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The Journal
of the
International
Feltmakers
Association

A woman with reddish-brown hair tied in a bun is shown in profile, facing right. She is wearing a large, textured shawl or poncho made of felted wool. The shawl features a vibrant rainbow gradient, with colors ranging from deep blue and teal on the left to bright yellow and orange on the right. The texture of the felt is highly visible, showing a series of ripples and folds. The background is a dark, solid color, which makes the colorful shawl stand out.

echoes

The Journal of the International Feltmakers Association

echoes

www.feltmakers.com



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In this issue

Editorial 2

News 2

Reviews

Book news 3

Felt hat trick - UK 3

Felt, steppes and yurts - Kazakhstan 5

Kyrgyzstan part 2 5

Salisbury Art Trail 7

Articles:

Arhanghai Wool Project - Mongolia 7

Sachiko Kotaka - Japan/Australia 8

Marketing skills - Sweden 9

A growing passion - Italy 9

Narnia: a felt experience 13

Trip to Georgia 13

Sheep fleeces 15

Moral Fibre - UK 15

KC Lowe: award finalist - Alaska 16

Vocational Qualifications - Finland 17

How we did it:

Inspired by Samurai - Australia 17

Is this a record? - Scotland 17

Being a mentor - Australia 20

Jacqui Morton - UK 21

Feltmakers' hints and tips 22

Feltmakers' Diary:

Workshops 23

Exhibitions 23

Conferences 24

Opportunities 25

Museums 26

Regional Co-ordinators 26

Websites for Feltmakers 28

Advertisements 28

Data Protection Act

The Membership Secretary will pass on your name and address to your Regional Co-ordinator, provided you have given your consent on the membership form.

Should you wish to contact a member whose address is not in these lists, please address your communication to that member c/o the Membership Secretary who will redirect it.



Works by the Aurélla group:
Alessandro Caroni and
Raffaella Norcini Pala
Right: Il Sogno



Works by the
Aurélla group:
Alessandro Caroni
and Raffaella
Norcini Pala
Right: Sospiri
Far right: Corpe
(See page 9)
Photos by the
makers

We made it. Echoes is now in full colour. Make sure that your photos match the quality we want to see. Quality is more important than ever. Make sure there is even lighting while taking photographs.

Finland has been given pride of place in our centre spread. What an extraordinary group of mature students and to think that they only embarked on the course last September. Six out of fourteen have their own websites, eight call themselves feltmaker/ entrepreneur, three textile artisan/ feltmaker and four are qualified textile and crafts teachers.

I was also very impressed by the development of 'Moral Fibre'. Takes me back to the early 80's when I was striving to be self-sufficient and had my own small flock of Shetland sheep. Along with my research into using spun fibres, I took up a textile degree course and stumbled across felt. I am in full support of using local fibres but yet, I struggle with actually wanting to use them all the time. The offer of large batts is tempting. Rovings are actually produced for spinners. Does anyone know how those wide commercially produced batts came into being. I wonder?

Tracking down Sachiko Kotaka has been quite a find. I have always referred to her as the one who worked with Polly Stirling when they discovered nunofelt.

There will be a showing of 'On the Map' in Italy. Just in time for giving a hand to the 'growing passion' of feltmaking in Italy. There is a promise of new feltworks produced for the Valcellina Award for the next issue of Echoes.

Hopefully, the title for our journal is beginning to make sense. 'Echoes', as the plural of 'echo' (see Collins Concise Dictionary), implies an after effect, repercussion, consequence of what has gone before. Will you be inspired by Echoes in full colour?

Had a great time in Barcelona!
Meike D. Laurenson

Right: Detail of Aurora Dreaming the Sea, seen on the front cover. See also Congratulations below.

Why is pool table felt green?

According to one of my summer students, this was the first question put to a pool historian from a billiard table manufacturer in Brunswick, WI during an interview on the local NPR station. The answer was that the first pool tables in England were a way to have indoor croquet, in fact he said that the first tables actually had little wickets. So the green colour was to mimic grass.

Jorie Johnson

Two new products

Superfine merino wool tops have come on the market, reflecting the tonal variations found in nature (www.treetopscolors.com.au) - and skin friendly superfine merino wool sliver is offered as a new felting fabric - "no need to hand lay anymore. Put more time into your design." www.fibrefusion.com.au

Evidence of Felt

The history of a Turner sketch showing Henry Cook, successful papermaker and his wife laying out long felt panels to dry outside their small water-powered paper-mill near Abbey House in about 1809 was traced recently. Paper was made by catching paper pulp with a mould and deckle. After shaking, draining and turning over, the fibres were pressed onto the felt and left to dry. *BBC2 House Detectives; 10.11.05*

In the pipeline

Lark Books contracted Jorie Johnson and Chad Alice Hagen to do a book on felt scarves. Look for it in autumn of 2007.

Batsford are due to publish 'Felt to Stitch' by Sheila Smith in July 2006.

Best bets for investment

Top textiles: "Fibre is overlooked as a collectible medium," says Matilda McQuaid (who curated last year's Extreme Textiles exhibit), exhibitions curator and head of textiles at Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum, Manhattan, NYC. If you're not about to buy yardage for investment, McQuaid suggests a space-saving alternative: scarves.



Photo: Chris Arnold Studios

"They're a small record of a designer's work," and sometimes, depending on process, one of a kind. McQuaid collects contemporary Japanese scarves and admires the five-foot-long felted scarves of Claudy Jongstra, a Dutch designer. At \$650, they're priced as art. *Metropolitan Home magazine, March 2006, p.42*

Take care

Sandoval McNair accidentally washed a felted scarf in her washer and basically made it bullet proof.

Congratulations

Kayleen C. Lowe, Canada, won the Surface Design Award for 2006 with Aurora Dreaming the Sea.

Olga von Moorende, Germany, won Euro 3,000, one of the four Danner Honorary Awards for her imaginative felt headdresses.

The Norwegian Feltmakers

website is now also in English: www.norskefeltmakere.no

Did you know?

The fine monofibre of a silk cocoon, barely visible, was unwrapped during a workshop in Germany. They are said to be 2-3 km long. *FUN 14*

Would you believe it?

Kirsten Smaadahl points out that if you try the method described by a visitor to her studio (Echoes 82, p.23), "you will get a big snake or ball of wool, silk and synthetic material." Make sure the tumble dryer is used for the final fulling only.

Beginner's Guide to Feltmaking

Publication: January 2006; paperback, 260 x 204mm, ISBN 1 84448 004 6; 80pp, 230 colour illustrations, step-by step photographs; easy to follow projects by Shirley Ascher and Jane Bateman; Search Press

Shirley, a freelance photographer, studied Art & Design at St. Albans School of Art and Jane, a sub-editor for a local newspaper, is in journalism and studied at Harlow Technical College and the University of Hertfordshire.

They have been making felt for a number of years, give demonstrations and exhibit locally. Their most notable exhibition was at St. Albans Cathedral Flower & Craft Show where they were amazed and delighted at the interest their felt generated; and this was the catalyst for the book.



Photo: J. Binks

Felt hat trick UK

Alison Binks, a student at South Nottingham College is one of only one hundred people from over three quarters of a million eligible candidates to win a City and Guilds gold medal for Excellence for her outstanding performance on the City and Guilds Feltmaking Course.

Sheep and Man - reprint request

David Marshall of Duckworth Publishers owns the rights of M. L. Ryder's 'Sheep and Man', published about twenty years ago, so the statistics concerning quantity of sheep in various countries appears outdated. However, according to Jorie Johnson, the information about the animal and wool growth in that book is outstanding. She believes that spinners, sheep farmers, felters, and a wide range of textile industrialists could benefit from a reprint of the volume. The minimum price would be in the region of £25 and the quantity about 1,000 copies.

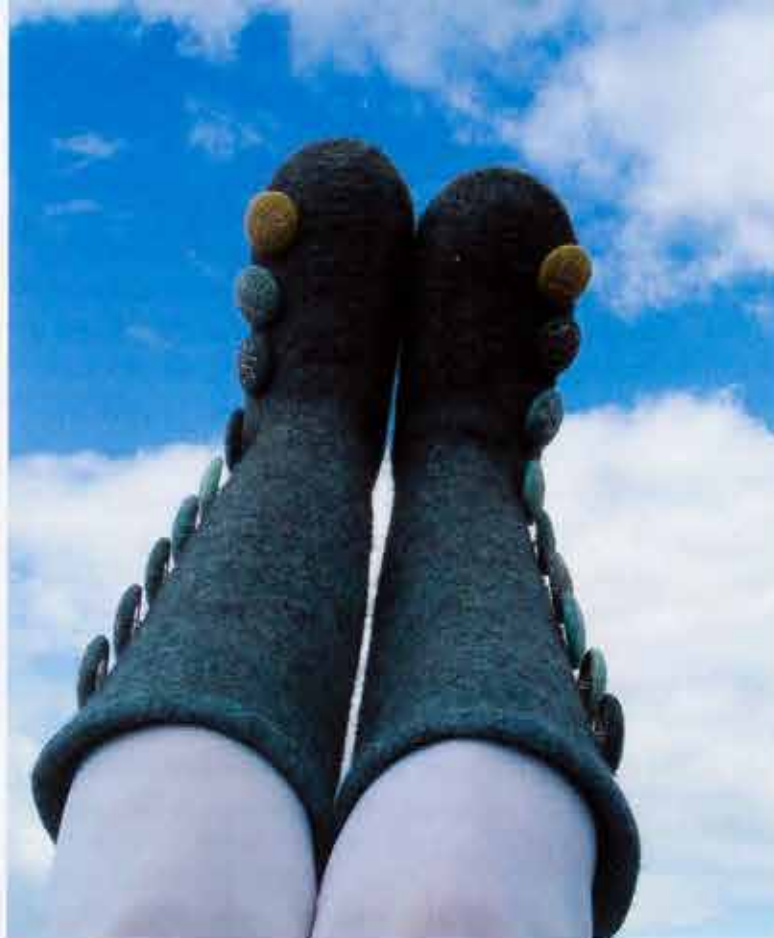
In order to reprint, the publisher would need to have a strong belief that they would be able to market it and successfully find an audience. If you are interested in purchasing this book, please write to David Marshall, Duckworth Publishers, 90-93 Cowcross Street, London EC1M 6BF (0)20 7490 7300



Above: One of a set of samples based on the structure of shells. Mammals and birds have been fibres felted over wire and wood to give structure. Left: Scarves by Alison Binks

This is a very special occasion for Alison and also for South Nottingham College as this is the fourth year in a row that a student studying here has received this top accolade. In fact this is the second medal for Alison as she won a medal for her Upholstery work in 2003; a truly exemplary achievement for this talented individual.

Joy Buttriss followed this success; she won a medal for Feltmaking in 2004 and has gone on to receive support



Helen Merrin's 'Helen's Boots' with felt (green) Hobbies
Kewell with the addition of felted knit

for her work from the Crafts Council. This has enabled her to exhibit her work internationally.

Joy's success was followed by Helen Merrin. In 2005 she received a medal for her work on the City and Guilds Feltmaking Course. She went on to win a further medal and monetary award from The Worshipful Company of Haberdashers, for her outstanding achievements in Constructed Textiles. Helen is a talented artist and teacher that continues to teach in and around Nottingham.

The Feltmaking work by Alison Binks was described by the judges as 'exciting and innovative, the final assessments are exceptional.' A worthy medal winner.

The award will be presented to her at an East Midlands event and she is now in the running to win one of eight prestigious UK awards at an 'Oscars' style

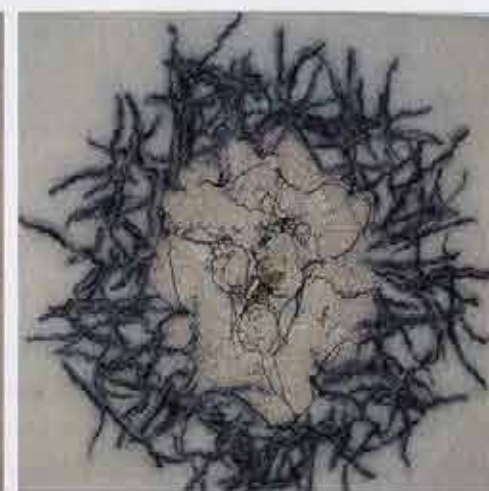
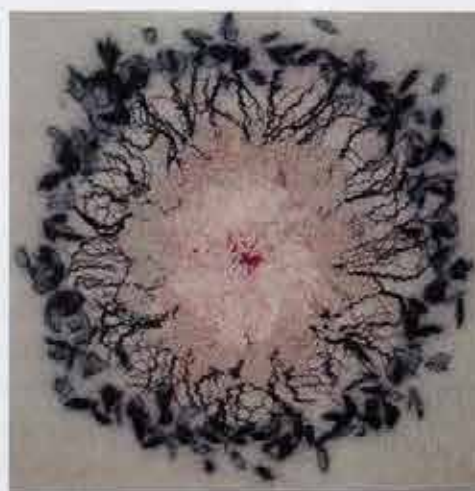
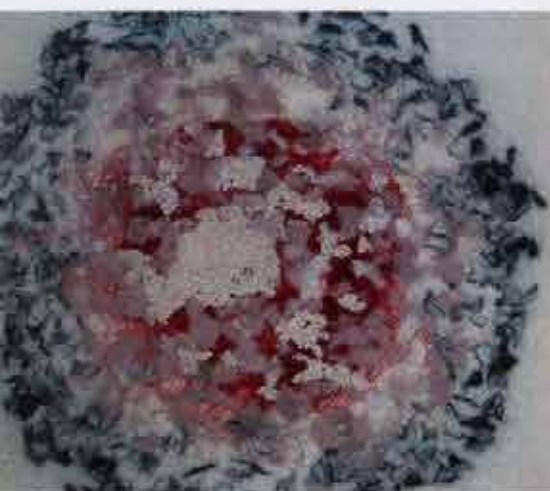
event to celebrate lifelong learning in London. Alison's tutor, Christine Standen, agreed that she has deservedly won this mark of special distinction.

This is a 'Feltmaking Hat Trick' and is evidence of the high level of achievement attained by students in the Creative Studies Department at South Nottingham College. Each year we also have students gain Highly Commended awards. These pay testament to students that have demonstrated excellence but are 'pipped at the post' by others who are awarded medals.

The end of year shows 28 June - 1 July 2006 are a spectacular event and time to see and celebrate the quality of work produced from a very wide variety of courses.

Sandra Weaver

Course Co-ordinator, Creative Studies Department



Photos: J. Farnham

Three panels by Joy Buttriss, created by the structure of 'Towers' (Helen Merrin, 2005) (Helen Merrin, 2005) (Helen Merrin, 2005)

Felt, steppes and yurts Kazakhstan

In mid April 2005, Walter and I visited Alibay and Saule Bapanov in Almaty, one time capital of Kazakhstan. We first met them as textile artists at the felt conference in Hungary. They are well known for their huge woven and felted wall hangings showing traditional motifs with contemporary interpretations.

It was cool and wet when we first arrived; local camel hair coats kept us warm in their workshop but within a few days, the temperature rose to 29 degrees. Spring had arrived. The grey house fronts disappeared along the wide streets lined with four rows of trees coming into leaf.

The hospitality was grand. Meeting up with lots of artists, visiting studios, private views, schools, museums, fashion shows and concerts allowed us to gain an insight into the local culture.

Our felt workshops were arranged for the second week and high on the list were hats. Women in Kazakhstan prefer modern dress to jeans and T-shirts; elegant, big brimmed, out of the ordinary head gear was in demand. Accordingly, playful, extravagant and floral hats were produced.

The men preferred waistcoats. Space was limited; tables had to be enlarged to hold straw mats and bubble wrap. Men were happy to have female help with laying out the fibres but thoroughly enjoyed rolling the felt with all their might. They were keen to show their new wearables with pride.

The final project was for a group to create a wall felt incorporating various silk fabrics and fibres, introducing the different structures possible with felt, including 'holes'. This final 'Blue Work' reminded us of a symphony, a harmonious composition with lots of artists working towards the final product and us as conductors.

All the felt produced during the workshops were displayed at a special exhibition alongside the wonderful woven carpets of Alibay and Saule. Two television teams appeared; the interview was conducted by a bilingual journalist. It was a great success. Felt as a medium, well known locally as a traditional fabric, was seen afresh and as a basis for artistic expression. The fact that someone from the Western world had shown the traditional feltmaker's craft in a new artistic light, was found to be amazing.

Saule and Alibay will be organising a felt conference in 2007 (see diary). There is the beauty of the steppes and mountains to behold and traditional carpets to be bought in the market. The colourful multiplicity of the orient will leave its mark on any visitor. Although Almaty claims to be a modern city just like those in Europe, it is exotic to us. There are some wonderful yurts to be seen, they are well cared for and hours of loving care are spent to set them up. Interiors are finely decorated; the exterior is protected by sailcloth or plastic. Yurts now serve as 'bars' for kumis (fermented mare's milk) along lively public open spaces - or as restaurants or boutiques for local crafts. There are no more yurts in the steppes but small circular concrete or corrugated copies left over from years of Russian occupation.

Maya Stenz

Maya runs the Humanita Art Centre in Switzerland

Kyrgyzstan - Part 2

The study tour to Kyrgyzstan led by Istvan Vidak, was part of the three year International Felt course for some; others joined out of sheer curiosity.

One of the places to see was Kisiltuu, a village of craftsmen and masters, on the other side of Lake Issik-Kul. But first, we were in for a couple of surprises.

Istvan had often told us about local thermal waters. So after bidding farewell to Koken-Apa, Kendsze accompanied us in our little bus which took us several hours along sandy tracks before we stopped for a break at the thermal bath. "Time to bathe for half an hour", grinned Istvan.

The facilities were more than quaint. The simple



Photos: Maya Stenz

Maya Stenz in the centre



Shirdak Kim

Photo: Annemie Koenen

bath-house with either two or four old bath tubs per room, one side for men, the other for women, took some time to get used to. Quite refreshed, we drove on for the next stop by a most peaceful sandy beach with a grand view across the sea. Some fishermen were preparing to go out for a catch. A few houses, various domestic animals and a yurt could be seen behind us. Kendsze greeted the women who invited us to enter the yurt and admire the shirdaks and other feltworks in preparation.

At one time there were three masters in Kisiltuu, our next stop. We meet Sapar, son of one of those master yurt builders who is in the process of passing on the tradition to his sons. His family lives and works together: three generations including married sons, in-laws, animals and co-workers. Everything happens in the yard. Around the yard: a small house, a house in the making (with hand-built clay bricks), a good stable, pasture, garden and toilet right at the back of the property. The yard holds two circles marked out in clay and natural stones, a space reserved for two yurts which will be up between 1 May and end October. Yurts are their business.

We watch the men preparing willow for the framework, a woman beats brown wool for a new felt on a mat and a calf moves freely between them, tied to a long cord. Sapar and his wife Gülbar greet us and invite us to help put up a yurt for us to sleep in. The second yurt space is kept for cords, ribbons and pieces

of felt ready to be inspected and repaired if need be by Gülbar and another two women. The woven ribbons and felts are not stored together over winter but will be stitched on anew to the felt. It was quite dark when the yurt was finally up, beautifully embroidered mats, stuffed with wool were laid side by side across the yurt to serve as our bedding. We lay down, sang some songs for an hour or so and a feeling of great peace and harmony came upon us. It was not thought to be strange at all to cuddle up for warmth to the next body when it got cold at night. We woke up as the roof was pulled off.

There was time to watch sheep being shorn which happens twice a year; Spring wool is spun and woven; autumn wool is felted.

During our farewell party, Koken-Apa told us about the symbolism of the yurt. The yurt is round just like the earth and the sun. The crown of the roof symbolises the sky, the roof poles the men and the trellis the women. People are close to nature. The trellis is also a symbol for Mother Earth which holds the world together. The leather tying the trellis is likened to the relationship between mother and daughter. The cords symbolise the ties between men and women and the many woven ribbons symbolise the family tree.

So many impressions in such a short time. We met lovely people, all so helpful. I hope to come again...

Annemie Koenen

(Part 1 appeared in Echoes 81)

Salisbury Art Trail UK

It was with great excitement and some trepidation that my mother, (Heather Banham) and I opened her city centre house to the public during the recent Salisbury Art Trail, so that the two of us could exhibit our work there. We are both keen felt makers of Region 2 and had a selection of scarves, wall-hangings, bags and vessels to display, as well as some paintings, life drawings and papier-mâché figures.

Would anyone be interested? How many would turn up? Would two weeks self-imposed 'house arrest' drive us stir crazy?

The art trail leaflet was published with us listed as venue No 1 – it sounded like a lot to live up to, but surely guaranteed at least a few people would arrive on the doorstep.

The next step was to prepare the ground floor – all clutter and ornaments were stashed upstairs (along with my dad and the two cats Fran and Tashiel!). The cosy living room and workroom were converted into a relaxed, friendly gallery space. The lacy curtains were replaced with gossamer fine nuno-felted scarves draped at the windows. Shelves were adorned with pots and decorations; walls were hung with paintings and wall-hangings; all flat surfaces were filled with sculptures and baskets full of felt bags, cards etc.

Excitement mounted and at 10.30 on day 1, we hung the sign on the door and sat down to wait – it didn't take long. Soon we had our first visitors – a couple from

Essex (who travel with their caravan on the Art Trail circuit), shortly followed by another pair, up from Somerset for the weekend – news of the trail had spread far and wide!

By the end of the day we had smiled, greeted, chatted, demonstrated and sold to over forty people. Everyone was keen to know about this mysterious art, fascinated to see how felt was made. Many people had some idea of felting a knitted item (usually by accident!), so to see the fabric emerge from layers of carded wool was quite an eye opener. We found that pursuing a less well known craft was quite an advantage in attracting visitors to the venue, and many visitors wanted to learn how to felt for themselves, so there's a healthy market out there for workshops!

Over the course of the fortnight, we had over three hundred visitors, including many textile fans and fellow felters, who were happy to share ideas and techniques (felters are a very friendly, non-competitive crowd!) We were overwhelmed by the positive response to our exhibition and loved meeting so many other enthusiasts. In the end, two weeks did feel like a long time. All credit to mum and dad for turning their house over to 'Art' for a fortnight. However it was a wonderful experience – we made new friends, met some lovely, fascinating people and learnt as much from them as they did from us! Would we do it again? YES!

Clare Hadley

Arhangai Wool Project Mongolia

Sheep wool and skin are the basic materials used for centuries by the nomads for warm clothing and ger insulation. The Arhangai Wool Project is the joint training and marketing venture for a number of individuals and small co-operatives learning to use the old felting skills in modern environment. Our products are completely hand made in the Central Steppes of Mongolia, in the Arhangai Province. We are grateful for the Finnish government development agency, FINNIDA, for their generous support for this project.

The aim of the wool project is to encourage local low income people to start their own small businesses. Please note that the part of the country where these articles are made, unemployment is well above 50%.

We are located in a small town in the province of Arhangai, about 450 west of Ulaanbaatar. On a good map, you can find the town of Tsetserleg (often spelled

Cherherleg or similar) where we are located. We have a training classroom, work with three small felting co-ops, have facilities for felting and training is aimed at improving skills and working together. The number of participants is limited to about ten people at one time.

The countryside around us is beautiful and provides good opportunities for horse trekking, hiking, and there are hot springs within 1 hour's drive away. We can offer a room in a basic but clean guesthouse with English style food for a felt tutor who wants to come and support us. We really do love to work with different kinds of people and have discovered that Mongolia attracts quite a few wonderfully eccentric personalities. (See opportunities)

Mika Laiho

mongoliashop@gmail.com

Sachiko Kotaka Japan/Australia

I have been working with felt more than a decade. Polly Stirling introduced me to this medium.

We were involved in developing a technique that we named nuno-felt (Nuno means fabric in Japanese). I believe this technique is known worldwide these days. Polly's innovative approach influenced me and encouraged me to develop 'Calamari-felt' and 'Wild Turkey's Nest' - felt. I have been lucky to work with her as she is generous, experienced, knowledgeable and creative!

I have a strong attraction to the tactile surface. I am mad about texture and as an artist I paint with wool and Kimono-silk to create pieces that are a homogenisation of both my Australian and Japanese identities.

As a multi media artist, I studied drawing and ceramics at Technical College and recently completed a Bachelor of Contemporary Visual Art (painting major 2000-05) at University. I am fortunate to have experienced the wonderful felt workshops of Lene Nielsen (Denmark 1995), Jeanette Appleton (England 1997) and Inge Evers (The Netherlands 1999).

Feltmaking gives me a special joy because I have an inborn love of textiles. After a decade making felt I still discover new magic in this medium. It allows me to make

my visions to a dimension beyond canvas and paper. These visions can then be worn, wrapped around the body, touched and felt! Like living sculpture.

I recently held my first solo exhibition 'Textile Tactile'

(Detail of Shibori Kimono silk nuno-felt garment; merino wool, Kimono silk and thread

(September - October 2005) at The Lismore Regional Gallery. My theme in the last exhibition was 'Kimono-silk Nuno-felt'. I feel my works are extensions of myself, they are like self-portraits. I developed installation as a means of engaging space to allow the viewer to enter into my work. Textile Tactile - this installation relates to and reflects this region, the surroundings in which I have lived for last 24 years, embracing both the rainforest and the ocean. After having made the felts, I performed within those and was photographed by my photographer friends.

Sachiko Kotaka

Right: Mossy Moon wrap skirt; merino wool, cotton and synthetics. See also inside back cover



Left: Calamari-felt scarf; merino wool. You make a circle by pulling wool to length, joining the ends and overlapping them - like a Wild Turkey Nest-felt. Make it lacy or dense; calamari rings can be tiny or big. It is good a good idea to use a match-stick blind to avoid the Calamari rings swimming apart.

Photo: Graeme Battarbury



Top: Forest canopy garment
middle: Spirit of Rainforest adjustable costume; some of the strips are woven and tied, can be worn inside out - merino wool, kimono silk, (hand-dyed) silk, velvet, cotton and synthetic (most fabrics are recycled)
below: Mossy Moon garment; merino, cotton and synthetics
bottom: Sandy nuno-felt garment; merino wool, kimono silk, silk fabric and fibres
Sachiko wearing a strip felt reversible dress - can also be worn front to back
Photos: Desmond Shendan

Marketing skills Sweden

The designer Minette Olson Hedin's website describes her range as 'an accessories label for women, featuring handmade scarves, shawls, hats and other pieces, embodying a striking mix of traditional manufacturing techniques and modern innovative design. She has a passion for detail, is driven by the desire to create unique items which stand on their own and is the creative force behind 'Small Cat Designs' and 'Minette Accessories'.

Minette created her own label in Stockholm in 2000 after having spent seven years in Manhattan as a designer. She began with a line of scarves, influenced by an old Swedish technique of hand-felting, her first collection of 'Dalarna' scarves were created from local raw wool.

Central to her design focus are natural fibres; all her pieces are handmade or include hand-worked details.

Today the Minette label can be found in speciality stores and boutiques across the US, Europe and Japan. She recently had her work featured in some leading US magazines and TV lifestyle chat shows.

Minette gives the following advice on how to turn an interest into a business, she was very generous with her time: "I suppose the best way to look at it is from a business perspective. I was a textiles and clothing design major and worked as a clothing designer in NYC for several large commercial firms. Since my background was designing for a large market, I had always been focused on designing for a large number of people. When I went out on my own, I found it was important to have something that was difficult for large companies to knock-off, I mean, to have something different enough to sell well, but not be mainstream. The trick is, I guess, to have something different for people to respond to."

"Probably the hardest thing with growth in business, is that there is so little time for design. My main advice would be to plan out what you want from a business and

be aware of the pitfalls of getting bigger. If the main part of what you enjoy doing is the actual physical part of designing/creating/felting, then perhaps you want to stay small so that you can still be involved in that process.

"With regard to how to actually start growing a cottage industry... the growth is of course organic. You have to be prepared for manufacturing and set goals for how much you want to sell. Doing trade shows and selling directly to stores are the main ways people get started. Get used to selling your product and don't be shy. You are the best salesperson, whether you like it or not."

Now trade shows are very expensive, so don't do one until you have researched it fully. Know what the traffic is like and who the target market is. If you find one that sounds like the right fit and it has good traffic, make sure to market your booth well to all potential clients/stores etc. They need to know where you are and what you have to offer.

Make a good mailing list by researching store info, ask friends for leads and find out where the competition is selling.

Two weeks before a show, mail your killer marketing material. If you have existing stores, call them to let them know where you will be. Try to stick to the same trade shows several seasons so people get used to seeing you.

There is so much to do, have a good design idea, know how far off mainstream you can be and yet still be accessible and not boring, how will you manufacture to meet the demand, work on your business skills, do your research, polish up your marketing approach to potential customers... oh and find some time to work on the next new design. And don't forget to enjoy yourself!

www.smallcatdesign.com

Fiona Wright

A growing passion Italy

Italy is not a land of feltmaking traditionally, although the fulling of woollens has been explored since Roman times. True and actual felt is found in hat making, produced by famous companies such as Borsalino and Cervo but it is felt made of fine hair, not sheep wool. The felting of wool is traditional only in Southern Tyrol, near the Italian border, populated by Germanic culture. The technique spread across the border, first to traditional craftsmen and then to enterprising young people.

At the traditional crafts school in the Ultental valley, one can learn how to spin, weave and compact the harsh fibres of local sheep into warm, strong felt. In the mid 90s, one of the students, Elisabeth Schwabl and sister Helga began to produce felt hats and sell them in crafts markets, an exciting novelty. Unlike the smooth and perfect Borsalinos, there were funny hats with bizarre noses and malicious little horns, produced of shaggy Tyrolean wools in natural colours: white, grey and brown. They looked so new and exciting! Helga and Elisabeth worked hard, sold a lot, had the desire and the opportunity to improve and looked for new ventures. After Ultental, Elisabeth attended some meetings in



Germany and the sisters continued to experiment and improve. Helga, more self-confident and communicative, spoke good Italian and used to take on the markets and talk about their products.

At that time, Christina Zofall, Australian born feltmaker, who had been living in Switzerland for many years and recently has moved to France, had been invited to the Italian weavers' meeting in Leumann, close to Turin. Her fine felt was absolutely new! We knew very little about felt in Italy, and it was not clear where to go and learn how to make it. I remember asking my weaving friends from other European countries about this, picked up some photocopies from Belgium and heard reports from a gallery in Kiev, Ukraine about "summer feltmaking meetings held in Hungary..." but where, in Hungary?

Gina Morandini, textile artist and former teacher at an Applied Arts School always cultivated a lot of contacts in Europe. She met Mari Nagy, learned feltmaking in 1997 and invited her two years later to hold a seminar in Valcellina, at the Associazione Arti Tessili summer event, organised by Morandini each year. It was enough to learn the basics. Gina passed on teaching the craft from 2001 and uses felt in her artistic research. Gina presented a feltwork at the 2004 Textile Arts biennial in Chieri. Her teaching activity had interesting outcomes: Barbara Girardi, costume designer and collaborator to the Associazione Arti Tessili, received a special mention at the edition 2002 of the Valcellina prize for young textile artists. In her 'Skin 01' she felted coconut fibres with wool on a metallic structure giving life to a interesting sculpture.

In 2000, felt began to be a less mysterious practice in the weavers' meetings of the Schwabl sisters. The work of makers from Switzerland and Finland came into view - coloured, soft, light felts...

The Milanese Associazione Tintura Naturale, specializing in vegetable dyes and textile practices, organised a felt course in 2001 on the use of merino wool and silk, held by a young Finnish feltmaker, an absolute novelty! The outcome is history: suppliers became known, experiments started to flourish, coloured fleeces were coming from Germany, natural wools from Tyrol. Helga and Elisabeth were invited to teach in towns from Turin to Milan... and every time a circle of lovers of felt was formed. Their intense activities began to be



1: Gloves by Eva Basile; naturally dyed merino

visible; felt was sold in fashionable shops but there were also dreadful handbags sold in markets for a few Euro. They were badly finished. Their big, showy flowers soon came detached and the felt started pilling. Since we did not know what a 'good' felt was, some unlucky buyers were of the opinion that felt was indeed interesting but did not last. It has not been easy to convince people that felt needs to be well-finished, that the handbags with the big daisies were the result of quick and poor quality work and could also in some cases, be a result of exploitation of labour in developing countries.

It was time to organize a more structured event. Josef and Hidegard Winkler had attended the school in the Ultental and German feltmakers' meetings. In 2002 they decided to organize the first feltmaking symposium in Italy, from their bordering state, speaking preferably German, helped by some sort of translation. They invited the more expert Austrian, South Tyrolean and German feltmakers and a few Italians. We were very shy, we did not even dare to take our work out from our luggage... fearing comparison with the more expert foreign colleagues although many of us had submitted work for the 'Ein Kleid für Oetzi' exhibition, organized to accompany the event.

Next to the work of well-known international feltmakers we also saw an installation which had a big visual impact. It had been submitted by students of the Academy of fine Arts of Bologna. Their tutor, Vanna Romualdi, had introduced students to fibre art techniques, different from more traditionally accepted ones: tapestry, painting, decoration. Gina Morandini had been invited to hold a short workshop on felt. The students approached the subject with an absolutely free mind, without any prejudice but creative freedom, forcing the technique and seeking a monumental effect with this material. Later felt was investigated and used by other young artists, in the academy. Mela Boev is one of them: her tender and intense creatures won her public esteem from those who had the opportunity to see them in April 2004 at the Valcellina prize for young fibre-artists.

The Aurelia group, composed by Raffaella Norcini



2: 'A colazione da...' by Marina Costantino, Cinzia Tarallo
3: La Chambre by Mela Boev



4: 'Mucca a tappeto' by Eva Basile



5: Hat by Alessandro Stacchiotti

Pala and Alessandro Caioni, use wool in a painterly manner, on a two dimensional surface.

Besides the bursting presence of Vanna Romualdi's students work there were also on display submissions by Barbara Girardi, Danila Schön and Eva Basile.

Danila studied Fashion and Costumes at the Art Institute of Turin and has been working with felt since 1999 together with Boris Blazan. Elisabeth and Helga Schwabl introduced her to felt; she continued her training with Claudia Schmidt and May Jacobsen. She produces hats and clothing and sells them in craft markets.

Marina Costantino and Cinzia Tarallo, both from Piedmont, exhibited at the 2nd Textile Biennial of Art in Chieri, 2002. Marina is a weaver who felts very lovely bags and uses felt to finish off her woven garments.

Alessandro Stacchiotti, a young man from the Marche region, is one of the few men fascinated by feltmaking. He learned the technique at the Ultental school and joined collective projects at Maja Stenz's workshop, in Switzerland. His work is characterized by the use of natural wool and the firm quality of his felt.

Now there are so many artists working with felt that I would need pages and pages to list them all. I must mention, in any case, Silvana Manetti, who produces wonderful scarves, Gaia Clerici, whose felt fashion is sold in fancy boutiques in Milan, and Agostina dalla Mora, who recently published a manual on feltmaking. The Finnish feltmaker and business woman Tiina Arrankoski published the first one, in Italian, some years ago.

In the first two South Tyrol symposia, I was the only feltmaker from the South, living in Florence... In the last ten years the craft has grown in followers and not only in the north, close to the boundaries with Austria and Slovenia where it began, nor Milan, the city of every new fashion and hobby, nor in Piedmont where there is a large group of feltmakers. Now, also due to my teaching activities in the

centre and South, there is felt Umbria, in Rome and also in the more southern regions, in Naples, in Sicily!

The result was an exhibition of Italian felt with which Christina Zofall opened her 'Lana Stratus' gallery and workshop in France in 2003.

Now, at the end of 2005, felt is a well known material. A couple of manuals are available in the book shops and felt has its own space at fairs dedicated to crafts. But the material is still considered unusual, away from hobbyists' or fibre-art environments. Therefore my decision to make hand made felt for my contribution to the CowParade has been very appealing. CowParade is a large public art exposition that takes place in many cities. Life-sized cows, made of resin, are supplied, on which artists create their own works of art.

The felt so far has been perceived as a suitable material to produce accessories; to see a multicoloured work of such large format, not having any utilitarian function, produces curiosity. Most people fail to comprehend that I spent the whole summer putting wool on a ruminating animal!

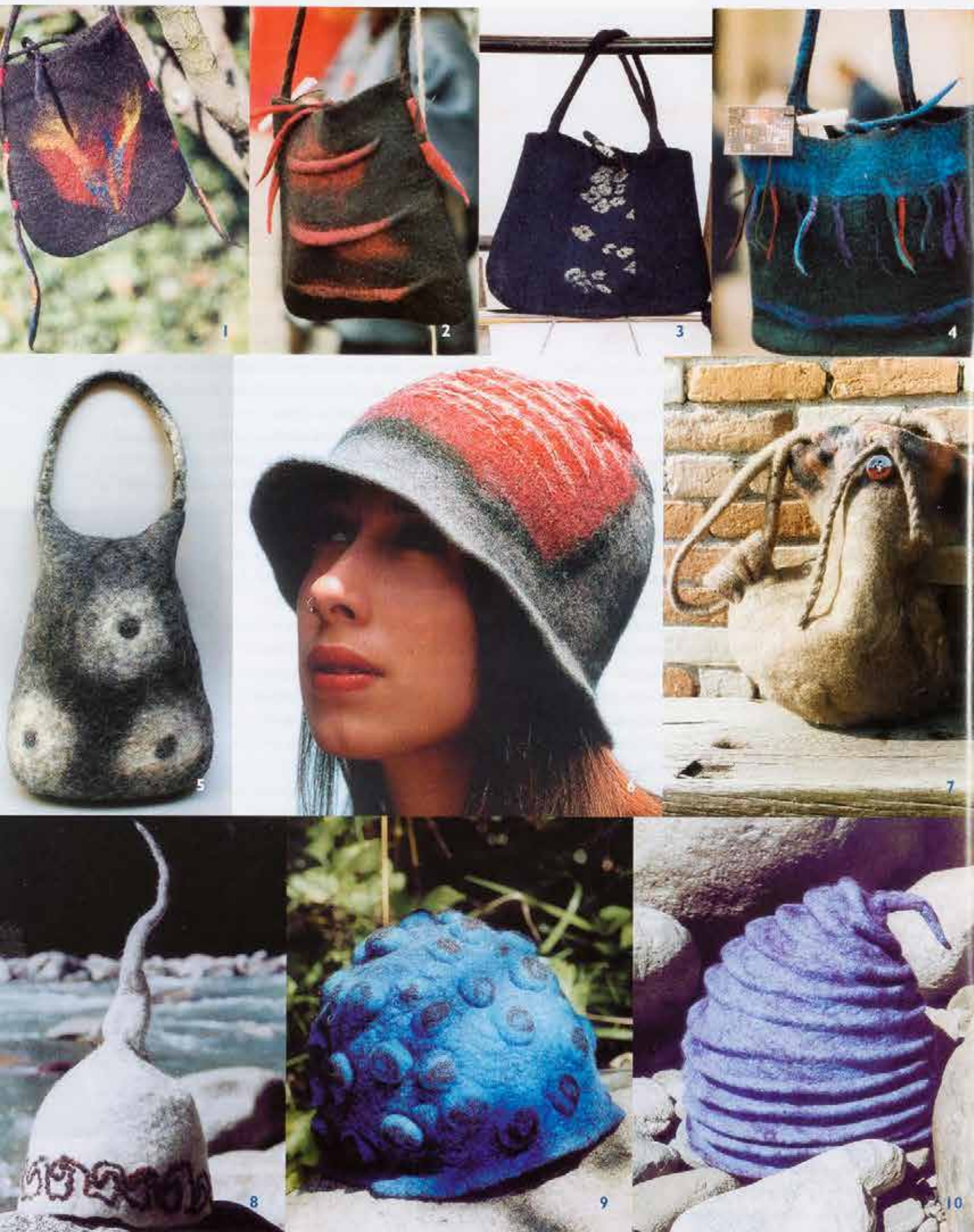
Eva Basile



6: 'L'anima' by Mela Boev



7: Work by the Aurelia group: Alessandro Caioni and Raffaella Norcini Pala
8: Dress by Danila Schön



1, 2, 3 and 4: Bags by Marina Constantino
5: Bag by Eva Basile from On the Map
6: Hat by Daniela Schön

7: Bag by Alessandro Stacchiotti
8, 9 and 10: Hats by Helga and Elizabeth Schwab
Photos: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 8 by Sergio Sui
5, 7, 9 and 10 by the makers

Narnia: a felt experience USA

The costume designer Isis Mussenden grew up in Hollywood and has no childhood experience of reading the chronicles of 'Narnia'. When drawn into the production of this new block buster film, she found a whole new world opening out before her.

Her son on the other hand, is growing up with the stories and she attributes many of his suggestions as the foundations for the costumes of the witch in the story.

When questioned as to how one creates a look for an entire film and an entire new world Mussenden answered, "Research, research and more research! From museums, books, periodicals, paintings, textile designs, organic images, mythological illustrations, anatomy studies etc. To design one needs information first. With that knowledge you can create."

The process of designing costumes for a movie is long and complex. The character is examined as to who, where, why and what are the doing - costume needs to reflect the character, the circumstances and what ever action is in store for them. Many sketches and ideas are produced and a working model of the costume is created. Once it is seen that the costume will fulfil its functions the textiles for the actual costume and all accessories will need to be sourced or created.

Mussenden says the witch was particularly challenging, with a year's worth of work and 97 sketches none of which were popular with the director. She decided to throw it all out and start afresh.

Some of her son's ideas were very valuable here. The idea of having wanted an ice crown that melted away, started things moving and adding "my son's concept of her 'evolving' as opposed to 'changing' clothing. She is organic, half witch/half giant, not human - the series of changes in her costume started to take on a meaning."

The witch is transformed in the time of the movie and this is symbolized by the evolution of the colours in her gowns, which necessitated the production of seven complete outfits. This is Mussenden's description of the building up of each gown: "The first layer is a velvet dyed with resist areas for a modelled look. The second layer is felted wool and silk. The raw materials were dyed and then felted to fit the shape of each dress. The sheen of the silk is what gave us icy lines and began to create the depth. The final layer is lace.

The metallic thread and organza pieces, also dyed, were sewn onto a burn out fabric. We would draw the ice crackle from a small scale to a larger scale at the hem of the dress. This gives us the illusion of height - she is a giant. Then a seamstress would machine endless amounts of thread over the lines and finally we would burn out the back. Each panel was made this way for all of the six dresses. Once the lace was ready we would hand sew it on to the felted dress and then and only then the dress would truly come to life. Tilda Swinton, the actress who plays the White Witch in the movie, used to comment on how amazing it was when we would lay on that last layer. It was always a little piece of magic."

Interesting to have an insight into all the research, consideration and work that goes into creating just one single character for a movie full of wonderful costuming and stories. As for the felt in the costumes - it was just the most suitable tool to hand for the designer, which is why I concentrated more on the process of design in which felt became to best tool to use.

Fiona Wright

<http://costumes.narniaweb.com/mussendeninterview.asp>
An interview with the designer of the white witch costumes who graduated with a BFA Fashion from the Parsons School of Design in New York.

Trip to Georgia

Georgia, a small country on the eastern coast of the Black Sea, has become more accessible to the western world since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Based in the capital Tbilisi is an association of artists, designers and historians formed to overcome the isolation of Georgian textile art and to create links with other countries.

Since 1993 this Georgian Textile Group has organised international symposia every two years. Autumn 2005 saw the fifth such symposium in Tbilisi followed by a felt seminar. For some years I have had the ambition to visit

Georgia, inspired by tales from other feltmakers and this time was fortunate to be invited to attend. My time was short but one day in Tbilisi gave me a brief taste of the city before travelling to Kakheti, the most eastern province of Georgia where our base was to be Telavi, the main city in this wine growing agricultural region.

The group travelling to Kakheti included the organisers Nino Kipshidze and Nino Tchatchkiani, Inge Evers and Leonie Smith from the Netherlands, May Bass, New Zealand, Isabella Walhutter, Austria and Liz Clay and myself UK plus a group of artisans from Tbilisi. The mini-bus was packed with bodies, luggage and felt making equipment. For three days workshops were planned in Zemo and Kvemo Alvani in the wool carding

Right: Rolling the burka in heavy cloth without a roller
See also inside back cover

stations of these neighbouring villages. Participants in the workshops were local people, including a group of teenage girls and the artisans from Tbilisi; tutors were the visiting feltmakers. These workshops were fulfilling, the students artistic and keen to learn new skills, the tutors learning to cope in situations quite unlike those taken for granted at home.

The carding station at Zemo Alvani is run commercially, with a full run of carding and spinning machinery, producing firmly spun two-ply wool from local sheep then dyed in mainly natural dyes. This wool is used to knit traditional patterned socks and slippers, bringing employment to the village. At Kvemo Alvani the carding station is being developed by a local artisan, producing hand rolled felt products from the local wool.

After three days of workshops there was a day of celebration of felt. Items made at the workshops, including a carpet made under the direction of Inge Evers, were put on display, local people brought craft items for sale and a tremendous feast of local food was provided. The highlight was the visit of local feltmakers demonstrating the making of a felt rug called a teka and a traditional shepherd's cloak called a burka.

The carpet was laid out on a large sheet of synthetic fabric, rather than a reed mat, showing some signs of moving with the times. First the border, cut from pre-felt with large scissors, was laid out and other parts of the design were formed with thick rovings rolled by hand. The pattern was then covered with a thick batt of fibre carded at the carding station and the edges strengthened with an extra layer. The edges of the cloth were folded over to preserve the shape of the rug, very hot water was liberally applied with a galvanised watering can and everything was rolled tightly round a wooden pole and cross tied carefully along the whole length. It was then felted on the table the feltmakers working in unison and rolling with their arms



Constructing the burka. Left to right: felt stretched into shape and folded, shoulder seams stitched, cotton lining hand stitched in place

The burka was laid out on a heavy cotton type cloth; again the fibres used were in carded batts and wet out with hot water. The cloth and fibres were rolled up



Photos: Sheila Smith

together without a roller or ties. It was opened up, the edges stretched, the felt rolled up on itself, the roll wrapped in the cloth again without a roller and rolled again four times in four different directions. The felt was then opened up, stretched into shape and the edges folded in to the centre make the sides of the cloak and re-rolled to harden with the edges still folded. The process of making a burka would normally be carried out in a communal situation with a group working together, eating and drinking and working through the night. After the felting is completed the felt is brushed with wire brushes, washed, dried and brushed again. Several burkas would be made together and as one is left to dry another would be started. After completion the shoulders are stitched together and a half lining is stitched into the cloak.

Each evening we went sightseeing, the region is beautiful with a backdrop of the Caucasus mountains in the distance. We visited

Alvani cathedral, beautiful monasteries, and attended two unforgettable traditional Georgian banquets with much food, wine, music, dancing and endless speeches proposed by the Tamada or toastmaster who presided over the proceedings.



The trip was unforgettable, an insight into the lives of people who extended friendship and hospitality to their visitors in spite of many hardships.
Sheila Smith

Sheep fleeces

There have been a number of enquiries as to the availability of 'fleeces from sheep not kept for meat' and so I will try to clarify a few points. Fleeces are usually sheared from adult sheep that are kept for rearing lambs and would not themselves normally be sold for meat (except for sheep that are too old, who can only be sold as 'culls' and would probably go for pet food).

Lambs which are generally reared to be sold for meat are not usually shorn. The price paid by the British Wool Marketing Board for fleeces in general is so extremely low that many farmers do not bother even sending their fleeces in, which makes keeping a flock of sheep for their wool alone totally uneconomic.

The only real possibility is to find someone who just keeps a couple of sheep as 'lawn mowers' may well want the fleeces for themselves, but obviously these people are hard to find. Also, they may not have the type of fleeces required – most of the fleeces that are readily available in Britain are not good for general felt making!

The best solution would be to keep some sheep of the required breed oneself – but do not be tempted to keep a 'tame' ram; they can be very unpredictable, possessive, and dangerous if kept as pets...

Maggie Whiteman

Sheepfarmer and IFA co-ordinator

Moral Fibre UK

A change of owner but not a change of heart...

I started the wool business Moral Fibre to make rare breed wool more readily available to other felt makers. I was already buying more and more fleeces from local farmers and forging links with people who were similarly interested in making better use of our indigenous breeds of sheep. So the business has happily encouraged me to follow an exciting trail down many muddy tracks, in search of lovely colours and textures of wool. This experimentation with various breeds has been the guiding force that underpins my work with felt and also continues to inform my teaching.

I am as committed as ever to the use of local wool and feel strongly that indigenous breeds of sheep play an integral role in the maintenance of our traditional farming landscape – something we can actively play a part in promoting. My own path as a felt maker has recently taken a different turn towards product design and an interest in the possibilities of mass production using industrial methods.

So it is a time of change for me and therefore a wonderfully happy coincidence that Faith Roper approached me about taking over Moral Fibre, just when

I need more time to devote to both teaching & new projects.

In partnership with Yuli Somme, under the name COCOON, we are developing a business manufacturing felt burial shrouds as well as other products. Our new workshop is in Devon UK, on Dartmoor and with the support of the Dartmoor National Park Sustainability Fund we will be making use of local Dartmoor wool: white faced Widescombe, grey-faced Dartmoor, Devon & Cornwall Longwool.

I first met Faith Roper when she came on one of my workshops: she is full of enthusiasm and commitment and will bring new ideas to promoting Moral Fibre as 'the' place to buy wool that makes sustainability its guiding principle, a place that people can go to when searching for something more intrinsically interesting than the stereotype of merino.

As Faith Roper says, "It was the photos of Anne's work on the Moral Fibre website – buckets, boats and bird's wings among leaves and on riverbanks – that inspired me to begin experimenting with natural colours and indigenous fleece. My first purchase from Moral Fibre was some pale buff Merino produced in the Forest of Dean. This wool turned out to be so completely unlike anything I had handled before, unrolling from the bag in a thick batt with a soft, unusual texture, that I began exploring the full range.

Now I find myself following the same muddy tracks discovered by Anne and finding some new ones of my own. Farmers and smallholders are always keen to see their wool being used, so it is not difficult to get hold of a wide range of top quality fleece. The problem for a business like Moral fibre is the time scale and costs involved in getting it washed and carded.

So I have bought a Mill. A number of exciting possibilities are in the air concerning premises, and by Summer 2006 the Mill will be up and running. Moral Fibre's ethical base will be reflected in the way we process the wool, continuing Anne's early commitment to bringing the principles of bio-diversity and sustainability into contemporary textile practice.

The range will include all the British breeds that have useful felting characteristics and those such as Gotland and Icelandic that are now produced here in the UK. We will be able to offer both batts and slivers, the batts being large enough to use as a base for wall-hangings or rugs, saving the time and effort involved in laying out.

Visit: www.moralfibre.uk.com

www.feltcocoon.co.uk

www.woolgatherers.net

Anne Belgrave

KC Lowe: award finalist Alaska

The NICHE Awards announcements arrived when I was doing a holiday show at the Anchorage Museum. What I thought was a packet of booth information turned out to be the letters of congratulation, press releases and other related material. The 700 or so vendors and shoppers in the Museum at the moment were exposed to an ear splitting whoop of joy and a spontaneous, if, thankfully, brief, happy dance (Oh, dear Americans – so lacking in decorum) when I realized that not one, but two pieces were Awards finalists.

The under-dye on these pieces was a collaboration with Margaret MacKay of Soay Studios in West Tarbert on the Isle of Harris. In the fall of 2004, I brought about 300 metres of silk sari and about 100 metres of silk chiffon, crinkle crepe and gauze with me to Scotland with the intent of dyeing most of it up in a crotal* bath so that I would have plenty of working material for the following year. My friends, Margaret and her husband Donald, housed me, fed me and put aside their own pressing projects to graciously drive me about the Island to gather crotal. Margaret supervised the pre-dye bath preparation of crotal and silk. Donald fired up the cast iron cauldron and kept the peat fires steady so that there would be no scorching of the fibre. Cathy Campbell, a friend of the MacKay's, helped keep watch over the simmering pot, picked crotal clingers off of the fabric and helped lug heavy containers of wet silk about and volunteered her clothes lines to which we pegged the yardage for drying. Much of this activity took place as gale force winds were mustering to heave all sorts of things, including a couple of fishing boats, on to the island beaches. *Crotal: common term for a group of lichen that grows on rocks locally; once part of a major dye industry

White 20-micron Australian merino wool fibre was felted through three and a half metres of crotal dyed eyelet chiffon and then over dyed to make 'Sunrise/Sunset'. Clear lurex fibre inclusions felted in with the wool fibre catch the light for added dimension. The piece can be worn as a shawl, tied as a shrug, wrapped as a paraeo** and is sufficiently gauzy to wear as a thickish muffler/scarf. Hanging sleeves are also incorporated in the piece, which would allow an owner to hang it as wall décor. **Paraeo: rectangular piece of cloth; term commonly used to describe the lower body covering worn by Polynesian women.

Sunrise/Sunset by KC Lowe
See also front cover



Crotal dyeing

'Aurora Dreaming the Sea' is made of white 20-micron Australian merino wool fibre felted through 33 metres of silk sari and crinkle crepe, with trilobal nylon and tussah silk fibre surface design inclusions, before it was over dyed. It also has incorporated hanging sleeves. The piece was juried as wearable art, but actually mounted as a wall hanging in the Earth, Fire and Fibre XXV Exhibition early in 2005 before receiving the NICHE Awards recognition in the fall of 2005.

I have finally come partially into this century and now have an informational website at www.kclowe.com.
KC Lowe. (Kayleen)



Photos: Chris Arnd Studios

Inspired by Samurai Australia



Samurai outfit by Lorraine McArthur

My grandson Jordan spent a year in Japan after graduating with a degree in Japanese Studies from Deakin University, Melbourne, Victoria. Jordan was also teaching Kendo, competing at a high level and was selected for the Australian team.

His activities inspired me to look at ethnic designs and research the Edo period. The simplicity of clothing used by the Samurai, the Japanese warrior casts, intrigued me. Each garment sported three bands of colour to denote which Samurai warrior the attendant belonged to. I had been experimenting with patterns for pants suitable for felt and found fisherman's pants to be most like the Samurai's as they have a pleat at the waist to fit almost any size.

The fact that these warriors seemed to be so fierce caused me to place the Peace symbol on the back of the shirt – my 'tongue in cheek' type comment. I decided to base the shirt and pants on black voile, leave the overcoat unlined and took fifty* kg of our own wool to be carded and combed into 6 foot batt rolls. Two thicknesses of the batt wool were laid out which was also needle felted.

Lorraine McArthur

* Not all of it was used for this project! Lorraine's latest achievement was to felt 32 metres for a medieval tent, using a market umbrella as a support.

Is this a record? Scotland

After a hectic January and February I wondered if making a piece of felt each with 1,010 children, 13-14 years old, in 3 weeks was a record – just me by myself. While they were engaged in the felt making I told them about felt history, felt in the present day and also about running a business.

Sadly out of all those children, only one had seen felt been made before. However both boys and girls went away with their work and newly learned skills and I went for a well earned rest.

Liz Brown

Vocational qualifications Finland

In September 2005 a new kind of education, targeted at experienced feltmakers was organized by the Jyväskylä Vocational Institute, College of Arts & Crafts in Petäjävesi (previously Central Finland Arts & Crafts Institute, home of the felt symposium in 1999). Fourteen feltmakers enrolled as students: Leena Sipilä, Arja Jäppinen, Marjo-Riitta Kaminen-Kandelin, Miia Kirkkomäki, Salla Kirkkomäki, Kaisa Kotanen, Päivi Laurikainen, Terhi Leppä, Sirpa Mäntylä, Kaisa Paavola, Eeva Piesala, Eija Pirttilähti, Elina Saari and Miika Saarinen.

They succeeded in entering designs to show at the Grace Barrand Design Centre in Nutfield, Surrey. (15 July – 26 August) and hope to meet IFA members and friends at their exhibition: FIETTI – unique felt designs of interior furnishings, wearables and accessories. (See diary)

The college offers three levels of competence-based qualifications: vocational, further vocational and specialist qualifications, defined in collaboration with business and working life representatives. They are directly based on real work tasks, include feltmaking and the required vocational skills are defined and published by the National Board of Education. (Also see opportunities)

Sirpa Mäntylä



Felt sculptures by Elina Saari. "My workshop is in my sauna and felt likes it hot and steamy!" More pictures on following pages.
Photos: Kivi Suomalainen



1: Down by Teva Pesälä: wall-hanging textile. Puku's multicoloured needle punch.



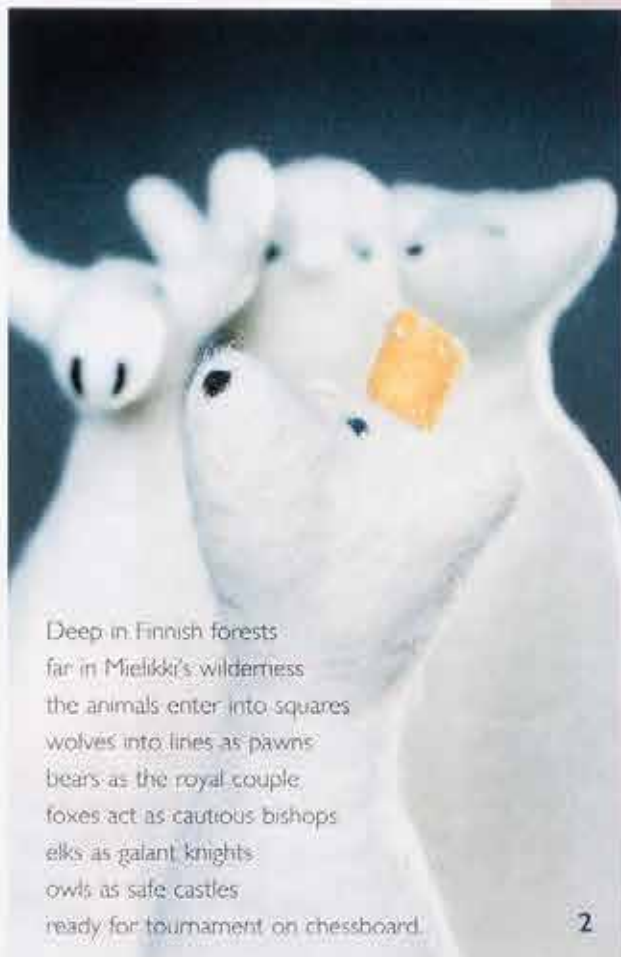
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2: Chess board with chessmen by Eija Piittilähti, 100% Finsheep wool
3: Aqua-Life by Kaisa Paavola, felted wall lamp.
4: Birchwood by Kaisa Kotanen, four pieces, felt dividers, 100% Finsheep wool



4

5: Miss Snowflake by Mika Sebastian Saarnen, wall hanging: Finsheep wool, linen, cotton thread and artificial pearls, inspired by the great Art Nouveau artists Alfons Mucha and Ivan Bilibin. "My main products are interior felt textiles."



Deep in Finnish forests far in Mielikki's wilderness the animals enter into squares: wolves into lines as pawns, bears as the royal couple, foxes act as cautious bishops, elks as galant knights, owls as safe castles ready for tournament on chessboard.

2



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6 and 7: Puzzle by Marjo-Riitta Käräinen-Kandelin, twelve piece wall hanging, 100% Finsheep wool, hand dyed
8: Hilde by Terhi Leppä, felt carpet, 100% Finsheep wool
9: Rokigarden, 1, 2 and 3 by Päivi Laurikainen, blankets of 100% Finsheep wool
10 and 11: Felted poncho or vest by Leena Sipilä of merino wool with glittering silk fabric decoration. "The ideas for my products arise from the Finnish nature and folklore." Photos: Kirsi Suomalainen

19



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8

Being a mentor Australia

I remember being asked if I could help Tullia Jack (whom I have known since she was a little girl) do a bit of felting. The rest is a bit of a blur, though I do remember saying "Mmm... It is a very ambitious project for a first time felter, perhaps we should start with something small and easy." Somehow between the question and that statement I became what is commonly known as a mentor.

Tullia with youthful enthusiasm grasped the bull by the horns and said, "I think we can do it... let's start with the full length jacket!" and I somewhat apprehensively followed. Thus began a new journey for both of us.

The life of a felt maker is always interesting, infinitely challenging – always inspiring.

This journey is inextricably linked to my journey as a human being and thus it has its ups and downs and boring bits and interesting moments! This was definitely not going to be a 'boring bit'.

I qualified as a teacher with a textile component, have been felt making for a over a decade and have just made the leap to felt making as my full time profession. With this comes new responsibilities and new opportunities. One of these I now know is being a mentor. Work began in earnest. We went through a process of talking and

listening, working out ideas and computations of shrinkage rates and such. Tullia sourced fabrics and collaborated with her college teachers. She also helped me set up for classes and roll felts that otherwise would have taken me an age.

There were memorable fittings of wet, felty clothing – particularly one piece that did not end up in the collection. It was the full length felted jacket which Tullia's brother had to put on wet and rubbed to shape on his body. That is brotherly love – especially in my studio in the middle of winter! We laughed a lot, talked about our lives and families, told lots of stories as we felted madly and at times my son came down and played us cello and guitar when the rolling got a little tedious. Tullia's boyfriend Dave and sister Rosie were enlisted as well to help with the rolling. There was much moaning and groaning – "surely it is done" but I just kept insisting it needed to be "harder".

With teaching comes much learning for the student and also the tutor. With each student comes fresh experience and that is a fantastic opportunity to learn and expand skills. A new student is unfamiliar with the medium and often will come up with ideas and questions that really stretch the imagination. "How can we make this happen together?" Sometimes it is a bit scary when a student has an idea and wants assistance to help him or her bring their idea to life. It requires taking a deep considered breath and saying "Yes, I think we can do this" and then working out how!

In an age where mass production is so endemic, the making of things by hand takes on such significance and the passing on of skills becomes so important. People, whether they be students or teachers, have so much to offer each other.

So... in my capacity as a feltmaker I mentored Tullia – a fashion design student – working on three beautiful garments in silk georgette – all non-felted with felt accessories.

Tullia entered the Student Section of the 2005 Delphin Australian Fashion Design awards and her theme was 'Bushfire' – very apt for our sweltering summer season. On Friday 4 November the preliminary judging was held at Varsity Lakes on the

Gold Coast, Australia. Tullia's very brave brother Christian and two friends (from preschool days!) Julia and Nardu modelled her garments.

The awards, now in their 25th Year, are a national fashion event which provides fashion designers with an extraordinary platform to showcase their talents to a national television audience. The Awards showcase the best of today's designers and discover the talent of tomorrow, providing them with the chance to promote their designs to the industry and the shopping public.

It was a great thrill for Tullia and I when her work was accepted into the finals from 56 entries. A frenzied week of activities for Tullia followed and the finals of the 2005 Delphin Australian Fashion Awards were telecast.

On Friday 11 November at the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre, Broadbeach, Tullia and her family gathered at the finals for the announcement of the winners. There were twelve other finalists all with stunning outfits.

Professional models were fitted for her garments and they were off. It was so exciting. The night of the finals my husband Murray had booked us as a family to the Queensland Symphony Orchestra performance of Beethoven's 9th Symphony – the night had been planned for four months so I couldn't absent myself from such an auspicious family event. I waited patiently through all the movements of Beethoven and then ran outside to check my mobile phone for a message. It was nerve wracking to say the least and some of those Beethoven movements are very, very slow!

Eventually a little message came through that said "Well done" from a friend and right after that the phone rang with the news from Tully that she had won. It was such a thrill. My mum spent the night glued to the television camera in hand – taking photos of the TV set with Tullia and her garments on it!! Beethoven's 'Ode to Joy' will always have a special significance for me and such great memories.

Being a mentor is a journey but one that has very rich rewards. Tully was also mentored by her fabulous teachers at Moreton TAFE on design and garment construction and though we all worked separately Tully managed to pull the whole lot together harmoniously in her exciting designs. She is a creative, talented person whose enthusiasm and flair will make her own creative journey a joyful and exciting one I'm sure. What a great time we had... and yes I'd do it again!

I'm so glad I didn't dampen her youthful enthusiasm when I suggested something a little easier – it was fun to rise to the challenge and I am a better feltmaker for it. *Wendy Bailey*

Wendy is a member of the Australian Textile Arts and Surface Design Association.

Jacqui Morton UK

Natural and organic forms have been a primary inspiration for my work and as a felt maker this has enabled me to exploit the many properties of felt and to create a body of work that reflects nature.

The work explores the tactile, sculptural and three dimensional potentials of hand made felt incorporating the Japanese shibori dyeing process as a method of embellishment to create colour when hand dyeing the various fibres.

I have named the scarf collection 'Seascapes' as it is inspired by the dynamic changes created along the Cornish coastline. I concentrated on the structure and surface of the beach, examining pebbles and the shibori patterns found in nature like the ripples in the sand created by the wind and the vein like appearance of the sand caused by the channelling of the water.

The colour palette chosen depicts the seashore's muted colours of blues and browns whilst interpreting nature's pattern on the landscape.

The manipulation of the surface, reconstruction and transformation of wool into felt is a voyage of discovery that continues unabated enabling exploration to cross the boundaries whilst investigating and creating new techniques. The unpredictable nature of both felt and dyeing adds to the aesthetic of the work making each item truly unique.

Since graduating from Huddersfield University last year I have exhibited at the New Designers Graduate Show, The London Art and Design Show, The Knitting & Stitching Show, Harrogate and the Designer Crafts at the Mall Galleries, and will continue to develop the processes which have influenced my work to date. *Jacqui Morton*



Left: Pebbles on the beach
Above: Pebbles scarf with shibori shapes by Jacqui Morton
(See more pictures on following page)
Photos: Jacqui Morton



From left: Model in hand dyed silk dress, Tullia in black, Christian in silk georgette, Tully lined hamm pants, non-felted Merino, hand dyed, felt buttons on cuffs, felt cap merino, Julia in two piece outfit, hand dyed, silk georgette, non-felted, fully lined and felt buttons. Photo: Dean Hargreaves

Right: Sand ripples.
Far right: Ripple shibori
scarf by Jacqui Morton.
(See article on previous
page)
Photos: Jacqui Morton



Feltnakers' *hints & tips*

Dyeing safely

I have got a stove and hood in my garage with good lighting all around. All the pots, measuring cups and spoons and the space are dedicated to dyeing.

Getting the dissolved dye on the skin is nowhere near as bad as breathing in the dust - the dry dye powder. I got this information from the MSD sheets, which I requested from Prochemical, the company from which I buy the dyes.

Dyepots are never brought to a full boil - it would felt the wool. Bring them to a very gentle simmer; thus, there is not a lot of 'steamage'. Don't open the lids of the pots until they are well cooled, which also reduces the amount of fumes.

But it is the dry dye dust that can be dangerous. You must handle the dye powder as if it were dangerous. Don't have fans blowing when you're measuring out powder - you want the air to be very still.

Chad Hagen teaches the construction of a little dye measuring chamber into which your hands, your scale and your measuring instruments fit. (Construct this from a large enough box, cut out the walls and leave the edges and corners for the bare structure. Cover in clear plastic so that you can see what you're doing.)

A respirator is for fumes. Our vastly larger concern is for the powder, and that can be taken care of with a simple dust mask. Wear gloves, a dust mask, a

large shirt that you'll leave in the dyeing area and not wear all over the house, carrying powder with you like Typhoid Mary dispensing virus. Wear 'dyeing shoes' that you also don't wear into the house. The big dyeing companies can't control what we're doing, so we have to practice our art safely.

Ruth Walker

UFOs

Wrap all your unfinished felt objects in newspaper, invite few friends to sit in a circle, put on some music for 'Pass the Parcel'. When the music stops, friends finish the project in hand.

Textile Fibre Forum, Number 80

Creating texture

To get different kinds of effect on a nunofelt jacket, I integrate three types of fabrics: 100% silk, 80/20 silk/synthetics and 100% synthetic. Agostina Zwilling

Problems with static?

Try boiling a couple of pots of water on the stove, get some laundry going to create more humidity or wait for the weather to change. Shona Schofield in New Zealand finds that she can only machine card early in the morning, wait until it rains or have a humidifier going and squirt water straight onto the fleece or into the air.

Stiffer hats

You can make a pretty stiff hat with at least 120g Merino. Increase amount of

layers, start with a template twice as large as you want to end up with and keep working it until it fits, steaming and stretching if it's too small.

Keeping felt clean

Myra Lenburg uses Scotchgard on her felt handbags. It doesn't affect the handling of the felt but really helps keep the bags cleaner.

Sliced pin cushions

Carol Marston takes the damp felt rolls, wraps them in plastic and freezes them... that way, an electric knife will not grab at the fibres and will make perfect cuts through the 'felt sausage'. They will need to thaw out and be left to dry if you want flat cushion bottoms. If you put them in the dryer at this point, it tends to round out the bottoms of the cushions.

p.s. Chris White once created a giant green caterpillar with a basic batt about 16" high before wetting down which went down to about 4 or 5" diameter after rolling.

Incorporating other matters

Ewa Kuniczak believes it is far easier to felt fine layers successfully rather than thick ones. Furthermore, with fine layers, you can incorporate open weave fabrics, knitting, fancy yarns and snippets of exotic fabric to create interest, pattern and textures that will show through the finished felt.

FeltWEST, Number 13

Feltnakers' *diary*

Diary dates and regional reports, by post or email to
Christine Branch, 14 Garden Hey Road, Meols, Wirral
CH47 5AT branchbc@yahoo.co.uk

Studio workshops

Anita Larkin Australia

Felting for groups at Rainbow Farm
150 Wyalla Road, Jamboeroo NSW 2533
Anita.Larkin@hotmail.com

ACT Textile Network Australia

• Second Thursday monthly
Upper Lecture Theatre
Canberra School of Art
barbara.jackson@canberra.act.edu.au

Canberra Region Feltnakers Australia

• 1-2 introductory workshops per month
Westwood Farm, Kambah Pool Road
Kambah
Edwina.jans@homemail.com.au

Victorian Feltnakers Australia

• 1-3 day workshops monthly
various tutors
Uniting Church Hall, Normanby Road
Kew, Victoria
Lin Hughes Telephone +[03] 9802 8933

FeltWest inc Australia

• 3rd Saturday each month at Craft House
Clyde Road, Menorca, WA 6050
Telephone 9337 4069
naney@treetopscolors.com.au

Fiona Wright Australia/Canada

• 5-6 August *Nunofelt and Beyond*
Ku-ring-gai Arts Centre, Sydney
T: +02 9413 9771
16-17 September *Sumptuous Surfaces*
Kingston, Canada T: + (613) 386-1869
graham_andrea@cogeco.ca
www.fionawright.com

Grima workshops Denmark

• Every August; week 33 or 34
Kirsten Vejlemand
vejlemand@get2net.dk

Lana Stratus France

• 11 June and 9 July
Introductory feltnaking for beginners
• 23 - 25 June
Choice of personal projects - advanced
Atelier Laine: Feutre Artisanal,
Place de l'église, 38710 Cordeac, Mens
Telephone 0033 0476 34 24 33
zofall.christina@wanadoo.fr

Inge Bauer Germany

Felt workshops - Am Sommerberg 49
D-73252 Lenningen-Schopfloch
Telephone +49 7026 601761
www.ibtextiles.de

Filzrausch Germany

1-2 workshops per month
Frieder Glatzer Studio, Hagenweg 2b
D-37081 Göttingen
Telephone +0551-67515
www.filzrausch.de

Werk Raum Textil e.V. Germany

1-3 days - international tutors monthly
D-73252 Lenningen-Schopfloch
www.werkraum-textil.de

Feltnakers Ireland

• 1-2 July 2006
Airfield House, Dublin
Fine felt with Jenny MacKay
sheila.ahern@ireland.com
www.airfield.ie

Moeder Aarde Netherlands

• June *Shirdak with Kendszekahn*
Toktosunova, from Kyrgyzstan
NL-6136 EB Sittard
Moeder Aarde, Overhoven 71
Telephone 0031-46-4581509
www.wolwerkplaatsmoederaarde.nl

Joke van Zinderen Netherlands

Monthly workshops in Amersfoort
Felting group and visiting tutors
Telephone 0031 33 4754 889
JeveZet@netevenanders.demon.nl

Claudy Jongstra Netherlands

• 9 June 2006 Felting class
Zijdelings, Kapelstraat 93A
NL-5046 CL Tilburg

May Jacobsen Hvistendahl Norway

• 1-7 July 2006
Clothing without Seams - nunofelt
Norwegian Folk Art & Music School
Rauland www.raulandsakademiet.no
may@feltmaker.no

Heartfelt Studio Scotland

• 16-17 September 2006
Absolutely Alpaca - felt or spin
www.heartfeltbyliz.com
Liz.brown@artlover.com

Ballenberg Centre Switzerland

Accredited three year feltnaking course
six modules over three years
CH-3855 Brienz
Telephone +0033 952 8040
www.ballenbergkurse.ch

Humanità Art Center Switzerland

Maya Stenz monthly workshops
Familie Stenz, CH-6558 Cabbiolo
Telephone +091 830 14 81
info@humanita.ch
www.humanita.ch

Mehmet Girgic Turkey

• 13-19 August 2006
Residential workshop in Konya
felter508@yahoo.com

Anne Belgrave UK

• 3-4 June and 9-10 September
making all sorts of felt with rare breed wool
The Chapel on the Welsh Border
Telephone 01544 267 997
anne@moralibre.uk.com

Deborah Roberts UK

• 24-28 July 2006
Experimental Feltnaking
Summer School at Compton Grange,
Wolverhampton, West Midlands
Sian Fletcher Telephone 01902 558164
sian@aes.wolverhampton.gov.uk

Jeanette Appleton UK

• July 22-28 *Lines and Layers*
Summer School
West Dean, Chichester, PO18 0QZ
Telephone +44(0)1243 811301
www.westdean.org.uk
• May 20 *Illustrated Talk*
Cambridge Embroiderers Guild

Margaret Docherty UK

• May, June, July, August
Nunofelting with Shibori
Wearables & Vessels
Ruskin Mill, Nailsworth, Gloucs
T: 01453 833320

Lizzie Houghton UK

Felting in London
Telephone 020 8989 4629
lizzie@lizziehoughton.com

C&G Creative Crafts UK

Open workshops

- 17 June, Embroidery, Machine Embroidery, Patchwork & Quilting, Stumpwork Embroidery.
 - 24 June, Embroidery, Beadneedle Weaving, Felt making, Patchwork & Quilting.
 - 1 July, Creative Computing, Machine Embroidery, Patchwork & Quilting, Design for all Subjects.
- Missenden Abbey, Great Missenden
11am - 4.00pm each day
Telephone 01494 890298

Jean Hicks USA

Hatmaking - West Virginian artists
Buxton and Landstreet Building
Douglas Road, Thomas, WV 26292
Telephone 1-877-686-6233
www.mountainmade.com

Chad Alice Hagen USA

Saturday and Sunday felting for 4-6 people
3-5 Day Intensive Study
chad@chadalicehagen.com

Suzanne Pufpaff USA

Weekends and evenings on the farm
Nashville, Michigan 49073
feltlady@yurtboutique.com

Please note:

Regional meetings in the UK are open to visitors. To update news on workshops, please send your email address or 4 postage stamps to the regional coordinator.

Region 2

- 20 August 2006
- Natural Dyeing at Judy Hardman's
Chris Lines T:01983-409746
arrylines@ntlworld.com

Region 5

- 18 June *Jacob Bags* with Harriet Appleby
 - 26 and 27 September *Strip Felt* master class with Polly Stirling
 - 15 October *Landscapes* with Clare Diprose
- Husborne Crawley Village Hall (near J.13 M1) Delta Blackman
Telephone 01763 231540
d.blackman@ntlworld.com

Region 7

- 7 October, tutor: Rebecca Dallas
Old School Community Assoc. Hall,
Long Melford 10:15 - 4pm
Gill Farlam, Telephone 01379 898077

Region 9

- 30 September - 1 October 2006
Strip Felts with Polly Stirling
- 4 November 2006 *Sumptuous Surfaces* with Jo Brudenell
melanie.bermingham@btinternet.com
Telephone 01543 257749

Region 10

- 18 June - North East Group Project, Inaugural meeting,
Dalton Village Hall, near Thirsk
- 16 July - North East Group Project,
Dalton Village Hall, near Thirsk
for details telephone 01845 523340

Region 11

- 15 July *Layered patterned and stitched felts* with Jackie Lunn
- 9 September *3D vessels* with Jenny Pepper
- 28 - 29 October *Decorated felt balls* with Linda Hume
cathy@rounthwaite.fsnet.co.uk

Region 12

- 24 June *Landscapes* with Clare Diprose, Worcester. Caroline Turner
Telephone 01905 452337
feltmakersregion12@hotmail.co.uk

Exhibitions

Scarf Festival Australia

- June - July 2006
Melbourne Telephone +03 9650 7775
amacdonald@craftvic.asn.au

Indian Dreamings Australia

- June to 30 July 2006
Southern Cross Needlework Gallery
East Gresford, NSW
Telephone: +61 (0)2 49 389 2592

a singular/synthesis Australia

- 26 August - 9 September 2006
including felt by Fiona Wright
Ewart Gallery, Sydney 33 Laurel St,
Willoughby
Telephone +61 (0)2 99586540
workshoparts@tsn.cc

Hat Week Australia

- 1-7 September 2006

Post show auction for 'Beyondblue'
Federation Square, Melbourne
www.hatweek.com.au/

Webermarkt Austria

- 22-23 July 2006
plus felt workshop with Heidi Greb
Textile Kultur Tourismusbüro
Marktplatz 45, A-4170 Haslach

Queen Fabiola Prize Belgium

- November 2006
12th open international lace biennial
Broad interpretation - contemporary
lace B-1000 Brussels
Telephone +32-2/7708670 www.dbk.be

For Chairs and Bodies Denmark

- 17 June - 6 August 2006
New interpretations: upholstery and
fashion. Rundetårn, Copenhagen

Marché des Misbrands France

- 3-5 June 2006
Including felt, Fils et Métiers,
Château Communal, 24360 Varaignes
www.filsmetiers.com

European Textile Art France

- 2-26 June 2006 Maison des Matières
& du Design Textile, Rue Lacordaire,
F-21150 Flavigny sur Ozerain

2nd Textile Art Germany

- 17-18 June 2006
17 of 67 artists held workshops in 2005
Galerie in der Victoriastadt, Berlin
www.textile-art-berlin.de

Ineke Carolus Netherlands

- 16 October - 19 November 2006
Deeper layers of felt art; solo show
Gallery Shirdak, Amsterdam
Telephone 003120 626 6800
www.shirdak.nl

European Art Quilts Netherlands

- June 2006 - trilingual catalogue
4th judged exhibition for Europeans
www.europeanartquilt.com

Wild Hair Clothing Netherlands

- 8 October 2005 - October 2006
plus accessories of feathers, skins and fur
Wereld Museum, Willemskade 25
NL-3016 DM Rotterdam
www.wereldmuseum.rotterdam.nl

Claudy Jongstra Netherlands

- 3 June - 3 September 2006
Retrospective solo exhibition
Nederlands Textielmuseum
Goirkestraat 96, NL-5046 GN Tilburg

Wrapped in Felt Netherlands

- 22 April - 17 June 2006
Viltcontactgroep's 15th anniversary
Museum de Koperen Knop,
Place Hardinxveld - Giesendam
www.koperenknop.nl

Gallery Shirdak Netherlands

- 16 October - 19 November 2006
Solo show by Ineke Carolus
Prinsengracht 192, Amsterdam
Telephone 003 120 626 6800
www.shirdak.nl

Fibre Festival New Zealand

- April 2007 - New Plymouth
www.creativefibre.org.nz

Passages and Transitions Norway

- 7 October 2006
Norwegian Feltmakers Association
www.norskefeltmakere.no

Textile Art Exhibition Scythia

- 14-18 June 2006 plus extended tour
Conference, fashion show, master classes
Kherson, Ukraine
http://anschnei.public.kherson.ua

Wool the Intelligent Fabric Spain

- 21 January 2004 - 30 September 2006
Museu Textil, calle Salmerón 25,
E-08222, Terrassa. www.edm.es

Ballenberg Switzerland

- 10-25 June 2006
2nd 3 year final felt exhibition
alongside Design Biennale Luzern
Ballenberg Heimatwerk (KBH), Brienz
www.ballenbergkurse.ch

Textile Artists Exhibition Turkey

- 1-30 June 2006
Dokuz Eylül University
TR-35320 Izmir

Craven College UK

- 10-11 June 2006
City & Guild end of year felt show
Town Hall, High Bentham
Telephone 015242 61474

Mid Devon Show UK

- Saturday 22 July 2006
Region 1 IFA stand, Tiverton

Ffeisty Ffelters UK

- Including felt by Vivienne Beaumont
- 15-29 October 2006
The Bear Steps Gallery, Shrewsbury
Telephone 01743 356511

Surrey Artists Open Studio UK

- 10, 11 and 15-18 June 2006
Including felt: The Bungalow, Reigate
Road, Buckland RH2 9RE
Telephone 01737 248909
mlaurenson@tiscali.co.uk

North Yorkshire Open Studios UK

- 10/11, 17/18 and 24/25 June 2006
Felt by Jackie Lunn and Jenny Pepper
Slingsby Village Hall, near Malton
www.jennyp.co.uk

Art in Action UK

- 1-16 July 2006, including felt
Waterperry House, Wheatley, Oxford
www.artinaction.org.uk

FILTTI - unique designs UK

- 15 July - 26 August
15 July meet the Finnish feltmakers
Grace Barrand Design Centre, Nutfield,
Surrey. www.gracebarrand.com

South Nottingham College UK

- 28 June - 1 July 2006
City & Guilds Feltmaking final
Nottingham NG2 7GA
standenc@sne.ac.uk

Contemporary Craft Fair UK

- 9-11 June 2006 including Liz Clay
Bovey Tracey, Devon,
Telephone 01626 830612

Contemporary Craft Event UK

- 3-8 and 10-13 October 2006
replacing Chelsea Crafts Fair
Somerset House, Strand, London
www.craftscouncil.org.uk

Ten Plus UK

- 11 March - 4 June 2006
Textile Art including feltworks
Bankfield Museum, Aekroyd Park
Boothtown Road, Halifax HX3 6HG
Telephone 01422 354823/352334
www.calderdale.gov.uk

Touring Felt Display UK

- 5 venues - ICHF Ltd
September 2005 - April 2006
Demo and display coordinator
jane.bolover@ntlworld.com
- For Fingers and a Thumb - UK*
• Autumn 2006 New IFA exhibition
at all Knitting and Stitch Shows
UK and Ireland www.feltmakers.com
- Twisted Thread - UK*
• 17-20 August Festival of Quilts
- 14-17 September Knitting & Stitching
Birmingham NEC [NEW]
- 12-15 October Alexandra Palace,
London
- 2-5 November RDS Dublin
- 23-26 November Harrogate International
www.twistedthread.com

Art of the Stitch Biennial UK

- 14 May - 18 June 2006 touring from
Royal West of England Academy
Queens Road, Clifton, Bristol BS8 1PX

Made in the Middle UK

- Contemporary Craft from West Midlands
Touring from November 2006
Rugby Art Gallery and Museum
www.craftspace-touring.co.uk

Quilt Art 20 UK

- 27 May - 23 July 2006
The Harley Gallery, Welbeck, Worksop
Nottinghamshire S80 3LW
- August - October 2006
Musée du Textile, rue du Parc
F-68470 Husseren, Weserling

Rhythms of Nature UK

- including felt by Ann Morgan
- 26 May - 27 June 2006
Upfront Gallery, Penrith, Cumbria
Telephone 017684 84538
www.upfront.co.uk

Contemporary Textile Art Ukraine

- 14-18 June 2006
6th international biennial exhibition
anschnei@public.kherson
(see opportunities)

Women in Textile Art USA

- 12 September - 12 October 2006
'Man + Woman = Creation'
3rd international miniature biennial
N. America Costa Rica Cultural Center
San José www.wta-online.org

Fiberart International USA

• 14 April – 19 August 2007
19th triennial juried exhibition
at the Society for Contemporary Craft
Pittsburgh Centre for the Arts
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
www.fiberartinternational.org

Conferences

7th World Merino Australia

• 1–24 July 2006
12 July Merino Innovation Day
Including felt in fashion parade
Egerton, Upper Swan
Home of the Grange Merino Stud
www.merino.com.au/conference

Geelong Forum Australia

• 24–30 September 2006
including felt workshops
Geelong Grammar School, Coria,
Victoria tafta@inet.net.au

Textile Society of America Canada

• 11–14 October 2006
Textile Narratives and Conversations
International related disciplines
10th Symposium, Nova Scotia, Toronto

Kartehuset Denmark

• 17–18 June 2006
Inspiration Weekend Vesterskovvej 8
5792 Aarslev www.kartehuset.dk

Grima Kursusweekend Denmark

• 25–27 August 2006 in Assens
Choice of five workshops: Bente Toft,
Birgit Vogler, Charlotte Buch, Karin
Graungaard Petersen, May Hvistendahl
bjlykke@post.tele.dk

7th Textile Triennial Finland

• 1 June – 31 July 2006
50th anniversary of TEXO
Amos Andersson Museum, Helsinki
www.ornamo.fi/texto

Natural Dyes Symposium India

• 6–12 November 2006
UNESCO supported in Hyderabad
www.unesco.org/culture/crafts

5th Felt Conference Italy

• 23–25 June 2006, Choice of 7 day
workshops
• 22, 26–28 June International pre and

post workshops, Lichtenburg, I-39010
Nals. Fax: 0039 0471 678108
hildegard.winkler@lichtenburg.at

2nd White Circle Mongolia

• July and August 2006
Conference and workshops
bayan_duuren@yahoo.com

Creative Fibre Fest New Zealand

• April 2007 – New Plymouth
www.creativefibre.org.nz

Aotearoa Textiles New Zealand

• 3–7 October 2006
Regional Forum including felt
Lindale Campus, Whitireia Polytechnic,
Kapiti Campus, Paraparaumu
www.mannmaid.com.au

Wool is Gold Norway

• 10–20 August 2006
8 workshops and 10 lectures, on the
west coast. Show of 50 bags and purses.
Karin Flatoy Svarstad +47 55 13 68 88
www.sommerakademiet.com

6th Textile Art Event Ukraine

• 14–18 June 2006
Kherson, Southern Ukraine
Ludmila Egorova +38 552 551127
<http://anshnei.pulic.kherson.ua>

IFA Conference and AGM UK

• 29 March – 1 April 2007
Tutors: Birgitte Krag-Hansen (DK)
May Jacobsen Hvistendahl (NO)
Clare Diprose & Liz Clay (UK)
University of Wales, Swansea
Convenor: Kirsten Hill-Nixon
Telephone: (+) 01275 873568
swansea@niscali.co.uk
www.feltmakers.com

ETN Conference UK

• 13–16 September 2007
Goldsmith College, London
Acting host: Professor Janis Jeffries
www.ETN-net.org

Mind and Body USA

• Early June 2007
Kansas City, Surface Design Association
www.surface-design.org

Grand Convergence 2006 USA

• 25 June – 1 July 2006

Including eight felt workshops with
Briony Jean Foy, Sharon Costello,
Chunghue Lee & Jiyoung Chung, Karen
Selk, Mary Fisher & Loretta Oliver
Handweavers Guild biennial
Grand Rapids, Michigan
www.weavespindye.org

MidWest Felters Symposium USA

• 26–30 July 2006, Local and
international tutors, Wisconsin
www.susansfibershop.com/

Opportunities

Wanted

There is an ongoing need for new
images of feltworks for the IFA website.
Photos, slides or CDs.
pmgreaves@btinternet.com

IFA Funding Scheme

A bursary of two funds of up to £500 is
available, or one fund of £1,000. Main
aim: to support work which promotes
feltmaking. Please apply to IFA
chairperson for full details. (See our
members' newsletter for more details).
Next deadline: 1 November 2006

Blue Hat Project Australia

Hat Week supports Beyondblue, the not-
for-profit Australian initiative to raise
community awareness of depression and
funds from an auction after the
exhibition. Think about what 'the blues'
mean to you; what colour might help
you to fight 'the blues'? Send a photo of
your finished hat. More info:
www.hatweek.com.au/
Deadline: 30 June 2006

Artist in residency Finland

Only professional or well-known,
experienced felters are invited to apply.
Possibility to work in a well-equipped
200 sq.m. workshop, organize advanced
courses for felters, create and promote
domestic and foreign contacts, organize
and create a felt exhibition and exchange
program of exhibitions and donate a
new felt work to the school's collection.
Self-catering accommodation supplied.
Period to be agreed by contract.
Jyväskylä Vocational Institute, College of
Arts & Crafts, in Petäjävesi. Apply by
email to leena.sipila@jao.fi

Neuburg Hat Show Germany

Five thousand hats were shown in a
sales exhibition in all colours, forms and
materials, including hand rolled felt. The
aim is to hold 'the largest and most
beautiful hat show in the world'.
To register for the annual hat show, due
to take place in September 2006, fax
Ute Patel Missfeldt 0049 84 31 407 11.
www.patel-missfeldt.com

Large scale art objects Germany

Felters are invited to come and display
outdoor exhibits for 3 October 2006
when 1,000 sheep will be driven
through the village into the valley from
their summer meadows. Farmers,
shepherds and craftsmen will create a
colourful and informative festival in
Denkingen. Free stands for
demonstrators and participants of the
parade. Email: info@denkingen.de

Skilled tutor or artist Mongolia

Interested in creating ideas and designs
for felt products that could be sold to
tourists or in Western markets? Good
teaching skills, solid experience in
standardised handcrafted products and
felting techniques? Flexible and able to
cover the cost of the trip to Mongolia
for 2–4 weeks in August or later? Costs
can be covered here.

Alternatively, a stay in co-operation
with several top Mongolian felters in
Ulaanbaatar could be organised and
possibly even cover travel costs to
Mongolia. Contact:
caroline_turne@hotmail.com

Felt Art Arena Switzerland

Individual felt projects wanted for
permanent outdoor exhibition.
Proposals wanted from felt tutors/artists
to use our workshop, 2–3 days of free
board and accommodation plus free
supply of local wool. Maya Stenz,
Humanita Art Center, 6558 Cabbio.
info@humanita.ch

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cash prizes; 19th triennial juried
exhibition at the Society for

Contemporary Craft and the Pittsburgh
Centre for the Arts, Pennsylvania.
www.fiberartinternational.org
Deadline: 18 August 2006

For Fingers and a Thumb - UK

Call for members to make a pair of felt
gloves or mittens. This will be a selected
exhibition. Venues: all Knitting and
Sitch shows Autumn 2006 with
possible additional venues in 2007. Full
details and application forms:
www.feltmakers.com
Deadline: 1 August 2006.

Teaching the public UK

Artists and craftspeople working in
textiles interested in leading one-off
workshops and longer term courses or
projects in Havant. Contact:
outreach@makingspace.org
Also for teaching people of all ages in
the borough of Erewash, in Derbyshire;
contact:
susangingersmith@btopenworld.com
Deadlines ongoing

Museums

Enquiries from individuals will be
answered by the appropriate curator.
Feltworks are not likely to be listed
according to the material or technique
nor be on permanent exhibition. Allow
three weeks' notice for a visit.

Denmark

• Nordjyllands Museum, Kong Christian
Alle 50, DK-9000, Aalborg
• Ethnographic Collection, Aarhus
University, Moesgaard Museum, Aarhus

England

• The Horniman Museum, 100 London
Road, Forest Hill, London SE23 2PQ
Mary Burkett's Private felt collection,
Isel Hall, near Cockermouth, Cumbria
• Turkmen Gallery, 8 Eccleston Street,
London SW1 9LT
• Hat Works, Wellington Mill,
Stockport, Cheshire
• Whitworth Gallery, Oxford Road,
Manchester
• Annie Sherburne, 126 Columbia
Road, London E2; Sundays 9.30am –
2.30pm.

France

• Musée du Laine, Les Bergerades, F-
07190 St. Pierreville, Ardeche
• Musée de la Chapellerie, Le Somail,
F-11120 Ginestas

Holland

Nederlands Textielmuseum, Goirkestraat
96, NL-5846 GN, Tilburg

Russia

The Hermitage, St. Petersburg

USA

• Los Angeles County Museum of Art
www.collectionsonline.lacma.org
• Textile Museum, Washington DC
<http://textilemuseum.org/exhibitions/collections.htm>

Canada

• Textile Museum of Canada, 5 Centre
Avenue, Toronto, Ontario
<http://www.museumfortextiles.on.ca/>
• The Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto,
Canada <http://www.rom.on.ca/>

At the time of publication the IFA have
been given to believe that these
museums have feltworks in their
collections. Contact museums about
viewing availability and opening times.

Regional co-ordinators

1. Devon & Cornwall

Maggie Whiteman 01884 32234
mwhiteman@ukonline.co.uk

2. Dorset, Hampshire & Isle of Wight

Chris Lines 01983 409746
feltmakers-region2@hotmail.co.uk
Clare Hadley 01202 389782
clare-hadley@ntlworld.com

3. Surrey, East & West Sussex & Kent

Joan Braganza 01737 245464
nyasa@globalnet.co.uk

4. London

All postcodes including Middlesex
Sue Pearl 01608 658213
suepearl@btopenworld.com

5. *Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire & Berkshire*
Priscilla Kuzmanov 01234 268479
cilla.kuzmanov@btopenworld.com
Delia Blackman 01763 231540
d.blackman@ntlworld.com

6. *Avon, Somerset, Wiltshire, Gloucestershire & Oxfordshire*
Gracie Cooper 0117 951 5646
graciecooper@hotmail.com
Kirsten Hill-Nixon 01275 873568
hill-nixonfamily@tiscali.co.uk

7. *Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk & Cambridgeshire*
Gillian Farlam 01379 898077
2nd co-ordinator wanted

8. *Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire & Derbyshire*
Jen Lees 0116 247 8571
jen.lees@avantek.co.uk

9. *Warwickshire, West Midlands, Northamptonshire & Staffordshire*
Melanie Birmingham 01543 257749
melanie.birmingham@btinternet.com

10. *South, East, West & North Yorkshire & Northumberland*
Sheila Smith 01845 523340
sjsmith@btinternet.com

11. *Lancashire, Cheshire, Gwynedd, Shropshire, & Cumbria*
Cathy Rounthwaite 01829 752070
cathy@rounthwaite.fsnet.co.uk
Anna Kennedy 07870 563398
imakefelt@yahoo.co.uk

12. *Powys, Hereford, Worcestershire, Gwent, Dyfed & Glamorganshire*
Caroline Turner 01905 452337
caroline_turne@hotmail.com

13. *Scotland*
Ann Ross 01786 479516
ann@rodan.e7even.com

Northern Ireland
Audrey Hughes
ahughesart@ntlworld.com

Scandinavia
Karoliina Arvilommi and Roderick Welch
+358 (0)13 313460
rod.welch@kolumbus.fi

France
Christina Zofall +04 76 34 24 33
zofall.christina@wanadoo.fr

Western US
Patricia Spark 01-(0)503-928-1095
spark@peak.org

Please feel free to contact any regional co-ordinator or representative for information about events in their area – be it teaching, making or visiting.

Websites for feltmakers

Organisations

www.feltmakers.com
www.filtu.fi
www.grima.dk
www.handspin.co.uk
www.meet-branson.com
www.nefeltmakersguild.org
www.norskfeltmakere.no
www.northeastfeltmakersguild.org
www.peak.org/~spark/feltmaker.html
www.perso.wanadoo.fr/atelier.laine
www.weavespindye.org
www.werkraumtextil.de

Galleries/workshops

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www.gotmygoat.com
www.hookedonfelt.com
www.icelandicsheep.com/Felt%20page.htm
www.needlefelting.com/
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www.winghamwoolwork.co.uk

For a link to the IFA website:

pingreaves@btinternet.com

For updates or additions in Echoes:
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Next deadline: 1 November 2006

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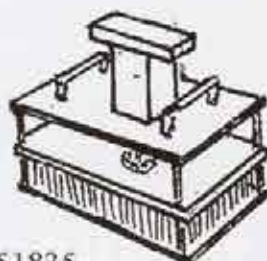
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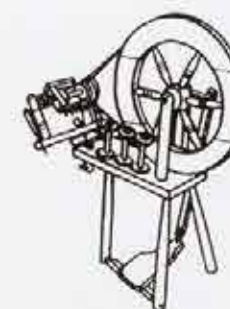
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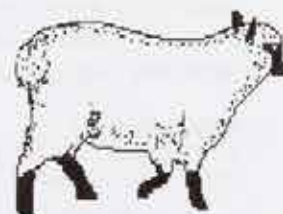
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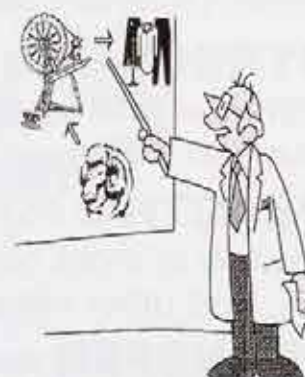


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Left: Marine wrap skirt with projections/ merino wool, hand-dyed silk, silk fibre and yarn



Above: Top: merino wool, hand-dyed cotton and hand-dyed silk fibre. A great top for dance or party, with a big surprise at the back.



Above: Felt top: nuno-felt using merino wool, silk and yarn. I used a variation of the Wild Turkey Nest-felt technique which I call fireworks. Below: Felt Fish - merino wool and silk fibres. A section of my Ocean installation. See article on page 8. Photos: Desmond Sheridan

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Above: Bird's Nest: almost-felted. See article on page 13. Photo: Sheila Smith



Far left: The Blues Brothers by Aija Jäppinen; needle felted, Finnsheep wool
Left: Batman - a dog's cloak, by Miia Kirkkomäki; felted of merino needlefelt and sewn together; details - stitching and buckles. "Made for my dog, who loves wool."



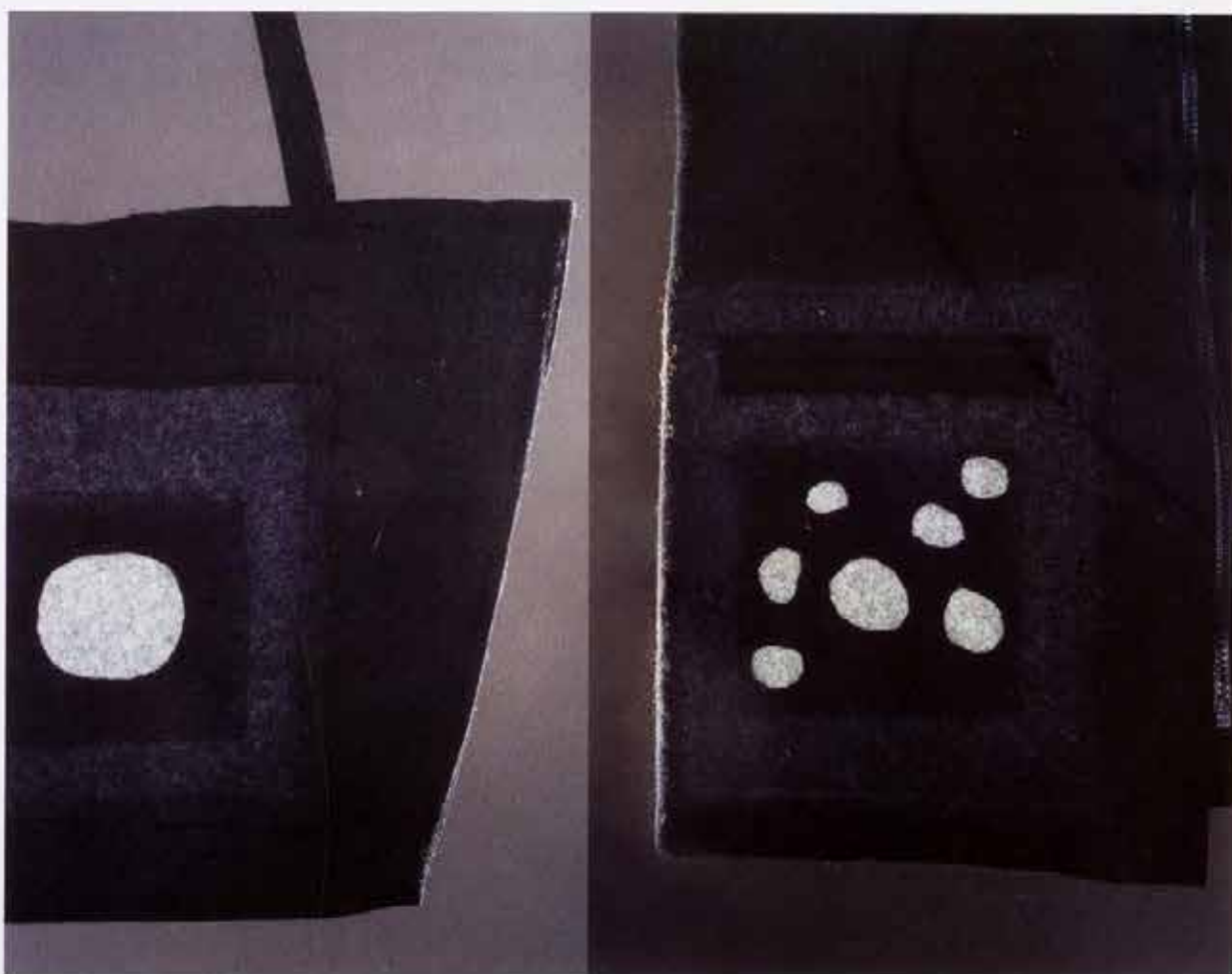
Above left and right: Leaves by Sirpa Mäntylä; panel curtains and cushion; linen; merino wool and silk fibres.

"On the wall of my workshop, a motto borrowed from William Morris: 'Keep nothing in your house that you can't use or don't find beautiful!'"

Right: Felted jacket and purse by Salla Kirkkomäki; 100% wool, merino needlefelt

See also pages 17-19

Photos: Kira Suomalainen



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1. Obtain the exact amount of UK currency for your membership from your bank and post this to me by secure means if this is permitted in your country.
2. Obtain from your bank a cheque for the correct amount of your membership **made out in UK £ sterling and drawn on a UK branch of that bank**. This should have the UK address of the branch printed on the front of the cheque and will cost you extra, depending what your bank charges are for this service.

Please contact me if you have any queries, I look forward to receiving your renewal.

Lynn Ramsbottom (Membership Secretary)

The Journal of the International Feltmakers Association www.feltmakers.com

echoes

members' newsletter

From the Chair

As I write this column, all the preparations for the Annual General Meeting at Terrassa, Spain, are being completed. I am looking forward to the Conference and meeting all those who are able to attend. As you read this column, the event will have passed and the excitement over for another year! I am sure we have returned with thousands of ideas and lots of memories too; we have also voted for new officers for the Association. I welcome them to Echoes in this issue and you will find details of how to contact them printed in the usual column. As you can see from the list there are five new officers who will be attending their first meeting of the Committee in June. Another new addition to the list is the position of International Coordinator. I am happy to say that Liz Clay will be taking on this role.

In earlier centuries to throw down the gauntlet meant you were issuing a challenge – so I hope you will 'pick it up' and accept that challenge! That is to make gauntlets, gloves or mittens for our new travelling exhibition. I think there is room for exotic exploration in this field (at least – by me!). I visualise fancy felts, 3D additions and even humorous subjects depicted – let's amaze the selectors.

In June I shall be visiting the second Woolfest at Cockermouth, Cumbria. The first event was a great success with many stalls being run by feltmakers. I hope to renew acquaintance with them and possibly some new additions, too! If you can make the trip I think you will enjoy the celebration of all things about wool – not least the sheep themselves.

The subscription year ends in August so please remember to renew yours as soon as possible to enable us to send your copy on time.

This makes it easier for Fiona Hirst, who packs and posts each copy of Echoes. She has help to do this but it is better to do one batch when help is available.

Sonya Middleton

September issue

Please note that the September issue might not be ready for delivery until mid month if renewals come in late

From our Exhibition Officer

I hope the new exhibition 'For Fingers and a Thumb' will provide members and the viewing public with as much enjoyment and pleasure as the recent tour has for so many. I'll leave you with some memories from the 'On the Map' visitors' book: 'Brilliant! I shall never look at sheep in the same way again!' 'Everything puts a smile on your face.' 'Beautiful, just beautiful.' 'Must make some felt!'

Wanted: Images, local tour information and wool

sources or sheepbreeders for the new 'On the Map' CD Rom.

Available from September.

Liz Clay

From our Secretary

Insurance: Changes in financial law which came into force in January 2006 mean the IFA can no longer take out insurance on behalf of members, to cover their work when in exhibitions. We would have to be registered financial advisers! This means members must take out their own cover or stand any risk themselves. It seems hard particularly on people who are just testing out the world of exhibitions but it is beyond our control. I have the names of a couple of companies who specialise in craft insurance, contact me for more information.

Membership: Increasing costs means that individual regions can no longer bear the costs of 'extra' members. To receive newsletters from as many regions as you like, contact each coordinator and arrange to send a stamped self addressed envelope or email details. Individual members can still choose the region that suits them as their main contact.

Christine Branch

Can you read Danish?

If so, you could help with news for the newsletter in exchange for receiving Grima, the Danish felters' newsletter. Please email the editor.

Bursary Funding Scheme

Annually, two funds of up to £500 are available, or one fund of £1000 (this may alter in exceptional circumstances). Main aim: to support work which promotes feltmaking.

One or more of the following criteria needs to be established plus work that strengthens the educational aims of the IFA:

- Work that is adventurous, creative, challenging, developmental and exciting.
- Work that ensures that people will have the widest opportunity to engage with the highest quality of feltmaking.
- Work that supports new and emerging feltmaking.

Before sending in your application, please apply to the IFA chairperson for full details of the Bursary Funding Scheme. Deadline 1 November each year.

Wanted

There is a vacancy for a co-ordinator in Region 7. If you are interested or would like to suggest anyone, please contact Christine Branch. Telephone: 0151 632 6121 or email: branchbcd@yahoo.co.uk

IFA Bursary Applications

Who should apply?

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2. Have a worthwhile project which will promote felt as well as the IFA and have a lasting effect.
3. The project should promote an exchange of ideas if possible, maybe create new members and be creative.

How to present the application

1. Send for a bursary leaflet from the chairman.
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 3. Ensure that you have covered the three points mentioned in the bursary leaflet which are: the aims of your project, your objectives and the benefits to the IFA.
 4. You also need to list the main people involved, the target audience if appropriate, publicity and any permanent record of the project which may result.
- Make the bid look good, so that it appeals to those reading it.
- Lyn Griffiths*

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email to branchbcd@yahoo.co.uk or send by post to: Christine Branch, 14 Garden Hey Road, Meols, Wirral CH47 5AL

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regional reports

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The Mid Devon Show (Tiverton) will take place on Saturday 22 July, and, as usual, we will be having an IFA demonstration stand. We would be very happy to see any IFA members there!

Maggie Whiteman

Region 2

Our Spring meeting was a Shibori workshop given by one of our group, Julia Little. This was a technique I had not come across, using a tie-dye method not only to colour but also to sculpt the felt. I never imagined that chick peas would come in handy while felting, but along with kidney beans, marbles and small pieces of stick they were all stitched or tied into the felt. After the pieces had been fulled, dyed and the bits and pieces removed, we found we had created some marvellous brightly coloured and textured pieces. I came home really inspired to do more Shibori. I am also casting a fresh eye over the contents of my store cupboard!

Our next meeting in June (date to be confirmed) will be a skill sharing workshop with a theme of bags. Please bring along any examples of felt bags, so that we can swap ideas and techniques. It would be good to see a variety of fleece types so that we can promote our 'rare breeds' in the spirit of 'On the Map'. New email for Chris Lines: feltnakers-region2.co.uk

Clare Hadley and Chris Lines

Region 5

Our year kicked off with a colourful start when Lyn Griffiths visited us in Bedfordshire to introduce us to using natural dyes. As our dye pots containing onion skins, madder, cochineal and weld simmered away, we produced a wonderful range of red, pink and yellow. We also made a couple of woad vats to give us a delightful shade of blue. We experimented with a variety of mordants and fibres and were amazed how the colour shades change simply by using different mordants, fibres and fabrics. We were even more amazed at the range of colours we achieved by over dyeing, enabling us to produce lovely shades of orange and green – all in all a wonderful palette of colour and texture. Thank you Lyn for sharing so much of your research with us.

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www.skedsmoohuset.com

It was also put forward for the Norwegian section of the 'Guinness Record' in September and I can show an entertaining video of 15 minutes next time we meet.

Kirsten Julie Smaadahl

Estonia

We are a young and energetic Estonian company now producing carded wool and unspun yarn for felting. We are highly interested in the craft industry and a few months ago we started to produce felted accessories. We are very enthusiastic about this. Finally we are proud to use an entirely natural production process from farm to finished product so we can be sure of the quality. <http://www.oldmill.ee>

Gabriel Rico

We are two felt artists from Estonia and at this moment we are researching for an MA degree 'Ancient fibres, new solutions. Rediscovered felt'. We deal with interior textiles and explore various kind of sheep breed wools. During the felting process we mix different fibres with wool. We tested Estonian sheep breed wool, compared these wools with materials used by other worldwide and put together a questionnaire for other felters.

Because there is no felting tradition in Estonia nor any written material on this theme, we carried out our research in Finland. We hope to share our findings with others at some time and are members of the IFA which helped us to find many contacts with felting artists from abroad. You are very welcome to our felting atelier in Tallinn.

Liisa Tomasberg www.superluks.tk

Finland

The 200 square metre felt workshop at the College of Arts and Crafts in Petäjävesi now holds a new rolling felt machine, a needlefelt machine, 150 different kinds of hat blocks, an automatic washing machine for dyeing and fulling of felt pieces, fulling machines with rolls, a mangle, felting basins, 6 felting tables and various hand tools.

Sirpa Mantyla

Scandinavia

Our IFA Scandi web page has had a facelift and new hosting: www.ifa-scandi.4felts.com (the old address still works). Please contact us if you want to put up any info.

Submission Form

For Fingers and a Thumb

Call for members to make a pair of felt gloves or mittens
IFA touring exhibition 2006 - 2007

Applicant: _____

Region / Country: _____

Membership number: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Work: _____

Title: _____

Materials: _____

Artist's price: _____

Notes:

1. Work not to exceed the size of one or two sheets of A4 paper.
2. Actual work to be submitted for selection – slides/ photographs NOT eligible.
3. Enclose on a separate sheet, a typed statement (100 words maximum) about your work.
4. Deadline: 1 August 2006.
5. Include a stamped addressed envelope for return of your work.
6. Send application to: Liz Clay, 10 Lodge Hill, Westbury-sub-Mendip, WELLS, BA5 1ES England.
7. Selection by independent panel early August 2006.
8. This is a selling exhibition with commission on sales. IFA and gallery commission will be added to the artist's price.

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We changed venues in March and moved to Buckinghamshire to make an easier journey for some of our members. This was well received and was another rendezvous day, this time working round templates making bags. As always

it was great to experiment with designs, techniques and materials used by other members.

We now look forward to our annual visit to Living Crafts in May and to an interesting programme of monthly meetings.

Delia Blackman and Cilla Kuzmanov

Region 6

We have had two meetings so far this year. The first was a get-together facilitated by Gracie at the Children's Scrapstore in Bristol, attended by the usual mix of seasoned felters, new members and enthusiastic beginners. The latter produced some delightful work under Gracie's tuition. We met new member Joanna King and saw a selection of her dramatic felt jewellery (see www.pinkfishstudios.co.uk), and were tempted by the range of craft materials on sale in the Scrapstore Shop. It is so inspiring to meet other feltmakers and see what they have been doing since last time. It was also very good to see the wide range of fibres being used – locally grown Sherland, Corswold and Swartbles and some yummy Norwegian wool making a welcome addition to Merino – the trickle-down effect of the On The Map philosophy! There are things you can do with these other wools that cannot be achieved with Merino.

The second meeting was a fabulous weekend of resist-dyeing on felt, with Chad Alice Hagen. I was fortunate enough to have Chad and her chauffeur staying with me – the perfect house guests. Chad is a very lively and inspiring tutor, flamboyant and meticulous. She works tremendously hard and so do her students. We dyed, wrapped, pinned, clamped, over-dyed, pegged, painted, over-dyed again and again, and each time the pieces came out more rich and complex and exciting. There was a great atmosphere of camaraderie and sharing of food, materials and information. We all found it a thoroughly enriching experience and can hardly wait for Chad's next visit.

After six very happy and fulfilling years as coordinator I am now retiring due to deteriorating eyesight, and the coordinators for Region 6 will be Gracie and Kirsten, who I know will do an excellent job. I shall continue to compile and distribute the quarterly newsletter while Kirsten is busy with preparations for the 2007 AGM and conference. If you do not already receive the newsletter and would like to, please send your e-mail address to region6@hotmail.co.uk.

Ama Bolton

Region 7

As I write this at the end of March, our Maldon exhibition has just opened. I am relieved that we have managed to stage a colourful display showing many felting techniques and uses of felt. It has been a team effort with six members travelling to Maldon to hang the work. Maldon's association with sea salt was depicted by Joan Gale in her marshy landscape, with 3-D (felt) salt crystals and the town's historic links with red-sailed barges and fishing boats being recorded in other wallhangings. After the April end of the exhibition and the 'Experimental Felt Lace' workshop with Doreen Hawkins, our next meeting will be on 7 October with Rebecca Dallas as tutor. Several of

us have admired the light, softly draped jackets we have seen in fashionable shops this winter. We hope that Rebecca will show us how to make something similar, though we may have to work on a smaller scale in order to finish in one day. Details, including cost, from me later.

Gill Farlam

Region 9

Our winter programme has seen us experimenting with different types of wool under the instruction of international tutors. In October Anna Gunnarsdóttir paid us a return visit to teach a workshop using Icelandic wool. This produces a very strong, firm felt which was ideal for the enormous fish-shaped bags and rucksacks we produced. Laying out was relatively quick as the wool came in batts. However, wetting out seemed to take for ever as the fibres are so springy. The resulting bags were delightfully quirky and had a very interesting surface texture. Several participants went on to produce a pair of slippers or mittens using Anna's technique.

In February Merja Markkula came from Finland to teach a workshop using Finnish wool. This also produced a strong, solid felt like the Icelandic wool but the surface is much smoother. We had a day making vessels followed by a day making art jewellery. One surprise was how much dry rolling there was with this type of wool before any water was introduced. A lot of the initial forming was done at this stage. When it was time for the rolling Merja introduced us to the Finnish Tango to give the necessary energy! The art jewellery required a little less vigour but the results were also wonderfully sculptural. This is something we would all have liked to play with for longer.

American tutor Chad Alice Hagen came to tutor a Fabulous Felt Hats workshop for us in March based on her latest book. Although we were back to working with Merino Chad's method was a change from the normal rolling in a cane blind. This time it was hands-on contact with the fibres from start to finish. Feeling the fibres changing from a fragile web to a firm felt directly under our hands was exciting and we were all very pleased with our finished hats.

Look in the diary dates for details of forthcoming workshops. If you are a new member and have not yet made it to one of our meetings, do try and join us some time. We can promise you a lot of fun!

Melanie Bermingham

Region 10

Our January meeting was an informal members day with a Floral Theme. Members brought felting equipment and pictures of flowers and the aim was to produce a range of flowers in felt. A wonderful array of exhibits was produced and much fun was had.

In March we had an interesting opportunity to meet and share ideas with Tatiana Vorotnikova a felt maker from Kyrgyzstan. Tatiana was visiting Rachel Howfield on an Artist to Artist Scheme. Rachel, a member of Region 10, arranged a skills sharing day where 20 members brought along samples of their felt, saw demonstrations by Tatiana and shared a buffet lunch. The following day four of us were lucky enough to

participate in a Masterclass with Tatiana and experience making felt using completely different methods just proving that there is no one correct way of making felt!

We have an opportunity for all members to take part in the making of a group felt project which will be ongoing from June. The project will take place over several meetings and will be led by Dot Seddon. Dot is a member of Region 10 and has years of experience in leading group and community projects involving felt and tapestry weaving. The subject will be 'The North East'. Our region is large, stretching from Newcastle down to Barton-on-Humber, over to and including West Yorkshire. It includes the Dales, Yorkshire Moors, Wolds, the east coast, both agricultural and industrial areas and many historic buildings. The plan is to have an initial meeting on Sunday June 18th at Thirsk as a brainstorming session, followed up with a second meeting at Thirsk on Sunday July 16th to take the project a step further. There will be a break over the holiday period and continue again in the autumn. There will be a charge of £5.00 per session to cover the cost of room hire. This will be an opportunity to work with an experienced leader, to exchange ideas and make felt. This idea was inspired by the group exhibit in 'On the Map' produced by the London region.

Sheila Smith

Region 11

We began 2006 with Carol Stow from our region teaching needlefelting to create 'faces with character' – and there were certainly some interesting characters produced – both human and animal! There was much laughter, but it was amazing how much was achieved during the day.

We then had a very successful weekend making Fabulous Felt Hats with Chad Alice Hagen in March. It was interesting to try her technique of felting without any rolling and to find how quickly it produced results. It seemed optimistic to make two hats over the two days, but we finished both a beret and a hat, shaped and decorated, some sliced and complete with dreadlocks. Again we worked very hard, but enjoyed the course tremendously – and were delighted with how much we had accomplished over the weekend. On both these courses we have been pleased to welcome members from the region we have not met before – and would encourage others to sign up for the courses.

Cathy Rounthwaite

Region 12

Where does the time go? I have now been co-coordinator for about 12 months and cannot believe how quickly the time has passed by. Region 12 had a couple of workshops in 2005 the first being 'vessels' with Jenny Pepper. We learnt how to sculpt a pot with lots of soap and hot water, the opposite of what you would normally use during felting! Everyone had a fantastic day and went away with a sense of achievement and yearning to experiment further.

The second workshop was 'fantastic footwear' with Sheila Smith. Everyone was truly inspired by Sheila as they produced slippers, shoes and boots in a variety of forms.

What never ceases to amaze me about workshops is that everyone is taught the same technique and yet all work is very different. It is great to get together with like minded people and pick up hints and tips along the way as well as being shown different methods of working... no matter how experienced you are there is always something to learn.

I would like to thank all the members that have supported the workshops so far and urge other members to support their regions.

I would also like to hear from anyone in region 12 if they have any upcoming exhibitions/events regarding felting, details of where you sell or promote your work, do you run workshops etc. Also it would be great if anyone hears of any events that would be of interest to feltmakers. I would like this information to produce a 'Region 12' newsletter. Maybe we could promote work of a member in each edition? The possibilities are endless... with members input!

Caroline Turner

Region 13

A busy year in Scotland. June – a stand at Woolfest – a wonderful event of like-minded fibre folk plus 5 star accommodation in our Yurt! August – after months of planning, seven members set off for a 'journey' to Mongolia – see last copy of Echoes. October – Jeanette Sandler led the workshop 'Fibres, Felt and Nostalgia'. We all have nostalgic items and many have special personal significance – for one member it was a collection of pebbles from a particular beach where she finds solace. For another it was a letter written by her great-grandmother. We each looked at the potential of the item and decided how we would develop this further using fibres. It was a wonderful enriching experience.

November – 'Space Dyeing' workshop led by Ann Ross. Magical effects were achieved on silk, muslin and yarns ready for nunofelting. Nov – Jan 'On the Map' at Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh with workshops run by Jenny Mackay, Maureen Macalister, Jennifer Alexander and Ann Ross. At the request of the Edinburgh Worshipful Company of Bonnetmakers and Dyers several members gave a tour of the exhibition and exchanged historical information as well as 'showing off' a few felt hats – much to the Bonnetmakers' delight!

February – 'The Mongolian Experience' – and opportunity for our members to share in our experiences through DVD, photographs and chat and to purchase items made by the feltmakers in the village where we stayed. A local Yurt maker Paul Millard brought along his Yurt. Contact: pauldoontoon@hotmail.com

Throughout the year the Yurt continues on its travels from woodland setting to Science Festival to Creative Stitches show at the S.E.C.C. in Glasgow in March – a very successful and promotional event with daily demonstrations, slide show and talk. Also in March at the Visitor Centre, Chatelherault Country Park, near Glasgow, the first exhibition by 'Diverse Fibres' – a group of felt makers who meet on a regular basis. Our Mongolian friends are planning a visit in September – I will keep you posted.

Ann Ross

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Our IFA Scandi web page has had a facelift and new hosting: www.ifa-scandi.4felts.com (the old address still works). Please contact us if you want to put up any info.

Now to our newest project: Värtsilä Villa ja Virago (Vätsilä's Wool and Dyers). Together with Anne Sulonen, we are shearing, processing and dyeing organic Finnwool using natural materials. Anne owns a flock of rare Kainuu Grey Finnsheep whose colours include beautiful shades from silver to dark blue/grey and black and white. We can control colour and quality to the utmost and will be running natural dyeing courses in the summer. Anne is also growing woad. Visit: www.villivilla.org

Our felting machine project has been a great success. The full size (3 metre wide) machine is a great relief to us. Main features: it is easily dismantled, up to three separate felts can be worked at the same time - all in different sizes and stages of completion. We can keep a continuous process going and not get in each other's way while waiting for the machine to finish with a work. We have managed fairly thin and delicate felts to thick rugs without the need of extensive finishing and hardening by hand. It has been a very exciting time (and exhausting) but the machine and process of developing it has created numerous new 'discoveries' for us.

We are off to the USA in the autumn as Karoliina is among 26 Finnish Craft Artists chosen for the Philadelphia Museum of Art Craft Show. It would be great to meet some US feltmakers.

Karoliina Arvilommi karo.arvi@kolumbus.fi

Germany

The new museum in Neumünster, 'Tuch + Technik' will concentrate on producing cloth and the commercial waulking of woollen fabrics in their displays. Feltmaking will be included in workshops and seminars for school visits, children and young people. Any proposals are welcome.

Karin Ruhmüller

Feltmakers Ireland

We have had a very busy and successful Spring. Our annual beginners workshop in early February was completely booked out as were our Shibori workshops with Chad Alice Hagen. Chad's workshops were an absolute joy - a wonderful combination of fun and learning. The Crafts Council of Ireland very generously helped to fund these workshops which meant that we could offer them to our members at a greatly reduced cost.

The next big event in our calendar is the AGM on 15 May 15. We are combining this year's AGM with a 'Felt Bazaar'. Sourcing supplies can be very difficult in Ireland where most people depend on buying materials by mail order and on the internet where it can be difficult to judge the colours you want. So we have decided to make a special purchase from Finland, Australia and the UK to offer our members as wide a range as possible. We are inviting members who wish to have a stall at the Bazaar to sell feltmaking supplies or finished produce to come along. We are also encouraging everyone to wear any of their felt creations on the day - so it should prove to be a very colourful and exciting AGM.

Our next workshops will be given by Jenny Mackay on the 1st and 2nd of July in the beautiful setting of Airfield House in Dublin (www.airfield.ie). Jenny will be teaching two one-day workshops on working with fine felt. Contact sheila.ahern@ireland.com or visit our website at www.virtualdublin15.info/sheila/

Sheila Ahern

New members

New members as of 2 April 2006:

Textiles Studio, Callaghan, New South Wales, Australia
Abery Linda, Plymouth

Aitchison Margaret, Lochwinnoch, Scotland

Beazer Rosi, Swindon

Bennett Marion M, Edinburgh, Scotland

Bondewijn Bridget, Ventnor, Isle of Wight

Broadbent Ruth, Leek, Staffs

Carson Suzy, Landrum, SC, USA

Clarkson Liane, Glasgow, Scotland

Cortada Nathalie, Edinburgh, Scotland

Drennan Louise, Great Ayton, North Yorkshire

Greaves Inge-Lise, Kings Lynn, Norfolk

Haskins Ann, Oundle, Northants

Henry Clare, Exeter, Devon

Iijima Michiko, Nishinomiya, Hyogo-Pref, Japan

Marsden Penny, Matlock, Derbyshire

Marshall Brenda, Cheltenham

Mollzahn Claudia, Swansea

Nishimura Akiko, Kyoto, Japan

North Janet, Radstock, Somerset

Pattinson Liz, Edinburgh, Scotland

Quinn Audrey, Blackwood, Lanarkshire, Scotland

Rowell Maggi, Leicester

Schibilsky Katchen, Bath, Michigan, USA

Simmons Elizabeth, Corwen, Denbighshire

Simmons Phillipa, Ipswich, Suffolk

Starling Sally, Nottingham

Stephenson Sarah, Cheltenham, Glos

Stewart Sarah, Torpoint, Cornwall

Teasley Emily, Monteagle, Tennessee, USA

Urquhart Fiona, Edinburgh, Scotland

Wallace Catriona, Harman's Cross, Dorset

Watson Aline, Edinburgh, Scotland

Withers Vanessa, Ludgvan, Cornwall

Submission Form

For Fingers and a Thumb

Call for members to make a pair of felt gloves or mittens
IFA touring exhibition 2006 - 2007

Applicant: _____

Region / Country: _____

Membership number: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Work: _____

Title: _____

Materials: _____

Artist's price: _____

Notes:

1. Work not to exceed the size of one or two sheets of A4 paper.
2. Actual work to be submitted for selection - slides/photographs NOT eligible.
3. Enclose on a separate sheet, a typed statement (100 words maximum) about your work.
4. Deadline: 1 August 2006.
5. Include a stamped addressed envelope for return of your work
6. Send application to: Liz Clay, 10 Lodge Hill, Westbury-sub-Mendip, WELLS, BA5 1ES England.
7. Selection by independent panel early August 2006.
8. This is a selling exhibition with commission on sales. IFA and gallery commission will be added to the artist's price.