

# findings

Issue 64 Spring 2017

The Magazine of the  
Association for  
Contemporary Jewellery

£5.00  
Free to members



20:20 Visions Conference Glass and the Czech Republic Collecting Conversations -  
Kath Libbert M(eat) et al - Rachael Colley Corpse of Jewellery Made in the Middle  
Triple Parade The Chinese Scene Sue Hyams 1950-2016 An Enamelling Adventure  
Tinal Lab Material Practice - Jewellery created through the Process of Knitting  
Collect Review Silent Protest Review

## Silent Protest Political Jewellery by Mahtab Hanna

Jo Garner

**It takes a lot to make me shudder.** Walking towards an open doorway into a seemingly empty room expecting to see customary displays of jewellery or a video - recording. I'm confronted with life size ghosts in black dress. It is a confrontation. There they wait for you, poised, deliberately hidden, and ready to be stumbled upon.

Mahtab Hanna has created a show overt with symbolism. Many of the works use props which are undeniably linked to war and religion. She introduces subtleties through her thoughtful alteration of war time memorabilia such as embroidering Persian poetry in to gas masks. Doing so adds a layer of complexity in the association with romance and nostalgia. Now they are objects of thought and sensitivity strategically placed to highlight survival scenarios. They become art symbols, as well as souvenirs of war. Representing life through their function and death through their provocative imagery.

Using carefully selected language and materials Hanna combines these apparently shocking works with much more subtle ones such as silver speech bubble brooches with only a message on the reverse.

Walking in to this exhibition with empathy is key. To look is not enough, one is asked to become conscious of religious and political factions in the Persian east. Having an openness to the work is having empathy for the situation. Perhaps that is where the shudder comes from.

Mahtab Hanna, Anti-War Gas Mask - Children of Adam. Gas mask with brass Persian calligraphy by 13th century poet Sadi "If you've no sympathy for human pain, the name of human you cannot retain!"

