INSPIRED TO SEW

A glimpse into the creative heart of today’s most talented sewing & quilting artists.
As Marketing Director of SCHMETZneedles I always ask, “What inspires you to sew?” Whether doing “show & tell” with individual consumers or industry professionals, I meet an amazing array of creative spirits that love to sew. I also love to take pictures. So, for the next 12 months get a glimpse into the creative heart of today’s most talented sewing and quilting artists — authors, designers, teachers, bloggers, sewing stars from around the world — with a few of my own pictures sprinkled into each issue. Through interviews, Rita Farro, writer extraordinaire and creative t-shirt fringe connoisseur, uncovers the creative essence of each featured sewing star.

Welcome to my world of amazing stitch encounters! Really, I just can’t wait to introduce you to the talent I meet throughout North America while working with our industry’s most recognized brand . . . SCHMETZ.

With this issue I hope that YOU shop for your goodies at your local independent dealers . . . and that you are Inspired to SEW!

Sew SCHMETZ!

Rhonda Pierce
Marketing Director & Publisher
SCHMETZneedles.com

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Quilted background on cover and all pages:

Flower Garden
Design by Erin Schlosser
Quilted by Danielle Wilkes
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What Inspires YOU to Sew?

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Pat Bravo — An Argentine Treasure

When Pat Bravo was growing up in Argentina, sewing was a normal part of her day. Schools in Argentina encourage creative artistic classes and she always chose stitching or sewing. At 13, she begged her mother to let her enter the two-year pattern-making/tailoring school.

As a newlywed, Pat moved to New York City with her husband to expand their clothing company, Davoucci, which manufactured leather garments. For one whole year, she did not have a sewing machine. She was depressed. Then her husband gave her a Kenmore electronic sewing machine and she began sewing her son’s clothes, her own clothes, curtains, pillows. Being able to sew again gave her happiness and peace of mind.

When she discovered quilting — she started to hand paint fat quarter pieces of fabric to achieve the variation and shading of color for her landscape art quilts. Her friends in the local quilting guild wanted to purchase her fabrics.

Famous quilt artists like Barbara Olson, David Taylor and Nickie Dupree were buying her hand-painted fabrics. The problem was when you hand paint, you need to let it lay on the floor until it dries — then heat set. Her house was not big enough to accommodate the orders. Having her designs commercially manufactured made her think about the quality of the base fabric — which, to Pat, was as important as her designs. She always used 100% Pima cotton — a long-staple fiber with a much higher thread count. Instead of 60x60 or 80x80, Pima cotton has a thread count of 133x72 (commonly known as 200 thread count). Pima cotton has an excellent drape so it can be used to make fashion garments as well as quilts.

Pima cotton is woven with a very delicate, fine thread, so the needle you use in your sewing machine is very important. Using a stitch length of 2.5 - the fabric may start to pucker. People think their machine has a tension problem, but it’s not the tension — it’s the sewing machine needle. Pat recommends a SCHMETZ Microtex Sharp 80/12.
when sewing with her fabrics. You’ll get perfect seams every time!

Pat says, “My inspiration? My home is full of book shelves and towers of magazines because I read all the time. My new passion is PINTEREST. (http://www.pinterest.com/patbravo/) It is like getting hundreds of magazines from all over the world delivered to my door every single day!

And I am often inspired by travel. For example, when visiting London I fell in love with Carnaby Street – an iconic emblem of the “Swinging 60’s movement.” I HAD to create a collection that could represent all the groovy flowers and the strong geometrics of that era! I began researching the fashion, colors and prints from that age and that’s how my collection “CARNABY STREET” came to life. I truly enjoy the designing process!”

Visit www.artgalleryfabrics.com for pictures of Carnaby Street.

I don’t know what I would do or who I would be without sewing. It is my cable to the earth . . .”

“I don’t know what I would do or who I would be without sewing. It is my cable to the earth . . .”

Pat Bravo, www.patbravo.com
Stitch Inspiration . . .

Among the thousands of quilts at 2013 Fall International Quilt Market in Houston, Flower Garden by Erin Schlosser spoke to me the most. I love the variety of quilted stitches. Both the quilted background and the modern placement of flowers inspire me to practice my quilting. Yes, Flower Garden inspires me to sew.

Flower Garden

Designed by Erin Schlosser
Schlosser Designs
www.schlosserdsgn.com

Quilted by Danielle Wilkes
Nacho Mama’s Quilt
www.nachomamasquilt.com

Garden Party Tango
Wingham Fabrics
www.windhamfabrics.com
by Melissa Ybarra
What Inspires YOU to Sew?

Let us know.

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Swirly Girls — Making Magic Happen

Some of the most original patterns in the quilt industry are coming from the dynamic duo of Susan Emory and Christine Van Buskirk, a.k.a. — Swirly Girls Design, Inc. out of Midlothian, Virginia. Since they established their partnership in 2008, they’ve made 100+ quilts a year, written two books, designed 20+ quilt patterns, and four fabric collections for Michael Miller.

So — how did this magic happen?

Susan Emory is a fifth generation quilter. Growing up, she believed everybody knew how to quilt. She went to school for graphic design and worked at an ad agency in Seattle. When asked where she gets her inspiration, she says “I love to make custom one-of-a-kind things for people and I sew every day. All aspects of quilting bring me joy — appliqué, piecing, paper piecing, curved piecing, hand piecing, and the actual quilting. I also do mixed media on canvas . . . and I upcycle furniture. I love to find a piece, an ugly piece — like this china hutch — and give it new life with fabric or paint.”

Christine Van Buskirk grew up learning the basics of garment sewing from her mother, who sewed all her own clothes. But during her college years, then graduate school, motherhood and a job at IBM, her own sewing was limited to things like fun, easy-fitting Halloween costumes. During the 90’s, she was intrigued by her mother’s newfound love of quilting, and inspired by Alex Anderson to give it a try. Living in upstate New York, she took her first class at a local quilt shop. Logical engineering

Christine fell in love. She says, “I was chomping at the bit to try every new technique. There is so much geometry in quilting and I love playing with graph paper! The first block that made me really happy was 16 pieces coming to a perfect point in the middle. I didn’t know it was supposed to be hard.”

Susan Emory and Christine Van Buskirk
Kindred Spirits
Their two worlds collided in 2002 when Susan and Christine’s husbands were each transferred and the two families moved to Virginia the same week. Both new in town, looking to make new friends — they ended up at Quilter’s Corner in Midlothian, Virginia.

They soon realized they were kindred spirits — with two very different points of view. Susan was doing long-arm quilting full-time, and after she purchased the quilt shop — Christine became the manager. They loved designing quilts together. They established Swirly Girls Design because they saw a need in the marketplace for patterns that would showcase the newer fabric styles — the larger prints, the directional prints, etc. Swirly Girls patterns became known for having excellent written directions with a clever twist — like an unexpected piecing technique.

When Susan and Christine were running the quilt shop — “SCHMETZ was the only machine needle we sold or used. We had the big display with all the different needle options. For piecing, we use the Microtex Sharp 70/10 and the 60/8 for machine appliqué. We use the Quilting needle to do our quilting, and we tell our students to use the Embroidery needle when sewing with decorative threads in appliqué projects.”

The Swirly Girls were often inspired by Michael Miller fabrics — and at the 2008 International Quilt Market, they had a meeting with Kathy Miller. “Delightful” was their last collection. “Daydream,” their fifth fabric collection, is newly released. Today’s quilters are inspired by Swirly Girls patterns, books and fabric lines. What’s next? They have created two quilting rulers for Creative Grids. And you MUST check out their very unique line of Monogram Buttons for Dill Buttons. Each button has a nine-hole grid so you can stitch out any letter or number. Once you stitch the letter, the buttons can be attached to any project to spell monograms, names, dates etc. It’s such a great idea — you’ll wonder why you didn’t think of it yourself!

Cool Monogram Buttons for Dill Buttons

Click the link below to download the color chart:

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Your Local Retailer

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Size: 250 x 250

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