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BEGUILING BIJOUX

The most alluring of masterpieces are there to be worn at Louisa Guinness' striking PAD jewellery gallery

By JULIA PEYTON-JONES

What is it about jewellery that continues to fascinate artists? What does the diminutive scale and intricate crafting of metals and stones give them that their work in other media does not? Is the jewellery they make a form of sculpture, an opportunity to experiment, or something playful that

shouldn't be taken too seriously by either the maker or the wearer?

There are certainly many similarities between contemporary sculpture and contemporary jewellery: both are often made in editions, both have a passionate following of knowledgeable specialists, and are of value in the widest sense of the word. Yet the small scale allows a kind of risk-taking that would be too difficult (and expensive) in a larger format.

Of the great artists who have made jewellery, Alexander Calder stands out for the spiralling and zigzag objects that transform his sculpture into what appears to be two-dimensional form. Salvador Dalí's surreal creations include a

1949 brooch featuring a luscious pair of ruby lips surrounding pearly teeth. Pablo Picasso engraved stone amulets for his lover Dora Maar and set her portrait in a ring of gold and enamel flowers.

In 1935, Meret Oppenheim produced a gorgeous fur bracelet lined with burnished gold. More recently, Louise Bourgeois created gold and silver brooches using her signature spider motif, and Damien Hirst incorporated a miniature version of his diamond skull, as well as golden replicas of pills, on his charm bracelet.

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Gallerists have increasingly recognised the allure of such jewellery that pushes creative boundaries. Fifteen years ago, Louisa Guinness took the pioneering step of commissioning artists to work with her, and later opened her gallery specialising in this field. Her role as both commissioner and curator helps artists to focus on the minute

Left and bottom:

pieces by Alexander

Calder and Pablo

Picasso collected by Louisa Guinness.

Below: a brooch by

Salvador Dali

details that are required for the production of small editions and unique pieces realised to the highest possible standard.

There's something innately fascinating about the nature of craftsmanship. The owner of an item of jewellery has the luxury of being able to focus on, revel in and return again and again to the object of

intrigue, which is quite literally at their fingertips. What could be more inspiring than to wear an artwork made by an artist you greatly admire, and to see it develop a patina of history as you move through your life? This surely is sculpture, but an

intimate kind that adorns the body in a concise expression of individuality and skill.

Louisa Guinness will be at PAD London (www.pad-fairs. com) from 2 to 8 October in Berkeley Square, London W1. PHOTOGRAPHS: ANDREW TESTA, RICHARD VALENCIA/COURTESY OF LOUISA GUINNESS GALLERY, ® CAMERA PRESS, ® MICHEL GIESBRECHT, ® DENIZ GUZEL, MATTIA LOTTI, ® DANIELEODICE, AL AIN CORNU, ® VERTES ZURICH

