

VISUAL INTERESTS

Artist Deborah Crowe shares her unique aesthetic, from shoes to doggie bags

Artist Deborah Crowe has a fascination with textiles, incorporating ideas of craft and construction into her work — a recent exhibition looked at the history of embroidery, and in the past she co-founded the fashion label FraserCrowe.

Her work also includes drawings, installations, digital prints and more, with pieces held in collections at Te Papa, The Dowse Art Museum and the James Wallace Collection. Crowe, also a senior practitioner and principal lecturer at the School of Visual Art, Manukau Institute of Technology, will be part of a roundtable discussion at 7UP, a “free talkfest for all with a stake in New Zealand’s craft sector” being held at Objectspace. This Saturday Crowe and six other creatives will assess the current and future landscape of the crafts, with Crowe particularly interested in the development of new audiences for craft and design-related makers, the provision of spaces for critique, and how to “keep it fresh”.

In July, she will also exhibit a collaborative 5.1 surround sound installation with writer/director Eldon Booth at Blue Oyster Art Project Space in Dunedin.

● **7UP discussion, at Objectspace, Saturday June 23, 1.30pm to 4.30pm.**

10 FAVOURITE THINGS

1 My bicycle
A Raleigh Nautilus 2.0 — not that I knew the brand and model before looking — however it’s my joy. A few years ago a crazy, inspirational student reminded me how brilliant it is to get on your bike and just go for a ride. Suddenly all your worries fade away and you’re 8 years old again. Pure magic.

2 Vivienne Westwood Canvas Bondage boots
I am a shoe collector. With their moulded animal toes, these remind me of spats or protective tack a horse might wear, crossed with a hint of bover boot and classic court shoe. I love to look at them as much as wear them.

3 John Reynolds, Acronyms, Etc #154 (CRAPOLA)
John Reynolds makes smart work. When I saw this a few years ago, I had to have it. Crapola is one of my favourite terms — derogatory but also a little exotic.

4 Fran Allison toxic weed brooch
A birthday present — silver cast from gorse, and embellished with recycled plastic. I like it because of its historical and cultural references — the thorny introduced species, enhanced with pink and white blooms reminiscent of cherry blossoms and Japanese fabrics. A bit spiky, it’s not the best brooch to give someone a hug, but contains myriad meanings for me.

5 Early morning surfing
Every morning I spend at least 15 minutes of pure opportunistic cruising on the net. I check my inbox for newsletters (designboom, coolhunting, dazeddigital, culturevixen, springwise et al) and go wherever the threads take me. I love coming across new things like Hovding’s inflatable bicycle helmet, The Royal College of Art’s latest MA Fashion shows, the museum of endangered sounds and amazing architectural projects.

6 Grace, the 1963 Ford Anglia
The same year as me and restored secretly by my husband for a surprise present. Grace has elegant fins and is named after my late mother, an inspirational woman whom I have a lot to thank for.

7 Makita battery drill
I love power tools. This isn’t mine, but I gave it as a present (the kind you give to someone close knowing you’ll get to use it too). I construct a lot of objects in my studio and used to use cheap battery drills, but once you’ve used a Makita, it’s difficult to go back.

8 aXylophone app
A bit like my bike, a brilliant distraction from things “adult”.

9 Leather coat
I love how distressed this is. I bought it in 1981 for £3 in a charity shop in my hometown, Kirriemuir. It’s now the permanent home of my prized Warwick Freeman Lava Brooch but about 15 years ago I hadn’t worn the coat for a while and put it through a hydraulic paper press as part of an artists project called PaperWeight. It’s been through a lot.

10 Who is Dead Martin doggie bag

I have a few Who is Dead Martin works by Maiangi Waitai. The best pieces are the roughest — embroidered like a quick sketch, unconcerned with technique, or concerned with stitching gone bad — yeah! This bag reminds me of my pretty ugly bull terrier Ana.



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