

COMPLEX PATTERNS AND CUT MOTIFS TO BE FEATURED AT CONTEMPORARY CRAFT

PITTSBURGH, PA—October 1, 2012—A solo exhibition of the work of Australian metalsmith Melissa Cameron opens as part of the Society for Contemporary Craft's (SCC) biennial *Bridge Exhibition Series*, with a public reception on Friday, November 9, from 5:30 to 8 pm. Cameron's saw-pierced recycled objects that investigate pattern and the interdependence between elements and organic systems are featured concurrently with Jacquard tapestries by fiber artist Betty Vera, and ceramic vessels patterned with quirky, figurative drawings by Kevin Snipes. The work of these three makers reflects the high quality craftsmanship produced by contemporary artists today. The show continues through March 30, 2013.

Cameron's jewelry construction draws on symmetric, patternmaking operations: translation, rotation, reflection and the transformations of Euclidean geometry. Through a methodical drawing practice that employs AutoCAD for its precision, she investigates motif in her pursuit of meaningful patterns. With her strict application of geometry, new patterns emerge incrementally and motif itself mutates over the course of her drawing.

In the manufacture of her wearable works, Cameron saw-pierces recycled objects by hand, and employs laser-cutting technology while working with titanium and stainless steel; alternately handsawing to free fragile materials. Laser cutting allows her to create patterns much larger than those that can be cut by hand. In either case, a single pattern drawing acts as the cutting plan, within which one or many motifs are repeated. Each pattern is wrought so that it enables the creation of at least one pair of works—a positive and negative use of the same plane.

By raising and lowering the elements on steel or silk guide wires, the separate pieces of the cutout pattern are linked into a single structure. As interconnected segments the workings flex and move, allowing the pattern drawings to literally come to life. Each work depends upon the tension of the cable against the weight of the strung elements to create its form, emulating architectural structure. Beyond the similarity to architecture, the fragile linkages between parts recall the invisible ties that interweave seemingly independent organic structures into an ecosystem. The delicate balancing act at play in Cameron's pieces speaks to a universal truth—the inextricable interdependence between all elements.

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Melissa Cameron, *Red Tin Set (Pin and Void Brooch)*, 2009.
Painted recycled metal, mild steel, stainless steel, 925 silver,
2" x 2" x 1-1/2" (pin), 3" x 3" x 1/3" (void brooch)
Photo: Melissa Cameron



Melissa Cameron, *Tobacco Tin Set (Pin and Void Brooch)*, 2009.
Painted recycled metal, mild steel, 925 silver, 1" x 1" x 1/3"
(pin), 2" x 2" x 1/3" (void brooch), 2" x 2" x 1" (container)
Photo: Melissa Cameron

Born in Perth, Western Australia, Cameron currently lives in Seattle, WA. She received her M.F.A. in Jewelry and Metals from Monash University in Melbourne, and a B.A. in Interior Architecture from Curtin University in Perth. Cameron's work has been exhibited widely across the United States, as well as in Australia, Korea and Germany, among other countries. Her pieces can be found in many collections, including that of the Cheongju City Collection, Cheongju, South Korea; the Arts Centre Melbourne, Victoria; and Toowoomba Regional Art Gallery, Queensland. Cameron has been the recipient of many prestigious awards and special recognitions, among them a Gold Prize at the Cheongju International Craft Competition in South Korea.

To complement the *Bridge 12 Exhibition Series*, educational programs are planned to encourage an exchange of ideas. In a two-day, weekend workshop, *Building Jewelry from Found Objects* (March 2—3, 2013, 9 am—4:30 pm), offered in partnership with Construction Junction and Pittsburgh Center for Creative Reuse, Cameron guides students in the adaptive reuse of repurposed objects for the creation of wearable jewelry. Class tuition is \$200, with a \$35 materials fee. For more information or to register, call The Studio at 412.261.7003, x25.

An exhibition brochure documenting Cameron's solo show includes biographical information, photo-documentation of the artist's work and an essay, *Building on Ornamental History*, written by Marilyn Zapf, a freelance writer and historian of craft and design. Former Editor-In-Chief of the blog *Unmaking Things* and recent member of the collective Fig. 9, her work has also appeared in publications such as *Crafts* magazine. *Bridge 12: Melissa Cameron, Kevin Snipes, Betty Vera* is made possible, in part, by the Allegheny Regional Asset District, the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, the Elizabeth R. Raphael Fund of The Pittsburgh Foundation and other generous donors.

About Society for Contemporary Craft (SCC)

Founded by Elizabeth Rockwell Raphael in 1971 and located in its current Strip District home for more than 25 years, SCC is today one of the top 10 nonprofit organizations for the promotion of contemporary craft in the U.S., and an international leader in the field. SCC engages people in the creative experience through cutting edge exhibitions focused on multicultural diversity and non-mainstream art at both its Main Galleries at 21st and Smallman streets in the Strip, and a Satellite Gallery at BNY Mellon Center in Downtown Pittsburgh. SCC also offers studio classes in a range of media and a retail store with work not seen elsewhere in the region. Proceeds from The Studio and The Store support regional, national and international artists, and SCC's free outreach programs. The Strip District facility is open Monday through Saturday, from 10 am to 5 pm, and other hours by appointment. Class times vary. There is a suggested donation of \$5. The BNY Mellon Center Satellite Gallery is open daily until midnight. Visit www.contemporarycraft.org or call 412.261.7003 for more information or to be added to the mailing list. Visitors can also craft a conversation with SCC at facebook.com/SCCPgh or by searching for SCCraft on Twitter.

Links

Melissa Cameron: melissacameron.net

Kevin Snipes: kevinsnipes.com

Betty Vera: bettyvera.com

Construction Junction: constructionjunction.org

Pittsburgh Center for Creative Reuse: pccr.org

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