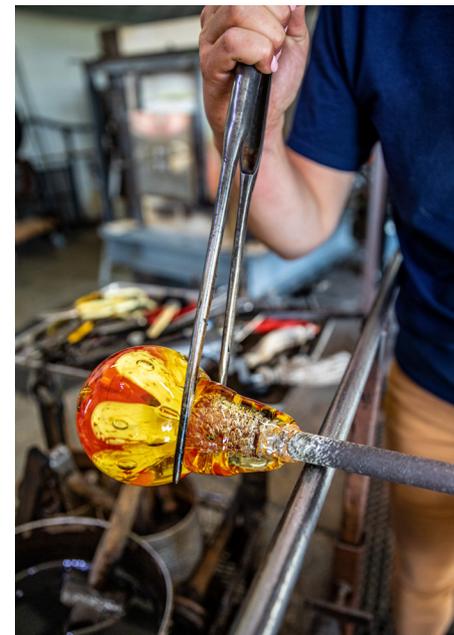




Traditional Arts Indiana



Apprenticeship Program 2020-2022

Traditional Arts Indiana



Creativity, Continuity, & Community

Apprenticeship Program

Traditional Arts Indiana's Apprenticeship Program supports the continuation of cultural practices throughout Indiana, enabling apprentices to learn essential knowledge and skills in traditional art forms from master artists. TAI hosts this apprenticeship program in partnership with the Indiana Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts, funding up to seven apprenticeship pairs each year.

From a fourth-generation hoop net maker to a Zapotec weaver, this booklet explores how makers from diverse communities throughout Indiana assert their personal and cultural identities through traditional arts. While nets, quilts, paperweights, pottery, and banjo tunes are creative expressions, they also communicate a makers' sense of self and community.



Above: Marco Bautista

Front cover: Hand-dyed wool by Marco Bautista and Aldebaran Bautista Montaño; Beatriz Vasquez and Isabel Schlebecker; and Stephanie Zimmerman

Inside cover: Larry Haycraft and Tyler Mason; Katrina Mitten and Josey Cirullo; and Reverend Dennis Freeman with Mark Duerson

2020



Dale Drake

Apprentice: Andrea Baughman

Tatting Lace

DALE DRAKE makes tatted lace, an intricate form of lacework that uses a shuttle and thread to create a knotted pattern of rings and chains. Historically, tatting lace decorated household linens, doilies, and other accessories. Dale's interest in tatting began when her grandmother passed down to her several family heirlooms bordered with the handmade lace, as well as a tatting shuttle and books. Dale teaches tatting classes at a quilt shop in Morgantown and formed the Morgan County Sit and Tatters group.

Dale has taught tatting to many students over the years, but through apprenticing her daughter Andrea, she is passing down the family craft in a more holistic way. Also a dollmaker, Andrea is learning foundational techniques from her mother to produce doll skirts and petticoats that draw on the lace patterns and motifs in their family heirlooms. To Dale and Andrea, tatting is more than a decorative art – it connects them to the generations of women in their family who tatted before them.



*Morgan and Marion
Counties, IN*

2020



Justin Rothshank

Apprentice: Sadie Misiuk

Wood-fired Pottery

GOSHEN-BASED POTTER Justin Rothshank carefully places hundreds of pots, vases, and clay dishware made by different potters into his large wood kiln. After 90 hours of firing day and night, ash deposits onto the surface of the ceramics for decoration in a “natural ash glaze,” resulting in unique and beautiful creations. To Justin, the practice of wood firing relies on the shared labor of the pottery community. Justin grew up in Goshen among notable potters, including Marvin Bartel, Dick Lehman, and the Unsicker Brothers, and learned from their examples.

Justin’s student of four years and now apprentice, Sadie Misiuk recognizes, “The wood-fire community is very small, so it’s nice to have that common small community.” Wood-fired pottery technique thrives when there are more people practicing it and teaching others. For Justin, “Multiple generations of working artists in a community are essential to the growth of that community.”



2020



Keith Ruble

Apprentices: Luke, Andy, & Kasey Ruble

Bowl Hewing

KEITH RUBLE started making hand-hewn wooden bowls over 40 years ago, picking up the practice from master bowl hewer Bill Day at the Indiana State Fair. Keith cultivated his mastery of the craft as a “stress reliever” during his long-standing career as superintendent of parks in Vigo County. After long days of forestry work, Keith says, “I could make a bowl in the evening and just totally relax my body. And that is the kind of thing that everybody has to have in their life, you know?”

While Keith has taught many others about the art of bowl-hewing, TAI’s apprenticeship program has enabled him to set his own family along the path of mastery. Keith’s daughter-in-law, Kasey Ruble, and his two sons, Luke and Andy Ruble, all share in Keith’s passion for trees. Each of them has worked in forestry and taken part in Keith’s other tree-related arts, such as building log houses for the state fair and producing homemade maple syrup, yet bowl-hewing offers a unique avenue for lifelong creative practice.



Vigo County, IN

2021



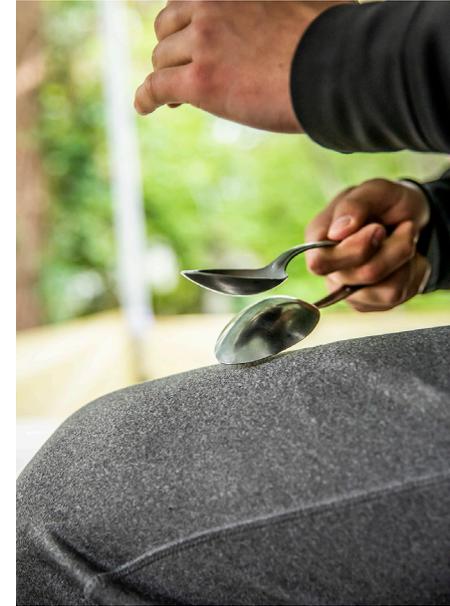
Bill Bailey

Apprentice: Isaac Gleitz

Making & Playing Idiophones

FROM PLAYING SPOONS and horseshoes to washboards and rocks, percussion has been a major thread in Bill Bailey's life. Bill has been a staple at the Indiana State Fair's Pioneer Village for nearly thirty years. He has honed his craft as a self-proclaimed "idiophonist," playing a variety of traditional genres on an assortment of everyday items. Today, Bill values teaching younger generations how to play, and he encourages them to incorporate household objects into their percussive practice.

During the early days of the pandemic, Bill and his apprentice Isaac Gleitz practiced traditional rhythms under the gazebo in a public park. The duo first met at the State Fair, where Bill taught Isaac about the Irish bodhrán before introducing him to spoons, washboards, and other idiophones. Isaac recalls, "I'd always been tapping or drumming on tables and chairs and everything growing up. So that prospect was appealing to me."



*Marion and Johnson
Counties, IN*

2021



Sam Bartlett

Apprentice: Lucy Annable

Irish Tenor Banjo

MULTI-INSTRUMENTALIST Sam Bartlett grew up in a musical family and at the age of 14, he started playing the 5-string banjo. When he got his driver's license, he immediately attended a contra dance. Contra dances introduced him to the 4-string tenor banjo, a multitude of Irish tunes, and a global community of traditional musicians. Receiving early encouragement from Irish banjo master Mick Moloney, Sam became obsessed with the instrument during his teens and devoted the next decade to its exclusive pursuit.

Playing the 4-string tenor banjo in an Irish style is tricky, where intricate ornamentation and precise rhythm distinguishes master players from others. Promising young tenor banjo player Lucy Annable is learning tunes, techniques, and session etiquette from Sam. Sharing their apprenticeship over Zoom during the Covid Pandemic, both Sam and Lucy have cherished their virtual time together.



*Monroe and Morgan
Counties, IN*

2021



Reverend Dennis Freeman

Apprentice: Mark Duerson

Gospel Piano

REVEREND DENNIS FREEMAN is a pillar of the gospel community in Indianapolis, serving a variety of churches. He is known for marrying technical skill, collaborative improvisation, and spiritual depth in his music. Rev. Freeman has composed over fifty pieces of music—it is his faith, hope, and ministry. “I don’t think there is any bad music,” he says. “I think that music comes from God.” Rev. Freeman doesn’t just play hymns, he prays them.

Sharing his lifetime of knowledge and experience with his apprentice Mark Duerson, Rev. Freeman is passing on his art and its important cultural history. Mark is a classically trained pianist and a fellow music teacher who shares Rev. Freeman’s love of gospel music. Mark says, “This art takes maturity. It’s not just about what you can do at the piano. It’s the life lessons, how they make you feel; how you transfer your feelings to the art, to the music.



2021



Steve King

Apprentice: Darren Bender-Beauregard

Blacksmithing

STEVE KING BEGAN forging in 2003. He recalls, “I first got started by visiting with a blacksmith at an 18th-century reenactment.” Later, he met master blacksmith Billy Merritt who passed to him his deep knowledge of the craft. “He just took me in like a son,” Steve says. Inspired by Merritt’s willingness to share his techniques and skills, Steve has mentored several other smiths. He also holds a weekly “Open Forge” where people watch skilled smiths at work and gain hands-on experience.

“I look forward to Fridays every week,” says Darren about his apprenticeship meetings with Steve. Darren started his training by making his own tools, including a set of tongs. He quickly progressed to forging a garden gate and making damascus steel chef’s knives.



2021



Ralph Scutchfield

Apprentice: Jimmie Lyon

Violin Building & Repair

VIOLIN BUILDING started as a hobby for Ralph Scutchfield, but “now it’s a habit.” His passion for lutherie snowballed after he retired. What started as learning to hair a bow quickly turned into crafting violin tops and backs, installing sound bars and bridges, shaping fingerboards and scrolls, and applying varnish to finish his creations. Today, in addition to making fiddles, Ralph restores old instruments. There is no shortage of “grandpa’s fiddles” that come to his shop in pieces, “held together by their cases,” that he brings back to life. “They don’t believe it’s their instrument, but it is.”

Ralph’s apprentice Jimmie Lyon works at a steel mill. His interest in old-time fiddle music drew him into his apprenticeship. The duo spent their Saturdays together in Ralph’s workshop building and repairing violins one piece at a time.



*Parke and St. Joseph
Counties, IN*

2021



Beatriz Vasquez

Apprentice: Isabel Schlebecker

Papel Picado

BEATRIZ VASQUEZ grew up in the borderlands between Brownsville, Texas and Matamoros, Mexico and currently works as an artist in Indianapolis. Incorporated in her art and teaching are the memories of colorful papel picado, the delicately-cut tissue paper that was ever-present in her youth. Beatriz communicates a message of social justice through her work, focusing on the disposable nature of papel picado. “It really spoke to me about the indigenous Mexican communities and how disposable they have been treated” she says. “For me, papel picado became a connection to my own culture.”

Her daughter and apprentice Isabel Schlebecker is an urban planner who applies her interest in sustainability to her art. “With environmental justice work and papel picado,” Isabel says, “I think it’s important to elevate that craft and bring light to how it is threatened and how those communities are threatened.”



Marion County, IN

2022



Marco Bautista

Apprentice: Aldebaran Bautista Montaña

Zapotec Dyeing and Weaving

MARCO BAUTISTA has worked with fiber since he was nine years old. He grew up in Teotitlán del Valle, a Zapotec community in Oaxaca, Mexico known for its weaving. His parents taught him to spin, dye, and weave as part of their family business. Since moving to Indiana, Marcos has continued to weave. He also sells his family's rugs in an ever expanding market throughout the United States. His style combines innovative designs with traditional Zapotec motifs. For him, the process is just as important as the final product. "Most people prefer to get the job done quickly," he says, "I like to be patient and take my time with the weaving."

Marco's nephew, Aldebaran Bautista Montaña, has been weaving for the past three years. Though he lives in Oaxaca, the pair has been meeting via Zoom and periodically in person. Marco is teaching Aldebaran how to care for the materials, finish weavings, and make natural dyes using plants found in Oaxaca. For Marco, this apprenticeship is an opportunity to pass on his traditional knowledge, especially since weaving has become less common among young people in Teotitlán.



Marion County, IN

2022



Daniel Cain

Apprentice: Ervin Garrison

Hoop Net Making

FOR DANNY CAIN, making hoop nets is central to his work as a fisherman. He first learned the craft from master net maker Jim Cooper, who “didn’t want the tradition to die with him.” This labor intensive process involves making your own tools, bending metal hoops, and tying thousands of carefully-planned knots. Danny felt “like a lost pup” when he began. “If I made one mistake in the whole net, Jim found it,” he says. Now, Danny can tie 350 knots per hour. For him, “the satisfaction comes mainly when you go out there and find a lot of fish in the net. Then you know you’ve made a good net.”

Today, Danny is teaching his nephew, Ervin Garrison, to make nets. They are starting the same way Danny did: one knot at a time. For Ervin, hoop net making is not only a practical skill, it is a meditative process. “Once I start working on it,” he says, “I just start thinking about it, and I can just clear my head.”



*Posey and Warrick
Counties, IN*

2022



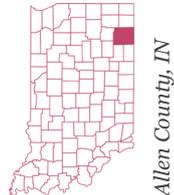
Amelia Culpher

Apprentice: Kamiesha Brown

Quilting

MANY YEARS AGO, a neighbor taught Amelia Culpher how to mend clothes. She spent decades developing an eye for design and honing her technical skills. After retiring, Amelia joined Sisters of the Cloth, a Fort Wayne-based quilt guild. Quilting quickly became her primary creative practice and remains an essential part of her life. For Amelia, the craft is an opportunity to give a piece of herself to somebody else. “If you know somebody did something out of love,” she says, “it just means a little more.”

As a young child, Kameisha Brown went to meetings of Sisters of the Cloth with her grandmother, Amelia. There, she learned the basics of quilt making. She returned to the guild years later as a way to spend time with her grandmother and express her creativity. Amelia hopes this apprenticeship will inspire a life-long love of quilting in her granddaughter. “Sometimes people learn things, then they put it on the shelf,” she says, “I’m just hoping she’ll get that fire like I got, then eventually pass it on.”



2022



Larry Haycraft

Apprentice: Tyler Mason

Hoop Net Making

FOURTH-GENERATION HOOP NET MAKER Larry Haycraft believes the key to making a good net is patience. “It’s about the rhythm and the math,” he says, “you’ve just got to visualize what you want it to do.” Larry’s father worried his son would be the last net maker in their family. As net making becomes less common in Indiana, Larry strives to teach the practice to his grandson, Tyler. The craft of creating hoop nets is about more than just tying knots—it’s about spending time together and communicating.

Tyler Mason’s favorite part of his apprenticeship is being with his grandpa. The pair are working on knotting techniques and net design. As the pair works side by side, Tyler is quickly building up his hand strength and tying speed. Larry wants his grandson to know that “whenever he feels lost in this world... he can always pick up that string and start tying those knots. He’ll never be alone with it,” he says, “I’ll always be right there with him.”



2022



Katrina Mitten

Apprentice: Josey Cirullo

Great Lakes Beadwork Embroidery

A MEMBER OF THE MIAMI (MYAAMIA) TRIBE of Oklahoma, artist Katrina Mitten began beading at age 12 as a way to connect with her ancestors who were forced to assimilate during the era of Indian Removal. “I felt deep down that I needed to do something physical and tangible that would identify me as a Native person,” Katrina explains, “something that I could do to show other people ‘Yes, we are still here.’” To learn the beadwork techniques of the Great Lakes region, she studied examples of Miami clothing and jewelry, as well as embroidery from the nearby Potawatomi and Ojibwe tribes. Her work is inspired by family stories, scenes from the natural environment, and contemporary issues affecting Native Americans.

Josey Cirullo has been learning beadwork embroidery from her grandmother, Katrina, for the past two years. She not only finds the process “soothing” and “quiet,” she also enjoys seeing others wear her finished pieces. This apprenticeship, according to Katrina, is a way to “bring back the link that has been broken in the chain.”



2022



Jim Smoak

Apprentice: Jeffrey Vessels

5-String Banjo

JIM SMOAK learned to play banjo from his mother at a young age. At 15, his father purchased him a new Gibson banjo, which was “pretty good encouragement,” he says. Jim spent much of his early career playing live shows, both in person and on television, working with bluegrass greats Bill Monroe, Earl Scruggs, and Hylo Brown. After marrying and settling down in Pekin, Indiana, Jim began teaching the instrument and went on to publish some of the first instructional books on three-finger-style banjo.

Jeff Vessels became interested in the banjo after hearing one around the fire at Boy Scout camp. “The instrument that’s really making this group” he remembers, “is that banjo right there.” Jeff received his first banjo at age 14 but didn’t begin taking lessons until 2018 when he met Jim. During their apprenticeship, the pair focused on bluegrass technique and music theory. Jeff also appreciates Jim’s historical connection to the banjo. He says, “I’ve learned a lot of history ... it really makes you reminisce about a time you never lived in.”



Washington and
Floyd Counties, IN

2022



Kerry Zimmerman

Apprentice: Stephanie Zimmerman

Glassblowing

ZIMMERMAN ART GLASS has been a staple of Corydon, Indiana since 1942. For Kerry Zimmerman, a fourth-generation glass artist, his family's shop is a place where the community can gather. "It's a real family-oriented place," he says. He demonstrates his craft to community members and school children from around the state. Kerry believes that his job is about more than just creating beautiful art; he also wants to help educate people by making each piece and experience personal.

During her apprenticeship, Stephanie Zimmerman is learning the art of glasswork as well as how the shop operates. She hopes to one day carry on the legacy of her family's business. Kerry admires his daughter-in-law's unique approach to the craft. "She's got an advantage to just see it in a totally different light. I think that's pretty cool." For Stephanie, the process is all about thinking three steps ahead, visualizing outcomes, and building her knowledge with each piece.



Harrison County, IN

Traditional Arts Indiana *Apprenticeship Program 2020-2022*



Above: Wood-fired pottery by Justin Rothshank and Sadie Misiuk; a bowl hewn by Keith Ruble; and Bill Bailey with his apprentice Isaac Gleitz

Images of Marco Bautista and Aldebaran Bautista Montañó by Eva Lepiz; all other photography by Greg Whitaker

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For more information visit traditionalarts.indiana.edu or email tradarts@indiana.edu



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