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Adopting after Infertility: Messages from Practice, Research and Personal Experience

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As a practice, craft can show both irreverence and respect for tradition. The historic connection between crafts, the community and social consciousness goes beyond the mere utility of object making. So much is embedded in the craft process which underlines its lasting significance as is evident in the extracts from the students' monographs where, for instance, Sarah Middleton reflects on a need for sanctuary in the contemporary urban environment. And while Carrie Holder explores a subtle appreciation for the transcendent in personal experience, Kerry Greville tells us how experimentation with the possibilities of materials is essential to the creative journey as it always presents the challenge of striking the right balance between control and intuition.

The creative process can give us an acute awareness of materials and through them we gain a greater sensitivity for the environment. Conversely, the environment is something private and communal, real and imagined, which motivates a need for visual expression and a desire to improvise with the tactility of materials.

Drawing is integral to the artistic process and the theme of this year's catalogue is that of a working sketchbook which suggests the connections between seeing, making and thinking. Drawing can be a free and experimental search for new expressive possibilities; it can also be a reflection in ways not dissimilar to how the production of this catalogue has encouraged students to reflect on the progress of their degree. The catalogue is a coherent collection of individual visions and it is evidence of an open, collaborative spirit.

The production of Sample 10 is made possible through the creativity, commitment and integrity of students and staff. Special thanks are due to all the tutors and technicians whose knowledge, commitment and enthusiasm has ably supported this year's graduates. We are particularly grateful to Linda Lewis for her dedicated work on Sample 10. I would also like to thank our course leader, Nicola Perren, for her confidence in me as editor of this edition of Sample.

The Sample brand continues to develop with the launch of the Enterprise Project in September 2009. The scheme runs alongside the alternative placement year offered by the Business School and is supported by the Textile Crafts course and external sponsorship. We currently have three second-year Textile Crafts students on a twelve-month placement at the University to explore setting up their own businesses. Students have the opportunity to develop as an artist, designer or maker under the Sample brand. They have access to workshop facilities, academic and business support too. Work produced is exhibited and sold at various venues. The project provides invaluable professional experience for those involved.

While looking through Sample 10 we hope you have the time to enjoy and appreciate the high standards our craft practitioners achieve. We are sure they will make a valuable contribution to the shape of craft to come and wish them every success in the future.

Clair Sweeney 2010  
Editor