

From big things

little things

grow



VENERARI, SYDNEY

Whether it's constructing a building or forging a ring, architect and jewellery designer Genevieve Lilley favours an organic process. "Hopping" from big to little buildings; to light or chunky jewellery pieces, Lilley seamlessly coalesces the two design disciplines in her Sydney studio. Just as she likes to spend time on site, working alongside jewellers in the studio provides a unique luxury of gestation.

As an architect Lilley enjoys crafting a solution in response to a project's constraints, working with the site and materials to define a project with one or two clear ideas. While jewellery affords more wilfulness, Lilley often chooses organic shapes from nature to resonate a single idea from the smaller medium so that the design is able to stand alone. Preferring that her jewellery is aligned to a person rather than a specific style, she says it's of more importance to see "how far I can push the boundaries at the various edges, how wide I can keep my sphere of influence and my pool of diversity".

Lilley's foray into jewellery echoes the influence of nine years spent working with David Chipperfield in London. "There was always this idea that you put your hand to anything. Architecture is everything that you touch, the way you bathe, the way you eat," she says. The other notion prevalent in Europe and the UK was that in order to do big things well you also have to be able to do *little* things well.

Soon after returning to Australia in 2004 with partner Kingsley Wallman, a former lawyer, they launched Venerari. For Wallman, CEO of

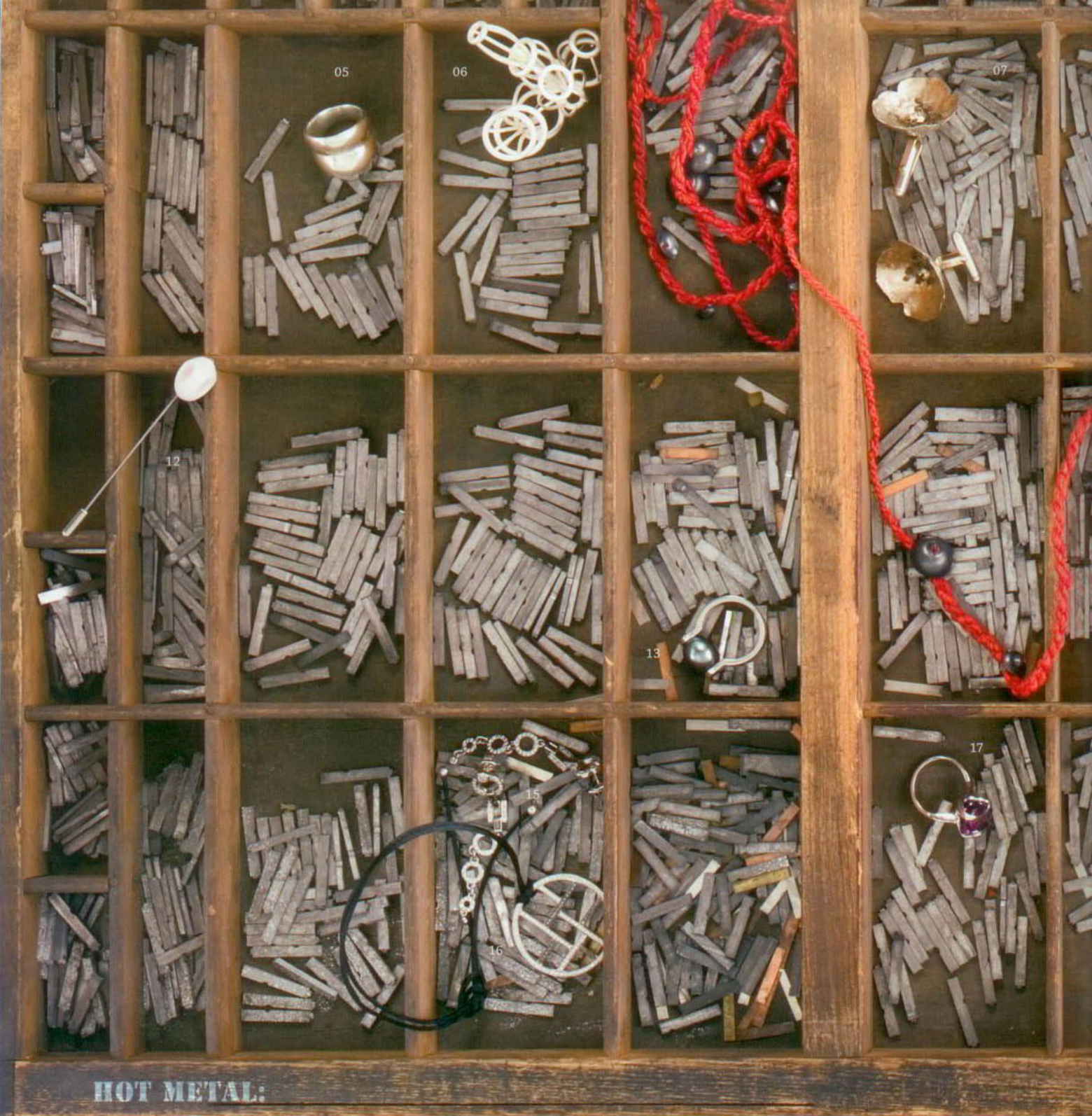
the business, there was both the opportunity to fill a void in the Australian jewellery industry for contemporary jewellery, and a return to his passion for Australian opals and gems, garnered through his family's 30-year mining and wholesaling interests.

Venerari defies the traditions underpinning jewellery purchases in Australia, in particular the preoccupation with the solitaire diamond engagement ring. The use of coloured gemstones and solid opals as the catalyst for the individually designed pieces, set in quality metals with unconventional finishes is a repositioning for the opal away from the cheap tourist market. This is evident in the Opalace necklace and ring Doreen's Glory, winner and runner up respectively in the Opal Design category at the Jewellers Association of Australia's 2006 Australian Jewellery Design Awards. Both pieces demonstrate an essential understanding of movement: on one level there's the incorporation of the opal's rolling colour flash, the other is the practical issue of working with the human form.

Pared back and embodying a simple idea is a parallel drawn by Wallman between Lilley and Chipperfield's work, along with the irony, "that simple is actually far more complex and more difficult to achieve".

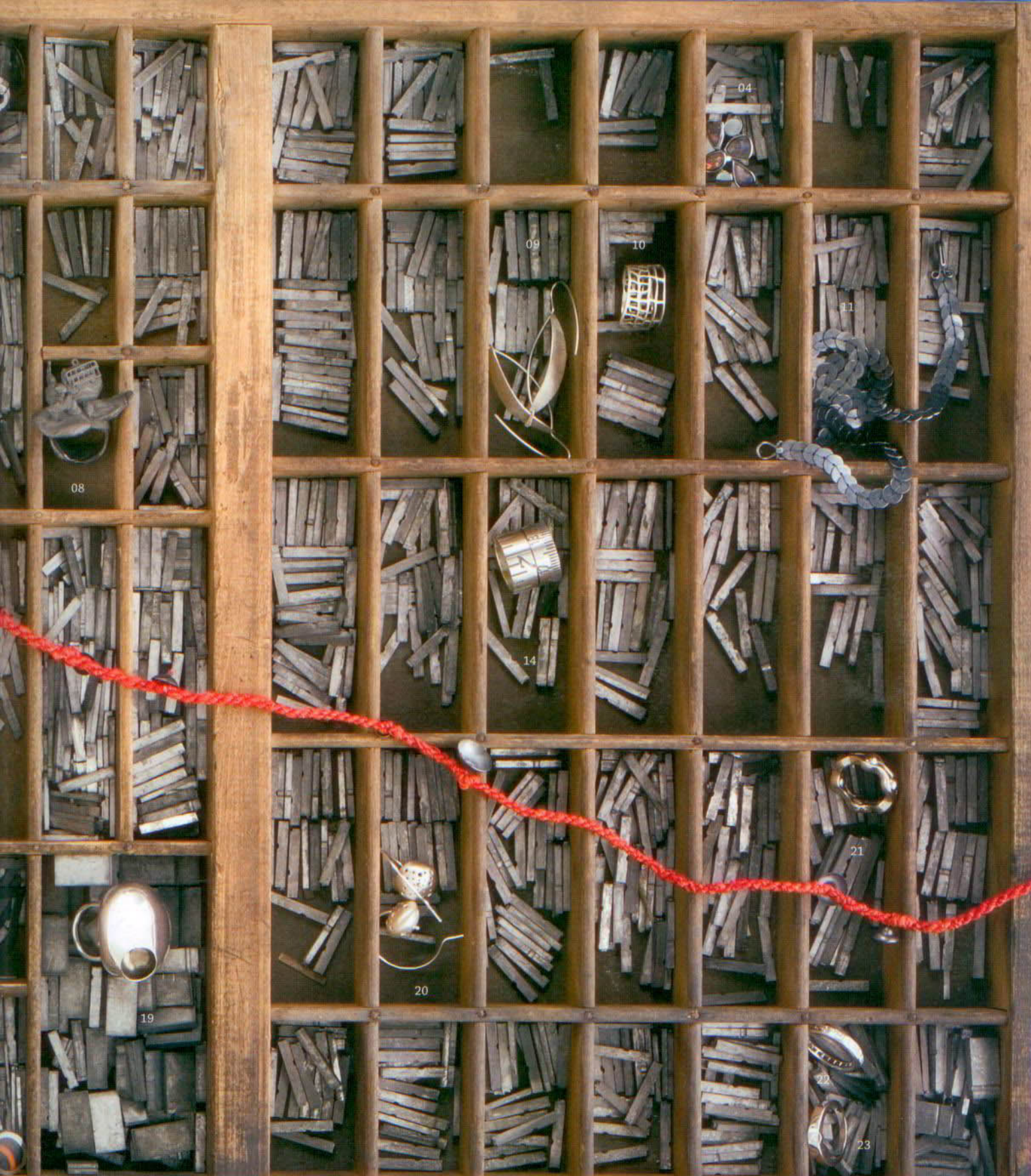
Marg Hearn

www.venerari.com



HOT METAL:

- 1 **White Gold Ring** by Mari Funaki, Gallery Funaki, 03 9662 9446, galleryfunaki.com.au
- 2 **Periwinkle Necklace**, silk thread with oxidised sterling-silver shells by Nicky Hepburn and Ilka White, e.g.etal, 03 9639 5111 or 03 9663 4334, egetal.com.au
- 3 **Metropolis** 18ct white-gold ring with black sapphire, Canturi, Melbourne: 03 9654 4888, Sydney: 02 9231 1799, Brisbane: 07 3229 6119, canturi.com
- 4 **18ct Black Gold Ring** with four Queensland matrix boulder opals, Venerari, 02 9222 9797, venerari.com.au
- 5 **Curve Ring**, sterling silver, Georg Jensen 1800 269 911, georgjensen.com
- 6 **Hybrid Cluster Brooch**, sterling silver and citron chrysophase by Carlier Makigawa, Gallery Funaki (as listed)
- 7 **Flower Cufflinks**, sterling silver by Mary Odorici, e.g.etal (as listed)
- 8 **Oxidised Silver Ring** by Karl Fitsch, Gallery Funaki (as listed)
- 9 **Boat Earrings**, sterling silver by Mary O Glass Plus Gallery, 03 9696 4776, glassplusgallery.com.au
- 10 **Dragonfly Ring**, oxidised sterling silver by Angela Hailey, Melbourne: e.g.etal (as listed) Sydney: Metalab, 02 8354 1398, metalab.com.au
- 11 **Sequin Necklace**, oxidised sterling silver by Joanna Campbell, e.g.etal (as listed)



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TIMENT HEADLINES THE LEADING JEWELLERY DESIGNS ON THE BLOCK