



Kentucky Craft History
& Education Association
P O Box 22363
Lexington, KY 40522
info@kchea.org
kchea.org

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For more information contact: Susan Goldstein
859-269-0908
SusanRaku@aol.com

Luthiers of the Late 20th Century: Combining Art, Craft, and Music

*“The guitar itself is a work of art. It all has to be about the craftsmanship and the beauty of the thing. You could almost frame them and put them on the wall.”
Roy Bowden, guitar maker, Winchester, KY*

The Kentucky Craft History & Education Association (KCHEA) has received a \$3,000 matching grant from [LexArts](#) to support video oral histories of Kentucky instrument makers. The project focuses on individuals who have been influential in the craft of making stringed instruments and who are a special part of Kentucky’s heritage. During the personal on-site studio interviews, Luthiers will discuss how they learned the trade and explain the artistry of building a string instrument. In addition to the makers' individual stories, the use of video will also document the processes of creating and playing the instruments.

"I was inspired to submit the grant request to LexArts after seeing the *Made to be Played* exhibit where the instruments became a canvas of inlaid wood, gems, shells, and other decorative materials" says board member Susan Goldstein, who's coordinating the interviews. The exhibit, which recently finished touring, represented Luthiers identified through years of research conducted by the Kentucky Folklife Program. It was presented by the Kentucky Arts Council and Kentucky Historical Society, and funded by the National Endowment for the Arts. For more information about the exhibit, [click here](#).

Technical support and assistance in conducting the interviews is being provided by Bob Gates, director of the Kentucky Folklife Program; Jesse Wells, archivist and instructor with the Traditional School of Music at Morehead State University; and Amanda Fickey, PhD candidate in the Department of Geography at the University of Kentucky.

The LexArt Grant provides KCHEA the opportunity to continue its ongoing [Craft Luminary Project](#), which currently represents more than 40 oral history videos of craft artists, and organizational and government leaders that have influenced the recent craft movement in Kentucky. Additional information on these interviews is available at [kchea.org](#).

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The Kentucky Craft History and Education Association gathers, conserves and presents the history and on-going impact of crafts in Kentucky.

