

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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“FIERCE: WOMEN IN IRON” OPENS AT THE PRAIRIE CENTER FOR THE ARTS

(Peoria, Ill.) – (10/14/19) The Prairie Center for the Arts is excited to announce the opening of “Fierce: Women in Iron,” an exhibition of female identified artists working with cast iron. The exhibition features the work of over thirty-five national and international artists as part of Peoria’s monthlong Citywide Celebration of Women in the Arts. *Fierce: Women in Iron* is co-curated by Kristen Tordella-Williams (Millsaps College, Jackson MS) and Jam Lovell (Black Dog Metal Arts LLC, Peoria, IL). The exhibition opening is Friday, November 1, 2019 from **INSERT TIME**. “Fierce: Women in Iron” is open to the public **INSERT DATES AND TIMES???** or by appointment from November 1- November 30, 2019. An all-female iron pour will take place November 2, 2019 **INSERT TIMES AND LOCATION** with a crew featuring several of the artists participating in the exhibition.

Fierce: Women in Iron features artwork that incorporates iron, a historically industrial and tough material, created by women identified artists from across the nation. A dedicated community of artists cast iron outside of commercial or fine art foundries; these individuals tap into a 5,000 year old ritual. Since the 60s, the iron community has included women and men working together to build furnaces, break iron and coke (unrefined coal), make molds, and perform the dirty, physical labor to craft the sculptures and artworks out of iron, our beloved shared medium. The iron community is a tight knit family of individuals who support and educate each other in spaces where everyone is welcome as long as they work hard and contribute. The cast iron community embodies the optimism we need to unify and grow. There is a beautiful fluidity of learning through making in iron and the iron community is a shining example of how we all can thrive together outside of a male-dominated culture. One hundred years ago, women would never have been able to participate in an iron pour. *Fierce: Women in Iron* focuses on female identified artists working with iron to celebrate our transition over the past one hundred years from objectification, to taking control of our likenesses, to now being experts of our craft from top to bottom.

Artists include Alison Oullette-Kirby (MO), Allison Denny (KY), April Livingston (AL), Ashley Seilhamer (OH), Becca Flis (NY), Christyn Overstake (OK), Coral Penelope Lambert (NY), Cristin Millett (PA), Cynthia Handel (MT), Danielle Robinson (KS), Emily Baker (CA), Erika McInay (TX), Erin Tucker (TN), Hanna Makkonen (Finland), Jaci Willis (IL), Jam Lovell (IL), Jamie Weinfurter (WI), Joy Fire (CA), Julie Slattery (IN), Julie Ward (FL), Katherine Rutecki (New Zealand), Kristen Tordella-Williams (MS), Laura Mullen (MO), Laura Phelps Rogers (CO), Lauren Koch (MD), Leticia Bajuyo (TX), Madeline Bates (MS), Margaret Bobo-Dancy (IL), Maria L. Sarmiento (GA), Nikki Moser (PA), Pamela Gargiulo (IL), Rachael Carruthers (MD), Rebecca Zink (IN), Samantha Leopold-Sullivan (MN), Sarah Dorau (TN), and Virginia Elliott (OH).

Prairie Center of the Arts was founded in 2003 as a juried Artist in Residency (AIR) program to attract emerging and established artists from Illinois and around the world; to provide these artists and local artists with opportunities for research and development of new work; to provide an accessible facility for art and creativity that embraces the Peoria area community offering equipment and technologies not currently available to the general public.

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