

PRESS RELEASE

Alexander Blank from Munich – 10th HANAU CITY GOLDSMITH



Gesellschaft für Goldschmiedekunst e.V.
Deutsches Goldschmiedehaus Hanau

Every two years since 2004, the City of Hanau appoints a City Goldsmith: selected by a jury, they spend a number of weeks working in Hanau at the Staatliche Zeichenakademie and holding a workshop for students. In the summer of last year, the jury decided to elect Alexander Blank (*1975 in Büdingen) from Munich the 10th Hanau City Goldsmith for 2023. For its holder, the conferring of the City Goldsmith title also means an exhibition at the German Goldsmiths' House Hanau.

Nine City Goldsmiths—Rudolf Bott (2004), Jiro Kamata (2006), Karl Fritsch (2010), Sam Tho Duong (2014), Hilde De Decker (2008), Vera Siemund (2012), Tabea Reulecke (2017), Silvia Weidenbach (2019), and Isabelle Enders (2021)—have guested in Hanau to date. The conferring of the City Goldsmith title is a cooperation among the City of Hanau, Gesellschaft für Goldschmiedekunst e.V., and the Staatliche Zeichenakademie Hanau.

Following goldsmith training at the Goldschmiede Kern in Altenstadt, Alexander Blank attended the vocational school of the Staatliche Zeichenakademie between 1999 and 2001; subsequently, he completed a journeyman year at the company Stichnoth, returning to the Zeichenakademie's school in 2002, where he remained until 2004.

There followed studies at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich, in the jewelry and hollowware class; Blank was Master Pupil under Professor Otto Künzli. The artist began working independently in Munich after his graduation in 2011. Whereas, at the Zeichenakademie, intense engagement with the broadest array of handicraft techniques was at the forefront, the academy in Munich enabled free, conceptual working. Alexander Blank rapidly found his very own trademark; when making jewelry, telling stories is what matters to him. The artist has always been happily steeped in imaginary worlds, has always enjoyed comics and sci-fi: curiosity about the unknown and the fantastic spurs him on again and again.

Themes out of popular culture and everyday reality are likewise taken up, and random events or experiences are processed. The artist employs the materials of our day-to-day world: he makes use of Corian, of rigid foam; of acrylic glass, cork, or

steel; and in the latest works, foil plays a major role. Blank gets to grips with the materials using the goldsmith's traditional tools: he drills, whittles, models, and files, and sandpaper is not uncommonly used for the finishing touch. Unique pieces are equally as valuable as limited editions; his "hallmarks" are clear, identifiable forms. For his frog brooch "Frosch Ed" (2009), which comprises rigid foam, silver, acrylic, and lacquer, Alexander Blank made some little pals: "Ed's Friends" are an owl and a snail. In an edition of 30 "Jimmy" brooches (2013), hand-carved out of a block of rigid foam, the artist plays with portraits of rock stars and sportspeople. The high-density foam is coated with lacquer blended with graphite, while spray paint was applied for the finish. This elaborate process lends the brooches a special touch and feel. The artist loves to show his jewelry in unusual presentations.

Alexander Blank is repeatedly engaged for teaching assignments and workshops in Germany and abroad; his works are shown worldwide in group and solo exhibitions; in 2013, under the title "Blank Planet", his first exhibition in America took place at the Ornamentum gallery in Hudson; and last year, the artist was represented there with his jewelry pieces, "En Vague 2".

Between 2004 and 2015, the artist received recognition for his work through numerous awards, which included the Bayerischer Staatspreis für Nachwuchsdesigner, the Herbert-Hoffmann-Preis, and the Danner Prize of the Danner Foundation. His jewelry pieces can be found in many private collections and museums in Europe, the USA, and Japan.

In the summer, Alexander Blank will be coming to Hanau to work at the Staatliche Zeichenakademie and will be holding a workshop with selected students.

More information at: www.goldschmiedehaus.com