





While 30th anniversaries are traditionally celebrated with lilies and pearls, Gray Street Workshop partners Jess Dare, Sue Lorraine and Catherine Truman entice us with a more adventurous material vocabulary.

Accomplished and inventive makers, the trio's deep research into new languages and knowledge unites these adventurous bodies of work. With light, lightness, plastics, plasticity, stillness and moving imagery augmenting their elemental familiars of glass, metal and wood, *Theatre of Detail* displays the inquiry, presence and vibrancy for which Gray Street is renowned.

JESS DARE transforms temporality into longevity. Informed by a recent Asialink residency researching floral culture in Thailand, she extends her oeuvre with the stringing traditions of Phuang Malai and the hand sewing and pinning techniques of Yeb Bab. *Offerings* ventures ambitiously in form and scale to capture an ephemeral narrative in glass and metal.

Traditionally a craft developed at court and over centuries taught in schools, ceremonial Phuang Malai signify respect and status. Flower garlands are given as offerings to spirits, draped on statues in Buddhist temples, and are kept for protection and luck. Today ubiquitous and pre-made in petals and plastics, they hang from taxi rear-vision mirrors to ensure a safe journey.

In admiration for the Thai people, their adoration of the Royal family, and the sharing of craft and culture, Jess rejuvenates the ceremonial garland in hybrid forms. Drawn from her notebooks, *Elementary Phuang Malai* examines their structure with pared back components of powder-coated brass. Conical five-sided Crown flowers interspersed by spherical Globe Amaranth and punctuated by spiky Magnolias, articulate enduring love.

Playfully fusing the traditions of Western and Thai celebration, *Happy Birthday Dear King* produces a regal spectacle. Exuberant yellow candles – stamens sprouting from sterling silver floral forms cast from plastic birthday candle holders, burn bright. Echoing Dare's lamp work, wax becomes liquid, audibly splattering, solidifying into abstract flowers below, as smoke caresses the blackened silver and copper malai.

Growing delicate stems and petals in flame-polished glass makes sense in semi-arid Adelaide where flowers, particularly orchids, are more precious than in tropical climes. The succulent verdant blooms of *Meditation Malai* openly and elegantly repose; its structure implicit. Inversely, the solid and tightly strung hand-cut and formed polished brass medallions of *Grand Gesture* twist rhythmically with the lightness of folded petals.

Perfectly proportioned, vibrantly fresh or clear aged-glass petals, hand sewn into wall-mounted brass mandalas, visually tinkle. The floral symmetry of her *Fading Yeb Bab* bears witness to the transience of life in a world of dying tradition. With skilful respect, Jess Dare de- and reconstructs an ancient ceremonial art for contemporary contemplation.

SUE LORRAINE makes jewellery for the body and mind. Her resilient steel flows deceptively; a sharp pencil drawing precise lines – just enough to en/form, never an excess to confuse. Her work's minimal aesthetic and reproducible integrity stem from childhood. Each day, after school she would go down to her mother's pottery studio to see what had been made that day, and offer unsolicited suggestions on how to trim and simplify her mother's organic pottery forms.

Now, in *Models of Light*, her heat-coloured steel ponders and grows into botanical form. Tracing the distinctive patterns of branching, Lorraine's models investigate classification and systems of how things work. Graphic, simply drawn skeletons take root in an imaginary space. Remembering a nostalgic past and fashioning a tangible future, the model brings both the macro and micro within our reach.

Part science, part engineering, part specimen and part whimsy, the steel trees branch in precise mathematical increments, spiralling outwards and upwards at geometrically set angles. In past work Sue remodelled non-precious ready-mades such as coloured vinyl LP records and iPhone 3 cases to create unnatural entomological collections; in these studies she chooses the resilient nature and restricted palette of semi-opaque polypropylene stationery.

A 1950s sensibility pervades her subtle variations in the patterns and moods of light. Mounted on school-desk Tasmanian oak, yellow, orange, red and pink discs happily pop open – *Sun burst* illuminates summer blooms. Pluming skywards, piercing heavy cloud, the columnar white, yellow and clear *Up lighting* recounts a powerful monologue. Moments are asymmetrically suspended in *Falling light*'s softer hues of deepening stillness.

Each intimate study resonates with presence. Dappled blue and dark grey discs hover as *Filtered* soothes our eyes, quieting the mind; darkness descends in *Absence of light* as the dying embers of the day shrink to greying carbon dots. *Bruised light* smoulders at the end of time, compacted purple-grey; a dense universe waiting to implode.

This suite of objects was intended for display and representation, however when wearable *Light spots* emerge, Lorraine considers incorporating a cheerful clasp. Designing thoughtfully for the wearer's benefit defines her 35-year practice, where sparse ornament belies deep structural integrity. Sue Lorraine delights in that which lies beneath – research, labour and invention.

CATHERINE TRUMAN works with an expansive embodied vocabulary, operating in a theatre informed by collaborations with scientists in Anatomy and Histology for almost a decade. These new vignettes, *In Preparation for Seeing*, propose poetic narratives on the threshold of perception.

Light is passed through a prepared specimen in conventional bright-field microscopy to study the structure and physiology of cells. In her *Cell Culture Glove* the processes and rituals of research and microscopy become that specimen, observed in the context of artistic practices. By interrogation she considers and ingests scientific bodies of knowledge.

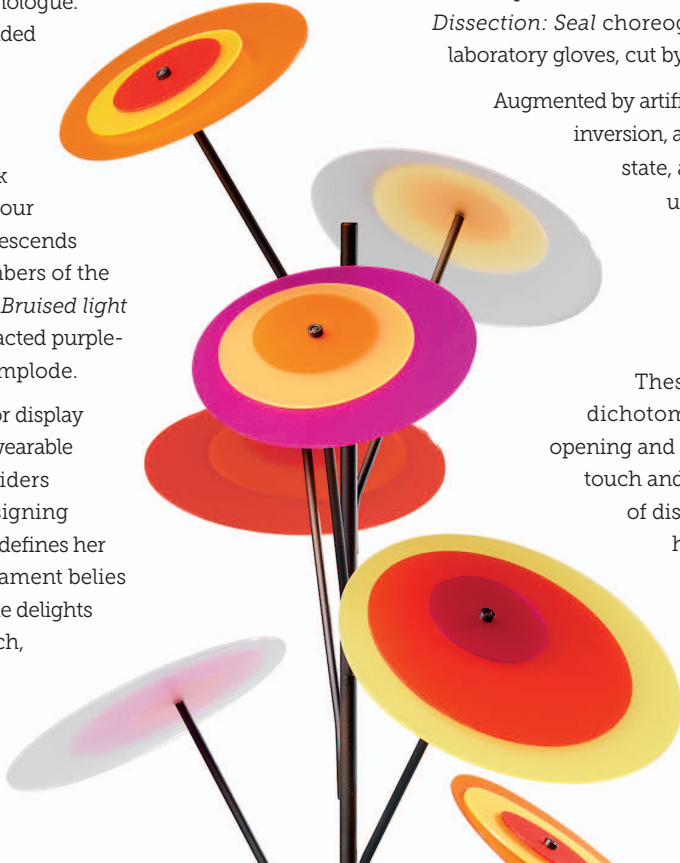
A cotton glove encrusted with translucent glass balls visually oscillates upon an underlit table. Multiplying cells glisten – embedded in forceps; swallowed by a wide-mouthed Coplin Jar. The enticement of slipping one's hand metaphorically within the luminous *Glove* propels us, the observer, into accountability on the experimental plane.

In twinned tableaux an optically dense, irregular black glass covered *SEM Glove* rests beside a Petri dish of dark matter. The spectrum of vision employed by Scanning Electron Microscopes (SEMs) requires refraction; an electron beam observes the surface topography coated with ultra-thin carbon or gold. Vision is an illusion. We see by touch. The tension of form and meaning may only be a fraction of a micron deep.

Observing skilful specimen dissection in laboratories resonated with Catherine's early grounding in Japanese *netsuke* carving, where razor sharp tools reveal the forms within tender wood. Now, her paired *Glove Dissection: Anatomised* and *Glove Dissection: Seal* choreograph dissections of layers of latex laboratory gloves, cut by another from Truman's own hands.

Augmented by artifices of magnification, distortion and inversion, altered viewing angles invoke a dream state, anaesthetised, floating disembodied underwater. Formalised by installation, yet ambiguous in content, these tense, intimate, vulnerable and deeply moving images momentarily take the breath away.

These dramatic dioramas are a dichotomy of yielding and resistance – opening and closure. The familiar physicality of touch and sight intersect with the hidden flesh of dissection and microscopy. The hand has been her constant over three and a half decades and ultimately she returns to self. Catherine Truman assures us 'the strongest work comes from within'.



Conceptual maturity, material diversity and technical excellence authenticate GRAY STREET WORKSHOP's reputation as a finishing school for jewellers. Shaped over 30 years and four venues by the energies of six core partners, the Workshop has taken a highly collaborative form, organically responding and reinventing itself.

Bridging formal education and professional practice, around 100 jewellers of all ages and genres from Australia and overseas, have contributed to and absorbed its gifts. The daily cross-fertilisation within the workshop breeds a critical vocabulary, broad skills and professional etiquette. More directed mentoring develops a confident aesthetic and strong individualised practices.

As founding partners, Lorraine and Truman have witnessed the flourishing of this extraordinary stable, yet dynamic entity. A new chapter was launched when Dare, an access tenant from 2007, became a partner in 2010. Over the past five years this specific partnership has generated significant regrowth and expansion into both gallery and web spaces. The Workshop's windows and doors are open to the world, inviting audience interaction and public participation.

As the lights dim and the curtains rise on *Theatre of Detail*, we applaud the fertility and longevity of Gray Street Workshop. Join in as this eminent artist-run institute collectively celebrate their devotion to practice, magnificence of method and eloquence of expression.

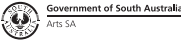
MELINDA RACKHAM  
Adelaide, 2015

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#### Theatre of Detail

5 – 29 March 2015  
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Adelaide, Australia

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Radiant Pavilion, Melbourne  
September 2015

The National, Christchurch, NZ  
April 2016

ATTA Gallery, Bangkok, Thailand  
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Above: Jess Dare, *Offerings: Grand Gesture* (detail), 2015, brass, steel, 450 x 280 x 50 mm  
Cover left: *Offerings: Happy Birthday Dear King*, 2015, oxidised sterling silver and copper, wax candles, steel, 390 x 260 x 130 mm (with candles)

Centre: Sue Lorraine, *Sun burst model* (detail), 2015, heat coloured steel, Tasmanian oak, polypropylene, 450 x 200 x 200 mm  
Cover centre: *Filtered model* (detail), 2015, heat coloured steel, Tasmanian oak, polypropylene, 270 x 560 x 280 mm

Catherine Truman, *In Preparation for Seeing – Glove dissection: Anatomise* (detail), 2015, film, aluminium viewer hood, magnifying lens, variable dimensions  
Cover right: *In Preparation for Seeing – Cell Culture Glove* (detail), 2015, cotton glove, glass, steel, light pad, variable dimensions

