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# Newsletter December 2018

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From the  
Maker-In-  
Chief



Hello and welcome to the December GoM Newsletter,

Not much to report this month because, like many of you, it's a busy time of year for makers. Everyone seems busy getting stuff done, making presents and hopefully selling lots of things!

If you want to treat yourself to a Christmas present this year (or share the link with those who can treat you), don't forget we have Guild of Makers T-shirts available with our new logo / shield in our [shop](#).

If it's not already in your calendar, make sure that it is now: Our annual gathering will be on Friday 22 March 2019 at the Autodesk Technology Centre in Birmingham. More details including timings and prices will be available early in the New Year.

I hope you are enjoying the interview series. This month we chat with Tim Nicholls who shares some images of his impressive 'shedquarters'.

Please do send any information regarding events, forums and opportunities and we'll place it in the newsletter. Scroll down to see the interesting role we have in 'Opportunities for Members' this month.

I hope Santa brings you the tools you wish for!

**Dr Lucy Rogers**

**Founder, Guild of Makers**

[@DrLucyRogers](#)

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## Ten questions with a maker

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**Name:** Tim Nicholls

**Twitter:** [@woodpunk](#)

**Location:** 'The Shedquarters',  
UK



### **1. What do you make?**

My projects and commissions are primarily bespoke items including carved wooden signage, sandcast aluminium parts, specialist furniture, custom guitars and movie props. Recently, I've designed and built a range of custom spanking paddles for a Soho fetish store!

### **2. What does your making space look like?**

My main space is a 10' x 16' log cabin that I built in my garden, which houses the CNC router, 3D printers and most of my tools and equipment. I'm also fortunate enough to have a 10' x 17' brick garage for the dirty/hot work like metal casting, welding and lathe work.

### **3. Where do you sell your makes?**

Mostly my commissions come via word-of-mouth recommendations now. I used to make a range of items to order on Etsy, but I found making the same item over and over again wasn't fun. I do get a lot of movie prop commissions from productions at Pinewood Studios.

### **4. Who inspires you?**

It's those people around me and in the wider maker community who share their



experiences. For me, it's often less about success and more about making progress that I find inspiring. A perfect example is Lisa Mather. We met at the Guild of Makers launch event and had a really great chat about her idea to create her own makerspace business. Over the next few months, I followed her progress as she found a space and turned it into what is now [Qwirkshop](#). Watching someone's maker-based business idea become a reality is just as exciting to me as the most spectacular tech build. On the subject of spectacular tech builds, Paul Parry's clocks ([Bad Dog Designs](#)) are pretty much the pinnacle of the art of making for me.

## **5. What's your best failure?**

Among many, many failures the biggest and best must be my failed attempt to build a homebrew Arc Voltage Height Control for my CNC plasma table. It didn't work. It was never going to work, but what it did do was encourage me to convert the plasma table into a CNC router and discover an entirely new world of tools, skills and projects made possible by my total inability to build anything that works using electronics!

## **6. What's your favourite magazine / podcast / youtube channel / other making related "thing"?**

I'm a big fan of YouTube as a resource for learning new skills and my return to manual metal lathe work has been much easier thanks to [This Old Tony](#). My good friend Andrew Armstrong's [backofficeshow](#) is always a good source of real-world electronics repairs, teardowns and fun projects. Andrew's knowledge of electronics is incredible. Many of us have used single-board microcontrollers in our projects at some point, but very few of us have designed our own from scratch and had them manufactured!

## **7. Do you outsource / employ someone to do some of the non-making things in your business? If so, which aspects?**

It's probably easier for me to do most of the stuff myself as my projects are bespoke commissions, so I tend to have only a few customers and consequently less admin.

## **8. What's been the hardest thing about making for a living for you?**

Balancing the interesting projects with the lucrative ones. They're often not the same projects and saying no to something that's fun in favour of something that'll pay the mortgage can be tough. It's taken me a while to work out the balance and a decision I've made this year to help with that seemed counterintuitive at first, but has turned out to be exactly the right thing to do. What did I do? I got a job! Sounds wrong, but here's how it worked out: I found it very hard to focus on making when I was worried about paying my bills. I believed that I needed to make more stuff to solve the problem, so I took on every project that came my way. I hated it. It sapped my energy and made me not want to make anything. I ended up being clinically fed-up for about a year. I finally got some help and made some changes. I now make less stuff, but make more money and I have a 'portfolio career' that balances paying the bills using all of my skills with delivering the thrills (and

terrible rhymes!)

## 9. What's the best thing about making for a living?

The simplicity of taking raw materials, applying some effort and seeing the end result. Most of what I've done for a career in the past 25 years has been so abstracted from that process it was hard to see any tangible benefit to any of it.

## 10. Whose work would you recommend that fellow Guild members should check out?

[@BadDogDesigns](#)

[@robives](#)

[@circuitbeard](#)

[@tanurai](#)

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# Events

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## Upcoming events:

### Monthly Fusion 360 events

Located within the FabLab at Beaumont Collegiate, Warrington, and hosted by John Grimshaw ([@LeanintoDesign](#)), these events take place from 10am until 3pm. A Fusion 360 basics session in the morning, which is focussed on a different subject each month, is followed by an afternoon spent in the FabLab for 'free play' and work on attendees' projects.

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# Forums

We have a Slack channel:

[guildofmakers.slack.com](#)

If you need an invite, please [email](#) and we'll get you added.

We are also active on Twitter:

[@GuildofMakers](#)

Make sure to join us every Wednesday at 8pm (UK time) for #MakersHour.

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# Opportunities for members

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Seeking a co-founder and CTO with mechatronics engineering and IOT expertise to join us in our early stage start-up YapLok. YapLok is an electronic dog collar and lead operated via your smartphone. We have a letter of commitment detailing a minimum £150K from the British Design Fund upon them approving the working prototype. My product design co-founder and Creative Director Sebastian Conran (son of Sir Terrence Conran) has a fully equipped design house for all R&D and prototype build productions. A number of VC's have expressed interest also for second round funding.

As a co-founder we would like to offer the ideal person a combination of salary and equity upon ongoing discussion.

Please contact Samantha Shaw via email [samshawco@icloud.com](mailto:samshawco@icloud.com)

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