

SMCK MAGAZINE

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FOR INDEPENDENT ARTISTS

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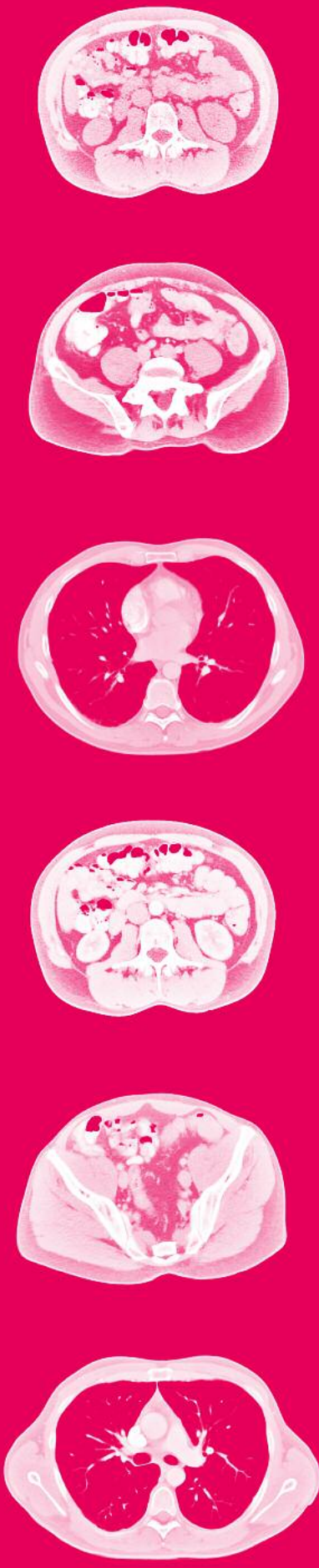
Nobody
Buys
Art Now

A Caricature of Art

THANK YOU
BIG PHARMA

THE
BODY

IN THE POST COVID-19 ERA



#1 THE BODY

IN THIS ISSUE

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CONTENTS

COVER TITLE

The Post COVID-19 era **PAGE 5**

TRENDS

A mental shift has to take place **PAGE 6**

The caricature of art **PAGE 11**

Thank You Big Pharma **PAGE 14**

ARTIST

Anna Watson's Neo-expressionistic offerings **PAGE 24**

FEATURE

Moebling or The side effects of domestication **PAGE 28**

INSIGHT

Crowned **PAGE 20**

The use of Greek jewellery **PAGE 21**

Which way after COVID-19? **PAGE 22**

Choreographers' creative solutions **PAGE 35**

REGULARS

The Photograph **PAGE 4**

The Object **PAGE 19**

Editor's choice **PAGE 40**

Jewellery and The City **PAGE 38**

THE PHOTOGRAPH



#cross
#middle_east
#nineteen_century
#splinters_of_holy_wood
#talismanic #apotropaic #healing
#true_cross #christianity #saint_helena
#roman_christian #orthodox #jewellery
#invaluable #religious_jewellery
#jerusalem #pilgrimage
#spirituality
#relic

EDITORIAL

COVID-19 AND THE ARTS. GAME OVER. A NEW GAME STARTS SOON.

The struggle taking place today inside the jewellery art scene may offer insight on how artists working in other disciplines combat conformism, destructive narcissism, rigid hegemonies.

Without prior warning, the COVID-19 crisis broke the vicious cycle of jewellery fairs and weeks. Due to the travel restrictions many countries have adopted, flights and accommodations may not be affordable in the coming months.

Difficulties and risks will encourage artists to evaluate events based on the analysis of cost and return. Recession caused by COVID-19 will force organizers who don't satisfy artists' expectations for exposure, career opportunities, and sales to improve their services or to close down. Imagination, innovation, honesty, and action are qualities now required to stay in the game, for nothing will remain the same in 2021.

Before COVID-19, it was difficult for outsiders to enter the closed circuit of contemporary jewellery and impregnate it with their ideas.

Peer pressure and the alleged benefits of being a follower made this unchallenged community also accept poor management, poor concepts, poor work, poor exhibition design, sleazy venues, lack of press reviews, and the absence of buyers as normal. The patronizing of artists by self-proclaimed influencers—ignorant of art history, economics, communication—has turned even reputable international events into a boring case of “insiders” patting “insiders” on the back.

The two-month-long lockdown is a taste of the next two years to come. Even if economic activity resumes, many

companies and freelancers won't make it; there will be hardly any money for the arts and design sector.

Recession is the word for the economic slowdown and pessimism we are stuck in. When money isn't available, it won't be easy to sell illusions, because people will look twice at their dime before casting it to the wind. This is the time for ambitious and hard-working people to redesign the rules of the game.

It's a difficult task to make the art-loving public—the prospective customers who will refresh the jewellery scene with their sophistication and standards—familiar with the amazing history, creative potential, and emotional value of the medium of jewellery. This requires knowledge, persistence, reflection, and strategy. It's easy to copy themes from the discourse of the 1990s and paste them into the 2020s. However, the challenges that inspire artists nowadays have more to do with major armed conflicts and cold wars, democracy and constitutional rights, hygienic totalitarianism and speech control, integration and citizenship, religion, identity, tradition, faith, civil activism, and environmental protection than sex, drugs, girl power, and political correctness.

SMCK Magazine's goal is to make art lovers understand the history and potential of jewellery as an art medium. It strives to bridge art and craft disciplines, to discuss contemporary social practices, and make artists aware of market basics. The magazine also serves as a podium for indies and outsiders—gallerists, curators, artists—to address interdisciplinary art directions, sharing stories of failure and success, and showing readers different cultural perspectives on how to appreciate and use art.



Photo: Frank von Schoenfelds

A MENTAL SHIFT HAS TO TAKE PLACE

Rudolf Maximilian Becker, owner and curator of WELTRAUM gallery, on the coronavirus' bright side, indie toughness, and Munich's potential to accommodate more jewellery art

Interview by Christoph Ziegler

CZ: What has motivated you to run a non-commercial gallery for more than 20 years?

RMB: I grew up with art, I have been surrounded with art since childhood. Permanent contact with art and artists is my life purpose. Dealing with art is like reading a newspaper, it's food for thought. I cannot imagine life without my constant involvement with art.

CZ: How did you decide to open a gallery?

RMB: When I was looking for a flat, I came across the shop on Rumfordstrasse. The house has original turn-of-the-century front windows, which you rarely see in Munich nowadays. The renovation took me two years to complete and I invested a lot of money, time, and energy to make the rooms look like they do today. It was only when I was finished with the renovation that I had the idea of having shows in the space. This is how WELTRAUM was born, in 1997. Thus, the gallery is also my living room, my life focus, and my flat.

CZ: How many artists have exhibited in WELTRAUM so far?

RMB: I've curated the exhibitions of approximately 1,500 artists in WELTRAUM. Apart from the solo shows, which for me are always an intensive exchange with the artist's work, I've curated and presented many group exhibitions featuring two to 20 artists each. My record is a group show with 107 participants—in approximately 60 square meters!

I had show openings almost every weekend for about a year and a half. In the long term, this brought me a lot of publicity, which also benefited the artists. Nevertheless, nobody can manage to have an exhibition opening every week. Our visitors also thought it was too much.

R

A U M

CZ: What's the ratio between your commitment and your profit?

RMB: For years, earning money from the gallery wasn't my aim, because this work gave me so much. I never had a master plan like "I want to earn this specific amount of money from my gallery." There was also no fixed concept on what WELTRAUM should show. The projects and exhibitions I presented made subsequently clear what the gallery's concept was.

I'm friends with 99 percent of all the artists who have exhibited at WELTRAUM. For me, a friendly atmosphere is very important for my commitment and the fascination I experience in this dialogue.

intensive exhibition program that took place inside this replica and lasted six weeks. The feedback was amazing.

A show I presented at the prestigious municipal art gallery, Lothringer 13, featuring 160 artists, hit a record number of visitors.

I've realized all WELTRAUM projects through my own efforts and means of support, without any funding. I apply the DIY principle in my work, as most artists do. I had never applied for public funding before the exhibitions *The Sacred & The Profane* (2019) and *WAR_Polemos* (2020) that you curated, which were indeed sponsored by the city of Munich! [Laughs.]

“Studies and apprenticeships enable you to see the world with fresh eyes”



Photo: Rudolf M. Becker

CZ: Is WELTRAUM funded by the city of Munich?

RMB: Last autumn the city of Munich gave me an award for my extensive commitment regarding the independent art scene. In 2015, for WELTRAUM's 20th anniversary, I was invited to install a real-life WELTRAUM replica in the Rathausgalerie (Munich Town Hall Gallery). I curated an

CZ: What is the situation for Munich artists?

RMB: The problem you face as an artist in Munich is that after graduation, even before you start making art, you must deal with the promotion of your work and securing funding. Even big art institutions and museums in Munich struggle to survive; this is why nobody can predict how



Weltraum at Rathausgalerie Photo: Frank von Schönfels

“ We live in fascinating times. Artists should not be intimidated by current conditions but should keep working ”

independent artists will fare in the future. It's definitely not an easy situation.

CZ: There is a strong division in Germany between art, handicraft, and design. How do you feel about this way of perceiving creative work?

RMB: Munich is a city that favors design sales, though I think design sells better everywhere. Tradition and handicraft are very important in Munich and this also affects design. Twenty or 30 years ago, Bavarian handicraft followed incredibly strict rules.

There was a big change, 10 to 15 years ago, resulting in the production of rather insignificant work that all looks almost the same, as if it were made on an assembly line. Most people in Munich prefer visually pleasing glossy art to hang nicely above their couches.

There is definitely a jewellery audience in Munich. But there's no broad awareness of how to appreciate this highly interesting art medium. Art lovers know almost nothing about jewellery. There's still a lot to be done to strengthen the dialogue between fine art and jewellery.

CZ: How do you think coronavirus will affect art?

RMB: For me personally, time has stopped, my vision is frozen. And of course, as far as artists and art projects are concerned, city funding is also frozen.

The corona crisis has an extreme impact on our social structures. What's special about it is that it affects all levels, politics, social life, market, finance, and, of course, culture. I am very excited to see how artists react. The economy will have a big influence on how things develop. Nobody is thinking of buying art now.

Even if exhibitions open, they won't attract a large number of visitors, and I don't think the crisis will be over by 2021. This means that a decisive mental shift has to take place.

I'm a positive person by nature and convinced that the crisis also has great potential: for example, to develop a more profound awareness. People are finally starting to reflect upon their situations. The fundamentals of our social structures are being questioned.

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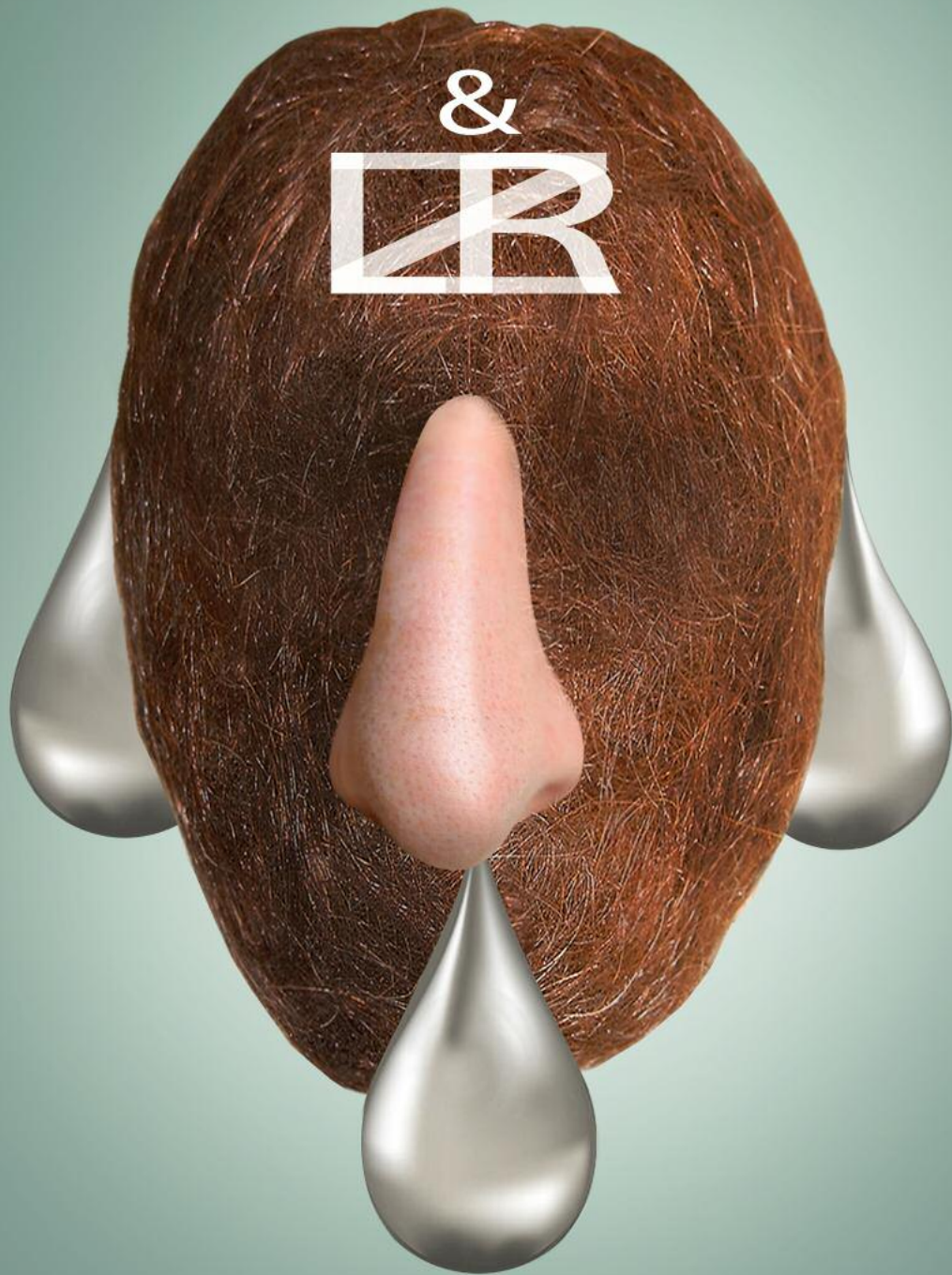
www.weltraum26.de

facebook: WELTRAUM



Polly - Photo: Christoph Ziegler

L'ARÔME



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W A R

EXHIBITION

5 - 9 NOV 2020

WELTRAUM

GALLERY

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SKATEBOARDING

“A CARICATURE OF THE ART WORLD”

VELTEN ECKEHART SCHÄFER ABOUT A MOVEMENT BETWEEN ART AND OLYMPIC DISCIPLINE

Interview by Christoph Ziegler

Skateboarding is widely considered a “loud” sport practiced by young individualists. Invented by surfers in California in the 1960s, it first became popular through slalom competitions. The discovery of empty swimming pools and rough urban terrain for the sport turned skateboarding into a real movement. Since 2020, it has been an Olympic discipline.

Apart from the extreme commercialization skateboarding witnessed, it also became a synonym for punk rock, hip hop, and street- and life-style culture, and in this way has pe-

netrated the art field more and more.

Despite the rise of the skateboarding industries, many skateboard manufacturers still see added value for themselves in the “personalization” and the manufacture of small series instead of mass production.

In Dogtown and X-Games, Velten Schäfer analyzes the history and development of a movement that is “sport” and “art” at the same time. Christoph Ziegler—a skater himself in his youth—talks with Velten Schäfer about the transition from skateboarding to art.

CZ: What makes skateboarding different from other sports movements?

VS: Skaters always claim an artistic subjectivity for themselves, based on the assumption that the act of skateboarding is a means of expression and comes from the soul, etc. Indeed, a skate performance is something completely different from ski slalom or javelin: the movements follow aesthetic parameters and not the logic of stopwatch or meter.

In his classic book *From Ritual to Record*, Allen Guttman shows how



Mike Fox Skatepark, Santa Cruz. Photo: Dunja Stamer

modern sport has been rationalized, disciplined, and removed from the cultic context that—by concept—the ancient Olympic Games expressed.

According to my thesis, skateboarding, as a paradigmatic “postmodern” sport, moves back from record to ritual: it’s about the ability to do tricks, but mainly the ritual is performed through a loyalty to style, or, in other words, through the authentic physical enactment of an aesthetical scheme.

This is where the creativity begins: skateboarding is largely about adapting, combining, and inventing new movements, not about perfecting existing ones.

CZ: You mentioned the “artistic claim” as being part of skateboarding. How did this claim come about?

VS: In the 1960s, the early years of skateboarding, slalom and figure skating were the most popular disciplines, with measurement categories that were adapted from conventional sport competitions. The rupture took place in the late 1970s, when some young athletes in California started to skate “vertical” in the now legendary swimming pools.

The edgy—and dangerous—movements in the steep-sided empty pools can be characterized by a kinesthetic proximity to punk/hardcore music.

Riding on “unsuitable” terrain can physically be compared to slam dancing: you throw around your body, it’s a radical game of losing control. The cultural link between music and sport is based on this loss of control.

“With the categories “high” and “low” shifting in the art world, skateboarding has started to enter galleries and museums.”

Many skaters also play in bands—if you look, you can find a “Skate Rock” section in any music store.

Skateboarding later adopted hip hop music, since it perfectly corresponded to new maneuvers, complex board flips, and body twists. Sport and art now start to approach each other; the

skater also becomes the designer. Street art is the starting point: skaters started to design their own board graphics and their accessories.

CZ: Besides a growing tendency toward commercialization, skateboarding has entered the art world. How did this happen?

VS: An important factor is the nexus between images and bodies. The “team riders” of the large skate brands are not primarily expected to win medals, but rather to embody the marketing aesthetics of the specific brand, which becomes explicit through the board and clothing designs.

Tony Hawk, one of the most famous skateboard stars, noticed in the 1980s that certain styles of physical moves related to certain brands. In order to make a difference through their graphical style, many skate brands have developed a huge appetite for refined designs, with which they also expand into fashion.

With the categories “high” and “low” shifting in the art world, skateboarding has started to enter galleries and museums. In 2002, Luxembourg artist Michel

Majerus built a skate bowl at the international art exhibition Documenta in Kassel, Germany, which was open to the public and frequently used by well known “skate heroes.”

“Mini ramps” or skate performances have increasingly become part of exhibitions and art festivals. Parallel with street art, the styles of skate graphics have experienced a “gallerisation.”

In a complementary manner, the skate-graphic market has started to adapt subjects and stylistic strategies from art.

CZ: *Authenticity, style, gesture: these criteria are well-known from the art world. Can you apply these criteria to skateboard artists?*

VS: Maybe skateboarding is a caricature of the art world. Both fields—art and skating—are shaped by the idea of authenticity, and ultimately by the concept of the “genius.” The skater who can expose his aesthetic-sportive practice as an undisguised expression of the conflict between himself and the (urban) environment is considered original, has a signature, is considered authentic and, in colloquial terms, is a “brand.”

Skateboarding reveals the fabrication of the “real” in the moment when “originality” unfolds in a product-aesthetic form. And this aesthetic also has a certain gender...

CZ: *... namely the male. How do you see the tendency of this “postmodern” sport in terms of gender? Can skateboarding still be rebellious in this direction?*

VS: The “culturalization” of skateboarding was actually a masculinization. Before the era of Dogtown (read the book!) it was far less male. Roughly speaking, skateboarding is more gender-inclusive the closer it gets to the



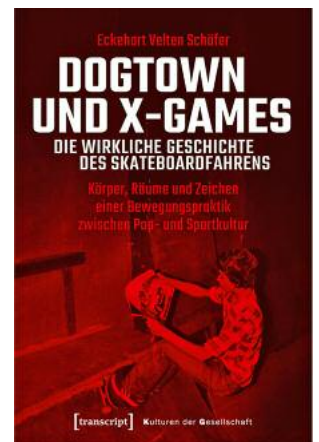
“Frontside Ollie” by Velten Schäfer. Photo: Joker

sports field: when it takes place on “legal” terrain rather than areas “stolen from the city.”

Certain regulations also curtail the male “right of the loudest.” Skateboarding qualified for the Olympic Games as the result of a standardization of movements on a standardized terrain, and this is manifested through the highly artificial parcours and the optimized “street furniture.”

However, the saga of the independence and freedom that is still strongly associated with skateboarding may change with its “sportification.” Perhaps especially if social circumstances change. The future is still open, surprising, and can be shaped—that’s my conclusion in Dogtown.

Dr. Phil. Eckehart Velten Schäfer teaches sports sociology at the European Sports Academy Potsdam. His book “Dogtown and X-Games: The Real History of Skateboarding” has recently been published by transcript Verlag.



“UNDERFUNDED,
UNDERAPPRECIATED,
NOT WIDELY UNDERSTOOD.
SURVIVAL IS NOT EASY”

Interview by Loukia Richards

LR: In Thank You Big Pharma!—selected for Schmuck Sonderschau 2019—you used contraceptive pill packages as jewellery material. How did Big Pharma change the female body and destiny?

LMC: The contraceptive pill gave women the freedom to manage their menstrual cycles, control family planning, prevent unwanted pregnancy. It did, in essence, provide the idea of emancipation. However, the pill, and the hormones it contains, can mess with some bodies, causing side effects. Why has the responsibility of contraception conveniently fallen into the hands of women, and men are excused?

Laila Marie Costa
(aka RUN LMC), artist,
curator, and co-director
of TempContemp Gallery,*
Melbourne on emancipa-
tion, indie perseverance
and THE Schmuck

* along with Anna Gray

LR: Why is menopause (still) a taboo even among women?

LMC: Peri/menopause and/or The Change is not very sexy and rarely spoken about.

Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) is big money, and from the point of view of drug companies allows women to seamlessly move from one product—birth control—to the other. Menopause is such a mysterious issue, both in society and the medical field. In my world, people really don't want to discuss it. On the up side, the packaging of HRT is a source of inspiration.

“ The
value of
my jewellery
is not monetary,
but intellectual ”



Photo: Bryony Jackson

LR: What kind of social status and background does your jewellery reflect?

LMC: My jewellery is autobiographical narratives about my existence in a suburban environment and my nature/nurture. The body ornaments I create reflect my status as working class, post-graduate educated, low income earner, first generation Italo/Australian, cis, Caucasian, child free, female divorcee, with mental-health issues, and neuro atypical with a wry sense of humour.

The value of the jewellery is not monetary, but intellectual, and it's at times elitist about cultural capital.

It is imbued with political and social concepts; with references to the history of art, design, and craft; and explores themes that relate to my navigation of life.

SCHMUCK LESSONS

LR: How did you benefit from your participation in Schmuck Sonder-schau 2019?

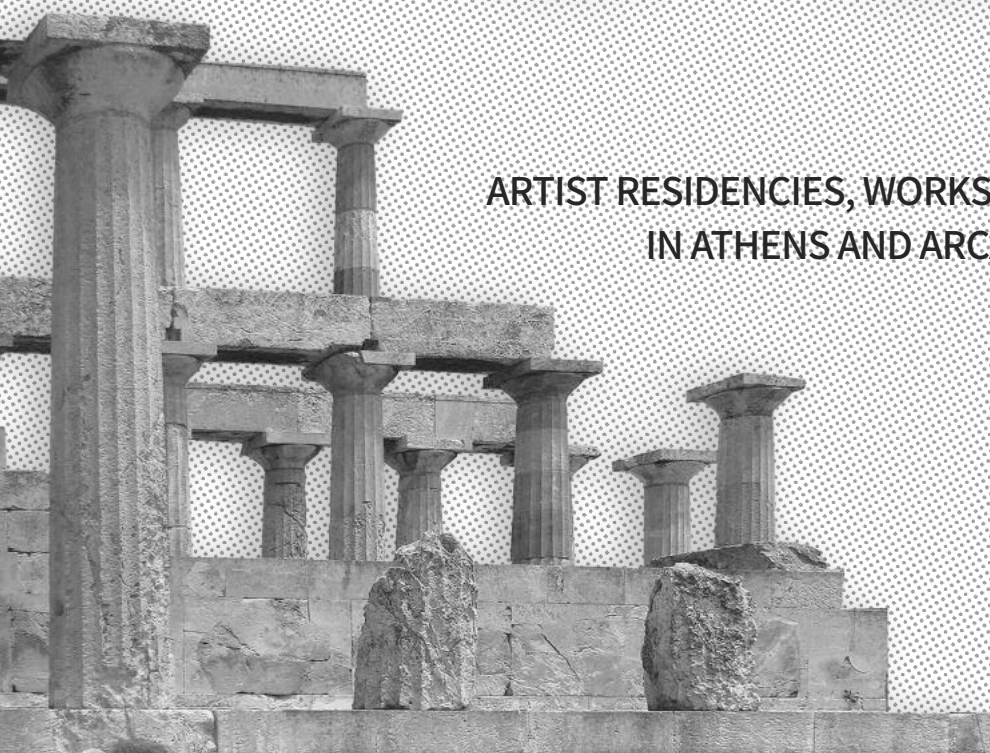
LMC: The mental confidence it gave me is invaluable. It confirmed I'm doing something valid that is part of the contemporary conversation. I thank the curator, Dr. Sabine Runde, for taking a risk with an outsider.

I went to Munich for Schmuck and spent seven days experiencing exhibitions, meeting with artists I admire, chatting with curators and educators. It was also beneficial for TempContemp, as people I met gained knowledge of it and the concurrent Schmuck / Schmock exhibition. I also met artists who had applied to participate in TempContemp group exhibitions.

Being a visitor at a European jewellery festival inspired and informed my practice as a curator and gallerist. The most direct outcome was that my work was selected for inclusion in the Body Control exhibition at Museum Arnhem, the Netherlands.

VISIT

ARTIST RESIDENCIES, WORKSHOPS & E-RESIDENCIES
IN ATHENS AND ARCADIA / GREECE



www.favelab.net | Athens, Greece

LR: How did you like Schmuck?

LMC: I found Schmuck München too large and it was impossible to get to see all the things I'd wanted to. Either the timeline needs to be increased or the number of exhibitions decreased, which would be my preference.

The actual Schmuck Sonderschau, in the Messe, was quite a conservative affair though I was expecting nothing less. The Talente exhibition I found quite compelling.

INDIE GALLERIES' CHALLENGES AND FUNDING SCHEMES

LR: What problems and challenges do you face as an indie gallerist in Australia?

LMC: In Melbourne, there's an indie scene that runs alongside the commercial galleries. The Big Four—Gallery Funaki, Studio Ingot, e.g.etal, and Pieces of Eight—focus on retail sales and commissions. They all have an exhibition program by artists they represent. Occasionally non represented artists are included in group exhibitions, most notably the Mari Funaki Award for Contemporary Jewellery, which attracts the rock stars. There are some public galleries, museums, and organisations that have the odd contemporary jewellery show.

There is the fabulous Radiant Pavilion, the Jewellery and Object Biennial, which is attracting global applications. TempContemp is different. We explore jewellery as an interdisciplinary practice, as a place of experimentation, trying new concepts and ideas without the pressure of having to make sales.

Melbourne is the jewellery galleries hotspot. Survival isn't easy for any of the various components of the system. Like most arts communities, jewellery is underfunded, underappreciated, and not widely understood. If you manage to secure stable work in the sector, it's poorly paid and overworked in comparison. Exploitation occurs.

There is no established centuries-old integration of the arts and knowledge of history in everyday life. That can also be an advantage. Grants are the usual way to get funds for a project. We secured two Arts Investment grants from the local council, Moreland. Sometimes the pay-to-play model is the only way to survive. It's a system fraught with ethical and moral considerations.

Without the volunteers we wouldn't exist. Some of our fab volunteers: Claire Vaganian, Peregrine Costa, Jessica Phippen, Aphra Cheesman, Fiona Fitzgerald, the Insecurity Guards and many others.

LR: What kind of artists did you present in TempContemp Gallery?

LMC: In our time at Northcity4, our previous brick-and-mortar address, we produced group exhibitions: I Hate Contemporary Jewellery, Do You Copy?, Schmuck/Schmock, and Radical Pavlova; a one-night event.

I curated The Urban Gleaner and the Plastique Pt.II. for the Climarte festival. We also put on one pay-to-play model exhibition, In Dialogue, for Radiant Pavilion 2019. Our final exhibition, O, was a group exhibition by some of our incredible volunteers.

The various artists came from all around the world. We did take a 20 percent commission on sales and have acquired some works exhibited in these shows for the TempContemp Collection. We selected pieces that we



Photo: Anthony Paine

“ I want things to happen that I never even thought possible. I want the industry to be moved by this happening ”

“ Without
the volunteers
TempContemp
wouldn't
exist ”



Photo: Bryony Jackson

found compelling, whether we personally liked them or not. I enjoy this way of curating, as you have to relinquish control and have faith in the respondents.

LR: How do you choose the artists you represent?

LMC: Working to optimize the artists' work takes effort that an artist-run initiative cannot afford. While Studio Ingot represents me, our arrangement is very workable; it relies on give and take from

both parties and aligns with my current needs. The traditional model of signing an artist is one I'm not so comfortable about. I'm more an indie, DIY type. Both systems have their benefits. It depends on how the artist wants to place themselves and their career.

We don't formally represent anyone at the moment. To represent artists is a large commitment and one we would not take lightly. We don't have the resources for it in the short term.

LR: How do you imagine future shows given that COVID-19 will persist for at least a few more months?

LMC: More online virtual exhibitions and projects as galleries begin to reopen. Snail mail sounds promising. Collaborations. Interventions. Live streaming. Zoom fests. I want things to happen that I never even thought possible. I want the industry to be moved by this happening.

LR: Your plans for the future?

LMC: In October I'll have a solo exhibition at Bridget Kennedy Project Space, in Sydney. I don't want to be too precious; I want to allow space for works that are unplanned and unstructured. After isolation restrictions lift, I'll return to my studio and recommence my artist residency at the East Brunswick Village.



Photo: Leila M. Costa

LINKS:

www.lailamariemcosta.com

Instagram: @lazyliberty

www.tempcontemp.com

THE OBJECT



UNK KRAUS

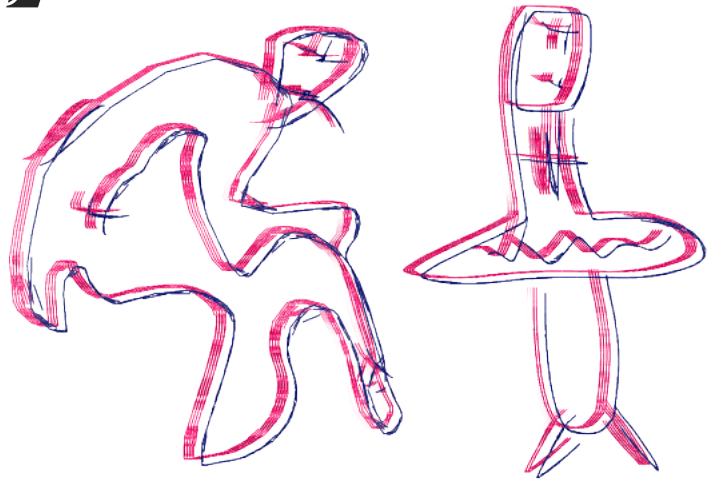
Goldsmith, independent artist,
lives and works in
Oberkienberg, Germany.

www.jac-jac.de/unk-kraus.html

BLAHBLOBS (2020)

THREE BROOCHES.
3D BIOPLASTIC PRINTING,
COLOR, GRAPHITE,
ASSEMBLED.

Jewellery for the Bodiless



By Loukia Richards

CROWNED

When my grandmother's brother died, the old women who lamented over his coffin pointed out that he had never been married.

"You should place a wedding wreath on his head," they said, "he looks so beautiful that he will seduce young people to follow him to Hades if he's buried uncrowned." I gave a village boy a dime to buy me a polyester wedding wreath from a nearby shop and told him to keep the change.

In the Christian Orthodox tradition, the bride and groom are crowned with wreaths made of silver (in days past) or plastic (nowadays) at their wedding. Those who die

unmarried are crowned at their funerals with a wedding wreath resembling a blooming lemon tree branch—a symbol of fertility.

The boy came back with the wreath, licking his ice cream happily. We placed the wreath carefully on my uncle's head.

He'd had 95 years of an astonishing life that I still envy him for.

Indeed! He looked beautiful lying inside a wooden coffin filled with his glasses, walking stick, and books. Mourners in Greece still bury their dear ones with their favorite objects.

No young man or woman died in town in 1996, the year following my uncle's death.



Drawings: Loukia Richards

BURIED JEWELLERY

The use of jewellery in contemporary Greece still reflects archaic concepts of identity, sacrifice, death, eternity, spirituality.

The concept of death has not changed much since the Homeric Age: the short joy of life is followed by an anaemic eternity in the kingdom of shadows.

End-death/τέλος (télos) in Greek means completion or perfection.

It also means the end of a sport race or αγών (agón).

A golden wreath crowned the victor of the life race at his funeral, just as athletes were crowned with wreaths made of sacred tree branches after their victories.

The crowning of the dead implies apotheosis, becoming God-like.

The baptism cross, the wedding ring, the engagement earrings reflect rites of social integration in modern Greece, and are buried with the dead to preserve the dead person's identity in the other world.

Buried jewellery later becomes the property of the relative who undertakes the exhumation, three years after death. Buried jewellery is considered apotropaic—it has the power to avert evil or bad luck—for it went to Hades and returned!





Photo: Anna Watson

“ANCIENT
CULTURES
HAVE A
HUGE
IMPACT
ON MY
WORK”

Anna Watson's latest
work transforms
pre-fab Greek
votives into
objects
reminiscent of
Neo-expressionism

Interview by Loukia Richards

LR: Why you are attracted to votives?

AW: I see jewellery potential in their shape and form; votives are often jewellery-sized objects and also imbued with deeper meaning. They offer a relationship between the material and the ethereal that I find pleasing.

I was initially keen on Mexican ex-voto, retablo, and lamina, which are little paintings often predicting the hopeful

outcome of a wish or prayer. I then began to look at Greek Orthodox tama, the silver, tin, or gold rectangles depicting an image and also used to facilitate prayers, desires, and wishes.

The colour in my work is inspired by Mexican ex-voto paintings and by the fact that it makes the object fun and playful. I spend time ensuring pieces work as jewellery as well as isolated objects.

LR: You're interested in ancient—but living—cultures such as the Greek, Chinese, etc. What is their impact on your maker's practice and way of thinking?

AW: Huge. Sometimes it's quite difficult to untangle this, as I spend a lot of time immersing myself in the visuals and details of other cultures without planning how to communicate through making. The elements of interest come out unconsciously.

LR: How are you coping with COVID-19?

AW: I'm struggling to make at the moment, partly because I'm unable to go to my workshop, which is shared with other makers and artists. Also, shows and exhibitions have been cancelled. I think creative people and industries adapt particularly well to the physical dynamics of change, which can stimulate more creativity, problem-solving, and experimentation.

LR: Are you thinking of other ways to promote your jewellery?

AW: I intend to develop my online presence. Regarding art, jewellery, clothes, and e-commerce, I think there are particular problems because work needs to be observed and tried on, which is more difficult to facilitate, but just another solvable problem.

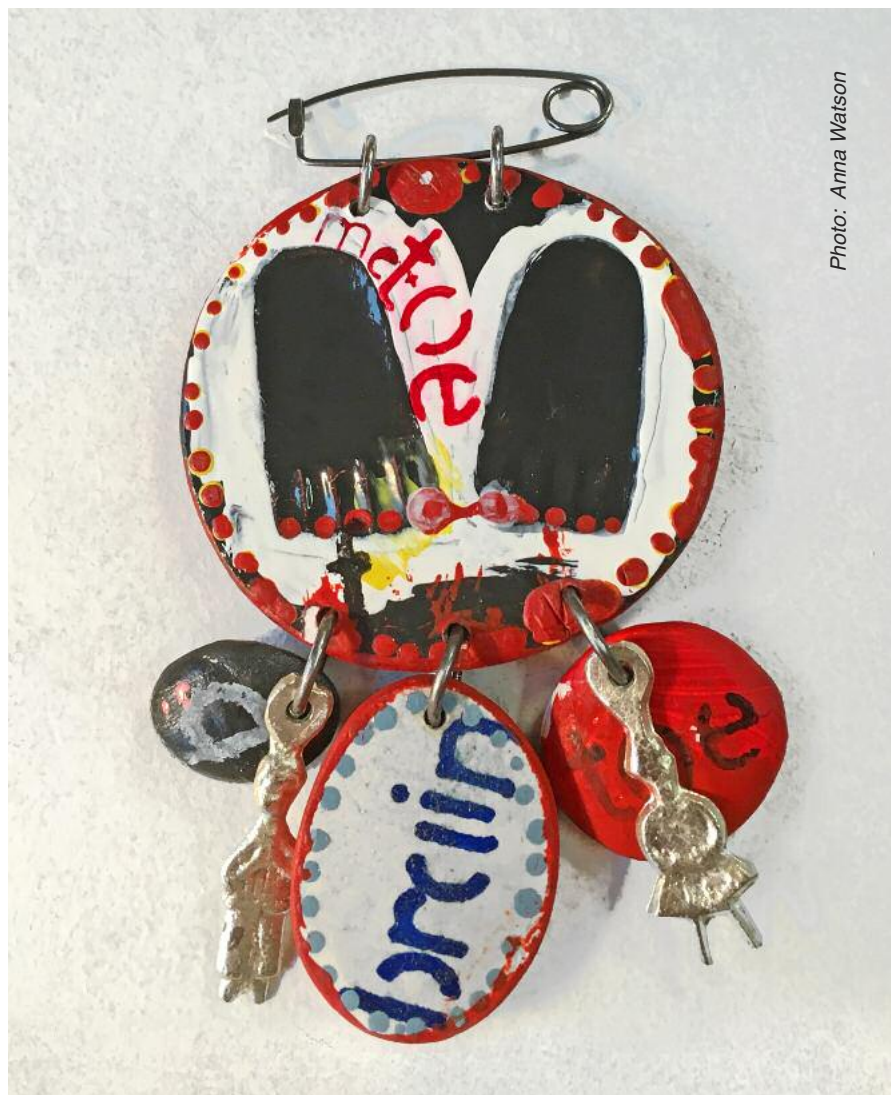


Photo: Anna Watson



Photo: Anna Watson

Anna Watson,
jewellery artist,
Brighton, UK

Instagram:
[@annawatson.jewellery](https://www.instagram.com/annawatson.jewellery)

"About the stolen blues", Traktor Truite.
Performance at
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**Olaf Scheller, artist
and photographer,
is the founder and
first chairman of
the Künstlerhaus
FAKTOR/Hamburg.
He has been cura-
ting art and music
projects for over
ten years.**

In modern Greece, “miraculous icons” are decorated with tama: identity jewellery (wedding rings, baptism crosses, engagement earrings, etc.), as well as with silver or gold plaques. Tama, which means “promise,” is placed on the icon, before the wish is granted.

Icons show how the world will look at the end of time, when the “sun of justice” never sets. Orthodox Christians use the icon as a visual stimulus to reach God; they worship the spirit the icon implies, not the wood it’s painted on. Icons emphasize Jesus’s human nature and build a bridge between God and man that’s easy to cross.

In modern terms, icons could be considered conceptual art. Worshipers kiss the icons, touch them, and place them on the chest of their dead at funerals.

Tama—which also existed in ancient Greece—follow this principle: sacrifice something precious to you and ask God for a favor. A standard depiction of your request will spare God time and confusion! Thus votives feature men, women, hearts, houses, babies, legs, arms, etc. If you ask for a big favor, you give God your best jewellery. It is a relief to know that God wears your jewellery and can make an exception for you when there’s no way out—like the *deus ex machina* in Greek tragedy.

Greek spirituality is pragmatic and reflects a culture of public argument and questioning, an intellectual tradition that gives citizens a voice and God, overseeing them, a human face.



Photo: Christoph Ziegler

By Loukia Richards

TAMA
OR MAY
THE FORCE
LOVE YOUR
JEWELLERY!

C H R I S T O P H Z I E G L E R



Photo: Loukia Richards

MOEBLING

THE SIDE EFFECTS OF DOMESTICATION

By Priscilla Katz

Visual artist Christoph Ziegler explores the relationship between the human body and objects or, more precisely, between man and furniture. His Moebling photo series focuses on the physical and psychological (side) effects of the domestic environment on human existence.

Since 2009, the German sculptor and performer has documented his personal experiences with everyday objects and with the unknown place we call “home.”



Photo: Olaf Scheller



Photo: Christoph Ziegler



"Hotels, Motels" series. Photo: (left) Loukia Richards, (right) Christoph Ziegler

During the COVID-19 crisis, this place has become the very epicenter of our lives. Forced to stay home, we use our private microcosms in multiple ways: as home office, workout space, kindergarten, workshop, and living room—all at the same time.

In his self-portraits, Ziegler plays with the—sometimes claustrophobic—characteristics of the private living space, which the artist defines as the utmost intimate place for retreat on the one hand, and a zone for the permanent reproduction of everyday life rituals on the other.



Photos: Hilmar Pruess



Top: "Drying Pants"
 Bottom: Moebling tools
 Photos: Christoph Ziegler



With "Moebling," Ziegler has coined an English adaptation of the German word *Moebel*, which means "furniture." With sarcastic references to the wellness movement and the ever-expanding culture of self-optimization, Ziegler promotes Moebling as a practice offering a playful approach for "kinetic meditation" at home. The artist's commandment is as simple as this: Turn your sofa, your table, your chairs, carpets, or vacuum cleaner into Moebling tools! His ongoing indoor project features public performances and ephemeral sculptures, as well as improvisational theater staged with everyday objects.



"The Quiet Surf" - Photo: Loukia Richards

Christoph Ziegler currently lives in Athens, Greece.

www.christophziegler.com



Photo: Olaf Scheller



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BODY,
DANCE AND
PERFORMANCE
DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Photo: Christoph Ziegler

THE CRISIS OPPORTUNITY

When the financial crisis hit more than a decade ago, dance critics and historians immediately responded by trying to define and identify how this challenge would affect artists and their art—a rather difficult task as situating an individual within the historical frame of his/her era while perceiving it as objectively as possible is close to impossible.

Nonetheless, some interesting questions came under scrutiny. For example, were any changes bound to occur in the field of institutions or in the field of dance itself because of the financial crisis and consequent lack of funding? How would artists confine themselves and their inspiration within small spaces and

very small scale spectacles, let alone realize it into a tangible spectacle, with the meagre financial means then available?

Is money related to the quality of a spectacle? I would add: was the opulence of the 90s a necessary thing? And did it lead to any (quality-wise) unforgettable productions?

CUT DOWN & IMPROVISE!

When there's a shortage of money, logic and the survival instinct push toward the most obvious direction: stripping off the inessential and economizing. Therefore we saw collectives being initiated and an emphasis put on short, site-specific, or street/open-air performances, happenings, events.

Techniques such as contact improvisation and release, that emphasize the informal, the low-key presence of the dancer participant, claim solidarity and an attitude toward the body that is tolerant, liberating and loose, offered consolation and helped to overcome the hostility and aggression that hovered over societies and artists alike by over-accentuating the need for mutual support and an interest in the weaker members of society. These techniques also helped rethink the urban landscape—an urban landscape that had become unrecognisable and depressing, with homeless people and the sad stories of the victims of the fall of vanity exhibited in the previous decades—along with the inner landscape of the performer.

WE ARE FORCED TO REFLECT AND REPLAN

It's only human nature to look to previous moments of crisis not only for educational purposes, but also for inspiration and ideas on how to handle adversity. Therefore in 2008 many looked back not just into past disasters, but also into utopian ideas, in the hope that "this time it might work." This is partly how the aforementioned choices—i.e., of collectives—may be interpreted. As soon as hope and a relative stability returned, escapism showed signs of having completed its life cycle. Then, just as everyone was about to catch up with life and art using gained experience as an asset for future expeditions, the COVID-19 pandemic became the new, more serious "drawback of human planning". At the moment, no clear signs of a new style or genre in dance exist, as people believe the disease to be a short-term impediment. In collaboration with

technology (the greatest enemy of escapism), dancers and performers managed to gain their pace (ironic) through the time of confinement—which seems not over yet.

On virtual meeting platforms, dancers continue to exercise on a daily basis, to teach and to choreograph. Famous artists have gone online on social

“ Fear and anxiety has been turned into art by many artists ”

media and shown their daily routine; dancers have continued to encourage colleagues, friends, and their audience on social media to gain strength and avoid depression through exercise.

THE BODY ADAPTS TO EXPERIMENTS

The body became "virtual" once more, bringing to mind the experiments carried out in the 90s when that new tool, the internet, sent performers experimenting with real time, different time zones, simultaneous dancing in different countries - the reality and corporeality and their limits.

Via the state-of-the-art technology of the time, performers mixed rationality and materialism with the "vanishing" of the body, its transcendental potential and the phenomenological point of view of experiments with the challenge of time and space as we know them. Media, computers, became for

many choreographers a standard element of their performances. The spectators often saw the "dialogue" of the performer on stage, with his/her prerecorded image or the projection of the body into an imaginary landscape via multimedia work.

ANGST FUELS CREATIVITY AND CONFINEMENT REDEFINES SPACE

It's rather early to say what this new crisis will generate in terms of inspiration for new ways of making dances. Serious questions arise from the pandemic and may help trigger new paths in our thinking. How does the body react in long-term confinement? How does the threat of a pandemic influence the body itself, and how does it cope with stress? How will the lonely body be treated? How do we evade the trap of mourning that constant images of death and danger in the media and in the news magnify? How do we perceive our culture after the severe blow brought about by the pandemic? How do we furthermore perceive the sick body and the frailty of life? As generations who have lived in relative luxury and peace, how quickly and how exactly shall we respond to consecutive crises? In other words, what are the tools and the reflexes that lead to personal, social, and artistic maturity? Will there be another fatalist "lost generation," as in the 20s?

Fear and anxiety has been turned into art by many artists, from Holbein to Munch and many others. Colour, shade, perspective (or the lack of it), help communicate the feeling of anger and despair to the viewer. How can an art such as dance that is so di-

rect with the presence of the body, so overwhelmingly close to the viewer, be turned into a distant activity, a spectacle that one watches on a screen? Does distance change the perspective as drastically as the discovery of perspective itself changed painting in the Renaissance? Is confinement a confining situation or an inspiring opportunity?

Dance is a social activity, but it also exists as solo performance. Dancers know that any object may serve the purpose of an exercise instrument, that space is a relative term and a challenge. From Trisha Brown's exploration of the walls and roofs of the buildings of New York to Martha Graham's spiraling of her Ariadne around the horns of a mythical bull to Mary Wigman's floor ritual of the Witch, to Steve Paxton's solitary "Goldberg Variations" or the post-industrial gloomy abstractions in William Forsythe's work of the late 80s and 90s—just to name a few of the many existing examples—dancers and choreographers have shown that space and everything related to it are malleable, relative, adjustable entities, and challenges to be conquered.

Natasha Hassiotis is a dance critic, choreographer and art historian. Her book "Great Choreographers Interviews" is available online
ISBN-13:
978-
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Photo: Giorgos Vitsaropoulos

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A R G E N T I N A

EL RÍO DE LA PLATA Y SU NUEVA CORRIENTE JEWELLERY DEFIES MACHISMO

By Virginia Jakim

Being the capital city of a country named after a precious metal seems decisive for the long tradition of silversmiths that followed. The land was so abundant in silver that the Spanish conquerors called it “Argentum” and enslaved its natives to extract the material.

Traditional silverware and jewellery display wealth and promote traditional values related to male dominance. The religious pendant is the most archetypical jewellery you see in Buenos Aires. Usually, it reflects the wearer’s faith in apotropaic jewellery and isn’t necessarily a sign of Christian piety.

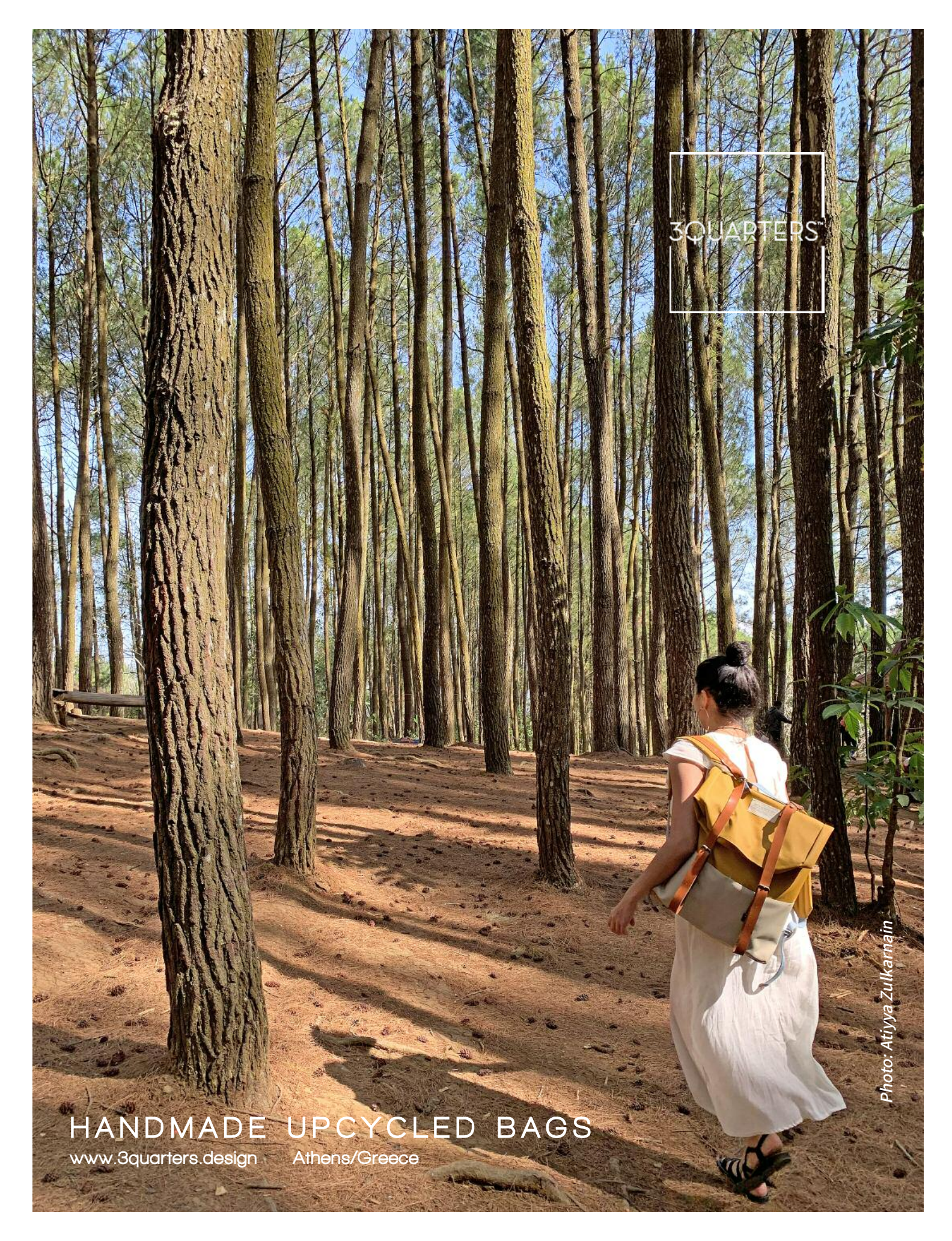
This tradition is being challenged. Contemporary jewellers, now mostly female and/or queer, make art imbued with new meaning. Jewellery, in this context, is no longer a binary,

male-dominated interpretation of what an ornament should be—refined, elegant, and light for women; sober, stark, and powerful for men. It follows a conceptual approach in which makers express their more inclusive worldviews, previously dismissed as “feminine” or of “lesser value,” for a society shaped by colonial hierarchies and machismo.

Nevertheless, there is still a lot to be improved. How silver was connected to the exploitation of natives and, later, of African slaves is an issue not yet being addressed. The contemporary jewellery scene still remains small and mainly consists of upper-

middle-class practitioners, the majority of whom have European ancestry. The exploration of this topic could create new frames of work and a more inclusive scene.



A woman with dark hair in a bun, wearing a white dress and a yellow and grey backpack, is walking away from the camera through a dense forest of tall, thin pine trees. The ground is covered in dry pine needles and small pine cones. The sunlight filters through the trees, creating dappled shadows on the forest floor. In the upper right corner, there is a white square logo with the text '3QUARTERS' inside.

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Photo: Atiyya Zulkarnain

EDITOR'S CHOICE

By Christina Panagiotopoulou

BOOK

"Great Choreographers-Interviews" by Natasha Hasiotis is a compilation of 39 interviews with the greatest choreographers of our time.

Artists from different countries and different genres, but mainly contemporary dance, talk about their ideas, their art, their work. Easy to read, the book is a MUST for those who want to become acquainted with contemporary dance or deepen their knowledge in this extraordinary art domain.

ISBN-13: 978-1496976376
206 Pages // English

DESIGN

3QUARTERS is an innovative sustainable fashion brand founded in 2015 in Athens. It upcycles leftover and used awning fabrics from the Athenian balconies. All raw material is sourced locally, for 3QUARTERS adheres to a policy of zero-waste and works intentionally on small-scale production. The brand aims at raising awareness on slow, ethical, socially and environmentally conscious fashion, while complementing the contemporary urban lifestyle with a topical taste.

Agiou Dimitriou 19,
Psirri, Athens
www.3quarters.design

GALLERY

„Efi Kazantzi -The Alternative Craft Gallery“. The gallery is housed in a former workshop which has been elegantly renovated to reflect the 1960s style of the building. The art gallery is located in the bohemian, down-town neighborhood of Psirri.

It presents exclusive, eco-conscious jewellery collections designed by Efi Kazantzi and hosts exhibitions of emerging and mid-career visual artists. Efi Kazantzi, the UK educated founder and gallerist, works as a designer and jewellery maker for over 20 years.

Agiou Dimitriou 30,
Psirri, Athens

BOOK

„To The Point - Pin Mechanisms And Brooch Back Design“ by Daniela Malev showcases more than 300 images of brooches made by 111 international artists. The book also includes insightful essays by internationally acclaimed jewellery scholars Liesbeth den Besten and Julia Wild. The brooch is a very common and also much discussed form of contemporary jewellery. One of the special challenges of making a good brooch is to find an adequate solution for the pin. The author is convinced that fastening and attachment of a brooch hold a tremendous potential for the design of the entity brooch. The book is a treasure for brooch designers and brooch lovers offering innumerable possibilities, varieties, solutions, and inspiring examples.

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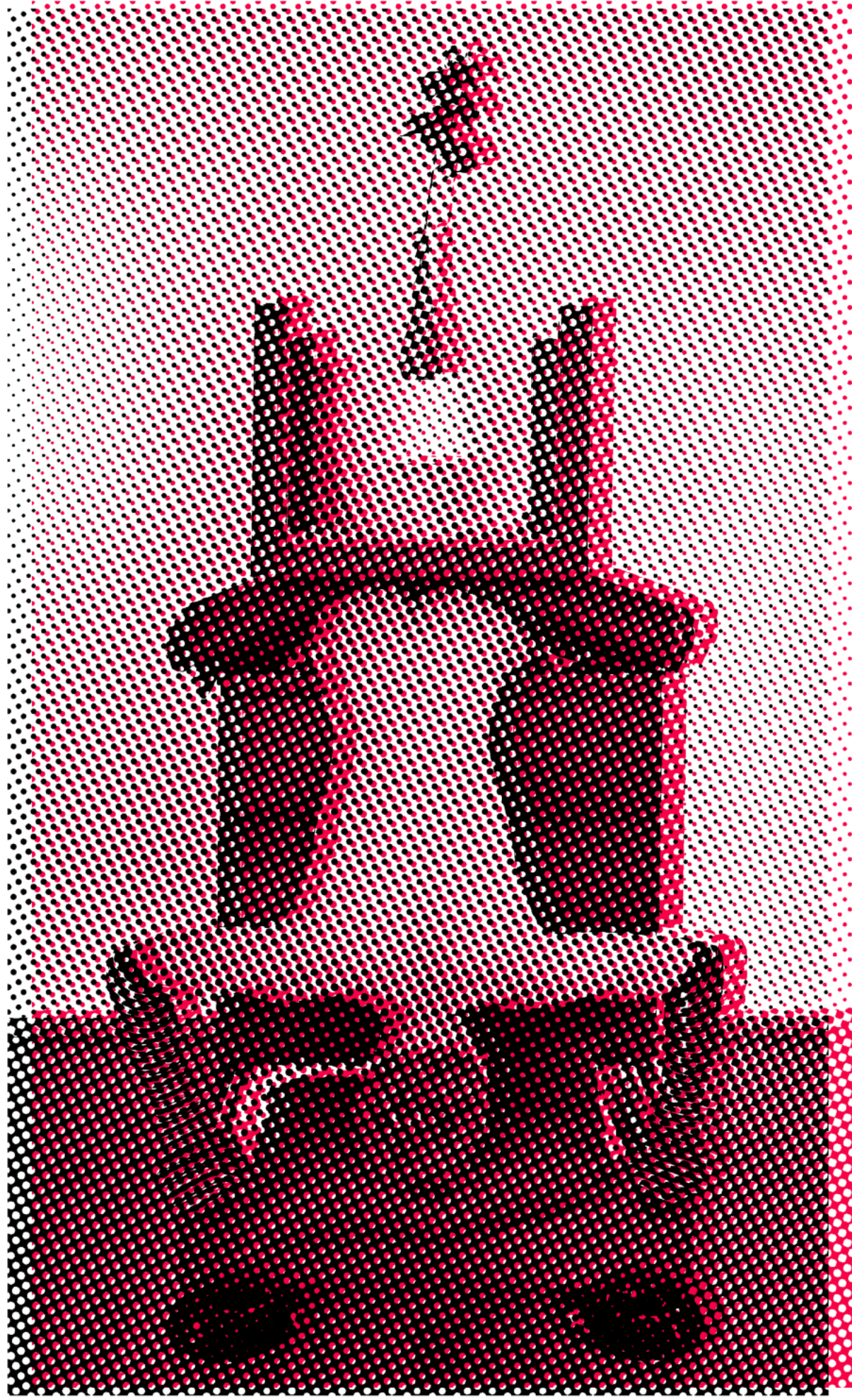


Image Moebing, Christoph Ziegler Photo: Loukia Richards