



Ted Noten,

Born in Tegelen, in 1956, first started working as a nurse in a psychiatric hospital. When he was 27 he started his education at the academy for applied arts in Maastricht. At the age of 30 he got into the Rietveld academy to really become a jeweler.

After the Rietveld he started working as a jeweler, but in 2005 he went to England to the Senior international Research Fellow at the school of jewelry at the university in Birmingham city.

Now his work is showed in different parts all over the world.

His atelier is here in Amsterdam, in the Kanaalstraat.

One of his works, you would have seen, is called 'new identifications'.

The series of golden earrings.

The fishermen from the former Zuiderzee used to wear a single gold earring, decorated with nautical symbols as an anchor, or a rope. If the fisherman would drown these rings could cover the funeral costs.

Ted Noten made a new series of these earrings, decorated with new symbols, like an i-pod and skateboards.

Because of the fishing industry has largely vanished these days.



Another nice piece he made is called 'Revenge of the Pearl Necklace'. The people who have lived around the IJsselmeer refused to wear pearls, because pearls were only used by the nobility (adel). He made a pike (snoek) hermetically sealed in a box of plexiglass. In the abdomen a pearl necklace. During the exhibition micro-organisms and maggots slowly eat the pike, so the chain slowly became visible. The whole process is filmed, and live showed in Zaal 3a jewelry room, in the museum. And later the film will be presented as an independent video in this room.

After the dissolution (ontbinding) process, the necklace and the pike were completely cleaned and restored (the pearls had a black haze after the dissolution). The fish is now in its original condition, with the bones arranged like a live fish and the pearls in its former belly.

His work is loaded with social satire, and parodies greed, tradition, gun crime and status. It has the ability to turn you into a walking display case. He likes to show useful objects in an unexpected way, results you can see as hybrid contrasting creations.

Much of Noten's work is about his frustration with the jewelry world. He loves the bling-bling culture these days, with his icons, who show their identity by the jewels. But he hates the fact that the industry is full of people who only want to spend their money on big diamonds. He says that diamonds have only to do with status, and I think that's a huge pity.

Noten's work called Princess, witch was made in 1995, was born out of anger. He was asked to design a pearl necklace for a contemporary art event. Instead of making another ordinary pearl necklace, he presented a mouse wearing pearls set in an acrylic box that hung on a steel wire chain, and he asked: "Who is wearing the best piece of jewelry? The lady who puts on the necklace, or the mouse decorated with pearls?"



Ted Noten thinks these days the function of jewelry is quite not necessary in the western culture. In his opinion we have forgotten what it means. He asks himself the question; What is jewelry? And; Why do we keep it?"

He wants to make jewelry people can afford, and that's a funny thing because his way of working is to pack things into acrylic material, so he actually makes a distance between object and public.

And the fact that he don't want to make art for the elite people. But - if you make jewelry that goes into the art field, it's only the elite who can buy it.

That's also my question; What's the use of this 'useless jewelry'?

Movie of a catwalk show with a couple of Noten's pieces

[Tedwalk show](#)

He explains that he want to involve elements of performance and humour in the presentation of the work, even if they can't afford the actual pieces.

For example; He designed an installation inspired by claw machines in amusement parks. A kilogram of gold sat in a box, and visitors paid a euro to try and grab it. "When people didn't get it out they weren't angry with me, but with themselves – for being taken for a fool. Their greed was bigger than their rational thinking – I don't insult people, but I play with that."

Another work is Noten's Chew Your Own Brooch project, he hands out chewing gum at galleries and then what returned to him, he casts that in silver. He said; These parody pieces, turning the wearer into a mobile exhibition and vehicle for social commentary. And another affordable piece was the Mercedes Benz brooch, He sliced up a Mercedes car and made brooches out of the pieces, allowing everybody to own a little piece of luxury.

He explains; Maybe the luxury elements in my work is an addiction, I have a great love for small items, people's behavior, specially when they are obsessive and surrounded with a great passion and love.



Ted Noten holds much store in the process of transformation and he is optimistic about the future.

He said; "Jewelry's about to boom.

And I think we're very close to that point. I hope I gave a part to that boom!