

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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SECOND ISSUE OF SEW WHAT???

Welcome to the second issue of SEW WHAT???, an e-newsletter for the contemporary quilter. Ottawa is an exciting place to be this month if you are a quilter, and especially if you are a contemporary quilter. At the end of this newsletter is a description of some of the events taking place. Please make sure to visit the CQA website at

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

for more information.

Those of you who know me well will need to bear with me here because I have an exciting story to tell, and some of you may have heard it before. Last issue I described my reaction the first time I saw Phil Beaver's (www.philbeaver.com) quilt "Secrets of the Daylilies" at the American Quilters Society Show in Paducah. In this issue I am able to tell you that I finally had an opportunity to take a 2-day class with Phil Beaver in April at the Machine Quilters Expo in Manchester, New Hampshire (www.mqxshow.com). While the class was very enjoyable, the exciting story I have to tell is that Phil Beaver loved my hand-dyed fabric, and actually purchased a piece! You can see a picture of Phil and I, and the fabric on my website at www.equarelle.ca.

Machine Quilting with Metallic Thread

In the last issue of Sew What? I sang the praises of Yenmet metallic threads. Fortunately, Yenmet threads are now available in Ottawa for the first time, along with Madeira metallic and polyneon (polyester) threads. Wendy Foster of Blackburn Hamlet is now distributing these threads locally. You won't find a better-behaved metallic thread for machine quilting than Yenmet. The Madeira metallics are fabulous for threadpainting, and can also be used for machine quilting. The polyneons come in variegated and solid colours. I have recently discovered the beauty of polyester machine quilting threads. They have the same lovely sheen as rayon, but are stronger if durability is a consideration. Wendy Foster provides machine quilting services as well. You can reach her at 613-830-5636. A picture of Wendy's gorgeous quilt "New Beginning" is featured on the following page. Wendy used Madeira metallic threads to thread-paint this work of art.

Featured Student: Carole Timinski



Carole took my hand-dyed fabric class this past winter, and is now an avid dyer. She made the tote bag depicted above using fabrics she dyed since taking the class. She has also taken Beyond Stippling I and Beyond Stippling II, as well as other contemporary classes I have offered. Carole went home and worked very hard at her free-motion machine quilting, and it really shows!! She is now providing machine-quilting services to her friends and acquaintances. Click on my Student Gallery at <http://www.equarelle.ca/EQStudentGallery.htm> to view a picture of Carole's beautiful machine quilting on the piece she made in my "Free-form Curves" class.

Carole's Story:

I have always loved sewing. At the age of 7 I taught myself how to use a sewing machine and created my own doll clothing. I continued sewing clothing for myself and my children. I discovered quilting 13 years ago when I couldn't resist purchasing a box of fabric ends for \$20.00 at a garage sale. I made my first scrap quilt from that box of fabric ends, using home-made templates. I realized I had a love for colour and fabric, and found that quilting was the perfect outlet. For four years I made traditional quilts and then was introduced to dollmaking. One of my daughters wanted a handmade doll for Christmas, and while making it, I learned about Eleanor Pierce Bailey. I enjoyed the freedom of expression that creative dollmaking allowed. This out-of-the-box way of creating art led to an interest in contemporary quilting and to classes taught by Elaine. In her classes I learned free-motion quilting, fabric dyeing and a freedom to go outside the constraints of traditional quilting. Thank you Elaine!



"New Beginning" by Wendy Foster

Out of the Dye Pot

Some of you know how easy it is to become addicted to dyeing your own fabric. We start out with 5 meters of white cotton, thinking that will keep us happily dyeing for a while. Then we realize we still have more colours and techniques to try, and soon we find we need 10 meter shipments of white cotton. Before we know it, we have a business and we are ordering 100 meters at a time.

People ask me why I teach dyeing classes. They wonder if this isn't competing with my business of selling hand-dyed fabrics. I don't worry about this because I know how labour-intensive hand-dyeing fabric is, and how little profit margin there is once you factor in your labour. I don't think there are a lot of people "dyeing" to get into this business (pardon the pun). Every dyer produces different results and even a seasoned dyer may still purchase my fabric and vice versa. I am also eager to infect others so I have someone to talk "dye-speak" to. My featured student this month, Carole Timinski, has been bitten by the dyeing bug, and I now have a new friend to share this passion with.

A popular hand-dyed fabric this spring has been what I refer to as my "tulip fabric". It is a lovely mixture of yellow, orange and pink. Here's the recipe. Mix up yellow, golden yellow and pink dye solutions. For the yellow and golden yellow use 1 Tb per cup of liquid. For the pink use 1 tsp. hot pink or ½ tsp fuchsia per cup of liquid. Use the direct-application method, pre-soaking your fabric in a soda ash bath for at least 10 minutes. Wring out your fabric and apply dye so it overlaps in some areas. You want some areas to remain unmixed.

Sometimes the most unusual and stunning fabrics that come out of the dye pot are the unplanned ones. At the end of each dye session I pour whatever dye

solutions are left over on to one piece of fabric. The results are sometimes my favorite pieces.

Interested in a dyeing class?

I am teaching Fabric Dyeing for Quilters and Fibre Artists to a private group on Saturday, June 10, 2006. There are still a few spaces available. If you are interested or would like more information please email Jody Taylor at bravoshow@sympatico.ca. A description of the class is on my website: <http://www.equarelle.ca/MyClassDescriptions.htm>

I will also be teaching a dyeing class at the Inspirations Needlework Show on Saturday, October 28, 2006. For more information, check out the Inspirations website at <http://www.inspirationsneedlecraft.com/>.

Hand-Dyed Threads

When I teach my class on hand-dyed threads, I always remind students that there is a great source of hand-dyed thread right here in the capital. Linda Palaisy (www.lindapalaisy.ca) has invested in equipment to automate the process so there is no need to do the manual winding of thread that we do in class. Linda's cotton threads come in a wide variety of hand-dyed variegated colours, at a reasonable price. She also has plans to introduce hand-dyed rayon threads in the near future. I personally can't wait to see these threads because rayon soaks up dye even better than cotton, Linda's threads are available at the following locations:

Yarn Forward & Sew On, Ottawa
Yarn Forward & Sew On, Kanata
Quilts & Seams, Ottawa
Dragonfly Fabrics, Ottawa
Quilty Pleasures, Orleans
Julees, Osgoode
Emma's, Merrickville
The Perfect Stitch, Kingston
Taylor's Sewing Centre, Brockville
The Cotton Mill Thread Works, Dundas, ON
The Quilting Quarters, Almonte
Textile Traditions, Almonte
Aunt Beth's, Navan
Les Creations Patchwork Creations Inc., Gatineau
Kava Threads, Montreal

Have You Considered University?

Can't find the class you are looking for locally? Consider Quilt University. A wonderful on-line resource exists at www.quiltuniversity.com. Unlike your university days, there are no lectures to attend, no exams, and no research papers to write. However, I will say that these classes are "meaty", and you will get your money's worth!! If you are willing to put in the work, you will learn a lot. A good number of contemporary and art quilt classes are available. Sign up and pay on-line, and a few days

prior to the start of class you will receive your password to log in at the Quilt University website. Most classes are of 4 or 5 weeks duration, with lessons being released on a weekly basis. There is a chat board available to communicate with the teacher and your fellow students, and you are able to post your work on-line if you have access to a digital camera.

Books, Books, Books:

The Art of Quilting by Laurie Swim

with an introduction by Mary Pratt

It is always a pleasure to see a Canadian artist in the limelight. Laurie Swim, an established fibre artist who resided in Toronto for many years, returned to her native Nova Scotia last year and opened the Art Quilt Gallery of the Atlantic. She is also about to release her third book "The Art of Quilting". For more information, visit her website at www.laurieswim.com

where you can order a signed, hard-cover copy at a pre-publication price of \$25.00. I'm sure many people have fond memories of seeing Laurie's works of art at the Waterloo Quilt festival over the past decade.

Innovative Piecing

A Rodale Book

Edited by Sarah Sacks Dunn

If you want to make more free and original quilts and aren't quite sure how, this book will be a great help to you! The editor has pulled together articles and projects by many famous contemporary quilters, such as Karen Eckmeier, Barbara Olson and Carol Taylor.

Thread Magic

By Ellen Anne Eddy

Dive into the enchanted world of Ellen Anne Eddy. Ellen paints with thread on her hand-dyed fabrics, and uses sheers, lace and lame to create other-worldly moods on her art pieces. Check out her website at www.ellenanneeddy.com where you can purchase her book. The Madeira and Yenmet threads now being sold by Wendy Foster would be perfect for this technique!

Books for You

Carole Van Die runs her business "Books for You" from her home in Edwards, Ontario. She specializes in needlework books of all kinds. Check out her website at <http://www.booksforyou.ca/>

Featured Websites:

Debra Danko

Breathtaking realistic floral quilts at www.debradanko.com.

Marilyn Belford:

Marilyn is known for her realistic portraits and art quilts inspired by the works of great artists. She recently won first place in the Small Wall Quilts – Pictorial category at the American Quilter's Society Show this past April for her portrait quilt "Rundy". Check out her work at www.marilynbelford.com.

Upcoming Events:

Canadian Quilters Association Conference

May 21 – 27, 2006

Algonquin College, Ottawa

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

Check out the schedule on-line.

"Planting Joy"

Currently running until May 31, 2006

A tulip-themed fibre art exhibit by the Out of the Box Fibre Arts Group.

Westin Hotel, (just outside Daly's restaurant)

"Fibre Expressions"

By the Out of the Box Fibre Art Group

Ottawa School of Art

35 George St.

May 21 – 28, 2006

Mon. – Thurs., 8:30 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Fri. – Sat., 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Sun., 12:30 – 4:30 p.m.

"From the Sublime to the Meticulous"

A Solo Show by Fibre Artist Margaret Dunsmore

May 17 – 29, 2006

Foyer Gallery, 1701 Woodroffe Ave.

Inside Entrance 1 of Nepean Sportsplex
6:30 – 8:30 Wed. to Fri.

11:00 – 1:00 Saturday and Sunday

Closed Monday and Tuesday

Waterloo County & Area Quilt Festival

May 24 – 27, 2006

RIM Park, Waterloo

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

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&>

Third Annual Richmond Outdoor Quilt Show

In the garden at The Country Quilter

3444 McBean St., Richmond, Ontario

Saturday, June 17, 2006, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

This free show displays works completed by students that have taken classes at The Country Quilter.

Hopefully some of my students will be showing their works. For more information visit

www.thecountryquilter.ca

Vermont Quilt Festival

June 29 – July 2, 2006

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 art quilters.