

Jury Report of the Françoise van den Bosch Award 2012

The enquiries the jury of the Françoise van den Bosch Award 2012 set itself were about the signal emanating from the award of a jewellery prize. Can, may, must the work be directly jewellery-related; how much influence has a jewellery designer on the next generation; what is the impact of the legacy of the previous winners on the development of new talent within the diverse world of jewellery design; do we follow or do we break with tradition to award the prize to a jewellery artist, or can it be a designer who only occasionally creates jewellery?

Important criteria discussed were: the ability to think out of the box; authenticity of material use; development in the oeuvre; and the ability to be an inspiration to colleagues and others.

One jury meeting is unfortunately not enough to hold an exchange of views on all these matters.

The main motivation to choose David Bielander as a winner is that his work in no way resembles that of fellow jewellery designers; he is a completely unique artist in his working methods, themes and materials. Despite the dimensions his work has a sculptural character. His work refers to pop art but rises above "pop". The photos he uses in support of his work let you glimpse into a world reminiscent of the great "road trip" you've always wanted to make. A world full of crazy beasts and objects. They seduce you, ask for attention and are cuddly, even when hard materials have been used.

It's as if Bielander sees a form hidden in very ordinary materials – he 'just' extracts them and in these transformations reveals his special craftsmanship. Often specially designed moulds or tools are needed to develop an idea, for instance with the Koi bracelets made of leather and drawing pins.

Bielander's themes are largely derived from the plant or animal worlds, but also faces and objects are found in his work; his choices always surprise. With Bielander we find no graceful animals that would normally be used for jewellery, no dragonflies or panthers, but slugs, rats, snakes, beetles or a pig's head. He is also the first jewellery designer who made a blue gentian as a brooch, a car tire as bracelet, and who changed minerals into faces. This is all done with a subtle sense of humour. Often it takes some time before you discover what transformations have taken place. A fish is quickly recognized - that it is also a bracelet is something you discover after. Good watching, observing – that's what it's about.

Amsterdam, 16 October 2011

The jury of the Françoise van den Bosch Award 2012:

Marcel van Kan (chair, designer),

Lisa Walker (winner Françoise van den Bosch Award 2010)

Jantje Fleischhut (jewellery designer)

Eveline Holsappel (curator Museum voor Moderne Kunst Arnhem / Museum of Modern Art Arnhem)

Frank Tjepkema (designer)