

*Cloud Busting brooch
by Sally Collins*



SIERAAD ART FAIR, AMSTERDAM

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When the iconic heart scarab was first unearthed alongside the ancient Egyptian mummies, it was more magical amulet than jewel, what with its spell-like inscription from the Egyptian Book of the Dead. While the likes of the heart scarab have lost their status as cult objects since, they still assert themselves as symbols of individuality as jewellery adornments. Indeed, the rewritten cult status of unique jewellery accoutrements has been passed down to this day and there is no better showcase than at the Sieraad Art Fair in Amsterdam where independent designers still huddle together each year to showcase the most innovative jewellery designs.

The Sieraad Art Fair is the largest jewellery fair in the Netherlands and has been held annually for the past eight years. The fair was originally set up in 2001 as a platform for designers who have had limited opportunities to showcase their work. It has since grown to become a highly regarded event in the international jewellery fair circuit for its showcase of independent jewellery designers who hail from around the world.

LXXX Jewellery gives you a sneak peek of the newest themes of these *objets d'art* at the Sieraad Art Fair in Amsterdam this year.

Tradition

Erwann Bigot, a jewellery designer's media relations manager predicts that in the coming year, precious traditional techniques will be in once again, listing lacquer and enamel as well as old and refined methods. "We are back to tradition, to real values, to high level craftsmanship, which is the real fundamental luxury," he says. It is also for this reason that Bigot believes Russia would be the next area of focus in

the world of luxury and culture. "You've heard about the re-launching of Fabergé, going back to royalty; art exhibitions on the Romanovs in Amsterdam, on Louis Quatorze in Versailles."

Sally Collins, a jewel craftsman, also sees a return to traditional handmade techniques in the world of jewellery-making. "I believe in passing down these skills and also in the tradition of transferring knowledge from generation to generation, as with the textile skills in my family," she says. "All my work is made using hand techniques. I hand-cut, drill, assemble, solder and colour the metal

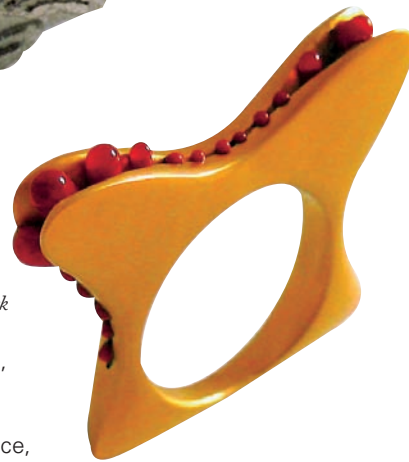


*Dresses necklace by
Sally Collins*



*Topography
ring by
Ute Decker*

*22K gold-plated
ring featuring the
use of red glass by
Serena KH Park*



elements. I then use a variety of 'cold connections' to join different coloured metal elements together. Recycled fabrics are stiffened, cut and sewn in place, and fine cotton or wool is crocheted to create frilly clusters of colour and texture."

Personal story

Collins also designs her jewellery, being inspired by stories close to her heart. "A lot of my pieces are inspired by particular stories from my childhood, and skills and techniques I had learnt through my mother and grandmother," she explains. "For example, my Apple Pie brooch, named so because of the diamond-shaped pieces of pastry me and my mother used to make out of leftover pastry to decorate Sunday pies and desserts when I was growing up." Another example would be Collins' Elsie-May necklace, which she named in memory of her grandmother, as the recycled textiles in the design were taken from leftovers in her grandmother's sewing basket. "Additional brooches are also named after the women in my family (for example, Elizabeth, Florry or Marth)," she reveals.

Jewellery designs can also be inspired by one's personal experience, says Ute Decker

who has a penchant for sculptural designs and architectural lines. "The designs are all collected during my many 10 to 20-mile country walks I used to take to recharge my batteries and put the challenges and petty nuisances of a hectic London city life back into perspective," she says.

The paper jewellery by Saloukee also acts as a raconteur of sorts. Sarah Kelly, designer of Saloukee, says: "Designing to suit fashion and pull in amazing feats of the past has always been important to me. The whole Elizabethan influence has been an important one in fashion recently — my ruffs/collars are a great tribute to my inspiration of all things 'costume history'."

Bold colours

Elsbeth Baarslag, designer of L*sieraden, predicts that in the coming season, jewellery designs will become more personal, warm-hearted and colourful. "My part of this right now is to create beauty, make harmony, play with the colours of gems and gold to make joyful jewellery," she says. She adds that the times we live in today call for a big change and therefore demands a more genuine, harmonious kind of lifestyle. Astrid Berens, organiser of the Sieraad Art Fair concurs about the use of loud colours. "People are grey and black during the economic crisis, now there's a change, something to keep the balance," she says. Jorge Gil also believes that bright tints and colours are a response to the global financial crisis. "Under these circumstances, humanity could respond this way, especially designers entrusted with fashion with its sensibility to favour and steer colours and forms. Bright colours demonstrate the state of spirit to step beyond and start anew, like spring," he says.

The use of bold colours also marks an expression of optimism. Valérie Brun, founder and designer of Umame, says, "Designing in loud colors is the best way to translate the joy of living and a kind of free thinking

*Gold ring with onyx and
multi-coloured precious stones
by UM-BAg-Galet*





A lotus leaf-inspired necklace made of titanium and steel wire by Jorge Gil



Quizzing Glass hidden face by CU

that I love to express." Gil adds that the renewal of loud colours is not just a concerted effort to overcome the crisis, it also signals change.

Organic

Kelly recalls how she stumbled upon her organic jewellery designs. "At university, I had created traditional jewellery models in paper as preparation for larger works. It was at this point that I realised that I loved working with the sensitive, ephemeral nature of paper, much more than metals," she states. The result is her collection of innovative and unique designs, made from laser-cut embossed paper, procured from environmentally approved mills.

Serena KH Park says that organic jewellery is not just about using recycled materials but being concerned about the processes of jewellery making. In the vein of organic jewellery's spirit of conservation, Park tries to conserve memories when designing her jewellery, making rings from a memorable wine bottle, champagne bottle or beer bottles by private clients to remember their special day. "It is about memory and environment. This kind of jewellery is not only aesthetically beautiful but also ethically admirable pieces," she states.

Feminine and romantic jewellery

Jewellery designer Heidi Hinder is taking the lead in designing romantic and feminine jewellery designs. "I am nostalgic for a bygone era of elegance. I design and make unique and limited-edition pieces, wearable reliquaries holding something to be discovered and treasured. In a mass market, one with a disposable culture of current society, I sense that customers are



Organic necklace made of amorphic knitted wire and natural objects by Ute Decker

searching for new heirlooms, collectible art that has an enduring value, both in the precious nature of the materials and through the time and love involved with the hand-making process," she explains.

Hinder's collection is aptly entitled Quizzing Glass, in which she makes references to the single lens magnifying glass worn in the Victorian era for ornamentation as well as use. "The title is intended to hint at the Surrealist's conundrum, questioning the gap between seeing and knowing, as illustrated in the detail of the close-up image. Each pendant is unique, so while some pieces emphasise wit or nostalgia, others will unsettle the viewer," she says. ■