

## Marlene True

### Artist Statement

I became enamored with using tin cans in my work after seeing a presentation by Bobby Hansson, author of *The Fine Art of the Tin Can*, and what I thought might be a just another material to use in my work became an obsession. I now have over 1,500 tin cans in my collection and find the process of collecting and learning about their use and history fascinating. Tin cans are not made of tin but of steel with a thin layer of tin and lithographed images, colors and text. Those elements are excellent for use in jewelry to create narrative, to add color or make a statement. The steel is great for fabrication and it is possible to make larger pieces without excessive weight, as it is much lighter than silver or gold.

On a recent trip to Seattle, I acquired a salesman's sample board of jewelry components from London that date to 1930. Those elements reference Victorian ornamentation and decorative ironwork. Inspired by those motifs, I selected a couple of them and began designing and altering the shapes in steel to create settings for the colorful bits that become the focal point in the pieces. On the steel settings I use patina and heat treatments to create the dark surface and plating with 24k gold to create a rich contrast for the colorful tin. I enjoy the process of transforming this material beyond its original use from containment to ornamentation.

Meshing repurposed materials with an undercurrent of past to the present is an act of redemption for both memory and material in the process of making.

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