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Editor's letter



Hazel Brown
Founder & Editor

We're bringing you our final issue of the year and this one is packed full of crafts, just in time for Christmas! On the next few pages you'll find jewellery makers, bespoke fabrics, upholsterers, a puppet maker, a potter and more.

Don't miss Cheryl Devonish's story on page 9. Her business Fearless Steps sell greetings cards with a difference. There is also a 15% discount available for DT readers.

I really can't believe the year is almost out - it's flown by. It's been a brilliant year for Discovering

Tottenham and we've met so many interesting and inspiring locals.

Do get in touch if you have a story that you think is worth telling. We're keen to cover both old and new Tottenham. Is there something we've missed?

If you get to the end of the magazine and want some more stories to read over the holidays, head over to discoveringtottenham.com for more inspirational interviews.

Have a great Christmas and we wish you all the best for 2019!

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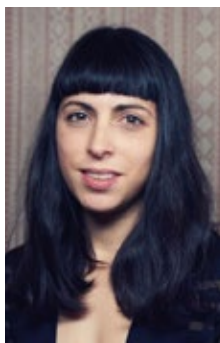
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Cocoon Home Interiors

DT caught up with Angela Constantinou about her bespoke soft furnishings company, Cocoon Home, back in 2016. Since then she has launched her bespoke interior textiles business, Cocoon Home Interiors.



Tell us about the new fabrics business! I work with British artists to produce interior textiles (fabrics for curtains and upholstery). The artists get a royalty from every metre sold and they've had an advance on that

royalty. We tell our customers who the designers are, and we don't pass off the designs as our own. It's all transparent and we really want to publicise the artists' other work outside of the business. One of the artists is a local illustrator, Megan Hindley of Stedhead Art. She's amazing!

Who have you worked with so far? So far I've worked with all women, which was completely unintentional, and it's been really nice. I've been working with illustrators and artists in other mediums such as wood and linocut. The designers are not necessarily textile artists.

How many designs have you got in total? 16 different fabrics. Our best seller so far is our sloth print fabric, High Life, which was designed by Tottenham-based illustrator Megan.

How have you found the first year? I never pretend that it's all wonderful because that's not the reality for me or others running a small business. The first anniversary of the fabric business was in September, and the first year of sales were negligible. Luckily I still have a small bespoke soft furnishings company. Over the last couple of months, things have been doing much better. I feel like I might make some money this year! The periods I've found hardest is when I've been at home working on my own for extended periods of time. This was incredibly isolating and utterly dull, but such long periods at the desk are unusual. My other business usually

balances out this isolation through client visits and I try and do something inspiring - such as going to a gallery or walking in a park - once a week.

What have you most enjoyed? Launching this year's collection. I feel like I'm really finding my feet with it. I've made a lot of new connections and friends through the business. That's been really lovely and everyone has been really supportive. I've enjoyed seeing the reaction to the new collection and a year in, I'm starting to think, 'Oh my god, this is going to work.'

What motivates you? I just want it to work. I also want it to work for the designers because I want them to get their royalties. I love it when I see a note saying I've made another sale.

I've got so many of the designs on furniture in my flat. Edge Upholstery (see page 10) covered some of my chairs. I just love looking at our fabrics - what inspires me is the fact that they're part of my collection. I can't wait to do the next lot. It's this never ending supply of influence and design that you can draw on. I've always loved fabric and home decor.

When I walk into my flat and see the furniture that has been styled in our fabrics it feels amazing! Your interior style is a great way of expressing yourself. When I find time to finish decorating my flat, I want it to be over the top. I am not a shy person and neither are our textiles. I like fabric so much because it can create an impact. 'Did you go to so and so's house? Didn't it look amazing?'

What else have you got in the pipeline? Keep an eye on us for wallpapers.

Fabric is printed to order via cocoonhome.uk



Top to bottom: Angela Constantinou, fabrics from Cocoon Home Interiors' most recent collection Bottom: fabric from the first collection

Crafty North Londoner

DT first interviewed Nonia Jeroh, the woman behind Pink Mushroom Accessories and Crafty North Londoner, just before she held the first Etsy Made Local Tottenham Christmas craft market last December.

What have you been up to over the last year? I arranged two more markets, one in March and one in June. In August I had a pop up shop for four weeks in Shoreditch, with 20 different designer-makers. It was a fantastic opportunity to have a home for their products, where their followers could find them. A collective of four of us currently have a shop in Upper Walthamstow at Wood Street Indoor Market that also opened in August. Items for sale include Ankara print inspired accessories, upcycled bags, pom poms, and my geometric necklaces and accessories.

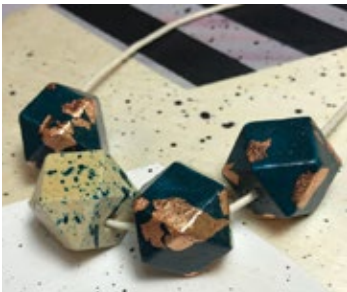
What products have you got on offer as Pink Mushroom? Stud earrings, pins, geometric necklaces, geometric teething necklaces (to be worn by parents or grandparents, not by baby) and bangles, which are new for Christmas and part of my new collection incorporating copper leaf. I've also introduced tubular, circular and polygon shaped beads. Each item is hand-painted, making them unique.

Why shop local and independent? The items we produce are on a small scale and the quality is exceptional. I had one seller who designed clothes and the items were produced in Ghana. The name of the seamstress that had made each item was on the label. In this case, you're not just supporting one person or just their family, you are supporting a whole community. Shop small, shop local.

What have you got in store this Christmas? I'll be hosting another Etsy Made Local Tottenham Christmas market in Tottenham Town Hall on 1 December and at The Beehive on 2 December. We have about 50 different designer-makers and all items are handmade.

I'll be at various handmade craft markets from now until the end of the year, as well as exhibiting my necklaces at the Dugdale Centre, Museum of Enfield from 3 - 17 December. The launch night is 5 December.

Anything coming up for 2019? Expect regular monthly markets from Crafty North Londoner from 2 March at The Beehive. You'll be treated to the best quality handmade items Tottenham has to offer. There's such a huge creative community in Tottenham - it's phenomenal. craftynorthlondoner.com pinkmushroom.co



Top: Pink Mushroom necklaces
Bottom: Nonia Jeroh

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Witty Ditty Designs

Bee Veronica Moore is a designer, creative writer and illustrator, and is the founder of Witty Ditty Designs. Her design studio is based in the Bernie Grant Arts Centre.

Tell us about Witty Ditty Designs!

I design and print my illustrated rhymes onto 100% cotton fabrics, good quality kids tableware and other interesting surfaces such as placemats, coasters, duvet covers, clocks, cushions and beanbags.

How did it all start? For a long while, my rhymes and drawings lay hidden away until I began volunteering to help primary school children who found learning to read difficult. I saw it could be frustrating for some of the little ones to be pulled out of class for a reading session - so, using innovative reading materials we encouraged them to have fun, which in turn, aided their progress. I shared my rhymes with the kids and watching their joyful engagement, led me to start up Witty Ditty. My aim is to encourage children to have fun while reading - any time, any place, anywhere.

As a mum of two energetic boys, I know how frustrating it can be sometimes to get



kids to eat-up, go to bed or practice reading. My designs are a great solution to these problems and can help make these everyday tasks fun. I've discovered along the way that adults love to own my unique products too, so Witty's now has a range of unique personalised mugs, designed especially for grown-ups.

What's the most popular item you sell?

My personalised superhero mum and dad mugs, my range of kids placemats and my 'farm animal' coasters and cushions. Other popular gifts for kids include my pirates,

princesses and superheroes placemats that can be personalised with kid's names. All my products are made in the UK and designed by me.

Where do you get your inspiration? My drawings and rhymes are usually triggered by joyful little moments. Like being chased by a squirrel for food when a friend and I took our sons to the local park, which led me to design my 'What Animal Am I' coasters and placemats. The rhymes were already written but that episode with the squirrel inspired me to illustrate and print them. Also, a lack of choice and diversity in shops, led me to trying to cater for my little boy's love of superhero characters (none of whom ever looked like him), by designing his very own superhero duvet set.

What are your plans for 2019? My plan is to have a permanent physical shop where people can find all my products in one place, and introduce my new 2019 range of wall print decor for kids rooms. I hope to start drawing, illustration and maybe even animation workshops for kids in my studio. I also intend to publish a book of my illustrations and rhymes.

Find Witty Ditty Designs at *Etsy Made Local* *Tottenham Christmas Market* on 1 - 2 Dec. wittydittydesigns.com

Brush & Botany

Sara Hoque runs Brush and Botany, a one woman creative studio, which she started in April 2018.

What do you do? I create hand painted plant pots and artwork all around the theme of plants and colour which are really important to your well-being. I want to bring people products like artwork and plant pots so that they can cheer up their work and home spaces.

How can art help your mental health and well-being? Art has always been a form of therapy to me. I do a lot of abstract painting and when I'm painting I don't need to think about anything else - I can just concentrate on the colours.

You say that you wear mostly black but your work is colourful. What draws you to that?

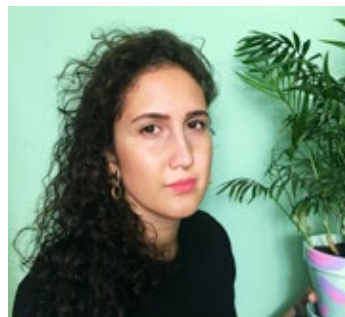
When I was younger I always wore black and a lot of my artwork started off being very dark and black. I think it really reflected my mood because I suffer with depression and when I was younger I was depressed

a lot of the time. Then I was doing a fine art degree and for some reason I suddenly started

using fluorescent colours. I'm really interested in psychedelic art and I like lots of bright patterns and bold, bright colours.

I realised when I was painting with brighter colours it was actually starting to make me feel better. Instead of looking at all this blackness, I feel that the colours were making me feel more alive and more happy. That's a big part of why I started this business, to show people that colour is really important especially in your living space. If you're constantly staring at a black wall it's not going to make you feel good.

What's your favourite piece that you've created so far? I've got a print that I made that has an image of a cactus, says 'grow' and has some pink paint on it. It's a nice little motivational artwork to have on my wall.



Any Christmas plans? I've got Christmas cards available in two designs and I'm doing a Christmas range of plant pots.

What have you got planned for 2019?

Next year I'd like to start doing paint your own plant pot workshops which will be centred around colour. I'll be using colour theory so people can pick colours which will help them in a certain way. I also want to expand my product range - I

made my first plant themed pin this year. I want to do a range of pins and put my designs on notebooks.

Sara has also been attending pottery classes once a week since the start of the year and hopes to start making high end handmade pots.

brushandbotany.com/shop



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Fearless Steps

Cheryl Devonish, the woman behind Fearless Steps, creates modern hand drawn greetings cards for people of colour with positive and diverse imagery and messages. Fearless Steps has been featured in The Voice newspaper, an Enfield newspaper, and trade magazine Greetings Today. In 2016, she was invited by Sonia Brown MBE to speak about her business at Digital Catapult in Kings Cross. She also sells bookmarks, tote bags, stationary and inspirational journals.

Cheryl had the idea for Fearless Steps in 2015 when she was off sick from work and went to look for a card for a friend. 'I went in a few shops and not one card was right for this particular person. I thought "I've had enough of this, I'm going to do my own." I wanted the cards to be different.'

'I wanted to get the cards hand drawn. My daughter was 15 at the time, and I started working with her school friends. I asked her arty friends to draw. They loved it. I paid them a small amount for each drawing so it was a way for them to make a bit of money. I put their name, age and Instagram profile on the back to promote their work.'

'I thought, "If I could get youngsters to draw, it's a positive way of reflecting young people. They could show their talent."

Cheryl explained that it's important to see more diverse greetings cards. '[BAME people] have been ignored long enough, we're not reflected anywhere. We don't really exist in the mainstream media - you'll see a token image every now and again, but it's not good enough. Our children feel disconnected. They don't know their rich history, where they've come from and the contributions we have made in this country. A lot of young people believe there's nothing here for them. They don't feel like they have a future here, which is so sad. It's important for our children to see that there are positive images. There are cards they can pick up in their image with inspirational wording. This one says: *Dream big, reach for the stars. Anything is possible, everything is achievable.*

Cheryl explained that the wording is just as important as the imagery. 'The wording is from my heart. Everything I go through I put in a card. I think it helps people with life and their own struggles.'

Cheryl worked as an investment banker in the city for 27 years before she was diagnosed with a rare illness called chorea - a neurological condition that effects movement. She started getting symptoms in 2013. 'I couldn't walk straight. My balance went. In the end I was talking a bit funny, it was just weird.' She was diagnosed in February 2015 at The National Hospital of Neurology. 'Symptoms are very similar to a stroke.'

Cheryl said that coming to terms with her illness has been challenging. 'I think I was a bit stressed out - my job was really high pressured and I was in a difficult marriage. I was off sick for nine months and I couldn't go back. I don't think I took it very seriously. They told me I had chorea and I was like "OK, I can deal with this." I put on a sort of mask. I was so determined not to let it stop me that I didn't actually think about the illness.' According to Cheryl, the doctors had only seen one similar case in 20 years. She was treated with antibiotics and steroids after testing positive for streptococcus and thankfully many of Cheryl's symptoms reversed. 'It cleared up, but it still left me with some symptoms. I get tired and haven't got the energy I used to have. I still have pains and I still get movement in my left hand - it fidgets a lot.' Cheryl explained that it can be a very lonely illness and would like other sufferers to get in touch so she can set up a group, as suggested by her doctor.

Cheryl said: 'Working in the city makes you really selfish. I never saw my local community. I feel that I was stopped in my tracks to do this. I've got to get it out there - I've got to lift my community.'

During her recovery Cheryl rediscovered her faith and she told



Above: Cheryl Devonish Below: a selection of Fearless Steps Christmas cards



us that it has been incredibly important to her journey. 'I always had faith but if I'm honest I was a church goer out of habit. Now it's different, there's a spiritual connection. I've learnt so much in the last three years and I've met the most amazing, kind people. It's helping to pull me out of a hole I've been in.'

Cheryl explained that the name Fearless Steps is highly significant to her. 'Fear has kept me from doing a lot of things in life. I've had a lot of opportunities over the years and not done them because I've been scared. I'm not usually a risk taker and starting this was a big risk for me. I thought, "You need to be fearless and take some steps to move up and achieve."

Cheryl wants her work to inspire young people. 'I think we have a lot of very talented young people in Tottenham and Edmonton who have been overlooked. My daughter, Nicolle, is 18 and has just gone off to university. There are lots of academic, well-grounded black children from two-parent and single-parent homes. There's thousands of black children in university. Why don't we see those images? The media portrays predominately negative stories about black children. The majority are not in gangs, they are in loving families.'

Next year Cheryl hopes to change the wording in her cards. 'The wording is going to really help people. I've been going through a lot, I've been struggling. It would be lovely to receive a card that offers words of encouragement. She read the words from her card aimed at men: *Continue to aspire to great things. Hold your head up with pride, nobody can stop you achieving your goals. Remain focused and dream big, celebrate and enjoy.*

Fearless Steps are offering DT readers a 15% discount on Christmas cards. Quote: XMAS2018 fearlesssteps.co.uk @fearlesssteps

Edge Upholstery

Claire Maclean and Nicola Thomas, founders of Edge Upholstery, moved into their studio on Bernard Road, N15, in June this year and run a range of upholstery classes.

What do you do and what are your roles?

Claire: We're both upholsterers. We met while we were working in a workshop and a school in Shoreditch. We decided to do more upholstery on our own, found a workshop and set up Edge together.

Nicola: Edge is an upholstery workshop and we offer classes.

Claire: We specialise in traditional and modern upholstery. I quite like modern upholstery whereas Nic's a fan of traditional. Nicola: We can both do both, but when a traditional piece comes in I'll get on it and when it's a more modern piece it's more Claire.

For someone who doesn't know anything about upholstery, what's involved and how does it work?

Nicola: Upholstery is like dressing furniture. You're putting in the foundations. You'll web it or put springs in and then you'll put padding in it. Then you're covering it and making it look beautiful and you'll end up with a long-lasting piece of furniture.

How did you first get into upholstery?

Nicola: Before I was doing upholstery I lived in Bristol and my best mate and I designed and made handmade lingerie. We did that for about eight years and then the recession hit, a lot of our stockists closed and it was a sad time for luxury bras and pants, so we decided to end.

I decided to make the leap from pants to chairs. It's still looking after people's bottoms! I went to Hertfordshire and did a course. Then I found an upholsterer who took me on and I worked really hard. I moved to London six years ago and worked at the upholsterers that have got the Royal Warrant, that was really cool. Then I went and worked in a prop house and worked on shows including Game of Thrones and Downton Abbey. After that I started working in Shoreditch, met Claire and we immediately clicked. We worked very closely together there so it just made sense.

Claire: I studied interior architecture in

Cardiff and then moved to London and worked as an architect's assistant. I did that for about four years and was stuck behind a computer. I realised then that I was more of a maker than a designer.

Before interior architecture, I was always interested in furniture. I stumbled on to upholstery and thought I'd give it a go. I met the woman who trained me in Shoreditch when she was just setting up a school. I was her first student. I was still working at the architects firm part-time and got a Saturday job at an upholsterer. Then the woman who was teaching me needed help and offered me a job at the school. I'd been working



Top: Nicola (left) Claire (right) Bottom: Nicola pinning fabric in the Edge Upholstery studio

with her for five years and a couple of years later Nic started teaching at that school.

How has it been going since you opened?

Claire: Work's coming in and we started our first leisure term. We've got a few students and we're loving it. Most of them come from stressful banking jobs in the city and then they come to a yard in a warehouse in Tottenham and learn about upholstery!

What is your favourite piece that you've worked on so far?

Nicola: Despite the fact that I like traditional work, my favourite chair is called Hans Wegner Papa Bear Chair. They're gorgeous to look at, really comfortable and really expensive.

Claire: It's a bit nerve wracking when you're working on a really expensive chair.

Nicola: When it's a design classic and you know it's worth about 10 grand, you're like, 'Don't drop it!'

Where do you get your inspiration from?

Claire: Each other!

Nicola: Day-to-day, we both love making things. The amazing thing about upholstery is you sometimes can polish a turd! You can take a piece of furniture and inside the frame you might find cardboard in there, or chipboard, and you can turn it into something that looks stunning. We've covered things that are basically from a high street shop and turned it into something beautiful.

Edge run a number of classes including: a leisure class one evening a week where you can bring in a piece of furniture and are guided through the process of stripping it back and building it up. A taster class, where people can 'come and see if they like upholstery and decide if they want to take it up further.' They also do monthly Saturday surgeries 'aimed at upholsterers who are just starting out, have done a few lessons, or need a bit of a top-up or some guidance. They can bring something in and join a morning or afternoon session.'

Edge are running a one day course on 8 December, where you can learn to make an atomic stool.

edgeupholstery.co.uk

Photos: Joanna Bongard www.joannabongard.com



Top left: Inside Edge Upholstery Top right: Claire working on a chair Bottom (L-R): Claire and Nicola (Edge Upholstery), Electra Read-Dagg, Vanessa Butt

Vanessa Butt & Electra Read-Dagg

Vanessa Butt and Electra Read-Dagg share a studio in Bernard Road opposite Edge. They both also work part time with another upholsterer, Rachael South, based at Lighthouse Studios in Dalston. Vanessa also teaches upholstery and is the technician at London Metropolitan University.

Electra had her work shown as part of a collection at the Geffrye Museum curated by Second Sitters. The exhibition was later expanded and displayed at the National Centre of Craft and Design, which also included Vanessa's work.

'I restore furniture,' Vanessa explained. 'A long-term goal for me is to make

upholstery more affordable. I feel like it can be a little bit inaccessible, not because we want it to be, but because it takes a lot of time. It's not just covering furniture with fabric, you also fix bits and pieces.' One of her ideas to make upholstery more affordable is a 'finance scheme where people could pay monthly. You are paying more money for something to be reupholstered but it will last you for years and years.'

Electra added: 'Upholstery isn't cheap. There are a lot of materials and fabrics involved and it can take a lot of time. There are a lot of places where you can learn traditional and modern upholstery, such as

Wendy Shorter Interiors and London Met. I learnt at Wendy's in Hertfordshire.

'Upholstery is becoming more and more popular with a lot more women learning the craft. This is really exciting as this used to be a very male dominated world.

'It's physical work, stripping a piece of furniture down - you get good guns. It's constantly standing up every day. You strip down a chair that's 50 years old and it can be pretty gross. Your nose is black when you blow it at the end of the night. You've got all these old fibres which have turned to dust.'

Electra's latest piece, Inka, is made from

two and a half hides of black leather and velvet mohair. 'He has quite the presence. I designed the frame taking inspiration from an old frame I was given and made the legs look like horse hooves.'

Electra explained that the inspiration for the piece was a horse 'called Inka - this big black stallion that nearly killed me. This horse just stayed with me.'

Electra is currently working on her next piece which is a commission from a client that saw Inka and wanted something in a similar style. 'It's a modern tub chair which will be upholstered in leather tassels and grey cotton velvet.'

Before working in upholstery, Electra worked in talent management, was a runner on Harry Potter and also worked for House of Hackney.

'My mother was a fashion designer in the rag trade. That was where my parents met. My mother then went into interiors, so all her cushions, curtains, and general home furnishings were a big part of what got me interested in fabric and furniture. When I first came to London, I did a basic upholstery course at The College of North West London. I was constantly doing little upholstery projects in my bedroom in a flat share. There were rolls of fabric in the corners and a sewing machine - it was hectic. My mate came in and I said, "I don't know what I'm doing with my life." She replied, "Why don't you just do upholstery?" I made my commitment to do a course on

it. It's been an amazing journey. It's been the best thing I've ever done.'

After her course, Electra went on to work for an artist that used furniture to express herself and make political statements, and was an apprentice to some established upholsterers.

Vanessa was working as a mental health support worker for the charity Mind whilst living in Oxford. She decided that she needed a bit of a break from that job and applied to and got accepted on an interior design course. She was the only person on the course so they suggested she focus on one element. She chose upholstery.

She told us: 'I slowly set myself up as an upholsterer and worked for other people including an artist. Then I worked in a factory for a while. The first time I set up was in Oxford in a friend's garage. I started doing commissions in there. There was no electricity or toilet, so that was challenging!' After that she moved to Bristol and became part of the Bristol Upholstery Collective before working for herself. She moved to London in April last year.

Vanessa said her biggest challenge so far has been marketing and selling herself. 'It's really hard because you're a one woman band who is, at the end of the day, trying to pay the rent. The pressure of social media can also make it challenging.'

When asked about her favourite fabric to work with Electra said: 'I really love leather. It's refreshing because there isn't a

grain. You've got a hide, you can cut it in any direction, it stretches, I love the smell of it. I also love linens and velvets, and I love natural. It's about the natural beauty for me, whether it's a beautiful French linen or an insane hide.'

Electra also does seat rushing, using wild rush from Cornwall and Sussex, and furniture caning using rattan.

Vanessa said: 'I think the best thing about upholstery is that there is so much variety. I like things that aren't so pedestrian. I want people to choose wild fabrics.'

'I think inspiration can come from everywhere.' Vanessa told us. 'I've named some of my chairs after people in my life. I don't think they even know they have a chair named after them.'

'I name every single chair I work on. It always has a gender - it's never neutral.' Electra added.

Vanessa said: 'We have a bit of a laugh about it. It's so much more than a chair.'

Next year, Vanessa plans to build up more stock from French flea markets.

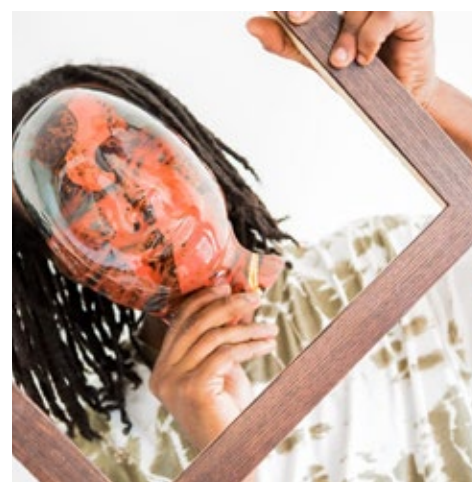
Electra said: 'I'd also like to make another indulgent chair, and I'm currently looking at other materials, such as precious metals that I can play around with on furniture. I'm looking at jewellery making courses, hoping to make my own nails and oozy stuff to come out of the furniture.'

electrareaddagg.com
vanessabutt.co.uk



Left: Electra working in the studio Top right: Vanessa in the studio Bottom right: Vanessa working on a chair

Motions of Clay



Left: some of Ronaldo's pieces Centre & right: Ronaldo with his decorative face sculptures

Ceramic artist Ronaldo Wiltshire started Motions of Clay in 2016. He is currently a ceramic technician and tutor at Kensington & Chelsea College and Hampstead School Of Art.

How long have you been working with ceramics? Both my parents are potters so I've been surrounded by clay since I was a young child.

When I was growing up, my mother had her own pottery studio in St Thomas Barbados, and my dad had a studio, Indigenous Potteries, and a shop, The Clay Gallery, which was in the Pelican Craft Centre in Barbados.

A lot of my family members worked with my father at some point and I did the same throughout the school holidays. At this point I wasn't sure I wanted to pursue a career in ceramics.

My mother is now a school pottery teacher in the UK, and my dad is still a potter in Barbados.

What made you decide to make it your career? I moved back and forth between London and Barbados until I was 12, and returned to London when I was 19. I then studied Art and Design at Croydon College and from there went on to study Product Design at Ravensbourne.

While I was studying, I lost movement in my arm for a few months and that led to months of physiotherapy. I mentioned to my physiotherapist that I worked with clay and he suggested it might be a good idea for me to get back into it as it could help with the movements in my arm. This

encouraged me to buy a bag of clay and I began hand building small pieces at home. In 2014 I bought a pottery wheel. Shortly after, I found out my girlfriend was pregnant so my plans to start a business got put on hold for a little while.

In late 2015, a family member allowed me to use their spare room as my studio. I was making loads of pieces but I didn't have a kiln to get them fired. I contacted ceramic artist Chris Bramble, who welcomed me into his studio and became a good friend.

I now had access to a kiln, but I wasn't making any money at that point. I used to take a cab from Tottenham to Kilburn to get my pieces fired, which was costly, but it was worthwhile because I knew I was investing in my future.

Was it the idea of using the pottery to help your recovery that kept you going? It made me think, 'You know what? Maybe this is a sign. I have a talent and I'm not using it. I just nearly lost movement in my arm so I better use it right now.'

How has working with clay helped you? Working with clay has helped me a lot both mentally and physically. It's helped me feel happier in myself because when I lost movement in my arm, it was a very low and depressing time.

My brother was diagnosed with schizophrenia in 2006, and we all get together to help him, which can be stressful for my family. I can sit at the pottery wheel and throw clay for hours. It's a way to escape and not think about anything at all.

What do you enjoy most about making pottery? I like the feeling of clay. Especially terracotta - it brings back good memories from my childhood in Barbados.

What have your achievements been so far? It's still early stages and I see myself as an emerging artist. My first exhibition was in June. It was a group exhibition with other ceramic artists and potters, which was a big deal for me. In July I organised a pop up exhibition with one of the students from Kensington and Chelsea in Babajanis Deli on Portobello Road. It was a great experience and quite overwhelming.

What products have you got on offer? I make functional as well as decorative ceramic pieces, including domestic ware such as bowls, mugs and plates. I really enjoy making oil burners as they can be used for natural healing and relaxation.

One of the product lines I'm currently working on is a series of face sculptures which are based on my brother. He has a very outgoing and bright personality. When he's in a bad mood, it can be very tough for not only him but also the family.

I decided to take an abstract approach with the glazing to make them all a bit different which represents his personality.

What are your plans for the future? I plan to spend a lot more time in the studio creating new products. I'm still yet to have a solo exhibition so that's definitely in the pipeline.

motionsofclay.co.uk

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Box of Prints

Zara Afflick is the founder of Box of Prints.

Tell us about Box of Prints! Box of Prints specialises in creating uniquely printed fabrics. We help people bring their stories to life through print design. Our motto is 'prints with a purpose.' We produce in-house prints for interior or fashionwear fabrics made from quality silks or cottons.

We encourage others to get creative and design their own prints, from concept all the way to final piece. Our print workshops give customers a taste of the many fabric-printing processes.

Recently we introduced Design and Earn which gives upcoming designers, who have a collection of designs ready, a 20% commission on their print if it's bought via our website.

Who do you work with? We work with everyone but our main customer base is women and children. Children can be really creative, they want to make, they've got designs, and mothers love seeing their children turn their drawings into something beautiful. We've also worked with graduate designers to produce fabrics for their early collections.

Which printing techniques do you use? We do batik (Indonesian wax printing), sublimation and traditional screen-printing. We print up to three metres in-house and for higher volumes we work with a cotton mill in Bradford.

What's your relationship to Tottenham? I grew up in Islington where the culture is completely different. My parents are Jamaican and since being in Tottenham, I've felt a greater connection to my culture. There are no Caribbean food shops or black hairdressers in Islington! Tottenham's the home place for my business, and in a weird way, I feel like it's my home too.

How do you feel print and design can tell a story? There's the emotion of colour and there's the emotion of imagery. It's like therapy. When I sit down with someone who hasn't got a design but they've got a story, I simply ask, 'How are you feeling now? What colours do you see?' Of course there's the obvious ones, people will often say 'red for anger', but sometimes it's not red, sometimes it's blue.



'Why do you see blue?' Perhaps they remember waking up and the sky was blue at the time they were angry. It's bringing the feeling and what you see together. Certain colours or shapes evoke different emotions and lead to a more striking print design.

Can you tell us about your first in house collection, Lost Memories? Lost Memories is my reflection of my experience of seeing my grandmother suffer with Alzheimer's disease. She passed away eight years after her diagnosis. It's a sad thing, but I never got connected to my own self and emotions in that way before. I'd never really had time to reflect on it. It was only afterwards, when I travelled to Jamaica and did some research, that I began to understand the disease and how it truly affected my grandmother.

My grandmother would start naming towns in Jamaica, which I couldn't relate to at the time, and when I got there I was like, 'Oh my gosh, Higgin Town is real. This is what grandma was talking about!' I got to learn more about my own history. I took the time to really get to know my grandmother's life journey. This helped me to feel more connected to her. I want customers to have that same connection with their print - I want them to love it!

The success of Lost Memories has allowed me to donate 10% from its sales to the Alzheimer's Society.

What have you got planned for Christmas? At the end of November, I'll be introducing



Top to bottom: Box of Prints fabrics
Bottom left: Zara Afflick



Print & Prosecco Nights in our studio at the 639 Enterprise Centre. It's a two and a half hour session including bottomless prosecco for £25. Participants will print items such as a tote bag, apron or cup. It's a fun and interactive way to get creative.

This December, you'll see our new collection The Falling. It's inspired by the different patterns snowflakes make. We use colours that aren't usually seen at Christmas: lilacs, purples, blues, but you'll still get the feeling of Christmas.

We also want to continue to run workshops to inspire others to create prints with a meaning.

boxofprints.co.uk

Oliver Smart (Folded Feather)



Photo of Flight is a Waltz: Puppet Flutter

Oliver Smart has specialised in and performed puppetry (exploring movement through performance) for the last 20 years. He also teaches puppetry, design and performance to performing arts professionals. Oliver creates his artistic work under his own name and does commissioned work through his company, Folded Feather. His studio is on Bernard Road, N15, where he's been based for the last three years.

Oliver has worked with companies including Channel 4 and Sony Playstation. His largest puppet Boreos - made entirely out of Austin Mini car parts and operated by two people, was created for Irresistible Films, London - and appeared in a Hyundai advert. Oliver was one of a number of puppeteers involved in the wedding scene in the last Muppets Movie and his puppetry appeared in an Alexis Taylor music video, where he animated a pair of eyes. He has performed at the World Puppet Theatre Festival in Charleville-Mézières, France. His butterfly, created in collaboration with the artist Dominic Harris, Flight is a Waltz: Puppet Flutter, was presented at Design Basel where it was represented by Priveekollektie Contemporary Art | Design.

Can you tell us a bit more about what you do? I've become very interested in natural mechanisms, like flying insects, and how a puppeteer makes bodies move. The scale is challenging and exciting. The way they are put together and the way they move is extraordinary. I find mechanical solutions for expressing something like a dragonfly and its movement in an object. Surrounding that activity is a whole lot of other work. There's a lot of reflection, drawing, writing, my own movement exploration, photography and prototyping which then results in a final mechanical body that ideally expresses the essence of its subject.

How did you first get into puppetry? I went through art school in Auckland, New Zealand. I started as a print maker, but I found that too two dimensional and moved towards sculpture. A while later, the sculpture started to move. I started performing sculpture, as a sort of performance art, within a gallery rather than a black box theatre. From there I became more specialised in theatre. I'm now going full circle and working back within the visual arts and I'm very focussed towards the gallery environment.

Is it important for you to tie the performance and the mechanical sides together? I think so. I'm able to express movement to an audience coming from a body which is something other than my own. That gives me a huge variation in terms of scale, identity, and all sorts of things through the separation that puppetry gives you. It's exciting to express through another, which is the body of the puppet. Then you get into mechanistic movement design.

What are you working on at the moment? I've just come back from Belgium where I was performing with a giant inflatable octopus at a festival over there for my friend's company Tim Davies Design.

I'm about two thirds through a process of conceiving, studying and designing a scale dragonfly. I'm currently at the end of the design process using computer aided design (CAD) to create 3D models. Most of the process is analogue and then it moves into digital because the lines have no thickness. Folded Feather currently has a commission with Kings College London where we're creating various parts and aspects of an MRI scan environment to make it more

suitable for preschool autistic children. It involves a collaboration with lots of other specialists including other puppeteers and designer-makers.

Can you explain more about the analogue process? I did an exercise with watercolours after the observation of the dragonfly to find solutions for movement. I came to an epiphany with one of them in particular, which is where you start getting a figure eight with the wing movement. I'm after a mechanism which is entirely dynamic. It's a hands on process, machined by me on the lathe and the mill. Before I end up with the final piece I have to prototype and test it out in the real world with gravity and friction.

What do you most enjoy about your job? Exploring the potential of what I am by experimenting with other things. It gives me the opportunity to explore outside of restriction and to exist within a physical world where anything is possible.

On top of that it all centres around communication. I enjoy exploring a very unusual edge of communication with the medium of puppetry. People will willingly suspend their disbelief and that's really cool.

Where do you get your inspiration from? A lot from the natural world, the environment and architecture. I love poetry and short stories. Some of my greatest inspiration comes from poetry because it's so efficient. I love reading short stories and twisting stuff around. Music as well.

How do you get from an initial idea to the final piece? I'll start with an idea that I explore very openly. I draw, I write, I explore everything differently. I might make prototypes out of cotton buds. I make stuff, draw stuff. Then it comes together and goes through a more refined drawing process. Maybe becoming watercolour or becoming colour. The prototypes become slightly more refined and maybe they actually start looking like a dragonfly.

Then you get into the cycle of the dragonfly where it becomes geometry and then it starts to become a process which becomes materialised. It becomes brass, bronze, wood or whatever it is.

Part of the whole process is countless drawings, often bad ones, and awful writing. I use these things as tools, so it doesn't matter. If I don't know how to draw with my right hand, maybe I'll use my left. Maybe all the words should be written backwards. You can't take a straight path, that would be like walking through a beautiful garden and making a bee-line for the exit, you have to meander. Then it starts to take shape. I have



an idea at the beginning of the process but I don't even know what it looks like. I know the concept of a dragonfly but I've never really spent any time thinking about it. It's a voyage of discovery.

What else have you got coming up? I'm spending a couple of months in my studio after doing a lot of work with teaching and performance. Now I've got a chance to consolidate what I've been working on and work towards manifesting the dragonfly physically. That's something I'm really looking forward to. The finished piece, as well as drawings and prototypes, will be presented at Circus, Marylebone High Street, in April next year.

oliversmart.net
foldedfeather.com



Top and middle: Flight is a Waltz: Puppet Flutter
Bottom: Oliver Smart in his studio

The Red Box Project Tottenham & Wood Green



Clockwise from top left: #community KindnessMatters badges, Jenalyn Rawes, The Red Box Project volunteers, donation box in Tesco's, another volunteer

Jenalyn Rawes looks after The Red Box Project in Tottenham and Wood Green that provides free sanitary products to young women.

Can you give an overview of the project and work that you're doing?

The Red Box Project is a community led project – we are run by local communities all across the UK. We provide easy access and free sanitary products to ensure that no young woman misses a class or an entire day of school due to their periods. All of our sanitary products are donated by the community through our donation drop off points located at different local businesses.

Where can red boxes be found in Tottenham? Shukran Best Kebab in West Green Road, Needham and Poulter Solicitors on the High Road, T on the Green in Bruce Castle Park, Downhills Park Café in Downhills Park, N17, Tesco Superstore High Road, and MetroVet on Lordship Lane.

Where did the idea for Red Box Project come from? Three friends from Portsmouth concerned about 'period poverty', decided to take action and started contacting local schools in their area. They found out that the issue was real and that resources were desperately needed. Recognising that we need the initiative nationwide, they started to welcome individuals from all over the UK to become Red Box Project coordinators in their local areas. Red Box Project Tottenham joined in March this year.

How can people get involved? The community can easily get involved by making a donation in either sanitary products or cash through our Just Giving page. The community can also donate via PayPal and we have #communityKindnessMatters button badges for sale to help us

raise funds. We have a number of local donation points at the moment, but are working on talking to more local businesses so we can have more red boxes across Tottenham and make it easy for the community to get involved.

We have 13 primary and secondary schools, colleges and youth centres across Tottenham and Wood Green on-board with the project, including Haringey Sixth Form College, Welbourne Primary School and Bruce Grove Youth Space. We would like to sponsor as many as possible, we want to ensure that all our young women are supported in their education and ensure that they do not miss their classes.

Why are projects like Red Box Tottenham and Wood Green so important? This project is close to home as growing up in the Philippines we often didn't have access to sanitary products. Most of the time I had to use cloth and going to school with it was horrible. I was surprised to find out that 'period poverty' existed in a developed country like the UK. A recent survey said 1 in 10 girls between the ages of 14 to 21 can't afford sanitary products, and they miss a class or school altogether just because they may not have access to or can't afford these products. 34% of Haringey residents are living below the poverty line and having a Red Box Project in our area is a simple way of helping these young women who can't afford these products.

To find out more about the The Red Box Project Tottenham and Wood Green, visit their Just Giving page [justgiving.com/crowdfunding/rbptottenham](https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/rbptottenham) or email redboxprojecttottenham@gmail.com

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