

Newsletters in June 2014

Double Fluff/batting

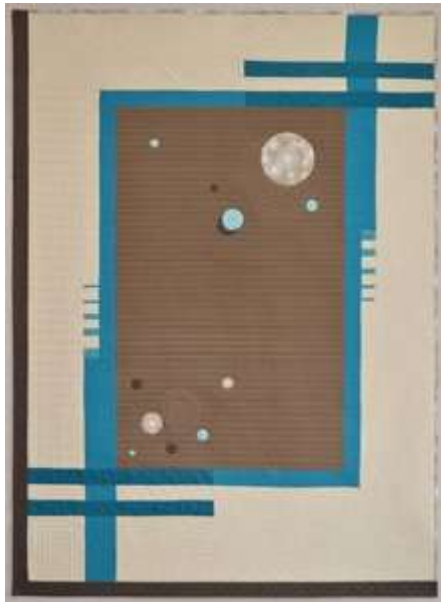
June 11, 2014

Hello my friends,

Summer time and the living is easy.

You won't believe it, my Modern Quilt got in to the AQS show in Charlotte!!

(This is the one my daughter thought was the back of a quilt). Stripes and circles *appliqued* to a big background of linen with minimal quilting. Playing with ideas so far outside of my comfort zone, it's really exciting being accepted. Multiple, multiple times, I had to restrain myself from plopping a nice little bird or something on it. No, I don't plan to make another one any time soon, but it was a valuable exercise in design and appreciation for this new generation of quilters.



When I retire-

I am going to take a quilting class on inset seams, so they don't terrify me. Maybe I could learn to do a little piecing. Add to that classes in line dancing. On my most recent teaching adventure in Alaska, *Line Dancing* was offered in the evening. It requires you to memorize several sequences of steps. I was a complete and abysmal failure. Never on the right foot and constantly crashing into others, the teacher was relieved when I made the decision to become a cheer-leader on the side lines. Oh, but Alaska was beautiful. Thank you Maret Anderson from "Seams Like Home Quilt Shop" in Anchorage for arranging this annual retreat at Stillpoint lodge in Halibut bay. www.stillpointlodge.com We all had such a great time together. Our class room looked out at

majestic mountains plunging into the sea. *See Bruce in the picture with all the ladies.* He kyayaked with the sea otters and hiked every day while we quilted.



Today is my 62nd birthday and this evening I am going to do a trunk show for the Crazy Quilters of Federal Way. *Crazy* and I get along very well.

Ribbons and things;

"High Country Colors" won 2nd place at Denver International.

Joen Wolfrom's new book will feature two of my quilts as examples of light and color. When I get my copies, I will let you know more. Joen is the reigning queen of color theory and her books are a great resource.

Tips and Tricks-

Double batting has come up several times at the last two shows I attended. Sharon Schamber uses a double batt as well as some others to get that stuffed look without all the work of cutting away a second trapunto layer. An idea worth exploring and reporting on..... so I tried it. My favorite batting is Hobbs, Tuscany Wool. It quilts beautifully and resists those fold lines that happen when my quilts are boxed and shipped across the country. Hobbs makes quality batting with more options than you could need. For the double batt, I used a bottom layer of Tuscany 100% wool and a top layer of Heirloom Natural with a scrim binder. The scrim side caught hold of the wool and kept both layers very stable. *Scrim is a woven web that the batt is punched thru to hold it more stable.* It's easy to see with close inspection on the Heirloom Natural.



In general, you would want the scrim side touching the backing of the quilt, so when you machine quilt, the needle is punching the batting in the same direction as in the factory. The loft of the two together looks challenging but actually was much easier than I expected. The feather design totally popped and is well stuffed. The fill between the puffed motifs does have to be moderately dense to tamp it down. **Voila**, the trapunto look, without hours of cutting from the back side. (Not that I ever doubted Sharom Schamber, but I did doubt my own ability to quilt a double batt on my domestic machine). Really it's much easier to manage than you would suspect. This combo would make a really nice winter time bed quilt. Tuscany wool batting provides superb insulation and the fiber breathes, allowing excess heat to disperse away from the body. For Bed quilts, wash wool on the gentle cycle using cool water, and then dry on the lowest temp - the shrinkage falls in the 3-5% range.

Tuscany Silk is their other newer batting.

Tuscany Silk bonded batting is made from imported silk filaments with the addition of 10% polyester. It is then carded and resin bonded to help retard bearding (fiber migration) and allowing the batting to be handled like a blanket. It can be quilted up to 4" apart and hand washed in tepid water and then laid out to dry flat. It will likely shrink approximately 5%. Because of silk's natural ability to breathe, it is an excellent choice for airy, lightweight quilts. Tuscany Silk quilts like butter and is a favorite for hand quilters too. I really liked the flat, almost painterly look that this batting gave me; especially for contemporary quilts where you don't want a lot of visual texture. My new project is a Koi pond, so Silk is what I am going to use. Texture from the quilting lines across a pond can ruin the effect of flat water. Which leads me back to the decision of whether to add a second layer behind the lily pads????? Your choice of batting does effect the finished "Visual Impact" of your quilt.

Now I am off to hand dye myself some water for this pond. All my pond elements and background section are applique and ready to be sewn to some water.



Have fun in the sun. Use your Sunscreen and hopefully we will meet on the road. Next Month I'm at Quilt Colorado.

Register at.

<http://www.cvent.com/events/quilt-colorado-2014/event-summary-0e4e276c9d14404c93a36edb5c3aa944.aspx>

Hugs Kathy

P.S.- Since I am hoping to have 20 more wonderful years to quilt--If you are the 20th person to write to me, I will send you any \$15.00 or less pattern of your choice.

Just take a look and tell me which one you want as (my) birthday present!

<http://www.kathymcneilquilts.com/shop/>

E mail me at - walrusdesigns@aol.com