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**BRINGING TEXTILES BACK TO THE COTSWOLDS**

Historically an area famous for textiles based around wool and local waterpower, Stroud's Five Valleys in Gloucestershire have a growing reputation as a home for some of the country's leading artists and craftspeople. Now, by building on its industrial heritage, this hidden heart of the south Cotswolds is rapidly becoming recognised as an international centre for contemporary textiles.

At the centre of the textile revival is **Stroud International Textiles (SIT)** a small but dynamic organisation. SIT organises the annual Stroud International Textile Festival, which last year attracted over ten thousand visitors, many from outside the UK.

Artistic Director Lizzi Walton is the driving force and inspiration behind not only the Festival, but also a year-round programme of other activities focusing on contemporary textiles and the related arts.

SIT already has a formidable, international reputation for excellence and innovation and, with its growing links to individual artists who enjoy international reputations, national colleges and universities and other artistic organizations, it aims to make the Stroud Valleys an even stronger part of the international cultural scene.

*"I did not hesitate in flying in from Boston, Massachusetts to enjoy the exciting programme that Stroud International Textiles offers. My 4 day stay was worth every penny!"* just one comment from the 2008 Festival.

Festival Patron, Mary La Trobe Bateman OBE: **"Stroud International Textiles are a young and growing organization with a clear vision for the future"**

Artistic Director Lizzi Walton says:

*"SIT is working hard to make Stroud an international centre of excellence for contemporary textiles. Our annual festival in May is the only one in the UK to celebrate contemporary and traditional textiles and we aim to continue to attract high profile, world class, local, national and international artists. What we want to do is completely stretch textile design into unique, untried areas and present work that is challenging, playful, seductive and above all, interesting for everyone – of all ages"*

**Gloucestershire Press/Publicity/Sponsorship**

Visitors and participants at the May Festival and the other year round activities come from all over the UK, Japan, USA and elsewhere. They often remain in the area for several days, to enjoy the full wealth of other local artistic talent in the area, stay at local hotels and visit pubs, restaurants, cafes and markets. Future plans include wider international co-operation and exhibition tours to other parts of the UK. SIT is a completely independent enterprise supported by contributions from local Councils, and national funders such as Arts Council England, its participants and visitors and a number of local businesses but is looking to widen its appeal through sponsorship from interested individuals, businesses or organisations.

For further information contact SIT on:

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