



The U.S. Connection

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guild.com: A Premier Internet Destination for Fine Arts and Crafts

April 1999 marked the unveiling of www.guild.com, the worldwide centre on the Internet for the discovery, exploration, and purchase of the finest arts and crafts available.

[guild.com](http://www.guild.com) is the brainchild of Toni Sikes, founder of the Guild. "There is so much extraordinary art work available. Unfortunately, many people don't have access to it," notes Sikes. She goes on to point out that now, through [guild.com](http://www.guild.com), anyone, anywhere, can view and purchase the work of thousands of the world's most exciting artists.

In developing [guild.com](http://www.guild.com), Sikes assembled a team of the top talent in the fields of art, craft, Web development, graphics, retail and e-commerce. "In order to make this site successful, all of the components had to be exceptional and work well together," says Sikes. [guild.com](http://www.guild.com) benefits from the curatorial expertise of Michael Monroe, past Executive Director of the American Craft Council and former Curator-in-Charge of the Smithsonian Institution's Renwick Gallery.

All of the artists whose work is on [guild.com](http://www.guild.com) appear by invitation only, and Sikes makes it clear that the

selection team is keen to increase Canadian representation on the site. Regardless of price or medium, the work is reviewed and selected by an advisory panel headed by Michael Monroe. "Quality is the absolute, uncompromising criterion for selection. From there, we look for breadth and range of work. Our ultimate goal is to offer the highest quality selection of hand-crafted objects available anywhere," says Monroe. Over 1,400 of the finest artists and galleries in the field have been invited to be a part of

[guild.com](http://www.guild.com). As a result, the site has an incredibly comprehensive body of work in all major media, at prices ranging from \$75 to \$50,000.

Once visitors have found that perfect piece, they simply place it in their Shopping Basket for purchase. Every order will come directly to [guild.com](http://www.guild.com), and order fulfillment will be handled by the artists themselves.

As well as showing the work of artists, the site includes an electronic wing devoted to galleries, museums and art events.

"[guild.com](http://www.guild.com) will pave the way towards greater exposure. It is far more than a premier shopping venue. It is an educational site, a resource guide and an adventure," says Sikes.

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The two articles on this page are extracts from New Directions, a quarterly export newsletter for the Canadian craft and giftware industries, written by Dana Boyle of the Canadian Consulate General in Minneapolis.

New Internet Wholesale Sales Vehicle

The progressive Internet site www.wholesalecrafts.com which currently markets only American and Canadian artists, was designed as an inexpensive way for retailers to meet with artists and suppliers. President and Founder Nancy Vince, says that they currently feature over 200 artists and

have enrolled 2,100 retail buyers — all of whom are carefully screened. "And we are receiving new buyer members at a rate of around five new stores per day!"

Wholesale buyers find artists by entering virtual trade shows on the

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