

# PENLAND GALLERY

## DANIEL SOUTO

Venezuela  
lacaravanaescuela.org

**METAL** | Sculptural and functional forged iron

**Penland Affiliation** | Penland Instructor 2022

**Artist Information** | Studio artist, founder, and executive director of La Caravana Escuela, a craft-based educational project empowering remote communities in Venezuela; teaching: Haystack (ME), Souto Studios (Venezuela)

**Artist Bio** | Daniel Souto first came to Penland in 1997 to attend a workshop taught by Stephen Yusko. After two years of living and working in the Penland community, he returned to Venezuela intending to teach blacksmithing there in his studio.

“Many years have passed since then. Our economy has disappeared as well as our currency, food, gasoline, propane, electricity, medication, and so on. Five million people have emigrated; meanwhile, the ones who stay are trying to find a new way to survive. I sold some heavy machinery I had and started a plan to take a mobile blacksmithing school to the rural areas where people see no way to keep feeding themselves—not for the lack of land or knowledge but for the lack of basic tools to work the soil.”

LaCaravanaEscuela is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to teaching the craft of blacksmithing in the Andean rural communities of Venezuela, employing an itinerant education system based on the four universal pillars of education: Being, Doing, Transforming, and Organizing. During week-long courses led by experienced blacksmiths, they train local community members to be competent blacksmiths, skilled enough to repair and manufacture the agricultural tools that they need for their daily sustenance, creating a path towards strengthening the community economy. At the end of each course, LaCaravanaEscuela leaves the members of the community trained, and provides them with a Rural Forge Workshop equipped with tools and coal. Together, these capabilities create not only a path to a better life, but also a community with a promising future, conditions that give young people the confidence to envision a personal future in the community and, therefore, a reason to stay.

Penland School of Craft | Penland Gallery & Visitors Center  
3135 Conley Ridge Road, Bakersville, NC 28705  
gallery@penland.org | 828 765 6211  
penland.org/gallery