

# HANDMADE IN BURNLEY

FACILITATED BY THE PRINCE'S SCHOOL OF TRADITIONAL ARTS

*Progress Report*

*Traditional Textile Design Workshops  
Felt Making & Laptop Covers*



# THE HANDMADE IN BURNLEY PROJECT

## THE WORK OF THE PRINCE'S SCHOOL OF TRADITIONAL ARTS IN BURNLEY

Handmade in Burnley is a project of The Prince's School of Traditional Arts in association with several of the other Prince's Charities. To meet the common objectives of encouraging manufacture and industry in Burnley and provide economic opportunities for the community, the Prince's School conceived of the idea of re-defining manufacture by harking back to its original meaning, handmade, and industry, which means resourcefulness.

### Partnership with the University of Central Lancashire

Currently, this idea is being translated in a "design and make" project in association with the International Fashion Institute of the University of Central Lancashire. Through the latter's Eastern Fashion course, the Prince's School is introducing traditional design principles and techniques, inspired and informed by local visual references from sources housed in Townley Hall, to give women a sense of their own cultural heritage as a resource for craft they can create by hand.

In a series of workshops held at the Burnley campus of UCLan, a team of teachers and alumni of The Prince's School are working with teachers of UCLan's Eastern Fashion course. The workshops focus on traditional textile design to provide the context for the development of the core identity of the products. The participants are led through a series of staged developments starting from a thorough research of the heritage of the textile and weaving industry in Burnley. They are given access to a series of textile designs extracted from pattern books housed in the archives of Towneley Hall and are taught to read and analyse these patterns in order to understand their full significance. Following this, they are taught to interpret the traditional patterns into their own contemporary work. Through the workshops, participants are given the opportunity to acquire the necessary skills to generate their products. They learn traditional dyeing techniques using natural dyes; painting on textiles; embroidery and stitching as well as the understanding of pattern as a fundamental expression of the order of nature.

### Outcome of Project's First Phase

As the first phase of the project comes to a close, the level of understanding and confidence amongst the participants is high and the collective awareness of the way forward is emerging. The women arrived in this project from different backgrounds (mothers, students, artists) but have rapidly, through a shared experience, developed a unified understanding of the creative journey they are embarking upon together. As a result, they have taken ownership of the project and have decided to form a cooperative towards the development of an enterprise.

This report outlines the development of three workshops which took place between June and

# FELT - A TRADITIONAL & CONTEMPORARY MATERIAL



The Prince's School of Traditional Arts in partnership with The University of Central Lancashire in Burnley ran three workshops in the summer to teach felt making techniques and produce a new set of product prototypes. Made from wool, felt is versatile traditional material which has a great variety of applications both in the traditional and the contemporary context of design. Felt has its roots in Central Asia, where beautiful rugs and clothes are made, mostly by women.



# MAKING THE FELT FIRST TEST PIECES

The workshop began with instructions on the basic techniques of felt making , where very participant made a test piece and began to see the design possibilities inherent in this material. They discovered that the pieces can have subtle colour variations as well as bold strong designs. The participants enjoyed the energetic process involved in felt making. They also learned about the wool and its characteristics as a base material, how to lay it, wet it, and roll and wash it in order to achieve a high quality felt piece.



# DESIGN, COLOUR AND MOCK-UPS

The next step in learning to work with felt focused on design and colour choices. The design process involved reseraching, sketching creating mood boards. The ideas were worked through on paper and eventually in making calico mock-ups. This was a very valuable process that many of the participants had not experienced before and allowed for a good exchange of ideas, and stimulating, and creative suggestions.



# MAKING THE FELT PIECES TO SCALE

The workshop then centred on lap top covers as the product to develop. Making the the felt pieces to the right scale for the requirements of this particular product was vital . In becoming familiar with the properties of felt, every participant had to learned about shrinkage. They also had to make sure that their chosen design remained integral to the piece of felt they were making.



# STITCHING AND EMBELLISHMENT

The last stage of the workshop looked at embellishments, fixings, and the stitching of the laptop covers themselves. In this phase the participants enjoyed experimenting with a variety of ideas, techniques and designs that made their piece even more unique, incorporating some of the ideas they had learned in the previous 'Design and Make' workshops.

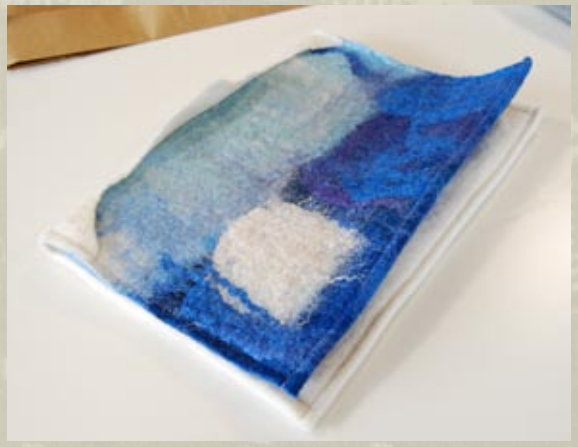
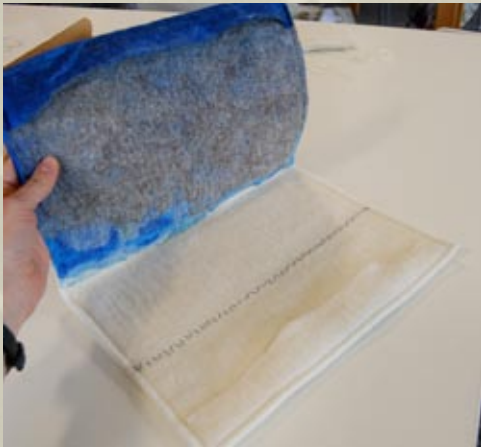


# THE COMPLETED LAPTOP COVERS

The participants managed to produce a set of laptop covers which reflected the various skills and techniques acquired throughout the programme. This stage of work was aimed at covering a wide range of skills, which will be deepened in the next stages. In effect, this was a general introduction to the broad possibilities that the 'Design and Make' workshops of Handmade in Burnley have to offer. The outcome of this stage sets a good platform to assess the standard of work that has been achieved and sets the aims and objectives for the next phase. This exercise sets the tone for the identification and creation of the brand image for Handmade in Burnley









## CONTACT INFORMATION

**Dr. Khaled Azzam, LVO**

Director

**Patricia Araneta**

Outreach Programme Director

The Prince's School of Traditional Arts

19-22 Charlotte Road

London EC2A 3SG

Tel + 44(0)20 7613 8500

Fax+ 44(0)20 7613 8558

[www.psta.org.uk](http://www.psta.org.uk)

The Prince's School of Traditional Arts is a company limited  
by guarantee, no 4970959.

Registered in England and Wales. Registered charity no 1101527.