

## Press Release



### Inspired:London

New handmade design guide puts readers directly in touch with makers

Readers of a new book, **Inspired: London, A guide to handmade in London**, will get an exclusive insight into over 150 handpicked designers, such as an embroidery designer who helped create Kate Middleton's wedding dress, to a designer who created bespoke and exclusive cushions for Harrods and Selfridges.

Packed full of inspiring designs from clothing to art, and detailed information about their creators, this guide literally puts the reader in touch with the people that hand make products in London. The book closes the gap between the producer and the buyer, as the book contains contact details for every designer, so the reader can chat, make a commission or even meet up with the designer in their studio.

The guide was created by Mary McDermott, owner of We Make London, a series of regular craft events across the city, after she spotted a rise in the interest in handmade products in the UK.

Mary said: *"While the enthusiasm for handmade products has increased in the past few years, I also noticed that customers actually wanted to know more about the designers than you can with online shopping. They wanted to have a personal experience and to know that the products they buy have been lovingly made locally. So we decided to put together a book that would allow customers to actually meet up with the designer."*

With products to suit every budget, this must-have guide for Londoners and visitors aims to support local businesses, which is now more important than ever in the current economy. As well as dedicating an entire page to the work of each designer, the book also has a directory of nearly 100 interesting organisations, suppliers, independent shops and designer-maker markets.

**Inspired:London – A guide to Handmade in London** will be launched on 10 and 11 November at Spitalfields market and is available to buy online for £12.99 via the We Make London Website <http://wemakelondon.bigcartel.com/> and in selected bookshops.

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## PRESS KIT: Inspired London by We Make London

Notes to editors....

Author of the Book, Mary McDermott

Mary McDermott runs We Make London, a creative organisation dedicated to supporting British designer-makers by offering them the opportunity to affordably sell and promote their work to a wider market through events and fairs dedicated to showcasing British design. As well as running We Make London, she has worked professionally in the jewellery business for 13 years and as a freelance events organiser. Mary is currently focusing all her attention on We Make London, and the promotion of her book, Inspired:London to continue to promote, celebrate and deliver affordable opportunities to designer-makers. We Make London unites buyers with designer-makers who offer something unique in today's fast-paced, throwaway world of mass production.

<http://www.wemakelondon.co.uk>

For further information please contact Amy Hutson at Gossip PR on 01273 778385 or email [amy@gossippr.co.uk](mailto:amy@gossippr.co.uk)



### **About the Author – Mary McDermott**

Mary McDermott is a London-based designer-maker with 13 years of professional experience in the jewellery industry, coupled with a background in freelance events management.

Mary specialises in delivering both small and large scale events from intimate show previews and popup shops, to Art and Design Shows featuring hundreds of designers at glorious venues like Chelsea Town Hall, Battersea Arts Centre, Old Spitalfields Market and Camden Lock Market.

Mary also regularly coordinates areas dedicated to designer-makers at large scale events like The Mayor's Thames Festival, The National Wedding Show, Clerkenwell Design Week and The Queen's Jubilee Pageant.

As a designer-maker herself, Mary knows the difficulties designers face in reaching the people who desire but don't know where to buy their products. Mary has been championing British designers since 2008 through her company "We Make London", by organising events dedicated to showcasing the work of British designers and now publishing Inspired:London to extend that platform to publishing.

Mary is dedicated to raising public awareness about the availability and affordability of locally-made handmade products.

[www.mary-mcdermott.co.uk](http://www.mary-mcdermott.co.uk)

### **About We Make London**

'A platform to promote, support & showcase exceptional designer makers in the UK.'

We Make London believe that creative individuals deserve a place to sell their work that is affordable and attainable. We Make London is a creative organisation created to enable talented people to make a living designing and making things, uniting buyers with makers at fun filled fairs and exciting events.

We Make London offers designers the opportunity to sell directly to buyers and offers buyers something unique in today's fast-paced, throw-away world of mass production. Quietly brewing for the last few years, on and offline through knitting clubs, blogs, forums and small independent shops and boutiques, the underground craft scene has exploded onto the public arena. Encouraged to discover this handmade world, consumer awareness is now rife with the notion of buying gifts that are meaningful, unique and made with passion.

With this in mind, price-conscious consumers are changing their shopping habits to be more selective. However, they still deserve and want something special and the designer-makers of We Make London perfectly sum up this new mood in shopping. It's time to take a refreshing break from high street monotony, into the exceptional world of the We Make London designer's products. Individuals are finally being rewarded for having such talent and creativity.

## PRESS KIT: Inspired London by We Make London

### How it all began...

We Make London was formed in 2008 by a group of like-minded designer-makers with a can do attitude, united by the lack of affordable places to sell their products. The original We Make London team met on a handmade chat forum, searching for a place to sell their work that was affordable, had the right creative vibe and would not mean having to compete with mass-produced, imported goods.

We Make London is flourishing after many triumphant events and We Make London events are now one of the top showcases for the work of some of the UK's most exciting design talent.

We Make London is still run by a group of designer-makers with their own small creative businesses, continuing to present the public with imaginative events organised by the makers, for the makers.

[www.wemakelondon.co.uk](http://www.wemakelondon.co.uk)

## Article about Inspired:London by Kathryn Sharman

We Make London's first book, **Inspired: London – A guide to Handmade in London** is a new and exciting title for anyone and everyone with a passion for and interest in buying handmade design. Of course, while the design talent showcased within its pages is London-based, you don't have to live in London, or even the UK, to find it useful and interesting.

What The Artists and Writer's Yearbook is to the literary world and the Michelin Guide is to the restaurant scene, so Inspired:London is to handmade design. Think of it as a one stop source book for the best designer-makers London has to offer. Not only does this handbook offer a visual reference point for the beautiful, unique handmade work of each of the 162 cherry-picked designers featured, it also provides an indispensable tool whereby buyers (from capital-dwelling locals to international tourists) as well as stylists and journalists can connect with designers and their work on a personal level.

Inspired:London is the brainchild of Mary McDermott, the owner of We Make London, which was created in 2008 to enable talented people to make a living from designing and making, by uniting buyers with makers at fun-filled fairs and exciting events. Now in its fourth year, We Make London is one of the top organisers of events for the UK handmade design community in London.

Taking the same ethos, a book that showcases London's design talent was the obvious next step for creator Mary McDermott, as she explains:

*"We are always mesmerised by the beautiful work designer-makers share at our events and we are extremely proud of the amazing diversity of talent and skills in our capital city. We have recreated that beauty in our book Inspired:London – A guide to Handmade in London".*

The wealth of design included is wide-ranging from jewellery-making, fashion and textiles to illustration and art. Prominent designers include Anna Wiscombe, who produces a range of contemporary decorative and functional wooden products inspired by the natural environment, Justine Ellis and her beautiful screen prints, Sophie Long and her exquisite hand-embroidery who contributed to Kate Middleton's Wedding Dress, Catriona Chapman and her unique illustrations and Sam Wingate who has worked with retailers to produce bespoke and exclusive ranges, including cushions for Harrods, Selfridges and the British Museum to name but a few. London certainly has an exclusive range of design, art, fashion and contemporary craft to warrant having a book to guide you around, and introduce you to the wonderful designers in their studios and shops, around London town and beyond.

The book, which encompasses five areas of London: North, East, Central, South and West, devotes a full page to the work of each chosen designer and also includes additional profiles on selected makers. Moreover, contact details are provided for each, so that the reader can easily access the designer's work and even arrange to meet the designer in person to discuss a commission. It is this personalised aspect which makes the book unique and will appeal most to the reader, as Mary explains more fully.

*"The business of handmade and craft has become more desirable and accessible in recent years with the increase in independent shops selling such wares as well as the advent of the online marketplace and key players such as Etsy and Folksy. However, this is still quite an impersonal and distant retail*

## PRESS KIT: Inspired London by We Make London

*experience. We know how important it is for buyers to meet face to face with the person who designed and made the item they're purchasing, which is why handmade markets and events have become so popular. This book encourages and facilitates the relationship between buyer and seller, connecting the reader with the designers who are right there on their doorstep."*

The 200 page book also provides key information on the London handmade scene including a directory of useful organisations, suppliers, independent shops and designer-maker markets, all helpfully split by each main area of London.

In addition, readers will also be interested to see quotes by industry experts and advocates from the creative sector including The Design Trust, ACID, UK Handmade and Creative Boom as well as designers like Rachael Taylor and Amy Lawton who share why they love the capital so much.

### Quotations from Inspired:London

*“When it comes to sourcing those extra special handmade products in London, nothing beats the city’s independent designers and makers. Not only are you going to buy something that has had a lot of love and attention poured into it, you’re going to be ethical in your buying choices by supporting local talent. At Creative Boom, we work hard to expose independents all over the UK. We wholeheartedly support this book and its ethos to champion handmade businesses across London.”*

Katy Cowan, [Creative Boom](#)

*“London has always been a hub of creativity, inspiration and innovation, leading the way and providing the world with a window on the UK’s exceptional and prolific talent. Integral to London’s handmade movement, We Make has created a community for the city’s many designers and makers, providing them with much needed support and an opportunity to show everyone exactly what the handmade renaissance is all about.”*

Bebe Bradley, Editor of [UK Handmade Magazine](#)

*“London continues to be a great magnet for so many great designers & makers from the UK and overseas. As a Dutch woman who arrived 15 years ago, I am always charmed by the history, endless energy, non-conformity and inspiring mismatch of people and cultures. I love London - it is a great place both culturally and financially, that provides fantastic opportunities to run creative businesses here in the Capital and see some of the best work in the world.”*

Patricia van den Akker, Director of [The Design Trust](#)

*“I love the design scene in London and regularly visit every couple of months for work and inspiration. London has amazing resources and is a feast for the eyes! From visiting exhibitions at the V&A to just observing what’s around me and window shopping, I’m instantly energised and inspired. One of my favourite places to go is Brick Lane and the Rob Ryan shop on Columbia Road. There are so many amazing designers in London and I am fortunate to work with some of them on my surface pattern e-course and in my new magazine Moyo. London is a great place for any creative individual to gain ideas and inspiration.”*

Designer, [Rachael Taylor](#)

*“The Oak Studio works with lots of wonderful designer-makers in London and the array of creative talent is inspiring. London is a great place to be and we have definitely created our own creative slice of heaven here. We enjoy working with the We Make London team and wish you all the success for the book.”*

Kate Simpson, [Oak Studio](#)

PRESS KIT: Inspired London by We Make London

Images from Inspired:London

Contact [mary@wemakelondon.co.uk](mailto:mary@wemakelondon.co.uk) for high resolution images



## Reviews of Inspired:London

**Karen Jinks, Creative Director, UK Handmade [www.ukhandmade.co.uk](http://www.ukhandmade.co.uk)**

*"Inspired:London is 200 pages of quality, originality and creativity that is second to none and makes it a book to treasure and be inspired by. The exceptional talent that resides in the vibrant city of London is bursting from every page of this book and it also shows the dedication and passion of Mary McDermott as she works tirelessly to promote and support designers and makers through her We Make fairs. Congratulations to everyone involved!"*

**Tracy, White Lilly Green [www.whitelilygreen.co.uk](http://www.whitelilygreen.co.uk), [whitelilygreen.blogspot.co.uk](http://whitelilygreen.blogspot.co.uk)**

"Inspired London more than lives up to its promise of taking the reader on an inspirational journey of handmade London. Every page is bursting with diversity and awe-inspiring creativity displayed by the talented showcased handmade designers. Discover London's hidden gems of the handmade world, from intricate jewellery to quirky illustration, contemporary needlework to printed textiles. Bask in an array of handmade treasure and find out where to buy them as We Make London introduces you to the designer-makers and their businesses.

Sure to be a hit this Christmas, Inspired London is a visual joy and a must for craft lovers and those who appreciate something that little bit different. It will make a fabulous present itself or it will inspire you to find that perfect, one-of-a-kind handmade gift.

Congratulations to Mary and the We Make London team."

**Laura Mason, Designer-maker, Mason Bee [www.masonbee.co.uk](http://www.masonbee.co.uk)**

*"This can only be described as an awe inspiring look-book of accessible lushness!*

*As a designer maker I have always been acutely aware of the treasure trove of untapped, unknown talent within the UK. The individuals contained within this book are of course, just the tip of the designer-maker iceberg. And it has only been with the continued work of organisations such as We Make London and the talent and hard-work by individuals like Mary McDermott that finally the tide is turning and people are becoming more aware of what has sadly long been considered the underdog, handmade crafts.*

*This book I guarantee will leave you in awe and reaching for your laptop to find out more about these gifted people. I know, because that's precisely what I did. This is a perfect resource which I can turn to whenever I am seeking the perfect gift for my loved ones. Something to look to turn to if you are seeking the encouragement to continue you on your own path to running your own craft business.*

*Now I can't wait for the next one....."*

**Kirsten Miller, Designer-maker, Quernus Crafts [www.quernuscrafts.co.uk](http://www.quernuscrafts.co.uk)**

*"The internet has made it both easier and harder to buy handmade arts and crafts in the UK. Well known websites like Etsy have certainly helped in raising the profile of the handmade community, but if you want to find the designer-makers in your local area, it can be hard to know where to start.*

## PRESS KIT: Inspired London by We Make London

*With Mary McDermott at the helm, We Make London has responded to this challenge by publishing a 200 page guide which is both an invaluable resource and beautiful to look at.*

*This unique guide gives a one page introduction to 162 talented creative micro-businesses in all parts of London, but it is so much more than a business directory. Each designer has a page to showcase their work with beautiful images and a description of their business. This is where the guide comes into its own – every page is a delight, and demonstrates the great diversity and talent that exists within the UK's capital city. At the end of the guide is another useful section of organisations which promote and support handmade in London.*

*All in all, this is a gem of a book on so many levels. It's a great resource for those buyers wishing to explore beyond the mass-produced high street offerings, it's wonderful eye candy for those moments when you want to be inspired, but most of all it demonstrates that there is a growing demand to buy beautiful things direct from local designer-makers. Surely it's only a matter of time before we see more of these guides springing up all over the country."*

**Dawn Bevins, Designer-maker, Dawn Bevins Design [www.dawnbevins.co.uk](http://www.dawnbevins.co.uk)**

*"Inspired: London – A Guide to Handmade in London is a mammoth guide to the wonderfully eclectic, bustling world of handmade that is currently thriving in London.*

*It introduces you to the latest cutting-edge designer-makers based in the capital, by dedicating a page to each, where you can find product images, a brief explanation about what it is they create and contact details.*

*The book is divided into the North, South, East and West of the city, so is of great interest to anyone living close by that may be interested in buying local, or to visitors searching for a unique item from their trip. However, most designers also have an online shop listed, so this also acts as a functional directory for anyone wanting to find handmade products online.*

*An extensive range of craft, art and design disciplines are covered including, illustration, screen printing, glass blowing, needle felting and jewellery, and you will find links to beautiful London themed products by designers such as Tobyboo, Amelia Parker, Mr Wingate and London Clay Birds.*

*For those that do live in, or visit, London there is also a useful list of organisations that support independent designer-makers, shops, galleries, studios, workshops, suppliers and markets.*

*This book contains something for everyone and it a great introduction to the handmade community. It is also a valuable resource if you are new to searching for handmade gifts but aren't quite sure where you can find sometimes elusive independent makers."*