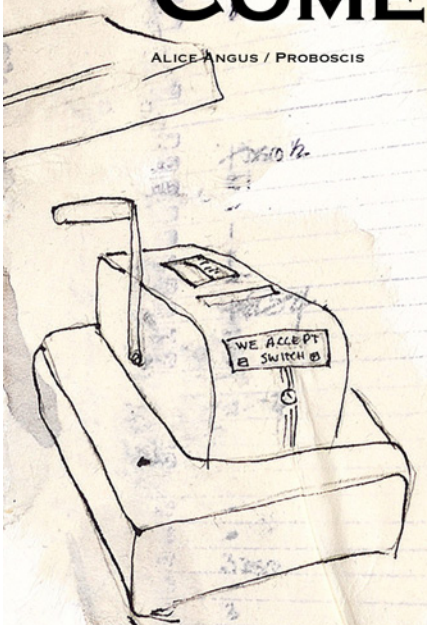
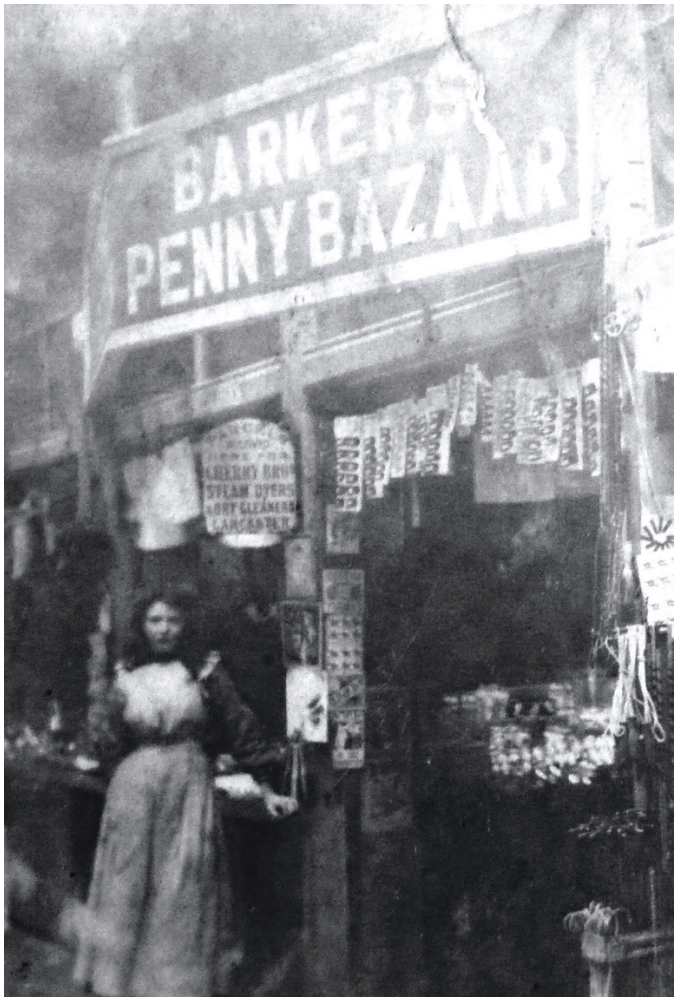
As It Comes

Alice Angus / Proboscis





As It Comes

Alice Angus / Proboscis

Lancaster 2010

Commissioned by
Mid Pennine Arts



Talking Shop

As It Comes, by Alice Angus, is part of *Talking Shop* a creative regeneration programme, run by Mid Pennine Arts since 2005, engaging creative practitioners to work with independent businesses to highlight their importance as hubs of their local communities. The projects have included exhibitions, films, and publications. You can see details at www.midpenninearts.org.uk

In Lancaster the Chamber of Commerce had identified a need to support the independent retailers to survive the recession and compete as a visitor destination. Discussions developed between us around the strong heritage of independent trade and the stories and people behind it. The Chamber decided to commission an artist through *Talking Shop* to tell the story of the traders who are so crucial to the city's success. Funding came from Lancaster City Council through the Department for Communities and Local Government. The project represents a new partnership between Lancaster District Chamber of Commerce, Storey Gallery and Lancaster University.

The empty shop windows we are using are a very public and relevant space to communicate the *Talking Shop* message that independent traders are key to the local economy, and that by working with artists we can shed new light on the issues. Alice's work beautifully illustrates the skills and creativity that typify independent traders and we're delighted to present it and this publication as a record of Lancaster, *As It Comes*.

Lucy Green
Talking Shop Project Coordinator, Mid Pennine Arts

As It Comes

In August 2010 I was commissioned, by Mid Pennine Arts and Lancaster District Chamber of Commerce, to create a new piece of work about Lancaster's independent traders.

Building on my previous work about markets and traders I worked with historian Michael Winstanley and artist Caroline Maclennan to research the trading history of the city and to meet local people, shop keepers and traders. On my visits I began to draw in traders' places of work, where we would talk about craft and knowledge; communities and friendships and the relationships they have with commodities, food, and people. What's inspired me is their skills, care and connection to local communities and suppliers; whether selling fabric, tailoring a suit, fitting a floor, repairing tools, advising on paint, gutting fish or butchering meat. Though I saw many tools of the trade, its not the physical things that people mention most but knowledge, ability to talk to people, honesty and trust.

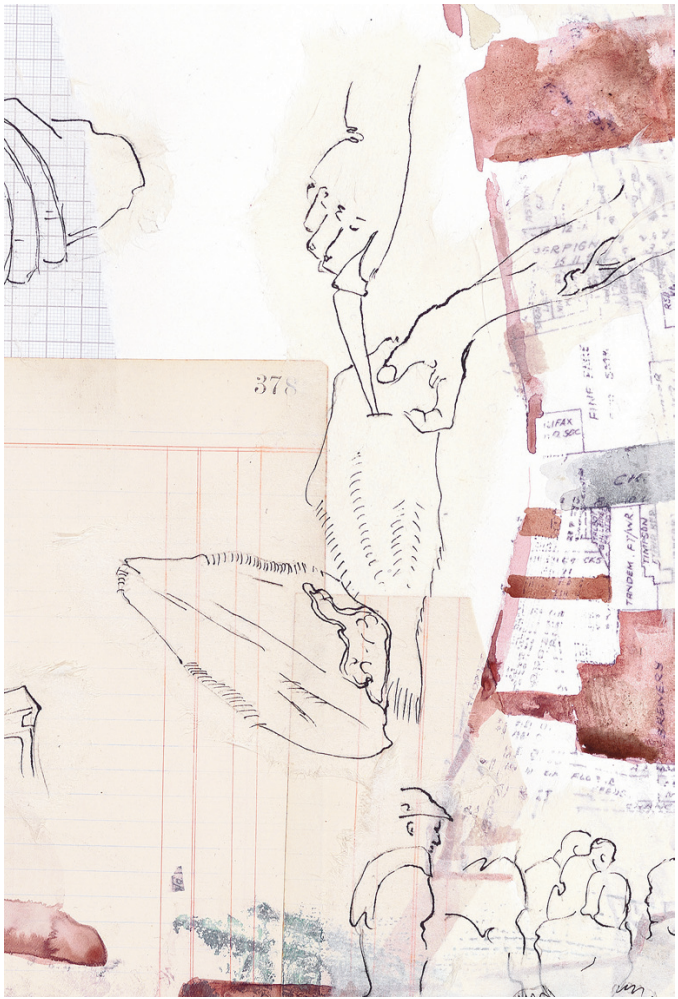
I spent time with traders to have conversations, collect audio interviews, make drawings and take photographs which have inspired new works combining traditional embroidery with drawing and digital printing on fabric. Lancashire was once famous for cotton manufacturing. Embroidering in cotton seemed appropriate to capture fragments of conversations about intangible skills, experiential knowledge, an uncertain future and the unique relationships these traders have with their customers.

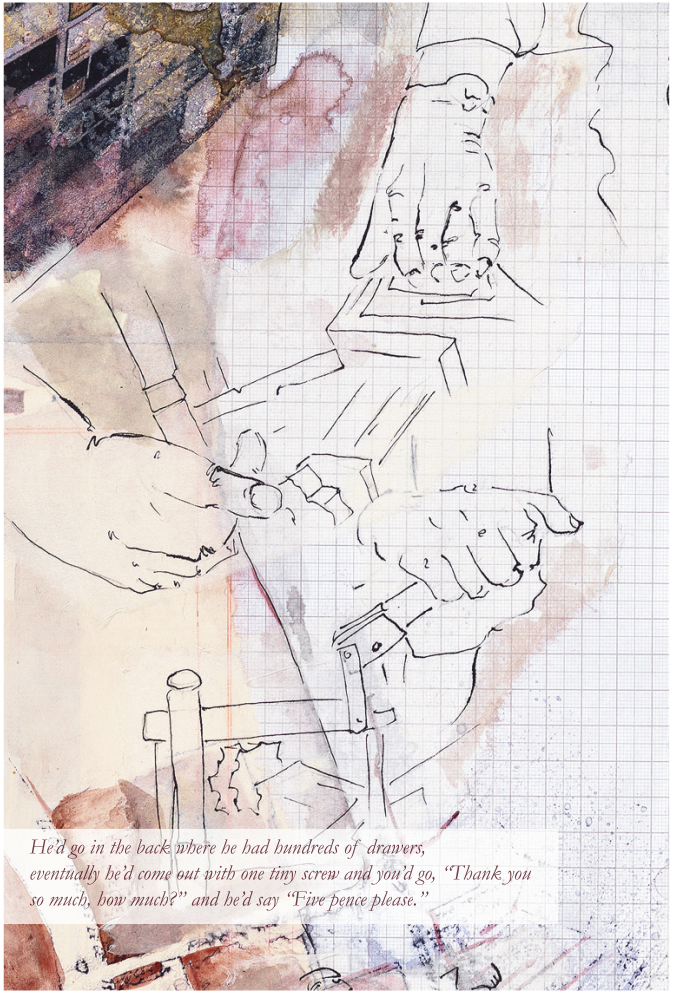
Alice Angus
(artist and Co-Director of Proboscis)
lancasterasitcomes.wordpress.com





Its more of a partnership than a commercial transaction, they're not just coming to buy their meat off me, we are talking about my family, their family, community.





He'd go in the back where he had hundreds of drawers, eventually he'd come out with one tiny screw and you'd go, "Thank you so much, how much?" and he'd say "Five pence please."



The last suit I have on the cutting table will probably be the last suit ever cut in Lancaster.



We used to go and watch them making clothes... and go to makers up and converters, now you don't get to see it coming off the production line... it all comes in a box now.





to make a living not a fortune



I don't want to take over the world


WHITEHEAD
T. GIBBON
LANCASTER MARKET. No 2.


you couldn't get this in a department store...



Acknowledgements

This project would have been impossible to produce if it were not for the generosity of the people who shared memories and allowed me to draw and photograph them at work including: David Clarkson and all at the Marsh History Group.
In the Indoor Market & Assembly Rooms:- The Bacon Stall; Burgess Cheese; Children's & Babywear; M Green & Son Household Textiles; D Gregory Butcher; R&P Shaw Fishmonger; Hesters Habadashery; Bebe Babette; First Age Comics; Malcolm's Place; Wonders. Other traders:- C E Barrow; Jennifer Pritchard Couchman; Dalton Square Florist; The Edge Gallery; Fabrix; Kings Carpets; Lile Tool Shop; The Paper Gallery; Mackies of Lancaster; Studio Arts. Thanks also to John Angus, Lucy Green, Caroline Maclennan, Ann Morris, Jeremy North, Michael Winstanley, Oliver Wilson-Fish.

As It Comes is A Mid Pennine Arts *Talking Shop* project, delivered in partnership with Lancaster District Chamber of Commerce, Storey Gallery and the History Department, Lancaster University.

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Drawings: Alice Angus 2010
Photographs: p 2, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14 & 17 Alex Delfanne 2010; p 7, 12 & 13 Mid Pennine Arts 2010; p2 & 16 members of Marsh History Group.

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As It Comes; talking shop in Lancaster

Alice Angus

A project by Alice Angus exploring the history and future of local and independent traders in Lancaster.

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