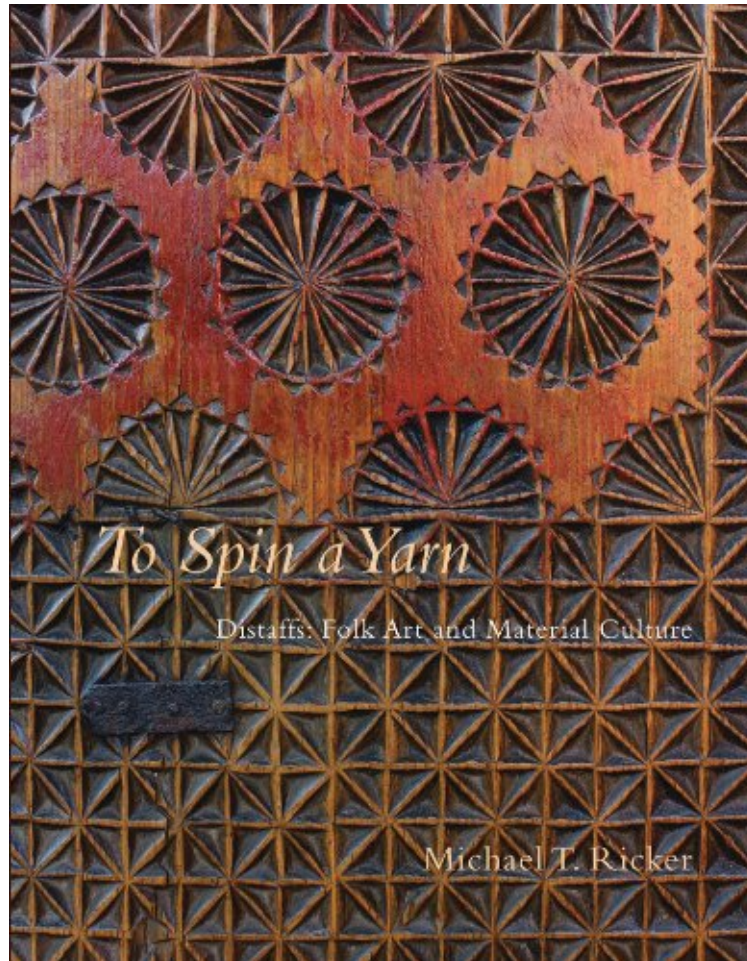


(Download) To Spin a Yarn: Distaffs: Folk Art and Material Culture

To Spin a Yarn: Distaffs: Folk Art and Material Culture

Michael T. Ricker

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Distaffs are simple tools for spinning fiber, forming part of world cultures for millennia. In certain cultures, distaffs

evolved over centuries from plain sticks to surprisingly ornate sculptures. They eventually became important cultural objects, with almost ritualistic significance. During a heyday lasting from the mid 18th century to the early 20th century, distaff production soared. This production was ultimately quashed by the progress of the Industrial Revolution and subsequent availability of ready-made fabric. Distaff use continued, but primarily to honor tradition and create special textiles of cultural and familial importance, rather than make clothes for daily wear.

About the Author MICHAEL T. RICKER is an independent scholar, artist, and collector, who lives and works in the greater Dallas area. Mr. Ricker's areas of interest within the fine arts include livres d'artiste and 20th-century social realism, with a particular focus on Mexican social realism and the legendary printmaking workshop, El Taller de Gráfica Popular (TGP) and its artists. In addition to his research on private press books and the TGP, he has contributed to studies of the American artists Leonard Baskin and Rico Lebrun.