

Devon Guild of Craftsmen

Press Information

—make it ok—

What Do I Need To Do To Make It OK?

Exhibition runs Saturday 19 March – Sunday 8 May
Private View 6 - 8pm Friday 18 March

Venue: **Devon Guild of Craftsmen**
Riverside Mill, Bovey Tracey, Devon TQ13 9AF

A touring exhibition including specially commissioned work by 5 artists who explore damage and repair, disease and healing, through stitch and other media.

Curator Liz Cooper launches this touring exhibition entitled 'What Do I Need to Do to Make it OK?' at Devon Guild of Craftsmen this Spring. The title is taken from a 2013 talk by internationally recognised artist [Dorothy Caldwell](#). From Ontario Canada, Dorothy has travelled to residencies in the outback of Southern Australia, and the wilds of Baffin Island in the Canadian Arctic. She searches for faint traces of lines and signs made by existing and earlier civilisations and records this distant and faint mark-making in her own work: 'I am drawn to cloth that has been repaired and reconstructed and in that ongoing process encodes time and the richness of lives lived.' These ideas are transferred into striking semi-abstract wall-hung work such as *Comfort of Fog* (below) using hand-stitching into layers of dyed cloth and felt. A new commission will debut at the Guild.

Other artists in the exhibition include [Freddie Robins](#) who uses precision machine-knitted wool and crochet in unsettling combinations with found objects. She creates distorted fabric faces and bodies which examine human fear of illness and death including the works *Basketcase* (top). [Celia Pym](#)'s interest in process has led her to knit her way around Japan to rescue other people's discarded and partially-made garments, and spend a residency darning the clothes and bags of medical students in the Dissecting Room at Kings College London. Her installation at the Guild incorporates 60 socks!

Another artist investigating medical territory is [Karina Thompson](#), whose work responds to historic, disused spaces and restoration of bodies and objects such as bones in a medieval lepers' cemetery: *Leper's Skull* (above). She often employs high-tech embroidery to replicate complex data, such as scans of her own heartbeat - as part of the debate about the nature of stitch in the 21st century and its value in cutting-edge robotics.

The fifth exhibitor, [Saidhbhín Gibson](#), is a multi-disciplinary artist concerned with our impact on the landscape. A recurring format is a series of stitched interventions into natural objects, such as the series of 'repaired' leaves known as *Make Good, Make Better*. There is deliberate ambiguity in her titles – is it art that makes things better, or nature?

A series of Guild events relating to the exhibition themes include a textile conservation day and sock puppet-making sessions for families where kids can sew alien puppets to patch up the planet.

Exhibition at the Guild is free entry and open daily 10am-5.30pm
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THE DEVON GUILD OF CRAFTSMEN

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Registered charity no. 296568 · Company no. 2026446

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A touring exhibition curated by Liz Cooper and supported by Arts Council England and the International Textile Research Centre of the University for the Creative Arts



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'Make it OK' on Tour

'Make it OK' is touring to venues across the UK. The generous support of Arts Council England has allowed all five artists to be commissioned to make new work in response to the exhibition themes, in some cases inspired by specific venues. The work will be unveiled in stages throughout the tour. *For more details of tour and artists please see:* <http://lizcooper.org/what-do-i-need-to-do-to-make-it-ok/tour-schedule-for-make-it-ok/>

Related events at the Devon Guild:

Curator Liz Cooper in conversation with exhibitor Dorothy Caldwell

19 March 10.30 - 11.30am

Canadian artist Caldwell will discuss her patterns of working, through residencies in Baffin Island and South Australia, tracing ancient manmade marks on the landscape and transforming these into her own language of stitch and dye. Free, no booking needed.

Odd Socks Sock puppet making

29 March & Tuesday 5 April 10.30am - 12.30pm & 1.30 - 4pm

Free family drop-in workshop. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Ask the Expert

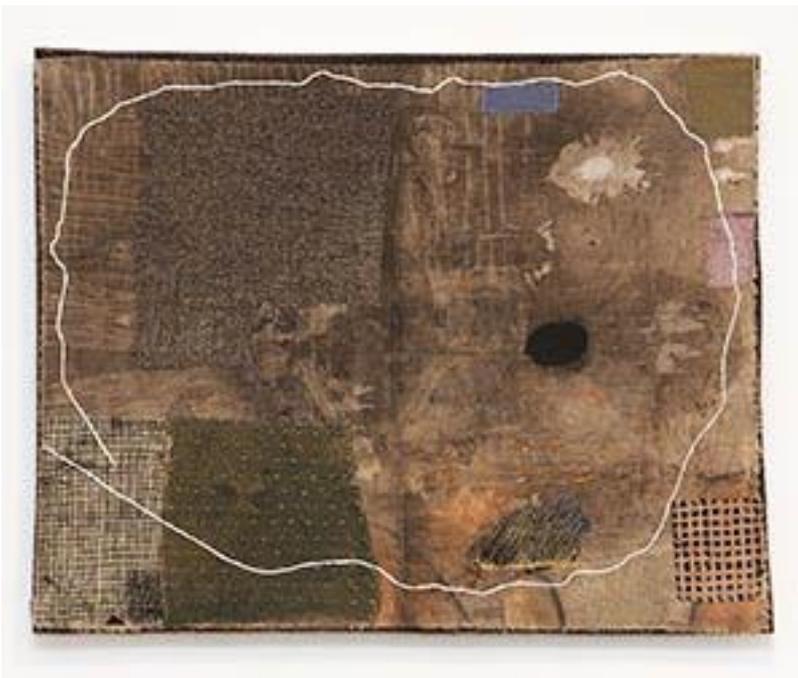
16 April 10.30am - 12.30pm & 1.30 - 4pm

Textile conservation day. Bring your textiles along and chat to the experts from *Icon* www.icon.org.uk Free, drop in event.

Meet the Makers

Saturday 23 April 10.30am - 12pm

Freddie Robins and Karina Thompson, along with curator Liz Cooper, will discuss technology verses hand-made. Free, no booking needed.



Images: Basketcase by Freddie Robins. Photo Douglas Atfield; Leper's Skull by Karina Thompson; Comfort of Fog by Dorothy Caldwell

About Devon Guild of Craftsmen: Based in Bovey Tracey the Devon Guild is the most popular contemporary crafts venue and charity in the South West (110,000+ visitors annually) and is the hub of local and creative communities. With a reputation and influence that extends nationally, the exhibitions and events are fun, free, open to all, inclusive and inspiring. They run an acclaimed educational outreach programme to schools and communities. At Riverside Mill there are two galleries with an exciting annual programme, constantly changing displays and showcases in our shop and a lively, friendly café with a rooftop terrace, alongside the River Bovey.

www.crafts.org.uk

Press: For more information contact: Liz Cooper, 07960 782 337, liz@lizcooper.org or Devon Guild Marketing for high resolution images and further support information: Simon Williams simon.williams@crafts.org.uk or Anna Trussler anna.trussler@crafts.org.uk 01626 832223

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