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National Magazine Honors Area Craftsperson

June 2011—[*Lisa M. Nelthropp* of [*Wolfeboro, NH*]] won the highest award as a traditional artisan in this year's Directory of Traditional American Crafts, and [*her, his*] work is showcased in the latest issue of *Early American Life* magazine. [She] ranks top in (her, His) field, according to a panel of national experts convened by the magazine. The experts—curators from such prestigious institutions as the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, George Washington's Mount Vernon, Hancock Shaker Village, Kent State University, National Council on History Education, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Old Sturbridge Village, Southern Highland Craft Guild, Strawberry Banke Museum, and Winterthur Museum as well as antiques dealers, independent scholars, and professional instructors—selected the top craftspeople working with traditional tools and techniques for the magazine's 26th annual Directory of Traditional American Crafts. [*Nelthropp*]'s handcrafted [*gouache paintings*] showed mastery of the art form, heritage techniques, and workmanship, according to the judges.

The Directory of Traditional American Crafts is a special listing that appears in the August 2011 issue of *Early American Life*, a national magazine focusing on architecture, decorative arts, period style, and social history from colonial times through the mid-19th Century. The Directory has been used for the past two decades by curators at living history museums, owners of traditional homes, and motion picture producers for finding artisans to make period-appropriate furnishings and accessories for displays, collections, and use.

"The judges look for authentic design and workmanship, whether the piece is a faithful reproduction or the artisan's interpretation of period style," said Tess Rosch, publisher of *Early American Life*. "Scholarship, as well as use of period tools and techniques, is particularly valued in this competition."

One goal of the Directory is to help preserve traditional handcrafts, part of our culture that is rapidly being lost in the digital age. Many of these skills were passed down from master to apprentice for hundreds of years, but now few new people choose to learn and master them. "If our traditional arts are lost, we have forgotten a part of who we are as Americans," Rosch said.

The August issue of *Early American Life*, on newsstands June 21st, lists all artisans selected for the Directory as well as contact information for those wanting to own their work. The Directory layout features lush color photos of many of these artworks.

"The Directory is a source for collectors and historic museums eager to own fine, handcrafted, period-accurate objects and also a means of supporting those who perpetuate the art forms that are such an important part of our nation's heritage," Rosch said. To learn more about *Early American Life*, for subscription information, or to purchase a copy, visit www.EarlyAmericanLife.com.

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Early American Life is a bimonthly magazine with a circulation of 90,000. The magazine was founded in 1970 and is owned by Firelands Media Group LLC, Shaker Heights, Ohio. Copies of the August 2011 issue with the 2011 Directory of Traditional American Crafts are available by contacting the editor.