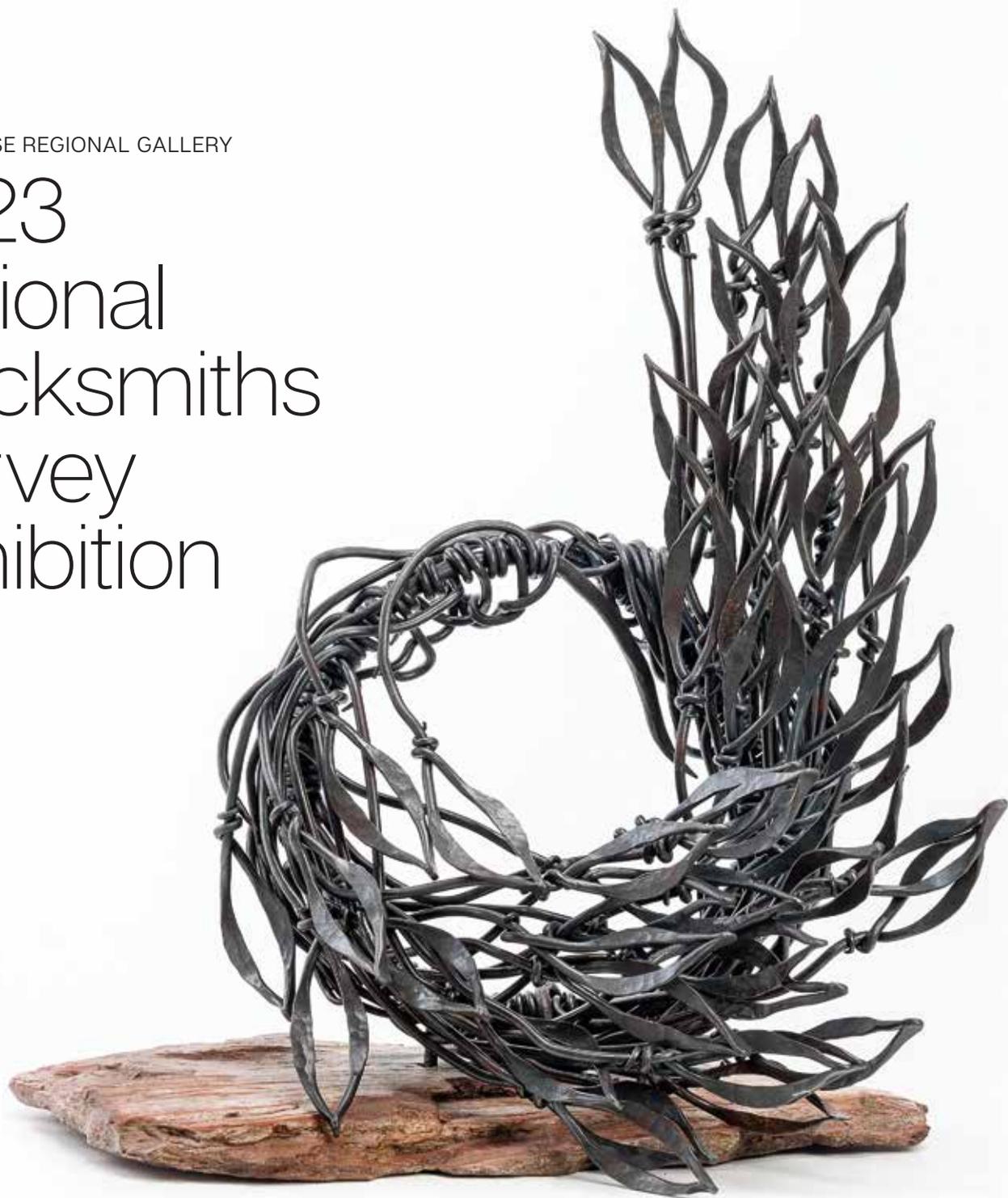


GLASSHOUSE REGIONAL GALLERY

# 2023 National Blacksmiths Survey Exhibition



2 December 2023 - 25 February 2024



# Foreword

The Glasshouse Regional Gallery is proud to partner with the Artist Blacksmith Association of NSW to host the first National Survey exhibition of contemporary blacksmithing practice.

This exhibition celebrates the craftsmanship and creativity of forged ironwork while also recognising the diversity of blacksmiths from across all states and territories. The focus is on the creative modes of contemporary blacksmithing from the technical, the expressive, the poetic and the functional.

Comprising of twenty-eight finalists from across the country, this survey presents audiences with a vast range of technical and conceptual applications, pushing far beyond the functional ideology of the age old craft. This rich and layered exhibition is sure to bewilder and inspire.

The Glasshouse Regional Gallery would like to acknowledge and thank all the participating artists featured in this exhibition. The 2023 National Blacksmiths Survey Exhibition pays homage to the Blacksmithing legacy and the wealth of talent within our National practitioners.

A special thank you to the Artist Blacksmith Association of New South Wales committee, in particularly Will Maguire, exhibition co-ordinator and exhibiting blacksmith. Without their support this exhibition would not have been possible. To Grace Cochrane AM the author of the insightful essay enclosed. To all the participating artists congratulations, the work is outstanding.

**Bridget Purtil**

Gallery Curator

Glasshouse Regional Gallery

# First National Artist Blacksmiths Survey Exhibition

Forge ahead! a context for congratulations

Congratulations to the Artist Blacksmiths Association NSW (ABANSW) for bringing together this exceptional selection of works to celebrate its 30th anniversary, with the continuing great support of the Glasshouse Regional Gallery. Significantly, this is also the first National Artist Blacksmiths exhibition, offering an opportunity for makers from a range of backgrounds across Australia, to 'celebrate the craftsmanship and creativity of hot forged iron.' It has been enthusiastically responded to by well-known art blacksmiths from NSW and most states, many of whom are members of related state organisations. Co-ordinator Will Maguire notes in his press release, that it includes '... contributors hailing from rural and urban areas, male and female, making objects that span the practical to sculptural, traditional to wonderfully expressive. What's common among the makers of these works is a deep connection and understanding of their material, an ability to mould steel in the manner of plasticine.'

From the 1960s and 1970s the world-wide contemporary Studio Crafts Movement saw the early and continuing establishment of many local, state and national specialist and multi-craft groups across Australia, as well as new funding and educational opportunities. This NSW Association, focusing on blacksmithing with a strong presence in northern NSW, was founded in 1993 by a group including Keith Towe, Doug Moseley, Graeme Askew, Richard Coumbe and Peter Allison, with a first meeting at Moseley's workshop in Bonny Hills. It followed similar organisations in Western Australia from about 1971 and Victoria in 1989, and preceded South Australia in 2008, Tasmania briefly from 2011, and several in Queensland. Similarly, among potential international connections, the Artists Blacksmiths Association of North America (ABANA) was formed in 1973 and the British Artist Blacksmiths Association (BABA) in 1978. According to ABANSW 'both had significant influence; many Australian smiths cut their

teeth in workshops in the UK and USA, learning skills and making many connections through events put on by these two associations.' Many across Australia, including some represented in this exhibition, have found, and contributed to, important training, conference and exhibition opportunities overseas.

Over many centuries, blacksmithing has been involved in making items for industry, such as for shipbuilding and railways, architectural, domestic and agricultural use and for war. But Maguire notes that: 'The last few decades have seen a creative rebirth of smithing globally where ancient techniques are melded with contemporary design and technology to produce really mind-blowing results.' It is evident in everything documented by these organisations in their newsletters, websites and catalogues, that Art Blacksmiths are very much committed to maintaining the processes used to work with the metals identified with their industrial history. From the outset, metals

used included iron and bronze from several centuries BC, as well as steel, copper and later, aluminium. Of the many metalworking processes that include cutting, repoussé and chasing, casting and welding, the selection of a focus on 'forging' for this exhibition is a uniting factor that identifies blacksmithing as a process of shaping forms by hammering heated metal. While much heating is still carried out with coke, charcoal or gas-fired furnaces and forges, and manipulated with hammers on anvils, recent technical changes include the accessibility to pneumatic power-hammers, hydraulic presses and electric induction heaters, as well as laser cutting and computer aided design. But the appreciation of hand-working traditions remains absolutely central to contemporary practice.

Historically, despite impressive decorative works made in gold and silver following mining discoveries, Australian blacksmithing had mostly been directed towards the production

of rural implements, but innovative decorative iron work was also evident, evolving to incorporate Australian inspirations and visual references. Among many events across Australia, art blacksmithing was encouraged at the 1983 Iron Plus work-in at Sturt workshops in Mittagong organised by Ray Norman, and ABA Victoria set up an old roll top 'Barn' in the Cooper Settlement grounds at Bundoora, as their very active base for workshops and demonstrations. Australians also attended international conferences, such as Daniel Jenkins at the ABANA Artist-Blacksmith's International Conference in America in 1986. Steve Weis, who founded Weis Iron at Toowoomba in Queensland in 1988, was awarded a Churchill Fellowship in the mid-1980s to travel and research overseas and participate in a conference in Germany, while blacksmith Albert Paley, from the United States, was invited to Australia for the 1988 World Crafts Council Conference in Sydney. From 1986 an annual Iron Corroboree was

organised by Jenkins in Braidwood in New South Wales, at the studio of Christoph and Kirsty Altenburg, now moved to Glen Moon's. From the outset in NSW, from 1991 - 2019 were the annual 'hand cranked' Great Dragonweyre Smite events, at the workshop of Adrian and Esme Hobba in Beaudesert, then Stanthorp. These were very influential for smiths who formed the core of the ABANSW, with a shared focus on hand powered forging. From 2000 - 2008 Queensland's Hot Iron Muster run by Alan Ball disseminated knowledge from international master smiths. And Pete Matilla, who has demonstrated the process with colleagues at the popular Tasmanian Crafts Fair in Deloraine a decade ago, continues to provide significant training in Hobart.

During this time there were many debates about the values and status of crafts practice, focusing on the values of hand skills in working directly with particular materials and processes, alongside the various relationships

that could be made with 'art' and 'design'. Importantly, across most of the crafts, there was also an industrial background, and the move to 'studio' practices meant practical changes had to be made to enable working independently. Also changing over recent decades has been the accessibility to art, crafts and design training and apprenticeship in this field. In fact, while some formal tertiary courses remain for blacksmithing, such as at TAFE Ultimo, most tuition is now carried out in the many workshops and courses run by these professional artist blacksmiths across the country. Interestingly, the Eveleigh Railway workshop in Sydney, which was initially opened in 1887 by the NSW government for the maintenance and manufacture of steam locomotives and where some significant early equipment remains, is currently run by art blacksmith Matt Mewburn as 'Eveleigh Works', and hosts many workshops and courses as well as commissions.

As in other states, and as identified in its newsletter *Contemporary Blacksmith* (previously *Solid Wrought*), the ABANSW association consistently organises meetings and workshops which are held in a range of members' sites, running monthly and annual events – a significant one being the regular 'Forging in July!' As well as hosting well-regarded local and interstate tutors, notable international master smiths have been invited to contribute from countries including Germany, Ukraine, Canada, USA and Norway. Participation is also evident across Australia in popular shows, fairs and galleries in state capitals and many regional centres. ABANSW acknowledges that such noteworthy Australian events include the Waterside Blacksmith Festivals in Footscray run by Steve Phillips. This festival has not only connected a wider audience to the craft by attracting thousands of people, but has supported and commissioned large work

from current makers, spread skills while actively supporting, elevating, teaching and encouraging women blacksmiths in what has been a male dominated craft.

Continuing this impressive history, the organisers say of their purpose for this exhibition: 'The focus is on current creative modes of blacksmithing. The mission is to showcase the diversity of what forging can offer from the technical to expressive, the conceptual, the sculptural or beautifully functional. These modes of making often depend on and influence each other and, as such, the evaluation and acceptance of work will be strongly influenced by how a work demonstrates a harmony between its intention, execution and the interest it provokes in the viewer.' It is very evident in the wide range of imaginative forms and subjects offered by the selected participants, and the ideas and influences behind them, that the

exhibition demonstrates this hope and intent. The works are exceptionally well-made, varied in subject and form, and inspiring to audiences who may think blacksmithing was only making horseshoes (which was what I understood when I was a country child with a pony!). Some are functional, all are expressive, some include other materials and they vary in sizes – bearing in mind that some of these artists also take on commissions for huge public art sculptures and substantial architectural domestic and garden features.

A further exhibition initiative for national involvement, is the collaborative 'Needle Stack' sculpture which has impressively encouraged contributions from blacksmiths across Australia, and has been compiled locally from the many and varied forged 'needles' submitted. As initiator Maguire says: 'So many smiths work in isolation across this huge country but on the rare occasions we get together it inevitably becomes a very open and welcoming affair ... So many of us work

with basic tools in relative isolation, forging our own path with fire, grit and perspiration.' Drawn from the idea of finding a needle in a haystack, the idea was about 'coming together as individual makers to share the love of our craft to create a beautifully complex future for blacksmithing in Australia.'

Sincere congratulations are offered to the committee of ABANSW, and especially exhibition co-ordinator Will Maguire, working with John Wood, Jen Madsen, Ben Beams, Steve Gale and Glasshouse curator Bridget Purtil and the gallery team. Thanks and acknowledgement also go to experienced selectors Doug Moseley, Gerry Bobsien and Bridget Purtil.

And overall, strongest congratulations to all the imaginative and professional participants in this inaugural national exhibition. I am sure your inspiring submissions will be well-received and remembered far and wide. Forge ahead!!

#### **Grace Cochran AM**

Former senior curator, Powerhouse Museum, Sydney, and author of *The Crafts Movement in Australia: a history* (1992) and many others.

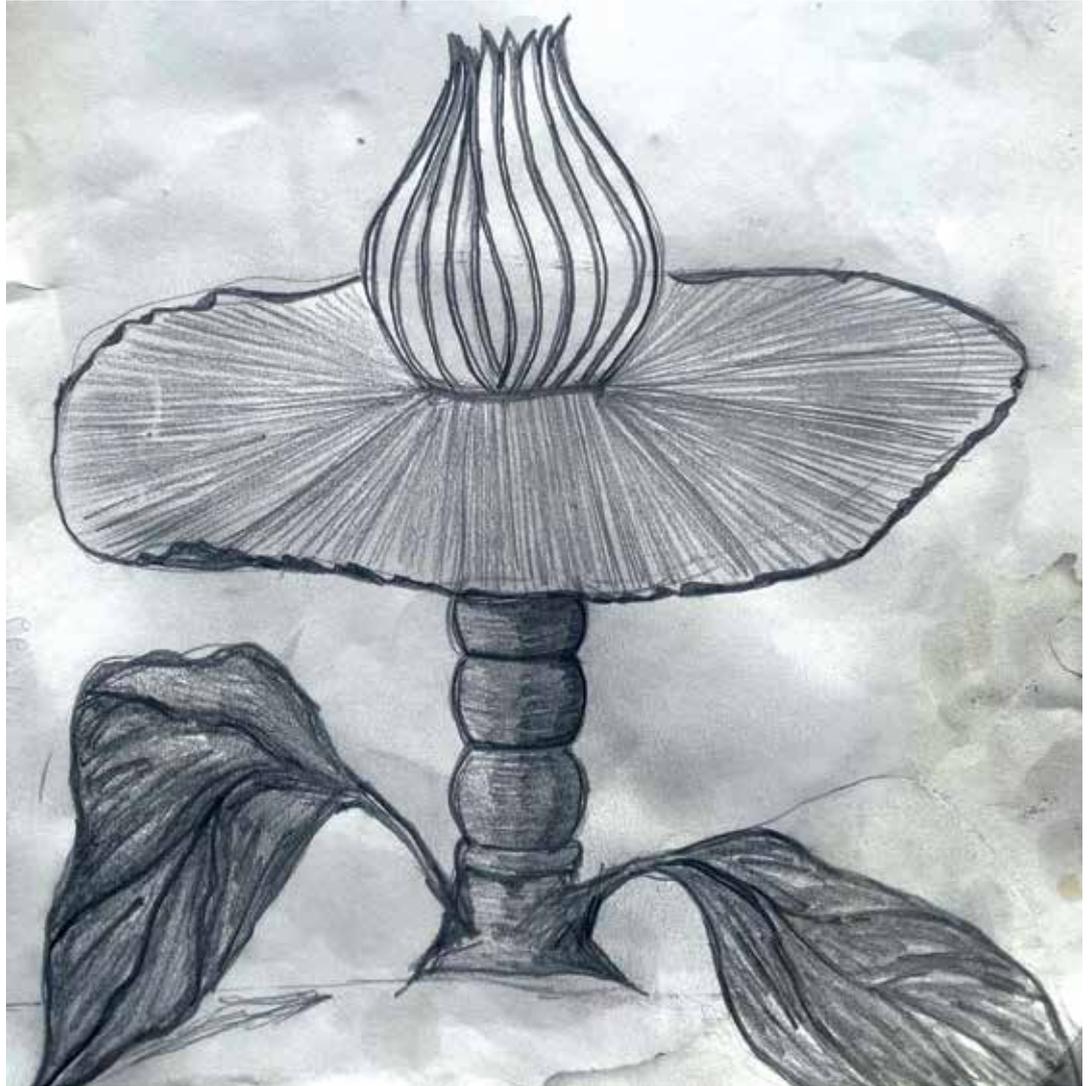


This exhibition is organised and supported by the Artist Blacksmith Association of NSW.

**[artistblacksmithnsw.com](http://artistblacksmithnsw.com)**

# Alice Garrett

Bayswater VIC



*Three Piece Flora*  
mild steel and enamel  
246 x 260 x 260mm

[@garrett\\_forgeworks](https://www.instagram.com/garrett_forgeworks)

*Three Piece Flora* is a showcase of different forging techniques, using various dies, and texturing tooling also isolating stock in complex ways. It will be three pieces that fit together seamlessly, all forged with no welds. There will also be coloured enamelling on the leaves and petals.

Alice Garrett has been Blacksmithing for over ten years. She has worked with several Australian and overseas blacksmiths. She studied at Ultimo Tafe Sydney completing the Cert 3 Industrial Blacksmithing course. For the last couple of years she has been working on setting up her own business "Garrett Forgeworks"

# Annie Cole Arthur

Sydney NSW



*"I think bin chickens are cool, so I made one!"*

Annie Cole Arthur is an American blacksmith who now lives in Sydney. Annie trained at the American College of the Building Arts in Charleston, SC where she graduated as Valedictorian with a B.A.S. in Building Arts and a Craft Specialization in Forged Architectural Ironwork.

*Bin Chicken*

Steel and wood  
600 x 450 x 170mm

[@annicoleironworks](https://www.instagram.com/annicoleironworks)

# Ben Beames

Hobart TAS



*Virga*  
mild steel & enamel  
1850 x 600 x 350mm

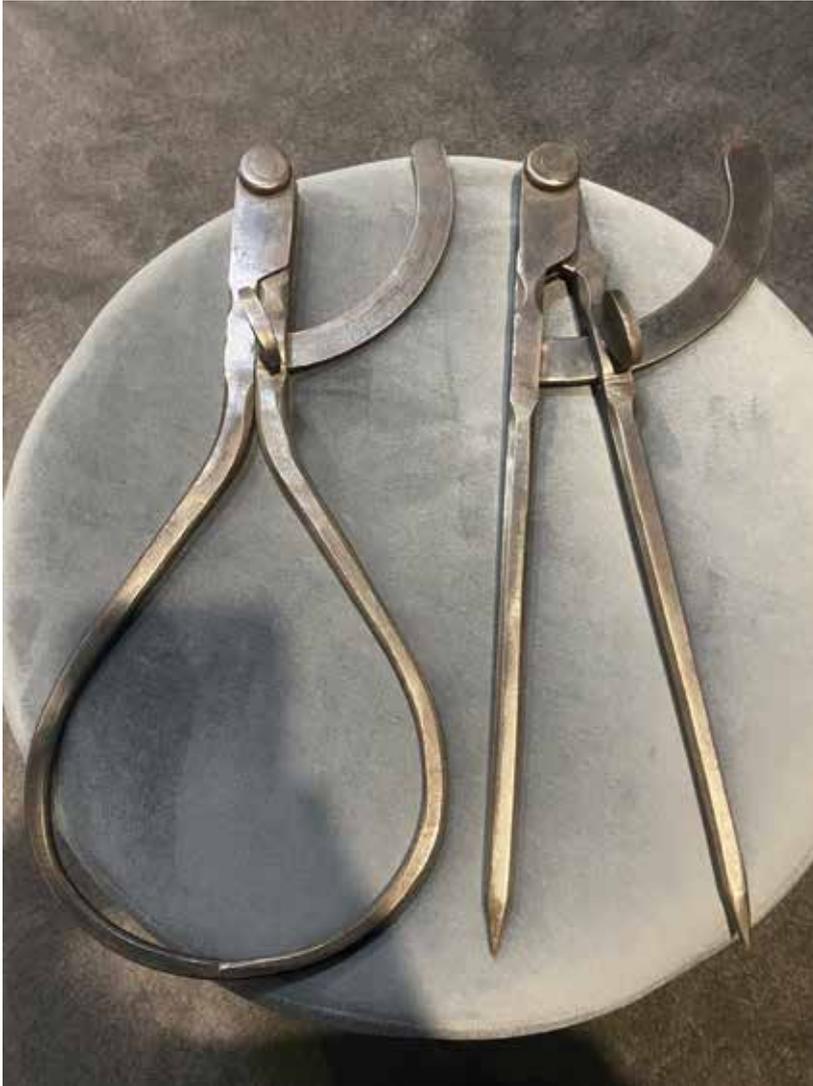
[@bendbeames](#)

*Virga* is inspired by the building up of tension in tormenting storm clouds . Threat or promise of big rain. The piece is is fully forged and hot formed. The top cloud formation will be enamelled a mixture of greys and the rest tinned.

Ben Beames is a full time artist blacksmith / designer / maker in Tasmania. His practice has a focus on sculptural architectural work , sculpture and objects.

# Brennan Sowter

Taree NSW



The three piece divider/ caliper set; first with a winged three leaf divider, second is a winged three leaf outside caliper and last is a winged three leaf inside caliper.

Brennan Sowter has been a hobbyist blacksmith for about twenty years. Predominantly making specialty metal and wood working tools including dividers, calipers and pliers, using traditional techniques. With a strong interest in household items such as hinges and drawer pulls, and has designed and forged farm gates.

*Dividers/Calipers*  
steel  
400 x 200 x 50mm

[@dustyshed](#)

# Christopher Fuller

Magill SA



*Creative in Depth*

mild steel

160mm

facebook: [Artistic Blacksmith-Studio](#)

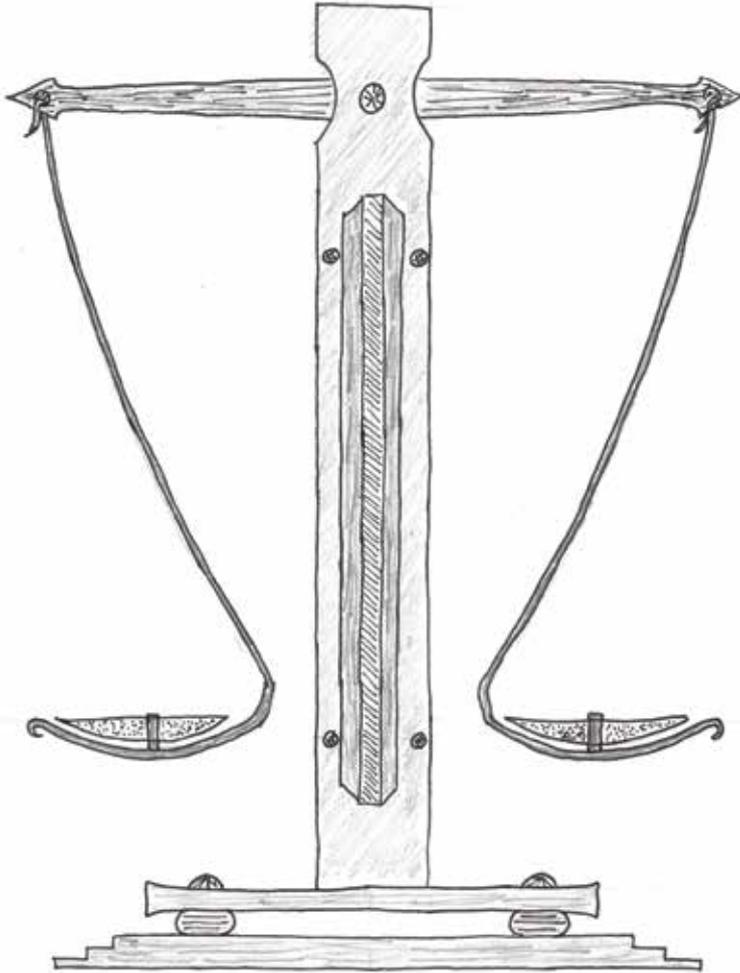
The Octopus, an intelligent, mysterious creature of three hearts, nine brains and eight legs intrigues us that at every poise it seems interrupted in it's purpose. It's non skeletal form capable of shape shifting and a camouflage expert like a Chameleon. A usually solitary, wild creature that will trust mankind.

Chris Fuller set up his own business, Artistic Blacksmith Studio, in 2000. Pushing boundaries, created and sent many art commissions to several corners of the world.

When not creating in his studio he can be found volunteering his knowledge, tutoring the craft at the Artist Blacksmith Association of South Australia."

# Craig Drew

Tamworth NSW



*Perfect balance* is representing the struggles of our day to day. Dealing with health issues, family commitments, as well as obtaining our work life balance. "When you reach it. Treasure that moment".

Craig Drew Served 4 yrs 1984-87 as an industrial trade apprentice blacksmith. He is a Churchill Fellow recipient in 1996 spending three months in the USA on a study tour of blacksmithing and a Member of the Australian team 2017 blacksmiths World Championships Silver Medal held in Stia, Italy.

Owned and operated Two Gates Forging Company for 14 years, offering Professional blacksmithing services. Instrumental in starting the Peel River Artist Blacksmiths group in 1994. A current President and long term member of the Artists Blacksmiths Association of NSW.

*Perfect Balance*  
steel and brass  
400 x 400mm

# Dan OToole

South Hobart TAS



## *Forged & Beaten Light*

mild steel & brass

610 x 365 x 480mm

[@dan.a.otoole](#)

Forged steel and hammered brass lamp. Glare-free relying on indirect reflected light. The small dish reflects light into the top of the main dish. A simple symmetry, the taper of the riveted and brass stitched lamp holder is reflected in the angle of the support. Upsetting, riveting and polished elements.

Originally trained as a draftsman and then as an engineer, Dan acquired his blacksmithing skills through attending short courses and a lot of self-learning. Light is often a key feature of his work. He enjoys combining polished metal elements with traditional blacksmithing finishes.

# Denise Axelsen

Burdell QLD



Exploring forged steel, Denise Axelsen hand-forged 6mm round steel into shapes and combined them, creating an enthralling journey. 'Guided by curiosity, I discover interplay and connections among these pieces, evoking underwater swirls, tidal flow, and seaweed'.

Denise Axelsen is a graduate of 3D design at the university of Manchester, a certified Blacksmith and active member in multiple Blacksmith Associations. She is known for her organic forms influenced by tropical plants with a focus on hand-shaping steel with traditional methods and gas forging techniques for heating.

*Steel Waves*

mild steel

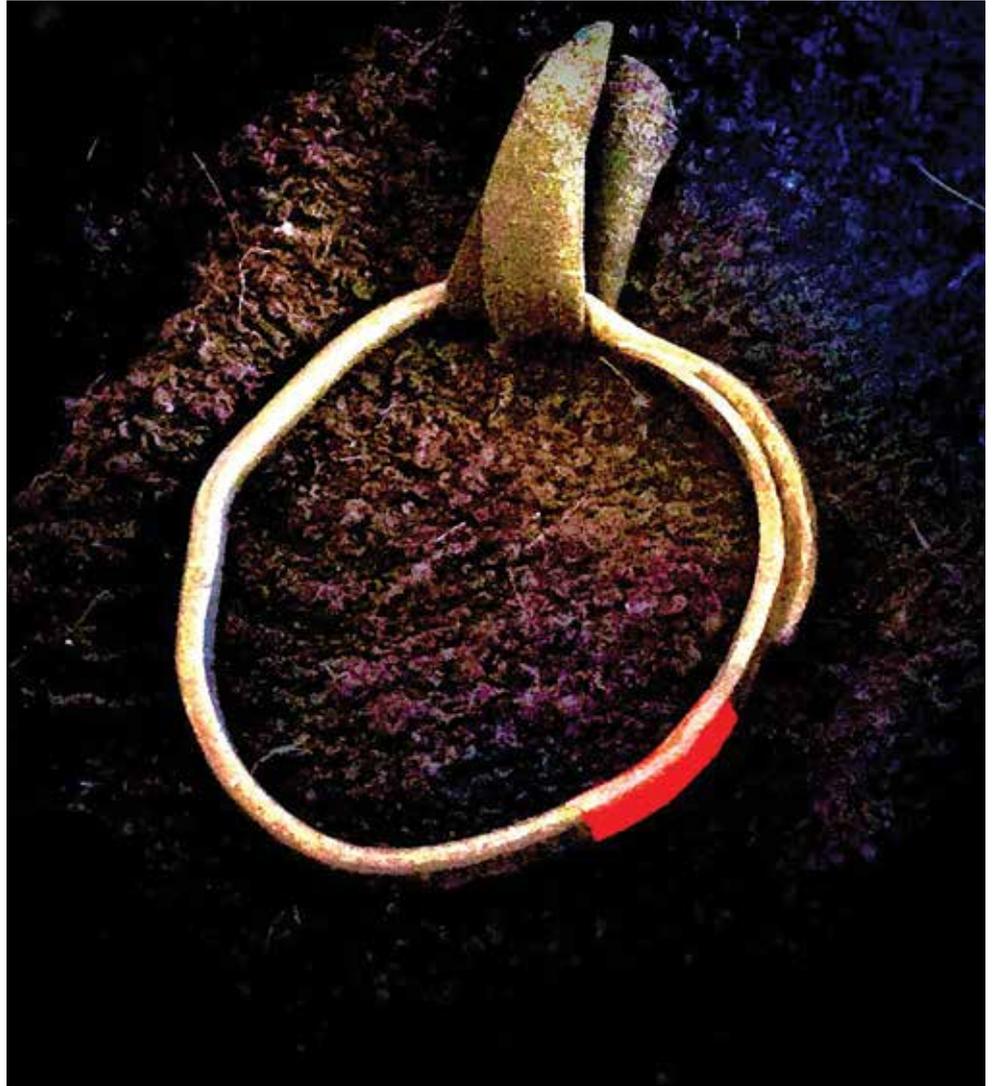
800 x 600 x 300mm

[Artisanblacksmith.org](http://Artisanblacksmith.org)

[@deniseaxelsenartisanblacksmith](https://www.instagram.com/deniseaxelsenartisanblacksmith)

# Dianne Beevers

Newcastle NSW



Calligraphy bangle /brooch  
Hot forged mild steel, gold leaf,  
enamel paint, leather, dimensions  
variable, for female wrists

[@diannebeevers\\_australia](https://www.instagram.com/diannebeevers_australia)

The calligraphy series of hot forged, mild steel bangles acknowledges the expressive drawing process discoverable in forging, yielding wearable objects aligned with contemporary jewellery. Convertible to brooches, bangles employ tie-pin findings, while embellishments employing gold leaf / painted markings, further underline their jewellery status, countering historical memories of colonial, convict "irons".

Dianne Beevers a multidisciplinary artist, + designer maker was teaching in Melbourne's jewellery realm, when Mary + Nick Hackett, founders of BLACKSMITH DORIS, introduced blacksmithing. Small scale, wearable objects became her focus, expanding to knifemaking (NICK HACKETT), exhibiting knives in HOW TO COOK A KNIFE, Australian Design Centre's Object Gallery.

# Eoin McSwan

Grafton NSW



*AcerSphere* is made using reclaimed copper sheet. Hand cut leaves, chiselled veins, hammered serrated edges. Inspired by the glorious changing autumn leaves.

Eoin McSwan joined the NSW Artist Blacksmith Association in 2005. Attending many workshops, he has exhibited in many galleries and won numerous prizes. He competed in Stia in Italy at the International World Championship Blacksmithing competition.

*AcerSphere*  
copper  
1200 x 800mm

# Eoin McSwan

Grafton NSW



*Feed Time*  
stainless steel, copper,  
bronze & cold rolled plate  
1500 x 600mm

*Feed Time* represents Three Honey Eaters feasting on a delicious flower.

# Glenn Moon

Braidwood NSW



Life is one big question. This is made from a hook I made a long time ago. It's a strange thing. The idea came in a dream one night.

"Glenn Moon has spent a working lifetime of hands-on experience. Predominantly as an industrial blacksmith. Arguably one of the country's most knowledgeable living blacksmiths". John Wood

U2?  
carbon steel  
1800 x 600 x 600mm

# Glenn Eagleton

Goulburn NSW



*Coated in Iron*  
mild steel parallel flanged channel  
600 x 300 x 300mm

A total of four representations in PFC iron and aluminium depicting the Kelly Gang dressed in their ironware commissioned by an Ornamental Blacksmith.

Glenn Eagleton is a Goulburn Ornamental Blacksmith with a family history of blacksmithing and metal workers traced back to Balmain Sydney from the 1840s. Glenn also started working with metal in the 1970s completing his apprenticeship and awarded his craftsmanship certificate in 1979 and is still working with metal.

# James Livesey

Potts Point NSW



James Livesey wanted to express simply the traditional technique of fire welding to demonstrate that traditional skills are still in practice in Australia. The techniques used influenced the form. The simple design was intended to show that over complicated work does not necessarily show greater value.

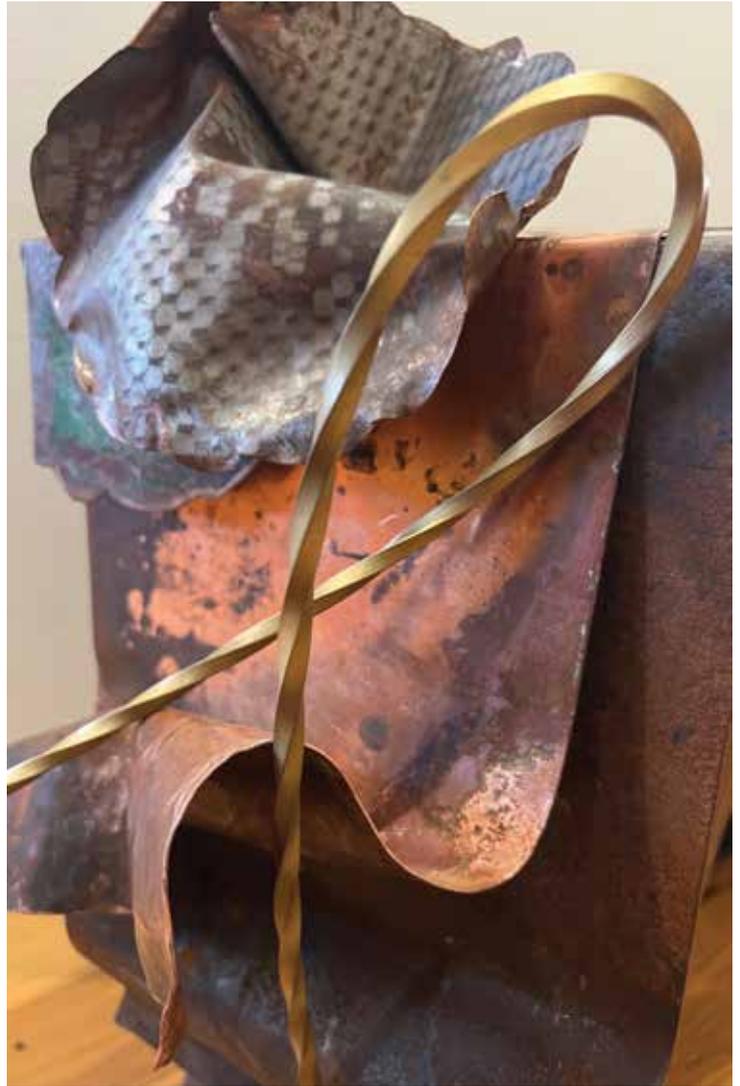
Training at the national school of blacksmithing in Hereford England, graduating in 2016, he spent some time working in the UK, and then moved home to Sydney where he's worked at Eveleigh works in Redfern for the last five years.

*Forged flame*  
forged mild steel and timber  
450 x 400 x 150mm

[@james\\_livesey\\_blacksmith](https://www.instagram.com/james_livesey_blacksmith)

# Jen Madsen

Manly Vale NSW



*Womens Work*  
steel, bronze, copper  
1500 x 500 x 500mm

[@jenmadsen](https://www.instagram.com/jenmadsen)

*Women's Work* is a statement on equality and acceptance. Historically women were seen as homemakers, sewing knitting and crafts were common practices. This piece represents equality and plays with the "idea" of women's work in today's society. Intended to create a shift from cloth to metals as a form of expression and pushing boundaries.

Jen Madsen is an Artist and Maker who has trained in Fine Arts and Design and, more recently, Metal Fabrication and Blacksmithing. Using multiple mediums across practice, Jen has a particular interest in Blacksmithing and the endless possibilities of manipulating metal. Mixing mediums is a focus in her sculptural work.



*Reap*, is made from forged and fabricated steel. Through this medium aiming to understand, learn and reflect on our precarious balance of relationships with the natural environment.

John Wood's aim as a public & private commission artist is to achieve a high quality outcome that references a sense of place or place making to its intended audience and/ or environment.

*Reap*  
mild steel, hot dipped galvanised,  
rusted steel, 2 pac painted finish  
1900 x 700 x 800mm

[johnwood.com.au](http://johnwood.com.au)  
FUNCTIONAL ART

# Julian Sutor

Braidwood NSW

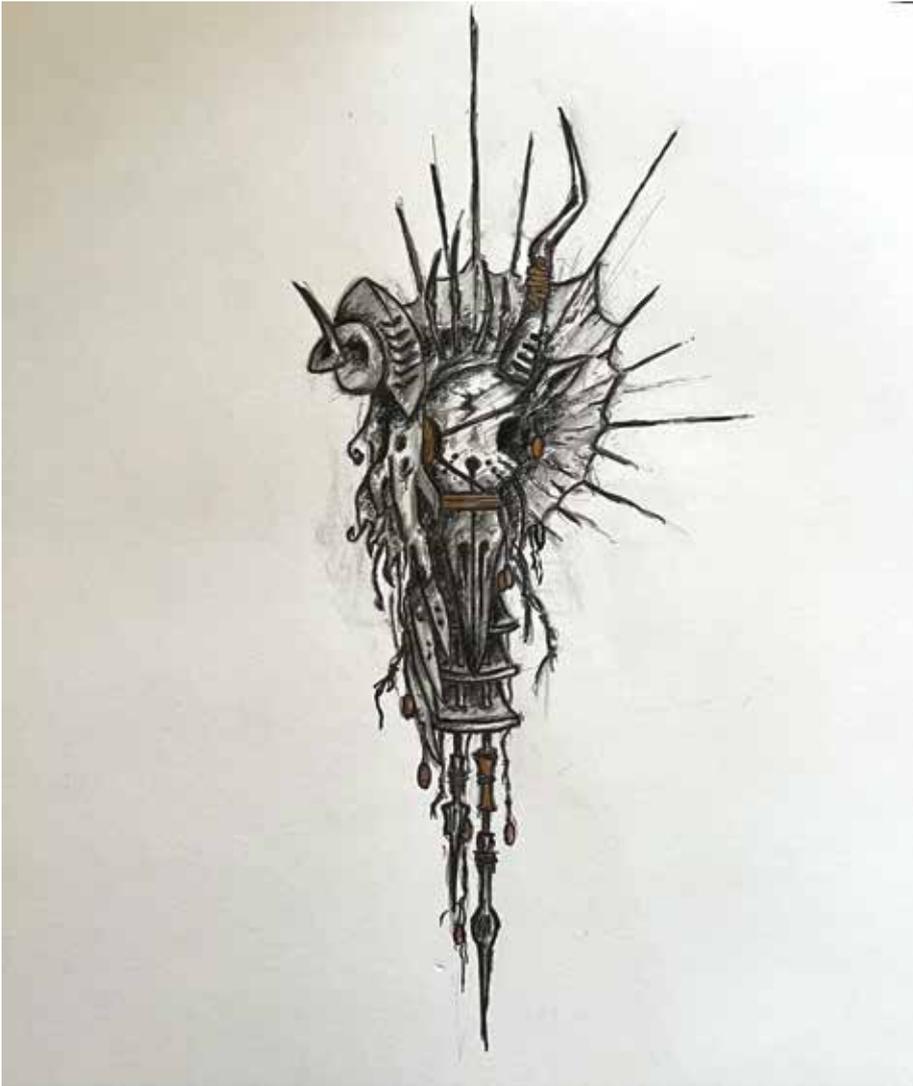


*Hewing axe*  
iron and timber  
650 x 200 x 50mm

[www.juliansutor.com](http://www.juliansutor.com)  
[@julian\\_sutor](https://www.instagram.com/julian_sutor)

Scandinavian style hewing axe. A carpentry tool for squaring and finishing timber, used in ship and house building. Fire welded reconstruction based on studies of historical finds in Roskilde, Denmark.

Julian Sutor is an Australian Blacksmith and Bladesmith based in regional NSW. An active member of NorrHälsinge Järnsmides, Scandinavia influences my design and processes. He is most interested in exploring and crafting items of utility.



Conjuring the primordial that lurks deep within the forests and at the corner of your eye, this Feretory is a place to keep your darkest emotional relics. A place to take all of your willingness. Burn it. Lick at the ashes. Scratch the earth, break your nails. Stroke your ego, crush it. Push the dust with your fingers.

*Feretory*  
iron, brass, copper, twine  
1200 x 500 x 300mm

# Lyle Brittain

Valery NSW



*Windswept*  
forged steel, fused glass, timber  
& stone  
600 x 700 x 460mm

This free standing sculpture depicts a Windswept Tree with entwining steel buttress roots emerging from a stone and timber base. The windswept tree branches support a glass rondell depicting the rising sun. The sculpture is fabricated using steel, stone, timber & glass - all natural elements of the earth.

After many career paths involving Metal Fabrication and Engineering Lyle now pursues a life long interest in Blacksmithing. Having also worked in timber and fused & slumped art glass he enjoys exploring the challenge of combining all of these natural earth elements into his Sculptures and Artworks.

# Matthew Mewburn

Redfern NSW



Sculpted steel flat bar is used to create concentric elements, each moving past and out of plane with one another. Each element is symbolic of the connectedness we have to our past, with the repetition of similar but individual elements showing others journeys and how they intersect ours.

Matt Mewburn is the founder of Eveleigh Works and runs one of Australia's largest and most historic blacksmiths shops. He has collaborated on commissions with artists such as Uncle Badger Bates, Nell and Mel O'Callaghan and produced varied architectural commissions around NSW.

*Alone (All Together)*  
steel  
1100 x 500 x 400mm

[www.eveleigh.works](http://www.eveleigh.works)

# Pete Mattila

Battery Point TAS



*Quickening mirror*  
steel and glass  
1520 x 540 x 180mm

[Petemattila.com](http://Petemattila.com)  
[@pete\\_mattila](https://www.instagram.com/pete_mattila)

This quickening mirror was part of a larger exhibition of works called 'CATALYSIS'. The body of work explored layers of transformation, geology, 'deep time' and transmutation. The quickening mirrors specifically in the body of work emphasised the 'speeding up' or the acceleration of deep time.

Trained as an industrial blacksmith and welder Pete's work celebrates complex histories, in art, craft and design as well as industrial expression. While simultaneously identifying the practice and understanding of craft in terms of social consciousness and the expression of an ethical life through the immediate relationship between hand and mind.



The work consists of four "figures", forged from 25mm square bar, in a similar way but of different heights. The base is flame cut 16mm plate with a forged recess. I imagine the group waiting for something, coffee, a bus, something.

Philip Spark began working with metal when I started making bicycle frames in the 1980's. He slowly moved from frames to forging, a process accelerated when he moved to his present workshop. A blacksmith paradise (apart from the winter cold) at the Lithgow State Mine.

*Group of Four*  
mild steel  
(4x) 410 x 80 x 80mm

[www.philspark.com.au](http://www.philspark.com.au)

# Robbie Alderson

Lyonville VIC



*Across the Oceans*  
steel  
1100 x 1100 x 300mm

[@organic\\_iron\\_studio](https://www.instagram.com/organic_iron_studio)

*Across the Oceans* is a safety screen for the oldest BBQ in Australia. It has four doors that arch towards the viewer. Prominent is a ship that once bought here botanical species from across the globe, featured are also the Sitka Spruce and Giant Redwood that are the most excellent examples in Victoria.

Robbie Alderson is a twenty one year old Blacksmith from the central highlands of Victoria. He started Blacksmithing at twelve and followed the passion to work with as many different smiths gaining as much experience as possible. Robbie now runs Organic Iron Studio designing and making custom sculptural and architectural ironwork.

# Simon Pankhurst

Rosewhite VIC



The proposed piece is a continuation of previous work, flowing on from both individual investigations/experimentation and collaborative efforts (with Ben Beames). A length of steel cable (12mm round strands, 20+) tied in a knot and free standing on a purpose built base. Just as it's inevitable that things don't always go according to plan, isn't it inevitable that they will work out in the end.

Simon Pankhurst is an Artist Blacksmith with a background in Landscape Architecture, who utilizes traditional hand forged design elements and techniques to create individual objects for the home, garden and public space. His work has been exhibited widely across Australia and is recognised for its fluidity and strength.

*Inevitability*  
forged mild steel  
2400 x 500 x 500mm

[www.simonpankhurst.com](http://www.simonpankhurst.com)

# Simon Pankhurst

Rosewhite VIC



*Garden seat*  
forged mild steel and timber  
1500 x 1350 x 600mm

A back piece of free flowing scroll work inspired by traditional decorative design elements and techniques. Fitted into a neat fabricated steel and timber frame. Utilising steel sizes from 25mm to 12mm round, some flat bar; incorporating collars and rivets to accentuate the hand craftedness.

# Steve Gale

Pembroke NSW



A DNA fragment opens to transcribe it's code into mRNA, the nucleotides regularity is interrupted by errors - deletion, dimer and a substitution, causing cancer and disease. From the trillions of bits of our DNA it just takes a few Little Things to be wrong and our lives are changed forever.

"Nature amazes and inspires me. There is always a journey to be had - into beauty, into knowledge, into its vastness and complexity". Steve Gale delves deep into the world of genetics - to be overawed at the marvelous simplicity that builds into the incredible complexity of life.

*The Little Things*  
steel, copper, aluminium  
2500 x 500 x 500mm

# Thomas Westra

Moruya NSW



*Comfort Zone*  
steel and stainless steel  
1800 x 350 x 350mm

[thomaswestra.com.au](http://thomaswestra.com.au)

With the emergence of robotic blacksmithing, Thomas's intention is to commemorate the sense of comfort he feels when shaping metal manually. The softness of the form, reminiscent of chesterfield lounges, serves to embody the sense of comfort and highlight the dynamic flow achieved during forging processes.

In order to push the boundaries achievable with metal forming and be able to realise larger sculptural concepts Thomas's practice includes a focus on combining knowledge in art, blacksmithing, electronics, software and engineering. His passion in developing bespoke processes, results in work that is unique, innovative and expressive.

# Wayne Saunders

Rosewood NSW



Ball of seagulls squabbling over hot chips. "This is the collaborative piece started at the last gallery exhibition. I thought it'd be fitting to have it at this one". Wayne's work is inspired by watching seagulls squabble over chips by the shore. It consists of a random collection of legs, beaks, wings and chips assembled into a ball shape. The work captures the speed and energy of the myriad of ebullient gulls, frozen in an instant- a confusion of their parts. It is intended as a joyful reminiscence- an experience we have all had down by the beach. The work is on the "newspaper wrapping" as it is blowing in the wind.

Wayne Saunders has been a full time blacksmith & knifemaker since 2003 when he first started his forging journey with the Artist Blacksmiths Association.

*Chip Melee*

steel

1500 x 500 x 500mm

[www.ironlordforge.com](http://www.ironlordforge.com)

# Will Maguire

Lochinvar NSW



*Tensioner 1 & 2*  
forged steel and old fencing  
750 x 1600 x 370mm

@Maguirewill

*Tensioner 1 & 2.* Rural fences are full of tangled straining effort. Even when rusted, broken, laying on the ground they seem to have lived. Who's to say if this is due to years of weathering storms, and resisting leaners; or their vitality emerges merely from the shadows and forms of our own perception.

Will Maguire is a NSW based blacksmith who has exhibited extensively both nationally and internationally. His work spans the practical and the sculptural combining extensive experience in making and design; with critical and interrogative thinking bringing fresh eyes to traditional mediums.



*Charcoal text* leans on the familiar concept of cursive text as a mode of communication. Using curved hot steel brands, the text is written. And so, enacting a direct cultural encounter between the seeming animate and inanimate leaving the memory of heat and smoke in its wake.

*Charcoal text (4 piece)*  
burnt plywood & paint with  
fabricated iron frame  
1210 x 1113 x 25mm

# Willie Rennison

Lillianrock NSW



*Flower*  
iron and stone  
900 x 300 x 200mm

Flower in stone.

Willie Rennison is a blacksmith from the Northern Rivers region of NSW. Drawing inspiration from nature and his surroundings.



Willie Rennison drew inspiration by a rarely seen black and white burrowing snake named a Bandy Bandy.

*Snake and ladders*  
iron/wood  
500 x 300mm

# Woody Blower

Dunoon NSW



*Candlestick prototype*  
steel, brass, stainless steel  
400 x 200 x 200mm

[www.easternforge.com.au](http://www.easternforge.com.au)

"At Eastern Forge, we (Liv and I) are developing a product range in the homewares space. We have a few items ready for production which includes these Candlesticks prototypes. Three sizes are featured and have three options in materials; Brass, Stainless steel and mild steel."

Woody studied Artist Blacksmithing at Hereford college of Arts, currently running Eastern Forge in Byron Bay and 3D design degree from Camberwell college of Arts, London. Developing a business in forged items for the home.

# Needle Stack Collaboration



This is a free form sculpture of similar forged parts, called 'needles' made in many forges throughout Australia. 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.

The concept was proposed by Will Maguire to allow involvement of as many smiths involvement in the show as possible. A national call out was made and dozens and dozens of smiths from all corners of the country have responded to take part.

Needle Stack Collaboration, 2023  
steel, wrought iron, bronze, brass,  
aluminium

Sizes variable



## Lyle Brittain

*Windswept*

forged steel, fused glass, timber & stone

600 x 700 x 460mm

## Matthew Mewburn

*Alone (All Together)*

steel

1100 x 500 x 400mm

## Pete Mattila

*Quickening mirror*

steel and glass

1520 x 540 x 180mm

## Philip Spark

*Waiting*

mild steel

(4x) 410 x 80 x 80mm

## Robbie Alderson

*Across the Oceans*

steel

1100 x 1100 x 300mm

## Simon Pankhurst

*Inevitability*

forged mild steel

2400 x 500 x 500mm

## Steve Gale

*The Little Things*

steel, copper, aluminium

2500 x 500 x 500mm

## Thomas Westra

*Comfort Zone*

steel and stainless steel

1800 x 350 x 350mm

## Wayne Saunders

*Chip Melee*

steel

1500 x 500 x 500mm

## Will Maguire

*Tensioner 1 & 2*

forged steel and old fencing

750 x 1600 x 370mm

## Will Maguire

*Charcoal text (4 piece)*

burnt plywood & paint with fabricated iron frame

1210 x 1113 x 25mm

## Willie Rennison

*snake and ladders*

iron /wood

500 x 300mm

## Willie Rennison

*flower*

iron and stone

900 x 300 x 200mm

## Woody Blower

*Candlestick prototypes*

Steel, Brass, Stainless Steel

400 x 200 x 200mm

## GLASSHOUSE REGIONAL GALLERY

Gallery Curator: Bridget Purtil  
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Images courtesy of the artist  
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**2023 National Blacksmiths Survey Exhibition**  
**2 December 2023 - 25 February 2024**



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[glasshouse.org.au](http://glasshouse.org.au)

Cover image: Denise Axelsen, *Steel Waves*, mild steel,  
800 x 600 x 300mm.

Special thanks to the Glasshouse team for all their efforts and  
collaborations to make this exhibition successful.

A Glasshouse Regional Gallery initiative supporting contemporary  
artists.

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Mondays: Closed | Tuesday - Friday: 10am - 4pm |  
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