

findings

Issue 59 Autumn 2014

The Magazine of the
Association for
Contemporary Jewellery



MIMA Jewellery
Gallery

Curatorial
Challenges of
Suspending
Colours

Kickstarter
Funding

Mudlarking

Collecting
Conversations
Alan Firth

Dorothy
Hogg

Sheffield
Focus

CONTENTS

FINDINGS Autumn 2014

- 2 Letter from the Chairman and Editor
- 3 The Curatorial Challenges Suspending Colours
- 6 Moving On - Kickstarter Funding
- 8 Mudlarking on the Thames
- 11 Less Toxic Alternatives to Soldering
- 13 Room of Dreams - Wendy Ramshaw
- 15 How to Get Paid Faster
- 16 Collecting Conversations - Alan Firth
- 19 Dorothy Hogg - Retrospective
- 21 Sheffield Focus
- 23 Regional Roundup
- 24 Going Digital - All Makers Now
- 26 Mima Jewellery Gallery
- 29 Digital Revolution
- 30 Everything is Interconnected - Bernard Schobinger

Sponsored by



LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN



For this letter I had initially considered reflecting on the warm, dry months since the last issue and how such weather affects us, whether we are designers, makers, retailers, collectors or academics. It was while posting off work following the conclusion of the ICONS exhibition that I was reminded that such a theme, though interesting, was far too parochial for our membership. Two of the exhibitors live either side of Australia and I'm sure they have weather issues of their own!

You will have heard already of the success of the ICONS show. Not mentioned so far was how it reflected the Association's wide representation of countries and nationalities! Though the vast majority of exhibitors (and memberships generally) live and work within all corners of the UK, I'm pleased to be reminded of our many overseas members.

I am a fervent supporter of regional groups, having seen how important they are in the UK: creating communities of like-minded creative individuals which can work on different levels, social and economic. I would hope members who are away from our shores can still feel part of the broader community; exchanging thoughts and experiences through our various media, as well as continuing to contribute to our exhibitions.

Finally, thanks again to the Goldsmiths' Company for their grant which has enabled this further edition of *Findings* to form such a rich and permanent communication for us all.

Terry Hunt



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to *Findings 59*, another expanded edition made possible by generous sponsorship from the Goldsmiths' Company. This Summer and Autumn has seen some important exhibitions and events not least the opening of the new Jewellery Gallery at the Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art (MIMA). An event that I was pleased to be able to attend and you can read all about it in Frances Julie Whitelaw's review. The collection is really well worth a visit and rivals the V&A for important contemporary pieces. Their Peter Chang Bracelet and Adam Paxon neckpiece were big highlights for me. Charlotte Verity went to the Bernard Schobinger Rings of Saturn exhibition at the Manchester art Gallery for us and Deputy Chair Dauvit Alexander took in the Dorothy Hogg Retrospective at The Scottish Gallery as well as reporting back from his mudlarking trip on the Thames. We have news from the regional groups and the newly formed Sheffield group tell the story of how the ACJ Exhibition Stain:LESS last year inspired them. Collector Alan Firth kindly agreed to open his extensive box of contemporary jewellery treasures to share with us which is a real treat. I hope you enjoy *Findings 59*.

Poppy Porter



Cover: Emily Kidson "Earrings for Vivienne Westwood" 2014. Photo: Ray Spence

ACJ Board

Chairman: Terry Hunt

Deputy Chair: Dauvit Alexander

Hon Treasurer and Company Secretary:

Dr Lynne Bartlett

Company Directors: Dauvit Alexander, Dr Lynne Bartlett, Karen Dell'Armi, Melanie Eddy, Jo Garner, Terry Hunt, Linda Lambert, Rebecca Skeels.

Patron

Lady Marie Alexander

Advisory Panel

Jo Bloxham, Ruta Brown, Jack Cunningham, Ute Decker, Mark Fenn, Janet Fitch, Jacqueline Gestetner, Joanna Hardy, Bridie Lander, Mark Lewis, Kath Libbert, Muriel Wilson.

ACJ Staff (part-time)

Development Manager:

Tamizan Savill projects@acj.org.uk

Administrator: Sue Hyams enquiries@acj.org.uk

Regional Group Contacts

East Midlands: Roberta Bernabei
r.bernabei@lboro.ac.uk

Edinburgh: Jo Garner
jo_garner.jewelry@hotmail.co.uk

Hertfordshire: Samantha Queen
samanthaqueen@mail.com

Kent: Mark Fenn
mark@markfenn.co.uk

Manchester: Charlotte Verity
mjmembers@yahoo.co.uk

Sheffield: Chris Boland/Chiara Bet
chris.boland@hotmail.co.uk
chiara.bet.gr@gmail.com

Sussex: Hannah-May Chapman
info@hannahmaychapman.com

Wales: Clare Collinson
clarecollinson@hotmail.co.uk

Wessex: Gill Mallett gillery@btinternet.com

ACJ Contact Addresses

Post: ACJ, PO Box 37807, London SE23 1XJ

Email, membership and general enquiries:
enquiries@acj.org.uk.

Development and Projects:

projects@acj.org.uk

Website: www.acj.org.uk

Proposals for *Findings 60*, Spring 2015 are welcomed by the Editor; info@poppyporter.co.uk. Copydate for material for *Findings 60* will be 1 March 2015.

Findings 59 is edited by Poppy Porter, Copy Editor Linda Lambert, Advertising Editor Tamizan Savill and designed by Ian Scaife. Published by The Association for Contemporary Jewellery, ISSN 2041-7047 Printed by The Dorset Press

THE CURATORIAL CHALLENGES SUSPENDING COLOURS

Laura Bradshaw-Heap

The first ‘Suspended’ exhibition – which became my whirlwind introduction to curation – began within Gabi Green’s small gallery in the Westend of Munich in 2012 during the week of Schmuck, that informal, half secret rollercoaster ride of a week of jewellery exhibitions and ‘happenings’ that infiltrates the city each March.¹

I began with one concept: to take away the plinths and glass that so often create barriers between viewer and object and to suspend jewellery from threads. Previous experience of this Schmuck-fest had witnessed the viewers (mainly jewellery students or jewellery practitioners) dissecting each object with their eyes, mentally de- and then re-constructing each piece, hungry to understand the meshing of concepts and techniques on show. So the initial idea was pretty simple: to display jewellery with the minimum amount of props in a way which enabled the viewer to see as much of each item on display as possible.

This exhibition was originally intended to be a one-off, yet somehow I was soon planning the next. Whereas the first ‘Suspended’ was a stand alone exhibition, a strong desire to keep things fresh resulted in the following two becoming touring exhibitions which used colours as themes, had juries, were on show in a number of different venues in different countries to be viewed by many different audiences. The evolution of the ‘Suspended’ exhibition has been a sometimes fast, sometimes slow process over the course of three years, an obsession which has taken me on a journey I would have never dreamt possible, one of which once this final tour of a total of ten exhibitions is finished will have reached seven different venues in five different countries.²



Suspended in Pink Munich. Photo: Mitchell Kohler

continued >

FEATURES

> continued from previous page

When I began this venture I naively thought I could simply reproduce the same exhibition in multiple venues. It seemed a logical step – create an exhibition and show it multiple times. Indeed, this is basic economics: capitalising on an initial investment of time and funding, through increased promotion through a variety of venues to increase the audience footfall.

Yet after the first ‘Suspended’ exhibition as I planned the next ‘Suspended in Pink’ exhibition in Birmingham what began to become apparent was that there was nothing ‘simple’ about reproducing an exhibition designed for one venue to fit into another. In fact I soon discovered, that although I could bring an exhibition to a different venue I could never reproduce it. This is because each venue has its own ambiance, sound, shape and feel. All its subtle (and not so subtle) differences reshaped the feel and presence of the exhibition on show. And, as each of the selected items of jewellery formed a conversation with each other, these conversations shifted and altered in accordance to each new hanging, composition and venue. In essence each venue demanded a re-curation, which in turn revealed new expressions, moods and connections between each individual piece and within the exhibition as a whole.

And this is the key: as a curator you curate a space, not just objects within a space. This seems an obvious statement but one that I think is sometimes overlooked within this object-focused discipline of jewellery. We have for so long sought white walls and a ‘blank canvas’, to allow our work to ‘speak for its self’, an ethos that on the surface ‘Suspended’ could be seen to epitomise with its emptied out gallery spaces and bare walls.

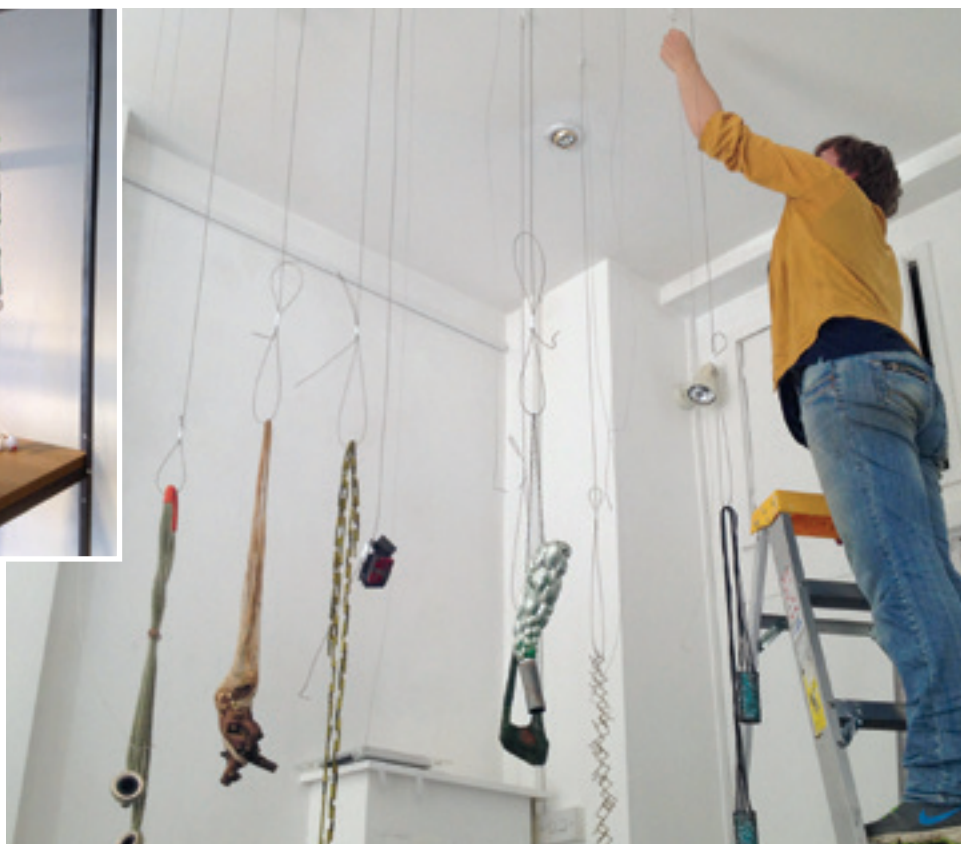
The reality however is that this desired ‘white cube space’ is not the blank canvas so sought after, with each venue strongly infused with its own historical inferences, connotations and associations. The physical size, shape and past use of a space all affect how we view it and this in turn refracts against the work we choose to show in it. And as the objects we display speak to the items and props that surround them, they also speak to the space which they inhabit. Ceiling height, room size, changes in light, floor colour texture and sound dramatically alter the mood and ambiance of the overall exhibition, and of the work on display.

I have had the pleasure of watching the ‘Suspended’ exhibitions in their seemingly white box spaces shift and change as at different times of the day the light hits the work in different ways, singing brightly in the sun and then casting shadows that dance in the evening. And, each white box space has demanded different framing leading to the alternating chaotic clashing and regimented rows of ‘Suspended in Pink’ and ‘Suspended in Green’ framed like chaos to its current incarnation which is currently at the Lesley Craze Gallery until the 20th September and which for the first time reintroduces its theme’s colour back into the display.

‘Suspended in Green’ is the last in the current ‘Suspended’ series, which finishes with a final exhibition in Australia in 2015. I have been incredibly lucky to be able to work with some wonderfully talented jewellers as a result from both the UK, such as Jo Pond, Zoe Robertson, Karen Bartlett and Jessica Turrell and internationally such as Jorge Manilla, Iris Eichenberg and Karl Fritsch. One of the biggest surprises of the open call format was that people I had studied the year previously, whose work I had



Suspended in Green Munich.
Photo: Laura Bradshaw-Heap



Laura Bradshaw-Heap
hanging *Suspended in Green*
at Lesley Craze Gallery.
Photo: Allyson Gee

coveted just months before at the previous 'Schmuck', were applying to be in my exhibition. Indeed if I were to have developed a Dream Team list it would not have been far off those who applied.

These 'Suspended' exhibitions have been so exciting to curate; they have awakened my unknown love of logistics and stage design and additionally provided a suitable outlet for my list-making mania.

Laura Bradshaw-Heap is a freelance curator, arts practitioner and anthropologist. She has an MA from London Metropolitan University in Design and is currently studying within the Anthropology department at University College London.



'Suspended in Green' shop pieces Munich.
Photo: Drew Markou

We have two beautiful publications available for both 'Suspended in Pink' and 'Suspended in Green', available through Chrome Yellow Books or via me directly.

For more information please visit <https://www.facebook.com/suspendedingreen> and <http://suspendedinpink.blogspot.co.uk>

¹ German for 'Jewellery'.

² 'Suspended' (2012) Gabi Green Studio, Munich, Germany. 'Suspended in Pink' (2013-2014) Jury: Timothy Information Limited and Laura Potter. Venues: The School of Jewellery, Birmingham, UK; Gabi Green Studio, Munich, Germany; Heidi Lowe Gallery, USA; Paris, France; V & V, Vienna, Austria. 'Suspended in Green' (2014-2015) Jury: David Clarke and Mah Rana. Venues: V & V, Vienna, Austria; Gabi Green Studio, Munich, Germany; Lesley Craze Gallery, London, UK; 20/17, Sydney, Australia.



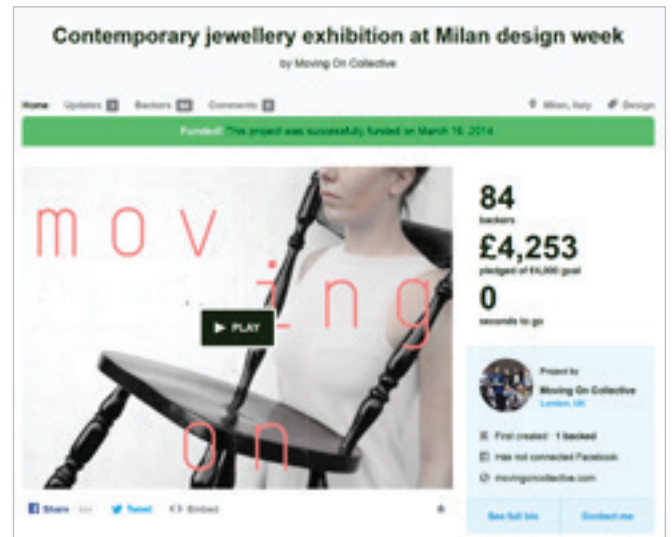
'Suspended in Pink' Munich.
Photo: Mitchell Kohler

MOVING ON: *Ceci n'est pas un bijou*

Sophie Main

In April 2014 contemporary jewellery and object collective Moving On travelled to Milan Design Week to exhibit its show 'Ceci n'est pas un bijou'. Since launching in early 2013 the Moving On Collective has attracted international attention by featuring in exhibitions at locations as diverse as the Design Museum, Schmuck in Munich and Beijing Design Week.

Continuing their mission to open up the debate around the accessibility and knowledge of contemporary jewellery and objects, the Moving On Collective wanted to present an engaging exhibition at Milan Design Week to introduce contemporary jewellery and objects to the wider design world. As with any project of this nature, funding was needed to ensure success, and the collective turned to crowd funding to achieve their goal. Using the popular website Kickstarter, Moving On got started by producing a film to sell their idea. This was a vital part of the process and took planning, time and patience. It was written by Moving On but filmed and



The Moving On Kickstarter web page



Hollie Paxton's work in the Moving On Collective 'Ceci n'est pas un bijou', Milan Design Week 2014, the result of a successful Kickstarter crowd-funding initiative. Photo: Jelka Quintelier

edited by a team of professional filmmakers. Whilst the film was being made each collective member was working on the pledges that they would send out to the backers of the crowd funding project. The pledges offered to backers varied in value from £2 to £600; the majority of pledges made were between £2 - £45. The project was launched on Kickstarter on Monday 17th February 2014 and following a strong publicity campaign the project was successfully funded on 17th March.

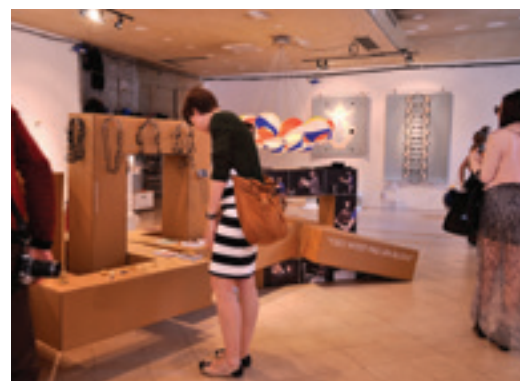
'Ceci n'est pas un bijou' was a great success. The Moving On Collective was able to get its niche discipline recognised at this major design event while also questioning the traditional definitions of adornment by pushing the boundaries of functionality, context, wearability, materiality and presentation. Among other expenses, the funding enabled the collective to design and build an innovative and complex display system which enhanced the work of each of the collective members.



Moving On Collective, 'Ceci n'est pas un bijou', Milan Design Week 2014. Photo: Jelka Quintelier

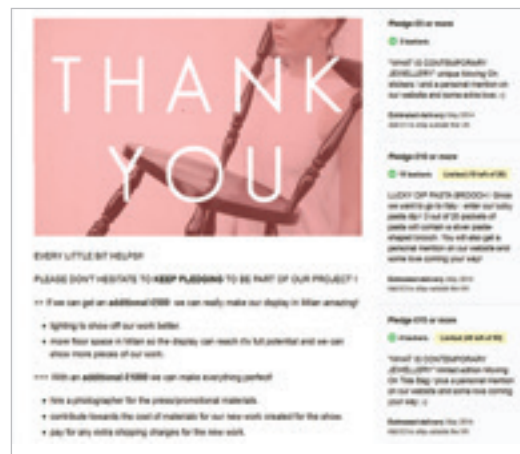
Top tips for a successful crowd funding campaign

1. Research, more research, and even more research.
2. Ensure you read all of the small print.
3. Structure your time plan and ensure you have a time contingency (once you have submitted your idea it can take time for it to be accepted).
4. Invest in a good quality film to sell your idea.
5. Consider what will happen if you are unsuccessful.
6. Include a good range of pledges, both in terms of cost and appeal.



The Moving On Collective display at Milan Design Week 2014. Photo: Jelka Quintelier

Moving On Collective Kickstarter web page - thank you.



The Moving On Kickstarter campaign can still be viewed at:
[kickstarter.com/projects/106376386/
 contemporary-jewellery-exhibition-at-milan-design](https://kickstarter.com/projects/106376386/contemporary-jewellery-exhibition-at-milan-design)

movingoncollective.com
 @MovingOnEvents
facebook.com/MovingOnCollectif

MUDLARKING ON THE THAMES

Dauvit Alexander

Almost a year ago my friend and fellow-jeweller from North Carolina, Madelyn Smoak¹, contacted me and asked about ‘Mudlarking’, something she had discovered online and which she was keen to experience. I had only once heard the term previously in the context of a mawkish 1950s film, *The Mudlark*^{2,3} and I would never have suspected what was about to unfold ...

Mudlarking is the scavenging of discarded objects from the banks of a river, specifically, the Thames in London. It appears that this has gone on since the 18th Century and that it used to be a way for impoverished children to make some sort of a living. Historically, the Thames has been London’s rubbish dump and increasing industrialisation along the shores of the river meant that factories would tip all manner of waste into it, leading to vast quantities of materials being deposited in the river mud – materials as diverse as ceramic pot-lids, broken bricks, metal buttons and bones. All of these objects still appear on the shores and can be found today.

Madelyn’s introduction to the idea of Mudlarking was through the work of Alexandra Abraham – now retired from jewellery – who made work almost exclusively from her finds on the Thames.



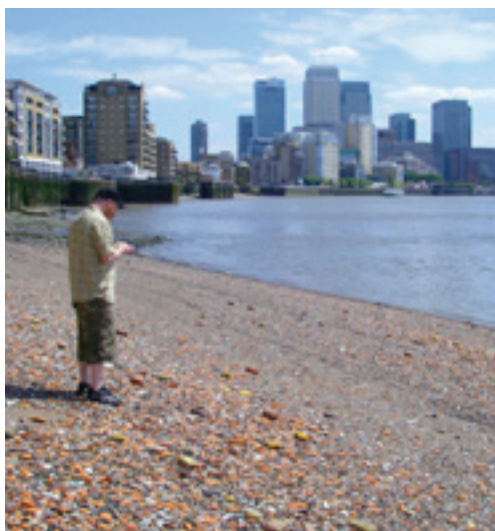
Work by Alexandra Abraham, made from fragments found in the Thames. Photo: Amanda Maddox

Alexandra couldn’t join us on our trip but she helped us enormously with our expedition. We set off on a baking-hot day to London’s Docklands in our wellies and rubber gloves to see what we could find. The first surprise was the sheer volume of material available. I had no idea what to expect – from knowing about Alexandra’s work, I had expected lots of shards of pottery and glass but I had not expected to find quite so much rusted iron (nails, springs, cogs...) or quite so many pipe stems. It was the pipe stems to which I was instantly drawn and a bit of post-mudlark research told me that they are effectively the ‘fag ends’ of the day. Porcelain tobacco pipes from the late 17th Century through to the early part of the 19th Century were sold ready-filled with a plug of tobacco and while they could have been re-used, they were more often discarded after smoking. A real prize for mudlarks is the finding of a complete pipe or even just a decorated pipe bowl. We had no such luck, but the stems themselves fascinated me and I collected over 100 in about an hour.

One of the things which appeals to me about the pipes is that they are a real connection to the past. That ‘somebody has actually drawn a breath through those pipes’ as Alexandra puts it in her video.⁴ We found a lot of fascinating objects, from a not-very-old bottle decorated with camels to preserved bones and ceramic shards.

Using the pipe stems from the shore is nothing new. Bettina Dittlmann used them to make a necklace, ‘Millennium Bridge’ when she was visiting artist at the RCA in 2005 and the piece can be seen in the V&A permanent collection⁵ but I was determined not to follow in the footsteps of those who use them like beads, looking more to find a way of utilising not only their hollow-form, but also their colour and even sound.

Mudlark on the Thames at Docklands. Photo: Dauvit Alexander



On the day we visited the Thames, we also went to the Docklands Museum, where I was absolutely blown away by a pair of 15th Century brass life heads from western Africa.

After researching these heads more fully – and there is a fascinating article about them on the Radio 4 ‘History of the World in 100 Objects’ website⁶ – these heads became the source of the idea for the development of the piece: a piece which looked to Africa – necessarily referencing the slave trade – while avoiding the obvious ‘tribal’ or ‘primitive’ nonsense which these very heads helped to dislodge from the European psyche at the time at which they were discovered (around 1910). So it was that I came to make ‘Ko si Iruufen’.⁷

Although apparently simple in construction, this piece is one of the most involved that I have ever made, each element (82 in all) requiring two cast elements, eight jump-rings and 12 solders. It took almost a week to construct, including the meticulous cleaning and disinfecting of the pipe stems. One surprising element of working with these was how tough the porcelain is: it is possible to solder next to it, polish near it and to clean it in an ultrasonic.



Alexandra Abraham
in her studio.
Photo: Amanda Maddox



Finds from the Thames.
Photo: Davit Alexander

continued >

FEATURES

> continued from previous page



15th Century brass life heads in the Docklands Museum.
Photo: Davvit Alexander

If this article has inspired you to have a look, do be aware that while it is enormous fun, there are rules about mudlarking and it is not acceptable – or even legal – to go to the shore of the Thames and start digging or using a metal-detector. If you are interested in trying mudlarking for yourself, it is strongly recommended that you read up on both the legislation and the etiquette of doing it. The people we met were polite and helpful and it is only right that we respect the law and others when joining in. There are lots of good guides online, from the rules of the Port of London Authority⁸ to useful blogs.⁹ Do make sure that you are aware of the tide times too as there is a danger of being trapped by the rising tide.

Ko si Iruufen, Collar made from porcelain pipe stems found in the Thames, silver, sapphires, spinels and garnets. Photographer - Simon Murphy, Model - Kirstin Norma Beaton, Hair and Makeup - Sam Hendry



¹ <http://www.madelynsmoak.com/#home>

² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Mudlark

³ <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0042757/>

⁴ A video of Alexandra and her work can be seen at
<http://www.racollaborations.co.uk/exquisite-memories/4570125914>

⁵ <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O145878/millennium-bridge-necklace-dittlmann-bettina/>

⁶ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/ahistoryoftheworld/objects/Z1CgMudYTJWzpTi-TW1IAA>

⁷ Yoruba for “No Smoking”.

⁸ <http://www.pla.co.uk/Environment/Metal-Detecting-and-Digging-on-the-Thames-Foreshore>

⁹ <http://mudlarking.blogspot.co.uk/2012/04/thames-mudlarking-rules.html>

Health and Safety in the Studio: Less Toxic Alternatives for Soldering

Christine Dhein

Creating and using procedures and working methods that ensure health and safety are cornerstones for building a long career as a working jeweller.

Identifying hazardous chemicals and practices in the studio is the first step to creating a safer working environment. Once hazards have been identified, eliminate the process whenever possible, or substitute a less-toxic alternative, limit the time and frequency of exposure, and use personal protective equipment and ventilation.

For most jewellers, soldering is a common procedure that cannot easily be eliminated. Many flux and pickle solutions used during soldering contain ingredients that pose health hazards. Others offer less toxic alternatives. Use the information in this article to make more educated choices about the chemicals you use and implement procedures to protect your health.



Flux

Fluxes often contain fluoride or chemicals in the fluoride family. Fluoride reduces the melting temperature of flux, making flux flow readily at the temperatures required for soldering. However, breathing fluoride fumes is toxic to your health. While health and safety issues are very important, other factors such as the working properties and cost must also be considered. Several flux options that do not contain fluoride or other chemicals in the fluoride family include a traditional borax cone and Firescoff. EazyFlo is a commonly used flux that does contain chemicals in the fluoride family. Below is an overview of these fluxes including working characteristics, cost and health concerns.

Borax Cone

The major benefits of the traditional borax cone are that it does not emit any toxic fumes and it is currently one of the most economical options on the market. For those who have grown accustomed to the simplicity of opening a jar of liquid or paste flux, using the borax cone may take some getting used to. The pointed end of the solid, cone-shaped cake is held in the hand while the larger end rests in an abrasive ceramic dish or on a granite slab. Add water to the dish and grind to create a paste of the desired consistency. The paste will dry out between uses. Add more water to thin or reconstitute the paste. During soldering, the flux flows well at the viscosity temperature of 745°C. With proper storage and handling, the cone will serve for many years of use. Health hazards are minimal, but this product can be a mild irritant to the skin and eyes. To prevent sensitivity, use with safety glasses and gloves or barrier cream.

Firescoff

Firescoff has many benefits, including no fluorides, no odour, no outgassing, and no health hazards with normal use. No pickling is required and the alcohol-free formula also acts as a firescale preventative. To use, the piece is warmed and the entire surface

is coated with the product, applied by spray or brush. The spray simplifies application and saves time, but uses more of the product. Firescoff can be removed either with hot water or in two minutes with an ultrasonic. No safety equipment is required with normal use. The many benefits of this product must be weighed against the fact that the quantity of the product required for the spray application and the cost make Firescoff one of the more expensive options on the market. Regardless, the cost is not exorbitant, and one must consider the value of one's health and safety.

EazyFlo

EazyFlo flux is designed to flow easily at the viscosity temperature of 575°C and can be removed with warm water. The easy-to-use, easy flow, paste formula contains two chemicals: potassium fluoride and potassium bi-fluoride, that enable the product to flow at such low temperatures. Both chemicals are very hazardous in case of skin contact (irritant), eye contact (irritant),

[continued >](#)

FEATURES

> continued from previous page

ingestion and inhalation. Do not breathe the fumes of this product during soldering. Use only with adequate ventilation and/or a chemical respirator. Safety goggles and gloves or barrier cream are also recommended.

Pickle

Chemical pickle solutions can cause health problems from overexposure. According to MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheets), sodium bisulfate, the chemical in most standard pickling solutions, is very hazardous in case of skin and eye contact, as well as inhalation. Take measures to reduce exposure and substitute less toxic alternatives for your health and to reduce environmental impact. Several less-toxic pickle solutions, including white vinegar and citric acid, can be readily substituted for the standard sodium bisulfate pickle solution. Below is an overview of these alternative pickling acids, including health concerns and working characteristics.

White Vinegar

White vinegar is an inexpensive, readily available, biodegradable food-grade acid. Use warm in a traditional pickle pot at full strength to remove flux and oxides. White vinegar works with all non-ferrous metals and is recommended for use with Argentium. Though vinegar is a food-grade acid, it may cause mild irritation to the skin and eyes and respiratory tract. To prevent sensitivity, gloves, safety glasses and adequate ventilation are recommended. This pickle solution has a slightly pungent odor.

Citric Acid

Citric acid is a natural acid found in powder form that is commonly used in preserving food. Citric pickle doesn't cause copper plating when contacted with steel. It is gentler than a standard pickle solution and does not emit odours. Mix one or two teaspoons per cup of water (always add acid to water) and use warm in a traditional pickle pot to remove flux and oxides. Citric pickle may take a bit longer than the traditional pickle solution. In that case, increase the strength of the solution to reduce cleaning time. Citric acid may cause mild irritation with skin or eye contact. Safety goggles, gloves or barrier cream and adequate ventilation are recommended.

Borax cone Photo: Christine Dhein



Reduce Pickle Consumption

Use a Small Pickle Pot – For most jewelers, the volume of pickle required is very small. Try using a small (2-3 cup) pickle pot to reduce chemical use.

Be Kind to Your Pickle Solution: Make it Last!

To keep the solution strong, avoid introducing baking soda. Rinse tongs, baskets and jewellery in a neutralising bath before returning them to the pickle. As water evaporates, add more water. If the pickle is weak, add more acid. Strain the pickle solution through a coffee filter to remove particles and debris. With care, a pickle solution can be used for many months up to a year before it needs replacing.

Follow Hazardous Waste Disposal Procedures

The job of pickle is to remove flux and oxides (generally copper oxides) from the surface of the precious metals used in jewellery making. Therefore, all used pickle solutions have copper ions suspended in them. Copper is a heavy metal, and therefore, it is against regulations to put it down the drain. All spent pickle, even biodegradable and/or neutralised pickle solutions must be disposed of properly. With all less toxic alternatives, be sure to read the MSDS and use proper ventilation, safety and disposal procedures. Hazardous waste disposal procedures vary by region. Check with local government and sanitation agencies for information.



About Christine

Christine Dhein is a jewellery designer, author, editor, educator and founder of *Green Jewelry News*. She is currently writing a book about environmentally friendly materials and studio practices to be published by Brynmorgen Press. She is the former assistant director of the Revere Academy of Jewelry Arts, in San Francisco, where she developed the curriculum for the first 'green' jewellery class, a subject about which she writes, lectures and teaches internationally. She has also produced two instructional DVDs on the ancient Korean technique, Keum-boo, which include information on how to recycle gold in a small-scale jewellery studio. Christine's jewellery has been featured in numerous books and magazines, exhibited internationally, and is included in the permanent collection of the Museum of Contemporary Craft.

Rooms of Dreams

Wendy Ramshaw

MIMA Middlesborough
12 September – 4 December 2014
Poppy Porter

The curators at the Middlesborough Institute of Modern Art clearly had their focussed planning heads on when they made sure a visit from Wendy Ramshaw's touring exhibition, 'Rooms of Dreams' was to coincide with their new jewellery gallery opening. It is a retrospective of the life's work of one of the best known characters in contemporary jewellery that has been touring since 2012.

So, down the rabbit hole we went to a world where scale seemed to have been turned on its head. There were tiny models of her gate designs, sculptures that looked as if her signature stacking ring stands had grown overnight into giant chess pieces and a tabletop model of the Room of Dreams itself. This model was then replicated into a full size display in the gallery. I preferred peering into the model and trying to see the tiny pieces, the scaled up version lost some of its magic in the translation.

The work itself is of course stunning. Those regimented ring stacks so familiar to any student of contemporary jewellery losing none of their polished beauty for being so. There were many variants here: ring stacks, pendants and large sculptures all echoing each other on different scales. The larger metal works were represented here too, models of her colourful gates being as immaculate as the jewellery. Her early work in paper from the 1960s was part of the story, vibrant and psychedelic but still with the geometric thread that runs throughout her work which becomes easy



Wendy Ramshaw Ring Stacks.
Photo: Poppy Porter



Early paper jewellery works from the 1960s by Wendy Ramshaw.
Photo: Poppy Porter

[continued >](#)

EXHIBITION REVIEW

> continued from previous page

to see in the context of such a comprehensive retrospective.

However, my favourite part of any exhibition is where you discover something that lets you glimpse into the workings of the mind of the artist. Two small square watercolour paintings one red, one blue/green gave a hint of the visual thinking behind her distinctive geometric style. In these moments you can almost see the artist's mind ticking over, working things out visually and that is an important connector between the person and the finished works that always makes an exhibition feel more complete.

Peering into a model of the 'Room of Dreams' by Wendy Ramshaw.
Photo: Poppy Porter



Jewellery Designer Makers



Affordable cover for your **Stock, Tools, Liabilities**
& much more!

At T H March, we offer insurance cover designed especially for Jewellery Designer Makers.

Let the UK jewellery trade's trusted experts look after your insurance needs.

Visit us at www.thmarch.co.uk

Tel: 01732 462 886
insurance@thmarch.co.uk
www.thmarch.co.uk



Visit
www.thmarch.co.uk
for more information and
get your quote today!



Connect with us today!

THMARCH/17074

How to get paid faster

Pete Mosley, Author of *Make Your Creativity Pay*



If payment for all your hard work regularly fails to arrive on time it's probably a sign that you need to tighten up your systems and adopt a tougher attitude to collecting your hard-earned dough.

First, it's all about how you set up the job and clarify expectations both ways.

Second, it's about making sure your systems are in alignment, not in conflict.

Third, it's about precision and clarity of communication.

1. Make clear arrangements in the first place

When you are discussing the details of the work and how it's going to be delivered, include payment in that discussion – don't leave it until later – it's amazing how easily assumptions get made.

2. Get a letter of agreement – if not a contract

The bigger the company or organisation you work with, the more stringent their systems are likely to be, and the longer you might have to wait to get paid.

If it's a smaller company, or an individual, then things are likely to be a bit easier. Whichever scenario you are dealing with, you must still get a written agreement that sets out all of the details.

3. Set clear payment terms

It's really important that both parties agree when and how payment will be made. All at once or in instalments? If all at once, when? If instalments, how many and when? And what will trigger the payments – what must be delivered at each stage? Ask for bank transfer rather than cheque – this can cut down the time that the payment takes to clear into your account.

4. Get a purchase order right away

Ask them to send you a purchase order straight away – or at least supply you with a purchase order number – this goes on your invoice and some organisations will simply not pay if this detail has been missed off the invoice.

5. Invoice immediately – or as soon as is prudent

Don't hang about – get the invoice sent to them – by email or by post (sometimes both) as soon as you can.

Getting an invoice into the system early can save a lot of grief later on. Check everything. About 2 weeks before you are expecting to be paid, ring them up and check if your invoice has been signed off and is in the system – they should be able to tell you the exact date when it will be paid.

6. Make your invoices clear and simple

I'm always astounded by just how many people don't really know what an invoice should have on it. It should have all of the following:

- Your logo/company name
- If you are a limited company, your company registration number.
- Your address, email and telephone number.
- Your invoice number – this is your identifier and you should keep a list of invoices sent anyway.
- Their purchase order number – that's their identifier and they will give that to you.
- The date of invoicing
- A description of what you are invoicing for.
- The amount, referencing any contract or letter of agreement.
- If it's one of a number of instalments, which instalment is it?
- The date you expect it to be paid.
- The name the payment should be made to.
- Your bank name, sort code and account number.
- How you want to be paid – e.g. by cheque or bank transfer.
- Your payment terms – 28 days, immediately, or whatever you agreed in the contract/letter of agreement.

Whatever you do, follow the payer's instructions for invoicing – they are usually set out on the purchase order. Send it exactly where the invoicing department asks you to.

Have you got a favourite technique for speeding up payments?

For other handy business tips, read Pete's blog at www.petemosley.com

Collecting Conversations - Alan Firth

Poppy Porter

Alan Firth is an enthusiast and collector of contemporary jewellery and when I spoke to him earlier this year he had just celebrated his 80th birthday at the home of his friends. He has collected over the years, first with his late wife Pat and latterly with his friend Judith.

Alan came to jewellery via studio ceramics. He and Pat began looking for a little quality and luxury in the objects they surrounded themselves with in the 1970s. Having no children they had 'A bob or two here and a bob or two there' to buy moderately priced artworks by now well-known studio potters like Hans Coper. However, it was on a visit to the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1986 that they saw a ring and pendant by Cathy Harris. Alan said, 'It was on a small stand, an unconventional thing with a painterly appearance. An odd striking thing, made of plastic. Pat loved it so we bought it.'

Their first purchases were not made of precious materials and they continued to buy what appealed to them, items such as some plastic arm pieces by Susanna Heron. There was no thinking about the difference between precious and non-precious materials; Pat and Alan were more interested in the ideas and the striking design a piece had. They continued to collect throughout the 1980s, usually buying non-precious pieces. It was not until 1990 that they realised they had started a collection and from then on they both mainly saved their appreciation for contemporary jewellery.

The 1990s saw Alan and Pat consciously start to collect significant works by artists such as David Watkins and Wendy Ramshaw. Of Wendy Ramshaw's work Alan says, 'We bought one of her Ring Stands. It is plain and simple and lovely for that, a plastic stand with five silver rings. It just fitted our view of things.' He also purchased 'Orbits', an important and spectacular piece from Wendy (made from nickel and resin). Clearly one of the favourites in his collection, Alan often wears this piece out and about. Other acquisitions included a Joanne Tinker necklace, made solely from chocolate wrappers. Alan and Pat fell in love with its naive innocence and precious aura.

Their collecting picked up pace in the 21st century with their purchase of a Peter Chang piece from the Walker Gallery in Liverpool. They did not realise any were for sale but a little investigation revealed that three or four that were not listed from The Scottish Gallery were indeed available to buy. This was a memorable time when appreciation of the extraordinary outweighed the considerable expense!

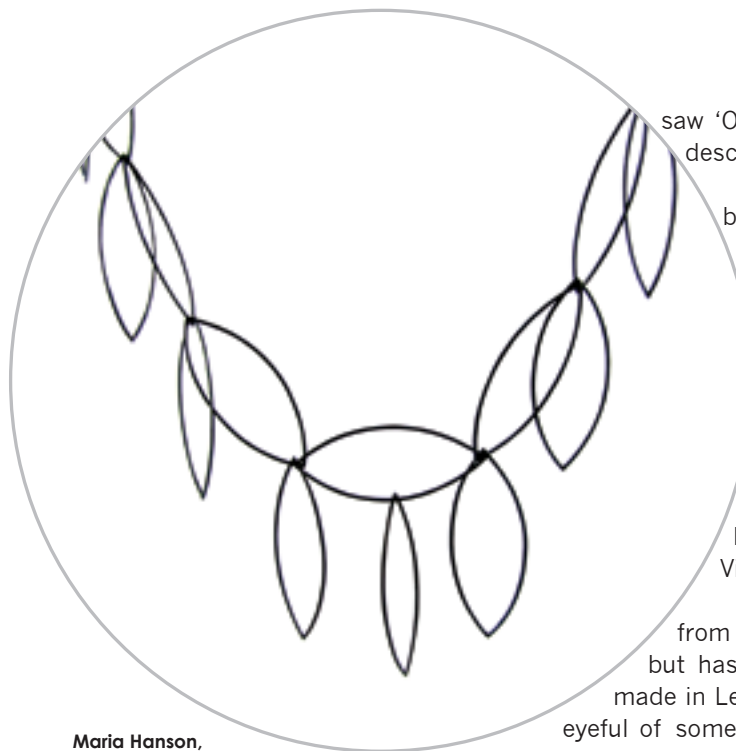
Of course, all pieces were bought to wear, mainly by Pat but Alan also wears the works and lends them to friends to wear. They are a statement of intent, a way of signalling to the world that they loved art, in fact they loved it so much they would sing its praises by wearing it. Alan is an advocate of going to art events and dressing appropriately both in the past with Pat and more recently with Judith. They love to go



Alan Firth

to arty gatherings wearing some of the collection: a recent visit to see Grayson Perry's tapestries 'The Vanity of Small Differences' showing at Temple Newsam house in Leeds saw Judith wearing a spectacular Adam Paxon neckpiece.

The galleries he visits are important as signifiers of the quality of contemporary jewellery in the UK. Lesley Craze and Kath Libbert are singled out as particularly important in his collecting story. They are both galleries that carry a range of the very best contemporary jewellery artists and Alan refers to them as sources from which he has looked and learnt. One of his major purchases came from Kath Libbert's 2008 exhibition Now & Then. Adam Paxon had won the Jerwood Prize jointly with Dianne Cross the previous year with his characteristic, acrylic jewellery reminiscent of sea creatures. The submissions had been touring and Alan



Maria Hanson,
Leaf I, Oxidised white
metal, 1998.
Photo: The Scottish Gallery

saw 'Orgasmaplode' at the gallery and decided to purchase it. He describes the artist as 'making the material sing'.

His interest in the human element to collecting jewellery was brought to the fore when the Brodie-Smith Collection came up for sale after Mr Brodie-Smith passed away in 2012. Alan went to have a look at the pieces in The Scottish Gallery and several pieces had a sentimental pull for him, having a direct relevance to Pat who had also passed away in 2012 after a long illness through which Alan had cared for her. However, he also appreciated that their previous owner had once had the same love for the pieces as he did. His collection grew by nine pieces that day including four major neckpieces by Susan May, Maria Hansen, Anne Finlay and Adam Paxon, brooches by Joel Degen, Elizabeth Holder and a necklace by Vicky Amberey-Smith

Alan is always alert to the possibility of acquiring new works from a variety of sources. He does not just purchase from galleries but has found works in unusual ways. One notable purchase was made in Leeds. He was walking past a pawnbrokers when he caught an eyeful of something that made him stop suddenly to look. There hung on some fabric was some incredible jewellery that caused him great excitement. Could it be true was he looking at an authentic John Donald from the 1960s? Alan took Pat to take a look. She loved the pieces. They wanted them but being gold they were expensive and they had to confirm that they were authentic. Contact with Rosemary Ransom Wallis, the curator at Goldsmiths Hall and John Donald himself confirmed that the pieces were 'as they had left my workshop'. Of course Alan purchased these pieces for his collection. He was gratified when later meeting the director of the pawnbrokers at an antique and collectors fair the director commented that, on reflection '... we should have thought more about it'. A bargain had clearly been had in his eyes.

Collecting jewellery is not exactly the cheapest of pastimes but Alan says of the financial side, 'We only bought what we could afford but something else always



One of Alan Firth's
 jewel boxes containing
 the 1969 John Donald
 sapphire, diamond and
 gold bracelets/brooches/
 choker and earrings with
 1971 necklace extension,
 Wendy Ramshaw "Orbit"
 Neckpiece and Ring
 Stack, gold and platinum
 ring by Jacqueline Mina,
 and gold and steel
 bracelet by Marlene
 Mckibbin.
 Photo: Alan Firth

continued >

INTERVIEW

> continued from previous page

comes along. We never pay over the odds. This leaves more money spare for when the extraordinary turns up.' Of course he always tries to get the best price on a piece. He likes to find high quality works and if there is a particular name he has in mind, he will always buy rather than walk away and regret it. He speaks of '... the greedy sensation that irritates when you either have to not buy and walk away or buy the piece and clear the air'. I think we have all had that desire in relation to something we are passionate about.

The rarity of opportunity to purchase is a draw for him and it is the unexpected discovery that 'is always a knockout'. It is because of this that he and Pat were not commissioners in the main; they always preferred to be surprised by the artist's ingenuity. Meeting the maker is crucial. He says 'Meeting the artist makes you more enthusiastic about their work. There is a whole world you didn't imagine existed.' Sometimes these meetings are chance encounters brought about by the wearability of the artworks. Once in the famous Betty's Tea Room in York, Pat and Alan were surprised by a looming figure pointing at Pat's necklace saying, '...mine! Mine!' It was Wendy Ramshaw.

His eightieth year finds Alan in a reflective mood – his collection is clearly a passion, a collection of memories and a connection with the creative spirit of the artists who made the pieces. He is still actively collecting, and was off to see the Dorothy Hogg retrospective in Edinburgh at the time of writing. No doubt he will see something extraordinary there.



Judith Wolf wearing acrylic Adam Paxon Neckpiece.
Photo: Alan Firth

Orgasmaplode Brooch, Adam Paxon. Photo: Alan Firth



Dorothy Hogg - Retrospective

The Scottish Gallery, 6th – 29th October, 2014

Dorothy Hogg's work has presence. Calm, confident, powerful presence. It has no need to shout or to show off; it just is.

For those who don't know – and there may be some: like her work, she does not shout about her talent – Dorothy Hogg was born in Troon, Ayrshire, to a family line of jewellers and followed in the footsteps of her father and grandfather, before studying jewellery at Glasgow School of Art and the Royal College. Her work could be described as 'minimalist' but, as Elizabeth Goring points out in the excellent catalogue essay for the show, that would be to miss the profundity of the work.

From the point of view of a jeweller, the work is exquisitely made and shows a technical mastery of every skill used in the construction of the pieces, from 1969 Articulated Necklace made from silver and set with labradorite to the 31 graduated and perfectly tapered silver rods joined fluidly and invisibly to create the 2005 Artery Series necklace to the present-day Touch series pieces, her skills as a maker are phenomenal. For the wearer, this translates into pieces which move with and engage with the body – sometimes even making sounds – an aspect of the work which Dorothy finds intriguing and of which she says, '... It must be like designing a chair, where a function defines its role. How much one can tease the function makes the design challenge interesting.'

One of the magical things about this work is that it does not require the viewer or wearer to understand the back-story. The background to these pieces is all very personal and derived from Dorothy's own emotions, feelings and life experiences but it is testament to her creative imagination that they appeal broadly beyond that, what Elizabeth Goring describes as 'three-dimensional lyricism'. This lyricism is given an understated personal touch by the inclusion of objects from her family and life in the exhibition, as well as one startling series of sketches in metal.

Remarkably, perhaps, her vision does not seem to have changed over the years, even if her forms have, from her constructivist roots, though a distinctly modernist (touches even of Brancusi) stage to her current digital



Brooch, Touch Series, 2014
red beads, silver
7.2 x 5.5 cm.
Photo:
The Scottish Gallery



Dorothy Hogg. Photograph:
John K McGregor

continued >

EXHIBITION REVIEWS

> continued from previous page



Necklace, Artery Series, 2005. silver and red felt
146 cm total length laid out. Photo: Shannon Tofts

work, the whole collection hangs comfortably and evenly together. Nothing jars. Even her use of splashes of colour – blue or red – in the otherwise minimalist metal tones is absolutely appropriate.

Dorothy Hogg is something of a quiet powerhouse and has driven Scottish jewellery design for many years, both as head of the Edinburgh College of Art Jewellery programme and as a curator of many shows both here and abroad which feature or focus on Scottish designers. Her recent work as the first craft-resident of the V&A Sackler Centre – some of the work from this residency is displayed in the gallery – saw her working with people she had taught and her impact on Contemporary Jewellery, not just in Scotland, can be understood when it is realised that she has taught some of the biggest names in the field, Anna Gordon, Grainne Morton and Grant McCaig to name but three.

It is delightful to see this exhibition at The Scottish Gallery, supported by a superbly illustrated catalogue, and to have had the pleasure of discussing it with the curator, Christina Jansen, to whom I am indebted for background information and her enthusiasm for Dorothy's work.



Inlaid Brooches, 1980s
steel and gold
from left: 5 x 3.2 cm, 8.3 x 1.7 cm,
8.7 x 1.5 cm, 6 x 3.5 cm.
Photo: The Scottish Gallery

Sheffield Focus

Laura Lou

The forming of ACJ Sheffield was born primarily out of a grassroots ethos, an enthusiasm for jewellery/personal adornment and a need to encourage and highlight a proactive cultural movement going on in a quiet but vibrant northern city. Inspiration came from the Sheffield-based 'metal festival' 'Galvanize' in May 2013. That year, along with the annual showcasing of the exquisite metalworking skills and fine examples of local makers' work, was also the centenary of Harry Brearley's invention of stainless steel and its credited history of production in the city.

By word of mouth, friendship and professional association, a small group of interconnected Sheffield-based jewellers began meeting once a month in a section of a tiny, historic corner pub. The group, some with workshops nearby, some working and travelling from home, met to discuss what they could demonstrate about contemporary jewellery and how they could achieve it collectively in a regional group under the arm of a respected association.

A diverse group in many ways, ACJ Sheffield consists of established jewellers, those in their tentative first few years and new graduates. Some makers have a strong focus on the traditional techniques of silversmithing such as wax carving, stone setting with a contemporary twist, ornate hammered surface texture and Korean surface pattern with precious metals. Others incorporate playful found objects or push the assumptions of silver clay; others focus on narrative with fine finishing or working solely in textiles with an illustrative style. Such differences would ordinarily divide but ACJ Sheffield celebrates the interdisciplinary differences, dynamism and diversity that span contemporary jewellery and hope to promote it inclusively.

With a typically 'northern' approach, the group's monthly meetings grew to become a warm, encouraging environment where opinions are expressed, questions asked (no matter how quizzical!), advice given with a

Lobster Necklace, Laura Lou,
Cotton, vintage buttons,
French knit chain, 2014.
Photo: Laura Lou



Expressions private view.
Photo: Chris Boland

[continued >](#)

> continued from previous page



'Expressions' private view. Photo: Chris Boland

kind heart and inspiration shared to keep the creative mind ticking. Soon these talks changed into a need for action and it was decided, by the group, that an inaugural exhibition would be not only a motivational tool but a great way to launch the group, get members working together, build links within the community and ultimately display and discuss our take on contemporary jewellery.

The contemporary design gallery Made North was chosen as the ideal venue for the exhibition. It is based in the Yorkshire Artspace building which also houses some of the makers' studios. (It didn't hurt that it was also just over the road from the pub where ACJ Sheffield held their meetings!) The gallery

was approached, dates discussed, plans finalised and a name for the exhibition was decided. Various suggestions for a name for the exhibition were thrown into the pot and the title 'Expressions' was chosen as it aptly fitted the group's enthusiasm, intention and holistic approach to the all-encompassing feel of ACJ Sheffield, its members and their work.

'Expressions', an exhibition of contemporary jewellery by members of the ACJ Sheffield, opened on Wednesday 20th August 2013 at Made North, 21 Brown Street Sheffield, with a private view on Friday 22nd August. It ran for three weeks and it was a great success. ACJ Sheffield hope to have similar shows in the future.



Chris Boland collection at 'Expressions'. Photo: Chris Boland

Jessica Briggs collection at 'Expressions'. Photo: Chris Boland

Regional Round Up

Manchester Jewellers Network – Group News

MJN has been incredibly busy, with a record number of group exhibitions under our belt, not least our large stand at International Jewellery London in September. However, in April MJN suffered the tragic loss of our much loved friend and treasured member Rowena Golton. Ro, a talented maker and inspirational teacher, served as our treasurer for many years, and was a driving force and concept author behind our exhibition 'Articles of Hope, Adornments for Justice'. Looking forward, MJN has three upcoming exhibitions for the holiday season in the Royal Exchange, Manchester Art Gallery Shop and Salford Museum and Art Gallery. *Charlotte Verity*



MJN Stand at International Jewellery London. Photo: Charlotte Verity



David Corbin 2014. 'A New Forest walk with four-footed friends.' This three-dimensional pendant was formed using construction and reticulation techniques in silver (partially oxidised) with 9ct leaves and 18ct dogs.



ACJ Wessex

Apart from our programme of selling exhibitions and workshops each year, we enjoy exploring our beautiful countryside and seashore to share ideas and gain inspiration for our jewellery designs. The first of these adventures took place along the seashore around Portchester Castle, followed by a very sociable pub lunch in the Cormorant in Castle Street, Old Portchester. We had a follow-up meeting to show what we had made as a result of our salty inspirations. This included some beautiful silver seaweed-like earrings, a collection of wave-influenced pieces and a silver bangle inscribed with some graffiti (complete with spelling mistakes!) copied from an 'art' encrusted old boat hull beached on the shoreline.

Our most recent excursion has been into the enchanting New Forest, where we walked with partners and pets, admiring the flora and fauna en route. A splendid example of a pendant thus inspired, by ACJW member David Corbin, is featured to the left. *Gill Mallett*

A well earned break for some of us from beach combing!

From left to right – Sarah Macrae, Gill Mallett, Sylvia Tomkinson, Catherine Thomas and Ruta Brown. Out of shot are Sharon Justice, David Corbin, Anna Vulpe and Bridget Yallup.

ACJ East Midlands

The ACJ East Midlands Group encourages members to share initiatives and experiences with particular reference to exploring how multidisciplinary practices can develop the language of jewellery. This has included investigations in glass for example. Whilst contributors may have different interests, a common factor of unification is the desire to address the body through wearable objects.

Meetings are hosted by Loughborough University, whose high-tech and varied facilities have contributed to our discussions and developments. Time together provides a good space where members can discuss ideas for new work in a supportive environment, as well as presenting physical objects for critique. *Roberta Benabei*

Green 2, nylon, enamel, cotton, 2012, Roberta Bernabei. Photo: Roberta Bernabei



Going Digital All Makers Now? Craft Values in 21st Century Production

8th – 11th July 2014. Falmouth University
Rebecca Skeels

The ‘All Makers Now?’ workshop and conference held at Falmouth University, and organised by the Autonomic Research Group, was amongst many digital technology exhibitions and events taking place across the UK this year. The constituency of the delegates was broad and as the organisers state: ‘This event was aimed at makers and researchers of all shapes and codes including hackers, crafters, inventors, designers, economists, curators and critical theorists.’ All the participants were eager to work out their focus and direction, by exploring how combining crafts and digital skills can bring about new opportunities and debates.

The event started with a two-day workshop in which the attendees were split into three groups in order to design and make a piece of work to be exhibited at Trelissick House. The teams worked extremely well together, combining skills and knowledge of a variety of digital technologies, from researching online, designing on computer, to programming and finally producing the work with computer-aided machines.

The workshop was followed by a two-day conference with a huge variety of talks and lectures, leaving all visitors in

thought, questioning and relating the digital technologies to their own work, how they will use or avoid technology.

For me the four days were a big learning curve. I felt a little out of my depth when I arrived in Falmouth having only used a laser cutter and three-dimensional printer a handful of times and really only having tried and tested the digital engraver regularly. However, I did discover I have dabbled in much more, starting in 1990 with Autocad training at University to my constant online research and development of ideas through computer skills today.

The broad area that these technologies cover was highlighted through the conference and workshops themes: Materiality and Aesthetics, Enhancing the Object, and Democratising Technology. Discussions were broad, including topics such as the use Raspberry Pi and Arduino, mass data collection, materials, 3D printing, making, crafting and hacking equipment to enable production of unique and unusual items as well as digitally augmented pieces that can communicate, listen and learn.

The final discussion at the conference was overwhelming for some, however like all tools, equipment and development, we need to select an area in which we are interested.



Laser cutter in the MakerNow facility in Falmouth University, Peryn campus. Photo: Rebecca Skeels

We cannot use or learn it all, but keeping in touch will allow us to add to our toolbox whether it is for researching, designing, making, marketing or even just for fun. The opportunities are endless and are, along with the tools, more affordable even for our lower paid craftspeople to have a go. I do not believe digital will replace established crafts and craftsmanship, but it will give craftspeople and designers more opportunities to take part in yet another area of discovery and opportunity.

It was a great four days, from which I feel I still need to record all of my thoughts from the talks, lectures and experience. And like most conferences I met a great group of practitioners. Nothing quite beats meeting like-minded people face-to-face for the debates and discussions to help our own minds and work develop further.

<http://www.autonomic.org.uk/>

Exhibition at Trelissick House. Photo: Rebecca Skeels



'In Memoriam' by Rebecca Skeels, Barney Townsend, Caro Woods, Armando Chant. 'Can objects produced through the use of digital technologies (over the course of a two day creative workshop), recapture the character of artefacts that have been displaced?' Photo: Rebecca Skeels



Dr Justin Marshall, one of the conference organisers and leader of the pre-conference workshop reflects:

'For me this conference highlighted the interest in, and need for, debate, discussion and celebration of practices which blur the boundaries between established craft activities and newer digitally-empowered "making". Projects and completed works were presented that point towards a future where digital capabilities are combined with the poetics and material sensitivity of craft in exciting and challenging ways.'



Exhibition opening at Trelissick House. Photo: Rebecca Skeels

Fred Baier delivers the evening dinner lecture. Photo: Rebecca Skeels

Mima Jewellery Gallery

Frances Julie Whitelaw

The new Jewellery Gallery within Mima opened its doors at the beginning of October. It has been a long journey to this point and I have been fortunate to see it grow and develop. Thirty years ago a new Crafts centre opened in Middlesbrough with a space for touring exhibitions and a small side gallery to house the already well-established ceramics collection. This little area also became the home for a new permanent collection of contemporary jewellery. However, there was no dedicated space for this collection to be seen in its entirety at Mima. For a few years it was out of public view, being kept in the storeroom whilst selected items would make an occasional appearance to do a solo performance.

In the early days, the emphasis of the collection was on the experimental and exciting use of non-traditional materials, which had its origins in the postwar era and took off in the 1960s, 70s and early 80s. The pieces came from Britain and northern Europe and reflected the energy of the broader design movements of the time. These colourful jewels were made of plastics, delicate paper, wood, textiles, rubber, glass, non-precious metals, string and paint. They brought new textures, bolder dimensions and made a statement: 'The New Jewellery has arrived.' Today it is satisfying to see those early pieces freshly displayed for all to enjoy.

Many of you will be familiar the book of the same name by Peter Dormer and Ralph Turner whose then position as Exhibitions officer at the Crafts Council made the location of the collection in Middlesbrough possible. In particular, his knowledge, advice and influence not only initiated this long running project but set the standard by which the collection could be built on over the following years.

The size and importance of the collection has increased dramatically since Ralph Turner's curatorship ended. For many years a panel of jewellery makers and thinkers brought their expertise to select and scrutinise the expansion and coherent development of the collection. Today, one of the immediate differences you note is that there are now many very precious items of jewellery made from those materials deliberately avoided at the outset. This has given great strength and depth to the body of work now held by Mima.

There was a period when the selection panel was disbanded leaving oversight to the then curator who fortunately made some great additions to the collection. Personally I think a selection panel would be the appropriate way for the collection to continue to achieve and maintain high curatorial standards. After

Felieke van der Leest,
Pirate's Show Off Necklace, 2000. 390 x 250 x 25 mm.
Non-precious metals, plastic, glass, crystal, paint



Otto Kunzli, Brooch,
1984.
240 x 240 x 20 mm
Wallpaper, foam
board, steel



ACJ member and MIMA Artist in Residence Jan Hinchliffe McCutcheon chats about the collection to guests at the opening of the Jewellery Gallery at MIMA. Photo: MIMA

Peter Chang Bracelet in the MIMA Collection. Photo: Poppy Porter

all, many of these pieces are no longer contemporary but of historical interest.

In the current exhibition, as well as the glorious explosion of colour in Gijs Bakker's red poppy collar, the collection also celebrates the technical achievements in fine metalworking, which we can see in Jacqueline Mina's platinum necklace or Giovanni Corvaja's gold bracelet. This has been all been made possible by generous grants and awards for the purchase of specific items of jewellery.

The opening of the Jewellery Gallery marks a new chapter for the jewellery collection and Mima itself, as this is the first project created out of the new partnership with Teesside University and generous funding from Arts Council England. What had been a cluttered storage room for both the ceramics collection and the jewellery collection (not to mention all sorts of other bits and bobs) has been beautifully transformed into a generous exhibition space. After a long wait in the dark it is now a well-lit and spacious area with thoughtfully designed exhibition/viewing options. There are smoothly gliding drawers, which light up as they are pulled out to reveal the treasures within, there are large free-standing cases to be seen from all sides and wall mounted boxes for individual treasures. It feels very fresh and accessible without dumbing down and in my opinion compares more than favourably with the V&A jewellery gallery, which can feel overwhelming and is poorly lit.



[continued >](#)

EXHIBITION REVIEWS

> continued from previous page



Admittedly this is a very different experience due to the nature of some of the pieces, but with only 100 items on show to begin with, the collection can be rotated over time. Personally I hope that Mima maintain interest in the jewellery collection by keeping it moving every 3-6 months and rotating not only the pieces on view but their location within the gallery.

At the opening it is always hard to really take everything in, so I have since taken time to go back and really look at the work and at how it is displayed. In the main I feel very positive about the gallery and the initial selection with a couple of minor caveats – the audio from the film at the entrance is an echoing distraction within the gallery and some spotlights could be redirected.

If you get the chance to visit the Gallery before the end of December you can also see a fabulous show of Wendy Ramshaw's work from early paper to recent pieces. The two events create a great visual feast of jewellery.

Giovanni Corvaja, Bracelet, 1999
Width 45mm, Wire 0.03mm diameter
Medium: 18 carat gold, 22 carat gold wire, niello

View of part of the
MIMA Jewellery
Gallery display,
drawers with hidden
treasures and one
of Susanna Heron's
1981 "Wearables"
series on the wall.
Photo:
Frances Julie
Whitelaw.



Digital Revolution

An immersive exhibition of art, design, film, music and videogames

3 Jul-14 Sep 2014. Barbican, London. Reviewed by Rebecca Skeels

Barbican Centre, Digital Revolution. Chris Milk, *The Treachery of Sanctuary*, 2012 *The Creators Project*, a partnership with Intel and VICE. Photo: Rebecca Skeels

Just before the entrance of the show, but already inside the Barbican, were some large plastic worm things hanging from the ceiling that interacted with the movements and dancing of the people nearby. (*'Minimaforms, Petting Zoo'*, 2013 Theodore & Stephen Spyropoulos). This was a good start for me: I feel that this is what digital revolution is about, computers that learn from the interaction from others and react to those movements, sounds and colours.

The first few rooms of the exhibition were dark and loud, full of computers past and computer games that someone my age remembers well – from the green dots and lines of Pong to Donkey Kong and Pac-man, as well as the ZX spectrum and Amstrad computers. This led to interactive exhibits, still in the dark however, such as crows made from old mobile phones that squawked and moved when you phoned them. The interactive exhibits were broken up with a large exhibit of how some films are now being made; this is an extremely informative piece, showing how the technology is used to develop images down to the tiniest detail to create reality and feeling.

The rooms that followed were great fun with more interaction such as creating wishes and blowing them away and making shadows that developed wings that moved with each wave of my arms. I think the only real disappointment so far was that it was hard to read any of the information plaques. Not only was it a little dark to read them, but they were all on a shiny surfaces so you had to move around so that the light could catch it in a way so that it could be read and each one was rather long to be moving it around to get the right angle.



The final part of this section was the wearable technology (don't be mistaken jewellers out there; there was no jewellery to be found I am afraid). The wearables were based on textiles, with clothes that lit up, blew bubbles and changed colour, fascinating and informative, and in a better lit area too. This is where you get a bit of a break and we needed it, having managed to take our time and be in the first section for quite a while. The next section was a little confusing and was full of kids on computers, so we were drawn to the shop nearby which was full of Arduinos (an open-source electronics platform), toys and books.

The final section was set in the basement, again a dark area, full of theatre smoke and light. I got the feeling that it wasn't quite working as well as it should. I had the opportunity to push lights around just by waving my hands, making them swing, grow and shrink. This effect however was quickly destroyed by a running child waving his arms about making the light you think you have just got control of switch off or swing off into the abyss.

Overall, a great day out for all ages and we had a super time. However, I did feel that it was missing something: to me the digital revolution is more than this. The exhibition was very focussed on play, which is never a bad thing, but what about the amazing digital advancements in medicine, science, creating and making? And of course I would have loved to have seen some jewellery.

<http://www.barbican.org.uk/digital-revolution/>

Everything is Interconnected

Bernhard Schobinger - The Rings of Saturn

Manchester Art Gallery. Curator - Jo Bloxham
Thursday 5 June 2014 – Sunday 19 October 2014
Reviewed by Charlotte Verity

The exhibition title is taken from a book by W. G. Sebald and is Bernhard Schobinger's first showing in a British public gallery. The pieces span four out of five of his decades of independent jewellery-making and total over 60 items. The earliest is a silk bobbin pendant cast in silver in 1977, while the most recent works are necklaces created this year from steel haberdashery scissors, left to him by his mother, combined with gold, Japanese lacquer (from the sap of the Urushi tree) and pearl or stone appendages.

Bernhard gave a fascinating, informal tour of the exhibition the day after its opening, providing us with an insight into some of the key pieces and their underlying concepts. Bernhard suggests his life and work are intertwined, rather than separate entities, and he is on very familiar terms with Arte Povera, Dada, and the Punk movement. However, to truly understand the ideals behind many of his works, it is necessary to be familiar with the philosophy and aesthetics of wabi and sabi, including: revering authenticity, accepting the transience of life and nature, and finding beauty in imperfection.

Bernhard's choices of materials are carefully considered; for example, the brilliant diamonds in 'Saw Blades Necklace' were not selected for their value and preciousness, but because they are arranged as constellations, and so are metaphorical stars. Recurrent materials include broken bottle necks as rings and beads, saw blades, nails, other 'ready-mades' and industrial detritus as well as lightning rods, which he retrieved from a building immediately prior to its demolition. The possibility that these saw blades and nails



Snake Ring, 2008, 18ct gold, diamond, malachite pigment, cinnabarite pigment, cultured pearl from Isehima, Japan. Private collection, England. Photo: Bernhard Schobinger

might lacerate or pierce the skin while being worn may be seen as a Punk subversion, but in fact the sharp edges have been smoothed, as these items are not only meant to be artworks, but are made to be worn.

The exhibition coincides with the release of a beautiful hardback book of the same title. The intention of the book was to document Schobinger's complete catalogue of Rings, but after discovering that many had been lost or were otherwise unavailable, the project was revised. The book presents a selection of rings, retrospectively divided into families, rather than being presented chronologically. One piece of note in the book and also in the exhibition (the most expensive item present) is a 'Snake Ring' made of gold, stone pigments, pearl, which also incorporates a large rough polycrystalline diamond. Bernhard's design called for the stone to be cut with over 100 reflective facets, but this was said to be 'impossible' and a number of companies refused the proposal before a diamond cutter in Belgium accepted the risky commission.

On the cover of the book is a photograph of a stone sculpture in Kenrokuen Garden in Japan. After the talk, Bernhard highlighted the significance of the image: the stone sculpture looks like a finger ring. He mentioned that if he'd had the forethought to photograph the sculpture from the side as well as the front, he would have considered recreating it in wearable proportions as, he says, 'everything is interconnected'.



Gold Mary's Nightmare, 2012, 18ct gold, fine gold, malachite.
Purchased by Helen Drutt-Stern for The State Hermitage Museum,
St Petersburg, Russia.

Five different bars of fine gold are stuck like projectiles in marshy ground.
Photo: Bernhard Schobinger



Man in the Universe, 2006, Japanese Akoya pearls, freshwater pearls, faceted diamond polyhedron, gold, chromium steel, brass.
Frei-Ehrensperger Collection, Zurich.
Photo: Bernhard Schobinger



MARCIA LANYON

BEADS, STONES AND PEARLS



PO BOX 370, LONDON, W6 7NJ TEL: 020 7602 2446
sales@marcialanyon.com www.marcialanyon.com