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Krafffhouse 2023: Forest of the New Trees
Center for Craft’s immersive art installation asks:
What will Appalachia be in a post-major event future?

ASHEVILLE, NC (June 6, 2023) – The Center for Craft is thrilled to announce Kraffhouse, a new immersive art installation, made for and by the community, that will evolve and change each year in their historic building at 67 Broadway in downtown Asheville.

Local artist Jeannie Regan leads the inaugural year as Creative Director with the vision for Kraffhouse 2023: Forest of the New Trees. Between September 28 and October 13, the curious will be rewarded with a ticketed installation that changes nightly, as artist and audience participation weave a story of radical collaboration in Appalachia in the aftermath of a mysterious, world-changing event.

In the spirit of immersive performances, events, and installations like Meow Wolf, Punchdrunk’s Sleep No More, and Burning Man, Kraffhouse 2023: Forest of the New Trees invites self-guided exploration of a strange, new landscape and its imagined ecologies and societies, including cultures, customs, and micro currencies. Return visits will reward guests with new perspectives and illuminate new paths through the experience.

Selected local artists working with Center staff and Regan will each interpret the theme in their own way. The end result will be the creation of a small, self-sustaining community that has made itself anew. A night market atmosphere will welcome visitors, who will be able to make, gift, and trade goods with the artists and each other, with the opportunity to take home keepsakes – as well as leave their own imprint on the space.

The installation asks visitors to participate and collaborate to the extent they wish. Guests are invited to come in costume to share their own interpretation of the post-major event, and to bring any of their own offerings for the space. Costumes and materials will also be available onsite for people who would like to step into this new reality more fully when they arrive.

In her exploration of the theme, Regan researched the centuries-old craft traditions of Appalachia, including their relationship to Indigenous wisdom, hillfolks’ lore, and the ancient wilderness of the Blue Ridge Mountains. An undercurrent of the installation is the generational resilience of local
peoples facing their own "post-major events" and collaborating radically to survive – and thrive – in their aftermath.

The varied lived experiences of people during the early days of the Covid-19 pandemic, when a multitude of realities existed simultaneously, also informed the theme. “There was no united experience in that major event that happened, because we all experienced it very differently,” Regan shares. But it was also a world where, she notes, “multiple realities intersected and radical community collaboration was the only way to survive.”

She continues, "Craft plays into all of that, because what we make says so much about us as individuals. What we make says something about what we want the future to be."

**Tickets** ($15) provide guests with a self-guided tour of the immersive installation, which runs for approximately three weeks from September 28- October 13 on Thursdays and Fridays from 5 - 8 p.m. and on Saturdays from 2 - 4 p.m. and 6 - 9 p.m. Ticketed tours depart every 10 minutes, and the experience takes approximately 30 minutes.

A **Benefit Preview** for friends of the Center for Craft will open the inaugural installation on Saturday, September 23, from 6 - 9 p.m. Guests will have first access to the installations and be treated to drinks, hors d'oeuvres, a photo booth, DJ, and more.

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**ABOUT CENTER FOR CRAFT** Founded in 1996, the Center for Craft’s mission is to resource, catalyze, and amplify how and why craft matters. As a 501(c)3 national nonprofit that increases access to craft by empowering and resourcing artists, organizations, and communities through grants, fellowships and programs that bring people together. The Center is widely acknowledged as one of the most influential organizations working on behalf of craft in the United States. For more information, visit [www.centerforcraft.org](http://www.centerforcraft.org).