

Michelle Taylor



"I like to make things...starting at one point, with a thought... a continuing conversation, not yet a complete sentence, describing through materials and processes, an object wearable ...or not"

elements. The artist comments, 'The work I produce is very exhibition-orientated. I don't myself as a production artist. The works I make are very much one-off production pieces.'

Inspiration

The artist states, 'The objects I make are like the physical constructions of my thoughts. They hold a narrative or idea that is fleeting or quite entrenched in my mind. The notion of landscape and more critically people in this landscape intrigues me – how it is affected by our habitation and vice versa.' In Taylor's symbolic scheme of things the contrasting soft/hard properties of wood and metal speak for the play of forces between natural and human systems.

Visualisation

Some drawings are made to aid the planning process but many key decisions are made by working directly with materials. Problem-solving is integral to Taylor's practice. She sees her exploration of the chain motif for example as an expression of a 'playful spontaneous approach.' The prominent visual role played by the chain the *Quiet words* neckpiece is indicative of the artist's attitude to making objects. Everything in the total package has a part to play. 'Sometimes', the artist

comments, 'ideas stay fixed and in place and what I begin with ends as it is intended. At other times I get distracted, my imagination takes over or I am not satisfied with the direction I am headed ... experimentation leads to evolution.'

Process

Many brooch and ring settings have been arrived at by cutting templates in card or metal and bending them into shapes. The artist often works intuitively during this process and occasionally surprised by the outcome. As she comments, 'There are always new things to consider in every piece. I don't often repeat myself. All my brooches have things in common but are an evolution at the same time.' The use of industrial timber (structural plyboard), evidence of wear and previous usage and retention of marking caused in the making of a work confirm the sculptural and expressive nature of Taylor's work.

Realisation

Layering is an important element within Taylor's work. For the artist it speaks of successive or complementary occupations of space, like human communities within landscapes. In rings, brooches and neckpieces these symbolic references are extended by

Changing faces, brooch, 2008. Reclaimed timber (found), mild steel, sterling silver, enamel paint, stainless steel. Photograph: Tom Paszki



the overlaying and clasp of wood within metal settings but also by the polishing and wearing down of surfaces and drilling to reveal others beneath. This symbolises for Taylor, people 'adapting to the landscape and transforming it in their own way.' The importance of human values and rituals in the form of families and friends coming together explains the strong visual presence of circular structures and motifs within most of the artist's works in the exhibition.

Committed founder, 2007, neckpiece, mild steel, plywood, enamel dye, wax. Photograph: Tom Paszki



Microscopic Quiet words (detail), 2007, mild steel, plywood, paper, enamel paint 65 x 65, 1.25. Photograph: Tom Paszki

