

# Selwedge

## DESIGNER EDGE

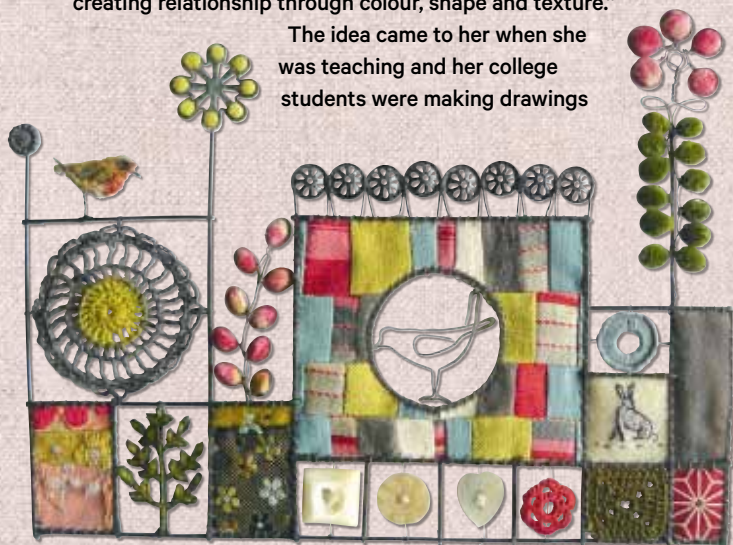


### LIZ COOKSEY

Liz Cooksey's artworks free birds from behind bars but retain the beauty of feather-soft fabrics and yarns juxtaposed against rigid wirework. And her tiny winged creatures clearly like the idea as much as we do, sticking around to perch on the metal framework, rather than taking flight.

"I often find it difficult to describe my work, as it is made up of lots of different elements using a wide range of techniques," says Manchester-based Liz. "It involves an eclectic mix of found and handmade treasures. I bring them together in small, intricate compositions with possible narratives coming into play via natural forms, such as flower heads, hares, birds and hearts. I try to carefully place all the elements together within a wire framework, creating relationship through colour, shape and texture."

The idea came to her when she was teaching and her college students were making drawings



using small wire grids.

Around the same time, she became 'hooked' on crochet after discovering mini hooks in her grandmother's sewing tin. "This led me to play around with combining wire and crochet – not the most obvious materials to bring together, but it got me started, and I have loved the process of discovery and experimentation that has led to the current pieces". The wire framework beautifully showcases her various techniques and her



collections of curios.

She starts the process by gathering and making her 'ingredients'. "I love this stage, because there is so much potential for ideas. I lay everything out, selecting a crocheted square, embroidered flower, patchwork fabric ... And I can consider what works together," she says. "It's like shopping."

Once a perfect balance has been achieved, the hammering begins. Liz straightens and flattens the wire to accommodate her

crafted compilation. When extra elements are called for, she adds random old buttons, pieces of pottery and remnants of lace and ribbons sourced from antique markets or family cupboards.

Her completed mixed-treasure artworks are suspended behind glass in white boxed frames, pinned to sit slightly away from the surface to create a soft shadow. Although the pieces are small (10-30cm wide), they have a concentrated quality.

Liz exhibits at The Contemporary Craft Festival in Devon, UK and also sells her work through [www.madebyhandonline.com](http://www.madebyhandonline.com).

Visit Liz Cooksey's website ([www.lizcooksey.com](http://www.lizcooksey.com)), follow her on Instagram (@liz\_cooksey) or email her ([cookseynash@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:cookseynash@hotmail.co.uk)).

– Janai Welx