

Susie Ganch Biography

The labor-intensive, site-specific installations of Susie Ganch (born 1970 in Appleton, WI; lives and works in Richmond, VA) incorporate throwaway materials such as recycled jewelry, plastic bags, and disposable coffee cup lids. Her work offers a pointed commentary on the effects of human culture and consumption on the environment.

Ganch's art exemplifies a belief in a circular economy that operates like a natural ecosystem, promoting the use of existing and finite resources sparingly and expanding recycling exponentially. The idea put forth is that if we use less, use things longer, and recycle as much as possible, we can eventually eliminate trash by not creating it.

Trained as a jeweler and metalsmith, Ganch says of her recent work, "Trading metal for plastic, a ubiquitous symbol that celebrates our worship of the present and disregard for the future, I make *antimemorials* born out of eco-anxiety."

Ganch's undergraduate studies in Geology and her subsequent MFA in Metals from the University of Wisconsin-Madison have shaped her interest in issues of waste and cultural consumption habits. In addition to her studio work, Ganch has been commissioned for large-scale installations throughout the country, the most recent at Sweet Briar College (Amherst, VA) that address these concerns. In that same vein, Ganch is the co-founder and director of the Radical Jewelry Makeover project, a global jewelry mining and recycling initiative that has traveled worldwide.

Ganch has received multiple recognitions including the 2024 James Renwick Alliance Distinguished Educator Award, and the 2024 Society of North American Goldsmiths' IMPACT award. Other awards include the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Fellowship, the Peter S. Reed Foundation Grant, the Theresa Pollack Fine Art Award, a VA Commission for the Arts Grant, and several VCU Faculty Research Grants. Her work has been featured in museum exhibitions nationally and internationally, including the Smithsonian American Art Museum Renwick Gallery, Washington D.C, the North Carolina Museum of Fine Art, Raleigh, NC, the National Museum for Women in the Arts, Washington D.C., MFA Boston, the Design Museum in London, the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne, Australia, the Ueno Royal Museum in Tokyo, Japan, the Kohler Art Center in Sheboygan, WI, and the Milwaukee Art Museum. Private and public collections include the Smithsonian American Art Museum and Renwick Gallery in Washington D.C., LACMA in Los Angeles, CA, Asheville Art Museum in NC, MFA Boston in MA, Fuller Craft Museum in Brockton, MA, Metal Museum in Memphis, TN, John Michael Kohler Art Center in Sheboygan, WI, and Kohler Company in Kohler, WI.