

Young British blacksmith and weaver take top prizes at New Designers Week 1 showcase

Week 1: Until 5 July 2025 | **Week 2:** 9 – 12 July 2025

Location: Business Design Centre, London, N1 0QH



Above (from left): Cameron Pearson from Hereford College of Arts and Ruby Webster from Manchester School of Art, winner and runner-up of the Business Design Centre New Designer of the Year Award respectively (Image: Mark Cocksedge)

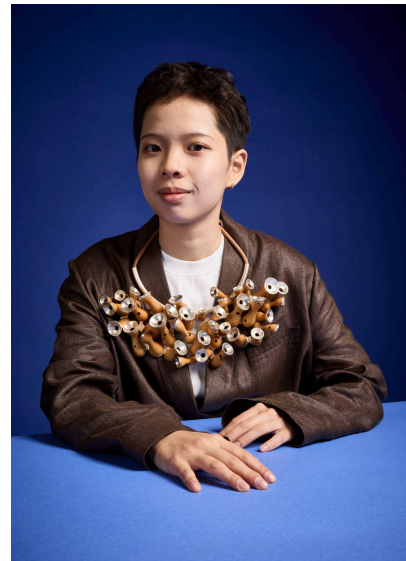
[Thursday, 3 July 2025] The 40th edition of [New Designers](#) opened yesterday with its **Week One showcase** (until 5 July 2025) at London's Business Design Centre. This annual event celebrates the best emerging talent in the UK, featuring over 2,500 design graduates from [more than 100 university courses](#) – get [tickets](#) now. Week One focuses on [various disciplines](#), including Fashion and Costume, Contemporary Design Crafts, Textiles, Ceramics, Glass, and Jewellery and Metalwork. The Week One award ceremony, opened by fashion icon **Dame Zandra Rhodes**, honoured a group of exciting graduates with 15 accolades supported by international brands and businesses – as part of the show's [ND Awards](#) programme.

Two young craftspeople – both deeply rooted in tradition and materiality – emerged as the night's biggest winners. The **Business Design Centre New Designer of the Year Award** went to **Cameron Pearson**, graduating in BA Artist Blacksmithing from **Hereford College of Arts**. Pearson captivated judges with his striking geometric sculptures forged from low-carbon mild steel, inspired by Euclidean and Ideal geometry. Transforming planar designs into precise three-dimensional forms, his pieces combine mathematical purity with the raw aesthetic of forged metal, revealing the intrinsic beauty of geometry. Judges said, "Cameron's forged sculptures are beautiful and elegant. He demonstrates complete mastery of his technique using mathematics and symmetry. Outstanding!" After six years of blacksmithing training, Pearson plans to refine his skills further by embarking on a master's degree.

The **Runner-Up Prize** was awarded to **Ruby Webster** from **Manchester School of Art**, graduating in BA Textiles in Practice. Judges praised Webster's dedication to learning fabric making from its very beginnings, developing a profound fascination with the ancient processes of cloth production. Her final project involved hand-spun wool blended with linen silk, naturally dyed with indigo. "We loved Ruby's vertical integration of the design process from fleece to product. Her low-impact practice is quiet activism focused on keeping the craft alive," judges said.

NEW DESIGNERS 40

EST. 1985



Above (from left): Charley Softley from University of Brighton, winner of the New Craftmaker Award; Laura Maycroft from Leeds Arts University, winner of the Habitat Future Design Award; DuoDou Lin from Glasgow School of Art, winner of the Hannah Martin New Rebel Prize (Image: Mark Cocksedge)

The [ND Awards](#) celebrate creativity, innovation and design excellence across key contemporary themes including sustainability, wellbeing, identity and inclusion. Read the **full list of winners** in the 'Notes to Editors' section. Sponsors of this year's Week One awards include (alphabetically): **Business Design Centre, Cole & Son, Dinny Hall, Future Icons, Habitat, Hallmark, Hannah Martin, Laura Ashley, PriestmanGoode, Romo, Ruup & Form, Sage Automotive Interiors, Sanderson and The New Craftmaker.**



Above (from left): Fashion icon Dame Zandra Rhodes photographed with the winners of New Designers Week 1 Awards; Rhodes delivering her keynote speech in front of the live audience (Image: Mark Cocksedge)

New Designers (newdesigners.com) runs until 5 July for Week One, and from 9 – 12 July for Week Two, at the Business Design Centre, London, N1 0QH. Click [here](#) to register for tickets and [here](#) for opening times.

NEW DESIGNERS 40

EST. 1985



Above (from left): Mini Sharma-McLachlan from Swansea College of Art, winner of the Cole & Son Award For Future Designers; Carmen Alexander from Edinburgh College of Art, winner of the Hallmark Connection Award (Image: Mark Cocksedge)



Above (from left): Kitty Campbell-Howard from Birmingham City University, winner of the Dinny Hall New Jewellery Designer of the Year Award; Robyn Tilsley from De Montfort University, winner of the Laura Ashley Award (Image: Mark Cocksedge)



Above (from left): Freya Hurlstone from Loughborough University, winner of the PriestmanGoode Award; Evie Hensser from Nottingham Trent University, winner of The Romo Award for Innovation in Design and Colour (Image: Mark Cocksedge)

NEW DESIGNERS 40

EST. 1985



Above (from left): Ines Congratel from Nottingham Trent University, winner of the Sanderson Award;
Megan Lester from De Montfort University, winner of the Sage Automotive Interiors Passion for Textiles Award (Image: Mark Cocksedge)



Above (from left): Lil Sanderson from Manchester School of Art, winner of the Ruup & Form Award;
Yuna Kim, winner of the Future Icons ND Selects Award (Image: Mark Cocksedge)

For the latest news, follow New Designers on: Instagram [@NewDesigners](#); X [@NewDesigners](#); Facebook [@NewDesignersEvent](#)

-ENDS-

PRESS CONTACT

For press information and images, or to request interviews, please contact Belinda Fisher and Jeffrey Cheung at Friends & Co.

E: belinda@friendsandco.co.uk | jeffrey@friendsandco.co.uk

Click [here](#) to register for **press passes**.

NOTES TO EDITORS

Ticket prices:

- General admission, including trade pass – From £27 on-the-door
- School group booking – From £10 per ticket; From £100 for group of 10 students, 2x tutors go free

Week 1 (2 – 5 July 2025): Fashion and Costume; Contemporary Design Crafts; Textiles; Ceramics; Glass; Jewellery and Metalwork

Week 2 (9 – 12 July 2025): Furniture; Product Design; Industrial and Spatial Design; Graphic Design; Illustration and Animation; Motion and Digital Arts; Game Design

The winners of Week One ND Awards are as follows:

Business Design Centre New Designer of the Year Award

Winner: Cameron Pearson, Hereford College of Arts (BA Artist Blacksmithing)

Title of work: Geometry in Perspective

Description of work: Inspired by Euclidean and Ideal geometry, Pearson's sculptures – forged from low-carbon mild steel – transform planar designs into three-dimensional forms through precise rotations. Each piece merges mathematical purity with a raw, forged aesthetic, revealing the intrinsic beauty of geometry. His work celebrates the intersection of art and science, highlighting the enduring elegance of geometric principles.

Judge's comment: Cameron's forged sculptures are beautiful and elegant. He demonstrates complete mastery of his technique using mathematics and symmetry. Outstanding!

Prize: £1,500 cash prize

"As one of its original founders, the BDC couldn't be more proud of our 40 year association with New Designers. To have given so many of today's leading designers the platform to showcase their early brilliance and talent is one of our greatest achievements as an organisation. Nothing makes me happier than meeting someone now who tells me they exhibited their work at New Designers twenty years ago, and how much the show meant to them back then and what it did to kick-start their career. Here's to the next forty years." **Dominic Jones, CEO, Business Design Centre**

Business Design Centre New Designer of the Year Award Runner-Up

Winner: Ruby Webster, Manchester School of Art (BA Textiles in Practice)

Title of work: From Field to Fabric

Description of work: Ruby's work is based on process, hand making and craft. She's interested in learning how to make fabric right from the beginning. She has developed a deep fascination with the ancient process of cloth making – not just the weaving itself, but also how far she can go in understanding and embodying the journey from raw fibre to finish fabric. All hand-spun wool with linen silk blend, and dyed naturally with indigo.

Judge's comment: We loved Ruby's vertical integration of the design process from fleece to product. Her low-impact practice is quiet activism focused on keeping the craft alive.

Prize: £500 cash prize

Hallmark Connection Award

Winner: Carmen Alexander, Edinburgh College of Art (BA Jewellery and Silversmithing)

Title of work: Friday Street

Description of work: A series of metal objects inspired by Friday street car boot sales which she visited when growing up. Transferred film photographs from analogue cameras to metal in different ways (silver and steel).

Judge's comment: A beautiful collection built on serendipitous finds. Emotionally evocative, connecting to memory past and present. Brought to life through a reimagined approach to techniques and process. We simply loved it!

Prize: Paid internship in the Hallmark Creative Studio

The PriestmanGoode Award

Winner: Freya Hurlstone, Loughborough University (BA Textiles Design)

Title of work: Connections

Description of work: An interiors collection based on the NHS scheme, social prescribing. Created a mobile space that facilitates social prescription and encourages connections between people and the environment. Inspired by stress production theory, looking at vegetation and water as a calming presence within a space.

Judge's comment: Cohesive, well contextualised. Aligns with PriestmanGoode values of social responsibility, holistic approach and a great range of materials and techniques.

Prize: Up to one-year internship at PriestmanGoode

The Habitat Future Design Award – Textiles, Product and Surface Pattern Design

Winner: Laura Maycroft, Leeds Arts University (BA Textile Design)

Title of work: Oiseau du Modernisme

Description of work: Celebrate the biophilic spaces designed by Sri Lankan architect Minnette De Silva – one of the first female architects to have her own practice in the 1940s – with this eclectic wallpaper and interior textiles collection. Explore the contrasts in her work; between geometric modernist forms, Arts and Crafts features made by local artisans and the lush tropical planting of her outdoor living spaces. This collection of wallpapers and hand screen printed fabrics mix artisanship and modernity.

Judge's comment: Laura's work shows wonderful story telling and skillset. Rich in colour, technique and a diverse, unique, handwriting. Laura's print and pattern is witty and colourful, much like our ethos for Habitat.

Prize: Mentoring from the Habitat Design Studio and £500 cash prize

"Habitat is delighted to sponsor both weeks of the New Designers exhibition again this year, reaffirming our longstanding passion and commitment to championing emerging British designers."

"As Head of Design at Habitat, it's a personal privilege to reflect on my own journey which began right here as a graduate exhibiting at New Designers in 1997. Habitat is proud to have recruited and collaborated with over 30 talented young designers through the show over the years and we are dedicated to continuing to support, celebrate and cultivate talent, creativity and innovation for many years to come, alongside the New Designers team." **Andrew Tanner,**
Head of Design at Habitat

Dinny Hall New Jewellery Designer of the Year Award

Winner: Kitty Campbell-Howard, Birmingham City University (HND Jewellery and Silversmithing)

Title of work: N/A

Description of work: This collection is inspired by sound waves, with designs that create abstract recordings of sounds to encapsulate specific moments. One necklace, for example, captures a recording of the sea, while other pieces are designed to record personal moments in time for their owners. Each piece is crafted in gold-plated silver.

Judge's comment: Real creative aplomb ideas behind the collection, seen to evolve and lots of scope to develop into commercial yet special pieces.

Prize: Mentorship support from the Dinny Hall team to collaborate with and then take their designs into production. Their designs will then be showcased at one of Dinny Hall's six London stores.

Hannah Martin New Rebel Prize

Winner: DuoDou Lin, Glasgow School of Art (BA Silversmithing & Jewellery)

Title of work: Echoed Emotion

Description of work: Lin's collection stems from her observation in life: the repetition of emotions. Her work explores how emotions reappear over time, often unannounced, yet deeply familiar. It consists of five groups of works – each rooted in a specific emotion (tense, disappointment, reflective, expectation and self-touch). Working primarily with silver and incorporating varied materials to represent each theme. The collection includes necklaces, rings, brooches, vessels and incense burners.

Judge's comment: Incredibly impressive body of work – imaginative use and combination of materials and techniques, strong conceptual vision.

Prize: Silver A Vanitas Razor Bangle

The Laura Ashley Award

Winner: Robyn Tilsley, De Montfort University (BA Textile Design)

Title of work: Eclectic Bloom

Description of work: Tilsley's work highlights the tactile beauty of fabric and pattern, bringing a sense of heritage and nature into contemporary textiles. She blends the aesthetics of traditional craft with modern design, focusing on repeat processes.

Judge's comment: We love the heritage inspired arts and crafts feel, earth toned palette and how this has translated into a rounded, extremely well developed collection that not only aligns to our values but brings contemporary feel to our brand.

Prize: £1000 prize money for the brand to purchase the winning artwork to add to Laura Ashley Archive and a freelance internship position for one month at Laura Ashley Head office.

The Cole & Son Award For Future Designers

Winner: Mini Sharma-McLachlan, Swansea College of Art (BA Surface Pattern and Textiles)

Title of work: Wild Waters and Highland Wonders

Description of work: Inspired by the Scottish heritage of the designer's father and draws on the rich landscapes of the Highlands, wetlands and diverse scenery across Scotland. It combines watercolour painting and fine line drawing with digital embroidery to capture these

natural environments in a contemporary way. A muted yet natural colour palette is used throughout to bring the outside in.

Judge's comment: Extremely talented, detailed work, painting skills with a state-of-the-art look. Beautiful, honest and humble presentation of work. We were drawn in and captivated by storytelling of wallpapers, textures and surfaces.

Prize: £1,500 cash prize

Future Icons ND Selects Award

Winner: Yuna Kim

Description of work: Inspired by the organic forms and inherent beauty of nature, Kim seeks to express its fragility and transience using transparent glass and subtle colours. Through her work, she visually captures delicate moments created by the interplay of light and shadow. Her collection is inspired by the silhouettes of tree branches that she observed while spending time under the trees, sketching and drawing.

Judge's comment: Innovative use of materials, a unified collection of pieces with beautiful colour.

Prize: A stand at Future Icons Selects during London Craft Week 2026

The Sanderson Award

Winner: Ines Congratel, Nottingham Trent University (BA Textile Design)

Title of work: Hilaritras – Joie De Vivre

Description of work: A complete interior design collection inspired by Joie de Vivre – the feeling you get when surrounded by people you love, and enjoying the presence of everyone. Inspired by her dad being a chef, as well as her childhood spent in the French countryside. The collection includes an upholstered chair, wallpapers, fabrics, placemats and napkin holders.

Judge's comment: An inspirational collection that demonstrates creativity and innovation, showing a wide breadth of knowledge and techniques. Accomplished and exquisite design style with considered application for interior design. Her passion shone through in her work.

Prize: 12-month paid internship with Sanderson

The Romo Award for Innovation in Design and Colour

Winner: Evie Hensser, Nottingham Trent University (BA Textile Design)

Title of work: The Saturday Club

Description of work: The collection draws inspiration from the Bloomsbury Group – particularly the charm and character of Charleston House. It seeks to embody the essence of traditional English design while paying homage to Charleston's distinctive eccentricity and rich decoration.

Judge's comment: We love Evie's creative exploration of the design and process along with her fun and vibrant use of colour.

Prize: A £500 cash prize and paid internship for up to six months in the Romo, Villa Nova or Black Edition design studio

The Sage Automotive Interiors Passion for Textiles Award

Winner: Megan Lester, De Montfort University (BA Fashion Textiles and Textile Design)

Title of work: Brutal Delicacy

Description of work: Lester's work explores the tension between density and delicacy in knitwear by reflecting the textures and contrasts found in urban environments. She was inspired by the interplay of light and shadow in brutalist architecture to create a range of contemporary and dynamic samples.

Judge's comment: A knit collection which showcases innovation and technical expertise. Excellent job in articulating her concept and inspiration to application.

Prize: A £1,000 cash prize, along with the opportunity to spend a day in the company's UK studio

The New Craftmaker Award

Winner: Charley Softley, University of Brighton (BA 3D Design and Craft)

Title of work: Rethinking How We Use Waste

Description of work: Looking at waste in different areas of Brighton – beach, the main city and residential areas. Observing discarded items and rethinking how they can be deconstructed, remade and experimented with – which she describes as “urban foraging”. Finding items that have been discarded due to fast furniture and people not being able to or not having the skills to fix them. Transforming them into items that carry their own history while continuing to evolve in the hands of their new owners.

Judge's comment: We found Charley's work playful, full of innovation, looking at urban foraging and its connection to material value with sustainability at its heart. It represents a new exploration in vernacular furniture.

Prize: Winner's work to be showcased in the company's Belgravia showroom over the late summer months, including a dedicated window display in early August; plus a two-hour mentoring session from Managing Director, Isobel Dennis

Ruup & Form Award

Winner: Lil Sanderson, Manchester School of Art (BA Product Design and Craft)

Title of work: My People Make Things

Description of work: Inspired by Sunderland's heritage craft traditions, particularly its lustreware produced in the 1800s. The collection takes key elements from original Sunderland ware and modernises them with the hope of reviving this traditional craft. The work is created using as little machinery as possible, staying true to the handcrafted nature of the originals, while an experimental glaze technique pays homage to the distinctive finishes of historic Sunderland lustreware.

Judge's comment: Distinctive, playful, strong narrative. Displays great potential – traditional yet contemporary.

Prize: £250 prize for the gallery to purchase the winning artwork to be part of Ruup & Form permanent collection. In addition, the recipient will benefit with a dedicated mentorship with the Ruup & Form team, offering guidance and professional development for 2 hours in the year 2025. Alongside the exciting opportunity to exhibit their work in an upcoming Ruup & Form exhibition in 2026.



About New Designers:

New Designers is an annual showcase of the UK's most innovative emerging design talent. Since its inception 40 years ago, New Designers has provided a platform for over 3,000 graduates to present their visionary ideas to industry professionals and the public every year. The event takes place over two weeks, with different disciplines highlighted in Week 1 and Week 2, spanning fashion, textiles, furniture, product design, illustration, and more. With a focus on creativity, innovation, and sustainability, New Designers is a must-attend event for anyone interested in the future of design. Whether you're a design enthusiast, a student, or a professional in the industry, there's something for everyone at New Designers.