

filzfun – The English Supplement

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Dear Readers,

Brightly-colored felted images, enchanting bracelets or stylish vessels – within this product range, felt artists like to combine feltmaking with decorative embroidery, thus enhancing their individual charm. The interdisciplinary artist Elena Kuki, for instance, uses hand and machine embroidery mainly as an ornament in accessories or clothing. Margot Krug, whom we portray as of page 28 is an expert on felted structural images. Many of her expressive images are embroidered with colorful beads or enhances certain contours with the sewing machine. Also, in her instructions – a wonderful upcycling project – the individually formed vessel made from wool remnants is rendered even more perfect by decorative elements such as beads, sequins or embroideries (Page 32). The Dutch textile artist Annemie Koenen is a specialist in the areas of feltmaking and embroidery and she expounds on the possibilities of combining those handicrafts. A further central matter of this filzfun issue is nature and its influence on the artists we present. The third portrait is dedicated to Jennifer

Pulley from the US, from Colorado. In great harmony, her clothing items mirror the great coloring of the Rocky Mountains. The Austrian felt artist Marlena Strauß brings small natural spirits, such as fairies, angels or witches to life (Page 42). The Finnish artist Karoliina Arvilommi, on the other hand, specializes in imaginary beings which are on show in her serial exhibition «Life Forms» (Page 10). Two further exhibits, «Disappearing Nature» (page 12) and «Charakterköpfe (Character Heads)» (page 16) would like to heighten the public's awareness of the human treatment of our planet.

In our second instalment of the serial «World of the Sheep» we have the pleasure to introduce Dörte Schlüter and her multi-colored Oessant flock. Helena Hermann's instructions to felt a bewitching little seahorse present another cute species.

We wish you lots of joy felting and an inspiring reading of the filzfun 80!

All the best,

Your filzfun team

NOTE

For reasons of environment protection, we decided to no longer add the English translation of most articles as a printed supplement to the filzfun issues going abroad but to offer it as a PDF on our website. The new approach will enable you to find and read selected articles and print them out only when you want to keep them.

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A new felt art pathway is in the makin

☞ The felt artists Monika Reindl and Michaela Kunzfeld would like to open a new felt-art hiking trail in Austria as of the middle of 2024. «We plan to provide information to bolster further education in the matter of sheep wool and the felting process», so the organizers say. On partial stretches of the idyllic Taggerwald hiking path in Kainbach, near Graz in the Steiermark, 20 stations with felted objects and information panels are planned. For the ultimate realization, the two organizers invite international felt artists to actively participate. All ideas and objects should be handed in by the end of November 2023. A jury will choose the objects that will be on permanent show. Please find further information and terms and conditions under: *filzkunst-wanderweg.at*

Creative Quilts in Luxembourg

The Quilt Art Group shows its exhibit «Following the thread» in Luxembourg in the nature reserve center/Cloth Manufacture in Esch-sur-Szre until September 10th 2023. All objects celebrate the innovative spirit and the rich heritage of women who make art with fabrics, needles and threads. The quilts are of an astounding variety and they sometimes don't answer to the traditional idea of a quilt. Each artist follows the threads in her own individual and special way. The show is accompanied by a catalogue which introduces the different art works and provides a glimpse into the artists' personal work processes. *naturpark-sure.lu*

Unique Felt Objects at the Rochlitz Mountain

In Saxonia, a felt art path themed «Kunst im Baum (Art of the Tree)» along the hiking paths around the Rochlitz mountain opens on September 17th 23. Over a period of six weeks, the visitors can see unique felted objects, made by artists from all over Germany and learn

more about the artful craft. Hiking with geo-rangers and felt courses for both kids and grownups are planned. *filz-fantasien.de*

As a Guest in Finland

The impressive felted image «Hello World» by Susanne Weber has been invited to Finland. It was chosen for the «Voyage – mini textile art exhibition» in the Finnish Arts and Craft Museum in Jyväskylä and is going to remain on show there from September 9th through December 3rd 2023. The Viennese artist depicted a curious being that takes in its first exciting glance at the world outside from its covert hidings. In her objects, Susanne Weber likes to play with the notions of light, fibers and secrets. «When felting, I like to log off and leave reality behind for a while. Whoever sees my work should feel the joy with which it was made», says the artist. This year, her felted image «Spring» in the group exhibit «Symphony of Flowers» was shown in Vienna and the image called «Lady Herbst (Lady Autumn)» at the Prague International Art Exhibition. *susifilzt.at*

11th Cloth Market in Bramsche

At the Clothmakers' Museum Bramsche you can learn about textiles of all kinds around the 11th Cloth Market starting September 10th 23. Many of the 30 people exhibiting had booths for many years, for example Karin Müller of the «Linner Filzart» or the felt artist Gabriele Mazaracis. But many new textile crafts people and textile artists show their works there as well, for example «Dornroesle» with her collection of ribbons and lacings or «Miss Weber», whose delicately woven scarves and ponchos made from Merino wool are on sale. The designer and textile artist Anette Rega brings along her unique objects dyed with blossoms, leaves and nutshells and the like. Old craft techniques like spinning, felting, dyeing and needle binding are waiting to be tried out by the public. Wool and materials of all kinds can be bought for upcoming projects. *tuchmachermuseum.de*

Fireworks of Colors

Within the framework of the Open Studio Days Brandenburg, the textile artist Sabine Reichert-Kassube invited to her fashion show «Fiber Dance»

☞ The fashion show as well as the accompanying exhibit «Vernetzung (Network)» took place at the Werenzia farm in Werenzhain in Southern Brandenburg. The village is well-known due to the artists' colony Atelierhof Werenzhain and the Felt Symposium that has been organized there by Maria Sigurna since 2012.

Queen of the Night

Against the clouded skies, the show was a veritable firework of colors. Sabine Reichert-Kassube had scheduled the catwalk according to certain chromatic circles or themes: the Queen of the Night in blue, the fates in red and green etc. The spectacular mosaic dresses, made from of hundreds of tiny felted tiles and silk fabrics, are remindful of works by the master builders Gaudí and Hundertwasser. A lady modelled such a dress in delicate lavender and rose hues that she had designed and made herself during a four-day course.

Wearable Fashion

Contrastively, the visitors were also presented with less extravagant garments: Sensible skirts and tunics made of vintage clothing, waste fabric and felted-in pantyhose. Reichert-Kassube's dresses not only meet the highest artistic standards, but are suitable for everyday use. This was further enhanced by the fact that all models are in their prime of life and full of zest.

A Magical, Bright World

The show was accompanied by harp music played by Sabine Raacke. The notes sparkled and coaxed, so that the ladies almost seemed to float in slow motion in the inner courtyard of the historical farm building despite strong gusts of wind. Such fairy-like slowness was well received by visitors and people interested in art, who took the delicate creations made of wool, silk and nobler fibers in from all sides, immersed in a magical, colorful world. ☞ The other show's theme «Vernetzung (Networking)» (which will be reported on in the forthcoming *filzfun* issue) was symbolically taken up during the fashion

show as well. The models handed out delicate Merino fibers or fragrant roses. Refreshments such as freshly baked cakes or drinks were served.

☞ For us women, it was an honor to model the varied, filigree and lovingly felted garments at the «Fiber Dance». Our thanks go to Sabine Reichert-Kassube, who has been the head of the Werenzia farm for three years and owns a feltmaking studio. With her felting courses and nature events she provides new experiences and is busy networking the interests of course participants and visitors. Her works mirror warmth, a zest for life and allows for glances into enchanted worlds.

CHRISTINE KREGE

Imaginary Living Beings

The Finnish artist Karoliina Arvilommi cunningly deals with life in its many manifestations in her serial show «Life Forms». Marvelous, exciting objects are in store for the lucky visitors!

☞ In her exhibit «Life Forms part 3» Karoliina Arvilommi presented her felted objects in the gallery Tyko in Nurmes, Finland, in the spring. «This exhibition is a take on life, its different shapes and forms of existence, from the past to an imagined future. The perspective of evolution, mythical phenomena and last but not least the connections that unite all living beings form part of this show,» claims the artist.

Creative Creatures

The brightly colored, expressive creatures – whether animals like turtles, fish or birds or other fantastic life forms are wet-felted from local, ecological wool, mostly Finnish Landrace. «I wash, dye and card the wool myself», explains Karoliina Arvilommi. For more than 20 years she has been working as a felt maker. «Felt as a material is so versatile to work with, it comes into being more out of a genuine feeling, since it is rather incalculable», she says enthusiastically. Her objects from the serial «Life Forms» were made over the last ten years. They consist of differently formed puzzle elements, each approx. 1 cm thick which will be put together anew at each new exhibition

site. These single, colorful elements have the power to change into new characters, creatures and beings each time.

A Childlike Perspective

Karoliina Arvilommi wants to make people smile and to convey a feeling of joy and lightheartedness through her art. Viewing the world in a childlike way, innocent yet with all senses alert, is an aspect of our lives that is so often missing for many people, according to her. The Finnish artist is convinced that it is crucial to regain this perspective on life for our own mental health and well-being. One female visitor made a lovely comment: «It is childlike without being childish, light but with deep in meaning.» «Our objects have simply been very well received», Karoliina Arvilommi is happy to report. She is already busy planning the next exhibitions. With her are again Marjaana Rotko and Pirjo Nylander who artistically approach the same subject, with hand-built Finnish earthen- and stoneware instead.

Exhibition Schedule

Another instalment of the serial exhibition «Life Form» will be on show at the gallery Kaamos, Kuusamo, Finland in March 2024. ☞ Please find the exact dates and further information about the Finnish artist Karoliina Arvilommi under *liinalommi.com* *Instagram: @karoliina.arvilommi*

VALESKA GEHRKE

The Ice is Melting

Everywhere in the world, the climate change makes itself felt in many different areas of life – either as a sudden catastrophe or as a slow process. «Disappearing Nature», an Icelandic-Finnish joint exhibit in the felto-Filzwelt Soltau, deals with that scenario

☞ Whoever works with a natural material like felt feels a special closeness with the environment. So, it came as no surprise that there was a travelling show titled «The Climate Changes», a joint venture organized by IFA, Filz-Netzwerk and Coordinamento Tessitori in 2010. In 2019, Icelandic and Finnish felt artists depicted this perspective more acutely in calling for objects that dealt with the disappearing

nature. The objects presented were chosen by a jury. Curated by Anna Gunnarsdottir, the exhibit «Disappearing Nature» opened in the Akureyri Art Museum in Iceland. After forced delays due to the pandemic and several stops in Finland, it can be seen now in comparatively southern regions thanks to the commitment of the filtti event coordinator Sirpa Mäntylä for the first time. Until November 24th, the art objects made by fifteen Finnish and six Icelandic artists will be an attraction at the felto - Filzwelt Soltau.

From Sculptures to Garments

Snow and ice, glaciers and water play a crucial role in many of those works, but also animals and plants, the air and the earth come into view. The range of designs covers the abstract and the concrete, of painting, sculptural work and garments. Felt was combined or processed further in part with other handicrafts, such as embroidery, knitting and printing. ☞ Tiina Mikkela made a splendid pair of boots titled «On the wayside». It shines verdant and is opulently embroidered with beautiful meadow flowers. On first glance, nature doesn't seem to vanish but to bloom. But if you take a closer look, you see that the boots are differently decorated: a colorful plant variety on one, blue and white lupines on the other. The commentary explains why: the latter threaten and supplant autochthonous plant species in Finland.

A Melting Frost Pattern

Also in many other artistic approaches something disquieting hovers behind a beautiful façade. For instance, Rea Pelto-Uotila's contribution «The Ice is Melting». It looks like a beautiful frosted pattern on a window pane – but there is an empty spot in the middle and water-blue drops form in the frozen ‚foliage'.

☞ Their engagement has changed the way of working of some of the artists: Leena Aalto used only material from her own stock, while Leena Sipilä declined to use soap and saved water whenever it was possible. ☞ Consequently, the exhibition should enhance the visitors' awareness that – while enjoying the art involved – each and every one can have a share that nature will not merely continue to live on in our memory.

Exhibition and Workshop Included

The show «Disappearing Nature» can be seen at the felto-Filzwelt Soltau until November 24th 2023.

☞ On November 11th and 12th 2023, Anna Gunnarsdottir, the show’s co-organizer, will hold her course «Light Objects». The artist is well-known for her characteristic, big-size felted objects that often have been inspired by the sea and are remindful of shell forms. Application and further information under filzwelt-soltau.de

ANTJE ERNST

PAGES 14-15

The Imaginary Felted Rooms of the Nagy and Vidák Families

With a joint felt exhibit, the families of Mari Nagy and István Vidák celebrated spring in Kecskemet, Hungary. All five family members, mother, father, daughter, son and the 13-year old granddaughter, have furnished an imaginary room with felted objects

The first room belongs to István and shows a shaman carpet and other rugs, inspired by ones of Koprivshztiza in Bulgaria. As I was born in Bulgaria, those were of special interest to me. These 200 to 250 year-old carpets, the oldest in Europe, which are on display in the little town of Koprivshztiza are a powerful inspiration indeed. But the times to value such things come and go. There were even times when such precious textiles were cut to pieces and used elsewhere. Since I love to felt carpets like those of Koprivshztiza, I can only hope that our elders’ beautiful symbols, like the wheel, the river of life and gardens in heaven and on earth will live on and find new interpretations.

The Second Chamber

This is Mari’s room and here you find yourself suddenly in the open markets of Mumbai and Delhi. Her world is brightly colored. Since 2008, the family has been travelling to India almost every year, and Mari always brings home an original Sari, a traditional garment for women, which she adorns further with wool, cotton, silk, batik, dyeing and printing. One of those saris is decorated with a sun on its back, another has turned into a wonderful, rainbow-colored shawl.

The Third Room

Here their son István shows his felted carpets. Next to a traditional carpet

from Kazachstan, one can admire his own newly designed patterns and color combinations. One blue carpet especially catches the eye. It is made from pre-felt, the back is brown, which shimmers through the surface.

In the Center of the Exhibition Space

Here are the felted seasonal circles done as carpets: Winter, spring and autumn. But where’s the summer? István chuckles: «It’s on its way to Budapest for an exhibition.»

The Fourth Chamber

A very lovable room belongs to Hanna, the granddaughter. At only nine years, she has already felted her first childrens’ rug. On this playful piece you can see a horse, a dog, a cat and birds.

The Last Room: Anna Vidák’s Snuggery

The last room is presented by daughter Anna. Through a stipend, she was able to design a series of felted clothes and worked together with a seamstress. Each single piece is very artfully made and embroidered in the lavish Hungarian style. Anna’s clothes will surely find their way into other shows as well.

White Flags

Throughout the exhibition premises, sunlit white felted flags waft, a hundred in all. The Mari Nagy family and István Vidák made them, together with 70 felters, 20 embroiderers and 10 bobbin lace makers. Each of those flags stands for a year of peace, counted with joy and hope since the end of World War I. This installation seemed to me so transparent and fragile. But it is aimed at bringing people together through the magical material wool and the sacred white color.

SVETLANA KAMPS, MARI NAGY AND ISTVÁN VIDÁK

PAGES 16-17

Felted Heads of Character

Within the scope of the project «Kunst bis in die letzte Ecke (Art to the Last Corner)», the felt artist Angela Teuchert showed her animal and human heads of character in a small studio in the district museum Zons in the spring

Carried by Friedrich von Schiller’s quotation «Freundschaft, nicht Geburt, macht uns zu Brüdern (Friendship, not birth, makes us brothers)», Angela Teuchert built a bridge between animal and human heads, all of which are dignified and special. Each living being is unique in its different ways: perfectly formed, beautiful, individual and multi-faceted. Only by treating our animal fellow-beings with respect and curiosity, we can value this wealth surrounding us, to protect it and to understand our brotherly relationship. Representative of the countless inhabitants of the earth, Angela Teuchert crafted a life-like Galapagos iguana, the portrait of the changeable chameleon and human felted busts. Each have their own character and special charm.

Expressive Eyes

Angela Teuchert looks closely at those faces. In all her works, the huge, expressive eyes are of great fascination. These see the appearance, but also what remains hidden in each of us, what makes us like nobody else, the whole beauty of being.

☞ The sculptures and figures develop their individuality during the creative process, thus connecting artist and object. Ideas come to mind and there are always obstacles to overcome. An inner peace can settle in, being content – this gives us strength for every day’s chores and routines, but most importantly, it encourages a person so inclined to make art.

How the Characters Are Made

The sustainable material sheep wool is well fitted for the evolution of expression. The pieces are needle-felted in many layers. At times, something like a skin is made in wet-felting and Nuno technique. The felt maker is always involved in the process and regains mastery over herself and her work, step by step. Felting is a relaxing part of her life and work as a psychologist and behavioral therapist. In her felt objects, Angela Teuchert deals with sociopolitical issues like refugees, criticizes the German Educational System or the way to deal with disabled persons., Upon reflection on these issues, the artist makes sculptures that tell their own stories under a contingency approach. The small but exquisite presentation «Kunst bis in die letzte Ecke» held at the Kreismuseum Zons had the quality of both being inspiring on the spur and wanting to learn more about these

important issues. May we all find and cherish the awareness for a respectful and friendly companionship with all characters in our lives.

ULRIKE STENGELE

PAGES 18-19

Transparent Dream Dresses

Five students felted excellent garments with the felt artist Charity van der Meer-Musoma in the ‚Wampendobler Paradise‘

One should already have some experience in wet-felting for this course, but Charity van der Meer-Musoma brought the subject matter close by having us make a ‚small‘ trial piece. «This piece is already so well thought-out that you can make a whole piece of clothing of it. You can see your first success after a relatively short period of time and how the small project implies to a bigger one», says the participant Viktoria Frühwirt. Fresh ideas were obtained through a small fashion show of van der Meer-Musoma’s astounding garments. «All we did was wonder how on earth we could ever leave this course with a similarly great dress!», another participant, Uli Reiterer, recalls.

Wide-Swinging and Colorful

At the beginning of the second day, the dress resists were made. Some students decided on widely swinging dresses, others preferred a less opulent flare. The projects ranged from a short beach dress, brightly colored evening dresses to festive robes. One participant felted her own bridal dress for her forthcoming wedding. We thought at which areas the dress should be just a hint of nothing, i.e., transparent, and where it should be opaque. How such transparency was achieved depended on the individual design. Various silks, such as Pongé or Margilan were used. Sometimes fibers were felted, sometimes wool cords in different thickness. We made ‚sandwiches‘ from two layers Margilan silk, in between wool, yarns or single fibers were placed. In between there was another piece of silk fabric.

A Treasure Chest of Expertise

Thanks to the great skills and experience of our teacher even short-time alterations were no problem. Charity van der Meer-

Musoma had a solution for each question and a heart for every wish. She even gave a brief digression into various dyeing techniques. The course was further enhanced by those side topics and given the small number of participants, the individual support and learning were perfect.

Beautiful Atmosphere

The breaks we took for lunch and coffee always came at the right time to regain our strength. «Marc and Petra are so hospitable and staying there left nothing to be desired. During these four days we made impressive, touching garments, always in a great mood», as per Viktoria Frühwirt. «In the end we modelled our beautiful summer dresses in delicate, transparent, swinging and flowing combinations of silk and felt», confirms Uli Reiterer enthusiastically, adding: «To learn from Charity van der Meer-Musoma in the Wampendobler paradise was a wonderfully funny, interesting, creative and instructive felt workshop. I look forward to the next one there!»

MARC HERRMANN

PAGES 22-27

Nature Love as an Initial Spark

The interdisciplinary artist Elena Kuki is an enthusiastic felt maker as well. In combination with decorative embroidery, she makes bewitching accessories in warm, natural shades. With her art objects she wants to promote a respectful interaction with our planet in people

«Through felting I have begun to explore my artistic potential», Elena Kuki says. She was born in Russia and has been working as a teacher of Applied Arts for 17 years. 2013 she came to the United States to marry her husband. They lived in Maryland until 2016 when they moved to Lake Placid in New York’s Adirondack Mountains. They both have daughters from previous marriages.

☞ In 2016, she grasped the opportunity to wholeheartedly pursue the felting craft. «It is an opportunity to use my previous knowledge and experience in different techniques», she says. In her home country, she had studied art and fashion design and became very well-

known for her fantasy and folk costumes for television shows. She is also a gifted painter, using oil and acrylic paints plus water colors.

Embroidered Garments and Accessories

Nowadays, Elena works mostly in Fiber Art in combination with hand- and machine embroidery. «I used to make clothes from manufactured fabrics – now I can create my own art fabric.» The 54-year-old lady revels in the endless possibilities of feltmaking. The manifold results are fetchingly embroidered felt bracelets and chains, tops but also abstract sculptures, tapestries or paintings. «I mostly use hand and machine embroidery as a decorative element for accessories and clothing. Sometimes embroidery seems to help to get to the unexplored potentials of a wool project. She claims, with a twinkle in her eyes, there is no such thing as a failed felting project!

The Love for the Mountains

In her works, she uses Merino wool from different countries: Italy, Australia, Russia and local sheep wool from New York State. «I also like fabrics from India, Uzbekistan and Germany. Sometimes in search of something unusual, I visit the Mood fabric store in New York City», Elena Kuki recommends. Special effects are achieved through color combinations and differently textured materials. Nature is her main source of inspiration. Despite having lived the greater part of her life in cities, she has always been drawn to mountain areas. «I was born in the vicinity of mountain ranges, but then my family moved to another part of the country, when I was still very young. However, I grew up with tales of the mountain queen and a visit to a geologist’s home in my early childhood instilled within me a lifelong love of minerals», the artist tells us.

«My Small Switzerland»

When she moved to the US, more precisely to New York State and there to Lace Placid, she found herself in a beautiful mountain area, fringed by picturesque lakes. For Elena Kuki «it’s a little Switzerland in America.» She loves to go hiking in the Adirondacks or kayaking on the many lakes. «Here I became one with nature and I came to understand how civilization and technical advancements distance people from nature», she tells us, and expounds

further: «The preservation of the planet by showing respect for local traditions, nature and her spirit are crucial issues for me.» These issues clearly reflect on her objects – whether in shape, color or motif. With her bracelet series «Evening in the Mountains,,» for instance, she gathers up all atmospheric colors of a mountain range. In another series, she depicts the elements fire, water, earth, air and light by means of impressive, wet-felted sculptures and vessels. «I am very fond of asymmetry and I love the pure colors of nature,» Elena Kuki describes her objects, which come into being in her studio that looks out on the nearby forests.

Animal Help

«Mostly, I do have a plan for my projects, but if inspiration strikes, I can switch to something else spontaneously», she explains. A valuable assistant is her cat Zosya, who is in charge of boosting morale. «When I'm not looking, she plays with the wool. Then she nestles on the sofa and acts as if nothing had happened», chuckles the artist. Elena Kuki shows her felt objects in group exhibits there and abroad and sells her work in local galleries or online. In the future she would love to hold a solo exhibition in a big city. Until then she is quite pleased – in strict accordance to her life's motto «Looking for the Extraordinary within the Ordinary» – to strive for harmony in her art and to feel one with herself and nature. Elena Kuki believes: «Love for nature is love for life itself.»

More information

Please find more information about the artist and her interdisciplinary approach on
Instagram: @elena.kuki.felt (Felted objects)
Instagram: @kuki.elena.art (Painting and other art forms)

VALESKA GEHRKE

PAGES 28-31

Creating Wool Structures

Margot Krug has been a feltmaker for many years, but only recently she discovered the felted structural images which she makes with great skill and passion

«I mostly find my ideas or the desired shape in nature and I try to recreate it with wool», says Margot Krug. «In structured images, wool can speak», she is convinced. The desired form is first sketched. Then she arranges and dyes the wool and silk for each project. «Sometimes I find a beautiful piece of wool or other natural materials around which I make my felted images», she describes her way of working. Her images – for instance discs from delicate fibers and gossamer silk – invite the spectator to take a closer look. One feels like touching them. «This aspect as well shows in my work. I insert exchangeable spheres or other loose parts that can always be altered», the artist tells us.

Individual Expression

The felt artist embroiders many of her images with colorful beads which give them each a unique character. She emphasizes single contours with the sewing machine. «It is typical for my work that the wool is always really firmly felted. Loose felt is not for me.» Key aspects of her long career as a feltmaker have shifted over time.
 ~ «In the beginning, I mainly felted bags, small and big ones and I liked them colorful. These were followed by delicate shawls and clothes as well as fine fabrics», she remembers. Most challenging for her is the felting of clothes. She likes to combine different techniques and materials, for instance she sews clothes from felt and other fabrics like fulled wool. «To revamp old jeans jackets by inserting felted parts is a great upcycling project», according to Margot Krug.

From Basement to Attic

For a long time, she experimented a lot and deepened her experience and skills during courses held by well-known felt artists. «From 2014 to 2016 I studied at the Obberrot Felting School. I learned a lot about fibers, fabrics, wool, felting and dyeing from this adult education program», she remembers. Margot Krug has been hosting her own feltmaking workshops in her studio in Gunzenhausen and at the VHS Gunzenhausen for many years.
 ~ For fifty years she lived in a beautiful big farmhouse together with her husband and her two kids. «The kids have long moved out. Now we live in a smaller house at the enchanting Altmühlsee. And my studio is no longer in the basement in the former washhouse, but at a sunlit top floor», she describes her working

place. Central is a big table, surrounded by drawers, cupboards and chests full of suitable material. «I can work on any idea anytime with anything», she is pleased to report.
 ~ Those ideas keep coming and some of them are adamant to be realized at once. «Felting is so much fun, because there are endless possibilities to find expression. Be it a three-dimensional object or a tiny, true-to-nature blossom, everything is possible. Imagination is unlimited!», Margot Krug knows.

Felting Together

Her expertise is passed on in courses and she rejoices in the happy faces of the participants, once they have their first feeling of felting achievement. Felting for Margot Krug is not only a hobby and a true passion, but also stands for «relaxation and the love of company. To meet nice people and spend entertaining, interesting hours with them. I always meet my feltmaking friends at felting events and trips we take together. Over the years I found many new friends», she says, beaming.

Margot Krug

Her objects can be seen on a regular basis in the «Kleine Galerie» in Feuchtwangen and on different regional fairs. Please find more information and current dates under
 margotkrug.de
 Facebook: @Filzatelier Margot Krug

VALESKA GEHRKE

PAGES 32-37

TUTORIAL

How to Use Wool Remnants in a Sensible Way

In these instructions, Margot Krug shows how to make an individual, up-cycled vessel from collected waste wool fibers

MATERIAL

- 400 g waste wool
- Different kinds of waste material, i.e., rovings, fleeces, pre-felt, partially felted pieces and cuts, silk waste, wool threads
- Quality of the material: Mountain Sheep

- or Merino, delicate or coarsely fibered, the wool must felt well.
- Sorting: either a colorful mix or arranged per color gradations
- Accessories upon request: beads, sequins, buttons etc.
- 100 g of Mountain Sheep wool (or another, similar quality with a fiber thickness of approx. 28 mic) as a stabilizing intermediate layer for form and support

Felting Equipment:

2 skid-proof mats or bubble foil, thick sound insulation foil for the resist, striated fulling mat, ball sprinkler, soap (e.g. olive soap), cloth, warm water, vinegar concentrate, pool noodle as a fulling core, tumbler, fulling pin, scales, pliers, scissors, rubber gloves if needed

INSTRUCTIONS

A felted vessel made of waste wool material is a wonderful project and always comes out as a surprise: You can never tell how the different kinds of wool and the colors connect. Form can also take on a playful aspect. The vessel introduced here is just a suggestion – depending on your material you may alter the design.

Advice

This up-cycling project is rather demanding, the implementation requires stamina and previous felting experience. Since the work piece should be turned around many times, I recommend to read the whole manual through first to get an overview.

1 Cut the resist from the thick sound insulation foil. The edges should be easy to feel, so that the wool can be folded over precisely. The finished product will be 25 to 30 % smaller than the resist.

2 The workpiece will have three layers on each side: An inner one consisting of wool waste, a middle layer (which remains unseen) made from Mountain Sheep wool and the decorative outer layer, again from wool. The layers are put on alternately on the front and on the back of the resist. The work piece has to be turned over many times. Weigh each wool layer before and label it (Image 2a), since the material requirements differ due to the folded-over protrusions. So bulges can be avoided and a certain smoothness is easier to achieve. Use the following amounts

	Inner layer 200g	Middle layer 100g	Outer layer 200g
Layer with protrusion (3/5 th of the amount)	120g	60g	120g
Layer without protrusion (2/5 th of the amount)	80g	40g	80g

Use the better-looking waste for the outer layer, e.g. the crazier colors, the more interesting cut-outs or the more daring accessories.
 ~ It may be that especially already felted-on waste material is too firm and therefore difficult to felt in later. This doesn't really matter, sometimes this makes for decorous effects. If desired, the sturdy waste can be cut or torn moderately.

3 Put the resist on the mat (Image 3a) Distribute 120 g wool for the inner layer evenly on the resist and let the wool protrude at about two fingers' breadth at the edge (Image 3b). Keep feeling with your hands whether everything is spread out evenly.

4 As soon as the resist is covered all-over, check for eventual thinner areas and fill them out. The whole designated amount of wool should be used to render the vessel stable.

5 Moisten the workpiece first with the ball sprinkler, starting from the middle over the whole surface and then wet it well with warm soapy water.

6 Cover the moist wool with the mat. If needed, spray on more soapy water and glide over the mat with a piece of soap. Rub the wool from the middle to the edges so everything is well moistened. Do not felt on yet.

7 Turn the workpiece around with the help of the two mats by gripping both mats and the workpiece in between firmly and turning the whole arrangement around carefully.

8 Remove the upper mat and put it aside. Align the protruding wool fibers close to the resist's edge, moisten it and

press it lightly with your fingers. Take care that the wool encloses the resist tightly.

9 Distribute the remaining 80 g inner layer wool evenly. The folded-fibers should overlap, not protrude. Gauge the surface for eventual thin areas again and if any, fill them out. Pay attention to sheer areas at the edges.

10 Wet the wool with soapy water, cover it with the mat, soap and thoroughly moisten it and press it flat. Don't felt on it and don't turn it around. By not turning the workpiece around you get an even bond at the edges.

11 Take the mat off. Now lay out 60 g of the Mountain Sheep middle layer; the wool should protrude over the edges at two fingers' breadth. Then moist it with warm soapy water.

12 Cover the layer with a mat, soap it lightly and flatten it. The wool should be thoroughly moist.

13 Turn the workpiece around again with the help of the two mats. Because it gets heavier during the process, have a safe grip so neither the mats nor the workpiece in between will skid.

14 Take the covering mat away and fold the edges over tightly. If necessary, flatten everything with soapy fingers.

15 Gauge all edges smoothly and firmly. If the protrusion is too little or you find gaps, correct it by putting some material under the workpiece and flatten it evenly after the folding over. Don't turn around.

16 Put the remaining 40 g of Mountain Sheep wool on evenly. Cover the folded-over protrusions thinly with wool to avoid bulging at the edges.

17 Spray the wool with soapy water again, cover it with a mat and rub. Don't felt on, don't turn it around.

18 Lay out 120 g of the exterior layer in a decorative way. Here you can play around to your heart's content with different materials such as wool threads, silk and pre-felt waste. You can shape silk or fabrics as a spiral or a blossom (18 b) Important: Save some decorations for the second exterior part.

19 Moisten the colorful layers, put the mat on top, rub it with soap and repeat the above steps, but don't felt it. Turn the workpiece within the two mats around.

20 Remove the covering mat. Fold the edges cleanly at the rim. If there is too little wool around the rim, patch it.

21 Put the remaining 80 g of the decorative outer layer on and sprinkle it with soapy water.

22 Important: Please take good care that the mat doesn't felt together with the wool, that's why you have to lift the mat off from time to time. The purpose of this stage in the felting process is that no fibers loosen themselves anymore from the surface. Turn the work piece around carefully, again using the two mats. Wipe away any dripping water.

23 The first milestone is reached: The surface has connected well, there are no longer parts that become loose.

24 Now felt on the edges, by folding the mat around the edges and rubbing everything with soapy hands until the fibers have fully connected. Then it's time for fulling!

25 Put the workpiece in between two mats and roll it loosely on the core. A lot of water will be coming out, so have a rag handy.

26 Roll it up firmly into a bigger, thin cloth. It keeps the rolled-up workpiece together and prevents too much shifting inside. Roll it back and forth under light pressure approx. 30 times and wipe the water off. Important: Rolling makes the workpiece shorter along the direction you roll. Take care to make the same exact number of rolling movements for each step in order to maintain the initial proportions. But, of course, you can change them altogether if you feel like it.

27 Unpack the workpiece and turn it around 180 degrees. Roll it loosely up from this side, as in the steps described above. Then roll it firmly up in a cloth and roll the bundle back and forth 30 times under light pressure. Unpack it and pull it cautiously into form.

28 Roll the workpiece up from the remaining two sides, then wrap it in a piece of cloth and roll it back and forth 30 times. After each opening, cautiously pull it in form. Keep the number of rollings constant to save the proportions.

Now turn the workpiece around, so that the lower side is on top. Roll it up once more from all four sides, wrap it up and roll it 30 times. As soon as it feels sturdy and well-felted on the outside put the core and the mats aside.

29 Roll the workpiece up without the core or a mat, wrap it up tightly in a cloth and full it strongly 30 times in each direction. Open the bundle from time to time, pull the workpiece in shape and roll it up from another side and full again.

30 Once the resist bulges, the vessel can be cut open. Carefully cut an opening from the direction of the upper tip with a sharp pair of scissors. Cut the whole inner edge open to the other tip and remove the resist. Be really careful. You can always make the opening a little bigger, but you cannot felt anything back together once it's too big.

31 Turn the workpiece around to its left side, roll it up and full it in a cloth with some force. Pull it in shape after each opening. The turning around smoothes the previously outside part considerably. Full until the cutting edges are blunt and don't look like cuts anymore. Turn the piece again to its right side.

32 Smooth and densify the uneven parts with the fulling pin, in case of worked-in sequins work around them so they won't tear off. When the desired size and stability has been reached, the vessel can be brought into shape. The resist should now be 25 to 30 % bigger than the finished container.

33 After drying, you can sew any loose parts back on with decorative stitches or beads.

34 In case of any soapy water left, wring it or tumble the workpiece. Put it in the middle of the tumbler. Rinse it with clear water, squeeze and tumble it. At the end, rinse the vessel in vinegar water, wring it and tumble it once more. If you use your washing machine, please

take care to tumble without the rinse cycle!

35 Shape the bottom into an oval with the fulling pin.

36 Any uneven parts at the edges you can carefully set straight with pliers.

37 Round the outer edges with the fulling pin, roll the long tip in a bit and bend it towards the middle. Roll the cut edges slightly to the inside. Cut protruding fabrics or felt pieces away carefully or fix them with nice stitches or beads.

38 The finished up-cycled vessel puts in quite an appearance!

INSTRUCTIONS: MARGOT KRUG

PAGES 38-41

The Colors of the Rockies

Colorado's awesome nature, its sunlight and wool from local farms – these are the ingredients Jennifer Pulley needs to make her bewitching felted garments happen

«I find inspiration in flowers, trees, textures of rock and all the colors in nature», says the 36-year-old artists who only started felt making three years ago. «I saw a felted garment online and was mesmerized by the textures and colors and I wanted immediately to learn how it was made», she recalls. On Facebook she found a dedicated and lively wet felting group that introduced her to free tutorials and classes online. «I've learned so much from being a part of that wonderful community,» she says, still reveling in her enthusiasm.

Atmosphere in Light and Color

She prefers using alpaca, merino and cashmere from local farms there in Colorado. The eye-catchers in her scarves, all in balanced color combinations, are the discretely added structures which are made with additional materials such as yarn, silk, cheesecloth or simply natural materials. «Also, vintage scarves or clothing are a fun alternative work into my designs», the nature-lover explains. Many of her felted works are of a pastel

brown, green or yellow which echo the colors and light of the great Rocky Mountains in Colorado. When she's not busy felting, Jennifer Pulley likes to hike with her husband and 7 years old son and to explore new places.

To Feel the Wool

According to the mood she's in, she either creates spontaneously or she plans and creates a template. But most of all, she wants to really feel the wool. «Only then I feel entirely connected. That's why I felt with my bare hands and can't stand using gloves», she admits. Her garments are mostly made in the Nuno felting technique. «I'd like to explore more shibori and sculptural wet felting in the future. Further I'd like to get more into abstract art and vessels», says the devoted felt maker, who has mainly been making clothing so far. «I can still learn so very much. I've recently been exploring 3-D textures utilizing pre-felt and I have started to dye my own fibers. It is a lot of fun but also challenging.»

A Studio of her Own

Feltmaking takes on various meanings for the US American lady. «It brings joy and mindfulness and relieves stress», Jennifer Pulley believes. She still holds a conventional job at an office. Currently, she is selling her work under her business label «Colorado Felt». But some things are about to change. «It is my dream to step away from computer work, I'd love to have my own felting studio place and build a local felting community.» Please find more information about the artist and photographs of her work on *Instagram: colorado_felt*

VALESKA GEHRKE

PAGES 42-43

Witchcraft in the Basement

In her basement, the Austrian Marlina Strauß brings fairies, witches and other fancy folks to life

«If I were to determine a focus of my feltmaking, it would be fairies, witches and angels for Christmas», says Marlina Strauß. Her studio is in the basement of her house in Stanz, and since her husband lovingly calls her «Witch», her son, now six

years old, combined all this information: «Mama is a basement witch.» But she felts so many more objects: from images for greeting cards (see instructions in the filzfun 79) to vases, cachepots, sculptures, backpacks to clothing and accessories like headbands, hats or spectacle cases. «I felt everything I can think of. I love the variety, having lots of ideas and changeableness – I have finally found my ideal material», she says enthusiastically.

«My Magic»

About five years ago, she took her first felting course when she still was a stay-at-home mom. Mesmerized by the many different possibilities, combinations and techniques offered, she taught herself wet-felting with the help of online tutorials and took courses with Beate Bossert and Annemie Koenen. Shortly afterwards, she took her first steps toward self-employment under the label «Kellerhexe (Basement Witch)», a decision she hasn't rued to this day. «I get all my power and energy from my work. Felting stands for my personal adjustment, my magic and my development», she beams, adding: «I love that all my ideas seem to work out fine and I am always amazed at my own creations.»

From Quaint to Kittenish

When wet-felting she likes to work in the resist technique, using wool from Tyrolese Mountain sheep provided by the Ötz Valley Sheep Wool Center Regensburger, or Merino. For her figurines, also viscose, hemp, flax or cotton come into use. «My objects are rather 'classical': monochromous, simple and natural. Colors, yes, but never loud ones. That might be the reason why my products are also liked by people who are usually not much taken with felted objects», she thinks. And indeed, many of her wearable objects, regardless whether it is a backpack, a hat or a headband, are of a reserved, functional and classical design. Yet her sweet angels, fairies or witches are of a playful nature, with a great love for detail, like with delicate braids, Alice bands or a witches' broom. «A room full of a thousand of those small, flying fairies would be wonderful», so the Tyrolese's dream of her own exhibition. She is a bit of a day dreamer and takes the rough with the smooth, as she says with a smile. What is her wish for the future? «To be able to make a good living off my calling, to continue brimming over with ideas, to create networks and to venture into

unknown artistic areas», the bubbly felt artist tells us, ending with: «And then I would like to die in good health after a long, creative life as a felt artist.»

Marlena Strauss

The Austrian felt artist offers her products on regional fairs, online and in a small self-service shop she has with two other self-employed women. Find more infos under *kellerhexe.at*
Instagram: @kellerhexe.at
Facebook: @kellerhexe

VALESKA GEHRKE

PAGES 44-51

TUTORIAL

An Enchanted Sea Horse

felt artist Helena Hermann shows how the little sea creatures come into being in a filzfun step-by-step instruction

MATERIAL

- very fine fleece (in this project South African Merino, 23 mic) in lilac, approx. 25 g for the body, 5 g of rose-colored wool for the belly and 2 to 2.5 g red-purple wool for the fins and the dorsal ridge
- optional: different fibers in natural colors and some roving to decorate (in this project, again optional for example Throwsters Waste Silk, mulberry silk, viscose und roving Floating Color «Malve»
- 2 round black glass beads (diameter 6 mm), transparent sewing yarn, matching sewing yarn (optional), very fine sewing or bead needle, pins
- delicate Rocaille pearls in matching colors (optional)
- fine felting needle (triangular or swiveled, thickness 40) and a mat for dry-felting (if not handy, dishwashing sponge or a piece of foam)
- 1 round chop stick
- a precision scale or a special accuracy weighing machine, or a digital kitchen scale
- for the resist: sound insulation foil, 1 DIN-A-4 sheet of square paper, millimeter paper, 1 ruler, pencil or fine liner, water-proof pen, a sharp pair of scissors

- Felting Equipment: skid-proof felting mat (e.g. anti-skid mat for drawers), 2 pieces of bubble foil about 30 x 40 cm, 1-2 towels, 1 piece about 30 x 40 cm nylon gauze or fly-screen, ball sprinkler (optional), warm water, soap (e.g. olive soap), vinegar.

INSTRUCTIONS

Tip: Precision scales come in very handy for this project, since the wool has to be divided into tiny portions. If you don't own one, weigh the wool by means of kitchen scales in the smallest amounts possible and divide them further under visual judgment. In the instructions you will find the precise number of grams.

1 Draw the sea horse resist true to scale on a squared DIN-A-4 sheet or directly onto millimeter paper. Then transfer the resist's contours with a waterproof pen onto the sound insulation foil and cut it out. Draw the lines A, B and C onto both sides of the resist.

2 Weigh 15 g of the lilac-colored wool for the body's filling and put it aside for later. Weigh another 3 g of the remaining wool and divide this piece into two equal parts. Put the resist onto the bubble side of the bubble foil piece. Layer the resist with a part of the wool (approx. 1.5 g) evenly and thin. In the middle of the resist the wool should only be laid out as far as the lines A, B and C. At the contours of the resist's edges, the wool should slightly stick out, about 0.5 mm to 1 cm)

3 Now moisten the wool cautiously with the lukewarm soapy water by means of a ball sprinkler or with your hands. Put a second piece of bubble foil with the bubbles pointing to the wool-covered resist and flatten it down in slight movements, so that the moisture spreads evenly and the air is pressed out of the wool. As soon as the wool fibers are 'glued' flat onto the resist, turn the whole package (consisting of two pieces of bubble foil with the resist in the middle) onto the other side, again with care.

4 Pull away the first foil, which is on top with caution. Fold the protruding fibers closely around the edges and smooth them with your fingers. If there are any wrinkles, flatten them. Should the wool around the tail have spread out too wide, lift the resist lightly and wrap

around one side lengthwise around the tail, then do the same with the other side.

5 Now lay out the resist's second side with a further amount of 1.5 g lilac-colored wool. Leave the areas of the dorsal fin, the ridge and a strip on the belly free. Sprinkle it with a little water, put the bubble foil onto it and proceed like in step 3. Turn the workpiece around.

6 Fold the protruding fibers at the edges around the rim and flatten them out.

7 Divide about 2 g of red-violet wool in two equal parts and put away one part for the back. Lay out the areas of the dorsal fin and the ridge with the other part (approx. 0.3 g for the dorsal fin and 0.7 g for the ridge). Pay attention: At the resist's edges the wool should be laid out slightly over the edge. If you want the partition between body, fin and ridge to be visible more sharply, fold in darker wool at the lines A and B.

8 Moisten the dorsal fin and the ridge with water, put the bubble foil as described on top, flatten it and turn the workpiece around. Fold the protruding wool tightly around the edges and smooth it out.

9 Now layer the dorsal fin and the ridge on the other side with the second part of red-violet wool as described in steps 7 and 8.

10 Weigh 1 g of the rose-colored wool and divide this piece into two equal parts for the front and the back side. The light strip on the belly should be covered with 0.5 g of wool. Think of the small protrusion at the edge (Image 10 a) Moisten it with water, put a piece of bubble foil over it, flatten it evenly and turn it around. Remove the foil carefully and fold the protruding wool over at the rim. (Image 10b)

11 Repeat step 10 on this side. Turn the workpiece over.

12 In that step, the volume of the belly is built up. Weigh 2.5 g from the rose-colored wool and divide the piece into 5 strips. With each of those strips one of the belly elements is formed. Due to this, they should have a thicker middle and the length should be so adapted that one belly element each can be capped from each side of the resist

(see image 12) The strips are displayed evenly on the belly now.

13 Lay out small pieces of roving between the single woolen strips at the belly. If no roving is at hand, twist any other colored wool between your fingers and put it on. These strips are meant to make the contrasts stronger and are optional.

14 Moisten the belly with water, then cover it with bubble foil and turn it around. Smooth the rose-colored woolen strips tightly around the edges, then put the pieces of roving more or less exactly like on the other side in between the rose-colored wool strips.

15 Now comes the building up of the cheeks. Fold the 2 equal parts of lilac-colored wool (each approx. 0.35 g) into disc shapes and felt them on lightly with the felting needle. The two discs should have a diameter of 2.5 and be really soft still.

16 Now one disc is put onto the middle of the head and...

17 ...covered with a few wool flakes, so that the discs' sharp outlines are hidden. Smooth the passages with soapy fingers cautiously. You can also fix the whole 'cheek' with a few stitches with the felting needle at the layer underneath the cheeks. Put your stitches parallel to the resist and let the needle not get in too deep so the wool isn't pinned to the resist foil.

18 At the end, the whole body (with the exception of fin, ridge and belly) gets covered with another layer of lilac-colored wool (approx. 2 g per each side of the body). At this point, uneven parts, flaws or the contours can be touched up. At the transition to the belly strips, the wool flakes should be laid out folded in at one side (as with the ridge in step 7) so that the belly part is sharply outlined (Image 18 b) If necessary, fix it cautiously with a couple of stitches with the felting needle at the lower wool parts.

19 Moisten the sea horse with very little water, cover it with fly screen and treat the whole surface with rubbing movements with very slight pressure. (1-2 min.) At brief intervals, the fly screen or gauze should be lifted up and put down again, so the wool doesn't connect with it. In this step, the surface should

only be smoothed out well and felt it on only minimally. This serves also to sense eventual bulges or wrinkles with your fingertips. If you find any, fix them with small wool flakes. The tail deserves a lot of attention – it should be covered with wool evenly. If any wool fibers protrude at the edges, fold them around the rims and smooth them out.

∞ When the entire surface on this size is flattened, put bubble foil on the work piece and turn it around with care. Repeat the steps 16, 17, 18 and 19 on the other side.

20 If you want the surface decorated, proceed like this: Twist tiny wool flakes in rose and red-violet between your fingers into small spheres. Distribute them on the surface. They should be fixed with the felted needle on the surface with care. Pay attention please: like mentioned already at step 17, the tip of the needle should not go too deep into the resist foil. Next, silk or viscose fibers are distributed over the small wool spheres. (Image 20 c)

21 Laying out the wool and the decoration of this side are concluded. Now the work piece has to be felted on well. For that, cover the whole surface again with the fly screen, moisten if needed with a little soapy water and treat the work piece with soapy hands slightly at first, then with mounting pressure. ∞ Important: In the beginning, always smooth out from the edges towards the middle, never the other way around. This prevents the wool from getting loose at the resist's rim and the edges from getting wrinkled. Work carefully on the belly elements and the cheeks – they have to connect well to the surface. When the surfaced 'closed' to such an extent that the single decorative elements can't be shifted anymore, turn the workpiece around and repeat the steps 20 and 21 on the other side.

∞ As soon as the second side is well felted on, you can leave the fly screen out altogether and proceed to fulling. Increase the power slowly, take the whole figurine in our hands, knead it, roll it back up and keep an eye to its overall bodily shape. Treat the edges with great focus. Don't work on the ridge as much as the rest, there the surface should be felted on tightly, but inside the wool can be a trifle loose. Dip the workpiece repeatedly into warm soapy water and take care that you work with really soapy hands so the surface doesn't get abraded too much.

22 When the wool gets firmer and the resist starts to well up it is time to take it out. Roll the workpiece into a towel with care to get out all surplus water. At the dorsal fin, cut along the rim with sharp and fine scissors. Pull the resist out of the hollow body with care and without stretching the workpiece too much. The shape shouldn't shift, since the felt is not too firm yet.

Tip: If the resist tears up in the process you can easily mend it with duct tape and use it again.

23 The workpiece has only minimally shrunk so far.

24 Put the head part onto a mat for dry-felting and treat the whole ridge with a felting needle. Especially where head and neck meet, the two parts have to connect well. (Advice: The ridge can be worked on with the needle a lot easier when the wool is almost dry. So, take a longer break before you tackle that step)

25 Next put the sea horse onto the skid-proof mat and wet the ridge area with soapy water. Rub and knead the entire ridge so both sides connect completely. But take care that the two sides of the head don't 'glue' together. Keep checking that through the dorsal fin opening with a finger or the chop stick.

26 Now work on the tail. Insert the chop stick with the thinner end through the fin's opening. Roll the tail element (plus chopstick) lightly over the skid-proof mat. The tail should get more narrow and nicely rounded.

27 Remove the chopstick and squeeze the workpiece again with the towel (don't wring it out). Take the 15 g lilac-colored wool that was set aside at the beginning for the filling and divide approx. 1.6 g for the tail. Now the tail should be stuffed with very small pieces of wool one at a time and evenly. Again, the chopstick is of great help.

28 Put the sea horse onto the felting pad on its belly. Put the remaining rose-colored wool through the fin's opening inside the belly and fix it with a few stitches of the felting needle. This prevents the lilac-colored wool to creep through the lighter belly wool once fulling starts. The belly should remain rose-colored throughout. If you desire a mix of those two colors where the belly is concerned, leave out step 28.

29 Now the rest of the figurine is stuffed completely as far as the dorsal fin. Take the rest of the lilac-colored wool (13.4 g). The sea horse should be padded well, but it shouldn't warp or lose its shape.

30 Bring the two sides of the dorsal fin together, put it onto the felting mat and fix it firmly with the felting needle (similar to step 24, needle-felting the ridge) Should the opening at the dorsal fin have gotten too wide or torn, you can sew this area closed with a few stitches in a matching sewing yarn.

31 Check all fine details and contours before the figurine with its padding is firmly felted. You may have to add wool in the corresponding color where head and ridge meet or to re-felt a contour with the felting needle. Also, the seam of the stitched-up opening can be covered with a small amount of matching wool and then felted on with the felting needle to hide it.

32 Now the whole sea horse should be thoroughly wetted and fullled until it shrinks a little and becomes nice and firm. (See image 32 size comparison workpiece vs. resist) You can still remodel the shape a bit, for instance the typical neck bend towards the back, the shape of the mouth or the rounded position of the tail.

33 Once ridge and the dorsal fin are sturdy and firm, cut them with a little, sharp pair of scissors wavelike, if you want. If yes, the cutting edges have to be re-worked well with your fingers or through slight rubbing at the skid-proof mat's surface.

34 The felting is finished and the sea horse can be rinsed well in clear water. At the end put it in a bowl full of cold water with 1-2 spoonsful of vinegar for a couple of minutes. Then squeeze it lightly and bring it into shape. Roll the tail tightly into a helix and fix it with pins. Let the little sea horse dry on a towel. Remove the pins only when it is entirely dry.

35 Roll two equal pieces of lilac-colored wool (each approx. 0.1 g) into two tiny discs of about 1 cm in diameter. Felt them relatively firm with the needle, sturdier than the cheeks in step 15. Examine the size in between with a ruler. The black bead can be laid upon the middle of the disc as measurement.

36 When the correct size is reached, divide three short roving pieces or twisted pieces of dark wool for each eye. Put the first strip in the middle of the eye disc, hold both ends with two fingers over the disc and felt the strip on with the needle. The ends are folded over to the other side of the disc with a little pull and fixed with the felting needle. Felt the other two strips on the same way in a 60° angle.

37 Now make a small dent with the felting needle for the glass bead in the middle of the discs. This is necessary because the beads should sink into the discs like they were eye-sockets, the beads shouldn't bulge too much.

38 When the sea horse is completely dry, first sew on the eye discs and then the black glass beads at each side of the head. If the thread runs across through the head, the beads can be pulled on more tightly and sink even deeper.

39 Last but not least the sea horse can be embroidered with little Rocaille beads. This step is optional.

40 The sea horse is finished! Have a lot of fun & a nice result!

Helena Hermann

came into contact with the wet-felting technique and was immediately taken by this way to treat sheep wool. She continued to learn wet-felting too, self-taught or in courses with international felt artists. In the meantime, she likes to combine the two techniques and specializes on making animal sculptures, finger and hand puppets. She likes to share her passion for art and craft and holds courses and workshops in her studio in Bad Honnef on a regular basis.
helena-hermann.de
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INSTRUCTIONS: HELENA HERMANN

PAGES 52-55

Artful Embroidery on Felt

Bewitching embroideries give felted objects that certain indefinable something

Feltmaking is the most ancient textile technique that exists. Since prehistoric times, people adorn themselves, their clothes or objects of daily use with colors and all kinds of natural materials. Embroidery existed already in the third to fifth century B.C. in many different cultures. The cradle of felting is Asia and a great example for embroidery on felt are the embroidered felted bags that were first made in Afghanistan.

∞ Embroidering on felt today offers limitless possibilities, regarding the different applications as well as the combination of materials. When felt is the basic material, embroideries are a wonderful way to decorate it. When the basic material is an embroidery, felt can offer a great surface to embroider upon.

Ornamental Embroidery

Embroidering on felt is different than embroidering on fabric. The felt shouldn't be as thin as fabric, but not necessarily much thicker. When I insert an embroidery in a felted workpiece, and I work with thin felt, like for instance for a collar, I add a layer of wool or a piece of pre-felt to the designated area. As a rule, you don't need an embroidery frame. Felt is sturdy enough, still its surface is flexible.

∞ The next big advantage is that the back of the workpiece remains free. Beginning and end threads are worked in between the layers. This means a felt piece can be embroidered on both sides, which makes for a great effect if you embroider the pages of a book.

Patience and Stamina

Embroidering is a very meditative work and takes up a long time. I often feel the urge to make an embroidery, no matter how long it may take to finish it. I just enjoy doing it a lot. One result, for example, are the kids' boots «Bhutanese Dream» on which I worked for 150 hours. The same goes for the embroidered case «Was die Englein ins Ohr Flüstern (What the Angels Whisper in Your Ear)» that took 250 hours to complete.

The Most Important Stitches

Bracelets and wristbands are ideal for smaller decorative embroideries. In the beginning, you need to know only a few stitches, ones you most likely already learned in school, but have been forgotten. In my courses, I often witness such memories coming back. For years, I only employed the chain, stem or French knot stitches. The stem stitch makes a

line, the chain stitch a chain-like pattern. The French knot stitch emphasizes plastic effects on the felt or fabric, for example when stitching blossoms.

∞ The co-operation with István Vidák and the trips we made together offered new treasures: the Tsjirasj, the rose stitch, the convent stitch and a simpler version of the Tsjirasj. A course participant taught me the so-called prehistoric stitch. Since embroidering on felt is my great passion that I use in many of my projects, I have continued to develop the technique further. In many of my courses I combine feltmaking and embroidery – the pretty results are book covers, charms, sewing books, vessels, bracelets and strap bags, also individually designed felt bags in the Asiatic Technique courses.

My Own Embroidery School

In the early days of the pandemic, I switched to online courses and developed my own structured offer, a brief embroidery school in three instalments called «My Favourite Embroidery Stitch Book». There, many different techniques are introduced and various techniques explained. The design is a hand-made book wherein felted pages can be sewn. I am working on stitch tutorials for each lesson, which will be permanently available to old and new participants as of October '23. Then I plan to write and design the embroidery book «What Angels Whisper in My Ear». I am full of ideas and the subjects feltmaking and embroidering and I wish you all a lot of fun doing it, too.

Courses and Workshops

The Dutch artist is an expert in the fields of feltmaking and embroidery. Already as a child, she learned to embroider from her mother and it became a great passion of hers in combination with feltmaking. Annemie Koenen hosts courses in the areas felting, embroidery on felt in her own studio in Sittard and online. The course offer, a free-of-charge tutorial about felting a bracelet and other current information you can find under:
annemiekoenen.com
tutorials.annemiekoenen.com
Facebook: @annemie.koenen
Instagram: @annemiekoenen

ANNEMIE KOENEN

PAGES 56-59

My Colorful Flock

Seven sheep and two lambs graze serenely on a pasture in a small village in the Westmünsterland. In the filzfun, the sheep keeper Dörte Schlüter reports on how she got her Ouessant flock and why this breed is a perfect match for her

«At the moment I have brown, black, a black and white and one white sheep. I think it's fantastic that my flock is so multi-colored – nice to look at and ideal for the use of their different wool», Dörte Schlüter says enthusiastically. About twelve years ago, she and her partner made their dream come true: a house in the countryside. The huge garden, more a park really, made her first think of keeping sheep. «I researched for some time and then I chose the Ouessant race. They are a small breed and suitable for a piece of land our size», she remembers. And as though by chance, a sheep keeper in a neighboring village retired. «In June 2016, we got home with four sheep: two ewes and two lambs. The former garden pond has been landfilled and made into a grazing meadow; the garden house turned into a luxurious sheep pen», the animal lover says with a chuckle.

Good For the Soul and a Lot of Fun

The multi-colored Ouessant flock has grown so dear to her now that she can't imagine life without it. «We initially got the sheep so we wouldn't have to mow the lawn all the time, strictly for landscape conservation purposes. In the meantime, they also provide their mixed wool and so much more...», she smiles and enumerates: «The sheep comfort my soul, they get me out into the fresh air, they are models and tricksters. When I have been sitting at my desk too long, I can always clear my head going out to the sheep.», Dörte Schlüter tells us. She has worked as a kindergarten teacher, a social education worker and until recently, many years as a teacher at a trade school. Her decision for the Ouessants proved to be the right one. «Because they are so small, they are easy to handle, which makes deworming or the clipping of their claws much easier. They are said to be stalwart and uncomplicated, and I have made the same experience», she characterizes her four-legged companions.

Her Own Breeding Efforts

At the moment, seven sheep live on the 1000 square meter property close to the

house. Next to the pen they also have a small hut to stay inside. «It wasn't really planned, but I kept thinking how nice it would be to see tiny lambs hop through the grass», Dörte Schlüter, who likes to sit on her terrace with a cup of coffee, watching her sheep, describes the beginning of her breeding efforts. «And since our four sheep were already registered in the herd book, it suggested itself that we should start breeding them.»

∞ Said and done. Soon, she was a proud herd book breeder (meaning that breeding is organized and controlled by a breeder' associations), a member of the IG Ouessant Sheep Association (IGOU) as well as in the Sheep Breeders' Association and Union of North Rhine-Westphalia. «Our first lambs were born in 2019. Of course, the amount of work increases, because you have to look after the sheep more often. We even had a lamb once that had to be bottle-fed every two hours», she recalls. But she likes the work involved, and cleaning the pen is not all that bad. «I really like doing that, a good physical training», so the 53-year-old lady.

From Sheep keeping to Felting

Once a year the shearer comes. «In 2018, I first thought about keeping the wool myself, to see what could be made of it. The results were beautiful, felted ‚veggie‘ furs. In the meantime, I send the wool that is unsuitable for the furs to a carding firm, where it is washed and carded. Then I either spin or felt it – also spinning I first discovered thanks to my little flock», she continues.

∞ Feltmaking was not new to her, but it was re-discovered through dealing with her animals as well. Twenty years ago, she tried her hand at felting and taught herself wet-felting with the help of books. «But for some reason I quit doing it. But this passion returned and really gripped me this time. My head is always full of ideas that I could try», Dörte Schlüter, whose life is marked by change, says. Also now, she is in the middle of a phase of considerable change.

∞ «I quit my teaching job and I am looking for a new field of work. Preferably one that is compatible with the things I like to do best, also with regard to time requirements.» And the things she likes best are clearly her sheep, feltmaking and wool processing in general. The lively lady also plays the Didgeridoo and loves taking photographs.

Dreams Come True

«At the moment, everything is open to me. This feels good and I'm curious where it leads me», Dörte Schlüter muses. But one thing is already settled: «Now I can fulfill my long-standing wish: To attend the Oberrot Felting School and learn to be a felt designer. This wasn't possible before, since as a teacher I had fixed holidays», she explains. She also wants to enlarge her online shop «Klangschaf», where she offers hand puppets and other felted objects and to delve into dyeing more. Her biggest dream, however, is still unfulfilled, but seems to get closer in this stage of her life: «I always wanted a shop of my own where I could sell beautiful self-made and other things. A kind of studio/shop combination, with a felting table, where I could work and maybe give courses», she deliberates. When not now, when at all?

Further Information

Dörte Schlüter and the colorful Ouessant flock live in the village Legden in the western Münsterland. Infos, photos and small videos of the sheep can be obtained under schafsucht.de

∞ Please find more information about Dörte Schlüter and her felted objects under klangschaf.de
Instagram: @klangschaf

VALESKA GEHRKE

PAGES 60-61

My Tour de France to Felletin

In the spring, I travelled via Crémieu, Pélussin, Fontvieille, Saintes Maries de la Mer and Causse Méjan to Felletin to the 7th European Feltmaking Days

At long last – as an international felt artist, I had long been looking forward to attend the 7th Journées Européennes du Feutre in Felletin, France, in person after four years. The event was brimming over with exciting activities like the fantastic défilé, a fashion show, and the exhibit that was scheduled to open the next day called «Feutre de Scène (Felt on the Stage)». In the wonderful Gothic church Notre-Dame-du-Château masterful robes and other objects were on show. In the Salon des Créateurs artful felt objects were displayed and on sale, as were many

kinds of local raw wool. Master courses, brief workshops and the composite work «Le Forêt (The Forest)» topped the fine, perfectly organized weekend off.

Opening Catwalk

The exquisite fashion show opened on the first evening with two evening robes felted in the Nuno technique. Then followed artfully felted jackets and tops. The defiling models were accompanied by classical music. The atmosphere was bewitching and unique. Another highlight were the elaborated baroque robes shown by Josée Mesnard. Wearable garments made by artists from France, Switzerland, Canada and the Ukraine floated by over the carpet.

Feutre de Scène – Felt on the Stage

In Felletin I met many feltmaking friends again and we all admired our different artistic developments, visible in our objects in an extraordinary stage setting. With three exhibits I myself took part in the show «Feutre de Scène». My «Queen of the Night» was much commented on, a shawl collar, ingeniously felted in wet-felting technique in elegant bronze hues. The queen of Mozart's «Magic Flute» was my inspiration. My second piece «Ocean 2050 Climate is changing – Don't WASTE your time», a bright tapestry shows schools of fish in all kinds of colors. Additionally, I felted in nets, capsules, plastic and pieces of clothing. I want to draw attention to the pollution of our seas and oceans. The subject matter environment should concern us all and for that reason it belongs on the felting stage. Another tapestry, «The Rose», already shown in Dublin and Vienna, has been inspired by the Scottish Art Nouveau architect Charles Rennie McIntosh. It meant a lot to me to be able to present my objects to interested parties and to explain my artistic intentions.

~ The show «Feutre de Scène» with art objects by a total of 45 contributors from 10 different countries, the wonderful garments, delicate jackets and dresses from the catwalk and other showpieces were open to the public after this weekend until the end of June.

Lively Exchange

At a brief felting beginners' workshop for I was able to share my felting experience with other participants – all in French, mind you! This is an extra allure, but also quite a challenge. Already I look forward to the European Felting Days in the spring of 2025. It is a wonderful occasion

to meet other felt artists from all over the globe, to immerse oneself in the art of felting, to learn and to grow.

Further Information

More information regarding the artist and the Felletin event
thefeltsideoflife.de
Instagram: @shantzsch_thefeltsideoflife
journeesdufeutre.wixsite.com/felletin

SUSANNE HANTZSCH

PAGES 62-63

Keles, the Headgear of Albanian Men

Mari Nagy und István Vidák report on their educational trip to Albania, where they looked more closely into the making of the traditional men's headgear

Albania lies in the western part of the Balkan peninsula; the capital is Tirana. Apart from the coastline there are mainly high mountains that serve as pasture lands. In the neighboring Kosovo, the conditions for both agriculture and raising cattle are much more favorable, the center of this area is Pristina. Albanian has about 5 million inhabitants. Serbs, Romanians and Rom form a small part of the population. After the long Turkish rule (1501-1912) it was a monarchy, as of 1944 a socialistic people's republic and finally it became a republic in 1991.

Our trip to former Yugoslavia

We visited the Kosovo at a time when Yugoslavia was the name of the confederation. Everybody spoke Albanian, but the leading offices were all taken by Serbs. Since we spoke neither Albanian nor Serbian, we needed an assistant, Olga Kovacsev. She was born in the Serbian town Szabadka and was fluent in Hungarian and Serbian. We travelled by train to Pristina, and from there to Prizren - Gyakovica - Pecs and then back to Pristina. The purpose of our trip was to find the famous traditional Albanian headgear masters and to watch them work.

The Workshop

We met an industrious craftsman who was busily sweeping the street in front of his workshop. Together with his

assistance and apprentice he got to work. His workshop was similarly furnished as those of Turkish feltmakers. Next to the entrance, a small, fenced-in space was reserved for the customers. Then, in the same room, was the workshop. In the back, there was a small storage room, followed by a staircase leading to the upper flat.

~ The working table was functionally designed. Due to a slight down tilt, the soapy water flowed from the table first to the middle from both sides and then to the edge. Through a small pipe, it trickled down into a bowl. If necessary, the contents of the bowl were re-used. The workpieces were handed over to other workers who further processed them. Remarkable is the way to work. As far as we knew, the soapy, rubbing method was only typical for Scandinavia. Here we realized that this method was living on in the Balkans.

Master, Assistant and Apprentice

During our trip we visited the Keles workshops in the cities Pecs, Gyakovó und Prizren. In each workshop, three men were at work: the master, the assistant and an apprentice. Both master and assistant were often equally skilled and approximately of the same age. The main difference was that the master owned the workshop and he was the one to take care of all business and financial matters. The youngest member was the apprentice. Once he had gained enough experience and had the means he opened his own workshop. Then he chose an assistant and hired a young man to learn the trade. The master's duties involved the cleaning of the headgear. The clients left theirs at the shop in the morning and upon their return in the afternoon they would pay for the washed and dried items. Different Shapes of Headgear
Different Shapes of Headgear

MARI NAGY AND ISTVÁN VIDÁK

PAGES 64

Decoratively Embroidered

With the help of Jennifer Dargel's new book «Sticken: Stich für Stich – Schick bestickt (Embroidery: Stitch for Stitch – Embroidered Chic)» clothing gets an individual and beautifying touch. A denim shirt, felted cuffs or a practical backpack – with just a little embroidery yarn and the correct stitches all those items can turn into your favorite one. Small flaws like spots, tears or holes can be hidden under an embroidered ornament. With detailed illustrated instructions, the author explains the French knot, satin stitch, chain stitch, stem stitch, lazy daisy stitch or overcast stitch. Many tips and motif patterns turn the ornamenting with yarn and needle into a children's game.

Crocheted Cute Animal Babies

In her first book to date, «Amigurumis – small and sweet!», the crocheting designer Annemarie Sichermann has designed whole animal families that set anybody's heart aflutter. In water or on land: For the otter, sea horse, whale, elephant, lion or kangaroo there is a design each for the adult and one for the baby animal. A total of 16 species spring to life with a crocheting needle and yarn. A perfect birthday surprise for kids and grownups alike.

Textile Techniques Newly Discovered

In her book «Faserwerkstatt (Fiber Workshop)» the author Doris Fischer brings to mind little known, half forgotten or newly resurrected textile techniques from all over the world, from the Stone Age to the 19th century. You get detailed background information with regard to spinning, braiding or weaving and practical instructions. With century-old techniques you may produce straw ropes made of straw, silk strings, belt straps, arm cuffs or gloves, all from simple and natural materials. The instructions and project ideas are uncomplicated; any previous knowledge, special materials or tools are not necessary.

PAGES 65

Cuddly Lambs and Colorful Snails

Many readers were inspired by the instructions in the last filzfun issues

In the spring issue, Lydia Klös showed how to make tiny cuddly spring lambs (see filzfun no. 78, p. 48). Yvonne Annen from the French-speaking part of Switzerland mailed us: «My friend Paula and I love reading the filzfun and looking at the pictures. After the death of her husband and a stroke I taught Paula how to felt, and thanks to it she is able to laugh again. We felted Lydia Klös' tiny sheep and had great fun doing it. Thank you very, very much for the fine photos, instructions and narratives.»

Colorful Creations

Our faithful reader Rita Tischendorf was inspired by Helene Weinold's instructions in the filzfun no. 77, p. 52. «According to the instructions I felted two storm lamps. With a whole chain of those, the wool structure comes out beautifully», she writes about her colorful objects. ~ From the Netherlands we received photographs of the 3-D honeycomb vase that Alie Postma had felted following instructions by Ilona Riehle in the filzfun 77, p. 40. «I found the honeycomb vase a lovely project», she comments her work. We agree: the result puts in quite an appearance.

Beware of an Addiction!

On Instagram, Tina Crowder shows her first two snails made after the tutoring by Brigitte Funk in the filzfun no. 72, p. 48. «I am working on the third, I'm addicted!», she wrote and mailed us shortly afterwards the pertaining photograph. «The instructions were very precise and I understood them well. It was a lot of fun and I learned a lot, too. The instructions give you new ideas and suggestions for new projects. Felt is so versatile and the possibilities endless. My thanks go to the filzfun editors for their wonderful work», Tina Crowder commented on her snail parade.

Individual Objects

The *filzfun* team is looking forward to receive many more photos from felted objects made from instructions in any issue. Simply mail us your feedback and a high-resolution photograph *under lesergalerie@filzfun.de*

VALESKA GEHRKE

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