

After the first edition of *Gioielli in Fermento*, in 2011, in which the catalyst effect was the project of the *Gioiello Modulare* (modular jewel)¹⁰, the need to involve more contemporary jewellery artists became essential, and that happened starting from the following year: in the pure spirit of a friendly match, agreeing to get in the project as a whole, even before taking part as an individual.

An attempt that, over the years, led to consolidate the basis of the competition mechanism, as a means of enhancing qualitative aspects of the entry pieces. A further factor to trigger a virtuous challenge between the participants was then to refer to guest artists. It still represents an incentive to deepen their path of research, to increase their trend to self-criticism, to try and get the best possible result, first of all by themselves, gaining their creative objective.

In this way, a partnership with AGC¹¹ Association and some of the members began, and since 2012 a Jury Committee¹² was formed and guest artists were involved, some of them showing live their works.

In 2012 **Maria Rosa Franzin e Graziano Visintin**, together with **Giulio Manfredi**; in 2013 and 2014 **GianCarlo Montebello**; since 2013 **Gigi Mariani**, which was very close to the project, as Maria Rosa Franzin was, they started reserving a special piece each year, trying directly referred to *Gioielli in Fermento*. Since 2015 **Roberta Bernabei**, join in her double role, being an artist as well as a teacher¹³.

Then, in the year 2016 *Gioielli in Fermento* getting on showing the creative processes driven by the competition, a wider vision has been offered to the observers, letting them discover ten different hors-concours pieces set up within the general exhibition.

They were selected because they relate somehow to the *Gioielli in Fermento* themes and the intention behind this new initiative was to investigate a dialogue between the pieces by the competition participants and the selected jewels. They created a kind of harmony, or at least this was the purpose of the curator of the project, who is writing this note.

A further result in strengthening the basic concept of *Gioielli in Fermento*: it is that kind of *Fermenting Jewelry*¹⁴ used to describe the main feature of experimental studio jewellery: its dynamic approach, always looking for a distinctive identity or at least a real intention¹⁵, to be confirmed by the evolution in the artist's work, by the will to establish themselves as artists, crafting their own expressive code.

With the courtesy of Charon Kransen Arts and Klimt02 Gallery we could share with the public the pieces by Efharis Alepedis, Sofia Björkman, Liv Blåvarp, Fumiki Taguchi, George Plionis, Niki Stylianou, Jasmin Winter¹⁶, Gésine Hackenberg¹⁷, together with new works by Maria Rosa Franzin and Gigi Mariani.

A further confirmation of regard the art jewelers feel for this project, is marked by the presence of three new works opening the *Master Collection Gioielli in Fermento 2017*:

the project *Over* by GianCarlo Montebello in collaboration with designer Matteo Bonafede, the new ring *Tracks*, which evokes real and mental sceneries of Gigi Mariani's¹⁸, and the pictorial flair in the necklace *Soul (Anima)* by Maria Rosa Franzin.

¹⁰ The Modular Jewel (*Gioiello Modulare*), originated from an idea of Italian goldsmith Stefano Pedonesi and was composed by 24 free interventions made on a the same number of basis units by designers and Italian goldsmith artists (many of them took part with some of their works to the first edition of *Gioielli in Fermento*, in April 2011).

¹¹ AGC, Association for Contemporary Jewellery, founded in Italy in 2004 by a number of colleagues who wish to set a dialogue and confrontation with similar international organizations in the field, today gathers artists, education institutes, galleries and professionals who acts both in Italy and abroad.

¹² The members of the jury committees have been listed in the foreword.

¹³ R. Bernabei wrote several critical essays and is the author of *Contemporary Jewellers: Interviews with European Artists*. A wide reference appeared in the text she wrote in the catalogue *Gioielli in Fermento 2016*.

¹⁴ *Sleeping beauties: the Fermenting Jewelry of Fumiki Taguchi*, Katja Toporski, *Snag Metalsmith Vol.36 n.3 - June 2016*

¹⁵ On the meaning of *intention*, I wish to share the vision G. Montebello explained in the interview *In conversation with GianCarlo Montebello*, *Art Jewelry Forum*, October 2015

¹⁶ Jewels by Alepedis, Björkman, Blåvarp, Taguchi, Plionis, Stylianou, were exhibited *courtesy of* Charon Kransen Arts, New York.

¹⁷ Jewels by Gésine Hackenberg, were exhibited *courtesy of* Klimt02 Gallery, Barcelona.

¹⁸ The pieces by Gigi Mariani, 2011 awarded artist, are shown in the Torre Fornello Award section.