

1960's Acrylic Jewellery

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The design brief required me to create a unique jewellery set inspired by, and creatively incorporating designs within the 1960's. I was influenced by 1960's art, colour schemes, shapes and patterns, in particular optical illusion art by artist Bridget Riley. I also drew insight from pieces by Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein and Florence Broadhurst. My aim was to construct a vibrant and eccentric jewellery collection, that skilfully reflects and captures the essence of 1960's design. Researching into the events that shaped design movements of the 1960's, I developed intrigue for 60's interior design, exploring the bright and innovative works of Bauhaus, Marimekko, Arthur Elrod and Barbara D'Arcy. I became aware of the influence earth's first artificial satellite, launched in 1957 had on 1960's design, starting the dawn of the 'space age'.

The excitement of space travel spiraled through the 1960's, bringing an era of futuristic design, with glossy fluid shapes, imaginative forms and bright spirited colour palettes. It was through this style that I discovered acclaimed designer Verner Panton, whose 'exuberant originality' and enthusiastic embrace of these new materials, placed him at the forefront of the space age era. Panton's iconic 'S chair' brought fantasy and futurism to the 1960's, and greatly influenced my designs, motivating me to push past what I believed was possible, thinking of new concepts and materials I could incorporate into my work. I had initially thought that my designs were going to be produced using polymer clay, a material I am comfortable with, however Panton had inspired me to search for something new, something unfamiliar and surprising. This is when I landed on laser cutting. I began creating symbols for my pieces, devised from each point of inspiration I found within the 1960's. Investigating deeper, I finalised my themes, wallpapers, fashion, art, furniture and appliances, which allowed me to have freedom to create designs that were unique, balanced, and harmoniously incorporated aspects of the 1960's.

Evidently, my final design, constructed by laser cutting on various types of orange, yellow, gold and 'multicolour galactic gradient' acrylic Perspex, expertly integrates use of 1960's bold shapes, lines, and patterns, with a striking colour palette. The different finishes of the mirror back, glossy and frosted acrylic sheets adds interest and textures that were crucial in 60's style. Each piece undeniably makes a statement on their own, and together exhibit a unique take on 1960's design.

The final practical, a matching jewellery set containing a pair of earrings, bracelet, and necklace, meet the brief as they are functional to wear, durable for everyday use and intriguing designs. Slight adjustments to the links were necessary, and the chosen black jump rings provided an effective contrast. While creating these pieces was challenging at times, particularly learning how to successfully use the laser printer setup, they taught me new skills that I had never dreamt of trying myself, enabling me to expand my knowledge of laser cutting and create polished and professional final products.