

Selwedge

DESIGNER EDGE



MEGAN GRIFFITHS

Take a step inside Megan Griffiths' creative studio, where "more is definitely more". The space is filled with collections of evocative and tactile objects – nature and children's books; jars with buttons and feathers; Indian textiles; and miniature objects. She says she likes to be surrounded by lots of curiosities. But the beauty is that she's not short of open spaces and fresh air, either. Megan lives in beautiful Bath, in Somerset, England, amongst hills and canals, where she can indulge in her love of forest ambles and soak in the picturesque surroundings.

Her magical and "anti-minimalistic" setting is a reflection of her work. Her tiny fabric dolls are richly embroidered in brilliant colours and metallic accents. She manages to pack an astonishing amount of detail into them – considering that many of her dolls fit into the palm of a hand.

That very detailing is the fountainhead of her inspirational flow. "I love the busyness and intricacy of the layered patterned fabric – the sort of thing you find in traditional clothes from around the world," says Megan. "India is at the very top of my list of places to visit. Preferably with a very empty bag to fill!"

Her body of work is a fusion of fabric animals and characters inspired by folk stories, fairy tales, exotic cultures and mythical worlds. Farmers, mermaids, lions, llamas, rabbits and, more specifically, Kurds and Valkyrie all feature as subjects, and they're all



dressed in beautiful decorative folk embroidery. Against the muted tones of calico, the bright thread colours really make the designs 'pop'. Megan uses a mix of patterns and shapes for the embroidery, usually focusing on one kind of stitch. "It might sound a bit boring, but I'm just in love with backstitch. Because I work on a small scale, some of the fancier stitches don't translate so well to that size. But I also use some other stitches to inject interesting textures. Whipped backstitch, fishbone and French knots are the firm favourites," she says.

When Megan's not embroidering, she's working on illustrations for weddings, magazines, books and more. She recently started pursuing this full time, but it's taken a few less-suited jobs to find her strengths. "I've done my fair share of waitressing, which is hilarious because I'm insanely clumsy and forgetful. Not a good combination when carrying wine!" she admits. Her time as a chocolatier, working on hand-piped designs, has influenced her intricate embroidery style.

"We didn't have the big white hats like in the Lindt adverts, but it was very cool. I'm a massive chocoholic, so it was a dream come true." And she continues to try new things and broaden her skill set. "I've just learnt to whittle a spoon, and my sister (who does a lot of woodwork) is teaching me how to carve a puppet, which I'm very excited to make an outfit



for. I think it's important to keep playing around with other materials and enjoy the process of it all."

But it's embroidery that she returns to for calmness. "For me, it's a kind of meditation. When you feel the creative flow from your fingers to whatever is being made, it is somewhat transcendental. I love the way that you see your idea building up stitch by stitch," she says. "It's a feeling I get much more readily than when I'm painting, which can sometimes be tainted with a sense of anxiety and pressure about the blank white page. I think it's to do with the rhythm of stitching and the fact that you can unpick anything that goes wrong. It's pure joy!"

To see more of Megan's charming creations visit her [Megan Ivy Griffiths Etsy store](https://www.etsy.com/shop/meganivygriffiths), www.etsy.com/shop/meganivygriffiths and follow her on Instagram @meganivygriffiths.

– Janai Velez

