

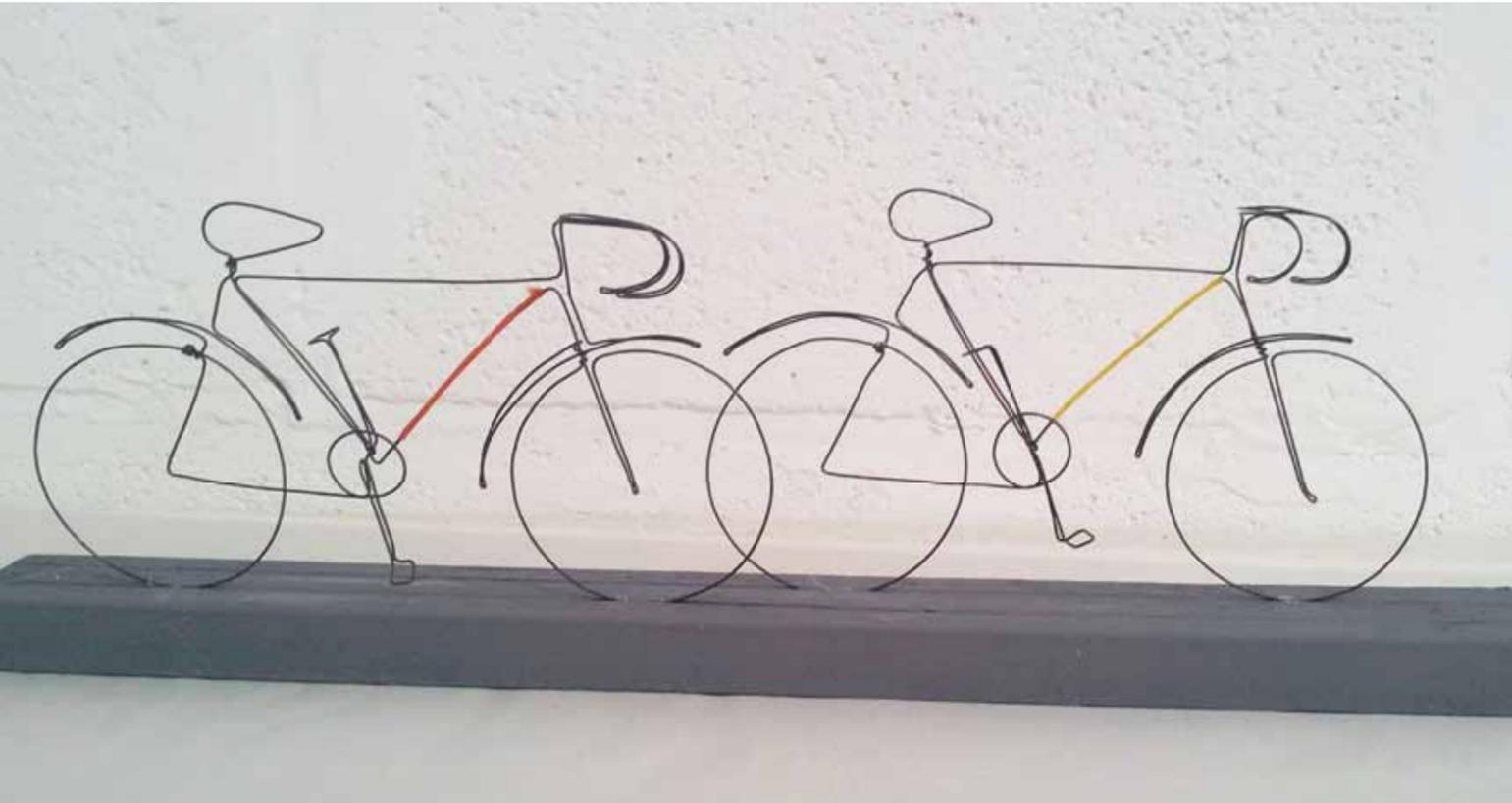
# On Yer Bike!

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Bikes at the ready! The first ever Tour de Yorkshire kicks off on 1st May. We looked at how the event has inspired a cottage industry among the region's designers



▼ Wire bike sculpture by Louise Wilson  
www.louisedawnwilson.co.uk



Cycling print by Jessica Hogarth ►►  
Designs www.jessicahogarth.com



Jane O'Neill, a Hebden Bridge-based contemporary fused glass artist, who stumbled into designing with glass after a friend gave her a beautiful sun catcher for Christmas in 2009, has also gained a reputation for her cycling work.

'I am a cyclist and when I heard about the Tour [de France] it just all came together in my head. I started off trying to draw something that I could make as a 3D sculpture, and ended up going in a different direction with little drawings of cyclists in the local towns.'

Her first cycling range was a success, with an appearance on Countryfile and John Craven helping her to sell her glass coasters on the show. 'I sold thousands,' she says. 'It was an incredible experience last year, people seemed to really like my work. I've been contacted for quite a few commissions as a result.'

Her newly launched range for the Tour de Yorkshire includes six new images that are available on glass cufflinks, keyrings, coasters, as well as prints and cards. 'I'm still trying to work out why people buy them,' she wonders. 'I think it's a mixture of things. It's commemorating the event, and the fact that they're glass and handmade makes them quite special. I'm also selling them to people who live locally and love to see their local area represented, and tourists who want to take a bit of the area home. So it's all that together.'

Unlike Jessica and Jane who both live and work in Yorkshire, Louise Wilson, a contemporary wire artist, has never even been to Yorkshire – although she says it's definitely on her to-do list. She became involved in

**I**t's big. Extremely big. World-class big. The Tour de Yorkshire comes to the region from 1st–3rd May, spurred on by the success of last year's Tour de France. Over three days, the world's best cyclists will gather in Yorkshire for the event, starting off in the seaside town of Bridlington and ending in Leeds on the final day. In between they'll pass through coast and countryside, ride through historic York city centre and tackle six brutal climbs on the final stage – for a grand total distance of 515km.

The excitement and buzz doesn't just extend to cycling enthusiasts. Last year, the Tour de France generated £128 million in total revenue for the economy – £102 million came from Yorkshire alone. However, it's not just the hotel and restaurants that are getting a tourism boost. Small, independent designers are latching onto the event and getting their work noticed.

For Jessica Hogarth, a 27-year-old surface pattern and textile designer from Robin Hood's Bay, the idea for a bicycle print came to her when she entered a wallpaper design competition for Graham and Brown in 2013. 'I am a proud Yorkshire lass, so I thought, "What can I do to stay true to my roots but give my coastal print work a rest for a while?" And I thought of the Tour de France. Bikes have been a trend for quite a while anyway, so I thought I'd be hitting the money from that aspect, and could do something in my style.'

Jessica's wallpaper design won the competition, and is now available to buy worldwide through Graham and Brown, but when she heard about the Tour de Yorkshire this year, she was excited to develop her concept further. 'I noticed that there was a lot of potential with the design,' she says. 'I don't think I realised, or anybody realised, how massive the Tour de France was going to be, and I think it's going to be big again this year, so I just wanted to change the design and make some products that I could sell locally or with some stockists that work on the route.'

Her range now includes tea towels, greeting cards and A4 and A3 prints. 'I totally underestimated how many tea towels I'd sell,' she laughs. 'I had to keep reordering and reordering them, because I sold way more than I had. Shops were selling out of them every few weeks. So, that was quite high numbers for me! I wanted to have a design that people could just appreciate for the design itself, that they could like without even knowing the story behind it – but if they knew the story behind it, it adds more value.'

Over the Tour de Yorkshire event weekend she'll be selling her products in Robin Hood's Bay. 'I'm planning on having a stall just outside my aunty's post office in the main village because the race is going right past there, and I think it's going to be a really exciting place to be, but also because I'm seeing it as a bit of an opportunity for me to get my designs out there as well.'

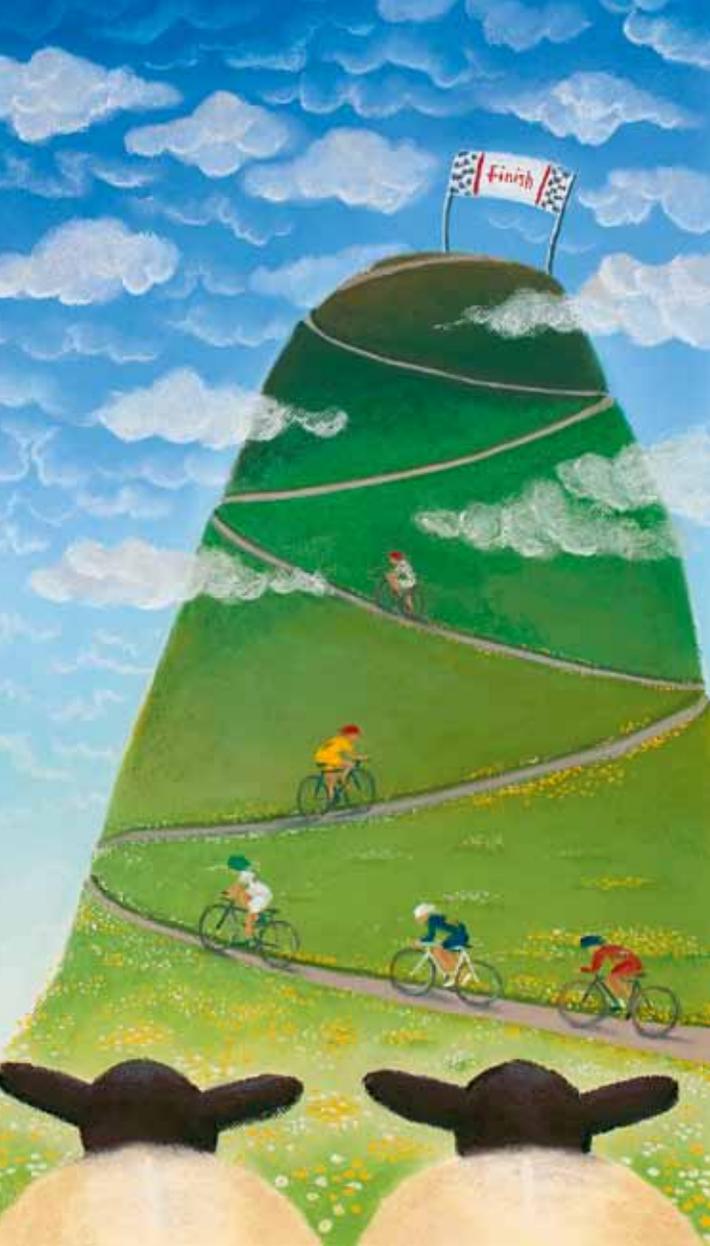


**'I had to keep reordering and reordering them, because I sold way more than I had. Shops were selling out of them every few weeks'**

◀◀ Whitby by Jane O'Neill  
www.abundantglass.co.uk



Cyclist on Hill sculpture ▲  
by Jane O'Neill ▲



Rather Ewe Than Me ▲  
 painting by Lucy Pittaway ▲

### Look out for these other Tour de Yorkshire designers

North Yorkshire-based Lucy Pittaway's collection of paintings for the Tour de Yorkshire is bright and vivid with rolling hills, sunsets and the occasional sheep. [www.lucypittaway.co.uk](http://www.lucypittaway.co.uk)

Denise Burden from Bradford creates black and white, and colour linoprints that capture the energy of the race day. [www.deniseburden.com](http://www.deniseburden.com)

Anita Bowerman makes unique limited edition prints, watercolours and mixed media prints from her studio in Harrogate. We love the vibrant cycling paper cut she did for last year's Tour de France, which she has brought back again for the Tour de Yorkshire. Go online to see more of her work at [www.anitabowerman.co.uk](http://www.anitabowerman.co.uk)

World's Greatest ►►  
 Cycle Race by Anita Bowerman

creating cycling pieces for the Tour de Yorkshire through a collaboration with Leeds' Craft Centre and Design Gallery, who were interested in her unusual wire work.

Louise makes everyday lifestyle objects such as telephones, cameras and lamps out of wire from her studio in Staffordshire. 'I like the simple lines that it gives you, and the interest in objects that people perhaps don't notice,' she says. One of these everyday objects she designed was a bicycle. It was tiny and fit into a little puncture repair tin.

However, Louise thought her small wire art could be improved. 'I wanted to show the bicycles off as a bigger piece of work, as the simple lines of a bicycle flow really well in wire,' she explains. 'The entire piece is made out of one piece of wire, because it just has that continuous linear line that's really simple.'

Her design attracted attention from Leeds' Craft Centre and Design Gallery who approached Louise to ask if she'd like to display and sell her bicycle pieces at their centre for the Tour de Yorkshire. 'I've just had a phone call this morning asking for more, so they must be getting a good response and selling well,' she gushes. 'I've never had work up in Leeds, so to have created something for an event that is based there is really good. It gets my name out to a different part of the country that I perhaps might not have done otherwise.'

With spectators coming from all across the world to watch the Tour de France last year (there were 4.8 million spectators along the roadside of the English stages), the inaugural Tour de Yorkshire is expected to bring in another large crowd. Thanks to the entrepreneurship of people such as Jessica, Jane and Louise, many will be returning to their home with a souvenir made by an independent designer.

