

Words of Wisdom

Supply list (6 pages)

Instructor: Helene Knott 503-631-8806 Email: helene.m.knott@gmail.com

Website: www.heleneknott.com

Words can inspire, words can bring back memories and words can conjure up images or tell a story. Language is a marvelous thing and written language is an art form in itself – the shapes of letters and the sounds they produce when read aloud. The masterful assembly of words is why we have enduring stories, poetry and memorable quotes. In this class, you will choose a message to build a small quilt upon. The words can be a famous quote (perhaps from the Bible or a favorite prayer?), a platitude, the title of a favorite book, a short poem or a line from a favorite song... it could even be the name of a person you wish to memorialize. The goal is to make a small quilted wall hanging incorporating words or phrases important to you. The quilts can be more traditional pieced or appliquéd block with writing included, or be made in a collage method incorporating design elements you feel are important to your phrase. At the end of the list, I have provided examples of my projects incorporating words along with the skill level involved. I have also provided some suggested phrases and projects for a range of skill levels for you to consider if you cannot come up with your own.

Please be courteous to others by arriving for class with the correct supplies. Contact me at 503-631-8806 or helene.m.knott@gmail.com if you have any questions.

TOOLS/MATERIALS:

- **A poem, quote, name, title or brief paragraph you wish to use for inspiration:** For best result, keep the paragraph or poem short. Japanese Haiku is perfect or if the poem is long, choose just one stanza and not the entire poem, the goal is to have a short assemblage preferably no more than four or five sentences at the most. If you aren't sure what you would like to write, a list of suggestions are provided at the end of the list along with some examples of the quilts I have made from words.
 - **Your original poem/phrase printed onto copy paper – for hand lettering only:** This will be your master templates for the calligraphy so they should be printed in the size, arrangement and font that you want; remember, you will be tracing these letters so consider the size and shape of the letters when choosing the font you print in. Keep scale in mind too, you want the phrase to fit the width of the quilt in the size you wish to make though the verses can be broken into segments if necessary. **NOTE:** There is a distinct advantage to having the poem printed in reverse onto the 'dry' side of freezer paper. Ironing the freezer paper to the wrong side of the fabric you intend to write on will create a stable surface for the lettering and prevent your fabric from slipping while you trace plus provide the lettering to trace right side up. To do this, you will need a graphics program capable of flipping your original writing. Contact instructor for more information if you want to do this.
 - **Your chosen poem, words etc, preprinted onto fabric by computer:** directions for doing this are at the end of the supplies below; contact the instructor for additional help if you need more information on this.
- **A 'mind map' list:** This is simply a list of things that your chosen words bring to mind. You will be interpreting the phrase or poem in visual images, having a list of potential design ideas will give you a choice of which to follow. Make notes as you list them of how you might best represent them: might you find a fabric print with pertinent motifs? Or perhaps print photos or artwork images on fabric with a computer printer? Maybe you can add appropriate design details with embellishment. You must come to the class prepared with the materials you need to at least start your project.
- **Fabric upon which to write your phrase:** An 8 ½" x 11" square of fabric; it can be larger if you wish to hand letter and make a larger project but if you want to use a computer printer to print the poem, you will need a standard page sized piece of fabric. This fabric need not be white but the color should be light enough for your lettering/printing to show up and with a smooth (not rough or nubby) surface texture, a light colored batik would be perfect. It can be patterned if you wish but the pattern should be subtle so as not to interfere with the lettering. If you want to preprint your poem by computer printer ahead of time, follow the directions provided at the end of the supply list
- **Black or brown Pigma Micron pens:** in a few different sizes - .005, .01, .03 and/or .08. The finer pen sizes are useful for outlining the letters while the thicker nibs will fill in block lettering faster though they are not as controllable for fine details. Even if you plan to print your words on a computer printer, the pens are useful to add

Words of Wisdom

Supply list (6 pages)

Instructor: Helene Knott 503-631-8806 Email: helene.m.knott@gmail.com

Website: www.heleneknott.com

details or alter fabrics. Use only the Pigma Micron pens, other inks tend to bleed into surrounding fabric and get fuzzy.

- **Additional fabrics:** Additional fabrics will be needed to compose your quilt beyond what you have printed or will be lettering on. Choose a variety of fabrics in colors and prints that you like and pertain in some way to your phrase; it's hard to anticipate how many you will use but having a wide selection will allow you to choose the perfect fabrics. Fat quarters and even some scraps will be fine for this. Consider textures that could represent objects too if you intend to use collage on your quilt.
- **Motif fabric (optional):** You may want to adorn your quilt with fussy cut appliqué. The motifs should have clearly defined edges to cut easily. Like the other fabrics, the motifs should be pertinent to your words.
- **Fusible web:** Choose your favorite brand for fusing design elements or motifs. One package of flat sheets or ½ yard from a roll should be adequate.
- **Pencil and good eraser**
- **Craft Scissors**
- **Embellishments:** These are optional to bring to class as you probably won't reach the stage of embellishing in class but it's good to keep these in mind if they will enhance your quilt. Beads, buttons, charms, sequins... even drilled seashells if your quilt involves an ocean or beach theme. Suggestions will be made for your individual project in class if you wish.
- **Rotary cutter, mat and cutting ruler:** Ideally, the ruler should be at least 12" long and at least 2 ½" wide.
- **Sewing machine:** with standard sewing accessories. NOTE: depending on what you make, piecing, zig zag and free motion feet may be useful.
- **Thread:** 100% cotton in a neutral color for piecing, in colors suitable for your fabrics if you are appliqueing
- **Embroidery Scissors:** a fine tipped pair with sharp blades no more than 1 ½" long (for cutting out motifs if you are using any).
- **Thread snips**
- **Sewing pins**
- **Freezer Paper**
- **Portable Light box:** to use for tracing the lettering onto your fabric. Alternatively; you could trace on a window but this is harder to do neatly.

Preprinting a poem with a computer printer:

If you wish to print your poem onto fabric from a computer, the following instructions will help you do so. First, you will need pre-treated fabric sold at quilt shops and craft stores. Write your poem in a desktop publishing program like Microsoft Word or Paint, Corel Draw or Adobe Illustrator... You will want to test the various sizes of fonts before printing your verses to make sure they will fit well and are large enough to be clearly readable and choose a font that creates a decorative element for your project. Using the 'show rulers' function on the screen display will help you measure and visualize how long and tall the verses will be. The length is more critical than the height if you are fitting the poem to a quilt of a specific size. Verses longer than 8" will have to be divided at strategic points and printed as separate sentences with enough spacing between each sentence 'row' to allow you to cut them apart into strips with ample seam allowances above and below the letters as well as a little more space so you don't end up losing any of the verses when sewing the strips together. You will probably have to play a bit with different fonts, sizes and how/where you divide a verse into segments to make it look good.

Once you are satisfied with the lettering, print it onto the prepared fabric; do final tests print on regular paper first to check if you like the way it looks before wasting a sheet of the printable fabric (which is expensive). The pretreated sheets come only in white and the finished fabric, once removed from the backing, has a less than pleasant feel to it so you might want to explore printing onto a fabric of your choice, If you want to do this, check to see if your printer uses a pigment based ink (as opposed to a dye based one). The pigment inks will be colorfast and water resistant while the dye based ones fade readily and will wash out if you ever get it wet. On Epson printers the ink called DuraBrite is pigment based, you may have to research this if you use a different brand of printer. If your printer is an ink-jet and has dye based inks, you can

Words of Wisdom

Supply list (6 pages)

Instructor: Helene Knott 503-631-8806 Email: helene.m.knott@gmail.com

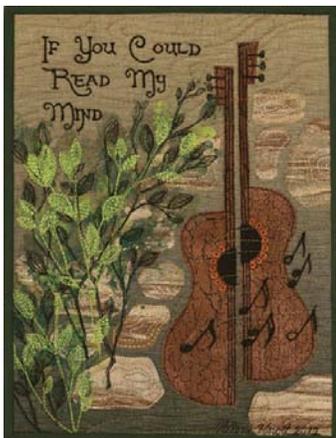
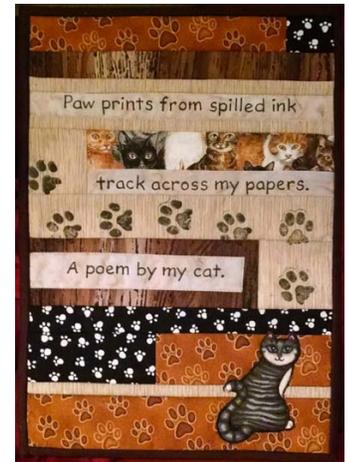
Website: www.heleneknott.com

pre-treat the fabric with a product called Bubble Jet Set™ to make it permanent or just print with whatever ink you have with the understanding that the resulting quilt will not be archival.

Choose a fine textured flat fabric – batiks are perfect for this – and in a color that is light enough to see the lettering on, If the fabric has a print, make sure it is subtle enough not to compete with the lettering. Cut a **precise** 8 ½” x 11” piece of freezer paper (cut carefully so it will not jam up your printer) and iron the freezer paper to the **wrong** side of the fabric; try to get the top and bottom edge as true to the fabric grain as possible, then trim the fabric with a rotary cutter to match the freezer paper template edges **exactly**. Make sure the fabric is firmly and neatly bonded to the freezer paper without any bubbles or separation especially along the bottom edge; let it cool completely after ironing for the best adhesion. Load it carefully into the feed slot of the printer; remove all other paper in the feed tray prior to seating the fabric or it may not feed properly. Feed and print one sheet of fabric at a time! Do not stack them in the feed tray if you are printing more than one page. After printing, it’s a good idea to wait a bit to let the ink completely dry and then give it a once over with a hot iron to help heat set the ink. Peel the fabric from the paper and proceed with your project.

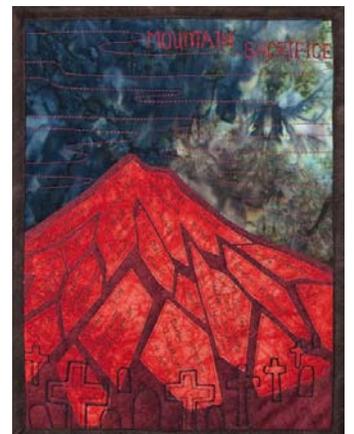
EXAMPLES:

Cat Haiku: In this project I wrote a Haiku - a short Japanese style poem that consists of three lines (5 syllables, then 7 syllables and finishing with 5 syllables) about my cat. I hand lettered the words of the poem onto three strips of fabric and strip pieced them between other ‘cat’ oriented fabrics into a small quilt to which I fused a fussy cut cat (that looked just like my cat). The final touches were stamped paw prints traipsing over the mini quilt..



If You Could Read My Mind: My ‘sanctuary’ quilt shown here is a memory of the summer I spent when I was 13 year old trying to learn a folksong on my guitar. I was very self-conscious of my musical skills and would hide behind the shrubbery on our back patio to practice out of earshot. I never did learn to play the song properly but it was a memorable summer. I chose three elements for my collage – the flag stones represent the patio, the shrubbery (printed from a spray from a plant then stitched) represent the bushes I hid behind and the split and skewed guitar symbolizes my failure to learn the song. The words are the title of the song I loved so much.

Mountain Sacrifice: My quilt – ‘Mountain Sacrifice’ is a memorial to all the climbers we have lost on Mt. Hood, a mountain that looms on the horizon of Portland. It is easily accessible and dangerous to climb so not a year goes by that we don’t have a tragic loss of life on it – usually around the fall/winter holidays, a popular and dangerous time to scale it, leaving grieving families for whom the holidays will never be the same. My quilt was inspired by ancient myths of the sacred nature of mountains – where the gods dwell. If not treated with proper respect, the mountain will demand its sacrifice. The blood red glaciers on my mountain bear the names of those lost over the years.



Words of Wisdom

Supply list (6 pages)

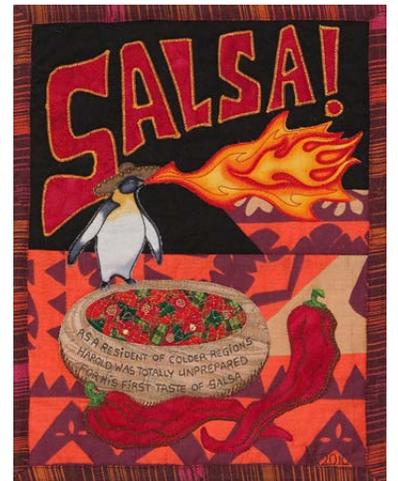
Instructor: Helene Knott 503-631-8806 Email: helene.m.knott@gmail.com

Website: www.heleneknott.com

My Favorite Things: “Raindrops on roses and whiskers on kittens...” surely you remember that classic Rodgers and Hammerstein song? This quilt celebrates one of my favorite things – TEA! The off-center five subdivided layout is a classic Japanese arrangement. In each sector some aspect of tea is represented. Top right are names of classic tea blends; moving clockwise – a botanical illustration of the tea plant, at the bottom left - a classic floor plan of a Japanese Teahouse and at the top left - a steaming teapot with china cups. In the center square is the Japanese Kanji for ‘Tea’.



Salsa!: This little bit of whimsy was the result of a exchange challenge to use a particular set of fabrics creatively - I got the penguin fabric. There was enough of the ‘penguin print’ to make several quilts and this was the third in what has become an ongoing series of penguin quilts with a humorous bent – penguins doing very un-penguin like things. In this quilt design, I was given some ‘flame’ fabric as well hence the fire-breathing penguin. It took some thought to come up with a reason why the penguin would be burping out flames and I decided that perhaps he had tried hot salsa for the first time so not only did I fuse a bright bold word “Salsa!” in block letters but the bowl of salsa that my penguin is perched on also bears the explanation that ‘as a resident of colder climates, Harold was totally unprepared for his first taste of salsa’.



These are just a few examples of how I incorporate words or in some cases base an entire design on a poem, phrase, quote, adage, title... You may already have an idea for a quilt inspired by words that you want to pursue but if not, I have a list of suggested assignments below for you to consider. These are just some suggestions to explore.

Assignments:

Strip Pieced Poetry: For this assignment you will choose a short poem that consists of just a few lines or choose your favorite paragraph from a longer poem. Break the poem into stanzas that will fit into the size format you need for your quilt, the individual stanzas should be no more than about 7” wide if you intend to use a computer printer to print your words but can be wider if you will do the lettering yourself. The stanzas are cut apart and strip pieced interspersed with other fabrics into a small quilt and then adorned with fussy cut fabric motifs and/or embellishments. NOTE: this project is also suitable for favorite quotes or a prayer as long as they can be broken down into several short sentences.

SKILL LEVEL: Beginner and up.

My Favorite Things: For this project you will pick a theme based on something you love. It might be a hobby or pastime or perhaps a favorite food (hey, who doesn’t love chocolate?). Perhaps you love horses or dogs – not a specific dog – that would be more suitable as a memorial quilt, but just dogs in general. Do you love to garden? If so, maybe you can explore a favorite flower. What kinds of words or phrases can you come up with about your favorite flower? Take a rose – “A rose by any other name would smell as sweet”, ‘Roses are red, violets are blue...’ “Life is not a bed of roses ...” (oh yes it is)... you could also list your favorite named varieties of roses. Your completed quilt could also be infused a rose scent for a finishing touch; explore what you love! **SKILL LEVEL: Confident Beginner and up**

Book Quilts: In recent years, some quilters have come together to form ‘book quilt groups’ - one such group in Portland call themselves ‘Cover to Cover’. They choose a book, read it as a standard book club might do but instead of meeting and discussing the book, each member designs an interpretive quilt based on the book. A good book is filled with rich imagery and your mind paints pictures based on what you read. Some aspects of a book become icons of the story or

Words of Wisdom

Supply list (6 pages)

Instructor: Helene Knott 503-631-8806 Email: helene.m.knott@gmail.com

Website: www.heleneknott.com

characters. Many years ago, the 'Cover to Cover' group decided their book for that year would be 'The #1 Ladies' Detective Agency' by Alexander McCall Smith and if you have read any of these books you will be familiar with some of those icons surrounding the leading lady, Precious Ramotswe – a 'Traditionally Built' woman (plump), who is always discussing cases over a cup of Bush Tea, with her secretary Grace Makutsi (who scored 97% at secretarial college and listens to/takes advice from her shoes). Characters include Mma Potokwani who runs the orphanage on a wing and a prayer and finds she can coax people to do things for the orphans with the offer of a slice of her special fruitcake. Mma Ramotswe agency was funded by selling the cattle (a very important asset in Botswana) left to her by her father who taught her the values of justice and kindness. Her entire concept of private detecting is guided by a dog-eared copy of a book 'The Principles of Private Detecting' by Clovis Anderson... and of course being Africa there are enough tales and fables of lions and zebra and snakes (Precious does NOT like snakes!) to go around. The quilts created by the book club were quite a sight to see. For this assignment, choose a book you love and create a list of everything that symbolizes the story in your mind and plan how you might interpret them. **SKILL LEVEL: Intermediate and up**

Sanctuaries: These quilts commemorate a place that was important to you; it may be a current refuge or a secret place from your childhood where you went to daydream or cry privately if your feelings were hurt. It might be a garden or a tree house; it might be your sewing room, or that swing that made you feel like you could take off and fly like a bird. On a more abstract level, it could be your favorite book – or the comfy chair you sit in to read. It could be the place your spouse proposed to you or where you received your first kiss. If you want to try this design approach, think about the various 'sanctuaries' you have had in your life and write a few down. For each, make a list of things associated with this special place and choose three or four of them that you think will be easy to represent in fabric or embellishments. **SKILL LEVEL: Intermediate and up**

Memorial Quilts: There are people in our lives we may wish to memorialize. In some cases it might not be a person but an event either joyous or tragic – memories of a parent or grandparent, the birth of a child, a wedding... for example, how about your grandmother? Was she a gardener? (Adorn your quilt with flowers or recreate her garden). Did she love to bake? Write down her favorite cookie recipe on fabric lined like an index card and/or make 'cookies' from textured fabric to scatter over your quilt. Was she musical? (Draw or print out some sheet music on fabric, and/or piece some piano keys). Do you remember stories she told, crafts she made, and activities you shared? (My grandma introduced me to the joys of jigsaw puzzles). The 'words' on your quilt could be the name of the person you are memorializing and/or a brief written memory or elegy. Memorial quilts can also commemorate an event – historical or personal. Again start with a 'mind map' list taking notes on how you might interpret an idea in a visual manner. **SKILL LEVEL: Intermediate and up.**

Acrostic Words: An Acrostic word game is one where you chose the letters that comprise a word and make a new word branching off from these letters – words that start with that particular letter, for the best Acrostic, the secondary words should in some way describe or reflect the meaning of the single original word. My sample Acrostic Quilt consists of the three words **A**esthetic **R**esonant **T**hought (**ART**). The letters are rendered in dense quilting that creates a bas relief of raised letters. For this project you will need a sewing machine capable of free motion stitching, graph paper and a pencil and good eraser to draft up your words, tracing paper, a subtle print or solid fabric, batting and backing and a variety of threads in different colors. If desired, you can embellish your quilt with fused fussy cut motifs prior to quilting or add beading to the quilt after it is quilted. **SKILL LEVEL: proficiency with free motion quilting recommended.**

Words of Wisdom

Supply list (6 pages)

Instructor: Helene Knott 503-631-8806 Email: helene.m.knott@gmail.com

Website: www.heleneknott.com

Textured Words: In this assignment you will choose a word or a couple of related words that are written/drafted out into blocky letters large enough to take advantage of a the physical texture of a variety of fabrics. The result is a quilted panel that is a feast for the touch as well as the eyes. The more varied the textures, the better – velvet, satin, burlap, felt, denim, faux leather... combining these fabrics creates a wonderful tapestry of texture. The choice of word can reflect the nature of the fabrics – how about writing the words ‘Blue Jeans’ out of recycled worn jeans?. For this project you will need graph paper and pencil/eraser to draft your letters, a background fabric, fusible web of your choice and fabrics in a variety of textures to create the letters. Commercially printed quilter’s cotton prints can also be used but the tactile feel of textured fabrics will make for a richer quilt. **SKILL LEVEL: Beginner and up.**



Resources: To keep the project manageable, plan on limiting your first quilt to a smaller size, anything from the size of a sheet of paper to the size of a poster. NOTE: If you intend to print words with a computer printer onto fabrics, remember that you will need to restrict the size of words and/or sentences to what will fit into a printer – 8 ½” x 11”.

It is hard to predict exactly what supplies you may need to complete your project as the methods will vary by project, for more information on specific design and projects, contact the instructor for further information

There is a wide variety of novelty prints under the sun to find motifs for your chosen subject or you can design and compose your own appliqué imagery; if you cannot draw there are various resources you can tap into; Dover Publications has a library of clip art books that they are very generous with permissions to use and there are other online resources you can find for free artwork downloads (please respect an artist’s copyright). These designs can be traced or used as a starting point to create appropriate imagery.