

Entertainment

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International quilter masters the fine art of fabric dyeing

Ann Johnston to display her art and teach at the NW Quilting Expo

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For Pamplin Media Group

"It is an honor to be asked to be a guest artist at this year's Northwest Quilting Expo," shares international guest instructor, Ann Johnston. "I travel and teach all over the world but rarely do I get the opportunity to display my work so close to home."

Ann resides in Lake Oswego, where she works and teaches from her home. She is also a recognized quilting instructor who just returned from teaching in Switzerland. An accomplished author and lecturer, she has written five books on the art and is looking forward to showing her work.

"I get to choose what will be shown and as a guest artist. I will have 25 quilts on display," she said.

Two of her quilts on display are titled "Family Wedding Quilts," made for her son and another family member. The quilts were created through a process, as she hand dyes all her own fabrics.

"I spent about two weeks last spring dyeing fabric — over 100 yards of blues in every shade from royal blue to violet. The entire process of making these two quilts has taken over six months," adds this expert artist.

The quilts are each 8-by-8-feet in size and are hand quilted.

Johnston will teach a two-day class prior to the opening of the expo show, which will encourage students to use their own photographs to create a unique design for a quilt block. Increasingly complex reverse appliqué and sewing techniques will be used. The classes will run all day Sept. 21 and 22 from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

"I started quilting way back in the '70s and began dyeing my own fabric in the late '70s and early '80s. Over the years and after trying many approaches, I finally realized you do not have to be a chemist to learn to dye fabric. Now I only use my own fabric when I make quilts. I can literally put on or paint the dye on the fabric where I want

it. I use everything from paints brushes to rollers and much more to create the art quilts," Johnston said. "I also use a combination of painting and printing called 'monoprinting' where I spread the dye on the table and then lay the fabric on it to absorb the dye."

One has to only view her vast collection to realize that the quilts are truly works of art and not made just to place upon a bed. Varying in size, the art is functional as it can also be wall art that can be displayed. Johnston's art is titled so that it gives people something to think about as she hopes to evoke a sense of emotion and feeling about each piece.

"I really want people to look at the work and think about it anyway they want as each person will interpret it differently," she offers.

"Quilts are many more things than what people think of," she said. "When I teach design, we work at each person's own level of experience, as I want it to be their own design and ideas."



Ann Johnston of Lake Oswego will be a guest artist at this year's Northwest Quilting Expo at the Portland Expo Center on Sept. 23, 24 and 25. She travels and teaches quilting all over the world, but "rarely gets the opportunity to display (her) work so close to home."

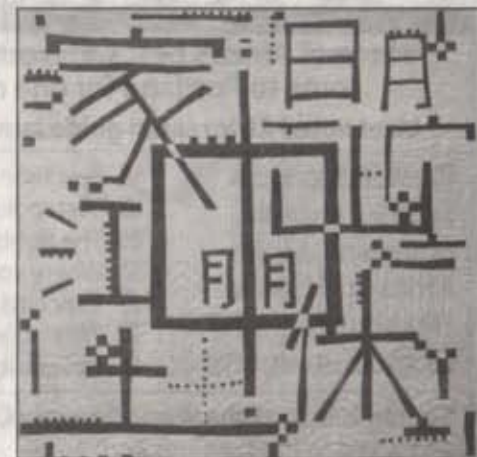


SUBMITTED PHOTOS / BILL BACHHUBER

Johnston is recognized internationally as a quilting instructor. She is shown here teaching a class in Switzerland.



ABOVE: Ann Johnston's studio in Lake Oswego offers lots of light and space for her to work on her artistic creations. Most of her quilts are eight-by-eight feet.



RIGHT: The blue and white quilt "9 Blue Characters" is one of the 25 quilts that Johnston will have on display at the NW Quilting Expo.

Johnston featured at quilt expo

Lake Oswego's award-winning quilter Ann Johnston will be the guest artist at the Northwest Quilting Expo 2010 to be held at the Portland Expo Center Sept. 23 to 25. The exhibit will feature over 20 quilts Johnston has made between 1997 and 2010.

The exhibit will run 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Sept. 23 and 24 and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sept. 25. Admission is \$9.50 per day or \$27 for a three-day pass.

Before the exhibit opens, Johnston will teach a two-day workshop on Reverse Appliqué for Designs from Photos. The dates are Sept. 21 and 22, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Cost of the workshop is \$165 and includes lunches.

For more information about the exhibit or to register for the workshop visit www.annjohnston.net.