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Media Release

For immediate release

MAKING: A WAY OF LIFE | SMALL CONNECTIONS | THE NECK | BODY LAYER; SEMBLANCE AND SELF

It's a contemporary metal takeover! Four new Craft ACT exhibitions feature leading contemporary jewellers and metalsmiths from Canberra, Australia and the world



Canberra, Australia: Leading local, national and international jewellers and metalsmiths have taken over the Craft ACT gallery with four new contemporary exhibitions that push the preconceptions and possibilities of jewellery and object production.

“Craft ACT is honoured to host four outstanding exhibitions of the most exciting, beautiful and thought provoking work by contemporary metalsmiths from Australia and the world. United by strong craftsmanship and compelling curatorial messages challenging ideas of adornment and production, these artists make a strong statement about the future of contemporary creative practice in metal,” said Craft ACT CEO and Artistic Director Rachael Coghlan.

Making: A Way of Life presents new collaborative work by award-winning metalsmiths Alison Jackson and Dan Lorrimer. The exhibition blends small-scale production techniques with one-of-a-kind processes to showcase the creativity involved in producing small batch edition tableware objects. Craftmanship and the handmade are beautifully expressed in new collections that are repeatable and accessible while retaining the character of the handmade and uniqueness seen in high-end artwork. “Pleasingly the production systems that deliver these two bodies of work enable commercially accessible price-pointing while still allowing the warmth and subtlety of the artisan to enrich every item,” said Oliver Smith, respected silversmith and senior lecturer at University of Sydney.

Small Connections features neck pieces, earrings, brooches and objects by the acclaimed JamFactory Metal Studio staff, tenants and associates. “Navigating tradition, politics and contemporary society, the works on display in this exhibition traverse the lived experiences of each maker in an attempt to forge connections and make sense of a changing and uncertain world,” said Rebecca Evans, Curator of Decorative Arts and Design, Art Gallery of South Australia about the exhibition. These beautiful and wearable works reveal the unique relationship between the giver, receiver and wearer of jewellery: unlike any other form of art, jewellery can be carried as a token. Signifying love, faith, status and connection, jewellery is significant in how it links people to each other.

Taking an experimental approach to gold and silversmithing, ***Body Layer; Semblance and Self*** features jewellery as well as objects, photographs, videos, tapestry and sculpture. Curated by Simon Cottrell, Researcher/Lecturer ANU School of Art & Design, this exhibition draws together leading Australian and international makers who have trained in the discipline of gold and silversmithing. These artists push beyond the familiar constraints of conventional physical jewellery formats to explore ways that jewellery can heighten compassion, acknowledge the diversity of human identity

and enable a more equitable and cohesive society. The exhibition communicates, says Cottrell, 'what it is to be a living social human'.

The Neck exhibition, curated by Bridget Kennedy, features 12 jewellers from Australia and New Zealand. These jewellers have created work that explores the neck as a vehicle for political, social, and environmental critique. The neck is seen as a sensual part of the body and a site of vulnerability; however it is also a site of strength, supporting the heavy head, a conduit to our heart and lungs, providing life giving oxygen to our bodies, and nourishment through the ingestion of food. "As all of the artists in the show make clear, the neck is a conceptually rich site for contemplation; a liminal zone that emphasises our nature as creatures of both mind and body," writes design writer Tracey Clement about the exhibition.

The four exhibitions will be supported by a program of artist talks to deepen understanding of the work and ideas on display. Full details are available at craftact.org.au

- EXHIBITIONS:** Making: A Way of Life
The Body Layer; Semblance and Self
Small Connections
The Neck
- ARTISTS:** Alison Jackson | Dan Lorrimer | Danielle Barrie | Daria Fox | Emma Cuppleditch | Erin Daniell | Gretal Ferguson | Kath Inglis | Katherine Grocott | Polly Dymond | Sarra Tzijan | Zoe Grigoris | Vivien Atkinson | Roseanne Bartley | Macarena Bernal | Vernon Bowden | Zoe Brand | Melissa Cameron | Anna Davern | Pennie Jagiello | Cara Johnson | Bridget Kennedy | Claire McArdle | Melinda Young | Liesbet Bussche | Jing He | Lauren Kalman | matt lambert | Kristina Neumann | Tiffany Parbs | Halie Rubenis
- DATES:** 27 May – 17 July 2021
<https://craftact.org.au/pages/exhibitions>
- LAUNCH EVENT:** Thursday 27 May, 6pm, to be opened **Tara Cheyne MLA**, ACT Minister for the Arts and guest speaker, **Oliver Smith**, respected silversmith and senior lecturer at University of Sydney
- FLOOR TALKS:** Friday 28 May at 12.00 pm with participating artists from *Small Connections* and *The Neck*
Saturday 12 June at 1pm with Alison Jackson and Dan Lorrimer to discuss *Making: A Way of Life*

MEDIA CONTACT: For interview requests please contact Madisyn Zabel, galleries@craftact.org.au, 62629333.

Images: <https://flic.kr/s/aHsmVCMhrq>

Image caption (L – R): Alison Jackson + Dan Lorrimer, Flow Form, 2021. Photo: Alison Jackson. Sarra Tzijan x Jake Shaw, Lowlight 1, 2021. Photo: Grant Hancock. Kristina Neumann, Boxed Sill, 2019. Photo: Simon Cottrell. Anna Davern, Meat and Greet, 2018. Photo: Fred Kroh.