filzfun – The English Supplement
Issue #93, Winter 2026/2027

SPECTRUM

2 6 Out of the Felt and Textile Scene

WORKSHOPS AND MASTERCLASSES

3 8 Filzkolleg 2026 – Centered on Feltmaking from Head to Toe

3 12 The Infinity of Felt Design

4 14 True to Form – Felting Bags with Framework and Hoops

EXHIBITIONS

4 16 „Textile Dialogue" in Armenia

EVENTS

5 18 How Feltmaking Connects - From Nomadic Traditions to Community Art

ARTISTS' PORTRAITS

7 24 Kristina Foley: „To Keep the Wool's Wildness"

8 28 Yuliya Kosata: How Imagination Morphs into Form

10 38 Inge Visser: The Art of Nature

11 42 Regina Knaz: Magical Worlds

TUTORIALS

8 32 Santa Bag by Yuliya Kosata

11 45 Soap in a Felt Coat by Regina Knaz

PROJECT

12 48 The Kids' Felting Chest

TECHNIQUE

12 52 „Little Clouds" – A Lay-Out Technique for Wet-Felting

SHEEP & WOOL

13 56 Finkhof: „A Close Connection with Sheep"

FELTING HISTORY

14 60 Dyeing with Marigolds

Dear readers,

Winter is a mastermind of change. Hoar frost turns bare branches into small works of art; snow makes us see familiar landscapes in a new light. Sometimes, you just need a different point of view to discover the special in matters of daily life. Feltmaking is not much different – also here, a quaint and familiar material can create a surprising, new world. How differently these can look becomes obvious in our present issue of artists' portraits. Kristina Foley from Oregon deals with the special relations between people, sheep and landscapes The Dutch felter Inge Visser is a master of abstract shapes and unusual material mixes that make for new forms of expression Yuliya Kosata from Ukraine turns wool into imaginative cat dwellings, while Regina Kunz from Hamburg creates bewitching tokens for family life with wool, beads, glitter and natural materials. New perspectives not only open up regarding one's own creativity, but also during exchanges with other artists in the field. At the exhibit „Textile Dialoge (Textile Dialogues)" in Armenia, artists from seven Southeast countries met. How feltmaking turns into a communal venture, into the so-called Community Art, is amply proven by the felt artist Inge Evers. And that learning and experimenting together continues to produce new impulses is laid down in reports from the Soltau Filzkolleg, from the Oberrot Felting School and the regional meeting of the Filznetzwerk in the Gorxheim Valley. Those who wish to participate in the next meeting can look forward to a felters' encounter in Hohebuch in February 2027. We have also some surprises in store for your own felting table in the shape of two instructions, i.e. the seasonal Santa Bag by Yuliya Kosata and felt-covered soap by Regina Kunz. A special laying-out of „small clouds" shows how new surfaces can be designed during wet-felting. Dyeing with marigolds warrants exciting color experiences. A children's felting chest that can be borrowed from the Filznetzwerk is perfect for youngsters who want to explore the realm of wool in a playful way. We take you on a visit to the Fink farm in the Allgäu Upland, where the co-existence or people, sheep and wool has been a crucial factor for nearly five decades.

Have fun reading and looking,

Your *filzfun* Team

NOTE

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

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

Suggestion: Mask Felting Course

Masks are worn for protection, disguise and rendering statements and have been a widespread means of expression over the centuries. In Anja Fröhlich's course, held in Göttingen from March 12th to 14th 2027, individual masks can be felted, inspired by masks from different cultures or by one's own imagination. The results can be small or big, quaint or minutely executed wearables or art objects, either wet- or dry-felted from fine Merino wool. Carefully planned beforehand, thought out on the spot and intuitively designed the masks may evolve from the participants' own hands. They all will have their individual character and special meaning. The course focuses on the creative process and fun in experimenting and can be booked by beginners and experienced felters alike, yet a little knowledge about the craft is advantageous.
kurse.filzrausch.de

Embroidering Together Online – Meditative and Inspiring

Each Wednesday, Annemie Koenen's studio in Sittard (The Netherlands) is open and invites interested parties to felt and knit together. Each can work on his or her own projects and there is plenty of room for exchange, inspiration and individual support. You can either start a new project or continue with an already existing one and Annemie Koenen assists regarding the choice of materials, techniques and stitches. The meetings on site, i.e. in the Sittard studio, take place each Wednesday afternoon from 2:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. or online on Mondays from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
annemiekoenen.com

Tutorial Anise Star – Inspired by Nature

How do you make such a fascinating form out of a flat resist? In her new PDF tutorial «Art Object Anis-Stern (Anise Star)», Ilona Riehle teaches the various steps how to make an unusually lovely, three-dimensional felted object from book resists with several parts. With more than 100 photos and detailed explanations, the tutorial covers the whole working process – from making the resist, laying out the wool, felting and shaping the single segments. The resulting anise star is not only a decorative art object but can be used as a stylish bowl, e.g. for nuts. In other words, it is perfect for the upcoming Christmas season. The exceptional construction of the resist opens further possibilities for individual design and invites you to experiment with shapes, proportions and your own ideas. The PDF tutorial is ready for download and addresses feltmakers who want to learn how to develop new three-dimensional forms in wet-felting and to work with book resists consisting of several parts.
ilorie.de

Felters' Meeting 2027 «Art and Nature in Focus»

The Filznetzwerk e.V. will hold their Felting Encounter at Hohebuch from February 11th to 14th 2027. This instance, the chosen meeting place is the Ländliche Heim Adult Education Institution Hohebuch in Waldenburg. The picturesque surroundings with their forests, river valleys and rich panoramic views are a suitable frame for four days full of feltmaking, creativity and meetings. The motto «Art and Nature in Focus» echoes what we encounter many times when felting: i.e. nature itself. Nature is truly inspiring: its colors, shapes and structures. Sometimes, the resulting objects are true to life, in other cases there is a free interpretation of a natural object. One highlight is visiting the Museum Würth 2 in Künzelsau together for the show «FOCUS. Neue Blicke auf die Sammlung Würth (New perspectives on the Würth collection)». The show encourages the spectators to look at familiar things anew and to hone the view on form, color and relation – an exciting stimulus for your own artistic endeavors. The so-called impulse workshops take up the motto in many different ways, in the shape of delicate physalis, dreamy blossom creatures, plastic surfaces between both organic and geometrical forms, small nature spirits, bags from natural wool fibers or other works where nature and art meet. They are all challenging you to learn new techniques and to try out ideas of your own. The Felting Encounter, though, is not all about workshops and courses. It is enlivened by the people who gather. During feltmaking, at meals or in jolly evenings, experiences are passed on, ideas shared and new contacts established. Exactly those encounters are crucial factors for the meeting. A lively evening program is the finishing touch for four days of felting passion. Applications under
filznetzwerk.de

CREATIVA 2027: Europe's Biggest Creative Fair

In the coming year, the CREATIVA is again going to be a hotspot for numerous creative branches. From March 17th to 21st 2027, everything revolves around the newest trends, techniques and inspirations around craft and design. The expert and TV host Enie van de Meiklokjes will offer exciting glimpses into the matter. Five days full of inspiration, new techniques and fresh impulses. The CREATIVA is Europe's biggest arts and crafts fair that brings together the various interest groups, salespeople and an ever-enthusiastic audience.
messe-creativa-de

PAGES 8–11

Filzkolleg 2026 – Centered on Feltmaking from Head to Toe

20 courses, around 100 felting enthusiasts and tons of wool and ideas: The Filzkolleg 2026 brought together as many people as never before at the end of June. For six days, there was learning and experimenting in Soltau, rolling and fulling, dyeing and designing – from hat to shoe, from delicate necklaces to most expressive masks.

Tiny felted ribbons in different colors worn at the wrist, in the hair, nestling in buttonholes or dangling from backpacks are the badges of the Filzkolleg in Soltau. This time, it was heather violet's turn, and never before was such a great number of ribbons distributed. With around 100 enthusiastic felters and a total of 20 courses, the Filzkolleg established several records. The program, organized by Annemie Koenen, attracted many members and regulars, but also won numerous newcomers. Fitting for this year's motto, two extensive courses for clothes were the center of the wide range of offers. Kerstin Scherr made capes and tops with extraordinary patterns and three-dimensional surface elements. In Sabine Reichert-Kassube's course, the focus lay on tops with filigree open structures. The technique of lace felting was also taught in a second course, this time for making delicate necklaces.

Rolling, Kneading, Fulling and Hammering

Kerstin Scherr as well hosted a further accessory workshop. Bags served as application examples of reserve-, multi-disc- and block techniques. The way to felt elastic cuffs, shown by Irina Kalaschnikow, attracted a lot of interest. The participants of the latter's shoemaking course worked really hard: During much rolling, kneading, fulling and hammering, huge socks finally turned into well-fitting footwear complete with sole and trimmings – luckily this all took place under the roof in an air-conditioned room. Regarding headgear, interested parties could choose between merry caps (by Frieder Klatzer) or elegant hats, as skillfully demonstrated by Annemie Koenen. Under her tutelage, Möbius scarves and collars with elaborate 3-D structures for the neck or the shoulders were made. Anja Fröhlich's mask course showed how by hiding the outside, the inside becomes more expressive in very individual ways. In her rose workshop, however, an almost true-to-life rendering of decorative, many-leafed blossoms was the main attraction.

The Flying Classroom

The agreeably tempered Flying Classroom at the Toy Museum was reserved for courses of dry-felting small formats. Here, the participants could concentrate on making beautiful buttons while their heads remained cool during Helene Weinold's workshop. Others were introduced to the art of fine knots during a micro macramé workshop held by Ilka Lehrmann. A big tent in the Filzwelt yard served as a dyeing kitchen. There, Heike Spiekermann and her groups experimented with reserve techniques using unfamiliar tools like perforated plates or gridirons. In her second course, making arm cuffs combined silk painting with feltmaking.

〰 Already before the Eco printing course by Rachel van der Weerd had started, the loosely laid-out plant patterns were bewitching. It was invariably exciting when the steamed rolls of fabric were finally unwrapped. How would the patterns change by the tannins and dyeing cloths used? Thanks to the expertise of many participants, even a brief botany course in Dutch, English and German was successfully held on the side. Other records were achieved as well: Temperatures had been steadily rising in the course of the week. When, on the last day, neither the shadow cast by the big elm above the tent nor additional pavilions or generous amounts of drinking water would help anymore, the felters crowded in the hall of the manufacturing plant and made room for the Eco printers. So, there were «happy faces on both sides and wonderful objects to be seen», as one participant put it.

〰 Again and again, the visitors looked in the various course rooms and wondered about the changes happening there: From loose fibers and seemingly amorphous, wet blobs firm, accurate forms emerged after a certain time. So, the Filzkolleg is not merely a meeting place, exchange unit, school and experimental field for insider, but simultaneously a shop window for the fascinating versatility of feltmaking.

ANTJE ERNST UND ANNEMIE KOENEN

Save the date
The 2027 Filzkolleg will take place in Soltau from June 21st to 26th under the motto: «I felt the world as I like it». The program will appear on the Filznetzwerk e.V.'s website:
filznetzwerk.de

PAGES 12-1

The Infinity of Felt Design

Five days, five lecturers and innumerable possibilities to newly discover felt: With the new course «Block 7», the Oberrot Felting School offers an advanced training course for its certified graduates for the first time. On schedule were many new impulses, familiar techniques and exciting experiments – and, of course, so much community.

〰 When felting school graduates drive onto the «Wollknoll» parking lot, the same invariably happens: You feel at home. Every day's hustle and bustle fades into the distance and a peaceful feeling spreads. Old acquaintances are greeted; new members aren't hard to make friends with – and all of a sudden, you are in the midst of the Oberrot felting family.

〰 This year, there was a special reason for the joy of seeing each other again, i.e. a new course offered by the Wollknoll company. For the first time, «Block 7» was about to start; an offer exclusively for certified graduates of the felting school. The course was fully booked in no time; there was even a waiting list.

Starting With Resists

12 participants, 5 days, five lecturers and a wealth of techniques new and familiar, enhanced or developed further. More often than not the lecturers didn't have to do a lot, obviously their initial training lessons had born fruit. With a resist and many applications, Lydia Rump started into the felting week. And so that nobody would get bored, she produced more resists from her chest and we worked on a «travel cushion, space-saving and foldable» in block technique.

〰 On the second day everything got a little smaller. Minka de Weerd introduced us into the secrets of jewelry-making. «Small, smaller, the smallest» was her credo. Those who had never before booked a jewelry course could hardly

believe that producing such teeny-tiny wool flakes and to lay them out. But success didn't take long. Earrings, rings and brooches were made aplenty.

Once Paper and Wool Meet

On the third day, Claudia Cappiello introduced us to a technique that nobody had known so far. Paper and wool were to be felted together. Is that really possible? After a thorough theoretical introduction in the different qualities and kinds of paper and whether they could be used in feltmaking, we stormed the felting tables. Paper, as the saying goes, is patient and can wait, which was exactly what it did. The initial felting took very long already, and the full felting process required a lot of patience and delicacy. The results were fascinating indeed.

〰 Then everything came in colors. On the fourth day, Kerstin Scheer deepened our knowledge and expertise regarding the mosaic, relief and reserve techniques. She helped us with many tipps and suggestions in finding new aspects in the said techniques, and she seemed to enjoy herself greatly watching her students succumb to a color craze.

Raw Wool in Focus

At the end, on the last day, there was a special highlight meant for those students who had graduated during the pandemic. Heidi Greb focused on the raw wool she had brought and together with it on the so-called «Flocke 7 (Flake 7)», something that had almost been neglected in the Corona turbulences. She showed different laying-out techniques for raw wool curls and informed on the many possibilities of their processing. Under her supervision not only test pieces and small sculptures were made, but also sitting furs, small carpets and a shawl collar.

〰 One week, so packed with daily changing offers, inspirations, lively talk, laughter and making new friends, went by. It is so beautiful to see and to experience how the felting school is developing still and how much their interest in fostering the graduates also after their training is appreciated. Our sincere thanks go to all lecturers of the Oberrot Felting School and the Fritz family. We are looking forward to other exciting offers, because felting design is ever so rich and different.

ULRIKE HEYDENREICH

Filzschule Oberrot

Please find further information about the Oberrot Felting School. their training and additional courses plus their current course offer under
wollknoll.eu

PAGES 14–15

True to Form – Felting Bags with Framework and Hoops

The regional meetings of the Filznetzwerk e.V. are organized by members for members in a loose series. Tanja Kahl and Steph Selke were responsible this time and invited interested parties to the Gorxheim Valley in June. The theme was: «Pouches and Bags with Framework and Loops».

The idea sprung up at this year's felting encounter, when bag framework caught the eye of the two felters: an accessory with which small pouches and bags can be designed that stay open when opened. This makes it easy to see what's in it and everything can be retrieved easily without having to rummage through the contents. To fasten them, you need neither needle nor thread. After first trials, the idea came up to evaluate this on a bigger scale. Consequently, on Saturday seven women met in Tanja Kahl's studio for a regional session in order to pursue the matter further.

From Idea to Felting Table

In the morning, patterns, ideas and thoughts were exchanged, compared and talked about and then the felting started. They made bags with loops and framework in different sizes, often with an in-worked bottom. Some participants used the classic handles they found in the tutors' material chest.

〰 The difference lies in the visibility of the loops and how they are used. With the newer variant, a flap loop, a tunnel is worked in already during the felting process, and after felting you just need to push the handle in. A classic loop is sewn in during finishing.

〰 The ladies basically agreed that they'd rather felt than sew. That the framework does not simply vanish into the felt, and the bag can stay open so that the content is visible is a true advantage. Still, the question of personal taste remains. Will you settle for the more accurate, modern version or for the playful latch? Both ways have their charms.

Talking Shop at the Buffet

Around noon there was a delicious buffet that the participants had stocked themselves. At the merry round there was enough time for shoptalk. Around 5 p.m., all had finished their objects and they set out for home after cleaning up. Some even travelled a distance of 150 km. Felters from Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria and Hessen united in their joy of feltmaking, of experimenting and mutual exchange.

STEPH SELKE

More Information

Please find all pertaining information regarding the regional encounter on the Filznetzwerk e.V.'s website
filznetzwerk.de

Tanja Kahl: filzkunst-tanja-kahl.de
Steph Selke: diefilzerei-naturpur.com

PAGES 16–17

« Textile Dialogue» in Armenia

Textile crafts connect people over all borders. During the exhibit «Textile Dialogue» in Armenia, artists and craftspeople from seven Southern East Europe met. Felt artist Svetlana Kamps from Bulgaria was one of them. She reports on her impressions, new friendships and a very enticing carpet she took home..

With fond memories, I keep thinking about my summer days in Armenia, a country and its people that welcomed me heartily, of museums in Yerevan, the green Dilijan, a village school and most of all to the many encounters around the textile craft.

〰 The show «Textile Dialogue» took place in Dilijan in August 2026. It brought together representatives of textile traditions from Bulgaria, Greece, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Romania, Moldavia and Georgia. Weaving,

embroidering and feltmaking were presented as well as different cultures and life stories.

Following Traces of Armenian Arts and Crafts

Let's start from the beginning. We «masters» were accommodated in the Silk Road Hotel in Yerevan. Upon entering the premises, we already started our journey through the Armenian carpet-making history. Ancient carpets adorned the walls, looms and spinning wheels told of the traditional crafts, plant-dyed wool shone brightly. In the garden, there grew pomegranate trees. What a truly wonderful place to make new, like-minded friends.

〰 Our hosts had prepared a rich cultural program. I was most impressed by the wooden house amulets, called «Dandrdan» in Armenian; and also, by the clay statuettes of the goddess Anahit in the Museum of Folk Art. They used to serve as salt containers and connect beauty, everyday life and symbolism in an enchanting way. Then we went to Dilijan. After Yerevan's heat, this former spa town greeted us with its fresh green forests and cool air. We discovered historical buildings with filigree wooden verandas, small craft workshops and Armenian Chatschkare, i.e. elaborately adorned cross stones. The Sewan Lake and the old Armenian cloisters were part of our trip as well. We kept finding traces of a culture wherein history, religion and handicraft were closely interwoven.

〰 During all that, we kept mounting our show pieces in the house of Hovhannes Sharambeyan, who contributes greatly to the preservation of Armenian folk art. At the opening, we were greeted by the lady cultural minister, and afterwards we celebrated at lavishly laid tables and the talks sprang merrily back and forth between Russian and English.

Seven Countries, Many Textile Stories

Elisavet Rodopoulou from Greece showed carpets and rugs made in a weaving tradition that has been spanning well over three generations. Svetlana Markovic from Bosnia and Herzegovina presented the characteristic Zmijanje-Embroidery, which is part of the immaterial cultural heritage of the UNESCO. Olesea Enachi and Ioana Corduneanu from Moldavia and Romania brought along elaborately decorated traditional costumes, while our colleagues from Georgia drew a lot of attention with their modern clothing, embroideries, carpets and many intricate interpretations of their respective folk-art traditions represented Bulgaria with felted carpets and their blessing ornaments, the protective charm of an eagle and the «bag of the eternally wandering traveler». Especially the children loved to gaze into the blue felted eyes of my eagle. The Armenian artists from Diljian bewitched me with their tiny, meticulous works. Miniature dolls, an embroidered pin cushion and small needled doilies made the trip home with me – love in every detail indeed. Memorable were the traditional folk costumes presented by the participants. Each woman proudly wore the colors of her region and her country. So, I learned that the orange color of the Armenian flag is connected, amongst other things, with the apricot. How fitting for a journey through a country of apricot trees and pomegranates! After the exhibit, we hosted small open-air workshops. The public's interest was huge. While felting my Bulgarian tomatoes, there was a blackout and the water didn't heat up anymore, so we improvised. When finally warm water was distributed again, the whole street was audibly jubilant.

A Small Farewell Carpet

What touched me most was the visit of an Armenian village school. There, I learned of a summer program that brings cultural offers and teachings of traditional crafts to kids in remote regions. We met thirteen girls who proudly presented their weaving work. Then, for the first time, they felted with me and their teacher. I got a great gift from them. In my luggage, I took home a small carpet, made by the children's hands showing a pomegranate. They bade me farewell with a heartfelt «Schnorakalutjun», meaning «Thank you» in Armenian. Textile craft, friendships, children and a country full of hospitality and love for its traditions. That is what I will always remember about Armenia. I take home another certainty: Handicrafts are so much more than just technique and materials. They make for encounters and follow a language that we all understand, even if we don't use the same words.

SVETLANA KAMPS

Personal Information

Svetlana Kamps Is a felt artists from Varna, Bulgaria. Her passion is to work with wool and to convey the art of feltmaking in workshops for kids and adults. In her objects and projects, she combines textile design with her Bulgarian heritage, nature, tradition and the joy of meeting people who feel and act the same.

PAGES 18–21

How Feltmaking Connects - From Nomadic Traditions to Community Art

Feltmaking is a lot more than loose wool fibers morphing into a firm textile material. For centuries communal work has brought people together and knowledge, stories and traditions wander freely about. The Dutch felt artist Inge Ewers has taken up that strain of thought and developed it further: For her, felt has turned into a medium for personal expression and communal experience. Leoni Smith and Annemie Koenen trace her personal, interesting story in a lecture.

At the occasion of the 35th anniversary of the Felt Contact Group Netherlands, Leoni Smith and Annemie Koenen delivered a lecture about their long years of intense work with felt in the Textielmuseum Tilburg on Febr. 7th 2026. Since they first discovered felt they have been hooked. They studied, experimented and conducted research there and abroad, passing on their knowledge during workshops and Community Art projects. Their special attention goes to the felt artist Inge Evers, who has been dealing intensely with matters of fabrics, fibers, silk paper and felt since 1970.

Felting is A Matter of Feeling

Over time, Inge Evers realized in her own works and those of others and with others that feltmaking is more than just wool turning into felt. Feelings may be let loose and may lead to new perspectives and insights. This experience fascinated her to such a degree that she started a Master Study at the European Graduate School in Switzerland when she was in her middle fifties. She graduated with «The Felt Sense», where she researched the possibilities of using felt in expression therapy and in Community Arts.

〰 She dealt with Gendlin's Focusing method as a self-therapy and studied Paolo Knill's approach to Community Art as Choreography, mostly in «The We-Song of Flowers». Based on this, she developed a new method to felt carpets and rugs communally and in groups. In her dissertation she describes, amongst other things, how the felted carpet «Mille Fleurs» für Mary Burkett was made in a five-day-long metamorphosis.

Travels to the Cradle of Feltmaking

Leonie and Annemie have known each other since the 1990ies. They met Inge during courses and Community Art Projects. Again and again, they had the opportunity to work together with her. Independently, this has reflected on their own respective art.
〰 Like Inge Evers, Mary Burkett und István Vidák, Leoni und Annemie travelled to the cradle of feltmaking, i.e. to Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Mongolia, Uzbekistan, Iran, Turkey, Armenia, Hungary und Siebenbürgen in Romania. There, they got to know the natural ways of Nomadic life, where feltmaking is invariably connects to everyday life. It becomes obvious in the traditional use of shapes and colors. What is today labelled as Community Art is no other than a long story for which these people don't have a name. Wool, felt and textile works were part of the daily existence and simultaneously an expression of community. The number of sheep owned determined the amount of raw material and was an important symbol of wealth. The sheep were not only coveted for their wool and the snug carpets, but fed the community as well. Traditional feltmaking is always communal, as proven by poems, songs, music, dances and festive meals.

Traditions and Customs

Nomadic life is rich in traditions, motifs and customs. Men and women each have their own tasks that complement each other and their respectful dealings. When a carpet is felted, its pattern is not sketched beforehand, but can appear spontaneously. It is an expression of the very moment. Only after finishing it can be properly read. Traditionally, the motifs and patterns are laid out by the oldest and wisest of the women, while the other tasks will be distributed according to age and previous experience. Once the carpet or rug is finished it is sprinkled with fermented mare's milk (Kumis) and blessed:

〰 You, o you from lamb's wool, carefully sorted out with then fingers, sprinkled with a thousand drops of water, fulled in the fields, with strong horses, you precious treasure of my home, be you turn out flawless, may never the moths get at you, be white as snow and strong as silk. So be it. Amen.

Like a Stone in the Water

After István Vidak had visited felt makers in Eurasia and on the Balkan in the 1970ies, he did the same in Western Europe in the beginning of the 1980ies and talked to many masters and scientists. In 1982, looking ever the travelling nomad with a sleeping mat from Turkmenia over his shoulder, he stood in front of Inge Ever's door. Vidak planned an international felting congress which took place in 1984 in memory of the Hungarian Veroniki Gervers-Molnar, who had died young.
〰 Amongst other matters, she had written a book about the Hungarian Szür, a shepherd's cloak. The congress brought all kinds of people together and thus countless areas of interest, such as traditional felt art, the architecture of the yurt and contemporary applications. As it were, Vidak had thrown a stone in a pond and the waves spread out fanwise more and more. Thanks to the state's sponsorship of his felting studies, he organized a summer school in the Hungarian Puszta four years in a row about the art of feltmaking, together with his wife Mari Nagy. Also, Inge Visser takes part. Here East and West met through the art of feltmaking.
〰 The participants chosen were experienced felters that brought along their own expertise and were equally prepared to learn something new. They entered in a kind of Nomadic life themselves, if only briefly: Yurts were built, felt was made, they ate together and made music. In the midst of an open field, there was a door. Who entered the camp had to go through it. Each year, there were new communities of both well-known and new professionals. After each summer, they passed on their learning and experiences to the whole world. Also, in her workshop in Harlem, Inge Evers stuck to the basic principles of Nomadic life. The students chose each a project, where everybody worked on then. The different tasks were distributed and the respective tutor was the person whose project was presently in the making.

Feltmaking as a Communal Experience

Even before her studies in Switzerland, Inge Evers had organized substantial Community Art projects. In Georgia, she called into life the «Peace Project Felt Art for Georgia». Under her instructions, internationally renowned felt artists, among them Leoni – together with Georgian women – made a felted blossom carpet for Sandra Roelofs. The project greatly added to an awareness to revive textile crafts in Georgia. Evers held courses like «Georgia meets The Netherlands», where feltmaking, dancing, singing and taking meals together were core items of the public's approval.During this occasion as well, they felted a carpet together. It was auctioned off to the benefit of a felting workshop in Georgia. Annemie had a part in it, too. After her studies. Inge Evers dedicated herself to the therapeutical applications of working with wool and Community Art. In Germany, her courses «A Carpet for the Soul», «The Bleeps» and the «Story Bag» met with great interest, many of you will still remember them. In Inge's Community Art, the process is central. There is a starting point, but no prescribed result. She describes this approach: «Yes...we felt, we make felt, but the result is never sure. Since we prioritize our senses, unforeseen things can happen, which we greet fondly and react to.» The process requires creative action, whatever comes from it, is well.

Hands and Hearts in Unisone

The felting process starts with preparing the necessary tools and materials, such as fibers, fabrics and threads and clearing the working space. Inge Evers describes the process as a getting into the material and your own perceptions. To her, felting means taking time and open up your senses. While your hands treat the workpiece, which keeps changing all the time, also your perceptions and feelings undergo a change. There is an alternating play between the movement of your hands and the stirrings of the heart. In the last phase, a felted piece can turn into an unexpected, firm shape, something that couldn't have been meticulously planned from the beginning but is accepted as it is nevertheless.

Inge Evers views the international felting project «Mille Fleurs for Mary Burkett» (200) as a fine example of communal felt art. The so-called ‚Heartfelt Carpet' was made as an homage to István Vidak and

Mary Nagy for their contribution to the international establishing of feltmaking. With their studies, trips, exhibits, courses and many related publications, the couple has contributed greatly to pass on traditional wisdom and to connect people. On this carpet worked 22 women, among them Annemie. She transported the still moist carpet first from England to The Netherlands and later further to Hungary. With this lecture, Leoni Smith and Annemie Koenen wish not only to fondly remember Inge Evers' research and way of working. Their other aim is to carry further a thought which is interwoven in their work and the history of feltmakig. Felt is purely connection, be it among fibers or people.

INGE EVERSDIANA PYTER

More Information
On this site you can listen to Leoni Smith's and Annemie Koenen's lecture:
viltkontaktgroep.nl/film-presentatie-over-community-art/
annemiekoenen.com/nl/publicaties/

Further information:
Dissertation «The Felt Sense»:
evers-in-vezels.nl/publicaties
Annemie Koenen:
Annemiekoenen.com

PAGES 24-27

«To Keep the Wool's Wildness»

With great sadness, the felters' scene Kristina Foley investigates wool as both a living material and a cultural technology. In her all her art works and practical items she makes, the artist tells us of the interconnected relationships among animals, humans and the land. She procures the fibers she needs near her home in Oregon. Quite often, a work of art begins with meeting the animals and their keepers on site.

Humans have been herding and raising sheep for over 10.000 years. These animals have been essential to our survival in their offering meat, milk, horns and last but not least luscious coats of thick wool. They have adapted alongside us to an infinite range of different landscapes and climate zones. This variety is fascinating to the artist. «Sheep wool is not merely a fiber among many, it is a visible expression of deeply interconnected relationships between humans, sheep and the land», says Kristina Foley. Wool is an astounding natural material: It's inherently insulating, breathable, elastic, bio-degradable and by nature fire-resistant. The very structure of the fibers perfectly lends itself to feltmaking.

A Thousand of Years-Old Craft

Wet-felting, for Foley, is a part of our common history with sheep. The basics have hardly changed over the millennia: «Wool, hot water, soap, movement and time to spare – these are the timeless, unchanged gestures of feltmaking.» Shorn fleeces are transformed by hands into clean and loose fibers. Through wet-felting, they turn into an irreversible entanglement resulting in a dense, cohesive, non-woven textile. Yet, Foleys work started long before that moment. The process begins by her visiting farms near to her home in Western Oregon to source wool. She seeks to maintain a relationship with the respective shepherds, the flocks in general and where the herds live and graze. Her so-called «Fibershed» comprises about 10 farms where she sources different wool varieties for her artwork: Lincoln Longwool, Gotland, Valais Blacknose, Romney, Navajo Chruuo, Icelandic, Merino, Alpaca, Mohair.

What Does the Wool Want to Become?

Back in her studio, Foley starts sorting out, cleans and prepares the wool by loosening the fibers. She strives to follow the wool's natural character rather than covering it up. By making small samples, she examines color and texture and watches how the different fibers finally combine. For the artist, this is a veritable dialogue: «What does the wool want to become? How can I work with it so it best expresses itself?» Another important question is: «How can I prepare something that is finished and refined, but also allows the wool to keep its wildness?» Whether she is creating a collection for an exhibition or developing a piece for a bespoke project, Foley is always interested how the wool she is using is connecting back to the place, to the land and to the community. Soft woolen sculptures like vases, knitwear or big tapestries – Foley is always focused on depicting the various textures of wool.

From the US to Tuscany

She was introduced to felting while completing a BFA in Fiber Structure and Interlocking at Syracuse University in 2005. After graduation, she continued developing her practice in Italy. While living in Tuscany, she cultivated a studio practice that centered on feltmaking and botanical colors, working with regional animals' fibers and local dye plants. She lived in a fourteenth-century stone house and got used to a slower rhythm of the seasons, the surroundings and her craft. The artisan culture of Florence, along with her work for the innovative knit label Boboutic, has deeply influenced her approach to materials, processing and textile tradition.

Back to the Roots

Since 2018, Kristina Foley has been living and working in Oregon. The wool she uses comes from small farms in the Pacific North West as well as from multi-generational fiber mills across the US. The ancient craft of feltmaking is connected with contemporary issues regarding provenance, sustainability and our general attitude towards nature. Yet her approach is always personal and immediate. She wants to get to know the materials, understand where they come from and find out what can be made of them. Herein lies the special quality of her art. Wool should be allowed to remain wool, even in a finished object – with its initial structure, originality and its ‚wildness', as she puts it. Equally important are the history of the animals, landscapes and people involved, who are inseparably connected with it.

DIANA PYTER

Personal Information
The felt artist Kristina Foley from Oregon (US) regularly exhibits her art in her home region and makes art for restaurants, pubs or private photo series on order.

@foodshelterclothing
feltedsheepskins@gmail.com
https://foodshelterclothing.net/

PAGES 28-31

How Imagination Morphs into Form

For more than 16 years, Yuliya Kosata has been working with wool almost daily. The artist and designer from Charkiw in the Ukraine loves to make complex three-dimensional forms from this soft material. Today, feltmaking means even more to her: creativity can be a strong support and makes room for new thoughts and ideas, even under the most difficult conditions imaginable.

Yuliya Kosata is 52 years old and has an already grown-up daughter. She lives and works with her partner and three cats in Charkiw. Together, they create big-sized felt objects and produce videos about feltmaking. She describes her beloved home city Charkiw as a green, well-maintained major city, with many parks, public squares and tons of flower beds. Unfortunately, Charkiw is now a frontline city and continually threatened by enemy hostilities. Despite this sad development, Kosata is successfully trying to go on with her daily life and her creative work.

A Trip to Nepal Started it All

Her initial impulse for her enthusiasm regarding feltmaking started more than 15 years ago, during a trip to Nepal. Near her lodgings, she found a shop where felted items were sold. She went there daily. «I was amazed by the variety of colors and unusual shapes.» Of course, she bought some of them. Today she realizes that their quality wasn't very good, but they still keep their special meaning: «I love these items because, thanks to them, I fell in love with feltmaking at first sight.» Back in Ukraine, Kosata immediately attended several workshops on wet- and needle felting and continued to study different felting techniques on her own and started to experiment. Until today, she remains fascinated by the versatility of wool: The product range includes clothing, shoes, bags, flowers, toys, sculptures and even housing for animals or people can be made of it. «What attracts me most to felting is that it is the only material that allows me to bring all my ideas to life.»

Imaginative Worlds from Wool

Initially, Kosata made shoes, scarves, bags and hats. Later, her objects turned more complex. She began to create fanciful cats' dens, a fulfillment of a childhood dream. Already as a little girl, she imagined fantastic, almost space-like little houses before she fell asleep. Today she loves to make toys, sculptures and three-dimensional works in a combination of wet- and needle felting. She mostly uses short-staple, carded Corriedale wool of 25 to 20 Micron. Sometimes she even felts hairs from her own cats into small flowers. She is hardly ever in want of ideas. «Sometimes they come to me in a dream at night, and I wake up to sketch the new idea.» Yet, she carefully thinks each of her projects through. Next to her hands, she uses some tools like wooden apparel, sometimes a sander, iron or steam. Some surfaces are shaved or carefully singed.

Creativity as a Refuge

Kosata's studio is in a room in her flat. The window is sheltered with big rolls of wools and heavy furniture. Also, her cats have made this room their own. As soon as any amount of wool is unrolled, they lie down on it. So, when she needs to work, she has to cut the wool away around them, leaving a warm and cozy mater underneath their bodies.
〰 Her art is more than just a profession. «My creativity literally saves me. It is impossible to hide from the terrible events around us, but it is possible», she says, «to engage your mind with good thoughts and ideas and try to bring them to life.» This became increasingly clear for her at the beginning of the war. When everything around them was exploding and burning, her neighbors and she hid in the basement. She took along wool, felting needles and sponges. At that time, many of her neighbors, and she, too, had trembling hands. Everyone started felting, even the men. «Needle felting helped us a lot to calm down and concentrate.» Until the present, there are days when she finds it difficult to start working. Then, it is often a quite simple thought that keeps her going: Just begin. «I tell myself I have to muster the initial strength. Then my creativity takes over by itself.»

Passing on Knowledge in New Ways

Before the war, Kosata exhibited her art in an art center and various galleries in Charkiw and she taught kids and grown-ups in artists' studios, which are now closed. She has not given us teaching, though. In her Etsy shop «FeltField» she offers video tutorials next to her felted objects. «I continue doing what I love and what I am used to, just in a slightly different form.» The decision to become a professional felter was a turning point. All the skills she had accumulated over the years, such as sewing, knitting, painting and art photography have merged into feltmaking. «I have found myself in this creative art form.»

The Joy of Being Able to Create

Apart from the arts, Kosata loves to take long walks. For her, they are a kind of meditation that helps her to calm down and to find new ideas. It is difficult for her to formulate a life philosophy right now, because life has changed so much. But some thoughts are with her constantly: «It is a great happiness to have legs and simply be able to walk. It is a great happiness to have a mind that works and constantly gives birth to fresh ideas. And it is a great happiness to have hands that are capable of turning abstract thoughts into something tangible.» This last thought describes her relationship to feltmaking well. From an idea, her hands make something that can be taken up, felt and touched. Her plans for the future are to continue creating, and she would like to be able to do so until the end of her life. «Hopefully a long one!»

LARA PYTER

Personal Information

For more information about Yuliya Kosata's imaginative worlds or instruction to felt one of her projects please contact:
feltfield.etsy.com
@feltfield

PAGES 32–37

Tutorial: A Santa Bag for Small Treasures

This small bag, perfect for the Christmas season, is an original idea for small gifts. With its jelly bag cap and the friendly face, it is an eyecatcher in itself. Sweets, vouchers or other small surprises can be hidden there.

Size: According to the provided resist or template, the finished piece will be approx. 14.5 cm high and 12 cm wide.

Materialsl

- Wool (White: 12 g, red: 12 g, black: 1 g): Recommendation: Use carded wool, 25-27 Microns. It is best to use wool with short fibers, as it is easier to work on small templates.
- Template: 3 mm foamed polyethylene. (The felting needle can pass through, so the motif is transferred onto the wool while the latter is still on the template) Alternative: Any other material that does not deform or absorb water. The face design and the outline should be added only after removing the template. Place a sponge inside the piece to support its shape while adding the details. Plastic sheet, oilcloth or bubble wrap foil to cover the table
- Felting mesh, here tulle
- Soap
- Container for water
- Scissors
- Felting needle. This can be a 36- or 38-gauge needle, triangular or star-shaped
- Needle and thread for sewing on the pompon.

Process

This felted rock carrying an ammonite fossil is inspired by stones that I found during a trip to France. Nature is my most important source of artistic inspiration. Rather unexpectedly, I met a fossil expert who showed me some stone heaps near a forest. With a hammer and beginner's luck I found many fossils, which kindles my sense of adventure and interest in the remains of long bygone centuries that I can hold in my hands.

1 Take the white wool and pull out small tufts. Lay them out in a row, with the thin ends facing to the side. Overlap each new tuft over the previous one by approx. half, so there are no gaps.

2 Lay out three horizontal rows. Leave some space at the top and at the bottom for the red wool.

3 The wool can be gently pressed, so that the next layer lies more evenly.

4 Then put on another layer of wool perpendicular to the previous one, with the thin ends of the tufts facing downward.

5 Cover the wool with the mesh. Lightly wet it, add some soap and rub gently so that no air remains under the layer and it lies firmly against the template.

6 Fold the wool under the template on one side, then turn the template over to the other side.

7 With soapy hands, fold the remaining wool over the template.

8 On this side as well, lay two layers of wool perpendicular to each other. Cover with the mesh, moisten, soap it, rub a little.

9 Now turn the workpiece over to the other side and fold in the protruding ends of the wool.

10 Slightly overlapping the white wool, lay out the red wool at the top and bottom of the template. Lay the wool out in the same way in two payers perpendicular to each other.

11 Wet everything, soap it and rub gently.

12 Separate the red wool where it meets the white wool and fold it under: along the line at the top, and with a slight curve at the bottom. Rub the red wool a little so that it lightly attaches to the white wool and does not come off when you turn the workpiece over.

13 Now turn it over to the other side. Repeat all the steps shown with the red wool. At the points where it meets the white wool, fold it along the straight lines.

14 Now start rubbing the entire surface, first with light movements, gradually increasing the pressure. Don't forget the edges. Advice: If there is too much soap and water, wring the workpiece out with a towel. The wool felts better with only a small amount of water and soap.

15 Rub the piece, turning it from one side to the other. In the example, it took about 20 minutes to rub the wool. The wool should become dense and fit tightly around the template. The wool fibers should not easily separate from the workpiece. They should pull up a small area of the surface with them.

16 Lay a few tufts of beige wool out on the white wool. Use a felting needle to shape the face and nose, and felt them thoroughly into place.

17 Stretch and twist small tufts of black wool between your fingers to create thin strands.

18 Using the felting needle, felt a thin outline along the color boundary on both sides of the work piece.

19 For the eyes, form two small, equal tufts of black wool using the felting needle.

20. Cover the wool with the mesh, wet it, add some soap and rub so that the beige and black wool attach well to the base.

21. Cut the upper red part of the piece along the sides and remove the template.

22. Cut off the top of the front part and cut a round hole approximately 1 cm in diameter in it.

23. Roll the tip of the back part into a cord by twisting it between your palms.

24. Rub all the cut edges with soapy hands through the net so that they become rounded.

25. Roll up the piece widthwise. Squeeze it firmly, moving it from one hand to the other for 1 to 2 minutes.

26. Then roll the piece in the other direction, i.e. lengthwise, and continue squeezing and twisting it in the same way. Change the direction of twisting to ensure even shrinkage.
How to determine that the felt is ready
- Shrinkage should be at least 20 %.
- The felt should not be loose.
- Well-felted wool is a firm, resilient material with a slightly bumpy surface.

27. After felting, smooth out the work piece. Pressing it from the inside with your palm, rub it against the work surface on all sides and along the edges. Press down on the bottom to flatten it. If there are small dents on the surface, you can push them out from the inside. Here, for this a wooden sushi stick was used.

28. Rinse the work piece thoroughly under running water and place it on a towel to dry completely. Advice: Should you notice that during felting the red wool is releasing color, it is better to wash the workpiece immediately after felting, to wring it well, smooth and let it dry.

29. To make the pompon, take a small piece of white wool and roll it very tightly to estimate the size of the finished ball. The finished ball should be able to pass through the hole. You can secure the bundle of wool or felt it a little with the felting needle.

30. Wet the wool a little and soap it, then roll it between your palms. At first, do not compress it too much. As the wool becomes denser, you can increase the pressure. The ball should become firm, but not too firm, so that the sewing needle can pass through it.

31. Sew the pompon onto the tip of the work piece.

32. The Santa bag is ready! You can put candies in it or a small gift inside and give it as a present to your family or loved ones.

INSTRUCTIONS: YULIYA KOSATA

PAGE 38-41

The Art of Nature

Wool, water, plant dyes and a lot of time: The Dutch artist Inge Visser turns a thousand-year-old craft into contemporary art. Her abstract works speak of a deep sense of relationship with nature.

Quite often, Inge Visser conceives of her best ideas directly in front of her door. In a park near her home, the 46-year-old artist goes for walks, for a swim or forages for plants and other natural treasures. Here she finds peace, inspiration and a good deal of materials for her creative efforts. At times, her garden serves as a perfect studio. She lives in Utrecht together with her partner Bram, her two daughters and tomcat Brutus.Visser studied Art and Cultural Sciences at Erasmus University in Rotterdam and subsequently worked in research and as a consultant. Over time, she decided to quit and to follow her passion. «I worked daily in an office, using my mind and there was almost no room for creativity. Today I work with my mind, heart and hands.»

A Discovery That Changed Everything

The initial spark of working with wool began in 2008 with a library book about wet-felting. She remembered that she had seen many felt products during her trips to the Baltic, Turkey, Finland and Georgia and began experimenting herself. «I loved it from the first minute», she says. She was greatly fascinated by the tactile element and the physical work involved. «For me, felting is about connecting with the wool and myself. I can express myself in sculpting and creating. That feels magical.» Today, Inge Visser is a professional felter and employs both wet- and dry-felting techniques. Characteristics of her work are three-dimensional elements, intricate surfaces and the use of different materials, such as delicate silk or sturdy raw wool.

Of Sheep, Plants and Natural Dyes

Visser prefers wool of European or regional sheep, like Drenth Heath Sheep and Zwartbles. If possible, she drives to the farms herself to choose her material on site. She also works with silk, hemp, flax, wool yarns and recycled clothing. The dyes she uses are mostly natural, and she harvests the plants herself. She plant-dyes wool, fibers and fabrics. Natural shapes, colors, structures, smells and noises turn into starting points for her abstract art. In it, themes like sustainability, ancient traditions and awareness are of great importance. New ideas come to her during hiking, harvesting veggies and even during her sleep. When possible, she pauses what she is doing and writes the inspiration down. «Working as an artist is woven into my whole life.»

Art With Depth and Movement

She makes applied art, mainly acoustic wall panels, wall hangings and sculptures, carpets and light objects plus a special collection with shrouds and urns. Her art is abstract and has depth and many layers and conveys a serene aspect. At the same time, however, it is all about movement and energy. She creates special three-dimensional structures and reliefs by layering wool, fabrics and other fibers. «Buyers tell me that every time they watch my art, they see the work in a wholly different way.» Inge Visser hardly every uses machines. Her most important tools are her hands, sometimes assisted by a wooden fulling tool. «For me, creating is like meditation. I prefer to work in the natural way.» When she is in the middle of a creative process, she often works until late at night. «If I'm in the flow, nothing can stop me until I have finished.» Several times per year, she schedules whole week off for creating. She hikes, eats and creates. Her art retreats in France are based on the same principle.

A Studio to Learn and Experiment

Her art studio is in Breukelen. She made it a cozy space with warm colors and natural materials where her students and she can feel at home. When the weather is good, she works in the open in front of the studio or in her garden, often accompanied by Brutus who is busy guarding her art objects, as Visser tells us with a smile. Felting for Inge Visser is more than just a handicraft technique amongst others. Creativity, in her estimation, can give self-confidence and encourages people to discover creative possibilities for themselves. Her life philosophy is simple yet convincing: «You can do more than you think you can. Be your own superhero!»

Dreams of Even More Wool

Apart from her art, Inge Visser also likes to be on the move. Kung-fu, Yoga, Salsa, swimming and hiking are part of her life, as are visits to the theatre or concerts. «I'm not much as a sofa sitter. My work and my life are always in motion.» Regarding her professional life, she would like to expand her team so she could spend more time for her art and exhibitions. And she has an even bigger dream: One day she would like to own a farm with sheep and horses, a place in nature with room to create and, of course, tons of the material that has been accompanying her life since 2008 – wool, the most wonderful material.

LARA PYTER

Personal Information

Next to her artistic work, Inge Visser passes on her knowledge in felting workshops. Her offer includes courses for beginners like the felting of stones or «Painting with Wool» for making wall-hangings. Her workshops are multilingual.

The week-long art retreats in France combine felt with events in nature and regional cuisine.

www.wolgoeroe.nl
www.wolleguru.de
www.chemindelaine.fr
www.Artecascada.com
info@wolgoeroe.nl
@wolgoeroe

PAGE 38-41

Magical Worlds

What started with two Santa boots she felted for her daughters turned into a great creative passion for Regina Knaz from Hamburg. Today she makes imaginative decorations meant for family life from wool, beads, glitter and natural materials and, above all, creates small magical worlds for children.

Creativity and working with her hands have always been a favorite thing for Regina Knaz. The 34-year-old artist lives with her family and the two daughters in Hamburg, in quite natural surroundings and in a family-friendly settlement.
She used to work as a hairdresser, a profession she fulfilled with energy and enthusiasm for nine years. But after allergic reactions and when a chronic eczema developed on her hands, she was forced to quit hairdressing. After a rehabilitation period, she settled on a commercial training. Yet, the idea to make something beautiful with her hands remained. «To be creative and to make beautiful things has always been my passion, and nobody can take that away from me», she says.

Two Santa Boots Were the Beginning

Regina Knaz discovered feltmaking only in November 2025, and completely by accident. She wanted to make Santa boots for her two girls; more was not in planning. But the craft had seized her. «I'd never thought this could turn into a real passion!»
〰 She is especially enthusiastic about the versatility of the material. Wet- and dry-felting opened up different possibilities to design shapes and surfaces. She likes to experiment with new techniques and ideas. «Sometimes I really ask myself: What exactly in NOT possible when working with wool?»
〰 For her work, she mainly uses felting wool in fleece and felt plates. But her art work is anything but plain: Sequins, beads and glitter just belong. Changing with the annual seasons, she also adds natural materials to her felt objects. Bigger project start classically with pencil and paper. She keeps a notebook and develops first drafts before she finally starts felting.

Kids Give Wings to the Imagination

Her main inspirational source she finds directly at home, her two girls. For them she makes small, fantastic worlds. She felts crowns and bags, magic wands and accessories for hair styling, small toys and stickers for a seasonal ring. She is not concerned with only the outcome, but likes the whole process. She likes to combine feltmaking with her family life. Especially during wet-felting, her children can assist, experience wool and water with their hands and to create something together with their mother.
〰 «For me, feltmaking is the most beautiful hobby I could find as a Mom», she tells us. So creative moments turn into communal experiences.

Share Instead of Selling

Her felt objects are not made for selling. Regina Knaz wants to infect others with her ideas. On her instagram account @regina_mommagic she shows her felt projects and any DIY ideas. She especially addresses mothers and wants to encourage them to find small creative spaces. Feltmaking provides leaving every day's chores for a while, concentrating on just material and your hands and to experience how to create something from loose fibers. Or, as Regina Knaz puts it: «Make something beautiful with your hands and switch the rest off.»

LARA PYTER

Personal Information
Those who want to share Regina Knez' world for a while may try out her felting instruction for a felt-covered soap on the following pages.

@regina_mommagic

PAGE 44-47

Tutorial: Foamy Business: Soap in a Felt Coat

Felted soap is a perfect, personal gift. Kids can take part in the wet-felting and everybody will have great fun!.

Advantages of the felt soapl

- Wool substitutes the wash cloth
- The soap foams beautifully
- The felted sheath makes for a soft peeling effect
- It lies in the hand well and doesn't slip easily.
- There are no sticky remains left in the soap dish

Materials

- 1 piece of soap
- Approx. 5-10 g felting wool in fleece, depending on the size of the soap
- Tray
- Towel
- Bubbe foil
- Bowl with warm water
- Ball sprinkler
- Optional: Cookie cutters for later decorations

Instructions

1 Put a towel on the tray and spread the bubble foil onto it. Have a bowl with warm water handy. Lay the wool out.

2 Put the soap briefly into the warm water and lay it on the prepared wool.

3 Wrap the wool around the piece of soap.

4 With the ball sprinkler, moisten it evenly with warm water. In this way, the wool clings to the soap better.

5 Make sure to cover the sides with wool as well and fold the sticking out fibers over carefully.

6 Repeat this several times. Wrap the wool around the soap, moisten it and press it on, until the whole piece of soap is covered with wool.

7 Now gently start to felt all around with only a little pressure. Through water and soap the wool starts to felt.

8 As soon as the wool stays put, wrap the soap in bubble foil.

9 Keep turning the soap around and work on it from all sides until the fibers are firmly connected.

10 There will be a lot of foam while felting, don't worry about that, it is quite normal. The soap piece itself won't shrink in size. Once you are ready let the felted soap piece dry completely.

11 Those who want to add decorations, use the cookie cutters..

12 As an alternative, felt the soap around without any of those accessory tools. Tie a nice bow around it and you have a nice idea for a present in the upcoming Christmas season.

INSTRUCTIONS: REGINA KNAZ

PAGE 48-51

Wool, Water and Wonder – the Kids' Felting Chest

How can kids be familiarized with feltmaking when there is no material at hand? The Kids' Felt Chest of the Filznetzwerk e.V. contains everything that you might need to start with wet-felting. It makes it easier for nurseries, kindergartens, day-care centers and recreation facilities to enter into the fascinating realm of felt with children.

Feltmaking with young children is a unique experience: From loose wool and water, soap and movement a sturdy piece of felt is made. The youngsters can experience the whole process with their hands; they can decide what it should be and can take a work of their own home later. In order to make felt projects a lot easier for schools, day-care centers, nurseries and recreation facilities, the Filznetzwerk e.V. lends such chests out. Each contains the necessary basics for wet-felting and prepared written and working materials. Furthermore, you will find step-by-step instructions with photos for small projects suitable for that age.

Feltmaking with all Senses

Feltmaking connects craft, design and immediate experiences. Kids get to know unspun sheep wool as a natural material and learn how loose fibers change by working them with water, soap and physical movements. It fosters motor development, concentration and stamina, on the side, as it were. Simultaneously, feltmaking offers many haptic experiences, such as the laying out of the wool, moistening, rubbing gently and fulling by rolling, kneading or throwing the work piece. The result is a lively working process, yet with quiet phases and alternate movements.

A Chest That Simplifies Feltmaking

Not every institution can provide the necessary materials and tools to felt with a group of kids. It is hardly worth the cost, if the teacher wants to felt only occasionally, to buy everything and have it in store. Here the Filznetzwerk e.V. comes in. The chest can be lent out for groups of up to 15 kids and each has its own basic wet-felting set. In addition, there are basic information regarding felting and a step-by-step instruction for a chose project. The instructions can be used for different age groups and projects.
〰 The only thing the institution in question has to procure are wool and soap. Each instruction includes the exact choice of wool and what quantities thereof should be planned. And at long last there is an address list of where you can get all kinds of felting equipment. All this makes it easy to plan a felt action well.

Feltmaking is Versatile

Feltmaking can be introduced in the arts and crafts classes and is of good use in therapeutical or pedagogical contexts. Especially communal projects work well with feltmaking. The technique fosters working and designing together and make the whole process a relational event. With the Children's Felting Chest, the Filznetzwerk e.V. would like to contribute to familiarizing kids with this ancient craft. Felt is discovered best when you hold it in your hands.

CLAUDIA HECKER, FILZNETZWERK E.V.

More Information

When interested, please download the necessary forms on the Filznetzwerk's website. They contact the respective institution and the desired date, group size and the envisaged project are synchronized. It can be discussed whether the project is suitable for the age group in question and what has to be taken into account in preparing the projects. The chest will be dispatched a couple of days before the set date, which leaves you enough time to get the materials and to prepare the course. Upon request, the network can supply contacts to feltmakers on site who can counsel, assist or accompany a venture. There is a one-time fee of 25 € for transport and administrative issues.
filznetzwerk.de/kinderfilzkiste

PAGES 52–55

«Little Clouds» A Lay-Out Technique for Wet-Felting

Delicate, evenly and prepared at your leisure: With the «Little Cloud» lay-out technique, bigger areas can be pleasantly laid out, especially with Nuno-felted clothing. Ilona Riehle demonstrates step-by-step how from tiny, featherweight wool areas on A4-paper, the basics for a whole pullover can be made.

Nuno felters know how crucial a thin and evenly laid-out wool layering is for the ultimate result. This is why Ilona Riehle has mainly been working for some years with the so-called «little cloud» lay-out technique. The wool is distributed like a ribbon, extremely thin in tiny, cloudlike quantities, hence the name. Here the important elements: The wool is not directly distributed on the big resist, but prepared beforehand in portions on DIN A4 paper. This can be done at one's leisure over several days, whenever there is time, e.g. sitting on the sofa or in your favorite armchair. Only when enough thinly covered papers are ready, they are put together on the actual resist. When felting bigger clothing, you can save considerable time at the felting table.

Thin, Evenly Distributed and Well-Prepared

The method has another advantage. By a certain wool quantity, estimated beforehand, it guarantees a thoroughly fine and even layering. When Nuno-felting clothes, this adds favorably to a smooth haptic effect of the finished piece. The technique is well suited for beginners. In order to wrestle with a rather big surface, the wool fleece is handled piece of paper per piece of paper at your own desired pace. How this functions, Ilona Riehle shows with a pullover example in the following steps:

Instructions

1 Determine the resist size.
The resist for the piece of clothing must already have the finally needed size, which means the shrinking factor has to be first calculated. By means of this resist, calculate about how many A4 papers have to be prepared.

2 Count the required number of papers.
Cover the resist with empty A4 pieces of paper and count how many of them will be needed for one side of the pullover including the arm. The exact same amount is needed for the second side. In certain areas. The A4 paper will stick out of the resist. These rests will later be needed at different places and should be included in the calculation. For the pullover here, a total of about 40 papers was required.

3 Separate the wool into portions.
For Nuno-felted clothing, this technique needs (by rule of thumb) 2 g of Merino wool in ribbon (18-19 Micron) per A4 sheet.
The example is calculated thus;
40 sheets x 2 g = 80 g of wool
With small kitchen scales, the entire wool amount is separated in portions of 2 g each
Important: When Nuno-felting clothing, additional silk, e.g. Margilan and/or plant fibers like Viscose are used. Wool alone does not result in a Nuno-felted, and 80 g for this pullover without those additional fibers wouldn't be enough. Margilan silk is mostly laid out on the inside of the piece of clothing; Viscose fibers are used more to decorate the outside. Also, the Viscose fibers can be prepared in small clouds on A4-sheets of paper.

4 Lay out the first little wool clouds.
Now you need one A4 sheet and an already prepared portion of 2 g of wool. Pull a very delicate tuft of fibers out of the wool ribbon and lay it onto the paper. Keep adding further fibers, It is required to lay out the fibers in different directions. So, after a certain time, a thin and even wool surface emerges.

5 Stabilize the wool surface
Once the paper is fully laid out, cautiously press the wool flat with your hand. This connects the loosely laid-out fibers a little. Laying out the little tufts or clouds is quiet and almost meditative, there simply is no hurry. The sheets can be prepared when you sit down comfortably and made when you have time and feel like doing it. Image 5b shows the finished wool sheet. Store the wool sheets if you don't need them immediately. The prepared sheets can be stacked and kept in a shoe carton or on a tray, waiting for further use.

6 Transfer to the resist
Once all sheets are prepared, spread the resist on your felting table. Lift the laid-out wool with care off the paper, like a piece of fabric and put it onto the resist. The fibers keep surprisingly well together, due to the direction of the lay-out, the pressuring flat and the stacked storage.

7 Align the wool sheets: If, for example, an arm piece doesn't require the whole paper, let 2-3 cm protrude and separate the rest with care. Don't throw away the remaining pieces, they might come in handy at other area of the resist. Work slightly overlapping: The single wool paper is distributed onto the resist with an overlap of approx. 1 cm. As you can see on image 5b, the outer edges of a wool paper are thinner that the rest of the surface. By slight overlaps, this difference is balanced and the layer is even.

8 Work out the round areas
On exceptions, like difficult or strongly rounded areas, the protruding wool may be cut off with a pair of scissors Then slightly fringe out the cutting edge and make it thinner, so it can easily merge with the neighboring wool surfaces.

9 Distribute it length-or crosswise
Since the fibers were already laid out in different directions during the preparation of the wool sheets, the finished surfaces have no common direction of the fibers. Thus, they can be placed either length- or crosswise onto the resist. In this way, the whole surface can be covered with the prepared wool sheets within a couple of minutes.

10 Now the felting can start
Once one side of the resist is completely laid out, wet the workpiece and felt it further. Then turn the resist around, lay out the second side following the same principle and felt it afterwards. In this way, many tiny, featherweight clouds turn into a big, smooth surface area. The time-consuming preparation of a piece of clothing can be relaxedly divided into many small, creative moments.

INSTRUCTIONS: ILONA RIEHLE

Personal Information

For more than ten years, Ilona Riehle has been dedicating herself to her passion for wet-felting, having specialized on Nuno felting and the felting of art objects. She presents her work on Social Media and her website and shows in short videos how her art is made. She offers in-depth video and PDF tutorials in which various felting techniques are demonstrated step by step. In our Spectrum, please find her new PDF tutorial «Art Object Anise Star», wherein she shows the fascinating shapes that can be achieved by means of a book resist consisting of several parts.

Ilona Riehle
@ilorieh
ilorie.de

PAGE 56-59

«A Close Connection with Sheep»

Some places tell their story only reluctantly. You should take a closer look, listen to people more, or simply follow the sheep. The Fink Farm in the Alpine Upland, the Allgäu, is such a place. For almost five decades, wool and sheep are closely connected to a grounded idea of life and toil. Many things have changed since the beginning. Yet, whoever visits the Farm today is left with the same inkling: This thread has never been torn for the longest time.

Should you travel through Arnach, a small part of the town Bad Wurzach in the Baden-Wurttemberg Upland, you would hardly believe that for almost five decades a special history around sheep, wool and communal is still being written. The Fink farm is in the middle of the village. What started in the 1970ies with an alternative life and work model for young people is today a modern company around natural textiles, wools and pelts – and yet, many of the original ideas persist.

A Flock and a Great Idea

In 1971, the first commune was founded in Isny, at the very Finkhof. A group of young people wanted to live and work differently that their parents: self-determined, communal and without the classical hierarchies. In 1975, the commune began collecting money for a flock of sheep. A year later, they founded a travelling shepherding with Merino Land sheep. For the first time, the flock travelled to the Obere-Mädele Alp near Oberstdorf. The wool and pelts were sold on regional markets and the gains were put to the group's general subsistence. In 1978, the Shepherd's Guild Finkhof eG was founded and a year later, they bought the former «Adler» tavern in Arnach.The Fink farm had found a place where its history could keep on growing. From the modest beginnings, it has turned into a many-sided, successful venture in the shape of a big shipping and online trade plus a popular farm shop. There are handicrafts on offer, like sewing fabrics and pelts, as well as a weaving manufacture. Almost all products are bio-certified.

〰 Of course, also regarding the personnel, there have been a lot of changes. In 2018, the founding generation put the company in younger hands. Today, Alina, Hanna, Melanie and Patrick continue the husbandry; almost all of them grew up at the Fink farm. The initial commune is still around on separate premises, while the new generation live with their respective families in and around Arnach. «Over the years there were many changes at the Finkhof, quite naturally, but many things that were important to the young people then is living in us still. Communal work, taking responsibility and to go our own way», says Hanna.

A Golden Fleeceg

What remained as strong as ever was the close relationship to the animals. Today, the Fink Farm keeps about a hundred ewes of the ancient county sheep type Coburg Fox Sheep. It was a conscious decision to settle on that stalwart breed which is threatened by extinction. Here, the farm wants to contribute to its preservation.

〰 Their wool is exceptional. The lambs are born with a golden yellow or reddish-brown fleece. It lightens up once the animal grows but it keeps its characteristic warm, slightly reddish sheen. That the ancients talked about the ‚golden fleece' is no wonder. «The Fox Sheep fit us and they simply belong», says Hanna. «They are an old, robust breed and the wool is of a unique color. Even in its natural state it is beautiful.» And not only that, mind you. With about 33 and 26 Micron it is stronger than fine Merino, a typical land sheep wool, perfect for the wind and the weather. It spins and weaves well and makes for warm clothing and blankets and, of course, it is suitable for feltmaking.

〰 During lambing season and wintertime, they are kept in a big pen at the village's edge. The rest of the year they graze on bio-certified pastures and meadows around Arnach, where they feed on fresh grass and herbs. They are taken care of in close co-operation of the sheep-farming Falkenhof. The shepherdess Irina Lindemann has known the farm for a long time, she trained there. Apart from the Fox Sheep herd, she keeps her own flock of about 100 Rhön Sheep. Everything is connected in a circle, all the knowledge and experience that was once given to the Finkhof people flow back today in new and modern ways.

From Shearing to a Finished Garment

The annual shearing takes place in the pen. Once shorn, the wool's journey begins. At the farm they not only process the fleeces of their own animals but collect wool of other bio-shepherds in Southern Germany. It is cleaned, spun and made into yarns, clothing, fabrics and many other wool products. The farm people try their best to move within regional ways, which is not always possible. The cleaning is done in Belgium, part of the production of fabrics, blankets and other wool accessories, the other steps of processing of the Finkhof farm is done in Germany. The wool is never bleached or chemically treated. Through these steps, the Fox Sheep wool, above all, can show its most beautiful feature, its vivid, warm color.

〰 Maybe this is why the Fink farm stands out until today. Wool is never considered an anonymous raw material. Its provenance remains visible – from sheep to shearing and via processing to the end product. The history of the farm is like a thread of wool itself. It was taken up, spun further and passed on from one generation to the next. Many things have changed, but the core remains: People, sheep and wool are one. And so, in Arnach this story is spun further – with new people, fresh ideas and an ancient breed which fits in so beautifully with its golden wool.

LARA PYTER

More about the Finkhof
Please find more information on the Finkhof collective, their own flock, wool, natural textiles and further products under:

finkhof.de

PAGE 60-63

Dyeing with Marigolds

Of a bright yellow, this humble plant is; in full blossom almost all summer. The marigold is not only a familiar feature in gardens and municipal flower beds. Its blossoms are most suitable for plant dyeing wool and felt. We offer a glimpse of the origin and cultivation of the marigold and show you how you can dye different bright yellow hues and further color variants.

Origin and Dissemination

The Latin name for the plant recurs to the name Tages. He was an Etruscan prince who was famous for his wisdom. In South America, the plant was already used by the Aztecs for wizardry and healing purposes, for example in the shape of a healing tea with an anise scent. It is supposed that Spanish seafarers brought the flower from its native Mexico to Europe in the 16th century.

〰 In the German-speaking realm it went

also by the name of velvet flower, due to the softness of the blossoms and leaves. Its Hungarian name «büdöske» (stinking flower) comes from the slightly unpleasant pungent and bitter smell when touched. In India it is called «genda», meaning jewel or ornament.

A Popular Garden Flowern

Each human soul longs to be close to nature, loves happy feelings and serene thoughts. Our garden is one of the most important places in our lives, and its flowers amply return our love and the work invested. In a period where there is increasingly little rain, flowers that do well in dry climates become more important. A fine example, indeed, is the Marigold that can be cultivated in almost any garden. Also, municipal gardening sets great store to the Marigold, since it doesn't need much water, stays long in bloom and merely shrugs at the first frost in the fall.

〰 Quite common are two kinds of marigold. The smaller one is Tagetes patula, the bigger one Tagetes erecta. The annual plant is in full bloom four to five months and gives us joy with its white, yellow and brightly orange blossoms. The fresh blossom heads can be collected throughout their long bloom and can be dried at a shady place later. This applies especially to the bigger variant. For us, this a little smelly plant is of particular interest, because it yields a beautiful, enduring yellow color.

Planting and Growth

The seeds are put in furrows of 1 to 1.5 cm depth, then covered with soil and watered daily. After a week to ten days, the first germinal sheets break through. Two weeks later, the plants gain steadily in height. If they stand too close, we recommend to plant them apart at approx. a palm's length. Soon the first blossom appears. Pluck the blossoms off in regular intervals or cut them off, which fosters the development of more blossoms. If we don't want to dye immediately, we can dry them. Yet, if you want to collect seeds for the coming years, the plants have to be in their fullest bloom and fading thereof. In the yellowish-brown pods are numerous lengthy seeds that can be sown.

Dyeing a Strong Yellow

The first step, bating

Dissolve 80 g Alum in 30 l of water. Then put 500 g of wool yarn in the solution and keep it there an hour at 9°. Then let the liquid cool off. After that, take out the yarn bundle, let it drip off, wrap it in a moist towel and let it sit for a day. Then rinse it. Readymade felt or sheep wool dyes accordingly.

Second Step: Making the Dye Bath

Put 1 kg of fresh Marigold blossoms in 30 l of water. We hold the liquid at 95° for an hour. Small bubbles should surface. Then we let the liquid cool and sieve it through a loosely woven cotton cloth.

Third step: Dyeing Wool

We put the moist wool in the dye bath and heat it up again to 95°. The wool is left for an hour at this temperature, then let the liquid cool off.

Some Remarks

The single blossom heads – white, yellow or orange don't influence how strongly the yellow hue might turn out. If you desire a darker tone, the dyeing process is repeated. If you dye with dried blossoms, it is enough to use 500 g of them with 500 g of wool. If the stems and leaves are added to the blossoms, we get a greenish-yellow color. When we bate 500 g of wool with 60 g of alum we add an additional 35 g of iron vitriol to the dye bath. In this manner, we achieve a soft, olive-green color. If it should be reddish-brown, we add the same quantity of walnut leaves to the blossoms in the boiling-up dye bath. Then the wool is put in the dye bath a second time. Then we add a deciliter of 25 %-ammonia solution and let the wool sit in the dye bath for an hour at 95°, This dyeing method is based on findings of the Swedish expert Gretel Feddersen.

India's Holy Flower

In India, this plant is greatly revered. The blossom heads are made into a garland with thread and needle. Such garlands are put around the neck of highly estimated people. On certain days of the year, these plants serve also as sacrifices for the gods. We were able to see a beautiful example in Central India on the Katsch peninsula. There, the Swaminarayan Temple was covered with a «flower garment». The white, artfully worked marble columns and archways of the temple were overflowing with flowers. In India, the people burn their dead. A marigold garland is an important feature of this death ritual. And the plant has a further, much more pragmatic use: It keeps off mosquitos that bear illnesses.

Marigold as a Healing Remedy

The healing effects of a Marigold tea when you have a cold, inflammation of the joints or ears and skin diseases is widely known. Marigold extracts also help with eye infections and have anti-inflammatory, anti-febrile and digestive ingredients. Not every kind lends itself to medicine purposes, so use them with care and inform yourself beforehand.

No Deserted Garden

Gardens are so close to the human soul. Our personality, our character and our way of thinking can be like one, an inner, spiritual garden. In order to reach our goals and fulfill our desires, we ought to nourish the garden, protect and cultivate it. In this way, this inner one resembles a real one, filled with trees and flowers.

MARI NAGY AND ISTVÁN VIDÁK

This is a supplement of the magazine »filzfun« Issue #93 - Winter 2026/2027
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