

THESIS

INSTANTIATING TIME: OBJECT AS METAPHOR

Submitted by

Alexandra Forsythe

Department of Art and Art History

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the Degree of Master of Fine Arts

Colorado State University

Fort Collins, Colorado

Spring 2019

Master's Committee:

Advisor: Haley Bates

Sven Egenhoff

Sanam Emami

Ajean Ryan

Copyright by Alexandra Forsythe 2019

All Rights Reserved

ABSTRACT

INSTANTIATING TIME: OBJECT AS METAPHOR

This body of work reflects personal research into the characteristics of time, specifically memory in relation to site, and our human relationship with the natural world. Time is relative, not absolute. Each individual has a unique perspective, from the speed at which time passes to recollection of the past to speculation into future events. Through the dual lenses of the personal and the geologic, I engage with perceptions of spatiotemporal experience. Exploration of the souvenir as a physical representation of memory and site is contrasted against the expansive theory of deep time. Through repetitive, time intensive methods grounded in traditional ways of making I create objects that both embody and represent time. By interacting directly with the body, my wearable pieces allow for an intimate engagement with these ideas; the non-wearable work provides space for reflection on the nature of time and memory.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to my husband and family for being so supportive during this journey, I could not have done it without them. Thank you to my advisor Haley for guiding, challenging and encouraging me. Thanks to the amazing folks on my committee, I am so grateful for your insight and honesty. I also want to thank Kathleen Chynoweth, Elizabeth Sorensen, Maggie and Cory Seymour, Michael Highsmith and Suzanne Faris for everything that goes into running this great department. Thanks also to Mark Krivanek for a generous tuition donation and being a friend, mentor, and incredibly patient boss for over twenty years.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
INSTANTIATING TIME: OBJECT AS METAPHOR..	1
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	21
FIGURES	22

Introduction ~

I am fascinated by social and personal perceptions of time and how these influence our general conception of reality. In this body of work, I explore the ability of objects to act as memento or souvenir of site. Approaching my practice as a way of embodying time through the act of making, I create physical representations of time through material and form. Each piece in this collection is an artifact of connections, of many pieces coalescing to form a whole. The works are metaphors for site, time and the fabricated nature of our identities and social structures. In thinking through the idea of a social construct and how communally agreed upon notions form culture and identity, jewelry (already a potent social signifier) becomes the perfect vehicle to explore constructed perceptions of reality. Another key aspect of this inquiry has been engaging with the notion of connection as a way of linking ideas, places and separate moments in time to form something new. How is the fabric of our reality connected and what are some metaphorical ways to highlight these connections?

Preliminary Investigations ~

My examination of personal concepts of time began with research into the material and semiological qualities of human hair. As a physical manifestation of human time and identity, hair is a material that provides a rich source for artistic inquiry. I created a series of three pieces investigating the symbolic possibilities of hair when used in combination with other materials. The final work in the sequence,

Timeline, 2017, (Fig. 1) was my first experience directly engaging with the notion of embodying time in an object. The piece is created from tiny handmade copper beads and my own hair. The 3,774 beads represent the days of hair growth between two dramatic haircuts. The resulting 20" long strands allowed me to use hair as beading thread, a linear representation of days, months and years of personal growth and change. This piece also permitted a brief indulgence in nostalgia as it utilizes a Native American beading technique that I learned as a child, bringing my artistic practice full circle. The work offers commentary on the arbitrary nature of societal time marking systems and replaces these with a personal one. Hair holds great significance in terms of societal and cultural meaning as well as through its historical use as a *momento mori*, the keepsake of a departed loved one. In the case of *Timeline*, it memorializes a past version of myself that I will never be again.

The linear nature of *Timeline* resulted from a desire to explore the qualities inherent in human hair; it begins at the scalp and grows outward in what one might call a line. Much of Western scientific and philosophic thought adheres to a linear model of time as the most rational organizational system. However, I have found it useful to adopt the cyclical model of time as well in my own mental organization of the phenomena. When thinking of the calendar year I picture a large ellipse, the months and seasons clearly marked yet lacking in uniformity one to the other, each changing dimensionally with my perception. In contrast, my mental construct of years consists of a narrow band amidst an infinite void stretching endlessly behind and ahead of me in a

long undulating ribbon, with each year marked as a discrete segment. Archeologist Richard Morris writes,

Ancient people believed that time was cyclic in character. We, on the other hand, habitually think of time as something that stretched in a straight line into the past and future . . . The linear concept of time has had profound effect on Western thought. Without it, it would be difficult to conceive of the idea of progress, or to speak of cosmic or biological evolution.¹

For me time has both characteristics, but it can also be a murky haze full of indistinct images and sensations of memory. The ability of objects to hold time in the form of associations that trigger memory has always intrigued me.

Instantiating Time ~

My research into personal and collective notions of time and the souvenir as a reference to site has been embodied in a series of jewelry objects and a large wall installation. *Instantiate* means to represent or manifest an abstract concept. In this body of work, I take my own mental constructs and create an *instance*, a physical materialization of something intangible.

Calendar/365, 2018 (Fig. 2), is a manifestation of the cyclical model of time, my previously described perception of the calendar year. Made up of 365 individual bronze nature castings on the ends of long bronze wires, this work is arranged in a large elliptical shape that protrudes in a perpendicular fashion from the wall. Reminiscent of blades of grass or other botanical growth, the shift in position from the expected vertical orientation encourages the viewer to re-examine preconceived notions of time and site.

Small dried plant remnants are likely to crumble to dust within a matter of days or weeks but through material transformation into metal become a personal marker of a momentary experience. In the change of seasons, particularly from summer to autumn, there is a unique beauty to be found in seed pods, dried flower heads and mountain alder cones. When walking outdoors my eyes are continuously seeking form and texture. I am in perpetual expectation of wonder at the varieties, changes and loveliness that is found within the things that grow and live in the surrounding landscape. Daily, I collect little mementos: a stalk of lavender from my grandmother's yard, a tiny pinon cone from the land I grew up on, a dried black-eyed-susan from the walk with my dog that final day before he passed. Each of these locations holds memories and associations. The bits I collect on these rambles become personal souvenirs of place and physical representations of experience. Susan Stewart in her book *On Longing*, notes that,

All souvenirs are souvenirs of nature, yet it is nature in its most synthetic, its most acculturated sense which appears here. Nature is arranged diachronically through the souvenir, its synchrony and atemporality are manipulated into a human time and order.²

In *Calendar/365*, the individual souvenir of site is lost in the greater system of marking time. By returning to places again and again new materials are constantly discovered and a kind of indulgence in nostalgia ensues. Fresh discoveries make this indulgence seem not only a renewal of, and immersion in, past experiences and sensations, but a way of acknowledging the present moment and realizing that each visit will reveal some change in the landscape. Places are constantly in a state of flux and noting these subtle differences can be a way of orienting oneself within the flow of time. I have always been

a “collector” of nature and the collections I form create a new and separate environment, evoking different connotations that differ from the singular object. In these groupings the individual unit still retains a sense of its original location but only for me as the collector. This contextual understanding is not accessible to the viewer or wearer. Collecting, cataloging and sorting are ways to organize and make sense of the world around us. This habitual activity of gathering is something I have done since before I could talk and only now am I beginning to understand how it has shaped me as an artist.

Examination of the installation/ sculpture *Study for a Monument*, 2013-ongoing (Fig. 3) by Abbas Akhavan inspired me to seek an alternative method of presentation for my nature castings. In *Calendar/ 365* I wanted to activate the forms differently than through use as adornment. Hand-sculpted in wax and cast in bronze, Akhavan’s installation comprises botanical replicas that have been increased in scale to that of the human body. Laid out horizontally on cotton sheets the works reference funereal proceedings, the patinated metal forms have the appearance of bodies assembled for burial. Akhavan shifts the expected vertical orientation of the installation in favor of placing the work directly on the gallery floor. Engagement from the viewer demands a physical change in posture, bending and stooping for closer examination. This ongoing work is complex and poignant speaking to the nature of monuments and collective memory.

Lost wax casting techniques make it possible to question and change an object’s relationship to time through material substitution. In *Calendar/ 365*, the resulting metal

copy of the botanical detritus retains a semblance of its appearance but has lost nearly all other aspects of its originality (Fig. 4). The color, fragility, texture, smell and weight have all but disappeared or been dramatically altered. For me, this transformation acts as a potent metaphor for the way memory operates in relation to experience. Memory can never fully recapture a past moment and is always incomplete. Susan Stewart writes of the human urge to delineate time through the act of marking, “The pages falling off the calendar, the notches marked in a tree that no longer stands- these are the signs of the everyday, the effort to articulate difference through counting.”³ The human desire to count time or mark the passing of days and seasons was at the root of my inquiry with *Calendar/365*. Time becomes more memorable for me through association with site, or specific location. By counting, arranging and transforming collected detritus a new system is imposed on the natural order of time. *Timeline* and *Calendar/365* allowed me to manifest linear and cyclical models of time into tangible objects.

Through the creation of *Calendar/365* and the direct engagement with natural detritus I began to question the prevailing dichotomous view of the natural vs. man-made worlds. I was surprised how much my own constructed view of reality was influenced by social and cultural preconceptions, including my view of nature.

Philosopher Steven Vogel in his book, *Thinking Like a Mall: Environmental Philosophy After the End of Nature*, writes that, “Far from being something other than or beyond human . . . ‘nature’ and ‘wilderness’ are revealed on close historical examination to be concepts that are created by humans- which is to say, they are social constructions.”⁴ He

goes on to clarify that it is not nature itself that he argues is socially constructed but only our *idea* of it.⁵ If our idea of nature is not what it actually is, then how do we begin to change our perspective? An awareness that the dichotomy between man and nature is false seems a good place to start. One aspect of my current body of work is an attempt to illustrate that there is no separation, only a multilayered and complex series of connections.

Moving to rural Colorado from the heart of the east coast (Washington, D.C.), I realize upon reflection that there were perceptions and ingrained societal filters through which I saw that new “wild” environment. Those beautiful, peaceful, quiet and nature-filled ideals of the American West were a reality in the sun-filled days of my childhood. I held a fond dream of living full time in the wilderness from a home built with my own hands. Like the incredible story of Dick Proenneke in the documentary “*Alone in the Wilderness*,” where man takes on the perils and challenges of living alone far from civilization, I too wanted a life of solitude. I did not realize how much I have taken societal notions of wilderness to heart and allowed my own perception to be influenced by the commonly held binary position of man and nature, that they are separate entities that cannot occupy the same space. A shift in perspective allows for a view of the planet as a singular environment; all that surrounds us is part of that environment from the densely constricted urban spaces to the remote wilderness of the West. Vogel states,

Humanity and the environment cannot be separated from each other- a conclusion that does *not* mean that we are masters of the world, or that it masters us either, but rather that “world” and “we” are so deeply interconnected that there is no way to tell where one leaves off and the other begins.⁶

This idea of connection is at the heart of my current inquiry and jewelry provides a potent platform to build upon.

Jewelry has always felt to me like the most personal art form; creating an object with my hands that someone else will then wear against their skin, on their body.

Personal adornment is a natural way to carry meaning through life. Leisbeth den Besten, in her book, *On Jewellery*, notes that the point at which early humans began using adornment indicates a prominent shift in evolution; demonstrating an ability to think symbolically and thus differentiating the human species from other types of life.⁷

Jewelry that intentionally takes the form of conceptual expression has been developed by serious practitioners over the past three-quarters of a century. Beginning in the 1940's and 50's and gaining momentum in the 60's "costume" or fashion jewelry became widely accessible. The availability of inexpensively made adornment allowed the signifying aspects of jewelry to be used in different ways, indicating style, culture and sophistication without an ostentatious display of wealth. Roland Barthes in his essay, *From Gemstones to Jewelry*, notes that the explosion of fashion ornaments served to break down social and class barriers that had always surrounded jewelry.⁸ Barthes states,

... there has been a widespread liberation of jewelry ... it is no longer subservient to the law of the highest price nor to that of being used in only one way, such as for a party or sacred occasion: jewelry has become democratic."⁹

Throughout history jewelry and personal adornment act as important semiological signifiers of class and status, not just in Western or European culture, but in nearly every society in the world. Barthes argues that jewelry "holds the ultimate power of

signification,” placing it above the signifying ability of clothing.¹⁰ This is a compelling basis on which to build artistic content and an important argument in support of the intentional jewelry object.

Contemporary conceptual jewelry often utilizes non-durable components as a way of challenging material hierarchies. This approach explores the qualities of various materials and their changing significance when used on the body for adornment. A great deal of contemporary wearable art is not intended to endure over time or hold up to daily wear. To me this approach feels counter intuitive when so much of our consumer culture is based on products/ objects that will eventually wear out and be thrown away. While work made from non-durable materials does perhaps bring more attention to this condition, it seems to do little to counter it. Western consumerism has led to a marked disconnection from the objects around us, a lack of interest in where something came from, how it was made, or where it goes when it has become trash. I feel the need for objects intended to withstand the passage of time and are therefore able to act as a marker, an artifact of the present moment. Traditional materials like silver and gemstones are appealing not only for their tactile qualities but also for the ability to withstand time and wear.

In the historical framework of jewelry, the gemstone has played an important role by adding both perceived and actual value as well as contributing to the visual appeal of an object. Stones have been ascribed various healing and metaphysical properties and associated in ritual and religion for thousands of years. Because of its

abundance and universality, durability and beautiful variety of color and pattern, microcrystalline quartz (agate and jasper) was a material used widely by pre-historic man. In Western jewelry traditions this material has always been relegated to the category of “semi-precious”. However, its durability and beautiful variety of color and pattern has ensured use of agate and jasper as adornment since the Bronze Age. Roland Barthes writes,

“... stone has always stood for the very essence of things, for the irremediably inanimate object; stone is neither life nor death, it represents the inert, the stubbornness of the thing to be nothing but itself; it is the infinitely unchanging.”¹¹

And yet stone becomes somewhat malleable in the hands of the lapidary artist; it can be cut, shaped and polished. In my work stones do represent the “infinitely unchanging”, acting as a stand-in for forces that move too slowly to be observed even over the lifespan of entire species, the geologic systems that change and shape the earth over hundreds of millions of years.

In the jewelry component of *Instantiating Time*, several concepts unite to form a cohesive collection of objects. Personal and social constructs of nature are melded with the ability of materials to hold time, both as personal memento or souvenir and as a reference to the immense span of geologic history. Additionally, the stones and silver nature castings provide the work with a direct reference to site. The complex silver framework that makes up the foundation of these unique wearable pieces has been assembled through fabrication. This method of building form through separate components acts as metaphor for constructed perceptions of reality. In some pieces, like

the brooch *Interval I*, 2018, the framework of silver is almost completely covered by the exterior stone façade, implying an intimate sense of interiority (Fig. 5). Susan Stewart notes that, “The delicate and hermetic world of the souvenir is a world of nature idealized; nature is removed from the domain of struggle into the domestic sphere of the individual and the interior.”¹² In other pieces the silver structure is more open, exemplified in the ring/pendant *Continuance II*, 2019, allowing for the interior space to be viewed more closely (Fig. 6). The botanical castings and polished gemstones reinforce the notion of “nature idealized” while still representing site and experience through the action of a souvenir. By taking an organic object and transforming it into silver a sense of preciousness and permanence is transferred to a formerly fleeting experience of site.

The small botanical casts contribute a sense of nostalgia to the work, a feeling of something referenced through facsimile that cannot be so easily replaced. The intricate organic forms provoke a desire to examine more closely, to become lost in the act of looking and discovery. This sense of wonder is what inspires me when considering Mari Ishikawa’s series, *Rebirth*. The brooches in this collection incorporate botanical cast sterling components in combination with silk embroidery thread for an effect that evokes the mysterious and inevitable qualities of nature, to renew and regrow (Fig. 7). Her work contains a sense of delicacy and harmony between the disparate materials of fiber and metal. Compositional balance between materials is something which I strive for when combining stone and metal components.

Each stone used in this body of work carries a different story and has been

dislocated from a different place of origin. In my desire to authentically represent ideals of the West I acquired over fifty “slabbed” specimens of agate and jasper, the majority gathered more than twenty years ago. All the stones were hand collected (without heavy equipment) throughout the western portions of the United States. The collectors and their stories serve to reinforce an old-fashioned idealization of the West, where prospectors are still seeking to make their fortune. It has always been important to me to engage in the ethical sourcing of materials in my practice. Knowing the place and method by which the stones were collected is important to supporting the overall concept of the work. The color and patterning of each stone specimen is the result of various introduced elements in the mineral composition that precipitated out from surrounding environments. These fragments are a unique record of site, transformed through slow and complex geologic processes, and a tangible, physical marker in time. I have carefully hand-cut each stone to form a covering or façade for the silver framework that makes up the foundation of each piece. Each small assemblage alludes to the un-knowableness and sublime nature of geologic forces at work in the world around us.

I made a deliberate choice to emphasize both the stones and the connection points through the unique way the stones are attached to the silver frames. By carefully drilling through each stone and using small tubular rivets instead of more traditional stone setting methods the conceptual significance of connection between separate elements is heightened. When considering experimental methods of stone setting the

work of pioneering studio jeweler Margaret de Patta immediately comes to mind. Hailing from a background rooted in Bauhaus design principles, de Patta created exquisite Constructivist inspired jewelry with unusual “invisible” settings. Collaboration with a lapidary artist allowed her to acquire stones cut to her specific requirements.¹³ In one of her signature pendants from 1948 the gemstone is a natural extension of the overall composition and demonstrates De Patta’s interest in the physical qualities of light and the refractive ability of gemstones (Fig. 8). Her striking geometric compositions are notable for their fineness of craftsmanship and asymmetric sculptural qualities.

There is beauty to be found in irregularity, a quality often observable in nature.¹⁴ This notion manifests in the *Instantiating Time* jewelry collection through the abstract geometric compositions that make up each piece. These small volumes either appear as though they are in a state of decay or regeneration, depending on one’s perspective. Most naturally occurring minerals grow in unpredictable and asymmetrical ways while still following the rules of their basic structures. The volumetric yet linear forms invoke a sense of familiarity through their resemblance to architectural edifices. These works demonstrate the similarities between naturally made and human built, without implying dichotomy.

The crystalline structure of minerals provide a framework to incorporate the stones and castings into a cohesive whole. By examining the foundational systems of various minerals, I used these shapes as the basis from which to develop pattern. Further

abstraction and alteration of these forms gives the viewer a sense of recognition without specific identification. Soetsu Yanagi states in *The Unknown Craftsman*, “A pattern is both true to nature and artificial.”¹⁵ He continues, “Pattern is born when one reproduces the intuitively perceived essence.”¹⁶ Through the process of creating this body of work I have attempted to let go of a habit of over-intellectualizing and instead allow intuition and instinctive making to permeate my practice. Although I began each piece with a series of sketches drawn from examination of crystalline form, the polished slices of agate and jasper are organically formed shapes brought about through my desire to maximize the stone and emphasize certain areas. From there the stone shapes are traced onto paper or foam and assembled into three dimensional forms. After I create silver frames for each stone the assemblage process also allows for interpretation and change, growing naturally with each added part. The nature cast elements are incorporated last, integrated into the completed structures. The small vessel forms, some mostly enclosed, others more open, act metaphorically as containers for memory. There is an inherent memory of site already contained within the stones and organic reproductions, and each piece will hold new memories for the owner/wearer/viewer as it moves forward into the world on a path away from its maker.

A study of geology during my undergraduate program broadened my understanding of the vastness of geologic time. In allowing this concept to settle into my consciousness I was strangely comforted. Over the course of eons and through a system of complex processes our planet has reshaped its surface, dramatically altering

the type of life upon it time and again. Awareness of the incomprehensible age of the Earth suddenly caused the minutiae of contemporary life to seem trivial and fleeting. The staggering amount of time that came before the human species, and the inference that a similar amount of time could elapse after human civilization has crumbled to dust profoundly influences the ways I think about time.

“Deep time” is a term coined by geologist John Mcphee in his book, *Basin and Range*, although the concept dates back to the fathers of geology, James Hutton and later, Charles Lyell.¹⁷ Hutton posited that geologic time “has no vestige of a beginning, no prospect of an end.”¹⁸ This is certainly the most significant contribution of the geosciences to human thought and a difficult one to comprehend logically. Dr. Stephen Jay Gould, professor of geology at Harvard University, argues that metaphor is the only way to conceptualize the expanse of geologic time.¹⁹ Mark Twain once notably compared the length of geologic time to the height of the Eiffel tower and the period including human life as the layer of paint on the top of the pinnacle.²⁰ The only way to grasp such an abstract concept is by relating it to something known, through a personal reference.

What does it mean to wear geologic time? *Perpetuations*, 2019 (Fig. 9) is a sterling silver neckpiece incorporating 250 million-year-old petrified wood that has been sliced and polished. The rough edges left along the edge of each stone, the merest suggestion of wood grain patterning and a single piece in which a knot is visible provide hints to the viewer of its formally organic nature. The shiny, glassy surface and pockets of clear quartz running throughout indicate the incredible transformation this ancient wood has

undergone, once a living organism, now stone. What does it signify to wear as adornment something that existed on this planet so long ago? Is there a memory of some kind still held within the material? The negative spaces within the geometric forms of this piece provide room for the silver botanicals to unfold. I created the *Perpetuations* neckpiece in a modular format with the largest enclosed form operating as a separate brooch, highlighting the constructed nature of temporal experience (Fig. 10). This work questions what it means to wear a material that is so steeped in the concept of deep time. How time can be memorialized in the landscape through sedimentation and metamorphic processes has been a fascinating part of my inquiry with this body of work.

Physicist Dr. Peter J. Riggs states,

The significance of knowledge about time cannot be overstated, for it goes to the core of human consciousness, perception, communication and of our desire to understand ourselves and the universe which we inhabit.²¹

It has been scientifically proven, beginning with Albert Einstein's Special Theory of Relativity, that the movement of time is different for different subjects.²² Time is not a tangible substance that can be quantified in some way and is only observable through its effects. Riggs goes on to say that,

...there is no consensus amongst scientifically literate philosophers or among physicists about the nature of time. Neither is there any consensus on which aspects of time are genuine features of reality. Time remains mysterious, for we lack an understanding of time at a basic physical level.²³

Time is an endlessly fascinating subject and one which can be approached in so many ways through scientific, philosophical and artistic inquiry. Time is a universal

phenomenon and yet completely personal, entirely dependent on individual experience. Even objects mark time in different ways and have a varying amount of life expectancy. Jewelry is a personal and intimate object that through careful craftsmanship and the use of durable materials has the ability to hold memories and experiences of more than one wearer.

When jewelry is not being worn it typically resides in a jewelry box or atop the bathroom counter or dresser. The plaster displays I created for *Instantiating Time* are unique to each piece and allow the work to operate sculpturally when in repose. The simple volumetric shapes speak the visual language of a frame or cabinet while grounding each object with a pleasing weight and referencing the smooth curves and surfaces of the body. In the display there is a sense of protection, of security and intimacy while still referencing the geologic spaces where the stones formed deep within the earth. In this setting the object is not entirely revealed to the viewer and can only be fully discovered by the wearer. Liesbeth den Besten discusses the added relational component inherent in jewelry and how it differs from other forms of art.²⁴ For me, one of the most appealing aspects of concept driven jewelry is that it involves the perspectives of three different subjects: the maker, the wearer and the viewer. Each of these roles involves a separate and unique relationship with the object. The maker imbues the work with layers of content and intention but is aware that the entirety of the conceptual meaning can never be fully conveyed to anyone else. The viewer is drawn to the object first by simple formal qualities and only through deeper

contemplation may understand something of the intended content. If the work is being worn the viewer's perception is also influenced in numerous ways by the individual wearing it. The wearer of jewelry has a much more intimate association with it as an object and often possesses a more thorough understanding of its concept. Jewelry becomes fully activated through display on the body.

In the *Continuance* series I explored the different ways jewelry can be activated when worn. A collection of five rings, the works can either be placed on the hand or strung on a chain and worn around the neck (Fig. 11) (Fig. 12) (Fig.13). On the hand the pieces are forceful, projecting outward in a way that commands attention, signaling that the wearer is not afraid to be bold and assertive. In contrast, when worn on the chest the forcefulness of the piece is diffused. It dangles, clearly displaying the circular shape of the ring. Its power now is one of interiority and the object takes on a talismanic quality. The ability of jewelry to act in such different ways along with the intertwined relationships between maker, viewer and wearer are what make wearable art such a potent and unique mode of creative expression.

Conclusion ~

There is always a distance between concept and product. Materials manifest in distinctive ways that are not always predictable, even after a lifetime of practice. Embracing the unknown and letting go of expectation has been an important part of this body of work. Allowing intuition to guide my response to materials and new processes is an invaluable approach to carry forward in my practice. Art is something

that can continue to have a meaningful impact even after the life of the artist.

Intentional design, quality materials and careful craftsmanship are elements that ensure the longevity of objects and which I attempt to bring to each piece I create. The stones and the nature castings exemplify a kind of frozen time, time slowed down; geologic epochs in combination with the ephemeral time of seasonal growth and decay, made manifest in wearable art. I have brought into being these odd little conglomerations of place to have their own life in the world, examining the relationship between man and the environment, both built and natural. My research into time, both geologic and personal as well as the constructed societal perceptions of the natural world has resulted in a collection of objects that serve to embody and represent time and site. In doing so they create an instance, a moment, in which the minutiae of contemporary life falls away and the void of the unknown beckons.

END NOTES

- ¹ Stephen Jay Gould, *Times Arrow, Times Cycle: Myth and Metaphor in the Discovery of Geological Time*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987), 12.
- ² Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 151.
- ³ Stewart, *On Longing*, 14.
- ⁴ Steven Vogel, *Thinking Like a Mall: Environmental Philosophy After the End of Nature*, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2015), 34.
- ⁵ Vogel, *Thinking Like a Mall*, 35.
- ⁶ Vogel, *Thinking Like a Mall*, 44.
- ⁷ Liesbeth den Besten, *On Jewellery: A Compendium of International Contemporary Art Jewellery*. (Stuttgart: Arnoldsche Publishers, 2011), 125.
- ⁸ Barthes, *The Language of Fashion*, (London: Bloomsbury, 2004), 57.
- ⁹ Barthes, *The Language of Fashion*, 57.
- ¹⁰ Barthes, *The Language of Fashion*, 59.
- ¹¹ Barthes, *The Language of Fashion*, 54.
- ¹² Stewart, *On Longing*, 151.
- ¹³ Susan Grant Lewin, *One of a Kind: American Art Jewelry Today*, 37.
- ¹⁴ Soetsu Yangari, *The Unknown Craftsman: A Japanese Insight into Beauty*, (Tokyo: Kodansha Publishing, 1972), 119.
- ¹⁵ Yangari, *The Unknown Craftsman*, 113.
- ¹⁶ Yangari, *The Unknown Craftsman*, 114.
- ¹⁷ Gould, *Times Arrow, Times Cycle*, 2.
- ¹⁸ Michael E. Brookfield, *Principles of Stratigraphy*, (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 141.
- ¹⁹ Gould, *Times Arrow, Times Cycle*, 3.
- ²⁰ Gould, *Times Arrow, Times Cycle*, 2.
- ²¹ Peter J. Riggs, "Contemporary Concepts of Time in Western Science & Philosophy," in *Long History, Deep Time: Deepening Histories of Place*. ed. by McGrath Ann and Mary Anne Jebb, (Acton: Australia National University Press, 2015), 48.
- ²² Riggs, "Contemporary Concepts of Time in Western Science & Philosophy," 49.
- ²³ Riggs, "Contemporary Concepts of Time in Western Science & Philosophy," 48.
- ²⁴ den Besten, *On Jewellery*, 62.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Barthes, Roland. *The Language of Fashion*. London: Bloomsbury, 2004.
- Brookfield, Michael E.. *Principles of Stratigraphy*. Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004.
- den Besten, Liesbeth. *On Jewellery: A Compendium of International Contemporary Art Jewellery*. Stuttgart: Arnoldsche Publishers, 2011.
- Gould, Stephen Jay. *Times Arrow, Times Cycle: Myth and Metaphor in the Discovery of Geological Time*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987.
- Lewin, Susan Grant. *One of a Kind: American Art Jewelry Today*. New York: Harry N. Abrams Publishers, 1985.
- Riggs, Peter J. "Contemporary Concepts of Time in Western Science & Philosophy," in *Long History, Deep Time: Deepening Histories of Place*. ed. by McGrath Ann and Mary Anne Jebb. Acton: Australia National University Press, 2015.
- Stewart, Susan. *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1993.
- Vogel, Steven. *Thinking Like a Mall: Environmental Philosophy After the End of Nature*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2015.
- Yangari, Soetsu. *The Unknown Craftsman: A Japanese Insight into Beauty*. Tokyo: Kodansha Publishing, 1972.

FIGURES



Figure 1: Alexandra Forsythe, *Timeline*, 2017, copper, human hair.

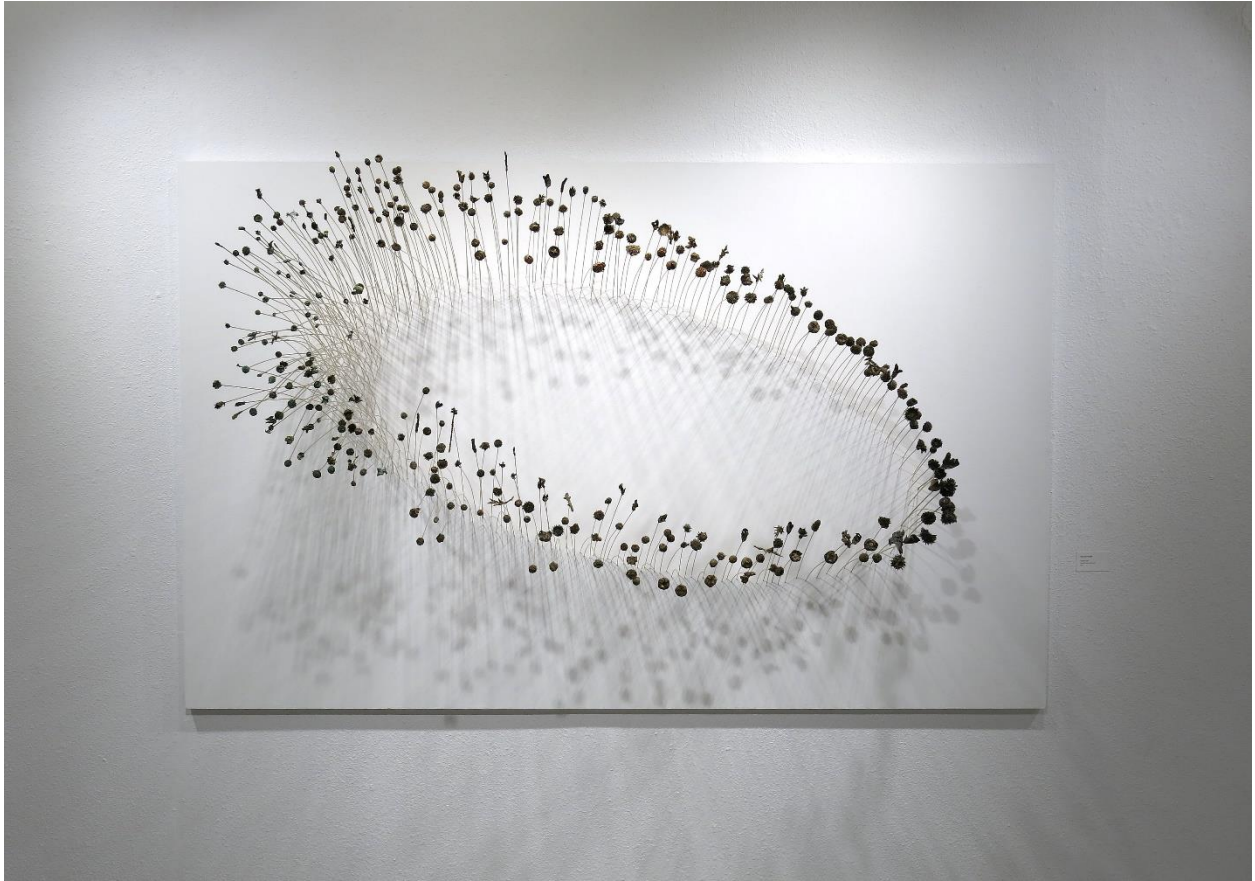


Figure 2: Alexandra Forsythe, *Calendar/ 365*, 2018, bronze.



Figure 3: Abbas Akhavan, *Study for a Monument*, 2013- Ongoing, cast bronze on cotton fabric.



Figure 4: Alexandra Forsythe, *Calendar/ 365* (detail), 2018, bronze.



Figure 5: Alexandra Forsythe, *Interval I*, 2018, sterling silver, bloodstone, petrified wood.



Figure 6: Alexandra Forsythe, *Continuance II*, 2019, sterling silver, moss agate.



Figure 7: Mari Ishikawa. Brooch: *Rebirth*, 2015. Silver 925, silk. 9.0 x 9.5 x 2.5 cm.



Figure 8: Margaret de Patta, Pendant, c. 1948, sterling silver, 14k gold, rutilated quart.



Figure 9: Alexandra Forsythe, *Perpetuations*, 2019, sterling silver, petrified wood, agate.



Figure 10: Alexandra Forsythe, *Perpetuations* (brooch), 2019, sterling silver, petrified wood, agate.



Figure 11: Alexandra Forsythe, *Continuance IV*, 2019, sterling silver, agate.



Figure 12: Alexandra Forsythe, *Continuance III*, 2019, sterling silver, aquamarine, 22k gold.



Figure 13: Alexandra Forsythe, *Continuance I*, 2019, sterling silver, agate.