

## **Members Teaching Members – January, 2020**

Karen Kebinger - Big Stitch Quilting Supplies

### **Needles**

Big Stitch needles are larger than regular hand quilting needles. They have larger eyes. Colonial needles has packs of needles that are designed especially for Big Stitch Quilting. The thicker the thread used the larger the needle.

Embroidery needles can be used. A size 8 is good. Keep in mind that needles can get dull after a while

### **Thimbles**

If you have never used a thimble, they feel very cumbersome and awkward at first. But do not give up!

Try different types till you find one you like. There are thimbles made of metal, leather and silicone.

I also like to use a fingertip thimble on my hand that is under the quilt. This protects the finger that pushes back the needle. Most are self-adhesive and come in metal, leather and plastic.

### **Threads**

Thread comes in many types and sizes. The higher the number the smaller the thread thickness.

100 weight(wt) is usually silk thread for appliqué or machine quilting.

60 wt is fine cotton for hand appliqué.

50 wt is used for machine piecing and machine quilting.

40 wt is used for machine quilting.

28 wt is for decorative machine quilting. 12 wt cotton is for hand Quilting. 12 wt peeled cotton is for hand work (Quilting and blanket Stitch)

8 wt peeled cotton is for hand work and quilting.

Many quilters prefer to use 12 wt cotton from Arifil for Big Stitch Quilting. If you are going to take the time to hand Quilt, you want the stitching to stand out and be noticed. This thread is sold on a red plastic spool. Be sure you are getting the 12 wt cotton thread, the 12 wt Wool thread is also sold on a red spool! There are 2 sizes if spool, the larger being 356 yards and comes in 270 colors. Smaller spools have 54 yards.

### **Batting**

Choosing a batting for your project is Very important. Stitching through 2 or more layers of fabric plus batting can make things difficult, unless you choose a batting that can be easily needed.

Thick cotton batting will be difficult to hand Quilt through. Choose instead a thin cotton or cotton blend batting.

Read the package of the batting to check for the suggested width between quilting. Larger spacing is recommended then you have the choice of how close your stitches can be.

### **Big Stitch Quilting**

Big Stitch Quilting has become popular today as a method to finish quilts. Many quilters have developed their own style of quilts, finding big Stitch Quilting a great way to extend their creativity using these wonderful colorful stitches.

Hand stitching has long been a skill used to create clothing and bedding before sewing machines were freely available. There a variety of hand stitched inspirations that form today's versions of hand Quilting.

### **Kantha**

The word literally translated means 'Rags' Originating in India this form of stitching was used out of necessity. The poor in the country needed to reuse worn Sari to create 'new' fabric to prolong it's use.

Small pieces of light weight cloth were layered together and sewn. The thread used was often taken from the edges of the fabrics. Many rows of small running stitches were used to give the cloth strength.

Often small embroideries were incorporated into the textiles depicting nature and religious symbols.

The fabric was then used to create bedding and other textiles used in everyday life.

### **Sashiko**

From Japan has also inspired Big stitch quilting. It is a very stylized form of hand embroidery.

Usually done using white or light-colored thread on Indigo dyed fabric. It is very decorative and forms geometric shapes.

### **Boro**

Also from Japan, translated means 'tattered cloth ' Similar in style to Kantha it was used by the poor to reuse fabric to prolong it's life. Running stitches were sewn into the layered fabrics to strengthen them for further use. It was considered very special to have cloth that had used many generations of the families clothing.

### **Hand Quilting**

Early hand Quilting was done to hold the layers of a quilt together. The stitches were small using light colored thread. The smaller the stitches were the better quality the finished Quilt was considered.

Generally early quilts were made in more muted colors and the quilting designs highlighted the patterns used.

### **Big Stitch Quilting**

Today quilting has come along way from the Traditional hand Quilting, Straight line machine quilting,

And Free motion machine quilting to mention just a few !

Today many quilters use much more vibrant colors and often great contrasts in color in their quilts.

Modern style quilts often have large areas of negative space. Art Quilts are often made of many textures of fabrics and fibers. Big Stitch Quilting lends itself to these types of quilts creating color and texture to create unique quilts and wall hangings!