

San Francisco Quilters' Guild – Member Biography

Oral Interview, San Francisco, CA. (not recorded)

Field worker: (Interviewer): Jeanie Low

Quiltmaker (Interviewee): Keiko Kurosawa
(Native Japanese speaker with bilingual skills)

Date: August 19, 2003; August 26, 2003



Q:Your name (full name) and where you were born?

A:My name is Keiko Kurosawa, and I was born in Tokyo, Japan. My family and I immigrated to San Francisco for my husband's job. My two children completed high school in Japan and their university degrees in the United States.

Q:Was there a previous quilting or sewing tradition in your family? (What kind of sewing was done?)

A:I think my maternal grandmother may have sewn. My mother made clothes for the four children in my family. It took her a long time to make clothes as she was very busy. She taught school for 43 years. After awhile, I decided to learn to sew my own clothes. I also learned to knit too.

Q:How long have you been quilting? A:I have quilted for fifteen years.

Q:Why do you like quilting? Are you involved in other crafts?

A:Quilting is both relaxing and a creative outlet. Thinking of designs is difficult, but I enjoy it. I especially enjoy handquilting.

Q:What quilt teachers have you had, and how have they have influenced your work?

A:When I took my first quilting class at Ft. Mason, my teacher was Sonya Lee Barrington. I didn't know what kind of quilt to make, so Sonya asked me "what do you want to make?" It was first time that I had to think about a quilt design. In Japan, the sewing teacher brought patterns for all of us to copy. In America, I had a choice.

Q: Do you make traditional or innovative quilts or wearable arts?

A: I make traditional and innovative quilts.

San Francisco Quilter's Guild-Member Biography
Keiko Kurasawa, Quilter. Interview: 8/19/2003; 8/26/2003

Q:How do you design your quilts? (Do you work from patterns, draw your own designs, receive inspiration from fabrics?)

A:I draw my own designs. I am also inspired by fabrics and photos. For instance, when I design floral appliques, I photograph flowers so that I can see the colors and different stages of flowers in bloom. I know younger buds are lighter in color than mature blooms.

Q:Do you collect or sell quilts? A: No.

Q:Have you won any quilting awards or had your work published. (You can also submit a quilt list). Describe a favorite quilt. What kind of techniques did you use?

A: Yes. I am submitting a quilt list with the awards I've received. Last year, I was interviewed by Japanese Radio [station1450] about my quilt art. It was easier for me to express myself in Japanese.

My favorite quilts are called, "Family Crest" and "Memory of Hawaii." My quilts usually take about two years to complete because I might be designing or working on other quilts. "Rondo at Dawn" took about three years to complete. I have to be sure my quilts are perfect because I am making family heirlooms to be passed from one generation to the next. A famous Japanese quilt artist commented that my quilts have both Japanese and American elements in the design. For me, my identity is as a Japanese living in the United States.

Q:What year did you join our guild? What do you enjoy about our guild?

A:I joined San Francisco Quilters' Guild in 1990. I like the creative stimulation and friends.

Q:What guild positions or projects have you held or worked on?

A: I have worked on guild opportunity quilts, and I've volunteered for our guilds' quilt shows.

Q:Describe your experiences and explain what participating in quilt related activities and/or groups means to you.

A:It makes me feel good to help when I have time.

San Francisco Quilter's Guild-Member Biography
Keiko Kurasawa, Quilter. Interviews: 8/19/2003; 8/26/2003

Q:What would you like to tell someone about quilting?

A: I want to leave my impressions of Japan for the next generation through my quilts. I want to share my Japanese culture with others. I seldom buy new fabrics for my quilts because I prefer using the fabric from the clothing from my family. It might be my father's kimono, my mother's obi or from my own kimonos. I buy fabric only if I need a certain color.

Shibori is a ancient [dye resist used for images] technique in Japan. I've used Shibori techniques in some of my quilts, but it is not always recognized. I feel that the Shibori technique is something new in the quilt world and it is not always familiar to the judges.





WISTERIA Shibori (HAND DYED)



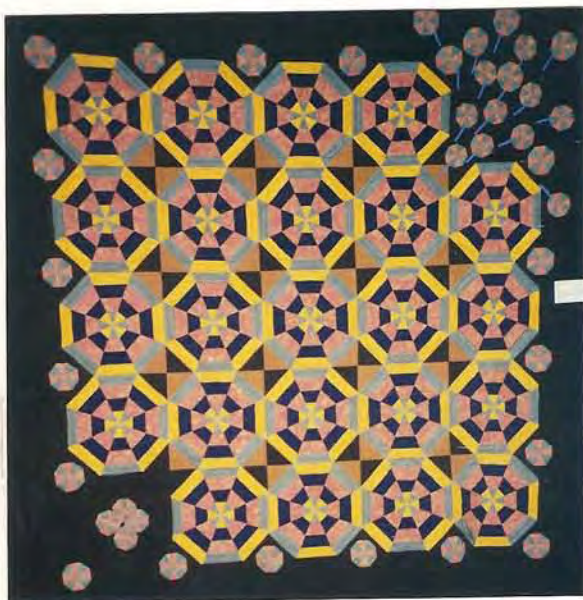
FAMILY CREST



MEMORY OF HAWAII



A RONDO OF DAWN



FUZZ

Keiko Kurosawa



EARLY SPRING



Keiko Kurosawa

List Of Award Ribons I Received in Quilt Shows

Keiko Kurosawa

As of ~~Sep-1st-2002~~
March 2003

First Place

Family Crest	1994	San Francisco Quilter's Guild
Memory of My Best Friend	1994	S.F.Q.G.
Family Crest	1995	Marin Quilt & Needle Arts
Hand Made Shibori (Tie-Dye) (Wistria)	1996	S.F.Q.G.
Ancient Japanese Garden	1997	Marin Q.& N. A.
Family Crest	2000	Peninsula Quilter's Guild
Family Crest	2000	San Mateo County Fair
Ancient Japanese Garden	2000	San Mateo C. F.
Memory of Hawaii	2001	S.F.Q.G.
Fuzz	2001	S.F.Q.G.
Quilt and Sashiko Stitching Bag	2001	San Mateo C.F.
Quilt and Sashiko Stitching Bag	2001	Marin Q.& N.A.
Memory of Hawaii	2002	Peninsula Q.G.
Memory of Hawaii	2002	San Mateo C.F.
Early Spring	2002	San Mateo C.F.
Fuzz of Flowers	2002	San Mateo C.F.
Memory of Hawaii	2002	Marin Q.& N.A.
A Rondo at Dawn	2003	S.F.Q.G.

Second Place

Memory of my Best Friend	1995	Marin Q.& N.A.
Early Sprin	1996	S.F.Q.G.
Hand Made Shibori (Tie-Dye)	2000	San Mateo C.F.

Third Place

Early Spring	1996	Marin Q.& N.A.
Birds Paradise (Hand Made Tie-Dye)	2000	San Mateo C.F.
Early Spring	2002	Peninsula Q.G.

Honorable Mention

Crest (Tsukahara)	1996	Marin Q.& N.A.
Hand Made Shibori (Tie Dye)	1997	Marin Q.& N.A.
Hand Made Shibori (Tie Dye)	2000	Peninsula Q.G.

Viewers Choice

Birds Paradise (Hand Made Tie-Dye)	1998	S.F.Q.G.
Memory of Hawaii	2002	Peninsula Q.G.

Best of Class

Ancient Japanese Garden	2000	San Mateo C.F
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Invited Items

Memory of Hawaii	2001	New Quilt of Northern California (at The Pacific international Quilt Festival)
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