Process and Progression: An investigation into provoking curiosity by challenging and extending perceptual engagement.

A project submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts (Fine Art)

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Declaration

I certify that except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the thesis is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program; any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged; and, ethics procedures and guidelines have been followed.

Simon Cottrell

14 / 11 / 2010

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SUMMARY OF THESIS/PROJECT:

Through the production of small objects I will develop strategies for extending a
viewer's perceptual engagement by provoking curiosity via ambiguity of form and
challenging expectations through materiality. The process of creative development
will be embedded in both the content and production. The main aim of the project is
to build objects that invite and reward attention to material nature and relationships
between forms.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

Introduction

My intention is to fabricate small jewellery scale objects in metal that are shaped by the
progression and evolution within my creative processes against a backdrop of discourse
on visual attention and perception. In particular this research will focus on perceptions
of attention to detail and their role to gain a deeper understanding of 'cause and effect'
and its importance in the continued development and progress of idea/concept and
also in relation to physical manual engagement and material control. Using insights into
the manner of human visual perception I aim to devise forms that explore the effects
of variations in the scale, detail, structure and contrasts in materiality as a means to
encourage and intensify curiosity and reward a viewer's sensory attentiveness; in effect
drawing parallels between the process of the artist and the viewers perceptions of the
artworks that result.

Background

Since 2002 I have been making work as both an embodiment of the nature of my
own creative processes and also loose mapping of the progress of these processes.
The intention has been to create objects that are open to process, represented as a
progression of forms within an overall composition that may grow and develop in an
order that refers to the way in which the seed of an idea grows and resolves towards
its final outcome. For example an object (eg. illustrations 1-3) that originates from a
simple static form that is then progressively elaborated on and becomes so complicated
that it cannot be perceived from one view. Each new vantage point provides and allows
varied views offering different levels of acuity on the subject.

Another intention, which is still carried within current work, is to build forms that in
some way represent and reveal a layering of understanding in what is observed or
thought. When looking over a forested valley it is possible to feel a sense of calm and
stillness. However, underlying the broad view are highly complex systems where multi-
layered elements co-exist that are mostly above or below human scale, and as such
cannot be perceived, or, beyond the field of vision. For example, the smooth, subtle surface
of a leaf, when viewed by the naked eye, does not allow access to the permeable
barrier of moisture and chlorophyll laden cell structures. And at a smaller scale again
each seemingly simple individual cell contains atomic complexities. Previous work has
been approached with the aim of attempting to present both complexity and simplicity
unified and intertwined within the one view. This includes using fabrication methods for
building simple forms that reveal visually complicated structural definition.

As we become conscious of the unseen depths of our surroundings, the
inwardness or interiority that we have come to associate with the personal
psyche begins to be encountered and questioned: we feel ourselves
enveloped, immersed, re-connected and then caught up in an ongoing
sensuous chain of experience 1 David Abram

David Abram's text 'Spell of the Sensuous' attempts to explain the way in which
human culture today is disengaging with a full and detailed sensory experience of
our surroundings. He does this by giving examples of how past cultures have been
more attentive to sensory perception, providing a far deeper understanding and
questioning of one's context and resulting in a more mindful shaping of specific
cultural outlooks. If indeed we are becoming far less engaged in our surroundings,
we are marginalising our basic understanding of the very nature of things; an
intrinsic understanding of our inter-relationships with the physical realities of our
surroundings. More specifically within creative process it is sensory attentiveness
that enables us to understand the nature of cause and effect within the production
of artefacts, and allows us to assess the delicacies of the methods used and
the intricate details of their specific outcomes. My research aims to close the
broadening gap might be closed through the construction and presentation of
intimate objects made through a reflexive process that draws on the progression of
the processes of sensory perception and visual attention. Both in relation to creative
process itself and within the sensory engagement of the resulting tangible outcomes.

Here is one example of how this may be done. An object may begin at one point as
a single element that then multiplies and incrementally evolves intuitively and as
it grows. At any point in this process if I begin to notice the developing structures
incidentally evoking a representational subject I will then consciously further develop
that allusion and also consciously introduce an allusion to a contrasting subject.
This action of embracing an incidental allusion is at first an embodiment of the way
human perception draws directly on a memory bank of prior perceptual experience
to apply order to new unknown situations. The following imposition of the second
allusion that is contradictory to the first is an attempt to de-rail the viewers ability
to make clear sense of what is being perceived. The ambiguity that results extends
the duration of time between initial engagement and a final perceptual resolve, or
even prevents a clear perceptual resolve from being reached. At the same time the
continuing manner of the growth and development of the elemental forms underlying
the overall structure adds another element to provoke confusion. However these
underlying structural tectonics, which are the building blocks for the overall ambiguity
of the piece, have within themselves a rather strict sense of order and repetition
in the progression and growth from element to element. So on a macro level there is
another more subtle ambiguity between two potential readings of aesthetic
sensibilities, depending on the degree and angle of the viewers focus. There could
also be the inclusion of material illusions. For example the critical stimulus initially
suggests that the object is uniform satin metal surfaces, but after a shift in viewpoint
a play of light is sensed to be well beyond the expectations of a metal surface.
Rather than being wholly metal some the surfaces may in fact be translucent tinted
mirror of the same surface texture and colour as the metal, but with an odd sense of
material depth.

1 Abram, David ,Spell of the Sensuous Random House, New York, 1996 page 260
Through this project I aim to create objects that are both a direct outcome and a loose representation of the effects that a heightened attention to detail has on the creative process as discussed by David Bohm:

"To be originally creative, it is necessary to be aware of the specific order of mechanical actions and reactions that could be making them work or not work. Then eventually with these insights as a base, natural creative action of the mind may begin, so that the mind will start to operate in a basically new order that is no longer determined mainly by mechanical aspects of thought... The key is also to be continually aware of and alert to the basically mechanical reactions that are causing us to "go to sleep" again and again, or fall backwards into habit."  

I will draw on the intuitive processes of 'flow' as discussed by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi 3 and the interrelationship with more systematic cognitive processes as discussed within the models of creative process by Andrezej P. Wierzbicki and Yoshiteru Nakamori 4 to devise and build forms that attempt to engross and re-invigorate the visual sense of the viewer. Through gaining greater insights into the manner and processes of perceptual attentiveness itself 5 then using these to build loose diagrammatic frameworks to inform the progression/directions of the intuitive flow of forms I will develop a reflexive assessment of relationships between subconscious processing and the cognitive applications of concept.

The ideas that I have outlined above are a framework for linking concepts to process. Evaluation of the effectiveness of various explorations of materials will occur concurrently. The objects will be predominantly fabricated in metal, however other materials may be incorporated where appropriate to triggering curiosity and ambiguity. The work will be made in both my own studio and at RMIT Gold and Silversmithing. Objects may be utilitarian or free standing, as informed by the history of gold/silversmithing practice. Rather than requiring any relationship to any specific external site the works will be intentionally reliant on spatial contexts inside their own structures and compositions and in cross relationships between the constructed objects. While aiming for discrete resolved pieces, there is likely to be a sequential progression of many smaller works that could be seen as interconnecting with major works.

Objective

The objective of this project is to build an ongoing lineage of related objects which represent my internal creative processes as the primary subject of the work, in particular representing the role that sensory attentiveness has as a means to devise form through which I aim to actively heighten the viewer's visual engagement.

AIMS:

- To investigate theories of visual perception and attention within creative process in order to achieve further awareness to the fundamentals of my own cerebral and physical creative processes.
- To devise and experiment with metal fabrication and structural detail appropriate to the project objective.
- To present and elevate an in-depth understanding of material and mental processes as an integral basis to the formation of, and approach to subject within the creation of artefacts.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

How can sequentially progressive elements and the dynamics of scale affect the way we are drawn into engaging with small objects?

How can I use the processes of visual perception within creative development as the subject for small-scale objects?

In what ways can unfamiliar or unexpected combinations of structures and materials be incorporated into small objects to heighten visual engagement?

RATIONALE FOR PROGRAM:

With the rise of contemporary interest across the breadth of art culture into the phenomenology of creative process it seems increasingly evident that the processes that drive creative visual culture forward are parallel to the way any human activity moves and develops. In a craft field (gold and silversmithing) that is often claimed to be rooted in a high regard for material processes it seems odd that the pre-cognitive processes that underpin and direct the choice, control and selection of material process is not more widely discussed. Works which provide insights into the broad nature of creative progress like ‘On Creativity’ by David Bohm and even much earlier seminal texts such as ‘The Act of Creation’ by Arthur Koestler are so little known or referenced within gold and silversmithing. The outcome of this project will draw attention to the conceptual and theoretical significance of creativity as a subject for production in the field of Gold and Silversmithing and the art of the small object.

The hollow-ware works of Michael Rowe have aimed for a “oneness of subject and object” 6 where the subject of the object is the object itself. Rowe allows his insights into phenomenology of objects and their utility to subtly shape and inform their composition. Like Rowe, my aim is not for these objects to be directly communicating these insights, but more simply using such insights as a way of devising form and compositions in objects that seem to present a heightened physical self awareness. While Rowe’s focus is specifically on the nature of the utilitarian framework which is his creative foundation, my interest is not only in what is cognitively being made but also into the intuitive, pre-cognitive processes through which the aim of the work itself is conceived, developed and resolved. The aim is to connect back to and reveal the underlying fundamentals of my own creative human nature; approaching the making of new work as human process, rather than as an ‘art’ outcome. The concept is to derive influence for the content of human creative action from the very nature of the processes and progression of the act itself.

Notes:

Like many artists, Helen Britton’s attention to her own perceptual processes and the ways they feed her own works began simply out of curiosity into the personal aesthetic interests and priorities of the things that stimulate and inform her work. Over time it has also become vital to maintaining her work as her own, as a means of further focussing her own visual language by allowing decisive mediation between incoming influences and the perceptual outcomes of a viewer.

Britton’s own aesthetic language has had a significant international influence on the field of art jewellery, a large proportion of which could be seen to be highly derivative. Out of concern for this, she has given lectures about the importance of understanding the links between one’s own personal stimuli and the tangible outcomes of the resulting work as a means of remaining in control of a constant and individual forward progression. Unlike my aims within this research project Britton is quite content to leave her intuitive making processes to flow as they will, open ended, the work itself does not attempt to outwardly reveal or amplify these processes. She does not in any way aim to direct the viewers’ senses in any particular direction other than to encourage an openness to entirely un-familiar sensations within the familiar contexts of jewellery. She is however actively raising discourse around the importance of objective critical self awareness within a field (art jewellery) that is more often focussed on trend-based decorative stylisation, and yet demands to be taken seriously as a mode of contemporary art practice. Her workshop titled ‘Authenticity in the Age of Style Surfing’ is an example of recent efforts in attempting to explicitly raise greater awareness into the nature of creative process by a growing number of other practitioners and educators who are noting the troubling effect that the unawareness of theory regarding the nature of creative process is having on the field as a whole.

If we consider creative process as an inherent part of human nature, by making work that is explicitly both ‘of’ and ‘about’ the processes that created it, there is the potential to amplify the fundamentals of creative process within the minds of the artist and also that of the viewer. Through this I aim to draw parallels between the active processes within creative development and the more passive processes by which we engage with the outcomes of creative process. Elizabeth Grosz explains that our relations with art are primarily ‘of’ sensation; the process from which cognitive metaphorical linkages are made and clarified between our direct readings of tangible objects and intellectual concepts. By having greater understanding of the way these processes operate it becomes possible to heighten their effectiveness.

The presentation of the processes and outcomes of this research project will also introduce aspects of a body of thought that is largely unfamiliar to the field of gold and silversmithing, both locally and internationally. It is also my hope that the results of this research will reach beyond the field of practitioners and also to the broader viewing audience.

METHODS:

Year/ Stage One

February - March 2005
- Begin to analyse and refine focus of project scope and develop proposal.
- Research artists working in similar ways such as Michael Rowe, Peter Bauhuis, Helen Britton.
- Build bibliography. Further reading, specifically Arthur Koestler and David Bohm.

April - July 2005
- Begin making experimental models and small scale pieces exploring structure and details of detail to allow the reading of two opposing sensibilities at the one time; simple overall form with layered elemental complexity in structure and detail; progression and growth of elements of gentle organic form with monotone within a strict sense of order.
- Build forms starting from a central idea ‘seed’ point which then develops complicates in multiple different directions.

August – September 2005
- Experiment with altering tone to see in what ways certain aspects can be amplified or shrouded, or in what ways the reading of the overall form can be subtly unified or divided.
- Explore complex internal structural dynamics in opposition to the simple definition of the external form.

November 2005 – January 2006
- Further exploration of the use of subtle tonal applications to confuse readings of light between internal and external areas; gloss white reflective internal spaces progress to matt white on open external surfaces. Explore other materials to achieve similar effects.
- Analyse all recent work and experiments to be presented as public lecture.
- Produce further small scale exploratory pieces, focussing more specifically on scale and contrasting material properties (colour, texture and illusion) of details as a means of challenging expectations of form and make-up.

Year / Stage Two

February - March 2006
- Develop further small-scale works exploring new means of fabrication and other material possibilities as a means to confuse cognitive progression from initial perception of form to a final perceptual resolve.
- Explore ambiguity between form and material sensibilities and allusions to varied representational subjects between various viewpoints. Almost like the rabbit-duck but with consideration of the effect of the movement, duration and angle of viewpoint.

April – May 2006
- Research different approaches to subtle material and structural ambiguity in the works or Lucy Sarneel, Gemma Draper, Ted Noten.
- Explore ways of subtle reflexive incremental progression within development of form. For example, light play on various panels of a previous solid form being loosely represented in the shadows and negative spaces between and within the progressing forms.

June - August 2006
- Explore more open reflexive processes of form development, beginning with a basic starting point and allowing incremental development to build works.
- Explore ways of responding to incidental readings of ambiguity by reflecting on the developments of subject allusions and consciously continuing in a way that both solidifies and also contradicts these allusions.

- Analyse all experiments and explorations in order to set next sequence of...
- Explore the theories and models of creative progression by Andrezej P. Wierzbicki and Yoshiteru Nakamori on processes of perception within creative process; Rudolf Arnheim, John H. Flowers and Calvin P. Garvin.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:**


Durr, Rolf; Gaspar, Monica; Klimpel, Roland; *Über das Schmelzen* Verlag-Robert Gessler, Munich. 2006.


Gaspar, Mónica Peter Bauhuis; Schmuck und Gefäss* Galerie So, Solothurn, Switzerland. 2004.

Gaspar, Monica + Saez Vilanova, Estela *Good By(e) Nest: works of Estela Saez Vilanova* Published by Galerie Louise Smit, Amsterdam, Netherlands. 2009.


**Year / Stage Three**

**February - April 2007**
- Expand means of fabrication resulting in further new structures, resulting in broader contrast and ambiguity between allusions in form.

**May - August 2007**
- Complete six small exploratory objects for exhibition at Sofa New York

**September 2007 - April 2008**
- Analyse experiments and explorations by assessment of both supervisors and colleagues noting responses to physical work in relation to aims.
- Further research on reflexive and self responsive creative process; Baingio Pinna and Arnold Berleant in order to set next sequence of explorations.
- Continue referencing written material and artists to inform and critique work.

**May 2008 - January 2010 On leave of absence / Not enrolled**

**Year / Stage Four**

**December 2009 - January 2010**
- Reinstall MA program.
- Review and revise MA proposal.

**February 2010**
- Present revised proposal to Readers meeting for comment. Major review of progress.
- Explorations, experiments and analysis culminating in new major works.
- Continue referencing artists and written material to inform and critique work.
- Begin collating documented projects for ADR.
- Consider methods for presentation.

**March - May 2010**
- Further revise proposal.
- Assess all work completed and set areas still needing further exploration in tangible works.
- Further investigation of material ambiguities within works of Estela Saez Vilanova; Eric Kuiper; Annamaria Zanella.

**June - November 2010**
- Complete objects for examination
- Construct supports/presentation for selected objects for examination
- Complete documentation for examination submission.

**December 2010**
- Present submission for examination.
Many of these works have been presented here as viewed from various angles to show the ways in which a shift in viewpoint can alter the sensibility perceived and alter the kinds of representational subjects that are evoked.

1. 'Awkward rest' container. 2005-03-01 Monel, Stainless steel 115 x 115 x 125 mm
2a. 'Awkward rest' view one.
2b. 'Awkward rest' view two.
2c. 'Awkward rest' view three.
2d. 'Awkward rest' view four.
3. 'Awkward rest' container, view with lid open.
4. 'Growth no 12, with white' Brooch. 2005-03-15. Monel, stainless steel, enamel paint. 80 x 40 x 30 mm. Two Views.
5. 'Six loose forms no.1' Brooch. 2005-04-03. Monel, stainless steel. 70 x 50 x 30 mm. Two Views
6. 'Six loose forms no.2' Brooch. 2005-05-12. Monel, stainless steel. 90 x 50 x 35 mm. Two Views
7. 'Tall dimple and blobs' Brooch. 2005-06-12 Monel, stainless steel. 65 x 40 x 30 mm. Two Views
9. 'Big silver blob faceted tubes' Brooch. 2005-07-24. Monel, 925 silver, stainless steel. 75 x 55 x 35 mm. Two Views
10. 'Faceted Tubes tagged intersections' Brooch. 2005-09-05. Monel, stainless steel. 85 x 40 x 30mm.
11. 'Black cone' Brooch. 2006-01-14. Monel oxidised, stainless steel. 50 x 50 x 35 mm
12. 'Broken cone' Brooch. 2006-02-04. Monel, stainless steel. 70 x 55 x 35 mm. Two Views
13. 'Cone, long lugged shallow' Brooch. 2006-02-19. Monel, stainless steel. 70 x 70 x 30 mm.
14. 'Cone with contents?' Brooch. 2006-03-11. Monel, stainless steel. 70 x 90 x 45 mm. Two Views
15. 'Hollow lumps with white tubes' Brooch. 2005-05-02. Monel, stainless steel, enamel paint. 70 x 50 x 30 mm. Two Views
16. 'Awkward profile' Brooch. 2005-05-20mm. Monel, mirrored synthetic polymer resin, stainless steel. 120 x 85 x 30 mm.
17. 'Tight/open mixed cluster bang' Brooch. 2006-06-07. Monel, stainless steel. 55 x 65 x 35 mm. Two Views
18a. Installation of 'Some Progress 2005-2006' (works 4, 6, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17) at the Colin and Cicely Rigg Contemporary Design Award. National Gallery of Victoria 2006-07-04
b. Broader view of exhibition.
c. Installation detail
19. 'Sample Brooch. First powder coating sample. 2007-02-07 Monel, stainless steel, gloss white powder coating. 80 x 80 x 15 mm.
20. 'Five tall dimples with two whites and a tail' brooch. 2007-03-00. Monel, white powder coat, stainless steel. 80 x 55 x 40 mm.
21. 'Variable focus’ 2007-03-02. Monel (oxidised), stainless steel. 70 x 50 x 30 mm. Two Views.
22. 'Variable dimples' 2007-12-20. Monel, stainless steel. 70 x 50 x 30 mm
23. ‘Bang in/at plant’ Brooch. 2008-01-20. Monel, Black powder-coat, stainless steel. 70 x 60 x 40 mm. Two Views.
24. ‘Six tall dimples from/through/behind’ Brooch. 2008-03-00. Monel, stainless steel. 90 x 60 x 30 mm. Two Views.
25. ‘Villiage of gold teeth with tail’ Brooch. 2008-04-005. Monel, gold plated monel, stainless steel. 105 x 55 x 40 mm.
27. ‘Faceted Pipe Strelizia’ Brooch, 2008-05-00. Monel, stainless steel. 85 x 50 x 30 mm. Two Views.
28. ‘Tested mirror capsule plant’ Brooch, 2009-05-00. Monel, mirrored synthetic polymer resin, stainless steel. 110 x 80 x 30 mm.
29. ‘Reversed growths, clubs on capsules’ brooch 2009-06-00. Monel, powder coat, stainless steel. 110 x 80 x 30 mm. Acquired by the City of Cagnes-Sur-Mer, France.
30. ‘Double dumb bang hammers’ brooch 2009-08-00. Monel, stainless steel. 70 x 50 x 30 mm
31. ‘Tubed shoulder in hips’ brooch, 2009-12-14. Monel, stainless steel. 70 x 50 x 30mm. Two views.
34. Experiments with luminous powder-coat. 2010-06-00. Monel, stainless steel. 80 x 80 x 25 mm.
   a. lights on.
   b. lights off.
35. ‘Four hollow white drops’ brooch, 2010-09-00. Monel, luminous powder-coat, stainless steel. 80 x 70 x 35 mm.
36. ‘Six drops’ Brooch. Old piece from 2003. Monel, stainless steel. 80 x 60 x 30 mm.
37. ‘Focussed drops’ brooch, 2010-06-00. Monel, stainless steel. 70 x 50 x 30 mm.
38. Exploration of project ideas in digital image format.
   a. ‘Process’ 2010-08-10.
   b. ‘Layered, complexity, simplicity’ 2010-08-10. Digital image / mock-up for possible future work (elaboration on ‘Six loose forms Two’ Brooch)
   c. ‘Origin’ 2010-08-24. Digital image (based on ‘Awkward profile’ Brooch)
39. ‘Full project flow map’ 2010-10-20. Image illustrating the succession of work throughout the entire project.
40. Nine images of project as presented for final assessment.
1. ‘Awkward rest’ container. 2005-03-01
Monel, Stainless steel
115 x 115 x 125 mm

photo: Mark Ashkanasy
2a. ‘Awkward rest’ view one.

2b. ‘Awkward rest’ view two.
**2c.** ‘Awkward rest’ view three.

**2d.** ‘Awkward rest’ view four.
3. 'Awkward rest' container, view with lid open. Monel, stainless steel. 115 x 115 x 125mm

4. 'Growth no 12, with white' Brooch. 2005-03-15 Monel, stainless steel, enamel paint. 80 x 40 x 30mm
   Two Views
5. ‘Six loose forms no.1’ Brooch.  2005-04-03
Monel, stainless steel.  70 x 50 x 30mm
(Private Collection, USA)

Two Views

6. ‘Six loose forms no.2’ Brooch.  2005-05-12
Monel, stainless steel.  90 x 50 x 35 mm

Two Views
7. 'Tall dimple and blobs’ Brooch. 2005-06-12
Monel, stainless steel. 65 x 40 x 30 mm
(Private Collection, USA)

Two Views

8. 'Faceted tubes, in-definitive’ Brooch. 2005-06-22
Monel, stainless steel. 70 x 50 x 25 mm
(Private Collection, Australia)
9. 'Big silver blob faceted tubes' Brooch. 2005-07-24
Monel, 925 silver, stainless steel. 75 x 55 x 35 mm
(Private Collection, Canada)

Two Views

10. 'Faceted Tubes tagged intersections' Brooch. 2005-09-05
Monel, stainless steel. 85 x 40 x 30mm
(Private Collection, Australia)

What began as structural strengthening between two forms in the previous two pieces, was then developed here as a means to reference the side by side planes that build the circumference of the forms being connected. Resulting in structural details that appear both similar in visual make-up and yet contradictory to the physicality of the overall growth of form.
11. ‘Black cone’ Brooch. 2006-01-14
Monel (oxidised), stainless steel. 50 x 50 x 35 mm
(Private Collection, USA)

12. ‘Broken cone’ Brooch. 2006-02-04. Two views
Monel, stainless steel. 70 x 55 x 35 mm

13. ‘Cone, long lugged shallow’ Brooch. 2006-02-19
Monel, stainless steel. 70 x 70 x 30 mm
(Private Collection, Australia)
14. ‘Cone with contents?’ Brooch.  2006-03-11
Monel, stainless steel.  70 x 90 x 45 mm

Two Views
15. 'Hollow lumps with white tubes' Brooch. 2005-05-02
Monel, stainless steel, enamel paint. 70 x 50 x 30 mm

Two Views

The white used on the interior surfaces of this piece are a gloss white, while the external white surfaces are matt. As a result of this the interior spaces feel brighter than the exterior surfaces, which is contradictory to our expectations of the nature of the form being experienced. (The interior gloss was later replaced with luminous, glow in the dark, white powder coat)

16. 'Awkward profile' Brooch. 2005-05-20
Monel, mirrored synthetic polymer resin, stainless steel. 120 x 85 x 30 mm

Upon initial reading of the overall form, this piece appears to be made entirely of metal. Once seen in movement (eg. on the body) there is a peculiar play of light on the largest plane that defies our expectations of a metal surface. This largest plane is a synthetic polymer resin with a mirrored backing, of similar colour to the metal. The surface of this material has been given a texture the same as the metal of the rest of the piece.
17. ‘Tight/open mixed cluster bang’ Brooch. 2006-06-07
Monel, 666 gold, stainless steel. 55 x 65 x 35 mm
(Private Collection, USA)

Two Views
18a. Installation of ‘Some Progress 2005-2006’
(works 4, 6, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17) at the Colin and
Cicely Rigg Contemporary Design Award.
18c. It was important for me to invite closer engagement by not having the work behind glass, and by pushing it forward from the wall and into the space. From several visits to the gallery to watch peoples actions, this did seem to draw people into the work. Maybe simply because they were able to, whereas in the broader context of the exhibition they were not.

18b. As seen through glass display cabinets containing the rest of the exhibition (the work of Mari Funaki in the foreground).
19. Sample Brooch. First powder coating sample. 2007-02-07
Monel, stainless steel, gloss white powder coating.
80 x 80 x 15 mm.
(Private Collection, Australia)

20. ‘Five tall dimples with two whites and a tail’ 2007-03-00
Monel, white powder coat, stainless steel.
80 x 55 x 40 mm
(Private Collection, USA)

Two Views
21. ‘Variable focus’ 2007-03-02
Monel (oxidised), stainless steel. 70 x 50 x 30 mm

Two Views

These stepped conical forms have in the past evoked in viewers, an ambiguity between floral forms and telescopic mechanisms. This piece began as a cone, which then had other aspects added as a means to clarify and increase the polarity between the allusions to these two contrasting subjects.

22. ‘Variable dimples’ 2007-12-20
Monel, stainless steel. 70 x 50 x 30 mm
23. ‘Bang in/at plant’ 2008-01-20
Monel, black powder-coat, stainless steel.
70 x 60 x 40 mm
(Private Collection, USA)

Two Views
24. ‘Six tall dimples from/through/behind’ 2008-03-00
Monel, stainless steel. 90 x 60 x 30 mm
(Private Collection, Italy)

Two Views
25. ‘Villiage of gold teeth with tail’ 2008-04-005
Monel, gold plated monel, stainless steel.
105 x 55 x 40 mm

Monel, stainless steel. 75 x 40 x 30 mm
(Private Collection, USA)
27. ‘Faceted Pipe Strelizia’ 2008-05-00
Monel, stainless steel. 85 x 50 x 30 mm
(Private Collection, Italy)

Two Views
28. ‘Tested mirror capsule plant’ brooch 2009-05-00
Monel, mirrored synthetic polymer resin, stainless steel.
110 x 80 x 30 mm.

29. ‘Reversed growths, clubs on capsules’ brooch 2009-06-00
Monel, white powder coat, stainless steel.
110 x 80 x 30 mm

Acquired for the City of Cagnes-Sur-Mer Contemporary Jewellery Collection, France.
30. 'Double dumb bang hammers' 2009-08-00
Monel, stainless steel. 70x50x30mm

31. 'Tubed shoulder in hips' 2009-12-14
Monel, stainless steel. 70 x 50 x 30mm

Two views
32. ‘Bulbs to barn doors’ 2010-01-21
Monel, stainless steel. 70 x 50 x 30 mm

2010 National Contemporary Jewellery Award winner
Acquired by Griffith Regional Art Gallery

Three views.

Made with the aim of progressing from softer organic form, structure and detail into something that resolves into a relative opposition to its starting point.
33. ‘Round and back in tempers’ 2010-03-05
Monel, stainless steel. 70 x 50 x 30 mm

Three views

Composed with the aim of presenting a progression (in a circular manner) through many of the developments of this project within the one piece.
34. Experiments with luminous powder-coat 2010-06-01
Monel, stainless steel. 80 x 80 x 25 mm

a. lights on

b. lights off

35. 'Four hollow white drops’ Brooch, 2010-10-00
Monel, luminous powder-coat, stainless steel. 80 x 70 x 35 mm
This was an old ‘reject’ piece from 2001 where each form within the piece was recently cut open and pulled apart and powder-coated on all interior surfaces then re-assembled in a different way. The original piece was not photographed but was similar to the piece in image 36.

a. lights on

b. lights off

36. 'Six drops’ Brooch. Original piece from 2003
Monel, stainless steel. 80 x 60 x 30 mm (private collection Netherlands)

37. 'Focussed drops’ 2010-06-00
Monel, stainless steel. 70 x 50 x 30 mm.
Re-iterating the form of the earlier piece but simplifying the definition of the forms from the front view, so that there is a greater disparity between the reading of the front and the reading of the back.
The following three images explore aspects and ideas of the project in graphic modes.
38 b. ‘Layered, complexity, simplicity’ 2010-08-10
Digital image / mock-up for possible future work.
(elaboration on ‘Six loose forms Two’ Brooch, Image 6.)

38 c. ‘Origin’ 2010-08-24
Digital image (based on ‘Awkward profile’ Brooch, Image 16.)
‘Full project flow map’ 2010-10-20
Image illustrating the succession of work throughout the entire project.
Indicates precursors to this project which have provided foundations for developments within recent work.
40. Presentation of project for final assessment in the Gossard Theatrette. Building 49 level 2.

40a. On entering the space you are presented with both the tangible works (on the right) and a projection which illustrates the generative progression of the entire project (on the left). Presenting these two options of engagement was aiming to trigger two levels of enquiry.
40c.

40d. The formality of the rectilinear plinths is set against the incidental outcome of the weight of a plane of caneboard succumbing to the nature of its context. This presents a combination of both familiarity and subtle oddity.
The twenty works were laid out in a way that may appear either grid like or completely random, depending on the breadth of focus with which they are viewed. The aim was to block a clear perceptual resolve as to whether the presentation layout is random or decisively ordered.
40g.  

40h. Digital image projection.
Simon Cottrell
Curriculum Vitae

Email: simon.cottrell@hotmail.com

Prior Training/Education
1996 - 97 Honours, Fine Arts. RMIT University Melbourne, Australia.
1994 - 96 BA, Fine Arts major- Gold and Silversmithing. RMIT Melbourne

Art Related Employment/Residencies
2010, Aug Seminar Speaker "Practice as a Site of Enquiry" organised by the School of Fine art RMIT.
2009, Sept Invited Visiting Artist Lecture, RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia.
2005, Jan Guest Lecturer at South Carolina University Fine Arts, Greenville, USA ; Massachusetts College of Fine Arts, Boston, USA
2008, Dec Guest Lecturer at State University of New York, New Paltz, USA.
2008, Nov Guest lecturer Rhode Island School of Art and Design Providence USA; Indiana University, Bloomington USA ; Pratt Institute, School of Art and Design, Brooklyn, NYC, USA.
2008, Nov Invited international guest speaker SOFA Chicago Lecture Series.
2008, Nov-Jan Artist Residency, Point B, Brooklyn, New York
2005, Sept, Guest Lecturer Auckland University, Manakau School of Visual Arts, NewZealand
2004, Dec Australia Council commission for design/making of the "2004 Emeritus Medal and Award"
2004-2007 Sessional Lecturer in Fine arts/Gold and silversmiting, RMIT University Melb. Australia
2003, July Guest lecturer LaSalle school of Fine Arts, Singapore
2002, May Selected for Asialink cross-cultural collaborative project.
2002 - ongoing Sessional lecturer in Fine arts/Applied arts/ Metal, Monash University, Caulfield Melb.
2001, 2002 Tutor, Gold+Silversmithing department, RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia.
1997, June Design and prototyping of corporate giftware for production. RMIT, Vice Chancellor.
1997, March Frank Bauer, Artist / Metalsmith. Assistant with large private commission.
1995, Nov-Dec Mark Edgoose, Artist / Metalsmith. Studio assistant

Exhibitions
2010, Aug ‘National Contemporary Jewellery Award Exhibition’ Griffith Regional Art Gallery, Australia
2010, May ‘SOFA West’ Sante Fe. USA (presented by Charon Kransen Arts)
2010, March ‘By Example’ Museum of Art/Craft Itami, Japan.
2010, March ‘Schmuck 2010’ Internationale Handwerksmesse, Munich, Germany.
2010, Feb ‘Treasure Room Australia’ Galerie Handwerk, Munich Germany.
2009, July ‘Four Jewellers, Baines/Bastin/Cottrell/Haydon’ Espace Solidor Cagnes Sur Mer, France.
2009, June Melbourne Hollow-ware’. Fine Arts Faculty Gallery RMIT, Melbourne, Australia.
2009,July ‘Soa West’ Sante Fe, USA (presented by Charon Kransen Arts)
2008, Nov ‘SOFA Chicago’ Navy Pier Chicago USA. USA (presented by Charon Kransen Arts)
2008, Sept ‘International Art and Design Fair’ Park Avenue Armory NYC, USA.
2008, May ‘SOFA 2008’ New York, USA. USA (presented by Charon Kransen Arts)
2008, Nov ‘Some...progress 05’ (solo installation) Objectspace Gallery, Melbourne, Australia.
2008, Jan ‘The Rhiannon Vernon-Roberts Memorial Collection’ Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, Aust
2008, Jan ‘Refined Abundance; International Art Jewellery Award’ Steven F Austin Gallery, Austin, Texas.
2007, Nov ‘SOFA 2007’ Chicago, USA (presented by Charon Kransen Arts)
2007, July ‘SOFA 2007’ New York, USA. USA (presented by Charon Kransen Arts)
2007, Feb-Nov ‘Beyond Metal- Contemporary Australian Metal’ Touring Bangalore New Delhi, Mumbai, India;
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; Singapore.
2006, Nov ‘Siemens Fine Art Scholarship Exhibition’ RMIT Gallery, Melbourne
2006, Oct ‘Connect’ Inaugural Gallery Funaki International Contemporary Jewellery Prize
2006, Aug ‘City of Hobart Art Prize’, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart, Australia
2006, July ‘Its Got Legs’ Postgraduate exhibition RMIT Gold and Silversmiting, School of Art Faculty Gallery
2006, June ‘Colin and Cicely Rigg Contemporary Design Award 06’ National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
2005, Oct ‘SOFA 2005’ Chicago, USA (presented by Charon Kransen Arts)
2005, Sept ‘Some...progress 05’ (solo installation) Objectspace Gallery, Auckland, New Zealand
2005, Sept ‘Space, Place and Poiximity’ Elaine Jacob Gallery, Detroit, Michigan, USA.
2005, June ‘SOFA 05’ New York, USA. (presented by Charon Kransen Arts)
2005, Mar ‘Ninth Biennial Ernest Levy Commemorative Silver Exhibition’ Castlemaine State Festival, Buda
2004, Oct ‘SOFA 2004’ Chicago, USA (presented by Charon Kransen Arts)
Exhibitions continued

2004, Sept ‘International Art And Design Fair’ New York, USA (presented by Charon Kranzens Arts)
2004, Sept ‘National Contemporary Jewellery Prize’, Griffith Regional Art Gallery, Griffith Australia
2004, July ‘Sixth Biennal jeweller’ Gallery Suba, Seoul, Korea
2004, May ‘Kunst RAI’ Arts Amsterdam, Rai Exhibition Centre (with Galerie Louise Smit)
2004, April ‘Metal Design 04’ International Design Centre, Nagoya, Japan
2004, Feb ‘COLLECT’ contemporary craft fair, Victoria & Albert Museum, London UK (with Galerie Louise Smit)
2004, Jan ‘Design Down Under’ South Shore Arts Center, Cohasset USA.
2003, Oct SOFA Chicago USA (presented by Charon Kranzens Arts)
2003, Aug ‘SOUND’ (Solo Exhibition), Gallery Funaki, Melbourne, Aust.
2003, May ‘Metal element Six’ Quadrivium Gallery, Sydney
2003, April ‘Metal of Six Countries’ International Design Centre, Nagoya, Japan
2002, Nov ‘RINGS’, Gallery Funaki Melbourne
2002, June ‘Less is More / Less is a Bore’ Brisbane City Gallery, Brisbane, Australia
2002, Oct ‘Sofa 2002’ Chicago USA
2001, Oct ‘International Art+Design Fair’ New York, USA (presented by Charon Kranzens Arts)
2001, Sept ‘SOFA 2001’ Chicago, USA (presented by Charon Kranzens Arts)
2001, Sept ‘International Contemporary Jewellery’ 20th Century Arts Fair, New York, USA
2001, March ‘Schmuck2001 Internationale Handwerksmesse, Munich, Germany
2000, May ‘Emerging’ Seven contemporary Jewellers, Gallery Funaki, Melbourne
2000, March ‘TALENTE’ International young craft practitioners award exhibition. Internationale Handwerksmesse, Munich, Germany
1999, Sept ‘Contemporary Wearsables 99’ eleven venues in Australia organised by Toowoomba Regional Art Gallery
1999, April ‘Sixth Biennial Ernest Levy Commemorative Silver Exhibition’ Castlemaine State Festival, Buda Historic Homestead, Castlemaine, Australia
1998, June ‘Grain’ Honors and Masters Gold+Silversmithing, First Site Gallery, Melbourne
1998, May ‘24th Alice Craft Acquisition’ The Araluen Centre, Alice Springs
1997, Dec ‘Mounts Peninsula Craft Event’ Mounts Peninsula Regional Gallery, Mounts Peninsula, Victoria
1997, Dec ‘City of Hobart Art Prize’, Carnegie Gallery, Hobart, Victoria
1997, Dec ‘Graduate Metal’, Salamanca Arts Centre, Hobart.
1996, Nov ‘Fifth Biennial Ernest Levy Commemorative Silver Exhibition’ Castlemaine State Festival, Buda Historic Homestead, Castlemaine, Australia
1996, June ‘Toy To Toy’ Customs House, Melbourne, Australia
1996, May ‘BOX’ satellite exhibition, Part of the Next Wave festival, RMIT Melbourne, Australia

Awards / Grants

2010 The National Contemporary Jewellery Award, Griffith Regional Art Gallery, Australia
2009 Atelier Ted Noten Artist Residency, Redlight Design, Amsterdam, Netherlands
2008 Australia Council Grant, for study into creative progression of contemporary improvised music in NYC
2008 2nd prize ‘Refined Abundance International Art Jewellery Award’ Opera House Art Centre, Townsville, Australia
2005 RMITU Postgraduate Scholarship.
1999 ‘KODDAK Peoples Choice Award’ Jewellers and Metalsmiths Group of Victoria, Australia
1999 ‘JOHNSON MATHEY AWARD’ For Excellence in Silversmithing, Australia
1996 LASLO PUZSAR AWARD. For Best Jewellery Design in Gold and Silversmithing, Australia

Collections

1998 Macmillan Collection, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University, Melbourne, Australia.
2003 Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia.
2004 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia.
2009 Red Light Design Collection, Atelier Ted Noten, Amsterdam, Netherlands
2007 ‘Ville de Cagnes-sur-Mer, Art Jewellery Collection, Cagnes-sur-Mer, France.
2010 National Contemporary Jewellery Collection, Griffith Regional Art Gallery, Australia.

(Private Collections in North America, Asia, Europe, Australia, New Zealand)

Representation

Gallery Funaki, Melbourne, Australia.
Charon Kranzens Arts, New York, USA.

Publications + Press

‘Broaching a Fine Subject’ Herald Sun Oct 14th 1997
‘Out of the Closet’ Robert Buckingham, Sunday Age magazine 23rd August 1998
‘Less is More/ Less is a Bore’ Brisbane City Gallery, Brisbane City Council Publishing, 2002.
‘Thrill Of the New’ The Age Good Living Magazine November 2003
‘The Naked Truth’ Art Monthly Australia, April 2005 #178 pg.35
‘10-2005, Funaki’s 10-year Vision’ Penny Web, The Age 18th May 2005
‘Proximity, the Sensory and Displacement’ Wayne state University, Detroit, Michigan August 2005.
‘Review of Proximity the sensory and Displacement’ The Detroler, 5th October 2005
‘Palm Beach 3 Contemporary Art Fair, 2006’ ATG Media & International Fine Art Expositions, Florida, USA
‘Cicely&Colin Rigg Contemporary Design Award’ Council of Trustees, National Gallery of Victoria 2006
‘Connect’ Penny Web, The Age October 3rd 2006
‘Gleam weavers’ The Age Life & Style, By Claire Halliday December 22, 2006
‘Melbourne Holloware’ Design Research Institute, RMIT, Melbourne, Australia. 2009
‘Marzee Magazine #66- Melbourne Hollo Ware’ Galerie Marzee, Nijmegen 2009.
‘Four Jewellers; Melbourne Australia’ Ville de Cagnes-Sur-Mer, France, 2009
‘von Neuseeland nach Australien’ Olga Biro, Art Aera Magazine, Germany, October 2009
‘By Example’ Published by Museum Art/craft Itami, Japan & Sydney College of the Arts, Australia, 2010.
‘Treasure Room Australia’ Australian Scholarly Publishing, Melbourne Australia, 2010