



Theatre of Detail

CALENDAR GIRLS PROJECT

January: Leonie Westbrook (Tenant 2012)



Image 1: Leonie Westbrook



Image 2: Fold Out, bangles, Leonie Westbrook, 2012, monel, enamel paint. Photo Grant Hancock

Anecdote about Leonie's time at Gray Street Workshop

My tenancy at GSW was short, but the experience was very influential to my practice. I was particularly fortunate as my time at GSW coincided with receiving a grant from Arts SA for research and development, so I got to experiment and explore this project in such a beneficial environment.

I thoroughly enjoyed the rapport with the partners and other tenants. I really valued the impromptu thoughtful and thought provoking discussions, and loved working in that space surrounded by people working with joy, dedication, generosity, and good humour. This provided an environment in which I was both challenged and supported, and felt validated that my work was worth pursuing, and also that this was an industry worth being part of and supporting.

One of the things that struck me about being at GSW was how different every one worked, and at the variety in what stage they were at in their career. Yet there was no one dictating to anyone else, or any emphasis placed on who was more important or successful. Those with less experience were never made to feel lesser, but received sound and genuine guidance, plus everyone got to experience and learn first hand from any great projects and opportunities on which others were working. Something I heard quite regularly at GSW, was the value of learning from others and how mutually beneficial the process of mentoring and being mentored was (both formally or informally), and I suspect this has been an integral part of GSW success as a collaborative space.



Image 1: Leonie at her design bench, marking out.



Image 2: Leonie saw piercing.

Q&A with Leonie Westbrook

What usually goes through your mind when you are making work?

Questions, realisations, ideas, explanations, reasoning. Thoughts that I scribble down then keep madly making. Curiously I have noticed that since I have been working alone, these once random thoughts have become more frequent, and the writing longer and freer, which could be because thoughts are now rarely spoken and discussed compared to the many conversations had when sharing a communal space. It wasn't until I started collating and reading these thoughts that I realised I was explaining my work, something I've always found excruciating and avoided unless necessary. Now it seems this process has become an important element of my making, a spontaneous act that both informs and is an honest communication of my practice.



Image 1: Leonie at the bench



Image 2: Wrapped, neckpiece & Another Aspect, brooch, Leonie Westbrook, 2012, monel, stainless steel, enamel paint. Photo Grant Hancock.

What gives you pleasure in your practice?

The joy of discovery, the delight of something unexpected happening. For me the most exciting and worthwhile discoveries have usually occurred through the hand making process, between conception and completion.

Currently I mainly use monel, which I started using with no knowledge or training in the material, so I have therefore learned mostly from playing with the metal and with no restriction as I don't know its limitations (other than what I have discovered along the way). This approach is risky as there many mistakes and failures, but the flipside is that so there is a real freedom to experiment and possibility of discovery, which I find to be a rewarding and really satisfying way of working.

What would you like to make that you haven't already?

Everything I haven't yet made! So many ideas and pieces to make, techniques to try, tangents to go off on, materials to experiment and play with, people to work with, projects to explore, questions to ask. More immediately I would like to work more with the idea of a mistake or reject, being useful rather than obsolete, instead creating another possibility that I may not have considered. This idea that deviations are worth exploring has been a presence in my making, so I would like to explore this further by fully embracing any mistakes when they occur and letting that guide my making.



Image 1: Metal Petal, Yellow & Red, Neckpieces, Leonie Westbrook, 2012, monel, enamel paint, sterling silver. Photo Grant Hancock.
Image 2: Unfolding and unfolding, neckpiece, Leonie Westbrook, 2015, monel.

How do you get from point A – B, from idea to out-come?

Currently I am using cardboard models, and I noticed that these would change over time. I started to let this inform my making while working the metal, so the idea and object develop simultaneously. I think of it as an ongoing conversation. Both metal and card start out as a flat piece of material that is then cut and manipulated, but as time passes the model “relaxes” its hard lines into softer shapes and curves, stretching downwards if hung, or gently sagging if left on my bench for a while. I try to capture a moment of this changing form, re- interpreting it in the metal, as the cardboard model will eventually disintegrate and fall apart.

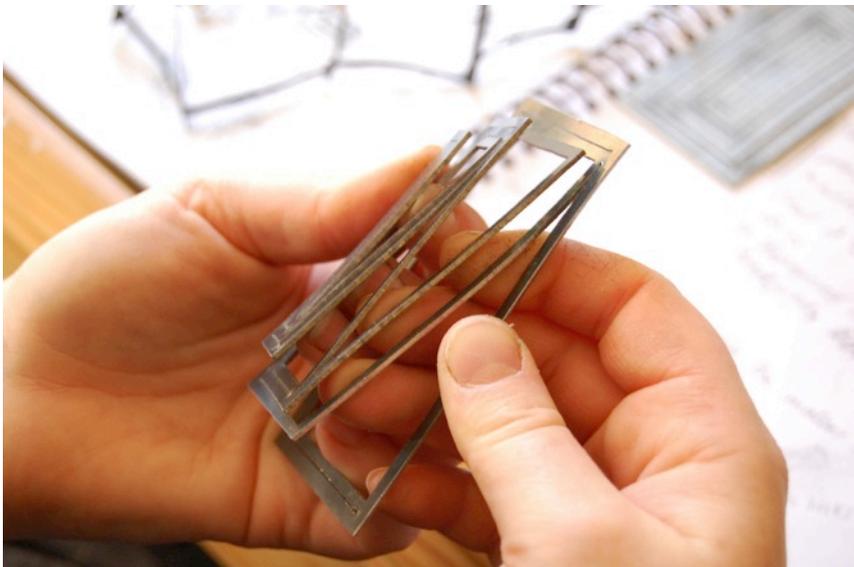


Image 1: Close up of cut edges.
Image 2: In and Out, neckpiece, Leonie Westbrook, 2015, monel, enamel paint.

Biography – Leonie Westbrook

Leonie Westbrook completed a Bachelor of Applied Arts at University of South Australia and in 2008 was selected as an associate in the JamFactory Metal Design studio. During this time Leonie exhibited locally at JamFactory and Zu Design Jewellery + Object, and nationally including *The Ring* at Studio Ingot in Melbourne and the *National Contemporary Jewellery Award*, at Griffith Regional Art Gallery. Leonie's work was also selected as a finalist in the *Waterhouse Natural Science Award* at the South Australian Museum in 2008, and again in 2011 and 2012.

Following her associateship Leonie became a JamFactory tenant, where in 2010 she held her solo exhibition *Relics*. She was also invited to exhibit at JamFactory in *Teawares* and *Metal on the Map*, the latter travelling to Gallery One in Perth as part of the JMGA Conference. In 2011 Leonie's work was selected to exhibit at the *Contemporary Australian Silver and Metalwork* Exhibition in Castlemaine, VIC.

In 2012 Leonie became a Gray Street Workshop tenant and exhibited alongside the partners and tenants in *Process*, and in 2013 exhibited there again in *Two Ways*, part of JamFactory 40year celebration program. While at GSW, Leonie was awarded an Arts SA Project Grant for research and development, and participated in *Mixquisite*, a collaborative project, culminating in exhibitions at Zu Design, and Studio 20/17 in NSW, both in 2013. Since leaving GSW Leonie has set up a home studio, and most recently exhibited in *Illuminate* at Studio Ingot, part of *Radiant Pavillion* in 2015.

Leonie has also worked in the contemporary crafts industry in various support roles, including administration and wholesale at JamFactory, and as Project Assistant for Craftsouth (now Guildhouse), projects including *Imagining Interiors*, curated by Wendy Walker, exhibited at JamFactory, and *Subversive Clay, Australian 2012 Ceramics Triennale*.



Image 1: Coming and going, neckpiece, Leonie Westbrook, 2012, monel, paint. Photo Grant Hancock
Image 2: Leonie working at her bench

CV – Leonie Westbrook

Education

- 1998-2001 Bachelor of Applied Art, University of South Australia
- 1994-1996 Bachelor of Secondary Education, Art & Design, University of South Australia (incomplete)

Selected Professional Development

- 2015/16 *Theatre of Detail*, Gray Street Workshop *Calendar Girls* Project
- 2012 Arts SA Project Grant, *Research, Development and Production of New Metal Work*
- 2012 Access Tennant, Gray Street Workshop, Adelaide
- 2011-12 Project Assistant, Craftsouth.
- 2010-11 Tennant, Independent studio, JamFactory SA
- 2008-09 Associate, Metal Design Studio, JamFactory, with Creative Director Sue Lorraine

2008 *The Compendium Of Contemporary Jewellery Makers'*, Darling Publications, Published 2008, Cologne, Germany

Selected Exhibitions

- 2015 *Illuminate, Radiant Pavilion* Studio Ingot Fitzroy, Melbourne VIC
Threads, Zu Design, Jewellery + Objects, Adelaide SA
- 2014 *Edgy*, Zu Design, Jewellery + Objects, Adelaide SA
Exquisite, Zu Design, Jewellery + Objects, Adelaide SA
- 2013 *Ring Show 2013*, Studio Ingot, Melbourne, VIC
Two Ways, Gray Street Workshop Gallery, Adelaide SA
Mixquisite, Zu Design, Jewellery + Objects, Adelaide SA & Studio 2017, Waterloo, NSW
The Finer Things, Zu Design, Jewellery + Objects, Adelaide SA
The Nature, Gallery 1855, Tea Tree Gully SA
- 2012 *Jing Tingleers*, Gray Street Workshop Gallery, Adelaide SA
Hand-picked, Zu Design, Jewellery + Objects, Adelaide SA
The Grass is Greener, Zu Design, Jewellery + Objects, Adelaide SA
Process, Gray Street Workshop Gallery, Adelaide SA
Waterhouse Art Prize, Finalist, Sculpture & Object Section, SA Museum
- 2011 *I Heart Jewellery*, Zu Design, Jewellery + Objects, Adelaide SA
Waterhouse Art Prize, Finalist, Sculpture & Object Section, SA Museum
Wishlist 2011, Craftsouth, Adelaide SA
Buda Contemporary Australian Silver & Metalwork Exhibition, Castlemaine VIC
- 2010 *Relics*, Solo exhibition, JamFactory SA
Teawares, JamFactory SA
Hang Around, Zu Design, Jewellery + Objects, Adelaide SA
Metal on The Map, JamFactory SA & Gallery Central, Perth WA
- 2009 *The Ring*, Studio Ingot, Melbourne VIC
Pattern, JamFactory SA
Generate, JamFactory SA
Italian Centre Design Awards, JamFactory SA
Its simple they match, Zu Design, Jewellery + Objects, Adelaide SA
- 2008 *Zu Presents*, Zu Design, Jewellery + Objects, Adelaide SA
National Contemporary Jewellery Award, Griffith Regional Art Gallery NSW
Waterhouse Natural History Art Prize, Finalist, Sculpture & Object Section, SA Museum
Hooked On The Ear, Zu Design, Jewellery + Objects
Far Out East, Self Preservation Gallery, Melbourne VIC