

2015 / 2018

ALLOY

Temporary Site-Based Artworks

pgh

EDITORS

Sean Derry
Chris McGinnis

LITERARY EDITORS

Carly McCoy
Beth Wojiski

DESIGNER

Casey Kovach

COVER

Oreen Cohen, *Spectre and Shade* (2015)

COVER (PHOTO)

Anthony Bookhammer

PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY BY

Anthony Bookhammer
Ivette Spradlin
Heather Tabacchi
Nico Segall Tobon
Andrea Petrillo

PUBLISHED BY

Rivers of Steel Heritage Corporation, 2019

PRINTED BY

Raff Printing, Inc.

© Alloy Pittsburgh 2019



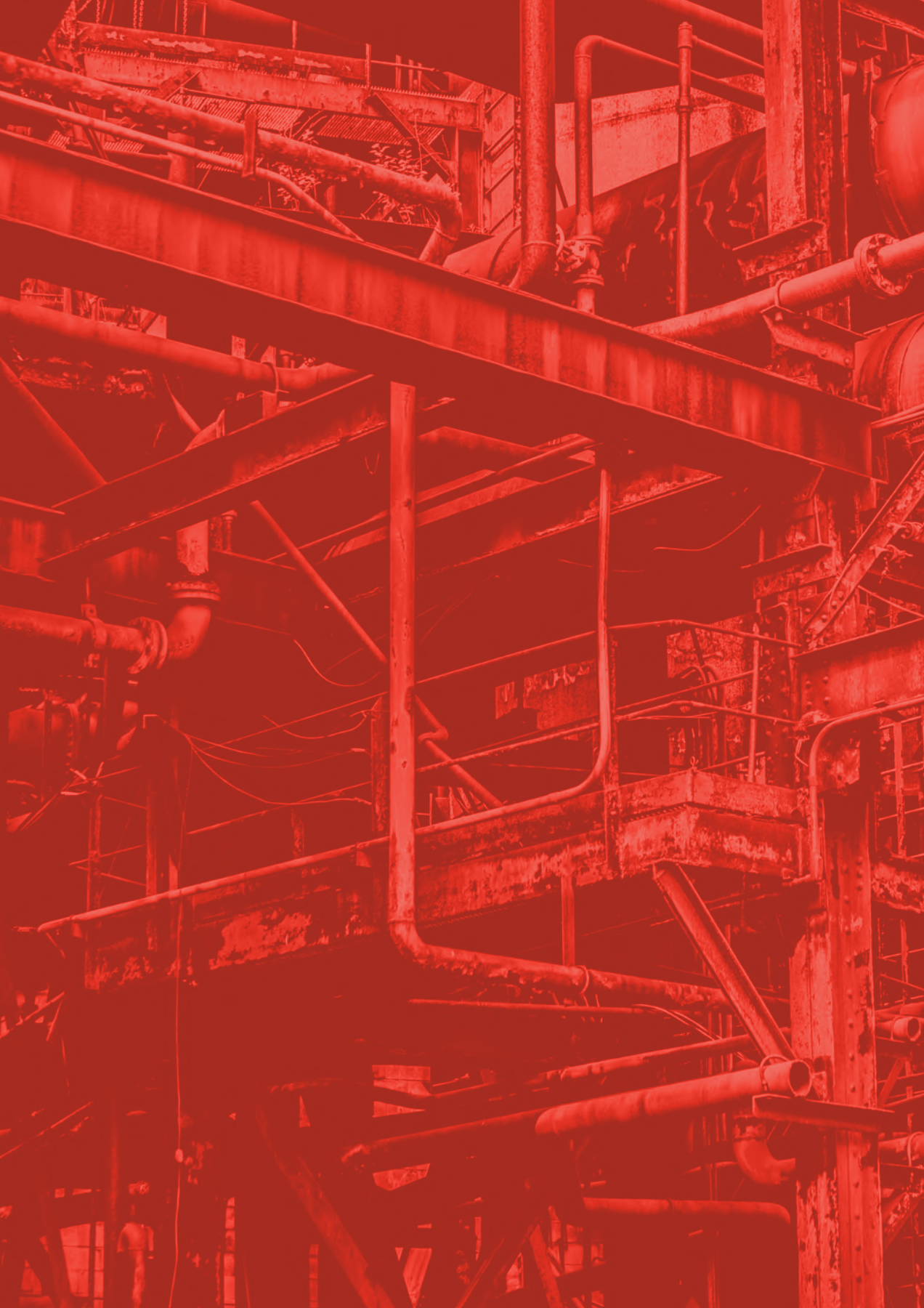
www.riversofsteel.com
cmcginnis@riversofsteel.com
www.facebook.com/riversofsteel
www.instagram.com/riversofsteel

2015 / 2018

ALLOY

Temporary Site-Based Artworks

pgH





CONTENTS

Introduction 1

Reimagining Familiar Places 2

A Reflection on Experience 4

by Mary Jane Jacob

Context and Community 6

by Sean Derry & Chris McGinnis

A Research Laboratory 10

Full Circle 32


by Scott Turri

Alloy Pittsburgh 2015 34

Alloy Pittsburgh 2018 56

Acknowledgments 76





ALLOY PITTSBURGH

Co-founded by Pittsburgh artists Sean Derry and Chris McGinnis in 2013 and developed as a program of the Rivers of Steel Heritage Corporation, Alloy Pittsburgh was conceived as a laboratory for artists to investigate the Carrie Blast Furnaces National Historic Landmark and respond through the creation of temporary site-based artworks. Every two-to-three years, Alloy Pittsburgh returns to the Carrie Blast Furnaces in Swissvale, Pennsylvania with a new group of regional artists whose individual artworks combine to breathe new life into a site once dominated by the singular purpose of commercial iron production.

The background of the entire page is a faded, high-angle photograph of an industrial facility, likely a steel mill, with complex metal structures and smokestacks. A solid yellow overlay covers the entire image, creating a monochromatic effect.

REIMAGINING FAMILIAR PLACES

Alloy Pittsburgh was founded on a belief that participation, dialogue, and action are necessary to redefine the post-industrial landscape. The program, which is produced and presented by Rivers of Steel, expands on Pittsburgh's legacy of innovation by promoting new relationships among existing community initiatives and offering a forum where artists and the general public come together to reimagine the built environment. Through scholarly presentations, an onsite research laboratory, and additional public activities, Alloy Pittsburgh works specifically with local artists and communities throughout the duration of the five-month program.

A Reflection on Experience

Mary Jane Jacob

Alloy Pittsburgh 2015, Lecturer

As I write this text, three years after an invigorating visit to see artists' installations at the Carrie Furnaces National Historic Landmark, I have just returned from seeing another art exhibition at an industrial site. This time it was the sculpture of Magdalena Abakanowicz at the Old Mine Science and Art Centre in Wałbrzych, Poland, one of hundreds of sites along the so-designated European Route of Industrial Heritage.

Why art *and* industry? What's the attraction contemporary art makers have to such sites as context, backdrop, or—as in the case of Alloy Pittsburgh's work—the generative vehicle for bringing forth new works of art? Inspiration is the now old-fashioned, if not romantic, term for this. But it is true: industry inspires. And it seems this is the case whether the location is in decay as in Swissvale at the Carrie Furnaces or in production (here one can think of the Kohler Art Center's "Art/Industry" program in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, where

for decades artists have been given access to the tools and materials of plumbing manufacturing).

There is something inspiring about the force of energy, the alchemical transformation of materials from one state into another. The formidable nature of industry attracts us like moths to a flame, at once fearful and fearless. And of these industrial processes, the making of steel has had a sense of majesty from the outset. Thus, as Andrew Carnegie's initiation of steel making in the mid-1870s in Braddock, Pennsylvania, enabled Henry Ford to undertake his total vision for the River Rouge Plant in Dearborn, Michigan, so Diego Rivera and Charles Sheeler were soon there, painting and photographing every aspect of an operation that started with smelting ore and ended with driving a car off the assembly line.

Honoring production and participating in the power of industry has been a role for art. But there is another coincidence at the root of



this marriage. Industrial workers and artists are *makers*. They bring something new into being. You can feel that energy in places like the Carrie Furnaces today, even in its silence. It reminds us that this lived history is embodied still in families and communities at the heart of this place.

Alloy Pittsburgh is the essential engine for artists to reimagine history and take it forward. The research artists conduct validates others' work as well as their very existence; then they translate that into visual, auditory, and spiritual forms. The audience includes art goers like me, and I am grateful for their work because it gave me insight into the region in ways that no history book could.

Yet perhaps more powerfully, the audience *is* the region. Art connects to community as it gives access to a place otherwise cordoned off and creates a dialogue between the past and present. Regardless of whether one's personal experience is vocalized or not, experiences

surely happen, and they build upon each other as they grow with each successive iteration of this exhibition program. Then, unlike the inspirational site of the furnaces, the art created there has an inexhaustible energy: it produces new meanings at the time of the show and in memory so that over time this art becomes part of the history of this place, too.

MARY JANE JACOB is a curator and writer who pioneered public, site-specific, and socially engaged art as a shared practice and discourse in the 1990s. Her recent book, *Dewey for Artists* published by the University of Chicago Press, looks at how artists, curators, and the public make meaning through everyday experiences. Jacob holds the position of Professor at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago where she is Director of the Curatorial Studies Program and Institute for Curatorial Research and Practice.

Context and Community

Sean Derry & Chris McGinnis

Alloy Pittsburgh, Co-founders

Since its inaugural year in 2013, Alloy Pittsburgh has showcased more than thirty-five temporary site-specific art installations at the Carrie Blast Furnaces National Historic Landmark, ranging in medium from digital animation and steel sculpture to sewn fabric and dance. Alloy artists have come to the project from a wide range of backgrounds, bringing with them unique approaches to art making that have come to define Alloy Pittsburgh. Challenged with the difficulty of balancing their work against the weight of history, each cohort of artists confronted the peculiar mix of decay, resilience, inspiration, and despair that defines the Carrie Blast Furnaces and the greater Pittsburgh region. Roughly two out of every three artists significantly altered their project proposals by the end of the research residency. We have always considered this a marker of success. The artists' time and dedication to Alloy Pittsburgh, as well as the contributions of the many visiting scholars, presenters, and community partners, continues to enrich the project and the region. As co-founders of Alloy Pittsburgh, we have had the distinct pleasure of witnessing this process unfold throughout each iteration of the biennial

and look ahead with great excitement for the 2020 artist cohort.

Alloy Pittsburgh grew from a shared interest in the region's post-industrial climate and the desire to cultivate a community of artists and supporters who will speculate on the myriad of future possibilities at the Carrie Blast Furnaces. From the start, Alloy Pittsburgh sought to empower partnerships between artists, community members, local nonprofit organizations, and businesses through collaborative installations, public programs, and exhibitions. In 2013, Ann Hamilton, internationally renowned artist and MacArthur Fellow, addressed Alloy Pittsburgh artists and the general public at the Braddock Community Center. Hamilton shared her expertise in the field of site-based inquiry with Alloy Pittsburgh participants and the greater community. In 2015, Pittsburgh artist Ann Rosenthal discussed her work as an ecofeminist and how global concerns, including climate change, food safety, and social justice, can be addressed locally through site-specific artworks. In 2018, the Alloy Pittsburgh team explicitly sought to build new organizational relationships by engaging four arts organizations, including

Associated Artists of Pittsburgh, Indiana University of Pennsylvania's Kipp Gallery, Pittsburgh Glass Center, and Radiant Hall Studios, which worked closely with Rivers of Steel to identify and support that year's diverse group of regional artists.

Alloy Pittsburgh's lectures and public programming across all three iterations of the project have featured collaborations with local arts organizations large and small, including Braddock's Unsmoke Systems, Homestead's Jesse Best Gallery, and Regent Square's Concept Art Gallery. The project regularly featured the cuisine of Monongahela River Valley establishments to visitors from outside the area. The 2015 project showcased partnerships with local personalities like Rick Sebak and then-Braddock Mayor John Fetterman, who offered new strategies for interpreting the artists' installations. That same year, Treading Art and The Mattress Factory museum collaborated with Alloy Pittsburgh to present an evening with famed Chicago-based curator Mary Jane Jacob at the Energy Innovation Center.

Alloy Pittsburgh artists' installations have also grappled with the importance of communities across each exhibition. Some installations challenged our understanding of the relationship between Pittsburgh's industrial legacy and its marginalized communities—as in Curtis Reaves' *Remnant of Progress* (2018) and Ricardo Iammuri Robinson's *Steel-fonics* (2015)—while others, such as Patrick Camut's *STAN* (2015), dwelled on personal stories directly linking their local experience and family history to the Carrie Blast Furnaces. None, however, embraced these aspirations more so than Edith Abeyta. In Abeyta's 2013 project *How We Slowly Become History*, the artist established direct connections to the surrounding communities through a woven installation of donated clothing.

The most compelling Alloy Pittsburgh projects embrace the physical attributes of the site as an important component of the artwork. The Carrie Blast Furnaces National Historic Landmark is not





*Dangerous Objects
Made Safe; Carrie
Furnace Wrap
(detail)*

a traditional exhibition venue, and attempts to treat it as such nearly always fail. Projects such as *Spectre and Shade* (2015) by Oreen Cohen and Katie Rearick's *Remediation* (2018) successfully identified openings in the site where our collective understanding can be advanced through deliberate interventions that permit the Carrie Blast Furnaces to act as a frame for the artwork. Cohen's *Spectre and Shade* utilized colored transparent films to activate the space surrounding the base of the dust catcher for Furnace #7. The structure defines the form of *Spectre and Shade*, yet light passing through the films projects shifting color across the dirt beneath the furnace. In *Remediation*, Rearick identified the opening of raw material hoppers in the mill's Stocking Trestle as apertures where natural light moving through delicate water-jet cut-steel stencils projected the silhouettes of plant life found onsite. Both Cohen's and Rearick's projects acknowledged their dependence on the form and context of the Carrie Blast Furnaces.

The Carrie Blast Furnaces are undergoing a transformation on multiple fronts. Historically, the site was organized around the ability to maximize the transformation of ore, coke, and limestone into iron. Artists have explored material transformation through the creation of artworks that respond to—and in some instances contest—the qualities of the materials that currently compose the site. Fabric and textiles have been used by many artists as a counterpoint to the dense concrete and heavy steel structures that are abundant on the site. In *Counter Weights* (2018), Sophia Sobers created sets of white fabric forms modeled after iron counterweights once used to invert fully loaded train cars. In a related exploration of materials, Michael Hull's *Reconnected* (2018) reattached broken chain falls on the Stove Deck with handmade gold-leafed links. These acts of material transformation created a striking contrast with the other materials onsite and elevated our recognition of the current traits of the Carrie Blast Furnaces. In her 2015 installation *Dangerous Objects Made Safe; Carrie Furnace*

Wrap, Rose Clancy harnessed the latent potential of the materials onsite in order to remake our understanding of these materials. Clancy's wrapped steel objects were unwrapped near the end of the exhibition, revealing dramatic rust prints, pictured on the opposite page, that served as material for future artworks.

The Carrie Blast Furnaces are now widely recognized as a symbol of Pittsburgh's renaissance, celebrating the past while embracing new modes of interpretation and serving as a proving ground for all manner of experimental projects in fields that range from the arts and entertainment to land management and engineering. This is in no small part a testament to the success of projects like Alloy Pittsburgh and many others that have graced the site. Ironically, this beacon of creative reuse sits in the heart of the Monongahela River Valley, where struggling main streets have experienced very little of this renaissance. Nevertheless, many of the same dynamic forces at play on the grounds of the Carrie Blast Furnaces, which have helped transform the site into a beacon of possibility, also exist in the surrounding Monongahela River Valley communities. Forces like the balance between decline and rebirth, along with grit and determination and the aesthetics of industry, remain attractive qualities for creatives, while a sense of authenticity and historical significance permeates the entire region.

In the beginning, Alloy Pittsburgh asked the question: what role could site-based creative inquiry play in the greater transformation of the Carrie Blast Furnaces? Now, seven years later, following three iterations of the successful project, a larger question looms: *what role can Alloy Pittsburgh and the Carrie Furnaces play in the greater transformation of the Monongahela River Valley?*

SEAN DERRY – Co-founder of Alloy Pittsburgh
CHRIS MCGINNIS – Co-founder of Alloy Pittsburgh

A RESEARCH LABORATORY



PHOTO - Heather Tabacci

Understanding Place and Context

Alloy Pittsburgh brings together regional artists and community members to encourage the inclusive exploration of the Carrie Blast Furnaces site.

“Alloy Pittsburgh is a special project. The Carrie Blast Furnaces National Historic Landmark is a special environment. Creating site-based artwork in such a sacred space, the artist is bound to develop something exceptional, and it was certainly an experience I will never forget. The Alloy Pittsburgh team honors and truly understands the process.”

Ricardo Iamuuri Robinson,
Alloy Pittsburgh 2015, Artist



PHOTO - Heather Tabacchi

Retired ironworkers Bill Sharky (above) and Jim Kapusta (right) discuss their time working in Cast House #6 at the Carrie Blast Furnaces with the artists in residence.



PHOTO - Heather Tabacci



PHOTO - Heather Tabacchi





2018 Alloy artists carry out research onsite at the Carrie Blast Furnaces.

PHOTO - Heather Tabacci



PHOTO - Anthony Bookhammer

2015 Alloy artists reflect on the competing contexts and overlapping modes of interpretation influencing each of their planned installations.

PHOTO - Andrea Petrillo





PHOTO - Heather Tabacci



Alloy Pittsburgh artists explore the galleries and archives at the Bost Building National Historic Landmark with archivist Ryan Henderson. Rivers of Steel's diverse collection includes thousands of artifacts, documents, photographs, and audio-visual materials that depict southwestern Pennsylvania's industrial, cultural, and ethnic traditions.

PHOTO - Heather Tabacci



PHOTO - Andrea Petrillo

Alloy Pittsburgh alumni speak with the current artists about the challenges and rewards of creating work at the Carrie Blast Furnaces.



PHOTO - Heather Tabacci



PHOTO - Chris McGinnis

JaQuay Edward Carter, Founding President of the Hazelwood Historical Society of Pittsburgh, speaks with the Alloy Pittsburgh 2018 artists over lunch at the Bost Building National Historic Landmark.





Jesse Best Gallery in Homestead, Pennsylvania partners with Alloy Pittsburgh 2018 for an evening conversation featuring Ted Muller, Professor Emeritus of History and Geography at the University of Pittsburgh.

PHOTO - Chris McGinnis



PHOTO - Andrea Petrillo

Alloy artists from 2015 explore the Iron Garden with botanist Dr. Anna Johnson to learn about the evolving ecosystem at the Carrie Blast Furnaces. Artists also heard from Addy Smith-Reiman about her 2014 project, "Casting the Iron Garden,"



wherein a series of informational plaques documenting botanical life at the Furnaces were cast in iron and mounted to form the Iron Garden Walk.

PHOTO - Andrea Petrillo



PHOTO - Anthony Bookhammer





Internationally recognized curator Mary Jane Jacob addresses the public at the Energy Innovation Center in Pittsburgh's Hill District during the Alloy Pittsburgh 2015 lecture series.

PHOTO - Anthony Bookhammer



PHOTO - Ivette Spradlin &
Nico Segall Tabon

After four months of research and studio work, Alloy Pittsburgh 2018 opened to the public for self-guided tours of the artists' installations located throughout the Carrie Blast Furnaces.



PHOTO - Ivette Spradlin &
Nico Segall Tobon





Alloy Pittsburgh 2015 artist Nick Liadis speaks about his work during individual artist-led tours of the project.

PHOTO - Anthony Bookhammer

Full Circle

Scott Turri

Alloy Pittsburgh 2015, Artist

I am fascinated by how place—the people, the history, the natural and built environment—helps to forge an individual’s identity. As I have gotten older, I have had a greater desire to trace how these various elements working alone and in tandem have made me the person I am today. I look to identify patterns, cycles and intersections in my personal history and this cultural history as a way to construct meaning and to make sense of my world and my place within it. I have always had a desire to meld these elements by transforming and fusing them to create something that is greater than the sum of its parts. This is an exercise that I repeat over and over. It is a cycle where history, personal history, and art history become the raw material for outcomes.

My grandfather, who immigrated to the States from the Tyrol in the early part of the 20th century, worked in the coal mines of northeastern Pennsylvania. My father often told me that his father preached to him that he would never work in the coal mine. He was right. After my dad served in WWII, he took the GI Bill and studied chemistry at the University of Pittsburgh when the steel industry was king. Shortly after graduating, he landed a job in Philadelphia, where he worked his entire career creating chemical compounds for industry.

Having spent most of my adult life in Pittsburgh, I have seen the transformation of its economy from one with a manufacturing emphasis to one based on high tech, education, and healthcare. I was here when the Homestead Works still existed and operated, and I am present today to see how it has been repurposed into its current consumer haven. Following in my father’s footsteps, I came to Pittsburgh to attend the University of Pittsburgh in the early 1980’s. As a young idealistic college student, I became a political activist because I was concerned about the faltering economy and the impending demise of the steel industry. I can remember getting picked up by my fellow comrades, stopping at Bageland in Squirrel Hill for a pumpnickel bagel and then driving across the Homestead bridge to hand out political papers to the incoming and outgoing shift workers at the Homestead Works.

Participating in the Alloy project was a way for me to interweave these personal memories and stories, which are embedded here within the state of Pennsylvania, with the larger narrative of this shared industrial legacy. I certainly underestimated the powerful impact that this experience would have on my life. The monumental scale of the Carrie Furnaces was in itself a mind-blowing experience. Walking among these massive

structures while listening to former ironworkers provide the narrative about how the Furnaces operated and the various physically demanding and perilous jobs that the workers performed was humbling, to say the least. There was a heavy burden that I carried with me after these onsite tours. I felt this incredible weight from the experiences of these workers; the palpable feeling of their collective pride in the craft and technical facility they brought to their jobs, the triumphs and sacrifices they made for themselves and their families. For me, the challenge was to make something to respectfully acknowledge this ‘immenseness’ so that I could, in a very small way, pay homage to their efforts. I realized early on that my work could not possibly compete with the scale and complexity of the history of this site. I chose to focus on the idea of communicating on a more personal level by emulating the feeling of being told a story by someone, much like how the ironworkers told their stories as they led the tours. I located my piece, which functioned like a home movie of sorts, inside the former lunchroom, because this is where the workers would have shared their most intimate personal stories.

And finally, another powerful outcome of the project was its profound impact on my sense of community: with the other artists, the volunteers

who worked at the site, with Chris, Sean, Ron, and the place itself. The Alloy project was like an incubator, and not to get too warm and fuzzy, but it was very comforting to only be in the presence of other artists. This was a place where we respected one another and where we were all working on a common goal to somehow translate our experiences into something meaningful for others and ourselves; a place where I could let down my guard and be goofy, say silly things and not have to worry about the ramifications because there was a wonderful underlying bond between us and a tangible feeling of comradery. This, too, was another unexpected gift. Thank you, all!

Hailing from suburban Philadelphia, where he spent his formative years, SCOTT TURRI now calls Pittsburgh home and has become enmeshed in its regional art community. He has had a broad range of artistic experiences: as a self-taught drummer playing punk rock, to an improvising percussionist in a performance-art band, writing for *New Art Examiner*, *BOMB*, and *Afterimage* magazines, to currently concentrating primarily on painting and experimental animation. He is represented by James Gallery. Along with these pursuits, Turri is also an educator and holds a full-time lecturer position in the Studio Arts Department at the University of Pittsburgh.

ALLOY PITTSBURGH 2015





Artist Installations





PHOTO - Anthony Bookhammer

Patrick Camut

Stan

Stan is a steel sculpture that balances one ton of Clairton Works coking coal and one cup of black coffee in a United Steelworkers union ceramic cup. This piece was inspired by a family story honoring my grandfather Stan Kwasny, who from 1965 to 1995, drove to work at Clairton Coke Works every day balancing his coffee cup but never spilling a drop. Strength and balance were common traits of the blue-collar workers from this region. He was part of an industry and a union of men and women that committed their lives to building the infrastructure we can continue to appreciate today. This piece celebrates that legacy.

— Patrick Camut

This artwork remains on display at the Carrie Blast Furnaces National Historic Landmark.

PATRICK CAMUT was born 1989 in New York, NY. In the mid-1990s, his family moved to Charleroi, PA, a town south of Pittsburgh, to be closer to others in his family. Growing up around relatives who worked in Pittsburgh's steel industry sparked Patrick's interest in metal. His materials of choice are structural steel and repurposed scrap metal. The excitement of finding new material from local scrap yards plays a major role in his process. The industrial material selected for sculptures creates an aesthetic that is intimidating. Through the functional elements of his sculpture, humor is found, giving the art a balance of being serious and playful.

Rose Clancy

Dangerous Objects Made Safe; Carrie Furnace Wrap

This project harnessed the many resources found throughout the Carrie Furnaces, including rusty objects, water, and plants, along with natural elements and time, to create marks of transformation on white cotton fabric. Inspired by physical transformations of the site during her residency period, Clancy's work commented on the shifting balance of marks made by the human hand and those made by nature.

Clancy's installation, located at the base of the Electrostatic Precipitator, provided an immersive experience presenting various stages of transformation in the artist's fabric-wrapped works. Visitors could see newly wrapped objects and those in mid-point transformation, as well as finished canopies of rust-stained fabric. Clancy worked actively throughout the period of the exhibition to provide several opportunities for visitors to make their own mark upon the installation.

ROSE CLANCY creates site-specific installations, found-object sculptures, and interactive public art projects that comment on abuses human beings inflict upon one another and upon the natural environment in which they live. Her current body of work is focused on the relationship between neglect and nurturing, and explores internal and external transformations that occur within the process of recovery.

Clancy graduated from the Art Institute of Pittsburgh with a degree in Visual Communications. In addition to working as a visual artist, Clancy works as a teaching artist and as an independent graphic designer.



PHOTO - Rose Clancy







PHOTO - Anthony Bookhammer

Oreen Cohen

Spectre and Shade

Spectre and Shade was a faux stained glass installation that occupied the negative spaces between girders enclosing the Dust Catcher for Blast Furnace #7. The work illuminated atmospheric and physical sensations captured as sunlight shifted behind the colored panels. Each minute was unique from the last.

Spectre and Shade was a gesture that represented human notions of progress as a conscious, transparent, and physical act. The gravitational realities of physical space are enveloped in a compelling comparison between the substantial gravity of the furnace and the ethereal space it occupies.

— Oreen Cohen

OREEN COHEN grew up between Rochester, NY and Moshav Merchavia, Israel and earned her BFA in Fine Arts at the University at Buffalo. Her artwork explores the potentiality of material, body, and community in site-specific sculpture, public art, intervention, and video performance. Oreen received a MFA in Sculpture in 2014 from Carnegie Mellon University. She has held an active public art career over the past ten years, participating in and organizing exhibitions, residencies, and public commissions nationally and internationally, including; Alloy Pittsburgh, FIGMENT Sculpture Project on Governors Island NYC, Flint Public Art Project, CerCCA Casamarles Residency in Catalonia, Spain (2012), as well as participating in the class of 2013 at the prestigious Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. She is co-owner of a public art design company, OOA Designs, LLC, which is currently working with the Pittsburgh Department of City Planning for a permanent public artwork to be installed in Wightman Park, Squirrel Hill, Pittsburgh in Fall 2019.





PHOTO - Anthony Bookhammer

Sarika Goulatia

Strength of Steele

Strength of Steele was a memorial of objects and spaces honoring the courage and indomitable spirit of the steelworkers.

Interactions with the former workers and their stories of the once-bustling Carrie Blast Furnaces informed this installation. The sculptures excavated and documented the workers' commemorations through plaster casts of original objects that preserved the residue of the past, thereby recording the traces of time. The impressions, grime, slag, and dirt captured in plaster from the original objects told the story of the past.

The features inherent in the plaster cast method—reversal, confrontation of positive and negative, dissolution, inversion, and mirror imaging—were harnessed to tell this story. Through these works, the viewers could examine memories, meaning, identities, and the history of the respective structures.

— Sarika Goulatia

SARIKA GOULATIA is a contemporary sculptor/installation artist. Her extensive practice touches on the frailty of human experience, drawing on personal challenges and socio-cultural issues. In 2017, Goulatia was the recipient of the prestigious Carol R. Brown Creative Achievement Award through the Heinz Endowments and The Pittsburgh Foundation. In 2016, as an Emerging Artist, she exhibited at the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts. She received the Sally Gehl, Samuel Rosenberg and Elizabeth Jones Award in Humanities and Art at Carnegie Mellon University in 2006. Goulatia has exhibited in group and solo shows through the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, The Westmoreland Museum of American Art, the Carnegie Museum of Art, and the Mattress Factory museum.

Dan Ivec & Nick Liadis

Chimneys

Chimneys was a collaborative work between Nick Liadis and Dan Ivec. The project responded to a cycle of production, decay, and adaptation that parallels the history of the Carrie Blast Furnaces and the surrounding region. Through collaborative drawing and creative writing, this duo revealed the past, present, and future of an invented world in which physical and mental survival depended upon the built environment. In this invented world, the technology of the structures sustained the inhabitants but also posed an unconsidered threat wherein their environment had been ecologically compromised by their lifestyle.

The suspended fabric panels hung at the base of Cast House #7 increased in scale as visitors entered the space.

DAN IVEC is an illustrator, writer, and performer. He is the author of *On the Stairs* (Meekling Press), and his poems have been published in *Verse*, *Guernica*, *6X6*, and elsewhere. Collaboration and playfulness are key to his process of creating and telling stories. For Alloy Pittsburgh 2015, Ivec worked with Nick Liadis, and the two employed a number of collaborative prompts and brainstorming exercises in order to draw new ideas out of each other. Ivec currently works as a barback and theater projectionist and narrates his drawings daily on Instagram, @venial_usa.

NICK LIADIS is an architect and artist living in the Lawrenceville neighborhood of Pittsburgh, though he also has strong connections to Detroit, MI. Much of Nick's work is made through a variety of media including architecture, space, and music. Drawing, design, and installation art extend that work as well. For Nick, having artistic skills in architecture challenges traditional modes of building making. Looking at spaces within the building first (as opposed to the overall structure) exposes a different kind of scale and detail. This closer look provides Nick with the questions and ideas that make architecture a multi-sensory experience through the presence of art. Nick's most recent work involves music to highlight dimensions of space, applying aspects of notation, resonance, balance, noise, and echo.



PHOTO - Anthony Bookhammer







PHOTO - Anthony Bookhammer

Alyssa Kail

Supportive (Im)materiality

Understanding our world through a lens of previous experience and past knowledge, my work seeks to obfuscate prescribed use value of space and materiality, utilizing existing architecture and unconventional materials in site-specific installations and sculptures. Embracing resourcefulness, I seek to highlight the potential of that which already exists.

Supportive (Im)materiality was a collection of works inspired by the materials oft-not-considered in the production of steel and iron that supported the laborers in their everyday. Originating in the stories of the textiles worn by the workers throughout the years and jumping ahead to present day, I then wondered about the materials necessary for me to understand, work, and imagine in this space. Tension existed between the light and dark. Interior and exterior. The built and the natural. Silk and steel. The silk material used in this installation allowed me to embrace the color of the natural and of the applied, while also investigating the line work of the industrial setting. Time and timelessness remain ever-present at the Carrie Furnaces, as well as the storied chaos and simultaneous silence.

— Alyssa Kail

ALYSSA KAIL is a visual artist and co-founder of Camp Copeland Studio. She holds a BA in Environmental Studies from the University of Pittsburgh and more recently an MFA in Applied Craft + Design from Pacific Northwest College of Art in Portland, OR. Relocating to Braddock, PA from Oregon in 2014, her work is influenced by the industrial landscape of the Monongahela Valley and combines her interests of art, design, and the environment by utilizing materials such as sustainably harvested wool and industrial remnant cast-offs. Most recently she has been focused on product design of wool home decor for Camp Copeland Studio.

Ricardo Iamuuri Robinson

Steel-fonics

Steel-fonics brought to light a hidden contribution to Pittsburgh's industrial past. In this culture, African Americans must be dancing, singing or marching against a backdrop of poverty, crime or packed arenas in order to be recognized. This installation imagined a creative collective of black industrial steelworkers called the Steel-fonics. Their contribution to the enormous expansion of the American steel industry was nearly invisible until this exhibit bore witness to their legacy.

The STEEL-FONICS were an Industrial Soul Experimental Fusion band formed in the late 1960s. They recorded an esoteric collection of music and experimental sounds that received little to no recognition at the time. Their story was discovered for the very first time in this fantastic sound installation, where attendees were introduced to the musical accomplishments of this obscure group of creative radicals.

Steel-fonics was the soundtrack for an experience not seen or heard until opening day. Their music asked the important question, "CAN YOU SEE US NOW, AMERICA?"

— Ricardo Iamuuri Robinson

RICARDO IAMUURI ROBINSON is a composer, sound recordist, and audiovisual performance artist. His work explores the sonic narratives of object and space. He is founder and owner of SONARCHEOLOGY STUDIOS, a field-recording service dedicated to the production of all things related to audio. His work has been featured in live public presentations: *Mars is Underwater*, *The Steel-fonics*, *Gem Way*, *A Brand New World: Kill the Artist*, *Sonarcheology Pittsburgh* and the Emmy Award-winning documentaries *In Country: A Vietnam Story* and *Jim Crow Pennsylvania*. He has also recorded & released two full-length albums: *Conversations with Shepherds*, *Sheep*, *Guinea Pigs and Monkeys: Nursery Rhymes for the Underfed Minds*, Vol. 1 and *Conversations w/ Aliens, Automats, Paper Kings and Plastic Dreams: Nursery Rhymes for the Unfettered Minds*, Vol. 2. A lifelong resident of Pittsburgh, Robinson has been an active member of the city's art and music scene for two decades, collaborating with dozens of local artists and working at some of the city's premier venues.

PHOTO - Andrea Petrillo



PHOTO - Andrea Petrillo





PHOTO - Anthony Bookhammer

Lenore Thomas

Untitled

An etching is a visual documentation of an action. With that idea in mind, I recorded sounds within and around the Carrie Furnaces property on copper etching plates by scraping the copper on floors, walls, or other surfaces and materials. Each surface created a unique and random impression on the copper plate that I then etched into the plate. While making the marks, I also recorded the sounds that the building elements/materials made on the plates. The impressions made on the copper show visual evidence of the sounds made while capturing those marks. I printed the plates and took the recordings and created an installation using the printed images and sounds. The room immerses the viewer in the visual and auditory experience of the sounds and marks created when I made the copper plates. The prints become a sort of sheet music that abstractly records the marks, beats, lines, and shapes that are held within the Carrie Furnaces.

— Lenore Thomas

LENORE THOMAS grew up in Milwaukee, WI. Her artwork has been shown in group and solo exhibitions in many cities nationally and internationally, including New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago, Las Vegas, Estonia, China, Argentina, Portugal, and Malaysia. In addition to her solo work, she has recently focused on two collaborative projects with photographer, Ivette Spradlin. Thomas received her MFA in Fine Art from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and BAs in Religious Studies and Fine Arts from Lawrence University in Appleton, WI. She is currently living in Pittsburgh, PA with her dog, Wiley, where she is an Associate Professor in the Department of Studio Arts at the University of Pittsburgh.

Scott Turri

Lunch Loop

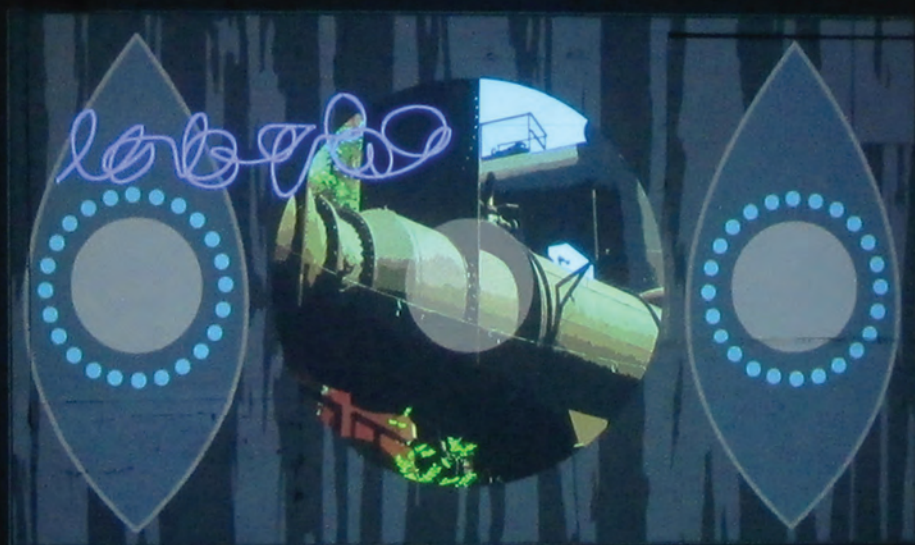
The nature of memory is linked to how humans construct meaning and identity from the intersection of our personal and cultural history. This is integral to my practice. I create nonlinear narratives generated from snippets: digitally manipulated photographs taken from both the natural and built environment and computer-drawn imagery. My focus is the literal and metaphorical relationship between interior and exterior spaces.

This *Lunch Loop* digital animation was created for the lunchroom at the Carrie Furnaces. The interior space would have been a place for the workers to share their personal histories, relaying intimacies which strengthened their bonds and solidified their union as workers and friends.

— Scott Turri

Hailing from suburban Philadelphia, where he spent his formative years, SCOTT TURRI now calls Pittsburgh home and has become enmeshed in its regional art community. He has had a broad range of artistic experiences: as a self-taught drummer playing punk rock, to an improvising percussionist in a performance-art band, writing for *New Art Examiner*, *BOMB*, and *Afterimage* magazines, to currently concentrating primarily on painting and experimental animation. He is represented by James Gallery. Along with these pursuits, Turri is also an educator and holds a full-time lecturer position in the Studio Arts Department at the University of Pittsburgh.

PHOTO - Scott Turri



John Tronsor

Untitled

carrie furnace exists in a strange state. an odd combination of different temporalities and material composition: a relic, a monument, a memorial, a corpse, an apparition—a memory foreclosing on itself, awaiting reactivation by some sort of recollective function, action or thought. it's a sprawl of memory, inhering/adhering to itself—traces and marks buried within and without—signs to be interpreted, or recalled. hark! it screams. in its activation, a recollection-memory emerges from a more abstract field, it is lifted from a dormant time passed and expresses an instance of recurrence or return. here we find intensive points of complication; sites where an interpretant explicates those loci, and in doing so, catalyzes a movement greater than the recollection alone. in recalling, the cascade of memory travels out, absorbs and expands—locating more ground in which to envelop, to territorialize. its movement is doubled: simultaneously facing out towards a more complicated/complicating plane of memory and plane of materiality. bergson managed a beautiful diagram of this process—a site in which recollection occurs and the associated folding and unfolding of particular memory structures set its boundaries. the diagram expresses this system, while the image grounds its singularity. the image echoes. it resonates. it ripples.

— John Tronsor

JOHN TRONSOR is an artist who is interested in ideas concerning representational instability, processes of cognition, and models of ontology. His work finds itself expressed in a variety of media but is typically realized three-dimensionally or time-based. He received his MFA from the University of California, Davis (2013), a Post-Baccalaureate certificate in Studio Arts from Brandeis University (2009), and a BA in Studio Arts from the University of Pittsburgh (2008).

John currently lives and works in Pittsburgh, PA.

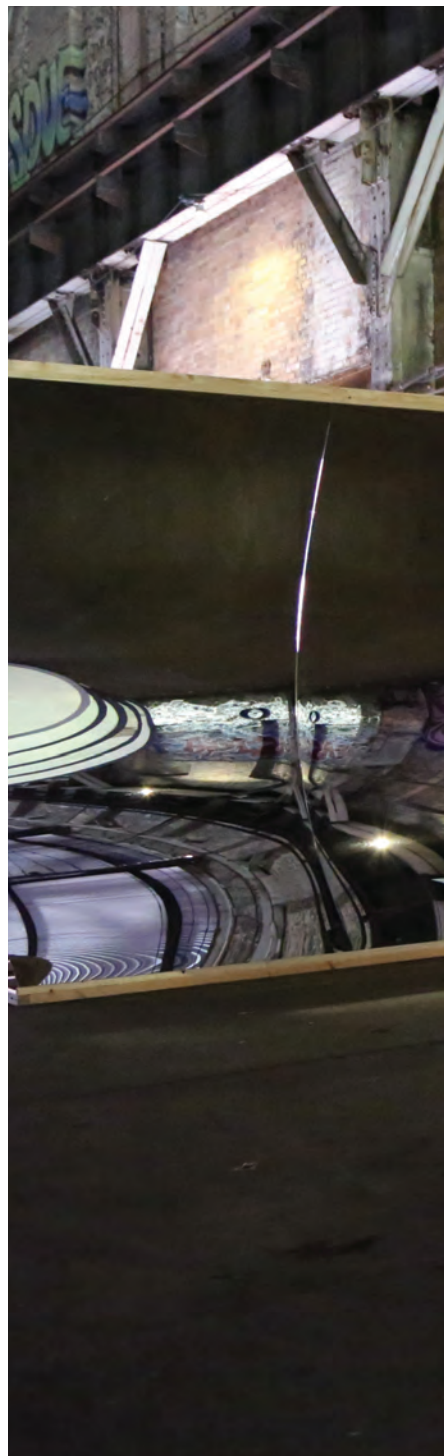


PHOTO - Ricardo Iammuri Robinson



ALLOY PITTSBURGH 2018

The background of the image is a photograph of an industrial facility, likely a steel mill or refinery, featuring complex piping, structural steel, and large cylindrical tanks. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent red filter. In the lower-left foreground, several large, rectangular metal ingots are visible, hanging from thick steel cables. The overall composition is industrial and modern.




PHOTO -Ivette Spradlin &
Nico Segall Twobon

Artist Installations





Angela Biederman

Untitled Bottle Car

The first time I toured Carrie Furnaces, I was instantly drawn to the Bottle Car. The material around its large opening conjured skin or animal hide on a bodily form. I visually deconstructed and physically reconstructed and abstracted this object in a way that would enhance its organic qualities, even though the structure itself is very industrial. This installation was created in accordance with current bodies of my work, which isolate physical features and the emotional energy of sites and structures in the landscape in order to magnify their presence and the responses they can provoke.

— Angela Biederman

ANGELA BIEDERMAN is a sculpture and installation artist with an education in ceramics. Angela earned her BFA from University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and her MFA from Kent State University. She taught ceramics during her graduate studies and currently teaches at the Community College of Allegheny County.

Angela has exhibited at 707 Penn Gallery, Pittsburgh Center for the Arts, Unsmoke Systems Artspace, and other galleries in Pittsburgh. She has exhibited in Cleveland, Columbus, and Kent; at the Huntington Museum of Art; and at the Hoyt Art Center. She has also exhibited in Providence, Philadelphia, and Milwaukee, and at the John Michael Kohler Center for the Arts.

Sara Caplan

*Stock House; Stove Deck;
Cast House*

Modern dancer Sara Caplan developed three site-based performances for the Carrie Furnaces. The first performance, *Stock House*, played with the extremes of shadow and light found in that section of the mill. As the dancer moved through the space, the light from openings in the ceiling and windows revealed different parts of the moving body and changed the viewers' perception of movement. During the second performance, *Stove Deck*, movement followed the path of the pipes and structure of the ceiling, mimicking the flow and support the Stove Deck provides to the furnace. The final performance, located in the Cast House, followed the path of the molten iron, beginning at the furnace and traveling through the runners. Along the way, Caplan explored notions of flow, balance, counterbalance, and sound throughout the unique space.

SARA CAPLAN is a contemporary dancer, choreographer, and teaching artist. She received her BA in Theatre: Dance Performance and her BS in Biology from Pennsylvania State University in 2013 and her MFA in Dance from SUNY, The College at Brockport in 2017. Sara currently teaches dance at Slippery Rock University.

Her choreographic work explores the interactions between moving bodies and space to create unique environments and create meaning. She uses improvisation and plays with gravity and balance to foster intimate, sensory experiences. She has presented work in State College, PA, Rochester, NY, and the Pittsburgh area.



PHOTO - Ivette Spradlin & Nico Segall Tobon







Elizabeth Fortunato

Home; Away

Home; Away was comprised of two disjointed vignettes made from materials including slumped glass, paper castings, welded steel, and dyed fiber objects that were hand-sewn and assembled. The installation was inspired by former worker Jim Kapusta's memory of watching the 1969 moon landing on televisions brought into the mill specifically so the men and women on duty could watch the iconic event. The television transformed household life throughout the 20th century, creating a new bond between media and individual. *Home* represented the life left behind, while *Away* was signified by the absent figure. Work clothing, keys, and an overall gesture toward leaving represented the distance between home and work as both worlds grew apart.

— Elizabeth Fortunato

ELIZABETH FORTUNATO is a mixed media artist working primarily in glass, paper, found objects, and installation. Elizabeth uses material to memorialize and vignette true and remembered places or figures.

In 2017, Elizabeth received her MFA in Sculpture from University of Washington in Seattle where she worked and showed locally. Having relocated back to her hometown of Pittsburgh, Elizabeth works as an independent artist in addition to her work in arts education and at reuse nonprofits in Pittsburgh. She received her BFA from Kent State University in 2010. She has been recognized with residencies, including Alloy Pittsburgh 2018, Pilchuck EAIR, and Bullseye Emerge.





Michael Hull

Reconnected

This project reflected a historical reconnection to Pittsburgh's industrial past by focusing on the many chain falls that had rusted in half on the Stove Deck. By reestablishing disconnected chain links used during the operation of the Carrie Blast Furnaces, Hull reconnected the site's former functional state of producing iron with its present function as a National Historic Landmark. The new steel chain used to join existing broken links further established a connection with the site's history as a blast furnace. Embellishing the newly added chain with gold leaf drew attention to the remade links and communicated the site's important historical value.

MICHAEL HULL is a contemporary artist/jeweler currently participating as a studio resident in the Distillery Program located in the South Side neighborhood of Pittsburgh, PA. His work explores concepts of value and culture by using found trash objects made into wearable objects of adornment. Michael's work has been shown in various exhibitions nationally and internationally, and most recently was awarded the Ethical Metalsmiths Emerging Artist Award. Other exhibitions of his work include Talente in Munich, Germany, the 2017 Beijing International Jewelry Exhibition, and the 2018 Dollar Bank Three Rivers Arts Festival Juried Visual Arts Exhibition.

Katie Rearick

Remediation

The Stock House at the Carrie Blast Furnaces provides a narrow tunnel of light that radiates from a series of overhead bins. Those bins once filtered taconite, iron ore, coke, and limestone into the cars below, which then took the materials to the furnace for smelting. The bins now only filter cascading light into the tunnel. Looking up, one can see the remnants of what once was—plant life, rust, and decay. Working from photographs taken in the Iron Garden surrounding the furnace, Rearick traced patterns of plant life that were then cut from over 40 sheets of solid steel. These plates were installed into the overhead bins to filter the light and cast a present-day shadow of life across the floor.

This artwork remains on display at the Carrie Blast Furnaces National Historic Landmark.

KATIE REARICK received her BFA with an emphasis in Metal/Jewelry from Western Michigan University in 2008 and her MFA from SUNY New Paltz in 2012. Supplemental to her formal education, she has studied at Haystack Mountain School of Crafts and Penland School of Crafts.

Her work ranges from small-scale body adornment to large sculptural installations. Having founded the Allegheny Metals Collective in 2015, Katie is actively engaged in the Pittsburgh metals community. Currently, she teaches workshops at Contemporary Craft and is a faculty member at Waynesburg University. She also maintains a home studio in the Stanton Heights neighborhood of Pittsburgh.

PHOTO - Ivette Spradlin & Nico Segall Tobon







PHOTO - Curtis Reaves

Curtis Reaves

Remnant of Promise

A multitude of African American families journeyed from the South during the great migration on a quest for a better future. *Remnant of Promise* paid tribute to the contributions of these African American steelworkers. This work illustrated their resiliency in relationship to their families, traditions, and culture.

Roughly six million African Americans left the American South and traveled north between 1916 and 1970 in search of a better future. Inspired by his own family's journey from Middleburg, NC to Braddock, PA, where his mother established "Bert's Market," a grocery store which served the steel town community for forty years, Curtis Reaves explores the Great Migration in his video and photography installation, *Remnant of Promise*. Using archival images overlaid with contemporary images of the Carrie Furnaces and presented with the spoken words of the poem *Forged in Steel*—a collaboration with Monongahela Valley poet Mike Vick—this installation shares the migration experience from the perspective of the African American workers. Historically, these iron- and steelworkers received the lowest-paid wages and most challenging positions. *Remnant of Promise* celebrates the culture, traditions and resiliency of the migrant workers and their families, both in the mill and in the community.

CURTIS REAVES is a multimedia artist and educator who works with photography and video as a vehicle for artistic expression, public engagement, and social change. His projects empower youth and adults to become community ambassadors through collaborative video documentation and photographic storytelling. Drawing inspiration from his grandfather's practice of telling family stories through photographs, Curtis uses both traditional and current photographic technologies to share his knowledge and passion for the arts and its power to build community.

In addition to his work as an independent artist, Curtis Reaves is also the founder of C-Clear, a nonprofit community and economic development organization based in McKeesport, Pennsylvania.

Gwen Sadler

The Iron Smelled Sweet Like Rain

It's mysterious

The absence of residue

The awkwardness of solidification

The constellation of accumulation

Of fragmented and reoriented moments

Of small forces moving such big things around

Only seeing, feeling submission, while cause
disappears in reaction.

So carefully made full of uncertainty and instability

So persistently fragile

An ingot melts, like a cloud releasing its rain

Like a thought forms, and flows from your mouth

— Gwen Sadler

GWEN SADLER, born and raised in Cumming, GA, left the Blue Ridge Mountains to study art and biology at Carnegie Mellon University, where she received her BFA in 2018. During her studies she found herself casting iron at the historic Carrie Furnaces, which has had a profound influence on her artistic path. Her sculptures, installations, performances, and videos draw inspiration from her background in the life sciences and respond to the histories and materials of the post-industrial spaces in which she works. Her current body of work finds balance in the weight and rawness of the materials, and their whimsical motion and intimate detail. Gwen has exhibited in galleries and post-industrial spaces throughout Pittsburgh and the broader Rust Belt region. Gwen continues to explore her work through her involvement with Rivers of Steel's metal arts program and in her home studio in the Munhall School House.

PHOTO - Ivette Spradlin & Nico Segall Tobon









Sophia Sobers

Counter Weights

On our first site visit to Carrie Furnaces, I was taken by the history of the site and material qualities of the structures that are still standing. In particular, the counterweight system in the Car Dumper exemplifies a lightweight quality to an otherwise solid metal structure that appeared to hang as effortlessly as a chain of beads. Inspired by this, I wanted to create an homage to the site by recreating the counterweights in a lightweight, sheer fabric and hang these weights in different locations away from their origin of inspiration. The use of a semi-transparent material helped emphasize the peaceful and airy quality that the site imbued while the placement of the counterweights gave nod to the fact that every aspect of the Furnaces functioned as part of an overarching system, and each part of that system was important to ensure the Furnaces operated successfully.

— Sophia Sobers

SOPHIA SOBERS is an interdisciplinary artist specializing in installations and site-specific work. She holds an MFA in Digital + Media from the Rhode Island School of Design and a BS in Architecture at the New Jersey Institute of Technology. Sobers exhibits and performs nationally in institutions such as the Rubin Museum, the Knockdown Center, the New Bedford Art Museum, and The Westmoreland Museum of American Art and has presented her work in solo exhibitions at the University of Pittsburgh, AS220 Reading Room, and Find & Form Space. She has received numerous commissions and grants, including the Puffin Foundation Grant. Her work has been written about in SciArt Center, E-Squared Magazine, Blouin Artinfo, and the Creators Project.

Sheila Ann Swartz

From Within

From Within was inspired by the dark and difficult conditions that the ironworkers endured at the Carrie Blast Furnaces. During the mill's operational period, the window openings of the Stock House were boarded up, leaving no trace of sunlight or sign of life from the outside world. The welded steel forms in this installation represented the chutes found throughout the mill that moved material in and out of the factory. The field of vision seen from within these chutes was meant to capture a sense of the longing for light and the call of home that must have pulled on the minds of those who worked in the Stock House. Overall, *From Within* addressed the need to see outward and beyond our circumstances, to look to the horizon.

— Sheila Ann Swartz

SHEILA ANN SWARTZ has a BFA in sculpture and is currently a third-year MFA sculpture candidate at Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP). Sheila's artistic practice investigates women's narratives and private spaces, specifically the home.

Her mixed-media sculptures have been exhibited throughout Pittsburgh, as well as Cleveland, Washington, D.C., St. Louis, and Chicago. She is a leader in both the academic and the broader arts community. In addition to her art practice, she has assisted over the past three years in the IUP sculpture department.



PHOTO - Ivette Spradlin & Nico Segall Tobon



ALLOY PITTSBURGH 2015 AND 2018 WERE MADE POSSIBLE THROUGH THE GENEROUS SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE OF MANY INDIVIDUALS.

Rivers of Steel thanks the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (2015) and the Fine Family Foundation (2018) for providing vital funding at the onset of each program year, enabling each project to move forward. Additional support for Alloy Pittsburgh 2018 programming was provided by the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation. Thank you to the Alloy Pittsburgh advisory panel, including Edith Abeyta, Ron Baraff, Johanna Lasner, Alison Brand-Oheler, and Ryan Lammie for your guidance with the program's success.

Also, our thanks to the following partner institutions who joined Rivers of Steel in 2018 to sponsor Alloy Pittsburgh artists' material stipends and honoraria, including Radiant Hall Studios, Pittsburgh Glass Center, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, and Associated Artists of Pittsburgh.

Most importantly, our sincere thanks to the artists from Alloy Pittsburgh 2015 and 2018 for their steadfast determination and willingness to take risks.



Mattress Factory
art you can get into



Rivers of Steel Heritage Corporation currently manages the Carrie Blast Furnaces National Historic Landmark, opening the site to visitors via a range of tours, events, and cultural experiences throughout the year. The site preserves two remaining iron blast furnaces that once provided molten iron for the United States Steel Homestead Steel Works. Iron made at the site was used to produce the structural and armor plate steel that built America. The two preserved blast furnaces operated from 1907 until 1978 and were designated National Historic Landmark status in 2006 by the National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior.

Rivers of Steel Mission

Founded on the principles of heritage development, community partnership, and a reverence for the region's natural and shared resources, Rivers of Steel strengthens the economic and cultural fabric of western Pennsylvania by fostering dynamic initiatives and transformative experiences.



RIVERS
OF
STEEL

ISBN 978-0-578-45450-4

90000



9 780578 454504