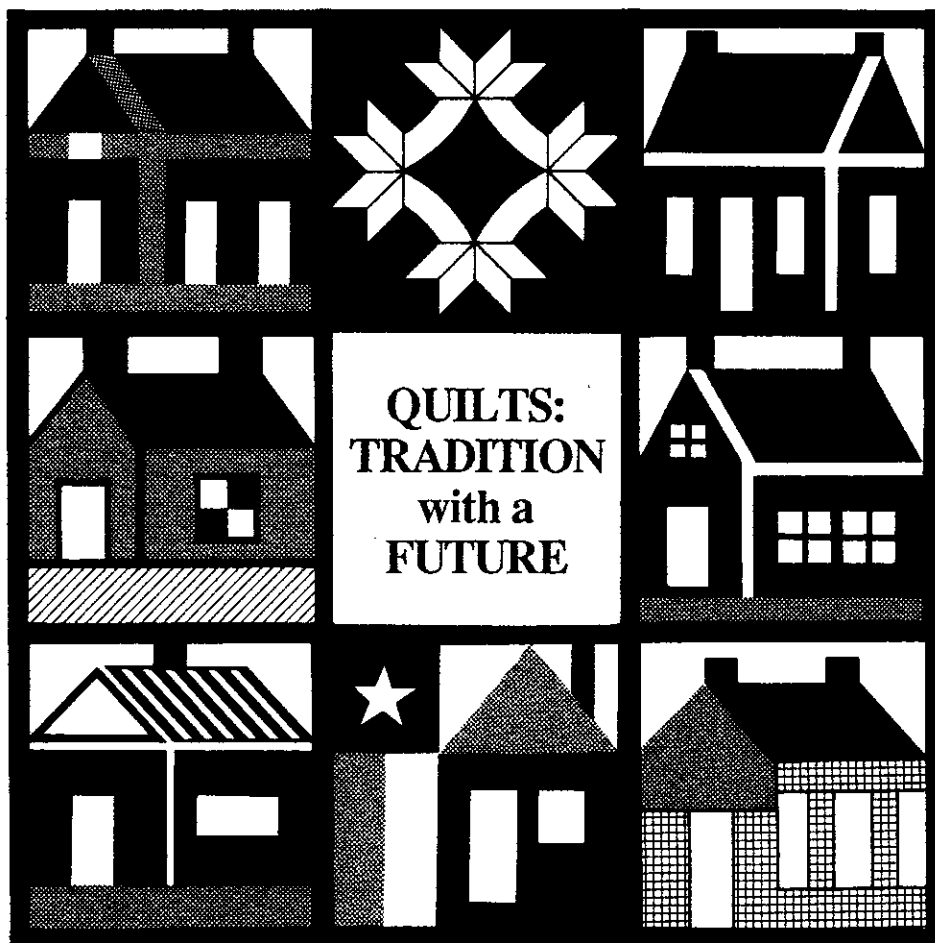


EAST BAY HERITAGE QUILTERS
Present



A QUILT STUDIO TOUR

July 29, 1988

INTRODUCTION

In 1984 the members of the East Bay Heritage Quilters sponsored their first symposium. As part of the four day event a tour of seven members' studios was held to showcase their work spaces. This event was conceived and conducted by the members of the 1984 Studio Tour Committee under the chairmanship of Mary Mashuta.

The tour was a resounding success and that event with seven new studios is being repeated for the 1988 symposium. The 1988 Studio Tour Committee welcomes you to this exciting event. As a participant of this tour of seven homes and eight studios we offer you the opportunity to relax and leave the driving to us.

As quilting takes a more important place in our lives, some of our EBHQ members have created a special area in their homes for quiltmaking. These studios have been selected to present to you because they each show creativity in solving some common quilters' problems such as workspace, selection and use of tools, storage of fabric, and adequate lighting.

Our committee has been working since February to make this tour a pleasurable event. We are hoping that you will gain some knowledge, inspiration, and incentive to create your own special 'studio.'

1988 Studio Tour Committee

Connie Blackstone

Lynn Crook

Peggy Kitchen

Claire Kropschot

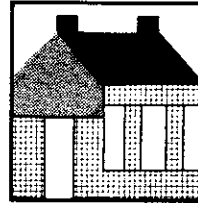
Terry Loy

Bernice Stone

July 11, 1988

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STUDIO 1 DENA CANTY



Dena Canty's studio is on the second floor of her house, which was built in 1896 by A. Page Brown and is a rare example of Tudor Revival. It is a four story home with a three story rusticated stone turret, giving it a Romanesque touch. Built for the Gorrill family – Mr. Gorrill is said to have been a lumberman – there are oak, redwood burl, pine, and birdseye maple rooms.

Dena has had her sewing room "since the day we moved in." It was one of her prerequisites to have a sewing room on the same floor as the bedrooms so as not to be isolated from the family. When her son moved up to an attic room, Dena's husband thought she might take over his room for its view, but she preferred to stay put because she feels right in the middle of the action. Her sewing machine faces a very busy street and her front yard filled with her husband's roses. Often friends driving by will wave and when she is in the mood, Dena can wave them in for a coffee break. An avid collector, Dena surrounds herself with sewing memorabilia – antique machines, file cabinets, old notions. Her sewing room environment enables Dena to spend many hours in her room alone without feeling lonely or shut in.

Dena has made few physical changes to her room. It has good natural light which she enjoys. Overhead lamps on a sliding bar provide additional flexible lighting. Dena uses regular lighting because her eyes don't function well under fluorescent lights. She has covered one wall with a large piece of white felt for pin-up, but says she usually uses the hall rug. For a work table, Dena uses an old kitchen cabinet (from a former house), and a school door purchased from a salvage company. She covers it with a cardboard cutting board. For her ironing, she uses the cabinet of an old treadle sewing machine with a small ironing board on it.

Dena made her first quilt in 1972 and has continued on a non-stop basis for 16 years. She makes all sizes of quilts, from miniature to king size. Her designs incorporate strip piecing techniques. She spends 8-10 hours a day, 4-5 days a week alone in her studio. She likes to work alone and saves her working with others to the 4 days a month she meets with her two different quilt groups. She also teaches quilting. With a background in sewing, primarily clothing, Dena says she "grew up in the fabric department of every known department store." Her love for fabrics is reflected in her sewing room as well. Her fabric is stored in an antique French file cabinet. As the fabrics outgrew this space she bought or was given orange crates, a large bookcase, a small bookcase, and baskets. Larger pieces are kept in the closet.

"Interestingly enough, I've always felt that given the chance, I'd love to have 'a real sewing room,'" says Dena. "But, actually, now I wouldn't change a thing." After 11 years

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STUDIO 2

ELLEN OPPENHEIMER



Ellen Oppenheimer's studio is like her quilting – unconventional, original, full of surprises and utterly delightful. The building was originally built as a dairy (note the sloping floors with drains in the center). She shares the building with another artist. One is struck by the light and space of Ellen's area, which is a marked contrast from her previous poorly lit and cramped quarters. "I like to think that the space I am in now has had a positive influence on my work. The size of the space has enabled me to see the work better and as a result take it more seriously."

Ellen's space and tools emphasize functionality. Her table which began as a 4' x 8' piece of plywood has evolved into an 8' x 8' table on saw horses. Ellen first built the table for basting quilts, and loves working on such a big surface. For ironing she says, "I have a very dilapidated ironing board and a no frills iron!" Ellen has kept the fluorescent lights that came with the studio. Because they influence the perception of colors, she finds it better to work with tricky colors in natural light. Ellen's work is large scale. She does rough sketches for her quilts on large sheets of butcher paper. These sketches and the quilts in progress are pinned onto an 8' x 12' Celotex wall.

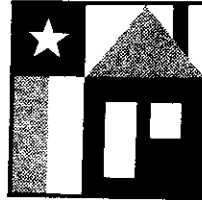
Ellen has not found the perfect solution to fabric storage; she keeps her fabrics on open shelves which are in full light. She has intentions of adding curtains to protect the fabrics from fading, but justifies procrastination by figuring that if something is going to fade, "I would like to know about it before I sew it into a quilt." Her palette is essentially commercial fabrics, specifically humorous and interesting prints which draw people into her quilts. Ellen also does hand dyeing and silk-screening of fabrics.

She uses an old Singer industrial sewing machine purchased in Allentown, Pa. while apprenticed to a glass artist in 1974. When her father got rid of some old ties, she put them together in a quilt with other found fabrics and became hooked on quilting. In 1982, Ellen made a quilt which was a jumping point from all her previous work. This quilt was shown in Quilt National '83, and continues to influence her work today. Ellen is self-taught, has never taken a formal quilting class, and has come to her solutions through trial and error, saying "I am not someone who is terribly concerned about process or techniques and the tools to accomplish them."

Her quilts are contemporary. They are bold, geometric, colorful and humorous. By eliminating symmetry from her quilts, Ellen creates limitless possibilities to communicate through her work the delight she has in fabric and quilts.

STUDIO 3

MICHAEL TRAVIS & DAVYD APPLE



As we approach the entrance to TRAPL, the fiberart studio of Michael Travis and Davyd Apple, we know we're going to see something unusual. TRAPL is in an old, run down, industrial area. At the end of a long hallway is a huge space – a room 45' x 20', with 10' high ceilings. The stark white walls are lined with colorful geometric quilts created by Michael and Davyd. They rent the space as a live-in artist work space. The owner of the building is also an artist, likes Davyd and Michael's work, and wants artists to live there.

Both Michael and Davyd have been involved with fiberart for about 4 years. Their combined backgrounds are in graphics/design. Michael and Davyd refer to themselves as "fiberartists." The term "quiltmaker," they feel, immediately limits the concept of a person's work by placing preconceived notions of what that work should be. They have a loom and hope to begin producing interesting fabrics. All of the fabrics used in their wall hangings are hand-dyed cottons. Their works are produced exclusively using solid colors. There is also a large area in their studio reserved for the dye process. Each is trying to explore his full potential in fiberart. They have an IBM computer for documentation of their work and for designing. They use various paint and computer-aided design programs.

As in most studios, much attention has been paid to details, but Michael and Davyd have been especially creative in a few areas which are of particular interest. Their worktables and ironing table are custom made. The table tops are two solid-core doors fastened together giving each a work surface of 6' x 6'8". The table top is covered with 12" x 12" white floor tile. The seams of the tile form a quick reference grid on the work surface. This work surface is attached to a base constructed of gray angle iron. The base is 48" x 48", has two shelves, and is on lockable wheels. The ironing table is also a solid-core door that has been padded and then covered with canvas. The canvas has been marked with right angle lines allowing another reference grid while ironing quilt strips or sections. The top surface of each work table is just over 40" high which makes for a more comfortable working height while standing. Michael and Davyd have devised plexiglas insets to fit around the sewing machine bases in their sewing tables. This innovation was developed especially for machine quilting.

There is an abundance of wall space and whatever is open is used for pin-up or display. Four 8' x 8' skylights provide bright, natural light. The skylights are covered with draped, white cotton sheeting, to filter the sun's rays, reduce the problems of fading, and eliminate harsh shadows. For night lighting there are two rows of fluorescent fixtures running the length of the room. The tubes are equally balanced between warm white and cool white bulbs. Fabric storage is in an area Michael and Davyd call the "vault"; a 10' x 5' storage area whose walls are lined with gray industrial steel shelving. A large platform was built above the steel shelves which serves for storage of bulky items like batting or rolled bolts.

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STUDIO 4

ROBERTA HORTON & MARY MASHUTA



When sisters Roberta Horton and Mary Mashuta first moved into their 1913 Berkeley house, the dining room was used for quilting. Later a second floor room, separated from the center of household activity, was converted into a second studio. Roberta and Mary shared studios A and B for a number of years, but when Mary started doing her quilt work full time, it became difficult to share workspace. After exploring alternatives, the easiest solution was to add a room. The new space, Studio C, is Roberta's, while Studio B became Mary's studio.

STUDIO B: Mary Mashuta began quilting in the early 1970's, and since leaving her teaching position three years ago, she has pursued her quilting career full time. She also expresses her creativity in the form of "wearable art." Mary has written a number of magazine articles and is working on two books. Mary works alone, but she and Roberta critique each other's work. She creates both large and small quilts. Currently, she makes "story" quilts which depict memorable times from her life.

The feature Mary likes most in her studio is the new 42" x 74" adjustable height work table. The large window above this table provides good natural light and a view. However, the sunlight is detrimental to fabrics. To offset this problem several precautionary measures were taken. A solar film was applied to the window surface and a translucent shade with an aluminum coating to reduce harmful sunlight was hung. Fabric stacked on three modular units will also be protected by roll down shades which Mary plans to install. In order to see colors accurately at night, Mary uses full-spectrum fluorescent fixtures which are covered with special sleeves to reduce fabric fading.

At one end of the room, two 4' x 8' Celotex sheets covered with white felt serve as a design surface. Work in progress can be easily viewed while seated at the sewing table. The Singer featherweight sits on a 4" platform which elevates the work area. This helps reduce neck strain caused by long hours of bending over the sewing machine. Mary added a raised edge to guard against the machine slipping off the platform. This platform also doubles as a convenient elevated holding surface for hand applique work. Ironing is done on the towel-covered formica table at a right angle to the sewing machine table. A nearby closet door has a bulletin board on which souvenirs and memorabilia that inspire her work are arranged. Along with her cats, music and "Prairie Home Companions" provide company.

STUDIO C: Roberta Horton has been teaching quilting since 1972. She has written three quilting books. Recently, Roberta designed a fabric collection of stripes and plaids which reflect her interest in 19th and 20th century fabrics. Roberta makes small quilts which are easier to travel with. The short hallway off the kitchen leads to Studio C and displays many of her Amish treasures. Studio C also houses items collected during

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STUDIO 5

LESLIE CARABAS



Leslie Carabas's current studio, which she says is "All Mine!" is a converted garage which she inherited from her husband, an artist, who had outgrown the space. Her previous studio was inside the house. Leslie prefers this new location where "the kids don't bother me as often, and yet I am close enough to keep track of what's going on."

Leslie wanted as much light as possible. There is a full wall of window on the north side, several windows on the west and south, a 6' skylight in the middle of the room, and about 1200 watts of fluorescent and incandescent lights. The lights are on separate switches so that each display area can be separately lit. The bank of windows allows Leslie to draw pleasure from the surrounding garden. Additionally she has the companionship of the cats, and a complete stereo system. Entrance is by invitation only, although she occasionally allows her daughter, a budding quiltmaker, some small amount of storage and floor space.

Almost two full connecting walls are pinboard covered with flannel. Leslie can have as many as eight small projects going on at the same time or one huge project and several small ones. She says, "this is wonderful, as I can work on one thing until I run out of inspiration or patience and then turn to another for relief." Another full wall is filled with shelves for fabric. She has no space for excess batting or large projects that have been laid aside. She chooses not to encroach on the display space. Her husband built the worktable and ironing/sewing table, the latter of which are attached to save space. The worktable is 4' x 8' and has under it the drawers and an area for storage of large flat papers, tools, etc.

Leslie makes quilts of all sizes, from 28" x 35" up to 78" x 156". She began making quilts in a class with Roberta Horton in 1975. For three years she was a partner in a fabric store business, where she took many classes including machine piecing classes from Glendora Hutson. After a 1980 Nancy Crow class she was inspired to create her own designs. Leslie's work shows a preference for the contemporary. She enjoys the unusual use of fabrics. She currently gives lectures on her quilts, and teaches some of the methods she has developed over the years. A weekly morning quilt group is the only place where she ever quilts by hand. She used to have work quilted by the Amish, but now does it all on the machine.

Leslie says "I am definitely a professional - ask the IRS." She has shifted her "administrative" things (files, computer, typewriter, stationary goods, etc.) into an office in the house. She keeps a daily log of time spent at her work, which averages 20-35 hours per week. Not all of this is spent in her studio. It includes administrative tasks, going to the post office, shopping for fabric, etc. A computer serves for word processing (price lists, correspondence, resumes, workshop proposals), although she feels it could have future use as a design aid.

STUDIO 6 BERNICE McCOY STONE



As you enter Bernice Stone's studio there is a feeling of being in a fabric lover's den. Bernice has designed a room to get greater fabric storage and a cozy atmosphere in which to pursue her quilt making out of two upstairs hall closets and a child's former bedroom. She maximizes her small space by making everything within an arm's reach. A specially designed worktable is 42" high to allow for standing or sitting with an adjustable chair. Her sewing table was designed to accommodate her sewing machine and a small ironing board (Portapress) for immediate ironing while piecing. Additionally, there are small shelves built into the sewing table to accommodate sewing notions and tools.

Under both the sewing table and worktable, there are Elfa baskets and shelves. (Elfa is a brand name which makes flexible width and depth steel frames and basket.) Fabric is stored in these baskets. Electrical outlets were installed at counter height to allow easy access for plug-ins. Between her sewing machine and worktable there is a pin-up board for designing her current projects. Track lighting was installed overhead with lights focused on specific work areas. Bernice has no fluorescent lighting as she doesn't like their affect on colors, and fears they may cause fabric to fade.

Bernice surrounds herself with the things she loves. As a collector of handmade baskets she uses them in both a decorative and functional manner. She has a separate, adjacent room where she stores her growing antique quilt collection, and when needed sets up a quilt frame. She has music, and a small television for company. She says, "I have everything I need at my fingertips with which to create beautiful quilts."

Bernice has been actively quilting for the past ten years, almost exclusively making bed-sized quilts. She has always enjoyed handwork, including doll clothes, needlepoint, knitting, upholstery, clothing, costume design and embroidery. Her quilting designs tend toward the historic, reflecting her love of antiques and period settings. She has a preference for traditional quilts and chosers to duplicate the color and feeling of the "old." Bernice spends 40-50 hours a week in her studio. In addition she travels and gives programs on the craft and appreciation of quilting. While she lectures professionally, she does not produce quilts for sale. However, she's very generous with her time and talents in producing group projects for a specific purpose. Bernice feels no limitation on herself as a creative person. She adds "I'm a very happy and privileged woman, having the space, materials, knowledge, background, and my husband's support to make beautiful things. I fully enjoy being in a totally indulgent phase of my life."

STUDIO 7 JANET SHORE



As you enter Janet Shore's El Cerrito home you are immediately escorted to the right, down a few stairs and proceed to enter a spacious, bright, well-lit room with two long 3' x 5' tables placed end to end down the center. Chairs are placed neatly around the table, and you come to the conclusion that you're in a meeting room set up for around 25 people. But look again, at the far end are sewing machines, two to be exact, and a serger, and your conclusion is that you're in a garment sewer's work area. Now now your eyes focus on the large flannel covered pin up board on which a quilt in progress is displayed, and again you change your mind to conclude this is a prizewinning quiltmaker's studio.

Well, you're right on all three counts – this is the studio of Janet Shore, charter member of EBHQ, present co-chairman of the 1988 EBHQ Symposium, past co-chairman of the 1984 Symposium, past president of EBHQ, past president Northern California Quilters Council, past program chairman of EBHQ, and past or present holder of numerous quilt related organizations' leadership positions. Janet's studio reflects the level of commitment and interest she has in this art form. About the only thing she hasn't tackled yet is to teach quiltmaking; however, she does teach sewing. Her interest in sewing began when she was about 12 years old and she has always enjoyed making her own clothes. Janet became hooked on quilting after taking a class from Roberta Horton in 1973. Her sewing skills were already well developed and she has continued to develop her talents in color coordination and design by taking workshops whenever she has the opportunity. Her prize-winning quilts and garments have appeared in numerous magazines and books.

Janet's studio is the hub for creating – quilts, wearable art, garments, activities – everything related to this consuming interest in quiltmaking. Her sewing machine sits on a specially designed table and ironing is done on a small portable ironing board adjacent to her sewing machine. She uses an ironing board for larger ironing projects. A magnificent fabric collection is stored on five 16' shelves in a closet along the back of the room. She's an avid believer that fabric should be stored away from light because of fading. The closet also houses her book and magazine collection, batting, miscellaneous notions and various projects piled in baskets. The closet doors are louvered to provide ventilation.

When asked what feature she likes most about her studio, she replied, "The table which my carpenter designed for my new Bernina and serger." Another comment was, "I especially like the adjustable table that I use to do my drafting." An item she would change would be that of having an uncarpeted floor. Janet truly enjoys her studio which gives her a very rewarding feeling. The view is inspiring, and the ambiance is quiet and serene.

Canty Studio, continued:

she has become so accustomed to her studio, and it has grown with her. She has always improvised rather than buying what she thought she "really needed" at the time. Dena feels justified that "all the money I've saved I can spend on fabric."

Apple and Travis Studio, continued:

"We both spend most of our free time in the studio. Our job schedules allow each of us to have the studio completely alone most of the time. We consult with each other but only in the concept and designing stage. We share ideas, discuss techniques and explore design possibilities. Once an idea is discussed, we generally complete the project with only limited input. The freedom we feel working in a room 20' x 45' with 10' ceilings, skylights, and lots of open space is an influence on our ideas."

Horton and Mashuta Studios, continued:

her travels to Japan. Roberta says "the room reflects the places I've been as a quilter."

In her studio Roberta has achieved a blending of the new and the old. The room was designed to have a "Maybeck (premier architect of the area) feeling." The backdoor is the original, while new moldings on the windows copy those in the rest of the house. A colorful garden is seen through the windows. Roberta sometimes takes time off "wandering through the garden to relax and contemplate. I find I can't do much creating during the travel time. When I am at home, most of my time is spent in my studio creating. I also like to just sit in my studio and feel serene."

The floor copies that in Studio B. The 12" black and white asphalt tiles double as a grid to true up quilts and to estimate their size. Fabric is stored in glass-door cabinets to provide a view of Roberta's fabric collection. The glass panels are covered with the same ultraviolet retardant film as the windows. The antique wood shelves were covered with aluminum foil so the wood wouldn't react adversely with the fabrics. The window shades in Studio C are like those in Studio B, but opaque because of the western exposure. The oak tables – one a desk/computer center, the other two the sewing center – were made to the same dimensions as those in Studio B. The furniture was ordered from a company making computer furniture. It lends itself well to flexibility and comfort. While Roberta doesn't use her Apple II computer for designing quilts, it's heavily used for the mountains of correspondence, and for the writing of her books.

One drawback in her new studio is the location of the pin-up wall. Roberta must turn 180 degrees while sewing to see the wall. However, she loves the floor space in front of the pinup wall. "I place piles of fabric in front of the work wall when I'm composing a piece so my eye can scan the possibilities." She also enjoys contemplating her "work in progress" from her Amish rocker. Roberta would like an even bigger space with more workwalls, storage for books, and a standing height cutting table. "I think having your own space allows you to take yourself more seriously. I took myself seriously from the beginning, I just couldn't afford to express it."
