

# BEAUTIFUL OBJECTS

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Zoe Arnold

Stephanie Bila

Eleanor Bolton

Simone Brewster

Caroline Broadhead

Lin Cheung

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Naomi Filmer

Katy Hackney

Sarah King

Maria Militsi

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Hans Stofer

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Maud Traon

Weidenbach / Klein

# BEAUTIFUL OBJECTS

It is hard to trace the roots of when an exhibition on jewellery at The Aram Gallery was first decided upon. But one thing that was always there from the start was the determination that any jewellery show was to focus on jewellery as a design object.

We began with a long long long long long list of possible exhibitors. Established jewellers, people working on the cusp of the jewellery field, product designers dipping a toe into making jewellery, emerging jewellers, graduating jewellers, jewellers abroad, jewellers at home... the common denominator being that all produced interesting thought provoking objects which were about or for the body.

But how to link these beautiful objects? We decided the best way to approach this quandary was to stay true to what The Aram Gallery is known for and focus on what we do best; revealing designers process.

Many exhibitions, newspaper and magazine articles, interviews now pay great attention to how designers do what they do; it seems as a public we are curious to get a behind the scenes look at 'how it's made', and we as galleries and museums are only too happy to oblige, adding depth to our exhibitions by attributing equal value to a material test as to a finished object. For this show, however, we wanted to approach showing process a little differently.

We did a number of revisions of that long long long long list of possible exhibitors - each edited with a few set criteria in mind. In the end we had got it down to a group of captivating objects; a selection of pieces which fascinated both in concept and material application.

In Beautiful Objects we do not explain how the exhibits are made, instead we reveal how they came about by showing where the idea for their making came from.

In most cases this [thought]process revealing object is an object bought, found or given to the exhibitor, in others it is something they have. Each, goes some way to showing our audience how these makers think about making and in so doing, help you gain a better understanding of how they approach designing.

It would not be right to introduce this exhibition without saying grateful thanks to those who helped realise it. For guidance, inspiration and confidence I am indebted to Corinne Julius. And for when I couldn't find a brass screw small enough or a light bulb bright enough, I thank these exhibitors.

# ZOE ARNOLD

**Which comes first, the poem or the object?** More often than not the poem comes first, I use the ideas and abstract imagery from the poems to feed into my pieces, and in this way add a depth and meaning to my work.

**You have said in the past that collected or found objects are used quite often in your work. Do you work systematically, collecting items for use in a particular project or do you have more of a magpie approach?** I certainly have a magpie approach. I have cupboards and drawers full of odd things, some of which will never be used, but others are so inspiring I have to be very careful which project I use them in, so as not to waste them. Although much of my work looks as though it is made of found objects, this is not always the case, often I have made everything myself, it's the mix of materials and techniques combined that gives me satisfaction.

**The composition in these pieces is very precise. Is the balance of material, shape and geometry a motivating force in your practice?** Very much so. My work is tending more and more towards that of a sculptural collage. You move things around until they sit together and feel right, they speak to you and demand attention and a great sense of satisfaction is derived when everything works as a whole.

**Did any other activities accompany the making of these pieces; listening to the radio, travelling on a train etc. or was it made during concentrated periods in the studio?** I listen to music, but that can sometimes be a distraction, or stories on the radio, comedy is a great background to work to. Anything that puts your mind into a sort of daydreaming state which is when you are most open to new ideas and flashes of inspiration.

## **1. Opinion No.1, 2010**

Antique wooden frame, antique prints, pearls, red thread, oxidised silver

## **Handmade poem booklet**

## **2. Emotions Brooch Green, 2009**

Oxidised silver, 18ct gold, picture Jasper, diamonds, antique marble cameo, mother of pearl, dyed agate, steel pin

# STEPHANIE BILA

**This piece has a symmetrical aesthetic, and your contextual objects suggest that geometric precision was a focus. Can you expand on that a little?** I was inspired by the symmetry of anatomical structures such as rib cages and skeletons which are constructed through repetition and geometric precision. My research also included looking into shells and structures which contain linear elements such as architecture. Although the pieces are quite geometrical and symmetrical, the purpose of my project was to explore themes of evolution and metamorphosis, which created a spontaneous and organic feel to my pieces.

**I'm interested in the translation of proportion between this large back piece and the much smaller bracelet. One would assume that the larger piece, worked in wood, came first as a sort of test piece for how the structure of the thing could be worked out. But then your contextual images suggest a smaller scale?** My contextual imagery (moodboard) provided the starting point to which I would explore themes such as evolution, anatomy and architectural form. I wanted to look at jewellery as a medium to redesign and compliment the structure of the human body and to reinterpret the silhouette. As a result I decided it would be best to work at a large scale and create catwalk pieces which would focus on less conventional areas of the body to adorn. These would later serve as the basis for a smaller, ready-to-wear collection made in metal, encapsulating the same aesthetic principles but on a more accessible scale.

**These pieces are an extension of the results of a design brief. What did that original brief ask for?** The aim of the project was to look at the body as a whole and on a larger scale and to create catwalk pieces that were both theatrical and sculptural. I sought to redesign the human body through my jewellery and through exploring evolution and anatomy itself focused my brief on altering the silhouette and exploring jewellery beyond traditional conventions. Essentially the project became a dialogue between the human form and design using jewellery as my medium.

**Did any other activities accompany the making of this piece; listening to the radio, travelling on a train etc. or was it made during concentrated periods in the studio?** Largely my work was done during concentrated periods in the studio listening to music (not specifically related to the work) as well as on my train journeys, as I often find that I am able to think more freely and am more relaxed when travelling.

**Bangle: The Human Body as a Landscape for Design and Intervention, 2012**

Brass with 18ctg gold plating

**Back Piece: The Human Body as a Landscape for Design and Intervention**

Beech Compwood Bendywood

# ELEANOR BOLTON

**Your contextual object is a cone of yarn. How did this raw material inspire the making of the piece?** The yarn is the material that enables the forms to be created from the cotton braid. Through stitching with it, the yarn holds the coiled braid together creating hollow shapes. I am interested in using simple techniques to create unexpected forms. In this case the yarn is the medium I stitch with, the possibilities for manipulating the stitches to create new shapes and structures is what inspires these necklaces.

**Can you say something about the scale of these necklaces?** The Red necklace is made using 50 metres of cotton braid, in this instance I set myself the rule to use this length and so that dictated the size. The technique of coiling the braid creates light-weight forms which allows me to be playful with size.

**Did any other activities accompany the making of these pieces; listening to the radio, travelling on a train etc. or was it made during concentrated periods in the studio?** The necklaces are stitched by hand in my studio, usually accompanied by Radio 4.

**Long Red Coiled Necklace, 2010**

**Blues Collection Necklace, 2011**

Both, cotton braid, cotton yarn

**Cannele Mercerised Cotton on cardboard cone**

# SIMONE BREWSTER

**You have said that the wood this Bust of African Female was made from motivated you to also use ebony in your work. Can you put your finger on exactly what properties of the material it was that appealed to you?** The natural dark colour of the wood and the pattern of the grain were immediately inviting. I feel that wood is an undervalued material within jewellery. In traditional jewellery, emphasis is often laid upon diamonds and precious stones, I wanted to use something I considered precious (wood) and treat it like you would a precious stone to reveal its beauty. So when considering the design of the jewellery, I emphasised the size of the wood and the cuts to reveal grain and colour.

**This collection is called Ebony Revolution. How important is it that an audience knows the title of the piece?** The necklaces belong to a wider collection, which began as a series of rings. The rings themselves focused upon the use of turning (lathing) as the means to generate their three dimensional form. Lathing is all about cutting wood whilst it revolves, so I felt it an appropriate word to use to entitle the collection. Simultaneously, it also refers to the Bust as it was something that my family acquired during the 60s a time of ethnic pride and social revolution. I think the title encompasses both elements of that dialogue so felt it befitting.

**You studied both product design and architecture. If pushed, what would you say is the one thing from each study which shapes your practice?** Studying and working in architecture gives you a strong foundation as a designer and artist. Your sensitivity to space, light and form are developed to a high degree. Our most influential architects are sculptors of space as well as form. I would say that when I make a piece of jewellery, furniture or an object, I approach it from the space it will inhabit and the atmosphere I want it to create.

Product design has a more hands on approach. Direct contact and understanding of material properties and the potential for material exploration is integral. Through my education and practice in product design I gained a familiarity with industrial processes whilst retaining an appreciation for the handmade; I seek to bring both to my designs and often combine traditional techniques with new technologies.

**Ebony Revolution Necklace Set 2009-2011**

Ebony, Ebonised Tulipwood, Copper, Leather, Silver

**Bust of African Female**

Carved solid wood

# CAROLINE BROADHEAD

**You have called this piece 'Wearing my Mother's Pearls'. Does this title refer to a memory which prompted this piece of work? Or is it instead a description of an act?** Both: My mother was given a string of pearls by her father, following her graduation in 1940s. The photograph on which this bracelet it based was taken at the time. They meant a lot to her, and when she died last year, I received the pearl necklace. I haven't worn them, but the bracelet came about from the idea of wearing her pearls and the memory of her at the same time.

**What inspired the choice of material for this piece? There are clear visual similarities between the glass beads and the pearls. Were you driven to match the properties (shiny, small, hard) of one material with another?** It came about from two previous works, one was a beaded bracelet following a trip to Mexico, and the other was a collaboration with my daughter Maisie Broadhead. In one of her photographs, her baby son wore my mother's wedding dress, which is embroidered with pearls and which I have memories of dressing up in when I was a child. Beading is a very exacting, needing patience and time. It is a process my mother would have been good at.

**Did any other activities accompany the making of this piece; listening to the radio, travelling on a train etc. or was it made during concentrated periods in the studio?** Definitely listening to the radio or to music, in my studio. This piece started in the summer and it has been started several times and was then completed in more fragmented moments.

# LIN CHEUNG

**Can you say a little bit about how your contextual object inspired the making of these brooches?**

Embarrassingly, this Argos catalogue — Spring & Summer 1985 — represents a period of my teenage life when I wore much of the jewellery listed, particularly on pages 86 and 87. The idea that I could so easily choose and buy my own jewellery was very attractive and at 14, I set aside a portion of my pocket money each week for jewellery purchases. I have not worn these pieces since and have carried some items around with me for almost 30 years. Inspired by the many reasons for owning and not wearing jewellery, these brooches are designed to encourage the re-valuing of old, broken, odd, unfashionable and unwanted jewellery.

Today, my outlook on jewellery has radically changed and the only reason I would buy a piece of jewellery from Argos is to relocate it in a far more subversive context and not to wear it in a conventional way. Those Argos pieces — gifts and purchases from the 1980s — are still part of my hoard but are never worn. While their form remains unaltered their meaning has changed and now represent historical markers in my adolescent life.

This series of brooches designed with the idea that each can act as a physical barrier between an old piece of jewellery and the wearer. The 'preventing of intimacy' between the object (old jewellery) and the wearer is the central concept behind this work with the brooches themselves acting as carriers of old earrings, chains or other brooches. Here I bring into question the constantly evolving meaning of jewellery and find new emotional and literal spaces for old jewellery that seems to have lost its value and potency.

**The shapes of these brooches seem familiar, but their colour and texture unfamiliar. Does recognition of form play a part in the understanding of these pieces?** Yes. The forms are based on jewellery boxes. I have used shapes, materials and textures that are associated with the display, packaging and presentation of jewellery. The bright, fluorescent colours are a personal choice and chosen in opposition to the 'tasteful' and bland colour palette often used. I am also 'highlighting' in a 3-dimensional sense; drawing attention to the significance of the jewellery about to be placed into it like underlining a key sentence with a broad-nib, luminous green marker pen.

**What techniques are used to make these pieces, is that flocked fabric?** Yes, nylon flocking is used. The solid forms are hand carved acrylic and the box-like forms are made from laser cut acrylic sheet, welded together to create the bottom and sides of the boxes before flocking. Some have soft, faux leather interiors for pinning a brooch onto or for tucking a ring into.



**Did any other activities accompany the making of these pieces; listening to the radio, travelling on a train etc. or was it made during concentrated periods in the studio?** Yes. I always have the radio on in the workshop but that never alters or influences what I have already decided to make. By the time I start making, I tend to know exactly what I need to do so I'm very focused and my hands are busy but I'm not really concentrating. The radio lets my mind wander to other ideas and other projects — it's a very productive time when the project in hand is near ending and other ideas start to burgeon in the thinking process.

**Wear Again, Again , 2011**

Nylon flocked acrylic and brass, faux leather, stainless steel

**Argos Catalogue, Spring & Summer 1985**

# LILI COLLEY

**Whilst we were discussing the display of your work you said it is as important for people to be able to see the back as well as the front of the neckpieces. Can you say a bit about why?** I always like to make things that have an extra dimension whether it changes colour with light or can be turned inside out or glows in the dark. I like to make things that have more than what first meets the eye, extra, hidden things that is seen only when you become more involved with the piece. In this case when the jewellery is taken off what lies beneath is the colour and shine of the sunlight. With these pieces they are influenced by light and so when moving around them you see different infusions of colours, shapes, patterns and reflections. On the back you can also see the workings of how it moves and fits together.

**Your references for these pieces come from Art Deco to origami to laser cut tea lanterns. I'm interested in how you transformed these seemingly disparate visual influences into these two necklaces.** I am influenced by light, we are all drawn to light, we live, eat, bathe and grow with it. Light and its spectrum of colour is the biggest influence for me including of course the ultra violet. I enjoy seeing spectrums of colour created by the glow of the sun, watching it play with shadows and shapes and colours in its path. I love the flood of colour through stained glass windows. In the art deco times they celebrated it, they celebrated electricity, the light bulb and life; they lived for the moment, as they didn't know what tomorrow brought. They used materials such as brass and Perspex they played with 3D optical illusions and black and white.

This repeated in the 60s, the materials with experiments and expressions of psychedelia and then in the 80s with plastics and geometric toys, the determinations to party and glow in ultra violet colours to be seen and enjoy music and dance in times of uncertainty. All of this is contained in the jewellery and more.

**Each piece has a unique layered construction. Is this something you work out on paper before beginning to make or do you build the piece more experimentally?** Whilst studying Fashion Jewellery at London College of Fashion I loved the 3D aspect. This started in the form of layering. As a hobby alongside my degree I experimented with origami, Kirigami and knotology (3D paper folding). I very much worked with paper taking it from flat 2D, folding and forming into 3D geometric shapes, slotting together enlarging and miniaturising also making paper move and pop up and change form. For these jewellery pieces I learnt and used Rhino a 3D package. I let the package move in a very organic way. I off set simple geometric shapes and let the shapes almost refract and change, get smaller or larger, slot together, layer and naturally change form.

**Did any other activities accompany the making of this piece; listening to the radio, travelling on a train etc. or was it made during concentrated periods in the studio?** I listened and danced to electro swing music! I played with light directing it through different materials. I read and watched programs about light and its effect on people, science and religion. I looked at Art Deco buildings in London. I spent ages looking at light at different angles! I love to really get into a new project and really like to feel it, I do this by playing! I get really involved and understand the materials I'm using. For this project the Geo Deco Collection, I used light conducting Perspex and brass for materials, a 3D computer program to make the shapes and then a laser cutter to cut the shapes out and accompanied it with LEDs and decorated with brass. I say accompanied... I spent ages working out how to fit small batteries and LEDs into a tiny place. I bought everything that had LEDs in and pulled it apart to try to understand the mechanics, I eventually made a tiny homemade switch actually, I'm not finished with LEDs - its unfinished business I will return to them.

Initially I would have liked to use glass for this project but I moved to translucent Perspex because of weight and dangers of glass as jewellery.

Glass and Perspex are looked at in very different ways and I wanted to enrich the Perspex. I layered it and worked with it to give it the feel of stained glass windows. I played a lot, trying to get the balance, and then there was a point when it came together for me, I felt like I was almost painting with the colours and materials and it suddenly seemed to fuse together, at this point I was happy!

**Octo Deco LEDs Neckpiece, 2012**

**Blue Deco LEDs Neckpiece, 2012**

Both, perspex and brass

**Perspex light and reflection installation**

# NAOMI FILMER

**Can you give a bit of background to this piece?** “The Ball in the Small of my Back” was commissioned by Alexander McQueen for his catwalk show of collection S/S 2002. McQueen asked me to make bubbles that capture the negative space around the torso of a flamenco dancer. Looking a flamenco dancer in action I was particularly drawn to her expressive hand movements, and so this bubble was a way of capturing both the space in the arch of the back, but around the hands in motion.

**This piece was designed to be held in the titled place, to hold the models hands at a particular position. So, the wearing of the object for the wearer is not an aesthetic one. You have said previously that you’re interested in this interaction between flesh and object more so than just the object. Do you think that personal focus inspires the materials you use?** Yes, my choice of materials are essential to aid both sensation and visual impression of the work i make. Impact on flesh aswell as to the eye is important to me.

**How is this work made?** The glass was hand blown. The metal element was initially carved in wax, then electroplated in copper which was then silver plated. The two elements are connected with a silicon seal.

**Do you see there as a difference between ‘about the body’ and ‘of the body’?** To me the difference would be between making a direct and clear reference, as opposed to an alluded reference.

**There is a technique in glass moulding called slumping. Was it your intention to evoke this method of making in Suspended Body Scapes without using it? Or is the slumped posture of these pieces strictly linked to bodily postures?** The physical nature of these objects is a result of the process of blowing molten glass into and over moulds. I dont perceive them as slumped, but more as gravity driven....oozing and languid. For me they refer to anatomical organs, feotus and phalluses, rather than bodily postures.

**Can you say a little bit about the colouring of these pieces both of the glass and leather?** Fleshy hues are used in both glass and leather to reference skin; a delicate and light impression of body, contrasting the strange drooping forms.

**Ball in the Small of my Back, 2001**

Blown glass and electro-formed copper (silver plated)

**Plamas di Flamenco soundtrack - running time 20mins**

**Suspended Body Scapes, 2011**

Glass and leather

**Large glass jar of honey**

# KATY HACKNEY

**Your contextual object for this piece is a child's toy. Have other works been similarly inspired or is that reference unique to this piece?** I was given a beautiful wooden Abbatt Toy 'tray puzzle' from a family friend when my daughter was born in 2007. I loved the muted colours — not as brash as modern toys. These puzzles have directly inspired my recent colour palette. I now collect Abbatt toys, especially the wooden screen printed tray puzzles.

**I understand you predominantly use found materials in your work. Can you use a few words to describe what you look for when you are collecting this raw material?** I don't really, most of it is bought... but some of my materials are found — ie parts of old toys or old formica. I'm never really sure what im looking for, but I know it when I see it.

**Did any other activities accompany the making of this piece; listening to the radio, travelling on a train etc. or was it made during concentrated periods in the studio?** They were made in studio, I always listen to the radio in the studio.

## **Necklace, 2011**

Silver, rosewood, box wood, bamboo, formica, found ceramic objects, 18ct gold, vitreous enamel, bone, colourcore, hand dyed nylon cord, paint.

## **Box of vintage Abbatt play shapes**

## **Brooch, 2012**

Plywood, silver, coloucore, boxwood, steel, hand dyed nylon cord

# MARIA MILITSI

**What were the origins of this project?** Both projects are part of a wider theme related to objects sourced from auctions such as eBay or in this occasion Bonhams auction house, with the intention to explore questions regarding the role of value and function. By hunting down, researching, classifying and responding to incidental qualities of existing objects this work revolves around the rare and aged or the unusual and worthy of collecting.

**In this series you couple found objects with additions that you make. How is your material choice influenced by the original object?** Through my material choice - mainly precious metal, I aim to accentuate the lack of parts or function. There is always a particular quality regarding the age, condition, material or purpose of an original object that determines my choice of inspiration, redefines my sense of taste and ultimately reasons my response to it.

**The initial objects in both of these projects are not contemporary. What is it that draws you to look to the past as a starting point?** The representation of an inaccessible material world triggers my curiosity for the once contemporary and obtainable object.

**Did any other activities accompany the making of these pieces; listening to the radio, travelling on a train etc. or were they made during concentrated periods in the studio?** The pieces were made during concentrated periods in the studio or whilst listening to BBC Radio 3.

## **Pin Holders, 2009**

Antique pin cushions, gold

## **57 Edward Spencer for the Artificers Guild, 2012**

Altar Cross/ Circa 1910, silver

## **Original Auction Documents**

Goldsmiths Library Portfolio KK Design 1201

Image ©The Goldsmiths' Company

# SARAH KING

**The process you used to make these pieces is unique to your practice and something you developed in tandem with the material you use, is that right?** The pieces that I have selected to show are all cast of Bioresin, which are then hand finished. It is a straight forward approach but also a very versatile method of form making with this particular material. There are also certain signature techniques I have developed within this method for the production of the hollow Bioresin forms. Now I am currently working on new pieces that aim to produce outcomes that extend the geometric complexity of the forms that are constrained by the materials limitations in the casting process and that also begin to address my conceptual aims of greater integration of the negative spaces within the translucent materiality. So yes, I do view my processes as unique to my design practice and to how it develops with the materials I use.

**Why did you choose this photograph by Kathryn Faulkner as your contextual object?** Originally when asked to select one “contextual object” I felt it was an impossible request as all my work is a synthesis of many interests and influences. Many objects and books that I have collected reflect these interests and I could have brought armfuls of monographs relating to abstraction, as well as materiality and structure. My short list included a series of African wooden head rests, artist Kim Lim’s folded paper pieces and the high-tech insulating foam used by NASA, Aerogel. However I did in the end decide on one. I have chosen this photograph as it relates to a specific aspect of my work that I am currently thinking about. Which is the combination of somewhat solid objects and the ephemeral qualities of light and the effects affects produced when the two interact. The image is from a photographic series that was produced when glass objects from Kettles Yard in Cambridge were placed directly on UV sensitive paper.

**Why did you start using Bioresin?** I never work from a blank sheet of paper as everything I make is part of a continuum or rather a feed back loop of process and outcomes that evolve out of previous pieces and material experimentation. I originally started using Bioresin after experimenting with stone, wood and more common resins. I was in need of a material that I could use in a sculptural process but would also give me the material effects I sought. Stone was limited in colouration and required a whole lapidary workshop, wood was always opaque and brown. In my production ranges I have used a lot of subtly coloured resin in combination with silver. For the Light Constructions series that I am showing I wanted to explore purely abstract and spatial qualities, colour felt too much of a distraction. There were many influences at play, especially an interest in seriality and my enduring fascination with the work of artist Robert Ryman. My main interest is in exploring how the light interacts with the intricacy of the forms and the translucent materiality of the pieces.

# LINA PETERSON

**Can you say something about the materials you have used in these pieces; one manmade, one naturally occurring?** The brooches are made using wood shavings from painted lime wood and coloured resin. The resin is poured on top of the wood shavings and the brooch pin inserted in to the resin, allowing for all the components to be held together once the resin has cured. I like the immediacy of this way of working and the added element of unpredictability. The materials are used for different reasons, I enjoy working with colour and the wood works well with paint. These pieces are partly about the contrast between the natural wood and the painted wood. The resin is also great for colour, but in this instance I also use it for its bonding properties. I enjoy very much how the resin begins to ooze out between the wood shavings.

**In these pieces and previous collections you have experimented with texture. Indeed, your contextual object is one big piece of texture! Is this a quality you seek to explore in your work?** I think it's definitely something that is a big part of what I do. I'm interested in material qualities and the inherent language that we associate with different materials and I enjoy playfully turning these elements on their head. Part of that process is the way I approach working with a specific material and paying attention to surface finishes and textures. I use a range of traditional craft techniques to make my work, such as embroidery, woodcarving and silversmithing techniques, but I always use these techniques so that the outcome has a sort of deliberate naivety. Part of the process of making is to develop an awareness of when an object becomes intriguing and the exploration of different textures is a part of that process.

**I'm aware that the shavings used in these brooches are actually the result of your making another piece. Were these pieces made in quick succession or did some time pass in-between designing?** When I made the first brooches from the 'Shavings' series they were the by-product from carving a group of painted wooden brooches. The coloured shavings looked lovely and I decided to have a go at making something with them. The process of making them happened very quickly and intuitively.

**Did any other activities accompany the making of this piece; listening to the radio, travelling on a train etc. or was it made during concentrated periods in the studio?** The pieces were all made in my studio. When I work I always tend to listen to music or the radio and although I work in a shared studio environment the actual making is a very focused activity. I sometimes make whilst traveling or watching TV, mainly working on embroidered work or crocheting. But train journeys are really best for thinking.

**Shavings brooches, 2012**

Wood shavings, resin, stainless steel

**Swedish Rag-Rug**



# LAURA POTTER

## **Alchemy**

### **Why brooches?**

If you are going to make jewellery out of soft or fragile materials, a brooch is your best option. The traditions and conventions of jewellery — the communally held rules about what it is and how it is made — are myriad. Some of these rules govern the practical aspects of making something ‘the right way’, whilst others are social conventions around the materials considered appropriate for a piece of adornment. Lead is generally wrong on both counts. Despite being a relatively valuable metal it is neither beautiful nor resilient enough for most jewellery applications. Lead is also not terribly safe to handle, and is indeed harmful if enough particles are ingested or inhaled. Yet its softness is a quality it shares with 24ct gold. In their pure states both metals are structurally incompetent for the manufacture of durable objects. A set of brooches emerged, using forms based on vague ‘silhouettes’ of Victorian brooches. These shapes lacked both detail and structure: they were intended to be as soft and pliable as the metals. The overall process resulted in pieces that are perversely delicate, despite being materially and physically unrefined.

### **Lifetime Medal 280100507863**

**I’m interested in the echoes of time invested in the making of Lifetime medal 280100507863. Initially there was the eBay search for the subject matter, which can be a drawn out process of stalking listings until the right thing comes up. Then there’s the waiting and watching for the countdown to end, followed by more waiting for delivery. Appropriately then you use an equally lengthy process; hand embroidery.**

**Were you thinking about time when making this piece and what motivated this use of this technique?** The piece is not so much about time, but more the idea of equivalence: of how our relationship to matter is measured similarly, but manifest differently.

This lot was bought when I was interested in de-sentimentalisation, or how to see jewellery for what it is rather than what it means. The two-pence piece in the ‘cash-for-gold’ envelope demonstrates this perfectly. It is an object designed to obliterate the emotional content of an object by pointing directly to its physical substance. In these lots of second hand jewellery I was looking for private sellers who were advertising old family pieces, and especially those who gave an insight into the emotional status of the items for sale. The embroidered quote is taken directly from the eBay listing: it contains no punctuation, no capitalisation and ‘jewellery’ is incorrectly spelled. This was not gold scrap for me

to remodel. I made the piece with care, incorporating some fabrics that belonged to me, and applied the quote using an embroidery technique that has connotations of female family ties, passed on with patience and love. It is true that the labour intensiveness of this process was important. If you are prepared to listen, learning to cross-stitch with your grandmother will teach you much more than how to sew. This is what I mean by equivalence: one person's lot of scrap gold is another person's realisation that they are forever in debt to their Nan.

**Did any other activities accompany the making of these pieces; listening to the radio, travelling on a train etc. or was it made during concentrated periods in the studio?** My work evolves out of my daily life: absolutely everything I do has an effect.

**Alchemy, 2007**

Lead, 24ct gold, 9ct gold

**Roll of lead**

**Lifetime Medal 280100507863, 2007**

Gold, linen, cotton

**'Gold to Cash' envelope, leaflet, pen**

# MAH RANA

**Both of your contextual objects for these pieces are photographs. One set you bought and the other you took. Can you say a little bit about how you interpret something documented into something made?** Little Differences came about from an international research fellowship in Australia, where I stayed in Melbourne for two months in 2004.

For those two months, I collated the research material that formed part of the input that underpinned my creative process. So I don't regard Little Differences as the final piece, but rather as part of a larger body of work that includes writing and photography that was about my experience of being in Australia and quickly being aware that many things around me were new and unseen before to me, but strangely familiar. And that this heightened sense of awareness stayed with me for a few days, but very quickly went - and I soon found myself navigating around the city streets, but I had stopped paying attention to what was around me - and the sense of wonder had disappeared as I now rushed from one location to another; not dissimilar to my life back in London. So I made the decision, to take my time each day and look at what was in front of me - and to become more present in the moment and to see more.

**The form and materials of these pieces seem to echo one another. For people who don't know your work, can these similarities be taken as indicative of your design approach? Or are they a unique occurrence in these two pieces?** Using block colour has been part of my visual language for many years, and paint is a direct way of using and applying colour to gold.

**What decision making process informs your use of colour?** It is normally determined by the context of the work and the references that it draws from. For Little Differences, the colour grey makes references to different key aspects of the project. It is a reference to a passage from a Wind-up Bird Chronicle by Haruki Murakami, a book that I read while I was in Melbourne. And the use of the colour grey is also a reference to how it is wrongly, in my opinion, synonymous with dull and neutral. If you look at Little Differences very briefly, one can be forgiven for thinking that the pendants are all the same colour, all the same grey, but if one takes a little more time to look again, one can notice that each grey is different from the next.

**Did any other activities accompany the making of this piece; listening to the radio, travelling on a train etc. or was it made during concentrated periods in the studio?** I have concentrated periods in the studio/workshop, but these periods are heavily interspersed with doing other things. So I think through making, reading, watching and listening. I don't regard the jewellery that I make as being final outcomes, but rather as parts of a process that is continual. Therefore most of the jewellery pieces that I make have some connection with each other, like the use of colour for example.

**Little Differences, 2004**

50 pendants, 18ct Australian Gold, Synthetic Polymer Paint

**Heart Locket, 2005**

**Open Locket, 2005**

Brass, acrylic, laminate

**Digital Prints**

**Selection of found black and white photographs**

# DAVID ROUX-FOUILLET

**I very much like that your exhibit is both an object of jewellery and a piece of documentary evidence. Can you comment at all on that?** A jewel is an emotional object. More than an expensive rock, it is its relation to our personal experiences, to special moments in our lives that empowers a piece of jewellery with the notion of preciousness. By making living jewels, I am proposing a moment of symbiotic relationship between object and body. As the wearer needs to pay special attention and care to the pupae contained in the piece he is wearing, the jewel has a direct influence on his behavior and vice versa. The essence of the jewel lies in the process of wearing it alive. Eventually, as the butterflies hatch and take off, the piece changes status and becomes a trace of that intimate experience.

**How long does it take the silk worms to weave this whole piece?** One worm can weave between 1.5 to 2 kilometers of silk in one nonstop thread to make a cocoon. This can take between 12 hours to 3 days. This piece is the result of my collaboration with five generations of worms building up layers of silk on top of each other. Proposing a structure to the first three silkworms, they quickly find their way to the spots where they can build a conventional type of cocoon. Then the next ones will start weaving wherever they want while I try to direct them wherever I would like them to weave. And so on with the next ones, they add layers of silk to increase the density and create a dense skin of silk on the structure. It is a bit like sculpting a bonsai. The tree grows and I try to give it a shape.

**And how long for the host structure to be printed?** For this piece the structure was 3D modeled on computer, then laser-cut in sheets of synthetic card that are then assembled back in the original shape. Using a traditional African lost wax casting technique that I have adapted for this project, those structures are then casted in Sterling silver. The roughness of the surface due to this casting process allows the silk to be strongly bonded when the worm applies it.

**In this piece you set up the circumstances under which an object is made, but leave the final 'making' to something else. This is a method you have previously employed - what inspired it?** As a maker, I am very much interested in the material itself. From its origin, its rough stage and through experiments and known techniques I try to understand it and control its processing as much as I can in order to make of it whatever I have in mind. But there is always this moment where the material just doesn't want to do what I want it to. This fine balance where the material claims its independence is the space where I like working.

# HANS STOFER

**This piece is clearly personal; it is a reminder of an action carried out by a family member. What inspired its making?** Thinking about my mother.

**Can you say something about the multiple imagery of the heart. Heart ended pins entering a heart shaped pin cushion?** By changing the eye of the needle into a heart you change its original purpose as a functional sewing implement. The sewing needle simply becomes a pin with a heart, a narrative object that still has the ability to pierce cloth and therefore can be worn. I was less interested in the notion of 'piercing the heart' than wearing something close to the heart - the notion of emotional connection through an action.

**Did any other activities accompany the making of this piece; listening to the radio, travelling on a train etc. or was it made during concentrated periods in the studio?** Thinking about my mother, her habits and her practical intelligence.

**Pin Cushion, 2006 - 12**

Ceramic, stainless steel pins, thread, rubber, silicon

**Black and White Portrait (Observed)**

**Hand Tinted Portrait (Applied)**

# KAROLA TORKOS

**The necklace is one of a number in your 'Changeables' series. Can you say something about the different materials used in each of this collections' pieces?** The pieces of the 'Changeables' collection focus on different aspects. The larger plastic pieces look at layering, transparency and colours. They have more of an object character and are more likely questioning the aspect of wearability. The simple reduced metal pieces also play with the layering and colours but in a more subtle way. The focus of these pieces is on functionality and wearability.

**This necklace enables the wearer to choose what colour of four they want to wear. What motivated you to leave the final wearing decision to someone else?** Most of the time jewellery is quite fixed as an object and the wearer is only displaying it in one way. I wanted to give the wearer the possibility to make a change, even if its just a small one. Having different colours allows to express moods etc. There is a bit of a thinking and playing process involved rather than just putting something on.

**Your contextual object is a children's book, were you inspired by this particular book, or children's books in general?** It was childrens books in general. Initially I took a children's book apart and made a wearable object out of it. Looking at the outcome and the functional details of a book inspired the 'Changeables' collection

**Did any other activities accompany the making of these pieces; listening to the radio, travelling on a train etc. or was it made during concentrated periods in the studio?** I usually listen to music when I work or to audio books, but I cannot recall what it was back then. A good activity to come up with new ideas is cycling I have to say, lots of ideas come when driving around London.

**Four Colours, 2006 - 7**

Silver, gold plated, low temperature enamel

**Garland, 2007**

Silver, gold plated

**Move and Match Children's book**

# MAUD TRAON

**What were the origins of this project?** The origin of the project simply comes from an unexplainable attraction to the object itself and became a point of focus - maybe an obsession for a while.

**We're showing here some of your painting by numbers pieces, but there were also other influences in this project — Woolworths, the now closed retailer and the film Pan's Labyrinth. Can you say something about how these quite distinct stimuli came together?** At the time I made these it was at the start of 'craft mania', the crisis had not yet kicked in and the perception of values was very confusing. It reflected as well in this craft mania, where you could have your own personal 10 minutes of glory by turning yourself into Monet or Picasso. There was no longer a distinction between fake and real. It was the pinnacle of bling bling really. So I suppose you put in a shaker the mass consumption (in Woolworth's case this also means your actual place in a society according to a financial point of view and therefore your place within the class system) plus an unconscious attraction to objects obviously connected to childhood, and what I first mentioned and you might well end up with something that looks psychedelic.

**The original source material for these pieces becomes a sort of morphed, decomposed version of itself when transformed into a ring. I like that in your 'undoing' of this plastic children's toy, you seem to be hinting at the damage these overly sexualised toys do to young children. Is that a fair summation of your motivations?** It was something that crossed my mind (indeed kids wear even more make up than I do!) but that wasn't the whole focus of my work. As the Little Pony developed it became the crystallisation of my questionings about a society in mutation.

**Did any other activities accompany the making of these pieces; listening to the radio, travelling on a train etc. or was it made during concentrated periods in the studio?** I work during concentrated periods, in silence just eating sweets which is important - colourful sweets.

**Little Pony Series, 2008 - 9**

**Little Pony 1**

**Little Pony Gothic**

**Electroformed Little Pony**

**Little Pony Thailand**

**Magic Rainbow**

**Painting by Numbers**

Clay, synthetic stones, Swarovski stones, glitter, copper



# WEIDENBACH/ KLEIN

**This partnership is Silvia Weidenbach and Tobias Klein, a union established in 2012. How did you meet and decide to work together?** Immediately there was a fascination and understanding about each other's work - the passion to join two creative heads and their different skills, to create something new. In today's lateral thinking society, we set out to the test, combine and collaborate in an unique setting, pushing the envelope of both professions via the medium and the technology as a combined scale-less and collaborative element. Both of us use 3D technology in a different applied way as a tool, to create new and modified unique aesthetical vision, forms and compositions. The combining elements in our collaboration have a deeply rooted curiosity and understanding of new technologies, pushing the manufacturing and design of each piece.

**I'm interested in the way you work collaboratively. Silvia, you have said that you ping pong a design file between you; you work on it, send it to Tobias, he sends it back... can you say something about that process?** We solely work over data transfer. Once derived the idea is passed on within a strict time frame - similar to a performance itself. This method of reacting and interpreting the input of the other part ensures the freshness and equal collaboration setting is maintained and secured. We enjoy the variety of thoughts and re-interpretation of the other and the created freedom of expression within the digital setting. It is a quality based on the applied craftsmanship with in the medium that allows the seamless transfer of ideas.

**Just as your working style is in effectively in two halves, so too are these latest pieces. You design what appears to be a single necklace but discretely built into the piece is the potential for it to be split into two, so creating two pieces of jewellery instead of one. What inspired this unique design?** We developed the idea to be inspired not by nature itself but by its interpretation and by its immediate cultural context and interpretation. Therefore our piece is accompanied by the first 170 images that are shown on your screen when typing butterfly and chrysalis into a search engine - a cultural hierarchy rather than a scientific anatomical drawing. We aim to combine and restructure what once before was an object that lived, through the event of breaking and revealing. Really, that one was made of two. We did not want to imitate or mimic the metamorphosis of the butterfly, yet allow a mutant to be created - not an entirely new rather a different phenotype of design. We wanted to create a hybrid - between the chrysalis and its shell and the butterfly - between the idea of digital manufacturing and traditional craftsmanship. We aim to design within a recursive cycle. We aim to design a language rather than a singular object.

**Glow, 2012**

**Beautiful Mutant, 2012**

Nylon, dye, copper, zirconia

**170 Butterfly and Chrysalis Images**

# THE ARAM GALLERY

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