

filzfun – The English Supplement

Issue #81, Winter 2023/2024

SPECTRUM

2 6 Out of the Felt and Textile Scene

EVENTS

3 11 All About Sheep

EXHIBITIONS

2 8 A World of Golden Butterflies for the Environment

3 12 A Journey to Creative Self-Exploration

4 16 Art Network

WORKSHOPS AND MASTERCLASSES

5 20 Felting Parcours in the Heathland

ARTISTS' PORTRAITS

5 26 Ririn Yaxley: The Threads of Creativity

6 32 Lydia Glonnegger: Furry, Cuddly Bygone Friends

8 38 Keith Holkham and Tasha Hess: Magical and Whimsical

8 40 Reena Curphey: An Ode to Nature

Dear Readers,

That something great may happen through a mutual passion is constantly proven in the felting world. There are two projects that clearly support that notion. The installation artist Gabriela Drees-Holz has lately encouraged felters to participate in a communal event. In Monchengladbach, she installed a golden butterflies' world with the aim to draw attention to environmental problems (page 8). Another opulent installation of 44 single objects was compiled by Sabine Reichert-Kassube, together with 36 felt and textile artists from four countries on the Werenzia Farm in Southern Brandenburg (page 16).

The participants of the annual Filzkolleg studied together and tried out various techniques at the felto Filzwelt Soltau (page 20). In a colorful, individual final show the Felting Education Lecture «Fit in Filz» found a great finale at the Oberrot Felting School (page 12).

Let yourself be inspired by our five felt artists' portraits. For the Australian Ririn Yaxley, felting means a haven

NOTE

or 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.

TUTORIALS

6 30 Atmospheric Lampshade

7 34 A Fascinating Snowy Owl

9 44 A Flowery Vessel

PROJECTS

10 50 Animal Visits

10 52 Felting with Visually Impaired and Blind People

11 54 Felting in Education and Therapy

TECHNIQUE

11 56 Techniques for Surface Design

SHEEP & WOOL

12 60 An Alpine Dream

FELTING TRIP

13 62 A Dreamy, Bewildering Path

FELTING HISTORY

13 64 The Turkish Prayer Rugs Seccade and Namazlik

of freedom and creativity. Her artistic spectrum ranges from wearable art to large conceptual installations and sustainable furniture design (page 26). Lydia Glonnegger, who lives with her family in Lower Bavaria, has taken on the task to felt true-to-life figurines of passed-away pets as a fond memory (page 32). Nature as her main inspirational source is named by Reena Curphey from Estonia, whose artistic focus lies on intricately structured tapestries and garments (page 40). Keith Holkham and Tasha Hess from Canada are responsible for the whimsical and magical elements. From local and thrift shop materials they make highly original headgear and accessories (page 38). Moreover, three exciting step-for-step felting instructions are waiting for you in this *filzfun* issue: Choose between an atmospheric lampshade (page 30), a fascinating snowy owl (page 34) and a flowery vessel (page 44). In this sense, we wish you, as always, a lot of joy over felting and an inspiring reading of the *filzfun* no. 81!

*Best regards,
Your filzfun team*

Your direct contact to the editorial department:

redaktion@filzfun.de

The spring issue will be published on March 2nd, 2024

Editorial deadline: December 1st, 2023

International Felt Art Path in Tyrol

The new International Felt Art Path in Tisens, South Tyrol is an almost 2 km long, themed loop road. It holds the balance between nature, culture and tradition. Along the Felt Art Path the visitors will see 25 art objects, but more are welcome. Consequently, there is a tender for felt artists that would like to take part in this international project. Called for are objects of sturdy felt to withstand the weather conditions as long as possible – preferable they should be made by South Tyrolean Mountain Sheep wool or other, similarly stalwart fibers. You may present just ideas or already finished works. Please ask the project coordinator Edith Hofer for more information concerning the application. Please read more about the International Felt Art Path as of page 62.
Mail: edith.hofer@rolmail.net

Meeting Point for Creatives

The «Creativa» has been following new creative impulses and actual trends for more than 40 years. In the following year, Europe's biggest creative fair will take place from March 20th to 24th 2014. As usual, there will be a lot of materials, tools and all kinds of accessories needed for creative expression. The many-faceted themes cover all creative branches, from handicrafts, artisanry, design, painting and drawing, felting, spinning, weaving, quilting, not to mention wood and metal work, silk fabrics, glass painting and jewelry-making. Numerous workshops invite you to join.
messe-creativa.de

Textile Craft in Focus

The international festival of textile crafts, textile art and design will take place in Bolzano from March 15th through 17th 2014 – conceived and organized by the European Textile Academy. In the medieval castle Maretsch with its special flair the visitors can experience the unique product variety made by textile

manufacturing plants, fashion and textile designers and textile artists. The festival combines the best from contemporary and traditional handicraft and artistic branches. Next to national and international manufacture, workshops for crafts, design and sustainability are also on offer.

textilefestival.eu/de

Hand in Hand

Two simultaneous shows of the embroidery project Guldusi can still be seen in the textile collection Max Berk in Heidelberg until January 28th 2014. For the second time already, the embroidery program Guldusi of the German-Afghan (DAI e.V.) is there as a guest. This association, founded by Germans and Afghans in Freiburg mainly realizes school projects in Afghanistan. Since 2004, it has been promoting embroidery programs to relieve the financial situation of Afghan women and their families. The hand-embroidered images are sold in Europe by the DAI e.V. and often serve as a «seed» for artistic and creative objects. In the second show «Faces to Faces», ten artists from Germany, France and Switzerland exhibit textile objects based on photographic portraits of Afghan embroiderers. Guldusi's initiator, Pascale Goldenberg, has been visiting the village women on a regular basis for 19 years. These portraits laid the groundwork to a whole wealth of textile possibilities and new, intriguing creations.
museum-heidelberg.de

Fabric and the City

If there ever is a fashion house where fabrics and the city are deeply rooted, it is the Akris in St. Gallen, the city of embroidery. For 100 years the only Swiss fashion company with a membership in the Fédération de la Haute Couture et de la Mode has cultivated its geographical origin. The new exhibit «Akris: St. Gallen, selbstverständlich (of course)», staged in the Textilmuseum St. Gallen until March 10th 2014, contextualizes its own share in the close co-operation between the fashion house and St. Gallen's textile industry and presents collections where the locale becomes a reference point. «Akris: St. Gallen, selbstverständlich» stages a variety of embroidery items,

actual designs which transpose honeycomb structures onto featherweight Guipure parkas, the embroidered, nude-colored tulle amulets of which evoke the tender lighting conditions of the Italian painter Giorgio Morandi. With Akris, great craftsmanship and uncompromising avantgarde, clear lines and delicate fabrics do not foreclose each other.
textilmuseum.ch

A World of Golden Butterflies for the Environment

The concept artist Gabriela Drees-Holz has called for a big joint venture. Together with 75 textile artists their work she is pondering environmental problems

«Co-crocheters wanted: Who wants to crochet butterflies for the golden salvation nest of Noah's 21st-century arc?» This clarion call was sent all over the world by the artist Gabriela Drees-Holz. 2000 butterflies fluttered to her, and she assembled them to a golden, nine square meter object, a «salvation nest». Twice already, the butterfly installation has been put on show by her – in May in the Kunsthaus Dreho in Liedberg und last in July, with the exhibit «Schmetterlinge kann man nicht einsperren (You can't fence in the butterflies)» on the altar of the City Church in Monchengladbach.

75 Co-Crocheters

Active participation is crucial for this environmentally inclined project. This angle not only applies to the 75 crocheters involved, the many helping hands, the children who showed their own green shoe parcours and the youths who contributed to the musical accompaniment. Also, the 500 visitors participated in their own way; merely by entering the golden world. This colorful, brimming over wealth of butterflies was not only enjoyed for itself but prompted reflections on these insects as symbols of beauty, zest for life and metamorphosis. ♡ The event was framed by an accompanying show with local and international artists. It held light installations, paper, felt and wire objects as well as photographs, paintings,

watercolors and video art work. Gabriela Drees-Holz was especially pleased about the co-operation with the BUND Monchengladbach.

Celebrating Nature

The brightly crocheted butterflies stand as an opposite to the norm, wherein nature is said to be doomed. But here, her doors are wide open: nature is symbolically set free. As the grateful artist reports: «More than 300 different people all over the world have taken an active part in the project.» Her appeal «Let us celebrate this wonderful world, let's all make an effort to save her» has reached many hearts in these days of gloom.

Betting on Hope

At the second show in Monchengladbach, the golden «salvation nest» again attracted many people. In the accompanying show, Gabriela Drees-Holz set an extra focus on CO₂ carbon emissions. In her snakelike objects she likens CO₂ to all-penetrating, ruinous snakes who push man off his throne, robbing him of the fulfillment of his basic needs. But in this dire vision there is always a speck of hope: one object shows relaxedly dancing worrywart dolls in the midst of peacefully curled up CO₂ snakes, surrounded by brightly colored butterflies. Another work shows black and orange-colored specimen in the midst of lambent CO₂ snakes in front of a golden «hope window» and also the XXL butterfly and the flower parcours plainly echo: So great and beautiful nature could become again, if only....

Gabriela Drees-Holz

is an object-, textile and installation artist with the environment as her main issue. Next to Fine Arts she studied geography and German and Roman philology. Today, she is the founder and manager of the Kunsthaus Dreho in Liedberg and a member of the Federal Association of Fine Artists as well as of Sculpture Network.

More infos: Dreho.de

Video exhibit Citykirche:

youtube.com/watch?v=Tgq66yDCt6Y

Video show in Liedberg:

youtu.be/2y5Km2hOgx4

GABRIELA DREES-HOLZ

PAGE 11

All About Sheep

The visitors were face-to-face to sheep shearing, spinning and dyeing the wool during the so-called Schafstag (Sheep Day) and Tuchmarkt (Cloth Market) in the Clothmaker Museum Branche

On the fourth Sheep Day on June 18th 23, more than 3000 visitors were offered a variety of events around the woolly four-legged creatures. In task work, more than 200 Heidschnucke sheep were relieved of their winter pelt on the lawn behind the museum. The experienced shearer needed as little as two minutes per animal. The shepherdess Marlen Müller in turn sheared the sheep in the traditional way, with nothing but a pair of scissors in her hand. In the dyeing section of the Museum, wool already cleaned and carded was spun by the «Kunterbunten Wollspinnerey», an association of spinners. Then the wool was dyed by means of the shredded pieces of madder roots for many hours in a big tin kettle until the famous hue «Bramscher Red» was finally achieved. In the next room, kids were having a lot of fun wet-felting sheep wool.

The 11th Cloth Market

Again, the museum offered its own crafted textiles at the eleventh cloth market on September 10th. Next to the sales, talking shop and exchanging ideas took center. Some of the thirty sellers have been present there for a long time: felted headgear by Karin Müller, enchanting animals and fairytale creatures made by Gabriele Mazaracis, Brigitte Becker's brightly colored clothes and artful knitwork by Lucia Röttgers. There were some new faces as well. Esther Hansen bewitched the visitors with hand-painted garments made from burn-out silk and und Tinkatons from hand-embroidered, vintage linen. Bärbel Schlüter-Sabbahs's filigree jewelry, bobbined-laced from the finest metal wire and Anette Rega's plant-dyed fabrics and Eco Prints also drew a crowd.

The Tuchmacher Museum

In the historical cloth manufacturing plant, the history of wool processing and the Bramscher cloth-making families is researched and exhibited. Interested parties can also watch the making of wool blankets on machines that are

over 100 years old.

www.tuchmachermuseum.de;

E-Mail: info@tuchmachermuseum.de

LARA PYTER

PAGES 12-15

A Journey to Creative Self-Exploration

43 feltmakers graduated from the popular adult educational training «Fit in Felt» that took place in Oberrot in 2023. After the exams a colorful show with very individual and personal art objects had been staged

«The purpose of art is to wash off every day's dust off our souls», Pablo Picasso allegedly said. Our everyday life is often running by too fast. Therefore, it is very important for us to find ways to slowing down, something that connects us with ourselves in the here and now. We all should linger again in the beauty and excitement of the moment, the creative coming-into-life of things.

A Way to Self-Expression

The felting education program «Fit in Felt» was and is such an opportunity that has enriched our lives in many different ways. An experience that reaches beyond an artistic, creative development. Over the past three years, we have learned a lot about the materials wool and felt. The variety of designs felt offers, dyeing, the different kinds of natural fibers in use – all these steps kept inviting us to find new ways and possibilities to process wool. This education program is much more than a well-funded, technical training – it is a way to find self-expression, for personal discoveries around the material felt.

A Community of Extraordinary Women

The Wollknoll company, the team and our teachers have had a great share in it, because the atmosphere at the felting school in Oberrot/Neuhausen, where the courses are held, couldn't be more beautiful and cordial. Even the strict pandemic measures couldn't keep us away. We always felt like in a different world altogether. The daily drudgery and worries were either left at home or could

be relieved a bit. We all felt a very special sense of belonging.

Creativity in Focus

From the beginning of the felt education and the first getting to know each other until the final show, we have spent six intense weeks with one another, 36 days and long evenings. The training modules were packed with practical work, learning new things and deepening the already familiar approaches. We were instructed to experience the interplay of fibers and fabrics, explore color palettes and to discover the different felting surfaces. We could felt in several dimensions and were encouraged in developing our individual project for the graduation exhibit. We met on extra evenings and nights, rejoicing in laughing and singing together. It was great: Wollknoll, the veritable treasure, chest was right across the road. No need to rein in our imagination and ideas.

A Colorful Good-bye Exhibit

For the graduation show four tents were pitched next to the course premises and our objects were tastefully arranged therein by our instructors. When ambling through the exhibition spaces, it became immediately clear that each participant had her own distinctive style and each object showed a unique personality. It was a sunny, hot graduation party, with a grand buffet, music and dance and many talks until late in the starry night. Graduating as «Fit for Felt» felt designers is only the beginning of our further path, because even after there is no end to new things to learn. Last but not least, it is a big felters' community in the social networks that invites us to exchange our experiences further.

DANIELA BALDAUF
www.wunderbares-allerlei.de

All 43 works in the exhibition catalogue

The felting projects of all participants are depicted and briefly explained in the exhibition catalogue. It can be ordered via the Oberrot Felting School. Ways in Felt, exhibition catalogue No. 13, Filzschule Oberrot, wollknoll.eu

The felting education «Fit in Filz (Fit for Felt)»

The adult education program «Fit in Filz» at the Oberrot Felting School lasts two to three years and comprises six course modules where consolidated

technical knowledge and artistic and creative felting practice are taught. Upon successful graduation, the students are presented with the certificate «Felting Designer» of the Felting School Oberrot. The next course starts in April 2024. Application and information you will find on the school's website: filzschule.de

PAGES 16-19

Art Network

Together with other felt- and textile artists from four different countries, Sabine Reichert-Kassube showed an opulent felt installation

During the last of the twelfth tide nights, I came upon a frozen spider web. I was so much taken by its beauty that I wanted to convey this impression in felt as an ice-blue felted net. Since Twelfth tide nights are said to allow a glimpse into the future, my theme for the year 2023 was set – Network, the idea for a felt installation. To actually make network happen, to design and adding to it, making communal life possible, thinking of mutual projects, to support and inspire one another.

35 Artists

The result of that deliberating was a net-shaped object of 2.60 m height, its width being 3 m. 44 contributions by 35 artists from Germany, The Netherlands, Kyrgyzstan and Italy formed the parts. Over the course of spring, I collected small art works on loan or as a present. (Specifications: 30 x 30 cm, weighing no more than 30 g and not white), mainly from friends of the felting scene, but also from other artistic fields as well.

Making Connections

Each parcel meant great joy all over again. It was to be a white, bobbin-lace spider web that should hold all the small treasures and connect them. Each little art object was to get its proper place there. That's why I included many small pockets and latches, sometimes exactly gauged with a certain object in mind. The web itself I made in several instalments with Merino wool, silk, bamboo gauze and eye-catching fibers on my felting table.

☞ Of course, I felt connected to the artist in question whose work I held in

my hands. Memories floated up, the sense of communion, projects we had made together. This became even more intense the more I included the single parts into the web, which was hanging in the meantime. Who and what fits where, who should get to know the other artist, who of you have already met? For entire days, I weaved and knotted, threaded the small wonders in with care, I established connections. On top, an edelweiss from the South-Tyrolean Alps next to a pair of delicate angels from Saxonia and a tiny bird from Kyrgyzstan. A mini skirt from Achen with long ribbons gets acquainted with the finest Brandenburg bobbin-lace. Embroidered Berlin balls glance with admiration onto filigree woven buttons. A very skillfully crocheted butterfly flirts with delicate flowers. Down below sits Grandmother Spider, taking the shape of the herb lady Adele from the Oderbruch relaxing in a hammock, symbolically spinning the web, with a badger looking on from out of his burrow.

The Web Is Growing

Working at the web required protection measures as of the late spring, because the Easter kittens loved to frolic there too much. Over summer, more contributions kept coming, found their way into the spider web which was of impressive size by now. Now it's fall, the kittens have grown and the web seems to be almost finished.

Thank you all, dear artists:

Renata Sichan, Edeltraud Kleiner, Asel Sapakowa, Sabine Schuldt, Regina Schößler, Elvira Altdorf, Kathrin Bauerrichter, Ursula Bierther, Anke Leuken, Ute Kirstein, Irene Edlich, Birgit Lang, Grit Herzberg, Peter-Paul Hempel, Helene Weinold, Anemone Pytlik, Ruth Wabnik, Antonia Netzger, Gabi Graf, Olaf Schwede, Delphine Klein, Maria Sagurna, Iris Stöber, Anemie Koenen, Angela Rüpke, Birgit Beeken, Christine Krege, Carola Zeiger, Ellen Mewes, Heidrun Jürgens, Runa Kratz, Hildegard Folde, Katrin Markes, Jaqueline Wachal and Edie Fuchs

Sabine Reichert-Kassube

has been working for more than 20 years as a freelancing felt artist in Berlin and for the last three years at the Werenzia Farm in Southern Brandenburg. One of her preferred felt themes is bobbin-lace felting, a skill that she teaches in courses. www.spitzenfilz.de

SABINE REICHERT-KASSUBE

Felting Parcours in the Heathland

13 courses and one experimental workshop in new techniques made for a lively program during the Felting Lectures in the Filzwelt Soltau

One can call the event that takes place every July well-established indeed. Despite all possible routines, the Felting Lectures are always good for a surprise. Also, this year, the Felting Network hosted a week of different felting and creative handicraft courses in the Filzwelt «Felto». The length of the courses varies and so does the demand on the proficiency of felting experiences. This enabled felters of all standards to meet and talk to each other during the workshops. 13 courses took place during June 26th and July 1st. More experienced felters assembled interesting projects in the so-called experimental workshop. Although the motto was: «Seele baumeln lassen in der Heide (Relax in the heathland)», it turned out to be not so languid after all. Everybody was really busy. Many participants met entirely new concepts and ideas, they dyed fabrics, felt and paper with rust or learned new basket weaving techniques.

Many Offers for Further Training

There were also quite familiar feltmaking issues, yet so intricately delivered that the great variety of processing and designing felt immediately hit home. From sturdy, thick meditation cushions, fine and light hoods and caps, solid footwear to dainty little birds - everything imaginable was felted. The participants also cherished the plump yoga ladies and the motley crew of creatures representing the soul of their maker.

☞ In addition to all those creative courses and the felting advanced education of our participants, the Filznetwork aims at educating feltmakers also in non-creative areas. For the second time, the teachers' seminary «Kurs aufnehmen (Steering the Course)» took place. This seminary should enable creatives to plan their courses more effectively and more exciting, further assistance is offered in the field of marketing. «Product Photography» was another important part of this elaborated program.

In the Realm of Felted Stones

To have all the ,i's dotted, there was a very inspiring evening with the artist Heike Fink, who showed her exhibit «Like a Rolling Stone» at Felto. Together with the students, she planned a «stony» evening, one that would take us away to the realm of the felted stones. Aside from all the workshops, the participants always had enough time to converse in between the sessions and to see other things. Felto with its felt museum is alone worth a trip. You get all kinds of precious details concerning the material and tons of inspiration due to their different exhibitions. There is also a very good tourist infrastructure. The next Felting Lectures will take place from June 17th to June 23rd 2024. Please find further information on the Filznetzwerk's homepage.

MARGIT RÖHM

Filz-Netzwerk

connects felting enthusiasts all over Germany and abroad. The institution offers teaching programs such as the Filzkolleg, organizes felt art show and certifies feltmakers on a voluntary quality control basis. The association is always on the look-out for young trainees, e.g., with projects like the Kinder-Filzkiste (a felt treasure chest for small kids), a set of felting equipment, tools and information brochures that schools and day care centers can rent for their teaching days or project weeks.

www.filznetzwerk.de

Felto Filzwelt

Since 2015, the felto Filzwelt Soltau, situated in a former storage building for felt in Soltau, has been informing in handicapped-accessible exhibitions about the history of felt and its many ways of applications. Any visitor can try his or her hands out at felting or be a part of the many courses and workshops.

www.filzwelt-soltau.de

The Threads of Creativity

For the Australian Ririn Yaxley, feltmaking has become a veritable haven of freedom and creativity. Her art ranges from big installations, sustainable furniture design to wearable art forms

The textile artist Ririn Yaxley found her passion in the world of felting. Her story seems like a colorful tapestry, woven with threads of inventive ingenuity, culture and a deep love of sustainable artisanry. Born in Indonesia she had always been drawn to creative pursuits. She now lives in the Australian city of Albury, together with her family. With her husband Kevin Yaxley, a hotelier and designer, she manages their boutique hotel. Her life is a blend of art, hospitality and the joy of raising their two daughters, Indita (17) and Ysabella (10).

Journey into the Felting World

Ririn Yaxley's journey into the realm of felting began during a stay in Corowa, New South Wales in 2016. Seeking to enhance the possibilities offered in her hotels, she stumbled upon felting through a scarf making workshop, led by a local artist called Margaret Wilmot. Little did she know that this workshop was to kindle a deep and lasting passion. Feltmaking quickly became a veritable haven of self-expression and relaxation. «What captivated me the most was the freedom it offered. There were no rights or wrongs, no boundaries to confine my creativity. I could mold fibers into whatever my heart desired, and if a mistake did happen, it only led me down on a new and exciting path», Yaxley explains. The art of felting brought solace not only in the results but also in a certain therapeutic, comforting process. Delving into different kinds of fibers became an adventurous pursuit. From the luxurious softness of Merino wool to the rustic charm of jute string and fabric, she explored a myriad of textures and different materials.

Wearable Art and Sustainable Furniture Design

Her art is a mixture of wet- and needle felting techniques, often enhanced by sanding in order to speed up the process. «Right now, I am exploring natural dyeing, so I hope my next

project eventually will embrace more of that», says the felt artist. Her artistic range spans from wearable art to large installations, but her passion for sustainable furniture design stands out. Her aim is to fuse the beauty of feltmaking with functional pieces of furniture and to champion environmental consciousness. She uses old chairs, wool insulation material from old pipes and any material around her. Sustainability is of core value for her, so she finds joy in repurposing and upcycling materials to craft pieces that not only inspire but also contribute to a better world.

Her First Solo Exhibition

Her works found a home in the gallery of her boutique hotels and on their online platform. Commissions and fashion shows followed suit, successfully blending her art with the world of fashion. She felt privileged by her participation in a fashion show in Wodonga, Victoria in 2021 and one in Albury, New South Wales in 2022. The pinnacle of her artistic journey arrived with her first solo exhibition at the Murray Art Museum Albury (MAMA), titled «Merangkul». Through this exhibition, she shared her narrative of assimilation into the Australian culture through her creative expression. The show ran from July 21st to October 15th 2023.

The Journey Goes On

The artist's dream now extends beyond the borders of Australia. So she is in the process of opening the Kitabisa Studio in Sanur on Bali – an enchanted place where art and design meet. This studio is her tribute to sustainable creativity. Here is where custom-made art furniture will come to life, and private felting classes will empower others to explore their artistic sides. My aim is to showcase that sustainability and beauty can harmoniously coexist in art.

Ririn Yaxley

The art work of the Indonesian-born artist Ririn Yaxley ranges from wearable art to large installations and sustainable furniture design. Sustainability plays a crucial role. Please find more information under Email: yaxleyririn@gmail.com
Website: kitabisadesign.com
Website: circahotels.com
Instagram: [@ririnyaxley](https://www.instagram.com/ririnyaxley)
Show: www.mamalbury.com.au/exhibitions/ririn-yaxley-merangkul

LARA PYTER

PAGES 30-31

Tutorial: Atmospheric Lampshade

Graceful and beautiful individual lampshades design - Ririn Yaxley describes step by step, how it is done

MATERIAL

- ~ Around 30 gr of merino, 10 gr Icelandic
Tips: You can work with any wool that suit for wet felting
- ~ Plastic resist size about 30 to 45 cm diameter or oval
- ~ 2 cm width plastic resist for top part, length is depends on what you need.
- ~ Balloon around 12"
- ~ PVC glue
- ~ Mesh fabric
- ~ Felt spray
- ~ Soap (e.g. olive soap or sheep milk soap)
- ~ painter brush

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 First, place the light wool horizontally on the upper part of the template, followed by the dark wool. Leave about 2.5 centimeters free towards the bottom (1a, 1b)
- 2 Second layer, Lay wool Crossway
- 3 Now wet the wool layers
- 4 Use the mesh. Cover and soap them, rub about 5 minute, avoid rubbing the outside part
- 5 Flip the resist and, fold the outside part and lay the wool horizontal and vertical
- 6 Continue rubbing gently, and feel free to roll as well
- 7 Keep rubbing until reach about 25% to 35% shrinkage. Then the template can be removed.
- 8 Use the balloon to mold and keep rubbing, was and hang for around 5 min.
- 9 Lastly use mix of glue and water and use the paint brush to paint the

shade. Let them dry overnight. The next day you can remove the balloon and the lampshade is ready.

INSTRUCTIONS: RIRIN YAXLEY

PAGES 32-33

Furry, Cuddly Bygone Friends

To remember pets that have died Lydia Glonegger felts their realistic renditions

36-year-old Lydia Glonegger lives in the middle of the woods in Böbrach on an old farm from 1926, together with her husband Luke and the children Lia, Emma, Marlene and Ben. On the many acres the family is by no means alone: their dog Finn, their cats Ida and Freya and a lot of poultry count as relatives, too. Lydia started felting because she wanted to remember the lost four-legged members of the family.

True-to-Life Pets

For seven years already, Lydia Glonegger passion has been to make other people happy, especially by felting their beloved furry kin. Having a pet die has a strong hold on the emotions. Many people would love to have a kind of keepsake. «With my felted sculptures you have something you can touch, this is different from a photo or a painting», says the artist. But their likeness she takes from photos and stories, to stick as close to the original as possible. It is always a great challenge to capture the soul of the deceased animal. Its facial traits, the gaze, a wished-for position – to make that all come to life, a lot of sensitivity is called for. «For preparation, I discuss the matter thoroughly with my clients and they send me many photos. Together we agree upon the gestures, the size and the colors and then I get started», Glonegger describes. Sometimes – upon request – the figurines are equipped with their favorite toys, blankets or collars.

Beautiful Materials

The artist keeps being surprised about how much can be done with wool, she loves the scent and its many qualities. She dry-felts mainly with mountain sheep wool or the fur of a pet. «In order to model the nose, claws or the muzzle I use

wax. For the claws, I use rice, wire for the skeleton, pastels and hairspray.»

Online Felting Course

As of the coming year, Lydia Glonegger will be offering courses online. There she will show how you can felt your own dear pet. She wants to pass on her skills, because her work is an important part of her life. A life without felting she cannot conceive.

Lydia Glonegger

For the last seven years, Lydia Glonegger has been making felted keepsakes of deceased pets. She specializes on true-to-life renditions of dogs, which have made many grieving owners happy. For further information: Instagram: @lydiaglonegger

LARA PYTER

PAGES 34-37

Tutorial: A Fascinating Snowy Owl

Elisabeth Grates shows in these instructions how to get this great animal into your home

MATERIAL

- ☞ 60g fine white Merino fleece
- ☞ Wool flakes in yellow, black and dark grey
- ☞ Plus, the usual felting equipment with a skid-proof mat, warm water, soap, gauze or disposable gloves

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 At first, roll a body from 10 g of the fleece, its height should be approx. 18 cm. In the lower belly part, a hollow space is needed, wrap two fleece layers around four fingers.
- 2 The head and the tail are modelled out of the body piece. The tail feathers should be drawn out of the lower belly hollow at a length of about 6 cm.
- 3 Now the work piece is moistened with lukewarm soapy water and gently rubbed with gauze or the plastic gloves. If necessary, build up on the required areas (e.g., belly or the side parts) with the wool flakes and felt those well.

4 To make it sturdier, roll the body at first gently and then more forceful. The position should always change and pay attention to the body form.

5 The legs and feet with their four toes and claws are made from a single wool strand. The toes are pulled out one by one towards up front, the last one backwards. All toes are tapered at the tip and covered delicately with a strand of black wool.

6 Important: The basic form is at first needled and then strengthened by wet-felting, whereby the upper parts of the legs remain dry, so they can be felting into the body more easily later. A piece of advice: Predatory birds have different feet and claws as water- or singing birds. I recommend some researching on the internet or respective literature to get a firm grasp on the anatomy of the snowy owl.

7 The wings are felted separately. 2 g each of fleece are laid out as a surface in wing form (height 11 cm) and wet-felted with soapy water. Here also the onset parts should remain entirely dry as well!

8 After the legs and wings are made, they are connected with the rump. ☞ At first, we put the legs into the body hollow and fill it up with white wool. After the «filled» belly has been thoroughly moistened with soapy water the legs, belly and tail feathers are brought into the desired shape by the pressure of the thumb and index finger.

9 Repeat the process of connecting the different parts until the transitions are homogenous and the figurine feels sturdy.

10 Pay attention to the position of the feet and toes, the slight bow they form.

11 The beak with its typical form is needled. Special care should be taken concerning the crooked beak. The transition to the head should remain dry as well, because the beak has to be wet-felted. The size of the beak should fit that of the head.

12 As soon as the beak has connected well with the head, make the eye sockets by pressing them in with your thumbs.

13 The characteristic eyes are first needled and then wet-felted. Form a yellow flake between your fingers, put it into the right spot in the hollows and fix it with two stitches. Also, the pupil, which should be a bit smaller is pre-formed and needled onto the middle of the iris. Then the ring around the iris is made. The needled-on flakes are thoroughly moistened and wet-felted. As a last step put a tiny white flake as a light reflection into each pupil with the felting needle.

14 The typical feather pattern of the snowy owl is slightly needled on with fine dark-grey wool fibers and then wet-felted.

15 The wings are also patterned accordingly. The transition area should remain dry so that the wings connect well to the body.

16 To strengthen the fusion put a few extra wool flakes onto the connecting area. Put the wings at shoulder height onto the body and felt them from both the inside and the outside. The bird figurine has to be scrutinized from all sides, rubbed and smoothed out, lightly at first, then with mounting pressure. Very important is the modelling by finger pressure of the round parts of the head and the neck area, as well as the eye sockets in order to improve and finish it.

17 The snowy owl is bathed in a water and vinegar solution and dried.

18 The tail feathers and wings are cut into and put into shape. Have a lot of felting fun with this cuddly owl!

INSTRUCTIONS: ELISABETH GRATES

Elisabeth Grates

Since she retired, she has been an enthusiastic feltmaker. The artist, who lives in Meerbusch near Düsseldorf likes to sculpt animals in the build-up technique by wet-felting. She doesn't make much care whether her work is free of mistakes, but she cherishes if the animal looks its special type. If possible, her inspiration comes from nature itself, or from books and the internet. She is teaching felting courses at the Adult Education Center in Meerbusch and leads the Felt Working Group at an elementary school. Please find further information under www.instagram.com/feines_gefilzt

Magical and Whimsical

Keith Holkham and Tasha Hess live in a small city in Western Canada. In their studio they create unique works of art from felt and silk, repurposing and upcycling local materials

About 12 years ago, Keith Holkham and Tasha Hess tried needle and wet felting small hats together with their children. «But we really didn't expand on it, as life was always too busy.» They didn't do much felting again until two and a half years ago, during the pandemic. «We had just moved to a 120-year-old farmhouse near the seaside in Nova Scotia», Keith Holkham tells us. «We were asked by a local woman if we could make 10 witch hats for a workshop and we were up for the challenge.» Today, the couple are selling their self-made witch hats, ear hoods, air plant pods, purses and whatever else they feel like creating under the label WoolnWoodn Handcrafts.

Passion and Inspiration

«Our life influences our artistic work as we feel if you have a passion for something you find inspiration everywhere», the textile artists claim. Nature, animals and fantasy are the main inspirational sources. «We generally have a rough plan of what we are making but incorporate sort of a hybrid technique that can change as we go along. Things don't always turn out as we hoped but some awesome objects resulted from perceived mistakes», Keith Holkham expounds. But primarily they work with extra fine merino wool, silk and silk ribbons and wool and banana silk yarns. They source silk scarves and wool yarns from local thrift stores. They also found a farm in Nova Scotia that they purchase wool from. They like to combine and incorporate various techniques and materials, such as nuno felting using silk confetti made from cut up silk scarves. «We just enjoy creating and sharing our items. Knowing that we are leaving something behind in this world that has come from our observant minds, which we believe is the purpose of life.»

Keith Holkham & Tasha Hess

The Canadian artists offer their whimsical, magical and functional felt objects on regional fairs and online. Keith Holkham and Tasha Hess love the challenge of custom-made products,

for example items for small movie and TV productions. Find further information under Instagram und Facebook: [@woolnwoodn](#)

LARA PYTER

An Ode to Nature

Reena Curphey from Estonia turns wool from her own animals into nature-inspired, highly artistic tapestries, clothes and accessories

Already her childhood was filled with knitting, sewing, drawing and painting. While studying textile art in college she was taught several traditional techniques such as weaving with looms, machine- and hand knitting, silk painting, tapestry weaving and embroidery.

«Her first feltmaking experience was over 20 years ago while she studied in Finland for a semester. She took a week-long felting course and immediately fell in love with the craft. After finishing her degree in textiles she started to go through felting books and self-taught herself different felting techniques. Over the years, felting has become her major medium for working.»

Nature as a Beacon

«I love how felting can be so versatile, ranging from the most delicate silk scarves to bulky fabriks», Curphey says. «I am still amazed how many different shapes and surface design elements you can create with such an old technique.» Since she lives in a peaceful, rural region with her husband and her three children, nature with all her beauty, richness and variety is her biggest source of inspiration. «I have always wondered how nature can create the most perfect textures, surfaces and patterns», the artist muses. But her aim is not to copy these but to use them as a source of inspiration for my own work.

Specialized in Wet-Felting

Over the last 15 years Reena Curphey has specialized in wet-felting, often in combination with free hand embroidery. She uses a variety of techniques to create textures, mostly using natural fibers such as wool, silk, linen, hemp, flax and others. «I also support producing less waste, so

I try to use leftover pieces of felt in my upcoming projects.»

«The Estonian artist loves to experiment with the creative process itself, as sometimes she has to trust her head and hands to work spontaneously. After all, every project is different and generally she keeps working on them until she feels they are finally finished.»

Fiber Art Tapestries

At the start of her artistic journey Reena Curphey was making mostly accessories – scarves, brooches and bags. Over the last five years, she has mostly been working with felted wall hangings for exhibitions, for sale and custom orders for clients all over the world. She has actively taken part in many exhibits in Estonia and internationally. Since she is also a member of the IFA (International Feltmakers Association) and the Finnish Felt Association you can see her works displayed in their shows as well.

To Trust in Creativity

As the textile artist is passionate about natural fibers used in her work she has her own flock of fiber animals. «At the moment, we are specialising in a rare Swedish fine wool sheep and I also have some British Angora goats and rabbits», she tells us. Her studio is in an old hay barn where she used to play as a child. Her studio is open to visitors in the summer months.

«I believe that every artwork changes us and creates ideas for the next projects. We should all trust our creative urges and keep working with all the ideas we have», is her philosophy. In the future, she plans to take part in more exhibitions and to share her expertise of felting through workshops locally and internationally. Maybe one day she'll have her own book on textiles published.

Reena Curphey

The textile designer specialises in felted wall hangings. For several years she has been teaching workshops and is at present preparing an online course which will start in the coming spring.

Website: [reenacurphey.com](#)
Instagram and Facebook
[@reenacurpheytextiles/](#)

LARA PYTER

Tutorial: A Flowery Vessel

In a step-for-step tutorial, the passionate felter Elke Diekneite shows how the flowery vessels are made

MATERIAL

- ~ 100g grey mountain sheep wool
- ~ 40g Merino roving in matching colors, also waste material is suitable
- ~ A Ø 22cm resist from sturdy foil
- ~ Scissors
- ~ Fine Felting Needle
- ~ A bowl with water
- ~ Felting mat
- ~ Thin foil or gauze
- ~ Ball sprinkler
- ~ Bubble foil
- ~ Sponge
- ~ Measuring tape or ruler

EXTRA MATERIAL MARBLE FLOWER

- ~ Ø 3cm marble
- ~ 2g Merino wool for the stem, approx. 60 cm long
- ~ About 1g white Merino wool as the flower's basic color, divided into 15 cm long, thin strands
- ~ Single fibers or waste material in 2 different colors

INSTRUCTIONS

This tutorial shows the felting of a big, round vessel. It has four pointed tips at the opening and the decoration consists of a thin cord with a small blossom. There is plenty of room for variations. The blossom might look different or can be replaced by an acorn, anything that looks good. If desired, the corners at the openings can be cut off.

1 At first, lay out the mountain sheep wool. The resist serves as a reference point for the size. The wool is divided into thin layers and put onto the resist with an overlap of 7-8 cm. When half of the wool has been laid out in a round form, the first «package» is ready.

2 Proceed as in step 1.

3 The colored Merino wool is put onto the second «package». I start with

the basic color, here orange. The roving is divided into thinner strips from which thin bushels are picked off. The fibers are laid out in a circle, from the outside to the inside onto the mountain sheep wool. The fibers may protrude or overlap at the edges.

4 Now the next color is laid out. At the edge, leave approx. 8 cm of the basic color free. The strands are laid out in a circle, the fine, loose fibers should point outward.

5 Repeat the same thing with the other colors, always moving more towards the middle so that a pleasing color gradation results. Leave some fibers overlapping from the middle to the outside so a good color gradient is guaranteed.

6 Fix the laid-out fibers with a fine felting needle so they don't shift during further processing.

7 For the wet-felting process I take «package» 1 first (the one without the colored wool). Again, the round resist is put in the middle. In the area where the resist should lie the wool is moistened with warm soapy water.

8 The resist is put onto the wet area, the overlapping edges of the wool are folded over. Moisten these fibers also with the warm, soapy water. With soapy hands press these flat onto the foil. Put the package aside for now.

9 For the next step, dry your working place up with a sponge. Put the thin foil or the gauze onto the felting mat. Package 2 (with the colored Merino wool) is flipped over, resting on the foil. Moisten it with the sprinkler in the middle in a circle. Package 1 should perfectly fit inside the circle. Put it onto the wet wool with the underside on top.

10 Turn the protruding wool fibers over evenly with dry hands, so that package 1 completely disappears from sight. Take care that the fibers run evenly toward the middle.

11 When all is laid out well use the sprinkler to moisten these fibers as well. With soapy hands, I keep stroking the fibers carefully from the outer edge to the middle and keep a slight pressure on the wool. If the middle is still lacking in some respects,

e.g., not enough of the appropriate colored wool, it can be corrected now by using more wool.

12 To flatten the wool and wet it through and through, the thin foil can be wound around the vessel, maybe you need to add some soapy water. No press and rub gently until the wool lies really flat.

13 Put the bubble foil onto the vessel. Now start to rub with your wet, soapy hands gently, not treating the edges too much. Turn the vessel around and proceed as before.

14 During the next step, the foil can be removed and the vessel can be felted further with soapy hands. In the beginning, the pressure should be light, but once the workpiece gets firmer it can be increased. In between, squeeze the surplus soapy water away.

15 Once the vessel feels sturdy to the touch it can be cut open. Measure the exact half by means of the tape. Cut in with pointed scissors at 4.5 cm away from the middle in four directions, so that you'll get 4 spikes at the opening.

16 The stencil is being removed from the inside.

17 Treat the vessel from the inside with soapy hands and go on working with your fist from the inside and the other hand from the outside. The same goes for the opening, all fibers should become well-connected. Now model out the form.

18 Rinse out the soap and let the object dry.

THE MARBLE FLOWER

1 For the stem, the strand's upper fibers are cut straight. Approx. 3 cm below the cut it is turned around, so that the fibers above spread-out fan-wise. Put the stem aside for the time being.

2 Wet the marble and wind white Merino strands crosswise around it. Dip it into the soapy water.

3 With dry hands, form the pink wool into a little package and put it on one side of the sphere.

- 4 Lay 4 thin threads of dark Merino crosswise over the marble and press it down.
- 5 Connect the stem to the marble.
- 6 Felt it on cautiously with soapy hands from all sides, the same goes for the stem.
- 7 Once the materials have felted together well you can cut the upper half of the marble open.
- 8 Cut into each half to form three petals. Take out the marble and continue to felt the blossom a bit from within. Rinse the workpiece.
- 9 Ready! Now the stem with the blossom can be wound around the vessel's neck.

INSTRUCTIONS: ELKE DIEKNEITE

ELKE DIEKNEITE

has been felting for 22 years. The master seamstress, who lives in Ahlen, started with wet-felting. Over the years, either self-taught or in courses, Elke Diekneite widened her artistic horizon and specialized on the felting of blossoms and flowers. Last year, she introduced dry-felting as a preferable technique, making birds, little dolls and dwarves. Her knitting wool is dyed and processed by herself. She is also into Ecoprinting. The felt artist loves to share her passion for handicrafts by hosting workshops and proper courses; at present at the Familienbildungsstätte (fbs) Ahlen, a communal education center. Instagram: [@filzundform](#)

PAGES 50-51

Animal Visits

The «Museum der gefilzten Tiere (Museum of Felted Animals)» is a collection and exhibit of felted domestic animals – made and curated by Ina Jeromin

«For some years, I have been dreaming of a natural history museum without animal exhibits treated by a taxidermist. Instead, all animals on display should be artfully felted», says the passionate felt artist. In

2022, the free-lance forest educationist, who first started felting in 2000, was finally able to make her dream come true. «The museum's concept is a permanent offer for schools, environmental institutions and interested societies. The show comes to the interested party, not vice versa as before, when the visitors had to go to the museum», explains Ina Jeromin. With financial support by the Sächsische Landesstiftung Natur und Umwelt, she has been felting a big number of local animals as illustrative models for the project. In order to open the museum for the public as well, she is works on a virtual museum on the internet at the same time. Online, the felted creatures are presented in photographs, with relevant information and explanation plus interactive elements.

An Alternative to Prepared Animals

«My aim is to forgo the use of taxidermists' recreations by showing lifelike, hand-felted animals. The former are no longer appropriate in terms of animals ethics and the protection of species», the forestry engineer is convinced. Since 1998, she is in charge of the «Rucksackwaldschule Freiberg (Backpack Forest School Freiberg), where she teaches children the local flora and fauna and the ecological interrelations of the natural world. In this context, Ina Jeromin developed the idea for a museum without any stuffed objects. «There is a big deficit in realistic animal models where schools, environmental education and nature protection work are concerned», she knows. With felted models, instruction would be more vivid and ethically justifiable.

Reward from the Saxon Ministry of Environment

In the fall of 2022, the project «Museum of Felted Animals» won the ecological future reward (endowed with 10.000 Euros) granted by the Saxon State Ministry for Energy, Climate Protection, Environment and Agriculture. The reward goes to high-impact and future-oriented contributions to environment, nature and climate protection. All those matters are dear to Jeromin's heart. In her studio, which opened in 2017, she works resource-efficiently and under strict avoidance of waste. «I only use solar energy and a modern wood carburetor. For felting, I need only a lighted and heated working place and smallest

amounts of soap and water», she explains. The biggest part of the materials required she buys from local sources. «With this project I would like to motivate people to start their own efforts for the protection of species, nature and environment», Ina Jeromin concludes and invites all interested parties to visit the virtual museum online.

The Museum

Please find more information regarding the «Museum of Felted Animals» and the virtual exhibit under: Rucksackwaldschule.de/gefилzte-tiermodelle/

More information about Ina Jeromin: unikate-aus-wolle.de
inasfilzshop.de
Facebook: [@BunteTruheFreiberg](https://www.facebook.com/BunteTruheFreiberg)

VALESKA GEHRKE

PAGES 52-53

Feltmaking with Visually Impaired and Blind People

Every year before Christmas, Carola Zeiger hosts a felting course in a meeting place of the Association of the Visually Impaired in Saxonia. She shares her experiences with the filzfun

Each year in the run up for Christmas, I felt with visually impaired and blind people. This much sought-after event week takes place the pension «Villa Rochsburg», at the premises of the Association of the Visually Impaired Saxonia. Every day a different handicraft is in focus. I have been teaching the courses for ten years. The first years we felted mainly with water and soap, but more recently needle-felting was more in demand. Now you might ask what kind of objects can be felted with blind students. Some of our guests have caregivers or partners at their side. Because feltmaking relies a lot on the sense of touch, the visually impaired or blind clients learn fast. Many have been participating for many years now and look forward to working in different crafts and meeting many like-minded people.

Impressive Start

When I started 10 years ago, I was rather worried, because I had no idea what we could felt over the course of the week. How much assistance would be required and accepted? I was well-prepared, having brought along a lot of wool, patterns and resists. Soon a cordial atmosphere was building up. After all participants had clarified their aims and wishes, the ice had broken. Most participants were beginners, so I informed about felting in general and then made my offers and suggestions for a particular course day. Naturally, I had brought finished objects along, which were scrutinized by touch and much admired. With a lot of enthusiasm, we felted balls to strengthen the hand muscles and covers for mobile phones.

☞ I chose the desired colors and prepared everything else, helped with picking out the wool and together we assembled the parts by means of the stencil. Felting itself posed no problem at all, since blind people have a much more pronounced sense of touch than people with normal eyesight. As often happens during felting courses, the feltmakers are surprised and happy when they get the results. «The material is so soft, agreeable and interesting. You can grip and feel it», the participant Andrea fondly recalls.

Every Year

After the first felting course we all knew: We have to do that again in the next event week. One year, Martina, one of the blind feltmakers of the first hour had the idea to use different Styrofoam shapes for felting. For the blind, such blank forms are ideal. They feel the form and cover it with wool. After small initial difficulties beautiful snow- and Christmas figures were successfully made. «Felting encourages the communal sense and creativity and it is very relaxing», says Marianne, who has been taking part in the event for some years. «When you needle-felt you immediately feel where your own fingers are», she jokes, «and of course we are all happy about what we made!»

Carola Zeiger

discovered felting for herself in 2007. She teaches courses for physically or mentally impaired people in schools and kindergartens and any interested creatives. Please find more information under filz-fantasien.de

CAROLA ZEIGER

PAGES 54-55

Felting in Education and Therapy

The working group (AG) called «Felt in Education and Therapy», which was founded by the Filznetzwerk e.V. in 2022, has now around 30 members. Craftspeople and felt artists with a pedagogical or therapeutical background meet on a regular basis in order to exchange experiences and thoughts

Felting is a meditative, soothing, but also very creative process for people of all ages. All five senses are involved. It is obvious that this area opens up questions concerning therapy and interesting subjects for educational processes. The AG «Felt in Education and Therapy» of the Filznetzwerk was founded in order to make felting better known and to use it specifically in the pedagogical and therapeutical areas. For quite some time, feltmakers have been introducing wool as material and medium to children of almost all ages, disabled people and to institutions for the elderly. Under minimal use of accessories and with your own hands as the sole tools, a maximum of experiential quality and self-efficacy can be reached. Not to mention the material outcome: an individual, mostly intricate and beautiful art object.

A Wealth of Experience

In the meantime, the AG has about 30 members. The participants, who come from all over Germany, meet online once a month for 90 minutes to simply talk shop or develop new ideas. To share expertise and experience, to place and connect their own work in the tradition of pedagogical and therapeutical knowledge is the basic idea. In the forum many different subjects, aspects of course work and specific problems of teaching individuals and groups in the most diverse contexts are discussed. The members structure and evaluate what has to be taken into consideration regarding course offers, organization and craft planning, regarding educational and therapeutical aspects and aims for the carrying out and gleanings of seminars and projects. All results are documented and can be perused after each meeting. The most beautiful thing is: For all these different areas, the feltmakers are their own contact persons, idea givers and competent counsellors. The AG's aim is

to develop feltmaking further through expertise and a variety of different perspectives. They want to offer an exchange platform regarding questions that arise in their own professional fields and for new ideas.

To become part of the AG

The AG «Filz In Pädagogik und Therapie» is always welcoming new members from the Filznetzwerk who want to deepen and contribute their expertise around feltmaking in educational matters and therapy.

☞ The next online meeting is going to take place on Thursday, January 25th from 7 p.m. to 8.30 p.m.

☞ Members of the Filznetzwerk can apply directly via the management.

☞ For further information [filznetzwerk e.V., vorstand@filznetzwerk.de](mailto:filznetzwerk.e.v.vorstand@filznetzwerk.de), filznetzwerk.de/arbeitskreis-filz-in-paedagogik-und-therapie/

REGINA PILZ UND PETRA KUNZ

PAGES 56-59

Techniques for Surface

Design The main part of the different ways to design which make felt so versatile is its surface texture. Next to the coloring you'll find endless possibilities to influence the texture with regard to haptics, structure and 3-D effects. The following presents a rough overview

Two-dimensional Colored Wool Fibers and Others

Each felted surface can be decorated by laying out colored wool. If you work with great sensitivity, you can even sort of paint with wool. But coloring always includes the notion that the fibers get mashed up and the colored elements from the different layers tend to wander upward, so that the desired color and the optics of the surface undergo some change. This can be put to use in designing to darken colors or to achieve color mixes or transitions.

☞ But other fibers as well, regardless of their provenance, are retained by the wool fibers during felting and can be put to use in surface design. It doesn't only look different then, but the surface itself changes and how the felt feels to the touch. With laid-out silk fibers, you

can give the work piece a fine sheen, while linen or hemp fibers make for an organically structured surface. ~ Since those fibers refuse the felting process, they build up different structures on the surface, owing to the variety in thickness or flexibility. The whole felt changes considerably. The more the non-wool fibers are mixed the looser the felt becomes, because the wool fibers don't establish contact and therefore don't connect easily.

~ The methods to felt onto the surface are almost unlimited. Next to textile fibers you can use fine wood shavings, sketched leaves or any other objects with a thin and fibred structure. Only two requirements exist: The material has to be thin enough to be covered by the wool or porous enough for the wool fibers to go through. The materials should be able to withstand a certain pressure by bending or rubbing and moisture, otherwise they get destroyed during the fulling process. Last but not least, elements that have been felted in below the surface can influence the surface structure, here an example of felted-in art yarn. The thicker, looser areas of the yarn can still be felted as they lay and shrink, while the rest felts much slower or keeps its form due to the twisted fibers. Like beads on a string the structure makes its way through the felt piece.

Heightened Surface Elements

Felt can be brought into any desired forms which can of course be felted onto the surface of another flat piece of felt. These are no mere design elements, but also functional parts like additional pockets, loops or handles that can be connected to the felt. There are two different methods for this. On the one hand, thicker or heightened areas can be felted previously and then laid below the last wool layer, then they don't influence the coloring. On the other, the single elements are pre-felted in such a way that on one side the fibers remain open, then the latter are put upon the last wool layer.

Kept Open Surface

Beautiful effects can be achieved to leave some parts of the surface open. These gaps are made like you would a hollow vessel, i.e., you put a resist between the single layers that can be cut open and formed to your liking later. But take care: If the remaining wool layer is too thin the stability of the whole object will suffer.

Designing with Pre-Felt

Pre-felts are felt pieces whose structures have not completely closed in. This means that they consist of several more or less loosely connected wool fibers. The respective stadium can differ a lot. But in general, every felted piece that can undergo a felting process and thickens may be called a pre-felt. On sale are so-called pre-felt fleeces, sold from the meter, in many different colors and stages of sturdiness. But since they are rather expensive and don't lend themselves to much designing liberty, it should be worth your while to make the pre-felt yourself. Make a flat felt in the quality, thickness and color you want, but stop the fulling process at an early stage. The pre-felt should always be dry when further processed, which makes it easier to handle. The pre-felt offers many possibilities. You can lay them out into 3 D structures or felt them on only on single parts of your felted object, for example to make lamellas. Traditionally, pre-felts are used for color design, since they can be cut into accurate patterns and ornaments, something that is difficult when working with wool fibers alone.

Washing Pre-Felt

If you want to make pre-felts on bulk you have to rinse out the soapy water. With a very loose pre-felt piece this isn't easily done. You get the best results if you wrap the pre-felt up in a mat and rinse it so long with clear water until no soap oozes out anymore. In this way, it doesn't lose its form and can be stored well for further use. But pre-felt can be made without any soap altogether, then the wool has to be moistened by mere steam or very hot water.

~ This article was taken from the newly published book «Schafwolle verarbeiten» by Margit Röhm, Katrin Sonnemann and Ulrike Claßen-Büttner. Textile artists get 46 detailed descriptions of different sheep breeds and lots of other information about individual workpiece and projects, in short about all they have to know.

MARGIT RÖHM, KATRIN SONNEMANN,
ULRIKE CLASSEN-BÜTTNER

Schafwolle verarbeiten. Schafwolle verarbeiten. Schafzassen, Wollkunde, Filzen, Spinnen. Von der Rohwolle zum fertigen Werkstück. (Processing sheep wool. Breeds,

Information, Feltmaking, Spinning. From Raw Wool to the Finished Object)
560 pages, Eugen Ulmer Publishing
ISBN 978-3-8186-1484-3
58.00 € (D)

MARGIT RÖHM

PAGES 60-61

An Alpine Dream

Conny Philipp made her dream come true in summer. She accompanied shepherds and their Black Nose sheep to their Alpine pastures of Le Tsalet in the Swiss part of the Wallis Alps

Sunday morning at seven-thirty: out of the feathers, a quick breakfast and we're on our way. On the road, I pick up Markus and Sonja – they are part of the Alp community that lease the alps above Vercorin. In Vercorin, we haul our luggage in a gondola and soon we arrive at Crêt du Midi station. From then on, everything is exhausting. On foot we go to the alp «Le Tsalet», 2.249 m above sea level. After one hour and a half we get there, accompanied by the tinkling of bells. These are mandatory so you can find the sheep even in bad weather or fog. Today it is very hot. Some of the Black Noses stand in the brook, others have looked out for shade and seem to be dozing. If it is too hot, the animals take a prolonged siesta. They preferably graze in the early morning hours or in the evening. Before the wolf came back, they fed all night long, because you could open the pastures for them.

~ Tonight, they should be driven into a night sheepcote. The fence is electrified so that the sheep are safer from the wolves. The disadvantage is that they cannot graze as much as they should and cannot return from the alp really well fed, as used to be the case. For the shepherds that means long days. Get up really early in the morning, before the heat sets in, and stay outside until dawn turns into night. And this in every kind of weather! Markus told me, that as a shepherd you make between 25.000 and 28.000 steps, but sometimes even as much as 40.000. The «hut» where we spend the night is very comfortable, we had flowing, even warm water. What a luxury! The warm water is guaranteed by the solar panels and right across is a spring. At 10 p.m.

there is a meeting, because the animals should be driven to another corral over a small river. This is not without risk, approx. 10 m next to the ford there is a beautiful waterfall.

A Natural Wonder

The next morning, we have to get up at 5 a.m., another hastily gulped breakfast and then: Action! Once the gate opens, the sheep keep literally piling up. In front of the river, we collect the animals in a little furrow. For their safety, I stand in the river, so that none of the sheep is carried over to the waterfall by the current. After a few endeavors, this is done and all sheep have safely crossed the river. We slowly move uphill to the next pasture and corral. All in all, there are six of them which are grazed one after the other. These corrals have to be fenced in even in rough terrain and secured with electricity. If this is not done, there is no compensation should a wolf ravage the flock. On my way up, I can hardly hide my joy – I saw so many plants and herbs that I have never even knew they existed. I was also lucky in that no sheep was taken by the wolf, which would have been a nightmare, to propel me out of my own dreams. This stay, short as it may have been, pulled the pink glasses off my nose. I was convinced that shepherding is idyllic, but now I sing a different tune. It is nothing but hard labor. Will I go up to the alp again? You bet I will!

Black Nose Sheep in the View of a Felter

The adult animals yield rather coarse wool. The curls range from fine frizz to simple undulations. The most beautiful wool comes from their breasts. You can make beautiful home decorations from it, e.g., sitting furs or storm lamps. The wool, thinly laid out, also lends itself to make place mats or curtains owing to the curl structure effects. The wool of the first shearing of the lambs is so fine that I use it to make clothes.

CONNYPHILIPP

PAGES 62-63

A Dreamy, Bewildering Path

The international felt art path in Tisens near Meran in Southern Tyrol newly opened in 2023 and surprises visitors with minimalistic art objects and big conceptual installations, not to mention its possibilities of relaxation and inspiration. The author and cultural worker Sonja Steger set out for discovery

On a mild summer's afternoon I ambled through Tisens. The picturesque South Tyrolean village lies south of Meran on 650 m hill, in an softly undulating mountain upland. From the center, along the public swimming pool and the camp site it takes me ten minutes to reach the premises of the Fachschule für Hauswirtschaft und Ernährung (Vocational School for Home Economics and Nutrition). Innumerable wild flowers sway in the wind. On the next hill, I spy a metal gate and a water blue felted sculpture. I have arrived!

On the Felt Art Path

This one is not like any other hill, I immediately perceive. If you follow the winded roads, like a bewitched garden it shares its secrets. I enter through a modern, square, rusty gate. On it are the letters SchulArtweg, which refers to the previous use of the land – a path for topics thought out by a creative project of several schools and institutions. In accordance with the sustainable ways of upcycling, many of the felted sculptures mingle well with the metallic objects the students had made.

Colorful Works of Art

This small art garden is perfect for families with children and for people interested in art and handicrafts. Sunrays glimpse through the foliage and cast delicate shadows on the objects. There is a great variety of themes, styles and techniques to be seen. You find tiny treasures but also stretched carpets with fairy tale motifs, animals and forest elves and storm lamps in all sizes and colors. On the accompanying tables I read that the show pieces – both single-handed made or in groups – were made by felt artists from South Tyrol and other regions of Italy, Germany and Canada. Some objects already show the toll of the weather and the forest animals. But

fugacity is part of the concept, so the natural material wool returns to nature and undergoes a change and a renewal in the exhibits.

A Joint Art Projects from Nature and Felt

Beautifully formed stones catch my attention, and I rest on them and let my thoughts amble. But no, these are no craggy rocks but sturdy felted art objects. Their coarse and warm surfaces invite you to sit down and daydream. I get the feeling to become part of those installations, just by sitting here in this small combined wonder of nature and felt art.

~ The International Felt Art Path in Tisens near Meran in South Tyrol opened in 2003. It was created to draw attention to sheep keeping and wool production. In 2003 it moved to the SchulARTweg in Tisens. This loop road, approx. 2 km long, is loved by children and adults alike. Please find information concerning the present felt art show pieces under: <https://bit.ly/3E1tZB3> General Information Loop Road www.tisensprissian.com – under the heading: Filzkunst

SONJA STEGER

The Turkish Prayer Rugs Seccade and Namazlik

Mari Nagy und István Vidák traced the richly embroidered prayer rugs in Bursa, Turkey

We arrived in Bursa just a few days after the earthquake in East Anatolia. The town greeted us with snowfall, after having visited the famous mosque Ulu-Djami. Then we went to the ancient bazaar and we were anything but disappointed by the outcome. It had been the purpose of the journey to see all the treasured antiques there. The Turkish people have never made no bones about being a pastoral nation. Even in antiquity felt belonged to their daily way of life and the craft of feltmaking and its use even spread further over the next centuries. Felted objects were sold in the cities and even used at the Sultan's court. Later it was substituted by other raw materials.

The Prayer Rugs Seccade & Namazlik

The Turkish prayer rug is called Seccade, stemming from the Arab word *sajada*, meaning «praying on the floor». The simpler rugs used by pastoral families are called Namazlik, this time Persian for «nama», prayer. Several times a day, when the Muezzin calls the believers, they pray on the floor. During other times of the day, the prayer rugs are rolled up and stored away so that they last longer. Bursa was famous for a long time for its intricate embroideries, especially for prayer rugs. When they were first made is lost in the haze of time, but one can safely say that for 300 to 400 years the most precious and beautiful carpets and rugs were made here.

∞ The prayer rugs in the Topkapi Museum in Istanbul are embroidered with gold, silver and silk threads, often on red fabric. Embroideries with gold threads, done in the Topkapseray, the harem in the Sultan's palace, used to be men's work. Also, other workshops were involved in the procuring the much sought-after goods. Maybe this craft came to Bursa only later, the city traditionally used to be the center of silk weaving.

Characteristics of the Splendid Bursa Prayer Rugs

For the embroideries, the basic material, i.e., felt, silk or wool fabric was stretched across a frame. In Uzbekistan, the richly patterned Susani textiles were also made on frames. In the 18th and 19th century, the patterns were rendered in chain stitch, which is a swift method. The motifs were first sketched on leather or cardboard. Then the pattern was embroidered through with hardly visible, thin threads on the basis. The basic color of the prayer rug is always white or ivory-colored. The four edges are often framed by tassels. These long tassels, made from the light hair of the Angora goat, are fixed to the edges. The back of the rug was layered with cotton, linen or silk fabrics. The names, Rakiy, Laku Rakiy and Rakiye refer to the sturdy felt's quality due to the fine wool fibers.

Embroidery Yarns

The prayer rugs of wealthy noblemen (like Beg, Aga, Pascha or Padischah) were often embroidered with red copper threads. The raw material could have been a strong, thin wool thread or a red copper thread coated with gold or

silver. According to some descriptions, the technique was known since the 15th century and was also wide-spread in Italian workshops. The use of very thin silver or copper threads increased as of the 19th century. Sometimes another yarn was used, initially a piece of an animals' intestines that had been coated. Rarely, thin strips of valuable metal were used to embroider.

Afterword

Since the beginning of the 1990ies we have been visiting the beautiful, cultured regions of Turkey. After 40 years of research, we were sad to register that there are no more feltmakers in Bursa. Bursa was Turkey's former capital, famous for its silk manufactures and their knotted silk carpets. It is unclear how and why the felting craft vanished.

MARI NAGY AND ISTVÁN VIDÁK

This is a supplement of the magazine
»filzfun« Issue #81 - Winter 2023/2024
ISSN 2199-7314 · ZKZ 77098

publisher: mk Medienmanufaktur GmbH
Döllgaststraße 5 · 86199 Augsburg, Germany
verlag@filzfun.de · register court Augsburg
HRB 18720 · USt-IdNr. DE813278048

Translations:
Christina Hirson

»filzfun« comes up 4 times a year
For information about each issue, subscription
and more, check www.filzfun.de/en.
The website is in English too!

Distribution Switzerland
Wollkarderei Ursula Jaton · Degenmattstr. 68
CH-4421 St. Pantaleon · Suisse
Tel. (0041) 619131333
www.atelier-pecora.ch · atelier-pecora@gmx.ch

Your direct contact to the editorial department:
redaktion@filzfun.de;
The spring issue will be published on March 2nd, 2024
Editorial deadline: December 1st, 2023
