JULIE BLYFIELD

Adelaide-based jeweller and metalworker Julie Blyfield is renowned for her use of the traditional techniques of chasing and repoussé to produce delicate works of jewellery that reference the preserved Australian floral specimens in natural history collections. Australian flora has long held the attention of Australian jewellers, with the motifs of wattle, grass trees and gum blossoms used by many nineteenth-century Australian colonial gold- and silversmiths. Blyfield has paid particular attention to the unique texture and detail of natural subjects as seen in Margaret’s pressings brooch, 2007.

I really enjoy working with all plant forms but particularly the Australian eucalypts, wattles, and other native plants. Quite often, my eye is attracted to the simple leaf and petal forms I collect on walks in my neighbourhood or places we visit in the remote desert of northeast South Australia. The diverse range of native grasses and exotic plants, including a quandong tree, succulents, and gardenias in our garden, inspire me.¹ Julie Blyfield

Why do you think some Australian jewelers remain fascinated with Australian flora?

What grows in your garden?

Discover another contemporary artist who is inspired by Australian flora and compare their work to that of Blyfield.

Select three examples of Australian flora you notice either on your way to school, in your school grounds or in your garden at home.

Imagine you are explorer encountering these plants for the first time.

Write detailed descriptions of these species including diagrams.

Identify and investigate these species based on your observations.

How many of the plants you observed are endemic?

As a class discuss the importance of endemic species and issues surrounding introduced flora.

Using catering foil create a wearable work of art which captures an aspect of Australian flora.

Begin by observing a variety of Australian plant specimens and completing a series of drawings that document size, colour, texture and detail.

Is your specimen fragile or robust?

How might you capture these qualities in your work of art?

Consider using the techniques chasing and repoussé.

¹ <https://artjewelryforum.org/julie-blyfield-second-nature-o>.
For over ten years, Korean contemporary jeweller Yong Joo Kim has worked with the everyday material of VELCRO® hook-and-loop fastening, to produce intricately assembled sculptural jewellery. Her *Crossing the Chasm Op. 4 neckpiece*, 2017, necklace is made of hundreds of thin strips of red VELCRO®, secured with thread and layered in a scrolling arrangement. In this work, the artist has drawn out the untapped visual potential of this readily available material.

Yong Joo Kim, South Korea, born 1982, *Crossing the chasm op. 4 neckpiece*, 2017, Seoul, VELCRO® brand hook-and-loop fastener, thread, 39.0 x 23.0 x 4.5 cm © Yong Joo Kim 20176A219A

I focus primarily on a single material of choice: hook and loop fasteners. The choice to create jewellery out of an inexpensive material often considered unattractive and mundane was originally inspired by two reasons. On the one hand, it was to survive financially by keeping material costs down. On the other hand, it was to challenge my ability to survive in a field known for its use of attractive and precious materials.¹ Yong Joo Kim

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**THINK AND DISCUSS**

Objects like jewellery can sometimes be a symbol of status or wealth.

How do you identify valuable objects?

Do you make judgments based on what something is made from, how an item was made or by who?

What is your most valued item or object that has no monetary worth?

**EXPLORE**

Today’s jewellers often use a wide range of found and everyday materials in their work, ultimately spending entire careers exploring the technical possibilities of their chosen non-precious material.

Make a list of materials that are ordinary, unattractive and inexpensive.

Perhaps visit your local hardware store for inspiration.

Using one of these materials explore the technical possibilities and limitations of your chosen material.

**CREATE**

Consider texture and the use of a single colour to create a piece of jewellery that you would wear.

Exhibit your work of art in a class exhibition.

Photograph your piece for the catalogue which captures its beauty and specific features.

Write a statement to accompany your work.

Use descriptive language, including sensory details, to help the reader imagine what it would be like to hold or wear your design.

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¹ Yong Joo Kim, personal email correspondence, May, 2018
NEL LINSSSEN

Nel Linssen (1935–2016) is renowned for her ability to form and fold coloured paper into a multitude of different structures. In her two neckpieces and two bangles Linssen’s manipulation of paper and subtle gradations of colour and pattern is demonstrated. The colour gradations in the two necklaces, which are constructed from blue paper, are achieved in one of them by means of a diagonal striped design interspersed with red and pink undertones, while the other features a contrast of colours, with peacock blue at the raised circular centre, accented by a border of greys and browns.

left: Neckpiece, 2013, Amsterdam, paper, 2.0 x 16.3 cm (diam.)
right: Bracelet, 2011, Amsterdam, paper, 2.0 x 8.0 cm (diam.)

Courtesy Pieternel Linssen

THINK AND DISCUSS

Works of art made from paper or cardboard might be fragile and difficult to wear, without causing damage to the work. Are Linssen’s works wearable?

What challenges might you encounter if you were to wear one of Linssen’s neckpieces and bangles?

Find a piece of jewellery which you think would be impossible to wear.

Hold a class debate on Form is more important than function.

Use examples from the Daalder collection to support your argument.

EXPLORE

Linssen took inspiration from the rhythms, patterns and formal structures of the natural world.

Spend time in a natural environment and document all the patterns you discover.

What other places might you observe rhythms and patterns?

Consider music and dance. How might you document these rhythms and patterns to use as inspiration for work of art worn on the body?

CREATE

Linssen spent her career pushing the limitations of paper, transforming it into seemingly impossible arrangements.

How many ways can you transform paper?

Experiment with different techniques such as tearing, cutting, folding, curling, scrunching or layering.

Create a neckpiece or bangle using only paper.
Sam Tho Duong was born in Bien Hoa, Vietnam, in 1969. In the late 1970s his family fled Vietnam for Germany by boat after the rise of communism. His 2011 *Frozen* series of neckpieces and brooches was inspired by the snow-laden branches of bare trees in the middle of a German winter. This *Frozen necklace* features hundreds of seed pearls secured in clusters of spherical forms by nylon thread onto an oxidised silver base. Its structure creates an organic sculptural form, suggesting that it evolved from nature rather than the jeweller’s workbench.

The seed pearls used by Sam Tho Duong’s are formed in either a saltwater oyster or freshwater mussel and usually measure less than 2 mm.

**Think** about other materials that artists use to make jewellery.

**Make** a list of materials you could use to create a wearable work of art.

Seeds pearls have a long history in jewellery design in the Western tradition, especially in their use in mourning jewellery to represent tears. They were often set as borders for the brooches, rings and lockets that enclosed the locks of hair of a deceased loved one.

**Investigate** examples of Victorian mourning jewellery.

What are some of the common symbols, characteristics and materials used in these pieces?

Tho Duong’s necklace captured the fleeting beauty of a European winter through his clusters of sculptural seed pearls.

**Design** a necklace inspired by a memory associated with the place where you live or your favourite season.

**Imagine** wearing the *Frozen necklace*.

**Write** a description about what it would be like to wear Tho Duong’s necklace.
Sarah Rothe graduated from Adelaide College of the Arts in 2006 with a Bachelor of Visual Arts and Applied Design (Jewellery) and as of 2018 is the Creative Director in JamFactory’s Jewellery and Metal studio. Rothe’s *Anisoptera collar* is crafted from anodised titanium, a lightweight but strong metal. Each fretworked and etched link resembles a life-sized transparent dragonfly wing, with its characteristic pattern of fine lines and lace-like positive and negative spaces. Each dragonfly wing part in is curved and joined by a small round link, allowing it to gently nestle and move within the shape of the neck.

**THINK AND DISCUSS**

An heirloom is a valuable object that belongs to a family for generations. What heirlooms do you have in your family? **Think** of an item that belongs to someone close to you, that in 100 years, will be your family heirloom.

**EXPLORE**

Investigate ruff lace collars that were a popular fashion item during the sixteenth century in Western Europe. **Compare** these ruff collars to *Anisoptera collar*. What characteristics do they share? **Consider** the formal qualities, the function and intention of the intended wearer. **Research** the history of neckpieces in other cultures. What do these items tell us about the people who are wearing them?

**CREATE**

For *Anisoptera collar* Rothe has selected the iridescent colours of dragonfly wings, turning something fragile into a durable neckpiece. **Create** a statement piece that transforms something fragile or delicate into a lasting piece of design that could be worn every day.
Norwegian jeweller, Tone Vigeland, was born into a family of artists. Her early work, including the gold ring (illustrated on the glossary sheet), demonstrates the minimal lines characteristic of the Scandinavian style. This period saw Vigeland’s complex and individual style begin to evolve. The necklace from the Feathers series, c.1984, is constructed of numerous black iron nails, which have been hand-hammered flat. In 1983 Vigeland explained that when she hammered out the nails, ‘they had a lovely character – almost like black feathers ...’ The hammered nails were then attached to a chain mail back, imparting to the piece a sense of movement and fluidity, resembling a feathered bird tail.

In 1995 Vigeland began making sculpture.

Discuss the similarities and differences between sculptural works of art versus works intended to be worn on the body.

Investigate Scandinavian design from the mid-twentieth century and highlight some key characteristics which you think influenced Vigeland’s practice. Scandinavian designers during the twentieth century were efficient with their use of limited materials and believed that beautiful things could enrich people’s lives.

Explain whether you think this is true.

Do beautiful things need to be made of expensive materials?

Use pieces from the Daalder collection to support your answer.

Vigeland often employs repetition through the repurposing of everyday materials, such as nails.

Select an everyday material such as paperclips, cutlery, bottle tops, ring-pulls from cans, rubber bands etc and alter its form.

Use this modified material to create a piece of wearable art where repetition and movement are the key principles.
South Australian jeweller and metalsmith, Jane Bowden, completed her Bachelor of Design at the University of South Australia in 1990 and is the owner of artist-run studio space and gallery, Zu Design – jewellery + objects. Bowden has an enduring love for craftsmanship and often combines a bold sculptural aesthetic with intricately woven textiles applied to metal. She is driven by a desire to expand people’s expectations of what a piece of jewellery should look like, while placing an emphasis on hand-made beautiful forms.

Brainstorm the definition of jewellery.

What defines an object as a piece of jewellery?

What does it need to be made from?

What should it look like?

How should it feel?

Bowden’s process for weaving metal strands is inspired by her love of traditional crafts, and draws on both the Japanese tradition of wrapping and Indigenous Australian basket weaving.

Investigate traditional weaving techniques.

How might these inspire you to create a piece of jewellery.

Experiment with a range of materials which you could weave with.

Which of these materials would you use in a jewellery design and why?

Jane Bowden builds lasting relationships with her clients and has in depth conversations with them that ensures her designs are specifically for them.

Choose a person you would like to make a piece of jewellery for.

Talk to your client and have them provide you with a brief.

Create a piece of wearable art that meets the needs of the person you are making it for.

As the title suggests, *Triangular tea strainer* by Jane Bowden could be used in the making of tea, yet its geometric shape and material lends itself to also function as a piece of jewellery.

Create a piece of jewellery that could be worn on the body, but also be used for another purpose.

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1 Walker, Wendy ‘Conjunction of Metals’ in *Craft Arts International*, no 64, July 1, 2005, pp. 50-52.
JILL HERMANS

Jill Hermans uses the traditional material of *shibuichi* in her work, which is an alloy made up of twenty-five per cent silver and seventy-five percent copper and has the capacity to create a myriad of colours when heat is applied. *Brooch* demonstrates her use of scrunched *shibuichi* metal forms and interrogates the Japanese ideals of beauty and truth. The repetition of basic shapes and forms, coupled with iridescent colours, exemplifies her distinctive aesthetic, one in which simplicity and complexity are harmoniously united.

Hermans is interested in juxtapositions, simple shapes and forms with intricate colours and textures, creating balance of simplicity and complexity.

What does this brooch remind you of? **Suggest** a new title for this brooch and share the reasons for your new title with the class.

Traditionally this ancient metal is used for samurai sword handles. **Trace** the history of other jewellery techniques used by contemporary artists and designers.

How has technology or availability of resources modified the way artists are working today?

Sustainability is a large part of Herman’s practice, from the reclaimed metal she uses as well as her solar powered tools. **Create** a brooch you would wear using only objects or materials that were destined for landfill.

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The three brooches by Mieko Matsue feature a simple, yet technically brilliant, East Asian aesthetic, each made of copper. The first is made from industrial copper wire constructed in a semi-circular form and blackened to achieve a deep charcoal colour. The second is made of copper mesh, whose form has been unpicked in parts to reveal curly lengths, blackened at their ends. The final brooch, also made of copper mesh, has been hammered into bulbous forms reminiscent – to the Australian viewer at least – of the domed rock formations of Kata Tjuta of central Australia.1

**THINK AND DISCUSS**

What tools do you think Matsue used to create her brooches?

**Select** one brooch and **discuss** with a friend the techniques and strategies Matsue might have used to create her work.

**EXPLORE**

**Investigate** the chemical element of copper.

Where else is copper used?

Why do you think some jewellers prefer to work with this metal as opposed to aluminium, silver or gold?

**Compare** the scientific properties of these metals.

Which metal would you choose to work with and why?

**CREATE**

**Select** a material that can be taken apart or unpicked such as a fabric, rope or electrical wire.

**Experiment** with your material by twisting, scrunching, curling or plaiting.

**Design** a piece of jewellery using your deconstructed material. You might even use rock or earth formations as your inspiration.

**Write** a twenty-five word statement aimed at persuading someone to purchase your favourite piece.

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1 Truus and Joost Daalder, pers. comm. with Rebecca Evans, March 2018.
New Zealand master jeweller Warwick Freeman was first introduced to jewellery-making in Perth, Western Australia by Peter Woods in 1972. Freeman’s use of the South Seas pearl, also known as mother-of-pearl (*Pinctada maxima*) links his home in Auckland in New Zealand’s north island with Western Australia where he first developed his interest in jewellery making. Pearling existed in both Australia and New Zealand for many years prior to colonisation with both Aboriginal people and Māori prize this valuable resource for its beauty and its usefulness.

To make his *Brain brooch* Freeman has carved a vermicular, or worm-like, pattern into the pearl shell to make a wearable object. The pattern resembles the human brain but also the species of coral known as Brain coral. By choosing to work with this material in this way Freeman uses one marine species to suggest another with both organisms found in abundance in the Pacific Ocean.

**THINK AND DISCUSS**

Find Perth and Auckland on a map.

Determine the distance between these two cities and the similarities and differences in terms of population, climate and culture.

**EXPLORE**

Locate an object made from shell by Māori artisans and one made by Aboriginal people from around Broome in Western Australia.

Sketch both to help you compare their form and function.

Investigate the uses for pearls by Aboriginal and Māori prior to colonisation.

**CREATE**

Draw a worm-like or vermicular pattern onto a type of material that you can easily cut around, you could try hard paper or soft plastic.

Cover the surface with nail polish to create a shell-like surface and attach a clasp to the back of your object so that it can be used.
David Bielander, Switzerland, born 1968, *Grinder ring*, 2014, Amsterdam, polyamide, 2.0 x 2.5 x 4.5 cm
Courtesy David Bielander 20172A121

Swiss-born David Bielander is drawn to using different types of materials and processes. Sometimes he uses materials that we might describe as precious or valuable while at other times he uses techniques and ideas that might be deemed unorthodox for jewellers. In *Grinder ring*, 2014 he used his own tooth, a grinding molar from the back of his mouth, as the starting point for a three-dimensionally printed ring.

**THINK AND DISCUSS**

Why do you think David Bielander has chosen a tooth as his subject matter? Discuss why you think he has chosen three-dimensional printing as his process.

**EXPLORE**

Across time and place, teeth and bones have frequently featured in body ornament. Research body adornment practices that have featured the teeth of humans and animals, and present your findings to the class.

**CREATE**

Design a series of edible rings. What form would they take and what would they be made from? Create a marketing campaign and brand for your edible jewellery.
Maureen Faye-Chauhan lives and works in a small community outside Melbourne. She is drawn to geometry and repetition and likes to work with blackened metal. Her brooch and earrings from the 2009 *Cluster* series look to be both industrial and natural. The brooch looks like a colony of barnacles and a geometric sequence at the same time. Faye-Chauhan prizes geometry as nature's building block and states, 'like growth in nature, my objects are created using repeated elements'.

Consider repetition in nature and brainstorm as many natural forms that have repeated patterns.

Many objects in nature can be described as fractal. Find out more about fractal patterns.

Artists use repetition to create pleasing visual effects.

Locate works of art across art history that have used repetition to create rhythm, direction, balance and movement and label each work according to their effect.

Create a block print stamp that enables you to endlessly repeat the same pattern.

Experiment with printing onto different surfaces and then exchange your stamp with a friend to create a new, combined pattern.

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Mary Hackett, Australia, born 1962, *Bangle*, 2015, Melbourne, blackened dog food tin, 4.7 x 7.3 cm
Courtesy the artist

Melbourne-based Mary Hackett is a blacksmith, which means that she is someone who works metal by hand. Hackett has formed a collective of female blacksmiths called Blacksmith Doris. Among many other things, she uses her skills to make jewellery and in the instance of this bangle, she has crushed a dog food tin with great force to create a wearable object. Something that is usually discarded once it has been used becomes a valued object.

What other type of containers could be recycled to make wearable objects. **List** as many objects as you can before selecting your favourite to design your wearable work.

What type of roles do you think blacksmiths would have played in the past? **Brainstorm** your responses first and then **research** the role of the blacksmith across time and place to create a timeline.

Using heavy catering foil as your surface **create** a neckpiece or bangle. **Experiment** with embossing, incising and colouring the metal. **Document** how it sits on the body.
Just as jewellers of the past used currency such as silver and gold to make valuable objects, Sungho Cho uses the contemporary currency of the credit card to craft wearable objects. Sungho Cho studied metalwork in Seoul, South Korea before extending his studies in Italy and Germany. He believes that his objects have been made for the age that we now live in – the age of the credit card. In this brooch expired credit cards have been cut into small shapes that resemble bombs, a possible political statement that pertains to the neighboring country of North Korea and their amassing of weapons. By making a unique and single item he returns the value and preciousness to the material.

Sungho Cho, South Korea, born 1975, Forest 07 brooch, 2014, Seoul, cut-up credit card, oxidised silver, 7.5 x 7.0 x 2.6 cm © Sungho Cho 20172A127

**THINK AND DISCUSS**

**Discuss** our attachment to plastic currency.

As a class, **weigh up** the pros and cons of credit cards as a type of currency.

**EXPLORE**

**Find** other artists who use recycled plastic whose work is part of the Daalder Collection of Contemporary Jewellery.

**Compare** the different approaches the art making and the differ ideas explored.

**CREATE**

**Create** a series of brooches for different types of people.

**Consider** how a brooch can, in effect, be a portrait and make a brooch for someone using materials that that they like.
Imagine being able to wear a building. Canberra-based jeweler Larah Nott makes buildings that can be worn on the body. In her *Sydney Opera House brooch* the interior of Australia’s most iconic building is rendered in anodised titanium and miniaturized. Focusing on the concert hall of the Opera House, the result is an ambiguous architectural form in vibrant pink that beckons explanation.

To make her miniature architectural interiors, Nott collected the blueprints of buildings.

She is interested in how concert halls are seen as elitist spaces for the privileged.

As a class discuss this idea and consider spaces that may be more or less democratic and inclusive.

**EXPLORE**

Consider the world’s most iconic buildings and locate images that show both the interiors and exteriors.

Design a building, inside and out, for your favourite stretch of land.

**CREATE**

Find your favourite piece of jewellery, it might be precious or everyday, and turn it into a building.

Consider what materials you would need to use and what the building would be best used for.
INTRODUCTION

THE DAALDER COLLECTION

In April 2017, the Art Gallery of South Australia received a generous donation of 161 outstanding examples of art jewellery from private collectors Truus and Joost Daalder. Passionate collectors of jewellery, the Daalders have been collecting since late 1992 and this gift has transformed the Gallery’s holdings of art jewellery, becoming one of the most significant in Australia.

WHAT IS CONTEMPORARY JEWELLERY?

Throughout history and across cultures, jewellery has been worn to demonstrate power, wealth, status and identity, its style and materiality undergoing change at the whim of fashion, style and technology. Mainstream jewellery has largely been typified by the use of precious and semi-precious materials, executed in delicate and brilliant designs designed to showcase and accentuate the mediums used. The world of contemporary jewellery, on the other hand, has often been characterised by its use of non-traditional materials and conceptual practice.

Jewellery exudes a great sense of intimacy. Worn on the body or held, nestled in the palm of the hand, it elicits an implicit physical and emotional relationship between maker, owner and object. Although contemporary jewellery sits firmly within the world of contemporary art and craft, its defining feature – its relationship to the body – cannot be underestimated. It is, after all, designed to be worn.

Contemporary jewellery is made to create something that’s not traditional. That’s something that appeals to us. We like the adventure of it. That is one of the reasons we have collected it. It is really a refreshing thing, so to speak ... with contemporary jewellery there is a major advantage because there is nothing that precedes it. I really think that’s fantastic. No one had ever made it before. We see something completely new. You could not predict fifteen years ago that something like this would exist.  

Joost Daalder

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE: THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

This resource provides students with opportunities to discover contemporary design techniques, materials, processes and technologies as well as explore conceptual ideas of artists. Students have the opportunity to work collaboratively and individually to develop their critical and creative thinking using visual arts language and apply aesthetic judgement. By showcasing a variety of artists, students will develop respect for and acknowledge the diverse roles, innovations, traditions, histories and cultures of artists, craftspeople and designers.

Notes to the reader

All pieces of jewellery illustrated are the gift of Truus and Joost Daalder through the Art Gallery of South Australia Foundation 2017.

The jewellery has been reproduced larger than actual size to enable a close view of the detail of each piece. Measurements are listed in order of height, width and depth or depth and diameter.
GLOSSARY

**Adornment** An accessory or ornament worn on the body to enhance the beauty or status of the wearer.

**Chain mail back** Metal rings linked together to create a flexible chain or sheet.

**Chasing** Indents are made to the front of the metal, also known as embossing.

**Design elements** Line, shape, texture, size, colour, value and form.

**Design principles** Balance, gradation, repetition, contrast, harmony, dominance, space, unity.

**Etched** Marks or designs are engraved into a surface with an acid.

**Fretwork** An ornamental design with interlaced parts, formed by perforation or carved in low relief.

**Fuse** Technique connecting two pure metal (silver and 24Kt gold) pieces together.

**Motif** A reoccurring decorative image or design.

**Oxidised silver** Sterling silver which has exposed to oxygen that contains sulphur, turning the surface of the metal black.

**Repoussé** A metalworking technique where designs are hammered into the reverse side of the metal.

**Rhythm** A combination of elements repeated in variations that indicates movement.

**Shibuichi** A Japanese alloy made from a combination of copper and silver.

**Vermicular pattern** A pattern of dense and irregular lines.

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Tone Vigeland Norway, born 1938, *Ring*, 1960–75, Oslo, gold, steel, 5.0 x 4.5 x 3.8 cm  
Courtesy Tone Vigeland  
20172A100

box detail: Frank Bauer, Germany/Australia, born 1942, *Pendant*, 1980, Adelaide, 18-ct gold, 14.0 x 23.0 x 2.4 cm  
Courtesy the artist  
20172A14A