

**THE CRAFTING OF TEXT ON EMBLEMATIC OBJECTS:  
JEWELLERY AND TABLE WARE**

**Master of Art by Project**

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To RMIT Higher Degrees  
For Appropriate Durable Record

## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the appropriate visual record for the work entitled The Crafting of Text on Emblematic Objects: Jewellery and Tableware as submitted on 10/08/06 for the qualification of Master of Arts by Research/project, represents the work of myself, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the documentation.

The work entitled The Crafting of Text on Emblematic Objects: Jewellery and Tableware has not been submitted, either in whole or in part, for any other academic award. The Appropriate Visual Record represents the work undertaken during the period of candidature from March 2000 – June 2006, being part time by research.

Yours sincerely

## Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Robert Baines and Sandy Kirby, the staff of RMIT Gold and Silversmithing and Vito Bila for their assistance and support in the production of this work. I would also like to thank Terence Bogue for photographing my work (unless stated otherwise) and Gemma Draper for her support and enthusiasm during my Barcelona Residency.

**SUMMARY OF THESIS/PROJECT:** This project will examine the use of text on emblematic objects and through a studio based practice investigate the signifying properties of object, text and material in the communication of symbolic message. It will involve the manufacturing of contemporary jewellery and tableware and will reference cultural and political themes.

## Brief Description of the project

This project will examine the historical use of text on emblematic objects and through a studio-based practice investigate the signifying properties of object, text and material in the communication of symbolic message. It will involve the manufacture of contemporary jewellery and tableware and will reference cultural and political themes. The symbolism of these themes will be explored through words, which signify, in the language of object making (for example the word 'detail'), and in the language of the Australian vernacular (for example 'sorry').

In my research I will examine the established history of emblematic objects, which through their incorporation of text, their function and scale in relation to the body, organise, distinguish, categorise, unite or isolate groups of people.

Typology: Objects for examination include:

- Badges/ Buttons - associate the wearer with the promotion of patriotic, political, or life style ideology
- Gang patches or insignia - identify the wearer as a subscriber to a code of practice.
- Medals - distinguish the wearer for their participation in a heroic or honourable event
- Souvenirs and commemorative objects eg. spoons, pins, key rings, cups or containers etc. - objects that associate the wearer/participant with a historical event or an iconic location.

My research will investigate the stylising of the form and text of these objects and examine what cultural/political factors informed the significance of their meaning. The studio-based element of this project will investigate contemporary interpretations of these objects, producing them as one off or multiples, using hand, digital and industrial techniques.

### Text

In my research I will examine how the meaning of a word is informed by the context in which it occurs, and by the treatment of the word as a visual image.

Meaning may be signified in a manipulation of the following visual applications:

- By graphically enhancing the word- meaning may be signified through the choice of font style, and the size and spacing of word in relation to the object
- By the technical methods used in materialising the word upon the object -for example embossing, etching or engraving, by hand, machine or digital methods.

### Material

The objects will be produced primarily in alloys of silver and collected discarded materials having a typology or symbolic meaning. The decision to work with these materials is based on my understanding with how they perform under certain conditions and my interest in how they signify value in contemporary culture. My intention is to consider the material and cultural significance of silver in the production of one off or multiples of emblematic objects. This contrasts the employment in commercial production of metal such as tin, brass or pewter, or materials such as paper and plastic that are more commonly used by industry for economic and production efficiencies.

## **Aims and Objectives:**

The aims of this project are:

- examine the history of emblematic objects as listed above, identify methods used in the manufacturing these objects and record the cultural/political factors which informed the significance of their meaning.
- manufacture contemporary interpretations of emblematic objects in alloys of silver. Experiment with techniques of hand forming and industrial forming such as metal spinning, blanking or casting and explore their symbolic properties.
- experiment with the signifying properties of visual and material applications in relation to selected text. For example-
  - font style, punctuation, size, framing and spacing
  - embossing, photo etching, or engraving
  - by hand, machine or digital applications.

The objectives of this project are:

- to produce a body of work consisting of one off and series of multiples of contemporary emblematic jewellery/tableware for final examination
- to foreground the signifying properties of object, text and material in the communication of a cultural/political themes in contemporary jewellery and tableware.

## **Research questions:**

How can the historic emblematic object be referenced in contemporary jewellery and tableware?

How does the relationship between material, object and text inform the communication of symbolic message in contemporary jewellery and tableware?

How can this relationship be used to communicate themes of a cultural or political nature in the context of one off piece' or over a series of multiple pieces?

## **Rationale**

Text has been employed by gold and silversmiths in a variety of ways - to narrate messages, as an abstract decoration, or as a means of identifying the maker.

American jeweller Laurie Hall uses text in her work as a means of reporting on cultural issues. She creates commentaries on issues of social or political nature in American culture such as, civil rights protest, sport, and the imagery of native Americans. In her work Hall explores narrative through word play, combining words or acronyms with other symbolic images to support the concept of her work. While Hall explores notions of duality of meaning through word play she doesn't exploit the visual or material symbolism of the words themselves.

Text as an abstract image has explored by jeweller Jens - Rudiger Lorenzen (German). Lorenzen uses newspaper collage in his work in what appears to be a spontaneous pastiche. Individual words sentences or letters appear more as a means for creating a visual sensation rather than communicating a message.

I am interested in investigating the signifying properties of objects; texts and materials in the communication of symbolic messages because recognition of the complexity is limited in contemporary text based jewellery and tableware.

## **Location**

I intend to conduct this research at the RMIT Gold and Silversmithing studios and machine workshop areas, and my own jewellery studio.

## **Methods**

### **Stage One: March 2000 - March 2001**

- research bibliography
- begin research on history of emblematic objects at University of Melbourne Archival Storage Facility and the State Library of Victoria.
- begin to establish a resource of current media on issues of cultural and political significance - for example news paper clippings, magazine and journal articles, radio,t.v.
- begin to establish a resource of cultural and political ephemera e.g. souvenirs; political badges, corporate logos, travel pins, clothing labels, press passes,
- begin writing of proposal

### **Stage Two: March 2001 - September 2001**

- continue with research
- collect and develop a resource of font samples from magazines, newspapers, billboards, film and television.
- collect discarded materials having a typology or symbolic meaning.
- develop methods for producing font - Letra set, font libraries.
- develop methods for manipulating font onto objects- learn illustrator and 3D design programs

### **Stage Three: September 2001- March 2002**

- extend skills for applying text - photo etching, digital and hand engraving
- develop techniques for making objects - metal spinning, fly press
- produce test pieces and samples for evaluation in different metal alloys
- begin to select text from media and ephemera resource

### **Stage Four: March 2002 - September 2002**

- make developmental drawings of objects incorporating text
- develop mock ups - paper, cardboard, computer print outs
- finalise tooling and methods for producing one off and multiples - for spinning lathe & fly press

### **Stage Five: September 2002 - March 2005**

- Manufacture samples of objects in alloys of silver experiment with alloys and surface finishing techniques
- Finalise text and methods of applying text by hand, machine or digitally
- Leave of absence Semester 2 2003
- Leave of absence Semester 1 & 2 2004
- Visit Italy April 2004

### **Stage Six: March 2005 - October 2005**

- Finalise objects for Masters presentation
- Finalise all manufacturing of objects
- Australia Council Barcelona Residency 3 October 2005 - 3 January 2006

### **Stage Seven: March 2006 - May 2006**

- prepare objects for final review
- photo documentation
- Masters presentation and evaluation

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## LIST OF WORKS

			H x W x D
1. Three Round Brooches With Embossed Detail	2001	Sterling Silver, Stainless steel	10x45x45mm
Culturing the Body			
2. Materialising the UnAustralian	2000/1	Sterling Silver, silk, brass safety pin	80x12mm
3. Simulated Expressions of Regret	2000/1	Sterling Silver, silk, brass safety pin	50x20mm
4. Sorry Word Dispenser	2002	950 silver	50x50x25mm (box)
5. Packet of Cigarettes, Takeaway Spoon and Drink Can	2002	950 silver	Box-15x50x100mm, Spn.-5x25x150mm,
Found Out Series			
6. Fragment and Souvenirs  (This work is held in the Toowoomba Regional Gallery collection)	2003	Sterling silver, Nickle silver, Rubber Thong, Wooden Paintbrush, Steel Bottle Top, Rubber Tennis Ball & Hose Pipe, Rubber Tennis Ball, Plastic Golf Ball, Rubber strip.	Thong 215mm W T. Ball 60mm D
7. Southern Bloom	2004	Sterling Silver, Stainless Steel Rubber Tennis Ball	15x90x60 mm largest
8. Northern Bloom	2004	Sterling Silver, Stainless Steel, Steel Drink Lids	4x55x55mm
9. Butterfly	2004	Sterling Silver, Stainless Steel Aluminium Number Plate	4x 55x55mm
10. Safety Chain Made in Italy	2004	Plastic Inflight Safety Sheet	25x290x6mm

11. Victoria's Garden	2005	Sterling Silver, Stainless Steel, Aluminium Number Plate	4x75x75mm
12. Untitled	2005	Sterling Silver, Stainless Steel Plastic Golf Ball	10x65x50mm
13. Lotus	2005	Sterling Silver, Stainless Steel Plastic Spoons	5x95x70mm
14. Magnum Opus	2005	Sterling Silver, Wooden Paddle Pop Sticks	2x230x230mm
15. Found OUT	2005	Sterling Silver, Stainless Steel Aluminium Ring Pulls	45x45mm

#### LIQUID SERIES

16. H2O Bucket	2005	Sterling Silver, Plastic Handle	120x100x100mm
17. One Green Bottle 2005	2005	Sterling Silver, Plastic Lid	65x200mm

#### HOME AND AWAY SERIES

18. Blue Line Meets the Green Made in Spain	2005	Silk Thread, Paper Metro Tickets	240x660mm
19. Distance in Perspective Made in Spain	2005	Nylon Thread Paper Map	190x209mm
20. One on Every Corner	2006	Sterling Silver, Stainless Steel, Plastic	12x65x65mm
21. Sign of Life	2006	Sterling Silver, Stainless Steel, Aluminium Number Plate	5x90x90mm
22. Matter of Time	2006	Sterling Silver, Stainless Steel Aluminium Street Sign	6x80x80mm

#### Developmental Works Studio and Performative

23. Objects for Travellers	2004	Paper Train Tickets	mask 60x195x60mm googles 35x90x60 m
24. Link, Link, Link...	2005	Mixed Media	Performative
25. Human Necklace	2005	Mixed Media	Performative



1. Three Round Brooches With Embossed Detail  
Sterling silver stainless steel 2001



## 2. Materialising the UnAustralian 2000

Sterling Silver, silk, brass safety pin.

80x12mm



## 3. Simulated Expressions of Regret 2000

Sterling Silver, silk, brass safety pin.

50x20mm



4. Sorry Word Dispenser. 2002  
950 silver.  
Box - 50x50x20mm



5. Packet of Cigarettes a takeaway spoon and a drink can. 2002  
950 silver.  
Box - 15x50x100mm, Spoon - 5x25x150mm, Can - 100x55x55mm

## FOUND OUT SERIES



### 6. Fragment and Souvenirs. 2003.

Sterling silver, Nickle silver, Thong, Paintbrush, Bottle Top, Tennis Ball, Hose Pipe, Tennis Ball, Golf Ball, Rubber Strip  
Thong 215mm length, Tennis Ball 60mm width.



Detail of above  
Mixed media



7. Southern Bloom. 2004

Tennis Ball (Merri Creek) Sterling Silver, Stainless Steel.

Top left - 15x90x60mm, bottom left 12x60x55mm



Detail of above

Tennis Ball (Merri Creek) Sterling Silver, Stainless Steel.

20x70x50mm





8. Northern Bloom 2004

Steel Drink Lids ( Naples ), Sterling Silver, Stainless Steel 55x55mm



19. Butterfly 2004

Aluminium Number Plate (Merri Creek), Sterling Silver, Stainless Steel  
55X55mm



10.Safety Chain 2004 Italy  
Plastic Inflight Safety Sheet (Lufthansa)  
290x25x10mm



11. Victoria's Garden 2005  
Aluminium Number Plate (Merri Creek), Sterling Silver, Stainless Steel  
75x75mm



12. Untitled 2005  
Plastic Golf Ball (Merri creek), Sterling Silver, Stainless Steel  
65x50mm



13. Lotus. 2005  
925 Silver, Stainless Steel, Plastic Spoons  
5x95x70mm



14. Found Out 2005  
Aluminium Ring Pulls, Sterling Silver, Stainless Steel  
45x45mm

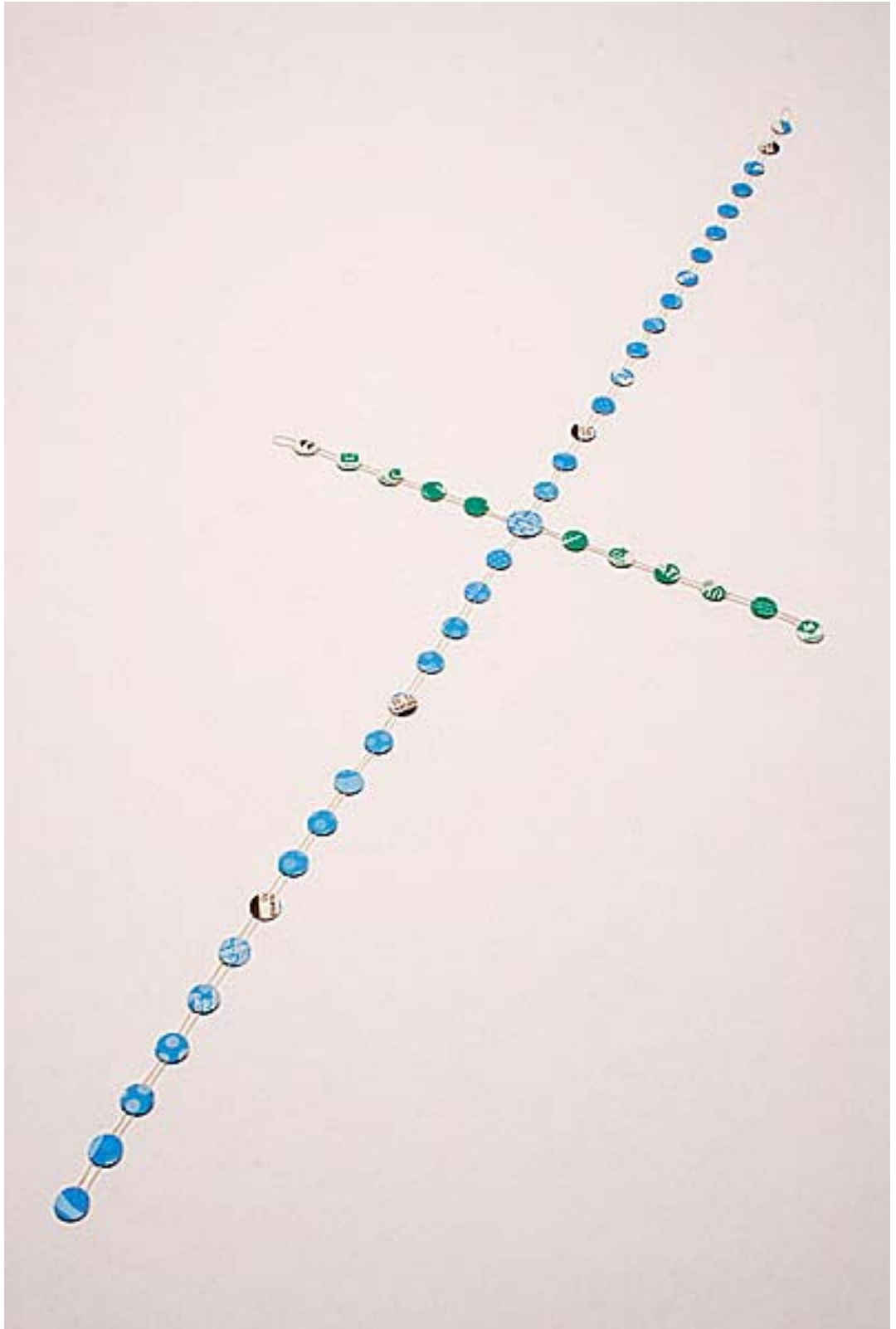


15. Magnum Opus 2005  
Wooden Paddle Pop Sticks (Rome), Sterling Silver  
230x230mm



16. H2O Bucket 2005  
Sterling Silver, Plastic Handle  
120x100mm

17. One Green Bottle 2005  
Sterling Silver, Plastic Lid  
65x200mm



18. Blue Line Meets the Green. 2005  
Silk Thread, Paper Metro Tickets  
240x660mm



19. Distance in Perspective. Spain 2005  
Nylon Thread, Paper Map  
190x209mm

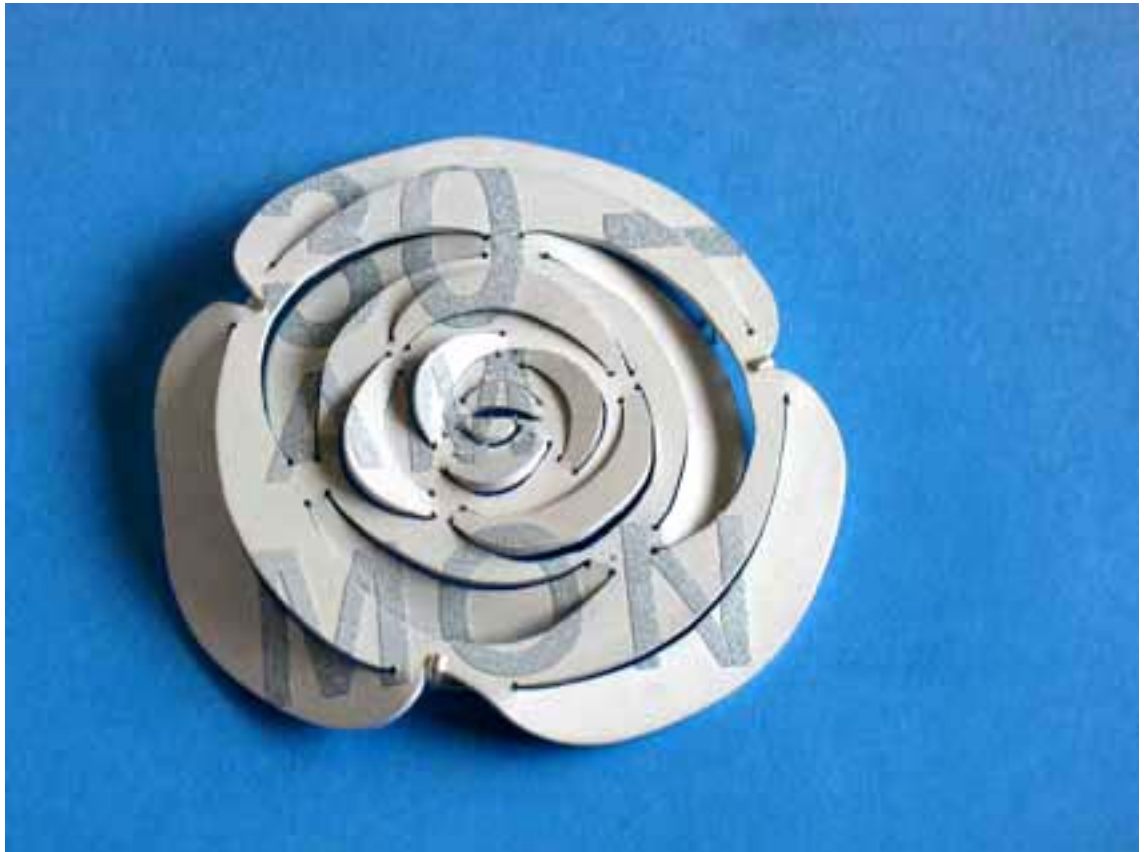




20. One on Every Corner. 2006  
Sterling Silver Stainless Steel Plastic  
12x65x65mm  
(retained for Colin and Cicely Rigg Design Award)



21. Sign of Life. 2006  
Sterling Silver, Stainless Steel, Number Plate  
5x90x90mm  
(Retained for Colin and Cicely Rigg Design Award)

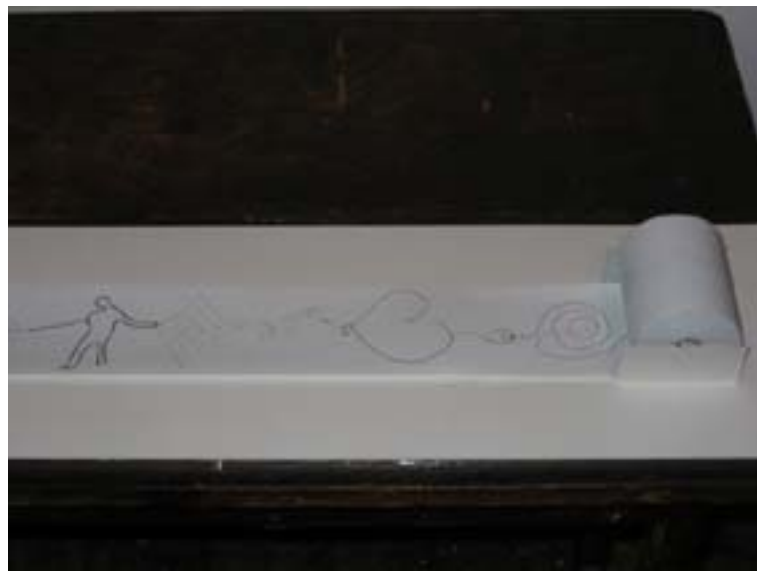


22. Matter of Time 2006  
Sterling Silver,Stainless Steel, Street Sign  
6x80x80mm

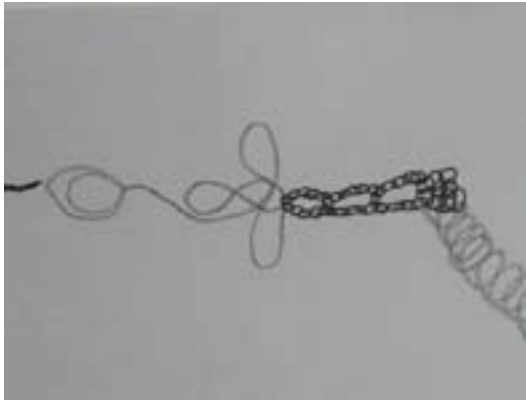
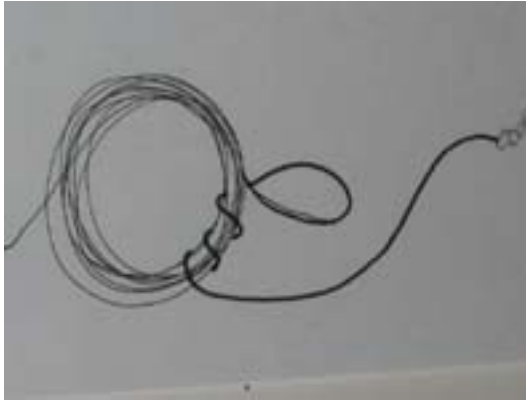
## Development Works



23. Objects For the Traveller 2004  
Made in Italy Train Tickets  
mask 60x195x60mm goggles 35x90x60 mm



24. Link,Link,Link....  
Galeria De Joies Alea Barcelona



Details of Link, Link, Link.....



25. Human Necklace 2005  
Made in Barcelona.



Human Necklace 2005  
Barcelona



