

Frederic A. Crist South River Complex

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540-942-7854 frederic//[cris@yahoo.com](mailto:cris@yahoo.com) A Brief Career Narrative

Forging metal has always been my choice of material and process as a sculptor. I was first introduced to this direct manipulation of metal as a student at Philadelphia College of Art (presently University of the Arts) in 1974. I was captivated by its potential as a sculptural medium. Upon graduation with a BFA in sculpture, I began working at Samuel Yellin Metalworkers in Philadelphia in 1977. This studio renowned for its excellence in hand forged metalworks dating back to 1906, was to be my training ground for the next eleven years. I began as an apprentice and worked my way up to Master Smith and head of the forging dept. While at the Yellin studios, I assisted and led on many major projects, as Gate and railing for the Washington Cathedral in DC, Display Case for the Book of Kells at the University of Pittsburgh, restoration and new reproduction of forgings at the Wilmington Train Station, Wilmington Del. Ironwork for the estate of Frederick Koch in Butler PA and numerous private commissions around the United States. In 1987 I received a 1% for the Arts Commission from the City of Philadelphia.

After eleven years at the Yellin Studios, I moved to Virginia to set up a studio with my business partner David Munn. Over the next 18 years we completed numerous commissions for private and corporate entities. In 1999-2000 I received a Virginia Museum Fellowship in Sculpture. During that time I spent a week at Rose Industries an industrial forge shop in Cleveland, Ohio, forging larger scale works. We received the Craftsmanship Award from the Virginia and West Virginia Chapters of the AIA for works in forged metals. On going exhibitions at The Reynolds Gallery in Richmond Va. and Franz Bader Gallery in Washington DC continued the sculptural works and commissions. Some of which included Richmond Times Building in Richmond, Va; Norfolk Academy in Norfolk, Va.; John and Robyn Horn Collection in Little Rock AR; John Allen Collection in Buchannon WVA; and a new sculpture for Massey Cancer Center in Richmond VA.

In 2007 I established a new independent studio to concentrate on more individual projects. In the past 10 years I have completed 6 major residential commissions. Exhibitions have included a 2 person show at Page Bond Gallery in Richmond, VA 2009; a group exhibition at the American University Art Museum, Washington DC in 2009-10; a group exhibition at the Art Museum of the Americas in Washington DC in 2009-2010 and a group exhibition at the Historical Society in Washington, DC in 2010. In 2012 I went to Ukraine to an international blacksmithing conference to make a sculpture I am presently working on a new series of sculpture for exhibition in 2017 and teaching most recently @ Peters Valley Center for the Crafts in NJ, Touchstone Center for the Crafts in Farmington, PA and Center for Metal Arts in Florida, NY. Recent Publications include a portfolio in The Metal Design International 2014 and Beauty in the Shadows, ironwork in the Washington Cathedral by Nol Putnam.

I live in Charlottesville Va and my studio is located in an industrial complex in Waynesboro Va. It is about 1500 square feet filled with the usual blacksmithing tools, 2 mechanical power hammers, a 60 ton press coal forge and gas forge, 5 anvils of varying sizes and a multitude of hand tools made and collected over 44 yrs. of forging. My work covers everything from letter openers, small sculptures to gates and railings and free standing sculpture. Over the years I have met and briefly worked with Paul Zimmermann, Freddie Habbermann, Serge Marchal, probably the three most important influences in my ironwork outside the Yellin Studio. Other influences include Robert Motherwell, Alberto Giacometti, Franz Kline and Frank Stella and Eduardo Chillida to mention a few.

My sculptural direction consists of making abstract sculpture using traditional forging techniques and tools, applying the principles of Chaos Theory, formalizing the coincidental and emphasizing the conscious process behind seemingly random forms.

I have always been fascinated with the malleability of metal when hot. It reflects the pliable nature that of clay, having the ability to mold and shape it into desired forms but with structural strength when cooled. The forging of hot metal can create both hard edge forms and soft curves within the same element. Pressing , hammering , shaping , bending and manipulating both surface and mass is the crucial structure of my sculpture that evolves through hot forging. This process not only allows me direct control of the sculpture I make, but also allows me to draw on a historical context relative to the craft of Blacksmithing that has been passed down for over 2000 years.

Standing before the forge, to the side on a hundred year old anvil used by Masters before me, holding a hammer I made in my hand, I reflect on the past, create in the present, hammer out the future.