

# CCANW

## **Art, Ecology and the Economy exhibitor information**

### **Yuli Somme**

Feltmaker  
Chagford

Yuli's business Bellacouche was set up to develop felt products from locally sourced wool. British wool is undervalued and many farmers bury or burn this beautiful, renewable resource. To a farmer, wool is an unviable nuisance. To a designer like Yuli and her business partner, Anne Belgrave, local wool has huge potential as a sustainable future fibre, and one of their ultimate aims is to reinstate wool as a valued fibre.



For six years, Yuli and Anne have collaborated, thinking out of the box and using their expertise as felt makers and designers to make new pathways in order to value the services of local wool mills and enable them to work on a more economical scale. Sourcing and processing is localised to avoid wool miles.

The Leafshroud on show here is the result of Yuli and Anne's collaboration. A soft shroud wrap is enveloped by layers of thick, leaf-shaped felt, all supported on a frame of local, sustainably sourced wood with six strong carrying handles. An alternative to the conventional coffin but without all the sharp edges, the Leafshroud is designed for natural burial and avoids the pollution issues of cremation. An historical reference is taken from a British practise made law in 1666 decreeing the dead must be buried in wool, thus keeping thousands of people in employment.

Initial funding has come from the Arts Council, Bath Spa University, Dartmoor Sustainable Development Fund and Glasu. Aside from this work, Yuli has developed two felt making kits which provide a foundation for knowledge about regional wools and textiles in general.

*Art, Ecology and the Economy* was shown at CCANW's Project Space in Haldon Forest Park and Duchy Square Centre for Creativity, Princetown, in two simultaneous parts in Winter 2010. It was supported by Arts Council England, Devon County Council and Greater Dartmoor LEAF, incorporating funding from the EU, Defra, SWRDA and LEADER.

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