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**Buyers Market of American Craft
Pennsylvania Convention Center
February 14, 2008: Jewelry Preview
February 15-18, 2008: Buyers Market**

WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

We're happy to assist you in connecting with sources at the show,
including sources for the following story ideas:

Topic: The BIG Trends

Rake them in: For spring, summer, fall and winter, the motif of the moment is the leaf, in its infinite and intricate variations. In tableware, in wall hangings, in jewelry: nature is guiding artists on flights of fancy. Some of our jewelers have used the real thing, pressing leaves into precious metals and other media. We've got what you need to assemble a gorgeous layout or a live broadcast featuring examples from sculptors, glass blowers, ceramic artists, handbag designers, jewelers and other artists.

Recycled: The consumer has spoken, demanding eco-friendly materials and manufacturing methods. The artists have responded with a surge of creativity and commitment. Let us introduce you to dozens of artists who are working with reclaimed or recycled materials, from old farm machinery parts to recycled gold. We've got the goods: recycled materials and found objects adapted to new uses in home furnishings, jewelry, handbags, textiles, sculpture and much, much more.

Women as Small Business Leaders: It's often said that manufacturing, as an industry, is dead -- but that's not the whole picture. There is a growing tide of micro-manufacturing in the arts, and it is an industry led by women. Handcraft is big business, as the Buyers Market proves. An estimated 78 percent of our artists are women whose small studios and home-based businesses are producing high-quality art and craft products for sale to museum gift shops, catalogs and boutiques.

TOPIC: The Wholesale Craft Marketplace

Local and well made: Here's the late-breaking news in gift buying: Consumers are more conscious than ever of a product's country of origin. Some are even willing to spend a little more for high-quality, American-made and locally made goods. Although cheap imports remain a challenge, the buy-American trend bodes well for craft artists. Many are updating their packaging and exhibits to emphasize work that is locally handmade to high standards.

Appealing to young collectors: Motivated by environmentalism, social responsibility and a punk aesthetic, a new generation of crafters is leading a resurgence in handmade. DIY ethics give these socially conscious consumers a special appreciation for the work of our professional craft artists. Learn what pop-culture influences have shaped their artistic tastes on Sunday, February 17, at 8:30 a.m., during a free seminar featuring young craft artists, retailers who cater to young collectors, and a guest panelist from Etsy.com.

Concerned about product safety? Artists who produce goods for children and for the home say consumers are looking to them for leadership in the use of environmentally friendly processes, materials and practices. Find out how they are improving their methods, taking care in their selection of supplies and informing their customers about safety.

From DIY to hot commodity: What does it entail to turn a craft hobby into a best-selling business with a national following? High-quality products plus sweat equity and business savvy. At the Buyers Market, you'll find experts who are working the aisles, speaking at seminars and also teaching in the Visiting Artists Program sponsored by the nonprofit Arts Business Institute.

Retail outlook for galleries and craft shops: Though the luxury goods marketplace tends to withstand an economic slowdown, tensions mount in times like these. Most of our buyers represent small businesses in a hyper-competitive marketplace. At seminars and throughout the show, you can hear their latest strategies for weathering the storm. Get the craft retail forecast for 2008.

Who are the top American and Canadian craft artists? Find out Sunday, February 17, at 6 p.m. at the annual NICHE Awards honoring the finest work of professional craft artists. Students and professors will also receive accolades.

A virtual tug-of-war: Internet sales are up, but for the artist, selling online presents a challenge: Can you sell on the Web without threatening long-time and cherished relationships that you've cultivated with galleries? Can a wholesale artist compete with an Etsy artist? Can we all get along? Pros and cons will be debated at the show during a seminar at 8:30 a.m. on Friday, February 15.

Telltale Tiles: For indoor and outdoor décor, tile is popular, and we have it in every conceivable medium and style: in fused glass, in stoneware, in metals; carved, inscribed or hand-painted; with magnets; with impressions from leaves and other items; in groupings that form quilt-like designs and pictures; for mixing, matching, framing like a painting, tiling the kitchen backsplash or sending instead of a greeting card. Tiles allow a beginning collector to have an affordable example of an artist's work.

No sweat shops here: In order to meet increasing wholesale demands, some craft artists face the prospect of outsourcing or hiring fellow artists. Learn how creative and committed they can be at keeping the work close to home.

Diversify and multiply: The Buyers Market of American Craft is a wholesale trade show, but many of the participating artists also produce one-of-a-kind pieces. How do they balance the discipline of one-of-a-kind with the demand to make more?

Spend with companies that share your values: Consumers, especially younger shoppers, want to know what their dollars support. They're especially impressed with companies that give back to the community and the environment. Find out how artists are part of this trend, both as producers of goods and as consumers of materials.

Location, location, location: We can always help you contact exhibiting artists who are from your city, state or region.

Topics: Fashion Accessories, Jewelry, Wearable Art

What's hot: The daily fashion shows at the Buyers Market will feature sumptuous wearable art and accessories. For the discerning customer of well-made goods, there are luxurious hand-painted silks; huggable, felted silk-wool blends; and exquisitely tooled leathers. And that's just the beginning.

Couture Jewelry: Fine art jewelry can be found in museum and private collections. We're thrilled this winter to have a number of America's top couture jewelry designers at the Buyers Market. This is the place to be to see brilliance, and we aren't talking just about the diamonds: The exquisite craftsmanship is what attracts retailers who cater to a refined customer.

Eco-fashion: There was a time, long ago, when the words "Earth-friendly fashion" might conjure images of frumpy frocks. No more. Environmental consciousness is upscale and hip. Among the accessories and jewelry exhibited this year at the Buyers Market, there are funky glass earrings cut from old Coke bottles, and chic handbags made of recycled inner-tube. There are fiber artists working with reclaimed wool and art jewelry designers using recycled gold.

Fashion forward in 2008: During the holiday season just past, retail analysts reported lackluster sales of women's apparel. Many put the blame, in part, on "uninspired" and "same old, same old" fashions at the big box and department stores. Now is the time to look to designers of wearable art and accessories for the fresh, new and edgy.

The "It" bag: She wants the one that completes her ensemble and telegraphs her individual style: We've got it. Check out statement-making, artist-designed handbags in a stunning array of media, from crochet to leather to recycled tires. We've got what you need to assemble a layout or "artist trunk show" that's all about the bag.

Tie one on: Wraps, scarves and throws in a kaleidoscope of dramatic and witty designs: Take a look today and you'll see the handcrafted and stylish gifts of warmth that will be in art-to-wear boutiques in the fall. Lovingly fashioned by hand, yes, but these aren't your great-grandmother's shawls.

Trends in bridal jewelry: When it's time to say "I do," many couples want a unique symbol of their commitment that only an artist can provide. Many of our jewelers are creating one-of-a-kind engagement rings and wedding bands.

PHOTOGRAPHS: Let us help you obtain images of the artwork for print, Web or broadcast use. Contact Jean Thompson, public relations director, at jeant@rosengrp.com, or 410-889-2933, ext. 218 (Baltimore office), or 443-845-6130 (cell).

PRESS CREDENTIALS: Press and camera credentials will be required. The application form is attached and can also be found at www.americancraft.com. Call for more information or to schedule a private tour of the show.

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