

Beyond Bling: The Artist as Jeweler

November 29, 2012 – January 12, 2013
Opening Reception with the Artists:
Thursday, November 29, 6-8 pm

For over four millennia, artists have been considered bellwethers, those sought-after trendsetters who play a leading role in style and design innovation. Historically, one can trace prevalent trends in culture as precursors to societal change: artists' involvement in fashion, literature, music, performance, and the visual arts has made significant contributions to the social climate.



Beth Lipman: *Residue Collar*, Argentium, glass, glue;
62 in. x 16 in. x 8 in.

The social and intellectual position of the artist changed radically during the 16th century; the Renaissance brought a heightened interaction between patron and artist. Previously seen as tradesman, occupying a relatively low social position, artists were henceforth considered creators of important work with complex content and cultural message, persons who conversed with philosophers and negotiated with kings and popes. It was during this time that the role of jewelry and what are today considered more traditional media, such as painting and sculpture, bifurcated, the former gradually becoming known as "craft" and the latter deemed "fine art." Yet this divergence did not dissuade many great painters and sculptors from continuing to create jewelry regardless of its perceived status.

Internationally renowned individuals from virtually every major artistic genre over the past five centuries have created jewelry-based artworks that not only resonate on their own, but also transform their



Jessica Joslin: *Bat-bird Hatpin*
Antique hardware and findings, brass, bone, steel, glove leather, glass eyes;
3 in. x 4.5 in. x 2.75 in.

wearers. A few examples of artists whose works have recently been included in major international museum exhibitions of jewelry include: Pablo Picasso, Georges Braque, Max Ernst, Salvador Dali, Alberto Giacometti, Rene Magritte, Alexander Calder, Robert Rauschenberg, Man Ray, Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, Sol LeWitt, Louise Nevelson, Nam June Paik, Louise Bourgeois, Damien Hirst, Jeff Koons, Jenny Holzer, Anish Kapoor, and Kiki Smith.

Historically, these innovative fine artists have shattered boundaries between the viewer and the artwork, fashioning a fascinating new creative language. Bridging disparate schools of practice, they reunite the detailed, material



Jazz-minh Moore: *Swamp*
Ink, acrylic, and resin on wood, leather back, sterling silver chain and clasp
3 in. x 2.35 in. x 0.25 in.; 18 in. chain

focus of “craft” with the conceptual depth and personal connection of “fine art.” The wearer of these works of art extols a calculated message, their body not only a canvas or backdrop but rather an integral part of the composition and its aesthetic appeal.

Recently, the line between craft and fine art has again begun a convergence: artists have embraced the freedom to dance between the two with facility. This reconciliation has been highlighted by several important international art museums, resulting in the display of necklaces, rings, bracelets, and brooches in galleries traditionally dedicated to painting and sculpture.

The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston recently built a gallery and hired a renowned curator solely dedicated to the research, display, and preservation of the world’s finest examples of works of art in the medium of jewelry. The Beyeler Foundation and the Guggenheim Museum have also recently acquired and exhibited works in this medium. Reaching far beyond diamonds and pearls, forward-thinking museums are celebrating jewelry’s powerful and historical legacy as a tool of helpful insight into the psyche of an artist.

For two decades, Claire Oliver Gallery has proven itself to be an institution that champions a dedication to physical process, commitment to craft, and intensity of detail balanced with conceptual content. As such, the Gallery is uniquely poised to invite contemporary mainstays and next generation talent alike to create new works for an important exhibition of wearable artistic innovations. With this exhibition, Claire Oliver Gallery continues its quest to knock down barriers among media and to foster and encourage artists to actualize groundbreaking work.

In presenting *Beyond Bling: The Artist As Jeweler*, Claire Oliver Gallery stays true to its commitment to challenge, dazzle, and surprise the viewer with works of art that require examination, contemplation, and interaction; the intellectual connection between the observer and the work of art is of the utmost importance to the Gallery.

Beyond Bling: The Artist as Jeweler will feature over 30 established and emerging artists with works created specifically for this exhibition. While some will be unique objects, other examples will be produced in limited editions. Working in a wide variety of media, invited artists will utilize disparate materials including mirror, crystal, blown glass, paint, stoneware, rapid prototyping, collage, photography, video, precious and semi-precious metals, to name but a few. This important exhibition is planned to travel to public institutions throughout the country.



Charlotte Potter: *The Duet*
Hand-engraved glass, sterling silver, metal, wax,
collected chains; 15 in. x 17 in.

Public transportation to the gallery

Take C or E train to W. 23 St., walk west to 10 Ave., then walk 3 blocks North to 26th street & 1/4 block west **OR** Take any north/south local train including C, E, 1, 9, F, V, N, R, W or 6 to the W. 23 St. stop, & take the M23 bus west to 10th Ave. then walk 3 blocks North to 26th street & 1/4 block west **OR** The M11 bus stops on 10th Ave. between W. 25th & W. 26th Streets.

For more information: www.ClaireOliver.com | Tel:212.929.5949