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Bird brain

DESIGNERS FLOCK TOGETHER

Gorgeous plumage, pretty singing voices and the power of flight; what's not to love about birds? Textile makers certainly seem to be keen arm-chair ornithologists.

Talented maker Abigail Brown sounds as though she's stumbled out of a Disney film but her fondness for her 'little flock of feathered friends' is clearly genuine, 'merrily they chirp in the dawn, delighting me with their happy tunes. They are simply so enchanting to watch as they hop, skip, swoop and dance their way through the day,' – presumably they also help her dress for the ball and foil the evil plans of her wicked stepmother...

Similarly fairytale pretty are Ann Wood's chirpy cake toppers. The New York-based artist's exquisitely featured, long legged birds arrived after she abandoned the commercial world to immerse herself in her passion for the handmade. Fellow artist Jen Muskopf's stuffed birds were also a sideline. Intended to be a limited commercial addition to her painted works, the boutiques who stocked them, such as the lovely 'Rose and Radish', were loath to let her stop the supply. Jen revived Clive and Sunshine toys last year to general rejoicing.

Not everyone looks so kindly on birds, according to the Chinese proverb "you cannot prevent the birds of sadness from passing over your head, but you can prevent them making a nest in your hair" How? By offering them a far more desirable residence. Tamar Mogendorff's beautifully stitched houses would cheer up any sad bird. They come complete with a resident or two but there's always room for one more. ●●●

01 Birdhouses, from £75, Tamar Mogendorff, T: +44 (0)20 8341 9721 www.selvedge.org
 02 Brooches, £14, Vicky Hageman, T: +44 (0)1227 262 500, www.frankworks.eu
 03 Clive & Sunshine bird, from \$225, Jen Muskopf, www.roseandradish.com 04 Birds, from \$32, Ann Wood, www.annwoodhandmade.com 05 Birds, from £56, Abigail Brown T: +44 (0)7940 497 488, www.abigail-brown.co.uk 06 Matchbox Tweeters, £22, Abigail Brown, as before.



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