

For Immediate Release

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Artist Karen Rossi Crafts a Gate for A Studio in the Woods

New Orleans, LA – World-renowned metal sculptor Karen Rossi recently christened a newly created metal gate adorning the entrance to the artist retreat, *A Studio in the Woods*, located in New Orleans, Louisiana. The gate's creation was a collaborative effort between Rossi and artist Lucianne Carmichael, Board Chair and Co-founder of *A Studio in the Woods*. With two contrasting artistic styles, both artists challenged and inspired one another; they jointly conceived the large piece in small portions; Carmichael and Rossi each drew a representation and then Rossi cut out its form in the metal. This process was repeated several times throughout the gate's production. Visually, the gate illustrates the lush nature that consumes the retreat site, including local flora, fauna, animals, and insects. Its steel, copper leaf finished panels depict forest-theme cutouts, such as herons, geckos, ferns, leaves, and other wildlife. The piece appears to blend into its environment, yet remains static among the noise and movement of its organic surroundings.

The "Rossi Gate" is Karen's creative contribution to *A Studio in the Woods*. It stands 69" from the ground at its highest point and each of its panels measures 63"x96." The gate has two eight foot wide doors that swing open to allow cars through. Fabricator Roger Escude Sr. secured the piece with a metal frame, hinges, and a post for mobility. Decorative Artist Heidi Poché applied a coat of rust inhibitor paint, copper leafed it and then applied a chemical patina treatment as a finishing touch; these supplementary artistic contributions emphasize a creative community of artists working and learning together.

A Studio in the Woods is a non-profit organization located in the beautiful, yet endangered, New Orleans bottomland hardwood forest. The 7.6-acre estate is also the home of

co-founders Lucianne and Joe Carmichael. They founded the retreat with a commitment to preserving the landscape and artistic community; hoping that this haven will remain used and intact for years to come, they have entrusted the *Friends of A Studio in the Woods* to oversee their mission.

The gate symbolizes the very goal of the studio sanctuary; nature is the driving force and inspiration for *A Studio in the Woods*, under the philosophy that all art is born out of the forms, textures, and sounds of nature. Thus, the retreat encourages artists of varying media to reconnect with the natural world, and to honor it, both in their lives and their creative work. *A Studio in the Woods* is designed to provide artists with an environment and community in which they have the opportunity for creative growth, research, experimentation, inspiration, and fellowship. Artists residing at the retreat generally stay for 2-6 weeks, leaving behind one or two pieces they have created as a benefaction to the environment that has inspired them.

On October 12, 2003 Karen Rossi attended an unveiling ceremony on site. At the event Rossi added her own special finishing touch, a steel cutout to go on top of the gate; reading “A Studio in the Woods” in her personal script. Rossi exhibited her plasma cutting talents before the crowd and when it was finished, a bottle of champagne was ceremoniously poured over the piece in celebration of its completion. During the ceremony Rossi was presented with a proclamation from the City Council of New Orleans, recognizing her creative contribution to the Artist’s Foundation Collection. This special acknowledgement was granted by the Mayor’s office and bestowed upon her by city-council member Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson.

Karen Rossi has had the pleasure of experiencing *A Studio in the Woods* on more than one occasion. She is the founder and owner of Rossi Studios in Windsor Locks, CT and is recognized worldwide for her charming, highly original portraits and metal sculptures of people, places, and lifestyles. Her work can be found in galleries across the globe, as well as in many private collections. Rossi has an ever-growing licensee list, including Bernina, Great American Puzzle Factory, New Creative Enterprises, SCI Promotion, and Silvestri. Rossi greatly values her specially commissioned and personalized work, including the gate that she co-produced for *A Studio in the Woods*. Much in the vein of the retreat’s mission statement, these projects allow her to reconnect with the world around her and to keep creating, inspiring both others and herself. For more information on Rossi and her creations visit www.karenrossi.com.

ARTWORK: Karen Rossi product images are available upon request. Please send your request to Jenny Hartung at info@karenrossi.com. Please specify digital format and size.

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