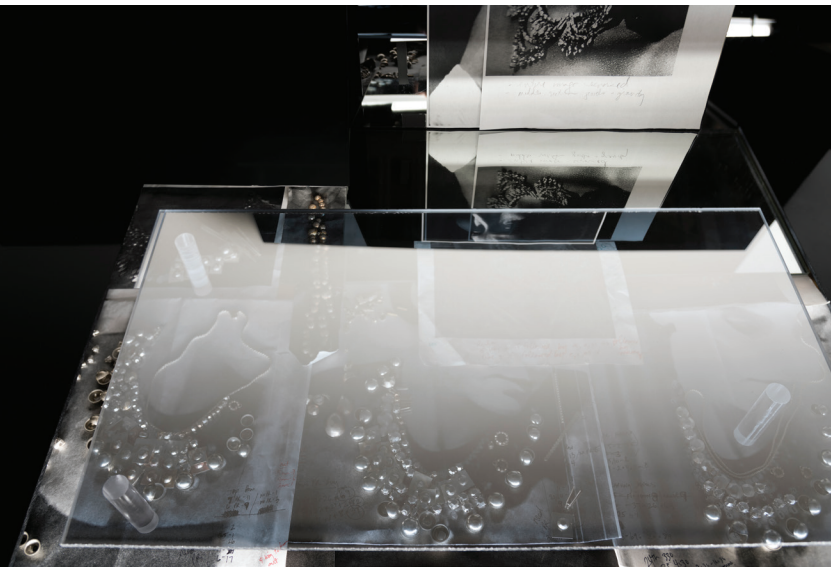


ANYA KIVARKIS





Smoke, 2018
Archival inkjet print
30 x 45 in



Movement Image II, 2018
Silver
7½ x 8½ x 1¼ in
Photo: Mike Bray

Previous page
Closed In, 2019
Silver
12 x 8 x 1½ in
Photo: Mike Bray



Time and the Other, 2018
Archival inkjet print
30 x 45 in



Open Out, 2019
Silver
12 x 2 x 1½ in
Photo: Mike Bray

“What really happened “last year”? You, the viewer, must answer these questions.
Watch carefully. An object... a gesture... a décor...”

— Last Year in Marienbad (1961) Trailer

A fragment is a portion of the whole. When fragments are separated from the greater object or from a wider narrative, it opens up the experience, allowing for multiple translations. Anya Kivarkis is a translator of fragments—but often the works are a clever mis-translation, playing with notions of reality and questioning values of opulence and excess in jewelry through the manipulation of the objects and their source material.

In her early bodies of work, Kivarkis appropriated material culture from historical moments of imperialism, such as in Baroque or Victorian times, when aesthetic cultures of excess and luxury were embraced as fashionable. Often these moments were followed or preceded by an economic decline. She describes how “moments in history that generate massive amounts of desire are coupled with a strong economic recession and a collective inability to fulfill that desire.”¹ Kivarkis’s well-received series *September Issue* (2014) recreated jewelry from a 2007 Vogue spread that mimicked the style of the roaring 20s, a period of prosperity fueled by exploitation and rising economic inequality that ended with the 1929 Wall Street crash and the onset of the Great Depression. In the *Paris Je T’aime* magazine spread, a model raises a cocktail, the jeweled bracelet on her arm in the center of the image. *September Issue #1* (2014) recreates in silver not only the bracelet but the strands of necklace peeking through the model’s blouse near her raised hand. When worn, *September Issue #1* is a ghostly representation of someone else’s body “frozen in their gesture,”² a translation of that person conveyed only through the jewelry they wear.

Kivarkis is a first generation American whose parents came to the United States from Syria and Lebanon to achieve the advertised and often unattainable “American dream.” She describes how these aspirations and dreams of a promising future—a future that for so many remains just out of reach—are an underlying theme in her work.³ The allure of Hollywood through the cinematic screen or the pages of a luxury magazine spread of jewelry, are all improbable dreams for most people, and yet are still framed as aspirational by society. To uphold these structures as worthy of reverence preserves not only the power structures in our entertainment industry but in society at large. In her text “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema,” feminist film theorist Laura Mulvey writes, “The magic of Hollywood style at its best (and of all the cinema which fell within its sphere of influence) arose, not exclusively, but in one important aspect, from its skilled and

satisfying manipulation of visual pleasure.”⁴ By analyzing this pleasure and beauty, by breaking it down into moments and “ghost gestures,” Kivarkis destroys it and allows for a critical eye to be placed on its distracting beauty.

For her next major bodies of work, Kivarkis uses two works of classic mid-20th century cinema, *Last Year at Marienbad* (1961) by Alain Resnais and *To Catch a Thief* (1955) by Alfred Hitchcock as the primary source material. Both films offered opportunities to view jewelry as a spectacle in the frame. *Last Year at Marienbad* features elaborate tracking shots in which characters hold their poses, still as statues in the opulent scenes of a garden or a gilded chateau, the only movement in their breath and the glimmer of jewelry catching the light. The five-channel video installation, *A Certain Slowness* (2018) by Kivarkis and partner Michael Bray recreates a scene from the film with the characters defined only by the jewelry they wear. The necklaces float on the black background of five blank screens. If you breeze past the installation, the subtle movement of each piece would be lost, as each necklace on the screen flutters as if the invisible wearer was drawing a restrained breath. Rather than edit digital footage of the jewelry from the film, Kivarkis meticulously constructed each gem from a rod of silver, carved and cut out by hand. Once finished, the piece is sandblasted, disguising the evidence of the hand with an industrial finish and furthering Kivarkis’s aim of constructing facsimiles of the “real” jewelry—which was, in fact, first mediated through a monitor to the viewer, and so was never truly “real” to begin with.

To Catch a Thief is a romantic thriller focused on jewelry heists and the reputation of a reformed cat burglar. The silver brooch *Movement Image II* (2018), mounted on a black reflective panel, has its formal reference from a film still of a necklace worn by Grace Kelly. In *Movement Image II*, the necklace is truncated, fragmented, and includes small glitches of glare from the screen. Displayed on a black reflective panel, the piece recreates a cinematic drama that gives the viewer the impression of interacting with the necklace without it being a “mirror” or the experience of a retail store. When viewing the work in this context, viewers can catch their own muted reflections wearing the piece, conjuring the illusion of aspiration, desire. The effect does not negate the work as being wearable, but it does question the value of this desire and its reality.

So much of film is told through editing, the art of dividing what is seen from what is left on the cutting room floor. Kivarkis is not only the maker but also the editor of her jewelry. This duality is captured in her photograph *List of Your Richest Clients, View I* (2014), in which gems strewn across a film still are annotated with notes about construction and the artist’s personal records. Kivarkis reconstructs how the format, whether film or photograph, mediates an object, placing it within a chosen perspective:



September Issue #1, 2014
Silver
9½ x 5 x 2 in
Photo: Mike Bray

A gemstone blurs in a ray of light; a necklace is cropped from the frame. Intentional in her decisions, Kivarkis carefully creates an experience, pulling a viewer into a mystery with no answers, a critique of the luxuries sought by society and a questioning of reality. Kivarkis acts as translator for an unspoken dialogue between the wearer and the viewer, whose own perspective ultimately weaves the fragmented stories into a whole.

Anna Walker is the assistant curator of decorative arts, craft, and design at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

1 Cummins, Susan, “Anya Kivarkis: September Issue,” Art Jewelry Forum, <https://artjewelryforum.org/anya-kivarkis-september-issue#:~:text=Anya%20Kivarkis%3A%20This%20body%20of,financial%20crisis%20of%202007%E2%80%93308>.

2 Anya Kivarkis, telephone interview with author, August 4, 2020.

3 Anya Kivarkis, telephone interview with author, August 4, 2020.

4 Jones, Amelia. *The Feminism and Visual Culture Reader*. In Sight. London: Routledge, 2003, 45.



List of Your Richest Clients, View I, 2014
Silvertone photograph
30 x 24 in

Depth Cue, 2016
Black acrylic, silver
64 x 18 x 2½ in
Photo: Mike Bray



ANYA KIVARKIS

b. 1975. Lives and works in Eugene, Oregon

2016 Hallie Ford Fellow

Anya Kivarkis received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Craft from the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana in 1999, and a Master of Fine Arts in Metal from the State University of New York (SUNY), New Paltz in 2004. Exhibitions include "Site Effects," curated by Anja Eichler and Katja Toporski at the Bavarian Association of Arts & Crafts, "Time and the Other," with Mike Bray at Sienna Patti and the Firehouse at Fort Mason Center for Art and Culture, San Francisco, California, and "A View from the Jewelers Bench: Ancient Treasures, Contemporary Statements," curated by Sasha Nixon at the Bard Graduate Center Gallery New York, New York. Her work has been included in publications such as *Metalsmith*, *American Craft*, and Italian *Elle* magazines. Her work can be found in the permanent collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas; the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Massachusetts; Tacoma Art Museum, Tacoma, Washington; The Rotasa Foundation, Redwood City, California; and the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, Eugene, Oregon.



Time Sequence, 2016
Silver
10 x 15 x ¾ in
Photo: Mike Bray

Hallie Brown was born in 1905, outside of Tulsa, in Indian Territory that would become the state of Oklahoma. She supported herself as she earned a bachelor's degree at East Central University and taught in Oklahoma before her parents moved their family to rural Oregon. In 1935 Hallie married Kenneth W. Ford and together they established Roseburg Lumber Company in the midst of the Great Depression.

Hallie Ford was drawn to art all her life, specifically the accessibility of artmaking. She took classes with the painter Carl Hall at Willamette University in Salem, and painting became a central part of her life. Her philanthropy established and supported key Oregon visual art museums and universities.

After Hallie's death in 2007, The Ford Family Foundation's Board of Directors honored our co-founder by establishing a Visual Arts Program. The first element of this program was the Hallie Ford Fellowships in the Visual Arts, awarded since 2010. Through these unrestricted fellowships, we seek to make significant awards to visual artists who have worked to establish their voice and craft.

Another of our goals is to help support the ecology that builds connections and capacity in the visual arts community of our state. As the Fellows become the focus of exhibitions throughout the world, they bring more attention and support to their Oregon peers. We are certain that Hallie Ford would be pleased to see how both individual artists and the visual arts community in Oregon have flourished since the establishment of this program in her honor.

We could not be more excited each year to bring new Hallie Ford Fellows into this family, and to share their work with you.

Anne C. Kubisch
President, The Ford Family Foundation

The Hallie Ford Fellowships are the flagship element of The Ford Family Foundation Visual Arts Program. The Foundation commits to an ongoing relationship with our Fellows through exhibition support, convenings, and professional development opportunities. In addition, the Visual Arts Program offers grants to visual artists for unanticipated career opportunities; supports artists-in-residence programs in Oregon and nationally; brings curators and arts writers from outside the region to Oregon for studio visits and community dialogue; commissions arts writing and publication; supports exhibitions, catalogues and other forms of documentation for Oregon artists; and awards grants to enhance exhibition spaces.

The Foundation is pleased to partner with the Oregon Arts Commission, University of Oregon, Pacific Northwest College of Art (PNCA), Portland State University, Reed College, Portland Institute for Contemporary Art (PICA), Creative Capital, Native Arts and Cultures Foundation, United States Artists, and the artists and visual arts organizations of our state.

The Ford Family Foundation was established in 1957 by Kenneth W. and Hallie E. Ford. Its mission is "successful citizens and vital rural communities" in Oregon and Siskiyou County, California. The Foundation is located in Roseburg, Oregon, with a Scholarship office in Eugene. For more information about the Foundation and its Visual Arts Program, visit www.tfff.org.



VISUAL ARTS PROGRAM

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Roseburg, OR

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form without written permission from
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Essay © 2020 by Anna Walker

Designed by Martha Lewis

Photographed as credited

Edited by Abby McGehee

Printed and finished in Portland, OR,
by Brown Printing

September Issue #1: Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Rob Koudijs, the Netherlands

Movement Image II: Courtesy the Museum of
Fine Arts, Houston Collection, US

All remaining works: Courtesy the artist and
Sienna Patti Gallery, US