

how to spend it

Ron Arad Rocks! at Louisa Guinness Gallery

Largest ever single body of jewellery work by the creative polymath

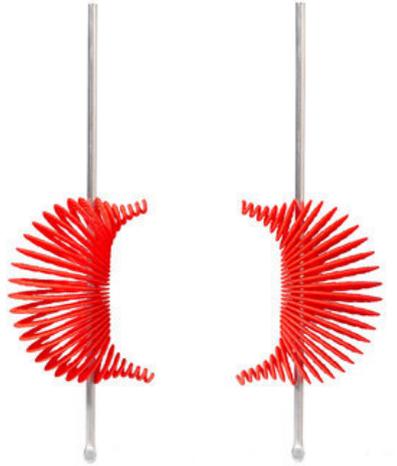


Image: Courtesy of Louisa Guinness Gallery

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In just over a decade, the Louisa Guinness Gallery has become something of a Mayfair mecca where jewellery aficionados can not only seek out avant-garde gems but also witness how the boundaries of this art form are being pushed. Famous for commissioning artist jewellery from revered painters and sculptors, Guinness has collaborated with the likes of Anish Kapoor, Dinos Chapman, Antony Gormley, Marc Quinn, Yinka Shonibare and Mariko Mori – and now multidisciplinary talent Ron Arad is the latest name to grace the roster. *Ron Arad Rocks!*, from February 24 to April 8, is a new exhibition bringing together the largest ever single body of jewellery work by the creative polymath.

The show is centred around three recent projects – Rocks, Hot Ingo and Naja – and all speak to Arad's signature quiriness and use of unexpected materials. Rocks, for example, are fashioned from single pieces of solid silicon layered with graphically patterned silk. The results, such as the cool E.III earrings (£3,000, second picture), seem to play a trick on the eye: what at first appears weighty and precariously jagged, is in fact soft and pliable. The necklaces (such as the tribal-esque N.IV, £3,500, third picture) further challenge notions of texture and form. All the pieces are one-offs or limited editions.

Laser-sintered polyamide and rapid prototyping were the mechanisms behind Hot Ingo, a body of work that is reminiscent of Arad's experiments in his *Not Made by Hand Not Made in China* collection, launched in Milan over 10 years ago. Here, eye-catching earrings, in red and silver (£1,300, first picture), or black and 18ct rose gold (£2,850), plus a range of necklaces, have a futuristic quality and are a wonderful, high-tech homage to their namesake (lighting maestro Ingo Maurer is a longstanding friend and collaborator of Arad's).

If Hot Ingo is forward-looking, then Naja glances back, thanks to its ancient, amulet-style necklaces that come coiled – either freely (in vermeil, £5,000) or precisely (in silver, £3,600). Named after the distinctive markings on a Naja cobra's hood, the designs also feature a working solid quartz lens, which promises to facilitate the reading of cocktail menus and the like. "Naja is not only beautiful and wearable," says Guinness, "but an ingenious solution to the middle-aged drama of short-sightedness."

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