

SEW WHAT???

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An e-newsletter for contemporary quilters

by Elaine Quehl

Contemporary Quilts, Hand-dyed Fabrics, Classes

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PREMIERE ISSUE OF SEW WHAT???

Welcome to the premiere issue of SEW WHAT???, an e-newsletter for the contemporary quilter. For some time I have been toying with the idea of communicating with former and current students, friends and acquaintances in the quilting world. Sometimes I get excited about things I see and hear and need to share them. Isn't this a good way to do so? Feel free to share this newsletter with your friends. They can email me if they would like to be included in my distribution list. If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please advise me by email, and I will be sure to remove you from my mailing list. The newsletter will be distributed on a quarterly basis, and in such a way that email addresses of recipients remain hidden.

A NAME FOR THIS NEWSLETTER

Why SEW WHAT??? "Sew what" if we don't follow the rules? A few years ago I found myself standing with my jaw to the floor in front of an awesome quilt named "Secrets of the Daylilies" by Phil Beaver (www.philbeaver.com) at the American Quilter's Society Show in Paducah, Kentucky. As many of you know, Phil Beaver paints his own fabrics, and creates elaborate raw-edge appliquéd quilts. Beside me stood a member of the quilt police, who turned to me exclaiming in shock, "that's raw-edge"! My response? "SEW WHAT"??? This newsletter will appeal to those who like to and/or want to be free from rules, and to those who ask "sew what" if I try it this way? The newsletter will also share my news about contemporary quilting - "sew what" is going on?

Machine Quilting with Metallic Thread

It has become obvious to me that Metallica 90/14 needles work far better for machine quilting with metallic threads than the widely-available 80/12 needles. The challenge is in finding the 90/14's. As far as I am aware, the only source in Ottawa is [Sew for It](#) on Moodie Dr. If you are aware of other sources, please let me know. [Sew For It](#) also has one of the best selections of threads in the city. Topstitch 90/14 needles are a must in your needle collection. They can replace Metallica 90/14's, and also work great with more substantial threads such as Sulky 12 weight Blendables. I use these needles with my 12 weight hand-dyed threads.

Featured Student: Barb Tench



Barb dyed these fabrics in my "Direct Application Dyeing for Quilters and Fibre Artists" class at the [Inspirations Needlecraft Show](#) in November 2005. She was brave enough to cut into them free-hand in my "Free-Form Curves" and "Liberated Applique" classes at the [Country Quilter](#) in Richmond, Ontario. I think the results are awesome. I think her style is very much like that of Melody Johnson: www.wowmelody.com

Barb's Story:

I have been a member of the Richmond Guild for the past two years. I used to quilt MANY years ago when I lived in New Brunswick, when everything was cut out from little cardboard templates – one by one. I learned to hand quilt at our church guild. I'll never forget the lady's name – Nelda Goodwin – if she didn't think our stitches measured up, she would stay late and remove them and replace them before the next meeting. I am proud to say she only had to replace mine once. At that time, one or another of my neighbours always had a quilt frame on the go. We were all stay-at-home mothers of small children and so poor we learned to make things like marshmallows from scratch for cheap treats for our kids, home made play dough, and all sorts of other things. Then I stopped quilting when my kids became old enough to be going to hockey practice, music lessons, and everything else they get into, and I began to work to support their habits. A few years ago, I wanted backing for a baby quilt I made for a friend's grandchild so I went to the Country Quilter and bought the fabric. I started taking lessons – relearning old skills and learning new methods. I love fabric! I have no idea what I will do with all the quilt tops I have made – I don't seem interested in finishing them off. But I do know that I am interested in more artsy type things and the lesson with you has helped to set me free – Thank you!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Yarn Forward and Sew On (Bank St., Ottawa and Hazeldean Rd., Kanata) have a great selection of Topstitch needles as well as a fantastic selection of threads.

Not all metallic threads are created equal. Yenmet metallic threads, available in “twilight” colours and “opalescent” colours are a joy to use!! Unfortunately they are not available in Ottawa. I first heard about them from Maurine Noble when I took a course with her and Elin Noble at [Quilting by the Lake](#). Last year I was able to buy several colours of Yenmet threads from a vendor at the Vermont Quilt Festival. The link to this vendor is below:

<http://www.thatthreadshop.com/yenmet.htm>

Another on-line source with a good selection:

http://www.notions.fabricstodyefor.com/thread/yenmet_thread.htm

Another high-performance metallic thread is Victory Metallic, sold by <http://kdsfibres.tripod.com/>, a local mail order business. Unfortunately this thread is only available in gold or silver, but at a good price (\$12 for a 1,000 meter spool). I have also heard reports that metallic threads made by Superior are a dream to use.

Featured Books:

Machine Quilting with Decorative Threads

by Maurine Noble and Elizabeth Hendricks, 1998

If you’ve taken my machine quilting or hand-dyed threads classes, you will have heard me sing the praises of this book. Although it was published in 1998, it remains, in my opinion, a leader in the field. It is loaded with eye candy and useful tips. What is especially useful about the book is the chart at the back that provides guidelines on what needles to use with specific threads. The down side is that the chart does not list all the new threads that have emerged in the last 8 years, however, you can extrapolate from it. If a size 50 Mettler cotton is mentioned, you can assume the same instructions apply for a size 50 cotton in another brand.

Color and Composition for the Creative Quilter

by Katie Pasquini Masopust and Brett Barker, 2005

This overview of color theory and design principles includes exercises to demonstrate how to produce a composition with greater pizzazz. Katie has maintained a high profile world-wide for the past 25 years. Visit Katie’s website at:

<http://www.katiepm.com/>

Featured Websites:

Judith Trager

I am absolutely in love with the work of Judith Trager of Boulder, Colorado. Check out the Vivaldi series on the Public and Corporate Collections Gallery of her website at: www.judithtrager.com

Martha Brown

Martha Brown of Pickering, Ontario has been exhibiting her work at Canadian and American shows over the past several years, and walking away with numerous awards. Check out her work at:

www.blumoonfabricarts.com

Featured Artist:

Elizabeth Dillinger

Elizabeth is an award-winning fibre artist, also from Pickering, Ontario. I first came to know about her after seeing her work at the [Ontario Juried Show](#) in Waterloo. Over the last year we have communicated by email several times. Elizabeth was recently featured in “East of the City”, a magazine focusing on communities east of Toronto. Her work can be viewed at

<http://www.edillinger.ca/>

“East of the City” is available at local Chapters stores.

NEWS FROM ELAINE

This Winter I have maintained a heavy teaching schedule, including several workshops at the [Country Quilter](#) (Richmond, Ontario), numerous private workshops, and a trunk show (March 6) and classes (March 11) coming up at the Ottawa Valley Quilters Guild.

Going on the Road ...

I will be delivering a trunk show in Cornwall on March 20 and a trunk show and class in Mississauga on April 6 and 7. I am also excited to report that I have been invited to teach two classes, May 26 and 27, at the [Waterloo County and Area Quilt Festival](#).

Teaching Notes

My most popular class, after three years, continues to be “Beyond Stippling, Part I”. This class is suitable for individuals who are comfortable with free-motion stippling, but need creative ideas to venture beyond. For the past year I have also been teaching a

“Beyond Stippling, Part II” class for more advanced machine quilters. Class descriptions are available at: <http://www.equarelle.ca/MyClassDescriptions.htm>

My up-to-date teaching schedule is always available at:

<http://www.equarelle.ca/TeachingSchedule.htm>

In the Fall of 2005 I introduced a series of classes on Innovative Techniques. I am thoroughly enjoying seeing the results of my "Free Form Curves" and "Liberated Applique" classes. I am so impressed with the creativity and playfulness of the students I have encountered, and their willingness to improvise and change their plans when their work was moving in a direction they had not planned. One of the pieces from this series is featured on page 1 in the "Featured Student" box. Other samples can be viewed in the Student Gallery of my webpage:

<http://www.equarelle.ca/EQStudentGallery.htm>

Students who have taken my classes are invited to send me pictures of their work, completed or not, and I will be sure to add them to my website. I will also be selecting one student each quarter, to have their work and story featured on page one.

Quilts:

In the last two months I have completed three quilts: "Soleil II", "Losses", and "Surface Appearances II". They can be viewed on the Gallery page of my website at:

<http://www.equarelle.ca/EQGallery.htm>

EQuarelle's Palette

In 2003 I started my own business, "EQuarelle's Palette", selling my quilts, hand-dyed fabrics, patterns, and teaching classes. After three years I have a much better idea what I love to do best. I have decided to focus first on teaching classes and creating quilts, and second on dyeing and selling my hand-dyed fabrics. For this reason, and because the name "EQuarelle's Palette" was often confusing to people, I have started to promote my quilts and classes under my own name. The hand-dyed fabric side of my business will continue under the name of EQuarelle's Palette.

Too Much About Me!

The next issue of "Sew What???" will contain a lot less news about me and more news about the contemporary quilting scene!!

Upcoming Events:

Trunk show by Pamela Allen, Kingston, Ontario
May 9, 2006

Common Thread Quilt Guild, Orleans

<http://www.pamelart.homestead.com/titlepage.html>
www.commonthread.on.ca

Canadian Quilters Association Conference
May 21 – 27, 2006

Algonquin College, Ottawa

<http://www.canadianquilter.com/events/quiltcanada2006.htm>

Check out the schedule on-line. There are many concurrent shows running alongside the National Juried Show, including a show by the Out of the Box Fibre Arts Group at the Ottawa School of Art, "Planting Joy", a tulip-themed show at the Westin Hotel, and a solo show by local fibre artist Margaret Dunsmore.

Waterloo County & Area Quilt Festival

May 24 – 27, 2006

RIM Park, Waterloo

<http://www.quiltcapitalfestival.com/>

Deadline for entries to the Ontario Juried Show:

March 17, 2006

What were they thinking? Why are both shows above taking place at the same time? Last year they joined forces for one super show in one place.

The Grand National Juried Show

2006 theme: The Wild Life

April 28 – May 28, 2006

Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery

In my opinion, this is the best quilt show in Canada. Small but powerful, the only quilts in this show are of the innovative variety. A catalogue of quilts is available for sale each year.

<http://www.kwag.on.ca/section/view/index.php?section=8&page=42&>

Vermont Quilt Festival

The Vermont Quilt Festival has a new air-conditioned home near Burlington, Vermont!

<http://www.vqf.org/>

Quilting by the Lake

July 21 – August 5, 2006

Morrisville, New York, SUNY Campus

<http://www.quiltingbythelake.com/>

A hotbed of contemporary and art quilters with famous teachers from around the world. This event takes place annually, and is only a four hour drive from Ottawa. You'll stay in basic dorms and feel like a kid at camp again. I have only managed to make it to this conference once, but I highly recommend it!! Most classes are 5 days long. Includes a show of work by teachers and students, and a fabulous merchant mall with an emphasis on supplies for artsy quilters.

Amazing Sights:

Would you like to see amazing fibre art, interesting suppliers, and information on shows. Check out the links on my webpage.

<http://www.equarelle.ca/EQLinks.htm>