

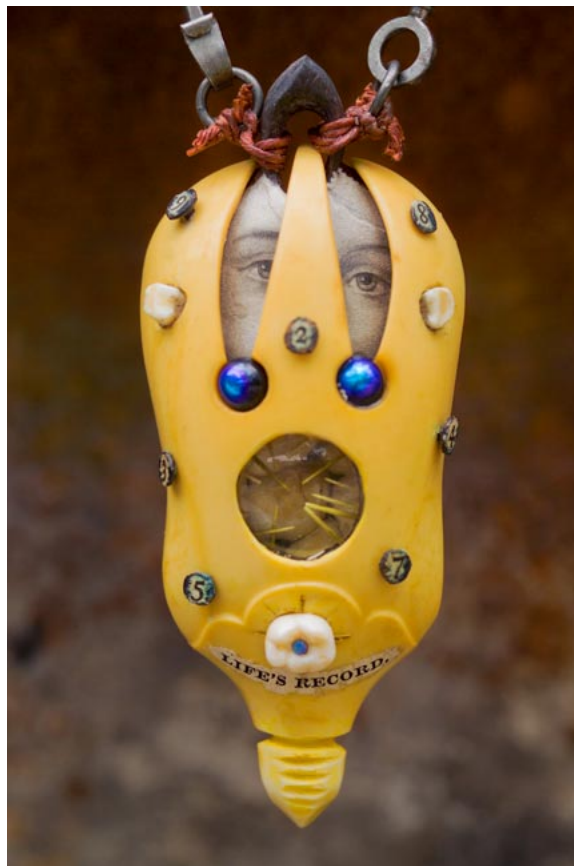
### SURREAL WEARABLES BY STUFFSMITH KEITH LO BUE

*SCC Showcases Keith Lo Bue in BRIDGE Exhibition*

PITTSBURGH, PA—December 15, 2014—Made from lobster claws, hors d'oeuvres forks, antique book bindings, keys, leather, marbles, and more, Keith Lo Bue's unexpected jewelry stirs up forgotten memories, and reminds us of the past. Examples of these distinct pieces, on display as part of the Society for Contemporary Craft's biennial *Bridge Exhibition Series*, are featured in concert with an exhibition of sculptural ceramics by Washington artist, Jason Walker and large scale figures—built from remnants of bedclothes, blankets, pillows, couch cushions, and knit Afghans—by California artist, Elisabeth Higgins O'Connor. The *Bridge Exhibition Series* opens with a public reception on Friday, January 23, from 5:30 to 8 pm and continues through August 22, 2015.

Lo Bue, a self-titled “stuffsmith” has left behind traditional approaches to jewelry making in favor of discovering and working with found materials. With a soft spot for a good treasure hunt, Lo Bue is constantly on the lookout for unassuming stuff that will find new life as jewelry. Interested in exploring the dichotomies that surround us—reality and surreality, preservation and decay, memory and forgetting—Lo Bue pairs dualities in his work. While vintage objects recall feelings of nostalgia, his fresh style and compositions seem ahead of their time. Lo Bue's work with found objects, a journey that has lasted over 25-years, began in 1989 with his first solo exhibition entitled *Oddments*. In the ensuing years, the artist has injected life and personal narrative into countless wearable works. These sculptural forms have evolved into minute constructed environments, oftentimes viewed through lenses that have been called diminutive museums and reliquaries of dreams.

The exhibition features a series of pendants and brooches. With titles such as *Life's Record*, *Mesmerism*, and *A Question of Taste*—the works highlight Lo Bue's thrill of making and spontaneity of instinct. One work from a private collection is the never before exhibited, *The Diary of Antiquary*. This wearable book includes elements such as fresh water pearls, unearthed glass, 19<sup>th</sup> century book cover fragments, antique ivory, feathers, pressed seaweed, and gold leaf. Exemplifying Lo Bue's passion for learning new techniques, the piece includes the first book made completely by his hand. This



*Life's Record (for Mira)*, 2014 Victorian 'pyralin ivory' serving fork, dichroic glass beads, Mira Lo Bue's baby teeth, resin, sea urchin spines, copper nails, opals, carved wood from a Lo Bue baby crib, waxed linen thread, 19th-century steel keys, 1920's elastic cord, camera lens and housing, mid-19th-century steel-point engraving and color lithograph, enamel pocket watch face, steel and bronze wire, paint, 16th- & 19th-century paper, text, soil Pendant: 4 ½" x 2" x 1", Cord/chain: 17½" Photo: Keith Lo Bue

neckpiece acts as a symbol for personal progress and a willing leap forward into the unknown. Lo Bue comments, “The work I produce has always involved making connections between disparate phenomena. There is a deliberate effort to create in my artwork a fragile technology of bone and soil exhumed from the scattered shards of lives proceeding our own. In this way I can strike an empathy with those who reached for the promise of progress with one hand while shielding their fallibility with the other.”

Lo Bue was born in Fairfax, Va. and earned a B.F.A. from the State University of New York at Purchase. In 1999, Lo Bue moved from the US to Australia. He currently lives and works as a full time maker in Sydney. Lo Bue has taught workshops at dozens of prestigious art and craft schools throughout the US, New Zealand and Australia, including stops at Arrowmont School of Arts & Crafts, Gatlinburg, Tenn., and the 92<sup>nd</sup> Street Y Art Center, New York, N.Y. His art has been recognized and selected for exhibitions by curators at the Museum of Modern Art, the Guggenheim Museum and the Museum of Arts & Design and has been acquired into renowned public collections including the Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, Pa., and the Renwick Gallery of the National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

To complement the *Bridge 13 Exhibition Series*, educational programs are planned to encourage an exchange of ideas. Visitors can create a free take away piece from a drop-in studio activity designed by a participating artist. An exhibition brochure documenting Lo Bue’s solo show includes biographical information, photo-documentation of the artist’s work, and an essay written by Suzanne Ramljak, Editor of *Metalsmith* and an art historian specializing in contemporary and 20<sup>th</sup>-century art and material culture. *Bridge 13: Keith Lo Bue, Elisabeth Higgins O’Connor, Jason Walker* is made possible by the Allegheny Regional Asset District, the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, the Elizabeth R. Raphael Fund of The Pittsburgh Foundation, Ted Rowland, BNSF Foundation, Ferrin Contemporary, and other generous donors.

Presenting contemporary art in craft media by regional, national and international artists since 1971, the Society for Contemporary Craft offers cutting edge exhibitions focusing on multicultural diversity and non-mainstream art, as well as a range of classes, community outreach programs and a retail store. SCC is located at 2100 Smallman Street in the Strip District of Pittsburgh, Pa. Hours are Monday through Saturday, 10 am to 5 pm. Exhibitions and informal, hands-on art activities in the Drop-In Studio are always free to the public. For more information, visit [www.contemporarycraft.org](http://www.contemporarycraft.org) or call 412.261.7003.

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### Links

**Keith Lo Bue:** [lobue-art.com](http://lobue-art.com)

**Jason Walker:** [jasonwalkerceramics.com](http://jasonwalkerceramics.com)

**Elisabeth Higgins O’Connor:** [elisabethhigginsoconnor.net](http://elisabethhigginsoconnor.net)

**Ferrin Contemporary:** [ferrincontemporary.com](http://ferrincontemporary.com)

*Please see complete press kit for additional information on programming and events, exhibition technology, and downloadable high-resolution images.*