

Cablegram



Fiber Frenzy

Are You Ready for the Fiber Explosion?

Seattle Knitters Guild will hold its annual Fiber Frenzy on May 4th. Knitters can add to their stash or make room for more, depending on their desire.

Any paid up member of the Seattle Knitters Guild can sell their knitterly related items: yarn, tools, books, etc. If you haven't renewed your membership for 2010, you can do so by mail (see SKG website for details) before the meeting. We will accept last-minute renewals.

Please label your items. Put all skeins of a type in a clear plastic bag or tie together with the price clearly visible. Make a note if the skeins/balls can be sold individually. Include all info. Include notations on yardage, fiber content and brand of yarn (if no ball band). Half skeins, full skeins – whatever you've got. Bring small bills/coin to make change. We will NOT have change on hand. The buying of such items is open to anyone. The terms of sale are determined by the individual seller so, while some sellers may accept personal checks, please bring your cash in case the beautiful skein of yarn you must have is a cash only prospect.

The doors will open at 6:15 for you to set up your for-sale items. No selling can or will take place until after announcements are made at 7:00 pm. Tables will be set up for fellowship and knitting so please come even if you are not in the market for new items.

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Looking Ahead:

May 4, Fiber Frenzy
 June 1, Mary Scott Huff
 July 6, To Be Announced
 See back cover for more info

Rebecca Danger

DangerCrafts

Rebecca Danger's grandma taught her to knit. More than once. It didn't take the first time. It did the second time though, to the consternation of her teachers in high school and collage since she spent much of her class time knitting. She made up her patterns as she went along, and eventually started publishing them. To date, she has over 30 patterns, published on her website, in various books and magazines, and on Ravelry. But that part comes later.

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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

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knittingaviatrix on Ravelry

Devorah Verburg-Sachs, Librarian

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devorahv on Ravelry

Christina Cheng, Hospitality Chair

hospitality@seattleknittersGuild.org

Cozyyarn on Ravelry

www.seattleknittersGuild.org

Notes from the Board

Yeah! It's Fiber Frenzy, spring cleaning at it's most fun. Time to weed out our stashes or, if you're like me, take stock of the gaps, and see what our friends and neighbors are getting rid of. This is so much fun. You will be amazed at HOW MUCH stuff some of us have to winnow out; I mean bags and bags. Come ready to shop for deals in patterns, books, yarns and tools. Maybe you'll see that Jordana Paige bag you couldn't talk yourself into at retail or a bag of home spun in a beautiful color with enough to make your mom a shawl for Mother's day. Come ready to spend a little or a lot and treat yourself or come ready to clear out a little space in your stash so you can fit in the treasures you find to fill it back up. Whichever, come! You really never know what you'll find.

We'll see you there. — Kristine Jackson



Kristine Jackson

Library Report

Newly added: The Big Book of Knitted Monsters by Rebecca Danger.

An updated list of Library books is being posted on our web site so back check soon to see if we have the books you need. — Devorah Verberg-Sachs

Notices

Do you like to buy knitting books and get to peruse them first? The Guild needs you! We are looking for a volunteer to take over managing the Guild library. If you are interested please Contact Devorah Verburg-Sachs dvsachs@gmail.com or any of the Board Members

PLEASE NOTE: We're losing some of our board members at the end of this year to attrition. We need to replace the Hospitality, Membership and Program chairs and still don't have a committed vice president. If you love the guild and would like to contribute to its long-term survival, come to a board meeting. You don't have to be a long time member. A special thanks to Carol Sherman who came to the last meeting.

Membership Notes

Welcome new members:

Lezli Dulude of Bellevue (Ravelry: btrails),
Monica Kirby of Seattle (Ravelry: kirbymomo),
Karla Kremer of Seattle (Ravelry: lacelover),
Amy Stanton of Seattle (Ravelry: quixoticpixels),
Venus Tan of Seattle (Ravelry: sunevnat),
Joan Stover of Seattle

SKG Speakers

Just How Do We Find These Fabulous People, Anyway?

The first Wednesday of every month, we all gather up our knitting bags and head off to the guild meeting. Almost every meeting features a guest speaker, and when most of us arrive, he or she is usually comfortably chatting with our fellow members, displays set up and samples spread out for sale or show. There are a lot of steps that lead up to that guild meeting, however. Dozens of emails and calls go back and forth between potential speakers and the program chairs, calendars are consulted, publishers and agents contacted, and local yarn stores and heads of fiber events consulted.

Fiber artists end up as guests of the guild in several different ways. Sometimes, the speakers contact the board themselves and ask to come when they will be stopping through town. The Madrona Fiber Arts team, the Nordic Heritage Museum, and local yarn stores contact us when they are bringing in speakers we may be able to feature. Occasionally, a chance meeting results in a speaker being scheduled, as was the case with Sivia Harding. Debra Fox, one of the program chairs, met Sivia at a yarn store in Portland. Deb asked Sivia if she would be interested in speaking at a meeting. Luckily for us, she was. Most often, speakers are a direct result of member requests. Either from Ravelry polls, direct conversations, or emails passed along to the board, members request speakers that represent a wide range of



Sivia Harding

interests; “from monsters to miters,” as one member put it. The SKG has featured speakers from Canada, Australia, and Denmark, as well as from all over the United States. With the goal of promoting a full range of fiber arts, the guild works to bring opportunities and information that stimulate the imagination and enhance the knitting skills of its members.

The Seattle Knitters Guild has a reputation of enthusiastic members who enjoy sharing their love of fiber art, and our speakers seem to enjoy sharing with us as much as we love hearing from them. To compensate for their time, the guild provides a small honorarium and allows speakers to sell their wares.

So whether you’re interested in learning more about indie dyers, the process involved in designing lace, the history of knitting, or the how to assemble and stuff a monster, there will always be something new to learn. — Tracey Delamarter



Ann Weaver

Knitter's Calendar

- ☛ May 7-8, 2011 - Maryland Sheep and Wool, <http://www.sheepandwool.org/>
- ☛ May 19-22, 2011 - Puget Sound LYS Tour, <http://www.lystour.com/>
- ☛ June 11-19 - Victoria Fibre Fest, <http://www.victoriafibrefest.com/index.html>
- ☛ June 24-16 - Black Sheep Gethering, <http://www.blacksheepgathering.org/>
- ☛ July 28-31, 2011 - Sock Summit, <http://www.socksummit.com/>



Continued from cover

In college, Rebecca majored in art history, but sometime during her junior year, in the middle of a tie-dye class, she suddenly felt that what she was doing was ridiculous. So she quit college and started her own business with the money she saved. Before selling knitting patterns, Rebecca made her living for about seven years selling handmade bags she designed. Her husband James helped with cutting, stitching and running the business, but she eventually grew tired of bags and instead decided to focus on knitting.

She didn't like knitting sweaters however, but with toys and monsters, her fun, quirky personality met its match. Herman was her very first creation, followed by Maddox. She goes back and forth between designing animals and other toys (we have Robbie the Radiant Robot at our house) and monsters. Earlier this year, her first book, *The Big Book of Knitted Monsters* was published.

Daphne and Delilah are her best selling patterns, but all of her designs have their loyal and enthusiastic supporters. Just take a look at her Ravelry group, and you see how beloved Rebecca and her monsters are. She has over 1,000 followers in her Ravelry group alone.

Rebecca, whose last name really is Danger, spent a portion of her time with us sharing her tips and tricks for creating the perfect stuffed critter. In Rebecca's words, creating the perfect toy is all about the stuffing. She carries bags of stuffing with her everywhere, and can spend hours working to get the shape just right. She buys plastic safety eyes at craft stores and at 6060.etsy.com, an Etsy vendor, and tries out different sizes to see which fit the personality of each monster. Rebecca cautioned against using plastic eyes for children under the age of three since they could pose a choking hazard, and instead recommended stitching or embroidering eyes.

Rebecca uses felt for most of her monster's mouths, but also creates a seamed mouth by casting off and then picking up the cast-off edge. While her creations can be knit up with DPNs, she prefers using the magic loop method for a variety of reasons (her pugs have a tendency to snatch the DPNs when she accidentally flings them across the room).

One of the wonderful things about knitting a Rebecca Danger pattern is that any yarn will do, and they're quick to knit up. She uses needles a few sizes smaller than the yarn label recommends in order to get a tight fabric. Berroco Comfort and Cascade 220 are her favorites.

With Baby Danger due any day now, Rebecca has been spending her creative time at the sewing machine. She now has several sewing patterns available as well.

Rebecca and James Danger live in Bellingham with their two pugs, Abbey and Lucy, who will be in for a big surprise with the arrival of the newest family member, expected any day now. You can see what Rebecca is up to, and find out if Baby Danger has arrived at her blog: http://rebeccadanger.typepad.com/rebecca_danger/ — Tracey Delamarter



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



Marilyn Tschetter



Liz Callahan



Susan Parke



Emma Bartholomew



Anna Lord



Monica Kirby



Anna Presland



Lisa Lamson



Julie Castner



Robyn Chernick



Sue Dybbro



Judith Smith



Sherry Toly



Warwick Tomfohr



Book Review

Custom Knits: Unleash Your Inner Designer with Top-Down and Improvisational Techniques

Wendy Bernard

STC Craft/A Melanie Falick Book, 2008

I pick up a lot of knitting books simply because I like what's on the cover. That's how I came to pick this one up, as well. It wasn't just the lovely purple, grey and blue round-yoke Fair Isle sweater, or the surfboard (something else I love). It was the way the sweater had a laced-up deep V-neck. A steak. The very thought of which both intrigues and terrifies me. It really did transform a lovely but almost generic looking sweater into something new and different. Flipping through the book revealed all sorts of patterns with twists on traditional themes.

The inspiration behind Bernard's book is a collection of projects that turned out to fit improperly or not at all. She got tired of working on sweaters that turned out to have mismatched sleeves or too small necks. From those early sweaters, she developed a desire to knit in ways that would allow her to create the right shape for her body. And, she wanted to do so in a way that would be fun and simple to achieve. She credits Elizabeth Zimmermann and Barbara Walker as her main influences for their circular knitting, top-down knitting, and especially Zimmermann's "No-nonsense approach... and making sweaters without an 'official pattern.'" These two women inspired her to

create her own patterns, improvising as she went along.

Bernard divides her book into six sections. Chapter one deals with making decisions about what fits our body type, which styles will work for our bodies, and how to decide what projects fit into our lifestyles. She addresses topics like deciphering patterns and schematics and taking measurements. One of my favorite parts of this section is when she gives instructions for making a personal dress form using an old T-shirt, plastic wrap, duct tape, and fiberfill in order to have an accurate way to check fit on in-progress knitting.

We've all seen the schematics in a knitting pattern, and I've measured myself on multiple occasions to see what size I should be knitting. Bernard explains how to read them, and more importantly, exactly how to measure yourself for one, something that I have apparently been doing wrong. She talks about ease, size, yarn types and weights, and has a list of helpful questions for determining if a pattern is a good fit for the reader's size, shape and lifestyle.

Sections two through five are patterns and improvising ideas. She tackles a specific style of sweater in each chapter. Top-down Raglans, chapter two, contains eight different patterns, but each pattern has many possibilities. Bernard presents dozens of ways to make each pattern an original:



changing sleeve length or shape, yarn texture or color, adding to the overall length, changing the collar. This chapter has cardigans, pull-overs, a cape, and a knitted t-shirt.

Chapter three has nine different top-down, set-in sleeve patterns including a coat, several shells, pull-overs, and cardigans. Chapter four features two round-yoke sweater patterns, including the steeked color work tunic from the cover.

Chapter five is titled "Designing on the Fly." Bernard introduces the chapter by explaining that by knowing stitch and row gauge, we can essentially knit and design a garment with no pattern at all. Using a bath towel to get dimensions for a shoulder wrap or a store bought tank top to find the right shape for a cashmere shell are just a few of the tricks Bernard uses in this chapter. Chapter five contains six patterns in all.

The last section contains information for anyone wanting the specific techniques that are used in the book. Bernard covers everything from collars to armhole depth to edging. This section is chocked full of information and reads more like a textbook than the rest of the book. It covers special techniques and talks through several different



cast-on options, as well as a whole assortment of other techniques.

Custom Knits is filled with practical information and helpful advice for knitters of any level. Even experienced knitters will find useful information here. Bernard includes checklists, charts and practical ideas, and does it in an easy to use format. Custom Knits is 168 pages, and this hardback book is as much a knitting and designing textbook as it is a pattern book.

The great thing about Custom Knits is the versatility. Any of these patterns can be adapted to meet any need. If you want a warm weather knit, use a lighter yarn and leave off the sleeves. For cooler weather, use a wool-based yarn and add sleeves, length, and a higher neck. Bernard takes the mystery out of the process, allowing us to create the perfect knits.

The photos throughout the book are well done, and helpfully illustrate the patterns and techniques. It's easy to see the details of each pattern. Bernard uses decorative stitches to get most of her texture in these patterns, but there are also several color work patterns. There is very little lace in this collection, and what lace she includes is generally part of a larger garment. Every pattern ends with an idea box titled "Make It Your Own," and

Bernard provides enough information to transform the patterns into something entirely new.

In all, this is a great book, and one I'll be adding to my own library. There's plenty of information in Custom Knits for any level of knitter, and the ideas are enough to inspire anyone to try a little creativity. Thanks to Bernard and her book, I now have the tools I need to do so.

There was quite a bit of errata for this book, and it wasn't easy to find. I eventually found it on the publishing house website: http://www.abramsbooks.com/stc_craft_errata_custom_knits.html — Tracey Delamarter



SKG KAL Update

Are You Thinking Ahead to November Yet?

It started out as "what can you do with a skein of sock yarn in the SKG colorway?" But who ever wants to stop with one skein? Two is more fun, and three's never a crowd when it comes to yarn. So why rein in the party? In fact, why stop at one color? We don't know about you, but when faced with all that gorgeous sock yarn, we just couldn't bring ourselves to limit it to one lonely skein. We'd still love to see what you could come up with in the SKG colorway, but bigger is better, right? So pick your number and pick your colors, we've made the KAL into the...

2011

Seattle Knitters Guild

What Can You Knit Out of

(however many skeins of whatever color)

Sock Yarn

Knit-a-Long.

We can't wait to see what you come up with at the Fashion Show in November!



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
by the 2nd Saturday following
the meeting.

www.seattleknittersguild.org



SKG's Custom Colorway



Don't Forget FIBER FRENZY is almost here!

Member Meeting	Topic
May 4	Fiber Frenzy
June 1	Mary Scott Huff
July 6	To Be Announced
August 3	To Be Announced