Exam Paper:

A collection of fragments

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Abstract

This paper presents how I came to create this collection of jewellery that is intimately tied to memories and fragments. How I have conducted my research about collections, museums, jewellery, and artists. Incorporating those findings into the workshop and the way the pieces came to be. Made in silver, zinc and iron, and with use of the techniques casting and etching.

And conclusively how a collection took form with this idea to give a sense of treasures or a language from an unknown world or place. Somewhere where time has passed and the individual pieces convey the notion that they are fragments of a greater whole, part of a story or memory that we can sense but not quite reckon, not to be fully understood.

Keywords;
jewellery, charms, collecting, fragments, memories, loss and time.

Tutors;
Anders Ljungberg, Andrea Peach, Filippa Arrias
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Introduction

Jewellery is my craft. I was certain from the beginning of my project that it was what I was going to do.

My art form has been jewellery for more than a decade now. I did apply to preparatory art school because I had loved to make jewellery for years, then with beads, polymer clay, paint, aluminium foil and small figurines. But I wanted to learn traditional jewellery techniques and work in metal, so my first step was to go to study Metal at Nyckelviksskolan, and then to a bachelor in Jewellery Art at HDK Gothenburg. And metal became my material, and was also the obvious choice for my master project. What my investigation should be about, as themes, subjects and questions, there I just had a vague idea. I just know that it will have something to do with collecting.

My first memory of the practice of collecting is from around when I was four years old. It’s vague; I can see a kitchen blurry in front of me, shadows of people, and someone started talking about that my couple of years older cousin was collecting napkins and bottle caps. I am not even sure today which cousin it was but I can remember that I didn't understand, what was to collect something? Is that something you could do? But as soon as I did, I was in a bit of an awe. I also wanted to collect and the only thing I knew that you could collect was; napkins and bottle caps. So I started, and continued on for a couple of years. For the bottle caps, I just ended up with a less than half full lunch box. But my napkin collection did become more considerable. When going through it in my twenties and also getting rid of most of it, it was two full large toy boxes, and hundreds upon hundreds of napkins. As a result of that every event where there was a napkin by your plate, I didn't use mine and instead gave it to one of my parents to put in a bag or pocket to take home. I wanted to have one of each that I could get my hands on. And others seemed surprisingly invested in my collecting. I have more than one memory of people starting to go through their cupboards to find if they have some more kinds they could give me. And I did not discriminate in my collecting, I had the branded ones from the closest pizza parlour and even ripped off pieces from patterned paper towels. I never had any plan for what I was going to do with all these napkins, it was just for the sake of collecting.

I continued to collect other things during my childhood; hippo figures from Kinder Eggs, stickers, bookmarks, stamps, stones, fossils - and I had together with a friend a skeleton collection of found ones from the forest, I just remember that some were from birds and sheeps. I have now incorporated some remains of these collections in my work. The bookmarks and stamps I used to make originals that through casting transformed into silver. And I have incorporated skeletons, but unfortunately not from my original collection since that had been thrown away years ago. But some from deers
that I had found in the forest a couple years ago that I had stored just in case I wanted to use them for some project.

And my way of crafting is entwined with collecting, it's an essential part of my process. I consistently make a bunch of different pieces - I cast, etch, saw, disassemble - and then when I have a collection of all these pieces I decide which I want to continue with and put them together and add parts that evolve them into jewellery. And it is also this collecting that is my big obstacle, I have a tendency to keep making new pieces without actually making decisions and finishing them into functional jewellery, I just want to continue with the collecting.
Intentions

The direction of this project soon took form as exploring the relationship between memories, fragments, collecting, and jewellery. To establish connections between these concepts by conducting research beyond the workshop and incorporating the findings into the workshop. Additionally, the project sought to comprehend the purpose, context, and relevance of the work, including its relation to jewellery history and other artists.

But primarily, how can I translate this connection into a physical artwork?

Along the way I had several sub-questions that required resolution.

(1) My intention was to employ the lost wax casting technique to create pieces that resembled a state of decay or being "eaten away". Thus, I needed to figure out how to create the right amount of "eaten".

(2) I also know that I wanted to incorporate etching and I needed to explore how to reconcile the differences between the casting and etching techniques, to make them talk the same language and compliment each other. I also wanted to figure out how I could involve etching of photos.

(3) Is it a way to incorporate my own personal collections in the creation of this new collection.

(4) How do I ensure that the individual pieces are coherent and exhibit a sense of connection, such that it was evident that they belonged to the same universe.

(5) I wanted to know what happens when you make a lot of individual pieces and display them next to one another, are they saying something different when presented as a mass, and how is that exhibited in the best way.

(6) I also sought to define my artistic practice, and to identify my method for crafting.
Theory and context

Memories & Fragments

I believe that memories and jewellery have a strong natural connection. Jewellery is often treated as a precious item that is passed down from generation to generation or gifted during significant life events such as baptisms, birthdays, graduations, and weddings.

Many people have a special piece of jewellery that they always wear, such as a wedding or engagement ring, or a necklace or bracelet that holds a specific meaning for them. This connection between jewellery and memories is something that fascinates me. And that memories and objects through time often become more and more an unsorted collection of fragments, until there's just nothing left.

I find decay and fragments intriguing, as they represent something that is no longer what it once was. Things that slowly erode and softly disappear, creating a sense that time cannot be stopped. What is beautiful, but at the same time a little uncomfortable, and I want to achieve that ambiguity in my work. For me, collecting can be a way to preserve objects and attempt to stop the unstoppable passage of time.

The passing of time is directly linked to the concept of fragments in this project. And I talk about it in relation to memories, objects and stories. I would not say that it's personal in the way that it's my stories, but more in a broader sense, a more philosophical one. A story that we all, living and once living, are a part of.

How a memory with time gets more and more fragmented until they are just a mere shadow. The same happens with objects, nothing seems to be eternal. And how a story with time loses its edges and becomes more and more a mist of words. And in the end leaving us with only a scattered collection of fragments.

As Julietta Singh describes in No Archive Will Restore You A person's life story can be viewed as an ‘incalculable catalogue of traces' that make up their body. As an archive you need to pour through in search of the past. We long for a 'fuller narrative' as we are ‘sniffing around the edges'. It's all there but 'just out of reach.'

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Our bodies themselves can be seen as fragments. As writer Julietta Singh reflects that her child is a fragment of her body, her own body is also a fragment, and writes “Something born, something shattered, something that articulates its interest in a mythical whole”.  

The word “fragment” has endless meanings, both philosophical and literal. As a fragment from a shattered vase. To only catch fragments of a conversation, to grasp a fragment of something. As a war can fragment society, and the death of a family member or close one can leave everything feeling like a mere fragment of what it once was.

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How do fragments and memories connect to collections?

Philosopher Walter Benjamin described collecting as a form of ‘practical memory’, a ‘manifestation of what has been’.

In a sense, a collection is a way to combat the natural fragmentation of memories and objects over time that might otherwise get lost.

For example, a family might create a collection of photographs and letters from past generations in order to remember their ancestors and their history. Helping to preserve memories and history for future generations.

For instance, souvenirs are a common way of collecting objects that are associated with a specific place. How some collect rocks from beaches they have visited or key chains with motives from cities visited, as a way to remember and cherish those moments. It can be likened to an object-based diary.

Collectors often express a strong emotional attachment to their objects, which is heightened when acquiring a new one. Jorunn Veitberg describes it in The jewellery box as the feeling of ‘never being fully satisfied’, and a ‘restlessness before the next hunt’.

It's like a puzzle, but where it's always missing pieces. This constant quest to get the collection to the finish, the complete, the whole. I can relate to the way I feel about creating, that restlessness when I don't have an ongoing project. The constant pursuit of getting better, to have better ideas, better craftsmanship, better pieces.

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Collecting

Does a collected item have to be a physical object that you own or part of a physical collection? Perhaps we can broaden the concept of collecting to include intangible items that are counted and collected in memory. As to how many butterflies you have spotted during the summer or how many countries you have visited. The more I think about it, the more complex I feel it becomes. Can one say they have a collection of 10,000 days (27 years) even though they may have no memory of the first few hundred, and many others are just a blur of days, and nights, and years passed. And I would argue that a collection can be either-or both a material or an immaterial, tangible and intangible.

One theory discussed by Jorunn Veitberg is that collecting could be a way to ‘cope with inner uncertainty and to curb anxiety and depression.’ Creating some sort of order in a world of chaos. But the collector is often unaware that that could be the motivation and it’ operates on an unconscious level.’

Elton John, who has a substantial collection of art, has said that he always found collecting oddly comforting, and as a child collected records and toys. How his parents argued a lot, and how he found comfort in objects and collecting.

This relates back to my project, is our being a big mess of different scattered fragments? Or does it just feel that way sometimes? The question of “Who are you?” is a challenging one to answer because we are not just one piece, but many little pieces that collectively make us who we are. And I assume, we all feel a bit scattered from time to time.

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About jewellery

Jewellery is described as ‘the most intimate of art forms’, as ‘it lies against and nestles around the body’, by Melanie Holcomb in Jewelry - The body transformed, and continues that It’s ‘a constant presence through the day’ or even there against your skin ‘for a lifetime’.

This is one of the things that make me so fond of jewellery. The intimacy, you can touch and feel it as you wear it through your day. As Marjan Unger talks about in Jewellery in context, ; It's only a piece of jewellery if it can be ‘worn on the human body’. This can of course be debated, if it must be able to be worn on a body. If you agree it makes a limit to how big or heavy you can go. It gives you a framework to adjust to, an art form in miniature. And the small size instantly gives an aura of delicacy, fragility, and preciousness.

Even though my choice is to adjust to these requirements. While I used to agree, before delving into the world of jewellery art, my perspective has since shifted. In my opinion, jewellery doesn't necessarily need to be wearable. I believe that as long as it is related or refers to jewellery, it can be considered as such. However, I believe that the decision to label a piece as jewellery ultimately lies with the artist.

As told by Jorunn Veitberg ‘Traditional jewellery transports’ a lot of memories and emotions since it's so ‘associated with rites of passage, such as baptism, confirmation and marriage’.

In addition to religious rites of passage such as baptism, confirmation, and marriage, other occasions like graduations and birthdays can also be marked with jewellery as a received gift. If it's given from someone close to you, it can become a specially fond memory of that person. I feel that we often have a hard time getting rid of an old gift, especially if it was from someone who has since then passed away. No new memories of you together will be created so we get fonder of the ones we have, and try to hold on with what we have. Also inherited jewellery has some of the same emotional properties. To wear a piece that you remember a now departed beloved one used to have. Or the one that has been passed down in generations, where you can feel the ones before you that you never meet.

Given all of this, I believe that jewellery is a natural expression of the connection between fragments, memory, and collecting.

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Jewellery History

When we look at prehistoric jewellery, we can only describe it from what we have found, express Marjan Unger, which are from time-resistant materials such as shells, teeth, ivory, antlers and stones.\textsuperscript{10}

However, we can only speculate about jewellery made from less resilient materials like wood or plants, which may have deteriorated over time. Additionally, historical jewellery made from valuable metals like gold and silver often underwent reshaping or melting, leaving no trace of their original form.

Marjan Unger continues with from the prehistoric times to ours, jewellery, if it was not linked to historic figures or facts, ‘the specific meaning of it was lost in one or two generations of wearing. Their history ‘tends to be poorly documented, especially before the rise of photography.’\textsuperscript{11}

So even in cases when old jewellery is still intact, we are often in the unknown.

For me, jewellery possesses a unique aura that distinguishes it from other objects. It’s something more in it, it was once worn on a person’s body. Related to clothes but still something else. Jewellery was not made to warm or protect us, not in the literal sense anyway, and it still has been a constant in generations for thousands of years. Throughout the centuries, jewellery has retained its significance, carrying intangible memories, stories, and meanings that have long since disappeared.

Mourning jewellery

In Britain during the Victorian era, mourning jewellery became the new fad, and hair ornaments became fashionable, where hair from the deceased was turned into jewellery. The hair was braided or woven in different patterns, or a lock was capsuled under glass, made into a wearable piece.\(^\text{12}\)

Here the connection between jewellery and memory is unmistakably clear. The lost one is not only in memory but in a physical way also there.

It's both intriguing and harrowing. ‘Hair jewellery across time and place makes the body a site of memory’ explained Melanie Holcomb. A tender encounter with the ones that have gone before.\(^\text{13}\)

It feels both haunting and beautiful. One contemporary jewellery artist is Melanie Bilenker, who has used her own hair to create sketch-like images. A reinvention of the Victorian grieving jewellery, ‘her work is still images of everyday Moments’ wrote Andrea DiNoto in Metalsmith.\(^\text{14}\)

She combines two uncomfortable elements, hair, but also the images of secretly spying on someone’s everyday life, as they fold laundry or sleep. The ambiguity between beautiful and uncomfortably is shown this way.

\[\text{Image 2: Pinning (Melanie Bilenker 2019)}\]


\(^{15}\) Melanie Bilenker, Pinning, 2019, [https://www.melaniebilenker.com/#/pinning/], [2022-05-29]
The Tokens

While conducting my research, I spent time visiting museums, and the one that left the biggest impression on me was the Foundling Museum in London and particularly their collection of tokens. The Foundling Hospital, officially known as “The Hospital for the Education and Maintenance of Exposed and Deserted children”,\textsuperscript{16} was an orphanage with the first babies admitted in 1741, and two centuries and 25,000 children later, it closed in 1954.\textsuperscript{17} During the first two decades of the hospital’s operation, a “particular writing” or “peculiar thing” was left with the children admitted, as an identifier if the child would be claimed later, since the children were given new names when entering. These “peculiar things” are known as the tokens.\textsuperscript{18}

The tokens themselves are both beautiful and tragic and left a lasting impact on me. They comprise a collection of small objects displayed on a wall and in two exhibition stands, including coins with specific markings and holes, a deformed thimble, a hazelnut, a ring, a key, and more. For me, the crafted items were especially moving, such as beads on a thread, a little textile piece with embroidered initials and pendants with engraved or enamelled initials or names. It gives the notion that these were loved children that were given up due to the difficult circumstances many faced during that era.

These little objects bear stories that are unknown to me. And often also to the museum itself, since they were separated from their admission records in the 1860s to be put on display. And while recent efforts have been made to connect them to the correct child and record, for many of the children, there is no description of the token in the record, so ‘the link will stay broken.’\textsuperscript{19}

The tokens have been an influence on my project, I feel they possess an intangible quality that is hard to describe. They can obviously not be compared but I feel that my collection of small delicate jewellery and objects has - or more likely, wants - to have a connection to the tokens. Since both collections evoke a sense of loss and unknown stories. We can see the tokens and know the context of how they became, we can only sense their full story. It is this intangible quality that I seek to capture in my work.

\textsuperscript{17} https://foundlingmuseum.org.uk/our-story/history/
Image 3: Tokens at the Foundling Museum (Hanna Havdell, 2022)

Image 4: One of the tokens, a deformed thimble (Hanna Havdell, 2022)
Cabinet of Curiosities

My bachelor exam project from the spring of 2018, I called ‘Curiosities’. As it was influenced by the Cabinets of Curiosities from the 16th to the 18th centuries, a precursor to museums. Where wealthy European merchants and monarchs created their own private collections of the ‘wonders of the world.’ And in a way, my master project can be seen as an extension of this project.

Because of this relevance I did in May 2022 visit the remains of one in Paris, the Joseph Bonnier de La Mosson cabinet. It was not easy to locate, and I wouldn't have found it without the precise directions. It is in a surprisingly unremarkable place, with no signs to guide you to it. Located at the médiathèque of Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, not in the museum itself, but in a small modern library next to it.

Once placed at Hôtel du Lude, consisting of different components: Cabinet d'Anatomie - a collection of human skeletons and wax models, a Cabinet de Chimie ou Laboratoire, a Cabinet de Pharmacie ou Apoticairie, a Cabinet de Drogues - which contained some eight hundred glass jars of ingredients, a Cabinet d'Histoire Naturelle - with samples of all sorts of animals, insects, fish, shells, and minerals, a Cabinet de Mechanique et de Physique, Cabinet du Tours and La Bibliothèque. Following the passing of Bonnier de La Mosson in 1744, his collection was put up for auction. The director of Muséum national d'histoire naturelle acquired the panelling and numerous from the ‘Cabinet d’Histoire Naturelle’ that’s now exhibited in the library I visited. For the other objects, just some buyers and current locations are known.

I think my fascination with Cabinets of Curiosities stems from two aspects. Firstly, the sense of mystery that surrounds them. The few surviving cabinets are often incomplete, leaving much to the imagination regarding the lost details. Secondly in the collecting part, it contained such an enchanting diverse array of objects. I think an important factor was to reflect the wealth and power of the collector. It’s most likely that these individuals had a keen interest in the world and its peculiarities, but that cabinet also served as a testament that they were intellectual enough to understand these marvellous objects.

And I can in a way relate this back to the napkins from my childhood. Just collecting for the collecting’s sake.

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Image 5: The Joseph Bonnier de La Mosson cabinet (Hanna Havdell, 2022)
Artistic influences: Yuka Oyama

When I look for artists that have worked with the same subjects as me, I am naturally mostly drawn to jewellery artists. One is Yuka Oyama, who among many things, works with jewellery.

Oyama's project, "Collectors," investigates people's emotional attachment to objects and their urge to amass multiples of the same item. By interviewing collectors in the Cleveland, Ohio area and then making masks for them that mimicked their particular kind of object. The resulting works comprise photographs of the collectors wearing the masks in the presence of their objects.23

Her work is compelling for this project as it is both connected to collections and the human body and is created by a jewellery artist. Her approach has focused on individual collectors, and made a special piece just for them, as a prolongation of their already existing collection. I have in a way revisited my childhood to revoke my inner collector to create the works for my project.

Image 6: Collectors - Moon Shelves (Yuka Oyama 2013)

Artistic influences: Jette Andersen

Another relevant artwork in this context is 'Livet i tingen vi lämnar efter oss' (Life in the things we leave behind) by Jette Andersens. The piece is composed of objects and fragments that she has collected over several decades. Andersens describes it as a kind of 'fragmentary archaeology' that encourages us to delve into the mystery of human influence on our world.25

I perceive the artwork as both structured and messy at the same time, composed of numerous small pieces that together create a larger whole. Many of the individual pieces are intriguing and relate to subjects that I have explored in my own project, such as insects, lace, thread, stones, shells, fossils, and skeletons. Andersens has allowed her individual discoveries to remain as they are, without the need to transform them into something else. As someone from a craft background where there is often a focus on making, I find it liberating that her meticulously sorted collection is the artwork itself.

Image 7: Livet i tingen vi lämnar efter oss. (Jette Andersen 202226)

26 Jette Andersen, Livet i tingen vi lämnar efter oss, 2022, https://www.jetteandersen.se, [2022-05-29]
Artistic influences: Bettina Speckner

Another artist whose work resonates with me is Bettina Speckner. She herself describes her work as 'uncovering what many have forgotten to look for.'

I am especially fond of this one to the left and needed a couple of seconds to see what I was looking at. Saw the pile of wood and the forest in the background, but the white sheet was confusing at first. It's probably just a tarpaulin to protect the wood from rain, but there's still an aura of mystery that it could be hiding something unknown underneath.

The piece on the right also evokes a similar feeling. The mountain and lamp-post create a sense of intrigue that makes me want to know more about the place depicted. However, I realise that knowing more would likely spoil the mystery. This approach to preserving mystery resonates with my own work, where I don't feel the need to explain every idea behind each piece of jewellery. It is not important enough to ruin the mystery.

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Methods & Materials

Process

Typically, I begin by sketching various shapes to get an idea of what I will go forward with in the workshop. However, I also figure out what I’m going to do while I am working directly with the material, whether it be wax before casting, or by paint and pens on metal before etching.

My process for creating shapes, figures, and forms is intuitive and often connected to things I have come across during my research. While I do not feel the need to explain the exact story behind each piece there are recurring themes that I often explore.

One such theme is the sea. Growing up on Gotland, an island in the Baltic Sea, the ocean has played a significant role in my memories and childhood experiences. My feelings for the sea are ambiguous. While swimming or going by boat in open water provides a sense of freedom, the water surrounding Gotland can also make me feel trapped and claustrophobic. Dark, wild water is both so beautiful and intriguing, yet also somewhat terrifying. I try to embody these conflicting feelings through shapes of water, waves, shells, and the mysterious qualities of the sea.

My work is also heavily influenced by the museums and collections I have visited, such as the Foundling tokens tragedy, the naturalia in Bonnier de la Mosson’s cabinets, and various other museums, including the Historical Museum of Gotland and its artefacts, the Parthenon sculptures and Rosetta stone at British Museums, the Victoria and Albert Museums jewellery, the art at the Louvre, the Swedish History Museums gold room, the Royal Armoury Museums textiles and Pitt Rivers drawers full of ethnographic objects. I draw on elements from these collections, incorporating at least a small reference to each of them in my work. Ultimately, my pieces are less about conveying a specific message and more about being a collection that evokes a particular feeling or mood.
Metals

In this project, I have primarily worked with metal and I feel it is the traditional jewellery material for a reason, it possesses an unparalleled beauty, as it can be both rough and sharp while also being delicate and smooth. It has the unique quality of allowing me to create thin and fragile-looking pieces that still maintain their shape.

The base of my project consists of three different types of metal. Firstly, I have used silver for the castings. Since it's hard enough to make thin castings, but still easy to work with. And I feel that a piece in silver has the instant sense of being something precious and it has naturally a beautiful white-grey colour that accentuates its details. The silver changes by time, it oxides and gets a darker tone. It's something you usually want to slow down, but in this project I feel that’s an advantage that it happens. It fits the concept of time and decay, nothing will stay the same.

For my etchings I use zinc. Although I had some issues with finding it for sale, since it's rarely used anymore, I was only able to obtain it in one sheet thickness. And it can't be soldered. But it has two upsides that makes it all worth it, I feel it is the metal that I feel gives the most beautiful etchings, with a contrast between a matte dark grey and a shiny almost silvery colour. Furthermore, it can be etched using my preferred etching technique of mixing Galvano bath and salt.

Finally, iron is the material a typewriter that I have disassembled and used is made of. I initially hesitated to work with it due to its hardness, propensity for sharp edges, and tendency to rust, even though rust fits well with my theme. However, it turned out better than expected, particularly after I decided to attempt etching it. I discovered that iron is easy to etch, and I could etch quite deeply into the small pieces without them losing their sturdiness since iron is so hard.
Casting

I begin my casting process by first creating delicate and fragile shapes using wax. To accomplish this, I take semi-transparent pink wax plates and place them on top of my sketches. Then, I trace the lines using a scalpel and a needle-like tool. This technique produces an effect a bit similar to engraving. I intentionally make the wax pieces, or certain parts of them, very thin so that the metal will struggle to fill out the entire form. To give a sense of slow decay or fragmented remnants. It becomes something that was supposed to be more, as in a becoming state. Like it has stopped in a motion, to forever be incomplete.

In this process, I utilise two collections that I have previously mentioned: bookmarks and stamps. For the bookmarks, I cover them in wax in various ways while attempting to preserve as much of their original surface and structure as possible. For the stamps, I layer several stamps of the same size on top of each other and cover them in wax, manipulating the thickness of the wax to create holes and fragments.

Once the wax pieces are complete, I construct a casting tree and attach the pieces to it. Then, I cover the tree in plaster and place it in an oven to burn out the wax. This leaves a void in the plaster that is shaped like the wax pieces on the tree. Next, I melt silver and pour it into the empty space in the plaster mould using a vacuum casting machine. Finally, I dissolve the plaster in water to reveal the metal tree with my pieces attached. To refine the pieces, I use a file, saw, and rotary multi-tool.
Image 10: Wax original (Hanna Havdell, 2022)

Image 11: After casting (Hanna Havdell, 2022)
Image 12: Casted pieces #1 (Hanna Havdell, 2023)

Image 13: Casted pieces #2 (Hanna Havdell, 2023)
Etching

Etching can be seen as a technique that is the opposite of casting, but I feel that both techniques can still create results that complement and communicate with each other.

I work in a couple of different ways with the etching.

For photo etching, I manipulate a photo in a computer to have only black and white parts. I then print it using an old black-only laser printer onto a thin, shiny paper. After cutting out the photo, I place it in a water bath for a couple minutes and then iron it onto a sheet of zinc, leaving some parts covered by the ink.

The sheet is then immersed in an acid bath that combines old Galvano bath and salt, and the acid slowly etches away the exposed parts, resulting in a fragmented picture. The longer the zinc stays in the bath, the deeper the etching becomes. However, the acid bath loses its effectiveness quickly with each use, making it challenging to predict how quickly the etching will occur. But embrace this lack of control in a way and let the unknown play a role in the final result.

The photographs I have used originate from my family's old albums, ones that my late maternal grandparents had in their possession. Spanning from the 1910s to the 1950s, they feature many of my relatives, some of whom passed away long before my birth, yet they remain a part of my identity. The collection includes photos of my grandparents, whom I knew and cherished, and images of their parents and other relatives, whom I never met, and whose lives I only know fragmental parts of. As time passes, fewer people remain who remember these individuals, and soon their memories will fade away altogether. By using etching to create an almost ghostly expression in these photos, I aim to express the feeling of these fragments slipping away.

When not using photos, I start by sketching a shape on paper, cutting it out, and glueing it onto the zinc. And starts sawing out the outline. I create a pattern or figure on the surface and cover parts of the metal with different pens and paint, like permanent markers, paint and nail polish. The sheet is then immersed in the acid bath, the same way as the photo etching.

This way of etching with the Galvano-salt mixture only works for zinc and aluminium. For other materials such as iron, I had to use a different technique and acid. I get more into this in the next chapter about the typewriter.
Image 16: My grandmother at her confirmation (Unknown, 1946) Image 17: Edited to black/white (Unknown, 1946)

Image 18: Finished brooch, with the photo from above twice, one is inverted and mirrored (Hanna Havdell, 2023)
Image 19: Etched pictures on zinc plates (Hanna Havdell, 2023)
Image 20: Etched charms with wedding photos (Hanna Havdell, 2023)

Image 21: Etched charm with another wedding photo (Hanna Havdell, 2023)
Image 22: Sawing out before etching (Hanna Havdell, 2022)

Image 23: After etching (Hanna Havdell, 2022)
The typewriter

During the autumn of 2022, I stumbled upon an early 20th-century typewriter from Pittsburgh in a second-hand shop that I realised would be interesting to use in this project. Besides its beautiful craftsmanship, what fascinated me about the typewriter was the possibility that stories and papers may have been written on it for over a century, giving it an intangible allure. And it helps to define how I see my pieces in this project as an unknown language.

I began using the typewriter by writing on wax, placing sheets of wax where paper would typically go and typing to imprint letters and symbols onto the wax. I created unreadable patterns by typing letters on top of one another, which I then cast in silver.

Next, I disassembled the typewriter, a tedious process that involved taking apart hundreds of pieces held together by countless tightly screwed screws and rivets. I then sawed out various parts, especially the ones that were painted black with beautiful golden patterns. And some of the other pieces I etched, since the material is iron I used electro etching, a technique involving submerging the piece in a mixture of water, vinegar, and salt and by a wire applying electricity to the piece. It surprisingly worked out much better than I expected and by hanging the typewriter parts in different kinds of wires, it transferred different tints of colour from the wire to the piece. Like using a brass wire resulted in golden-like patterned splashes.

Shortly after I had started with the typewriter I found out about another work that bear close resemblance, 'Aeon Profit - Piano Forte', by former Ädellab students Adam Grinovich, Romina Fuentes and Annika Pettersson, where they as as a group, ‘A5’, in 2010 disassemble a piano to create jewellery. A piano and a typewriter also have things in common, they are both tools where you have the possibility to create art. Analog but mechanical advanced. A5 described the connection between jewellery and instrument as;

‘Thus when an instrument or a piece of jewellery is no longer wanted or needed it falls into a particular space of limbo, the owner wishes to part with the item yet at the same time hopes that it will continue its existence.’

While the two projects have strong similarities, I have decided to proceed with my idea with the typewriter because I feel the core messages of the projects are different from each other, and mine is not supposed to be a stand alone work, but a part of a bigger collection. And I also really liked their project and way of working.

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30 https://www.current-obsession.com/A5-AEON-PROFIT-PIANO-FORTE
Image 24: Aeon Profit – Piano Forte, (A5 2010)\textsuperscript{31}

\textsuperscript{31} A5, Adam Grinovich, Romina Fuentes, Annika Pettersson Piano Forte, 2010
Image 25: The typewriter (Hanna Havdell, 2022)

Image 26: Becoming disassembled (Hanna Havdell, 2022)
Image 27: Bracelet made from the typewriter (Hanna Havdell, 2023)

Image 28: Etched piece from the typewriter (Hanna Havdell, 2023)
Becoming jewellery

After creating my collection of pieces, I look at them, move them around, and try out different constellations. Holding a fragment and wondering, can this be a stand alone jewellery piece or does it crave to be sewed together with another one? Which kind of jewellery are they, are it destined to be a brooch or a charm?

Charms have been a great influence in this process. A charm bracelet or necklace serves as a miniature collection that can be worn, and the charms can be added, removed, or reorganised as desired. Charm bracelets can be a meaningful and sentimental gift, as the charms often hold personal significance to the wearer.

As Yvonne Markowitz and Midori Ferriso explained in an article in Ornament they have the potential to reveal cultural information by displaying specific aspects of people’s lives as it is a jewellery piece rooted in personal experience, serving as a means to recognize and confirm emotions, decisions, and occurrences. With their inherent ability to convey a story, charm bracelets share similarities with ‘oral histories, quilts, letters, and journals.’ In essence, they possess a unique narrative quality that can express the wearer’s life journey.32

This resonates so well with my project and theme, it became so obvious that so many of my pieces are destined to become charms.

But also many pieces become another type of jewellery, like for example brooches. I feel that brooches are something special, because of the way they are traditionally worn; on the left side of your chest. It feels like something precious and sentimental when wearing it so close to your heart. It feels so personal.

With some of my jewellery I have connected different pieces by drilling holes and sewing them together with a needle and thread. I see it as a way to connect these scattered memories. Like how by time the thread will decay but not the metal pieces, and they will be scattered fragments again. Also it's something so delicate with a textile tread against the rougher and harder metal, as it accents a fragmental feeling.

32 Markowitz, Yvonne and Ferriso, Midori “Charm Bracelets: Portable Autobiographies” Ornament 21 no4 54-7 Summ ’98
Image 29: Sewing together (Hanna Havdell, 2022)

Image 30: Stamp brooch (Hanna Havdell, 2022)
Exhibit

For a while, I had been contemplating the best way to showcase my pieces. Initially, I had arranged them in neat rows on boards with black textile, which I hung on the wall. The black background complemented the silver well and the details did get more visible. However, displaying so many pieces so closely together made them blend in as a mass. I desired a way to strike a balance between showcasing a collection while still allowing each piece to stand out.

Placing the pieces on podiums, one by one, or a few on each, provided more space and allowed easier attention to each piece, and while looking nice it didn't convey my vision of a collection.

I tried to pile up some box-like frames on top of each other and stacked my jewellery between the glass in layers. So that some pieces become a bit hidden and harder to see. I liked the idea with the boxes and layers, but not these specific boxes and not the way I had executed it.

At my bachelor project exhibition, I used two drawers from a filing cabinet, ones used to store drawings in, to showcase my pieces, which worked well but didn't feel like doing that again, since it felt “done” and unexciting.

Then in the summer of 2022 at the lakttagelser/Observations jewellery art exhibition by Sara Borgegård Ålgå at Liljevalchs, I saw Kajsa Lindbergs pieces displayed using different boxes and drawers, and I really liked it. It reminded me of my earlier bachelor set up but felt much more interesting and existing. I didn't want to just copy their concept, but thought that I should go back to the idea about the drawers and see if I could do something new with it.

I've decided to revisit the idea of using an old filing cabinet, to see how it would look with my new pieces. My vision was for a traditional, slightly weathered one, so I saw no need to build one from scratch. Instead, I opted to purchase an existing one that I can modify and paint. After searching second-hand sources, I found one that I thought was a good base to work with, and that’s where I’m at currently.

My plan is to modify the filing cabinet by painting, staining, and possibly adding burn marks. To take out some of the drawers and stack them a bit on each other. To place my pieces in and on top of the drawers.

I want to conceive this feeling of an old archive or museum. To tie the jewellery and the display together with the idea of the collection.
Image 31: Bachelor project, exhibited in drawers (Hanna Havdell, 2018)

Image 32: Exhibit on black boards (Hanna Havdell, 2022)
Conclusion

Looking back at my original intent. I believe that I did create a collection of jewellery that is intimately tied to memories and fragments. In my creative process, I explored various approaches to express the connection between memories, fragments, collecting, and jewellery, and ultimately concluded that each element is equally vital to the overall concept. With jewellery serving as the medium of expression, collecting as the method of creating, fragments as the visual representation, and memories of an unknown story as the underlying essence that I aim to evoke in the beholder.

(1) Regarding the casting process, I underwent a trial and error process to achieve the fragmented appearance I wanted of the casted silver pieces. I experimented with using paper coated with layers of wax, but I transitioned using wax plates that allowed me to more accurately control the thickness and achieve the right level of fragmentation while still maintaining somewhat structure in the pieces. I also experimented with making some parts of a piece thinner to be able to control the brokenness without making it look too unnatural.

(2) Having achieved a fragmented appearance in the silver casted pieces, I then sought to create etched pieces that mirrored this aesthetic, which it often does naturally. However, the process to get the etching to work like I wanted was long. Especially the ones where I wanted to use photos. I had some hurdles to overcome, like finding sheets of zinc, the right sort of printer and paper, testing different etching methods, preparing the correct solution, finding pens and paint that could withstand the etching solution and then etching the pieces to the appropriate degree. And every step came with some sort of unexpected obstacles. But finally in the end, it all came together, and I could achieve what I wanted.

(3) I did incorporate three of my old collections in the finished work: the stamps, bookmarks and skeletons. A piece of skeleton from a deer I sawed out and used as it is. Along the way during this project I realised that metal is often enough, that I don’t need to include and show a lot of other materials. So I decided that the stamps and bookmarks didn’t need to be kept in a paper state, it could instead be used as a material to make originals together with wax, to later be transformed into silver in the casting process.

(4) For a long time I tried to find a more common ground for the different jewellery pieces than they actually needed. I had this focus that they needed to be in the same way, as a ‘red thread’ that connected them all. The first idea was to make them interactive, to be able to make them connect to each other in different ways using clasps and hooks. Another was that all the jewellery pieces should be constructed of
two or more pieces that were sewed together with tread. And the latest was that they should all be charms. In the end I realised that I was just making it unnecessarily difficult, the pieces could be different types of jewellery, some could be charms, some could be brooches, some could be stitched together and some not. I realised that it already was apparent that they are connected, that they are “in the same universe”.

(5) When I put all my pieces together it gets a collective effect and the narrative gets more powerful than each individual piece. And I feel that my intentions are shown best when my pieces are displayed together, as a collection. But I have also recognized that I compulsory put them too close together, causing the individual pieces and details to feel lost. I had to learn how to put enough space around and between the jewellery while still maintaining a sense of cohesion as a collection. And I feel that I have now figured out the right display with the cabinet and drawers.

(6) I gained a deeper understanding about my practice during this project. That my practice is so closely knit with jewellery, that jewellery is my practice. It’s what I do and it’s all I need to do. What I do doesn’t have to become wearable pieces, but it’s always closely related to jewellery.

I used to feel conflicted, thinking that I needed to be more versatile. Everybody else seems to be able to do so many different things and master several art forms. I struggled with the fact that my pieces are too small and it feels like they disappear in a room when exhibited. I should be able to make bigger things, to go more towards sculpture and make it eye-catching. I battled that my collection would just feel bland if I just used metal and that I needed to include other materials. I experimented with for example textile, embroidery, wood, and porcelain, but none of them felt to resonate with my project. In the end I just came back to that the small pieces in metal are my place to be.

I also thought that my work needed to be more conceptual and norm critical. Smarter, more relevant and important. But I now see that it doesn’t need to be all those things. Instead, I can evolve by trusting the process and allowing it to guide me towards what I’m looking for.

When I put my pieces together, they have a powerful collective effect that speaks for itself. And even though they may be small, they don't need to be any larger or more complex to make an impact. Just there to convey the feeling of the unknown that we can sense but are just out of reach.
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Markowitz, Yvonne and Ferriso, Midori “Charm Bracelets: Portable Autobiographies” *Ornament* 21 no4 54-7 Summ ’98


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Image 2

Image 6

Image 7
Jette Andersen, Livet i tingen vi lämnar efter oss, 2022, https://www.jetteandersen.se, [2022-05-29]

Image 8

Image 9

Image 16-17
Unknown photographer, 1946

Image 24
A5, Adam Grinovich, Romina Fuentes, Annika Pettersson Piano Forte, 2010

Image 1, 3-5, 10-23, 25-35
Hanna Havdell
Reflection

It feels a bit odd and somewhat melancholic to write this, knowing that this is the final submission, signifying the end of my time at Konstfack.

Looking back on the past few months. After completing this exam paper, the preparation for the examinations started. For displaying my work, I did use the old filing cabinet that I had purchased and I wanted to put my jewellery inside its drawers. The insides of the drawers were made of untreated wood, which appeared too light. To create a better contrast against the jewellery while still showcasing the wood’s texture, I decided to paint the insides of the drawers in shades of brown and black using wood stain, making them darker. The cabinet consisted of ten drawers, with five on each side that could be arranged as separate pieces of furniture or combined into one. It wasn’t until the installation in Havet that I made a decision. I stacked the two pieces on top of each other, but in opposite directions, so the drawers faced different sides. This way I was able to display more of the jewellery and the viewers could observe it from both sides and had to walk around it. Additionally, I chose to have two drawers on the floor for unfinished and scrap pieces. My intention was to create a sense of a dynamic archive, where some pieces were sorted and exhibited in the cabinet while others remained unsorted in the drawers on the floor. Also, during our first week at Konstfack, in the beginning of autumn 2021, our class built an exhibition together in Havet. It was a nice experience to work together in that space once again, a year and a half later.

For the examination, I prepared a slideshow featuring images of my research, process, and completed work. I decided to be more personal in the presentation than I was in this exam paper. I had felt that the personal aspects were irrelevant for others to hear about. However, through tutorials and discussions with my peers in the weeks leading up to the examination, I received feedback suggesting that these personal insights were indeed relevant and helped to understand my project. Additionally, as I put words to my thoughts, I also began to perceive and comprehend my project in an enhanced way. And that is something I could do better, to be more open and honest. Perhaps if I had embraced this approach earlier in the process, my project could have undergone further evolution. Nevertheless, it is a lesson I will carry on forward.

For the spring exhibition, I aimed to clarify my charm concept for viewers by putting some of the charms onto a chain. However, I felt that a pre-made chain would not blend well with the etched and casted pieces. After considering various solutions, I concluded that the best approach would be to individually create each chain link using wax, cast them, and then assemble them into a chain. This method proved to be exceedingly time-consuming. The process of crafting the links from wax and casting them took some time, but the most time-consuming aspect was cleaning up the links. Since each link had to be removed from the casting tree and meticulously sawed and filed. Despite the time constraints, I managed to assemble a bracelet chain and approximately two-thirds of a necklace. I did not have sufficient time to complete the remaining portion, but I did not consider it a significant issue as I believed the concept was still evident. I put casted silver charms on the necklace and made tiny new etched zinc charms for the bracelet. The addition of the chains not only provided a more
polished appearance to my project but also, in my opinion, made the concept clearer for viewers. Therefore, I am pleased that I decided to undertake this endeavour.

In the spring exhibition I was placed in A5, together with two classmates from craft, one from fine art and one from the teacher education programme. The room had ceiling windows, as it was sunny most of the exhibition week, a nice natural light was coming through. Our diverse works came together nicely in the space, and it felt airy and not too overcrowded. In my corner spot, I had my filing cabinet in the middle of the floor and left sufficient space around it. I reorganised my pieces in the drawers, removing some from the exam exhibition and incorporating the chains instead.

One of the walls served as a display for some of my unfinished and scrap pieces, arranged in a wave-like pattern. I experimented with various ideas regarding their placement and quantity on the wall. My intention was to create a sense of disorganised yet organic composition, but avoiding it to feel too cluttered. Therefore, I selected pieces that featured grey tones such as silver, zinc, iron, and aluminium, with soft or organic shapes. I found this arrangement to be a good addition to the cabinet, symbolising organised versus unorganised, still versus movement.

I found this setup better than the one in Havet. A smaller room suits my artwork better, as it tends to disappear in larger spaces and when placed alongside larger works.

During the exhibition, the discussions I had were generally brief, but gave some valuable insights. One was that the inclusion of chains in my work enhanced its clarity and elevated the overall presentation. I agree with this and believe that if I incorporated the chains earlier in the project it would have been better since they could have evolved more. I should in the future explore how I can connect my pieces earlier in the process - with chains or something else - and work more with that. Furthermore, I received feedback that looked better now than at the exam exhibition since I had fewer objects now, which is good for me to hear since I am aware that I easily overstack. Also, it was rewarding and in a way liberating to present the work in its more completed form. In previous instances, I could often hide behind the notion of the work being a process or an experimentation. However, in this exhibition, I had to stand for the finished pieces, acknowledging that they represented my work for over the past two years.

I feel that the last few months, as everything came together, provided me with a greater sense of clarity and some valuable insights for my future practice.

Regarding my future plans, I am certain that I want to continue with jewellery art, although I do not have a highly structured plan in place. What I know is that I’m staying in Stockholm and I have got a spot in a workshop where I have a goldsmith bench and there is some equipment. My plan is to engage in both jewellery art and create some commercially oriented pieces that are more sellable. Additionally, I aspire to apply for exhibitions, scholarships, and possibly teaching positions, and explore various craft-related opportunities. As a “bread job” I have a part-time administrative job, which will occupy my mornings until around lunchtime during the weekdays. This will grant me the afternoons to focus on jewellery making. I have some plans for the future, but a lot are still in the unknown.
Image 33: Spring exhibition (Hanna Havdell, 2023)
Image 34: Chain, necklace (Hanna Havdell, 2023)

Image 35: Chain, bracelet (Hanna Havdell, 2023)