

Sylvie Marquet is native from France where she grew up and got her PhD in Geology. During these studies, she spent five months at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana working on Manganese and Iron oxides in the Geology Department. She then raised her four kids as she married a globetrotter. This also led to her immigration to the United States 12 years ago. She has lived in Texas, New York and now discovers San Francisco with great pleasure.

As her four kids went to college, she started tutoring French. She strongly believes in the power of education, and put her background at use to help students reach their goals. She loves this part time job and has students ranging from 5 to 80 years old. She likes the challenge each one brings along the way.



What brought you to quilting?

Sewing has been part of my life since I was a teenager and learned these skills from my mom. At the time, I was making clothes. Then, as soon as I got my first home, I bought a sewing machine and did all my curtains. With four kids, there was always something to fix. For me, it was a valuable investment. When I moved to Texas, I was drawn towards two stores: Recollection and Jo-Ann. I was puzzled by the size and choices of these stores. That is when I discovered scrapbooking and quilting. I like craft activities, and I made my first quilts on my own doing placemats. My older son was working on tessellation in his math class, and I used foundation piecing to work on the effect of colors and patterns of fabrics.

Person who made an influence in your quilting:

I really got into quilting while I settled in Northport on Long Island and discovered a quilting class in the Continuing Education and Recreation booklet for adults. I had to wait a semester though as Judy Wilhelm, our certified teacher, asked to take a hand quilting course to start with. I worked on hand quilting, appliqués, piecing. I LOVE piecing. Besides the knowledge and skills I learned from Judy, what I really enjoyed was working on a same project with my classmates but with our own choice of fabric. It taught us so much about our style, personality, sense of color and artistry! It was the best experience ever, and I took Judy's classes for 5 years in a row. In addition, I took a class called 'painting with fabrics' a freer concept, but very rewarding too. This is definitely something I want to explore more.

When I moved to San Francisco, I had to find a quilting circle, and I joined the Guild. I knew I would be able to mingle with my new environment right away, and I would meet wonderful human beings. I had no clue I would even be on the board in charge of the Opportunity Quilt fundraising! It has been a very interesting and quick way to be introduced around and be proactive. It also gave me the opportunity to join Caroline Lieberman's class. I love to participate in the community projects she suggests and challenge myself with the quilting sample tasks she gives us.

Finally, the workshop offered by SFQG I recently attended with Freddy Moran was a joy. I definitely wish to participate in more of these events.

How many quilts did you make?

Many. Quilts decorate my home. I change them with the seasons. Some are big, other are small. Lately, I tried a few bed covers. I offered one to my mom who turned 80 and another one to my son and my daughter-in-law made with fabric I bought in Paducah, Kentucky while visiting my son doing an internship close by. By the way, I highly recommend the visit at the National Quilt Museum.

I like to offer my quilts to family and friends. They are made with love and time, two ingredients that we should cherish every day. I also did baby quilts or memory quilts for friends or people I met and were interested in my work. Quilts are all about encounters. They tell stories, and are a link between people and generations.

Do you select fabric for a particular project or because you like it?

Both. I had a discussion with a student of mine who is an artist. He asked me a similar question. Sometimes the pattern comes first to mind, and I buy fabric for the project. I love creating patterns. For me, quilts have meanings. I like to work on symbols to put in my work. Other times, I fall in love with fabric while visiting a store or going to a vendor booth during a show. I strongly believe intuition plays a part in the process of choosing a fabric or making a quilt. These are opportunities to begin a new project.

Do you enter your quilts in quilt shows?

This year was my first opportunity to enter a quilt show, and I took it. I had my quilt judged, and it was a very nice way to get positive feedback from professionals.

Do you have an advice for future quilters?

Quilting combines utility and art. Quilts are part of our lives. There are countless techniques in quilting so you can find many ways to express your personality. Don't be shy with your own choice of color, pattern or design. The selection is yours and it reflects your background, taste, sensibility to the world that surrounds you. Embrace the variety you have at hand. The possibilities are endless.