

# 'Needle Stack' Collaboration Work

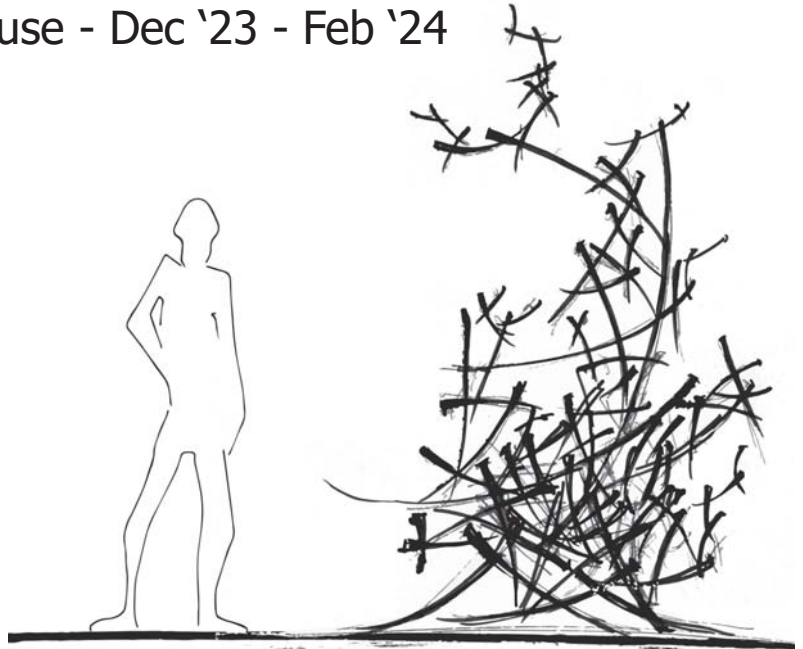
Part of the National Blacksmith Survey Exhibition at  
The Glasshouse - Dec '23 - Feb '24

## The idea

'Needle Stack' is about coming together as individual makers to share the love of our craft to create a beautifully complex future for blacksmithing in Australia. So many of us work with basic tools in relative isolation, forging our own path with fire, grit and perspiration.

Drawn from the familiar idea of finding a needle in a haystack, we create an actual haystack of needles, our lost trade is found; complex and powerful only through the joint effort of strong, sharing hands.

This is a free form sculpture of similar forged parts, called 'needles' made in many forges throughout Australia. The final form will only be known at opening night as the needles will be arranged by letting each part guide the composition (we are hoping to organise a group assembly for all those interested).



Needle Stack concept - the actual size and arrangement will be determined by the contributions received.



## Who can get involved?

Anyone in Australia with the basic forging skills and access to equipment can make a 'needle' for inclusion in the Needle Stack.

There is no selection process for Individual participation in this collaboration. You may have a lifetime of experience or be a complete novice, you are encouraged to contribute. We want this to be an inclusive celebration of all smiths working in Australia now.

Simply make a needle or few and send it off for inclusion. Please email to let us know what is coming.

Group forging days are a great opportunity to make a needle for this project.

All needles will be included.

See page 2 for what to make and delivery details.

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## What to make:

Each needle is a tapered and gently curved square bar with 1 or 2 square holes in the thick end and the head slightly upset. Each needle should have a blunt end.

## Parameters

Stock size: There is no set length or stock size as we want diversity, Bar between 10 - 30mm square would be a good place to start. As small as 6mm would be ok and some really big ones would be great to form a stable base.

Length: Average might be 100 - 400mm long. In our testing we found shorter chunkier needles tend to look better than long thin ones when assembled.



'Needles' all have a blunt point.

Hole size: As a guide the hole should be no bigger than  $\frac{3}{4}$  (0.75) of the size of the thickest size. *eg. if starting with 12mm square the hole should be about 9mm square ( $12 \times 0.75 = 9$ ) if 20mm then a 15mm square hole.*

Typically, the largest needles will be assembled lower down so your hole will be filled with a taper of similar or smaller sized needle so a smaller hole works best.

Material: Steel is assumed, however you may use other forgeable metals such as wrought iron or bronze.

Finish: For consistency please hand wire brush and apply a hot wax finish.

We encourage marking your needle with an touch mark or other identifier.  
You can contribute as many 'needles' as you like. 1000 needles would be amazing.

## Delivery

Individual or groups of 'needles' can either be posted to a collection point by 1st November 2023 or delivered directly to the gallery on the set delivery day (Friday 24th Nov 2023 8 -1pm).

Assistance is available to help with transporting bulk loads (20+). Please call or email to discuss as required.

Contact:

Will Maguire – Ph: 0423 289 648 – Email: [blacksmithexh@gmail.com](mailto:blacksmithexh@gmail.com)

For postal delivery the main collection delivery point is:

**Needle Stack Collaboration - c/o. Will Maguire**  
**664 Elderslie Rd**  
**Elderslie via Branxton NSW 2335**  
**AUSTRALIA**

