

ARTS and ENTERTAINMENT



A sustainable future on the horizon

Landfill statistics inspired Kerri Hollingsworth to quit her job, move to the country and birth an eco-friendly upholstery art business in a year.

Consumerism has been eating away at the Earth's crust. Harmful waste and toxins are injected into our land every day. The oceans are polluted. Temperatures are rising, water is evaporating, and nature is suffering. While from a helicopter view our planet seems doomed, there is light on the horizon.

People are waking up. They're becoming attuned to their personal impact on our planet. Our society has begun to sense the urgency to make a change in the way we live, produce and consume day-to-day products.

Kerri Hollingsworth, founder and director of an.ti.quate, is one of these people. an.ti.quate is an environmentally conscious Australian upholstery art brand that's on the rise. In fact, Kerri's grand vision is to become a zero-waste business.

Planet Earth, the plastic factory

If you take a moment to expand your awareness, to cast your eye through your pantry, your bathroom and into the bedrooms in your household, you'll find an abundance of plastic products you use on a daily basis.

When you take yourself shopping – for the most ➤



Delivery day for wingback armchair 'Valerie'.



*Above: Kerri weaving 100% natural fibres for 'Autumn'.
Left: Mongolian sheepskin, mid century recliner 'Presley'.*

part – you'll find produce neatly stacked and hugged in plastic. From condiments to ice-cream to your toothbrush and the packaging it comes in...plastic and its counterparts are available in abundance.

For Kerri, the eco-mindset shift happened about three years ago, while she was working as a flight attendant running her upholstery business on the side as a passion project.

One day, she began learning more about landfill statistics. Sheer concern engulfed her the more she learned about single-use plastic, mass production and every-day chemicals. This new knowledge started keeping her up at night.

Questions around how could she change; how could she make a positive impact, danced through her mind until one day, inspiration spoke loud and clear.

The 12-month challenge

The sleepless nights and constant pre-occupation with unnecessary waste catapulted Kerri into 'inspired action'. That's when she decided to embark on a 12-month challenge where she would refrain from buying anything new for an entire year.

The challenge began with a stocktake of what plastic and other non-recyclable materials could be eliminated or at least cut down in her home. Things like cling wrap were finished off – as not to waste what was already bought – and she learned how to make her own personal care and general cleaning products. Glass was the container of choice and if it wasn't recyclable, it didn't go home with her.

A change of scenery

During this time, Kerri's jet-setting career spurred on further dissatisfaction. Questions like, "What am I doing with my life? Am I bringing out my best and contributing to the greater good of the world?" played on repeat until she decided to resign.

After Kerri fell pregnant, with her partner, she relocated to their farm in the Cathedral Ranges. The lush natural surroundings only spurred on her conscious mindset. For the first time, Kerri honestly felt as though she was making an impact on the world. Nature fuelled her creativity. Her disposition lightened, and she experienced deep peace. ➤



Kerri Hollingsworth with peacock themed, fluted back chair 'Penelope'.

The birth of a zero waste business

Kerri's 12-month challenge ignited other feelings. Her upholstery business was no longer aligned with her eco-conscious way of living. There was no doubt that upholstery was her passion, but not in its current state. Just as she evolved, Kerri knew her company must too. That's when she consciously chose to make an.ti.quate into a zero waste business.

The decision to become zero waste is one thing, to execute is another, and this became evident to Kerri as she saw how many products in her business used non-biodegradable materials or environmentally damaging packaging.

Today, Kerri's getting closer to her vision. She reuses scraps of fabric, trimmings, offcuts and yarn. She collects used staples. Any unusable fabric is recycled and natural fibres composted. She avoids foam where possible and opts for natural fibre fabrics. Coconut fibre and cotton batting are combined with traditional upholstery techniques. All plastic packaging is avoided where possible. It's a journey, but one she's made significant progress on.

Take a seat

When an individual is on purpose, you know it. It oozes out from all that they do. Kerri's commissioned armchairs and sofas are a testament to that. Her work captivates the heart and inspires the soul. I guarantee you haven't seen anything like it. Rich tapestries of colour, an assortment of textures and family heirlooms—and their heartfelt stories—are quite literally woven into her armchairs.

Her life of restoring "a lot of grey sofas", is now a speck in the

distance. Now, Mother Nature is her muse. The raw country environment is infused into her work. It's what makes her work more than a piece of furniture—it's truly living, breathing art that becomes your favourite sitting place.

Kerri's coming to play

With the growth of an.ti.quate, Kerri is always looking for ways to give back and help educate the community around sustainable living and upholstery art. She'll be at the MiRa (Marysville Information and Regional Artspace) Exhibition Space doing just this. Her live exhibition, Recover, Reuse, Recycle is where you'll have the opportunity to see Kerri in action intermittently throughout six weeks.

Come along and ask her as many questions as you like, because she'd be delighted to share her ideas, thoughts, techniques and hear yours.

Artist in Residence exhibition at MiRa From 15 April to 31 May 31st

'Recover, Reuse, Recycle' Exhibition at MiRa (Marysville Information and Regional Artspace) Exhibition Space, Marysville. Open daily from 10am to 4pm.

And, if you're really inspired by Kerri's story, join her upcoming Mother's Day workshop, May 2019. You'll learn how to make an Upholstery Art ottoman that you get to take home!

Visit antiquate.com.au to register your interest today! Places are limited!