

LIGHT MOVES

BLANCHE TILDEN'S METAL AND GLASS JEWELLERY MUST BE THE MOST ELEGANT NEW JEWELLERY STATEMENT SEEN THIS YEAR. IT IS LAID OUT, PERFECTLY FLAT, ON THE NARROW SHELF SURROUNDING THE TINY GALLERY FUNAKI. ITS GLASS COMPONENTS GLISTEN IN A LOW KEY KIND OF WAY, WHILE ITS MECHANICAL STRUCTURES ARE PERFECTLY ALIGNED INTO LONG NARROW STRIPS OR MAGNIFICENT SPRINGING CURVES. MADE MAINLY OF TITANIUM AND THIN, STRONG, COLOURLESS PYREX, EACH PIECE IS SURPRISINGLY LIGHT TO HOLD, OR WEAR, AND SUBTLY BENDS TO THE BODY'S MOVEMENT. THIS WORK IS ABSOLUTELY ORIGINAL IN CONCEPT.

TILDEN TAKES AS HER POINT OF DEPARTURE THE MECHANICS OF SIMPLE OBJECTS WITH MOVING PARTS – THINGS LIKE BICYCLE CHAINS, SCISSORS, PISTONS, PULLEYS, GEARS, CRANKS, LEVERS AND CONVEYOR BELTS. SHE REFINES THESE MOVEMENTS TO THEIR EXTREME ESSENTIALS AND THEN RE-CREATES THEM IN HER CHOSEN MATERIALS.

THE BICYCLE CHAIN FORMAT, FOR INSTANCE, IS MIMICKED IN GREY TITANIUM METAL WITH GLASS RIVETS THAT BEJEWEL ITS SEAMLESS CONTINUITY WITH REGULARLY SPACED LIGHT POINTS. A FOUR- METRE CHAIN MADE OF TINY, GLASS COMPONENTS HELD TOGETHER BY METAL PINS AND SPACERS, EXTENDS ALONG THE ENTIRE LENGTH OF THE GALLERY. EACH GLASS ELEMENT IS HANDMADE WITH UTMOST PRECISION, OUT OF HEAT AND SHOCK-RESISTANT PYREX TUBING. THE CHAIN RESEMBLES A CONTINUOUS CONVEYOR BELT CARRYING MINIATURE GLASS JARS.

COMPLETELY MODERN, AND REDOLENT WITH ECHOES OF AN INDUSTRIAL/ MECHANICAL AGE NOW PASSING INTO A DARK AND GREASY HISTORY, THIS JEWELLERY INSPIRES NOSTALGIA FOR ELEGANT, WELL CRAFTED HAND WORK THAT HAS A BEAUTY ALL ITS OWN. THIS IS CONTEMPORARY CRAFT AT ITS VERY BEST.

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