The Handshake exhibition is the culmination of the Handshake mentoring project that began in 2011 involving twelve, then emerging, New Zealand-based jewellers. The project initiated by jeweller, teacher, and jewellery activist Peter Deckers, has provided the mentees with the opportunity to work with an internationally renowned artist or jeweller of their choice, as a mentor.

The role of the mentor was to assist the mentee with establishing an ongoing practice that would extend beyond the duration of the project and provide professional support and advice during the process of them developing works for a series of Handshake exhibitions staged in Australia, New Zealand and Germany. While earlier exhibitions presented the work of mentees, the Objectspace exhibition presents works by both mentor and mentee and highlights the collaborative process and unique qualities of the relationships between the pairs.

The Handshake website (http://handshakejewellery.com) records the progress of the Handshake participants through blogs that chart the development and exchange of ideas which occurred through a mixture of email, Skype, and studio visits. The newly published book HANDSHAKE – 12 contemporary jewellers meet their hero collects text and images from participants and features an essay from leading international jewellery commentator Benjamin Lignel. The book is available for purchase at Objectspace.

In the final phase of this Handshake project each of the current mentees has been given the opportunity to select a new recent graduate, whom they will mentor for a year, expanding the circle of learning and contributing to the dynamic flow of shared experiences. These graduating mentees—soon-to-be-mentors are a precious jewellery resource generated by Handshake.
Handshake: a mutual understanding of how each of us processes ideas, harnesses creativity, finds solutions and produces the final pieces. This has taken time to develop through being in each other’s lives and being interested in each other’s work. The project was enjoyable and involved: creating, being spontaneous, and having fun with the materials that inspire us in the moment, and the freedom to express ourselves as individuals whilst producing a comprehensive body of work. Whaite te iki kahunguru kia tiaha ho he meauna titei! This loosely translates as: Follow your passion in life, if you fancy, let it be to a lofty mountain, but get back up and carry on! Neke Moa & Karl Fritsch

Andrea and I exchanged images from our portfolios and gave ourselves free rein to investigate with each other’s work for the collaboration. In Andrea’s words, rather than “pouring my visual signifier into Lynsay’s pieces...I really wanted to pick up on her work and use castings that could have come from me... but with new shapes.” I used Andrea’s Subtext Synergies series merged with my own castings and visual imagery. These evolved into drawings that reflect our shared experiences of having cultural identity in multiple countries. Subtext Synergies explores how different cultures overlap and merge to create more than merely the sum of their parts. I wanted my work to extend this idea and have the collaboration be a reflection on the global nature of the Handshake project.

Lynsay Raine

Nature surrounds us, in our backyards, on our windowsills, even creeping through the cracks in the pavement, but the artificial wilderness is also growing. It permeates our world, and often filters into spaces where nature and technology coexist. As the line between real and unreal begins to blur, so too does our self-deception. Our romantic visions of the natural world and the relationship we have with it seem to be at odds with some of the harsh realities we face.

These are reflections that trickle through conversations between us and form the basis for this work. For the past two years, we have been sharing words, images and even objects. Presented in this exhibition, is a segment of our shared process.

Debbie Adamson & Hannah Hедман

"Communicating across language barriers becomes a visual experience." Becky Bliss takes her mentor Lucy to the challenge of making for Fabrizio Tridenti to respond to his Hardware works he made for him to bring to New Zealand. She has used similar ready-made objects put together with her own aesthetic.

Becky Bliss & Fabrizio Tridenti

1. Ring, motorcycle oil filter, Fabrizio Tridenti, 2013 (rubber)
2. Necklaces, pipe and rubber band from skateboard, Fabrizio Tridenti, 2013 (rubber)
3. Necklace, exhaust pipe rubber 'danger sign' from auto parts shop, Fabrizio Tridenti, 2011 (rubber)
4. Pendant,ALMONDO, Becky Bliss 2013 (motorcycle oil filter, hose, fuel hose, copper,)
5. Pendant, Hardware 4, Becky Bliss 2013 (motorcycle oil filter, hose fitting, rubber)
6. Pendant, Hardware 6, Becky Bliss 2013 (motorcycle oil filter, rubber, brass, copper, oxidised)
7. Ring, Hardware 7, Becky Bliss 2013 (motorcycle oil filter, hose, resin, copper)
8. Pendant, Hardware 9, Becky Bliss 2013 (motorcycle oil filter, hose, rubber, hardware)

"We were lucky to have been sharing thoughts, words, images and even objects. Presented in this exhibition is a segment of our shared process."

Debbie Adamson & Hannah Hedman

"The theme for this collaborative work, Milk and honey, emerged from discussions around mothering, feminism, breastfeeding, art. We have found the most fertile ground for collaboration to be when discussing the terrain of physical materials and modes of exchange. It seemed appropriate that the collaboration begin with a named material rather than an aesthetic convention. We experimented with small plastic boxes used as takeaway containers in Japanese restaurants. The takeaway container is already a familiar trope in Kristin D’Agostino’s jewellery, but in this case, the containers are curved instead of straight; opaque instead of transparent. This case, the containers are curved instead of straight; opaque instead of transparent. The takeaway container is already a familiar trope in Kristin D’Agostino’s jewellery, but in this case, the containers are curved instead of straight; opaque instead of transparent. This container serves as a primary shape for collaboration and knowledge for a lifetime of making. Mentor and Mentee have gained kinship, overcame hurdles of life together, and swapped tips and tricks. It was felt that our biggest collaboration of all was the information shared over this time. In homage to this and in appreciation of the work conceived during this relationship, it seemed fitting to work with this resource of exchange — our personal emails.

Kristin D’Agostino & Judy Darragh

1. OH5, Kristin D’Agostino, 2013 (plastic take away container, silver, aluminium, nylon)
2. OH6, Kristin D’Agostino, 2013 (plastic take away container, silver, aluminium, nylon)
3. OH7, Kristin D’Agostino, 2013 (plastic take away container, silver, aluminium, nylon)
4. OH8, Kristin D’Agostino, 2013 (plastic take away container, aluminium, topa, spray-paint, form, handage)

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