



MID-SOUTH SCULPTURE ALLIANCE

 **SLOSS**  
METAL ARTS

# Engaged: Sculpture as Catalyst for Social Change

Sloss Furnaces National Historic Landmark in Birmingham, AL



Thank you for visiting the Sculpture Garden!

Here you'll find an overview of the garden's history, its thoughtful expansion over time, and details about the artwork currently on display—including our rotating exhibitions and permanent collection.

This year's featured exhibition, *Engaged: Sculpture as Catalyst for Social Change*, is curated in partnership between Sloss Metal Arts and the Mid-South Sculpture Alliance (MSA). The exhibition features work that explores the role of sculpture in molding societal change and community building. This exhibition is on view  
November 1, 2024 - November 1, 2025.

Founded in 2006, the Mid-South Sculpture Alliance is a non-profit organization formed to promote the creation and awareness of sculpture in its many and varied forms within our communities while providing a supportive environment for sculpture and sculptors. MSA advances the understanding that sculpture educates; affects social change; and engages artists, art professionals, and the community in dialogue. its membership is open to anyone, anywhere, with an interest in and commitment to the field of sculpture - including sculptors, art educators, patrons, collectors, galleries, museums, and more.

We invite you to explore, reflect, and engage!

This exhibition is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts.

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# HISTORY OF THE SCULPTURE GARDEN

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Before the Sculpture Garden was established in 2023 with support from the Alabama State Council on the Arts, this area housed two important pieces of industrial equipment.

One was a Slag Granulator, a machine that ground slag into various sizes for use in concrete, insulation, and other products. A similar granulator can be seen near the #1 Furnace and Water Tower.

The second was a Recuperator, none of which remain at Sloss today. The adjacent Hot Blast Stoves were heated using reclaimed furnace gases. Rather than letting the heat escape through the smokestacks, the gases were diverted into the Recuperator, which captured and reused the heat to preheat the cold blast of air before it entered the Hot Blast Stoves. This process improved energy efficiency and reduced operating costs.

To learn more about Sloss Furnace history visit: [www.slossfurnaces.org](http://www.slossfurnaces.org)



The No. 2 Furnace, Slag Pit, and Recuperator. 1936.





## Anomie Exquisite

Andrew Light

2014

Stainless Steel

This sculpture was conceived as a response to found materials, and the availability of time and technique. Much the same as community development of Arts programming. The presence of aesthetic interventions in the built environment are indicators of potent values in the community. Values of place, home, and beautification. To be in a community that values the Arts, that makes them available to all citizens without fee or favor, is a decision many communities are choosing to make, and others yet aspire to. To be in awe, to be inspired, to be challenged in assumptions about what a material is and can be, these are the ambitions of the Artist, and their gift to the community.

## Instead

Allison Ouellette-Kirby

2016

Cast Iron and Welded Steel

The title *Instead* is a question to the viewer, what can be done instead of ....  
trust instead of fear mongering;  
reasonable restraints instead of negligence; communication instead of complicity; creativity instead of increasing violence; support instead of claiming mental health issues; acceptance instead of hate...

The choice of the single word "*Instead*" is meant to inspire people to instead explore other perspectives. It is a counterpoint that creates dialogue and pathways to connections instead of differences. By attempting to pose these questions, *Instead* seeks to reconnect with those who have diametrically opposing opinions and to restore trust as we look for solutions.







## **Ebb** Ian Skinner

2024  
Steel, Pine, Powder Coating

I make objects that are the result of an exploration of concept, form, surface and craft that elevate commonly seen elements found within both natural and industrial landscapes. Through the use of recycled materials and newly fabricated, industrial elements, I accentuate the inherent qualities of the materials to reflect the history and beauty of the objects in their newly re-imagined compositions.

The work creates connections with a wide demographic of viewers through the utilization and augmentation of elements that we see everyday, yet easily ignore or pass off as industrial refuse. The forms used in the final objects reference structures, and periods of time, that we are all indelibly tied to. The works much like the structures they reference allude to the act of their former creation and eventual degradation.

Through the work, I present how our day to day lives are laced with these elements, and how our memories are shaped by our interactions with them in the environment. The interplay between these natural and human made structures and the way we unconsciously interact with them intrigues me. Through bringing such overlooked objects to a fine art prospective, I hope to impart this same feeling of intrigue onto the viewer.

While looking to pair such elements together in a resonant manner, I let the components guide the final composition resulting in balance and tension coming together. The implementation of found industrial objects emphasizes their original design aesthetics, and creates tension through the contradiction of the objects' initial function as an industrial object and its current presentation. Further bring into question why these objects have anthropologic importance and why one should look at them from an artistic perspective.



## Lust and Anxiety

### Joni Younkings-Herzog

2007

Fiberglass, Resin, Hydrocal, Aluminum

I was surprised and disappointed in graduate school to learn about feminist backlash. I thought we were past that as a society, right? But consider how the recent appeal from the movie "Barbie" resulted in a backlash snub that nominated Gosling's character vs the Robie, the lead character? I mention this because my work is easily identified as female with an appreciation for the feminine. My sculptures were not accepted for exhibitions for over a year after the much deserved "Me, Too" movement. Why? I think folks were so afraid of offending anyone with any female body references that the pendulum to celebrate Equity swung in the opposite direction.

Lust and Anxiety is about the power dynamics of relationships, La Resistance is a tribute to Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign motto, encouraging the safety pin imagery seen in the aluminum structure at the base and Dance in all her bliss of the movement of dance and gymnastics with an added stainless "hoop" to simulate the energy of movement.

## Nesting Too

Richard Herzog

Reclaimed Truck Tires, Steel

Nesting Too is a sculpture fabricated from steel and reclaimed truck tires. I was inspired and driven to create this sculpture during the lockdown of the pandemic. As a fulltime artist I had the luxury of already being a recluse with little interaction with other individuals. While, the feeling of stir-crazy and need to create were overwhelming the fear of financial distress started to set in so I started to look for materials I could acquire and use. The idea of a nest was a natural one at that time, an idea many in society were feeling, "nesting". So out came Nesting Too. The tires were collected from an illegal tire dumpsite in the woods close to my studio. With the curved steel being drops from a commission I had completed. As an artist I do not have the answers, I feel my role is more like an activist. I do not create work with a political agenda nor have a politically motivated view. My role is to bring awareness to the society in which we live and to the subjects, objects and ideas that permeate our culture in a subordinate or subversive manner.







## One Last Sip Kevin Vanek

2024

Cast Iron, Cast Aluminum, Steel, Stainless Steel

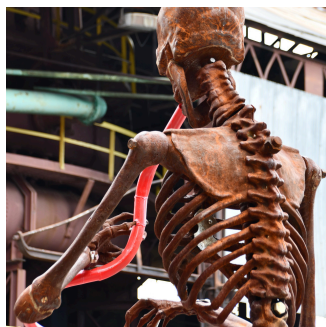
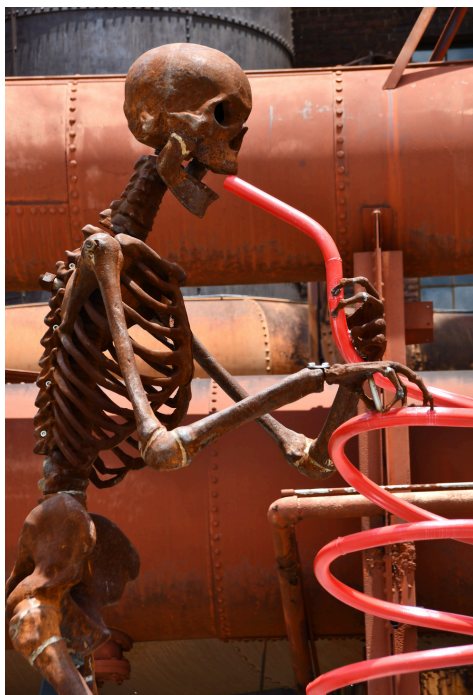
One Last Sip humorously portraits a giant skeleton slurping a silly straw oil/gas pipeline from a large soda cup lid, each button naming the top oil producers and consumers in the United States. This sculpture is part of a series of cast metal skeletal sculptures titled "Memento Mori: the american way."

These sculptures all use the human skeleton to reflect humanity as a whole. The sculptures in this series reflect on the tragic folly of humanity brought on by our own consumer driven attrition.

One Last Sip brings to attention the enormous issue of fossil fuel consumption and production. Acting as a monument to the mounting impact of global climate change directly associated with fossil fuel usage. This consumption has more than doubled since the 1980's and is still rising.

Despite decades of data from scientific studies linking our use of fossil fuels to the increasingly rapid rise in global temperatures, our society has continued to rely on these products.

Even the most conscientious citizen, worried as they may be about their carbon-footprint, can't avoid the usage. Whether by reliance on road based infrastructure or a coal fired power plant, our world has been built to rely on the machines, industry, and profit from oil and fossil fuel production. Without realizing it, we are all made complacent in our world's inevitable downfall. One last tank of gas, one last power plant, one last plastic item, one last car, One Last Sip.





# SLOSS METAL ARTS PERMANENT COLLECTION

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***Ladleman Blues***  
Erik Johnson  
1999



***Vaughn Randall***



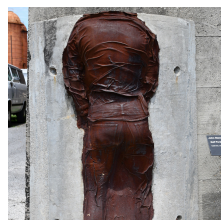
***Turtle Island Drum***  
Wayne Potratz



***Lake Effect***  
Daniel Hunt



***The Sentinel,  
Stabbing Guard***  
Bryan Massey  
2023



***Self Portrait***  
John Stewart  
Jackson  
2005



***It's All Down  
Here From Here***  
Matt Crane  
2019



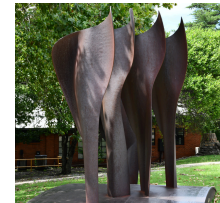
***Ladleman Blues II***  
Erik Johnson  
2000



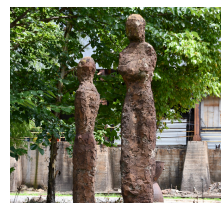
***Momentary  
News***  
David Lobdell  
2000



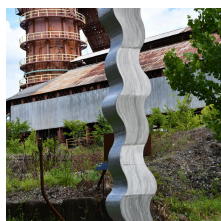
***Copings***  
Gwen L. Kelling  
2025



***The Exiles***  
Tony Buchen and  
Jeralyn Goodwin



***Mother and Child***  
David Crook



**Aspire**  
Ira Hill



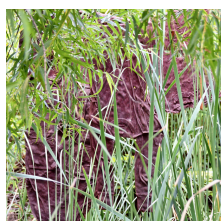
**Wedges**  
Hana Jubran  
2001



**Scoop**  
Forrest Millsap  
2007



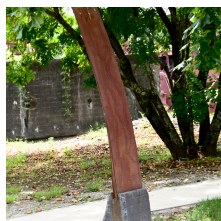
**Time Sieve**  
Allen Peterson  
2000



**Clothesline Birds**  
Michael Bonadio  
2007



**Vertical Shed**  
John Stewart Jackson  
2010



**Sail**  
Julie Ward  
2006



**AMUK**  
Ira Hill



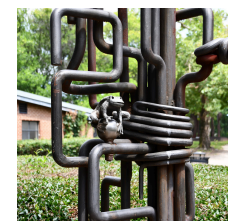
**Smelting Furnaces**  
Wayne Portratz



**Untitled**  
Ian Skinner  
2018

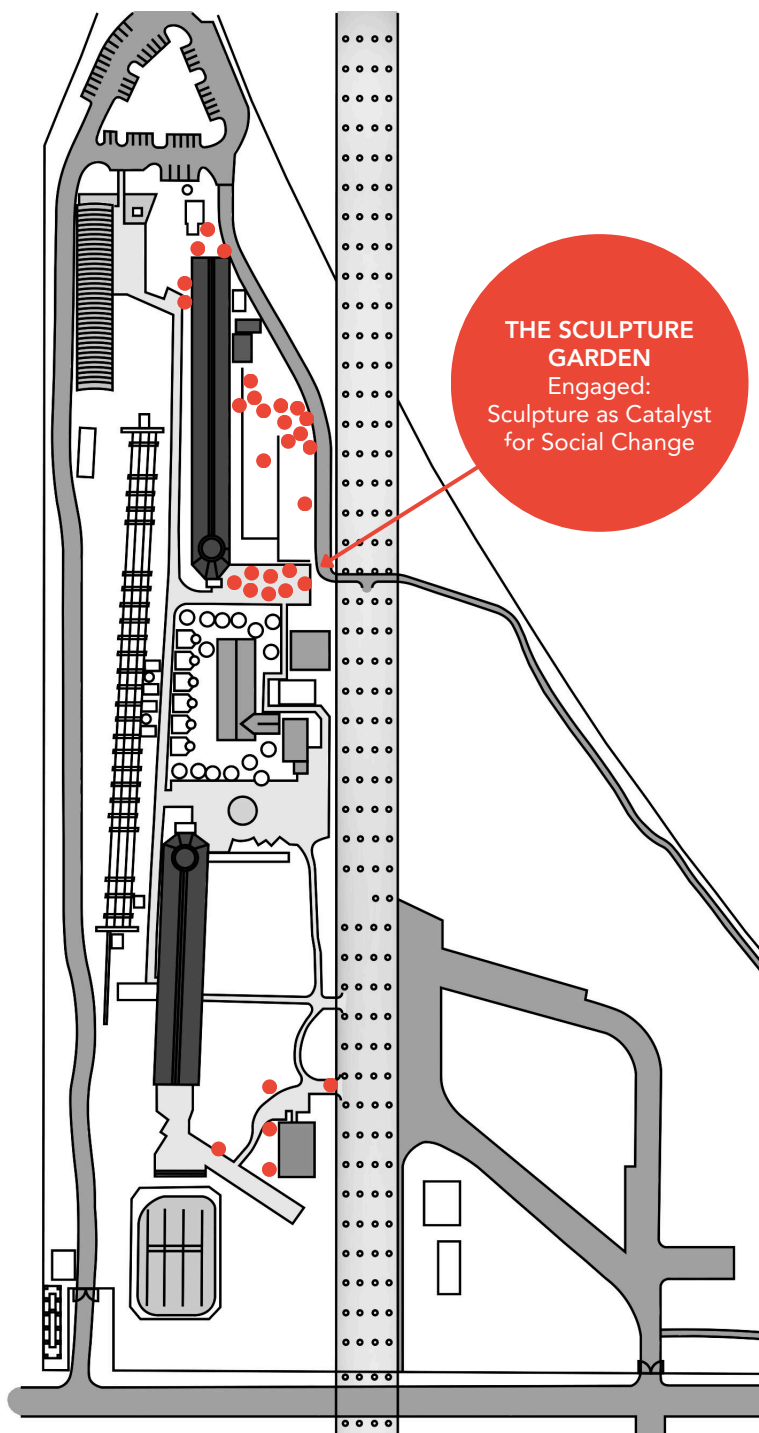


**Naked**  
Marshall Christie  
2019



**Bredohl Gate**  
Manfred Bredohl  
Forged during the 1986  
Birmingham Blacksmithing  
Festival

# SCULPTURE LOCATIONS





## SPONSERS

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## Engaged: Sculpture as Catalyst for Social Change

November 1, 2024 - November 1, 2025  
at Sloss Furnaces National Historic Landmark in Birmingham, AL



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## Help support the Sculpture Garden

Donations help support our mission through public programming, exhibitions, artist residencies & more

