



# an.ti.quate

Kerri, our newly discovered designer from central Victoria, shares her passion and speaks about how her craft evolved.

Words by Kerri Hollingsworth Photography Aaron Clark-Pearman

Living on a small farm at the foot of the Cathedral Ranges with her partner Marcus and their almost two-year-old daughter, Betty, Kerri believes life is wonderful. Constantly inspired by her surroundings and the reminder of how important it is to look after the earth, she couldn't think of a better place to build a creative business.



Life looked so different eight years ago when, after studying Interior Design, I started searching for something more 'hands on'. I was drawn to the creative process around upholstery restorations, and commenced rescuing any roadside pieces I could find.

At that time I was a full-time flight attendant, and a few years later started an.ti.quate as a 'side hustle'. Antiquate means to make something obsolete or out of date by replacing it with something newer or better – it is a reference to the antiquated pieces that I find and restore.

an.ti.quate started as a 'standard' upholstery business, but after I became incredibly conscious of waste, naturally the business followed suit. Energised about upholstery, it wasn't until I made environmentally positive changes that a passionate desire evolved.

## Tell us a little bit about your design process.

My design process in most cases begins with finding the right chair frame – this is the bones of the design so I find inspiration evolves from complementing the frame with the right theme. Once the two coalesce, the only way I can describe the creative process is that I receive an influx of visions that I sketch out to get closer to what will be the perfect fit.

I let my creativity flow with unrestricted ideas before deciding what materials to include in the piece. On most occasions, the ideas continue to develop right until the end: in the past I have taken apart a piece I have been working on because my mind had envisioned a design in a different way that seemed to work better. I have always assumed that's how most creatives work.

## Where do you source your materials from?

My preference is to use fabrics from Laine Furnishings. Laine has created an Environmental Rating System that really makes environmentally conscious choices easy to understand. Many of the fabrics I have used from Laine are either made from recycled wool jumpers, recycled soft drink bottles, compostable fabric, or 100% natural fibres.

As for the recycled upholstery art elements, they come from many different sources: my grandparents spin and dye there own wool so I'm incredibly lucky to be gifted some; op shops and fibre shares are also great sources.

After years of upholstery I don't think I will ever be short of fabric scraps. Every design has offcuts – it's inevitable – but I now have a use for all those offcuts instead of sending them to landfill.

The furniture is sourced from a variety of places – auction houses, op shops, online or from friends and family who notify me when they see a particular treasure they know I would love to work on.

## Do you create a design based on each season or is your colour palette aligned with what is popular and in style at the time?

I tend to create not according to what is popular or seasonal. If we all keep following what is in style, everything becomes the same. I prefer to step out from that mould by displaying beauty without being a sheep – I have enough of those in the paddock! In saying that, last autumn I did create a piece that was very much inspired by the warm autumn tones (and titled 'Autumn'). The style of the weave is very much decided by the look and style of the furniture.

## How important as a designer is it to make a quality handmade product that has been made in an ecologically respectful way?

This is absolutely one of my core beliefs – designing shouldn't cost the earth. To know I have made something not only from the heart, but with the whole lifecycle in mind means I am not simply about business but striving for 'betterment' whilst creating statement pieces.





All my designs have their unique personalities, but they are all similar in the manner in which they showcase fibres that would have otherwise gone into landfill.

#### Tell us about your different collections.

**Numero Uno** – The first of the Upholstery Art collection, Numero Uno resulted from the idea that environmental consciousness and exclusive design can come together in a beautiful way. The fibre scraps had been saved from many previous ‘standard upholstery’ jobs. To me, Numero Uno is the confirmation that listening to your intuition and aligning your beliefs is monumental for your growth.

**Autumn** – Created through the desire to construct a piece that is 100% biodegradable: from the internal build of the sofa, which is made with coconut fibre, hessian, jute, and cotton, to the linseed oil timber treatment, the 100% compostable wool fabric (with non-metallic dyes) and all natural fibres in the weaving: cotton, hemp, linen, jute, alpaca, mohair, wool, raffia, hessian, coconut.

**Penelope** – The latest of my Upholstery Art collection, Penelope was developed with a peacock theme, which allowed me to utilise even smaller scraps that were too small for weaving. Her bright cheerful colours and unique shape come together to form a quirky occasional chair.

I have a few designs currently in the making, but one I am particularly excited to commence is a sentimental sofa for a client. Woven fibres from his grandparents’ textiles will be used in a creative way to design a statement piece that will tell a story. I feel very grateful that my clients trust me to design and execute something so meaningful to them.

#### Why do you think it's important to live a sustainable life?

For the last four years I’ve made considerable efforts to reduce my impact on the earth in a number of ways, and moving out to our farm has heightened my eco-mindset further.

I am now striving for a zero waste lifestyle and, although my partner at times thinks I’m an earth fairy, it is something my soul needs. With my everyday view into the picture-perfect surrounds of nature, it’s hard to understand how anyone can not appreciate and want to make a positive difference.

#### Do you have any tips for our readers either from your business or from your lifestyle that you can share with us?

I think the biggest thing and really the simplest thing is to start being aware. Be aware of what you buy, the things you use, the amenities you ‘need’. It’s not until we are truly honest with ourselves about our everyday impact that we can adjust ourselves to pursuing a more environmentally promising future.

#### Where can we find you?

You can reach out to us via our social media channels or through the website. We are always happy to answer any questions!

[antiquate.com.au](http://antiquate.com.au)