

Laura Baxter



artist statement

Laura Baxter makes precious jewellery, metal wall panels and silverware inspired by botanical forms. Twigs, buds, blossom and leaf structures are abstracted and magnified in different scales to create graphic silhouettes of nature. The intention of the work is to create pieces which capture the essence and beauty of plant life. The work reflects how plants change and grow throughout the seasons and explores the potential of working with light and shadow.

Laura describes her relationship with nature as being central to her life and work, and this commitment can be seen in the sensitivity she has to the beauty of roadside weeds as well as more exotic specimens. She becomes captivated by particular types of plants and their life cycles, the drawings she makes become increasingly simple and more definitive which leads well to further development in precious metal.

Occasionally she finds a plant form that is so reductive in its form that it can be transposed into her designs with little alteration, saphora is one of these discoveries, the leaf structure felt familiar, as if she had created it herself. It reminded her of mimosa, a flower that has intrigued since childhood. These favourite plant structures recur throughout many pieces, and have become synonymous with her jewellery.

Laura hand constructs all her own work using shaping, piercing, die-pressing, soldeing and forging techniques. Surface texture and finishes are applied using roll-printing, punches and oxidising. Small silverware is hand raised and planished. Work is made in silver and 18ct gold to commission, as one-off pieces or as limited edition batch produced ranges. Each piece of jewellery is unique and to keep her work collectable Laura marks each piece with an issue number, similar to that of an artist's print. Many of her brooches have a life when not worn and can be displayed as small works of art which cast beautiful shadows.

Having established a strong personal voice for her jewellery, Laura has been developing large scale work in metal for public and private architectural commissions. In 2009 Laura successfully secured her first major public art commission, 'Leaf Fall' for the new atrium space at the Charles Rennie Mackintosh designed house, 78 Derngate, Northampton. In 2010 Laura was selected by the prestigious Museummaker organisation to design and make over 60 metal filigree birds, inspired by the museum's collections, for the parterre gardens at the Bowes Museum in County Durham. This fantastic commission has led Laura to start thinking larger scale and designing and making metal sculptural pieces. Laura's enthusiasm and commitment to her craft drives her practice forward but it is her passion for making small things, specifically jewellery, that will always be her principal identity as a maker.