

# Up!

SEPTEMBER 2022

CLOTHES

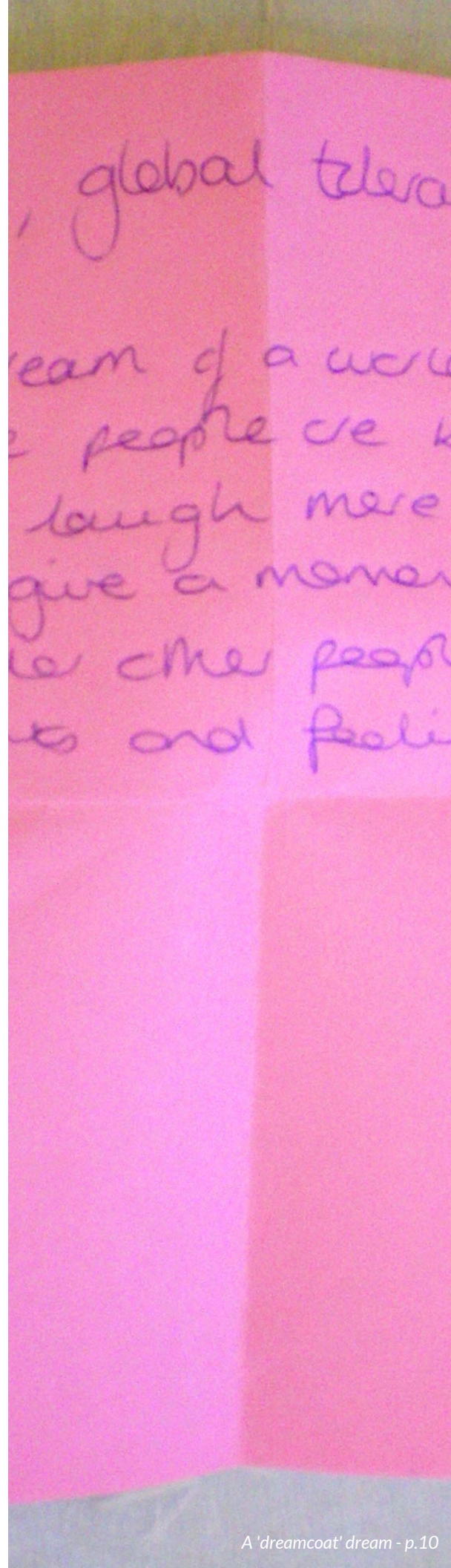


Making the world  
a better place -  
one page at a time



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# Up Front!

Greetings from Up! HQ, and welcome to September's edition of your favourite magazine.

They say you can tell a lot about people from what they wear. We're not so sure about that ... mind you, one of your co-editors wears odd socks every day as a somewhat childish and futile gesture of non-compliance, so perhaps the theorists have a point! Whatever, this month's clothes-themed issue is full of colour, vitality and hope. So grab your coat and come and join us!

We couldn't let this issue pass without addressing the passing of HM The Queen. In the midst of blanket media coverage, it's difficult to know what Up! can add at this juncture. As we write this, our country is about to pause for the state funeral of a well-loved, quite exceptional monarch. To say she served her country with distinction for longer than any other monarch in history doesn't really do her justice. Perhaps in this case, less is more.

RIP Ma'am, we will not see your like again.

Bridget & Harry x



*This month's front cover features quilts by Phoenix Green Store (see page 2)*

# Sew Up!

KATE STUART - THE PHOENIX GREEN STORE

A north east creative shares her passion for textiles

Rebel, resist, MEND!

There was a time, within living memory, when a wooden darning mushroom would be as much an essential household item as a dustpan and brush and reusing old clothes to make new tops for patchwork quilts was just what everyone did.



Perhaps you remember a button jar – my Gran’s was a pressed glass biscuit jar with a metal screw top lid – or a wooden cantilever sewing box filled with press studs and scraps of

elastic, pincushions and needle cases. There was a time, not so long ago, when a hole in the knee of a pair of trousers was mended, a dance of moths across a pure wool jumper was darned, a lost button replaced, careful stitches slowly telling a little more of a garment’s history – and when the clothing that kept us warm and dry was honoured, respected, mended. I grew up in a house where clothes were made and mended. When you make your own clothes, you understand and value the energy that’s needed to make them. At some point in our recent history, somewhere, down the warp and weft of our relationship with the fibres that clothe us, vital connections to the sheer human power that flows into the yarn that makes the



cloth have been broken. Broken with intent. The fast fashion industry, the media, the forces that turn the cogs in our consumerist society brainwashed us with super cheap, 'throw it away and buy another' marketing mind games. They taught us a new lesson of how it was so much easier, quicker, cheaper to buy a new jumper, dress, hat than to mend the one we already had. Soon we began to believe that the time it would take to mend a garment carried more value than the time it took someone, far away and not paid nearly enough to live, to make it.

In the three years since I wrote “Mending Clothes as an Act of Rebellion”, the tide has well and truly turned, and we are collectively awakening to the power we hold, against the fashion industry, the media, the forces that turned the cogs that are beginning to slow, that soon will stop - but there is much still in need of mending.

I always thought that my own journey with textiles began in my teenage years – from textiles class at school and coming home to watch my mum make clothes for us (and mend them too) to the day when a family friend taught

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me to make patchwork from scraps of brightly coloured cotton. But as I get older, I discover more and more of my ancestors were connected to cloth - making, mending, creating - and wonder perhaps is my love of textiles something inherent that has been gifted to me along with my blue eyes and my strong Stuart nose. That notion of making bed-sized pieces of cloth from tiny bits of waste fabric, like a colourful mosaic, ignited a fascination in me that has never been dampened yet. I was 17 when I made my first quilt - an adventurous rainbow hexagonal quilt that started its life as a Cinderella costume for a friend's 18th birthday party, became a makeshift guitar case, snuggled my babies, and has, for the last 30 odd years adorned the back of every sofa I've ever owned. I've made a lot of quilts, for a lot of people



since then and every single one was made with old, unloved, unwanted clothing. The old-as-time concept of using up old clothes to make new things was always there for me in the things I was creating - it cost less, and it always felt like an

environmentally sound choice - so that it became rare for me to buy new fabric. But it was when my late mum began to sort through three generations of clothes stored in her attic, and found she couldn't throw any of them away because of the memories they invoked of the people who wore them - my brother's shirt with the cowboy print, my dad's golfing shirt, with the tiny golfers all over it, my Gran's flowery pinny with the hand sewn pockets - that the idea to make a quilt containing all these precious fabric memories was born. Hers was the first memory quilt I made, and held pieces of her going away outfit, all her children's old pyjamas, her grandmother's housecoat, my father's favourite tie. I've been making memory quilts and what I call "scrappy" rainbow quilts ever since, and it brings me so much joy to know that fabric which at one time might have been thrown away, is being repurposed into practical, usable, cosy quilts, and the memories and value it carries remain, connecting us with stories of the past.

For me, it's that connection, between the intrinsic emotional value of an item of clothing, and the time and energy and resources that were used in the making of it, that feels most important. In every quilt I make I see that connection finding its way into a newly remembered consciousness, helping us to join the dots between producing less waste and re-using what we already have, to reconsider the things we think we need.

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In a similar way, mending our clothes has become a statement that we understand that connection, and wearing clothing that is mended, particularly in a

visible way, communicates this to others. A quiet whisper to join the gang. Silent recognition that our world needs us to consider the impact of the things we own, and the things we throw away. A pause, a space, to breath new life into old stuff.

Visible mending, that is, mending where it is obvious that a garment has been mended, and where the stitches



that hold together what was once broken are there for all to see, is more acceptable now than ever before. The textile stories of so many cultures around the world have, for a great many lifetimes, honoured visible mending in a way that we are only beginning to understand and acknowledge. When we mend a garment, we stitch the story of what it was that broke, what small



disaster happened, into the fibres of the cloth. We tell the tale of the hurt knee, the elbows on the kitchen table, the lost button, the much-used pocket, the family of moths. And in the stories and the stitches, there is

space for us to consider more than that - all the mended clothes of our ancestors, who stitched seams back together because there was no other option. Space for us to honour the hands that made the cloth. Space to honour the land that grew the fibre that made the thread that became the cloth. And perhaps most importantly, space to reimagine the power we hold to make a difference in a world that does not belong to those who hold the strings of commerce, but to you. And to me. The needle and thread in our sewing boxes are as much tools for rebellion as they ever have been. Let's use them.

Vive la revolution!

*Kate Stuart is a practising artist, craftswoman, and writer, juggling single motherhood, home education and environmental activism. Based in the North East of England, Kate enjoys gardening, walking in nature, daydreaming and stitching patchwork quilts. Kate dislikes icy Monday mornings, the news, the shuffle facility, and liquorice.*

Connect with Kate on [Instagram @the phoenix green store](https://www.instagram.com/the phoenix green store)

Find out more about Kate's work here:

<https://linktr.ee/the phoenix green>

Read Kate's viral blog post from 2019 here:

<https://the phoenix green store.wordpress.com/2019/11/26/mending-clothes-as-an-act-of-rebellion>

# Word Up!

## YOUR POEMS ON THE THEME OF CLOTHES

### Clothes

Like friends, some have a  
Choice of many with  
Each one lying ready,  
Especially the grand ones  
Picked for high days and holidays then back on the  
Rail, but always there just  
On the edge of your perception.

### Others

Much more familiar, comfortable  
And reached for often.  
Shared times bound within the warp and weft, gentle against  
Skin even when tiredness and cold creep in. Worn with use  
But reliable still.

These are the best ones.  
They know just  
Where our skin is thick  
And to tread gently where it is thin.  
It is important to treasure them.

### *Ali Rowland*

#### To the Duck

I covet your coat. I can't  
sit in the snow, can't  
swim in the partly  
frozen lake, creating  
a wake. What bad luck!  
I wish I too were a duck.

### *Wilda Morris*

### Without Clothes

Outside in the street  
she ran without clothes.  
Two streets back she left  
her right shoe. The top  
was left about a mile  
away. The pants were  
nowhere to be found.  
Some people laughed.  
Some people screamed.  
Some took out their  
phones and some averted  
their eyes. It was not  
long before the cops  
came by. They took her  
away and no one bothered  
to bring a blanket to  
cover the poor lady.

### *Luis Cuauhtémoc Berriozábal*

### Stepping out in style

A charity shop in a  
well-heeled town  
yields flashy bargains  
for mum and aunt,  
but their five-year old girl  
can't be bothered with  
the children's rack.  
A brown felt hat  
with a gold buckle trim  
transforms the child to her  
high-class inner self,  
and the passing world  
agrees.

### *Gerda Pickin*

# Wrap Up!

STEVE LOWE

## Keeping warm and dry whilst saving the planet

Wandering around Lakeland last week with my sis and her hubby, was a great reminder of that famous old Cumbrian, Alfred Wainwright - "There's no such thing as bad weather, only unsuitable clothing."



In the shadow of his favourite fell, Haystacks, and entirely true to form, we were treated to wind, drizzle, cloud and blazing sun, all in one day. We even got thunder and lightning, although only after dark! Coats on and off for most, although I stuck to quick-drying clothes, which also allowed me to stay cool.

In my various activities, both at work and play, I am regularly exposed to the vagaries of the unpredictable weather. Over the years I have come to depend upon a number of items of clothing, which have stayed with me for yonks.

There is so much choice available nowadays that it can sometimes be bewildering to choose what is "the right clothing". Of course, that also depends upon what you are planning to do, but I have

personally found that quality brands are usually the best, and they last longer. However, when confronted by a rainbow of high tech and high spec items, there is also a further consideration. The planet.

In my younger days, army surplus was the easiest and sturdiest outdoor clothing. Of course, there was also a sustainability element as it was "previously loved" and the quality also needed to be good because a service person's life may have depended on it. Outdoor wear as we know it did not really exist. Then, along came Berghaus. Born in

the Northeast of England from an idea by Peter Lockey and Gordon Davison, Berghaus started selling quality outdoor gear in 1966, from a small shop called the LD Mountain Centre in Newcastle. It was the only place to go for proper gear and I recall a schoolfriend working there, whilst training for the UK ski team!

From the beginning Berghaus wanted to make proper gear packed with innovation, selling the best outdoor wear the industry had to offer. They started to make their own gear - designing, testing, and creating brand new outdoor wear, inspired by what climbers wanted and needed. And so, Berghaus was born. The company aims to be a market leader in sustainable products, providing expected lifetimes for their gear backed up by a repair service to ensure there is no need to keep buying new.



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In 2022, they are producing their most environmentally friendly gear yet, while continuing to deliver the newest innovations. This includes taking care to run lower-energy offices and supporting numerous charity partnerships. But the company also states that manufacturing is where outdoors brands create their biggest impacts and can therefore make the most meaningful improvements. Berghaus research, develop and invest in new eco-friendly materials, find emission reducing production processes, and work hard to minimise their impact at every stage in a product's lifecycle, from its design and production through to its use and disposal.



They were the first British brand to join the bluesign® system, an industry-leading

initiative which works with chemical suppliers, textile mills and component manufacturers to eliminate harmful substances from the supply chain; ensuring that products are safe for consumers, workers and the environment.

But readers may be as pleasantly surprised as I am, to learn that many other outdoor clothing companies have made commitments of a similar nature and have become eco-friendly or sustainable. But what does that really mean?

In terms of clothing, it means that the clothing is made from recycled, organic, or otherwise eco-friendly materials. But the term sustainable also refers to the company that makes the clothing. They should be long lasting, durable and recyclable as well as ethically sourced.

There are a number of companies who fit this bracket.

One of my favourites is Alpkit. I've been a fan for some time and not just because of their environmental "people before profit" approach, but because their stuff works – brilliantly! They've even developed a scheme for reuse of neoprene, notoriously difficult to deal with once the hole in your waders gets beyond acceptable (this week – river Wansbeck).



Alpkit - six simple principles

Other players include:

Kathmandu, which sells high-quality, sustainably sourced outdoor clothing at fair prices. The company has many efforts in place to give back to the planet, such as planting trees, recycling plastic bottles into usable fabrics, and helping local communities.

It's fair to say you're unlikely to spend any length of time outdoors without seeing at least one piece of Rab kit. Synonymous with unrivalled insulation and quality, built-to-last kit - but they're also packing a sustainable punch.

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They've been certified Climate Neutral by South Pole and are committed to achieving net zero emissions by 2030, as well as working towards 100% recycled plastic in their orders and introducing ever more recycled materials in their kit.

Ayacucho® clothing and equipment is designed "with a focus on responsible, careful sourcing and modern-day technological advancement, giving your adventure the welcome combination of responsibility, comfort and style." Since 2009, every product sold from the Ayacucho® collection generates new funds for their existing projects and for new initiatives.

Keen footwear has made significant commitments to bringing us sustainable footwear. First, they have invested in replacing damaging PFC in their footwear's water repellency, and today are over 95% PFC-free. All their leather is sourced from tanneries certified by the Leather Working Group – the gold standard in responsible leather. These tanneries use a closed-loop system which reduces water and energy use and eliminates wastewater pollution. Keen's third pillar is eco-friendly anti-odour technology. Usually, footwear uses pesticides as an anti-odour treatment; but these use harmful chemicals which end up polluting waterways. So now, Keen use natural probiotics to achieve the anti-odour effect – avoiding the use of 15,400 lbs of pesticides every year.

Most significantly of all, the owner of Patagonia clothing, Yvon Chouinard, has recently given away his company to a charitable trust. He stated that any profit not reinvested in running the business would go to fighting climate change. The label has



amassed a cult following due to sustainability moves like guaranteeing its clothes for life and offering reasonably priced repairs.

It is also famous for an advert titled "Don't buy this jacket" asking shoppers to consider costs to the environment. The brand's website now states: "Earth is now our only shareholder".

Chouinard adds "While we're doing our best to address the environmental crisis, it's not enough. We need to find a way to put more money into fighting the crisis while keeping the company's values intact. If we have any hope of a thriving planet—much less a business—it is going to take all of us doing what we can, with the resources we have. This is what we can do. Despite its immensity, the Earth's resources are not infinite, and it's clear we've exceeded its limits. But it's also resilient. We can save our planet if we commit to it".

What a statement! Hats off!\*

\*Merino wool preferred



*An experienced wildlife professional, Steve currently works freelance with Northumberland Rivers Trust as well as undertaking work with volunteers on local heritage and archaeology projects.*

*His hope is to leave the world a better place.*

# Word Up!

## YOUR POEMS ON THE THEME OF CLOTHES

### **The Old Donkey Jacket**

“You’re not wearing that old thing. It’s her 21st. Absolutely not!”  
Her husband looks down at the tattered old coat.

“I can’t get it clean. The buttons are odd, ...”

He feels for the hem,  
A flash of fear, but no, it’s still there, stuck in the lining,

“And no matter how I try, I can’t get that lump out.”

Fingers tracing its shape,  
He’s transported back,  
To a wind-bitten beach,  
Five-year old daughter,  
Barely visible ‘neath layers of wool,  
She releases his hand to stoop,  
Lifting her precious find aloft,  
She beams:

“Look Daddy, treasure!”

He kneels, opens his pocket, taps it closed  
“Safe there forever”  
Was the promise made,  
Which tonight, he needs to prove, is still kept.

“It’ll be fine,” he smiles.

*Julie Wilson*

### **Morning Wears A Scarf**

Morning wears a scarf  
Of Crimson and burnt orange  
Draped carelessly  
Around the horizon  
Ineffective against  
A penetrating cold

*Simon Williams*

### **Nuda Veritas**

Pockets full of paradise  
In a worn out pair of jeans,  
That tell a tale of yesteryear  
With magic at the seams.

Like woven words of wonder  
That spread across the chest  
Of toddlers in their high chairs  
And grandads’ Sunday best.

Where shoes can walk for miles,  
But never miss a beat,  
To kick the dying autumn leaves  
Then kiss the cobbled street.

As winter scarves are tickled  
By stitches full of dreams,  
That hold the hopes of better days  
With magic at the seams.

*Peter D Hehir*

# Dream Up!

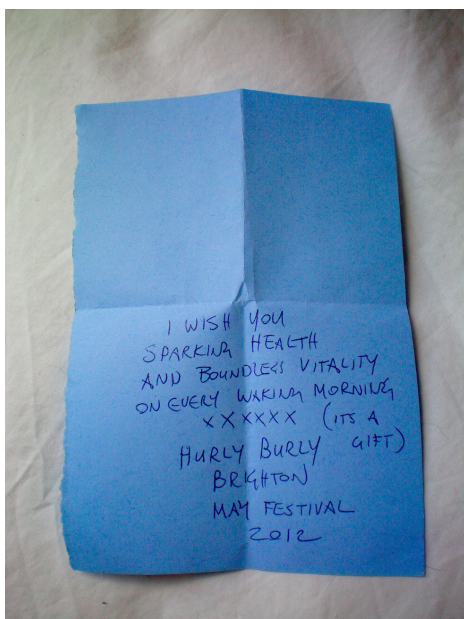
NICOLA SOKELL

One woman and her amazing technicolour dreamcoat

Hi Nicola, thanks for talking to Up! We love the sound of your Dreamcoat! Could you outline the idea behind it for our readers?

Hi! Thanks, nice to talk to you too. Yes, the Dreamcoat is a beautiful, colourful coat completely covered in pockets. Each pocket contains a dream that someone has written. I wear the coat and visit all kinds of people and places. Anyone can take a dream from a pocket - but they must swap it for one of their own. So, it's an ongoing dream exchange between strangers all over the world. The dreams are of all kinds too - sleeping, waking, daydreams, fantasies, aspirations, wishes and visions.

I've been doing it since 2005 when I first went to the Burning Man festival in the US - a huge, experimental arts festival in the desert. The theme that year was Psyche: the conscious, the subconscious and the unconscious. Very different to the usual fancy dress festival themes I was used



to! I hadn't a clue what I was going to bring, wear or make for the festival. Some months before, my subconscious showed me what it was capable of by handing me the idea of the dreamcoat. It kind of just fell out of there!



I spent the months before the festival collecting dreams from people wherever I went to go in the first 'layer' of pockets. And I put the costume together. I'm not a seamstress so it needed to be pretty simple. I made a cloak from some gauzy, floaty, shimmery pale blue fabric and cut circular pockets from a load of coloured silks then stitched them to the coat. A fairy-like headdress was donated from my arty colleagues and I was set. It was a costume designed to be worn in the heat of the desert for one week only ...

However, as soon as I started exchanging dreams with people I knew I'd found my dream job! I loved the connection it made for people, the instant and intimate interactions, the spontaneity and openness of it, the vulnerability and magic and unexpected power of it. I knew I had to keep doing it.

My life changed in a lot of ways after that and in 2008 I moved to Berlin. At this point I'd been doing the dreamcoat at lots of festivals and the flimsy costume was on its last legs. Also, I'd outgrown it in other ways. The first coat felt too fey and fairylike, too frivolous and flimsy,

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which is not really me. I'm a really big believer in costume, its importance and impact. It's a first impression, it tells a story. So when I first approach people with the coat it sets a tone before I've even spoken. Costume also impacts the wearer; it can alter your mood, give or take away confidence, be a sort of mask or disguise. That first version of the coat made me feel I was putting on a persona and I didn't want that.

So when I moved to Berlin I sketched out an idea for a new coat. I met Agnieszka - a dressmaker-designer (and now a good friend) and she brought my sketch to life, helped me source materials and made me a wonderful base coat to put the new pockets on.



I wanted shiny and colourful pockets to cover the jacket as fully as possible. I sent the word out and people sent me bits of fabric, trimmings, buttons and bows. They came from Thailand, India, Bali, France, Mexico, Greece, New York - my accountant even donated some! I spent many very happy hours on the floor of my apartment putting them all together to make the perfect pocket arrangement. Then Agi painstakingly stitched them all on.



This version of the coat has been with me ever since and it feels like an extension of me. I love it, I love how much of a true collaboration the making of it is. And that it's still ongoing - there are still spaces to be filled! It attracts people without being intimidating, which is very important when asking such a personal question.

**Your coat is well travelled! How do people of different cultures react to the concept?**

Something I realised very quickly, and another thing I loved about my new job, was that dreams are a universal language. Everyone gets it, everyone dreams, everyone holds importance and value in dreams of some kind, whether sleeping, aspirational or visionary. And not only now, but throughout time, dreaming has always been a big deal.

Mostly the reaction I get to the coat is very similar - mostly enchantment, occasionally wariness - dreams can also be very scary and disappointing - and various other reactions in between. That variation has been the same across cultures, and context can alter the reaction. I started with festivals but have gone on to take the coat to offices, private gatherings, workshops, schools. I've worked with children,

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refugees, social groups, protesters, pensioners. I've taken the coat for walks in urban, rural, historic and financial areas.

Children get it very well. At one festival I was booked to do the coat in the kids' field only, they were so hyped by all the fun they were having that they weren't really interested in dream reflection and so mostly asked for material things! (I rarely get dreams for material things). With older people in care homes, it was very poignant, dreams became more simplified. The environment and setting can have an influence too.

But yes, there are different nuances in different places around what dreaming means and its



importance to us. I'm really fascinated by this aspect and want to explore it more. I know many cultures have a lot more reverence for sleeping dreams than we do here for instance. I'm always discovering new outlooks on dreaming - I've just found out that in Korea people buy each other's dreams!

**When we think about the act of dreaming itself, it seems such a strange thing. Do you have a theory about their purpose?**

Sleep dreams I think have a few purposes. Alice Robb has written a brilliant book about that. I also agree with Tom Robbins' idea that it's playtime for the subconscious, when it's finally free of our practical, fretting daytime mind and can get up to all the high-jinx imaginings it's capable of!

Because I take all kinds of dreams in the coat it's made me think about their purpose a lot. I feel that all kinds of dreams are doing the same thing - trying to tell us or lead us to who/what we truly are.



**In your experience, is there a common theme running through people's shared dreams?**

I think they all come down to just a couple of things - peace and happiness. That's what we all want.

**Like us, you're big on positivity. In today's world with all its challenges, it's so important to see the possibilities out there, don't you think?**

Absolutely. It seems to be becoming radical and revolutionary to see and believe in positive possibilities. I also started a newsletter during lockdown highlighting the good stuff that's

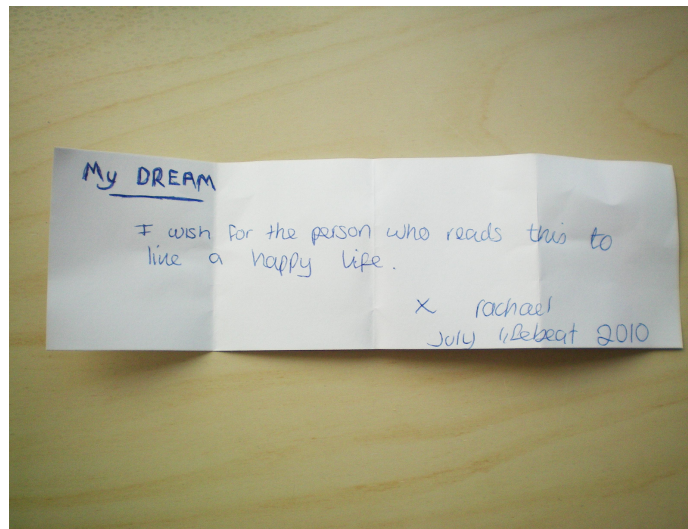
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going on as a response to the doom and gloom narrative we're destructively fed these days. Actually most of my work as an artist is to do with countering that mindset, because my most fundamental belief is that we are not here to be miserable (although of course sometimes that is part of our experience), we are here to enjoy this world, our lives and all the wonders in them.

The dreamcoat led me to follow my dreams, which is not by any means always easy. But our world is built of dreams, that's all we've ever done, it's our nature. Everything is a creation of some dream, we're putting them out there all the time, we just need to make sure they're true, and trust in them. Whether they "come true" or not is not the point. It's about the intention, and the ripples that the intention sends out, and it's about who we're becoming as we follow them. Dreams are not realised in a vacuum, they're always a collaboration, as this coat is testament to. As is this magazine!

Someone put this dream in a pocket once, years ago, and I took it as my manifesto for the project. "Every word we speak and every action we take has the potential to change the direction of a relationship. Every moment is an opportunity to build bonds for a better world." If we look back in history we can see how the many different civilisations wrote, lived and shared their dreams. If we want to focus our lives more deeply on the goal of "creating a better world" we must be prepared to believe our dreams, and most importantly our most crazy and idealistic dreams. Only radical thinking will make it. Be generous. Be the dream within you.



**Lastly, how about we swap dreams? Ours is that people can somehow regain the sense of community and interconnectedness we saw during the initial Covid lockdown. How about yours ...?**

I love that dream! I'd love that to happen, it was very special.

I've put only three dreams in the pockets of the coat myself over the years, the last time was in 2010 and that one still holds. It's for us to enjoy our beautiful lives.

**Discover more about Nicola and her dreamcoat here:**

**Short video introducing the coat:**

**<https://vimeo.com/405358085>**

**Newsletter: <https://tinyletter.com/whynotbetter>**

**Website: [www.nicolasokell.com](http://www.nicolasokell.com)**

**Instagram The Dreamcoat:**

**<https://www.instagram.com/thedreamcoat/>**

**Instagram art work:**

**<https://www.instagram.com/nicolasokell/>**

# Word Up!

## YOUR POEMS ON THE THEME OF CLOTHES

### Gown

In the Escher hospital  
she pulls off everything she ever knew  
to wear this robe, roomy as a paper  
lantern set for a sky-blue fate.

Gown comes from gunna,  
a fur to comfort mead-sipping monks  
by crackling fires, not this stiff cotton  
blurring her into the white walls.

Name unzipped, accent undone  
she is chicken thigh, greaseproof-wrapped.  
A ghostly neckline smiles across her chest.  
The carver rattles. She aches to redress.

*Helen Kay*

### Wainwright's Jackets

Wainwright's jackets  
from a suit of third-best tweed  
were as reliable as the buses  
then, and fit his every need.  
The pockets held a pebble,  
map and cash for chips;  
no list to tick off every peak,  
just solace from the trips.

*Janette Ostle*

### VESTMENTS

At the bench, he wore a smock.  
The bench: vice clamped  
at one end, the wall above it  
lined with tools and attachments,  
arranged according to purpose,  
shape and size. The smock:  
a stubby pencil in one pocket,  
rag in the other. A nail

on the back of the door  
for when he shucked it off,  
the smock, and hung it up.  
Pulled on overalls instead,  
slid onto a crawl-board,  
swung an inspection lamp  
against the shadowy crevasse  
of subframe and engine block.

*Neil Fulwood*

### Homemade

Due to the cost of living crisis,  
you made your own wedding dress.  
You know as well as I do,  
you couldn't buy anything like it.  
I keep hearing noises you make  
when you try it on in the spare bedroom.  
You're not one to boast, but those noises  
say it all. You told me how the women  
in a Skipton lingerie boutique gasped  
when you tried it on with new knickers and bra.  
How am I supposed to hold it together?  
We're getting married in Lower Manhattan,  
and I'll look downtown by comparison,  
but you'll always be my uptown-Keighley girl  
and I'm aware of the oxymoron.

*Mark Connors*



# Dressing Up!

HARRY GALLAGHER

Did you know ...



Victorian boys wore dresses until they were around 4 or 5 years of age. Pink was also a boy's colour.

It takes 700 gallons of water to make a cotton shirt.

The first humans to make clothes were the much-debated Neanderthals, who were around from 200,000 B.C.E. to about 30,000 B.C.E.



The first ever pair of Levi jeans were bought in 1853 for \$6 worth of gold dust.

In 14th century England, fashionable men's shoes were up to 2 feet long, the toe-piece being extended and strengthened with whalebone.

In Roman theatre, the actors wore huge platformed shoes and tall hats, so they could be seen from the back rows of large amphitheatres.

The bra clasp was invented by Mark Twain, author of *The Adventures Of Tom Sawyer*.

The world's longest wedding dress has a train measuring 1.85 miles.



Those buttons on soldiers' sleeves? Apparently invented by Napoleon to discourage soldiers from wiping their noses on them.

Genoan sailors were known colloquially as "Genes" and wore cotton pants, which is where we get the word "jeans" from.

# Dressing Up!

HARRY GALLAGHER

The first pair of Doc Martens were made from melted down tyres.



Speaking of Docs, they were invented by German Doctor Klaus Maertens in 1945 when he couldn't find

anything comfortable to wear on his feet after a skiing accident.

The bikini - invented in 1946 - was banned in Italy after the Vatican labelled it 'a sin'.

In the original Cinderella story, the glass slippers did not exist. Instead, her shoes were made out of fur, but the story was changed in the 1600's.

Think Converse are the hip, new brand of tennis shoe? Think again! Converse released their first tennis shoes in 1917.

In 15th century England, being pregnant was considered such a great 'look' that young aristocratic women used to put pillows under their dresses to pose for portraits.

Edward Jones might have been the first celebrity stalker: He got caught trying to steal Queen Victoria's underwear four times, and was sent to live in a penal colony in Australia.



King Edward VII was too large to fasten the bottom button on his waistcoats. This look caught on and is the reason that the lower button on men's jackets is still not meant to be done up now.

Cowboy belts and cowboy belt buckles were an invention of Hollywood.

The fashion for blazers was started by the captain of the HMS Blazer to smarten up his scruffy crew when Queen Victoria was about to inspect the ship. She was so impressed she ordered all her sailors to be dressed in similar uniform.

In 2017, shoemaker Dominic Wilcox invented a pair of shoes with built-in satnav in case you're lost. But how to switch on the GPS....? You click your heels together 3 times...



<https://dominicwilcox.com>

# Word Up!

## YOUR POEMS ON THE THEME OF CLOTHES

### **Kanojo (Her)**

If they asked me to describe her  
I'd whisper

If you unwrapped her kimono  
You wouldn't know where silk begins and skin ends

If you unfolded her origami crane  
The creases would tell a thousand stories  
For her thousand years of luck

If you watched her slumber  
The rabbit in the moon would pause from  
Pounding mochi to let her rest

And if you gazed into her eyes  
You would hear what she was saying:

--

### **Tamiko Dooley**

### **Yarns**

I made two crochet dresses, one blue, one pink  
For my daughters when they were five and six  
And they grew with them, stretching with each wash  
Stitch by stitch.

Years they had them  
Until they refused to wear them and demanded flared jeans and tank tops  
And now they laugh at old images  
Of crocheted frocks and multi coloured tank tops  
Made with 4 ply and love.

### **Dorothy Granville**

### **Friends in Need**

Faithfully they'd looked after each toe  
through good, and bad times too, for me.  
It seemed unjust to let them go  
without a little eulogy.  
So, I asks you:

Where do socks  
go when they die?  
Are angels waiting  
to darn them?  
Is there a sock  
heaven in the sky,  
– Or just a  
bonfire to burn them?

### **John Wilkins**

### **Patches**

An ancient blanket,  
patched with mismatched  
scraps of fabric,  
darned with wool and yarn  
and string,  
as my grandma would say,  
“Nothing to look at but it serves.”  
a compliment so rarely deserved.

### **Antony Stones**

# Up Top!

HARRY GALLAGHER

Oh I say, Mrs Shilling!

Well, we couldn't let this clothes-themed issue of Up! go without mention of the lady for whom the phrase "If something's worth doing, it's worth overdoing" could have been written.

Gertrude Shilling was born in 1910, in St John's Wood, London, one of nine siblings and it's fair to say her life was one of some privilege. She was part of a set who had 'coming out' parties. With regards to her own appearance as a 'deb', she later described herself as looking like 'an oversized fairy queen' - perhaps an omen for some of the creations she would become famous for sporting in her later years.

She married and had a son, David - and it is with his arrival and journey towards adulthood that her story in the public eye really begins. At 12 years of age, he designed a hat for her which she sported in that year's Ascot. Onlookers were described as 'stunned', and a star was born! From that point onwards, every year the paparazzi flashed their cameras while she flashed her headwear!

Over the ensuing 30 years, hats/outfits she wore included:

a five-foot tall giraffe design

a three-foot wide daisy hat - with a stalk embroidered down the back of her coat

a massive concoction of an apple with a four-foot arrow pierced through it.

a giant football (in honour of the World Cup), and a television resting on her shoulders (for the launch of breakfast TV)



*David and Gertrude Shilling*

Little wonder the word 'chutzpah' tended to appear beside her name on the frequent occasions she made the press.

Unsurprisingly, her son and inspiration David went on to become a world-famous hat designer and is now in his 70s, living in Monaco. It's perhaps fitting we should grant the last word to him:

"She was great fun, incredibly energetic. A gay icon before the term was even thought of. She got cancer while I was still at school and then survived 35 years after diagnosis. Amazing. Having Royal Ascot to look forward to each year helped to prolong her life, giving her that goal of getting there."

She died in 1999, leaving a trail of feathers, exotic materials and headlines in her wake.

# Up Top!

MRS SHILLING



## Where Is HoneyB?



Where on earth has the intrepid little explorer been this month?

If you think you recognise the mystery location, simply post your suggestion on the Up! facebook group page and tag it #HoneyB.

Good luck!

# Word Up!

## YOUR POEMS ON THE THEME OF CLOTHES

### Notions

In a small translucent box they wait  
colour coded, full of memories.

My Mam sewed all our clothes,  
gathering buttons like sweet treats -

making blouses and dresses our own.  
I remember her bent over vogue patterns.

Let's make the sleeves silk  
cover the buttons with the same shade.

When throwing out or recycling,  
I cut off buttons, add them to the box. Smile.

Me who was thrown out of sewing class aged seven  
for blotches on my run and fell seam.

I keep them for their colour, for the joy they bring -  
inspiring stories of outfits, good and awful.

Greens and blues remind me of Dollymount beach  
the sea stretching to infinity.

Yellow and orange shimmer  
like rare sunshine on a Glasgow day.

My favourite is heart shaped  
in bruised purple.

**Rona Fitzgerald**

### Three-inch Heels

A stage of life is over when you discover  
you can no longer walk well in three-inch heels.  
Then come orthotics, your arches' best friend.  
From orthodox podiatrists, gurus of their church,  
a pronouncement of no more sexy feet.

Is this middle age?

I'm not ready—still have boots to wear,  
sandals to strut, pumps in my closet.

No matter, here they come—the sensible shoes  
I never wanted, ones my mother modeled  
in her later days, days of swollen feet  
laced up in practical styles.

Perhaps if my pant legs are long enough  
my shoes won't steal the show.

Walk me back to my teenage years  
of coveted saddle oxfords when comfort  
didn't clash with style, when form followed  
function, one gender didn't dictate  
the shapely footwear of another.

### Evie Groch



Next month's theme is -

**WORKING TOGETHER**

Feel free to interpret the theme as you see fit and send  
up to 3 poems (no more than 20 lines each please) to:  
[admin@positivelyup.co.uk](mailto:admin@positivelyup.co.uk)

Full submission details can be found here:  
<https://positivelyup.co.uk/poetry-submissions>

# Read Up!

JENNA WARREN

New reads for a new term



As it's September, I thought I would write a 'back to school' column, featuring some of my favourite books for young readers. This month I'll focus on books for ages six to twelve, and in October I'll explore books for teens and young adults.



*Like a Charm* is a wonderful fantasy novel by Elle McNicoll. The story is set in Edinburgh and follows Ramya Knox. When she learns that her grandfather – who was estranged from her family – has died, Ramya sneaks off to attend his funeral alone. Whilst there, she learns that her grandfather has left her a message: 'Beware the Sirens'. Ramya discovers she has a gift – she can see through glamour, which means she can see the Hidden Folk, magical beings who live amongst the ordinary residents of the city. Ramya finds herself on a mission to protect the people of Edinburgh – magical and otherwise – from the sinister and powerful Sirens. This is a beautiful, highly imaginative, and humorous novel, with a fantastic sense of place. I loved the magical beings, especially the shapeshifting, watery Kelpies. But my favourite character was Murrey the library vampire, who loves books and the weather in Scotland (he informs us that there aren't many vampires in Dubai).

A sequel is due to be published in 2023, and I'm very much looking forward to it.

*The Secret of Haven Point* by Lisette Auton is a wonderful book set on the North East coast. The main character is Alpha, who lives at Haven Point, a remote lighthouse. Alpha is one of the Wrecklings, a community of disabled people who survive by looting goods from passing ships. They're helped by the mermaids who lure the ships onto the rocks. Alpha loves her life as a Wreckling, but when she learns they're being watched by Outsiders, she finds that her home and community is suddenly under threat. Alpha must find a way to protect those she cares about and decide what she wants to do in the future.

This novel paints a wonderfully evocative picture of the North East coast, and has a great cast of characters. I loved the secret and magical world of the Wrecklings, and I can't wait to see what Lisette Auton writes next.



# Read Up!

JENNA WARREN



*You Can't Make Me Go to Witch School!* is the first book in a very funny and magical trilogy by Em Lynas. Daisy Wart is most definitely an actress, and most definitely not a witch. But her grandmother has other ideas, and leaves her at Toadspit Towers, a school for witches. Daisy is furious – she was due to appear in her old school's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and now she may never be able to perform her Bottom. The story follows Daisy's unusual education and adventures as a reluctant witch, and her attempts to escape from Toadspit Towers. It's great fun, with fabulous illustrations by Jamie Littler.

*The Unbelievable Biscuit Factory* is the debut novel from James Harris, and it's both surreal and hilarious. The story follows Haddie, who just wants to rehearse with her band. However, her hometown has been invaded by giant, orange, fluffy monsters, whose main talents seem to be causing chaos and stating the obvious in capital letters ("I AM SITTING ON THIS MAN"). Haddie thinks this may have something to do with the town's mysterious biscuit factory, which isn't actually a biscuit factory at all, but a Super-Secret Science Lab (Although, it can legally call itself a biscuit factory because it has made one biscuit, which is kept in a special room marked 'Biscuit'). Haddie must infiltrate the biscuit factory in order to put things right and save the world. I laughed so much at this book, and I'm pleased that James has now written a second novel, *Happytown Must Be Destroyed*.



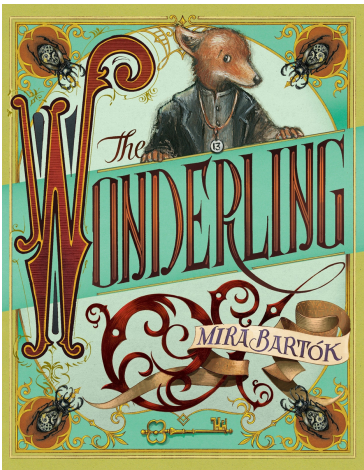
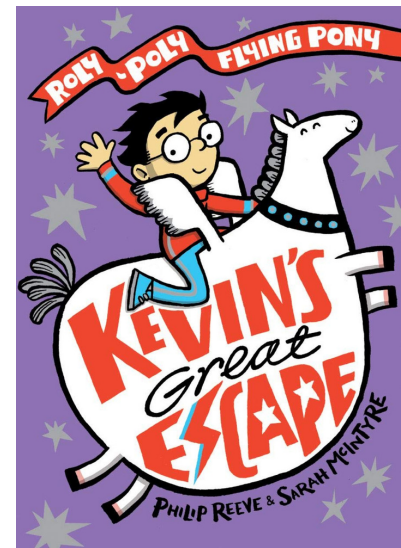
*Knights and Bikes* by Gabrielle Kent is the first in a series following the adventures of best friends Demelza and Nessa. They live on the sleepy island of Penfurzy, where nothing much happens. But the island does have its own legend: that of the Penfurzy Knights, and their hidden treasure. Together with their bikes, and their goose sidekick, Captain Honkers, Demelza and Nessa set out on a madcap adventure to uncover the mystery of the Knights and find the treasure. This book is charming, with quirky characters and plenty of humour. There's also a *Knights and Bikes* console game.



# Read Up!

JENNA WARREN

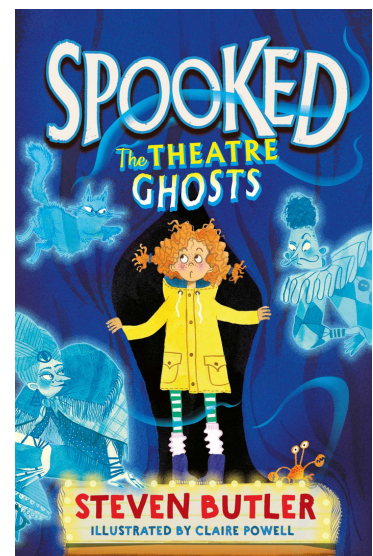
I love *The Legend of Kevin: Roly-Poly Flying Pony* by Philip Reeve and Sarah McIntyre. Kevin is a biscuit-loving flying pony. One day, a magical storm causes Kevin to crash land into a tower block. He finds himself in the home of a young boy called Max. Max and Kevin embark on an adventure to save the town, which has been submerged by a flood during the storm. Throughout their journey, Max keeps Kevin supplied with biscuits. This is the first in a funny series, with excellent illustrations. It would make a great early chapter book for younger readers.



For older readers, I highly recommend *The Wonderling* by Mira Bartók. This imaginative novel is set in a world which is part Dickensian (there are strong nods to *Oliver Twist*) and part Steampunk, with a strong fantasy element too. As well as humans, this world also has 'groundlings', people with animal-like characteristics and abilities. It follows Arthur, a fox-like eleven-year-old groundling who lives at the Home for Wayward and Misbegotten Creatures, a workhouse-like institution run by the villainous Miss Carbunkle. When he rescues Trinket, a young bird groundling, Arthur finds a way to escape and embark on a journey to this world's version of London, to discover who he really is.

This is a beautifully written, complex novel with themes of prejudice and social justice. I would recommend it for ages nine and above.

Finally, I would like to recommend *Spooked! The Theatre Ghosts*, a fun new release by Steven Butler. Ten-year-old Ella and her mum have just moved to Cod's Bottom, a rundown seaside town. Ella misses her life and friends in London, especially her drama club. While out exploring the town, she discovers the old Cod's Bottom Hippodrome, a derelict variety theatre which has been closed for many years. Ella follows some local children inside and finds that the theatre is haunted by the ghosts of actors and performers who appeared at the theatre in its glory days. I absolutely love the descriptions of the old theatre, all cobwebs and dust and crumbling plaster cherubs. The illustrations by Claire Powell are also whimsical and funny. Highly recommended for young theatre lovers.



*Jenna Warren is a bookseller and writer from Teesside. She studied Theatre and later Creative Writing at university. She runs Book Corner, an independent bookshop in Saltburn-by-the-Sea. Her debut novel, *The Moon and Stars*, will be published by Fairlight Books in October 2022.*

# Coming Up!

So here we are, all done and dusted for another month. Just be sure to get your warm togs on, winter's on its way - and keep an eye on those energy bills!

When we left you last month, we were about to embark on another new Up! project. 'Feeding Folk' is the simplest of ideas, but as a friend recently pointed out to us, all the best ideas are simple. Feeding Folk is a series of live and shared music/poetry events, with the caveat that everyone - performers and audience alike - bring along at least one food item as the price of admission. The next day, it's all donated to your local Foodbank, in our case the wonderful Bay Foodbank.

Well our first event was a roaring success, with crate-loads of food (plus some money) given - and we're holding one every month until further notice, with the next one on 23rd September. All welcome, contact us for details.

If any of you lovely folk would like to do something similar for your area, just get in touch; we'll be happy for you to use our banner and to help you with publicity, with all proceeds going to whichever Foodbank is closest to you.

We're sure you'll agree that in this day and age, Foodbanks really shouldn't be needed. But sadly they are, and where there's need, we need to be there.

We're back next month with a 'Working Together' theme. Until then, look after yourselves and look after each other.

Much love  
Bridget & Harry xx



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