

A Sign of Belief

At the start of December, the winners of the design competition New Traditional Jewelry were announced at the Sieraad International Jewelry, Silver and Design Fair in Amsterdam. The competition, which was organized for the second time to mark the trade show, took as its motto this year 'Signs of belief'. More than 300 entries were received from all over the world. After much thought, the expert jury of seven, including among others the jewelry designer Dinie Besems and the New York curator and dealer Charon Kransen, made a selection of the contributions, which were interesting both visually and in terms of content. They chose five winners.

Numerous participants in the competition modified the presentation of a crucifix. One of the winners, the artist team Hartog & Henneman, used the motif in order to lend expression to Christian faith in an unorthodox manner. In the computer-designed necklace 'De Overwinning' (The Victory) made of grey rubber, the image of the crucified Christ was mirrored and duplicated. The Christ figures hold out their hands to each other. "By dying, Jesus took upon himself the punishment for the sin of humankind. He overcame death, which is celebrated in this item of jewelry with radial protrusion of Christ figures."

There is also jewelry that deals with other forms of belief, such as the ring 'Buis van Licht' (Conduits of Light). The golden ring is expertly set with rubies and diamonds, with which the jewelry designer and pupil of Maharishi Mahesh Yogis wishes to express the "radiating illumination" that he received.

Religions have always polarized humankind since the dawn of time. As a response to this, there is an item of jewelry with the title 'Listen to' that is reminiscent of a stethoscope with which the jewelry designer calls for an attitude of attentiveness and openness. A water-filled glass sphere all on a chain symbolizes the "irreplaceable independence" within human beings, which is just as sensitive as glass. Peter Hoogenboom, the winner, describes himself as a pantheist. "In everything, in the universe, on earth, in nature and in humanity, God is present, but one must not try to imagine him as a figure." Hoogenboom looks for a mutual basis of no less than 45 different beliefs: from Islam, Buddhism, right through to Sufism or

Jesus depiction in rubber by the duo Hartog & Henneman

Golden rings with confessions of faith by Robean Visschers

Voodoo – water plays a role in all of these beliefs. This is symbolized by miniature oil lamps in the necklace 'Holy Light' and by miniature water bottles made of ceramics in the necklace 'Holy Water'. The rear side portrays human figures reaching out their hands to each other, symbolizing the desire for redemption.

Some jewelry designers portray doubt, for example in the necklace made of felt letters with numerous delicate bird skulls suspended from it. The punched letters nestle around the neck and read: "Ik geloof dat ik twijfel

of ..." (I believe that I doubt whether...) etc. Others even create their own cults, for example the jewelry designer who designed a rosary in the form of a silver clitoris. The student prize goes to Nina Schüler, who astonishingly transformed a pink rubber household glove into a song of praise to motherhood. The finely-meshed relief of the taut rubber is reminiscent of the fine veins on a mother's breast, while the empty "fingertips" conjure up images of a nipple. A brooch that takes an unusual approach to presenting belief in a mother's love.

www.newtraditionaljewellery.com • ahe

The student prize for the Song of Praise for Motherly Love went to Nina Schüler from Essen