

Handmade

Vintage cushions

In her London flat, Nichollette Yardley-Moore hand-stitches an eclectic collection of cushions

Have you always been interested in designing? Absolutely – my dressing-up box was always crammed full with far more interesting things than the clothes I had, so I would make my own wardrobe.

What was the first thing you ever made? I cut all the embroidered flowers out of a shawl to sew around the neckline of a black silk ballgown – I thought it looked absolutely wonderful!

How did you get into what you do? After studying fashion and design, I did various things, including designing and making accessories, running my own shop, studying drama and becoming a yoga teacher. My most recent change came after I had a dream of me with an industrial sewing machine, scarves and fabrics, making cushions.

How did the business come about? After my dream, I bought an industrial sewing machine from eBay. It went to a repair shop, then a friend and I rolled it home on a shopping trolley. I began sourcing fabrics, scarves and sewing paraphernalia straight away.

How did it all develop? I sold at markets like Greenwich, Spitalfields and Covent Garden. Some independent shops stocked my cushions, and then the website launched. I now invest in PR and sell in the US via a boutique in Greenwich Village.

What's your proudest moment? Achieving Best of British at Liberty's open call competition in 2013. The emporium's managing director, Ed Burstall, allowed



Left Nichollette's bespoke handmade cushions feature different designs, including flags, animals, florals and retro patterns, with complementary trimmings, all designs are one-offs and start from £30. **Right** Nichollette with a range of her cushions. Browse her gallery at www.vintagecushions.com.

me 40 minutes to show him my collection – instead of the allocated 3 minutes.

What's been your biggest challenge? The quality of my work is difficult to convey online. Instead, I take every opportunity to get to markets and fairs so

that customers can actually see the quality first-hand.

What's the best thing about being a maker? I never have to compromise with workmanship. All of my cushion covers are fully lined, with bias bound zip seams, and the inner seams are bias bound too.

How do you work? I choose a theme or a colour for a collection, then I team up complementary fabrics and scarves – it can take some time to create a harmonious impact. I cut them out, choose ribbons, zips and cottons, then I prepare everything into a kit-like form before getting onto the sewing machine. Finally, I attach a vintage button to the zip and hand-write a provenance label. I spend another day photographing and writing information to be uploaded online.

What inspires you? Everything from dreams to walking the dog! My design background was shaped by my pattern-cutting teacher, Miss Kitty Todor. Now in her 90s, she continues to be an inspiration.

Any advice? Aim to be the best in your field, never compromise standards and maintain your individuality.

What's next? For my cushions to be more available, in the UK and Ireland, as well as internationally. 



*The
company*

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