

SNIPPETS

Kenya Quilt Guild Newsletter



FROM THE CHAIRMAN

APRIL 2013

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Dear Members,

First and foremost, this being my last message as Chairperson, I would like to thank all my committee members for their hard work in making this year a great success. Without you, it will not have been possible to do all that we have achieved. I will miss you all.

Secondly, thank you to the Exhibition Committee, for putting up a beautiful show at the Sarit Centre, which was a great success and we have had very good feedback from people. You did a fantastic job of hanging the quilts and staying on late– till 630pm. The hall looked very colourful and we had all beautiful quilts. The African quilts, what can I say, are really amazing and the effort gone into it, and was surprised to see so many. Keep up the good work ladies, and don't stop here. Once again, THANK YOU to Sheryl and her whole team for a job

well done, including myself and we are all very very exhausted, but proud that we DID IT. The classes were also a great success. The Raffles have been drawn, but the Viewer's Choice will be announced at the meeting on Thursday. We are hoping to make this a yearly event, and at the same venue, and hopefully we will have enough quilts available to do this on a regular basis.

I would like to congratulate, in advance, the new committee.

We have the AGM this month, after which we will have Gill giving a talk on Khangas, and don't forget to come all dressed up in khangas. This will be followed by a class done by Sarah Brewin on English paper piecing.

Neela

PHEW!!

Well, the exhibition is over and we can all put our feet up and congratulate ourselves on a fantastic job well done.! But first we should congratulate all the ladies involved in organising the event - primarily the Show Committee, chaired very ably by Sheryl Fowler, and the tireless hanging team led by Jaswinder Phull. Neela and Kundan were helping everywhere throughout the event as were many other members – too numerous to name. A very big thank you to all those who helped in any way. Thank you all also for publicising the show and persuading friends and relatives to come along. The quilts were fabulous - the best yet - and visitors were amazed at the standard of our work. Congratulations to everyone and don't forget to take your 20% off vouchers to BUTTONS & BOWS at YaYa Centre to get your fabric discount.

EXHIBITIONS

KANGA GALORE

Don't forget the April meeting this week. It is also the AGM, when we elect new officers to the board. We have had some nominations but if anyone else would like to stand for the committee it is not too late to volunteer. We will try to keep this part of the meeting brief as we have a lot on. I will be giving a talk and will show a short film show on the ubiquitous Kanga – once a garment found along the East African coast but now popular all over the region. We hope as many of you as can manage will come with a Kanga – preferably dressed in it! There will be a prize for the most original. Following this Sarah Brewin will be doing a class on Grandmothers' Garden, or English paper pieced hexagons, mainly for those unfamiliar with the technique, but all are welcome. Sarah has procured kits complete with fabric, needle and thread from the US – but you do need to bring a small pair of scissors and a thimble if you need one for this hand stitching technique. There will not be much extra time for our sampler class but if anyone wants to bring their work along for help, I will be available.

To prepare you for the meeting you might like to read the piece below from London's Evening Standard newspaper:

London - A World City in 20 Objects: No. 20 Barack Obama's Kenyan victory kanga, 2008

The last in our series examining an artefact from the British Museum with origins in one of the capital's many diverse cultures



Tremendous celebrations greeted the news in Kenya, the homeland of Barack Obama's father, on Barack's election as US President in 2008 and re-election last year. Thousands of kangas bearing his image were worn. The inscription in Kiswahili reads: Congratulations Barack Obama. God has granted us Love and Peace. This kanga is on display in an exhibition looking at the textile traditions of Southern and Eastern Africa, which opens today at the British Museum.

Kangas are rectangular printed cloths, each with their own inscription written in the same place in every design; they are sold and worn in matching pairs and are principally a woman's garment in eastern Africa, though often worn singly by men at home and by Maasai men in public.

A combination of inscription, overall design and the ways in which a kanga may be worn make it a remarkable medium of communication. Kangas may be used to show a woman's stance on global issues, her political allegiance and even her alignment with a collective vision for the future.

Kangas reflect changing times, fashions and tastes. They provide a chronology of the social, political, religious, emotional and sexual concerns of those who wear them. Their patterns and inscriptions vary according to the age of the wearer and context in which the cloth is worn.

Kangas provide ways of suggesting thoughts and feelings which cannot be said aloud. They play a vital role in the major rite-of-passage ceremonies in a woman's life, yet also are used for the most mundane of functions.

The rectangular form of today's kanga, with a continuous border, a central image or pattern and an inscription in Kiswahili, has changed since the first kangas were created in the late 19th century. Then, it meant sewing together six lenço (printed handkerchiefs), which the Portuguese had traded to east Africa for centuries. Soon hand-stamped versions on a piece of cloth replaced the sewn lenço, to be superseded by factory-printed textiles. The most successful designs are those appealing most to women. There was little doubt the Obama kanga would be a bestseller.

Chris Spring, British Museum curator, African Collections

CLASSES IN CANADA

A few of our members are planning to go. We would like to know if any more ladies are interested in going. Just to tempt you – here are the classes which you could take. For more info check the London International Show website at <http://londoninternationalquiltfestival.com/>

How to Make an African Quilt– by Dena



Dena Crain came to Kenya in 1990 for a teaching position at Egerton University outside Nakuru, Kenya. She has spent most of her time since then living on the shore of Lake Baringo, two hundred miles and a five hour drive north of Nairobi.

Class Description: From color to texture, from imagery to embellishments, African quilts have a character uniquely their own. Difficult to define, this quality is one that is instantly recognized the world over.

Students should bring: a variety of African fabrics and embellishments. These can also be purchased from various vendors in the Merchants Mall on location at the quilt festival.

Contemporary African Fiber Arts– by Naomi

Naomi Wanjiku Gakunga is a fabric/quilt artist living in San Antonio, Texas. She is originally from Kenya, East Africa. She received her B.A. (Design) from the University of Nairobi, Kenya and her M.A. (Design) from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally; most recently at the 11th Biennial Quilt Nihon Exhibition in Japan, and the 2012 Brazil's Patchwork Design Exhibition in Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paolo. Naomi has been invited to the 14th International Triennial of Tapestry, Lodz, Poland in May 2013.



Class Information: Creating Contemporary African Fabrics: This will be a hands-on exercise. This exercise will focus on: the African color palette (no pastels!); African improvisational design; and non-traditional tools for fabric painting. The participants will get out of their comfort zones and create free flowing multi-layered textures. By the end of the course, they will have four yards of contemporary African fabric. A variety of African fabrics will be on display. This will include kente cloth from Ghana, mud cloth from Mali, kuba cloth from Congo, and khanga from Kenya.

CLASSES IN CANADA

Fabric Stamping Safari—Paula Benjaminson

Paula Benjaminson a former diplomat who's crossed over into the world of fiber art. Her posting in Namibia introduced her to the hand-carved wood printing blocks of Oshiwa Designs, and she has specialized in making textile art pieces with hand-stamped fabrics for the past several years. She loves teaching classes in fabric stamping, and has taught this and a variety of other quilting classes in Belgium, Burkina Faso, Namibia, Canada, Gabon, Kenya, and the US."

Class Description: In this two-day workshop, participants will create original fabric with an African flair and then learn how to use it. On the first day, Paula tell you a bit about the hand-carved African wood blocks from Oshiwa Designs in Namibia that we'll be using, then we'll get right to work experimenting with them, using them to stamp single images, layered images or "transparencies" on sheer fabrics. We'll also emboss velvet and do some rubbings. These wood blocks come in a wide range of sizes, shapes, and styles, and can yield an amazing variety of looks depending on colors of paint and techniques you use, and types of fabric you work with. She'll have available a tempting array of fabric paints and other media for you to try out, and there will be plenty of interesting examples of different techniques to spark your creativity. She'll also cover how to take care of wood blocks like these so you can keep them in perfect condition for many years. By the end of the day, you'll have many unique pieces of fabric ready for the next day's sewing.

On the second day of class, she'll hand out directions for several different projects you can make. She'll also give you some pointers for using pieces of stamped fabric that didn't turn out quite the way you had in mind. For finishing, you will show some examples of pieces quilted and embellished in

different ways, often using the Oshiwa block designs as inspiration. At the end of class, you can have a small project done, and come away with tons of ideas for your remaining pieces of stamped fabric



African Rhinoceros Appliqué—By Beverly Rebelo from Zimbabwe

Class Information: Participants will make one panel of the rhinoceros, similar to the detailed photograph. (Approximately 58 cm x 45 cm.) A kit will be provided of African fabrics, with a mottled hand dyed yellow background fabric. Patterns and instructions will be included in the kit. Raw edge appliqué and free motion quilting are used to create this picture.



FUTURE PROGRAMMES

At the April meeting I will be giving a talk and slide show on the Kanga. The committee would like everyone to try and bring their favourite kanga along for a Show and Tell. In fact we would love to see as many of you as possible dressed up in a kanga at the meeting.

Thursday 18th April – Presentation and slide show on Kangas – Gill Rebelo. Class by Sarah Brewin on English paper piecing.

Thursday 16th May – Presentation on the Modern Quilt Movement – by Gill Rebelo

Thursday 20th June – Humble Beginnings – a chance for members to show their first-ever and their most recently completed quilts.

Thursday 18th July – programme to be decided

QUILTS FOR CANADA

We have had a kind offer from a visitor from Canada who will be returning home with an empty suitcase and is willing to fill it with our quilts. She flies out of Nairobi on April 24th and then around May 8th, colleagues of Deanna are generously taking four extra suitcases full of quilts for us, which Garnet Smalley, show organizer in Canada, has kindly agreed to pay for. This means that we need to start collecting in some of the quilts which are destined for Canada. Please can you bring them to the April meeting this week.

THE KENYA QUILT GUILD

PO Box 39482

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RAFFLE PRIZE WINNERS:

Raffle Prize	Ticket Number	Winner
King Size Quilt	0677	Mrs. Classen
Floor Frame and Tapestry	2651	Julie Wubs
Embroidery Hamper	1650	Bharat Shah
Lap Quilt	2348	Elizabeth Fowler
Tapestry Kit	1351	Frances KEG
Seat Frame and KEG Sub	1146	Kusum Patel
Baby Quilt	0762	Bharti
Tablecloth Kit and KEG Sub	2161	Gurpreet Virdee
Tapestry Kit and KEG Sub	0520	Manta Shah
Manicure	1827	Diana Shaw
Manicure	2577	Rajan Jani
Manicure	1051	Sonal Shah

Email:kenyaquiltguild@gmail.com**Website:**www.kenyaquiltguild.org**Meetings****Venue:**

Simba Union Off
Forest Road

Time

9.30am– 1.00pm

Monthly meeting date

April 18, 2013

RAFFLE PRIZE FOR RAFFLE QUILT MAKERS

Gill Rebelo won the draw for all the members who made Flying Geese block for the large raffle quilt. She won a rotary cutter and blades kindly donated by Sarah Brewin

This month's**contributors**

- ◆ Gill Rebelo

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The editor in chief welcomes contributions from all members. Please send articles for inclusion in the next edition of SNIPPETS to her email by 10th monthly.