

Meghann Jones

"I have always been interested in taking the object past its function"



Meghann Jones sees her practice as derived from wider contexts than the worlds of art, design and the market place. She doesn't see herself as a production jeweller. "I'm not interested in making precious or semi-precious jewellery for general consumption." While working at Gray Street Workshop Jones was already considering the architectural potential of her ideas and was encouraged by watching established makers work on a diversity of scales. The artist envisages a number of her ideas scaled up as public art works. She comments, "my works are pretty sculptural and I do cross into elements of design. I don't try to extract the two from each other... I never know where the lines of designer and maker, sculpture and object, begin and end – it's pretty fluid."

alludes to the ease with which people, as the artist sees it, become desensitized to the reality of warfare, and regard it as a kind of 'game', one that humans are programmed to play from an early age. The use of an actual bullet casing jump-cuts the symbolism of the 'toy boys' with reality.

Visualisation

The artist maintains visual diaries which act as scrap books for the spill of ideas and gathering of source material. They include photocopies of media images, tonal drop outs and line tracings which illustrate how the artist translates such found material into a body of personalized imagery. Jones states, "I need to be part of the process. That's where it all comes together for me. It's not an on-paper thing." This explains why resolving ideas usually involves working directly with materials and structures (such as her linear-structured *Mine* series) to see where things will lead. The *Gunskull* concept, for example, involved a number of models being produced before decision on the final form.

Process

The artist's initial introduction to jewellery as a metal smithing process was followed by an extended period of self-directed skills development. Working at JamFactory offered the advantage of collaborating with and acquiring technical knowledge from artists working in and across different mediums. Current (2008) materials preferences favour the use of industrial materials such as mild and stainless steel.



Mine series constructions, 2008
Photograph: Mick Bradley

Realisation

The *Gunskulls* motif is derived from a number of sources. Jones recalls that as a child she was not inclined to read books but *Tintin* comics (in which characters occasionally brandished a Beretta hand gun) were favorites. The Beretta also appears as the weapon of choice in many television series and movies. It is, on one hand, a nostalgic motif but also references a popular culture of violence. The idea of 'butterflying' or opening out the gun came in part from a need to avoid referring to the gun 'as a gun'. Once this happens the artist explains, "it loses its power to be anything else." By turning the gun into a skull its ability to be read as an open metaphor for death was confirmed. The artist explains the use of the 'pink glow' pigment used on the underside of the 'skull' as broadly symbolic, the action of light (and the resulting pink glow) building then fading across the day is a reference to the way media images and information become embedded in the subconscious.



Gunskulls model 1, 2007, mild steel, 180 x 400 x 450
Gunskulls model 2, 2007, mild steel, 180 x 390 x 430
Photograph: Mick Bradley

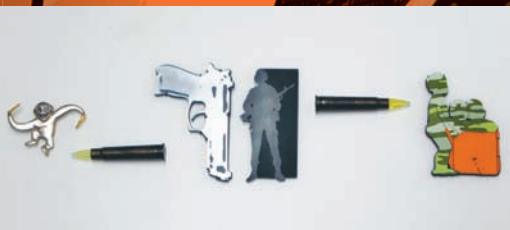
Inspiration

Jones' practice is framed by strong social and political values. Personal political activism over the last decade (including involvement in a campaign to oppose nuclear waste dumps in the Coober Pedy region) has been influential and given the artist

perspectives on society and the role she might play as an artist within it.

She continues to work through these experiences and how they shape her practice. "For me the work is my way of churning through thoughts

I have but don't feel particularly strong at articulating verbally." An example is *Final Sentence*. This work



Final Sentence, Series, brooches/objects, 2006,
silver and gold leaf, black diamonds, bullet casing,
uranium glass, mirrored perspex, steel, mild steel