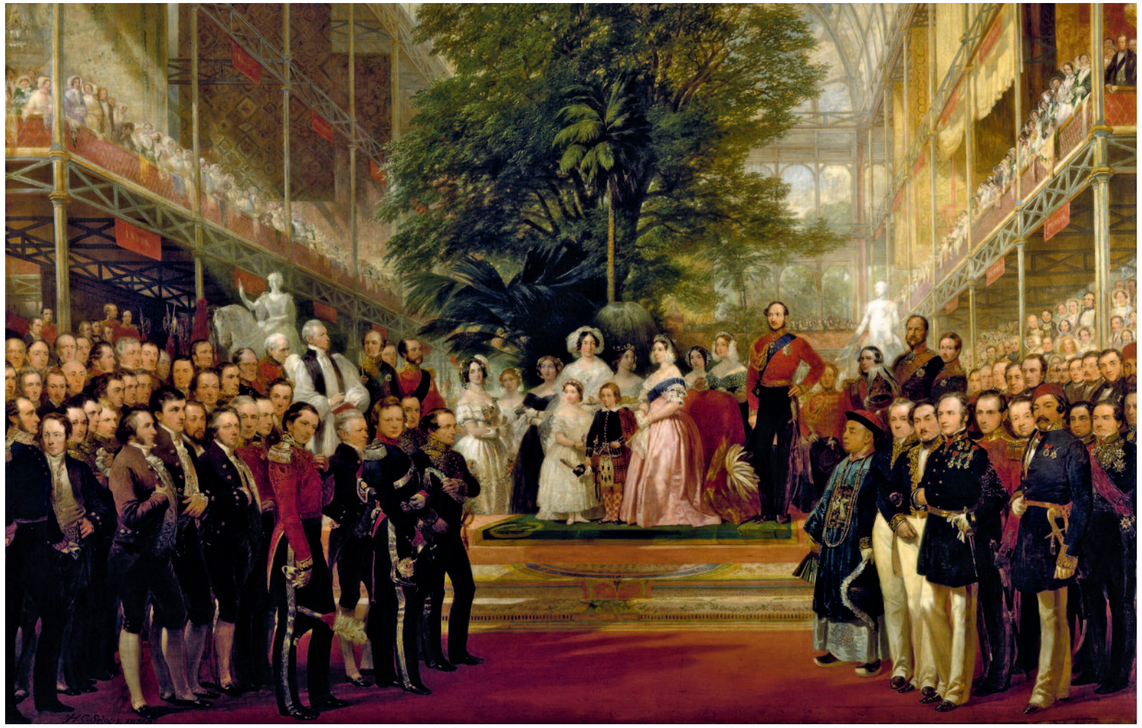
To celebrate the 250th issue of Crafts, we asked a group of makers, writers, gallery owners and collectors to nominate a moment that changed the field of making. The results are fascinating

FIFTY MOMENTS THAT CHANGED CRAFT

250th ISSUE SPECIAL SECTION



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***Opening of the Great Exhibition by Queen Victoria on 1 May 1851*, Henry Courtney Selous**

Exhibitions

We can hear the brickbats now. Where's Morris? Ruskin? What about when Lucie Rie met Hans Coper, or Duchamp created *Fountain* in 1917 and changed fine art's relationship with skill. And no Michael Cardew, really? Compiled by asking a selection of makers, historians, writers, collectors and gallery owners, this list isn't intended to be definitive. We see it as a way to jog your memory, to remind you of influential events or people you might have forgotten. Split into five categories, entries range from a 16th century knitting frame to the coming launch of the Crafts Council's education manifesto – via the invention of polythene and the recurring importance of Grayson Perry. I'd like to thank all the people that took part.

You'll notice that there are actually 49 entries here (we allowed two people to nominate the launch of *Crafts*). So there is a slot spare and we'd love to hear from you. What is your moment that changed craft? Let us know. GG *editorial@craftscouncil.org.uk*

The Great Exhibition (1851)
Why choose the Great Exhibition of 1851, that apparent celebration of British industrialisation, as a major moment in the history of craft? The Crystal Palace erected in Hyde Park to house the exhibition was a masterpiece of large-scale steel and glass, and it displayed many factory products, yet it would be wrong to see it as presaging the heavy industry of the future. Artisanal skills were fundamental to Britain's industrial transformation, and visitors to the Great Exhibition admired an abundance of hand-made, artisanal objects. Craft was not a relic of the past in 1851, but a key element of its present, embedded in economic expansion and innovation. Yet the next century's narrative would identify craft with nostalgia and tradition. The world of the Great Exhibition shows craft embedded in innovation – something that the Crafts Council is insisting upon today. The difference between craft and innovation, creative skills and economic progress, lay in future narratives. It wasn't there in the Britain of the Great Exhibition.
Geoffrey Crossick, chair of the Crafts Council

Le Théâtre de la Mode (The Theatre of Fashion), Paris (1945-46)
Parisian *haute couture* is known for exquisite workmanship – not just in its clothing but also all its buttons, flowers, laces, braid and embroideries. The skills that create them date from before the 18th century. Yet, after World War Two, all of it was nearly lost. What saved the day was a communal effort called Le Théâtre de la Mode. Undeterred by terrible shortages, 53 designers and their studios laboured to make and clothe 200 mini-mannequins. Made of wire – and only 69 centimetres in height – these were dressed and accessorised with very determined elegance. (The dolls were provided with sets designed by the likes of Jean Cocteau.) During 1945-46, as the first post-war 'collection', Le Théâtre de la Mode toured Europe and America. Not only did its ingenious scheme manage to save an industry: it ensured that truly irreplaceable makers had a future.
Cynthia Rose, writer and broadcaster

***The Craftsman's Art* (1973)**
I remember *The Craftsman's Art* as the defining moment taking the crafts in Britain out of the realms of the well turned salad bowl into new areas of technical inventiveness, narrative richness, political subversiveness. It altered our concept of what crafts could be. The exhibition was held at the V&A under the auspices of the then newly formed Crafts Advisory Committee, precursor of the present day Crafts Council. The 470 exhibits were emphatically not batch production: these were specials. The exhibition set out to be a 'celebration of the craftsman's art rather than the craftsman's craft'. It introduced new makers to the general public, many of them young, some of them still students. The exhibition represented a radical rethinking, highly controversial in the craft world of the time but defended by the exhibition organisers: 'If the space age, as these decades have been called, has destroyed traditional horizons, it has surely enriched not only our techniques but our perception of the beauties of the universe.' This was indeed the moment when the crafts started reaching for the moon.
Fiona MacCarthy, writer and historian

***The International Exhibitions of Miniature Textiles* (1970s)**
In the 70s Ann Sutton instigated a series of *International Exhibitions of Miniature Textiles* for the British Crafts Centre. The concept was simple: nothing to exceed 25-30 centimetres in any direction. At a stroke, work could be easily transported and displayed; the size restriction encouraged an inclusivity of participation spanning both nationalities and status. I've witnessed any number of miniature shows over the years: regularly appropriated, it's a model that continues to work. A miniature exhibition is not unlike a music anthology; it's a chance to see the artists you love alongside work of someone perhaps unknown that is soon to feature heavily on your artistic playlist.
Michael Brennand-Wood, artist

***The Maker's Eye* (1981)**
Craft entered my consciousness when a new friend, the potter Carol McNicoll, took me to this Crafts Council exhibition. Thirteen makers, covering all generations, had been asked to 'define the idea of craft from his or her personal experience'. The show looked wonderful but suggested that 'craft' had a complicated unstable identity. Was it a lute made by Stephen Gottlieb (chosen by David Pye) or a Triumph Bonneville motorbike (chosen by Emmanuel Cooper)? Was it the *trompe l'oeil* of Andrew Lord's *Round Grey Shadow* coffee set (chosen by Alison Britton) or a humble Sussex trug (chosen by Enid Marx)? Here was unknown territory, a world, if not quite a discipline, a field apparently undecided about itself. *The Maker's Eye* led me to try to unravel craft's mysteries in my book *The Crafts in Britain in the 20th Century*. As protean craft continues to change its identity, the quest goes on. *Tanya Harrod, author, design historian and columnist*

HOURS IMAGE © EDMUND DE WAAL COURTESY GAGOSIAN GALLERY | POWER OF MAKING PHOTO © V&A MUSEUM, LONDON

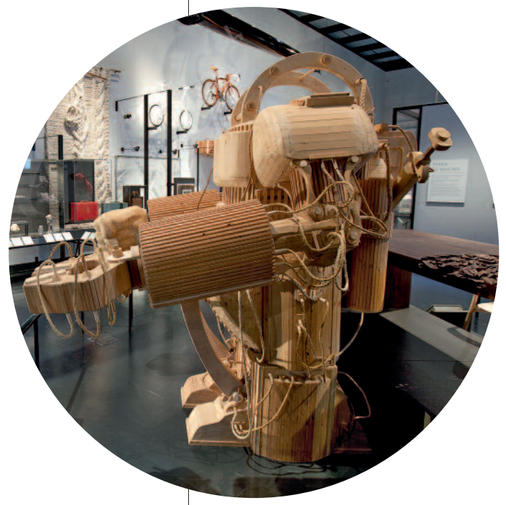
***Pierre Degen: New Work* (1982)**
Pierre Degen: New Work, curated by Ralph Turner, which opened at the Crafts Council Galleries in Lower Regent Street in late 1982, was an exhibition that decidedly polarised opinion. The design and installation was conceptually radical. I found it exciting; in others it engendered a crisis of confidence: *Have we gone too far? Where are the borders? Is it still jewellery?* Degen's exhibition radically pushed the landscape of contemporary craft over the flat earth's edge; the world had ceased to exist in the form we knew it. As someone who first exhibited with the Crafts Council in 1979, what excited me at that time was the absence of any definable artistic road map. The Crafts Council seemed to welcome a pluralistic approach embracing tradition, technique and contemporary innovation in equal parts. *New Works* outlined a possible fourth artistic world of experimental jewellery, installation and performance-based activity. *Michael Brennand-Wood*

***Jewellery Moves* (1998)**
Jewellery Moves was the title of an exhibition I had the chance to work on with Elizabeth Goring at the National Museums of Scotland in Edinburgh in 1998. The title, Elizabeth's, represents two aspects of jewellery that are inescapable: it occupies a strong relationship, through time, to our emotional and intimate lives and, when worn, it is usually in motion. Working on that show not only developed my knowledge and understanding of the work of some 300 internationally active artist jewellers, but it also allowed me to place local practice in context: I understood more about the qualities of contemporary jewellery in Scotland because I could see it in its broad and deep relationships to other cultures and countries. Jewellery – like many forms of expression loosely classified by the term craft – crosses temporal and geographical boundaries, and becomes a shared language: difference is recognised, and respected, but common ground is also found and enjoyed.
Amanda Game, writer and curator

> 'The Maker's Eye looked wonderful but suggested that 'craft' had a complicated unstable identity'
> TANYA HARROD

***The Glass Show* (1993)**
The Crafts Council's exhibition in Islington was absolutely what a major show should be – an exciting, revealing and pleasurable presentation of the best of the best. The best of British work, to inspire those in this country to admire, collect, trade in, or perhaps make, glass. By 1993 I had seen a great deal of contemporary ceramics but less glass. In that show I saw work by artists I had never heard of before, but I soon made it my business to meet many of them. They were at various stages in their careers, but the exhibition showed accomplished work made through as many glass processes as possible. It inspired me to collect and to deal in the work of many of those artists. In retrospect, I can see that the selection panel included Dan Klein – the nicest, kindest, wisest contemporary glass enthusiast-with-a-commercial-twist of his generation. I haven't seen any museum exhibition in the capital city of our country of such high-quality on any aspect of British craft objects since this one in 1993 – have you?
Adrian Sassoon, gallery owner

***COLLECT* (2003)**
COLLECT started at the V&A: in those interconnecting rooms, dark yet dramatically spot lit. It spoke of something new and different, it endorsed excellence of making, ideas and context. *COLLECT* is now in its 11th year and its ethos has not changed. It gathers the best in its field and presents it to a global audience. *Peter Ting, ceramic designer*



***Power of Making* (2011)**
The Crafts Council's and V&A's *Power of Making* anticipated the growing use of digital manufacture for craft objects. Computer-aided design has been widely adopted by artists and designers. While the transfer of this information to production is relatively straightforward in two dimensions, the making of more organic three-dimensional forms, especially in wood, remains a challenge because the cost of programming and processing is extraordinarily high in comparison with that of hand-work. This echoes the issues confronted a century ago, when innovative designs intended to give visual expression to the new Machine Age were often made by hand. We are on the cusp of another revolution.
John Makepeace, designer and educator
(***Power of Making** was also nominated by Catharine Rossi and Corinne Julius*)

***Atemwende* (2013)**
In 2013, Larry Gagosian signed a contract with Edmund de Waal, and assisted his passage through the finely crafted glass ceiling which had long kept the crafts from reaching the dizzy market heights scaled by fine art. At a stroke, de Waal's work underwent stellar repositioning. The road had been paved for this development by a number of other conspicuous successes: sculptor Antony Gormley's *Field* had very publicly established the viability of a large multiplicity of similar hand-crafted objects as a single, saleable work of art; and Grayson Perry – using his glazed ceramic vessel as a vehicle for edgy political challenge – had given a new Turner-Prize-fuelled cachet to the medium. In terms of personality, added plurality of practice as a successful writer and recognised thinker, and the nuanced significance of the individual craft object in his installations of multiple cylinders, de Waal has matched both.
Sara Roberts, independent curator

This page, top to bottom: Michael Brennand-Wood's work at *Maker's Eye*; *Power of Making*, V&A, 2011; *your hand full of hours*, Edmund de Waal, 23 porcelain vessels, wood, aluminium and plexiglass vitrine, 45 x 190 cm, 2013. Opposite: vessel, Lucie Rie (shown in *The Craftsman's Art*)

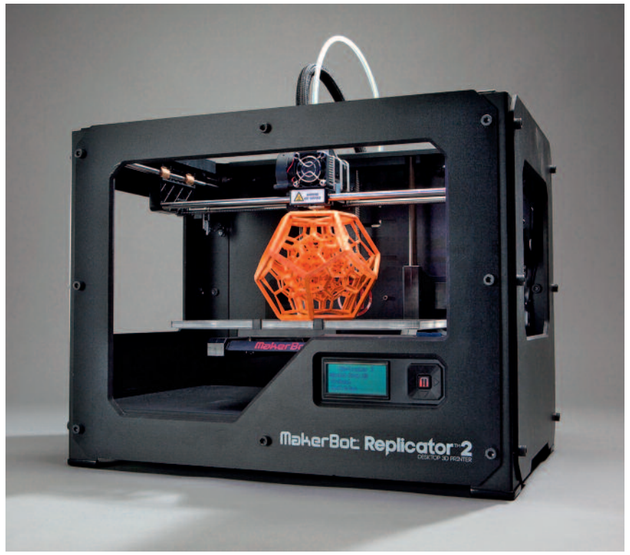
Objects and tools

William Lee's hand-operated knitting frame (1589)
This is the first machine to replace the action of fingers, so it could be said to be the first step towards robotics. Over the following centuries, its principles inspired the development of a myriad of machines, for making stockings, knitwear, jersey fabrics, nets, laces and fancy weaves, including those made with Jacquard cards (perfected in 1801 and a forerunner of computer data-entry cards). Yet the perfected hand-operated frame itself, proliferating in the 18th-19th centuries, continued to underpin specialist making, and remains an important tool for creative hand-knitters today. In many ways its story presages the relationship between digital mass-production technologies and the innovations that individuals can achieve through hand-manipulation and sophisticated questioning of a tool's capabilities.
Mary Schoeser, writer and curator

The Steam Engine (1763-75)
The earliest steam engines were hand-made objects, triumphs of craft knowledge collaboratively realised by the metalsmithing entrepreneur Matthew Boulton and the engineer and prototyper James Watt. Yet their achievement made possible the Industrial Revolution, and with it a widespread degradation of labour. Craft itself came to be defined against the steam engine and the automated machinery it powered.
In many ways we still understand craftsmanship in these oppositional terms, as they were formulated by the 19th-century critics of industrial capitalism who wrote in the shadow of the steam engine, such as Karl Marx and William Morris. *Glenn Adamson, Museum of Arts and Design, New York, director*

Samuel Compton's spinning mule (1779)
The spinning mule revolutionised the making of all cloths and threads for sewing and embroidery, producing the first strong and fine machine-twisted yarn. Arguably this opened the gateway for the Industrial Revolution. Plentiful yarns made mechanised weaving and knitting viable, resulting in the diminution of hand-weaving and frame-knitting as a livelihood. But the resulting extraordinary wealth of 19th century Britain facilitated the attendant (and capital-dependent) philanthropic response, namely the Arts and Crafts Movement. The same cycle of influence occurred in Belgium, where the mule was soon acquired by stealth, and Europe's first arts and crafts activity later emerged. Intriguingly, mules required craftsmen – skilled hands – to control the pace of the drawing out of yarns, which subsequent spinning machines do not. Few operating spinning mules survive, though Quarry Bank Mill retains one. *Mary Schoeser*

'The earliest steam engines were hand-made objects, triumphs of craft knowledge'
GLENN ADAMSON



Bernard Leach and the etching press (1909)
Bernard Leach set off for Japan with the phrase 'go to Nature' ringing in his ears. It was his erstwhile teacher's way (the teacher in question was Sir Frank Brangwyn) of telling him to get a grip on his ambition to become an 'Artist' (which is how he described himself, evocatively, in his first passport). And in order to demonstrate that he was indeed an 'Artist', Leach packed into the bowels of the German liner that took him – third class, first to Nagasaki, then to Tokyo – a fine etching press, purchased from Wilfred C. Kimber's etcher's store in London. Etching was the 'Art' of choice. Leach set out with 'The Introduction of Etching to the Japanese Art World' grandly announced, in a lecture title. The date of his last etchings – one an evocative picture of a baby, possibly his daughter Jessamine – is 1924. Etchings had given way to pots. But it might be seen as a symbol of his intentions and endeavours to take an art world by storm. *Simon Olding, Crafts Study Centre, director*

Polythene (1933)
In my particular craft, ceramics, the technology and invention that brought polythene sheeting into being has changed and liberated practice. It means you can make a piece of work slowly, wrap it up and come back to it. Not often needed by throwers, hand-builders and sculptors depend on it. Works can have a sequence of ideas thought about them that can still be acted upon.
You could even be ill for a month, and revive to complete the same piece. In the workshops of Renaissance sculptors, such as the della Robbia family, teams of small boys had to keep wetting the cloths that protected unfinished altarpieces. This is hard to replicate, so thank you to polythene, which can be responsibly recycled for a long time. *Alison Britton, artist, writer and teacher*

TAPESTRY PHOTO COURTESY THE ARTIST AND VICTORIA MIRO, LONDON © GRAYSON PERRY | LEACH PHOTO: TRUE FLEISCHMANN COURTESY CRAFTS STUDY CENTRE | FLOCKINGER PHOTO: NENKE KLUNDER

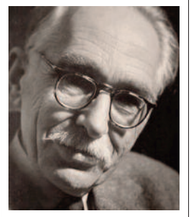
People

David Pye's fluting engine (late 1940s)
David Pye practised what he preached. His fluting engine was his response to the call, in his own 1968 publication *The Nature and Art of Workmanship*, to marry the benefits of the 'workmanship of certainty' – regularity, precision, order – with the 'workmanship of risk', which produces diversity, and freedom of expression. Operating like a pole lathe, the fluting engine guided a chisel from the rim to the centre of the piece of wood that he was working with: wood-carving, not wood-turning. It produced diversity, yes, but within the parameters of the machine that regulated the incisions, a delicate tension is noticeable on the surface of each bowl. These works provide a lesson in how technology can augment our experience and appreciation of craft. *Stephen Knott, writer and lecturer*

The *Walthamstow Tapestry* (2009)
Some of the most thrilling craft works are those that catch you unawares. Seen from afar, Grayson Perry's *Walthamstow Tapestry* is a beautiful, if benign, thing, inspired by the *Bayeux Tapestry* and the traditions of Sumatran *batik*. Designed by Perry and woven by a specialist Belgian firm, the tapestry speaks of Perry's active patronage of numerous historic crafts. Up close, however, we see the other key characteristic of this latest chapter in art's turn to craft: the appropriation of craft's quiet and conservative image for subversive ends. In among its human figures depicting the seven ages of man is a rollcall of the brands that we worship in our contemporary consumer culture, and in whom we put our misplaced faith. The *Walthamstow Tapestry* is testimony to craft's long history of socially engaged practice, and its ability to make radical messages as powerful as they are unexpected. *Catharine Rossi, writer and lecturer*

MakerBot Replicator 2
A desktop printer for less than £1,800 might not be able to produce much more in the way of useable objects than a shoehorn or a keyring. But it is an object that has revolutionised the meaning of making. It's a machine that questions the nature of skill, and yet it also transforms the domination of the machine and the factory in our imaginations. *Deyan Sudjic, Design Museum, director*

'Nobody has done more than Gerda Flöckinger to professionalise UK studio jewellery'
DAVID WHITING



Above: Bernard Leach
Right: Gerda Flöckinger, photographed in her studio for *Crafts*, no.206, 2007
Opposite page above: MakerBot Replicator 2
Opposite page below: *The Walthamstow Tapestry*, Grayson Perry, wool and cotton tapestry, 3 x 15 m, 2009

William Lethaby (1857-1931)
Not often put in the same league as William Morris or John Ruskin, the Devon-born William Lethaby arguably did more to secure the legacy of the Arts and Crafts Movement. It was not his architectural practice that backs up this claim, but his role as founder of the Central School of Arts and Crafts , which opened in 1896. Working with the newly formed London County Council, Lethaby instituted a radical art and design education, whereby learning did not supplant apprenticeship in a trade but went alongside it, anticipating the call in Walter Gropius's Bauhaus manifesto to 'return to the crafts'.
A pioneer pedagogue, Lethaby employed a number of influential teachers at the Central, including Edward Johnston, establishing it as a beacon of progressive art and design education in the 20th century. He was also alert to the more humble contexts of craft, bemoaning élitism and celebrating, among other things, agricultural crafts and the activities of the fledgling Women's Institute. *Stephen Knott*

Margaret Pilkington (1891-1974)
A wood engraver trained in painting at the Slade and in engraving under Noel Rooke at the Central School, Pilkington was active from 1920 in the Society of Wood Engravers, and had also instigated the founding of the Red Rose Guild (of Artworkers, later of Designer Craftsmen) in 1921 and its influential annual *COLLECT*-like fairs. On the council of the Whitworth Art Gallery from 1925, she was its honorary director from 1936-59, running the gallery and especially keen to develop exhibitions that would appeal to ordinary people. She became equally familiar with the organisations that we know as the Crafts Council (which as the Craft Centre of Great Britain was sponsored in 1947 by, among other bodies, the Red Rose Guild) and the Crafts Study Centre, having – with Marianne Straub, a founding Trustee in 1970 – acted as conservator of Ethel Mairet's estate, and campaigned for a national crafts collection. *Mary Schoeser*

Gerda Flöckinger
One can think of many pivotal moments in the crafts, and of many pioneering figures, but I would like to nominate one who is happily still with us and working at her bench, the artist-jeweller Gerda Flöckinger. Instilled by the strong decorative arts ethos of her country of birth, Austria, nobody has done more to professionalise and lay the groundwork in Britain for studio jewellery in the post-war period. This has been manifest not only in her highly innovative modern designs and techniques, but through her seminal teaching and course at Hornsey College of Art in the 60s, a model for subsequent courses. Her example helped to make the discipline a viable one, full of possibilities for the many designer-makers that followed, and she has played a key role in the renaissance of studio craft in the last 50 years. *David Whiting, writer and critic*

Jim Partridge and Liz Walmsley
In 1989 I decided to take a short cut from Leicester Square and found myself walking down Waterloo Place. I had

some time, and wandered into the Crafts Council gallery to view an exhibition of work by Jim Partridge, finding myself immersed in a display of blackened oak vessels and seats – dramatic, simple, completely, and surprisingly, original. James Ravilious's black and white photographs, showing Partridge's elegant walkways and bridges, recently commissioned for Grizedale Forest, enlarged the space of the show. I could probably draw the exhibition now, so vivid was the imprint that show made on both my intellect and my imagination. It marked the beginning of a long working relationship, and friendship, with Jim and his partner Liz Walmsley, which resulted in regular shows in Edinburgh and a series of commissions for seats and bridges at the Ardtornish Estate in Morvern; Mount Stuart on the Isle of Bute and many others. *Amanda Game*

David Redhead
David Redhead is responsible for two intriguing exhibitions. At Glasgow's Lighthouse he curated *Identity Crisis: the 90s Defined* to mark the end of the 1999 Year of Architecture and Design – memorable for his choice of Thomas Heatherwick, fresh from the RCA, to design it. Heatherwick didn't so much design the show as make it. Even with his arm in a sling, he wound five miles of cling film around the exhibits, suggesting some kind of giant spider's lair. Two years later, Redhead came up with a great title for his second exhibition, *Industry of One*, for the Crafts Council – tracing the story of the designer-makers. The title alone was enough to capture the essential schizophrenia of the idea. *Deyan Sudjic*

The Swadeshi movement in India
In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, craft was adopted as a tool of nationalism in many countries across the globe, from the Scandinavian 'Viking style' to Japan's *Mingei* movement. Arguably the greatest of these initiatives was the self-rule or *Swadeshi* movement of India, which found its avatar and spokesman in Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi found in craft – specifically the production of *khadi* homespun cloth – both a practical and symbolic way to achieve independence from British imperial power. The hand-made took a natural place in his thought alongside non-violent protest: two paths toward an ethical, autonomous and expressive politics. *Glenn Adamson*

David Queensberry
During David Queensberry's tenure as professor of ceramics and glass at the Royal College of Art, there emerged a group of globally influential ceramists in the 70s, including Alison Britton, Carol McNicoll, Jacqui Poncelet, Elizabeth Fritsch, Glenys Barton and Jill Crowley. They defined a generation of makers, and continue to influence those generations to come. Not only did David focus on studio ceramics,

'For Grayson Perry, the pot is not an end in itself, it is part of composition'
GERALDINE RUDGE

Clockwise from above left: *Identity Crisis*; Hiroshi Suzuki; *The Whole Earth Catalog*, 1969; David Queensberry, right, with business partner Martin Hunt, centre

QUEENSBERRY IMAGE COURTESY ROYAL COLLEGE OF ART ARCHIVE/PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN | SUZUKI PORTRAIT COURTESY ADRIAN SASSOON, LONDON

together with Martin Hunt, he formed the highly successful design group Queensberry Hunt, working with such makers as Janice Tchalenko and Keiko Hasegawa to bring the 'hand-made' into mass production. His influence is immeasurable. *Peter Ting*

Ralph Turner
During the late 70s and early 80s, the old Crafts Council gallery on Lower Regent Street provided the hub where craft visibly changed. A relatively tiny space, the gallery acted as an unofficial clubhouse to meet, view and talk over the latest innovations. The exhibition programme, led by head of exhibitions Ralph Turner, instigated a series of innovative shows that mapped the burgeoning landscape of contemporary expression. Shows were exciting and edgy. During that era many makers were offered their first opportunity to show a collection of work: if you look at a certain strata of makers today they nearly all got their start at Lower Regent Street. *Michael Brennand-Wood*

Lina Bo Bardi
In Brazil, as in Europe, Modernist architects valued indigenous craft. The Italian architect and designer Lina Bo Bardi, ambitious for social democracy, pioneered the collection and exhibition of folk art from Pernambuco in the north-east for the iconic public art museum she designed in cosmopolitan São Paulo (MASP). This helped change perceptions of value and values in a post-colonial society and culture, an adjustment still playing out in countries round the world. *Martina Margetts, senior tutor at the RCA and former editor of Crafts*

Grayson Perry
Grayson Perry is the maverick of the crafts world, but I've chosen to place him here, because he has done more than any British potter since Bernard Leach to generate public interest in clay and the work of the potter. When Perry first started making pots in the early 80s and we featured his work in *Crafts* magazine, those on the side of tradition and skill at the Crafts Council held up their hands in horror at his simple coiled pieces. But for Perry, the pot is not an end in itself, it is part of composition, a vehicle for often shocking narrative and the added punch that a seemingly innocuous pot can pack on closer inspection. *Geraldine Rudge, writer and former editor of Crafts*

Hiroshi Suzuki
Where does one start to explain the impact of Hiroshi Suzuki? The breadth of his *oeuvre* is still expanding beyond the present borders of his achievement;

he now enamels some silver and enjoys working in gold too. His genius for making glamorous, large and even larger silver objects as sculptures to be enjoyed in domestic settings has inspired a collecting base of such eminence that one has to acknowledge this is something different. *Adrian Sassoon*

Kate Malone
Kate Malone has been a dynamic force in ceramics since graduating from the Royal College of Art in 1986. The *Fruits of the Sea* pieces that she created initially were a *tour de force*, with their swirling aquatic relief forms and exquisite multi-coloured glazes. The *Fruits of the Earth* series that she developed subsequently have proved a rich vein ever since, although she is constantly coming up with new ideas. Her ability to work on a micro- and a macro-scale is quite extraordinary – from subtle relief patterns and crystalline glaze effects on the surface of a pot to gigantic vessels and installations in public spaces. Malone exudes creativity and embodies all that is best about contemporary craft, inspiring both fellow potters and the public. *Lesley Jackson, writer, curator and design historian*

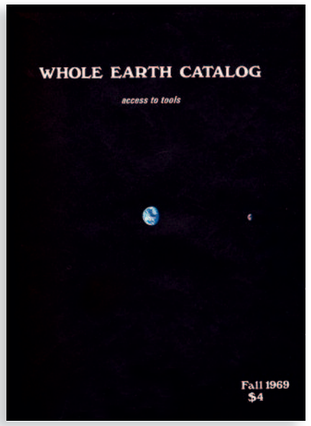
The Sōdeisha group
Abstract Expressionist ceramics of the 1950s in the USA are widely known as emblems of a paradigm shift in the purpose and meaning of making in the postwar era. But the earlier Sōdeisha group in Japan – begun in 1948 by Yagi Kazuo, Yamada Hikaru and Suzuki Osamu, all sons of potters – was perhaps even more audacious in its intention to change craft. Reacting to the conservatism of Japanese industrial production, the *Mingei* folkcraft movement and the heritage of Living National Treasures, they exemplify a group prepared to take creative, social and economic risks, an inspiration to current collectives and individual pracititoners globally. As Yagi wrote: 'We knew that we wanted to develop in Japanese terms something that had not previously existed'. *Martina Margetts*

Publications

'The sculptor today places greater emphasis on event, rather than occasion'
ROSE SLIVKA, 1961

'Honesty and the Crafts' by Gordon Russell (1922)
This 12-page pamphlet is important because it's the beginning of a transition in this country from the Arts and Crafts Movement to modern ways of thinking about how things should be made. It's sub-titled 'A Plea for a Broader Outlook', and in it Russell puts the view – startling at the time, especially among the die-hard handicraft brigade – that it is 'possible to make furniture by mass production, it is even possible to make good furniture this way.' Russell argues against dishonesty in design – 'the doctrine that nothing is beautiful unless it is old' – and against dishonesty in finish where 'everything looks like something else'. 'We must abolish shams and return to a study of fundamentals,' he writes, 'and bring honesty into everyday life.' Today, with craft besieged by 'up-cyclers' on one hand, and heritage enthusiasts on the other, this is still as relevant as it was in 1922. *Chris Eckersley, artist and designer*

***A Potter's Book* by Bernard Leach (1940)**
In which Leach told artisan-potters they should regard themselves as 'potter-artists', seeking to elevate the status of craft by deliberately attempting to place it on a par with fine art. 'The work of the individual potter or potter-artist... belongs to one aesthetic category, and the finished result of the operations of industrialised manufacture... to another and quite different category,' Leach claimed, and thus repositioned craft for the rest of the 20th century. This was a deciding moment, and the worst thing that could have happened, because it significantly reduced the chances of any collaboration between craft and industrial production. These few sentences effectively replaced the idea of what used to be called the 'applied arts' with a view of craft that is much more self-centred and far less interested in any social purpose. The logical development of this has resulted today in craft shows where items are sold to wealthy collectors at often over-inflated prices. Thus has craft become part of the luxury market. *Chris Eckersley*



The Coldstream Reports (1960, 1970)
The Coldstream Report of 1960 – with a second in 1970 – had a significant impact on the applied and decorative arts and its consequences still echo today. The report recommended and implemented real changes in art education, with an emphasis on craft-based training, a more liberal approach to art training, and the inclusion of the academic study of art and design history. It was at this point that the rigid barriers between fine art and craft training became flexible. From the 70s onwards, this freedom and flexibility to experiment with craft materials fuelled a renaissance of interest. The report formed a major foundation block for the 'new ceramics' and the 'new jewellery' movements of the 70s and 80s, and pushed boundaries in all disciplines. *Geraldine Rudge*

'The New Ceramic Presence' by Rose Slivka (1961)
There are two particular moments for me where the world gets re-aligned. The first is Kazimir Malevich's *Teapot* of 1923, made at the State Porcelain Factory in Leningrad out of earthenware. It is in revolutionary white, an exercise in 'economic geometry', useless in every way except as a manifesto for the purity of ideas, a new horizon for what objects can be. The second is a text from 1961, written by Rose Slivka, the editor of *Craft Horizons*, a provocation entitled 'The New Ceramic Presence', in which she argued that 'new images and new ideas' were emerging from the synergy between abstract sculpture and painting and the crafts. 'The sculptor today,' she wrote, 'places greater emphasis on event rather than occasion, in the force of movement and the stance of the dance rather than in the power of permanence and the weight of immobility, in the metamorphosis of meanings rather than in the eternity of symbols.' It is incendiary, as it suggests that craft can change. An idea well worth returning to at moments of celebration. *Edmund de Waal, artist and writer*

***The Whole Earth Catalog* (1968)**
DIY books and how-to guides have long held a central place in the literature of craft. First published in 1968, *The*

Events

Whole Earth Catalog was not your typical instruction manual, however. Created by Stewart Brand, and published regularly until the early 70s, the catalogue was the Yellow Pages of the self-made 60s counterculture. This was a grassroots compendium of the skills, tools and technologies – from solar power to geodesic domes and goat husbandry – necessary to make your own alternative, unalienated existence. It was the bible of self-built, *ad hoc* communities like Colorado's Drop City, and its networked, crowdsourced ethos provided the roots for Silicon Valley's technological revolutions. *The Whole Earth Catalog* is not just a landmark text for yesterday's counterculture, but for today's cyberculture too. *Catharine Rossi*

The launch of *Crafts* magazine (1973)
Leaving art school in 1969, I took a job to pay the bills – but by 1972 I was able to set up my first studio in the basement of an architects' office. 250 editions of *Crafts* magazine later, I have an encyclopaedia of craft, with academic and visual stimulation and a studio with of a bookcase full of *Crafts*. *Jilly Edwards, artist and maker*

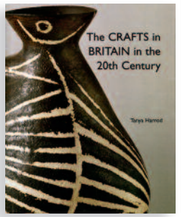
Four decades appear as the blink of an eye in the scale of human existence, so I hope 250 issues of *Crafts* since 1973 count as 'a moment'. The publication has helped change the apprehension and critique of craft, significantly enabled by a publicly funded organisation. *Martina Margetts*

***The Crafts in Britain in the 20th Century* by Tanya Harrod (1999)**
This book made serious the world I have worked in, because it gave crafts an extensive and honest understanding that was not merely glorifying the artefacts, or making claims for an expressively useful or a pure aesthetic status, but giving crafts a context that was both grounded in social history, in the point of them in human behaviour, and investigating the fluctuations of relevance and place the crafts could occupy. Crafts might be therapeutic for injured soldiers after a war, daringly modernist in their revisions of folk art practice, or brazen and barrier-crashing in avant-garde moments, as well as comfortingly familiar and symbolic in other circumstances, like transitional objects. Her research of the great breadth of her sources was remarkable, and it also has to be noted that Harrod writes with great clarity and fluid intelligence in language that that delights the ear and puts no one's back up by straining to intellectualise. *Alison Britton*

Bernard Leach and the *raku* party (1911)
In the contents page to Bernard Leach's *Beyond East and West: Memoirs, Portraits and Essays*, beneath the title, and in the course of describing the beginnings of a long friendship with Kenkichi Tomimoto ('We share life... [H]e leads me into Oriental subtleties'), Leach notes, casually, that 'we experience an amateur pottery party.' This, he says 'decides our future'. In the burning embers of a firing, surrounded by 'some 30 young artists, writers and actors', one of the great careers of ceramics was forged, and the revolution of British studio ceramics in the 20th century was begun. The casual invitation to paint a pot on 18 February 1911 changed the way we all look at ceramics. *Simon Olding*

The Dartington Conference (1952)
The 1952 Dartington International Conference of Craftsmen in Pottery and Textiles was one of the first large organised meetings of makers after World War Two. Over 100 delegates from 20 countries went to Dartington Hall in Devon to discuss and present papers on these disciplines and related issues, accompanied by a touring exhibition. The aim? To investigate the role of craftspeople in modern society in the light of their achievements over the preceding 30 years. Dominated by the anti-industrial and 'East meets West' philosophical stance of the potter Bernard Leach (who had helped to initiate the event) and others, and quite élitist in terms of those invited to attend and speak, its persuasive uniting sense of a new and burgeoning community of makers nonetheless helped to set the intellectual and spiritual tone for a revival in more traditional practice over the next 20 years. *David Whiting*

'The event began when Jim Melchert lowered his head into a vat of slip and took a seat'
DEIRDRE FIGUEIREDO



The founding of the World Crafts Council (1964)
Fifty years ago at Columbia University in New York City, hundreds of emissaries from across the globe gathered to discuss the present and future state of craft. It was the last and most ambitious project of Aileen Osborn Webb, who had already founded a national council, a museum, and a school. Now, with the support of UNESCO, she brought together luminaries from six continents to work together. Up until Webb's death in 1979, the WCC was one of the most powerful forces for economic development in the crafts, and initiated many strategies that are still used by independent development organisations today. *Glenn Adamson*

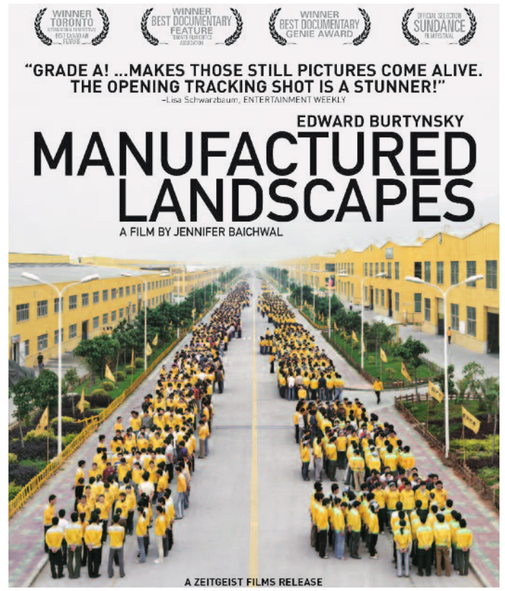
Jim Melchert's *Changes – Performance with Drying Slip* (Amsterdam 1972, re-staged Houston 2010)
Principally known for his work in ceramics, Melchert is an artist who disregards many of the canons that define disciplines. In this live experimental performance, clay is treated as an aesthetic medium that exists in many states. Here he investigates the effects of wet clay slip upon the body. The event began when Melchert lowered his head into a vat of slip and took a seat. 'Outside activity doesn't invade that interior space again until the slip covering your eyes and ears dries enough to crack and slowly release you to the company of other people.' This landmark 'Happening' was a seminal forerunner of current debates about craft in an expanded field. It shifted the idea of ceramics from gallery to performance space and beyond. *Deirdre Figueiredo, Craftspace, director*

The Crafts Council receives funding from the Arts Council (1998)
The moment that changed craft in our recent history began in 1998 when Culture Secretary Chris Smith proposed a merger of Crafts Council and Arts Council. A meeting at the Crafts Council to consider such a move was almost unanimous in welcoming it. So how did this moment change craft in the year that I graduated from the ceramics and glass department at the Royal College of Art? It meant that craft could truly join in, be judged as an equal practice alongside opera, painting, dance, design and sculpture. Craft now shifted beyond its separate funded history, and could move into an exciting world of dialogue with other cultures of the arts. Craft had been given an invitation to join in: craft as an equal partner, a welcome partner that has enabled us 16 years later to work fluidly and develop as an area of practice. *Clare Twomey, artist*

BUILDING PHOTO: HÉLÈNE BINET | PERRY PHOTO COURTESY TATE PHOTOGRAPHY

The American Craft Museum changes its name (2002)
For me an important moment is the moment that craft became a dirty word: the other c-word! In America the evidence for this is tangible; the changing of the name of the American Craft Museum in New York to the Museum of Arts & Design in 2002 (mind you, I love the acronym MAD). And in 2003 the dropping of the word 'craft' from California College of Arts and Crafts in San Francisco, making it simply the California College of the Arts. Maybe the seminal moment was in 2005 when Lacey Jane Roberts (a grad student from CCA) knitted the words '& Crafts' in bright orange yarn and installed them in their former place at the end of the 'California College of Arts' sign, so that it read 'California College of Arts & Crafts' again. *Freddie Robins, artist*

Grayson Perry wins the Turner Prize (2003)
Perry's success marked an important international shift in the understanding and awareness of ceramics. He gained a highly publicised platform to present the possibilities and relevance of craft within the contemporary avant garde. Using pottery as his medium and taking obvious pleasure in its marginalised status within the art world, he made it irresistible to them. By his own admission, his work deploys 'guerilla' or 'stealth' tactics. Beautiful, highly decorated, utilitarian forms of pottery both seduce and provoke the viewer into confronting challenging contemporary social, political and often intensely personal themes. He was not the first to give pottery a subversive agenda, but his achievement in raising the profile of craft which he has since continued via tapestry and quilting has been groundbreaking. *Beverley Rider, designer and collector*



A Chinese factory worker assembles a circuit-breaker in Edward Burtynsky's film *Manufactured Landscapes* (2006)
In this beguiling scene, a woman constructs a circuit-breaker at breakneck speed, from a myriad of electrical components. She inserts the metal clips, the fuses, pins, wires, screws, and various fixtures into the breaker with the two ends of a standard flat-headed screwdriver, which wedges, taps and secures the pieces in place. When one is finished there is no time for contemplation – she just proceeds on to the next one, alongside co-workers who are doing exactly the same thing. There is nothing precious about this engagement with making – it is about maximising output, pure and simple. Many would doubt this is a craft at all. However, the manual dexterity, the skill of assembly, and the efficiency of movement are a testament to human ability operating under economic pressure. Perhaps the knowledge that our circuit breakers are hand-made offers the most palpable reassessment of our understanding of craft today. *Stephen Knott*

'The global financial crisis in the late 2000s highlighted conspicuous consumerism'
ROSY GREENLEES

Clockwise from left: Grayson Perry at the Turner Prize reception, 2003; *The Crafts in Britain in the 20th Century*, Tanya Harrod; Museum of Arts and Design, New York; poster for Edward Burtynsky's *Manufactured Landscapes*, 2006

The Financial Crash (2008)
The global financial crisis in the late 2000s highlighted conspicuous consumerism and the danger of focusing solely on a knowledge-based economy. It led to increased public interest in craft both as product and skill. Two best-selling books – *The Craftsman* by Richard Sennett (2008) and *The Case for Working with Your Hands* by Matthew Crawford (2010) – gained widespread attention, resonating with the public, political analysts and economists alike. In 2011 Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne made his 'March of the Makers' speech, the BBC looked at manufacturing through the *Made in Britain* series, and the Crafts Council and V&A exhibition *Power of Making* became one of the museum's most visited shows ever. The importance of skills, material knowledge and the maker's way of thinking was identified as driving success and in some cases innovation across a number of industries leading to a positive re-appraisal of craft's relevance and value in the 21st century. As a sector we need to ensure this continues. *Rosy Greenlees, Crafts Council, executive director*

The launch of the Craft Education Manifesto in November (2014)
Without expert training, there'd be no craft. In 1998, the publication of *Learning Through Making* marked a key moment in recognising the value of craft education. 'Practical insightful making is one of the most highly valued capabilities in Britain,' it declared. Today we're fighting again for recognition. *Studying Craft* (published March 2014) tracks craft education at all levels over a five year period. The data revealed worrying trends. Between 2007-11, participation fell 19 percent at GCSE and 15 percent at A-level. The number of higher education courses plummeted by 39 percent, though student numbers held up. Spurred by these figures, the Crafts Council is leading the development of a Craft Education Manifesto, to make the urgent case for safeguarding the future of craft education. We launch it this November. I hope in years to come we will look back to this as a pivotal moment, a turning point in the resurgence of craft education. *Annie Warburton, Crafts Council, creative programmes director*