

JEWELLERY

Michael Peckitt -
Fine Art
Jewellery

In his foreword to the 2006 Craft Galleries Guide, Sir Christopher Frayling states that it has been "quite a year for the crafts". However, he believes that, "There are still muddles about where the crafts 'sit' exactly - a proliferation of subdivisions which would make even Polonius dizzy: the crafts, the decorative arts, the applied arts, makers, designer-makers, artist-craftspeople. But these are now seen, I think, as a range of possibilities rather than inhibitors. The crafts are a spectrum, touching art at one end and design at the other."

This view of the current place of craft and fine art is something which Michael Peckitt has been thinking about for a long time. He says, "I am a fine artist, my passion is for colour and exploring the possibilities of brightness and fun in using it. My paintings express this, I work to my sense and sensibilities, never to pattern. The frame around my painting is crafted and does not express my fine art. "When I became an artist, living provincially,

I found it a burden to get my paintings seen anywhere other than locally in my region. So I decided to make them in miniature, not as miniatures, but as wearable dynamic fine art. I trained for two years in jewellery design to learn something of this craft. The result is that I make fine art painting and craft it into a wearable piece of art. I do not consider my work to be craft. It is, after all, made by me as an artist. The shape which it is given is not a frame, but often a finding. I make it as a piece of art and jewellery comes second, it is ancillary to my art; like a picture frame is often chosen for the completed painting. I believe that I am an artist working in a craft world. Living as I do in Cheltenham, I am conscious of the Arts and Crafts Movement. With this in mind, I am currently working on an exhibition expressing my artistic progress. It will be called 'Art to Crafts - movement'. Michael makes his Very Colourful Jewellery from acrylic and anodised aluminium., with findings which are handmade from silver or surgical stainless steel. The colour is achieved with high quality acrylic paint with gold and silver leaf. He says, "My work is intended to be

worn as dynamic fine art. A sheet of acrylic is painted in layers over time and finished with two coats of varnish. The aluminium is anodised to accept dyes. It is then painted and sealed so that the colour is fixed permanently. With some acrylic pieces, I have worked the top surface to give depth to the work. One may look through it to the lower painted surface and appreciate colours in depth. From the sides refracted light is seen." With his paintings Michael has a range of ideas to present them in ways other than by simply framing them, so too with his contemporary jewellery. He explains, "I have found a wide variety of shapes and designs for wearing my art and I have adopted the laser cutter to help me cut shapes that would not be possible to make manually. All pieces have had handmade attention to achieve their individuality. No two are the same." Michael's jewellery is featured as Editor's Choice on page 94 of the new Craft Galleries Guide (reviewed in January issue 174 Craftsman Magazine) and details of the many galleries where his work is available can be found at www.michaelpeckitt.com.



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