



Christine Beard

Quiltmaker Story

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Christine Beard holds a B.A. in mathematics and an M.S. in physics from San Francisco State University as well as an M.A. in educational technology from University of San Francisco.

Ms. Beard is a skilled educator with over two decades of experience as a tutor, classroom teacher, and public speaker. For five years, she held a California Designated Subjects Credential. In the fall of 2005, she was hired as a full-time instructor in the Transitional Studies Department of City College of San Francisco where she specializes in adult basic mathematics.

Ms. Beard previously was an adjunct professor teaching online "science and society" courses for the College of Professional Studies at the University of San Francisco. Other jobs have included adjunct professor of mathematics at Contra Costa Community College; science instructor at Hayward Adult School; and substitute mathematics instructor at Berkeley Adult School.

In her private life, Ms. Beard is an avid quilter. She began quilting in 1994 and has been active in the San Francisco Quilters' Guild since 1996, including the 2002-03 presidency. She also has worked as a quilting teacher and a quilt competition judge. Other major interests include: California native plant gardening; horses (dressage and trail riding); website development & design; vegetarian cooking; politics and community activism; and reading.

Ms. Beard's other major accomplishments include certification as a nutrition educator and the publication of two books on vegetarianism which have combined sales of over twelve thousand copies. In addition, Ms. Beard was a dancer, professionally trained at the San Francisco Ballet School, whose career unfortunately was cut short by disabling injuries.

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Ms. Beard is a native of Modesto, California, and resides in San Francisco with her husband, David Goldblatt, a cellist in the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, and their two cats.

OTHER BIO:

Born in Modesto, CA on September 11, 1962. Parents: Robert and Betty Beard. Sisters: Cathie Peck and Peggy Drach. Bros-in-law: Bill Peck and Gary Drach. Nieces: Amy Peck and Erin Peck. Bunch of cousins.

Miscellaneous animals: dogs, cats, rats, horses. Moved to San Rafael in 1979 and San Francisco in 1981. Met David in 1983, bought a house in the Sunset District in 1987, and married in 2003. Books: *Become a Vegetarian in Five Easy Steps!* and *New Vegetarian Baby* (with Sharon Yntema), both published by McBooks Press.

QUILTING HISTORY:

When I was a little girl, I often was cared for on the weekends by Lillian and John Dieu, a couple who lived on some of the family company land (Beard Land Improvement Company in Modesto, CA <beardland.com>). Lillian taught me basic stab-stitch embroidery using pre-stenciled pillowcases and dishtowels. I still have one piece that I made all those years ago with her help. (I also was able to experience farm life in a way most suburban and city kids never get to. The farm, unfortunately, long since has been "developed".)

Other crafting experiences occurred at camps and school. In 7th Grade, I crocheted a small Granny Square afghan (in colors to match my room – lime green, turquoise, and navy blue. Yikes!) and needle pointed a cute little ladybug piece. That was the start of my UFO obsession as it took me years to finish both. The ladybug still is sitting around somewhere waiting to be framed. I'll get around to it someday!

In college, I tried again with another afghan. I was careful to only buy half the yarn I needed since I didn't know if I would use it all. I did, and ended up with a half-sized afghan which makes a lovely cat blankie. From that experience I learned to always buy enough material – and more! – so as to ensure being able to finish no matter how long it takes. Hence my rather large fabric collection!

I made a full-sized afghan in my late twenties, and also tried knitting, without success. My stitches are always too tight, no matter what size needles I use, and my interest flags quickly due to the sameness of the colors and patterns, no matter how beautiful. My first quilt show thus was a



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revelation. My cellist husband (then boyfriend) is good friends with a cellist named Judiyaba, who just happens to be a quilter and original co-owner of New Pieces Quilt Shop. She had a piece in the Pacific International show held at a hotel near the SFO Airport. We went, and I fell in love. Tight stitches; lots of color and pattern; and big pieces that can be put together to make something sizable in less than a decade (well, in theory)!

That was 1994, and I have never looked back. I still love to look at and fondle a nice piece of crochet or knitting, but quilting is my art and craft. Judi advised me to buy the book *Quilts! Quilts! Quilts!*. I started a sampler; moved on to my own simple design for a twin-sized baby quilt for a pregnant friend (and machine quilted it!); made a twin-sized Fence Rail; redesigned and finished the sampler; bought tons of fabric; joined the SFQG; bought tons of fabric; went to every show in the area; bought more fabric; designed a bunch of quilts using EQ1, EQ2, EQ3, EQ4, and EQ5; made some of them; started others which still aren't done thirteen years later; bought more fabric; . . . and joined the UFO Bee started by Leah Segal for the obvious reason.

MORE BIO:

I'm a math and science type, so I adore geometric designs which explore perception through the use of color, pattern, value, etc. I tend to work best with straight-line machine piecing, so that's mostly what I do.

I make quilts mostly for others: friends, family members, and Community Outreach. A few have stayed with me, mostly bed quilts, and a handful of wall quilts and pillows. I prefer using them to looking at them.

I started quilting during a very difficult time, and I joined the Guild specifically to help me cope. During my childhood dance training, I badly injured my left knee six times, and had surgery when I was seventeen. I hurt my knee a few more times during my twenties and early thirties, and needed a partial knee replacement in 1986. Three surgeries in eleven months, followed by post-op pneumonia and the subsequent development of asthma, left me unable to pursue the political and community activist work I had done previously. I started quilting and joined the Guild in order to make beautiful things and to make friends. Those friendships have continued to support me through additional injuries and now-chronic illness.

MORE QUILTING:

I used to select fabric for specific projects, but it rarely ended up used for those projects since I have so many UFOs to work on. I then went through a long period of buying fabric because it added something to my stash. I sort by color (yellow drawer, red drawer), type (French, African), and other (special pieces, weird fabrics). I am out of space, so now I rarely buy fabric at all (and if you believe that . . .).

GUILD HISTORY:

I participated in the design of the 2004 Opportunity Quilt. I helped Leah take her ideas to the Board and I later, I put the blocks together on my design wall. The New York Beauty

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blocks were technically challenging, so I had to "edit" some of the blocks during the design process. The UFO Bee then took my design, made a few changes, and put the top together.

CLASSES:

My first class was a Mariner's Compass with Judy Matheison. The finished block still awaits quilting over a decade later! A fairly comprehensive list of classes I've taken:

- SFQG Quiltaways: Hand Quilting with Deidre McElroy; Shattering (a bargello technique); fabric dyeing; and machine thread art
- P&B Teacher Retreats: House Quilt with Knownes/McLun; unique block settings with Margaret Miller; surface design techniques with Jean Ray Laury; design with Jane Sassaman; and large-scale appliqué with Velda Newman
- Art Quilt Lake Tahoe with Sue Brenner
- Black Cat Quilts: Hand Appliqué and care of quilts with Susan Bradford; Wedge Christmas Tree Skirt with Carolyn Startup
- Pineapple Quilt class with Freddy Moran
- SFQG Workshops: Mariner's Compass with Judy Matheison; Celtic Appliqué; and Curved Piecing
- Fabric Painting at New Pieces Quilt Shop

I also have taught classes at Black Cat Quilts in SF and at Pumpkinseed in San Rafael. I might teach again once my new career is more settled. So far, my most successful classes are *Color Theory* and *Basic Machine Quilting*. Less successful, but promising, are *Block Drafting & Design* and *Hand Appliqué*.

I've placed at least one quilt in each SFQG show since I joined. I also once had a quilt in the Marin Quilt Guild show. If I could ever finish and keep anything, I would show more! As is, all I've managed ribbon-wise is two Honorable Mentions at SFQG shows.

ADVICE FOR OTHER QUILTERS:

Buy fabric, and play!

PICS

