



In Her Hands: Craftswomen Changing the World

Paola Gianturco, Toby Tuttle, Alice Walker

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All over the world, women in developing economies improve the lives of their families by creating and selling exquisite, indigenous crafts. The Ndebele beaders of South Africa, the weavers of Guatemala, the flower painters of Poland, the doll makers of Turkey, the mirror embroiderers of India, the batik artists of Indonesia—all these women draw from past traditions and contribute to the future of their cultures. ***In Her Hands: Craftswomen Changing the World*** is a beautifully photographed documentary of ninety women in twelve countries on four continents, revealing their diverse lives and surprisingly universal aspirations.

Often driven by the harsh realities of poverty, little education, and even a lack of basic health care, female artisans are motivated by the desire to provide for their children: to dress them properly, to feed them well, and, most of all, to educate them. The need for social contact and a sense of community brings craftswomen together into small groups, which in turn gives rise to new micro-enterprises in developing countries. Many political and social organizations, including the United Nations, provide guidance and economic support, most often in the form of very small, short-term loans; thus cooperatives are created that strengthen and enrich their cultural heritage as well as individual lives and fortunes.

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