



Artist Musings ~ Fiber Fusings

A Newsletter About All Things Fiber for All Fiber Lovers

Volume One

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Greetings!

Thank you for signing up for my newsletter. I am so excited to finally get my fiber art business started again*. It has been a dream of mine for many years and that dream is finally coming true. (*More about my previous career as a fiber artist in another newsletter.) As I write this newsletter, it is over 90°! So..... Stay cool! We bought a house last November and after 25 years, I have a garden this year. It's exciting to dig in the dirt again. We put in raised beds for a vegetable garden and installed a fence that hopefully will keep the rabbits out. So far so good, and some vegetables are ready for harvest.

So, you ask, what is my newsletter going to be all about? It will be a sharing all sorts of things: tips, tricks, patterns, kits, and upcoming events. Since officially retiring from work outside of my home, it is time to start serious work in the studio. That means some classes, clubs, and demos. And some merchandise promotion of things that every fiber artist must have. I will also introduce you to some wonderful fiber artists from around the world who are doing some amazing work. You might get a few hints on popular culture, a recipe or two.....

Plus there will be a few little quizzes with some fun prizes. Everything is fair game in this newsletter.

If you have a question ask and I will put it out on my fiber network and see if we can get an answer. I would love to spotlight your work as well.

What I'm saying is that this is a newsletter to share the love of fiber art: quilting, embroidery, felting, weaving, spinning, knitting, papermaking, anything fiber! You received a little pattern for a notebook cover when you signed up for my newsletter. For a few upcoming newsletters, I will be offering some fun variations to this pattern. If you make some, please share! If I use them in a future newsletter, you will get credit for your original ideas!

So welcome on board. Fiber Arts Rule!

Birgit Ruotsala

What's Happening in My Studio

We moved into this home in November and I am just getting around to organizing my studio space. I don't know about you, but I am a messy worker, so it is a challenge. My fabrics are finally making their appearance on my shelves – about one third done with folding them. Once everything is all organized, I'll give you a virtual tour.

Like many of you, I have been making MASKS. I have made over 300 for family and friends. I keep saying NO MORE! Then someone else asks. It is an exceedingly small request compared to those dealing with the Corona Virus on the front lines.

A Work of Thanks

Tracy Reeb has been a great coach and web developer – and a task master too. I would not have been able to get my website and newsletters done without her help. Jim has helped in so many ways to support this project and is learning new computer skills to help with my business ventures. *Best husband ever!*



The other activity that has been taking my time is getting my website and newsletters up and running. I am not a tech person so it has been interesting!

Yes, newsletters! If you look on my website, the other newsletter is called "The Tomte Times." Small Scandinavian folk called tomtes have fascinated me since I was a little girl. Stories and illustrated books are on my drawing board. The group of tomtes who are in my

stories have immigrated to this country and are up to mischief. If you want to learn about them, feel free to sign up for this newsletter as well. It's called the **Tomte Times**. To the right is my drawing of Sven. He is the grandpa of his little clan and tries to keep everyone in line and to teach his family about his culture. The first story is **The Tomte's Hat** and tells the story about how the tomtes find their hats in America.



Meet the Artist ~ Marijke Van Welzen

The first artist I would like to introduce you to is Marijke van Welzen. She was involved with two special exhibits that I am also involved with ~ **HERstory: Strong Women in Art Quilts**, and **OURstory: Human Right Stories in Art Quilts**. Both projects had a private facebook page where the artists all got to know each other. I fell in love with Marijke's quilted garments. She is from Vlaaringen, Netherlands. Here is a little

about her in her own words:

My name is Marijke van Welzen. I am from the Netherlands. Textile is my passion; it lends itself to infinite possibilities of expression. I love making coats with a story to tell.

I have recently retired. I have been a school teacher for 40 years I have a BA in Textile Art and in English. I worked part time, middle school.



(con't. from page 3)

In 2000 I started making my Art2wear. I found a very inspiring book by Rosemary Eichorn, **The Art of Fabric Collage** and made my first jacket.

Since then I have made many, many more.

When an idea comes to mind, it has to whirl around in my head before I start working. I look in my stash for materials to use and collect some more. The rest is very intuitive. I use all sorts of surface design techniques.

My favourite technique is Textile Collage. Starting with many tiny pieces of fabric, felt and yarn, and colourful machine-threads I 'paint' my designs. I like to combine this with stencilling, stamping and needle-felting. My work constantly evolves as I find new images in my imagination and develop the techniques to create them in cloth.

My coats and quilts travel all over the world. I always look for Calls for Entry to make new pieces for, but only when the theme resonates with me.

You can find me on: www.facebook.com/marijke.vanwelzen
<https://art2wearblog.blogspot.com>

Kit/Pattern of the Month

Each month there will be a featured pattern/kit. You will be able to order the kit or just the pattern. Starting in September, I will be offering a few clubs that you will be able to join and receive free patterns and offers for discounted kits. August newsletter will contain all details for "In the Bag" club.

Look at these luscious fabrics! These fabrics come from Robert Kaufman and are inspired by the artwork of Gustaf Klimt. Klimt is one of my favorite artists and the fabric is fabulous. I am working on the first pattern using these luscious fabrics. This pattern/kit will be featured in the next newsletter.





Recipe ~ Rhubarb Iced Tea

4 cups water

6 cups fresh or frozen rhubarb, cut in 1/2 in. pieces

1 to 2 cups sugar (I like sour so I use one cup)

1 small can frozen lemonade concentrate

1 small can pink lemonade concentrate

Method

1. In a large saucepan, bring rhubarb and 4 cups water to boil.
2. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered for 5-8 min. or until rhubarb is tender.
3. Mash rhubarb, then strain.
4. Reserve juice and discard pulp. Let cool.
5. Add sugar and concentrates.
6. Pour into a freezer container; cover and freeze until firm.

Make your favorite tea. I like Lipton's cold brew. Scoop desired amount of frozen rhubarb syrup. I like about 2-3 TBSP per 16 oz glass.

For a low calorie version, I plan on changing the frozen concentrates to a sugar free powdered lemon drink mix like Crystal Light. I will give you an update on how to do it in the next newsletter.

Upcoming Classes and Clubs

Several years ago I offered a few clubs. I am bringing the them back with lots of new ideas. Projects are designed so that students can learn a technique by making a small project. *Details will be included in the August newsletter.*

“In the Bag” features bags and things you put in bags to make them more functional. Each month offers a new technique and pattern.

“Table Runners/Toppers” Each month offers a technique and pattern used in a table runner or table topper.

“Mixed Media” group featuring an art technique to add to your toolbox of techniques that you will use in your beautiful art quilts.

I hope you'll be interested in one of these clubs. At this point, with our new Covid lifestyle, my intention is to host a Zoom meeting for each group that will include time to do some instruction and getting to know each other.

Other classes to be determined. What would you like to learn?

Upcoming events

All of the quilts from the exhibit **OURstory: Human Rights Stories in Art Quilts** (curated by Susanne Miller Jones) will be at the National Quilt Museum in Paducah from June 12 through September 8, 2020. My quilt **Becoming Ryleigh** from this exhibit is pictured here. I have a number of signed copies of the book (by Susanne Miller Jones) that showcases this exhibit. Regular price is \$35.00, now selling for \$25.00. Discount good through July 2020. Contact me at birgitsdesigns@new.rr.co



What Are Other Fiber Artists Saying and Doing?

This area is for you to share things. During this time of quarantine and not being able to get together with our fiber art friends, I am offering a place to post things that are going on in your fiber world. Contact me to share the things you are doing so that I can share them with those reading this newsletter. My email address is: birgitsdesigns@new.rr.com

NEED

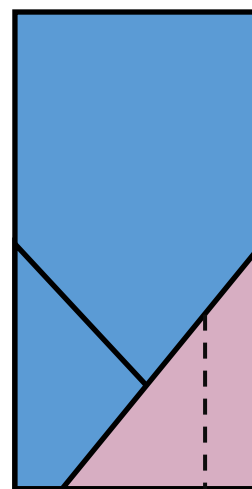
To help get my business started, I am offering a little incentive. Invite your friends to sign up for my newsletter. For each referral that sign's up, I will credit you with \$1.00 toward merchandise or classes on my website. Just email me the names and email addresses so I can track them and I will email you when your friend has signed up for the newsletter. Offer good through August 31, 2020.

Zoom Lectures:

All lectures listed on my website can be delivered by Zoom. If your guild is meeting by Zoom, I would love to talk to you about a Zoom presentation.

Mini Notebook and Business Card Holder ~ Variation 1

When you signed up for this newsletter, you received a pattern for a Mini Notebook and Business Card Holder. Here is a little variation for your Mini Notebook – **a slot for a pen.** All it takes is one little seam (shown in yellow on the middle picture). Refer to your original pattern. Once you have reached the direction shown by Illustration 6 it is time to sew a line. In third picture, it is shown by black dotted line. The line should be 1 ¼" from the right side. Do a little back stitch at the beginning and end of your stitching to secure. Carry on with the rest of the steps in original directions. I also put a few colorful buttons on this holder – have fun and play.



Ill. 6

Please note: the notebook that this holder covers is a top-bound spiral notebook 3" x 5". It was listed in the description but I neglected to add it to the supply list.

These little Notebooks are wonderful for party favors. If it's something that you would like and don't have the time, let me know. I charge \$8.00 per notebook (with notebook included) and \$10.00 for custom designed covers with embroidery or beading (for Bridal or Baby Showers, etc.)

Til next time, keep creating

Love, Birgit

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