

Fruits of therapy

Renowned milliner tells in her newly published book of her battle with clinical depression



by emma brennan

MILLINER Miranda Green is so far advanced in the techniques of structured crowns and stitched brims, it is hard to believe she has no formal training in hat making, initially picking up a few basic skills from an evening class.

Green, of Fremantle, who has just shown her spring 2007 couture collection at New York fashion week, said she had taken up stitching as a therapy for her clinical depression.

Her heavily detailed sculptural headwear has attracted attention from Japan to the US, where she recently displayed a 65-piece collection in Louisville for an exhibition that coincided with the Kentucky Derby.

Green's coffee table book, *A Milliner's Tale*, was launched at St Catherine's College, Nedlands, on Friday.

"I taught myself how to make hats by trial and error and although it was fabulous creatively to be able to stage a show in New York, my motivation for making hats is for the therapeutic value," she said.

"The fashion industry is not a pretty industry to be in and it can be quite draining – I have had to find my own way of working."

The book features images from Green's twice-yearly photo shoots woven together with snippets from her personal story.

She left school at 15 without formal education or professional qualifications.

After taking up stitching as occupational therapy, she immediately began developing her own millinery techniques.

Since launching Miranda Green Millinery in 1997, she has produced two collections a year.

Her Green Girl collection is made from textiles sourced with environmental concerns in mind and she has recently set up a workshop in India that provides Tibetan women with a chance to gain skills and experience in the industry.

Green designs and handcrafts all of the couture hats herself using Australian wool, linen, velvet and silks, with a focus on individuality.

"I don't shop but I read a lot and I gain inspiration from things like Chinese and Tibetan movies, period costume and traditional Tibetan headwear," she said.

"I guess silhouette is the most important aspect of my designs followed by textile, colour and then detailing – I usually have a story in my head that has its own life."

Green's skills extend to self-taught photography and her book clearly displays a special way with words.

"Throughout my illness I have written about the process as daily food. Like the designing, I still do it for the therapeutic value. It's become part of who I am," she said.

A Milliner's Tale is available from

