

It being a Saturday and all **Pawn** has decided to take in some East End markets; Brick Lane, Petticoat Lane and Spitalfields Market. I hopped on the tube down to Aldgate East station and started the long stroll up Brick Lane. The markets start about half way up the street, so there was a bit of walking involved.



The first big market building had about 150 booths set up with arts and crafts, vintage clothing, new designer clothing, music, food etc. I bought some souvenirs for patient loved ones back home. Met the charming artist behind [Polite Furniture](#) with whom I whiled away some time discussing her art and the market day activities.

Bought some CDs of classic Funk, R&B and Soul music ripped from 45s and LPs onto compilation CDs by Small Potato Records – Great riffs!

The markets all around London are so vital and alive you wouldn't believe it. And each one has its own charm, its own character. Camden Town markets are rowdy and loud. Borough Market is foodie to the nth degree, with wonderful smells. Petticoat Lane is all cheap knock-off clothing and textiles. Truman Brewery Market, where I met Anne and bought the music and souvenirs is more like an artist colony has turned out for a big party. A lot of creative energy permeates the air. Many young designers are all over the place with brash and lovely clothing, bags, jackets, etc. One booth featured classic men's suit coats which had been painted with stalks of wheat growing out of the pockets or Samurai warriors peeking out from a lapel. Really fun stuff.

Back on the street I was immersed in a flood of people from all around the East End. There are so many cultures here, and on this Saturday, at least, they all seemed to get on quite well. One thing that struck me is that while one finds graffiti all around London, here it is quite advanced and reads more as art than as tagging or vandalism. There are several places where the street art is the focus, and large panels are installed for it. Here are a couple of examples, more can be found in [today's gallery](#).



Finally reached the top of Brick Lane, after side trips up a couple of other market lanes, and headed west to the top of Shoreditch Hight Street, which leads down into Commercial Lane and the Spitalfields Market. Along the way on Bethnel Green Road there is a large piece of street art called *Spaced Out Rainbow* which runs the length of a couple of blocks along a works site. Here are some snaps:



Spitalfields Market has been around in one form or another for ever but is now a rather upscale market in a purpose built structure on the old marketplace site. There are several high end and ready-to-eat restaurants here, as well as arts and craft booths, clothing vendors, food stalls, etc. I saw some scarves I really liked, and a shirt which caught my eye, but I was running low on cash and there were **huge** queues at the cash points, so those must wait.

I did meet another fine artist, [Jenny Rose](#), whose work crosses several boundaries from photography to screen printing, etching and collage work. She uses unconventional materials both to print onto and to mount her works. Some are on old piano rolls, for example. Several incorporate sheet music from classics and show tunes into the multi-layered work. I bought a few of these, and now must struggle to get them home ☹ They are lovely, and will make for some nice souvenirs as well.



Then it was back home to eat some Indian food (finally, first time this trip), do this write up,

and get ready for tonight's activity: [Frances Ruffelle](#), *Beneath the Dress* in Soho at Madame Jojo's.
Ta!