

# Cablegram



## Rebecca Danger *DangerCrafts*

This month we welcome Rebecca Danger to the Seattle Knitters Guild. Rebecca Danger is a knitting pattern designer living in a cute 1920's cottage in Bellingham Washington with her husband, Mr Danger, their soon-to-be son due in April 2011, and their two pugs Abbey and Lucy, plus a whole menagerie of knitted toys. She's got a great blog at [www.rebeccadanger.typepad.com](http://www.rebeccadanger.typepad.com) and a monster of an etsy shop at [www.dangercrafts.etsy.com](http://www.dangercrafts.etsy.com). She can also be found at [www.DCSewingShop.etsy.com](http://www.DCSewingShop.etsy.com) and on Ravelry as Rebeccadanger.

She believes that knitting is a lifestyle, not just a hobby. Since Rebecca really, really, really likes to knit, she started knitting rather obsessively and writing patterns of her original toy designs in February 2009. Since then she has self-published about 20 patterns, released 3 free patterns, written patterns for several yarn companies and books, and has authored her own book, *The Big Book of Knitted Monsters* published by Martingale & Co. She really likes this since it means she gets to knit all day, tell the government that all of her yarn purchases are business expenses, and still be able to afford to feed her family. She also feels quite proud that all of that knitting in high school and college has led to something more than just frowns and discontented looks from teachers.

Notes from the Board 2  
 Membership 2  
 Knitter's Calendar 3  
 Show and Tell 5  
 Book Review 6  
 Knitting Tips & Tricks 8  
**Looking Ahead:**  
 April 6, Rebecca Danger of  
*Dangerfieldcrafts*  
 May 4, Fiber Frenzy  
 June 1, Mary Scott Huff  
 See back cover for more info

## Michele Whiplinger *Knitting Luxury Yarns*

Anyone who attended the March guild meeting would never have guessed that speaker Michele Whiplinger was a last minute guest speaker. We also would never have known that she had spent all day working at her shop. Both knowledgeable and an eloquent speaker, Michele was a fascinating person to get to meet. We were very privileged to have had her spend time with guild members discussing her work with natural dyes and dyeing traditions. *Continued on page 4*



## Board Members

Thanks goes to following members who volunteer their time:

**Kristine Jackson, President**

*president@seattleknittersGuild.org*  
*kljackson on Ravelry*

**Open Position, Vice President**

*vicepresident@seattleknittersGuild.org*

**Lizbeth Linares Davern, Treasurer**

*treasurer@seattleknittersGuild.org*  
*llinares1 on Ravelry*

**Debra Fox, Program Co-chair**

*programchair@seattleknittersGuild.org*  
*yarnfox on Ravelry*

**Jessica Rose, Program Co-Chair**

*programchair@seattleknittersGuild.org*  
*rosekimknits on Ravelry*

**Alex Butler, Program Co-Chair**

*programchair@seattleknittersGuild.org*  
*butlera22 on Ravelry*

**Kathy Hightower, Membership**

*membership@seattleknittersGuild.org*  
*khightop on Ravelry*

**Lisa Kobeck, Newsletter Editor**

*editor@seattleknittersGuild.org*  
*convolutedstring on Ravelry*

**Tracey Delamarter, Newsletter Reporter**

*reporter@seattleknittersGuild.org*  
*delaknitter on Ravelry*

**Margarite Hargrave, Webmistress**

*Board@seattleknittersGuild.org*  
*knittingaviatrix on Ravelry*

**Devorah Verburg-Sachs, Librarian**

*librarian@seattleknittersGuild.org*  
*devorahv on Ravelry*

**Christina Cheng, Hospitality Chair**

*hospitality@seattleknittersGuild.org*  
*Cozyyarn on Ravelry*

[www.seattleknittersGuild.org](http://www.seattleknittersGuild.org)

## Notes from the Board

There's a monster hiding under my bed! There's a primeval fascination with monsters from folklore to fairy tales. Monsters brought the villagers together, albeit with pitchforks, not knitting needles, and made them, at least metaphorically through stories, face their fears together. Somehow, the magic doesn't go away as we get older and more sophisticated and monsters come to represent a more silly side of us. Our next guest has silly monsters galore to share as she taps into this part of our psyche. No huddling under tables, now! We'll see you there.  
— Kristine Jackson



Kristine Jackson

## Library Report

Be sure to check out these great new books in our library Silk Road Socks by Hunter Hammersen and Charts Made Simple by JC Briar. These are two gems!  
— Devorah Verberg-Sachs

## Notices

Both the Bellevue Art Museum and the Seattle Art Museum have fiber-related exhibits currently on display.

See [The Mysterious Content of Softness](#), an exploration of the transformative power of fiber and its connection to the human body, at the Bellevue Art Museum through June 26th. The exhibit includes fiber techniques such as knitting, loom-weaving and crochet.

Through June 5th, the Seattle Art Museum's exhibit [Meet Me at the Center of the Earth](#) is an opportunity to view the Soundsuits of Nick Cave sculpted from unusual materials such as potholders, buttons, and thrift store sweaters.

## Membership Notes

Welcome to new members:  
Michale Crooks (Ravelry: crookedneedles)  
Sue Dybbro of Seattle (Ravelry: suzseattle)  
Megan Gorman of Seattle (Ravelry: flygirl)  
Lisa Lamson of Seattle (Ravelry: frankierose)  
Sarah Merner of Seattle  
Marion O'Brien of Seattle (Ravelry: mariono)  
Judith Marie Smith of Seattle  
— Kathy Hightower, Membership

## Madrona 2011

### *A Member Photographs the Teacher's Gallery*

Many thanks to Karen Jo Gustafson for her photographic work.



Margaret Radcliffe



Cat Bordhi



Franklin Habit



Jared Flood Among Lovely Sweaters



Sivia Harding



Vivian Hoxbro's Table

### Knitter's Calendar

- ☛ April 8-11, 2011 - Weekend Workshop with Karen Alfke, <http://www.grandfirlodge.com/html/retreats-110408-acorn.html>
- ☛ April 14-17, 2011 - Shepherd's Extravaganza, <http://www.shepherds-extravaganza.com/>
- ☛ May 19-22, 2011 - Puget Sound LYS Tour, <http://www.lystour.com/>
- ☛ July 28-31, 2011 - Sock Summit, <http://www.socksummit.com/>

everything you  
need to know  
about dyeing  
and painting  
with natural dye  
extracts



*Continued from cover*

Fiber arts have always been a part of Michele's life. As a girl, she remembers sneaking out of her room with her sister to peek at their mother's late night knitting group. In spite of all those women knitting away every week, Michele herself never learned how. Instead, she became a weaver, and later began to dye fiber. These days, she travels the world, helping indigenous peoples return to using natural and locally found dyes. In November 2010, for example, she attended Tinkuy de Tejedores in Cusco, Peru. She described rows of Peruvians delegates to the conference wearing beautifully colored hats, shawls and other tribal clothes. Though she was there as a teacher, "my mouth hung open," she told us, from all the colors, and all from plants and naturally occurring resources: purples, olives, turquoise, and more.

Michele works with a wide range of people and agencies, from local villagers in remote locations to government agencies. Her goals are to help preserve the natural habitats from which the dye plants and minerals come, and to help the local people work with safer substances by eliminating synthetic dyes that poison the water. She works as a product developer as well, helping to tweak products to make them more marketable internationally

Indigenous plants are now being protected and replanted. Governments, companies and local people in the communities are coming together to discuss how to save these resources. Michele told us the story of Nilda who was sent to study in the United States and then returned to her hometown of Cusco, Peru to create the Center for Traditional Textiles, and has become a force to be reckoned with in the local textile industry.

Michele gave us so much information about different types of dyes, the methods used to harvest and create them, and the people she's encountered; it was the equivalent of an all day class. Here is some of the information that stood out:

- The Mixtec in Oaxaca Mexico use a small marine snail to dye cotton purple. They travel along the coast for month-long trips, carefully collecting them and gently milking about a tablespoon of secretions from each before replacing them.
- Yellow is the most common, easily created dye color.
- Indigo, from leaves soaked in alkaline water, is used on every continent
- It takes 150,000 Lac insects to create one pound of red dye.
- Cotton is most commonly greenish brown in color, not the white that shows up in schoolbook pictures.
- Some of the natural dyes are extremely durable and lightfast, but it's necessary to know what type of dye to use when and how to prepare and set it. Michele showed us a photo of a 550 year-old tapestry and most of the colors were still vivid.

Michele is the founder of Earthues, a fair-trade business located in Ballard that specializes in natural dyeing, textile design and creating sustainable dyeing practices. Products and information on classes are available both on the company's website, <http://www.earthues.com> and in the shop. Earthues blogs at: <http://earthuescolors.blogspot.com/>. — Tracey Delamarter



March's Show 'n Tell — What are you working on?



Linda Knower



Marion O'Brien



Betty Erickson



Anu Slorah



Lisa Burlingame



Kathie Jordan



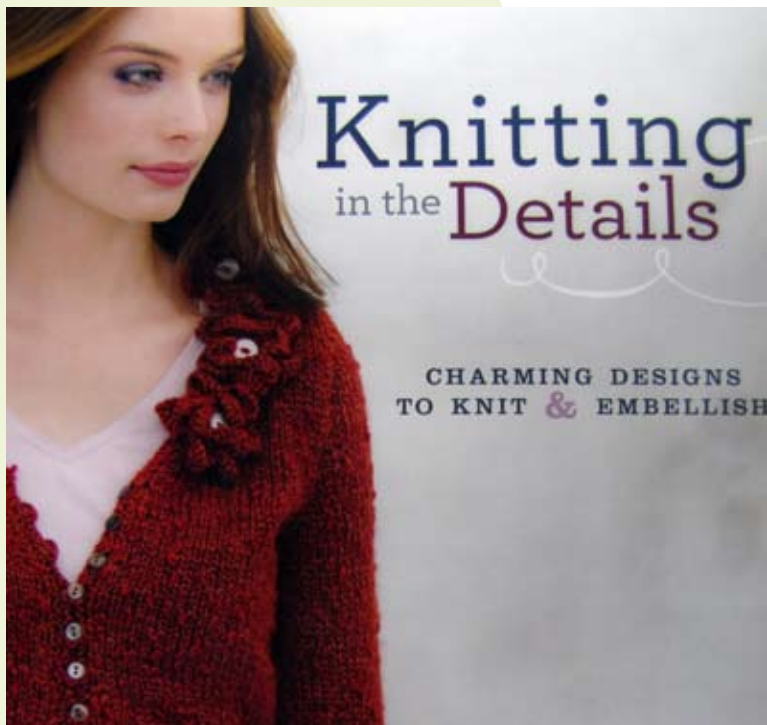
Mary Mara



Jan Ives



Carol Sherman



## Book Review

### *Knitting in the Details: Charming Designs to Knit and Embellish*

Louisa Harding, Interweave Books, 2010

There are a lot of knitting patterns out there. Anyone who has browsed through the craft section of his or her local bookstore or scrolled through the selections on Ravelry can attest to the fact. And there are really only so many ways to knit up a pair of mittens or a hat or a scarf. The trick to creating truly unique and one of a kind knitted items is in the details. Louisa Harding's book, *Knitting in the Details*, is a hands-on guidebook and a source of inspiration for adding those little details to your work.

Harding takes the relatively simple patterns included in the book and adds all sorts of embellishments and details, creating fun pieces that stand out. In the introduction she writes about her studio and her collections of buttons, ribbons, feathers, and other trinkets. She shares that her love of shiny, sparkly things draws her to collect all sorts of treasures. "I love anything that looks as if it has a hidden story, such as a vintage brooch at the thrift shop, a jar of old belt buckles in the dusty corner of my local haberdashery shop, and my mother's jewelry boxes filled with broken trinkets." Looking through the beautifully staged and photographed pictures in this book, Harding's love of story shines. Each piece looks as though it's just jumped straight out of a fairytale is waiting to share its story with the wearer.

*Knitting in the Details* contains 24 patterns, but many of them are presented in more than one way, either with different types of yarn or with different styles of embellishments, creating far more than the twenty-four patterns themselves. The book is broken down into sections by type of embellishment. There are six patterns under the 'Embroidery' heading, as well as six each under 'Beading', 'Added Elements', and the 'In the Details' sections.

The embroidery selections are lovely and, for several of the projects, Harding shows multiple ways of embroidering with the patterns. Using the same pattern but with different types of yarns and different styles of embroidering, she creates entirely different end results. The Amber hat is a very stylish, simple cloche hat, but the different looks Harding creates are almost unrecognizable as the same pattern. With so many options for so many of the projects, Harding appeals to a wide range of knitters.

The beading section of the book takes a lot of the unknown out of combining beading and knitting, something that seems daunting to the uninitiated. Harding gives us several challenging larger projects, a lovely wrap, a shrug and a bolero, but also gives the beading newcomers simple yet elegant projects to tackle. The first project in this section is a beautiful little clasp purse that could easily become a family heirloom. Each piece looks much more challenging than it actually turns out to be since Harding uses simple knits and relies on the added elements, in this case beads, to make the piece stand out. The Bettine shrug, for example, is lovely and looks quite complex, but reading through the pattern reveals it is actually a rather



simple piece to create, even for a beginner.

In the third section of the book, 'Added Elements', Harding uses ribbons, feathers, buttons, fringe, appliqué, sequins and more to "transform the knitted blank canvases of the projects." As she does elsewhere in the book, Harding shows two completely different results with the Esme vest simply by choosing different yarns and by threading either contrasting or coordinating colored ribbon through the eyelets. All the patterns in this section are nice, but it's the additions of fringe or appliqué or some other embellishment that add the pop to each piece.



The last chapter of Harding's book, 'In the Details', sums up all the techniques and shows examples of how combining various embellishments can allow you to create incredible pieces. Using a simple hat (Poppy), Harding adds beads, ribbon, and knitted flowers to a pastel striped hat to create a lovely, soft look. On the next page, she shows the same hat, this time in bold red and purple yarn with a dark ribbon through the eyelets and a large rosette. The looks are totally different, and seeing them



made me want to knit up one for several friends, each customized to their style and personality. The projects in this section of the book make use of all the techniques Harding has covered, and the results are lovely. Reading through *Knitting in the Details* challenges us to get more creative; the ideas are endless.

*Knitting in the Details* has all of the standard knitting book components; there's a glossary of terms, several pages of instruction on the knitting techniques the book uses, and decent diagrams and charts. The charts are a bit on the small side, and most readers would want to consider enlarging them for easier use. Make sure to check out the links under 'Sources for Embellishments' in the back of the book. Just looking at all the notions on one of the French websites got me drooling. There was no errata on the publisher's website for this book.

Harding's book is a little like having a fashion stylist show up and coach you with your knitting. She takes simple ideas and turns them into very achievable fashion that will appeal to a wide range of fiber artists. She has a good eye for details, and knows when to stop. None of the designs look overly fussy, and they all fit into her vision

of story. Each creation in this book looks as though it has a story to tell.

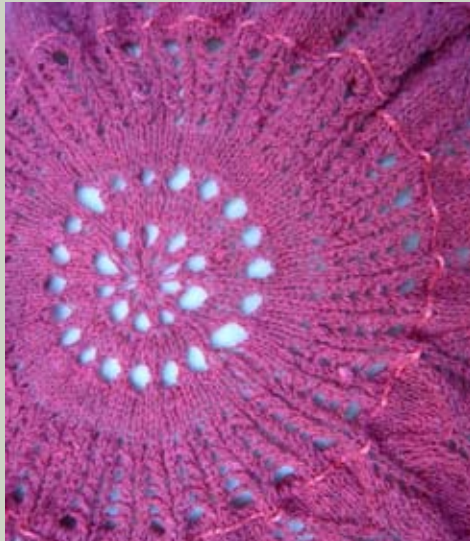
This book would be a great read for all levels of knitters who enjoy finding inspiration for creating unique, individual works of fibery art. It's a great book for both the actual patterns and instructions it contains, as well as for the inspiration to be creative that it provides. — *Tracey Delamarter*



## This Month's Knitting Tip

### *Lifelines Come to the Rescue*

Whether you call them lifelines or rescue lines; this line gives you a safety net to fall back on, especially with lace. I love to use them along with markers for each repeat to assist in keeping the pattern going. It's so easy to forget a yarn over or perhaps you drop a stitch; a rescue line gives you a cushion to fall back on. The idea is that you can rip out down to your rescue line where you know you've got the correct number of stitches and the pattern done properly. There it's easy to pick up the stitches off your lifeline. I even rip down just the one pattern repeat, leaving the rest of the current row



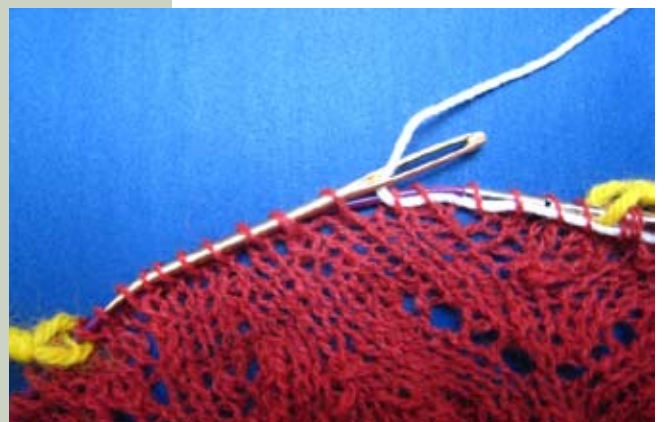
*Girasole with Rescue Line*

re-establish the pattern with the correct number of stitches and then work just those 10 to 15 stitches.

The application is simple. Thread a large blunt darning needle with a smooth contrasting colored yarn. Cotton is excellent for this purpose. You need a generous length to go through all the stitches on your needle and a bit extra to tie the ends together forming a loop so the thread doesn't pull out. It's easiest to do the threading working on what would be considered your "purl row". Or if you knitting on circulars as I'm doing for Jared Flood's *Girasole* circular shawl (pictured) you would thread the needle through after finishing an all knit row. Just go ahead and thread the yarn through all your stitches – working along the wire section of circular needles where the stitches are loose is the easiest. Or better yet if you use a set of interchangeable needles, like Knit Picks, thread your rescue thread (thin crochet yarn works well) through the tightening hole at the base of the needle and then pull the thread through as you purl your row. For this method you'll want to use removable stitch markers.

A real life example is my struggle to establish the next pattern in my shawl. I had to frog down two to three rows three times before getting the blocks correctly set up. Adding stitch markers helped, and the lifeline held the line as I ripped down to it each time making it considerably easier to pick up that last perfect row from the previous pattern.

Ahh, life is good when you add lifelines to your lace. —  
*Margarite Hargrave*



*For ease thread the lifeline along the wire part of a circular needle*

### Seattle Knitters Guild

(Est. 1985)

Meetings every first Wednesday  
of the month 7pm

Wedgwood Presbyterian Church  
8008 – 35th Ave. NE, Seattle  
(NE corner of 35th and 80th)

Visitors always welcome. Parking  
available in the lot behind the  
church or across from the south  
side of the church on 80th.

Dues: \$22 per year,  
\$11 after July 1

Library cart open 6:30 to 7pm  
(Only members may check out  
books.)

**Cablegram** is published monthly.

Submit stories and photos to  
[editor@seattleknittersguild.org](mailto:editor@seattleknittersguild.org)  
by the 2nd Saturday following  
the meeting.

[www.seattleknittersguild.org](http://www.seattleknittersguild.org)

Member Meeting	Topic
April 6	Rebecca Danger of Dangerfieldcrafts
May 4	Fiber Frenzy
June 1	Mary Scott Huff
July 6	To Be Announced