



Atty Tantivit, ATTA Gallery

In each newsletter we will introduce you to one of the galleries that has joined AJF to support and promote contemporary jewelry. This month's AJF Questionnaire has been answered by Atty Tantivit of ATTA Gallery, Bangkok, Thailand. (www.attagallery.com)

How long have you been running a gallery?

Just about a year. We opened our doors at the end of August 2010 but had an official opening on November 11, 2010.



ATTA Gallery, Bangkok, Thailand

Where did your interest in contemporary jewelry come from?

I have always loved wearing jewelry. Growing up, I collected many types of jewelry, from Japanese plastic toy/fashion jewelry, to wooden figure jewelry, to Native American jewelry. While in college in the United States I had a chance to take a ring-making workshop and fell in love with the craft. However, it wasn't until five or six years later that I took up jewelry making again, starting with beading then moving onto fabricating in silver. I had a life-changing moment while filing a silver ring in my once-a-week evening class: I no longer wanted to be a scientist, but I wanted to make jewelry all day long! Soon after that I quit my job in the science field and moved out west.

I did a GG program at GIA in Carlsbad in 2003, thinking that the way to start learning about jewelry is learning about gems. After that I went to Florence, Italy, to learn jewelry design and making, then back to the United States for an Intensive Jewelry Technician course at Revere Academy in San Francisco. Upon returning to Thailand I started my own studio making modern jewelry out of silver and 18k gold under the brand La Chiocciolina.



La Chiocciolina

A few years later, in 2009, I explored the concept of conceptual design and decided to take an intensive jewelry design course at Alchimia School in Florence, Italy. That was when I began to appreciate contemporary jewelry even more and started to make pieces that are more conceptual.

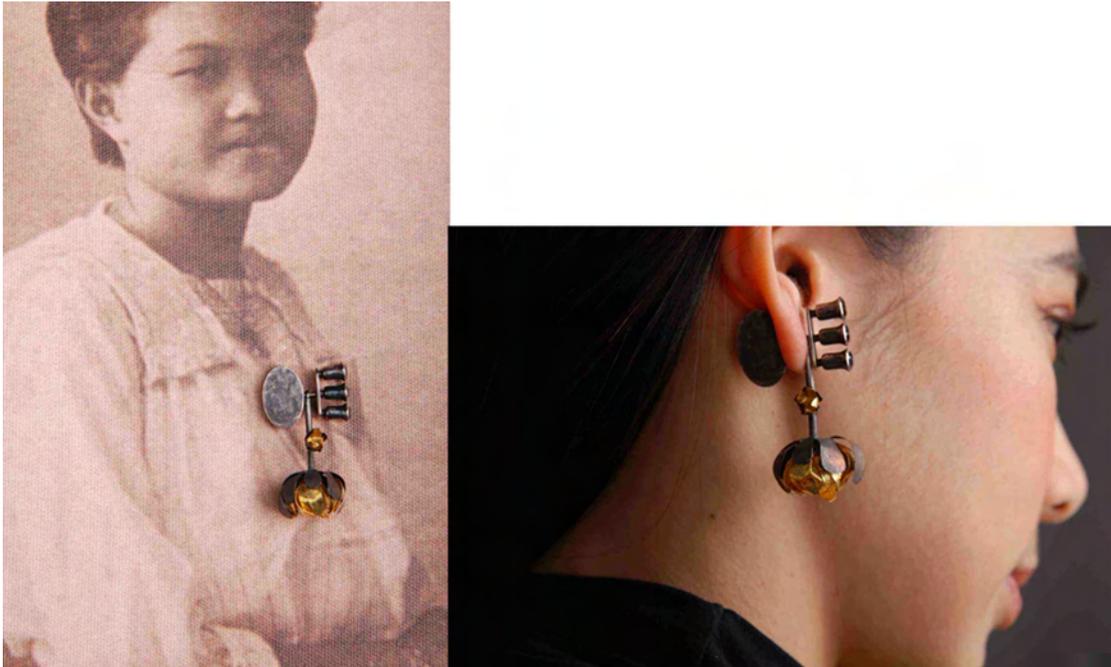


Atty Tantivit

Being in Europe I was exposed to fairs and galleries that showcase only contemporary jewelry arts. It was very inspiring. From my original plan to start a modern fine jewelry business, I turned almost 180 degrees and concentrated on creating contemporary jewelry. I also started collecting contemporary jewelry and decided I would like others to enjoy it as much as I do. And that's when I turned my attention to opening the first contemporary art jewelry gallery in Thailand.

What's the Thai word for contemporary jewelry?

Kruangpradap silp ruam samai, which literally translates as contemporary art jewelry.



Apinya Oo Boonprakob (TH)

Thailand doesn't usually come to mind when thinking about countries producing contemporary jewelry. What is the local scene like? Does the concept of contemporary jewelry translate easily?

Many people buy jewelry here. We have a big market for fine and fashion/costume jewelry but hardly anyone (aside from educators in the field of jewelry) knew about contemporary jewelry up until now. It's hard to convince them to spend money on non-precious materials. It's also hard for them to understand the differences between contemporary and fashion/costume jewelry, especially if they only have time to look at the outside and not learning about the concepts behind the pieces. When they see plastic being used, they automatically think costume jewelry...cheap jewelry. It's quite interesting to see that people are more willing to buy mass-produced fashion jewelry than a piece of contemporary jewelry using similar materials at the same price range. Maybe they think 'art' is too hard to understand and do not feel comfortable wearing 'wearable arts.'

Also, we have a very decorative background in the way people dress. People tend to pile on many different types of jewelry. Some want to showcase their wealth, their status in society, while others are just following trends. Jewelry plays a supporting role to clothing. People still think of jewelry as accessory.

Contemporary jewelry is very strong in itself and to many people they can't seem to figure out what to wear it with. I have to explain to them that the roles are now reversed in this case, with clothing becoming a backdrop for one or two pieces of unique contemporary jewelry. It's time for them to let jewelry be the protagonist.

What do you show most, Thai or international contemporary jewelry?

International jewelry at this point, as we only have about seven active local contemporary jewelry makers. But I try to balance my exhibitions by having at least one exhibition a year showcasing works of Thai artists. I hope that in the next few years we could represent more local artists at the gallery.



Rudee Tancharoen (TH)



Katja Prins (NL)



Taweesak Molsawat (TH)



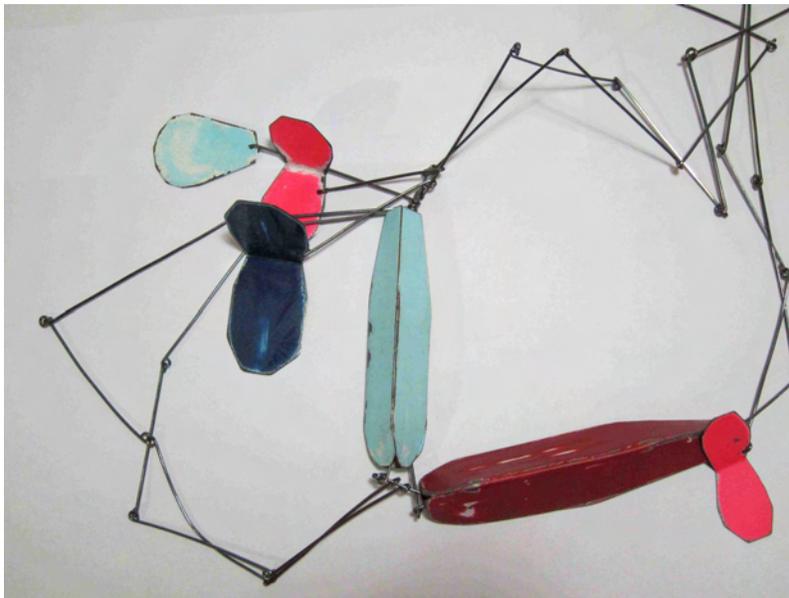
Christiane Koehne (DE)



Philip Sajet (NL)



Chuchart Sarunnayawatsin (TH)



Amy Tavern (US)

What niche do you and your gallery occupy in the contemporary jewelry eco-system?

I am not quite sure at this point . . .

What are the three most interesting pieces of jewelry you've seen lately?



Jenny Klemming brooch



Juliane Brandes brooch



Trinidad Contreras brooch