

AND FOR SOME FURTHER SPARKLE

When Yvonna Demczynska, director of London's Flow Gallery, decided to take part in a multi-venue celebration of contemporary Portuguese design a few months ago, she went to Lisbon looking for ceramics – the genre of local craftsmanship she expected to love. She came back, however, with jewellery. "I was amazed by the vivid use of colour and many different non-precious materials," she explains. "It also appealed to me that the sources of inspiration were as different as Catholicism and Portuguese patisseries." Although not often thought of as a go-to country for filigreed adornment, Portugal has been, it turns out, quietly nurturing a generation of jewellers who are now beginning to make an international impact. Alexandra de Serpa Pimentel's beautiful, delicate, cut-out silver brooches, for example, are inspired by antique lace, while Cristina Felipe's intriguing, exquisitely made ring, fine chain and silver box assemblages, nested in grey felt-lined wooden boxes, are influenced equally by Catholic rosaries and the work of German artist Joseph Beuys. Madalena Avellar has recreated enamelled cameo rings of Catholic saints, inspired by antique portrait-miniatures, and Rita

Ruivo makes pretty, witty brooches by printing images of antique jewellery on cloth and then stuffing and stitching them. Tereza Seabra's stunning gold and reset cameo necklace evokes Portugal's opulent past, while Vera Manzoni's charming, brightly coloured, paper doily bracelets and fruit jelly rings are inspired by Lisbon's oldest patisserie.

And the jewellers' bold use of materials is matched by a range of experimental techniques, from Manuela Sousa's gold and elastic brooches to Leonor Hipólito's gorgeous use of silicon, glass beads, sequins and plastic with gold and silver. Not to mention Suzana Rezende's jolly latex pins, Rita Faustino's joyful brightly coloured crocheted necklaces, and Ines Sobreira's painstakingly woven copper and silver wire pieces. Expressing a wide range of mood and character, the work is surprisingly beautiful, entirely wearable, and perfect for those in search of an original Christmas present. "The most colourful pieces and the pieces made from the most unusual materials are selling best," Demczynska reports.

Emma Crichton-Miller

Design Mais At Flow, 1-5
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2RP until end of the year.