



**“ETHICS
EQUALS
ESTHETICS”**

- ROLAND PIETER SMIT -



STUDIO RO SMIT

Roland Pieter Smit is a designer with a clear mission to put needs, desires and human well being at the centre of everything he does. This means: designing concepts and products that make people comfortable, supporting the actions in daily life and strengthening human behaviour. Roland's goal is also to offer insights into the various stages and places in the production chain, striving to maintain or to restore traditional processes. He aims to start the process as close to the source as possible. Made in Holland or anywhere in the world if required. People with a mental or physical impairment in particular create the products, where the process reflects the psychological and physical capabilities of the creators. The platform makes the creator visible and offers them self-esteem. In recent years, Roland created several concepts and products that reflect his progressive philosophy.

Roland graduated in 2010 Cum Laude at the Design Academy Eindhoven with his thesis "WOLWAEREN". He exhibited at various international occasions, perfectly symbolising his thoughts.



**WOLWAEREN
HANDMADE TX**



WOLWAEREN HANDMADE TX (2010)

Sheep shearing often costs more than the revenue from the wool. For Dutch farmers, sheep wool was a by-product. And that's what intrigued social entrepreneur Roland Pieter Smit to search for new possibilities for this wool.

Looking for local techniques and work force to initiate a chain supply system, he joined the „Maartenhuis“, a social work community for people with disabilities on the island of Texel. He discovered that everyone in the community has their own talent: people with autism work very sophisticated and refined with thin threads. People with Down syndrome are more in skilled with thick threads, because they enjoy fast results. Fascinated by their unique personal skills, Roland recognised the potential in each member of the community.

That's why his next step was to develop yarns that were the best match for the various disabilities. This produced a subsequent challenge: ordinary looms couldn't process Roland's yarns. The practically minded Roland developed his own weaving frames in which he enlarged and simplified the weaving process, also stimulating social interaction of its creators.

The result is a beautiful series of woolen blankets and rugs with a recognisable authentic look, each with the unique 'signature' of the creator.

SEE LINK VIDEO: <https://youtu.be/i9mbXmqmCpl>



**HOUT
WAEREN**



HOUTWAEREN (2012)

Houtwaeren consists, among other things, of tables that tell a story and where new stories can be told. For the production, native wood is used, often from decades old trees felled by natural disasters or, for whatever reason, had to give way. This often iconic trees are so saved from the stove or chipper and can, in a sustainable way, renew their lives as iconic object in your home. Houtwaeren objects are uniquely designed in workshops by people with a distance to the labor market.



WEEFRAEM



WEEFRAEM (2016)

Discover and experience the process of weaving by doing it yourself on the special Weefraem. By following the instructions your own piece of fabric becomes part of a common end product.

Weefraem is commissioned by the TextielMuseum and designed by Roland Pieter Smit, Studio Ro Smit. It originates from his graduation project Wolwaeren.



**WOLWAEREN
COLLECTION**



WOLWAEREN COLLECTION (2016)

After shearing the sheep, raw wool must undergo a process, which is only economically feasible in larger volumes. Since wool isn't a popular product, the number of specialist spinners has declined sharply. Roland was happy to discover that a number of spinners is still active in neighbouring countries. Consequently, a substantial minimum purchase quantity of yarns is required.

The WOLWAEREN concept is designed for manual processing produces limited volumes. For that reason, Roland developed an additional range of woolen products, still valuing the unique craftsmanship of the creator of the WOLWAEREN products.

By adding new products to the collection, larger volumes of yarns can be purchased to also provide for the smaller volumes for the production of the original WOLWAEREN HANDMADE TX blankets produced in the institutions.

WOLWAEREN is a contemporary concept that leads to a collection of authentic products. The collection exists of a series of authentic wearable and interior blankets, rugs and cushions. All the products are made of 100% local sheep wool. The launch collection is made with the special yarns that are developed for production methods with people with special needs.



TAFELWAEREN



TAFELWAEREN (2017)

On the basis of his vision, and seeking possibilities of developing special earthenware tableware, it was in Nepal that RPS found the answer to all the criteria he had set.

Respect for the craft

The craft of the potter is as old as human civilisation. Despite modern influences, many communities in the valley of Kathmandu are still involved in the traditional manufacture of earthenware and, with great pleasure, still provide for their daily subsistence from behind their trusty potter's wheels. Not cast serial products, but unique hand-crafted earthenware made in accordance with centuries-old traditions. The unique fine clay, with its characteristic colour, is extracted from the river bed in the valley of Kathmandu during the first half of June and stored in an age old manner, in order to be further processed later in the year.

Social aim

On the basis of crockery which he himself designed, RPS wants to make a contribution to the further development of micro enterprises in Nepal. By developing new products, he wants to stimulate the traditional culture, feed production capacity and, supported by the World Fair Trade Organization and Fair Trade Group Nepal, help the craftsmen in the promotion of honest and sustainable trade.

SEE LINK VIDEO: <https://youtu.be/roYR0ntkfnM>



**SOCIAL
TEXTILES**



SOCIAL TEXTILES (2019)

The project Social Textiles by Ro Smit revolves around creating new opportunities by using old skills and crafts.

Social Sustainability

From hand woven felted carpets from the Himalayas and hand woven ottoman rugs from Nepal: Ro Smit develops all kinds of sustainable products for this purpose, which empowers craftsmen's skills. What is his main challenge? Ensuring that they will rediscover the joy of working with their products for export and enabling them to provide for themselves.

Ethical Carpets

Ro Smit is fascinated by these opportunities for reviving the traditionally available or produced raw materials through the associated crafts.