



## VOLUME 6 – JOURNAL OF JEWELLERY RESEARCH

---

### Contents:

---

<b>Editorial: Volume 6 Journal of Jewellery Research</b> <i>Dr Roberta Bernabei &amp; Professor Jayne Wallace</i>	<b>01</b>
<b>Exhibition Review: {queer}+{metals}</b> <i>Dauvit Alexander</i>	<b>04</b>
<b>Expanded Provenance: Models for Recording Jewellery Stories Inspired by The Loan Scheme of The Danish Arts Foundation's Jewellery Collection</b> <i>Anni Nørskov Mørch</i>	<b>18</b>
<b>Where the Digital Meets the Physical: A Jewellery Design Approach</b> <i>Mala Siamptani</i>	<b>42</b>
<b>Exhibition Review: It Is Never What You Did or Didn't Do</b> <i>Jayne Wallace in conversation with Mark Mcleish</i>	<b>63</b>

Cover image: Mark Mcleish. *The connected spell was 'To configure origins of truth'.*

## **Editorial: Volume 6 Journal of Jewellery Research**

---

**Authors:** *Dr Roberta Bernabei & Professor Jayne Wallace*

---



As we have done every year for the last six years, we draw together the work of authors, editors and editors' assistants in a new volume. We are very pleased to publish Volume 6 of the Journal of Jewellery Research and, even more so, to see that the topics tackled by the authors are expanding. This sixth volume shows the most salient pieces of writing that elaborate on what are some of the prevailing current debates in our field today: the social lives of jewellery; how jewellery represents sense of self; how it can be a valuable lens onto identity; how it can support wellbeing in uncommon ways and how its forms are extending beyond the physical.

This journal enjoys being able to celebrate that craft is part of our existential need to make objects with our hands and, in our case, to ornate our bodies. We share a quote from Yoshiaki Kojiro, an artist from Japan, who uses experimental processes to make glass objects, who received the special mention for the Lowe Craft Prize in 2017.

'The mysterious charm things created through trial and error, while relying on experience and intuition, is an absolutely necessary element for our lives. Craft is an event that starts with a physical sense of relationship between materials and people. This spirit and physicality are related not only to creative activities, but also to the foundation of human activity'. (2023)

Dauvit Alexander writes in relation to the exhibition {queer}+{metals}. Alexander acted as exhibitor and cocurator along with Deirdre Figueiredo, and both developed the show in collaboration with Rebekah Frank. A series of themes are introduced in relation to

queerness and metalsmithing and the exhibition both represented and responded to additional interviews conducted digitally with a wider audience of artists who shared detail of their thoughts and feelings related to queerness and the ways in which it informs or impacts on their work. Extending the exhibition through both informal and panel discussion formats authors speak of what bringing a queer lens to their own work has started to reveal for themselves and how cumulatively they were able to open up tensions, themes and potentialities with a wider audience both physically and digitally present. Alexander emphasises the timeliness, or perhaps overdue, nature of this exhibition where "queerness/metalsmithing has not been the focus of a single show to date" and how this could and should be the impetus for not only larger but also more various shows on this theme.

Anni Nørskov Mørch's paper explores and disrupts the period in a jewellery object's life once it has been acquired for a museum or gallery collection. Interestingly, the moment of acquisition is framed both as the end of the object's life in many ways – an end to its story, to its provenance narrative – and also a ticket to immortality (theoretically speaking) where the collection is protector, however removed from human social interaction a piece of jewellery may then be. To disrupt this context Nørskov Mørch explored what could be afforded by loaning jewellery items from a collection out... how new social lives involving the jewellery could be had and how new stories attributed to the objects could be developed, captured and woven into its history.

Mala Siamptani draws on an interesting project where jewellery design students (some from London College of Fashion and some from Estonia Academy of the Arts) investigated how creating jewellery can exist in non-physical forms. The project is dealing with current debates and challenges that we have been facing for a while now. The debate about the coexistence of physical and non-physical creations has been discussed even at a nanotechnology level. Where the preconceived notion of the non-visible to be nonphysical has been at length discussed by scholars who have touched material at nano level (see Tincuta Heinzl's papers). The intention of providing an opportunity to BA and MA students to embrace, to explore and apply Augmented Reality (AR) filters is here further explored and illustrated. In this collaborative international undergraduate project the most interesting aspect is to see how the further continuation of exploring AR filters as a tool on social media platforms has been utilised and interacted with by the audience in specific contexts. During the pandemic, as the paper mentions, we have seen an increase of fashion companies connecting with their customers offering virtual opportunities to wear products, including sculptural face filters that pushed the boundaries of what it is possible to wear on our faces. Some explorations are impossible to be achieved in a physical piece and this makes this aspect a possibility to extend the language of conceiving, imagining, wearing and experiencing jewellery. These aspects are still all to be explored and there is a lot more work to be done in this context. One aspect or element that makes this area of investigation even more innovative or novel is the understanding of the kind of impact that these forms of 'new jewellery' have when it

hits a wider audience including those who are very familiar with wearing physical artefacts, and how this new experience will impact on their understanding of the physicality of wearing jewellery and the new corporeal experience.

The final piece in the journal focuses on a solo exhibition of jewellery work by Mark McLeish. It references an exhibition of 365 brooches made by McLeish over the course of the same number of days and how each incorporates both autobiographical material and aspects of McLeish's witchcraft practice. A particular method or system was employed by McLeish in the making of each piece that was sensitive/responsive to what he felt he may need from a jewel that would accompany him in the day to follow. His system enables him to articulate specific needs, concerns, desires and then to find materials that speak to these. His process of connecting the pieces together and creating something wearable all form part of how a personal spell is imbued onto each piece. His work speaks very directly and uncommonly to how jewellery can act as talisman-like objects or things that support wellbeing.

## Exhibition Review: {queer}+{metals}

---

**Author:** *Dauvit Alexander*

---





*Fig. 1 - Pop-up gallery window display. Dauvit Alexander, Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial Share-Alike, 2022*

## ABSTRACT

*{queer}+{metals}* (*{q}+{m}*)<sup>1</sup> was a Craftspace exhibition co-curated by Dauvit Alexander and Deirdre Figueiredo in collaboration with Rebekah Frank. The exhibition ran from 25<sup>th</sup> March – 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2022 in Hereford, England, as a part of the Ferrous Festival and through object, narrative and digital presentation,

explored the multiplicity of queerness<sup>2</sup> – identity, lived experiences, thinking, cultures, aesthetic, influences, stories, place, imagination – in relation to creative metalwork. The curators all identify as queer and Alexander and Frank are both metalsmiths.

The ‘pop-up’ venue was an empty shop on the main street in Hereford (Fig.1), with around 30 metal objects from eight artists.

## BACKGROUND

---

*“Queerness is for me about not fitting in or not bothering yourself with fitting in [...] and this freedom of transforming from one to another.”*  
(Frank, 2022a)

{q}+{m} evolved from a conversation held at the New Designers exhibition, London, in 2018, discussing Theo Somerville-Scott’s *“Orlando”* (Fig. 2). Alexander, Figueiredo and Somerville-Scott quickly came to a realisation that while there were many active metalsmiths, very few of them explicitly identified as queer. Figueiredo (2022) writes,

*“The idea evolved as an inkling after working closely with [Alexander] on ‘Show your Metal<sup>3</sup>’ and seeing Fei He’s work [...] at New Designers along with other queer graduates, I noticed a new generation that were far more ‘out’ and comfortable being visible as queer so the work became more evident, this was affirmed when I saw Theo’s work [...].*

Later, she was bidding to the Arts Council England for, *“[...] a major digital programme for Craftspace [and] I looked for a way to enlarge the Queer Metal exhibition by including a digital residency in the bid.”*  
(Ibid.)

Through research online, Frank was contacted and agreed to be a part of the project. This triumvirate approach was critical to the form of the final exhibition and research. Figueiredo continues, *“I think it’s important that it became a three-way conversation and collaboration between two artists and a curator/Craftspace as an organisation led by a Queer person. It’s the first exhibition I’ve curated in my career where my personal life has been so interconnected and where I’ve been visible and ‘taken up space’ in a different way. When we take the next steps [...] I think it’s important not to miss out that element of what it meant to each of us in relation to our practice”.*

The 2019 pandemic prevented the production of any physical exhibition until late 2021, when Delyth Done from Hereford College of Arts’ Artist Blacksmithing confirmed that the 2022 Ferrous Festival would happen. The exhibition was brought together from December, 2021. Over the short period of curation and informing the process, Frank conducted an open online survey and research project, generating responses from 119 artists with connections to 52 countries.





*Fig. 2 - Theo Somerville-Scott discussing his sculpture, "Orlando". ©Matt Davies, 2022*

## CAVEAT

---

It is challenging to write a critical, objective review of a project in which the author was not only a curator but an exhibitor: in this case, the speed of putting the exhibition together and the closeness of the show to the review deadline made the inclusion of work and writing of a review by one of the curators unavoidable. No matter how undesirable this situation is, it was felt that dissemination of the project was important. A positive point is that this approach provides the opportunity to explain and understand any shortcomings of the exhibition with an insider's perspective.

## THE EXHIBITION

---

The short timescale and modest budget for the exhibition necessarily limited the range of artists who could be invited to participate. The curators found it necessary to draw on their personal contacts – and, in the case of Alexander, his own work – in order to assemble the breadth of work in the physical exhibition. This led to a heavy focus on both blacksmithing and jewellery with student and recent graduate works featuring alongside established makers such as John Moore, who exhibited two of his fine-jewellery pieces (Fig. 3).

The inclusion of student and emerging artists did not in any way detract from the intelligence, creativity or maturity of the show and it would have been a challenge to tell these artists from the established. A wide range of works were shown: sculpture, knives, jewellery, wearable objects, performative objects and



*Fig. 3 - John Moore, "Pagoda". Model: Jasmine Chiu, ©Chris Bulezuik, 2021*

work which crossed over categories. Within the exhibition were video contributions from Frank's interviews with selected artists, alongside exhibition boards explaining the physical work and the digital elements of the residency. Everything felt considered and deliberate (Fig. 4) in spite of the gallery space being a repurposed shop-unit.

Thematically, the work was varied and sometimes challenging, swinging from the playfulness of Fei He's wire drag costumes through the S&M dungeon-darkness of Marius du Pasquier-Greene's "*Repent*" works exploring responses to religious bigotry (Fig. 5), to Gil Hadden's knives dealing with the transformational cuts of gender reassignment.



*Fig. 4 - General view of the exhibition space. Dauvit Alexander, Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial Share-Alike, 2022*

Not all of the work dealt with explicitly queer themes. Annie Higgins' work (Fig. 6) explores the sensation of free-swimming and John Moore's work considers how dancers move when performing. These fitted neatly into the most notable thematic intersection, that of body and queerness with almost all the artists using the body as a site for their work or referring to it in the work<sup>4</sup>.

Other significant themes included violence (physical and linguistic), dance culture, material transformation and traditional gender roles. Many of the works dealt with multiple layers of these themes, such as Gil Hadden's knives relating to transformation (through cutting), technology in conjunction with tradition, revulsion and narrative. Although the exhibition was



too small to offer a detailed overview of these intersections, the presence of well-informed student invigilators, the curators and many of the artists ensured that visitors could explore themes through meaningful conversations<sup>5</sup>.



Fig. 5 - Marius du Pasquier-Greene, "God is Watching". Model: Dan Lee, ©James Hutchinson, 2021

## THE DIGITAL RESIDENCY

---

"Queerness" is a vaporous notion. The core of this work came from asking people who identified as queer what this meant to them in terms of their metals practice. Frank put out an open call on a range of networks – primarily Instagram – inviting queer metalworkers to get in touch and share their responses to the following questions:

1. *Within what area of metalsmithing do you work?*
2. *How do you define your queerness?*
3. *What are other ways you identify?*
4. *What does queer metal mean to you?*

(Frank, 2022b)

Their responses shaped the form and content of the exhibition<sup>6</sup>. As Frank says in the accompanying essay, these questions don't seek definitive answers,

*"There are many other queer metalsmiths. I proposed crowdsourcing the question, asking others to participate, to get curious, to wonder with me and Craftspace about what queer metals could mean."*  
(Ibid.)

Frank also notes the limitations of the survey: access to online information, the small pool of respondents and the way in which Instagram skews the delivery of posts. Necessarily, the survey self-excluded those for whom the queerness of their practice was not important to them and was limited by the (algorithmic) whims of the platforms from which responses were sought.

Limitations aside, the survey received 119 responses from metalworkers in all areas: blacksmiths, sculptors, jewellers, farriers, welders, machinists, activists and performers. Frank selected 16 of these to create a series of social media posts featuring a broad range of responses that were included in the exhibition via visual images and a QR code to the online thread. She also created a series of eight video interviews where the artists discussed in more depth their thoughts and feelings around queerness and the way it impacts their work. Some of the artists interviewed were also represented in the physical exhibition.



*Fig. 6 - Annie Higgins wearing her wild swimming neckpiece.  
©Annie Higgins, 2022*



*Fig. 7 - Alexander and Figueiredo talking about the works on display. ©Matt Davies, 2022*

## THE DISCUSSION AND PERFORMANCE

An evening event was organised consisting of the curators and artists discussing the work in the gallery (Fig. 7) followed by a panel discussion. Frank joined online from San Francisco and all the artists represented in the physical show were present for the event. The open, informal conversation was led by Alexander, Figueiredo and Frank.

Surprisingly, many of the artists – and Figueiredo on the panel – said that this was the first time that they had explicitly acknowledged the queerness in their work, examined their work through a queer lens: some commented that this had even led to them thinking about their identity in ways which they had not previously considered. Significantly Higgins, used this event as her coming out. Less surprising was the political nature of the discussion and the way in which connected themes appeared. Rogers (2013) points out that

*“[...] Queer Theory has had (and continues to have) an important political agenda and grows from our concern with the rights of **others** [...] [it] has also migrated across disciplines in such a way that for some it can seem bewildering yet exciting in terms of the interrelationships being forged.”*  
(Emphasis in original.)

These interrelationships were rarely explicit, being collectively intuited rather than stated, including notions of spirituality, magick, transformation,

community, communitarianism and affirmation, amongst others; themes which appear in the exhibition essay and all worthy of future exploration in a larger project. In slightly over an hour, the artists and audience were willing to share their thoughts and experiences with a remarkable intensity, encouraged by the willingness of the mixed audience to listen and accept what was being discussed.

After the event finished, the group moved to a relaxed space for a performance of Fei He’s drag piece, “The Golden Cage” using his hand-crafted metal objects as props.



**Fig. 8 - Audience post left in the reflection space. Dauvit Alexander, Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial Share-Alike, 2022**



## AUDIENCE RESPONSES

---

Some early negative reactions on Social Media caused concern with the curators of both {q}+{m} and Ferrous but these were dealt with swiftly and did not recur. It is important to note that these comments were very limited, the work of online “trolls”. Visitors to the show were overwhelmingly positive. Curators created an area for reflection and responses with a chalkboard, reading materials – including copies of Frank’s essay – sticky notes, pens, paper and a questionnaire which could be posted anonymously in a sealed box. An overview shows that the respondents were predominately white, aged 45 – 60 and from the local area. Many of them came to the event as a part of the larger festival and most rated the exhibition “Good” or “Very Good”. There were no recorded negative comments and positive comments included, “*Delighted to see queer work on the High Street*” (Anon, 2022a) and “[...] *explores the notion of queerness in intelligent and creative ways [...] liberating and validating.*” (Anon, 2022b)

## CONCLUSIONS

---

*“Queer is not what has gone before but what is yet to come, a perpetual dialogue between sexual identity and its critique, looking forward without anticipating the future.”*  
(Merck, 2005)

The importance of this exhibition the opening of a dialogue is undeniable. Discussions around queerness have been happening in the arts generally for many

years now and it is surprising that queerness/metalsmithing has not been the focus of a single show to date.

The short timescale for the production of this exhibition led to some shortcomings: a lack of international perspective in the physical works displayed and the fact that the participants in the digital elements had to be able to speak English. The digital element worked well in addressing the first, allowing makers from around the world to participate and it is to be hoped that in any future project there would be more representation from global majority artists and those who do not speak English. In spite of these shortcomings, the approach proves the effectiveness of a hybrid physical/digital approach to exhibitions. The use of clear wall-mounted texts was carefully considered to create a unity between these elements and carefully picked out synergistic elements of the narratives presented.

The mixture of internationally-known artists with emerging and student artists emphasised the quality of the work which is capable of being produced by metalsmithing programmes as well as offering a valuable platform to the student participants. This approach is commendable and desirable but it also requires the strictest curation with all work assessed to the same standards, as apparent here.

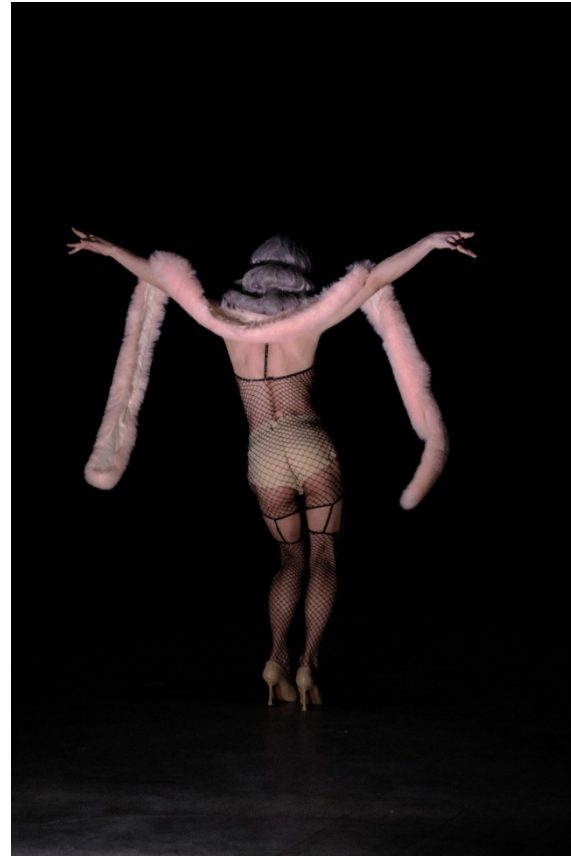
It was the curators’ stated intent that this exhibition should be a starting point from which other exhibitions could be built. In the panel discussion held in the gallery space on the second day of the show the audience clearly showed interest in creating a larger



event. The importance of this exhibition lies in the identification of and giving voice to a group of queer makers who are working in metal and who, until now, were largely working in isolation. This contextualised public profile offers the opportunity to start to build a community of practice around shared queer experiences.

*"I think that's one of the great things about this [exhibition] and about this project is really learning and talking and sharing experiences."*  
(Frank, 2022c)

Unusually, this exhibition marked not the end of a research position but the beginning.



*Fig. 9 - Fei He, Performance. ©Matt Davies, 2022*

## REFERENCES

---

- Anon. 2022a *Craftspace 2021-22 Questionnaire*, 26<sup>th</sup> March.
- Anon. 2022b *Craftspace 2021-22 Questionnaire*, 27<sup>th</sup> March.
- Figueiredo, D., 2022 *Email to Dauvit Alexander*, 24<sup>th</sup> June.
- Frank, R., 2022a *Interview with Urmas Lüüs*. March. [Online] [Accessed 22/6/2022] Available from <https://youtu.be/XiKPDRwkArU>
- Frank, R., 2022b. *Queer + Metals: Shaped by Us*. [Online] [Accessed 17/5/2022] Available from <https://www.rebekahfrank.com/queer-metals-essay>
- Frank, R., 2022c. interview with Theo Sommerville-Scott. March. [Online] [Accessed 22/6/2022] Available from <https://youtu.be/XiKPDRwkArU>
- Rogers, H., 2013. Introduction in *Queertexturealities*. Rogers, H. ed. Birmingham: Article Press. p.13
- Merk, M., 2005. Afterword in *Queer Theory*. Morland, I. and Willox, A., eds. London: Palgrave. p.187

## Notes:

- 1 - The working-title for the exhibition was “Queer Metalsmiths” – Frank came up with the set-theory version, {queer}+{metals} and it was only after the interviews started coming in that it was realised that the title should really have been {queer}∩{metals} as it was more about intersection than addition.
- 2 - It is not within the scope of this review to discuss the full, diverse meaning(s) of terms such as “queer” and “queerness” and the author hopes to address this more fully in a later publication.
- 3 - “Show Your Metal” was a project using creative metalwork processes to explore the marginalised voices of fans of Heavy Metal music and was shown as part of the wider Birmingham “Home of Metal” exhibition on this musical theme.
- 4 - This may not be surprising to an audience familiar with contemporary jewellery but it was commented upon by several visitors who had come to the festival for blacksmithing and sculptural work: large iron objects interacting with the body struck them as dissonant.
- 5 - One very significant moment involved a young person in tears, hugging Gil Hadden: the knives had ‘spoken’ to their own situation and this proved to be one which Gil had gone through.
- 6 - Each of the artists represented in the physical show was also a part of this digital survey and their responses to these questions were presented alongside their work.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

---

*Dauvit Alexander*

dauvit.alexander@bcu.ac.uk; justified.sinner@gmail.com

Alexander works with found metals (predominately iron and steel), creating jewellery which crosses boundaries of style and technique. His narrative/historic work uses traditional techniques from fine jewellery alongside digital technologies. His work includes socially-engaged projects, medals, jewellery and objects. He currently teaches at the School of Jewellery, Birmingham City University in Birmingham.



Journal of Jewellery Research

[www.journalofjewelleryresearch.org](http://www.journalofjewelleryresearch.org)

ISSN 2516-337X

Loughborough University, Northumbria University.

First published in June 2023, UK.

Copyright© Journal of Jewellery Research and the author.

All rights reserved. Apart from fair dealing for the purposes of study, research, criticism or review, as permitted under the applicable copyright legislation, no part of this work may be reproduced by any process without written permission from the publisher or author.

For permissions and other inquiries, please contact the editors:  
editorsjojr@gmail.com

Journal of Jewellery Research is a double blind peer-reviewed research journal supported by an International Editorial Advisory Group.

**Expanded Provenance:**

**Models for Recording Jewellery Stories Inspired by The Loan Scheme of The Danish Arts Foundation's Jewellery Collection**

---

**Author:** *Anni Nørskov Mørch*

---



## ABSTRACT

---

Provenance is the chronicle of an object's life up until it is acquired by a collection. In consequence, the concept of provenance puts an end to the life story of a piece of jewellery as it enters a collection.

However, being acquired by a collection is also the chance to secure an object's eternal life, at least in theory. This paradox between life and death by collection is more than a fancy play with words or a technicality within collection management. Because provenance is also the record of the social meanings of jewellery.

The registration of the provenance of collected objects offers an intellectual and practical framework to structure and preserve social significance alongside the factual information given by the object's physical, historical, and artistic properties.

In this paper I explore how including user-experiences and significance attributed by the wearer to the category of provenance might make the social meaning of jewellery available in more depth and nuance for inquiry and future research, communication, and connection.

The loan scheme of the Danish Arts Foundation's Jewellery Collection offers a unique case to investigate user-experiences of jewellery in a public collection and it can serve as inspiration for new models for recording jewellery stories in both public and private collections. In this paper I propose the term 'expanded provenance' to conceptualize how user-experiences can be recorded

and logged in existing systems and how these systems might be expanded to contain experiences authored by a more diverse group of voices.

This paper build on my experience as a curator working hands on with the Danish Arts Foundation's Jewellery Collection and on my findings from a research project at Design School Kolding, Denmark.

*Keywords: expanded provenance; collection management; user-experience; curation; contemporary jewellery; The Danish Arts Foundation's Jewellery Collection.*

## INTRODUCTION: A UNIQUE JEWELLERY CASE THAT DEMONSTRATES WHY 'PROVENANCE' IS A KEY CONCEPT IF EXPERIENCES ARE TO BE CONNECTED TO COLLECTIONS AND STORIES GIVEN A PLACE IN HISTORY

---

"...I wore Thorkild Thøgersen's earrings during my visit to Jakarta University and a youth organization with 90.000 members. The earrings are in constant motion, and you cannot help but notice them. Young people are the same way. They demonstrate, critique, innovate, destroy, rebuild, produce new traditions, and question the status quo. I found the earrings fit them so well." (Cekic 2019)

These are the words of former Danish MP Özlem Cekic. In October 2019 she visited Indonesia to talk about her work for democracy under her concept of

Expanded Provenance:

Models for Recording Jewellery Stories Inspired by The Loan Scheme of The Danish Arts Foundation's Jewellery Collection



*Former Danish MP Özlem Cekic wearing earrings from the Danish Arts Foundation Jewellery Collection during a visit to Indonesia in October 2019 from her Facebook-post about the loan, including a screen shot from the Danish Arts Foundation's website, [www.kunst.dk](http://www.kunst.dk), with a photo of Thorkild Thøgersen's earrings.*

'dialogue coffee'. On social media she dedicated several posts to the jewellery she wore during the trip and her posts instigated long threads of comments herein a dialogue with the artist of one of the pieces. Özlem Cekic does not own the earrings she uses here as a vehicle to express her reflections on her meeting with students at Jakarta University. In the abovementioned post she goes on to explain how she loaned the earrings from the Danish Arts Foundation's Jewellery Collection.

The loan scheme connected to the collection invites all Danes to borrow jewellery to wear and promote at an official event. Borrowing jewellery from the collection is free and only requires an application accounting for the role of the borrower at an official event. At the event the borrower is expected to take on the role of 'ambassador' for Danish jewellery and for the borrowed piece thereby assisting in fulfilling the two-sided purpose of the Foundation: to support and publicize Danish art. Effectively, the borrower becomes a curator and an active co-creator of the significance of a piece of jewellery belonging to a public collection. The borrower's curatorial selection and experiences with wearing and presenting the jewellery could add new layers to the chronicle of the object.

Several contemporary jewellery artists have based their research precisely on the emotional meanings the wearer attributes to the object thereby demonstrating the social meaning of jewellery and the close relations between the avant garde of art jewellery and the everyday symbolic use of jewellery well-known to most of us. A poignant example of a contemporary art piece harvesting its power from emotional meanings is

Otto Künzli's contemporary classic *Chain/ Necklace* (1985-1986). The fact that the gold necklace is made by discarded wedding rings with the engravings of names and old vows still visible makes it to heavy with emotions to wear. Makers Move, an art project by Josephine Winther and Gitte Nygaard, collect and add layers of significance to used jewellery in a sophisticated exchange of stories when they travel the world with their mobile jewellery workshop (Nygaard and Winther 2016, Makers Move 2023). People that the artists meet on the street are asked to loan them their jewellery and more importantly the stories connected to it. In exchange for the story the artists make small pewter casts of the jewellery during the short meeting, one for the jewellery owner to keep and one for the artists' archive of pewter casts and written copies of the stories. The stories can be accessed on the website makersmove.com.

What new layers of meaning are created by wearers and viewers and what are the implications of the co-curation practice of the loan scheme of the Danish Arts Foundation? For these questions to be answered and examined over time, a methodology for handling these new layers of meaning as relevant data needs to be developed.

My experience as curator at the museum administering the loan scheme on behalf of the Danish Arts Foundation, The Museum at Koldinghus, now Museum Kolding, made me wonder if these relatively autonomous extra-institutional user-experiences with jewellery could be collected and made available in a systematic and relevant way inspired by the way museums record the provenance of objects. During a

research project at Design School Kolding in 2021 I had the opportunity to engage in this question and in this paper I will examine how and why the user-experience of jewellery in a public collection might be understood and handled as 'expanded provenance', i.e. multimedial and multivocal interpretation recorded repeatedly over time to follow the objects and be made available for future research and dissemination. Furthermore, the concept of expanded provenance might suggest models for keeping records of jewellery stories that are also relevant in private collections.

### **PROVENANCE: THE LIFE STORY OF THE COLLECTED OBJECT**

---

In the context of collection management, the term 'provenance' represents objective static information on the origin and ownership record of an object. Provenance is a sober chronicle leading up to the acquisition by the chronicling collection: "Provenance is the life story of an item or collection and a record of its ultimate derivation and its passage through the hands of its various owners." (Russell & Winkworth 2009, p. 15). Also, it is the only section in the registration database where the history of use is described (Pedersen 2019).

Jewellery has for centuries been collected to become part of many types of public collections, for instance: encyclopaedic museums, art and design museums, natural and cultural history museums. In the records of these collections jewellery is classified by different principles that reveal reasons behind the acquisition and the role the piece plays in the museum's activities, research, exhibition, and education. The principles

might be function, chronology, style, artist, materials, or provenance. Whatever the classifying principle all museum objects are given an accession number and described in a register. Provenance is a key part of the description of a collected object and in some collections provenance serve as an overall categorizing principle.

Knowledge regimes, classifications and demarcations between registering systems and their practices, have a huge impact on what we are able to think and talk about, as Foucault and other thinkers in and outside the museum world has taught us (Foucault 1966/2006). In the past 30 years research and critical analysis has been performed on collections and registration (among others by Hooper-Greenhill 1992, Pearce 1994, Bowker & Star 1999, Mordhorst 2009, Vasström 2020) and with it a more holistic approach to provenance research has developed (Thompkins 2020), however in the shade of a predominant interest in the more extroverted operations of museums.

In the official guidelines on registering in Danish museums from 2010 the power within the 'secret' work behind the scenes is admitted with the solemn reminder, that within the dry categories of a registration database lies important decisions on what is deemed relevant and what is not, which determines what will be accessible for future generations of museum users and researchers (Wohlfarth 2010).

In her research on how classification influence the focus of thinking in the National Museum of Denmark in the years 1885-1985 Annette Vasström (2020) shows that during this period a new focus on function as a



principle of classification meant a shift from the singular object to the relations between objects and between objects and humans, but in this case of a new classification system in the National Museum "... there was still a lack of understanding the many other ways an object could be related to human life. There is no wish or possibility to record the various symbolic meanings in the object, meanings that may change through the lifetime of the objects." (Vasström 2020, p. 276). The registration systems of art and design museums in Denmark also rarely give a rich description of the symbolic meaning of a piece of jewellery and the changing interpretations over time, and reception-history is typically confined to scholarly interpretations like publications and exhibitions.

Provenance research has primarily focused on clarifying pedigree and legal ownership of artworks up until the acquisition to a collection. A substantial part of the efforts deals with authenticating the rightful owners of art, as looted artworks by the Nazi regime in Germany during the Second World War. Increasingly, colonial collections undergo systematic provenance research inviting conversation on ownership of cultural property, representation, appropriation and expanding the interpretation of objects to include the various cultural and political meanings objects have and have had in former colonized and colonizing countries.

A dedicated effort to describe the significance of a prioritized piece or a collection can result in a statement of significance performed as an addition to registration and perhaps as part of a re-evaluation and strategic development of a collection and or exhibition (a recent example from two Danish museums is described in

Mejlhede 2022). A statement of significance can include both interpretations by museum professionals and the culture from which the object originated legitimizing actions and decisions around the object: "A statement of significance is a reference point for all the policies, actions and decisions about how the item is managed. It is a means of sharing knowledge about why an item is important, and why it has a place in a public collection." (Russel og Winkworth 2009, p. 11). Significance statements might benefit from a more elaborated and up to date provenance section in the registration of collected objects.

Vasström (2020) summarize the paradox of provenance: Provenance is the part of the registration with the most ambiguity, the highest level of identification and room for interpretation, aspects that increase the value of the object from a research and exhibition standpoint. But while the social dimension adds value to objects and has been of increasing interest in museum exhibitions, it is difficult for museum classifications to contain and describe.

## ALL JEWELLERY SHARES A SOCIAL COMPONENT

Jewellery is a universal and rich phenomenon with a long history, at least 140.000 years long indicated by recent archaeological findings (Sehasseh et. al. 2021), and it can be divided into several subcategories besides the ones made by museums. These categories however, as Marjan Unger writes "...has little or nothing to do with the way in which jewellery is worn and with the various decorative and symbolic values that can be attributed to it (Unger 2010/2019, p. 25). In her

dissertation Unger suggests a multidisciplinary framework for the study of jewellery, motivated by the observation that across subdivisions, cultures and millennia there seems to be a "...hard core that doesn't change" – jewellery, she argues, is a universal phenomenon and "...many a motif for wearing jewellery has not changed substantially compared to 100, 1000, 10,000 and perhaps even 100,000 years ago." (Unger 2010/2019, p. 20) however very little is known about the history of jewellery that derived its value from the private life of the wearer – especially from poorly documented time periods or from lower classes.

To serve the interest of this paper – to explore ways to collect and communicate the subjective and social significance of jewellery – I follow the pragmatic and spacious definition of jewellery as a universal phenomenon by Unger and an anthropological interest in the use of objects. Unger formulates her proposal for a definition of a 'piece of jewellery' as follows: "A piece of jewellery is an object that is worn on the human body, as a decorative and symbolic addition to its outward appearance." (Unger 2010/2019, p. 18). There are good reasons for jewellery to be divided by classifications and types of museums, but as suggested by Unger, jewellery across these demarcations share a social component.

Provenance is concerned with the social life of an object and therefore a type of information that transcends demarcations and exists as a relevant piece of information in all types of records and collections. This makes provenance an effective entry to wedge in diverse and experience-oriented perspectives on

significance to the records that form the basis of new insights and future history. I identify the provenance section as the 'crack' where subjective, and social significance can come in and light up the "black box" (Vasström 2020, p. 277) of registration.

## RECORDING EXPERIENCES MAKES SENSE OF THINGS

Collections preserve objects for the future to learn from, interact with and reinterpret. To each preserved object an archive of data is connected, and the hierarchical structure and solidified practices of museums and academia means that access to fame and eternal life is granted through the collection of data and the writing of texts.

We need objects, but objects also need us as Peter N. Miller concludes in 'History and its objects' (2017). He argues for this point by turning to philosopher Immanuel Kant and reading him through a hermeneutical lens: "It is only because we can bring the external world under our categories of perception that we can talk about things scientifically - as knowledge. Without us, things might exist, but they could not have meaning." And he continues: "Thinking hermeneutically about Kant's statement on things, we might conclude that just as we need objects to help understand the past, objects need people to fully realize their own potential." (Miller 2017, p. 206). Following this argument, procuring all the relevant data on objects, making it available for analysis and dissemination is as important for material culture as are the material objects themselves since it makes the

context and significance of the objects available as scientific material, as knowledge.

So what data is relevant? This question touches the core of curatorial power and relates to the recent focus shift in the curatorial discourse from an intense interest in independent curatorship in the art world to the emergence of a dialogical understanding of exhibition making and collecting acknowledging the relation between curating and politics and the potential of exhibitions and collections to activate discursive open-ended processes of engagement (O'Neill et al. 2017; Reilly 2018; Hooper-Greenhill 1992).

With *Arkivism: En Handbok – Hitta, spara och organisera för framtidens historieskrivning* (Pousette and Thomsgård 2021. *Archivism: A handbook – find, save and organize for the history writing of the future*) Stockholm's Museum of Women's History brings engagement and what we have come to now as 'the participatory museum' (Simon 2010) all the way into the engine room of the public collection where registering and archiving takes place. Archivism is the English word for the process of archiving, however in Danish and Swedish one would use 'arkivering' equivalent to archiving – making 'arkivism/ arkivisme' a neologism that combines archiving with activism, suggesting that archiving can be practiced with a politically informed purpose and social mindfulness. The Museum of Women's History strives to strengthen democracy by actively challenging the marginalization of women in the creation and use of history and they have attempted to do so by publishing the handbook *Arkivism*. The leitmotif of the handbook is the act of archiving as a means to secure women a place in future history.

'Arkivism' serves as a reminder that only material that has been archived can be refound and brought back to attention and this goes for the future story as well – it is written today.

## KEEPING RECORDS OF PRIVATE COLLECTIONS

Outside the museum classification systems many other examples of ways to keep record of jewellery exist in private and artistic contexts. An Excel sheet will suffice, and many registration programs are available for the collector of jewellery as described by Rebekah Frank in her summarizing article in *Art Jewelry Forum* on best practice for collectors (Frank 2019).

An elaborate example of an account of a private jewellery collection and the stories connected to it is *The Jewellery Box* – an impressive catalogue of Jorunn Veiteberg's collection of some 550 items (Veiteberg 2021). The invitation to exhibit her collection at Nordenfjeldske Kunstindustrimuseum in Trondheim in 2018 required Veiteberg to register her collection. She admits, that "(u)p to that point, this was a task I had shamefully neglected" (Veiteberg 2021, p. 14). The author merges several principles of cataloguing in her book, in the main section of the book real size photos of the collection are arranged not according to the artist's name or year of production but roughly in the order in which the item entered the life of the author. A complete list in alphabetical order with thumbnail pictures is also available after a section of portraits of the items in use by the author because she is "a user of jewellery" and "(t)he absence of the body it is meant to adorn can be a problem when presenting jewellery,

## Expanded Provenance:

### Models for Recording Jewellery Stories Inspired by The Loan Scheme of The Danish Arts Foundation's Jewellery Collection



*From the opening of the exhibition Our Jewellery September 29, 2019, at The Museum at Koldinghus. As a natural consequence of the collection's wearability the exhibition was opened with a 'fashion show' with members of the museum staff and board and committee members presenting selected pieces of jewellery on a catwalk and in the following conversations with visitors.*

*Series of photos (pp. 26-28) by Palle Peter Skov, courtesy of The Museum at Koldinghus/ Museum Kolding, jewellery from the Danish Arts Foundation's Jewellery Collection:*

- 1) Curator Anni Nørskov Mørch with member of the board Merete Due Paarup.*
- 2) Exhibition architect Margit Soome.*
- 3) Member of the board Merete Due Paarup.*
- 4) Senior advisor at The Danish Arts Foundation Signe Marie Ebbe Jacobsen, members of the Danish Arts Foundation's Committee for Craft and Design Iben Høj and Simon Skafdrup in conversation with former chair of the committee Mia Okkels.*
- 5) Former Chair of the Danish Arts Foundation's Committee for Craft and Design Bente Skjøttgaard.*

whether in an exhibition context or a book (...) Jewellery's role as means of communication has always mattered greatly to me." (Veiteberg, 2021, p.14).

However, many of us who are owners of jewellery that functions as means of communication or hold great emotional significance do not identify as collectors and have no systematic collection management or registration practice to collect the layers of significance of our jewellery as they change over time.

## THE DANISH ARTS FOUNDATION'S JEWELLERY COLLECTION: A STATE-OWNED COLLECTION IN USE BY THE PUBLIC

The Danish Arts Foundation is the largest arts foundation in Denmark and its purpose is to "... work to spread the arts to a wide audience all over Denmark, to promote Danish art internationally, and to pave the way for talented artists" (The Danish Arts Foundation 2023). The Foundation's jewellery collection of more than 300 pieces is a result of the acquisitions by changing committees over the last 40+ years of almost exclusively newly produced Danish contemporary pieces of jewellery bought at exhibitions and the committees' visits to workshops and galleries.

The activities of the Foundation are funded by the Danish State but governed by the principle of 'full arm's length' between the professional expertise of the Foundation and politics. Artworks like paintings and sculptures are also bought by the Foundation to be exhibited in public spaces and after a number of years donated to museums or public institutions. The

## Expanded Provenance:

### Models for Recording Jewellery Stories Inspired by The Loan Scheme of The Danish Arts Foundation's Jewellery Collection



Foundation's criteria for acquiring artworks including jewellery is the artistic quality of the work and the purpose of buying art works is to both support Danish artists through acquisition and promotion and to give the Danish public access to art of the highest quality. Since 2007 a loan scheme has made the pieces in the jewellery collection accessible for use at official events. The loan scheme of the jewellery collection was initiated by a former committee chaired by Mia Okkels, making the jewellery that up until then was acquired, occasionally exhibited but mostly kept in storage, available to the public. The loan scheme was inspired by the Foundation's other deposits and donations but tailored to the body related scale and symbolic density of jewellery (The Danish Arts Foundation 2007).

The initiative shares similarities with the before mentioned Makers Move archive and Josephine Winther's exhibition and story-collecting project *Ruby likes to Travel* from 2003 (Winther 2023) where the artist tested a model for recording user-experiences with jewellery by loaning out pieces of jewellery during the exhibition period in exchange for the account of the experience by the borrower written in a designated book. *Ruby likes to Travel*, Makers Move and the Danish Arts Foundation's loan scheme have all in part inspired the Swedish initiative Smyckoteket at Rian Designmuseum under the leadership of Love Jönsson. Smyckoteket is a collection of international contemporary art jewellery that is available for loan (Rian Design Museum 2023; Mørch 2022a).

The unique and value adding feature of the Danish Arts Foundation's Jewellery Collection is not so much the

Expanded Provenance:  
Models for Recording Jewellery Stories Inspired by The Loan Scheme of The Danish Arts Foundation's Jewellery Collection



#### Expanded Provenance:

##### Models for Recording Jewellery Stories Inspired by The Loan Scheme of The Danish Arts Foundation's Jewellery Collection



*The Danish Arts Foundation's Jewellery Collection primarily consists of contemporary studio jewellery in both precious and nonprecious materials.*

*Ring made by Kim Buck in 1987 in platinum, 18 carat gold and cubic zirconia.*

*Photo by Iben Kaufmann courtesy of The Museum at Koldinghus/ Museum Kolding and The Danish Arts Foundation, 2019.*

coherence of the collection in and of itself, but the quality of the works combined with the volume of experiences of borrowers, their curatorial choices, and their use of the pieces in social settings. In this case the wearers' experiences therefore seem indispensable among relevant data to collect. This would require the wearer, i.e. the borrower, to be considered as important as a previous owner in traditional records of provenance and the significance of jewellery to be determined by the social and communicative practices between both maker, wearer and viewer. Among others Susan Cohn and Petra Ahde-Deal have convincingly made the latter point in their dissertations on the social meaning of jewellery. Cohn (2009) states that the wearer is the most important person in the life of a jewellery-object, and Ahde-Deal (2013) assumes that jewellery as such carries no inherent meaning: meaning is generated within social practices.

#### AVANT-GARDE PRÊT-A-PORTER

Contemporary art jewellery dominates the latest acquisitions to The Danish Arts Foundation's Jewellery Collection. This new tradition within the history of jewellery can be viewed as does Marjan Unger in her renowned dissertation *Jewellery in Context* as "an elitist niche within jewellery based on its emphasis on autonomy in both concept and execution". Even so, as Unger points out, jewellery is there to be worn, it is not merely a form of autonomous art (Unger 2010/19, p. 51). Lisbeth den Besten also makes note of this fruitful paradox within 'art jewellery' or 'author jewellery': "With this notion, a kind of jewellery is described that is not only there to adorn a person for the sake of the



Expanded Provenance:

Models for Recording Jewellery Stories Inspired by The Loan Scheme of The Danish Arts Foundation's Jewellery Collection



*Many pieces in The Danish Arts Foundation's Jewellery Collection have a strong visual presence, and some are challenging to wear. Verlängert Fünf is a 77 cm long ring that can also be attached to a choker made by Camilla Prasch in 2005 in nylon thread, plastic snaps and silicone discs.*

*Photo by Iben Kaufmann courtesy of The Museum at Koldinghus/ Museum Kolding and The Danish Arts Foundation, 2019.*

wearer's enjoyment or to show off their wealth, but that wants to transmit meaning or content similar to the way that fine art does - with one difference: that it is worn by a human on the body." (den Besten 2012, p. 60).

The social and communicative function of jewellery is the point of departure for the thinking on jewellery of Karen Pontoppidan and this function is the feature that in her view as a professor, curator, and jewellery artist connects jewellery from the earliest civilizations to present day art jewellery. In *Schmuckismus* (2019) she offers an anthropological framework for thinking about jewellery and says: "... by its very nature the act of adorning oneself is an expression of fundamental social constructions." Pontoppidan makes a comparison between military uniforms and jewellery stressing that jewellery is a far more subtle and complex form of communication: "Yet both are structured displays of group affiliation that simultaneously make self-identification possible." Jewellery is, according to Pontoppidan, attractive from a socio-political viewpoint not only as a tool for manifesting a range of social identities but also as an enabler of social flexibility (Pontoppidan and Nollert 2019, p. 12).

Many of the pieces in The Danish Arts Foundation's Jewellery Collection fit within this complex socio-political and art historical contextualization of contemporary art jewellery. The pieces challenge conventions and give the public access to experience wearable artworks which is an unaccustomed experience for most people.



## Expanded Provenance:

### Models for Recording Jewellery Stories Inspired by The Loan Scheme of The Danish Arts Foundation's Jewellery Collection



*The title of this brooch by Marie-Louise Kristensen, Nothing is swept under the rug, is a reference to a Danish political scandal in 1989 that has made the phrase a common and charged expression indicating that something has in fact been swept under the rug. Made in 2008 with yarn, silver, and 20 different stones like lemon quartz, sapphire, and diamond.*

*Photo by Iben Kaufmann courtesy of The Museum at Koldinghus/ Museum Kolding and The Danish Arts Foundation, 2019.*

The fact that this collection combines avantgarde artwork and user interaction gives an interesting case for considering the need for mediation and ‘translation’ that is at the centre of museum education. In my observations as a curator working with the collection and its loan scheme the meaning-making process is not so much a case of translation as it is a case of transformation - a process of meaning-making as a negotiation between the qualities of the object and the values of the user herself as seen in the case of Özlem Cekic.

The borrowers are asked to report back on a few simple questions about the choice of the piece, the occasion and the experience of wearing the piece and they are also encouraged to send in a photo of themselves wearing the borrowed piece of jewellery. As these reports accumulate over time it shall be interesting to learn how this might add new perspectives to the collection.

## JEWELLERY AS TOOL FOR COMMUNICATION

The most iconic use of jewellery as a vehicle to visually display and give public resonance to a specific message is the jewellery diplomacy by Sec. Madeleine Albright who even gave an eloquent account of her conscious use of jewellery in her book *Read My Pins: Stories from a Diplomat's Jewel Box* (Albright 2009) that has also been accounted for in several exhibitions i.e. the online exhibition *Read my Pins* at the National Museum of American Diplomacy, *The Splendour of Power* at The Museum at Koldinghus in 2018, and *Jewelry Stories* at Museum of Arts and Design in New

York in 2021 (The National Museum of American Diplomacy 2023; Mørch 2018; Gifford 2021). This famous case of jewellery use of the Secretary of State exemplify how jewellery with clear communicative qualities can serve as a signal in international diplomacy and in a mass media context.

An example of a more subtle use of jewellery as a means of communication is given by museum director Love Jönsson in an interview I did with him in 2021. Here he tells an anecdote that illustrates his own use of the multifaceted and explorative qualities of contemporary jewellery to mediate one-on-one meetings with strangers: "By wearing a piece of jewellery, you make yourself available to people, for their comments and reactions. It has been a nice and interesting way for me to connect with strangers both at parties, in professional contexts and for example during a flight where I wore a brooch by Auli Laitinen with the text "I am human". A flight attendant asked: 'What does that mean?', and I explained that an artist had made it, and that it could be interpreted that we are all equal. A little later she came back to my seat and whispered to me 'I am an alien!'" (Mørch, 2022a).

### **JEWELLERY SALONS: HOW ARE EXPERIENCES WITH JEWELLERY COMMUNICATED AND STRUCTURED**

---

In a research project, supervised by Professor Eva Brandt, at Design School Kolding, I conducted three different jewellery salons to examine how experiences around jewellery are communicated and structured. The purpose of the salons was to inform my thesis that an alternative method can be developed that builds a

dynamic narrative framework around the collected piece and tells the story of the object not only in its constituent characteristics but also in its relations with its surroundings, thus reaffirming its specificity as a wearable object. The distinctive feature of jewellery as wearable objects that establishes extremely intimate and personal relationships with the wearer needs to be mirrored in the methodology of archiving in public or private jewellery collections.

### **THE FIRST SALON WAS CONCERNED WITH THE MEANING ATTRIBUTED TO BORROWED JEWELLERY**

During the salon students at Design School Kolding shared their experience with wearing jewellery from the Danish Arts Foundation's collection. I partnered with jewellery artist and teacher at Design School Kolding, Josephine Winther, and a group of her students. The students from the Accessory Design and the Industrial Design study programs were introduced to the collection and the loan scheme. Afterward they had the opportunity to interact with a selection of pieces from the collection and reflect on their roles as wearers and makers (Mørch 2022b). Beyond the information made available through interacting with the pieces, the participants were very curious to know more about the previous wearers and the maker, information that is only available if records of this are kept.

Expanded Provenance:

Models for Recording Jewellery Stories Inspired by The Loan Scheme of The Danish Arts Foundation's Jewellery Collection



*Mette Daarbak Balsby wearing a brooch by Ole Bent Petersen from The Danish Arts Foundation's Jewellery Collection for the 20-year jubilee of Film6000 June 13, 2019, in Nicolai Biograf.*

*Photo courtesy of Mette Daarbak Balsby.*

*Free ticket brooch by Ole Bent Petersen, 1992, in silver. The Danish Arts Foundation's Jewellery Collection.*

*Photo by Iben Kaufmann courtesy of Museum Kolding.*

Expanded Provenance:

Models for Recording Jewellery Stories Inspired by The Loan Scheme of The Danish Arts Foundation's Jewellery Collection



*Trine Møller after her Ph.D. defence, Wearing Health Products - A wearer-led accessory approach to wearable health design at Design School Kolding September 12, 2019 wearing a ring by Malene Kastalje from The Danish Arts Foundation's Jewellery Collection. Photo by Anni Nørskov Mørch.*

*No one knew, when it would happen #1, ring from 2015 by Malene Kastalje in silicone and other materials. The Danish Arts Foundation's Jewellery Collection.*

*Photo by Iben Kaufmann courtesy of The Museum at Koldinghus/ Museum Kolding and Danish Arts Foundation, 2019.*

## THE SECOND SALON WAS CONCERNED WITH THE MEANING ATTRIBUTED TO PERSONAL JEWELLERY AND MODELS FOR RECORDING THESE MEANINGS.

During the salon a small group of employees at Design School Kolding were asked to prioritize a list of questions I had formulated to prompt descriptions about personal jewellery and then use their chosen set of questions to describe the piece of jewellery that they had brought to the meeting.

The range of jewellery-types was varied, and the stories revealed many layers of significance connected to values, important life events, relationships, and the physical and artistic properties of the pieces.

One of the participants stressed that the verifiable history is one thing, the personal story another. The emotions and social imagination of the subjective story is dynamic and cannot be controlled by the same standards as objective descriptions and she recognized this distinction in the four groups of questions in the list I asked the group to choose from: the acquisition, the history of the jewellery, the personal story, and the future.

## THE THIRD SALON WAS CONCERNED WITH THE WAY EXPERIENCES AROUND JEWELLERY ARE COMMUNICATED AND STRUCTURED AS STORIES.

A group of design students from Design School Kolding were invited to participate and bring a piece of jewellery with a personal story or significance. During

the salon the students shared their private jewellery stories as oral stories and drawings.

In the second and third jewellery salon the participants instinctively structured their jewellery stories by a story grammar around important values or important events or relationships in the life of the owner. In several cases the stories were so emotional they brought tears.

Several of the storytellers were surprised themselves how memories, realizations and very strong emotions erupted during the telling of the story connected to the jewellery. In many of the stories there was a significant link between the artistic, physical, and material properties of the piece and the symbolic meanings the piece carries for the storyteller.

The participants' descriptions of their jewellery differed in many ways from the objective registrations of museums. The descriptions quickly deviated from my list of questions and followed what narrative psychology calls a story grammar, the implicit set of rules determining what a story is and how it works. The stories had the characteristics of nuclear episodes, subjective memories of particular events which have assumed especially prominent positions in our understanding of who we were and are; high points, low points and turning points in our narrative accounts of the past (McAdams 1997, Kirkegaard 2013).

In her account of the psychological concept of 'life story' Dorthe Kirkegaard Thomsen describes key concepts and developments in narrative psychology like story grammar, nuclear episodes and narrative therapy and describes how deeply ingrained storytelling is in forming identity and how this knowledge can be

used in authoring an alternative life story to produce a sense of agency after trauma (Kirkegaard 2013). Following this understanding the narrative is something fundamental for personal and cultural identity and at the same time something dynamic, an interpretation that can be repeated and changed. Consistent with the literature on the social meanings of wearing jewellery (Ahde-Deal 2013) the jewellery stories of the salons imply that jewellery can be deeply connected to this identity forming act of continuous life story-telling. A simple registration of objective characteristics of a piece of jewellery by the time of acquisition would not be able to capture the meanings of this narrative developed over time.

If experiences of borrowing jewellery and of owning jewellery were registered by a diverse group of people over time as suggested by this paper, we could perhaps gain deeper understanding of how the narrative around a piece of jewellery in a public and a private collection develop over time.

### **CONCLUSION: EXPANDING PROVENANCE IN PUBLIC COLLECTIONS AND KEEPING RECORDS OF PRIVATE COLLECTIONS**

---

For the benefit of collecting, keeping, and sharing the dynamic and relational values of jewellery the concept of 'expanded provenance' can serve as a tool in private or public records to elaborate on otherwise neglected experience-based data around jewellery and ensure that significant stories make history.

The case of the Danish Arts Foundation Jewellery Collection and its loan scheme merge two set of practices and value systems, the life world and collection management. The recording develops experiences around jewellery and make them available for research and communication. Furthermore, the development and recording of the experiences add to the value of the pieces themselves. However, this demands a method for recording that includes a greater diversity of voices and meanings and that is able to log these entries over time.

My research suggests that a few key concepts can aid the recording of experiences with jewellery.

To build on the many different meticulously developed and historically rooted practices of recording data on material culture in museums and to keep descriptive data close together with records of experiences the attempts to develop and record experiences should be integrated into existing systems, therefore this paper suggests that:

- the known concept of provenance is expanded from being the records of ownership of the object to a log of experiences.

Methods for gathering relevant information for the 'expanded provenance' could advantageously include:

- A list of varied questions to prompt answers that reaches deeper sensory and symbolic interpretations and describe past events and expectations about the future of the object.

- Blank space (whether it be for audio recordings, writing text, adding photos or drawings) to fill out with the story of the piece thereby giving the author an opportunity to use the narrative structure of story grammar and connect the object to their personal life story or nuclear episodes.

To include more voices and meanings in the curatorial space of registration the expanded provenance should:

- Find its authors among a diverse group of users, jewellery makers, wearers, and viewers.
- Repeat the recording, so descriptions of the piece are logged and 'layered' as separate interpretations, allowing stories and authors to develop and change over time.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the Danish Arts Foundation, Design School Kolding and Museum Kolding, to Professor Eva Brandt and all the participants in the jewellery salons that have informed and inspired my research, and the many colleagues and fellow jewellery enthusiasts who have inspired and aided this paper to come to fruition.

## REFERENCES

Albright, Madeleine. 2009. *Read My Pins: Stories from a Diplomat's Jewel Box*. Harpercollins.

Ahde-Deal, Petra. 2013. *Women and Jewellery. A social approach to wearing and possessing jewellery*. Doctoral dissertation. Aalto: Aalto University publication series.

Bowker, Geoffrey C. and Star, Susan Leigh. 1999. *Sorting Things Out: Classification and its consequences*. London and Massachusetts, The MIT Press.

Cekic, Özlem. 2019. Post on Facebook October 18, 2019. [Online]. Facebook, accessed October 26, 2021. (Citations translated from Danish by Anni Nørskov Mørch)

Cohn, Susan. 2009. *Recoding Jewellery: identity, body, survival*. Ph.D. thesis. New South Wales: College of Fine Art. University of New South Wales.

den Besten, Liesbeth. 2012. *On Jewellery. A compendium of international contemporary art jewellery*. Stuttgart, Arnoldsche Art Publishers.

Sehasseh, E. M. et. al. 2021. "Early Middle Stone Age personal ornaments from Bizmoune Cave, Essaouira, Morocco". [Online]. Science Advances Vol 7, Issue 39, 22 September 2021. Accessed February 25, 2023. <https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/sciadv.abi8620>

Foucault, Michel. 1966/ 2006. *Ordene og Tingene. (Les mots et les choses)*. Denmark, Det lille Forlag.

Frank, Rebekah. 2019. "CATALOGUING YOUR JEWELRY COLLECTION: Everything You Need to Know to Get Started". [Online]. Art Jewelry Forum, accessed February 25, 2023. <https://artjewelryforum.org/articles/cataloging-your-jewelry-collection/>

Gifford, Barbara Paris (Ed.). 2021. *Jewelry Stories: Highlights from the Collection 1947-2019*. New York, United States: arnoldsche Art Publishers.

Hooper-Greenhill, Eilean. 1992. *Museums and the shaping of knowledge*. London, Routledge.

Kirkegaard Thomsen, Dorte. 2013. *Livshistorien*. Aarhus: Århus Universitetsforlag.

McAdams, Dan P. 1997. *The Stories We Live By: Personal Myths and the Making of the Self*. The Guildford Press.

Makers Move. 2023. Website. [Online], accessed February 25, 2023. <http://makersmove.com/>

Mejlhede, Inge Bucka; Christensen, Pia; Meldgaard, Thomas. 2022. "Møbler med betydning". In Danske Museer nr.4, 2022. [Online]. Accessed February 25, 2023. <https://www.danskemuseer.dk/moebler-med-betydning/>

Miller, Peter N. 2017. *History and Its Objects: Antiquarianism and Material Culture since 1500*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Mordhorst, Camilla. 2009. *Genstandsfortællinger: Fra Museum Wormanium til de moderne museer*. København, Museum Tusculanum.

Mørch, Anni Nørskov. 2018. "Introduction – The Splendour of Power" and object descriptions. In *The Splendour of Power* edited by Thomas C. Thulstrup. Kolding, Denmark: The Museum at Koldinghus.

Mørch, Anni Nørskov. 2022a. "Alle har ret til et fedt samtalesmykke". In *Værdi, Vækst, Virkelighed* edited by Charlotte Jul. The Danish Arts Foundation, 2022. [https://www.kunst.dk/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Kunst\\_dk/Dokumenter/Om\\_os/Publikationer/2022/V%C3%A6rdi\\_V%C3%A6kst\\_Virkelighed\\_web.pdf](https://www.kunst.dk/fileadmin/user_upload/Kunst_dk/Dokumenter/Om_os/Publikationer/2022/V%C3%A6rdi_V%C3%A6kst_Virkelighed_web.pdf) (Citations translated from Danish by Anni Nørskov Mørch)

Mørch, Anni Nørskov. 2022b. "Can I Borrow it? The Danish Arts Foundation Loans Out Its Jewelry Collection and Gets Jewelry Ambassadors in Return". [Online], accessed February 25, 2023. [https://artjewelryforum.org/articles/can-i-borrow-it\\_danish-arts-foundation-jewellery-collection\\_auth-natl-denmark\\_4-25-2022/](https://artjewelryforum.org/articles/can-i-borrow-it_danish-arts-foundation-jewellery-collection_auth-natl-denmark_4-25-2022/)

Nygaard, Gitte and Winther, Josephine (ed.). 2016. *Makers Move Matter a project by Gitte Nygaard and Josephine Winther*. Denmark.



O'Neill, Paul. 2012. *The Culture of Curating and the Curating of Culture(s)*. Cambridge, London: The MIT Press.

O'Neill, Paul; Steeds, Lucy; Wilson, Mike. 2017. *How Institutions Think: Between Contemporary Art and Curatorial Discourse*. LUMA Foundation and the Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College. Cambridge, London: The MIT Press.

Pearce, Susan. 1995. *On Collecting: An investigation into collecting in the European tradition*. London: Routledge.

Pedersen, Katrine Thorsgaard. 2019. *SARA-manual – vejledning til de kunst- og kulturhistoriske museer*. Version 2.0. 2. udgave, 12. februar 2021. Slots- og Kulturstyrelsen. [Online], accessed February 25, 2023. [https://slks.dk/fileadmin/user\\_upload/SLKS/Omraader/Kulturinstitutioner/Museer/SARA\\_brugervejledning\\_Vers.\\_2.0\\_tilgaengeliggjort.pdf](https://slks.dk/fileadmin/user_upload/SLKS/Omraader/Kulturinstitutioner/Museer/SARA_brugervejledning_Vers._2.0_tilgaengeliggjort.pdf)

Pontoppidan, Karen and Nollert, Angelika. 2019. *Schmuckismus*. Munich: Die Neue Sammlung Munich and Arnoldsche Art Publishers.

Pousette, Helene Larsson and Thomsgård, Lina (ed.). 2021. *Arkivism: En handbok - Hitta, spara och organisera för framtidens historieskrivning*. Stockholm: Stockholms Kvinnohistoriska and Volante förlag.

Rian Design Museum. 2023. Smyckoteket [Online]. Smyckoteket, accessed February 25, 2023. <https://www.smyckoteket.se/>

Reilly, Maura. 2018. *Curatorial Activism: Towards an Ethics of Curating*. London: Thames & Hudson

Russel, R. and Winkworth, K. 2009. *Significance 2.0. – a guide to assessing the significance of collections*. Australia: Collections Council of Australia Ltd.

Simon, Nina. 2010. *The Participatory Museum*. Santa Cruz.

The Danish Arts Foundation. 2023. Website, [Online], accessed February 25, 2023. <https://www.kunst.dk/english/about-us>

The Danish Arts Foundation. 2007. *Statens Kunstfonds beretning 1. januar – 31. december 2006* [Online]. The Danish Arts Foundation (annual report 2006), accessed 8 July 2022. [https://issuu.com/kunststyrelsen/docs/skf\\_aarsberetning\\_2006/46?ff](https://issuu.com/kunststyrelsen/docs/skf_aarsberetning_2006/46?ff)

The National Museum of American Diplomacy. 2023. Website, [Online], accessed February 25, 2023. <https://readmypins.state.gov/>

Tompkins, Arthur (ed.). 2020. *Provenance Research Today: Principles, Practice, Problems*. London: Lund Humphries.

Unger, Marjan. 2010/2019. *Jewellery in context. A multidisciplinary framework for the study of jewellery*. Doctoral dissertation. Leiden University. English edition by Theo Smeets. Arnoldsche Art Publishers.

Expanded Provenance:

Models for Recording Jewellery Stories Inspired by The Loan Scheme of The Danish Arts Foundation's Jewellery Collection

Vasström, Annette. 2020. *At sætte tingenes verden i system: Om udarbejdelsen af en saglig registrant for de kulturhistoriske museer i Danmark ved Dansk Folkemuseum og Nationalmuseet, i årene 1885-1940 med eksempler på registrantens betydning for det efterfølgende museumsarbejde, 1940-1985.* (Systematizing the World). Studies in Archaeology & History Vol. 28. Copenhagen: Publications from the National Museum.

Veiteberg, Jorunn. 2021. *The Jewellery Box*. Europe: Arnoldsche Art Publishers.

Winther, Josephine. 2023. *Ruby likes to travel* [Online], accessed February 25, 2023.  
<https://josephinewinther.com/ruby-likes-to-travel/>

Wohlfahrt, Eske. 2010. *Baggrunden for Dansk Museums Dokumentations Standard*. Copenhagen: Kulturarvsstyrelsen, [Online], accessed February 25, 2023.  
[https://slks.dk/fileadmin/user\\_upload/kulturarv/museer/dokumenter/Baggrund\\_for\\_Dansk\\_Museums\\_Dokumentations\\_Standard.pdf](https://slks.dk/fileadmin/user_upload/kulturarv/museer/dokumenter/Baggrund_for_Dansk_Museums_Dokumentations_Standard.pdf)

Expanded Provenance:

Models for Recording Jewellery Stories Inspired by The Loan Scheme of The Danish Arts Foundation's Jewellery Collection

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

---

*Anni Nørskov Mørch*

*hallo@anninomo.com*

Anni Nørskov Mørch is an independent curator, speaker, and writer with a MA in the History of Ideas and Art History. For the period 2022–2025, she has been appointed as Chair of the Danish Arts Foundation's Committee for Craft and Design Project Funding.



Journal of Jewellery Research

[www.journalofjewelleryresearch.org](http://www.journalofjewelleryresearch.org)

ISSN 2516-337X

Loughborough University, Northumbria University.

First published in June 2023, UK.

Copyright© Journal of Jewellery Research and the author.

All rights reserved. Apart from fair dealing for the purposes of study, research, criticism or review, as permitted under the applicable copyright legislation, no part of this work may be reproduced by any process without written permission from the publisher or author.

For permissions and other inquiries, please contact the editors:  
[editorsjojr@gmail.com](mailto:editorsjojr@gmail.com)

Journal of Jewellery Research is a double blind peer-reviewed research journal supported by an International Editorial Advisory Group.

## Where the Digital Meets the Physical: A Jewellery Design Approach

---

**Author:** *Mala Siamptani*

---



## ABSTRACT

---

Jewellery is a design practice heavily associated with traditional handcraft values such as labour, material and complexity. Such values are being challenged by the current use of digital tools and technologies in the industry. While the pandemic has exhilarated our immersion in the digital world, we have observed a change in the design field where individual designers of brands deliver to consumers a blend of experiential and entertainment values. The project Let's Get Phygital was set out as a response to the new reality we all had to get used to, exploring how jewellery could exist in different and unconventional realms. This paper presents the results of an experimental collaborative project between 22 jewellery design students from London College of Fashion (LCF) and Estonia Academy of the Arts (EKA). The students were given a brief and challenged with subverting conventional design and manufacturing approaches, to investigate how contemporary jewellery can exist in non-physical forms and develop digital jewellery related to their personal projects in response. The project's main objective was to support students develop a creative design approach while implementing digital technologies in their own practice. Using Augmented Reality (AR) filters for social media platforms as a tool to directly interact with their audience, the cohort explored digital possibilities and digital wearability within contemporary jewellery.

Keywords: *Augmented Reality, Creativity, Digital, Design, Jewellery*

## INTRODUCTION

---

In the case of designer makers, tools are the embodiment of rules working alongside more conceptual rules and conventions, in order to transform a design problem towards a creative design solution (MacLachlan, Earl and Eckert, 2012). Thus, as designers it is our role to research and experiment with methods and tools available to us and uncover ways we can push our practices forward.

Through the years, jewellers have attempted to test the boundaries of the field by breaking new ground either by inventing new techniques, exploring different materials or simply by testing whether something is possible. Thus, this paper attempts to question how can AR aid the creative process of the jewellery designer. The Lets Get Phygital project was set to deepen our understanding of how the use of digital technologies influences jewellery designers and to learn more about the creative process of these designers while using this tech. The project hoped to support students develop a creative design approach while implementing digital technologies in their own practice. As this was a collaborative project between LCF and EKA, it was set up to support and share the participants' common experiences and envision potential future concepts within the field of jewellery design. The objectives advanced for this study were to:

- 1) Teach students new software applications (Meshmixer and SparkAR),
- 2) Investigate and interrogate how these digital tools influenced (or not) the students' creative behaviour and design processes,

3) Evaluate students' perceptions when using AR as a design tool.

This paper presents the results of LGP collaborative project, which focused on an experimental approach investigating contemporary jewellery in a digital/non-physical form. This exhibition-oriented project dealt with learning about digital possibilities in the context of contemporary jewellery. All participating students experienced the reality of preparing for and taking part in an exhibition, which enabled them to familiarise themselves with the professional sector. Bonardel and Zenasi (2010), suggest that the democratization of the use of computers along with the internet development, have led and allowed a large number of people accessing and using these tools. Thus, LGP participation was free and did not require any technical skills prior to taking part. LGP encouraged students to start developing pieces related to their personal projects in order to subvert conventional design and manufacturing approaches. The students were invited to reflect on a more intuitive and freethinking approach, that implement digital technologies. They were also asked to analyse new product design interactions using Augmented reality as a tool. The project explored how AR could in theory enhance the potential for young designers in the jewellery field to advance their creative practice and enable them to reassess the contemporary value of jewellery. In an attempt to develop new methodologies of designing through making that integrate digital technologies, the project's intention was to contribute to the wider evolution of creative jewellery design.

As social media are universally accessible and part of our daily lives, the project used Instagram as a platform to disseminate the work of the students, due to its build in AR features. The technology company Meta, has developed a software named Spark AR, which is the tool the project uses to allow students to develop digital filters of their work. LGP project lasted 5 weeks (10th March - 5th May 2022) for about two hours each session and was divided into several phases. In the first of these, the students were introduced to the theory behind the use of technology and were presented with a series of examples of designers and content creators using such technology. In later phases, the students were introduced to some digital tools they could download and use for free for these sessions. The staff involved were then concentrated on giving the students feedback and support when concluding their designs. There follows a brief reflection on how they felt during this project via a written statement and a concept description.

Qualitative methodological approaches were employed in order to conduct a comprehensive analysis of how young designers perceive their creative practice while they experiment with new software such as Spark AR. As this was a project developed in an educational set up, reflective practice was at its core. A set of questions were given to the participants, through which we aimed to understand how they perceived their creative practice while they experiment with tools which they were not very familiar.

LGP reflected on students' intuitive design approach and most importantly invited viewers to try on digital jewellery products IRL. The project run from March to

May 2022, culminating in an exhibition, which took place between 6-10 July 2022, as part of the renowned Munich Jewellery Week (MJW). The study is significant for both educational and industry purposes as it focuses primarily on advancing knowledge about jewellery design practice and its outcomes, while integrating AR technologies.

## LITERATURE

---

Digital technologies are among the most important driving forces in the economy today (Brynjolfsson and McAfee, 2012). Thus, an understanding of these phenomena in addition to a discussion of ways in which practitioners make use of digital tools and their impact on the creative process will enable better technology to be developed (Shneiderman et al. 2006).

Technology is deeply entrenched within the new era of fashion and accessories. For instance, digital printing, enable designers to test their design variations instantly, thus allowing more flexibility in conceptualizing prototypes (Parsons & Campbell 2004). Brown (2009), notes that one of the technologies that can be seen as an important innovation in this era is Computer Aided Design (CAD), which has revolutionised the creative capabilities available to designers and engineers worldwide.

Pullee (1990) addresses some major factors that have brought a revolution in the field of jewellery design: the first was industrialization and the growth of technologies, which has enabled jewellery to be mass-produced in order to satisfy a growing consumer market. As a second factor, the author mentions the

rapid expansion of information technology and media, which has allowed new ideas to be shared worldwide, reflecting the taste and aspirations of a multi-cultural society. This is a very important factor for the purposes of this paper.

Radhika et al. (2016), note that while digital technology is in constant development, the display of 3D models in the real world has led to the creation of Augmented Reality (AR), gaining a wider importance in gaming and being increasingly used in the design industry. These developments are allowing us to view images of the real world and images of computer-generated worlds in the same field of view (Berry et al., 2006). Thus, we can define here AR as: 'An enhanced version of reality created by the use of technology to overlay digital information on an image of something being viewed through a device (such as a smartphone camera)'.

According to Greengard (2019), a variety of software and hardware has been developed that deliver convincing images, sound, feel or other sensory elements to alter our perception and experience of physical things (AR) or create virtual imaginary or realistic worlds (virtual reality or VR).

During the pandemic, we have witnessed AR take off in major ways in response to retail. Clark, in an article issued by the drum, an online publisher for the marketing and media industries (2021), suggests that the growth of AR on mobile has been significantly accelerated by the pandemic and its associated effects. We have, indeed, observed how various companies attempted to connect with their customers using virtual



try-on experiences, including advertising sunglasses or previewing furniture in the home environment. We have had examples from luxury fashion labels such as Gucci, where Alessandro Michele designed a pair of digital-only trainers named Gucci Virtual 25, where people could virtually wear the shoes using AR. The renowned Sotheby's auction house collaborated with Poplar digital studio to bring a historic royal tiara to life via their social media platforms. The tiara was digitally recreated using CAD, ensuring that all elements were added and that the virtual filter was as close to the real object as possible. Technology allowed Sotheby's to reach a wider audience, who interacted with the object through this digital filter, thus propelling the promotion of the auction of the physical tiara in Geneva. Clearly, during this period, AR has proven to be an essential technology for retailers (H. Papagiannis in Clark, K article 2021).

AR has also proven to be a great tool for reaching wider audiences. Björk, the Icelandic music legend, alongside creative collaborator James Merry, have developed a series of AR filters, presenting sculptural iridescent and translucent face shields as digital wearable artworks that the audience could virtually try on themselves.

Some companies pushed the boundaries beyond the physical object. Recently, Balenciaga released a fashion collection (Fall 2021) in the form of a video game, where players walked through a futuristic environment, passing avatars dressed in repurposed style garments. This was an innovative way for the brand to present the line called Afterworld: The Age of Tomorrow. Instead of inviting their audience to attend

an in-person runway show, anyone could access the video game via Balenciaga's website. This is in line with Lingel's (2016) thoughts on how the physical places are less important than the ability to establish connection with others. This presents a shift in power where the designer no longer needs a catwalk, a physical exhibition space, a gallerist or curator to present their new work to their audience.

## METHODOLOGY

---

In this project, qualitative methodological approaches were used in order to conduct a comprehensive analysis of how digital tools (CAD) and AR influence the creative process of the jewellery designer. Based on Schön's (1991) work, reflection-on-action, is an approach which involves reflecting on how practice can be developed after the lesson has been taught. Schön recognises the importance of reflecting back 'in order to discover how our knowing-in-action may have contributed to an unexpected outcome'. Thus, the use of reflective process aids in obtaining new knowledge about practice Schön (1991). LGP uses reflection during the project, where we studied the shared patterns and behaviours of the young designers and explored their practice from their viewpoint in order to collect information regarding the role of digital design and AR in their learning and practice.

The scope of our attention was discussed during an initial meeting between Mala Siamptani (LCF) lecturer designer and researcher, Darja Popolitova (EKA) designer and researcher, and creative technologist, Mouhannad Al-Sayegh (LCF), which involved a consideration of own personal experiences in the

professional design sector. The team organised an outlook framework spanning across all five sessions. An open call invited students from Year 2-3 Bachelor level and year 1-2 Master level from LCF and EKA. Prior to the beginning of the project and any data collection, a consent form and participation sheet was provided to those who agreed to take part. 22 students were recruited from LCF (15) and EKA (7), with two to four years of experience in the field of jewellery design. The participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study up until the point of data analysis, which was two months from the project start date. The participants were also informed that the findings of the research may be published and used for future teaching purposes.

The project began with introductory practical and theoretical lectures on Meshmixer (Autodesk) and Spark AR (Meta) software, taught by Mala, Darja and Mouhanad. During these lectures, the students were presented with the theory behind using technology as a tool. Examples of digitally produced jewellery and other artworks were considered and discussed. The students were then given practical step by step sessions on the use of software. Meshmixer was selected by the teaching team as it is a 3D modelling freeform software, and Spark AR was selected as it is specifically designed to create (face) filters and is directly linked with Instagram and Facebook as showcase platforms. Both software are free to download which meant the participants did not have to endure any costs.

Each lecture and workshop was recorded via Microsoft Teams and shared with the students so they could

return to it at any point. Thereafter, students were given time to work independently to produce digital designs based on their own original ideas and research. During the last sessions of the project, the participants were given the opportunity to present work in progress via the Mural sharing platform (Fig 2) and receive feedback from the teaching team. The outcomes, for each student, consisted of a digital presentation (3D & AR software) of an original design project (1-3 pieces). The students had to upload their final designs as filters on their professional Instagram page, in compliance with the criteria of AR Instagram filters set by Meta. Students submitted a reflective statement and concept description as a remaining activity of the project. The work was collected and presented online via Instagram, in addition to being presented at a physical exhibition, as part of MJW 2022.

The project's focus was to investigate particularly how the students felt about the experience of using new tools they were not familiar with in their creative practice. It was important to investigate what behaviours AR encouraged during this project. The students were asked to complete and upload their final designs online by the 26th of May. The submission was requesting not only the design outcomes but in addition, a 100-word description of their project concept and a 100-150 word reflective statement, in response to the questions below:

- How did you use AR technology in your project?
- What stumbling blocks arose and how were they addressed?
- Did you find the technology workable, interesting, challenging?

- Did the collaboration and solutions of the technology and your design work well or not?
- What lessons were learnt from successes or failures?
- Will you be using this technology in the future?

These questions were designed to facilitate investigation and interrogation of how the digital tools influenced (or not) the students' creative behaviour and design processes. With these questions we hoped for the students to respond as naturally as possible, while acknowledging the self-awareness involved in conditions where one knows they are being studied; hence participants were allowed enough time to respond and without any pressure. The students were aware of the impact they can have, and part of the analysis was to consider how people may be responding to the researcher. To limit bias the questions were indirect and open-ended, inviting the students to express their personal point of view. This was an attempt to allow students to introduce and reflect on issues and practices that they perceived as relevant to the project's topic.

The above questions resulted in rich perspectives on the diversity of design experience allowing us to contribute to design education. In analysing the students' responses, the Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework was applied in a systematic manner to describe and explain the process of analysis within the context of teaching and learning research.

## FINDINGS

---

When building a case for craft practice in design for a digital age, Wallace and Press (2015), suggest three priority areas for research. First, the suggested practice centred digital craft research, and secondly embodying craft in product teams. The authors also suggested the need for pedagogical research that extends the breath of craft practice to engage with issues of culture and technology. This is where LGP comes in to support the future generation of jewellery designers in being aware and make use of tools such as AR allowing them to expand their knowledge and design skills.

All the students' reflective statements were gathered, allowing the researcher to engage themselves with the entire body of data. The analysis then helped in identifying how the students' experience in using AR and CAD corresponded to established literature. Upon data collection, thematic analysis was used as a method to identify, analyse and report patterns/themes among the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher used their judgment to identify themes which capture something important about the data in relation to the project topic. An inductive analysis was used as it is a process of coding the collected data without trying to fit it into a pre-existing coding frame, or the researcher's own preconceptions, thus using a form of thematic analysis which is data-driven (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Coding was done manually, by writing notes and highlighting potential indicative patterns. Constant comparative method was used to explore each data source in relation to those previously analysed. There was a clear sense of which themes were of significance and which seemed to reflect the data best, before

analysing more texts and comparing them again. After reviewing and refining, five key themes were identified in relation to investigating the use of AR in Jewellery design:

- Challenging to learn a new skill yet the outcomes were fulfilling
- New perspectives in conveying concepts unreachable by traditional craft
- Efficient tool to connect and reach a wider audience
- Lower costs for dissemination/promotion of work via digital try-ons
- Willing to continue exploring this technology

#### CHALLENGING TO LEARN A NEW SKILL YET THE OUTCOMES WERE FULFILLING

What arose from the participants reflective statements was that learning a new CAD software was quite a challenging experience. Some of the students already knew how to use some software, such as Rhino or Blender, yet the majority were not familiar with Spark AR. Specifically, they found the low triangle count, which the software allows you to work with, very challenging, as many details get lost when trying to reduce the triangle count of a design.

For some students this has been a rich experience, as overcoming technical issues was a learning curve, as they have not used such tools in the past. A student mentions: 'through this project, I have a new understanding of AR technology. I think this is a very interesting, playful technology with a lot of future.'



*Fig 1 Digital filter developed by Kiska Huang, 2022, Photo: Kiska Huang*

This was evident in some student's work where they added playful animation elements to their designs, allowing movement and interaction with the audience. For example, the work of Kiska Huang (Fig 1) is a colourful bird-like mask with a pair of animated swinging wings. The student here applied various futuristic colours and textures to the design with the attempt to connect humans with nature. Thus, this indicates a shift in creative behaviour as it allowed the student to play with an animated element available due to the software's features.

Participants highlighted the value of combinational use of various software programmes, as each one has its own advantages. Kiska in this instance has used a combination of Nommad for creating the shape and Blender for adding the animated elements. Other students used Gravity sketch, which allowed again a very quick manipulation of forms on screen. This is evident in the work of student Ulrika Paemurru (Fig2) where we can see all the quick variations of the designs the student tested before the final production of the piece. The ease in which the software allowed the student to test potential outputs have clearly been an important element of the creative process. These observations indicate that the use of the digital tools enabled a level of experimentation that was not normally present in the conventional design process. The consensus was that using AR technology in the students' work was at times extremely challenging, as this was unfamiliar territory, yet the results were rewarding. S4 'the switch from material to immaterial is a constant struggle for me, even though I find new technologies fascinating''. This challenging emotions were predicted when we started the project. Kay and

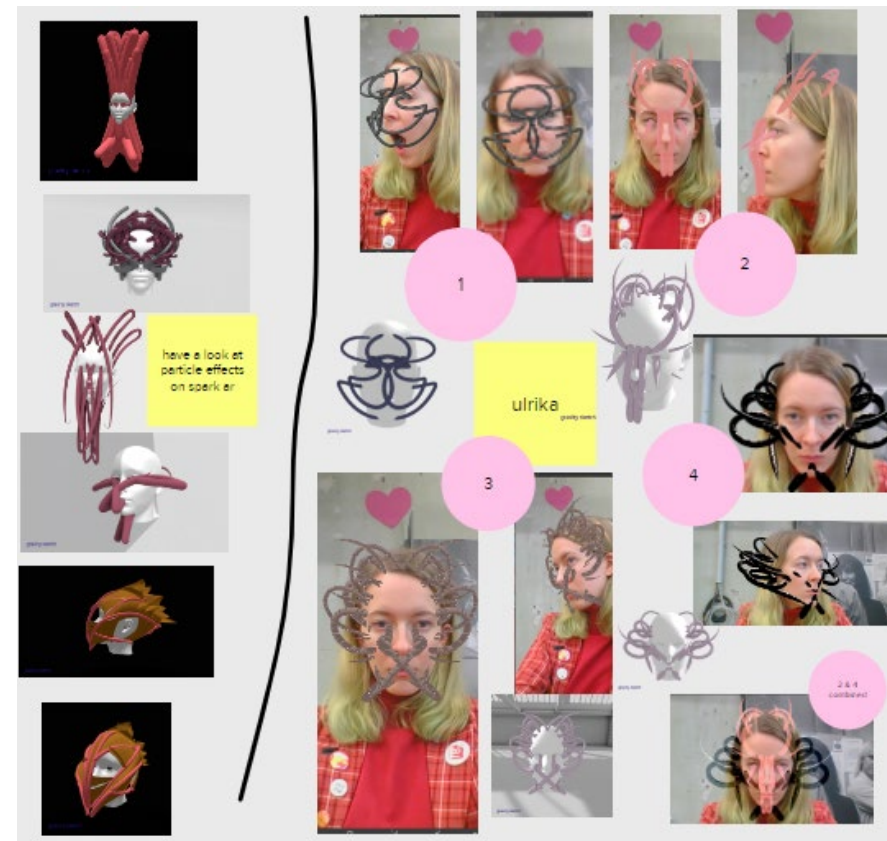


Fig 2 Design process of student Ulrika Paemurru, 2022, screenshot from Mural presentation session.



Loverock (2008), when assessing emotions related to learning new software, they predication and proofed an increase in happiness and decreases in negative emotions while gaining new computer knowledge. The researchers proofed that participants who become more comfortable learning new software probably gained more knowledge. Thus, the students were constantly reminded that perseverance when using Mesh mixer and Spark AR would offer interesting results.

Mesh mixer is a fantastic free software developed by Autodesk which allows the user to generate, manipulate and sculpt 3 dimensional objects as if it were clay. The various brush tools available allow quick on screen visuals. Spark AR on the other hand is an ever-developing free software by Meta, which has new tools and updates coming out every few months. Pre-coded templates are available on the software allowing the user to import their digital 3D files and generate very quickly a filter for both Meta apps: Facebook and Instagram. The so-called patches of the software are pre-coded effects that the user can apply to their work. For example, you can add music and interactions to the filters generated. A blink of an eye can respond to a digital object appearing or disappearing. The user can also try out interaction patches to detect gestures from the person using their filter and make something happen as a result. The software also has body landmark patches, which means it can recognise the body and allow the user to place their objects on it with ease and no difficult coding. During the LGP sessions, the students were also introduced to 3D scanning apps (Trinio, Qlone etc). The reason behind this was to give the students the opportunity to reuse some of their

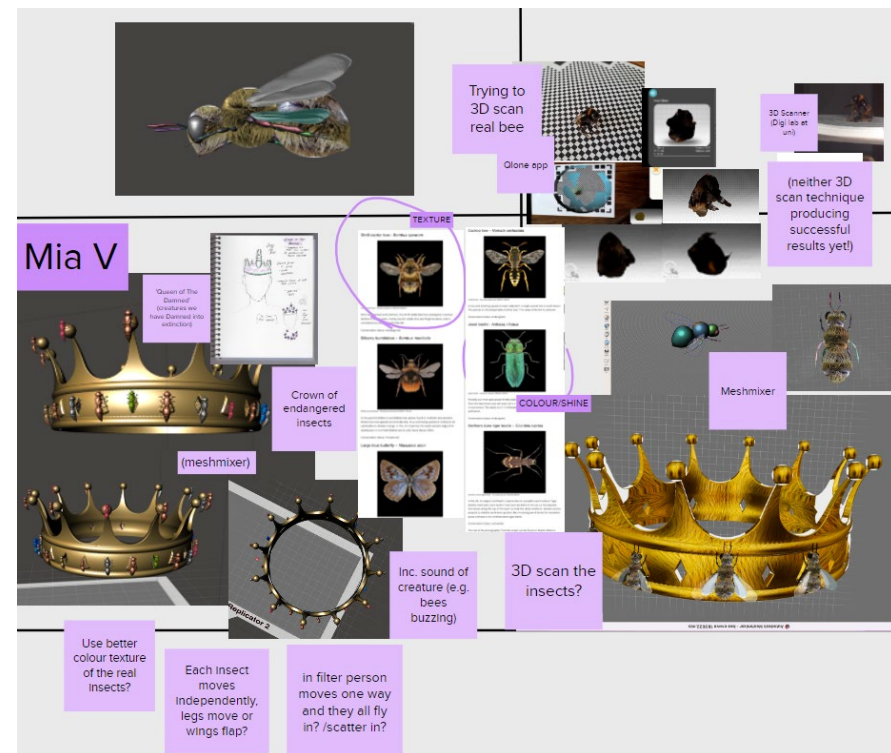


Fig 3 Design process of student Mia Vilkins, 2022, screenshot from Mural presentation session.

existing physical pieces by digitalising to further manipulate on screen. An example of such mixture of processes was evident in the work of student Mia Vilkins who has attempted to 3D scan real bees to add as elements to her digital filter (Fig3) allowing the student to design with a combination of digital and physical elements.

#### NEW PERSPECTIVES IN CONVEYING CONCEPTS UNREACHABLE BY TRADITIONAL CRAFT

AR technology allowed the participants to play with scale and digital material. This was evident in Dijun Shine Sha work (Fig 4,5) where the student experimented with scale and developed a virtual sash with added animation and a music soundtrack. These elements could be achieved by a click of a button, something that wouldn't be as easy to embed in a physical piece.

When asked to describe their experience, one participant stated S3 'Through this digital project, I had a good experience of the combination of various materials, and inspired my interest in trying various digital creations in the future.' Another participant noted S14 'I found AR can convey my concepts better than traditional formats and it's easy to extend digital to physical and make combinations afterwards'. S13 pointed out that 'Using AR I created an item I couldn't produce in the physical world, and through digital platforms raise awareness to a cause sharing with others.'

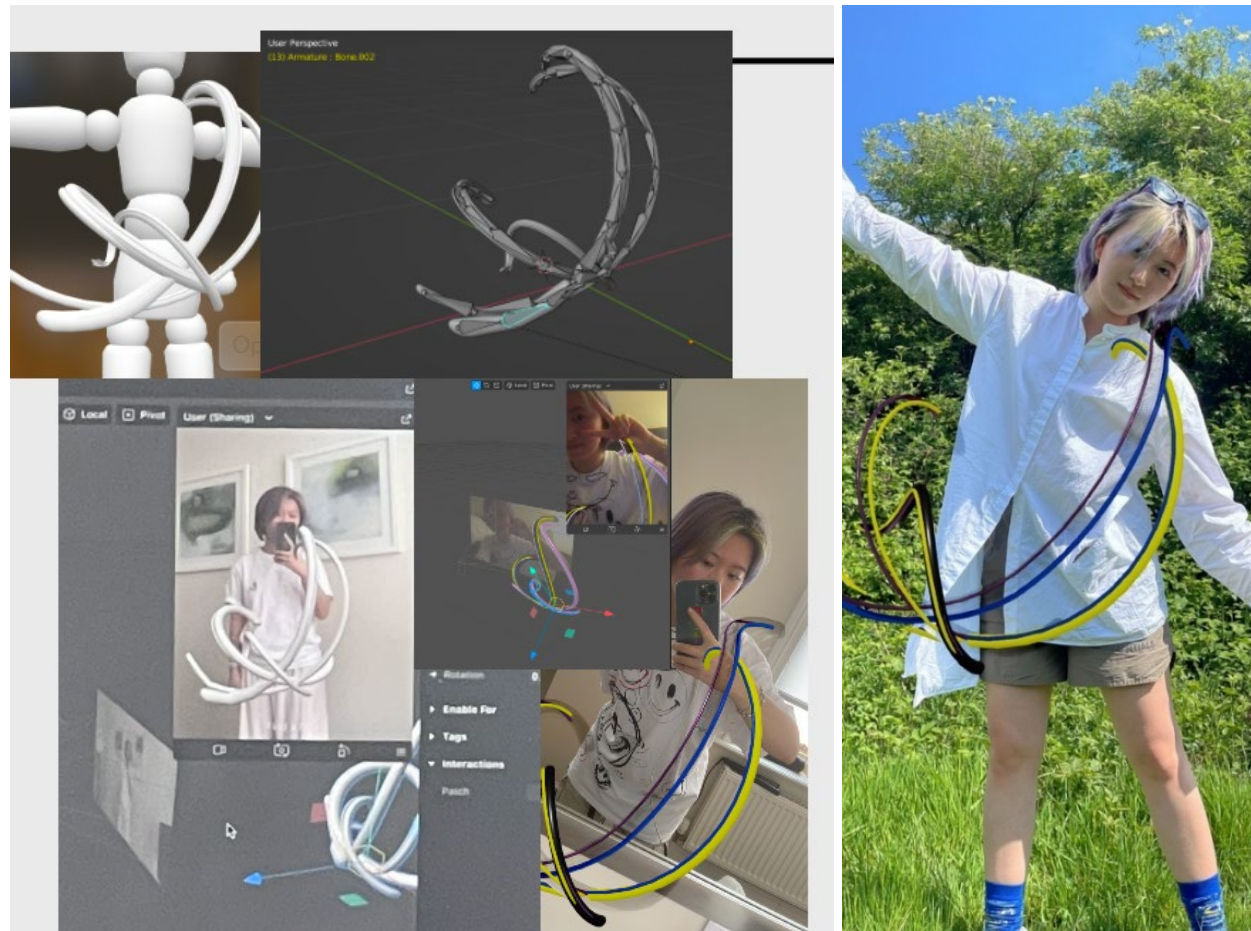
The participants agreed that this technology allowed more space for exploring intangible designs. This is already evident in the industry as mentioned above, where James Merry creates a dialog between the digital and the physical work, exploring animation in their virtual filters and creating different physical variations of them. Student Ellen Axberg (Fig 6) created pieces, which reflected on jewellery's purpose and origin, focusing on the feeling of being the jewellery rather than that of wearing it. The student here explored a concept that reverses traditional ideas on jewellery creation and wearability with the assistance of technology. A great quote from Greengard (2019) fits well here 'Make no mistake, the possibilities are limited only by our imagination'.

#### EFFICIENT TOOL TO CONNECT AND REACH A WIDER AUDIENCE

This type of technology was new to some students hence they found it challenging to design for a digital environment, although it was stated that it gave them the opportunity to rethink how they design and approach a wider audience. 'Through this project, I have a new understanding of AR technology. I think this is a very interesting, playful technology with a lot of future' S11. Student Urlika Paemurru (Fig7) explored digital filters in forms which would be impossible to create in the physical realm. The students developed a 3D accessory passing through the face, thereby creating the impossible feeling of large and complicated structures being surgically attached to or growing directly out of the face. The model was paired with a fluid texture that reacts to the colour scheme it



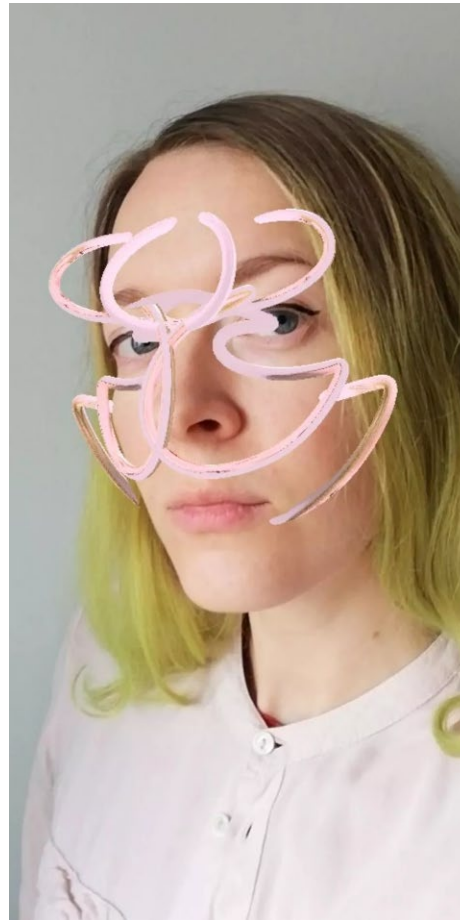
Where the Digital Meets the Physical: A Jewellery Design Approach  
Models for Recording Jewellery Stories Inspired by The Loan Scheme of The Danish Arts Foundation's Jewellery Collection



*Fig 4-5 Design process and final outcome of student Dijun Shine Sha, 2022, screenshot from Mural presentation session.*



*Fig 6 Digital filter developed by Ellen Axberg, 2022, Photo: Ellen Axberg.*



*Fig 7 Digital filter developed by Urlika Paemurru, 2022, Photo: Urlika Paemurru.*



*Fig 8 Digital filter developed by Katrin Maria Kteras, 2022, Photo: Katrin Maria Kteras.*

detects on the screen; another impossible element to achieve in a physical piece. Thus, interacting with the filter user and their garment in a way not imaginable in conventional jewellery. 'Being able to make your objects transform and adjust because of some simple gestures is really enjoyable. No need to know complicated coding or anything to end up with usable material' S1.

Spark AR is a software that allows immersive possibilities for interaction, using animation, sound effects or even colour changes. Katrin Maria Kteras (Fig8) is a student who explored the potential of changing the color of the filter depending on the head movements, again something that would have been very difficult to achieve in a physical piece and it allowed a playful interaction with the wearer.

#### LOWER COSTS FOR DISSEMINATION/PROMOTION OF WORK VIA DIGITAL TRY-ONS

The students participating in LGP, mentioned the lack of costs attached to virtual try-ons: 'For the audience, digital jewellery enables people to try different styles which they probably won't wear on the street anytime, anywhere with less or zero cost so that people can see more possibilities in themselves.' S15 Digital try-ons were very successful in the work of some students who were working on a physical collection for their course. In line with the industry input in the introduction of this paper, the students mention that Covid had an impact on their learning: 'Schedules changed due to the

pandemic, which offered me more opportunities to self-study 3D modelling software like C4D and Blender, I enjoyed using AR technology to design Jewellery pieces.' S14.

When discussing audience participation, S2 observed 'it makes me feel fulfilled and willing to continue exploring 3D technology, which will make it easier for more people to see my work and understand what I'm trying to say'. This is in line with Oladumiye et.al (2018), who stated that design presentations have been enhanced with virtual reality features in CAD and designers now have efficient environments to communicate their design thinking and express their creativity. The authors continue by mentioning that developments in technology and computer science have modified the creative potential of each individual. Robertson and Radcliffe (2009), also agree that CAD impacts creativity in design through an enhanced communication and visualization features allowing the designer to realize and communicate their work.

#### WILLING TO CONTINUE EXPLORING THIS TECHNOLOGY

Finally, the majority of participants expressed their will to continue to explore this technology in their practices. 'Although creating the filters was new to me, the process was fun and it was very rewarding to be able to experience my own filters in real time and finally succeed. Having a virtual counterpart to the physical product has made my work more accessible to a wider audience and I will continue to try to develop it in the future.' S20.

## THE PHYGITAL EXHIBITION

Munich jewellery week (MJW) is considered one of the most significant international events of contemporary jewellery and is the meeting point for collectors, gallerists, curators, and jewellery designers from around the world. It is a contributor in setting the pace for the entire field of jewellery. Thus, LGP was selected to participate during MJW, and was designed as a community building exercise. LGP was set to reach new audiences, and raise awareness for the use of technology in such a traditional field as jewellery. The term Phygital is used in this project as it refers to the integration of digital elements (the student's outcomes) in a physical exhibition space using the physical body. Having created digital interactive artefacts, students who participated in LGP had the opportunity to present the outcomes in the form of an online and in person exhibition, facilitating dissemination to a much wider audience than that of a physical exhibition. The exhibition also tested whether social media platforms could be used as a digital exhibition platform to attract visitors/viewers' attention during a physical exhibition at MJW.

The physical exhibition during MJW, consisted of digital designs, presented on iPads, as well as looped videos being played on TV screens and wall projections. Instagram was used as a platform to present the outcomes due to its AR filter function. This allowed the audience to interact not only online but also in the exhibition physical space via the iPads. Using technology and social media platforms in this way,



**Fig 9 Daniel Ramos and Mala Siamptani in conversation during MJW, 2022, Photo: Nicole Chahrokh.**



prompted us to explore new relationships between the wearer and the designer and to explore how new product design processes interact with digital technologies.

In the studies of Amabile et al. (2011), the researchers demonstrated that although creativity in a product may be difficult to characterize in terms of specific features, it is something that people can recognize and agree upon when they see it. And this was the case during the LGP exhibition, where we had a lot of discussions with the audience who visited and received very positive feedback on the creativity of the students outcomes. The audience found the use of digital objects an innovative approach to jewellery and enjoyed the virtual display in a physical space.

During MJW we extended our invitation to professional designers from the jewellery industry who have deployed some form of digital design in their practice (Fig 9). Daniel Ramos is a Colombian designer who exhibited activities such as those identified in our project framework. The designer developed a series of works, before creating digital filter versions of them allowing a bigger audience to experience the work (Fig10). Another guest was award-winning designer Silvia Weidenbach, who has extensively tested different tools and methods in her work (Fig 11). Live discussions were hosted with the two designers in an online and in person set-up. This strategy helped open up the conversation to colleagues and industry professionals, who we were physically and digitally present during MJW.



*Fig 10 Bracelet by Silvia Weidenbach, 2022, Photo: Sylvain Deleu.*



*Fig 11 Digital filter by Daniel Ramos, 2020, Photo: Lukasz Przytarski.*

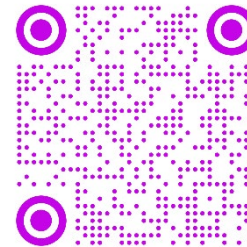
## CONCLUSION

The LGP project resulted in rich new perspectives on the diversity of design experience as revealed by the participating students' responses. All students who participated and contributed to the exhibition have been enriched with new experience on using augmented reality as a design tool and new reflections on their own work, in addition to new approaches on connecting to their audiences. This is in line with Oladumiye et.al (2018) study which concluded that CAD could enhance students' creative behaviour. When researching the effects of CAD on the creative behaviours of design students the authors suggested that integration of CAD related courses could lead to higher competency for future designers.

In summation, the consensus between the students was that using a new digital tool, such as AR technology, could be extremely challenging yet the results were very rewarding. At times, the participants experienced the lack of CAD knowledge as an obstacle, which they tried to overcome during this project. When designing for a digital environment, students stated that it gave them the opportunity to rethink how they design and how their work interacts with the digital and physical body thus enriching their creative capabilities. Findings of this study indicate that when used as a design tool, AR allows the user to explore new potentials in design, which would not otherwise be possible. The patch editor of Spark AR allowed the introduction of different performing elements such as animations, music/sound or body interactions. This resulted to the student's creativity to unleash in ways conventional physical designs are not able to.

The students also recognized that this technology could be a current trend in fashion and they intent to make more use of it in the future, as it allowed them to approach a wider audience than that of a physical exhibition. AR in this instance gave the opportunity to the young designers to have a play with scale of the work, experiment more and enrich their design practice. If creativity, innovation, discovery, and exploration are potent concepts in academic communities (Shneiderman, B et al., 2006), then collaborative projects such as this should continue to develop in order to advance knowledge on the use of open source software and their implications on the creative process. Experiential knowledge, combined with findings from literature review and the themes that emerged from the analysis of the qualitative data will inform the future editions of this project.

We observed that some of the project weaknesses was the time spend learning the software. Learning a new tool can be consider as learning a new language and mastering it as such takes time. Thus, future editions should allow more time to generate results.



*Fig 12 QR code directing to @let\_get\_phygital and all students work.*

It was apparent, through LGP, that communicability of digital designs on social platforms enables designs to be shared in unconventional ways and with a broader audience. Thus, further research should investigate what behaviours AR technologies encourage and what new cultural responsibilities they may bring along with them.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

---

The author would like to extend her thanks to Darja Popolitova and Mouhannad Al-Sayegh, for their collaboration in this project. Special thanks to the students of LCF and EKA for participating in this project and to Dr. Jennifer Eve Barrett for her supervisory support.

## IMAGES

---

Fig 1: Digital filter developed by Kiska Huang, 2022, Photo: Kiska Huang

Fig 2: Design process of student Urlika Paemurru, 2022, screenshot from Mural presentation session.

Fig 3: Design process of student Mia Vilkins, 2022, screenshot from Mural presentation session.

Fig 4-5: Design process and final outcome of student Dijun Shine Sha, 2022, screenshot from Mural presentation session.

Fig 6: Digital filter developed by Ellen Axberg, 2022, Photo: Ellen Axberg.

Fig 7: Digital filter developed by Urlika Paemurru, 2022, Photo: Urlika Paemurru.

Fig 8: Digital filter developed by Katrin Maria Kteras, 2022, Photo: Katrin Maria Kteras.

Fig 9: Daniel Ramos and Mala Siamptani in conversation during MJW, 2022, Photo: Nicole Chahrokh.

Fig 10: Bracelet by Silvia Weidenbach, 2022, Photo: Sylvain Deleu.

Fig 11: Digital filter by Daniel Ramos, 2020, Photo: Lukasz Przytarski.

Fig 12: QR code directing to @let\_get\_phygital and all students work.



## REFERENCES

---

- Amabile, T. M. (1996). *Creativity in context: Update to the social psychology of creativity*. Boulder, CO: Westview.
- Bankole, E. o, Tanimu, H.A & Adelabu, O. S. (2018), *Appraising the Effects of Computer Aided Design (CAD) on the Creative Behaviour of Design Students in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria: A Case Study of the Federal University of Technology*, *Globar Journal of human- social science*, Vol. 18 (5).
- Berry, R., Makino, M., Hikawa, N., Naemura, M., Pisan, Y., Edmonds, E. (2006). *Programming in the world*, *Digital Creativity*, Vol. 17(1), 36-48.
- Bonnardel, N. & Zenasni, F. (2010). *The impact pf technology on creativity in Design: an enhancement? Creativity and innovation management*, Vil. 19(2), 180-191.
- Braun, V & Clarke, V. (2006). *Using thematic analysis in psychology. Qualitative Research in Psychology*, Vol.3, 77-101.
- Brynjolfsson, E., McAfee, A. (2012). *Race against the Machine: How the Digital Revolution is Accelerating Innovation, Driving Productivity, and Irreversibly Transforming Employment and the Economy*, The MIT centre for digital business.
- Brown, P. (2009), *CAD: Do Computers aid the design process after all?*, *The Stanford Journal of Science, Technology and Society*, Vol. 2(1), 52-66.
- Clark, K accessed June 29, (2021) <https://www.thedrum.com/news/2021/06/24/ar-the-metaverse-and-why-marketers-need-be-thinking-about-the-new-spatial-web>
- Greengard, S. (2019), *Virtual reality*, The MIT press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.
- Kay, R.H., Loverock, S. (2008). *Assessing emotions related to learning new software: The computer emotion scale*, *Computers in Human Behavior*, Vol 24 (4), 1605-1623.
- Lingel, B. (2016). *Beyond Bling: chapter digital happy contemporary jewellery in the digital age*, DelMoniko books, Prestel Munich, London, New York.
- MacLachlan, L., Earl, V., Eckert, C. (2012). *Creativity in craft led design: the tools are the rules*, The 2nd International Conference on Design Creativity (ICDC2012) Glasgow, UK.
- Parsons, J.L., Campbell, J.R. (2004). *Digital apparel design process: placing a new technology into a framework for the creative process. Clothing and textiles journal*, Vol. 22(1/2), 88-98.
- Pullee, C. (1990). *20th Century jewellery*, The Apple Press, London.
- Radhika, G., Senthil Kumar, T., Pravin Dolleth Reyner, P., Leela, G., Mangayarkarasi, N., Abirami, A., Shneiderman, B et al. (2006), *Creativity Support Tools: Report From a U.S. National ScienceFoundation*

Sponsored Workshop, International Journal of Human-Computer Interaction, Vol 20(2), 61-77.

Robertson, B. F., & Radcliffe, D. F. (2009), Computer-Aided Design impact of CAD tools on creative problem solving in engineering design. Computer Aided Design, Vol. 41(3), 136-146.

Vinayaka, K. (2016). 3D modelling of a Jewellery and Its Virtual Try-on, Proceedings of the International Conference on Soft Computing Systems, ICSCS 2015, Vol. 1.

Papagiannis, H. (2017). Augmented human: how technology is shaping the new reality, O'Reilly Media, USA.

Schon, A. D. (1991). The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action, Ashgate, publishing limited, England.

Silverman, D. (2011), interpreting qualitative data, Sage Publications, London.

Wallace, J. & Press, M. (2015). All this useless beauty: the case for craft practice in design for a digital age, The design journal, Vol. 7(2), 42-53.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

---

*Mala Siamptani*

*m.siamptani@fashion.arts.ac.uk*

Mala Siamptani is a lecturer and design practitioner with a studio practice specializing in the research, development and delivery of creative projects in Fashion, Design and Art sector. Mala's PhD research focuses on digital technology tools (CAD, AR, RP) in order to advance knowledge regarding the jewellery design creative practice.



Journal of Jewellery Research

[www.journalofjewelleryresearch.org](http://www.journalofjewelleryresearch.org)

ISSN 2516-337X

Loughborough University, Northumbria University.

First published in June 2023, UK.

Copyright© Journal of Jewellery Research and the author.

All rights reserved. Apart from fair dealing for the purposes of study, research, criticism or review, as permitted under the applicable copyright legislation, no part of this work may be reproduced by any process without written permission from the publisher or author.

For permissions and other inquiries, please contact the editors:  
[editorsjojr@gmail.com](mailto:editorsjojr@gmail.com)

Journal of Jewellery Research is a double blind peer-reviewed research journal supported by an International Editorial Advisory Group.

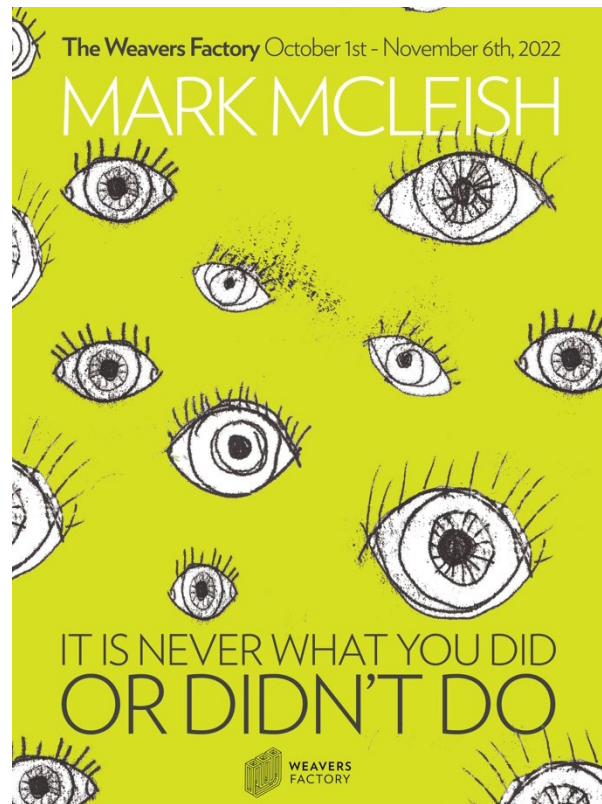
## Exhibition Review: It Is Never What You Did or Didn't Do

---

**Author:** *Jayne Wallace in conversation with Mark Mcleish*

---





*Figure 1. Exhibition Poster*

'It is never what you did or didn't do' (Fig 1) was a solo exhibition at The Weavers Factory Gallery, Oldham, UK 01/10/23 – 06/11/23 showing 365 brooches from jewellery artist and material led witch Mark McLeish. This paper has used an informal conversational interview method (1, 2) to develop a jointly produced and dialogical review (3).



*Figure 2. Detail from the exhibition*

Each of the brooches (Fig 2 - 4) was made over the course of a single day (many from consecutive days during 2022 and other, earlier pieces from various days since 2014). They are part of a specific, autobiographical process that has naturally become part of McLeish's personal documentation of his life and steady preparation for the day to come.



**Figure 3 & 4.** *The second floor of the gallery – walls, pillows, white shirts hoisted aloft with sticks of willow and fabric hands filled with straw form backdrops for the display of the brooches.*

Often made during the night when sleep is evasive the brooches are part of what has become a systematised method that weaves McLeish's practice as an art jeweller and material led witch together.

Tell me about the title of the show...

*"It is a deliberate marker for ideas of thinking of influences we cannot control. Evoking the notion to be careful what you wish for, and it can also be read as a 'telling off', which I like a lot."*

You've told me how the process of making these works naturally evolved for you and has now matured to comprise several specific stages, let's step through what these stages are:



1. *"Firstly I forecast what I imagine my day will look like - the shape that you know about your day, i.e. if you're going to work, or if you know you're doing an activity, meeting certain people etc, what I can forecast or foresee within that day. To do this I enter a meditative or trance-like state and I allocate words or sentences to what I'm forecasting - to kind of intervene, interrupt, compliment or galvanise all the different things that I'm envisioning. Then what I do is write myself a Finders List (as you see in these examples)"*

*A SMALL SENSE OF ORDER*

*REPEATEDLY UNFOLDED*

*EVEN WITH A FRAGILE LIGHT*

*FLAT GREEN SPACES*

2. You told me before that once a Finders List is complete the second stage comprises you searching out materials and fragments of different objects from your vast collection that can form the basis for a new brooch. It feels to me like there is an emphasis on finding things that work as metaphors to represent or respond in some way to the Finders List. You've described this as being akin to a process of finding ingredients and how it feels like a form of negotiation with things and meanings in order to arrive at a collection for the day.

*"That's right, I collect and stockpile my materials in different ways, the provenance and condition is a lure for my choices. Some are found on the streets as remnants akin to rubbish, others are things I have overpaid for in collectors' markets or antique shops. I mudlark, I beachcomb, I skipdive, I carboot and very often have things donated or offered to me, by people who know my work, as something potentially useful to me. I do like 'the broken' as a transitional state, I covet things along a spectrum of damaged meets forgotten... I'm always on the lookout for finding things. For instance, yesterday I was walking home, and I could hear a certain noise. It came from a gutter - it was the rainfall hitting an object and made just such a distinctive noise and I collected the object. So, for me now, that object has the memory of rain hitting it and I was attracted to that noise. So, when I use that object in the future, whatever I use that for, it will be in relation to that sound and rainfall."*

3. Once you have chosen a collection of items to represent a particular Finders List and located from the

hundreds of drawers and shelves in your studio the next stage of your process is to consider what you call 'the intent' can you tell me more about this?

*"The intent is the notion that can activate more deeply the pulse of the brooch. I ask myself for example 'is something bound, smothered, grappled, hidden, broken, stitched, washed, knotted, or set?'. What process of connecting the pieces together represents the pulse of a piece? What is needed to support my day ahead? Through this thinking the brooch is made negotiating the importance of each chosen element."*

4. All of these stages within the act of making a piece are your act of imbuing a brooch with a magical spell – which you have referred to as a kind of 'vitamin' to give you energy for the day or antidote to potential difficulties you foresee.

*"The making is the spell - it goes from words to ingredients to making, so the 'how' in the make is the important bit, we spoke of that, for example 'is it hidden or bound?' this is the activation of the spell"*

Significantly, made from midnight onwards, once complete you wear the brooch throughout the day – and for that day alone. We've often talked about how aspects of this process have always been there for you since childhood – can you tell me more about that?

*"When I talk about making or being a maker, I don't feel like anything's changed since my childhood. Because what I was given as a child, being an*



*insomniac, I was given stuff to do and kind of monopolise my time as my parents slept. And so, a lot of things that I was given were broken things and collections and I used to make arrangements or imaginary scenes, you know, I just allowed creativity to flow. A modified spanner became a dinosaur, for instance, and all those different things. And this just stayed in my head, and it became kind of a tangible, adaptation of what I was thinking about at that moment. Basically, I need, kind of, 'hand minders' as I call them, because I get very, kind of, restless hands."*



**Figure 5.** Mark in the exhibition



**Figure 6. Mark Mcleish.**

Can we share some details of individual pieces next?

*“Yes, the brooch above (Figure 6) represents a reminder to know that you are loved.”*

I find the materials used in this piece interesting and the reasons multi-layered. You used fragments of embroidered antique clothing, filled and padded out with your hair and held together with layers of melted

sealing wax that used to be wax seals on antique love letters that you say you had collected over ten years.

The Finders List for this piece was:

***HE LOVES ME,  
HE LOVES ME NOT,  
OVER TIME LENDS  
TOMORROW,  
GIVEN TO UNKNOWN  
LANGUAGE,  
DROPPED***

*“Love can be friendliness from a postman, or, you know, a smile from a 5-year-old child, it can be quite fleeting, but the language of love is on such a fantastic spectrum from massive all-consuming romance to acts of kindness. If I categorise some spells, I call some of them a reality check. Not in a crude, blatant sense, but rather actually, no, look again, pay attention and notice these things going on around you and see, in this case, acts of love that are there... Removing the wax seals from the letters, melting them down and seeing the initials and intaglios dissolve and merge into one gave me a potent material to use as a glue to secure fragments of material together. I thought of the wax as a witness to the expressions of love they sealed in the letters and how these were all now one large conversation together.”*

This second piece (Figure 7) shown here in one of the zines you made for the show responded to a Finders List that read:

*A SMALL SENSE OF  
ORDER,  
IGNORED DANGER,  
SUMMARY OF SUNSHINE*

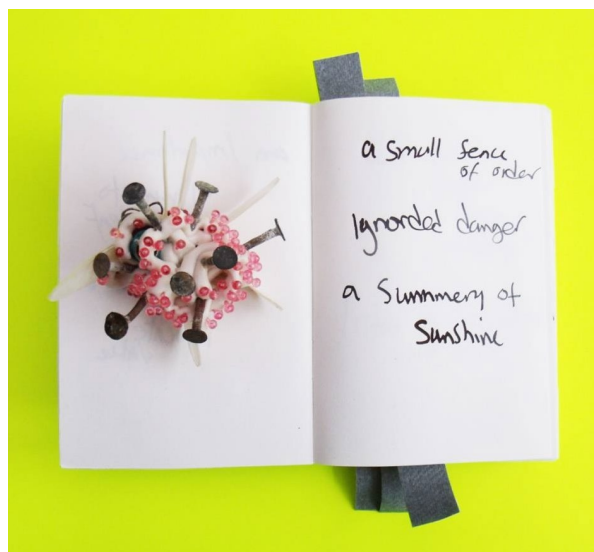


Figure 7. Mark Mcleish. The connected spell was 'laughter is the best medicine'.

*"I was starting to think about how to start to locate this finders list as both a meeting point of making, but also of finding ignored danger and it felt as though there needed to be some dark humour involved."*

To do this you were telling me that you were drawn to a group of metal nails that you had collected years before when walking by a funeral home that was having its roof repaired. As the workers mended the roof, they were letting old nails fall to the ground and you gathered them up – some were very old, lead and handmade and others were newer, but still very worn aluminium ones. Tell me about the element of dark humour in the piece.

"Yes, it's held together with no more nails! You don't know that until I tell you. It's like an inside joke. But what I love about it is that it represents ways which are very familiar in terms of magic, which goes tribal really, really quickly. So, in terms of when you're looking at things that are made by different tribes, even today, and how they repurpose ready-mades and see them very differently within a making process, it reads really quickly as that and then you see the other shards that are kind of put in there. It becomes almost organic in a sense, and there's hand cut pieces of shell that are wedged in there. The 'no more nails' adhesive also masks a message bracelet from a pigeon and then the pink tiny little orbs came from a 1980s board game. They are pegs that let light through to make pictures - so they almost mimic nails again. So, it's that kind of really fantastic relationship there. My interpretation of the words 'summary of sunshine' is actually how that pink negotiates light on the top of the piece. Thinking back that was a fantastic day. The brooch is one of those ones that are so particular and so brilliant to wear because it's just 'odd enough'. It's odd enough that it does look weaponised, but it's also decorative. It has that great tension to it, within its thingness."



**Figure 8. Mark Mcleish. The connected spell was 'To configure origins of truth'.**

The final brooch to share in detail (Figure 8) draws on your personal relationships doesn't it. The pink painted back section of the brooch is made from an old jewellery box. It is something that you say you used as a surface for the drilling of holes into other pieces and then reused in this brooch. The fake, plastic flowers are remnants from an earlier project called 'A history of

touch' and come from flowers that people had once left on gravestones and then thrown away.

Finders List for this piece:

***OF ME AND FROM ME,  
DISRUPTED HOME,  
WEEDING WITH SILENCE***

*"I became absolutely obsessed with sitting in graveyards and watching people bring plastic flowers to the grave. They would hold them like they're the most precious, alive, thing and you can actually see the energy of emotive feeling and memory and all these different things as you watch people place these plastic flowers on the grave. I used to go to the bins in the graveyard and collect the discarded, weathered ones. I wanted something to grow out of the brooch like a bird's nest - a disturbed bird's nest or disturbed home. Then I extruded my favourite German glue into those kind of cup like pieces and then I wanted something that was one of those treasure things. I have a treasure box that I keep for special things, and it holds loads of cut amethysts and lemon quartz faceted stones. I became interested in sandblasting them so they lost their shine and just kind of ruining the language of preciousness or jewellery in them. Then I looked at it and there was this idea of 'disturbed home' and my parents were part of the internal conversation for this work and so the image is me when I was about 3 and we were on holiday. It's a very clear memory because it is heightened by this experience. The image is from a key chain that my dad had on his keys for the remainder of his life and I took it off his keys when I inherited his things. That day we were in a*

*market and a woman put her cigarette out on my arm, burning a hole through my jacket. Of course, I screamed, and my parents thought I was just bored or agitated being dragged around a market, but that wasn't the case. I remember the woman so well and that she looked at me as she did this thing. When we went to have this photograph taken my parents realised what I was trying to communicate to them when they saw the hole in my jacket and the burn on my arm. So, there's this, kind of, jubilation of me smiling in the photo (I was always smiling. I'd like to think I'm still that smiley person) but this horrible thing had happened – followed by a promise of ice-cream from my parents for forgiveness.*

*But I just love that within that one, there's so many great connections to the language of jewellery - from the jewellery box, to stones, to the reason why I became obsessed with the flowers on graveyards is because there's a body underneath them. And it has that relationship with the body, distant, granted, but again between those two bodies of the living person and the dead person with these really plastic flower objects between them."*

It would be great to hear how the pieces were curated to tell a story of the autobiographical journey in the exhibition space.

*"The active shape of space between dusk and dawn and the Scissor Sisters song Return to Oz influenced the curation. Two different feelings within both floors nod to the time the brooches are made. A bedframe sits centre of the first floor, pushing the surrounding brooches to participate in a vigil with a distant body.*

*The top floor prompts towards more folkloric props such as structures that suggest effigies of the body. 66 hay stuffed left hands (Figure 4) represent the in-betweenness for making, of both the brooch and magic. Scarecrow like stick structures wear an altered white shirt with brooches. The brooches are clustered in sets and groupings that **behave** together, meaning taking instruction from both the intent of magic and its residual energy paired with lived autobiographical experiences."*

It is interesting to see such an intensely personal process of an art jeweller exhibited and opened up in this way. These pieces are made purely as a personal gesture, others are a meditation or way of supporting sense of self for you and you have a separate art jewellery practice running alongside this. There are some aspects here for future exploration – firstly how it feels to wear these pieces and be viewed by others, how it feels now to share them en masse with an audience and secondly how it feels for others to take/buy them – for you to let them go. All of these are beyond the limits of this review, but what we can end with now is how you see this work in relation to witchcraft and the wider contemporary or art jewellery field.

*"The reason I chose to go into jewellery was its connections to witchcraft and the idea of there being many ways to look at objects and their relationship to the body. There has always been that sympathetic magic that's made by pedestrians and lay folk – and you can see this in things that we do in our daily lives and things like cooking or tying knots. I've always been interested in how people have used objects to find comfort or try to make things better. Some of the spells that I'm making as a witch practitioner and a maker*

*are hundreds of years old. What has changed is the access to material. 200 years ago it was horn bone or cotton fabric, those types of things. Now we're so saturated in the system of objects, but with that is what I see as the material, and I think that's what becomes interesting globally because we can look at things as new kinds of magical ingredients here with new and direct cultural connotations.*

*In terms of how the work in the exhibition sits within the jewellery field, you know, that this work definitely couldn't, wouldn't, exist without Lisa Walker. I freely acknowledged that, and this is mainly because her work gave me the confidence to show the part of my practice represented by this exhibition. If Lisa Walker didn't do the work she's done in the last 20 years, I wouldn't have the confidence to show this work. Because it comments on those subcategories that also could be used to describe her work, things like punk and craft and all the subcategories therein that kind of collide - in terms of the aesthetics. Similarly, the use of readymade objects or how things are put together. This work could be likened to Lisa Walker, and possibly also to assemblages of other jewellery artists like Helen Britain, absolutely. But what I see in terms of those practitioners, I call them definite polymaths who do fantastic things in textiles and they do fantastic things in collaborative projects, and I think that's where a kind of level of thinking and application of creativity is - where actually you can be put in any creative situation and you can find your own identity."*

For me what this exhibition contributes to the wider jewellery field is firstly an example of how the objects and detritus from contemporary culture can be reconfigured to represent different metaphors and

stories as a lens onto someone's contemporary life, secondly an uncommon and fascinating suggestion of how witchcraft and jewellery can be viewed within an interconnected practice and thirdly a highly systematised process within a personal daily practice that offers insight into how autobiographical content can be used in the making of jewellery to support and understand the self. Each of these aspects presents intriguing possibilities for our field and how jewellery can and does exist for people as contemporary talisman, conduits to meaningful ideas or understandings of the self.

## REFERENCES

---

- Burgess-Limerick, T. and Burgess-Limerick, R., 1998. Conversational interviews and multiple-case research in psychology. *Australian Journal of Psychology*, 50(2), pp.63-70.
- Owens, E., 2006. Conversational space and participant shame in interviewing. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 12(6), pp.1160-1179.
- Van Enk, A.A., 2009. The shaping effects of the conversational interview: An examination using Bakhtin's theory of genre. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 15(7), pp.1265-1286.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

---

*Prof Jayne Wallace*

*jayne.wallace@northumbria.ac.uk*

Jayne studied metalwork and jewellery at Sheffield Hallam University, UK where she also gained a PhD focused on Digital Jewellery. She is professor of craft, digital creativity and wellbeing in the design school at Northumbria University, Newcastle, UK. Her research focuses on how jewellery and making can support sense of self in complex contexts like dementia, end of life and bereavement. [www.digitaljewellery.com](http://www.digitaljewellery.com)

*Mark Mcleish*

*m.mcleish@mmu.ac.uk*

Mark studied silversmithing and jewellery at Loughborough University then some years later did an MA in Craft at Manchester School of art where he is now the jewellery lead. He has exhibited internationally and is board member for precious collective. He is recognised for working with archives and is an elder within a Lancashire coven.



Journal of Jewellery Research

[www.journalofjewelleryresearch.org](http://www.journalofjewelleryresearch.org)

ISSN 2516-337X

Loughborough University, Northumbria University.

First published in June 2023, UK.

Copyright© Journal of Jewellery Research and the author.

All rights reserved. Apart from fair dealing for the purposes of study, research, criticism or review, as permitted under the applicable copyright legislation, no part of this work may be reproduced by any process without written permission from the publisher or author.

For permissions and other inquiries, please contact the editors:  
[editorsjojr@gmail.com](mailto:editorsjojr@gmail.com)

Journal of Jewellery Research is a double blind peer-reviewed research journal supported by an International Editorial Advisory Group.