

filzfun – The English Supplement

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Dear Readers,

«If you can dream it, you can do it», Walt Disney, movie producer and creator of Mickey Mouse is supposed to have said. Many of our felt artist model themselves to that famous dictum, as the kindred spirits they are: creators of beautiful figurines and sculptures, wall hangings, clothes, decorative elements and a lot more. The Australian felt artist Norton Fredericks, whom we portray as of page 32, makes large-size wall hangings. The wool he dyes with plants from his home region, like eucalyptus and quandong. Also, the Dutch artist Anja Schrik sets great store by natural dyes, experimenting with plants, roots and insects. She tells us about her color experiments and provides us with a recipe for earth colors in this *filzfun* issue. (p. 52) From her travels to her home country India, Anitarini Bauer brings all kinds of inspirations for her artful vessels, room dividers, Buddha figures and lighting objects, which we show as of page 48. Animal figures and finger puppets that raise high spirits are the specialty of Helena Hermann (p. 40) Jasmin Hage, on the other hand, combines felt-making with energy training. She weaves wishes and energies into her so-called soul figurines, great little companions with unique characters. (p.28) Just in time before nature fully awakens, we are pleased

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.

to present two detailed instructions in this issue: Cute cockatoo parrots (p. 44) and a mobile phone cover depicting a robin (p.36) are waiting in the wings. Have a lot of fun!

Price Adjustment *filzfun*

Since 2020, the subscription fee as well as the news stall price of our magazine hasn't been augmented, whereas all cost involved in every realm such as logistics, energy cost or raw materials have continually risen. We kindly ask for your understanding that we have to pass on the higher level of operating cost moderately via the price of a single issue. In practice this means that as of issue 2/2024, the subscription price in Germany will be adjusted to 35.90 € (abroad 47.90 €) and the newsstand price in Germany to 9.90 € (in Austria 11.90 €, Luxembourg 11.90 €, Slovakia 12.90 €). This is crucial to further ensure the *filzfun's* high quality printout.

With best wishes

Your filzfun team

Your direct contact to the editorial department:

redaktion@filzfun.de

The summer issue will be published on June 1st, 2024

Editorial deadline: March 1st, 2024

Creativa Fair in Dortmund

For handicraft enthusiasts, artists, craftspeople and DIY fans, the Creativa Messe in Dortmund is one of the most important and biggest fairs for creatives in the whole of Europe. From March 20th to 24th, a wide range of craft materials, DIY tools, fabrics, colors and other pertaining goods. Many exhibitors present innovative ideas, techniques and produce for all possible kinds of handcrafted projects are on sale. Apart from that, workshops, lectures and shows are on schedule. The visitors can learn from experts, work on new techniques and deepen their own skills. The Creativa in Dortmund is not only a sales exhibition but a buzzing meeting place for the entire creative community.
messe-creativa.de

Sheep Day in the Tuchmacher Museum

At the Sheep Day, held on June 16th in the Tuchmacher Museum Bramsche (Clothmaker Museum) everything that happens is in the sign of those animals. For centuries, sheep have been important farm stock. They don't only yield wool but also meat, milk and cheese and they are used for landscape preservation. At the mill, regional manufacturers offer culinary items and textiles made from sheep wool. The goods range from cheese, other milk products, sausages, furs, wool, yarns and soap to knitted and woven textiles and blankets plus jewelry and accessories. There are small gastronomic specialties for you to taste.
tuchmachermuseum.de

Brightly Colored Easter Felting

With colored wool you can make easter eggs, many other imaginative decorations for an easter bouquet or gifts or all kinds. Stephanie van der Mee shows how this is done on March 16th in the Tuchmachermuseum in Bramsche. Wet-felted sheep wool turn into small easter

presents and other unique little things which can be taken home, of course. The workshop is suitable for kids and youngsters as of eight years of age. Binding applications can be made by mail until latest March 12th.
Info@tuchmachermuseum.de | tuchmachermuseum.de

Playful Things at the Filzkolleg in Soltau

The felting course of lectures in Soltau has become a tradition by now. This year as well there will be a colorful round dance of felting courses. For beginners and experienced felters alike the Filznetzwerk offers many workshops around the theme «Verspielt (Playful)» from June 17th to 22nd. In the Filzwelt «felto» and the Toy Museum, a total of ten different workshops will be held. Like on previous occasions, the latter deal doesn't deal exclusively with feltmaking but include other crafts as well; a creative challenge for every participant to learn more. Applications are possible as of March 1st.
filznetzwerk.de

Embroidered Felt by Annemie Koenen

The Dutch felt artist Annemie Koenen presents a fine choice of her many, highly skilled art works in the Filzwelt «felto» in Soltau from April 26th to September 9th. The focus lies on embroidered felted objects. Interested parties are invited to attend the opening on Thursday, April 25th at 6:30 p.m.
☞ At the beginning of the show, Annemie Koenen will host a modular course called «Artful Embroidery on Felt» on April 26th and 27th. It can be booked either as a half-day course or stretched over two days. At the exhibit's end, the artist holds a three-day course themed «Surface Structures» with many design possibilities from September 6th to 8th.
filzwelt-soltau.de

Felt Designing Space

From March 24th to July 28th 2024, the textile Collection Max Berk in Heidelberg presents two felt art objects shows

The exhibit «Filz gestaltet Raum (Felt Designing Space)» by the Filznetzwerk e.V. association shows objects by 30 artists who transposed the subject «space» each in his or her own artistic ways. To that end, Filznetzwerk had started an international tender which lasted over two years. A qualified jury then chose the objects according to their artistic value, putting an extra focus on how «space» reflects on the art work in question. At the same time, there will be a second exhibit in the premises of Max Berk Collection, called «FokusFILZ», wherein 20 artists show a colorful variety of felt art.

To Give a Face to Space

For the show «Filz gestaltet Raum» more than 30 artists have approached the subject «space» very differently and have given it a broad variety of meaning. This reflects also on the different forms and shapes it can take; there are sculptures, vessels, paintings, wall hangings, flowers and a lot more.

☞ When the Filznetzwerk worked on the show's theme, it became clear that for most participants space meant simply a room that could be decorated with felt itself or felted interior decoration. But space means a lot more than an ordinary room. It is a physical, three-dimensional object, but it can also be limitless and impossible to hold. Natural and living spaces can be defined as such and depicted, too, but nevertheless the physical dimensions will never do justice to the real meaning of the term. Each idea of space has its very own atmosphere.

☞ In the past three years, our understanding of space has undergone a profound change. Many rooms and spaces got a new identity due to the lockdowns and experiences of isolation. Living space turned into offices, and the home, where we should feel protected became a lonely place. A room isn't just four walls surrounding a space, it is an atmosphere itself and conveys a certain kind of feeling.

Experimental Joy with FokusFILZ

The «FokusFILZ» show, which was organized by the felt artists Ulrike

Hartrumpf and Bärbel Helfrich can be seen at the Max Berk collection in Heidelberg as well. Here we find a broad range of themes, from personal travel impressions to efforts of mastering of fears and anger. The 20 artists participating also dealt with private and global problems such as wars, economic and climate crises. Their joy in experimenting with colors and fire, the mix of different materials and depicting nature with felt is always coupled with a wealth of new ideas.

~ Next to the artistic skill involved, both shows testify to the unbelievable variety of felt. Expertise in handicrafts, but also the creative dealing with manual felting techniques render each object unique and bear witness to an individual language of form which is contemporary, modern and groundbreaking. The playful handling of different material combinations and textile techniques on one hand, the consciously sparse materiality and coloring on the other make this all-comprising show an exciting event.

Further Information

Everything revolves around textiles and fabrics at the Textile Collection Max Berk in the Ziegelhausen quarter in Heidelberg. The museum – a former protestant church – organizes several special shows per year. Please find further information regarding the new felt art exhibits under museum-heidelberg.de

MARGIT RÖHM – DR. KRISTINE SCHERER

PAGE 11

Textile Art in Focus

In the Textilmuseum in Augsburg, beautiful handicraft art objects were presented during the textile market 2023, e.g. clothing, hats, home decoration textiles, leather goods, jewelry and a lot more

64 exhibitors presented textile art, design and textile handicrafts at its best in the Staatliche Textil- und Industriemuseum Augsburg (tim) on November 25th and 26th 2023. The artists here design and manufacture their products themselves with great passion and commitment, making for high-quality goods that can be enjoyed for a long time.

Workshops and Participatory Events

In the historic premises of the former Augsburg worsted yarn factory individual clothing, hats, home decoration objects, leather goods, jewelry and a lot of other products were on show, such as felted vessels, bowls and vases. Special highlights were the show «Begegnung (Encounter)» with original Plissé objects made by Marina Krog, additionally staged and defamiliarized by the photographer Claudia Reiter as well as the presentation «Winterfeen (Winter Fairies)» with light-filled art dresses made by Sabine Wagner. The weaver Weber Andreas Möller from Hamburg, who has been awarded many prizes already, introduced his innovative weaving system «Flying 8»

Textile and Industrial Museum

Please find further information regarding exhibitions in the Textil- und Industriemuseum tim under:

timbayern.de

More information about the textile market under: textilmarkt-im-tim.de

BARBARA BODE

PAGES 12-15

Art in Trees

In the fall of 2023, the Rochlitz mountain in Middle Saxonia was ornated with 33 unique felt art objects and a felt art path with the resonant name «Kunst im Baum (Art in Trees)» was installed

In the middle of beautiful natural surroundings, the exhibit organized by the felt artist Carola Zeiger from the «Felted Fantasies» of Wechselburg was ceremoniously opened on September 17th 2023. The leisurely walk around the Rochlitz mountain commenced on a sunny, friendly fall day. Felt artists from all over Germany had created the 33 exhibits, which were lovingly mounted along the hiking path. The fifty guests were warmly welcomed by Frank Dehne, the mayor of the city of Rochlitz, Anja Schwulst of the Heimat- und Verkehrsverein Rochlitzer Muldental e.V. and of course by the initiator and organizer Carola Zeiger. The hike started at the so-called Porphyry House – a former social meeting place of stone masons, which is now used as a green classroom. There, the visitors greeted

the wood fairy Roland, a lovingly felted dwarf, wood gnome Rochold, a little tree of paradise, shiny beetles, bewitching fly amanitas, a felted birdhouse and porphyry pebbles as light as a feather. The felt artists present briefly introduced their works and what inspired them. The rest of the felted objects were presented during the hike by Carola Zeiger.

Mandalas Tinkling in the Breeze

Directly opposite the Porphyry House, which has its name for the pre-tertiary volcanic crystalline stones won in this region, an owl watches us from a safe distance on a treetop. A little further in the direction of the quarry, felted tree fungi and lichen were to be admired. Sound mandalas tinkling in the wind led us to the quarry, where we came upon a felted basket that had been hung up to house collected memories.

At and around the tower house, there were several felted treasures – in the garden of a nearby house a felted bowl, golden autumn flowers and a weird bird were hidden. Then we proceeded to the Haberkorn quarries. There were several other objects on show, e.g. Porphyry himself, dressed to kill with a tie and glasses, felted leaves swaying in the wind and inviting to dream, as well as the hanging installation «Aufgebrochen (Broken Up)», made of plastic waste and fibers found in the woods by its maker. In a neighboring forest we found mushrooms galore that were felted by a senior felting group for this occasion with great imagination. In the crown of a maple tree, a felted snake coiled around the branches and some place further ahead, a horse's head stuck out of the window of a long-deserted stable.

Porphyry Snails at the Gables

On the way back, objects made by the felt groups of the Johann Mathesius Gymnasium and the Protestant Secondary School showed the Rochlitz castle and the Wechselburg Basilica. At the hermitage's gabled wall, two porphyry snails were positioned, opposite of which a porphyry mandala was hung up. Its bright colors contrasted nicely with the green, broad-leaved forest. The latter object's message is to find your own middle and relax, and where this is easier done than in a forest, just watching? On a rocky slope a parakeet greeted us and close by there were «life veins» – a love declaration by the artist to the colors and structure of porphyry. Even dancing souls were there – an

homage to the lightness of butterflies and of pure being - and a gigantically beautiful porphyry spider. The last item on our way back was a felted seed pod. Nearing the end of the path, everybody was overly taken by the imaginative felt objects, which visitors could see until the end of October.

Art Auction

At the closing event on October 2023, a third of the objects was auctioned off. The gain of about 900 € was handed over to Angela Schubert of the Naturstation Weidnitz. During the six-week long exhibition, many hikers have looked out for these objects or stumbled onto them by chance. The resonance was considerable. Especially the connection of felt and the living environment found many enthusiastic comments, even if this implies that the exhibits will get wet or to waste, tackled by animals or are going to vanish altogether eventually. Wool is a natural material and therefore wonderfully suited for being presented outdoors, as a part of the grand cycle where nothing is wasted but simply changes shape.

Felt Art Path «Art in Trees»

For further information about the project «Art in Trees» at the Rochlitz mountain please contact: filznetzwerk.de/filzkunstweg-rochlitz-berg-2023/ More to the projects and art works by Carola Zeiger: filz-fantasien.de

DR. KATRIN BIGL

PAGES 16-17

In the Sign of Tradition

70 creatives presented their felt embroideries from June 16th through 18th 2023 at the show «Embroidered Felt» in Kecskemét-Lakitelek (Hungary), which was organized by Mari Nagy and István Vidák

The first aim of this exhibit was to bring home the beauty and uniqueness of embroidery on felt to interested parties. The second purpose was that embroiderers should deepen their skills. Of course, a felter and an embroiderer could always team up. 70 creative people have answered Mari Nagy's and István Vidák's invitation with sending

their objects. These were often of very high quality and chosen items were finally staged in the exhibit hall of the Katona József Museum in Kecskemét, Hungary.

Traditional or a new interpretation?

The show comprised two years of creative work, distributed over the years 2022 and 2023. The bags embroidered during that period were the main objects on show. After learning new skills each embroiderer or felter could decide whether he or she wanted to stick to traditional patterns and techniques or whether change was called for. «We met from time to time, discussed the sketches or blueprints and offered corrections. Each participant could work from home, choosing her or his own working pace. Of course, there were also felters who sent finished objects to the museum», István Vidák reports.

Hungarian Fur/Leather Vests as a Prototype

The first task was to get to know the patterns of traditional Hungarian fur/leather vests, the second challenge to copy them onto felt. «To this end, we chose some vests from Gyimes and Moldavia. It was not easy to interpret the traditional patterns in a new design since their original meanings are mostly forgotten now. But luckily, the names of certain stitches are preserved, which gives some direction at least», says István Vidák.

Dyeing the Embroidering Yarn

The embroidery yarn was made from long-fibered, carded Merino wool. Its surface is smooth, so it glides easily within the felt. It doesn't tear and is easy to varnish. The different stitches were first practiced on discarded corner pieces or an unused felt plates before the actual embroidery.

«We dyed the yarn with botanical dyes. There were always two different hues, a darker and a lighter one.» Yellow dye was made from birch or wormwood leaves, brown with leaves of the walnut trees. Brick-red was achieved with a special root, purple with cochénille lice. Natural indigo gave a wonderful blue and green came from a mix of a yellow and indigo bath. So an exhibit with beautifully embroidered felt pieces was successfully staged.

MARI NAGY – ISTVÁN VIDÁK

PAGES 18-19

A Brightly Colored Felters' Meeting

The 4th CorNit Online Felters' Meeting, organized and moderated by the felt artist Corinna Nitschmann offered an exciting and multifaceted platform with a varied course program for wet felters from all over the world

The event took place in the fall of 2023 and lasted for about a week. Corinna Nitschmann, the organizer, called it a kind of «intercontinental pajama party», since everybody could take part from home in comfy clothes. The participants could choose between five different online felting courses, to broaden their horizon regarding techniques and to converse in German with like-minded craftspeople.

From Necklaces to Felted Angels

The main program of this virtual meeting was, of course, the teaching, which was streamed live but could be followed in written as well. There were five different courses during which the participants had plenty of opportunities to improve their skills and technical knowledge. The courses not only conveyed basics, but encouraged further potential for future projects. Accordingly, Bea Németh showed how discarded felt can get a new life. Anikó Boros taught how to make her beautiful fuchsia necklace. Nadia Szabó shared how shimmering «glass mosaic shawls» can be made from silk and wool. With Ági Palásti, one learned how to create bewitching, mischievous felted angels. In Mónika Szabolcsi's course, the students even made delicate ballerina pumps with a real sole, which renders them fit for the road.

«The event was framed by an opening, where the lecturers presented their art and allowed for all kinds of questions. The end was a finissage where the participants showed what they had made over the week.

A Varied Program

There were more events on offer. Anna Vidák held a lecture about her stipend, where she combines felt and traditional costumes. The strained muscles were pampered with stretching exercises by a Pilates trainer. The so-called «psycho felting» was special indeed. Under the supervision of Péter Póth, an expert on mental hygiene, the participants set out for

an inner quest which ended in a creative phase. The objects, stories and experiences could be exchanged upon request in a pre-ordained safe space, thus deepening the contacts between the students. A further enrichment were the video courses, which were not only streamed live but could be downloaded, which enables interested parties to work at their own chosen speed and to come back to the subject matter, if so desired. Additionally, step-by-step photo instructions were provided which supported the felting process.

Felters' Meeting 2024

For those who were unable to take part at the 2023 online meeting there are always the LIVE Felt Treff in Hungary 2024 and the 5th Online Felters' Meeting 2024 to look forward to. Further information under: corinna@cornitfilz.de and www.cornitfilz.de

CORINNA NITSCHMANN

PAGES 20-22

«Beyond Resist» with Saar Snoek

During this three-day long workshop in Vienna, felt enthusiasts created fantasy sculptures under the supervision of the Dutch felt artist Saar Snoek. The workshop's organizer was Sawatou Mouratidou

To learn from the best lecturers, that has always been my motto when I chose the invitations for the courses that I have been organizing into the ninth year now. Saar Snoek is a true master of her trade, an exceptional artist. I am thankful that she accepted the invitation and came to Vienna to teach. At the picturesque surroundings of the Kunstfabrik, a former malt mill surrounded by high trees and meadows, some feltmakers from near and far have gathered to broaden their felting horizon, to meet like-minded artisans and to talk shop.

~ An unconventional approach towards felted sculptures was the subject of the three-day course in September 2023. Each participant made her own figure, always alert to learn more about new sculpting methods, to deliberate forms and shapes and to connect felt in the various processing phases with one's own personal aim. The projects being

highly individual, the course teacher's aid, support and simply her presence were crucial to our successful work.

Fast Feedback and Correcting Mistakes

In this course, the great advantages of a course where the participants are actually present came to light again: An experienced tutor is on board to give the students direct instructions and to help. A fast feedback, effective correction of mistakes or an individually chosen support regarding the different projects were instantaneously available on site. The direct exchange with our teacher stimulated the social aspect of learning and led to a higher understanding and/or motivation to make your project work. ~ All participants were encouraged to concentrate on certain demanding or challenging aspects in their own good time. Saar Snoek guided everybody through the process and they all were able to finish their first fantastic sculpture. She certainly rewarded us with an inspiring, interactive type of learning due to the high quality of her work and her expertise in this artistic field. In a playful way, Saar Snoek allowed for a glimpse what happens at the felting process by means of a technical analysis, thus granting her students the possible balance between control and creative freedom.

Important: The Social Gathering

The social aspect was very valuable indeed – i.e. the interaction between the participants and their tutor. They all were put in the position to learn from each other and to offer assistance. The exchange of ideas, tools and free loans of materials were important as well. Those three days were a very special experience for each and everybody around. Not only did we learn a lot about felting but about closeness as well. Here, I would like to thank with all my heart every teacher and student who have been present at my Vienna courses during the past nine years. In the future, I will concentrate on other issues.

SAWATOU MOURATIDOU

Saar Snoek

Saar Snoek is a sculptor and painter from The Netherlands and a passionate felt artist, too. Fascinated by science, biology and patterns, Saar Snoek uses those manifold influences in her experimental, wearable sculptures. saarsnoek.nl

Sawatou Mouratidou

Sawatou Mouratidou was born and grew up in Greece. Today, she lives in Vienna with her family. Since 2006, Sawatou Mouratidou has been focused on textile creations and founded her label «Sawatou fiber Artist» the same year. sawatou.com

PAGE 23

Seahorse ahoy!

During the regional meeting of the East Westphalian feltmakers, the participants immersed themselves into the felting world and created a crew of tiny seahorses

On October 8th 2023 it was time again for a regional meeting of the East Westphalian feltmakers in the region East Westphalia-Lippe (OWL). Karin Twelkemeier invited six felters to her wonderful «Filzgewerke» studio in Versmold, in the midst of green meadows. The meeting's theme was to felt a seahorse, following the *filzfun* 4/23 instructions by Helena Hermann. ~ After a cozy breakfast with self-made dips and salads, the group set to work. Karin Twelkemeier had already enlarged the stencil to the measurements given in the instructions, so they were immediately able to start laying out the wool. Helena Hermann's tutoring led each feltmaker on her own creative way to her respective seahorse project.

A Seahorse with a Mohawk

The results were as varied as the women in the group. The seahorse band boasted, amongst other specimen, one with a colorful mohawk or a bright green interpretation of Hippocampus. It never ceases to be touching how well feltmakers do connect during their passionate commitment. The whole day was characterized by support, tips and tricks, exchanging wool, talking shop, to borrow or lend needles and pieces of soap. It was a relaxing, happy time of mutual laughter and feltmaking – and as always before, you ask yourself again: «Why don't we do this more often?» I would like to thank Karin Twelkemeier for her initiative and hospitality.

Karin Twelkemeier

For more than 20 years, feltmaking has been enriching Karin Twelkemeier's life.

The artist loves to make basic commodity felt, decorations and hand-made felt art. In 2016 she opened her small studio where she holds courses and hosts the regional OWL meeting. She is a member of the Filznetzwerk e.V. and her products have passed the voluntary quality assurance process by the Filznetzwerk with flying colors.

Email: info@filzgewerke.de

DORIS NIESTROJ

PAGES 24-25

Giving Wings to Felting Ideas

Notable pieces of clothing were made during the workshop «Freies Filzen, Kleidung und Ecoprint (Free Felting, Clothing and Ecoprint)» hosted by Nina Demidova in the Bavarian felting paradise «Wampendobl»

For the felt artist Nina Demidova, the aim of her open felting workshop in July 2023 was to make individual clothing, such as coats, jackets, dresses or skirts together with her clients. To this end, she kept their number small, only five participants were allowed. This restriction paid off, since the artist offered full attention and support in realizing the many different ideas and projects.

∞ The first day began with preparatory work, such as the making of pre-felts or resists. The participants settled on the desired materials and combined those. The second day passed with the laying the wool out onto the resists – depending on the project in question either with silk, cotton or roving. On the third and fourth day the objects slowly took shape and the first garments were already dyed. For this, the felters put flowers and grasses onto the wraparound skirts and put them into the steamer for five hours. Ecoprinting made it necessary to put the grasses and leaves in a black color bath beforehand and to water the eucalyptus leaves. The perfect finishing was scheduled for day five.

Viktoria Frühwirth:

«I highly valued the open-mindedness concerning unusual ideas»

Nina's teachings are outstanding in her openness for all kinds of ideas. None is too small, too big, too easy or too

difficult. With great routine and empathy, she accompanied us during these five days. She immediately supported my idea for making a medieval kind of dress and we discussed the stencil pattern together. I trusted her suggestion to work with pre-felt in order to achieve more flexibility in the leg area. The result is quite becoming. The exchange during the five-day course was a special highlight, after all, Germany, Austria and Italy created beautiful felted clothing under charming international supervision. The success was enhanced by the surroundings themselves. The Wampendobl paradise showed once again where its core competence lies: In organizing and carrying out high-quality felting workshops. The cordiality and the accommodation offered by Petra and Mark Hermann left nothing to be desired. It feels like coming home, with the benefit that in the days to come I only have to take care of myself, the wool and my project.

Uli Reiterer:

«I am thankful for the many tricks of the trade and the practical help»

A felting course with Nina Demidova in Wampendobl is a unique experience. I was most impressed by our teacher's professionalism, poise and serenity. She helped to overcome every difficulty. Her course is a pure enrichment and improvement of your own skills – regardless whether you want to make scarves in different optics, dresses with challenging patterns, coats with different structures or enticing wraparound skirts. The Wampendobl paradise is a heaven for such adult education programs. Already approaching the farm is a beautiful sight, the road winds up along pastures with grazing Krainer sheep, llamas, ducks, geese, chicken and peacocks. I can fully recommend such a workshop in this lovely place.

Further Information

The lecturer Nina Demidova was born in Russia and lives in Barcelona. Since 2008, she is a professional feltmaker, felt artist and designer. Since 2010 she has been teaching, amongst other places, at the Oberrot Felting School and the Wampendobl Paradise. Please find the next course schedules on the Wampendobl Paradise's website. wampendobl.de

DIANA PYTER – VIKTORIA FRÜHWIRTH –
ULI REITERER

PAGES 28-31

Breathing Life Into Soul Figurines

The felt artist Jasmin Hage combines feltmaking with energy work and weaves wishes and energies into her soul figurines

Creative impulses and work have been standing side by side of 32-year-old Jasmin Hage, a.k.a. as «Jasmin the little creative», ever since her childhood. During a voluntary social year, when she was 24, she worked in a feltmaking and weaving studio and became acquainted with wet- and dry felting techniques. Some years later, during a self-help program (easy enough, just don't turn on the TV) she remembered those happy days. That is when she started to felt her little figurines. «I like the challenge to make something solid out of loose wool, some wire and crafting skills. I immerse myself in the world of creativity and imagination, and each time this is a special journey into the world of my own artistic faculties», she raves. «For me, it is crucial that I express myself without restraint whatsoever. While working in art, I always feel like I am on a trip where I can get ahold of otherwise fleeting creative images and share them with the world», Jasmin tells us.

An Inner Process Starts

The decision to start felting again unleashed a wave of inner sensations and processes. Her new hobby put her in renewed contact with imaginary folks like wood gnomes, fairies, witches, druids, dwarves, goddesses, nature and with her own personal natural spirituality and intuition. «Felt art and to feel connected to the revival of natural spirituality have opened a further door for me that I hadn't known before, that is to say: energy work», the artist says.

Soul Figurines, Energy Work and Felting

At first, the artist subconsciously started to integrate her energy work in her art. A shaman she knew helped her in understanding that this can happen on a conscious basis as well. Finally, Jasmin Hagen started to make something entirely new, following her acquired skills and her creative intuition. At the end of 2021, she finally settled on making highly individual soul figurines.

For them, she needs only some information concerning the person and her or his favorite colors. «Making soul figurines is possible on a very intuitive and delicate energetical level», Jasmin Hage explains. «While the making is in progress, I receive images, feelings, sometimes even smells and I am led by all these features. I feel like an open channel when I make the figurines with my hands», the felt artist describes her work. She is busy weaving and felting the obtained energies and wishes into each particular figurine. This may take hours or even days. Once the soul figurine is finished, there will be a cleansing ritual and then she breathes life into it with a blessing.

Jasmin's Felt Art

The figurines are mostly started with the dry-felting needle. The fabrics for the undergarments are wet-felted. Jasmin Hage mainly uses mountain sheep, Bheda, Merino and Wensleydale wool, viscose and gauze. The gauze is chemically dyed. «I love to combine colors and to dye fabrics, to try out the different shades, mix them and to get great results», Jasmin gushes. As the last step, the figurines are treated with a tiny pressing iron.

« The focus lies mostly in the symmetrical depiction of a face, something that wasn't so easy in the beginning. But her world spells trying, experimenting and readiness for each and every outcome. «I believe that the characteristic effects occur if you keep looking at the figurine, tracing the development or simply thinking about who they want to become. This makes for extraordinary character traits.»

« Jasmin Hage is prepared to work on special order based mainly on a client's given theme or imaginative powers. The outcome is astounding: Season figurines, witches, meditating folks, shamans, ritual headgear and then some!

Jasmin Hage

The felt artist Jasmin Hage combines felt and energetic support by means of her unique soul figurines. At present, she works on her self-employment, on two exhibitions and her own future online courses.

Instagram: [@deinefilzwelt](#)

Website: [deinefilzwelt.com](#)

Mail: info@jasmin-dieseelenheilerin.de

DIANA PYTER

PAGES 32-35

In Harmony with Nature

Norton Fredericks, a visual felt artist from Australia, specializes in large scale wall hangings that double as bio-acoustic sound absorbers. A further passion is making wearable art. His work is inspired by nature, his heritage and his connection to his home country

Norton Fredericks lives in in Kombumerri Country on Australia's Gold Coast and he is of mixed European and indigenous Australian heritage. He grew up in a semi-rural city on 250 acres on bushland and spent a lot of time outside and in his grandmother's sewing room as well. At an early age already, he discovered his love of felting. His first attempts were at needle felting, but after having found a local wet felt teacher he focussed mainly on wet felting. «I prefer wet felting because it feels more natural to me and I like the resulting surface better, compared with needle felting», Norton Fredericks claims.

Felting with Natural Fibres

Next to wet felting, his specialty lies in using natural dyes for botanical mono prints. He also spins yarns, weaves cloth and baskets and has been starting to work with metals lately. He only uses natural fibres in his felting. His favourite surface design fibres are red eri silk and unbleached flax. He uses natural botanical dyes to colour his wool and to print onto the finished works.

« Norton Frederick's artwork to date mirrors many different themes, for example his personal identity, overcoming trauma, the connection to certain places, sustainability and environmental issues. The artist reports: «The materiality and the fact that wool is compostable and returns nitrogen back into the soil greatly appeal to me. I love that felt has endless possibilities and enjoy relating how felt seems to hold memories, connecting it to place by imbuing it with botanical dyes from my region.»

« Fredericks is a full-time artist and workshop facilitator. He creates work for exhibitions and commercial buildings. In 2022 he took part in the Churchie Emerging Arts Prize which was founded by the Anglican Church Grammar School in Australia. He won the Commendation and People's Choice Award with his work

«Identity Landscape». It featured in his solo exhibition «Gatherer» in Brisbane and was later acquired by the Museum of Brisbane. «Identity Landscape» is a felted triptych that serves as a geographical map of the two federal states in eastern Australia where the artist used to live. It contained plants from significant locations which were then put to use as dyestuff. Once the felting was completed, he laid the material on the ground and poured an eucalyptus dye bath over it, letting the dye collect in the natural contours.

Guide His Hands

«For me, I am not concerned so much about creating perfection or what someone else might consider «beautiful» work. I care more about how and why the felt is created.» When it comes to creating surface design, he often lets his hands be guided by the fibres, letting them decide where to fall. Due to the size of his work, the felting process often takes many days, even a whole week. He views this as a meditative practice. «I love these slow crafts and live by the motto «Be your own art therapist», since all my work is done by hand with no electric tools.»

« Recently, Norton Fredericks has been incorporating more sculptural elements in his felt works. In a commercial commission for a residential skyscraper, he created a large felt wall hanging depicting the root system of the local Moreton Bay Fig tree. His object «Quandong Abstraction» shown in the Ipswich Art Gallery consists of two felted vessels that serve as an abstraction of a blue and red quandong seed, using wool and natural dyes extracted from eucalyptus and quandong. These vessels represent the European as well as the indigenous heritage, combining an Australian native plant with the medium of felt.

Norton Fredericks

Norton Fredericks next body of work is looking at his family history. The death of his great great grandmother is one of Brisbane's biggest unsolved murder mysteries. This work will be part of an upcoming Biennial in Queensland and will tell investigate her short life and retell her story. This will be his biggest and most ambitious work to date and it will be on display in late 2024.

Web: [Retritus.com](#)

Instagram: [@retritus](#)

DIANA PYTER

Tutorial: Mobile Phone Cover With Robin

This handy and practical sheath with the cute robin introduced below by Annette Koffer is quickly felted. It's great idea for a gift to a nature lover!

MATERIAL

- ~ Natural wool felt, thickness 3 mm and the piece should be at least 90 % pure new wool
- ~ Rubber band 2 cm wide and approx. 36 cm long
- ~ Felt wool of different colors
- ~ Felting cushion and felting needle
- ~ Glass beads
- ~ Fabric re-enforcer
- ~ Cutter, ruler, a pair of scissors and a needle
- ~ Sewing machine

INSTRUCTIONS

Before the actual felting starts, the cut-out patterns for the cover are made. Cut two rectangles from the natural wool felt which should be of your mobile phone's size. Important: Allow 2 cm for the seams both in length and width.

~ Cut two openings of approx. 2.5 cm length for the rubber band which closes the cover into both the front and the back of your two pattern pieces. I recommend to cut them at 10 cm from the lower edge in the middle.

1 Now sketch the desired motif (here the robin) with a pencil on the front side.

2 Felt light brown wool onto the robin's body with the felting needle on the felting cushion.

3 Now put on red wool for the characteristic spot below the bird's throat and lighter brown wool for the area under the wing. Everything should be needled evenly and firmly on.

4 Two tiny white wool balls make for the eyes.

5 For the small beak, felt first a little triangle in grey and frame this with a thinly twisted piece of black wool and divide the beak midwise with a thin line.

6 Now for the legs: Here too, twist thin threads and felt them on with the felting needle.

7 A small bead each renders the eyes lively. They should be sewed on with black yarn from the reverse.

8 If desired, you can felt a tiny flower into the beak. The stem is also felted on with thinly twisted wool threads. For the petals take white, tiny wool balls and felt them on tightly.

9 Now you glue the motif from the reverse with the fabric re-enforcer. Put that on only very thinly and press everything down well. Now a full hour of drying is required.

10 Before you sit down at the sewing machine, thread the rubber band through the cut-out openings. It should stick out a bit from below. Now put all the edges neatly onto each other and fix them with needles or clamps so nothing shifts. Sew the cover and don't forget to neaten beginning and end of the seams.

11 For the last step, cut the thread's ends off and the protruding rubber band back. The cuddly wool felt cover with the alluring robin will protect your mobile phone in a pleasing way.

INSTRUCTIONS: ANNETTE KOFFER

Annette Koffer

«Once I have my felting needle in hand - regardless whether I felt small furry animals onto knife sheaths, pocket knife holders or tiny crowns - it is the most beautiful work I can imagine doing. Feltmaking is sheer wizardry - literally everything can be made from colored, loose wool.»

~ 34-year-old Annette Koffer lives with her family and friends near Aachen. She studied Art and later Social Work. She digs working with her hands and is an outdoor lover. In 2021, she opened her own studio called «Das Wolltier (The Woolly Animal)» where sells her lovingly felted and sewn objects. At «Wolltier» you can get a DIY box, with all materials required, including a pre-cut mobile phone cover.

Mail: info@das-wolltier.de
Etsy: [daswolltier.etsy.com](https://www.etsy.com/shop/daswolltier)
Instagram: [@daswolltier](https://www.instagram.com/daswolltier)

Simply Animalistic

«Nature, art and a great love for animals have been in my life always», Helena Herrmann says fondly. «Feltmaking for me is a wonderful possibility to combine all those aspects.»

The felt artist with Russian and German roots moved to Germany with her family in the beginning of the 1990ies. «In the afternoons, I sat in my father's studio and sketched animals, sometimes true to life, at others more like comic strip characters», she remembers. Small wonder then that her trademark is mainly small, felted animal sculptures and finger- and hand puppets. There is always a dash of humor in their depiction.

A Chance Discovery

Her first contact with feltmaking happened by chance in 2010. She worked as a freelancing decorator designer and illustrator, and took on another job on the side at an arts and crafts shop. «One day they asked for a demonstration of dry felting, something I had never done before. In preparation for the task, I felted a tiny teddy bear. This technique immediately surprised me and I was enthusiastic to do more», the artist tells us. Feltmaking has never loosened its grip on the artist since then. By and by she studied wet-felting, on her own and through a lot of experimenting, and with others during courses with internationally famous felt artists.

~ In the meantime, feltmaking has become her main profession. Since 2016, she has been living with her husband in Bad Honnef at the foot of the Dragon Rock. She works from home, where she set up her small, cozy studio. The artistic focus still lies in felting animal figurines, but she doesn't neglect the many other possibilities felt offers and designs lighting objects, interior decorations, clothing and accessories. As a passionate tango dancer, she also creates a variety of jewelry, flowers and hair decoration.

Funny Accessories

In her work, she combines dry- and wet felting techniques. A hollow body, such as a finger puppet, she mostly wet-felts with the help of a resist and needles on the faces or decorative patterns later. If

a moveable or rather compact figurine is planned, the artists mostly dry-felted the body parts and enforces them with wire. Before they are all connected to form a whole, the single parts are sometimes reworked with water and soap. For some animals, she conjures cute accessories which she makes from various materials. So, she had a 3 D printer made small horns for a little felted ram.

☞ Each object is thoroughly planned and prepared. «When felting animals, it is important to know their anatomy and typical features. Still, despite all beforehand planning, some ideas only pop up during the felting process itself», Helena Hermann reports. The animals not only herald a good mood or assist a story teller, they can absorb fears and worries and have an exonerating quality. For this reason, in therapy work, coaching and training sessions – e.g. in nonviolent communication, such figures do have a responsible function. Helena Hermann has made card decks with portraits of her animal figures. These decks are used by family therapists in their contact with kids and youngsters in order to gain access to their emotions or inner resources. Helena Hermann cherishes the creative potential in some of her made-to-order projects. Either the person ordering wants to have a felted copy of an actual four-footed friend, or her filigree art objects are used in books, like for example a substantial order for moveable animal figures for the children's story «Sumpfbiber Bill (Bog beaver Bill)» by Wilma Frech.

Nature as a Paradigm

Like with most creative persons, nature plays the most important part in Hermann's work. A walk in the woods, a glance to a cloudy sky, bird watching, even digging in the garden – they all bring forth new ideas for different shapes, color combinations and new critters. Environmental protection and the preservation of rare animal and plant specimen are crucial themes for Hermann. Likewise, are exciting characters stemming from stories, poems and songs which come before her inner eye fully felted.

☞ Next to freelancing and working on order Helena Hermann is regularly hosting courses and workshops in her studio. «A highly individual and thorough assistance for my clients is important, therefore I only work with small groups», she tells us. «It is simply beautiful to watch people

leave more than happy with what they achieved with their own hands and that wonderful technique!»

Helena Hermann

The felt artist with Russian-German roots loves to share her passion for artistic and handicraft matters in courses and workshops. Please find more information on Helena Hermann's website or in the social networks.

Web: helena-hermann.de

Facebook: [@HelenaHermannFilz](https://www.facebook.com/HelenaHermannFilz)

Instagram: [@helena_hermann_filzkunst](https://www.instagram.com/helena_hermann_filzkunst)

DIANA PYTER

PAGES 44-47

Tutorial: Charming Cockatoos

These sweet cockatoo parrots made by Shana Assmann draw a lot of attention and enliven your rooms

MATERIAL

- ☞ Merino wool in yellow, light yellow, light pink, light red, dark grey
- ☞ Small black plastic eyes
- ☞ Awl
- ☞ Felting equipment: Felting mat, felting needles (star needle 38 gauge & reverse)

INSTRUCTIONS

1 First start by making the body and the head. Use light yellow wool for the body and stark yellow for the head.

2 Then connect the head to the body.

3 With the help of the awl, punch two holes for the eyes and insert the plastic eyes.

4 Then felt a small beak out of the light pink wool.

5 Roll two small light pink balls between your fingers and felt them at each side at the top of the beak. Add dark grey nostrils.

6 Add more wool to the side of the face to round the cheeks.

7 Two small pieces of light red wool form the circles on the cheeks. Felt them on both parts and place the circles as shown in the photograph.

8 For the crown feather use the yellow wool.

9 Now the tail is made with a piece of light-yellow wool.

10 Connect the tail to the body and screen the transition.

11 Make two wings out of the light-yellow wool.

12 Connect the wings to the upper body and screen the transition parts.

13 Make two slightly bigger wings from the light-yellow wool as well.

14 Connect these wings above the others to the body and screen the transition areas.

15 Roll two small balls for the legs and connect those with the lower part of the body.

16 Now felt the four stick-like feet (1 cm each) and cross them, as shown in the photograph.

17 Connect the feet to the legs.

18 In order make the bird real fluffy, take the reverse needle and loosen the wool up carefully. Now the charming cockatoo is finished and ready to adorn your home!

INSTRUCTIONS: SHANA ASSMANN

Shana Assmann

27-year-old Shana Assmann from Karlsruhe discovered felting through the social media in 2020. She liked it so much that she decided to try her own hand in it. The process itself, working with the materials and the challenge to give shape to your own ideas are her main joys. Shana finds her creative freedom in feltmaking. She loves experiments, especially designing a mixture of both surreal and true-to-life animals.

Instagram: [@shannuzik](https://www.instagram.com/shannuzik)

«Forget the Brains and Delve Into Feeling»

Anitarini Bauer wants to bridge the gap between traditional handicrafts of the felting art and today. In her designs, felt appears in modern shapes and designs

The quiet, peaceful grazing of sheep made Anitarini Bauer feel good even as a child. When her own children were in kindergarten, she came into contact with feltmaking through the dry-felting artist Andrea Hunger-Ebenhöch. At that time, she bought her first felting kit, of course a sheep was the project envisaged. As of 2010 she taught herself many felting techniques and attended different felting courses held by local felters. Taught by her sister-in-law, also an avid felter, Anitarini Bauer made her first hollow vessel, the veritable corner stone of her felting passion.

∞ The 50-year-old felt artist with Indian roots has quit her job to have more time for her family and for self-fulfillment. Together with her husband and her three children she lives near Stuttgart. In 2019, still under employment, she started a felt designer education program at the Oberrot Felting School in Oberrot-Neuhausen. In 2023, she proudly received her certificate. Sill joyous, she tells us about those times: «I am so thankful for all the inspiring encounters and friendship that ensued from the feltmaking training. Felt really connects – this ambiguous statement was immortalized by our felters' group in the shape of little streamers. So much truth lies in that saying.»

The Gain of Peace and Quiet

Felting is particularly fascinating to Anitarini, because one is presented with an inexhaustible variety of techniques and artistic design possibilities at hand, with just loose wool fibers, the proper choice of the wool, additional tools and colors. Against every cliché that feltmaking is old-fashioned and mainly done by housewives! For Anitarini Bauer, felting spells: «Forget the brains and immerse yourself in creativity and feelings!»

∞ The steady, regular steps of feltmaking give her the opportunity to find some peace and to concentrate on the present (working) moment.

As per the artist: «The felting process often helps me to fight off negative emotions like nervousness, disquiet or worries. At the end, there is always pure joy, happiness, pride and a deep feeling of inner satisfaction over the felted wonder that materialized as if commanded by a magic wand.» Her artistic achievements allow for an encompassing expression of her personality and creative faculties. She wants to make something that lasts, that gives other people joy. «Felting is a kind of magic», she is convinced.

Felt Interior Design

Primarily, Anitarini Bauer works in the wet-felting technique and she loves surfaces of all possible kinds. Her focus lies on three-dimensional objects. When an object requires to be handled with dry-felting techniques, as for instance her Buddha, she resorts to that process. Amongst other fibers, she uses raw wool, dyed wool fleeces and roving, curls, fabrics, Pongé silk, silk threads and plant fibers.

∞ She is also an expert of interior design – she makes lighted objects, vessels and even bigger objects, like her folding screen or the already mentioned Buddha sculptures. Anitarini Bauer finds her inspiration when travelling – so again for the Buddha in Kamakura when she visited Japan – or during exhibits, the works of other designers and in nature.

Lightness of Heart and Self-Confidence

She has finished her Life Coaching training in the spring of 2023. To combine this with feltmaking is dear to her heart. She wants to accompany people in finding more lightness of being and self-confidence in their lives. Her inclination is to support others to lead a content and happy live and to nourish the conviction that each human being is perfect as it is and always lovable.

Anitarini Bauer

Future exhibits by Anitarini Bauer are on schedule in the cities of Backnang and Ludwigsburg. The artist offers various courses for felting vessels, sitting cushions, stones and a lot more. Email: Anitarini.Bauer@arcor.de Website: www.filz-und-emotion.de Instagram: [@textilkunst_filz_und_emotion](https://www.instagram.com/textilkunst_filz_und_emotion)

LARA PYTER

Fascinating Metamorphoses

The metamorphoses of materials are the passion of the Dutch felt artist Anja Schrik. She has written several books on her specialty, eco dyeing with plants, roots and insects and teaches her expertise in courses

Anja Schrik grew up in a small village in the eastern Netherlands. Even as a child, she liked handicrafts, such as knitting or sewing. As an adult, she has been concentrating on feltmaking and eventually took it up as a proper profession. Her special interest lies in combining felt with natural materials. To that end, the artist uses mainly natural-colored wool fresh from the sheep, and she abstains from dyeing the curls. Apart from that, she has been developing various techniques to felt in shells, stones or leaves into her objects, vases, lighting objects or wall hangings. Since there was no suitable literature available to be had on feltmaking with other natural materials, she wrote a book herself in 2014 titled «Öko-Filz. Natur pur!», self-published in German and Dutch.

From Felting to Dyeing

Felting went hand in hand with a thorough research into the history and methods of plant dyeing, which has a long tradition in many regions of the world. Anja Schrik wanted to see and learn all steps of the process and therefore experimented with plants, roots and insects which are well-known as typical dye ingredients, but also with the plants and shrubbery she found in her own garden.

∞ During her research, she came upon recipes for dyeing with color pigments which can be used for working on paper, textiles and wood. As opposed to plant dyes, color pigments have to undergo a binding process in order get liquids for painting or stamping. Arabic gum, linseed or even egg yolk serve as binding agents. In the following double page, you will find a recipe for earth pigments that are compounded with turpentine and winter green oil.

∞ Several books have been made in the meantime from Anja Schrik's recipe treasures: Two detailed volumes on eco dyeing and a «Stalenboek», which contains examples and recipes for 65

different plants and how these can be used for the dyeing of wool, paper and cotton and for eco-printing. In 2017, MaroVerlag published her book «Eco-Färben. Malen, Färben, Drucken mit Naturfarbstoffen» in a German translation. There are tons of information on how dye is extracted from plant materials, how to dye fabric with different techniques and to make great eco-prints. This book is a wonderful invitation to discover the rich world of natural colors and dyeing methods.

Metamorphoses

«These kinds of metamorphoses continue to kindle my curiosity. I always want to know how something works. The changes the materials are subject to interest me a lot – from soft wool to firm felt, from plants to dyes, from fish skin to leather, from recycled paper to jolly, colorful notebooks», Anja Schrik tells us enthusiastically. Many of those metamorphoses arise when she is busy experimenting. But a printed paper or fabric is hardly ever a finished product that can be put on show. Many of her experiments she turns into attractive book covers, since she also successfully studied book-binding. She treats the felt in such a way that it can serve the purpose like leather.
☞ «What would art be without the craft?» is her rhetoric question. Anja Schrik is convinced that she as an artist profits a lot from learning traditional techniques and to grapple with different materials. Equally important is a consciousness regarding the provenance of things, to use what is at hand and to give so-called waste a new dignity. Consequently, her credo is: «Recycling is more important than ever – let's upcycle, let's make something beautiful out of it!»
☞ Further information about Anja Schrik, her courses and books: anjaschrik.nl

SARAH KÄSMAYR

PAGES 54-55

Working with Earth Colors

In our soil there are plenty of colored minerals with so-called inorganic pigments that can be used in painting. A recipe for making earth color dyes plus many practical hints are introduced by Anja Schrik below

Think, for example, of pre-historic cave paintings – earth colors have a very long tradition. The colors we usually label «earth hues» are full and warm. But to use them for fabric designs you have to bind them, i.e. liquefy them. Once this is done, the color is ready for use.

Light-Resistant Colors

Most earthy pigments are colorfast and don't bleach under the exposure of UV rays, which is their great advantage. Examples of some wonderful colorfast minerals are blazed or unglazed Umbra, blazed or unglazed Siena (Italian Ochre) and green earth. The disadvantage of pigments is that they kind of just lie on the fabric surface, they refuse to soak into it and rub off eventually. The color variant introduced here is exempted.

Buying Pigments

Most specialized arts and crafts shops offer pigments, both synthetic and natural ones. Apart from the typical earth tones there are pigments made from shining precious stones, such as Lapis lazuli. In this case, the stones are ground to a fine powder. Always keep in mind: Each pigment behaves differently. One dyes better than the other. The quantities of my recipe are just a guideline. Before each color bath, you have to test the various relations of the pigments.

Making Dyes

Earth color pigments can be mixed with an additive which is high in protein. Egg white, rice- chick pea or soy milk work well. Another method is to stir it with turpentine oil (not to be confounded with turpentine!) With these methods, the pigment sink into the fabric better and the result is similar to water color. For the last-mentioned method, I am pleased to provide a recipe with exact specifications.

Binding

The dye is now a thin fluid and can be applied well with a brush. If you want to use it with resists and silk-screen printing, the color has to be bound first, i.e. thickened. It is your choice how syrupy you want it to become. Choose a binding agent suitable for cold liquids – but not all of them function equally well. Guava seed or carob gum flour are fine in any case.

Preservation

Color that has been made with turpentine oil keeps well in closed jars or bottles. But my advice is to make only small quantities and to use them up fast.

Preparing the Fabric

Before dyeing, I recommend to wash the fabric first, preferably in the washing-machine. Thus, the fabric gets really clean, since any possible additives of industrial manufacture are washed out. This makes the dye cling to the fabric better. Use soda instead of detergent and don't use any softener. A couple of spoonsful of soda for a full load is sufficient. Before the fabric is printed or painted it has to be completely dry.

Broaden the Color Range

Colors made on a turpentine oil basis can be mixed with each other, so you get different color hues. As opposed to dyeing with plant colors, here a difference in temperature doesn't influence the dyeing degree,

Fixing

It is really important to let the designed fabric dry slowly. The process should not be hastened, so don't put it on the heater. Let time pass before the fabric is completely dry – my recommendation is a full two weeks.

Dye Recipe

MATERIAL

For approx. 135 ml of color

- ☞ 6 grams of earth pigments, for example Umbra, Siena or green earth
- ☞ 75 ml turpentine oil, **not** turpentine
- ☞ 30 ml vinegar
- ☞ 15 ml winter-green oil from the pharmacy
- ☞ 15 ml dish detergent
- ☞ If possible 1 teaspoon full of guava seed oil or another binding agent

1 The Making of the Color

Mix all ingredients. Stir well until you get a smooth colored liquid. If it turns out too thin, add a binding agent. Start with half a spoonful. Always wait for 10 minutes until you add more - the thickening agent needs time to bind the color. If you are satisfied with the color range and consistency, fill the liquid in a tight container, for example a screw-on glass.

2 Fabric Design

Once the fabric in question was washed with soda and dried out completely, spread it onto a flat base, for example a table. Fix the edges with adhesive tape so the fabric lies flat and as evenly as possible. Now it can be painted on with different brushes or self-made stamps, or silk-screen printed. Further methods are marbling or batik techniques.

3 Drying the Fabric

Let the fabric dry for at least two weeks. Then iron it with a steam iron and wash it once more by hand.

Advice: Prepare a bottle wherein you store a so-called «basic fluid». To that end, mix all required ingredients except the pigments well. When desired, you can add earth pigments to this starter liquid. You can always make the exact amount you want without any time-consuming preparations.

ANJA SCHRİK

Book Recommendation:

»Eco-Färben. Malen, Färben, Drucken mit Naturfarbstoffen«

These instructions were kindly allowed for printing by Maro Publishing from: Anja Schrik: »Eco-Färben. Malen, Färben, Drucken mit Naturfarbstoffen«, translated from the Dutch. 256 pages, hardcover, MaroVerlag, 38 € (D) | 39,10 € (A) www.galeriebuch.de

For the Last Journey

To be warmly sheathed on our last passage – this is Erika Amon's idea for her felted ecological, natural and perishable urns

«Wool is a material basking in warmth and it serves as a symbol for the love we wish to give our dear ones who have passed away», Erika Amon says. As a well-known funeral speaker in her region, she knows what grieving relatives long for: Warmth and comfort. That is how her idea to felt urns was born. «The power of symbols carries us along hard times, and an urn made of felted sheep wool is such a symbol. The wool stands for the warm love we want to give our dead.»

«I design the urns following my own ideas but also relatives can have a say in it, according to the deceased's personality». The wet-felted urns vary a lot in color and shape: from quaint ones which are crowned with real flowers to unique specimen, richly adorned with felted flowery twines. Felted canary creepers, sweet peas, roses or snowdrops adorn without ever withering.

«Erika Amon offers courses, where surviving family members felt the urn for the deceased themselves. This making and housing is almost a healing process in itself, sometimes people cry, but they also smile and often the atmosphere is reverent – and the lost person always really close. «To keep your hands busy in times of mourning, to be able to give a last gift, this is an important aspect of my courses. We think with love and grief of the person we lost. The mother of a star baby (a term that refers to stillborn children or those who died very young) one told me: «I cannot do anything for my child all life long, at least I can make something for her now.»

«For clients who want to felt their own urn I often see a first tentative, then increasingly bold engagement in the subject of transience. In my eyes, this is crucial for a good life», Erika Amon stresses. She shares her home in Lindau with a dog, cats, chicken, ducks and even a crow with an injured wing. «Around our red wooden house, you really feel nature», she muses.

«Her interest lies in all what makes life vibrant, and death is but a part of it. «It is inevitable, after all, and preparation can be so helpful». Many bereaved see

themselves confronted with too many things to organize, so the emotional farewell is often missed out. «In the realm of death and grief, there is so much that may change», she thinks. «Approaching the delicate subject via the medium wool takes away a bit off the load, makes it possible to literally grasp the situation.»

«Wool is my passion – I am quite taken by its charms. Working with it is fascinating and the results range from filigree and delicate to sturdy and indestructible. The way of working with it is similar: sometimes full to the brim with feelings and meditative, then again full of power and dynamical», Erika Amon tells us.

The urns are provided with ribbons so they can be lowered into the grave without the use of plastic nets. Erika Amon uses local mountain sheep wool and mule sing-free Merino, a matter of course for the animal lover.

Her love of felting was kindled around the turn of the century by Eva Pözl, who is a skilled designer of natural beings and fairies. «I spent endless hours in my felt studio, I took part in many courses, I learned always newer and more techniques, but I still keep finding new possibilities for felt. Five years ago, I started felting urns. I thought of it at first at a funeral in the Friedwald on a bitterly cold winter's day.»

Erika Amon

For many years now, Erika Amon has been guiding people through hard times as a funeral speaker. These times leave traces in us, and so the idea to felt urns was born. Please find further information and course schedules 2024 under Facebook: [@erika_amon_reden_zeremonien](https://www.facebook.com/erika_amon_reden_zeremonien) Instagram: [@ErikaAmon_RedenzereemonienBegleitung](https://www.instagram.com/ErikaAmon_RedenzereemonienBegleitung) Website: www.erika-amon.de

LARA PYTER

All About Sheep

Petra Hermann and her husband Marc live in Egglham near Passau on a farm from 1640. There they have found and made their own «Wampendobler Paradise». 70 Krain Stone sheep found a home there too, and with them the couple discovered the art of felting

In 2007, Petra and Marc moved from Munich to Lower Bavaria to their farm called «Wampendobl». Since 1640, it has been known under that homestead name. But the Hermanns added: «Paradise». Their vision was to live off the land and the farm. At first, they offered hotel services and day-spa applications. One after the other, the first animals moved in. Dana, the dog, chicken, three goats and three llamas and eventually their flock.

Sheep Threatened by Extinction

«An acquaintance sold her little flock and we bought some of them in 2013. We immediately liked the Krain sheep, because they are small, of lively coloring and threatened by extinction», Petra and Marc Hermann tell us. That's why they remained faithful to this breed and have become not only sheep keepers but herd book breeders as well. This implies that they can only breed certain kinds of Krain sheep, meaning those who classify for further breeding. The Krain Stone Sheep are a very quiet and frugal breed. «We also like to cultivate our land and to use it properly. We keep so many sheep that we can feed them off our premises, i.e. they can graze all year round and we also make hay solely from our pastures and meadows», the sheep breeders explain. At the moment they possess – with the lambs – about 110 sheep.

∞ They are kept in a so-called open pen, which means they can graze outside but can also go back inside the pen at any time. The 58 ewes and 12 rams have six hectares of pastures at their disposal, their pen is 250 square meters. Petra Hermann reports: «Bio-sheep keeping rules that each sheep requires 1.5 square meters in the sheep pen and 1.5 square meters of moving space. For 70 animals 105 square meters of pen and 105 square meters to run around.» Although the Krain Stone ewes lamb up to 3 times a year, Petra and Marc Hermann give them at least a year after birth before they give lamb again. The older

animals have to lamb no longer but receive food and care in their old age. «My husband looks after the animals daily, feeds them with hay, cuts their claws and bottle-feeds the lambs, in cases of emergency even in our living room», Petra Hermann describes their everyday life.

A Sensible Use of Wool

Sheep have to be shorn, and each shearing yields about 100 kg of wool. The sheep breeders were looking for a sensible use, and now they manufacture fabric lengths thrice wet needle-felted for sewn bags, coats, jackets, blankets, wick yarns for weaving carpets, sitting cushions and fleece that is to be inserted in sturdy felted clothing.

Discovering Feltmaking

In 2017, Petra Hermann started felting herself. A seamstress had made her a cape with felted applications from the felt material described above. A guest wanted to have the exact same cape. The seamstress, however, was not too keen on doing it all over again, and so Marc had an idea: «Petra, you should make it yourself!» She immediately fell in love with feltmaking and the first items she made were shawls. In the following year, she attended the Oberrot Felting School for a course with Nida Demidowa. «Since those days, we host several felting courses per year with holistic nature experiences on our biological farm», Petra says. She works mainly with pure wool, wool with different fibers and Nuno felt with silk fabrics. Not only she was gripped by the felting fever. Her husband is an enthusiast, too, he favors felted clothes above all others, in short, he is a great representative of her skills. Marc and Petra Hermann continue to enlarge their paradise. «The farm is a great joy to us and gives us free rein to pass on our thoughts about farm animals, nature and to life itself to our fellow human beings», the Wampendobl felt enthusiasts claim who are deeply rooted in their home.

Wampendobler Paradise

In the «Wampendobler Paradise» guests who seek individuality will not be disappointed. Further information on the spacious holiday homes, day-spa, applications of all kinds and interesting felting courses please find under www.wampendobl.de/index.html

LARA PYTER

Our Most Beloved Syrmaks from Kazakhstan

Mari Nagy und István Vidák set out on a historical quest for felted carpets in Kazakhstan

In the old days, most carpets were made for one's own needs or those of the immediate family. All that remains today are photographs, because those carpets have been surely been worn and and torn in the meantime. The carpets were made by Kazakh women all over Middle Asia. The Kazakh people are spread widely beyond the country itself until today's West China at the Mongolian border, where nomad herders had always been living. We looked for their traces and pondered: Who made them and when? Who took photographs? Did the carpet find its way to Europe or was it kept in the family? For our choice, we did not care about how old the carpet was. The only criteria were its beauty and skilled making.

Pattern Distribution

Drawings or sketches of carpets, the whole surfaces of which are filled with a single pattern illustrate how much artistry and effort has been put into designing that very pattern and to convey it to the workpiece. The single-patterned carpets please us the most. Their creators showed spunk, because next to the flowing design you always have to keep in mind the trickiness involved. Carpets with a single coherent pattern were mostly made in remote regions over the past hundred years – far away from urbanization and where tourists hardly ever venture. Maybe they are still made in regions where traditional life forms have stood the test of time. If you look at them closely, one can learn a lot about them – certainly we were not present when they were first made, but we can still try to unravel some secrets regarding their making.

∞ Most of the carpets made over the last hundred years came in five parts. The middle pattern is decisive. The lower pattern part mirrors the upper one, they complement one another. The same goes for the two subset patterns. The carpets here introduced show one exception to the rule: Its creator had cut the felt plates in such a way that a single blanket resulted. This is indeed a rarity.

The Work Method

You put two felt pieces in contrasting colors on top of each other. The pattern is sketched on with coal or chalk. Now cut along the given lines. You get several pieces that are interlocked in the next step. Our photos show four variants how the middle area can be differently designed.

Notes on the Back of the Syrmak Carpets

Patterns on the back of the Syrmak could be imagined. Because of the quilting involved, the patterns should correspond to the ones on the front side. A complementary piece of the same color would make that possible. But as far as we could gather, this was never done in

this particular branch of Kazhakh folk tradition. The backside of a Kazhakh smyrnak is always monochrome, never white but mostly brown.

MARI NAGY – ISTVÁN VIDÁK

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Tel. (0041) 619131333
www.atelier-pecora.ch · atelier-pecora@gmx.ch

Your direct contact to the editorial department:
redaktion@filzfun.de;
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