



Serin Oh

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Serin Oh

1987, Seoul, Korea

Serin Oh has spent the past several years collecting accessories from street vendors and using them to create new works by copying them and breaking them into pieces, then reassembling and recasting them into one of a kind rings and brooches. Even as they are consumed as art in the museums, department stores, and fashion magazines of the capitalist system, these pieces of jewelry satirize a reality in which imitations and copies are rampant. In 2016 and 2018, in search of the starting point of this irony, she headed out to two of the outposts that sustain this world's flashy radiance, Yiwu(China) and Đồng Văn(Vietnam), where many cheap accessories are produced. There she asked the people she met for an answer to the question “what does it mean for something to be real?”.

Imitation & Deception, 2009~

Looking back on my 20s, I was an exceptionally bright and cheerful person, but I did have a bit of an inferiority complex about my wealthier friends, and I spent a lot of energy trying to dress as well as my classmates in the art department. The class structure, divided as it was by money, was clearly visible, and I took it to be the thing I needed to overcome. At the same time, I was taking as many gold and metalwork classes as I could at school. I registered for classes in the ‘jewelry’ classification for four semesters straight. I worked harder sitting in front of the workbench, drawing designs and hammering at brooches and necklaces, than in the classes for my major.

One day in Seoul’s ostentatious Myeong-dong neighborhood, I walked past a shop selling cheap accessories, and I felt a strange emotion at the hundreds of earrings hanging under white light bulbs and the customers with their baskets of accessories. There was too large a gulf between those earrings and the ‘works of art’ I had spent weeks creating at the workbench, but the customers picking through the accessories seemed somehow similar to me. The most expensive things in the store might have cost 3000 won. Things stuck together with glue, things that make your earlobes itch if you leave them in too long, fake gemstones, the shiny things filling my jewelry drawer, the only luxuries I could afford with my thin wallet.

That’s how I started the “Imitations and Subterfuges” series. I divided the real and the fake with a line as clear as my resentments against the world, and I gathered the absolute fakest of the cheap, imitation accessories that I could find. I wanted to change the fate they had been given. I thought of it as a means of subversion against the class pyramid I had been made so conscious of. When framed that way, the project received a fierce welcome and then naturally seeped down into the gears of that world. I was able to send around a hundred pieces off into the world as a part of this project. I was delighted.





Imitation & Deception no.2009-15
Brass plated with rhodium, 4x4.8x6.4cm, 2009



Imitation & Deception no.2010-09
925silver with plated rhodium and 18k gold, 5.6x6x5.5cm, 2010



Imitation & Deception no.2011-13, no.2011-14
925silver, 5.7x5.3x4cm (left), 6x5.5x3cm (right), 2011



Imitation & Deception no.2012-01
925silver plated with rhodium, 6x7.4x4cm, 2012



Imitation & Deception no.2011-02
925 silver plated with rhodium and 24k gold, 5.5x7x6cm, 2011



Imitation & Deception no.2012-11
Brass plated with 18k gold, fabric, 17x21x4cm, 2012



Garden's Miracle no.2013-06
925silver, fabric, polyester, artificial flower, white paint, 29x18x4cm (necklace) , 2013



Garden's Miracle no.2013-15
925silver, fabric, artificial flower, white paint, 30.5x18x4cm (necklace), 2013





Garden's Miracle no.2013-09
925silver, polyester, 7x8.5x4cm, 2013

I made use of the popular desire towards ostentation to create an ironic drama. My role was to alter the original characteristics of the real and the fake, to distort their function and value, thereby turning the pyramid of class upside down. Over the past few years, I collected street accessories, in which the desire for imitation is most strongly reflected, and created dozens of copies of them using a silicon mold. Next I reassembled the copies to create one of a kind brooches and rings. It is a process of creating something neither real nor fake, neither authentic nor imitation, in order to escape the dichotomy between chasing after sameness and fleeing conformity to be different. Something fake can be made into an expensive work of art simply by changing its setting and surface features, and people will then believe it to be real. "Imitations and Subterfuges" is still on display under dazzling lighting on the 12th floor of Myeong-dong's Shinsegae Department Store.



Imitation & Deception no.2011-34
925silver, 13x8.4x5.5cm, 2011



Imitation & Deception no.2011-30
925silver plated with rhodium, fabric, 16.5x21x4.2cm, 2011



Imitation & Deception no.2011-02, no.2011-03
925silver plated with rhodium and 24k gold, 5.5x6.6x6cm (left), 925silver plated with rhodium, 4.6x6.8x4cm (right), 2011



Imitation & Deception no.2011-20
925silver plated with rhodium, 6.5x8x5cm, 2011



Imitation & Deception
no.2011-20, no.2011-34
<VOGUE Korea> sep. 2012

Those Collection, 2016

Once I rented a studio and equipment in order to photograph the cheap accessories I had collected and organize them into types. In front of my camera there was a brooch studded with plastics pearls, sitting modestly in the center of a white box. I bought it at the flea market that opens every other weekend near my house in Seoul's Gwanak-Gu district. There had been a mountain of earrings, necklaces and other accessories piled atop a silver foil mat, all being sold for 100 won apiece. But the camera and lighting I had that day in the studio were professional advertising equipment, and the 100 won brooch made such a good photograph that even I was amazed at its successful imitation of luxurious jewelry. How might the other people who bought this cheap brooch have felt? Its rough texture, weak color, and sheen all created a beautiful display through the camera lens.

Another time, I picked up a fashion magazine lying on the table at the hair salon and found it calmly recommending a 10 million won necklace. The fluorescent lighting reflected across the glossy paper, making the gemstones look more brilliant, and the editor's flashy description was tempting enough to convince me the necklace was worth owning. I took sentences from the magazine at random and placed them as descriptions under the pictures I had taken in the studio, arranging them without regard to content. I wanted to tear down the border between real and fake by attaching sentences that matched, if only on the surface, with those fake accessories. In the end all that was left were images in which the boundary between real and fake had disappeared, but I encountered the irony that as soon as I explained this project in words, real and fake were redefined.



Peacock's Tail

보라색 타고 와서 타임스퀘어에서 빨갱이타고 23번가에서 내림 됨.
가격미정.

Collection No. BAC002



Venezia Love

베네치아풍 창문틀을 떠오르게 하는 섬세한 디자인.
담수 양식 진주와 라운드 다이아몬드가 세팅된 18k 골드. 가격미정.

Collection No. RGP001



Black Horse

형식에 얽매이지 않는 자유로운 패션 스타일과
언제나 밝고 당당한 에티튜드를 위한 독창적이며 우아한 디자인.
그 두 번째 작품을 소개합니다. 가격미정.

Collection No. EA002



Paris Match

흔해 빠진 '명품' 이라는 말을 재정립해줄
와일드한 브로치. 가격미정.

Collection No. BAC006

Accessory Travel, 2016~2018

When I was in elementary school I went to Lotte World with my mother for the first time, but my only clear memory from that trip is the “Adventures of Sinbad” ride. I stepped into the ride’s small boat and became Sinbad himself, exploring the watery pathways and corners of a long, dark cave. Inside the cave, which appeared just before the ride finished, there was an enormous treasure chest piled high with shiny gems and gold coins. It was close enough to reach out and touch, and the young me thought that the gold was real. While I was lost in thought, the beautiful, plentiful treasure filling my mind, the boat quickly passed it by. I swore to my young self that if I ever went on the ride again, I would lean over and snatch a handful of gold coins, and the image of all that shininess remained in my memory into my adulthood.

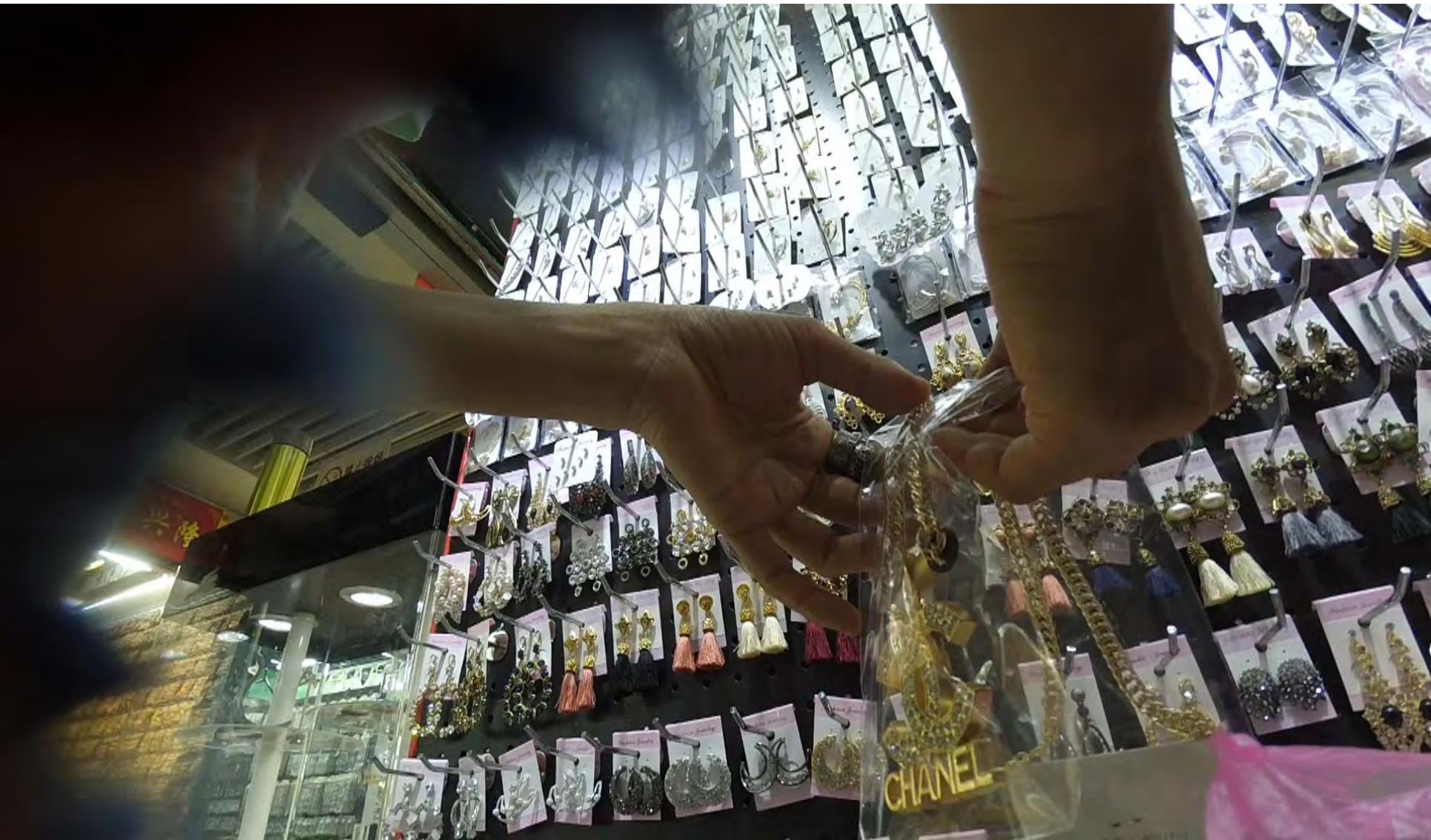
In search of the starting point of this ironic scenery of real and fake, I set out for the corner of the world that sustains all this flashiness, Zhejiang, China, where the world’s most inexpensive accessories are fabricated. More than half of the products available at Daiso, a Korean discount variety store, are produced and distributed in this city. I went there to find the people who make them. What is the functioning mechanism of this dazzlingly decorated world? Countless hands moving without rest, all for a moment of radiance. There I asked the people I met for an answer to the question “what does it mean for something to be real?”

* The Birds Trashed Their Heads to Fly_ 2016~2018 <https://youtu.be/Z73pcWQekRU>



The Birds Trashed Their Heads to Fly (*shooting cut*)_ single channel video, 10'35" _ 2016~2018

<https://youtu.be/Z73pcWQckRU>



Walking across Putien_ single channel video, 21'57" _ 2016~2018
<https://youtu.be/ePPLdyIqBI>



Accessory Travel_ pigment print, 42x29cm_ 2016



Accessory Travel_ pigment print, 42x29cm_ 2016

Vietnam Project, 2018

In 2016, while filming for the piece “The Birds Trashed Their Heads to Fly,” I was offered free use of facilities and labor force by a representative of an accessory factory in Đ Đ ng V ã n, Vietnam in exchange for providing a unique design for the factory. And so, in early 2018, I started the “Vietnam Project” while staying at Đ Đ ng V ã n Industrial Park, about an hour from Hanoi. The industrial park is crowded with factories that mass produce the world’s cheapest accessories. Some of these factories specialize in copycat products, imitations of original products, and can essentially duplicate the product of any brand in about a week. In keeping with my original interest in the boundary between real and fake, I prepared my original piece and observed how it was altered within the mass production system.

While I was creating the original piece, an art collector lent me diamonds, pearls, and other precious stones for free, and a diamond-setting specialist helped me with the elaborate setting of these stones. I also used 18k gold for some pieces. The factory in Vietnam used cubic zirconia or epoxy to imitate the precious stones. And yet the six samples-for-sale that the factory produced were sufficiently flashy. The gap between the original and the imitations was at once wide and narrow. The exhibition “How to Arrange Glitter and Gold,” held in Korea, showcased the various stages and aspects of this project in display cases along with the final samples, and a portion of the samples remain at the factory in Vietnam.

*Making Flim <https://youtu.be/R-TWo56p0Z8>



(붙임1)

작업 협력 협약서

액세서리 생산업체 - ㈜ KAS Fashion (이하 "KAS"라 한다)과 디자인 원작자인 작가 - 오세린 (이하 "오세린"이라 한다)은 상호간의 신뢰를 바탕으로 오세린의 베트남 프로젝트 및 개인전에 관한 교류 및 협력체제를 구축하기 위하여 다음과 같이 작업협력에 관한 협약을 요청한다.

제 1조 (목적) 본 협약은 작업협력으로 파생된 결과물이 1) 2018년 4월 7일부터 4월 21일(이하 "전시기간"이라 한다), 세움아트스페이스 (서울특별시 종로구 소격동 73)에서 열리는 오세린의 개인전을 통해 동시대성을 반영하는 새로운 공예패러다임에 기여하고, 2) KAS를 통해 개발, 생산 및 판매되는 것을 목적으로 한다.

제 2조 (협약사항) 양 측은 신의성실에 다음과 같이 협약한다.

1. 오세린은 본 협약서의 효력이 발생하는 날부터 2018년 2월 8일까지 반지원본 10여점(이하 "반지원본"라 한다)을 성실하게 제작한다. 반지원본에 대한 소유권, 저작권, 저작인접권, 판매권 및 디자인권은 오세린이 갖는다.

2. 오세린은 2018년 1월 18일부터 2월 8일(이하 "생산기간"이라 한다)까지 KAS로부터 베트남에 위치한 공장 내 설비와 생산에 필요한 재료 및 숙식을 무상으로 제공받는다.

3. 오세린은 생산기간동안 "반지원본"의 디자인을 KAS에게 제공하며, KAS는 이 디자인을 바탕으로 양산이 가능한 샘플(이하 "샘플"이라 한다)을 _____점 이상 개발한다.

3-1. 각 샘플의 _____개는 오세린의 사인과 에디션 넘버가 새겨져 전시기간 중 전시 및 판매된다. 이에 대한 소유권, 저작권, 저작인접권, 판매권은 오세린이, 디자인권은 KAS가 갖는다. 전시기간 중 판매된 샘플의 수입은 갤러리 수수료 _____%를 제외하고 오세린이 갖는다.

3-2. 바이어에게 샘플에 대한 대량주문이 들어올 경우, KAS는 이를 자유롭게 생산, 판매할 수 있으며, KAS는 오세린에게 진행과정과 판매루트를 알릴 의무가 있다. 이에 대한 소유권, 저작권, 저작인접권, 판매권 및 디자인권은 KAS가 갖는다.

4. 작업기간동안 KAS와 오세린은 양산에 효과적인 디자인을 함께 연구한다. KAS는 오세린의 작업활동을 원활히 진행할 수 있도록 최우선적으로 지원 및 협조한다.

제 3조 (상호협이) 본 협약서의 세부적 사항은 양 측이 협의하여 결정한다.

제 4조 (효력) 본 협약은 서명한 날로부터 효력이 발생하며, 어느 한 쪽에서 파기의사가 없는 한 유효한 것으로 한다.

양 측은 본 협약서 2부를 작성, 서명날인 후 각각 1부씩 보관한다.

2018년 1 월 9 일

• 생산 업체

회 사 명 : KAS Fashion co., Ltd.

주 소 : Dongvan industrial park, Hanam province, Vietnam

연 락 처 : [Redacted]

사업자등록번호 : 062043000020

대 표 자 : 이정우

연 락 처 : [Redacted]

• 기 획 및

디자인원작자 : 오 세 린

주 소 : 경기도 용인시 수지구 현암로 125번지 11

연 락 처 : [Redacted]



For and on behalf of
KAS FASHION GROUP CO., LIMITED
Authorized Signature(s)

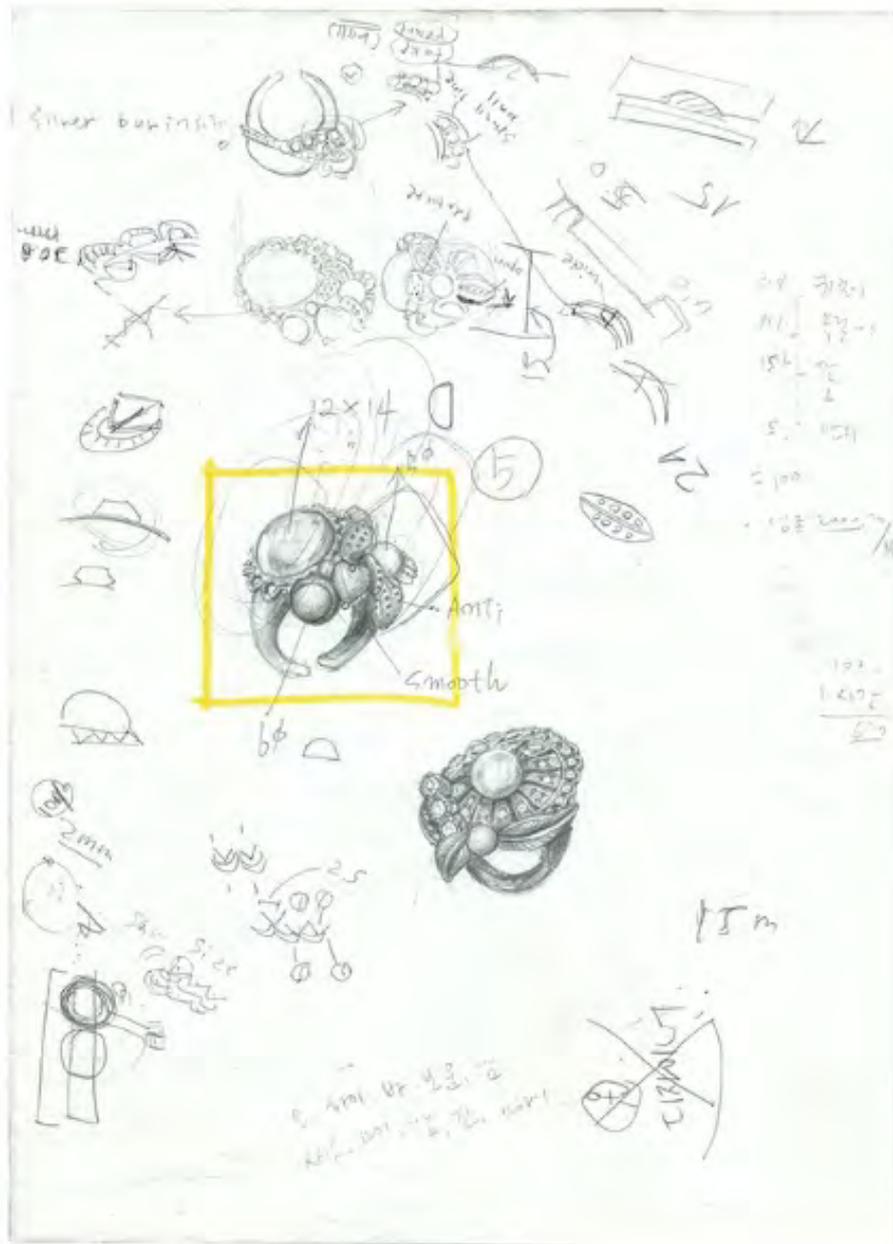
한세린

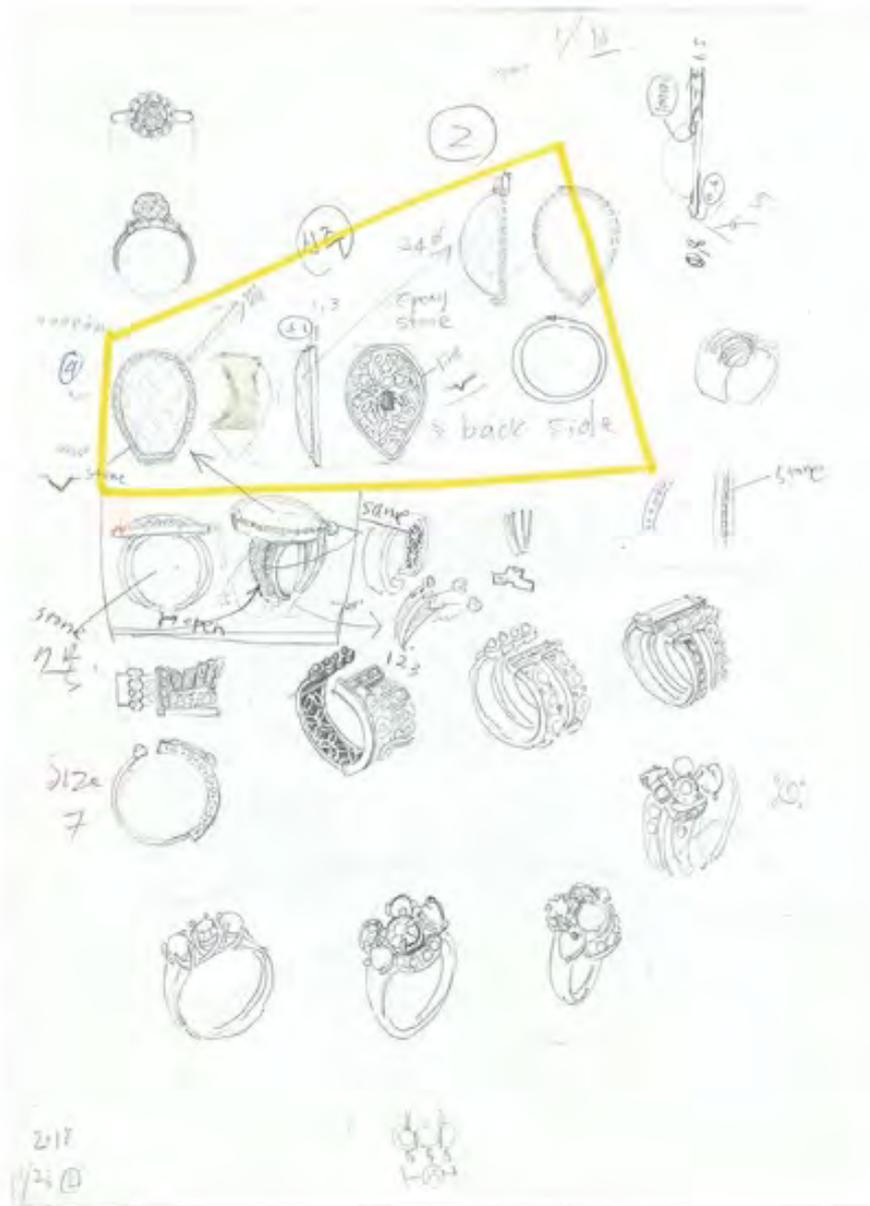
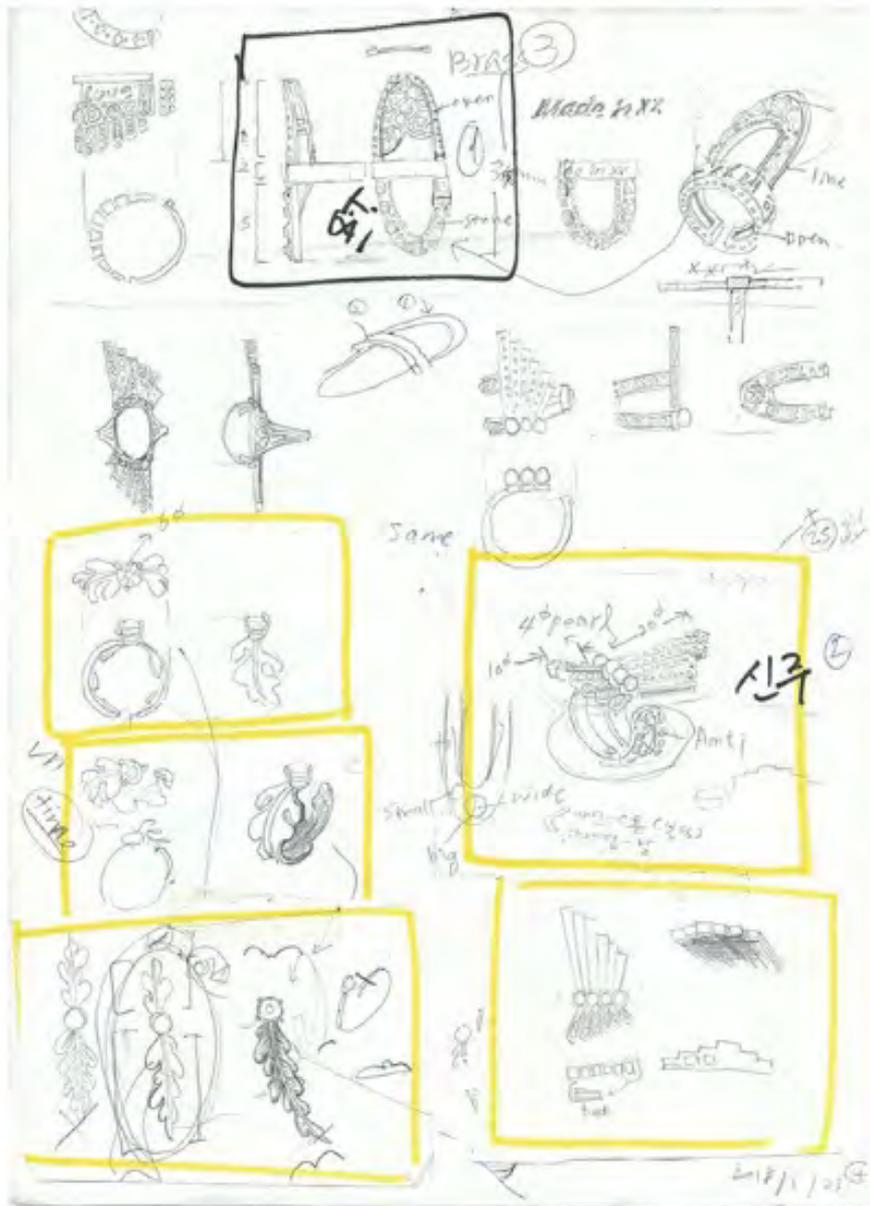
ĐƠN VỊ **HÓA ĐƠN BÁN LẺ** Mẫu số 1/B
 QĐ liên bộ TCTL-TN

Số:

Họ và tên người mua hàng: HUY DAI
 Địa chỉ: HUY DAI

Số TT	Tên hàng và quy cách phẩm chất	Đơn vị tính	Số lượng	Giá đơn vị	Thành tiền
①					
		100000	100000	120000	12000000
②					
		120000	120000	250000	30000000
③					
		120000	120000	14000000	1400000000
Cộng:					
④ 					
Cộng thành tiền (viết bằng chữ)					12391100000









Vietnam Project made in Korea 05_ sterling silver, 7x8.2x5.7cm_ 2018
Vietnam Project made in Vietnam 04 (120 editions)_ zinc, artificial diamond, 0.8x2.2x2.5cm_ 2018



Vietnam Project made in Korea 01_ sterling silver, pearl, 4x7x5cm_ 2018
Vietnam Project made in Vietnam 06 (26 editions)_ brass, 2.5x2.2x2.5cm_ 2018



Vietnam Project_installation view
(Solo exhibition <How to arrange glitter and gold>. Seum art place_2018)



W1 489,800

Vietnam Project_ installation view
(Solo exhibition <How to arrange glitter and gold>. Seum art place_2018)



Vietnam Project_ installation view
(group exhibition <Tricksters> Shinhan gallery Yeoksam_2018)