

DARKBLACK

Jade Muirhead



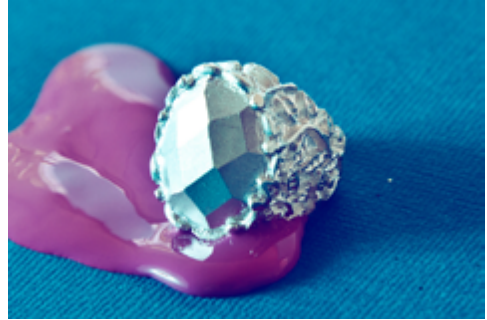


Dunedin born, I grew up immersed in Dunedin's fashion culture with its darkness and glamorous grunge. My jewellery label Darkblack reflects this Southern fashion scene and includes a range of rings, pendants, earrings, brooches and bracelets.

When I studied fine arts in Dunedin I discovered that my passion lay not with paintbrushes, but was anchored in the tangible world of jewellery. I am inspired by everyday objects and images from my own dream world; and have always been interested in how light passes over an object and casts asymmetric shadows.

In 2010, I was invited to be a part of the Dunedin Fashion Incubator and through this programme developed the label, Darkblack. The label allows me to combine my fine arts background with the practical side of making jewellery. As an artist I create through a critical thinking process for each new design collection before sitting at my workbench and picking up my tools.

Wearable elegance is one of Darkblack's core themes. Each piece is hand forged from precious metals – predominantly sterling silver and gold, and has an edgy feel to it. Semi-precious stones and crystals are perfectly



set to create the illusion that they are floating in metal. These flush settings also have a functional aspect as they are less likely to catch on delicate fabrics.

My summer collection has a heavy industrial look; I have experimented with rough finishes creating a sense of shadow and contrast. The range is aimed at those who want to complete their outfit and wear their jewellery like a second skin.

My favourite piece in the new collection is the *Tendril Pendant*. This cylindrical shaped sterling silver pendant has a garnet set into its leading edge and is worn on a long chain so that the pendant becomes a moving extension of the wearer's outfit.

Darkblack designs have developed a symbiotic relationship with high-fashion clothing and have been used to style the models in designer collections on the catwalks of Dunedin's iD Fashion Weeks and fashion photography shoots for Dunedin labels NOM*D and MILD RED. These iconic Dunedin labels are the perfect canvas for Darkblack; each piece adds a subtle finishing touch to garments with a unique texture and silhouette.

Jade Muirhead is Jeweller/Director of the label Darkblack. She graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts majoring in Jewellery in 2009. www.darkblack.co.nz

All photos by Emily Hlavac-Green.