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## **“THIS SIDE UP” HIGHLIGHTS INGENUOUS CRAFTSMANSHIP BEHIND ART HANDLING & COLLECTIONS CARE**

On View January 27 – May 4, 2024, at Houston Center for Contemporary Craft

### **THIS SIDE UP**

**January 27 – May 4, 2024**

Main & Front Galleries

Houston Center for Contemporary Craft

4848 Main Street, Houston, TX 77002

### **Exhibition Reception**

**Friday, January 26, 5:30 – 7:30 PM**

The evening will celebrate the winter/spring exhibitions and feature open studios by current resident artists.

### RELATED PROGRAMMING

#### **THIS SIDE UP: Artists in Conversation**

**Saturday, January 27, 3:00 – 4:30 PM**

Join *THIS SIDE UP*'s exhibiting artists for a panel moderated by HCCC Curator + Exhibitions Director, Sarah Darro. The panelists will share insider perspectives on producing this exhibition and new bodies of work to articulate a complex history about the business of handling art.

#### **Deconstructing the Exhibition Gallery Lecture**

**Saturday, February 17, 3:00 – 4:00 PM**

Join the Curator of *THIS SIDE UP* for a special, behind-the-scenes lecture that delves into the networked, iterative process of making and designing exhibitions--from conception to final presentation.

#### **Art Handling Olympics**

**Thursday, March 7, 5:30 – 8:00 PM**

Join HCCC for the first-ever Texas Art Handling Olympics! Inspired by the infamous competition that emerged in New York City by and for the art handling community in 2010, HCCC will host a modified version of this riotous event. Participation instructions, awards, and judges to be announced.

#### **Exhibition web page**

<https://crafthouston.org/exhibition/this-side-up/>

#### **Hours & Admission**

Open Tuesday - Saturday, 10 AM – 5 PM. Closed major holidays. Admission is free.

**(HOUSTON, TX) November 21, 2023** — Houston Center for Contemporary Craft (HCCC) is pleased to present *THIS SIDE UP*, a group exhibition that frames art handling and collections-care practices within the field of craft. Featuring the work of mount makers, crate builders, and exhibition fabricators, as well as artwork informed by these practices, the show brings unprecedented attention to the specialized knowledge, skill, apprenticeship, problem-solving, and deep understanding of materials required to build and support art infrastructure.

*THIS SIDE UP* is the first curatorial project of its kind to frame the materials-based knowledge and making practices radiating from the museum industrial complex within the discipline of craft. HCCC Curator and Exhibitions Director Sarah Darro notes, “*THIS SIDE UP* is an exhibition about the making of an exhibition. Its design and layout reflect the art object’s journey from artist studio to art-shipping transit facility to clandestine preparation room, and finally, to public presentation in the museum gallery.”

The throughline of the exhibition is an investigation of labor and visibility (or invisibility) within the field. For instance, two new series, “Passage (those that carried us)” by Vivian Chiu and “Quotidian Relics” by Adam Manley, each transform the art storage crate into a conduit for larger discourses on migration, labor, and value—not only referencing the bodies of artwork they hold but also serving as a metaphor for the journey of their makers and the network of people who steward them through space and over time. On the other hand, renowned art handlers Willem de Haan and Clynton Lowry, founding editor of *Art Handler Magazine*, present sculptural, wearable, and editorial works that showcase the highly specialized, skilled, and often undervalued anonymous labor and making within museums. Their practices also demonstrate how art handling has informed and inspired adjacent creative production, from fashion design to meme-making and community organizing.

The exhibition and its associated programming provide visitors with a unique opportunity to experience the “behind-the-scenes” work of museums and prioritize the viewing of crafted objects that are typically obscured. By providing new visibility for these oft-overlooked and many times purposefully concealed objects, this exhibition highlights the masterful craftsmanship of these makers and their vital role in facilitating the art experience.

*THIS SIDE UP* is curated by HCCC Curator & Exhibitions Director, Sarah Darro. Exhibiting artists include Vivian Chiu, Willem de Haan, Clynton Lowry, Adam Manley, and more. HCCC received material donations and exhibition support from the registration, preparation, and exhibitions teams of the following museums: Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, New York, NY; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA; Fuller Craft Museum, Brockton, MA; Museum for Art in Wood, Philadelphia, PA; Wharton Esherick Museum, Malvern, PA; Mingei International Museum, San Diego, CA; and Racine Art Museum, Racine, WI.

### **About Houston Center for Contemporary Craft**

Serving as a treasured resource in the Houston arts community for more than 20 years, 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 showcases emerging and acclaimed artists in exhibitions, introduces visitors of all ages to contemporary craft through hands-on and virtual programming, and supports the development of working artists through its artist residency program.

HCCC is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 AM – 5 PM. **Holiday hours for 2023: HCCC will be closed to the public November 23–25 for the Thanksgiving holiday weekend and December 26–January 2 for winter holidays.** HCCC is also closed on Easter, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, July 4th, and Labor Day.

Admission is free. HCCC is located in the Museum District at 4848 Main Street, three blocks south of the Wheeler Ave. MetroRail station. Free parking is available directly behind the facility, off Rosedale and Travis 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](http://www.crafthouston.org). Find HCCC on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram @CraftHouston.

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