overview

conversations about jewellery in Aotearoa, NZ

issue one
March 2011

icebreaker

Something to get the conversation started...

In life, they say not to sweat the small stuff. But we know that it is all in the details and that a whole is made up of many parts. We also know that the most rewarding 'whole' is that one which is greater than the sum of these parts. If we apply these ideas to the world of Contemporary Jewellery we can see that achieving this kind of synergy is not borne of making alone and that it is vital to create the conditions for discussion, review and critique if we want jewellery practices in Aotearoa to flourish, as it has done in the past.

This was certainly the case in the early 1980s when a group of jewellers launched the *Details* newsletter which purported to provide information and dialogue at a time before the internet made everyone an expert by giving us access to, well, everything and geographical isolation often meant artists worked in a jewellery vacuum.

Times have clearly changed, and our access to information has opened up dramatically, but we think there is still a gap in the jewellery scene here that needs to be plugged with some meaningful dialogue. This e-letter intends to follow the model of the *Details* newsletter by providing a targeted audience with the platform to keep that conversation going. You can expect small talk (what's on) and deep and meaningfuls (articles of note) together with the occasional monologue (personal reflections). We also hope to make that leap into sex and politics and discuss the unmentionables with reviews of jewellery shows around town. *Overview* will be a bi-monthly, subscription-based newsletter and, like *Details*, will rely on its subscribers to contribute and comment. Your participation will make this so much more interesting and we invite subjective opinion to be submitted in the spirit of good rigour and raucous conversation.

-Raewyn Walsh

deep and meaningful

Kristin D'Agostino goes past polite conversation and helps us understand how artworks relate to each other and why we need to talk about them.

In his talk piece called 'Talking at Pomona' David Antin (American poet/critic) touches on the fine line between art and furniture, and it made me think that the difference was really only one of linguistic nuance. It underscores the importance of commentators and critics in the realm of any art and in our case, jewellery. If you replace art/painting/sculpture with contemporary craft/jewllery/ceramics, Antin's argument is relevant for the contemporary jewellery community today.

In 'Talking at Pomona' from the book 'David Antin, Talking' (New York: Kulchur Foundation, 1972) Antin is giving a lecture/performance about creating a "discourse situation in art . . . how you can think about making art . . . how you can talk about it in such a way that it will lead to making more art . . ." (p143)

The following quote is considered poetry so line spacing, punctuation and capitalization are roughly as seen below.

> "…to be art majors or graduate students normally assume that it is valuable to make whatever that is and typically they have in mind the things that people have always done when they made art and you know there is a kind of consensus a low level consensus about what art making is i mean without placing a utilitarian role upon what it does to you say there is a kind of function that people seem to attribute to it nevertheless they know what it is beforehand people think they want to make paintings or they want to make sculpture now this is a commonplace and obvious idea of course very few people have any clear idea of what it is that a painting ought to be that somebody should want to have it for example if any of

you or all of you are graduate students or artists or whatever or art makers and I say to you "you want to make paintings and youre really interested in making furniture right? I mean you want something to hang on the wall right over the sofa and they have a persimmon colored sofa and you want one that will give them pleasure so that they will buy it?" and at that point you will either say "what is he coming on?" or you get up and start trying to get out the door or show me the door you think thats a very offensive thing to say "what do you mean I make furniture what do you think I am an interior decorator? no im not an interior decorator im an artist!" i said "well I thought we were an artist and you wanted to make paintings" paintings you know what paintings are in the art scene theyre seven feet by seven feet and the important thing to know is that a painting is big it is very important to know that a painting is large and not easily portable a painting is a flat non-portable object frequently covered with colors and usually stretched canvas over a support and the important thing to realize that when people look at it automatically in the beginning uninitiated people walk into a place to see it they don't think of it as a painting i said "oh that's a painting?" "no you don't understand painting is about….." and then theres a dead end painting is about something that is not easy… "(p144-145)

We make jewellery, people wear or view it and place their own ideas onto each piece. The difference between ornament and art is the way makers, critics and the wider community discuss it, and, I see this as an exciting call to arms.

- Kristin D'Agostino

monologue

They say that 'what goes on tour, stays on tour' but we asked Sharon Fitness to tell all about her experience at the Jewellery Bootcamp held in Ashley Gorge in February 2011

The weeks leading up to Bootcamp were fraught with anxiety for many Bootcampers. The organisers had deliberately spread rumors of tough, relentless critiques that would stop us being naughty, lazy, emerging jewellers and whip us into shape – not just average shape, but into the kind of shape where from now on, we will only ever expect excellence of ourselves and produce excellent work worthy of being shown at the Schmuck Museum in Pfortzheim. Tall order right..?

So with trepidation and keen minds we packed up our pyjamas, sleeping bags, and seminar notes.

The first nice surprise of the weekend for me was when Camp Leader Damian Skinner dispelled those scary rumors with a compliment. The organisers decided to run this, one and only, Bootcamp because they were so impressed by what the new generation of emerging jewellers were doing for themselves – changing the way we move in the world, exhibiting in new ways, networking online, participating in interactive projects and creating a group show of New Zealand jewellers in Australia. I am not sure if the curators of "Touch, Pause, Engage" realised the enormity of that feat until Damian pointed out how few group shows of New Zealand jewellers had exhibited in Australia.

The next two days and nights of Bootcamp were indeed relentless. A constant flow of information, insights, discussions, critiques, photography lessons, cups of tea and delicious food.

One month later and I am still marinating conversations and snippets of wisdom that didn't quite make sense or seem possible to me then, but are gently simmering into place now. I imagine what Warwick would think of things as I make – I am searching for the essence of the object, making minimal decisions and inventing techniques to enable my wind wands to be perfect.

Essentially, Bootcamp gave me a big kick up the bum. It helped me recognise and admit too some of the barriers I have put between me and making, and gave me the motivation to set about removing those barriers. My jewellery making had been shoved back into third priority last year. I felt like I was only just

making enough work to get by, rather than the ideal situation of having many good works to select from. To fix this I have given myself another making day and implemented tools to improve my efficiency – there are so many simple things I can do to improve the likelihood of successful work. I have put in place a plan for this year – first on the list is to produce good work to re-stock my galleries – I owe them big time. Then I am going to experiment with a passion for the next 6 months to revive and invest integrity in my work. I need to get excited about what I am doing again.

Bootcamp has challenged me to expect the best from everything I do, stop making excuses and never ever send out things that I know could be better. Yes that is a tall order, but one that is totally achievable if I take small steps now to improve the way I do the things I do.

The Emerging Jewellers Bootcamp was held at Ashley Gorge, Oxford NZ 12-14 February 2011. Fourteen emerging contemporary jewellers were put through their paces by Warwick Freeman, Caroline Billing, Areta Wilkinson, Damian Skinner, Karl Chitham, Areta's mum Hui A Rei, Keri from The National, La Gonda Studios and the lovely Neighbours from up the road who made us Pavlova.

- Sharon Fitness

EMERGING JEWELLERS BOOTCAMP
Ashley Gorge, NZ. 12-14 February 2011

BACK ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT): Tara Brady, Cath Dearsley, Sharon Fitness, Karl Chitham, Warwick Freeman, Kvetoslava Flora Sekanova, Karen Michaud, Kate Barton.
MIDDLE ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT): Sophie Taylor-Brockie, Kathryn Yeats, Lynsay Raine, Victoria McIntosh, Kristin Toller, Sunni Gibson, Nadene Carr, Raewyn Walsh.
FRONT ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT): Keri Whaitiri, Haruhiko Sameshima, Caroline Billing, Areta Wilkinson, Damian Skinner, Hui-a-rei Wilkinson, Mark Adams.

Class Photo by Studio La Gonda

monologue

Suni Gibson gives her view of Bootcamp in pictures: though it wasn't all tea and scones...

dialogue

You made it, we saw it; let's talk about it.

William McDonough and Michael Braungart's *Cradle to Cradle* is a title familiar to most of us. The book encourages us towards a world in which the concept of waste does not exist, and where re-use is preferred to recycling. Along similar lines, some of us have joined groups like the ethical metalsmiths. As a generation of makers who grew up recycling, the source of our materials factor into many of our practices. How well are we really doing against such sustainable ideals? Tatjana Panyockzi's *Sincere: New Work* in The Jewellery Box at Masterworks Gallery contains necklaces made of recycled wax which embodies the concepts of sustainability and recycling.

Twice made:
Besides being an accomplished jeweller, Panyockzi is an avid candlemaker. Homemade candles are used by her and her family and given away as gifts. Panyockzi saves all of the dripped remnants of her tapers and asks other recipients to do that same. As the globules of wax are returned she separates and stores them according to color. When enough wax is collected, Panyockzi melts the recycled bits down and like an ancient alchemist, mixes waxes to form orbs of new and wonderful hues. As she describes on the masterwork website, she then dips pompoms into the paraffin giving, "the two components a new life and structure, which transforms the wax into a less fragile state and preserves the pompoms." This slow creation, destruction, gleaning, sorting and reconstructing seems to be a very satisfying way to work and live.

Enhancing jewellery with additional sensory experiences is fascinating from a theoretical point of view. The only criticism I have, and this is from someone who suffers from bad allergies and has switched to "scent free" lifestyle, is the scent. My personal olfactory sensitivity makes this work a challenge to stay close to.

Overall, I think this work is a beautiful product of a fascinating process. And the knowledge that Panyockzi is not adding more stuff to this planet, must be extremely satisfying.

For another interesting take on the life cycle of stuff check out the Story of Stuff: http://storyofstuff.org/

- Kristin D'Agostino

soundbite

We listen out to the voices from the past and see what was going on in the Details in the 1980s.

LARNACH'S CASTLE
SYMPOSIUM.
EXHIBITION INVITATION
by
OTTO KUNZLI.

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GALERIE

CAKE

INVITES

Richard Tarrant

TO A SPECIAL PREVIEW
OF

KIWI EYES CREAM

AN EXHIBITION OF

CONTEMPORARY WEARABLES

ON

FRIDAY 17th AUGUST 1990
AT 3.30 PM

TRANSPORT TO THE GALLERY IS ARRANGED.
ASSEMBLE AT STABLES AT 3.00 PM

P.O Box 1350 DUNEDIN

P.H: 761 302 Fax: 761 574

small talk

Jewellery exhibitions, events, and workshops

Auckland

Fingers Gallery
Now - Ross Malcolm *Home Sweet Home*
May - Karl Fritsch

Masterworks Gallery
Now - Tatjana Panyoczki *Sincere*
Now - Karl Chitham *Derelict*
April - Mia Straka

Objectspace
Now - Vaune Mason *Structure Life*

Wellington

The See Here
Now - Peter Deckers and Hilda Gascard
May - Sunni Gibson

Find out more at:

www.theseehere.com

Christchurch

The National
Due to the devastating February 22 earthquake the gallery remains closed. Support Caroline and buy some jewellery online at:

www.thenational.co.nz

Dunedin

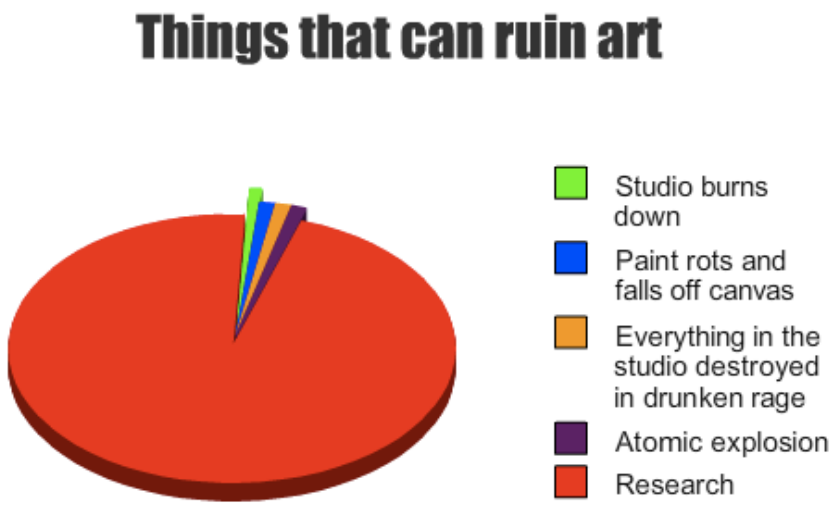
Lure Gallery
Now - Goldfinger, Group Show

Projects to look out for

www.handshake.wordpress.com

aside

Chit chat aside, let's not forget how important it is to make good work.



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