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Brass tools and silk apparel for mining the world's most abundant mineral



London and Montreal designer Emilie F. Grenier has created set of brass tools and a silk outfit for mining feldspar - the most plentiful mineral on Earth.



Emilie F. Grenier's Disquiet Luxurians project considers redefining luxury so the process of creating products such as jewellery becomes the expensive factor rather than the material. She proposes that if craft was to be valued higher than materials, gems for jewellery could be sourced and fashioned from the group of minerals called feldspar instead of rare stones.

Feldspars are formed from crystallised magma and make up around 60% of the earth's crust.

Grenier's collection of opulent tools becomes the luxury element of the process as opposed to the mined minerals, as one set of utensils can be used to eventually create many pieces of jewellery.

Her set comprises three chisels with square, hexagonal and oval cutting heads, plus a hexagonal block used to hammer the ends of each tool.

Grenier made the implements from brass, a much more malleable metal than those traditionally used to make chisels such as steel. "Brass is a softer alloy, hence rarely used to craft stone-carving chisels or hammer heads," she told Dezeen.

She designed a green silk boiler suit to be worn when mining the mineral, which was purposefully made to be difficult to move in.

"Silk chiffon is an incredibly delicate textile with barely any give - potentially one of the worst materials to use for utility clothing," said Grenier. "In doing so, the post-luxurian mining experience became a geological





choreography, and the act of collecting less mechanical, and more unique. This was one of the strategies in this project to add value to the most plentiful mineral on Earth.”

Grenier also produced range of feldspar gems, cut into simple shapes with the help of lapidaries at Holt Gems in London.

“The set of gems was designed with über minimalist shapes to expose the fragility of the stone,” she explained. “Cutting them according to traditional gemmology standards would have rendered them too common, too commercial.”

A chunky ring she made is presented on a rough section of the material beneath a glass bell jar.

“The ring was inspired by art deco jewellery, from a time when women only wore the fanciest pieces at the fanciest soirées, but the jewels actually spent their lives in beautiful vanity cases and became instant heirlooms,” Grenier said. “This was why it was important for me to design a vanity case as well, using a rougher cut of the stone to highlight its provenance, and the lapidary’s craft.”

Grenier completed the project when studying on the Textile Futures course at London’s Central Saint Martins art and design college.

