



The Crafter:

words from the craft world

New Designers is a great show for the lazy Londoner. Universities across the country bring their prize new graduates to show off their work at the Islington Business Design Centre at the same time every year. It certainly saves on shoe leather, but it's a shame that not every graduate will get the chance to shine there. The cost for universities to pay for the display, transport etc is extremely high and many students have to club together to pay to get there themselves when their institution has run out of the readies. After all that effort it would be churlish not to go and have a look and some of those names of the future were part of a great crop of new knitters this year. We can only amaze at their ingenuity (and pinch some of their ideas for our own hand knitting of course).

Bucks New Uni always produce some great knitting under the tutelage of Fiona Ross. Emmeline Kellett, whose knitting is combined with giant needlepoint stitching on canvas to create a new kind of fabric, unsurprisingly has been snapped up by the RCA where she will be studying for the next two years, so watch this space.

From the same stable, Rebecca Millyard made some astonishing things with cables. She knitted swatches, then created drawings to visualise how they might look as part of a garment. Nicola Balakian, another Bucks New Uni student, stitched into hessian and made art out of vegetable sacks. My favourite is the cabled carrot.

Lisa Dillon from **Bath Spa** displayed her curiosity about the structure of knitted fabrics, making all sorts of interesting textures that I can imagine catching on in sportswear. Meanwhile Maisie

Williamson from **Winchester School of Art** had been looking at the idea of mental illness and society's attitude to female insanity in particular. The stereotype is of the wild Mrs Rochester in the attic, or the bonkers Miss Havisham with her uncontrollable hair. Her Havisham dress used horsehair to look like real hair in a rather unsettling way.

Another maker playing with cables and textures is Laura Muir with her 'Knit Knot Knit' range of knits. She has just graduated from **Glasgow School of Art**. Luckily for her she was in a different building to the iconic one that tragically caught fire earlier this year, so her work was saved for our delectation and delight. The giant snood structures were eye-catching, but the knotted cables show promise.

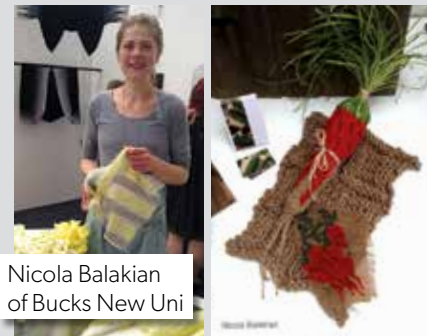
Cable and knots are having a moment. At the **Stroud International Textiles** festival I happened to meet Cari Morton, a knitter and textile designer who teaches at **Leeds College of Art**. She's been working on a project called **Synthesis** that explores braiding and knotting with the knit structure. The resulting fabric is intriguing and rather elegant. She has designed a range called **Cari + Carl** that consists mostly of lovely scarves with names like Knotty and Humbug. I'm definitely putting this on my Christmas list.



Laura Muir's 'Knit Knot Knit' giant snood



Emmeline Kellett of Bucks New Uni



Nicola Balakian of Bucks New Uni



Rebecca Millyard of Bucks New Uni and her graduation collection



Maisie Williamson's Havisham dress