

Aid to Artisans

Winter 2018 Newsletter



Table of Contents

Page 3- Las Vegas

ATA's TEAM Brings International Artisans to Las Vegas Market

Page 11- Morocco & Tunisia

ATA's Exchange Program Strengthens Ties with North Africa

Page 14- New York

What's Coming Up: Introducing 2018 Market Readiness Program

ATA's TEAM Brings International Artisans to Las Vegas Market

ATA has embarked on a partnership with the Las Vegas Market (LVM), inaugurating its “Training for Entrepreneurs in Artisans Market” (TEAM) initiative. ATA's TEAM initiative advances entrepreneurship of artisan-based business and introduces fresh concepts in new market-ready products for the US retail market. An on-site coaching and mentoring program, TEAM launched thirteen first-time exhibitors, providing them with a unique opportunity to sell in an individual booth at LVM, the nation's fastest growing gift and home décor market in the western U.S.

To prepare for TEAM, consultants Carol MacNulty, Mimi Robinson and Laurie Kanen went into action by preparing participants through a series of webinars reviewing the fundamentals of trade show preparation. Topics included costing and pricing, terms and conditions, export readiness, booth display, product merchandising and more.

“Being part of the ATA TEAM program made the whole experience of first-time trade show participation less intimidating and frankly, a lot more fun. Connecting with the other TEAM participants, brainstorming ideas, and sharing experiences was very valuable in itself, even when we were marketing very different products” said Rikki Quintana of [HoonArts](#).

“I am very impressed with the enthusiasm and welcoming environment provided by Las Vegas Market support to the TEAM initiative that involved a lot of exchange of assistance. It was like “linking of arms for a bigger voice”, added Carol MacNulty. Consultants acted as “personal trainers,” supporting TEAM exhibitors with advice and preparation for the winter market in how to set up their own booth.





For product development and design expert Mimi Robinson, the highlight of TEAM was having in-depth interactions with each participant about their collection and providing them with product reviews. “Touring the show, connecting participants to other companies exhibiting in the same category and networking with potential buyers was an important way to form links for ideas and future possibilities”, said Mimi.

With five busy days of providing hands on training, giving individual attention to each exhibitor in assessing their collection, and providing

feedback on how to present to buyers, TEAM’s mentoring and coaching program was a success. It was highly innovative in connecting participants with buyers.

“Overall, the most important aspect of TEAM was getting personalized feedback from experts on all aspects of our wholesale business--from product design, pricing, terms and conditions to booth display. Learning what is “standard” or “expected by buyers” in the US wholesale market was invaluable, said Quintana.





YUMAJAI

Artisan products came from all over the world including: Mexico, Tajikistan, Pakistan, Jamaica, Columbia, Haiti, Iraq, Turkey and Kenya. TEAM Exhibitors included the following:

[YUMAJAI](#), a Colombia-based ethical fashion brand that creates opportunities for Latin American artisans who fuse ancient crafts with a modern, unique designs. Yumajai proudly received the People's Choice Global Goodness Award that recognizes social responsibility, sustainability and corporate good citizenship from LVM. "ATA was

the reason we joined Las Vegas market, we can definitely say that without the training process before the market we would never know about the award option...ATA is a big partner of Yumajai in this award-winning, said Dror Noi, Co-founder of Yumajai.

Yumajai's collection of vibrant handmade earrings, necklaces, rings, bags and unique personal accessories reflect the culture and traditions of Colombia.



[Ark of Crafts](#), is a socially responsible Turkish supplier committed to rich Turkish artisanal traditions and ethical, time-honored processes to a selection of artisan-crafted, home décor gifts, accessories and hand-loomed textiles. They present the crafts at [Loom](#). Woven in cotton, linen or silk, each item reveals unique qualities of the natural textiles in both softness and color. Their beachwear collection is made of Sile; a natural cotton boiled in floured water and washed in salt from the Black sea. It's beauty and earthy makes great bathrobes, beach towels, kimonos, tunic tops and throws.



Pakistan based [Indus Heritage](#) is a not-for-profit-organization engaged in preserving and promoting the country's arts and crafts while empowering communities. They displayed a mix of traditional and contemporary designs in their collection. Indigo colored and tone-on tone embroidered pillows, throws, home décor and accessories were showcased under the Tribal and Suzani collections. Contemporary designs were featured in the Geometric and Sindhi Collections.





[Reve Jewellery](#), an international award-winner, produces quality handmade Jamaican jewelry and accessories. Reve displayed an exquisite collection of precious and semi-precious stones, metals and natural materials sourced from Jamaica and the wider Caribbean.

[Artemateria](#) is a women's initiative that creates and designs Mexican artisanal products. Artemateria decorated their booth with environmentally friendly and functional wares. Unusual colors and innovative designs in baskets and home accessories in contemporary and innovative designs were the highlights.





[Prosperity Catalyst](#) lit up their booth with hand painted votive stands and ceramic holders for candles made by hand from women in Haiti and Iraq. The story behind handcrafting each piece carried with it a piece of culture and labor and details of the artist.

African Women's Entrepreneurship Program ([AWEP](#)) is an initiative targeting African women



entrepreneurs by promoting business growth by increasing trade both regionally and to U.S. markets. AWEP sponsored four Kenyan organizations; [Mohazo](#) presented sculptured creations for home ware and personal accessories. [Ranstom Creation](#) displayed furniture with innovative African design. Yetu Leather showcased bags with traditional motifs and Zehu exhibited beautiful bronze jewelry and bags.



[ATA Mexico](#) presented a wide array of embroidered cushion covers, hand loomed stoles, hand sewn and embroidered capes, napkins and pom-poms in both vibrant colors and muted tones created with locally sourced raw materials that went into making their latest collection an appropriate fit for the west coast market.

[HoonArts Fair Trade LLC](#), one of only three Fair Trade Federation members working with artisans in Central Asia, displayed suzani hand-embroidered home decor items, hand-woven silk ikat scarves, hand-felted wool on silk wraps, and hand-carved wooden combs, barrettes, toys and Christmas ornaments. The hand-felted silk scarves and wraps from Kyrgyzstan were the “booth magnets” that resulted good sales.

“My favorite part was the last day when participants from several different countries talked about their experiences and how they had learnt from each other. They were able to identify their target audience and form connections amongst



each other and ways they can adapt their business skills in understanding the western market as independent exhibitors” said Carol MacNulty.

“I fondly remember getting a chance to meet such a talented, diverse group of people from all over the world, who share a common appreciation of handmade products and a dedication to help support those who create them” expressed Kanés. “I’m looking forward to the next opportunity to apply the lessons we learned from this first venture and to meet the next group of TEAM participants!” added Laurie Kanés.

TEAM will be back for the forthcoming [Las Vegas Market](#) this summer from July 29-August 2nd. ATA will continue with the expansive job of telling the story of handmade in the Western market as we bolster our mission to empower artisan enterprises around the world.



ATA's Exchange Program Strengthens Ties with North Africa

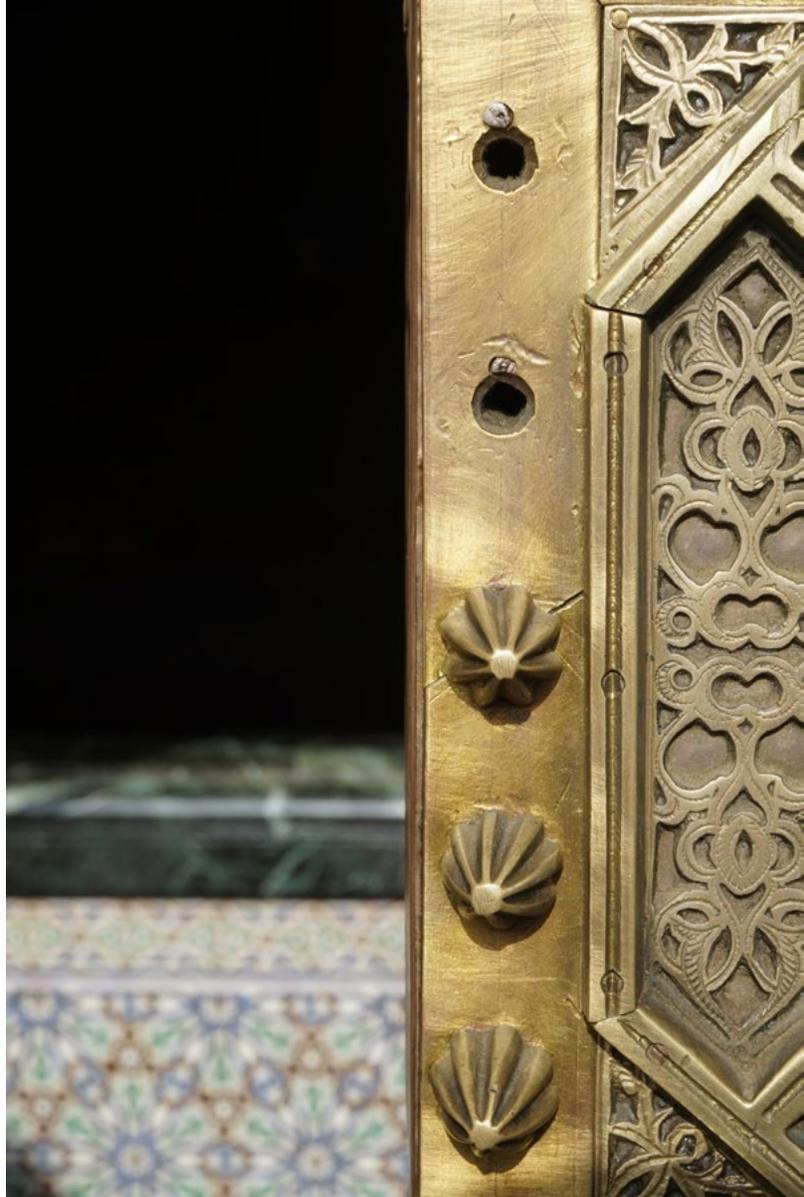
This is the third year ATA has collaborated with Hands Along the Nile Development Services (HANDS) to host the “HANDS Professional Fellows Program” between the US and countries in the Middle East and North Africa. Last fall, ATA hosted Khadija Addaidi from Morocco and this January, Kenneth Davis, Business Development Coordinator with ATA, participated in the reverse exchange. Davis represented ATA in building relationships with civil society organizations, working to empower women through economic development, and exchanging knowledge amongst these organizations and other HANDS fellows.

Kenneth's journey to Morocco and Tunisia was filled with great learning and insights, the highlight of which was getting to see the incredible changes being made by civil society across North Africa. “I was exposed to areas outside my expertise; I learned for the first time the incredible



work being done for disabled persons, the spirit of collaboration and learning between countries. My biggest takeaway though, was the strengths and weaknesses of many local NGOs. While they often have the expertise, experience, and understanding to implement incredible projects, what they lack are appropriate mechanisms to receive and manage U.S. government and international funding” says Kenneth.

Kenneth had the opportunity to see many artisan projects in Morocco and Tunisia. One women’s artisan group in particular stands out, which worked on a project with a group from Denmark to produce high quality handicraft goods reflecting traditional methods, materials, and style with a “modern twist.” The goods respond to changing local markets and the preferences in the European market. These products were of a particularly high quality, and represented a beautiful synergy between North



African and European style.

“I was really inspired by the women in both Morocco and Tunisia. The women of each country, in a unique way, have developed a powerful sisterhood that is performing the delicate balancing act of pushing for reform while honoring tradition, culture, and religious beliefs. Even as women choose to pursue very different mechanisms through which to push for progress, there is camaraderie and respect among them” says Kenneth.

While in Tunisia, Davis visited a women’s cooperative high in the mountains where the indigenous Berber community reside and experienced firsthand, the process of distilling the oils and waters of local herbs to sell within the city and export to European and U.S. markets. “The quality of the Rosemary Oil and the Rose Water was far beyond what is typically found in the city markets and even in more expensive western markets” adds

Kenneth.

Reminiscing about the two weeks spent in North Africa Kenneth recaps his experience as “incredibly valuable . . . I learned a significant amount from both the partner organizations I visited as well as my fellow compatriots on the trip.

I realize how much more work there is still to do in Morocco, Tunisia, and the U.S. as well. However, I left with a sense that the change-makers in both countries are going to let nothing stop their charge to bringing legal, social, and economic equality to their countries” concluded Kenneth.



A woman wearing a red headscarf and a black floral dress is focused on her craft, possibly weaving or sewing, in a workshop setting. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Aid to Artisans

Market Readiness Program™

August 12-15, 2018

[Click Here](#) to Watch the 2018 MRP Video

We are excited to launch the 2018 Market Readiness Program™ at [NY NOW](#) this summer. Join us this August with craft-based organization leaders, social entrepreneurs, non-profit founders and designers. Receive mentorship from the industry's best and brightest. Come network, engage and expand your work within the artisan sector with this unique program.

[Reserve your space now!](#)

Thank You!

Aid to Artisans

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Creative
Learning