

# Etsy

The Storque *Etsy's Handmade Blog*



## Handmade Holidays With the One of a Kind Show



Story by [missbatch](#), [OneOfaKindShow](#), [TeenAngster](#)  
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Photo by

[Aaron Foster's License Plate Map](#)

*As we all know, once Thanksgiving passes, it can feel like a freefall through the holiday season, rushing from one event to the next and desperately cramming shopping in between. Before you let yourself get carried away on that manic bandwagon, Etsy and [The One of a Kind Show](#) have something to say about it!*

*Lisa Simonian, the vice president of marketing for the One of a Kind Show and Sale — now in its 35th year! — joined us to talk about the inherent value of handmade items and the fun of getting to know the people and stories behind them.*

*Here at Etsy, we take this message very much to heart, and we are excited to be partnering with The One of a Kind Show and Sales® in [Chicago](#) and [New](#)*



*Lisa Simonian*  
*One of a Kind Show*

*York* this December to present *The Etsy Artist Pavilion* for emerging artists. This dedicated area of each show will feature more than twenty Etsy artists — just a fraction of the incredible and diverse talents on the site itself, but a welcome alternative to that four-letter word, "mall." We hope you can join us!

Now, on to our interview with Lisa...



**Can you tell us a little about the One of a Kind Show? Where did it start?**

Similar to most brilliant ideas, the One of a Kind Show was born out of a simple desire for something more! The show is the brainchild of Torontonians Steven Levy, Martin Rumack and June Bibby. It was 1975 and June: an artisan couldn't find a place to sell her work before Christmas. So she, along with friends Steven and Martin, decided to create a holiday shopping venue. After a great deal of legwork and countless all-nighters, the trio launched the first One of a Kind Show at Toronto's Queen Elizabeth Building in December 1975. Today the show is a wildly popular annual event that runs in Toronto, Vancouver, Chicago, and soon to be New York.

*[Vases by Christopher Mosey]*



**This is the first year the show is appearing in New York — what can people expect at this show?**

They can expect to find the unexpected and things they won't be able to find anywhere else! They can expect to find truly unique gifts items from the 275 talented artisans who will set up shop at the show. They can expect to meet in-person every artist, artisan and designer represented, and they can expect to find a fun and easy shopping experience with cafes, lounges, fashion shows, artist demonstrations, expert presentations, craft workshops, live music, coat and package check, and giftwrapping.



**What are your goals for the OoAK Show?**

True to the founders, our goal is to create the ideal venue for artisans to sell their work and the ideal venue for shoppers to buy artisan work.

*[Sculptures by Dailey Woodworking]*

**The One of a Kind Show has been around for thirty five years. That's a long time! What's your favorite memory from OoAK shows past?**

I've been with the Chicago show for six years and I have six years worth of wonderful memories of working with my One of a Kind colleagues and with our One of a Kind artisans. What stands out most in my mind when I think of past shows is that the show is always such a happy event. You walk through the aisles and somehow it's smiles and laughter everywhere. People who don't even like to shop love the show! I think the concept and environment make people feel good.

**What's your favorite item that you've purchased? What does it mean to you?**

A beautiful seafoam green handknit wool sweater and matching hat that I bought for my daughter before she was born. She's now well outgrown it — but it is still in pristine condition and we'll keep it forever... for her daughter, perhaps!



*[Ceramics by Lois Aronow]*

**What do you think is the draw of handmade items? Besides the obvious beauty, why should people buy handmade for the holidays?**

As you know at Etsy, people are more conscious these days about how and by whom things are made. There's a newfound appreciation for craftsmanship. When an item is handmade there's heart and soul behind it. Someone (not a machine!) had the desire, and took the time and effort, to create it. Holiday gifts should be meaningful — so it's the perfect match.



**What kind of workshops and seminars are offered at the OoAK Show?**

There will always be something going on at the show stage. We'll have fashion shows showcasing wearable art from the show, artist demonstrations, presentations by Hello Craft and *ReadyMade* magazine, a panel of editors discussing "The Evolution of Craft" and live music by up-and-coming musicians. *ReadyMade* and Hello Craft will also be conducting various how-to workshops at their booths on the show floor. Etsy will be hosting a handmade ornament workshop with fabric from [Spoonflower](#) at their booth at the show in New York.



[Sculpture by [Dolan Geiman](#)]

**What's the number one reason to attend the OoAK show?**

To shop for wonderfully unique work and to support the artisan community while doing it!



**one of a kind**

**Chicago**  
**December 3-6, 2009**

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**NY**  
**December 11-13, 2009**  
**Preview Night December 10**

Check out the [One of a Kind Show Artists Guide](#) and the Related Items below for a sneak peek of Etsy artists selling at this year's show. Will you be attending the One of a Kind Show in Chicago or New York? Let us know in the comments!