# STORY MAGAZINE FOR INDEPENDENT ARTISTS

DECEMBER 2023

THE ROAD TO ELEFSINA • HOW THE GREEK CLASSICS FELL PREY TO WOKE CULTURE • HELP! THE PRESS DOESN'T GIVE A HOOT ABOUT MY SHOW • RUGS ARE SILENT WITNESSES OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

• LIFT THE VEIL: 7 TOP JEWELRY ARTISTS REVEAL SECRETS OF THE MYSTERIES

# THE #9 ELEFS ROAD TO Z

IN THIS ISSUE

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**Cover front/back:** Bernhard Schobinger, "Rotating square", bangle, 2020.

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\* SMCK Magazine title and theme inspired by The Road to Eleusis: Unveiling the Secret of the Mysteries by R.Gordon Wasson, Albert Hofmann, Carl A.P.Ruck, Peter Webster. Publisher: North Atlantic Books. For Greek language: Ο ΔΡΟΜΟΣ ΓΙΑ ΤΗΝ ΕΛΕΥΣΙΝΑ. Publisher: cyceon tales.

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CHRISTOPH ZIEGLER

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# The Road to Civilization

espect for nature, sharing resources, accepting one's own mortality, humility, community, equality, sublimation, civilization, peace. These words all describe key ideas Eleusis (modern Greek: Elefsina) could still teach us today.

Archaeologist George E. Mylonas, the ancient site's excavator, describes how the truth was revealed by the Eleusinian Mysteries to the initiates through what we would callperformance, poetry recitations, and exhibitions of objects! We can only speculate which sacred objects revealed the secret of immortality in the then-known world which, already in Antiquity, was maddened by crisis, conflict, war, inequality, injustice.

Art can build bridges connecting the present to the past and to the future.

Seven top jewelry artists chose an object to highlight aspects of the Eleusinian Mysteries. Art institutions such as the reputable Danner Foundation could be the presentday hierophants preserving the social memory of our era while contributing to peace by channeling our passions towards beauty and harmony.

About ten years ago, I performed a stitching marathon, Stitchathon, together with descendants of former enemies. The event was held in a small German town by the border with the Netherlands and made me realize that art can support peace talks. Everybody in the group became very emotional, but unspoken stories were told, silence and suppressed rage were broken.

The meeting in Ahaus, Westfalia, a region famous for the treaties that ended two religious wars in the seventeenth century, taught me that the past stays with us, controls us, dictates us our destiny – until we break the spell through catharsis.

By Loukia Richards





Archaeological site of Elefsina. Photo: Chr. Ziegler

In his Poetics, Artistotle, describes how drama triggers empathy, awe, fear, and mercy, leading viewers to purification and spiritual renewal. Ancient Greeks used theater as a means of teaching citizens and shaping common values and responsibilities as well as to promote collective healing. Ancient Greek theater is nowadays edited, rewritten, arbitrarily re-arranged, and its therapeutic effect on the human soul and politics is ignored.

When we started collecting material for this SMCK issue last summer, we were deeply moved by the new Armenian tragedy and ethnic cleansing in Nagorno Karabakh. Objects not only reveal the truth, but they can also be silent witnesses of crimes against humanity and cultural heritage expropriation. Armenian rugs speak volumes about the first Christian nation and its unique culture to everyone willing to learn how to decipher them.

While thinking of the Editorial, I received an email from Dana Hakim, an artist I became acquainted with during her admirable art initiative I Care A Lot to promote peace in the Middle East in the early 2010s: *For decades we have been taking part in exhibitions and contributing to our field and not a single body, person, gallery has publicly sent condolences to us and to our families.* 

The details of 7 October pogrom against Israeli and foreign citizens, young and old, peace-loving rave-party goers and non-Jewish land workers, even against pets owned by the victims, have similar features with the atrocities Nazis committed in occupied Europe during World War II.

A Middle East inferno threatens to engulf us, and we will not prevent it as long as we opt for the road to destruction instead of the road to Eleusis.

As outsiders to the regional conflict, but as Europeans bound to Jewish destiny, we stand for Palestinian Arabs' right to self determination and for the right of Israelis to live in peace.

We need to read more history more often; to doublecheck news sources, to debate but with respect for the other person's views. It is also time to discuss how we will stop extremists from spreading hate and ugliness even inside the artist community and academia.

## DEVOTED TO THE FINEST ART OF JEWELLERY MAKING





# LETTER TO THE Dear SMCK Magazine, EDTOR

#### ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR FEELINGS AND AUDIT YOUR FALSE ASSUMP-TIONS! >>

#### Dear Editor,

I read your article about rejection ("Rejected by Design," SMCK no. 8) and would like to share my experience with your readers.

As a Life and Empowerment Coach, I work with many artists,

and rejection is a recurrent theme. The most common formulation of the problem comes as a question: "I am feeling depressed after my applications for various shows/awards were rejected. How can I manage my disappointment?"

Very briefly, I would say that acknowledging the feeling within is an important first step because one knows the "enemy" that one must fight. But be well-prepared before going into battle. And by 'prepared' I mean, above all, maintain your self-esteem.

In terms of actions you can take, evaluate the current situation. Make a list of "what went wrong and why" and follow this with a list of things you could do to address and reverse the situation. Proceed without guilt – but beware, guilt sometimes pops up unexpectedly, imperceptibly. If possible, be your own auditor or evaluator. Pretend your "failure" is a small business that has called in a specialist for advice. Manage pain and revise your project when you have some distance, but never leave this for too long!

Natasha Hassiotis



Natasha Hassiotis. "Helen's Dress" performance video.

anastasia.hassiotis@gmail.com

Dear SMCK Magazine,

I once worked with an "established conceptual jewelry maker." He was a master at applying for subsidies and grants and receiving them. That money allowed

him to work, live, and make new work. But he could not live from the sales of his work.

His way is one way of working, but I think it is incredible that, even when your work is in all the "main galleries" in Europe and beyond, that you cannot make a living out from it. There you have my 'problem' with conceptual jewelry: is it an art form that should be subsidized or is it doomed to only be created with support from another source of income?

I have been collecting for 40 years and another aspect worth mention is that I get a little bored by some "new jewelry". Seen it, been there. That feeling.

Last year I visited a fashion and jewelry gallery in Munich and I could name all the creators. But...I had them all wrong! I showed the gallerist some pictures of my collection bought years ago. They were exactly the same designs. So part of my collection was made thirty years ago – before everything was published on the

internet - but I encounter the same designs again and again.

#### CAN YOU MAKE A LIVING FROM CONCEPTUAL JEWELRY? >>

*«* NOBODY FELT

FOR US AFTER

7 OCTOBER "

The Jewelry Artist's Map To Success (detail) by Loukia Richards, 2019.

Maja Houtman is gold- and silversmith, teacher, exhibition curator, and blogger.

www.majahoutman.nl

Maja Houtman

Dear SMCK Magazine,

I e-mailed the following comment to an Instagram account connected to the jewelry community. I got no reply. I posted the

same comment in the user's profile. The account user blocked me. This is my message. Thank you for sharing it:

There are three Israeli jewelry artists on the list of Schmuck 2024 award nominees you shared in your Instagram profile. Maybe on this occasion, you will finally show some support for your Israeli colleagues?

For decades we have been taking part in exhibitions and contributing to our field, and not a single body, person, gallery has publicly sent condolences to us and our families. It's basic! Many of you in the field know us in person. That's unbelievable. החזרת החטופים מיד free the hostages now إعادة المختطف فوراً

www.danahakim.com

Dana Hakim, Israel



## HOW THE GREEK **CLASSICS** FELL PREY **TO WOKE CULTURE AND POST-POST-FEMINISM**

Greek play mask. Photo: Chr. Ziegler.

By Natasha Hassiotis

ALMOST EVERY SEASON AT EPIDAURUS INCLUDES A PERFORMANCE THAT SPARKS CONTROVERSY BUT 2023 STOOD OUT AS AUDIENCES WALKED OUT OF SEVERAL PLAYS, SHOCKED AT MODERN ADAPTATIONS THAT INCLU-DED SETS WITH A BASKETBALL HOPE, A DANCE POLE, AND REFUGEE CAMP -NOTABLY EURIPIDES'S MEDEA, SOPHO-CLES'S PHILOCTETES, AND ARISTOPHA-NES'S WASPS. THE LATTER, IN PARTI-CULAR, TOUCHED OFF A FURIOUS DE-BATE IN THE PRESS AND THE PUBLIC OVER THE DIRECTOR'S FREE ADAPTA-TION OF THE ANCIENT PLAY. SMCK MAGAZINE'S PERFORMING ARTS EX-PERT EXPLAINS HOW THE META-THEA-TER OF NIHILISM WAS BORN.

ast summer, one performance at the ancient theatre of Epidaurus, still considered a sacred place, caused a commotion among visitors and press.

Aristophanes' Wasps had originally been staged in ancient Athens amidst the Peloponnesian War that led to the city's destruction. The play was meant to castigate the Athenians' behavior and their leaders' ill deeds at that pivotal moment for the survival of democracy and Athens itself. This was not the first time that a performance of a classical play has triggered outrage. Already in the 1990s, performances that mistreated texts and ideas and disrespected the Ancient Theatre of Epidaurus where they were staged led Greek artists and academics to a discussion on whether ancient Greek drama should stop being staged for a while so that directors, translators, and performers would have more time to redefine their position towards this amazing body of work and universal cultural heritage.

On the other hand, the Nineties also saw an explosion in publications of theoretical texts stressing the limits and limitations of the body as enunciator of meaning, but also of the truth. It was a current that was strengthened by the coming of virtual reality and the internet that altered everyone's life and work experiences.

#### WHEN SOPHOCLES MET CARRIE

A theater or rather meta-theater of nihilism emerged that tirelessly tried to re-connect with the darkest moments of existentialism and the post- feminist culture of the millennium, along with a sub-current of anti-capitalism and an affiliation with woke culture. All this fermentation ended up in the helter-skelter mix of all the commercial anti-commercialist elements one sees in today's performances.

Among the first victims of the new discovery and "freedom" of butchered logic was ancient Greek drama: its texts being re-written(!), shortened at will or being redone according to a Procrustean logic into horror stories, irrational stories of paranoid Stephen King-styled adolescents or representations of royal families as "natural born killers." So much for psychoanalysis, history, archaeology, feminism, politics, culture...Euripides, Sophocles, and Aeschylus became something like spokespersons of a local commune. And they were not. They were not "local." Cultural humiliation reached its apogee with this summer's Wasps performance.

However, it would be unfair to "blame" only the artists of barbarism. It is the critical theory of theater and the performing arts of the past three decades, completely under the hegemony of the Left that created the walls of woke culture and post-post-feminism against which art bleeds itself to death. Because, to put it poetically, to make theater titillating today, one must show blood, literally or metaphorically, on stage.

Artists suffer under the tyrannical boot of an exigent old-timer, the critical theory of the Left, that is serving the past as future by giving orders:

- "Go out and be political."
- "Go cruel."
- "Go insane."
- "Go to factories."

The most all of the above has created is "aesthetics," more or less vulgar, the Zeitgeist labeled: "reaction," "revolution," "situationist/anti-capitalist orientation," "subjectivity," "subversion."

If artists refuse to follow the orders, then the haunting hegemony of the bourgeoisie would triumph! This warning sounds like Madame Bovary is scared she is becoming the tamed wife of a country doctor.



#### EMMA SHOPS TILL SHE DROPS

But who is Emma Bovary, the famous literary character created by French novelist Gustave Flaubert in mid-19th century? Her name serves as a synonym for the boredom and claustrophobia a bourgeois wife experiences in her marriage.

Is Emma a revolutionary? Far from it. She is a compulsive spender with huge debts. The revolutionary element is not the aversion of Emma for her White Western husband, but her being buried in debt.

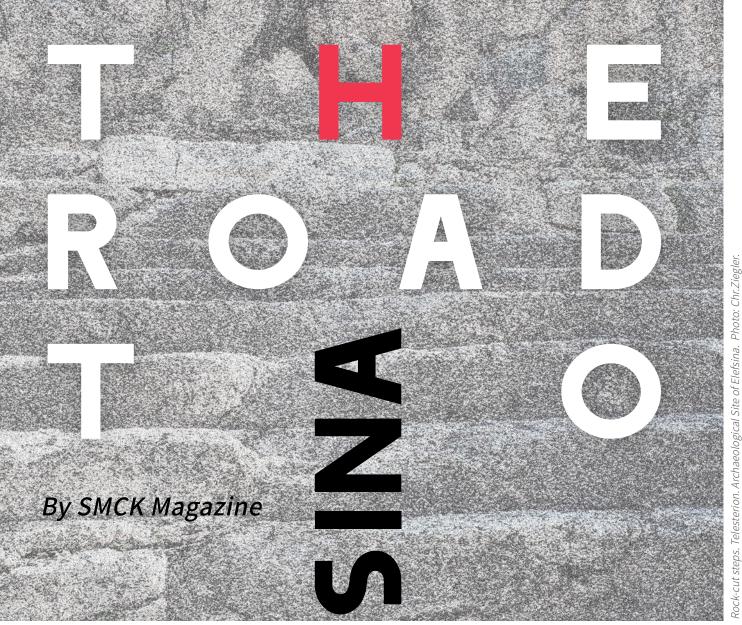
If one fights bourgeois aesthetics as an obstacle to freedom, then it is not enough to use offensive language, slurs, and curses. Nor is it enough to repeat the colonization mantra of critical theory.

#### DEAD WHITE MALES CANCEL SPOILED BRATS

In other words, it is not the aversion of Emma for the husband we must glorify; it is not Emma the victim who helps us promote feminist ideas. Instead, we should acknowledge Emma's sick passions. Acknowledging Emma's personality disorder will help us create a "female culture" that is not bratty and barbaric, but strong and independent.

Until then, let's study ancient Greek drama more thoroughly to stop any more Wasps from being staged ever again.

Natasha Hassiotis is Dance Critic, Historian-Independent Researcher, Life Coach.



FOR 2,000 YEARS, A FARMING COM-MUNITY CLOSE TO ATHENS WAS THE SPIRITUAL CENTER OF THE ANCIENT WORLD. PILGRIMS FROM ALL OVER CAME TO ELEUSIS (MODERN-DAY ELEFSINA) TO BE INITIATED TO THE **MYSTERIES – SECRET CEREMONIES** BEFRIENDING THEM WITH DEATH. MEN, WOMEN, FREE PEOPLE, AND SLAVES, GREEKS, AND FOREIGNERS WATCHED THE MYTH OF PERSE-PHONE STAGED AND REVIVED AT THE SACRED SITE OF ELEUSIS, WIT-NESSING THE YOUNG GODDESS RE-TURNING FROM HADES.

Sacred rituals including recitation, performance, and presentation of sacred objects taught initiates the secret of immortal bliss. Had it not been one of the most important religious ceremonies of the ancient world, it could have been one of the most glamorous art events of all times.

In 2023, Elefsina was one of three cities holding the title European Cultural Capital. As the year ends, we invited artists to interpret eternity, immortality, promise, revelation, fraternity, or bliss through their work.

#### ELEUSIS AND THE DEIKNYMENA

How important these elements might have been can be inferred from the fact that the advanced degree of initiation, the epopteia, was attained solely by the inspection – followed by contemplation – of the Eleusinian sacra, exhibited to the initiates by the hierophant in a striking manner. As a matter of fact, the title of that high dignitary of Eleusis, hierophant, means "he who displays the sacra, the sacred objects."

(...) The importance of the deiknymena (the shown objects) and the legomena (the spoken words) may further be inferred from the ritual acts, exhibits, and doctrines we find in the Greek Orthodox and the Roman Catholic churches of our day. (Indeed, it is highly possible that ritual acts and exhibits, like the elevation of the sacred host of the Christian mysteries, were borrowed directly from the Eleusinian rites.)

(...) For two thousand years, civilized humanity was sustained by those rites. Then we shall be able to appreciate the meaning and the importance of Eleusis and of the cult of Demeter in the pre-Christian era. When Christianity conquered the Mediterranean world, the rites of Demeter having perhaps fulfilled their mission to humanity, came to an end...The doctrine which inspired the world for so long was gradually forgotten, and its secrets were buried with its last hierophant. After all, this seems to be the eternal law: one source succeeds another, and a doctrine must die so that another may be born. Yet the story of Demeter and her cult at Eleusis will live forever in the memories of man because it belongs to the cycle of popular myths that can never die.

Excerpted from "Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries" by George E. Mylonas, published in The Classical Journal, volume 43, number 3, December 1947.



Sigurd Bronger -"Carrying device for a pine cone", brooch, 2020. Photo: S. Bronger.

#### SECRET NO. 1 - DEIKNYMENON

With the revelation of the Hiera the initiation was completed and the mystai, still under the impact of deep emotional feelings but filled with joy and hope, would leave the Sanctuary of Demeter to the epoptai. They, too, in the course of the second night and in the Telesterion would attain the higher degree of initiation and their final glimpse of the most sacred objects of the cult.\*

#### Sigurd Bronger

www.cargocollective.com/sigurdbronger

Bernhard Schobinger - "Rotating Square", bangle, 2020. Brass, lapislazuli pigment paint. Photo: B. Schobinger.



#### SECRET NO. 2 - LIFT THE VEIL!

Divulging the secrets of the cult was considered comparable to the destruction of democracy.\*

"I have delved into the subject of your research and think I have found a good analogy with a work. The object Rotating Square (2020) from four antique door handles definitely has a metaphysical background. The symbol of the sun is also emphasized by the golden color of brass. The rotation without beginning and end. The doorknobs that reach out to each other. The reference to the human function as door opener and door closer."

Bernhard Schobinger

www.schobinger.ch

#### SECRET NO. 3 - PERSEPHONE ASCENDING

Certainly the setting is both impressive and suggestive and a priestess impersonating Persephone could ascend the stairway and emerge through the elliptical opening into the view of spectators on the Sacred Way, thus heightening the sense of reality and the dramatic appeal of the action.\*

> Fabrizio Tridenti -"Untitled" - Ku series, ring, 2018. Brass, paint. Photo: F. Tridenti.

Emptiness is not other than form; form is also not other than emptiness.

#### Heart Sutra

"Artworks are the result of visions emerging from nothing.

What we see lives only in an illusory reality.

We attribute to forms a multitude of meanings created by our minds.

All forms are essentially empty, what appears as form is therefore pure illusion.

Our mind is composed of experiential stratifications upon which we form our creative identity.

The apparent identity is the result of the collective creativity perceived by us as ours.

Objects are the witness of the self-generative process of Existence.

Man is an empty being, timeless and aimless in which the universe appears.

The void is indefinite, undifferentiated and, therefore, offers unlimited possibilities of transformation.

What triggers my creativity is not the result of the process in a piece, but what comes first, that is, the feeling of living an emotional experience that allows me to forget for a moment that I am existing and that allows me to absorb that silence where everything seems to happen."

Fabrizio Tridenti



Veronika Fabian - "Love Machine", necklace, 2021. Coffee machine parts. Photo: V. Fabian.

#### SECRET NO. 4 - BLISS

One of the requirements of the cult, apparently very strictly enforced, was the secrecy imposed upon its initiates. They had to keep silent forever about the things they witnessed and heard during the celebration.\*

"The *Love machine* necklace is a transformed coffee machine. It is part of the series 'You, me, and your stuff' in which I make jewelry by reconstructing everyday objects identified as being important in people's lives.

I transformed objects that are often associated with shared moments, having a coffee with friends or enjoying a glass of wine in the evening. I consider these social gatherings to be sacred rituals that play an important role in building and nurturing social relations.

In a world where personal connections are increasingly converting into a scarce alternative, I believe these everyday objects can symbolize luxury."

www.veronikafabian.com

Christoph Ziegler - "Love + Hate", necklace, 2022. Olive wood, varnish, rubber cord, engraving. Photo: Chr. Ziegler.

#### **SECRET NO. 5 - CHTHONIC**

Closely connected with Eleusis and Demeter is the story of Triptolemos and the spreading of the knowledge of the cultivation of the soil or perhaps the spreading of improved methods of agriculture. Triptolemos seems to have been one of the legendary figures that fascinated the minds of men. He is first mentioned on the Hymn as one of the chieftains of the people, "a king who deals justice." He is among the "kings to whom the Goddess showed the conduct of her rites and taught all her mysteries." \*

"The necklace Love+Hate is made of olive wood. Olive trees live for hundreds of years, and their trunk reminds us of ageing humans, or more precisely of ageing women.

In my narrative, the necklace Love+Hate stands for the grief Demeter feels, when she loses her daughter, and for her decision to bring Persephone back to life.

The necklace and the material it is made of symbolizes for me the temporary death of nature. But nature will be reborn, according to the myth, if Demeter reaches a compromise with Hades, and Kore will always resurrect in spring.

The question is what will happen if Demeter accepts that her daughter is lost for ever, and nature does not resurrect?"



Christoph Ziegler

*Kira Fritsch - "Spoons: Devices for your hand", Ongoing series, 2016-2023. Metal, wood, recycled plastic. Photo: K. Fritsch.* 



#### SECRET NO. 6 - I DRANK THE KYKEON

The total fasting of course would have been in observation of Demeter's total fasting, and perhaps it was kept by the initiates during the first day of their residence in Eleusis. This total fasting perhaps came to a close by the drinking of the kykeon, the special potion of the Eleusinian Mysteries, again in observation of the similar experience of the Goddess who had refused red wine, and requested meal mixed with water and soft mint for a drink.\*

"This usually inconspicuous piece of cutlery plays a major role in cultural history. The spoon could be one of the most important personal possessions that you always carry with you, tucked into your belt."

www.kirafritsch.com

Kira Fritsch

#### SECRET NO. 7 - Adyton

The most holy room of a temple to which entry was allowed to certain people or under special conditions.\*

"My jewels are offerings to a godless modernity, ephemeral ornaments celebrating our carefree era of petrochemicals. I never forget how toxic the material I make art with is; it poisons me in my workshop, it poisons our environment. And yet its venomous beauty fascinates me. The skulls on the plastic package warning do not scare me.

Art events are today's mass. Balloons let loose make them look more glamorous. The religious ceremonies of the ancient world are replaced by orgies performed under a dome made by LED screens. Let's celebrate plastic, let's eat plastic, let's wear plastic clothes, let's wear plastic shoes. And we will parade on the Parisian Champs Elysées, the eternal residence of the blessed and blissful who have forgotten their Greek origins.

Isabelle Azaïs - "Crips", necklace, Crips Collection, 2023. Recycling packaging crips. Photo: I. Azaïs.

Isabelle Azais

www.isabelleazais.blogspot.com



Rock-cut steps. Telesterion. Archaeological Site of Elefsina. Photo: Chr.Ziegler.

### **EPILOGUE**

Whatever the substance and meaning of the Mysteries was, the fact remains that the cult of Eleusis satisfied the most sincere yearnings and the deeper longings of the human heart.

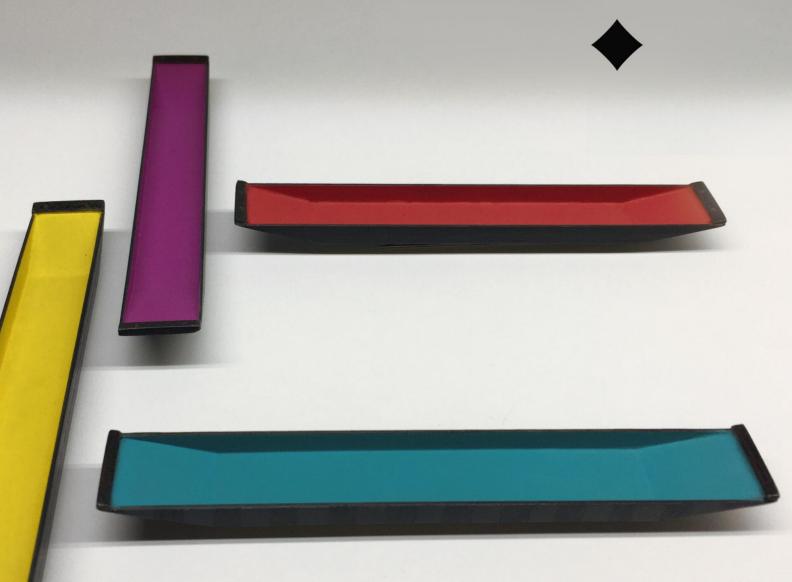
The initiates returned from their pilgrimage to Eleusis full of joy and happiness, with the fear of death diminished and the strengthened hope of a better life in the world of shadows.

"Thrice happy are those of mortals, who having seen those rites depart for Hades; for to them alone is it granted to have true life there; to the rest all here is evil," Sophocles cries out exultantly. And to this Pindar with equal exultation answers: "Happy is he who, having seen these rites goes below the hollow earth; for he knows the end of life and he knows its god-sent beginning."

When we read these and other similar statements written by the great or nearly great of the ancient world, by the dramatists and the thinkers, when we picture the magnificent buildings and monuments constructed at Eleusis by great political figures like Peisistratos, Kimon, Perikles, Hadrian, Marcus Aurelius and others, we cannot help but believe that the Mysteries of Eleusis were not an empty, childish affair devised by shrewd priests to fool the peasant and the ignorant, but a philosophy of life that possessed substance and meaning and imparted a modicum of truth to the yearning human soul. That belief is strengthened when we read in Cicero that Athens has given nothing to the world more excellent or divine than the Eleusinian Mysteries. \*

\* Excerpted from "Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries" by George E. Mylonas. Publisher: cyceon tales. Publication of selected excerpts in SMCK Magazine by courtesy of cyceon tales.

## KLIMTO2 artworks on sale we are ready to source, advise and research on your behalf



Tore Svensson. Brooches: Untitled, 2010. Iron, acrylic paint.



Don't be shy to present yourself! Photo (selfie) by Christoph Ziegler.

My job is to decide which press releases or artist requests for a review deserve the senior editors' attention. The art press focuses on news that offers intellectual added value to their readers. The 'press kits' I forward to my senior editors have the following characteristics:

> **1.** The text is easy to understand; no art jargon, no cryptic allusions, no literary aspirations: just facts about the show and the concept.

#### 2.

Work context, artist's background, venue's history, details about the theme, techniques, and materials are key information to include in an effective press release.

> **4**. A pitch must give me specific reasons why

I should not miss the show.

#### 5.

Some artists make their approach with a tautology: I should review the show because this is a great show at a great venue. No!

**6**. "Why is your show so special, and why should our readers care to read about it?" Artists often hate me for asking this question, although many of them later admit that it helped them describe the very essence of their work in a few words.\*

\* Never forget the ,thank you' note!

**3**. No praise for the ex-

hibition or the artist or the gallery. Avoid superlatives and hyperbole such as "brilliant work," "the best show of the year," "the city's most famous venue."

**7.** Sometimes

the photographic material is

horrible: out of focus; crudely

photoshopped; snobbish looking

models; without captions or photo

credit; lacking the photogra-

pher's written permission al-

lowing their use.

## THE PRESS DOESN'T GIVE A HOOT ABOUT By Tommy Wurm

WHY AREN'T ART EDITORS INTERESTED IN YOUR WORK? SMCK MAGAZINE JUNIOR EDITOR TOMMY WURM EXPLAINS WHAT ARTISTS GET WRONG WHEN THEY MAKE THEIR PITCH TO THE PRESS AND OTHER MEDIA.

#### 8.

A cover letter (an email addressed to 'Dear Tommy'). To make any press release publishable, I need to add an appropriate and interest-grabbing title, informative subtitle, and introduction, edit the text, add context, and thus enrich it. Sometimes I get emails demanding that I publish the material as sent. I delete these immediately!

After the article is published, I expect feedback: a 'thank you' note or card, a copy of the print catalogue of the show, 'Happy New Year's' wishes in due time. Most artists never write back to express their gratitude. Savoir vivre is very important in the art business.

9.

#### SHARÓN CHANDALLY PEDRINI



COOPERATE & KHID



*Myrrh Cluster earring, gold, diamonds. Photo: S. C. Pedrini.*  he Infiniswing draws on the idea that synchronized movement can enhance cooperation and foster social interaction. Swinging is scientifically proven to have a calming effect, provide sensory balance, and relieve stress. The Infinity Swing acts as an ongoing and open invitation for passers-by to connect with each other, especially in times of change and upheaval.

The Infiniswing will be used in a study titled "Cooperation and Depolarization Through Synchronous Movement" led by researcher Tal-Chen Rabinowich. This project highlights the profound influence of art on human interactions.

Sharón Chandally Pedrini specializes in contemporary filigree, a technique she studied under the watchful eyes of two elderly great uncles. Her recent work, the Infiniswing, is a nine-foot face-to-face swing in a double twisted Mobius inspired loop. Sharón envisions her creations to be long-lasting and heirloom-quality, bringing joy to future generations.

www.chandally.com www.infiniswing.com instagram: chandallyjewelry

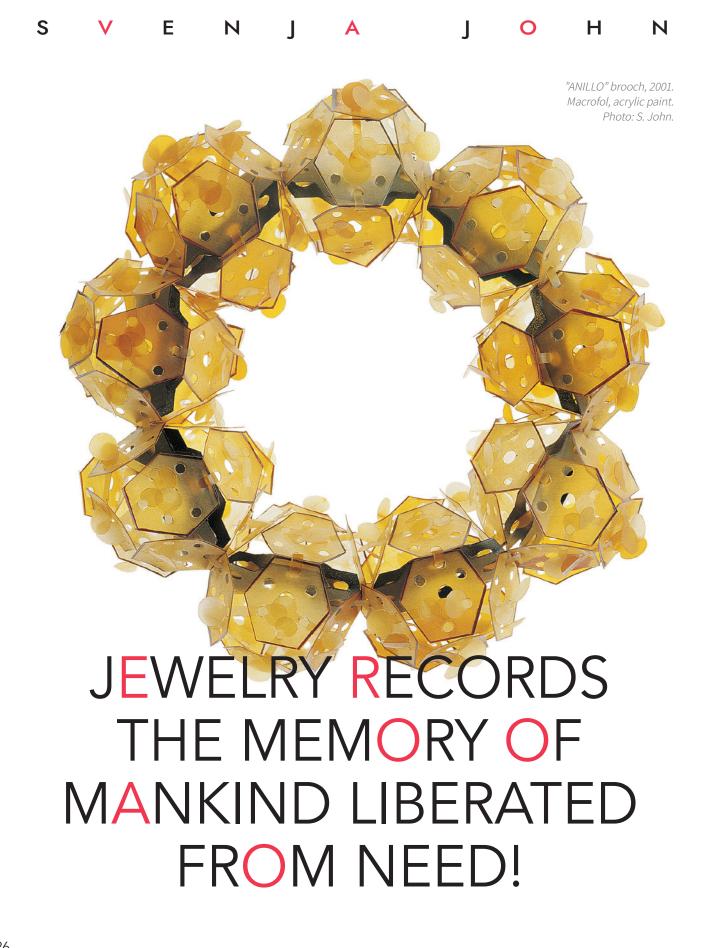


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di-so und feiertags 10.00-17.00 uhr

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KNOWN FOR HER UNCOPIABLE STY-LE OF TURNING NATURE'S PAT-TERNS INTO LUXURIOUS JEWELRY MADE OF MAKROLON® AND 3D PRINTING, SVENJA JOHN'S NAME IS LINKED TO BERLIN. JOHN SPOKE TO SMCK MAGAZINE ABOUT THE CULTURAL MEANING OF JEWELRY, THE BENEFITS OF AD-VANCED TECHNOLOGY, AND DRAW-ING INSPIRATION FROM THE CITY THAT APOTHEOSES PERSONALITY.

#### Interview by Loukia Richards

SMCK: Did your archaeology studies influence your decision to become a jewelry artist?

SJ: I always wanted to make jewelry. To bridge the time until the apprenticeship, I studied archaeology. Archaeological artifacts in museum collections are the vivid cultural memory of humankind, original testimonies of past cultures.

When civilization made it possible to produce things that were no longer essential for survival, probably the first forms of jewelry were created. Looking at excavations of prehistoric settlements, it catches the eye that often more jewelry than tools were found. People have been decorating themselves since primal times, where the shapes of the jewelry are just as different and as multifaceted as the materials used. Jewelry has a very long tradition in all cultures, and this fact inspired me.

SMCK: Long before "value-less" materials became fashionable among jewelry designers and artists, you began to work with polycarbonate. Why did you choose this specific material and what original techniques did you develop?

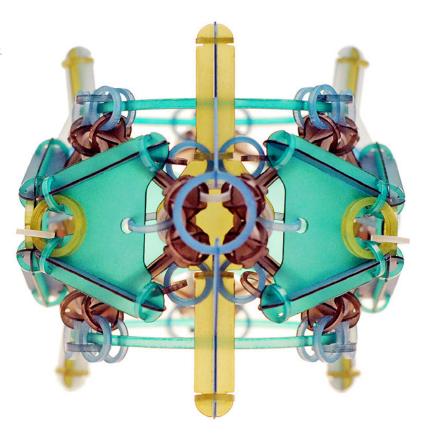
SI: The first pieces of this material (Makrolon®) I fished out of the leftover box of a Frankfurt plastics wholesaler. Polycarbonate is characterized by its super-clear and super-strong nature; the plastic is very robust and light. You can process it with the usual goldsmith tools, file, saw, or drill. So I got stuck relatively quickly with the crystal-clear foils and was totally taken by the pleasant processing.

I quickly realized that the crystal-clear foil plastic can be co-



"TIJUANA" necklace, 2023. Macrofol, acrylic paint. Photo: S. John.

*"SIBIU" bracelet, 2011. Macrofol, acrylic paint. Photo: S. John.* 



lored in any color design. For 30 years, I have been experimenting with colors, color compositions, and different coloring processes. Color design is a very important part of my work.

In 1996 I started to cut the foils with water jet technology. With the development of technology, my jewelry work evolves further. New technologies offer me the chance to

evolve my design language. Due to the material, my art creation is close to the technical-scientific world. Nothing is accidental in my work: everything is precisely controlled. Since 2007 I have also been working and experimenting with additive manufacturing processes (Selective-Laser-Sintering or SLS, and 3D printing) and complement my poly-

carbonate elements with 3D-printed nylon parts, which today, thanks to technological development, can be manufactured in any color that I can imagine.

Even the inventors of the plastic of my choice (Makrolon®/Makrofol®), Bayer AG, were so impressed with my processing of the material that they sponsored a solo exhibition at the Museum for Applied Arts in Cologne and a catalog during the 50th anniversary of Makrolon®.

**SMCK:** How would you describe the thoughts, cultural input, and influences behind your jewelry?

**SJ:** My work feeds on three main influences: nature, technology, modern art. Shapes from nature are abstracted and produced using technological processes, then later hand-colored under the influence of the great Abstract Expressionist Colorists, Color Field Paintings, and Hard-Edge Paintings, and then assembled into a unique new jewelry construction.

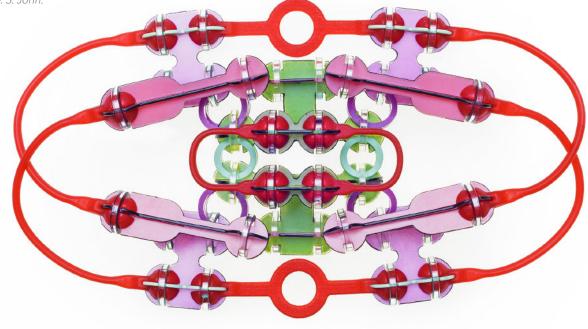
\*\* DEVELOP
YOUR OWN
UNIQUE
STYLE! >>

**SMCK:** Berlin is a rather jewel-less city. Maybe it is the prevalence of the Protestant spirit or perhaps the dire conditions in which Berliners lived for many decades that made jewelry a rather unimportant element of dressing. How did you establish yourself as a jewelry artist in a city whose arts schools

still do not have a jewelry department?

**Sj:** Berlin is a lively, diverse, young, and international city. The atmosphere attracts people from all nations and cultures. The young Berlin scene decorates itself but unfortunately not with the jewelry I make or with what we mean by author's jewelry.

To sell high quality artist jewelry in Berlin is difficult. A swank fake Rolex or a tribal tattoo goes better with jogging pants. However, I make most of my sales in other cities or abroad. "MAPUTO" brooch, 2021. Macrofol, coral red nylon, acrylic paint. Photo: S. John.



From 1996 to 2001 I exhibited and sold at the most important accessories fair – the "Première Classe" in Paris. I had numerous publications in glossy magazines; my work/jewelry has always been in the context of Berlin in the 1990s. A young Berlin designer in Paris making colored plastic jewelry: that was something special at the time so I was able to establish my name in Berlin.

**SMCK:** What would you suggest curators, art institutions, gallerists, and fellow artists do to broaden the spectrum of jewelry lovers?

**SJ:** Jewelry as an art form – author's jewelry – is unknown to most of the general public. My suggestion to broaden the spectrum of jewelry lovers is more intervention exhibitions. I have reached many good customers through these shows.

**SMCK:** What do you think of an eventual rapprochement between the fashion industry and jewelry art?

**SJ:** The way I experienced it, there is a competition between fashion and jewelry. The fashion designers do not want expressive author jewelry on their designs; their work is in the foreground, jewelry is an accessory and can be made as a service to the fashion designer, but in the style of their work, please!



www.svenja-john.de | instagram: @svenja.john.jewelry

#### DANNER FOUNDATION

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**FURA** 

MEMORY AND

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CRAFTS

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Danner Rotunda in the Pinakothek der Moderne. Exhibition design by Mikiko Minewaki /Tokyo, Alexander Blank /Munich and Hans Stofer /Halle. © The New Collection - The Design Museum. Photo: A. Laurenzo

> DANNER FOUNDATION SUPPORTS AND PROMOTES BAVARIAN CRAFT AND DE-SIGN THROUGH GRANTS, AWARDS AND EXHIBITIONS. ESTABLISHED IN 1920 TO HELP BAVARIAN CRAFTS TO **RESURRECT AFTER THE ECONOMIC** COLLAPSE FOLLOWING WORLD WAR I. DANNER FOUNDATION HAS A LONG HISTORY OF COMMITMENT TO EXCEL-LENCE. SMCK MAGAZINE TALKED WITH DR. MARKUS EDER, EXECUTIVE CHAIR-MAN OF DANNER FOUNDATION, ON HOW THE REPUTATION OF BAVARIAN CRAFTS IS CON-NECTED TO PERFECTION OF MANUAL WORK AND THE MAKERS' INTELLECT.

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#### Interview by Christoph Ziegler

SMCK: What are the goals of Danner Foundation?

**ME:** Professor Karl Rothmüller, a goldsmith assigned by the Bavarian royal court and long term friend of the welloff beer brewers Therese und Benno Danner, convinced the widow Therese, to establish the foundation.

Professor Rothmüller was thus the initiator and spiritual father of Danner Stiftung, along with Therese Danner. He had already been famous for his own work far beyond Bavaria. His designs were perceived already at the time as fashionable German jewelry.

#### <sup>66</sup> IT IS NOT DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES THAT MAKE CRAFTS LOOK ALIVE AND KICKING! ??

Professor Rothmüller was a board member of Bayerischer Kunstgewerbeverein (Bavarian Crafts Association), member of the German Design Federation and a long term member of the Danner Foundation board; he had a huge

influence on Bavarian crafts, applied art and jewelry.

For the last hundred years, Danner Foundation follows the same spirit and supports artists working in the field of applied arts, namely with jewelry, ceramics, glass, wood, textile, metal, stone and objects.

**SMCK:** How big is the jewelry collection of Danner Rotunda? What are the criteria applied on new jewelry acquisitions? Danner Rotunda has been re-arranged already four times by different curators. Do you plan a new re-arrangement in the near future?

**ME:** Every year, approximately twelve new jewelry pieces are acquired

The committee members deciding on the acquisitions also change, and the orientation regarding what to purchase also change. The collection is enriched with new pieces that close important gaps and also reflect new developments in jewelry design; they must be exhibited as soon as possible, and this will be a great pleasure for jewelry fans.

Right now the collection includes approximately 620 jewelry pieces by 209 artists and displays a variety of art trends and artists from various countries.



Max Fröhlich - "Body Ornament", necklace, 1970. Electrical wire, paper. © The New Collection – The Design Museum. Photo: A. Laurenzo



*Margaret West -"Rosa Concremata", brooch, 2004. Basalt, paint, silver. © The New Collection. Photo: A. Laurenzo* 

• The "Danner Collection of modern jewelry" started 36 years ago with the goal to mirror the international jewelry scene. The collection was given as a permanent loan to Neue Sammlung – The Design Museum in 1999.

The collection is shown at Danner Rotunda during Schmuck Munich, and opened for the first time in 2004. At the time of the opening the collection included over 300 pieces by approximately 120 artists.

• At the beginning, the acquisitions had been mainly decided by the board, a member of which is also Karl Rothmüller, a descendant of the Danner Foundation same name initiator. In 1988 Professor Hermann Jünger became also a member of the committee.

In the next years the significant directions for the collection development had been set by inviting in the purchasing committee Otto Künzli and Professor Florian Hufnagl, director of Neue Sammlung.

• In this circle, the idea has been born, to host a permanent jewelry exhibition in Pinakothek der Moderne, in order to present the collection in the best possible way.

• Since the festive opening of Danner-Rotunda in March 2004 the collection is curated anew every three to five years, in order to present new perspectives of contemporary jewelry. The last curation of the collection took place in 2020 by Mikiko Minewaki of Hiko Mizuno College Tokio, Professor Hans Stofer of Burg Giebichenstein, and jewelry artist Alexander Blank; and this means that the Danner foundation and the Neue Sammlung museum must think about the next curatorial arrangement soon.

Last but not least, I would like to mention the conceptual and curatorial contribution of Professor Hermann Jünger and Professor Otto Künzli in the past, as well as of Karl Fritsch in 2010.

**SMCK:** How can we separate contemporary crafts from art and design? How important are for crafts the current trends in art and design?

**ME:** The boundaries between art, design and crafts are fluid, and I have not yet found a meaningful division that would make sense and would allow a sustainable and dynamic understanding of the disciplines. The aspect of the technical quality and the usability is part of the understanding of what constitutes crafts; nevertheless, I do not think that a rigid exclusion of no-future-oriented-crafts is helpful or necessary.The disciplines overlap, enrich each other and the mutual exchange that takes place shows us the way to the future.

SMCK: What is the crafts "added value"?

**ME:** Crafts have, apart from the economic aspect, also an important function as the society's cultural "memory", and they are at the same time a social capital that includes skills, values and innovative potential, and it is future oriented.

**SMCK:** What about crafts in a wired and digitally operating world?

**ME:** More and more artists discover nowadays the potential of digital technology for the making of their works, and they apply it consciously next to the traditional manual techniques they use. Interesting and undoubtfully contemporary objects are born this way, although I think that works that do not use new technologies, do not look by any means obsolete or old fashioned. The idea behind the creation is significant on whether a work looks lively and contemporary. Without any innovative confrontation with the theme that moves the artist i.e. with the medium's tradition, the work would look old fashioned or even dead, regardless of whether the artist used digital technologies to create it or it has been entirely handmade.

www.danner-stiftung.de | instagram: @dannerstiftung

Julia Manheim - "Cowl Collar" (N/72), necklace, 1983. Black and yellow Plastic. © Danner Foundation. Photo: Eva Jünger

> Marie Louise Kristensen - "Angel", brooch, 2019. Modeling clay, wood, silver, plaster, quartz. © Danner Foundation. Photo: Eva Jünger



## ΕΧΗΙΒΙΤΙΟΝ

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12 OCTOBER 2023 TO 28 JANUARY 2024

THE DANNER PRIZE IS ONE THE WORLD'S MOST PRESTI-GIOUS AWARDS FOR APPLIED ART AND CRAFTS. DR. STEFAN KRAUS, DIRECTOR OF KO-LUMBA MUSEUM IN COLOGNE AND DANNER PRIZE JURY MEMBER, TELLS SMCK MAGA-ZINE OF THE AWARD'S SIGNI-FICANCE AND THE CRITERIA FOLLOWED TO SELECT THE NOMINEES FOR THE SHOW **OPENING** ON THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12, IN LANDSHUT.

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Danner Prize winner: Gunther Pfeffer, "Raster", pine wood cabinet, 2022. Photo: © Danner-Stiftung / Eva Jünger.

#### Interview by Christoph Ziegler

**SMCK:** What quality characteristics make an entry interesting for the jury?

**SK:** Already the quality level of the applications we receive makes the jury's work interesting. This high level of the portfolios submitted should be credited to the continuous work of the Danner Foundation over the years. We are talking about top-class crafts. The quality characteristics are part of the criteria we use to decide the nominations. The first impression is indeed very important: is the work fascinating and what does it tell us exclusively through how it looks?

**SMCK:** Which criteria played a role for the award nominations this year?

**SK:** Some of the criteria have been already articulated in the Open Call and in formulating the goal the Danner Foundation wishes to achieve by supporting artists. Other criteria must be discussed at the beginning of the jury meeting and take a definite form during the jury discussion, to reflect the variety of the submitted works. Part of the procedure is that one has to find the criteria that apply to every single work, such as an understanding of the material used, individuality and distinctiveness, as well as haptics and function. The innovation part looks very important to me. One can see in the work submitted the very long practice of the discipline, the repetitive exercising of the technique to attain perfection, but also the risktaking for achieving something new.

**SMCK:** What is the Danner Prize's significance for winners' and nominees' careers?

**SK:** It encourages them to continue on the path they had chosen and not to compromise the high quality of their work. The Danner Prize gives crafters and designers the opportunity to stand on equal foot with visual artists who usually attract more publicity than their colleagues of applied art. The Danner Foundation award is one of the best international references an artist working in the field of applied art can have.



Awardee: Christoph Straube, brooches, 2022. Stainless steel, painted enamel. Photo: © Danner-Stiftung / Eva Jünger.

Danner Prize 2023 Exhibition 10 October 2023 to 28 January 2024 Opening hours of the exhibition: Tue to Sun, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Free admission.

> Heiliggeistkirche Heiliggeistgasse 394 84028 Landshut, Germany

www.heiliggeistkirche-landshut.de



Nominee: Otto Baier, titan object, 2020. Photo: © Danner-Stiftung / Eva Jünger.

stablished in 1920 in Munich, the Danner Foundation is among Europe's most renowned organizations promoting handmade craftsmanship. Since 1984, every three years, the Danner Foundation awards artists, crafters, and designers living in Bavaria for their outstanding achievements.

The competition promotes new creative ideas and enhances further progress and developments in the applied art and crafts sector. It is under the auspices of the Bavarian Minister of Economic Affairs, Regional Development and Energy. A jury of international experts decides the nominations and the awards.

The Danner Prize promotes established artists and young talent while it also sets the sector's high standards and promotes Bavarian design globally.

Gunther Pfeffer was awarded the Danner Prize 2023 for his delicate modular showcase cabinet Raster made of fir wood. Honorary prizes go to Christiane Engelsberger's headdress Fülle made of rye straw, Beate Leonard's vase made of tombac, Nico Schipp's ceramic installation Lined up, and Christoph Straube's three-dimensional illusion of enamel brooches.

## Danner Prize 2023 Artistic Crafts of Distinction from 12.10.23 to 28.1.24 Heiliggeistkirche Landshut Germany

More than 100 objects by over 40 artists. Free admission. Opening hours: Tue to Sun, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Heiliggeistgasse 394, 84028 Landshut, Germany

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JEWELLERY & GLASS

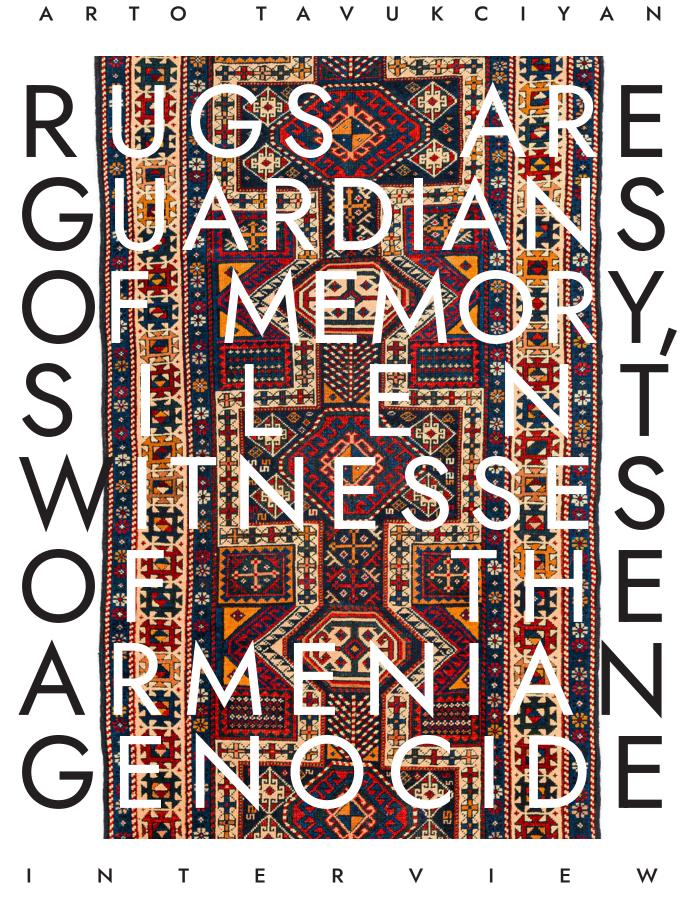






Blessing of the bread, Elefsina. Photo: Christoph Ziegler.





MANY BEAUTIFUL DESIGNS OF ORI-ENTAL RUGS ARE REPRODUCTIONS OF CHRISTIAN AND ARMENIAN SYM-BOLS AND CONCEPTS, SAYS EXPERT AND COLLECTOR ARTO TAVUKCIYAN. IN AN INTERVIEW WITH SMCK MA-GAZINE, HE DESCRIBES HOW RUGS CAN REVEAL THE TRUTH ABOUT STO-LEN CULTURAL HERITAGE AND RES-TORE THE IDENTITY OF A NATION DESTROYED BY ETHNIC CLEANSING.

#### Interview by Loukia Richards

**SMCK:** How did you come to work with antique rugs and what types of objects do you handle in your business, Hye Antiques?

**AT:** I was born in Montreal to an Armenian family from Istanbul. My parents left after the Istanbul Pogroms in 1955 when Christian businesses and churches were attacked. My wife and I moved to Vancouver in 1992. I worked as Art Director for several ad agencies, including McCann-Erickson. I was also the founding art director of NUVO magazine. Eventually I realized that clients prefer to work with younger people. I was always interested in antique rugs, though I hadn't yet figured out why. Aesthetically I was drawn to Caucasian rugs, especially Kazakh, because of their bold geometric patterns and striking colors.

As I began to research antique rugs, I learned that Armenians had woven many of these Caucasian rugs. As I dug further, I discovered that Armenians were among the earliest weavers in history and weaving was an important part of our ancient culture.

I discovered that Armenians wove the majority of Kazak and Nagorno-Karabakh rugs, many Eastern Caucasian rugs, and also the majority in Eastern Anatolia – what is today eastern Turkey. The area, which begins just east of Cappadocia, comprises along with present-day Armenia, the geographic region known as the Armenian highlands.

Most importantly I found that the accepted theory that the original weavers were the Turkic nomads who migrated to



Antique Artsakh Armenian rug (Nagorno Karabakh), late 19th century. Photo: A. Tavukciyan.



Armenian Kazakh double niche Prayer rug, 1912. The Hand (Khamsa), particularly the open right hand, is a sign of protection that also represents blessings, power and strength, and is seen as potent in deflecting the evil eye for all peoples of the Middle East, Muslims, Christians and Jews alike. Photo: A. Tavukciyan.

Anatolia in the twelfth century and conquered **66** Anatolia was false. There is documented proof of weaving in Anatolia thousands of years before the appearance of the Turkic tribes. Also, the belief that Turkic motifs imported from Central Asia were what was reflected in Antique Caucasian and Anatolian rugs was also wrong.

In reality these were ancient Anatolian motifs dating from petroglyphs to their use by the Anatolian sedentary cultures of the Hittites, Luwians, Lydians, Phrygians, Assyrians, Urartians, Byzantines, and finally the Armenians that was reflected in the rugs. You can see many of these motifs in the remaining Byzantine and Armenian medieval churches, manuscripts, and Armenian Khachkars (cross stones).

# THE ORIGIN OF PRAYER RUGS IS EASTERN CHRISTIAN ??

#### SMCK: What is an "antique" rug?

**AT:** A rug is considered antique after 100 years and a semi-antique when between 50 and 100 years old. Antique rugs and kilims are more desirable than new rugs because of the better work-

manship and dyes. Natural flowers and plants were used to create them. The dye-maker was as important in the rugmaking process as the designer and the weaver. Natural dyes were more beautiful and the overall colors more harmonious than the synthetic dyes of today. In addition to the workshops, villagers wove rugs for their own personal use. These rugs reflect their ancient traditions and beliefs. Those informal village rugs are the ones that really speak to me, as well as the rugs woven as gifts to churches to honor departed loved ones or rugs woven as wedding gifts or for some other commemoration. Today's designs are a derivative of those motifs, losing their pure essence.

Rugs were passed on or sold from one person to another over the course of their history. Provenance is hard to track beyond one or two owners. The looting of churches and homes from the first Seljuk invasions to the Genocide in 1915 adds another dimension of confusion.

**SMCK:** What is the difference between a rug and a kilim?

**AT:** Both carpets and rugs are piled. An individual knot is woven one at a time, in a particular color on a template grid to make a larger design. It's similar to a mosaic where each individual tiny mosaic is part of a larger design. A carpet is generally larger than 10 feet long and 8 feet wide and rugs are smaller. A kilim is a flat woven textile. It is made by interweaving the warp (vertical yarns) and wefts (horizontal yarns) on looms.

**SMCK:** Many people do not know about the tragedy of the Armenian people or the genocides between 1890-1915. The objects you work with can also be seen as guardians of memory and silent witnesses of the crimes against the Armenian people.

**AT:** Rugs as guardians of memory and silent witnesses of the crimes against the Armenian people is a very apt expression.

Since 1915, Turks and Azeris have made a concerted effort to exclude Armenians from the weaving culture of Anatolia and the Caucasus. The reason is political. They claim Armenians never wove rugs and were only merchants. Their intent is to separate Armenians from the weaving culture of the region thus providing an argument against the Armenian presence in the region. By separating Armenians from the region's culture their argument is Armenians were never there or were interlopers. Armenians are indigenous to the region and have a history of at least 2,500 years in Anatolia and the Caucasus.

Most believe that only Muslims use prayer rugs or that the Mihrab or prayer niche's origin is Islamic. This is untrue. Eastern Christians like the Armenians and Assyrians used prayer rugs in churches. There are monuments in Anatolia from ancient cultures and carvings from Christian Assyrians of prayer niches well before the advent of Islam.



Antique Armenian Kilim, circa 1900. Photo: A. Tavukciyan.

#### Two special features of Armenian rugs:

I. Armenian rugs have bold primary colors. Red and blue were the most common colors. Red is commonly used as a background color. Armenian national garments and rugs are often adorned with a deep, saturated red. This comes from a tiny insect called the Armenian cochineal (Porphyrophora hamelii), also known as "Kermes," which is indigenous to the Ararat plain and Aras River valley in the Armenian highlands.

II. Armenian rugs are geometric and abstract. Armenian rugs can be described as Totemic or Monumental. They are not representational or decorative like Persian or Azeri rugs. Rugs like the Sevan design are based on floor plans of medieval churches; crosses and cruciform shapes are used often. Antique Armenian rugs always convey a meaning.



Armenian carpet manufactory in Eastern Kurdistan. Photo: Early Twentieth Century Anthropology. "As craftsmen the Armenians show considerable capacity. They have been long renowned for their skill and artistry in carpet-making. Most of the carpets known as Turkish are manufactured by them and sold to the Western world by merchants and traders in Constantinople". Noel Buxton in Peoples of All Nations Their Life Today and Story of Their Past.

For Armenians, prostrating and kissing the earth on a rug during prayer is registered in the Armenian language. The word "worship" in Armenian literally means to kiss the earth. There is no other language to my knowledge that has a word that expresses or describes the act of worship so literally, which is proof the practice was used before the advent of Islam. Not just prostration, which is a practice older than

# <sup>66</sup> THE WESTERN WORLD TODAY SUFFERS FROM OIKOPHOBIA **?**

Christianity, but literally "kissing the earth."

In the Ottoman era, as a result of Turkification and Islamization of Armenians and other Christians, people started to hide their Christian identity to avoid discrimination and persecution. So the practice of kneeling on rugs and kissing the earth

during prayer disappeared and with it the art of Armenian prayer rugs. Nowadays surviving Armenian prayer rugs are wrongly labeled Islamic or Turkish.

There are many common misunderstandings about rug motifs, many coined by Europeans without understanding their true significance. I sometimes wonder whether this was ignorance or intentional.

To put things in context, I have to first state that the Western world today suffers from oikophobia, or fear of home. Almost everyone is familiar with the phenomenon of people who blame their own country or civilization for everything, who feel embarrassed about their own culture. Oikophobia is an extreme aversion to the sacred, and the thwarting of the connection of the sacred to the culture of the West.



"As cult objects of Christian oriental churches, carpets, along with other textiles, constitute what may well be the most important Armenian contribution to the history of world art. My book attempts to make good the injustice done to a people who, in the course of their more than two-thousand-year history, have suffered more than any other as a result of their geographic location between the Orient and the Occident. The Armenians have countless times been divided, exploited, robbed, exiled, deported, enslaved, murdered and mistreated. They have been robbed of their art, the authorship for which has been attributed to the conquerors during the years which followed, either due to ignorance of the facts involved, or to the manipulation of these facts. This unique collection of patterns and designs, characteristics of oriental carpets, is a part of the Armenian heritage and identity, and it should now be understood as such."

*Volkmar Gantzhorn, The Christian Oriental Carpet (Benedict Taschen, 1991; 532 pages)*  Armenian Dragon Sileh (detail), 2nd half of 19th century. This 'Sileh' carpet is woven using the weft-wrapping technique known as soumakh, with a design of large S-shaped motifs that represent highly stylized, mythological dragons. Dragon mythology has been a part of Armenian culture since time immemorial. Photo: A. Tavukciyan.



Armenian Karabakh Prayer rug (detail) dated 1881. Armenians along with other Eastern Christians used Prayer rugs in Church to kneel on and pray towards the Altar. The cavernous medieval churches were cold in winter. Originally there were no pews so people sat or knelt on rugs to keep warm. Photo: A. Tavukciyan.



Arto Tavukciyan.

## ARMENIAN GENOCIDE DENIAL

**SMCK:** The Armenian genocide has been recognized by thirty-four countries, but not by Turkey, Pakistan, or Azerbaijan. Turkey attributes the mass deaths of the Ottoman Empire's Armenian subjects to the harsh conditions of the first world war and denies the claim that the mass murders were centrally planned and executed. What do Armenian rugs tell us today about memory, genocide, and cultural expropriation?

**AT:** F. R. Martin, a well-known Swedish rug scholar in England in the nineteenth century wrote A History of Oriental Rugs Before 1800 fully acknowledging the seminal contributions of the Armenians to the art of weaving, especially in the creation of the famous Dragon rugs from Nagorno-Karabakh. According to many Western historians and architects, medieval and early post-medieval European architecture can trace its origins to Armenia, which was the birthplace of Romanesque and Gothic architectural styles later adopted and spread throughout Europe.

But after the Armenian Genocide in 1915 – when Armenians were ethnically-cleansed from their Anatolian homeland, churches were destroyed, village names were changed, and art and culture was appropriated – the Turkish government begun to deny the extermination of the Armenians. Unfortunately the Western powers, in their desire to keep the new Turkish republic in the fold as a bulwark against the Soviets, closed their eyes to the atrocities and the cultural theft.

Reeling from mass extermination and subsequent wars, Armenians were too shell-shocked and devastated to protest even as their cultural legacy was being stolen in front of their eyes. Their first priority was survival. Also, Armenia being pulled behind the Iron Curtain as a new Soviet state in 1921 did not help.

It wasn't until the 1970s that a group of Armenian diasporan rug merchants in the United States began to fight back by founding the Armenian Rug Society and organizing rug seminars and exhibitions with Armenian inscribed rugs. Today, due to the commitment of collectors, experts, and the Armenian Rugs Society, Armenians' seminal place in rug history is slowly being restored.

facebook: HyeAntiques | instagram: hye\_antiques www.armenianrugs.com

# ATHENS 2024 ARTIST RESIDENCY PROJECT VISIT THE OPEN CALL FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.FAVELAB.NET

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# P U E R R Ε Ζ MAKE UNDER **STAN** DABLE, AFFO **RDAB** PPEAL LE, A SEXY ING,

# JEWELRY!

ARTIST, CURATOR, PUBLISHER, ACTIVIST. PAUL DERREZ, OWNER OF THE LEGEN-DARY GALERIE RA IN AMSTERDAM, NEEDS NO INTRODUCTION. GALERIE RA'S HERITAGE AND ITS MAJOR AESTHETICAL AND EDUCATIONAL ROLE SHAPED GE-NERATIONS OF JEWELRY ARTISTS. ALTHOUGH GALERIE RA NO LONGER EXISTS, ITS LEGACY LIVES ON. REFLECTING ON GALERIE RA'S PAST TRIGGERED SMCK MAGAZINE'S DISCUSSION WITH PAUL DERREZ ON THE ROLE JEWELRY CAN PLAY IN TIMES OF SOCIAL DISCONTENT AND UNCERTAINTY ABOUT THE FUTURE.

#### Interview by Loukia Richards

**SMCK:** In the late 1960s and early 1970s, when you started your jewelry career, you were both witness and protagonist of a revolutionary mood in society. How do you see the situation in Europe today, with the war in Ukraine, the climate crisis activism, the energy shortage concerns, the increasing threat of poverty? How do these topics affect contemporary jewelry and influence its themes and values?

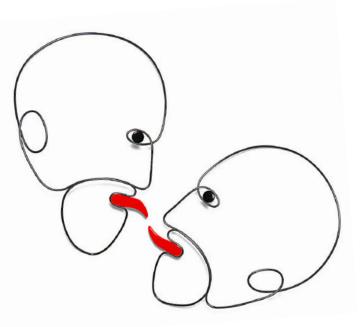
# <sup>66</sup> JEWELRY SHOO-TING WORKS BET-TER WITH PRO-VOCATION, HU-MOR AND JOY ??

**PD:** Although the Vietnam war and the nuclear threat were strongly felt in those days, there was still optimism that things could change for the better – in a kind of naive way, by wearing badges for example. Now we all realize how

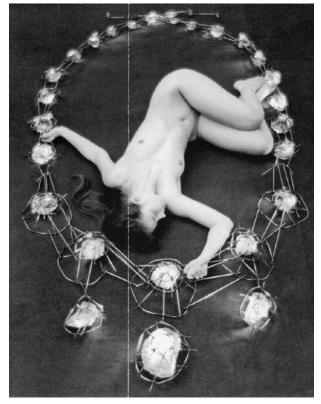
complicated it is to change so many social, political, and environmental themes drastically. And, during the last decennia, we became very individualistic. In jewelry, the focus also became very individual and personal. It's time again for solidarity in thinking and acting.

**SMCK:** Pride Power, Ukraine Chain, and Spoons for Food. Their sale revenues benefit good deeds, but this is not the end of their positive effect. In the past, various social and political movements, such as the suffragettes or the social democrats or the nuclear power opponents, designed their own jewelry or insignia, badges and pins to take pride in their cause and make themselves visible. Can jewelry make the public aware that there is a lot to be done against poverty, war, bigotry, hate ideologies? Are there rules for designing visually attractive and popular 'politically and socially aware jewelry'?

**PD:** I think in the past the buttons, cheap and easy, worked well to tell a simple message. But nowadays society is so polarized that even such an expression of opinion can be dangerous for the wearer. If the jewel brings in money for a specific goal, there is more commitment involved. And yes, maybe we should organize a design competition for an Extinction Rebellion badge!



Paul Derrez - "Real Men Heart Brooch", 2021. Silver, acrylic. Photo: Rob Bohle.



*Ra Gallery announcement for Petra Hartman exhibition at KunstRai art fair, 1992.* 



**SMCK:** At the very beginning of your career, you and other jewelry artists faced the dilemma of the direction in which contemporary jewelry should move: towards fashion or towards art? Galerie Ra stood for the latter. Which direction do you think contemporary jewelry is heading in now?

**PD:** Galerie Ra started with a very diverse program and offer. You could call it art, design, or fashion without strict borders or hierarchy. But more and more the scene moved in the art or quasi-art direction. But we do not need categories as interesting work is built on research, vision, and commitment.

**SMCK:** Visual communication, gallery identity, and strategy made Galerie Ra immediately recognizable as a distinctive 'brand'. Branding and selling are very important issues for artists and art dealers. However, many artists ignore the importance of the market, while in art schools the market is often demonized.

**PD:** Yes, Galerie Ra was a brand, a self-created brand. It was built on aims and on a strategy to reach these aims. It was not artificial or copied. Artists should operate in this order, not the other way around.

**SMCK:** How can contemporary jewelry artists promote and sell their jewelry in a highly competitive international environment that is also plagued by an unforeseen crisis with war, recession, post-Covid depression?

**PD:** Specialized jewelry galleries still can play a role, but there is much more to do. Jewelry has to be brought to the street again. It does not need an artist label to communicate. It can connect directly to vivid themes in society. Jewelry is a unique medium and can be very fast and flexible: designing it day 1, making it day 2, wearing it day 3, and having learned from this process day 4!

**SMCK:** In your book Cherished, 40 Years Galerie Ra, you describe the shift in customers' behavior in the 1970s and 1980s as emancipated professional women could afford to buy their own jewelry. The feedback we get now from artists and dealers is that things are very tough. Why don't people buy art jewelry as much now?

**PD:** When it does not appeal to people, they do not buy it. Make it understandable, affordable, appealing, sexy.

**SMCK:** Pricing art is an important and very difficult procedure many artists dread. How do you find the price for your jewelry?

# <sup>66</sup> JEWELRY HAS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE STREET AGAIN **?**

**PD:** To act as a shop makes these things easier. You just can try out which pieces at what prices would work. The prestige of the maker or the

knowledge of the customer do not play a role. And that is a relief and gives freedom to experiment. It's a learning process that needs time and commitment.

**SMCK:** The promotional picture of your work for the group exhibition delight! at Veszprem-Balaton European Capital of Culture 2023 is amazing. You are wearing a pink overcoat and your Pride chain and you are the personification of the ageless joy of life. Many jewelry artists prefer conservative approaches when they shoot photos of their jewelry and choose young, rather bland models. What role does photography play in transferring the jewelry's message?

**PD:** It's all about communication and sometimes provocation; humor and joy help a lot in this respect. I always wear my own and others' work with great confidence and pride. It's the easiest and jolliest way to show and advertise your own or others' work! My husband and I always choose a different pendant or necklace when visiting the bar on Sunday afternoon. People come up to us to see the new one!

**SMCK:** How should jewelry artists and galleries present themselves, document and promote their work today, with digital and social media demanding 24/7 availability and constant, but ephemeral, input?

**PD:** From Galerie Ra's start in 1976, collecting, producing, and spreading information about developments in jewelry, was very important for me. It was all printed matter, although I recently found tapes with artist-interviews from the early Eighties. In the Sixties and Seventies publications were rare and minimal, but in the Eighties more and more catalogues and books were published and of better quality (color!). When Ra moved to a larger space in 1983, a book and catalogue corner and a mail-order-service were created, covering a wide range of publications, not limited to the Ra artists. I still like books, as they show a selection and a context. It's important to build a well-organized personal archive for study and research, for information and promotion.

**SMCK:** Do you plan a new publication of your sold-out book Cherished, 40 Years Galerie Ra?

**PD:** No, that book and Galerie Ra are history now. The future is a new generation.



Ra Gallery, Vijzelstraat, exhibition Marion Herbst, 1993.



www.thepooljewelry.com/shop/paul-derrez

"We can use Zen as the foundation of finding our inner peace in turbulent times. Living in Kharkiv under active artillery shelling and rocket fire, I maintain my peace of mind thanks to Zen; and I continue transforming negative energy into a positive one."

Stanislav Drokin

This Collection made with Fercupium, Stanislav Drokin's innovative casting technique, was launched during the Kharkiv war.





# STANISLAV DROKIN

Revival Collection:

*Left: Fercupium Pendant (ID) P2317. Blued steel fragment of a free-form projectile and patinated bronze, sapphires, spessartine garnets.* 

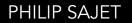
*Right: Fercupium Pendant (ID) P2324. Blued steel fragment of a free-form projectile and patinated bronze, yellow sapphires, blue diamonds.* 

www.stanislavdrokin.com

"There is a rabbi, Manis Friedman, a realistic thinker. He says: 'Don't demonstrate for peace, demonstrate peace'. What is the essence of everything? It can be said in one word: Light. To bring light into the world. Anybody can choose to do that."

b

Philip Sajet



"Van Gogh Color Star Collier", 2022. Perspex, gold. Photo: Aatjan Renders.

200

instagram: @philipsajet

# ART SHOU LD RAISE QUES-TIONS

THE BROTHERS ARSEN AND ROUPEN KAL-FAYAN ESTABLISHED THE KALFAYAN GAL-LERIES IN THESSALONIKI IN 1995, FOLLOWED IN 2007 BY A SECOND VENUE IN ATHENS.

KALFAYAN GALLERIES IS A REGULAR PAR-TICIPANT IN ART BASEL HONG KONG, ART BASEL, ARMORY, EXPO CHICAGO, ART COLOGNE, FRIEZE LONDON, ART BASEL MIAMI, AND OTHER GLOBAL ART VENUES. SMCK MAGAZINE DISCUSSED ART AND BUSINESS WITH GALLERY MA-NAGER YULI KARATSIKI.



Antrea Tzourovits - "Untitled", 2022. Wood, natural shellac. Photo: Kalfayan Galleries

Interview by Christoph Ziegler

**SMCK:** What are the secrets of an art gallery's resilience and prosperity in difficult times?

**YK:** The Greek financial crisis, which lasted almost ten years, has taught us a lot about last-minute impro-

<sup>66</sup> COLLECTING IS A JOURNEY FIRST WITHIN YOURSELF AND THEN A JOUR-NEY AROUND THE ART WORLD. <sup>99</sup>

visation under pressured circumstances, about inventiveness, and above all about flexibility and adaptability. Art Fairs are an important platform for international exposure for the gallery and its artists, and for building long-lasting relationships with collectors worldwide.

**SMCK:** What are the mutual obligations between a gallery and an artist?

**YK:** We support and internationally promote the artists we collaborate with on a long-term basis. Successful collaboration between the artist and the gallery can only be built on mutual trust and respect. These are the real binding contracts.

**SMCK:** Kalfayan's most recent solo show by Serbia Montenegro-born artist Antrea Tzourovits reflects the personal and collective memory of his home country. His work refers to an international basketball championship that Serbia won shortly before the NATO bombings of 1999. The exhibition has the additional quality of a political and historical discourse and reflection. How important is politics in contemporary art?

**YK:** Art is politics, to paraphrase Aristotle's thesis that every human being is by nature a political being. However, art should not be didactic, it should not offer answers but raise questions. That is exactly what the Antrea Tzourovits exhibition did, drawing from his personal experience of the war, but also his body-memory as an instrument maker. His elaborate sculptures and paintings on wood examine the relationship between 'play' and 'conflict' and how these can generate both humor and a feeling of uncertainty.

**SMCK:** The Kalfayan family is of Armenian origin. Armenia is going through a horrible tragedy in Artsakh/ Nagorno-Karabakh. Would you like to comment on these events?

**YK:** What is happening is a real human and cultural tragedy. What is equally devastating is the general indifference of the West.



Kalfayan Galleries Athens, 11 Haritos Street, Athens (Kolonaki).



Antrea Tzourovits - "Kicking back comma", 2023. Wood, leather guitar strap, wood varnish. Photo: Kalfayan Galleries.

www.kalfayangalleries.com instagram: kalfayangalleries

# A D O SIN IN IS A PRIMAI INSTINCT

# JEWELLERY BIENNIAL 2024

EWELRY &

Lin Cheung, "Frowning Face" (left) and "Still Confused" (right), brooches, Delayed Reactions series, 2018/19. Lapis lazuli, gold. Photo: Lin Cheung THE 2ND LISBON JEWELLERY BIENNIAL (JUNE 2024), CELEBRA-TES THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RESTITUTION OF DEMO-CRACY IN PORTUGAL. POLITICAL JEWELRY AND JEWELRY OF POWER CHALLENGES THE NOTION THAT JEWELRY IS JUST OR-NAMENTAL AND THAT POLITICS IS A SYNONYM FOR IDENTITY OR ANTI-CAPITALISM.SMCK MAGAZINE SPOKE WITH MARTA COSTA, PIN - ASSOCIAÇÃO PORTUGUESA DE JOALHARIA CON-TEMPORÂNEA DIRECTOR AND CO-CURATOR OF THE BIENNIAL, ON JEWELRY'S POWER FOR SOCIAL INTERVENTION.

# Interview by Loukia Richards

**SMCK:** How did you discover your love for jewelry?

MCR: In my early teens, I made very simple jewelry with beads. I studied philosophy and law and had a professional career in the media and

# *CAN NOT RE-ALLY EXPLAIN WHY I LOVE JE-WELRY, I JUST DO.* **?**

non-profit sector. I started making jewelry as a hobby in 2004. In 2014 I enrolled in Arco school, and all my professional life is now jewelry-related.

**SMCK:** How easy is it to organize and curate a major jewelry meeting? What events are scheduled for 2nd Lisbon Biennial?

**MCR:** The 1st Biennial was about jewelry and objects of protection; it was a crazy adventure in the midst of the pandemic.

It is very hard and challenging to organize such an event. The money is always short, the people are always few, the resources are hard to come by. Editing ideas is one of the hardest things: realizing what we can and cannot do, defining priorities, canceling projects we can't afford.

The 2nd Biennial's title is Madrugada (dawn), inspired by a well-known poem by Sophia de Mello Breyner Andersen that speaks about the end of the totalitarian night and the hope that the new day brings.

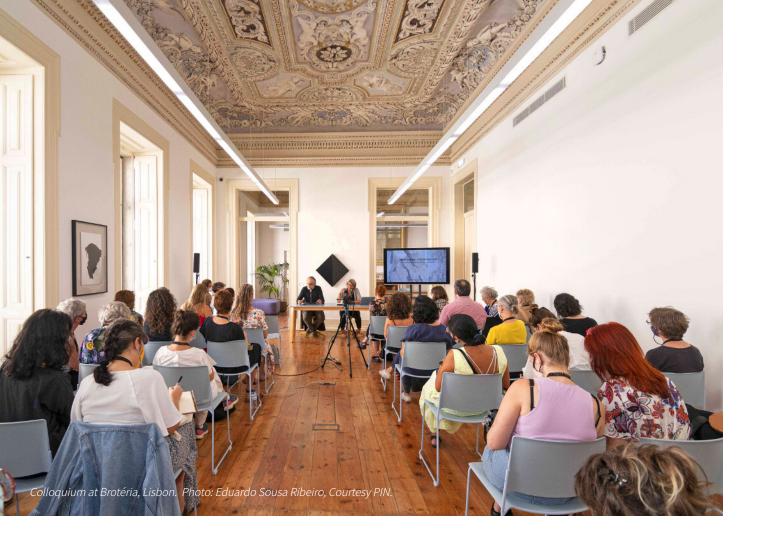
There will be a collective international exhibition at MUDE the Lisbon Design Museum, an anthological show of Portuguese artist Teresa Milheiro, two exhibitions at the Royal Treasure Museum — one showing contemporary tiaras side by side with the traditional ones and an exhibition of jewels made by PIN members honoring women who had a role in the transition towards democracy or suffered under the dictatorship. The exhibitions at the Royal Treasure Museum will open in April on the anniversary of the Revolution, but everything else will take place in late June.



Loukia Richards, "OX!! (NO!)", 2010. 18th & 19th century Greek embroidery motifs stitched on old Greek flag. Photo: Studio Kominis Athens.



Jewelry Room with international galleries. Photo: Eduardo Sousa Ribeiro, courtesy PIN.



<sup>66</sup> IDENTITY POLI-

TICS HAVE OVER-

SHADOWED THE

POLITICAL DIS-

COURSE. "

We will also have a colloquium, schools' meetings, parallel events from different artist groups, galleries presenting work, and many other initiatives. We are very happy to have a power team with Monica Gaspar, Patricia Domingues, and myself curating this show and the colloquium. We are a small team of around ten persons, mostly volunteers.

SMCK: How is the Biennial funded?

**MCR:** We received a 40,000-euro grant from the Portuguese government and the rest of the budget will be met by partners like the City of Lisbon and our museum partners and sponsors.

**SMCK:** What are distinctive features of contemporary Portuguese jewelry?

**MCR:** Portuguese contemporary jewelry is very diverse. Its origins are in the 1960s and it has been influenced by the typical Nordic design, North American studio jewelry, and European conceptual art jewelry.

## THE TOTALITARIAN NIGHT LASTED 48 YEARS

**SMCK:** History is a complex collective memory process. What advice would you give younger artists who wish to indulge in politics and reflect on history and draw inspiration from them?

MCR: I was five years old when the revolution happened and I remember vividly the feeling of joy and liberation that imbued the whole society at that moment. I couldn't really understand what was going on, but suddenly everyone was friendly and there were huge gatherings and parties and everyone was just happy. I grew up in a democratic country, but with a

strong awareness of what a dictatorship is.

These fundamental political struggles are still very real in many other places like Iran, Hong Kong, Brazil, and even the US, to name a few – and, of course, Ukraine which is fighting an invasive colonialist power.

In Europe we are faced with different challenges, namely the limits of democracy: free-speech and tolerance of



speech that attacks the root of democracy or the breaking of the social contract with the ever-growing wealth gap and the failure of governments to secure education, housing, healthcare, and satisfaction of other needs or the polarization and loss of social trust due to fake news and the shameless lies of those seeking power by manipulating media and people.

Identity politics seem to have overshadowed the political discourse and I do fear some essentials are being forgotten. I tend to prefer a more universal approach based on what we have in common than what differentiates us, but this seems to belong to a different time. I believe democracy is the only system where individual rights can be maintained and protected. I know this because I lived in times when we saw the difference in Portugal, Spain, Greece, South America, the USSR, and the "Iron Curtain" across eastern Europe.

With the Biennial we want to say: you need democracy to fight today's battles. Democracy has its flaws but they can be fixed; if you lose it, it might take you 48 years to get it back, like it took us.

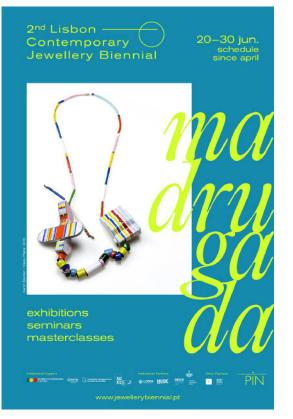
SMCK: Jewelry – pins, rings, and so on – has played

an important role in social and political movements, such as women's liberation and social democracy. What do you consider "political jewelry topics" today?

**MCR:** It's true, jewelry was also very much connected with power and its symbols. We take a very broad understanding of "political;" it can include how we connect with others and objects, the ways we talk about who we are, the choices we make connected to our bodies, or the realities of living in an over-connected world but where borders are still very much real. We are political beings and jewelry is an amazing media for expressing that reality.

## ALL JEWELRY CAN BE POLITICAL

**SMCK:** Jewelry can be a very good form of political communication, as the late Madeleine Albright demonstrated as US Secretary of State when she wore different pins to meetings as foreign policy signals. Medieval kings and bishops consciously used clothes, shoes, hats, and jewelry to send visual messages to those who could read



Poster of "Madruga", 2nd Lisbon Jewellery Biennial 2024.

<sup>66</sup> EDUCATING NEW ENTHU-SIASTS AND POTENTIAL BUYERS/COLLECTORS IS ALSO WHAT WE AIM TO DO THROUGH THE BIEN-NIAL AND THROUGH OUR WORK WITH MUSEUMS. **?** 



Cuartor Marta Costa Reis.

them. What messages could political jewelry send today via the people who wear it to the people who see it?

**MCR:** Madeline Albright's story tells us that all jewelry can be political. The brooches she used to wear are mostly devoid of any message per se. It was her, the context, the person the message is intended to reach that transforms very traditional pieces of jewelry into political symbols and conveyers of meaning. In medieval Europe and many other times in history, metals, precious stones, and special fabrics had their use restricted by law to certain social classes only. Those materials were therefore political in themselves, as were the styles and shapes. Political jewelry today can be used to speak about everything and anything. If you understand the language, the code, the meaning, jewelry can speak volumes. For instance, a pink knot doesn't say much unless you know it supports breast cancer victims.

**SMCK:** The world as we know it is changing brutally and rapidly. There is no safe prediction about the outcome of military conflicts or economic recovery. How can jewelry artists stand out and flourish in this unsafe and totally new environment, and what can jewelry offer art lovers that no other art discipline can?

**MCR:** Most artists need to be very organized, work very hard and for a long time to achieve a stable income from their art – and not everyone has that endurance. There is not a single "recipe" that fits everyone. Each person should find what works for her or him and above all who they are artistically. That's the only thing that will make anyone stand out eventually. lewelry brings intimacy, tactility, sensuality in a way no other vi-

sual art does. Adorning is a primal instinct; it has always been with us and will most probably always be.

**SMCK:** How can the Lisbon Biennial contribute to better promoting and understanding jewelry artists' work?

**MCR:** Art jewelry is a niche product because it tends to appeal to people who see themselves outside the norm. Art jewelry is competing with high-end jewelry, replacing the brand or materials' value with artistic value.

The Biennial tries to give artists more platforms to expose and show their work. I think galleries are still of extreme importance. People can access and buy everything online, but we need places to present shows that matter to motivate artists to create new work and to present that work as something valuable to newcomers. At the Biennial we try to present as much as we can: galleries, schools, artists, students, curators, teachers, thinkers, writers, museums, and collectors.

www.jewellerybiennial.pt

# LOOKING FOR WONDERLAND





## IF OUR CIVILIZATION DIES IN A NUCLEAR EVENT, WHETHER ACCIDENT OR WAR, HOW WILL IT REEMERGE?

Athens – the cradle of democracy, art, and philosophy – inspired six artists to answer this question by creating new works of art.

Inhabited continuously since Copper Age, the city has long traces of Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Ottoman, and Bavarian monuments, making it the ideal place to reflect on how culture could be reborn under the current pressure of war, financial crisis, climate change, energy considerations, globalization challenges, new collective identities, and 21st-century ethics. GROUP EXHIBITION WITH BRIDGET CATCHPOLE KHANYA MTHETHWA CHRISTOPH ZIEGLER LOUKIA RICHARDS TRICIA WASNEY BA AN LE

Π-ARTWORKS LEKKA 30 10562 ATHENS

# BA AN LE

On the night before, a strong wind blew through town. Trees were thrown about, debris everywhere, shattered glass.

I saw angels play by the music of the wind. They clothed themselves with food wrap, played hideand-seek in disposable cups, and danced with tree branches.

When they passed through a little church on the corner of Mary Street and Harrow Road, a few of the angels slid down the roof, bringing some of the roof tiles to the ground.

Defeated, Tile, in hundreds of shattered bits cried out. And on they went, angels playing to the music of the wind.

instagram: @baan\_le



# TRICIA WASNEY

My narrative jewelry is informed by geography and hidden histories. I incorporate reclaimed materials that embody past lives. Souvenirs are poignant; although they are cliché representations of place, they signify a sincere desire to share experience. These neckpieces are created from souvenirs and other recycled materials to examine the idea of travel without traveling, using archetypes of Western culture with their origins in Ancient Greece.

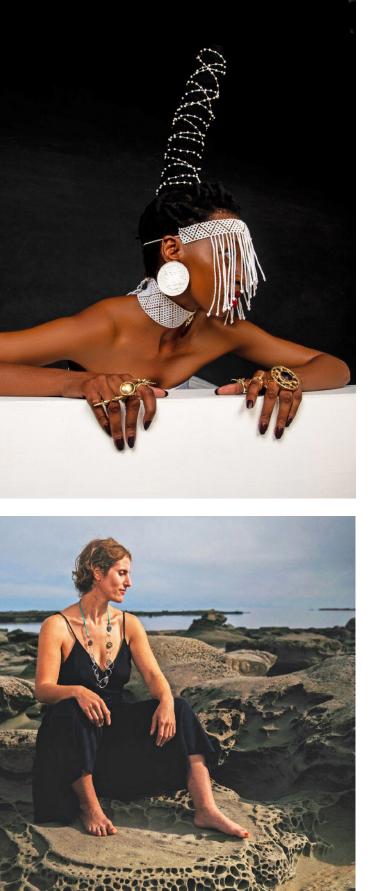
When family illness prevented me from attending the Athens residency in person, this notion became even more resonant for me. Gods & Goddesses & Orion Constellation and The Acropolis Garland use Greek mementoes to explore the limits of understanding place. The Golden Boy, modelled after Hermes, sits atop the legislative building in my hometown of Winnipeg, connecting our two cities, and now representing the stars of Orion.

If civilization is indeed re-booted, will Orion still stand watch in our shared skies of the Northern Hemisphere?



www.triciawasney.ca

"The Acropolis Garland", necklace, 2023. Photo by Leif Norman.



Bridget Catchpole, "Iera Odos II" - necklace, Stages of Healing series, 2023. Sterling silver, found plastic (Athens), tinted eco-resin, rubber. Model: Emma Walter. Photo: B. Catchpole.

Khanya Mthethwa, "Echoes of the past 2.0" -Abantu, not object. Necklace, face piece, earrings, rings and charms. Model: Khanya Mthethwa. Photo: Tomsavcheez

# KHANYA MTHETHWA

Reclaiming Abantu Heritage with Sustainability: My Echoes of the Past collection boldly challenges colonial shadows. Through modernized Zulu bridal attire and powerful poses, I defy erasure of our heritage. Celebrating the role of women and the symbolic power of cattle, I pay homage to our roots and inspire pride in our heritage. By embracing sustainable practices in my artistic journey, I not only echo our ancestors' voices but also contribute to reimagining and rejuvenating society for future generations.

#### Link: Art Jewelry Forum

# BRIDGET CATCHPOLE

I re-imagined a future impacted by climate change and looked to the ancient pilgrimage of lera Odos and the myths of Demeter for inspiration. I unmasked the worthlessness of waste plastics by documenting and collecting plastic litter along lera Odos and then modifying the sweeps of trash into a workable medium. The wearable objects referenced the descent, search, and ascent of the myth of Demeter. For example, the route along areas of lera Odos was an action of moving downward – from sacred to mundane – with industrial obstacles, such as roads and manufacturing, near at hand at every turn of the ancient road.

Finding plastic litter was commonplace, and symbolized how a search for meaning went beyond "the material of a thousand uses." Inspired by koureloudes, Greek rugs made with textile leftovers, I patchworked the Athens sweeps into a renewed material to reflect and recreate a future caught in the trap of expansionism.

#### www.bridgetcatchpole.com

# LOUKIA RICHARDS

A cosmos of harmony is a fundamental feature of Greek culture. Art is a means to achieve social cohesion and collective catharsis. Through my jewelry, textile works, videos, performances I intend to cancel fragmentation. An holistic approach to art and life is what Greece can still teach us today.

#### www.loukiarichards.net

"Neo Nomad", 2023. Textile, silver coins, vintage embroideries. Photo: Chr. Ziegler.







My jewelry is best described as "shamanic poetry of post-consumerism". The process of discovering and collecting waste material from the seashore feels like practicing archeology of today.

Empty cans and plastic packages mixed with nature become integral part of the soil and form a future layer of the Anthropocene.

The oversized Flotsam necklace, inspired by tribal animalistic jewelry, replaces archaic components, such as bones, teeth, shells and animal hair, beverage cans, plastic fragments and organic flotsam.

instagram: @rossozett



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1 inter

# RESIDENTS' MEMOIRS

# CHAIR AS AN OBJECT OF POWER AND FORCED OBEDIENCE

Wade Kelly, "My Time Is Expensive", painting, 2022. Spray paint, silkscreen on canvas. Photo. W. Kelly.

SYDNEY-BORN, VISUAL ARTIST WADE KELLY VISITED ATHENS AT THE SAME TIME AS THE SUMMER WILDFIRES RAGED ACROSS THE COUNTRY. TOXIC SMOKE ALL OVER THE CITY MADE HIS RESIDENCY IMPOSSIBLE TO HOLD. NEVERTHELESS, WE HAD THE PLEASURE OF TALKING WITH WADE ON WHAT GIVES MEA-NING TO HIS ART AND LIFE.

# Interview by FaveLAB

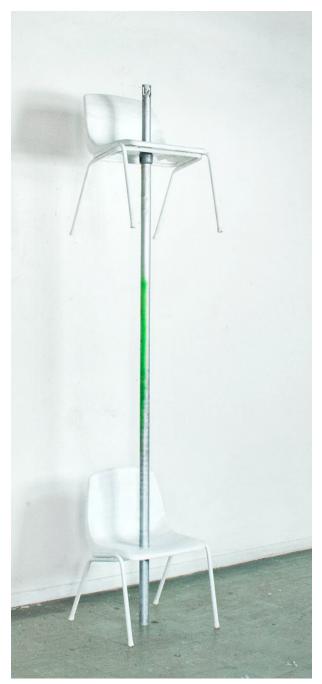
**FAVELAB:** Chairs are among your favorite objects. In ancient cultures, the chair or the throne was an object for the privileged. Metaphorically speaking, ancient rulers draw power from the divine mother who, in the form of chair, held them close to her body! In the history of objects, a chair means comfort, but also power and endorsement. What is a chair to you?

**WK:** I went to visit the stadium in Athens where the first Modern Olympic Games were held in 1896 and was immediately drawn to the chairs/thrones reserved for royalty. I sat there for some time soaking in the energy from the marble. A moment to connect with history and maybe even feel like a king? A chair holds and supports, and I totally agree with your statement that it does offer elevation, comfort, and status – especially historically. Being called into an office, it is generally the person behind the desk with more authority who allows or asks us to sit, so seating has a power dichotomy involved in most cases.



*I studied cinema; I went from film to photography and finally painting.* 

Through my education and living overseas, my world opened up to the possibilities of what art and an artist can be, but I didn't give myself permission to dedicate my life to art for several years before fully committing to the idea. It is the best decision I've made so far.



Wade Kelly, "My Baby Takes the Morning Train", 2018. Galvanised steel pole, plastic chair, acrylic paint. Photo: W. Kelly.

Everyone can contribute to a better and more just world through their everyday choices and interactions. How do you treat people? How do you treat yourself? The environment? People you disagree with?

Don't be a hypocrite, but also good luck with that – we are human after all.

# <sup>66</sup> MOST PEOPLE ARE BOUND TO THEIR CHAIR IN AN OFFICE FOR-TY-PLUS HOURS A WEEK. <sup>99</sup>

My personal exploration of the chair as a symbol involves more of a bondage element in the sense that we are told to sit down and sit up straight within a classroom setting – our initial indoctrination into subservience to authority in society.

It all depends on what chair and what context. A beach chair in a tropical location definitely holds different meaning and even a sense of freedom, a place to rest our weary souls from the grind of another type of chair.

# **FAVELAB:** How do you come to the statements you use in your paintings?

**WK:** The quotes are lines that are usually a reaction to some stimuli, usually when I'm in the outside world and on the move. Sometimes I draw from conversation or other media like music, film, or literature but generally speaking the words or phrases arrive formed; I never plan to write with a theme or an idea in mind, it just flows.

Everything is written with a sardonic wink-wink. "It's an inside joke and the joke is on you, but only until you get it, and then you're laughing with me."

I have been writing poetry for over a decade. I needed to find a way to get what I have to say to a place an audience might actually read it or have a chance to connect with it.

# FAVELAB: What gives meaning in your life?

**WK:** The idea that we ourselves are creating the meaning in our lives is an incredible force – we have the ability to accept or reject based on personal value, and that can be very empowering or overwhelming. But our search for meaning as well as the creation of meaning will always feel like a very human thing.

Meaning in my life is my connections with others – what have we shared? As human beings we have a predisposition to look for signs and symbols in our environment so we can project meaning on what we choose and read it accordingly. My art practice also adds so much to my life because it is a constant dialog revealing more of myself back to me.

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# THE ROAD TO ELEFSINA

# RESIDENTS' MEMOIRS

# THE WARRIOR NEVER RETURNED

# By Abby King



Greek pottery, Thebes. Classical period. Photo: Chr. Ziegler.

Abby King (US, 1989) is a visual artist and educator residing in Vienna, Austria. Abby received her BFA in Painting from Xavier University and her MFA from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. She has participated in numerous exhibitions in the US. came to Greece for the FaveLAB artist residency in search of the famed black-figure pottery. Part of my interest in these objects is their ubiquity, the vase's timelessness. These pieces display silhouettes from the mundane to the mystical: the stories of gods and mythology, weddings and funerals, and day to day life in ancient Greece.

During my first visit to the the National Archaeological Museum, I wandered around looking for the vases like a lost tourist. I was almost ready to go, when I discovered an entire museum floor upstairs dedicated to amphorae. My jaw dropped; I saw the ghostly White-Ground Lekythos.

Further research led me to understand that these white cousins to traditional amphorae only existed for a short time (mid-500s B.C.) There's something so precise about an artwork whose form parallels its function. The most common visuals on the lekythos are about death, depicted on a precarious object that can only be used once as ritual funerary vessel.

With my thoughts still swirling around the ghosts on the lekythos I took myself to the movies. At EKPAN summer cinema I watched Aftersun by Charlotte Wells. It's a semiautobiographical story, seemingly like the director's own desire to preserve her late father in film.

Both the white lekythos and the film hold visual empty spaces that create a sense of ambiguity that allows the viewer to project their own memories and feelings onto them. The texture of these medias, sharp focus with blurred context, helps further resonate their underlying themes of loss.

In my favorite piece at the National Archaeological Museum, A Farewell Scene, shows in cream-colored slip a seated woman, an arm's length away from a standing young warrior. The man is almost off screen, holding out his helmet as a keepsake. To anyone who has lost someone and held onto an object, like a photograph or piece of clothing, it's a glimpse of that person who didn't return.

I'm still ruminating on the longevity of the stories found on ancient Athenian pottery. It's also a little intriguing that I spent my residency focusing on the end of life while I'm in the early stages of a pregnancy. My son and I were able to begin our journey together enjoying the beautiful fraying edges of Athens and thinking to the future.

# RESIDENTS' MEMOIRS

Prior to arriving at the FaveLAB residency in Athens, I was working in Shanghai as an art educator while developing my own practice as a painter exploring different realms of memory and intimacy.

I arrived in Athens after two months of traveling through Europe. I had been seeing artwork from different cultures and friends I hadn't seen in many years. This was a great introduction to the themes I wanted to work with at Fave-LAB.

I was immediately inspired by the character of Athens. Simply walking through and witnessing the change of personality in different areas of the city, as well as seeing the vast and deep history at major landmarks and museums was the perfect introduction to my time creating art in the city. I began my time at the FaveLAB Residency focusing on expressing the ephemeral quality of relationships and our attempts at making them permanent through images and souvenirs. People become integral parts of our lives just as quickly as they leave, and adapting to this continual push and pull of intimacy is necessary for emotional survival; through photographs and objects, we seek to clarify the image of a memory that wilts with time.

Photos and keepsakes, just like our own memories, however, degrade with the passage of time; electronics malfunction, pictures pixelate, objects break, and memories blur and disintegrate despite our best efforts at conservation.

Upon introducing myself to the City of Athens, I was inspired by its distinct manner of recording time. I encountered the most impactful examples of the city displaying its history at the archeological museum and with the graffiti and posted bills on the buildings.

Both artefacts, those displayed in a museum as relics of an ancient past and the layers of graffiti and posters torn and posted again and again, served to inform viewers of something that once existed and did so in fragments and layers. These unintentional works of art inspired me to explore memory, intimacy, and the passage of time in my own work by employing a multimedia approach, utilizing collage, photography, and painting.

I would strongly suggest to any other visiting artists that they, of course, visit the major landmarks, but also allow yourself to get lost; there's much to learn and view beneath the surface.

# ALLOW YOURSELF TO GET LOST IN ATHENS!

By Olivia Jones



Painting on torn posters found in Athens. Photo: O. Jones.

instagram: ojnanpaints

# SMCK MAGAZINE OPEN CALL

# The second secon

SMCK MAGAZINE's next issue, titled Schmuck On The Go! will come out end of February 2024, ahead of Schmuck/Jewelry Week of Munich 2024. The digital issue will be free to download, and will be distributed through SMCK Magazine's subscribers' base and network that include art editors, critics and fashion journalists, curators, museums' and foundations' decision makers, art experts and VIPs, designers, artists, crafters, schools, institutions and academics, grant committee members, and gallerists.

Schmuck On The Go! issue #10 presents, next to its exceptional journalistic content, a professionally curated, designed, and edited catalogue featuring contemporary jewelry's major trends.

The goal of the catalogue is to make the international public aware of contemporary jewelry's creative, society changing and business potential by presenting the best of the best in the field.

CATALOGUE PROJECT FOR SCHMUCK/ JEWELRY WEEK OF MUNICH 2024

 $\forall$ 

The catalogue's title is Jewelry Is A Bridge, and is divided into the following three chapters: Life Milestones // Magic // Social Values.

The separate chapters reflect and explain jewelry's rich cultural and spiritual history. The chapters facilitate readers and experts to gain insight in the makers' work and to picture it in the context of jewelry's conceptual, economic or emotional role in human societies.

Works by thirty selected jewelry artists will be presented in the catalogue, and the social media. The artists' participation in exhibitions during Schmuck 2024 or in other 2024 scheduled jewelry events will also be mentioned in the catalogue, and these details will serve as a 2024 Jewelry Calendar to keep an eye on.

Individual artists, as well as organizations (schools, foundations, artist residencies, biennials or galleries) may apply to be included in the Jewelry Is A Bridge catalogue. The catalogue serves as a bibliography reference, while it enriches the artist's or organization's portfolio. Jewelry Is A Bridge adds context and content to the artist's work, and promotes it in a way no standard advertisement can do.

Jewelry artists or organizations wishing to be considered for selection should submit a portfolio with the following:

- Photos of 1 to 6 jewelry pieces shot against white or black background (high res), and if possible, the same piece/s additionally worn by a model. Please send the photo/s per WeTransfer
- Photo captions and photo credit
- Work statement 100 words
- Short Bio or CV
- Artist's or Organization's Webpage or Instagram account

# SEND YOUR APPLICATION TO MAGAZINE@SMCK.ORG

Reference: Jewelry Is A Bridge\_Catalogue

## DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS IS SUNDAY 21 JANUARY 2024.

SELECTED ARTISTS/ORGANIZATI-ONS PAY A CATALOGUE **FEE OF 145,00 EURO** UPON NOTIFICATION OF APPLICATION APPROVAL.

THERE IS NO APPLICATION FEE FOR SUBMITTING A PORTFOLIO FOR SE-LECTION.

WHILE THE DIGITAL ISSUE IS FREE TO DOWNLOAD, THE PRINT ISSUE CAN BE ORDERED FROM THE PU-BLISHER ONLINE.

WWW.SMCK.ORG

# EDITOR's Choice

By Priscilla Katz



Monica Cecchi, "Citta", bracelet. Recycled tin, 2011. Photo: M. Cecchi.

# MÁMORT / DELIGHT

# EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

European Contemporary Jewellery Exhibition curated by Olga Zobel Biró and Szonja Dohnál

Veszprém - Balaton, European Capital of Culture 2023, Hungary

A visually intriguing catalogue featuring works by twenty nine European jewelry artists. Olga Zobel Biró writes in the introduction:

Jewellery is a different genre of art from sculpture and painting. Jewellery is concerned with movement, with the body, it is tactile as a medium, which makes it a channel of emotion. Jewellery conveys feelings that are related to the quality of life. It is possible to improve the quality of life through jewellery.

www.veszprembalaton2023.hu



# METAMORPHOSEN AT GRASSI MU-SEUM LEIPZIG

# PHOTOGRAPHY, VIDEO, SOUND INSTALLATION UNTIL 1 APRIL 2024

German photographer Herlinde Koelbl (b. 1939), known for her portraits of politicians and citizens, turns to the blooming world and immortalizes it in the process of becoming.

Her photos depict the dynamic changes in the lives of plants and flowers, the ceaseless transformation of being born, grow and die. The change of consequetive stages makes her photos look like abstract paintings. Present and past flow into one another, while coming back in a new form is what the future looks like.

Grassi Museum For Applied Arts, Johannisplatz 5–11 04103 Leipzig 23.11.2023 – 01.04.2024 Tue–Sun & holidays: 10:00 am – 6:00 pm

www.grassimak.de

# OPEN CALL: 32ND INTERNATIONAL JEWELLERY COMPETITION EMPATHY

## GALLERY OF ART, LEGNICA, POLAND

The theme of the 32nd International Jewellery Competition is EMPATHY. The competition addresses jewelry artists, goldsmiths, designers. Applicants should send their work for the selection round to Legnica, Poland by **20 January 2024**.

Read the detailed open call:

www.silver.legnica.eu | open call link



Christoph Ziegler, "Garden", 2023. Wood, stain, varnish. Photo: Chr. Ziegler



Martin Creed, "Work No. 1094", photo print, 2011. Photo: Hugo Glendinning. ©Martin Creed - All Rights Reserved.

# **MYSTICAL GARDEN**

## SOLO EXHIBITION BY CHRISTOPH ZIEGLER

Worms and snakes, sacred animals and immortal goddesses, insects and birds, tamed forces and small creatures are the infatigable laborers and initiates in Ziegler's imaginary garden. All of them are meticulously depicted in Ziegler's Dadaesque assemblages.

Cyceon Bar Cafe, Elefsina, Greece Saturday 13 January to Sunday 5 February 2024

www.cyceon.gr | instagram: rossozett

# I DON'T KNOW WHAT ART IS

#### EXHIBITION UNTIL 3 MARCH 2024 MARTIN CREED AT MKK INGOLSTADT, GERMANY

A solo show on the meaning and substance of art by famous artist and former Turner Prize awardee Martin Creed (UK).

Museum für Konkrete Kunst, Tränktorstraße 6–8 85049 Ingolstadt 21.10.2023 – 03.03.2024 Tue – Sun, 10:00 am – 5:00 pm

www.mkk-ingoldstadt.de



"Untitled", 2023. Photo: Vanessa Steinmann, Courtesy of The Schlumpers.

# MONSTER, MUMIEN, MUTATIONEN

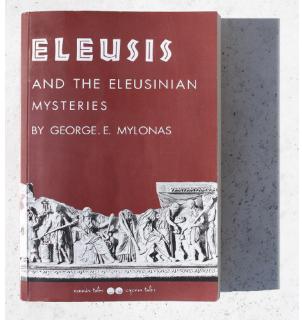
#### UNTIL 25 FEBRUARY 2024 HAMBURG, GERMANY

I enjoy visiting the Schlumpers gallery to get food for thought and to change my perspective. As the saying goes: Change the way you look at things and the things you look at change.

I read in the website: "The Schlumpers are an artists' group founded in 1980 by the Hamburg artist Rolf Laute (1940–2013). (...) Today, this group of artists, with differing handicaps and individual artistic attitudes, is celebrated internationally. Self-determination and free artistic activity are the group's basic principles."

Galerie der Schlumper, Marktstrasse 131, Hamburg 25.11.2023 – 25.02.2024, Wed. – Fri. 4:00–7:00 pm, Sat. 11:00 am – 5:00 pm, Sun. 2:00 – 5:00 pm

www.schlumper.de



"Eleusis And The Eleusinian Mysteries" by George E. Mylonas. Publisher: cyceon tales.

# ELEUSIS AND THE ELEUSINIAN MYSTERIES

#### BOOK BY GEORGE E. MYLONAS

*"...no serious student of Greek religion, archaeology or history can afford to neglect this book." -* Joseph Fontenrose, American Journal of Philology

One of the most fascinating books I have read on the subject. It combines the scholar's accuracy with the devotion of the ardent believer.

I read this book over and over again. It is my guide and my inspiration when I visit the sacred site of the Eleusinian Mysteries. One cannot understand Eleusis without absorbing this classic first.

www.cyceon.gr

# 32<sup>ND</sup> INTERNATIONAL JEWELLERY COMPETITION DEADLINE **JANUARY 20, 2024**

Legnica Jewellery SIVEI Festival SIVEI The Gallery of Art in Legnica

Participation in the competition is free – participants only cover the cost of shipping and returning the works.

SILVER.LEGNICA.EU

>> OPEN CALL @

@LEGNICA\_SILVER\_FESTIVAL

# NEXT ISSUE

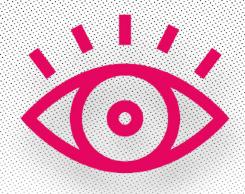
SMCK MAGAZINE FOR INDEPENDENT ARTISTS

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# COMING OUT IN MARCE 2024

# ARTICLES SUBMISSIONS, ADVERTISEMENTS & PRESS RELEASES







ADVERTISE WITH US IN THE NEXT ISSUE! VISIT OUR **HOMEPAGE** FOR PRICES AND AD FORMATS.

E-MAIL US YOUR PRESS MATERIAL FOR UPCOMING SHOWS AND/OR YOUR ARTICLE SUGGESTION.

PRESS RELEASES OR ARTICLES MUST BE FOLLOWED BY AT LEAST ONE 300 DPI PHOTO, FREE OF PHOTO RIGHTS.

DEADLINES FOR SUBMITTING PRESS MATERIAL & ARTICLES ARE 15 AU-GUST, 15 JANUARY, 15 MAY.

ASK YOURSELF BEFORE SUBMITTING YOUR ARTICLE: HOW WILL MY PIECE BENEFIT THE READER ?

Thank you for your interest in SMCK Magazine!

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