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POCKET MUSEUM ENCHANTS VIEWERS WITH WONDROUS MINIATURES
On View January 20 – March 18, 2017 at Houston Center for Contemporary Craft

Pocket Museum

January 20 – March 18, 2017

Artist Hall

Houston Center for Contemporary Craft

4848 Main Street, Houston, TX 77002

Opening Reception

Friday, February 3, 5:30 – 8:00 PM

The evening will also feature the openings of *United by Hand: Work and Service* by Drew Cameron, Alicia Deitz and Ehren Tool and *Future Tradition: Melissa Cody*, as well as open studios by HCCC's current resident artists.

Hours & Admission

Open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 AM – 5 PM, and Sunday, 12 – 5 PM. Summer Hours: Closed Sundays, July 4th – Labor Day. Holidays: Closed Easter, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day. Admission is free.

(HOUSTON, TX) December 14, 2016 – Diminutive, yet exactingly crafted, the miniature has an undeniable allure. Houston Center for Contemporary Craft (HCCC) presents *Pocket Museum*, a group exhibition that spotlights the contemporary craft miniature. Featuring five artists working in ceramic, fiber, glass, metal, and wood--Jon Almeda, Althea Crome, Sean Donlon, Nash Quinn, and Marco Terenzi--the exhibition explores the relevance of small-scale objects in contemporary material culture and the renewed fascination with this timeless form.

The works on view enchant viewers through the wonderment of their construction. Jon Almeda's ceramic vessels are thrown on a two-inch mechanized wheel. Althea Crome's tiny gloves are knitted with silk thread and wire needles that are so thin, they can accommodate more than 80 stitches per inch. Sean Donlon creates functioning, miniature blown-glass teapots, while Nash Quinn and Marco Terenzi produce metal micro-guns and tiny, scaled woodworking tools, respectively. All of these objects serve as studies that beckon a closer understanding of process.

Within popular culture, there is a renewed interest in the miniature. Beyond dedicated maker groups, Instagram accounts like The Daily Miniature (@dailymini) have garnered over 91,000 followers. In his account, Hans Ulrich Obrist, the artistic director of the Serpentine Galleries, London, recently posted: "THE MUSEUM OF THE FUTURE IS A POCKET MUSEUM." Scale takes on new significance in a virtual world, in which one can discover and examine objects at the touch of a finger, as well as curate digital spaces.

Historically, the drive behind making material microcosms and the scaled objects that compose them has been to achieve a different bodily perspective, a voyeuristic, all-seeing eye. However, the contemporary miniatures featured in this show move away from a history of model making, dollhouses, and Utopian world-building and towards objects that push their material and traditional processes to newfound levels of ambition and technical skill. By displaying miniatures in a physical gallery setting, removed from either virtual online galleries or their historical encasement in dioramas or models, *Pocket Museum* offers a fresh perspective on these fascinating works.

Pocket Museum was curated by HCCC Curatorial Fellow, Sarah Darro.

About the Artists

Scale has always been at the forefront of Washington-based potter **Jon Almeda**'s artistic process. Initially throwing oversized vessels, he began to recreate those pieces on a one-inch scale, finding that the process of throwing miniatures allowed him to focus on the more formal qualities of his objects. To throw miniature work, he designed, prototyped, and manufactured a specialized wheel, which he calls the "curio wheel," and he holds the title of fellow at the International Guild of Miniature Artisans (IGMA). He documents his most recent work on his Instagram account, [@almedapottery](#), which boasts 268,000 followers.

Also a fellow of IGMA, Indiana-based **Althea Crome** has pioneered knitting at a 1:12 scale. For reference, the fingers of her gloves are the correct size to hold a grain of rice. Her process of making these "bug-knits" requires an incredible level of precision and skill. She makes her own, almost-impossibly-thin knitting needles and uses a fine, silk sewing thread, rather than yarn, to achieve the tiny stitches that compose her works. Taken to the silver screen, her miniature knit garments adorned the lead character of the 2009 stop-motion film, *Coraline*.

Working in Richmond, Virginia, glassblower **Sean Donlon** studies the form of the teapot by scaling down this familiar archetype. Along with his hand-blown, functional, miniature teapot sets, he also creates installations of mirrored and mounted glass teapots in varying scales on the wall. He is the founder of Mule Barn Craft Studios, a Richmond art space that focuses on conceptual craft, and was the recipient of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Fellowship.

Philadelphia-based metalsmith **Nash Quinn** is drawn to the small scale inherent to jewelry. He creates works that explore social behavior and physically engage with the viewer or wearer. *Pocket Museum* will display a series of Quinn's functioning micro-guns. Each with intricate mechanisms, these tiny cap guns, encased in ornate mint tins and held between two fingers, actually fire. Quinn's work has been featured in *Metalsmith Magazine*, and he holds an MFA in jewelry and metalsmithing from Edinboro University of Pennsylvania.

Based in Michigan, **Marco Terenzi** specializes in building miniature, functional woodworking tools to a 1:4 scale. Working through the lens of a stereomicroscope, he not only works the heat-treated steel and wooden tool pieces but also machines tiny screws, jigs, and specialized instruments that allow him to make the tools themselves. After studying craft at the College for Creative Studies in Detroit, Terenzi has been featured in *Woodworker's Journal* and shares his process and work on his popular Instagram account, [@marcoterenzi](#), with his over 27,000 followers.

About Houston Center for Contemporary Craft

Houston Center for Contemporary Craft (HCCC) is a nonprofit visual arts center dedicated to advancing education about the process, product and history of craft. HCCC provides exhibition, retail, and studio spaces to support the work of local and national artists and serves as a resource for artists, educators and the community at large.

Located in the Museum District at 4848 Main Street, HCCC is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 AM – 5 PM, and Sunday, 12 – 5 PM. Summer Hours: Closed Sundays, July 4th – Labor Day. Holidays: Closed Easter, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day. Admission is free. Free parking is

available directly behind the facility, off Rosedale and Travis Street. HCCC is three blocks south of Wheeler Ave. MetroRail station on Main Street.

HCCC is funded in part by grants from The Brown Foundation; Houston Endowment, Inc.; the City of Houston through the Houston Arts Alliance; Texas Commission on the Arts; the National Endowment for the Arts; the Kinder Foundation; the Morgan Foundation; Windgate Charitable Foundation; and the Wortham Foundation. HCCC is a member of the Houston Museum District and the Midtown Arts District.

For more information, call 713-529-4848 or visit www.crafthouston.org. Find HCCC on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram @CraftHouston.

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