

For Immediate Release:

THE COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES CRAFT & FORGE, A NEW BRAND ROOTED IN THE HISTORY OF AMERICAN ARTISANRY AND REIMAGINED FOR TODAY'S LIFESTYLE

Williamsburg Enlists Thread LLC to Develop Licensing Opportunities Across Home and Design Categories

Craft & Forge Artisan Exchange Coming to Colonial Williamsburg September 22nd & 23rd

Williamsburg, Va. - September 9, 2021 - **The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation** today announced the launch of **Craft & Forge**, an innovative new lifestyle brand rooted in the esteemed traditions of American craftsmanship and designed for a modern world. With the historic archives, museums and artisans of Colonial Williamsburg as the brand's north star, Craft & Forge will encompass a range of products for the home - everything from home décor and outdoor living to crafting, seasonal, food & beverage, and more. To further support the preservation and exploration of traditional trades, Craft & Forge gives a percentage of proceeds back to the development and education of historic trades at Colonial Williamsburg.

The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation has enlisted top licensing agency, **Thread, LLC**, to lead licensing opportunities and partnerships for Craft & Forge.

Cindy Elfenbein and **Marcy George**, Co-Founders, Thread, LLC, commented, "Thread is passionate to be a part of the development, launch, and future growth of Colonial Williamsburg's newest brand, Craft & Forge. Inspired by authentic storytelling and our rich American heritage, we are excited to represent a relevant and modern brand that embraces a total home experience for the end consumer. Bridging the past with the future, we draw inspiration from proprietary 18th-century artisan skills and artifacts – while tapping into a growing mindset that values sustainability and craftsmanship. In conjunction with our licensed partners, influential artisans inspired by Craft & Forge, and retailers, we will strategically launch products that are as useful as they are beautiful and enrich our everyday lives celebrating the artisan in all of us."

Kiri Franco, director, Brand & Licensing, WILLIAMSBURG Brand, added, "Our love of historic trades, our passion for the artisan-inspired products, and our desire to pass on artisan skills to a younger generation ignited the spark to create Craft & Forge. We look forward to partnering with like-minded brands to bring an outstanding assortment of product to the marketplace."

For centuries, the mark of true craftsmanship has been learning from others, sharing your skills, and enjoying the labor of love. Craft & Forge carries on that tradition by supporting and celebrating today's artisans through education, events, collaborations, and social media (@craftandforge). **To put this vision into action, the first Craft & Forge Artisan Exchange will be held September 22nd and 23rd, 2021.** The two-day event will bring modern artisans pursuing classic trades for the contemporary market together with the acclaimed tradespeople

at Williamsburg preserving historic methods and practices. The artisans will collaborate on site in the trade shops, sharing ideas, techniques and inspiration. Visiting artisans participating in the inaugural Exchange will include: carpenter/farmer/blacksmith **Annie Briggs (@anneofalltrades)**, artist and weaver **Lindsey Campbell (@hellohydrangea)**, metalsmith and award-winning writer **Sara Dahmen (@Housecopper)**, with a special appearance by Culinary Historian, Author, and Interpreter **Michael Twitty (@thecookingene)**.

Alligator Clouds has been retained to develop marketing strategies and launch the brand across all channels.

About The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation:

The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation preserves, restores and operates Virginia's 18th-century capital of Williamsburg. Innovative and interactive experiences highlight the relevance of the American Revolution to contemporary life and the importance of an informed, active citizenry. The Colonial Williamsburg experience includes more than 400 restored or reconstructed original buildings, vibrant gardens, world class museums, and extensive educational outreach programs for students and teachers. The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation also boasts a renowned program of more than 20 historic trades. Philanthropic support and revenue from admissions, products and hospitality operations sustain Colonial Williamsburg's educational programs and preservation initiatives.

About Thread, LLC

Thread, LLC is a full-service boutique licensing agency that offers Licensing, Brand Development, Retail Activation, and Management. An industry powerhouse that provides dynamic and innovative market-ready solutions - blazing the creative trail from strategic conceptualization to multiplatform realization. We ensure unrivaled ideation that empowers our clients – as well as leverages our deep relationships with best-in-class brands, licensees, and retailers.

About Alligator Clouds, LLC

A boutique firm dedicated to building and evolving brands and franchises for today's consumer. Blending innovative strategy and exceptional creative, principals Suzanne Kolb and Lewis Goldstein have launched scores of culture-defining brands and developed beloved programming. We imagine what could be and then bring it to life.

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