

AUT INTRODUCES THE FELTLOOM

The introduction of the FeltLOOM (needle-felting machine) at Auckland University of Technology (AUT) has been a great success. It offers an exciting new design facet for students at the Textile and Design Lab (TDL), as well as researchers, crafts people and the textile industry. The TDL holds classes using the FeltLOOM as a creative tool, which has already generated a large amount of interest and a wide range of original artifacts. TDL's FeltLOOM technician, Donna Cleveland, says 'the loom has opened up a whole new range of possibilities for fibre processing that were not possible before.' The machine considerably speeds up the process of making felt from traditional fibres such as wool and alpaca, but also offers a creative tool for other fibre and fabric felting explorations. It can transform fibre to fibre and fibre to fabric, up to 160cm wide and of a continuous length.

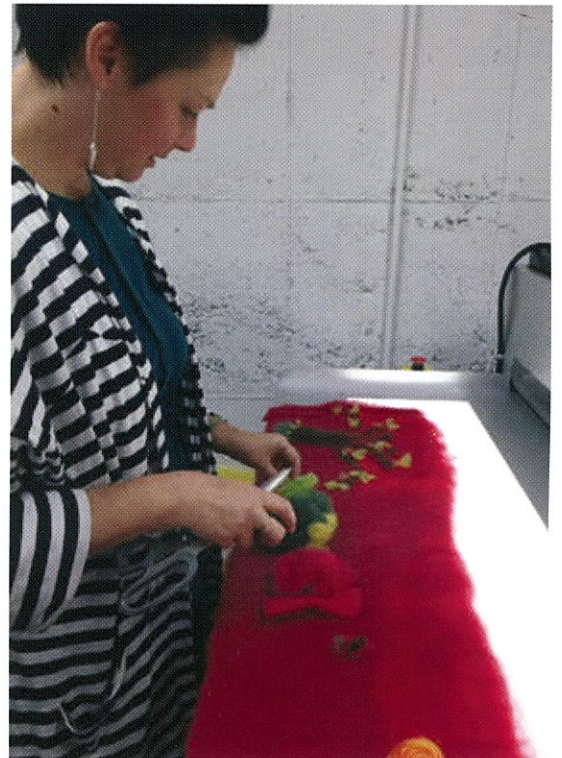
At AUT, the technical innovation available through the use of felting processes has developed into an integration of traditional craft techniques and emerging technologies, that Donna says has resulted in bespoke garments, wearable electronic textiles and novel approaches to art. The TDL supports both AUT and external students, as well as working with commercial partners on product development, prototyping, sampling, and small-scale production projects. The FeltLOOM has been integral for research into, and the prototyping of felted circuits, pressure sensors and even augmented reality. It is



FeltLOOM in use

the blend of traditional processes and cutting edge technology that has extended the possibilities of making and designing on the FeltLOOM at AUT.

It's easy to join in; anyone can book in for a machine induction class, then for the feltmaker session. You might also like to book into one of their one-day workshops where you can design and make your own beautiful felted scarf, or perhaps an e-textiles workshop on felted circuits. For all enquiries and bookings please contact Peter Heslop at peter.heslop@aut.ac.nz.



Donna Cleveland lays out a felted scarf design

Donna, and others from AUT, will give a lecture at Fibrant Auckland, 'Exciting Directions in the Fibre World', on Saturday morning. See the festival booklet for full details.



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