

# DESIGNER MAKER PROFILE

## TIFFANY RAWSON

This month's Designer Maker profile introduces Tiffany Rawson, winner of the Concept For Living award at Manchester Metropolitan University this year. Tiffany's designs are quirky and illustrative and have the potential to take her far. We met up with her to find out more about her work.

### Tell us a bit about your background.

I am a West Yorkshire based artist, who has practiced number of creative disciplines at Manchester Metropolitan University over the last five years. After completing my Art Foundation I progressed onto the Embroidery Degree where I experimented with a lot of illustration and narratives that then were not only translated often on found papers but also through hand embroidery. Over the summer I attended New Designers in London, as well as being chosen by the Embroiders Guild to exhibit my work at the Knit and Stitch show in the graduate showcase in both London and Harrogate. That September I went straight onto a Postgraduate in Creative Business under the mentoring of CJ O'Neil and Helen Felcey. With their guidance over the year I gained all the knowledge I would need to set up my own business, not only in terms of academia but also pursuing my product to the standard that is required. During this I gained freelance work for a company called Studio 24 in which I designed 1950's wallpaper as well working under one of the leading British fashion names Alexander McQueen.



**Tiffany Rawson**  
Designer



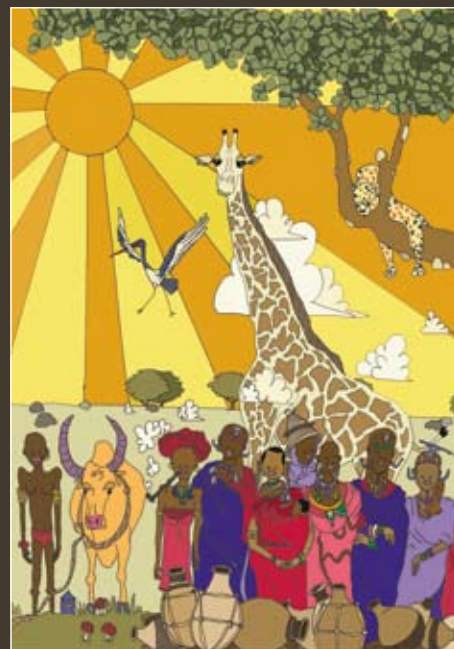
### What inspires you?

The inspirations behind my work come from the day-to-day characters that I come across and my travels. I carry a sketchbook with me nearly all the time; it doesn't matter whether I am in Manchester or Mauritius. My postgraduate collection of work was derived from a trip to South Africa this Easter where I travelled from Cape Town then up to Kruger National Park. A lot of my designs were based around the wildlife I saw as well as the native people.

### Can you describe your work and the processes that you use?

The process pattern of my work always starts off with taking a lot of photographs and drawing directly on sight in my

sketchbook. I then take a series of images back to my studio where I begin to develop the line quality and use the addition of colour to enhance my designs. With these designs I create a series of products, which are a means of showcasing and visualising prospective products. For my latest collection these ranged from leather book sleeves, moleskin holders, and credit card wallets. I also experimented with actually bookbinding itself as well as screen prints, printed Cello tape, lettersets and finally large illustrations for installations; whether it be for a child's bedroom, a window display or an exhibition. Colour is very important to my work and is something I get excited about when injecting into my designs. My grandpa used to be a master dyer and create new colours for the carpet industry (which was big business at the time) and that is where I think I get it.



### Who are your design heroes?

My design heroes vary I have so many. In terms of straight forward design/ illustration it has to be Quentin Blake and Charley Harper. Blake's simplicity of line and how it captures a character is brilliant and his work can be translated straight onto any product and sell; whether it be a book, a mug, a painting or an apron. Charley Harper, in terms of pattern and technique was way ahead of his time, combined with his bold use of colour that is so considered.

### What projects are you working on at the moment?

Currently I am enjoying everything that has come from the Postgraduate show in Manchester as well as looking for creative employment although there are a few opportunities in the pipelines. I have completed a week at Design Show Liverpool with a group my fellow students from the course, under the name Studio 10. I have also been working on some freelance work for a new online craft community Folksy, as well as doing a series of workshops with them at Love Box festival run by Groove Armada over the course of the summer. I have also been putting work in galleries who saw my work from the show such as Urbis in Manchester who I have been in contact with over the last year, Pad Gallery in Preston, Bolthole in Rawtenstall and a small gallery/shop in Halifax, Gallery 339; a gallery I have worked closely and developed with over the last few years.

### What are your plans for the future?

In the immediate future I will be undergoing some design work for Urbis, working with the internal structure of the building and responding to that in my own way. I have also got some more freelance work coming up for Studio 24, and Folksy, as well as developing some new designs I have been working on from my holiday; all of which will keep me occupied until I find a creative position. Long term I will carry on creating and developing new ideas and designs with the hope to work with a company / companies that will transform them into products.

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