



## i'm leafing you

SUSANNA BAUER CRAFTS TINY,  
FRAGILE SCULPTURES FROM  
FALLEN FOLIAGE.

**Tell us a little about yourself.** I was born in Germany 43 years ago and moved to London in 1996. I now live in the south-west of England in the beautiful region of Cornwall.

**What is your background in art?** I have always loved making things since I was a child, which led me to model-making. My favourite production I worked on was probably *Wallace & Gromit: The Curse of the Were-Rabbit*, where I built mini fairgrounds and painted cheeses, and I also made the golden chalices for *King Arthur*. In a way my current work combines my love for nature, the craft of my childhood and the techniques from my model-making years.

**Where did the idea of making art out of leaves come from?** Fragility, strength, tension and resilience are subjects I feel drawn to, and leaves reflect all of these themes. I like how my work draws people in – how you have to absorb the work for a while to capture all of its details. It opens the eye for things that often go unnoticed. There is also a certain attraction in working with something perceived as being so perishable – leaves left out in nature disappear, and I see my work as a way of halting that process and giving them a new life.

**What different craft techniques do you use on the leaves?** I mainly crochet using very small hooks and some basic stitching and weaving techniques. Trying to stay very close to the edge of a leaf with very fine stitches or working a tight web over a brittle one without it cracking takes quite some patience.

**Who taught you all of these different techniques?** I learned everything to do with craft – crocheting, stitching, knitting and sewing – in primary school and from my grandmother who was a seamstress. There was always some knitting project on the go when I was growing up. I have now taken some of these techniques and appropriated them as a method of sculpture.

**Where do you source your leaves from?** My studio is next door to a beautiful botanical garden with huge trees. A lot of my materials come from there, but I've also brought back maple leaves from a woods near my parents' home in Germany and ginkgo leaves from a garden in France. A big part of my work goes into choosing the right colour, size and texture of fallen leaves for a particular project. I particularly like magnolia leaves because of their simple shape, but also because they're quite big, which allows me to do three-dimensional work. I seem to have an affinity for working with what nature has to offer. Leaves hold an infinite potential for me. I just have to carry on working. ✿