

APPLIED| Makers Offerings – new exhibition at Custom House Gallery

**A new exhibition at Custom House
Gallery in Leith celebrates three
decades of Applied Arts Scotland
(AAS) exhibitions.**

Curated by Sarah Calmus and Svetlana Panova, APPLIED|Makers Offerings is AAS's first Open Members' exhibition; it showcases 76 works by over 50 professional makers working in applied art, craft and design. The exhibition seeks to minimise its environmental impact and work towards sustainable practice; to this end particular emphasis has been placed on the use of borrowed, hired or surplus materials – and these have been used in some strikingly innovative ways.

| APPLIED | Makers Offerings

27 May - 10 Jun 2023
Custom Lane, Edinburgh





Yellow Broom: Experimental Collection of Milky Offerings

Yellow Broom is a two person collaboration based within the Cairngorms National Park in the Scottish Highlands, and they

are creators of handcrafted utilitarian lighting and product design. YB| *Experimental Collection of Milky Offerings* employs single use plastic milk bottles, together with locally sourced handcrafted wood, to create beautiful sculptures. I love the combination of the practical and the ethereal in this piece.



Mairi Brown: What Lies Beneath

In *What Lies Beneath* Mairi Brown has created a stunning costume – a chiffon kimono in turquoise silk is worn over pale

green stays decorated with an embroidered picture of a bird. Beneath the corset are dark blue French knickers; from it hang pocket hoops. This is accompanied by a photo of the costume being modelled in front of a backdrop of a Chinese fire-breathing dragon. The dragon, and the model's blank stare, create an atmosphere quite different from that of the standalone ensemble. This beautiful work is one that invites us to wonder about the story beneath the surface.

Mairi Brown is a graduate of the Scottish College of Textiles in Galashiels and now works from Coburg House Studios in Leith. She incorporates free motion embroidery into her work, and specialises in historic stay and corsetry garments. She has been a member of the Scottish making community for many years, and she also teaches.



Jay Rubenstein: *Moths*

Jay Rubenstein's *Moths* (veneers, stainless steel ball, wood)

is a gently floating mobile. Each hanging piece is different, each uses different combinations of light and dark veneers to recreate the markings of these mesmerising creatures of the night. I particularly liked the moths' shadows on the white walls around them. The work has a wonderful sense of peace.

Jay, who exhibits at The Whitehouse Gallery in Kirkcudbright, has developed his woodworking skills over thirty years. He has recently focused on making larger and more ambitious mobiles:

I enjoy the way it is possible to suggest shapes and connections rather than making them always explicit and the fact that a shape can be two things at once, a flame and a feather or a bird and the scale on a fish.. (Jay Rubinstein)



Stefanie Cheong jewellery

Stefanie Cheong shows a collection of jewellery made using Feldspar rock from Croy Sands and recycled silver. The unusual

shapes of the rings – some silver and some black – are geometric, the straight edges contrasting with the inner circles. I especially like the flat black discs of the *Slice Earrings* with recycled silver hoops..

Stephanie explores geology and rock formations to inform her work, cutting found and discarded rock to create her jewellery. She has also recently begun to make her own rocks from waste streams such as e-waste, plastics, glass and ceramics. She is a graduate of Glasgow School of Art, and is now a Visiting Lecturer at both GSA and Edinburgh College of Art. She also hosts community workshops in partnership with charities.



Jaxx Waygood: Infinity

Infinity (solid forged steel, infinity mirrors) by **Jaxx Waygood** is an impressive structure with an air of steampunk,

or maybe Art Deco?, about it. Jaxx created it in memory of his friend and inspiration Andrea Lori.

Jaxx is the managing director of Work of Iron, which combines a progressive approach to blacksmithing with fine art practice. After graduating from the BA Artist Blacksmithing course at Hereford College he became a freelance special effects technician for film and television – he's worked on *Poldark*, *Casualty*, and more recently the *Lord of the Rings* TV series. He's travelled widely as a journeyman blacksmith, studied in Gothenburg, and found inspiration in puppetry, performance, and the art of street protest. The recipient of many awards, Jaxx is interested in architecture, engineering, traveller culture, nature and music.



Vicky Higginson:artefact vii. mind reader

Edinburgh-based artist, designer and maker Vicky Higginson's *artefact vii. mind reader* (hand blown and hot sculpted glass,

mirror) is a beautiful, complex arrangement of shapes and colours. Oranges, yellows, reds and blues are skilfully juxtaposed to create a dazzling sculpture, reminiscent of chemists' vials. Vicky's *Coping Mechanisms* series, in which she reinterpreted an anaesthetic inhaler, (to numb grief), a pestle and mortar (to break up overwhelming thoughts) and an ear trumpet (to hear things left unsaid) was recently selected for the Jerwood Art Fund Makers Open.

Vicky combines her interest in design, particularly Japanese, Scandinavian and Mid-Century, with her love of the material. She has a Masters in Glass from the University of Sunderland, has exhibited internationally, and is the recipient of several prizes.

Sea Ivory (porcelain, hand-blown glass bell jar) by ceramic artist Lorna Fraser is part of *Forth Flora: A Study in Porcelain*, a commission for the new Haematology Wing at the Western General Hospital which opened in May 2021. The brief was to explore the landscape, ecology and heritage of the Firth of Forth. All of Lorna's work is inspired by the plant world and its sculptural qualities. Lorna is a graduate of Aberdeen's Gray's School of Art, she has exhibited nationally and internationally, and her studio is handily just a short walk from the Royal Botanic Garden.



Madeleine Shepherd: Pulsar and Gliders Headband; Diamond and Still Life Neck Warmer

Madeleine Shepherd, who runs the textiles studio Knot Unknot, is a textile artist, photographer and writer. Here she

exhibits *Pulsar and Gliders Headband*, and *Diamond Ring and Still Life Neck Warmer* in shades of blue, red and white. They are part of Madeleine's *Knitting Life* series, inspired by Conway's Game of Life (a 2D cellular automaton or discrete model of computation studied in automata theory) and traditional Fair Isle knitting.

Madeleine is developing a growing body of objects made by applying mathematical ideas to knitting, crochet, patchwork and other crafts. She offers workshops based around these ideas to galleries, museums and science festivals. Madeleine works from Coburg Studios in Leith and will participate in their next open weekend on 5-6 August 2023. Her website lists many other events, at some of which she will be selling some of her wares.

There are many other eye-catching and interesting pieces in this excellent exhibition, and what's more, once you've had a look round you could enjoy a coffee in the adjacent branch of Williams and Johnson.

APPLIED|Makers Offerings is open from 8.30 to 5 Monday to Friday, 9-5 on Saturdays and 10-4 on Sundays until 10 June 2023 (*NB it will close at 3pm on 10 June.) Admission is free. Many items are for sale.

Custom House Gallery is at 1 Customs Wharf, Leith EH6 6AL. Buses 16, 22, 35 and 36 stop on Commercial Street, just a minute's walk from the gallery door.

Applied Arts Scotland is a membership organisation run 'by makers for makers' in Scotland. It nurtures the creative heart and soul of making practice, celebrates expertise, and facilitates practical opportunities for creative and professional development.

<https://www.appliedartsscotland.org.uk>