

# APRIL—JUNE 2018: ADORNMENT AND GENDER: ENGAGING CONVERSATION

DEVELOPED WITH BENJAMIN LIGNEL IN COLLABORATION WITH  
NORWEGIAN CRAFTS BY PRAKSIS OSLO

RESIDENCY DATES — *THIS RESIDENCY IS SPLIT INTO TWO PERIODS //*  
**23 APRIL - 4 MAY AND 21 MAY - 3 JUNE**

## RESIDENCE

**Tone Bjerkaas**, born in 1987, lives and works in Oslo and her birthplace Tromsø. Bjerkaas' works with clothing and textile based craft to explore the fields of fashion, art and political activism.

Bjerkaas is currently situated at VORTA atelier in Middelalderparken, where she is a member of EUFORISK the collective for experimental club culture, as well as working as designer for the art & public space project *Detroit Kunsthalle*. Last year she received a grant from SNN-stiftelsen to launch her first un-gendered clothing collection. Bjerkaas holds a BFA from Gerrit Rietveld Academie (2015) and is a MA candidate at the Oslo National Academy of the Arts due to graduate in 2020.

**Auli Laitinen** is a jewellery artist based in Stockholm, Sweden. She is interested in contexts involving collaborative thinking and ideas including maker, wearer and viewer. Laitinen uses text, textile, and ready-mades to explore contemporary adornment. She sees jewellery as an active art form, whereby willing exhibitors carry signs of the makers ideas. Ideally, the wearer is engaged with the concept and aesthetics, and encourages conversation around what they wear.

Laitinen's work has been exhibited nationally and internationally since her graduation in 2000. She has received numerous grants and is represented at the National Museum in Stockholm and the Röhss Museum in Gothenburg, Sweden. She occasionally teaches.

**Matt Lambert**'s work pushes the preconceptions and possibilities of jewelry and adornment as traditionally understood. Adornment has the ability to blur the fields of design, craft, fashion, and art—and through inhabiting queer and/or liminal spaces adornment has great strength. Lambert believes that this aspect has yet to be fully explored as a terroristic act towards Westernized institutions.

Based in Detroit, Lambert holds an MFA in metalsmithing from Cranbrook Academy of Art with addition to specific university training in craft skills, such as metalsmithing, ceramic, and fiber. Through apprenticeships Lambert has also studied semi-antique rug restoration and leather working. Lambert holds academic training in art history, psychology/human sexuality, and cultural studies from Wayne State University in Detroit MI. Lambert's work has been collected internationally and shown at venues including: Swedish Center for Architecture and Design (Stockholm, Sweden); Kunstnerforbundet (Oslo, Norway); the Craft Council of British Columbia Gallery (Vancouver, Canada); Handwerkskammer für München und Oberbayern (Munich, Germany); the Walker Arts Center (Minneapolis, Minnesota) and the Queer Culture Center (San Francisco, California). In 2017-2018 Lambert was the first international artist based in jewelry/metalsmithing to be invited as a resident at IASPIS the Swedish Arts Grants Committee's programme for visual artists and designers in Stockholm, Sweden.

**Benjamin Lignel** is an artist, writer and curator. He was the editor of Art Jewelry Forum between January 2013 and December 2016, and edited three books under AJF's imprint, including the first book-length study of jewelry exhibition-making. His most recent curatorial project was *Medusa, Jewellery and Taboos* (2017) at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, in collaboration with Anne Dressen and Michèle Heuzé. Benjamin has lectured extensively on craft, and likes to organize (or co-organize) symposia on jewellery, of which *The Public and Private Lives of Jewellery* (Zimmerhof, 2011), *Forgetting Jewellery* (Paris, 2017) and *The Fuzzy, the Fake and the Double - Trouble in Ornament* (Paris, 2017). He is a guest teacher at the Akademie der Bildende Künste (Nürnberg) and at Alchimia (Florence), and a mentor in the Handshake 4 pedagogical program (New Zealand). Ben regularly contributes essays to magazines, monographs and museum publications, and is currently working with co-editor Namita Wiggers towards a series of publications on jewelry and gender. He lives in Montreuil (France).

**Nanna Melland** (b.1969) is a jewellery artist based in Oslo. At the core of her work lies a fundamental curiosity in the relationship between nature and human existence. She is fascinated by symbols and rituals, as well as by unpleasant and dark tensions inherent to life.

Combining and experimenting with form, material, technique and subject until she finds a type of unity – maybe harmony in the disharmonic. Inter-Uterine-Devices (IUD's), nails in gold, cast pig's hearts, orchids in lead and aluminium airplanes hence achieve – albeit paradoxically – a coherent whole.

Melland initially trained in goldsmithing at Elvebakken Technical School, and received a Candidata Magister from the University of Oslo in the subject history of religion, social anthropology and Tibetan language and culture before going on to study at The Munich Academy of Arts, Germany, where she was appointed Meister student, and for her diploma work in 2008 received both the academy's Debut Prize, and the Norwegian Craft prize in Norway. Her work has been bought by national and international private and public collections. Nordenfjeldske Art and Craft museum, Collection Marzee in the Netherlands, Collection Hiko Mizuni in Japan and Collection Susan Cummins in USA among others.

**Darja Popolitova** (1989) is an Estonian jewellery artist and designer. She is currently a PhD researcher and guest lecturer at Estonian Academy of Arts. Her approach to jewellery art emerged while studying at Estonian Academy of Arts, as well as at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design, Bratislava. She honed her skills at Florian Landstätter's studio in Vienna. Darja received the Young Jewellery Award (2015), has exhibited in Holland, Germany, Brazil and Spain among others. The topics of her works include eroticism and digital culture.

Based in Mexico, **Aleyda Rocha's** practice is focuses on data ethnography, social impact design and educational technology. She is interested in how to understand, think about, and interact with data - particularly, how we can make data experiences that are aesthetic, tangible and consider all of our senses. Rocha graduated from Monterrey Center for Higher Learning of Design's Digital Art Program. She currently researching how safety policies and violent events influence gender identity and garment in Mexico. The project traces how, from the post-revolution war, the identity of Mexican men have been dictated by the constant state of ferocity.

She is a founding member of RevoltosasMX – a non-profit dedicated to generate speeches and narratives that challenge the existing power dynamics at workplace in order to push forward gender equality in Mexico.

Identifying as a curious wanderer, Rocha has navigated industries including technology, advertising and public sector innovation. She spent two years as Creative Program Manager at Google, developing groundbreaking digital projects in Latin America with the goal of leveraging the power of technology for both users and brands.

**Mallika Roy** (b. 1991, Chicago, USA) is a diasporic artist who facilitates open sites of creative education. Her guiding belief is that alternative communications for, amongst, and on behalf of dispossessed and alienated peoples can serve to disrupt and re-imagine the political economy. She synthesizes critical theory, art, ethnographies, and other research and presents them in publicly accessible forms like websites, graphic design, fashion and adornment, curriculum, workshops, and social media. Mallika's framework for understanding social change has been primarily informed by her BA in International Studies and Urban Studies from the University of Michigan, the Center for Political Education's community course on Marxist thought, Movement Generation's *A Just Transition Zine*, and her upbringing in Eastern philosophy. Her work is constantly challenged and reinvigorated by the youth she has partnered with in Detroit and San Francisco since 2012.

**Elia Heidi Sand** (b. 1957) studied at the Oslo National Academy of the Arts, graduating in 1984, with further studies at the State University of New York, College at New Paltz, USA. She has participated in exhibitions both in Norway and abroad, and has held several solo exhibitions. She is now a member of the art collective The Archive.

Sand has coordinated a number of jewellery exhibitions abroad, has had several assignments as an art consultant for KORO (Public Art Norway), and for 7 years she was engaged as the director of RAM gallery in Oslo. From 2006 -2013 she was a professor in jewellery at the Oslo National Academy of the Arts in Oslo (KHIO) where she was Head of the Department for Metalwork and Jewellery.

**Shweta Sharma** a.k.a Betty (b.1988, IND) is a fashion editor and costumier based in Mumbai. She holds a bachelors degree in Fashion Communication from National Institute of Fashion Technology, Mumbai. She has styled for various television networks like TLC, MTV and Discovery Networks and designed costumes and characters for movies and ad films. Using styling and costume design as a way of story-telling and cultural gate-keeping, she has collaborated with publications including; Vogue India, Femina and Harper's Bazaar on fashion features and editorials. She has been working on a sartorial and spatial documentation series - meeting women through Instagram and travelling to Liguria, Berlin, New York, Oakland, and London. In 2017, after doing a Contemporary Fine Arts Intensive course at Central Saint Martins London, she developed a photographic series with a women's Cricket ball as a starting point. She teaches Advanced Fashion Styling to undergraduate students of Fashion Communication at NIFT (National Institute of Fashion Technology, India).

**Ahmed Umar** (b.1988) is a Norwegian/Sudanese cross-diciplinary artist based in Oslo. He came to Norway as a politcial refugee in 2008. In 2016 he received an MFA in Medium and Material-based Arts from the department of Ceramic Arts at the National Academy of the Arts, Oslo (KHIO). Since his graduation, Umar has exhibited in several galleries and museums, both nationally and internationally including; FORMAT, Kunstnerforbundet, Kunstnernes Hus, Museum of Cultural History (Oslo), and Kunsthall Oslo. In 2017, Umar won the Debutante prize for his installation Hijab (Annual protection) at the Norwegian Annual Art and Craft exhibition. His work have been collected by institutions such as Drammen Museum of Art and Cultural History, and Oslo Municipality Art Collection. He also is a board member of Oslo Open art festival