

2024 QAQS Stories

#1 2021 TEMPERATURE QUILT – SEATTLE, WA

2022 ~ 56 x 80

At the end of 2020 it seemed like the days ran together. In an effort to be more mindful of the differences each day brings I committed to watching the changes in the weather each day. The key on the back explains the colors used for each three degrees of temperature and the weather conditions depicted by the diagonal lines. I had to add two colors as I had only planned for 100F maximum and it reached 107F!

I found it very helpful to have components prepared ahead of time so I could start each day in the studio sewing a block from the pieces I had prepared. Starch is my best friend when working with bias edges and I starched the heck out of the fabric before cutting the triangles.

Krista Moser's quilting gives the atmospheric weather map effect that really completes the design.

#2 WHEELS OF CHANCE

2018 ~ 86 x 103

This is an early quilt of mine and one of the few where I have followed a pattern and used the designer's templates. It was featured on the cover of *Fons and Porter* magazine and designed by Liz Porter.

I see this design as a bridge between traditional and modern quilts; the blocks are uniform and set in a regular grid but they are larger than most traditional quilt blocks and the quilt has a bold graphic quality even though the colors are rather muted.

The handsome long-arm quilting is by **Adrienne Reynolds**. The wool batting drapes well and is comfortable all seasons (in the Northwest).

#4, #3, #5

TABLE RUNNERS

Note: these 3 will hang together and share a story sheet and photo

Runners and mats offer a great opportunity to explore palettes or new techniques without investing a lot of time and material. They are great scrap buster projects and I love having useful textiles to add color and pattern to my home.

RED-ORANGE RUNNER

2020

#4

In 2020 I assigned a color to each month and tasked myself to make several projects using that monochromatic scheme as the starting point. (Some might remember it as my year of the bears. Oh, those bears!) I feel this simple piece is a good representation of my style and how I like to work.

DOUBLE TROUBLE

2024

#3

A re-make of a runner I made in a Katie Pedersen workshop around 2016. Her technique adds wonky flippy corners to some of the HSTs to add an additional design element. The effect makes me think of a flock of juncos flying through my garden and they appear more as movement than birds.

DOUGHNUTS AND COFFEE

2018

#5

My design group offered the cue word *doughnut* and this was my response. A dozen doughnuts on the front (some with sprinkles). Coffee on the back.

#6 GIANT PLACEMAT #3

2021 ~ 30 x 38

In most aspects of my life I am a planner and favor order, so the relative chaos of working with scraps is somewhat balancing and delightful. I am also rather thrifty so using things up and throwing away less appeals to me. To a scrappy quilter, crumbs are the ultimate scraps. (If you have ever attended a workshop or retreat with me, chances are I went through your garbage.) When I am between projects or not sure what to do next, I start sewing crumbs together to make new fabric. Sometimes I have a project in mind, sometimes I don't.

We take fabric, cut it into pieces and sew it together to make fabric. And then we take the remaining bits and make more fabric. And sew on ...

#7 COLOR GETS THE CREDIT ... VALUE DOES THE WORK 2023 ~ 42 x 73

I'm a big fan of Timna Tarr's work so was thrilled when QA featured her for lectures and a workshop. (QA has great workshops!) Timna's string quilt method is foundation pieced on muslin. She assigns each block a color rule, e.g. all black, half and half, etc. then arranges the blocks so the design and colors flow and pool rather than be uniformly distributed. I like working with a BWG or neutral palette as it can be graphically bold and purer (not better but more elemental) than working in color but the little dabs of color add a little fun.

FMQ on long-arm by **Vicki Boddy**.

QA Workshop

#8 DIFFUSION

2024 ~ 103 x 83

Diffusion = a social process through which elements of culture spread from one people or region to another; in essence, a process of social change.

While making this quilt I saw the colors as starting from the center and diffusing outward. Now that it is finished, I more often see the colors as merging inward. Or perhaps they are pulsing back and forth ... inward and outward. What do you think?

Inspired by the Canadian concept of *cultural mosaic* and the mid-century work of American artist Ellsworth Kelly.

I used only scraps and fat quarters that I had on hand for the quilt top. (Yes, I have a lot of scraps.) One of my favorite things about this quilt is searching for 3-4 adjacent colors that form a new-to-me palette. Lots of ideas for the future.

Working with long-arm quilter **Dionne Hersh** was a fine collaboration. We talked about the feeling and intention of the design in addition to the visual aspect of the work. Her quilting captured my idea of the core diffusing and spreading outward.

#9 SUPREME COURTHOUSE STEPS

2023 ~ 48 x 84

Here are two improvisational takes on the traditional Courthouse Steps block. The front features 2 oversized blocks (that's what makes them supreme). The color challenge cue for the back was to use solids that I would not usually use together. I found some pleasing combinations I didn't expect to like.

The back started out as the front and the front as the back but somewhere during the process the back took over. I only used scraps I had on hand for both sides and let the strips determine the size and numbers of steps.

Not all scraps are created equal and some are problematic. There are some missteps ... that's all I'm sayin'.

Meticulously quilted by **Dionne Hersh**.

#10 GWEN'S GARDEN

2022 ~ 37 x 50

When my great-niece Gwen was born her mother she wanted her always to be surrounded by flowers. I designed improv paper pieced blocks that have been described as a marriage of Marimekko and Andy Warhol.

Jana Royal's long-arm quilting includes dragon flies and butterflies that are at home in Gwen's Garden.

#11 TIDAL SHIFT

2024 ~ 18 x 35

The central part of the design was produced in the first virtual workshop I took in 2020. (Thank you to QA and instructors for adapting so quickly to the pandemic.) Luke Haynes taught techniques and ideas for working with unusual fabrics and patterns. I fabricated the curved piecing with a vertical orientation in mind. Didn't know what to do with it so put it in the spare parts bin. Took it out a year later and looked at it vertically and put it back in the bin. Took it out a couple months ago and shifted the orientation so the curves ran horizontally and it finally made sense. I like contrasts of fluid and solid, light and dark, balance and off-balance.

QA Workshop

#12.5 CURVES AHEAD

2023 ~17 x53

Patricia Belyea's Complex Curve technique uses free-hand (no templates) curves that make interesting stand alone blocks but when combined with other blocks create beautiful organic secondary curves and designs. Big-stitch

#14 TINY RAKES

2018-19 ~ 42 x 64

When my oldest great-nephew graduated with a masters from the University of Montana, I wanted to make him a quilt that would remind him of the NW after his eventual return to the East Coast. The design started with trees and mountains of assorted sizes with coping strips and blocks added to puzzle the pieces together.

I was finishing the top at the time of the devastating wildfires in California when I saw footage of a high-level government official say that raking the forest floor could help prevent wildfires so I added a few tiny rakes to help protect the quilt from fire damage.

Quilted by **Krista Moser**. You can see the wind swirling through the trees.

#15 BOWL

2018 ~ 15 dia

Hilde Moran taught this wonderful bowl technique at a workshop during the Pacific Northwest Quilt and Fiber Arts Museum's Fiber Festival in 2018.

Canvas replaces batting as the middle sandwich layer and the top (inside) and back (outside) are raw edge pieced, then free motion quilted.

#16 SOMETIMES YOU GO AROUND AN OBSTACLE ...SOMETIMES YOU GO THROUGH

2020 ~ 27 x 38

Improv piecing may seem totally random but planned-random may be a better descriptive term as each piece and group of pieces is purposefully placed. Every element, while not in a repeated pattern, is auditioned and moved and altered during the design process to achieve the desired balance or counterbalance.

Just as in nature, there is room for imperfection in improvisational piecing. It's not an excuse for sloppiness but a nod toward the beauty and visual tension of things that are different or off-kilter.

Pick your battles. Not every challenge is an unmovable obstacle that needs to be taken on; sometimes one just needs to step around and carry on.

#17 ENGLISH TOFFEE #1

2019 ~ 17 x 27

Is there anything more delicious than English toffee with its rich caramel colored goodness topped with chocolate and nuts?

Improv pieced blocks are the focal point but the additions at top and bottom are important to the overall design. Machine and hand quilting echo and emphasize some shapes and create new ones as well as adding texture.

#18 MOMENTS IN A MARRIAGE

2017-2024 ~ 86 x 94

The small squares represent the thousands of moments and memories of 2 lives joined together in marriage:

Some moments are simple ... some are bold

Some have stories to tell ... some have nothing to say

Some are beautiful ... a few are not very attractive.

Some relate directly to one another ... some offer an interesting contrast

And there are a couple of mistakes because life is like that too

But when viewed all together, if successful, the whole reads as a single beautiful thing.

Inspired by a postage stamp quilt I saw in a museum a few years after I started quilting, I initially wanted to see if I could make a lap quilt with this amount of precision piecing ... then I kept going. Starting with a 4-patch that alternates light and dark value and often pair similar motifs or patterns, the design continues this pairing to make 16-patch and then 64-patch blocks that (usually) maintain a monochrome diagonal. It's simple in concept but more complex in execution. The

pairing of motifs and prints was particularly fun for me and has led me to look at pattern differently.

Rather than a uniform distribution of color and value I favored allowing the colors to ebb and flow; pooling for a while then stopping up against another color range. This is especially noticeable where warm colors run into cool colors.

I like elements in quilts that reveal themselves as you get closer or further away. The blocks themselves show more detail as the viewer gets closer. **Jill Bell's** beautiful and intricate long-arm quilting serves to emphasize the movement of the colors, add texture and another layer of visual interest to the design.

A gift to my husband for our 46.5th anniversary this weekend.

And the answer is: 7,040 1-inch squares

#19 PSYCHEDELIC BABY

2019 ~ 51 x 77

Workshops, whether in person or virtual, can be so informative and inspiring. Not only does one learn something from the instructor but being able to see many iterations of the technique or design can be as valuable as doing several versions oneself. Katie Pedersen's Psychedelic Baby design is more of a technique than a set pattern and the possibilities are endless and worth exploring. Katie's website *Sew Katie Did* shows many interesting variations on this technique.

The adjacent quilt uses the pieces left over from this quilt but the two have quite different personalities.

Quilted by **Krista Moser**.

QA Workshop

#20 PLANNED OVERS

2019 ~ 58 x 58

Some might call this Left Overs but at our house we say Planned Overs for the bits that remain after a meal. Because Psychedelic Baby is set on-point, there are plenty of planned-over pieces that serve as a starting point. Some scraps were used as is and others needed bits added or subtracted to bring them to size for

this large block HST quilt. I am fascinated by 2 quilts that use a similar palette, fabric, and pieced elements but result in quilts of different character.

Quilted by **Krista Moser**.

#21 SIXTY

2024 ~ 41 x 60

A quilt to mark the 60th birthday of my third niece. She is a hiker, climber, adventurer and the peaks and valleys make me think of her. Are these mountains to climb? Achievements met? Challenges to take on? Avett Brothers concerts yet to see? She can decide.

I grew up with jigsaw puzzles. Piecing together randomly sized improv blocks is like working a jigsaw puzzle that after you fit together the pieces at hand you get to make up extra pieces to finish the picture ... or make a different picture. My kind of puzzle.

#22 KATHY'S FLOWER GARDEN

2017 ~ 80 x 94

This was my first improvisationally pieced quilt made early in my quilty life following a series of workshops with Katie Pedersen at The Quilting Loft in Ballard, now sadly closed. I've returned to improv log cabin many times since then. (And I've returned to Katie Pedersen's instruction many times since then as well.)

Originally titled "ROYGBIV + Cheddar" because my rainbow includes cheddar ... lots of cheddar. It is renamed AS it was gifted to my oldest dear niece for her 60th birthday a few years ago. She lives on a small flower and vegetable farm in Iowa and favors plants from heirloom seeds.

Adrienne Reynolds' long-arm quilting and ruler work adds and improvisational by structured element. I especially love her work in the white background with geometric motifs and articulating the pieced jester's collar near the border.