



NEWS RELEASE

Wednesday 27 November 2024

Beth Somerville wins inaugural Heritage Crafts Young Embroiderer of the Year Award supported by the Broderers' Company

Gloucestershire embroiderer Beth Somerville has won the inaugural *Young Embroiderer of the Year Award*, supported by the Worshipful Company of Broderers, including a £1,000 prize awarded at a special presentation at Eltham Palace on Tuesday 26 November 2024.

Heritage Crafts was set up 14 years ago as a national charity to support and safeguard heritage crafts skills, and has become well known for its *Red List of Endangered Crafts*, the first research of its kind to rank traditional crafts in the UK by the likelihood they will survive the next generation.

The inaugural award, supported by the **Broderers' Company**, celebrates a young embroiderer who has made an outstanding start to their craft career. The winner is highly skilled amongst their peers, whilst raising the perceived value of their craft through sharing and awareness raising. They have given themselves a fantastic chance of achieving long-term success, perhaps overcoming disadvantage or setbacks along the way.



Beth Somerville started a degree in plant science at Manchester University, before diverting to pursue a career as a textile designer at Falmouth University. In 2023 she was awarded the New Designer of the Year after exhibiting at New Designers, and invited to show her work at the Knitting and Stitching Show. Since graduating, Beth has completed the Chanel and King's Foundation Metiers d'Art Fellowship.

The two other finalists for the award were **Imogen Marmont**, who combines traditional skills with organic materials to create exquisite designs, and in 2023 received an award for stitch innovation sponsored by the Worshipful Company of Needle Makers, and **Rosie Merriman**, who strives to make impactful, unconventional textile pieces, and who received the Principal's Award for Studentship during her degree in Textile Design, and has since studied in Paris. Both Imogen and Rosie have also completed their Chanel and King's Foundation Metiers d'Art Fellowships.



Among the award judges was goldwork embroiderer **Hanny Newton**, recent recipient of the inaugural Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust Sanderson Rising Star Craft Award.

The **Worshipful Company of Broderers** is an ancient company with a busy programme blending a keen interest in the art of embroidery with an ethos of friendship, charity support and fun.

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Photo captions:

- **Beth Somerville**, winner of the 2024 *Young Embroiderer of the Year Award*, and **Hanny Newton**, goldwork embroiderer and award judge. Photo by Robert Wade.
- **Beth Somerville**, winner of the 2024 *Young Embroiderer of the Year Award*.

About Heritage Crafts

Founded in 2009, the Heritage Crafts is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) registered as the 'Heritage Crafts Association', the

advocacy body for traditional heritage crafts. Working in partnership with government and key agencies, it provides a focus for craftspeople, groups, societies and guilds, as well as individuals who care about the loss of traditional crafts skills, and works towards a healthy and sustainable framework for the future. Its aim is to support and promote heritage crafts as a fundamental part of our living heritage.

www.heritagecrafts.org.uk

About the *Red List of Endangered Crafts*

The Red List of Endangered Crafts, created by Heritage Crafts, was the first to rank traditional crafts in the UK by the likelihood they would survive the next generation. The 2023 edition of the Red List, funded by the Pilgrim Trust, assessed 259 crafts to identify those which are at greatest risk of disappearing, of which 62 have been classified as critically endangered, 84 as endangered and 112 as currently viable.

The Red List shows that the craft knowledge, skills and practices that form an important part of our shared cultural heritage are – for a number of reasons – at risk of being lost. Heritage Crafts believes that these cultural assets are as important as unique heritage buildings and ancient beautiful landscapes and could provide future generations with fantastic opportunities to enrich their lives and the lives of others.

<http://redlist.heritagecrafts.org.uk>