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Antiquate

KERRI HOLLINGSWORTH - AUSTRALIA'S FIRST
ZERO-WASTE UPHOLSTERER

Kerri Hollingsworth's picturesque farm at the foot of the Cathedral Ranges, which she shares with her partner Marcus and daughter Betty, is a ceaseless reminder of the importance of sustainability, as well as an earthly inspiration continually driving her business.

While working as a full time flight attendant, Kerri's creative spirit and hands on approach led her to rescue old fashioned and out of date pieces of furniture destined for landfill. She was fortunate to experience the benefit of a mentorship from retired upholsterer, Terry Foster. Based in Montrose, Terry began his upholstery apprenticeship in 1959, and his skills are exemplified in his occasional position, teaching upholstery at Japara House. Bolstered by this mentorship, and having felt the creative allure of upholstery restoration, Kerri was quickly hooked on finding and repurposing furniture pieces.

Kerri's passion for design that doesn't cost the earth, coupled with a dedicated mentor and an inspirational landscape, laid the foundation for an.ti.quate, a company thriving in its quest to become Australia's first zero waste upholsterer.

The direction of the piece is dictated by the bones of the chair, and locating the perfect frame is the first step. Kerri then describes an "influx of visions", sketching to achieve the perfect complement of frame and materials. Kerri continues to experience waves of ideas throughout the process, occasionally resulting in her having to take pieces apart and embrace a new and improved direction.



Much like her art, Kerri's business direction developed and changed. What originally began as a "side hustle" has blossomed into an award winning business and eco friendly initiative.

As Kerri's personal values began to become more focussed on sustainability and being conscious of her environmental impact, she extended her goal of a zero waste lifestyle to her business. Kerri credits this as the catalyst for the emergence of her true passion for an.ti.quate.

An.ti.quate's environmental initiative means all materials are sustainably sourced. Kerri's furniture comes from anywhere, from auction houses to online, from rubbish to beloved friends and family. Aptly named opportunity shops are an excellent source of both furniture and fabric, offering sustainable materials from the wider community, adding a further personalised touch to Kerri's projects. Laine Furnishings, an Australian based company, holds high esteem for Kerri, as they make environmentally sustainable choices accessible through their Environmental Rating System. Fabrics from Laine furnishings that have been used in an.ti.quate pieces have come from recycled wool jumpers, soft drink bottles and compostable fabric. The art elements come from fibre shares, an international yarn swap, or are personally spun and dyed by Kerri's grandparents, further connecting her to her creations.

The unique feature of Kerri's work is that materials destined for landfill are transformed into something beautiful and functional, showcasing rather than shunning pre-loved materials. While all Kerri's designs share a common eco-friendly thread, they are incredibly unique.

Kerri's first Upholstery Art collection began with Numero Uno, made from fibre scraps from a variety of previous works. The successful marriage of Kerri's design and environmental consciousness corroborated her conviction, and was crucial to her growth as an artist.

Then came 'Autumn'. This piece's individuality is in its materials, which are all biodegradable. The sofa is made entirely of coconut fibre, hessian, jute and cotton, and is treated with linseed oil. The wool is completely compostable, using non-metallic dyes and all natural fibres, including materials such as mohair, wool, raffia, hessian and coconut. Kerri's latest project uses scraps too small for weaving, as nothing goes to waste in Kerri's art. It is peacock themed, featuring bright colours and a distinctive shape, resulting in a fun and quirky occasional chair.

Her first exhibition, held at Décor & Design, won best small stand, and subsequently generated a public excitement centred around Kerri's work. One of the most exciting commissions to emerge from this is a



sentimental sofa. Significant memorabilia from the client's grandparents' and great grandparents' lives will be woven into the chairs. Everything from the family's textiles, to their war medals, police badges and clothing will be displayed in the art panels, to create a "museum of family history".

It is Kerri's hope that her art and steadfast passion for sustainability can prompt people to become more aware of their environmental footprint. From becoming a more conscious consumer, to being creative about the ways you use products and reduce waste, Kerri believes there are always opportunities for people to better themselves to create a more "environmentally promising future".

Savvy shoppers may be able to snag a piece from an.ti. quate's website, but as it largely focusses on bespoke pieces for clients, products are generally not for sale. 'Autumn' is currently on sale at Auld Alliance Merchants in Mt Evelyn. Previous designs and featured products can be viewed at www.antiquate.com.au, as well as Facebook @an.ti.quate and Instagram @k_antiquate. •



Opposite page: Huxley Chair and Ottoman created for Rebecca from Kangaroo Ridge Retreat.

