



Guild Level Membership

SELF ASSESSMENT

The Guild Level Membership is the MCA's only juried membership. This membership level is designed to attract and bring together professional craft artists to exhibit in the Guild Fine Craft Shows with other professional craft artists making craft work that is excellently conceived, crafted and presented. The intent of the shows, as it was under Maine Crafts Guild management, is to nurture a marketplace where the public can see, collect and learn about the highest quality craft objects made by Maine's most dedicated, talented and trained craft artists who have mastered their tools, techniques and vision to create original fine craft objects for everyday use and special occasions.

Please use this assessment tool to help you gauge your level of professional preparedness for the MCA Guild Level membership and assess the likelihood of acceptance. The more areas that you can confidently answer yes, the higher the chance that you are a good match for MCA Guild Level membership which grants you access to exhibit at the Guild Fine Craft Shows without further applications or juries.

Of Note:

The MCA Guild Level membership and shows prioritize beautiful, well-crafted work exhibiting skill from conception to finished product. There is not an amount of years in business or number of awards won which will determine this. We welcome artists of any age, at any stage in their career creating strong work. We also want to provide clear expectations for applicants – very few craft artists will check every box in this self assessment.

The most important criteria are meeting the residency requirements and making strong work.

Questions?

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Please use the 3 self assessment tools on the next few pages.

1

Assessment of your professional preparedness and qualifiers

This section includes some requirements, some measurements and some best practices – meeting most of these is best.

- My work fits into the standard craft media categories: baskets, ceramics, fiber, furniture, glass, jewelry, leather, metal, mixed media, paper, stone and wood.
- My work is made in Maine and I live in Maine (or in a NH town within ten miles of Maine) I have personally attended the Maine Crafts Guild Shows and believe my work would fit in. A customer pays the same price for my work anywhere they purchase it (i.e. my studio, a gallery, a craft show). With the exception of seconds or a special sale or promotion.
- I have a bank account associated with my business name
- I have at least five professional images of my recent / current work
- I have at least one image of my booth display set up (professional image not required)
- I have marketing materials such as: business cards, brochures, catalogues, postcards My products have a warranty, guarantee or statement of quality
- I have exhibited in a juried craft show
- I have a current website
- I have my own booth display that professionally displays my work
- I can process credit card transactions
- I charge customers sales tax and pay that to the proper state
- I have a mailing list

2

Assess your craft work, how it is designed, sourced and produced

This section, assuming you meet the basic qualifiers, is the most important and will impact if you are approved for the membership and the shows.

Craft Artists selecting A's or B's below can be accepted to the Guild Level membership. However, artists with more B's tend to require more jury discussion, may be required to be reviewed through a "Booth Jury" and generally, more time is spent determining if they meet the standards of this membership level and the Guild Fine Craft Shows. If you are neither A or B, we recommend calling Shop Maine Craft to discuss if an application is appropriate. We also recognize that artists make a variety of work, while thinking through these options, please apply the questions to your one of a kind or limited-edition work. For example, if you have some of your designs reproduced by an off-site third party, those would not qualify for the shows, but you may be accepted with and for your other work.

A. I am the sole designer and maker of my work and it is made in my own studio, or

B. I am the sole designer of my work and have staff / assistants to help me produce the work which is made in my studio.

A. All of my work is one-of-a-kind or limited edition, I do not have a production line, or

B. I have one-of-a-kind work, limited edition work and production work

A. Most of what I purchase to make my work are raw materials: clay, wood, metals or fibers, I then use tools and techniques to make into my final craft work, or

B. I purchase some raw materials and combine them with other purchased components to make my final craft work. The purchased components are not integral to the style or appearance of the work.

3

Assess your artistic milestones & professional experience

This section helps to identify where you are in your career, where you are showing, how you are connecting with collectors and how your work is being received and celebrated. While all these are worthy of aspiring to, only a limited number of artists will meet all these milestones and this section will have the least impact on your successful application.

- I have exhibited in large, indoor, juried retail fine craft shows such as: American Craft Council Shows, Philadelphia Museum Show, CraftBoston, etc. and/or juried outdoor shows, such as Laudholm, Portland Fine Craft Show, Cherry Creek
- I have collectors; patrons who seek me out at shows, galleries and online and buy my work year after year
- I know the names and contact information of my collectors
- I have received awards and other accolades for my work
- I have been included in exhibitions of fine craft in established galleries and/or museums I sell my work in juried craft galleries in Maine
- I sell my work in juried craft galleries beyond Maine
- I have professional affiliations with Maine or national craft or other organizations, such as: Society of Arts & Crafts, American Craft Council, SNAG, Maine Crafts Association, The Furniture Society, etc.
- I have been selected as the subject in professional editorial content in magazines, newspapers, blogs or television / video
- My work has been included in book or online collections (such as 500 Teapots)