"La Frontera" Explores US-Mexico Border Through Contemporary Jewelry Exhibition on View at Houston Center for Contemporary Craft This Summer (May 30 - September 7, 2014)

Houston Center for Contemporary Craft (HCCC) is proud to present "La Frontera" ("The Borderlands"), an international exhibition of contemporary jewelry that explores the physical space where the complex relationship between Mexico and the United States is most evident. With startling results, 90 artists from the U.S., Mexico, Europe, Australia, and Latin America explore the underlying currents of the border environment within geographic, political, social, cultural, and ideological contexts.

Houston, Texas (PRWEB) March 15, 2014 -- At 1,969 miles long, the U.S.-Mexico border has the largest number of legal and illegal crossings in the world. An estimated 11.2 million unauthorized immigrants currently live in the United States, according to studies by the Pew Hispanic Research Center. Concerns about illegal immigration, combined with the increase in drug trafficking and violence, instigated the controversial construction of the border fence, which is now 700 miles long and counting. This timely exhibition occurs as the U.S. Congress is considering an immigration reform bill that would extend the Border Wall an additional 700 miles and add another 20,000 U.S. Border Patrol agents. Still, the border is a vibrant and vital corridor, and its extremely porous nature allows not only the passage of illegal arms and drugs but also valuable ideas and projects, families and culture.

Inspired by the border’s tumultuous environment of deserts, mountains, rivers, and flow of diverse nationalities, the artists of "La Frontera" created 150 pieces of contemporary jewelry. The materials range from canvas, polyester, porcelain, water bottles, photos, and paint to more precious ones, such as steel, copper, silver, and gold. Cristina Celis, one of the participating artists from Mexico, explains her necklace, "Dactilar," made of porcelain, gold, and silver: "The practice of erasing the information on fingers is common. Knives, acid, fire, and even surgery are some of the mechanisms that undocumented immigrants are turning to in order to erase their fingerprints and avoid deportation." The dangers of the border are also explored in U.S. artist Julia Turner’s brooch, "Three Days Walking (Mourning Brooch)," which features red dots that refer to the NGO Humane Borders’ map identifying the places where people die while attempting to cross the border.

In his essay for the exhibition catalog, Mexican writer, Benito Taibo, poetically described the show as “conceptual art that uses the body, the neck, the wrist, and the shoulders as a canvas to shape, in all its splendor, the bewitched, the fantasy, and also the sadness that is the frontier and what it signifies. It’s a final frontier that eats its children and the children of other territories and then spits them all over the land, transforming [them] into different beings, with different passions, all in search of a place in the world.”

"La Frontera" includes work by three celebrated Houston jewelry artists—Edward Lane McCartney, Olga Starostina, and Demitra Thomloudis—all of whom have shown work at HCCC in exhibitions or in the Asher Gallery. HCCC Curator, Elizabeth Kozlowski, commented, “The works included in 'La Frontera' cannot be easily categorized. There is an impressive range of techniques, materials and personal interpretations regarding border issues. The exhibition comes to Houston at the perfect time, when immigration and U.S.-Mexico relations are at the forefront of current sociopolitical issues.”

"La Frontera" was curated by Mike Holmes and Elizabeth Shyperett, founders of Velvet da Vinci gallery in San...
Francisco, CA, and Lorena Lazard, from Mexico City, who has been a practicing jewelry artist for more than 20 years. The exhibition opened at the Franz Mayer Museum in Mexico City in June, 2013, to wide critical acclaim from press and visitors.

"La Frontera" will be on view May 30 – September 7, 2014, in the Main Gallery at Houston Center for Contemporary Craft, 4848 Main Street, Houston, TX 77002.

Opening Reception: Friday, May 30, 5:30 – 8:00 PM
6:00 – Curator’s Talk by Mike Holmes
The opening will also feature "Texas Masters Series: Sandie Zilker" in the Front Gallery. Open studios by current resident artists to follow talks.

About Houston Center for Contemporary Craft
Houston Center for Contemporary Craft is a nonprofit arts organization founded to advance education about the process, product and history of craft. HCCC serves as an important cultural and educational resource for Houston and the Southwest—one of the few venues in the country dedicated exclusively to craft at the highest level. HCCC provides exhibition, retail and studio spaces to support the work of local and national artists. In addition, HCCC is a wonderful resource for art educators and provides mission-related educational programs in schools and underserved communities. Visitors enjoy viewing innovative exhibitions, visiting the resident artist studios, creating their own crafts in monthly HANDS-ON HOUSTON events, and shopping for one-of-a-kind gifts and home décor in the Asher Gallery.

Located in the Museum District at 4848 Main Street, HCCC is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 AM – 5 PM, and Sunday, 12 – 5 PM. Summer Hours: Closed July 4th and Sundays, July 6th – Labor Day. Admission is free. Free parking is available directly behind the facility, off Rosedale and Travis Street. HCCC is three blocks south of Wheeler Ave. MetroRail station on Main Street.

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