

GALERIE
ARTEMPO



ALEX O'CONNOR

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

CORNWALL, ENGLAND

Alex O'Connor, Alex O'Connor came to silversmithing in 2013 from a background in Fine Art and Sculpture. Accordingly, her silverware merges an inherent understanding of form, composition, balance and surface with the specific disciplines of contemporary craft.

Based in West Cornwall, this elemental location has a profound influence on her practice. The colour of the sky, the wind-blown trees, the negative spaces between rocks, shadows, sounds. It's these sensations that she looks to express in her work. The poetry of the landscape is important – the resilience and dynamism – but also the stillness, the solace. It's a landscape that speaks of something ancient and atavistic.

Her recent collections are created through a process that begins with walking in the Cornish landscape and moves into drawing and model making. The resulting pieces bring together ideas of both our external and internal landscape.

'The world is a beautiful place, filled with wonders, but also cacophonous, baffling, chaotic and overwhelming for me. I convert these sensations into silverware and wearable sculptures that are suffused with harmony, composure, poise and serenity'

In 2019 Alex has exhibited at Collect and will be at Handmade Oxford and the Goldsmiths' Fair, Week Two.

INTRODUCTION

" I design silverware that is unadorned yet subtly tactile, celebrating the material while evoking ephemeral sensations through the metal.

Vessels are a consistent presence in my work; these potent, archetypal objects are functional but they also serve a purpose that is more reflective or contemplative. They are containers for memory, meaning and a sense of place; sculptural objects that merge ideas, form and technique.

My recent work is an impressionistic response to the resilient, dynamic topography of West Cornwall and unsurprisingly, the creative process always begins with walking. I move through the landscape, observing and gathering fleeting details; light falling on water for a moment, particular shadows, the sound of dry grass; fragments of sensation that become sketches, working drawings and models for pieces in silver.

I think and design through making, and multiple paper prototypes enable me to evaluate balance, visual weight, scale and composition before working in base metal and finally silver.

When fabricating the silver vessels it's important to translate a sense of immediacy and spontaneity into the metal sheet and I do this by decisive scoring, folding and forming. The metal surface is treated almost like a drawing, with many layers of fine lines being built up to give an expressive, nuanced finish.

I am a graduate from the Jewellery and Silversmithing BA at Truro College but my love of working with form has its origins in my early twenties when I studied for a degree in sculpture. This led to ten years as a sculpture and ceramics technician. "

—— ALEX O'CONNOR

EXHIBITIONS

2020 24th September-6th October The Goldsmiths' Fair Online
2019 29-30 June Handmade Oxford, Waterperry Gardens, Oxfordshire
2019 1-30 June Renewal, Dock Street Studios, Dundee
2019 28 February-3 March Collect, The Saatchi Gallery, London
2018 November-May 2019 Schoonhoven Silver Awards Exhibition, Zilvermuseum, Schoonhoven Netherlands
2018 15 November-23 January Gifted, Kath Libbert Gallery, Bradford.
2018 25 - 30 September The Goldsmiths' Fair Week One, Goldsmiths' Hall, London
2018 20 - 23 September London Design Fair, The Old Truman Brewery, London
2018 15 August Hidden Depths, The Byre Gallery, Torpoint, Cornwall
2018 26 - 30 June One Year On at New Designers, Business Design Centre, London
2018 13 July - 31 August Made for the Table, The Goldsmiths' Centre, London
2018 Rising Stars, The New Ashgate Gallery
2017 Shine, The Goldsmiths' Centre, London
2017 New Designers, Business Design Centre, London
2017 Page Turner, Lemon Quay, Truro, Cornwall
2017 Inspired, The Goldsmiths Centre, London
2016 Tenth, Lemon Quay, Truro, Cornwall
2016 Inspired, The Goldsmiths' Centre, London

AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

2017 Contemporary British Silversmiths (CBS)
2017 Design in Silver Award at New Designers
2017 Goldsmiths' Company Silver Bullion Grant
2015 the South Square Trust Bursary in 2015

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inquiries@galerieartempo.com

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