REVEALED³: SOMEONE'S AND EVERYONE'S
Every Collection Is a Story:
Four Jewellery Collections in Adelaide

Contemporary jewellery is hot. In recent decades it has become an important focus of collecting, and a wealth of museum catalogues, books and blogs testifies to the beauty, vitality and distinction of contemporary jewellery. This is especially true of the United Kingdom, the USA, Germany, the Netherlands and Italy, but also Australia and New Zealand, with their energetic jewellery communities and leading figures recognised across the world.

Contemporary jewellery collecting has been a long time coming. Humans have always needed jewellery, and what is now widely recognized as the most ancient form of art thrives in the 21st century. Because jewellery is wearable, it is portable, passing from body to body, from hand to hand, travelling the world. It is also (mostly) evident to others, and of all forms of crafting the most public in-principle. And perhaps because contemporary jewellery embodies both portability and personal identity, it has thrived over the last five decades of accelerated social change, precisely when some other forms of crafting have been faltering.

In Adelaide, just four collections suggest something of the rich complex motivations that inspire engagement with contemporary jewellery. But these selections also evoke aspects of collecting that are, to a degree, opaque, even to the collectors themselves: this is, after all, a process of discovery. There is a serendipitous aspect to collecting, no matter how systematic it may appear, a story that unfolds with each acquisition: how to account for why a collector chose jewellery rather than ceramics, or that academics Truus and Joost Daalder were working in New Zealand when contemporary jewellery flowered there in the 1970s, only to collect it later?

In fact, Truus and Joost Daalder have been collecting jewellery for decades – first antique, then tribal, now contemporary. Originally from the Netherlands, the Daalders’ long residence in the Southern Hemisphere –the last four decades in Adelaide – has inflected their collecting. Their project is classically encyclopedic: knowledgeable and discriminating, they pursue outstanding works of contemporary jewellery with boundless ardour. ‘We buy chiefly as art, and see jewellery as an important art form,’ Truus notes. ‘We are guided by the aesthetic appeal, not the preciousness of the materials used.’ Interested in key developments, the Daalders also recognize exceptions that prove the rule — Matthew McIntyre-Wilson’s 2012 Whetu brooch, where silver mimics Maori weaving, or David Bielander’s exercises in plastics that play with incongruities.

For this exhibition, the Daalders chose works from Australia, New Zealand and Europe, including international jewellers not often seen in Australia, such as Daniel Kruger, (South Africa, Germany) and Sam-Tho Duong (Vietnam, Germany). Early acquisitions date from 1993, including work by eminent Adelaide-based Frank Bauer, but the most recent acquisitions, by Julie Blyfield and emerging Sydney jeweller Emma Fielden, were in 2015. From time to time, the Daalders add key pieces retrospectively, like the 1981 Feather neckpiece by the celebrated Norwegian Tone Vigeland (b. 1938), found in Melbourne in 1993, or New Zealander Warwick Freeman’s important 1991 brooch Soft Star, sourced from the jeweller in 2004.
01. Matthew McIntyre-Wilson
*Whetu brooch*, 2012,
oxidised silver, fine silver
Collection of Truus and Joost Daalder, Adelaide
02. **Frank BAUER**  
*pendant (detail), 1981,*  
gold  
Collection of Truus and Joost Daalder, Adelaide.
This passion for contemporary jewellery is informed by a strong sense of the fragility of the artists’ enterprise. As Truus says, ‘One reason for buying contemporary jewellery is the support one can give to contemporary jewellers, who often need it, because it is a lifestyle choice and not a way to earn much money. You can also communicate with some jewellers and get a technical explanation etc. (as with Emma Fielden).’ Clearly, contact with contemporary jewellers has enriched the Daalders’ collecting, shining a light onto the past.

Other collections are more personal. An architect has been collecting jewellery for more than thirty years, generally in Adelaide, sometimes in Sydney and Melbourne. He wrote, ‘Architecture, art and craft enhances and enriches everyday life….The human race has been making these functional objects for more than 5000 years and yet we can still conceive and fabricate entirely original works of great beauty, elegance and finesse. Whether pottery, architecture, sculpture or jewellery the result is the same.’ Thus this collection started with analogical sympathy: as an architect, this collector recognized the exceptional elegance that jewellers bring to resolving conceptual and structural problems on an intimidatingly small scale — Blanche Tilden’s 2014 glass, silver and stainless steel necklace, inspired by early modern glass exhibition palaces, is a case in point.

This fascination with contemporary jewellery has been shared with professional colleagues: two beautiful brooches by veteran Sydney modernists Helge Larsen and Darani Lewers were acquired in 2003 through an introduction by architect Philip Cox, over the course of a leisurely visit to the jewellers’ studio. The complexity of references in these brooches appeals to the collector, who notes ‘...ambiguity provides longevity of consideration by providing opportunities for contemplation of subject, reference and meaning.’

Being worn on the body makes jewellery closely identified with its owner. One might say that giving a piece of jewellery is tantamount to giving part of oneself, and this is exactly how gifts of jewellery are often, if tacitly, understood. The architect’s pieces are worn by his wife. He notes, ‘Functionality is also very important to me. Jewellery is for personal adornment and therefore for wearing.’ Often additional pieces, such as matching earrings from Regine Schwarzer or Tilden, are commissioned to make a set. So while this collection was shaped by the architect’s eye for concept, restraint and detail, each piece is always, in the end, a gift from a husband to his wife.

What of artists’ collections? Formed through fellow feeling, inspired by insider knowledge? A splendid set of collections comes from Gray Street Workshop, Adelaide’s long-established contemporary jewellers’ hub: Catherine Truman, Sue Lorraine and Jess Dare are the Workshop’s current partners; Lisa Furno has been a long-standing comrade at the bench, and Kelly Jonasson is a current tenant. All five collect pieces by fellow jewellers that embody mutual admiration for each other’s works, and understanding of the travails of making.
03. **Blance TILDEN**

*necklace*, 2014, (detail),
fused and cold worked glass,
925 silver, stainless steel

Private collection, Adelaide
04. Regine SCHWARZER
*earrings*, 2012
and *necklace*, 2012, (detail),
stereo silver
Private collection, Adelaide
Catherine and Sue have been amassing their trove for around three decades, and collectively it marks their trajectories as jewellers. A fine group of works comes from Julie Blyfield and Leslie Matthews, previous Gray Street Workshop partners, as well as from many of the 100 makers who passed through the Workshop over 30 years, such as Leonie Westbrook. One substantial group stems from the early 1990s, when a strong and fruitful series of exchanges between Gray Street and New Zealand jewellers began at Dunedin, on the South Island, with Catherine’s residency at Otago Polytechnic and Sue’s at Fluxus workshop; this connection was formative for the Workshop, building enduring relationships with New Zealand practitioners. Pieces by Kobi Bosshard, Peter McKay, Ann Culy and Lynn Kelly come from the early 1990s, with ‘memories of those original exchanges symbolised through the works’, but only last year, Catherine and Sue travelled around New Zealand collecting works from old friends, and Areta Wilkinson’s warm welcome is woven into the gift of her ribbon brooches based on age-old Pacific woven forms.

For the most part, though, Catherine and Sue purchase pieces, rather than acquiring them through swapping or as gifts. Purchase is a deliberate tribute to other makers — they say ‘We buy especially from the emerging jewellers because it is a validation in the most grass roots kind of way. It binds us together forever – there’s no better form of direct support.’ What is most important, when Catherine or Sue asks for a work, is the sense of the maker embodied in the work, some trace of the person, even their distinctive way of being. Handling their pieces, one might work back from the tender lyricism of Marian Hosking’s brooch and the generous decisiveness of Carlier Makigawa’s, or the calculated whimsy of Zoe Brand’s pendant, to once more make the maker present. In this way, each piece conjures time, place, conversations, affections.

Jess Dare, Lisa Furno and Kelly Jonasson have gathered their pieces mostly from younger fellow-jewellers, some as swaps or mementos of working together, but others because, as Lisa said of Sian Edwards’s Gold Bird Foot Pendant, ‘I was completely obsessed with it and knew life wouldn’t be complete without it.’ These pieces are used: Lisa says of her Vernon Bowden ring, ‘I have worn it at least every week for the last ten years - I am absolutely in love with it!” About hers, Jess says ‘My earrings are the most worn (especially as a single earring on my right ear), then brooches, then neckpieces and lastly rings. I love buying rings but practically, as a maker, I am constantly taking them off to protect them, so I seem to have a growing pile in the studio, which every now and then I will gather up and take home and then they migrate back in to the studio and the ring cycle continues.’ Importantly, Jess looks at her collection: ‘I keep most of my jewellery collections in large wooden, glass topped cases not dissimilar to something you might find in a natural history museum, so I get to see all them all the time and appreciate them as little objects and offerings.’ And collecting manifests appreciation: in a nice pick-up of the Workshop’s New Zealand loop, Kelly Jonasson purchased a ring by Dunedin jeweller Lynn Kelly in Sydney in 2015.
05. JULIE BLYFIELD
*brooch*, 2005,
repurposed sterling silver,
paint, steel
Collection of Sue Lorraine
and Catherine Truman
(Gray Street Workshop), Adelaide
06. Areta WILKINSON

whetu (*star*) brooch, 2016,
silk ribbon, brass, cotton

Collection of Jess Dare
(Gray Street Workshop), Adelaide
The future of art sits with its youngest practitioners, but also youthful enthusiasts. The fourth collector, Sophie Guiney, is a graphic designer at Adelaide’s JamFactory, and her jewellery collecting has evolved organically through her participation in the vibrant creative community at her workplace, and close connections with jewellers based at the Jam’s Metal Studio and those who have passed through it — Sophie owns work by Christian Hall, the Studio’s current Creative Director, for instance, and alumni Peta Kruger and Michelle Kelly. Her intimate vantage point at the JamFactory compels respect, as well as empathy.

The wearable, playful pieces in Sophie’s collection give some sense of the range of methods used by jewellers today, and their divergence from traditional fine metals and gems. She does wear silver jewellery, but also prizes an exceptional looped ‘Built’ bangle by Jessamy Pollock in anodized and dyed aluminium, and, at the other end of the stylistic spectrum, two alluring neckpieces in luscious warm pinks, one in woven fabric by Cairns-based Indigenous designer Grace Lililan Lee, and another by Lauren Simeoni sporting flirtatious plastic frilling.

Sophie Guiney is from a younger cohort of jewellery collectors that revels in the inventiveness of contemporary work. Like many young people, she is at the beginning of her career, and her budget suits the desirable but affordable pieces made by younger jewellers. Early in a career, one is an explorer, setting paths for the future. Sophie Guiney is the travel companion of these jewellers, a friend as well as a client.

One final thought about how collections come into being. I suggested earlier that collecting was serendipitous: what if these pieces of jewellery acquired their owners? American scholar Bill Brown has suggested that collecting seems to happen through ‘... a kind of magic, by an inexplicable vitality that objects and images assert when they discover us discovering them. Indeed, when you say that a collection really demands this or that addition, you voice not the desire for objects, but the desire of objects.’ And why not? Happenstance is sadly underrated as an explanatory force, and in any case, explorers know only what the map shows, not the actual territory. Delight in collecting contemporary jewellery is surely heightened by exploring such a radically heterogeneous field: the jewellery exhibited here reveals shared enthusiasms across four Adelaide collections, but it also throws into sharp relief the remarkable diversity of jewellery practice today. A whole world is waiting to be explored, and it is just outside the door.


Julie Ewington, 2016
07. Jessamy POLLOCK

cuff, 2012,
anodized aluminium
Collection of Sophie Guiney, Adelaide
08. **Sian EDWARDS**
*Gold Bird Foot Necklace*, 2015, gold-plated sterling silver and gold coloured glomesh, dimensions variable
Collection of Sophie Guiney.
09. **Lauren SIMEONI**

*necklace*, 2014
beads, silver, artificial foliage

Collection of Sophie Guiney, Adelaide
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The Samstag Museum of Art is delighted to present this this third and final exhibition in the Revealed series.

Through four very different South Australian collections, Revealed3: someone’s and everyone’s allows us to examine the role of the collector in supporting artists working in the visual practice of contemporary jewellery. Built over the course of a lifetime out of a passion for beautiful and sometimes challenging objects, these collections demonstrate not only the craft and imagination of the makers but also the collector’s own taste and story. Join us to delve into the fascinating motivations behind the gathering of these private yet very public works of art.

The Samstag Museum of Art would like to thank all the participating collectors, who have not only generously agreed to lend their treasures for Revealed3: someone’s and everyone’s, but also to share their thoughts about these favourite works.

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