



Kelsey Gruber

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Capstone - Metalsmithing

Department of Art and Art History

Artist Statement:

I am currently exploring the relationship between found and discarded materials in relationship to preciousness and adornment in my metals work. The materials and symbols in my work imply death in some way, whether it be a literally dead specimen or a metaphorically dead object: one that is obsolete, has been given up by its previous owner, or is a made representation of something dead. I take these objects and I conserve their dead attributes in a way that protects, honors, and holds as sacred.

I work specifically with nests and integrating them into the language of craft and adornment. Wasps, birds, and other creatures create their nests out of discarded and dead materials to then create life in, only for the nests to be left behind and discarded once again. This cyclical nature of material is in direct relation to the cyclical nature of life and death; I view these cycles as a portal for new transmutations.

These cycles are also a reminder of the preciousness of life and death - to hold death as sacred is to transform our narratives of death into something continuous rather than final. There have been a lot of deaths close to my heart in the recent years, and with little room to grieve amidst the business of getting a degree, I needed to come up with a way that I could connect with death in a factual, but meaningful sense. Death does not only exist in the cessation of life: it exists in creation and all throughout life in terms of rebirth. Death is not an end, it is in fact a cycle that is as close to us as our waking lives. Between these moments of constant death and life is where I find the fibers of creation; the poetry of existence; the nests with their honey and eggs. Death will always feed life, and life will always feed death.

Title	Original Format
Figure 1: Always Touched By Change	22 in x 1 in x .5 in
Figure 2: Always Touched By Change, worn	
Figure 3: All In One Breath	8 in x 6 in x 6 in
Figure 4: All In One Breath, detail	
Figure 5: All In One Breath, detail	
Figure 6: All In One Breath, detail	
Figure 7: In One and Out the Other	13 in x 2 in
Figure 8: In One and Out the Other, worn	
Figure 9: In One and Out the Other, detail	
Figure 10: In One and Out the Other, detail	



Figure 1: Always Touched By Change



Figure 2: Always Touched By Change, Worn



Figure 3: All In One Breath



Figure 4: All In One Breath, detail



Figure 5: All In One Breath, detail



Figure 6: All In One Breath, detail



Figure 7: In One and Out the Other



Figure 8: In One and Out the Other, worn



Figure 9: In One and Out the Other, detail



Figure 10: In One and Out the Other, detail