-On Projects as the following assignments are written as instruction for the student and are contained in the guide as they are here. For additional project ideas, remember to investigate the Hands-On Projects found on the Companion Website.*
1. **Ceramic Forms**
Using self-hardening clay found in crafts stores, create two ceramic forms. One, a utilitarian vessel, the other a non-functional sculpture.

2. **Metalsmithing**
Research the jewelry of an ancient culture and re-create it using copper wire. This simplification of what will probably be an elaborate ancient piece, will modernize the form in some regard. The technique of coiling copper wire to create a bracelet, ring, armband, ankle bracelet, broach, or toe ring is quite simple and requires only a pliers and wire-cutter.

3. **Fiber Art**
Using twigs, rags, and other natural fibers, weave a non-functional fiber tapestry. Consider the unity of the piece as you select your weaving materials. Use a large piece of cardboard to construct a loom. Simple directions for creating a loom and weaving can be found at: www.hallnet.com/weave.html

**RESOURCES**

_A World of Art Companion Website:_
Remember to direct students to _A World of Art_ companion website (www.prenhall.com/sayre) to help further their understanding of the materials discussed in this chapter with ideas for completing hands-on projects and exercises. Self-testing materials are also available and offer students the opportunity to evaluate their understanding of the chapter materials in a variety of formats. In addition, links to websites featuring contemporary artists, and museum and gallery exhibitions related to this chapter will enhance discussion and comprehension. Links for this chapter include:

**CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS:** Dale Chihuly Over Venice is a site, which documents Chihuly's remarkable project in Venice, Italy. Working collaboratively with glass artists in Venice, Chihuly and his technicians created stunning chandeliers of colored glass mounted above the canals.

**GALLERIES AND MUSEUMS:** Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) is the largest art museum west of the Mississippi, and has over 100,000 works of art dating from prehistory to the present day. This link brings you directly to the _Permanent Collections, "Masterpieces at LACMA"_ site. While all links on the page are interesting, this is one of only a few sites that share images of works from their permanent collections of Costumes and Textiles, and Decorative Arts. Click each thumbnail for a larger jpeg of the work and a description.

**GALLERIES AND MUSEUMS:** Pilchuck Glass School was founded in 1971 by Dale Chihuly, with support from patrons Anne Gould Hauberg and John H.
Hauberg. Since then, it has been a catalyst for leading artists and a model of education in the visual arts. Both glass blowing as a studio art and the broader contemporary interest in glass as a visual arts medium have evolved in large part because of Pilchuck. It is a place where artists come to work, not only with glass, but also with their minds.—©1999 Pilchuck Glass School

GALLERIES AND MUSEUMS: **Tapestries** is an institution dedicated to preserving the history and promoting the contemporary applications of woven tapestry. "Woven tapestry art is one of the most effective forms of literary expression the world has ever known. In fact, woven tapestry art has vividly told the stories of the Greeks, Romans, Medieval, and the Renaissance period as well as the Old & New Testament. Countless heroes and nobility have owned hand-woven tapestry art in France, England, Germany, and Italy from ancient times to more recently throughout the Thirteenth to the Eighteenth centuries." © 1999 Tapestries

**Other Suggested Websites:**

Magdelena Abakanowicz’s sculptural images are provided at artscenecal.com/ArticlesFile/Archive/Articles2001/Articles0301/MAbakanowicz_A.html

Hannah Hoch’s photomontages may be viewed online at www.yellowbellywebdesign.com/hoch/gallery.html

Robert Rauschenberg’s history and links to online exhibitions is found at www.fi.muni.cz/~toms/PopArt/Biographies/rauschenberg.html

Judy Pfaff, world renowned installation artist, is interviewed by Richard Whitacrer at www.conversations.org/98-1-pfaff.htm

For Laurie Anderson links, history, images, visit the Homepage of the Brave at www.cc.gatech.edu/~jimmyd/laurie-anderson/

Joseph Beuys’s biography and works are online at www.walkerart.org/beuys/info

**Suggested Videos:**

Videos and other resources are available for purchase through any of the distributors listed in the Resources section of this manual.

Dale Chihuly: Glass Master contemporary blown glass (26 minutes)
Chihuly Over Venice the creative process from sketch to installation (90 minutes)
Sister Wendy’s Pains of Glass stained glass (58 minutes)
Functional Pottery overview (24 minutes)
Clayworks overview (13 minutes)
Contemporary Ceramics overview (25 minutes)
Maria: Indian Pottery of San Ildefonso focus on pottery (27 minutes)
The Legacy of Generations: Pottery by American Indian Women focus on pottery
With Hand and Heart: Portrait of Southwestern Native American Artists overview
Woven By The Grandmothers: 19th Century Navajo Textiles focus on weaving
Threads of Tradition fiber arts in Hispanic culture (14 minutes)
Faith Ringgold: The Last Story Quilt feature artist (28 minutes)
Faith Ringgold: Paints Crown Heights feature artist (28 minutes)
Gathered in Time quilting (90 minutes)
The Complete Metalsmith jewelry (45 minutes)