

JUDY WOODFILL

SFQG Quiltmaker Story

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No matter where I've lived, be it Sydney, Stockton, or San Francisco, I've been a sewer. My first machine sewing experience was at school on a treadle machine when I was about 9. I started sewing my own clothes at 15, and I made clothes for my son, Darin when he was a baby and toddler. My first attempt at patchwork was in 1971, when I made a 3' square one-patch (4" squares) pillow cover, using all kinds of fabric: cotton, satin, polyester. It's long gone now, of course. When I started making quilts I gave up making clothes with only the very occasional exception. My interest in quilting began when I was channel-surfing one Sunday afternoon in 1991 and came upon "The Great American Quilt". Strip-piecing a 9-patch was the subject and I thought "I could do that." That very day, I went to San Francisco Fabrics and bought the supplies I needed (rotary cutter and mat - the wrong kind) but didn't start quilting until almost six months after. I ordered a book from Rodale and jumped into my first Log Cabin. No clue what I was doing and the instructions were not good. It took me 11 hours (!!!!!) just to cut out the individual pieces the book specified. Anyway, when I laid out the 48 finished blocks on the floor in the Sunshine & Shadow pattern and looked through my binoculars backwards (my shrinking glass), my heart leaped and a warm glow blossomed in my chest. WOW, what a feeling! I'd never felt so clever or creative in my whole life - I was hooked! I machine quilted it - what a chore! I still use that quilt on my bed, even though I've made over 100 quilts since, quite a few for my bed. I immediately made another Log Cabin (like there aren't any other patterns?) using the same laborious method as before. I'm such a quick learner! That second quilt was my son's wedding present. I had Glenda Freiberg quilt that one!

I love old-fashioned patterns, but with a fresh palette; e.g. I have made 5 different Pineapple quilts (2 commissions) which I did not foundation piece. I'm very proud of that. I used unusual combinations of colors - they were all very successful. I really love the graphic elements of quilt patterns and playing with the values in them. I have tried hand appliqué and hand quilting, but they are not for me. I'm a machine person. It's hard to say what my favorite color is - I love them all - but if pressed, I would have to say green. In 1999, I attended the first Art Quilt Tahoe quilting conference and took Ruth McDowell's Designing from Nature class. I was terrified; I had never attempted an 'art' quilt per se; but had made wall hangings. Ruth is a wonderful teacher; nurturing, encouraging, and a genius! I have done three art quilts using her method: Under Dogwood, Central Park, and Ghost Gums at Uluru. Ruth is my inspiration when it comes to quilting - I am in awe of her art.

I recently began quilting on the Gammill at Karen Reiter's (with her instruction of course) - find it quite intimidating but am continuing to persevere.

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The only quilting technique I use that might be considered "special" is that I always press my seams open (not necessarily in art pieces though) using a seam roll for the purpose, and I am a stickler for precision.

In late August 2001, I was asked by my employer to design and make an AIDS Memorial Quilt for display in our lobby each December, and in the building lobby during AIDS Awareness. It ended up 5' x 10', depicting a large tree with spreading limbs with each large leaf on the tree bearing the name of an employee who died of AIDS - at that time there were 24. On September 9, I cut out the paper pattern for the tree. On 9/11, I went to work and we were promptly told to go home. I spent that entire day and evening cutting the tree out of fabric and positioning it on my design wall. I don't know what I would have done without that quilt to keep me busy that day.

I have raffled two quilts for charity: "Cat's Cradle" for Friends of the Feral Cats (raised \$1,500) and "The Stables" for Redwings Horse Sanctuary (raised \$2,000). I have donated two of my quilts: "Fantasia" for a friend's church raffle, and "Weaver Fever" to raise money for a friend's son's gymnastics group, and have made several 'tops' for Community Outreach and numerous preemies.

My apartment is 'riddled' with quilts: 1 in the hallway, 2 in the living room, 3 in the bedroom, and one on the bed, of course, so I have seven quilts always on display. I don't receive quilts from others; I only collect mine. I've just taken on being co-Chair, with Carol Grey, of the 2009 Quilt Show. My previous commitments with the Guild include: Block of the Month; Fabric of the Month; Friendship Blocks, Vice President, President, and Parliamentarian.

Mostly I choose fabric because I like it, but I do buy fabric for specific projects when necessary. I don't belong to a Sewing Circle or other group, mostly because I don't have a car and getting around on Muni with a sewing machine would be just horrible. I've taught two Precision Piecing classes at Guild Saturday Sewcials. They were lots of fun - I really enjoy teaching. The students seemed to like it too!

I have had some of my art quilts in a couple of local galleries, and I have entered quilts in the SFQG show, Marin show, and PIQF. Ribbons to date:

QUILT NAME	RIBBON / SHOW	YEAR
Underwater Windows	1 st Place / SFQG	2005
Playtime	1 st Place / SFQG	2007
Blueberry Icecreams	2 nd Place / Marin	1998
Ghost Gums at Uluru	2 nd Place / SFQG	2005
Purple Maze	2 nd Place / Marin	1996
The Mother Ship	2 nd Place / SFQG	1998
The QBert Quilt	3 rd Place / Marin	1996
Central Park	HM / Marin 3 rd Place / SFQG	9/2001 3/2003
Corroboree	HM / SFQG	2001
Fire Down Below	HM / SFQG	2001
Florabundance	HM / SFQG	2003
One Exploding Star & 32 Cats	HM / Marin	1997
Shirts	HM / Marin	2002

Ten of my favorite quilts (in no particular order):

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|---|---------------------|----|---------------------|
| 1 | Ghost Gums at Uluru | 6 | Blueberry Icecreams |
| 2 | Underwater Windows | 7 | Corroboree |
| 3 | Central Park | 8 | The Qbert Quilt |
| 4 | Sydney Cove | 9 | Purple Maze |
| 5 | Rain on the Reef | 10 | Cacti |





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