

FELTMAKERS

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SPOTLIGHT ON USA & CANADA

Welcome to our regular feature Spotlight. On the following pages, we introduce IFA members from various parts of the globe. We are an international family and we celebrate our talented felt-makers worldwide. The last issue of Felt Matters explored the work of our North American members, and this current issue continues to look at American and Canadian felt-makers.

Sue Pearl & Johanna Rösti

Image Credit - Fiona Duthie



HEIDI HARRIS - USA

Heidi is a feltmaker living in Santa Rosa, California, and the last of our group of American IFA members to respond to our call for news from across the pond. She is a native Californian with a degree in business management. After attending a Fibershed symposium (a gathering of fibre enthusiasts and a series of events held in California), Heidi became passionate about felting. So much so that she spearheaded the Fibershed Yurt project, creating a yurt made entirely with hand-felted local wool by volunteers through the project. This yurt, which was in the old Mongolian style, displayed locally made art, clothing and products. Heidi manages to fit all this in while holding down a full time job as a Law Office manager.

Heidi was involved in a variety of workshops to create the yurt, one of which had members of the group needle-felting embellishments to the walls. This project took her deeply into 'felting culture' and found her researching all types of felting, and she is now giving workshops on the subject.



FIONA DUTHIE - CANADA

Fiona practices her art as a full time, professional feltmaker. She combines many different techniques such as dyeing and stitching into her work, creating different surface textures. Her work consists of 'sculpture for the body', designing and making garments that take unusual pathways. She has also created a line of garments, accessories and soft furnishings, all in felt, that has allowed her to explore new ideas in surface treatments.

Fiona teaches internationally as well as in Canada, and will be running workshops with her friend Katia Mokeyeva in British Columbia in April 2015. Beginning as a clothing and textile designer, in 1996 she discovered felt through the classic book 'New directions for Felt' by Gunilla Sjoberg. Being inspired by this book, she realised that it was possible to create her own textiles for total individuality.

W: www.fionaduthie.com



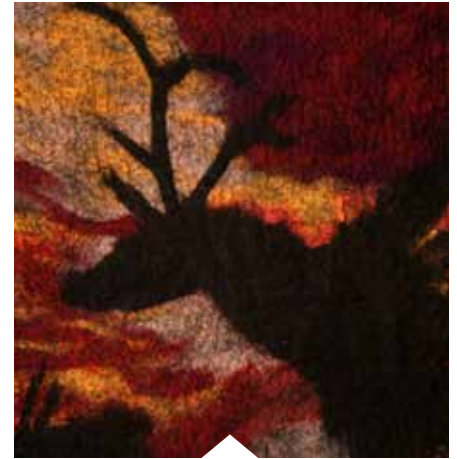
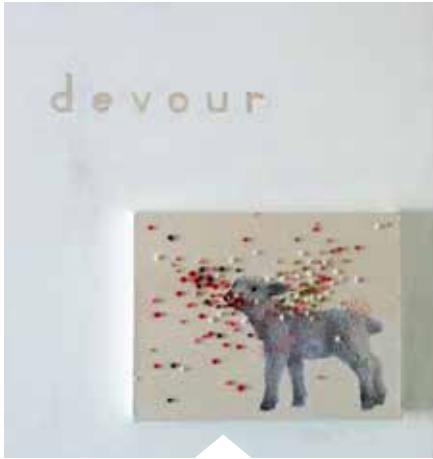
JENNIFER OSBORN - CANADA

Jennifer is a farmer; she arrived at this through an unusual route! Starting off as an artist and designer, Jennifer travelled through to digital design work and graphic art. However, she felt out of kilter with this work as she craved a link to the natural world and wished to become physically engaged with creating things with her hands. So, in 2005, she went back into education to study animal husbandry.

Her maths skills were not good enough for a veterinary degree, but through her course she obtained a placement on a farm. This projected her onto another path and she and her husband Tim, bought a house with land. As well as growing vegetables, they took on a couple of Shetland sheep from a friend – and the flock grew as the lambs arrived! The shearer visited, and then so did her passion for felt, she signed up for a one day felting course. Jennifer now uses her wool to create rugs, wall hangings and sometimes functional items.

W: www.feltworks.ca
www.hairfarmer.ca

SPOTLIGHT



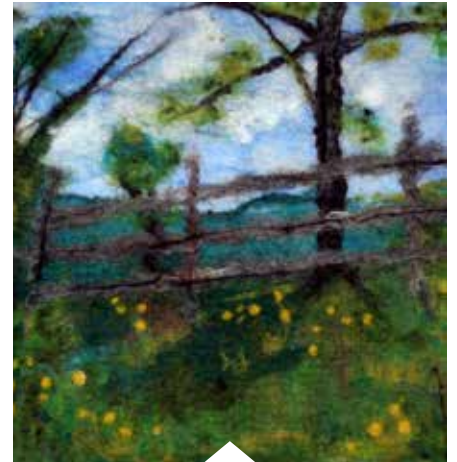
JUDITH DIOS - CANADA

Judith is a full time professional feltmaker. She has been making felt for seven years after finding images of nuno felt on the internet: she was so excited by these images that she decided to experiment herself.

Using her own hand-spun silk and silk fabric, she makes wraps, jackets, dresses and jewellery. These are made from undyed materials, and then the colour is applied by hand to create special effects.

Judith enjoys freeform weaving at her friend's weaving studio, using her fabric scraps and fibres. She also runs workshops to teach her methods in her studio in British Columbia.

W: www.judithdios.com



CONNIE MICHELE MOREY - CANADA

Connie is a sculptor teaching Drawing and Sculpture at the University of Victoria and Vancouver Island School of Art. Connie works in a variety of media including clay, glass, wood, thread and crochet. She also uses fibre as a sculptural medium, and now finds that felt is playing a prominent part in her work, so much so that she now teaches felting as part of her sculpture classes. At the same time, she is pursuing a PhD combining studio work and theoretical writings.

Connie was first drawn to felt because of its traditional and historical element. Felt also has a richness and softness and maybe, in this way, it is looked at as a traditionally female material. She felt it also combined her interest in ecology with her sculptural methods and shows the connection between man and beast. The works that Connie creates are abstract and organic forms using wet felting, needle felting and other processes, and relate to human, animal and plant forms.

W: www.conniemorey.com



BARB HILDEBRAND - CANADA

Barb practises as a Veterinarian. She 'discovered' felt some four years ago when her mother-in-law introduced her to needle-felting. Barb also sews and knits but she fell in love with felt and began to explore the process, creating animals, ornaments and people. This led on to the wet felting method and then a combination of the two, to create pots, bags and wall art. She is now trying her hand at dyeing using the immersion method, and loving it.



TRINE SCHIODAN - CANADA

Trine works as a full time Parliamentary Indexer and has been making felt since 1996. She was successfully selling the hooked mats that she was making when a felt course started up locally, tutored by someone who had learnt feltmaking from Pat Spark, the American feltmaker. She was drawn in to the craft by the limitless possibilities it offered, both in terms of design and practice, and also in the chance of following new paths. Trine has been making both functional and decorative felt such as wall hangings and bags, and now wants to venture into landscapes and natural dyeing felt with embroidery embellishments.