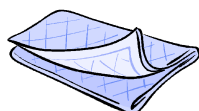

LONDON QUILTERS

Autumn 2006 Newsletter

Pacific Northwest Quilters Quiltfest 2006

By Marlene Kleven



Seattle, Washington on a beautiful sunny morning; waking up to the sound of seagulls and the sight of ferries as they glide across Elliott Bay; an early morning walk through the Pike Street Market as the vendors set up their food and flower displays; a stop at the original Starbucks Coffee house for a steaming hot latte. Can this day get any better? Absolutely! I'm on my way to Quiltfest 2006!

The Association of Pacific Northwest Quilters started their biannual quilt show in 1994. Although I have never been able to attend a Quiltfest before, I have had the opportunity to take classes from many of the association members. I have a friend whom I consider to be an excellent quilter and teacher who lives near Seattle. I gave her a call to see if she had a quilt in the show this year and she said, "No, I've been submitting quilts to that show for the past 10 years and not one of my quilts has ever been accepted". I asked her if she had any insight about why this would be and she replied "technique."

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Digital Titivation

By Margaret Scholey-Hill



In the September 2006 issue of 'Our Patch' (Newsletter of The Quilters Guild of the British Isles), Tricia Revest gave an interesting account of her impressions of the Festival of Quilts, as a first time visitor.

She talked of Michael James' use of digitally printed fabrics and how using these had completely transformed his latest quilts. 'He uses photographs, manipulates them in Photoshop and prints them on a special printer, which can be used for fabrics up to 65" wide.'

The Fabric Print Design Bureau, part of Knowledge Dock for the University of East London, offers a printing facility for the fabric industry and for the general public from a CD of your own making. This means that you can use photos, manipulate them, present them to the Unit, choose the fabric and collect a length of unique fabric for your own use.

However it is not cheap, but this need not put you off. With VAT the cost is £32.75 per meter with the additional cost of the fabric. Prices range from £8.50 for cotton furnishing fabric to £14.50 for silk crepe satin suitable for stage costumes. More details are available from Philip Jones, Knowledge Dock, Docklands Campus, 4 University Way, London E16 2RD

And from: Manager@knowledgedock.com

I enjoyed visiting this unit as part of a course taken at The City Literary Institute which introduced designing using computers and Photoshop; a very intensive but worthwhile course. Familiarity with AppleMac would be a distinct advantage but it does start you off on the journey! Details can be found at: www.citylit.ac.uk. ❖

She went on to say that the one thing every quilt in this show has in common is that regardless of the category, the quilt must demonstrate exemplary technique in every aspect of the design, piecing, quilting and binding. She quipped the one word that will get you rejected faster than a mismatched corner, and the word is “fused”.

I entered the exhibition hall with her comments in mind, wondering if the presence of the “quilt police” would, hinder the ability of the quilt makers to produce innovative and interesting quilts. I quickly realized that I had nothing to worry about. The 400 quilts on display were amazing in every way. After a morning of inspecting the variety of quilts in each category, I had to agree with my friend. These quilts were not only visually exciting but also technically exquisite. Whether viewed from far away or at “nose length”, the piecing and appliqué was perfect and the quilting magnificent, whether I was looking at quilt in the “Innovative” or the “Traditional” category.

With so many quilts on display it would be impossible to comment on each one of them, or even on each category, so as I walked through the Seattle Center Exhibition Hall I tried to answer the following questions: Besides the technical prowess, what makes these quilts unique? What overall trends am I seeing in the quilts in terms of design, genre, fabric selection, color, technique or quilting that is different or unusual? Here is what I came up with:

Embellishment -- Small glass beads or sequins strategically placed throughout the quilt. This showed up in every category. The beading was not heavy or concentrated, but used to accent the fabrics, provide texture and visual interest. One of my favorite quilts was a traditional Texas star design done in shades of blue and white, with a small iridescent glass bead stitched into the point of each star. The quilt absolutely appeared to “twinkle”.

Heavy Machine Quilting -- Quilting so dense that the unquilted areas appeared to have a trapunto stuffing. This type of quilting was present not only on the smaller or innovative quilts, but also on the huge traditional quilts. I was in awe as I inspected the 1/2mm continuous circles, spirals or wandering designs over meters of fabric, with the same stitch length in every single stitch. I know how to do free motion machine quilting, but I also know how difficult this can be to do on a large quilt. I knew there must be a secret to the quilting I was seeing and I found it in the vendor’s section of the exhibition

hall. If you want to know the secret, read my article on the quilting systems in the next issue!

Pictorial/portrait quilts -- These quilts look like paintings instead of quilts, but this was certainly a popular genre at Quiltfest. The quality of the quilts displayed was exceptional and not even the smallest pieces were fused. Everything was stitched by machine or hand. These quilts often had some sort of “writing” in the quilt as part of the overall design, and again, this was done by either appliqué or reverse appliqué. One quilt had what appeared to be miles of script writing on it, all done by hand in reverse appliqué!

The quilt which was honored with “Best in Show” was a huge quilt that was a combination of a pictorial and traditional quilt. The quilt was an amazing array of colors set together in a traditional design and it had a large cat in the right hand corner that almost seemed to jump off the quilt and land on the opposite side.

In addition to the new quilts in the show, there was also a wonderful display of antique American Quilts from 1850 to 1950. I love looking at antique quilts and several of these beauties caught my eye: a redwork top dated 1850 made in the Colorado Territory filled with cowboys and Indians (how very American); a quilt of “cigar flannels”, small flannel pieces which were included in the price of a box of cigars, printed with international flags, many from countries that no longer exist; and my favorite, a primitive quilt made in the California desert about 1920. It had wonderful images of cacti, donkeys and Spanish Mission Churches. It was sold in 1980 to help pay for the funeral of the lady who made it (so think ahead fellow quilters!).

After spending way too much money at the vendors booths, talking to fellow quilters who were visiting from California to Alaska, and going back to visit my favorite quilt one more time, I reluctantly ended my day. My only regret? Well, it would have been great to have a fellow quilter along to share my day with, so perhaps one of you would like to fly out and join me in Seattle for Quiltfest 2008! ♦

Thomas Jefferson said: “Every experience deeply felt in life needs to be passed along whether it be through words and music, chiseled in stone, painted with a brush, or sewn with a needle. It is a way of reaching immortality.”



Chair Chat

Dear LQ's,

This is my last chair chat as by the time the next newsletter is due the AGM will have voted for my replacement. I will continue to be occupied with LQ business in the short term to coordinate putting together the group quilt and in the longer term as web person. (Or is that web mistress?)

I have enjoyed my time as chair, although it will be nice to come to meetings and not have to fret about anything going wrong. I could not have put up such a brave front without the support of the committee, especially your vice-chair, Judy. She is so well organised and enthusiastic I'm sure she will be a super new chair.

One of the things I have most enjoyed during my tenure is the way that members have pitched in and done things together. This was exemplified by the sterling efforts put into making our last group quilt which raised so much money for Breakthrough Breast Cancer. As you can see from the blocks that have already been collected for the new quilt, whilst being very different, it will be just as splendid; and it is all down to YOU. The members of London Quilters make it what it is and it is very much dependent on what you put in. So as I finally leave the chair I would say to you all, get involved, it's a lot of fun and well worth the effort.

Best wishes,
Tricia



Tips for Success

If you need to remove a pencil mark from embroidery (or indeed from any fabric), take a small piece of dough from a loaf of white bread, knead with fingers and then rub gently over the pencil mark, which should disappear.

Use a piece of white chalk to remove marks from white material.

If you're having trouble threading your needles, try wetting the eye of the needle instead of the thread.



2006 Quilt Judging Course

Have you ever thought you would like to know more about judging quilts? Have you ever wondered why a particular quilt was chosen? Would you like to become a quilt judge yourself?

The Quilters' Guild has a small number of places on its two year Quilt Judging Course starting with an introductory weekend at the end of October. This is a distance learning course and provides a flexible way for students from all over Europe to develop their skills in assessment, evaluation and communication in judging quilts. The skills are also transferable to other textiles and art forms. If you would like to know more please contact the Guild Office or Fay Allwood on 01442 890924 or email: fay@allwoodf.fsnet.co.uk

Check it off your "to-do" list

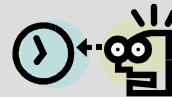


If you haven't already done so, it's time to renew your LQ membership. The membership fee is now £24 per annum.

Renewal forms are available online or see Traci at meetings. Cash & cheques accepted.

What do you receive in exchange? 11 meetings, informative and cutting-edge speakers, 4 newsletters and all the quilting friends you meet at LQ. It's the best deal around!

2007 Newsletter Deadlines:



- ◆ Winter issue – 1st January
- Spring issue – 1st March
- Summer issue – 1st June
- Autumn issue – 1st October

Email your submissions to:
nebraskanative@yahoo.com

(◆ next issue)

Patchwork and Quilting at Sewfine, Watford

By Evelyn Hurst

You might be familiar with Sewfine in Watford – a sewing machine shop that also sells material, haberdashery, etc. But did you know there are two patchwork and quilting groups meeting monthly in the 1st floor workroom?

Jean's group meets on the 1st Tuesday of the month: this is run by our own Jean Nissan. An informal and friendly group, Jean will respond to any request and prepare that topic for the next meeting. As she attends a lot of workshops, quilting retreats and conferences, there is very little Jean cannot demonstrate – she is also interested in technology, so is up to date with most gadgets and software.

Sandy's group meets on or about the 3rd Monday (often the same day as LQ). Sandy publishes a programme in advance – this year's topics include Threads, Wadding and Angelina Fibre, Tricky Triangles, Two-sided Quilts, Mosaic Fabric and Cotton Theory. We have also made group Linus Quilts and have just raffled a quilt made in memory of a member. The current project is a block of the month sampler quilt, and we are going to learn to "quilt as we go".

Other advantages of both groups include the availability of an enormous workroom. Malcolm, the owner, is happy for members to arrive early and take advantage of the large work tables to stretch and layer quilts (there are usually plenty of group members to help). Meeting above a shop means you can take bolts of fabric upstairs to audition for that sashing, binding, or contrast to give your quilt a zing. Which brings me to another advantage. When you are stuck, confused, lost the plot, etc. bring your project in to the group and we can all try to help.

Both groups, of course, have a "show and tell" and both meet 2 – 4pm



If you want to join or visit, email or phone me to check dates and location.

Email: evelyn21@btinternet.com

Phone: 020 8349 3712

Sewfine
63 Queens Road
Watford, Herts
WD17 2QN
01923 234130

And now a tidbit from Margaret Cooter...

I've just heard on the radio that the Battersea Power Station is open to the public for possibly the last time until it starts to be redeveloped. There's an exhibition of Chinese video and sound artists, which runs until 5 November. Apparently you can hire bicycles and see the building, then go on a tour of the exhibition.

The reason there isn't painting, sculpture, etc. is that the previous developer, whose plans fell through, got as far as taking off the roof -- so to see some of the work, you have to traipse through puddles!

Not sure how relevant this is to quilting, but it could be inspirational for some people -- after all, it all feeds into the same place, they do say.

Also, Asian Art Week is 2nd to 10th November www.asianartinlondon.com. Galleries have open evening and are open the weekend of 4-5 November, and there are lectures and auctions in various venues.

And Fri. 20 to Sun. 22 October there's the Bloomsbury Festival -- the October Gallery, which often has Aboriginal art, is heavily involved in this. <http://www.bloomsburyfestival.org/>

© Thanks, Margaret! One never knows where inspiration will strike!

The sun has such a pretty quilt
Each night he goes to bed,
It's made of lavender and gold,
With great long stripes of red.

And bordered by the softest
tints
Of all the shades of gray.
It's put together by the sky,
And quilted by the day.

By Laura Coates Reed
From "The Romance of the Patchwork Quilt
in America"



The Power of Colour

By *Henriette Saxon*

My primary purpose of visiting the exhibition of Wassily Kandinsky at the Tate was to see the way he used colour in his paintings. In his compositions, colours, lines and shapes blend together in great beauty and it is these strong, fiery colours one cannot forget.

Kandinsky's concept of colour, which powered his work, translates into any medium, particularly into fabric and patchwork.

One of the most important factors in patchwork is the choice of colour and its application to the art of quilt making. The patchwork artist with an eye for colour finds it easier to create an exciting composition to produce a quilt with life and movement.

Although Kandinsky took his colours to extremes of tones and contrasts, he knew how to captivate his viewers. Kandinsky quotes, "a work of art consists of two elements, the inner and the outer. The inner element on its own is the emotion of the artist's soul. This emotion is able to bring out a corresponding emotion in the soul of the viewer".

Think how often a quilt reflects your feelings! Firstly in the pattern you choose, the colour you select and even the final quilting stitches you perform – all this work can portray happy or tragic events, fun and spontaneity. In turn, when looking at a quilt which is being exhibited, it can provoke emotional responses such as admiration, pleasure or dislike.

Kandinsky uses colour as a "tonal medium" to emphasize rhythm and balance in his paintings. He thought of his colours and forms as "sounding and vibrating."

Quilts are like paintings, only we use fabric instead of paint. We quilters are also artists, who have the desire to create something that reflects colourful imagination.

Kandinsky taught at the famous Bauhaus school of modern design. In teaching colour he stressed the principles of yellow and blue, the importance in contrasting black and white, and the balance between red and green. "Colours are not just a creative device; they achieve an all-embracing power of expression, drawing upon knowledge and experience".

Kandinsky observed that colour, line and form express emotion and mood. He wrote about the emotional significance of blue: "Blue is the typical heavenly colour. The ultimate feeling it creates is one of rest." His comments on red were: "The warmth of red has not the appeal of yellow, but rings inwardly with a powerful intensity. It glows in itself and does not distribute its vigour aimlessly." He also said: "Black is the silence of the body after death, the closing of life."

The passionate use of colour in Kandinsky's early work gave way to a cooler use of colour, known as his "cool period". His early work characterised a drama between colour and form, whereas his later work appears to be less spontaneous; more planned with rational compositions, and therefore seems to lack tension and excitement.

Translate this again to patchwork, you will find that in scrap quilts it is always more successful to just pull a scrap out of the bag and sew it, rather than to sort and match the patch. A random choice gives spontaneity and a lively look to the quilt.

In the last years at the Bauhaus, Kandinsky strongly stressed the role of intuition in the creative process without which no work of art could be produced. In a journal published in 1928 he described the important relationship between "intuition and the use of material, and methods used to achieve a means to an end."

"A work of art consists of two elements, the inner and outer. The inner element on its own is the emotion of the artist's soul. This emotion is able to bring out a corresponding emotion in the soul of the viewer."

Most often your first idea and choice of a "block" assembly for your quilt is the best. Trying to improve the layout and fussing with your quilt too long usually brings an unsatisfactory result, even to the point of losing its sparkle and vigour.

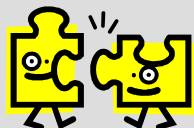
Maybe our aim should be to create quilts "glowing with inner radiance", "sounding and vibrating" that radiate pure colour.

Kandinsky's unique, expressive use of colour should be a lesson to all who enjoy patchwork. His paintings are a tribute to colour. ❖

2006/2007 Calendar of Events



- 20th November – AGM – with trader
- 18th December – Christmas Party
- 15th January 2007 – Jennie Rayment
- 19th February – Gail Lawther: “Inspiration from History” (for either quilting or embroidery designs)
- 19th March – Susan Chapman: “By Design”
- 14th April – Workshop – Angela Madden
- 16th April – Angela Madden: “Pictorial Patchwork from Family Photos”
- 21st May – Barbara Chainey: “Tentmakers of Cairo”
- 18th June – Claire Benn: “Cloth as a Catalyst”
- 16th July – Sewing evening
- August – No meeting
- 17th September – TBA
- 15th October – Sandra Meech: “Journeys”
- 19th November – AGM – with trader
- 17th December – Christmas Party



LQ Committee Members

Chairman

Patricia Revest p.a.revest@qmul.ac.uk

Vice Chairman

Judy Roose jroose.highgate@virgin.net

Treasurer

Janne Bell jannebell@hotmail.com

Minute Secretary

Margaret Mavay jsbach99@blueyonder.co.uk

Membership Secretary

Tracy Fogarty tracy@mahonkin.com

Newsletter Editor

Andrea Taylor nebraskanative@yahoo.com

Librarians

Evelyn Hurst evelyn21@btinternet.com

Fran Katkar frkatkar@homechoice.co.uk

Hospitality:

Yzabel Field vzabel@tree78.fsnet.co.uk



Exhibitions

21-22 October: Pilgrim Quilters 17th Exhibition, Priory School, Bolters Lane, Banstead, Surrey. 10-4, admission £1. Raffle. Details from: pilgrimquilters@yahoo.co.uk

5-6 November: Dulwich Quilters 2006

Exhibition at The Old Library, Dulwich College, Dulwich Common, SE21. 10-5, £2.50 includes Catalogue. Raffle, demonstrations, refreshments. Details from Kurshid Bamboat

email: soot01@onetel.com

Link to flyer: www.qgr1.co.uk/Dulwich2006.htm

7-11 November: “Recycled” – An exhibition by Stitch Witches of both traditional and contemporary quilts

at Farnham Maltings, Bridge Square, Farnham, Surrey. 10-4. Details from info@stitchwitches.co.uk or on their website www.stitchwitches.co.uk

10-12 November: Chilford Autumn Quilt Festival

Chilford Hall Vineyard, Linton Cambridge. Displays by Sally Holman and Janet Cook, Barbara and Sylvia Richards, Phat Quarters, Madeleine Millington and Lynne Edwards. Quilt Festival Challenge Red and White. Details from Grosvenor Exhibitions 01775 712100 or 01775 722900 email: emma.cooling@btconnect.com

Ends 19 November: Art of the Stitch and Scholar Embroiderers Guild Travelling Exhibition.

Williamson Art Gallery and Museum, Slaty Road, Birkinhead. www.embroiderersguild.com

January & February 2007: Contemporary Art Quilts 2006

a juried exhibition at Morley Art Gallery, London. More information from: caq2006@hotmail.co.uk



INTERNET INFORMATION

The London Quilters web site address is:
www.londonquilters.org.uk

It is run and maintained by Tricia Revest.
Email: p.a.revest@qmul.ac.uk