



A MADE-WORLD

Pullens Yards were purpose-built for designer-makers in the late 1880s. The studios have housed craftspeople. working with their hands, for a hundred and twenty years. Unsurprisingly, over this length of time, what most of the craftspeople produce has evolved: at one time the Yards boasted lace makers, fan makers and cabinet makers; replaced by today's filmmakers, iewellers and artist potters. A few crafts have stayed the same, there are furniture designers and letterpress printers here now, just as there were in the days of **Queen Victoria.**

Hannah Arendt wrote of homo faber. humans fully engaged in shaping the world around them, by actually producing it with their hands. Making involves thinking about what you make, which amounts to careful thinking about everything that surrounds you. Thinking carefully about making, naturally results in made things that exhibit sensitivity. practicality and beauty. Arendt's vision is of a made-world, a thought-out-world. There was once a time when this was common, we would have grown much of the food we eat, and made many of the things we needed in our homes. (And not as long ago as you might be thinking: my mother and father grew fruit and vegetables in a vast garden, made furniture, clothes, and many of my toys.)

You can see as you walk the cobbles of the Yards the sheer range of what is made here; photographs, rugs, wedding dresses, lutes, ceramics of every kind, films, printed silk scarves. And you can see the pinnacles reached: jewellery worn by Kate Moss, paintings which are acquired by MoMA and the Tate. Everything here is unique. A one off. It has been made by hand, shaped slowly by someone lost in concentration, with their fingers, or a simple tool carefully held, trying to give living form to something that has only existed until then as a thought. The Yards show us that a life of making is both possible and fruitful. Homo faber, although rare, is still alive and busy here. Ouentin Newark Alec Peever, Lettercutter & Sculptor (1980).







Two of the artist-makers at the Yards.



IN CONCERT

David looks up over his glasses, and hesitates, that pause that comes when you want to impart significance. "Sculpture in clay can be all about technique and process and painting on canvas can rely too heavily on expressive freedom. What is crucial to both my sculpture and my painting is structure" It is hard, at first, to see how his paintings show this idea of structure. how they can be seen as anything other than free, they first strike you as swirling and meshing globs and slabs of colour. But when you understand that they are paintings of space, cathedrals and concert halls, and people, and the music that they are playing, you can start to pick out what might be an arch, a pillar. You realise the paintings are depictions of space, time, activity, an attempt to capture the complexity of experience.

Barbara, David's co-inhabitor of the neatly divided ground floor studio, works with ceramics. Ranks of coloured discs. soft blue and raspberry, putty and cobalt, all to test the amount of colour the porcelain can support, are displayed in a case. Experiments in form and testing the capacities of materials are key parts of her work, this will to invent produces some genuine marvels. Little undulating bowls shaped around passion fruit. Liquid bone china poured into moulds to resemble tall paper bags, the china thin with crisp edges.

Music is essential to both of them. They go to recitals together, listening, looking harder and longer than anyone else there, sketching. And then they bring this fullness and lyricism back to their studio. It's not just the music that these two otherwise quite distinct artists have in common. An idea derived from music pervades their work, of things working together. Things judged and balanced and orchestrated. Sometimes in sympathy, sometimes as counterpoint. As I leave, I turn, and see them, David looking through a stack of watercolours, the stiff paper scuffling, Barbara scoring a pattern into something, scratching and shuffling. Quiet human music. Quentin Newark























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