

# The Edinburgh Reporter chats with Emily Raemakers of Talented Apple



## **What does your typical day look like?**

– Everything centres around my kitchen table. I spend about half of my time making pieces. The process starts with sketching out a design in my sketchbook, then developing my drawings into a graphic print by carving a lino cut or creating a screen print stencil. Then I'll pull a set of prints and leave them to dry, before heat-setting them, cutting the patterns for the pieces I'm going to make, and then sewing them up.

## **What is your potted business biography?**

– After studying Performance Costume Design at Edinburgh College of Art, I set up Talented Apple in 2011, selling handmade, hand printed fashion accessories and homeware online and at local craft markets. All Talented Apple products are original designs, handmade in small batches using water-based, non-toxic inks. I run my business as a small, ethical outfit with a personal touch.

## **What was your first job?**

– I started out working freelance as a costume designer for theatre and film and my first job was as a Costume Assistant on the production of a film called "Perfect Sense", starring Ewan McGregor and Eva Green.

## **What do you think is most important: theoretical training or "on the job" training?**

– Definitely on the job training in my experience. You can prepare yourself to a certain extent with theoretical training but, being a creative-type, nothing beats getting your hands

dirty and trying things out. I spent quite a while attending seminars and reading books on how to start a business before I took the plunge and, although that information was useful, it wasn't tailored to my personal ideas for my business and I've learned a lot more since by trial and error.

**Do you have any wish to study for a further qualification like an MBA?**

– Not for an academic qualification, but I am always interested in learning new practical skills to expand my creative disciplines. I like to keep an eye out for different textile-related short courses.

**Are there any people who have been of great influence to you on your career path?**

– I think just being around various creative and enterprising people during my studies at Edinburgh College of Art. My aunt, Sally Mumford, runs her own handmade skincare company called "Shea Alchemy" which she set up several years ago. I think seeing her succeed doing something close to her heart has given me the confidence to do the same.

**Which business book would you recommend?**

– I found "The Small Business Start-Up Workbook" by Cheryl D Rickman was useful for covering all the different aspects of business. "The Handmade Marketplace" by Kari Chapin is a nice introduction to starting up a small craft business.

**What are your business goals for the year?**

– I want to establish myself on the local craft market scene and keep fine-tuning my range and designs. I love coming up with new designs. I also have a few commissions in the pipeline for things like wedding favours.

**What do you do in your spare time?**

– I love being outdoors, especially hillwalking, and I get a lot of inspiration for designs from the natural world. I try to get out of the city at least every couple of weeks for

walks with family and my boyfriend. I also love travelling and sketching the places I go to.

**Do you think you have a good work/life balance?**

– Usually it's pretty good, although the run up to Christmas last year was very hectic. I'm lucky that I can be reasonably flexible so if I really need to have a break and go for a run or a walk for a few hours, I can do that, and finish what I was working on when I get back.

**Do you use social media in your business? If you do then how much is it important to you?**

– I use [Facebook](#), Flickr and LinkedIn to keep in touch with different sorts of people and I have an Etsy shop, too. It's a great way of letting people know about new designs or craft markets I'm attending in a less formal fashion. It's also a great resource for being an active member of craft communities which I enjoy.

**What are the best aspects of living and/or working in Edinburgh?**

– I think Edinburgh is the perfect size for me, it has all the resources I need and it's big enough to have a great craft and creative scene but it's small enough that it still feels intimate. All of the festivals in the summer make it an exciting place to be.

**The best place in Edinburgh?**

– The top of Arthur's Seat on a clear day.

**Your favourite Edinburgh restaurant?**

– Under the Stairs on Merchant Street. It's cosy and it does great comfort food in small portions so you can share with your friends and try a bit of everything. The cocktails are pretty good, too!

**Where else have you lived and or worked?**

– I'm an Edinburgh girl born and bred, but I took a gap year

between high school and university and taught English in a rural school in Himachal Pradesh in India for four months.

**What do you do about business networking?**

– Social media is a great tool for networking. I also like the face-to-face aspect of having a stall in a craft market.

**What does success look like to you?**

– To be able to make a living doing what I love. Keeping things small, creative and fun



