

# exhibitionist

Art and crafts in the eco sphere - words by Melissa Knight and Anna Greer



## paper cuts and prayer books

**Peter Clark wants your love letters. He wants your old maths exercise book as well. And Peter Clark is not a primary school crush with a fetish for algebra.** Described as an eccentric scavenger, Clark hunts through antiques fairs, car-boot sales, bric-a-brac markets and second hand stores to find the right objects to inspire his playful and colourful collages - old maps, discarded love letters, buttons, matchboxes; all with a renewed purpose in life.

In the new fully illustrated book, *Paperwork*, author Matthew Sturgis takes readers on a unique journey into Clark's career. Icons and images of modern eras almost leap out of the pages, from proud English bulldogs and cheeky beasts, to smoking jackets and Harley Davidsons. Based in London, Clark has exhibited in major galleries and art fairs around the world, and even fashion designer Paul Smith is a dedicated fan, showing Clark's work in his New York, L.A. and Milan stores.

*Paperwork* is accompanied by a background story to Peter Clark's work and provides readers with a rare insight into an artist's practice, showing the progression of his work from found ephemera to amazingly detailed, colourful and engaging works of art. Peter's tongue often seems firmly implanted in his cheek, like in one of our favourites (above) - a Hells Angel Jacket made from old bibles and prayer books. {MK}

*Paperwork* by Matthew Sturgis is published through Black Dog Publishing



## trash palette

**Brisbane's Reverse Garbage has long been an institution for renovators and creative-types looking for salvaged materials they can use in original designs.**

A not-for-profit business that collects and re-sells high quality industrial discards, this worker's co-operative also plays host to quarterly exhibitions promoting the creative reuse of materials through art. In its most recent show, *Resonance*, artists were asked to stretch their imaginations, using only recycled wood, metal, plastics or rubber in their works.

Exhibition organiser Brooke Nelson says the concept led to artists creating new and exciting objects, from funky brooches and delicate timepieces, to rubber cuffs made from recycled inner-tubes. "Our exhibitions are really inspiring and show people just what you can make from salvaged materials."

Following the success of *resonance*, Brooke is in the middle of organising the next exhibition, *SHIFT*, which is scheduled for November. "I want this exhibition to be about "shifting" people's ideas, thinking outside the box a little and substituting new materials for reused objects when designing jewellery or art pieces," Brooke says. {MK}

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

## wooly waterworld

**Are you hooked on crochet? Is your life intertwined with the environment and your community? Are you familiar with the theory of hyperbolic space? Well, the last one you can work on.**

For crafting, environmentalist and science nerds everywhere, comes the Sydney Reef project, the Australian version of an installation that has wended its way around the world. It began with LA-based science communicator Margaret Wertheim and her sister Caroline, who grew up in Queensland. They discovered that a particular way of modeling the geometric theory of hyperbolic space, through crochet, closely resembled coral and other marine life. From this the crocheted coral reef project was born. The installation aims to bring awareness to the affects of global warming on the Great Barrier Reef.

The Sydney-based In Stitches collective brought the installation to the Great Barrier Reef's homeland for the first time and collaborated with over 300 volunteers to bring the crocheted reef to life. The original Crochet Reef was made up of many different "sub-reefs," each with its own colours and styling: including a massive Toxic Reef crocheted from yarn and plastic trash - a part of the project that responds to the escalating problem of plastic trash that is inundating our oceans and choking marine life.

Avid crafter Maryann Noonan only missed one of the many workshops held over 11 months. "We're creating something beautiful and raising awareness of what nature has given us. I hope the exhibit will bring out that message - that we need to protect our planet. There is an urgency there, we need to do something about it," she said.

The Sydney Reef was exhibited at Sydney's Powerhouse Museum in August but for those who missed it, The In Stitches crew have said they also hope to tour the show regionally, so keep your ears to the ground (or eyes on their website [www.sydneyreef.blogspot.com](http://www.sydneyreef.blogspot.com)) for future happenings. {AG}

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



## optimistic art

**A self-confessed craft addict, Melbourne's Penny Walker-Keefe is an emerging handmade designer, using recycled and found objects to create whimsical paper and textile collections.**

Finding inspiration in everything from folk rock and psychedelic colour to the motifs of exotic culture, Penny's work includes gorgeous fabric bangles, hand-woven wall hangings and delicate paper sculptures made from pre-loved journals, plastics and reclaimed fabrics.

Penny says growing up with creative parents gave her an ability to see everything has a second purpose. "I would figure out ways to make things myself out of available resources, if I couldn't afford the neat new materials from the shops. It became a way of life and I developed an eye for seeing the potential in the junk others dismissed."

Penny's latest project, *Nightmares*, exhibited at Sydney's World Bar in October and showcased a selection of new drawings and collages on handmade paper. {MK}

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

## seven thousand oaks

Founded by Miyuki Jokiranta (a radio maker, linguist and cultural researcher based in Sydney), the Seven Thousand Oaks website aims to be an avenue for sourcing and promoting artists incorporating environmental concerns into their film, visual or sound works.

The organisation's name is inspired by a Joseph Beuys work of the same name, in which he envisioned planting 7000 oaks around the world, in order to bring the transformative power of art into the public sphere.

As well as the website, seven thousand oaks is also organising the 7KO festival in Melbourne, a program of film, sound and visual artists work scheduled for spring next year. Miyuki says she hopes the festival will just be the starting point in opening up discussions in the community on the ideas and concepts behind sustainability in art. {MK}

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

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