

DREAM • CREATE • INSPIRE

# tickle the imagination

M A G A Z I N E

ISSUE 20 | HOME ISSUE  
www.tickletheimagination.com.au

## *dream*

- + ORGANISE YOUR CREATIVE SPACE
- + WIN! OVER \$700 IN GIVEAWAYS!
- + HAPPINESS IS ...

## *create*

- + ROPE & FABRIC BOWLS
- + LEATHER STRAP SHELVES
- + TRIPLE CHOC MERINGUE TART

## *inspire*

- + FOX HILL LLAMAS
- + LITTLE VILLAGE HANDMADE
- + NATURE'S FORGE

cocoon  
*cocoon*



PUBLISHED & PRINTED IN AUSTRALIA. CRAFT & LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE *be inspired*



*Designed and  
handcrafted in our studio*





## *Caitlin's crafty creations*

was established in 2005 and is very much a family handcrafted jewellery affair. Karen, her daughters Caitlin and Melinda, and sister Janine design and create a range of quality handcrafted jewellery whilst husband Bevon and son Scott take care of product marketing and distribution.

Our range of jewellery has all been designed and handcrafted in our studio. All materials used to construct our products - including the finest quality Sterling Silver and 14kt Gold-Filled materials, genuine Swarovski Crystals and Pearls, Freshwater Pearls and Lampwork Glass Beads - have been handpicked from the finest suppliers sourced both locally and overseas.

[www.caitlinscraftycreations.com.au](http://www.caitlinscraftycreations.com.au)



[www.caitlinscraftycreations.com.au](http://www.caitlinscraftycreations.com.au)



*a lovely blog filled with  
recipes and free decorating  
tutorials*



RECIPES | IDEAS | INSPIRATION

[bubbleandsweet.blogspot.com.au](http://bubbleandsweet.blogspot.com.au)

# tickle the imagination

MAGAZINE

**tickle the imagination** is an independently produced magazine.

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photography by Simon Rutgers.

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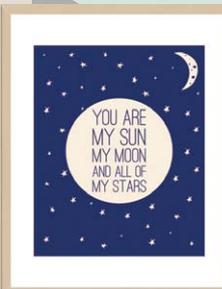
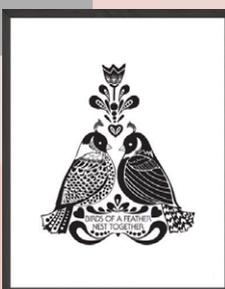
Instagram.com/madeit

Top: InkandCard, LisaRefaloVisualArtist,  
missyminzy

Middle: spunkandheart,  
DrawstringHandmade, BillyandScarlet

Bottom: ericamillerdesign,  
ColourscapeStudios, blossombird

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hello!

Winter is a lovely season to stay indoors and create, don't you agree? It makes me want to snuggle in front of the telly with a coffee and some crochet. It's also great weather for reading magazines!

I am so delighted to bring you our home issue, which is filled with lovely ideas for making, organising and decorating your home this winter.

I had the opportunity to travel out to meet and photograph one of our 'meet the maker' stories for this issue - Nichelle from Fox Hill Llamas. Nichelle and her family have built such a beautiful business with their herd of llamas. It is lovely to see a business that creates (or raises) the raw product they use in their creations and to look for opportunities to create something of beauty from materials that others might dismiss as worthless. I hope you enjoy their story as much as I did!

Wishing you every happiness!

Tanya X

Tanya Collier  
Editor



That's me, left, with Amber Appelbee of Games To Go at the recent Etsy Craft Party in Perth - so much fun!! The night was organised by the WA Street Team (thanks Kate & Davina!) and held in a lovely store called UnchARTed in Mount Lawley - well worth a visit!

Dedicated to my beautiful mum, Rita  
- I miss you every day X

*special thanks to the*  
**tickle team**



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*join us!*

tickle ambassadors are our eyes and ears on the ground - in every corner of Australia  
- helping spread the joy of tickle!

As a tickle ambassador, you will receive a complimentary subscription to tickle, and cute ambassador calling cards! In return, we ask that you share tickle with those you think would love tickle too  
- in person and on social media.

We would love for you to join us!

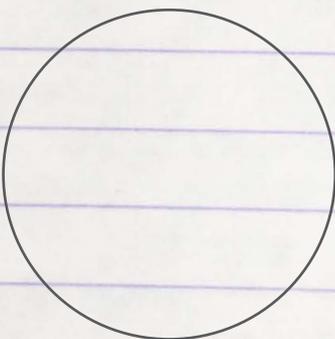
If you would like to find out more about the tickle ambassador program, please visit  
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*how to make a*  
**fabric & rope bowl**

TUTORIAL AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY HELEN LOUISE WILKINSON - BLOSSOM & CAT

Before you start this project, I must warn you that making these pretty rope bowls is completely addictive, it's almost impossible to stop at just one! Using scraps of fabric and cotton washing line, you can wrap, coil and sew a gorgeous stack of colourful bowls to store your treasures and other bits and bobs.





### *you will need...*

- + Soft cotton rope or washing line
- + Strips of fabric cut 1-2cm wide
- + Cotton thread
- + Scissors
- + Pegs
- + Sewing machine set to zigzag

(I used approximately 5.5m of cotton washing line to make this blue bowl which measures 18 x 6cm.)

### *before you start...*

Be organised! Make sure you have a full bobbin of cotton and a sharp new needle for your sewing machine. Cut lots of fabric strips! The strips don't have to be perfect and don't worry about frayed edges, they add to the charm and character of the finished bowl.

Liberty Tana Lawn Fabric from 'The Strawberry Thief'

## *how to make your bowl...*



**STEP 1** Cut the end of the first strip of fabric on the diagonal and sandwich the rope down the length of the fabric.



**STEP 2** Firmly wrap the fabric around the clothesline, overlap as you go making sure the fabric doesn't bunch up. Wrap about 25cm to get started and hold the end in place with a peg.



**STEP 3** Fold the end of the fabric wrapped rope about 2cm and place under the foot of your sewing machine. Sew the length of the fold using zigzag stitch.





**STEP 4** With the needle in the down position, lift the foot of the sewing machine, turn your work, lower the foot and sew. This will start to form the coil for the base of the bowl.



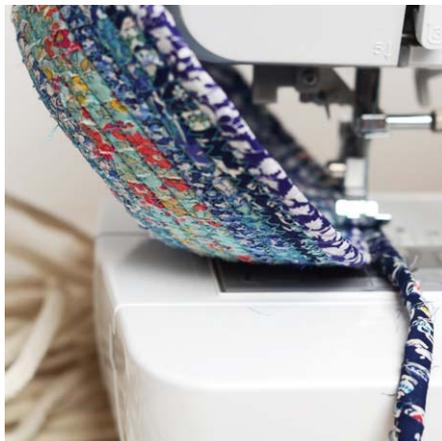
**STEP 5** Sewing the rope is a little fiddly to start. Once you have sewn a couple of centimetres, there will be no need to lift and turn, you will simply sew continuously.



**STEP 6** To join a new colour, put the needle in the down position to keep your work in place. Overlap a strip of fabric at an angle and wrap around the rope. Hold the end in place with a peg.



**STEP 7** To create the sides, lift and hold your bowl at an angle and continue to sew.



**STEP 8** Keeping the bowl at an angle, continue to sew until the bowl reaches your desired size. Your bowl will take shape very quickly!



**STEP 9** To finish, cut the rope and leave a good length of fabric for wrapping.



**STEP 10** Wrap the remaining section of rope. When you reach the end of the rope, fold the fabric over and wrap backwards.



**STEP 11** Hold the fabric in place while you tuck the end of the rope under itself, it will now be sandwiched between the top of the bowl and the coil of rope.



**STEP 12** Zigzag forward along the top of the bowl and the coil, then reverse. Zigzag forward between the handle, leaving a small gap, then reverse. Cut off any loose threads.

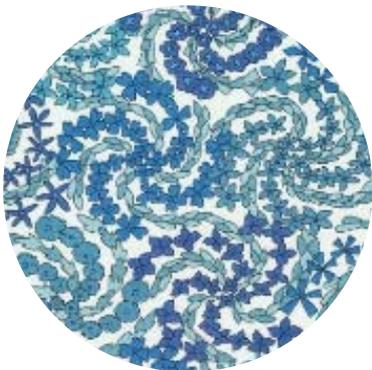
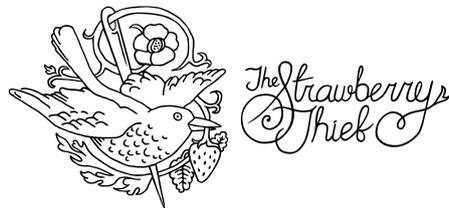
*How many can you make...?*





## Little Details...

- 1 Large patterns get lost when making the fabric rope basket. Small prints and pretty florals work perfectly.
- 2 Choose soft, lightweight cotton fabric - it is easier to wrap around the rope than thicker, more bulky fabrics.
- 3 Be bold! Mix and match bright colours and prints. You can tone or contrast your sewing thread.
- 4 Keep it simple! Use the same principles to create a rope bowl without the fabric. Simply sew the rope with brightly coloured cotton thread for a striking effect.



LOVE LIBERTY? Become an Exclusive Member of The Love Liberty Club and receive a fat bundle of Liberty Love each month! Every month your excitement and anticipation shall culminate with a carefully curated selection of Season (past & present) and Classic Liberty Tana Lawn. Our fat bundles include prints in colour-ways that are never repeated, providing diversity to your Liberty stash.

[www.thestrawberrythief.com.au](http://www.thestrawberrythief.com.au)

# fabric stash

So much fabric, not enough hours in the day! There really is nothing like a lovely pile of fabric to get you inspired. Thank you to everyone who shared a peek at their fabric stash on Instagram.



@dittanym



@onebusysloth



@julieslittlepeople



@missyandmoo



@rhapsodyandthread



@houseofnicax



@bugseybeehandmade



@driinkt



@the\_strawberry\_thief

show us your stash →



@tickletheimagination

#ticklefabricstash

## black betty...

I am loving the Black Betty side table with its matte black finish and Tassie oak trim! Black Betty has been designed and handcrafted by Milk Cart in their Sydney workshop. Find them at [www.milkcart.com.au](http://www.milkcart.com.au)



## a few of my favourite things

Editor Tanya Collier and designers Tania Goranitis of Interior Philosophy and Maya Anderson of House Nerd each create a design board to showcase their favourite Australian designers and makers.



↑ *spot on*

Keep your little ones super warm and stylish this winter with a gorgeous quilt by tiina made it. Handmade in Melbourne. Find them at [www.etsy.com/au/shop/tiinamadeit](http://www.etsy.com/au/shop/tiinamadeit)

*thunderbolts & lightning*

Style up a storm with this adorable lightning wall hanging by Cactus&Co, handcrafted in Adelaide using fair trade felt wool balls. Find it at [etsy.com/shop/CactusCo](http://etsy.com/shop/CactusCo)



↑ *knobbly*

Fun, functional and handcrafted in Australia, each knobbly. wall\*knob is made from Australian plywood and hand-painted. We love their lightning bolt design! Find them at [www.knobbly.com.au](http://www.knobbly.com.au)



**achromatic**

Some might say black and white is playing it safe, but there's no denying the drama and sophistication these tonal extremes bring to a space.

COMPILED BY TANYA COLLIER

*stylish storage*



Super practical and super cute! sir trouble takes the trouble out of organising with their cute range of fabric storage bags. Find them online at [sirtrouble.bigcartel.com](http://sirtrouble.bigcartel.com)



↑ *knot cushion*

Made with a cotton blend fabric, my little echo has created this unique knot cushion that would look amazing in any room of the house. Order yours at [www.mylittleecho.bigcartel.com](http://www.mylittleecho.bigcartel.com)





happy

Artwork 'Happy' by Cat Lee available from [artpharmacy.com.au](http://artpharmacy.com.au)



jelly planter

Round Jelly Planter Grey by Angus & Celeste [angusandceleste.com](http://angusandceleste.com)



lake cushion

Lake Cushion (in Moss/Grey/Green) by Cushionopoly [cushionopoly.com.au](http://cushionopoly.com.au)



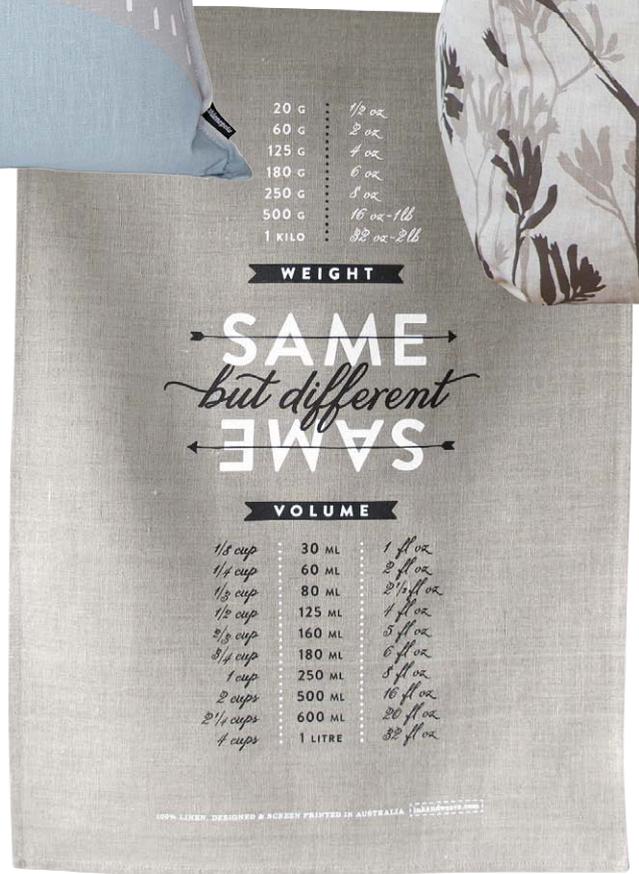
cat & mouse

Cat & Mouse Blanket by Mooi Baby [mooibaby.com.au](http://mooibaby.com.au)



milk bottles

Handmade porcelain milk bottles by Urban Cartel [urbancartel.com.au](http://urbancartel.com.au)



same same

Same Same tea towel by Ink & Weave [www.inkandweave.com](http://www.inkandweave.com)



conical flask candle  
**Conical Flask Candle** in Wild Fig by Alchemy Produx  
 alchemyprodux.com



collecting the mail 2  
 'Collecting the mail 2' by tsk tsk - Art by Tiel Seivl-kevers  
 tsksk.com.au



← ottoman  
**Kangaroo Paw Ottoman**  
 by Ink and Spindle  
 inkandspindle.com



← clothpot  
**DIY Clothpot** (in Fragments in Pitcher Pink/Flights in Dove Grey)  
 by Maze & Vale  
 mazeandvale.bigcartel.com



↑ linen pillow slips  
**Flax/White Combo Set of 2** by Mr & Mrs White  
 www.mrandmrswhite.net

# tania goranitis

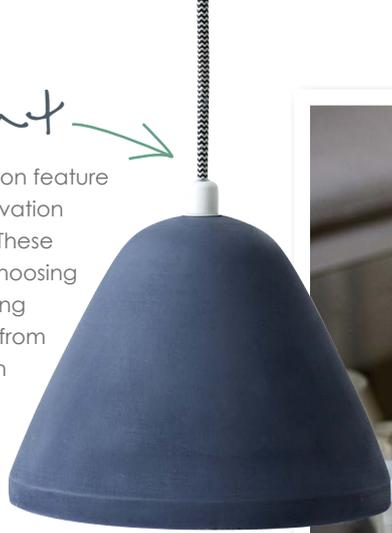
Interior Philosophy | [interiorphilosophy.com.au](http://interiorphilosophy.com.au)

Tania Goranitis is passionate about the home environment and its effect on the people it surrounds. She is well known for her past craft label Chicken Ink. Creative, and for creating online craft communities The Contemporary Handmade Alliance and Shop Contemporary Handmade. These days, she studies Design at ISCD and has opened her new business Interior Philosophy; which offers interior styling, home staging and home organisation services in her local region of East Gippsland. She is an avid style watcher, information sharer, vignette builder and organiser, and blogs about these topics regularly. If these things are your favourite things too, follow her on Instagram @interiorphilosophy, visit her Facebook page or her website [interiorphilosophy.com.au](http://interiorphilosophy.com.au) and say hello.



## concrete pendant

I never knew how hard it was to decide on feature lighting until we started our kitchen renovation and I was faced with so many choices. These Finn Pendants from Milk + Sugar make choosing lighting easy – the only hard bit is choosing which gorgeous colour to go for! Made from concrete, they are then hand-painted in four gorgeous colours while the inside is on-trend, raw, unpainted concrete. **Finn Concrete Pendant in Slate**, Milk + Sugar [milkandsugar.com.au](http://milkandsugar.com.au)



## marble candle

If you want to add a touch of elegance to any room, an Allume candle is a good way to go. I love the look of their White Marble Candle. **White Marble Candle**, Allume Candle Co. [allumecandleco.com](http://allumecandleco.com)



## kantha cushion

I love Bowerhouse – beautiful handmade pieces that add texture and warmth to any home, like the gorgeous Uma cushion with its rich jewel-like colours. All pieces are limited, though, so you have to get in quickly! **Uma silk kantha cushion**, Bowerhouse [bowerhouse.com.au](http://bowerhouse.com.au)

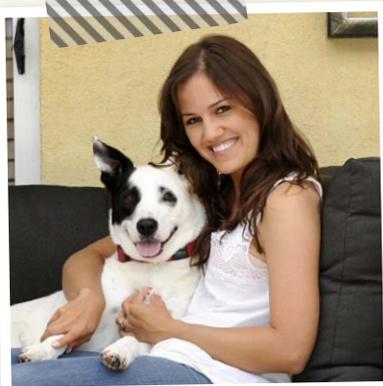
## copper wastepaper basket

Why can't a waste paper basket be beautiful? One of the next projects on our house renovation list is my home office makeover – this beautiful copper basket will be on the must-have list. **Copper Wireware Wastebasket**, Robert Gordon [robertgordonaustralia.com](http://robertgordonaustralia.com)



## half dip

These hand-dipped porcelain planters make absolutely gorgeous gifts and look great indoors or out. **Half Dip Hanging Planter**, Angus & Celeste [angusandceleste.com](http://angusandceleste.com)



# maya anderson

BLOGGER, FREELANCE JOURNALIST AND COLUMNIST

House Nerd | [www.house-nerd.com](http://www.house-nerd.com)

If you're obsessed with houses, this is the blog for you! My name is Maya Anderson. I'm a house nerd and freelance journalist. Based in Perth, Western Australia, I write about homes, renovations and interior design. I love houses of all different styles, but the ones I've always been the most drawn to are the ones that have a warmth, an invitingness. House Nerd is my way of looking more intimately at those places.

DREAM • CREATE • INSPIRE

# tickle the imagination

M A G A Z I N E



Just a few of the gorgeous collection of Australian designers and makers you will discover in our online creative directory

(from top, L-R) paloma le sage, designry, gaye abandon, bits & bobs 4 bubs, marjorie handmade, dandelyne, fluid ink, ceramic snippets

[tickletheimagination.com.au](http://tickletheimagination.com.au)

@ \_\_\_\_\_

happiness is...

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#happinessis

fill it out

take a pic

share it!

# simple things...

COMPILED BY TANYA COLLIER

"Most folks are as happy as they make up their mind to be" ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

One of my catch phrases at home is 'choose to be happy' and I truly believe the secret to happiness really is as simple as that. I'm not saying you can be happy all the time - we all have our bad days. But I do think it's important to be happy more often than not - for both our mental and physical health. I also think it's important for us to understand, and to teach our children, that 'things' don't bring happiness; it isn't something you can buy or something you can be dependent on others to bring you. Happiness is what you choose to find and be grateful for in a moment - in an object or in a person.

Inspired by one of our lovely readers, Natural Saffie who commented on instagram that 'Happiness is receiving the latest edition from @tickletheimagination', we set out to discover what brings you happiness. And, as we hoped, it really is the simple things that bring you joy.

@natural\_saffie **happiness is receiving the latest edition from @tickletheimagination.**

receiving sweet surprise snail mail from family and friends. Deb, VIC, Two Cheeky Monkeys

finding time in a busy day to sit down and create something - a luxury that is always enjoyed. Lynda Wilson, Editor, The Owner Builder magazine

@bettyandbarbara **...creating with paper, a parcel at the front door, hot coffee.**

...a lovely sleep in! Failing that, happiness is a yummy picnic in the autumn sun. Kate, VIC, Handmade Cooperative

@upperdhali **Happiness is playing with dolls.**

@radgedesign **Happiness is... Spending time being creative and expressing myself.**

@vintagefairy\_official **happiness : is a warm hug, the more hugs the happier you feel xxxxx.**

@onebusyslth **Happiness is little hands massaging my sore shoulders.**

@gamestogo **Happiness is waking up to a house full of laughter & love.**

@schooza **happiness is making other people happy and surrounding yourself with happy people- as it is so infectious.**

@soniadesigns **To me happiness is my life and sharing it with those I love.**

@tractorgirlmakes **happiness is a toasty fire on a frosty day.**

@notquitenans **happiness is accepting yourself and those around you.**

@seaville...**spotting tiny flowers that everyone else walked past.**

@handmadecooperative **...a big hug!**

@driinkt **Reading a good book and drinking tea after a long, but successful, semester of study! Ahhh, sigh of contentment.**

@lldesigns **knowing I have the power to make others happy too. it's a snow ball effect, spread happiness every where!**

@mgrhandmade **Handmade is happiness. Creating, making, sharing. It's a wonderful community. Buyers with lovely feedback makes me happy & grateful.**

@craftbound **Finishing a craft project you have been working on for a long time.**

@jas\_bric **Sunday x**

@eenyempire **2 minutes to myself is my sort of happiness.**

@greenmayhem **Happiness is getting lost in the moment!**

@tallrabbitgram **Chocolate!**

happiness inspiration...

When in need of a little dose of happiness, I like to visit...



[www.gretchenrubin.com](http://www.gretchenrubin.com)



[www.kikki-k.com/blog](http://www.kikki-k.com/blog)



[www.actionforhappiness.org](http://www.actionforhappiness.org)



[www.tonipowell.me](http://www.tonipowell.me)



THIS PAGE: Llamas Harz & Kronk. OPPOSITE: (background) the stunning view from the porch of Nichelle's home, (right) Nichelle Scholz

# waste not want not

WORDS NICHELLE SCHOLZ | PHOTOGRAPHY TANYA COLLIER

Set atop a hill in the beautiful Marradong countryside, Fox Hill Llamas treads very gently on the earth.





“

The perfect addition to our property was bound to be llamas, with their gentle tread and love of heights.”



Fox Hill Llamas consists of myself (Nichelle), my husband, Trev, our three gorgeous daughters and our enchanting herd of llamas. I am the cause of creative chaos, the maker of our fibre products and handmade papers.

Fox Hill is our property, quietly hidden away in picturesque Marradong Country in the South West of Western Australia. It is a rough and tumble granite hill that has taken its name from the many caves formed by the lay of the granite rock, creating a perfect haven for local foxes. We toyed with the name 'Fox Hill' for some time, undecided as to whether it was the one we wanted. The name was confirmed when, upon completion of the building of our home, we arrived to find a fox observing us from the top of the hill.

The perfect addition to our property was bound to be llamas, with their gentle tread and love of heights. Whilst I have always been delighted at their quiet curiosity and playful nature, I saw so much more in these beautiful animals. Having loved them since I was a child, my wish to find a truly sustainable reason to farm them gave me a great incentive to look beyond their value as companions.

PHOTOGRAPHY TANYA COLLIER

In our first few years of sharing our lives with llamas, we stored our shorn fibre, considering the ways in which it could be really admired and utilised. I wanted the natural beauty of llama to be displayed for many to see, so I began to look for inspiration and knowledge on how to turn my ideas into reality. With ideas multiplying I began the Fox Hill Llamas adventure, making llama fibre items, handmade papers and more.

Creating items with fibre from the animals we have raised is a fun, challenging and dusty process! The individuality of each animal makes me aspire to ensure that all our llama fibre pieces also have this uniqueness, with most pieces being 'one of a kind'. As no two llamas are the same, neither should their fibre creations be the same.

Using the llamas and our beautiful location as inspiration and the source of the materials for my creations is a very rewarding process.

Papermaking has been a part of my life since I was a child. My mother has had many a laundry sink overflow as a result of my paper-making endeavours blocking her drains! I love to use recycled paper and botanicals sourced from our property. It is a wonderful feeling to be able to repurpose a waste material. Llama Poo Paper is a perfect example of this! This was something new and interesting to do, and the result of merging my love of papermaking and the llama products. As a family, we all have a lot of fun with the concept and making of our llama fibre and llama poo paper.

THIS PAGE: Nichelle feeding three of her lovely llamas - Shadow, Henny Penny and Felicia. OPPOSITE: (top left) llama fibre cushions sit on a llama fibre throw, (top right) Nichelle's signature llama fibre vessels, (bottom left) Llama, Geronimo Stilton





## *favourite things about owning a business...*

I love the flexibility. This suits me as a mum because I can reshuffle most things to fit around the needs of my children. I allow myself slower days and more crazy productive ones. My creativity and motivation can vary depending on what is happening in our lives, so I am able to use this to make the most of my time. I also need this flexibility to ensure we can effectively care for our llamas. It's not uncommon to check the animals and find myself taking on further work with them as needed.

Being able to include our girls is another big benefit. Teaching them how to process fibre and make paper is really fun for us all. There are opportunities for them to help me and as they get older, these will grow. Fox Hill Llamas is very much a family business. While I may be the creative and come up with the ideas and products, I couldn't do any of it without my supportive team! The efforts we all put in to raising our llamas and caring for our property now has a visual outcome in the form of our products. This links us all together and is the combination of our hard work and love for our land and animals.

THIS PAGE: Llama, Geronimo Stilton. OPPOSITE: (top right) a new arrival - the adorable Noddy was born just days before our visit, (bottom right) Llama, Fluffinella



### *inspired by...*

My surroundings and animals are inspirational. I like to create with the materials my location provides. Nature provides me endless inspiration in colour, texture and form.

I believe everything has worth, that when something is deemed 'worthless' it is just waiting for someone to think of a way to add value to it. I wish for my children to see that an idea can become a reality. That anything is possible if you commit and are willing to work to achieve it.

Our very first llama was an older male, purchased purely for pleasure as a companion. We were told he was 'worthless' due to his age and his poor fibre quality. Believing that very little is actually worthless, I began to think on what value I could give him and show our girls that worth is something we can create. Over time the ideas slowly built up, and I have tried to use what this llama has given us to bring the most value to him.

Little by little our treasured and aging llama is increasing his worth. His fibre makes bird nesters and felted vessels and paper. His manure makes paper and llama poo tea. The dust from his fibre makes our novelty 'llama enchantment dust'. His photo advertises us and his inspiration has landed me in a place I would never have imagined, even with a very surprising nomination for last year's Australian Etsy Design Awards. Most of all, he has made us and so many others smile, with school trips dressed up in his tassels, birthday parties, street parades and some special moments just for us.

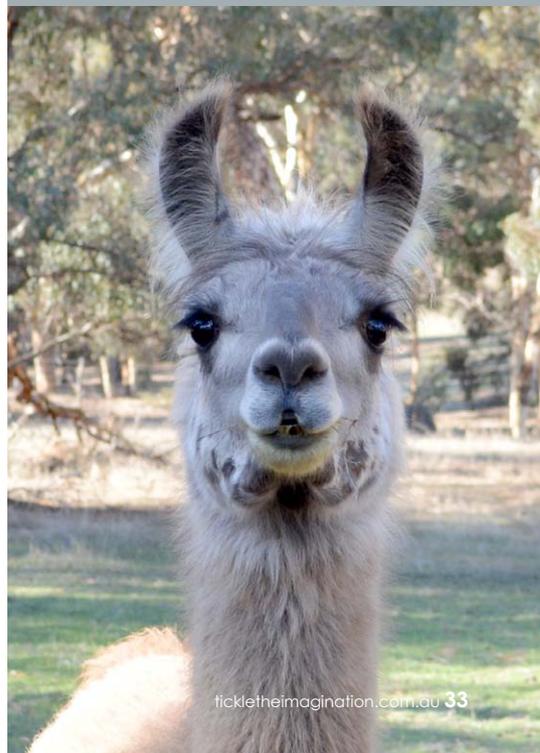
### *favourite people...*

My favourite creative people and businesses would have to be those who encourage and support others. I have received the most overwhelming support from other online sellers and this has been empowering. The people and businesses who enable this will always be my favourite, independent of the products they create. I will always value this support and seek to reciprocate it. It is daunting to put your ideas and creations out there, regardless of your chosen forum. The people who offer encouragement and welcome others into their creative world are invaluable.

I also admire eco-friendly creative people and businesses. It can be difficult to always minimise waste and repurpose, while remaining efficient and cost effective.



I like to create with the materials my location provides. Nature provides me endless inspiration in colour, texture and form.”





## *tools of the trade*

### **llama fibre creations...**

- + Fibre
- + Fibre Tumbler
- + Trough
- + Water and Detergent
- + Picker
- + Carder
- + Brushes, Scissors and Tweezers

There is quite a process to prepare the llama fibre prior to creating.

To collect the fibre, we need to shear our llamas and we do so before summer each year. We do this by haltering them while they stand, and using a shearing handpiece. Trev has become more efficient at this as our herd has grown and provided lots of practice. I'm still very much a learner shearer and super slow, still choosing to practice on only the calmest animal. As we spend much time handling the llamas, shearing is a relatively stress free exercise for them and us. The fibre is skirted and stored until I'm able to use it.



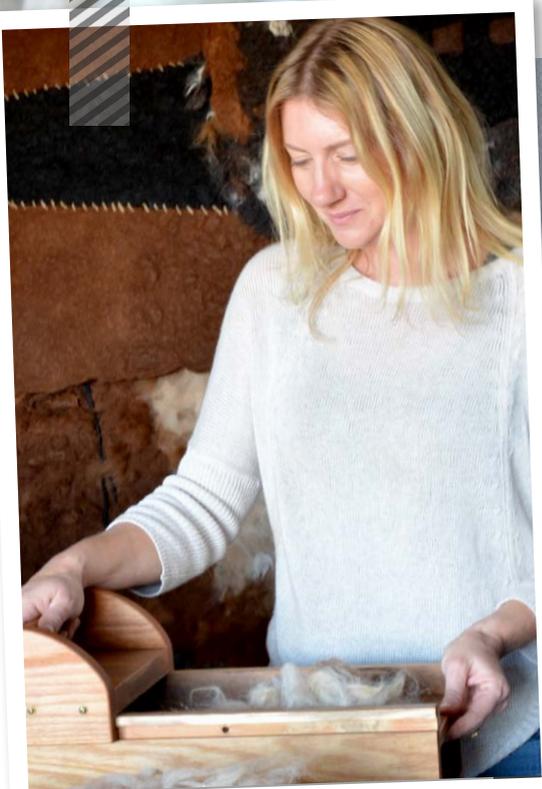
To prepare the fibre, I first use a purpose-built tumbler to remove as much dust and vegetable matter as possible. Llamas love dust baths and this is when I get to have one too! The tumbler turns the fibre over and over in a mesh basket, allowing much of the debris to fall out (top left).

Once tumbling is complete, the fibre is washed and allowed to air dry. I then use a picker to help loosen the fibre so that it can be fed through the carder. The picker is comprised of a mean-looking set of nails that pull the fibre apart. The picker is moved back and forth by hand in order to achieve this (bottom left).

The carder is next, and effectively 'brushes' the fibre (below). Once the fibre is carded, it can be easily handled, and divided into usable portions.

Most of my llama fibre creations are wet-felted, this requires hot water, detergent and lots of friction to turn the fibre into felt. I use a textured surface and a rubbing motion to create the felt.

Once the items are felted, I sometimes use brushes to create a fluffy effect, and I always use tweezers. Tweezers are essential in removing any leftover pieces of debris that have remained in the item. Sometimes there is only a little, other times there is more than I wish to see! Some llamas have a habit of collecting stubborn and challenging debris for me in their adventures.





## *typical week...*

Every day is different. All begin and end with checking social media, email and our online store for questions and sales. I respond to as much as possible before the children wake and prepare for school, as well as throughout the day and before I go to bed.

I spend time working (how is it work?) with the llamas each day.

I create daily. Each week involves fibre processing, papermaking and making llama fibre products. Some weeks will concentrate more on the fibre products, others more on paper.

Orders that need posting are taken to the post office in the afternoon on the way to collect the children from school. I usually squeeze in some inside work between an after school snack, and helping with homework before checking the animals again, then preparing dinner.

Throughout the week, I source any supplies I need, mostly online, then I promote and try to keep up-to-date and learning.

Weather will often determine what is suitable to concentrate on. Sunshine means great paper and fibre drying opportunities. Wind and rain often drive me inside and I save up the jobs suitable for these days.

## **recycled papermaking...**

- + Waste Paper
- + Moulds and Deckles
- + Couching Materials
- + Stick Blender
- + Hollander Beater
- + Vat
- + Heating Equipment
- + Water and Buckets
- + Botanicals and other paper additions

Papermaking is so much fun! It is when I am making paper that my mind is free to entertain all sorts of creative ideas. I use my papermaking time both to reflect and prepare for the day's various activities. What I decide to make on any given day will vary. Sometimes I have orders to make, and other times I am free to make paper of my choice or to experiment. I was making paper when I considered whether I would be brave enough to add the llama manure to it. I have pretty much put anything I can imagine or find into the paper making process, so why not experiment? I love the uniqueness of every piece of paper and the variance of all handmade items.





## *at home...*

Home is my sanctuary. It is the space and even the moments I share with those dearest to me, my husband and our children. It is my escape from the hustle and bustle of everyone else's lives and a safe place to be creative and experiment with my ideas. Our home is often chaotic and often very quiet. I enjoy both, as each moment falls upon the next quickly enough. I require the quietness to be creative, sometimes the chaos for motivation and productivity.



## *lessons learned...*

**begin...** while it is great to learn as much as possible and perfect your product or idea, this can become an endless task and prevent you from actually embarking on the next step. Your product will evolve and grow with you and you can continue to learn along the way.

**get to know your target market.** Your friends are most likely not your target customer. This is really tricky as we often evaluate our creations and ideas based on what our friends and family think of them and allocate worth in this way. The items we create are likely to be very different to the items we consume in our daily lives and this is probably the reason we are drawn to creating them. The consumers of this item can therefore be quite different people to whom we like to voice our ideas and initially showcase our products. It is important to get to know your target market.

**don't assume** to know what others will like. I have often quickly sold the items in my store that I was hesitant to list due to my own ideas of what others will like. Everyone is different and so too are their likes and dislikes.

Try to **be prepared** for the opportunities that have not yet arisen. Having some high resolution photos that you can send off at a minute's notice and a blurb prepared will ensure that you take advantage of that first opportunity and it will encourage you to pursue them.

**surround yourself with support.** This may be in the form of social media, other creative minds, or your friends and family. You will need this support in the form of encouragement. Sometimes the littlest compliment from another creative can make the biggest difference.

**trust your judgement.** Only you know which direction you wish to steer your creative business in. It is easy to get caught up in exciting ideas suggested by others, your instincts will guide you as to what is the best for your brand, ensuring that you continue to be creative in an environment that works for you, in your chosen forums and to your ideal customer.

**find time to disconnect** from your business, especially while you are 'giving it your all' to get it off the ground. This may seem like the worst time to take time out, but it is essential to rest and return refreshed. Often in this time, new ideas will come to you and it enables you a chance to reflect on what you are achieving. Turning off my creativity and tuning out is something I find difficult to do. Working from home does make this a bigger challenge. Remembering to value yourself matters. After all, it is your 'best self' that your business relies on.

THIS PAGE: Nichelle takes us for a tour of her beautiful home, wooden reindeer by local artist. OPPOSITE: gorgeous llama creations collected from around the world adorn every corner of Nichelle's home - painting (bottom left) by Eli Halpin of Austin Texas.



*editor's  
note*

## local goodies

During my visit to photograph this story I was treated to delicious cauliflower soup (made by Nichelle), accompanied by yummy focaccia from Bannister Roadhouse Bakery and this assortment of scrumptious chocolate slices from Little Envy Cafe in Boddington





'Present' - the Scholz's much loved llama of inspiration

### *secret of success...*

For me, success is doing what you enjoy in a sustainable way. I don't know if I have found the secret yet, but I believe that if you can figure out what it is that you love to do and pursue it with passion, integrity and persistence, then success is likely to follow. Be your authentic self, be original, keep learning and follow your dreams regardless of self-doubt.

### *future plans...*

I am going to continue on my mission to share the beauty of llama fibre and handmade papers with as many people as possible. I'm very much looking forward to the adventure ahead. I have many unexplored ideas and much still to create.

---

## **fox hill llamas**

Nichelle Scholz  
Crossman WA  
[www.foxhillllamas.wix.com/foxhill](http://www.foxhillllamas.wix.com/foxhill)  
[www.facebook.com/foxhillllamaswa](https://www.facebook.com/foxhillllamaswa)  
[www.etsy.com/au/shop/FoxHillLlamas](https://www.etsy.com/au/shop/FoxHillLlamas)  
[instagram.com/foxhillllamas](https://instagram.com/foxhillllamas)



**win!**

Fox Hill Llamas are giving tickle readers the chance to win one of 4 prize packs valued at over \$50 each!

Visit the win page at [www.tickletheimagination.com.au](http://www.tickletheimagination.com.au) for details



## Llama or alpaca?

Friendly and curious creatures, llamas and alpacas are often confused, but are in fact quite different!

Here's three ways to spot the difference...

- 1 llamas are much larger than alpacas - adult llamas stand at approximately 1.8m tall, with adult alpacas at 0.9m tall.
- 2 llamas (traditionally bred as pack animals, valued for their strength and endurance) have a rough guard coat to protect their soft undercoat, while alpacas (traditionally bred for their fibre) have a silky single coat.
- 3 llamas have long, banana-shaped ears while alpacas ears are straight.

TOP LEFT Curiosity may be dangerous for cats but Carlos is a llama and he just can't help himself. He's always popping up here and there to say "Hola!", catch up on the latest gossip and steal any muffins he can find (apple cinnamon are his favourite). **Hola Carlos! print** by Core Jewellery, TOP RIGHT Laser cut and handpainted **Alpaca necklaces** by Tall Rabbit, BOTTOM LEFT **Alpaca Garden pillowcase** is screen printed onto 100% cotton with eco-friendly inks in Perth, WA by Eeva Margita, BOTTOM RIGHT Original **llama artwork** by Boddington artist, Sally Skewes

PLEASE VISIT THE DESIGNER AND MAKER DIRECTORY AT THE BACK OF THE MAGAZINE FOR CONTACT DETAILS.





THIS PAGE: Following a recent visit to a Paul Klee exhibition, Annie was inspired to paint a number of Klee-inspired pieces such as this chest of drawers with graduated colour 'What can I say about avant-garde artist Paul Klee except he really knocks my socks off! I'd forgotten how much he has influenced me until a recent visit to the Making Visible Exhibition at Tate Modern, on London's South Bank. So, seeing the Klee show spurred to me to produce new pieces and to think about the nature of colour.'



# chalk paint

BY ANNIE SLOAN

PRODUCT REVIEW BY TANYA COLLIER

Sometimes you come across a product and wonder how you have lived without knowing it existed ... that is exactly how I felt when I discovered Chalk Paint by Annie Sloan!

Annie Sloan is a creative paint guru known worldwide for her inspirational colour, her books (she's sold well over 2 million copies worldwide!), style and inspiration. For many, she is the 'Queen of Paint'.

An Australian by birth and painter by passion, Annie created the Chalk Paint range after her own frustrations while searching for an easy to use range of paints in colours that allowed her creative aesthetic to really come to the fore.

Annie trained as a painter but turned to decorative work and understanding colour after university. In 1987 she wrote the phenomenally successful book *The Complete Book of Decorative Paint Techniques* which was followed by over 20 books on traditional paints, colours and techniques. In 2000, she set up her shop in Oxford, England, to showcase her Chalk Paint, run courses, and offer interior design services using her knowledge about colour.

Twenty years later, her much-loved range includes over thirty colours that rejuvenate, recycle or refashion almost any surface.

You could be forgiven for thinking this paint is used to create chalk boards or contains chalk, however 'Chalk' actually refers to the lovely chalk-like feel of the finished piece.

The thing I love most about Chalk Paint (besides the gorgeous finish) is that it can be applied to almost anything without the need to prepare the surface first. As an avid upcycler who loves to get stuck into a project, this was reason enough to rush out and purchase a few sample pots from my local supplier Little Leaf Co. Having worked in the paint industry myself, I was not convinced it would stick without prepping first, but it really does! The first things I tried it out on were a plastic tray and a tin can, and the paint applied and adhered beautifully, as promised.

To find your nearest stockist, visit [www.anniesloan.com](http://www.anniesloan.com)

**TOP:** Annie Sloan. **MIDDLE:** Chalk Paint in Florence, **BOTTOM:** Annie outside her shop in her home town of Oxford, England





IMAGE: ABIGAIL AND RYAN BELL OF ABIGAIL \*RYAN

# pretty platters

TUTORIAL ABIGAIL AND RYAN BELL OF ABIGAIL\*RYAN

Combine form and function to create  
your own beautiful platters with this  
easy step-by-step project

After seeing the project on creating a 'limed oak look' in Annie Sloan's book *Colour Recipes for Painted Furniture*, Abigail and Ryan were inspired by the possibility of 'transparent colour', and created these beautiful platters! [www.abigailryan.com](http://www.abigailryan.com)

RIGHT: Irish Painters in Residence Abigail and Ryan Bell with Annie Sloan



# you will need...

- + air dry clay
- + Chalk Paint
- + soft wax
- + bristle brush
- + linen
- + rolling pin
- + baking paper
- + craft knife
- + plate/bowl for mould
- + rags



## air dry clay

we've used Crayola air dry clay. A fine, natural earth clay that is non toxic and perfect for working with children.



## bristle brush

a quality brush makes painting a delight. The natural bristles and short handle are perfect for working the tinted wax into the texture of your platter.

## linen

or other textured surface. You will be using this to imprint a texture into the clay...there are lots of alternatives such as doilies, timber or flywire.



## soft wax + chalk paint

combined, these two products create a lovely translucent colour that can be applied to highlight the texture of your platter. Combine 3 teaspoons of soft wax with 1 teaspoon of Chalk Paint.

Find your nearest stockist at [www.anniesloan.com](http://www.anniesloan.com)



IMAGE: ABIGAIL AND RYAN BELL OF ABIGAIL\*RYAN

## experiment

Create any shape you can imagine and experiment with leaving the edges raw or trimming them for a smooth finish.



### step 1

Using a rolling pin, roll the air dry clay onto baking paper until 3 - 4mm thick.



### step 2

Leave the edges natural or use a craft knife to cut out the shape you would like. Set aside excess clay.



### step 3

Place linen over your platter and roll it into the clay to imprint a texture. Remove the linen.



### step 4

Leave your platter to dry thoroughly - this may take several days depending on the weather. If you would like a lip on your platter, leave it to dry on a plate or bowl.



### step 5

Mix a teaspoon of Chalk Paint with approximately 3 teaspoons of Soft Wax apply - rub, scrub and paint onto your platter to highlight the texture.



### step 6

A few days later, buff the surface using a soft rag to create a sheen.

# Win!

## WIN a fabulous Annie Sloan pack, valued at over \$200!

Thanks to the lovely folk at Annie Sloan, one lucky tickle reader will win an Annie Sloan prize pack which includes ... a Chalk Paint® Litre, 2 x Chalk Paint® Sample Pots, Soft Clear Wax, Small Annie Sloan Brush & Annie Sloan Quick & Easy Paint Transformations. **Valued at over \$200!** Visit the win page at [www.tickletheimagination.com.au](http://www.tickletheimagination.com.au) for entry details.



IMAGE: ABIGAIL AND RYAN BELL OF ABIGAIL\*RYAN

## *delicious colours*

Abigail & Ryan used Annie Sloan's chalk paint in Old Violet, Antoinette and Emperor's Silk to colour their platters.



# a place for everything

and everything in its place

---

WORDS **ROBYN AMOTT** OF BLESS THIS MESS | STYLING & PHOTOGRAPHY **TANYA COLLIER**

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It may be a little cliché but when it comes to keeping your home or workspace organised, these words really do ring true. If you're anything like me, your craft stash is spread throughout your home and whenever you need something in particular, you can't quite remember the 'special' place you tucked it away last.

Creative and organised aren't two words usually used in the same sentence, but our favourite professional organiser Robyn Amott from Bless this Mess has some tips to get you started on the journey to curb your creative chaos.

Feeling overwhelmed by our spaces, whilst also attempting to manage all the incoming aspects of our daily life, is something we can all relate to.

We all dream of clear spaces, and by doing so, we also clear our minds and the sense of burden we wear on our shoulders.

Knowing where to start and how to maintain your spaces for the long haul is a great place to start.

OPPOSITE: **bookshelf** and **drawers** Ikea, **storage boxes**, **marker storage**, **magazine holders**, **shadow box** and **stationery organiser** created using ready-to-assemble kits from the Kaisercraft 'beyond the page' range, **Everyday I love you print** Wisteria Paper, **pink dot wrap** Big W, **Florence Broadhurst wallpapers** signature prints

Please visit the **designer and maker directory** at the end of the magazine for **contact details**

The first mistake we all make in organising is putting it off and looking at a room or space and thinking to ourselves - I need to tidy this up, or I'll get to that later. Organising, cleaning and tidying are all very different things.

Later is now! – The longer you leave it, the bigger that pile will grow.

So start today. It's only natural to feel overwhelmed when we think of it as one big job ... an entire space is often too much to take into account.

I therefore recommend you break it down. Start small.

## 5 steps to curb your creative chaos...

**1.** Take a look around all the spaces in your home, **observe the category of items that are most out of place.**

This category clearly identifies the room that's most in need of your attention. For the purpose of this exercise, we are going to assume it's craft supplies!

**2.** **Make a plan by setting limits in terms of space allocation.** Do you have a space dedicated to craft supplies? Perhaps a study or a linen press? Maybe a single cupboard under your bench in your kitchen? Think about how much space can you realistically allocate to your craft supplies.

**3.** Sort and **group like with like.** To get started, think about how your favourite craft store groups their products - crochet and knitting supplies, scrapbooking, painting supplies, fabrics, haberdashery and so on.

Grouping items of the same nature together can help you understand just how much you have of each of these categories. And your available storage space provides you with your limit.

◀ OPPOSITE: **pegboard and hooks** Bunnings, **paints** Kaisergraf, **paint swatches** Porters Paints, **assorted craft supplies** stylist's own

**Please visit the designer and maker directory at the end of the magazine for contact details**



## Need more storage space?

Don't forget to consider your walls for craft storage. Peg boards have been used in garages for decades, but they are equally effective for your craft supplies!

Having everything on display makes it easy to find things in an instant, and just looking at all those lovely supplies will inspire you to create.

You can find pegboards and hooks at your local salvage yard or hardware store.

## divide and conquer...

We creatives have lots of bits and pieces, so using storage designed for the job makes sense. This 'captured memories storage' from Kaisercraft has lovely deep drawers perfect for sorting and storing things like glitter and glue, and the larger drawers are perfect for your glue gun and paper punches. Adding a label to the drawer means you know where to find everything in an instant (and also where to put it back!). We've created these labels using custom-cut adhesive vinyl. You could achieve a similar look by hand-painting the words.



4.

**Declutter** – it's the key to effective organisation within every room of our home. Remove all items that you no longer need, use, have a purpose for or simply exceed the limits you have set out/your space allows for.



Before you have a panic attack...I'm pretty sure I know what you're going to say. The mere thought of letting go of any of your craft supplies fills you with terror! BUT, unless you have unlimited space, it really is a necessary evil. So ... take a deep breath and consider donating your surplus supplies to a local school or charity - it makes dealing with the loss that much easier knowing you are helping someone else. To get started, look for double-ups - these should be easy to let go of. Next, look for items you haven't touched in over a year. If you simply can't let go, the alternative is to look at creating more storage space.

5.

With your plan in mind – put the items you've sorted in their newly allocated home.

*almost there,  
well done!*

This process can be applied to other categories such as paperwork or clothing, and before you know it, your entire home will be organised!

Working on one category at a time often makes it easier for our minds to focus and maintain our vision for the end result. Sorting too many categories in an overloaded space – without having a home in which to relocate them, will often leave you more overwhelmed than when you started. It will also quickly see you putting it off until yet another day.

OPPOSITE: **Calendar**, **Captured memories storage**, **Polka dot handles** (created using scrapbooking paper), and **Magazine holder** (painted black and lined with 'girlfriend' paper) - all by Kaisercraft. Visit [www.kaisercraft.com.au](http://www.kaisercraft.com.au) for your nearest stockist.

Please visit the designer and maker directory at the end of the magazine for contact details

It takes time to effectively organise your home, not just a weekend, but the results are well worth the time you invest.

The routines and systems we have around the stuff we allow into our home on a daily basis, are just as important in ensuring we maintain that balance over time.

## quick tips to keep your space organised...

- \* **One in one out** – for everything new that comes into the home, something old has to go.
- \* **Unsubscribe** from anything that is no longer relevant. Stop it entering your home in the first place.
- \* **Establish a daily system** with your incoming mail (physical or digital) and action it immediately.
- \* **Put everything back** where it belongs as soon as you're finished with it.

### *Bless This Mess*

offers solutions that will increase the energy flow within your home

Whilst providing you with the hands on motivation you need to put it all into place, and maintain it.

Contact Robyn Amott – 0407 757 466 or [robyn@blessthemess.com.au](mailto:robyn@blessthemess.com.au) - for further information

[www.blessthemess.com.au](http://www.blessthemess.com.au)

THIS PAGE & OPPOSITE: **pegboard and hooks** Bunnings, **table & drawers** Ikea, **paint swatches** Porters Paints, **Paints, Calendar, Captured memories storage, Polka dot handles** (created using scrapbooking paper), and **Magazine holder** (painted black and lined with 'girlfriend' paper) - all by Kaisercraft, **assorted craft supplies** stylist's own

Please visit the designer and maker directory at the end of the magazine for contact details





Calendar grid with days of the week: Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and a blank space for 'Afterschool'.

stamps  
glitter  
glue  
punches  
glue gun

# storage solutions

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY TANYA COLLIER

We've teamed up with the lovely folk at Kaisercraft to create a collection of storage pieces. Their extensive range of ready-to-assemble storage solutions, papers and paints makes it easy to create one-of-a-kind pieces that are perfect for your creative space.



**\* supplies...** We've used a selection of papers from the Kaisercraft 'Oh So Lovely' collection for the projects in this story. The MDF boxes are also from the Kaisercraft range. Not only is their 'beyond the page' collection perfect for all kinds of craft storage, we especially love that they are made in Australia!

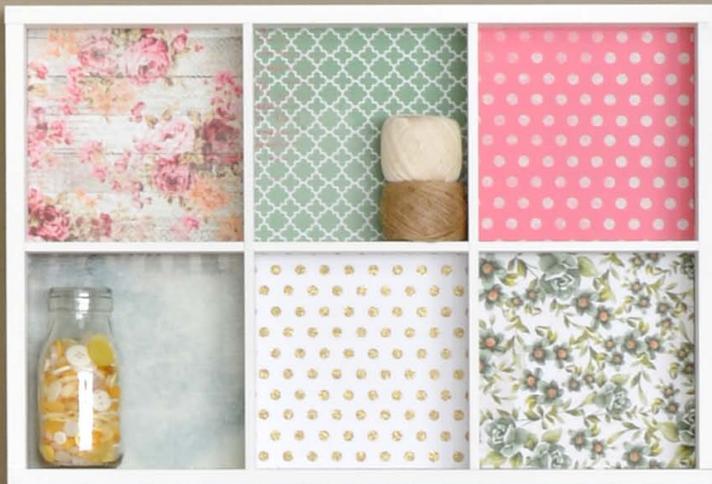


## paper-covered storage

you will need...

- + ready-to-assemble kit from Kaisercraft - on this page we've used the scrapping organiser and multipurpose box
- + acrylic sealer undercoat
- + mini roller and tray
- + acrylic paints
- + paint brushes
- + patterned paper
- + wood glue or white craft glue
- + craft knife

1. paint the pieces of your box with a coat of acrylic sealer undercoat followed by two coats of acrylic paint, allowing to dry between each coat.
2. Assemble the storage box using wood glue or white craft glue.
3. Place the storage box onto the reverse side of your patterned paper and trace around each side of the box.
4. Add 1cm around your template for the side panels - this allows you to glue the paper around the corners for a neat finish.
5. Cut out your pieces and glue the paper to the side panels first, wrapping the excess around the front and back. Then glue the front and back panel on.
6. Where necessary, tidy the edges with a craft knife.



Wall mounted storage make the best use of space and these shadow box shelves are not just pretty to look at, but also perfect for storing crafty bits and bobs. To hang the shadow box we've used 3M Command strips.

THIS PAGE & OPPOSITE: **shadow box** and **captured moments storage** created using ready-to-assemble kits from the Kaisercraft 'beyond the page' and 'Oh So Lovely' paper range, **Everyday I love you print** Wisteria Paper.

Please visit the designer and maker directory at the end of the magazine for contact details



## shadow box

you will need...

- + MDF shadow box
- + acrylic sealer undercoat
- + white acrylic paint
- + mini roller and tray
- + patterned paper
- + craft knife
- + paper glue
- + wood glue or white craft glue

1. Loosely assemble the box and mark out the sections on the backing board.
2. Unassemble, then apply an undercoat and two coats of paint in white to the front frames of the box. Set aside and allow to dry.
3. Measure the sections on the backing board and cut patterned paper to size. Use paper glue to adhere this to the backing board.
4. Assemble the shadow box using wood glue and allow to dry thoroughly before hanging



## paper garland

you will need...

- + patterned paper - scrapbooking paper is perfect for this as it is printed on both sides
- + round punch
- + sewing machine and thread

1. Punch circles from the patterned paper.
2. Using your sewing machine, stitch through the middle of each paper circle leaving a small length of thread between each one.
3. Continue until your garland is the length you would like it.

## Painted jars

### you will need...

- + glass jar or bottle
- + masking tape
- + scrap paper
- + gold spray paint - we've used Dulux Duramax Bright Finish in gold
- + large cardboard box 'spray booth'

1. Clean and thoroughly dry your jar.
2. Place masking tape on the outside of your jar - just above the position you would like to apply the gold.

3. Mask-off the top of the jar using more tape and paper, leaving a spot to insert your hand, as this will be the easiest way to hold it while painting.
4. Find a well-ventilated space and set up your 'spray booth'. Shake the spray paint as instructed on the can and apply spray paint in light, even coats, working your way around the jar.
5. Once dry, your jar is ready to use! Fill it with craft supplies or a pretty posy of flowers.





# little village

WORDS JO RUTGERS PHOTOGRAPHY SIMON RUTGERS

## *meet Jo...*

I've always been a creative type. As a child I would make May Gibbs-inspired jewellery out of Fimo for my nan to sell to her friends. I was happy when I was crafting, it didn't really matter what it was. I ended up becoming an Early Childhood teacher but after having my own kids I really felt inspired to design and make something for children. I've never been good at following a pattern so making clothes was out of the question. After experimenting with appliqué and fabric combinations, my house cushion design was born and the name 'little village' seemed like the perfect fit. It became 'little village handmade' after my domain name was taken one week before I registered it (so frustrating!). Five years later, and this little business has become more than I ever expected it to become.



## *what does 'home' mean for you?*

My husband and I are in the process of building, so my parents house is 'home' for us at the moment. I'm surrounded by my family so I feel very much at home here but I really can't wait to have a space where we can create our own home - a space filled with the people I love and beautiful things that make me happy.

## *tools of the trade...*

I mainly use my sewing machine but I also do quite a bit of hand stitching. In terms of fabrics, I love natural fibres. I can't resist linen and Liberty of London fabrics, with a few vintage bits and pieces thrown in. And when I can't find the perfect fabric, I just hand dye or paint it myself.

## *inspired by...*

I love home magazines and Instagram. Seeing how people decorate their spaces, use colour and combine textures is always inspiring. Browsing through fabric stores and vintage shops usually leads to some exciting idea that I add to my ever-growing list of 'things to make'. Sometimes one particular fabric or trim inspires a whole collection of cushions.

I don't often experience creative blocks but sometimes I can sit for hours trying to decide which trim to add to a cushion or what fabric to use for the bunnies' cape. If it doesn't feel right, then I can't go through with it. It might mean shopping around or searching online until I find the exact thing I need.









## *favourite people...*

I have a long list of favourite creatives that I follow on Instagram but some of the standouts would include children's stylist Jacinda Malloy from 'Hide & Sleep'. I love her taste and she finds the best products for kids. Artist and Illustrator Emma from 'Pax & Hart', who draws amazing dreamlike children's prints. I'm in awe of Sibella Court's gypsy bowerbird style. It's so timeless and reminds me of how I used to love collecting things as a child. And Jenni from 'cloth & thread' who makes whimsical cloth animals and creates wonderful costumes for them to wear.

## *other creative passions...*

I really enjoy decorating, styling and photography. I style and photograph all the photo shoots for my business. I'm not an expert but I think if you enjoy something, you can make it happen. I'd love to study interior styling or fabric design one day, perhaps when I retire! I'm also clueless when it comes to camera gear but thank goodness my husband is a great photographer and can help me with camera settings and lenses.

## *typical week...*

Generally, my business needs to fit around the kids. This means there are days where I hardly have time to sit behind the sewing machine. But there are also times when I have deadlines and that means staying at home and getting out the trusty iPad for 'quiet times' so mummy can sew like a mad woman.

I generally set monthly goals rather than weekly goals as I can often spend a week in the design/sourcing phase and then a week in the cutting out phase, etc. I usually begin the month by writing out plan of what I need to achieve, whether that includes restocking current designs, designing a new range or filling stockists orders. I begin by cutting out everything I need to complete for that month. Then I do all the appliqué and machine work, followed by hand stitching and finally cutting out all the backings and stitching up the cushions. Then I need to take photos, make listings or send out invoices, package for post and do post runs. Hopefully all is completed by the end of the month!



## *lessons learned...*

Maintaining a presence on social media is really important. It gives a business the opportunity to visually present itself to the world. I've learnt to keep that in mind when posting photos. Collaborations are great! I've been lucky enough to do a couple of collaborations with some great designers. It's the perfect way to meet like-minded people, and often leads to other opportunities.

## *favourite things* about owning a business . . .

Being able to take the images inside my head and make them a reality is very rewarding for me. I love getting emails from customers who are over the moon about their cushions. Plus I get to play around with beautiful fabrics and trims. It doesn't get much better than that!

## *future plans...*

At the moment, I can't seem to make enough house cushions, they are snapped up as soon as I list them, so they will keep coming. I'd also love to do something more for the boys. At the moment, the girls get all the good stuff. I'd like to make some totally new cushion designs and perhaps take on some more international stockists. It all takes time!

---

## **little village handmade**

Jo Rutgers

[www.littlevillagehandmade.com.au](http://www.littlevillagehandmade.com.au)

Blog: <http://littlevillagehandmade.blogspot.com.au>

[facebook.com/littlevillagehandmade](https://facebook.com/littlevillagehandmade)

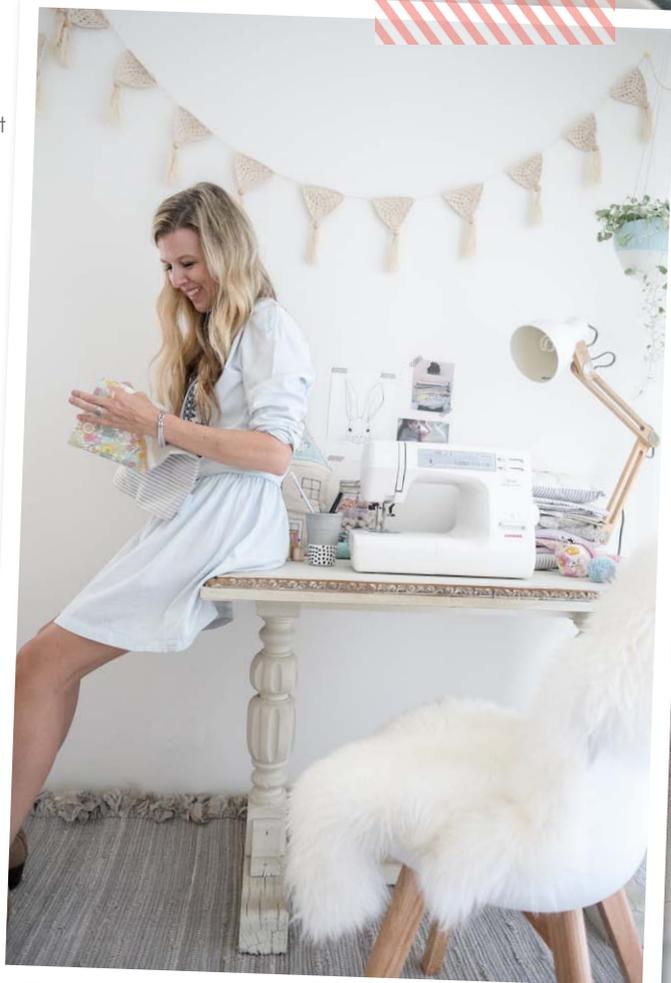
[instagram.com/littlevillagehandmade/](https://instagram.com/littlevillagehandmade/)

[www.pinterest.com/littlevillage/](https://www.pinterest.com/littlevillage/)

Sydney

## *secret of success...*

Success is doing what you love every day. If you can wake up every day and feel thankful for the life you have, then you've made it. My business certainly doesn't make me rich financially (far from it) but work wise, I've never been happier than I am now. If I could do this kind of work for the rest of my life, I'd be very thankful.



## shadow box

available in a range of colours, these lovely house shaped shadow boxes make perfect shelves for childrens spaces. Available from Little Mai [facebook.com/littlemaishop](https://facebook.com/littlemaishop)



home

sweet

home

A collection of handcrafted, house-shaped creations

COMPILED BY **TANYA COLLIER**



## little village

Made from high quality linen and Liberty of London fabrics. little village handmade cushions feature hand stitched details. Approx 42cm x 24cm, each cushion is handmade and one of a kind.

[littlevillagehandmade.com.au](http://littlevillagehandmade.com.au)

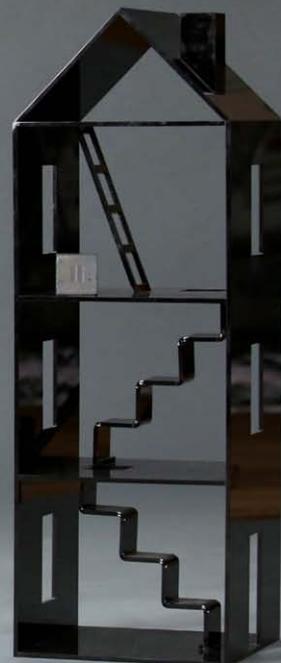
## noir house

For all the monochrome lovers out there! Mint Rhapsody took inspiration from the Benelux region in creating this gorgeous statement piece.

The house comes as one solid piece and is made from opaque black acrylic.

[mintrhapsody.com.au](http://mintrhapsody.com.au)

And super cute pj's by Sunday - [sundaythelabel.com](http://sundaythelabel.com)





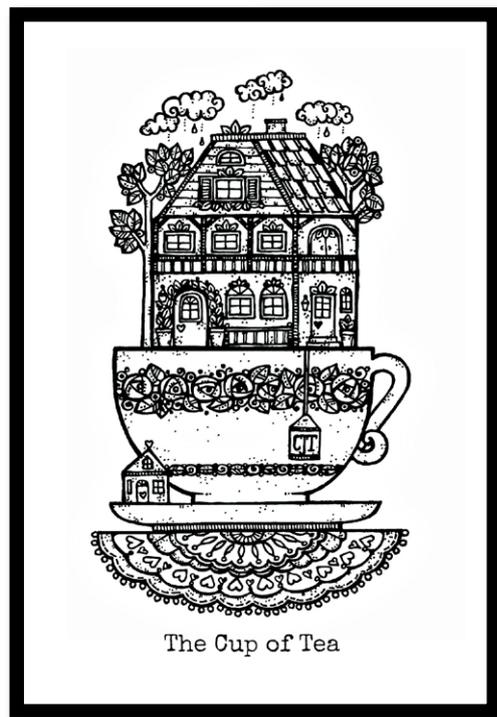
all in a row

Five hand cut paper houses join to create a pretty garland, perfect for a playroom or bedroom. Created by Little Glitter Co. in Perth. Find them at [etsy.com/au/shop/LittleGlitterCo](http://etsy.com/au/shop/LittleGlitterCo)



house in a teacup

Add a touch of whimsy to your space with this adorable artwork - 'The Cup of Tea' is the second in a series of whimsical hand-drawn Pen & Ink illustrations from the Studio of Curly Jo. [madeit.com.au/curlyjodesign](http://madeit.com.au/curlyjodesign)



The Cup of Tea

time flies...

Handcrafted in Perth, Western Australia, every funkydory clock is unique. Artist, Jacq Chorlton can also create custom clocks to suit your space. [www.funkydory.com.au](http://www.funkydory.com.au)

collagraph...

Entitled 'This is a strange world, where I saw the joy of your smile for the first time' This unique collagraph is inspired by Montmartre, one of artist Magali Dincher's favourite places in Paris, where the "Sacre Coeur" overlooks the whole city. Printed by hand with etching ink, and hand coloured with watercolour. Find it at [beauestmien.com.au](http://beauestmien.com.au)



house shelf

Made to order, Mox Kid's house shaped shadow boxes comes as natural ply on the outside with a painted interior and painted front edge. Cute! [etsy.com/au/shop/MoxKids](http://etsy.com/au/shop/MoxKids)





Win!  
a 12 month  
subscription to  
the makers  
mailer!  
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Visit the win page at  
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for entry details



# Lovely little things in your letterbox

Instant pick-me-ups surely don't come any sweeter than receiving a monthly surprise package in your letterbox. The Makers Mailer celebrates this joy, offering a subscription-based service for busy women, lovingly selecting and delivering beautifully made homewares, accessories and stationery to letterboxes.

The Maker's Mailer subscription is just \$30 a month plus delivery, and subscribers are invited to tailor their own commitment, from a one-off sign up to a 12 month subscription.

The Maker's Mailer sources its unique gifts from Australian craftspeople and artists, keeping each month's selection a surprise until the parcel is delivered. From exquisite pieces of handmade jewellery, to screen-printed homewares and ceramics.

Creator Fi Footit developed The Maker's Mailer in recognition that women have become increasingly time poor when it comes to rewarding and treating themselves. With a background in pattern and trend forecasting, Fi demonstrates an uncanny ability to carefully select items that are beautifully made, on trend and a little bit different from pieces you see in the stores.

'All of our gifts are created by small independent artists and makers,' says Fi, 'and each month, a maker is selected and we purchase a piece to send to our subscribers.' Often the pieces are commissioned so they are one-off originals. The works are posted with a small tailored biography about each artist, in the hope that the subscribers will share these unique hand-crafted businesses with friends, and continue to support the makers that are showcased.

'I love connecting with each and every maker on behalf of our subscribers,' says Fi, 'it's so satisfying to support such creative industries, and to help busy women also make that connection when their letterbox reveals our latest creative discovery.'

It's the surprise element of The Maker's Mailer which tickles not just Fi's fancy, but also her subscribers.

[www.themakersmailer.com.au](http://www.themakersmailer.com.au)

instagram: @themakersmailer

Fi Footit - creator of  
The Makers Mailer →





## before you begin...

If you are hanging your shelves on a plasterboard wall, bear in mind the positioning of your studs as this may determine the spacing of your leather straps

# *how to make* **leather strap shelves**

TUTORIAL **REBECCA & ADAM FOGARTY** OF HAMMERED LEATHERWORKS | PHOTOGRAPHY **TANYA COLLIER**

Simple, natural and stylish, leather strap shelves are perfect for any space.



## you will need...

- + 2 x dressed timber planks for shelves - 235mm x 30mm x 700mm long
- + 2 x 1200mm leather straps or belts
- + 12 x galvanised nails
- + fixings and screws to attach your shelf to the wall

## tools...

- + hammer
- + tape measure
- + right angle or ruler
- + pliers
- + blocks of wood for spacing





**1.** Mark the positions for your straps onto each shelf. Our shelves are 700mm long and we've marked a spot 140mm in from each end.



**2.** Using a right angle (or ruler) and the strap positions you've just marked, rule a line on the width of the base and sides of your bottom shelf, and sides only on your top shelf.



**3.** Take one piece of leather strapping and fold it to find the centre point. Place this (right side facing up) onto the base of the first shelf, with centres matching. Hammer a nail into the centre.



**4.** Hammer an additional two nails, evenly spaced, to secure the leather strap to the base of the shelf.



**5.** Repeat steps 3 & 4 at the other end of the shelf.



**6.** Turn the shelf onto its side and fold strapping around, keeping it aligned to the inside of the line you marked earlier, and hammer in a nail to secure. Repeat at other end.



**7.** Turn the shelf over so the other edge is facing up and hammer another nail so that you now have a total of five nails securing each leather strap to each end of your bottom shelf.



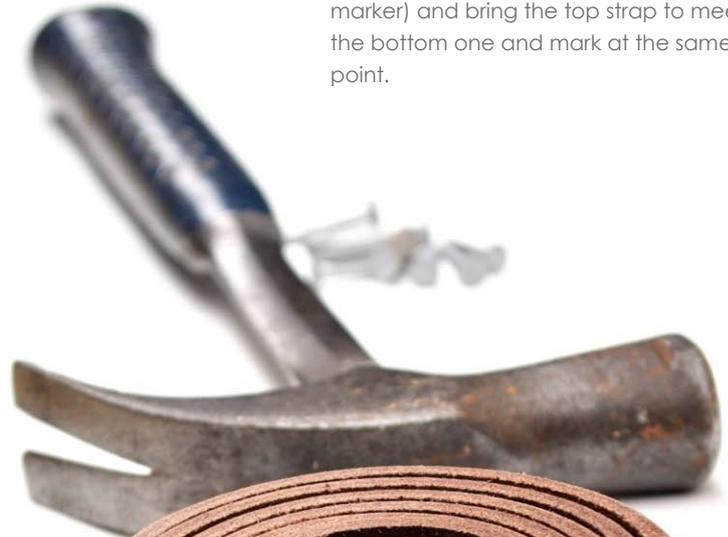
**8.** Use blocks or books to ensure equal spacing at both ends. We've spaced ours approximately 200mm apart. Hammer a nail in to secure the leather strap to the top shelf on both the front and back edge.



**9.** Working on one end at a time, measure and mark a hanging point on the straps. Keeping the bottom strap taut and flat on the worktop, mark a point 200mm up from the top shelf. Keep the ruler in place (or use a paper marker) and bring the top strap to meet the bottom one and mark at the same point.



**10.** Nail or drill a hole through the centre of each strap at the marked hanging point.



Hammered Leatherworks are offering leather straps just for tickle readers!  
Visit their website for details...  
[hammeredleatherworks.com.au](http://hammeredleatherworks.com.au)



## bricks or plasterboard?

The fixings you need will depend on how your wall has been constructed, and in turn will determine the load your shelves can hold. Speak to your local hardware store to ensure you select the appropriate fixings.

THIS PAGE **Cloud trinket tray** by Urban Cartel, vase and books stylists own.

Do it yourself leathergoods  
EVERYTHING IS IN THE BOX  
Kits starting at \$29



11. Finish the ends of the leather straps neatly with a craft knife or scissors.



12. Time to hang your shelves!  
Drill holes and apply fixings to your wall to match the positions of your straps. Find a friend to hold the shelves while you screw the leather straps to the wall.

*Stand back and  
admire your work...  
now you can start  
decorating!*

For a great range of DIY leatherwork kits and supplies, visit Hammered Leatherworks online at [hammeredleatherworks.com.au](http://hammeredleatherworks.com.au)



*Purses  
Wallets  
Pouches  
Satchels  
& Totes*

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THIS PAGE: (left) Owner and the face behind Nature's Forge, Anita Baills showcasing a collection of her creations (image courtesy of Matilda Beezley Photography), (below) Sunset moth cufflinks, (bottom right) Anita works on a Thai Jewel beetle creation, (bottom left) Sunset moth wing necklace.

OPPOSITE: Caper White Butterfly beautifully preserved in a glass dome.



ethically

sourced

All insects that Nature's Forge use are ethically obtained from insect farms once they have lived their full lifespan. Breeders possess all the necessary environmental licenses. No protected or CITES species are used.

All reptile sheds are obtained from registered owners and are sourced and produced in accordance with environmental regulations.



5 minutes with...

# nature's forge

WORDS ANITA BAILS

I believe most people have at least one defining moment in their life. A moment that either breaks them completely... or one that changes them forever. Where they emerge from that dark cocoon stronger and more resilient than ever before. I believe that those dark moments can transform us and change us into something truly beautiful. My journey into jewellery making came from such a place.

In early 2009, I experienced my darkest moment. At the time I had two young children aged 3 and 1. I was suffering daily, chronic, debilitating pain from various health conditions (along with depression and anxiety attacks) and was grieving the loss of my mum who had passed away at the end of 2008. At a time when I most wanted to ask my mum all those questions you have as a new mother, to share with her the precious highs and the deep lows, I only had a void. During that time, I was unable to complete the simplest of tasks, as my mobility was severely restricted, so I picked up a jewellery-making kit I had received for Christmas from my mother-in-law. Jewellery making soon became the highlight in those dark days and I began to receive compliments and encouragement from some of the ladies at my church. I began to scour the online world for supplies and techniques to grow my new found passion. It quickly became apparent to me why they ask at pain clinics "Do you have a hobby?". Jewellery making helped distract me from my pain and was one of the things that helped me cope. While the road since then has not always been an easy one, and I still struggle with my health (thankfully it is much more under control these days), I believe those dark times helped to strengthen me and made me want to create beauty rather than dwell on the darkness. Looking back, I am grateful for that period in my life, without which I would not have discovered my new world of jewellery making.

## what inspires your style and your designs?

Most of my designs are inspired by nature and I utilise real items from nature in much of my work. The work I do with real butterfly wings, in particular, has a very special meaning for me, not just because of their symbol of transformation. Butterflies have played a part in some of the big moments in my life. When I was married in 2003, my husband and I released butterflies for every month we had been together. One of those butterflies stayed with me on my bouquet for most of the day, only flying away at the end of the photo session. But the most special moment with butterflies was at my mother's funeral. I had ordered five butterflies (one to symbolise each of her children) to release at the graveside service. Upon release, a sixth butterfly, with a broken wing, fluttered out and flew under the casket. Later in the service, as the casket was slowly lowered, it fluttered out from underneath and flew off into the sky. It was such a fitting symbol of Mum's broken body and her new life in heaven.

## what is your favourite part of the design process?

What I love most about designing and creating is that there are no limits. My mind can wander wherever it will and I can dream up new ideas and creations. I especially love recycling or preserving items and giving them a second life in my work, finding ways to highlight their beauty and incorporate it into my work.

## what have been your greatest challenges in growing a creative business?

The greatest challenge to a creative business, I believe, is yourself. So often artisans undervalue either their work or themselves and belittle the work they do. As our products are so intertwined with who we are, as they are an expression of our creative side, we often struggle to speak the praises of them for fear of sounding too proud. The second greatest challenge is time! When we are required to be the accountant, purchaser, photographer, designer, marketing manager, receptionist and artist, it can be very difficult to get all the things done that we want to. It can also take days or weeks just to find the right supplies.

## what have been the greatest successes in your businesses?

I am most proud of the successes I have had with the butterfly wing and snake shed products. Both ranges required me to do so much research and product-testing as well as vast amounts of communication with the Department of Environment to check what restrictions and licensing were associated with the work. It took me many months to work out how to seal the butterfly wings prior to resin work, as the natural colours simply drowned out if I applied the resin directly to the wing and it was a process I had to constantly refine. The snake shed had similar difficulties as I quickly learned there was a right and a wrong side to the sheds, and I needed to dye the correct side for the best result. I also had to carefully apply the dye or I would tear the delicate sheds.

## do you have a dream creative project?

I would love to make homewares from butterfly, insect and snake fragments. At the moment I'm trialling some techniques to make drawer knobs with the wing inset at the front of the piece. If for no other reason than to put a rainbow of natural beauty on my own chest of drawers at home.

## what makes a house a home?

A home is the place where you can be free to be you and share that place with the ones dearest to you! No restrictions, no apologies, no hiding how you really feel that day, to be open and vulnerable and most of all loved! I am blessed to have a wonderful family who are supportive and encouraging in all I do. My husband, in particular, has helped carry me through all that life has thrown at us, and he encourages my creativity despite the associated creative mess that usually occupies our house as a result.



visit *Nature's Forge*...

[www.naturesforge.com.au](http://www.naturesforge.com.au)

[www.facebook.com/naturesforge](https://www.facebook.com/naturesforge)

[info@naturesforge.com.au](mailto:info@naturesforge.com.au)

phone: 0408 878633

# *triple chocolate* **meringue tart**

---

RECIPE & PHOTOGRAPHY LINDA VANDERMEER | BUBBLE & SWEET

---

When the weather turns cold, I like to snuggle up inside with warm, hearty food and decadent desserts. With a layer of crisp chocolate pastry base, a smooth chocolate filling, rich ganache and a creamy meringue topping, this triple chocolate meringue tart fits the bill perfectly.



It sounds substantial and it is. With numerous layers to create separately, I suggest making the tart - up to the chocolate ganache layer - up to two days ahead, topping with the meringue up to three hours before serving and caramelising at the last minute.

Alternatively you can opt for a simpler tart and omit both the chocolate ganache and meringue layers to make a classic baked chocolate tart, finished with a little sifted cocoa and served with cream. Or you can omit just the meringue layer and have the chocolate base, filling and ganache, for a lovely elegant layered dessert.

Cheats shortcut - Save time by buying pre-made chocolate pastry. Careme makes a great quality chocolate pastry which is available from many delis and some IGA stores, or you can use regular shortcrust pastry from a supermarket.

Makes one 35cm X 13 cm tart, giving 12 large slices (approx 3cm X 10cm) or 24 smaller slices (3cm X 5cm). Keep in an airtight container in fridge for up to three days from commencement of baking. Best served immediately after the meringue has been caramelised.

## chocolate tart base

This dough is quite dry and may crack a little while rolling, but don't worry, just press the dough back together with your fingertips and keep going.

### ingredients...

- + 45g icing sugar
- + 125g unsalted butter, cold in 1cm cubes
- + 200g plain flour
- + 30g cocoa
- + 1 large egg yolk

### tools...

- + 35cm X 13cm tart tin
- + baking paper
- + ceramic weights



## gluten-free option

Use a premade gluten free shortcrust pastry from the freezer section of the supermarket to make the tart base then follow the rest of the recipe.

### directions...

1. Place icing sugar and butter in bowl of blender and blend for 30 seconds. Add the flour and cocoa and blend for another 30 seconds. Add the egg yolk and blend for 1 - 2 minutes, scraping down as necessary until the mixture darkens and resembles coarse sand. Tip the mixture onto a work bench and knead it until it comes together and forms a dough. There may be some dry mixture when you first tip it out but just knead it and it will come together.
2. Shape dough into a rectangle, wrap in plastic wrap and place in fridge for 30 minutes.
3. Remove dough from fridge and roll out in an approximate rectangle shape 45cm X 23cm and 3mm thick. Carefully roll the dough around the rolling pin to lift it and centre it over the tart tin.
4. Press the dough into the tin and remove any excess from around the top of the tin. Use a fork to pop holes into the base.
5. Place in fridge and rest for 30 minutes.
6. Preheat oven to 170°C (fan forced).
7. Line tart base with baking paper and fill with ceramic weights then blind bake for 10 minutes. Remove weights and baking paper, and bake for a further 5 minutes.
8. Remove from oven and set aside.



### *ingredients...*

- + 300g dark chocolate cut into small pieces
- + 180g cream
- + 80g milk
- + 2 large egg yolks

### *directions...*

1. Reduce oven to 130°C.
2. Place chocolate, cream and milk in a microwave-safe bowl, mix with a spoon to coat chocolate and heat at high for 1 minute. Whisk for 30 seconds until smooth. If all of the chocolate has not melted, heat for a further 30 seconds if necessary.
3. Allow mixture to cool for a few minutes and then whisk in the egg yolks.
4. Pour mixture into prepared tart base and cook in preheated oven for 35 minutes. The filling will still appear to be wobbly when baked, and the top may crack a little.
5. Place in fridge to chill for 3 hours.

## **chocolate ganache layer**

### *ingredients...*

- + 100g dark chocolate cut into small pieces
- + 70g cream

### *directions...*

1. Place chocolate and cream in a microwave-safe dish and heat at medium high for 1 minute. Remove and whisk until smooth. Heat for a further 30 seconds if necessary.
2. Spread ganache over the chocolate filling and chill for 1 hour until set.

## **meringue layer**

### *ingredients...*

- + 230g sugar
- + 45g water
- + 3 egg whites
- + pinch of cream of tartar

### *directions...*

1. Place egg whites and cream of tartar in the bowl of a stand mixer.
2. Place sugar and water in a saucepan and heat to 115°C. Continue heating the sugar syrup and start the stand mixer and whisk the eggs to soft peak. When the sugar mixture reaches 120°C, reduce the mixer to low and carefully pour the hot sugar mixture into the egg whites. Be careful not to splash any sugar mixture onto yourself. Use a pouring shield on the mixer bowl, if you have one.
3. Increase the mixer speed to high and blend for 15 minutes.
4. Place the meringue into a piping bag with a 1cm round tip, or a disposable bag with the tip cut off, and pipe mounds of meringue around 3cm wide and 2cm high onto the top of the prepared tart. You should be able to pipe 4 across and 12 along the length of the tart.
5. Use a kitchen blowtorch to caramelize the meringue frosting. If you don't have a blowtorch, you can pop the tart under the grill quickly.

*Best served immediately.*



A close-up photograph of a chocolate cake decorated with meringue peaks. The cake is on a dark wooden surface, and several pieces of chocolate are scattered in the foreground. A circular tip box is overlaid on the right side of the image.

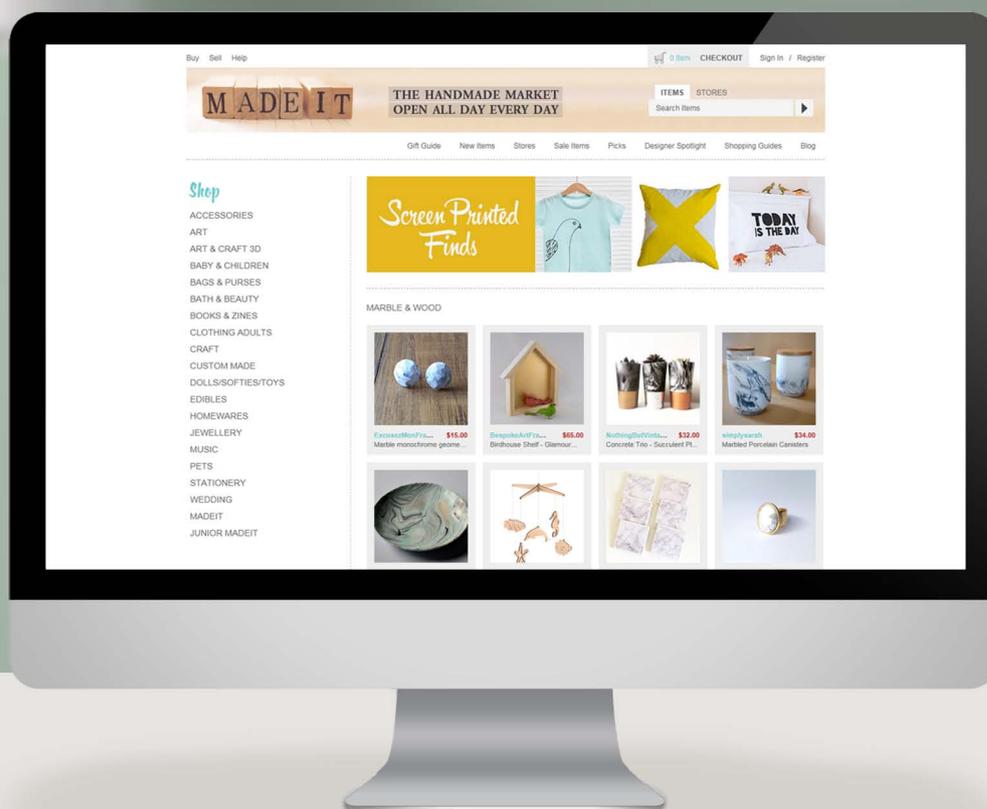
## tip...

If you choose not to make the meringue layer, you can freeze your egg whites in ice cube trays and then pop them into Ziploc bags. They can remain frozen for up to three months. To use, just defrost in the fridge. Egg whites can be used to make meringue, macarons and pavlovas.

# shop handmade

We love supporting local, independent designers and makers (it's one of the reasons tickle exists!) and it is so wonderful to see this industry constantly growing and supported by online marketplaces and community initiatives - making handmade truly accessible to all.

This issue, we chatted with the people behind some of our favourite websites that showcase Australian designers and makers, to find out a little more about their history and what makes them unique.



# madeit

RESPONSES FROM **BEC DAVIES**  
MADEIT FOUNDER & OWNER

**What is madeit?** madeit is a online handmade market for Australian makers.

**Who are the people behind madeit?** I am the main All-Round Duties Gal behind madeit. I am a graphic designer by trade who loves all things handmade. My partner Jayc helps out with the tech side (when he isn't roasting coffee).

As a photographer, graphic designer, crafter and market seller, I have always been interested in all things handmade and independent. I love buying unique, small-run, handmade goodies, as well as going to as many handmade markets as possible.

A Google search for independent Australian designers in 2006 was like finding a needle in a haystack, and at that time, there were no simple directories that listed independent Australian designers. This is why we started the original independent designer's directory way back then.

As the directory grew we thought it was time to take the next step and open an online shop. We have been overwhelmed by the amount of talent in Australia and madeit is about showcasing this talent to the rest of Australia and abroad.



ABOVE: Founder and owner of madeit, Bec Davies.  
OPPOSITE: madeit website

**What will people find when they visit madeit?** If it has been handmade then you will find it on madeit. The products range from fashion, art, homewares, accessories and stationery, to toys, children's and babies' clothing, and much, much more.

**What makes madeit unique?** Our point of difference is that we are purely Australian, so when you shop on madeit.com.au, you know you're buying from a maker in Australia. This is the number one reason why buyers shop on madeit!

**Why do you believe it's important to support locally made?** There are lots of reasons why local is best. These include items that are unique and have a story. Buying local allows makers to do what they love. We think it's important to do what you love in life.

**Are all items featured on your site designed and made in Australia?** Yes, madeit only allows Australian sellers who make their own items.

**How can designers and makers take part?** Anyone is welcome to sell their products on madeit as long as they currently reside in Australia and the product they are selling is their own independently created item. It does not matter if you create for a living or as a hobbyist - you are more than welcome to sell on madeit.

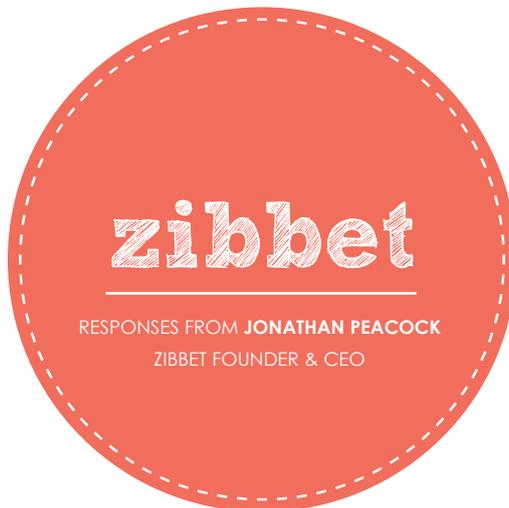


## EDITOR'S FAVOURITE FIND AT MADEIT...

Dream big wall banner, by Grace and May  
[www.madeit.com.au/GraceandMay](http://www.madeit.com.au/GraceandMay)

ready...set...shop!

[www.madeit.com.au](http://www.madeit.com.au)



**What is Zibbet?** Zibbet is a global community of independent artists, crafters and vintage collectors. Almost 50,000 sellers have a store within the Zibbet marketplace.

We launched Zibbet in 2009. In fact, we launched it as a Fine Art's marketplace, as I had a lot of artist friends who were selling their paintings via an eBay auction for very little money. I hated seeing something they'd put so much hard work and love into, sell for such a small price tag. There had to be a better way, I thought to myself. So, the idea for Zibbet was born (Zibbet comes from the word 'exhibit'). After we launched, we increasingly had more and more demand for a handmade category on the site, and to cut a long story short, it became the most popular of our four main categories on Zibbet (handmade, fine art, vintage and craft supplies).

**Who are the people behind Zibbet?** Although Zibbet is a global marketplace, we're proud of the fact that we're 100% Australian made. We have a remote team across NSW and QLD, which means our staff work from wherever they want – from home, their favorite coffee shop, a co-working space, or wherever they feel most inspired and productive.



ABOVE: Founder & CEO of Zibbet Jonathan Peacock.  
OPPOSITE: Zibbet on the go and full website

**What will people find when they visit Zibbet?**

There are over 200,000 unique, one-of-a-kind products on Zibbet that will amaze and inspire!

**What makes Zibbet unique?** When you buy from Zibbet, you're supporting an independent artist, crafter or vintage collector. We're passionate about supporting indie sellers, so to sell on Zibbet you must be an individual or have a maximum of two people in your team (to allow for collaboration between family and friends). You're not allowed to have large teams if you sell on Zibbet. The main reason hundreds of sellers are joining Zibbet each week is because of our strict policy on handmade. One of our tag lines is that on Zibbet you "buy real handmade from real people". We don't agree with other venues that allow mass-production as part of the creative process. Trying to redefine handmade is a slippery slope. Once mass production takes hold of a venue, the true handmade artisans can't compete on price with their mass-produced competitors with large teams. Zibbet won't be going down that path!

For those looking to start an online store, Zibbet doesn't charge listing fees, nor do we take a commission on your sales. You can sign up and get started for free and if you want more features, you can upgrade to one of our paid plans, starting at just \$5/month.

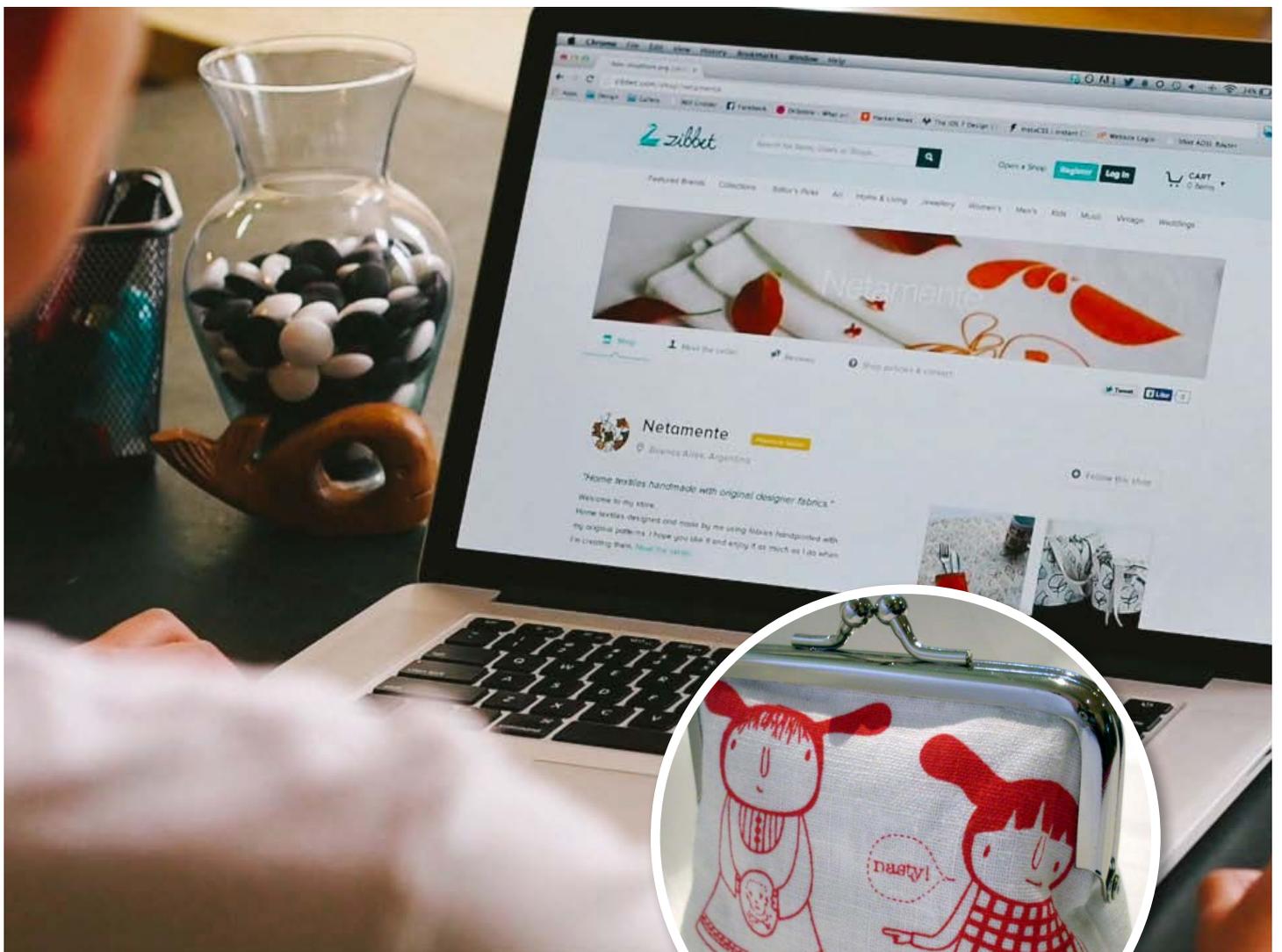
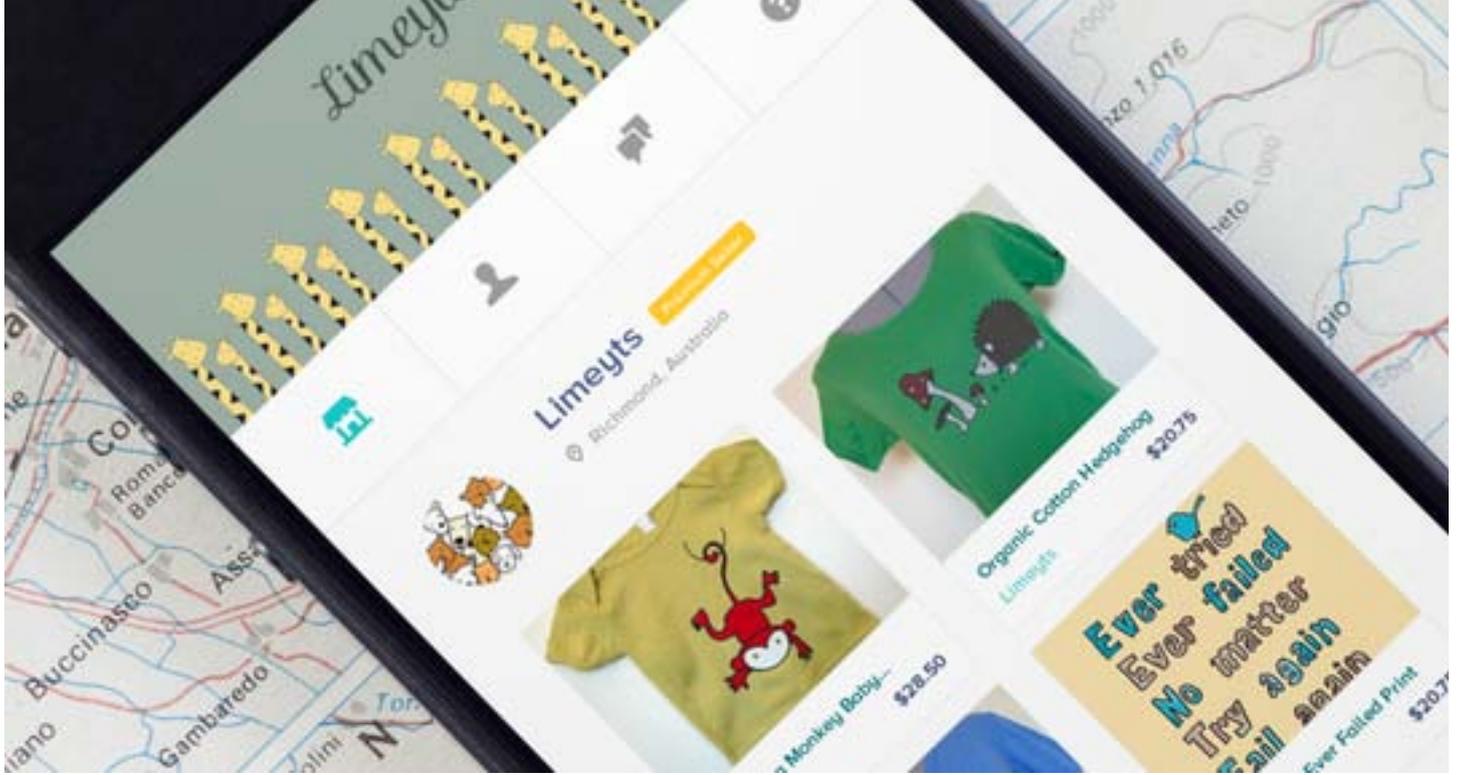
**Why do you believe it's important to support locally made?** I want to see creatives turn their passion into a thriving business. I want to see real handmade valued more than something generic and mass-produced. I worry that there's a push from larger marketplaces like eBay and Amazon that are trying to reverse this. If people want to see real handmade live on and thrive, it must be supported! So, please please please, support your local makers, whether that be online or at your local markets.

**Are all items featured on your site designed and made in Australia?** No, we have sellers from all over the world.

**How can designers and makers take part?**

Anyone is welcome to join as long as you fulfil the criteria of being an independent seller and adhere to our strict handmade only policies.

If you're interested to sell on Zibbet, check out [www.zibbet.com/sell](http://www.zibbet.com/sell).



ready..set..shop!

[www.zibbet.com](http://www.zibbet.com)

EDITOR'S FAVOURITE FIND AT ZIBBET...

Little Cookie-Coin Purse by Seventh Sphere  
[www.zibbet.com/seventhsphere](http://www.zibbet.com/seventhsphere)

# etsy

RESPONSES FROM HELEN SOUNESS  
ETSY MANAGING DIRECTOR FOR  
AUSTRALIA AND ASIA

**What is Etsy?** Etsy.com is a marketplace where people around the world connect, both online and offline, to make, sell and buy unique goods.

The heart and soul of Etsy is our global community: the creative entrepreneurs who use Etsy to sell what they make or curate, the shoppers looking for things they can't find anywhere else, the manufacturers who partner with Etsy sellers to help them grow, and the Etsy employees who maintain and nurture our marketplace.

**How did it begin, what was the inspiration?** Etsy was founded in June 2005 in an apartment in Brooklyn, New York, to fill a need for an online community where crafters, artists and makers could sell their handmade and vintage goods and craft supplies. In the spirit of handmade, founder Rob Kalin and two friends designed the first site, wrote the code, assembled the servers and spliced the cables to get Etsy up and running. In 2008, Chad Dickerson joined Etsy as its first CTO, and became CEO in 2011.

The website that began in an apartment in Brooklyn has evolved into a sophisticated technology platform that connects Etsy sellers and buyers across borders, languages and devices, a company that spans the globe and a business that is committed to creating lasting change in the world. Today, we have people buying and selling on Etsy in almost every country in the world, with 1.4 million active sellers sharing their work and more than 20 million active buyers.

Our mission is to reimagine commerce in ways that build a more fulfilling and lasting world. We are building a human, authentic and community-centric global and local marketplace. We are committed to using the power of business to create a better

world through our platform, our members, our employees and the communities we serve.

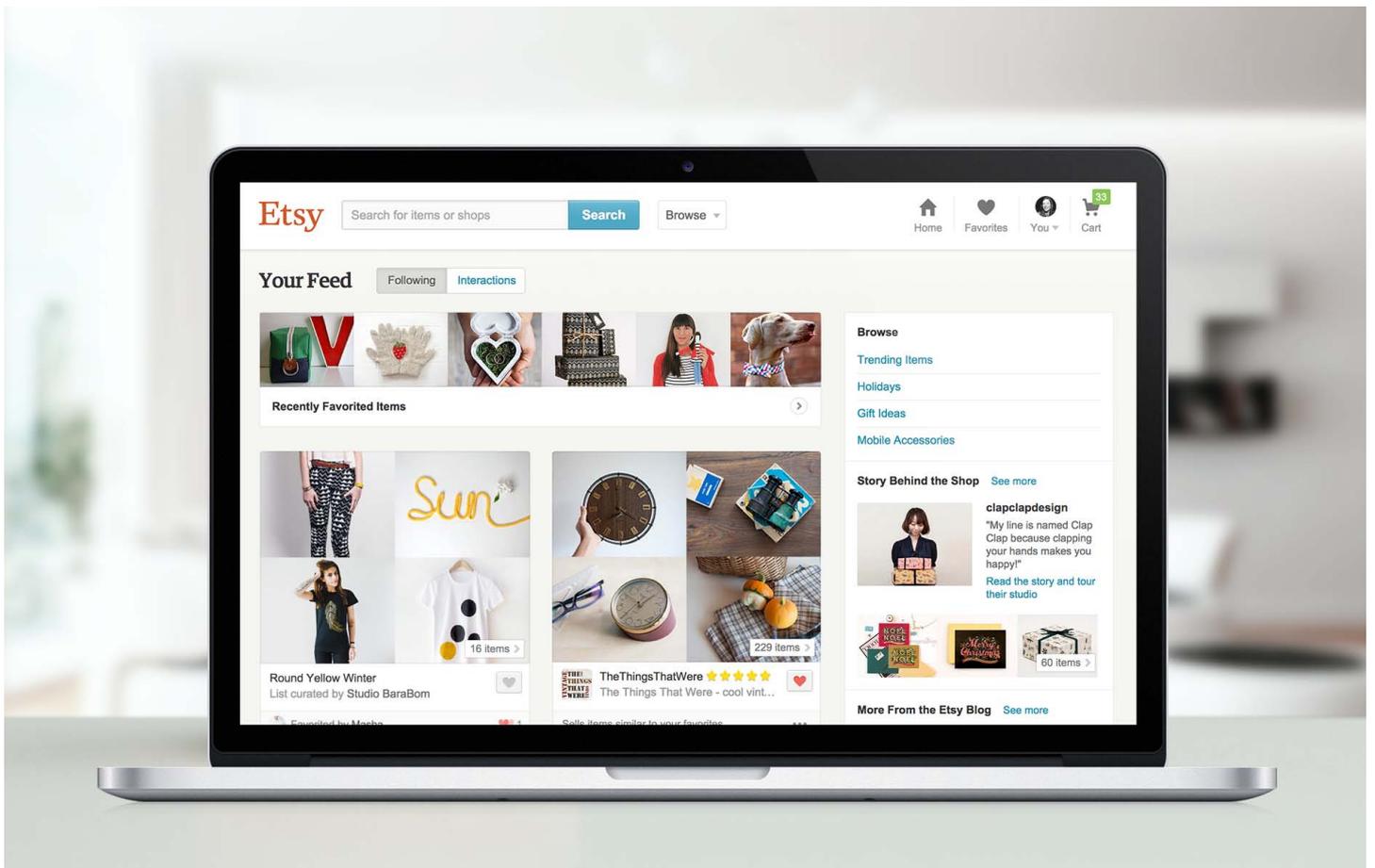
**Who are the people behind Etsy?** There are so many great people behind Etsy! They include our CEO Chad Dickerson, our executive team and our global staff. Together we support a community of millions of creative businesses and their customers. On a more local scale, here in Australia we are a team of ten people who work to build, support and promote the Etsy community in Australia and New Zealand.

**What will people find when they visit Etsy?** When you visit Etsy.com you will find a plethora of amazing handmade and vintage goods, along with unique craft supplies. You will also find the stories of the makers behind the products, as well as business tips, DIYs, inspiration, forums & FAQs and so much more. For example, in the last week I bought some vintage cowboy boots from the MetropolisNYCVintage in the US and ordered a personalised, monogrammed leather toilet bag for my husband for Fathers Day from FelixStreetStudio. One of my favourite purchases is this necklace from Anthaus, a Sydney jeweller.

**What makes Etsy unique?** Etsy is so unique for so many reasons. You can find not only handmade and vintage goods on the site, but craft supplies that you can't get anywhere else. You can use the site to create a curated feed of recommended items specifically tailored to your taste. Finally you can find local markets, fairs, boutiques and places you can shop from Etsy sellers offline as well. Plus, Etsy is a global community, which means as a buyer, you can buy items from makers and curators all around the world. And as a seller, you can share your work with thoughtful consumers all around the world. I think the most special thing to me is the connections you make between like minded people, and the direct contact you have with the maker when buying something. It sometimes reminds me of an old fashioned marketplace, buying direct from artisans. Meaningful commerce.

**What separates you from other collectives?** Being a member of Etsy means you can connect directly with buyers and sellers from all over the world, and collaborate with local or like-minded Etsy members. When you shop on Etsy you also get to learn about the maker's story, where your product came from and the work that has gone into creating it. When I bought a brooch last year from MoonSilverStudio, Kathleen told me how she had been walking in the forest and found the baby pussy willow branch. She had made a wax mould from it that became the brooch which I truly treasure. I love how connected you feel to the making process and the items you buy on Etsy. Etsy is truly global. There are people buying and selling in almost every country in the world.





For creative entrepreneurs, one of the biggest things that separates us apart from all the other platforms for makers is that Etsy is really easy to use and is very accessible for makers and vintage collectors looking to sell their goods. We also provide a lot of support to sellers when setting up their shops and to help them to succeed. We have forums and a great help section full of business tips and tricks.

And one of the best things about Etsy that you can't get anywhere else is our access to the rest of the making community through our Etsy teams and forums. Sellers can use these outlets to meet other sellers and connect to share ideas, tips and advice. It's really a great place to find inspiration and get help in starting and building a creative business.

**Why do you believe it's important to support locally made?** Buying locally means you are supporting your own community and economy of creativity in your city. We are focused on supporting the growth and success of Etsy's creative community in Australia and enabling makers to share their work with thoughtful consumers here in Australia and all around the world.

**Are all items featured on your site designed and made in Australia?** Etsy is a global marketplace. Of course, you'll find plenty of amazing products created by makers from Australia and New Zealand, and our team here in Australia is focused

on highlighting the amazing craftsmanship and products being made locally.

**How can designers and makers take part?** Etsy is an open marketplace, which means anyone can sign up for a shop and sell their products. Opening a shop on Etsy is free and listing an item for sale costs just 20 cents. The commission Etsy take from sales is only 3.5%.

There is also a wide range of resources for Etsy seller success on Etsy.com. We have a Seller Handbook which is full of articles on different tips in making your business a success, from marketing and PR, to how to photograph products and improve the SEO (search engine optimisation) for your shop and items you sell.

There are also the Etsy teams, forums and even Facebook groups that are full of active members of the community sharing helpful information and key learnings.



ready...set...shop!

[www.etsy.com](http://www.etsy.com)

**EDITOR'S FAVOURITE FIND AT ETSY...**

Cat bow tie by blossom & cat  
[www.etsy.com/au/shop/blossomandcat](http://www.etsy.com/au/shop/blossomandcat)



*ready...set...shop!*

[www.handcrafted.com](http://www.handcrafted.com)

**EDITOR'S FAVOURITE FIND AT  
HANDCRAFTED...**



The Labyrinth Bookshelf by Christopher Blank  
[www.handcrafted.com/christopherblank](http://www.handcrafted.com/christopherblank)

# hand krafted

RESPONSES FROM **FRED KIMEL**  
HANDKRAFTED FOUNDER

**What is Handkrafted?** Handkrafted connects people with passionate makers to commission quality bespoke goods.

**Who are the people behind Handkrafted?** I founded and launched our platform in February 2014. The idea was something I'd been turning over in my mind for some time. I've always valued quality design and craftsmanship and believe strongly in the importance of things being made well and made to last.

For many years I've had a passion and respect for traditional craftsmanship, whether this be for old cars or antique and vintage furniture. It really is sad that so much of what is made today barely lasts a few years before being discarded. We recently did an article on this for our blog and the data on this issue is truly shocking. The good news though is that there are plenty of amazingly talented craftspeople out there making high quality pieces that are made to last. Handkrafted was established to help improve accessibility to these designer makers.

We're a really small but passionate team ... alongside me, I work closely with Eric Wee who leads our technology and platform development. We're also supported in our marketing efforts by Steph Schaffer and we have a relationship with a number of interns and freelancers who help to support various aspects of the business.

**What will people find when they visit Handkrafted?** We have brought together one of Australia's largest and most vibrant communities of independent, bespoke furniture makers who specialise in producing high quality, sustainably made pieces. We have started with woodworkers and custom furniture makers and will expand to other crafts over time.

Our makers specialise in custom orders – they can help you realise your own idea or collaborate with you on a new design. Many of our makers also feature a range of their own designs that can be made to order or customised to suit your specific requirements.

**What makes Handkrafted unique?** We want everyone to feel that working with a maker to produce a unique, sustainably made item is a viable alternative to the mass-produced goods typically available.

Our unique value proposition is our 'curated crowdsourcing' mechanism to connect clients with the most suited makers for their custom project. Users can post a brief describing what they would like made and shortly after, they will be engaged

and receive proposals from only the most suited and interested makers, allowing them to choose the maker they feel best suits their needs.

We want to uncover the stories behind the products - the untold stories about the makers, the materials used and techniques they employ.

Finally, we want to empower the many talented makers in our society by providing them with the tools they need to connect and engage with their clients and the broader community.

**Why do you believe it's important to support locally made?** If we're going to consume more consciously and sustainably, we need to understand not just where the products we buy are made, but by whom, under what working conditions and where and how the raw materials were sourced. By connecting directly with a maker to produce a custom piece, you're likely to build more of an emotional connection with the items you buy ... and therefore less likely to dispose of them in just a few years. Ultimately we endorse a philosophy to 'buy less, buy well'.

**Are all items featured on your site designed and made in Australia?** Yes, we currently only feature Australian makers who produce their products here in Australia. We also only profile the makers themselves, not resellers as you often find on many other handmade marketplaces.

**How can designers and makers take part?**

We initially targeted and approached the makers we wanted to join our platform, however as it's grown in popularity we now field applications from makers on virtually a daily basis. There's no shortage of incredibly talented local makers here in Australia!



ABOVE: Founder of Handkrafted, Fred Kimel



# out+about

## *Love Handmade*

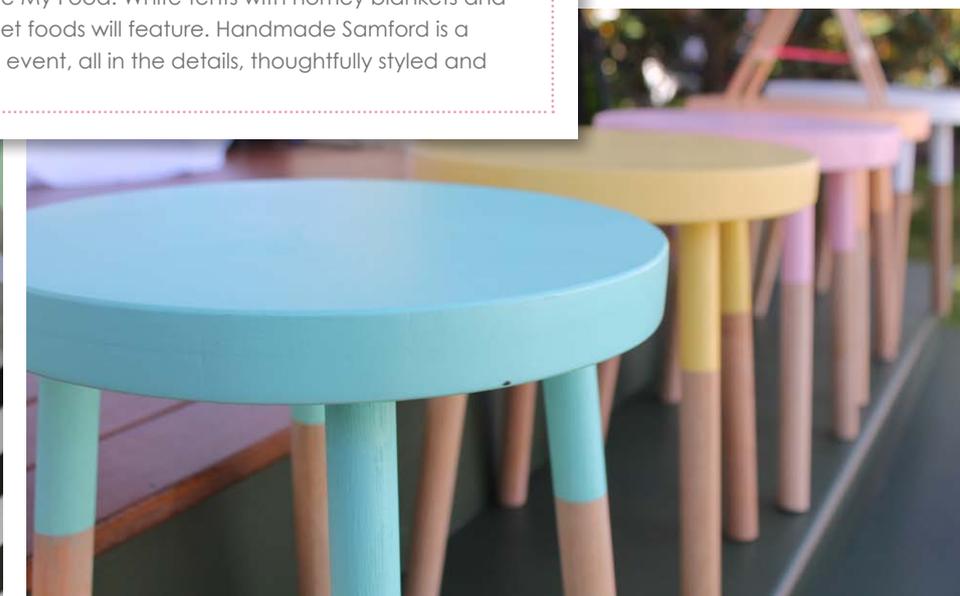
WORDS JANMAREE LOWE  
PHOTOGRAPHY ROSE.PHOTOGRAPHY AND TWO MARKET TARTS

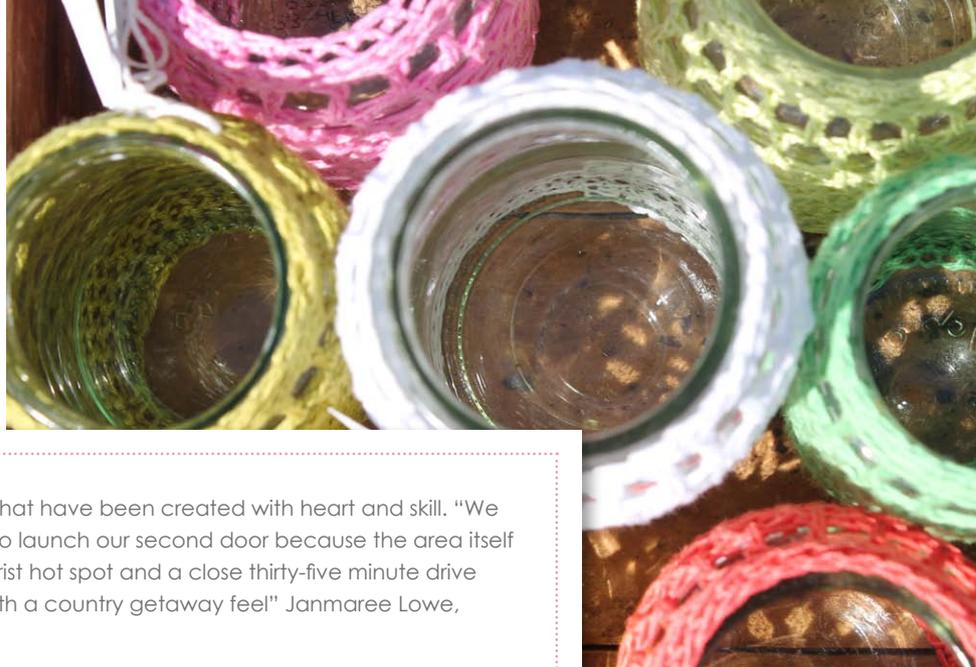
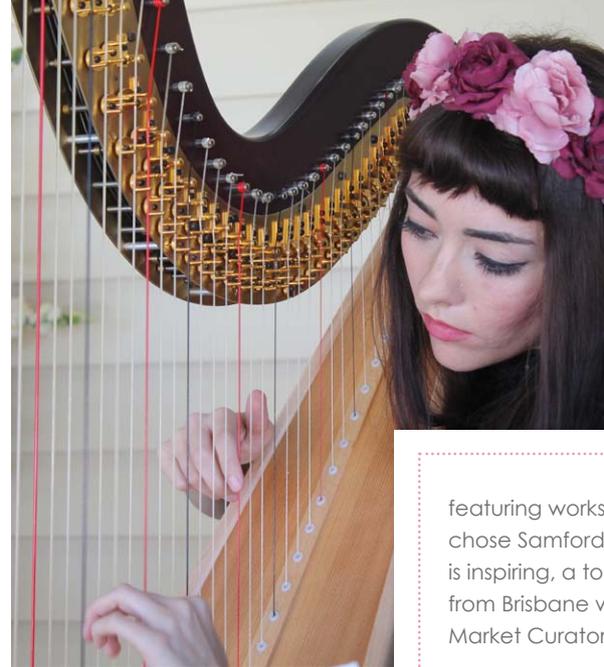
**If you are seeking the loveliest of handmade things in Brisbane, you have found your home.**

The Love Handmade markets showcase the best in handmade design from Queensland makers. The location of the markets promote coastal, cultural and country living destinations. Inviting you to enjoy the beautiful makers and towns they are set in. The creative direction since inception remains to design markets with engaging looks, craft workshops and themes.

The Love Handmade Redcliffe market is set in the Wedding Gardens of Reid's Place. You will find makers nestled under white umbrellas on green lawns. Visitors have the option to stay for High Tea and afterwards take a stroll to nearby beaches. As an extra treat, accommodation is available at the adjoining B&B cottages. An experience to mark on the tourist to-dos! This series of markets take on a garden party feel with boutique stalls and High Tea creating the perfect time-out experience. Redcliffe is positioned between Brisbane and the Sunshine Coast. Scenic Moreton Bay sweeps around the cosy town.

Love Handmade Samford is set in the grounds of The Old Samford Church Hall built in 1895. The Samford Valley forms the perfect backdrop and local cafes are just a hop, skip and a jump away. The market gives makers the opportunity to create their own pop up shop for the day with an emphasis on ethical, stylish and handcrafted wares. Picturesque Samford Valley with its cute village strip shopping, water holes and mountain views adds an extra draw card to the experience. In July the market will host a picnic restaurant by Love My Food. White tents with homey blankets and baskets of gourmet foods will feature. Handmade Samford is a carefully curated event, all in the details, thoughtfully styled and





featuring works that have been created with heart and skill. "We chose Samford to launch our second door because the area itself is inspiring, a tourist hot spot and a close thirty-five minute drive from Brisbane with a country getaway feel" Janmaree Lowe, Market Curator.

Three times a year mini markets are hosted at the Redcliffe Library and Art Gallery, giving shoppers a cultural experience and unique opportunity to connect with local makers while visiting the latest art exhibition.

The markets launched under the name Handmade Redcliffe in 2013 with an indie-craft feel at the Woody Point Memorial Hall and soon won runner-up craft market in the Australian Craft Awards. By supporting the Love Handmade markets visitors breathe life into maker's dreams. By buying the maker's works customers give handmade and locally produced pieces a deserved home.

Collaborating regularly with the Moreton Bay Regional Council in local festivities provides further opportunities of recognition to the makers of this special community. Invitations to exhibit at external events is another reason why makers love being a part of Love Handmade. These opportunities set this market apart and why it has loyal exhibitors and patrons that enjoy diverse experiences. More dreams are on the drawing board with new pop up locations, workshops and maker inspiration sessions being planned to compliment the mission of the markets.

Love Handmade is not just any market, each maker is selected via a strict selection process, which considers the making process, quality, presentation, styling, aesthetics, function, originality of the range, materials used, what is needed in the mix and the maker's personal passion for what they do and customer focus! Where product, maker and service meet. If you would like to be a part of the fun, apply for a stall or

*for more info visit ...*

[www.love-handmade.com.au](http://www.love-handmade.com.au)

### Market dates

#### REDCLIFFE

Sat 11 July, Sat 1 August,  
Sat 5 September, Sat 3 October,  
Sat 7 November, Sat 28 November,  
Sat 12 & Sun 13 December

#### SAMFORD

Sat 18 July, Sat 19 September,  
Sat 21 November,  
Sat 19 December





“ Some of the workshop attendees have also become teachers themselves with me, which is just great - I love that kind of continuity happening. ”

SKYE ROGERS





# creative escapes

isn't it time you connected with your creative side?

## 1 wyld & whimsy

We work with local makers and artisans to offer unique art and craft sessions, which are very well priced and scattered throughout the week. We cater to adults as well as kids, with 2 kids 'crafternoons' each week on Wednesday and Friday afternoons from 3.30 - 5pm. We sit around the big table in the front of the shop and have cups of tea or coffee and cake. It's very relaxed and a really warm and generous atmosphere. Sometimes they don't want to leave; one lot stayed four hours longer than the session because they were having such fun! Because we're small, it's intimate like that and I want it to feel like a home away from home. It has certainly become that for me since we opened our doors in January.

As people come into the shop, I have come to learn a lot about the local 'talent'. There are so many amazing makers out there - it has been quite humbling! Almost every day someone comes in with something they've made or who has a friend who would like to make things for the shop. Just this week I had a lovely Bosnian woman who could hardly speak English but brought in a bag full of the most beautiful hand-crocheted lace, in her country's original style. Blew me away! We communicated with loving hand gestures and smiles. 'I'll take it!' I said. So we get lots of original work coming through the door. Another lady who asked if she could bring some crochet in is a well-known musician with the Sydney symphony orchestra and makes things while she travels the world for her gigs.

Some of the workshop attendees have also become teachers themselves with me, which is just great - I love that kind of continuity happening.

---

Skye Rogers  
wyld & whimsy  
149 Norton St, Leichhardt, 2040 NSW

**Leichardt, NSW**

[www.wyldandwhimsy.com.au](http://www.wyldandwhimsy.com.au)  
phone 0404 876 682

wyld & whimsy 1



IMAGE: SARAH GARDAN PHOTOGRAPHY

## 2 mama creatives

We are a supportive, collaborative and inspiring group for creative mamas to share their passion, work, expertise and ideas with other like-minded mothers, followed by a hands-on creative/ experiential workshop. We meet the first Tuesday (mostly) of the month from February to November.

In addition to our monthly evening Mama talks this year, I have introduced a morning tea expert series, school holiday creative family workshops, and an expert panel discussion, totalling nearly 20 events!

- CONNECT - with other like-minded creative mamas
- SHARE - present their creative story, expertise or passion
- COLLABORATE - form new creative partnerships
- VALIDATE - get back in touch, promote their creative identity
- FACILITATE - lead a creative/experiential workshop with the group, in their area of expertise

### Sydney, NSW

Anna Kellerman  
 anna@creativemamasgroup.com.au  
 www.facebook.com/MamaCreatives



## 3 eeny workshops

Eeny Workshops are a great place to come and learn a new creative skill for beginners or seasoned makers of any age. We specialise in sewing and macrame and have more activities being added to the timetable daily. We provide a friendly atmosphere where you can get your craft on! At our crafternoons we provide afternoon tea and you get to take home instructions so you can master your craft at home until your creative heart is content.

We take private group bookings or even host parties so feel free to look at the website or contact Kristy any time.

Classes are held at The Guildford Mechanics Institute - 20 Meadow St, Guildford WA

### Guildford, WA

Kristy Scaddan  
 ph 0421 469 765  
 hello@eenyempire.com.au  
 www.eenyempire.com.au  
 www.facebook.com/eenyempire



## 4 patricia fernandes clay workshop

West Australian ceramicist Patricia Fernandes offers clay workshops for budding clay enthusiasts or seasoned pros.

Her workshops focus on hand building porcelain functional objects and using various modern and ancient decorative methods.

Morning tea and a champagne lunch are offered and one on one time is guaranteed due to the small workshop numbers.

For more information, please head over to [www.patriciafernandes.com.au](http://www.patriciafernandes.com.au)

### Queens Park, WA

Patricia Fernandes  
[www.patriciafernandes.com.au](http://www.patriciafernandes.com.au)

## 5 colourful nomad upcycle fashion workshop

Over six weeks, learn to upcycle old clothing items and give them a new life, or cut them up and completely reinvent them. This is a highly creative workshop, encouraging you to be playful with fabrics and create unique items. Please bring along a bag of old clothes or fabrics which can be used for the projects. I try to encourage upcycling fabrics where possible.

Sewing machines, scissors, pins, pens and paper will be provided. Basic sewing skills are required. Please bring along a bag of old clothes or fabrics to use. If you do not have any spare clothes or fabrics, a limited selection will be provided.

### The Basin, VIC

Bronwyn  
[broncobowerman@hotmail.com](mailto:broncobowerman@hotmail.com)  
or call 0428114748  
[www.colourfulnomad.com](http://www.colourfulnomad.com)

# \* pin cushion challenge

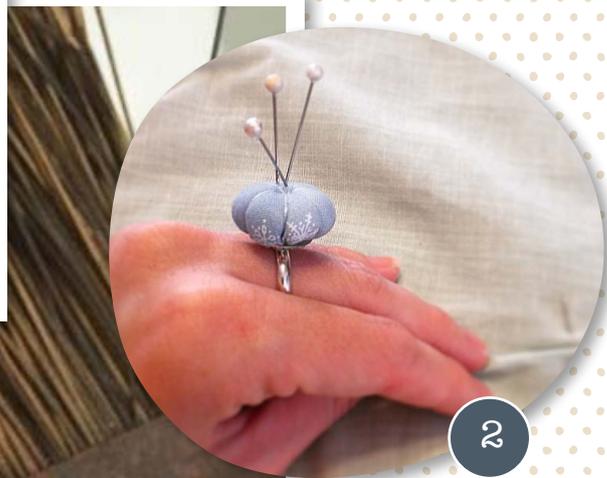
Thank you to everyone who took part in the tickle tribe challenge for this issue! Here are some of our favourites, created by...

1. Lyn from The Studio Handmade
2. Esther from Not Quite Nan's
3. Lauren from Molly & Mama
4. Nic from House of Nic Nax

Please visit the designer and maker directory at the end of the magazine for contact details



1



2



3



4

JOIN THE  
tickle  
tribe



The tickle tribe is all about creativity, inspiration, living your dream, caring for the environment and each other, supporting local and most of all happiness!

Each month you will receive an email filled with creative goodness and set you a creative challenge, giving you the chance to feature in an upcoming issue.

Join today at [www.tickletheimagination.com.au/join](http://www.tickletheimagination.com.au/join)

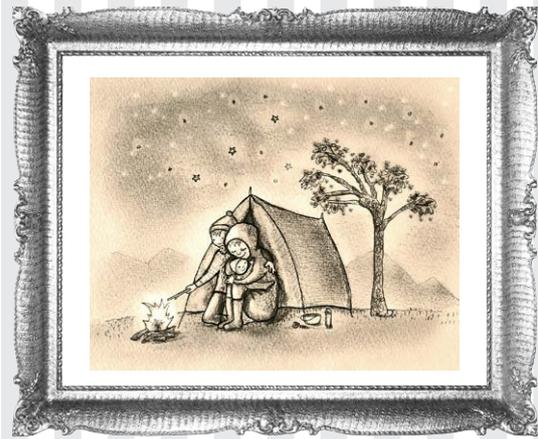


# creative connection

How reconnecting with your eight-year-old self can bring creative contentment ... or quite literally change your life.

WORDS Tania McCartney

ABOVE artwork by Tania McCartney



*"Thank you, 52-Week Illustration Challenge, for the beautiful new friendships and for inspiring me each day - far beyond my paint brush ... and into my soul."*

— NATALIE DANIEL

As an 8-year old, I loved to draw (like most 8-year-olds). But what I also loved to do was meld artwork with story. Words with visual adventure. Hours were spent carefully writing, illustrating and stapling together puerile picture books from a burgeoning imagination run riot. It was, quite simply, what brought me the greatest joy.

And now—x-amount of years later—that very same concept continues to bring me the greatest joy, as an author and now illustrator, of children's books.

It feels really strange to call myself an Illustrator. For decades, when my passion for art and illustration was lost through the 'tragedy' of everyday life, and a crushing lack of self-belief, calling myself an illustrator was a fantasy that lived inside the pencil tips and paintbrushes of anyone else but me.

It was when I finally found the courage to reconnect with my creatively pure 8-year-old, that this 'fantasy' took up residence in my own pencils and paintbrushes.

Courage is what it takes to connect with the path that brings you happiness and life pleasure. The courage to not only believe in yourself but to believe you deserve it. When you realise the need to live your life with the creativity and gusto of an 8-year-old, you may find yourself, as I did, absolutely desperate to reconnect.

For me, this reconnection meant illustration. I'm an illustration obsessive. I have an unholy collection of picture books from all over the world, and they make my heart pound like shoes. They are my shoes. I walk in them. I journey in them. They carry me, and I plan to spend the rest of my life creating and revelling in them.



*Aura Parker*

**ABOVE:** Artwork by Aura Parker (Australia)

**OPPOSITE:** Tickle magazine set 52-Week Illustration Challenge members a challenge to create an illustration inspired by the idea that 'our home is a cocoon'. We selected our favourites to share with you in this issue **OPPOSITE** (from top, L-R) Artworks by Nicky Johnston (Australia), Tania McCartney (Australia), Deborah Parker of Mookoo Design (Australia), Miriam Shilling (Australia), Cara King of Caratoons(Australia), Anita Gadzinska (Poland), Vair Buchanan (Australia)

Please visit the designer and maker page at the back of the magazine for full contact details



ABOVE: Artwork by E'von LeAngelis S. of Little Wood Trove Illustrated (Singapore)

So in January 2014, I set myself a challenge to reconnect with art—to see if I could still 'do it'. I came up with a weekly prompt to illustrate to each week, set up a Facebook group, and within three weeks, we hit 800 members. A little over a year later, we're nudging 3500.

The 52-Week Illustration Challenge has become more than a challenge. It's become a community. Members have made new friends, they have forged working relationships, signed contracts, even left jobs to pursue their graphic design dreams or fall into the deep end of publishing.

Members have also found deeply personal meaning, happiness and even healing in the Challenge. From those struggling with illness or depression, to those who are simply lonely or lost, relationships have been healed, past pain has been eased, and life directions have been reclaimed. They have returned to their path. They have come Home.

In March, the Challenge reached a pinnacle milestone—it exhibited in a public forum with Arts Brookfield in Perth. While its outward successes have been huge, the overriding element for me—as well as many others—has been that realignment with lost passion. Stepping back into our heart and operating from our creative centre.

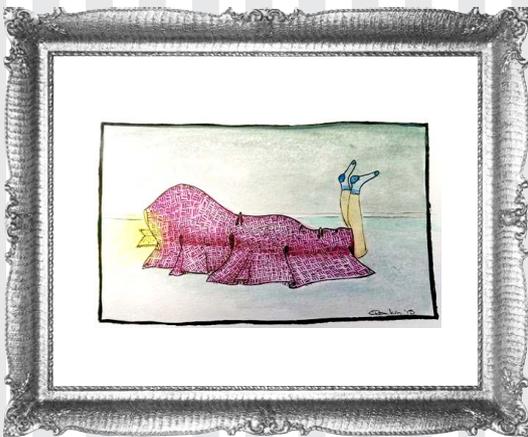
*"I have felt as though a part of me died a few years ago ... now, a whole new world has opened up to me, and art has become my therapy."* — LISA-MARIE KERR



A collection of gorgeous artworks created by members of the 52-Week Illustration Challenge especially for tickle the imagination magazine - inspired by the idea that 'our home is a cocoon'

**THIS PAGE** (from top row, L-R) Artworks by Ramona Van Bakkum (Netherlands), Katharina Rotter (Germany), Leonie Cheetham (Australia), Sophie Pittaway (Australia), Margaret Dewer (Australia), Lisa-Marie Kerr of Arlington Road Designs (Australia), Ishrat Ahmed (UK)

Please visit the designer and maker page at the back of the magazine for full contact details



A collection of gorgeous artworks created by members of the 52-Week Illustration Challenge especially for tickle the imagination magazine - inspired by the idea that 'our home is a cocoon'

**THIS PAGE** (from top row, L-R) Jess Racklyeft (Australia), Hayley Atkinson (Australia), Kasia Gudacz (UK), Chrystal Rankin (Australia), Clara Cook (Australia), Rebecca Webb (Australia), Bronwyn Boniface Illustration (Australia)

**Please visit the designer and maker page at the back of the magazine for full contact details**

*"Without this Challenge, I would not be on the path I was always meant to be on. Opportunities have arisen, friendships formed, my confidence is growing."*

— BRONWYN BONIFACE

This kind of shift is truly life-changing. I should know - I'm now illustrating my own books, but more than that - I've found my Purpose. Opening to your Purpose is what life is about. We can't go outside ourselves to find it because it already exists within. It's part of us - it's where we cocoon ourselves, where we feel happy and safe and truly content.

I'm both humbled and overwhelmed that this small seed of an illustration idea has become a safe creative cocoon for so many. I'm humbled that it reconnected anyone with their creative core, let alone the wee eight-year-old girl inside me.

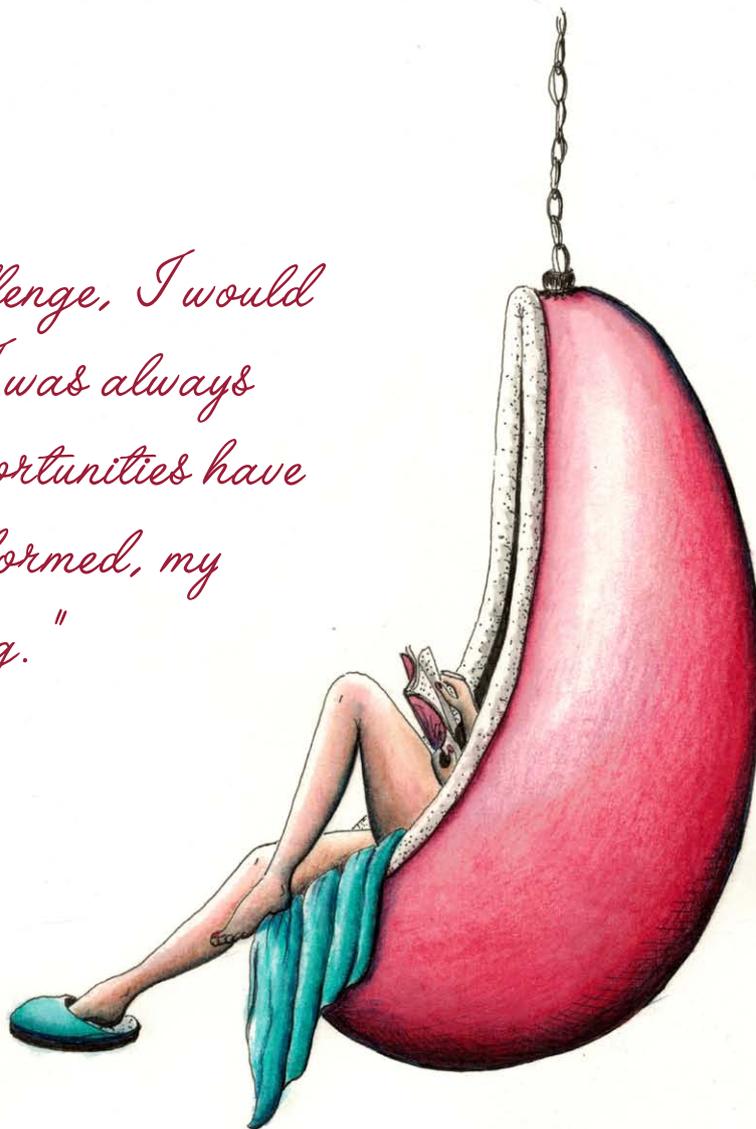
What did you love to do as an eight-year-old? Reconnect with that talented, creativity-driven child within. Reclaim You. I highly recommend it.

would  
you like to  
join the challenge?

Simply head to The 52-Week  
Illustration Challenge Facebook Group  
and request to join.

[www.facebook.com/groups/418616991575037/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/418616991575037/)

You can also partake on your own blog  
or other social media sites, using  
hashtag #illo52weeks



ABOVE Cocoon artwork by Sally Fawcett (Australia)

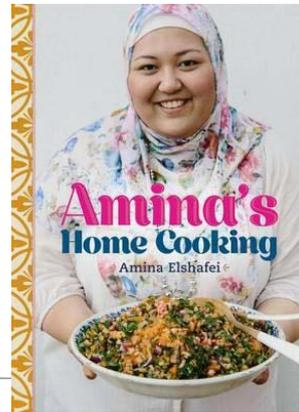
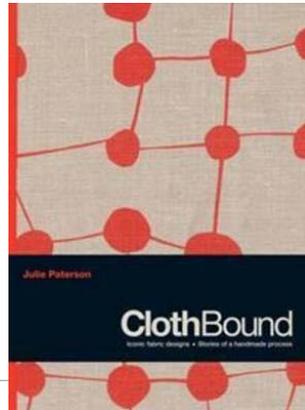
*"Each week, my confidence and my love for drawing grew, and I came to realise that this is what I wanted to do with my life."*

— HEIDI COOPER

The founder of the 52-week Illustration Challenge, Tania McCartney, is an award-winning author, illustrator, editor and founder of number one children's literary site Kids' Book Review. She is also the creator of The Fantastical Flying Creator—an e-book for creators who really want to soar. [www.taniamccartney.com](http://www.taniamccartney.com)

# on our bookshelf

REVIEWS **TANIA McCARTNEY** KIDS BOOK REVIEW



## Design with Colour and Style

by **Shayna Blaze**

Viking, \$39.99

In this luscious book, interior designer Shayna Blaze does more than showcase page after page of gorgeous rooms. She offers insightful and creative ways to shift the way we view personal decor. Featuring mood boards and the principles of style, Shayna takes us on an inspiring journey through the full colour spectrum, discussing the importance of texture, pattern, balance, and the influence of both culture and decades past.

## ClothBound

by **Julie Paterson**

Murdoch Books, \$59.99

A lifetime of passion for pattern and textile has been wrapped up in this gorgeously designed cloth-bound book by one of Australia's most iconic fabric designers. Fluid yet structured, gentle yet bold, Julie Paterson's earthy, modern and nature-inspired creations take centre stage in this visual peek into a world of both aesthetic and tactile pleasure. Get set to marvel at Julie's inspirations, directions and creative processes.

## Amina's Home Cooking

by **Amina Elshafei**

Lantern, \$35

I fell in love with Egyptian-Korean cook Amina Elshafei during her Masterchef Australia journey. Her passion for cross-cultural food was palpable, and her new book has been worth the (tummy grumbling) wait. From dukkah and labna to perfumed veggies, kimchi dumplings, pancakes, kebabs, tagines—and salads and delicate pastries straight from a spice bazaar—this is goose-bumping, tongue-tingling culture on a plate.

## Sandcastles

by **Tim Neve**

Murdoch Books, \$75

'Beachy' has been an interior design buzz word for some time now—bringing the invigorating salt air and colour and light of the coast into our homes. Tim Neve has taken 'beachy' and turned it up a notch to create a book that's stylish yet simple, striking yet warm, curated yet utterly inspired. Eclectic, colour- and texture-conscious, with delicious punches of retro, this is a book of considered elegance ... tangled up with über cool.

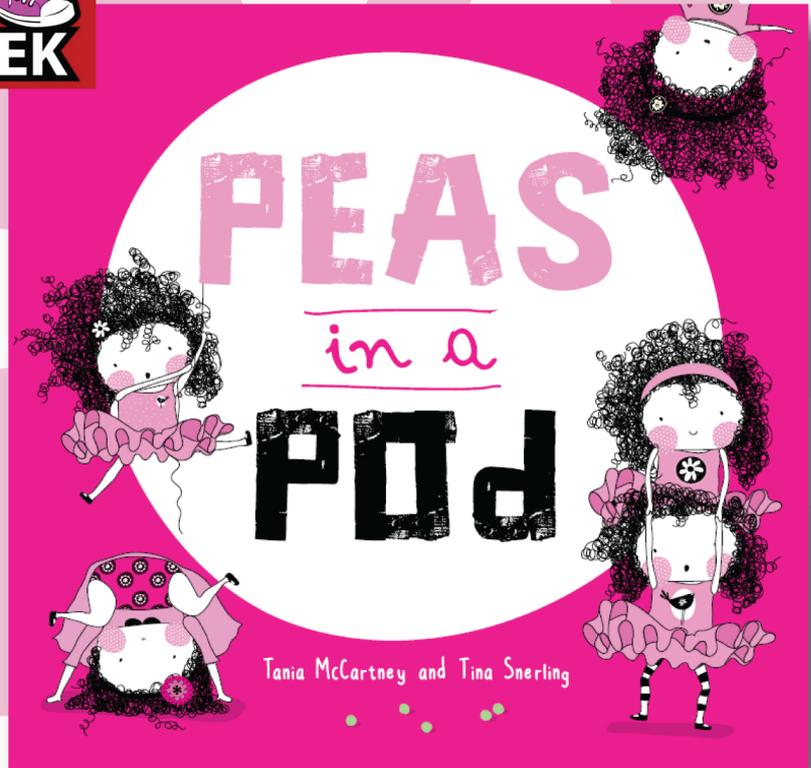


**Tania McCartney is an award-winning author, illustrator, editor and founder of number one children's literary site Kids' Book Review. Her 52-Week Illustration Challenge recently exhibited in Perth with Arts Brookfield.**

**For more reviews visit Kids Book Review online at [www.kids-bookreview.com](http://www.kids-bookreview.com)**

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[www.johnmarshallarts.com](http://www.johnmarshallarts.com)



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Very sweet, original handmade clay 'long legged birdie's caught and displayed in a tiny glass terrarium. All birds are made to order and body colour can be requested. Glass terrarium is 4cm high, the bird is approx 1.5cm beak to tail. Handmade with much love....

[www.etsy.com/au/shop/TheLongLeggedBirdie](http://www.etsy.com/au/shop/TheLongLeggedBirdie)



## Perth Upmarket

Perth Upmarket brings together a handpicked selection of artists, designers, stylists, craftspeople and gourmets all under one roof.

**2015 Upmarkets - 13th Sep and 29th Nov**

2015 Wedding Upmarkets - Saturday - 29th Aug

[www.perthupmarket.com.au](http://www.perthupmarket.com.au)

*perthupmarket*



### The Sisters Red

Handbags, purses and jewellery lovingly handmade in Adelaide, using new and vintage fabrics. Where I can I use vintage fabrics, coupled with new quality fabrics. Here and there you will see a vintage brooch or button for that bespoke feel.

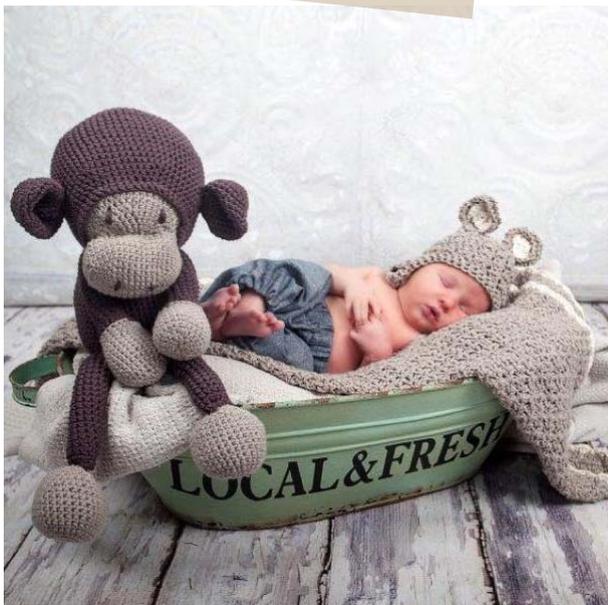
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## creative marketplace



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[www.littlemoodesigns.com.au](http://www.littlemoodesigns.com.au)

## old vintage bike

Old Vintage Bike is an online boutique creating handmade clothing and homewares for special little Misters and Misses. The home of exquisite apparel tailored to bring love, joy and happiness to the tender beginnings of our juniors.

[www.oldvintagebike.com.au](http://www.oldvintagebike.com.au)

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Minty, Marvellous and always up to Mischief.

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[www.laikonik.com.au](http://www.laikonik.com.au)

## creative marketplace

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[www.madeit.com.au/InaSudjana](http://www.madeit.com.au/InaSudjana)



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# business toolkit:

## the art of writing engaging product descriptions...and why it matters

WORDS BY BY JINGO



**“The main thing is not the ‘what’ but the ‘why’. Not the ‘how’ but the ‘how come’. How does this product value-add to the customer’s life?”**

One of the things that small, boutique business owners frequently tell us is that they struggle with writing compelling product descriptions. They know that a good description has the ability to convert a potential customer into a buying (and even loyal) one, but they're not quite sure what to do or how to do it.

We thought we could explore this further and hopefully offer some useful suggestions on how to write some bad-ass product descriptions for your business.

We've noticed that the most common approach is to describe the facts (or the 'features', as advertising folks refer to it). For example, say you sell kitchenware and you're wanting to describe a tablecloth from your range of kitchen accessories. Usually people will say something like this:

*“Tablecloth with pink and red retro-floral print, authentic vintage material, easy to clean, measuring 120cm x 120cm. Suitable for small table. \$39.95”*

While this tells the customer the obvious features of the product, it does very little to convey the benefits. It doesn't say anything that would leave a lasting impression.

The features of a product are like the brass tacks – what the product can do, its dimensions, its specifics. You know, the necessary (but not terribly exciting) stuff. The benefits, on the other hand, are where you can let your creativity do the heavy lifting. Here you can communicate just what the product can accomplish for your customer on a personal and emotional level. What does it give them? How does it add to their lives?

Take this example where we've combined the features from the original description with some sweet benefits.

*“Woo your guests with this pink and red retro floral tablecloth, made from genuine vintage fabric and designed to enhance any table setting. Whether it's for a vintage themed party, or for a casual afternoon tea with friends, this tablecloth makes sure your cupcakes are sitting pretty. Only \$39.95 for 120cm x 120cm of seriously swoon-worthy table covering.”*

The main thing is not the 'what' but the 'why'. Not the 'how' but the 'how come'. How does this product value-add to the customer's life? After all, the customer doesn't care about the tablecloth as much as s/he cares about the memories it will make and how incredible it will look on Instagram.

To further make our point, when people buy an Apple product, they're not just

buying a high-tech, sleek looking device. They're buying into a world of creativity and possibility. They're saying, “This product connects me to a brood of other creatives and innovators – with whom I share similar values and lifestyles.”

With every product description, try and tap into, and reinforce, your broader brand message. If you don't know what a brand personality is and why you need one – read our blog post, “*What's a brand personality and why the heck do you need one.*”

We recently did a range of new product descriptions for a local menswear brand 'Leo & Spargo'.

If you don't know about them, the menfolk in your life are missing out big-time! Do check them out later.

Here is an example of a product and how we chose to describe it.

### SAVE YOUR BREATH T-SHIRT

“Mark Twain famously said, ‘Never argue with a fool; onlookers may not be able to tell the difference’. It's in this spirit that we bring you our Save Your Breath tee. It's a reminder to remain calm, keep your sanity, and a warning for would-be windbags. Save your breath for breathin' — and for cooling your porridge.”

You'll notice that we said very little about the actual facts of the tee. Sure, “Available in white or navy and features a vintage inspired, hand-drawn type logo. Lightweight, 100% cotton t-shirt.” etc. will be included in the final description, but we didn't front-end load it with these features. Instead, we decided to focus on the meaning that the audience will emotionally connect with — using a bit of humour throughout. What's more, all the descriptions tie back to the overarching brand story of Leo & Spargo. For more examples of product descriptions, visit [www.leoandspargo.com](http://www.leoandspargo.com).

The other thing to notice is the succinct nature of the description.

Back to the tablecloth example. Why don't you try writing your own description using the said tablecloth as your guide? Remember to strike a balance between features and benefits, the larger brand message, and of course the lifestyle of your consumer.

The key is to not over-egg the pudding. Keep your descriptions short, punchy and to the point.

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