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IP Thesis  
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I felt another drip land on my shoulder. The tea gathered on my collarbone and then fell down in sweet red droplets. I knew I was making a mess and I wanted to make more. As I moved around the studio, the tea bags swung and grazed my neck with more tea. I enjoyed wearing the earrings and feeling contact with the pomegranate tea. While wearing the earrings, I suddenly became more aware of my movements. The tea earrings are part of a series of jewelry that contains materials that marks the wearer as they interact with them. The traces the materials leave on the wearer are evidence of the individual's movement and they track time spent with the jewelry. I designed the jewelry pieces to hold these ephemeral materials and now I step back and see what happens when they are worn. I like seeing what happens to the wearer, the jewelry, and what is created from the interaction between the two.

In this series of jewelry, there are elements that are carried over from my experience with painting. My approach to painting was to consider the paint as a material and to have a certain way of applying the material to the canvas. When looking at other painter's work, the pieces that resonated with me were pieces that showed a process of how it was developed. Some painters, for instance Thomas Gillespie, are not just trying to create an illusion through their paintings but to show the paint for what it is as a material. In Gillespie's paintings you can see how he intentionally let the paint drip down the canvas.



When standing in front of one of his pieces, I could see where he laid down tape so that the dripping paint would not hit that part of the canvas and then he later removed the tape. I liked being able to see how the piece developed. I only saw the final painting but I can picture Gillespie working on this and seeing how the painting developed over time through a process. The elements of process and material transferred over to my concept in this series. My jewelry contains materials that show a process. I'm working with different materials like charcoal and pigments to show how the materials work, and what they do when they interact with the wearer. The material transfers and builds on top of itself over time. After some time, the jewelry changes and the wearer changes and through photo documentation the audience can see this process.

Before I start working in the metals studio, I spend time sketching the jewelry. I'm considering how to house the materials I want to use, how well it will expose the

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas Gillespie, "Bepanthoen blue", 2009

materials to transfer to the wearer and how it will lay on the body. I sketch out every detail to have a good idea how it will work once it is on the body. My first piece is a locket that can hold different substances, like charcoal, and through a pierced out hole in the locket the charcoal can leave traces on the wearer. The traces record the individual's movement while they are wearing the piece. There is evidence of movement through the creation of a path from the contact of the pendulum on the wearer. Wearing the jewelry highlights the subtle movements that we all do but may not always focus on.



The gathering of materials on the wearer depicts how long the person spent wearing the piece. As the stain of the tea drips from the earrings become denser on the clothing the audience can get a sense of time the wearer interacted with the jewelry. Like the sand builds at the bottom of an hourglass over time so does the graphite powder on the shoulders of the wearer of the earrings. Throughout the series the forms vary to hold different types of substances and allow the material to transfer to the wearer in new ways.

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<sup>2</sup> Graphite Earrings

I focus on different areas of the body for the materials to transfer to. It is interesting to see the multiple ways a material can transfer to the body. Some pieces rest directly on the body, while one wraps around. From the earrings the tea drips and takes its own course down the curves of the neck and shoulders like a watershed off the mountain. I design the sterling silver jewelry to contain the ephemeral materials and expose them to the wearer.

I work with mostly sterling silver to fabricate the forms. It is a durable material that contains the materials well. The metal within the pieces are stable and hold firm, however, with in the jewelry are spacer rivets and jump rings that allow the pieces to move easily with the wearer. For instance, in the charcoal necklace there are spacer rivets that connect each charcoal piece to the next allowing for the charcoal to rub against each other to create a powder that falls on the skin or clothes of the wearer. I use metal to also create a juxtaposition of materials. The charcoal piece looks more fragile next to a durable piece of silver.

The ephemeral materials that are within the jewelry I chose because they leave a noticeable but not permanent mark. In this series I have used charcoal, tea, graphite powder and pigment. Some materials create a different interaction between the wearer and the jewelry then others. In some, like the charcoal, you can see the breakdown of the pieces over time from wearing the jewelry. In other jewelry pieces the viewers can see the accumulation of material grow over time.

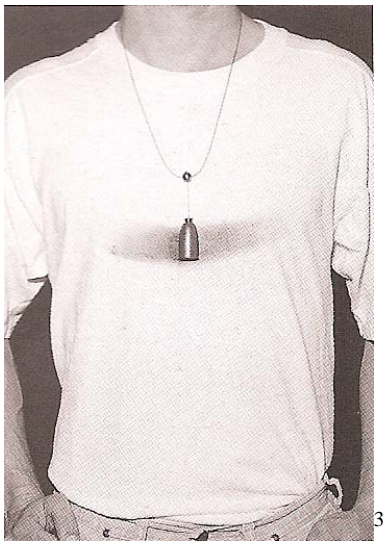
Most of the time the intention of jewelry is for it to be worn. In this way it because a functional piece of art. To make it functional, wearable, the designer considers the form of the body and designs a pieces that will allow the body to still function.

Contemporary jewelers have tested what is wearable over the decades. There are pieces like Jennifer Crupi that restrict movement and pieces that mark up the clothes like Joan Parcher's graphite pendant. These pieces are not traditional in the sense that people would want to wear them out and about but they are still functional because the artist's concept is conveyed through the work. The original intention for jewelry is for it to be worn. I believe the individual wearing the piece has a vital role in jewelry. The wearer can change the jewelry by using it over time and this process of change and the interaction between the wearer and the jewelry is central to my concept in this series.

I can see in artist's works where they considered the forms of the body and where the intention of wearing the piece is clear. It is clear in Caroline Broadhead's piece from 1978. It has materials that are flexible and the form of the jewelry is for the wrist. In the interior of the bracelet, what lays on the wrist are multiple pieces of nylon fibers and they bend to the curve of the wrist. The bracelet could stand alone as a sculptural piece but it is interesting because it changes once it is on the body. This piece is interesting because it is working with the body, however, it could just be put on a manikin. When you can see human interaction with the piece, those works resonate with me. Human interaction includes more than just the form of the body but also has the element of movement. How the pieces change through the interaction between the wearer and the jewelry is what I'm exploring in my series. I am making forms that hold substances that transfer to the wearer to show the evidence of movement and that there was a relationship between the wearer and the jewelry.

I first saw an interaction between the wearer and jewelry in Joan Parcher's graphite piece. Joan Parcher finds natural materials that are not as valuable but are still

as beautiful as diamonds and incorporates them into her jewelry. She found pieces of large graphite discarded by the mills in Lakewood, Ohio and she thought it was a really beautiful material. Parcher made pendants out of them that created marks on the wearer that inspired me to work with new materials in jewelry. Patricia Harris and David Lyon wrote, “Parcher’s pendants are anti-jewelry, just as graphite is anti-diamond. There is no denying the sensual qualities of the graphite surface an almost greasy matte black as lovely as gold or gemstones” (Metalsmith, 44). Parcher wanted to use the graphite in her work starting in graduate school but “didn’t because it would damage clothes. It was only later on that [she] realized that would be a good thing” (Metalsmith, 44). Joan Parcher’s work is innovative. She was able to see past the graphite as a potential clothes strainer and capture the beauty in the graphite’s ability to create something new on the body. It is about creation rather than destruction.



When you look at Parcher’s pendant piece on a model there is a clear path of graphite on the models chest. It moved back and forth across the chest like a pendulum on a clock ticks back and forth. When you look at this path you can imagine what kind of

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<sup>3</sup> Joan Parcher, graphite pendant

movements the model did to create the path. This piece resonated with me because she captured the evidence of the model's movement. In my work there is not a clear path of materials left on the model but the audience can tell that there is an interaction between the jewelry and the wearer. After wearing the jewelry the wearer and the jewelry have changed through the interaction. Some of the materials can wear down where it laid against the body. There might be a groove on the charcoal where it has rubbed against the collarbone. The wearer's appearance changes overtime through the transfer of substance from the jewelry. Since there is a consequence to putting on the jewelry and interacting with it, the wearer also becomes more aware of their movements.

One slight turn of the head, that's all it took for the graphite to powder my neck and shoulders. The more I moved and the longer I wore the earrings, the more I was covered with powder. I felt a connection to this jewelry unlike any other. The material was like an extension of myself. This jewelry marks movements and time, and shows the importance of the wearer. The ephemeral material within the jewelry is exposed to the contact to the wearer and the environment that the wearer is in. Each individual will move and interact with the jewelry in various ways and they and the jewelry will change in a different way than someone else wearing it. Who ever wear it will be creating something new. I fabricated the jewelry and included mark-making materials in them and now I step back and let the wearer create their own marks with the jewelry. The piece is not finished until after the individual has worn the jewelry.

Work Cited

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