

filzfun – The English Supplement

Issue #89, Winter 2025/2026

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Dear Readers,

Outside, winter's chill settles over the landscape; the days are short, the evenings long — a time when we tend to turn inward, seek warmth, and become creative. It is precisely in this season that felt reveals its full magic. The British artist Lucy Sparrow, for instance, creates entire miniature universes: supermarkets, pharmacies, or fish-and-chips shops — all lovingly crafted in felt, rich with detail (from p. 36). In Ukraine, Diana Nagorna moves between fashion, sculpture, and performance. Her works tell stories and open spaces for emotion (from p. 28). Annett Lohmann invites us into her «felt land» — a place where imagination, craftsmanship, and inner journeys meet (from p. 46). This issue also looks back: we remember the unforgettable Charlotte Semisch, a master of felt art (p. 18). At the feltoFelt World in Soltau, the exhibition «Children's Book Meets Felt» by Margit Röhm celebrated its tenth anniversary (from p. 12). Included as well are a report on three years of the «Fit in Felt» training program at the Felt School in Oberrot

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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(from p. 20), a review of the Felt College 2025 (from p. 8), and a feature on the course «Paper Meets Wool» with Swiss felt artist Corinne Keiser (from p. 24). The diversity of the felt world also shines in the international contributions: from Mari Nagy and István Vidák, who created the impressive carpet exhibition «On Noah's Ark» in Kecskemét (from p. 62), to the story of the 197 felt blossoms made during this year's Felt Encounter, now adorning the Felt Art Trail in Tisens, South Tyrol (p. 56). This time, three tutorials invite you to make creative use of the long winter evenings: Natalie Martin's woolly Christmas tree (p. 32), Annett Lohmann's mysterious nuno-felt scarf (p. 48), and the hot-water bottle cover by Ilka Siebel (p. 40). These are complemented by fascinating topics such as dyeing with cochineal (p. 52), a portrait of the Heilmühle sheep farm (p. 58), and the exhibition «Felted» by Elisabeth Schiemer (p. 23).

Let this issue inspire you — to create your own projects, discover new ideas, and embark on a journey into the colorful, warming world of felt.

We wish you a peaceful winter season full of warmth, creativity, and joy in felting!

Your *filzfun* Team

Your direct contact to the editorial department:

redaktion@filzfun.de

The spring issue will be published on February 28th, 2026

Editorial deadline: December 2nd, 2025

Creative Felted Objects and Garments Wanted

Under the motto «C_The Unseen_ Ungesehenes wird sichtbar» the next Filzbegegnung will take place in Chemnitz from February 19th to 22nd 2026. The event boasts of two highlights, the fashion show and the Unseen Exhibition where felters can take an active part. The organizers invite you to roam through your treasures that have never met the public eye so far. It takes only a few measures to turn them into proper show items. For the fashion show, we would like to receive a variety of hand-felted clothing, such as dresses, skirts, jackets, hats or accessories, whatever. The garments are modeled by the members of the Felting Encounter themselves. filznetzwerk.de

16th Leipzig Fair – Wool Fest and Fabric Fair

The 16th Wollefest & Stoffmesse is scheduled for March 28th and 29th 2026. It will be held on the fair grounds of Leipzig. Organized by the Leipzig Creative & Knit Café, it addresses people loving wool, fabrics, yarns and everything else around textile design. There are beautiful things to be found: high-quality yarns, beautiful fabrics, small items and creative materials of all kinds. There will be workshops and plenty of occasions to talk shop, no matter whether you are a beginner or an expert felter. The fair offers a creative atmosphere, room for inspirations, new ideas and learning and seeing craftspeople demonstrating their art. Those on the lookout for new fabric designs, colors, and/or an opportunity to brush up their skills will certainly find plenty – and then some – during the Leipzig Wolle-Fest & Stoffmesse. leipziger-wollefest.de

Blossom Made Easy

On February 21st and 22nd 2026, the felt artist Barbara Westerath invites to her felting course called «Blütenpracht - Wealth of Blossoms». The course begins on Saturday at 11 a.m. and ends at about 8 p.m., on Sunday it starts at 9 a.m. and lasts until 2 p.m. The participants will get a short introduction to easy-felted blossoms and the chance, to experiment further with resists for more complex forms such as tulips, filled blossoms or spring snowflakes. According to your wishes, you can further elaborate on the motifs and vary them. A perfect event for both beginners and advanced feltmakers! kurse.filzrausch.de

My Book of Felting Techniques

In Annemie Koenen's new course called «My Book of Felting Techniques/ Mein Filztechniken Buch» the students delve into the fascinating world of felt. 14 different techniques wait to be discovered, and what is really special: Each student can decide which of them will turn into her own book. On the lovingly made paper pages, a real treasure manifests itself. The chosen felting technique can be described, photos of your own creations can be added. So a veritable dictionary builds up which is full of imagination, creativity, inspiration and memories. The course offers a maximum of artistic freedom, but also in the literal sense of the word: you can learn on site, online or in a mixture of both. For interested parties online, the virtual doors are open as of November 20th, every second Thursday evening from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. If you can't make it for a session, you won't miss out. All lectures will be recorded and can be seen any time. This course not only transports knowledge but also sheer joy at designing and making items that will leave lasting traces in your own felt technique book and in your heart. annemiekoenen.com

Big Bags in Relief Technique

Get to know the bewitching world of the relief technique during a course hosted by Kerstin Scherr at the Wollknoll Felting School from March 9th to 11th 2026. Step-by-step instructions show how the play of colors, materials and structures make for unique surface effects. In the beginning, there will be a compact introduction to material issues and techniques. Afterwards the participants are invited to develop their own ideas and to make small trial pieces. The you start your own project, a big bag decorated in the relief technique. The course also deals with how certain, precise color combinations yield depth and plasticity and which materials, when combined, are suitable and how creative ideas can be turned into practice. There will be a lot of space for practical issues, individual trials, experiments and artistic development. Wollknoll.de

Felting Holidays at Wampendobl

Vacation and creativity can be ideally combined at the Wampendobl «paradise». A relaxing time with a whirlpool or floating in a huge «seashell» is further enhanced by inspiring felting possibilities in the midst of the beautiful nature of Lower Bavaria. For beginners and advanced felters alike – each stay offers the possibility to gather creative momentum in peace, attentiveness and creative groups. Petra Hermann is a passionate felter and the manager of the felting workshop at Wampendobl. She designs unique, seamlessly felted clothing and items of everyday use, often with Eco Print and the wool of her own flock of Krainer Stone sheep. She likes to teach her knowledge and skill in workshops, and the felting workshop can be rented out for individual projects. Please find all pertaining information on the website or in direct contact. The paradise is already looking forward to wholesome and creative encounters. wampendobl.de

The Filzkolleg 2025 – A Celebration of Diversity and Creativity

«Filzmagie – Zauberfilz» was the theme of the Filzkolleg 2025 organized by the Filznetzwerk e.V., which took place in June for the 8th time in Soltau – and it truly unfolded a magical attraction. Over the course of the workshop week, around 90 felt enthusiasts let their textile enchantments come to life. Among them were many regulars, and about a quarter of the participants were attending for the very first time.

Annemie Koenen, the organizer of the Filzkolleg, had compiled a varied program, following requests from members of the network. One could choose among day-long taster courses or a four-day long ample project, a small piece of jewelry or a workpiece covering the whole table, needle-felting, wet-felted objects in all shapes and sizes or trial runs of other textile techniques. There were many exciting things on offer for newcomers, experienced and professional felters. The participants could choose between 19 courses held by nine expert lecturers.

A Varied Program

The Filzwelt team is looking forward to every year's humming creativity from roof to yard. With regard to the considerable number of courses, some guests were working in the historical ambient of a neighboring industrial site next to big piles of hosing material, while others soared high in the «Flying Classroom» of a nearby toy museum. The latter was the perfect place to immerse yourself in a meditative class of button-making with Helene Weinold, or let the hand spindles dance with Birgit Blumrich to make fantastic yarns. A tent in the yard served as a dyer's kitchen. During Birgit Samson's Shibori course, the clients tied little packets of fabrics, put them in color baths and were surprised at the fine patterns emerging when they unpacked the work piece. With Annemie Koenen, different figurines were made, ranging from Mother Earth to gummy bears. They were decorated with a brush and acid colors.

A Fairytale World and Jewelry

Under Beate Bossert's instructions, a fairytale world grew, populated by

dwarves, trolls and friendly witches who even charmed the local press. To make small, beautiful little bags for secrets was taught by Anja Fröhlich (Atzert) and Heike Spiekermann showed how to felt in remembrances and memorabilia of lost loved ones. Nuno surface experiments were followed by designing individual, matching clothes in Kerstin Scherr's course. Sculptural surface design with new techniques was the core of Heike Spiekermann's workshop in pointillism. Irina Kalaschnikow's introduced painting with viscose and wool, on one hand playfully experimental, on the other as a fascinatingly accurate rendition of a given motif, be it a classical painting or your own design. Bewitchingly fine and intricate little rose jewels grew with Anja Fröhlich and Birgit Samson showed how to make poppy capsules or other complex structures by experimenting with different kinds of resists. Last but not least, Annemie Koenen taught artful embroidery on various felted objects.

Mutual Exchange

During the breaks and the evenings there were many opportunities to talk shop or to relax – for instance with laughing yoga or at a barbecue of fried regional Heidschnucken sausages. For many, the charm will last in the shape of projects that were taken home to be decorated, changed or finished, to be put to use through many new techniques and ideas.

ANTJE ERNST

Save the date

The next Filzkolleg is going to take place from June 22nd to 27th 2026 under the motto «Von Kopf bis Fuß auf Filzen eingestellt», echoing Marlene Dietrich's famous song «From Head to Toe I'm Inclined to Love». The core matter is clothing.
Program and Application at:
filznetzwerk.de

10 Years felto – Filzwelt Soltau

In a listed felt storage building in the middle of the city of Soltau, felto made the traditional, ever-surprising material felt come alive – and has been doing so for ten years now. This jubilee was celebrated in the Filzwelt from August 16th to November 30th with an animated program. Margit Röhm reports on the celebration of this non-profit, independent cultural and educational institution.

Most of those invited might have thought, like I did: Is the felto Filzwelt Soltau only 10 years old? It feels much longer – such a renowned, familiar institution must surely have exist since way back when. In only 10 years, felto has managed to be known far and wide and that is why so many flocked from far and wide as well to attend the celebration.

Living Felt

Some might think such a celebration would be quite solemn, with a fixed program and many honorable lecturers. All wrong! As one can read on the felto homepage, the Filzwelt breathes life into this ancient material that continues to surprise those who handle it. For three days, the visitors were able to take part in a variety of exciting courses. The opening already made clear that improvisation is sometimes called for. Some of the official speeches were enhanced by voices from the audience, who wanted to express their gratitude to Matthias and Antje Ernst. After all, their combined contribution warrants the institution's success so far and continues to pursue its success with passion and commitment.

Many Scheduled Events

Most anniversary teams would fire off a range of scheduled events and offers, but this doesn't befit a felt museum. It is rather a rainbow of games and activities to take part in. Play, fun and excitement are more like it. You could felt a snake together with others, which slithered through a part of Soltau in the end. There was a play street for small kids and a guided tour through felto. With Matthias Ernst as a guide, it is not boring in the least, we learned a lot from him and enjoyed his humor. Everyone listening could sense how great his enthusiasm still is after a decade has gone by.

A Wealth of Children's Books

This is an unbelievable collection, compiled with expertise and strong will. The Steiff figurines turn every collector green with envy. The collection of old children's books was breathtaking and I enjoyed watching the staff working. An event can be really stressful, simply because it means a lot of work and something always can go wrong. But Antje Ernst kept her cool always with a friendly smile, you could ask the assistants for information and get it. Felt instructor Maike Kern never lost her patience when felting the felto snake. The anniversary was like felto wants to be: versatile, surprising, playful and to be experienced by all means. I was happy to have been there and I can only recommend going there. The Filzwelt is always worth a trip, not only for an anniversary.

MARGIT RÖHM

Further Information

The Filzwelt Soltau opens daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
filzwelt-soltau.de

PAGES 14-17

Children's Books Meet Felt

Under the title «Kinderbuch trifft Filz (Children's Books Meet Felt)», Margit Röhm presented a bewitching exhibit at the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the felto Filzwelt from August 16th to November 30th. It was not only an invitation to marvel at the works presented, but also to read aloud to a young crowd, and to play and join in.

It takes courage to plan a show that is solely meant for play – and lasting more than three months. What may happen to the works of art during such a long time – it makes you worry. But the whole concept's idea was made to overcome distances, to become alive with all senses involved and also by stories, objects and your own commitment.

A Jubilee Opening

The 16th August opening was scheduled at the felto anniversary show (see pages

12-13) Around 50 guests had arrived, many familiars with the institution and also some interested feltmakers. The atmosphere was festive indeed, since the opening allowed for a glance back, sincere thanks and with joy regarding the exhibit about to open for the public.

Inspiration from Books

Felto is closely connected to the toy museum in Soltau which houses an important collection of old children's books. One fine example is Hilde Krüger's «Der Widiwondelwald/Hurleburles Wolkenreise», an artist who created a new path in illustrations with her geometrical shapes. Her «Buch aus Dreiecken (A Book Made from Triangles)» nudges you to become creative yourself and to make your own pictures from triangles. To depict literary characters has a long tradition. Margarete Steiff was the first to bring fluffy toys looking like children's book heroes into nurseries. Both felto and the toy museum also show many of her little fellows, so it adds up well with the concept of the show.

Scenes from Children's Books

All in all, Margit Röhm designed six big sceneries with a total of about 114 objects.

- ✎ Exupéry's little prince with a planet and seven planet chairs
- ✎ The caterpillar who ate too much with fruit and other food.
- ✎ A dragon and sea trolls complete with a carpet, a tree trunk, animals and cushions.
- ✎ The Mumpel with a turtle, fish, jellyfish, mantas and sea star cushions
- ✎ The wish punch with a laboratory wall, animals and many utensils
- ✎ Little Peter's Journey to the Moon, with the Big Dipper, a sword, apples and Sumsemann, the May beetle.

The initial plan was to make more places to sit, but that's how it is with felt: There are no sidecuts. Some things just couldn't happen. The little prince lacked his fox and the serpent – there simply wasn't enough time and some unresolved artistic questions didn't help either.

My Favorite: The Wunschpunsch

Especially dear to Margit Röhm's heart is the wish punch scenery. Not only the laboratory wall with its many shelves and objects, but a different object still arrests her: a felted «wooden» bucket. It took heavenly patience to make the wooden

texture complete with rusty steel ribbons and rivets. Many visitors were surprised that all these objects were indeed made of felt – even wooden spoons, egg whisks and mortars. It took quite some time to make it, at the expense of other figurines, but it turned out to be a great success. Many guests declared that scene their favorite.

An Eventful, Lively Place

The idea of having kids sit on the Big Dipper and listen to Sumsemann, the May Beetle, already turned real on the first day. The Filzwelt team took great care to protect the sceneries – figurines were correctly placed or put back, hair brushed and cushions fluffed, new books distributed. The show «Kinderbuch trifft Filz» connected the powers of storytelling with those of creativity and made for a space where art, play and imagination met in a singular way.

DIANA PYTER

Personal Information

Margit Röhm is the chair of the Filznetzwerk e.V. and founded Triluna Filzkunst 15 years ago. Her main signature are her hand and finger puppets and vessels made to look like animals.
triluna.de

PAGES 18-19

An Obituary for Charlotte Semisch, the Felt Art Master

Sometimes, the quiet arts tell the loudest stories. Charlotte Semisch was a master of such a silent language. Her canvas was raw, untamed wool, her hands a brush and her colors were water and soap. She sculpted, created and changed an object, beforehand quaint and plain, into a specimen of breathtaking complexity.

Born in Thüringen and having settled in Weimar, she worked as an architect first – her studies resulted in the unmistakable structure and clarity of her works. But feltmaking was her true calling. It wasn't only a material for her, but a challenge, an invitation to break down the limits of

geometry and textiles. Her creations were never chance products, but the results of perfectionism and a deep devotion to handicrafts. She was a true inventor and many techniques she developed on her own. She taught us that wool not only keeps you warm, but sculptural forms, three-dimensional objects and even lighting installation would come to the mind sooner or later. Charlotte Sehmisch was the «mother» of the so-called lamella, slate and compartment techniques.

Passion and Innovative Techniques

Charlotte Sehmisch didn't keep her expertise to herself. She was a great tutor who worked around the globe, always passing on her enthusiasm, skill and her innovative techniques to innumerable students. Her courses were a lot more than just a lesson in felt art. They were a place for imagination, inspiration and communal work. Everyone who had the privilege to work with her talked with bright eyes of the precision of her work and her generosity of spirit. Her sudden death in December 2024 at only 59 years old leaves a void in the felting world. But her art lives on in her filigree hats, the sculptural dresses, the unique wall hangings and the lighting fixtures. It is a true heritage which reminds us that true art is said to affect our souls and urges us to take a wider view of things and matters.

Exhibit of Her Life Work

From May 12th to July 12th, a much-praised exhibit about Charlotte Sehmisch's life work opened posthumously in the University library, organized by loving friends. On show were originals from private collections and big-sized photographs by the artists Tine Trefahl and Alex Burke. Our special thanks for this exhibit go to the Weimar university library and the Bauhaus university for the great co-operation. We are equally indebted to Dr. Frank Simon-Ritz, Moritz Lampe and to Silvia Riedel of the Alumni-Bauhaus-Netzwerk für their support. The perfect conceptual development by Ante Heise was executed and supported by Sibylle Mania, Martin Neubert, Tine Drefahl, Alex Burzik, Katja Ender, Frieder Glatzer and the many helpers and supporters who made this exhibit to the impressive event that it was.

Felt Objects on the Internet

The last phase of expressive light images can still be seen on the internet under www.bingowingairlines.de. The felted surfaces demonstrate her unique sleight

of hand. Through differently built-up wool layers, a three-dimensional world becomes visible upon switching on a LED light plate – Charlotte Sehmisch's world. Her objects, mostly made in a single effort, are proof of her mastery. They are also an ode to patience, precision and the limitless possibilities of a material that she understood like no one before her. The felting world has lost one of her greatest artists. But the traces she leaves behind are indelible – in each work of art she made and in each person she inspired and will continue to inspire with her art.

ANNETTE WIESNETH AND
FRIEDER GLATZER

PAGES 20–22

Connected in Every Fiber

Three years of the felting education «Fit in Filz» at the Felting School Wollknoll Oberroth have gone by for the graduates – three years full of encounters, challenges and inspirations. Here some of the graduates look back on what connected them and what will remain.

Our final exhibit took place at the Wollknoll Felting School in Oberrot during the second weekend in July 2025. This institution became a source of learning, encounter and inspiration for us. We – Barbara Fuchsberger-Wagner, Jennifer Gabriel, Nicole Haubrich, Alexandra Mayer, Sabine Mosters and Carmen Neumayer – were the members of one graduating class out of four. 34 women have completed their training as certified feltmakers or felt designers. All come from different regions, professions and ways of life. In Oberrot, we not only deepened our understanding of the craft and its skills through intricate technical knowledge and free artistic design, but experienced a communal atmosphere characterized by trust, creativity and respect.

~ The feltmakers' world is open, diverse and cordial, and we are proud to be a part of it. We celebrated ourselves and let others celebrate us. Our objects are proof how different and yet how connected we are. Each of us has her own signature, putting heart and thought into felt. The show mirrored what moves and concerns us and how this mutual path shows in our

artistic language. The end of this intense time was not only a presentation, but a farewell with a vision: Gratefulness, pride and curiosity for the things to come echo in every fiber.

The Graduates and Their Final Pieces

Barbara Fuchsberger-Wagner with
«Urban, Fell(Fur), Art»:

The happiness welling up when wool is in my hands has to do with the innumerable possibilities that felt offers. In my final piece, wool meets paper and peaks in the contrast raw wool versus graffiti.

Jennifer Gabriel with «Er(He)»:

Human beings and their fateful ways through life in this world and in these times is the subject matter of my graduation piece. I often thought about a line in a children's song: «Inmitten von allem, da lebe ich (I live in the midst of everything)». How people spend their lifetime – have to spend it – touches and fascinates me. We are not free in what we feel and want, but we make our own life and act according to the passing time. During the training, I took a road back to myself and I am very grateful for that. Instagram: [@jennifer_woolsmith](https://www.instagram.com/jennifer_woolsmith)

Nicole Haubrich with

«Verborgene Schätze – die Natur in spielerischer Vielfalt (Hidden Treasures – Nature in its playful variety)»:

In the depth of a hidden forest Hennes and Käte live together with their children, away from the modern and hectic buzz of the world. Their home is an old, fairytale-like beech wood. Felt and fairytales have always had a strong connection for me, each with its own attraction. Wool is ideal to create different worlds that make the child within me giddy with joy. sternenhimmel-heusweiler.de

Alexandra Mayer with
«Schwarzwald (Black Forest)»:

The colors of the forest flow into felt: the verdant green of the pastures, the soft brown hue of the earth and the shining blue sky. The felt becomes a living work of art which captures the soul of the Black Forest. Here, where nature and creativity become one. I feel free. It is a play, a dance with inspiration itself. I am only company, felt seeks its own path. Instagram: [@allerleigefilztes](https://www.instagram.com/allerleigefilztes)

Sabine Mosters with «Why?»:

My story is your story is our story. Dealing with the present and my own past inspired me to make this piece. As a daughter, grandchild and great-grandchild of a mother, grandmother and great-grandmother who had to flee Silesia at the end of World War II I found in felt the right medium to confront this sad fact. Approaching the subject on an emotional level, and planning and making it in both meditative steps followed by intense physical force put me in touch with my own deeper emotions and I came to terms with them. Feltmaking is not only inspiring and exciting when I want to make beautiful items, clothes and accessories, but I can use it therapeutically, which I put to good use for myself here. Instagram: @binimo_filz

Carmen Neumayer with «Metamorphosis»:

All began with a fiber. It used to be a line, a surface, graphics. Today it is wool that moves, takes shape and grows. To train as a felt designer changed my creative expression – from sketch to finished project. My object «Metamorphosis» shows this journey. A shepherd's cloak becomes the stage. On the outside it is quaint, on the inside is wild garden full of colors and roots. A hand-puppet, a sheep dances between light and sound and words whirr through space like Dadaism. Felt is not merely a material among many, it is a new way to make the world. @fellfilzerei.ch, fellfilzerei.ch

Fit in Filz

Please find below the next training schedules and dates. wollknoll.eu

PAGE 23

When Wool Tells Stories

With her show held at the Mattighofen Castle, the felt artist Elisabeth Schiemer celebrated her 70th birthday in a special way. Under the motto: «Felted – Half of the Whole – 70-35-1» the artist from Upper Austria presented works that tell from passion, journeys and the uniqueness of wool.

Recently, the feltmaker Elisabeth Schiemer turned the Mattighofen castle north of Salzburg into a stage for textile art. On show were paintings, lamps, clothes, carpets and all kinds of decorative objects. In her stage setting she incorporated wool from 16 different countries that she brought back from her trips. Equally impressive were small carpets made from Mongolian wool and a Sari from India, complemented by a nuno felt cape and hand-felted flowers. The opening took place on April 10th 2025 with 90 guests. Over the period of three days 200 people attended.

The Subject 70 – 35 – 1

Elisabeth Schiemer gave herself this present for her 70th birthday. For 35 years now she has been an enthusiastic felter, using mainly the wool of her own flock. The number 1 stands for singularity. Her aim was to show that sheep wool can take different shapes than socks or slippers, e.g. felted sculptures, wall installations or textile collages which amply proved the material's versatility.

Stage Setting «Wolle verbindet (Wool Connects)»

«In this scenery I included wool from 16 different countries that I visited during my feltmaking life. Only the wool from New Zealand and Iceland I was given by friends», she reports. The image shows the sunrise in East Africa. «I took a photo of this motif in January 2013 when I climbed the Kilimandscharo, at the last camp at an altitude of 4664 m. You can see the Mawenzi – wet-felted in rubbing and rolling technique», the feltmaker describes her fond memory.

«Yellow Girl»

This work of art is 90 x 18 cm; the wood comes from her own pasture. «Almost 40 years ago we protected the young fruit trees from the sheep. The trees have grown, the wood has withered and the flock said good-bye last year», Schiemer tells us. «In remembrance of beautiful times I wet-felted this image.»

My Own Kind of Sari

«I brought this Sari back from India and interpreted it anew», she tells us. «As a top, I felted a cape, nuno felt on silk, which I decorated with many felted flowers and a felted necklace, also with a flower.»

LARA PYTER

Personal Information

Elisabeth Schiemer is the speaker for the wool department of the Upper Austria Sheep Breeders' Association. In many institutions dealing with adult education she has passed on her knowledge and expertise around the subject wool, e.g. 30 years in the organization «Schule am Bauernhof (School at the Farm)». She held courses, amongst other countries, in India, Bolivia and Mongolia. She organized many events, shows and fairs for the Sheep Breeders' Association. wollgartl.at

PAGES 24-25

Paper Meets Wool

How can two such different materials like paper and wool be combined? This exciting question was pursued during the course «Papier in Kombination mit Wolle (Paper in Combination with Wool)» hosted by the Swiss artist Corinne Keiser at Wollknoll in Oberrot. The participants shared a weekend filled to the brim with new techniques, inspiring impulses and lively exchange.

The lecturer Corinne Keiser, a sympathetic Swiss lady with a great sense of humor, was greatly influenced by the Wabi-Sabi principle. It is a Japanese aesthetic principle deriving from Zen Buddhism, a philosophy that is committed to simplicity, naturalness and the acceptance of transience. It is an interesting prerogative for feltmaking in combination with paper and a challenge in itself to deal with these entirely different materials.

Different Materials

The wool itself, a warm material with either soft or rough structure from animal fibers was to be had in many colors in the Wollknoll shop across the street at any time. The participants could also choose among different kinds of paper: sheer Japan paper, fiber silk or sturdy watercolor paper, egg cartons, newspaper pages or hand-made paper. Some of these felted in easily, others required more patience – but this was exactly what it was all about. Each participant experimented and discovered new things and intricate effects to their hearts' content.

A Creative Process

Under Corinne Keiser's skilled instructions, a variety of small and bigger works of

art were made. She worked with every participant, observant and always ready with impulses and advice. She left ample room for everybody's own ideas and shared her great knowledge and her fine eye for details. The premises were well equipped as well and the atmosphere very cozy indoors and also outdoors. The landscape was pastoral, with soft hills, where the eye could roam and the soul relax. All this slowed down considerably and gave in turn rise to creativity. This course does not really have a finished project in the end. It is rather a communal working process that entices, challenges and enriches everyone. I can only recommend it for all who want to have a different perspective of feltmaking.

DANIELA BALDAUF

Further Information

For more than 10 years, Wollknoll in Oberrot has been offering numerous courses of varied content, current themes, novelties and specialties around feltmaking and creative design.
wollknoll.eu

PAGES 28-31

In Constant Dialogue with Wool

For the Ukrainian artist Diana Nagorna wool is a living, responsive material that tells stories, translating emotions and myths into form. She has been a professional felter for more than 18 years, with a signature handwriting oscillating between fashion, sculpture and performance. Her studio in the Ukraine is a place of silence and transformation – and a mirror of her own cultural roots.

«The first time I touched wool I felt its transformative potential. Something raw and simple could become delicate, strong, sculptural and alive», Diana Nagorna remembers her beginnings. She studied design and soon discovered the unique expressional power of wool. For her, felting is sculpting and painting at the same time, with a medium that reacts, breathes and seems to have a will of its own. «Wool has memory, energy and an almost spiritual character. It resists and

yields, it asks you to listen. That constant dialogue fascinates me.»

Handicraft and Experiment

The felt artist mainly works with the wet-felting technique, often in combination with sewing, surface design and detailed hand-finishing to achieve depth and sculptural quality. Sometimes she integrates beading embroidery, stitching or textile layering. She works together with photographers and stage artists where her felt becomes a part of performances and visual storytelling. She works in a studio of her own. It is full of wool, fabrics and tools, but also branches, natural objects that connect her to the earth. She tells us: «It is a place of silence and transformation, where light plays with textures and where ideas are born. My art work shapes everything. Felting is not just work but a way of breathing, of translating emotions and myths into form.»

The Power of Resistance and Folk Traditions

Diana Nagorna uses mainly fine Merino wool, sometimes in combination with silk fibers and other natural materials that create texture and contrast. She began with art couture – wearable pieces that merge sculpture, mythology and body. Currently she also makes art objects and interior decorations and pieces. Her themes are deeply connected with Ukrainian culture: myths, symbols, resistance and the dialogue between tradition and the present, in nature, in Ukrainian mythology, in traditions that carry the memory of generations she finds her inspiration. «Since the war in the Ukraine has been ongoing for three years, my work reflects the strength of resistance, folk traditions and ancestral stories that keep us rooted and alive.»

Guided By Fibers

«I often start with an atmosphere, a vision or a story rather than a fixed design. The fibers guide me. Wool suggests shapes and textures I could never plan fully in advance. There is a dialogue between me and the material. I regard felt as a bridge between fashion and fine art», the artist states with a smile. Her pieces can be either worn or they can exist independently as sculptural objects. This duality defines her approach. She uses mainly traditional tools for wet-felting.

∞ She relies more on handwork, water, movement and patience than on

machinery. She creates special surface effects that add depth and character. «I often hand-finish my work with stitching or layering details. These small interventions give the piece individuality and structure», according to the artist. Nature for her is a way to recharge and connect with herself. Through fibers, she gives form to emotions, traditions and myths. Her vision is to create larger-scale installations and collaborations where felt can interact with architecture, light and movement.

Exhibits

Diana Nagorna occasionally presents her work in exhibitions and other artistic events, often in collaboration with photography, film or stage projects. For her, every presentation is not just a display but a continuation of the artwork itself – another layer of storytelling. «I offer my pieces as unique art objects. They are not intended for mass production but for collectors and people who resonate with textile art as something intimate and powerful.»

DIANA PYTER

Personal Information

Diana Nagorna conducts master classes in different countries and also offers a large number of online classes for all levels – from beginners to experienced felt artists. Teaching is a big part of her practice and a wonderful way to share knowledge and energy with the global felting community.
diananagorna.com
[@diananagorna_feltcouture](https://www.instagram.com/diananagorna_feltcouture)

Tutorial: Wooly Christmas Tree

This little watercolor Christmas tree is not only a decorative element but it brings a cozy atmosphere and warmth into your home. Inside, a tea-light adds to the festive atmosphere with soft light.

Material (Photo 1,2):

- ☞ Wool (fleece) – 10 g
- ☞ Viscose threads– 3 g
- ☞ Soap and water
- ☞ Pair of Scissors
- ☞ Laminated base
(Triangle basis 23 cm, height 31 cm)
- ☞ Synthetic fabric net
- ☞ Bubble foil (2 pcs 35 x 50 cm)
- ☞ Glove

The shrinking factor (SF) is 1.6.

Instructions:

1 Put the resist onto the bubble foil and distribute a thin layer of wool on one side of the resist. The wool should stick out approx. 2 cm over the resist's edges so the fibers can be turned over neatly to the other side.

2 Moisten the wool with soapy water and rub it through the net. Make sure that the wool is evenly moistened and foam is produced.

3 Remove the net carefully. Cover the upper side with bubble foil, turn the «sandwich» around and fold the protruding wool over the resist.

4 Then proceed to lay out the wool (4 g) like you did on the back side. Stop 1 cm before the edges of the resist.

5 Moisten the wool with soapy water and rub it through the net.

6 The net can be removed and the wet, soapy wool surface is rubbed with your gloved hand with care. Pay attention to the edges, the wool should be fixed well in these spots.

7 Now mark the places where holes should be cut (Photo 13). Mit a sharp pair of scissors cut crosses of 2 x 2 cm and form a circle with your fingers.

8 Pull out thin strands of the dyed viscose and put them on the holes. Cut them if they are too long.

9 Cover the work piece with a net, add a little soapy foam and rub it with your gloved hand.

10 Turn everything around and repeat all steps.

11 Now felting can begin. Cover the work piece with bubble foil, roll it up and roll it around from all four sides approx. 30 times.

12 Remove the bubble foil and check whether the wool and viscose fibers have connected well. If necessary, continue rolling. Then rub with your gloved hand. Remove the stencil and continue to felt if desired.

13 Once the shrinking factor 1.6 has been reached, stop felting. Rinse the workpiece in clean water, pull it into shape and let it dry.

INSTRUCTIONS: NATALIE MARTIN

Personal Information

Nathalie Martin enjoys the meditative and healing feltmaking process and likes to pass on her skills to interested parties. Characterized by her Kazhak roots, she felts everything from clothes to interior decorations and accessories.

@felt_my_love
natamartynen@gmail.com

PAGES 36-39

«I want to felt the world»

Visiting Lucy Sparrow's exhibitions, you will likely feel transported to another world. Suddenly you find yourself in the middle of a supermarket, a kiosk or even a fish and chips shop – but everything, from the shop sign to the napkins, is made of soft, colorful felt. Lucy Sparrow's art is simultaneously playful and gaudily colored, but also profound and critical of society.

«When I was six years old, my mother bought me a bagful of felt pieces. Since then, I never stopped», Lucy Sparrow

remembers, one of the most original and exciting artists currently working in Great Britain. Already as a child, she sewed small figurines, toys and Christmas decorations. What started as a mere hobby developed into an unmistakable artistic signature over the years. Currently, whole worlds made of fabric are made in her Suffolk studio, a former ambulance ward. Each item is meticulously handcrafted, painted on and signed. In the meantime, she is not only supported by a team of four who assist her in designing and cutting out the different felt parts, but by home workers as well. Nothing is left to chance when making the felt pieces which are mostly made from polyester or a wool mixture procured by British manufactures. «We start with images and design a flat version», Lucy Sparrow reports. «Then we make another flat version, so that one can be felted properly and the other continues to serve as a pattern. The we proceed into production, whereby the design is altered until everything is perfect.»

Walk-In Felted Reality

Her hallmark are her large-scale, walk-in installations that reimagine beloved institutions like pharmacies or supermarket in felt. In 2014 she took over the art scene with her Cornershop in London's East End by storm.

☞ Visitors queued to see the life-size installation of a Corner Shop complete with thousands of art works. Since then, Lucy Sparrow travelled the world and has shown her unique art in New York, Los Angeles, Peking or Miami: Pharmacies, supermarkets, bagel shops or delis – made of fabrics to the last detail. «Depending on the size, the installation may take years to complete, e.g. the Tampa Supermarket with 50.000 single pieces took two years to finish. But we are getting faster!», she laughs. The exhibits are as much theatre as art as social commentary. By translating familiar worlds into felt, Sparrow shows her audience how consumerism, habits and collective memories mint our lives.

Homage to British Culture

Her latest installation, The Bourdon Street Chippy, opened in the renowned Lyndsey Ingram Gallery in Mayfair, London on August 1st 2025. For six weeks, the spectators could experience a typical fish and chips joint – completely made from felt, from the banquette seatings to

the menus hanging on the walls. There were even portraits of some prominent regulars, art works sewn by hand. More than 65.000 single felt items, amongst them 15 different fish and chips versions in five different colors are ample proof of her love for detail. The gallery owner was enthusiastic: «Lucy is blurring the lines between performance and installation art. She is one of the most important and meaningful artists of her generation.»

Art Mirrors Personal Experiences

Sparrow's work may seem just playful, but it is deeply influenced by her personal life experiences. In June 2025, she revealed that she has struggled with anorexia since her teens. Her relationship with food has always influenced her art, she says. «Over time, I came to understand that my practice had become a way to manage difficult emotions. Art is both my outlet and my motivation to stay well.» This personal background may explain why food stores, supermarkets and snack bars are in focus – all places where relish, nostalgia and societal issues overlap.

Success and Works to Order

In the past years, Sparrow was present on all important stages of art. For the BBC she felt the crown jewels for the Queen's 90th birthday, made installations for the Miami Art Week and worked for brands like Hermès and Diptyque. For her supermarket installations in New York and Los Angeles people stood in line for days. Her exhibit called Tampa Fresh Foods went viral on TikTok. Institutions and museums all over the world crave her art. Be it the Rockefeller Center in New York, the M Woods in Peking or the Bristol Museum & Art Gallery – her splendid, brightly colored rooms find enthusiastic crowds and art critics.

Her Mission: A World Made of Felt

«My mission is to felt the world», according to Sparrow. Her studio is full of fabrics, threads, colours and plans. For December 2025 there will be her next big-scale installation in Miami during the Art Week to add to her impressive series of projects realized over more than a decade. Her «felted realities» are more than art, they are invitations to view everyday life from a different perspective, to laugh, to wonder and to reflect.

LARA PYTER

Personal Information

For more than ten years, Lucy Sparrow has been travelling the world and has been creating large-scale versions of familiar places – from corner shops to supermarkets, New York bodegas or pharmacies. Each of those is a complete walk-in installation with thousands of art works, all meticulously hand-crafted. They can be bought directly from the artist. sewyour soul.co.uk
[@sewyour soul](https://www.instagram.com/sewyour soul)

PAGES 40-45

Tutorial: Hot Water Bottle with Robin

Especially in the cold season, there is hardly anything more gratifying than a hot water bottle at your feet at night. If it is clothed in a felted cover, decorated with a tiny robin, it becomes a favorite. In these step-by-step instructions we show you how to make it from wool, water and a little patience. It'll keep the cockles of your heart warm as well!

Basic Materials:

- ☞ Car mat
- ☞ 2 skidproof meshes
(or pieces of fine drapes)
- ☞ Ball sprinkler, soap, a bowl
- ☞ Towel
- ☞ Bubble foil
- ☞ A pair of scissors
- ☞ Needle, thread or hot glue

Further Materials:

- ☞ Hot water bottle (20 cm x 33 cm)
- ☞ Approx. 70 g Merino wool strands in light grey
- ☞ Approx. 2 g of Merino wool strands in white
- ☞ Merino wool waste pieces in black, red, dark red, dark grey and orange
- ☞ Pre-felt approx. 10 x 5 cm in white, greyish blue, green and brown
- ☞ Approx. 60 cm ribbon checkered red/white
- ☞ Approx. 15 cm cord blue-white striped

Instructions:

- 1 First cut a resist of the hot water bottle from the piece of bubble foil. Place it on the car mat, which

has beforehand been equipped with a skidproof mesh.

- 2 To have the single pieces of the Robin hand, cut them out from the pre-felt before you start working.

- 3 Pick fine fibers out of the light grey Merino and put them shinglewise onto the resist. Take care that the fibers stick out approx. 3 cm above the edge. Repeat the same step with a second layer of wool, laid out diagonally across the first.

- 4 Now cover everything with the second skidproof mesh and spray it with hot water. The spread a little soap across the work piece.

- 5 For the fibers to connect well to get a sturdy felt rub softly over the mat with your palms in a circle from the outside to the inside until everything is lightly felted.

- 6 Turn the workpiece around like a pancake and remove the upper mat.

- 7 To turn the protruding fibers over more easily, cut both corners at the bottle cap with the scissors.

- 8 Important: Fold the protruding wool fibers exactly over the resist to avoid creases later.

- 9 Leave the bottle's opening untouched. There the felt will be cut open at the end.

- 10 Now repeat laying out the light-grey wool in two layers, as you already did on the other side.

- 11 To get a nice gradient below the robin motif pick delicate fibers out of the white Merino and lay them out in a circle on the lower part of the bottle piece.

- 12 Moisten this side with a little water so the outline of the edges is enhanced and the motif can be placed in the middle.

- 13 Now to the robin. For fine lines separate long thin fibers from the dark-grey wool.

- 14 Moisten the fibers on the skid-proof mesh and roll the strand carefully around between your fingertips.

15 Now lay out the cords, as sketched on the pattern, onto the moistened resist.

16 Now it's time for the already prepared single parts of the robin and the leaves. For the small red berries, roll up red and dark red wool like a helix between your fingertips and place them below the green leaves.

17 To achieve a pretty thread gradient, mix a couple of fibers of wool of a similar color, it makes the result more life-like looking.

18 For the belly, roll the wool's ends back and forth between your fingers and twirl them together.

19 Repeat the same with the wings. Fold a grey wool puff in the middle and twirl together the ends.

20 For the beak and the eye, roll small black spheres between your fingertips that will later be put onto the face. To make them adhere better, moisten the motif; this also serves to make the contours more precise.

21 At last, the bird's little cap is put into shape. Roll fine strands from the white wool and put them on the cap as a contour or in stripes.

22 The motif is ready. Place the skid-proof mesh over the wool piece so nothing shifts. Moisten this side with hot water and spread some soap on the mat.

23 Slightly felt on this side, always rub from the outside to the inside so that the wool doesn't shift or become apart.

24 Now turn everything around again like a pancake and carefully remove the mat.

25 Like at the beginning, cut into the edges with the scissors. Lay the protruding fibers firmly and without creases around the resist.

26 Cover the bottle piece and treat this side alike until everything has felted well. Remove the skid-proof mesh and rub directly on the fluffy wool.

27 To get a faster and firmer result, substitute the cooled-off water between the fibers with freshly hot water.

28 So, the surplus soap water can be wrung into a second bowl or a wash basin.

29 Now felt both sides with added pressure and make it thorough along the edges.

30 The next step is fulling. Wring the bottle out and roll it up tightly.

31 Powerful rolling about makes the felt more stable since the fibers connect tightly. Repeat this from all sides, also crosswise and on the backside, until the bottle piece doesn't warp anymore.

32 We're almost finished. Cut the upper part of the bottle open and remove the resist. We now have a hollow body.

33 To make the whole thing firmer and to finish the cutting edges, felt the inside with hot water and soap as well.

34 Put the actual hot water bottle inside the cover. To make it prettier, fold a piece of the opening over.

35 Now let the covered hot water bottle dry on the heater. Decorate it with the red-and-white ribbon and glue a blue/white bow onto the robin's neck. You can also simply sew those on.

INSTRUCTIONS: ILKA SIEBEL

Personal Information

For more than 20 years, Ilka Siebel has been living her passion as a felt artist and designer with her label Kunstgenuss. Felting for her is much more than a handicraft – it is a possibility to be creative, to pause for a moment and to make something unique. Her online shop offers all kinds of materials and DIY parcels with the matching utensils to start right away.

www.ilkasiebel.etsy.com

@Ilkasiebelkunstgenuss

www.ilkasiebel.de

PAGES 46-47

Welcome to Felt Land

Annett Lohman from Magdeburg, in her self-designed «Felt Land», fashions unique textile objects full of symbolic value from fine Merino and silk with a great mind for detail. Oscillating between artistic expression and therapeutical depth, this creative world is astounding.

«I remember my first felted piece exactly», Annett tells us. «It was a tiny sphere, quaint yet magical. I sensed the wool, the warm water and the light fulling – I suddenly realized I had found something that moves me deeply.» This moment in a workshop in 2005 was the first stepping stone on her path. Between 2010 and 2013 she took up her studies to become a felt designer at the Oberrot Felting School and started an upgrade training course in psychosocial art therapy – two different ways that merge so nicely in her work, design and a soulful attitude. After many experiments and changing situations – a small felt shop. Courses and attending fairs Annett came back to herself in 2020, and since then she has been working in her self-built felt house in her garden. It is a wooden structure, 5 x 5 m with a stove, a big working table and a porch where dragonflies buzz by after dawn.

∞ In this very house she makes her objects that she lovingly calls «Wool, Words and Wonders». «My felt land is a colorful place, with a lot of threads and imagination to boot, full of stories that move and wool that keeps you warm», Annett Lohmann describes her felting oasis. Next to her creative calling, she works full time as a social education worker in day-care centers. She teaches primary school pupils how to be creative, school being a place where imagination and sympathy are just as called for as in felt land. Her artistic ways grew in her side job, with devotion, passion and the conviction that people connect over textile projects, with others and themselves as well.

Merging Wool and Silk

She prefers to work with her hand-dyed, extra fine Merino, complemented by delicate fibers and high-quality fabrics. She especially likes to combine Pongee silk (gauge 05) and wool etamine, a light wool fabric that falls softly. «I love to make something new by combining them. These structure, the feel of it – always a

small miracle», says the feltmaker. The felt cards magic set, the material boxes with short instructions as well as «Lydia's favorites» – all are lovingly made singular pieces which are most dear to her heart, often bearing a message or carrying symbolic meaning. Her current focus lies in wearables in nuno felt techniques, such as bandanas, scarves and cuffs and she plans to make hand-felted clothing as well. All the unique pieces have meaning, some are embroidered or touching words were felted in. Inspiration she finds in nature, in the changing seasons, in feelings. Most of her projects start on small notes that she collects and elaborates in the course of time. «Then I make trial pieces and let myself be led – and something manifests itself that I hadn't been able to envisage before. When I felt, time loses its clockwork character.»

Exhibit «Filzgeschichten - Felted Stories»

Her art could last be seen at the exhibit «Felted Stories» at the Mining Museum Staßfurt in 2024. There, she presented, among other objects, felted figurines, landscapes, clothing and images, all accompanied by a little text. Wolly, her perky felted sheep, carrying green roving, that roams through her creative life was present as well, together with kind-hearted Lydia, a felted figurine with red curls and a loving gaze. They keep her company on her way through felt land – a place between imagination, handicraft and inner journey.

~ Annett doesn't host any courses, since she is working on her new, digital annual program with monthly impulses, stories and small felting ideas for her audience.

Felt Land Talk

It was a silent evening in the felt house. Lydia sat on the porch, a cup of tea in her hand, looking at the warm light of the solar lamps. Wolly nestled at her feet, the green roving safely tucked under its arm, as usual. Deeply in thought, he chewed on an apple ring, «You..., Lydia», he began and looked at her from the side.

«What is it, Wolly?»

«Do you believe that felt land has arrived yet?»

Lydia smiled and said: «It think it is slowly coming to, nearer to itself.»

«Maybe felt land is no place but a condition. A way back to yourself, with wool, words and wonder. It weaves on: card for card, idea for idea, sometimes

with tears. And sometimes, everything glitters. Always genuine, and always on the move.»

«Nothing gets perfect, I say», said Wolly. «But soft and colorful and yes, genuine, indeed.»

LARA PYTER

Personal Information

Since 2005, Annett Lohman has been an enthusiastic feltmaker since 2005 and she deems this handicraft a healing factor. She seeks to inspire other people to think bigger and more serene to make our life respond to our wishes.

dasfilzland.de

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

PAGES 48-51

Tutorial:

Nuno Felt Scarf with a Secret Message

A feltmaking project from Felt Land – with heart, hand and hope. Lydia stood at the meadow's edge and held a small note in her hand. «Trust» was written on it, spidery yet honest. The wind rustled the note, and Wolly looked on. «And then? You want to felt it in or just carry it around?» Lydia smiled. «I want to remember. And I want to keep warm.» Then she spread a big piece of silk on the table and stroked fine Merino lengthwise onto it. Silently she made her wishing thread-scarf, one that warms both neck and heart.

Material:

- ~ 1 piece of Pongee silk (Gauge 05). approx. 200 × 90 cm
- ~ 1 piece of Margilan silk approx. 200 × 90 cm
- ~ Approx. 110 g extra fine, hand-dyed Merino roving
- ~ Optional: hand-made blossom paper for a wish list and a pen
- ~ A core, for example a pool noodle or a towel
- ~ Olive soap, warm water
- ~ Bubble foil, towel
- ~ 3 buttons (for the Poncho variant)
- ~ Shrinking factor: approx. 1.4
- ~ Finished measurements approx. 1.50 m length, width approx. 76 cm

Instructions:

- 1 First spread the Pongee silk onto the working space.
- 2 Lay out the Merino wool lengthwise. Take the roving in your hand and peel off delicate strands of fiber. Lay them out lengthwise on the entire silk surface, evenly thin. So, you get a soft, wearable felt with a smooth fiber run.
- 3 Now work in the desired message. There are two different possibilities:

Variant 1:

Put the written note directly on the silk and cover it with wool. It should still be visible, like a secret treasure

Variant 2:

Put the note on the wool and cover it with a second, thin wool layer – now it is hidden and invisible.

- 4 Now grate fine soap flakes onto the surface and moisten it with warm water.

- 5 Cover everything with the Margilan silk. It makes for depth, keeps it light and shows a delicate play of structure and the incidence of light.

- 6 Grate fine soap flakes onto the Margilan silk and moisten the workpiece well with warm water.

- 7 Cover everything with the bubble foil.

- 8 Start felting, first with light movements then increase the intensity. Stroke softly across until wool, silk and wish have merged.

- 9 Keep an eye on the edges. If necessary, pull the Margilan silk cautiously in shape.

- 10 Now comes the rolling – with a core (e.g. a pool noodle or a towel) and bubble foil. Roll the scarf approx. 150 times from each side, keeping a constant pressure.

- 11 Open the bundle, check the connections and start fulling on the bubble foil: Move your hands like a washboard over the surface, back and forth, in a soft rhythm.

- 12 Later the felt can be thrown lightly and pulled into shape. The felt becomes more dense, more wearable.

13 Rinse the scarf, pull it into shape and let it dry lying down.

Tipp: A shot of vinegar in the last rinse neutralizes soap and makes the fibers smooth. Then the scarf can be steam-ironed to smooth it and to enhance the structure.

Extra Felt Land Suggestion

Anyone interested in an additional wearing variant can turn the scarf into a shoulder piece. Fold the scarf in half lengthwise and close one of the open sides with three buttons sewed on below at approx. 45 cm height. The result resembles a poncho or the part of a cloak that lies around the shoulders, warm soft and full of meaning. (Photo scarf with buttons)

INSTRUCTIONS: ANNETT LOHMAN

PAGES 52-55

Natural Dyes – The Variety of Cochenille

When you want to buy plant dye but have to watch your expenses, you will soon notice that two dyes are really expensive. One is the wonderful blue Indigo, the other is Cochenille which makes one of the most beautiful gradients of red. Mari Nagy und István Vidák give a short resume of dyeing with Cochenille.

The prices seem shocking at first glance. A kg of Indigo or Cochenille cost around 200 €. Yet consider how much wool you could dye with that amount. We started with 30 g and dyed as much wool as the dye bath allowed until the dye was exhausted.

The Cochenille Louse

Don't fret, these are not icky head lice. Cochenille originate from Mexico. They live on a fig cactus, the juice of which they feed on and grow. Only the soft-skinned female louse yields the red dye. The male lives only briefly and dies after mating. The growing lice should be collected in their ripest stadium, then they are the biggest. For harvesting, you need a small special wooden shovel, and you catch them in a bowl. For now, they

are still 1 cm big, oval and soft. Drying up makes them shrink and then they are sold. Their color is a shining grey or purple-grey. The dried lice should be milled into a fine powder. Before dyeing, we soaked the powder for a day in water with tartar. In that way, you get a beautiful tone we call «red-pepper red».

Bating and Dyeing

For bating we use alum in a quantity of 13 % of the weight of the yarn about to be dyed. In this solution the yarn was heated up to 95° to 98° and bated. We let it cool in the solution and kept it moist for three days, wrapped in a piece of cloth. Only then we started dyeing. In order to achieve the desired shining pepper red, the dyeing solution must not exceed 60°. Put the wool or the yarn bated with alum into the dye bath and leave it there, stir often. If yarn is dyed the dosage is simpler, since length and weight can be easily calculated. We used a two-thread yarn from 100 % Merino. 10 m of it weighed exactly 30 grams.

From Red to Rose

We kept putting 30 g into the dye bath. Between the single steps, we took a break of a few hours, since we always waited until the solution had cooled off completely. Only then we removed the yarn and let it dry in the shade, without rinsing it. The first six charges yielded the intense pepper red. (Corresponds to about 180 g). The next four quantities took on a middle red tone, their total weight was 120 g. We continued with 5 more changes and got 120 g of rose-colored yarn. We could have stopped now, but we had become curious how long you could dye with that one solution. It was almost endlessly possible. Dye it did, whenever soaked another 30 g of moistened yarn. It seemed like a competition: Who would win, we or the dye bath? We wanted to continue until the dye wouldn't dye no more and remain white. The days went by, and the yarn got lighter and lighter – but it still remained rose-colored.

How Expensive is Cochenille?

We calculated briefly: The whole amount of dyed yarn was 500 g. The 30 g Cochenille cost about 5,50 € - this is surprisingly little. We managed to get four different gradients of red out of this. Conclusion: Dyeing with Cochenille is really not a great burden on your purse – quite to the contrary. Of course, red,

purple, scarlet, pepper ed, cherry red and rose are popular colors, especially with children. Asked to choose colors they always take red first.

☞ People interested in the life of the Cochenille louse should turn to the Canaries close to the European Western shorelines. During a famine in Mexico, some families emigrated to these islands in the early 19th century, carrying their knowledge of farming Cochenille with them. Today this island group is a popular tourist spot. If you are lucky, you can even buy Cochenille at the local market, much cheaper, ideal for travelers who would like to learn more and to practice. Unfortunately, the use of Cochenille in the textile industry has decreased considerably. Today, they are used mainly in the pharmaceutical industry, for making sweets and in cosmetics in bigger or smaller quantities.

MARI NAGY AND ISTVÁN VIDÁK

PAGES 56-57

197 Blossoms for South Tyrol

It was decided not to simply pack up the brightly colored blossoms that were made during the last Felting Encounter. Instead, they found a special place in South Tyrol, where they decorate the Tourism Office in Tisens as well as the Felt Art Hiking Path, thus enabling the public to partake in this creative outburst.

This year's Filzbegegnung (Felting Encounter) was special, since we celebrated both 30 years of Felting Encounter and the 20-year anniversary of the Filznetzwerk Association (we reported on it in issue xx/2025) The Filznetzwerk members made a brightly colored flower bouquet consisting of 197 felted blossoms. The organizers had come up with the idea to make these as festive decorations or to hand out to guests and lecturers. They started a members' call for «Ein Blümchen zum Jubiläum (A Little Flower for the Jubilee)». The postman was busy delivering 197 blossoms to Kerstin Waizenegger in January. Christine Rusch from the organizing team put some in a wreath made of crooked hazel branches and made others into a hanging object

for Roggenburg. The blossoms also decorated the table. It looked too swell to have them all vanish in the attic afterwards. But what was to become of them?

Flowers For the Tourism Office

In Roggenburg, it was planned to offer them to a Felt Art Hiking Path. Margarete Pfattner, who takes care of the South Tyrol Felt Art Hiking Path, was present as well and she liked the idea. So, an application was written and accepted with thanks in South Tyrol.

~ Two new garlands were made, again by Christine Rusch, Kerstin Waizenegger and Helga Steegborn, with hazel branches interspersed with those blossoms that were rather delicate and not too sturdily felted. This smaller wreath is now in possession of the Tourism Office in Tisens and is displayed on a beautiful table. A perfect advertisement for the ancient felting craft, the hiking path and the German and Italian Feltmaking Network!

A Garland for the Felt Art Hiking Path

The second, slightly bigger wreath with sturdier blossoms was meant for the Felt Art Hiking Path. It was installed on a door by Veronika Winkler from the Tourist Office. The door was then brought to the path and mounted. The blossoms with long stems and cords that had also been felted before the festivities were put onto a rose bow at the path's entrance area. The rose bow was made by the apprentices of the nearby home economics school. All 197 blossoms have now arrived in South Tyrol and are on public display.

~ The Filznetzwerk Association and the organizers of this transfer would like to thank all who sent flowers and/or helped to realize the projects in Roggenburg and South Tyrol – a merger of great ideas and busy hands. Our thanks go also to the Tourist Office Tisens/Prissian for the organization and financing on site as well as to Margarethe Pfattner, Veronika Winkler and Edith Hofer.

KERSTIN WAIZENEGGER, CHRISTINE RUSCH
AND HELGA STEEGBORN

Further Information

If on vacation in South Tyrol you should visit the Felt Art Hiking Path and the Tourist Office in Prissian.
tisensprissian.com

PAGES 58-61

From a Childhood Dream to Your Own Sheep Farm

For nine years now, Silvana Irina Pezzi has been keeping sheep in Neudrossenfeld near Bayreuth, and quite on her own at that. With her Heideilmühle, a dream has come true. The sheep lover spins and felts and sells her own wool mixtures.

Silvana Irina Pezzi was born on May 29th 1967 in Bayreuth. «In my passport, in my heart and in all my mentality I am Italian», she tells us. Her parents moved from Italy to Upper Franconia in 1963. After her training as a pharmacist's assistant, she has been working for 30 years at a health insurance institution. Already as a child she was drawn to the surrounding farms. Animals and husbandry meant much more to her than a just a pastime. «For me, farming combines living close to nature, a sense of freedom and creativity.»

From Sheep to Wool

In 2009, the first couple of sheep moved in – at first to graze the fruit orchard. With them came their wool, and a great passion arose from curiosity. Silvana started to dye the wool, then took up felting and last but not least, spinning. «My creative senses ran free», she remembers. In 2016, her biggest wish came true: She bought a small, almost solitary farm close to the re-naturalized river Trebgast – the Heideilmühle. «It was my lucky number», she says about her farm where she has been living since 2017. It is home. Already 18 years ago, she had had her eye on this building – and now she was able to move in, together with six rare Coburg Fox sheep. She raised fences, renovated the house and the pen and felt herself in the middle of a personal and artistic development that is ongoing still. She tried her hand at several felting techniques, attended workshops and finally started to host courses herself, also spinning classes. She had always liked the ancient spinning craft, having soon found that the «golden fleece», i.e. the wool of the Coburg Fox was an ideal material. She knitted wonderful garments.

Working With the Animals

Today, Silvana lives at the Heideilmühle with eight sheep, her shepherd's dog

Dori and her tomcat Kasper. «My animals are like family members and they will always stay with me», she states. Each sheep has its own godmother who will keep the wool after shearing. Once a month, Silvana invites interested parties for a spinning meeting to farm, turning it further into a place of exchange and community. Her Coburg Foxes remain on the list of threatened cattle. They are sturdy, unmistakable by their red heads and legs and their wool is quite precious. Silvana cares for them, moves the fencing around, pays attention to the pasture rotation and cuts their claws regularly. «The sheep have a fixed pen at the house. From there they can roam about the fenced-in pastures. We also have a sheep wagon that is mounted near the water's edge. Sometimes they stay there and take it for their pen. They need fresh water and some hay, which makes for good digestion», according to the sheep keeper. «Of course, they are also cuddled and I spend a lot of time with them. Each animal knows its name. I am a one-woman show and I manage alone fine!» she says with pride.

Wool Processing and Creativity

Over time, she wanted to try out wool from other breeds and found them as a member of the Sheep Keepers' Guild of Upper Franconia. Silvana spins, felts and sell her own mixed wools that are much sought after by other craftspeople. She sells her products on fairs, especially so in fall and winter: socks, caps, scarves, jackets – spun, knitted or felted. She doesn't work on order anymore. «This robs me of my creativity». She felts as she pleases, sometimes in slate technique, then nuno-felt or 3-D felt objects. She has no preferences: «Like with painting – once the muse has kissed you, you start and see what comes out of it.»

A Full, Creative Life

Living on her farm has changed Silvana for the better. The responsibility, the work and being so close to nature lend her days meaning. She doesn't need trips around the world: «I am on holidays every day, because my home is so very beautiful.» In her free time she paints, works in the garden or lays out mosaics. But she likes best to walk the fields with Dori or watch her sheep. Just one longing always remains: for Italy. Still, she is full of spit and vinegar and always optimistic. Her credo is: «Give each day the chance to become the most beautiful». She continues to be full

of ideas as well, loves challenges and trying out something new. «I am never bored – each day is an adventure.»

LARA PYTER

Personal Information

Silvana Pezzi offers a wide range on cleaned and carded sheep from local stocks. During the felting courses for beginners and advanced felters at the Heideilmühle she works with her products.
diewollfra.de

PAGES 62–65

Felt Carpet Exhibit «On Noah's Ark»

Ancient legends and contemporary felting craft met at Kecskemét in Hungary. Titled «Auf Noahs Arche (On Noah's Ark)» Mari Nagy and István Vidák, together with 50 other artists, presented their work. The exhibit soon turned into a cultural highlight that now lives on as a travelling show. The Hungarian felt artists report on the event.

The title refers to Noah who took two animals of every kind in his ark to withstand the flood. After the water gradually subsided, the ark came to rest on Mt. Ararat after a long time. Something had changed inside the ark – the animals had lost their hair and had trampled over them – so the world's first felt was made.

About the Artists

For our ark, we tried to invite all Hungarian felt artists who live in Hungary or neighboring countries. Many responded and we were able to organize the first

exhibit with objects by 50 artists in our home town Kecskemét. Adding the works made by the children, there were about 100 felted carpets on show. The show took place in a finance building from 1896 that had stood empty for a long time and was given new life by the exhibit.

A Blanket Made by Friends

One of the carpets on show is a communal project. One reason is that it is so big that a single person could never manage to make it alone, since this is hard physical labor. But working together has another wonderful effect – you make friends. A great example was made in Székelyudvarhely (Odorheiu Secuiesc), Siebenbürgen, Romania. An expert felter, Emese Kovács Túri, designed the carpet's main motif for the blanket and participants later filled out the surfaces with plant-dyed wool.

A New Face Among Felt Artist

Of course, with each new exhibit there is suddenly a new face - an unknown artist That's how it went with Sára Gittiger Looking at her carpets, we were astounded by the care and how much love for detail she professed – and all this already for 20 years. Together with her husband, Sára Gittinger has managed a rider's stable, that is why she often felted sweat blankets which are put underneath the saddles and other horse blankets.

The Children' Felt Works

The children's oeuvres were shown at another location. The youngest participant was shy of five, but we also got objects from nine, eleven and 15-year-old children. They were entirely free to invent their own pattern or motif, Grownups, mostly their parents, helped them during the exhausting fulling process. The works of the children were all much more freely done, they are more playful and in a better mood than those of the grown-ups. They like small dots

and surfaces, prefer shining colors like red, yellow or light-green. Since they still live in a fairytale world, many objects are named after fairies and princesses, also moon and sun are cherished motifs.

Exhibition Space in Kecskemét

Thanks to Kecskemét we got a show room for three weeks for free, but we would have to do without watch personnel. Und these circumstances, the artists were all a big help. People who are familiar with the show pieces acted as guides. Sometimes came over to one of his own art works and told the audience the details and personal stories: In each room we had installed a small niche where on each table practical demonstrations were held. It was a great success – for people who had dealt with felt forever but also for those who only first heard about it that very time. 300 to 350 visitors came during these three weeks and watched a great textile show.

Travelling Show

Even after the show was dismantled the objects stayed together, for they journeyed to new shop locations. The second show was in August of this year at the Velence Lake, approx. 40 m away from Budapest. In September the exhibit went to a Hungarian-speaking region in Siebenbürgen, then it is shown again in Hajdúszoboszló, and at last in the Serbian Zenta, a place with deep Hungarian roots and where and many people speak the language. Our aim is to make the public more familiar with the felting craft, a travelling show is ideal for that. Here we would like to express our sincerest thanks to the Exterior Branch of the Hungarian Academy of Fine Art in Kecskemét and to the folk-art guild of the Donau-Tisza-Region (Duna-Tisza közí Népművészeti Egyesület) for their valuable support in the exhibition,

MARI NAGY AND ISTVÁN VIDÁK

This is a supplement of the magazine
»filzfun« Issue #89- Winter 2025/2026
ISSN 2199-7314 · ZKZ 77098

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

Translations:
Christina Hirson

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

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

Your direct contact to the editorial department:
redaktion@filzfun.de;
The spring issue will be published on February 28th, 2026
Editorial deadline: December 2nd, 2025