



MEDIA CONTACT:
Mary Headrick (mheadrick@crafthouston.org)
Houston Center for Contemporary Craft
713.529.4848 x.107

“DRAWN TO THE WORK” EXPLORES INTERSECTION OF ILLUSTRATION AND CRAFT
On View at Houston Center for Contemporary Craft, January 25 – March 29, 2020

Drawn to the Work: Illustration and Craft in Conversation

January 25 – March 29, 2020

Front Gallery

Houston Center for Contemporary Craft
4848 Main Street, Houston, TX 77002

Exhibition Reception

Friday, January 24, 5:30 – 8:00 PM

The evening will also feature the opening of *Escaping Earth: The Kinetic Work of Casey Curran* in the Main Gallery, *In Residence: 12th Edition* in Asher Gallery, and open studios by the current resident artists. Beer generously provided by Buffalo Bayou Brewing Co.

Hours & Admission

Open Wednesday through Saturday, 10 AM – 5 PM, and Sunday, 12 – 5 PM. Closed on major holidays. Admission is free.

(HOUSTON, TX) December 5, 2019 – Houston Center for Contemporary Craft is pleased to present *Drawn to the Work: Illustration and Craft in Conversation*, an exhibition of works by Aurélie Guillaume, Chenlu Hou, and Aya Kakeda, three craft artists who draw from a background in illustration. By featuring traditional and digital illustrations alongside works in craft materials, the exhibition explores the intersection of these two artistic disciplines and presents unusually expressive works that tell unique stories.

The detailed brooches of Aurélie Guillaume (Montréal, QC) draw on the historic use of narrative illustration in enamel, particularly the tradition of Byzantine enamelwork, which allowed artists to create intricate portraits. Guillaume translates her energetic and joyful illustrations into large enamel brooches, which can be displayed on the body or by themselves. Her lively and humorous character designs draw upon street and pop art, as well as the narrative qualities of comic-making.

Chenlu Hou (Providence, RI) uses ink, clay, and animation to create a world populated by crowds of mutant bodies moving together with a single consciousness. Influenced by childhood memories, folktales of demons and spirits, and the work of horror comics artist Junji Ito, Hou’s figures stretch and warp unnaturally, limbs detaching and reassembling under their own volition. Merging her personal history with dark images from folklore, Hou’s world has the power to unsettle the psyche by appearing both comfortably familiar and totally alien.

Aya Kakeda (Brooklyn, NY) grew up in Tokyo, where she was influenced by ancient woodblock prints, as well as the work of painter, photographer, and printmaker, Yasuo Kuniyoshi, and the travel photography of Kenji Sato. Her detailed illustrations evoke lush worlds inhabited by moody and whimsical characters. Kakeda has translated her illustrations into toys, ceramic, and installations. Through diorama-building and character design, she plays with scale, allowing viewers to explore the imaginative worlds she creates.

The translation of these artists' visions, from illustration to craft media, speaks to the commonalities that exist between the two disciplines. Both illustration and craft have historically formed professional guilds or work societies, and both are deeply practice-oriented fields that recognize the merits of time and skill-building. HCCC Curatorial Fellow Maria-Elisa Heg comments, "While all works in craft media tell their stories through materials and process, the expressive and narrative qualities of these works have a palpable sense of personality and life. Every illustrator is a storyteller, and these pieces invite us to imagine novel possibilities, drawing us deeper into both our own fantasy worlds and those of the artists. *Drawn to the Work* also contributes to the ongoing conversation around how craft is defined in the 21st century by showcasing the exciting and unique work that comes from the intersection of illustration and craft."

Drawn to the Work: Illustration and Craft in Conversation is curated by HCCC Curatorial Fellow María-Elisa Heg.

For more information about the artists, please visit their websites:

<http://aurelieguillaume.com>

<http://chenlu-art.weebly.com>

<http://ayakakeda.com>

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 Wednesday through Saturday, 10 AM – 5 PM, and Sunday, 12 – 5 PM. Holidays: Closed Easter, July 4th, 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 supported by individual donors and members and funded in part by 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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