

Metallic Grad

A Goldsmiths' bursary has allowed ten jewellers to pursue their craft with creative flair. **Rosalyn Wikeley** meets two of its recipients, Max Danger and Emma-Jane Rule

As with clothes, cars or interiors, luxury status and the trappings that accompany it can facilitate creativity – pushing boundaries and budgets – or sadly (and often) slowly butchering it. Luxury jewellery is perennially in danger of becoming the victim of its own success, carving out a signature look that allows complacency to set in.

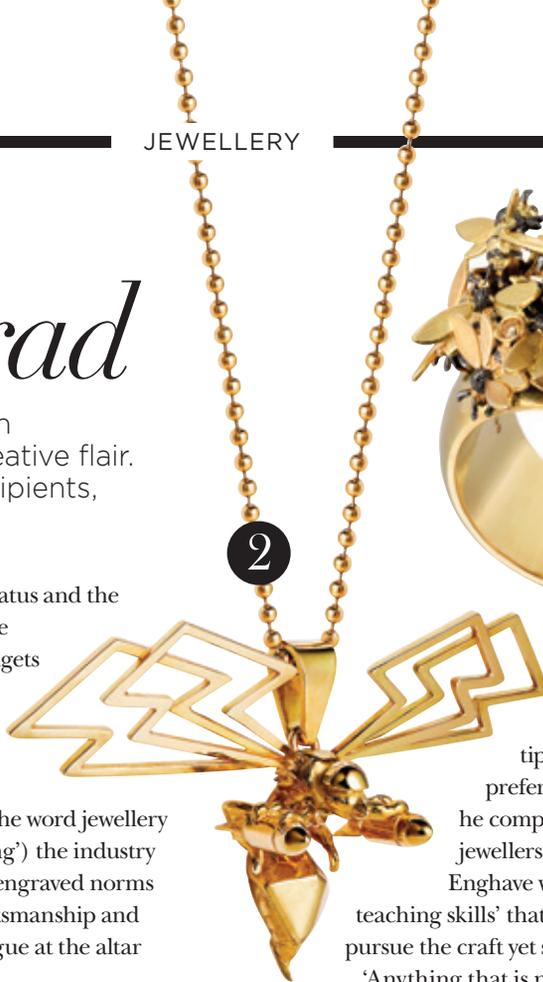
Yet, keeping in step with its semantic backbone (the word jewellery originates from the Latin 'jocale', meaning 'plaything') the industry must stomach inventive creativity. It must challenge engraved norms while keeping to a rich and revered tradition of craftsmanship and artisanal panache. Suffocating risk and playful intrigue at the altar of luxury ambition is to the demise of all.

Two classically trained, yet alternatively inclined, jewellers who satisfy the manifesto and keep buyers on their well-manicured toes are Max Danger and Emma-Jane Rule. Supported by Goldsmiths' Company of London's bursary scheme, they attained the classical skills and training needed to fulfill their contemporary design ambitions.

Goldsmith Max Danger's pieces are constructed with a patience and skill traditionally associated with high jewellery making, yet injected with a big dose of fun. The jagged edges and garish colours reflect his background in illustration 'going beyond aesthetics and into humour and storytelling'. Save furry Fendi key

rings and Anya Hindmarch Daz clutches, luxury tends to steer clear of irony, keeping to the straight and serious. So when 'funny' works out, especially in jewellery, it loosens purse strings and inhibitions.

Danger was interested in jewellery from a young age,



- 1 Honey Bee Cluster Ring by Max Danger
- 2 Killer Bee with Honey Bombs by Max Danger
- 3 Futuristic Worker Bee by Max Danger
- 4 Prickles Pods by Emma-Jane Rule
- 5 Bud Beakers by Emma-Jane Rule
- 6 Prickles Platter by Emma-Jane Rule

collecting stones in his youth. Following a brief hiatus (someone tipped him off that teenage girls' preferred line of work was breakdancing) he completed an apprenticeship at fine jewellers, Jacob Enghave Gold in Copenhagen. Enghave was a 'like-minded spirit with excellent teaching skills' that would give Danger the confidence to pursue the craft yet stay true to his adventurous streak. 'Anything that is new can contribute to something never seen before in jewellery,' Danger asserts, inspired by new scientific discoveries, such as materials and minerals and especially apiology (the scientific study of bees). His rings and necklaces offer a delicate aesthetic with a punchy talking point. Its bespoke nature allows the narratives and idiosyncrasies of his style to speak.

Silversmith Emma-Jane Rule combines the more contemporary technique of fold forming alongside other traditional metalworking practices, such as hand raising and hammer folding. 'Fold forming is not a widely used technique, which makes my work a little more unusual and unique.' It involves taking a flat sheet of metal, folding it with a hammer or passing it through a rolling mill which creates 3D forms.

Rule is a Graduate of Contemporary British Silversmiths, the leading association for contemporary silver in the UK. Her ornamental bowls ignite a drawing room or hall, catching the light with their elegant folds and modern edge. They would look as comfortable in a country pile as a modern city pied à terre.

Inspired by the natural world and the patterns and forms found within it, Rule's jewellery stays true to the unique technique and sculptural approach of the main collection. Her current range is themed around cacti and she continues to find inspiration in catwalk couture and architecture.

So as high jewellery drifts further still towards bespoke, jewellers like Max Danger and Emma-Jane Rule must rise to the challenge and meet consumer demands, keeping a consistent thread of recognition but a unique return on investment.

See their work alongside that of the eight other bursary winners at the Goldsmiths' Fair, 27 Sept to 2 Oct and 4–9 Oct. goldsmithsfair.co.uk