

PROJECT
*calm**
MINDFULNESS THROUGH MAKING

EXTRAS
ORIGAMI PLANT POT
HOME STUDIO SIGNS
ILLUSTRATED PRINTS
PAPER BLOOMS
'GIFT OF TIME'
VOUCHERS

*Bloom
where you are*

Learn the language of flowers,
plan the perfect staycation,
turn a nook into an art studio,
use illustration as therapy,
sing a lullaby, make pebble
art and much more...



Welcome...



One of my favourite artists, Georgia O'Keeffe, decided to paint flowers on such a large scale that we "could not ignore their beauty". This came to mind in our interview with Woodlucker's Ann Wood (page 26), whose accurate studies of flowers in paper are so detailed you could say the same. You'll find your own paper flowers to make on page 18.

Elsewhere this issue, Pragma Agarwal examines lullabies and other calming rituals for children. We've commissioned an exclusive nursery poster from illustrator Esther Curtis to hang in your child's space, or to frame and gift to a new baby. Illustrators get lots of love this issue, in fact, from Angie Lewin's lino-cut studies of pebbles to Ella Masters' freehand phrases. We encourage you to draw as a form of therapy on page 60, and to create an artist's studio in your own home on page 92.

Another key theme this issue is all the mindful ways we can save money, from staycations (page 113) to thrifty florals (page 86) to giving our time instead of things (page 72). Sian Meades' new travel column on page 120 is all about stretching our pennies further for more enriching experiences.

I hope you enjoy!

Lara

LARA WATSON EDITOR

Cover illustration by Agathe Singer

EXTRAS IN THIS ISSUE

Enjoy all this paper goodness! Our exclusive prints and projects celebrate the edition's themes.

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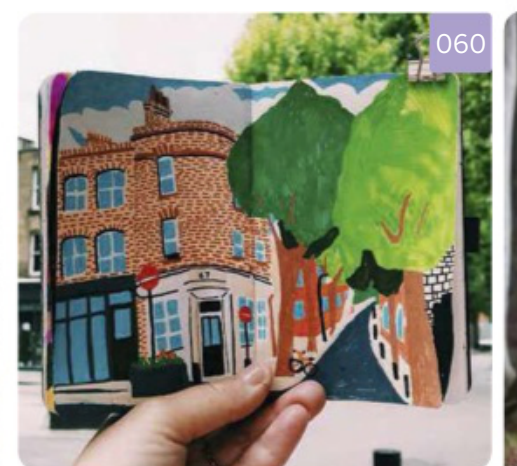
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When you take
a flower in your
hand and really look at
it, it's your world
for the moment.

NATURE

This issue we celebrate the language of flowers, from their symbolism in literature to the way they speak to our senses. Emma Mitchell's beautiful piece about forest bathing in bluebell woods is testament to the healing power of plants. From feasting our eyes on, and breathing in, all that floral goodness, we turn to the tactile beauty of a palm-sized pebble. Be inspired to go beachcombing via Angie Lewin's iconic watercolours and Cari-Jane Hakes' soothing stone art.





NATURE
NEWS

Unfurl in the springtime warmth – stroll through a sunny bluebell wood, learn botanical painting or relax at a Devon writing retreat.

Compiled by Tiffany Francis





1 SPREAD A LITTLE SUNSHINE

Spring has finally arrived and we are obsessed with the new sunshine pendant from London-based eco jewellery maker Zoe Morton. Her work is inspired by adventures, people, places and travels, lying out in the long grass, looking out to sea and staring at the stars. Her goal is to create beautiful, durable pieces that can be handed down from generation to generation, and her stamped sunshine pendant comes in recycled gold or brass – the perfect way to entice dreamy summer adventures over the next few months. Sunshine pendant starts from £95, available at zmorton.com with worldwide shipping.

2 FRESH FABRICS FOR SPRING

Inspired by Victorian greenhouses and afternoon tea at Kew Gardens, the magnificent Thornback & Peel has revealed its latest fabric design for spring. London-based duo Juliet Thornback and Delia Peel use their backgrounds in floristry and design to create beautiful prints inspired by English heritage and the natural world. Their three-colour Cactus & Bird print depicts a little bird hopping between grey and pink pots of flowering cacti and green succulents, perfect for adding a little colour to your kitchen or potting shed as the days start to warm up. You can find it on their aprons, tea towels, oven gloves, tote bags and more. Prices from £12 at thornbackandpeel.co.uk with worldwide shipping.

3 A WALK IN THE WOODS

Is there a more mesmerising sight than an English woodland carpeted with

bluebells? They disappear almost as soon as they arrive, so be sure to get outside into the woods this spring and see them for their flowering season in April and May. Bluebells flower when the trees are still bare so that sunlight can reach them on the woodland floor – once the leaves start thickening on the trees, it's too dark for them to photosynthesise. Visit woodlandtrust.org.uk to find your nearest bluebell woodland, and for more floral inspiration, read Emily Brontë's *The Bluebell* – a poem about seasonal changes and the strength of the human spirit, on page 23.

4 HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

Revel in the art of floristry at this year's Harrogate Spring Flower Show in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Stroll through the show gardens and pick up seeds, cuttings and shrubbery to take home, or ask the exhibitors if you have the right plant for the right place! Plus there's inspiring seasonal cookery demonstrations, handmade crafts, jewellery and artwork, local breweries, artisan bakeries and fresh coffee to while away an afternoon in the spring sunshine. The Harrogate Spring Flower Show takes place from 25-28 April, tickets available from £17 at flowershow.org.uk. If Yorkshire's too far afield, we love *The Flower Podcast* for its beautiful conversations with florists around the world.

5 TRY BOTANICAL PAINTING

Get ready for new growth and garden parties with a three-day course on botanical painting in the heart of Cornwall from 10-12 May. Join botanical artists from the Eden Project Florilegium

Society and learn about the techniques of graphite drawing, shading and watercolour painting, as well as the history of botanical illustration and how to make your subject appear three-dimensional. The course is suitable for beginners and improvers and includes tuition, all materials, lunch, refreshments and entry into the Eden Project. Course places cost £220 and can be booked at edenproject.com. Can't make it to Cornwall? We love the illustrated guide, *Botanical Painting*, by Margaret Stevens, £25.

6 CREATE NATURAL DISPLAYS

Join tutor Dawn Hickie for a wild spring workshop in the heart of Edinburgh to make your own stunning and sustainable table decorations from locally foraged materials. The natural world is growing and blossoming at this time of year, and it's the best time to get out and source a few beautiful sprigs and flowers to bring nature into your home. Foraged & Found: Rustic Table Decorations takes place in the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh on 28 April. Tickets £60, available from visitscotland.com. Alternatively, grab a copy of Janet Sobesky's new book *Natural Style* for an eco-friendly guide to home décor, £15.

7 BE INSPIRED BY WILDERNESS ART

Contemporary artist Sam Gare knows exactly how to capture the wild landscapes that inspire her, but she is also passionate about making art accessible to all. Her latest collection is a series of small, circular pieces exploring the mountains and landscapes she's visited – all at affordable prices. We love ▶



8

A ROOM of ONE'S OWN



VIRGINIA
WOOLF
VINTAGE FEMINISM



9

her focus on reconnecting people with nature and sharing the positive power of the wild on the human spirit and soul. To see her portfolio and buy her work, visit samgare.com or check out her Instagram feed at [@samanthagare](https://www.instagram.com/samanthagare).

8 TWILIGHT GARDENS

Delve into the heart of East Sussex for a twilight tour of Monk's House, Leonard and Virginia Woolf's 16th-century country retreat that became a hub for the famous Bloomsbury group of writers and artists, including TS Eliot and EM Forster, Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant. Join the National Trust team for a tour of the house on 16 May to experience the evening atmosphere of the house at twilight. Tickets are £17.50 and include a glass of fizz in the garden, available at nationaltrust.org.uk. For extra literary empowerment, read Virginia's seminal 1929 feminist essay *A Room of One's Own* (Vintage, £4.99), based on two lectures she gave at Newnham and Girton women's colleges, and written while she was having her own bedroom built at Monk's House.

9 ZESTY AND EARTHY AROMAS

Looking for a little luxury this spring? Le Labo has launched its latest scented candle Verveine 32, and it's perfect for reviving the home after winter. With zesty kaffir lime leaves, earthy eucalyptus, galbanum and violet, each burn conjures the aroma of sunlit afternoons, floral bouquets and woodland walks. With roots in New York and the French Riviera, Le Labo's candles are all vegan, cruelty-free, hand-poured and made with soy-based wax. Verveine 32

available now for £52 from lelabofragrances.com with worldwide shipping.

10 OPEN MIND POETRY IN DEVON

Treat yourself to a relaxing week in one of the most peaceful and idyllic parts of Devon this May, and join Arvon for one of their unique creative writing retreats. In *Poetry: Celebrating Curiosity*, you will learn the basic forms of poetry writing with a twist, embracing inquisitiveness and turning it into art. Come with an open mind, a blank notebook and a willingness to explore the unknown as you settle into Totleigh Barton, a 16th-century manor house surrounded by wildlife and the glorious Devon landscape. Prices start from £795 (grants are available) and include all accommodation, food and tutoring. Can't make it? We love Stephen Fry's *The Ode Less Travelled* (£8.99) for a welcoming introduction to poetry that invites everyone to write their own.

11 NORWEGIAN FOREST AIR

Ever felt trapped in the office when you wish you could be outside? This May, grab a copy of Norwegian author Jorn Viumdal's new book *Skogluft*, based on the idea that growing plants indoors can dramatically improve your health, strengthen the immune system and increase productivity. The benefits of being close to nature are well known, and this beautiful new book explores simple techniques (create a living wall) to beautify your home and office, and purify the air around you to live a healthier life. *Skogluft* (Forest Air) is available from 16 May for £14.99.

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11

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ALL ABOUT POSITIVE

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SAY IT WITH FLOWERS

Shrinking violet, fresh as a daisy, the primrose path... flowers have talked to us from the pages of books for centuries, says **Julia Wills**.



Purple hyacinth

In Greek mythology Hyacinthus was a beautiful Spartan prince and lover of the god Apollo.



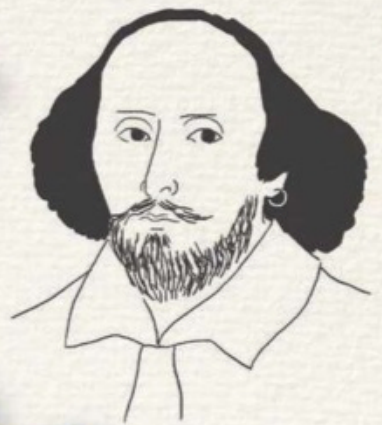
Roses

Romans regarded roses as a symbol of beauty and love. They were also a symbol of vanity.



Daisy

Daisies were associated with Ophelia in Hamlet. They also symbolise childhood and innocence.





Mention the language of flowers and chances are you'll think of the Victorians. Like clematis clambering through roses, floriography and secret-bearing posies are steadfastly entwined in our imaginations. However, its roots stretch back thousands of years.

Our ability to marry the colours, scents and seasons of flowers to our own human traits is universal and perennial. Flora have always blossomed in religion, folklore, mythology and literature because they lend themselves so beautifully to expressing the most important things in our lives.

Some of the earliest floral symbolism was seeded in the ancient Greek myths. In the tale of Narcissus, the beautiful son of a river god falls in love with his own reflection and, unable to leave it, wastes away. The bright yellow flowers named for him

are said to have grown up around his body and they still bear connotations of ego and vanity. In the myth of Hyacinthus, the Spartan youth is accidentally killed by the god Apollo, who then mourns him by enchanting the ground with a haze of mauve. To this day, purple hyacinths with their bowed, sorrowful heads carry a request to be forgiven.

The ancient Greeks and Romans immortalised flowers in stories because they were a big part of daily life. Gods were worshipped in posies of roses, lilies and violets – the same three species that bloom most prolifically in the Bible. Surprised? Don't be. As the floral historian Beverly Seaton explains, early Christian writers had something of an image problem with flowers because they were linked to paganism. But, even as theological writers tried to trample them out of worship, early



Protea

Protea is the national flower of South Africa. It symbolises diversity and courage.



Lavender

During the Regency period, women used to sniff lavender water to revive them if they felt faint.



Christians loved them just as much as everyone else, and what had to change was the flowers' PR. So scholars in the Middle Ages quickly set about twining these blooms with nobler meanings. The rose came to stand for Christ's Passion, the lily for purity and the violet for the humility of Christian life. Newly worthy flowers took their place in scripture.

But it was Shakespeare who wove them into some of literature's most beautiful writing. In *Botanical Shakespeare* Gerit Quealy suggests the playwright made no fewer than 175 mentions of specific plants and several more general references. Flowers stood for worth or wickedness, love or loss, each species sharing secrets with the audiences of the time. Shakespeare's mastery of floriography is perhaps most memorably shown in *Hamlet* when Ophelia, driven mad with grief, hands out flowers as messages. She asks her brother to think of her and find their father's murderer, with: "... rosemary, that's for remembrance. Pray you, love, remember. And there is pansies, that's for thoughts." She insults the king, "... fennel for you, and columbines," and the queen, "There's rue for you".

Seventeenth-century playgoers were familiar with fennel's meaning of flattery. They knew that columbines and rue symbolised adultery. But it is in discarding a daisy that Ophelia 'speaks' the saddest words of all – that there is no innocence left in her life now. This simple gesture, made with a flower, is more powerful than any lament.

For Jane Austen, flowers meant liberation from the stuffy manners of drawing rooms. In her novels, most proposals take place outdoors, often in gardens and deftly link the Regency period's

"LUSCIOUS WOODBINE, WITH SWEET MUSK-ROSES AND WITH EGLANTINE: THERE SLEEPS TITANIA SOMETIME OF THE NIGHT, LULL'D IN THESE FLOWERS WITH DANCES AND DELIGHT."

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

love of hollyhocks and lavender to romance. Emily Brontë found escape in bluebells: "The bluebell is the sweetest flower, that waves in summer air. Its blossoms have the mightiest power, to soothe my spirit's care..."

For Charlotte Brontë too, wild flowers, growing outdoors, symbolised freedom: "I like to see flowers growing, but when they are gathered, they cease to please."

But it was the Victorians who famously fell in love with the language of flowers and documented it in almanacs and dictionaries. As voyages around the globe returned with exotic species like rhododendron and camellia, botany boomed. The new pastime soon hybridised with Victorian sentiment and the language of flowers was spoken everywhere. *Le Langage des Fleurs*, written in 1819 by Charlotte de Latour, was a best-seller, gracing the parlours of every genteel home. Fanned by its oriental associations with *sélam* (the clandestine language of the Turkish harem), flower symbolism thrived. In the practice of *sélam*, made famous by *Turkish Embassy Letters* of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu in 1763, confined women sent secret messages



Lily

The lily represents purity and symbolises Hera, the Greek goddess of love and marriage.



in flowers, stone and feathers to forbidden lovers, who feverishly deciphered meanings by working out love-words that rhymed with the objects.

Sadly for the romantics among us, however, both *sélam* and the Victorian language of flowers seem likely only to have been diversions and parlour games. As Beverly Seaton points out, there's no evidence in diaries kept by ladies of the time that anyone actually sent sneaky bouquets.

The past, they say, is a different country and from the way it celebrates flowers in writing, it must be a greener and prettier place, far more in tune with nature. In our urbanised lives, floriography can feel faded, pressed like violets into pages of the past and irrelevant. Until we look a little closer.

Every year, in Japan, the cherry blossom season of *hanami* continues to bring people together to appreciate *sakura* (cherry blossom) as a metaphor for the beauty and transience of life, just as vitally as Murasaki Shikibu wrote about it in her 11th-century *The Tale of Genji*: “the blossoms of spring are all the more precious because they bloom so briefly.”

The ubiquitous red rose sighs romance around the world, thanks to centuries of lovesick writers, while the poppy remains forever linked to war's brutality in John McCrae's poem:

“In Flanders fields the poppies blow, between the crosses, row on row, that mark our place.”

Thanks to their long cultivation in literature, flowers can still talk to us today. Perhaps we simply need to listen a little more closely. ▶



Poppy

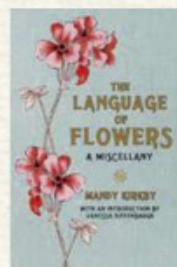
Poet John McCrae wrote of the poppies blowing between the crosses.



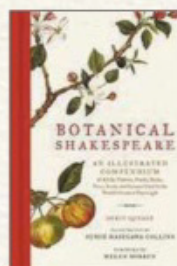
Bluebell

For author and poet Emily Brontë, bluebells, or “fairy gifts” reminded her of her childhood and innocent days.

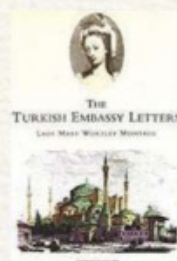
FURTHER READING



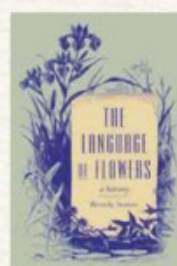
THE LANGUAGE OF FLOWERS: A MISCELLANY by Mandy Kirkby
Discover the hidden meanings of 50 flowers and deliver the perfect message within your bouquet or posy.
Published by Macmillan



BOTANICAL SHAKESPEARE: AN ILLUSTRATED COMPENDIUM by Gerit Quealy
A beautiful guide to flowers, fruits, herbs, trees and grasses mentioned in the works of Shakespeare.
Published by Harper Design



THE TURKISH EMBASSY LETTERS by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu
Lady Mary travelled through Europe to Turkey in 1716 and discovered a secret language of flowers, which she explains here.
Published by Virago



THE LANGUAGE OF FLOWERS: A HISTORY by Beverly Seaton
A study of three flower books in Napoleonic France, England and America and what they reveal about the period and respective cultures.
University of Virginia Press



HOPE
AND NEW
BEGINNINGS

Snowdrop

Victorian plant collectors adored snowdrops and many stately homes still feature beautiful snowdrop walks set in woodland gardens.

Symbolising hope, these flowers appear at the harshest time of the year and can melt the snow around them with the heat they produce. A perfect metaphor for happier times to come, with spring on its way.

“Coming in the cold time,
Prophet of the gay time,
Prophet of the May time,
Prophet of the roses,
Many, many welcomes,
February fair-maid!”

Alfred Lord Tennyson



FAITH

Passion Flower

Known as the floral apostle, this flower is said to represent

Christ’s Passion. A central column symbolises the cross, five anthers his wounds, three stigmas for the nails that secured him to the cross. The crown of thorns is seen in the filaments radiating from its centre. This flower was christened *Espina de Cristo* – Christ’s Thorns – by the Spanish missionaries who discovered it in South America.

“The passion-flower,
with symbol holy,
Twining its tendrils
long and lowly.”

Toussaint L’Ouverture



COURAGE AND
DEFIANCE

Thistle

The thistle means business. Despite its beautiful colour it is prickly and defiant, arming itself against grazing animals with its spikes, and thriving when cut back. In

the Bible, it was fated to overgrow the ruined Garden of Eden after Adam and Eve were exiled. However, its qualities include a warlike nobility too, steadfast and tough, reflecting the way the Scots saw themselves and becoming the country’s emblem. Indeed, The Order of the Thistle, created by James VII, sums up the plant’s qualities in its motto: ‘*Nemo me impune lacessit*’ – nobody hurts me without punishment. Enough said.



TRUTH
AND LIGHT

Chrysanthemum

One of the last flowers of the year to bloom, the chrysanthemum's long-awaited unfurling has come to signify a truth slowly dawning.

It was originally cultivated over two thousand years ago in China, where together with bamboo, plum blossom and orchid it stood as one of the four flowers of Confucianism.

Taking root in Japan as the emblem of the Emperor, it symbolised the sun, light and truth. It remains the crest of the Japanese royal family and its image is still used to seal official documents.

Chrysanthemums are celebrated annually there in The Festival of Happiness.



FALSE RICHES

Sunflower

The Incas celebrated their sun god by wearing gleaming gold sunflower jewellery. When the conquistadors arrived, they were dazzled by such riches and, on spotting fields of sunflowers, thought they'd discovered acres of pure gold. On finding living plants instead, they were bitterly disappointed. Consequently, this big, beautiful flower carries a surprising meaning of false riches.

"Keep your face to the
sunshine and you cannot
see the shadows. It's
what the sunflowers do."

Helen Keller



DIVERSITY,
COURAGE AND
STRENGTH

Protea

Gaining its name from the mythical sea god Proteus, who was able to change his shape at will, this flower comes in many shapes and sizes. Consequently, it stands for both diversity and the courage to be different.

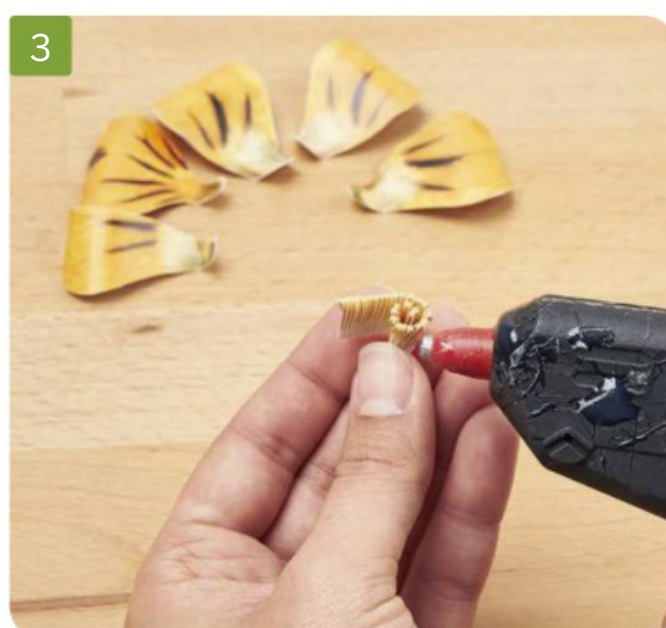
The king protea has the largest flowerheads in the genus, with spectacular pink spikes arrayed around the central blooms, giving the appearance of crowns. It's the national flower of South Africa and a show-stopping beauty that knocks any surrounding flowers into the shade. Its uniqueness signals delight in diversity and the desire to celebrate it.



INDOOR BLOOMS

Select your favourite vases and arrange your flowers. We love one stem in each vessel, or gather them together in one colourful posy. Place them on the table and every morning you'll be greeted by radiant, everlasting flowers.





MAKING THE PAPER FLOWERS

Paper makes for gorgeous petals! Cut and fold these blooms to create your own bouquet, brooch or floral crown. By Leela Roy.

What will you make your paper flowers into? Attach the flower heads to paper-wrapped wire stems, and maybe add little sparkling crystals that look like morning dew. Hunt for small glass containers or jars, or pretty vintage bud vases, then group your flowers and position them on a sunny windowsill for a forever display. Or back your flower with a brooch pin, a hairclip or a hairband to create an accessory that makes a fitting tribute to nature's floral finery.

You will need: pull-out flower sheets, scissors, glue gun, wire flower stems, small vases, brooch backs (optional)

1. Cut out the petals and rectangle (this will become the stamen) from the pull-out sheet. Curve the tops of the petals around a pencil to make them more life-like.
2. Fold the rectangle in half lengthwise. Cut tiny snips along one long edge to form a fringe.
3. Arrange your petals on your work surface in a flower shape. Roll up the fringed rectangle and stick it together using the glue gun.
4. Glue the petals together, allowing them to overlap a little at the base. Attach the stamen to the centre, again using the glue gun. Decide how you'd like to display your flower, then glue either a length of wire or a brooch back to the underside of the bloom.



FLOWER BROOCH

These natural-looking paper flowers have a vintage, enamel-like costume-jewellery quality when turned into brooches. They're sweet on a shirt and would look gorgeous grouped together on a chunky coat lapel, too, for an embellished look. Adorn yourself in a whole bouquet!



A sea of bluebells

Emma Mitchell shares her experience of nature as medicine – forest bathing is her ‘wild remedy’.

It is two months since I became unwell, and although I have lifted out of the worst of this bout of depression the shadow of low mood still lurks in my consciousness. However, as May begins, my instinct to seek out natural wonders that had been suppressed begins to reawaken. It is muffled at first but I am relieved that it has returned.

While I was ill I stayed indoors and missed a significant part of the spring, but the slowing of the seasons means that cow parsley flowers have only just begun to emerge and bluebells are at their peak now, in early May. I am pleased that I haven't missed them. The vestiges of depression are still clawing at my motivation and energy, but my compulsion to see that ethereal mist of blue on a woodland floor is too powerful for the melancholy to subdue it, so, once again, I drive to Bradfield Woods in Bury St Edmunds.

As I enter the wood there is that particular gentle warmth that comes when the skies clear and the spring gathers pace. The balmy weather combines with the leaf-dappled shade, the heady jumble of greens and the delicious scents of leaf litter, spring growth and bluebells to create a cocktail of sensory delight as I walk. This place, now, is sublime and all of it – sunlight, scents, colours and more than that, something of nature itself humming in the newly emerged bees, the delicate fronds of pignut and the orchestra of birdsong above me – sends my spirits swooping upwards. I feel as though I want to swim in the wood's bright new foliage, dive down into the gently mouldering layers of last year's leaves where a wood-wide-web of fungal mycelia connects the tree roots, and up into the glades where the green-gold spring sunlight pours down on the wild garlic. I stand and look and allow myself to drink in the joy of ▶

“I feel as though I want to swim in the wood's bright new foliage, dive down into the gently mouldering layers of last year's leaves.”



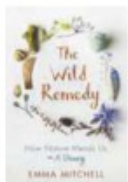
“The feeling is as effective at spreading contentment as a slab of chocolate cake or chips sprinkled with salt. It is as though my mind is eating this scene and gaining sustenance.”

this wood. I know there are dormice here, nightingales, orchids. It is a potent place. A place that can heal.

I make my way to the first clearing, just metres from the visitors' centre. Here, coppiced hazels stand, bristling thickly with poles of growth just a few years old. A small sign reads 'Keep off the bank, solitary bees nesting': such a glorious sentence and evidence of the care that Suffolk Wildlife Trust are taking of this precious habitat. I notice small movements above the low sandy slope in front of me. These are female tawny mining bees, a bright coppery species, busily digging holes in which to lay their eggs, hovering in front of their entrances and going about their important bee business. I saw these bees a year ago on just such a day as this. I remember watching them for an hour or more while my children built an excellent den with the hazel poles that had been harvested in the preceding winter months. I want to know the bees, learn how they dig these tiny burrows, and follow them on their foraging flights. I watch them for a while, spellbound.

Beyond the bank is the plant I have come to see. The flowers are at their peak: the lower bells are open, the petals of each curved backwards, and the upper bells are still in bud. The blue is deep, intense, luminous, and these flowers thrum with colour. I find a patch of ground among them covered by a tangle of wood avens, wood anemone and pignut, and sit cross-legged and gaze at them, allowing the combination of sunlight and floral abundance to enter my eyes and reach my brain. The feeling is as effective at spreading contentment as a slab of the most delicious chocolate cake or a plate of homemade chips sprinkled with salt. It is as though my mind is eating this scene and gaining sustenance from it.

The sound of solitary bees visiting the bluebells to collect nectar and pollen is soporific. I feel a pull to lie down and sleep here among the flowers. I allow time to drift. This is forest bathing. I am totally immersed in my surroundings: I can smell the leaf mould, the gentle scent of the bluebells; the sun is warming the back of my neck; I can hear the busy rustlings of small mammals in the undergrowth and the song of birds above me. The wood is lowering my blood pressure, lifting my mood and dialling down my levels of stress. There is no doubt that it is aiding my recovery. I don't know how long I stay among the bluebells, but when I leave for home I do so reluctantly.



The Wild Remedy: How Nature Mends Us – A Diary, by Emma Mitchell is published by Michael O'Mara (£14.99). Emma records her daily nature finds with photographs and illustrations on her Instagram, @silverpebble2.





The bluebell

By Emily Bronte

The Bluebell is the sweetest flower
That waves in summer air:
Its blossoms have the mightiest power
To soothe my spirit's care.

There is a spell in purple heath
Too wildly, sadly dear;
The violet has a fragrant breath,
But fragrance will not cheer,

The trees are bare, the sun is cold,
And seldom, seldom seen;
The heavens have lost their zone of gold,
And earth her robe of green.

And ice upon the glancing stream
Has cast its sombre shade;
And distant hills and valleys seem
In frozen mist arrayed.

The Bluebell cannot charm me now,
The heath has lost its bloom;
The violets in the glen below,
They yield no sweet perfume.

But, though I mourn the sweet Bluebell,
'Tis better far away;
I know how fast my tears would swell
To see it smile to-day.

For, oh! when chill the sunbeams fall
Adown that dreary sky,
And gild yon dank and darkened wall
With transient brilliancy;

How do I weep, how do I pine
For the time of flowers to come,
And turn me from that fading shine,
To mourn the fields of home!

Agathe is inspired by
artists such as Matisse,
Rousseau and Kahlo.





I N B L O O M

Our cover artist, French illustrator Agathe Singer, talks about her childhood garden and finding inspiration in the city for her beautiful floral paintings.

*** Have you always wanted to be an illustrator?**
I always loved to draw and paint. I worked as a graphic designer for a few years but realised that being an illustrator would be my dream job. I've been working as a freelance illustrator for seven years now.

*** What inspires your work?**
I'm inspired by memories from my childhood garden, which was beautiful, wild and full of flowers. In the city I always look for plants on a balcony, flower shops, parks and botanical gardens. I also love vintage herbarium and classical botanical books.

*** The women you portray have strong personalities – how do you capture this?**
I love to express the strength of the women through their hair: often wavy, bold and full. They are also very strongly built, with solid legs and large feet on the ground.

*** What are some of your favourite projects so far?**
I enjoy working on different projects. My favourite aspect of my work is that it gets a little place in people's homes.

*** Do you listen to music or podcasts?**
I can listen to audiobooks for hours, especially while I'm painting. At the moment I'm listening to *Lord of the Rings* by JRR Tolkien and *Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.

*** What other ways do you unwind?**
I love knitting. I knitted a rainbow rug for my daughter's bedroom. Using huge yarn with flashy colours was a lot of fun!

*** What's your favourite thing about living in Paris?**
I enjoy the weekends with my daughter and husband, going to a movie on the Sunday morning, eating French fries on the banks of the Seine and meeting friends for a drink.
[instagram.com/agathesinger](https://www.instagram.com/agathesinger)



"I like to use bold colours like ultramarine blue or bright magenta. I love painting bold shapes, working on colour-blocked swatches and then playing with stripes, dots and lines."



PROFILE

ANN WOOD: NO WALLFLOWER

How a confident approach, social media and science sparked the paper art of Ann Wood, AKA Woodlucker.

Having made art with her husband for over 20 years, nature took Ann Wood's work in a different direction. "On the last day of my father's life, he was commenting on how beautiful certain plants were outside. I could not get his words out of my thoughts. Flowers began to feel so universal to me."

Her father's words inspired the start of a new stage of Ann's career, creating intricate, painted paper flowers, insects and food. Her work has proved hugely popular with a new generation of nature lovers.

"I think it's partly related to the issues of global warming, I think there's a preciousness now in plants and flowers being part of our lives, to remind us that we are all connected to the natural world.

When I make bees or butterflies there's a huge response. I'm a gardener myself and I've noticed a definite decline in bees over the 25 years that I've been gardening, and it's very worrying."

Ann used to work with wood and paint mixed media pieces before she moved to paper. "I love paper because it has lots of different textures, it's very malleable, inexpensive and easily accessible. I had a lot of it from some previous work when I

started to see people on Instagram making things out of paper and I thought I should really try myself. I like how it transforms; I can paint it and make it look like something that it isn't."

Despite having worked with her husband for so many years, Ann has embraced the opportunity to branch out by herself. "I enjoy working pretty much alone, with my crowd on Instagram!

It's made a difference. I can get feedback, it's such a new day for artists who spend a lot of time alone in the studio."

Ann's work is incredibly detailed, sometimes taking a whole week to finish one plant. Her insects also require painstaking attention to detail. "I use sharp embroidery scissors to create each item. I call my technique 'drawing with scissors,' the cuts

become the lines of a drawing in 3D. Paint and pencils add variety to the surface. It is important to me that each arranged grouping is displayed in a framed collection box, housing the delicacy and care I put into each item."

"My work is like being a jeweller where your body is really controlling your arms and hands to paint and make it do what you want. I often listen to audiobooks or podcasts, and I'll work

"I love paper because it has lots of different textures, it's very malleable and easily accessible."





“The appreciation of flowers is universal and the idea of everlasting flowers is so appealing,” notes Ann.



for half an hour and then get up for a break. I keep my phone on the other side of the room, I have regular posting times but it's definitely something you have to keep in check because you could spend all your time looking at Instagram. I use it as a tool to help me make sure I do get new work made for my posts. I probably wouldn't have made this work without Instagram."

Based in Minneapolis, Ann finds inspiration in her garden, her local park and illustrations. "I don't use botanical illustrations so much anymore because I couldn't see all the details. Sometimes it's nice to make things that aren't totally realistic, but now I mostly cut the plants apart to see how they form, how they curl around and connect to the centre stalk and the bulb. In the winter I go to the wholesale florist to buy flowers and dissect those. I do the same with food, I go to the grocery store and think, what could I make?"

Some projects prove more difficult than others. "With art you have that stage where you can see it in your mind and you think it's going to turn out really great, then you run into some troubles and you think, 'this is the silliest thing I've ever made,' and then you make all these small victories until it's done and

you've created something that is its own entity. It's a push and pull back and forth, you can be in the state of flow, or you might have to pull yourself out – for me it's like having lots of hurdles in a race and you keep jumping until you hit the finish line. And some things are really good, others aren't so good."

Having acknowledged the worth of Instagram for uniting artists and audiences, Ann also has her concerns. "Instagram is great but I also think it's important to engage with art in real life too. One of the things that worries me about social media is that we all think we've seen everything, because we saw it on a small screen. But to experience art in three-dimensional space is a totally different experience. And I've heard from people that my work is even more detailed when they see it in person.

"One of my goals is to exhibit my wall of art. I don't take commissions. I'm working, every day, making items for this wall. I've had a lot of enquiries about people wanting to buy the pieces but if I did that I'd never be able to build this installation which is really why I started. I'd love to show it somewhere people might just happen upon it in real life."

woodlucker.com

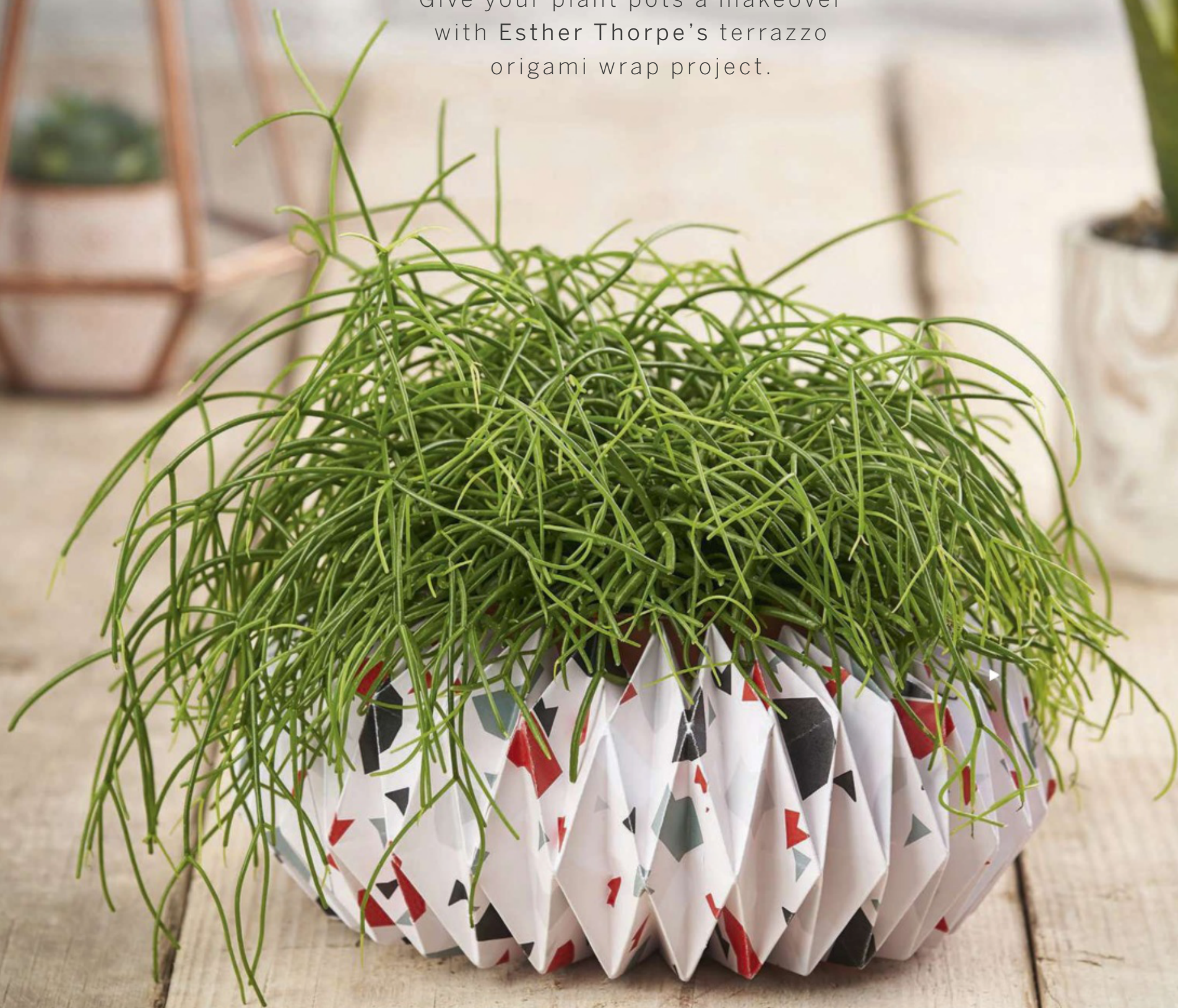


If you'd like to create your own paper flowers, give it a try, says Ann. "I made it up my way, how I saw things. Look on Instagram under #paperflowers to get a flavour of what is happening."

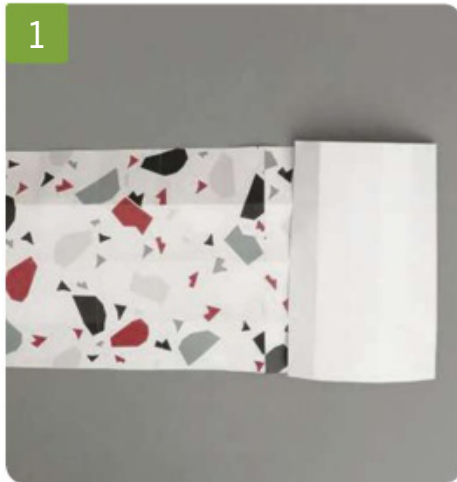


Well dressed

Give your plant pots a makeover with Esther Thorpe's terrazzo origami wrap project.



Esther, aka Origami Est, lives in the heart of central England, with her husband and two, slightly mad, small people. She is the published author of award winning *Paper Home* and is an origami artist specialising in multi-modular creations. Esther also runs hugely popular workshops in various venues across the UK. origamiest.co.uk



You will need:

Pullout paper, scissors or a guillotine, glue, a plant in a pot roughly 9 x 12cm

1. Cut the pullout paper in half, horizontally. With the patterned side face up fold and unfold vertically, until there are 32 equal sections.
2. Fold and unfold the paper horizontally into four sections.
3. You should now have a grid of pre-creases. Each section of the grid now needs a diagonal fold within it, from corner to corner. Each section has the opposite diagonal to its neighbour. Turn the paper

over, so the pattern side is face down on the table.

4. Keep folding and unfolding alternate diagonals until every section is complete.
5. Take the second half of your paper, repeat 1-4 with the diagonal folds in the opposite directions.
6. With both halves, bring together the pre-creases, emphasising the diagonals folding as mountains and the horizontals as valleys.
7. Press the folds together tightly.
8. Glue both ends of the two halves together, to create a doughnut shape.
9. Expand and contract the doughnut structure to carefully place the plant inside.





PEBBLE FOR YOUR THOUGHTS

Printer, painter and designer, Angie Lewin,
shares her love of seaside stones.



A smooth striped stone found in the bottom of my coat pocket transports me back to a beach walk. I can hear the pebbles crunching underfoot, and imagine the view out to sea as I make my way slowly along, scanning the tideline, which is tumbled with shells, driftwood, seaweeds and tattered feathers. A purple-black twist of dried bladderwrack alongside a striated silver and blue-grey pebble is a trigger for a sketch in which I try to capture the coastal landscape.

Each walk seems to have a different focus. One day I'll seek out hag stones; another striped or hooped pebbles. The next day the beach may have a hoard of spherical white quartz pebbles, chalky sea glass or smoothly rounded pottery shards. Pottering on a beach or delving into the life of rockpools could be thought of as a childish activity, but I find it completely absorbing. Time can stand still, a feeling that's heightened if you're lucky enough to have a beach to yourself. Whole days spent outdoors walking and sketching are the best of times for me.

For many years pebbles have formed a backdrop to the

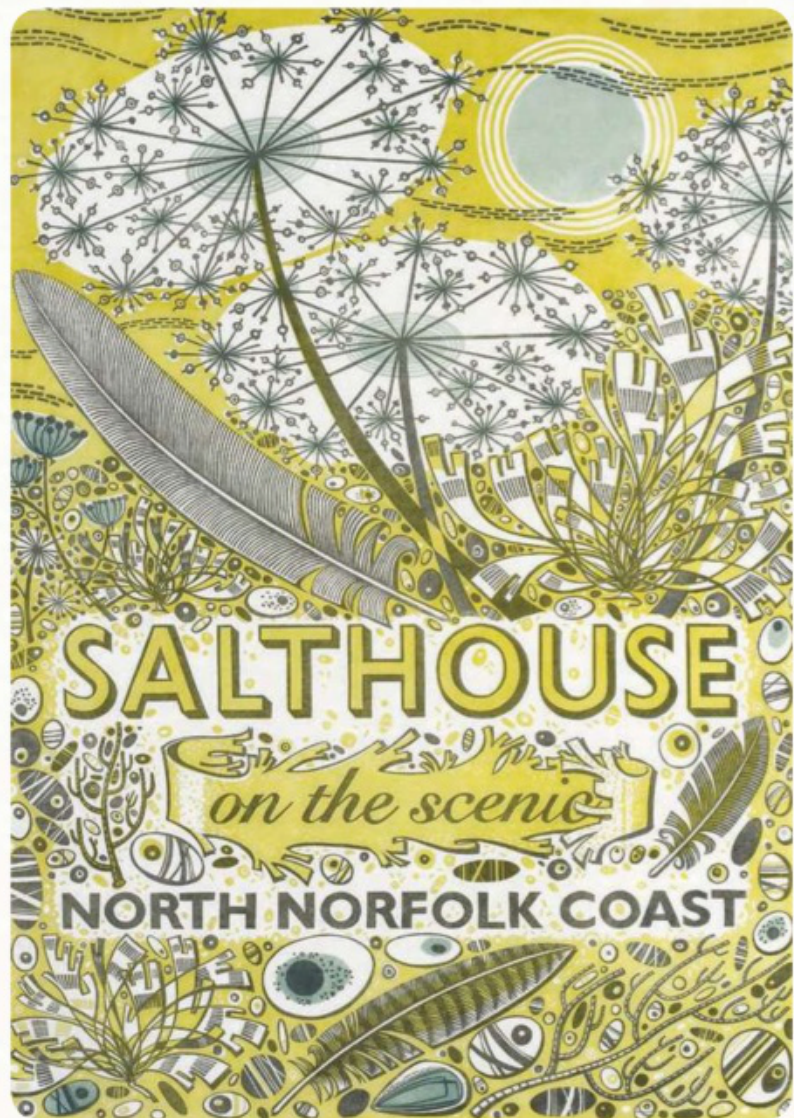


Top left: A section of '1937 Coronation Mug', Linocut 2005, Angie Lewin.
 Right: 'Salthouse Poster', Linocut 2010, Angie Lewin.



native plants that I depict in my linocuts, screen prints, wood engravings and watercolours. Their weathered, ageless solidity creates a visual counterpoint in my pictures to layers of windswept grasses, skeletal plant forms and translucent feathers. Increasingly pebbles have moved into the foreground in my prints and paintings. In linocuts and wood engravings I stylise them, accentuating their graphic qualities and creating pattern by repeating their subtle variations of texture and form.

Perhaps I can trace collecting natural objects for my home and studio back to the day in the early 1980s when, wandering through Cambridge with a school friend, we tried ringing the doorbell at Kettle's Yard, having no idea of what lay inside. ▶



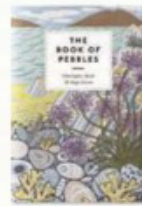




My pebbles are scattered on windowsills and studio shelves alongside my collection of chipped cups and bowls, and they're just as valued.

Jim Ede's placing of two flints close to a painting by Alfred Wallis, or a seed pod and pebbles on a shelf alongside a Ben Nicholson were a revelation to me, illustrating how art relates to the natural world and how both are integral to our domestic daily life. I could imagine the tactile experience of choosing the near spherical grey pebbles on the shoreline, then assembling them on a simple wooden table to create a perfect spiral in gradations of size and shade.

My pebbles are scattered on windowsills and studio shelves alongside my collection of chipped cups and bowls, and they're just as beautiful and valued. I'm no geologist, but I'm attracted by how they look and feel in the hand, and that inspires me to sketch them. In the same way that I've slowly learned more about our native wildflowers by drawing them, I've slowly learned more about pebbles too. My interest is sparked by their relationship with the flora around them and the views to rocks, sea and sky beyond. Along with the tiniest, most insignificant plant, a pebble defines an entire landscape for me, and through them, I try to depict the wild places that I love.



This is an abridged extract from *The Book of Pebbles* by Christopher Stocks, with a foreword and illustrations by Angie Lewin (Random Spectacular, £14.99). Part social history, part practical guide, the book features more than 40 examples of Angie's limited edition prints, watercolours and sketchbook pages. stjudesprints.co.uk



COMMON PEBBLES

Christopher Stocks shows us what to watch out for.

Some basic knowledge of pebbles surely adds to the pleasure of pebble collecting. Here, then, are a few of the commonest types of rock you're likely to find as pebbles on the shore.



FLINT

Flint is a fascinating and mysterious material, as we're still not entirely sure how it forms. It's found as nodules within sedimentary rocks, which then erode from the cliffs containing them – a process that can be seen dramatically in the chalk cliffs at Beachy Head and the Needles on the Isle of Wight, where bands of glossy black flints protrude from the dazzling whiteness of the chalk. Flints are made from an extremely hard kind of quartz, which is thought to fill small gaps between larger masses of other rocks, and their striking, knobby shapes (like sun-bleached bones) probably follow the contours of the void in which they formed.



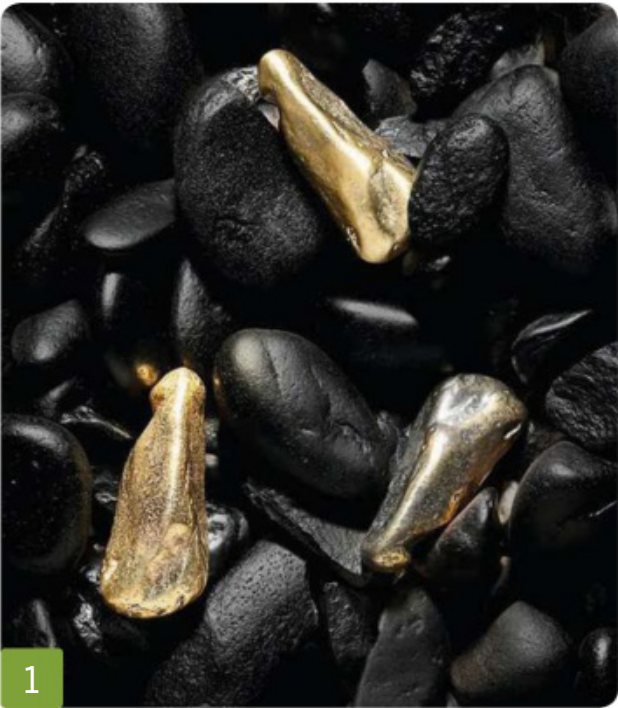
GNEISS

At first glance pebbles of gneiss (pronounced 'nice') could be taken for granite, but they are easy to distinguish because, unlike granite, they have stripes. Yet though layers generally suggest sedimentary rocks such as limestone and sandstone, gneiss (like schist) is actually metamorphic, and is formed when other rocks – which could be sedimentary, volcanic or metamorphic in origin – are recrystallised under conditions of enormous pressure and heat. These crystals separate into bands, giving gneiss its distinctive appearance. Because it is extremely hard, gneiss pebbles are usually oval or spherical.



QUARTZ

This beautiful white, almost translucent pebble looks like an oval moon, and is a type of quartz, formed from tiny hexagonal crystals of silica. In my eyes, the hairline fractures in its surface only add to its beauty. Quartz can be as clear as glass – when it's known as rock crystal – but it more commonly comes in a range of colours, from white and pale yellow to pink and brown. Though pebbles of pure quartz are attractive in themselves, as a mineral it is also found in almost every kind of rock, most strikingly as those often parallel white stripes in slate and limestone. Quartz is hard: so hard, in fact, that a piece of quartz will scratch glass.



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INSPIRED BY PEBBLES

1. A pebble held in the hand is one of life's simplest pleasures. Bring the sensation to your home with these door handles, covethouse.eu. 2. Round or jagged, pebbles inspire beautiful patterns, such as these cushions from bobbinandfleck.com. 3. Natural forms for natural, Scandinavian felted soaps, norrodesign.com. 4. Smooth statement jewellery at oliverbonas.com. 5. Have special dates and names engraved in solid stone, letterfest.com. 6. Handmade in Cornwall, eco cork with seaside stones, loveliga.co.uk. 7. Blue-grey placemats as smooth as a pebble, cloudberryliving.co.uk. 8. Curves that work for coffee tables too, loveliga.co.uk.



5



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7



8

Bring a mid-century
vibe to your home
with Oliver Bonas's
pebble mirror range,
oliverbonas.com





PEBBLES AS ART

Jeweller and architect **Cari-Jane Hakes** creates the most soothing selection of doodled pebbles. She tells us about her collection.

I am attracted firstly by their colour. Some beaches really do look like a treasure chest of gems to me. The gleam and gloss of a bright little pebble washed up by the latest tide is really irresistible. I have to pick them up take a closer look. After colour, the shape and feel of how a pebble fits into my palm is just the most simple pleasure I know. I'm always on the hunt for that perfect pebble that fits the shape of my palm. Once I became a goldsmith I began incorporating the smaller ones into rings and kilt pins. I particularly love the simplicity of using the colour of a pebble in a piece of jewellery.

I can't remember a time when I wasn't collecting pebbles. I've always been bringing them home and using them in sculptural displays in my studio and around the house. Every now and then I will go through my pebble stash and release a few back into the wild!

For me, a doodle-worthy pebble needs to be as smooth as possible because I like to cover the whole pebble in a drawn pattern so I am really interested in the continuity of the surface. I tend to work on ones that are not much bigger than my hand so that when they are finished they can easily be picked up, turned over and examined.

My favourite pebble was one that I found on the beach near my brother's house on the east coast of Scotland. The pebbles there are so beautiful. It isn't a vibrant colour, but the shape is just perfect. I've carried it around for a few years now and used it recently as a shape former for creating the outside wall of a brooch/necklace I was commissioned to make.

As well as occasionally using pebbles as shape formers in this way, I use the ones I draw on as a way to transition out of a busy making period. I find it hard to stop making! I'm often on holiday when they get created and it's a great way to still be making something but in a less time pressured way.

carijanehakes.com



THREE TIPS FOR DRAWING ON PEBBLES

Create your own patterned pebble.

FINE PENS **1**

I use Uni Pin fine line black pens, usually with a nib size of 0.3 or 0.5mm. They use water and fade proof pigment ink. I love Uni Posca pens in white with a 0.7mm nib, too. We can also recommend Sakura Pen-Touch pens.



WORK SLOWLY **2**

Give the pebble a quick wash to remove any seaweed and salt. Let it dry out and then work slowly. Let the ink dry and try not to handle the pebbles too much as the oils from your skin can stop the ink going on cleanly.

GO FOR A GOOD SIZE **3**

Pick a good-sized pebble - small ones can get a bit fiddly and don't give you much scope to see how a pattern will spread and grow around the surface of the pebble.





PROJECT
*calm**
MINDFULNESS THROUGH MAKING

S i m p l i c i t y i s
t h e g l o r y
o f e x p r e s s i o n

MIND & BODY

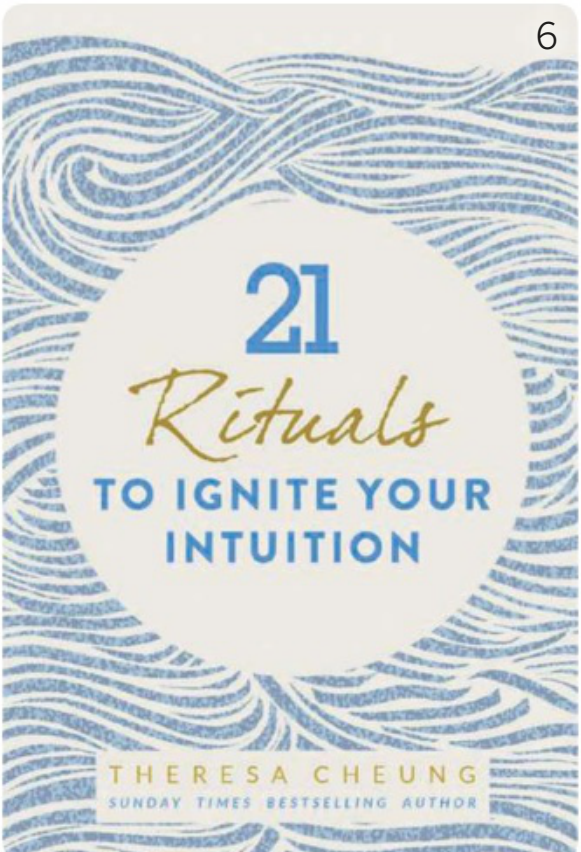
Singing and drawing are both wonderful ways to communicate our feelings. We look at much-loved lullabies from around the world and their power to soothe baby (and mum!) to sleep, while writer Pragya Agarwal shares her tips of other ways she creates a calm living space for her family. Meanwhile Katie Antoniou meets the women who turn to illustration to convey their thoughts and feelings around loss and deep sadness. Elsewhere we look at ways to live ethically and mindfully while saving money – with this economical spirit, cut out our little coupons offering the gift of your time next time you're stuck for a present.



MIND
& BODY
NEWS

Treat yourself to inspiring reads, joyful sounds and beautiful, tactile makes.

Compiled by Sarah Gane





2

1 HANDMADE TOTEMS

Whether you're a Kondo-convert or not, there's no denying that our surroundings really can impact the way we think and feel. So, if you're looking to spark a little joy, Millie Fairhall's totems are a thing of beauty. Each one, handcrafted and painted in her Aussie studio, is different, decorated with beautiful colours and designs, which are then adorned with sun-dried banana fibre, vintage brass bells and leather scraps. These wall hangings are a subtle celebration of pattern and texture, guaranteed to brighten up a little spot in a room. milliefairhall.com @milliefairhall

2 OUT YOU HOP, LITTLE BUNNY

Whatever your age, bedtime routines are important. They're part of the many little rituals that form our lives and make us feel grounded. Bathtime, especially for littleuns, is a great way to bond, settle and nurture them from birth. Yet, it's often the 'getting out' that's the issue! Cuddledry hopes to help with its sweet, cosy hooded towels. Made from a super-soft, fluffy bamboo blend, with a choice of little animals, these little creatures encourage fun, imaginative play too. Shame they don't come in grown-up sizes. cuddledry.com

3 MEDITATION PEBBLES

If you've ever spent time looking for pebbles, shells or pieces of sea glass on the beach, you'll know how fun yet utterly absorbing it can be. "I find that being by the coast is a great way of gaining perspective and finding peace," confirms artist and

illustrator Natasha Newton. "When I'm totally absorbed in beach combing, I'm not really thinking about anything else." Once she's selected her favourite finds, Natasha then takes them back to her studio to work her magic on them. "I'm fascinated by the history and story of these pieces, tumbled and shaped by the waves... and the life they had before I found them." Each one of her meditation stones, sea glass pieces and decorated vintage book covers are painted by hand and one of a kind. See more of her work at natashanewton.com | @natashanewtonart

4 STASH THE CASH FOR A RAINY DAY

Writer Otegha Uwagba (womenwho.co/the-book) talks about the importance of saving and the 50/30/20 rule, in *Little Black Book: A Toolkit for Working Women*. She recommends that no more than half of your pay should go on rent, bills and food, while 20 per cent should cover pensions, loan repayments and emergency savings, with the final 30 per cent going on the fun stuff like holidays, clothes or meals out. So, if you'd like to start small, what better way to save for a rainy day than with the OYOY money banks? Made from beech wood and handpainted in two adorable designs, the only thing left for you to do is to fill it full of shiny coins! victoriawindsor.com

5 GRACEFUL SOUNDS

Listening to tracks from the Cinematic Orchestra feels very much like a lullaby at times. The delicate, moving, notes of *To Build a Home* has been a soundtrack to many special and everyday moments since its release as part of the Ma Fleur album

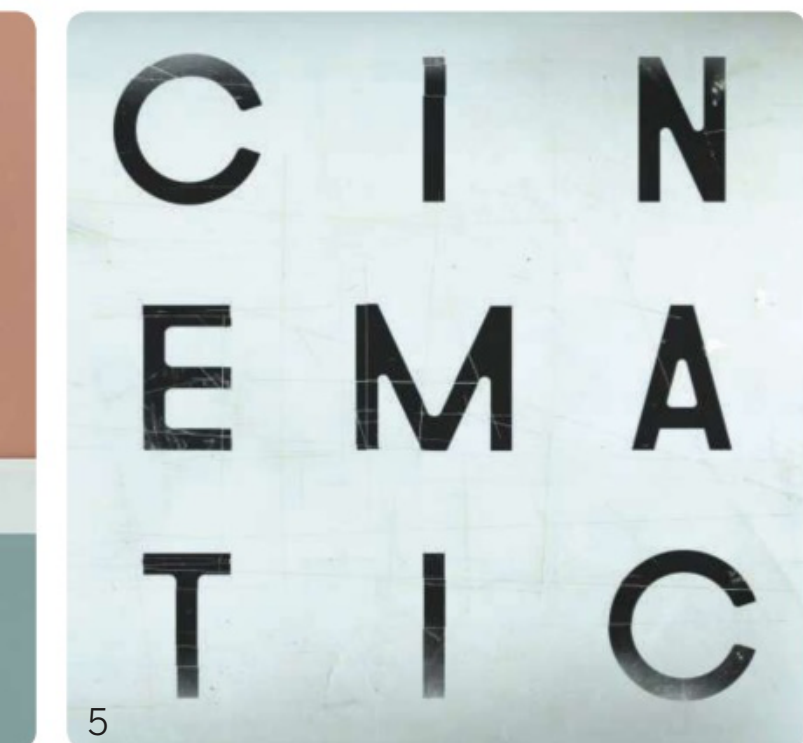
in 2007. Now, 12 years later, the long-awaited follow-up, *To Believe*, is out and filled with more varied, relevant and wonderful tracks for the rather topsy-turvy world we're living in at the moment. On reflection, the extraordinarily long gap between albums serves as a helpful reminder to apply to our own lives: do your own thing, there's beauty in the process, and go at your own pace: the world will be waiting for you when you're ready. ninjatune.net

6 TRUST YOUR INTUITION

Ever had a feeling about something or someone that you couldn't explain? Your intuition is a powerful tool. In fact, trusting your judgement or, better yet, your gut is an important way to navigate life. Yet, there's no denying it can be easy to lose your way – how do you know you're on the right path? With so much information bombarding us, our intuition can end up feeling little more than a whisper sometimes. This is where author Theresa Cheung hopes to help. Her new book *21 Rituals to Ignite your Intuition* aims to show how you can tune into your inner wisdom through a series of 21 daily rituals, each designed to help you delve deep and rediscover a little more about yourself. theresacheung.com

7 DEVELOP A NEW HABIT

If you're looking for a new podcast to subscribe to, check out *The Creativity Habit* by Daphne Cohn. This series of creative and in-depth discussions with some amazing individuals is incredibly inspiring. Topics are as varied as the interviewees themselves, tackling everything from creating the life you want to ►



9



live, to building a dream business or finding peace, these chats are honest, interesting and a joy to listen to. Favourite episodes include *Project Calm's* very own columnist Susanna Conway, Sheila Pree Bright, Satsuki Shibuya, plus lots more. thecreativityhabit.com

8 FLOWER POWER SKIN BOOST

If, like us, you're trying to reduce plastic usage, switching to soap is an easy win. What we particularly like about Moonko's vegan lavender soaps is that they use the plant's finely cut flowers in the mix, giving you a gentle exfoliant. The essential oil also helps to relax, relieve tension, disinfect the skin all while boosting blood circulation. Cocoa butter and patchouli and sandalwood options are also available. All free from palm oil, parabens and sulphates. moonko.co.uk

10 KIND REMINDERS FOR EVERY DAY

Scrolling through Instagram can feel a little like wandering through a crowd at times. Everyone's busy in their own bubble, focused on where they want to go. Jess Sharp's words (@jessrachelsharp) are a refreshing change from that. She successfully combines the power of creativity with thoughtful messages to form a virtual hug around those who need it – the equivalent of a smile from a stranger. Whether you feel lost, hopeless or just having 'one of those days', Jess's words are like a gentle nudge that you're seen: you matter. Better yet, the prints and pins she makes are a nice way for us all to spread messages of positivity and hope in the real world. jessrachelsharp.etsy.com

11 FEMALE-MADE AND BEAUTIFUL

When it comes to the Amie store, what we really love about its approach is not only its beautifully curated seasonal collection of independently made products (and, trust us, they're gorgeous), it's its ethos: "We empower female artists by sharing their stories, putting a face to the products and investing in female, not factory-made products." The store showcases thoughtful, design-led pieces that are made in small batches. The beautiful textured incense holder, for example, was a collaboration with Campfire Studio (@campfirestudios), featuring a stunning sandstone base and bright white glossy glaze. The Womankind scarf, meanwhile, represents love, equality, and justice for all womankind. The design was a collaboration with Buhlaixe (@buhlaixe). Find out more at femalenotfactory.com

9 ROCKING LULLABIES

There's nothing to say that lullabies have to be traditional tunes. If you ever find yourself singing one (and, let's be honest, it's normally when you're at peak tiredness yourself!), it's more often than not a song you'd listen to on a regular basis. Yet, trying to find a nursery toy that reflects diverse musical tastes is tricky to say the least. Thankfully, music box makers Mellipou has come to the rescue with its gorgeous range of musical clouds, stars and mobiles. Each one is fully customisable and can be installed with one of seven contemporary lullabies, from Adele, Stevie Wonder through to the *Game of Thrones* soundtrack. Our favourite is Yann Tiersen's *Amélie Poulain* from the film *Amélie*. A treat for adults and kids alike. mellipou.com

Photograph: @tawnibannister

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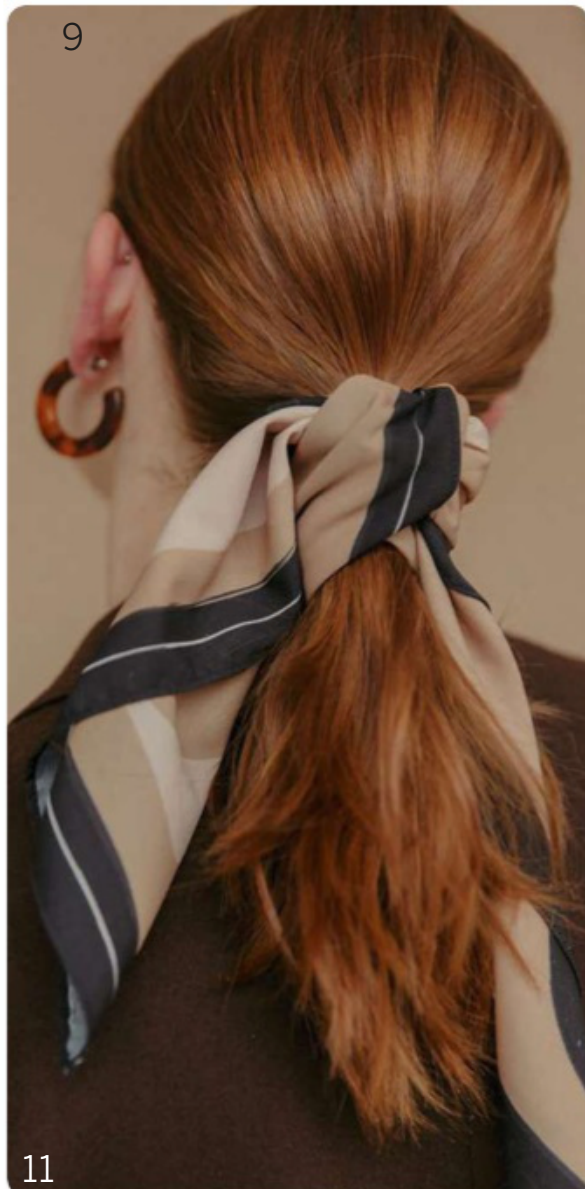
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11

Hush little baby

Music has the power to relax and calm, and lullabies are the classic example, familiar to us from birth. Pragma Argarwal investigates the sweet songs that lull us to sleep, whatever our age. ▶



As universal as they are, it is not certain where the first lullaby originated. According to the Hebrew tradition, the term 'lullaby' derives from 'Lilith-Abi', a call to drive away the monster that steals children's souls while they sleep. The Babylonians used lullabies as charms protecting children from evil spirits. Madalasa, a learned woman in Ancient India, sang to her children in the Markandeya Purana, one of the oldest Vedas from 250 CE, giving them the message of purity, rather than attachment to material goods: "You are pure, enlightened, and spotless. Leave the illusion of the world and wake up from this deep slumber of delusion."

The word 'lullaby' in English can be broken into two parts: 'lull' and 'aby'. Etymologically speaking, the word 'lulling' means to hush to sleep, and the second half of 'lullaby' – 'aby' – may be taken from 'good bye' by means of the mother saying "bye bye" to her children at night. The Italian word for lullaby, 'ninne-nanne' is similar to the Turkish 'ninni' and Spanish lulling-

"You are pure
enlightened and
spotless.
Leave the
illusion of the
world and wake
up from this
deep slumber
of delusion!"

word 'nana,' all three words deriving from the Latin word 'naniae,' meaning lullaby or lament. A small clay tablet in the British Museum shows the first ever recorded lullaby from 2000 years ago, written in cuneiform, possibly with a reed stylus. It is quite a threatening one by today's standards, as the child is reprimanded for waking up the house demon, and told that the demon would eat them if they didn't stop crying. In

fact, this menacing undertone seems to be a common theme of some of the earliest lullabies. The Spanish poet Federico García Lorca observed in 1928 that his country's "saddest melodies and most melancholy texts" are contained in lullabies. The *Duérmete Niño* sung in Spanish speaking regions, warns of a shapeshifting monster Coco that carries children away. In a Scottish lullaby *Highland Fairy Lullaby*, the mother puts the baby down and loses it. "Ho-van, ho-van gorry o go, Gorry o go, gorry o go; Ho-van, ho-van gorry o go, I never found my baby-o."

Despite the dark undertones, these lullabies or cradle songs are rooted in tender love, traditionally sung by primary caregivers, in most cases the mother. However, in the well-known French lullaby, *Fais Dodo*, also known as *Do, l'Enfant Do*, meaning *Sleep, child, Sleep*, an older sibling is singing to their little brother, Colas. According to the Cherokee tradition, it was the men who used to sing to the babies, mostly a lullaby pronounced as 'usdi yona' which means 'little bear'.

Many lullabies have folk roots and can be gendered with bravery, strength and handsomeness, recurrent themes in those sung to boys, while beauty, marriage and motherhood are more typical in those sung to girls. Another popular Scottish lullaby is *Lullaby of an Infant Chief* made popular by Sir



Rock-a-bye-baby
On the tree top
When the wind
blows, the cradle
will rock.



When the bough breaks the
cradle will fall and down will
come Baby, cradle and all.

Walter Scott in the 19th century in his book *Guy Mannering*. Here the simple AABBA musical form is repeated over each verse, combined with a humble rhythm and melody line. This kind of simple structure helps the parent remember the lullaby, while the simple-triple meter or 6/8 time gives them a swinging motion, supposed to imitate the soothing rocking motion that babies feel in the womb. Any music that has a tempo of 60–80 beats per minute, a slow and stable rhythm and tones low in pitch can be effectively used as a soothing lullaby.

But what makes lullabies unique is the voice of the mother or equivalent primary caregiver. No matter how bad or good a singer, our voices have unique thumbprints – we're the one that relaxes and calms our own child. Musically, most lullabies are simple enough for amateurs, sung in soothing voices, often at pianissimo level, and never have a melodic range spanning more than an octave. Lullabies written by established classical composers are

often given the form name 'berceuse,' which comes from French 'bercer' meaning 'to rock'. The most famous lullaby is that by Johannes Brahms (*Wiegenlied*, 1868), where 'Wiegenlied' takes its root from 'wiegen,' meaning to rock, to sway, to cradle, or to nurse.

In some cultures, these lullabies are used to pass down local heritage and traditions through songs. Oral storytelling is an ancient and intimate tradition, and lullabies are a key foundation stone for language in infants, encouraging active listening and speech development. Lullabies are often the first introduction to music and to rhyming words. Auditory processing or hearing sense is the most important sense that

babies have for the first two years of their lives, and so these lullabies help them make sense of the world around them.

Lullabies are a mirror into the culture of a society, while revealing a beautiful, tender side of humanity, one that is desperately needed in current turbulent times. A research study with premature infants found that music offered stress relief, slowing down infant heart rate, improving sucking behaviour that is critical for feeding, and resulted in ►

increased periods of 'quiet alertness' helping the babies sleep. Lullabies can foster the creation of new neural networks in babies to calm them down. It also enhances bonding between parents and their babies, while fostering a sense of wellbeing. In a project on lullabies by the Carnegie Hall Music Trust in New York, it was shown that by singing and creating lullabies, mothers have a moment to step back, discover insights, and make connections between different parts of their lives. One study even found that singing lullabies resulted in fewer symptoms of post-partum depression.

When we listen to music, our brain also produces oxytocin, which helps us sleep. Oxytocin, called the 'cuddle hormone,' is important for bonding and intimacy. Listening to music has been connected to the activation of brain areas important for pleasure and reward, and also to the release of endogenous opioids which are natural painkillers. This results in decreased stress and lowering the experience of any physical and emotional pain, thereby calming down both the baby and the parent.

So, lullabies are not just 'fuzzy baby songs'. While for the child the lullaby is a gentle melody reflecting a mother's

love, lullabies are also a way for mothers to release their unspoken emotions and verbalise their anxieties. Many lullabies embody the fear of losing the child, especially in those early days. One such, *Rock-a-bye baby*, which we are all familiar with, is about crib death. Other scholars have interpreted the 'when the bough breaks' lyric as closing of the bedroom door in a culture that values independence, but also voices the grief of separation by the new mother. Since children do not understand the meaning behind the lyrics, some cultures also use the lullabies as vehicles of lament, with elements of weeping and grief.

In Iraqi culture, lullabies have been used by women to express their despair of facing war and strife. These lullabies are important in preserving a female view of war, which otherwise may not be heard. Judaeo-Iraqi folklore is rich with such lullabies from 200 years ago, transmitted orally from generation to generation. Some of these old laments are a mirror into women's lives when they had very little human rights, a way to express loneliness and pain. One of them says: "I am a stranger, and my neighbours are strangers; I have no friends in this world. Winter night, and my husband is absent."

A lullaby not only makes the child feel rested, but also makes the singer more relaxed and happy. Amongst the stresses of everyday life, it provides a moment of respite, where all that matters is the tiny tot in our arms, and the love between us; that moment where everything else can be forgotten. The messy house, the political turmoil, or any family troubles can all melt away.

"Ho-van, ho-van
gorny o go,
Gorny o go, gorny o go;
Ho-van, ho-van
gorny o go,
I never found my baby-o"



BEAUTIFUL BEDTIME

Hang up this richly illustrated exclusive print by Esther Curtis depicting one of the most visually imaginative rhymes for children. Perfect for the nursery, it's just as suitable in big kids' rooms too.

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Modern lullabies

Chart-toppers follow the lullaby format, too. Pragma Agarwal chooses her favourites as suggestions for your bedtime playlist.



TENDER, BLUR

The gentle rhythm soothes and relaxes.

The song *Tender*, by Blur, is a beautiful song, all about trying to find love after loss. With repetitions and swaying rhythms, it makes a life-affirming melody for bedtime. In December 2017, a cover version of the song featured in a Christmas advert for Co-op and also in recent drama *Patrick Melrose*.

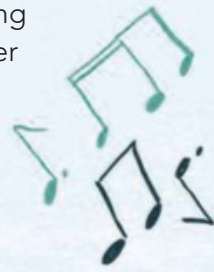


BLACKBIRD, THE BEATLES

One of the top ten most recorded songs.

From their 1968 album, this is a song performed solo by Paul McCartney, who said that he was inspired by the blackbird he heard during his stay in Rishikesh, India, and the race relations in the USA. The meanings have been interpreted in different ways as a love song, a homage to nature, and in support of the Black Power Movement. It is short and reassuring, with a relatively simple melody, and a powerful, positive message. It is as uplifting for the parents as for the children, reminding them that there's still hope even when there are times when it feels almost impossible to carry on.

"Tender is the right lying by your side Tender is the touch of someone that you love too much"





**YOUR SONG,
ELTON JOHN**

Let them know they're precious.

"How wonderful life is when you are in the world." This is my personal favourite, something that I sing often to my children. It features a simple melody and straightforward, conversational lyrics. The repetitive refrain of "hope you don't mind" makes it a perfect bedtime lullaby.

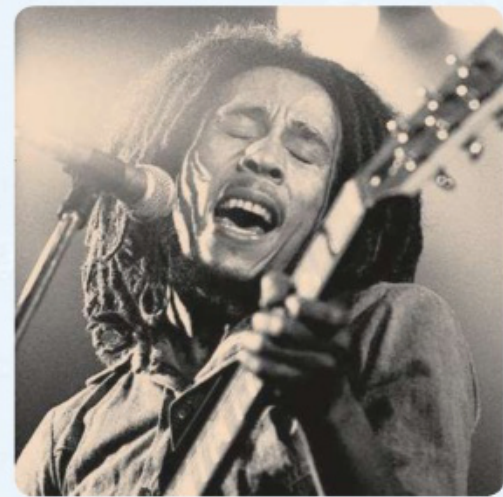


**HALLELUJAH,
LEONARD COHEN**

A moving melody with spiritual undertones.

Considered the baseline of secular hymns with its repetitive refrain of "Hallelujah," this song was made famous in a recording by Jeff Buckley, although it has been recorded several times, most recently by Guy Garvey of Elbow, and then by Madonna in 2018.

Having featured in *Shrek*, it is also more familiar to children now. It evokes early rock and gospel music, an eternal search for spiritual wisdom. It can be joyous or mournful depending on the arrangement and the singer.



Photographs: Getty Images

**THREE LITTLE
BIRDS, BOB
MARLEY**

A happy song to wash away any worries.

From the 1980s, filled with positivity, this is a wonderful message to give the young ones before bed. "Don't worry about a thing, 'cause every little thing is gonna be all right". Again, the repetitive bounce makes this perfect to be sung as a lullaby.

"How wonderful life is when you are in the world"



Creating calm for children

Singing lullabies is a wonderful way to wind down, but in what other ways can we introduce stillness to children?

Pragya Agarwal shares her personal experience.

My favourite time of the day is when we're doing nothing. Well, let me rephrase that as 'not much', as 'nothing' doesn't exist in my children's vocabulary. We try to have these moments of repose and calm in the midst of our increasingly busy lives that are filled with wonder, curiosity, exploration and adventure – so much sensory stimulation. These calm moments and the act of making space for stillness as a family is so crucial for mental health.

Every child is different, and every family is different. My three girls (twins April and India, aged two and a half, and Prishita, now 21) tend to seek sensory stimulation but also get overwhelmed by excessive stimulus. This can result in meltdowns and temper tantrums. I didn't realise for a long time just how anxiety-inducing constant stimulation can be for young ones. From birth to age five, a child's brain develops more than at any other time of their lives. They are constantly observing, interacting

with new information, and making new neural connections. This kind of activity, and exposure to so many new sensations, can often overwhelm a little child. This is therefore also the best time to start building calmer neural pathways.

Say the word 'ritual' and it can evoke images of tribal ceremonies and forgotten religious practices. But it's one of the most powerful ways to create protective behaviours for our children. Creating calm rituals provides a safe space where anxious feelings can be centred, and children can feel grounded. Two of our rituals are long dog walks to the nearby sand dunes, and visiting a wetland centre over the weekend, where the children love to watch different birds and animals. Indoors, you might create a quiet corner. This is not intended as a space to give 'time out', instead it's somewhere children can retreat to. A teepee with cushions, fairy lights and throws of

Creating calm rituals provides a safe space where anxious feelings can be centred, and children can feel grounded.

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A teepee with cushions, fairy lights and throws of different textures can help calm down children who seek sensory stimulation but also need to balance it with stillness.

different textures can help calm down children who seek sensory stimulation but also need to balance it with stillness. Having an arts corner where children can play around with crayons and colours, just messing around without any pressure or agenda, is so calming for children. This kind of immersion without much distraction can create the meditative state of flow we all enjoy in our mindful practices.

Bedtime rituals are an important part of our family life, too. Sometimes bedtime can be so rushed as we're all exhausted at the end of the day, especially on a weekend. I've realised that when we really start slowing down towards the end of the day, with a calming bath perhaps, and soft music, it makes for a more peaceful bedtime. Medically speaking, when we're anxious, our heart rate increases and our breathing becomes shallow. This means that less oxygen is reaching our muscles and our bodies, which in turn causes panic and can lead to more meltdowns in children. So we've started doing deep breathing techniques together towards the end of the day. *Sitting Still Like A Frog: Mindfulness Exercises For Kids (And Their Parents)* by Eline Snel is a lovely book that encourages children to take deep belly

breaths in a fun way. Listening to music can have a hugely calming effect. The soothing power of music has been well-established by research, slowing the pulse and heart rate, lowering blood pressure and decreasing the levels of stress hormones. We listen to some calm lullabies, and one of our favourites is Brahms', played by the cellist Yo-Yo Ma. Slow classical music has also been shown to slow down brainwave speed, and also trigger the release of dopamine, a happiness-inducing neurotransmitter in our brains.

Happy, healthy children constantly ask questions, observing the world around them. Though it's important to nurture and encourage this curiosity and thirst for learning, it's also our responsibility to encourage calm rhythms. As children grow older, this can take the form of a dedicated time when the family can sit and just talk through our day, and share in joys and sorrows in a non-judgemental space. This enriches communication and strengthens the bond as a family. It's also important for our physical, mental and emotional wellbeing. Creating a space for stillness is crucial to leave the mad rush of the world behind, even for just a little while.

Allow time before
bed for children
to relax, whether
that's creating art
without an agenda,
or reading in
their own nook.





1



2



3



4

INSPIRED BY NURSERY RHYMES

1. Get four and twenty of these sweet blackbird pegs on the wall, melodymaison.co.uk.
2. Nursery wall stickers get a magical moo and moon twist, oakdenedesigns.com.
3. Incy-wincy spider-style lighting at grattify.com.
4. A mulberry bush! The sweetest christening gift, glut.co.uk.
5. Some twinkle twinkle little stars to glow in the dark, rexlondon.com.
6. Go on a teddy bear's (or panda's or rabbit's) picnic, rexlondon.com.
7. Sing a song of sixpence, and wear this lucky silver necklace, hersey.co.uk.
8. Sign your little one up to Letters from Fairyland. A three-month subscription of exciting letters from well-loved characters, just for them, themagicinkpot.com.



5



6



7



8

Three (or more) blind mice!
Maileg's adorable toys in matchboxes are something to treasure.
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Illustrations: Ella Masters

ILLUSTRATION THERAPY PEN, PAPER, PROCESS

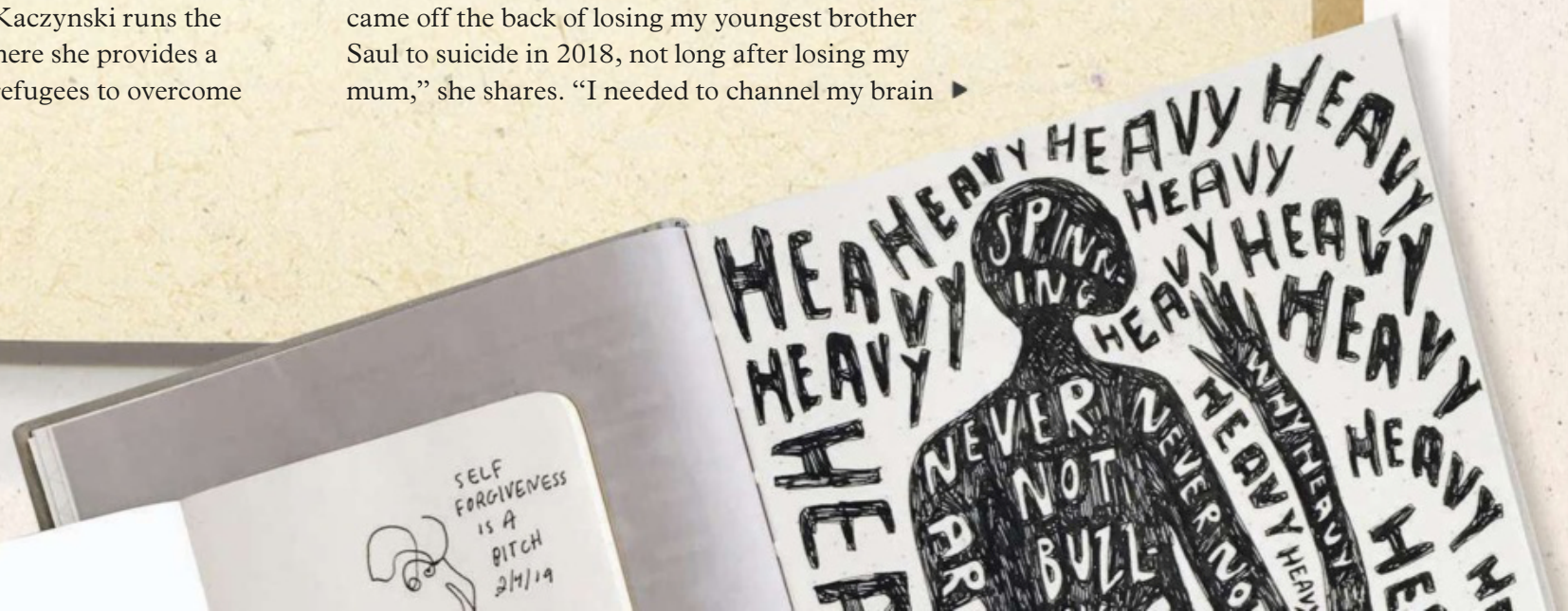
Communicating loss or deep sadness can often feel like a battle in itself. **Katie Antoniou** meets the women who turn to illustration to convey their thoughts and feelings.

Writing down emotions can be extremely therapeutic, but what about when you can't find the words? Sometimes an experience is just too intense to describe. Henri Matisse said that drawing was 'putting a line around an idea', but this notion doesn't just apply to ideas; emotions, dreams, physical sensations, thoughts and memories can all be embodied in art, and illustration is one of the simplest ways you can get started.

Art psychotherapist Tania Kaczynski runs the New Art Studio in London where she provides a space for asylum seekers and refugees to overcome

trauma and rebuild their lives. "Making art is a direct line to our unconscious thought. Expressing yourself visually is very different from using language, it's much more primitive and immediate, and often feelings from trauma can't really be articulated through language."

Illustrator Ella Masters has also used art to work through her own personal trauma, drawing a picture every day for a year. "My #ella365project came off the back of losing my youngest brother Saul to suicide in 2018, not long after losing my mum," she shares. "I needed to channel my brain ▶



PROJECT
*calm**

Ella Masters' colourful illustrations have resonated with many.



into something creative, so I came up with the idea of one drawing a day; if I could do that while dealing with the immense grief then I could get through it.”

Ella posts her work on Instagram, where the project has become so popular that she now sells postcards of her drawings with the profits going towards CALM, a ‘campaign against living miserably,’ the leading movement against male suicide. She says, “I still think suicide is considered a taboo subject, but I find the project has allowed me to be open about suffering in the wake of someone taking their own life, the meanings are just often hidden behind pretty patterns on a page.”

But you don't have to be a professional illustrator to reap the rewards of drawing. Selling your work or sharing it online is merely a bonus, the real benefits come from the process itself. Taking that time to be mindful, to avoid needless distractions and concentrate on just one thing is the perfect antidote to the multi-tasking chaos of modern life.

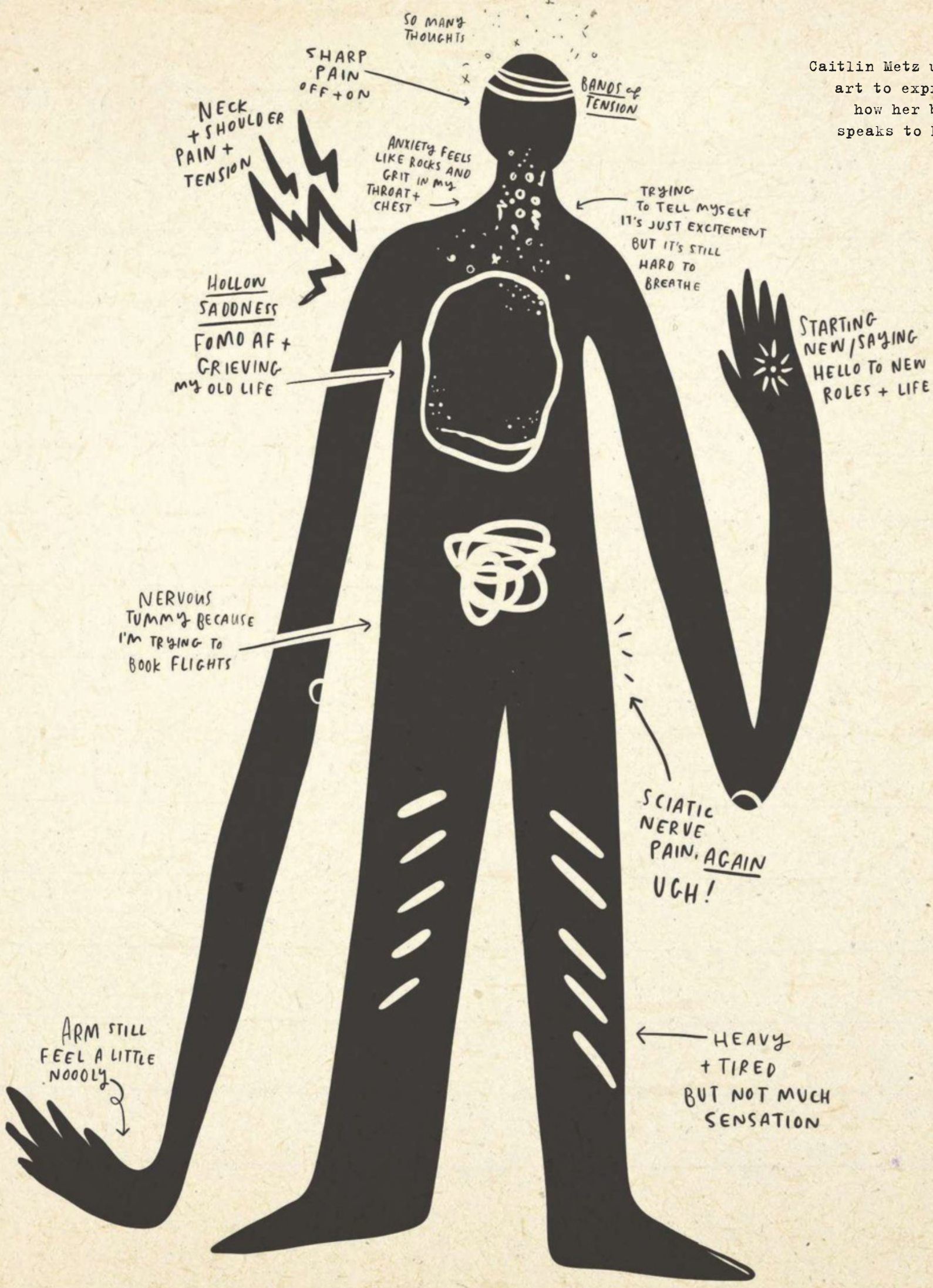
Caitlin Metz is an illustrator and co-creator of the On Being In Your Body project, championing body positivity. “I always feel a bit safer if I have some paper and a pen nearby,” she says. “I like having something to be busy with the same way some people knit. I do some pieces where I draw

a body or text then just scribble around, filling in negative space, it's incredibly meditative. I turn to those when I need something to help fill my mind. It's so repetitive that I can just fall into that flow.”

Another technique Caitlin uses is called blind drawing, which focuses on process rather than the end result. It's a great place to start experimenting. “You don't look at your paper and you don't lift your pen, so it's one continuous line. I love doing them of myself. Because it's meditation, you have to ▶



Ella started her 365 Project in memory of her brother Saul, pictured.



Caitlin Metz uses art to express how her body speaks to her.



Quotes and colour from
Ella Masters, and sincere
words from Gemma Correll.

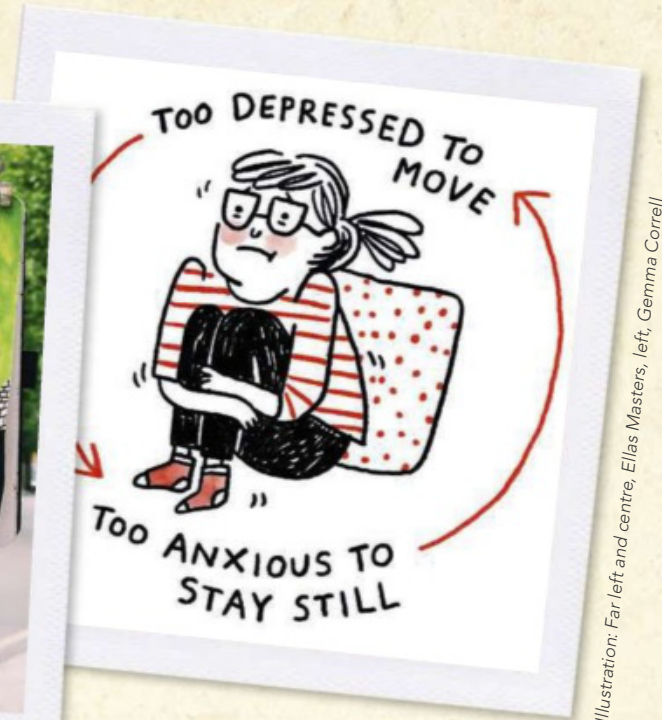


Illustration: Far left and centre, Ella Masters, left, Gemma Correll

be so present. They're supposed to be absurd and awkward; there's no wrong way to do them."

One of the aims of drawing as an adult is to regain that sense of joy we had as children, before we learned to value results over process. Caitlin says, "If you hand a child any kind of mark-making medium, they'll just intuitively start making marks. But as we get older we start censoring ourselves."

The idea is not to come up with a perfect plan for your drawing, but to see where the journey takes you. You may want to distract yourself with what's around you, such as nature, people or places. Or you might want to look inside yourself for inspiration.

Caitlin says, "Almost all of the work I create is inspired by a feeling that I'm having or what I was processing in therapy that week. Drawing puts space between me and the feeling, to draw it makes it containable, manageable."

Drawing can be a great way of dealing with major changes in your life. Zarina Liew was a fashion illustrator before she had her baby daughter. She says, "It took about six months after Zadie was born before I found time to draw again. I didn't

have any energy and I realise now that not drawing makes me sad – I felt like I was missing something and I didn't have the heart to draw the stuff I would normally draw. I'd lost the confidence."

"I felt like everyone else's lives had moved on," she continues. "And I didn't really know where I was. I started drawing comics about motherhood

because I was battling with the cultural differences between my very traditional Chinese family and my British upbringing; how I should treat Zadie, when I should wean her. I began these small sketches as a way to sort of make fun of it, to depict how I felt and get it out of my system. And it was like a tap, as soon as I started I couldn't stop."

Even though Zarina's comics are sometimes just simple pencil sketches, they perfectly convey the message she's trying to express. Your work doesn't have to be polished in order for it to be finished.

Zarina continues, "I went to an exhibition of Klimt's work and it was so inspiring to see his sketches. He would only stamp his name if he felt something was complete, but there were simple sketches that were just the side of someone's

"I began these sketches as a way to depict how I felt and get it out of my system – it was like a tap, as soon as I started I couldn't stop."

NOTHING IS KNOWN
THERE ARE NO ANSWERS
GRIEF COMES IN WAVES
BUILD A TEAM AROUND YOU
OUTSOURCE / RESOURCE
ASK FOR HELP
THERAPY IS NONNEGOTIABLE
CUDDLE EARLY + OFTEN
NO ONE WILL FULLY
UNDERSTAND
HELP WILL COME IN
UNEXPECTED WAYS
YOU WILL FALL A PART
YOU MIGHT LOSE FRIENDS
IT WILL BE OKAY SOMEHOW
TODAY IS ALL YOU KNOW
THERE IS NO END IN SIGHT
IT WILL BE OKAY
YOU WILL BE OKAY

head, which he had signed because he thought that was how it was meant to be. It really inspired me and helped me realise that pieces don't have to look completely finished to be ready for people to see."

And, of course, you don't have to share your work. It can be a private practice, or it can also be sociable. The Victorians used to play a game where they would draw everything they liked in order to get to know each other; so they would sketch their favourite food, possession, place, pastime and so on. When a picture is worth a thousand words, what better way to help other people understand you and to get to know yourself better too?

Ella is holding an exhibition, with workshops based around her #ella365project, on 15-26 May at We Built This City on Carnaby Street, London.

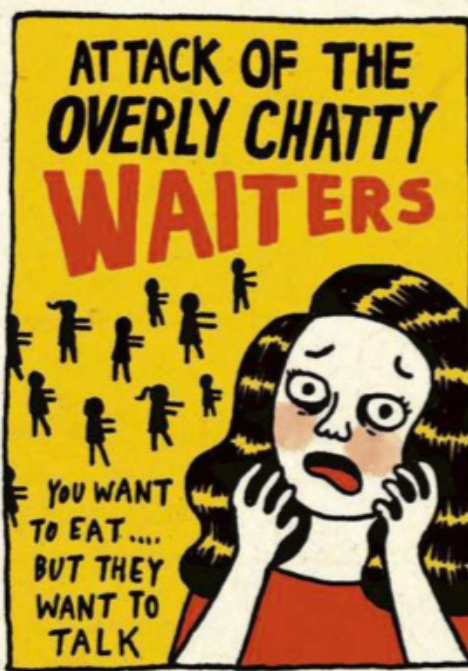
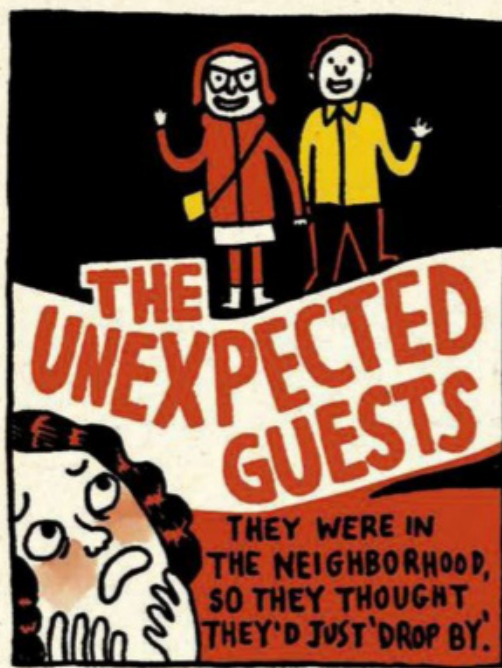
Left: Wisdom from Caitlin Metz. Below: The beautiful Making Pearl by Zarina Liew.



SIMPLE TIPS FOR GETTING STARTED

- 1 Start small. Ella Masters says, "My sketchbook is only A6 – keep it simple and manageable."
- 2 Don't aim for perfection. Gemma Correll's helpful tip is to start in the middle of a new sketchbook, "Then you don't have the pressure of trying to make that first blank page of the book perfect."
- 3 Make it a habit. Take your sketchbook everywhere with you and try replacing half an hour when you would normally be checking your phone or watching TV with drawing instead.
- 4 Join a group. Some people love the support of a drawing class while others can find it intimidating; find what works for you.
- 5 Set yourself a challenge. Zarina Liew took part in the annual #hourlycomicday, drawing the hours of her day. But don't feel obliged to share online if you don't want to, just draw for yourself.
- 6 Don't hold back. Caitlin Metz advises, "Let it be messy, let it be whatever it is, have no expectation of the outcome."

REAL LIFE HORROR MOVIES



“Drawing new things I haven’t seen before gives me something to focus on besides my own head.”

Gemma CORRELL

DRAWN TOGETHER

Katie Antoniou shares a connection made through art.

I always thought I understood what anxiety and depression must be like, until I experienced them for myself. Last year, a serious anxiety attack landed me in hospital. When I came out, I saw everything with new eyes, including Gemma Correll’s illustrations.

A picture she’d drawn of herself curled up and rocking, ‘too depressed to move, too anxious to keep still’ described exactly what I was going through. Having both just moved to the same part of the US, we connected and when Gemma went through a similarly awful episode of anxiety a few months later, we became ‘anxiety buddies’. Her work made me feel seen at a time when I was struggling to understand what I was going through.

Gemma says, “I’d been drawing work about mental-health struggles for a while but not sharing it with anybody, then one day I decided to snap a picture of something I’d drawn in my sketchbook and see what the reaction was on social media. It really resonated with people so I started showing more. It made me feel less alone, to see that there were other people who felt that way, other people who found humour in difficult things the same way I did.”

While Gemma draws for a living, she continues to use illustration in her everyday life. “In my sketchbook I’m less concerned about the final result, it’s more like a stream of consciousness, taking me away from my thoughts. I always draw little travel diaries because travelling makes me anxious, but drawing new things I haven’t seen before gives me something to focus on besides my own head.” You can see Gemma’s sketchbook and travel diaries at gemmaacorrell.com.



GET INTO THE FLOW

So you're sitting at your table, pen or brush or paper in hand. And you're going to start creating art. Hang up these fabulous, exclusive prints by artist Ella Masters and be inspired to enjoy the process, whatever the outcome! It's your time to express yourself.



SAVING, MINDFULLY

Concerns over climate change and the call for minimal-impact, zero-waste living are rising. So how do we balance our budgets to make sustainable change? Kate O'Sullivan finds out.

Whether it's slow living, zero waste, sustainable fashion or plastic-free living, businesses are encouraging us to invest in climate change. In an average day, we will negotiate our own values against current events, health needs, family needs, caring needs and career needs. In order to make change that will last, it must be sustainable. Making ethical living viable is often a question of budget. The very nature of consuming less should, in theory, save money. How this all adds up in practice, however, can feel quite hard to navigate.

The question, 'Does it spark joy?' has become a cultural shorthand thanks to Marie Kondo's decluttering phenomena. Our connection to our possessions is a complex relationship that can bring up feelings of identity, self-worth and belonging. It's no wonder that people have been drawn to Marie's emotionally charged approach to a minimal, less wasteful life. Focusing on joy means we ward away shame. In her teachings about shame, research professor Brene Brown highlights how this emotion evokes feelings of not being worthy of love, and losing a sense of belonging. If we are to truly move forward as a species to a less wasteful approach, we need to identify shame triggers and get to grips with our emotional responses to consumption.

Removing worries is easier said than done and it's something that author Huma Qureshi teaches

with her writing courses and blog pieces that focus on journaling. "I don't always journal, but if I ever go through spells of self-doubt [around money], it's usually a sign that I need to process fears or anxieties," Huma explains. "Writing my way through it helps me clear my mind; it helps me pinpoint what it is that's building up inside." Reconnecting with ourselves seems to be at the heart of making this change tangible.

Guidance from organisations like Mind, the UK-based mental health support service, are clear about good mental wellbeing. How some of these indicators of wellbeing intersect with movements such as zero waste, green or frugal living and minimalism is important in safeguarding against feelings of failure. Feeling relatively confident, engaged in the world and able to work productively are just some of the ways wellbeing manifests itself. So within a call to live in a way that does least harm

to the planet and humanity, we need to include the bottom line that it is an act of self-love to task ourselves with an achievable goal.

While no one can dispute we need to do more as a human race if our planet's eco system is going to cope, individual accountability is complex. Ethical production and waste management are big business concerns that filter down to us as the consumer. This raises issues around affordability and accessibility. Perhaps we need a starting point where we can all make meaningful change in our lives.

"IF WE ARE TO MOVE TO A LESS WASTEFUL APPROACH, WE NEED TO GET TO GRIPS WITH OUR EMOTIONAL RESPONSES TO CONSUMPTION."



A J A B A R B E R

Choose quality brands you love and stick to them.

Aja Barber is a writer and stylist with a passion for sustainable and inclusive fashion. Each month, she delivers tips for wardrobe management with the aim of supporting those who want to move from fast fashion consumption and into a more mindful practice. Aja explains she's saved the most money by changing from high street purchases to better quality brands thanks to focusing on affordable options. "I was in a continuous cycle of buying and I hated all of it and felt gross about my consumption," she explains. "In previous years I was buying the same sort of basics from the high street over and over again but getting rid of them in a year or two. I now swear by a few quality brands and often I will find them on eBay and other resale sites for the same cost as a high street garment. Of course you have to either stay the same size (something I did not) or invest in stretchy jersey (which I did). I've bought something used for a good price and kept something out of a landfill."

"I WAS BUYING THE SAME BASICS FROM THE HIGH STREET BUT GETTING RID OF THEM IN A YEAR OR TWO."



J E N G A L E

Free resources to start you on your eco journey.

Jen Gale runs Sustainableish, a website for people who know they want to reduce their environmental impact but aren't sure where to start. There's a host of free resources from podcasts to downloadable ebooks. One example is Jen's monthly Sustainableish calendar. Jen says, "The idea is that they act like a checklist of easy, small changes we can all do – you can print them off, tick off the ones you're already doing and then pick which ones you want to tackle next." The key here is baby steps, and slowing down enough to have the time to think about what you're doing, its impact, and look around for easy alternatives. What's more, each action is small and budget-friendly, such as food shopping from your own cupboards or hosting a clothes swap party.

"THE KEY IS BABY STEPS. THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU'RE DOING, ITS IMPACT, AND LOOK AROUND FOR EASY ALTERNATIVES."



ALEXIS HILLYARD

Enjoy experimenting with homemade food options.

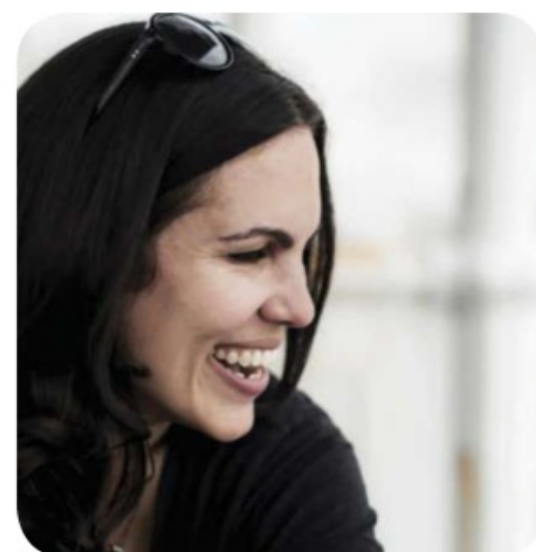
Keeping things within budget and manageable is a key to success in making lifelong changes. This is something embodied by Alexis Hillyard, creator of Stump Kitchen. "I vowed that food and groceries were something I would allow myself to spend money freely on," she says. "So, quite honestly, it's my spending outside of food that I am careful about, and that doesn't cause as much stress as it would if it were around food costs. I buy second hand, I re-use

"REGULAR TRIPS INSTEAD OF ONE BIG FOOD SHOP HELP US STAY MORE CONSCIOUS OF WHAT'S IN THE KITCHEN."

or repurpose items, I don't purchase a lot of technology, and I cook at home as much as I have the energy for." One strategy Alexis says she's employed to good effect is regular trips to the store over one big food shop. This helps her stay more conscious of what's in her kitchen with shopping lists and achievable shopping loads. Experimenting with homemade options for her particular diet needs has led to some surprises too: "I was surprised to learn that the homemade loaves I'd been preparing were actually the same price, or more expensive than some of the gluten-free ones."



Save money and make stronger friendships: give the gift of time to friends and neighbours with our sweet vouchers on page 73.



LUCY LUCRAFT

New habits will soon become second nature.

Adopting a consistent approach is the key for Lucy Lucraft, a journalist and zero-waste blogger and busy mum with a young family. "Meal planning and using a £5 compost bin for the scraps has helped me dramatically reduce my food waste," Lucy explains. "I try not to worry too much. Every little helps so if I fancy a chocolate bar covered in plastic wrapping occasionally, so be it. I do my bit elsewhere!"

"IF I FANCY A CHOCOLATE BAR WRAPPED IN PLASTIC OCCASIONALLY, SO BE IT. I DO MY BIT ELSEWHERE!"

ONLINE CHALLENGES

The four best online challenges aimed at saving money (and the planet).



10 X 10 CHALLENGE

Need to quit the fast fashion? Try the #10x10challenge on Instagram, now hosted by @selltradeslowfashion and @buyfrombipoc. You'll be invited to choose 10 existing items in your wardrobe and make 10 outfits, giving you a strong idea of your key looks and essential pieces. Look out for the hashtags '#10x10challenge', 'representationmatters' and '#10x10challenge'.



MAKE NINE CHALLENGE

Do you make your own clothes? Take a look at the #makeninechallenge. This was started by Rochelle of homerowfiberco and Lucille of luckylucille.com. Realising that they were treating their hobbies in the same way they did fast fashion, Lucille began the challenge to focus on what it takes to make nine essential, high-quality pieces a year. This includes sewing, knitting and crochet.



THE MINIMALISM GAME

Need to make decluttering a game? How about the Minimalism Game hosted by The Minimalists? Find a buddy who's willing to take part with you and each person gets rid of one thing on the first day of the month. Two things on the second and so on. The 'winner' is the person who lasts the longest. With options such as reselling and gifting, this could be a money-earner too.



PLAN A STAYCATION

Travel can be expensive and a huge cost in terms of our carbon footprint. Plan yourself the perfect staycation with @wisewomanwallet's Summer Staycation Starter Set. Alongside her debt recovery and budgeting resources, you'll find help to map out your free resources. Books, local free events, Netflix listings – all the spoiling you've been meaning to do. Find more inspiration on page 113!

TAP TO
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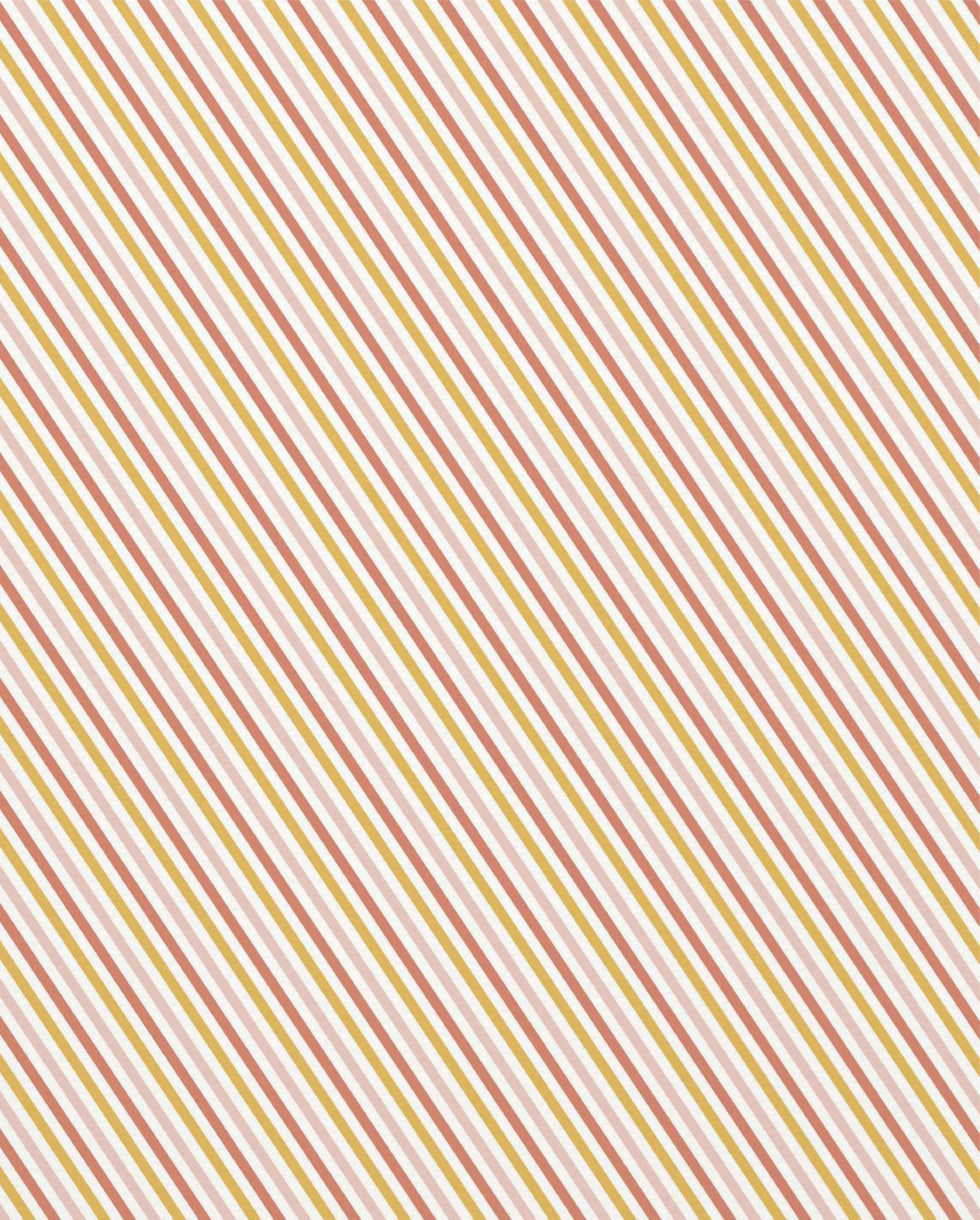


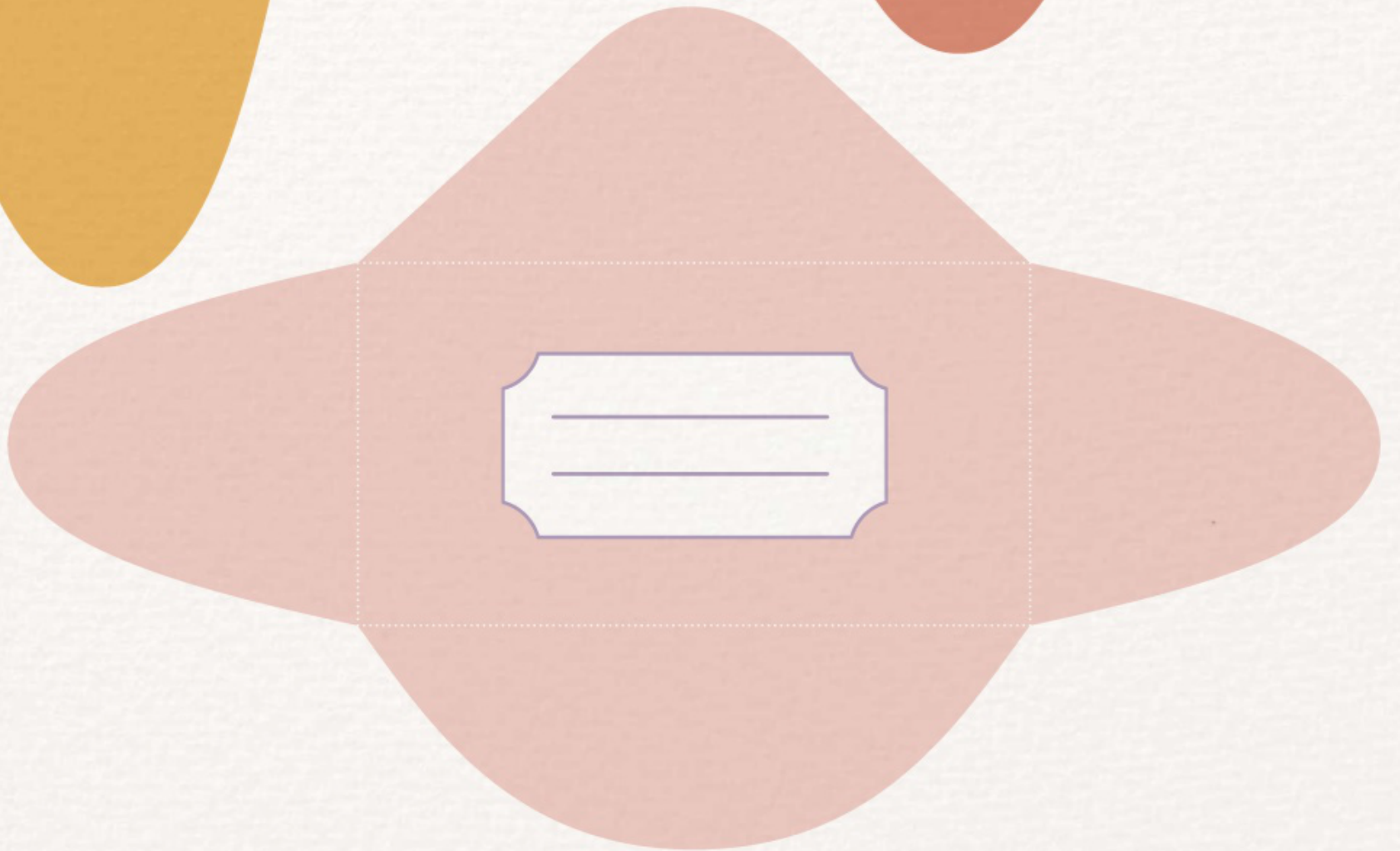
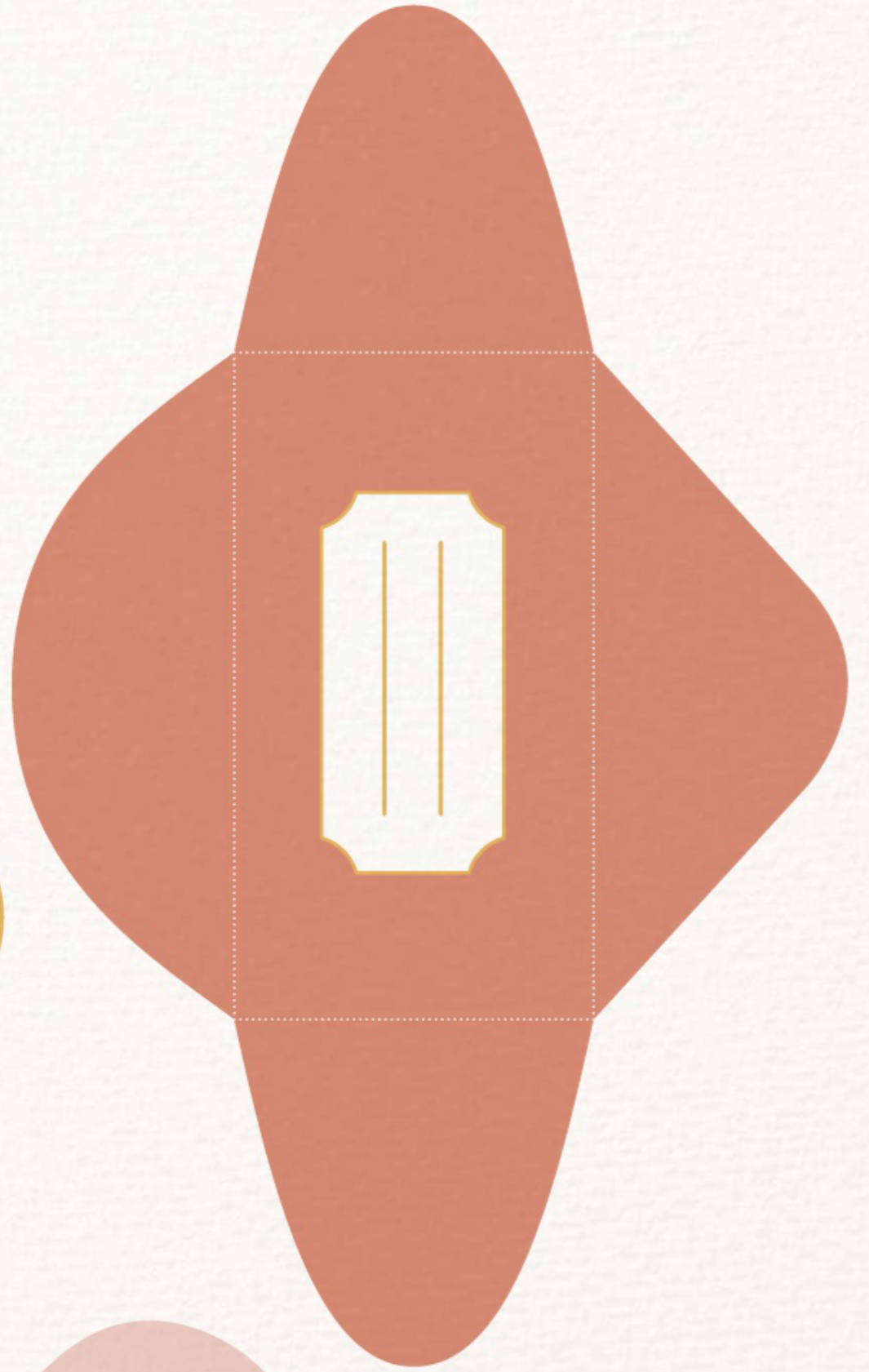
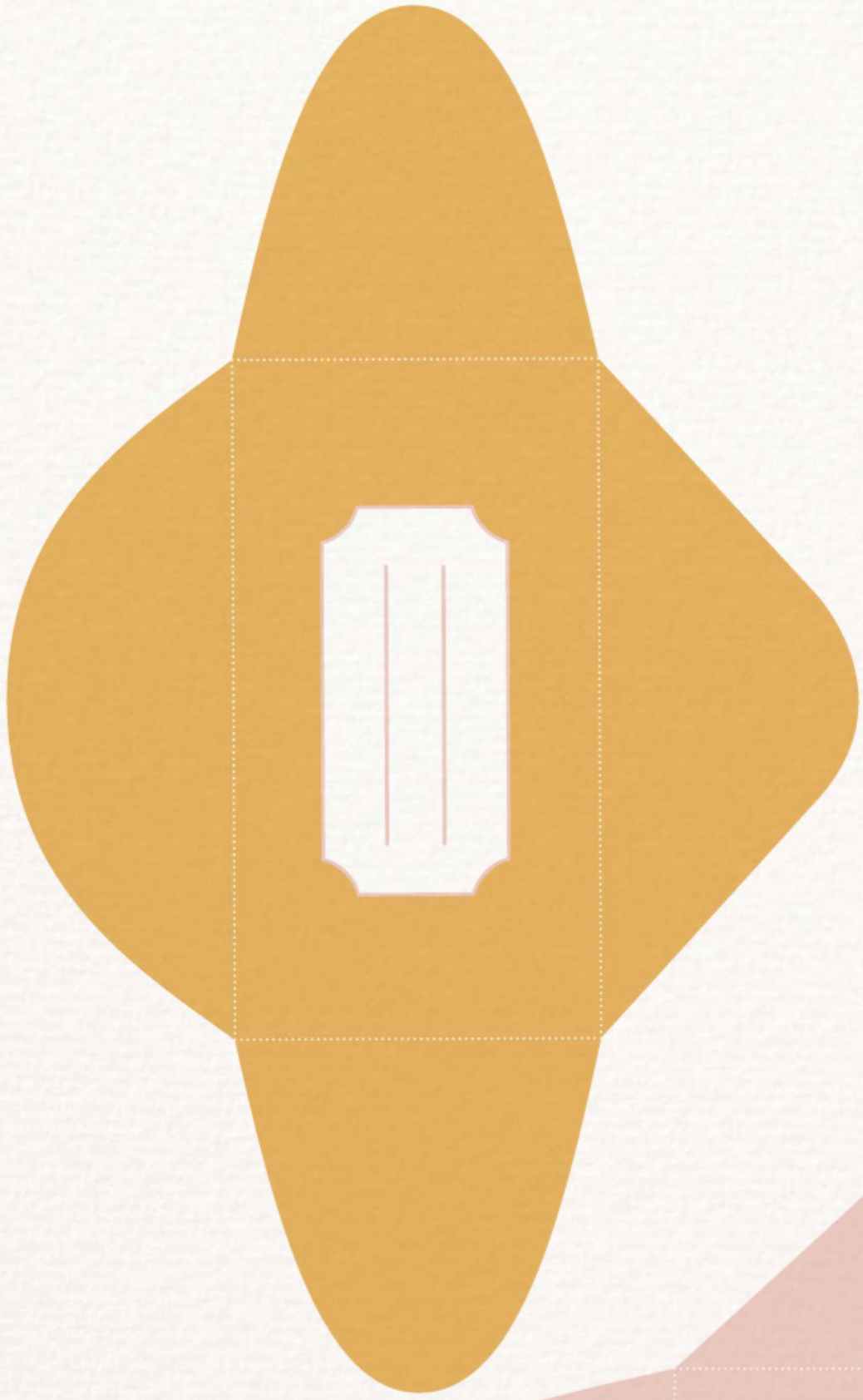
GIVING TIME

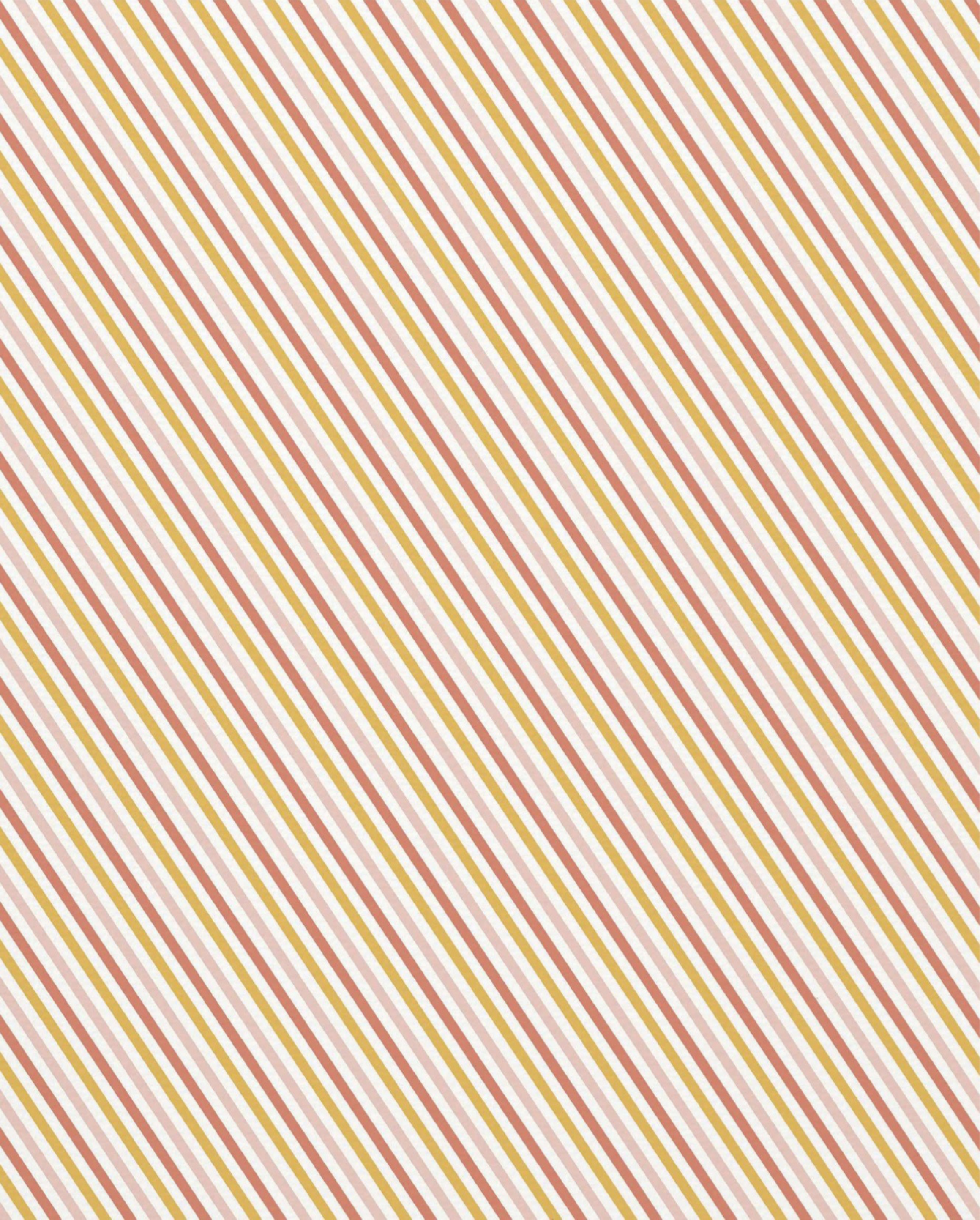
What better gift to a loved one, than your time? Maybe a neighbour would appreciate some babysitting. Or, when was the last time you went out for a really long chat and coffee with a good friend? Pick one of our sweet vouchers and make someone's day special.

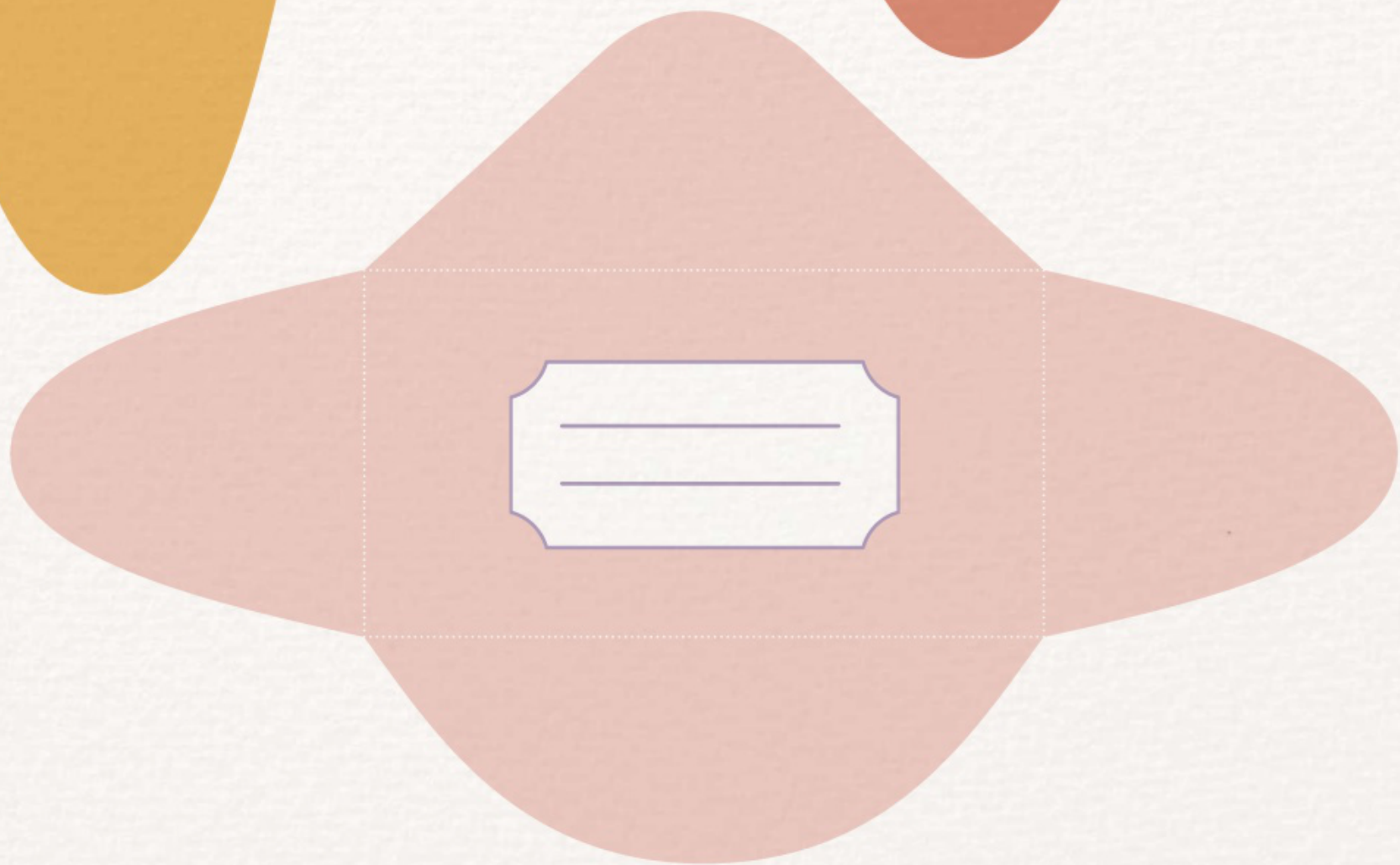
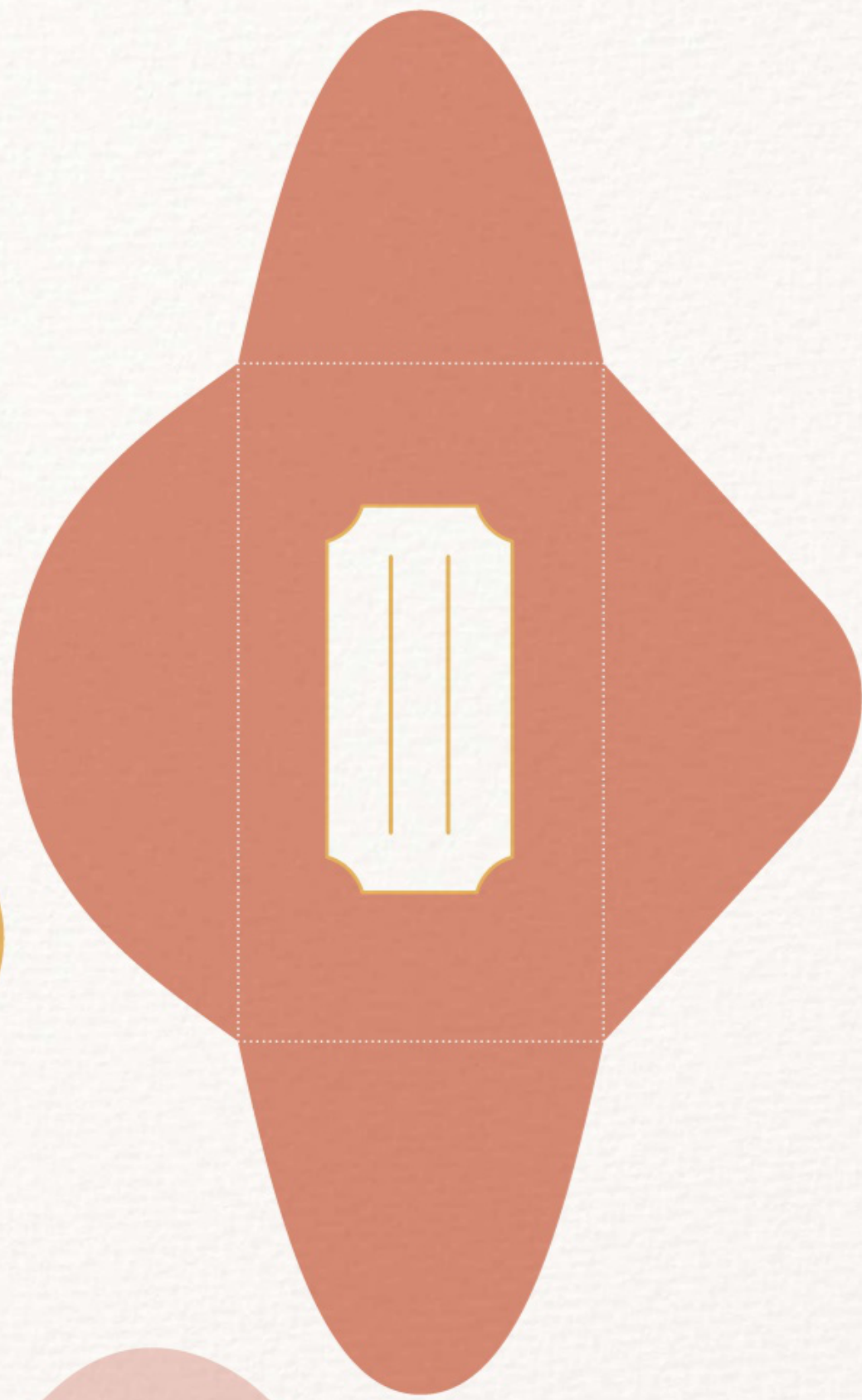
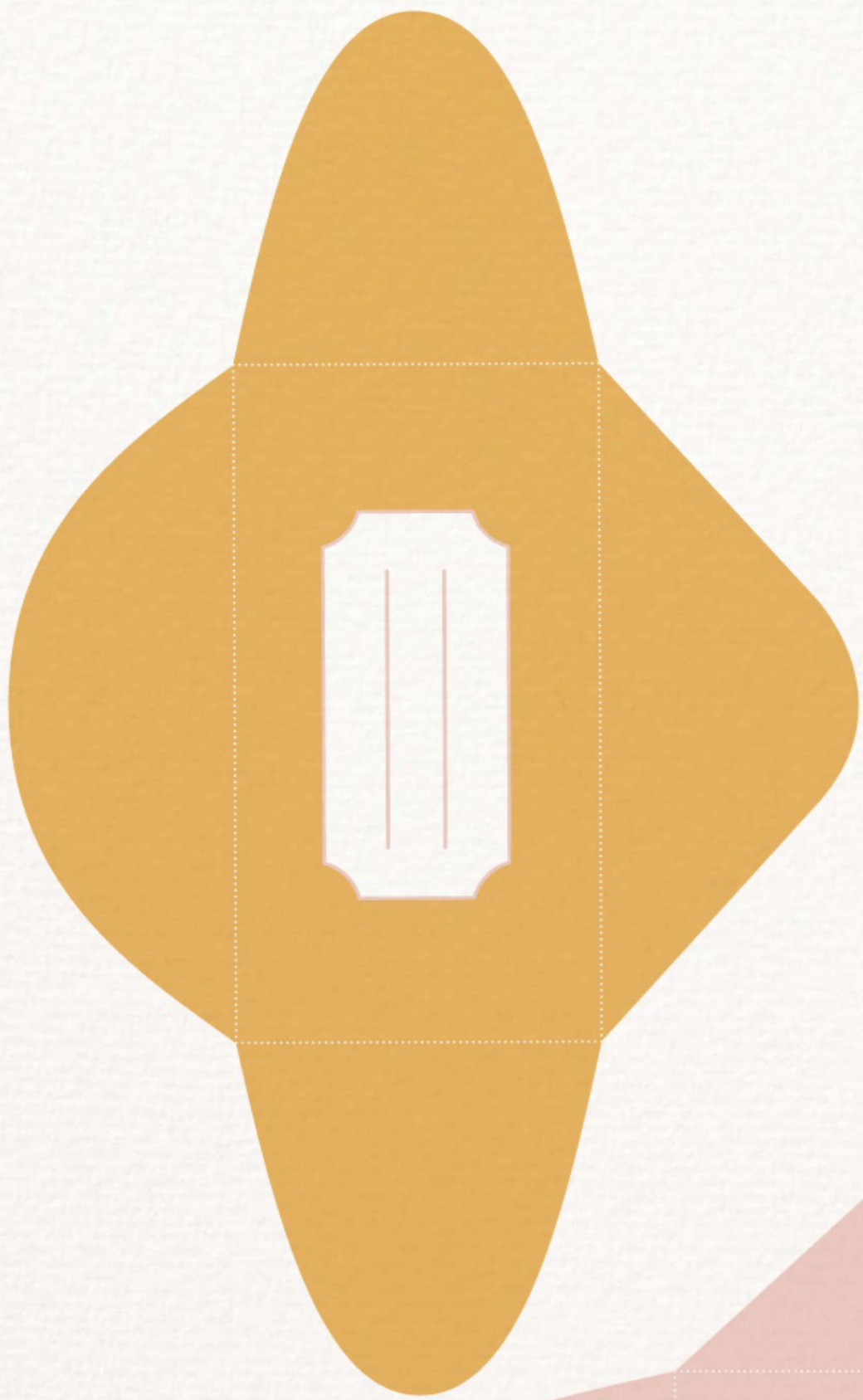


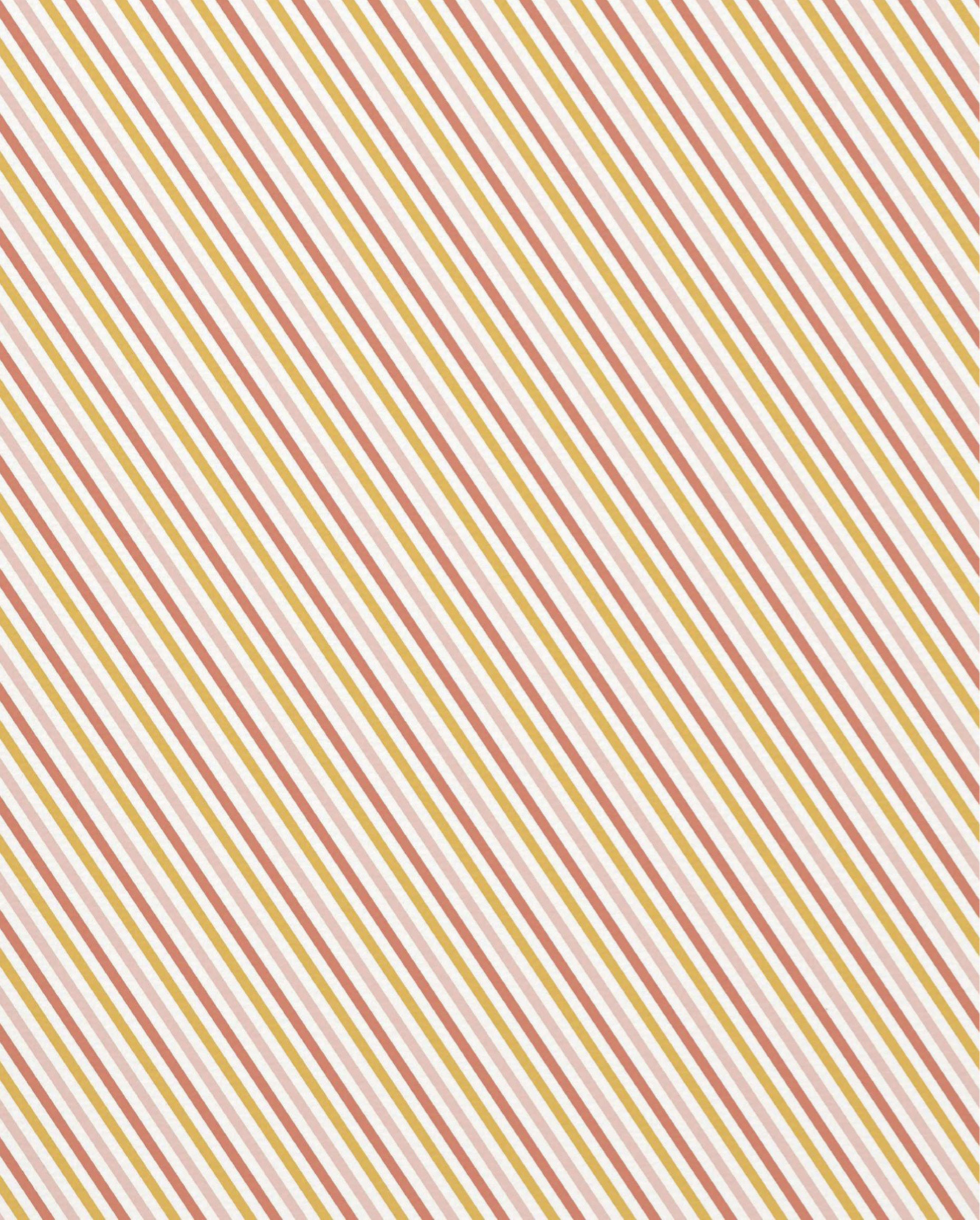













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A r t i s t h e o n l y
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HOME

For an instant interiors boost, you can't beat fresh flowers. But do the air miles of big bouquets concern you? Author and stylist Selina Lake shares her tips for eco blooms this issue – from the plants themselves to the way you present them in your space. From flowers we move to artists – and was there ever an artist who failed to be inspired by nature? We meet three female sculptors harnessing the shape and form around them, and then look at the ways you can create your own art studio at home.





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Photograph: Rachel Whiting

Photograph: Rachel Whiting

HOME NEWS

Freshen up your living space with cool linen and your dream sofa, plus make your furniture and weave your own wall hanging.

Compiled by Caroline Rowland



4



4



6



7



Photograph: India Hobson

1 ECO-FRIENDLY HOME DECOR

There appears to be no stopping interior stylist and author Selina Lake when it comes to producing beautiful interiors books! Selina has just published her ninth book and unsurprisingly always seems to have her finger on the pulse of how interior style is evolving. With the move to make our lives and homes more eco-friendly, Selina's new book, *Natural Living Style*, is the perfect guide to not only reducing waste and being kinder to the environment, but for gathering ideas and inspiration to make it look utterly stylish. She talks materials, repurposing and using nature as decorative details. All photographed beautifully by Rachel Whiting. Get a sneak peek on page 86. Published by Ryland Peters and Small, £19.99.

2 LINEN FOR A LIFETIME

We are all about natural materials right now, and linen is top of the textiles list, with its sustainability credentials and ability to look super stylish whether neatly ironed or carefree and crumpled. Nicole Patterson recently launched Home Trousseau, focusing on simple, high quality linen goods for the home. Her collection is hard-wearing, sourced within the European Union, and she encourages customers to shop for life. The range includes table linen, towels, aprons and bed linen in white, charcoal grey and ice blue. If you want textiles to last a lifetime, then this is the place to look. hometrousseau.com

3 SLOW LIVING COTTAGE STAY

Holiday accommodation set within a beautiful landscape

that doubles up as interiors inspiration gets the thumbs up in our book, and that's exactly what Harp Cottage offers – a self-catering three-bed cottage near Hay-on-Wye on the Welsh borders. The space has been sympathetically decorated by owner Justine Cook, highlighting original features and creating a calm, timeless environment in which to spend your well-earned break. Justine also runs workshops and retreats from Harp Cottage and offers design consultations to anyone wanting to emulate the slow living style she is known for. Peek inside her world on Instagram at [@harpcottage](https://www.instagram.com/harpcottage) and you can even join in with the hashtag she came up with, [#myconsideredhome](https://www.instagram.com/hashtag/myconsideredhome). harpcottage.co.uk

4 NEW INTERIORS PODCAST

The world of podcasts is thriving at the moment, but until recently there seemed to be a gap in the market for a podcast which focused on interiors. Being such a visual concept, it's no surprise, but not letting that deter them, author and blogger Kate Watson Smyth and TV presenter and stylist Sophie Robinson, teamed up to create *The Great Indoors*, a podcast about home décor. The two women clearly know their stuff when it comes to paint colours and parquet, but what makes listening so enjoyable is the fun they seem to have when recording and the debate-style conversations that ensue. While they provide lots of practical advice on decorating and styling you can put into action, you will find yourself having a giggle in the process. madaboutthehouse.com sophierobinson.co.uk

5 RELAX ON YOUR DREAM SOFA

Talking of linen, furniture maker Loaf has recently released a new fabric range for its sofas in what it describes as 'clever laundered linen'. The fabric can upholster all of Loaf's made-to-order pieces including sofas, armchairs, footstools, beds and headboards. It gives a laidback yet luxurious feel, and due to a special protective coating, it is spill-resistant – meaning even the clumsy among us can opt for it without a worry! We are particularly taken by the colourways available – go neutral with the popular Blue Turtle, Shell or Grey Daybreak, or create a statement sofa in a brighter shade such as Mellow Yellow or Blossom. loaf.com

6 INDIAN-INSPIRED TEXTILES

If your style is less calm and muted and more colour-pop and pattern, then head over to recently launched website Chandan Whittle. A design graduate of London's Goldsmiths University, Kam Chandan-Whittle's heritage is rooted in her family's native India, and her dream was to create a range of textiles and artwork that celebrated the culture and craftsmanship of the country. Kam's cushions are handcrafted in organic cotton by a female-led group of artisans in Karur, India. Inspiration for her debut designs come from the colours and chaos, food and architecture of the country, while the red bindi sparked one of the collections. chandanwhittle.com

7 SPOTLIGHT ON RENEWABLE CORK

Until recently cork as a ▶



Photograph: Rado Daskalov

Photograph: Simon Daskalov



material in your home was mainly reserved for 90s-style pinboards in teenage girls' bedrooms, but now it is becoming a favourite with many eco-conscious product designers, who are giving it a new lease of contemporary life. The bark of the cork oak tree is what is extracted, meaning no trees are cut down and the bark is self-regenerating. It can only be harvested every nine years, and it is the Portuguese word for nine that gives lighting brand, Nove, its name. Founder Kirsty Saxon works with a family in Portugal who specialise in cork manufacturing to produce her modern, simplistic light fittings. Cork has many favourable qualities including being biodegradable, renewable and recyclable, so we expect to see it featuring even more in homes in years to come. novelighting.com

9 WEAVE YOUR OWN WALL HANGING

Wall hangings and weavings have been popular for a while and we can't imagine this trend disappearing anytime soon. The best thing is you can make your own wall hangings quite easily, meaning they are unique to you and you can match it to your interior. You can buy a full weaving kit from Peas and Needles for just £45, which includes a handmade wooden loom, a weaving needle, cotton warp thread, weaving shuttle, a how-to leaflet, a wooden piece of doweling to hang your weave from and a canvas tote bag to carry your work in. For help with getting started, Lucy Rowan, the weaver behind Peas and Needles, offers workshops, although if you aren't UK-based, look out for local workshops, or YouTube! If you love wall hangings but aren't a keen crafter, then Lucy sells some of her own creations which are just beautiful. Prices from £55. peasandneedles.co.uk

8 INDUSTRIAL CHIC STORAGE

Little Deer is a homeware brand based on the south coast of England. What makes it unique is that founder Jade Golding and her two female assistants handcraft much of the industrial style furniture and storage solutions themselves, mainly from copper pipes and plywood. The business was born from necessity as originally Jade sold clothing and needed a rail to display her wares at a festival. She and her father came up with the Original Copper Clothing Rail. Her brand then evolved to further clothes rail designs and other industrial storage pieces. The furniture range is complemented by a selection of homewares, such as bohemian cushions, ceramics, rugs and rattan accessories. thelittledeer.co.uk

10 DIY FURNITURE & HANDY HACKS

If you dream of a unique home, then designing and making your own furniture and accessories is one way to do it, not to mention being cost effective. If you aren't confident with coming up with your own designs, then head over to one of our favourite DIY blogs. Medina Grillo is the woman behind award-winning blog Grillo Designs, and her projects are comprehensive and totally on-trend. A few of our favourite creations include how to build an outdoor sofa, a DIY TV stand you can build in a weekend and a lampshade made from jute string! She also shares some fabulous IKEA hacks and upcycling ideas. grillo-designs.com



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10



10

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These old bricks were found on a beach in Greece. The salty seawater has eroded them slightly, giving them a smooth outline and rendering them very tactile. The bricks make great vases, as they have holes that can be lined with plastic bags (a good way to reuse them) to make them watertight.





Flowers with a conscience

Stylist Selina Lake shares her tips for displaying flowers in your home with an eco slant. ▶



When looking for plant pots and vases opt for natural tones and textures, like this lovely terracotta pot, to create a calm environment.



Currently the issue of protecting our planet is a hot topic, constantly discussed by the world's media, politicians and environmentalists along with individuals trying to make a difference, while the legend that is Sir David Attenborough has highlighted the plastic filling our oceans in his BBC TV programmes.

As I become increasingly aware of these issues, I look back at all the plastics that have come and gone in my life. I feel guilty about the cartoon-character plastic lunchbox that I took to junior school and can't help but wonder where it is now. Experts predict that plastic will take up to 1,000 years to break down and in the process will release tiny particles of plastic into streams, rivers and the ocean, causing harm to animals, the environment and us. And plastic is just one concern. There are many

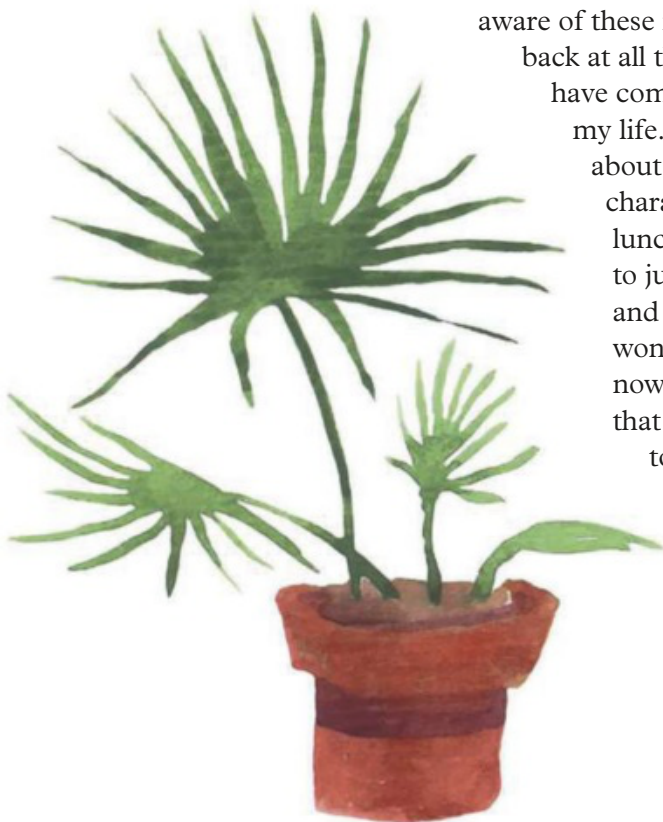
threats to our planet – global warming, pollution, overpopulation and water scarcity – and it's easy to feel powerless in the face of all this bad news. As a stylist, I wondered how we can make our homes, work spaces and gardens more in harmony with the environment while keeping


them beautiful? Can a stylish, comfortable, efficient home be achieved with minimal impact on the environment?

It's always such a treat to display flowers and plants at home – they cheer up a dull space as well as putting a smile on your face. No one can have missed the huge boom

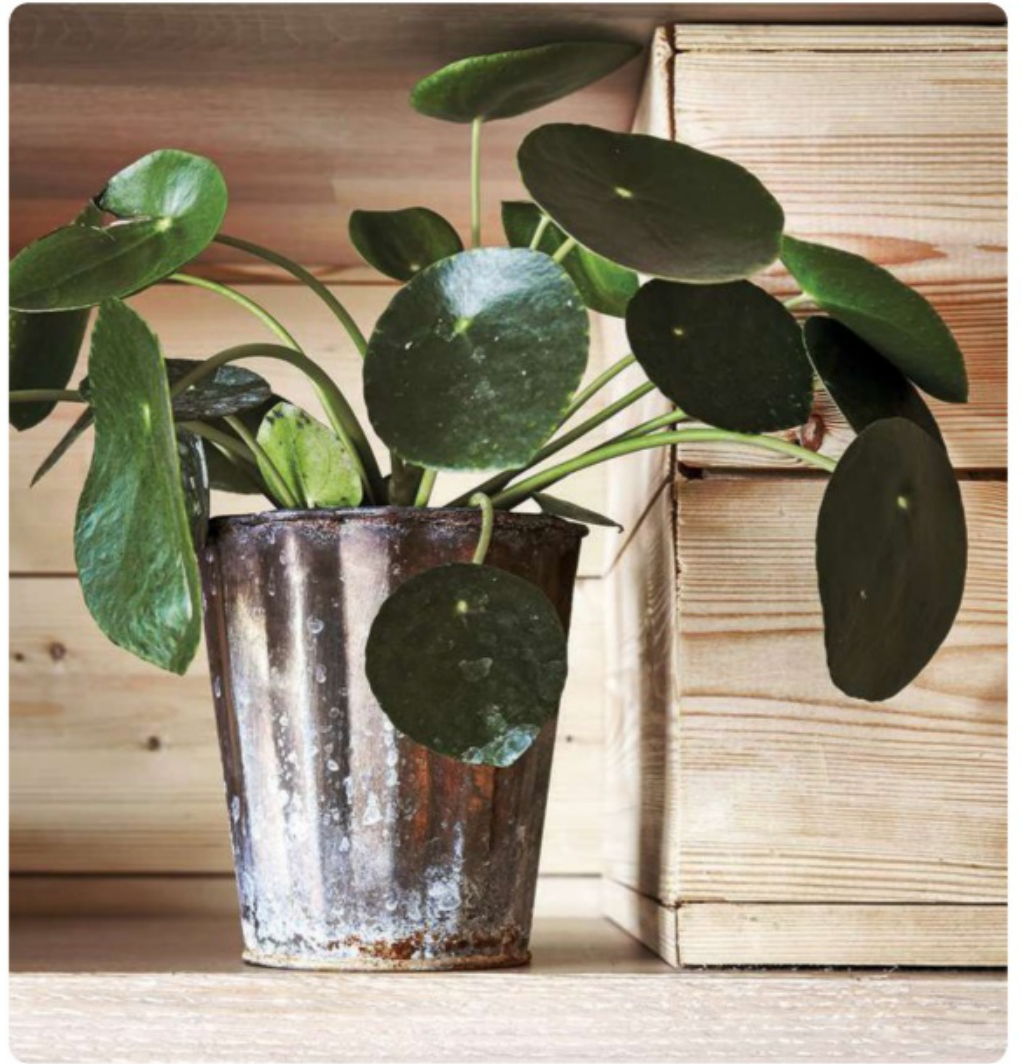
in popularity of houseplants in recent years. Our Instagram feeds are awash with snaps of 'indoor jungles'. Plants help strengthen our connection with nature. They also have therapeutic qualities and help to absorb carbon dioxide and other pollutants like carbon monoxide and formaldehyde, making for a healthier atmosphere. Scented flowers such

“It's always a treat to display flowers and plants at home – they cheer up a dull space as well as putting a smile on your face. They also have therapeutic qualities.”





Assorted vases mixed with metal and rattan give this vignette a charming style full of interest. The result has a timeless appeal - some pieces are slightly worn, and each piece has been collected over time.



as sweet peas, lilacs, mock orange and roses will perfume your space with seasonal scents too. Look out for unusual vessels for flowers – old lab jars and shot glasses for smaller sprigs and buds, and stoneware or glass vases for larger arrangements can all be found at flea markets, car boot/yard sales and in charity/thrift shops. Any chips, dents or scratches just add character!

I am a firm believer that buying local or growing your own flowers is the best option.

I am always amazed by the huge array of beautiful blooms that can be grown on quite a small scale.

I have been encouraged to grow my own flowers by Worton Organic Garden, Green & Gorgeous and many other flower growers I have met, and in recent years I have had great success

“Look out for unusual vessels for flowers – old lab jars and shot glasses for smaller sprigs and buds, and stoneware or glass vases for larger arrangements.”

cultivating chocolate cosmos, sweet peas, Ammi majus, foxgloves, lupins, dahlias and edible flowers in my garden.

Apparently, 90 per cent of flowers sold in the UK are imported and have a large carbon footprint.

Imports tend to be mass cultivated in huge glasshouses, many in developing countries, and are sprayed with chemical preservatives so they survive their journey to their point of sale. It's well worth buying locally grown flowers wherever possible. Like home-grown or locally grown veg that are fresher

and taste better, locally grown flowers usually have a better fragrance and last longer than their well-travelled counterparts. If you choose scented flowers, they will add a delicate floral note to your space too.



Extracted from *Natural Living Style* by Selina Lake (published by Ryland Peters & Small, RRP £19.99). Photography by Rachel Whiting. rylandpeters.com

“Garden blooms often look better when loosely arranged in a simple glass or ceramic vessel, which allows their beauty to shine through.”



Children's book author and
illustrator Helen
Stephens sits at her
treasured table.



A STUDIO OF ONE'S OWN

Laura Pashby meets the artists who made space for creativity by converting a corner of their home.

Have you ever dreamed of having your own artist's studio like Barbara Hepworth's chalky-white plaster room, or Jackson Pollock's paint-splattered barn? If you're a frustrated creative, there's no need to wait for the perfect studio to come along – you can find a corner of your home, make it yours, and make art! You may be lucky enough to have a spare bedroom, box-room or a neglected outbuilding that could be converted into a creative space but if not, don't despair: take a day to repurpose a corner, divide up a room with a screen, or gather supplies and put together an art caddy.

Whatever your creative medium of choice, carving out your own art space will allow you to make creativity a part of your daily life, snatching moments wherever you can.

Flora Jamieson, a stained-

glass artist, explains that having a studio in her home has allowed her to juggle her art work with bringing up her children: "I can work late into the night or early in the morning," she explains, "but the best thing is having a space all of my own, where I can leave things out without having to tidy away all the time."

Flora's studio is housed in an outbuilding close to her house, which is a fantastic

option if you have one available. Katie Robbins, a potter, built a studio on the site of her former conservatory. "I needed running water for clearing up my ceramics [and] an electricity supply for the kiln." She says that having a home studio "reaps rewards in terms of productivity."

Both Flora and Katie painted the walls of their studios white, to maximise the available light, which, as Katie says, "gives the illusion of space." Natural light is a key consideration when selecting a studio area: look for a corner close to a window, or below a skylight, and think about freshening up the walls with tub of cheap white emulsion paint.

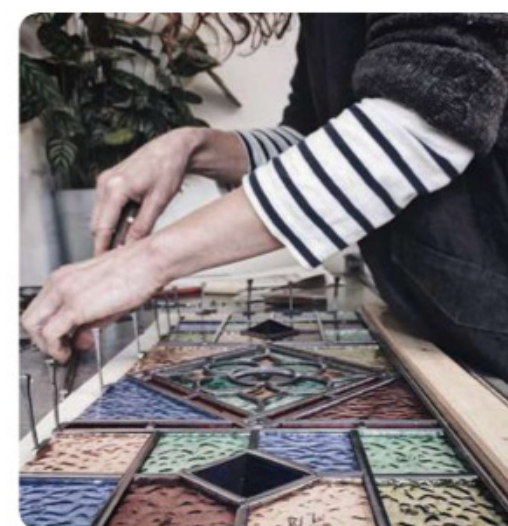
Another essential is a practical work surface. Helen Stephens, a children's book author and illustrator, treasures her trestle table, bought in 1997: "It was £100 and seemed like a lot of money for a freelance illustrator just out of art school," she remembers. If you don't have money to invest, you could use a collapsible table for portability, buy something in need of restoration from an auction or junk shop, or repurpose an existing

piece of furniture, such as a bureau with a fold-down top.

Storage is essential in a studio. Katie has plenty of shelving, and uses pegboards ▶



Katie Robbins has set up her ceramics studio in her old conservatory.



Flora Jamieson works on stained glass projects in her light-filled studio.



Katie's studio has running water and electricity, essential for her creative process.



and baskets to store her tools. Flora likes small sets of drawers that are “either sourced from junk shops or available from Ikea,” and Helen collects boxes, as well as “old tins full of pen nibs and paints, and marmalade jars for brushes and pens.” Both Flora and Helen suggest labelling drawers or boxes with what is inside. “It saves a lot of time searching!” says Helen.

A studio is a place to gather inspiration, and to display your creations. Helen urges you to “surround yourself with books, objects and images that inspire you.” In her studio (a downstairs room in her house, shared with her partner and fellow illustrator, Gerry Turley) they have “things pinned above the desks; postcards, paper ephemera, shopping lists, rough drawings, ideas...” Pegboards are another option to use as moodboards, or for displaying works in progress.

If you don’t have space to create a permanent studio, make a moveable one by storing equipment in an art-caddy. Flora values working “quickly and tidily” and rates “a wooden box with lots of compartments for storing supplies and tools to pack everything away”. Organising a dedicated art box can allow you to set up at your kitchen table, or even to consider what Helen calls “temporary work-spots in cafés.”

“Just remember,” says Flora, “a studio is going to get messy, so it doesn’t have to be too perfect.” Start with what you have – gather your art supplies and think creatively about making a unique space that works for you. In just a few hours you can restyle a corner of your home into a studio nook that will continue to inspire you to make time for your art.





FROM THE STUDIO -
MEET THE CREATIVES



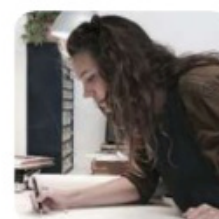
HELEN STEPHENS
Helen has been creating picture books for more than 20 years. She also inspires others by teaching workshops and giving talks at festivals and schools.

helenstephens.com
[instagram.com/helenstephenslion](https://www.instagram.com/helenstephenslion)



KATIE ROBBINS
Former PR consultant Katie, has since found success as a ceramicist. Her passion for nature shines through in each beautiful item that she makes.

ktrobbinsceramics.com
[instagram.com/ceramicmagpie](https://www.instagram.com/ceramicmagpie)



FLORA JAMIESON
Flora works with stained glass in many ways from restoring windows to creating small decorative items. She is known for her bold and modern designs.

florajamieson.co.uk
[instagram.com/theroundwindow](https://www.instagram.com/theroundwindow)





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INSPIRED BY ARTISTS

1. Meet 'splatter' and 'splodge', Pollock-inspired, mismatched earrings from berylune.co.uk.
2. If Andy Warhol did bananas... get a fine, fun print from lu-west.com.
3. Go for lighting like an Alexander Calder sculpture – what a work of art! theshopfloorproject.com.
4. Van Gogh your walls with wallsauce.com.
5. A case of the Gustav Klimts at giantsparrows.co.uk.
6. Work your own bold Matisse-y shapes with POSCA pens, uniball.com.
7. Bend time like Dalí with a melting clock from yellowoctopus.com.au.
8. Be the girl with the pearl bubble in homage to Vermeer's masterpiece, thefrenchbedroomcompany.co.uk.



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8



Applique homewares that are lush and colourful, like the great Frida Kahlo's work, janconstantine.com



TIME TO BLOSSOM

Becki Clark designed this inspirational sign for you as a way to honour your creative time. Add some twine and hang it this way round while you work - focus on the statement. You are an artist! Grant yourself some time every day to play (it doesn't need to be 'work' at all!), and enjoy the process, whatever the outcome.

TAP TO
DOWNLOAD





TAP TO
DOWNLOAD

GARNER IDEAS

Alternatively, hang your sign the other way round when you're away from your desk. Everyone needs a break at times to reignite their creativity. Go for a stroll with no agenda and revel in observing the details. What colours and shapes are around you? Return to your project, reinvigorated and refreshed.

Sculpting their world

Meet three female sculptors who found expression through form and shape. Yayoi Kusama, Camille Claudel and Barbara Hepworth (famously influenced by pebbles) all pushed the boundaries of their respective disciplines.



BARBARA HEPWORTH (1903–1975)

Exploring the natural world and the idea of solidity and space through smooth, rounded forms, Barbara Hepworth created works that range from small to monumental. After growing up in Yorkshire, England, and living and working in Cornwall for more than 30 years, she was especially connected to her surrounding landscapes.

Hepworth was awarded a scholarship to Leeds School of Art, where she met Henry Moore, who became both a friend and a rival. At the age of 18, she won a place at London's Royal College of Art, and after that she spent two years in Italy. Fascinated by Italian art, and its traditional techniques and skills, she began practising direct carving (working without preparatory sketches or models).

After marrying her second husband, Ben Nicholson, in the 1930s, her sleek, curving work became increasingly abstract, and she was one of the first artists to introduce holes, or 'piercings' into her sculpture, creating light, lace-like effects.

Hepworth's career spanned five decades. While married to Nicholson, she worked closely with him, and when in Paris, they visited the studios of Pablo Picasso, Jean Arp (1886–1966) and Sophie Taeuber-Arp (1889–1943), among others. They became part of an network of abstract artists.

With a son from her first marriage and triplets from her second, Hepworth moved to St Ives in Cornwall when war broke out in 1939. A decade later, she acquired Trewyn Studio from where she lived and worked for the rest of her life. Having worked predominantly with wood, in the mid-1950s, she began producing pieces using metal, such as brass and copper.

Although her work expresses organic forms and abstraction, Hepworth particularly explored relationships, including those within families, between figures and the landscape, between colour and texture, and music and art. She often worked in collaboration with other artists and explored unusual ways of working as well as innovative materials, themes and subjects.



YAYOI KUSAMA (1929 -)

Aiming to provoke powerful feelings among viewers, Yayoi Kusama regularly works with mirrors and bright colours, creating repeating patterns of things such as dots and pumpkins. With unusual materials, she paints and produces installations, filling large spaces to generate the greatest impact.

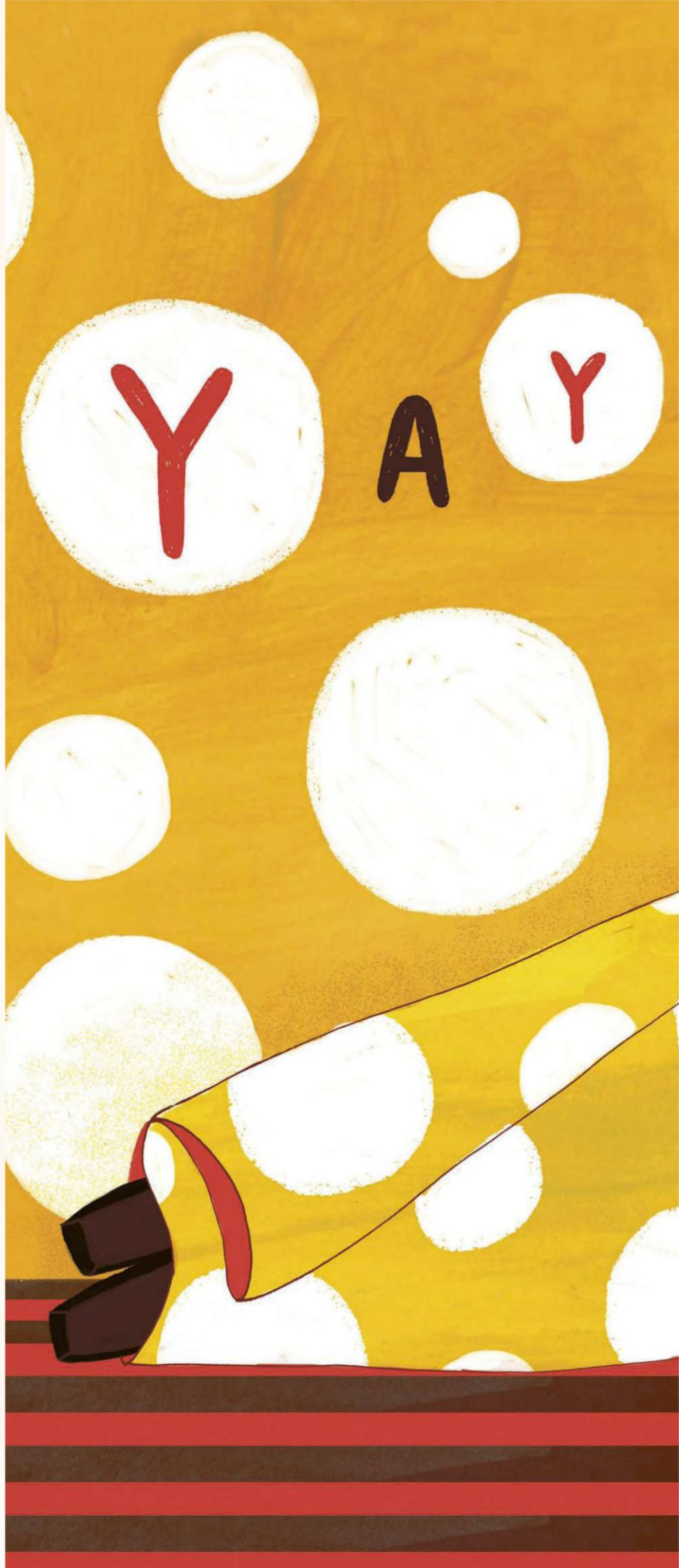
Born in Matsumoto, Japan in 1929, Kusama was sent to work in a military factory when she was 13 years old, where she sewed parachutes for the Japanese army during World War II. After the war, she studied the formal style of Nihonga painting in Kyoto before moving to New York in the late 1950s, where she was inspired by Abstract Expressionism and socialised with artists including Donald Judd, Andy Warhol, Joseph Cornell and Claes Oldenburg.

After first painting with gouache, watercolour and oils, Kusama began to experiment with sculpture and installation, exploring her identity as a female artist in a male-dominated society, as a Japanese artist in the Western art world, and as a victim of her own neuroses. She came to public attention when she organised a series of happenings in which naked people were painted with brightly coloured polka dots, which became the most prominent motif in her work. Calling the dots 'infinity nets', she explained that they derived directly from the hallucinations she had experienced since childhood. In fact, the earliest example of dots in her work was made when she was aged ten: a drawing of a woman wearing a dot-patterned kimono.

Since returning to Japan in 1973, Kusama has been involved with painting, drawing, collage, sculpture, performance, film, printmaking, installation, literature, fashion and product design. Much of her work expresses her childhood memories and ideas about floating and being closed in. It features extensive use of mirrors and lights, as she seeks to evoke elements of her hallucinations.

Although Kusama is usually classed as a Conceptualist, she insists that her work cannot be labelled. Pumpkins for her are a form of self-portrait, and many of her installations are intentionally created for audience participation, so that viewers can immerse themselves in her experiences. Kusama's ideas continue to flow, as she expresses dynamism, contradiction, unpredictability and colour in numerous variations.

With exhibitions all over the world, she was chosen as one of the world's 100 most influential people by *Time* magazine in 2016. Also in the same year, she received the Order of Culture, one of the highest honours bestowed by the Imperial Family in Japan. In 2017, the Yayoi Kusama Museum opened in Tokyo, founded with the aim of spreading and promoting her art.



O I K U S A M A



CAMILLE CLAUDEL (1864 – 1943)

Fascinated by the human figure and methods that can be used to portray emotion, Camille Claudel conveyed characteristics such as innocence, wisdom and love through her sculpture, using skills she learned from Alfred Boucher and Rodin.

Claudé began working with clay when she was 12 years old, and some of her early work attracted the attention of Boucher, who advised her father to encourage her artistic career. Her mother disagreed, but Claudé later joined the Académie Colarossi, one of the few institutions of the time that accepted females. Boucher became her mentor. She made a bust of him and he produced Camille Claudé Lisant (1882), a sculpture of a delicate, contemplative young woman reading.

At the age of 18, Claudé rented a workshop with other young female sculptors, including Jessie Lipscomb, Amy Singer and Emily Fawcett. Boucher advised them all, but after winning the Grand Prix du Salon in 1881, he moved to Florence and asked Rodin to take over the instruction of his students, which was how, in around 1884, Claudé began working with Rodin as his assistant and they embarked on their intense affair.

Claudé became Rodin's muse and lover, but as he would never end his relationship with Rose Beuret, Claudé was

constantly jealous, which led to paranoia. Her parents were scandalised by the relationship and they made her leave the family home. But, within a short time, she ended the intimate side of her relationship with Rodin. However, they continued to see each other until 1898, when she moved away completely.

Meanwhile, with the sinuous curves of Art Nouveau and Japanese ukiyo-e prints, Claudé's own work was becoming popular. In 1886, her sculpture *Shakuntala* won a prize at the Salon, and her experiments with materials and combinations of marble and bronze were innovative, which attracted a number of wealthy patrons. Sadly, from 1905, her mental health began to deteriorate – she often destroyed work, paranoid that everyone was against her.



These edited extracts have been taken from *I Know An Artist: The Inspiring Connections Between the World's Greatest Artists* by Susie Hodge, illustrated by Sarah Papworth, published by White Lion Publishing, £20.



BARBARA HEPWORTH

1951's Festival of Britain celebrated British industry, arts and science.

Below, Hepworth works on a sculpture at her Trewyn studio in Cornwall, before the work is moved to the festival's 93ft-high Dome of Discovery on London's South Bank.



Photos: Getty Images



YAYOI KUSAMA

The infinity room *The Spirit of the Pumpkins Descended into the Heavens* (below) contains many of the artist's recurring motifs. A permanent fixture at the National Gallery of Australia, each visitor has a unique perspective of Kusama's vision.



CAMILLE CLAUDEL

As a celebration of her work, life and talent, in 2017 La Musée Camille Claudé opened in the sculptor's hometown of Nogent-sur-Seine. Visitors are able to see nearly half of Claudé's works, including the beautiful *L'Aurore*, below.



c a m i t t e



c l a u d e t

PROJECT
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MINDFULNESS THROUGH MAKING

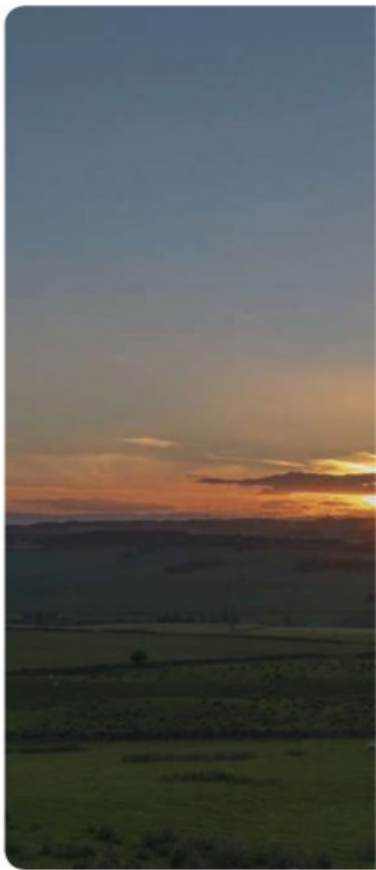
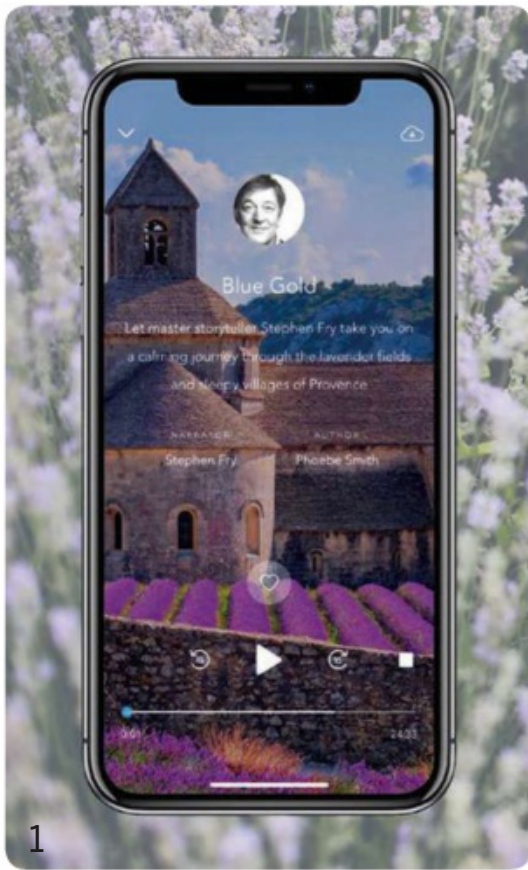
One's destination
is never a place,
but a new way
of seeing things.

TRAVEL

This issue we've travelled inwards a little for a look at a slightly different sort of exploration – one that starts with you. Have you truly immersed yourself in your local surroundings? Become a tourist in your own town? You don't need to travel far to experience something brand new. So we're all in favour of staycations this issue, saving funds for the sort of life-affirming trips outlined by our new columnist, Sian Meades, on page 120. She's your new go-to agent for travelling as creatively as you live, with lots of ideas for incorporating your artistic passions into your holidays.



1



Photograph: David Clapp/Getty Images

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TRAVEL
NEWS

Set off on a fulfilling solo trip, lunch at a 1950s diner, hike through the Cambrian Mountains plus more ideas for spring.

Compiled by Helen Martin



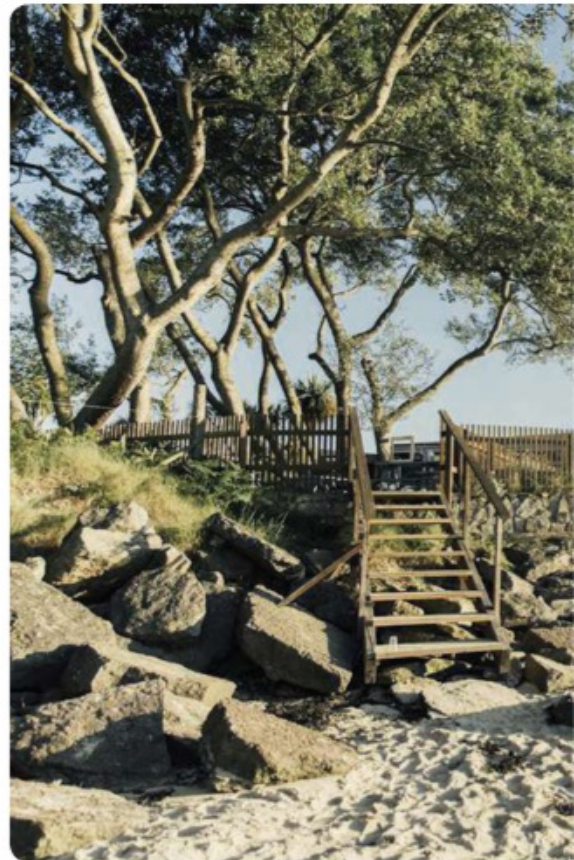
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1 NOD OFF TO SLEEP STORIES

Sleep stories are bedtime stories for grown-ups. A mix between a lullaby and meditation, slow literature will lull you off to sleep as the stories being read create a sense of escapism and calm. Phoebe Smith, adventurer and writer, writes sleep stories for the app, Calm. She recounts her travel experiences to slowly send people off to sleep. Her most popular story is *Blue Gold*, narrated by Stephen Fry, which takes the listener wandering through the lavender fields of Provence. Soothing and detailed sensory descriptions transport you to the fields and villages in France, as body and mind relaxes. Phoebe believes that sleeping while travelling is actually easier than at home; her mind free, body tired and focused on simply resting. calm.com



3

2 MELBOURNE FLOWER SHOW

The 24th Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show in the heritage-listed Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens, is on March 27-31 as autumn arrives in Australia. Celebrating creativity and innovation in landscape and floral design from the leading designers of Australia and the world, there will be over 200 exhibitors. Lifestyle, environment and sustainability provide inspiration for attendees in their own gardens, while the new partnership with Beyond Blue puts a focus on the positive impact plants and the outdoors have on mental health and wellbeing. There will also be DIY floral workshops, a kids' zone, high tea with floral inspired

treats and a special ikebana installation celebrating the ancient floral art of Japan. melbflowershow.com.au

3 REINVENTING THE ROADSIDE DINER

Inspired by the classic 1950s American motel, diner and drive-thru, Mollie's Motel is the latest opening from Soho House founder, Nick Jones. Situated on the outskirts of Oxford, this is a stylish stop for your travels. You'll see a large, red illuminated Mollie's Motel sign, and inside you'll find a simple interior with peach velvet armchairs, globe lights and wood panelling, and a general store stocked with essentials, such as gin and tonic and salted crisps. The diner meanwhile, features teal-coloured booths and monochrome art deco tiles. It serves cheesy nachos, burgers, mac 'n' cheese, waffles and ice-cream, plus free filter coffee. The motel has 79 bedrooms, including inter-connecting family and bunk rooms. A chic place to drive through, eat in and sleep over on your travels. molliesmotel.com

4 SOLO TRAVEL HANDBOOK

To travel alone can be a rewarding and liberating experience, opening your eyes, heart and mind to different lifestyles and cultures. If you're pondering this path, Lonely Planet's *Solo Travel Handbook* offers practical advice, tips and inspiration for your potential trip, whether you're thinking long or short haul, busy metropolis or rural retreat. The book covers topics such as funding your trip, booking the best deals on flights and accommodation, planning your itinerary, packing, making friends with fellow travellers and locals, setting your budget

and staying safe, happy and healthy. The aim is for you to be confident and knowledgeable as you explore the world and live out your dreams. shop.lonelyplanet.com

5 DORSET'S SHELL BAY RESTAURANT

Situated in Dorset on the edge of the Isle of Purbeck, Shell Bay is a seasonal restaurant overlooking Brownsea Island, Poole Harbour and Sandbanks. It's ideal for a long morning coffee, lazy lunch, or sunset dinner and drinks. Basking in the view from one of the outdoor dining areas as it melts from day to night is one of Shell Bay's unique selling points. Explore the Jurassic Coast and then reach Shell Bay through the Isle of Purbeck from Corfe Castle, at the edge of the National Park. Or if coming from Bournemouth, Poole or Sandbanks, jump on the ferry to discover Shell Bay as you disembark the boat. shellbay.net

6 ELAN VALLEY IN WALES

Breathe in the fresh pine trees by the trickling water in The Elan Valley, an area stretching 72 square miles and with abundant wildlife and an impressive history. Part of the Cambrian Mountains in Wales, it is ideal for hiking, cycling, picnics and exploring. The poet Percy Bysshe Shelley visited and made the valley his home in 1811 and 1812. Before that the area's fascinating history includes Stone Age, Bronze Age and Celtic settlers, while the working legacy of Victorian engineering can be seen through its dams and railways that assisted their construction. Accommodation includes ►



5

Photograph: charlottebryer-ash.com



Photograph: James Parkhurst

6

Penbont House, a bed and breakfast and tea room in a large Victorian building, opening this spring after refurbishment. Or camp on the banks of the River Elan below the red kites, buzzards and peregrine falcons, at Elan Oaks. elanvalley.org.uk

smoothies and juices. Hammocks are festooned next to dream catchers, succulents and cacti. While just down the road are white sandy beaches and the cenotes, natural sinkholes filled with turquoise water. fridastulum.com

7 LEAVING ON A JET PLANE

The Aesop Jet Set Kit comprises four essential products to take with you while travelling, providing luxury care for your face, body and hair. In this smart little travel box you will find Geranium Leaf Body Wash, which is both invigorating and refreshing. Two bottles of Classic Shampoo and Classic Conditioner containing gentle herbal formulas, which will clean and nourish hair. Then a bottle of Citrus Body Balm, adding a boost to your senses as you massage it over your body. Refreshed and ready for the world, the zesty scent of citrus from these products will cheer you on. aesop.com

9 FILTERED WATER ON THE GO

For clean water without the use of chemicals or batteries, the LifeStraw Personal Water Filter uses advanced hollow fibre technology to filter water from a fresh water source such as a stream, lake, river, waterfall, or even a puddle. Perfect for camping, backpacking, hiking and simply to have in your emergency kit, the straw will turn up to 1,000 litres of contaminated water into safe drinking water by removing bacteria and parasites. For each LifeStraw purchased, one school child in need will receive safe drinking water for a whole school year. lifestraw.com

8 GREEN SANCTUARY

At El Jardin de Frida in Mexico's Tulum, the intention is for guests to, 'sleep, learn and heal'. A true oasis nestled behind trees on the main road that leads down towards the beach, there are comfortable rooms, bright murals, a library, kitchen and long wooden tables to enjoy eating and socialising. The beaming sunshine serves to highlight the bold colour and healing garden surrounding the eco hostel, which is inspired by Frida Kahlo as well as Mexican culture, art and tradition. Food on offer includes a breakfast of homemade bread, crêpes and homemade fruit and cacao nib jams, plus coffee,

10 COLOURFUL PEBBLES

As the waves crash and lap over the colourful, smooth pebbles at Jasper Beach in Maine, USA, it is said that the sound is almost musical. The remote beach in Machiasport at Howard Cove, is made of smooth stones and pebbles. Glacial bedrock, millions of years old, frames the beach on both ends, making Jasper Beach a pocket beach. Many of the stones have a red tint due the iron. However, there's a huge variety of colour and patterns, from algae green, to black, orange, swirled and speckled. Look out for shells, seaweed and sheets of kelp. Wild and rugged, don't miss the sea caves at low tide. visitmaine.com



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Photograph: @kay_rave

H

THE HANDMADE FESTIVAL

With Kirstie Allsopp



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YOUR STAYCATION

A staycation is a period of time when anything goes, or indeed, doesn't go at all. Use this free time to its maximum advantage and make discoveries along the way, says Helen Martin.





Boost your wellbeing with a home spa day; light candles, draw a bath, put on a homemade face mask and paint your nails.

Quite romantic is the vision of a staycation. Gliding about an immaculate house in sumptuous loungewear, watching the birds in the garden, drinking coffee and tending to the plants. None of those tense airport check-ins, spinning baggage carousels, checklists and returning home to a cross cat, wilting leaves and 6am start. Instead, play that French chill and turn off any alarms. On a staycation you have permission to do as you please, so treat it as time for nurturing yourself. A sweet sanctuary is to be simply: home. As Jane Austen wrote, “There’s nothing like staying at home for real comfort”. For the environment, for your budget, for your personal growth, a staycation can be both liberating and a period of discovery. Use some of these ideas to bloom on home ground.

Have you always wanted to try an art class, but have never been able to make one? Artist Laxmi Hussain (thislakshmi.com/art-club) brings her art workshop to you with a home-based art club, complete with materials, guidance, notes, online support, hints and tips to enable you to explore drawing as a pastime. Start with Laxmi’s handpicked box of art materials delivered to your home, plus reference objects or images and a full guide. Example materials include a bottle of ink, brush, pencil and 10 sheets of various papers ranging from a heavyweight cartridge, to handmade cotton rag papers as well as some paper for testing. The aim is for a mindful art experience. Meanwhile, The Royal Academy have a free 90-minute life-drawing class on their website (royalacademy.org.uk). All you need is a pen or pencil and some paper. Don’t forget to share your life-drawing at [#lifedrawinglive](https://twitter.com/lifedrawinglive).

Vibrant and beautiful storytelling possibilities lie in those simple everyday moments, believes writer and photographer, Laura Pashby (circleofpinetrees.com). It’s ideal for a staycation as you’ll be able to slowly and mindfully take note of your surroundings, routines and simple pleasures. Go on to confidently capture these through words and pictures with Laura’s e-course, *Little Stories of My Life*. Laura provides insights, lessons and support to improve your photography

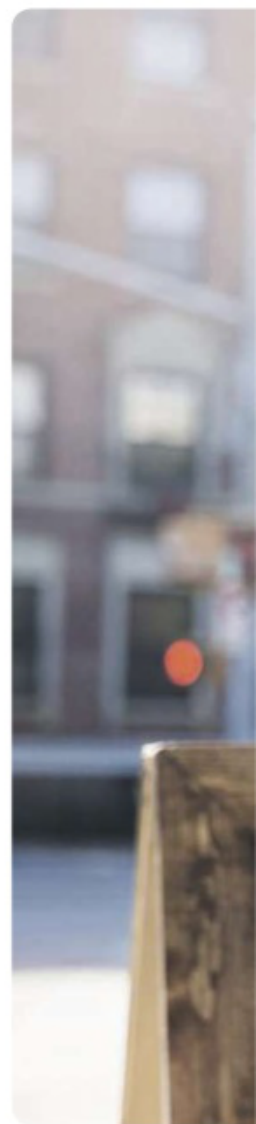


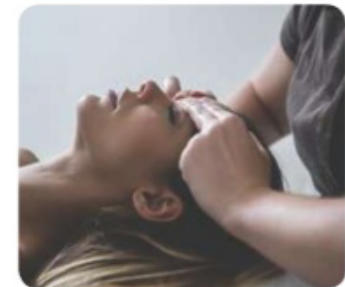
and writing. Document your adventures, push your skills and illuminate the everyday stories that perhaps you’ve previously taken for granted. A key element of a staycation after all, is that it allows you to appreciate what you have.

If you prefer the idea of your words and images to be more like a personal diary, try journaling. Famous journal writers have included Einstein, Marie Curie and Frida Kahlo. Each used their journals to work through and document various aspects of their lives; from developing ideas and research, to illustrating powerful emotions. Journals are excellent at providing a catharsis and outlet for creativity and thought. Include your streams of consciousness, sketches, postcards, fabric swatches, anything that inspires you. This sort of scrapbook journaling is fun for prompting other projects and avenues of thought. Or perhaps start a gratitude journal, writing about what you’re grateful for each day. Journals can create focus, peace and a greater sense of who you are.

On at least one day during your staycation sit down in a local cafe over a long hot coffee and write a list of local sights and attractions in your area; think art galleries, beach coves, museums and the lights and carousels of old-style pleasure parks. Now you have time, go and visit a few. You might also find some extra hidden gems along the way. Don’t forget local events; art shows, theatre and cinema matinees, yoga sessions and local meet ups. Plus dig out that wicker basket and check out the diary for local markets in your area. You may even have an independent makers, or antiques market close by. Or how about popping to a town or village you’ve not been to for a while and explore it all over again? Places change quickly with new shops, cafés and curiosities.

Wild swimming is perhaps the purest sense of freedom. Benefits include better circulation and an easing of pain, as well as improved mood. Check out outdoorswimmingsociety.com to locate somewhere close to you for a dip. Perhaps you could join the Outdoor Swimming Society’s club, which has seen an increase from 200 to 70,000 members in the last two years. Or try a refreshing swim at a lido, such as the pools at Tooting Bec, Portishead and the newly beautifully renovated Tamar Manoukian New Cumnock open air pool, in Ayrshire.





By allowing for rest you nurture both body and mind, easing tension and restoring energy levels. Boost your wellbeing with a home spa day; light candles, draw a bath, put on a homemade face mask and paint your nails. Follow this with a delicious meal and a great TV show. For a real sense of zen, massage, we know, is strongly linked with wellbeing, reducing stress levels and calm. Other benefits include boosting the immune system, a reduction in inflammation and pain, plus improved sleep. A staycation is an ideal time to book yourself a massage or facial in a tranquil treatment centre, or at home with a mobile therapist. Urban Massage provides massage, nails, skincare and osteopathy in London (urbanmassage.com). Practitioners come with their own massage table, sheets, oils, lotions and music. All you need to do is book the time, location and the treatment. Convenient, simple and rejuvenating, without stepping a foot out the door.

The pure joy of pottering can't be underestimated; moving plants about, playing with table arrangements, going through cupboards and curating shelves. With pottering nothing needs to be justified and there are no rules to be adhered to. It has no aim, set process or destination, but the benefits to your wellbeing and your body are significant. Meditative, methodical, active, but also gentle, it can lead to a sense of clarity impacting every part of your life.

As you potter, think about the styling in your home. Try moving furniture, grouping colours, adding textures, varying heights and embracing negative space. Always incorporate plants. The peace lily is easy to look after and can improve indoor air quality by up to 60 per cent. Think about creating a sense of consistency in your style, whether that's chic minimalism, or 1970s pattern and colour. Don't forget to ask the question, what brings me most happiness in my surroundings? This is your time and your space.



A WEEK OFF WORK

What a treat, here are some ideas for each day of the week.



MONDAY



Start the day with 15 minutes of yoga. Then begin your week by cleaning your home! Wash the sheets, dust every surface, clean out the bathroom cabinets and thoroughly go through your kitchen cupboards. By cleaning and organising your space, you will reduce stress and free the mind ready for the week ahead. Cleanse, preferably using natural sprays which include lemon's zingy citrus buzz, then bask in a clean and tidy environment.



THURSDAY



Gardening has been proven to improve mental health, dexterity and fitness and lower blood pressure. It also boosts the immune system. Visit a garden, arboretum or National Trust estate, or spend time gardening at home. *Small-Space Gardening* by Kay Macguire is full of ideas such as wildlife pots, fragrant baskets and salads. Indoors, keep plants in your home to maintain clean air and a positive mood.



FRIDAY



How green is your life? Create your own eco spray cleaners, upcycle clothing, buy vintage furniture, mix up some beauty potions, or go for a litter pick! *Live Green: 52 steps for a more sustainable life*, by Jen Chillingworth, is packed with ideas to reduce your impact on the environment. Look closer at fashion with Safia Minney's book, *Slow Fashion*, featuring "pioneering people and projects that will inspire you to be part of the change."



TUESDAY

Now it's time to organise your wardrobe. First off, utilise Marie Kondo's famous method of placing all of your clothes on your bed and sorting through each piece, deciding if it brings you joy. If not, it needs to go (konmari.com). Hang up as much as you can and keep similar items together, such as blouses and dresses. Fold jumpers so they keep their shape, and label any boxes. Go through your jewellery and bring out neglected pieces.



WEDNESDAY

Think about detoxing your digital life. *How to Break Up With Your Phone* by Catherine Price is a book on how to turn your phone "back into a tool, not a temptation". Most of us can relate to the endless scroll, time lost and guilt flooding in. Also have a look at the Digital Detox cards by Consciously Digital (consciously-digital.com). A set of 30 cards, with a practical challenge to control your use of technology, or an insightful question.



SATURDAY

Meander through the markets and go for a leisurely walk. Perhaps include some foraging and pick up some fallen pinecones, twigs and leaves to make a mini wild bouquet. Then enjoy styling your dinner table in preparation for a light dinner party with friends. Using local, seasonal ingredients, create a small feast, asking friends to bring the wine, snacks or dessert. Spend the evening filling your cup with the joy of good company.



SUNDAY

Spend the day pottering. In *Conscious Creativity: Look, Connect, Create* by artist Philippa Stanton, learn about connecting to the world and your own innate creativity. Play with compositions, notice details, observe your emotions and allow your imagination to flourish. With experimentation, you will open up new worlds around and within you. Later, watch a film, spray your pillow with lavender and rest. It's been a good week.



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INSPIRED BY STAYCATIONS

1. Explore your neighbourhood with a 'brown paper' eco-rucksack, wearthlondon.com.
2. Enjoy a moment finding and sketching natural objects. We love Uni-PIN pens, cultpens.com.
3. Take your coffee with you, thermosbrand.de.
4. Tend to an indoor garden. Compact plant stand, hurnandhurn.com.
5. Lounge to the max. Monogram it yourself or have it done for you at meinmonogramm.de.
6. Catch up with your reading on a 100% wool, waterproof picnic blanket from heating-and-plumbing.com.
7. Jazz up that wall with statement wallpaper, farrow-ball.com.
8. Create a boutique hotel-worthy toileteries shelf. Grey soap dispenser, hurnandhurn.com.



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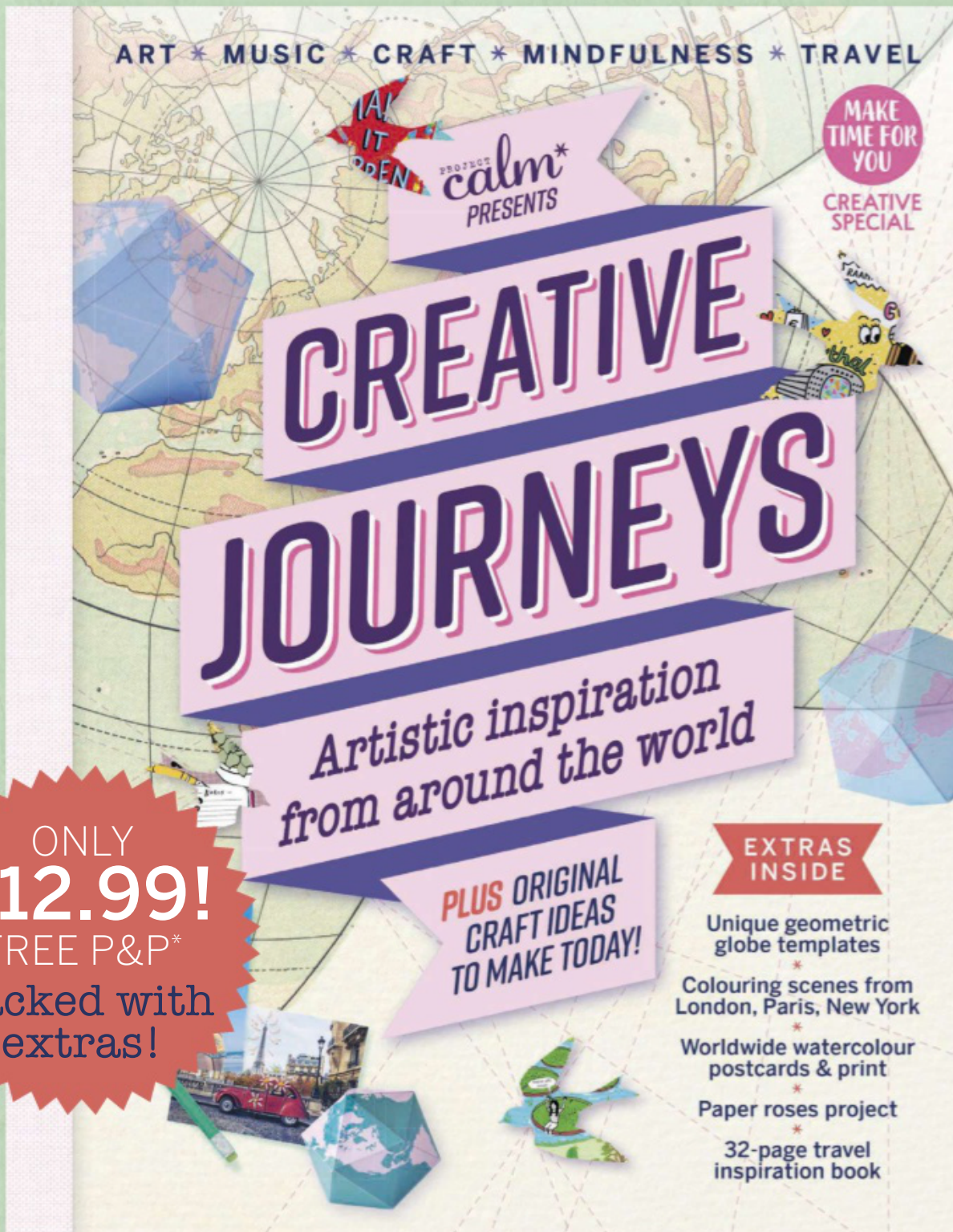
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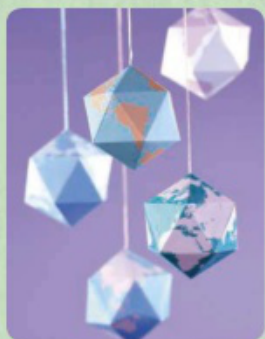
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SIAN MEADES

Your go-to travel agent

In her new column, Sian Meades tempts you with the most inspiring travels – this issue she looks at hobby holidays.

It is far easier to wish and dream than it is to do. Despite our curiosity and desire to experience something new, putting that into action is harder than it sounds. We may want to try somewhere new to eat, but our familiar favourite is right there. That new class might be too hard, too daunting. But when we overcome those fears, we are rewarded with passions and hobbies that make us happy, fuel us, and enrich our lives. And so it is with travel.

Our holidays tend to fall into two camps: either we snatch a week away (maybe two, you lucky duck), and lie on a beach until we are crispy, posting Instagrams of our legs. Or we try to dash around an entire European city in a weekend so we can tick it off our ‘must-visit’ list when we’re home. There’s absolutely nothing wrong with either of these holiday options – some of my best exploring has been done in an unknown city with just 24 hours to spare – but this year we’re trying a new approach. Instead of separating our holidays from our lives and what we love, what if they were simply extensions of what makes us tick?

We’re focusing on making our time away align with our creativity and curiosity, rather than exist separately from it. Rather than downing tools and shutting off for the weekend, we’re about exploring travel that’s fuelled by our hobbies and interests. We’re letting our creativity lead the way and encouraging you to do same. Pack your passport, but don’t forget your paintbrush.

What’s the thing that you always make time for, no matter how busy your day has been? Where do you invest your money when payday comes around? Perhaps you get your kicks from crochet or writing poetry. Maybe it’s cooking or baking that soothes you (I am a firm believer in the magical soothing properties of chopping and stirring). We all need a break from work and time away from our inboxes and our daily lives, but that doesn’t mean we need a holiday from what we love. That’s what grounds us. When our hobbies are present in every part of our lives, we make them a priority. When we start to weave our passions into our weekends and our trips away, we see the benefits in all areas of our lives.

Don’t think that to find creative joy on holiday you have to give up your margaritas and spend two weeks on a yoga retreat just because you sweat through the occasional class after work. This approach is more about aligning your true joy with your free time. But if you really miss your regular yoga class while you’re on holiday, why not incorporate it into your trip? If you stay in hotels but cooking is the thing that gives you more pleasure than anything else, go self-catering and explore the local markets. Book cooking classes, experiment with ingredients you’ve never even seen before. Feed whatever it is that makes you hungry.

The package holiday is a hard habit to break. There’s an undeniable buzz of finding a brilliant deal and affordable holidays make it much easier





MEMORY MAKERS

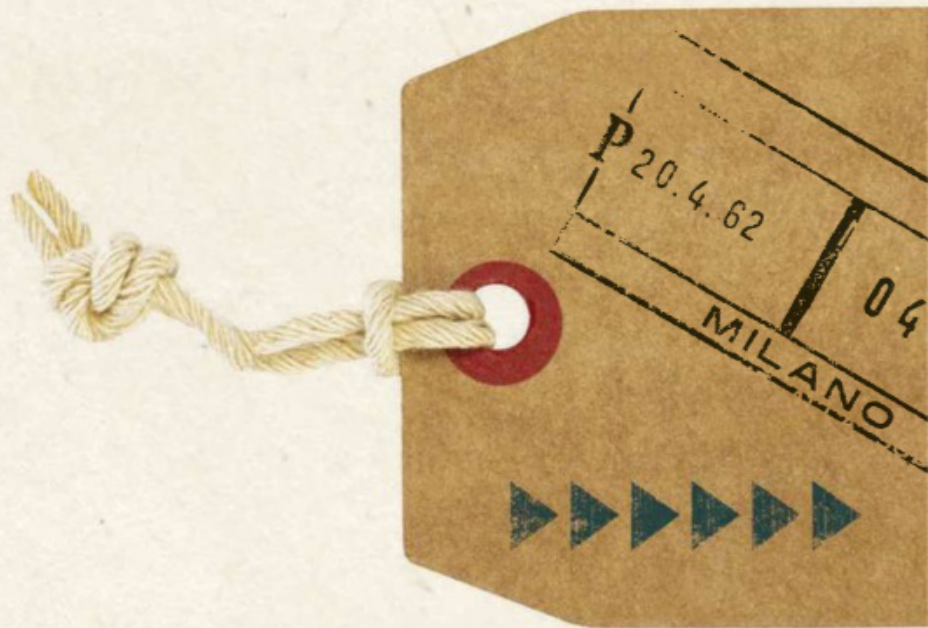
Want to keep those holiday memories alive long after you've unpacked? Here are some creative ways to commemorate your trip.

Make a souvenir shelf.
Display curios and crafts from each trip to build your own personal museum.

Learn a new recipe.
Recreate a much-loved dish back home and build your own travel recipe book.

Frame your photographs.
Hang your favourite photos and create a small gallery of your trips away.

Photographs, clockwise from top: Getty Westendd1/Mosuno Media; Getty ddi; Getty Aleksandar Nakic; Susannah Conway; Getty Johner Images; tag Getty Images/Goir; tags on previous spread Getty



for us to experience a new country and culture. But when we start to see travel as an investment in our lives – rather than an expense – we approach our holidays differently. When we're at home we gladly pay for weekly classes in dance, pottery, singing. If we can do these things while we're travelling, then we arrive home with a new skill and a tan. We're rested and fulfilled. If you've ever thought: "I wish I could do that", we'll encourage you to take that leap. Perhaps you'll end up on a horse-riding holiday in Albania, or maybe you'll take yourself on a storm-watching holiday in Canada. You already know where you really want to go – it's saved right there in your bookmarks.

Self-exploration is a solo pursuit, whereas travel often isn't. It can be hard to marry these two truths. If your usual holiday partner just doesn't share your hobbies, now isn't the time to try and convince

them. Dare to go it alone or take a like-minded friend who will cherish the experience as much as you. Or opt for a money-saving dabble. You don't need or whisk yourself off on a week-long writer's retreat in the Rocky Mountains to embrace what you love. Try a lunchtime cooking class in Lille while your partner entertains themselves, or tag a city break in Florence onto your truffle hunt in the countryside. Carve a day for writing solo. Just as we snatch time for our pursuits and hobbies in our daily lives, we can do so around museums, lounging by the pool and sightseeing. There are no rules – you're on holiday, don't forget.

You also don't have to buy a ticket to the other side of the world for a new experience, if your dream is actually beekeeping in Suffolk. I've vowed to see more British wildlife this year, so in October I'm taking a deer safari in Sussex. Travel that enriches your life is simply about saying yes to the things that pique your interest and allowing yourself to explore those interests. Not every break needs to be a 'trip of a lifetime' (unless you want it to be). This is about seizing the opportunity to experience something new and spending your money on moments that will shape you, in ways you can't quite imagine yet. The world is an extraordinary place, and every day we seek to make something in our lives feel remarkable and full of unforgettable experiences. We talk so much about the benefits of making time for our hobbies and the things that bring us joy in our everyday lives, and that should extend to our holidays and travel. There's no need to leave our passions at home just because we pack a bikini into a suitcase. There's room in our suitcase for both.



Photograph: Getty Images, Vytautas Dranginis/EyeEm

▶▶▶
**NEXT
ISSUE** Sian paints by the sea.
▶▶▶



TUSCANY

Truffle hunting in the woods with a guide and dog and lunch. From £85. trufflehunter.net

70708



SUSSEX

Half day deer rut safari from mid October to early November, £40. kneppsafaris.co.uk

WHERE WILL YOUR ADVENTURE TAKE YOU?

Taking a wildlife or cooking holiday in a beautiful setting? Or keen to try something new? Read all about it!

It's fun to read inspiring books about the place you're visiting and your chosen activity, before you go. But continuing to read when you get home will reveal more enlightening insights and information, as well as cementing your own holiday experience in your mind.



LILLE

Lunchtime cooking class. 30-minute class, lunch served with wine and dessert, £14.50. atelierdeschefs.fr



SUFFOLK

Beekeeping holidays. Prices depend on bespoke experiences for each guest. honeysuckleholidays.co.uk

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LISTEN TO THE ISSUE

This issue's Project Calm playlist is for your babies. And you!

For our issue dedicated to lullabies we had to fill it with soothing songs, of course. So we kick off with Vault's jingly, music box-inspired *Cry No More*, and follow with Anna of the North's *Sway*. Cash + David's gorgeous *Bones* makes the cut simply for a lyric every parent can relate to: "I'm just tired to my bones". Modern day nursery rhymes from our feature on page 54 appear too, with a couple of stand-out cover versions from Branches and Jeff Buckley. Elsewhere we celebrate pebbles, staycations, flowers and home. It's a good one to lull you to sleep, whatever your age.

1. *Cry No More* – Vault's
2. *Pebbles* – She Drew the Gun
3. *Sway* – Anna of the North
4. *StayCation* – BassFiend
5. *Les Fleur* – 4hero
6. *Three Little Birds* – Branches
7. *Your Song* – Elton John
8. *Bones* – Cash+David
9. *Stone Thrown* – Turin Brakes
10. *Wallflowers* – The Chain Gang of 1974
11. *Blackbird* – The Beatles
12. *Hometown Glory* – Adele
13. *Tender* – Blur
14. *Hallelujah* – Jeff Buckley
15. *Bloom* – Lights & Motion

THE STORIES BEHIND THE MUSIC ...



Photograph: Getty Images/Visionhaus

PEBBLES

She Drew the Gun

"I've always felt drawn to music that says something," says Louisa Roach, aka She Drew The Gun. The Merseyside singer songwriter won Glastonbury's Emerging Talent contest in 2016. With a degree in psychology, her tracks go deeper into the human psyche than your typical pop song. In this song, "pebbles on my window pane" tell a story of an unbalanced relationship.



Photograph: Getty Images/Jamie McCarthy

YOUR SONG

Elton John

Your Song was one of the first collaborations between Elton John and his longterm lyricist, Bernie Taupin, who was only 17 at the time he wrote: "I hope you don't mind that I put down in words / How wonderful life is, while you're in the world." Surprisingly it only reached number seven in the UK singles chart, but it's since been celebrated as one of Elton's finest songs.



Photograph: Getty Images/Brigitte Engl

STONE THROWN

Turin Brakes

Originally recorded as a B-side to the *Mind Over Money* single from their first album, Olly Knights and Gale Paridjanian of Turin Brakes recorded this version for their second offering, *Ether Song*. "It's about being dumped, basically, as about 50 per cent of our songs seem to be," says Olly, who describes this version as a bit "Neil Young, with a groove you can nod to."



KEEP EXPLORING

Going to new places regularly wakes up your brain, slows down time and makes you feel more energised, says **Susannah Conway**.

In 2014 I embarked on the ultimate staycation when I chose to photograph a coffee table book about London. I wasn't born in London but I've lived here long enough to consider myself a Londoner and figured I knew the city pretty well. It didn't take long to realise that, like most Londoners, I tend to stay in my favourite bits of town. There's that central square mile I know like the back of my hand, and a bunch of old addresses in the north, west and east, but that was about it. To capture the spirit of the city I had to get out and discover it for myself.

As I planned my shooting itinerary my number one question was always: where would be fun to photograph? There were plenty of famous landmarks I had to include but was I more excited to visit neighbourhoods I'd never explored before. Rather than working through the five districts (North, South, East, West and Central) I decided to Marie Kondo my way through my list – if an area sparked joy, it was the day to visit.

While not the biggest or most densely populated city in the world, London can feel enormous. It's not unusual to spend over an hour on the tube to visit a friend, one of the reasons Londoners tend to stick to their own neck of the woods. Still, there's something thrilling about being able to legitimately get lost in your own town. The arrival of smart phones and Google maps has made exploring the city much easier but I still spent two hours trying to find Kenwood House (bad signal on Hampstead Heath!).

One of the unexpected pleasures of being a tourist at home was how many strangers struck up conversations. This was in no small part due to me carrying a vintage Polaroid camera. Tourists wanted to know how the camera worked. Kids in particular were fascinated by the 'real photos'. I'll never forget the old man who asked me to take his picture as he sat on a bench on the Southbank – I hope he still has his Polaroid.

In total I spent four months staycating in London.

I shot tens of thousands of photographs and discovered there's a restored windmill in Brixton and a stuffed walrus in East Dulwich. You'll get the best views of the city from the top of the Shard and see a wall of very poignant post-it notes by Peckham Library. You can enjoy a grapefruit G&T in Maltby Street Market on a Saturday and a stroll along Regent's Canal makes for a beautiful Sunday afternoon.

When I finished the book project I realised I'd gained so much more than a rekindled love of the city. Going to new places every day woke up a part of my brain that made time feel endless. Do you remember how long the summer holidays felt when you were little? How the countdown to Christmas seemed to take forever? And yet as an adult the holiday season seems to arrive faster each year.

When we're little everything is fresh and our brains are logging the new places and experiences. Time is slower because there's so much new stuff to digest. As we get older we tend to stop learning and our days start looking the same, which is why time appears to speed up – when there's nothing new to log the brain lumps it all together and files it under 'daily routine' – 365 days of daily routine is over in a flash.

My extended staycation reminded me of the benefits of doing new things. In her seminal book, *The Artist's Way*, Julia Cameron recommends going on regular Artist's Dates, a "once-weekly, festive, solo expedition to explore something that interests you". Whether it's a trip to a gallery, an afternoon reading in a café or an urban photo safari, making an effort to do something new feeds your brain and slows down the march of time. These days I gift myself one day each week to go exploring. Sometimes I'll invite a friend to meet me for lunch; other times it's enough to just sit in a new place with a book. Every single time I return home with a smile on my face and a head full of new ideas.



FURTHER READING

From left: *Londontown* by Susannah Conway; *London: The Weekends Start Here* by Tom Jones and David Doran; *Pretty City London* by Siobhan Ferguson; *Quiet London* by Siobhan Wall.



A WEEKEND STAYCATION IN LONDON

Choose one key place to visit each day and
let staycation serendipity lead the way!

NORTH

Kenwood House
Primrose Hill
Camden Passage Market
Highgate Cemetery

SOUTH

Brixton Village
Horniman Museum
Royal Observatory,
Greenwich
Cutty Sark

EAST

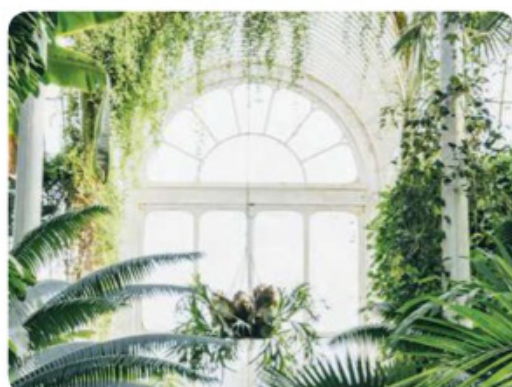
Brick Lane Market
Columbia Road Flower
Market
Canary Wharf
Shoreditch

WEST

Royal Botanic
Gardens, Kew
Brompton Cemetery
Serpentine Gallery
Portobello Road Market
The V&A

CENTRAL

Maltby Street Market
River Thames
Barbican Centre
The Shard



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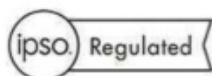
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Ella is an illustrator, portrait artist and sign painter, creator of #ella365project and mental health advocate in London. Her work is inspired by colour, music and tattoos. See her illustrations on page 67.

ellamasters.co.uk



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Julia is a freelance journalist and author of two children's comedy novels. She has a love of the natural world and would rather watch seagulls flying than do housework. She wrote our flowers feature (page 12).

julia-wills.com



PRAGYA AGARWAL

Pragya is a printmaker, writer and founder of The Art Tiffin. She is a TEDx speaker, campaigning for creativity, mental health and gender equality. Follow her tips to create a calm space for children (page 54).

thearttiffin.co.uk



LAURA PASHBY

Writer and photographer Laura believes in capturing simple moments with words and images. She teaches the Little Stories Of My Life e-course. Be inspired to turn a room into an artist studio on page 92.

circleofpinetrees.com



KATE O'SULLIVAN

Kate lives in a seaside home near Edinburgh with her girlfriend, daughter and two wayward cats. Kate hosts the *Conversations From Our Days* podcast. Follow her mindful saving ideas (page 68).

kateosullivan.org



ESTHER THORPE

Esther lives in central England with her husband and two small people. She is the author of *Paper Home* and is an origami artist. Esther also runs workshops in the UK.

Make her plant pot wrap on page 30.

origamiest.co.uk

WITH THANKS TO...

Words **Katie Antoniou, Susannah Conway, Sarah Gane, Cari-Jane Hakes, Helen Martin, Sian Meades, Caroline Rowland, Tiffany Francis**
Illustration **Becki Clark, Esther Curtis, Ella Masters, Agathe Singer**





Until next time...

Thanks for reading! We hope you've found lots of inspiration to spark your creativity.
See you next issue.

CREATIVE EXTRAS INSIDE



Create your own 3D paper blooms



Dress your desk with style



Hang up a sweet nursery print



Give a 'gift of time' voucher



Fold a terrazzo pattern pot cover



Ella Masters illustrated prints

**ARTIST
are
WORK**



BOOKS

Inspiration



TAKE A

Line

FOR A

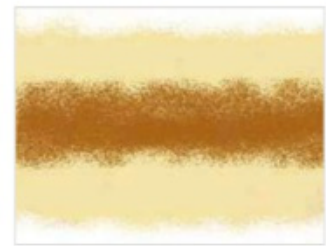
Walk

ella masters

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EMPT
O
THE
PROCESSES





LOVE

"Love is the flower you've
got to let grow."
John Lennon



MYSTERY

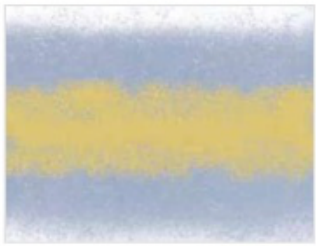
"She wore flowers in her
hair and carried magic
secrets in her eyes."
Arundhati Roy



BEAUTY

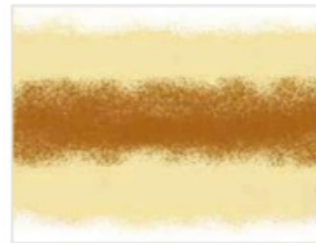
"I smile like a flower not only with
my lips but with my whole being."
Rumi





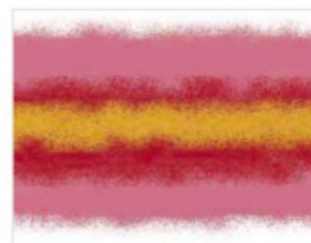
PASSION

"I must have flowers,
always and always."
Claude Monet



POSITIVITY

"There are always flowers for
those who want to see them."
Henri Matisse



HOPE

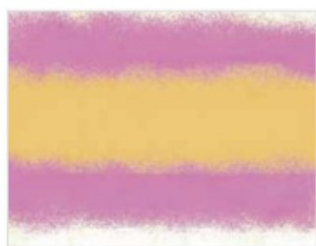
"All the flowers of all the tomorrows
are in the seeds of today."
Indian proverb





HAPPINESS

"Happiness held is the seed;
Happiness shared is the flower."
John Harrigan



LAUGHTER

"The earth laughs
in flowers."
Ralph Waldo Emerson



JOY

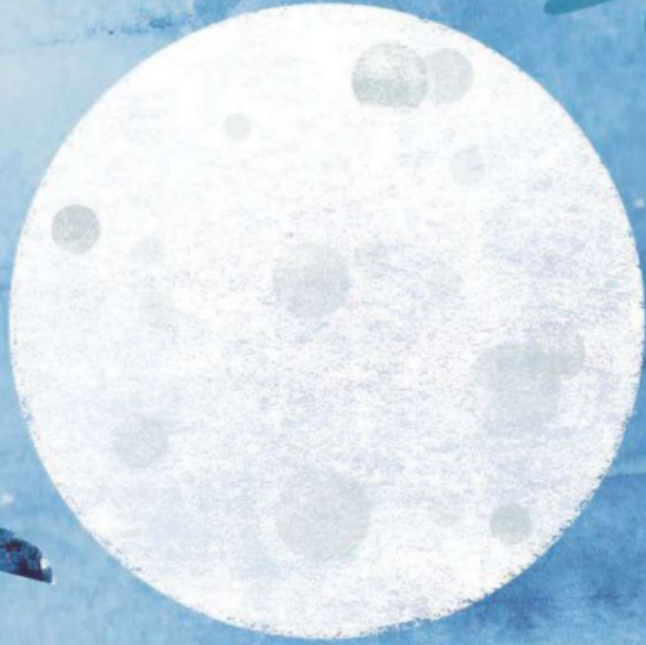
"A flower blossoms
for its own joy."
Oscar Wilde



Hey Diddle Diddle

The cat
and the
fiddle

The cow
jumped
over



the moon



The little
boy laughed
so so
joy such fun



and the
dish ran the



away
the spoon







