

**MATTHEW
BROODRYK**
UNITEC SCHOOL OF DESIGN

**RAFE
COPELAND**
AUT UNIVERSITY

**ERIN
CRETNEY**
MASSEY UNIVERSITY

**CORRINA
HOSEASON**
UNITEC SCHOOL OF DESIGN

**KRISTY
JOHNSTONE**
MASSEY UNIVERSITY

**SOPHIE
LAURS**
WHITIREIA POLYTECHNIC

**CAROL
LEUNG**
MANUKAU SCHOOL OF VISUAL ARTS

**JULIA
MIDDLETON**
WHITIREIA POLYTECHNIC

**LUCY
PIERPOINT**
MANUKAU SCHOOL OF VISUAL ARTS

**SARAH
READ**
WHITIREIA POLYTECHNIC

**MARK
SEENEY**
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**KVETOSLAVA
FLORA SEKANOVA**
HUNGRY CREEK SCHOOL OF ARTS

**SARAH
WALKER-HOLT**
MANUKAU SCHOOL OF VISUAL ARTS

**ABI
WOOLLCOMBE**
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**AMY
YALLAND**
AUT UNIVERSITY

**YANG
ZHANG**
UNITEC SCHOOL OF DESIGN

2011

29 JAN — 24 FEB

BEST IN SHOW



2011

BEST IN SHOW

MATT BLOMELEY — OBJECTSPACE PROGRAMME COORDINATOR

The **Best in Show** exhibition series is an annual fixture in the Objectspace calendar. Inaugurated in 2005, the aim is to showcase Objectspace's selection of talented emerging applied arts graduates from tertiary institutions around New Zealand. Areas of practice covered in 2011 by these 'diamonds in the rough' include graphic design, digital design, textiles, ceramics, contemporary jewellery and furniture.

These sixteen bachelor-level graduates display a consistent level of polish that belies the relatively limited amount of time spent in their respective fields. Each of these exhibitors displays either a limited edition, one-off, or specialist type of production and this approach entails few compromises when it comes to construction materials, aesthetic decisions and other artistic concerns. Some of the concepts addressed include: the energy within objects; randomness; contrasts and purposes within natural materials; popular traditions; class; graffiti; commercial branding; digital communication; apocalypse; ruins; obsolescence; nurturing; growth; and the visual language of experimental music.

Aside from offering a foot in the ladder with an exhibition following soon after their end of year graduate showcase exhibitions, **Best in Show 2011** provides an additional professional development opportunity, with participation involving makers preparing an artist statement that has been subject to critique and editing. As contemporary makers, an elegant understanding of critical discussions, the ability to position their work and having the language to talk about what they do are important components of a successful career.

Objectspace would like to congratulate all the exhibitors featuring in **Best in Show 2011** and wish them great success in their creative careers. We would also like to acknowledge the following Institutions and their staff for supporting this important ongoing exhibition project and without whom **Best in Show 2011** would not have been possible: AUT University (Te Wānanga Aronui o Tāmaki Tāmaki Makaurau), Hungry Creek Art and Craft School, Manukau School of Visual Arts (Te Whare Takiura o Manukau), Massey University (Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa), Unitec (Te Whare Wānanga o Wairaka), Whitireia (Te Kura Matatini o Whitireia).

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MATTHEW BROODRYK

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Matthew Broodryk observes that in our everyday routines we often breeze monotonously through a multitude of encounters with objects and surfaces. To the extent that genuine satisfaction with everyday objects can seem like a rarity, it could be claimed that we lack engagement with the objects we encounter. So can we be enlightened to these kinds of encounters?

In the digital realm, Broodryk observes, the 'hover state' occurs when a mouse cursor becomes positioned over a piece of text or image that has a link to another location assigned to it. When in the hover state, the link will appear underlined in a specified colour. This functionality is designed to get attention and prompt the user to select and follow the link. His project asks whether, if we were able to somehow engage a hover state in our everyday lives, would this lead to enriched encounters with objects?



RAFE COPELAND

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Rafe Copeland's *DIASPAR* publication project comprises forty-five reactions to randomness, generated by internationally recognised experts from dozens of different fields?

These articles overlap each other in complex ways, drawing lines of connection that crosshatch into a map. He notes that in the project there is no beginning and there is no end—it is a labyrinth which must be navigated, and these connections are its corridors. Similarly, there are no contents, index or statements of intent: the book is all of these things itself, slowly explaining and indexing itself as you travel through it.

KNOWINGLY COMBINING TOPICS RELATED TO AGRICULTURE, INCLUDING STATUS, INHERITANCE, LIVELIHOOD AND WEALTH, HOSEASON'S WORK PLAYS WITHIN A 'TOPSY-TURVY' WORLD OF PONY-CLUB CHARM, POMPOUS AGRICULTURAL FIELD-DAYS AND GENUINE RURAL PRIDE.



ERIN CRETNEY

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MASSEY UNIVERSITY

Growing up near the beach in Nelson, Erin Cretney has drawn upon these experiences in her practice as a textile designer. The seashell is a particularly important source of inspiration for Cretney.

This is due to the shell's purposeful design as a place of shelter, repose and refuge, protecting the soft mollusc inside from external elements. It is this simple contrast of successfully combined oppositions which is the focus for her work. Cretney also recognises that the interior and exterior surfaces of a seashell are inherently rich with visual information. For instance the interior generally portrays smooth, shiny and soft qualities which are a distinct contrast to the rough, matte and hard exterior. Cretney has worked with a range of materials and techniques, including ceramics, Waitaha schist rock, natural fleece and felted yarns, to replicate these opposing, yet inherently related, contrasts.



CORRINA HOSEASON

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Corrina Hoseason's ceramics practice is connected both to beaux-arts tradition and popular culture.

She is intrigued by the romanticisation of the pastoral landscape, its inhabitants, and how this informs unrealistic aesthetic expectations of a benign, idealised agrarian society. As a 'farm-girl' from good country stock, Hoseason finds these notions to be somewhat humorous, especially in the context of New Zealand, a small geographically isolated country built upon an iconic green agricultural brand.

Recent examination of the eighteenth-century Sèvres porcelain tradition has highlighted for Hoseason that romanticised socio-cultural ideals of class, livelihood and status are not confined to our contemporary notions of 'lifestyle'. Knowingly combining topics related to agriculture, including status, inheritance, livelihood and wealth, Hoseason's work plays within a 'topsy-turvy' world of pony-club charm, pompous agricultural field-days and genuine rural pride.



KRISTY JOHNSTONE

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Kristy Johnstone produces graffiti. The ubiquitous glimpses of living things found growing in the cracks and walls of our urban environments – temporary, unexpected and unwanted – are the signifiers for her series, *Urban Nature*.

Exploring graffiti's typically impermanent qualities through the use of organic materials instead of spray cans, Johnstone's ephemeral works are designed to change over time; weathering, growing, dying, or being cleaned away. Embedding her knitted graffiti forms with grass seed, they are brought to life and encouraged to emerge, like a weed, from the unexpected. Over time Johnstone's graffiti is transformed, as the grass grows and then fades away.

EXPLORING GRAFFITI'S TYPICALLY IMPERMANENT QUALITIES THROUGH THE USE OF ORGANIC MATERIALS INSTEAD OF SPRAY CANS, JOHNSTONE'S EPHEMERAL WORKS ARE DESIGNED TO CHANGE OVER TIME; WEATHERING, GROWING, DYING, OR BEING CLEANED AWAY.



SOPHIE LAURS

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WHITIREIA POLYTECHNIC

Our world is saturated with logos. They mark our place in social hierarchies and uniform the fashion world. 'The brand' is not only synonymous with utilitarian retail goods such as clothing but also with contemporary art.

Sophie Laurs' *WHY SL?* series is intended as a satirical commentary and critique of the modern notion of the pop artist. Interpreting branded objects as contemporary jewellery, her work references the commercial ideals of high end fashion labels. *WHY SL?* comprises elegant, restyled versions of previous items, forging her own designs from the skeletons of others. Laurs' works suggest she is experimenting with the wearer, asking; are you really making a unique statement, or are you, yet again, branded?



CAROL LEUNG

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Carol Leung's digital interactive works, entitled *Thomas, Delin, Laura*, reflect her understanding of the confusion and frustration commonly experienced during screen-based communication.

Ultimately aiming to reveal a full portrait of the person speaking on screen, the viewer becomes an active participant, who, upon clicking and dragging the mouse, experiences fragments of facial expressions and speech. These fragments interfere, interject and interlace with one another, creating a picture that, in the viewers mind, is populated by simultaneous information overload and deficit. A fitting analogy for this is the contemporary experience of web browsing, where our search for essential information is often easily diverted or buried under layers of audiovisual chaos.

READ'S PRACTICE PLAYS WITH THE CONVENTIONS OF JEWELLERY AND THE ASSOCIATIVE PROPERTIES OF MATERIALS TO EVOKE INTIMACY IN ALL ITS FLAVOURS – FROM PROTECTIVE, THROUGH SYMBIOTIC, TO PARASITIC AND BEYOND.

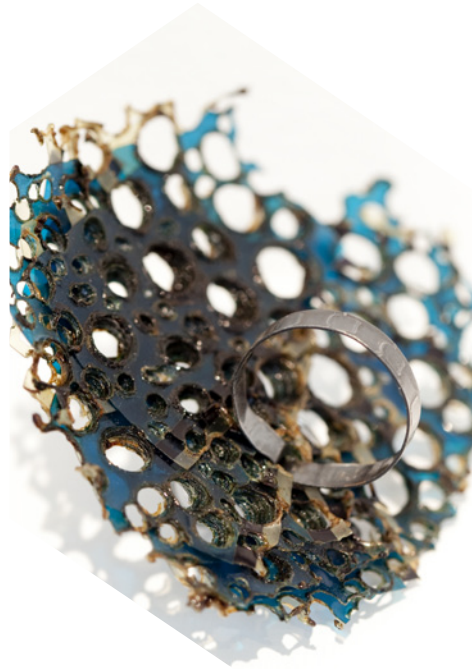


JULIA MIDDLETON

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Julia Middleton imagines her contemporary jewellery creations as “recent relics of the apocalypse of the industrial age.”

These objects, imagined and carefully ‘recreated’ by the artist as once new things, reflect a society that lent too far in the direction of a technological precipice. Now outmoded, perhaps ancient, the meaning we derive from these found objects naturally propels one to imagine overarching issues relevant to current society. Middleton suggests her work is post-industrial art. Like many relics, her objects contain hints of grandness, lost religions and faded architecture, among other things. In one work, for instance, the Phoenician sun appears in a fragment of a speaker cone, while in another work, the reflective bases of a double headed lightbulb emerges from a charred and gnarly fitting. These fragments of old technology are our legacy.



LUCY PIERPOINT

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Lucy Pierpoint's jewellery practice is centred on a premise of defying obsolescence. She notes that technological changes may improve our lifestyles, but at a cost, as uncalculated demands on finite resources result in discarded piles of perfectly functional yet technologically obsolete products.

Pierpoint, in a previous career was involved in the waste management industry, so it is fitting that her career as a contemporary jeweller involves resurrecting materials from redundant ‘analogue’ technologies.

Pierpoint combines her interest in sustainability with the intention to unearth beauty within these materials. She creates objects that, unlike many mass-produced technological goods proliferating our shelves, are invested with a great deal of time and skill and, in the instance of analogue technologies, redouble upon the original content bearing purpose of the material.

Image courtesy Mark McClean



SARAH READ

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Sarah Read's recurring theme is power and nuance within relationships. She is fascinated by the bonds we form and the way they shape our lives.

Read's practice plays with the conventions of jewellery and the associative properties of materials to evoke intimacy in all its flavours – from protective, through symbiotic, to parasitic and beyond.

Read's series entitled Nestle is all about nurturing and growth – watching out for the vulnerable and treasuring the imperfect. Her aim was to develop a collection of pieces that, despite being unfamiliar, would trigger our instinct to hold and protect. The starting point of the project was the notion of jewellery as a sentient force, a separate species that has been humankind's companion down through the ages. As with so many species, generations of domestication have taken their toll on the creatures' natural defense mechanisms, leaving them reliant on us to meet their most basic needs: transportation, nourishment and safety.



MARK SEENEY

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My Ruins is a conceptual furniture design project which came about when designer Mark Seeney attempted to materialize two differing visions: the architecture of a ruin versus that of a newly built form.

The construction of each work in this series varies in the making process due to simple structural differences and finishing treatments of the fragmented sections of mild steel that he employs to complete the object. Seeney relates each object as a metaphor for the built environment and our potential capacity to adapt and rebuild with limited means in extenuating circumstances. A collection of contemporary furniture built in a seemingly haphazard manner, resembling wildly constructed yet ultimately sound scaffolded structures, Seeney's *My Ruins* reflect his interests in re-use and consumerism.

Image courtesy Dominic Emeschajmer



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Flora Sekanova works with laminated newspaper to make new jewellery statements. Although it may elicit subjective responses from the wearer or viewer, the actual information embodied in the newspaper fragments is not an aspect of primary interest in her work, as Sekanova is more intrigued by formal qualities of the reconstituted material such as colour, texture, flatness and layering.

Once the reconstituted material is formed and reshaped into objects, the making process then involves recognition of the dialog between objects and their influence upon one another. Giving equal importance to the back of the pieces as to their outward appearance, when worn, Sekanova's brooches enable only the wearer to know the full shape of the object.

Image courtesy Allan Johnston

ONCE THE RECONSTITUTED MATERIAL IS FORMED AND RESHAPED INTO OBJECTS, THE MAKING PROCESS THEN INVOLVES RECOGNITION OF THE DIALOG BETWEEN OBJECTS AND THEIR INFLUENCE UPON ONE ANOTHER.



SARAH WALKER-HOLT

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Sarah Walker-Holt reconfigures collected materials to create jewellery that consists of multiple components, which she terms *Situational Personalities*. These components engage the wearer by offering numerous discoveries as to their combinations, wear-ability and connection to the garment. She aims to initiate an intimate relationship between the wearer and the object.

Avoiding traditional jewellery fastenings, the wear-ability of Walker-Holt's works is not immediately obvious. Elements within the work suggest a function and fit that the viewer may not see or understand, unless shown, so that what each wearer brings to her objects is individual and due to their own learnt subconscious. A bricoleur, she utilises materials that are at hand; the non-precious materials and their construction test the perceptions and limits of jewellery, suggesting that it is not the materials that make jewellery – jewellery, but how we perceive the object.



ABI WOOLLCOMBE

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Reminiscent of domestic vessels wildly distorted by the addition of thrown and extruded appendages, Abi Woollcombe's recent graduate work, *Painterly Pitchers and Vibrant Vessels*, investigates what she sees as painterly conventions applied to ceramic forms.

In Woollcombe's work, heavy black lines play on the dimensional conventions of drawing, defining and exaggerating space. As a maker of pots, Woollcombe is drawn to Jane Bennett's theory, *The Force of Things; Steps toward an Ecology of Matter*. Bennett refers to 'Thing-Power', which Woollcombe describes as "the force of energy that pulses through all matter, the vibrant interactivity that resonates through and between all things, considering materiality as human and non-human." Over the past year Woollcombe has also looked towards and found inspiration in the work of renowned US ceramist Betty Woodman.

THE PROJECT WAS ORIGINALLY UNDERTAKEN WITH THE INTENTION OF DOCUMENTING THE 'BETWEENNESS' OF THE AURAL AND THE VISUAL; A BETWEENNESS MADE TANGIBLE IN THE CREATION OF A VISIBLE/AUDIBLE DIALOGUE BETWEEN VIEWER AND SCORE.



AMY YALLAND

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Amy Yalland's *Dialog* is a graphic design project that aims to demystify the esoteric language of experimental music notation. It is an investigation of various people's immediate and automatic responses to graphic scores or 'funny marks' in the form of two books and a series of videos.

The project was originally undertaken with the intention of documenting the 'betweenness' of the aural and the visual; a betweenness made tangible in the creation of a visible/audible dialogue between viewer and score. The project questions how people read and vocalise graphic marks; how ambiguous a mark can be; and to what extent technical details (thickness/size/placement, etc) are taken into consideration by the reader. Yalland's books *Dialog: Reading Through* and *Graphic Score: Presently Processing* document the investigation and are accompanied by a DVD, which shows a number of musicians and non-musicians reading the same visual material, with very different responses.



YANG ZHANG

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Informed by her social observations, Yang Zhang's jewellery practice constitutes a synergistic, looping system.

Using the left over material and detritus from three years of jewellery study, in the *Loop* series, Zhang has recycled these otherwise wasted materials to create new work. This investigation involving the reuse of materials communicates her concept of interconnectivity. Zhang cites Julia Morison's recent painting as an inspiration for her practice, referencing Morison's work *RoCoco*, which Justin Paton has described as "a painted world in which things never stop recombining and ramifying."¹ She relates the two dimensional map-like meanderings in Morrison's work as akin to her jewellery making process. Zhang's focus in the *Loop* series also involves recording her environment, taking note of how she moves through it and relating these observations structurally within her jewellery. She encourages the wearer to feel like they are participating in this process.

1. Justin Paton, Jennifer Hay, and Anna Smith, *Gobsnack and Flabbergast*, Julia Morison: a Loop around a Loop, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna O Waiwhetu, 2006. (pp164-65.)