



Left: Moe  
Right: Hoot  
Below inset: Tyson



design and also I have a couple of Aussie animals that I want to have a go at."

### Finding the balance

It is so difficult for artists to balance things sometimes yet creative freedom is so important! Bear making can be very lonely, it can be punishing in terms of wear and tear on the eyes and the joints (yes I am talking about the artist not the bear!), and on top of that the length of time it takes to actually create a bear can mean that artists are working long hours and have the stress of waiting lists, commissions and shows to deal with.

Taking a break from commission pieces is one way in which to cut back, to find one's Zen again and to ensure that you are producing the very best, most exciting creatures that you can. It is rewarding for collectors too, because whether artists believe it or not, we really can tell when a bear has been made with love.

### An explosion of creativity

It is vital for the continuation of bear artistry that artists first of all remember why it is they fell in love with making bears in the first place and also to allow their creative energy to be restored.

It may sound pretentious, but it really does make for better artists! Kim's attitude to the future is testament to the regenerative powers of a rest. "I have so many bears and critters in my mind that I'm just dying to try, but just not had enough hours in the day!" she exclaims.

Time will be on her side now, we hope and we are thrilled at the very idea of what she might create!

### Continuing to improve

It seems crazy to think that there is any area of bear making that Kim hasn't



yet conquered, especially in light of her very complex designs, but she does say that she hasn't yet got to grips with her airbrush. "I still haven't got the hang of it" she says, "I am more of a sketcher, not a painter!" She is more likely to be found using Copic markers freehand to shade, and perhaps that should not change because there seems very little to me about her bears that should change.

Her favourite fabric to work with is Alpaca, "I prefer to work with hand dyed materials for that extra individuality," she explains. "I use a lot of ultra suede and sometimes leather and of course wool for the needle felting."

Kim uses what ever is the most appropriate thing for her bears, keeping things natural means that they appear more organic. I just love Hoot the little owl chick who looks just like he has fallen out of a tree.

Her work is startling in its diversity and the reality of her designs. She is most certainly an individual and thank goodness for that. It is welcome and exciting in the bear world, a world full of interesting artists making such wonderful things!

"I have found that the bear scene is sometimes like an escape from reality for me" she says, "it has been my sanity during stressful times and has got me through some very challenging circumstances in the last few years. I am also thankful that it has given me the opportunity to reconnect with a part of me that was buried many years ago, never thinking it would ever need to re-emerge. I truly love creating my bears and critters and hope to do so for many years to come."

## CONTACT:

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