



## Amazing Fabric Art

Timeless Stitches — Quilt Capital of Kansas

Liz Granberg-Jerome

Who doesn't love going to a museum and strolling past beautiful works of art? Did you know that is exactly what quilt shows are all about? Whether you attend a local quilt show like the one being held this coming weekend during the Maple Leaf Festival, or the renowned International Quilt Festival held in Houston each October, each show features amazing works of fabric art made by quilters from next door and around the world.

There are many reasons quilters enter their quilts in quilt shows. A few quilters create what are often referred to as "show quilts"—extremely detailed and exquisitely made quilts designed specifically to be entered in juried shows. These elite quilters often make only one quilt a year, knowing they will be entering it into juried shows. Photos and technical information are submitted in advance to be reviewed by a jury of professional quilters. Not every quilt gets accepted into a show. Once a quilt has been juried in, the quilt itself is then sent in to be judged against others in its category, hung in the quilt show display, and winners are awarded ribbons and often cash prizes. Visiting one of these large quilt shows is truly an inspiration.

Most quilters, however, make quilts for the joy of the making. We make bed quilts, baby quilts, table runners, quilted bags or jackets, and so much more. The quilts often are utility quilts to be used on beds or as couch quilts around the home, gifts for family and friends, or to donate to local charities. These are precious possessions, not museum pieces; however, they are nonetheless art created by artists with sewing machines.

The Maple Leaf Quilt Show has been a part of the Maple Leaf Festival since it was started by Enola Gish in 1973. Averaging 100 quilts on display each year, every quilt is unique. You'll find traditional quilts, modern quilts, art quilts, and so much more. This quilt show is an opportunity for the members of the local Maple Leaf Quilters Guild, as well as quilters from across Kansas and the Midwest to display their quilts for Maple Leaf Festival attendees to enjoy.

The donated quilt to benefit the Baldwin City Community Relief Fund that is being hand quilted by community members will be at the quilt show for visitors to add a few or more than a few stitches to the quilt. With two full days and many visitors to the quilt show we are in hopes that the main body of the quilt will be completed during the festival so it can be bound and finished in time to draw the winning ticket at the Baldwin City Festival of Lights the first weekend in December. Be sure to stop by and add a few stitches to make it truly a community wide project.

Visit the Maple Leaf Quilt Show on Saturday, October 16 from 9am to 6pm and Sunday, October 17 from 10am to 5pm in the Baldwin Elementary School Intermediate Center gymnasium, 100 Bullpup Drive, Baldwin City, right off Hwy 56 on the west side of town. Shuttle busses will be taking visitors to and from the school parking lot to downtown throughout the festival, so be sure to stop in to see the quilts!