

The EXAMINER

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Thousands of crafty types gather for Tasmanian Craft Fair



[Frances Vinall](#)



 HELLO THERE: Christine Stock, of Vintage Folds, Ulverstone. Pictures: Phillip Biggs

First, Cindy Watkins gathers the Eucalyptus leaves from a patch of rainforest near Quamby Bluff, in the Meander Valley.

Then she bundles them inside sheets of high-quality silk.

The bundles are thrown into a pot, where the boiling water transfers the minerals from the leaves into the fabric of the silk, embedding unique, natural dyes into the material.



 Cindy Watkins of the 5000 Trees Project.

She has her backdrop.

Next she embroiders cotton thread onto the silk in the design of trees. Each one is different, because Ms Watkins is making the design up as she stitches away on her sewing machine.

“It’s like drawing with a sewing machine, or colouring in with a sewing machine,” she said.

“I like using the dyes because there’s always a piece of the rainforest in my work, and I feel like that’s connecting the environment that I live in into my work.”

Ms Watkins is stitching 5000 trees in total, with \$2 donated from each tree sold to Landcare.

She stands to donate \$10,000 to the environmental organisation by the time the project is done.

There’s always a piece of the rainforest in my work, and I feel like that’s connecting the environment that I live in into my work.

Cindy Watkins

The quilted trees can be purchased at her stall in the Community Complex of the Tasmanian Craft Fair.

It’s just one of over 200 stalls at the fair, which is Australia’s largest craft fair.

Fair marshall Paul Bowman said there were about 25 per cent new stallholders every year.

“And the regulars do something different year; it’s a great way for them to trial new products,” he said.

The fair was met with a stormy morning on its opening day on Friday morning, but marshall John Dare said he considered the drizzling rain an advantage.

“Once people get here, they go straight inside to the pavilions, which means they buy lots of stuff,” he said.

“I’ve seen lots of people lined up at the ATMs, which is great because it means they’re getting out lots of money to buy lots of great stuff at our great stalls.”



 Looking out for Each Other project artist Jacqueline Thomson

Besides, people coming over from the mainland for the fair were hardly going to put off by a bit of rain, he said.

“They’re going to come regardless of the conditions,” he said.

The Tasmanian Craft Fair is running November 2 – 5 across seven venues and five galleries in Deloraine.

Tickets are available online, and at the gates.

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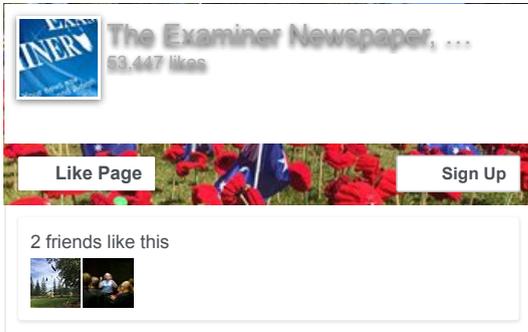
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