



ABOVE: Salt Textiles cowl neck chocolate silk dress, £99, and People Tree gauze and ribbon scarf, £35

All fashions from One, Peter, Lane, York
Photography by Rachel Saunders at Random Acts, York



LEFT: Kisiki leather sandals, £35, from Kenya



ABOVE (also in green and black); Artisan Life Tagua jewellery (necklaces £29 & £42); Blank Recycled quilt coat, £259, made in India



ABOVE: Pachacuti embroidered belts (thin £26, wide £39), from Peru



ABOVE: Artisan Life Tagua necklace, made from a palm tree seed and dubbed "vegetable ivory", grown in tropical regions of South America



LEFT: Kisiki Kikapu basket, £29



Fashion plays fair

Fairtrade bananas, coffee and chocolate are big business now, but what about fashion? **MAXINE GORDON** visits York's pioneering ethical boutique to find out more

STEP over the threshold of One and you might congratulate yourself with finding a little fashion hideaway.

The York boutique oozes boudoir charm, with its white walls, battered French-dresser display cabinets and white-wire bird cages dripping with colourful jewellery.

Racks of pretty dresses, cobweb-light knitwear, sheer silk jackets and statement print coats line the walls, while a choice of shoes, bags and scarves offer the opportunity of a one-stop-shop for fashionistas.

Sitting snugly in Peter Lane, just off Market Street (round the corner from Superdrug), One has been open for three years – and remains a unique offering in York.

The shop's website – responsibly-gorgeous.co.uk – sums up the ethos of the shop, which sets out to prove women can look fashionable with-

out destroying the planet or exploiting workers.

As Fairtrade fortnight gets into full swing, we visited One to throw the spotlight on fashion that wears its ethics on its sleeve.

Each item in the boutique – from intricate silver earrings, to leather bling sandals and beaded party dresses – has its own story to tell, often involving communities from all over the world who rely on our love of fashion to make a living.

Take the vibrant green silk shift dress (£150) in our photoshoot. It's from People Tree, one of the biggest labels in Fairtrade fashion, but look behind the label and the tale is much more interesting. The dress was made in Bangladesh by the Folk project, which works with around 550 low-income producers of which approximately 80 per cent are women. The products are made by hand and combine a wide range

of traditional handcraft skills from weaving and hand fabric dyeing to hand embroidery and mirror work. Folk offers their members basic health care, support for their children's education, advance payments and non-interest loans.

This, explains Rachel Sedman of One, is the essence of Fairtrade. "It's about developing good relationships with suppliers around the globe, respecting their traditional skills and crafts and paying a fair price as well as providing good working standards and health care and education for their children."

The chocolate brown silk dress, £99, on our model is from fashion house Salt and was designed and made in India from locally-sourced garment producers. The scarf (worn on her head), again from People Tree (£35), is made by the Sasha Handicrafts project in Kotala, India. This project supports

150 small-scale producers mainly from West Bengal and Orissa, providing training, marketing, business development and micro-credit schemes. Sasha's products are a showcase for traditional Indian skills such as handweaving, tailoring and embroidery to dyeing or block printing.

A favourite fashion trick is to correct a much-loved garment with a new accessory. If you like to play this game, then One is worth a visit.

Check out the colourful Pachacuti embroidered belts, from £26, which would easily jazz up some jeans look cool slung around a kaftan. They are made by the Aid to Artisans project, which supports a group of women in the highland Peru who have suffered domestic abuse. Rachel says: "The Tikanchay project provides the women with a sustainable future

and helps to restore their self-esteem, while providing us with fabulous, fashionable, fairly-traded accessories which look terrific."

The Kisiki leather sandals, £35, are made in Kenya; the beads hand stitched by local crafts people, providing vital work for the local community.

Silver jewellery doesn't come more intricate than the collection from Just Trade. Crafted by women in Peru, the range (featuring earrings and pendants at £22 and £26 respectively) combines traditional Peruvian skills with 950 grade fine silver, a grade higher than sterling silver, so does not tarnish. The effect is like silver crochet.

Recycling crosses over with Fairtrade in the necklaces from Juzi (£20 each). In Swahili, Juzi means "the day before yesterday" which neatly reflects the essence of these handmade in Kenya from

old magazines, posters, calendars and bottle-tops.

While One is proud of its ethical foundations, it never loses sight of the fact it is a fashion store.

Rachel says: "We have a nice message, but it can be quite an earnest thing to talk about. We are about being fashionable and selling beautiful things, but have very good standards underneath."

● Fairtrade fortnight runs until March 7. To celebrate, One will be offering customers a free cup of Fairtrade tea. It is also hosting an intimate evening of acoustic music by singer/songwriter Jont on Monday (March 1) at 8pm. Tickets are free, but places are limited to 30. To reserve a ticket, telephone 01904 675987 or email: shop@responsiblygorgeous.co.uk. Doors will open on Monday at 6.30pm for pre-show shopping.

Fair Trade York

YORK is already a strong supporter of the Fairtrade movement and was awarded Fairtrade status six years ago.

This means organisations such as the council, but also schools, workplaces, community groups and places of worship, support Fairtrade and use its products.

Despite the recession, sales of Fairtrade products in the UK rose by 12 per cent last year, totalling some £800 million, reports the Fairtrade Foundation.

Several events are taking place in York over the fortnight, including a market in Parliament Street from March 5-7, devoted to Fairtrade products.

Many churches in York are taking part in the Big Brew, a Fairtrade tea party; more details from your local church.