

Artist information



HANDSHAKE 2 is a mentoring project matching contemporary jewellers with their chosen mentors from across the globe.

It links a series of national and international exhibitions with professional development and is communicated through a dynamic blog <http://handshake2.com>.

The work in this exhibition represents the first stage of the mentee's two year development.

1. Suni Hermon (with mentor Sally Marsland)

Artist Statement

Why I make is becoming more and more of a mystery to me. Is it out of habit? To be part of a group? To show off? The result of an uncontrollable compulsion? To make something 'beautiful'? To test myself?

What I make is perhaps less mysterious but sometimes hard to describe. Within our roll of email/Skype conversations my Handshake mentor Sally Marsland offered a partial description of works I held up to the screen. This included "... abstracted to simple and loosely geometric forms, largely planar elements, connected with metal frame construction ... sometimes sewn ... sometime monochrome ... colour apparently random ... attention to surface texture and colour ... new piece, cardboard and tape ... shallowly extruded planes ..."

Before our correspondence I had not considered my work in such unvarnished or pragmatic terms. It is only one of the many layers Sally and I have been exploring, nonetheless, articulating what is there, via pure and simple visual observation, is adding to new ways of understanding the making process.

I make in an intuitive and repetitive, albeit interrupted, manner – in fits and starts – sometimes as short as five or ten minute intervals, late at night and when the baby is sleeping. At present, time is simultaneously the challenge, structure and method that inform my making.

BIO

Since completing a Bachelor of Applied Arts at Whitireia in 2009 Suni has exhibited throughout New Zealand, in Australia and recently in Munich as part of Talente (2012) and Wunderrüma (2014).

In 2011 Suni attended the inaugural (and only) contemporary jewellery professional development camp 'Boot Camp' with; Damien Skinner, Areta Wilkinson, Warwick Freeman, Karl Chittham and Studio La Gonda And has attended workshops with; Areta Wilkinson, Warwick Freeman, Octavia Cook, Renee Bevan, Andrea Daly, Lisa Walker, Steph Lusted, Matthew McIntyre Wilson.

Also in 2011 Suni developed the concept for The See Here, a micro gallery space in Wellington (theseehere.com).

Suni lives in Wellington with her husband and their baby Otto.

For more information: <http://handshake2.com>

HANDSHAKE 2

2. Vanessa Arthur (with mentor David Neale)

Artist Statement

Handshake 2 serves as a connecting thread. Offering me fresh perspectives, an objective sounding board and a wealth of experience and knowledge via my mentor David Neale. Uncomfortably at times, it pushes me out of my safe zone to question, evaluate and re-evaluate my work, my practice and my aims.

Our relationship with permanence currently drives my making. Pieces come to life through wear, surfaces evolve over time, and marks appear and disappear. My jewellery is often influenced by images captured on daily travels. In the studio while hammering, cutting, constructing; I picture pieces inhabiting these explored streetscapes – a drifting trove waiting to be discovered, treasured and worn.

BIO

Vanessa Arthur graduated from Whitireia New Zealand in 2012 with a Bachelor of Applied Arts. On graduating she was awarded the Deblyn Artist in Residency at Toi Poneke Arts Centre in Wellington and also received various graduate awards including; The Masterworks Gallery Jewellery Box Showcase, Fingers Gallery Graduate Award and Best in Show, Objectspace Gallery, Auckland. Vanessa continues to exhibit throughout New Zealand and Australia and currently works from her studio in the Hawke's Bay, New Zealand.

3. Julia Middleton (with mentor Terhi Tolvanen)

Artist Statement

Julia Middleton explores in her latest series illusionary tactics and light, where strict angles sidle up against blurred lines. A 'Waste not want not' methodology has created works that are a culmination of contradictory elements. The highlight of the conversations with her mentor filters into this body of work through the use of light sensitive materials with transparency and reflection.

BIO

Julia Middleton works from her studio in Riverton, Western Southland.

In October Middleton was nominated as a finalist for two major art awards for the Anderson Park Art Gallery Annual Spring Exhibition in Invercargill. Julia was awarded the title 'Southland Artist of the Year' for her series of silver rings.

Earlier this year Middleton was invited to participate in an exhibition at Gallery SO in London. The exhibition 'The Otherside' displayed a slice of contemporary Australian and New Zealand jewellers works.

Since graduating at Whitireia Polytechnic in 2011, Julia has exhibited in Holland, London, Australia and New Zealand and is currently mentored by Finnish Contemporary Jeweller Terhi Tolvanen through the 'Handshake2' mentorship project.

Within Southland Julia runs jewellery making workshops and works in closely with the local art gallery on exhibitions and community based events. The most recent being the Riverton Nautical Steampunk Exhibition.

4. Amelia Pascoe (with mentor Ruudt Peters)

Artist Statement

My journey to contemporary jewellery has been winding, scenic and rewarding. My adventures, a rich source of inspiration. I have terrible memory for facts and figures, but I think a lot, love a quirky story, and a good technical challenge. Small details, contradictions and surprises are things I hold dear.

Through Handshake I am exploring new ways. Ruudt is my conspirator. Don't make beautiful things he says. Be less rational he says. Embrace chaos he says.

BIO

Originally trained in the sciences and with a long and varied career in science-based organisations, Amelia has over recent years been making an active transition into the arts through a developing practice in contemporary jewellery.

Amelia is a recent graduate of Whitireia New Zealand's contemporary jewellery degree programme. During the course of her studies, she received a number of awards in recognition of her work, culminating with the 2012 Masterworks Gallery supreme graduate award, selected from contemporary jewellery graduates nationwide. Over recent years, Amelia has presented her work in solo shows in Wellington (Bowen Galleries, Photospace Gallery), Auckland (Masterworks Gallery THINKspace), and Christchurch (The National). Her work is held in the collections of both the Dowse Art Museum and Te Papa, and was represented in Wunderrūma – a recent survey of New Zealand jewellery exhibited in Galerie Handwerk, Munich, Germany and at the Dowse Art Museum in Wellington. In 2013, Amelia received Creative New Zealand funding to support a six-week residency with Italian contemporary jeweller, Fabrizio Tridenti.

In Handshake 2, Amelia is being mentored by pioneering Dutch jeweller Ruudt Peters.

Amelia lives and works in Wellington.

5. Raewyn Walsh (with mentor Henriette Schuster)

Artist Statement

I am one of those people who live by the adage – 'what goes on tour, stays on tour'. With regard to jewellery this means I make decisions alone in my workshop, and any work in progress is discussed, informally, within the safe environs of my peer group. I respect their opinions, respond to suggestions, and note the polite silence that often surrounds work that is not what it could be.

Now I find myself as one of the mentees for Handshake2. Being part of this project requires me to share unresolved work and half-baked ideas of work in progress. On the blog confessional fears intersperse triumphs, exhibition excitement and, ultimately, work and projects that ensures my faith in jewellery remains intact.

The Handshake Project is just as much about my physical connection with materials and process as it is about the digital relationship I have with my mentor, Henriette Schuster. Through skype and email we discuss jewellery, life and everything in between. Henriette questions my intentions, encourages experimentation and play, and suggests new avenues for research. The works in this show are the results of these conversations.

BIO

Raewyn Walsh studied under the tutelage of Pauline Bern and Ilse-Marie Erl at Unitec, Auckland, and graduated with a Bachelor of Design(hons) in 2010. Her work is grounded in materials and process and she has a particular interest in traditional methods such as silversmithing and granulation.

Raewyn Walsh lives and works in Auckland.

6. Lisa Higgins (with mentor Cal Lane)

Artist Statement

Desirable oppositions, distortion of the familiar, contrast and contradiction all inform my making as does form and the preservation and interpretation of memory. Attempting to capture the intangible and give voice to the space between the visible and the invisible, the real and imagined... much of my work relies on an emotive response referencing what has gone before and reinterpreting this through material choice and abstraction of familiar forms.

During Handshake my thoughts and making have been fragmented. Snippets of time in which to consider questions seem only to raise more.

"Don't worry if you don't have the answers – mistrust those that do." Cal Lane – Metal Artist/ Sculptor

Conversations with Cal though not always directly related to the work inevitably feed into its making. She reminds me to value the pieces that don't work as much if not more than the ones that do. Offering a shift in perspective and a means by which to look at my work anew we discuss the need to allow the viewer a place in which to consider. A place to question, think and experience so as to inspire sensitivity to their surroundings and a new way of looking at and considering the everyday.

BIO

Lisa Higgins moved to New Zealand from the UK in 2003 and graduated with an Advanced Diploma (Jewellery) from Hungry Creek Art & Craft School in 2012.

Lisa received the 'NZ Jewellery Manufacturers Federation Award of Excellence' in 2011, 'Best in Show Graduate Award' in 2012 and 'Fingers Graduate Award' in 2013.

Having shown in a number of galleries and exhibitions throughout New Zealand Lisa recently co-curated RE: (A Contemporary Jewellery Exhibition) showcasing the work of 7 emerging artists.

Lisa currently lives and works in Auckland.

7. Tineke Jansen (with mentor Ela Bauer)

Artist Statement

Ideas are collections that formulate and create before they reach my hands. Often the idea changes through the tactility of the material and the material changes through the idea. Admitting a process to another and sharing the beginning stages of an idea is a hard thing to do.

As a mentee of Handshake discussions with a mentor are vital, sharing with an audience is encouraged. Sorting through the cobwebs of processes that sit in my head and making this coherent for another has become a challenge. During this process of sharing with a mentor I find my mind has become that of a person with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder controlling the remote, constantly interfering with my daily viewing. I share with Ela many ideas and experimentations with various materials. By the time she emails back I have shifted onto the next thing. Ela has been very calm with my process of change. Her best piece of advice to settle my nerves was "don't panic, better to have one good thing, or many try outs, than finished jewels that don't mean much to you."

Ideas are easy. It is refining an idea and sharing with another that is the challenge. One thought that brings me comfort is to know my work is mine and in any condition they will always be mine no matter how often an idea or material changes.

BIO

Tineke Jansen graduated from Hungry Creek Art School in 2012. During her time as a student Tineke received the Masterworks Graduate Award exhibiting in the “Jewellery Box” and later received the Graduate Award at Objectspace, exhibiting in Best in Show. In a more recent exhibition, Tineke and 6 emerging jewellers joined forces and successfully co-curated the show RE: in July at Allpress Gallery.

Tineke is currently a student of photography. Her new found interest has become a source of inspiration within both practices.

Tineke lives and works in Auckland.

8. Soo Jeong Lee (with mentor Natalia Milosz-Piekarska)

Artist Statement

I see jewellery as wearable drawing, constantly changing and moving.

I am a maker who is led by my hands, it has lead me explore the hand in my practice. I am fascinated in interaction, gesture and communication and how hands play that role in everyday life. I often use materials that can be easily and quickly manipulated with my hands like soft wax or binding wire. Through the Handshake Project I have been paired up with Natalia Milosz-Piekarska who also shares fascination with the handmade and the relationships formed with objects. Through this mentorship it has definitely made me think deeper into the reasoning of why I make and how. With the help of her words of wisdom and encouraging nudges she has pushed me to being more experimental with my work in terms of materials, scale and interaction with the audience. So in response to her advice I have decided to further explore my fascination with hands and to document hands and respond to them using different materials.

So far this project has got me searching op shops for wooden bowls to carve out my dad's hands and making little wax hands that scratch each other's itch.

BIO

Soo Jeong Lee (1991) born in Rotorua, New Zealand moved up to Auckland in 2010 to study Visual Arts at MSVA. After completing her Bachelor of Visual Arts she has shown her work in numbers of group shows including ‘Best in Show’ at Objectspace, ‘Brace Yourself’ at Masterworks Gallery early this year. She also recently showed her work at on the ‘THINKspace’ wall and had her own Jewellery Box at Masterworks Gallery. Currently she spends her time learning how to become a self-employed artist and also works full time as a jeweller at Meadowlark.

9. Kelly McDonald (with mentor Kirsten Haydon)

Artist Statement

McDonald sources her materials from the inner mechanisms of 1920s – 60s domestic appliances and hardware. She sees an integrity and sincerity in the careful hand-tooling, the robust engineering and the designs of the past that were built to last. This same reverence for the honesty and integrity of a previous era's machinery provides her making with a counterpoint to mass-production, built-in obsolescence and 3D printers.

BIO

Kelly McDonald grew up in Australia and moved to Wellington ten years ago. Following graduation from Sydney College of the Arts in the late 90s, she worked in film and children's television and has re-emerged to pursue her first love of jewellery. She is a jewellery tutor at Whitireia New Zealand and also a member of Occupation Artist and The See Here. Notable exhibitions include selection for Talente and more recently, inclusion in Wunderrüma, with an exhibition at The National, Christchurch in July this year.

10. Karren Dale (with mentor Gemma Draper)

Artist Statement

I make because I have to. I am interested in form and our perception of the world around us. I chose Gemma Draper as my mentor because I loved looking at the experimental nature of her work. I couldn't tell what some of her material choices were and this interested me. Gemma has a fantastic use of words and colour that I am immediately drawn to. Without putting too much pressure on myself/Gemma or the mentor/mentee project, I would love to see my work grow... or maybe age. My work can be minimal and has a naive element but there is a lot of process and thought that it sits upon.

BIO

I live in Wellington, New Zealand. My mentor Gemma Draper is from Barcelona, Spain. I have a Certificate in photography and papers in Contemporary jewellery, drawing and sociology. I love to write and I love to read. I show regularly in Wellington and had a piece of my work included in the contemporary jewellery show Wunderūma at the Dowse recently which also showed in Munich.

11. Kathryn Yeats (with mentor Ben Pearce)

Artist Statement

- I. I am interested in the domestic objects and places which weave the ordinary fabric of life, in examining everyday experience; spaces inhabited by people and objects of use are points of interaction between people and materials.*
- II. There are particular materials I like to work with, materials that I am particularly drawn to. These are fragile and are susceptible to the actions of time: rusting, peeling, expansion, contraction, becoming brittle, discolouration, oxidation, warping, wearing away, and scratching, cracking. This is precious to me, the warmth and the life of living materials, the narrative which permeates these objects, impressed into their surface, the story of their history, and the stories yet to come.*
- III. I am drawn to the scale of jewellery; small objects invite intimacy, they invite the viewer to examine closely; the scale amplifies details. Small objects are perfect to conceal alcoves, compartments and drawers. They can be turned over in the hands to reveal and conceal parts.*
- IV. Construction is a pleasurable and meditative process: repetition, building units, testing the relationships between components, breaking things up, reassembling them, treating them with chemicals, painting, sanding, repainting, stitching, and tying.*

BIO

I live in Wellington, where I completed a BA in History and Art History at Victoria University, studying a diverse range of papers from both humanities and sciences including biology, chemistry, mathematics, linguistics and classical studies. My Jewellery study was undertaken at Whitireia Polytechnic, and after graduating with a Diploma in Visual Arts I also completed a Postgraduate Diploma in Heritage Materials Science at Victoria.

I am drawn to alternative materials for making jewellery, particularly fabrics and wood because of their fragility and transience. I enjoy building complex structures from these materials which reveal one face to the world while holding secrets for the wearer. I am interested in time, in the deterioration of objects, rusting and decay leaving its narrative on them, the record of their life of use. Other themes which interest me in my practice include gender, domesticity, memory, spaces, concealment, loss and narratives of human lives and relationships.

12. Sarah Walker-Holt (with mentor Helen Britton)

Artist Statement

Collecting, dissecting and reconfiguring objects shape my practice. This process can be so intense, confusing and difficult that I want to share the experience. I am driven by process. Passing it on; I want someone else to feel it, become absorbed and over whelmed by its complexity. Simultaneously, I have a slight fetish for mechanisms; I am intrigued by how things work, questioning how I can make them work for me within jewellery while concurrently accessible to others. Are mechanisms something that encourages touch to a deeper sphere? This quizzical approach has established my connection with my mentor, Helen Britton, as she has encouraged me to work out how much freedom I want to gift those who choose to engage with my work on a compositional level. Is it essential to my own development that I define this? How easy is it to present your work to an audience and let them complete it, to lose control over its outcome? Helen has also encouraged my idea to experiment with moving image; utilising it as an instructional component that inspires physical engagement. This has opened a space for presentational outcomes that connect the jewellery exhibition format with the body, defying the expected display and delicate nature of jewellery.

BIO

Sarah completed a Bachelor of Visual Arts at Auckland University's MSVA in 2010. She was the recipient of MSVA – Fingers Graduating Students Award and winner of the New Zealand Contemporary Jewellery Award in 2011. She was the only contemporary jeweller selected to represent New Zealand in Galerie Marzee's 2012 Graduate Show Work in Progress in The Netherlands. Sarah was an exhibitor in The Dowse Art Museum's Wunderr ma: New Zealand Jewellery.

Sarah lives and works in Auckland.

13. Renee Bevan (with mentor Harrell Fletcher)

Artist Statement

Absent Presence / 2014

Does the 'life' of the object lie in that which we cannot see? In the non-material, the invisible?

In a world and discipline heavily consumed by aesthetics and materialism I am intrigued by value systems that transcend material and aesthetic worth. Wanting to make work that is 'alive', work embedded with 'life' is not an easy task for a maker of new things. When this 'life' has everything to do with the life the object has 'lived' and the people or events it has connected or encountered along the way, how does one make something 'new' carry with it the weight of the 'past'? How does one make something 'new' carry with it too the weight of the 'future'? How can one make something carry such weight, such life and only this? How can the 'new', the 'invisible' suddenly carry 'life', suddenly become 'alive'?

BIO

b. 1980, European/Cook Island descent

Having completed a Bachelor of Visual Arts at The University of Auckland MSVA in 2002, Renee has shown in a number of exhibitions both in New Zealand and internationally. Such exhibitions include Talente 2005/Schmuck 2008, Munich, The Pocket Guide to New Zealand Jewellery, exhibited in Boston, San Francisco and Wisconsin; Ontketend! (Jewellery Unleashed), The Dudok exhibit in The Netherlands and more recently Wunderrūma, The Dowse Art Museum, Wellington and Galerie Handwerk, Munich. Her first major solo exhibition New Work, Renee Bevan was exhibited at The National, Christchurch in 2012 and was toured in partnership with The National to The Gus Fisher Gallery, Auckland and The New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts, Wellington in 2013.

Although Renee's practice is primarily based around ideas related to jewellery, these ideas are often translated into a range of different media which include jewellery, photographs, relational based projects, collaborative forms of practice and performance.

Renee currently lives and works in Auckland

A mentee in Handshake II, Renee Bevan is mentored by Harrell Fletcher, a social practice artist living in Portland, Oregon and Professor of Art and Social Practice at Portland University.

For more information: <http://handshake2.com>

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