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BINH PHO: SHADOW OF THE TURNING **September 27, 2015 – January 3, 2016**

The Craft & Folk Art Museum is the only West Coast venue to host touring solo exhibition of acclaimed Vietnamese-American wood sculptor Binh Pho



Roots of Heaven, Binh Pho with Ron Gerton, cast glass, bradford pear, gold leaf, acrylic paint, 2012. Courtesy of the artist and Marty and Barbara Bosch



Sea of Serenity, Binh Pho, box elder, acrylic paints, 2010. Courtesy of the artist and Roman and Mary Ann Hruska

LOS ANGELES — The Craft & Folk Art Museum (CAFAM) presents *Binh Pho: Shadow of the Turning*, a solo exhibition of Vietnamese-American sculptor Binh Pho. Combining woodturning, painting, and glasswork, Pho's wood vessels act as storytelling devices to illustrate the autobiographical and fictional books he has collaborated on with exhibition curator Kevin Wallace. A previous body of work represented his experiences in Communist Vietnam, including the Fall of Saigon and detention in prison camp. With *Shadow of the Turning*, Pho's sculptures expand beyond autobiography to convey the fantasy story contained in the novel of the same name he co-wrote with Wallace. The exhibition will be on view from September 26, 2015 through January 3, 2016.

Pho has always been a storyteller, as well as an artist. Both Wallace and Pho conceived of the book and exhibition as a vehicle for expressing their strong belief in destiny—that things happen for a reason. The work serves to illustrate the narrative that emerged as Pho and Wallace collaborated to develop the characters and plot line, while navigating the meaning of the symbolic elements crucial to the story. Pho incorporates personal iconography on his sculptures that represent the book's narrative concepts: peacock feathers signify a dream, while dragonflies represent good luck, and butterflies symbolize the link between the physical and spirit world.

To traverse the world of dreams, spirits, and reality, Pho uses an intricate, mixed media approach to woodturning. He explores the interaction of negative and positive space by etching and piercing through thinly turned wooden surfaces before using an airbrush to create imagery and symbols in the style of Chinese landscape painting. Sometimes incorporating glass, gold leaf, and bronze in his objects, Pho's fascination with media and techniques, and his ability to master them, has allowed him to push his artistic vision.

"We are extremely pleased to show Pho's latest work, as he presents an intriguing and personal perspective on life and work, evoking creative possibilities and a sense of hope as he astonishes us with the sheer beauty in his objects," says CAFAM Executive Director Suzanne Isken.

A diverse group of international artists collaborated with Pho to embody his idea of celebrating craft by including artists who work in traditional craft media: glass, ceramic, wood, fiber, and metal. Works on view will include Pho's collaboration with an international roster of artists, including multimedia artist Ron Gerton; woodworkers Graeme Priddle, Harvey Fein, Joey Richardson, Curt Theobald, Michael Mahoney, Don Derry, Giles Gilson and Hans Weissflog; fiber artists Kay Kahn and Patti Quin Hill; assemblage artist Ron Robertson; metalworker Meghan Rowland; ceramic artist Richard Flores; and Australian painter Annette Barlow. Pho often builds structures around the work of a collaborator; in one case, he sliced open Patti Quinn Hill's basket to paint the interior.



The Knower and the Known, Binh Pho with Joey Richardson, box elder, sycamore, acrylic paints, 2012. Courtesy of the artist

“CAFAM is the final destination before the works are returned to individual collectors,” notes Wallace. “Just as the characters in the novel *Shadow of The Turning* find themselves on an adventurous road trip to Southern California, so too has the exhibition worked it’s way across the country to Los Angeles.”

An opening reception for *Binh Pho: Shadow of the Turning* will take place on Saturday, September 26 from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. The reception is free for CAFAM members and open to the public for a \$12 admission fee. CAFAM members will be able to preview the exhibition on Saturday, September 26 starting at 12:00 p.m.

Supported in part by the Antonia and Vladimer Kulaev Cultural Heritage Fund.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

CAFAM will offer exhibition-related workshops and events in conjunction with the exhibition, including CraftLab family workshops on the second Sunday of each month from 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.

Artist Talk with Binh Pho

September 26 | 6:00pm

Situated on historic Museum Row since 1973, the **Craft & Folk Art Museum (CAFAM)** is an invaluable contributor to Los Angeles culture, exhibiting current artists with intriguing perspectives and distinctive practices. Exploring the leading edge of craft, art, and design, CAFAM gives audience to diverse makers and artists whose work is often not represented in larger art institutions. The museum is a place to see art and make art — all under one roof. CAFAM coordinates a robust roster of hands-on workshops led by professional artists and makers. The intimate, atypical museum space and independent spirit at CAFAM combine to create an atmosphere of excitement and innovation, where people in Los Angeles deepen their relationships to art, creativity and one another. For more information, visit www.cafam.org

Location: 5814 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90036

Admission: FREE every Sunday

Regularly: \$7 for adults; \$5 for students, teachers, seniors, and veterans; free for CAFAM members

Hours: Tuesday-Friday, 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Saturday & Sunday, 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.; closed

Mondays. Every first Thursday of the month, extended hours 6:30 - 9:30 p.m.

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