

filzfun – The English Supplement

Issue #84, Autumn 2024

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Dear Readers,

slowly, the days get shorter and the evenings longer – an ideal time to work creatively. Autumn always presents us with a wealth of natural inspirations: all kinds of fruit, chestnuts, mushrooms, dried grasses, flowers and leaves. Also, for felt artist Heike Böhn, autumn is her favorite season, easy to see in the many storm lamps, bowls, felted chestnuts and other atmospheric items she made. (Page 56) Another nature lover is Sandrine Pialat from France. In her Parisian studio she creates clothing with bewitching surface structures and sculptural interior decoration with motifs from the deep-sea world. (Page 28) Last but not least, textile artist Jutta Schwab counts on nature as an inspirational source for her floral art and magical figurines. You will find her portrait from page 32 to 35. Rather grounded, however, are the art objects

NOTE

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

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made by Sabine Reichert-Kassube, who takes on the theme «Magic of Stones» with seven installations for an exhibition (Page 10). She also hosted a lace felting course at the Winterschule Ulten in South Tyrol. Please find a choice of those delicate, finespun felt pieces as of page 52. How feltmaking keeps the felt designer Katrin Bigl down to earth we will tell you as of page 42. She uses her felt projects also in her caregiver training for young people.

Of course, we report on many interesting felting exhibits and courses, e.g. in the Sayn castle, where «Noble Embroidery on Wool Felt» took place (page 8), in the felto Filzwelt a show with the Dutch felt artist Annemie Koenen (page 16) and the «Third Italian Needle-Felt Meeting» in Rome (Page 22).

If you want to felt yourself, we have two inspiring instructions: a very beautiful 3-D felted rose (page 48) and a scarf with plant printing (page 36) which is perfect for the crisp and exhilarating days to come.

We wish you a beautiful autumn with many happy, creative hours. Have a lot of fun reading the new *filzfun*.

*Best regards
Your *filzfun* team*

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redaktion@filzfun.de

The winter issue will be published on November 30th, 2024

Editorial deadline: September 2nd, 2024

Wool Meets Clay

For the fifth time, the Craft-Art-Fusion 2024 is going to take place in Vienna in October. The Austrian felt network Wollmodus will present mixed-material objects made by twelve international textile artists with the aim to share the perception of sheep wool variety beyond the realm of the traditional feltmaking craft. This time it's all about sheep wool and clay. For the fifth Open Calls, international artists were invited to newly consider the basic stuff sheep wool and have it enter into a dialogue with other materials, in this case clay or finished ceramics. From the many highly ambitious submissions from here and abroad the Jury selected 12 art works and will put them on show at the «Wir WOLLEn TON» exhibit in Vienna in October 2024. The show runs from October 9th to 18.10.2024 in the Galerie am Park, Liniengasse 2A, 1060 Wien. The opening is on October 8th 2024 starting at 6 p.m., the closing event is on October 18th 2024 at 4 p.m.
wollmodus.at

Supporting Women in Need with Textile Art

«Threads of Change: Stitching against Femicide» is a project of the Austrian Fine Artists' Guild. Embroidered flowers and blossoms stitched by many different people should draw attention to the increasing number of femicides all over the world. At different exhibition places, interested parties can embroider a piece of cloth themselves and thus take part in this project. The next exhibits are scheduled at «ega: frauen im zentrum (women at the center)» from October 10th to November 11th 2024, Windmühlgasse 26, 1060 Wien as well as in the Semmelweis Hospital (November 15th to 24th 2024, Hockegasse 37, House 4, 1180 Wien). The piece of cloth will also be presented at smaller events and passed on to different places such as galleries, studios and shops in order to be further embroidered. Everybody is encouraged to create a small stitching venture. One can also embroider flowers on small pieces of fabric which will later be sewn onto the big main cloth. This makes it possible for people from out of Vienna to share.

We plan to sell the finished project or to auction it off. The money will go to organizations who support women in need.

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Felted Sculptures in Leipzig

Under the designation «ANDERS (DIFFERENT)», the art association Ars Avanti e.V. is going to present felted sculptures by Yvonne Zoberbier in the Kunstquartier der Alten Handelsschule Leipzig from September 13th to 29th 2024. Her filigree women's torsi are as impressive as the faces which seem to embody a wholly different being with each stitch of the needle – at one time energetic and full of hope, at another vulnerable and unstable. Opening: September 13th 2024, starting 7 p.m. Closing Event: September 29th 2024, from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. within the frame of the Offenen Ateliers (Open Studios) Leipzig. The event takes place at the Alte Handelsschule, ARS Avanti Kunstraum, 2nd story, Gießerstr. 75, 04229 Leipzig
arsavanti.de
info@arsavanti.de

Self-made Kyrgyz Shyrdak Carpets

In this course, which will take place from November 15th to 17th 2024 visitors can learn about the traditional, Central-Asian textile technique and to make a Shyrdak cushion themselves. To this end, Sabine Reichert-Kassube invited Asel Sapakova from Kyrgyzstan – a textile artist in the fourth generation. On the first day two sturdy plates are felted, cut according to a certain pattern and re-assembled again. These so-called twins will be sewn, lined with a second layer of felt, quilted and embroidered with a cord. Participants may choose between symmetrical and free design variations. In Kyrgyzstan, symbols play an important part in textile design. These may be plant or animals' symbols, like trees, a ram's horn, the wings of an eagle or symbols of human life such as family, community and love.
sabine@arachne-textilkunst.de
spitzenfilz.de

Artful Bulgarian Felt Carpets

From June 22nd to October 15th 2024 a unique, long-awaited felt exhibition will be shown in the Bulgarian city of Plovdiv. The historical Ethnographic Museum Plovdiv is a most beautiful setting for the event themed «Bulgarian Felt Carpets – a Message from the Past». The 40 large and intricately made felt carpets – some are older than 200 years – were collected from six museums and other preservation sites in Bulgaria. For the first time in many years, they will be publicly displayed in the two-story historic museum building. These are the oldest felt carpets found in Europe, and they have a lot to tell with their exciting sun symbols.

To entertain small visitors, Istvan Vidák will open his colorful treasure chest and present colorful felt games.

Opening: Tuesday – Sunday: 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Co-ordination and support on site for interested feltmakers:

svetlana.kamps@t-online.de,
+49 179 7426902
ethnograph.info/en/bulgarian-felted-textiles-a-message-from-antiquity/

Noble Embroidery on Wool Felt

The special show «Die fabelhafte Welt der Barbara Behr (The fabulous world of Barbara Behr)» in the Sayn Castle was a highlight for art lovers and felting enthusiasts. The felt artist Silvia Josten from Cologne presented female portraits hand-embroidered on wool felt

On March 15th 2024, the New Museum of the Sayn Castle in Bendorf-Sayn near Koblenz opened its doors for a startling show themed «Die fabelhafte Welt der Barbara Behr (The fabulous world of Barbara Behr)». The illustrator Barbara Behr from Sankt Augustin near Bonn is well-known for her nostalgic, colorful and opulent designs. Within the scope of this impressive special show, felt artist Silvia Josten from Cologne showed her

hand-embroidered images, inspired by Barbara Behr's fascinating collages. At the opening, around 250 guests were greeted by the Prince and Princess zu Sayn-Wittgenstein.

Artful Embroidery

From nostalgic portraits of women, graceful illustrations of nobility issues or classical masterpieces, such as Leonardo da Vinci's «Mona Lisa» and «Lady with Ermine», Sandro Botticelli's «Birth of Venus», Raffael's «Angel», Jan Vermeer's «Girl with the Pearl Earring» or Grant Wood's «American Gothic»- the illustrator Barbara Behr breathed new life into each of those. Silvia Josten transposed a choice of Behr's collages onto wool felt and created an entirely new dimension with lots of skill and imagination. Josten says: «I love to freely embroider wool felt, using high-quality yarns, beads, sequins and trims. My love for detail often shows in my classy yet playful objects with their tiny stitches, glittering materials or three-dimensional inlays.»

A Lot to Discover

Her extravagant, elaborate felt 'paintings' were such eye candy that most visitors took a much closer look than usual. «The eye of the beholder may roam. There is a lot to see in my creations», as Silvia Josten says. The artist encouraged the public to share opinions with her and to discuss her objects. Due to its great success, the show was prolonged until the beginning of June to let even more people enjoy this fascinating world. A further exhibit with new felt artwork by Silvia Josten is planned for the coming year.

DIANA PYTER

Further Information

The felt artist Silvia Josten makes jewelry, accessories, objects, urns and much more from her favorite material wool and sells those under her label Filzperle. (See and read more on the pages 32-35)

In the Sayn Castle in Rhineland-Palatine near Koblenz visitors can spend riveting hours between the beautiful Sayn Castle and varicolored butterflies. Further information please find under *sayn.de*

More information about Barbara Behr under: *behr-pixelart.de*

PAGES 10-11

Stone Magic

On May 4th and 5th 2024, the show «Magie der Steine (Stone Magic)» took place (within the framework of Open Studios Brandenburg) at the Werenzia Farm in Doberlug-Kirchhain. Approximately 70 visitors came to see seven installations by the felt artist Sabine Reichert-Kassube during those two days. Some remarks were heard over and over again: «They do look real» and «Is this really felt?» Here her resumé.

Mankind has always been intrigued by stones. Despite their being so hard, the elements can shape them: wind, water and heat take their toll. Such a process can be understood in the reverse order where feltmaking is concerned: If the times and natural forces erode rocks and stones, firm stone shapes can be made by the repeated layering and rubbing of wool.

Annual Felting Motto Stones

I first thought of my personal annual felting motto «Stones» during last fall, after seeing the Felt Art Path winding through the bizarre porphyry quarries at the Rochlitz Mountain. The reddish Porphyry stone with its tiny white veins was the first impulse to set up a stone exhibit. In January 2024, several hundred stones came to light during a reconstruction of our old house; they had been buried in the ground for a couple of hundred years. What could they probably have told us? Heaps of stones of all colors, sizes and structures towered on the romantic farm premises. We laid them out in spirals and circles in remembrance of the Celtic ritual places in Ireland. How could these stones not enter into a dialogue with all kinds of imaginatively felted ones?

Earth, Mankind and the Animal Kingdom Are Deeply Related

Many felt artists have already made stones. This intense process allows us to feel the strong bond between the Earth, mankind and the animal world and to build upon it. Already, winding up the core from unwashed wool (for instance milk sheep wool) is very sensual and a good way to meditate. Mountains of blanks pile high on the felting table. The raw wool's scent keeps us grounded, makes us grateful. The lanolin is gentle to the hands. With each wool layer which

is put on with a lot of soap and water the stone grows. The first layers may be coarser and hairier, but the uppermost layers should be completely smooth and fine. On the very top comes the texture in a harmonic color balance or in contrasting colors, as natural as possible.

Petroglyphs as a Challenge

A felting trip to Kyrgyzstan was the last straw for a stone installation. I was mesmerized by petroglyphs, i.e. delicate animal paintings on big stones. These images engraved in stone had religious or ritualistic purposes, they portray revered gods or animals, such as capricorns, rams or the sacred white hind. To imitate those petroglyphs was hard work. The sketch should look like a thousand-year-old engraving. I preferred free cutting to the reserve technique, since it looks more natural: The trick was not to cut too deeply, otherwise the raw wool will show, but deep enough for visible lines. Some of my stones have found a new home. On the felting table there are still a few blanks and I continue to felt stones, often in a merry company.

SABINE REICHERT-KASSUBE

Further Information

For 25 years, Sabine Reichert-Kassube has been a professional felt artist. She offers an extensive array of courses on her Werenzia farm south of Berlin and other meeting places. The artist specializes mainly in clothing and bobbin-lace felts. *spitzenfilz.de*

PAGES 12-15

«Filz gestaltet Raum» – Ever So Diverse

Until July 28th 2024, the show «Filz gestaltet Raum (Felt Designs Space)», together with the exhibit «Fokus Filz», was presented in the Max Berk Textile Collection in Heidelberg. Now the show travelled to The Netherlands and will be presented from September until December in the Museum de Kantfabriek in Horst

Why does the Filznetzwerk organize events around a certain theme? Because the Filznetzwerk connects people of the most diverse relationship toward felt.

You meet beginners and professionals, traders of wool or tools, pastime felters, advanced ones and of course: absolute experts in the field. It is not always easy to find common ground and the creative and artistic intentions differ greatly. A good way to bring all those people together is a common theme and a collective presentation of felt art objects. Naturally, a jury will judge the artistic approach and craftsmanship involved. It is up to the Filznetzwerk to lure future participants and interested parties out of their den.

The Objects

The many ways to process felt is a crucial element of the show. Not only that the material offers so many possibilities, also the creative designs and combinations with other materials are inexhaustible. Small decorative items stand in line with colorful paravents or partitions, aesthetic and useful containers and rather large pieces of furniture. Once more, the Filznetzwerk offered ample proof to what the material is capable of.

Temporary Resumé

The show «Filz gestaltet Raum» was very well received, thanks to the Filznetzwerk's combined efforts. Not only did it draw a crowd, the press echo was very encouraging and the scheduled events around the show were well received. Tanja Kahl, for instance, hosted a workshop in the Textile Collection that was almost fully booked. She passed on her expertise, her love for felting techniques and the handicraft as such to a newly enthusiastic crowd.

Online Exhibit

«Filz gestaltet Raum» will move to The Netherlands. At the same time there will be a video presentation shown on the internet. The aim is to motivate young people who do not ordinarily visit galleries or museums. Another advantage is that everybody can watch at their leisure.

MARGIT RÖHM

Further Information

The exhibit «Filz gestaltet Raum» can be seen from October 1st to Dezember 26th 2024 in the Museum de Kantfabriek in Horst. museumdekantfabriek.nl

PAGES 16-17

What the Angels Whispered

Until September 8th 2024, the oeuvre of the Dutch felt artist Annemie Koenen is shown under the resonant title «Was die Englein flüstern (What little angels are whispering)» The objects range from wall hangings and objects to clothes accessories such as hats and collars, jewelry, bags and shoes

How can this wealth of objects be subsumed in a common denominator? Annemie Koenen does not have to think long what connects all her art. She loves to work by intuition, she lets her thoughts run free and follows what «the little angels whisper». The inspiration comes from two directions: On the one hand, she is of a deep spirituality herself and feels very connected to Mother Earth. This is also the name of her studio which will celebrate its 25th. anniversary this year, «Wolwerkplaats Moeder Aarde». On the other hand, she draws many inspirations from the outside world. Her research trips and teachings led her all over the globe – amongst other countries, to Hungary, Kyrgyzstan, Australia and the USA. She cherishes especially her trips to Central Asia, often together with István Vidák und Mari Nagy. To overcome borders and limits was natural to her even as a child, as she grew up in the border triangle The Netherlands, Belgium and Germany. Her mother was from the Rhineland. In this respect, it was beautiful that the exhibit in Soltau coincided with the visit of a group of Norwegian felters at the occasion of the 30th. anniversary of the Norske Filtmakere Association.

A Sea of Colors

Glancing around the gallery walls and through class cabinets in the felto-Filzwelt in Soltau, you see a whole rainbow of colors. Koenen dyed most of them herself: delicate mixtures of wool and silk for felting, embroidery yarns and leather for applications. Often a specific color program is the starting point for making accessory ensembles, for instance with «Emerald», delicate rose hues with sewed-on, pale green small stones, or with «For Kalipa» (a Kyrgyz friend) with its warm earthen tones or one ensemble inspired by the Dutch coast line «Polderland».

Meditative Work

Annemie's outstanding objects possess intricate surface structures and elaborate free embroidery. To make those, it may take hundreds of hours of meditative, thorough fine-tuning. This is obviously the case with the big shoulder bag which is embroidered from all sides, titled «History of Kyrgyzstan» – this one took 500 hours to make. «My favorite stitches' book presents examples of various stitches on sewed-in, felted pages and explains them in detail. You can leaf through such a book at the exhibition. The embroidery stitches' book is also the basis for a series of online lectures», Annemie Koenen tells us. Many exhibits have a very personal dimension, e.g. the hand-felted measuring rods for her grandchildren, as each kid grows new embroideries are added. Or another felted book where Annemie has preserved many remembrances of her mother – from photographs to a tiny bag for the wedding rings. Even more important than her own creative work is teaching – i.e. to teach as many as possible felting enthusiasts to hear the whispering of the angels as well. The show will end like it began – with the course «Filzdimensionen (Felting Dimensions)» from September 6th. to 8th. 2024.

DIANA PYTER

Further Information

Regarding felto – Filzwelt Soltau: filzwelt-soltau.de

Regarding the Dutch textile artist Annemie Koenen: annemiekoenen.com

PAGES 18-19

All Felt...?!

At the sand farm Liedberg, the second felting event «All Felt ...?!» took place from March 16th to 17th 2024. On show was a brightly colored repertory of felted and sewn objects made by the felting group around Elisabeth Hartkopf – from objects for everyday use over home accessories to genuine art objects

Liedberg is a small historic village on a hill between the cities of Neuss and Mönchengladbach; its being first settled goes back into Stone Age. The sand farm

is a listed building with a big hall that served as the exhibition space for the «All Felt...?!» event. Elisabeth Hartkopf reports on her group's show.

Regular Felting Meetings

Our intention was to collect our many various felting and sewing projects and to show them to the public. First and foremost, we wanted to celebrate us felters, but we also wanted to show our friends, family members and other interested parties what creative felt objects we made from loose fibers, silk and fabrics. Ever since I graduated as a felt designer from the Oberrot Felting School, I have hosted such meetings in my felting studio in Liedberg. Over the course of time, eight women became regulars, all creative, very skilled in handicraft and ready to try out new things. During the winter months we felted in two groups with four participants each for four hours every two weeks.

A Merry Opening

After the first chaos of sorting out colors, draping, glueing, hammering, shifting and hanging gradually subsided, the exhibition space became one in spite of being composed of hundreds of single parts. On March 16th the long-desired moment came. The pastor Anna Lina Becker held a speech at the opening at the sand farm building. There was also a buffet with finger food and champagne.

Colorful Conglomeration

The exhibit was a colorful conglomeration of birds, beetles, spiders, one chameleon, snail shells as well as bags, hats, table runners and scarves. Small and larger copies of famous paintings were felted. Even torsi, felt patterns and felt-covered sphere lamps found a place. Special eye candy was a communal project which shows a spring meadow with grazing horses and pebbles in the background. A carpet with double wall baskets for a kid's room was felted plus many figurines and the protagonists of the picture book «Das Neinhorn» by Marc Uwe Kling.

☞ Iris Makowiack, fashion manageress and a designer for bridal and evening gowns in Kleinenbroich, showed some of her designs and sketches. Under her first-class tutelage, several ladies sewed individual clothing from high-quality fabrics, felted or not.

A Great Success

During those two days, many people came and left astonished, enthusiastic

and always very interested in the crafts shown. The asked many questions, took photographs and walked the space several times over. There were a lot of lasting talks and everybody left with a smile and signaled encouragement.

ELISABETH HARTKOPF

Further Information

Elisabeth Hartkopf

For many years the professional educator Elisabeth Hartkopf has been interested in color, form and structure of textile materials and techniques. She began with designing and making clothing and painting on silk, then she moved to working with clay and its many possibilities. In 2003, the artist discovered feltmaking with the pertaining surface structures, color shades and forms and techniques. To deepen her skills, she took the three year-long felt designer training in Oberrot and has been passing on her expertise ever since in courses and workshops. Web: elisabeth-hartkopf.de

Ulrike Froitzheim

has been working for more than 20 years in the clothing industry
filzundfaden.ch

Iris Makowiack

is a fashion manageress for bridal and evening gown fashion
Email: i.makowiack@web.de

PAGES 20-21

Close to Nature-Objects in the Tuchmacher Museum

The artist Edith Pundt from Bremen had a show from April 13th to June 2nd 2014 in the Tuchmacher Museum in Bramsche. In the center were her felted objects which are remindful of roots, nets, rhizomes, branches or buds

For many years now, textile art has had a special local value in the exhibition program of the Tuchmacher Museum, a fact which was again proven by the felt artist Edith Pundt's show. Her

works are diverse and range from video installations to photographs and sewn drawings. The handicraft process is crucial to her. Edith Pundt knits and crochets hose-shaped basic forms, the bigger ones are stuffed with wool. Then these shapes are felted in the washing-machine. A critical step in the artistic process – it can be influenced by the artist only to a very small degree and is thus dependent on pure chance. Through the felting process, for instance the symmetrical structure is dissolved crosswise and transformed into an approximate arrangement. The joy the artist feels about this special feature of felted wool clearly shows in her poetic objects which seem like intertwined roots and other nettings, usually decorated with small red blossoms, buds or beads.

Sewn Drawings

A second textile group of works by Edith Pundt was presented in the exhibit as well: her sewn drawings. The filigree lines are made by the sewing machine. The clear structures of the cotton yarn which is sewn on thin, smooth rice paper form a stark contrast to the loose, sutured thread ends which limit each drawing. The paper shrivels during sewing, an intended but not exactly calculable feature. The unity of structure and chaos enhances the charm of these drawings and is essential for their aesthetics.

ILKA THÖRNER

Further Information

The Tuchmacher Museum in Bramsche hosts exhibits, events and the Sheep Day.
tuchmachermuseum.de

The artist Edith Pundt's oeuvre comprises installations, videos, photos, objects and drawings.
edithpundt.de

Feltmaking in Bella Italia

From February 29th to March 3rd, the «Third Italian Needle-Felt Meeting» took place in Rome, organized by the Italian felt artist Anna Esposito. More than 250 feltmakers met to needle-felt in the Eternal City and participated in many different felting courses

I suggested that the «Abilmente» staff, who organize Italy's most important fair for creatives and leisure, set up a felters' meeting during the spring fair in Rome this year. They agreed enthusiastically. Many ideas were born, many things had to be done and there were only four months to manage it all. I contacted experts to plan all kinds of different and captivating workshops for beginners and advanced parties and they agreed to work in partnerships. My friend, the illustrator Simona Candido, for instance drew our mascot, a cuddly, dancing little sheep that we called Annalisa. Annalisa is a real sheep, born during the meeting's preparations on the La Rocca farm in Montefortino in the Marches. The lamb's birth seemed to be a lucky sign. ~ My partners in this adventure were Sara Compagnoni, a designer responsible for the 3-D animal portrait courses and a masters' class, Daniella dalla Valle, who hosted courses about the making of fairies, elves and dwarves from the Waldorf world and Giulia Alberti who planned DYE and botanical printing courses and a master class about painting with wool. All in all, there were four master classes and 16 other felting courses on schedule.

Felting on a Sheep Dummy

The fair personnel provided us with a big room which we used to exhibit animals and farm art and craft – naturally, everything was from wool. A life-size sheep dummy, covered with pre-felted merino wool came in handy to teach people how to needle-felt. The visitors approached the technique by needling on colorful tufts of wool onto the sheep's body.

A Huge Felting Party

One of the most intriguing parts of the event was the felted flower competition. 16 artists took part and three of them won. DHG-shop and Clover Italy

sponsored our venture by providing us with different kinds of wool and respective tools for the courses. The La Rocca farm took part as well with a project to preserve the Sopravissana Sheep, an almost extinguished breed of the Merino type. The felting event as a whole was admittedly trying, but the communal effort was absolutely worth it. I have met so many new, enthusiastic felters and the whole atmosphere resembled a big party with lots of friends sharing something beautiful. I am already thinking about the next meeting and hope to invite felters from all over Europe.

ANNA ESPOSITO

Further Information

The Italian felt artist Anna Esposito is a teacher and environment instructor. Her two passions are science and art, combined in her brand "NearteNeparte art&craft" that she founded in 2017. She loves most to work with sheep wool and natural fibers. From many different techniques she creates decorative objects which smell like nature itself. Anna Esposito believes in the magic and friendliness of a smile, so all her figurines smile. In her online feltmaking school she shows how to make magical creatures, trading cards or accessories.

Web: nearteneparte.net

Email: info@nearteneparte.net

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

YouTube: [nearteneparte feltro](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)

PAGES 24-25

Boots and Bags Made in Wampendobl

Again, an internationally renowned felt instructor was a guest at the felters' paradise Wampendobl in Lower Bavaria. Natalya Brashovetska from Cyprus with Ukrainian roots passed on her expertise to an equally international group during four exciting days. Feltmakers from Switzerland, Austria and Germany took part in this 4 day course under the motto «Boots and Bags»

This course stood out in many ways. First, in the creation of boots and matching bags which formed a fashionable

unity. Secondly, the participants were encouraged to employ all kinds of different felting techniques, for instance Shibori, block technique, nuno, 3-D applications and hidden zippers. The groups were small, only four people, so each felter could follow the technical steps of another without losing concentration on her own piece. The small work group is a fixture of the courses at Wampendobl and also this time the instructor was at leisure to assist all present in a perfect way.

Perfect Fit

Before the course actually started, the participants were asked to measure their feet. According to the measurements received, Natalya Brashovetska ordered matching bootstrap stretchers. She also offered a great array of soles they could pick for their own projects. On the first day, exact measurements were repeated – the foot's width, highness of the instep, individual characteristics. The parameters were then calculated and the stencils for the felted boot corpus made accordingly. The Shibori lining of a boot required the making of not one, but two pairs – a shoe felted inside another. The inner shoe has a longer bootleg. This will be folded at the upper end (Shibori) and pushed into the outer shoe. The folded, protruding part of the inner bootleg is put over the outer bootleg. Also the straps had to be thoroughly measured and adapted to the participants' feet. The focus was on the width and the instep.

Difficult Work

Then the laying-up started. It required full concentration, because in some cases, a hidden zipper was planned. As with the block or slate technique, an additional resist had to be inserted in the layers where the zipper should be. Other additional resists were inserted at places where the shoe had to be strengthened. The second day was spent finishing the felted corpus. It had to be ready that very day to dry out completely and be ready for further processing.

The Making of the Bags

On the third day it was the bags' turn. Each participant designed her own model. The samples Natalya brought along didn't make the choice any easier. Again stencils were made, fibers laid out, some extra stencils were inserted for special requirements, then the work pieces were cut open, brought into shape and put out to dry. The bag had to be really

sturdy so it could stand on its own when in use. This was impossible to achieve in a day. So on the fourth day, the bags were finished around noon and in the afternoon shoemaker's work was taken up again. The strengthenings were glued in and the soles glued on, so on the last day the soles just had to be sutured. A photo session ended the day. Fitted out with new wonderful boots and a fashionable matching shoulder bag each participant left the Paradise with joy.

PETRA HERRMANN

Further Information

Current felting courses under:
wampendobl.de

More about Natalya Brashovetska:
natalyabrashovetska.art

PAGES 28-31

In Love with Marine Fauna and Flora

A passion for art and craft was already put into the cradle of the French felt artist Sandrine Pialat by her great-grandmother. Today she felts mainly clothing and sculptural interior decoration in her Parisien studio

Sandrine Pialat lives in the east of Paris, in a very quiet and charming quarter with many historical points of interest and a warm atmosphere. Her great-grandmother was a hat maker in Avignon where she opened her own «salon» or workroom, making hats. After the 50ies, when wearing hats was not as popular anymore, she became a dressmaker. «Her salon was full of fabrics, hat forms, feathers, flowers, hat pins, an old sewing machine and a huge mirror», Sandrine remembers. When she opened her own studio, she decided to borrow her great-grandmother's name Lanzetta as a tribute to her heard and long working life as a handicraftswoman and her exquisite taste for quality materials and achievements.

Hooked on Feltmaking

Approximately eight years ago, Sandrine Pialat started feltmaking. The initial spark happened during a natural dyes-workshop

where she realized that wool had great affinities to plant colors. She was in search for a textile material that could meet her sculptural needs. So, she turned to felting became hooked and has been ever since. «What I love about felting is the great versatility of the fibers: flat or voluminous, thick or very thin, lustrous or textured. Depending on the wool, the possibilities will vary and open new creative paths each time», the artist says with a smile. She mainly works with the wet felting technique, as far as her sculptural felt is concerned and she uses the nuno technique for her felted wearables. She works in her freshly renovated studio, felts and does some hand-dyeing of the wool she uses. A low sink was installed that makes it easier for her to carry the heavy pots of wool dye baths.

Nature as a Source of Inspiration

Sandrine Pialat's life is greatly influenced by her artistic work. «A walk in the great Jardin de Plantes, a botanical garden in Paris, a forest with trees and marine flora and fauna are my great sources of inspiration. I look closely and study their textures, shapes and colors. Botanical illustrations also play that role as well as acquiring more knowledge about different kinds of wool. This leads me to visit some areas in France where special breeds can still be found», she says. As a professional felter and craftswoman, she is a member of the «Belleville's Craftsmen Association» in Paris the goal of which is to promote the work of handicraftsmen from this area. Sandrine Pialat muses: «As a felting artist and owner of a studio, I am much more aware of the impact of our actions on the environment and going against the devastating consequences the textile industry has on our world is something I care about every single day.»

Wool from The South of France

She loves to use merino wool from the South of France – preferably from a small breeding in Provence, where she comes from. «This wool is just top quality and I can dye it when I need to», the felt artists describes her favorite material. For the decorative and sculptural items, she uses French wools that possess a certain structure, such as «Thône and Marthod», «Bizet» oder «Solognote». «The origin of the wool matters a lot to me, as I want to have an impact as low as possible in terms of transportation cost.» She also uses Mohair wool from the South of France and silk fibers to achieve different decorations and motifs. Special textile

surface effects are achieved by using different natural fibers such as silk, linen, vintage cotton lace and even straw, all of which react differently during the shrinking process.

Key Aspects of Her Work

Having worked as a costume designer for many years, Sandrine Pialat works on nuno felted garments in which she can combine wool and other natural materials, such as cotton gaze or light silks. Other highlights of her oeuvre are sculptural objects, e.g. vessels and other decoration pieces like seashells, corals and other deep-sea creatures. «I try to extend the numerous possibilities that wool offers to achieve original, one-of-a-kind 3D shapes with highly textured surfaces», she describes her way of working. As a former textile surface designer, she is always attracted to decorating the surfaces of her sculptural felts by applying an all-over pattern that will give them texture and relief.

DIANA PYTER

Further Information

Sandrine Pialat's next exhibit is at the Ob'Art in Paris from November 22nd to 24th 2024, where she will present felted sculptures around the theme «Sea Creatures».

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PAGES 32-35

Felt Meets Floral Magic

In love with colors, full of the zest of life and crazy about felt – Jutta Schwab, in other words, is an enthusiastic felter. Creative and imaginative work is her lifeblood. With «Jutta's Floral Magic» she made a dream of bewitching felt art come true and she works on its spreading its wings even further

«Imagination is more important than knowledge, because knowledge is somewhat limited», Albert Einstein is supposed to have said. This quotation exactly describes the creative art of the felt artist from Fulda. With her colorful

and intricate felt objects, she strives to inspire people and make them curious, to awaken their feelings, to express how close she feels to Mother Earth and to portray a childlike, happy-go-lucky attitude. «In this sense, magic flowers, blossom elves, fairies, gnomes, leprechauns and fairy tale lamps were made», she reports, eyes shining. «In all my objects there are floral elements to be found, because I am a professional florist. Even as a child I felt very close to nature and especially to her gorgeous flora.» Trees awash with blossoms, butterflies dancing through the air or other natural materials she collects on her walks and hikes – they all add up to her inspiration. Little acorn hats, cones, walnut shells, small branches, snail shells, feathers, seashells and driftwood find way into her art. In July she is going to show a choice of her objects within the scope of an art exhibit in the town hall of Gersfeld in the Rhön region, her home. She also presents her felt art works on art and craft fairs in and around the city of Fulda.

Different Felting Techniques

Over the past years, Jutta Schwab has acquired extensive knowledge about various felting techniques. She learned to wet-felt in an online course and familiarized herself with nuno felting. «I keep on being impressed how these beautiful felts, sturdy yet wonderfully light are made from fine wool fibers and silk. They look fashionable, keep you warm when it is cold outside and they are even cuddly, not itchy», she says happily. For her magic art work, she likes to combine dry and wet-felting. She works in a sunlit room in her flat, accompanied by birds singing in the garden. «When I work I get into a kind of trance – back to my childhood, when my imagination ran away with me. Felting makes me calm and patient, and in my small felting world it's pleasant, colorful, alive and peaceful», Jutta Schwab describes her creative mood.

Energy Source Nature

To gather up energy for new projects she likes hiking in the woods or gardening. In this way, she can also immerse herself in the world of magic, natural spirits, fairytales and wizardry. Then she transposes her ideas in dry-felting technique, making blossom fairies, elves, witches, herb women, dwarves and wizards. She wet-felts blossom-shaped dresses that are supposed to mirror

the character of each flower. For her projects, Jutta Schwab uses local raw wool, e.g. from the region Fulda she gets Coburg Fox Sheep wool or from Ouessant or Rhön Sheep. All breeds provide wool that felts well and is rather robust. «I love best to work with really fine fibers such as Merino roving, but I also like other fibers, for instance Viscose, silk and plant fibers for my projects», she informs us.

Natural Materials Merge into Felt

During her walks through nature she discovers a lot of things that she can use in her art. Acorn hats turn into magic fly amanitas, walnut shells into tiny herb baskets, little twigs became magic wands and a witch's broom is made from small birch twigs. Snails shells, small seashells, feathers, pine cones and tree fungi as well as dried flowers form a harmonious interplay with felt wool. More magic is added by adorning the objects with small precious stones, tiny bells and beads. «I concentrate on detail to achieve a one-of-a-kind signature. The beings I create carry some part of me into the world. They are proof that creativity and childlike imagination persist and may be acted out. I want to reach out to people and to inspire them», says the nature-loving felt artist.

Her Own Felting Workshops

In the future, Jutta Schwab would like to offer felting courses where the focus is not alone on learning to felt, but to feel the fibers consciously, to create in harmony with body and soul and to be carried away. The results are unique works of art which are value-free and inimitable. Intuitive, relaxed felting should teach participants how to find more inner peace and stay in the flow of life. «It makes everybody happy to create a work of art and to take it home!»

DIANA PYTER

Jutta Schwab

The magical floral felt objects made by the artist from the Rhön also in the social media. Original felting projects may be made on order.

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PAGES 36-41

Tutorial: Autumnal Nuno Felt Scarf

Margot Krug shows how to felt a delicate, light Nuno felt scarf made from wool and silk and printed with leaves afterwards

Material Required

- ✦ White silk gauze no. 2, very thin, 2.2 m long and 0.9 m wide. Jagged edges enhance the effect.
- ✦ 30 - 40 g white wool roving 16 mic. Don't use more than that, otherwise the scarf will turn out too thick and lose its lightness.
- ✦ Fresh leaves, e.g. oak, linden, walnut, rose, birch, maple, strawberry, acacia, willow, dogwood and eucalyptus. I just mentioned a few, in my opinion they all dye well.
- ✦ The number of leaves may vary according to whether you want to print the whole scarf or just the middle. The scarf in this instruction was fully laid out with leaves. I used a 10-l bucket and stuffed it loosely with the leaves.
- ✦ 40 ml of vinegar essence
- ✦ 2 l of rusty water, made from 2 l of water, 1 teaspoon of salt and a handful of rusty metal.

Tools and Utensils

- ✦ 2 pieces of bubble foil, each 2.3 m long and 0.5 m wide
- ✦ Strong painter's foil, 2 m long and 1.0 m wide
- ✦ Slip-resistant mat or gauze – depends on your individual liking
- ✦ Soap, ball sprinkler and water mug
- ✦ Coarse ripple mat as a fulling basis, if available
- ✦ Foam core
- ✦ Light piece of cloth, like a bedsheet
- ✦ 4 to 5 thin dishcloths
- ✦ Rubber gloves
- ✦ A wooden rod (e.g. an old broomstick), approx. 0.3 m long to wind up the workpiece
- ✦ An electrical boiling pot (diameter 32-35 cm) with a spacer grid on the bottom OR a pot with the same diameter and an electric cooking plate. The pot's diameter should be a little wider than the width of your scarf
- ✦ Linen strips, approx. 6 cm wide and 2.0 m long OR a tearproof piece of twine to tie up the workpiece

Instructions

Advice: Please read the instructions carefully before starting to work. The felting process may take from three to five hours, depending your felting experience and practice. You can stop the felting process any time, just let the workpiece dry and take the work up another time. Printing, however, should not be interrupted at all.

Working Steps: Making the Rust Water

It takes a couple of days to make the rust water required for the printing process, so plan some lead time accordingly

1 Put approx. 1.5 l to 2 l of water with two spoonfuls of salt in an old pot or bowl. Put rusty nails, screws and/or other rusty items into the salt water and let it sit for at least 24 hours. Stir occasionally

2 Once the water has turned brown it is fit for use: strain it through a sieve to remove bigger rust flakes. Keep the rusty nails or screws for your next dyeing process.

Working Steps: Scarf

3 Lay out the first piece of bubble foil. If you have no dark working table, like me, I recommend to put a dark piece of foil underneath. This makes working with the white silk and wool easier.

4 Lay out the silk across the whole length of the bubble foil. In width, 48 cm silk lie on the bubble foil, the rest sticks out (see the left side of the picture) Keep an inward distance of approx. 2 cm from the lateral edge (see right side of the picture)

☞ Should your table – like mine – be shorter than the scarf before it shrinks, I recommend you work in intervals and pull the workpiece up a little each time. In this case, repeat the steps 6 to 8, until the whole length has been treated.

☞ With a measuring rod (white in the image) you can measure how wide the wool should be laid out. To distribute it evenly, it helps to divide the wool into two parts and to keep progress in view by means of a second rod (yellow in the image)

5 Pull apart the wool strings lengthwise in three even parts.
☞ In the first row, bend the wool fibers in the middle at the short end, to achieve a smooth edge.

Lay out the wool thinly lengthwise only in a single layer onto the silk at a width of 45 cm. The wool fibers should overlap to get a smooth surface across the whole length.

6 Now put the other half amount of the silk carefully over the laid-out wool. Take extra care that the wool fibers are not pulled away by accident – maybe there is somebody at hand to assist here.

7 As you see on the picture, the selvages of the silk gauze lie on top of each other on the left side, on the right side the silk is folded over.

8 Moisten wool and silk with warm soapy water. Once you have put the silk over the wool and you – like I – work in intervals, moisten only until to a distance about 20 cm from the spot where further laying out continues. This makes an even transition easier.

9 Place the slip-resistant mat resp. gauze onto the workpiece and spray some more soapy water on if required. Soap lightly and felt it on with slight pressure.

10 Remove the slip-resistant mat or gauze and smooth the scarf out to the sides to remove eventual creases.
☞ Cover the felted-on silk and wool evenly with the second piece of bubble foil.

11 Then wind up the area covered with the second bubble foil over the foam core smoothly and narrowly.
☞ If you work in intervals, wind up only the felted-on part, then go back to step 6.
☞ In case you don't work in intervals or the intervals are finished proceed to step 8.

12 Fold the wool fibers over at the end. If the silk is not entirely even it doesn't matter. On the contrary, it enhances the edges in a nice way.

13 In case the silk is not reaching to the end, you can just add some. The crossover will become invisible later.

14 Roll the whole length of the workpiece around the core and wind it up in a long, light piece of cloth. This seals the roll tightly and ensures that inside nothing shifts.

☞ This piece of cloth maybe for example a bedsheet, which won't get as heavy as a towel when the water oozes out.

Roll it back and forth without any pressure approx. 100 times. Wipe away the oozing-out water.

☞ Open up the roll, smooth the scarf one more, remove the second bubble fold and smoothly and firmly rewind it around the core from the opposite side.
☞ Roll it around approx. 100 times also.

15 Repeat step 14 two to three times, and increase the pressure with each repetition.

☞ Pay close attention to the sides and the ends of the scarf and pull it in shape after each opening up of the roll. Pay attention to the long edges with regard to creases, and in case there are any, open them up carefully and flatten them.

16 Take the scarf out of the foil. By now it should be firm enough so no fibers get loose anymore. It should have shrunk to a length of about 1.8 m.
☞ Should the firmness leave to be desired, repeat the rolling process. Squeeze out the surplus cold soapy water and put the scarf briefly in fresh, hand-warm soapy water; this will hasten the felting process even more.

17 Take it out of the soapy water and squeeze it well. Throw the workpiece to make it denser so the final length of 1.7 m is reached.

18 Continue to check eventual creases on the surface and at the edges. In case there are any, open them up and flatten them.

19 On the ruffle mat the scarf is rolled firmly piece for piece lengthwise to shrink it to a width of 35 cm.
☞ In the end, the scarf should not be wider than the pot used to fix printing. In other words, the pot should be big enough to immerse the whole width of the scarf.

20 Once the final measurement of 1.6 or 1.7 m length and 0.30 to 0.35 m width is reached, the scarf should be pulled into shape again. Pick the edges even and loosen parts that are too thick. Then rinse it thoroughly so no soap suds remain.

21 Mix 2 l of water and 40 ml of vinegar essence and put the scarf into it.

☞ In case you want to interrupt the work here, the scarf may remain in the vinegar water overnight, but not longer. If desired, let it dry. Felting is now finished.

Printing Steps

22 Now the leaf printing starts. Put in the thin dish rags (green in the picture). You will need four to five, measure out first how many are actually needed.

23 Lay out the patterned painter's foil on the table. Take the scarf out of the vinegary solution, squeeze it dry and put it in the middle of the foil.

24 Put the gathered leaves (with the lower part down) onto the moist scarf as you wish, topsy-turvy, next or on top of each other. Here they are put next to each other. Since the lower parts of the leaves meet the scarf surface, the fine leafy structures are printed down.

25 In case of thicker stems, like with walnut or eucalyptus leaves, divide them with a knife. This makes rolling up easier.

26 Wear the rubber gloves for the steps 13 and 14. Take the dishcloths out of the rusty water and squeeze them as dry as possible. Put them over the leaves and take care that the leaves stay flat under the cloths.

27 Fold the painter's foil over the workpiece from both sides, edge to edge. Take care not to shift anything. The workpiece should not be wider than the pot you need for fixing.

28 Fold the foil over and wind the scarf really tight around the wooden core.

29 Wind the linen strips around the roll as tightly as possible and knot them.
~ You could also use a tearproof piece of twine to fasten the roll. It may show in the print, a quite interesting effect. Just try it!

30 Now the pot comes into play. Put the grids in and bring the water to a boil. Put the roll on the grid. It should just be steamed, never boiled in water!

~ Now fix the workpiece for three hours at 90 to 95°C – keep attention throughout and take care that there is always enough water in the pot.

~ While the roll steams air the room or do it outside to begin with.

~ The work piece should be allowed to cool for a very long time, even if you

can hardly wait to unfold it. If you leave it overnight to cool the dyed prints will come out more acutely.

31 The surprise moment has come – unpack the workpiece. Rewind the linen strips or the twine.

32 Remove the cloths and rinse them for further use. Remove the moist leaves. Wipe the foil clean and let it dry, it can also be re-used several times.

33 Now comes the last step. Caution! Don't move the scarf too much, for it could still shrink – this applies also to a later washing, take great care here.

~ Rinse the scarf several time in clear water. Then put it in a water-mild detergent solution and rinse it again.

~ Neutralize the solution with vinegar water and tumble the scarf dry, or roll it up in a towel and squeeze the solution out.

~ Pull it into shape and iron it in stage 2. Ready!

Small Color and Leaves Overview

In the following you get a brief overview which leaves yield which color when printed. Try yourself, it is so much fun.

1. Maple	2. Hedge Maple	3. Red Maple
4. Birch	5. Oak	6. Strawberry
7. Eucalyptus	8. Parted Eucalyptus stem	9. Dogwood
10. Rose	11. Walnut	12. Willow

INSTRUCTIONS: MARGOT KRUG

PAGES 42-43

«If I am touched by something, I felt it»

Katrin Bigl is from Leipzig, a quirky and creative city. She trained as a baker and earned a doctorate in Biology. Ever since she took the «Fit in Felt» training at the Oberrot Felting School she is also a certified felt designer and combines creativity with her work as a teacher of future staff nurses and care personnel

Her love for wool began with a spinning course in a small village in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. In 2009, she added feltmaking to her crafts – originally only to process those fleece parts she wasn't able to spin. «But within soon I was completely hooked», she remembers.
~ The 51-year-old artist now has her own cozy little studio in the Gohlis quarter in Leipzig. Here she plans and develops her felted products and hosts small felting classes and spinning training in private tutoring. Her studio is a former dog parlor. A big, entirely tiled sink, tiled floor and some tiled walls still speak of its former enterprise – ideal for somebody who processes wool in wet-felting technique.

Feltmaker and Lecturer

The studio work takes up half of Katrin Bigl's weekly work load. The other half is her passion to train young people as care personnel. Amongst other things, she teaches anatomy, physiology and micro biology. As she reports with joy: «You wouldn't believe it, but also here felt is omnipresent. For my classes, for instance, I have felted a cut-out heart. With its chambers and vestibules I can explain very well the blood flow from systole to diastole. I also felted a brain called «Brian the Brain» which serves to explain, amongst other things, the linings of the brain and its regions.»

Felting Grounds

Feltmaking for Katrin Bigl is a possible expression of emotional reckoning processes. «If I am deeply touched by something I felt it. It grounds me and gives me room and time to find myself», she explains. She drew a lot of comfort from feltmaking when her father died one and a half years ago, when she felted an urn for him. Moved, she remembers: «It was the most beautiful farewell imaginable. I was in a silent conversation

with him throughout the whole time and I felt that I had lovingly accompanied him on his last journey.»

Interesting Surface Design

She mainly works in the wet-felting technique, partially also in Nuno felt. She hardly ever uses pre-felts; she mostly creates patterns or images by directly laying out the wool before felting begins. As the artist states: «I am more the type for clear, simple shapes of my objects. My preferable realm of actual designs is more surface design, for example by employing the reserve technique, by felting lamellas, by inserting other materials or a later application of natural materials.» She sometimes creates surfaces by using henna colors with which she draws patterns or images on the finished felt. In terms of color, she hardly ever contents herself with using just one, but she proceeds from a basic color and puts on the thinnest fibers of the same hue in another nuance. The effect looks like sunrays or beams of light.

Upcycling Materials

For her felting courses she prefers Australian Merino wool. For her own work, she loves to work with coarser natural wools. «They are just so earthy and cozy», the feltmaker declares. She felts in everything she can lay her hands on – other fibers, lemon nets, poplar seeds, leaf veins or waste fabric. She tells us: «I am an upcycling fan and I passionately collect materials to felt them in. In checking out the many possibilities lies a big part of my creative sense.» Her focus is often on felted everyday items, such as bags, scarves, spectacle cases, mobile phone covers or bicycle saddles. But she also felts company with an emotional value, for example worrywarts, magic crayons, bookworms or an array of other accessories. Katrin Bigl: «Last year, I felted my second backpack. I thought about it for almost a year – beginning with the evaluation of the first specimen and all the things that could and should be improved. I spent quite some time thinking what I expect from a backpack and how I best realize that.» Her inspiration sources for her design are often found in nature, in her own feelings or simply out of common sense.

LARA PYTER

Further information

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PAGES 44-47

The True Lightness of Being

Ever since childhood, the felt artist Silvia Josten from Cologne has been a true craftswoman and in 2007 she founded her own label «Filzperle (Felted Pearl)». Since then, she has made numerous pieces of jewelry, kids' clothes, book covers, pictures, sculptures and felted urns, many of them lovingly embroidered

Silvia Josten discovered the world of textile work early on. Inspired by her mother, a trained and talented tailor, the two oft hem spent many an hour in a former fabric shop in Cologne, where they looked entraptured through several floors, where a literal sea of the most wonderful fabrics, lace trims and buttons engulfed them. There, between patterns and fabrics, her creative love was born. «Needle and thread became my passion and soon I enlarged my repertoire from simple, embroidered tapestries to artful crocheting and the embroidery on accessories, sweaters and a lot more», she reports on her getting so skilled already in her youth. Her mother's sudden death put a temporary end to her early artistic phase. She trained as a clerk and started a family. But the fire of creativity was not so easily extinguished. After her children were born, it started to burn anew and she began to make kids' clothes. In 2002 she discovered felting, her new passion.

Learning By Herself

Inspired by a colleague, she immersed herself into the realm of wet felting. In a time when nobody thought of online courses yet and it was difficult to travel, she taught herself at first with the help of books. Later she attended courses hosted by many internationally famous feltmakers, devoured online tutorials and taught courses and workshops herself in the western part of Cologne. «I was so keen on learning to make something beautiful with my hands. Handling fine, soft wool with its wonderful colors fascinated me from the first moment. I really enjoy working with high quality materials and they mean a lot to me», Silvia Josten says.

Her Own Label «Filzperle»

In 2007 she introduced her own label «Filzperle». Throughout many years of

learning and experimenting she put her craft to perfection. Over the years she made one-of-a-kind pieces of jewelry like chains, pins and earrings, but also childrens' clothes, book covers, paintings, sculptures and felted urns. Next to feltmaking, she cherishes embroidery. «I love to freely embroider my creations. It makes felt art really special, I can accentuate a certain area that I wish to be prominent. I often use beads, sequins, ribbons, laces and trims. These items make me think of the happier part of my childhood», Silvia Josten tells us. For her work, she mainly uses quality wool and other high-quality materials such as silk, viscose, angelina or wool curls to give her art a noble touch. She is in love with details, always conscious of the harmony involved, her works are opulent and glittery and they convey a light and easy sense. Here ever the enthusiastic artist: «Lightness is a real need for me in life as well as in art. If my objects get too massive or heavy I'm the first one to make a brazen cut. And I cut until I feel the result is right. Then I continue felting until everything is all nice and harmonious.»

A Perfected Felted Spiral

A fine example is her felted spiral, which was inspired by the felt artist Maria Frieze. «At the beginning, I wasn't at all satisfied with the result. I didn't like the form much, and the spiral was way too compact and too heavy. I had a good mind to discard it altogether. But I stayed put, cut holes in it and felted as long as it took to make the spiral right. It touched my heart to see and feel how something heavy and seemingly discombobulated turned into a beautiful creation. My efforts paid well», the feltmaker Silvia Josten recalls.

«Silvia Josten's art is not only an expression of creativity, but also spells stamina and intuition. Her art reflects her wish to bring more lightness and beauty into the world. «I don't only want to spread joy and to touch the viewer's heart, I would like to convey also a distinct message: Never give up too early!» Her artistic approach is also characterized by stamina and the will to succeed, which can certainly be an inspiration for other creatives: Never give up too early and nurture your own creative senses – therein lies the true lightness of being.

«Silvia Josten's artistic approach which emphasizes the will to see things through also in difficult times might very well

come as an inspiration to other creatives: Go on! Nurse your own creativity – there you'll find the true lightness of being.

LARA PYTER

Silvia Josten

Under her label «Fizperle» – handmade in Cologne Silvia Josten makes jewelry, clothes, sculptures, accessories and urn from felt

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PAGES 48-51

Tutorial: An Ever-Blossoming Rose

This 3D felted rose by Irene Reinhardt is a true eyecatcher

Materials

- ~ Wool roving, here Merino roving 18 and 19 mic
- ~ DIN A 4 paper, a pencil, measuring tape, scissors
- ~ Felting equipment: bubble foil, soap, ball sprinkler, water container
- ~ Resist material, e.g. sound insulation foil (2 mm thickness)
- ~ Rubber mat for fulling and to speed up the felting process

Instructions

- 1 With a shrinking factor of 35 %, the rose will have a diameter of about 16 cm.
~ Make five cut-outs of a circle, of different sizes and uneven angles or limbs. The length of the edges should be between approx. 13 cm and 21 cm.
- 2 Cut out all 5 resists from the 2 mm thick sound insulation foil. Due to this thickness, you can both see and feel the resists later under the wet wool.
~ Smallest resist:
Angle/Limb length 12.8 cm x 13.5 cm, angle 90°

- 3 Second resist:
Angle/Limb length: 17 cm x 18.5 cm, angle 90°

- 4 Third resist:
Angle/Limb length: 20 cm x 21 cm, angle 50°

- 5 Fourth resist:
Angle/Limb length: 16 cm x 16.5 cm, angle 90°

- 6 Fifth resist:
Angle/Limb length: 16.8 cm x 20.5 cm, angle 90°

- 7 Put all five cut-out resists under a work foil. So, you see exactly the amount and size of the required wool layout. All petals can be prepared at the same time.

- 8 Cross two layers of wool over and lay it out so the wool sticks out about 3 cm all over the stencil.

~ The chosen color corresponds to the color of the eventual rose petals.

- 9 Moisten the middle of the small surfaces, the edges remain dry. Remove the stencil from under the foil and put it on the moist wool. The protruding edges should be folded over the resist from the back side. Fill up the middle with two crossed wool layers, moist it and spread the contours at the resist.

- 10 The color of the five prepared resists corresponds to the color of the rose petals.

- 11 For a test, pile the resists on top of each other, the tips should point in different directions.

~ For this purpose, the resist can be turned around, if required. This warrants that the petals group themselves in reverse order around the middle.

- 12 Lay out 1/3 of the layers prepared for your object.

- 13 Place the smallest after 1/3 of the planned layers.

~ Pay attention: With the surface shown here, the rose will be cut open later, starting from the last laid-out wool strand. The smallest resist in this case is at the bottom.

~ With a pocket flap it is different. Open the rose from the back and start with the biggest resist!

- 14 Cover each resist with two crosswise placed wool layers. The color of the wool in between the resists will permeate the colors of the petal, the result is a mixed hue. In the case shown, the shining yellow of the petals is somewhat dampened by the grey.

- 15 Moisten the two dry layers with soapy water and press the fibers onto the resist. The position of the previous resist will become visible.

- 16 Lay out the second prepared resist in reverse order.

- 17 Lay out another two layers and pile all five prepared resists with the wool in between to a heap. Depending on the desired result, dry wool (each in two layers) only in the rose area can connect the surface in between the resists. In my example the whole surface was covered.

- 18 Now 3/3 of the wool have been put out. Felt the whole surface cautiously with a lot of soapy water. Full in all directions. The whole item should shrink about 25 %. Where the later rose will be, you can only see a bump.

- 19 Like shown on the cutting pattern, three petals are cut out of each of the triangle-shaped resists

- 20 The edges can be felt with your fingertips before the cut. Start at the side of the middle and cut in a round arc ending inside the corner. Now you see the first three petals. A small pointed triangle remains.

- 21 Remove the first resist. Feel the edges of the next resist.

- 22 Cut the second stencil the same way into three petals. Take care that the petals place themselves in reverse order around the middle.

- 23 Repeat each cut to the next resist. Remove the third resist to be able to cut easier.

- 24 Feel the fourth stencil and cut it open in such a way that each rounded petal is placed in front of a pointed tip.

- 25 The petals get smaller and smaller towards the middle. The outer surface of each petal corresponds

in color to the shrouded resist. The in-between layers permeate the surface softly. Here, every petal is tinged with grey.

26 In each cut open layer remain triangles that become smaller and smaller. By cutting away the middle, the three petals per layer become softly rounded.

27 Now felt all the cut or open edges with water and soap again.

28 All 15 petals are felted together. Push the inner colored wool layers to the top, this makes for a delicate color contrast at the petals outer rim.

29 Now the felting of the whole workpiece can be finished. Depending on the kind of wool used, the shrinkage should amount to approx. 35 %. Wash all soap out and pull the petals into form. Arch the middle of the rose blossom with your thumb from behind.
☞ Tipp: When you finally model the petals, use a pair of pincers or flat nose pliers to pull them into the right position.

30 The finished 3-D rose in detail

INSTRUCTIONS: IRENE REINHARDT

Irene Reinhardt

She studied product design in Münster and Helsinki. For 30 years, Irene Reinhardt has been felting and is continually experimenting with new techniques for her art. As a felt artist, she passes on her skills, profound knowledge and her enthusiasm by teaching in the Summer Academy of the Coburg university. Her objects are shown in national and international exhibits on a regular basis.

Web: filzkuenstlerin.de

PAGES 52-55

The Lace Felting Course was the Icing on the Cake

In the Winterschule Ulten in South Tyrol lace felt was on schedule in March 2024. Over four course days the participants, together with the felting expert Sabine Reichert-Kassube, made delicate, filigree felt objects

The philosophy of the «Winterschule Ulten» in South Tyrol is to foster emotional awareness of nature and the joys of creative work, to liven up traditional handicraft techniques and to pass it on in combination with contemporary knowledge and trends. Next to herb seminars, wild flower floristry and health courses, the three-year long Winter school offer the most important handicraft techniques of the Alpine region. The Winter students can also learn textile techniques, such as making bobbin lace, hand weaving and feltmaking in specialized workshops.

Delicate and Sophisticated

In accordance with the above, a special course called «Spitzenfilz (Lace Felt)» took place in the spring of 2024. Under the tutelage of lecturer Sabine Reichert-Kassube, seven ladies delved into the realm of lace felt. Sabine Reichert-Kassube has been bobbin lace-making for many years. «My general love for lace comes from there», the felt artist from Doberlug-Kirchhain in Brandenburg says. Lace felts are delicate, filigree felt works that resemble genuine lace. They are made of wool and silk fibers, with partially felted-in fabrics, threads or lace. The resulting shapes and effects are two-dimensional as well as sculptural. These objects are inspired by fine bobbin lace or by natural objects such as blossoms, leaves, spider webs or by stories, myths or one's own personal experience. The design possibilities are numerous – be it a piece of cloth, a wall hanging or clothing – everything can be done. Another field are the lace felt techniques using 3-D resists which are suitable for making bags, vessels and lighting objects.

Lace Doily

On the first day, each felter made a lace doily as a trial piece, using diverse

techniques and design alternatives. The work at the felting table was always accompanied by the motto: «From dense to light» that Sabine learned from a bobbin lace-making master. This means that the special charm of lace lies in the dynamics of opposites: Woven fabrics alternate with open work patterns, dense felted areas next to see-through ones.

☞ The course offered the opportunity to experiment with various fine wool, silk and plant fibers, yarns and high-quality fabrics. The participants brought along their own treasures and tried and traded threads, yarns, fibers and fabrics amongst each other. Sabine Reichert-Kassube kept on reminding the group to lay out the wool real thin, to divide the roving and to flatten it. So impressive delicate two-dimensional effects were reached and some achieved sculptural fabrics with transparent inlays which were reminiscent of natural phenomena like spider webs, blossoms or leaves.

Imagination Runs Free

Over the remaining three days, bigger objects were made after the test doilies, where the lace felting techniques came into use. Many objects were finished, for example a floor lamp, a bowl, a dress, a cape, several skirts and an afghan. The felters followed only their imagination and each one deepened her craft skills. It continues to be inspiring how rich the world of felt can be.

☞ My heartfelt thanks to Sabine Reichert-Kassube for these successful instructions and to the Winter School Ulten for organizing the event.

ROSALINDA SCHWARZ HÖLLER

Winter School in Ulten

31 years ago, Waltraud Schwenbacher founded the Winterschule Ulten in St. Walburg in South Tyrol. She is an herb expert and loves sheep wool and is first and foremost a courageous mastermind and a fighter against people emigrating from the Ulten Valley. The students can learn ancient crafts that no school teaches anymore. She made it possible for many women to work on their own. In the meantime, her daughter Dr. Franziska Schwenbacher has taken over the management of the school with the same verve. Both women also teach natural healing, natural fiber processing, Alpine herb knowledge and permaculture.

Further info: winterschule-ulten.it

Next lace felt course: 04.-06.10.2024
Filigree objects and garments with
lace effects
Contact: spitzenfilz.de

PAGES 56-57

Felt Meets Mushroom

Heike Böhn loved to stroll around art and craft fairs and dream of her own felt projects. Inspired by nature and the seasons, she started to make her own felted creations three years ago – with a focus on autumnal decorations

Three years ago, Heike Böhn began to watch a lot of videos, to read books and to teach herself various felting techniques. «Felt is such a wonderful material and you can treat it with so many different techniques», the Cologne-born lady says fondly. She felts in her own cozy working place in her flat in Dortmund. For her, felting is like a meditation, she can really relax and delve into the atmosphere and mood of each distinct season.

Nature as a Source of Inspiration

The feltmaker is a great friend of nature. Her garden is a true element of her art, she uses poppy pods, snail shells or blossoms that she dries and inserts in her object. Heike Böhn loves both needle-felting and wet-felting, which she particularly likes because the process from wool to felt can be watched and followed. «To work with the needle is almost like sculpting», she says enthusiastically. She mainly uses fleece wool and Merino roving for her objects, last but not least because these two kinds go so well together. As she tells us: «All seasons inspire me, but autumn is the time that I like best, because there is such a rich harvest that I can use in my work.» In that sense, she wet-felts small storm lamps suitable for each season. They are decorated for example with tiny red fly amanitas, dried grasses or other items of her collection.

Funny Mushroom Munchkins and Pumpkin People

Her constant fascination with the versatile material led her to needle-felted funny figurines. Funny facial expressions are especially endearing to her. From a chestnut, a small chestnut man peers

out with large eyes. «I wet-felted the chestnut with fleece wool. To make it nice and round, I wet-felted around a table-tennis ball and later cut it open. The eyes were needle-felted», the artist says. The equally droll mushroom munchkin was felted with different needles and combined with moss collected in the woods. Fleece wool was used for it, plus Merino roving for the face. The stark connection to nature is visible in many of her objects – small dwarves sit on pumpkins; a tiny mouse is blissfully napping in an apple core and colorful acorns wear genuine acorn hats. «The pumpkins were needle-felted around a Styrofoam sphere, the hats with fleece wool were wet-felted with a resist made of bubble foil», she reports on the making of her autumn decoration.

Felted Bowls for Harvest Time

Also, mobiles, elves and felted bowls in all shapes and sizes are part of her repertoire. She makes star-shaped bowls and pretty round vessels decorated also with fly amanitas; the latter are wet-felted only. «The star-shaped harvest bowl was additionally embroidered with beads. The wet-felted acorns with the genuine little hats are a perfect match», the artist describes her lovingly made objects.

LARA PYTER

Heike Böhn

Heike Böhn's objects can be found on Instagram. She makes felt decoration on order and likes to make people happy with her charming work.

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

PAGES 58-61

A Life for Sheep

Since 1772, the Perl farm in Grub near Rinchnach in the Bavarian Forest has belonged to the same family. Today, the 27-year-old Alexandra Perl manages with great enthusiasm the sheep farm she took over from her parents Elisabeth and Ernst Perl. She truly lives for her animals; her whole day is centered around the sheep and the sale of regional products coming from her own flocks

The Perl sheep farm is situated in the middle of the holiday community Rinchnach in the Bavarian Forest. The open meadows surrounding the region are ideal for sheep keeping because they can graze all year round. The sheep pen is comfortably strewn with straw. «Animal welfare is crucial for us», says the sheep keeper and breeder Alexandra Perl. The farm is also a cherished sight and place to go for locals, tourists and sheep lovers alike. The owner works on behalf of the flock for 12 hours a day, feeding, preparing the feed, taking care of the claws, shearing, de-worming, milking or breeding efforts.

∞ There are about 10 ewes, many rams and lambs living on this farm in Lower Bavaria. 15 breeds are present all in all, e.g. Forest Sheep, Merino, Black Head, Wallister Blacknoses, Jacob sheep and Zackel. This breed variety enhances the flock's ability for landscape preservation and each kind of wool favorably adds to the array of further products.

A Big Farm Store with Sheep Products

The 300-year-old farm also boasts of a 300 square meter farm shop where all kinds of products around sheep are on offer. «There is hardly an animal as versatile for processing as a sheep», Alexandra Perl, who also likes to felt, is convinced. The many different products include wool products, pelts and food made from sheep milk. «Once a year, at Easter, the sheep are shorn and the shearing is open to the public. The wool is then sent to be cleaned, carded and is later a part is further processed into wool fabrics and yarns.»

∞ Wet and dry-felting were taught by her family and the owner passes those techniques on to school children and classes. For her, the local sheep are wonderwork. Wool is a sustainable and bio-degradable resource. «From the

raw material to the finished product, almost everything comes from and is done on the farm», Perl says. We deliver raw wool to many manufacturers in Germany. The sheep farm Perl also produces wool fleeces for feltmaking, spinning or for other handicraft work plus knitting wool.

Guided Tours

Transparency is made a joyful game by the Perl family. The farm is a place for events with guided tours, public shearing and open sales days. Under the motto: Feeling, Smelling and Tasting, visitors get a close look of a sheep owner's life. To that end, they accompany a shepherd who lets the flock graze around the farm, followed by an inspection of the 15 different breeds that live there. You may cuddle the sheep or touch them and kids are allowed to feed them with pressed grains. The shepherd tells the audience about his work with the sheep and refers about the regional marketing of sheep wool, pelts, milk and lamb meat. Then people are invited into the shop to see old tools and learn about the principles of wool processing. The guided tour ends with an invitation to taste different cheeses made of sheep milk and sheep milk chocolates. «I am very happy that our products around sheep is met so favorably by our customers. This motivates us greatly!»

DIANA PYTER

Sheep Farm Perl

The wool store is open from March to December on Thursday to Friday from 10 a.m. 4. 30 p.m., Saturday from 9.30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

☞ From November until February the store is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Several times a week, guided tours are held.

Full schedule under schafhof-perl.de

PAGES 62-63

Clothes Moths – Unwelcome Guests

«Bear is the shepherd's enemy, wolf the enemy of the sheep and moth is the enemy of the feltmaker». This Kyrgyz saying aptly describes what we have to fear most: the clothes moths

Feltmakers often ask: How can we protect ourselves against moths? We answer: «Let's talk about it later when there's more time.» Of course, this answer cannot satisfy. People want to hear an immediate and reliable solution that saves time and money. But unfortunately, there is no such easy way out. Most people know that flying moths, small night moths, don't feed on clothes. It is not the moth; it is the larva we have to fear. 10 to 15 % of the worldwide wool stores are destroyed by clothes moths, which corresponds to a destruction of about 130 to 200 tons per year. In our homes, there are no other pest that is more long-lived and unpleasant than moths. Once they move into the wardrobes they go in hiding, are hardly noticed and have all the time in the world to wreak havoc.

Onerous Moth Infestation

With moth-eaten wool, felt or clothing we bring these irksome insects into our homes. Sometimes they come through the window or through an open door. In our workshops we used to find a small white, soft tube with a maggot in it hanging from the ceiling. Brushing it away is easily done. But at that stage it is clear that the place where the wool is stored is already infested.

Moths and Felt

The moth mostly crawls beneath the felted edges because it is dark there. It doesn't venture too far, lest it risks to never find its way out again. Most

excrement crumbs are found approx. 3 to 8 cm away from the felt blanket's edges when they lie on the floor or hang from the wall. The caterpillar doesn't feed wholly through the material so the surface doesn't show the infestation. Summer holidays are crucial for eventual moth appearances, the flat being empty and unaired. The round holes in the loose, washed or carded wool plainly witness their great appetite.

Moth Protection

An often-used wool blanket runs a lesser risk of damage, since the daily use and movement warn the pest that it is unsafe to settle there. The same goes for the felted bedding that is still in use in Central Asia. These blankets are soft and smooth and are pleasant to the touch. It offers shelter against heat and cold. It is rolled up in the morning and does not take up room. Such a felted blanket can last more than 40 years, especially if it is newly fulled and densified each year. Fulling is an equivalent for cleaning the blanket and restores its compactness.

MARI NAGY AND ISTVÁN VIDÁK

General Information Concerning Clothes Moths

The clothes moth (*Tineola bisselliella*) originates from the polar circle, but nowadays the pest is found all over the globe. There are male and female moths. As soon as they are fully developed mating is their only aim. After mating, the female insects lay its eggs and both sexes die. The moth swarms in summer, from May into August, and lives and flies at night. It dwells not only in houses but also outside on all possible plant and animal material. The moths are easily recognizable due to their characteristic coloring: the front wings are light, shining or of a see-through straw-like color without a pattern.

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