

An interview with UK textile artist, Mary-Clare Buckle
by David Dupuy, owner of www.reaktiv-zone.org

Hi Mary-Clare - could you introduce yourself in a few words?

Hi - I'm Mary-Clare Buckle - a textile artist from Dorset, South West England.

What does 1-art-1.com mean?

We wanted a domain name using the word art and put the 1 in to hopefully come top in various directories.

Are you a symmetrical or asymmetrical person?

Symmetrical I s'pose

You define yourself as a textile artist: what is textile art?

Pictures which are made using fibres or fabric as the medium. Unfortunately, textile work is often categorised as 'craft' rather than 'art', but I consider myself firmly as an artist - I don't do bags and hats!

How did you get the idea to use fibres?

I've always been interested in textiles - making my own clothes and suchlike. I nearly did my degree in Textiles - but ended up specialising in jewellery. A friend I was on my Art Foundation course with did Feltmaking as her speciality and so when I wanted to move on from jewellery that was what I chose to do as I had been interested in it for a long time.

Why are your pieces so colourful. Are they a gathering of all the travelling experiences you've gone through?

I expect that's it to an extent, but really it was the other way round. I wanted to visit countries in the 'third world' because they tend to use colour in such a vibrant way. No more so than in India - their houses, interiors, clothes, even their food is in bright, clashing colours. Also possibly from having made jewellery for years and unable to express myself in colour - it's all coming out now.

You wrote in your biography that you come from a creative family of artists. Did they push you to follow the same path or did it come naturally?

I certainly wasn't pushed into art. It was the thing I was best at and very much what I wanted to do from quite a young age.

What inspires you?

Inspiration comes sometimes from the actual medium itself - 'playing' with all sorts of different textures and threads. I like my work to be lively - what often comes to mind is that the fibres are 'dancing.'. When I designed jewellery I liked making things that had moving parts and I like the images to have a lot of movement - whether implied or actual (as in my flashing light pictures).

I've been inspired recently from getting into dance music (particularly 'trance') in the last few years. In particular, the multi-coloured 'glow-sticks' everyone dances with, the lasers and flashing coloured lights and the abstract moving images projected onto screens behind the DJs.

Other inspiration includes: film sets eg the underground city in 'Matrix Reloaded' and the cars flying in all directions in 'The Fifth Element'; also costumes and sets from historical drama/films such as 'First Knight', 'Hamlet' and 'Henry VIII'; mediæval artifacts; textures used in Indian/Moroccan/South American fabrics and laquer work; Italian glass; or perhaps a line in a poem; the title of a pop song ... ideas **do** sometimes come to me in the middle of the night!

Artists whose work inspires me include: Alexander Calder, Miro, Rothko, Eduardo Paolozzi, Matisse's cut-outs, Odilon Redon

What are your current exhibitions and what are your next projects?

I have my first solo exhibition in September 2004. This is entitled '[Floating Felts](#)', which is the term I coined for my almost-transparent pieces. These are framed by sandwiching between sheets of clear acrylic, and hung slightly away from the wall, which means that the eye of the viewer is no longer constrained by a rectangular frame.

I am also continuing to work on my '[Art Light](#)' pictures (including some with special sequences of gently flashing lights) and [pictures using digital images on a textile \(felt\) background](#).

As an artist, what are the difficulties you have to face?

Finding the time and quiet to do my work rather than promoting it; same as all artists - selling enough to have enough money to buy materials, frame it and produce more.

How do you lead a project to its reality?

I spend a lot of time prior to actually producing the piece: thinking, thinking, thinking; getting out all my fibres and looking at the colours; looking at images of inspiring pieces/fabrics/designs; using the internet to research ideas. Then I start to lay out the fibres and play around with different colours, shapes and types of fibre.

Often, I'll lay out the piece, then decide I don't like it, discard it and work on a different design for it ... and sometimes I'll finish the piece and then cut it up into squares to combine into one of my 'tiled' pieces (eg '[Kiss Kiss](#)').

How do you see the evolution of Art in the coming years? What about your own work?

I think the Art scene in Britain is really interesting and vibrant - people like the Chapman brothers and Tracey Emin really challenging our ideas - things can only get better!

As for my work: to an extent I want to produce attractive stuff that people can live with, but I also would like to do stuff that is a bit more challenging than that. I'd love to have my work in a public collection somewhere!

Anything to wish?

My wish is to have a technical expert on hand to help me realise all my ideas like we used to have when I was at college. Maybe I could have the time someday to go back to college to do some new innovative work!

I would also particularly like to work with an electronics expert who is interested in art, to realise some of my ideas for lighted pieces.

Anything to add?

I particularly like the textile/fibre art medium, because it enables me to produce pieces which are very alive and - with their texture - have a three-dimensional look and feel to them. As I always say in my promotional literature - "sweeping away the two-dimensional limitations of painting"!

Mary-Clare's work can be seen on www.1-art-1.com
or at her gallery at [13 Market Street, Abbotsbury, Dorset, UK.](#)

She can be contacted on 0044-1305-871561, or by email via her website.