



Carol Eckert, *Dark Tales*
10" x 19" x 4," cotton over wire

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Untamed

Featuring 6 contemporary artists exploring the
connection between animals and humans

January 13, 2012 – February 26, 2012

WHO: Craft Alliance in the Delmar Loop

WHAT: *Untamed*

WHEN: **FREE Opening Reception** on Friday, January 13, 6 – 8pm

GALLERY HOURS: Tuesday – Thursday 10am – 5pm / Friday – Saturday 10am – 6 pm / Sunday 11am – 5pm

WHERE: Craft Alliance in the Delmar Loop, 6640 Delmar Blvd, St. Louis, MO 63130 / 314.725.1177

ST. LOUIS (November 11, 2011) Craft Alliance (CA) is pleased to announce the opening reception of *Untamed* from 6 – 8 pm on Friday, January 13, 2012, in CA's gallery in the Delmar Loop. The exhibition, which runs through February 26, features works from Carol Eckert, Geoffrey Gorman, Russell Wrangle, Rachel Wilson, Sayaka Ganza, and Sylvie Rosenthal.

These works examine the complex relationship between animals and humans. Although the nature of that connection has evolved over time, animals have continued to hold a place of paramount significance in our lives. Whether used for transportation, mythologized in religious and spiritual stories, or loved as a companion, animals have always been inextricably bound to our history. Each of these artists interprets the mystery of that relationship in a different way, some exploring the essence of animals, their soul, spirit or symbolic personification; others comment on their fragile existence in the contemporary natural world.

With the dexterous movement of needle and thread, Carol Eckert creates delicately coiled narratives. Universally symbolic animals, such as snakes and storks, take center stage in a series of mythological stories and creation legends. These animal-centric creations intertwine to create free-standing staffs, shrines, and books.

Gorman explores the beauty of decay through animal imagery that is constructed from abandoned scraps. These bits of cultural detritus, including sticks, bicycle tires, rusted screws, and washers, are laboriously layered together and given a second life. Using human artifacts to create animal forms, he explores the shared tendencies of human and animal behavior.

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Untamed – First and last add

Russell Wrangle wrestles with existential questions of life and death through the symbolism of the hare. His intensely saturated ceramic hares represent the decadence of worldly pleasures, a vibrant source of energy that is antithetical to death and dying. It is through embracing life and living that the pull of death and suffering is kept at a distance.

The durable wood of the Osage-orange tree is the foundation for Rachel Wilson's life size animal sculptures. Repurposing pieces of found wood, she transforms this heavy material into graceful horses, elks, and other wild creatures. These enchanting sculptures, intended to evoke a sense of respect for all living beings, quietly capture the essence of the animals.

The Japanese Shinto belief that all objects and beings have spirits has deeply inspired Sayaka Ganz. Treasuring the forlorn spirit of those objects that have been forgotten or discarded, she integrates scrap metal pieces, abandoned toys, and utensils, among other items, into organic animal sculptures. In this way, both the animal and the object are infused with a new life spirit.

Sylvie Rosenthal responds to the current social architecture with humorous and meticulously crafted creatures built on the impossible. She directs our attention to imagined spaces in which architecture and animal merge into one. Sylvie's work urges viewers to question the plausibility of animals, people, and architecture coexisting within a singular space.

Opening concurrently in the Charak Gallery is *The Garden*, an exhibition featuring new clay works by Adam Posnak. In contrast to the domesticity implied in the title, Adam's work embraces the powerful Afro-Cuban notion of "El Monte," which means "The Wild." Adam's work taps into the energy of El Monte through the imagery depicted on his pots.

ABOUT CRAFT ALLIANCE

Craft Alliance is the only art institution dedicated to contemporary craft in the St. Louis region. The non-profit organization, located in the Delmar Loop and in the Kranzberg Arts Center in Grand Center, provides inspiration and education in contemporary craft to a national community of artists, collectors, students and the art-viewing public. It does this through every creative stage, offering exhibitions, studio art classes, family programs, and community outreach programs. For more information, please call (314) 725-1177 or visit www.craftalliance.org.

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