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**UK MakerFaire in Newcastle 28-29 April 2018 - Lucy's report**

[MakerFaire](https://makerfaireuk.com.) is eclectic, exciting and a little exhausting! With over 120 stands and displays, and approaching 10,000 visitors over the two days, there was a lot to see and do and many people to talk to.

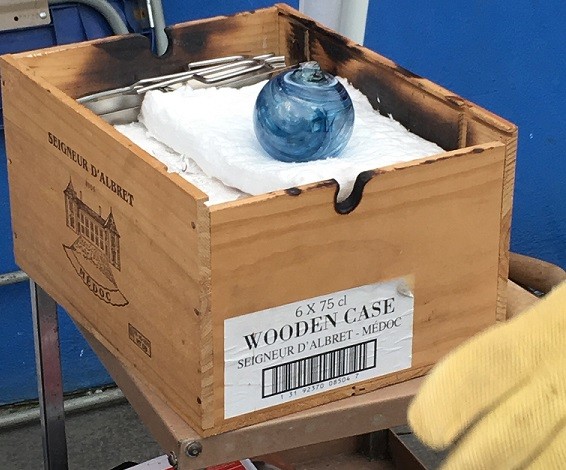
It was tremendous fun to be based in the DesignSpark Village – with superhero capes and masks to try on (pic), tools to poke at and the opportunity to learn more about the newly launched [Marketplace](https://designsparkmarketplace.com/) – an online shop for makers to sell their wears, I could have been entertained just in that one area all day. Especially as there were also fighting robots as Stuart Barnwell and Kevin Tonry from [Kinematic Events](http://www.kinematicevents.com) brought their arena and bots to the show and let anyone have a go with. Even me!



Colin Furze was next to us and had a constant crowd around him. I kept seeing children being ejected out of his ejector bed. Sadly his homemade hoverbike was only on display – and not available for us to try.

When I did leave the village and go to explore there were many things that caught my eye.  The “soft” makers with the [Association of Guilds of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers](http://www.wsd.org.uk) demonstrated their crafts and a lot of different types of wool. I knew not all wool looked the same, but the varieties in texture surprised me. There were also felters, cross stitchers and rug makers as well as jewellery makers and beaders.

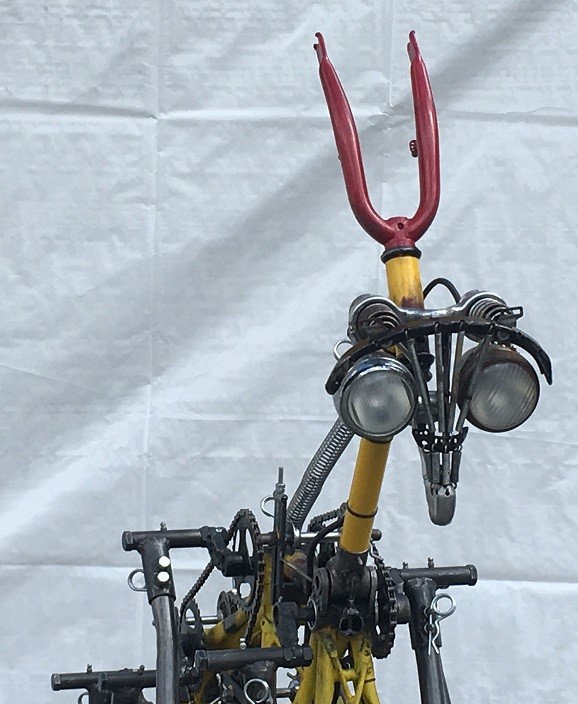
Outside were the more “dirty” crafts – blacksmithing, wood carving and wood turning as well as glass blowing. Both [Malham Smithy](http://www.malhamsmithy.co.uk) and [Hen Ogledd Glass](http://henogleddglass.co.uk) provided the opportunity to “have a go”. Glass blowing is one of the few crafts I’ve never dabbled with, so I took the opportunity and blew a glass bauble. I now want my own furnace …

One of my favourite stands included Rachel "[Konichiwakitty](http://www.konichiwakitty.com" \t "_blank)" Wong’s Japanese culture inspired wearables – from fluffy ears with LEDs to jackets and dresses that glow. She has fused fashion and electronics well. Another fun display was the Pirograph by Northumbria University – a giant spirograph using two and three bar linkage robots with LEDs on, with the image being projected on to a large screen.



The [Steamroadsters](http://www.abacustheater.nl/nl/nieuwe-straattheater-act-in-steampunk-stijl) were fantastic. Who wouldn't like a giant steam-powered Penny Farthing? I was sad to have missed the [roaming foolpool herd](http://www.foolpool.de/en/home/) - but I did say hello to the Creatures as they were resting.



It was also great to see [Remap](http://www.remap.org.uk/) and some of the custom-made equipment they have created to help disabled people live more independent lives.

I hadn’t realised you could do a degree in model making – but the display from [Art University Bournemouth](https://aub.ac.uk/courses/ba/ba-modelmaking/) really got me drooling. This is an amazing degree course – where the majority of their graduates walk straight into jobs. Not surprising seeing the quality and creativity of what they make. Am wondering if I could justify doing another degree …

So MakerFaire was everything I wished for – I met many interesting people, I learnt a lot and I was inspired. If you haven't been to one, I can highly recommend it. Now that I have rested slightly, I need to get off the computer and go and make something …

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I'm the Maker-in Chief at the Guild of Makers (www.guildofmakers.org). I make bespoke items that solve problems. I am a Fellow of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers and have a PhD in bubbles (fluid dynamics). I was a judge on BBC Robot Wars and the "Inventor in Residence" on the "Josh Widdicombe will make your life better" radio show.

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