

## Moonlike and Andi Gut at 66'

Gallery SO 8 Feb - 24 March 2019

by Anthony Wong

**Minutes into the PV of the group show 'Moonlike and Andi Gut at 66', I knew I would be returning to savour this again quietly.**

For those who haven't visited Gallery SO on Brick Lane, it is a delightful, independent treasure in itself, quite unlike any other gallery in London. The founder of SO, Felix Flury, guides his enthusiastic, knowledgeable team to build upon the intimate, charming ambience held within the fabric of the building. Making you feel like a child entering the thickets of a secret garden, its gentle, sympathetic re-purposing of spaces meanders, encouraging you to progress and discover more.

**Through the black front door and on into The Front Room...**

'Andi Gut at 66' was a retrospective exhibition by the London-based Swiss artist, originally trained as a goldsmith in Zug, Switzerland, with '66' referring to the angle of the exhibition boards. Gut works in a multitude of materials including nylon, naturally-etched metal shelving, gold and titanium, and employs varied methods of production including carving and colouring to produce delicate abstract forms – part embryonic Martians (there's something of the oceans in here, surely?) and part sci-fi age wafer-thin microphone/audio systems.

Gut's pieces are deceptively camouflaged, their forms collections of partial clues to their origins. It is this un-pin-downable quality that renders the viewer beguiled. Sharing his particular humour and vision of the world, thankfully he continues to expand and challenge the accepted definition of jewellery.

*Moonlike* highlighted the work of 10 international contemporary metalsmiths, with notably only one woman, Simone Ten Hompel. It introduced the viewer to the potential of metal in all forms and finishes, and for the most part showed the act of transformation, from the familiar into the unexpected. A sense of the hidden and the reveal was enhanced in the back gallery by an oversized dividing wall screen which masked what was on show behind, and gave a powerful theatrical entrance to the space.

Michael Rowe's pieces 'Behind Glass' guarded the ante space created by the screen. The designs, distilled to a critical, minimal level in form, were contradictory as they did not behave themselves at all: they questioned function and purpose, place

Michael Rowe, 'Behind Glass no. 1', 2009 (silver, wood, Perspex). Image: Anthony Wong



Anders Ljungberg, 'Bag beneath', 2015 (silver, wood). Image: Anthony Wong



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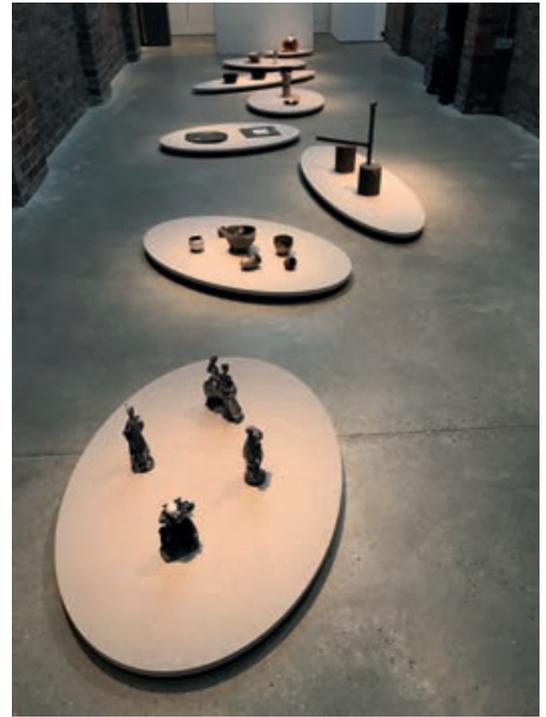
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and space, and the definition of preciousness. These 'precious' objects imperceptibly leeching out from under their counterpart Perspex cubes set the tone: to expect the unexpected.

**Behind the screen... The Brick Gallery...**

'Bag Beneath' by Anders Ljungberg, displayed on the bare brick wall, prompted an unexpected conversation with a friend about testicular cancer. This experience reiterated the fact that it is not only the physical work offered for scrutiny that is of significance but, by association, equal worth is gained through the reactions initiated by each personal interpretation. To quote John Dewey: 'Art is a quality that permeates an experience; it is not save by a figure of speech, the experience itself.'

*Moonlike* as a title is inspired by the moon's silvery metallic surface. The display methods employed hit the spot: simple oval cloth-covered boards, floated at shoe level, gave each maker their own small 'moonstage' which, although static, appeared kinetic, giving the impression of multiple moons reflecting, pivoting and jostling each other on a river's surface. The construction of the display encouraged an intimate engagement with the whole space and objects, weaving carefully in between 'moons', getting down on your hands and knees if needs be. The whole show collectively was so physically engaging and visually satisfying, as far away as you could get from a white box, white plinth show.



View of Moonlike in the brick room.  
Image: Anthony Wong

Gallery SO deserves all the recognition it receives for identifying as a brave peculiar fish. Next time you're near Brick Lane and you wonder what's behind the black door of no. 92, press the buzzer. You will be enchanted.

For more information about Gallery SO visit [www.galleryso.com](http://www.galleryso.com).

Andi Gut, 'Correspondance'  
(with Peter Bauhuis), 2014  
(copper, nylon).  
Image: Anthony Wong

