

Curatorial statement by Sam Tho Duong, the curator of SCHMUCKmünchen 2026

First of all, I have been given the unexpected honour of selecting the pieces for the SCHMUCKmünchen 2026 special exhibition. With this special exhibition and its long and extremely successful history as part of the International Craft Fair, Munich offers contemporary designer jewellery a globally renowned forum. I was, of course, aware that the role of curator would be a very responsible and difficult task, indeed a challenge. Only 69 of the 1,046 jewellery designers from 68 countries who submitted their work could be considered for the final selection – and, as we all know, choice is agony.

When selecting jewellery for an exhibition, it is essential for me to appreciate both craftsmanship and avant-garde creativity. The pieces selected should either be masterfully crafted to show high regard for traditional craftsmanship, and/or innovative and original to represent the avant-garde. New designs, unusual materials or innovative techniques should contribute to making the exhibition exciting and contemporary. Care should be taken not to select works that have already been shown by the artists in a similar form in previous special exhibitions. The selection should strike a balance between craftsmanship and creative innovation in order to honour tradition while also looking to the future. The result is hopefully an inspiring exhibition that reflects the diversity and development of jewellery design and delights visitors with fresh ideas and impressive craftsmanship.

A big thank you to the dedicated team at the Munich Chamber of Crafts, especially Barbara Schmidt and Eva Sarnowski for their wonderful cooperation.

Of course, I would also like to thank all participants for their submissions and regret that, due to the limited exhibition space mentioned above, many interesting works could not be included.

Sam Tho Duong, Pforzheim, November 2025