



Models: Estelle Hollows and Beth Maiden of Todmorden



In Fashion



A Calderdale knitwear company with ethics just as important as its designs is causing a *BUZZ* (or should that be a *baa*) in the fashion world.

Knit yourself a conscience



THE chances are you've never heard of a fashion label called Makepiece. But I'd wager a bet you soon will.

The Todmorden based luxurious and eco-friendly knitwear company is the talk of the fashion industry after showing its latest collections at top shows in Paris and London.

Knitwear designer Nicola Sherlock and her business partner Beate Kubitz set up Makepiece two-and-a-half years ago and in that time have dressed an actress for a red carpet event, been featured on TV and now have their first international orders.

They exhibited at London Fashion Week and Pret a Porter, Paris, and their designs are now on sale in the United States, Israel and the Netherlands, not to mention numerous shops in the UK. British fashion journalists were so impressed with their work that it should only be a matter of time before they are featured in all the top women's magazines.

The two women, who have a studio in Dale Street, have struck a cord with journalists, buyers and shoppers alike thanks in no small part to their strong ethical principles. They sell unique designs knitted from exquisite soft, wool, mohair and alpaca sourced from their own animals (they own 50 Shetland sheep and angora goats) and other British farms, mainly in Yorkshire. The wool is spun in Calderdale and Bradford and made up by hand or on small machines by a team of local knit-

ters. They also use a factory in Nottingham.

"We buy as local as possible, pay people properly, look after animals and love what we do. It's fashion with a conscience which can truly be worn with pride," says 35-year-old Beate, whose father comes from Germany.

Twenty-six-year-old Nicola, a knitwear design graduate who grew up in Todmorden, says her designs are classic and sophisticated with lots of texture and contemporary detail and can be worn forever. She produces two collections a year, as well as offering a made-to-measure service at the Todmorden shop. After the Yorkshire TV documentary last year, the studio attracted customers from all over the country and even created two wedding dresses.

Her summer collection consists of light, dreamy, floaty dresses and tops embellished with boucle strata and weathered felted lace. There are also lots of layers. Colours are dusky pastel shades of pink, grey, brown, black and blue.

The two women are now in talks with London shop owners and hope their designs will soon be on sale in the capital. There are also plans to be on the catwalk at international shows in London and Paris next season, rather than just have an exhibition stand.

All the clothes featured are from Makepiece. Prices range from £45 for a shrug to £350 for a full-length dress. Jackets cost about £200.



Business partners: Nicola Sherlock and Beate Kubitz

