

Meet GINGER RAMIREZ | *Ginger, a resident of Marina, works in Salinas, attends classes part-time, and is raising two teen sons with husband Charlie. "I have a very, very full plate. I love the guild, but I don't normally get to the meetings. This year I'm trying to be more balanced and make time to do the fun stuff." We endorse Ginger's intentions, and look forward to seeing her at guild events!*



How did you start quilting? My family is very creative. Charlie's into drawing and comics, and he plays guitar. My sons draw, and my oldest is into photography and film. I never felt like I had a talent, a creative thing. So when I found quilting I thought, 'oh, this is it.' And I felt good at it. I was happy about the things I made. It was a cool, 'me' kind of thing.

I actually learned a lot from Instagram: that's how I started to get into quilting. The first thing I saw that I really wanted to do was the Millefiore / Passacaglia quilt. It's a million cogs of color, and everybody makes it differently. I want to put it here on this wall [she gestures to a spot she's saving above the couch]. I bought the pattern and templates, but they're in a box, and have been for a while. I'm a little resistant because I don't want to screw up. I feel like I'll only do it once because it is epic.

What's your quilting style? I definitely like bright, cheery colors. I like the more modern, whimsical, funky stuff. I love when it looks professional, but still homey. Kathrin Brown, who's in the guild—I follow her [on Instagram] and love her stuff. Then there's a designer, Elizabeth Hartman, oh I love her patterns. I've done the whales, and the foxes. I started the hedgehogs but my gosh it's a lot of piecing. So instead of a quilt, I ended up with a bunch of pillows! I like modern, but I really like traditional stuff in modern colors.

Where do you quilt? This is my little corner (a large alcove off the living room, where one surface holds Ginger's sewing gear and another Charlie's computer and drawing materials). What I like best is that it's open, and it's in the heart of the house. And from the position of the sewing table, I can watch TV. [When I'm alone] I watch all the garbage on Bravo that I don't like to watch in front of anyone else because I know it's terrible! It's my guilty pleasure.

My greatest frustration [with the space] is that it's just a corner. I used to be really...well, I wanted the house to look a certain way, with everything put away and neat. Barbara [Grant, guild member and Ginger's former co-worker] was the one who said, 'how often are you really entertaining guests? Use your house the way you use it every day.' So I was able to let go of that, and make it functional for us. My husband does graphic design on the computer there, and I'm sewing here: we are doing our own thing but we're together.

What elements of quilting do you like best...and least? My favorite is binding a quilt. I've seen where people do the binding on the machine, but I've never tried that. I think there's something almost ceremonial about hand-binding at the end: you've spent all this time [making] it and you're about to give it away...You're sitting with it, kind of cuddling with it at the end. You're saying goodbye.

First, Last, Best			
At a little hamburger joint in Alabama, called Krystal. They called them gut grenades. They're terrible and wonderful	← First Job	Last Job →	I work for Monterey county, in labor and employee relations. We have a lot of good employees, and everyone wants to do their job, so I just want to iron out the thing that's wrong so everyone can get back to work. I feel very fortunate to work there.
Heath Tomlin. I was in kindergarten or first grade.	← First Crush	Last Crush →	Charlie, of course. But Thor: I love Thor [Chris Hemsworth]. He has a big hammer and huge muscles. He's very pretty.
The Police. I was in second grade.	← First Concert	Last Concert →	Father John Misty, at the Hollywood Bowl.
<i>Catcher in the Rye</i> . I remember being very moved by it, and thinking that I'd love to write something like that.	← First Best Book	Last Best Book	<i>All the Light We Cannot See</i> . I'm reading it now and want to read it more but I have so much crap to do!
<i>It's a Wonderful Life</i> . I watch it every year, and it always makes me cry and miss my sister.	← First Best Movie	Other Best Movie	<i>La La Land</i> . I've seen it a thousand times and it never gets old. I listen to the soundtrack in the car and drive my family crazy.

What I hate is the basting, the pinning, on your knees. I dread it. I have to go into the garage, on the concrete, because it's the only open space I have. But I'll tell you what: I'm eyeballing a conference table at work....!

(A quilty secret?) Charlie's super, super supportive. He'll even suggest to me, if I'm getting a little edgy, 'why don't you make something?' He knows it makes me happy and that it's calming. Then again, he also knows what it means when he hears me muttering a string of obscenities into my machine. He'll say, 'maybe it's time you take a break.' When he saw my [English paper-pieced] quilt hanging at the quilt show he asked, 'do you think people here know how many obscenities are in this quilt?'

Why do you continue to quilt? It's a fun release, and it's something I feel good about myself when I'm doing. And I love to give quilts as gifts. I think it means a lot to the person you give it to, that you spent all this time and effort. It means a lot to me that it means a lot to them.

Just the Facts, Ma'am

Born and raised: Warrior, Alabama, 25 miles north of Birmingham.

Here since: 2005.

First quilt: It was a janky little Star Trek quilt. I just wanted to see if I could do it. It's really so terrible, but everyone in the family loves it and we all cover up with it.

Favorite Place on the Peninsula: The beach. Any beach, really, but there's one spot where you go through the new VA hospital and across. There's a little cove that you wouldn't know is there. Oh, and also this couch. When I'm at work, I'm like 'oh gosh please, can I just have a moment when I don't have to do anything?'



(Part of an occasional series in which a MPQG member, chosen at random, is interviewed about their quilting journey. You can find all of the series interviews at <http://www.mpqg.org/member-interviews.htm>.)