

**CERAMIC ARTIST EXPLORES EMOTIONAL VALUE OF EVERYDAY OBJECTS**  
***one day, late in the afternoon. . .***  
**On View February 6 – May 10, 2015 at Houston Center for Contemporary Craft**

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Front Gallery at Houston Center for Contemporary Craft  
4848 Main Street, Houston, TX 77002

**Opening Reception - Friday, February 6, 5:30 – 8:00 PM**

*The opening will also feature Dining and Discourse: A Discussion in Three Courses in the Main Gallery and open studios by the current resident artists.*

**Hours & Admission**

Tuesday through Saturday, 10 AM – 5 PM, and Sunday, 12 – 5 PM. Admission is free.

**(HOUSTON, TX) November 16, 2014** – Houston Center for Contemporary Craft (HCCC) is pleased to host *one day, late in the afternoon. . .*, an installation by contemporary ceramic artist, Kelly O'Briant. Reminiscent of the traditional still life from art history, the installation captures a moment of intimacy between utilitarian objects and their users. Things, such as a favorite mug, heirloom silverware, or a holiday tablecloth, are as integral to people's lives as the conversations that take place around them. O'Briant recreates these everyday objects in order to elevate them to a position of aesthetic and emotional value.



Using a minimal color palette to emphasize physical form, the artist also manipulates atmosphere, emotion and memory through her use of light and shadow. Her process of coiling and pinching the clay lends humanity to the surfaces of the objects, which, in ordinary life, would remain inert.

O'Briant arranges her porcelain objects in groupings that are intentionally ambiguous in their relationships to each other and their surroundings. For instance, in one grouping, she arranges a bucket of eggshells, a spigot, and a garden hose on a wooden deck-like surface. In another, she fills kitchen-like cabinets with various objects resembling bric-a-brac accumulated over time. These objects are meant to stand in for the

intangible relationships that transpire around things and the information transfer that occurs when people gather around the kitchen table for a cup of coffee or wash dishes at the sink after a communal dinner. O'Briant captures these shared moments through the creation of a still life composed of outwardly recognizable objects. However, upon closer inspection, one can see that the artist has altered the objects by removing some elements of the familiar—leaving the viewer feeling somewhat perplexed and disconnected.



HCCC Curator, Elizabeth Kozlowski, comments, “This exhibition asks open-ended questions about what we share when we come together at the most intimate of meeting places. There is a combination of both positive and negative feelings that occurs when the viewer places herself in one of these scenarios, which are familiar and yet not at all what they seem. O'Briant brilliantly creates this ambivalent mood to reflect the ups and downs we experience throughout our lives.”

*one day, late in the afternoon* was originally exhibited in the spring of 2014 at Harry Wood Gallery, Arizona State University, for Kelly O'Briant's Masters of Fine Arts thesis.

### **Image Credits**

Kelly O'Briant, *Two Dozen Each*, 2014, 30" x 30" x 40," porcelain, wood, metal, eggshells. Photo by Peter Bugg.

Kelly O'Briant, *Cabinets for Important Things*, 2014, 4' x 8,' porcelain, wood, paint, nails, glass, thread. Photo by Peter Bugg.

### **About the Artist**

Kelly O'Briant's work in ceramics has made an expansive journey of form and material alongside her own travels through North Carolina and abroad. A native of Julian, North Carolina, O'Briant earned a BFA (2000) in design, with a second major in cultural anthropology from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. While pursuing her Bachelor's degree, O'Briant studied at the University of Oulu, Finland, where she participated in archaeological field work. In 2001, O'Briant was awarded a two-year Core Student Fellowship at Penland School of Crafts. While at Penland, she concentrated on clay and metals, also taking courses in books, wood and fibers. She gained expertise in a variety of ceramic techniques, including high-temperature wood, salt and soda firings, porcelain, stoneware, low-fire methods, earthenware, majolica and china painting.

O'Briant returned to the Piedmont of North Carolina in June, 2005, to set up her own ceramics studio, which she ran until 2010. Her focus was in high-fired functional porcelain work, which she appreciated for its clean lines and artistic accessibility. During that time, she regularly participated in retail shows, including the

American Craft Council's show, and sold her work from galleries across the country. Her work has been featured in a number of exhibitions, including *Refraction and Flux: 8 Rising Young Potters* at JC Self Research Institute, Greenwood Genetic Center, Greenwood, SC; *A Process of Becoming* at GPSA Gallery, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ; and *Art of the Cup* at Ogden Museum of Southern Art, Center for Craft and Design, New Orleans.

In 2014, O'Briant graduated with an MFA from Arizona State University and was named a "2015 Emerging Artist" by the National Council for Education on the Ceramic Arts (NCECA). The organization's Emerging Artists program recognizes and cultivates exceptional early career artists by highlighting them during its annual conference and presenting them with opportunities for increased exposure. She currently resides with her partner, Matthew Thomason, in Grand Forks, North Dakota, as the artist-in-residence at the University of North Dakota.

### **About Houston Center for Contemporary Craft**

Houston Center for Contemporary Craft (HCCC) 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. The organization provides exhibition, sales and studio spaces to support the work of local and national artists and offers mission-related educational programs in schools and underserved communities. Visitors enjoy viewing innovative exhibitions, visiting artist studios, strolling through the Craft Garden, 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. **Spring/Summer Hours: Closed Easter Sunday, July 4<sup>th</sup>, and on Sundays, July 4<sup>th</sup> – 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.

HCCC is funded in part by grants from The Brown Foundation; Houston Endowment, Inc.; Texas Commission on the Arts; the National Endowment for the Arts; the Kinder Foundation; the Morgan Foundation; Windgate Charitable Foundation; and the Wortham Foundation.

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For more information, call 713.529.4848 or visit [www.crafthouston.org](http://www.crafthouston.org). Follow HCCC on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram @CraftHouston.

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