

# Twilling Tweeds Pop up shop

✘ *Cultivating Crafts from Scotland and Pakistan*

Twilling Tweeds is a cross-cultural initiative set up by Scottish Pakistani designer Adil Iqbal. It works with Pakistani embroiderers and Scottish weavers.

The Exhibition opens at Whitespace Gallery, 25 Howe Street in Edinburgh on Friday 12 December 2014 (Private opening 6pm – 8pm) and runs till Saturday 20th December 2014. (10am – 6pm).

Adil Iqbal, an Edinburgh-based fashion designer will be showcasing a range of ready to wear collection. There will be an exclusive line of hand embroidered tweed zip clutches, totes and many more items for sale.

The project connects the weavers of the Outer Hebrides, Scotland with the female embroiderers of Chitral, North West Frontier of Pakistan. A series of contemporary hand-loomed embroidered textiles interpret Scottish and Chitrali stories through illustrated narratives. The artwork incorporates Pakistani narratives illustrated on Harris Tweed as well as Scottish narratives on Chitrali calico.

The tapestries aim to depict the uniqueness of life in the Outer Hebrides and Chitral Valley. These ancient traditions will be preserved so that the skills of the artisans are not lost.

The pieces are illustrated and embellished by female artisans from Chitral. This project encourages the women to be creative designers and gives them the space to tell their stories in their own words and drawings ; interpreting the life of both communities.

In June 2012, Twilling Tweeds invited Chitrali embroiderers to participate in a series of creative workshops, where they were

exposed to basic photography, drawing and coloring techniques. Their own daily lives, people, objects and anecdotes became the immediate source of inspiration. The workshops gave them the space to tell their stories in their own words and drawings; interpreting the life of both communities. Throughout the workshops the women's conversation and tales were recorded. These made up the accompanying narratives.

Nusrat Khatoon embroiderer from Chitral sharing her experience :

' I have a lot of respect for the weavers and understand the hard work that goes in making the cloth. It's similar to Chitrali Shu (Woollen cloth) so I instantly connected with the tweed.'

Taiba, embroiderer from Chitral had interwoven the lines from Scottish 'Weaving Songs' by Donald S Murray.

'Listening to the Weaving songs has reminded me of the folk songs and stories relating to Chitrali Shu weaving and embroidery.'

A special edition textile had been embellished by Textile artist Alison Macleod on Chitrali Patti (local handspun wool).

On the Chitrali Patti panel, Alison embroidered a Gaelic 'Waulking Song' using free hand machine embroidery. She 'wrote' with the machine needle using a free motion. She also printed an image of a Lewis 'sheiling' and used threads of moorland colours to decorate the cloth.

Alison describing her Textiles:

' I was fascinated by the Chitrali Patti and the similarities in the making process of Harris Tweed. Both cloths have such rich heritage and skill and live up to the saying 'craft is knowledge'. As the Chitrali Patti is still being made in its traditional method, I think it fully reflects the Chitral

culture with its rawness and strong smell. I wanted to combine this part of the Hebridean culture by adding the Gaelic waulking song and the sheiling image'.

Twilling Tweed's mission is to create a bridge between Scottish and Pakistani crafts, which will provide a new cultural dimension to traditional Scottish fabrics through the application of traditional Pakistani art and embroidery.

We encourage new ideas and making of new textile work, market friendly, income generating products and encourage the artisans to take increasing ownership of the creative art and design process.

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Submitted by [Adil Iqbal](#)

