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META-FORMATION EMBRACES NON-TRADITIONAL BLACKSMITHING

On View October 15, 2020 – January 3, 2021 at Houston Center for Contemporary Craft

Meta-Formation: New Connections in Contemporary Blacksmithing

October 15, 2020 – January 3, 2021

Main Gallery

Houston Center for Contemporary Craft

4848 Main Street, Houston, TX 77002

Hours & Admission

Beginning October 15th: Open Thursday through Saturday, 10 AM – 5 PM. Closed on major holidays. Admission is free. Reservations are required. Visitors must wear masks and practice social distancing.

(HOUSTON, TX) October 13, 2020 – Houston Center for Contemporary Craft is pleased to present *Meta-Formation: New Connections in Contemporary Blacksmithing*. The exhibition showcases some of the best metalworkers in the field today, illustrating the magic of forged metal. The featured work, from sculpture to functional ware, exemplifies a diversity of artistic expression, while embracing approaches that go beyond traditional blacksmithing techniques.

Spearheaded by New Orleans-based metalworker and designer Rachel David of Red Metal, *Meta-Formation* first debuted at the Appalachian Center for Craft (Smithville, TN) in 2019. Jurors Andy Cooperman, Hoss Haley, and former HCCC Curatorial Fellow Sarah Darro selected works from an open call, giving preference to those that exhibited outstanding sculptural and design qualities.

For the exhibition's second iteration, David and HCCC Curator Kathryn Hall invited a new group of artists to contribute work. Hall commented, "With the opportunity to utilize a larger gallery space, Rachel and I wanted to expand the exhibition to include more artists who are influential in the field, as well as those who demonstrate a unique approach or perspective, illustrating that there is more out there than what has traditionally been presented." As a whole, *Meta-Formation* demonstrates the evolution of contemporary blacksmithing and those inspired by the field, bringing some well-deserved attention to this frequently overlooked craft discipline.

Meta-Formation: New Connections in Contemporary Blacksmithing is organized by Rachel David in collaboration with HCCC Curator Kathryn Hall and was juried in part by Andy Cooperman, Sarah Darro, and Hoss Haley.

Rachel David (curator)

Born in Maryland, Rachel David is a blacksmith, sculptor, and designer, who lives in New Orleans, Louisiana. Her metalwork practice encompasses art, furniture, architectural elements, activism, and gardening. Through community activism and metalwork that references relationships between bodies and landscapes, David investigates issues related to colonization, social, and environmental justice. She was a visiting artist at the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts (LA), The Crucible (CA), and Community-First Forge (TX), and taught at

Haystack Mountain School of Crafts (ME), Peters Valley School of Craft (NJ), the New Agrarian School (MT), and Southern Illinois University, Carbondale (IL). David organized and curated Nu Iron Age in (2017) and Meta-Formation (2019 - ongoing). She has exhibited work nationally and internationally in solo and group exhibitions. Her work has been included in several publications, including *Ironwork Today 4*, and in the collections of the City of New Orleans and the Simone Benetton Foundation, as well as numerous private collections.

Andy Cooperman (juror)

Working in Seattle, Andy Cooperman is a jeweler, metalsmith, educator, and writer who has worked in the field of jewelry and metalsmithing for over 30 years. Cooperman's work has been exhibited internationally and can be found in many different private and public collections, such as the Victoria and Albert Museum (United Kingdom), the Smithsonian Museum (Washington, D.C.), the Tacoma Art Museum (WA), and Central College (IA). His writing can be found in blogs, books, and publications, including *Art Jewelry Today 1, 2 and 3; Humor in Craft; The Penland Book of Jewelry*; and many more. In 2017, Cooperman won First Place in Alternative Materials in the Saul Bell Design Award competition. Having taught and presented across the country, Cooperman's goal is to help students develop the creative problem-solving tools that will allow them to see beyond standard solutions and open new doors into the creative process.

Sarah Darro (juror)

Based in Philadelphia, Sarah Darro is a curator of contemporary craft, material culture, and design. Her research interests range from architecturally influenced design and the agency of objects to artist communities, socially engaged practice, and relational aesthetics. She holds an MA in visual, material, and museum anthropology from Oxford University and a BA in art history and anthropology from Barnard College of Columbia University. She formerly served as the Curatorial Research Fellow at the Corning Museum of Glass and as the Windgate Curatorial Fellow at Houston Center for Contemporary Craft. She received the Emerging Voices Scholar Award from the American Craft Council in 2019 and a Houston Arts Alliance Creativity Express Grant in 2018. Her exhibitions have been featured in publications such as *American Craft, Architectural Digest, Condé Nast Traveler, Urbanglass Quarterly*, and *Arts + Culture Texas*. Some of Darro's recent exhibitions include *Total Work of Art* (2020), *Tense Present* (2019), *Tiff Massey: A Different World* (2019), *Radical Objects Now* (2018), *After Memphis: Crafted Postmodern* (2018), and *B. Anele: I Don't Play That Game* (2018).

Hoss Haley (juror)

Hoss Haley is a sculptor who is based in Asheville, NC. The Kansas native studied blacksmithing for many years in New Mexico and Texas before turning his focus to two- and three-dimensional sculpture, made in steel, concrete, and bronze. His later work is heavily influenced by the Western landscape of his youth. Haley has exhibited nationwide, including several solo exhibitions. He has created many different public art projects, including works for the Pack Square Conservancy (NC), the Charlotte Area Transit System, and Mecklenberg County (NC). His work is in the collections of the New Mexico Museum of Art (NM), Mint Museum of Craft + Design (NC), California Crafts Museum (CA), North Carolina Museum of Art (NC), Bechtler Museum of Modern Art (NC), and the Huntsville Museum of Art (AL), among others. Haley has held residencies at Penland School of Crafts (NC) and the John Michael Kohler Arts Center (WI) and has served as an instructor, a presenter, and a keynote speaker for many different craft institutions and nationally recognized conferences.

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, studio, and garden spaces to support the work of local and national artists and serves as a resource for artists, educators and the community at large.

Beginning October 15th, HCCC is open limited hours: Thursday through Saturday, 10 AM – 5 PM. Timed reservations are required. Before visiting, the public should visit the website at www.crafthouston.org to make a reservation and view the complete list of visitor guidelines, including the requirement to wear face masks and practice social distancing throughout the building.

HCCC is located in the Museum District at 4848 Main Street. 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. Closed the following holidays: Easter, July 4th, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day.

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. **###**