

Vulcana

Women Forging Ahead

Hidden History

Proof of the existence of female blacksmiths exists within a few documents, one of which being the Holkham Bible which includes images of women forging nails. In the 1700s women in London were encouraged to learn a trade and take on apprentices to help them.

- <https://blacksmithingart.com/female-blacksmith-find-historical-facts/>
- <https://kamabandsaw.com/female-blacksmiths-through-history/>
- https://www.google.com/search?q=women+blacksmith+history&client=firefox-b-1-d&sca_esv=567676932&channel=fenc&tbm=vid&sxsr=AM9HkKmhJ7xvrOQBAjm76faH3XAMOfZ-PA:1695414048526&source=lnms&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwi56O_Ahb-BAxUsIjQIHUv5BCsQ_AUoA3oECAIQBQ&biw=1600&bih=775&dpr=1#fpstat=ive&vld=cid:c6193be5,vid:8zZSUZ2Z0E4,st:0

Aislinn Lewis

As part of the Museum's Artisan Field Trip series, featuring interviews with living history artisans and makers as they demonstrate their Revolutionary-era crafts, Aislinn Lewis joins Museum Gallery Interpretation Manager Tyler Putman to discuss and demonstrate her work and use of historical techniques as a blacksmith, who forges iron, using tools to hammer, bend, and cut. Plus, don't miss a special behind-the-scenes look of Lewis' shop

- <https://www.amrevmuseum.org/artisan-field-trip-with-blacksmith-aislinn-lewis>
- <https://peninsulachronicle.com/2023/05/23/meet-aislinn-lewis-colonial-williamsburg-blacksmith/>

Society of Inclusive Blacksmiths

The [Society of Inclusive Blacksmiths](#) is an organization working to change the image of blacksmiths in the 21st century by supporting, promoting, and highlighting historically underrepresented populations and forward-thinking work. Through listening to the experiences of others and working to understand their perspective, SIB builds a community that truly supports, encourages, and educates people regardless of constructs of race, gender, sexuality, gender orientation, or physical limitations.

The organization began in 2018 when smiths gathered in August 2018 at the Cascadia Center for Arts and Crafts (CCAC) in Oregon. The goals were a collaborative project for the on-site sculpture garden and conversation around issues of inclusivity in blacksmithing. The event brought women from across the country, ranging in age, experience, and metalworking interests. At the conclusion of their time at the CCAC, the team agreed to continue the project as the Society of Inclusive Blacksmiths (SIB).



Top row from left: Anne Bujold, Caitlin Morris, Rachel David, Monica Coyne, Leslie Tharpe, Alice Garrett, Heather McLarty, Ryna Cady. Bottom row from left: Lynda Metcalf, Lisa Geertsen, Ann Klicka

Sister Paula Mary Turnbull

Sister Paula Mary Turnbull, the revered Spokane artist and nun who created the Garbage Goat and other iconic sculptures in Spokane and beyond, died at 97.

Sister Paula dedicated the last 80 years of her life to producing art and teaching others. Until her health started to fail, she lived at Spokane's Convent of the Sisters of Holy Names of Jesus and Mary. Her international fame as the "welding nun" resulted in a studio being built exclusively for her more than 25 years ago on the convent's grounds.

Sister Paula was welcoming to visitors to her studio, giving tours and holding classes. She served as a kind of creative ambassador for the other sisters there who devoted their lives to God, once writing that art and art education was her "ministry ... a gift from God to be developed and shared."

- <https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2018/jul/21/sister-paula-turnbull-artist-behind-many-of-spokan/>
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yn6e3_jl5co
- <https://www.krem.com/video/news/local/creator-of-the-infamous-garbage-goat-sister-paula-turnbull-passes-away-7-23-18/293-8198044>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oP21j8iz3EA&t=177s> (garbage goat)











Chloe Darke

Chloe Darke is of the generation fueling the DIY movement, hungry to explore and savor the act of *making*, driven to create. Having studied metalsmithing and jewelry at Maine College of Art, she now produces fine sterling place settings for Old Newbury Crafters in Amesbury, Massachusetts, a four hundred year old studio producing hand wrought silver. Darke is a perfect example of an art student who has utilized her education for her livelihood, an accomplishment that relates directly to her talent and determination. Her daily work reinforces and informs her personal work which centers on the female form and aesthetic.

- <https://www.craftinamerica.org/artist/chloe-darke/>







Heather McLarty

As an artist blacksmith I don't feel the pressure of much competition. I use ancient hand forging techniques along with more modern metalworking ones to achieve aesthetic and functional goals in my pieces. It is a very labor intensive occupation. I work almost entirely on commission. My clients are the best! Together with them I design and build works from metal that are site specific. I have designed and made works as small as napkin rings and hair pins to an award wall that is 25' high by 10' tall, gates onto the athletic field at Occidental College, and all sizes in between. From pedestrian gates and railings to garden fountains, silver spoons to pure sculpture. Each piece is different but all have a through-line of taking metal from a hard industrial form and giving it life.

The magic happens by using heat (about 2200 degrees) and hammering on an anvil. It is an exhilarating experience. After studying theater at UCSD I started out as a prop builder for large regional theaters throughout the western states. During that time I learned even more about history of periods and styles in architecture. I learned to work with many different designers and other craftspeople in different shop situations. I learned a lot of creative problem solving on the job using many different materials. Once I transitioned to my own artistic metalworking business I have been able to bring those skills to bear.

- <https://shoutoutla.com/meet-heather-mclarty-artist-blacksmith/>
- <http://www.steelcrazy.biz/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=771848126511051> (Adam's Forge)

















Elaine Unzicker

[Elaine Unzicker](#), based in Ojai, transforms chainmail into a sleek and wearable material. Slipping on one of her gloves creates a tactile sensation that is unique and unexpected.

I create seductive, wearable objects combining jewelry techniques with chain mail to caress the female body. As a child, I was taught to be quiet and not express myself even though I noticed creativity flowing through my grandmothers fingers in the form of quilt-making. I find my voice when I create art through the meditative state of linking one ring at a time. When knitted with thin metal wire and small rings this masculine, war-like material becomes extremely soft and flowing. The ritual of laying the transparent veil of chain mail on a woman invokes a sense of security and a feeling of empowerment. My creations are a merging of art and history in the intimate setting of a woman's body.

Lately, I've become fascinated with the color and pattern of chain mail. I was reminded of the quilt squares my grandmother Minnie always had sitting by her chair. These thoughts led to a series of wall pieces relating to a quilt square format. "Legacy" being the first in the series, a pattern created using bright colors similar to hers. Translating the material to a wall format has opened a whole new venue for my art with new directions.

<https://unzickerdesign.com/about/>











Joy Fire

Joy Fire is a blacksmith and multi media artist participating in the long history of creativity in the community of Santa Ana, California. While blacksmithing is her foundation, she also produces objects in metal, photographs, installations, videos, and anything else that draws her interest.

She is a certified instructor with the California Blacksmith Association, a certified welder with the American Welding Society, a community education instructor in blacksmithing and bronze casting, and a welding instructor at Orange Coast College. She is also on the governance committee for the nonprofit Society of Inclusive Blacksmiths which provides opportunities, visibility, and economic support for marginalized communities in the field of blacksmithing.

<https://www.instagram.com/joyfire/>







Annie Cole Arthur

Annie Cole Arthur may have the stained outfit, glowing steel and giant hammer, but the stereotype ends there. Arthur is a respected blacksmith at Robert Thomas Iron Design who often leads teams of blacksmiths forging metal into carefully crafted ironware. Based in Charleston, she and her team create limited edition carbon steel skillets and roasters for Smithey, the Jedi Masters of ironware used by great chefs like Jacques Pépin and Alton Brown.

<https://www.eater.com/22704339/carbon-steel-woks-pans-forged-blacksmithing>





CARBON STEEL WOK



Lisa Geertsen

Lisa Geertsen is an artist blacksmith in Seattle, Wa. She has owned and operated Firelight Forge since 2007, operating solely on custom commissions ranging from architectural work to sculpture. In 2013 she accepted the position of Metal and Stone Sculpture Studio Manager at Pratt Fine Arts Center in addition to the classes she teaches there regularly. This position allows her to design and schedule the classes offered at Pratt in Stone Carving, Bronze Casting, Fabrication and Blacksmithing.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zmlgEr4ObDI&t=11s>

https://www.google.com/search?q=women+blacksmith+history&client=firefox-b-1-d&sca_esv=567676932&channel=fenc&tbm=vid&sxsr=AM9HkKmhJ7xvrOQBAjm76faH3XAMOfZ-PA:1695414048526&source=lnms&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwi56O_Ahb-BAxUsIjQIHUv5BCsQ_AUoA3oECAIQBQ&biw=1600&bih=775&dpr=1#fpstate=ive&vid=cid:589ce422,vid:zmlgEr4ObDI,st:0





THE CENTER
GALLERY

LISA GEERTSEN
SHOW OF HEARTS



Monica Coyne

I began as an industrial artist. Experience and skill with metal greatly influences my art. I am trained as a blacksmith to shape steel into tools and connections that will serve an efficient end. I have made a name for myself in the blacksmithing community by forging forms that contradict the weight of the material and the prudential practice of the craft. The strength of steel offers me the opportunity to experiment with balance and asymmetry. Its versatility provides the ability to create surprising forms. I have always been fascinated by the idea that the shape of something can create an emotion in people. I can follow the vein of iron and carbon. I can take it to a place of function, to a gate, a tool, a joint. Or I can follow it where it wants to go. Or I can do both. This is what I am trying to do. Let the metal move. Explore the forms it takes from steel bar to skin, bone and water.

- <http://www.moniacoyneartistblacksmith.com/about>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JSeiAla8wos>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b8HTxUymcqc>











Elizabeth Brim

Elizabeth Brim is a blacksmith as well as an instructor at the Penland School of Crafts in Penland, North Carolina. She is best known for feminine imagery in her ironwork. Her works have been showcased in the United States, Canada, and Germany

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZEn3giTgeos>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zZNR-RTH2j4>
- <https://www.arthurmorganschool.org/home/teaching-feminism/>







Anne Bujold

Anne Bujold combines metalsmithing and blacksmithing techniques with alternative materials such as felt, ribbon, and plastics. In her sculpture, animals are agents examining the spaces between definitions, that fertile ground where new forms emerge.

https://www.reddit.com/r/Blacksmith/comments/zf4c8v/interview_with_blacksmith_anne_bujold/











Caitlin Morris

The Vermont native runs Ms Caitlin's School in Maryland, which is dedicated to sharing the craft with as many unsuspecting people as possible. She also teaches at other schools across the country.

When you first put hammer to hot steel, you want Caitlin there to guide, mentor, and inspire you. She's good at lighting fires.

<https://mscaitlinsschool.com/index.html>



Agnes Jones

Agnes Jones is a sculptor based in Glasgow who draws in steel to make linear pieces full of character. Translating pen drawings into steel, her work changes this very solid material into something that looks like it has been sketched in the air. From large public art sculptures to garden and homeware commissions, her work can be seen across the UK.

"I have worked as an art blacksmith for ten years now, and have always been led by drawing. Working with line drawing allows me to create pieces that are full of character, movement and narrative, and allows a structural material to seem like I have quickly sketched it in mid-air. I have been exploring how to use line more sparingly and simply, leaving the viewer to fill in form on their own. The location and area around each piece is important as the work is forced to interact with the shapes, movement and feel of a site."

- https://www.facebook.com/BBCScotland/posts/4632125150150547/?comment_id=4633387296690999&paipv=0&eav=AfbnKabPzpQuD7JpASQ5vGjy9iGYT9bjiLAlfvbKZuvrzbcju n76VVDwhviVg3Vixw& rdr
- <https://www.agnesmjones.com/>













Rachel David

In the artist's words: "The work is inspired by my life and body, the landscapes I've passed through and the processes of metalworking in which I specialize. The work of furniture is by nature interactive, considerate, comforting and durable. It is an adornment, it is ornament, and it is a relationship. Each creative opportunity is another chance to be challenged as a maker and citizen: a moment to take risks to express feelings and expand understanding of both materials and concepts."

Born in Maryland, Rachel David is a blacksmith, sculptor, and designer. Her metalwork practice encompasses art, furniture, architectural elements, activism, and gardening. Through community activism and metalwork that references relationships between bodies and landscapes, David investigates issues related to colonization, social, and environmental justice.

<https://www.angelakinggallery.com/racheldavid>









Leslie Tharpe

I am a metal artist in Gainesville, FL that specializes in large scale public art and teaching hands on metalworking classes. My adventures in metal began at the University of Florida's Sculpture Program where I was given training and access to a wide variety of tools and techniques. After graduating I worked for a brief time as a hired welder, and eventually moved back to Gainesville to pursue a more creative career. My blacksmithing training began at Penland School of Craft, where I received a work study scholarship to attend a two week workshop in the Iron Studio. I caught the bug right away and began gathering tools to practice with and attending workshops whenever possible.

I now run a metal studio and teaching shop in Gainesville, and I specialize in large-scale sculpture and custom metalwork that integrates forged techniques.

- <https://www.leslietharp.com/>
- <https://www.leslietharp.com/sculpture> (images here)
- <https://www.instagram.com/leslietharpdesigns/?hl=en>
- <https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/2053979105/lift-a-metal-sculpture-and-an-epic-voyage>







Lynda Metcalfe

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HzOHBnTIQT4> (19 min)
- <https://www.facebook.com/LMetcalfe.MetalDesign/>
- <http://lyndametcalfe.com/>



ARTIST TALK WITH LYNDA METCALFE
PRESENTED BY CLOVERDALE FORGE

TUESDAY, JUNE 5, 2018 | 7 PM
C2 CENTRE FOR CRAFT

ARTIST: LYNDA METCALFE
PHOTO BY STEWART YOUNG





Ann Klicka

Ann Klicka **received her BFA in Sculpture from the Hartford Art School, CT.** In addition to completing an apprenticeship at the National Ornamental Metal Museum in Memphis, TN, she has studied blacksmithing and metalworking techniques with masters across the United States.

<https://www.annklicka.com/sculpture/2017/6/21/xee0nbcgl9cph3m37myyza4p72lpy8>







Assignment Suggestions...

- Incorporate metal into an artwork
- Photograph interesting ironwork (it could be a closeup of wrought iron railings).
- Beat metal with a hammer.
- Design a stamp for yourself