

Hand & Lock Prize for Embroidery, 2022

Challenging creatives to innovate with eco-conscious embroidery? The prestigious Hand & Lock Prize for embroidery returns in 2022 with a sustainability brief.

The world's greatest embroidery competition returns in 2022 with a new brief and exciting new vision. With the announcement, an army of global creatives are mobilised to create original embroidery works with the hope of exhibiting at the prestigious [Embroidered Arts Exhibition](#). What's behind this embroidery renaissance and how is one company hoping embroidery can be used to ease mental health issues during the pandemic.

According to recent trends, the perception that embroidered crafts have been in terminal decline for the last decade is no longer accurate. While embroidery as a professional pursuit and vocation might be in decline in the west, it is increasingly been adopted as an artistic or therapeutic practice. Research conducted by University College London in 2020 confirmed that such artistic activities can 'lower inflammation and stress hormones' while also helping reduce the risk of dementia. Since the start of the pandemic record numbers of people have been encouraged by hand & Lock and the Prize to take up embroidery and discover the healing power and joy found in embroidery.

This renewed interest in craft was reflected by the success of the 2021 [Hand & Lock Prize for Embroidery](#) and the accompanying Embroidered Arts Exhibition. In 2021 the final five-day exhibition included the work of emerging fashion and textile designers alongside established notable works by Yinka Ilori, Karen Nicol and Burberry. Presented in the unique Bargehouse exhibition centre on London's iconic South Bank, the event and finale awards evening were attended by over 2500 people from all around the world. With the interest in crafts still growing, can the 2022 Prize succeed in being even bigger?

Each year the Prize, operated by 250-year-old embroidery house Hand & Lock, opens with the publication of a brief designed to inspire creativity. The 2022 Prize brief, 2022 [Brief](#): **'The New Nature' Embellished design in harmony with the natural world**, was written in association with Polly Kenny of the London College of Fashion. It asks embroidery designers and artists to consider the natural world, evolution, adaptation, biomimicry, texture, colour, craft and sustainable practices.

The structure of this uniquely global embroidery competition encourages the slow practice of embroidery, with a touch of innovation and collaboration. After the first round, when entrants submit images of their work in progress, a select group of finalists who demonstrate the most inventive and creative interpretation of the brief are paired with expert industry mentors to develop their ideas. In 2021 These mentors included the artists **Carolina Mazzolari**, **Diana Springall** and **Nelly Agassi** along with designers and makers **Daniel Heath**, **Anna Taylor**, **Nadia Albertini** and **Beatrice Korlekie Newman**. Each year, the mentors work with their finalists to support their creative process

and steer them towards the \$3500 top prize. Previous finalists and winners have gone on to work with their mentors and gain vital industry insights.

The full list of 2022 mentors and judges will be announced throughout the year but the names announced so far suggest a stellar lineup of embroidery and artistic expertise.

In 2022, Hand & Lock anticipates record numbers of entrants interested in building on their skills and using their crafts to create innovative and sustainable solutions. The new brief has the capacity to impact the fashion industry and challenge fashion designers to rethink decorations and embellishments as functional and practical elements of apparel. Likewise, artists and creatives who express their visions in embroidery are being asked to make bold environmental statements that can help us understand the impact we are each having on the planet. **Embroidery has the power to heal the individual but maybe this year, it can help us heal the planet too.**