

1 Hattie Kerrs combines stunning colours for her traditional tams, made from British wool 2 Helen Foot's woven scarves are inspired by DNA sequences 3 Hikaru Noguchi's sophisticated machine knits



Katie Mawson creates modern knitwear



Woven fabrics by Holly Berry contain hidden messages



Nina Fuehrer's sweet little fish keyrings

# A celebration of the handmade

Made London is an annual exhibition showcasing inspirational textile art. **Sasha Kagan** reports back from this fascinating event



**TEXTILE ART** was the star attraction this year at Made London. This cutting-edge craft and design show, now in its fourth year, aims to showcase the most original designers in Britain (and beyond) in a friendly, relaxed show in a Sir John Soane-designed former church near Regent's Park.

I was delighted to have been chosen to exhibit at such a prestigious show and wave the flag for handknitting. Taking an overview of the textiles on display, I was not only struck by the interconnectivity of design in knit and weave, but also by how diverse and original the pieces were, each in its own way moving forward from its traditional craft origins into a developed contemporary style.

Hattie Kerrs puts her own spin on the traditional Shetland tam o'shanter design, using a variety of edgy colourways. She brings colour - as was the original idea behind Shetland tams - into our grey, bleak winters. She uses 100%, Bluefaced Leicester wool that is grown, spun and processed in the UK, and makes every piece herself. Her collection includes luxury British wool accessories in cable patterns.

Katie Mawson's felted lambswool hats, gloves, scarves and throws deliver modern, easy-to-wear pieces; solid colour scarves with contrasting felted ribbon decoration, long stripy fingerless gloves, bobble hats with a difference, and a cleverly constructed hedgehog hat with a definite sense of humour!

I found more fun hats with an animal theme on Nina Fuehrer's stand. Quirky fox, flamingo and badger stoles sporting very realistic eyes referenced Edwardian wraps which would have used stuffed, deceased specimens back in the day. How social mores have changed in 100 years!

Cleverly constructed machine-knit jackets, which were not only reversible but on occasions could be worn upside down, were to be found at Ollie Zwitserlood's stand. I felt dizzy with the possible variations on offer. Each drape-front garment featured colour blocks, striped areas, bright hand-finished accent colours, and clever use of short-row shaping. Vibrant lime green pared with charcoal had subtle burgundy details; electric blue with mid grey was spiced with mustard yellow.

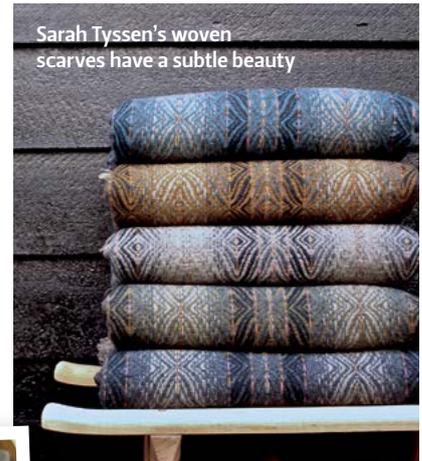
Hikaru Noguchi has built up a loyal following for her menswear collection, which is sophisticated and unusual. She works with family-run, traditional machine-knit



Nina Fuehrer's stoles are a playful take on Edwardian wraps



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Sarah Tyssen's woven scarves have a subtle beauty



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4 Gorgeous rugs by Margo Selby 5+6 Sasha Kagan exhibited her nature-inspired handknits 7 Katie Mawson's hedgehog hat 8+9 Ollie Zwitserlood creates striking colourblock knits with clever constructions



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workshops in the UK where attention to detail and quality still form a way of life. Her juxtaposition of colour and texture is subtle and understated.

Woven textiles were in abundance. Sarah Tyssen (winner of the Craft and Design award at Made London in 2014) showed limited-edition scarves, throws and blankets in a variety of weaves and subtle colours. As with my own nature-inspired handknits, her work embodies the ethos of the Arts and Crafts movement, which advocated hand skills and believed passionately that making things by hand had a bearing on one's happiness and wellbeing. How right they were!

Holly Berry showed a collection of vibrant and intense pastel pieces. Recognisable for her exciting use of pattern and colour, Holly weaves double-sided graphic blocks that contain hidden messages. Using morse code patterns, the pieces are embedded with messages of "love" and "comfort".

Helen Foot's wovens also carried a deeper message. Working in collaboration with Iona Inglesby, who has taken her family's DNA and transformed it into a series of bright colourblock designs, Helen has interpreted this design into a personalized double cloth. Scottish tartans come to mind,

a subconscious need to define a clan with its own cloth. Aside from this intriguing commission, Helen's fabrics are created in harmony with the loom. I particularly liked her 'wiggles' scarves. The woven fabric is embellished with borders constructed from French knitting, statement meandering tubes making a harmonious hybrid of knitting and weaving.

Margo Selby heads up a woven textile design company that produces exceptional-quality fabrics, rugs and accessories. With commissions for the British Museum, the Yorkshire Sculpture Park and London Transport Museum, for Made London she showed a group of hand-woven art pieces and hand-tufted carpets which referenced Bauhaus design and the tradition of log cabin quilting.

I had a wonderful time at the show, and there was a great camaraderie amongst exhibitors. As more people appreciate and invest in handmade, I feel that we, as craftspeople, are no longer a dying breed, and the only way is up! ☺

For more information on Made London 2015 exhibitors, go to [www.madelondon.org](http://www.madelondon.org). The Made London Spring 2016 exhibition will be held on April 29-May 1.



