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The Glass Jewel:
 From Matter
 to Substance



Jewelers Speak
 Out: Stirring
 Voices from an
 Ancient Land

Observations from
 Munich Jewellery
 Week 2019



SUPPORT ISRAEL ... BUY A PIECE OF JEWELRY

The Association of Israel's Decorative Arts (AIDA) will be bringing 24 artist/craftspeople from Israel to the Philadelphia Museum of Art Craft Show, including 12 jewelers.

PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART CRAFT SHOW

November 8-10, 2019

Preview Party November 7

Pennsylvania Convention Center

pmacraftshow.org



Noa Liran, butterfly brooches

AIDA

association of israel's decorative arts

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Breaking from the usual format, this issue presents as its sole feature Ursula Ilse-Neuman's *Jewelers Speak Out: Stirring Voices from an Ancient Land*. Curator Emerita of the Museum of Arts and Design, Ilse-Neuman spent the last two years traveling throughout Israel visiting cities, villages, schools, and studios. The artists featured herein highlight Israel's cultural, spiritual, political, and ecological landscapes as manifested in its contemporary jewelry.

Ilse-Neuman's evocative title speaks to the cumulative power of individual expressions, and that stirring is at play, to varying extents, throughout the other articles in this issue. Barbara Paris Gifford's "Observations from Munich Jewellery Week 2019" is an honest look at the highlights and pitfalls of this major annual event, where generational shifts are increasingly evident and therefore hard to ignore. In "Findings," Bella Neyman dives deep into the work of up-and-coming curators Sasha Nixon and Kellie Riggs, whose concurrent exhibitions in New York this year offered robust views of the history and future of jewelry through distinct curatorial voices. In "Look," Ilaria Ruggiero presents jewelry artists who imbue glass, a complex material both physically and thematically, with rich meanings. And, for silversmith Julia Woodman, featured in "Studio," it could be said that a divine voice motivated her later-in-life pursuit of a creative practice.

On the topic of stirring voices, please note the absence of "letters to the editor" in this issue. While not gone for good, it does require that you, the reader, share your voice. Consider this a formal invitation to give me a piece of your mind: editor@snagmetalsmith.org.

—Adriane Dalton, Editor

The mission of *Metalsmith* is to explore, analyze, promote, and document excellence and innovation in the field of jewelry and metalsmithing. In achieving this goal, SNAG will produce and oversee the direction and content of a publication that will serve as a significant resource for the metalsmithing field. The editorial content of *Metalsmith* will emphasize contemporary activities, makers, and ideas and incorporate supportive content, relevant critical issues, and the exchange of viewpoints.

STIRRING VOICES from an ANCIENT LAND

By Ursula Ilse-Neuman

In the burgeoning world of international art jewelry, beset by both lookalikes and provocateurs boldly competing for attention, the authenticity and directness of Israel's art jewelry has consistently set it apart. Yet I only fully appreciated what makes this country's work exceptional after having the opportunity to live there for the past two years. This experience provided vital insights into the deeply felt political, social, and individual convictions of its jewelry artists, who translate their humanity into impassioned works that achieve far-reaching resonance.

Contemporary Israeli jewelry is infused with the historic significance of a land held sacred by three major religions. This fact is also, quite tragically, at the heart of the conflict and enduring passions that affect all levels of society, even as bridges are being attempted to unite people in the search for a common future.

Subject to winds of change, Israel's multicultural and multiethnic society weaves together people of different ancestries, cultures, and languages to create a rich human tapestry, as generations-old communities welcome uprooted immigrants striving to integrate into a new country and a new society. I am constantly reminded that this is a young nation. The city sidewalks are alive with polyglot choruses of Hebrew, Arabic, English, French, and Russian, though the seclusion and quiet of rural Kibbutzim and Moshavim are not far away. In addition, Israel's booming technological centers offer innovations that are transforming every corner of the globe. It is amid these multifaceted realities that thoughtful and skilled jewelry makers realize their deeply felt concerns.

I have traveled from the Galilee in the north, to the Negev Desert in the south, from sophisticated jewelry schools in major cities to studios and master classes in rural communities. Warmly welcomed, I have met people using their creativity and skill to produce spirited jewelry that captures the complexities of a region perpetually in the crosshairs of history. Yes, there are walls that separate and divide, and their existence is a deeply affecting and inescapable aspect of life here.

The majority of the jewelry artists I met developed their exceptional technical skills in the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design in Jerusalem (established 1906); the Shenkar College of Engineering and Design in the Tel Aviv District (established 1970); and the Tel Hai School in the Upper Galilee (established 1957). In addition, the NB Haifa School of Design and the Megemeria School of Jewelry in Nazareth are reaching out to jewelry students from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds to teach them the techniques they need to give voice to the individual ideas and issues at the root of their art.

While the works featured here possess strong visual immediacy, the context of the artist's backgrounds and cultures reveals their full richness and emotional impact, which infuse the very sinews of their objects and invite a second (or third) look.

During the process of selecting these works, four key themes came into focus:

Inspired by the Land

Articles of Faith

Echoes of Conflict

Expressions of Identity

INSPIRED BY THE LAND

Jewelers contemplate the visible and hidden attributes of the land and man's impact on it, from visions of distant horizons and romanticized villages to a focus on the forms and colors of desert landscapes.

Vered Kaminski (b. 1953)

Kaminski splits apart her hand-cast stones to reveal the vibrant colors provided by the humblest of materials: sand, drawn from the deserts of Israel.



Vered Kaminski

Stones, 2015

Cement, sand, pigments, stainless steel pin

Dimensions varied:

3.5 x 4 x 1.5 – 4 x 4.5 x 1.5 cm

Collection of the artist

Photo: Elie Posner

INSPIRED BY THE LAND



Vered Babai (b.1967)

Like erratic boulders alien to their surroundings, Babai's delicate forms created from pencil shavings appear on her atmospheric photographs like life forms determined to survive in the untamed Negev desert.

Vered Babai

Erratic (shown superimposed on local photography), 2017
 Photograph, pencil shavings, wood, glass, brass, glue
 39 x 26 x 5.7 cm
 Private collection
 Photo: Alain Delmas





Maya Schossberger (b. 1991)

Using her observations of the lines, surfaces, and shapes of local landscapes, the artist creates a mysterious new horizon to portray her inner world.



Maya Schossberger
Landscape Story, 2016
Sterling silver, copper, enamel,
rubies, sapphires, aquamarine
22 x 19 x 4 cm
Collection of the artist
Photo: Ilan Besor

INSPIRED BY THE LAND

Ariel Lavian (b.1983)

Lavian creates new life forms using the soil, leaves, insects, and animal remains he recovers from the land around his studio.

Ariel Lavian

My Garden—Winter Time, 2018

Leaves, snail shell,
stainless steel
13.5 x 12.8 x 7 cm
Collection of the artist
Photo: Ariel Lavian



Attai Chen

View 2 (with detail), 2015

Silver, wood, enamel,
pigments, stainless steel
7 x 12 x 5 cm
Collection of The Israel Museum
Photo: Attai Chen



Attai Chen (b.1979)

Chen transforms a piece of driftwood into a mountain scene inspired by the deserts around Jericho, and uses the Arab villages clinging to its hillsides to explore how people overly romanticize such poignant vistas.



Rory Hooper (b.1975)

Hooper calls Jerusalem “the city of many tales.” Images of the Wailing Wall, the Dome of the Rock, and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, representing the city’s three main religions, are overlaid on the sixteenth-century Cloverleaf Map of the World, which has Jerusalem as its center.

Heinrich Bünting
Cloverleaf Map of the World, 1581
27 x 36 cm
Photo: Wikipedia public domain



Rory Hooper
Jerusalem My City, 2019
Laser etched and cut acrylic,
olive tree wood beads
11 x 10 x 4.5 cm; chain: 77 cm
Collection of the artist
Photo: Rory Hooper



ARTICLES OF FAITH

These works must be seen in the context of the Middle East, where symbols of faith pervade everyday life. Wearable and ceremonial articles have profound significance in Judaism, Islam, and Christianity, and these works, while different, are linked through the depth and sincerity of the artists' beliefs.

Yomna Al Wazani Samara (b.1994)

The Muslim hijab is a symbol of modesty separating a woman's private and public life. The title *Nusuki* signifies a life based on belief that also embraces individual freedom of choice and identity. Phrases from the Koran printed on the textile in traditional Arabic calligraphy effectively interweave proud traditions with the artist's perspectives on the role of women today.



Nusuki (on model)



Yomna Al Wazani Samara

Nusuki, 2018

Brass, 21 karat gold plate,
hand printed and sewn textile
15 x 28 cm

Collection of the artist

Photo: Achikam Ben Yossef

Photo, top: Iddo Lavie

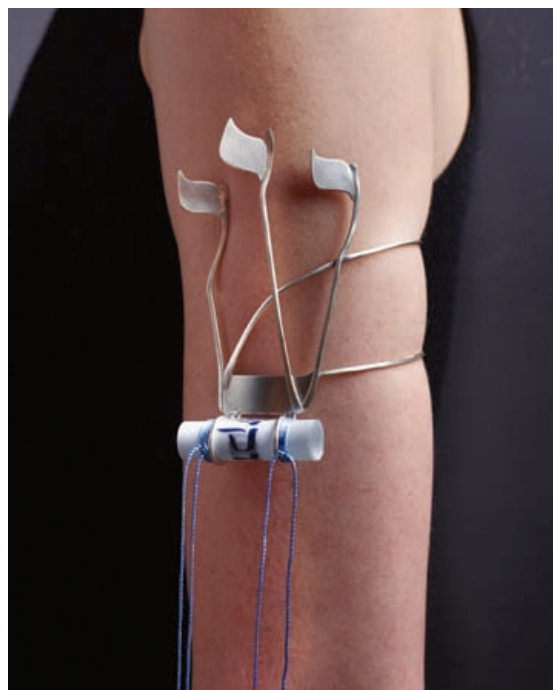
Tamar Paley (b. 1991)

Paley offers women new ways to participate in Judaism's male-dominant rituals by redesigning religious ritual objects that reflect feminine consciousness, text, material, gestures, and the female form.

Tamar Paley
Tzitzit, 2017
 Silver, hand woven
 textile, thread
 115 x 13 x 2.5 cm
 Collection of the artist
 Photo: Ya Studio



Tamar Paley
Tallit, 2017
 German silver (alpaca), printed
 textile, gold foil, printed parchment
 63 x 12 x 4.5 cm
 Collection of the artist
 Photo: Ya Studio



Tamar Paley
A Sign Upon Your Hand, 2018
 Silver, acrylic string, printed parchment
 8 x 8 x 45 cm
 2018.2186; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston;
 Jestkalina H. Phillips Fund
 Photo: Ya Studio

ARTICLES OF FAITH

Kerdan (detail)

Dome of the Rock,
Jerusalem Old City,
Israel: interior of the
Dome, floral decoration
and various inscriptions.
Photo: Hanan Isachar/
Alamy Stock Photo

Fidaa Zuabi
Kerdan, 2019
 Stainless steel, enamel,
 silver chain
 Width: 20 cm; height 30 cm,
 with chain 43 cm
 Collection of the artist
 Photo: Boaz Nobelman

Fidaa Zuabi (b.1988)

This neckpiece, based on a traditional Muslim neck ornament, is inspired by the arabesque designs from the Dome of the Rock, one of Islam's holiest sites. *Kerdan* is the first creative effort by Zuabi, an Arab woman who broke cultural barriers to learn metalsmithing skills in order to bring Islamic traditions and aesthetics into contemporary jewelry design.



Zenab Grabia (b. 1972)

Across faiths and cultures, the hand-shaped hamsa is a talismanic symbol of protection. The artist draws from Bedouin traditions, using her signature embroidered ceramic tiles to create an individualistic neckpiece that takes jewelry's ability to represent personal and cultural perspectives to a grand scale. The title is a tribute to the traditional Bedouin necklace worn by the artist's mother.



Kelada (detail)

Zenab Grabia
Kelada, 2018
 Handmade ceramic with
 traditional Bedouin embroidery
 threads, beads, metal hoops
 115 x 125 x 0.5 cm
 Private collection
 Photo: Boaz Nobelman



ARTICLES OF FAITH

Shachar Cohen (b. 1981)

Cohen uses the timeless quality of polished stainless steel to transform venerated spiritual symbols into contemporary, cool, and shiny objects of desire. The physical reflections of the viewers themselves may represent the replacement of transcendent faith by today's egocentric society.



Shachar Cohen
The Duet, 2017
 Stainless steel
 17 x 23 x 2 cm
 Collection of the artist
 Photo: Mirei Takeuchi



Shachar Cohen
Personal Jesus, 2016
 Stainless steel, string
 11 x 7 x 2 cm
 Private collection
 Photo: Maria Austen



Deganit Stern Schocken (b. 1947)

Remembrance is at the core of collective Israeli identity, making Schocken's candles both a personal expression and a national symbol. The artist collected discarded and crushed candles that had been burned beside graves to create necklaces set with inlaid semiprecious stones to preserve the spirituality of the original vessels.

Deganit Stern Schocken

Soul Candles, 2017

Found aluminum memorial candle vessels (crushed), silver, zircons

18 x 14 cm

Collection of the artist

Photo: Uri Grun



Six memorial candles are lit during a Holocaust Remembrance Day ceremony at Sharkey Theater, Naval Station Pearl Harbor, April 26, 2007. Photo: U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class James E. Foehl



ECHOES OF CONFLICT

Life amid ongoing political turmoil and recurring violence deeply affects these jewelers, who eloquently capture the country's fears, griefs, and hopes with a compelling commitment to universal humanist values.

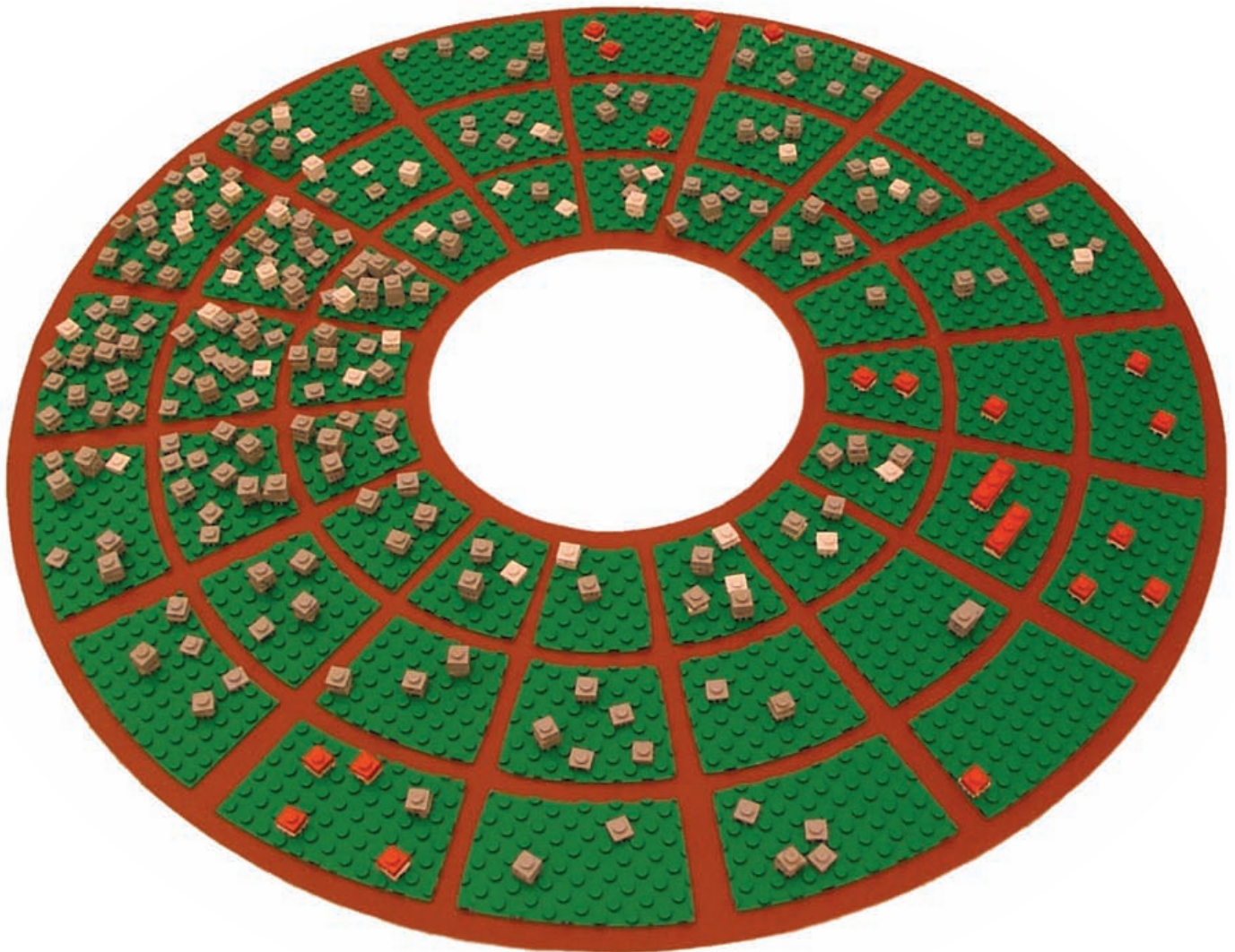
Ido Noy (b. 1979)

The constantly shifting patterns of settlement, and demolition of communities in response to growing populations and the ongoing Israeli-Palestine conflict, are reflected in Noy's necklace of interlocking Lego® pieces, which allow the wearer to reconfigure the design.



Lego Settlement (detail)

Ido Noy
Lego Settlement, 2005
 Lego® pieces, rubber
 50 x 1.5 x 50 cm
 Courtesy Galerie Ra
 Photo: Ido Noy



Einat Leader

Brooches from "Order Has Not Been Restored" series, 2009

Fine silver

Collection of the artist

Photos: Ron Amir

Sheikh Muwannis

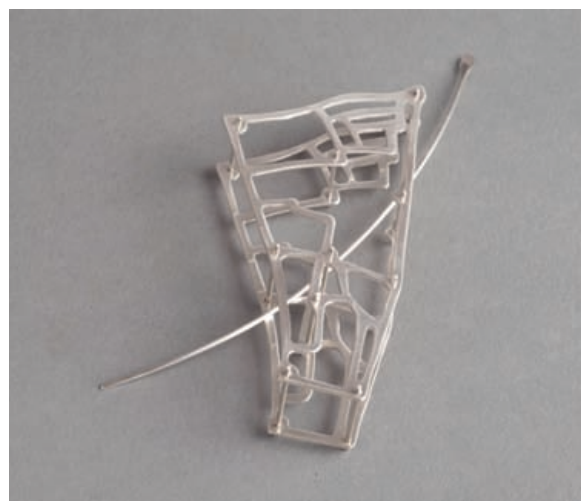
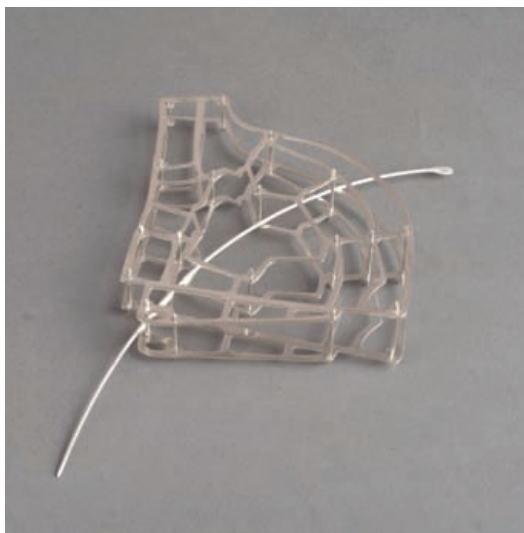
2.3 x 3.3 x 8.7 cm

**Einat Leader (b.1966)**

The design of each brooch starts with the borders of lost Palestinian villages that existed prior to the 1948 establishment of Israel. Leader uses the outlines of their growth projected to the present day in a series of brooches that are not only intended to recall the pain of forgotten people, but to reflect hope for a shared life between Palestinians and Jews.

Jammasin

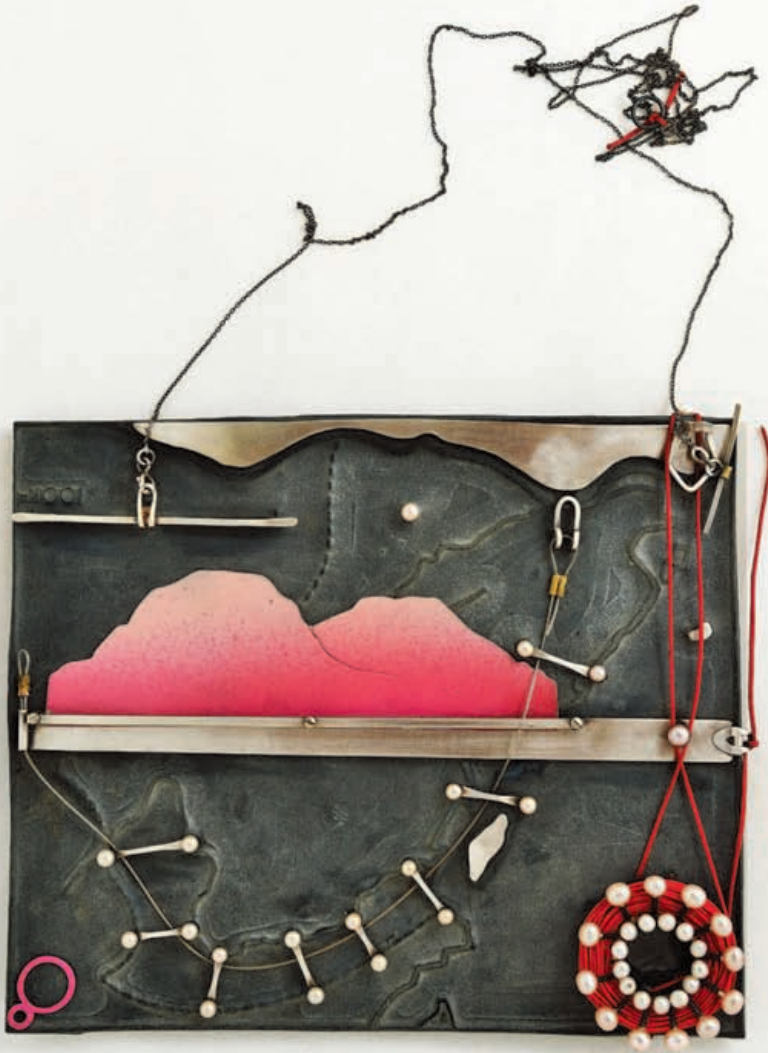
2 x 3.7 x 8 cm

**Salama**2.3 x
7 x 8.5 cm

Sketches by the artist of projected borders of these Palestinian villages if they were to exist today (the original areas of the villages are marked in orange).

The 2007 Zochrot maps of destroyed Palestinian villages of the corresponding areas.

ECHOES OF CONFLICT



Anat Aboucaya Grozovski (b.1959)

In response to the violence and anxiety of the 2014 military conflict between the Gaza Strip and Israel, the artist used old rubber mapmaking plates to build chaotic landscapes of arbitrary borders and secret tunnels.

Anat Aboucaya Grozovski

Parting-line #4, 2015

Rubber printing plate, silver, nickel silver, textile thread
15 x 14 cm

Collection of the artist

Photo: Anat Aboucaya Grozovski

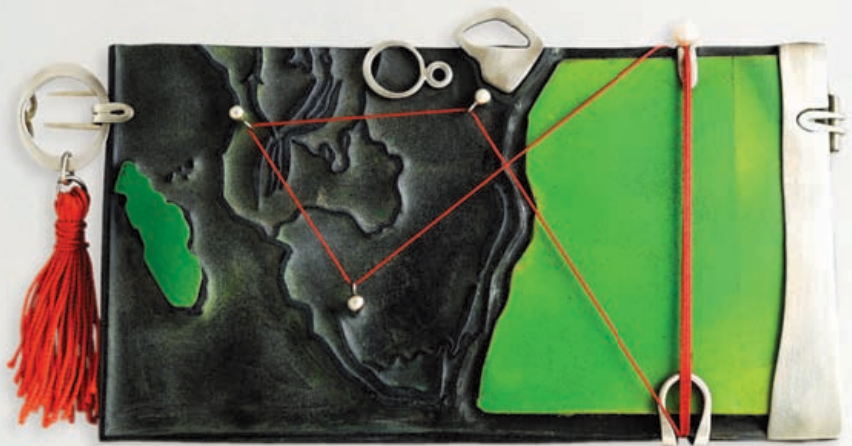
Anat Aboucaya Grozovski

Parting-line #1, 2015

Rubber printing plate, silver, nickel silver, textile thread, pearls
7.5 x 14 cm

Collection of the artist

Photo: Anat Aboucaya Grozovski



Shirly Bar Amotz (b.1974)

Instead of celebrating the symbiotic relationship of man and dog, this neckpiece depicts images in which assault dogs and their trainers become one, a military hybrid of man and animal.



Shirly Bar Amotz

Jump Mobile, 2018

Copper, iron, enamel,
iron powder, epoxy resin
putty, rubber
33 x 36 x 2.2 cm
Collection of the artist
Photo: Boaz Nobelman

Esther Knobel (b.1949)

The gold needles and crushed spool of thread are metaphors for mending, representing the artist's belief or hope that anything broken, including our thoughts, can be repaired.

Esther Knobel

Kit for Mending

Thoughts, 2005

18 and 24 karat

gold, silver,

paper, tin box

18 x 8 x 2 cm

Collection of the

Rotasa Foundation

Photo: Leonid

Padrul



EXPRESSIONS OF IDENTITY

Immigration is the country's lifeblood. Jewish immigrants, from countries including Russia, France, and Ethiopia, join Israeli-born Jews, Christians, Palestinians, Druze, and Bedouins in confronting issues of identity and social status, in order to encourage the acceptance of differences and the rejection of intolerance.

Samah Batheesh (b. 1984)

Though respected Israeli citizens, the Druze community in the Golan Heights still endures the pain of separation from their people across the nearby Syrian border, which was created in 1967. Batheesh expresses her longing to be accepted as she is through dormant branches that wait to bloom again. "My work is a combination of hope and pain," she says.



Samah Batheesh

Identity Thornes, 2018

Left: Natural branches, cement, threads, paint
3 x 18.5 cm

Right: Brass, thread
7 x 10 cm

Collection of the artist

Photo: Boaz Nobelman



Tehila Levi (b. 1982)

Levi expresses the story of her family's immigration from Yemen to Israel by invoking her grandmother's memories of the jewelry she lost during her journey across the desert. Elements of the acclaimed Yemenite filigree silversmithing are central to her dramatic jewelry.

Tehila Levi
Tear Earrings, 2016
 Silver
 3.8 x 8 cm
 Collection of the artist
 Photo: Vered Babai

Tehila Levi
Eden Necklace, 2016
 Silver, copper
 28 x 8 cm
 Collection of the artist
 Photo: Vered Babai

EXPRESSIONS OF IDENTITY

Lior Amiel (b. 1975)

Using a self-taught technique, Amiel transforms rigid and sharp steel fencing wire into a clothlike texture that appears soft and malleable. Inspired by the traditional Arab ornamental embroidery of his Egyptian-born mother and grandmother, he achieves a harmony of contrasts: soft and hard, feminine and masculine, Arab and Jewish, traditional and contemporary.



Lior Amiel
Veil (wall piece), 2015
Iron net wire
70 x 45 x 45 cm
Collection of the artist
Photo: Yuval Katzover

Gregory Larin (b.1978)

With biting humor, this “meat” medal captures the venality hiding behind the gaudy uniforms of dictators. A Russian immigrant, Larin inserts a large fly attracted by the fleshlike textures, as a telltale sign of the decay underlying Stalin’s despotism.



Gregory Larin

Nice to Meet You, 2014

Woolen thread, brass,

polymer, lacquer

7.3 x 3.8 x 8 cm

Left: shown superimposed on
photograph of Joseph Stalin

Collection of the artist

Photo: Dima Reinstein



Hirut Hizkiyahu (b.1987)

A child of Ethiopian immigrants, Israeli-born Hizkiyahu lives in a home full of reminders of her heritage. Ethiopian objects are part of her daily life and an integral part of her aesthetic and her cultural identity.

Hirut Hizkiyahu

Earrings from “Shamkan”
series, 2018

Top: Copper, silver

Each earring: 2.5 x 6 x 0.8 cm

Right: Copper, brass

Each earring: 10 x 6 x 0.8 cm

Collection of the artist

Photo: Achikam Ben Yossef



EXPRESSIONS OF IDENTITY

Dania Chelminsky (b.1961)

The prickly pear or sabra cactus was transplanted to Israel from Mexico, as was the artist. The sabra has become the symbol of the native-born Israeli, but for Chelminsky it symbolizes immigrants who adapt to new surroundings while maintaining qualities of their former identities to create a new life that merges the two.



Dania Chelminsky

Pendants from "Opuntia" series, 2018
 Silver, iron, dried nopal stems and veins,
 rust powder, epoxy resin, stainless steel
 8.5 x 10.5 x 1 cm
 Collection of the artist
 Photo: Ran Erde

Mexican coat of arms.
 Photo: Wikipedia public domain

Prickly pear, or
 sabra cactus, in Israel.
 Photo: Dania Chelminsky





Naama Haneman
Sibling Life, 2012
 Limestone, silver, magnets,
 stainless steel
 variable dimensions
 Collection of the artist
 Photo: Tal Rogovski

Naama Haneman (b.1987)

One of ten siblings, Haneman's life is inseparable from theirs. The artist represents these relationships using fragile but enduring local stones inlaid with distinct silver letters and symbols as stand-ins for family members who come together to form an integral whole.



Rami Tareef (b.1980)

This series represents the changes in the traditional patriarchal status of men in Arab society that the artist attributes to the influences of Western culture and values. Tareef merges the lapel pin, a typically Western jewelry form, with one of the most characteristic images of Arab culture, the olive tree, using the olive pit to symbolize the interaction of male and female.

Rami Tareef
50 Shades of Patriarchy
 (brooches), 2019
 Silver, brass
 Each: 10 x 4 x 0.5 cm
 Collection of the artist
 Photo: Shay ben-Efraim



EXPRESSIONS OF IDENTITY



Elinor Cohen (b.1986)

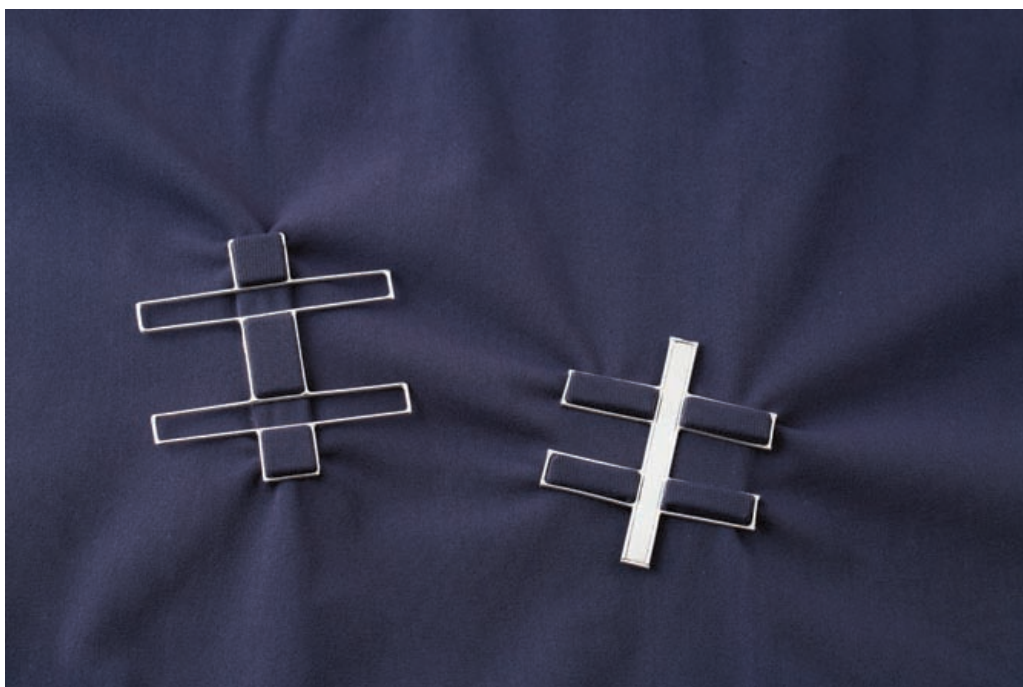
This work expresses the alienation and plight of Eritrean migrants and asylum seekers who made Israel their destination but here are marked as the “other” and limited to a marginal role in society. Cohen’s jewelry provides a powerful visual representation of their entrapment in a vicious cycle.

Elinor Cohen
Forced Placement, 2016
 Sterling silver
 22 x 20 cm
 Collection of the artist
 Photo: Ahiad Danziger



Yotam Bahat (b. 1994)

Bahat's pieces express the discrimination he experiences as a member of the LGBTQ community, and his desire for legislative acceptance. When worn, the brooches make visible the tension between the equal signs on the outer side, while the "does not equal" slash of inequality is hidden underneath the garment closest to the skin.



Yotam Bahat
Equal Not Equal, 2016
 Sterling silver
 5.5 x 4.5 cm
 Collection of the artist
 Photo: Achikam Ben Yossef

IN CONCLUSION

The contemporary jewelry community in Israel brings together artists working to breach ethnic, class, and cultural divides to unite its people, even as political forces work to divide them. Fired in the crucible of turmoil and discord, these works of nuance and concern represent the search for common ground, to transform encounters into engagements.

Ursula Ilse-Neuman is Curator Emerita at the Museum of Arts and Design, New York, and independent curator, author, and lecturer who divides her time between Tel Aviv and New York.

This project was organized with the assistance of Tamar Paley.

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