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The Materiality of Place

An investigation into the makers approach to material and process as a reflection of place within Northern European contemporary jewellery practice



Beth Legg

August 2012

Edinburgh College of Art

The University of Edinburgh

College of Humanities and Social Sciences

Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Practice

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Abstract

This practice-led research project takes the form of a written thesis, a body of new work and a public exhibition, which are designed to be reciprocally illuminating. Collectively they articulate a response to the central question; 'How do contemporary jewellery makers transfer the sensory experience of place into a tangible object?' Fundamental to this enquiry is 'The Topophilia Project' - a creative participatory research method where the resulting artefacts serve both as data and represent data. This project involved a group of 16 contemporary makers creating new work to brief for an exhibition entitled 'A Sense of Place; New Jewellery from Northern Lands'. The exhibition was held in the National Museums of Scotland in Edinburgh from May to September 2012 and formed the primary vehicle with which to both present and explore research into the contemporary jewellery of Northern Europe.

The new artifacts and first person accounts produced as a result of this research method enabled an investigation into the maker's approach to material and process. These highly valuable resources allowed for a reading and deciphering of the methods used by the artists when gathering information from their surrounding environments. Multifaceted methods of practice are distilled within the project outcomes allowing for a broadened terminology to unfold in reference to these practices.

This Northern study, rooted in phenomenological understanding and investigated through the creative process, contributes knowledge to the field from an alternative perspective to the dominant position of Central European jewellery output. As a geographically focused inquiry it also adds a necessary alternative outlook to studies focusing on multi-cultural migration. The resulting body of research outlines an arena of practice and theory in which the work of these makers can be debated, analysed, and criticised within the broader field, contributing to the cross-disciplinary discourse on contemporary theories of place of benefit to those interested in the significance of environmental influence on the creative process.

Acknowledgements

It would not have been possible to write this doctoral thesis without the help and support of the lovely people around me, only some of whom it is possible to give particular mention here. I would especially like to thank my partner Andy for his support, kindness and patience. I would also like to thank my friends, particularly my studio-mate Grace for her encouragement and biscuits. My parents and brother have given me their unequivocal support throughout, as always, for which my mere expression of thanks does not suffice. I would also like to thank Annie and Alex Kelly who have welcomed me into their family with kindness and generosity.

I also would like to acknowledge the support and insight of my supervisors. It was an honour to be the first PhD student of Stephen Bottomley and Susan Cross. Stephen's enthusiasm and organisation has been of real value and Susan's sensitive and thoughtful approach to her work continues to be an inspiration to me. My thanks also go to my supervisor Dr. Ray Flavell for his much appreciated advice and experience of practice-led research at doctorate level. I would also like to thank Dr. Sophia Lycouris, Director of Graduate Research School for her support

I am most grateful to Rose Watban, Senior Curator of Applied Art & Design at The National Museums of Scotland for allowing me to curate a show with this institution. Rose permitted me great freedom with this project and was a pleasure to work with. I would also like to thank Cathy Sexton the Exhibitions Co-ordinator for her helpful organisation and enthusiasm, and the staff of the Exhibitions Department at the museum who were flexible to my particular preferences when it came to the display and design of the exhibition.

The symposium would not have been made achievable without the help and organisation of the Jewellery Department at eca or the financial support of 'Research and Knowledge Exchange' at the University of Edinburgh. I would like to thank Dr. Catharine Rossi, Dr. Jonathan Murray, Prof Elizabeth Moignard and Edward Hollis for their stimulating input to the day.

I owe a great deal to the honesty, openness and generosity of time that the 15 participating jewellery makers afforded me while involved in this project. Without their co-operation and hard work this research would simply not have been possible. The participating artists were; Tobias Alm, Rut-Malin Barklund, Sara Borgegård Älgå, Sofia Björkman, Grace Girvan, Ingjerd Hanevold, Caroline Holt, Hildur yr Jónsdóttir, Jenny Klemming, Helena Lehtinen, Helga Mogensen, Eija Mustonen, Per Suntum, Nelli Tanner and Tarja Tuupanen. Thanks also go to Donald Mackay for his poetry.

Finally, I would like to gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Edinburgh College of Art Studentship Award, without which I would not have been able to dedicate myself to this period of study.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Title

The Materiality of Place; an investigation into the makers approach to material and process as a reflection of place within Northern European contemporary jewellery practice.

1.2 Research Questions

Main Question

- How do contemporary jewellery makers transfer the sensory experience of their surrounding environments into a tangible object?

Sub - Questions

- What creative methods are employed during this transformative process?
- In a craft discipline that is not defined by its medium, what is the jewellery makers' relationship with material as a reflection of place?
- How are the perceptual engagements we call sensing critical to conceptual constructions of place?

1.3 Aims and Objectives

Central to my enquiry is the 'Topophilia Project' – a research method involving a group of 16 contemporary makers from Northern Europe creating new work to brief for exhibition. This thesis, my own studio practice and the exhibition all aim to contribute to a better knowledge and awareness of the creative processes involved in contemporary jewellery practice as a reflection of place.

Therefore, in a more detailed way, the research will aim to:

- Open a discussion around 'place' - how jewellery makers engage with it and how they transfer aspects of it into their work.
- Explore the contemporary jewellery makers' relationship with material within the cultural context.

- Review any commonalities in approach and method observed in the creative process whilst exploring how this might inform the critical discourse of jewellery practice.
- Further explore the different practices utilised as research methods by jewellery makers involved in this process.
- Reveal the meanings and symbolism behind material through the identification, recognition and celebration of this type of work and manner of working.
- Contribute to the shifting worldviews around concepts of 'place', advocating contemporary jewellery as a valid method of exploration of this subject matter

1.4 Contribution to Knowledge

Despite growing and experimental research within the field, jewellery does not yet have what could be termed a strong research tradition at practice-led PhD level.¹ Existing inquiry in the discipline has had a tendency towards historical, technical or manufacturing based areas of exploration, although this is now broadening. During my contextual review a web-search for 'Contemporary Jewellery' brought up only 3 results² – one on digital jewellery, one on jewellery in education and one by Jack Cunningham defining narrative jewellery which is probably the most closely aligned to my area of research.

In his 2007 PhD paper on 'Contemporary European Narrative Jewellery' Cunningham defines narrative jewellery as 'being that which tells a story or makes a statement through visual imagery' (Cunningham 2007). Cunningham's 'Maker, Wearer, Viewer' exhibition in 2005 was indeed ground breaking in its range and classification of works. This was an ambitious project both in scale (74 participants) and scope (20 European countries); I am targeting a much smaller research group but am asking for more in-depth and involved participation from them. Although our basic research structure is similar in that an exhibition and symposium are used as research methods and there is a slight overlap in terms of the geographical area (his being the whole of Europe), the work I am researching tends to be material and process-led rather than primarily narrative driven. Where Cunningham's main aim appears to have been to define a theme my primary purpose is to explore a process.

¹ In *Thinking Jewellery* (2011:13) Wilhelm Lindemann notes that despite being one of the most ancient disciplines evident across all cultures, and although it retains its popularity today, wearable artifacts have not been 'theorised' to any satisfactory depth.

² 'Jewellery' brought up 87 results in the *Index to Theses* (Expert Information Ltd accessed 12/07/12) most of which fell under the aforementioned thematic areas of research.

My original contribution to the field of jewellery is rooted in the combination of informed and participatory creative methods that I have adopted. This framework of study comes from the perspective of the maker due to the phenomenological nature of the research and the auto-ethnographic approach to the subject. The methodology has a collaborative element of investigation, where there is a direct involvement between my practice and those of other contemporary practitioners resulting in a diverse collection of new works. Through the analysis of both physical data and first person accounts produced as a result of this study I explore a taxonomic system in order to help define the diversity of approaches used in transferring the sensory experience of place into a tangible jewellery object. This Northern study, rooted in phenomenological understanding and investigated through the creative process, contributes knowledge to the field from an alternative perspective to the dominant position of Central European jewellery output. As a geographically focused inquiry it also adds a necessary alternative outlook to studies focusing on multi-cultural migration. The resulting body of research outlines an arena of practice and theory in which the work of these makers can be debated, analysed, and criticised within the broader field.

2. METHODOLOGY

Practice-led enquiry emphasises ‘the importance of tacit knowledge to the process of inquiry and review’ (Dean & Smith 2010:223) and as such my enquiry has been emergent rather than linear in its formation. In the beginning, my objectives were not set in stone but developed progressively as I opened doors to different avenues of investigation. I was aware of the challenge of developing a rigorous thesis-by-practice that stands up to scrutiny without submitting to the established science-based research methods and framework where objectives might be reduced to ‘a problem’ and ‘a question’. My broad field of research did not sit easily within any single established theoretical framework and I was concerned my investigation would be subsumed to the norms of knowledge-based research (Scrivener 2002) if constrained to one. The nature of this research is exploratory rather than hypothesis testing due to the qualitative method of my approach and so it would be inappropriate to attempt to scientifically explain the outcomes of this study. Instead, theories developed and knowledge emerged as my research progressed through literature review and reflective practice. The synthesis of interpretations made available through physical and textual data helped me to set and clarify the themes and territory of my study. This results not in one answer or

one finding but a web of findings all connected to, and validated by, both my practice and those of the research participants.

The relatively broad thematic scope of my research reflects the interests and approaches I have established in my practice. By choosing to focus on the Northern periphery of Europe the geographic perimeters I set gave my research a preliminary boundary that served both a practical ‘reigning-in’ purpose and had a personal connection. The recurrent themes evident in my work (for example material-led processes, the influence of landscape and the act of collection) were prevalent throughout and were validated and strengthened by the evidence provided through the study of the other artists involved in my study. My central research question is explored through practice: both creative and curatorial. In a merging of the critical and the creative I intend to articulate a complex series of thoughts, output, and creativity through the tools of writing, curating and making. The strategies I deployed conform to ‘artistic approaches that focus on the whole and the parts as an inventive analysis is created and an imaginative synthesis is sought.’ (Sullivan 2005:192). The use of this multi-method approach (Sommer & Sommer 1980, Gray & Malins 2004) allowed for a combination of approaches from predominantly qualitative analysis with which to explore the subject. Through this holistic method of investigation I established a critical understanding of the field and my place in it. This is my knowledge base and the foundation of my research.

2.1 The Topophilia Project

Fundamental to this enquiry is the ‘Topophilia Project’ – a qualitative interpretative research method involving a group of 16 selected makers from six of the countries on the Northern periphery of Europe. This method was structured around a brief (Appendix E), which was designed in such a way that the participating artists had a clear but broad thematic area of investigation while not being prescriptive. I invited the group of both emerging and established jewellery artists from Finland, Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Scotland to make two new pieces. The first of these pieces was informed by a box of collected objects and materials that the artist has gathered from a surrounding environment that was significant to them. These ‘Topophilia’ boxes were then swapped at random (precluding the originating country)

for another artist's box, which then formed the stimuli for the creation of the second piece of jewellery.³

My rationale behind the selection of makers for the Topophilia project was primarily based on an informed observational assessment of their bodies of work and personal statements on their methods of practice. This was done on-line as well as through visits to the international expositions 'Collect' in London and 'Schmuck' in Munich. My choices and decisions have inevitably been influenced by my knowledge, experience and personal motivations as a practitioner within the field (where I feel an affinity with their approach, for example) and by a necessarily informed appraisal of their aesthetic output. These choices were initially rooted in an interest in each of the makers' approaches to making: a process-driven practice and material-led enquiry emerged as particularly important to these makers in my initial field research, and this was something that I went on to explore further with phenomenological insight. Secondly, I selected these artists because many of their works are involved in a communication with their surrounding environments; terms such as 'landscape', 'surroundings', 'scenery' and 'nature' were used repeatedly throughout their statements on practice.

The 'Topophilia' brief was a method that allowed me to explore elements of these makers' relationships with their surrounding environments, and how this relationship influenced their creative processes. This project is a 'visual arts-based participatory research method' (Leavy, 2009:229) where the resulting artefacts serve both as data and represent data. Leavy explains that this form of method can help the researcher link the 'micro level of experience with the macro level of socio historic and symbolic context' (*ibid*). As an experimental stratagem, the box methodology was designed with the aim of enabling the artists to present residues or traces of the sensory experiences of a place through 'things'. The brief allows the artists to develop their connections with these 'things' through which they re-present their place as finished pieces for exhibition. Throughout the process of collecting stimulus matter for the box each artist opted for their individual method of communication and selected different manners of documenting their chosen environment. This element of the research method is concerned with investigating the different means of articulating the

³ This research method emerged after I led a ten-day project with eca jewellery students in 2009. I saw this 'in-house' project as a warm-up exercise for the larger research project that was to follow. I set a brief (Appendix F) aimed towards making the students think about the relationship between people and their environments through narrative materials, which helped me to clarify elements of the Topophilia box method.

experiential utilised by artists through their application of sensorial tools. The focus of the documentation of place lies primarily on generating optical and physical traces of the experience of 'place' that have the potential to provoke not only a recall of the detail of the corporeal environment, but also similar experiential and emotional responses to the sensations experienced in situ by the artists during their time there. These personal responses are modes of understanding ourselves and our relationship to the surrounding environment, and are as important as our more conscious or verbalised awareness of environmental stimuli. Such responses were investigated further in the second phase of the project when the artists react to another artist's choice of stimuli and reassess their approach.

Capturing with any degree of accuracy the results of the complex interrelations between the various perceptual systems (aural, visual, haptic, olfactory) and emotional responses that the 'being in the place' process elicits is, at present, beyond the range of any technology, however, the Topophilia box method opens a narrative between object, person and place which the maker can illuminate through their own voice and which can perhaps speak to the observer again in a different way. The project comprises a series of individually known and creatively interpreted places displayed within a group of boxes representing the broad range of interpretations of our surroundings. Here, place is understood as a personally specific and meaningful location. When the museum boxes are brought together, they collectively represent the group but also tell of the individual places (and the constituency of these places) and the specific locations that inspired the re-configuration of place into jewellery. They also act as expressions of the individuals who made and presented these places, boxes and artifacts. This participatory research project entails the exploration of relationships; an anonymous relationship between two makers through one box, the relationship between stimulus material and artefact through maker, and the relationship between person (maker & viewer) and place through the box and artefact. One intention of utilising this inclusive strategy was to provoke the makers' interest with an original approach to curating their work outwith the standard thematic exhibition. This method, although experimental and exploratory, is also rooted in a well-defined strategy of enquiry surrounding the themes of place, process, perception and artefact. As such, the box acts as an expressive repository of data surrounding:

- The role of stimulus (the objects)
- The tangible link between objects and artefacts
- The types of places these artists are drawn to and why

- How the makers chose to record those places
- How those recordings are interpreted from different perspectives
- The commonalities & differences that emerged between those interpretations

This research method also has the capacity to investigate aspects of process further and as such was a key method of exploration of my research question. My aim was not to attempt to make all of the creative process explicit within the exhibition format but to explore the acts of selection and interpretation within process as disclosed by the artists in their boxes and works. In studying the artists' compositions of collected objects, which have place embedded in them and are unfolded and transmuted into the resulting works, patterns within the artistic processes of these makers emerged.

The structure of the two-phase brief created a comparative tool for deeper reflective insight⁴ into the makers approach to practice and the response piece is key to this. The second phase involved a shifting of perspectives for the makers. It allowed for an evaluation of different creative processes, methods of approach, interpretations and the roles and applications of material (this is expanded on in Chapter 7.5). It is my reasoning that the second piece acts as an instrument for comparison and reflection on the maker's process by way of disparity aiding appraisal and evaluation. The text data generated from the participants' viewpoint surrounding this second phase asserts this and was a rich source of information (Appendix B). As such, the role of the response phase is to:

- Act as a reflective method of assessment of process and method by studying this comparatively to each maker's standard and phase 1 practice
- Explore the expressive capacity of different materials as applied by different makers
- Act as a comparative tool exposing any differences or similarities of process adopted by the artists during greater and lesser informed involvement with 'place'
- Illustrate to a wider audience the breadth of interpretations available within the jewellery medium

⁴ Reflectivity, developed from the ideas of Argyris and Schön (1978) is the process through which you are able to reflect upon the ways your own assumptions and actions influence a situation, and thus change ones practice as a direct result of the reflective process. In this way of thinking, reflectivity becomes a type of research method that allows a practitioner to research his or her own practice (or those of others) in order to explore it. An example of this within my research is where I formed the questions for phase 2 as a result of my reflection on the data produced during phase 1.

This project carried a relatively high element of risk as I was asking the artists to produce new work to brief rather than selecting pre-existing work as an illustration of a theme and manner of working. I see this constitute level of risk as a positive element of my research method; pre-conceived notions of the outcomes were not so easily formed due to the relatively open nature of the project brief. Risk was also inherent in a method where geographical, financial, cultural, and language barriers were present and where outcomes are heavily reliant on the cooperation of others. My research depended upon the full engagement of the makers with the brief and I owe a great deal to the generosity of time and openness that they afforded me.

As a result of this method 32 new works were produced and my interpretation and analysis of them was a form of reflection in action (Schön). The multi-method approach of gaining different perspectives through interview, observation, visual documentation and analysis produced new insights. My interpretative method of studying the resulting works of these selected practitioners allowed me to:

- Describe the current practice
- Both gather and generate data around this practice
- Organise the prevalent modes of the interpretation of place
- Analyse, evaluate and interpret the makers' processes and outcomes
- Demonstrate the variety of materials, techniques, approaches and outcomes exemplified within the Northern jewellery context
- Bring about greater understanding of the phenomena involved within the creative process as represented by this group

2.2 Reflexive Practice

Reflexivity is a step beyond reflectivity: 'to be reflexive involves thinking from within experiences', (Bolton 2010:14) or as the *Oxford English Dictionary* puts it: 'turned or reflected back upon the mind itself'. This involves the search for an approach that allows us to question our habitual actions. Douglas Macbeth defines reflexivity as 'a deconstruction exercise for locating the intersections of author, other, text and word, and for penetrating the representational exercise itself.' (2001:35), as an artist I am very much positioned within the research, and as such my practice is implicitly interwoven into my representations and methodologies in many ways. The foundation of my research began through the evaluation of both my own praxis and the practice of my contemporaries within the field. On first embarking on this form of practice-led research I was faced with the challenge of how to 'communicate an experience while living it'

(Skinner 2003:527). As Patricia Leavy states in *'Method Meets Art'* researchers 'communicate partial and situated realities while they also become constituent parts of those represented realities' (2009:36). As part of the outcome of this research I have produced a body of work within my studio practice. My experiences within studio practice inform my research and in order to bring about insight through experience I had to be methodically reflexive about developments at the bench. The recording methods involved in this (e.g. photography and on-line documentation) act as structured and deliberate auto-ethnographic research methods (Pelias 2004). I have investigated approaches, processes, techniques and materials through experimentation by developing and reflecting on my making practices within the wider contemporary context. These methods as utilised in my practice are illustrated further in Chapter 8. As a reflective practitioner I have an informed perspective on issues relating to practice and my practice provides the means to explore the knowledge embedded within objects in order to contribute to the wider development and understanding of process. This on-going reflexivity gave me insights that were needed to study the subject in-depth from the perspective of a maker and were robustly informed by my academic and theoretical research and writing.

As a reflective practitioner I determined that it was important that I take a participatory role in the 'Topophilia Box Project' as an artist as well as the project designer/curator. Through reflective practice I illustrate the drive and processes involved in my working methods alongside those of others. This is developed in Chapter 7.4 and Appendix B where I place my practice under the same analysis as the other project participants. The idea of the researcher as a participating artist is in line with the recognised type of multiple research roles that are in keeping with the 'diversity of exploratory practices pursued by many today' (Sullivan 2005:210) where 'subjectivity, involvement, reflexivity is acknowledged; the interaction of the researcher and research material is recognised.' (Gray & Malins 2004:21). This informed position required a critical understanding of the field and enabled deeper insight into the processes involved, which in turn helped me to verify my research questions.

My multi-method approach is tailored to my specific project providing what I believe to be a rich information source for the field as a whole. This approach is characteristic of what Gray & Malins (2004) call an 'Artistic Methodology', which involves diverse and experimental research methods and techniques. Graeme Sullivan illustrates this further in *'Art Practice as Research'* describing it thus;

‘Whether working in the studio, in the museum, in the classroom or on the internet, particular approaches prevail, such as visualising, sensing, intuiting, focusing, reasoning, questioning, grounding, comparing and interpreting. These are the kind of capacities that characterise the way that artists work and are also the attributes needed for conducting effective research in the field.’(2005:192).

Through this multi-method artistic approach I am involved in:

- The generation of research material in the form of artefacts through an active creative process (both my own and the 15 other participating artists)
- The facilitation and management of specific projects (The ‘Topophilia Project’, ‘Sense of Place’ exhibition, presentations & symposium).
- The observation of others in order to place my practice and my research in context and to gain insight into other possible perspectives (through interview/symposium)
- Self-observation through reflection in action and on action, which is developed through the communication with others.

2.3 A Phenomenological Perspective

My methodology investigates the interconnected and multi-sensorial creative experience where processes ‘cannot be understood separately from the environments in which they occur’ (Leavy 2009:226). In the study of experience my research method is navigated from a phenomenological perspective,⁵ which places experience at the core of knowledge building (Leavy, 2009, Pink 2008). This is reflected in my ‘Topophilia Project’ method and associated data collection. Here, aspects of Hermeneutic Phenomenology are applied as part of my multi-method approach to study.⁶ Working from this perspective I am interested in accessing experience, and experience which occurs within a predominantly visual landscape – as Leavy states; ‘experience is embedded within its visual context’ (2009:226), and as such the jewellery object is at the centre of my study method. Although both the artefact and the perceptual processes investigated in this study are multi-modal, our contemporary environment, and of course this subject, is highly visual thus the visual becomes a dominant part of how our

⁵ Phenomenology has origins in the thinking of the German philosopher Husserl, although it has developed with many branches; and does not have a ‘clearly delineated body of doctrines’ (Gallagher & Zahavi 2012:661) I find its approach useful as its overarching concern is with the lived experience of phenomena or ‘natural experience’ using Ricoeur’s (1981:103) expression.

⁶ As Graeme Sullivan states ‘Hermeneutics are at the very heart of individual meaning making.’ (2010:120), my method is in line with Glaser’s inductive approach to Hermeneutics as the theory is generated from the viewpoint of the project participants in the first person accounts.

consciousness develops (*ibid*), in light of this Alva Noë (2000) suggests that a visual phenomenology is the merging of art and the study of perceptual consciousness. This merging of fields of study can be seen in chapters 4, 5 and 6 where *Place*, *Perception* and *Process* are examined from different spheres of knowledge. The French phenomenological philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty has influenced my thinking on notions of perception, and Goethe's 'Delicate Empiricism' has shaped my position on the correlation between man and nature.⁷

An approach to research that places human experience at the centre of the analysis also implies the importance of 'attending to the sensory and embodied nature of experience' (Pink 2008:135) or as Noë puts it; 'To describe experience is to describe the experienced world.' (2000:125). These ideas resonate strongly within the central aspects of this research as embodied sensory experiences used in the perception of place, feed into the embedded research practices of the making process. But, given the complexity of experience itself I am faced with the challenge as to how I might be able to interpret and understand other people's experiences, as Sarah Pink suggests:

'We cannot get inside their heads or under their skins to think or sense as they do, if we are interested in how they see, we cannot be their eyes...The closest we can get to feeling as they feel is through our own limited capacity to empathise with their embodied experiences.' (2008:135)

However, through my own reflexive practice and informed understanding as a project participant I have a fuller awareness of the experiences of my fellow makers. The methods I have applied have also brought me closer to the experience of others - as part of this phenomenological approach I have undertaken an in-depth study of each of the makers through questionnaire. This interview method aimed to 'reveal those explicit reflective processes that tend to give coherence and definitive form to experience.' (Throop 2003:135). Principles of phenomenology also informed my process of understanding the interviewees' commentary.⁸ This method depended fully on the artists' co-operation and was restricted through access due to geographical, language and financial limitations. Because of this I employed flexible methods such as email conversation and interview questions, and some photographic recording/observation techniques. The questions were designed to extract data surrounding both their general

⁷ Goethe's way of science is one early example of a phenomenology of the natural world.

⁸ Primary methods of phenomenological research encourage people to reflect on, and thus define their experiences and as an artist participating within the research I have the capacity to experience processes similarly and apply my own sensory embodied knowledge to 'formulate assumptions about those of others'. (Pink 2008:136).

approach to practice and their specific responses to the project. These questions were sent out at each phase of the project and were compiled based on my reflective practice and through the questions that arose within the context of the brief. The use of questionnaires allowed me to search for meanings and essences of experience through first-person accounts, viewing experience and process as an integrated and inseparable relationship.

The investigation of each of the individual makers allowed for a more solid approach to the study where comparisons could be made. During analysis, the study of text, word, object and image allowed me to identify similarities and differences and to then use these to recognise common patterns. The results of these observations can be seen in Chapter 7.4. In Chapter 7.5 I employ diagrams and charts in order to organize this data and illustrate these emerging patterns. Through qualitative analysis of said data I developed an understanding of the prevalent themes, processes and motivations that arose. The objects collected and made by the artists allowed for a reading and deciphering that was further developed through discussion during the symposium.

The symposium was a data gathering method structured so as to encourage group discussion, which is essentially a qualitative technique that I utilised at a stage when considerable research and data collection had already been undertaken (i.e. after exhibition set-up and preliminary data-gathering from the 'Topophilia Project'). This method included a plenary discussion where several of the project participants were present. Blumer (1969) notes the importance of conversing with numbers of a select group; he mentions 'seeking participants who are acute observers and who are well informed...a small number of such individuals brought together as a discussion and resource group, is more valuable many times over than any representative sample.' (1969:41). This method as expanded on in Chapter 7.2 and Appendix D, was intended to be flexible, stimulating to respondents, recall aiding, and cumulative, and to allow for the 'elaboration of commonalities of approach over and above individual responses'. (Fontana & Frey 1998:55). Reflective analysis was used to review the common threads that emerged from the symposium and to then establish an understanding of what is recurrent amongst all of these sets of data (see Chapt. 7.2 & Appendix D).

The aforementioned methods and perspectives collectively feed into my epistemology as illustrated in Fig. 1. My philosophical perspective is not rigidly tied to any one school of thought but instead touches on concepts from different spheres of post-Husserlian phenomenologist thinking. Data gathering has come from *the artefact* (phase 1 pieces, phase 2 pieces, the boxes and my studio practice), *first person accounts*

(questionnaires) and *knowledge sharing* (symposium/exhibition). Due to the emergent and multi-method nature of my research it has taken on its own identity and as a mode of enquiry could be seen as a valuable contribution to the growing sphere of practice-led research in jewellery.

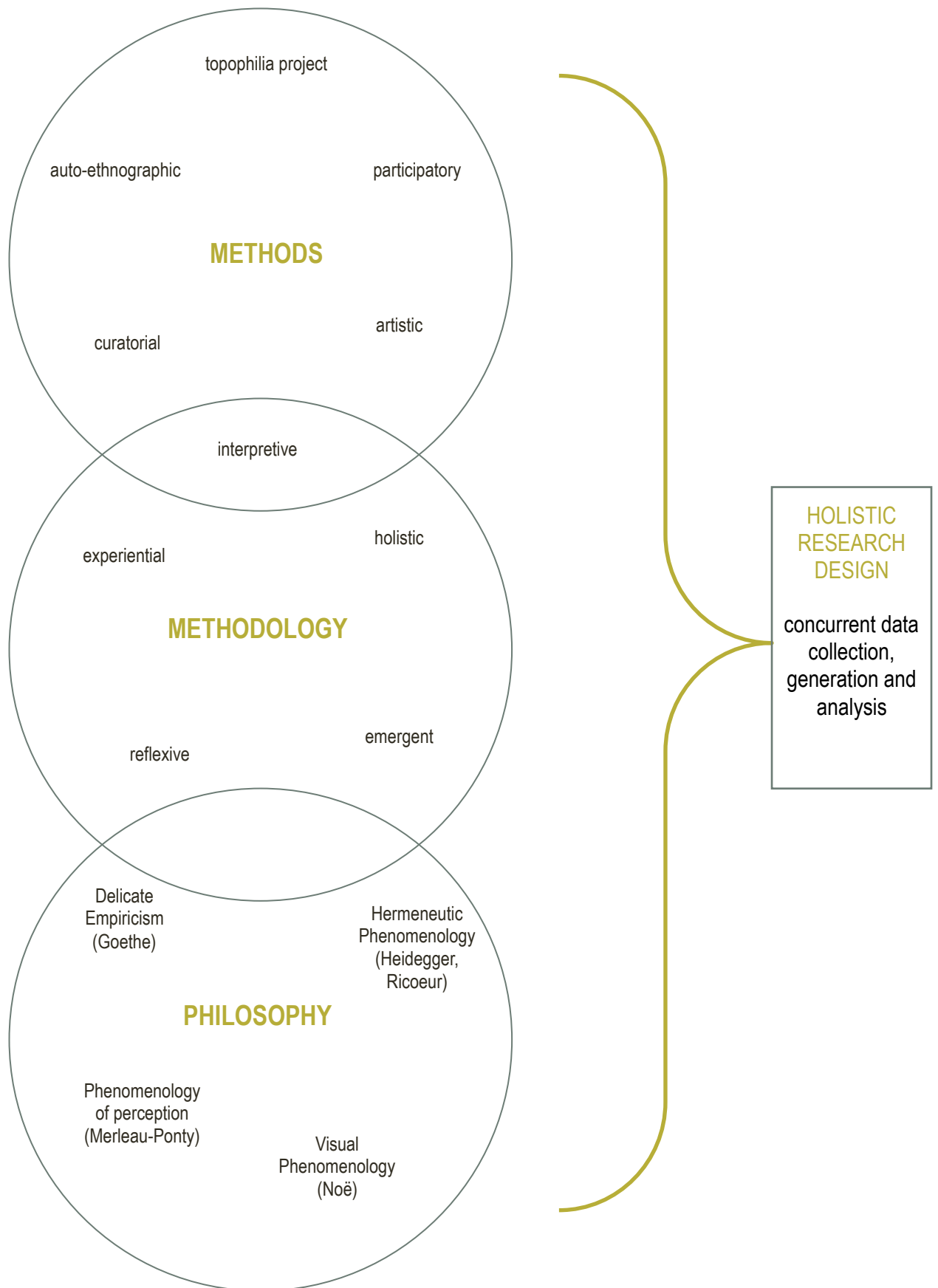


FIG. 1. Components of Research

3. RATIONALE & CONTEXTUAL OVERVIEW

3.1 Jewellery; an Overview of Critical Discourse & Contemporary Practice

In order to develop my own critical practice I needed to clarify my position in relation to the wider contemporary jewellery field and the discourse surrounding it. Through this I built a framework of study as both a researcher and practitioner. I will allow space here to outline my stance in relation to the current discussions that surround contemporary jewellery practice.

Jewellery is not only adornment it is a cultural document (Baines, Dormer, Lignel): 'Jewellery has an innate relationship with both the physical and the cultured body, and jewellery making, like all art, is a profoundly humanistic concern' (McFadden 1995:50). Contemporary jewellery is an individual expression that reflects on contemporary culture; it acts as a cultural signifier, a communication device through which notions of individuality and cultural identity can be transmitted. It has experienced spectacular changes in both form and content over recent decades and its development both mirrors the movements of the wider art field and the social and economic changes of the time. 'Contemporary Jewellery' is also termed as 'Artist-led jewellery', 'Studio Jewellery', 'Research Jewellery', 'Art jewellery', 'Auteur' or 'Author jewellery'. All of these labels refer to the production of jewellery work that, in Lisbeth den Beston's words; 'bears a strong mark of the maker, not as subservient but as a means of expression of the maker' (2005). Although I agree with the designer and theorist Benjamin Lignel (2006) that 'contemporary jewellery' is a 'simplistic label, falling short of the profession's complex heritage and range of interests', it is the most internationally recognised and encompassing term for this field of work. The field of contemporary jewellery has covered a great deal of ground since its exploratory developments in the experimental 60's. As a communication medium jewellery has held transitory positions in the spheres of craft, contemporary art, fashion, and product design and sits poised between mainstream high-street production and individual artistic and craft driven practices. The contemporary jewellery field no longer has distinct boundaries and the jewellery makers approach has the freedom to extend beyond the margins of traditional art/craft codes.

I do not subscribe to the idea that the fine arts and crafts inhabit opposing territories⁹ - instead I propose that jewellery lies in a space between these constraining

⁹ Glenn Adamson writes in *Thinking through Craft*: 'Crafts grounding in material specificity is opposite to the ambition of modern art to achieve a purely visual effect' (2007:2). This statement appears

definitions. It belongs to both the optical and the material realms; it has the capacity to tread on the terrain of the fine arts while its roots stem from the crafts. In terms of the makers approach and process, jewellery at times has more in common with sculpture than textiles for example, and often both fine art and craft theories can be applied to it. This form of jewellery, being one that shows strength of authorship, belongs more to Martina Margetts' (1989) idea of the 'metaphorical craft object', which has the capacity to embody both personal narratives and cultural reflections. I believe that there are now few taboos left for exploration within this field and the time of the purely reactionary use of material, scale or message evident in the subject during the past two decades has passed.

I propose that if we are to allow for a constructive critical discourse to thrive within the discipline of contemporary jewellery, we should embrace the active space between fields that the subject has the ability to inhabit. Moving to a place between disciplines (Rendell 2006) allows jewellery practitioners and theorists to adopt terminology that has traditional routes in both the fine arts, crafts and design fields. I believe this to be entirely appropriate for the mode of creativity that I am discussing as it allows the field to move forward and articulate the meaning inherent within the work. The discourse around this field has gone beyond the tired partisan debate around whether contemporary studio jewellery belongs to the pigeon-hole of 'art', 'craft' or 'design' but I will state that the majority of the makers that I have been working with throughout this project do not undergo a traditional 'design-led' process leading from two-dimensional image to three-dimensional form steered through drawing. In this way the research challenges pre-conceived notions and perspectives on jewellery still held by some (mainly out-with the discipline).

Contemporary jewellery has entered a phase of shifting visual cultures. I propose that this is an opportunity for us to re-asses our position within this global paradigm and re-assert our place in the field through our personal 'sense of place'. Through re-engaging with an honest language of material, object and origin it is possible to allow space for an individual exploration of our shared cultural influences. I use the term 'honest' in reference to both the processes utilised in the creation of a crafted object as well as our relationship to our surrounding environments. This term is used with some regularity within the field when discussing the appearance of a piece, often without real expansion on what is meant by it. It is used in relation to both the work bearing

overzealous to me, and I am more aligned with his comments that 'where fine art involves a transcendence of material the craft process entails a direct encounter with material' (2007:39).

evidence of the maker's tool or hand (*process aesthetics*) and/or the use of what could be characterised as simple and visible fabrication techniques.¹⁰ However, this 'honesty' could also be applied to the experiential processes undergone by makers: an honesty to their 'sense of place' and surrounding stimulus that might become evident in the finished piece. In this sense the word honesty is very closely aligned with the idea of authenticity. I will go on to suggest that embodied knowledge can be achieved through the process of engagement with place and material that can allow for 'honest' or authentic expression.

3.2 The Deep North; a Cultural Context

I determined to focus my core research on the contemporary jewellery from the Northern periphery of Europe¹¹ - working within this geographical margin has both personal and pragmatic reasoning. I grew up on the far north coast of Scotland where the Arctic Circle was within closer proximity than London - I am drawn to this region initially because of my own 'Northern-ness', and grew up aware of the parallels between the Scandinavian countries and Scotland. The long history of Viking and Norse settlement in Scotland has left an enduring legacy that can be seen in many aspects of Scottish culture and especially in our language.¹² There are more contemporary cultural parallels as well such as our relationship to the land - the oil, the fisheries and renewables (Kelly 2011). In relation to the specifics of this study the commonalities of landscape, are also recognised and the aforementioned industries are resultant of this. The large areas of 'wild' or uninhabited landmass in both Scotland and Scandinavia has undoubtedly shaped cultural identity with regions of 'natural' landscape easily accessible to most who live in urban settings. Another commonality is that both the Nordic countries and the UK see the European Continent as a perceived other. There is a distinct sense that the Nordic countries exist on the edge of Europe (Skinner 2009).

¹⁰ The idea of honesty to material and fabrication techniques can be traced back to the Arts and Crafts era where the philosophy of the movement supported the notion of 'natural and honest' imperfection that was referred to as a form of 'savageness' (Naylor) at the time. John Ruskin defined mass produced work as poor and *dishonest*; the movement he was a founding member of believed that design had to be *true* to the material used but ideas on the honesty of material can predate this to the writings of architect and theorist Adolf Loos who talked of the honesty and truth to materials and was strongly against what he called the violation and imitation of materials (Loos). Sculptors such as Barbara Hepworth have also been associated with 'truth to material' (Bowness 2001), where the artist works with, rather than against the inherent qualities of the material. These perspectives risk appearing out-dated and backward looking in our contemporary era of technical advances and material experimentation, but they remain relevant to our practice.

¹¹ A map locating the makers involved in my study appears in Chapter 7.4.

Despite mainland Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Finland being attached to mainland Europe they have historically been accessed by sea and there has been an implicit divide from a Scandinavian viewpoint thus the Nordic words for the continent; *Kontinentet* or *Kontinenten* affirms mainland Europe as a separate entity imprinted in the vernacular. There has historically been a strong sense of cultural romanticism in all of these countries and Scotland is currently attempting to align itself more closely with the Nordic countries in terms of political ideology. These are some of the commonalities between Scotland and the Nordic region that drew me to study within this geographic perimeter from a personal perspective, but the position I have as a practitioner within the contemporary jewellery field is also relevant.

European contemporary jewellery output has been prevalently Dutch & German centric in recent decades. This is only logical as it is where the greatest number of specialist galleries and prominent practitioners teach and reside, but we should be careful that this is not at the cost of the marginalisation of other regions. Despite the lack of an established history of rigorous academic research into the subject as a whole, texts covering tribal, historical, and technical aspects of jewellery are too many to cite, and although numerous publications focus on the development of the contemporary jewellery movements of North America, Australia, and Central Europe, there is far less documented material on an equivalent practice for jewellery from the Nordic countries despite this regions historically distinct aesthetic voice.¹³ This imbalance appears to have been recognised by others within the field recently. Martina Kaufmann is leading a project called ‘From the Coolest Corner – Nordic Jewellery’ due to be shown during ‘Schmuck’ in 2014. She notes that it will have been eleven years since the last major Nordic jewellery exhibition and the ‘Coolest Corner’ exhibition provides an opportunity to ‘present the latest development of Nordic jewellery art’ (Kaufmann 2012). I hope that my research will contribute knowledge to the valuable and emergent discourse coming from the field to the north of central Europe.

Although my research is situated within geographic and cultural borders this is not an investigation into ‘national identity’: a territory well covered in the social

¹² Many Scots words are derived from Old Norse with places such as Lerwick, Dingwall and Wick tracing their etymology back to the same source (Kelly 2011). Although I come from the Highlands my local dialect has Norse routes rather than Gaelic ones.

¹³ This is also reflected in the events surrounding the field. Germany hosts the prominent annual international exposition on contemporary jewellery at the ‘Schmuck’ fair in Munich but at present there are no recurring Nordic jewellery shows despite regional growth in the field. Although there have been intermittent events such as a Nordic jewellery symposium in 1996/7 and in 2009 in the Design Museum in Helsinki or the three ‘Koru’ events held at the Imatra Art Museum in Finland, the last being in 2009 (with a gap of three years Koru 4 is expected at the end of 2012) representation is low.

sciences and one I discuss with caution as it is an elusive topic and tends to be theorised in a general and abstract way. However, concepts of national identity are persistent in current jewellery discourse and it is important to look at how the cultural backdrop might be related to jewellery that references place. In Chapter 4.2 I will go on to look at these issues in the broader field of practice, studying jewellery in an era of global fluidity, this chapter will focus on the prevalent themes evident in Nordic contemporary jewellery, as I perceive them. By investigating the coherence of style and approach I touch on the cultural influence on aesthetic and material. My interest is in locating individual approaches through the work of specific practitioners as well as the concerns and sensibilities that can be regarded as special to, or particularly strong within Nordic jewellery output. This sets the foundations for the more in-depth studies undertaken during the Topophilia Project in Chapter 7.

In the following, I am using the term 'Nordic' in the way that is most common today, as a synonym of Scandinavia; encompassing Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland and Iceland¹⁴. Here I will only be focussing on jewellery work predominantly from these countries where the pieces produced would be deemed to fall under the aforementioned definition of 'contemporary jewellery' as discussed in the last chapter. I did not include Estonia (which is often still incorporated into the Nordic group) as the Baltic States have a separate craft tradition and aesthetic, as I perceive it. Ultimately I am looking north from my personal perspective and that is why I didn't include English or Irish makers in the Topophilia Project either.

¹⁴ Before the 20th century, the term 'Nordic' or 'Northern' was commonly used to mean Northern Europe in a sense that included the Nordic countries (Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland and Iceland), European Russia and the Baltic Countries (at that time Estonia, Livonia and Courland). Today, Northern Europe covers a range of countries and dependent regions reaching north from, and including, the UK and Ireland. The Baltic countries are now classed as belonging to Eastern Europe (*United Nations Statistics Division*)



FIG.2. Märta Mattsson 'Skin flowers' Brooches, 2011, Goatskin, walnut wood, and silver online image available from www.klimt02.net located on 02/07/12

The countries situated on the north-eastern periphery of Europe have been formally united in numerous ways over the past 1,500 years and less formally so since the time of the Vikings. The sense of a shared cultural heritage and common interests in the field of international and economic affairs has bound these countries together. Historically there has also been a common sense of unity within the aesthetic field. It was during the first half of the 19th Century that the idea that within architecture, industrial design and the applied arts, there existed something that might be termed specifically a Nordic style developed. This was a reflection of the cultural and political nationalism of this era, when the Scandinavian movement was born. Also known as *Scandinavianism*, or *Nordism*, this movement is regarded as a quest for a common Nordic identity. The political nationalism of the Scandinavian movement was rooted in romanticism, leading to the idea of a homogeneous nation with one shared language, culture and collective memory. Today there are quite distinct differences within the countries that make up the Nordic region and these are traceable in both social structure and cultural atmosphere, however, the modern industrial, commercial and social evolution of the late 19th and early 20th Century often blends such subtle shades of difference as seen from the outside (Somme 1961:16). Foreign stereotypes tend to depict Scandinavians as 'wealthy, enlightened, rational Protestants with strong welfare states and an institutionalised yearning for nature and simplicity' (Eriksen 1997) It is

paradoxical that although we often resort to generalisations and simplifications in our effort to find characteristics common between these countries, stereotypes irritate because they also contain ‘certain elements of truth’ (Jaukkuri 1990:9). A concurrent paradox to note here is that often individual artistic freedoms have to be ‘organised’ within culture if they are to be intelligible (Elliot 2000:7), this is evidenced in the tendency towards regional classifications of works in many exhibitions. Twenty years ago Nordic-ness was seen by many as something parochial and unsophisticated, but with increasing globalisation, ‘provincialism’ can perhaps today be seen as a source of strength allowing for a clearer definition of relative individuality¹⁵ (Jaukkuri). With this comes an increased awareness of individual national characteristics and of the importance of the preservation of their determining features, whilst attempting to keep the balance away from nostalgic or backward looking inclinations.



FIG.3. Karin Roy Andersson, 2011, ‘A Constant Grinding’ Brooch, Galia melon seeds, birch wood, aluminium, silver, steel 12 x 6 x 3 cm, online images available from www.klimt02.net located on 02/06/12

As a relatively young discipline contemporary jewellery has filtered through to the Nordic countries comparatively later than in Central Europe and North America due to their relative geographical and cultural separation. It wasn’t until the 1990s that the first exhibition of international contemporary jewellery took place in Stockholm (Skinner 2009), and the contemporary position of Nordic jewellery as an expressive medium has only moved beyond its own borders in the last two decades. Historically, the slow adoption of industrialised working methods coupled with the traditional nature of the education structure may also have contributed to northern jewellery retaining conventional forms for a longer time than its southern brothers. The prevalent social

¹⁵ This is reflected in the recent growth in ‘Nordic Noir’ seen in film, literature and fashion.

ideals that embrace autonomy and democracy in Scandinavia might account for the slower development of studio jewellery as a whole because decoration is associated with frivolity and this would not foster growth in a craft medium traditionally perceived as decoration for the body. This geographic and cultural aesthetic insularity is no longer as evident in our more globally fluid times where lecturers and practitioners travel and work across international borders.¹⁶ It is certainly not as easy to talk about typical Scandinavian Design or Nordic trends as was the case from the 1950's to the 1990's, as the international orientation of the globally connected 21st Century is so strong, that regional characteristics are no longer as clearly perceptible.

After studying the work and personal statements of over 30 contemporary Nordic jewellery artists some commonalities of motivation, process and aesthetic have become evident. The jewellery pieces I have included here represent individual identity but an identification with collective traditions is also often perceptible. These are craft traditions embedded in the cultural aesthetic, which was strongly influenced by modernism and the movement towards making domestic products that were both beautiful and functional through truth to material and need. The impact of Scandinavian modernism in the 1950s had an on-going effect on craft production within the Nordic countries, where form followed function and ornament was crime. Although at the time this did not directly influence jewellery in the same way as it did more utilitarian craft production such as furniture for example, it certainly will have contributed to the Northern creative approach and aesthetic framework.



FIG.4. Kirsten Bak, 2005, 'Unicated' rings, plane wood, plastic coating, photograph © Kirsten Bak

¹⁶ As is evident in the particularly strong experimental work currently coming from the Ädellab department in Konstfack; the University College of Arts, Crafts and Design in Stockholm for example, which has a varied programme of visiting artists and lecturers.

The influences of romanticism and modernism coupled with national democratic ideals were formative in the 'Scandinavian aesthetic' and have strong bearing upon the regions' native crafts traditions. The rich customs of craftsmanship and folk art that have existed in these countries demonstrate a high regard for material as can be seen in Figs 2 & 3 - a desire to infuse everyday objects with an aesthetic that is sympathetic to nature has also been recurrently evident (Fig.4): 'These qualities engender an atmosphere of respect for materials, respect for techniques, respect for tradition and respect for innovation.' (McFadden 1995:50). Contemporary jewellery pieces that reflect this tradition could be seen to be 'typically Scandinavian' due to the strong emphasis on both material and a purity of design that is evident in many contemporary pieces. In successful works of this nature our awareness of material is reawakened and we are invited to share in a celebration of humble materials.



FIG.5. Mette T. Jensen, 2006, Bracelet no. 6214, beech and silver, Approx 9.5x 9.5 x 2.5cm, photograph by Joël Degen © Mette T. Jensen

Traces of the historic engagement with modernist ideals can also still be seen in some contemporary work. Pieces by artists such as Tone Vigeland (Norway), Toril Bjorg (Norway) and Mette Jensen (Denmark Fig.5) illustrate the fingerprint of Scandinavian modernism. There are exactly 30 years between the production of Tone Vigeland's bracelet and Toril Bjorg's neckpiece (Figs. 6 & 7) but they both demonstrate the same purity of form, process and material. This work is very much materially led. In Jensen's work the materials used are wood and silver; both materials are worked to achieve the desired forms inspired by furniture and ship building and suggest the visually light and pure design of modernist aesthetics. Jensen states that; 'Respecting a

material here means accepting its limits and developing it according to its characteristics, which involves getting to know what is natural for it to do and how it reacts towards different factors, like heat, water, air and pressure.' (Legg 2008).

Although the pieces by Tone Vigeland have undoubtedly been influenced by Modernist ideals they also have roots that appear to be set deeper in ancient cultures. She says of her process; 'I am attracted to jewellery that seems to be made from nothing, jewellery that is very, very simple but also has a tremendous strength. For me this jewellery has a bit of magic, a secret quality that sets it apart, and that interests me.' (McFadden 1995:14)



FIG.6. Tone Vigeland, bracelet (1986). Sterling silver, 4.4 x 11.4 cm, The museum of Modern Art New York Collection Online image from <http://www.moma.org/collection> Located on 12/10/09

Many of the artists I initially studied in this research demonstrated an open and inquiring interest in materials and their inherent possibilities. In their works the maker could be said to act as a releaser of an innate beauty trapped in an unprepossessing material. Their work spoke of simplicity and respect for material - appearing to be in a search for the elemental. Artists such as Tarja Tuupanen (Finland) Märta Mattsson (Sweden - Fig.9) and Kirsten Bak (Denmark) demonstrate that the material-orientated characteristics of Nordic jewellery, dominant from the 50's onwards, are still present today.



FIG.7. Toril Bjorg, 2006, *Sable* Neckpiece, Sterling silver, online image available from www.klimt02.net located on 02/07/12

The use of natural materials as both symbol and form can be seen especially as an illustration of the processes of nature. Often the artists discuss the forces found in nature: gravity, weight, lightness and darkness, growth, decomposition and transformation. Processes that surround us are transferred to material by the hand and the resulting pieces express ideas around man's interaction with the environment. Tuupanen works with Cacholong (Fig.8), a white stone from the quartz family. The stone offers a wide range of white colours like warm creamy white to cold bluish snow white moving into grey shades. She creates minimalistic forms, 'portraits without pictures, scenery without a view'. (Tuupanen 2012) Rut-Malin Barklund's deconstructed and re-constructed works in paper, wood and cardboard (Figs.10 & 11) are also an example of this process and material orientated method of working.



FIG. 8. (Left) Tarja Tuupanen 2009, brooch, silver, cacholong stone, image available from <http://www.hibernata.fi/> located on 25/11/09
FIG.9. (Right) Märta Mattsson 2011 Brooch: Cameo Calfskin, walnut wood, gold, silver image available from <http://www.klimt02.net> located on 25/06/12

Despite this being an established stereotype, the influence of nature on Nordic artistic output remains observable. The Nordic countries have the largest unexploited landmass in Europe and the abundance of relatively un-touched wilderness has a powerful influence upon the culture of its inhabitants. An intense, often spiritual approach to landscape has long traditions here. The poet and critic Charles Baudelaire called the Nordic people ‘children of the mist’ stating that they are inherently introspective and inclined to withdraw into the internal landscapes of their mind (Somme 1961:14). This is a Romantic statement indeed, made as it was in the eighteenth hundreds and by an outsider but it does suggest the early establishing of a link between landscape and cultural identity.



FIGS.10 & 11. Rut-Malin Barklund 2008, Brooch 'From wood to paper to wood', cardboard, iron 67x17x9 mm and Necklace 2008 'Circles, Time and Shadows.' Cardboard 150 x 265 x 150 mm online images available from www.klimt02.net located on 02/11/09

Today, unlike a tired and romanticised 'yearning for the lost' in nature, evident in some artistic practices, the Nordic sensibility addresses nature not only as it surrounds them but that it is also part of them. Such expressions are bound up with the spiritual the poetic and the personal; 'Artists are shaped by the land...and in their own turn shape the land according to their own consciousness of it.' (Taylor 1989:104) The work of Agnes Larsson is an example of this (Fig.12), she says of her carbon and horsehair pieces:



FIG.12. Agnes Larsson Necklace, 2010, Carbon, Wire, Horse hair 45 x 32 x 0.5 cm online image available from www.klimt02.net located on 02/07/12

‘I let the material lead the way through the working process, drawing inspiration from thoughts about gravity, lightness and heaviness, death, life, transparency and darkness, growth, decomposition and transformation to show contrasts like fragility and strength, depth and surface, darkness and light. (Larsson 2012)

The work included in this chapter is jewellery that I suggest is rooted in a delight in the poetic nature of materials, and orientated in one way or another towards the north. A projection of honesty, nature and humanity is evident in much of this work, residing in a contemporary period where nature and environment are re-defined. Some of the work appears to be involved in a communication with the evocative northern landscape, or is ‘communing with abstracted nature.’ (Levin 2001:21). This is often easier sensed than defined.

Although the European aesthetic meld is in constant ebb and flow, a great deal of the work coming from the Nordic countries retains a coherent approach and aesthetic. This can be seen in the respectful and inquiring approach to process and material, and in the search for the elemental essence of things – a melancholic darkness and a pure light. Scandinavian jewellery's post-war development has, up to now, been responsive to global trends and movements without becoming subservient to them. This has been possible due to an inherent understanding of the language of (often indigenous) materials and by remaining true to a respect-based craft tradition and approach to making. Hannah Hedman (Fig.13) is an example of a Nordic jewellery maker who recognises the importance of tradition whilst moving it forward. Her work embodies a great deal of what I see as the contemporary Scandinavian jewellery melting pot:

‘I try to keep an open attitude to methods and materials as I find my way to new techniques, combinations and approaches, but simultaneously always strongly rooted to the past. Daydreams integrated with reality and stories of past centuries blend with everyday life and nature. My jewelry holds ornamental stories that entice you into a suggestive world full of detail; sometimes beautiful but also melancholic and malevolent.’ (Hedman 2012)



FIG. 13. Hanna Hedman, Necklace from the 'What you tell is not always what you have experienced' series 2009
Oxidized silver, powder coated copper, paint 23 x 7 x 2,1 inches, Photograph by Sanna Lindberg online image
available from www.klimt02.net located on 02/07/12

Today, difficult questions around ideas of national identity in jewellery are being raised, questions that probably cannot ever be answered fully as they deal with fluid, transient and idiosyncratic things. The following comments by New Zealand art historian and writer Damian Skinner, made on a visit to Sweden in 2009 illustrates the type of on-going discussion within the field:

‘Like most European jewellers that I have encountered, none of these Swedish jewellers saw themselves as making Swedish jewellery. It was as though they didn’t even understand this as a basic label for them and their work – Swedish jewellery being jewellery which is made in Sweden, or by Swedish jewellers. Instead, the only way they seemed to understand this label was as a descriptor of theme or material – Swedish jewellery as jewellery that in some way declares its Swedishness through references to national/ethnic traditions, or local or natural materials.’ (Skinner 2009)

He implies that a global rather than provincial language of European jewellery has replaced individual national identities, asking; ‘Why is it that Europeans think about their jewellery without reference to nationality?’ (*ibid*). I turned this question back on myself. I am Scottish, I make jewellery in Scotland and I make it in relation to specific places in Scotland, and yet, if asked, I wouldn’t think to describe what I make as ‘Scottish Jewellery’. But neither would I necessarily say that I make ‘European jewellery’. This does not mean that it does not reflect aspects of Scotland or, from a

wider viewpoint, even Europe. These waters are far more muddied than Skinner appears to imply. I would suggest that we ‘European jewellers’ instead are principally reflecting a wariness of the parochial or provincial associations that come with such labels and their associated terminology. Skinner states that the Swedish group he talked to only recognised their ‘Swedishness’ where there are thematic references to national/ethnic traditions, or local or natural materials are used in the work (Skinner 2009) - surely this is important? Is this not an implicit declaration of their cultural traditions through the visual languages they employ best?

Countless jewellery designers capture the zeitgeist of their times through the adoption of patterns, forms and materials that evoke the moment. The work of such jewellery artists is often closely aligned to the movements of specialists in other fields such as fashion, the fine arts or industrial design. However, there appears to be a notable number of makers from the Nordic countries who speak through a different interpretation of time and history. This might largely be assigned to a strong association with nature in much of the work, which is arguably the most timeless subject matter in art. Maker and wearer bring their own interpretations to the symbolism of material and form but I would maintain that the cultural values of some materials still persist. Here, cultural identity can be expressed through the utilisation of vernacular materials such as native woods (Sweden/Norway/Denmark) salmon skin (Iceland), antler, horn and soapstone (Finland). Through the subtle referencing of the landscape much of the Nordic jewellery maintains a perceptible identity that many other countries have lost.¹⁷ I suggest that the work here is not tied to traditions of romanticised nature or cold geometry but is instead an honest portrayal of a process-orientated approach to the exploration of vernacular materials.

It is interesting reading Skinner’s views on the ‘universalising’ role of European jewellery, which he states claims to be global, rather than provincial. He asks whether the European field needs a framework to replace what is, in his view, a lost national identity, allowing us as makers to think about our work in new ways. It is indeed questionable whether there is any value in nationalising European jewellery, or, should we want to do it, if this is even achievable. Instead of making generalised assumptions around national identities in a time of blurred borders and instability I would encourage an active engagement with aspects of our cultural histories and a respect for established

¹⁷ I think there is less unity of style in the jewellery production within Scotland for example. This is in part due to the longer establishment of UK practice and thus exposure to the language of international work. The different governmental support structures for the Arts may well also contribute to the time artists in different countries are able to afford making experimental work without commercial pressure.

regional values in order to investigate otherwise hidden or forgotten dimensions of our practice. We should have the courage not to fear provincialism but instead use our practice to move these meanings forward. Through doing this we would also be moving our practice forward proving that it has the capacity to embrace aspects of tradition without becoming subsumed to staid and conventional methods. One progressive way of constructing a connection to rooted practices in our work is by engaging with place – forming a contemporary relationship with, and individual expression of, the different environments that surround us.

4. PLACE

4.1 Defining a ‘Sense of Place’

‘Places are...contexts for human experiences, constructed in movement, memory, encounter and association.’ (Tilley 1994:15)

Far more than mere geographical locations, places hold distinctive meanings and values for individuals. Cultural geographers, anthropologists, sociologists and urban planners have all studied why certain places hold a special meaning to particular people or peoples. Places said to have a strong ‘sense of place’ have a tangible identity and character that is deeply felt by both local inhabitants and visitors (Bachelard, Tilley, Tuan). The term a ‘sense of place’ has been defined and used in many different ways, not least within the visual arts. It can encapsulate both the physical geographic characteristics that make a place special or unique and the more internalised feelings or perceptions that the place provokes in people; fostering personal attachment and sensations of belonging enriched through physical encounter. A ‘sense of place’ is both a social and personal phenomenon that is dependent on human consciousness and engagement for its existence.

In the discussion around a ‘sense of place’ I should first make clear my meaning when I employ the word ‘place’.¹⁸ By their very nature, places contain ‘*sedimented meanings*’ (Tilley, 1994) which resist easy definition or clarification of their significance. One definition of ‘place’, proposed by the geographer and philosopher Yi-

¹⁸ In engaging with expressions such as ‘place’ and ‘landscape’ as they are understood today, I recognise the contested nature of both terms. Concepts of ‘place’ and ‘landscape’ have been adopted by various academic disciplines and their meanings are often questioned and misunderstood. Neither term lends itself to one single definition; they remain elusive as they shift between objective fact and subjective feeling. I will continue to use both of these expressions as they are implicitly interwoven within this research, and although they overlap they are not synonymous. Both the terms ‘place’ and ‘landscape’ encapsulate the physicality and sensuality of geographical space, but ‘place’ (in its physical sense) can broadly encapsulate both internal as well as external environments.

fu Tuan (1977) is that a place comes into existence when humans give meaning to a part of the larger, undifferentiated space; when a location is identified or given a name for example, it is separated from the undefined space that surrounds it. 'Place' is different from 'space', which is 'a far more abstract construct' (Tilley 1994:15). Where space is a transient and intangible thing, place is more grounded and personal, or as Tuan elegantly explains it; 'If space allows movement, place is pause.' (Tuan 1977:6).

The expression a 'sense of place' is by nature, subjective, due to its reliance on our personal perception. It is often used in relation to those characteristics that make a place special or unique, as well as to those that foster a sensation of attachment and belonging; the related term Topophilia¹⁹ was coined by Tuan to refer to 'the affective bond between people and place or setting' (Tuan, 1974:4). During his study of *Environmental Perception, Attitudes and Values* (1974) he stated that:

'Topophilia takes many forms and varies greatly in emotional range and intensity. It is a start to describe what they are; fleeting visual pleasure; the sensual delight of physical contact; the fondness for place because it is familiar, because it is home and incarnates the past, because it evokes pride of ownership or of creation; joy of things because of animal health and vitality.' (Tuan 1974:247)

The term a 'sense of place', as I continue to use it, encapsulates both a physical and emotional expression of the experience of both internal and external spaces, and is a multifaceted sensation formed through our sensory embodiment, emotion and memory. Through exploring 'a sense of place' we can begin to build a structure of feeling, examining people's ties and attachment to place.

4.2 'Placeless' Jewellery in an Era of Global Fluidity

'There is no there there.' (Gertrude Stein, 1937)

The concept of national identity, and its origin in an essentially romantic cultural ideology, is bound by competing identities and is continually being fractured, questioned and redefined due to forces of globalisation (Bartley 2002). Our physical movement across geographical and cultural borders is restricted only by cost and our

¹⁹ I use the term 'Topophilia' as a descriptive term for a positive sense of place and I have adopted it as a title for the stimulus boxes used as part of my research method. In the project brief sent out to the artists I talked generally about place and the definition of Topophilia, I mentioned the term 'environment' as it broadly describes space and encapsulates place but not terms such as 'landscape' or 'nature' for example as I thought them too loaded. This allowed for an open and personal interpretation of place by the participating artists.

ability to travel 'virtually' is increasingly effortless. Professor of Sociology John Urry talks of a 'democratisation of the tourist gaze' (1995:176) resulting from the idea that much of the West is able to consume and appropriate landscapes from almost anywhere in the world. This wide availability of imagery via the Internet enables effortless visual consumption of different aesthetics: 'In opposition to that collar made of teeth and bones that defined the identity of the Neanderthal man, contemporary man has a web page and a door into the cyberspace.' (Cuyàs 2000). Because the modern range of visual material to which we can relate is incomprehensibly large, to define craft objects in terms of pure cultural lineage is probably no longer achievable (Cunningham 2007) but neither is it my intention. I consider this to be an especially interesting and challenging time to be researching jewellery work within geographic and cultural 'perimeters'. Artists today know each other, follow each other's work and are connected across borders, so can contemporary jewellery still be 'placed'? Current thinking surrounding the field appears to suggest that many national jewellery identities have disseminated and cultural styles have become more permeable:

'As contemporary jewellery has developed over the last four decades it has become more international, leading to the erasing of obvious national identities in jewellery practice...Each country has its own practitioners of minimalism, formalism, conceptualism, narrative etc. just like every other country. Variety increases within each country while diversity diminishes globally.' (den Beston 2011:6)

Liesbeth den Beston refers to this as the European 'fusion kitchen' of jewellery (2011:54), where influences such as the strong 'more is not enough' (den Beston 2003) Dutch style, for example is now perceptible in jewellery work coming from many countries. As with any art form, I think individuality and authenticity are strong requirements for sound practice. This is arguably made more difficult to achieve in an era of globalisation, as it is increasingly easy for makers to adopt styles from others rather than endeavour to develop an original and personal voice of their own should they desire a 'short-cut' to creativity. With easy accessibility to what Ted Polhemus (2006) describes as the 'Supermarket of Style', nervousness around the idea of an increasingly assimilated and homogenous style enabled through visual appropriation has been reflected in recent symposiums and workshops, some of which have demonstrated a reactive tone.²⁰ One such example was a workshop held at the Alchimia summer

²⁰ I felt this was evident in the *'Disruptive Difference - transnational craft dialogues'* symposium, which I attended in February 2012 at the School of Museum Studies, Leicester.

school by David Bielander and Helen Britton in 2010 entitled '*Authenticity in the Age of Style Surfing; reflecting on how to develop your own style.*' (Bielander & Britton). The main focus of this workshop was to look at 'strategies of how to achieve an honest personal expression' and to move away from the 'influential power of the visual stereotype appearance of contemporary jewellery.' (*ibid*). Britton and Bielander believe that a 'lack of rigor in investigating materials and themes' (Bradshaw-Heap 2011) in contemporary jewellery practice is fostering the growth of derivative work within the community. They also note that much of what they call the 'in-authentic' jewellery being produced lacks reference to 'any kind of tradition, history, context or geography' (*ibid*). One alternative proposition to consider here might be that 'style surfing' is purely a reflection of the modern condition of visual consumption, and as such it is in itself a form of authentic expression because this is contemporary jewellery echoing contemporary culture. From this perspective, the combative attitude towards 'style surfing' might even be seen as the reflection of a reactionary relationship between one generation of jewellers and the next.

It has been said that 'culture tunes our neurons' (Howes 2005:143) but can the imprint of our surrounding environment still be seen as a strong influence on our creative voice? Perhaps the answer lies in the words of curator David Elliot when he wrote that 'Art is made in response to other art...but the sensibilities that mould that final making have at a time been long before drunk in with the mother's milk.' (1990:13). This idea is affirmed by Jeweller Jivan Astfalck when she talks about *Heimat*; 'Heimat is a German concept; people are bound by their heimat by their birth, their childhood, their language and their earliest experiences.' (Bloxham 2012:29). These notions suggest that the way we see, think and behave always stems from the origins of our birth. When asked whether they think the landscape of the place in which they grew up has affected their aesthetic or material choices several of the makers involved in the 'Topophilia Project' echoed this sentiment. Eija Mustonen replied; 'Very much, understanding different material, forms colour, joints comes from childhood surroundings.' and Sofia Björkman stated that 'Yes, off course. Everything in my life started when I was born. My life is what I have and that is my only reference. Time and place matters'(2012). Others stated that this is difficult to articulate or quantify; Per Suntum expressed that 'we are a landscape of all that we know' and Helena Lehtinen remarked that it is; 'Very difficult to say, what affects [us] in a world like ours. We know and see too much.' (2012).

Knowing and seeing too much could even de-sensitise us to place through the constant reconfiguration of our orientation. Converse to the concept of a 'sense of place' is the idea of places that lack emotional settlement and these are referred to as placeless or 'non-places' (Augé 1995). Placeless spaces are those that have no special relationship to the areas in which they are located; they could be anywhere and are often associated with the corporate and commodious.²¹ The 'anywhere is everywhere' mentality (White 2011:11), pervasive with the growth of the Internet may have seemed to negate the importance of place in the modern era. However, despite technology, we still crave tangible experiences and a growing interest in the 'local' handmade object is also evident in contemporary western society (*ibid*).

Bielander and Britton believe that an engagement with our traditions, our cultural history and local geography can foster the growth of a personal or authentic style; this strengthens my case for a progressive engagement with our local stimuli and respect for craft traditions as one way of moving the field forward. But if one of the results of globalisation is an increasing uncertainty about what we mean by places and how we relate to them, then the call for a re-establishment of a sense of place could be seen as backward looking. However, I subscribe to Professor Doreen Massey's idea of a more evolved sense of place: 'a sense of place...can only be constructed by linking that place to places beyond. A progressive sense of place would recognise that, without being threatened by it.' (Massey 1991:29). If the traditional use of local resources, and thus distinctive regional practices and aesthetics, has diminished as seems to be repeatedly suggested in current thinking, we now share many of our global points of reference.²² The Art Jewellery Forum (AJF 2011:7) refers to a growing '*naturalistic trend* in the study of art and aesthetics' as a reaction to this. 'Trends' by nature, come and go but I would state that 'place' is both a universal language and one rooted to locality. Through embracing our surroundings using methods and perspectives from the social sciences and other creative disciplines it may be possible to gain new insights into the individual approach to materials, process and subject matter within the field as a whole. My manner of approaching this is to showcase what I consider to be work that has a sensitive and personal response to place and to explore the deeper embedded processes that lie behind the creation of work coming from place. As such, jewellery work that references the artists' local environment and the formation of personal

²¹ Airports, petrol stations, supermarket chains and new housing estates are often cited as examples of placeless landscape elements. (Augé, Tuan)

²² Some within the jewellery field may even see this as a positive development as this allows for broader communication using these shared reference points.

narratives through and of, place is one alternative approach to the ‘style surfing’ or stereotype aesthetic. This form of working which deals with themes of rootedness, belonging and locality is particularly of interest in a time of global fluidity when people are re-forming their ideas of place-ness. In light of this, I am exploring the individual voices within the creative output of the Northern European region, therefore exposing interconnections and consistent modes of working processes that the artists use to select, filter, explore and translate the information they gather from their surrounding environments. It is not my contention that these particular approaches and methods of working are exclusive to this region, instead, through bringing about an involved and considered level of study to this research group a body of knowledge is formed with which comparable studies can then be made in the future, thus linking this group or ‘place’ to places beyond. This study aims to present a non-reactionary²³ exploration of personal perspectives of a sense of place in the context of the North, which will have interdisciplinary relevance. As the curator Valeria Siemlink proposes;

‘In an era of globalisation, cultural reciprocity is fundamental. Learning about others not only helps us to understand and appreciate what we initially consider as foreign, but also helps us to learn about ourselves. Let’s not forget that diversity, difference of opinion, and divergent artistic proposals are good things for a discipline that is working its way to recognition.’ (Siemlink 2011:21)

In this research I intend to present a progressive sense of place through the celebration of this form of working where personal notions of our surroundings, individuality and rootedness are expressed in a non-reactionary manner. In outlining this arena of practice and theory the work of the Northern makers can be debated, analysed, and criticised within the broader field.

4.3 Landscape & Jewellery

*‘Landscape in art tells us, or asks us, to think about where we belong.’
(Andrews 1999:8)*

Having studied different viewpoints on theories surrounding a ‘sense of place’ in the spheres of philosophy, human geography and cultural anthropology I was drawn towards the field of landscape studies as an interpretive method of understanding our

²³ To clarify my ‘non-reactionary’ position, I mean that I do not wish to mark globalisation and the resultant emergence of ‘style-surfing’ symptomatic of this as being a purely negative influence on

external environments. I have brought perspectives from these aforementioned fields to reflect upon jewellery practice and formed some mutually applicable parallels between landscape studies and jewellery that is made from ‘place’.

Landscape as a term, medium or genre has not been commonly used within the field of jewellery making; although its relevance is there if you look for it and I believe landscape to be a germane concept for the discussion around jewellery of place.²⁴ The term landscape emerged with some regularity within the participant’s statements on practice and this prompted me to explore this somewhat generic term more fully and to investigate how it might relate to jewellery practice in a more informed manner.

‘Landscape’ which has long meant either a pictorial representation of the countryside or the countryside itself has now altered to become not merely a genre but a medium (Mitchell 1994, Tilley 1994, Andrews 1999), and like ‘place’ this is of a subjective and transient nature; ‘The aesthetic status of a landscape is a product of cultural processes continually subject to change’²⁵ (Andrews 1999:10). Mitchell goes on to expand on the amorphous nature of landscape as a medium and also highlights the significance of the cultural perspective through which it is interpreted; ‘Landscape is a medium of exchange between the human and the natural, the self and the other. Landscape is a natural scene mediated by culture.’ (Mitchell 1994:5). Landscape has the capacity to encompass both the cultural and the natural and is applicable to both real and imagined constructions of place. The range of ways in which artists can interpret and utilise landscapes are varied and these expressive constructions can be formed with a multitude of materials from paint, to earth, stone and vegetation, video and installation; constructing ‘images which are created and read, verbal and non-verbal texts.’ (Tilley 1994:24). This opens a gateway to jewellery as an expressive construction with the narrative capacity capable of embodying concepts of landscape. I propose that with this function, jewellery also has the ability to articulate the vernacular landscape, should its author wish to go there.

Landscape has had at times, an inferior status in the fine arts, just as themes of the organic or natural have had in jewellery. Where landscape has suffered from associations with sentimental or romanticised visions of pastoral scenes, jewellery that

jewellery making, instead I see these as interesting aspects which bear influence on both my own research and production and on the creative processes adopted by contemporary makers within the wider field.

²⁴ Within the contemporary jewellery field, the idea of the ‘Body as Landscape’ has been explored in the 70’s by Gijs Bakker, Emmy van Leersum and David Watkins, as has the Architectonic theme of the modernist movement, both of which draw on laws of proportion in relation to objects and the body, but the idea of ‘Landscape’ embodied within the jewellery artefact itself has not been rigorously explored.

includes natural references has been associated with decorative commerciality and prettification. However, in the sensitive and considered approach taken by many of the contemporary jewellery makers involved in this project, landscape often comes in the form of an abstraction or appropriation. Professor Malcolm Andrews proposed an explanation of Landscape that I found to be closely aligned to my study when he describes Landscape as; ‘a framed representation...a cropped view selected and reduced...a portable memento of...experience.’ (1999:201). This could accurately describe much of the contemporary jewellery that is created as vestiges of the experiences of place. These pieces act as portable mementos and are carried somatically with us. Jenny Klemming echoes this idea:

‘Do I think of a place as something constant or do I feel like it only exists when I’m there...? Maybe my piece is a way of making the location feel like it’s there all the time - connecting it to the history of my own family and to historical events in a time line.’ (Klemming 2012)

Of the makers directly involved in this research I would state that the medium of landscape is implicated within the general practice of Klemming, Girvan, Mustonen, Tuupanen, Lehtinen, Borgegård Älgå, Jónsdóttir, Holt, Suntum and myself. Fourteen out of the sixteen makers involved in this study selected external ‘Topophilia’ places that dealt with landscapes in a holistic sense and only two chose purely internal domestic spaces. Most makers focused on large stretches of space encompassing a combination of topographical and industrial features. Of the exterior places chosen there was a leaning towards liminal and quiet places where natural features dominated.²⁶ As a whole, an engagement with both natural and cultural landscapes occupies the work of this selected group of makers (see Fig.14).

²⁵ I also note the emergent parallels between the ever-present ‘cultural image’ in landscape definitions mirroring jewellery in its role as a ‘cultural document’.

²⁶ Interestingly, for countries characteristically linked by common topographical features such as mountains, pine forests and lakes the coast featured repeatedly amongst the selected places, perhaps representing the human draw to water.

constitute an active part of the natural sphere and the processes within that sphere and our creative actions have the ability to reflect this. The French philosopher Jaques Maritain, expands on this notion when he states that; ‘Nature and man are not separate; rather than a separate thing-in-itself, for the artist, nature has reached the heart of subjectivity, as the germ of the object which is the work to be born.’ (1953:29). This is evident in this study where ‘Topophilia’ was applied by the participants to wildernesses remote from the impact of humanity, but also to places containing an interplay of the ‘man-made’ and the ‘natural’ (Fig. 15). The works of Jenny Klemming, Sara Borgegård Älgå and Eija Mustonen are just three examples of makers fully engaged in this dialogue. It is deep-set in the human psyche to find some level of sensory enjoyment in the natural environment and the influence of the natural world upon our sense of identity, both national and personal, is well acknowledged. In their publication ‘Place’ fine artists Tacita Dean and Jeremy Miller state that ‘The art produced as a result of this identity is in turn an influencing force on our relationship with, and understanding of, the natural world. This is an area rich for exploration’ (2005:50).



FIG.15. Image of Kaldbaksvik, Iceland – Helga Mogensen's 'place' © Helga Mogensen

The co-dependency of humans and the natural world has come increasingly to the fore of cultural consciousness and our attitude towards nature has become progressively more precarious over the past few decades; ‘the late 20th Century has a sharpened sense of human attenuation from the natural world and a hunger for a more intimate familiarity with that receding domain.’ (Andrews 1999:213) perhaps this is

objective principle of continuity running through the whole, from the geological rocks to the processes of aesthetic creation’ (Seamon & Zajonc 1998:9).

what the AJF mean by a ‘growing naturalistic trend’ (2011). This is part of a wider on-going re-evaluation that we have of our relationship with the natural world and the representation of landscape is an expressive element of this. My focus is not primarily concerned with the natural but there is a weight towards it in the work under study in this project. This is in part due to my informed position within the research and my interest in the contemporary uses of natural materials in jewellery. The works examined within this research all include some element of the natural, either in terms of subject matter or material, but not always both exclusively.²⁸ Despite my informed position and creative empathy I consider the jewellery represented within my research to be an accurate reflection of a significant proportion of the work coming from this region, exploring the proven dialogue that these makers have established with aspects of nature, as can be seen throughout their bodies of work.

Within the field, the recognition of the ability of jewellery practice to engage with place has been growing. Two recent exhibitions and publications have touched on some of the aspects pertinent to my research. While I was two-thirds of the way through this research project the AJF presented an exhibition of contemporary jewellery entitled ‘Geography’ at the 2011 Society of North American Goldsmiths (SNAG) Conference in Seattle. The framework for this showcase curated by Susan Cummins and Mike Holmes struck a chord with me as it reaffirmed the theoretical underpinning of my own research. I could observe elements of my approach echoed in some of the work and writing surrounding this exhibition.²⁹ Where I was using the term ‘landscape’, they were using the term ‘geography’; both encompassing their widest perimeters of meaning to embrace jewellery that centres on land, place, and emotion. Where I had expressed that landscape has the capacity to encompass both the cultural and the natural and thus the way in which we think about our place in the world, comparing it to a language, a medium and way of seeing, they stated that ‘Geography is a lens we can look through to learn about our place in the world’ (Cummins & Holmes 2011:11). While there are relevant crossovers with my research I find the term ‘geography’ too generic and believe it does not encompass the variety of interpretations I am investigating. I see

²⁸ I have found defining and using the term ‘natural’ problematic as again this has multiple interpretations and can feel rather purist a label in the muddied waters of contemporary production and processed materials. ‘Natural’ is also a loaded expression suggesting what is often interpreted as ‘natural’ being positive and the alternatives negative. As I further examined the current work being produced within the wider field in the early stages of this research it became clear that ‘natural’ could be a restrictive designating term when applied to both material and concept, and one which many makers apply to their own work with caution. I purposefully avoided using it in the ‘Topophilia Project’ Brief.

²⁹ Two of the makers that were involved in the ‘Topophilia’ project were also showing with ‘Geography’ (Klemming & Tuupanen).

geography as a part of landscape and similar to topography, but landscape as a concept encapsulates more – it is a ‘humane geography’ it is both nature and culture and moves to become interpretive. This title also represents the on-going search within the jewellery field for terminology rooted in other subjects that might describe the multifarious themes and approaches that this medium has the capacity to engage with.

Another term included within this lexicon is ‘Topos’ which is Greek for place and closely aligned with my ‘Topophilia’ approach. ‘Topos’ appeals as it is not as overloaded a term as ‘landscape’ and is more inclusive than the generic word ‘place’ or the broad term ‘geography’. ‘Topos’ is more suggestive of the wide and multi-faceted aspects of this field of work and has the capacity to encompass ideas of both landscape and place. The term ‘Topos’ was used in relation to contemporary jewellery by the Australian Professor of jewellery Robert Baines (2009) as an exhibition title and recently in his co-edited book ‘Australian Jewellery Topos: Talking about Place’ (2011). Baines explains the ‘Jewellery Topos’ exhibition as encompassing work that aims ‘to recognise and explore the ways the jewellery artefact opens our engagement with, and understanding of the personal and external places we inhabit.’(2009). This showcase included a very broad field of influence, all eighteen artists involved were Melbourne Institute of Technology students or graduates and the links to place in their works sometimes appeared tenuous. In the catalogue place is talked about very much as an expanded notion – where even the construction process becomes place (joining of metals/materials). To me, some of the work included in this exhibition appears to have been bent to the theme rather than fitting it naturally. Despite the accompanying texts detailing interesting and relevant modes of working with place, I feel that some of the work itself weakens the proposal of ‘Jewellery Topos’ as much of it does not appear to be actively engaged with place in an embedded sense.



FIG.16. 'Caithness' – Research Images, 2011 © Beth Legg

Considering my dissatisfaction with the available terminology I have to ask whether using the term 'landscape' in relation to contemporary jewellery is actually helpful to the field. Evidently the word is rather fluid – it has been described as more than a genre - as a medium, a tool, a language, a narrative, a raw material, a way of seeing and interpreting, the embodiment of an abstract and the reflection of a cultural image. Perhaps, as the cultural geographer Stephen Daniels puts it; 'We should beware attempts to define landscape, to resolve its contradictions; rather we should abide in its duplicity.' (1988:218). Rather than appropriate the term, I am adopting the concept of the medium. As a concept it remains valuable to my discourse on contemporary jewellery and theories of place for if, as WTJ Mitchell states; 'Landscape is a medium found in all cultures' (1994:5), it is a relevant and applicable vehicle to be explored and utilised within the field of contemporary jewellery of place. Concepts of landscape are key to this research as it is one method through which we can move 'a sense of place' forward. I am not suggesting that jewellery practice of this kind subsumes itself to overloaded terminology – terminology that many find obstructive. Instead I am proposing that there are valid theories and methods within landscape studies that can be applied within a jewellery framework. It might appear incongruous to suggest that we use landscape – a field, like jewellery, that has struggled with its identity and traditional binds in the past as a way of moving a sense of place forward. But this concept embodies important ideas that jewellery makers can utilise in their approach to place; it is a mode of seeing that allows us to position our work in relation to its subject and the cultures in which it resides. The contemporary landscape field has shifted beyond

preconceptions of pictorial imagery whilst acknowledging that it is not a substitute for the real (Hill), perhaps the jewellery field can also actively contribute to these ideals. One of the areas where I feel landscape is most influential as a method that can be applied within the field of jewellery is in its representation of the acts of interpretation and selection (Fig. 16). Through the potential of choice within landscape as ‘a way of seeing’, we can gain an insight into the maker’s interpretation of place at that time. Places can be consumed both in physical material terms and also in the abstract and emotive interpretation of an artist’s personal sense of place. Landscape, above all, represents a means of conceptual ordering that stresses relations: differences, commonalities and singularity. I am investigating both Place and Landscape in this context: the interplay of aspects of both the holistic Landscape and the personal constructs of Place, and the manner in which contemporary jewellery makers approach these themes. I propose that jewellery has the ability to actively engage with concepts of landscape and that jewellery that does this successfully has the capacity to participate in the moving-beyond of the banal visual image to embrace a more sensory representation that contemporary landscape studies appear to seek.



FIG.17. Ramon Puig Cuyas 'Bilustris n°1114' brooch, (2006) silver, plastic, nickel, acrylic paint. Online image <http://bijoucontemporain.unblog>, located on 02/07/12

In order to further illustrate this I will give three examples of jewellery makers that reside out with my geographical research perimeters that I consider to have been engaged with place in an informed sense throughout their careers. The works of these established makers illustrate the diversity of form and approach that can be involved in

this sphere of study. The first is Spanish artist Ramón Puig Cuyàs - best known for his brooches of microcosmic worlds (Figs 17 & 18). In many of his works abstracted landscapes are evident in found objects or materials appropriated from the environment. In these pieces there is a tension or dialectic generated between the original (real) and the representational. The landscape gives form to a way of seeing that becomes visible in the work. Cuyàs is actively engaged in the discourse surrounding the field both as practitioner and teacher. He sees an important role of the jewellery object as part of a symbolic code that has, in the past, 'allowed man to represent himself and communicate with the invisible and transcendental world' (Cuyàs 2001). In his work Cuyàs has engaged with both physical and spiritual aspects of his immediate environment and the broader spiritual universe. He says:

'The artist integrates with those who contemplate, a quiet contemplation, one which, little by little, becomes an emotional reality, a sensitivity transformed into an inner landscape. The landscape, specifically the sea, the Mediterranean, becomes a symbolic reality; this is the constant context in my work. To create is to seek a re-encounter with inner landscapes; it is the search for one's roots in the universal using the sea as a metaphor.' (Cuyàs 2011)

In his most recent series of works he studies the relationship between the body and the virtual space that surrounds it: moving place to both a more intimate and expanded dimension.



FIG.18. Ramón Puig Cuyàs, 2010, N°1336 Net-work series Brooch, nickel silver, online image located from <http://puigcuyas2.blogspot.co.uk>

Place is explored through process in the reduced elemental pieces born of meditation and ritual by Elisabeth Holder (Figs. 19 & 20). For over a decade the German jewellery professor has travelled to Neolithic sites throughout the British Isles and Malta, studying the ritual meanings embedded within them – ‘it was necessary to return again and again, attaching, absorbing, simply being there in the place.’ (2001:17) Holder also drew on memory traces of experience gained from the sites in the process of developing her ‘Zeichen’ (symbol) series. She takes the ‘engrams of experiences, impressions, and perceptions as points of departure’ (Holder 2001:18) for her alternating creative processes. In this body of work her earlier language of abstract geometry finds a synthesis with forms that appear to have been dictated by more organic processes. These works are rooted in extensive field research and the time and process invested in their creation is engrained in them. Holder approaches place through meditation and intuition, developing an almost symbiotic relationship with her work where she establishes a dialogue with her material rather than a mastery of it.

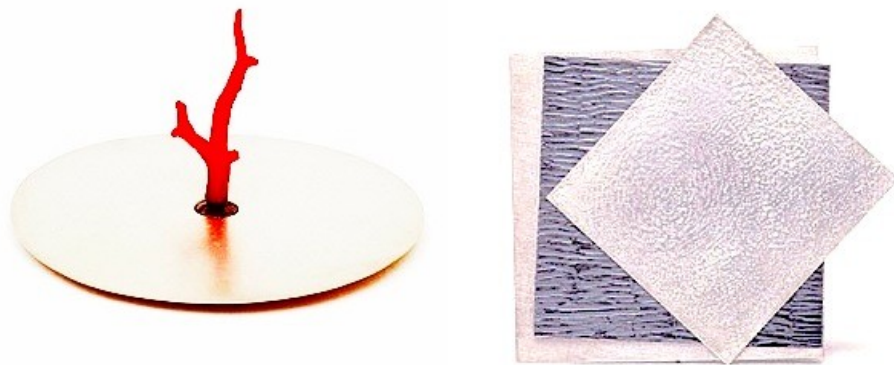


FIG.19 (Left) Elisabeth Holder, ‘Dreh-und Angelpunkt’ Object, 2001, refined silver, magnet, coral, steel 80mm

FIG.20. (Right) Elisabeth Holder ‘Schichtungen’ Brooch, 2001, refined silver, magnet, iron, silver 50 x 50mm, both online images from www.kunst.at

Cynthia Cousens is another practitioner who has worked extensively within landscapes. Raised on a farm in Suffolk, by parents she describes as ‘observers of small changes in the patterns of agriculture and rural environment’ (Stoddart 2008), she inherited a close affinity with the surrounding landscape. Her earlier working practices began with walking and drawing on the South Downs where she gathered natural objects, constructed models, and developed pieces that were linear and delicate in form. These pieces were the result of spontaneous working methods; ‘A new philosophy emerged from the experience of working in a more intuitive way.’ (*ibid*). The

neckpieces she produced during this time, with titles such as ‘Briar’ and ‘Trail’ suggest their sources. These observational methods still inform her practice and are particularly evident in her residency projects.³⁰ Her jewellery explores emotional experience reflected through a visual language derived from landscape and materialised through a wide range of media moving from precious metals to include video, photography, installation and textiles (Figs 21 & 27). Some of the themes Cousens has explored have included ephemerality and non-materiality in jewellery, the fragility of the rural landscape and the human condition. In more recent exhibitions, such as the retrospective solo *Shift*, she has challenged conventions and traditions in jewellery such as its dependence on material substance or value and its ‘presumed inherent longevity’ (Cousens 2002).

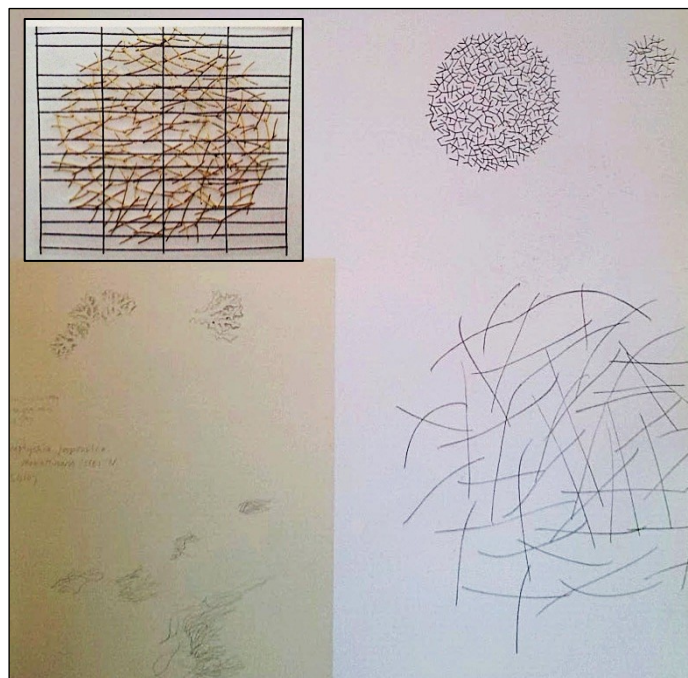


FIG.21. Cynthia Cousens, ‘Crossing and Rows Brooch’ from the Welbeck project (inset), 18ct yellow and red gold, 80mm x 90mm, 2001 and sketchbook extract from ‘*Shift*’.

These different artists from separate countries devour imagined and physical landscapes in both their miniscule detail and their ethereal nature. I use these three individual examples purely to illustrate the diverse scope involved when interpretations of landscapes are made tangible in jewellery form, of course there are others I could mention whose work is actively engaged with aspects of place - Francis Willemstijn in The Netherlands, Dorothea Prühl in Germany, Julie Blyfield in Australia. All of these

³⁰ Cousens’ research on the landscape has taken place through residencies at the JamFactory Adelaide, the Welbeck Estate England, UNITEC Auckland and Tainan National College of the Arts Taiwan.

makers illustrate a particular sensitivity to their surrounding environments and express this through contemplative interaction with materials and process.

In this chapter I have outlined the theoretical discourse that underpins my research and contextualised this research with related jewellery studies within the field. Applying concepts of landscape as an approach through which jewellery makers can investigate a 'sense of place' requires the tools of exploration that are our sensory perception, emotional engagement, imagination and memory. These means of interaction and reflection have bearing upon embodied consciousness, which comes into play in the act of perception. In his essay '*Places Sensed, Senses Placed; Towards a Sensuous Epistemology of Environments*', Steven Field writes that 'In the term the 'sense of place' the idiom is so pervasive that the word 'sense' is almost completely transparent.' He asks; 'how are the perceptual engagements we call sensing critical to conceptual constructions of place?' (2005:179). This is a key question I aim to address in the following chapter, and something which will be further explored through examining the manner in which the jewellery makers have engaged in the Topophilia Box project.

5. PERCEPTION

5.1 'Sensescapes' - Sensory Embodiment in Place

'The meaning of place is grounded in existential or lived consciousness of it. It follows that the limits of place are grounded in the limits of human consciousness. Places are as diffuse and differentiated as the range of identities and significances accorded to them.' (Tilley 1994:15)

Conceptual issues relating to notions of embodied consciousness and perception helped form my reflections on the work produced for this project and I believe that embodied consciousness plays a central role within the creative process of many of the jewellery makers working in this field (feeding into what I will expand on in Chapter 6.3 as their 'intuitive' working processes, where thinking occurs through making). Merleau-Ponty believed that the senses were experienced presences of what later philosophers and cognitive psychologists called the 'Embodied Mind' (Valera, Thomson & Rosch 1991), the 'Body in the Mind' (Johnston 1997) or 'Embodied Consciousness' (Damasio 2000, Edelman 2001). Philosophers and cognitive scientists who study embodied cognition and the embodied mind believe that the nature of the

human mind is largely determined by the form of the human body. They argue that aspects of the physical body shape all facets of cognition, such as ideas, thoughts, concepts and categories. These include the perceptual system, the intuitions that underlie the ability to move, activities and interactions with our environment and the basic understanding of the world that is built into the body and the brain. Tilley affirms this idea:

‘The human body provides the fundamental mediation point between thought and the world...the world and the subject reflect the flow into each other through the body that provides the living bond with the world.’ (1994:14).

Contemporary neuroscientists such as Antonio Damasio (1999) and Gerald Edelman (2001) consider embodied understanding to be a crucial, if often neglected, form of consciousness - one that does not depend on experiencing an overtly conscious awareness of the sensations elicited by the event, but on a more liminal sensate experience that is not communicable in words (Rubidge & Stones 2009). These neuroscientists argue that our embodied consciousness of the environment, including nuances of feeling, which Damasio calls ‘background emotions’, underlies the particularity of an individual’s rational analyses. Embodied consciousness is notoriously difficult to capture in words but could most generally be described as the matrix upon which knowledge, and indeed the specificity of our perceptions, are built (Rubidge & Stones 2009). The phenomenological perspective of my enquiry reflects this, exploring a sense of place through the integrated and inseparable relationship of our perceptual experiences and processes.

Interrelated with embodied cognition research is the study of perception, which has undergone huge reassessment over the last fifty years. This began in 1966 when J.J. Gibson noted that rather than being independent of each other, the perceptual systems are inextricably interconnected. Thus perception is not merely multi-modal, but a complex integrated sensory system in which the various perceptual systems are in a continual state of interaction (Rubidge & Stones 2009). Gibson also notes that as well as being multi-modal; perception is selective, arguing that, whilst any perceptual array contains all elements that are available to our perception, many of those elements are not relevant to the perceiver at any given time. The value of an element within the perceptual array is determined by a combination of pragmatic circumstances, intentionality, attention, and prior experience (Rubidge & Stones 2009). Further, the processes of selective perception occur at several stages within the act of perceiving, from the initial recognition and collection/categorization of stimuli, through the

selective attention to competing stimuli, to the interpretation of those stimuli. Perceptual experience is not isolated to individual senses, but is a dynamic process comprising of the interweaving of several perceptual modalities (Gibson 1966, Rubidge & Stones 2009) ‘The meaning of the senses is in their use, and that perception is always mediated by the prevailing order of sensory values.’ (Howes 2005:143) (i.e. in the field of touch temperature is privileged over texture and in sight colour over line). In order to challenge the ocular-centricism that arguably underpins much scholarship in the arts some academics are looking to emerging interdisciplinary fields that focus on sensorial studies of human interaction with physical environments. One such group initiated by the Manchester Architecture Research Centre (MARC) has been named ‘Sensescapes’. This field of research incorporates the full range of sensory experience in the broadest range of disciplines as; ‘the concept of ‘sensescapes’ enables an interrogation of everyday life that incorporates the meeting of mind, body and environment.’ My understanding of a progressive ‘sense of place’ and the concept of ‘sensescapes’ appear closely aligned.

The notion of cohesive sensory perception is also significant in the development of, and reflections on, the artistic strategies employed in this project. The Topophilia brief entails an embodiment in place and an immersion in process. The objects and artefacts gathered and created signify a synthesis of interpretations and acts of selection. I see this selective perception as the first step to attaining ownership and in turn the individual authorship (Bernabei, Margetts) of an artefact. Even when we look we are already shaping and interpreting (Andrews 1999:1); we are selecting and editing in the process of judging a view – preferring one aspect of the environment to another. ‘We are constructing a hierarchical arrangement of the components within a simple view so that it becomes a complex mix of visual facts and imaginative construction.’ (ibid). This idea of the informed and selective sensory interpretation of our surroundings is reinforced in ‘*Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation*’, where, drawing on perceptual psychology, E. H. Gombrich states that; ‘The innocent eye is a myth. All thinking is sorting, classifying. All perceiving relates to expectation and therefore to comparisons.’³¹ Both conscious and un-conscious acts of editing and selecting occurred at almost every stage of the ‘Topophilia’ project. Tilley reinforces the

³¹ Gombrich goes on to say that ‘what is new is always accommodated to what is familiar.’(1960:4) The act of accommodating the unknown to the known is particularly relevant to the different perspectives on ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’ views on landscape – for example those who live and work within the natural or rural environment and those who have a romanticised and escapist view of it.

idea that neutral vision is a myth in relation to how we connect to landscapes when he states that:

‘Subjectivity and objectivity connect in a dialectic producing a place for Being in which the topography and physiography of the land and thought remain distinct but play into each other as an ‘intelligible landscape’, a spatialisation of Being.’ (Tilley 1994:14)

This is also interesting when interpreting object stimulus from removed or informed viewpoints and is of significance when we go on to look at the artists’ responses to the Topophilia boxes in phase 2. The experience of the environment and of the things that inhabit that environment is produced by the particular selective modes of distinguishing and combining the senses within the culture under study (Howes). So, if ‘what is new is always accommodated to what is familiar’, then this should have weight upon the response stage of the Topophilia project where the participants are moved from a multi-modal and interconnected sensory perception of place to a more removed and reflective stage. Sara Borgegård Älgå voices this issue when she states; ‘In the response piece I really tried to keep my own “glasses” on’ and Per Suntum states that he ‘was acutely aware of the ‘other persons vision’.

Another significant role of the senses is in stimulating memories. Susan Stewart makes a case for the role of the senses on our autobiographical memory. She states that the senses are not merely organs used in responding to, and apprehending the world, but that they are material memories: ‘These memories are made material in that the body carries them somatically – registered in our conscious or unconscious knowledge.’ (2005:59) This idea corresponds to one introduced by the French philosopher Henri Bergson in *Matter & Memory* (1896) where he gives the view of our senses as cumulative and accomplished rather than purely given;

‘There is no perception which is not full of memories. With the immediate and the present data of our senses, we mingle a thousand details out of our past experiences.’ (Bergson [1896] 1980:33)

Aspects of memory resonate strongly within contemporary jewellery practices, as is exemplified by the work of Cuyàs who refers to himself as being a ‘memory nomad’: interested in ‘re-establishing a new humanism that enlightens us through new paths of change’ (Campos 2003). The notion of memory is also of importance within the wider practice, both where the makers are creating from a memory and where the viewer is deriving associations from an object as a memento. The stimulus held within the Topophilia boxes are second-order accounts of places, and in the case of the response

stage boxes they move to become third order accounts of place as they move from a once embodied territory to an interpreted one and finally an imagined one.

Our capacity to remember³², often stimulated through sensory perception, leads us to emotion as another strong aspect that bears influence upon this project. Topophilia is, after all ‘a love of place’, and so in the discussion around theories of place I cannot ignore the subject of emotion and how strongly it is involved in both our perception and the interpretation and expression of said perception. In ‘*The Feeling of What Happens: Body and Emotion in the Making of Consciousness*’ Damasio states that emotions occur in one of two types of circumstances; one being through sensory processing and the other being through memory conjured via objects and situations and represented as ‘images in the thought process’ (1999:56). There is a huge range of stimuli that constitute inducers for certain types of emotion. Damasio goes on to say that ‘The consequence of extending emotional value to objects that were not biologically prescribed to be emotionally laden is that the range of stimuli that can potentially produce emotions is infinite.’ (1999:58). Maritain affirms that this form of emotion is more than a base preference, and that ‘such an emotion transcends mere subjectivity, and draws the mind towards things known and towards knowing more. And so induces dreams in us.’ (Maritain 1953:7). This can come about through imagination and projection; ‘thus do the slow moving clouds in the sky or the immensity of the sea...speak endlessly to man of the human soul.’ (*ibid*). Emotion is central to the interpretation of our sense of place, the ‘things’ situated within landscapes and the manner in which artists transform their experience of place into a tangible form, as Damasio goes on to state; ‘Some level of emotion is the obligate accompaniment of thinking about oneself or about ones surroundings’ (1999:58) and as Maritain affirms: ‘Emotion is essential in the perception of beauty’ (1953:8). Sensory perception and memory commonly initiate some form of emotion in us and this is one reason why I asked the jewellery makers to choose a place they had strong positive feelings towards. Working from a positive basis would be more appealing to the participants and in turn this would give a more productive return in terms of object data.

³² This notion of recall is based on the concept formed by the psychologist Frederick Bartlett who introduced the idea that we do not recall facsimiles of perceived objects or places, but rather reconstruct, as best we can, some approximation of the original perception (Bartlett 1954, Damasio 1999).

he talks of the *undividedness [l'indivision]* of the sensing and the sensed; 'Visible and mobile my body is a thing among other things; it is caught up in the fabric of the world; and its cohesion is that of a thing...the world is made of the same stuff as the body.' (Merleau-Ponty 1964:163) This has its roots in Heidegger's 1927 philosophy of Being-in-the-world, which strives to overcome the object/subject division through interpreting and understanding the world in terms of possibilities. In a *Dasien* (being-there) state the body is emphasised as the primary device through which we perceive the world. Merleau-Ponty (1962), Gibson (1966), Fields (2005) and Nöe (2007) also argue that the process of physiological integration and the formation of 'inward tapestries' of landscapes, lie at the heart of perceptual experience, and crucially that movement within an environment is a central factor of embodied perception. It is the latter that gives rise to the constant reconfiguring of the environment and our perception of it, occurring when we reorient ourselves in any environment. This notion is of importance to the practice of walking, for the movement in and through an environment is not incidental to the perception of the environment, but central to the very formation of that perception (Merleau-Ponty 1962).

5.2 The Practice of Walking

'The kinaesthetic interplay of the tactile, sonic and visual senses is drawn upon by motion and thus emplacement always implicates the intertwined nature of sensual bodily presence and perceptual engagement.' (Fields 2005:181)

Walking is both the medium and the outcome of a research practice: it is also a basic human act; it is encounter - giving form to the perception of place. The art of walking is 'simultaneously an art of consciousness, habit and practice that is both constrained by place and landscape and constitutive of them.' (Tilley 1994:29). In '*Walkscapes: Walking as an Aesthetic Practice*', architect Francesco Careri suggests that walking was humanity's first aesthetic act:

'Walking inherently contains the symbolic meanings of the primal creative act; roaming as architecture of the landscape, where the term landscape indicates the action of the symbolic as well as physical transformation of anthropic space'. (Careri 2002:20).

Walking, apart from being an action that has had an obvious use value through time (hunting, foraging, trading, etc.) has also assumed dimensions of discovery, ownership and order: an activity that enabled early human beings to penetrate what Careri calls the 'territories of chaos' (2002:21). Careri suggests that walking, by virtue of being an act

that puts humans in direct contact with traversed spaces, was in a certain sense the origin and expression of disciplines and practices as diverse as sculpture, architecture, religion, and literature. He describes walking as ‘an unconscious, natural, automatic action...a symbolic form with which to transform the landscape’ (2002:19) and says that ‘this action has given rise to the most important relation man has established with the land, the territory.’ (2002:20).

In the modern age, walking not only assumes the ability to generate symbolic territorial meanings, fostering a sense of belonging as had been the case with early humans, but also becomes a means to propose new ways of encountering and evaluating places. Without the introduction of movement, spatial perception stays limited to a static vision. In order to form an embodied understanding of place it is fundamental to tread on the ground, to move through space, finding its multiple dimensions. It is also crucial to our comprehension of how both urban and natural spaces can be moulded by different eventualities: the different light during the day, the weather, the memories evoked by a certain atmosphere, noise or smell, and the emotional state of mind of the individual. Place is never totally perceived, because its perception is dependent on the moment in time in which it is experienced. Far from being a passive act, the meditative pleasure of walking (Maritain 1953) is a way in which one’s disposition towards place can, by artistic practices, be further thought through and revised, bringing about a personal knowledge of place.

A person walking is not just someone implanted within a space, but someone who can, by means of creative praxis, interact with, and (as is the case of the ‘*walkthroughs*’ of Richard Long or the sculptures of Andy Goldsworthy) perhaps intervene in, various aspects of that place. Long’s work is about mobility, lightness and freedom: place, locality, time and distance. He works using his body as a scale ‘in the reality of landscapes’ (Long). Long underlines the idea of an embedded connection between his consciousness, his body and the world given emphasis through the act of walking: ‘My footsteps make the mark. My legs carry me across the country. It’s like a way of measuring the world. I love that connection to my own body. It’s me to the world.’ (Higgins 2012). Careri identifies key moments of passage in art history when walking was the main aesthetic agent, most notably in the Dada and Surrealist movements (the Surrealists described the dream-like and subliminal aspect of walking as *Déambulation* capable of revealing the ‘unconscious zones of space and the repressed memories of place’ (Careri 21:2002) as well as later in Minimalism and Land Art. To varying degrees the meditative process of walking as a research practice has

been reflected in art movements over time and is an important method of cementing our embodied consciousness in a place whether employed intentionally or not.

Walking as a research practice is actively adopted by a number of the artists in this project (Girvan, Holt, Jónsdóttir, Klemming, Legg, Mogensen, Suntum) where notions of meditative and intuitive processes recur within their statements of practice. Through this sensory encounter with landscape and the meditative activity of walking these makers are cementing the relevance of the body in all stages of the jewellery process – from stimulus stage to carrier and wearer. The body is a tool – primarily as the sensory instrument of perception through embodied consciousness, then as the creative force of self and jewellery object and ultimately as the somatic messenger of the artefact as worn. Whether this translation of experience is made tangible in the form of mark making such as the process aesthetics visible in the work of makers such as Alm, Girvan and Borgegård Älgå, or in the appropriated objects and materials of Lehtinen, the materials used are vital to the language of place. ‘The fact is that if we want to describe it, we must say that...experience breaks forth into things and transcends itself in them.’ (Merleau-Ponty 1962:303). This brings us on to another form of experience and knowledge, one that is often practiced alongside walking - that of object collection.

6. PROCESS

6.1 Collection as a Form of Knowledge

‘One cannot know everything about the world but one can at least approach closed knowledge through the collection.’ (Stewart 1993:161)

The engagement with raw materials acquired from the surrounding landscape has taken place since the beginning of human existence and most probably brought about the creation of the first jewel. The act of collection as a creative practice has been explored to some extent in the fine arts; from the time of Marcel Duchamp through to the works of artists such as Joseph Cornell and the more recent beachcombing explorations of Robert Callender, but it has not been extensively investigated as a method of research or expressive form within the applied arts. Collection is a process I decided to explore after both reflecting on my own involved practice and through my anecdotal knowledge that collection is used as a research tool to greater or lesser extents by many of my peers³³. It

³³ One of the reasons that the box methodology was chosen was that collection was unlikely to be an alien process to the invited jewellery makers; fourteen out of the sixteen makers involved in this project stated collection as tool utilised within their normal research practice.

is a natural human act and one especially common for those engaged in artistic practices. In the artists' collection (Figs 23 & 24) I see the collection itself not as the finite product but instead it is a tool, a stimulus for the creation of further associations and narratives. A collection is often about containment, grouping and composition and place can be accounted for through the elements within a collection. This is both in terms of the physical content and the abstract representation of the memories and experiences of a place that the collection represents. These groupings of objects, through their accumulation and arrangement, are able to present a language of place, which no single element could perhaps sustain. Jeweller Karen Johansson discusses what collection means to her in her personal statement:

‘I collect real objects and images, seized from my daily surroundings. In fact, my studio is an endlessly growing collection of bits and pieces, both visible and invisible, that become parts of a map I keep updating and revising. My work is a treasure hunt among things and ideas finally fashioning into pieces of jewellery made to be desired, worn, questioned, or loved’ (Johansson 2012)

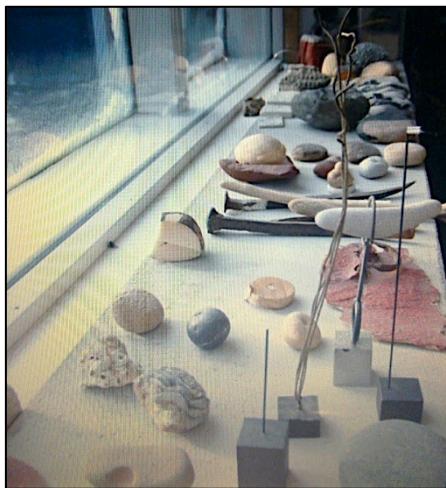


FIG.23. Per Suntum, Studio Collection, 2011 © Per Suntum



FIG.24. Beth Legg, Studio Collection, 2012 © Beth Legg

In this context, accumulation becomes collection when the objects are brought into relation with one another and given significance. Collection as a research tool then moves to become a mode of knowledge. Per Suntum calls this ‘learning through seeing’:

‘I do collect all sorts of objects that I find interesting at a given moment. Sometimes to learn through seeing, for instance a twig - a branch and its related parts, sometimes for the pure inspiration certain things give. Above all, I have a profound feeling of wonderment always when structures, colours, the immaculate beauty of

natural creations etc. are contemplated.’ (Suntum 2012)

The human appropriation of materials taken from a source which holds emotional attachment and meaning can lead to various experiments involving the assimilation of the artist within the landscape. Objects that form material references to places seen and touched are important rooting elements for the biographies of both the person and their interpretation of place. This results in a highly personal representation of that place. Here the act of selection and choice brings issues of self and identity into what becomes a cycle of self-referential exchange between the artist and their environment. The jewellery made as a result of this process has the ability to represent the act of reclaiming the experience of place. Deyan Sudjic, Director of the Design Museum in London introduces a way to explore the idea of collection by understanding it as:

‘[A] bid to impose control and order on that tiny part of a disorderly universe which is within the reach of an individual. Collecting can form some kind of solace. Life has no pattern but a collection can create at least the sense of material consistency that offers a kind of meaning.’ (Sudjic: 2011).

Susan Stewart refers to collected objects as ‘souvenirs’³⁴ (1984:152). Stewart states that in order for souvenirs to retain their ‘magic’ ‘The place of origin must remain unavailable. In the case of artists’ objects, this is also true to a point, where the objects are acting as signifiers of an encompassing metaphor for place (Figs. 25 & 26). I would add that this ‘magic’ can also be expressed through the totemic or memento qualities of an object, which can be read through the biographical memories embodied within them. Continuing on this thread Stewart goes on to say that:

‘Nature is arranged diachronically through the souvenir; its synchrony and atemporality are manipulated into a human time and order. The pressed flowers under glass speak to the significance of their owner in nature and not to themselves in nature. They are a sample of a larger and more sublime nature, a nature differentiated by human experience, by human history.’ (Stewart 1984:152)

The ‘pressed flowers’ that Stewart uses as an example do speak of the ‘owner’ in nature to the observer but when the owner is also the collector they are a signifier of a more specific place and origin; a stimulus for the memory of the moment of appropriation and sensory embodiment within place. Mikel Dufrenne refers to this as ‘The stubborn presence of the natural object.’ (1973:85). Man’s relationship with nature through the aesthetic object brings forth questions of identity and the true character of

nature. The potency of nature is embedded in the form of object or material and so, when it is appropriated (in the case of both natural found objects and natural materials) it enters into an artistic relationship but retains its natural quality and communicates it through art; ‘We can thus say that the aesthetic object is nature in that it expresses nature, not by imitating it but by submitting to it.’ (Dufrenne1973: 84).



FIG.25 Image of Kaldbaksvik, Iceland & FIG.26 Helga Mogensens Studio, Both © Helga Mogensen

The ‘stubborn presence’ of the natural object becomes a key challenge to jewellers who might wish to utilise it within their work. Working with any collected or appropriated object, natural or synthetic, which may be considered complete in itself, involves the inclusion of an element which can embody potent symbolism and which can overpower any additional man-made element. Achieving a successful balance or juxtaposition between the made and the appropriated is a test for a maker. Several of the ‘Topophilia’ artists expressed a difficulty in working with objects that they perceived to be beautiful in their own right (Alm, Borgegård, Holt, Mogensen, Legg, Tuupanen). Alm describes them as ‘loaded’ objects and Mogensen feels she is ‘tampering with the

³⁴ Found objects that embody biographical memories are termed as souvenirs by Stewart although I find this word too redolent of commercially produced ornaments. I would prefer to apply the term memento within this research, as it lies more comfortably within the established jewellery lexicon.

beauty’, for Tanner the ‘spell is broken’ when she comes to use a beautiful object or material. Holt declares that she is more comfortable working with ‘the seemingly mundane’ (in this case cement) and Borgegård Älgå feels ‘a certain kind of dishonesty when working with them.’ This is something I can relate to in my practice where I have struggled with the ‘ethics of appropriation’ in the past. I have learnt to choose my found objects or materials carefully because often their voice is too suggestive or dominant for me to work with. Although some may see the act of appropriation as a short cut to ready-made symbolism, I believe it is in fact a true challenge to achieve a lightness of touch, balance and originality without the work seeming forced. Bettina Speckner, Tehri Tolvanen, Jack Cunningham and Helen Britton are examples of contemporary makers who consistently achieve this balance.

Many artists who work with and around themes of landscape and place are moved by nostalgia for origin and presence (Girvan, Legg, Barklund, Jónsdóttir, Mustonen, Tanner, Lehtinen). A creative research stage between being in the place and making work at the bench often involves collection; removing objects from their original contexts and placing them within a larger group thus creating an interplay of metaphorical objects that are contiguous to their embodiment within the place of origin. This memento quality investigated through collected objects was particularly evident in the work of Mogensen, Girvan, Lehtinen and Tanner. Helga Mogensen articulates her approach to collection thus:

‘The collection of objects such as driftwood, colorful objects and sea driven things plays an enormous role in my process. The place where I go to pick up things is only accessible during the summer, so the anticipation adds another side to the process. When I arrive at the beach I am gone, I experience a different mindset and I become one with the beach. This experience is amazing, mostly because it continues to the bench. I remember where I pick up the objects, and I relate to each object that takes the journey with me.’ (Mogensen 2012)

As Stewart states; ‘The collection is a form of art as play, a form of reframing of objects within a world of attention and manipulation of context.’ (1993:153). The level of categorisation and organisation is dependent on the nature of the collector themselves. These forms of artistic collections tend to be compositions of intrinsic objects, complete in themselves not only because of the sensory and aesthetic qualities that have made them attractive to the collector but because of their provenance to their place of origin. If the object must be removed from its context in order to serve as a trace of it, it can then be restored through narrative or reverie (Stewart, Waldman). The

supplanting of origin through collection and arrangement can form an intermediary process taken by artists towards the interpretation of the sensory experience of place into a jewellery object. The knowledge embodied within the collection is both consciously and sub-consciously revisited during the creative process towards the development of new jewellery objects. As Helena Lehtinen states;

‘Collection is an important part of the process and collection of objects on my desk is essential [essential] to start a project. I need all kinds of stuff (readymades) to feed me and give me reason to start working. This visual presence is very important. I often leave the materials or objects, which I have in the beginning on my desk out of the final pieces. But without them the process doesn’t start.’ (Lehtinen 2012)

The collection as stimulus is both a complete entity and the individual narratives that lie behind it; each element works in combination towards the representation of a new whole that becomes the context of the collection itself. This provides an important transformative stage in the knowledge and translation of place where collection feeds into the creation of the jewellery artefact (as is illustrated with the ‘Topophilia’ boxes and resultant pieces). Through the experience embedded in these objects the acts of selection and reflection move to become an active translation of experience of the surrounding environment in the artist’s voice.

6.2 The Translation of Experience

‘Each work of art is a container, a reliquary in which the artist has deposited their ideas, emotions, doubts, experiences, impressions and definitely a part of themselves, in the intention of reconnecting it all.’ Ramòn Puig Cuyàs (Bernabei 2011:173)

During this research project the group of jewellery makers have found themselves confronted by many issues, conceptual and pragmatic, in their attempts to articulate traces of experience gleaned from sensory perception and embodied understanding elicited whilst in their chosen places. These include issues concerning both the nature of consciousness and perception, as well as the more practical issues associated with the processing and communication of their experiences. The diversity of approaches adopted by the makers ranged from methodical (Tanner) to spontaneous (Alm), from the more conceptual (Borgegård Älgå) to the process driven (Tuupanen) with some makers stepping further away from their normal practice than others. These personal

interpretations of place allow some illuminating insights into the creative process and the potential of materials.³⁵

Any means of recording an experience will be reductive because, as discussed, any experiential event is a complex multiplicity of smaller events and sensory experiences; it is not possible to re-present it in its entirety. Even the most precise rendering of an experience does not capture the full experience, as the represented characteristics are physical, not sensuous (Rubidge & Stones) - perception is more detached rather than embedded. These different levels of experience and perception are reflected in the box method where the artists adopted different approaches during the altered phases of the project (see chapter 7.5). In phase 1 they are working from a sensuous and embedded perception of place and in phase 2 a more physical and detached representation of place.³⁶ Where only two or three objects were placed in a box the responding artist often found these very challenging to perceive a place from at all (e.g. Alm, Barklund). In the case of imagery – used by many of the artists, V.S. Ramachandran, extrapolating from his scientific experiments into object recognition proposes that:

‘What the artist tries to do (either consciously or unconsciously) is...to amplify [the essence of the source stimulus] in order to more powerfully activate the same neural mechanisms that would be activated by the original object’ (Ramachandran & Hirstein, 1999:16)

Expanding on this hypothesis, Professor of human physiology Vittorio Gallese (2007) and his colleagues claim that visual imagery, particularly that which represents familiar situations of which the viewer has an embodied experience, can initiate neurological or physiological activity similar to that initiated in response to the original stimulus. Gallese and art historian David Freedberg (2007) have extended this to include the notion that even still life paintings can engender an embodied simulation:

‘[T]he perception of the objects leads to the activation of motor regions of the brain that control our interactions with the same objects...mechanism of motor simulation, coupled with the emotional resonance it triggers ... is likely to be a crucial component of the aesthetic experience of objects in art works: even a still-life can be ‘animated’ by the embodied simulation it evokes in the observer’s brain.’ (Freedberg & Gallese 2007:201)

³⁵ I give a more detailed account of the specific works produced during the ‘Topophilia’ project in Chapt. 7

If this hypothesis holds true it seems reasonable to assume that the makers who were responding to source material would find it easier if said material held some level of familiarity for them. The notion of embodied simulation is of particular interest when we consider the response stage of the project and examine how the makers related to the objects inside the second box, as it is natural to adapt what we see to what is familiar (Gombrich). This is evident when we compare the work made for both phases and where both pieces retain the maker's strong individual voice or authorship within the artefacts. The overall manner in which the makers responded to Phase 2 illustrates that they accommodated the contents of the objects to their own eye, this came more easily for some than others depending on their approach and interpretation of the box contents they received (Chapter 7.4/Appendix B).

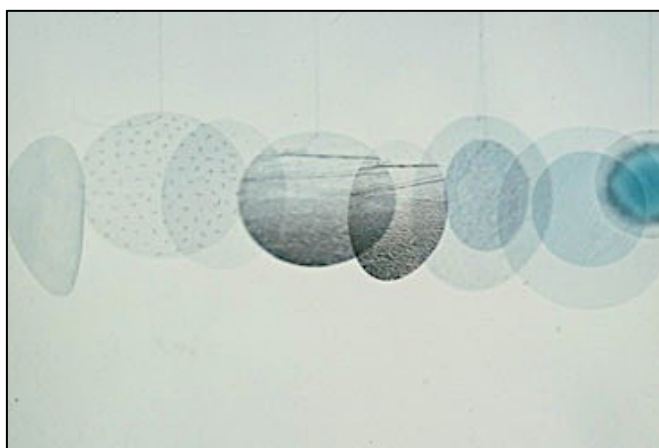


FIG.27. Cynthia Cousens, 'The Waves', acetate, print, dye, monofilament, light, shadow, 1.5m wide installation, 2000. Photo: Sara Morris. Courtesy: Crafts Council Collection.

Ramachandran, Gallese and Freedberg discuss the interpretation of objects in pictorial form, but this could also be applicable to the three-dimensional fragment representations of topographical or architectural features that were found in some of the 'Topophilia' boxes. Even less tangible atmospheric elements such as the waxing and waning qualities of light for instance have been expressed through jewellery. As a medium it is capable of conveying an extensive range of atmospheric and visual aspects from places, real or imagined and this is exemplified in Cynthia Cousens' 2002 'Shift' works. These installation-based pieces are abstract representations of experience and emotion in expressive 'smudges' of colour and studies of the effect of shifting light.

³⁶ It seems clear that a purely physical representation alone was not enough for a number of the makers as they included text and photographic images in their boxes so that the interpretation became more explicitly narrative or poetic – I myself did this.

Here it is evident that jewellery has the capacity to capture an abstract expression of an experience and this is most often created not through the facsimile imitation of features from the environment but through an understanding and interpretation of the core qualities and feelings elicited by a place.

Rubidge & Stones state that artistic representations are ‘physical rather than sensuous’ but I think jewellery offers another dimension to this. The quintessential relationship between body and object present in jewellery is where it differs most notably from the mediums of painting, sculpture, or installation art for example. Because the artefact is ultimately worn on the body it forges new connections and identities when mementoes become intimate, this is out-with the scope of other artistic mediums that approach the themes of landscape and place. Although the human body is also fundamental to Land Art for example this is usually a transient and process based act tethered to location. Jewellery however shifts both physically with and upon the body and the meaning behind it is manifold and changing depending on who wears it, when and where. If Land Art is *in* place, then jewellery inspired by the land is a memento *of* place. Carried somatically, the jewellery object is returned to the embodied realm of the sensuous. This is the second life or ‘supplemental nature’ (Adamson, 2010) of the jewellery object and is a crucial element of artefacts in relation to the human body; where jewellery made from a sensuous experience of place is transposed to the sensorial experience of the wearer. As such, I suggest that as a medium jewellery is uniquely positioned in exploring the language of place as it traverses the different sense modalities.

The translation of the experience of place into a tangible object is a poetic act. A level of creative intelligence is involved in the exploration of elements (physical and non-physical) drawn from the experience of place. In ‘*Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry*’ Jacques Maritain describes the creative act as a form of poetry; a ‘process more general and more primary; that intercommunication between the inner being of things and the inner being of the human self.’ (1953:3). Per Suntum’s description of his personal approach to this process reiterates this idea:

‘In order to transfer a sensory experience into a tangible object: I try to maintain an atmosphere of alertness, of gratitude, a sense of spaciousness: freedom, in order to see myself: to be - open to the singular moment, where man meets material. And I listen. I listen to every material in order to be ready for any change in the direction of the work. In the process I am all for the interplay between material, their intrinsic values

or capabilities, the knowing (both metal and me) and the conscious vision. (Suntum 2012)

Suntum is articulating a creative action that entails a level of intuitive or subconscious processing between things and the self. Maritain explains it thus:

‘At the root of the creative act there must be a quite particular intellectual process, without parallel in logical reason, through which Things and the Self are grasped together by means of a kind of experience or knowledge which has no conceptual expression and is expressed only in the artist’s work.’ (Maritain 1953:34)

Maritain refers to this as ‘poetic knowledge or poetic intuition’ (ibid). These theories are aligned with the ideas I go on to explore in the next chapter where *Embedded Knowledge*, *Embodied Cognition* and *Self into Object* are explored within the context of making. The selective perception of elements from an environment feed into the investigative processes involved at the bench where both choice and chance feature in the act of selecting or disregarding certain elements from the environment. Fundamental to this is the different approaches taken to working with materials; be it process driven or in aesthetic appropriation. In making this choice, the artist is creating a model for interpretation, for arranging perception, which opens the beholder to the life of things, becoming personal expressions of, and cultural contributions to, place.

6.3 Thinking Through Making; Intuition, Tacit Knowledge & Unthought-Known

‘In the beginning there is always an intuition’ Esther Brinkman (Bernabei 2011:77)

Further to the nature of consciousness and perception undergone during the sensory embodiment in an environment discussed in Chapter 5, we now shift this perceptual processing to the act of making. References to intuitive working practices were recurrent in my research for this project (fifteen out of the sixteen makers cited ‘intuition’ as important to their creative approach) and this posed me to question further the nature and meaning behind the jewellery makers’ use of this term. In *‘Right brain: a New Understanding of the Unconscious Mind and its Creative Powers’* Thomas Blakeslee describes intuition as a ‘catch all word for thinking processes that we can’t verbally explain’ (1980:24). He goes on to say that: ‘Intuitive judgements are not arrived at step-by-step, but in an instant. They typically take into consideration a large mass of data in *parallel*, without separately considering each factor. Finally, they cannot be explained verbally.’ (ibid).

If a clear and succinct explanation of the intuitive process is unattainable then I can only aim to discuss the related processes that feed into this blanket phrase. I am merely able to touch lightly on the complex cognitive phenomena involved in the creative process within the scope of this research, so I will focus on the areas of creative intelligence that are applied within arts discourse and are most active within the processes undertaken in the Topophilia project, underpinning them with reference to cognitive psychology. In this chapter I hope to address the role of the persistent term 'intuition' in the creative act and investigate how theories of 'Tacit knowledge' and the 'Unthought Known' might have bearing on our expression as makers of jewellery.

The British psychoanalyst Christopher Bollas uses the evocative phrase 'unthought known' to express what we 'know' but for a variety of reasons may not be able to think about, have 'forgotten', 'act out' on a physical level, or have a 'sense' for but cannot articulate; 'The dancer', he writes, 'expresses the unthought known through body knowledge' (1987:282). In psychoanalytic terms, it refers to the boundary between the 'unconscious' and the 'conscious' mind, (i.e. the 'preconscious mind'). This sits very closely to what is referred to more readily in craft theory as a form of 'Tacit Knowledge', a term which was introduced by the Hungarian philosopher/chemist Michael Polanyi (1966) in his book *The Tacit Dimension*. This form of un-known or tacit knowing has become a popular subject of inquiry in the arts and other practice-led activities where an understanding of techniques, methods and actions are often accepted a-priori as being embedded in the skill-sets and processes of certain practices learned through judged repetition and adjustment. Despite the concept of tacit knowledge being introduced to arts discourse over fifty years ago, craft theorist Martina Margetts believes that the tacit is still esteemed too lightly in the arts (2011). On the role of making in the creative process she proposes that:

'Making is a revelation of the human impulse to explore and express forms of knowledge and a range of emotions; an impulse towards knowing and feeling, which shapes human action and hence the world we create.' (2011:39)

Margetts is emphasising the significance of making as a mode and expression of knowledge, in which tacit plays an important part. Although the tacit dimension is by its very nature unquantifiable, Professor and furniture maker David Pye distinguishes between two modes of making which might be employed to evidence how tacit knowledge can evolve and be applied. Pye identifies the '*workmanship of risk*' whereby he means:

‘Workmanship using any kind of technique or apparatus, in which the quality of the result is not predetermined, but depends on the judgment, dexterity and care which the maker exercises as he works (1968:20). By contrast the ‘*workmanship of certainty*’ proceeds by way of a pre-planned series of operations, each of which is mechanically constrained to the extent that the result is predetermined and outside the operative's control. Pye compares handwriting and printing to exemplify these differences. With the contribution of the concept of the ‘*workmanship of risk*’ Pye articulated one of the most important foundations of individual craftsmanship. I would suggest that it is evident in the creative processes of many craftspeople, especially where they state ‘intuitive’ working methods as important to their praxis.

This theory of unknown or *embedded knowledge* is also supported in the fields of psychology and cognitive science. The developmental psychologist Howard Gardner questioned the divorced nature of physical and mental knowledge in the fields of psychology. His work on ‘Multiple Intelligences’ caused a paradigm shift in human cognition theory in the late 80’s, stating: ‘Only if we expand and reformulate our ideas of what counts as human intellect will we be able to devise more appropriate ways of assessing it and more effective ways of educating it.’ (Gardner 1985:210)

Closely aligned to these theories of *embedded consciousness* and the embodied mind is the coming into being of the self and the thing. This is often expressed by makers as the diffusion of *self into object* (Pye), ‘Self grasped in Things’ (Maritain) and touched on in the statements of contemporary jewellery makers; ‘when I see myself in the work’ (Suntum) and ‘the body is brought into the work’ (Puig Cuyàs). The ‘embodied mind’, ‘body in the mind’, and ‘bodily-kinesthetic intelligence’ (Gardner) fundamentally involve the same idea of *embodied cognition* as discussed in chapter 5.1 - the integrated nature of physical and mental knowledge. This theory is a phenomenological perspective grounded in the thinking of Heidegger and Merleau-ponty and is articulated by different means and in different eras within a variety of fields and so serves to strengthen the proposition that mind, body and imagination integrate in the practice of ‘thought through action’ (Margetts 2011).³⁷ The question of the ‘being of the hand’, philosophically said, is a question that has begun to be considered further in twentieth century philosophy and is a notion inherent to the crafts (whether fully expressed or not).³⁸

³⁷ This is reflected in the ‘Topophilia Project’ where the makers involved cite their intuitive working processes and the element of chance (discussed further in Chapter 7).

³⁸ Echoing Margretts’ belief that the Tacit is still not embraced seriously in the arts, the Finnish architectural theorist Juhani Pallasmaa states that the ‘training of the hand’ is now marginalized in arts



FIG.28. Three-Dimensional Drawing and Test pieces – Grace Girvan, Topophilia phase 1, work in progress
© Beth Legg

The integrated nature of physical and mental knowledge inherent in craft processes is one element of the complex phases integral to making. As I mentioned in chapters 5.1 and 6.1 the act of selection is also key within the creative processes involved in this project and selective processes are at the core of most models of creativity (Dean & Smith) – the ‘Geneplore’ model for ‘generate - explore - select – generate’, illustrates this. In 1992, Finke et al. proposed this model, in which creativity takes place in two phases: a ‘generative phase’ (reflected in my methodology as the research processes & box compilation), where an individual constructs mental representations called ‘preinventive structures’, and an exploratory phase where those structures are used to come up with creative ideas (reflected in the exploratory processes such as three-dimensional drawing, the creation of test pieces, sketches etc.) As a maker, I would interpret these phases as beginning with a searching process, which takes us to a certain point of understanding, and the next stage involves a consolidation of this understanding where things begin to become more fixed. I see this not as linear but instead as a cyclical process that seeks a balance between embedded and reflective methods (see Model Fig.29). Artist Caroline Broadhead describes these stages in her making process as involving; ‘both a distancing from the piece in order to gain a viewer’s perspective, and an absorption in it in order to successfully think and make.’

education: ‘the integral role of the hand in the evolution and different manifestations of human intelligence is not acknowledged’ (2009:11). With his publication titled: *The Thinking Hand: Existential and Embodied Wisdom in Architecture*, Pallasmaa opened the door to the need to incorporate the growing field of philosophical thought related to what he names the *thinking hand*, to try to reform what he sees as overly digitised education in art practice.

(Bernabei 2011:84) This is a combination of both embedded (intuitive) and reflective (reason-based) processes. Where we begin with intuition; analysis, reason and concept are required to frame it. Both freedom and control are felt during this process and Pye's workmanship of risk (and the constitute element of chance) often plays a role.

Broadhead's distancing and absorption can also be explained in terms of cognition. Different levels of awareness during experiences progress from a state in which we are merged in the content of our experience (embedded knowledge/intuitive processing) to a more liberated mindful state in which we discover ourselves and are; 'capable of interacting with every dimension of our experience with a sense of freedom and flexibility' (Robbins 2008:1) In order to achieve this mindful state³⁹ there has to be a reflective level of awareness. In an embedded or absorbed frame of mind we are blended with the experience and have a lessened capacity to reflect on the feelings, emotions, somatic sensations, or mental representations that are passing through our awareness as information about our experience. This is akin to the state of experience called 'flow' as explained by Mihaly Csíkszentmihályi in his seminal work, *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience* (1990). Csíkszentmihályi outlines his theory that people are most content when they are in a state of *flow* - a state of complete immersion with the activity at hand. This condition is characterised by engagement, absorption, achievement and skill during which external concerns are disregarded. Caroline Holt articulates this when questioned about her thoughts on intuitive creative processes:

'My most creative moments are when I forget everything else and my hands just take over. Of course this alone usually doesn't get a project finished. So it is always a balance, and often a real struggle to find this balance, between complete freedom and complete control. For me this struggle is at the heart of creating.' (Holt 2012)

To achieve a flow state, equilibrium must be found between the challenge of the task and the skill of the artist. If the task is too easy or too demanding *flow* cannot occur. Csíkszentmihályi states that both skill level and challenge level must be matched and high; if skill and challenge are low and matched, then apathy results (1990). This could also be applied to the balance between workmanship of certainty and workmanship of risk. This feeling of freedom (flow) and unthought-knowledge (tacit) embodied in process is articulated with regularity in the discourse on creative practice. Holt discussed the search for a creative balance in her process and this is where *embedded* processes are supported through *Reflection*. This refers to our capacity to reflect on the

³⁹ Mindfulness is closely aligned to 'Conscious Aesthetic Vision' a term introduced by Per Sunsum and discussed in Chapter 7.

sensorial, imaginative, and emotional, which pass through our awareness as information about our inner and outer environments (Robbins). In *reflection* we have the capacity for a certain distancing and to process the information that we are receiving and reflect on it before acting upon it. A level of mindfulness develops our reflective faculty. Broadhead touches on notions of embedded and reflective processes of awareness in the articulation of the main stages of creating a jewellery piece as:

‘a synthesis of looking, feeling, thinking, drawing, observing, rethinking, starting over, assessing, analysing and it’s going back to the beginning – starting all over, following the same path again, but maybe branching off at a different point.’ (Bernabei 2011:84)

These creative stages are individual in nature however they can occur simultaneously or as Broadhead suggests, in synthesis. They involve both body and mind during the physical expression of knowledge. Patience, accuracy, testing, and craftsmanship are also significant in order to gain an authorship of expression. In a statement on his creative process, Ramòn Puig Cuyàs (Figs.17&18) touches on three of the above creative phases within his practice. He discusses his making process involving ‘the impact of everyday things’ where there is no pre-determined plan or design (*intuition*). He begins with what he calls a ‘pre-feeling’ (‘pre-conscious’ or *Embedded Knowledge*) - the search for a feeling that is trapped within himself and can find form in an object, he forms a dialogue between the hands and the matter (*Embodied Cognition*) and ultimately he knows a piece is complete when he sees some of himself in the jewellery object (*Self into Object*). (Bernabei 2011:174).

I have brought together the aforementioned theories on perception and process in model Fig. 29 in order to further clarify my understanding of the processes involved in ‘thinking through making’.

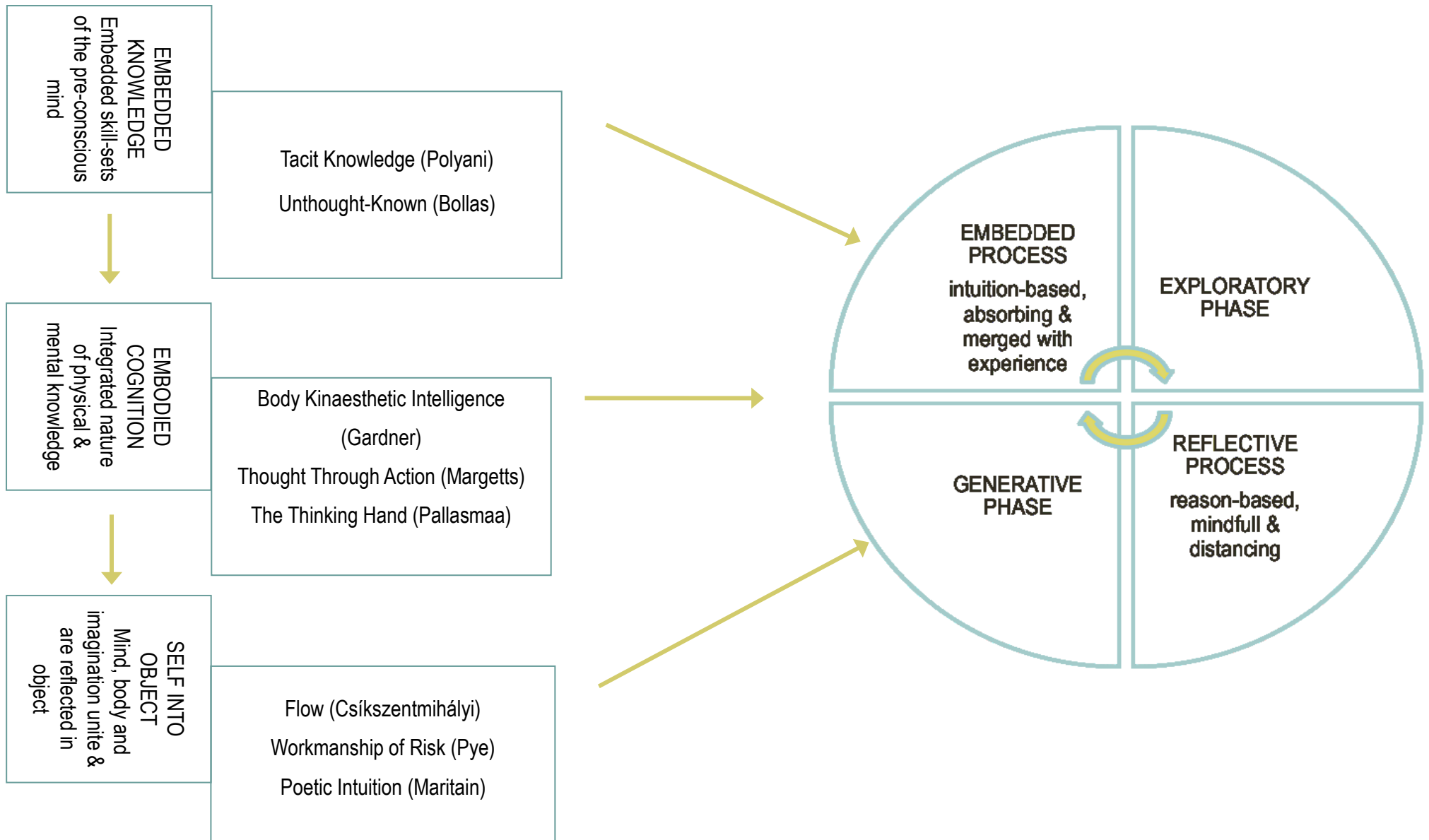


FIG.29. Thinking Through Making' Model

6.4 Thinking through Material

'Vision, Uncertainty, and Knowledge of Materials are inevitabilities that all artists must acknowledge and learn from: vision is always ahead of execution, knowledge of materials is your contact with reality, and uncertainty is a virtue.'
(David Bayles 2001)

Material has a fundamental role as an expressive tool in jewellery, particularly as it is a craft practice that is not defined by its medium (unlike glass, textiles or ceramics for example). The principal craft-based endeavour remains the same however in that it is a form of research that strives to acquire knowledge of materials, processes and methods. As previously discussed craft knowledge is acquired through the senses and it is through a multi-modal perception that we approach material as an elevated aspect of the jewellery object:

'Through manipulating a material a maker will understand its decorative and functional potential and define and refine methods of working it. Much of this knowledge cannot be reduced to words; it relies upon movement, touch, sometimes even smell and sound to acquire.' (Press 1996:15)

Beyond function and decoration, harnessing the capacity of material as a substance imbued with self-expressive meaning is a dominant method of individuating the authorship of the piece. This authorship is further reinforced through technique, which emerged as being of importance to the makers involved in the Topophilia project in a range of ways. For some of the makers technique led to aesthetics of process (hammer marks, binding etc.) and for others technique, as a process in itself, was the mode of investigation (Tuupanen's stone carving and Suntum's shakudo & shibuichi). Alternatively the desired form can determine the technique used and in turn the technique can dictate the material (Klemming's electroformed copper used in Phases 1 & 2).

The sometimes naïve or primitive aesthetics of Alm, Björkman and Borgegård Älgå are resultant of the elementary techniques applied within their creative processes. Cuyàs has stated his belief that contemporary jewellery practice allows us as makers to connect to materials in a way that 'resonates with its primitive roots' (Bernabei 2011:174) but he also discusses more practical reasons for using simple techniques. In the dialogue between mind, hands and matter, he fears a loss of the ideas that emerge and so favours working procedures that can be completed quickly. This is very much akin to the approach of Tobias Alm who selects his materials with this in mind; 'I tend

to go for quick materials, so that I can easily follow my impulses, and avoid getting stuck in long processes of realisation. My improvisational working method works well with wood, textiles, plaster etc.’ (Alm 2012)



FIG.30. Jenny Klemming MA Degree Project, 2010 available from hdk.gu.se accessed 20/6/12

The authorship of jewellery can be confirmed through the sensitive understanding of a wide range of materials and this might include the incorporation of found objects/materials or the readymade, through assemblage. When incorporating appropriated objects taken from the environment into the finished jewellery piece a pre-industrial aesthetic of the hand crafted object is combined with a post-industrial mode of acquisition; the readymade (Taylor 1996). This very much depends on the type of object or material being appropriated however; in the assemblages of jewellery artists such as Jack Cunningham, Felieke van der Leest, and Helen Britton where synthetic readymades are central to the language of the work we see this duality, but in the use of

natural materials or found fragments included in works such as those of Terhi Tolvanen, Jenny Klemming or Luzia Vogt the raw or primitive remains. Equally, both of these types of jewellery pieces could be termed *partial readymades* where both constructed and found materials are assembled together or ‘coerced into being...[like a] sentence constructed from existing language’ (Stewart 1984:20). In his doctoral thesis Cunningham discusses both the unequivocal and the more ambiguous layers of meaning that can be read into these different appropriated objects:

‘The readymade can be used explicitly to convey the intention of its original meaning; indeed this may be paramount to the narrative of the piece. For instance the Lego brick, the ruler and the glass ‘marble’...are each evocative of childhood activities. On the other hand the inclusion of found objects, such as a fragment of ceramic plate, a twig or shell, also convey a narrative, but are of non-specific origin and removed from their original context. What is presented to the viewer by the grouping of these objects therefore, is inter-connectedness, a layering of associations, simultaneously suggesting a previous history and a current meaning.’ (Cunningham 2007)

The suggestion of both a ‘previous history and a current meaning’ is significant because the dimension of time and how we remember is key to the manner in which these appropriated materials are interpreted. Pallasmaa notes that ‘All matter exists within the continuum of time; the patina of wear adds the enriching experience of time to the materials of construction.’ (2005:32)⁴⁰. In the creative act there is a basic satisfaction in contributing to objects and processes that supersede the span of an individual life. The makers in this project also declare a pleasure in working with materials that have an element of history embedded into them. Both Helga Mogensen and Grace Girvan use found driftwood for similar reasons:

‘I think using a material that already has a history adds to the magic of the making. I wonder with the things that I pick up from the beach, for instance the driftwood, how far it has gone, where it came from and so forth.’ (Mogensen 2012).

For Girvan the use of driftwood and pebbles provide a direct link to the place where she is from through their provenance; ‘they give an authenticity to what I am attempting to convey; a sense of the place from which I come. I do like the thought that I am adding to the history of a found object by incorporating it into a piece of jewellery.’ (Girvan 2012)

⁴⁰ Pallasmaa believes that we have a contemporary fear of the signs of ageing which is related to our fear of death. He argues that humans have a psychological need to be aware of our rootedness in the continuity of time and that this can be done through the demonstration of the processes of ageing or by incorporating the dimension of time into the surfaces and materials that surround us.

The readymade is an object that has moved from one context to another. It can embody uniqueness or reference associated objects. Found objects, readymades and certain appropriated materials bring with them both a form of history and their associations have the capacity to speak richly of their original life in the world. As jeweller Luzia Vogt states:

‘The found object, a discard from the utilitarian world lays idle awaiting destruction, renewal or metamorphosis. A leftover is a reminder of a person’s presence, a witness of passed time. Found objects attract my perception. They trigger my curiosity and play with my imagination...The transformation of these found objects as well as everyday patterns are starting points for my work. The alternating process of experimentation and reflection leads me to the final piece. I respond to used everyday objects and fragments with intuition.’ (Vogt, 2009)

In the use of scavenged, found, or salvaged objects and materials the maker is exploiting the multiple associations and borrowed histories inherent in the object to attain a rich layering of meaning, and for some an appropriated object provides a naturally given surface or material which ‘can act as a liberator from self-criticism as it provides an input from the outside’ (Kleming 2012). However, as Girvan articulated above, another important element that has emerged in the case of found objects within the Topophilia project is that provenant objects taken from a particular place of origin can authenticate the piece for the maker thus validating their mode of expression.

The relationship between maker and material is especially complex due to the multifarious interpretations that can be made through the almost limitless range of materials utilised in contemporary jewellery practice. The allure of the exotic has been historically important within jewellery making, and there is a well-established use of non-indigenous materials in the field; ‘the human recognition of the intrinsic beauty of certain materials and minerals such as gold, precious stones, and resins has led to their use in totally unconnected civilisations separated by vast barriers of time and space.’ (Siemelink 2011:19)⁴¹. This study is concerned with the familiar rather than the exotic however and the relationships makers have with these known places is generally reflected in the types of materials they applied within the project. Margetts suggests

⁴¹ Siemelink is discussing the recent analysis of three ancient seashells, which reveals that they are likely to have been used as beads, potentially pushing back the evidence for personal decoration by 25,000 years. The shells were excavated from Mount Carmel in Israel and Oued Djebbana, Algeria, in the 1930s and 1940s. But it is only now that scientists have been able to accurately date the shells and study their significance. The marine shells were found many miles from the Mediterranean Sea where they originate. (National Geographic June 22, 2006)

makers might gain a greater understanding of the self through working with materials in a particular way, and if so, the re-appropriation of objects; ‘suggests a special metamorphosis of self, material and object’ (1996:9). In the makers’ choice of material, human identities and intentions are reflected. Again we see the creative process of selection as another key method of bringing the *self into object*. If, as Mark Smith suggests in *A Sensory History*: ‘sensory perception is a cultural as well as a physical act.’ (Smith 2008:3) then it could be said that there is also a cultural perception of material. Kaplan & Kaplan explain this as shared experience: ‘People who share a system of thought or perhaps a language (or dialect) and pass these on from generation to generation would presumably experience the environment similarly and might have some common preferences.’ (Kaplan 1989:86) In Chapter 3 I maintained that a cultural aesthetic could be read through the use of certain indigenous materials, but that this association has become more tenuous. What is perhaps more interesting though is the question of meaning - what the material represents to the individual artist. As Liesbeth den Beston states:

‘In the short history of contemporary art jewellery, the semiotic function of certain materials, the values (beyond the economical) and meanings which are attached to materials by artists, is very interesting. These meanings and attachments can explain a lot about the artists’ motives as a jewellery designer...These discussions and statements about the character, the properties and meanings of materials are very illuminating.’ (2005).

Below I have included three tables and two charts relating to a numerical assessment of the materials utilised within the Topophilia Project. I thought it helpful to include these tables to illustrate my classification of materials and also to depict the sheer range and types of materials utilised in this project. I will go on to discuss the roles these materials played within this study in Chapter 7. I have divided the materials into two broad categories – Natural and Processed/Synthetic. I would like to make it clear that I see neither natural nor man-made as preferable or superior to the other, instead I see them as having inherently complimentary rather than opposing characteristics. I have chosen to distinguish between them on the table below, as I believe they have different expressions, as previously discussed. When I began this research I had formed a kind of conceptual amalgam of what I personally defined as ‘natural materials’, but this needed greater clarification. I had to decide how purist I was going to be in my approach to ‘naturalness’ and where to draw a line when it comes to the materials used in jewellery today, for example metal – undoubtedly the most

commonly used material associated with Western jewellery production, is, in its simplest form mineral deposits from within the Earth's crust. In the Oxford dictionary the adjective 'Natural' is defined as something 'having had a minimum of processing or preservative treatment' (*Oxford Dictionaries*). Oppi Untracht (1982:59) refers to the use of natural materials in jewellery as 'employing products of formerly living organisms' and 'using natures valued non-metals' and so in this research I am working primarily with the broad definition that a natural material is any physical matter that comes from plants, animals, or the ground. Minerals and the metals that can be extracted from them could also be considered to belong in this category, however I believe the level of processing involved in their production negates their perceived naturalness.

The contents of the Topophilia boxes had a weight towards natural materials and this reflects the predominantly natural characteristics of the landscapes that made up the majority of the places selected by the makers (see chapter 7.3 for detailed information on the box contents). Nature is represented in many ways in this project, not just through landscape and material but also through process, approach and theme. In Chapter 7.5 I go on to develop a taxonomy for defining the diversity of approaches used in transferring the sensory experience of the surrounding landscape into a tangible jewellery object. In this, material plays a key role, although it is not the type of material that has prominence, but rather what it represents and the motivation behind its use.

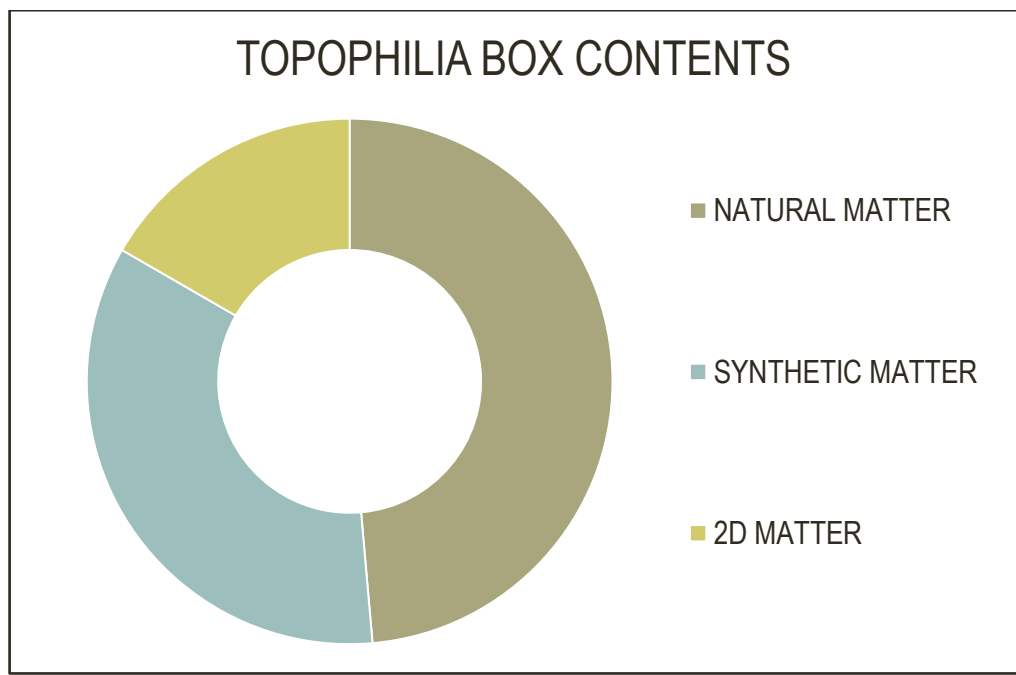


FIG.31. Chart of Topophilia Box Content

TOPOPHILIA BOX CONTENTS									
Natural Matter <i>(Materials directly resulting from living organisms or created through natural rather than synthetic processes)</i>					Processed / Synthetic Matter			Two Dimensional Matter	
Wood	Natural Fibres Animal & Vegetable	Skeletal Hard Tissue	Metal Ore	Stone <i>Naturally occurring (not reconstituted) solid aggregate of minerals</i>	Fragments <i>Found manufactured objects/materials that have been altered through natural processes</i>	Readymade <i>Complete manufactured or purchased objects</i>	Made <i>Objects made by the artists</i>	Words	Images
twigs, bark, cork, etc.	Wool, cotton, leather, hair, moss, leaves, feather, seeds etc.	Horn, tooth, bone, antler, coral, shell, etc.	Iron, copper, silver, gold, etc.	granite, flint, sandstone, slate etc.	rope, rusted metal, plastic from the beach, broken china etc.	i.e. Antique brooch, Photo frame,	Casts, Carvings	poetry, stories, descriptions	photographic representation, sketch, painting, drawing etc.
5	4	7	0	9	12	12	1	4	8
35					25			12	

Table 1 – Classification of Topophilia Box Content

PHASE 1 JEWELLERY PIECES							
Natural materials <i>(resulting from living organisms or created through natural rather than synthetic processes)</i>				Processed / Synthetic Materials			
Wood	Natural Fibres Animal & Vegetable	Skeletal Hard Tissue	Stone Naturally occurring (not reconstituted) solid aggregate of minerals	Fragments <i>Found or broken manufactured objects/materials that have been altered through natural processes</i>	Readymade <i>Complete manufactured or purchased objects</i>	Metal Pure & Alloy	Composite Materials
Twigs, bark, cork, etc.	Wool, cotton, leather, hair, moss, leaves, feather, seeds etc.	Horn, tooth, bone, antler, coral, shell, fossil etc.	Granite, flint, sandstone, slate etc.	Rope, rusted metal, plastic from the beach	i.e. antique brooch, photo frame	Iron, copper, silver, gold, etc.	Concrete, bio-resin, artificial wood, enamel faux ivory
8	6	2	4	3	3	13	4
20				23			

Table 2. Classification of Phase 1 Jewellery Materials

PHASE 2 JEWELLERY PIECES							
Natural materials <i>(resulting from living organisms or created through natural rather than synthetic processes)</i>				Processed / Synthetic Materials			
Wood	Natural Fibres Animal & Vegetable	Skeletal Hard Tissue	Stone Naturally occurring (not reconstituted) solid aggregate of minerals	Fragments <i>Found or broken manufactured objects/materials that have been altered through natural processes</i>	Readymade <i>Complete manufactured or purchased objects</i>	Metal Pure & Alloy	Composite Materials
Twigs, bark, cork, etc.	Wool, cotton, leather, hair, moss, leaves, feather, seeds etc.	Horn, tooth, bone, antler, coral, shell, fossil etc.	Granite, flint, sandstone, slate etc.	Rope, rusted metal, broken china, plastic from the beach	i.e. antique brooch, photo frame, glass beads	Iron, copper, silver, gold, etc.	Concrete, bio-resin, artificial wood, enamel faux ivory
7	6	3	2	0	1	15	5
18				21			

Table 3. Classification of Phase 2 Jewellery Materials



FIG.32. Chart of Materials used in Phase 1 Topophilia Jewellery Objects

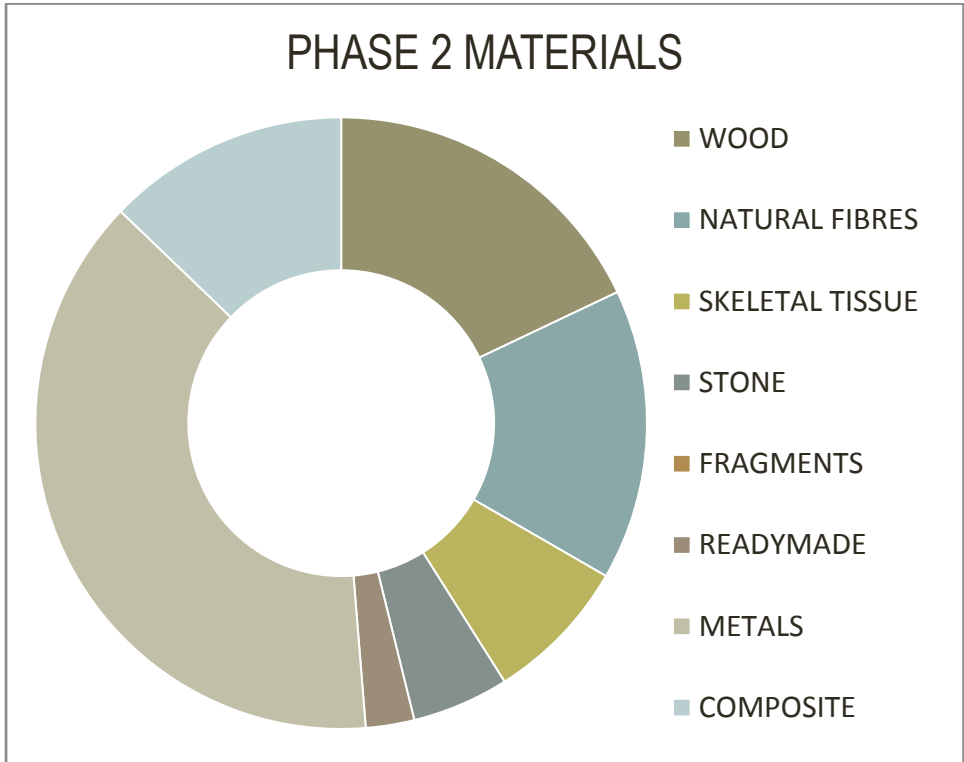


FIG.33. Chart of Materials used in Phase 2 Topophilia Jewellery Objects

7. New Jewellery from Northern Lands

7.1 The Museum; Exhibition as a Site of Enquiry

Here I discuss the methodological rationale behind curating a research-driven exhibition within the museum institution. I detail some of the logistical issues of exhibiting within the context of a public museum in Appendix E.



FIG.34. The Exhibition

The use of exhibitions as places of visual arts enquiry that are at the public interface has become increasingly prominent, as has the emergence of the academic free-lance curator in the role of a ‘shaper of cultural perceptions’ (Sullivan, 2005:208). The seventeen week long ‘A Sense of Place’ exhibition held at the National Museums of Scotland (NMS) made use of artistic, curatorial, and cultural interpretive research practices. This exhibition research project used the elements of artistic experience that are central to my practice and incorporated reliable methods that have credence in the research community, bringing together creative responses and objects which can be investigated as a ‘discrete source.’ (*ibid*). Sullivan states that ‘The exhibition not only comprises a selection of artworks that are placed within a particular context, but offers an original interpretation of that context and brings new insight into the field.’ (2005:214). This was important as a contribution to knowledge - bringing the resultant ‘Topophilia Project’ artefacts into the public domain of the museum context provided knowledge transfer of mutual benefit between different ‘worlds’ of research (i.e. museum education and academia, peer groups and private galleries) as well as to the

wider public arena across the exhibition and supporting events. Through employing the exhibition as a site of enquiry my intention was to:

- Illustrate the diversity of this practice to a broad public audience
- Act as a catalyst in 'participatory action research' (Gray & Malins 2004:105) where creative practice can actively involve, inform and inspire others.
- Enable insight into the links between stimulus, process and artifact
- Provide knowledge transfer between the aforementioned 'worlds' of research

The cultural practices that surround museum exhibitions are vast (Sullivan, 2005) and as such a cultural practice, the exhibition is related to the production and display of art and the collection and academic enquiry of art:

‘Since museums became part of the humanist project during the Renaissance the roles of artists, exhibitions, curators, and institutional politics have changed dramatically and today offer considerable opportunity for research and development.’ (Sullivan, 2005:207) In the culture of art galleries a more hierarchical view of objects is involved, where things are defined as 'art' and being those which aim to 'ennoble and uplift the human spirit' (Rose 2002:172).

Bennett notes that art galleries remain obscure to some social groups; he believes this is a contradiction at the heart of their institutional apparatus (1995). Katja Lindqvist (2003) discusses instead, the museum as a site of opportunity in the arts with research and development possibilities being expanded due to changes in the conventional institutional politics surrounding the roles of curator, artist and exhibition. Lindqvist tracks the professional involvement of artists as instigators in shaping museum practices, discussing the altering roles of collections and curators and identifies the emergence of the academic freelance curator as a shaper of cultural perceptions.

I was drawn to the idea of artists object collections that usually remain hidden and private, being on display in the same building as the public collections of historic and cultural artefacts. The museum is a place both of ideas and ideologies; ‘When placed in a case, an object is dislocated from the everyday context...and is instead placed in the classificatory schema of the museum as an institution.’ (Rose 2002:176) This contextual duality might bring another layer of reference to the viewers; ‘Given the truth regime of the museum as an institution, the effect on the visitor is one of truth; an analytical one rather than a representational one.’ (Rose, 2002:176)

‘A Sense of Place’ is perhaps a hybrid – the modern phenomena of an art gallery type exhibition in a museum setting. As such I had hoped that the objects

displayed might be understood as art by the visitors but not perhaps in such a prescriptive manner as they might be in a gallery setting. The idea that the creation of meaning is not a supplement to the work of art, but instead is something already etched in the status of the work is something I think my methodology has allowed me to explore further through displaying stimulus objects alongside the jewellery artefacts. In this way I hoped that the public might read through those artefacts the significance that they have been arranged to represent.

There have been several recent craft exhibitions⁴² in the UK that have attempted to expose the maker's creative practice to a wider general audience. The recorded audio interviews, DVD's of makers in the studio setting and sketchbook extracts made available at such exhibitions are successful at illustrating some elements of the creative process but obviously have their limitations. With these limitations in mind my aim was not to attempt to make all of the creative process explicit within the exhibition format but to explore the acts of selection and interpretation within the creative process as disclosed by the artists in their boxes and works.



FIG 35. Exhibition Layout

Throughout the 2 and a half years leading up to exhibiting I was aware that the level of information and interpretation that would be made available to the public was important. The museum, in its role as educator, wanted to make the content explicit to a broad audience and I had to walk a fine line between opening the door to the public on the intellectual territory that these makers inhabit whilst conforming to established NMS practice.

⁴² The Cutting Edge (NMS, 2009), the Jerwood Makers Open (Jerwood Foundation, Crafts Council), 'Creation II; An insight into the mind of the modern artist jeweller', (Worshipful Company of Goldsmith's, London 2008).



FIG. 36. Documentation of Topophilia boxes and corresponding pieces



FIG.37 Installation – pinning the pieces to the wall

FIG.38 Installation complete

The most advantageous aspect of holding the exhibition in the museum was the level of public access and sheer number and variety of people who were able to view the show. Because the ‘Sense of Place’ exhibition was held in a public space that is not ‘art specific’ the work was exposed to a mixed public audience in terms of age, background and nationality. The exhibition ran over the Edinburgh festivals and was part of the Art Festival so the audience had a strong international orientation. I am pleased that the exhibition has allowed for a heightened exposure of research-led jewellery to a wide public audience, as there has not been an international contemporary jewellery exhibition in the museum for 14 years (since ‘Jewellery Moves’ in 1998).

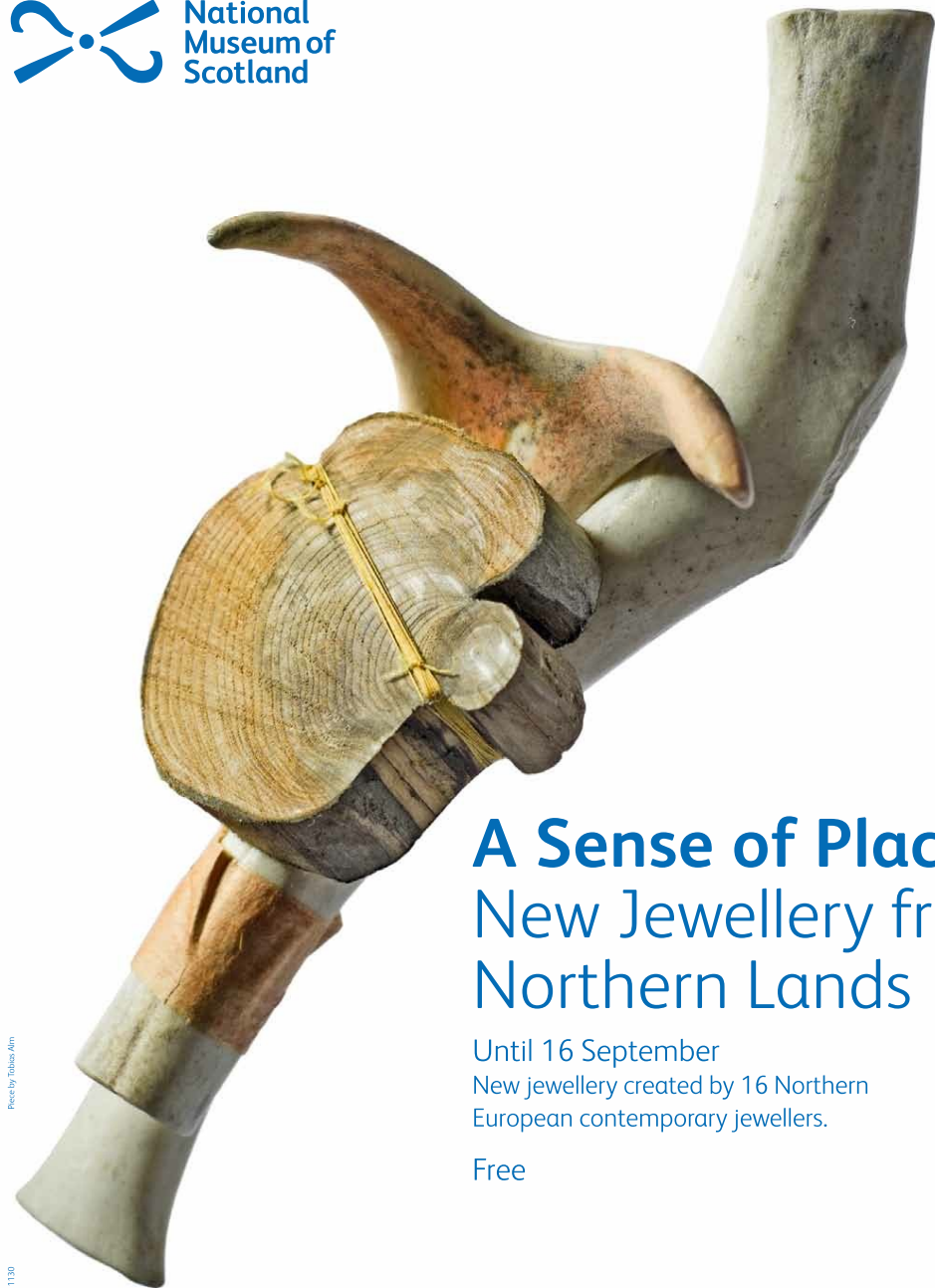


Photo by Fabrice Alm

National Museums Scotland Scottish Charity, No. SC011130

A Sense of Place: New Jewellery from Northern Lands

Until 16 September
New jewellery created by 16 Northern
European contemporary jewellers.

Free

Developed in partnership with Edinburgh College of Art.
Part of the Edinburgh Art Festival.

National Museum of Scotland
Chambers Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1JF
www.nms.ac.uk/senseofplace

FIG.39. Promotional Exhibition Poster © NMS

7.2 The Symposium

The symposium's primary role as I saw it was to stimulate discussion and debate, and to provide an opportunity for peer feedback and review. Planning a symposium designed around the exhibition gave me the research opportunity to develop a focused programme of enquiry that delved into the specifics of the issue (Sullivan, 2005). As a tool for research it enhanced my level of enquiry and provided an opportunity for greater analysis of the individual outcomes of the 'Topophilia Project'. Presenting this forum for discussion around notions of place offered both an additional research opportunity for myself, and an opportunity for knowledge exchange amongst others. It allowed me to place my practice and my research in context and to gain insight into other possible perspectives on the theme. The symposium played a key role in allowing me to question the artists directly and to hold group discussions (during plenary) on the project and general subject area.

Situating the venue within a higher education setting and incorporating speakers from a range of backgrounds and subject areas allowed for considerable opportunity for imaginative enquiry and research scope. The majority of the 40 guests and participants were jewellery practitioners but there was also representation from the fields of curating and collecting, film studies, archaeology, classical art and design history as well as lecturers and students representing four UK and three European art colleges and universities. I believe this enabled a broader scope of both the practical and academic approaches to the subject to be explored.

On reflection the one-day symposium aided in highlighting the threads that run through the theme of place within the creative fields. Although the timing of the symposium was such that my thoughts on the projects as a whole had not fully formed and I had only two days before completed the installation of works into the museum space, I was still able to identify persistent themes in light of the research I had undertaken in the time leading up to this point. These are illustrated in the bullet points below. The symposium event is detailed in Appendix D and a recording of the plenary session can be obtained at request.

Recurrent ideas that surfaced during the symposium discussion around 'Place' were:

- Places are personal – we see them as we are
- Place is both a physical and emotional construct
- Place is transient and unattainable and yet we strive for feelings of ownership & belonging

- Place comprises of people and people constitute place

It is my belief that these ideas of place are explored in the Topophilia Project and through the resulting jewellery objects.

Persistent themes that emerged during the symposium discussion specifically on the project were:

- Jewellery is a multi-dimensional tool with the capacity to be a sensory expression of place (olfactory/visual/tactile)
- We (both maker and viewer) can express/read emotions engendered by these places through the jewellery object
- The artifact can act as a memento of places longed for and remembered
- There is the capacity for intense personal content in these jewellery pieces
- Jewellery can both abstract and distill a 'sense of place'
- The objects and jewellery pieces are both manifestations of, and contributions to, a northern place-based identity (individual expressions within a cultural context)
- Metaphor can be a strong tool towards the expression of ideas of place
- Personal narratives are of great importance to the forming of place
- The unattainable is often romanticised through these objects
- Identity is confirmed through and by both the collected and made objects
- There is a meditative aspect common to both making and being in a place
- A removed perspective can be an important aspect of thinking and making around the theme of place

7.3 The Topophilia Boxes

Number	Box by	Location	Contents	Phase 2 Response Piece	Responders Country
1	Tobias Alm	Sweden	Box of nails, old hammer head, old knife with bone handle, 3 wooden toggles, ring, white cotton string and sea-grass rope	Nelli Tanner	Finland
2	Rut Malin Barklund	Sweden	Cemetery photographs, twigs, leaves, twigs, stone, marble, patinated copper	Hildur Yr Jónsdóttir	Iceland
3	Sofia Björkman	Sweden	A number of old wooden planks, rusty nails, 1 crab shell, some sea shells.	Grace Girvan	Scotland
4	Sara Borgegård Älgå	Sweden	Photographic composition (2 large images of industrial structures) with lichen covered stones, wooden blocks and rust pieces laid on top, also notes on place provided.	Eija Mustonen	Finland
5	Grace Girvan	Scotland	Driftwood, old photograph, Stone, 7 pebbles, Whelk & Limpet shells, rusted metal, rolled birch bark.	Helena Lehtinen	Finland
6	Ingjerd Hanevold	Norway	Dried hydrangea flower heads, spray painted grey	Sara Borgegård Älgå	Sweden
7	Caroline Holt	Scotland	Cement casts of 12 surface textures and corresponding list of sites around Edinburgh from where they were taken. * Text Insert See Appendix A	Per Suntum	Denmark

8	Hildur Yr Jónsdóttir	Iceland	Photo montage with objects – rope, rust, wood, stone, birch bark, leather * Text Insert See Appendix A	Tarja Tuupanen	Finland
9	Jenny Klemming	Sweden	Photograph & story, driftwood, stone, broken china pieces, birch bark, beach plastic, * Text Insert See Appendix A	Caroline Holt	Scotland
10	Beth Legg	Scotland	Poem on Lid, seaweed, shells and stone fill the box. * Text Insert See Appendix A	Jenny Klemming	Sweden
11	Helena Lehtinen	Finland	Fossil, antique brooch & blue glass drop	Sofia Björkman	Sweden
12	Helga Mogensen	Iceland	Photographs on lid with description of place, various driftwoods, rolled-up bark, shell & rope in box. * *Text Insert See Appendix A	Rut Malin Barklund	Sweden
13	Eija Mustonen	Finland	Antler, Stone & Wood	Tobias Alm	Sweden
14	Per Suntum	Denmark	Images and found objects including various remnants of metal, stone, wood and seed pod	Beth Legg	Scotland
15	Nelli Tanner	Finland	Enlargement of old photograph in the base of box depicting old man in what looks like a kitchen.	Helga Mogensen	Iceland
16	Tarja Tuupanen	Finland	5 empty picture frame backs – rectangular and oval in black & grey cardboard.	Ingjerd Hanevold	Norway

Table 4. Topophilia Box Contents and Locations

BOX 1.



Tobias Alm_Box



Tobias Alm_1



Nelli Tanner_2

BOX 2.



Rut Malin Barklund_Box



Rut Malin Barklund_1



Hildur Yr Jónsdóttir_2

BOX 3.



Sofia Björkman_Box

|



Sofia Björkman_1



Grace Girvan_2

BOX 4.



Sara Borgegård Älgå_Box



Sara Borgegård Älgå_1



Eija Mustonen_2

BOX 5.



Grace Girvan_Box



Grace Girvan_1



Helena Lehtinen_2

BOX 6.



Ingjerd Hanevold_Box



Ingjerd Hanevold_1



Sara Borgegård Älgå_2

BOX 7.



Caroline Holt_Box



Caroline Holt_1



Per Suntum_2

BOX 8.



Hildur Yr Jónsdóttir_Box



Hildur Yr Jónsdóttir_1



Tarja Tuupanen_2

BOX 9.



Jenny Klemming_Box



Jenny Klemming_1



Caroline Holt_2

BOX 10.



Beth Legg_Box



Beth Legg_1



Jenny Klemming_2

BOX 11.



Helena Lehtinen_Box



Helena Lehtinen_1



Sofia Björkman_2

BOX 12.



Helga Mogensen_Box



Helga Mogensen_1



Rut Malin Barklund_2

BOX 13.



Eija Mustonen_Box



Eija Mustonen_1



Tobias Alm_2

BOX 14.



Per Suntum_Box



Per Suntum_1



Beth Legg_2

BOX 15.



Nelli Tanner_Box



Nelli Tanner_1



Helga Mogensen_2

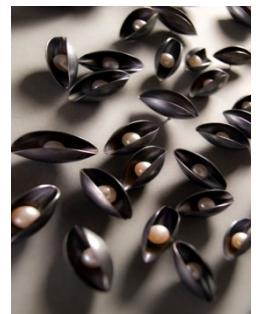
BOX 16.



Tarja Tuupanen_Box



Tarja Tuupanen_1



Ingjerd Hanevold_2

7.4 The Sixteen Makers

This chapter deals with the documentation and evaluation of physical data (phase 1 & 2 jewellery artefacts) and the makers' first person accounts. I have included an image from each of the participant's oeuvre and short biographies in order to contextualise their general approach as seen in relation to the project outcomes. I give an overview of each of the maker's responses to the project and have included data boxes that contain condensed analysis of the types of approach, process, interpretation and material applications involved. This analysis is expanded upon in chapter 7.5 'Project Outcomes & Reflection'. All of the quotes included in the project overviews are referenced from the first person interview accounts, these can be found in Appendix B along with the participants' personal statements.



FIG.40 'Topophilia Project' Map of makers & locations © Aird McKinstrie & NMS

Tobias Alm

(Sweden)



FIG. 41. Tobias Alm '7th Series' Brooches (2010) cotton, tape, wood, paint, magnetic powder, shellac © Tobias Alm

Biography

Born in 1985, in Stockholm, Sweden, Tobias Alm is a young artist who recently graduated from Ädellab Konstfack, the jewellery-section of the art academy in Stockholm. He had his first solo show 'Summer Series', with Galerie Rob Koudijs, Amsterdam, Holland in 2009 who also represented him at Collect 2010, 2011 and 2012.

Topophilia Pieces



Phase 1 (Box no. 1)



Phase 2 (Box no. 13)

PHASE 1 PIECE:	Wooden pendant with cotton tape
PLACE:	Interior
APPROACH:	Intuitive / Sensory / Memory Based / Material-led
PROCESS:	Being-in-the-place / Photography / Test pieces
INTERPRETATION:	Ambiguous Construction
MATERIAL:	Provenance / Symbolic

PHASE 2 PIECE:	Brooch in wood, antler and cotton thread
RESPONSE BOX:	Composed by Eija Mustonen, Finland
APPROACH:	Material-led / intuitive
PROCESS:	Material Derived from Box/3D drawing/photography
INTERPRETATION:	Representational / Abstract assemblage
MATERIAL:	Aesthetic Appropriation (Readymade fragments)

Project Overview

Tobias Alm makes necklaces and brooches involving combinations, connections and materials unconventional to the jewellery field. He constructs tactile forms that are both suggestive and ambiguous and to handle these beguiling objects feels fascinating and natural. Materiality is central to his work and his jewellery often investigates the dynamics of materials - their weight and their sound. Alm's work explores such phenomena as rhythm, contrast, colour and connection. For this project Alm approached

the theme of 'place' in a manner that was very closely aligned to his accustomed working practice. His chosen place was an internal space rich with memories, and the aesthetic of his phase 1 neckpiece reflects this. His first piece does not have the rawness of much of his early work and feels very considered and cared for; this is most strongly felt in the smooth finish of the oiled wood. Alms most recent work has moved to a more functional aesthetic and this is reflected in his first phase piece where a location for the hand is recognisable; the logic of buttons, handles and knobs unmistakable. The aesthetic here is not only utilitarian but also has an association with ubiquitous toy-like objects from childhood and this is echoed in the spirit of playful nostalgia with which he handled this project.

As always with Alm's work, both his phase 1 and 2 pieces are highly appealing to the senses. Sensory engagement is fundamental to him and is the tool with which an intimate relationship between the object and the wearer is established. In both of his pieces his personal fascinations are made visible; in the first piece a considered functionality is perceptible and in the second a more dynamic and direct making process is made tangible. The second piece appears more aligned to his graduate body of work where quick, impulsive and improvisational working processes are directed through material. Although he found the second phase of the Topophilia project challenging due to the loaded nature of the objects he received and their strong connections to someone else, he states that intuition is his 'number one tool' and by letting his sub-conscious direct form and material he created a dynamic and personal interpretation of the objects in the second box that still strongly express his authorship and personal visual language.

(See p.211 for Tobias Alm Interview)

Rut-Malin Barklund

(Sweden)

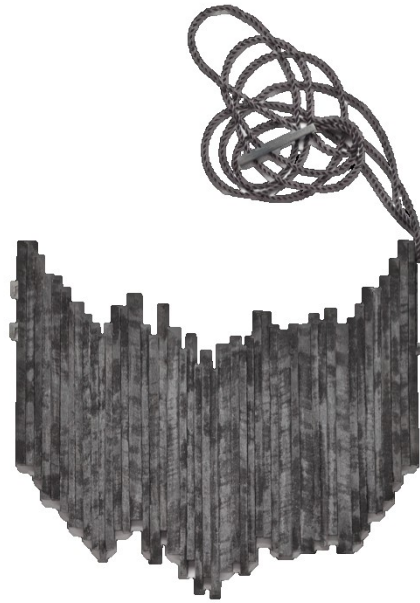


FIG. 42. Rut-Malin Barklund, Necklace (2010) MDF. © Rut-Malin Barklund

Biography

Rut-Malin Barklund graduated from Ädellab Konstfack, Sweden in 2007 and since then has been working as an independent jewellery artist in Stockholm. She has participated in several national and international exhibitions and is represented by Platina gallery with her work included in the Danner Rotunda collection in the Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich. Rut-Malin Barklund's work is very much process based and is centred on revealing the hidden properties of materials. Her most recent work explores paper and mdf.

Topophilia Pieces



Phase 1 (Box no. 2)



Phase 2 (Box no. 12)

PHASE 1 PIECE:	Necklace: marble, copper, brass, silver & leather
PLACE:	Abandoned Graveyard
APPROACH:	Emotion / Memory Based
PROCESS:	Being-in-the-place/photography/walking/writing/ collection
INTERPRETATION:	Abstract / Ambiguous Representation
MATERIAL:	Provenance/Metaphor/Symbol/Aesthetic Appropriation

PHASE 2 PIECE:	Necklace: wood, leather and cotton thread
RESPONSE BOX:	Composed by Helga Mogensen, Iceland
APPROACH:	Material-led / Intuitive
PROCESS:	Derivative Colour & Material
INTERPRETATION:	Imitative / Reduced / Abstraction
MATERIAL:	Aesthetic Appropriation

Project Overview

The transformative process is central to Barklund's approach to making and this process is most often led by material. In both phases of the Topophilia project there is a strong connection to material and process evident in the pieces she has made but with a less purist manner of approach than is customary for her. Barklund chose to focus on a place that elicited a strong emotional response and to explore the symbolic expression of materials. The box she created for her chosen place was image-heavy and object/material light. Her first jewellery piece is a metaphorical construction intended to symbolise her feelings around this place. The aesthetic of this piece is quite fragmentary in terms of the techniques and material combinations she used and does not particularly reflect her typical working practice or approach to material. I would attribute this to the importance she placed on an emotive response to the chosen place, where the aesthetic was secondary to the symbolic meaning of the materials and processes involved in the piece. Here, she mentions the etching into marble especially: 'To etch in stone, to create deep marks in this hard material has a symbolic meaning for me.' The strong emotional response to her choice of place (a cemetery) appears to have obscured the making process for her and perhaps the clarity of her final piece. This first piece seems uncertain and confused when compared to her more resolved body of work - both in terms of its voice and its intended purpose.

Responding to the second box proved to hold a similar challenge for Barklund

as it did for Alm. The difficulty for them both came in separating the objects from the person who chose them. This meant that the idea of the other artist dominated the objects more strongly than the idea of the place itself. This was something all of the makers had to deal with; 'place' not being neutral but rather very personal; one interpretation will be different from another. Barklund mentions the conflict she felt between text and object found in her response phase box; 'The words didn't say the same thing to me as my eyes did when looking at the content in the box. Probably that other person and I have [a] different relationship to these things. I therefore chose to not focus at all at [on] the text.' The second phase necklace that she made has a clearer voice than her first and its simplicity makes its jewellery-ness manifest. I would suggest that in Barklund's case the emotional distancing and pure reading of objects resulted in a more lucid creative process and in turn a finished object that speaks with greater confidence and clarity.

Barklund states that intuition is an important part of her making process and that it involves being absorbed in the process analogous to Csikszentmihalyi's concept of flow. 'I often give my materials [an] unexpected appearance. Sometimes the material leads me, and sometimes I lead the material to the final appearance.' She mentions the difficulty she finds in measuring the influence her native landscape might have had upon her aesthetic but does note that she chose a place with a 'typical Swedish atmosphere' and her use of materials commonly found in the Swedish archipelago. Materials of provenance to the place are utilised for their symbolic meaning and the expressions they provide. For Barklund, the use of indigenous materials appears to be the most important link to place.

(See p.213 for Rut-Malin Barklund Interview)

Sofia Björkman (Sweden)



FIG.43. Sofia Björkman 'Blackened Brilliance' Brooch (2011) Mixed Media © Sofia Björkman

Biography

Sofia Björkman was born in 1970 Ekerö, Sweden, She studied for her MFA at Konstfack and since 1999 has been the owner of Gallery Platina in Stockholm. Her recent work titled 'Dark Black is a series of jewellery pieces in mixed media, such as 3D-printing, found objects, cast silver, and painting made in response to the gloomy financial and environmental events of recent times.

Topophilia Pieces



Phase 1 (Box no. 3)



Phase 2 (Box no. 11)

PHASE 1 PIECE:	Wooden brooch in twig shape, engraved silver back piece
PLACE:	Natural Environment (Coastal)
APPROACH:	Emotional / Material-led / Memory
PROCESS:	Being-in-the-place / photography / writing / collection
INTERPRETATION:	Crude Representation
MATERIAL:	Provenance / Metaphor / Symbol

PHASE 2 PIECE:	Necklace 'Blurred Fragments', in silver
RESPONSE BOX:	Composed by Helena Lehtinen, Finland
APPROACH:	Conscious Aesthetic Vision
PROCESS:	Derivative Form
INTERPRETATION:	Representative /reduced
MATERIAL:	Dictated by Process / Technique

Project Overview

The use of material as metaphor is a strong element of Sofia Björkman's work. This often revolves around the source or origin of the material and in turn references a narrative around time and history; 'Objects obtain a different energy when taken from their context and put into another time and place. You can't revisit a place in order to experience it again... the place can never be the same. But the memory exists and the place may receive new meaning through subjective recreation, using completely different emotions and colours.' Björkman also discusses the grey area between the appearance and the content of a jewellery object, stating; 'I can't ignore an objects' meaning. The surface can't hide references but the surface can tell a lot about the content. Therefore I am interested in both. There are also the grey zones layers in between the object, the content, the surface and the viewer that I think is real [really] interesting.' Making time visible is one of Björkman's aims. This can be seen in the primitively simple piece she created for the first phase of the project in which the provenance of materials directly references their source. For her, the object she made is unequivocal; 'It just can't be in another form because I have the background information. It has always been there and has a lot [of] symbolic qualities for the place.'

Her material choice is symbolic and holds an emotional connection to both people and place. It has a direct provenance to the place and also embodies a narrative of the social history of that place (it is a section of wood from a fishing boat); 'It is important for me that the material has a symbolic meaning in itself that's fits the idea.'

The material I have chosen comes from something that has a bigger value both for me, my family and the area.' Engraved on the back of the brooch is the name of the boat. She has saw-pierced a basic branch form out of the plank thus emphasising the importance of the source material. This is evident both in terms of the plank of wood relating back to the boat it came from, the brooch relating to the plank of wood it was pierced from, and the branch form of the brooch referencing back to the tree that the boat was made from. This piece has an immediacy and confidence that is not as evident in her second piece.

Like Tobias Alm, Björkman found her phase 2 box contents (which also happened to come from a Finnish maker) to hold loaded objects that spoke strongly of themselves but gave a rather obscure understanding of place; 'Of the box with the materials I got I couldn't read any place. I didn't get a picture and I didn't have any references. It was difficult. Therefore I concentrated in the three objects I had and what they told me.' This is reflected in the title of her phase 2 piece; 'Blurred Fragments', which is an imprint of one of the objects in the box (an antique brooch).

(See p.215 for Sofia Björkman Interview)

Sara Borgegård Älgå

(Sweden)

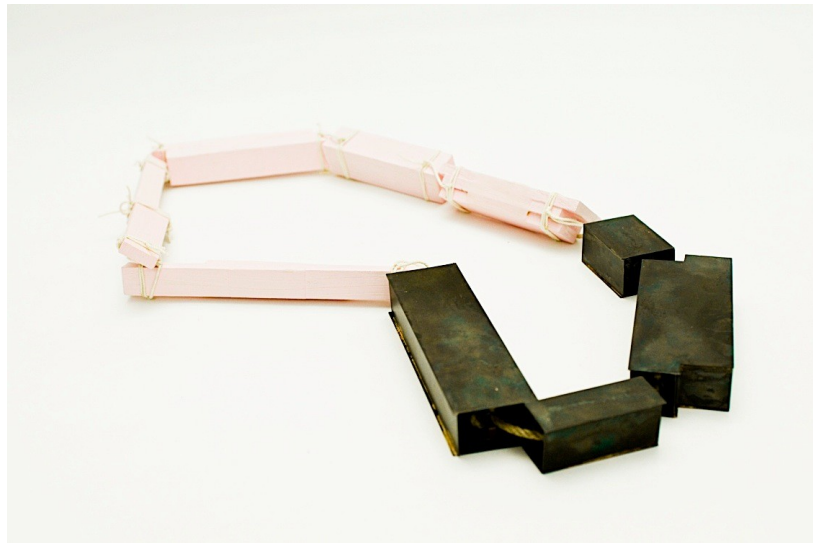


FIG.44. Sara Borgegård Älgå , Necklace from the series 'Home' (20) Cotton, Iron, Wood, Paint © Sara Borgegård Älgå

Biography

Sara Borgegård Älgå gained her Masters from Konstfack (Art Academy) in Stockholm Sweden in 2007, studying under Professor Ruudt Peters. She was awarded the Marzee graduate prize in 2007 and had solo shows at Gallery Hnoss, Göteborg, Sweden in 2009 and Gallery Wittenbringk, Munich in 2010.

Topophilia Pieces



Phase 1 (Box no. 4)



Phase 2 (Box no. 6)

PHASE 1 PIECE:	Necklace: "Furillen" of painted wood, iron & thread
PLACE:	Coastal - Abandoned Industrial Features
APPROACH:	Intuitive / Sensory / Material-led / Emotional
PROCESS:	Being-in-the-place/ photography/ writing/ collection/ walking/ 3D drawing
INTERPRETATION:	Abstract interpretation
MATERIAL:	Provenance / Metaphor / Symbol

PHASE 2 PIECE:	Brooch made of iron, wood, cotton thread and paint
RESPONSE BOX:	Composed by Ingjerd Hanevold, Norway
APPROACH:	Sensory based / Empathetic
PROCESS:	Form derived from Box / Narrative Construction
INTERPRETATION:	Abstract interpretation
MATERIAL:	Aesthetic Appropriation

Project Overview

Sara Borgegård Älgå's main source of inspiration is industrial architecture and surface; she is especially drawn to painted metal, machinery and buildings. Materials such as scrap wood and industrial iron sheet are recurrent in her constructed jewellery pieces. Älgå speaks eloquently about her process. She utilises the metaphor of stones under water to describe her translation of fragments of experience from her surrounding environment; 'I feel my way ahead. Searching for the expression of that inner world. It is like stones underneath the surface of water, it looks different when you pick it up. I am not sure of how this what I am looking for looks like. My conversation becomes physical. My conversation becomes objects.'

Borgegård Älgå gathers her somatic and emotional experiences into what she calls an 'inner world.' It is in this world that she gathers her observations and collections; 'I am both hunter and collector.' But she is also a storyteller, speaking through her constructions, and narrating through her materials. Her abstract architectonic representations are about scale and contrast. Her pieces are formed by making three-dimensional abstract 'drawings'; constructing and assembling component parts 'intuitively' after forming images of forms in her mind, this is an 'on-going three-dimensional discussion'. She writes to connect ideas and words to the process, grounding her clarification of the 'theme'. She considers the materials she uses to be

both cultural and gendered. She is very aware of the language of the materials she utilises and exploits these associations; ‘I use shapes and materials as metaphors for words and feelings.’ Her pieces combine what would be traditionally perceived as male and female materials or techniques i.e. architectonic constructions of wood and iron joined with embroidery thread. Both materials of provenance to the place and other materials are combined. The materials were chosen because of their connection to her background and their cultural reference. The form of this piece echoes the feelings she has when in her chosen place – a place empty and abandoned. The piece suggests openness and both weight and air.

Her response piece was a sensory interpretation of the objects in the box. Without departing from forms and materials familiar to her, she has transferred the imagined sound of the frozen branches conveyed to her by the dry flower heads inside the box. She has realised this through the noise that her response piece makes when it moves. This ‘industrial branch’ is a sensitive and insightful interpretation that goes beyond the pure aesthetic approach to encompass sensory stimulation through bodily interaction and movement.

(See p.218 for Sara Borgegård Älgå Interview)

Grace Girvan (Scotland)



FIG.45. Grace Girvan, Brooch (2012) Wood, Stone, Enamel, Silver © Collin Tennant

Biography

Grace Girvan was born in Orkney, Scotland in 1981. Grace graduated from Edinburgh College of Art in 2003 with a First Class Honours and had her first solo show at the Scottish Gallery, Edinburgh in 2010.

Topophilia Pieces



Phase 1 (Box no. 5)



Phase 2 (Box no. 3)

PHASE 1 PIECE:	Brooch in enamel, silver, pebble, wood, bone handle & limpet shell
PLACE:	Natural Environment (Coastal)
APPROACH:	Intuitive / Sensory / Memory / Material-led
PROCESS:	Being-in-the-place / Photography / Writing / Drawing / Collection / Walking / 3D Drawing
INTERPRETATION:	Abstract interpretation
MATERIAL:	Provenance / Metaphor / Symbol

PHASE 2 PIECE:	Brooch of silver, driftwood & shell
RESPONSE BOX:	Composed by Sofia Bjorkman, Sweden
APPROACH:	Conscious Aesthetic Vision / Material-led
PROCESS:	Derivative Objects & Materials / 3D Drawing
INTERPRETATION:	Representational
MATERIAL:	Aesthetic Appropriation

Project Overview

The unique landscape of the Orkney Islands provides the inspiration for Grace Girvan's work. She enjoys beachcombing and incorporates the objects that she collects on her walks into her work, combining found objects such as pebbles, driftwood and shell with precious metals and vitreous enamels in her considered compositions. Collecting and studying objects, photography, drawing and walking feed her research process, informing texture, colour & form. Her work is evocative of her inspiration, through a subdued colour palette of enamels in soft greys, blues, greens and browns she conveys the washed out, sun bleached colours of the island coasts. The restrained colour tones in her work combine with found objects and fabricated abstract forms that are suggestive of both natural and man-made elements of the Orcadian landscape.

Girvan worked from a place that she has known since childhood and describes her experience of this place as 'imprinted on her senses'. Found objects were used to provide a direct link to something of the place it is trying to convey - provenance being a key element of the language of the piece. She utilised 4 found objects taken directly from the place. Girvan wanted to convey a combination of 'detritus and texture but with an overall sense of harmony'. The complete aesthetic is one that suggests natural elements and the passing of time. The found fragments are very evocative of this but the processes Girvan applies also reflect the layering and eroding effect the natural

elements have on surfaces; 'I am interested in the effect the sea has on materials over time: breaking down layers, smoothing and altering form. I use the objects I find as a starting point in my work, often incorporating these objects into my pieces. I attempt to emulate the effects of the sea, primarily through the use of enamel, subtle colour applied in layers, appearing smooth and worn looking.'

Girvan's creative process for phase 1 involved a great deal of model making and three-dimensional drawing with test pieces and assemblages (Fig. 28). During this process the proportions and positions of elements both found and made were tested, juxtaposed and swapped for the most congruent combinations. This activity followed some rough sketching that allowed her initial ideas of composition, proportion and form to flow. The completed first phase brooch uses more found and collected objects than is typical in Girvan's work and for the first time a man-made element of the bone handle (albeit in a natural material and eroded by natural processes) is incorporated into the composition. This may well be reflective of the collection element of the Topophilia Box process feeding into the final piece and also the 'place' being embodied most absolutely for Girvan in these appropriated materials.

Despite the materials Girvan was given in her phase 2 box having a sense of familiarity to her she felt that she did not have the same connection to these collected objects as she would to her own. The process of creating her response piece was a considerably more straightforward one than her first but also one that she states she did not feel as involved in or as enjoyable. Both of these pieces have commonalities of form and arrangement but the more in-depth creative and compositional processes involved in stage one are clearly evident in the first piece.

(See p.222 for Grace Girvan Interview)

Ingjerd Hanevold (Norway)



FIG.46. Ingjerd Hanevold 'Nature Morte', brooches (2007) silver cast plant seeds and raw crystals © Ingjerd Hanevold

Biography

Ingjerd Hanevold was born in Asker, Norway 1950. She is a graduate of Norwegian National College of Art and Design and the New York State University. Hanevold's work has been purchased by the Norwegian Council of Culture, Decorative Arts in Trondheim Art Museum in Oslo and the National Gallery and Røhska Museum in Gothenburg. Gallery Kunst 1 represented her at Collect at the Saatchi Gallery in 2010. She is currently Professor of Jewellery at the Oslo National Academy of the Arts.

Topophilia Pieces



Phase 1 (Box no. 6)



Phase 2 (Box no. 16)

PHASE 1 PIECE:	Brooch in silver and diamonds
PLACE:	Natural Environment
APPROACH:	Conscious Aesthetic Vision
PROCESS:	Being-in-the-place / Photography / Collection
INTERPRETATION:	Representational
MATERIAL:	Dictated by Technique / Metaphorical

PHASE 2 PIECE:	'Hope from Tragedy', 77 oxidised silver & pearl pins
RESPONSE BOX:	Composed by Tarja Tuupenen, Finland
APPROACH:	Emotional / Conscious Aesthetic vision
PROCESS:	Narrative Construction
INTERPRETATION:	Narrative
MATERIAL:	Metaphorical / Symbolic

Project Overview

Ingjerd Hanevold's work probably has the most conservative aesthetic of the Topophilia group and as such her work is accessible to a wide audience. This is in large part due to the universal nature of her subject matter and her choice of recognised mediums. Hanevold both casts natural elements and constructs organic forms in silver. Silver has historical and cultural significance for her as it has long been mined in Norway. Her hand-tool based making processes are also traditional and reflect the direct relationship she has both as a maker of jewellery objects and a cultivator of plants. Her work has a quiet presence rooted in the meditative observations she makes in the horticultural surroundings of her home. 'Nature becomes an everlasting font of inspiration with its changing beauty and decay, for joy and for comfort. Observing forms, colours, constructions, patterns and the characteristics of materials is the basis for my creative work in the studio. The attention focused on natural science, ecology and sustainability.'

Hanevold's material choices have a recognisable symbolism, her first piece of jewellery included tiny diamonds representing the glittering ice crystals of a frozen hydrangea plant and her second piece consists of 77 silver pins containing pearls as a symbol of how something debased can be transformed into something precious. This piece was a response to the box she received at the time of the Norwegian massacre in July 2011, which contained 5 empty picture frame backs. Her personal response to this exemplifies the narrative capacity of the jewellery object as a cultural document.

(See p.225 for Ingjerd Hanevold Interview)

Caroline Holt

(Scotland)



FIG.47. Caroline Holt, *Traces 2 Pendant*, (2010), Concrete, horsehair & organza print © Caroline Holt

Biography

Caroline Holt graduated from the Masters course at the Royal College of Art, London in 2010 and previous to that she undertook her BA (Hons) in Design and Applied Arts at Edinburgh College of Art.

Topophilia Pieces



Phase 1 (Box no. 7)



Phase 2 (Box no. 9)

PHASE 1 PIECE:	Neckpiece: concrete, pigment, graphite, wood, & brass
PLACE:	Urban Environment
APPROACH:	Sensory / Emotional / Material-led
PROCESS:	Being-in-the-place / test-pieces / drawing /3D Drawing
INTERPRETATION:	Abstract interpretation
MATERIAL:	Dictated by Technique & Process / Metaphorical

PHASE 2 PIECE:	Neckpiece entitled '32', of concrete & pigment
RESPONSE BOX:	Composed by Jenny Klemming, Sweden
APPROACH:	Emotional / Empathetic
PROCESS:	Narrative construction from text
INTERPRETATION:	Narrative / Abstraction
MATERIAL:	Dictated by Technique / Symbolic

Project Overview

Employing materials such as antler horn, horsehair, chalk, printed organza and silver thermal blanket, Caroline Holt's sensitive pieces symbolise an identity and connection with her environment through the application of material and the exploration of process. Her most recent pendants are composed of both vessel and brush, which invite the wearer to explore and engage with their environment through mark making. For this project Holt explored a sensorial documentation of her personal understanding of place through walking, sampling, drawing and modelling research processes. To her, a 'tactile interaction was more primal and emotional than a visual documentation.' (her concept being the creation of something akin to a 'cities' fingerprint'). The materials she chose to work with for the first phase piece had both a personal connection as well as a more universal association for Holt. She used concrete as a symbol of the human domination of landscape but also enjoyed the fortifying quality that concrete has as the on-going chemical process continues to strengthen the material over time. Holt utilises this as a metaphor for the strengthening attachment to place. Her first piece both suggests an aerial view of a section of land and a piece of architectural salvage. Although the form of this piece has an industrial quality, a more organic process is brought to mind with the bubble-raw surface of the concrete in its almost flesh-like tone. The surface contrast and linear direction give this object a strong presence although it is unfortunate that the neck string seems comparatively insubstantial for the piece.

Concrete is very much the dominant voice in her second piece, which is a direct and simple interpretation of the box's narrative of houses being washed away. The house forms have a childlike simplicity that provides a satisfying contrast to the grown-up associations of the material itself. Due to the nature of the material and the manner with which Holt has manipulated it, the haptic presence of these pieces is undeniable. When worn or handled, both neckpieces reinforce the importance of tactility to our sensory embodiment in place, and in turn our growing attachment to place.

(See p.227 for Caroline Holt Interview)

Hildur Ýr Jónsdóttir

(Iceland)



FIG.48. Hildur Ýr Jónsdóttir, Necklace from 'I Am How I Am' Series (2010) Ceramic and Jute © Hildur Ýr Jónsdóttir

Biography

Hildur Ýr Jónsdóttir was born in Hafnarfjörður, Iceland in 1976. She completed her studies at the Gerrit Rietveld Academy in Amsterdam, Holland. Works by Jónsdóttir were selected for the Danner Rotunda Jewellery Art Collection in the Pinakothek Der Moderne, Munich curated by Karl Fritsch in 2010.

Topophilia Pieces



Phase 1 (Box no. 8)



Phase 2 (Box no. 2)

PHASE 1 PIECE:	"Circle of Life" Necklace, rope, mussels shells, rubber tube, polymorph, rusted iron, stone, cotton thread and old iron chain
PLACE:	Natural Environment (Coastal)
APPROACH:	Intuitive / Material-led
PROCESS:	Being-in-the-place / Walking / Photography / Collecting / Writing / 3D Drawing
INTERPRETATION:	Abstract Assemblage
MATERIAL:	Provenant / Aesthetic Appropriation

PHASE 2 PIECE:	Brooch with Cement and Pigment
RESPONSE BOX:	Composed by Rut-Malin Braklund, Sweden
APPROACH:	Material-led / aesthetic vision / empathetic
PROCESS:	Writing / Derivative material
INTERPRETATION:	Ambiguous / Abstract
MATERIAL:	Aesthetic appropriation

Project Overview

For Hildur Ýr Jónsdóttir material is the strongest means with which to transfer her sensory experience of place into a tangible object. Her choice of material very often stems directly from a specific source and the origin of these objects and materials are very important to her narrative. Her works touch on ideas of Icelandic natural and cultural inheritance and she works with a range of materials such as fish skin, shell and stone. Both of the pieces Jónsdóttir made for the Topophilia project are crude in terms of their construction and in her manipulation of the materials. In her first piece there is a certain charm in this raw aesthetic, giving the neckpiece the appearance of being thrown together by the elements and scavenged from the shore. The rough and unfinished appearance of her response piece does not have the same freedom as her first piece however. This second piece came from her response to a box that she found to be not a particularly rich source in terms of either objects or the variety of materials. Jónsdóttir seems to have reacted to the melancholic feeling she felt when looking at the materials inside the box (the same response the maker of the box had in her chosen place). Jónsdóttir had given herself a set of rules to follow for the response stage of the project and this might have contributed to the struggle and lack of freedom she felt during this second stage, where a rigid and forced quality is reflected in her piece. This work does however appear to reflect the box it is linked to quite well both in terms of material and form.

Jónsdóttir seems to have a level of conflict within her creative process. She says that she does not strive to create objects that would be considered beautiful by the majority of people, stating that the work she produces is not to her ‘taste’ but is instead allied to the Icelandic landscape. She describes her surroundings as ‘beautiful, cruel, terrifying, ugly, colourful, colourless’ and she speaks both of being connected to her materials and attacking her materials. This divergence is visible in Jónsdóttir’s work, sometimes producing free and spontaneous pieces in remarkable materials and at other times looking forced, underworked and lacking clear intention.

(See p.230 for Hildur Ýr Jónsdóttir Interview)

Jenny Klemming

(Sweden)

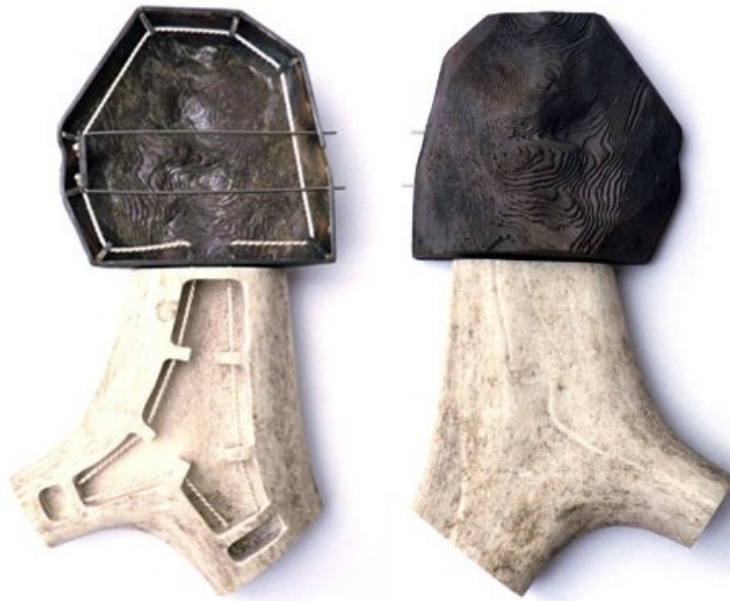


FIG.49. Jenny Klemming, Brooch (front and back) from the Series 'Land Pieces' (2010) mixed media. © Jenny Klemming

Biography

Jenny Klemming is a recent graduate from the MFA course at HDK University of Design and Crafts, Gothenburg, Sweden. She was awarded the Galerie Marzee International Graduation Prize in both 2008 and 2010. Her series of work entitled 'Land pieces' investigates the borders and transitions between culture and nature.

Topophilia Pieces



Phase 1 (Box no. 9)



Phase 2 (Box no. 10)

PHASE 1 PIECE:	Brooch 'Shoreline Frontline', electroformed copper, silver & steel
PLACE:	Natural Environment / Coastal
APPROACH:	Emotional / Sensory / Aesthetic vision
PROCESS:	Walking / collecting / photography / Narrative construction / being-in-the-place
INTERPRETATION:	Reduced Abstract Interpretation
MATERIAL:	Dictated by Process (process dictated by form)

PHASE 2 PIECE:	Brooch made of copper, paint, cotton thread, silver and steel
RESPONSE BOX:	Composed by Beth Legg, Scotland
APPROACH:	Sensory / Imaginative / Aesthetic vision
PROCESS:	Narrative construction / derivative form
INTERPRETATION:	Ambiguous / Abstract interpretation
MATERIAL:	Dictated by Process

Project Overview

With her jewellery objects Jenny Klemming wants to ‘tell tales and stir imaginations’. Klemming maintains a balance between the symbolic language of the material and the aesthetic qualities of the object in her work, creating a language of symbols that are strongly connected to her subject matter. She seeks out events, shapes and materials that connect to specific ideas. These associations give Klemming the confidence to resolve the pieces’ individual aesthetic. She often uses found objects for form and material, engaging in the challenge of uniting both the created and the given. Klemming believes that a ‘naturally given surface or material can act as a liberator from self-criticism as it provides an input from the outside.’ Although she is wary of working with the loaded object - a form that is too ubiquitous or suggestive, she is always drawn to the small nuances or individual qualities of a found fragment.

Her phase 1 piece, a brooch entitled 'Shoreline Frontline' is a highly reduced abstract form. Klemming felt it difficult to choose one single piece to be representative of her selected location and found this process more difficult than she had expected (see Appendix B). She made three pieces for this first stage because she could not decide which approach embodied the place best but ultimately decided to go with her first brooch despite her fear that this object might not be as expressive to the viewer due to

its extremely reduced appearance. This piece is a pebble shaped hollow shell in electroformed copper with a line of holes running diagonally across the form. This brooch was a combination of both emotional and geographical influence in which she attempted to embody the ambivalence of this place – solitude and calmness but with a hidden threat.

After making this first piece, doubt made Klemming attempt two other approaches both of which were more aesthetically driven (see Appendix B). The first was a ring made of apple wood with chalcedony. This piece centred on the found object (the piece of apple wood) to which she added the barnacle-looking blue chalcedony stones. She felt this piece to be too vague and that it didn't speak as clearly of her chosen location. Klemmings next attempt was a free interpretation of the horizon line of her chosen place. This 'Horizon brooch' was a hollow shape made out of electroformed copper, semi-cut aquamarine, silk thread, steel and silver. The horizon brooch may not have been used for the first piece but it certainly fed into the creation of her second piece, which was made in a similar manner.

Klemming found the response stage much easier than the first. The box she was sent included a poem and she focused predominantly on this text. Her final piece does however also share physical characteristics with the shells in the box - the whiteness, the hollowness, which must have fed into the resolved aesthetic. Through listing key words from the poem inside the box she has created an ambiguous object that suggests a stranded remnant, bleached and hollowed by the elements. Her process for this stage was in general very similar to her normal approach. She notes though that without the time and background knowledge built up through a language of association around the 'place' it made the piece 'more direct, more emotionally connected (less intellectually supported)'.

(See p233. for Jenny Klemming Interview)

Beth Legg

(Scotland)



FIG.50. Beth Legg 'Caged Bird Brooch' 2007 Oxidised silver, steel & bird bone 9 x 7 cm

© Beth Legg

Biography

I was born in 1981 in the Scottish Highlands and studied Jewellery and Silversmithing at BA and MA level at Edinburgh College of Art. In 2008 I authored 'Natural Materials in Jewellery' for A&C Black publishers, which sparked my interest into further research within this diverse field. After four years working and exhibiting as a self-employed maker, I embarked on this doctoral thesis.

Topophilia Pieces



Phase 1 (Box no. 10)



Phase 2 (Box no. 14)

PHASE 1 PIECE:	'Where Land Meets Sea' Neckpiece, silver, oxidised silver, copper, driftwood, stone & industrial enamel
PLACE:	Natural Environment (Coastal)
APPROACH:	Intuitive / Process & Material-led
PROCESS:	Being-In-The-Place / Collecting / Walking / Photography / 3D Drawing
INTERPRETATION:	Abstract Assemblage
MATERIAL:	Provenant / Aesthetic Appropriation / Dictated by Process

PHASE 2 PIECE:	'Collection Triptych', 3 Brooches in Wood, Silver, Oxidised silver, patinated Copper & Enamel Paint
RESPONSE BOX:	Composed by Per Suntum, Denmark
APPROACH:	Sensory / Process-based / Aesthetic vision
PROCESS:	3D Drawing / Photography / Derivative Colour & Forms
INTERPRETATION:	Representative / Reduced
MATERIAL:	Aesthetic appropriation / Dictated by process

Project Overview

My chosen place is an edge of coastline on the very northern strip of the Scottish mainland. It is remote and very few people come here. For me being in this place usually engenders feelings of safety and solitude, I am relaxed, at peace and in a meditative frame of mind where I feel a real sense of belonging to the land & the place; I am hidden, alone and free.

My research process for the first piece was fairly in-depth. At an early stage this included photography, observation, walking, and collection; all in-situ, and at a later stage writing, sketching and three-dimensional 'drawing' in assemblages/constructions. Walking and immersing myself in the atmosphere of the place was very important. I have always loved walking and moving through landscapes. Moving through and stopping and looking are the best ways by which I can feel the contrasts and connections within a place. The words I used to describe my chosen place were; periphery, edge, raw, moving, changing, alive, familiar, empty, beautiful, bleak, varied, quiet, vast, open. I found it helpful to keep coming back to these terms although the

seeming contradictions within them (i.e. alive and empty; moving and quiet) embody some of the challenges I confronted when making this first piece. I use photography often and sometimes edit and change them digitally afterwards. For this project I sent some of these to Donald Mackay, a poet who lives near my chosen place and he wrote a poem 'Sea-ware' which I have included on the box lid. (Appendix A)

I believe there are many parallels between the medium of poetry and the expressive capacity of the jewellery object and I thought this might allow me to further explore this aspect in a small way. Mackay has put into words the atmosphere of the place I initially attempted to capture through photography and drawing. This poem captures the essence of movement, rhythm and contrasts that I associate with this wild coastal place. I used to draw regularly but I have found with time that this distances me from the elements I am trying to capture rather than bringing me closer to them – it is adding another step to the process which I believe can disconnect me further from the essence of the thing. I now prefer 'drawing' directly with materials and objects that I have collected when I return to the studio. It was my intention to then transform these aspects into the materials and compositions I brought together in the necklace I called 'Where Land Meets Sea'. The inclusion of this poem was probably more of an aid to the person who had to respond to the box than to myself as I was working more from my own embodied experience of the place.

I began my translation of the fundamental qualities of the landscape of this place through my physical interaction with material. I see this as a kind of cycle of influences between the landscape, the material and myself. The processes I apply within my practice in the workshop are part of a reciprocal interchange with my thoughts and memories of the processes that are inherent in the landscape. After various mock-ups I chose to incorporate five different materials into the final jewellery piece. Firstly silver; I am comfortable with this material – I am familiar with its qualities and challenges and enjoy manipulating it. I particularly enjoyed the process of imparting the qualities of something soft, fluid and moving (seaweed) to a metal. I included a piece of driftwood because it is from the place – it has provenance and I take pleasure in the conversation between 'found' and 'made'. It also had a visual appeal as it echoes the linear qualities in the other elements and it has contrasting warmth to the sometimes cold appearance of the metal. Stone – again for its provenance and that it is a very typical material of the region I am from; to me it embodies both ideas of man-made and naturally occurring structures. Copper, which I enjoy for its malleability and softness and liquid enamel,

which I love for its painterly-like application process and the alchemy of mixing natural materials into the liquid with unpredictable results.

This first piece and the process of its making as a whole was decidedly more difficult than I had thought before starting the project. As an object it went through numerous guises and assemblages and I think this is reflected in the rather forced and overworked aesthetic of the final neckpiece. I had invested too much in this one piece – both in terms of what it represented physically and emotionally and in terms of its importance to my research. On reflection I think that during the making process I thought the piece had to do and be everything and so I threw everything at it. This results in an over-busy piece that has some pleasing elements, but is overall unsuccessful as a fully resolved jewellery object in my eyes. I do believe it suggests many of the key aspects that I was seeking to evoke but not with as much clarity and simplicity as I would have liked.

The three brooches that make up my Phase 2 piece ‘Collection Triptych’ are responses to the different combinations of materials, forms and colours that I saw inside Per Suntum’s box. I chose to then echo the processes suggested to me from the objects in the box in my making process (i.e. surface indentations, twisted wire, folded metal). The first piece was a quite literal translation of a dried leaf that was inside the box. I fabricated, chased and formed sheet silver into twelve leaf shapes, which I then soldered together into a square mass. The second piece took its colour from a dried seed inside the box and its form from the dimple-like indentations in three of the stones inside the box. I wonder now whether the square became a dominant form in two of these pieces because I was repeatedly referring to the constant presence of the box throughout my making process.

I found the second phase of the project much more liberating than the first, which was unexpected to me at the time. I thought I would feel a weight of responsibility but this was more the case when working from my own selection of place and objects. I think there was a freedom in not knowing too much about the second place – although all of the objects had a certain familiarity I did not know their contexts so I could work on the initial aesthetic impulse, which was freeing. I could approach the stimulus with more clarity and I am more pleased with the outcome of Phase 2 ‘Collection Triptych’.

(See p.237 for Beth Legg Interview)

Helen Lehtinen

(Finland)

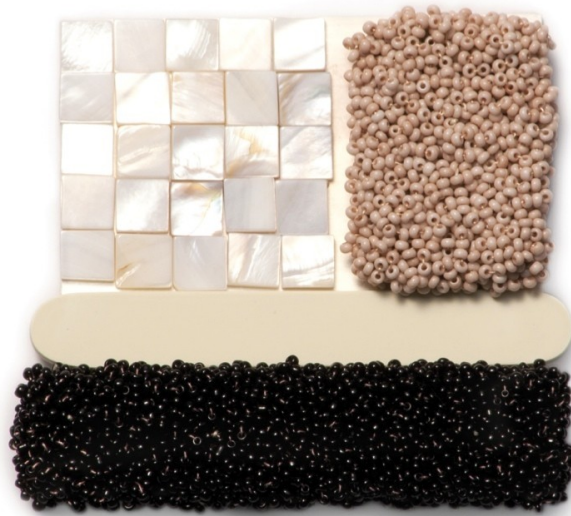


FIG.51. Helena Lehtinen, Mixed Media Brooch from the Garden Series (2011) © Helena Lehtinen

Biography

Helena Lehtinen, jewellery artist, was born in Lahti, Finland, in 1952 where she lives and works. After graduating from Lahti Goldsmith School in 1977 as silversmith she complimented studies at Lahti polytechnics and also at University of Industrials Arts Helsinki. She has taught as a senior lecturer at Konstfack, Stockholm. Galeria Norsu represented her work at Collect 2007, 2009 and 2010. Lehtinen has recently enjoyed a five-year working grant from the State Applied Art Commission in Finland.

Topophilia Pieces



Phase 1 (Box No. 11)



Phase 2 (Box No. 5)

PHASE 1 PIECE:	Brooch of glass beads, silver, hair (readymade) & reconstructed Ivory (plastic)
PLACE:	Interior (Domestic)
APPROACH:	Intuitive / Imaginative
PROCESS:	Being-in-the-place / Collecting / 3D Drawing
INTERPRETATION:	Abstract Assemblage
MATERIAL:	Aesthetic Appropriation / Symbolic

PHASE 2 PIECE:	Brooch of glass beads, silver, reconstructed ivory (plastic) & textile
RESPONSE BOX:	Composed by Grace Girvan, Scotland
APPROACH:	Sensory / Imaginative / Aesthetic vision
PROCESS:	Narrative construction / Colour derived from Box / 3D Drawing
INTERPRETATION:	Abstract / Narrative
MATERIAL:	Aesthetic Appropriation

Project Overview

Helena Lehtinen's jewellery touches on the grey area of memory where reality is filtered and functional capacity is weakened. She is fascinated with the distorted and sifted information the memory can produce and both recollection and imagination play a key role in her creative process. Lehtinen works in a form of poetic construction; each jewellery piece is an assemblage of elements that build to form a whole. In a recent body of work called 'Gardens' she produced pieces around the memory of summer gardens at a time when they were in reality covered in snow. She questioned her sensory memory and the feelings that these places had left with her. The colours, smells and visions that her mind conjured up were transformed into physical components of an imaginary winter garden that have a certain beauty that is quite different to a blooming garden in the summer. Each of her jewellery objects are meticulously made, the materials being built up over time like the words of a poem. All of the component parts have to be in the right place to express the right thing and every constituent object is composed with care. These poetic constructions talk about memories of something lost. Her materials are chosen for their evocative qualities, encompassing themes of memory, time and space. Lehtinen locates her pieces in a space between two worlds; the one we live in and the one we have left behind. There is sometimes an air of sentiment in these

pieces; a memento-like quality. This is also reflected in the manner by which she has approached the Topophilia project.

Her first piece certainly has nuances of Victorian mourning jewellery. The braided hairpiece that makes up part of her abstract assemblage brooch is a readymade with loaded associations. Collection is an important part of her process and she surrounds her desk with objects and materials that are essential starting points for a project. The important narrative presence of these materials leads her way of working. She constructs her assemblages through three-dimensional 'drawing' with objects. These objects (often ready-mades) feed into her process but not always physically; she often leaves the stimulus objects out of the final pieces. She scavenges from markets and charity shops, searching for objects and their hidden histories to become part of her expression. Intuition plays a huge role in her making process, as does chance; 'I do not choose, I accept those things that might be in my place, when I go there. Through those "accidents" the story begins.' It is through reading and re-reading these objects and their memories that she is helped towards the process of understanding things. Lehtinen believes that every material has its own history with which she tries to work. This is especially the case when incorporating found objects into pieces, because each object is impregnated with history.

Lehtinen found the second phase more difficult than the first because she was confronted with materials and objects that she would not normally have elected to work with. But once she had immersed herself in the narrative of the objects her imagination allowed her to translate sensorial ideas such as the smell of the sea and the feeling of sand under her feet into physical form.

(See p.240 for Helena Lehtinen Interview)

Helga Mogensen

(Iceland)



FIG.52. Helga Mogensen 'The Red Thread, Family Tree' Necklace (2010) Driftwood, Silk Thread. © Helga Mogensen

Biography

Helga Mogensen was born in Iceland in 1980 and continues to live and work there after gaining a First Class BA (Hons) in Jewellery and Silversmithing at Edinburgh College of Art. She has just had her first solo show in Iceland. Her work considers the material representations of the memory of place and often involves the use of driftwood and fish skin.

Topophilia Pieces



Phase 1 (Box No. 12)



Phase 2 (Box No. 15)

PHASE 1 PIECE:	Brooch of silver, driftwood, fish skin
PLACE:	Domestic space within Natural Environment (Coastal Wilderness)
APPROACH:	Memory based / Material-led
PROCESS:	Walking / collecting / photography / drawing / Being-in-the-place
INTERPRETATION:	Semi-representational / Narrative
MATERIAL:	Provenance / symbolic

PHASE 2 PIECE:	Silver necklace in driftwood box
RESPONSE BOX:	Composed by Nelli Tanner, Finland
APPROACH:	Imaginative / Empathetic
PROCESS:	Narrative Construction
INTERPRETATION:	Narrative representation
MATERIAL:	Aesthetic Appropriation / Dictated by Technique

Project Overview

For this project Mogensen was working from a place that appears to illustrate the atmosphere of a sublime and romantic wilderness for her. She talks of being ‘gone’ and experiencing a different mind-set when she arrives in this location. This meditative sensation is something she carries to the bench when she works with the objects that she has collected there. These objects are seen in a new context within the studio when she handles them. Believing that their narratives are now interwoven with her own, she says that each object ‘takes the journey with me’. Mogensen emphasises the importance of sensory embodiment; embedding herself in the place as part of the research process. She is aware of the value of standing, listening and watching; being-in-the-place and that this can give a greater closeness and insight into an environment than activities such as drawing and taking photographs which can sometimes have a distancing effect.

Mogensen transfers her memories of place into a jewellery piece through her use of material. She works with the recollection of her sensory experiences and transfers them into the symbolic qualities of her chosen materials. She enjoys the association that fish skin has, connecting to both her personal history and the greater Icelandic cultural history. She often incorporates found driftwood into her pieces and has done so for both of her Topophilia pieces as well. The use of driftwood is for her the most direct manner through which she can embody what the place means to her; she sees this material as an

inseparable part of work that she executes around this place. Colour is also important to Mogensen, for her this reflects the Icelandic seasons – the extremes of dark and light, snow and verdant land, winter and summer.

Mogensen's work might not have the maturity of some of the other makers involved in this project but her pieces have a naivety that can be quite charming. Her first piece is a representation of an interior space. This miniature room is an interpretation of a personal domestic space with more abstract references to the external landscape. With her second piece she was given a box that contained only an enlargement of an old black and white photograph of an elderly man. Mogensen used her imagination and empathy to create a narrative around the image of this man and the person who compiled the box which she could then relate to her own personal history. In this way her approach was similar to her normal practice as memory and imagination were crucial.

(See p.242 for Helga Mogensen Interview)

Eija Mustonen

(Finland)



FIG.53. Eija Mustonen, Brooch (2008) Mixed Media © Eija Mustonen

Biography

Eija Mustonen was born in Polvijärvi, Finland in 1961 and since 2009 has been the Principal lecturer at the jewellery department, Saimaa University of Applied Sciences, Imatra-Lappeenranta. She exhibits internationally and is the Coordinator for international jewellery KORU events in Lappeenranta, Finland.

Topophilia Pieces



Phase 1 (Box no. 13)



Phase 2 (Box no. 4)

PHASE 1 PIECE:	Brooch of silver chain and bioresin
PLACE:	Natural Environment (Wilderness)
APPROACH:	Emotional / Sensory / memory
PROCESS:	Walking / collecting / being-in-the-place
INTERPRETATION:	Reduced Abstract Interpretation
MATERIAL:	Dictated by Process

PHASE 2 PIECE:	Necklace of plywood, steel, silver, and 'new silver' (copper/nickel)
RESPONSE BOX:	Composed by Sara Borgegard, Sweden
APPROACH:	Conscious aesthetic vision
PROCESS:	Derivative Colour & Material
INTERPRETATION:	Abstract interpretation
MATERIAL:	Dictated by Process / Symbolic

Project Overview

Eija Mustonen's jewellery is deeply linked to the natural environment of her country, Finland. In her work the perceived beauty associated with the 'precious materials' of traditional jewellery has been transferred and attributed to the natural landscape instead. Lakes, mountains and forests are the protagonists of her work. The work of Mustonen revolves around an individual emotional dimension in which memory and imagination build form and creativity is stimulated by narrative. Sensory phenomena, memory and emotion come together in her work, which expresses genuine admiration for the precious and unique in nature.

A particular focus in the past for her has been the lake – both ubiquitous and symbolic in Finland. Mustonen combined oxidised silver with off-cuts of linen fabric in a series of brooches exploring the topographic maps of these specific named places. This body of work has more feminine associations than her most recent pieces. In her latest work the central theme of the natural landscape remains but her perspective has changed. These new landscapes still act as carriers of memories of childhood on the body, but now they are darker, heavier, and more masculine in weight, colour and appearance. The viewer is brought lower and closer to terra firma as geographic details are taken into sharp relief. Mustonen begins with form and then brings material and colour in to support her ideas. Atmosphere is conjured through dark and light elements and ethereal or weighty materials - heavy rock, dark forest, snow-laden cloud, deep

water. This is reflected in her phase 1 piece, which is dominated by what appears to be a dense and bulky topographical form – which in actuality is deceptively hollow and light. From this form chains hang and sway; suggesting water or even tears perhaps. This first piece uses form, concept and material typical of her current work but in her response piece Mustonen stepped further away from her characteristic mediums. She read the colours, forms and materials in the box and incorporated them into a neckpiece. The blue in her piece is from the walls of the box; the iron and the form came from the concept she formed around the place. Despite adopting colour, material and form from another source, this piece still retains her personal creative voice.

(See p.246 for Eija Mustonen Interview)

Per Suntum

(Denmark)

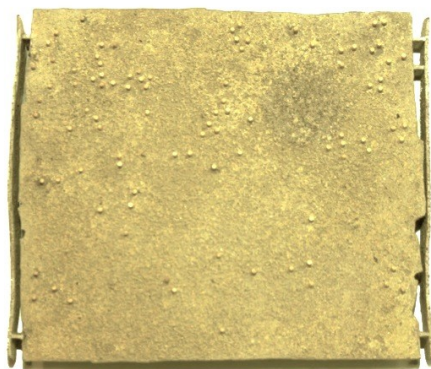


FIG.54. Per Suntum 'Florence' brooch (2011) 18kt gold, palladium, 24kt and 22kt gold. 44x46x4mm © Per Suntum

Biography

Per Suntum was born in 1944 in Denmark and graduated as a goldsmith from Hans Hansen Silversmith, Copenhagen in 1965. In 2003 he was awarded the Danish State Arts Foundation TM Lifelong Grant for Artists on the Financial Law. His work is held in several international Major Collections including The Danish State Arts Foundation, The Danish Museum of Art & Design, Copenhagen, The Rohsska Museum of Art and Crafts, Gothenburg and The Pahlman Collection, Finland.

Topophilia Pieces



Phase 1 (Box no. 14)



Phase 2 (Box no. 7)

PHASE 1 PIECE:	'Rockscape', Brooch, shakudo & shibuichi, white gold & yellow gold
PLACE:	Natural environment (coastal)
APPROACH:	Conscious Aesthetic Vision
PROCESS:	Walking / collecting / Being-in-the-place / photography
INTERPRETATION:	Reduced Abstract Interpretation
MATERIAL:	Dictated by Process / Aesthetic Appropriation

PHASE 2 PIECE:	'Song of Two', Brooch of silver, fine silver, enamel and gold
RESPONSE BOX:	Composed by Caroline Holt, Scotland
APPROACH:	Sensory / Process Driven
PROCESS:	Derivative Process / Test-pieces
INTERPRETATION	Representational
MATERIAL:	Dictated by Process

Project Overview

Per Suntum is a specialist with surface treatment - rough, smooth, frosted, coloured and structured, his pieces are studies in texture; their surfaces always fascinating; 'The source of my work with jewellery is my intuitive, direct response to the immanent power of the materials...it is the singular moment, where man meets material and purpose steers the soul into expression.' His jewellery has a quiet presence that draws you closer to them. Whether they are in metal, enamel or stone they echo the weathered surfaces of everyday life but in a beautifully detailed and poignant way. The working methods he applies to metal replicates the on-going geological processes in nature; the continual cycle of layers and materials consolidated within terra firma. Suntum often works in the Japanese alloy techniques of shakudo and shibuichi where the basic materials are reprocessed again and again in layers of different carats of gold filings. Suntum is very mindful of the association his work has with natural processes. He states that one of his aims is to reflect the 'deep ancient and immense still life of stone among stone' in his work. Suntum's process is poetic and meditative. His approach is a balance between a 'conscious aesthetic vision' and an intuitive response to his materials. He sees intuition as another level of awareness on which his decisions hinge. This involves the interplay between the intrinsic potential of his material, and a conscious vision that stems from his personal knowledge of both the material and the source of inspiration. He states that 'only when I see myself in the work will I know that that is the work I have to do'. He listens to his materials, aware of their capacity to

change the direction of the work. ' He says of his intuitive working process that he tries to 'maintain an atmosphere of alertness, of gratitude, a sense of spaciousness: freedom, in order to see myself: to be - open to the singular moment, where man meets material.' In his work material and process combine to create a sensory aesthetic.

With his Topophilia box Suntutum attempted to illustrate the atmosphere of elements from his chosen place. Suntutum found the box compilation more of a challenge than making the actual jewellery pieces (see email correspondence in Appendix B). He describes his inspiration as a 'huge variety of impressions, almost impossible and futile to describe' and he found it daunting to capture both the minutiae and ethereal qualities of place in a physical form that could be constrained within a box. He tried to combat this by including a cd of images titled 'Not Ideas But things' which contained photography from his walks along the coastline of Bornholm in his box. Collection is a habitual practice for Suntutum and it feeds into his overall creative approach. He learns from his collected objects – they are either a tool for seeing in a particular way or a stimulus for further inspiration. The notion of the sublime as perceived through nature is evident when Suntutum discusses the transcendent sensation he experiences when contemplating these objects, he says; 'Then, my work is not really about nature. It is not about the seen. It is more of what is known forever in the mind, the awareness of unborn perfection.'

Both of Suntutum's pieces for this project are reflective of his greater body of work. They are highly detailed and yet have an over-all modest appearance despite the ostentatious connotations of their materials. They have a quietly strong presence and are the kind of pieces whose qualities cannot be captured easily in a photograph. His first piece is a brooch entitled 'Rockscape', of shakudo, shibuichi, white gold and yellow gold. This piece is reminiscent of both an aerial view from far above where details become lost to the greater essence of landscape and a very close up detail of a surface – both familiar and a little exotic. His response piece is a brooch entitled 'Song of Two', in silver, fine silver, enamel and gold and is both a visual and tactile reaction to the cast surfaces that were to be found in his phase 2 box. These cast objects of urban surfaces inspired Suntutum to make what he calls a 'nature statement'; his personal interpretation of a surface study derived from his own environment. A sensory-driven aesthetic is the language in which Suntutum works most fluently and his response was both immediate and perceptive.

(See p.248 for Per Suntutum Interview)

Nelli Tanner

(Finland)



FIG.55. Nelli Tanner, Brooch 'Behind the white curtains' (2009) Aluminium, brass, silver, plaster, plastic, wood © Nelli Tanner

Biography

Nelli Tanner graduated in 2003 from Gerrit Rietveld Academie, Amsterdam. She was also educated at South Carelian Polytechnic (Lappeenranta, Finland) in jewellery and stonework design where she currently works as a technician.

Topophiia Pieces



Phase 1 (Box No. 15)

Phase 2 (Box No. 1)

PHASE 1 PIECE:	'Still life of the house of Mäkelä', 4 objects 'tools' in artificial wood
PLACE:	Interior (domestic / familial)
APPROACH:	Sensory / Conscious Aesthetic Vision
PROCESS:	Being-in-the-place / Collection / Drawing / Narrative Construction (Interviewing)
INTERPRETATION:	Representational / Narrative
MATERIAL:	Dictated by Process / symbolic

PHASE 2 PIECE	'Relics', in white marble, black granite, artificial wood & metal
RESPONSE BOX:	Composed by Tobias Alm, Sweden
APPROACH:	Conscious Aesthetic vision / Process driven
PROCESS:	Derivative Form
INTERPRETATION:	Representational / Reduced
MATERIAL:	Dictated by Process / Aesthetic Appropriation

Project Overview

Nelli Tanner's work explores the materials that surround her; their intrinsic nature and the impact that time has on them. Layers of time, storytelling and remembrance fascinate her. Tanner applies multiple techniques on various materials and enjoys extended and in-depth making processes. For her the time invested in a piece is as valuable as the final work.

For phase 1 of the Topophilia project time remained a very strong theme. Tanner worked with wooden objects she found in the old house she has recently inherited. These are objects of ambiguous purpose and this provoked her curiosity; 'The objects are all showing signs of the human hand, how they are made or how they are touched or the way you hold the object.' Tanner imitated the objects, carving them from artificial wood, which is a light foam-like plastic. She chose this artificial material as a representation of our contemporary era. Her aim was to reach the original tactility of the found objects. These abstract tool-like forms called the 'Still life of the house of Mäkelä' are not wearable and as such are probably the farthest removed pieces in this project from the traditional concept of a jewellery object. They do however still relate very closely to the human body – they are tactile and can be held and the artificial wood has a slightly disturbing flesh tone and perhaps this, along with their form, is a contributing factor to the medical-like quality of the objects. Her research for this phase

involved acquiring a deeper insight into the personal histories revolving around one house over time. Tanner explored the 'aesthetics of empty space' and used the ambiguous objects she found there as reliquaries for the lives of people who have come and gone in this dwelling space. The box she compiled for this phase contained no three-dimensional materials at all, only an old photograph of an elderly man sitting in the house of Mäkelä.

Tanner's second piece again involved a form of imitation. This consisted of six sometimes reduced, representative, or abstracted hammerhead forms entitled 'Relics' in four different materials. The essence of these objects is similar to those of Neolithic excavated finds. Carving stone involves real investment as a making process, and the title of the piece also references the dimension of time, implying the objects are vestiges of a lost era. For Tanner place is not only a physical location but is also a point in time; a dimension around which personal narratives revolve. In her work these poetic histories are imbued into an object through both process and material.

(See p253. for Nelli Tanner Interview)

Tarja Tuupanen (Finland)



FIG.56. Tarja Tuupanen Brooch: Untitled (2010) Cacholong, silver 12 x 1,1 x 5,5 cm photo: © Kimmo Heikkilä

Biography

Born in 1973, in Lieksa, Finland, Tarja Tuupanen trained at the Lappeenranta College of Crafts and Design, Finland and has had several solo shows in Finland and Amsterdam. She is a stonework teacher at Saimaa University of Applied Sciences, Lappeenranta/Imatra, Finland. Her solo shows include Gallery Louise Smit, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, Gallery Hnoss, Göteborg, Sweden and Gallery Marzee, Nijmegen, The Netherlands.

Topophilia Pieces



Phase 1 (Box No. 16)



Phase 2 (Box No. 8)

PHASE 1 PIECE:	Two brooches of cachalong opal and silver
PLACE:	Natural Environment / Landscape
APPROACH:	Material led
PROCESS:	Collecting / Being-in-the-place
INTERPRETATION:	Reduced Abstract Interpretation
MATERIAL:	Dictated by Process / Aesthetic Appropriation / Symbolic

PHASE 2 PIECE:	Brooch of Slate and silver
RESPONSE BOX:	Composed by Hildur Ýr Jónsdóttir, Sweden
APPROACH:	Sensory / Conscious Aesthetic vision
PROCESS:	Derivative Form
INTERPRETATION:	Reduced Abstract interpretation
MATERIAL:	Dictated by Process / Aesthetic Appropriation

Project Overview

Tarja Tuupanen works predominantly with cachalong, a white stone from the quartz family. Tuupanen's stone brooches have a quietly powerful and atmospheric quality that is resonant of the deep Finnish winter. The blanket of snow that descends over her familiar landscape every year has profoundly affected Tuupanen. This returning but transient feature is embodied in her white stone pieces where she pushes the limits of minimalism and the aesthetic of emptiness, giving content and expression to an unyielding material. Tuupanen has a respect for stone. She appreciates its limitations and she values the challenges of manipulating it. The real investment here is the time that has to be devoted to the slow working process. The finished pieces possess a tangible dichotomy; that of the still and quiet resonance of the finished piece with the difficult, noisy and laborious stone working process that has gone before. The time spent on these pieces is a perceptible feature of them – an investment of value that can be read within the material of the object. Working with what is a naturally beautiful material does bring another level of complexity of practice for Tuupanen. For her it is the unremitting fascination that she has with the material and the challenge it holds that allows her to remain loyal to what can be a difficult medium. In this kind of work the fine line is walked between taking a material further or diminishing its inherent given qualities. Tuupanen successfully traverses this line with a sensitive reading of the

material's content and an approach to working with it that is harmonious to its natural qualities. She observes the intrinsic value in natural details and uses it to expand her own narrative.

For both phases of the Topophilia project Tuupanen chose to work in her familiar material of stone and with her recurring form of the oval. She explains both her choice of material and place in terms of ownership. Tuupanen reveals that she feels as if she is in her own territory when in her chosen place - that it 'truly belongs' to her. She states that she has transferred the on-going processes and feelings of being in this place into the piece through the use of cachalong stone. For Tuupanen this material has real significance which transcends a purely aesthetic value; 'The calmness and the territory is shown with the material I have used, it is also calm and 'mine'.' As such, her feelings of belonging in a place are reflected in her knowledge and possession of her material.

(See p.255 for Tarja Tuupanen Interview)

7.5 'Topophilia' - Project Outcomes & Reflection

The text-based data I received from the makers principally came from the feedback received after two stages of questioning initiated via email (Appendix B). I sent all of the makers a set of questions focussing on the project and their general practice just after the completion of each of the two phases of the project (the first phase being the box compilation and creation of the first piece, the second being the creation of the response piece). For the first phase interview I asked all of the participants exactly the same set of questions. These were aimed at gaining insight into their various research methods and material choices for example, as well as attaining a better insight into the types of environment they had selected and their feelings around it.

From the outset I was aware that the 'questionnaire' format can be restrictive and sometimes tiresome for contributors and that participants might find this process challenging due to the involved level of reflection necessitated by some of the questions and the language translation required. As a result I kept the number of questions to what I believe to be a comfortable limit for the contributors whilst remaining beneficial to the research. Not all of the makers chose to answer all of the questions however (e.g. Hanevold and Suntum instead wrote statements that covered the topics I had asked about in a broad manner) and there was a certain level of pursuing on my part for answers from some makers. Because of this I changed method slightly for the phase 2

questions; these were more targeted at each participant's personal approach so as not to appear overly generic. Both the types of responses I received from the phase 1 questions and the jewellery pieces themselves influenced the nature of the questions asked during the second stage. I did however ask all of the participants the same key question regarding the comparison of the manner in which they approached the different phases.

After reflection on both the physical and the written data I received from the makers for the Topophilia Project I thought it important to bring some form of classification together in relation to the prevalent methods of approach and resulting outcomes that emerged during this strategy. Although categorisation and terminology can be restrictive when applied to the complex and multi-faceted interpretations of creative practice, this process helped explicate the dominant threads running through this type of making. I have brought together the following descriptive categories, used to position the makers' creative process and output as a proportional illustration of the shared processes undergone during this study. I would like to emphasise here that these categorisations are not mutually exclusive; the lists below consist of definitions where boundaries are not fixed and there are interconnections and sometimes overlaps evident within the themes of approach and methods undertaken by each of these makers. The terminology and categorisation emerged in combination from the makers' own statements on practice and the established vocabulary applied in the fields of both the fine and applied arts. I have isolated the prevalent themes for each of them; principally drawn from their own evaluation of their process and outcomes but also from my own informed interpretation of their statements, their general body of work and the Topophilia artefacts. This framework provides a manner of defining the diversity of approaches used in this type of jewellery making.

In order to answer my central research question I have clarified the dominant creative methods involved in the transformative process of shifting from sensory environment to tangible object. I have condensed the data I received into four main category types, these being: the manner in which the makers approached the project, the series of creative processes involved, the act of interpretation of stimulus and the role of material. These terms are applied to the breakdown of creative processes and physical artefacts in Chapter 7.4. Here, I will go on to expand on the terminology of my chosen categories and their relevance to the research outcomes.

- **'APPROACH'**; by this I mean the manner by which the creative task is dealt with.

In the first phase this was the task of creating a piece of jewellery informed by a

surrounding environment that is significant to the maker. In the second phase this is the task of creating a jewellery piece informed by the box of collected objects and materials alien to them. By comparing the approaches taken from both embedded and more detached perspectives it is possible to clarify different modes of making. I have defined the methods of approach adopted by the makers during this project under the following seven categories:

- *Process Based and/or Material-led* (where the approach is directed through the investigation and working of specific materials)
- *Intuitive* (the subconscious processing between things and the self or ‘unthought’ approach e.g. Alm, Borgegård Älgå)
- *Sensory* (a strongly multi-sensorial-based approach to the task e.g. the Phase 1 pieces by Tanner and Holt, phase 2 piece by Lehtinen)
- *Emotional* (where strong feelings are aroused by place or box contents, in phase 2 this is *empathetic* e.g. Barklund phase 1, Hanevold phase 2)
- *Imaginative* (An active engagement with fictitious or invented elements of place/happenings e.g. Lehtinen phase 1, Mogesen Phase 2)
- *Memory Based* (this only occurs in phase 1 as it centres around nostalgia and the memory of a place e.g. Björkman, Girvan, Legg)
- *A Conscious Aesthetic Vision* (by which I mean a direct and mindful insight of what is to be made e.g. phase 1 Suntum, Klemming & Hanevold)

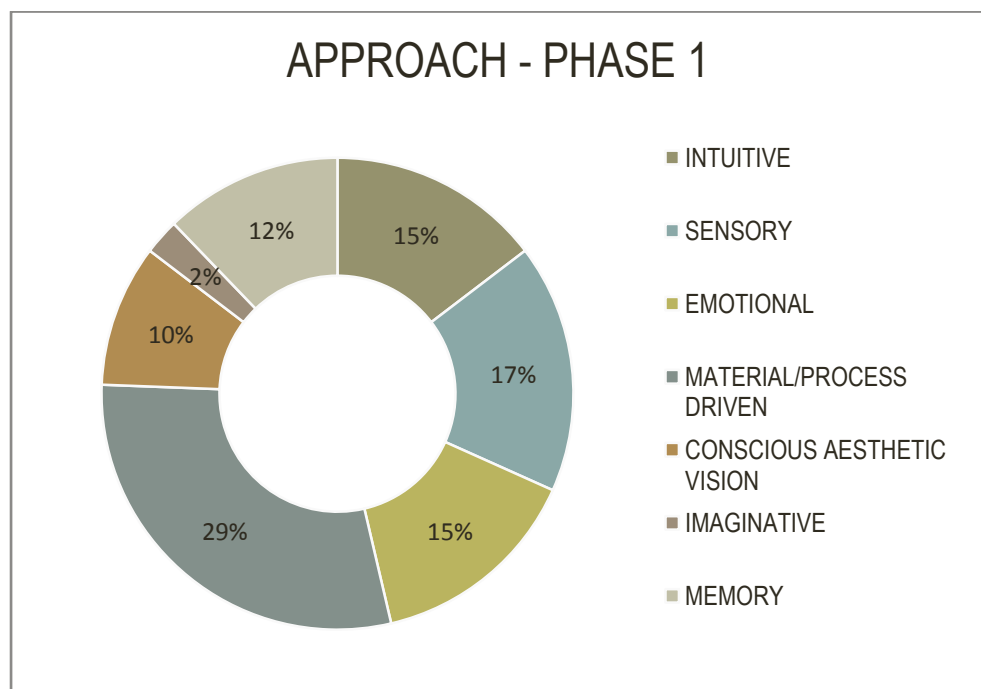


FIG 57. Methods of Approach undertaken by Makers during Phase 1

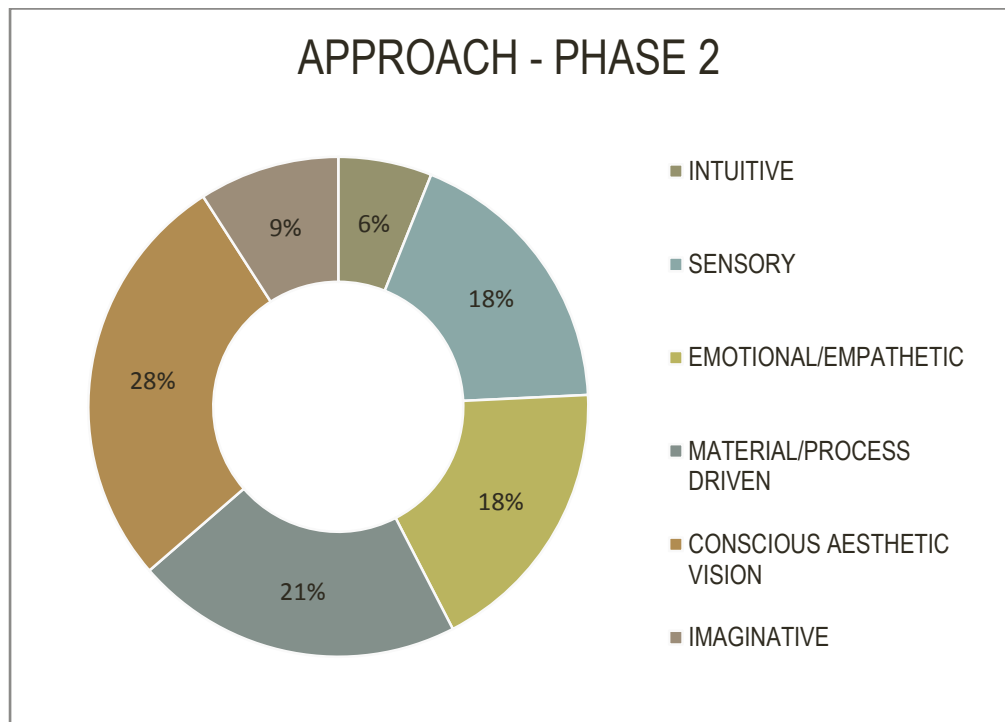


FIG 58. Methods of Approach undertaken by Makers during Phase 2

As is visible in the charts 57 & 58 process based and material-led methods of approach dominate throughout the group of makers in Phase 1 (29%), with memory, intuitive and sensory-based methods of approach also being important approaches engaged with by the makers during the research and production phases for the first piece. On the whole, a process-driven working practice emerged as being of importance to many of these makers within their general praxis. The work of Suntum, Barklund, Tanner and Tuupanen exemplify this particularly well; Suntum works with alloy techniques where the basic materials are reprocessed again and again in layers, Barklund de-constructs and re-constructs in layers of paper and mdf, and both Suntum and myself compare the creative processes undergone in the workshop as echoing the processes found in the natural environment.

As discussed in previous chapters sensory and emotion-based approaches are closely linked as a 'sense of place' encapsulates both a physical and emotional expression of the experience of our environment. Of course the senses are hugely involved in all of the makers' approaches but Alm, Holt, Lehtinen and Suntum exemplify a particularly sensory-based approach to their mode of making in this project. Memory features strongly, primarily due to the personal history that is embedded in these places for the makers. Klemming describes jewellery as 'precious personal carriers of memory';

Lehtinen questions the sensory memory in her pieces and Björkman focuses on the familial history of place. In these pieces memory is often closely linked with nostalgia and feelings of longing for a place or time now lost. Jewellery pieces made with a memory-based approach act as mementos or marker points for places and times of life.⁴³

Fifteen out of the sixteen makers describe intuition as very important to their creative approach. For Eija Mustonen; 'Intuition [has] a big role, it gives freedom and something that cannot be expected, something new, something non-rationalistic.' The element of chance seems to be closely aligned with intuition for some of the makers, Mogensen describes her intuitive making as such; 'Intuition plays a big role in my making because even if I have a plan of what I am making, the end result never seems to be same as what I started off with.' Jenny Klemming speaks about chance directly when questioned on her feelings towards intuitive approach, saying; 'I think chance has an important role in my work sometimes. I like to use processes that give an irregular outcome or add something unexpected.' Intuition and chance appear to be closely aligned due to the intuitive approach to working allowing for an involvement of chance as a positive element of the process. This could also be interpreted as openness to the incorporation of Pye's 'workmanship of risk'.

In the second phase *process based and material-led* methods still make up a large percentage of the different approaches (21%) but a *Conscious Aesthetic Vision* now dominates the types of approaches adopted by makers at the response phase. This direct and mindful insight of what is to be made is illustrated by Suntum when he describes the box he receives; 'it contained wrapped up objects that immediately spoke to me in the sense that they instantly inspired me to do a 'nature statement' derived from my environment'. I explain my response as an 'initial aesthetic impulse, which was freeing. I could approach the stimulus with more clarity' this approach is reflected also by Holt who states that the box 'gave me something fresh and also a clear framework' and by Tuupanen who describes it as '[a] more direct path to working'. This shift in the balance of approaches may well be attributed to the 'place' already being distilled into more reduced aspects of an environment thus allowing for a predominantly optical and limited physical reading of the objects in the box; hence the use of words such as 'instant', 'clear' and 'direct'. This was not always the case however and some of the makers (e.g. Alm, Barklund) found their approach in the response phase muddled by the difficulty of separating the artefacts (and the place they were intended to represent)

⁴³ This is also confirmed through the perspective of viewer (Prof. Elizabeth Moignard stated during the symposium that her identity was both confirmed through and by the objects she collected during the symposium.)

from the person who chose them. This meant that the idea of the other artist dominated the objects more strongly than the idea of the place itself reiterating the personal and informed nature of 'place'. In the response phase there is a perceptible attempt by the makers to empathise with both the person who compiled the box and any narrative that might be read into the box contents. Here there is an increased engagement with imagination as a creative apparatus, key to an engagement with *narrative construction* as exemplified in Holt and Mogensen's response pieces.

- **'PROCESS'**; by this I mean the series of creative actions undertaken from the research stage to the physical construction of the jewellery object. I have categorised these processes as;
 - *Collection*
 - *Writing*
 - *Drawing*
 - *Walking*
 - *Test-pieces*
 - *Photography*
 - *Narrative Construction* (through personal or historical research)
 - *Being-in-the-place* (observation, reflection, meditation etc. in-situ: informing embodied knowledge – see Fig.61)
 - *Derivative Aesthetics* (where material, form and/or colour are recognisably informed directly by the physical contents of the box)
 - *Three-dimensional drawing* ('sketches' using made and/or appropriated objects that help realise ideas quickly as explorations of specific object/material combinations)

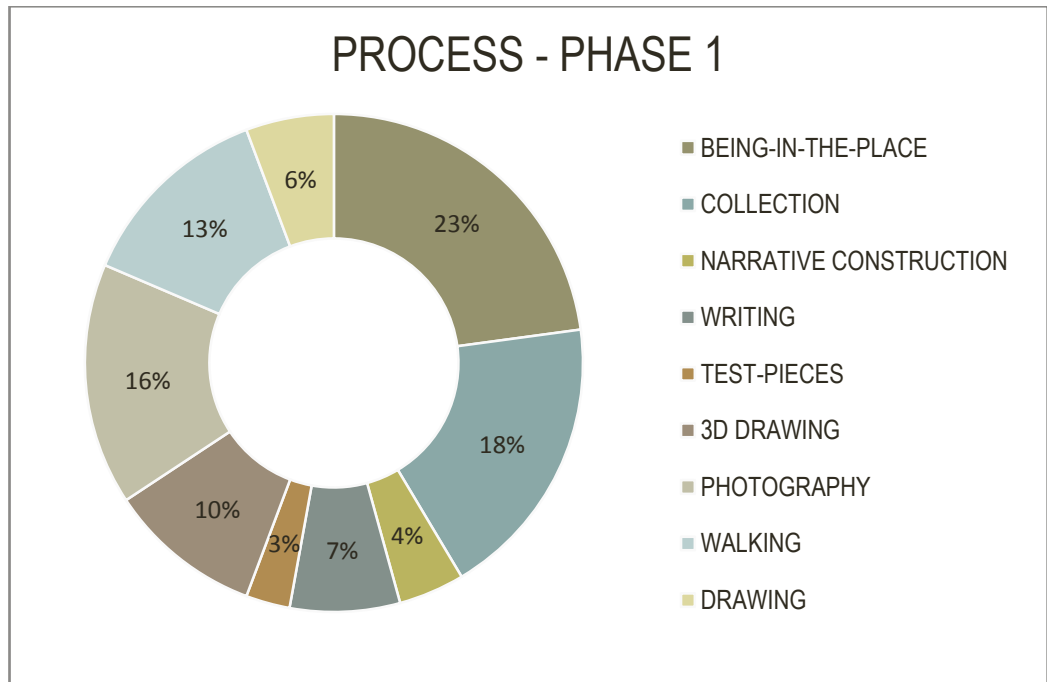


FIG. 59. Creative Processes Undertaken by makers during Phase 1

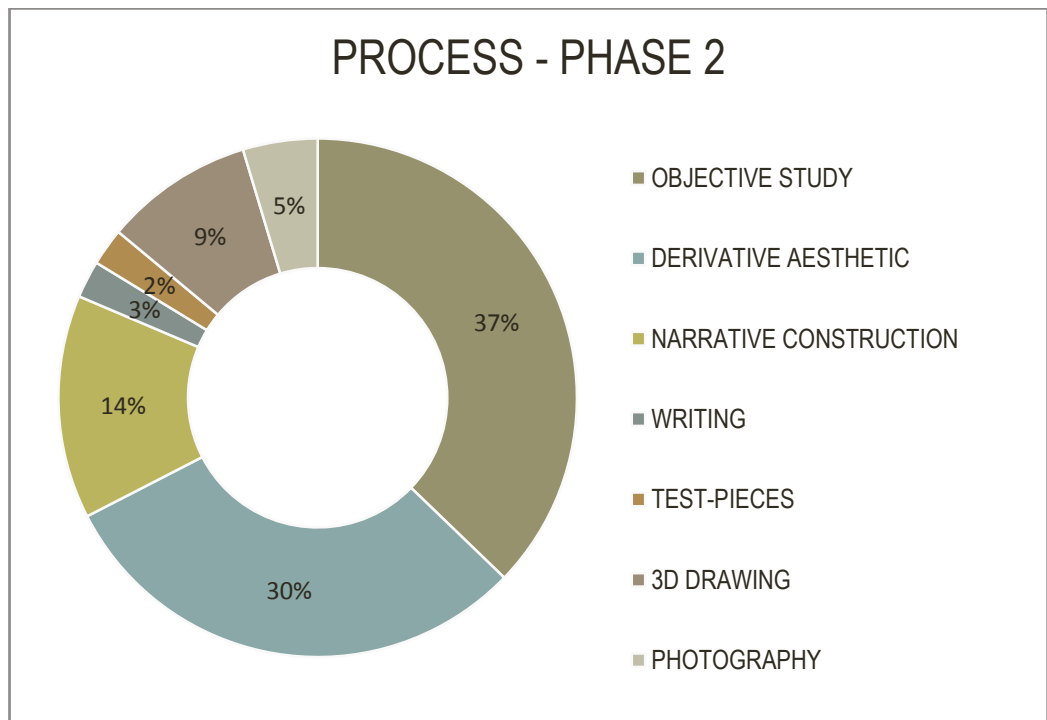


FIG. 60. Creative Processes Undertaken by makers during Phase 2

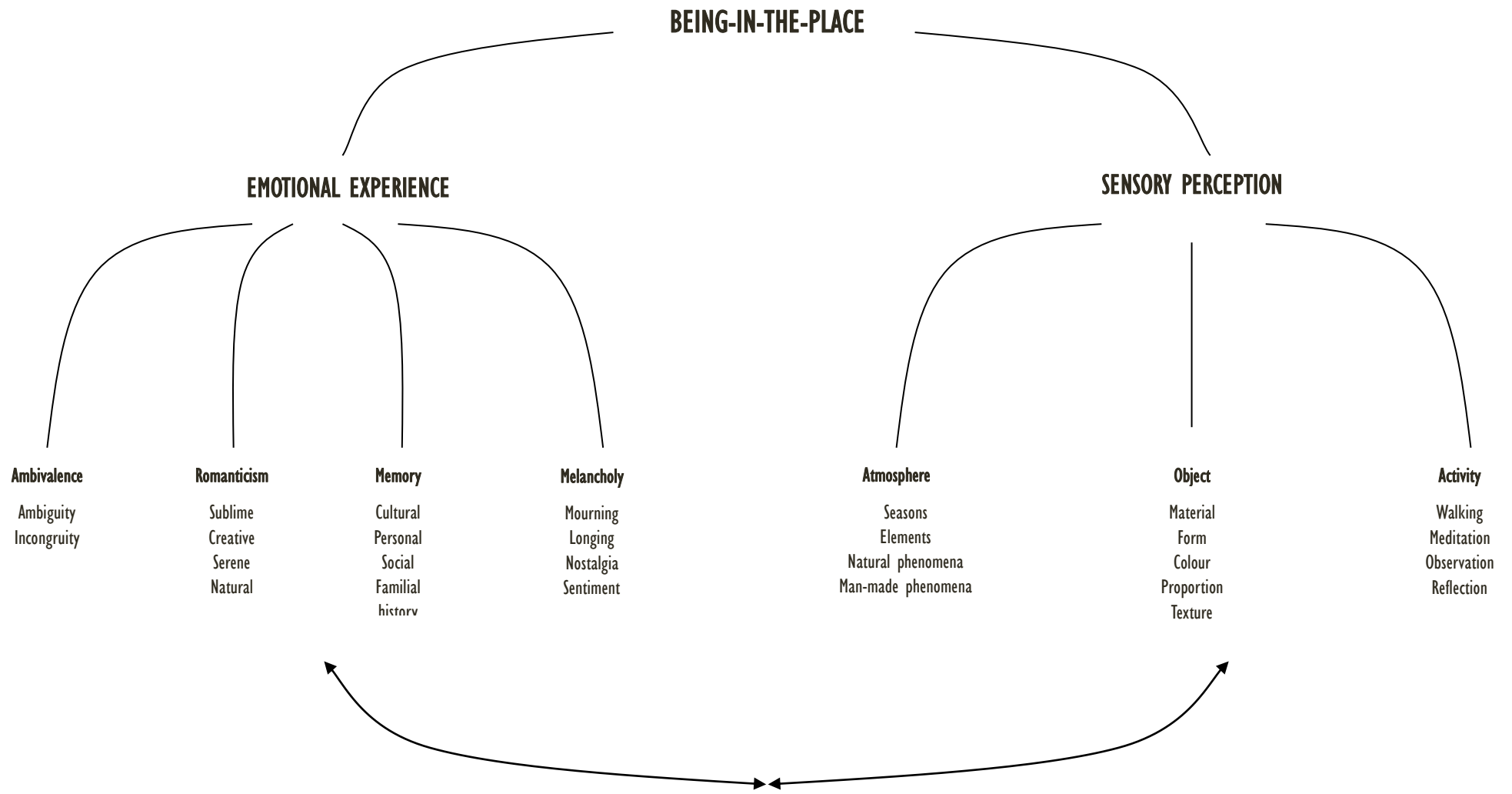


FIG. 61 Model of 'Being-in-the-place'

Due to the different nature of the two phases of this project the research processes undertaken were altered. There are a higher number of different processes undertaken at stage 1 (Fig. 59) due to the more complex levels of embedded research undertaken in situ. Here there was an employment of what I have called *being-in-the-place*, which encapsulates emotional experience and sensory perception (i.e. acts of observation, reflection and meditation) while on location, forming embodied knowledge (See Fig.61). This often, but not always, includes *collection*, *drawing*, and *walking* as research processes so I have given them separate categories. The process of *being-in-the-place* is replaced by an *objective study* of the contents of the box in phase 2 (Fig. 60), and *collection* is substituted by what I have called a *derivative aesthetic* where material, form and/or colour are recognisably derived directly by the physical contents of the box; this makes up 30% of the different processes undertaken at phase 2. The creation of *test-pieces* and *three-dimensional drawing* play roles within both phases. Photographic documentation of these developments in the studio as well as on-site photographic research also make up a large part of the research process. *Writing* was used by less of the makers; Mogensen says of writing about her place; ‘It was a very important part of the process to...learn about the things I was expressing. It made me view the place from different viewpoints and find out things that I had not known before.’ These processes often feed into a *Narrative Construction* around the place which was a particularly strong tool in phase 2 where it makes up 14% of the processes applied to the reading of the box contents and the creation of a piece in response. Whether it was in the familial history of an old man’s life read through an image, a community’s loss of a village washed away or simply the depiction of landscape and its elements read through collected objects, Mogensen, Hanevold, Tanner, Björkman, Lehtinen, Holt, Klemming, and Borgegård Älgå, all engaged with narrative at one or both stages of the project.

It is pertinent to ask whether these different identified levels and types of creative processes are in any way reflected in the finished jewellery pieces when we compare the two. The response works of Barklund, Hanevold, Girvan, Holt, Jónsdóttir, Legg, and Mogensen certainly have a more reduced aesthetic to them than those of their first pieces. Each maker has produced a second piece that is simpler in form or has a reduced number of incorporated materials; but it is debatable whether a lessened visual language is reflective of a lessened level of involved creative research. Here I would naturally have to refer to my own experience of creating the two pieces, and in my case I believe the increased sensory immersion and informed level of research undertaken for

my first piece is perceptible in the complexity of the piece. Some of the other makers assert this altered process comparison when they discuss their feelings around the response stage. Girvan states that; 'I didn't have the same connection to these collected objects as I did to my own. Creating my second piece felt like a much more straightforward process but one that I did not feel as involved in.' Klemming states that; 'I didn't have the time to build up a language of keys/ associations around it since it wasn't a part of a longer process. Maybe that made the piece more direct. More emotionally connected (less intellectually supported) - but I don't know if that's something a viewer notices or if that's a personal reflection.' In the case of Klemming this is interesting because I would say that she is one of the nine makers where there is little or no perceptible difference to the depth of research process in the aesthetic of either piece, so I would conclude that this, as Klemming herself alludes to, is a highly subjective assessment to make. Unless process is made explicit through aesthetic (e.g. hammer marks, cast lines, bindings) the viewer will be unlikely to perceive much of the multi-faceted processes contained in an object, and is fully understood by a maker alone.

- **'INTERPETATION'**: by which I mean the act of interpreting experience. In phase 1 this is the experience of a chosen surrounding environment and in phase 2 this is the act of interpreting collected objects/materials illustrating an unknown environment gathered by someone else. Through my own and the makers' assessment of the jewellery pieces which were made, I have employed five sub-categories;
- *Abstract*
- *Representational*
- *Ambiguous*
- *Narrative*
- *Reduced*

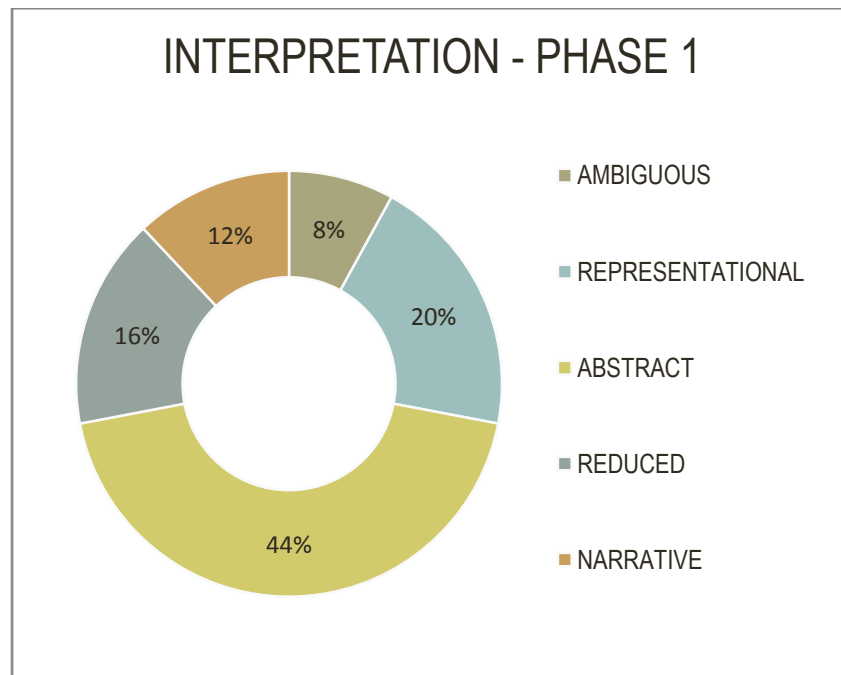


FIG. 62 The modes of interpretation utilised by makers during Phase 1

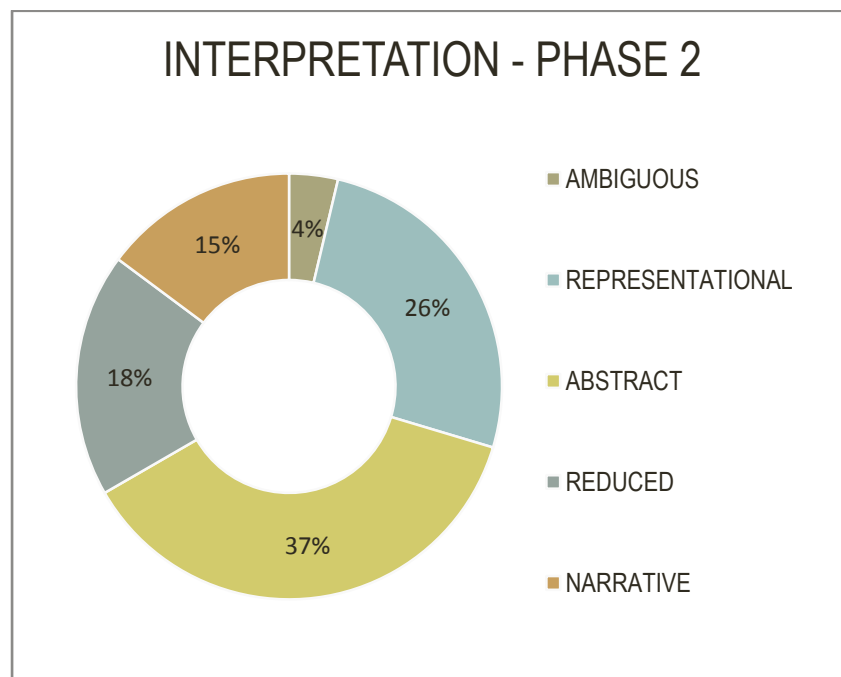


FIG. 63. The modes of interpretation utilised by makers during Phase 2

As is evident in Figs 62 & 63 the modes of interpretation remain proportionally similar during both phases of the project. This could be understood as the preservation of authorship, which I suggest was generally maintained during both phases. There is a slight shift discernible however in the second phase where the makers' elucidation of place/object become less *abstract* or *ambiguous* and moves to become more *representational*. It seems reasonable to conclude that these second pieces have a

representational interpretation of the stimulus due to the level of sensory and in turn emotional involvement being greatly reduced in phase 2. Thus a conscious aesthetic vision rather than memory, intuitive and sensory-based methods of approach result in a more depictive aesthetic and in turn a marginally less abstract one (Fig.63) It could thus be determined that the process of being-in-the-place results in more varied levels of approach; in turn leaning towards a more abstract interpretation due to the complex and less tangible nature of the information being processed.

- **‘MATERIAL’**; with particular focus on the significant role it plays within the jewellery object. I have broken ‘material’ down into four sub categories:
- *Provenant* (i.e. being taken from the place of origin - this is only applicable to phase 1)
- *Dictated by Process/Technique* (determined by technical capabilities or desired effect)
- *Metaphor/Symbol* (i.e. Holt’s cement metaphor in phase 1 and Hanevold’s symbolic pearls in phase 2)
- *Aesthetic Appropriation* (The found or readymade object or material that is not necessarily provenant but has been used for primarily aesthetic reasons (e.g the braided hair in Lehtinen’s phase 1 piece and the antler in Alm’s phase 2 piece))

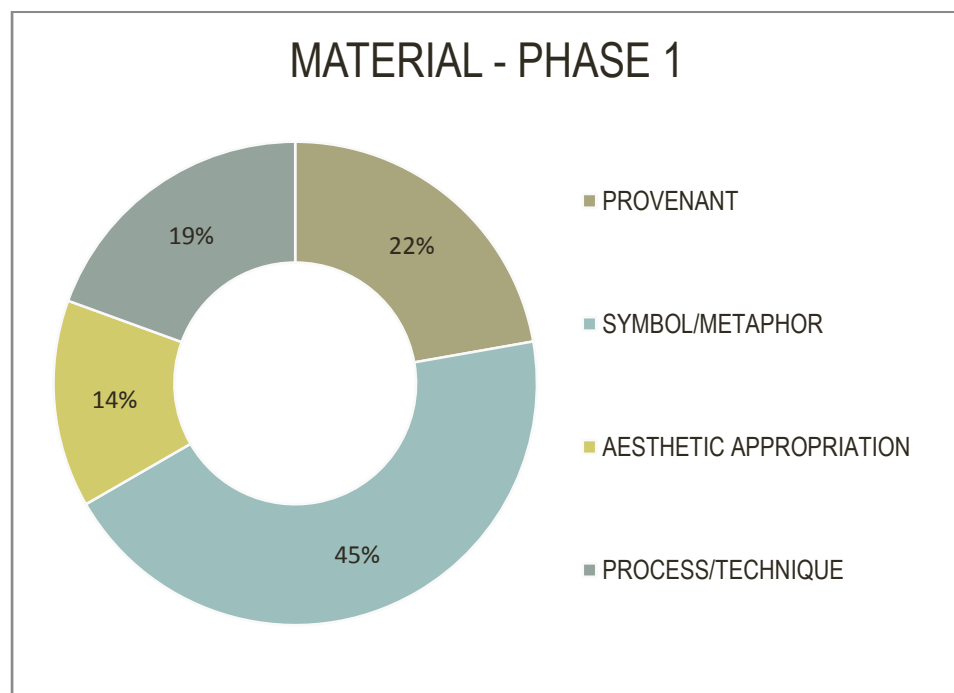


FIG 64: The roles of material in Phase 1 jewellery pieces

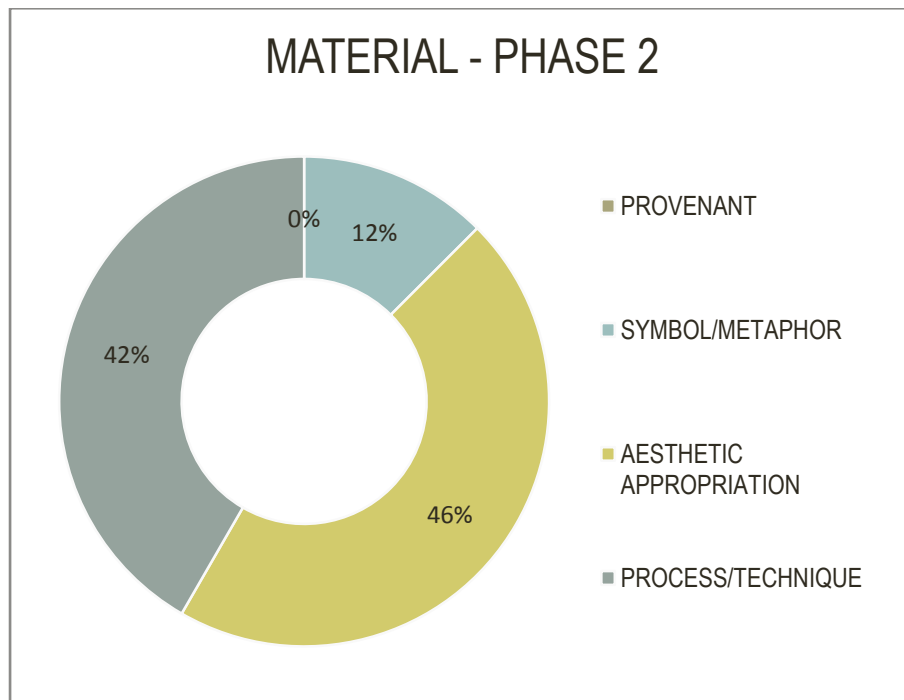


FIG 65: The roles of material in Phase 2 jewellery pieces

Through charting of the roles of material the biggest shift between the two phases of the project emerged. During phase 1 the use of metaphorical or symbolic materials (45%) and provenant materials (22%) dominated. Half of the makers incorporated a material that had provenance to their chosen place into their first piece. This provenance also gives a level of symbolism to the material because it has the capacity to signify the place of origin. In the second phase the role of materials shifts markedly towards aesthetic appropriation (46%) and the use of materials dictated by process or technique (42%). This is most likely a reflection of the more removed study and further detached perception undergone in this second process.

There is little doubt that the role of material is key to these makers as a method of embodying aspects of place in their work, and that the nature and language of these carefully selected materials is reflective of a reciprocal and symbiotic relationship between the work and the world (as is found in Heidegger's analyses of art works)⁴⁴. When asked the central question of this study: 'How do you transfer the sensory experience of a place into a tangible object?' eleven out of the sixteen makers referenced material as a vital element in doing this. Borgegård Älgå states that she uses

⁴⁴ Heidegger advocated a holistic view of art; every aspect of it being crucial to its understanding. In his essay "The Origin of the Work of Art" (1835-1860) he argues that art is not only a way of expressing the element of truth in a culture, but the means of creating it. The artifact reveals truth by getting us to see objects outside their customary settings, revealing the broader contexts within which they exist. In this sense the Topophilia project had similar aspirations – to quote Dr. Rossi from symposium; the roles of the artifacts are as 'both expressions of, and contributions to their native Northern lands'.

‘shapes and materials as metaphors for words and feelings’. For Lehtinen ‘materials, their presence, their stories’ led her manner of working and Tuupanen believes that ‘the territory is shown with the material’. Mogensen speaks about the language of specific materials in doing this; ‘for me it was a matter of finding memories related to the place and transferring them into the object. This I had to do with the driftwood and fish skin because I relate the materials to the place.’ Suntum discusses what he calls the ‘singular moment, where man meets material’. As part of his process he says that he is responsive to his materials; ‘I listen to every material in order to be ready for any change in the direction of the work. In the process I am all for the interplay between material, their intrinsic values or capabilities, the knowing (both metal and me) and the conscious vision.’ I describe this in my process as a ‘bodily interaction with material; a kind of reciprocal interchange or cycle of influences between the landscape, myself, and the materials within the creative process’.

In jewellery, material can sometimes to lesser or greater degrees become subsumed into the overall dialogue of the piece (i.e. the copper in both of Klemming’s pieces) or is used purely as a conduit between other elements (the silver in Lehtinen’s brooch). This is also the case where materials are employed purely for aesthetic appropriation (such as the plywood in Mustonen’s response piece) or where the required process or technique dictates their selection (i.e. Björkman’s response piece). But materials also have the capacity to become present in new and remarkable ways such as is seen in Holt’s use of cement and Tanners’s use of carved ‘artificial wood’ and stone. Dufrenne explains this thus;

‘The artist wrestles with his materials so that they might disappear before our eyes as materials and be exalted as matter. Ultimately these materials become aesthetic by advertising themselves rather than keeping themselves hidden, that is, by displaying all of their sensuous richness.’ (1973:109)

Whether the material is subsumed into the greater whole of the piece or expresses a sensory depth, material has complex multi-potential in the jewellery object and this takes us back to the issues discussed in chapter 6.4. A jewellery material can be a provenant object used to authenticate the piece for the maker, it can be a material dictated by process and worked with in such a way that the maker sees themselves in the material thus giving the piece authorship, it can encompass both metaphor and symbol and it can be an appropriated material utilised purely for its aesthetic language. How these makers chose to work with material for both stages of this project has been

an illuminating insight into its application as a reflection of place. I believe the latent meaning held within material to be an area rich for further exploration.

I have transferred the Topophilia project data from the charts into a text-based table where greater prominence is given to methods that are used more frequently. These words derive from the categories above, which in turn came from the interpretation of the project outcomes (my own and the makers' accounts). Fig. 66 illustrates the comparison between the approach, creative process, interpretive method and role of material where the roots of the process lie in an embodied experience (Phase 1) or in a more removed experience (Phase 2).

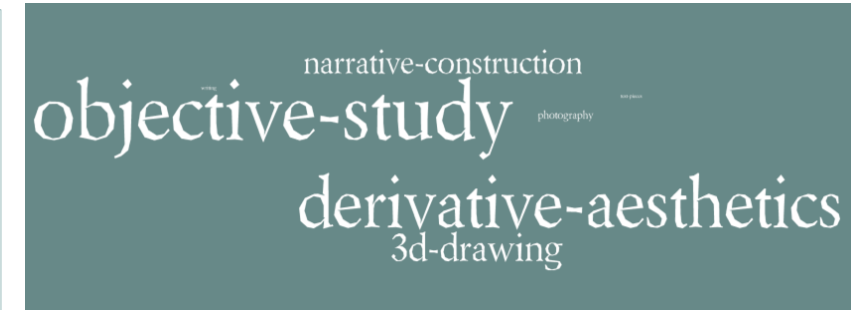
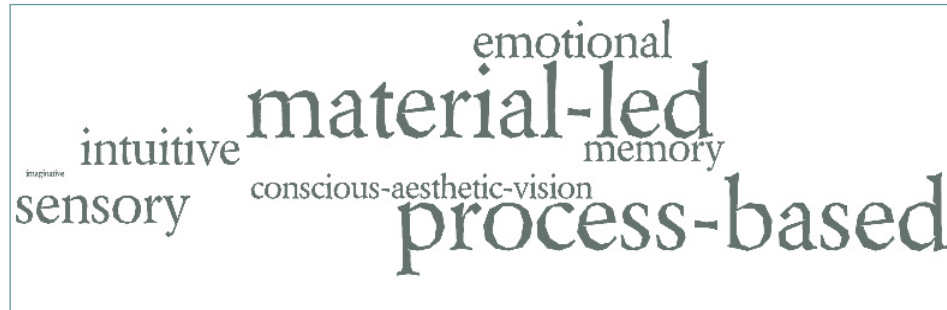
Here, we can see that embodied perception leads to a more 'physical' creative approach; this physicality is continued from the being-in-the-place processes (collection, walking etc.) to the process-driven and material-led making practices. The embodied experience meant that the materials used have a weight towards the metaphorical and the symbolic rather than being dictated by technique or desired aesthetic. More detached perception leads to a heavier reliance on the purely visual ('conscious aesthetic vision' and derivative aesthetics). Phenomenologically speaking; embodied sensory experiences used in the perception of place, feed into the embedded research practices of the making process.

These results are not wholly surprising given the nature of the project, however it is an illustration, coming from the makers experiential perspective, of how being-in-the-place (forming a 'sense of place') leads to embodied knowledge of that place and in turn is conducive to more embedded making practices. This sensorial mirroring⁴⁵ is in itself is illuminating. These practices alone do not make for 'better' work but need to be supported with reflective processes in order to attain the balance discussed in chapter 6.3. Whether this is evidenced in the final piece from a viewer's perspective would be the subject of further research; again, this may be a layer of process and meaning known by the maker alone.

⁴⁵ By sensorial mirroring I mean the echoing of sensory processes. For example, in general practice both myself, Girvan & Suntum compare the physical making processes undergone in the studio to the processes felt and seen in the natural environment. The Topophilia phase 1 pieces that illustrate a tactile sensorial mirroring particularly well would be the works of Alm, Holt, Tanner & Suntum. However, this mirroring is not restricted to phase 1 where 'being-in-the-place' occurs and there is a more embodied experience of place – a form of mirroring also occurs vicariously through embodied simulation where interpretation, imagination and empathy are used in the creation of the phase 2 pieces by Lehtinen, Borgegard and Suntum.

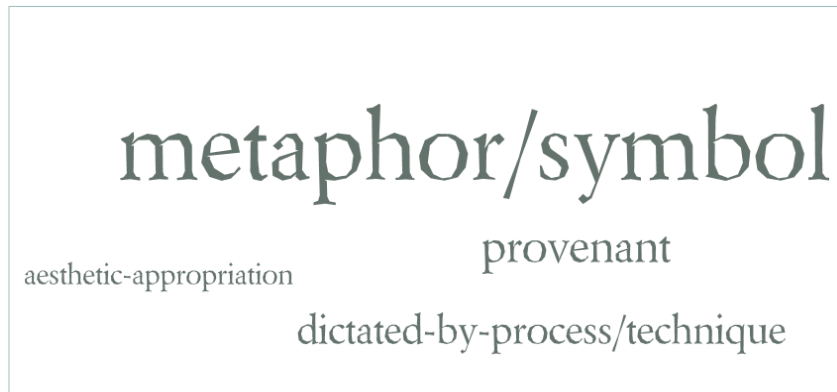
Embodied Experience

Removed Experience



APPROACH

PROCESSES



INTERPRETATION

MATERIAL

FIG.66. Word Clouds illustrating the Embodied Experience (Phase 1) and more Removed Experience (Phase 2) influencing the various creative methods utilised by the Topophilia Project makers (greater prominence is given to methods that are used more frequently)

8. PERSONAL PRACTICE

As a maker my practice is embedded within this research and as such I have already discussed my motives, responses and processes involved from the perspective as a participant within the Topophilia Project in chapter 7.4/Appendix B. Here, I will briefly outline my approach to studio practice over the past three years. I also include a selected chronological gallery of finished pieces produced over a period of 9 years since graduation from my BA so as to illustrate the shift in my visual language. More images of finished pieces, investigative processes and test-pieces can be seen on the online visual journal (<http://lookingmakingthinking.tumblr.com>). Details of my professional practice and the dissemination of my research work can be found in Appendix C.

The outcomes of my research - this textual document, the Topophilia project, and the following artworks are the products of my creative and investigative synthesis and the themes within the text are rooted in my working processes. These interests have emerged concurrently to, and in turn have been affirmed by, my textual, curatorial and practical research (i.e. the meditative act of walking, the role of collection, being-in-the-place, working from memory and 'intuitive' practices). Pelias (2004:11) suggests that the purpose of auto-ethnographic research is *resonance* and 'uses the self as a spring-board, as a witness.' Having drawn upon artistic and auto-ethnographic methods, my practice-led research makes a contribution to both the analysis and synthesis of the Northern European output, and to the wider contemporary discourse on the jewellery maker's creative process within the field as a whole. Rooted in the processes discussed in chapter 6, I have been directed to a methodological framing of my research that embraces tacit knowledge and practices of reflexive inquiry. The 'Thinking through Making' model in chapter 6.3 and the outcomes of chapter 7.5 have helped me to clarify some of the multifarious processes implicated in my own practice where I endeavour to transfer elements of the experience of place into a tangible form. The investigation into the content and context of my own practice has helped me to gain further understanding of my creative processes in relation to those of others, but more importantly I feel, it has validated and demystified the latent layers of process and approach inherent to my praxis. I see the resulting artefacts as only the beginning of a more perceptive and mindful way of working.

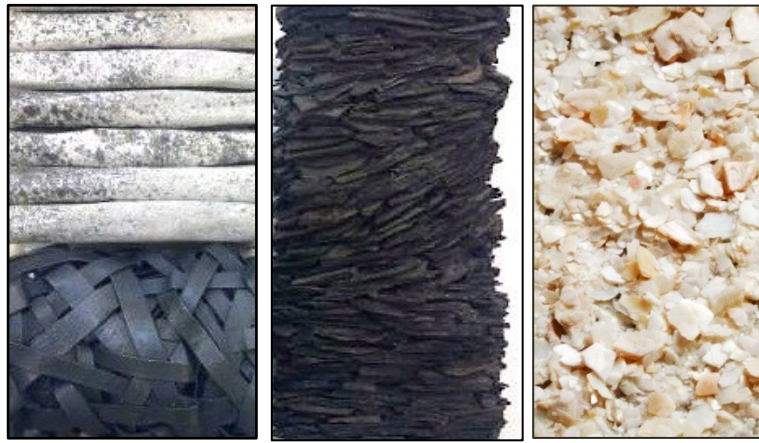


Fig.67 Test-piece 'swatches' (enamel, silver, stone, and shell)

I have employed several different artistic methods of research in my practice; collecting and exploring new materials with which to work such as silver birch bark, seaweed, heather, wood, liquid enamels and stone. The creation of both test pieces and finished objects has involved processes such as weaving, binding, setting and inlay and I have utilised drawing, photography and digital manipulation in my visual research.

Three-dimensional drawing and test-pieces have always been important to my making process both as 'sketches' that help to realise ideas quickly and as methods of exploration of specific techniques and material combinations. These test-pieces act as evidence of the realisation of a variety of different technical skills employed during making. They are also central in the exploration with spatial and tactile details i.e. the qualities and properties of different materials; surface textures, weight, proportions etc.

Photographic documentation of these developments build into data evidencing the progression of ideas and direction. I use photography to record developments at the bench and to represent the research process itself. The inclusion of such images on the online journal is a structured and deliberate auto-ethnographic research method that allows for a communicable framework to expose and explore various models of practice. The online space acts as a visual repository for a range of documentation and materials that help to capture the reflexive nature of my practice. As well as a method of studio documentation, photography acts as a creative tool produced spontaneously as part of my own visual research, detailing the visual and experiential processes undergone whilst moving through different landscapes.



FIG.68. Photography from Nova Scotia © Beth Legg

As a result of the various thinking, looking and making activities of the past three years new pieces are evolving. Not all of these pieces are fully resolved - I have begun working with liquid enamel which is a new material for me and one which still needs to be worked further in order to sit naturally within my body of work. Birch bark has emerged as something I find particularly pleasing to work with – it is native to all of the most northern countries in Europe and I enjoy its symbolism and associations. Making pieces without commercial forces restricting scale or dictating material has been freeing; I think my newest work in general appears bolder and more reduced. The brooch dominates as I have pared back my aesthetic and consolidated my ideas. Process remains important. I hope that in my studio practice I show a concern and sensitivity towards the nature and phenomena of materials and their intrinsic potential. In this new work and the pieces that are to follow I aim to illustrate a tangible narrative reflective of my environment that is visible in the object.

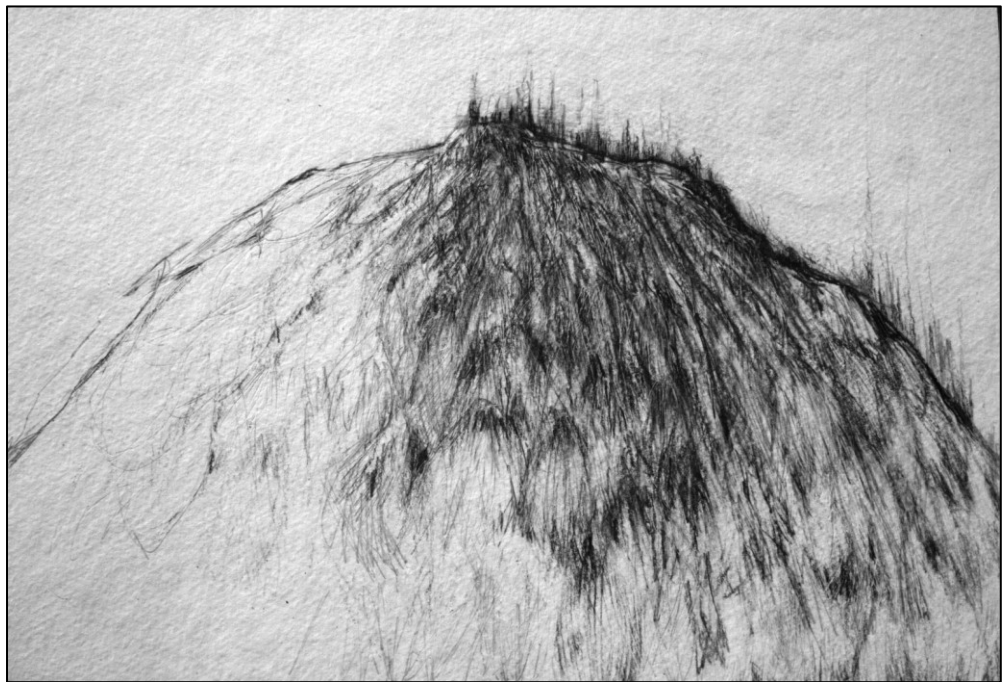
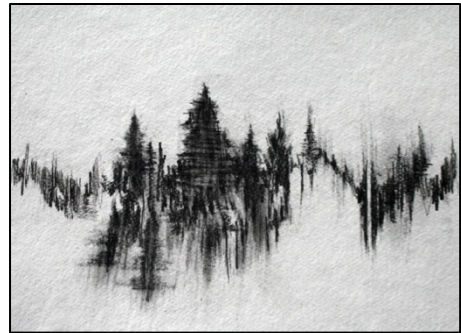
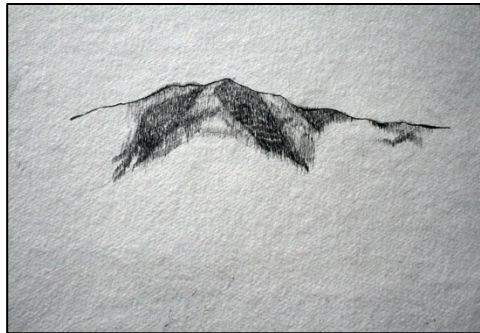
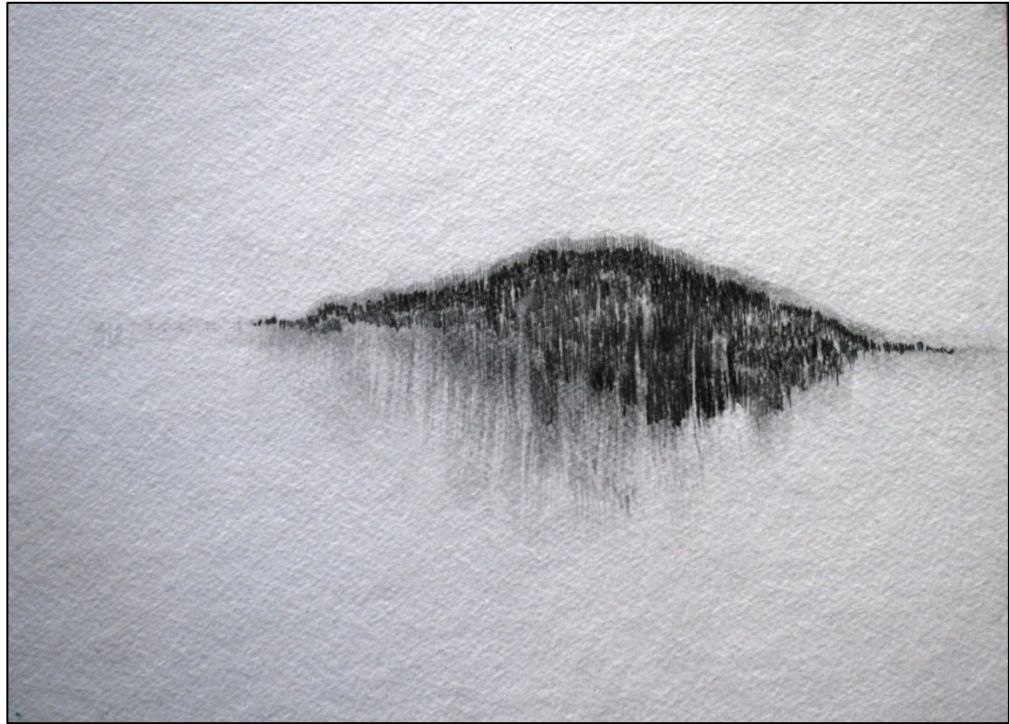


FIG.69 Sketchbook pages © Beth Legg

8.1 Chronological Gallery of Works



FIG. 70 'Inverted' Birch Bark Brooch, 2012, Silver, Bark, Steel 5.5 x 6 x 2.5 cm



FIG. 71 'Inverted' Birch Bark Arm Piece, 2012, Bark & Silver 7.5 x 5.5 x 6.5 cm

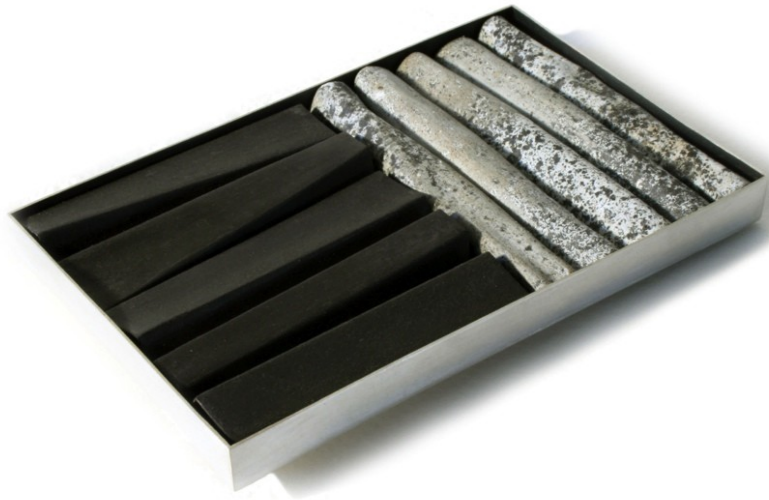


FIG. 72 'Fallen Trees' Brooch, 2012, Silver, Copper, Enamel, Graphite, Steel 10.5 x 7 x 1 cm



FIG. 73 'Surfaces' Brooch, 2012, Wood, Silver 11.5 x 7 x 1.5 cm



FIG. 74 'Northern Stone' Brooch, 2012, Silver, Stone, Steel 10.5 x 7 x 1.5 cm



FIG. 75 'Northern Triptych' Brooches, 2012, Wood, Silver, Stone, Steel 10.5 x 7 x 1.5 cm each



FIG. 76 'Northern Form' Brooch, 2012, Wood, Silver, Steel 10.5 x 7 x 1.5 cm



FIG. 77 'Northern Wood' Brooch, 2012, Wood, Silver, Steel 10.5 x 7 x 1.5 cm



FIG. 78 'Inverted' Brooch, 2011, silver, steel, bark 7.5 x 6 x 3 cm



FIG. 79 'Field' Brooch, 2012, Wood, Silver, Stone, Paint, Bark and Steel 10.5 x 9 x 1.8 cm



FIG. 80 'Cullaloe' Necklace: 2010 Silver 40 cm long



FIG. 81 'Equilibrium' Brooch 2010 Wood, ink, enamel paint, silver 12 cm long



FIG. 82 'Cullaloe' Brooch, 2010 Wood, Ink, Silver 12 cm wide



FIG. 83 'Inverted & opened' Brooch 2011 Silver, Bark 7.5 x 6 x 3 cm



FIG. 84 'Transatlantic Brooch 1', 2009 Silver, oxidised silver, horn, found quartz 4 x 5 x 6 cm



FIG. 85 'Transatlantic Brooch Triptych', 2009 Silver, oxidised silver, horn, wood, found quartz 10 x 5 x 6 cm each



FIG. 86 Neckpiece: 'Hinterlands I' 2009 Oxidised silver, rutilated quartz, 18ct yellow gold 40 cm



FIG. 87 Neckpiece: 'Rivers Mouth' 2009 Oxidised silver, garnet, 18ct yellow fresh water pearls, 18ct yellow gold 40 cm



FIG. 88 'Hinterlands II' Necklace: 2009 Oxidised silver, found quartz, 18ct yellow gold 40 cm



FIG. 89 'Six Whins' Neckpiece 2009 Oxidised silver & 18ct yellow gold 40 cm



FIG. 90 'Buds and Bloom' brooch, 2008 Oxidised silver and carved alabaster stone 12 cm



FIG. 91 Brooch: Frozen Fern 2008 Silver & burnt rosewood 12 cm



FIG. 92 'Laburnum' Neckpiece: 2008 Oxidised silver and seed pearls 40 cm



FIG. 93 'Pods in the Wind' Neckpiece: 2008 Oxidised silver & seed pearls 40 cm

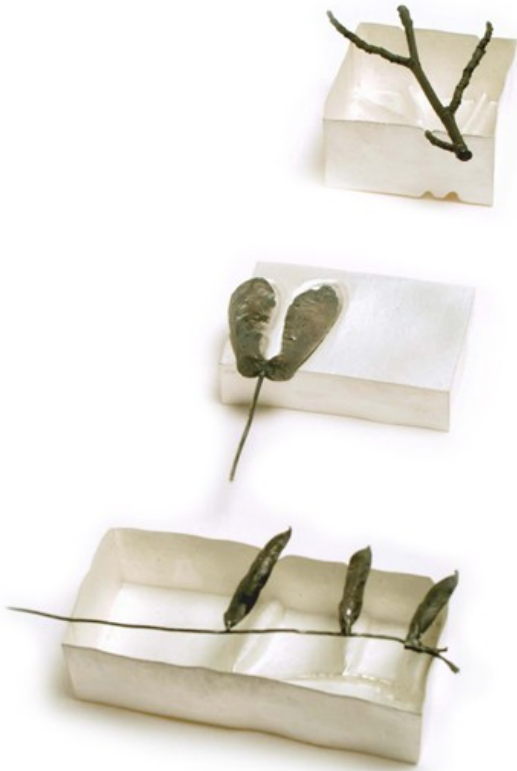


FIG. 94 'Three boxes with lids' (pins) 2005, silver & oxidized silver, from 5cm to 7cm long



FIG. 95 Peewit Rings, 2003, oxidized silver, from 3cm to 4.5cm long



FIG. 96 'Tidelines' Brooches, 2003, Fire marked silver, iron, steel, heather, wood & brass from 9 to 25cm long

9. CONCLUSION

'The more thought one gives to the conceptualisation of the visual environment the more one becomes cognizant of its multi-dimensionality, its amorphous nature...to measure such complexity is likely to lead to many insights.' (Kaplan 1989:214)

In this final chapter, I will bring together the major objectives and outcomes of my study, providing an overview of what was learnt in answer to my questions and the new insights that were produced during the research journey. I assess my contribution to knowledge and how this knowledge might add to the on-going analysis of jewellery practice.

9.1 Research Outcomes

This thesis began by outlining my rationale and clarifying my position in relation to contemporary jewellery practice and the critical discourse currently surrounding it. Acknowledging the recurrent questions surrounding concepts of national identity in jewellery, I proposed an engagement with aspects of cultural history and regional values as a method of investigating otherwise hidden or forgotten dimensions of practice, citing Nordic jewellery as an example. Through an exploration of the individual voices within the creative output of this region I outlined the prevalent themes within this cultural context, setting the foundation for the more informed study undertaken during the 'Topophilia Project'.

Through the exploration of theories and approaches to 'place' I defined my understanding of the much-used term: a 'sense of place'. This expression is clarified further in model form (Fig.61 'Being-in-the-Place'). In studying Landscape theory from different viewpoints, I applied the recognised concepts surrounding it to give a more robust perspective on the fluid and shifting notions of a 'sense of place'. I investigated these concepts as a means through which to articulate jewellery that reflects aspects of our external environments. The following quote by Denis Cosgrove illustrates this further:

'Landscape is a particularly valuable concept for a humane geography. Unlike place it reminds us of our position in the scheme of nature. Unlike environment or space it reminds us that only through human consciousness and reason is that scheme known to us, and only through technique can we participate as humans in it.' (Cosgrove 1989:122)

I suggest that much of the jewellery work involved in this research brings all three of the above elements together – it is nature reflected through culture, it represents the intimate perspective of consciousness and reason brought about through sensory perception, and this is embodied within the technically crafted artefact. In this manner of working jewellery makers are actively participating in contemporary interpretations of landscape: both creating expressions of it and making new contributions to it.

I explored the practices of walking and collection as research methods utilised by jewellery makers that feed into the embedded creative processes involved in working with the translation of place. I suggest that these acts are forms of knowledge; they are proven and integrated creative practices evidenced in diverse fields such as the fine arts and architecture, they are also of importance to many jewellery makers, as is supported through the first person accounts found in chapters 5.2 & 6.1 and Appendix B.

In the study of 'Perception', I illustrated how cumulative, selective and multi-modal perceptual engagements are critical to conceptual constructions of place. The construction of what we call a 'sense of place' stems from the physical knowledge, emotional engagement and personal attachment formed between person and place. This sense then develops when memory and imagination are utilised as tools to carry an experience of place to a more embedded creative territory. As makers, our creative process is often something we find difficult to articulate – frequently relying on blanket terms such as 'intuition' and 'instinctive'. The phenomenological perspective of my enquiry involved a search for the meanings and essences behind these types of expressions through the recognition of the integrated and inseparable relationship of our

perceptual processes. I transferred the multi-modal perceptual study of place through to an investigation of the making process. Here aspects of ‘intuition’, ‘tacit knowledge’ and the ‘unthought-known’ emerged, outlining the dialogue surrounding these theories from both creative and scientific perspectives. I bring together these aspects in my model ‘Thinking through Making’ (Fig.29), illustrating the reciprocal exchange between embedded and reflective levels of awareness in the creative process. Here, concepts of perception and process come together in contemporary theories on creative awareness, and I position myself alongside those calling for an increased understanding and recognition of embodied knowledge processes⁴⁶. In this study I have illustrated just some of the processes inherent in jewellery practice. It is only through growth in practice-led research from divergent fields of discipline that there will be wider recognition of making as knowledge. It is my intention that the data produced within this study will feed into this increased recognition.

The Topophilia brief entailed an embodiment in place and an immersion in process. The objects and artefacts gathered and created signify informed acts of perceptual selection, creating a synthesis of interpretations. This selective perception is the first step to attaining ownership and in turn the individual authorship of an artefact. I explored the different levels and aspects of perception involved in the ‘Topophilia’ box method where an altered perspective was presented to the artists during the response phase of the project. Commonalities of approach emerged through the first person accounts in this study, which helped me to elucidate the taxonomy for defining the diversity of approaches used in transferring the sensory experience of the surrounding environment into a tangible jewellery object in Chapter 7.5. The cross-referencing and comparison of different methods of approach and processes applied within the two stages of the project allowed for a broadened terminology to unfold in reference to these practices. This data would have been relatively one-dimensional without the second phase of the project, which enabled comparison and reflection by way of disparity.

In discussing ‘thinking through material’ I touched on the contemporary jewellery makers’ complex relationship with material. Both qualitative and numerical methods were applied to the study of materials utilised in this project in Chapter 6.4. Amongst the group of makers involved in the Topophilia project the language of material - the latent information that it contains and what it signifies, was highly

⁴⁶ Pallasmaa states; ‘Prevailing educational pedagogies and practices also regrettably continue to separate mental, intellectual and emotional capacities from the senses and the multifarious dimensions of human embodiment.... To put it simply, [they] fail to grasp the indeterminate, dynamic and sensually integrated essence of human existence, thought and action.’ (2009:11-12)

important. The metaphorical and symbolic meaning inherent in selected materials was significant, as often was their provenance which can bring a level of 'authenticity' to the created artefact. The investigation, identification and recognition of this type of work and manner of working helped me to illustrate the diversity of materials used in the construction of these jewellery pieces and revealed the emotion and symbolism inherent in material.

In answering my central question I discovered that the translation of experience into a tangible object is a poetic act where a level of creative intelligence is involved in the poetic exploration of elements (physical and non-physical) drawn from the experience of place. Through investigating the amorphous nature of place, perception and process in this thesis, insights arose. What I discovered were in-depth methods of practice, multi-faceted creative processes and layers of informed approach and interpretation. These complexities are distilled within the project outcomes detailed in chapter 7.5. I found it especially illuminating that the embodied research practices undergone away from the bench led to more embodied physical creative processes at the bench. This sensorial mirroring might be another way in which we can further understand how makers attempt to translate experience from an emotive perception into a tangible object.

As an area of inquiry I have chosen to investigate processes and experiences that by their very nature are difficult to verbally describe or articulate in writing. My methodologies emphasised discovery, description and meaning rather than prediction, control and measurement. It is my intention that the valuable physical data produced through this research will elucidate and expound the theories I have touched on in the text.

9.2 Contribution to Knowledge

This thesis, personal practice and the exhibition and symposium all contribute to an increased awareness of the motivations and processes involved in Northern contemporary jewellery practice as a reflection of place. This knowledge was shared with mutual benefit between different 'worlds' of research and the public sphere through the museum interface, the exhibition, symposium and supporting events. I consider the originality of this study to lie in the combination of creative methods I utilised, the exploration of a Northern position, the phenomenological perspective on the jewellery making process, and the new data produced as a result. Despite this study having geographical perimeters its relevance to jewellery practice reaches beyond them;

benefitting practitioners and researchers internationally in terms of providing increased insight into the processes, approaches and material applications currently being utilised by jewellery artists. I hope that my phenomenological approach to this research, rooted in embodied understanding and investigated through artifacts and first person accounts, will provide a valuable introductory resource for makers and other interested parties who wish to gain further understanding of some of the perceptual and creative processes involved in this manner of working. It is my intention that this enquiry will add to the growing and experimental research within the contemporary jewellery field and also help to broaden the manner in which it is perceived in the public sphere.

The emergent nature of my methodological approach to this research has developed from the roots of my own practice. My participation in exhibitions and ongoing studio activity ran concurrently with the curatorial and organisational work involved in undertaking the 'Topophilia Project' and mounting the resulting 'A Sense of Place' exhibition with NMS. These have been the practice-led qualities of my research where both object and text-based data were produced. The consolidation of a further understanding of my own creative processes has impacted on my approach to practice - I am confident that this will continue to distil over time, feeding into future work. The participatory element within this investigation has led to the production of new jewellery pieces, which have a strong reflexive value.

From the outset of this research, it was not my intention to define the 'purity' of the cultural lineage of Northern European contemporary jewellery, but instead to investigate how our surrounding environments might influence our creative voice, using jewellery from the north as an exemplar. To make bold statements about the global condition of 'national identity' from the outcomes of any particular project, would be misguided, especially one which focuses on a small research group such as this. However, insights around cultural influence might be forthcoming through the accumulation of such small-scale studies in other regions and their subsequent comparison, if the identification of regional differences were the desired line of enquiry. How much culture truly plays in these matters is an open question and one out-with the remit of my research, instead, this project is an exploration of individual creative processes within a cultural backdrop of both commonalities and differences. The Mexican poet José Emilio Pacheco said, 'art has no nationality, it has roots' (Cuyas 2011) and it is amongst these roots that my research is positioned. The makers involved in this project reside within a close geographical area of where they were born – many have studied in other countries, almost all have travelled widely but all, bar one, have

returned to their homelands to work and live. Several exhibition projects have acknowledged the impact of multi-cultural and migratory factors on jewellery makers from the UK, Australia, Central Europe and Latin America (e.g. *'The Here & There Project'* 2005, *Maker Wearer Viewer* 2005, *'Walking the Gray Area'* 2010, *'Transplantation'* 2012). Although I could have taken a more multi-cultural approach - swapping boxes between Northern and Southern Hemispheres for example, I specifically chose not to. I was aware that this type of geographically focused study might be accused of being backward looking and that I would be going against the grain of the growing focus on multiculturalism, diversity and migration. But in making this choice I believe that this focussed study provides an original contribution and is thus of greater value to the existing discourse within the field. Some may think it parochial to celebrate themes of rootedness, locality and belonging but this approach is neither insular nor backward looking. Achieving a personal sense of place within a global framework is one step towards an authentic practice and the authorship of work. This thesis and the accompanying exhibition exemplify how jewellery makers can play a valuable role in contributing to the cross-disciplinary discourse on contemporary theories of place. In the role of presenting a progressive sense of place through the investigation of personal notions of our surroundings, individuality and rootedness in a non-reactionary manner, I have outlined an arena of practice and theory in which the work of these makers can be debated, analysed, and criticised within the broader field.

Ramón Puig Cuyàs suggests what he believes should be the function that conditions the creation of the contemporary jewel: 'Scientists pretend to represent the world with the least ambiguity and mistake from rational thinking, artists also pretend to represent the world, but they deliberately exploit the ambiguity of intuition. If in the remote origins of jewellery, the amulet and the talisman wanted to connect man with nature and the transcendent universe through the forces of magic, today jewellery pretends to do it through a new humanism that should integrate art and science values.' (2000)

I propose that the multi-modal and multi-method aspects of forming and translating 'a sense of place' can contribute to one area where these 'art and science' values have the capacity to further unite. The craft processes latent within our field such as tacit knowledge and the 'thinking hand' are verified through cognitive science – our perceptual ordering and selective interpretation form our understanding. The materiality of a local place within a global context is a step towards a more evolved and progressive 'sense of place' - constructed by linking that place to places beyond. The local and the

global are by no means mutually exclusive. I posit ‘a sense of place’ given emphasis through embedded research and making processes, which is rooted in the local in such a way that it implicates the global. This local rootedness is not nationalism, provincialism or parochialism; it is purely a materiality of place. Forming our own assured sense of place becomes a way to think beyond the provincial by rooting ourselves in the fundamentals of our surrounding environment; the visual, physical and atmospheric: the geography, the materials, these are both local and global. This method of exploring the materiality of our surrounding environment is one manner of distinguishing our work from our counterparts in an era of visual appropriation.

During this three year study I was able to investigate and expose interconnections and consistent modes of working used by artists to select, filter, explore and translate the information they gather from their surrounding environments. In the diverse group of 32 new works produced as a result of my method, poetic responses to feelings of belonging through the language of making can be observed. The examination and illustration of the creative outcomes of these individuals is a means of demonstrating the validity of their in-depth approaches to research and practice, which reflects upon the field as a whole. The materiality of place is not the preserve of a Northern dialogue and through outlining this manner of working in this focused study I am contributing to the wider field of knowledge. These jewellery makers are storytellers of personal narratives of place and this project is a celebration of the lived experience of our environments, forming new connections to our place in the world.



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11. IMAGE CREDITS

Images of Topophilia pieces are not to scale

Per Suntum phase 1 piece - Image Credits © Beth Legg

Tarja Tuupanen phase 1 piece - Image Credits © Tarja Tuupanen

Hildur Yr Jónsdóttir phase 1 piece - Image Credits © Beth Legg

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APPENDIX A

'Topophilia Box' Text Inserts

*Box No. 7 (Caroline Holt) text Insert;

1. *Meadows: Lamppost*
2. *Hanover Steet: Grid*
3. *Grassmarket: Drain Lid*
4. *Kings Stables: Tunnel wall*
5. *Hendersons Café: Chair*
6. *Grassmarket: Flodden Wall*
7. *West End: Lamppost*
8. *Victoria Street: House wall*
9. *Bruntsfield Links: Bench*
10. *Lady Wynd Street: Wall*
11. *Telfer Wall*
12. *Grassmarket: Hanging Place*

*Box No. 8 (Hildur Yr Jónsdóttir) text Insert;

*'Walking
In the ebb,
feeling the stones
under my feet,
strengthens my
Earth-connection.
The sound from
the waves,
calm and control
my breath.
Bending down
to pick up
whatever
my eye catches
each time
is a kind
of meditated
movement.'*

*Box No. 9 (Jenny Klemming) text Insert;

Shoreline – Timeline – Frontline

*Fragments. Little pieces of porcelain flowers
together with a tube of Estonian hand cream
An odd combination. One is a time traveller
the other an immigrant from overseas. My Dad
says the hand cream works fine even though
it's imported in an unusual manner.*

*The storm hit the village on the 13th of
November 1872. 32 houses were swept away
Together with boats, household goods, trees
And winter potatoes. My mother's great
Grandmother was eight years old and running
for higher ground this Thursday evening. I*

wonder if I'll ever stumble upon her kitchen
floor or roofing tiles? Now, the only
buildings on the beach are concrete bunkers
built in the 1940's in fear of another kind
of storm. They follow the curve of the beach
like a necklace of faceted stones. Sharp
angles softened, set in sand. Lee.

*Box No. 10 (Beth Legg) text Insert;

Sea-Ware

*Great gales that flew here from north of Svalbard
have felled the lost forest of the sea,
whose olive sluice and sway
we first see as the swell lifts it on-board*

*root and branch, onto our rocky shore.
Here are stems which rose straight into the blue
while, far below,
shifting across the forest floor*

*stars and radiant urchins glimmered in the dark.
Work to align yourself
with what the sea has logged, as it falls*

*broken wrack, off every wave and onto our deck,
living fossils
from that bottom shelf on which our bodies still rock.*

By Donald Mackay

* Box No. 12 (Helga Mogensen) text Insert;

The Place

*Where nothing interrupts my inspiration. Where nature is in its prime.
The atmosphere, the house, the stillness and the joy. All this affects me.
How can I not make a piece that reflects a place like Kaldbaksvik?
On the second floor there is a room with two beds and two tables. The room is
under the bent rood that faces the mountains and the ocean.
In the morning all one can hear is the sound of the ocean, like a never-ending
symphony.
The kitchen is the warmest room in the house. The old fashioned style and the
feeling make this room, the social place as well. Laughter and fond memories
fill my room, the heart.*

This section includes the 'Topophilia Project' participants' personal statements and first person accounts captured through email interviewing.

TOBIAS ALM

Artists Statement

'My way of creating is very free. I don't control the direction of the work that much. I follow hunches and impulses. I let go of logic and reason, and let the flow of improvisation lead the way. I let my impulses get realised in material, judging their quality first after seeing the result. Working with intuition and improvisation is exciting. It's very joyful. Still, it can be quite hard to handle. Without using any guidelines showing me which direction to go, the possibilities are unlimited. The freedom is fantastic, but also somewhat terrifying. That duality is a big part of why it's so exciting. Sometimes I feel like a filter. Like I unconsciously pick up whatever interests me in my surroundings, let it be reshaped by my personality, and spit it out in new shapes and constellations. In a way my work mirrors my life.' Tobias Alm

TOBIAS ALM - INTERVIEW PHASE 1

BL: What words would you use to describe your chosen place?

TA: I associate my chosen place with creativity and activities, but also with peacefulness. It has been a big part of my whole life, so I feel very at home there.

BL: How do you feel when you are in this place?

TA: I feel free and relaxed. I also tend to start creative projects. It is my favourite place to go when I really need to think something through, or find the part to start a new artistic process.

BL: Other than collecting objects, did you research the place in other ways i.e. photography, drawing, walking or in writing?

TA: I went there for a few days, and sort of re-explored the place. I discovered things that I hadn't seen for a very long time. I also went through a lot of childhood photos taken at this place.

BL: How do you transfer the sensory experience of a place into a tangible object?

TA: I don't know if it is possible. In another way it might be inevitable. In my artistic work I sometimes soak myself in the feeling of a place or a theme, and then create intuitively, trying to

keep away from thinking too much. Even though my focus never is to deliberately tell a story about that theme or place, I might give the objects some kind of essence of my feelings about it.

BL: What made you choose to work with the particular materials that you incorporated into the final jewellery piece?

TA: Wood and tools has [have] fascinated me since I was very young. My chosen place has a lot of both. I think my choice came quite naturally.

BL: Do you think the landscape of the place you grew up has affected your aesthetic or material choices?

TA: In many ways, I think. My creativity as a child was very influenced by what surrounded me, especially during the summer holidays. It must have affected me, and how I work today.

TOBIAS ALM - INTERVIEW PHASE 2

BL: Are you interested in imbuing materials with significance or are you more interested in their surface aesthetics?

TA: What a difficult question! I don't know if I really understand what you mean. Could you rephrase it?

BL: Do you find it difficult to work with materials that are naturally beautiful?

TA: Yes, I find it difficult to work with materials that are very loaded.

BL: What role does intuition play in your creative practice?

TA: Intuition is very important for me. It is my number one creative tool, and I always get surprised of the amazing things that can come out of it.

BL: How do you view the relationship between your work and it's wearer?

TA: The intimacy between person and object is important for me. I want the people that experience my work to lift, touch, smell, and listen to the sound of the objects. I think that the best way to do this is by wearing the objects.

BL: How do you select your materials?

TA: I tend to go for quick materials, so that I can easily follow my impulses, and avoid getting stuck in long processes of realisation. My improvisational working method works well with wood, textiles, plaster etc.

BL: Is a piece of jewellery still jewellery when displayed in a museum?

TA: Yes, I believe so. We look at objects with completely different eyes if they are labelled "installation", or "necklace"; "brooch, or "tea pot".

BL: Now that you have gone through the process of compiling the inspiration box, creating both your first piece and your second response piece can you please describe your making process for the second piece - was it similar to your normal practice or did you approach it differently, if so, how?

It was very difficult. I received a box with very strong materials, and I found it hard to free myself of [from] thing [thinking] about what the sender might have in her mind. I tried to approach this task in my usual way, but of course these special circumstances affected the process a lot. I tried to not think too much about what the other people involved in this project might want, and on the project as a whole. I wanted to keep free from those thoughts, and that was difficult.

RUT-MALIN BARKLUND

Artists Statement

'I de construct to construct. I tear stuff down to pieces. I mess things up, just to put them back in order again. Often in a new kind of order. It is like a never-ending flow, and that is what is keeping me running.' Rut-Malin Barklund

RUT-MALIN BARKLUND - INTERVIEW PHASE 1

BL: What words would you use to describe your chosen place?

RMB: Heart. Broke. Mend. Dark – Light. Ruin(s). Pain. Pain. Tears. Crush. Cry. Heal. Rust. Sore. Fear. Torn. Angst. Recover. Beauty. Peace. Harmony. Overwhelm. Devastate. Brake Down.

BL: How do you feel when you are in this place?

RMB: Pain, Relief, Grief, Calm – at the same time. Burden, heavy burden. Heavy as a stone. Memories etched inside of me. A oxide coating that eating (on) my surface. Fretted holes - hold myself together. In between.

BL: Other than collecting objects , did you research the place in other ways i.e. photography, drawing, walking or in writing?

RMB: I have been taking pictures. I also spent some time there, sitting, looking, thinking and walking around. A bit of writing while working – listing keywords

BL: How do you transfer the sensory experience of a place into a tangible object?

RMB: For me it has been a lot about my feelings for this place. Or maybe rather the feelings this place evoke. A metaphorical (figurative) interpretation (configuration/ translation/ construction/) of my thoughts around this place. A sort of symbolic meaning.

BL: What made you choose to work with the particular materials that you incorporated into the final jewellery piece?

RMB: There, for me, symbolic meaning. The way I was able to work with those materials, and the expressions they gave me.

BL: Do you think the landscape of the place you grew up has affected your aesthetic or material choices?

RMB: I am not really sure about this. If my choices are an effect of my working theme, the place I have chosen or a landscape I often spent time in as a child is very difficult for me to say. I would say that the place I have chosen has a quite [quite] typical Swedish atmosphere. I have worked with materials that for sure [sure] can be found in this place, as well as in the Swedish countryside and archipelago.

RUT-MALIN BARKLUND - INTERVIEW PHASE 2

BL: How do you select your materials?

RMB: The materials I choose to work with I have chosen because I think they are interesting to work with. They have qualities or an expression that fascinates me. They shape the way I am working, by experimenting and deconstructing, I often give my materials unexpected appearance. Sometimes the material leads me, and sometimes I lead the material to the final appearance.

BL: What role does intuition play in your creative practice?

RMB: The intuition is always there. I can't see how it couldn't take a role in the process, for anyone. I mean even though you are working towards a certain direction, have a visual draft or so you always come to [a] point where you have to take a look at what you have in front of you. You analyse it, and with your intuition you make decisions.

BL: What kind of relationship do you aim to establish between the jewellery object and the

wearers body?

RMB: The body is the scene for my creations. The body doesn't play a part in my jewellery besides being a carrier. I see the body as the perfect mobile scene to show my discoveries. I can't imagine a better way to come that close to the viewer.

BL: Is collection normally an important part of your research process and if so how do you think that the collection of objects feeds into your work?

RMB: I do collect in my research process. The range of things I collect is wide: objects (both from nature and man-made), materials, pictures, text, colours, details in objects/clothes... Definitely I do this to feed my inspiration.

BL: Are you interested in imbuing materials with significance or are you more interested in their surface aesthetics?

RMB: Both, I think. Mostly I am after a specific aesthetic appearance. Sometimes though the materials have a "deeper" meaning. As for example, the marble in the first piece. To etch in stone, to create deep marks in this hard material has a symbolic meaning for me.

BL: Now that you have gone through the process of compiling the inspiration box, creating both your first piece and your second response piece can you please describe your making process for the second piece - was it similar to your normal practice or did you approach it differently, if so, how?

RMB: The thing I found difficult in working with someone else's inspiration box was to disregard wondering what that person thought/felt/meant with these things. I believe it was almost impossible to just apply my "feeling" on it, without also trying to "find out" something at the same time. Getting someone else's box fed my curiosity. At [in] this specific case I found it very confusing to have both a text and materials/objects/photos. The words didn't say the same thing to me as my eyes did when looking at the content in the box. Probably that other person and I have different relationship to these things. I therefore chose to not focus at all at [on] the text.

SOFIA BJORKMAN**Artists Statement**

'The first piece of jewellery I got was the newborn bangle at hospital.

The first piece of jewellery I bought myself

was a necklace at a market in Sweden.

The first piece of jewellery I made

was a bracelet made of string.

The first piece of jewellery I showed in an exhibition

was a brooch I made in school.

The first piece of jewellery I sold

was a ring to a friend.

The first piece of jewellery I was proud of

was a ring I got from my mom.

I believe in jewellery- gossiping jewellery that tells truths and untruths,

gorgeous jewellery that fascinates, annoys and tickles, without falses.

I make jewellery that is questioning the values and status.

I show jewellery that attracts others to think.

I am wearing jewellery that loads my batteries, and illustrate my thoughts.

I discuss jewellery that may seem strange to the viewer

and I sell jewellery stunned or strengthen people's feelings.

I think of jewellery as miniatures of life's content

and dream of jewellery that makes a hole in my wallet.

Jewellery matters.' Sofia Björkman

SOFIA BJORKMAN - INTERVIEW PHASE 1

BL: What words would you use to describe your chosen place?

SB: Sea, Wind, Trees, Beach, rocks, heritage, nature reserve, pastures, species diversity

BL: How do you feel when you are in this place?

SB: Happiness, Harmony, joy, pleasure, treat, delight, time stands still

BL: Other than collecting objects, did you research the place in other ways i.e. photography, drawing, walking or in writing?

SB: I have been in this place since I was born. I don't live here but spend a lot [of] time here. My studio is since long time full of materials from the place and my diary and sketchbook is filled.

Deciding for this project what to use wasn't clear from the beginning but I decided to chose [choose] one material that has followed me since I was a little child. It has always been there and has a lot symbolic qualities for the place.

BL: How do you transfer the sensory experience of a place into a tangible object?

SB: For me, the object I made is very clear and direct. It just can't be in another form because I have the background information. It will be interesting to see how the audience will read the object.

BL: What made you choose to work with the particular materials that you incorporated into the final jewellery piece?

I was walking around in the place and had some different ideas. It is important for me that the material has a symbolic meaning in itself that fits the idea. The material I have chosen comes from something that has a bigger value both for me, my family and the area.

BL: Do you think the landscape of the place you grew up has affected your aesthetic or material choices?

SB: Yes, of course. Everything in my life started when I was born. My life is what I have and that is my only reference. Time and place matters.

SOFIA BJORKMAN - INTERVIEW PHASE 2

BL: How do you select your materials?

SB: All materials can be my working material. I collect materials I find on my way, materials with content, surface [surface] and expressions that I don't think I can find when I need it. Very often I use these materials later on in other contexts. I have too much [many] materials in my studio but I am happy for that when I want to use one specific.

BL: What role does intuition play in your creative practice?

SB: A lot. I trust more intuition than intellectual thinking.

BL: Is collection normally an important part of your research process and if so how do you think that the collection of objects feeds into your work?

SB: To collect is important but it doesn't need to be objects or materials. I also collect thoughts, quotes, notes and whatever. All in combination makes my work.

BL: Are you interested in imbuing materials with significance or are you more interested in their surface aesthetics?

SB: I can't ignore an objects meaning. The surface can't hide references but the surface can tell a lot about the content. Therefore I am interested in both. There are also the grey zones layers in between the object, the content, the surface and the viewer that I think is real [really] interesting.

BL: Now that you have gone through the process of compiling the inspiration box, creating both your first piece and your second response piece can you please describe your making process for the second piece - was it similar to your normal practice or did you approach it differently, if so, how?

SB: Of the box with the materials I got I couldn't read any place. I didn't get a picture and I didn't have any references. It was difficult. Therefore I concentrated in the three objects I had and what they told me.

SARA BORGEGARD ALGA

Artists Statement

'To me the city and urban spaces feel more like a natural everyday environment than nature. Trees, meadows and flowers become exotic in comparison to concrete, cars and shops. It is as if objects and spaces in my surroundings have always been there, but they are made by someone. Things that I take for granted, things that has become natural to me are applied. Even the landscapes are arranged. Buildings placed like jewellery in the landscapes. Almost everything in the urban environment that surrounds me is constructed, arranged. Things that I take for granted, things that have become natural to me. It is as if objects and spaces around me have always been there, but they are artificial; applied. Even the landscapes are arranged. Buildings are placed like jewellery in the landscapes. I construct, I arrange.' Sara Borgegård Älgå

SARA BORGEGARD ALGA - INTERVIEW PHASE 1

BL: What words would you use to describe your chosen place?

SBA: Remote, clam [calm], abandoned, empty, lonely, free.

BL: How do you feel when you are in this place?

SBA: I feel like I can breath. Deep breaths. It is an open place, an empty landscape just by the sea. I feel a strong resonance to my inner space. My mind is clam [calm] and clear.

BL: Other than collecting objects, did you research the place in other ways i.e. photography, drawing, walking or in writing?

SBA: I made photos and I collected a few small pieces of materials. Then I wrote down some words that came to my mind. I am interested in what kind of association chain will start inside me when I visit a space I like.

BL: How do you transfer the sensory experience of a place into a tangible object?

SBA: My process starts when I see an object that I feel attracted to, something that draws my attention. Same thing with places. I let myself go into that feeling of liking, a feeling of happiness. It is a feeling of finding treasures. At that point I do not analyse exactly why I like it. I usually make a photo or a drawing of the space/object or sometimes a combination of forms that appears as an image in my mind. Most usually I make only photos and maybe a note about colours.

Next step I often start working by going into colours and shades making abstract drawing. From the beginning my work has a strong intuitively [intuitive] character. In drawings I find colour combinations and new forms. Next step is making three dimensional sketches. By this I mean that I start working with forms, in this phase I use scrap pieces of wood and sometimes thing[s] I find around me. Next step is to look upon the work I have done so far. It is a kind of research. In this phase I also start connecting ideas and words to the process, making the grounds for a clarification of the "theme". I then take a step back to look on the results so far and start thinking jewellery. I transform the experiences of the two-dimensional and the three dimensional into jewellery. I make loose jewellery sketches of form and colour but up until the end I keep the final result quite open. It becomes an on-going three-dimensional discussion.

I use shapes and materials as metaphors for words and feelings. My work is about scale and contrast and to highlight the feeling [feeling] that the jewellery is indeed constructed and added to the body. It is important for me to keep a monumental feeling in the scale I use.

BL: What made you choose to work with the particular materials that you incorporated into the final jewellery piece?

SBA: I used materials that were present at the location. But also I used materials that I love to work with. I think I chose the place because it has a resonance to my work. I am drawn to those kind of places, because they make me feel connected. These materials has [have] a connection to my background.

BL: Do you think the landscape of the place you grew up has affected your aesthetic or material choices?

SBA: Yes absolutely. The materials I have been drawn to and worked with during the last years has [have] strong references to my family and there interests and occupations. Also the fact that I grew up just outside the city and spend more time in a city environment than in nature.

SARA BORGEGARD ALGA - INTERVIEW PHASE 2

BL: Are you interested in imbuing materials with significance or are you more interested in their surface aesthetics?

SBA: I am not sure I understand this question correctly, I tried to translate it but... I will tell you about my interest for the materials I mostly [mostly] use: Wood, Iron, paint, embroidery thread and carpet warp.. Wood and iron. These materials have many meanings to me. First of all they are very present in my surroundings. Sweden is a country with a huge wood and iron industry. These materials are present in all parts of my everyday life. Both used for constructing houses, furniture and tools for instance. To me these materials bear a history of building. They are both natural resources. We transform these parts of nature into materials for construction. I am interested in the way humans are taking care of and using these materials. All the way from mining and cutting down trees to transforming the materials to houses and tools. To me this kind of work is quite male. In my everyday surroundings I see these materials in different shapes and often painted. Paint. We use paint to cover and protect both iron and wood so they will not become rusty or damaged by moisture. Now and then these materials need to be repainted. The paint is a protecting, covering and decorative layer. It is like a skin on the surface. The paint highlights the surface at the same time that it is covering it. The painted surfaces tell me about the fact that a human has had the intention to protect the material. This is very intriguing to me. The taking care of holds a certain poetic aspect. To paint a material is an act of love. I like to use paint sometimes a bit worn off. This puts the object into a perspective of time. Embroidery thread and carpet warp are for me female materials for constructing. In my jewellery I often let these materials hold and carry the industrial shapes of wood and iron.

With these materials I construct.

BL: Do you find it difficult to work with materials that are naturally beautiful?

SBA: I am often struck by the beauty of nature. Nature is so extraordinary and perfect. I do have a difficulty working with these materials but I think this is because I feel a certain kind of dishonesty when working with them. I can not let the "finished" materials be, I want to transform them to my own materials in that case. I do admire jewellers who can use these materials in a good way but it is not my way of working. I think often naturally beautiful materials are difficult to

fit into a constructed context. As I said above I am very fascinated of how we create materials from nature. We chop down the trees, cut them up, make them into small squares and glue them together to make a wooden table surface. The table gives a “natural touch” to the home. It is a bit humoristic and at the same time a beautiful act. I see care in how humans with tenderness and affection force these materials into squares.

BL: What role does intuition play in your creative practice?

SBA: I would say that intuition plays a huge role in my work; it is in fact depending on it. I constantly get information from my surroundings. Consciously, unconsciously, fragments from my environment are collected inside me. Words, feelings, colours, shapes, situations. Flavours, scents, conversations, situations. Stories, experiences.

Somewhere inside me impressions become imprints. They are mixed with experience and memories. Things are forgotten or given no concern. Other things are given importance and become enlarged. All these parts of impressions come together in new constellations. It is as if things are crystallised and puzzled together. In my way. It is because of my history and the imprints I have gathered, that specific new parts are picked out and collected. Unconsciously. Everything I see and experience, I see through all my gathered imprints and experiences. I have an inner world. Through this world I observe and to this world I collect. I am both hunter and collector. But I am also something else. I speak about my pictures. I speak about the imprints I have inside. But I speak not through [through] words. The inner world seeks its way out, I want to see it. But it is hard to illustrate. It changes all the time. I feel my way ahead. Searching for the expression of that inner world. It is like stones underneath the surface of water, it looks different when you pick it up. I am not sure of how this what I am looking for looks like. My conversation becomes physical. My conversation becomes objects. I am asking myself questions through materials, through shapes. Test, search, hunt. But I don't know for what until the feeling of searching is replaced by the feeling of a meeting with something that communicates with me.

BL: Is collection normally an important part of your research process and if so how do you think that the collection of objects feeds into your work?

SBA: If I collect objects it is mostly to use as vehicles for inspiration. My collecting is normally more about images, materials, impressions, experiences, feelings and memories. To observe is a way to collect.

BL: Now that you have gone through the process of compiling the inspiration box, creating both your first piece and your second response piece can you please describe

your making process for the second piece - was it similar to your normal practice or did you approach it differently, if so, how?

SBA: Actually I always carefully consider if I should say yes or no to projects where I am asked to react on a given theme. Unless I feel I can find a link to my own work I try to say no. This is because I often tend to jump too far from myself if I don't feel connected. I often get stuck in performance anxiety.

In the response piece I really tried to keep my own "glasses" on. This is what I saw when looking into the box:

Paint. A painted branch is bearing a history of being picked and painted. Someone has given it a layer of paint, a skin. To hide the surface? To protect it? To decorate it? The box is telling about a sequence of events. Someone has picked the branches, painted them and put them into the box. White branches. Perhaps the artist would like to show something frozen? I see the painted. A branch with flowers, probably from a blossoming summer bush has been covered.

I decided to make a copy, an industrial copy of the white branch.

GRACE GIRVAN

Artists Statement

'I was born and raised on the Orkney Islands. This unique landscape is imprinted in my memory and is a continuing source of inspiration for me. I feel most contented when I'm out beach combing; it is a calming, almost cathartic pastime that provides an opportunity to escape from the hectic pace of daily life. I aim to convey this sense of calm through a restrained colour palette of soft greys, blues, greens and browns to portray the washed out, sun bleached colours associated with the sea and shore. My countless beachcombing expeditions unearth objects such as pebbles, driftwood and shell, which I then combine with silver and enamel. The found objects provide a source for the shapes and compositions and with this I aim to create sculptural yet wearable pieces of jewellery.' Grace Girvan

GRACE GIRVAN - INTERVIEW PHASE 1

BL: What words would you use to describe your chosen place?

GG: Private, peaceful, familiar.

My chosen place is a long stretch of shoreline. It begins as a large sandy bay which is attractive and busy on a sunny day. The shoreline continues round the headland, changing from sand to rocks and shallow pools to stone and then round to my favourite section which isn't the most attractive but it is private and the area I have spent most time. It has some sand, a lot of shells

and is always littered with detritus from the sea. There are rocks stretching out to the sea and often seals on the furthest out. Terns, Lapwings and Oyster Catchers nest here. As a family we have spent hours here searching for Groatie buckies and pebbles, worn to become perfectly smooth, flat and oval. During a westerly gale the waves are ferocious and it is at its most beautiful. From here you look over to islands of Burray and Copinsay.

BL: How do you feel when you are in this place?

GG: Safe, relaxed, nostalgic, content.

BL: Other than collecting objects, did you research the place in other ways i.e. photography, drawing, walking or in writing?

GG: This stretch of shoreline is a stone's throw from where I grew up so it is imprinted on my senses. It is where I take the inspiration for most of my work so I have photographed, drawn it and walked it countless times.

BL: How do you transfer the sensory experience of a place into a tangible object?

GG: It is very difficult to put into words. The place that I chose for this project, which is the place that informs most of my work, is somewhere I have known since my childhood. As I said before, I feel that this place is imprinted on my senses and therefore when I attempt to 'transfer the sensory experience' I do so somewhat intuitively. Collecting and observing objects from that place is a good starting point. Recording information by photography, drawing and walking can aid the process, informing texture, colour, form. Generally, I use an object found on the beach within a piece of jewellery so the piece has a direct link to something of the place it is trying to convey.

BL: What made you choose to work with the particular materials that you incorporated into the final jewellery piece?

GG: I collected a lot of material from the beach and of those collected items I decided on a piece of bone, a small piece of driftwood, a pebble and a limpet shell. The area of shoreline I concentrated on is always littered with shell, driftwood, plastics, rope – all manner of flotsam and jetsam. I wanted to convey this combination of detritus and texture but with an overall sense of harmony. The small smooth black pebble is a typical example of one you'd find on that beach, I often use them in my work.

BL: Do you think the landscape of the place you grew up has affected your aesthetic or material choices?

GG: Most definitely.

GRACE GIRVAN - INTERVIEW PHASE 2

BL: You seem to favour the brooch for this project – can you describe why?

GG: I like the freedom a brooch allows –there are not the same restrictions in terms of ‘fitting’ the body that are inherent in the design of a necklace or earrings for example. I view brooches as sculpture on a small scale, which I like.

BL: Are you interested in imbuing materials with significance or are you more interested in their surface aesthetics?

GG: I would say that I am initially attracted to an object because of its aesthetic - surface, shape or colour. If I imbue a material with significance it is simply as being representative of a place.

BL: Do you find it difficult to work with materials that are naturally beautiful?

GG: Yes and no. Out of the objects I collect there are some that I find difficult to incorporate into a piece. It is as though the object is complete in itself, that I could just attach a pin and wear it and that by adding any other elements to it is somehow doing this object a disservice. Equally, some beautiful objects are easily incorporated into a piece of work. Often the found object forms the starting point for a piece and dictates how the finished piece will look.

BL: How do you feel about using a material that already has a history?

GG: I suppose all the materials I use have some kind of history. Most of the found objects I use are from the shores of Orkney. I find it intriguing to consider what the objects I collect once formed a part of and how large the original structure was, especially with driftwood. Although I find it interesting, considering the history of an object does not have much significance in my working practice. For me, the objects I collect provide a link to the place where I found them, they give an authenticity to what I am attempting to convey; a sense of the place from which I come. I do like the thought that I am adding to the history of a found object by incorporating it into a piece of jewellery.

BL: What role does intuition play in your creative practice?

GG: I would say that intuition plays an intrinsic role in my creative practice. In my work I attempt

to convey a sense of the place where I am from and as much as I document the place in terms of photographs, drawings and the collecting of objects, when it comes to creating a piece there is another aspect which contributes which I would explain as intuition.

BL: Is collection normally an important part of your research process and if so how do you think that the collection of objects feeds into your work?

GG: Collection is an important part of my research process. The objects I collect are the source for shape, surface and composition. They help me in my attempts to communicate a sense of sea and shore.

BL: Now that you have gone through the process of compiling the inspiration box, creating both your first piece and your second response piece can you please describe your making process for the second piece - was it similar to your normal practice or did you approach it differently, if so, how?

GG: When I opened my box for phase 2 of the project I was interested to find that the objects in the box were not unlike objects I would collect myself – driftwood, shell, a crab shell.

I would say that the making process for the second piece was different to that of my normal practice. I created the piece for phase 2 very quickly, much faster than I did in phase 1. I speculate that this is because I had not collected the objects myself. Even though the objects were similar to objects I would collect, I didn't have the same connection to these collected objects as I did to my own. Creating my second piece felt like a much more straightforward process but one that I did not feel as involved in. I enjoyed creating the first piece much more.

INGJERD HANEVOLD

Artists Statement

'I hail from generations of gardeners in Asker, Southern Norway. Growing up close to nature and observing the growth of flowers and all sorts of plants have been forming my interest and work as a jewellery artist. The garden is my little Utopia. I never stop being fascinated by the beauty and drama happening there, from the first fragile shoots that grow throughout the summer and die in the autumn; the rhythm of life, a repetitive natural wonder, year after year.

In recent studies I combine casts of flowers seeds, mosses and twigs with my own constructions. They are also based on the same patterns and growth principles as found in nature. Silver gives me the opportunity to create the contrasts I am looking for, between rigid and soft shapes, between black and white and between matt and polished surfaces. I like working with my hands, sawing, filing and soldering. It almost becomes a form of meditation, letting my hands shape what

is forming in my mind. It is a different way of expressing yourself than through words, yet possibly even more precise or spontaneous. I am interested in the little things. We are easily impressed by size, but everything is relative. When you look into a microscope you can get almost the same picture as you get when viewing outer space. Micro and macro looks really rather similar. I like working with people. Getting to know different persons and reflect about life and existence. A question is how do we best communicate? Jewellery has existed in all cultures and at all times in human history. I believe jewellery is part of our basic need to be seen and appreciated. It is a privilege to have the opportunity to realise myself through my work. To shape my own life and surroundings. However, the most important is for your work also to mean something to others. This is what gives it true worth! Ingjerd Hanevold

INGJERD HANEVOLD - INTERVIEW PHASE 1

BL: Can you please discuss your choice of place and your approach to this phase of the Topophilia project?

IH: From my kitchen window I am able to meditate at the same time as I view the landscape outside.

I look out over my garden and observe all the constant changes taking place there over the seasons:

First the melting snow revealing a multitude of spring- flowers, then summer with everything in verdant bloom, followed by autumn's golden colours that remain till the first snowfall which again transforms the garden, this time into soft and sculptural shapes. Experiencing the landscape this way can both reinforce and alleviate how I feel at a particular moment. If I am feeling sad, a rainy, dull autumn scene will affirm this mood. Nature becomes an everlasting font of inspiration with its changing beauty and decay, for joy and for comfort. It is a privilege to have a profession where this well of experience becomes an important part of my work. I have a passion for gardening. I dig, I plant, I tend my flowers and plants. I collect seeds and observe and study their form and structure (I have 2 greenhouses and am in the process of having a conservatory built).

BL: How do you transfer the sensory experience of a place into a tangible object?

IH: Observing forms, colours, constructions, patterns and the characteristics of materials is the basis for my creative work in the studio. At the same time I am influenced by events happening around me, both in my immediate surroundings and also in the world as a whole. The attention focused on natural science, ecology and sustainability has also captured my interest. Probably all this is reflected in my work, although my jewellery is not associated with politics. In my work I cast metal from natural elements and construct shapes in metal inspired by nature.

BL: What made you choose to work with the particular materials that you incorporated into the final jewellery piece?

I like working with silver and value both the technical and visual characteristics silver possesses as it can be cast to any shape or be constructed and soldered from a sheet or from wire. Also silver has for generations been mined in Norway and has therefore a special meaning in our culture. The visual value graduating from shiny to matte, from white to black and all shades in between give me a very rich spectre of expressive possibilities. In my first piece of jewellery, I have included tiny diamonds into the silver. My inspiration being the glittering ice crystals on the frozen hydrangea bush outside my kitchen window. The title of this piece is at this moment still undecided.

INGJERD HANEVOLD - INTERVIEW PHASE 2

BL: Can you please discuss your approach to this phase of the Topophilia project?

Due to the exceptional circumstances in Norway as I was starting work on my second piece, (Oslo terror attack, July 2011) my inspiration box arrived that day just as the number of victims were being released. It was inevitable for my work not to reflect this as my given inspiration was 5 empty picture-frame-backs. My second piece is an installation consisting of 77 silver pins with a pearl. To me the pearl is a symbol of how something violated can be transformed into something beautiful and valuable. The title of my work had to be 'Hope from Tragedy'.

CAROLINE HOLT

Artists Statement

'Commuting through London has influenced my recent work's concept, aesthetics and choice of materials. In big cities we spend a record amount of time in transit, which can create a feeling of detachment from our surroundings. My jewellery and objects symbolize the need to re-connect and counteract this sense of distancing. My current work consists mainly of jewellery and objects made of concrete and horse hair (which in Roman times was added to the concrete mix in order to strengthen it). I am fascinated by how a material, such as concrete normally associated with huge structures, can be so tactile and sensitive at the same time. This inspired me to create a series of brooches referencing classical jewellery shapes using an unlikely material such as concrete.

On a more conceptual level I have played with the idea of my jewellery being part of our surroundings and, through the action of pulling and wrapping, bringing it closer to us until we

actually can wear it. Literally, pulling the outside in. My series Traces consists of pendants, which are vessel and brush at the same time. In a sense this is the reverse of pulling the outside in – but much more it is my way of going back for a closer look at specific places that flashed by on my daily commute. In going back I take time to explore each place through mark making. The brushes, and in some pieces the graphite lead, also have an aesthetic quality resembling large-scale construction work, as well as being a testimony to my love of drawing.’ Caroline Holt

CAROLINE HOLT - INTERVIEW PHASE 1

BL: What words would you use to describe your chosen place?

CH: It's a place full of life and history. And it holds a lot of my own personal history.

BL: How do you feel when you are in this place?

CH: I always feel excited and a bit of a buzz in Edinburgh. There are always things to see and things take you by surprise (either buildings have changed, the weather goes mad, I meet random funny people). Sometimes it makes me feel isolated to [too].

BL: Other than collecting objects, did you research the place in other ways i.e. photography, drawing, walking or in writing?

CH: For this project I decided to focus on a sensory documentation. A sense of place and meaning comes from a deep connection and I felt a tactile interaction was more primal and emotional than a visual documentation. Our society relies so much on the visual sense, as it is the only way we can keep up with the fast pace of a city. Counteracting the fast pace, which often makes us feel disconnected, I walked through the old town of Edinburgh taking texture samples. The idea being of creating something like a cities' fingerprint. Or carefully looking at its palm.

BL: How do you transfer the sensory experience of a place into a tangible object?

CH: From my texture samples I then made moulds, which I cast concrete into. I then had three-dimensional objects, which I studied carefully. By drawing some of the patterns I came up with the design of my piece.

BL: What made you choose to work with the particular materials that you incorporated into the final jewellery piece?

CH: I felt there where materials which had a personal connection as well as a more general connection. I used concrete, because Edinburgh's architecture continues to surprise me (in good

and bad ways) and it stands for human domination of a landscape. The fact that concrete continues to strengthen over years and years (the chemical process is ongoing) makes it like a metaphor for the feeling for a place, which develops over time.

The incorporation of graphite has a personal reason: Drawing. I have always loved drawing, but it wasn't until I moved to Edinburgh that I could fully develop this skill. To this day, I remember that wonderful feeling of having discovered something - and I strongly connect this with Edinburgh.

BL: Do you think the landscape of the place you grew up has affected your aesthetic or material choices?

CH: I am sure it has. It is hard to say in what ways though. I have lived in several places and just like meeting different people, all places have shaped the way I look at the world and therefore the way I create. Sometimes I stumble across a material and that can be very random and other times it has a strong link to the place (like when I used antlers from Scottish deer, or Whitby jet). I work a lot with concrete now, which was directly influenced by London. However, I grew up in Switzerland and the Swiss love concrete - cause it lasts forever! So maybe it is something that sits deep within me. Who knows.

CAROLINE HOLT - INTERVIEW PHASE 2

BL: What role does intuition play in your creative practice?

CH: Intuition is a major part of the way I work. It is what made me want to do Art and not science or economics. My most creative moments are when I forget everything else and my hands just take over.

Of course this alone usually doesn't get a project finished. So it is always a balance, and often a real struggle to find this balance, between complete freedom and complete control. For me this struggle is at the heart of creating.

BL: Are you interested in imbuing materials with significance or are you more interested in their surface aesthetics?

CH: Initially I am drawn to a material because of its aesthetic. Then I feel there are usually two routes it can go with my work: the material itself leads me to a meaning, a theme and I then explore this or the other route would be having an idea and then searching for the appropriate material.

However, it is not always that one or the other. For example I can't clearly determine what came first; my love for the material concrete or my interest in the building process, architecture and the way it evokes emotions.

BL: Do you find it difficult to work with materials that are naturally beautiful?

CH: Yes, I would say I do. I always feel more drawn to the seemingly mundane. Although of course I love diamonds!

BL: Is collection normally an important part of your research process and if so how do you think that the collection of objects feeds into your work?

CH: I am not sure how important it is to me. Generally it is of course very important to me to be surrounded by things that have meaning or things that I simply find interesting. These can sit on my desk for years and suddenly they find a way into a particular project. I guess they are a bit like thoughts, they can just rest at the back of you [your] head and then something triggers them to grow or slot into place. I rarely consciously collect for a particular idea/project.

BL: Now that you have gone through the process of compiling the inspiration box, creating both your first piece and your second response piece can you please describe your making process for the second piece - was it similar to your normal practice or did you approach it differently, if so, how?

CH: I found it really nice to unwrap each object and look at them in amongst my stuff. It was a bit like having a mysterious conversation and it gave me a really nice feeling. I was very moved by the little note, which described the houses, which had been washed away.

Because the starting point came from another person, the process did feel very different. It gave me something fresh and also a clear framework. What surprised me was the sense of responsibility towards these carefully selected objects. It was a bit like someone asked me to finish their job well – and I liked that.

HILDUR YR JONSDOTTIR

Artists Statement

'I am driven by the life that thrives around me. I constantly wonder about different things. People say that I am curious and I am, for me, that is a positive thing. It is this curiosity that leads me to unexpected paths which usually surprises me.

The unexpected and the search for my own ways with materials keep my curiosity and joy of making on going. My working rhythm has to be quite fast; not knowing totally the end result is an important part of my working methods. Coming from a Volcanic Island and living with the unspoiled nature almost in my back garden, has also had a great influence on me. It is my

energy, and inspiration source. Organic shapes, so beautiful, cruel, even terrifying and ugly, colourful and colourless all around.' Hildur Ýr Jónsdóttir.

HILDUR YR JONSDOTTIR - INTERVIEW PHASE 1

BL: What words would you use to describe your chosen place?

HYJ: It is my energy and inspiration source.

BL: How do you feel when you are in this place?

HYJ: I feel at peace, I recharge my batteries there every time,

BL: Other than collecting objects, did you research the place in other ways i.e. photography, drawing, walking or in writing?

HYJ: I have been going to this place for over 30 years, each time I see and experience something new and different. I regularly take walks in this area, about twice a week if I am in Iceland and almost every time I have my camera with me.

BL: How do you transfer the sensory experience of a place into a tangible object?

HYJ: With the material I choose each time, at least I try to.

BL: What made you choose to work with the particular materials that you incorporated into the final jewellery piece?

HYJ: The materials I used for my work I collected/found at "my love of place" randomly over [a] period of time, depending on my mood and what my eyes saw each time. For me the materials I used really represents my chosen place.

BL: Do you think the landscape of the place you grew up has affected your aesthetic or material choices?

HYJ: Definitely [definitely] my material choices are affected to the place where I grew up, also aesthetically but more in an unconscious way and in an uncontrolled way. It have [has] taken me some time to "accept" my work. First I did not know where it came from, but then I realised that it was really connected to the landscape I come from, aesthetically the work I make is not my taste (cup of tea), but in a way I can't change the outcome, then I would not be honest at least not to myself.

HILDUR YR JONSDOTTIR - INTERVIEW PHASE 2

BL: Are you interested in imbuing materials with significance or are you more interested in their surface aesthetics?

HYJ: I think I am interested in both, really depending on the theme I am working on each time. Imbuing materials with significance is thought [though] more interesting for me.

BL: Do you find it difficult to work with materials that are naturally beautiful?

HYJ: Sometimes it is hard, but again depending on the concept each time, and if am attacking the material or not.

BL: Do you feel a particular affinity to any material?

HYJ: I connect more to natural materials, like wood and stone.

BL: How do you feel about using a material that already has a history?

HYJ: The history of the materials make them more interesting for me, even I don't "really" know the true history.

BL: What kind of relationship do you aim to establish between the jewellery object and the wearers body?

HYJ: Humm.....a good relationship!

BL: Now that you have gone through the process of compiling the inspiration box, creating both your first piece and your second response piece can you please describe your making process for the second piece - was it similar to your normal practice or did you approach it differently, if so, how?

HYJ: Waiting after the second box, I already decided to change my working process for that piece, I wrote down some reminders and rules. Like: Write down your first reaction, feelings, thoughts: Grey- sadness,-emptyness [emptiness] –squares - overgrown. Use material unknown to you, but somehow connected to the feeling you get from the box: concrete, metal, Go out from comfort zone. Make a brooch!

I was very excited to start this second journey, But after receiving the box, I realised that this journey was much harder than I thought to start with, to create a piece responding on the box. I followed my list/rules very strictly and in the end after many many different experiments with materials and shape, I ended up with a piece, foreign to me in a way. But looking back I am glad

that I took part in this project, I learned a lot. I am looking forward to see the end result but also a bit scared.

JENNY KLEMMING

Artists Statement

'Human interference or possible domination of nature is a recurring theme in my work. Mankind is involved in a fragile relationship that needs to be maintained. Our borders part the landscape into different sections through roads and fences. We dominate and shape nature with gardens, industries and agriculture. We organize, improve and refine. The human intervention in nature can also be subtle changes in the landscape that disclose a presence. A mark or placing of an object may reveal an intention. As an artist I am searching for connections. I gather aspects and associations, hints and lore, trying to map out my area of interest. It is a balance between craft and experiments, chance and control.

As jewellers we tread an ancient path. When I use an unrefined material I cultivate it. I dominate and bend it to my will or let it go out of my control for a while before shortening the leash. Jewellery pieces have a tradition of being precious personal carriers of memory and social status. They have therefore been handled with care. I like the thought of a jewel being lost, found, re-made, inherited and worn during a life time – that the piece of jewellery has a life span longer and separate from mine.' Jenny Klemming

JENNY KLEMMING - INTERVIEW PHASE 1

BL: What words would you use to describe your chosen place?

Horizon, border, line, element, time.

BL: How do you feel when you are in this place?

JK: Embraced - or maybe transfigured into a less complex component. Every day problems doesn't seem to matter as much when exposed to something greater. I guess that emotional experience is consistent with "the sublime", a concept of the Romanticism.

I was surprised by a thought: Do I think of a place as something constant or do I feel like it only exists when I'm there...? Maybe my piece is a way of making the location feel like it's there all the time - connecting it to the history of my own family and to historical events in a time line. It sounds really pretentious when writing about it.

BL: Other than collecting objects, did you research the place in other ways i.e. photography, drawing, walking or in writing?

JK: Apart from spending time there - roaming around and walking - I used photography, writing and 'googling'.

BL: How do you transfer the sensory experience of a place into a tangible object?

JK: I tried three different approaches to the subject:

- one is a mix between emotional and geographical thoughts (the pebble shaped hollow shell made out of electroformed copper with a line of holes). I tried to make an ambivalent piece with a bit of solitude, calmness but with a hidden treat. Doubt made me continue on two more pieces.

- The second try resulted in a ring made of apple wood with incorporated chalcedony. I used a found piece of apple wood and made it a bit more "maritime" by adding the slightly barnacle-looking blue stones. This turned in to a more general piece and didn't speak so much of my chosen location.



- the third try was also a "free" piece - a loose mix of direction (the horizon / horizontal line is one reason for my fascination of the chosen place), shapes and colour found at my spot. The form reminded me of something in between a twig and a bone.



BL: What made you choose to work with the particular materials that you incorporated into the final jewellery piece?

JK: The electroforming technique I use only works with copper so the material is a result of that rather than a result of the place I worked with.

BL: Do you think the landscape of the place you grew up has affected your aesthetic or material choices?

JK: Yes, definitely. We have all these sayings and proverbs connecting the geography to the character resulting in a general view of the Swede as a solitary, independent and sometimes melancholic person - striving to cope with the elements. Well... more of a preconception than a truth, but none the less I feel drawn to this Nordic melancholy. Fog and ice and deep forests despite the fact that I grew up in Malmö - Sweden's third biggest town! But since deciding for myself I have strived to get closer to that dream.

In my art I'm more interested in small nuances and well... a touch of melancholy, solitude or Swedish rain doesn't surprise me.

JENNY KLEMMING - INTERVIEW PHASE 2

BL: Do you find it difficult to work with materials that are naturally beautiful?

JK: I don't have to make my own materials or shapes all the time. I work both with given and created materials and shapes. A naturally given surface or material can act as a liberator from self criticism as it provides an input from the outside. I start to find it more difficult when the material shape works like a strong symbol... somehow there's a difference in how I look upon a shell or an uncut stone. The shell has a strict shape - each looks more or less the same. The stone looks more like an individual. Somehow I find the individual easier to work with.

BL: Are you interested in imbuing materials with significance or are you more interested in their surface aesthetics?

JK: A combination of the two. I tend to create a symbol language connected to the subject field my work is centered around. I find acts, shapes and materials that I connect to a certain idea. These associations give me the strength to decide how the pieces individual beauty should look like - Do I make sense here...?

BL: How do you view the relationship between your work and it's wearer?

JK: Right now I don't think too much of the wearer. There's a hypothetical and possible wearer but

I don't know who that person might be. I make my pieces wearable but... honestly... how many people will actually wear them? Many of our pieces have a high voice, they sometimes speak of inconvenient matters or defend an unknown position. They are conversation pieces when most people want well-known brands as their ambassadors. On the other side, I also have to be true to my creative direction and fascination as far as it is economically possible.

I started out as a goldsmith's apprentice making the regular jewellery pieces but got tired of the conventional and design based process. I wanted to tell tales and stir imaginations. That's what I try to do... but to the price of loosing the more common wearer. The audience expects something spectacular of art but they might not want to go out and have a drink with it afterwards :). I'm starting my search for a personal balance between expression and usefulness that doesn't feel like a bad compromise...

BL: How do you feel about using a material that already has a history?

JK: I have no problems with a background history as long as the expression gives me the right associations and serve my purpose.

BL: What role does intuition play in your creative practice?

JK: Hard to say... I don't think too much of intuition. Maybe because that's one of the characteristics of intuition..? It's unpremeditated. Sometimes I don't know exactly why I make something. Meaning is added along the way. It's the total sum of the piece. I think chance has an important role in my work sometimes. I like to use processes that gives an irregular outcome or adds something unexpected.

BL: Is collection normally an important part of your research process and if so how do you think that the collection of objects feeds into your work?

JK: I collect pictures [pictures] and materials as I run in to them. They act as clues giving me ideas and associations.

BL: Now that you have gone through the process of compiling the inspiration box, creating both your first piece and your second response piece can you please describe your making process for the second piece - was it similar to your normal practice or did you approach it differently, if so, how?

JK: The second box was easier to work with. I tried to look upon the box as a piece of poetry (which it was, partly) I used the text as my main focus but the final piece also shares characteristics with the shells in the box - the whiteness, the openings etc. I can't find my notes

about the text right now but if I remember it correctly I used the words hollow/hollowed, seaware, deep, current, voyage...Something that could have floated but has stranded and been left alone with the elements, rather intact but bleached and hollowed.

The process was both similar and different to my normal approach. I didn't have the time to build up a language of keys/ associations around it since it wasn't a part of a longer process. Maybe that made the piece more direct. more emotionally connected (less intellectually supported) - but I don't know if that's something a viewer notices or if that's a personal reflection. On the whole [whole], the process didn't differ from my regular way of working.

BETH LEGG

Artists Statement

'My jewellery pieces explore a sense of place through the embedded object and memory. The remote environment I come from in the far north coast of Scotland from has strongly influenced the work I produce. I have always been fascinated by the hinterlands and quiet edges of places – a bleak remoteness which can be both beautiful and melancholic. When worn, the jewellery pieces are altered and the wearer appropriates the narrative of the landscape; forming their own associations through the piece. Away from the wearer I would like my work to have an autonomous character where the environment is made tangible in the visible narrative of the object. I tend to work instinctively with materials rather than contriving designs beforehand. I enjoy the labour of traditional hand tool methods - forming a dialogue with materials through the sensitivity exploration of the nature and phenomena of materials and their intrinsic potential. I find this process of thinking through material and making very satisfying. I aim for my work to be seen as a moving dialogue – each piece an exploration of composing elements encompassing themes of landscape and memory, ultimately reflecting the often bleak and fragile nature of the environment I come from.' Beth Legg

BETH LEGG - QUESTIONS PHASE 1

I have tried to respond to the same themes and questions I put to the other participating artists for both phases of the project. Many of these questions were formed through my insight into practice as I experienced it, and were often asked as part of my thinking and making process.

What words would you use to describe your chosen place?

On the edge, raw, moving, changing, alive, familiar, empty, beautiful, varied, quiet, vast, open

How do you feel when you are in this place?

Very relaxed, at peace, meditative, belonging to the land & the place, hidden, alone, free, safe.

Other than collecting objects, did you research the place in other ways i.e. photography, drawing, walking or in writing?

Walking and immersing myself in the atmosphere of the place is very important. I jot down key words also. I take a lot of photographs and often edit and change them digitally afterwards. For this project I sent some of them to a poet who lives near my chosen place and he wrote a poem 'Sea-ware' which I have included on the box lid. I used to draw but I find that this distances me from the elements I am trying to capture rather than bringing me closer to them – it is adding another step to the process which I fear might detach me further. I prefer 'drawing' directly with matter I have collected when I return to the studio.

How do you transfer the sensory experience of a place into a tangible object?

Through a contemplative appreciation of the elemental qualities of landscape and translating these qualities through bodily interaction with material. This is a kind of reciprocal interchange or cycle of influences between the landscape – myself – materials within the creative process.

What made you choose to work with the particular materials that you incorporated into the final jewellery piece?

Silver. I am comfortable with this material – I am familiar with its qualities and challenges and enjoy manipulating it. I particularly enjoyed the process of imparting the qualities of something soft, fluid and moving (seaweed) to a metal. I included a piece of driftwood because it is from the place – it has provenance and I like the conversation between 'readymade' and 'made'. It also have visual appeal as it echoes the linear qualities in the other elements and it has a contrasting warmth to the sometimes coldness of metal. Stone – again signifying provenance. Very typical of the area I am from. suggestions of man-made and naturally occurring structures

Do you think the landscape of the place you grew up has affected your aesthetic or material choices?

I do believe that the landscape of the place in which I grew up has affected my aesthetic and material choices although our influences are numerous and impossible to pinpoint in their entirety. I trust and hope, that you can see suggestions of the type of environment I come from in my work. This is articulated most strongly through material rather than image or form.

BETH LEGG – QUESTIONS PHASE 2

What role does intuition play in your creative practice?

Intuition also plays a large part in my creative practice but I can become over conscious of the importance of this. When I allow myself to trust a more intuitive decision making process then I can 'let-go' and have a greater freedom with the piece – this is not always easy and it is a creative dichotomy that I sometimes struggle with. A large part of undertaking this practice-led research project has been to increase my understanding of my own creative process. Exploring the most productive balance of conscious and unconscious actions and how they might best produce work in equilibrium has emerged as an interesting component within my practice. My own consciousness of my consciousness might be the very thing that stops me from creating a harmonious piece and I realise that I have to push beyond that.

Are you interested in imbuing materials with significance or are you more interested in their surface aesthetics?

I believe that materials have their own natural significance and inherent symbolism. This is both personal and subjective of course. I have always made pieces which seek a balance between the given and the created and this is rarely effortless but when successful can be very satisfying.

Do you find it difficult to work with materials that are naturally beautiful?

I do sometimes find it challenging to work with materials that I believe to be naturally beautiful. I have often found myself questioning whether I am actually detracting from or reducing the objects principle quality if I work with it, and this is something I have struggled with in the past. I have learnt to choose any found or appropriated objects carefully because often their voice is too redolent or strong for me to work with.

How do you feel about using a material that already has a history?

I do enjoy working with materials that suggest a history. I appreciate this because this history is then subsumed into the narrative of the object; natural processes have altered it, I have then altered it and the wearer in time will most likely alter it again. On deeper consideration I also feel that it means the piece is not wholly about my own authorship, and this idea sits more comfortably with me. Often my initial use of found or appropriated objects is as a research stimuli or jumping-off point; perhaps it is even a tool to vanquish the fear of the 'blank canvas'.

Is collection normally an important part of your research process and if so how do you

think that the collection of objects feeds into your work?

Collection is an important part of my research process and I think that the collection of objects feeds into my work in various ways; both physically and subliminally. I have always been interested in how, what and why people, especially artists, collect. I believe collection is a natural act that feeds into our psyche and reinforces our aesthetic framework.

How do you select your materials?

I love silver– it teaches me something new every time I work with it, but my work most generally comes under the bracket of ‘mixed media’ because I enjoy exploring the conversations between materials. I go through phases of working with many materials mostly found and rarely bought but they are almost always considered natural or raw materials. At the moment I am particularly enjoying working with wood and stone. I have moved from appropriating both form and material from nature to working with more abstracted ‘blocks’ of natural materials.

Now that you have gone through the process of compiling the inspiration box, creating both your first piece and your second response piece can you please describe your making process for the second piece - was it similar to your normal practice or did you approach it differently, if so, how?

I found this second phase much more liberating which was unexpected at the time. I thought I would feel a weight of responsibility but this was more the case when working from my own selection of place and objects. I think there was a freedom in not knowing too much about the second place – although all of the objects had a level of familiarity I did not know their histories or narratives so I could work on an aesthetic impulse, which was freeing. I could approach the stimulus with more clarity.

What has this taught me? That to embark on the creative process with a primarily aesthetic (rather than overly emotional) approach is not necessarily superficial but instead gives a level of distancing and if done with sensitivity it can lead to deeper associations and suggestions. I discovered that making a group of pieces that were slightly removed from my overall body of work was liberating and the pieces still had a strong voice that I believe to be mine. I did not have the weight of a surrounding body of work colouring the production of these pieces and I was not worrying about the final aesthetic at the outset. This may well influence my future working processes but if this is the case it will only be observed in work yet to come.

HELENA LEHTINEN

Artists Statement

'A theme I work now is landscapes, inner landscapes, it sounds deep, but I love things that are not superfluous. My works are about memories from my family, my past; fragments, objects, photos without a camera. Identity is not stable but in constant movement and change. I'm in between minimalism and kitsch; I hate and love both of them.' Helena Lehtinen

HELENA LEHTINEN - INTERVIEW PHASE 1

BL: What words would you use to describe your chosen place?

HL: My place consists all imaginary things, that you might need in your life.

BL: How do you feel when you are in this place?

HL: I'm always excited, when entering the place, what to find this time.

BL: Other than collecting objects, did you research the place in other ways i.e. photography, drawing, walking or in writing?

HL: I go almost every working day to this special place, have done it for years, so I know it almost by heart.

BL: How do you transfer the sensory experience of a place into a tangible object?

HL: Materials, their presence, their stories led [led] my way of working.

BL: What made you choose to work with the particular materials that you incorporated into the final jewellery piece?

HL: I do not choose, I accept those things, that might be in my place, when I go there. Through those "accidents" the story begins.

BL: Do you think the landscape of the place you grew up has affected your aesthetic or material choices?

HL: Very difficult to say, what affects in a world like ours. We know and see too much.

HELENA LEHTINEN - INTERVIEW PHASE 2

BL: Are you interested in imbuing materials with significance or are you more interested in their surface aesthetics?

HL: my interest in materials comes from the stories they are carrying, so the aesthetics are less important. Of course aesthetics have some meaning also but not the only.

BL: Do you find it difficult to work with materials that are naturally beautiful?

HL: Well, what is beauty? I find beauty in so many things, also in ugliness. So, no, it is not difficult. Difficult is to define beauty.

BL: How do you feel about using a material that already has a history?

HL: All materials have history in my mind. As I wrote earlier, I'm interested in the story behind.

BL: What role does intuition play in your creative practice?

HL: Intuition has very big role in my practice. Really big.

BL: Is collection normally an important part of your research process and if so how do you think that the collection of objects feeds into your work?

HL: collection is an important part of the process and collection of objects on my desk is essential [essential] to start a project. I need all kinds of stuff (readymades) to feed me and give me reason to start working. This visual presence is very important. I often leave the materials or objects, which I have in the beginning on my desk out of the final pieces. But without them the process doesn't start.

BL: Now that you have gone through the process of compiling the inspiration box, creating both your first piece and your second response piece can you please describe your making process for the second piece - was it similar to your normal practice or did you approach it differently, if so, how?

HL: Well it was more difficult, because I had [had] not chosen those objects myself. It took some time to get into them. I don't think that I would ever have chosen that kind of materials to start with. But then happened, what often happens. The objects in the box started to tell a story (about sea). Sand, shell, seaweed [seaweed] I started with colours; I tried to create the imaginary scenery with smells and feeling with sand under my feet.

HELGA MOGENSEN

Artists Statement

'It can be difficult to ask oneself what it is that matters, what it is that I thrive on as a designer, artist and maker. For me it is quite simple actually. Its just life. The passion for making jewellery is based on this life experience. Its all about somehow transferring the feelings behind

the experience into a tangible object that can perhaps be worn. I once heard someone say: 'The work most personal to the individual artist, tends to be the work that people will learn to appreciate the most.' These words really stuck with me and lead me to belief that in order to create something, people have to have passion and belief in the things they are doing or making. Therefore my work portraits a bit of myself: it mirrors actions, behaviour, people, places, nature and feelings. It really does not make sense to be making something if I don't have interest or passion in what I am doing.

Ever since I was a kid, I have been going up North in Iceland to a special hideaway place where I go with my family every summer. This hidden gem has some sort of magic about it. The beach is full of driftwood, sea shells, old shoes and interesting things that have been in the ocean for quite some time. The place has no electricity or hot water which makes it quite the contrast to city life. With nature at my doorstep and interesting things drifting ashore the place is ideal for processing thoughts and developing new ideas.

The moment is also a great interest to me. I find it somewhat charming to stand opposite someone in the supermarket and wonder what kind of person they are or if there is someone wanting to be looking at that person at that specific time. But how does one capture moment with jewellery? I personally try and transfer feelings and colours into shape, but I guess we each have different ways of dealing with the moment. Photographs are one way of capturing the moment people want to remember for a long time. What is it actually that makes people want to capture the moment? These are thoughts, not answers about my work!

The sketchbook is a very important medium for me to work with along side the jewellery. The sketchbook works as a communicator between me and the pieces I am making at each time. I find it very important to keep a sketchbook with me at all times, small or large to keep track of thoughts.' Helga Mogensen

HELGA MOGENSEN - INTERVIEW PHASE 1

BL: What words would you use to describe your chosen place?

HM: Beautiful, peaceful [peaceful], amazing, quiet, memorable, magical, family, laughter.

BL: How do you feel when you are in this place?

HM: The moment I arrive I feel completely [completely] intact with nature, like there is not a care in the world. When I am there I want to wake up early in the mornings to get going and go outside to listen to the nature. I guess the right words for the experience are that the time stands still and there is nothing that interrupts [interrupts] the incoming natural data that is flowing to your brain!

BL: Other than collecting objects, did you research the place in other ways i.e. photography, drawing, walking or in writing?

HM: Yes I took photographs [photographs], did drawings, walking and I also wrote about the experience. It was a very important part of the process to get it all in and to learn about the things I was expressing. It made me view the place from different viewpoints and find out things that I had not known before. For the research it was also important for me just to sit and listen and really look at what was there. Sometimes I get so caught up in especially taking photographs [photographs] that I forget to look closely [closely] and listen. So I value this a really important factor in my research [research].

BL: How do you transfer the sensory experience of a place into a tangible object?

HM: For me it was a matter of finding memories related to the place and transferring them into the object. This I had to do with the driftwood and fish skin because I relate the materials to the place. Also I felt a need to transfer my thoughts into silver, by grasping what the place does for me and what I felt was the best way to express the feelings.

BL: What made you choose to work with the particular materials that you incorporated into the final jewellery piece?

HM: Silver is something that I love working with, and I find the colour of silver suiting the other materials I use well. I use fish skin because of the colour and it also represents my connection with fishing with my family all through my life, as a family activity. The driftwood comes from my Place, and it is inseparable [inseparable] part of work that I do for the Place.

BL: Do you think the landscape of the place you grew up has affected your aesthetic or material choices?

HM: Yes the landscape has inspired me quite a lot. There are so many different things in the landscape that trigger inspiration. For instance the difference in winter and summer. When the snow covers everything and the days are dark and grey opposite the summer with the 24 hour daylight, and light colours of summer. The fantastic colour of moss opposite the dark sand and black lava is a colour combination that comes from my every day environment and can be seen quite a lot in my work, and drawings.

Growing up near the ocean and mountains is just something I can't get used to, its amazing to see the everyday changes in the environment closest to me.

HELGA MOGENSEN - INTERVIEW PHASE 2

BL: Are you interested in imbuing materials with significance or are you more interested in their surface aesthetics?

HM: I think it all has to work together but I love working with beautiful materials that I pick up myself. I tend to think in surfaces, I find it interesting to make objects that have lovely textures and/or colors. For me it almost works as a puzzle of mix matching different materials and surfaces in an attempt to come up with something that I have not seen before.

BL: Do you find it difficult to work with materials that are naturally beautiful?

HM: I find it rather challenging to use naturally beautiful materials because sometimes I feel like I need to rationalize my thoughts for tampering with the beauty and transforming them into a piece of jewellery. Before I start my work with something I think about how it works with what I am doing because even if I am rather sketchy in my making process I think about how the materials are used in their best advantages.

BL: How do you feel about using a material that already has a history?

HM: I think using a material that already has a history adds to the magic of the making. I wonder with the things that I pick up from the beach, for instance the driftwood, how far it has gone, where it came from and so forth. Driftwood is my main found object, I don't use much besides the wood in my making, other things for instance plastic objects tend to end up on the wall in the workshop or in my sketchbooks.

BL: What role does intuition play in your creative practice?

HM: Intuition plays a big role in my making because even if I have a plan of what I am making, the end result never seems to be same as what I started off with. I think when I start handling the materials I want to use they tend to change, merely because of the overall composition and sometimes things just don't work together.

BL: Is collection normally an important part of your research process and if so how do you think that the collection of objects feeds into your work?

HM: The collection of objects such as driftwood, colorful objects and sea driven things plays an enormous role in my process. The place where I go to pick up things is only accessible during the summer, so the anticipation adds another side to the process. When I arrive at the beach I am gone, I experience a different mindset and I become one with the beach. This experience is amazing, mostly because it continues to the bench. I remember where I pick up the objects, and I

relate to each object that takes the journey with me.

BL: Now that you have gone through the process of compiling the inspiration box, creating both your first piece and your second response piece can you please describe your making process for the second piece - was it similar to your normal practice or did you approach it differently, if so, how?

HM: Before I opened the second box I was aware of the importance of first reaction. I sat with the box and recorded what was going through my head and my heart. Seeing the photograph of the old gentleman was not what I expected, but it was very much right for me because I related with the place and the man. I started thinking about my grandfathers and how I wanted to make memories related to them. The fact is that I never met my grandfathers, they both died young. I related to the photograph and started thinking how I could make a personal object that could contain the memories of the man in the box and the relationship he and the maker of the box had. So in general the approach was similar to my normal practice.

EIJA MUSTONEN

Artists Statement

'Some years ago I spend some time in the Netherlands in a country where everything is manmade. I was homesick, I missed space around me, and I missed wide-open view in front of my eyes. I started thinking again what is jewellery and gemstones: something precious, something beautiful, and something rare. I change these general qualities into my own qualities and values. Precious, beautiful and rare is my landscape around me in Finland, lakes and islands.

In last years some relatives and friends have passed away, I continued my theme landscapes combining the idea of mourning jewellery. The connection to my own environment and space has been the starting point in my working process; randomness and order as it is in nature. The theme is landscape, not just physical space but also psychic state'. Eija Mustonen

EIJA MUSTONEN - INTERVIEW PHASE 1

BL: What words would you use to describe your chosen place?

EM: Home

BL: How do you feel when you are in this place?

EM: Beloved. Relax.

BL: Other than collecting objects, did you research the place in other ways i.e. photography, drawing, walking or in writing?

EM: I live [in] the place: it is my home; my surrounding; my garden; lake and forest...

BL: How do you transfer the sensory experience of a place into a tangible object?

EM: I work mainly with forms: forms [forms] of stones, forms of lakes. I take the form and transform in material. Materials as well colour[s] support the idea.

BL: What made you choose to work with the particular materials that you incorporated into the final jewellery piece?

EM: The idea of jewellery piece advice[es me] to choose the right material and colour. Last years I have worked with [the] theme mourning jewellery I have read [the] history of mourning jewellery, I have chosen colours and materials based on that. Jewellery forms are my own 'mourning stories'

BL: Do you think the landscape of the place you grew up has affected your aesthetic or material choices?

EM: Very much, understanding different material, forms colour, joints comes from childhood surroundings.

EIJA MUSTONEN - INTERVIEW PHASE 2

BL: How did you select your materials?

EM: In the first piece I used materials that I have used before. The second one I was inspired of colours, forms and also partly materials that were in the box I got. Blue colour from walls of box, iron from concept of a place.

BL: Is a piece of jewellery still jewellery when displayed in a museum?

EM: In this case I have not think [thought] a lot about 'jewellery' while making it. But in general [a] piece of jewellery is [a] piece of jewellery even [if] it is displayd [displayed] in a museum.

BL: Are you interested in imbuing materials with significance or are you more interested in their surface aesthetics?

EM: Colours, materials and forms are building and helping the concept of jewellery.

BL: How do you view the relationship between your work and it's wearer?

EM: I make my work and do not think about [the] wearer. I consider my pieces are jewellery because I use the somehow values that a piece of jewellery has in general. In my case I have been thinking what is valuable and rare and beautiful for me. It is the landscape, free space around me. Also the scale is body scale.

BL: What role does intuition play in your creative practice?

EM: When [I] start working I always have [an] idea first, then I use materials, colours and forms that helps me to make guidelines for creative work. Intuition is in a big role, it gives freedom and something that cannot be expected, something new, something non-rationalistic.

BL: Is collection normally an important part of your research process and if so how do you think that the collection of objects feeds into your work?

EM: I do not think so.

PER SUNTUM

Artists Statement

Suntum provided this poem in place of an artistic statement at an early stage of this poroject;

'Let's Eat Stars'



Believe me, children!
God made
Sky for airplanes
Coral reefs for tourists
Farms for agrochemicals
Rivers for dams
Forests for golf courses
Mountains for ski resorts
Wild animals for zoos
Trucks and cars for
traffic tragedies
Nuclear power plants for
ghost dance.
Don't worry, children!
The well never dries up.
Look at the evening
glow!
Sunflowers in the
garden.
Red dragonflies in the
air.

A small child starts
singing:
"Let's eat stars?"
"Let's eat stars!"

Nanao Sakaki (1923 – 2008) Japanese poet and environmentalist

email correspondence

per suntum
To beth legg

14/05/2011 
Reply 

Dear Beth,

I am in the process of doing my box.. and now I seriously have doubts about the content.
First, I am not sure whether we shall actually FILL it (completely?) like in a mess?- and then wrap the things before sending?

My understanding is the box shall reflect the inspiration to my work in general and also the actual piece for the exhibition, and then serve as the catalyst for the next phase- receiver. Right? Only I find it more difficult than I thought it to be, as the content is so physical... and my inspirations of a more "ethereal" nature.

Also, living in the countryside, the things which I see and are drawn to tends to be heavy objects. Well, so far I have photos and finds showing structures and colours and unfinished work: surfaces etc.

Please just give me a few comments to my "bewilderment". Thanks

Per

From: **beth legg** (bfaraway@hotmail.com)
Sent: 14 May 2011 15:12:35
To: per suntum (per@suntum.dk)

Dear Per,

Thank you for your email. Your questions are important and I find it gladdening to know that you are giving the project serious thought.

If it is at all reassuring, I am also finding the task of filling the box far more challenging than I had thought it would be. I have just returned from a short trip to Finland where I met 4 of the other artists and this appears to be the general consensus.

I understand what you mean by the trouble of the physical and ethereal. I had intended that the box would form a sort of 3-Dimensional sketch book to illustrate a small element of the transformative/creative process of moving from environmental stimulus and inspiration to the finished piece. (This also then becoming the stimulus for the 2nd artists to make a response piece) If you find it helpful you might want to include photographs or drawings as you have mentioned but also words or poems, or even sound recordings/film might capture the more ethereal qualities you work from, if you should wish.

In terms of the practicalities of the box itself...the interior of the box is yours to do with as you like - you can make it shallower by raising the felt up (or any other material you may want to insert) - I have done this as some of my objects got 'lost' in the depth. I know that some people are painting the interior as well. You can add compartments or defined areas within the box or leave it open and free and loose if you feel this reflects your aesthetic best. You can put as many or as few 'objects' into the box as you feel necessary and if there is a specific way in which you would like them to be seen in relation to one another then I suggest you include an illustration or photograph of this so that they can be re-arranged post-transit.

I understand that the box project is quite a challenge and there is a great deal of responsibility on our heads to represent the minutia and ethereal qualities of a place in the contents of a box but i hope that you can embrace and enjoy the challenge (as I am trying to do!) and to not worry too much about the weight of responsibility - this is a very subjective and personal project and it is this that makes the outcomes most interesting.

I hope this helps, although i know that the hard work is for each of us to deal with alone, please do not hesitate to ask me any further questions regarding the project. I appreciate your thoughts and opinions.

Warm Wishes,

Beth

PER SUNTUM - INTERVIEW PHASE 1

BL: Can you please describe your making process?

PS: Firstly, let me quote the American painter Agnes Martin (her writings are really filled with deep form): "For those who are visual minded I will say: there seems to be a fine ship at anchor. Fear is the anchor, convention is the chain, ghosts stalk the decks, the sails are filled with Pride and the ship does not move. But there are moments for all of us in which the anchor is weighed. Moments in which we learn what it feels like to move freely, not held back by pride and fear. Moments that can be recalled with all their fine flavour..."

BL: How do you transfer a sensory experience into a tangible object?

PS: In order to transfer a sensory experience into a tangible object: I try to maintain an atmosphere of alertness, of gratitude, a sense of spaciousness: freedom, in order to see myself: to be - open to the singular moment, where man meets material.

And I listen. I listen to every material in order to be ready for any change in the direction of the work.

In the process I am all for the interplay between material, their intrinsic values or capabilities, the knowing (both metal and me) and the conscious vision.

Only when I see myself in the work I will know that that is the work I have to do.

BL: Why were you drawn to certain materials?

PS: Choosing the particular materials: with shakudo and shibuichi as the basic materials reprocessed again and again with layers of different karats of gold filings, I try to reflect the intense colours of peculiar shaped stones (one - to show especially the colouring - is placed in my box) I have collected from sandbeaches and among cliffs beneath my village. I am also intrigued by the deep toned colour in which many of the old buildings on Bornholm are painted. It is called "Bornholmer red". My hope is they will finally be a reflection of the deep ancient and immense still life of stone among stone.

BL: Do you feel that the place I grew up has had a particular impact on your aesthetic and material choices?

PS: Only partly do I feel that the place I grew up has had a particular impact on my aesthetic and material choices [choices]. Aesthetically maybe it formed my love of soft flowing hills and sense of 'home' with certain seasonal lights and shadowing, but I strongly feel that especially the impact the Himalayas had on me, while I lived there for more than four years, standing on my head, attending a yogi, growing conscious of life and art, was tremendous. Life there really impressed me in subtle and wonderful ways. And we are a landscape of all that we know.

BL: Can you please tell me more about your chosen place?

PS: Garlanded by a shimmering sea where all you see is the planetary curve on the horizon, life here fills me with an infinite variety of impressions, almost impossible and futile to describe. On Bornholm with its dramatic rocks and rough vegetation, I feel such serenity to immerse myself in the big round me in daily exposure to a pristine world of beauty. You sense it immediately you enter the landscape into the garden, which rises sloping behind the studio: the scent and atmosphere of tranquility [tranquillity] that floats over this place. It is the dry scent of warm rocks,

the scent of blooming lilacs, of heather, broom and wild rowan, that grows in abundance. It is a landscape of intrinsic knowing, which stirs enthusiasm and opens your inner flowering to inspiration. Inspiration is pervasive, peaceful and spacious = Your mind is untroubled. This is somehow the way I feel in this place now it is summer. (Bornholm, rocky island is a rare experience for a Dane as it is the only place in Denmark where rocks meet the eye!)

PER SUNTUM - INTERVIEW PHASE 2

BL: What does nature mean to you?

PS: Nature: what does it mean to me... a vast phenomenon! and the Alpha and Omega for my work with jewellery. This singular moment when one perceives a material - can be any object in nature - it's like a circle is created. Dynamic - inspiring.

Every cell of our being alive is part of nature. Dancing! Without a breath... zero.

Nature is my partner, whom I adore. I am in love with the purity of it all, the pristine beauty and seeing a straightforward raw elegance permeating everything, it somehow forms the very basis for my work.

BL: What role does intuition play in your creative practice?

PS: Intuition...a very important part of my life and creative practice. For me, intuition is another word for awareness. Seeing and intuitively grasping [grasping] - I hang my decisions on it.

BL: Is a piece of jewellery still jewellery when displayed in a museum?

PS: In a museum... Simply, yes jewellery displayed in a museum is jewellery which is shown in that situation. Some may say it is alone an object related to jewellery... I won't go there. I agree that it is not created to be displayed in a museum, but also, a car that doesn't move on the road but stands at a show, has it expired being a car? (ridiculous example).

BL: Is collection normally an important part of your research process and if so how do you think that the collection of objects feeds into your work?

PS: Collection... it depends on times and circumstances. I do collect all sorts of objects that I find interesting at a given moment. Sometimes to learn through seeing, for instance a twig - a branch and its related parts, sometimes for the pure inspiration certain things give. Above all, I have a profound feeling of wonderment always when structures, colours, the immaculate beauty of natural creations etc. are contemplated. Then, my work is not really about nature. It is not about the seen. It is more of what is known forever in the mind, the awareness of unborn perfection. How it functions I don't know, it is mysterious for sure.

BL: Now that you have gone through the process of compiling the inspiration box, creating both your first piece and your second response piece can you please describe your making process for the second piece - was it similar to your normal practice or did you approach it differently, if so, how?

PS: As I remember the inspiration box which I received for the phase 2 work was very plain and simple ...it contained wrapped up objects that immediately spoke to me in the sense that they instantly inspired me to do a 'nature statement' derived from my environment, opposed to the given objects that were impressed concrete of urban living. It was really like a 'first thought, best thought' process, so I went straight into building up the work. In the technical [technical] sense it was quite similar to my normal practice. In the process though I was acutely aware of the 'other' persons vision, my work had to be like in a 'Song For Two'.

Looking back onto the result (or maybe it is because of the colours of the photo I had taken) I am not sure whether I succeeded...I feel that I maybe overdid the finish, applying the techniques of enamel, which I am not really mastering...But at the time I liked it and maybe that can be the criterium [criteria] for a work being good or not.

NELLI TANNER

Artists Statement

'Starting point for my working is in everyday life. I make long detours by listening stories on my way home on the bus, finding beauty in broken objects, walking in my surroundings where there is wood and forgotten man made marks on the landscape. I carry camera and sketchbook with me all the time. I stop my walk on the street to take a snapshot of a moment which otherwise will be forgotten or unseen. I try to catch something I don't understand or makes me troubled. I collect other people's photos, characters of people, make small stories of these with materials to my working table. This transfers into jewellery through a process-based working. Sometimes jewellery is only about a small hole on a white paper. What remains is the memory of the act.'

Nelli Tanner

NELLI TANNER - INTERVIEW PHASE 1

BL: What words would you use to describe your chosen place?

NT: Wooden, old, quiet, full of history and lived lives, peaceful

BL: How do you feel when you are in this place?

NT: Relaxed, calm, respectful

BL: Other than collecting objects , did you research the place in other ways i.e. photography, drawing, walking or in writing?

NT: Research was done by drawing, photographing, going around the place, asking questions from the people who have lived there, collecting objects, scanning old photographs from the neighbours.

BL: What made you choose to work with the particular materials that you incorporated into the final jewellery piece?

NT: Final jewellery objects are called still life of the house of Mäkelä. I have worked with wooden objects I found in this old house we are living.

Objects which original purpose I don't know but they make me curious.

The objects are all showing signs of human hand, how they are made or how they are touched or the way you hold the object. I imitated the objects by making them from artificial wood. Trying to reach their original tactility. Using artificial material as it is something from this time.

BL: Do you think the landscape of the place you grew up has affected your aesthetic or material choices?

NT: To appreciate the Aesthetics of empty space. It made me curious in materials like wood and white paint.

NELLI TANNER - INTERVIEW PHASE 2

BL: Do you find it difficult to work with materials that are naturally beautiful?

NT: Sometimes. I use lot of time just looking and keeping these beautiful materials. But then after sometime or even some years I just start working with it and the spell is broken. The beautiful material becomes just a material which fits to my work purposes. Sometimes if a material is too beautiful I might give it away, if I don't use it.

BL: How do you feel about using a material that already has a history?

NT: I do consider of their use quite long. Normally I don't use them as materials but more of an inspiration for a new work.

BL: What role does intuition play in your creative practice?

NT: A big role. It guides me through the artistic process and helps to choose the ways or try-outs I want to continue with. Some choices feel right or some try-outs make me curious, then I know I need to continue exploring them.

BL: Is collection normally an important part of your research process and if so how do you think that the collection of objects feeds into your work?

NT: Collecting different objects, material, photos etc is a big part of my artistic research [research]. That's how I get going. I like to see how the objects are handled or hold by human hand or what time has done to the material. I might imitate the surface or colour in them while making a new piece myself from other material.

BL: Now that you have gone through the process of compiling the inspiration box, creating both your first piece and your second response piece can you please describe your making process for the second piece - was it similar to your normal practice or did you approach it differently, if so, how?

NT: I think it was quite similar to my normal process. I opened the box, looked what was inside, touched all of them. I was surprised how similar content this second box had compared to what I made for the 1st box. After a while I started experimenting with materials and sort of copying the feeling or shape of the sent objects.

After some try-outs with white marble and sandstone I knew I was going to use stone. And that is something I have not used for many years.

Funny thing is that when I opened the box, one object had some writing in Swedish. I immediately [immediately] knew which artist had filled the box: Tobias Alm. And I was right.

TARJA TUUPANEN

Artists Statement

'Stone is my main material as a jewellery artist. I have worked with it ten years, and still it offers me challenge and surprises. I love it for its versatility, and hate it for its limitations. Working with stone is slow and it suits me. I don't want to romanticize it that the timetaking working process would be meditative or spiritual, but the slowness has its value and the concrete grinding work helps me think. In the first working years I disliked the stone for its heaviness and clumsiness, and I wanted to change these qualities to the opposite by pushing the material to its edge by making it as thin and light as possible. Nowadays [nowadays] I'm already asking what the stone wants to say. The idea and the material go hand in hand, but sometimes the stone piece offers something you can't pass, a colour change or a line or a structure. Then you have to

change the original plan. Sometimes I search for these treasures to be used. And in the other hand there is always the need to control, need to do a perfect shape, a perfect oval. The white cacholong has offered the theme for me for the last 5-6 years. In the natural material there are all the white shades you can think of. When you look its whiteness long enough, you start to see some colours. This stone has the perfect atmosphere [atmosphere], it is minimalistic and quiet, stagnant but not boring, quite noble even. It looks soft and gentle, but it is not the truth. In a white stone all details show more clearly. In the emptiness there is content. Where is the limit of your expression or form, where is the limit in minimalism? The white is waiting, it is silent, quiet and calm, it is clear and comforting, and frighteningly empty. Can a blanco portrait tell more than a photo? Is there something more to look at in white scenery than in the view from your balcony? I do love the northern winter, when everything is covered with snow. It is silent, quiet and calm. Clear and comforting and frighteningly empty.' Tarja Tuupanen

TARJA TUUPANEN - INTERVIEW PHASE 1

BL: What words would you use to describe your chosen place?

TT: Calm, personal, my own.

BL: How do you feel when you are in this place?

TT: I feel like I am in my own territory, that the place truly belongs to me.

BL: Other than collecting objects, did you research the place in other ways i.e. photography, drawing, walking or in writing?

TT: No.

BL: How do you transfer the sensory experience of a place into a tangible object?

TT: Difficult question. It is also that the process [process] and ideas which are on going in my place, is shown in the piece. The calmness and the territory is shown with the material I have used, it is also calm and "mine".

BL: What made you choose to work with the particular materials that you incorporated into the final jewellery piece?

TT: The material/s I have used in this piece are to me the most important ones and represent the place I have chosen.

BL: Do you think the landscape of the place you grew up has affected your aesthetic or material choices?

TT: I think the seasonal changes in Finland and especially [especially] my love to [of] winter has effected to my aesthetic expression. I come from a little town and not from a metropole [metropolis], so that might have some effect also.

TARJA TUUPANEN - INTERVIEW PHASE 2

BL: Is a piece of jewellery still jewellery when displayed in a museum?

TT: Yes. If the artist have [has] done it as jewellery, it is jewellery where ever it is.

BL: Are you interested in imbuing materials with significance or are you more interested in their surface aesthetics?

TT: For me the material itself (the stone which I have chosen) contains the signifigance [significance]. I am interested in their aesthetics, but the material itself (the time and beauty of it) is as important than [as] the story the piece will tell.

BL: How do you view the relationship between your work and it's wearer?

TT: Maybe too little. I'm delighted when they are worn, but as often I picture then [them] on the wall.

BL: What role does intuition play in your creative practice?

TT: The intuition is very important. I make decisions based on intuition, for example when the piece is ready, or the decisions about the compositions. The experience helps, and the experience developes [develops] the intuition.

BL: Do you find it difficult to work with materials that are naturally beautiful?

TT: Sometimes it is really difficult. When you have a great beauty in a material itself, what can yo [you] do? How to make it further without distroying [destroying] it? But, the fascination [fascination] for these materials (and I speak as a stone maker) is great, and they give a great challenge to me. Sometimes I do very little and accept the material piece almost as it is. Sometimes I look for these king [kind] of treasures to be used.

BL: Is collection normally an important part of your research process and if so how do you think that the collection of objects feeds into your work?

TT: In the beginning of the project I try to collect pictures and text etc. to the wall in my studio. I do not necessarily use them later, the collecting time is important; I do not study them so much afterwards.

BL: Now that you have gone through the process of compiling the inspiration box, creating both your first piece and your second response piece, can you please describe your making process for the second piece - was it similar to your normal practice or did you approach it differently, if so, how?

TT: In the normal practice I make more decisions [decisions] in the beginning. I mean that now I had a ready subject, the box I received [received], with what [which] to begin. On the other hand it was easier, more direct path to working. So in that sense [sense] it was different than normal practice. I chose a "thing" I was interested in the content of the box and continued with it, combining it to my materials. In this case slate.

APPENDIX C

Practice Activity

Throughout my doctorate I streamlined my exhibiting activity to focus on themes I thought particularly relevant to my current work and research. I undertook a small number of shows in the UK (*Inner Voice* – Curated by Prof Dorothy Hogg MBE at Contemporary Applied Arts, London, *The Wych Elm Project* at the Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh, *Collect*, The Saatchi Gallery, London) and I showed work in five international exhibitions in Korea, Poland, Finland, Canada and Estonia. The three most notable of these shows were:

- *UltraMarine* exhibition in Tallinn, Estonia where 51 artists from Europe, US, Australia and Asia were invited to show their work in a century old shipyard. An 80-page catalogue was published to accompany the opening of the for more information <http://www.ultramarine.ee>
- '*natural-artificial*' - In the spring of 2012 Swiss jeweller Luzia Vogt invited me to send a group of work to Galerie Noël Guyomarc'h in Montréal (Canada) for a show she was joint-curating. For more information see <http://www.artjewelryforum.org/ajf-blog/nature-artificial-curated-luzia-vogt>.
- *The Spirit of Stone* exhibition in Lappeenranta, Finland aimed to present the best works from an international competition for jewellery students. Five students of jewellery design were invited from 7 art schools from 6 different countries. I was awarded second prize for my piece '*Where the bones of the earth show through*'. A hard backed book was produced as part of the exhibition

and competition. The exhibition also included 33 jewellery pieces in dialogue with the theme of the exhibition. www.saimia.fi/spiritofstone

As well as participating in these exhibitions I taught and presented within eca giving seminars to students on the technique of casting on the theme of working with stone, devising and leading the 'Precious Matter' project with a small group of third year students and presenting at the college 'Touch' seminar on my approach to the haptic dimension from a jewellery perspective. http://www.eca.ac.uk/cms_assets/Documents-Research/touchtoo.pdf

Exhibitions visited

Relevant exhibitions of contemporary jewellery and the broader craft field were visited for research purposes. These included:

- 'Collect' at the Saatchi Gallery – 2010, 2011 & 2012
- 'Schmuck' 2010 and accompanying satellite exhibitions
- 'A Sense of Place' SpaceCRAFT in Belfast
- 'Chien-Wei Chang' solo show, Leicestershire new walk Museum
- 'Spirit of Stone', Lappeenranta Museum, Finland
- 'Drawing with Objects' Contemporary Applied Arts

Conference attendance

In order to ensure that my research has been properly informed by relevant developments in the UK and nationally, and especially to keep abreast of debates on the critical languages of craft, I was a delegate at the particular conferences as indicated here.

'*Spirit of Stone*' Lappeenranta, Finland (May 2011)

'*Disruptive Difference - transnational craft dialogues*' at the School of Museum Studies, Leicester (Feb. 2012)

'*Designing Alternatives*', Edinburgh <http://designingalternatives.tumblr.com/> (June 2012)

Dissemination of research

In addition to the international exhibition of new pieces of work, the research has been brought into the public domain throughout the duration of the project by a variety of means:

- I gave two research in progress seminars to students and staff of eca in 2010 and 2011
- As part of the Edinburgh Art Festival I also gave a 'spotlight' presentation of the 'Sense of Place' exhibition and Topophilia Project at NMS to the general public.

- Topophilia Symposium
- NMS website - (www.nms.ac.uk/senseofplace)
- I wrote an article entitled 'The Topophilia Box Project' for the ACJ Findings Magazine issue 54 Spring 2012
- I created a Klimt02 page advertising the exhibition
http://www.klimt02.net/exhibitions/index.php?item_id=28114
- The exhibition was reviewed by Crafts Magazine issue no. 238

APPENDIX D

Symposium Report

I initiated the symposium supported through the eca Jewellery and Silversmithing department and with financial assistance from a University of Edinburgh Research and Knowledge Exchange grant. In order to secure the attendance of as many of the makers involved in my research project as possible some of the Knowledge Exchange funding was used to offer small travel bursaries for the makers who had shown interest in coming to Scotland for the exhibition. The symposium coincided with the opening of the exhibition at The National Museum of Scotland and the audience for the one-day symposium was kept purposely small and by invitation only in order to encourage comfortable discussion. The event was attended by twelve of the sixteen makers participating in the exhibition project from Scotland, Sweden, Finland, Norway and Iceland.

With this there were issues of language barriers to overcome and a general reticence to speak out illustrated by the introverted nature of these makers. I know that many of the overseas makers found the more academic language of the afternoon presentations difficult to key into and so it was important to give the makers the opportunity to discuss any thoughts they might have more relaxed and one-to one circumstances afterwards. Although the makers showed more reticence in coming forward during the discussion than I had anticipated, I think this is indicative of their typical approach and the quietly reflective character that these makers have.

Throughout this project I have had to walk a careful line between obtaining as much information as possible from the participants without causing them to feel uncomfortable or asking too much of them. In hindsight it occurs to me that I could of orchestrated a more structured presentation during the exhibition opening where the makers introduced themselves, their pieces and gave a reaction to the response pieces but I had to negotiate personalities and characters and I knew many of the makers would not have been comfortable with this. Overall I think I achieved as much as I could within the short time frame of this symposium and the feedback I

received post-event from both the participants and audience was positive.

Stephen Bottomley, Jewellery and Silversmithing Programme Director at eca chaired the day, which included presentations by Susan Cross (Jeweller/Reader/Lecturer at eca), Dr. Jonathan Murray (Film and Visual culture historian), and Edward Hollis, (Writer/Architect/eca Interior Design Award Leader). Guest speakers were Professor Elizabeth Moignard, (jewellery collector and Professor of Classical Art and Archaeology), and the keynote speaker, Sofia Björkman, (Jeweller and owner of Galerie Platina in Stockholm). We began the day with jeweller Susan Cross (Jeweller/Reader/Lecturer eca), presenting 'Distance and Distillation', which focussed on her creative praxis and how her sensory experiences are distilled through travel into her work. She noted the importance of time spent sitting and absorbing place, stating that her senses are 'grounded and explored when given time'. Cross also explained her approach to collecting objects as a 'long drawing or collage exploring narrative.' Her experience of curating an exhibition of textile art emphasised the immersed manner in which craft makers respond to landscape and place. Cross discussed the 'unbroken response to landscape', 'the presence and physicality of place' and the 'direct experience of surface phenomena', which were important ideas to these makers. Cross talked about her personal response to the memory of place (after travelling her work is distilled and filters through into her pieces after up to three years). She also mentions place having a memory; discussing visiting a beach where a Maori massacre took place and how she felt negative emotions when she was in this place before she discovered the history of the area, she declared that she believes 'places carry feelings'.

Professor Elizabeth Moignard then presented 'Collecting and Place' in which she detailed the jewellery pieces that she has collected as they related to places that were meaningful to her. Symbolism and narrative are strong themes in her collection. Moignard sees her collected memento pieces as marker points for times in her life, stating that her identity was both 'confirmed through and by the objects'.

Sofia Björkman presented a personal dialogue of place titled 'Places, Feelings and Memories' in which she emphasised the importance of familial history to place. Björkman sees jewellery as 'a path between wearer and viewer' where the physical and the emotional are combined. The memento aspect was again mentioned, and this seemed most powerful in pieces where provenant materials were utilised. Björkman underlined the subjective nature of place when stating that 'we don't see places as they are, we see places as we are.'

Edward Hollis, presented his architects perspective on 'Topophilia' which he linked through the material of stone. His themes were 'loving places' where he used the Berlin wall as an example, 'remembering places' for which he used porphyrogenitos, and 'places of origin' for which he talked about the 'Stone of Destiny'. The overall theme to his presentation was that

places were what we made of them and that often this is an un-truth or a distortion due to the personal and intimate nature of place. In terms of the physical aspects of place he discussed the moving and displaced nature of material and the manner in which each culture claims ownership on such materials and symbols.

In the afternoon, film and visual culture historian Dr. Jonathan Murray presented 'Here but anywhere, anywhere but here: images of place in contemporary British cinema'. Murray mentioned that place as a theme for academic enquiry has had increasing interest over recent years. He presented four ideas about cinema and place: (1) Cinema allows the spectator to travel to other places while remaining spatially static, (2) Cinema's ability to *show* place does not automatically presume any attendant ability to *know* said thing (3) In cinema, place is heard as well as seen, and (4) Cinema is compelled to travel to other places in order to engage spatially static audiences. Catharine Rossi later adapted these ideas to a craft perspective during the plenary session, replacing the word 'cinema' for 'craft' at each point and suggesting their mutual applicability.

The plenary discussion allowed us to bring together the threads that ran through the discussions and presentations. The panel that concluded the day included Susan Cross, Sofia Björkman, Professor Elizabeth Moignard and myself. Craft & Design Historian Dr. Catharine Rossi chaired the discussion and began by bringing together the varied and diverse elements that had been discussed around 'place' throughout the day. Rossi mentioned that in both the academic and the more personal perspectives on the subject, we saw 'how important people are both in terms of populating places but also constructing spaces'. She described a 'sense of place' and 'love of place' as competing phrases – I would disagree that they are competing because emotion and sense are so closely intertwined, I propose instead that places contain both the physical (a sense of place) and the emotional (topophilia); we grow to love place through our sensory discovery and knowledge of it.

The idea that emotion and sense are strongly linked was given emphasis throughout the day when Björkman, Borgegård Älgå and Barklund discussed their response to their chosen places. They all mentioned strong emotions linked to place, both through personal history as well as through the raw physical aspects of place, which are felt through our senses. To me this underlined the idea that people make place but are also prisms through which place is transmuted and this brings us to another recurring theme of the day which was the idea of place belonging to us and/or the feeling of us belonging to a place. Rossi went on to quote Ken Bryden, an American regional folklorist who says of a sense of place; 'A sense of place arises from and contributes to a place-based identity'...so it comes both from us and is created by us with acts of storytelling, with acts of folklore and with acts of craft.' Rossi then stated that the objects that

have been made and collected for the Topophilia Project 'are both expressions of, and contributions to, these native northern lands'.

Travel was a recurrently used word (Cross, Hollis, Moignard, Björkman) engendering a feeling of longing or nostalgia for the place that you are removed from. Edward Hollis also talked about the sense of place being stronger when you are removed from it – or taking it out of context (Venice is made from elsewhere). This idea was again mentioned by Professor Jack Cunningham who declared the Topophilia boxes 'displaced' and compared them to the appropriated materials that made up Venice. Cunningham went on to question the significance of the response piece of jewellery. I understand that this is not something I was able to fully articulate within the text interpretation of the NMS exhibition. For me, the response process forced me to question everything that I do in terms of my approach to making and I know that the creation of this second piece told me a lot more about my processes for the first piece as well, but did the other makers feel the same? It is my reasoning that the second piece acts as a form of control object; if not a pure scientific control as such, certainly an instrument for comparison. From the feedback I have received from the makers many of them questioned their approach to this process during the response stage (Alm, Borgegård Älgå, Mogensen, Jónsdóttir). Whether they found it freeing, or challenging, I suggest that this research phase provided a more in-depth reflection on the maker's process by way of disparity aiding appraisal and evaluation. I propose that the response piece enabled a necessary level of distancing for the makers.

This distancing or removed perspective has emerged as a key method within the creative process (reflection) whether it is through the altering of context, physical travel or nostalgic perspectives. This was a recurrent theme in the discussions around place and process that occurred during the day. Tobias Alm used the word 'translated' on seeing his objects in this context and the manner in which this changes his viewpoint on his pieces. Alm stated that his objects look stronger when taken out of their original context and used his box objects in the museum as an example. He suggested that they have a greater presence in their new surroundings due to the visual contrast and he believes that this gives them more 'power'. He describes this action as a 'ripping away' from origin and that this creates a new space for reflection and a re-questioning of what the object/s meant to him. Alm compares this to a process he often undertakes in his studio when he photographs pieces so that he can see them in a different light, discussing this process he mentions a 'flattened' perspective and that this provides a distancing or a 'new clean look on something'.

Another recurring theme was the atmosphere and aesthetic of emptiness. An absence of people or a feeling of abandonment is common in the places chosen by many of the makers. For Sara Borgegård Älgå emptiness is a 'metaphor for creative space or process' – creating a mental

and physical space where she can be free; 'I chose this place because I connect this idea of love of place with a feeling of creativity which only happens when there is a space for it. I also chose this remote...hermit, abandoned place where there is no distractions or pressures.' This again reiterates the idea of being removed. She states that she has a nostalgic longing to be there more often and that the kind of feeling that this place engenders in her is the same kind of feeling that she attempts to convey in her jewellery pieces. Helga Mogensen discussed her remote place as being removed from society and modern influences, she connects with the place and not the outer world – 'you are just there...being away from the material world is a great luxury'.

Continuing on 'emptiness' Sofia Björkman spoke about our creative response to empty spaces, saying that when you see an object you place your own narrative into it. She stated that this was important when we talk about craft; 'we are filling empty spaces'. She used the example of Tarja Tuupanen's box containing the empty picture frames and the manner in which Ingrid Hanevold read them in light of the Norwegian massacre. Björkman mentions that time and response are talked about often, particularly the past and the present but not so often the future. I went on to say that the future element was inherent in one aspect of this project, as we knew the boxes we compiled were communication tools for another maker as we composed them. Professor Elizabeth Moignard mentioned that there were many commonalities in the boxes – both in terms of the nature of the places chosen and the aesthetic of them but that the pieces that came from them showed real variety.

Edward Hollis described himself as an outsider to jewellery discourse and noted that he found it unexpected that when we talked as craft makers who worked from place, that we talked about individual and personal responses. He stated that this is an approach that he associates with 'Art' – he called this 'un-craft thinking'. He explained that he sees craft and place being about a shared aesthetic (ie the style of houses in the Highlands of Scotland and their shared aesthetic due to their collective use of local materials) and that he thinks of craft as a social construct rather than a personal expression. This brings us back to the grey area that contemporary jewellery situates which I mentioned earlier in the thesis, and I believe it adds validity to my use of both what are traditionally considered to be fine art and craft terminologies. It is my position that contemporary jewellery making is an individual response within a social context. The observable commonalities that we see in the Topophilia Project (for example; source materials, liminal places, natural materials, the muted colour palette) could all be considered social or 'craft' responses in this context and the aesthetic and narrative being very personal, or to Hollis, 'un-craft' or 'art' responses.

Over the past two and a half years I have been in regular contact with Rose Watban the Senior Curator of Applied Art and Design and Cathy Sexton the Exhibitions Co-ordinator at the National Museums of Scotland (NMS). After going through a formal application process my exhibition proposal was accepted. When I initiated this project I was more familiar with the specialist art gallery exhibition context and so I had to adjust my expectations and perspectives and explore more fully what showing a research based exhibition within an established public institution might represent.

There were huge advantages to citing the exhibition within the institution of a National Museum but compromises also had to be made. The obvious advantages included the status of NMS have which no doubt helped me to attract the range of artists I was able to involve in the exhibition. There was the technical and financial assistance that an organisation such as this could afford. The cost of this project such as making the boxes, repeated internationally couriering, transporting the pieces, the technologies of display, would have been prohibitive for me to carry out alone. However, that said, throughout the period of this project the recession persisted and the budget for this show was repeatedly reduced. Additional online interpretation was created by NMS (www.nms.ac.uk/senseofplace) in order to supplement the panel text of the exhibition and although this allowed for a wider geographic audience to access the exhibition digitally, unfortunately there is no tangible paper-based legacy. My hopes for a catalogue and the possibility of touring unfortunately remain unrealised at the point of writing. This appears to be due to some ambiguity over 'ownership', the costs and work involved in touring and the NMS wishing to acquire pieces for their collection. The catalogue could have included contextualising essays from peers, artists' biographies/statements and would have been an opportunity to see the two works by each artist together which is not possible within the physical exhibition design. This is something I hope to continue to pursue.

The panel text was written by myself and edited by Rose Watban. It then went through at least two more edits with 'Learning and Programmes', which I was unhappy with and so a compromise was reached. Other compromises that were made included the title of the exhibition itself. The act of signing off an exhibition title was more protracted than I had foreseen; in the case of this 'special exhibition' audience testing and discussion between Exhibitions & Marketing teams within NMS were involved and the titles proposed ranged from 'Cool Jewel' (marketing Dept. suggestion) to my own favoured title 'Topophilia; New Jewellery from the North'. I felt an intriguing title with a more explanatory tagline would help express what was a difficult exhibition to distil into a short label. After various strategy group meetings and brainstorming, 'Love of Place'

went forward as a working title within NMS, which then moved to become 'A Sense of Place'. I flagged up my concern that 'A Sense of Place' had already been used a great deal as an exhibition title in both the Fine and the Applied Arts. I was aware that it was a title for a Jewellery show at Mobilia Gallery in 2006 and it was also a title of a touring exhibition and paperback published by Glasgow School of Art documenting the work of Jack Cunningham and textile artist Linda Green in 1997, but more concerning to me was the contemporary jewellery exhibition that would run and tour concurrently with ours, curated by Professor Norman Cherry as it was titled 'Transplantation: A Sense of Place and Culture'. I again proposed Topophilia highlighting my belief that it was a very close conceptual twin to 'a sense of place' but public consultation did not favour this. After months of further discussion on this point 'A Sense of Place' was decided on internally and my strap line was added.

The physical design of the exhibition also went through several stages of assessment. In the method of display and presentation of the exhibition I wanted to allow for some democratisation of the process and finished piece; the inspiration becoming more equal to the object. I intended to foster a contemplative manner of viewing the pieces and I spent several meetings collaborating with the NMS exhibitions team in order to achieve this. This involved taking museum staff and visitors out of their established 'comfort zone', leading them to think beyond traditional object / material / technique and thematic curatorial concepts and display methods.

I requested my preference there not be images of the artists themselves (an established element of 'craft' interpretation within NMS) as I wanted the viewer to read the objects unprejudiced by personal preconceptions and to see through the artists eyes as much as possible instead of as a voyeur of the artist themselves. I also felt there was a danger of the exhibition looking formulaic by sticking too closely to established formats and technologies of display. I was aware at the outset that the design of the exhibition layout, display panels and level of interpretation would have to be sensitively thought out whilst still being compatible with NMS exhibition standards. The design team favoured large 8ft tall glass cabinets for this show and it was only due to persistence on my part and the flexibility of some on the design team that this did not come to fruition. With this I was principally concerned that the viewer would be unable to stand over the box and look down into it and I also felt this manner of displaying the works would mean that the show would be subsumed into the general museum display context. I would primarily have favoured the objects not to be placed behind glass although I was all too aware of the restrictions that might be made on us due to insurance stipulations and what this might mean in terms of supervision and surveillance. Cost restrictions also became an issue as we worked through a period of high recession and belts were being increasingly tightened in both the private

and public spheres. I am satisfied with how the exhibition design was concluded, as I believe it is sympathetic to both the space and the objects.

The museum had dedicated departments for press and marketing so the show received a high amount of coverage in both local and international press, I wrote an article for the ACJ 'Findings' Magazine to appear at the time of the exhibition opening and Dr. Jessica Hemmings reviewed the show for 'Crafts' Magazine. Although the exhibition is still on-going at the time of writing, there has been an overall very positive reception to the show as reflected in the comments book (See below).

Exhibition Brief

'The artist is nothing but the imprint of his native land; the one wherein he grew up and the one that grows within him.' (Esther Knobel 2008)

The topophilia box

'Topophilia' - literally translated means " a love of place." Our environments form us all and I would like to ask you to choose a place that is special to you and to put together a box of objects and materials that form a visual poetry resonant of the place you have chosen. The materials can be organic or man-made, there can be images – (photographs/drawings) words (poems/songs) or even audio recordings (sounds/music) to give a sense of where you are.

This box will form a three-dimensional diary of your observations of that place; encapsulating memories, atmosphere, histories, the minutia and the tangible physical aspects of a place. You are being asked to capture the ephemeral spirit of a place through a box of stimuli which will then form the starting point for your first piece of jewellery. The Topophilia boxes will then be swapped with another artists box at random for you to make a second piece from. These pieces can be as narrative, abstract or figurative as you wish. I hope that your strong personal voice will remain so within both pieces of work.

This loose form of collaboration will culminate in an exhibition and accompanying symposium focusing on the makers working process and approach to stimuli. The jewellery pieces will be displayed in pairs alongside their corresponding box of source materials illustrating the different approaches taken by artists with the same stimuli. The viewer will also be able to compare how the work of a single artist might be affected by working from objects that they are instinctively drawn to and from objects that have been selected by someone else.

I hope that you will embrace this refreshing and challenging opportunity to question your working process and approach to material and stimuli. The outcome of this project will be to

illustrate individual approaches as well as the concerns and sensibilities that can be regarded as special to, or particularly strong within the artistic output of the Northern European region. Throughout the making process – from the selection of stimulus materials to the creation of a finished piece, any commonalities of motivation, process and aesthetic will become evident. Through allowing the gallery audience an insight into this private and instinctive process we might generate a greater understanding of the ways in which contemporary makers approach their work and respond to stimuli from different environments.

Once you have accepted this digital invite I will mail the empty topophilia box to you for you to fill. Please include your studio address in your email reply if you wish to take part.

Comments Book Extracts

A Sense of Place	
VISITOR COMMENTS	
Date	31.5.12
your town or country	Glasgow
No name or address is required)	
Please write your comment on the exhibition here	
A really interesting idea; some of the designers really embraced the freedom of not knowing the items' origins, while others seemed almost stifled by the lack of knowledge. Non-precious work is interesting, as it's not constrained by scale or cost.	

A Sense of Place

VISITOR COMMENTS

Date 31/05/12

Your town or country Harthill (Scotland)

(No name or address is required)

Please write your comment on the exhibition here

The exhibition was such a lovely concept + the works + display ~~with~~ lived up to expectations. It was really nice to see the jewellers work transform as they received someone else's box.

Date 31/05/12

Your town or country Glasgow

(No name or address is required)

Please write your comment on the exhibition here

Loved the concept. It's very inspiring to see such a well thought out display too! The work is stunning.

A Sense of Place

VISITOR COMMENTS

Date 31st May 2012

Your town or country Scotland

(No name or address is required)

Please write your comment on the exhibition here

A very lovely exhibition. Very interesting to see how the artists work changed when they received their box / to see a continued aesthetic in their work. Presented / displayed beautifully :)

A Sense of Place

VISITOR COMMENTS

Date 30.5.12

Your town or country SCOTLAND

(No name or address is required)

Please write your comment on the exhibition here

MOST THOUGHT PROVOKING AND
INSPIRING AS TO HOW WE VIEW OUR
SURROUNDINGS/LANDSCAPE — MARVELLOUS!

A Sense of Place

VISITOR COMMENTS

Date 22/05/12

Your town or country EDINBURGH

(No name or address is required)

Please write your comment on the exhibition here

BEAUTIFUL JEWELRY FROM A1, EXCITING AND WONDERFUL CONCEPT. LOVE IT X,
11

Date 31st May 2012

Your town or country Glasgow

(No name or address is required)

Please write your comment on the exhibition here

lovely exhibition, really nice idea
— some of the boxes would be quite difficult to work
with but would be a great and interesting
challenge.

Date 30/5/12.

Your town or country Kildare, Ireland

(No name or address is required)

Please write your comment on the exhibition here

Very nice!!!

Date 31st May 2012

Your town or country Scotland

(No name or address is required)

Please write your comment on the exhibition here

Beautiful exhibition with a really interesting variety of materials.
The materials is also very interesting and well laid out. The
concept behind this exhibition is also very interesting, a fresh new
look.

Date 23-6-12

Your town or country Edinburgh.

(No name or address is required)

Please write your comment on the exhibition here

I loved it! Very inspirational
- and reflective.

Date 25/05/12

Your town or country ROSEWELL, MIDLOTHIAN

(No name or address is required)

Please write your comment on the exhibition here

So interesting to see different people's interpretation of
objects & items. The Jewellery was so cleverly done
and even if I'd never wear it, I wouldn't tire
of looking at it!

A Sense of Place

VISITOR COMMENTS

Date 23/08/12

Your town or country ITALY

(No name or address is required)

Please write your comment on the exhibition here

I LOVE THIS KIND OF JEWELLERY BUT I WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE SAME EXHIBITION WITH SOUTHERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

A Sense of Place

VISITOR COMMENTS

Date 26/05/12

Your town or country Scotland

(No name or address is required) Anne Smith Fife

Please write your comment on the exhibition here

A very profound complex small exhibit lots of variety but works well as a unit.

A Sense of Place

VISITOR COMMENTS

Date 31/5/12

Your town or country Glasgow

(No name or address is required)

Please write your comment on the exhibition here

The idea behind this was really interesting and the work lived up to the concept. It was really interesting to see how the designers all respond in different ways to the boxes. Overall a really great show (& curation was well done too!)

A 10-day project with five 3rd year eca jewellery students

This project was aimed to make the participants think about the relationship between people and their environments through expressive materials. The finished pieces were intended to be a form of memento which reflects the nature of the environment they were inspired by and echoes the tradition of jewellery created and worn as remembrance.

I was conscious of how much I should lead a young group like this. My brief was perhaps more illustrative than I would have given to established artists for example. I scheduled group meetings for each days end rather than monitoring the project throughout so as not to overly influence their processes and I only gave them technical direction if specifically asked.

As a warm up project leading to further research I have drawn a number of positive and negative outcomes from the project that will affect my future methodologies especially in respect to gathering information from practitioners.

Project brief;

'The French have a name for the landscape in our mind where fantasy is allowed, where wild thought overgrowth does no harm, but rigorous trimming back doesn't hurt either. They call it "jardin interieur" - inside garden.' Andrea Wagner, Jeweller

This project has been designed to explore your interpretation of 'place' through memory as illustrated through narrative materials and processes.

For this 5 day project I would like you to choose a place which has an importance to you. This can be an urban or natural environment, a vast landscape or secret nook. - It can be somewhere from your home or childhood or somewhere that has some kind of current resonance for you. A sense of place can be as much an internal feeling as it can be an external setting or landscape.

I want you to work from memory primarily; in order to build up a reflection of your chosen place you can research it by building up collected objects/drawings/notes materials - narratives and ideas that you think reflect that place.

This project is aimed to make you think about the relationship between people and their environments through the language of different materials. I hope that the finished piece will reflect the nature of the environment you were inspired by and echo a whole tradition of jewellery created and worn as remembrance

There will be a group crit. of the finished work and I will ask another year group to talk about their interpretation of the pieces.

Process

I gave an introductory talk to clarify the brief and answer any questions they might have but did not show them any images so as not to subliminally suggest certain aesthetics to them.

Some of the things I mentioned in my introductory talk included asking them to think about;

- Memories of a place – how do you represent the tangible aspects of a place in a piece of jewellery? Is it abstract or illustrative?
- The narrative of materials - colours, textures, objects, symbols and associations
- The provenance of materials – where they source them from and if this is important to them. Is there a value to these materials?
- The joining of different materials and the tension or dialogue that can be found between materials – manners or processes of working with materials – joining them in an honest and obvious way or hidden and ambiguous.
- 'Intuitive' - Choice – what materials are we drawn to and why?

Sketchbooks played a particularly important role in the exploratory process for three students but less so for the other two who worked primarily from their chosen physical materials. (Fig 7-9) Photography was important in recording developments at the bench and possible design solutions.

I documented the project throughout with photography and held quick half hour tutorials at the end of each working day for the students to go over their progress and achievements as a group.

Students Questionnaire

Towards the end of the project I gave the students a questionnaire comprising seven open questions to assess their feelings and motivations surrounding the project.

1. What were the key words that reflect the initial place/memory that you chose to work from?
2. What physical materials did you work with?
3. Why do you think you were drawn to certain materials?
4. Did you incorporate any found/gathered objects or materials and do you normally work in this way?
5. What research processes did you adopt and in what ways did you utilise source

materials?

6. Do you believe that the finished piece suggests a feeling of the place from which it was inspired?
7. In what way do you feel that the objects/materials you chose to work with reflect the feeling/atmosphere of the place from which you took them?

Please see their hand written responses (Fig 17-21)

Materials Utilised

The five students sourced and experimented with a wide range of materials which included;

hay, grass, string, brushes, soap, driftwood, soap, binding wire, paint, feathers, cardboard, bed-linen fabric, plastic air filter, copper sheet, comics, lavender, letter, telephone parts, hairdryer parts, copper wire, twigs, fence wire, enamel paint, parcel string, bubble-wrap, photographs

These materials were primarily sourced independently although some base materials such as copper sheet, wire and Perspex from the departments store were utilised.

The *'readymade' or 'found' object* was not utilised as much as I might have expected although letters and photographs were included by 2 participants. Instead, objects such as brushes, hairdryers and car filters were dismantled and elements were incorporated in an abstracted context.

Techniques used included;

Laminating, etching, wrapping, painting, folding, crimping, stone-setting (claw), pleating, sewing, carving,

Outcomes

Finished pieces comprised of 1 Object, 2 brooches, a large neckpiece and a body /hand piece.

(See Figs 10–16)

Commonalities of approach that appeared between the group included;

- *References to feelings of childhood nostalgia.* None of the participants referred to places that were particularly current to them. I did ask them to 'work from memory primarily; in order to build up a reflection of your chosen place' but this could have as easily been

somewhere they had visited last week as much as somewhere that they grew up. Perhaps the reason for this is that they wanted to refer to their strongest memories of places - those with the deepest emotional attachment.

- *A sensory exploration through material.* Strong elements included the smell of lavender, soap and straw, the feel of weighted materials, worn edges, textural and surface contrasts and combinations of materials for example. This appears to reinforce the idea that sensory stimulation evokes memory.
- *The appropriation of elements from existing objects.* Electrical goods were dismantled, brushes taken apart, photographs, fabrics and comics cut and collaged, branches cut down to twigs.
- *The utilisation of materials that have 'a history'.*

Problems with student as research participants

This project was very much a warm-up research project which I hoped would help guide me and shape the methodologies I might utilise in future research involving established artists. Before and during the project I became aware of some drawbacks present when working with students. These included;

- The students' personal practice is at an early stage and many of their motivations are relatively unshaped. Some of the students may have little interest in a more 'in-depth' level of jewellery making and may be more focussed on fashion based practice for example. Working with these students can absorb more of the researcher's time as they might be closed to this way of thinking/working and need a fuller explanation of the processes.
- Being within an educational establishment might affect the way in which they respond to the questionnaire as they might answer questions in a manner in which they believe they should answer them rather than how they truly feel.
- There are some concerns over membership and understanding during the questionnaire process.

Workshop in Progress



Fig 1



Fig 2



Fig 3



Fig 4



Fig 5



Fig 6

Sketchbooks



Fig 7



Fig 8

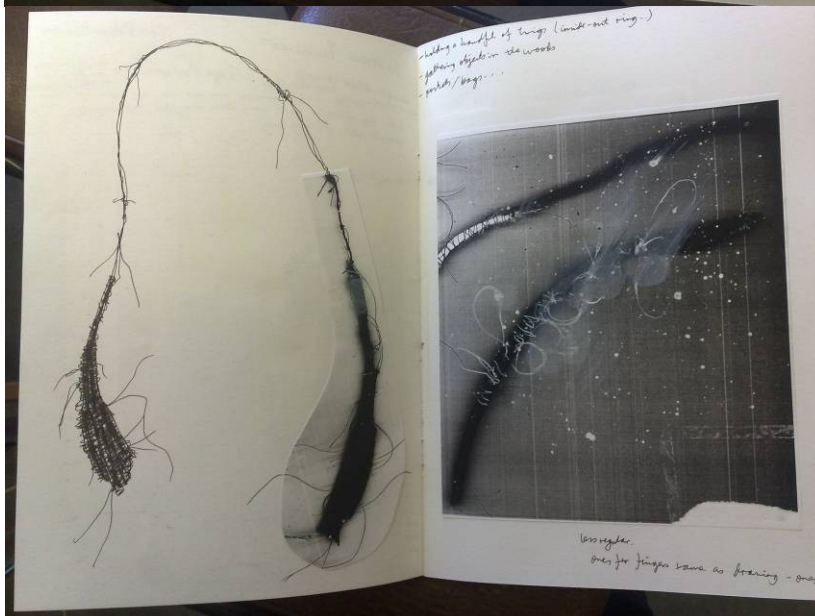
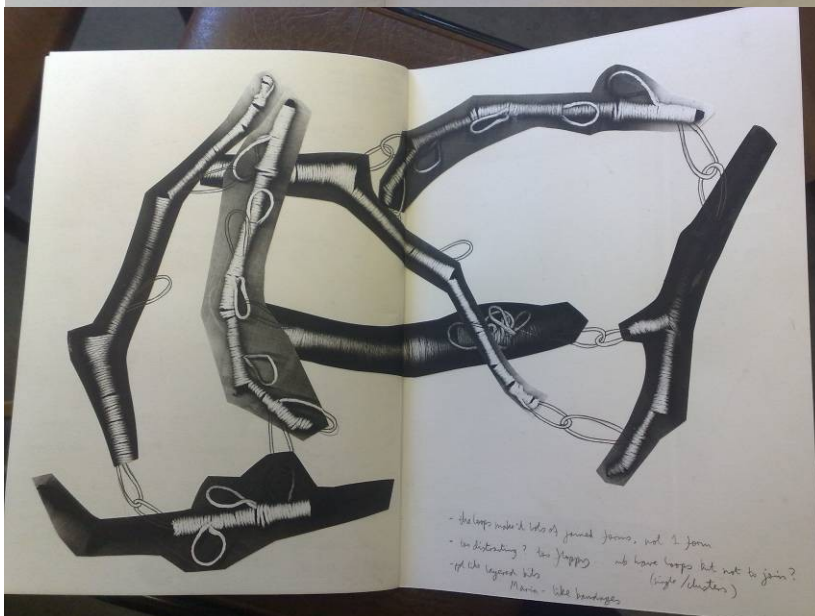


Fig. 9

Finished Pieces



Fig. 10



Fig. 11



Fig. 12

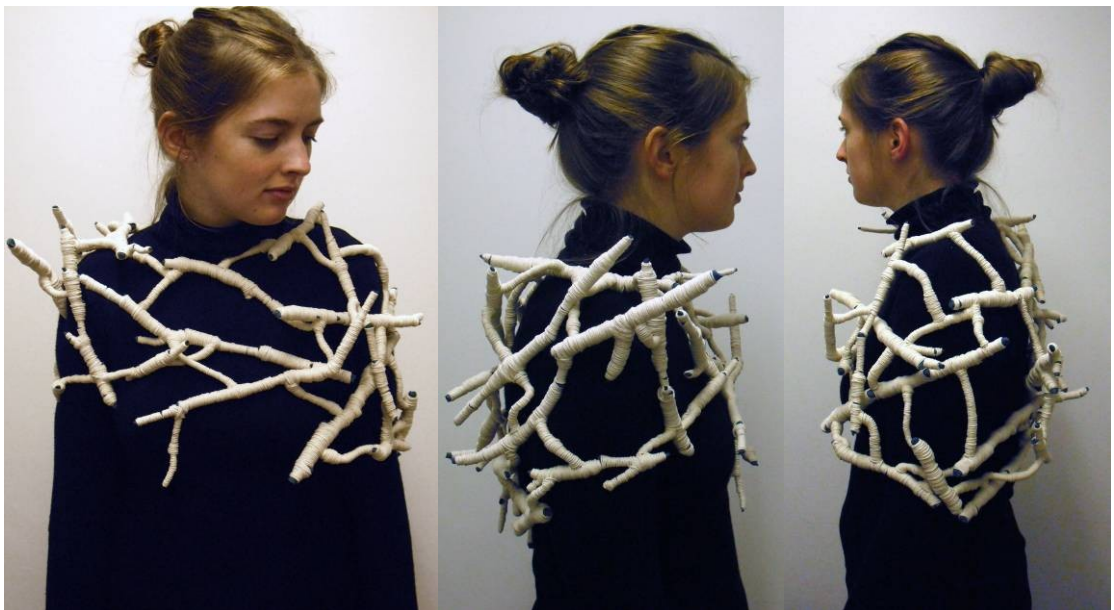


Fig.13



Fig 14



Fig 15



Fig 16

precious matter project

Hello lovely 3rd year student. I hope you have enjoyed this 2 week project and that it will provide an encouraging stepping stone into your own 4th year projects.

Please could you take a few minutes to answer these questions for me?

What were the key words that reflect the initial place/memory that you chose to work from?

trees, moss, bones, feathers, stones, forest, branches, twigs, comforting, calm, peaceful, enveloping, muffling, dense, tangled, wrapping, heavy, clusters, binding, holding

What physical materials did you work with?

twigs, fence wire, matt enamel paint, parle-string
(I mixed the colour)

Why do you think you were drawn to certain materials?

I always collect interesting things. I used to make things with fence wire when I was very young. The paint gives a strong colour (for visual impact & to make it personal) but without looking plasticky. String is a homely, friendly and comforting material.

Did you incorporate any found/gathered objects or materials and do you normally work in this way?

Yes, the twigs. I don't often use the objects I obsessively collect - I usually make metal models of them or copy an aspect of them in a more abstract way. Using twigs let me make something bigger & freer than normal - very refreshing.

What research processes did you adopt and in what ways did you utilise source materials?

I experimented with twigs & feathers - starting wrapping them in wire or thread, then tried string & really liked the look and feel of that. I photocopied my models then cut up the sheets to collage and draw on top of, to work out a design. I looked at other artists who use binding & wrapping, but this was when I had already decided on that.

Do you believe that the finished piece suggests a feeling of the place from which it was inspired?

It does to me. Not sure how others would read it. I think it reflects both the comforting, pleasant feeling of being in a forest, and also the way you feel trapped and disoriented if you get lost.

In what way do you feel that the objects/materials you chose to work with reflect the

feeling/atmosphere of the place from which you took them?

The twigs are obviously very literal. The wire, which is hidden, gives the piece weight. I hope it is deceptive and surprisingly heavy to pick up. The bluey colour is partly decorative and partly to suggest a calm mood. The string is wrapped in a fairly organic way, and joining sections allow the twigs to move, like branches. It gives the piece a soft look & feeling. The protruding ends of the twigs are important - they stop it being completely soft and friendly.

Thank you. I really appreciate the time and effort you have put into the project. Both myself and Sue will see you tomorrow at 3 for the group crit.

precious matter project

Hello lovely 3rd year student. I hope you have enjoyed this 2 week project and that it will provide an encouraging stepping stone into your own 4th year projects.

Please could you take a few minutes to answer these questions for me?

What were the key words that reflect the initial place/memory that you chose to work from?

o School
o home

journey ⇒ mask... put on / take off

mom
↓
me

attachment
confidence

What physical materials did you work with?

- telephone code
- letter.

Why do you think you were drawn to certain materials?

I didn't want to copy and make ^{original} the exact same shape or form from motifs which I wanted to use, so I tried to keep their characteristics and my memory ~~from~~ in different types of materials.

Did you incorporate any found/gathered objects or materials and do you normally work in this way?

No, I've never used found objects in my works.

I always use precious metal and bought materials for jewellery, so it was a great opportunity to use other materials for me.

What research processes did you adopt and in what ways did you utilise source materials?

When I thought about objects or materials which could work as key symbols in my piece, if impossible to obtain here,

I tried to find meanings or key roles of them from their shape & colours. Then I tried to break down the typical shape of them to put them together.

Do you believe that the finished piece suggests a feeling of the place from which it was inspired?

Especially for mine, the concept and products came from Japan, so

I'm not sure foreign people would suggest Japan, but from some words on piece

In what way do you feel that the objects/materials you chose to work with reflect the feeling/atmosphere of the place from which you took them?

Especially stamps, reminds people Japan. However, the shape & colour of my piece will not reflect Japanese at all.

Instead of impressing people from shape or colour, I would like people to imagine ~~the piece~~ their precious feeling or atmosphere from visuals of letter words, stamps. Also I would like ^{them} to play with code.

Thank you. I really appreciate the time and effort you have put into the project. Both myself and Sue will see you tomorrow at 3 for the group crit.

However, for me, those small elements reminds me many events in my life.

By looking at and creating those objects,

I feel attachment toward my piece & memory.

* At the same time. It was hard & fun to choose or not choose their forms, colours and elements.

precious matter project

Hello lovely 3rd year student. I hope you have enjoyed this 2 week project and that it will provide an encouraging stepping stone into your own 4th year projects.

Please could you take a few minutes to answer these questions for me?

What were the key words that reflect the initial place/memory that you chose to work from?

Home, my brother, hut, comics, cardboard box, toys
deterioration

What physical materials did you work with?

Cardboard, fabric, paper, copper sheet and wire, plastic air filter,
lavender

Why do you think you were drawn to certain materials?

They best reflected ~~my~~ the objects from my place and memories,
I also quite like not using precious materials, it's more of a challenge.

Did you incorporate any found/gathered objects or materials and do you normally work in this way?

I sometimes work in this way but not to the extent I did this
time. I used the air filter, cardboard and lavender I found.

What research processes did you adopt and in what ways did you utilise source materials?

I folded and crinkled materials, I made heat transfers from a
pillowcase and comics.

Do you believe that the finished piece suggests a feeling of the place from which it was inspired?

Yes I think it's quite nostalgic with the comic imagery and the
smell of lavender.

In what way do you feel that the objects/materials you chose to work with reflect the
feeling/atmosphere of the place from which you took them?

~~I think the comic imagery is instantly recognisable and~~

I think the imagery of WHF and the beans reflects home, my childhood
and my brother. But the fabric makes it really homey. The
cardboard and patchy prints resonate the deterioration of the hut and the
box full of comics.

Thank you. I really appreciate the time and effort you have put into the project. Both myself and
Sue will see you tomorrow at 3 for the group crit.

precious matter project

Hello lovely 3rd year student. I hope you have enjoyed this 2 week project and that it will provide an encouraging stepping stone into your own 4th year projects.

Please could you take a few minutes to answer these questions for me?

What were the key words that reflect the initial place/memory that you chose to work from?

~~aviary~~ aviary ~~exciting~~ exciting
daring special

What physical materials did you work with?

driftwood, dressed wood, soap, binding wire, paint, feathers.

Why do you think you were drawn to certain materials?

I like the age of driftwood.
Feathers have delicate movement and disconnection from bird in the cage. found feathers in cage mesmerising can be jewel like or grossly clinging to wire mesh of cage.

Did you incorporate any found/gathered objects or materials and do you normally work in this way?

Yes driftwood. I like objects that have a history
Feathers were given to me.

What research processes did you adopt and in what ways did you utilise source materials?

soldering binding wire was new to me
connection of elements was explored.

Do you believe that the finished piece suggests a feeling of the place from which it was inspired?

Yes

In what way do you feel that the objects/materials you chose to work with reflect the feeling/atmosphere of the place from which you took them?

Soap has the connotation of cleanliness & purity, which I associate with the convent where this aviary was - wash your mouth out with soap.
The combination of materials reflects the nature of the place for me

Thank you. I really appreciate the time and effort you have put into the project. Both myself and Sue will see you tomorrow at 3 for the group crit.

precious matter project

Hello lovely 3rd year student. I hope you have enjoyed this 2 week project and that it will provide an encouraging stepping stone into your own 4th year projects.

Please could you take a few minutes to answer these questions for me?

What were the key words that reflect the initial place/memory that you chose to work from?

Sweet smelling, quiet,

What physical materials did you work with?

hay, grass, string, brushes.

Why do you think you were drawn to certain materials?

a natural aesthetic, similar to that found in a yard. Horse hair always blows around and gets caught in bundles. It was also smell in the case of the hay - being reminiscent of horses and feel of material. Also the interplay between material.

Did you incorporate any found/gathered objects or materials and do you normally work in this way?

I used brushes, which are natural fibre. I do not usually use natural materials, it is mainly metal work. Although I enjoyed the way that the object conveyed what I wanted it to much better than metal could.

What research processes did you adopt and in what ways did you utilise source materials?

I experimented with different materials that had a smell relevant to my inspiration.

Do you believe that the finished piece suggests a feeling of the place from which it was inspired?

I think it suggests a feeling of a particular aspect of the place it was inspired by, grooming horses + the contours of their coats.

In what way do you feel that the objects/materials you chose to work with reflect the feeling/atmosphere of the place from which you took them?

The bristles on the brushes I have are blander colour, with little black bristles in them. These remind me of horses grey coats, where often in the tails and coat you will find rogue dark hairs. Grey is a 'common' colour, but all the small ponies in the yard I went riding in were grey when I was young with shiny, but often coarse coats and unruly manes + tails. I think the action within the bristles set, that ruffle up the confluence like are reminiscent of those coats. The metal work also has that slightly free, haphazard feel to it that is appropriate to a yard + cheeky ponies that

Thank you. I really appreciate the time and effort you have put into the project. Both myself and Sue will see you tomorrow at 3 for the group crit.

do what they want to even if its not exactly conventional!

