



## Dear Fii, crafter extraordinaire

**Fiona Lech**

It's hard not to smile at the sight of Fiona Lech's endearing creations. Elaborate floral brooches, quirky pincushions, darling soft toys and her eclectic 'Magpie' necklaces have all but taken over the spare room in Fi's ramshackle Melbourne cottage, which she shares with her husband and five children. Selling under the label Dear Fii, Fiona has quickly become an Etsy.com favourite, winning hearts with her handmade wares. "I have been sewing and crafting for as long as I can remember," says Fiona. "I love making things that are different, not something you could find in the shops.

Sure, a pincushion can be practical, functional and plain, but I like to create pincushions that are practical, functional and pretty!" View her work at [www.dearfii.blogspot.com](http://www.dearfii.blogspot.com) and at her online store, [www.dearfii.etsy.com](http://www.dearfii.etsy.com).



# craft culture

When we think of revolutions, we picture scenes of crowds storming the bastions of privilege. For more of a quiet, gentle revolution (though we're intrigued by the idea of a war waged with knitting needles and crochet hooks), we herald the recent resurgence of DIY craft. Crafters worldwide are uniting to prove their art form is far from being out of date; being crafty in the 21st century is all about appreciating craftsmanship, shunning mass-produced products and taking a stance against hyper-consumerism. At the recent Stitches & Craft Show in Melbourne, we met hundreds of savvy crafters who are all creating extraordinary things with their own hands.

## Ink & Spindle, boutique screen-printers

**Lara Cameron, Bianca van Meeuwen and Tegan Rose**

In the old Younghusband Wool Store building in Melbourne's Kensington, yards of beautiful fabric are stretched over a printing table and bestowed with bursts of colour. "There's nothing more exciting than screen-printing your very own design onto fabric, by hand, in your own studio," says Ink & Spindle co-owner Lara Cameron. Lara, Tegan and Bianca are all fiercely passionate about creating sustainable alternatives to impersonal factory-produced textiles. "We love the way the online crafting community is so supportive," says Tegan. "It fosters creativity and encourages people to pursue their dreams." View their work at [www.inkandspindle.com.au](http://www.inkandspindle.com.au).



## Vince, boutique letterpress stationary

**Meaghan Barbuto**

A 1200-kilogram antique printing press takes pride of place in the Vince studio. "It took a three-tonne truck, an eight-hour expedition, a forklift and a car trailer to get it in my studio," laughs Meaghan, "and when I turned on the press and watched its arms flap around, I realised I had no idea how it worked!" A graphic designer by trade, Meaghan first discovered the art of letterpress while exploring typography from around the world. Self-taught, she now prints dozens of beautifully intricate cards and stationery every day. "The increasing interest in the art of letterpress is really a reflection of the times – the time that people spend running their fingers over my cards is proof that no matter how much joy there is in a wireless gadget, nothing compares to the tactile experience of handmade." Visit [www.vinceprinters.com.au](http://www.vinceprinters.com.au).



Check out the Sydney Stitches & Craft show, on August 19-23. Visit [www.stitchesandcraft.com.au](http://www.stitchesandcraft.com.au).