

# PIECING TOGETHER

**Ruby Joy Eade has been quilting since 2016, when she lived in London. One cold evening she picked up a second-hand sewing machine and bag of fabric scraps from a tube station, and ever since has repurposed fabric into playful quilts. Now, bags of fabric often turn up on her Wellington doorstep unannounced.**

Photo by Lewis Ferris

I've just moved into a new studio. It's in an old building on Courtenay Place – there's quite a few different rooms, with lots of artists, a couple of designers and jewellers. I share a big, beautiful room with high ceilings with my friend, who's a graphic designer. We've got lots of plants and heaps of books, and a nice big table that we sit at and eat our lunch and have coffee. It's kind of funny, coming on a Saturday morning, when the street will be all sticky and smell like beer – but then upstairs in the studio it's all lovely and beautiful.

I'm a high-school art teacher so the school holidays are my golden time when I can come to the studio for the whole week and really get settled in. During the term, I usually pop in one day in the weekend, maybe for a full day, maybe for half a day, and I also work from home in the evenings. I've got a basket next to an armchair and I'll pull that out when we're watching TV. For someone who's got quite a busy job where I'm quite active, it's

a nice way to be doing something meditative.

My quilts are inspired by photographs, places, patterns or objects. I've made a quilt which is inspired by this little crochet doll's blanket that we've had in my family for ages. No one can remember who made it, but it's a very wonky funny little diamond shape. I remade it human-sized. I've got another quilt that's like the pattern from my mum and dad's tiled floor. A lot of the inspiration is from the history of textiles, whether that's from my own personal life or not. My family has a huge history with sewing and textiles. My grandma used to make wedding dresses and I'd go to her studio after school and make things out of scraps. I've always had fabrics in my world, and it's comforting to me.

I will usually start with a sketch. But then I would say 99 per cent of the time, it changes quite a bit from the initial sketch. I do like to keep it relatively free-form so that I can use up all the bits of fabric and keep it playful. My quilts are always super wonky, that's what I love about them. I use rulers but I don't do a lot of measuring. I don't follow all the rules of traditional quilters. People can get all stressed when their corners don't match, and honestly, I couldn't care less. I think something that's perfect is kind of boring to my brain. We're so used to perfect things now, it's that element of the visible hand that's so satisfying to our souls. ■

Ruby Joy Eade's work can be found at [rubyjoyeade.com](http://rubyjoyeade.com)

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