



NEWS RELEASE

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Libby Payne wins Heritage Crafts *Young Upholsterer of the Year Award* supported by House of Sonnaz

London upholsterer Libby Payne has won the 2024 *Young Upholsterer of the Year Award*, supported by House of Sonnaz, including a £1,000 prize awarded at a special presentation at Eltham Palace on Tuesday 26 November 2024.

Heritage Crafts was set up 14 years ago as a national charity to support and safeguard heritage crafts skills, and has become well known for its *Red List of Endangered Crafts*, the first research of its kind to rank traditional crafts in the UK by the likelihood they will survive the next generation.

The award, supported by **House of Sonnaz** and now in its second year, celebrates a young upholsterer who has made an outstanding start to their craft career. The winner is highly skilled amongst their peers, whilst raising the perceived value of their craft through sharing and awareness raising. They have given themselves a fantastic chance of achieving long-term success, perhaps overcoming disadvantage or setbacks along the way.

Libby Payne sought employment within the upholstery trade early in her studies, and her enthusiasm quickly led her to secure a position at a commercial workshop. Where others may have paused their formal education, Libby recognised the value of combining her studies with hands-on experience, dedicating all her time and energy to both. Her work rivals that of upholsterers with decades of experience, and she consistently produces results of the highest quality.



The two other finalists for the award were **Maya Bennett**, who has been studying with the Association of Master Upholsterers and Soft Furnishers (AMUSF) Diploma syllabus part-time at the Bristol Upholstery Collective for two years, and **Maisie Fox**, who had previously worked for an interiors company, making upholstered furniture to clients' specifications, before dedicating herself to gaining her AMUSF diploma at London Metropolitan University.



House of Sonnaz is a sustainability-led luxury lifestyle and homeware brand from Sonnaz Nooranvary (BBC *The Repair Shop*). Its furniture range features innovative ways of designing, making and supplying, with a mission to create incredible furniture and furnishings, bringing fabulousness and craftsmanship into every space it possibly can.

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Contacts:

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Photo captions:

- **Libby Payne**, winner of the 2024 *Young Upholsterer of the Year Award*, and **Sonnaz Nooranvary**, Founder of House of Sonnaz. Photo by Robert Wade.
- Upholstery by **Libby Payne**, winner of the 2024 *Young Upholsterer of the Year Award*.

About Heritage Crafts

Founded in 2009, the Heritage Crafts is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) registered as the 'Heritage Crafts Association', the advocacy body for traditional heritage crafts. Working in partnership with government and key agencies, it provides a focus for craftspeople, groups, societies and guilds, as well as individuals who care about the loss of traditional crafts skills, and works towards a healthy and sustainable

framework for the future. Its aim is to support and promote heritage crafts as a fundamental part of our living heritage.

www.heritagecrafts.org.uk

About the *Red List of Endangered Crafts*

The Red List of Endangered Crafts, created by Heritage Crafts, was the first to rank traditional crafts in the UK by the likelihood they would survive the next generation. The 2023 edition of the Red List, funded by the Pilgrim Trust, assessed 259 crafts to identify those which are at greatest risk of disappearing, of which 62 have been classified as critically endangered, 84 as endangered and 112 as currently viable.

The Red List shows that the craft knowledge, skills and practices that form an important part of our shared cultural heritage are – for a number of reasons – at risk of being lost. Heritage Crafts believes that these cultural assets are as important as unique heritage buildings and ancient beautiful landscapes and could provide future generations with fantastic opportunities to enrich their lives and the lives of others.

<http://redlist.heritagecrafts.org.uk>