



Tony Williams
Goldsmith



Tony Williams Goldsmith

With essays by
Emma Neale & Rigel Sorzano

Tony Williams Gallery

Potton & Burton



Black Moth brooch – 18ct gold, platinum, diamond & *plique à jour* enamel, with sapphire eyes, 85mm, 2008.

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Part One: An Interview with Tony Williams

by Emma Neale

It is a piercingly bright southern autumn day. The morning news recounts how Cyclone Debbie has wrought devastation in Whakatane and Edgecumbe, and announces that gold's price has risen in response to America's 50-missile assault on Syria. En route to master goldsmith Tony Williams' house, the air flickers, hazardous with the sense of life's frailty. It's as if a gust of wrathful breath has brushed over our scalps. The radio bulletin reminds us how climate and economics bear down on every human endeavour - from food harvest, to travel, to the arts that express what is most dear and fleeting to us. The change in the gold price underlines the fact that Williams' own business and creative life have had to ride out multiple economic shocks and swerves over his four-decade career.

A natural beauty persists here, in one of the world's bewildering, yet lucky disjunctions. Autumnal sycamore, chestnut, elms are hung with sunset-coloured leaves that shiver and turn like thin glass panes in the breeze. A park's green grass has the gloss of polished pounamu; the inlet shows a solitary spoonbill scooping and fossicking for food: its feathers so white it's like a small magnesium fire. The sea tips between teal and aquamarine. With its hills and harbour, Dunedin flaunts itself as a jeweller's natural niche, letting sun and colour caper across its skin.

Tony Williams' home, shared with his wife, Bridget Waldron, known as Biddy, is at the top of a steep gravel driveway framed on one side by a neat macrocarpa hedge laced with errant

OPPOSITE: Tony Williams at his bench, Carnegie Centre workshop, Moray Place, Dunedin, 2015.



nasturtium. Rhododendrons, azaleas and small kowhai flank the other; low in the garden is a hedge cut in the shape of a merry foliate head: a Cernunnos or Green Man. On a hillock above the house, the fruit on a Peasgood's Nonsuch glows like fire-opals. At the top of the drive sits the skylit workshop, which Tony helped to build; across from this is a large wooden villa. The house is filled with art, books, family memorabilia and heirlooms: ranging from an early black and white dragon painting by Tony himself, to an intricately carved floral wooden tray, handmade by Tony's paternal grandfather. There is also a music cabinet beautifully carved with Māori motifs by his great-grandfather, J. H. Menzies; from this, Tony and his sisters often used to take pencil rubbings as children - an early apprenticeship in the elegance of design.

Menzies, an English immigrant landowner and farmer (1840-1919), is probably best known as the carver of the interior of St Luke's Church in Little Akaloa.¹ As Tony leafs through a large book of Menzies' paintings of Māori carvings, he revisits an anecdote about a train conductor who dreaded his great-grandfather as a passenger; because he inevitably left behind a pile of wood parings in the carriage. You get the sense that the conductor probably had to keep an eye on the train fittings, too: 'Apparently he whittled anything in sight.'

As Tony and Bidy open their home, it's clear that belongings are treasured not only for their aesthetic or material value, but also for their connections to loved ones. This theme also runs through Tony's professional life. Acutely aware that jewellery is not only self-adornment or a display of wealth, Tony talks about how it's also, variously, a projection of desired identity; an articulation of ideals; a manifestation of the dreamscapes of myth and fable; a declaration of faith or membership of some community; and perhaps most importantly, how often it carries the deep emotional freight of bonds between people, of private history. He also points out that not all jewellery is about social display. Some items are always worn concealed, having religious, talismanic or magical properties for the owner - as touchstones for luck, or totems against evil.

The history of jewellery takes us right back to the origins and practices of nomadic human society; while by the time the medieval era arrived, goldsmithing itself was the most prestigious trade and craft guild. The weight of tradition seems ferried in Tony's voice: 'It's a complicated business being a jeweller. You're not only dealing with monetary value; you're also privy to a lot



TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT: **Ring** - cabochon ruby & 22ct gold, 1990. ~ Made from Central Otago gold supplied by the client - includes nuggets in their original form. **Pendant** - silver, enamel & 18ct gold, 55mm, 1993. ~ Made to commemorate the publication of the first volume of James Ng's *Windows on a Chinese Past*, the image taken from the cover illustration.

BELOW, LEFT TO RIGHT: **Dog stick** - silver & dracophyllum, 2013. ~ Commissioned in memory of Guinness, a much-loved Labrador. **Jigsaw brooch** - silver, 18ct gold, marbled black enamel, diamond, fire & water opals, 45mm, 1996. ~ Made for a client who loved to do jigsaws with his mother.

of profound personal details. Sometimes there is a huge amount of emotion, but the dollars are quite small. Sometimes a lot of money is involved, yet sometimes ... one wonders about the nature of the intimacy.'

His work, he says, has taught him about 'the infinite variety of human nature.' For example - 'How do people go about gifting something valuable to someone else? There's such a range. We met one man who was going to buy a diamond ring for a young woman, and it became apparent as we talked that he barely knew her. He was going to spend a considerable amount of money on this person. And we were very glad when he decided he didn't want to carry it any further.'

When people enter a goldsmith's workshop, they are often also bringing in any number of fantasies, ambitions, desires and hopes. Buying or commissioning jewellery often comes at a point of significant personal milestone or transition: engagement, graduation, birthdays, asking for family treasures to be valued or altered. 'One has to tread very carefully.' He discusses the common interactions he's seen. Some couples will come in, discuss the stone, the colour, the design, the cost, and then leave - and, say it's a male and female couple - '*She* will ostensibly forget about it; *he* will purchase it; give it to her; and so it will be a great surprise, but he will have got it right! Such is the relationship that they can talk it through in great detail, but then there's the little bit of theatre over the surprise. The games people play, I *adore* this.'

Deeply respectful of the sentimental attachment people have to otherwise unremarkable items, Tony explains, 'I do place a lot of value on the client's emotional investment in a piece of jewellery. It might be a rather mundane little worn-out ring with a couple of diamonds in it - but if it belonged to great-granny, it's important. If you want to use those stones, even if they're worth almost nothing, and I can get you *much* nicer, better stones, if it's important to you - we'll use those stones. Even if it means extra labour and so on - if you want those molecules of gold, we will use those molecules of gold. The emotional history of the piece is a vital aspect of jewellery.'

The human intrigue of surprises and private transactions is in rich contrast to one of the earliest comments Tony makes, when he leads me to the jeweller's bench, a traditional wooden worktop modelled on those in Birmingham, where he trained. Explaining that workshop design has changed very little since sixteenth-century goldsmith Benvenuto Cellini's, he sighs. 'I often think my world reduces to a bench peg.' Yet even in the first half hour, his discussion



The Green Man Necklace

TOP: In the making, with enamel colour samples & tourmaline beads.

BELOW: **The Green Man necklace** - 18ct gold, enamel, chrome tourmaline, tourmaline beads, 65mm, 2015. - *The Green Man or Cernunnos, tossing leaves from spring into autumn. The box, with its rich green velvet, was made by Jeffrey Chambers.*

plunges in and out of various periods in history, touches down in a number of countries, then arrows off again over topics as diverse as science, preserves, rowing, building a kayak, altering the roof spouting to give it a gargoyle with copper-spouting tongue – and all the while, the workshop itself testifies that there is far more in his sights than a wooden bench peg’s V-groove.

The studio displays fencing swords; stores myriad sketchbooks; business files; a much-disliked computer (Tony’s face sours and he cold-shoulders it, as if hoping it won’t snarl sergeant-major imperatives). The workroom also has a warm and open-hearted air from Biddy’s presence. A former university history tutor, in the early 2000s she began to help Tony run his gallery – first in Moray Chambers, then in the Carnegie Centre, also in Dunedin’s Moray Place. Now she glides off to find books on various subjects; brings in coffee and cake; prints out information for us; working as business colleague, confidante and helpmeet in multiple ways. Tony’s world is real, human, layered and varied – vastly more expansive than a bench peg.

Tony himself is described by fellow practitioners, curators and critics as ‘an excellent role model for aspiring craftspeople’ (Kobi Bosshard); who ‘followed his own bold, independent career path’ (Judith Carswell); having a ‘vivid, unusual imagination’ (Bronwyn Labrum); and ‘a fascinating character; like someone whose true era was the Renaissance; a real romantic in vision’ (Fiona Shaw). Tanya Ashken has written about his use of ‘noble materials and precious stones in the tradition of the greatest jewellers’. His skill, she says, is ‘without peer’.²

In person, Tony’s movements are precise, darting, much like his conversation, when he’s on topics he’s comfortable with. He bounces on his heels, pivots on the spot, even seems to click his heels together and give a tart, parodic military bow at one point; it’s a restless, shifting activity which makes perfect sense when you learn both that Scottish country dancing was one of the only things that gave him emotional sustenance as a teenager and that he is a keen *sabreur*. And he emphasises the physicality of a jeweller’s work: ‘You’re constantly getting up and down from the bench to draw wire, hammer something, bathe something in acid, polish something – there’s constant movement.’

When I dive into questions about his childhood, there’s an instant sobriety in his voice and a solemn shift in atmosphere. This isn’t solely the sadness of having recently lost his parents.

OPPOSITE: Tony Williams’ home workshop, 2017.



Although it's obvious there is a deep affection for his immediate family – his parents and his two older sisters – the shadow looms throughout his recollection of childhood, high school and even early university. It seems to be partly an agitation from reliving the disorientation of not having found his niche or a clear sense of identity.

'I was something of a lost child,' is his own adamant summary.

The youngest of three, Tony was born in England in 1949 when his father, Robin Williams, was doing his Ph.D. in mathematics at Cambridge. Robin held a scholarship from before the war, but spent the war itself working in California on the Manhattan Project. Tony's parents married just before Robin left for the United States; Tony's mother, Mary, joined his father in America before they went to Cambridge, where all three children were born. Tony was eight months old when they returned to New Zealand. Robin found employment in the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) in Wellington, and although Mary had been studying towards a music degree before 1959, and went into nursing during the war (even organising the nurses' union for her workplace), she now focused on family. Tony's father went on to head the DSIR Applied Maths Laboratory in Wellington; and his career took him from employment as varied as Chairman of the State Services Commission to the role of Vice Chancellor at Otago University in Dunedin. Tony's memory of his father is that: 'He came home at five-thirty. We didn't get on that well back then, sadly – although I know he tried very hard. I remember him taking me to the park and bowling cricket balls for me – we both hated it, but he did his duty.

'He was quite left wing, but he was very careful being in the civil service not to wear that on his sleeve – so as a young person, I didn't even think of him this way. But I realise now that it has actually schooled my thinking ever since.'

It may have, for example, fed in some subterranean way into Tony's fascination for the Arts and Crafts Movement. The movement was built on social values as much as aesthetic vision, lauding manual work, simplicity of style, high standards, a deep understanding of the nature of the materials used, and the skilled individual craftsworker. There was a strong connection too between the maker and the recipient or owner of a piece. The ethics behind it are perhaps echoed in memories Tony has of his father's attitude to self-reliance:



TOP: **Marmalade spoons** – silver, 150mm, 1998.

BELOW, LEFT TO RIGHT: **Brooch** – oxidised silver, 45mm, 1995. **Ring** – 18ct yellow & white gold, emerald & garnet, 1998.

‘I remember my father once said he would make me some wooden blocks for my birthday, or I could have the wood and make something myself; I chose to make something myself, and I just drove lots and lots of nails into it. Later I told him I’d wondered if I’d made the right decision but he said he was really pleased.

‘At home, there was always a workshop of a sort; it wasn’t very organised, my father was not a craftsman. But he was brought up on the assumption that you *did* it. And he instilled that in me from a very early stage.’

Tony selected the Birmingham School of Jewellery for his training ground in the 1970s. Set up in a similar Arts and Crafts spirit, its aim was to instruct craftworkers to high standards; enabling them to make work of simple elegance, strong design core, beauty and durability.

Given the fundamental family character of the pragmatic and the hands-on, and also his parents’ active efforts to nurture a communal social life through regular folk-dancing evenings, it’s initially puzzling that he characterises his very young self as ‘lost’. Yet formal education was really where he began to feel adrift.

‘Childhood was something that happened *to* me. I wasn’t very aware, in some ways; things just seemed to happen. There is a very dark, strange book called *The Lost Lands* by Peter Vansittart, where the hero is supposedly the heir to the castle, but people just sort of come and go, with no explanation. I get the same sense of disconnect from that book that I associate with my childhood. In fact, I spent most of my childhood buried in a book – and I always hated school.’

When I try to unpack that a little more, there’s a brief dash of ferocity – something in the air of ribbed red wings flaring; the clatter and glint of unsheathed, onyx-black claws.

‘I went to secondary school as a fat little boy; I went to Onslow College which was five miles across the Wellington hills. I cycled to get there; it took me an hour at first – and it ended up taking me eleven minutes. I left high school quite fit. But as soon as I got to school, I’d go straight to the library. I was reading a book a day; more if I could manage it. It was mainly historical novels, sci-fi, anything escapist; a few non-fiction books, but not very much. Yet I reckoned I could do all my school exams on the basis of *The Lord of the Rings* or *They Fought for the Sky*, by Quentin Reynolds, the story of the World War One flying aces. I knew both books backwards.’

He says there was a dearth of inspirational mentors or even anyone particularly encouraging at high school: ‘But I was not easy material. I was kicking and screaming the whole way. I was very lucky to win university entrance; I got it accredited and it must have been by a *wafer*-thin margin. Looking back on it now, if I were *them*, I wouldn’t have given it to me. I was bright, but I *Did. Not. Work*. My aptitude tests at the start dumped me in the top class but I dropped a level every year. So I think that demonstrates the intelligence was there, but the application was not.

‘My parents really tried to make things work for me, and for the girls as well; they and their friends also ran a folk-dancing group for adults and children; there was a collection of records; we’d sweep clear all of the furniture in friends’ front rooms, numbers were carefully calibrated. And that was *marvellous*.’

The only other memories that enliven Tony’s recollections from this period are the connections he felt to three adults: the first being the travelling arts specialist Grant Tilly (a trained teacher, artist and later also a well-known, gifted actor), who visited his school. As he hugely enjoyed these classes, Tony’s mother organised for Tilly to give Tony extra art lessons during his early teenage years. Another warm influence came from close family friends Juliet Peter and Roy Cowan, artists and potters who lived nearby. Juliet taught Tony modelling in clay and helped him to make bowls and sculptures.

The hands-on, tactile component of the activities shared in these friendships lights up another small but telling recollection, about which Tony goes into much more enthusiastic detail than he does about high-school teachers’ names or personalities.

‘There was a fashion at school for making little crossbows out of wooden rulers – for firing pencils and erasers – I remember carefully making a collapsible pocket-sized one, with a tiny trigger and everything else. I made another with a pistol grip that folded out; it got wildly complicated, but it didn’t work very well ... I have a tendency to want to tweak and modify things to make them better, as I see it ... I make my own grips for my foils; when I came back from England I could get very little in the way of fencing equipment anyway, so if there was anything that could be made, I did it.’

It only strikes me much later that Tony doesn’t mention anyone from his peer group from this phase; possibly part of the alienation and disconnection he is reluctant to probe.

Ill at ease talking about this time, he's already on fast forward to when he returned from England. When I try to backtrack to immediately after high school, he says: 'I had no idea what I wanted to do. I could get by in physics; I did well in geometry, could visualise things in 3D; but did badly in other maths. I nominally had some artistic ability. The default position in my family, if you didn't know what you were doing, was to go to university. With those skills, what fits? Architecture. To qualify for architecture school you had to do physics and two other units. So in 1967, I did physics, anthropology and English. I had NO idea what English was about. It was a missed opportunity for me, really. James K. Baxter was my tutor; and I had no idea who he was. I had no idea how to analyse a book or why you would want to do it anyway. All I *did* was read - I lived in books - but English at university was a total loss and I got completely bogged down in physics, mainly from not paying enough attention. I didn't do the work. Anthropology was my best fail. I think I got a D and two Es.

'In desperation at the end of that year, I tried for art school at Canterbury University. I must have been drawing because I did have sketchbooks to show for entry; but I didn't particularly engage with art school, either. I had never trained in art as a formal subject and the lecturers expected people to be more advanced. There were only two who really engaged me. One was Doris Lusk, who stood in for the painting tutor at one point; she looked at what I was doing and said, "You haven't got a clue, have you?" and actually started *teaching*. The painting tutor had watched me going nowhere for six months. But Doris took one look and said, "Right, we'd better do something about this." And there was a guy who did sculpture who was not popular with the other students. But I actually registered with him and enjoyed the projects he got us doing. However, I crashed out of art school depressed before the end of the year.'

He fleetingly mentions one bout in hospital at a point of mental and physical exhaustion, where a nun taught him how to darn, and feeling grateful for the kindness and sustenance in that; the healing that came from the simple act of using his hands.

Another rescuing act of kindness for the lost young man came from a cousin, Bernard Thorpe, who heard of Tony's predicament and his withdrawal from art school. Bernard knew that Tony had expressed an interest in jewellery after seeing Kobi Bosshard's work in Watson's jewellery shop in Christchurch; so he introduced his cousin to Mike Ward. Ward, later a Green

OPPOSITE: Detail of a sketchbook page, c.1999. Initial designs for butterfly, p.149, and dragonflies, pp.98-99, 117.



MP for Nelson, was a craftsworker in the 1960s who made copper jewellery to sell at boutiques in Nelson, during the era when local handmade work was in high demand and sold readily. Bernard arranged for Tony to observe Mike for a few hours. ‘And that was my preliminary instruction in jewellery: one afternoon with Mike Ward. I went away from that session and bought a gas bottle, some copper wire, a brazing rod [a solder for joining metals] and some copper, and started making copper jewellery and selling it to boutiques. I used to cut the metal with a pair of shears; I bent it with a pair of electrician’s pliers; I made the rings round with the back of a ball-pein hammer; it was all very crude. I used to reckon on making a ring every hour. I’ve never been so fast since!’ Tony gives one of his disarming, rasping laughs – as if he’s slightly surprised by his own youthful chutzpah. ‘So I started selling that round craft shops – that was really where I started, though I had done odd things before as a child; I remember mocking-up a signet ring out of a bit of brass, and putting a bit of black plastic in the top for a stone; I’d made a copper pendant when I was at school; so I had done minor things before, but not on this scale.

‘I came back to Dunedin after dropping out of art school, and I was still faced with the question of what am I going to *do*. The question that used to wake me up for years – *what am I going to do* – a big worry, in fact it even worried me years after I’d started making money from jewellery.

‘I got various jobs for a while; worked as a costing clerk at a garage; shovelled sand at a foundry; got my heavy-duty truck licence and drove for Mackintosh Caley. Then I stopped doing all that and just made copper jewellery. Around then I started looking for training as a jeweller. There were three names I knew of at that stage. They were Kobi Bosshard, Jens Hansen and Guenther Taemmler. I approached all of them: Jens had apprentices but his workshop was full; Guenther didn’t want an apprentice; and Kobi had taken on someone else just two weeks earlier. My father, who had a trip to England at about that time, made enquiries about training there. He talked to various connections – and came up with the names of three places to go: Sir John Cass in London, or Birmingham or Glasgow. I no longer remember whether I applied to all of them, or whether I picked Birmingham and applied only to that. But I *do* remember Cousin Alison, who was of my parent’s generation, she had a **Typewriter**. This was 1968: typewriters were a big deal then. So she brought her typewriter around and I remember us all standing about while she typed **The Letter** – and off it went! And back came – **The Reply**! And I don’t know whether it

was badly phrased, or if we misread it, but I packed my bags and went off to Birmingham; only to find that when I got there, they were somewhat surprised that I had turned up. ‘Oh, you’re here? Well, we’d better do the interview, then.’ I’d turned up thinking I already had a place. Fortunately, they decided to accept me.’

Such slips and swerves of fate have helped lend Tony a sense of the numinous; of the fey and otherworldly that also characterises some of the imagery in his jewellery. ‘I find it hard not to believe in an angel on my shoulder looking after me sometimes.’ That was a year that the school had a very short list of local students; there was space for this foreigner. But would he have even travelled abroad if he had realised he still had to ace an interview? ‘Something said *go*, so I – or we – misread the letter.’

Despite the ‘strange, grey industrial’ buildings that greeted him on his arrival, and despite the fact that this face of England was completely outside the sphere of his experience so far, Tony gives a graceful, rising hand gesture: a mime of *my cup runneth over* – ‘It was the first time I was happy.’

During Tony’s time at Birmingham, there were three other students doing jewellery and one doing silversmithing.⁵ The school offered three courses at that stage: the Diploma of Art and Design, the Trade Certificate, and the Diploma in Jewellery Design and Manufacture. Tony lived on an allowance from his father, of which he says: ‘I thought he got it absolutely right, because I always survived, but I never had more than a couple of shillings to rub together so I was as parsimonious as I could be.’ Eating mutton casserole made of scrag-end of neck, for example; and working obsessively, always the first to arrive at the bench and the last to leave; and being one of only three people in the entire school to turn up on snow days.

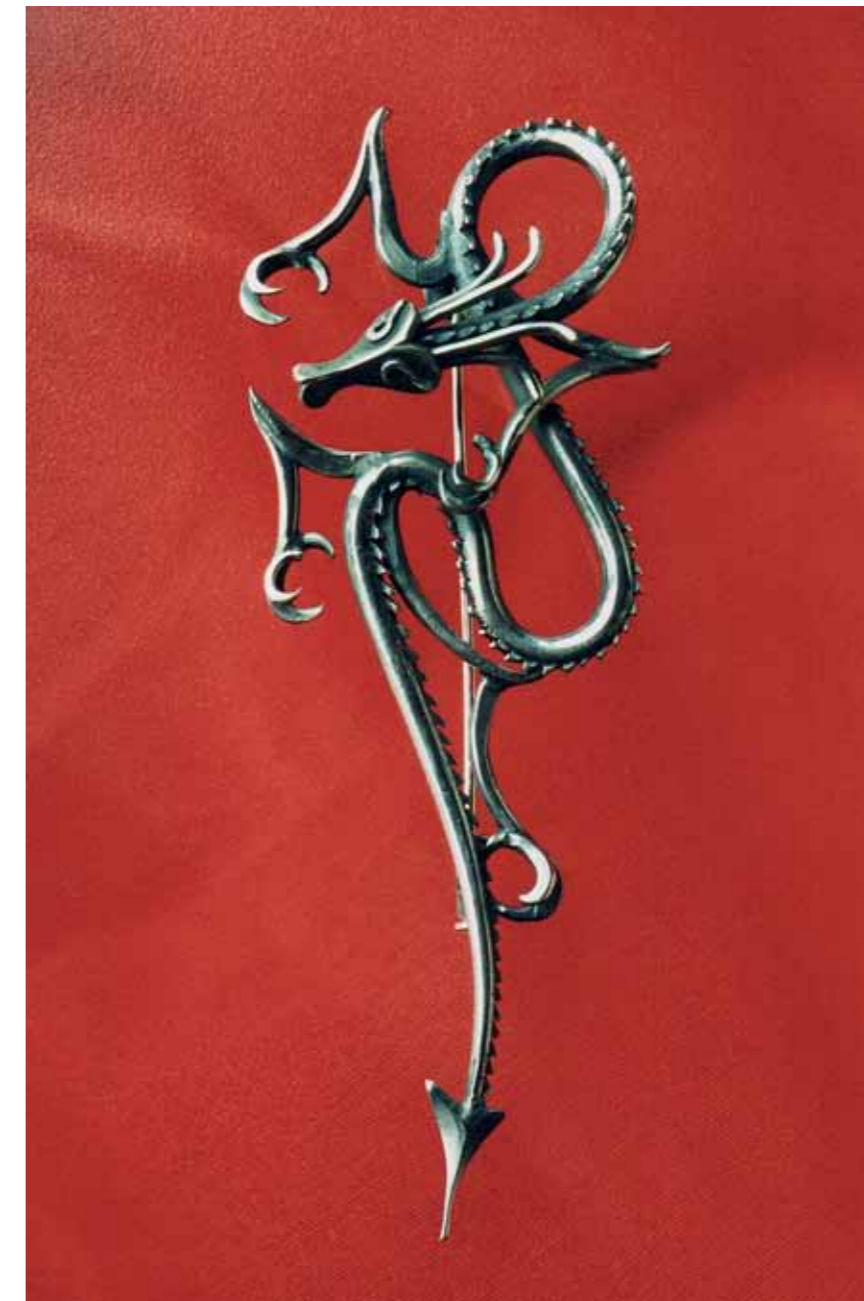
Throughout his time in Birmingham, Tony’s ambition was to set up as an independent jeweller back in New Zealand; so from day one, when the students were given a list of what they would need, he was quietly laying up tools for his return, and always striving to acquire a range of skills. Assuming that home was a wilderness for jewellery, he made sure he learnt everything from diamond setting to *repoussé* technique and laboured compulsively so he could be as self-reliant and versatile as possible upon graduation.

Tony and his fellow students discovered, many decades later, that the Birmingham diploma had never been officially accepted as a bona fide qualification; Tony has a sharp response to that: ‘What the hell. I’ve got the piece of paper. It exists. Who cares about the official acceptance?’ Anyone seeing the skill, beauty, ingenuity, the astonishing versatile range, the lucent palette, the distilled emotion and sense of movement, particularly in his figural and animal work, would readily agree.

Still in his twenties, Tony graduated in 1972 with an honours Diploma in Jewellery Design and Manufacture, and with diplomas in gemmology and gem diamonds. He trained further with a year’s employment under Hamish Bowie, one of the school’s teachers – and then, ‘with the arrogance of youth’, wrote to Andrew Grima, whose prestigious London workshop, known for its superlative technique, Tony’s class had visited as part of their training.

‘I think Grima had a policy of supporting young jewellers. At college, while some students had been somewhat cavalier about learning gemmology and diamond-setting, because they didn’t feel these aspects were creative, I had been head down and working really hard at those; so I had quite a good portfolio to show. I think Geoffrey Turk did the interview. He was Grima’s longterm business partner and also a significant name in English jewellery at the time. And I got the job. I went on between £5 and £8 a week – rock-bottom wages – for most of two years with Grima, who ran a very international workshop. He had Swiss, Australian and German employees; but they hit hard times and we went to a three-day working week, which meant we didn’t get a hell of a lot of income and I eventually got a job briefly for Crinnan Jewellery. Then I worked for Alan Gard who was an ex-Grima employee doing a slightly downmarket Grima variation. That was right in the heart of the jewellery quarter in Hatton Garden. It was a much smaller workshop; and fascinating and interesting, a different sort of feeling. No daylight, jammed together in a basement, but that whole London experience was highly valuable.’

England was also where Tony met his first wife, Jenny, when she was a university student; she went on to teach, first at primary and then at secondary level. She shared Tony’s fascination for the sport of fencing. When the couple moved to New Zealand in 1975, he established the first of two home-based workshops in Dunedin. Together he and Jenny gave considerable time and energy to teaching and encouraging local fencers.



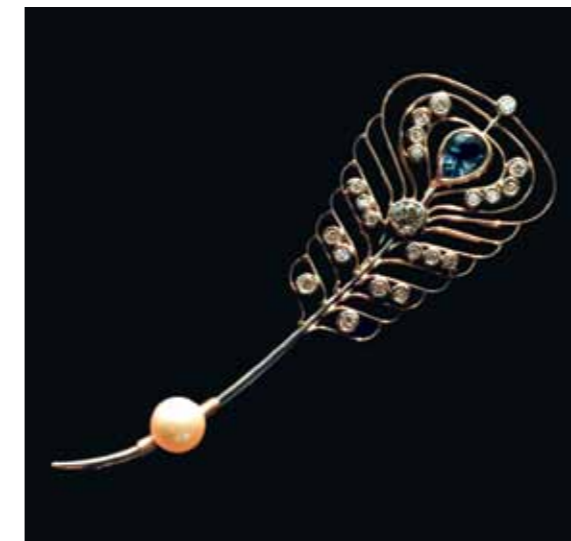
Brooch – oxidised silver, 80mm, 1997.

Over the next ten years, Tony built up his client list so that he was selling to galleries not only around New Zealand, but also to Asprey and Electrum Gallery in London. As the business soared from the mid-1990s, with sales to galleries and retailers in Australia, he needed two skilled craftsmen working for him at the bench, plus his second full-time apprentice and a part-time secretary.⁴ The enterprise became too large for a home-based workshop, so in 2005 he opened a gallery and workshop in Moray Chambers, moving in 2010 to the Carnegie Centre - both in Moray Place, a street central to Dunedin's 'Creative Quarter'.

Jeffrey Chambers has been making beautiful leather, velvet-lined, fitted-boxes for Tony's jewellery for many years. It's been a relationship both jeweller and box-maker value. Jeffrey has said: 'Working with Tony has been a constant joyful thread running through my life; one that has allowed me to be part of a wider world. It's a privilege to handle Tony's jewellery and to know these pieces will go on to be much treasured. I love to make the boxes that protect each piece like a hand in a glove. Ours has been a happy and respectful collaboration.'

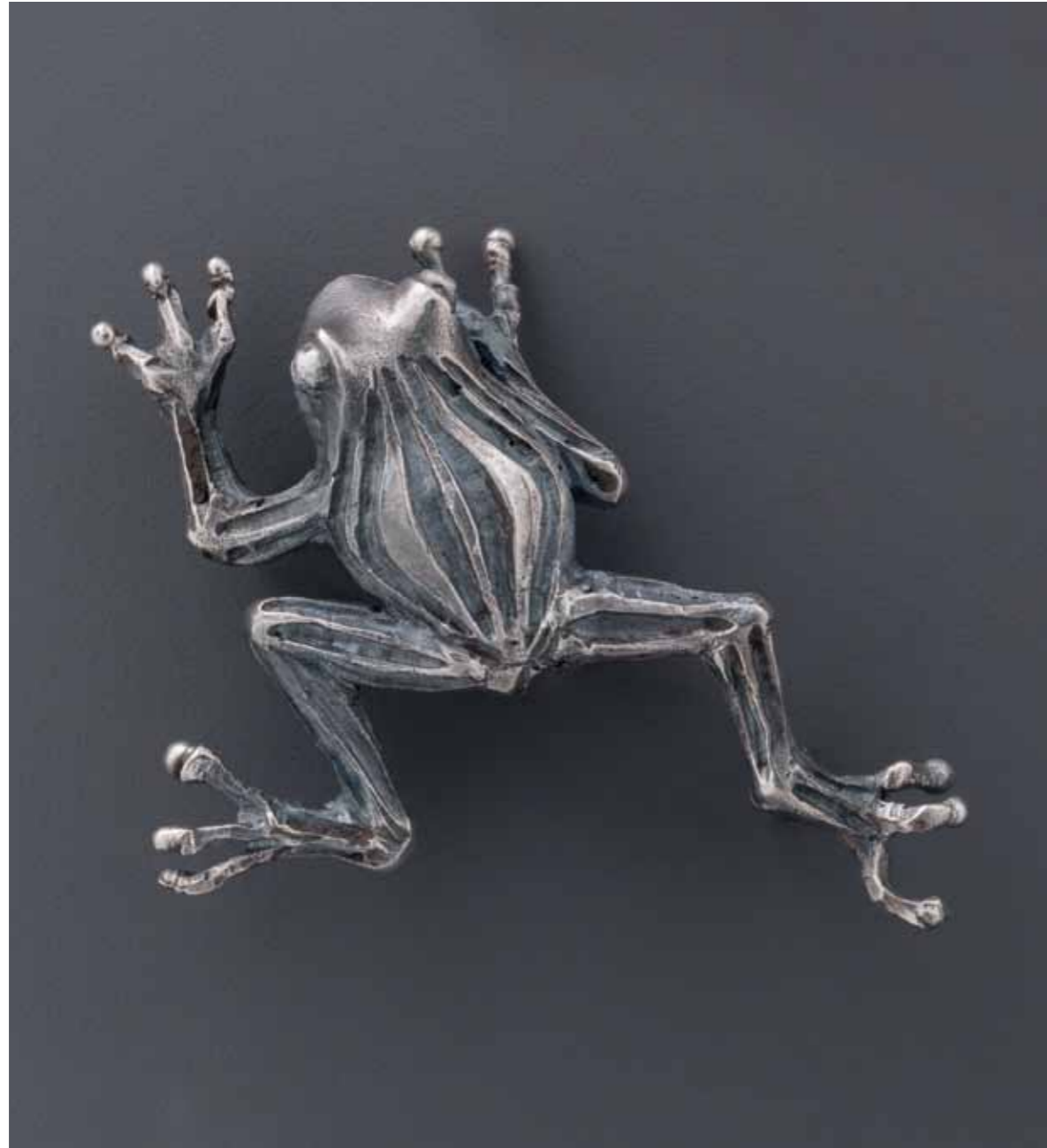
Tony's strikingly elegant works - the pieces that shimmer on that elusive line between fine art and deftly executed yet still 'functional' craft - often grew out of specific commissions from private clients or high-end retailers. Yet he had to support these imaginative, whimsical, often fable or myth-inspired pieces, by diligently taking on regular 'donkey work' for many years.

'In Birmingham, working in the back of the shop was good for learning repairs and ordinary trade work; it was very good for cash flow. Then when I had my first workshop in Dunedin, I would get work from Bob Daniels of Peter Dick Ltd as it was then; he'd get me a lot of work doing things like little name tags that were very fashionable at the time. It was a matter of being versatile and quick with a piercing saw and turning them out; and it was necessary income. Not creative, but useful. Then, when I took on an apprentice for John Bezett of Bezett's Jewellers, he said if you take on the trainee, I'll guarantee you a plentiful supply of repairs. He knew that if I was to train someone I'd also need the income to support that. And when I came back from England again in the 1980s, I did a lot of repairs for Dunedin-based LeeDon Jewellers. All the way through, having good trade contacts, and being able to talk to people, has enabled me to do what Hamish Bowie taught me all those years ago: which was that with a little bit of gold shanking and a little bit



TOP: **Brooch** - 18ct gold, platinum, natural tanzanite & diamond, 48mm, 1984.

BELOW, LEFT TO RIGHT: **Brooch** - 18ct gold, platinum, sapphire & pearl, 60mm, 1985. **Fly brooch** - 18ct gold, platinum, diamond & plique à jour enamel, with onyx eyes, 50mm, 1986. ~ *These three pieces were among those I sold to Asprey.*



Tree Frog brooch - silver, 50mm, 2000-.



TOP: **Kahawai brooch** - silver & onyx, 70mm, c2005-.



BELOW: **Piranha brooch** - silver & onyx, 45mm, c2005-.

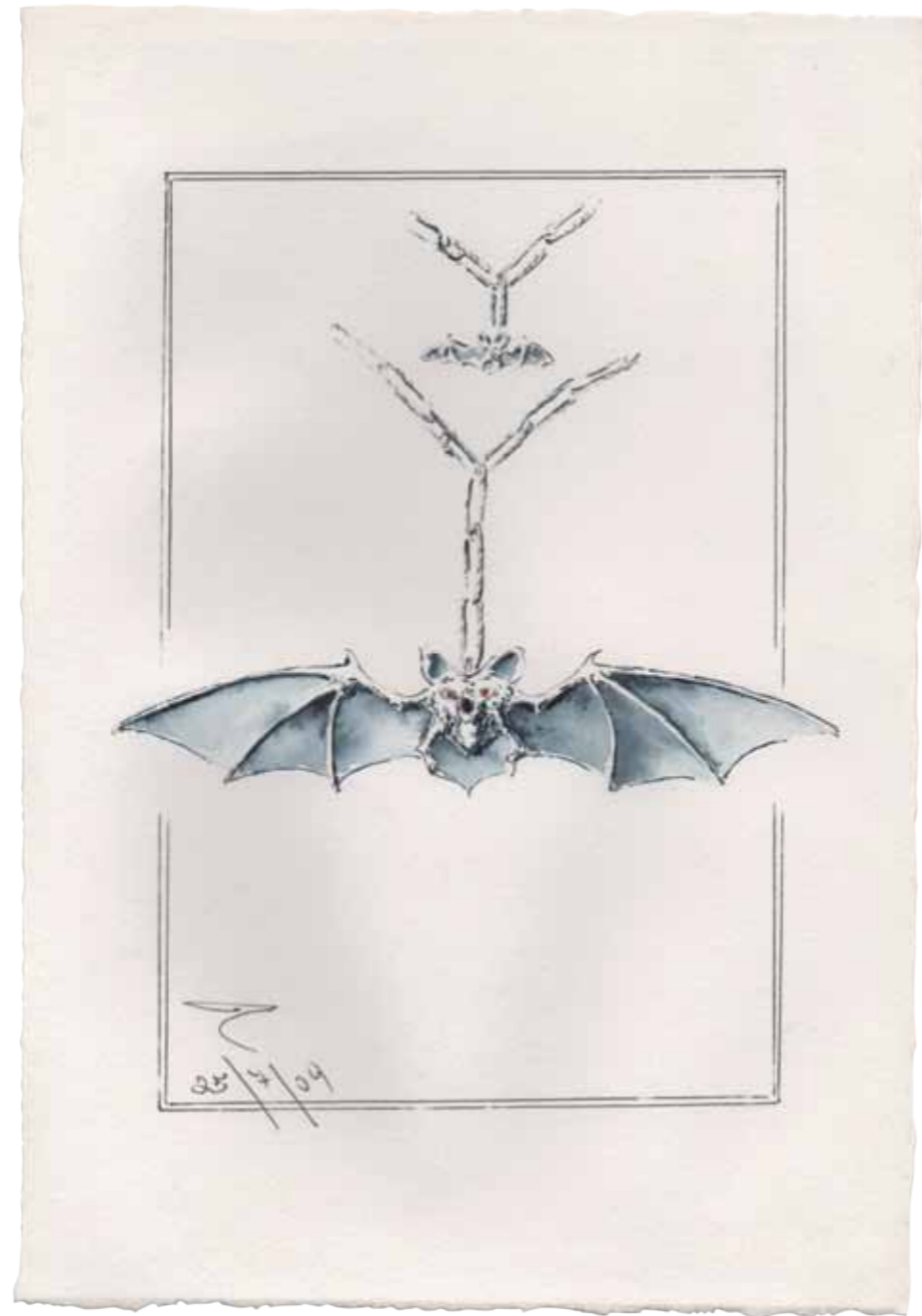
~ *The Piranha design first made its appearance as a pair of earrings.*



TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT: **Ring** - 18ct gold, platinum, citrine & amethyst, 2006. **Ring** - 18ct gold & cabochon garnet, 2014.
BELOW, LEFT TO RIGHT: **Ring** - 18ct gold & silver, 2005. **Ring** - 18ct yellow & white gold, with cognac diamond, 2006.



LEFT TO RIGHT: **Honeybee pin** - 18ct yellow & white gold, with diamond eyes, 21mm, c.1995-. **Bumblebee pin** - 18ct yellow & white gold, with diamond eyes, 50mm, c.1990-. ~ *The bumblebee came first, but I wanted a smaller bee, so made the honeybee. They were made as pins, but I often wear my honeybee as an earring!*



The Bat Series

ABOVE: **Bat brooch** - silver, with ruby eyes, 70mm, 2009-. ~ *The bat brooches evolved from the bats made for the Bat Choker (p.169) and were hugely popular: I loved it that I sold them to everyone from conservationists to Goths, and those in between!*

OPPOSITE: Drawing of the bat as a pendant.



TOP: **Cicada brooch** - 18ct gold, platinum, *plique à jour* & *champlevé* enamels, & diamond, with sapphire eyes. 67mm, 2005. ~ *Made in the style of Boucheron.*

BELOW, LEFT TO RIGHT: **Cicada brooch** - 18ct gold, *plique à jour* enamel & diamond, 40mm, 1999. ~ *The only plique à jour enamel piece that I put into production. Richard van Dijk made the master pattern.* **Blue moth brooch** - 18ct gold, platinum, *plique à jour* enamel & diamond, with sapphire eyes, 40mm, 1994.



Poppy necklace - 18ct gold, 2012. ~ *Designed to be worn with or without the poppy brooch (p.5) as a pendant.*



Sycamore pendant - 18ct yellow gold, platinum, diamond, *plique à jour* enamel, topaz & pipi pearls, 50mm, 2001. ~ A very fine precious topaz with that perfect almost peachy colour of the finest imperial topaz. The colour is repeated in the unfurling leaves of the sycamore in the early spring, which I find incredibly beautiful. Pipi pearls are lovely - they come from Rarotonga, are all natural (not cultured), and have a range of peachy bronze to white colours.



Butterfly brooch - 18ct gold, platinum, *plique à jour* enamel & diamond, 80mm, 2002. ~ This appeared on the title page of the 2005 desk diary *Butterflies*, published by the National Trust of Australia.



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