

# FINGERS: JEWELLERY FOR AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

## 40 Years of Fingers Jewellery Gallery

On 22 November 1974 five jewellers opened Aotearoa New Zealand's first contemporary jewellery gallery in a narrow shop at 6 Lorne Street in central Auckland. The establishment of the Fingers jewellery co-operative was a response to the challenge of making a living from their craft while remaining true to the alternative spirit of the 1970s. 40 years later, and around the corner in Kitchener Street, Fingers is one of the oldest jewellery galleries in the world and is the longest operating craft gallery in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Fingers is particularly renowned for its ‘house style’ of the 1980s, now often known as the Bone Stone Shell movement. The story presented in *Fingers: Jewellery for Aotearoa New Zealand* is much wider than this. These are stories of jewellery with diverse

cultural references, connections to the alternative social movements, the exploration of new materials and engagement with the visual arts zeitgeist through to the plurality of 2014 practice.

Since Objectspace opened Fingers has been an active supporter of our work and so it is a real pleasure for Objectspace to stage this celebration of 40 years of achievement. *Fingers: Jewellery for Aotearoa New Zealand* is curated for Objectspace by Finn McCahon-Jones and the accompanying important history *Fingers: Jewellery for Aotearoa New Zealand* is written by Damian Skinner and Finn McCahon-Jones. Objectspace wishes to congratulate Finn and Damian for their fine work in telling this important story. We want to thank the current Fingers partners for their support of this project. Ruth Baird and Alan Preston. Objectspace would also like to thanks all the lenders who have kindly loaned works, Creative New Zealand, through the Arts Leadership Programme, for their support together with the support received from Auckland Council, the ASB Community Trust and the Object-space Donors.

Fingers has had a massive impact on the development of New Zealand contemporary jewellery and it is a national and international magnet for collectors and enthusiasts interested in sophisticated contemporary making. Works by a number of its current and former partners — and exhibitors — are held in private and public collections in the world. In 2014 established and emerging New Zealand jewellers are regular participants in the global jewellery community. Without Fingers, large parts of the history that have led to this moment would be unimaginable.

**1976:**  
*Fingers Group Exhibition, CSA, Christchurch* 4 – 19 September

*Chaia Fein and Derek Hampton: Jewellery For Swingers* 7 – 25 November

*Fingers Group Exhibition, New Zealand Academy of Fine Art, Wellington*

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**Philip Clarke, Director**

# 1970s

Alan Preston invites fellow jewellers Roy Mason, Margie Phillips, Ruth Baird (Schofield) and Michael Ayling to open a jewellery shop in the old Purdeu Perfume premises at 6 Lorne Street in Auckland City. Michael Guy, who joins afew months later, is the sixth member in what becomes Fingers. The shop opens on 22 November 1974, offering jewellery priced from \$4 to \$40.

The name captures the era’s fascination with the handmade object, and the desire of craftspeople to live from the work of their hands. Through Fingers these jewellers hope to create a ‘New Zealand feeling for modern jewellery’, and encourage people to choose something that captures their imagination and personality, rather than a conventional diamond ring.

**1977:**  
*Group Show: Precious Little* 6 – 19 May

*Group Exhibition: Pofflatt Gallery, Thames*

*Group Exhibition: Details* 27 August – 22 October

*Group Exhibition: Paua Dreams* To 16 October

**1978:**  
*Fingers Group Exhibition, Nambassa Festival, Waihi* January

*Group Exhibition: Guaranteed Trash* 4 – 19 September

*Ruby Gash: Jungle Jewellery* 20 June – 9 July

*Fingers Group Exhibition, Galerie Legard, Wellington* 16 – 27 October

**1979:**  
*Group Exhibition: Spring Collection* 17 – 25 September

*Group Exhibition: Worn Out Art* 25 September – 13 October

The diversity of jewellery found in Fingers spanned from talismans and amulets informed by alternative belief systems, through to punk and pop art. These are all part of the unexpected cultural stew that made Fingers notable in the 1970s.

**Jewellery from the 1970s**

- Martin Sutcliffe, *Egyptian Necklace*, 1977–78, private collection
- Warwick Freeman, *Mattress*, 1978, collection of the artist
- Warwick Freeman, *Their Day*, 1977, collection of the artist
- Michael Guy, *Peacock*, 1975, collection of Peta Tearle
- Alan Preston, *Shell Necklace*, 1979, collection of the artist
- Roy Mason, *Hemmingway Locket*, 1973, collection of the artist
- Roy Mason, *Benevolence Talisman*, 1968, collection of the artist
- Margie Phillips, *Mermaid Pendant*, 1975, collection of the artist
- Ruby Gash, *Necklace*, 1978,

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*Group Exhibition: Pofflatt Gallery, Thames* 6 – 19 May

*Group Exhibition: Details* 27 August – 22 October

*Group Exhibition: Paua Dreams* To 16 October

**1981:**  
*Group Exhibition: Bone* 30 March – 24 April

*Group Exhibition: Souvenirs* 17 September – 6 October

**1985:**  
*Group exhibition: Showing Up* 17 June – 8 July

*Emblems* 4 – 23 November

*Group Exhibition: Spring Collection* 17 – 25 September

*Group Exhibition: Worn Out Art* 25 September – 13 October

- Ruby Gash, *Lizard Brooch*, 1978, collection of Alan Preston
- Daniel Clasby, *Brooch*, 1977, collection of Alan Preston
- Warwick Freeman, *Thumb Tack*, 1978, collection of the artist
- Warwick Freeman, *Silver Prison*, 1978, collection of the artist
- Alan Preston, *Rocket & Ice Cream Brooch*, 1978, collection of the artist
- Alan Preston, *Book of Kells brooches*, 1978, collection of the artist
- Alan Preston, *Enamel Earrings*, 1979, collection of the artist
- Felicity West, *Brooches*, 1975–76, collection of the artist
- Wallace Sutherland, *Bush Lawyer Ring*, 1978, collection of Ruth Baird
- Wallace Sutherland, *Fuchsia Ring*, c.1979, collection of Ruth Baird
- Roy Mason, *Organic Curl Ring*, 1975, collection of the artist
- Margie Phillips, *Reverie Ring*, 1974, collection of the artist

**1986:**  
*Jewellery by Kobi Bosshard* 14 April – 2 May

*Group Exhibition: New Veneers* 12 – 30 May

*Bone Jewellery by Hamish Campbell* 1 – 22 September

**1987:**  
*Helen Holmes and Mathew von Sturmer* 2 – 20 March

*Warwick Freeman: Fern, Fish, Feather, Rose* 15 June – 3 July

*Group Exhibition: \$100 Under* 30 May – 18 June

*Kobi Bosshard and Georg Beer: Jewellery* 20 June – 9 July

*Paul Annear: Jade* 11 – 30 July

*Johannes Kuhn*en and Helen Aitken: *Hollowware and Jewellery* 1 – 27 August

**Jewellery from Paua Dreams**

- Brian Adam, *Glasses*, 1981 (remade 2013), collection of the artist
- Elena Gee, *Microwave with Breakfast*, 1981, collection of the artist
- Pauline Bern, *Seascape*, 1981, collection of the artist
- Alan Preston, *Enamel Earrings*, 1981, collection of the artist
- Alan Preston, *Coconut Shell and Pāua Necklace*, 1981, collection of the artist
- Warwick Freeman, *Necklace*, 1981, collection of Alan Preston
- Warwick Freeman, *Pāua Tabua*, 1981, collection of the artist
- Roy Mason, *Necklace*, 1981, collection of the artist
- Roy Mason, *Necklace*, 1981, collection of Miranda Joel

**Jewellery from Souvenirs**

*Group Exhibition: Spring Collection* 17 – 25 September

*Group Exhibition: Worn Out Art* 25 September – 13 October

- Margie Phillips, *Kelp Ring*, 1974, collection of the artist
- Margie Phillips, *Surge Ring*, 1975, collection of the artist
- Ruth Baird, *Ring*, 1979, collection of the artist
- Ruth Baird, *Ring*, 1972–1973, collection of the artist
- Daniel Clasby, *Ring*, 1976, collection of Alan Preston
- Alan Preston, *Ring*, 1970s, collection of the artist
- Alan Preston, *Ring*, 1970s, collection of the artist
- Alan Preston, *Ring*, 1970s, collection of the artist
- Alan Preston, *Ring*, 1970s, collection of the artist
- Warwick Freeman, *Trap Bracelet*, 1977, collection of the artist

**1986:**  
*Jewellery by Kobi Bosshard* 14 April – 2 May

*Group Exhibition: New Veneers* 12 – 30 May

*Bone Jewellery by Hamish Campbell* 1 – 22 September

**1988:**  
*Derek March: Jewellery* 14 March – 2 April

*Group Show: Stone:Bone:Shell – New Jewellery* 11 – 30 April

*Louise Maich: Bodyworks* 4 – 30 April

*Jewellery by Kobi Bosshard* 14 April – 2 May

*Peter Woods: Forged Metals* 25 April – 14 May

*Group Exhibition: \$100 Under* 30 May – 18 June

*Kobi Bosshard and Georg Beer: Jewellery* 20 June – 9 July

*Paul Annear: Jade* 11 – 30 July

*Johannes Kuhn*en and Helen Aitken: *Hollowware and Jewellery* 1 – 27 August

**Jewellery from Emblems**

- Alan Preston, *Rainbow Warrior*, 1985, collection of the artist
- Derek March, *Passion Medallion*, 1985, collection of the artist
- Warwick Freeman, *Aotearoa: Biting The Hand Badge*, 1985, collection of the artist
- Alan Preston, *Earrings*, 1985, collection of the artist
- Roy Mason, *Liberated Kiwi*, 1985, collection of the artist
- Roy Mason, *Is The Good We Leave For The Future Our Heaven?* 1985, collection of the artist
- Elena Gee, *Single Earring*, 1985, collection of the artist

- Roy Mason, *Beach Squitter Necklace*, 1986, collection of Warwick Freeman
- Warwick Freeman, *Pakohe Cross*, 1986, collection of the artist

**Jewellery from the 1980s**

1 Warwick Freeman, *Earrings*, 1981, collection of the artist

2 Warwick Freeman, *Paua Leopard Skin*, 1981, collection of the artist

3 Helen Holmes, *Brooch*, 1987, collection of Warwick Freeman

4 Kobi Bosshard, *Jewellery Set*, c.1989, collection of Warwick Freeman

5 Kobi Bosshard, *Brooch*, 1985/86, private collection

6 Elena Gee, *Box*, 1988, collection of the artist

7 John Edgar, *Necklace*, 1980s, collection of Dr Jill Smith

8 Nick Charlton, *Brooch*, 1984–88, collection of the artist

9 Nick Charlton, *White Face Brooch*, 1984–88, collection of the artist

10 Warwick Freeman, *Breastplate*, 1984, collection of the artist

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- Warwick Freeman, *Earrings*, 1981, collection of the artist
- Warwick Freeman, *Paua Leopard Skin*, 1981, collection of the artist
- Helen Holmes, *Brooch*, 1987, collection of Warwick Freeman
- Kobi Bosshard, *Jewellery Set*, c.1989, collection of Warwick Freeman
- Kobi Bosshard, *Brooch*, 1985/86, private collection
- Elena Gee, *Box*, 1988, collection of the artist
- John Edgar, *Necklace*, 1980s, collection of Dr Jill Smith
- Nick Charlton, *Brooch*, 1984–88, collection of the artist
- Nick Charlton, *White Face Brooch*, 1984–88, collection of the artist
- Warwick Freeman, *Breastplate*, 1984, collection of the artist

**Fingers, 1985**

This short programme was made for the television arts programme Kaleidoscope in 1985 and features the Lorne Street shop. Kaleidoscope was a magazine-style arts show which ran from 1976 to 1989.

Courtesy Fingers

*Group Exhibition: Solstice* 21 June – 10 July

*Ann Culy: Jewellery* 12 – 26 July

*Kobi Bosshard: Jewellery* 2 – 31 August

*Group Exhibition: Now and Then* 31 October – 19 November

**1995:**  
*Alan Preston: From Open Heart* 28 February – 25 March

*Fam McKelvey: Stones* To 22 April

*Group Show: Fingers Annual Contemporary Jewellery Show* 19 June – 14 July

*Stephanie Lambert* 14 August – 10 September

*Grant Thompson* 11 September – 8 October

*Double Vision: Work by Jason Patterson* 11 September – 8 October

*Group Show: Bones* 13 November – 2 December

*Brian Adams: Eyewear* To 9 December

*Group Exhibition: Paua Dreams* 11 – 18 July

*Group Exhibition: Bone Jewellery* 11 – 18 July

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